

## Application of Criteria for Pima County Bond Project Proposals

### **Project Name: South 12th Ave Cultural & Culinary Corridor**

#### 1. Broad Demonstrated Support by Public:

This portion of South 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been the subject of several publicly supported planning initiatives by Pima County, the City of Tucson, and the University of Arizona's Drachman Institute. Similar investments to this project were planned under 1997 Pima County HURF bonds, but not completed. In 2012, a smaller version of the project was rated fourth in a competitive County-wide process for prioritizing federal Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding. Unfortunately TE funding was subsequently eliminated.

Pima County residents have indicated continued and passionate support for investment in pedestrian and bicycle facilities, cultural conservation, and projects that support economic development.

#### 2. Has Regional Public Benefit:

Businesses, governments, and community leaders across Pima County increasingly trade on the region's cultural and economic ties with Mexico as a source of tourism, visitor spending, and economic development. South 12th Avenue is the terminus of the region's two major Mexican bus lines, a popular alternate route to I-19 into downtown Tucson, and the heart of neighborhoods with generations of Mexican American heritage and a 90% Hispanic population. It is a gateway by which many Mexican visitors enter the region, a nationally recognized culinary destination, and has served as an incubator for successful businesses that now operate branches throughout the region. With targeted investment and continued business and public engagement, the corridor has the potential to become a culturally relevant public space and tourist destination comparable to that of Olvera Street in L.A. or the Mission District in San Francisco.

Investing in the condition and character of the South 12th Avenue Cultural and Culinary Corridor will promote tourism, support the development of local and regional businesses, improve safety and connectivity on a regionally significant transportation route, and complete the investments begun by Pima County in 1997.

#### 3. Partnerships:

Partners on the project include the South Side Business Coalition, Visit Tucson, Gray Line Tours, C.E. Rose Elementary School, Pueblo High School, St. John's Catholic Church & School, Tierra y Libertad Organization (barrio sustainability nonprofit), Watershed Management Group (identifying green infrastructure opportunities within the Airport Wash watershed), and local neighborhood associations (within City of Tucson Wards 1 and 5).

#### 4. Other Funding Sources or Matches:

The City of Tucson will fund roadway resurfacing (mill and overlay) of the project segment of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, including restriping the roadway to include bike lanes (\$1.8m). The City will also be using \$200,000 in federal Safe Routes to Schools funds for a HAWK pedestrian crossing in the project area.

The project area has been rated among the top three highest stress census tracts within the City's adopted CDBG Target Area, and as such is considered a priority. The City used approximately \$75,000 to place shelters over three heavily used bus stops in 2013; and anticipates that the corridor will be eligible for up to \$250,000 to continue improvements in 2014/2015. In the same period City staff will work with the Microbusiness Advancement Center to employ Microenterprise Technical Assistance Funds to assist businesses on the corridor. The City will also be investing \$30,000 in landscape improvements at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Ajo Road in 2014/2015.

The City of Tucson and Pima County are working together to compete for designation as a federal Promise Zone for the region, which if awarded could bring funding to build on these improvements. In addition, the City will continue to pursue funding opportunities such as the federal Transportation Alternatives Program, historic sign preservation monies, and tribal 12% gaming funds.

5. Education and Workforce Training: Not applicable

6. Advances Board Adopted Principles of Sustainability and Conservation:

This project will improve safety, accessibility, and comfort for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users in an area where these sustainable transportation modes are already heavily used. Adding tree canopy (using desert-adapted species) will improve air quality and reduce heat island effects. The project supports conservation of cultural resources (in the business district and its celebrated restaurants) and will contribute to Pima County's global reputation as a hub of sustainable cultural tourism.

7. Previously Authorized Large-scale Bond Projects or Programs that are Now Short of Funding:

Improvements to the project area (South 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. between Ajo and Drexel) were originally planned under the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Community Revitalization Project funded by 1997 HURF bonds (DOT-43 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Veterans Boulevard to Los Reales Road). Though the project is considered complete by Pima County, major improvements were only made to South 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue outside the project area.

8. Phasing of Large Projects: Not applicable

9. Impact on Operating and Maintenance Costs for Governments and Commitment to Fund These Ongoing Costs:

The City of Tucson will maintain the improvements at an estimated annual cost of \$40,000. The City has demonstrated its commitment and capability to maintain a high level of O&M in its care of the similar improvements completed by Pima County on 12th Ave. south of Drexel.

10. Project or Program is a Capital Improvement, Not a Repair or Maintenance Project:

The proposed bond project is a capital improvement, constructing new facilities rather than repairing existing ones.