



**DRAFT Meeting Summary
BROADWAY BOULEVARD CITIZENS PLANNING TASK FORCE**



March 19, 2015
5:30 p.m.
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
1200 N. Campbell Ave.
Tucson, Arizona 85719

The Broadway Boulevard Citizens Planning Task Force meeting summaries provide a brief descriptive overview of the discussions, decisions and actions taken at the meetings. The summary and the audio recording of the meeting comprise the official minutes of the Broadway Boulevard Citizens Planning Task Force Meeting.

Meeting summaries and audio recordings of the meetings are available online at the City Clerk's web page at:
<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/boards?board=100>.

Requests for CD copies of the audio recordings are taken by the City Clerk's Office at (520) 791-4213.

MEETING RESULTS

1. Call to Order/Agenda Review/Announcements

The meeting was called to order by Meeting Facilitator Nanci Beizer. A quorum was established, and Nanci reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Handouts were distributed to the Task Force with supplemental information.

Citizen Task Force Members

Present	Absent
Bob Belman	Michael Butterbrodt
Dale Calvert	Jamey Sumner
Anthony R. DiGrazia	
Mary Durham-Pflibsen	
Bruce Fairchild	
Jon Howe	
Colby Henley	
Shannon McBride-Olsen*	
Anne Padias	
Shirley Papuga	
Diane Robles	

** Shannon McBride-Olsen, representative from the Planning Commission, attended the meeting and sat at the table with the Task Force. Her official appointment to the Task Force is in progress.*

This Meeting Summary has not yet been approved by the Broadway Boulevard Citizens Planning Task Force.

2. Approval of October 23, 2014, Meeting Summary

The project team asked the Task Force to approve the October 23, 2014, CTF meeting summary. The Task Force approved the summary with no requested changes. The project team will post the approved summary to the Clerk's Office.

3. Public Input Report, and Reports on Project Presentations & Outreach

The project team updated the Task Force on the latest presentations and outreach that have occurred and that are planned and shared links to articles forwarded by CTF members.

4. 1st Call to Audience

Eight members of the public filled out speakers cards and were called on to address the Task Force:

Bob Kaye

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. I have reviewed the Broadway Corridor plans and report data from February 20th and I have four specific comments that I'd like to offer for your consideration.

First, the new signalized intersections, such as the ones that are proposed at Plumber and Broadway should be pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular activated for entering across Broadway movements. Likewise, existing signalized intersections with relatively low entering or cross movements should be made user-activated. This will improve the flow of busses and other vehicles on Broadway and it will increase safety for pedestrians for bicyclists and for all others using the corridor.

Second, for greater clarity of the plans, I would ask that you consider identifying and highlighting the existing bus stops on the corridor. At one point in the report, there is mention of the improved connection between bus service on Broadway to Country Club, but it is very difficult to see where that happens as the plans are currently drawn.

Third, I'd suggest that user signage at bus pullouts on pavement and on posts is critical to future safety in the corridor. It needs to be safe, both for bicyclists and for boarding and dis-embarking bus passengers. My suggestion would be that if the team has not already done so, the team should consider looking at and monitoring the conditions of stops along the Modern Streetcar where these kinds of conditions already occur. We should all benefit from the experience and those locations improving solutions to bike and pedestrian conflicts.

My fourth specific comment is that, in several places in the report there is mention of refinements to the alignment, the turning radii, lane dimensions, driveways and so forth. Those are described as being to the benefit of improving or reducing impacts to adjoining properties and improving access. I think it's also worth pointing out that those same improvements will have a traffic calming method, reducing speeds and improving safety.

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Overall, based on my review and my professional experience, the work that the team has produced is outstanding. It is technically sound, it is forward thinking, responsive to business and community concerns, protective of historic and community resources and community areas and sensitive to environmental values. The plans show a Broadway corridor that will enhance safety and the quality of experience for everyone; for those who are there, all Broadway users: pedestrians, shoppers, bicyclists, bus riders and drivers. Access to transit business is important. Community facilities will be improved. The visual quality of the corridor will be transformed for the good. Most important, the design accomplishes the first crucial step in introducing high-capacity, high-speed transit service to the corridor.

At this stage, it's impossible to conclusively determine whether the new transit service will be bus rapid transit, or it will be streetcar or light rail; but, none of those services can be created in the Broadway corridor without the work that the project team, the community task force, local business people and residents are doing to widen the existing roadway to three lanes in each direction. Generations of future Tucsonans will be significantly benefited by this kind of work.

Margot Garcia

Good evening, I am Margot Garcia of the Broadway Coalition and here we are again all together. I especially want to call people's attention to the public comments that have been turned in we have done a count. We found that 171 have questions, or oppose the current staff preferred alignment, 12 were in favor and 4 were ambiguous. That is 6% of the people who commented as a first batch that was sent out.

We are delighted to see some of the discussions that we have had. Over the past couple of three years, we have made an impression on society and there are maps that are brought forward; I am glad to see that. On the maps, there's a yellow line indicating the 100 feet behind the sidewalk, so that we can see the size of the remnant parcels.

I found the use of the in-lane bus stops a good idea, though I worry about the increased collision opportunities between bicyclists and pedestrians at the two cross-over points where the cycle-track goes to the right of the bus stop. I think it's going to take a while and many collisions, before the bus rider is exiting the bus. Learn to look for the cyclists, especially the fast and furious and vice-versa.

I think all of the right-hand turn channels should be removed, because they are a safety hazard to both the bicyclist and the pedestrian alike. The big question that I want to lift up before you, is one of the balance between cars and the people who work and live within the area (or the land use). Right now, the tilt is for the car at a minimum-37 structures will be demolished, in favor of the car. They are not just blocks of color on a map. These are people's homes, their businesses, their hopes, their livelihood, their jobs and their dreams. They work and live in these places; many 24-hours a day, 7 days a week! And for the rest of us, these buildings are our history, our culture, remembrances of the way we lived and can still live. They are houses and buildings with good bones that can be painted, re-roofed and used productively for years to come.

Somewhere I read that even using the most sustainable building products, it will take up to forty years for a new building to catch up in sustainability with reusing an old

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building. Sustainability is important to us in the next generation. I would like to tip that balance back toward people and jobs and buildings and sustainability. My summary, the changes I would urge you to make to the staff preferred alignment are (and I have passed these around):

- Euclid to Campbell: No median
- Narrow sidewalk to 5 feet
- Narrow landscaping to 3 feet
- No landscaping in front of Miles School, they have wonderful trees already
- This should save almost all of the historic buildings
- We will need to work on access and parking issues
- Remove the right-hand turn going into Euclid
- Campbell to Country Club, work on access & parking for Solot Plaza, for Inglis Flowers Complex, for 2300 & 2400 block businesses
- No landscaping in front of Broadway Villages or the GLHN buildings, but there's a special place by the Safeway and the bike/bus lane where there is a place for a little park in the existing right-of-way, there's an opportunity!

Thank you, and I hope that you enjoy our signs. "Make Tucson great, not second rate - don't supersize Broadway."

Marc Fink

I think you all know me, I'm Marc Fink, I'm with the Broadway Coalition and I am a retired planner. I want to talk about transit specifically. I guess I will just have to disagree with the gentleman before me, who talked about this being great and beyond great, wonderful. The problem is, you don't need to widen the road so large and this is what we have been hearing. We need lots of land in order to do transit and that is what we have been told repeatedly.

