

River Road - Thornydale Regional Transportation Corridor

Today's dedication of the reconstruction of River Road from Campbell Avenue to Dodge Boulevard and the extension of Alvernon Way across the Rillito River marks the culmination of over twenty years of planning and development efforts to effectively link the northwest metropolitan area with central Tucson. The total corridor is 12.5 miles long and contains facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders, in addition to motor vehicles. Planning for improved regional transportation facilities in the corridor began in the early 1980's. The first corridor segment, River Road from 15th Avenue (west of Oracle Road) to First Avenue, was completed in 1993. General obligation bonds authorized by the voters in 1986 funded preliminary corridor design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the initial roadway improvements. The 1997 HURF bond authorization placed new emphasis on east/west corridors and provided the bulk of the funding, along with county roadway development impact fees and regional funds administered through the Pima Association of Governments, for the completion of the roadway corridor we see today.

Although the initial corridor was located entirely within unincorporated Pima County, the City of Tucson and the Town of Marana annexed portions of the corridor over the years. Pima County maintained its commitment to completion of the corridor, with the cooperation of the regional partners. Currently, the corridor has connections to I-10 at Orange Grove Road, Ina Road and Cortaro Farms Road. A future project, with funding by the recently approved Regional Transportation Authority and half-cent sales tax, will connect River Road with I-10 in the vicinity of the Sunset Road interchange. The total cost of the corridor is \$120.8 million.

The corridor has proven popular with motorists and other users, as new segments have been completed. Traffic growth on the corridor since 1980 is presented in the table below. Total traffic on all corridor segments has increased 618% in the 26 years.

Traffic Volume History by Year • Vehicles per Day

PROJECT LIMITS	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006
Thornydale Rd: Cortaro Farms Rd. to Ina Rd.	1,400	6,900	18,200	18,400	22,800	31,900
Thornydale Rd: Ina Rd. to Cañada del Oro Wash	---	12,700	14,300	25,100	24,800	31,500
River Rd.: Thornydale Rd to La Cholla Blvd.	---	---	---	---	---	25,500
River Rd.: La Cholla Blvd. to La Cañada Dr.	---	---	---	15,900	20,300	32,100
River Rd.: La Cañada Dr. to 15th Ave.	6,500	8,500	10,500	19,800	27,300	34,400
River Rd.: 15th Ave. to First Ave.	8,800	10,000	17,100	25,700	38,900	39,500
River Rd.: First Ave. to Campbell Ave.	10,900	15,000	21,300	27,600	31,000	36,100
River Rd.: Campbell Ave. to Alvernon Way at Ft. Lowell Rd.	8,900	11,000	16,000	19,000	20,200	31,000
Total traffic volume	36,500	64,100	97,400	151,500	185,300	262,000

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