



**SMART GROWTH FOCUS AREA:
Urban Design Policy Working Group Meeting
October 6, 2011**

Exercise Responses and Meeting Notes

Urban Form:

- Interconnected districts encouraging mixed use and zoning.
- Create more greenbelts and multiuse pathways to link neighborhood nodes, encourage alternative transit and improve public health.
- Tourism Loop / TRAM Loop / Bike Loop / Running Loop / Public Parks Interconnecting Loop
- Promote efficient use of land.
- Through land, building and transportation policies, plan and encourage large activity centers and business corridors but also small scale ones that serve neighborhoods. Do not plan large centers too close to small ones which cause small ones to go under.
- Re-conceive neighborhoods as being connected to local destinations, i.e. Urban Villages
- Create a network of Urban Villages where the civic/commercial centers (Urban Village Center) are connected to their surrounding neighborhood Home Zones and to each other by alternate transportation, not just roads
- Provide budgets and training to allow neighborhood to guide this redevelopment as Home Zones.
- Start to cultivate districts within the city – i.e. destinations with their own flavor/character... can start to be created by LUC, design standards, etc
- Find areas for “4th Ave” like. Commercial/residential redevelopment - landscaping, facade improvement, bike/pedestrian friendly, inviting – planted median traffic calming tools.
- Maintain urban grid.
- Stick to a highly permeable grid system and do not allow existing one to be severed.

Density:

- Our current General Plan policy says to put residential density along arterial streets. THIS IS A TERRIBLE IDEA. Density of it brings cars with it, accomplishes nothing for urban design. It increases congestion, widens streets and intersections, and ruins our city. No wonder neighborhoods oppose it. Density should be surgically placed in our city in those locations where alternate modes – bikes, walking, streetcar, good us service, carshare – are viable so that density can increase with substantially increasing auto traffic. Residential density on arterial streets promotes more auto use – not less. A dense project should be required to explain how they intend to minimize car use
- Choose Major and Minor Transportation Corridors, then insist on densification along those lines and around the intersections. Prioritize this over the opposition of existing neighborhoods and over-riding neighborhood plans and comprehensive plan
- Impose mandatory “Centers/Corridors” densities on neighborhood plans = Regional over Neighborhoods
- Protect residential areas – R1 and R2 from inappropriate dense development
- In low density, cluster development for common open spaces
- Consider new approaches to increasing density and massing such as progressive allowances on building heights.

Natural Resources:

- **Habitat:**
 - Implement Pima County's Conservation Lands Policy map and policies in new annexations (open space requirements for Council discretionary actions: rezonings, conditional use permits, etc.). Tucson Mayor and Council already adopted this policy, needs to be codified!
 - Mitigate for adverse impacts (habitat fragmentation) from the provision of new infrastructure (transportation, energy transmission).
 - Protect washes, linkages to habitat, and wildlife corridors.
 - Recognize that washes are not the only natural feature worth preserving.
 - Require developers to work with the land/site as much as practicable – i.e. preserve native vegetation in planned landscape areas, maintain small washes for drainage. Use the topography.
 - Incorporate natural features and wildlife corridors into community design.
 - Consider negative impact of training flights over the city and residential areas.
- **Water Harvesting:**
 - Rainwater harvesting integrated into all ROW.
 - Enhance recharge aquifer by built design. Enhance use of gray water for public-private purpose.
 - A lot of thought put into encouraging/promoting water harvesting design.
 - Incorporate rain water harvesting techniques as part of new residential subdivisions.
 - Requirements for green infrastructure (H2O harvesting) and street landscaping to decrease urban heat island.
- **Renewable Resources / Solar / Energy / Heat Island:**
 - Use solar power to run motion sensor fans, WiFi, power chargers at bus stops.
 - Create incentives for sustainability to developers that are real solar!!!
 - Facilitate installation of solar on retention basins and other spaces to provide electricity to common areas/heating pools, etc.
 - Use as much renewable resources in all phases of construction. Incorporate backup generators in new housing design. Provide community gardening areas in new and old neighborhoods. Electric vehicle plug-ins built in new homes.
 - Attracting "green" industries requires approaching light industrial parks differently (encourage industrial businesses in the same area (within walking distance) of homes and services/businesses. Solar farms require large expanses of land.
 - Desert landscape parks in the city. Not parks based on grass and non-native plants.
 - Encourage new lighting and enforce ordinances and reward energy savings.
 - Street trees! We need shade along our streets.
 - Since parking requirements have been reduced, could existing parking areas at established businesses be reduced for additional landscaping, water harvesting, etc. Trees are needed to cut down heat island effect, make shade for walking.
 - Plan should require that new developments plant drought-tolerant, shade-producing trees and build shade structures for 33 percent of development's square footage.

