

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council
THROUGH: Keith Burke, Community Services Director
FROM: Craig Hayton, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks and Recreation
Julie Hietter, Community Services Manager
DATE: January 21, 2021
SUBJECT: Rio Salado Implementation Plan Update



PURPOSE:

Staff is providing an update on implementation of the Rio Salado Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION OR DIRECTION REQUESTED:

1. Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the highest scoring land, aerial and water options.
2. Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop design guidelines for the Rio Salado Parks & to develop conceptual plans for three (3) activity zones, rather than two, as previously identified.

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Quality of Life:

3.16 – Achieve ratings of "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with the Quality of City recreation, arts, and cultural centers greater than or equal to the national benchmark cities as measured in the Community Survey.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Overview:

The Rio Salado Master Plan, adopted by Mayor and Council on November 29, 2018, represents the future development and improvement of Tempe's Rio Salado parks. The Master Plan is a comprehensive and inclusive roadmap for public and private development surrounding the Tempe Town Lake for the next 20-30 years, fulfilling Tempe's vision for the Rio Salado as a grand public amenity, desirable destination, and point of pride for the community. Central to the plan are five guiding principles, each of which ensures diversity in design and planning, while maintaining consistent vision and level of quality. They include:

1. **Public Ownership:** Balance between special events and everyday experiences.
2. **Connectivity:** Multimodal access from near and far; connections to various networks and neighborhoods.
3. **Shade:** Trees as primary source with supplementary structures related to new developments.
4. **Opportunity:** Vibrant combination of active and passive activities for all walks of life.
5. **Sustainability:** Environmental stewardship, flora and fauna conservation, ease of maintenance.

These guiding principles set the stage for the identification and planned development of twelve distinct activity zones (see Appendix A), covering the project's boundaries: the north and south sides of the Rio Salado, from Priest Drive on the west to McClintock Drive on the east. Each activity zone includes possible elements and uses, consistent with either the current or future use and feel of each area of the Rio Salado parks. The plan concludes with several implementation strategies, stressing the importance of ensuring consistency with the adopted plan.

To ensure continued momentum from the adopted master plan, at an April 2019 Work Study Session, staff presented an overview of the Rio Salado implementation plan, which provided strategies to assist in attaining the vision of the adopted Rio Salado Master Plan through initial and long-term actions related to programming, improvements, and funding. The goal of the implementation plan is to focus on critical first steps, ensuring overall continuity with the master plan, while recommending a clear pathway for this important planning and development effort. The implementation plan identified the top two scoring activity zones (Entertainment North Shore and Recreation/Adventure); a full breakdown of the activity zone scoring can be

found in Appendix B. Additionally, the plan recommends supplementing City funding through a public private partnership (PPP), in order to maximize initial improvements.

Key Dates in the Process:

- November 2018 WSS - Adoption of Master Plan
- April 2019 WSS - Implementation Plan identified top two activity zones & exploration of alternative funding approaches for new amenities
- November 2019 to February 2020 - Request for Information (RFI) issued for Public Private Partnership
- September 2020 – Public Outreach to provide input on concept options
- January 2021 WSS – Implementation Plan Update on Public Private Partnership



Implementation Plan Update:

Request for Information:

In November 2019, staff issued a Request for Information (RFI), to gauge private sector interest in funding the design, build and operation of recreational amenities in the Rio Salado parks. This first step is consistent with the pursuit of a public private partnership. The RFI was issued for 90 days and resulted in 18 responses. Responses included both active and passive recreational amenities, consisting of four broad categories: land, aerial, water and support amenities. Staff researched additional waterfront park amenities, in order to fully gauge potential amenity options, prior to seeking public input.

Review of Concepts:

The 18 RFI submissions and additional staff-researched options resulted in 26 different options in four categories:

<p>CATEGORY LAND (L) L1 – Observation Tower L2 – Rockwall L3 – Fitness Court L4 – Skate Rink L5 – Bike Ramps L6 – Playground L7 – Swings L8 – Carousel L9 – Themed Gardens L10 – Museum L11 – Birding and Nature</p>	<p>CATEGORY AERIAL (A) A1 – Zipline A2 –Adventure Challenge Course A3 – Sky Ride A4 – Bungee Jumping</p>	<p>CATEGORY WATER (W) W1 – Obstacle course W2 – Slide W3 – Cable wakeboard/Flowboard/Surf Pool W4 – Brew boat/ Cycle boat/ Tour boat W5 – Lazy River W6 – Floating Movies W7 – Fountain/ Splash Play</p>	<p>CATEGORY SUPPORT (S) S1 – Food S2 – Transport S3 – Restrooms S4 – Parking</p>
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Public Input:

Community outreach and input was originally scheduled for March 2020, but was delayed due to COVID-19. Public input began on September 2 with well-attended virtual public meetings, the public survey solicited comments through October 1, resulting in 783 community responses. Responses related to park amenities was gauged through how likely the public would utilize the options, as well as whether active or passive amenities were more desirable. The full public survey report has been included in the presentation packet materials. The results were utilized in the evaluation of concepts and will aid future planning efforts.

