

# **Southern Arizona Regional Visitor Center Concepts and Discussion**



## **Stakeholder and Project Discussion Meeting**

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Nanette Slusser, Assistant County Administrator  
Pima County Administration

Linda Mayro, Director  
Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation

# A Shared Vision for the Regional Visitor Center: “Tucson’s Heritage and Sustainable Tourism”

*“tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents”*

- National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations

## Revitalizing Tourism

City of Tucson-Pima County-Rio Nuevo  
District Board -University of Arizona -  
Western National Parks Association -  
Visit Tucson-Friends of Tucson’s  
Birthplace - Local Stakeholders

## Regional Visitor Center Proposed 2015 Bond Project

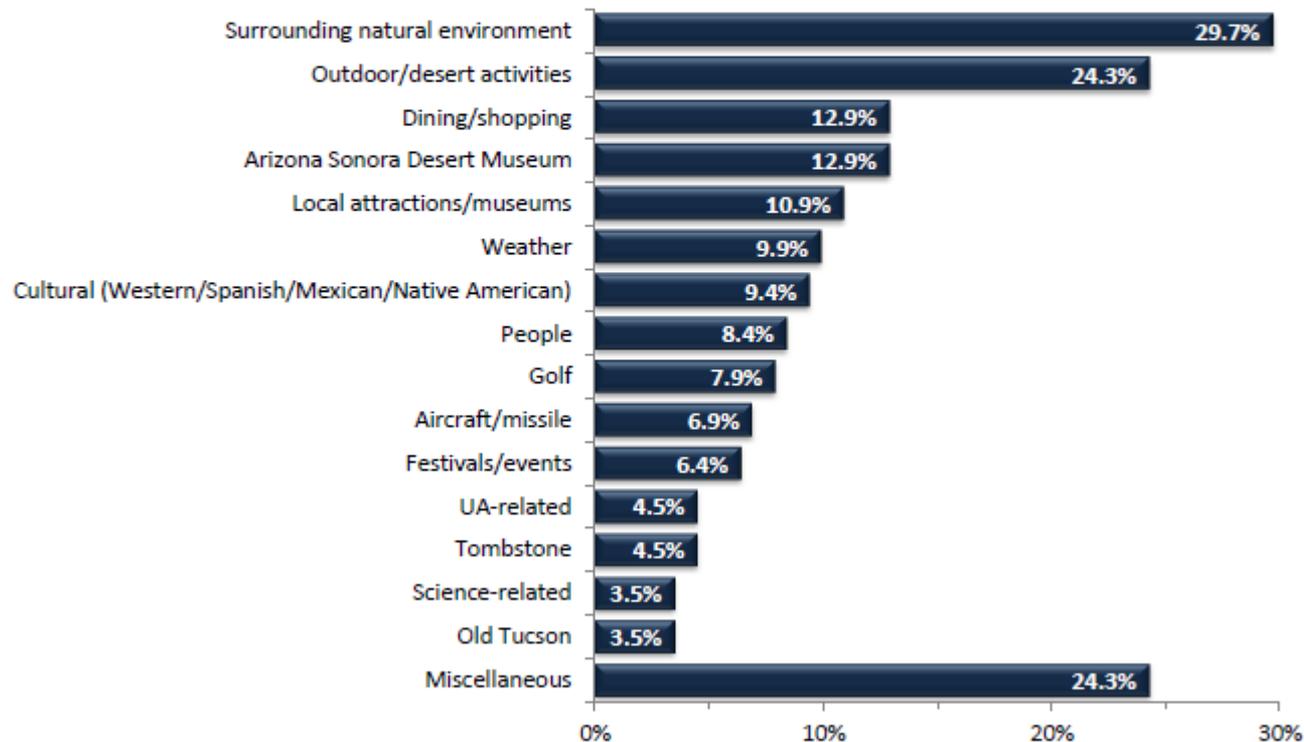
- \$10 - \$15 Million Bond Project to construct Visitor Center and Plaza
- Gateway to Tucson Origins Park
- Exhibits and Educational Programs
- Information hub for regional attractions and heritage destinations



Mission San Agustin del Tucson and Mission Gardens ca. 1810

# The natural environment, and the exploration of and activities surrounding it, is Tucson's greatest attraction

Primary reason for recommending Tucson to other travelers



# The Site:

It is the site of Tucson's origins,  
between mountain and river...