Transportation:

▪ *Mobility:*

- Multi-modal!!! Create seamless transportation options that allow all people to get where they need to go, regardless of income, race, ability, etc.
- Synchronize traffic signaling – engineer traffic flows to lessen vehicles waiting; more bus pull outs.
- Design urban areas for 33% car / 33% bike/pedestrian / 33% public transit mode share.
- Proposed metric: % of errands that can be accomplished without the use of a car. Survey/community panel.
- Dis-incentivize new housing developments that have only one point of access... encourage multiple points/types of access.
- Let's give people a reason to walk (by providing places to walk to) to shopping/services, and the ability to do so.
- No more street-front parking!!!! Require that all new development be up to the curb/ROW (so that we don't have strip malls everywhere).
- Continue to connect neighborhoods with pedestrian/bike corridors – especially across washes to improve access to commercial centers.
- Identify neighborhoods for walkability, to focus resources.
- Encourage businesses to make their grounds accessible from the interior of the neighborhood – pedestrian and bicycles – not just driveways from major streets.
- Reduce parking requirements generally – make parking harder to encourage alternate modes. Adjust parking and transportation formulas to ovr(?) designed state – i.e. 30/30/30 – to avoid self-fulfilling prophecy of auto-concept.
- Intermodal transportation thru + between neighborhoods = bike boulevards intersecting with bus/streetcar routes – transit centers.

▪ *Streets:*

- Don't sacrifice the livability, aesthetics, or potential for transit-oriented development to the idea of building wide corridors/road channels for moving traffic to suburbs.
- Allow for dedicated pedestrian retail districts in place of roads. E.g. Toole at Maynards + Hotel Congress – No cars or parking
- Create car-free zones.
- Resist pressure to close streets, block access, or restrict turning or movement choices at intersections. Utilize traffic-calming measures that beautify and reduce urban heat island effect rather than restricting access – use traffic circles, bump-outs.
- Traffic calming by expanded sidewalks and designated street lanes (?) secondary street cut through traffic: cul-de-sac and one way.
- Emphasize that street layouts should provide permeability to bikes/pedestrians.
- The basis of our grid city should be new and retrofitted complete streets – sidewalks, greenery, shade, water harvesting, safe bike lanes/paths, lighting – oh yeah, ad cars if they can play nicely.
- Discourage non-connecting street patterns, encouraging multi-modal access (car, bike, pedestrian), public safety access.
- Plan shall incorporate a “Complete Streets” policy that requires new streets to be built with all modes of transportation accommodated.
- Plan should require that 50 percent of city streets be retrofitted to the Complete Streets concept by 2030.
- Complete streets in key traffic corridors – cars, transit, bikes, pedestrians.