But there's lots of other places that have not done that, because they have seen that if you remove the land uses, and this plan removes at least thirty-seven buildings, and we know with conversations we have had with City staff, including Daryl Cole, Daryl is the Director of the Tucson Department of Transportation, that probably lots of other properties will be taken because of access issues and parking issues. This will have a major impact, there will be no destinations on Broadway for people to go to. So what I have handed out is one of those examples, this is bus rapid transit in Richmond, VA. What they have done is kind of a hybrid system for bus rapid transit in the more suburban areas and what they did is find that they had a dedicated lane for bus rapid transit. When you think of Broadway, there already are eight lanes on Broadway east of Columbus. Six travel lanes and two transit lanes, that's perfect. Go ahead and do it, but what Richmond did through their central city and their historic district, is they have the bus rapid transit mixed with their other travel lanes; perfect! They save what's really important, they save their downtown, they save their historic district, they still have bus rapid transit. You could do that on this section of Broadway, it's only two miles long and the bus rapid transit could then also act as local bus service as well, thereby obviating the need for other kinds of improvements and you can run it along the edges if need be.

So that's one example, and let me just remind you that during this process, Wolf Brody, who's head of the Phoenix Valley Rapid Transit System, in his presentation mentioned specifically- the one big mistake they made was Camelback Road. And what did they do

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on Camelback Road? They did what is proposed here. They widened the heck out of Camelback and now it's a big mistake, because they ended up with a bunch of parcels that he said were not viable economically. So I urge you, we can do transit here, we can do it well and what we are asking for, is some creativity. If other places can do it, certainly we have the intelligence and the ability to do it well here. Thank you.

John Davis

I looked at the minor and major plan and one thing that I found was lacking, that was of even mentioning at all, was that of handicap accessibility. I used to walk in this corridor quite often, but I had too many incidents at the Broadway and Treat intersection. There's a crosswalk there, but nobody honors it. And one day, one person drove through the crosswalk and I stopped the car and asked "why did you go through it? You know, why didn't you stop? There was a person there." The person could have cared less, the person was in a wheelchair.

Not too far back, I was in a knee walker, that's where you put your knee onto it, because I had had an operation on it and I had jury duty downtown. I went downtown there, I asked for handicapped parking, I didn't get it and the time I was supposed to be there all of the parking was taken up, so I had to park somewhere else. And one of the things that I found was, how wonderful it is to go across the trolley tracks, and then they get worse. If I had tipped over, it would have been a nightmare! I have an implant in my right shoulder and it doesn't work right and I have got a separated shoulder too. If I'd tipped over, I couldn't do anything. And I had that happen one time, over at UofA, they had to call the fire department to pick me up, put me on the scooter and away I went.

What I would like to see in the plan, is something for that. I saw nothing for handicapped parking. And in the corridor, there's virtually no handicapped parking. When I looked at the maps of the setbacks, etc. the streetlights, where are the streetlights going to be? They are not even mentioned. Now down by Treat, I was walking the street one night going down Broadway and so many of the street lights were out, it was a dark, moonless night, I couldn't see where I was going. I thought I was on the sidewalk and I fell in a hole about this deep. Where are the streetlights going to be? Which side of the sidewalk? Don't know? That's all I have to say. Thank you.

(Jude Cook Abstained His Time)

Suzy Gershman

Thank you Jude. I'm Suzy Gershman and I'm representing the Tucson Historic Foundation Preservation and also the Tucson Pima Historic Commission. You have been told over and over again that it is necessary to knock down dozens and dozens of historic buildings on Broadway to achieve the project goals.

The Tucson Pima County Historic Transportation Subcommittee recently reviewed the latest alignment and compared it to similar transportation projects with similar goals in progressive cities nationwide. The commission determined that by making minor adjustments to the lanes, medians, sidewalks and landscaping you could realistically reduce the historic demolitions to zero. Reduced acquisitions save so much money, you could even afford to consider moving a building, if necessary. The commission also

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recommended creating a zoning overlay to deal with all of the parking problems created by the project and to provide real incentives to preserve historic buildings. Even losing one or two buildings here or there can make a difference. You already know that Broadway's Mid-Century streetscape has its own unique character and community. Many people are unaware that the historic streetscape acts as a buffer zone to the surrounding neighborhoods. We have found that compromising the integrity of the buffer zone, can begin a domino effect which eventually spreads deep into the surrounding neighborhoods. One or two buildings can make a crucial difference.

The alignment as it stands now, is the single most destructive project since the urban renewal of the 1960's and 70's. I know that for years you have been told, "It could be worse" or "we'll deal with it later." Or the "owners want to sell out anyway." I know that we can do better. We urge you to do the right thing and demand a better alignment.

Bob Cook

Thank you very much, actually I am very honored to speak. I didn't expect to speak in the first call, I came here a little bit late, but since my letter wasn't published in the report and logged in, they have asked me to read it and I thank you for that. This isn't my last word, there are some fundamental issues that are appalling about this current design and the community will hear it in different formats going forward, but this is the letter that I wrote on March 11th.

Linda Dobbyn

So there have been a bunch of studies that have come out that show trends that counter what the planned alignment is and we need to think about where we are going as a city; and it's not this suburban style corridor. Studies are showing that young, college graduates are choosing where to live. They are making that choice, because either they are going to move to a place because it offers the kind of community they want or they are going to move there and get a job, or they are going to select a job based on the type of community that's available in that region. They want vibrant, urban settings; they want to live, work and play in the same area. They don't want to have to drive to their work, they want to walk, bicycle or take transit, all within the same neighborhood where they can live, work and play.

Cities know this; progressive cities all over the US are doing this. They are establishing these types of communities for young people to move there. Downtown is doing this here and it's become quite vibrant, but we need more than just a downtown, we need an extension beyond that to offer choices for those people who are moving here. Baby boomers are retiring and they will need to be replaced and hopefully they will be replaced by the best and the brightest.

We want those people who are making choices who are the cream of the crop, including our own children, encouraging them to stay here and offering those communities what they want. They don't need to move to Portland or Brooklyn or Austin, or Seattle or San Francisco. We want to offer those communities here. The Sunshine Mile is the exact type of community, for the framework of, what they would want to live in. It's equal distance from downtown to the UofA. People could live in that community, they could work, they could commute to either the University or

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downtown where they live or work. It would be a lovely, lovely human centered environment for them. There's another trend that has come out that was released last year from the Preservation Greenland with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and I know you all have this, it's a report called, *Older Smaller Better Measuring How the Character of Buildings and Blocks Influence Urban Vitality*. You don't need to read very much of it to get a good sense of what it says and I'll just read the first paragraph of the executive summary, "All across America blocks of older, smaller buildings are quietly contributing to robust local economies and are distinctive livable communities. Buildings of diverse, vintage and small-scale provide flexible, affordable space for entrepreneurs launching new business and service as attractive settings for new restaurants and locally owned shops. They offer diverse housing choices that attract young residents and create human-scale places for walking, shopping and social interaction."

I'm sorry I've got three minutes. It's the older mixed neighborhoods that offer much. One poll from Jane Jacobs, cities need old buildings so badly that it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them. Thank you.

Melody Peters

As a homeowner living on the south side of Tenth Street and an active member of Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association, I am asking for you to reject the most recent alignment which calls for the acquisition and demolition of a significant number of properties that contribute to our historic district. Like the overwhelmingly majority of people who have spoken out in public meetings, Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association believes the widening of Broadway is unnecessary, expensive and most of all, damaging to historic neighborhoods.

