



January 26, 2008 Field Trip **Challenges and Opportunities Identified by Field Trip Participants**

On Saturday, January 26, 2008, the Citizens Steering Committee (CSC) and Technical Advisory Team (TAT) for the Oracle Area Revitalization Plan (OARP) participated in a two-hour field trip, to increase their familiarity with and knowledge of the neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, and overall physical environment within the OARP project area.

CSC and TAT members shared their knowledge about the area, and recorded their observations in a tour guide that was provided. Those notes that were similar in nature were grouped, and then organized into the 12 categories below. These categories were based on challenges and opportunities identified in the OARP Purpose Statement, previous area plans and studies, and the Draft Existing Conditions Report.

The items highlighted in **yellow** correspond to site-specific comments. The rest of the items pertain to broader issues in the OARP project area.

A. Economic Development Challenges and Opportunities

1. Potential organization of businesses in the OARP project area, like the Downtown Tucson Partnership (formerly the Tucson Downtown Alliance) to improve business conditions.
2. How many businesses are taking advantage of the enterprise zone?
3. More support to Gem Show activities.
4. Establishment of a community free-cycle lot to recycle junk and/or generate income.
5. Organization of farmers markets.
6. Organization of community events throughout the OARP project area to attract people (like music events, dance events, etc.).
7. Establishment of tourist-oriented shops.
8. Exploration of ways to allow people work on cars in their yards.
9. Potential establishment of PCC's Automobile Lab internships with the auto shops in the OARP project area.
10. Miracle Mile can become the grand entrance to downtown Tucson. Entrepreneurs and Urban Planning & Design Department need to work closely together for a vision.
11. Stone – Most of the businesses need repair and clean up.
12. Establishment of the Evergreen and Holy Hope Cemeteries, just north of the OARP project area, into unique tourist attractions. They are both over a 100 years old and hold Tucson's early history of its diverse people, and culture.

B. Environmental Challenges and Opportunities

1. Mabel floods from Drachman to 15th Avenue.
2. Potential leaking tank issues on site of old gas station at the southeast corner of Miracle Mile and Fairview (next to Ghost Ranch Lodge).
3. Potential issues with underground storage tanks, waste oil, etc. along Stone Avenue.
4. Potential air pollution between major corridors.
5. Promotion of water harvesting throughout the OARP project area.





6. Development of a green space corridor to downtown.
7. Potential harvesting for street planting upstream of Bronx Wash.
8. Esquer Park – Possibility of water harvesting in park and on individual lots, but not enough to relieve excess floods; would need large collection basin.
9. Promote multi-story parking to minimize heat island effect from ground lots.

C. Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources Challenges and Opportunities

1. Sacred land within the Yaqui community is being lost. The most recent example is the land on sale at Fairview and 15th Ave.
2. How can Yaqui heritage be preserved and saved?
3. Sensitivity to Mexican and Yaqui cultures (housing, open space, gardens, etc.).
4. Expansion of the Pascua Yaqui Community Center to address cultural and drug/crime/alcohol issues.
5. The Yaqui community, working with Richey Elementary school, can help to sustain the Yaqui traditions and culture to add richness to the neighborhood.
6. Protection and renovation of historic landmarks and areas.
7. Preservation and renovation of old motels along Oracle Road, Drachman Street and Miracle Mile, including their signs.
8. Potential conversion of the No-Tel Motel into a historical facility.
9. Protection of Ghost Ranch Lodge's gardens and sign (designed by Georgia O'Keefe).
10. Open Ghost Ranch's gardens to the public.
11. Ghost Ranch to clean up southern edge of property.
12. Promotion of historic housing over new architecture.
13. Recognition of Beau Brummel's Club as the oldest African American Club in Tucson.
14. Establishment of the "Rolling Stone Trail" along Stone Avenue.

D. Housing Challenges and Opportunities

1. Many houses throughout the OARP project area seem to be in great need of repair and clean-up.
2. More affordable housing projects in the OARP project area. Habitat for Humanity homes in Coronado Heights look very nice and they blend well in the neighborhood.
3. Renovation of mobile homes in Miracle Manor.
4. Miracle Manor holds a variety of housing types available.
5. El Sol Apartments are a good example of multi-family housing.
6. Potential conversion of Tiki Motel into apartments.
7. Potential gentrification in Barrio Blue Moon/Adelanto/San Ignacio Yaqui neighborhoods.

E. Land Use Challenges and Opportunities

1. Lots of vacant land available for development.
2. Need for neighborhood markets along Oracle Road, perhaps at the corner of Oracle and Drachman.