- Complete streets policy.
- Streets must be conducive to transportation – design must be with safety in mind.
- Do not assume lane widening is inevitable.
- Minimize street width and number of lanes.
- Build streets no wider than is absolutely necessary.
- (South 4th Ave) Although this may be partially out of City limits the walk street feel is potential waiting to happen.
- ***Bicycle and Pedestrian:***
 - Implement short-trip infrastructure (street crossing capabilities) to create safe access to nearby Urban Village Centers by large numbers of bicyclists, pedestrians, and local transit.
 - Encourage the development of multiuse paths where possible along/near features.
 - Routes should have signalized crossings across larger arterials to increase safety for bikes and pedestrians – also slower calmed traffic.
 - Design bicycle facilities that are safe, direct and appealing to bicyclists of all skill levels.
 - Encourage design patterned after European bike lanes (Denmark particularly). Place medians (low and small and slender) to fully separate bike and traffic lanes.
 - Plan shall require a car-free network of side streets that traverses the city to encourage cycling.
 - Plan shall require the creation and maintenance of pedestrian paths and walkways in all residential areas.
 - Corridors that entice visitors to walk – paths, shade, art, safety, vegetation, viewsheds, minimal asphalt.
 - Create interconnected low stress corridors for bicyclists and pedestrians – connect to neighborhoods and common destinations/amenities – these can double as linear parks!
 - Redesign minor arterials/collectors to be more pedestrian/bike compatible; neck down intersection crossings with “ears”, separated sidewalks, etc.
 - Build very safe bike/walk corridors within 2 miles of every school.
 - Greening / urban corridor / pedestrian/bike friendly.
 - Invest in sidewalks and pedestrian lighting.
 - Ensure pedestrian/bike connections to these e.g. corner grocery/markets
 - Provide funding incentives for repair/placement of sidewalks in existing neighborhoods.
 - Allow for user-activated signals along bike routes and at transit stops on high pedestrian use.
- ***Public Transportation:***
 - Need to have more park and ride. Maybe block off sections to pedestrian and/or public transportation.
 - Connect city through TRAM system.
 - Plan shall require that car-free zones be discussed, planned and adopted along mass transit corridor modern street car route.
- ***Maintenance:***
 - Better planning; if for example desert landscaping is planned for medians, please plan for maintenance/unprep. Weather by contract and/or agreement with neighborhoods, businesses, churches, non-profits, etc.

Land Use:

- **Transit-Oriented Development:**
 - Promote mass transit financial viability by reducing barriers to higher residential density.
 - Transit-oriented developments – stores nearer to the street on key transit routes. Clear and safe pedestrian paths/sidewalks to transit stops and centers.
 - Incentives include transit-oriented development
- **Mixed-Use:**
 - Encourage mixes of housing types and price ranges – near major economic centers, along transportation routes that ensure access to food stores, recreation, services.
 - Encourage accessible commercial and industrial nodes (jobs) to mixed use structures (residential, office and retail)
 - Allow for mixed-use development! Try to figure out how we can allow certain types of businesses and amenities to be placed within existing neighborhoods (as well as new ones) without disturbing their cultural/historic integrity.
 - Discourage single-use zoning – allow corner stores.
- **Non-Residential Uses:**
 - Plan shall require set aside land in new development for urban gardening.
 - Encourage neighborhood gardens along drainage/riparian ways.
 - Encourage commercial along corridors, including multi-family housing.
 - Retail wrapping around above ground parking.
 - Do not build schools far away from where the people are (keep them in densest urban areas).
 - Encouragement of pedestrian malls – big boxes with parking on 1 or 2 sides and small shops with sidewalks, pathways, vegetation, minimal parking on other sides.
 - Promote development of neighborhood commercial-corner stores.
 - Co-locate schools, community centers, and childcare services.
 - Incorporate opted principles into new commercial development.

Renewal / Infill:

- Reinvest in the urban core.
- Dis-incentivize building demolition / encourage adaptive reuse.
- Facilitate rehab of existing older strip malls.
- Allow for conversion to or infill of residential-scale retail/commercial on corners/major corridors in neighborhoods.
- Incentives to promote conversion to viable new use.
- Discourage sprawl by making it harder and more expensive to develop on the fringe.
- Re-plan, re-vitalize infill development incentive programs.
- Directly incentivize the rehabilitation of major routes and business corridors.