In Rincon Heights, we are concerned not only how the destruction of historic properties on Broadway will affect historic designation, but also how demolition and possible redevelopment on the diminished parcels will impact the residents on the south side of Tenth Street.

What protections would be put in place to ensure that fast food restaurants, where there are intendant noises and disgusting odors, are not built within a few feet of people's homes? Or high-rise housing that would take away privacy? Will quality of life on Tenth Street become so miserable that its homeowners flee the neighborhood? A flight of homeowners on Tenth Street would in term diminish quality of life on Ninth Street and our neighborhood; which has been slowly stabilizing, in spite of considerable outside pressures, will surely decline.

Gene Caywood, on a volunteer basis, has done what the consultants have not been able to do. His drafted and alternative alignment, that allows for six lanes of traffic, but takes out few, if any historic structures. It is time that the Mayor and Council direct their consultants to produce a plan that prioritizes historic preservation while providing walkability, cycling and transit.

Street trees are important and should be planted wherever possible; but extra wide sidewalks and luxuriously wide landscape buffers, though nice, where space is no object, should not be provided at the expense of a national historic district. With a

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little creativity these assets can be reduced in stretches where the existing right of way is tight without negatively impacting the entire project.

5. 2015 Project Milestones and Decision Points, CTF Reappointments, and Filling of CTF Vacancies

This agenda item allowed the Task Force time to discuss upcoming project milestones, and have a broader conversation regarding filling the current vacant Planning Commission seat as well as future vacancies when they occur. The Task Force approved filling the Planning Commission vacancy and if it is allowable, to discuss filling subsequent vacancies on a case by case basis. After fulfilling her oath of office at the next CTF meeting Shannon McBride Olsen will officially fill the Planning Commission vacancy and become the newest Broadway Boulevard Citizens Task Force member.

6. Discussion/Decisions Regarding Moving 6-Lane Including Transit Baseline Refined Alignment Forward

- Refinements Made; Public Comment Period Comments Received; Design Considerations; CTF Recommendations to Mayor and Council

This agenda item allowed the Task Force members who attended the March 2 & 3, 2015, Business and Property Owner meetings and the Casitas on Broadway meeting to report on what they observed and heard at these meetings. Listed below is a summary of the comments that were made.

- We have been given several proposals for keeping the west portion narrow. Margot Garcia gave us a proposal as did others. Why were they rejected and is it even legal to move forward with Margot's? Also, we were told that we need bus pullouts - why?
- I attended the Business & Property Owners meeting Monday evening. Attendee said: "I have a red building. Will I get more money for it?" Jonathan Mabry said, "No." When asked why a study was done of historic buildings along Broadway, Mabry said it was to inform the CTF which buildings would be affected by the project. Putting this responsibility on the CTF was an eye-opener for me.
- As business owner myself, I noticed that others are realizing that this is coming to pass. Not everyone is happy. Certain areas want to stay. Mike (Johnson) was very helpful providing ideas, opening dialogue with real estate to make a decision if they want to stay or leave. Meeting was positive, solution-focused. Owners were not happy about having to pay for their own appraisals, instead the City, to find out what they will get.
- I heard from a tenant of a building that has a bus stop in front. The owner wants building acquired. I don't feel people are being heard. I don't want to ruin someone's livelihood. A few are willing to be acquired. If we tear down buildings where there is already economic vitality, how long will it take to rebuild? I'm concerned about our alignment now.
- On the east portion, parking and access are the biggest issues. We can't give them parking, just point them in the right direction. Rincon Heights owners are

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ready to throw their buildings and the tenants under the bus. Small parcels are incubators. I feel ill about how many will be knocked down. We're doing all we can to save them. Let's see what's possible and let the chips fall.

Listed below is a summary of the comments that were made during a discussion of the alignment before the project team presentation.

- Why is staff recommending taking 10' width to 11'? Studies indicate drivers drive more slowly when narrow. (*Staff: "10'6 is minimum. A bus with mirrors is 10'2".*) That reasoning is valid for outside lanes - not inside.
- Can we minimize medians? (*Staff: "Absolutely."*) Are there any existing 10' lanes in the City? Can you describe what a "design vehicle" is? (*Staff: "Vehicle we use to design roadway, used moving van/tractor trailer".*) So the alignment was designed for worst-case use?
- I feel that CTF has been misled by RTA. We were given right to define functionality. But at the Dec. 1 Technical Advisory Committee meeting for RTA, the first time our majority/minority opinion was being presented to them, instead of full discussion, there was a traffic briefing from Kittelson, a mention of bus pullouts, and they were told that the city's proposal did not include dedicated transit lanes. An RTA legal opinion that came out on Dec. 3 said there was no dedicated transit lane. The RTA Board meeting included no discussion of this broader view of functionality. I feel it was bait and switch by the RTA. I also feel like we were misled by project team. We had a majority and minority opinion, and we trusted staff to take that forward. The Mayor and Council approved the majority opinion (on Oct. 9). The press release said Mayor and Council approved a 6 lane including transit alignment and that it would include two transit lanes, bike lanes and new sidewalks. That's what we thought we did. At the Technical Advisory Committee meeting on Dec. 1, Jim DeGrood said the proposal did not include dedicated transit lanes. So somewhere between Mayor and Council and the RTA meeting, that changed. Again, the Dec. 3 legal opinion said the city's approved alignment would not include dedicated bus lanes but would include bus pullouts. On Dec. 11, RTA put out a news release about its approval of funds for 6 lanes with bus pullouts, bike lanes, sidewalks. A city news release referred to moving forward with 6 lanes including transit design. I think the press releases were misleading the public. All the materials say 6 lanes including transit. But that's not at all what we are looking at. The public process is a bit of a charade. I'm concerned about that. Historic preservation was #1 thing at public meetings - yet the one historic district that abuts this roadway is taking the brunt of the demolition. Tucson-Pima Historical Commission said this would be the biggest wipeout of historic buildings since the demolition of the barrio downtown. I wouldn't want to do this to your neighborhood and I'm asking you not to do this to my neighborhood. We're being asked to design a roadway and add a car lane where traffic is the lowest it's been in 30 years. It

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seems like we're coming at this backwards. I can't sign onto this. I like the bike lanes, if this represents progressive stand for Tucson roads, then I'm pretty sad for our city.

- The majority report did not include dedicated transit lanes, but I think we need two dedicated transit lanes.
- *(Staff: Chuck Huckelberry has stated in writing that he would not fund a 4+2T. RTA would not approve 4+2T.)*
- We went with 6 lanes including 2 transit lanes - 4+2T - and that changed to 6 lanes including 2. Mayor and Council approved "including transit."
- Something has been brought forth as the task force recommendation when it did not meet the spirit of what we were trying to put forward.
- It would be helpful to get back to the performance measures.

The project team presented the refinements that have been made to the 6-Lane Including Transit Alignment since the Task Force met in October 2014. Design concepts put forth by the Broadway Coalition were presented by the Task Force members for the body's consideration. Examples of modifications that can be made during project design were presented to demonstrate productive approaches and outcomes. The project team provided information about strategic parameters that could be recommended by the CTF to guide design changes to the adopted alignment, where productive, as the technical design phase progresses.

Listed below is a summary of the comments that were made.

