



STREET TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

PROPOSAL UPDATE – September 2025 Van Buren Street Outdoor Event Space

The City of Phoenix Street Transportation Department appreciates the community's participation and thoughtful input while it considered a proposal to remove medians along a portion of Van Buren Street between 2nd and 7th Streets.

The City of Phoenix and Downtown Phoenix, Inc. sought a new location for large outdoor festivals since prior street festival locations have developed into new downtown venues and multi-family housing. Van Buren Street was identified for a variety of reasons, among which was access to public transit, active transportation modes and local parking options.

The Street Transportation Department held a live virtual public meeting to assess community support for this project in January 2025. Additional discussions took place with key stakeholders in the area such as the Diocese of Phoenix, the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGEN), Herberger Theater and downtown hotels.

DECISION

After careful consideration and extensive community engagement, the proposal to convert the site into a permitted space for street festivals and outdoor events will not move forward.

While median removal would have been necessary to accommodate event infrastructure—such as booths and ADA-compliant access—the existing medians currently serve as pedestrian refuge space. The Department was attentive to public feedback and recognized the importance of maintaining safe crossing conditions in this area.

Ultimately, there was not sufficient support or funding to implement the proposed changes. We sincerely appreciate the public's participation and stakeholder input, which played a key role in guiding this decision.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Street Transportation Department remains committed to working with other City partners to create a vibrant downtown area that is responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.