Appearance:

▪ **Buildings / Site Design:**

- Preserving historic architecture unique to our area/region contributes to creating a unique sense of place and distinguishing Tucson from other localities.
- Assist neighborhoods and business districts to adopt design guidelines to retain history, character, sense of place and to promote cohesion among built elements.
- Resist stucco box developments
- New architecture and innovative design. Develop a consensus of what the City should be, a model. Cities Brand- Denver, Santa Fe, San Diego, Mesa.
- Create a local design competition focused on economical way to remodel our outdated decaying mini-malls. Sustainable materials would be essential.
- Support different architectural styles that work together as opposed to pushing conformity
- Civic Buildings should be examples of architecture and art.
- Identify and promote neighborhood and business architecture things so we don't have a gothic quarter but you know what I mean?
- Authenticity – based on Tucson's character, not mimicking California, Santa Fe, etc. Consistent with our climate and desert landscape.
- Clusters of civic buildings should have a consistent design/appearance (brick, colors, (?) of windows, roof, etc.). CoT buildings (library, fire station, substations) should match neighborhood styles and construction (fire stations could look like big two-story houses).
- Encourage diversity in design.
- Identify historic landmarks to encourage preservation.
- Encourage the placement of buildings at property line to facilitate pedestrian activity and define the street.
- Look at IID to insure that there is adequate buffering. Height and building – mass of building both important. But USE can be the biggest problem, for the adjacent residents.
- Trash collection / solid waste disposal ad to a lesser extent the fire departure + have been allowed to optimize their convenience at the price of a huge urban design quality negative impact. They need to modify their requirements for the sake of better quality urban design.

▪ **Art:**

- Solar sculpture / shade structures
- Inviting local graffiti artists to “beautify” of urban surfaces at designated locations – come above ground and be part of the recognized community.
- Include the economic impact of public art. Attraction of corporation relocation, tourism, job creation.
- Find a way to allow art as signage under specific circumstances.

▪ **Aesthetics:**

- Reduce visual pollution. Reduction of signs and electric signs on arterial streets.
- Gateway Project / “Welcome to Tucson” cornerstone monolith monument. Greening Miracle Mile.
- Consider ways to mask “ugly” cell towers.

- Program to improve “run-down” business areas. Speedway, Stone.
- Work to find effective strategies to keep the city clean and attractive.
- Does the C.E. waiver really serve our City well? TREO never addressed the importance if our attractive streetscape.
- Break-up the “urban desert” (concrete, minimal vegetation, asphalt). Things that make walking in Tucson climate unappealing.
- Small is better than big – ALWAYS.
- Plant more trees and other native plants to improve city appearance and reduce urban heat island effect.
- Upgrade bus stops to improve looks, add shade, fit neighborhood design.
- Underground parking.
- Subsidize re-vegetation of 50-year-old suburban sprawl neighborhoods.
- **Outdoor lighting:**
 - Install consistent and architectural lighting via business improved districts or other funding mechanisms.
 - Increase lighting (using LEDs or alternates to bright lights). I understand the need to accommodate Kitt Peak but areas need to be better lit to encourage neighborhood activity and growth. Cocooning needs to be lessened.
 - Pedestrian/scale street lighting.

Residential Neighborhoods:

- Integrate different types of housing into the same area (i.e. single family, elderly, multi-family, lofts, etc.)
- Teach people who are active in their neighborhoods how residential density can be increased in acceptable ways
- Continue programs (when budget – economy allows) such as Back to Basics to invest in established neighborhoods – a few benefited but many still do not have sidewalks, attractive streetscapes, et
- Collaborate with neighborhoods to help them become learning organizations that rapidly adopt and develop best practices for redevelopment
- Each neighborhood should have signage placed at its corner borders
- Do asset mapping of neighborhood of wants, needs are to see what structures could/should/would “fit” for the neighborhood. Use that for businesses, non-profits, etc. to help decide what impact that’ll help the neighborhood
- Neighborhood identifiers – mini-plaza with plaques and history of the area, maps of Tucson and the time the neighborhood was established
- Use traffic calming, trees, public art, micro-parks, redesign features to remodel existing neighborhoods into Home Zones to create safe places where people naturally gather
- Rethink neighborhoods as places where resources, particularly food and biological resources, are produced (Edible Urban Forest)
- When designing new neighborhoods/public areas – include green “buffer zones” around the perimeter than can be used for expansion in the future.
- Encourage owners to work with neighborhoods to make existing buildings use more user-friendly to the needs of the area.