- Park Avenue at Broadway is already commercial. Removing buildings from the north side of Broadway will create a blank spot that will kill the neighborhood vibe. 100' setback eats into TUSD. Can alignment bump south instead? Owners like solution on south side. Save pieces on north side where we can - for a commercial node for Rincon Heights.
- At Highland, it would be nice to see the narrowed sidewalk option apply to this section to save properties on north side.
- How does Green Streets come into play with medians? Mayor and Council passed a Green Streets Policy - how will that play into developing design? *(Staff: Water harvesting needs extra width. As designed today, it won't meet Green Streets Policy.)*
- Is that something property owners can work on?
- Staff is not using the narrow option provided in our packet. Why? There's a great deal of support for something along the "narrow line."
- Does investigating the narrow option extend the timeline?
- Too much that needs to be changed.
- I feel like we're in a catch 22. I understand the project team has a job to do. But it's our job to represent stakeholders faithfully. We're in this bind right now. We hear what our stakeholders want and this is not it. Instead of starting out with the worst case scenario, I'd like to start out with the best case

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scenario. We have to have the same technical drawings of a narrower plan that we have had for the wider plan. As a business owner, I'd rather be told that we came up with this alternative to save your property, but this is why it won't work.

- To clarify, I don't mistrust the project team. I have not been speaking out, representing my stakeholders. Business & Property Owners meetings changed this for me. I am having a difficult time supporting this now that I've heard from the business and property owners.
- I have no problem with the project team. When I talk about trust, I'm talking about the relationship with the rest of the CTF and the public. Their positions are positions opposed to other parts of the community that are showing up at RTA meetings. I may be the only person sitting at the table who would approve the baseline alignment, partially because I understand that it will change with time. What is possible, meeting all the standards, is a difficult tradeoff to go through hole in needle. Have confidence in the staff but they have a very difficult job.

During this agenda item a motion was made, and seconded, to remove "including transit" from the name of the alignment as well as change the project logo to remove the bus. Task Force members felt that transit improvements are being overlooked and not incorporated into the design and therefore including them in the logo and name of the alignment was misleading. No action was taken on the motion and no motion was made to table the decision. The motion died and is no longer pending. (This item could be revisited at the March 26, 2015 meeting and, if desired, the motion mentioned above can be made again.)

- It should be taken to the RTA and let them shoot it down. *(Staff: I have been told that the decision has been made. No dedicated transit Day 1. The county will not support 4+2T.)*
- I thought that decision was made 18 months ago.
- We've made it 6 lanes so we did not have to go back in 2 years - get the real estate now.
- I've never trusted the RTA. I'm surprised they budged from eight lanes.

7. 2nd Call to the Audience (Please note, this item took place in the middle of item 6 due to time constraints. Item 6 was reopened following the call to the audience)

Seven members of the public filled out speakers cards and were called on to address the Task Force:

Les Pierce

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Howdy, we all doing alright? Woohoo, my name is Les Pierce and I am the president of the Arroyo Chico Neighborhood Association and a bicyclist, bicycle rider at large. I am going to try to keep it brief and some of you may have already touched upon this, but I'd like to call your attention to the Major Streets and Routes Plan page 8, policy 2 - *Design and Development Standards for Major Streets and Routes*, states that effects on neighborhoods shall be considered and that projects shall be sensitive and compatible with a specific neighborhoods and historic districts they pass through and serve. I will leave you all to decide whether that has been done here.

Also, page 20, more important, policy 5, regarding *Scenic and Gateway Routes*, medians shall be provided on routes more than four lanes except where they pass through or are adjacent to historic areas and the roadway width will intrude on character of historic structures. Why is this important? Broadway is a gateway street, it says so in the Major Streets and Routes Plan. It is also confirmed by staff to Mayor and Council, God and everyone on Tuesday night.

The Rincon Heights National Register Historic District is in effect, two years old now; Congratulations! And, it extends down to the Broadway center line. When the eight-lane, one hundred and fifty foot destructo-rama plan was conceived about thirty years ago by the City, Rincon Heights District was not in effect, while the City then sold the plans for Broadway to the RTA about ten years ago from their thirteen pieces of half a cent sales tax; the Rincon Heights District was still not in effect. But, it is in effect now and it extends to the centerline; it needs to be protected and respected because the Major Streets and Routes Plan says so.

The city therefore, would be in violation of its own laws, if as lead agency it built, or caused to be built a medianized roadway through a historic area and we may safely assume that a federally recognized historic district qualifies as a historic area for this purpose. So now what, since 2006, conditions on the ground have changed dramatically and immutably we now have a quarter of the project area, a protected historic resource; that was not the case when the RTA was passed in 2006, but it is the reality now.

The design presented in February does not contemplate this reality and must be rejected; and a new design created, that does reflect the new normal, in which we find ourselves. Also, I am not a lawyer, but I am fairly literate on good days, so I have looked at what revised stats say, to see what it has to say about regional transportation authorities and revised statutes 485309, Section B, says that there may not be a substantial limit to any element of the plan without submitting it to voters for a reauthorization; however, prior approval by the electorate is not required if a political subdivision causes changes within its jurisdiction to the plan and decides to pay for the difference.

So if the City decided, we don't want a huge destructive plan, we want a narrow, more reasonable plan and it will save money, I'm sure the City would be happy to incur that negative cost savings. Thank you.

Michael Ames

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My name is Michael Ames and I have lived in Tucson, mostly since 1948. I doubt that I am the only one here who is infuriated by the continual destruction of our city with unneeded, unwanted boondoggles, like the Broadway Widening. They must make a claim to the RTA, to the Mayor and Council that those entities that will profit from this madness that this project will not go through. Thank you.

Camille Kershner

Camille Kershner again, yes, really quick, I wanted to wonder about considerations of the current post-streetcar width and lane counts on Broadway and Congress for which that was put in widening necessary, I believe it is three lanes. Also, what considerations about the impacts of parking and access at Country Club, just east of Broadway, where again, I will remind you there is plenty of parking available at High Corbett and El Con and talking about access to the Starbucks drive-through at Campbell and Broadway, that is my transfer to work going northbound on the fifteen and I'd have to go through that drive in that is backed up into Broadway because there is cars trying to turn in at 7 a.m. every morning and my transfer is too close. I can't use that transfer because I have to run through the drive-through, run across the street on a red light usually because the bus is coming. So I prefer to transfer to the seventeen at Country Club which is a near side transfer. Most of the people getting off do go onto Broadway to catch the eight westbound to downtown. So nearside Sun Tran might not say they like it, but the riders do.

Katya Peterson

Hi, I'm Katya Peterson and I grew up on Broadway. First, I'd like to thank the Citizen's Task Force for your amazing dedication the last two and a half years, thank you. And now, respectfully I would submit that as controversial as the Broadway Project is, Tucson needs and deserves a well-developed alternative plan. In fact, a well-developed alternative is a basic public administrative standard for decision making. Why should Tucson be any different from cities all over the country?

This stage of creating an alternative was skipped over in the process here, because the public and the CTF were told that it was not an option because of the ADA sidewalk, because the project could not be changed or no monies available, because of so many other reasons. If we think back could we have not had an alternative in the 1960's to the plan that tore down The Barrio? We all deserve a well-crafted alternative. Let's not destabilize neighborhoods, tear down forty historic buildings and spend money, we know, we do not have.