Additionally, the process was presented to multiple Boards and Commissions, as well as other stakeholders:

- Boards & Commissions: Historic Preservation Commission, Parks, Recreation, Golf and Double Butte Cemetery Board, Sustainability Commission, Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission, Neighborhood Advisory Commission and Enhanced Services Commission.
- Stakeholders: Downtown Tempe Authority, Rio Salado Foundation and Arizona State University.

Evaluation of Concepts:

Staff developed a scoring matrix to narrow down the 26 concept options for the next step, the formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Three key elements were utilized for the scoring matrix:

1. **Public Survey Score** – The likelihood that the public would utilize a proposed amenity, ranging from one (not likely) to five (very likely), as identified in the public survey.
2. **Proposal Submission** – Believing that receiving a proposal during the RFI period will more likely lead to a submission during the upcoming RFP process, five points were awarded for an amenity where a submission was received; one point was awarded if a submission was not received.
3. **Staff Score:** Determined by gauging what an amenity is, where it could be placed and who it could serve, scores could total a maximum of five points.

Each element was weighted 1/3 of the total score for a maximum weighted average of 5 points. The full evaluation matrix has been included in Appendix C. The five highest scoring concepts are shown below.

Activity	Category	Survey Score	Proposal Submitted	Staff Score	Total Score
Zipline	Aerial	3.1	5	5	4.31
Observation Tower	Land	3.1	5	5	4.31
Rockwall	Land	2.8	5	5	4.24
Bungee Jumping	Aerial	2.2	5	5	4.01
Flowrider/Surf Pool	Water	2.9	5	4.2	3.98

It is important to note that though specific support options (parking and restrooms) scored extremely high during public outreach but not in the matrix, they will not be included in the RFP process, but will instead be included in the conceptual planning process.

Next Steps:

In order to keep this important implementation plan moving forward, the following next steps will be pursued in 2021:

- Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the highest scoring land, aerial and water options.
- Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop conceptual plans for 3 activity zones & design guidelines for the Rio Salado parks. This increases the original plan from two to three activity zones, allowing the full conceptual planning of the undeveloped and underdeveloped north side from the James Elmore Bridge to the Marina.

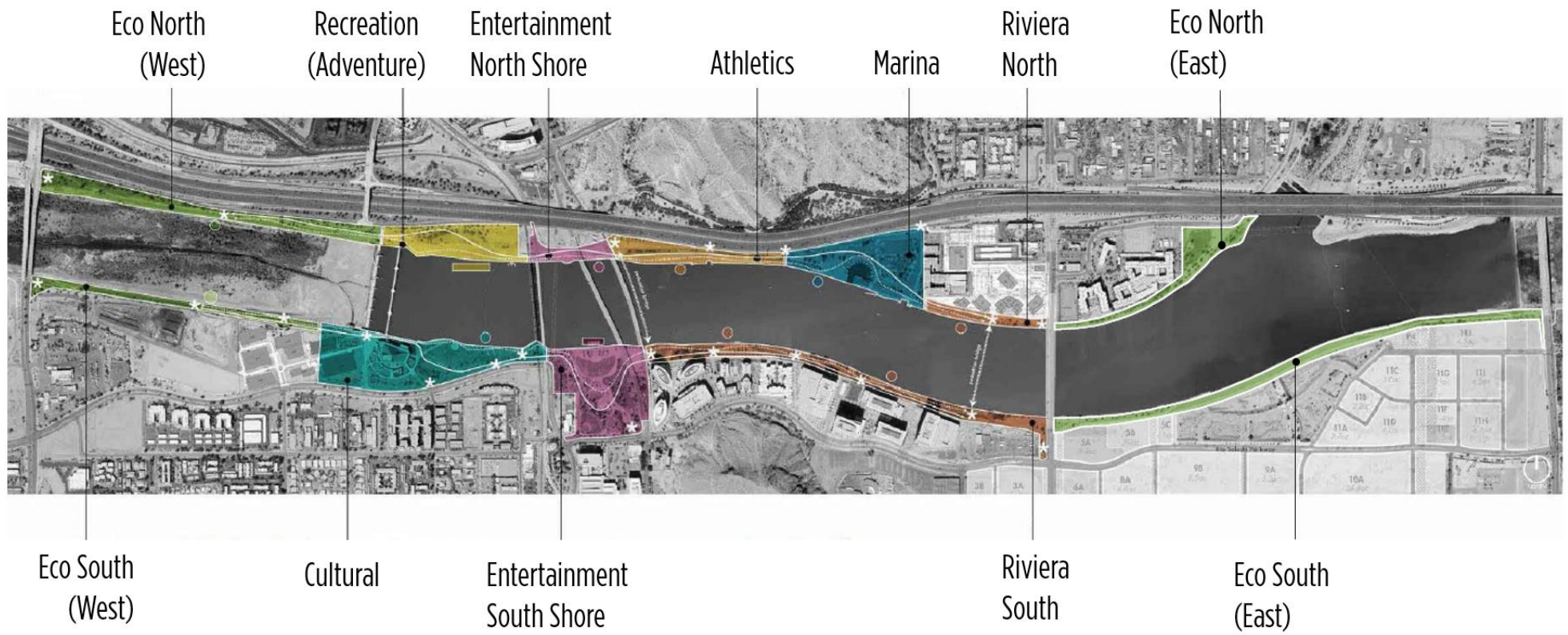
FISCAL IMPACT or IMPACT TO CURRENT RESOURCES:

An estimated \$100,000 funded through Development Impact Fees could be utilized to develop the top three activity zone concepts (Entertainment North Shore, Recreation/Adventure and Athletics) and create design guidelines for the Rio Salado parks.

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint Presentation, Tempe Town Lake Public Input document, Appendixes A, B & C

Appendix A:



Appendix B:

		Improvement Impact					Improvement Potential							
		Current Status					Uses/Elements							
Area	Side	Undeveloped <--> Developed					Improvement Impact Score	Active Elements	Passive Elements	Events/Tournaments/Revenue	Everyday Use	Restrooms (additional)	Improvement Potential Score (1 pt. per dot)	TOTAL SCORE
		5	4	3	2	1								
Entertainment North Shore	North	•					5		•	•	•	•	4	9
Recreation (Adventure)	North		•				4	•	•	•	•		4	8
Athletics	North			•			3	•	•	•	•		4	7
Eco South (east)	South	•					5		•		•		2	7
Entertainment South Shore	South			•			3	•	•	•	•		4	7
Riviera North	North	•					5		•		•		2	7
Marina	North				•		2	•	•	•	•		4	6
Eco North (east)	North				•		2	•	•		•		3	5
Eco North (west)	North			•			3		•		•		2	5
Eco South (west)	South					•	1	•	•		•	•	4	5
Cultural	South					•	1		•	•	•		3	4
Riviera South	South				•		2		•		•		2	4

Appendix C:

Activity	Category	Survey Score	Proposal Submitted	Staff Score	Total Score
A1 Zipline	Aerial	3.1	5	5	4.31
L1 Observation Tower	Land	3.1	5	5	4.31
L2 Rockwall	Land	2.8	5	5	4.24
A4 Bungee Jumping	Aerial	2.2	5	5	4.01
W3 Flowrider/Surf Pool	Water	2.9	5	4.2	3.98
W3 Cable wakeboard	Water	2.9	5	3.3	3.70
W1 Obstacle Course	Water	2.9	5	3.3	3.70
W4 Brew boat/Cycle Boat/ Tour Boat	Water	3.3	5	2.5	3.57
W2 Slide	Water	2.8	5	2.5	3.40
S1 Food	Support	3.4	5	1.7	3.35
S4 Transport	Support	2.9	5	1.7	3.16
A2 Adventure/Challenge Course	Aerial	3.1	1	5	3.02
W5 Lazy River	Water	3.4	1	4.2	2.85
A3 Sky Ride	Aerial	3.0	1	4.2	2.70
L3 Fitness Court	Land	2.8	1	4.2	2.64
L4 Skate Rink	Land	2.8	1	4.2	2.64
L11 Birding and Nature	Land	3.6	1	3.3	2.60
W7 Fountain/ Splash Play	Water	3.3	1	3.3	2.49
L7 Swings	Land	3.1	1	3.3	2.43
L9 Themed Gardens	Land	3.8	1	2.5	2.42
L6 Playground	Land	3.0	1	3.3	2.41
S3 Restrooms	Support	4.3	1	1.7	2.31
L8 Carousel	Land	2.7	1	3.3	2.30
L10 Museum	Land	3.4	1	2.5	2.28
W6 Floating Movies	Water	3.4	1	2.5	2.27
L5 Bike Ramps	Land	2.5	1	3.3	2.25
S2 Parking	Support	3.9	1	1.7	2.19