Lessons Learned
From the Grant Road Improvement Project (GRIP) Task Force

As a resource for the Broadway Boulevard Citizen’s Task Force, the Planning Team got in touch with members of the GRIP Task Force that were involved from the start of that project to ask them to provide advice on key lessons that they learned from participation in the GRIP process. Several members responded; the following summarizes their comments.

What Helped the Process Work?

As you reflect on your experience as a GRIP Task Force member, what about the way you worked together helped you to accomplish your mission? What would you coach the BBCTF to adopt?

Take Time to Become Informed - Lay a Strong Foundation

- Learn together, take time to become informed. (Explored Grant Road with project team and Transportation Director, Jim Glock. Took public transit, walked, bicycled).
- Take your role seriously. Do your homework; come to meetings prepared, having read any materials that were handed out or emailed.
- Make time for self-study to understand issues unique to the roadway (diverse character, alternate modes, traffic flow, storm water drainage, pedestrian and business impact...).
- Don't be afraid to ask the most elementary question

Create and Follow a Focused, Respectful, Collaborative Meeting Process

- Set firm and reasonable ground rules that all can agree on – before getting to the nitty gritty.
- Keep to agendas; let the facilitator do her job. Keep the process on track and within scope of the CTF.
- Work well together, take each other seriously, value and respect each others’ viewpoints. Stay open to other ideas.
- Make decisions through informed discussion versus emotion. (Staff presented five iterations for proposed alignment before consensus decision could be reached).
- Define Guiding Principles together. Helped us understand each others’ values, leading to mutual respect and informed decision-making.
- Have a well defined set of objectives, yet allow creativity and adjustment.
- Ensure every voice is heard – CTF members and the public.
- Keep the discussions open and transparent. This includes the preferences of the Project Team and political leaders, in addition to each other.

This project is funded by the City of Tucson, Pima County and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), and is part of the voter-approved, $2.1 billion RTA plan that will be implemented through 2026. Details about the plan are available at www.RTAmobility.com.
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What Helped the Process Work?

Ensure Diverse Stakeholder Representation, Education, Engagement

- CTF members represented diverse stakeholder interests; know who you represent and make their interests apparent.
- Maintain Vision: this project is to be a community asset; you play an important role. Consider needs of a diverse set of users and how to make it work best for all (lane width, design speed, tradeoffs for developing a roadway).
- Engage and educate the public early on in the planning process (open houses, workshops, call to audience). Listen to community comments, capture and note their views in TF discussions.

What Would You Do Differently?

How would you improve the meeting process (within the constraints of the open meeting laws)?

- Don’t rush it – allow time for decisions to bubble up.
- Ensure constructive public dialogue, understanding of issues (such as density) to build trust.
- Understand that public engagement may set up unrealistic expectations. Ask the public to dream, they do, and then expect you to enact that dream, which is not always realistic. Consistently educate and inform the public, including realities and limits of the possibilities.
- Limit meeting times to no more than two hours (holding longer meetings are asking of lot of members who work all day).
- Engage media in more prominent and productive role.
- Have political leaders attend more meetings for timely input, promote greater awareness of CTF issues and progress.