We have a chance to be a leader to create something so vibrant and economically rewarding as well as unique. A lot has changed in the thirty years. Don't we deserve to see an alternative? Why should Tucson settle for any less? I wonder how many of you in the audience think we should have an alternative to this plan.

Earl Sher

Good evening everybody and thank you for attending. There's lots of things I'd like to discuss, I've spent hours at request of a number of small businesses specifically Sid Hirsh has been very outspoken about this and rather than try to break the timeline, I'll be brief and first we have to ask one question: Is Democracy failing midtown?

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With four public meetings dominated by unfavorable comments in widening Broadway, council has turned to deaf ear. It seems some old legislation and special interests have dominated their fancy. Steve K, Ward 6, however, does feel the project is unnecessary, it destroys the tax base and takes away from the sense of place. That's one voice for Democracy. Equally important, current traffic numbers do not live up to the numbers used to justify widening Broadway. Perhaps council does not understand who they represent?

In a recent meeting a business owner was told to plan on buying or leasing parking and many questions went unanswered. That's what happened at a very recent meeting; and that was the house of shame. The private taxpayer will be caught with a healthy tab. Conservative studies show there will be at least a 25 million dollar overrun. Businesses will suffer, Cook & Company Sign Makers, Zemans Ethiopia, Hirsh, Pet Designs and many, many more. Neighborhoods lose as does lifestyle and historic status. Time for city council folks to take a second look and not be so quick about whitewashing meetings and citizenry.

Molly McKasson

Thank you very much, and thank you all so much, my name is Molly McKesson. I also grew up a block and a half, north of Broadway and I live about eight blocks north of Broadway now; but a lot has changed in that time and I'm not really here to talk about nostalgia.

I served eight years on the city council and during those eight years, I represented this area, as well as Speedway. I was equally involved in the Speedway widening. Anyone in this room who has forgotten about the Speedway widening, raise your hand if you remember the Speedway widening? Alright. It wiped out businesses and the only reason that we'd succeeded in the end was that we had a Mayor and Council that had some money and we put up money and we did a small business project with loans and there was attention constantly to it. We had a whole section of transportation devoted to it. The city of Tucson does not have those resources at all anymore and there will be no money for that. It really bothers me, because people like Rocco and other business owners who have been on Broadway who have hung in there on a street that's been redlined for twenty years. Bless you all for doing that! You created community nodes, you created vitality and life and you made it possible for a lot of us to stay in the inner-city and do fine, and be able to walk to have a meal, to be able to go out and go places to do our shopping. Do we want to lose that at a time in the history of our community? And in the history of the country and the world, when climate change is a big issue, when we are supposed to be going the other direction. When we are supposed to be thinking, envisioning, we are supposed to be using our minds to expand how we are going to get used to sustaining culture, sustain community, sustain commerce, and sustain a climate that is decent.

I urge you all; and I can see that this is a wonderful group of people. What is confusing to me is, what has driven this project? I fear that it is something like a Regional Transportation Authority. I don't know that, I have been on the outskirts of this, but why we don't have a visionary alternative? Why it hasn't been flushed out, is beyond my comprehension frankly, as someone who was an elected official. I hear from all of you wonderings, like, why not?

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It's not too late you all, it is right on time. Flush out this plan for the narrower version, the version that is wide for the community and narrow in terms of more cars being driven into downtown. I just urge you. And also I am with you. And there will be a lot of people supporting this in this community, to think about the City of Tucson's past, and not its future, and not about accommodating more cars and making a drive-through out of the central core of Tucson. Thank you so much for your time.

Richard Mayers (comment card filled out but he didn't speak)

8. Next Steps/Roundtable

The CTF approved meeting again on March 26, 2015, to continue discussion regarding moving forward an alignment and design recommendations to a public open house in April, and subsequently to a May Mayor and Council meeting for adoption. No comments were made during the CTF roundtable.

9. Adjourn

Nanci Beizer called meeting to a close at 9:05 p.m.

The presentations given at this meeting can be reviewed by visiting the Broadway Boulevard Project web page at <http://www.tucsonaz.gov/broadway>.

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Recommended changes to Staff preferred alignment of Feb 20, 2015
Margot W. Garcia

Euclid to Campbell

1. No median
2. Narrow sidewalk to 5 feet
3. Narrow landscaping to 3 feet (no landscaping in front of Miles School)
4. This should save almost all historic and historic eligible buildings. '
5. Will need to work on access and parking issues.
6. Remove free right hand turn (going west) onto Euclid

Campbell to Country Club

1. Work on access and parking for Solot Plaza
2. Work on access and parking for Inglis Flowers complex
3. Work on access and parking for 2300 and 2400 block businesses
4. No landscaping in front of Broadway Village, and in front of 2919-2955 (Murphey building) and GLHN Building on north side
5. Make a landscaped node in front of Safeway in right of way already COT owned between bus pullout and Safeway parking lot.
6. Remove free right hand turns (east and west) onto Campbell

Euclid x walk set back hazard



TUCSON
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
FOUNDATION

P.O. BOX 40008
TUCSON, AZ 85717

PRESERVETUCSON.ORG

March 18, 2015

Re: Broadway Boulevard Alignment

The Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation fundamentally opposes aspects of the Broadway alignment that results in the demolition of historic resources. Cutting edge urban research and best urban policy development support this position. In 2014 The National Trust for Historic Preservation – Preservation Green Lab in association with Kresge Foundation, Summit Foundation and Prince Charitable Trusts published comprehensive findings titled “Older, Smaller, Better: Measuring how the character of building and blocks influence urban vitality.” The report finds:

All across America, blocks of older, smaller buildings are quietly contributing to robust local economies and distinctive livable communities. Buildings of diverse vintage and small scale provide flexible, affordable space for entrepreneurs launching new businesses and serve as attractive settings for new restaurants and locally owned shops. They offer diverse housing choices that attract younger residents and create human-scaled places for walking, shopping, and social interaction. These modest, often-overlooked buildings are irreplaceable assets for America’s new urban age.

This study demonstrates the unique and valuable role that older, smaller buildings play in the development of sustainable cities. Based upon statistical analysis of the built fabric of three major American cities, this research finds that established neighborhoods with a mix of older, smaller buildings perform better than districts with larger, newer structures when tested against a range of economic, social, and environmental outcome measures.

The preservation Green Lab is now working in Tucson and the preliminary findings are both consistent with their 2014 report and provide insight into best practices for this type of project. To become a relevant 21st Century city we must align with these findings.

Additionally, the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation fully endorse the policy position and finding of the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission:

1. Eliminate the median, where needed, especially in Historic Districts, in accordance with City of Tucson Major Streets and Routes Plan.

2. Shift the alignment north or south, where needed, to avoid historic buildings.
3. Narrow the width of certain landscaped sections, where needed.
4. Narrow the width of certain sidewalks, where needed, to ADA minimums.
5. Narrow the lane width, where needed.
6. Develop a zoning overlay to legally allow and encourage a variety of creative solutions to parking problems created by road widening, including, where applicable: shared / cooperative parking, shared access to parking, adapting parking to side or rear, accessing parking from side streets or alleys, etc., sensitive to the concerns of the adjacent neighborhoods.

We full agree that “flexible and creative implementation of all six recommendations will reduce the total number of demolitions from 24 to 2. The remaining two properties (1730 and 1736 E. Broadway) are historic residences on deep lots.” In this case, instead of changing the alignment, move the homes to the back of the property.