3. Development of pedestrian-oriented businesses/residences along Drachman Street.
4. Maintain gas station at Drachman and Stone – functional businesses should not be displaced.
5. Support mixed-use. A neighborhood containing so many land uses can mature into a mini self-contained community where people can live and walk to work in the same neighborhood.
6. Development of nostalgic coffee/diner/restaurant businesses along Miracle Mile.
7. Promotion of infill along Oracle Road.
8. Ocotillo-Oracle – Maintain the mix the old motels with residential, if motels are remodeled and/or converted into living/working units.
9. Removal of adult entertainment and liquor stores from the OARP project area.
10. Establishment of farmers market at the northwest corner of Castro and Kelso.
11. Development of area surrounding elementary schools with family-friendly land uses.
12. Better land use and code enforcement is needed.
13. Explore Pima Community College's plans for its impact onto surrounding neighborhoods.

F. Landscaping and Screening Challenges and Opportunities

1. Buffering/ screening of industrial and adult entertainment properties from surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Provision of adequate landscaping, screening, and buffering between certain areas and incompatible uses.
3. More interesting fencing types (like the Sierra Madre apartments has – all natural fences) would be nice around schools, businesses, etc.
4. Ventura/9th Ave – example of prison-like ugly fences (barbed wire) encircling junk-like establishment, creating inhospitable environment.
5. Ocotillo-Oracle – Better screening of KVOA antennas.
6. Encourage native vegetation.
7. 14th / Mabel traffic circle – provide vegetation instead of metal bars.
8. Pho Thu – its landscapes reflect the Asian influence in the OARP project area.
9. Miracle Manor – Beautiful, mature trees and great landscaping.

G. Parks and Recreation Challenges and Opportunities

1. Water main is leaking at Pascua Yaqui ceremonial park
2. Improvements needed for Jacinto Park (maintenance, equipment for kids).
3. Shade and maintenance needed for Manuel Valenzuela Alvarez Park (by Santa Rosa church).
4. Maintain green space and some open space
5. Potential purchase of vacant land parcels for area parks.
6. Maintain large plot on 14th and railroad tracks for open space.
7. Soccer fields are needed.
8. Ocotillo-Oracle – Support for a community garden behind the Circle K and Jack-in-the-Box area.
9. Develop Bronx Wash as a continuous linear park.
10. Develop park in Coronado Heights neighborhood, perhaps at Blackledge/Oracle.
11. Develop Paul Bunyon statue site as a new park, with a transit stop.





H. Safety Challenges and Opportunities

1. Current conditions of motels and apartments along Oracle Road and Miracle Mile attract a segment of people conducting illegal activities.
2. More street lighting is needed.
3. Drug use throughout the area.
4. Kelso at Oracle is a “crime corridor”.
5. Shady-looking characters loitering at gas stations and on corners.
6. Possible prostitution is observed along Oracle and in Balboa Heights.
7. Despite big police presence, crime continues.

I. Transportation Challenges and Opportunities

1. Street repairs needed throughout Barrio Blue Moon.
2. More sidewalks are needed throughout the OARP project area.
3. Provision of sidewalks going west on Oracle to the US Post Office (Flores/13th).
4. Provision of better connectivity between neighborhoods with big and safe bike/pedestrian crosswalks or pathways across Miracle Mile, Grant, Speedway, Oracle and Stone.
5. Provision of street lighting and trees in bus stop areas.
6. Enhancement of street landscape with water harvesting and more nature plants.
7. Miracle Manor – No current Sun Tran service, except Rt. 10 on Miracle Mile; No future service planned.
8. Need weekend bus schedule in this area Sun Tran Rt. 20 currently weekday-only service (servicing Grant). Weekend service will be added in 2009 as part of the RTA.
9. Preservation of the traffic circle at Oracle/Miracle Mile.
10. Potential location of a Park and Ride lot at Pima Community College.
11. CAT Tran routes could be expanded to serve College Place students.
12. Stone Avenue:
 - More sidewalks.
 - Safe crosswalk(s).
 - Street repairs (cracks and potholes).
 - Bus stops with benches and shade.

J. Urban and Architectural Design Challenges and Opportunities

1. ADA Accessibility:
 - Keep area pedestrian/wheelchair accessible.
 - La Fuente is a great restaurant, but it does not provide accessibility for wheelchairs.
 - Most of the ramps on the accessible curbs are too steep.
2. Identity:
 - Maintain Tucson as Tucson, not a generic neighborhood/city.
 - Maintain the character of neighborhoods as much as possible.
3. Preservation of most of the views to the mountains.
4. Improvement of Grant Road with landscaping and sidewalks.
5. Stone Avenue:
 - More landscaping.





- Great street for architecture of bungalow living.
 - Some walls have nice-looking murals.
6. Oracle Road:
 - Nice brick work along Grant Rd, east of Oracle.
 7. Miracle Mile:
 - Differing architecture along Miracle Mile – lack of continuity and look; blighted and discontinuous.
 - Miracle Mile to be designed as a grand entrance to downtown Tucson.
 8. Miracle Manor – Traditional design of the buildings.

K. Other Challenges and Opportunities

1. Clean up junk and graffiti throughout the OARP project area (in residential, industrial and commercial areas).
2. The Islamic mosque should be invited/included in this project.
3. Ocotillo-Oracle could establish an effective neighborhood association to work in partnership with various groups to help address their issues.