Where people have lived for  
more than 4,000 years

Where some of the earliest  
agriculture in North America has  
been documented

Where the Piman village of  
“*stjuckshon*” was encountered by  
Fr. Kino in 1694, giving Tucson  
its name...



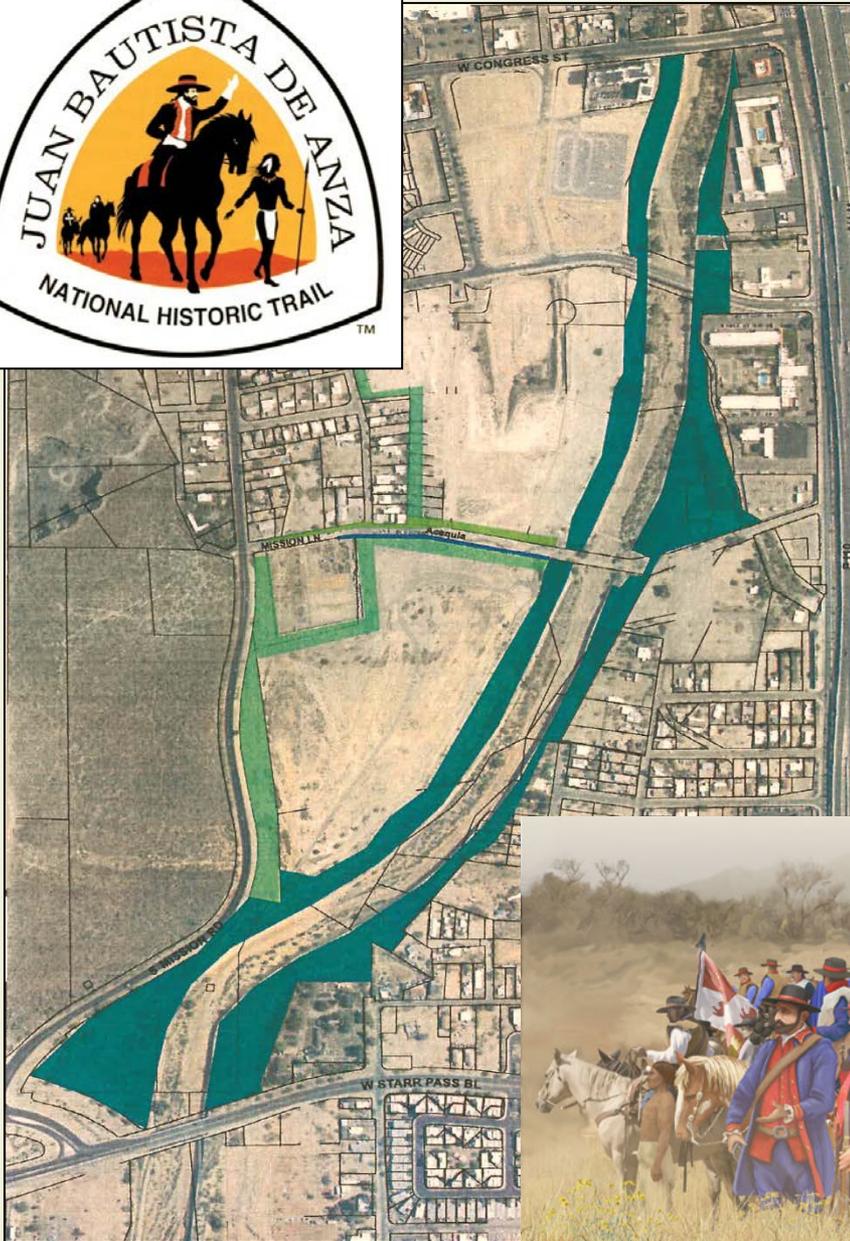
# Tucson Origins Heritage Park

Concept Plan adopted by the City of Tucson Mayor and Council





# Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail & Reforestation of River