This project is a watershed moment for Tucson – this outcome will set the precedent for these types of projects for the future. Either we follow the mistakes of the past or make informed thoughtful decisions that have the potential to create a dynamic and urban center that will serve this community for generations.

Through this public process, the citizens of this region have made it clear that historic preservation is a top priority. Please demand a nuanced approach.



Demion Clinco
Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation
PO Box 40008
Tucson, Arizona 85717
demion.clinco@preservetucson.org
www.preservetucson.org

Study Background

Beginning in fall 2009, GRTC Transit System and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) initiated a study of the Broad Street Corridor to consider rapid transit improvements from Willow Lawn to Rocketts Landing. Broad Street is central to the economic activity and the metropolitan area, linking the residential areas east and west of the corridor with the government offices and commercial activities downtown. The study team evaluated different approaches to introducing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to Broad Street and developed a Build Alternative that was presented to the public in October 2010 and again in August 2013. Since that time, the study team has addressed comments to reach consensus on a Recommended Alternative to move forward in the transit planning process with the goal of securing federal funding for the project and constructing it within the next several years.

What is BRT?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high quality, high capacity rapid transit system that offers many of the advantages of rail transit but at a lower and more affordable cost. Instead of trains and tracks, BRT invests in improvements to vehicles, stations, operations, roadways, rights-of-way, intersections and traffic signals to

speed up bus transit service. BRT is not a uniform, turn-key transit technology, but represents a spectrum of service enhancements. BRT systems are constructed by choosing and integrating among various BRT elements, such as dedicated lanes, signal priority for buses, branded vehicles and enhanced station amenities. The integration of elements improves system performance and the experience for customers, with the overall goal of making the BRT line accessible, attractive, reliable and, above all, rapid.

What We've Heard

More than 350 citizens have attended three rounds of public meetings and the study team has received many comments. Summaries of the prior public meetings can be found at <http://study.ridegrtc.com/>. Most comments reflect support for rapid transit and transit-oriented development in the corridor. Comments also address concerns about impacts to traffic and businesses along the corridor and questions about impacts to current bus operations. The study team has continued meeting with groups representing key interests and institutions along the corridor to provide further opportunity for input in this process. Concerns and questions raised through these meetings have shaped the analysis and screening of alternatives, resulting in the Recommended Alternative.

Locating local bus stops near BRT stops will make transfers faster and convenient.

Off-board ticketing

Signal priority will reduce delays at intersections.

Sidewalk and crosswalk improvements

Dedicated lanes allow BRT to bypass local traffic.

Low floor buses reduce boarding times and ease boarding for wheelchairs and strollers.

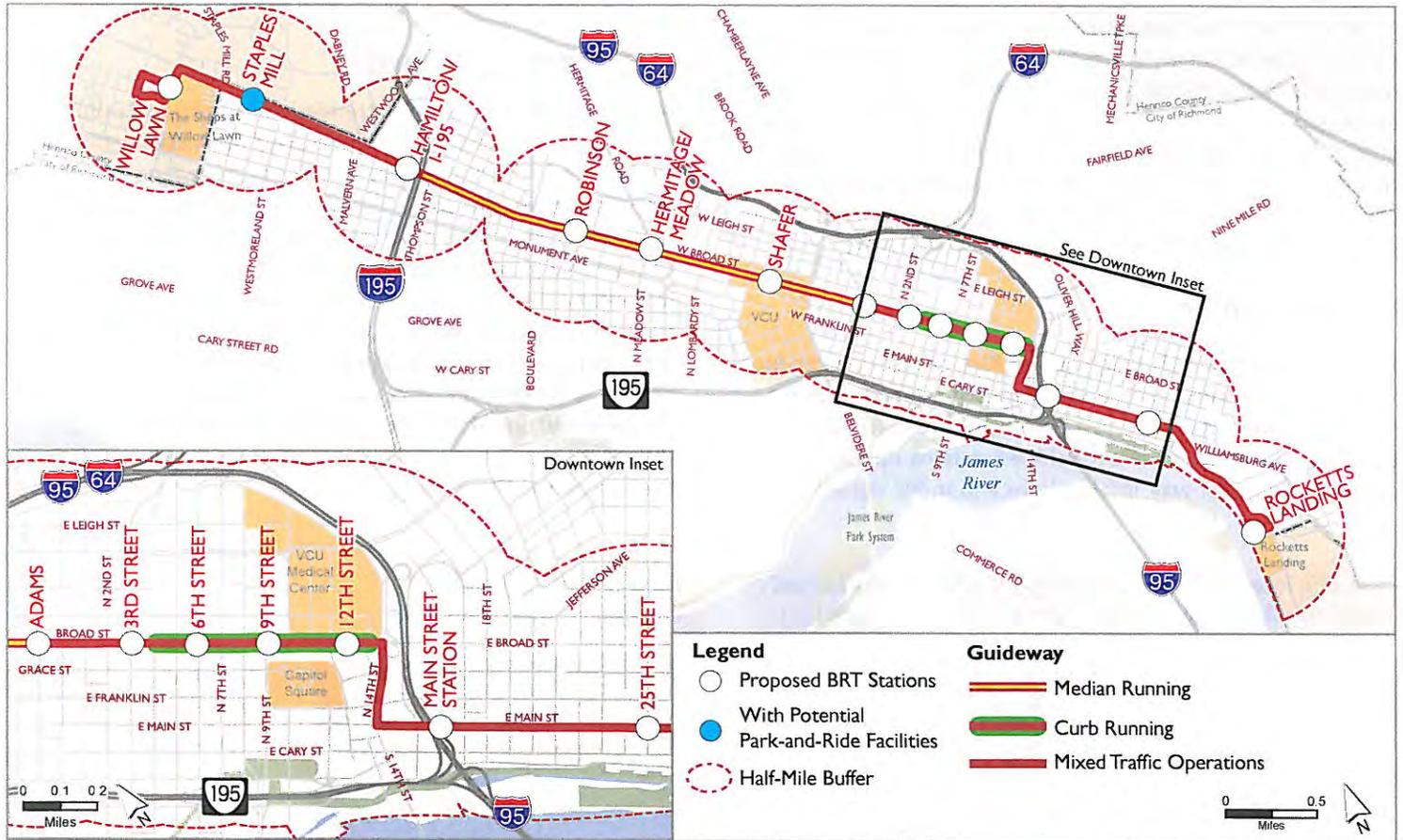
A combination of dedicated lanes, convenient stations and branded vehicles will save time and make the BRT service attractive to new riders. The above image is a conceptual rendering of the Adams Street station – final design may vary.

Where We Are Today: Recommending an Alternative

The purpose of today's meeting is to present the Recommended Alternative and gather feedback. The Recommended Alternative has been endorsed by the study Policy and Technical Advisory Committees made up of representatives from the City, County and DRPT, as well as by various community and regional stakeholders. The Recommended Alternative will be considered by the GRTC Board of Directors at its June 17 meeting. If approved to proceed, GRTC will continue with preliminary engineering for the Recommended Alternative with the intention of completing

design, construction and opening the service by 2018. At this time, the study team wants to hear from citizens about their level of support for the Recommended Alternative and answer any questions citizens may have about design or operation of the BRT. Although specific design details of the BRT will be determined during the next phase of the project, the selection of the Recommended Alternative will commit GRTC to developing BRT service along the route and with stations in the general locations identified in the map below.