Parks:

- Directly support parks with multiple uses/activities and provide more parks with natural features, historic features, green infrastructure features. More public water features.
- Encourage access with security, lighting.
- (Tumamoc) Organized training park. In respect of neighborhoods how can those who use the two hills to exercise have a more formal and safer route. Promote, beautify, and organize.
- Designating areas – 5-10 acres for community commercial center in developing and underserved neighborhoods – open space, local services, mini park.
- Stop taking away green space at Reid Park – or if it is deemed necessary to do this like build elephant grounds, designate other green space in the Reid Park service area to compensate for public uses.
- Encourage development of pocket parks and public areas in new development.
- Integrate public spaces with active areas/uses. Don't isolate them. More small neighborhood pocket parks.

Downtown:

- Per experience in Flagstaff, modifying key streets through downtown as pedestrian traffic only can invite and create a vibrant pedestrian activity
- More concentrated civic center / buildings. City offices scattered across Downtown. Create a feeling of Tucson HQ.
- Bus station downtown relocation. All for more retail and gathering places in the heart of the community. Bus station now breaks apart of the possibility of a cohesive, continuous experience that has a comfortable safe urban experience.
- Affordable housing downtown!!

Health/Safety:

- Crime prevention through Environmental Design – CPTED.
- Protect public through safety codes for buildings through well maintained streets to provide public safety access and through infrastructure (water, phone lines) to support it – fund it.
- Element 7 of current General Plan is a major issue – we need a safe community.
- Input from TPD/TFD on 'safe' design of traffic circles (location, real need?)
- Minimize dust waivers.
- Minimize land disturbances and reduce dust and work with agencies to identify streetscapes in need of repair to sidewalks/medians when landscaping is not appropriate. Ex: Pavers along narrow landscaping. Strips Campbell/Ft. Lowell.
- Must provide adequate safety to encourage public participation.

Public Spaces:

- Encourage public use activating (loitering) of sidewalks. E.g. sidewalk cafes, window shopping, benches.
- Identify areas where plazas and public spaces can be implemented or converted from other uses through incentives.
- Create public spaces in Urban Village Center that attract people to the center and engage people with each other.

Socioeconomics:

- We need to provide infrastructure that supports the kind of business and industry that allows us to fully fund all the projects and programs we want.
- Install features to plan for an aging population – more sidewalks and connectivity of existing ones, ramps – bigger street signs or bigger lettering – wider doorways.
- VELODROME!!! This can change our community in significant ways - Place to go as family for alternative fitness activity - Draw athletes and money for competition events and training - Capitalize on our already “gold” standing for cyclist and so much more.

Tools:

- “Major Streets and Routes” needs to be revisited. Are the designations still valid?
- (MS&R) Throw it out and start over again
- Amend Streets and Routes for no cars – promotes health and saves environment.
- Our Land Use Code is functionally obsolete. We should entirely replace it with a carefully vetted Form-Based Code starting downtown and working outwards.
- Plan should require that zoning ordinances and code be written and simplified with the understanding aimed at an eighth-grade education reading level.
- Continually check and re-check that urban design policies, programs and decisions are aligned with community values.
- Funding/loans/free design assistance to upgrade older strip malls to be more inviting to costumers and residential areas – i.e. landscaping, art, other amenities.
- Seek grants to provide staff to assist in site plan reviews and design opted guidelines.
- Tie taxes and development fees to Walkscore.
- Allocate transportation funding more equitable based on mode-split.
- Encourage off hours use of private recreational facilities, such as church, school yards, and meeting rooms
- Built environment – public-private partnerships.