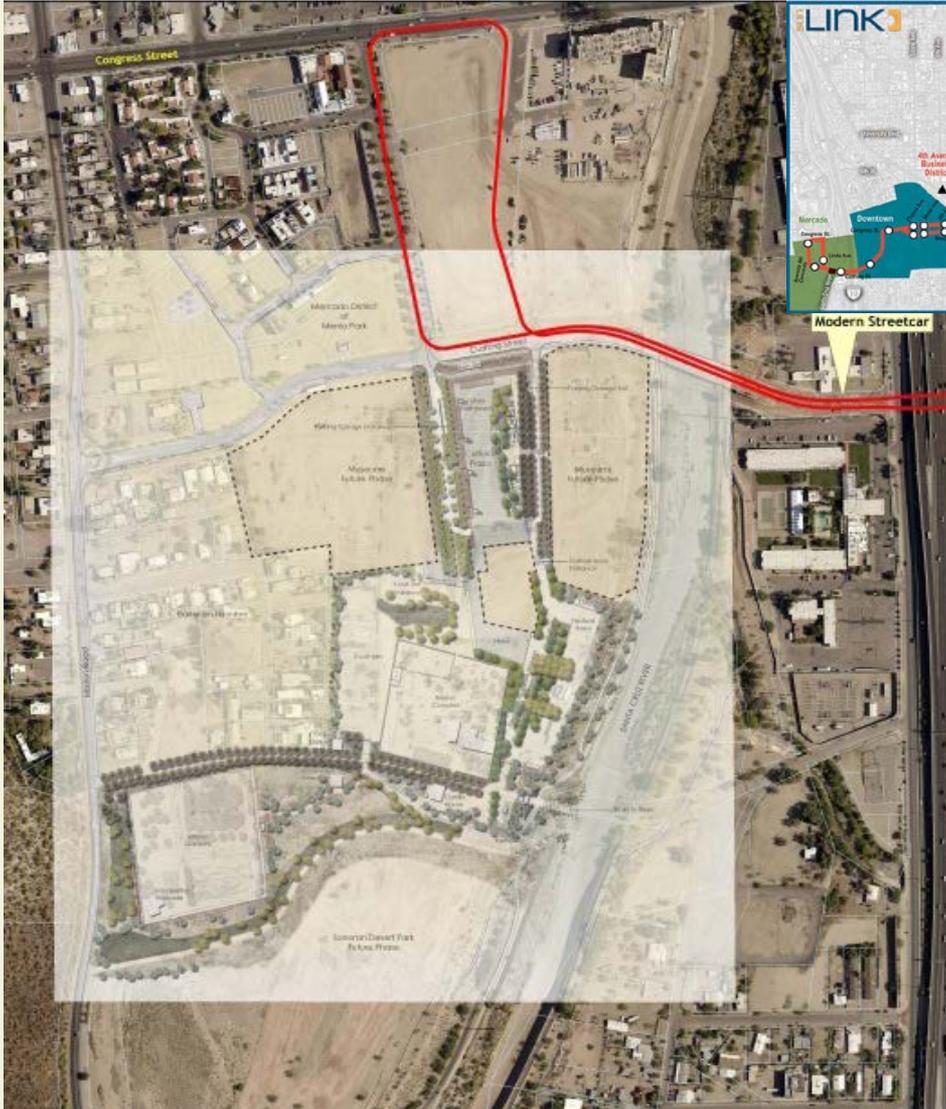
# The LOOP...

*Connecting our community and our region with our cultural and natural heritage through more than 100 miles of river paths and trails.*