Recommended Alternative



Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit Key Features

Route length: 7.6 Miles	Proposed Fare: Same as local bus fare (Currently \$1.50)
Vehicles: Dedicated BRT vehicles	Travel Speeds: 65% Increase in Bus Speed
Dedicated Bus Lanes: Thompson to Adams (Median Lanes) 4th to 14th (Curb Lanes Widened)	Estimated Ridership*: Over 3,000 daily boardings About 500 new daily riders
Number of Stations: 14 stations (4 center, 4 consolidated, 6 curbside)	Estimated Cost*: \$53.8 Million Capital \$2.7 Million Annual Operating \$400,000 Net Annual Operating
Frequency: 10 Minutes (Peak) / 15 Minutes (Off-Peak)	
Hours of Operation: Weekdays: 5:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. Weekends 6 a.m – 11:30 p.m.	

*Updated in 2014 analysis.

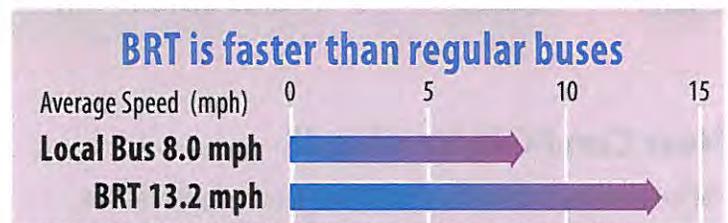
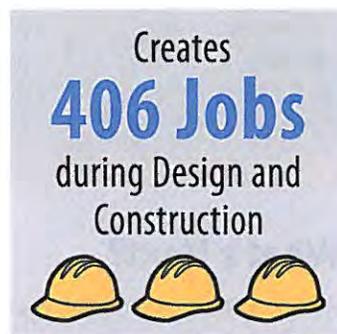
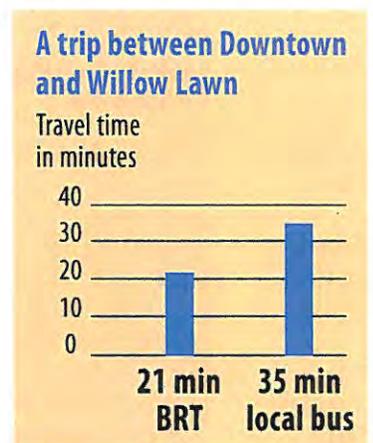
Updates to the Recommended Alternative

In October 2010, the study team unveiled the original Build Alternative. The original Build Alternative followed the same route, same stations and had the same dedicated lane as the current Recommended Alternative. The original Build Alternative, however, included service frequencies of 5 minutes in the peak period and 10 minutes in the off-peak period. Since 2010, a number of changes in federal regulations and feedback from stakeholders led the study team to reevaluate the original Build Alternative to better balance ridership, the benefits to users and the corridor and the costs. The result of the reevaluation of ridership, benefits and costs has led to the current Recommended Alternative.

Environmental Impacts

The study team recently completed coordination with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to assess impacts to environmental resources in the corridor. The FTA has determined that the Recommended Alternative meets the requirements for a Categorical Exclusion because the project is not expected to have a significant negative impact on the environment. The project team will continue to coordinate efforts with FTA, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and others as planning and design progresses to meet obligations set forth during the environmental review process.

Benefits of Bus Rapid Transit



Schedule

Preliminary Engineering: July 2014 to June 2015

- Develop initial design plans
- System, station and bus branding
- Finalize station locations & guideway alignments
- Design station features
- Detailed cost estimates
- Solidify Local Funding Commitments
- Solidify local funding commitments

Final Design: June 2015 to February 2017

- Final design of all individual station elements
- Approval of designs elements by Urban Design Committee and Planning Commission
- Bus procurement begins

Construction: July 2016 to June 2018

- Construction of station shelters and amenities
- Construction of median lanes between Thompson Street and Adams Street
- Reconstruction of curb bus lane from 4th to 14th Street
- Delivery of BRT buses

BRT Opening August 2018

Funding

The total cost for design and construction of the Recommended Alternative is \$53.8 million. DRPT and the City of Richmond have already funded the preliminary engineering phase, which will cost \$4 million. Therefore, \$49.8 million will be needed to complete design and construction of the BRT. The study team has developed the following funding plan to construct and operate the BRT.

DRPT, the City and County have all expressed strong support for funding their shares of design, construction and operation of the BRT. The final piece of funding necessary is the 50% of federal funding for Final Design & Construction. On April 27, 2014, GRTC, with the support of the Governor, DRPT, City, County and many

others, submitted an application for funding through the USDOT TIGER Discretionary Grant Program for \$24.9 Million. The study team expects to learn of the final decision by USDOT in September of 2014. If GRTC does not receive the requested TIGER Grant, the study team will pursue funding through the FTA Small Starts program. Under the rules of the Small Starts program, an application for funding would be submitted once Preliminary Engineering is complete, which is expected in June of 2015. The Recommended Alternative has been developed to meet the criteria of the FTA Small Starts program and it is well positioned to successfully compete for these funds.

Project Phase	Preliminary Engineering: July 2014 to June 2015		Final Design and Construction: June 2015 to June 2018	Operating Cost
	Locally Preferred Alternative	TIGER or FTA Grant	Planned Opening	
Estimated Cost	\$4 Million Total Cost		Capital \$49.8 Million Total Cost	Net Operating \$400,000 per year
Expected Funding Source	Federal Flexible STP Funds: \$3.2 Million (80%)* DRPT Grant: \$640,000 (16%)* Local Match: \$160,000 (4%)*		TIGER or FTA Grant: \$24.9 Million (50%) DRPT Match: \$16.9 Million (34%) Local Match: \$8.0 Million (16%)	Farebox: \$80,000 (20%) DRPT: \$96,000 (24%) Local: \$225,000 (56%)
Proposed State and Local Funding	DRPT Grant: \$640,000* City of Richmond: \$160,000* *Funded		DRPT Match: \$16.9 Million City Match: \$7.6 Million County Match: \$0.4 Million	DRPT Assistance: \$96,000 City Annual Funding: \$216,000 County Annual Funding: \$9,000

How Can I Get Involved?

We invite your input in this project development process and encourage you to comment on any of the elements noted above. Comments can be submitted in one of three ways:

- Provide written comments at a citizen information meeting.
- Provide written comments at any time by using the electronic comment form <http://study.ridegrtc.com>
- Mail written comments to Stephen McNally, Director of Engineering/Construction, GRTC Transit System
301 East Belt Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23224

What's Next?

Following the public meetings in May 2014, the study team will review and address all comments received and the GRTC Board of Directors will consider the Recommended Alternative with the goal of selecting a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Once the LPA is selected, preliminary engineering will begin. Continued public outreach and coordination with the City and County on local funding sources will occur during Preliminary Engineering, Design and Construction.

Notes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All across America, blocks of older, smaller buildings are quietly contributing to robust local economies and distinctive livable communities. Buildings of diverse vintage and small scale provide flexible, affordable space for entrepreneurs launching new businesses and serve as attractive settings for new restaurants and locally owned shops. They offer diverse housing choices that attract younger residents and create human-scaled places for walking, shopping, and social interaction. These modest, often-overlooked buildings are irreplaceable assets for America's new urban age.

This study demonstrates the unique and valuable role that older, smaller buildings play in the development of sustainable cities. Based upon statistical analysis of the built fabric of three major American cities, this research finds that established neighborhoods with a mix of older, smaller buildings perform better than districts with larger, newer structures when tested against a range of economic, social, and environmental outcome measures.

