

1. INTRODUCTION

This Design Concept Report is for the Broadway Boulevard Improvement Project from Euclid Avenue to Country Club Road. The Design Concept Report (DCR) describes the vision for the future multimodal transportation design and function for the street; and how this supports the community’s broader vision for the future character of the combined street and development along it as an important place within both the local community and the broader region. The DCR provides an overview of the need and purpose of the project; the process that led from the setting of goals and performance measures to a Baseline Alignment Concept that was approved by City of Tucson’s Mayor and Council on June 9, 2015; and then describes the design development of that concept, design criteria, and implementation steps that will lead to the construction of the street improvements anticipated to start in late 2017-2018. The project is managed by the City of Tucson, and will widen the existing roadway from Euclid to Country Club to a 6-lane street, with bike lanes, sidewalks, and landscape.

1.1 Project Need

The Broadway Boulevard Improvement Project is one of 35 improvement projects included in the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Plan which was approved by Pima County voters through a special election in May 2006. The original project scope in the RTA Plan called for widening Broadway to a “6-lane arterial plus 2 dedicated bus lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks.” The Regional Transportation Authority provided policy guidance to the planning process, citing the 2005 RTA Board policy that any project modifications ‘not diminish the functionality of the project as originally envisioned’ by the technical and citizens committee. The project also includes funding from Pima County and the City of Tucson, see Section 1.4.

Improvements to Broadway Boulevard are needed to create better mobility and access for all users: people driving, taking transit, riding a bike, or walking regardless of their ability. Modernization of signal and lighting systems and use of best practices in complete streets design are being employed to address safety concerns as well as mobility and access. A context-sensitive design approach has also been employed to achieve a street design that better complements the character of development along the corridor – both that which exists today, as well as the community’s vision for the future.

1.2 Project Purpose

The project’s planning, design, and public involvement approach were undertaken over the past 3-1/2 years in order to serve the project’s particular community context. There has been divergent public opinion about this RTA project, given the extent of the potential widening to 8-lanes (and the resulting costs); number of potential impacts to adjacent buildings, properties, residences, and businesses; and what those impacts could mean to the future of the commercial districts along the street and the neighborhoods surrounding it.

Therefore, the purpose of the project was to identify a set of improvements that would meet the needs and desires of the three funding agencies and the public at a consensus level—satisfying key transportation and safety thresholds for the funding agencies and resulting in transportation, environmental, social and economic impacts and benefits that everyone could, at a minimum, live with and to a greater degree be satisfied with.

On December 11, 2014 the RTA Board approved a revision to the definition of the project to “6 travel lanes plus bus pullouts, where appropriate to meet project functionality”.¹

1.3 Study Area and Project Limits

The study area for the project encompasses the area a quarter mile off Broadway Boulevard, to the north and south, and it extends from Euclid Avenue to Country Club Road, from west to east, see both the image on the facing page and the map below. Where this roughly aligns with a street, the lot on the ‘far side’ of the street is also included in the study area. This portion of Broadway is near both Downtown and the University of Arizona and sits amid some of Tucson’s most active and historic neighborhoods, as well as industrial zones. In addition, Broadway Boulevard is unique amongst Tucson’s many major streets in that it connects five major activity centers, see Figure 1.1



Figure 1.1: Broadway Boulevard Project Study Area within the context of the larger area

¹ <http://www.rtamobility.com/documents/pdfs/RTABOARD/2014/RTABOARD-2014-12-11-Minutes.pdf>



1. Introduction

1.4 Funding Partners

The total amount of funds allocated for the Broadway Boulevard Improvement Project is \$71.3 million. Approximately \$42 million of project funding is provided by the Regional Transportation Authority, with another \$25 million originating from the 1997 Pima County Transportation Bond Improvement Plan, and \$3 million from the City of Tucson.

To ensure coordination during the planning and design phase, RTA and Pima County representatives participated on the project Technical Advisory Committee. Guidance and decisions were provided by elected officials and agency leaders at important key points, culminating in adoption of the Broadway Baseline Alignment Concept and Technical Design Parameters by the Tucson Mayor and City Council on June 9, 2015.

1.5 Getting from Project Initiation to the Recommended Design Concept

A deliberative planning, design, and public process was defined for the Broadway Project to move from the initiation of the public process with a Citizen Task Force Meeting and Public Listening Session in June 20, 2012 to the Mayor and Council’s approval of the Baseline Alignment Concept on June 9, 2015. Table 1.1 provides a graphic summary of the process and the chapters that describe the phases of the project in this Design Concept Report.

Table 1.1 Major Planning and Design Work Items and Schedule

DCR Chapter	Major Work Items	Time Period
1. Introduction		
2. Project Initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Citizens Task Force Public Meeting #1 (June 20, 2012) 	June 2012 to October 2012
3. Existing Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Existing Conditions Report Prepared Review Revision of Existing Conditions 	October 2012 to November 2012
4. Planning and Scoping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Vision Statement and Goals Develop Performance Measures Public Meetings #2 and #3 (February 28, 2013; September 26, 2013) Initial Alternative Street Sections and Evaluation Process Decision made by Mayor and Council to eliminate the 6+2 transit lane concept (May 6, 2014) 	October 2012 to May 2014
5. Preliminary Design Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Street Section/Alignment Configurations Design and Evaluation (4-Lane and 6-Lane concepts) Public Meeting #4 (June 12, 2014) Consolidated Alignment Variations developed and evaluated Citizens Task Force develops Performance Objectives and Design Considerations (August 2014) 6-Lane Including Transit Alignment developed (August 28, 2014) 	May 2014 to August 2014
6. Recommended Design Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Alignment Concept approved by Mayor and Council (October 23, 2014) Start Small Design Concept and Technical Design Parameters developed (March 2015) Public Meeting #5 (April 23, 2015) Mayor and Council Approval of Baseline Alignment Concept and Strategic Design Parameters (June 9, 2015) 	September 2014 to June 2015
<i>The following DCR Chapters and Work Items describe the technical design process to turn the Baseline Alignment Concept into a 30%-complete Plan by Spring 2016.</i>		
7. Design Development of Baseline Alignment Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of design refinements Definition of geometric, pavement, drainage, and other design criteria to guide final design of improvements 	July 2015 to December 2015
8. Design Criteria		
9. Project Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of what project costs will be estimated and when, and project delivery phasing considerations 	