



**Next Move Arizona  
Statewide Listening Tour**

**Southern Arizona Arts and Culture Network Listening Session  
Meeting Notes**

June 23, 2026

**Attendees**

ADOT and Consultant Team

- Kristin Darr, Consultant Team Facilitator
- Teresa Welborn, ADOT Strategic Advisor
- Shannon Scutari, Consultant Central Metropolitan Liaison
- Daksha Masurkar, Consultant Support/Transportation Planner
- Elaine Mariolle, ADOT MPD Active Transportation Planner

Agency and Public Participants

- Gia del Pino, Arts Foundation Communications Manager
- Meg Hagyard, The Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures Executive Director
- Dana Roes, Pima Community College Dean of Arts
- Ron Spark, Parks & Connectivity Bond Oversight Commission Chair
- Hirotsune Tashima, Pima College Head of Ceramics/Instructor of Art
- Matt Rolland, Art State Arizona Deputy Director
- Corky Poster, Poster Mirto McDonald Architect/Planner
- Joseph O'Connell, Creative Machines Founder/Artistic Director
- Eva Carrillo Dong, Arizona Jobs with Justice Senior Advisor
- Barbara Grygutis, Artist
- Lydia Aranda, MSBASA Board Chair
- Elva De La Torre, KXCI Executive Director
- Lara Hamwey, City of Tucson Parks & Recreation Director
- Tiera Rainey, Arts Foundation Grants & Programs Coordinator
- Sadie Shaw, Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona Public Art & Community Design Administrator
- David Gaxiola, Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona Grants & Programs Project Manager
- Wylwyn Reyes, Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona, Director of Public Art
- Ariel Fry, Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona Public Art Project Manager



- Adriana Gallego, Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona CEO
- Alexandra Jimenez, Artist
- Eric Lind, Tucson Symphony Orchestra VP of Philanthropy
- Yvonne Montoya, Safos Dance Theatre Artistic Executive Director
- Deborah Carr, Reid Park Zoo Director of Marketing and Communications
- Lydia Aranda, Minority & Small Business Alliance of Southern Arizona Chair
- Carolyn Gorst, Compass Affordable Housing Director of Development and Communications

## Welcome

- Kristin opened the meeting with a welcome and a round of introductions.

## Discussion

- Participants discussed transportation, mobility, arts, and community development priorities throughout Southern Arizona, emphasizing the need to improve transportation safety while preserving environmental and cultural resources.
- Public transportation was identified as a significant challenge, with many participants noting that transportation gaps limit access to employment, food, healthcare, recreation, and other essential services.
- Attendees highlighted the regional nature of travel patterns in Southern Arizona and expressed support for expanded transit options, including passenger rail service between Tucson and Phoenix, improved regional connections, and additional mobility options for older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- Concerns were also raised regarding transportation affordability and the disproportionate burden transportation costs place on many communities.
- Participants emphasized the importance of incorporating equity, accessibility, and environmental stewardship into transportation planning and project development.
- Discussion included the need for additional wildlife crossings, climate-conscious infrastructure design, equitable access to shade, and stronger consideration of ecological connectivity and natural resource protection.
- Concerns were raised regarding the potential impacts of the proposed Interstate 11 corridor on Indigenous communities and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Participants also noted the need for greater investment in environmental stewardship activities, including management of invasive vegetation, mitigation of wildfire risks, and preservation of scenic and natural resources along transportation corridors.
- Public art emerged as a prominent topic throughout the discussion. Participants expressed strong support for integrating art into transportation infrastructure and noted that public art contributes to community identity, placemaking, safety, accessibility, tourism, and quality of life.



- Questions were raised regarding how public art projects are selected, how artists can participate more meaningfully in transportation projects, and whether opportunities exist to develop a broader statewide public art program.
- Participants shared examples from other cities and communities such as Colorado, Minnesota, and California where artists are engaged as collaborators throughout project development and where public art is incorporated into rest areas, transportation corridors, and civic infrastructure.
- Opportunities to utilize rest stops, surplus properties, and transportation facilities to showcase local culture and artistic expression were also discussed.
- Roadway safety, operations, and system performance were identified as ongoing concerns. Participants discussed roadway conditions, construction-related disruptions, increasing truck traffic, lane reductions, and safety challenges associated with freight movement. For example, when crashes occur, travelers need clearer information from the Dynamic Message Signs on alternative routes and how to navigate congestion.
- Concerns were raised regarding truck activity, limited rest areas, median safety, and the need for stronger driver education and enforcement.
- Participants also expressed frustration with roadway construction impacts and emphasized the importance of improving project coordination, reducing disruptions, and providing clearer traveler information related to incidents, congestion, and detours.
- Emerging technologies, including autonomous freight vehicles, were discussed as transportation trends that should be approached with a continued focus on safety.
- Participants noted opportunities to strengthen partnerships and collaboration among ADOT, local governments, nonprofit organizations, artists, and cultural institutions.
- Discussion included challenges related to public art approvals within ADOT rights-of-way, the use of surplus properties for community purposes, and the need for greater transparency regarding funding and decision-making processes. The Stone Avenue underpass was mentioned as an example of a location where the local art community could be engaged.
- Participants also highlighted the unique challenges faced by rural communities, which often have limited access to transportation funding and investment resources. For example, in Pima County, funding is available through the recently approved RTANext program, while state funding cannot be used directly for public transit.
- Strengthening coordination across agencies and organizations was viewed as an important opportunity to improve project outcomes and better align transportation investments with community priorities.

## Key Takeaways

- Public transportation options are insufficient to meet mobility needs in many Southern Arizona communities, limiting access to employment, healthcare, food, recreation, and other essential services. Participants expressed strong support for expanded transit services and improved regional connectivity.



- Transportation planning should continue to prioritize equity, accessibility, affordability, and mobility for underserved populations, including rural communities, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.
- Environmental stewardship is a significant priority, with participants advocating for additional wildlife crossings, climate-responsive infrastructure, ecological connectivity, and protection of natural and cultural resources.
- Public art is widely viewed as an essential component of transportation infrastructure that supports community identity, placemaking, tourism, safety, and quality of life. Participants expressed strong support for continued and expanded investment in arts integration.
- Greater involvement of artists throughout project development could enhance transportation outcomes and create more meaningful connections between infrastructure, culture, and community identity.
- Participants identified opportunities to expand public art and cultural programming at rest stops, transportation corridors, surplus properties, and other publicly accessible transportation facilities.
- Roadway safety concerns—including roadway conditions, freight traffic, construction impacts, truck operations, and limited rest facilities—require continued attention and targeted improvements.
- Improved coordination of transportation projects, more effective communication with travelers, and enhanced incident and congestion management could help reduce disruptions and improve system performance.
- Rural communities face unique funding and resource challenges and may require additional attention to ensure equitable access to transportation investments and improvement opportunities.
- Strengthening partnerships among ADOT, local governments, nonprofit organizations, arts and cultural groups, and community stakeholders could improve coordination, transparency, and community-centered outcomes.