For generations, planners, preservationists, and community leaders have debated and discussed the importance of retaining older, smaller buildings. Jane Jacobs' 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, launched the conversation. Jacobs asserted that urban renewal, which replaced richly textured streets of small, mixed-age buildings with blocks of much larger new structures, drained life from neighborhoods and deadened urban centers. She argued that older buildings provide critical space for entrepreneurial ventures and a healthy mix of local businesses. Today, after decades of advocacy by preservationists and community groups, Jacobs' ideas are widely accepted. Her insights about the contributions of older buildings inform community plans across the country.

The tools for implementing these ideas are not fully developed in many cities, however. Outdated zoning regulations, overly prescriptive building and energy codes, misdirected development incentives, and limited financing tools continue to make it difficult to reuse older structures and to retain the human scale of older blocks and neighborhoods. In addition, and perhaps more significantly, some leading urban thinkers have recently raised fundamental questions about the validity of Jacobs' ideas for today's world. Where do older, smaller buildings fit within cities



Analysis of data from three major American cities shows that areas with a mix of older, smaller buildings perform better than districts with larger, newer structures when tested against a range of economic, social, and environmental outcome measures.

that are seeking to maximize transit investments, increase density, and compete in the global economy? Are the lessons of Jacobs' 1961 book still valid in the 21st century? What have we learned from more than 50 years of experience? What does the growing mountain of data reveal about the contributions of older buildings to successful urban places?

In an effort to answer these questions, the National Trust's Preservation Green Lab mined newly available public and private sources to examine the role that older, smaller buildings play in the context of overall urban development. This research focused on three cities with strong real estate markets and extensive older fabric: San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. Looking not just at historically designated or older buildings, but *all* existing structures across these three urban landscapes, the research team empirically documented the age, diversity of age, and size of buildings and statistically assessed the relationships between these characteristics and 40 economic, social, cultural, and environmental performance metrics. Each city was divided into a grid of 200-meter-by-200-meter squares (about one to two square city blocks). Squares composed of commercial and mixed-use areas of the city were analyzed using statistical models, generating "apples to apples" comparisons of results across diverse urban landscapes.



YOUTHFUL CROWD AT A STREET FESTIVAL ON WASHINGTON, D.C.'S HISTORIC H STREET CORRIDOR. Photo: Flickr - Ted Eytan



The research team empirically documented the age, diversity of age, and size of buildings and statistically assessed the relationships between these characteristics and 40 economic, social, cultural, and environmental performance metrics.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs observed that “Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them.”¹ This Preservation Green Lab report provides the most complete empirical validation to date of Jacobs’ long-respected, but largely untested hypothesis: That neighborhoods containing a mix of older, smaller buildings of diverse age support greater levels of positive economic and social activity than areas dominated by newer, larger buildings. These findings support the idea that retaining blocks of older, smaller, mixed-vintage buildings can help cities achieve sustainable development goals and foster great neighborhoods.

Below are insights from this research that demonstrate how the character of buildings and blocks influences urban vitality in some of the nation’s strongest urban real estate markets:

Older, mixed-use neighborhoods are more walkable.

In Seattle and San Francisco, older neighborhoods with a mixture of small, mixed-age buildings have significantly higher Walk Score® rankings and Transit Score® ratings than neighborhoods with large, new buildings.²



BARRACKS ROW, WASHINGTON, D.C. Photo: Barracks Row Main Street



This Preservation Green Lab report provides the most complete empirical validation to date of Jacobs’ long-respected, but largely untested hypothesis: That neighborhoods containing a mix of older, smaller buildings of diverse age support greater levels of positive economic and social activity than areas dominated by newer, larger buildings.

PRINCIPLES FOR OTHER CITIES

This report provides new information about the role that blocks of older, smaller buildings can play in the future development of Seattle, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. The results from these three cities suggest some general planning and development principles that can be applied in other communities as well:

Realize the efficiencies of older buildings and blocks.

This research shows that older, smaller buildings and blocks “punch above their weight class” when considering a full spectrum of outcomes on a per-square-foot basis—from the number of jobs and businesses to the vitality of nightlife and presence of young residents. Older buildings employ time-tested, practical solutions to achieve these efficiencies: mixed daytime and nighttime uses; common entrances and shared services; creative use of small spaces and storage areas; and very little space dedicated for cars. With the new “sharing economy” emerging, older buildings also offer lessons in how to get more round-the-clock performance from our bricks and mortar investments. Codes and regulations can limit these uses, however, and may need to be revised to encourage the efficiencies that older, smaller buildings offer.

Fit new and old together at a human scale.

Findings from the three study cities show that mixing buildings from different vintages—including modern buildings—supports social and cultural activity in commercial and mixed-use zones. Many of the most thriving blocks in the study cities scored high on the diversity of building-age measure. Scale also played an important role. Grid squares with smaller lots and more human-scaled buildings generally scored higher on the performance measures than squares characterized by larger lots and structures. These results support the concept of adding new infill projects of compatible size alongside older buildings.

Support neighborhood evolution, not revolution.

While this research indicates that successful commercial and mixed-use districts benefit from new construction, these changes should be gradual. The rate of change is important. The higher performance of areas containing small-scale buildings of mixed vintage suggests that successful districts evolve over time, adding and subtracting buildings incrementally, rather than comprehensively and all at once.

Steward the streetcar legacy.

Many of the highest performing grid squares in our study cities are commercial areas with buildings that date to the streetcar era. Nearly every American city (and plenty of small towns) once boasted a network of streetcar lines. From the late 1900s until World War II, these lines spurred the construction of neighborhood service centers. Although most streetcar lines are long buried, the commercial districts they created can still be found in urban neighborhoods across the country. Examples of streetcar-era districts from the study cities include Seattle's Pike/Pine Corridor and Washington, D.C.'s H Street NE, which both scored well (and will soon have streetcars again). As cities seek to re-establish transit corridors and foster mixed-use development, the armature of streetcar-era commercial districts provides a head start.

Make room for the new and local economy.

Richard Florida and other scholars have noted that technology start-ups and other creative companies are moving into diverse neighborhoods full of older buildings, such as New York's Silicon Alley, where even former warehouses are small relative to Manhattan buildings overall.³ The *Older, Smaller, Better* research confirms this connection, finding a correlation between a higher concentration of creative jobs and older, smaller-scaled buildings and blocks. These areas also support higher levels of small businesses and non-chain business, helping to keep dollars in the local economy, and providing more resilience against future economic storms.

Make it easier to reuse small buildings.

Vacant and underused buildings are an untapped reservoir of already built density. The *Older, Smaller, Better* research illustrates the value of keeping older, smaller, diverse-age buildings viable and in full use. In some cities, however, older commercial buildings languish, with empty upper floors or vacant storefronts. Cities can help unlock the potential of these spaces by removing barriers, such as outdated zoning codes and parking requirements, and streamlining permitting and approval processes. Targeted incentives and financing programs are also needed to assist small-scale projects.

This study is the first phase of a broader Preservation Green Lab research agenda focused on the role of older buildings in sustainable development. With the help of interested funders, local governments, and partner organizations, our research scope is expanding into additional cities with different economic, social, and physical contexts, including weak real estate markets and high building vacancy rates. The Green Lab's goals are to identify opportunities and to share solutions



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