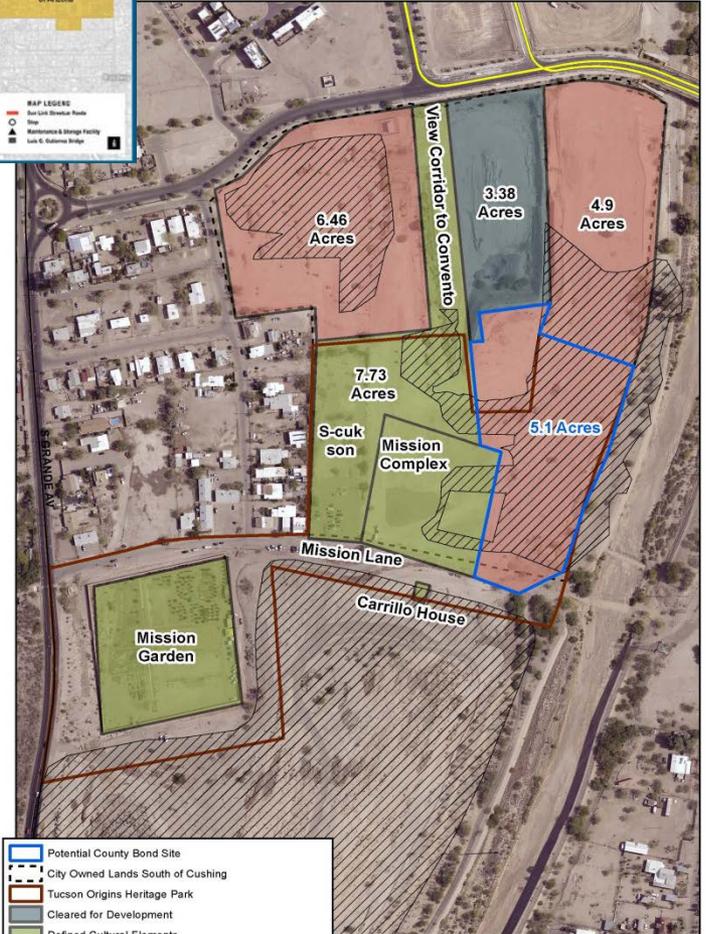


# Preliminary Concept :

Mission Gardens - Mission Complex - Regional Visitor Center - Cultural Plaza - Anza Trail - River Walk  
Equestrian Trail - Mixed Use Development - Parking Garage - SunLink Streetcar Access



## Westside Properties



- Potential County Bond Site
- City Owned Lands South of Cushing
- Tucson Origins Heritage Park
- Cleared for Development
- Defined Cultural Elements
- Further Archaeology & Environmental Clearance Needed
- Landfills
- Modern Streetcar

0 170 340 680 Feet



# Regional Visitor Center

## Center Management Partners:

- Western National Parks Association
- Visit Tucson
- City of Tucson, Pima County, UofA, Rio Nuevo, FOTB, Local Stakeholders

## Programming:

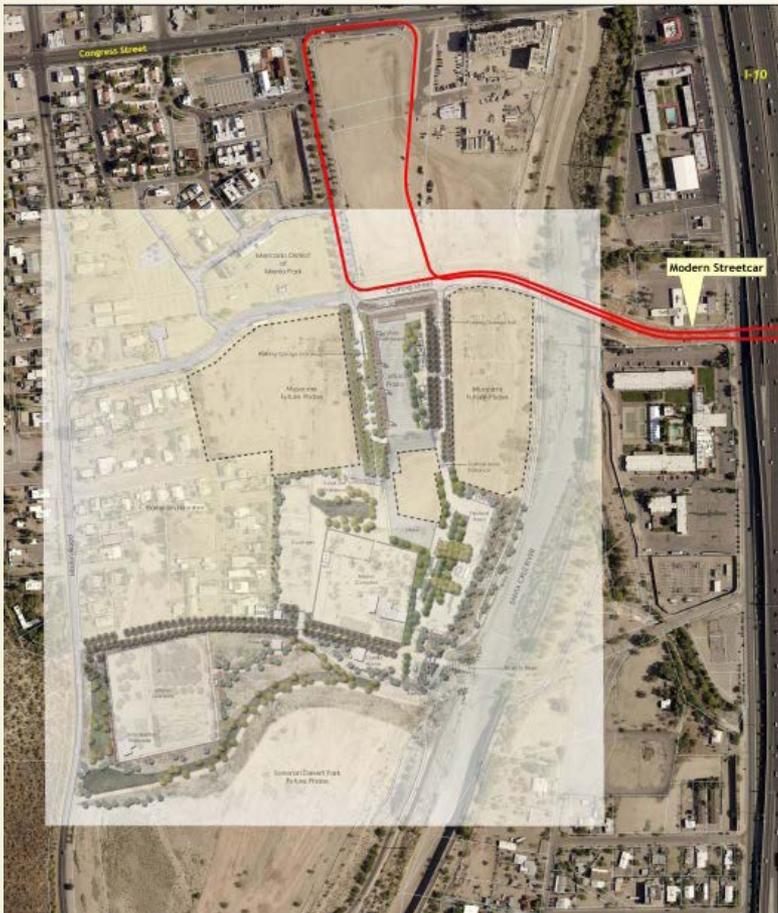
- Gateway to Tucson Origins Heritage Park and Birthplace of Tucson
- Information hub for natural/cultural attractions, tours, events, museums
- Workshops and educational lecture series

## Facility:

- Promote local and regional sustainable tourism
- Indoor space for exhibits, educational programs
- Technological center with software/applications to assist visitors in planning their stay in Tucson region
- Auditorium, gift shop, class room space, offices
- Outdoor cultural plaza
- Easy access to the *SunLink* streetcar
- Parking for over 400 cars by City of Tucson.



# Summary & Discussion



- Celebrates Tucson and region
- Tucson Origins Heritage Park
- Promotes sustainable tourism to benefit local community
- Educational programming for residents and visitors