

MEMORANDUM



TO: Chair and Members, Development Review Commission
FROM: Ambika Adhikari, Principal Planner; and Robbie Aaron, Planner
DATE: October 12, 2021
SUBJECT: Character Area 1 – Papago/North Tempe Planning Process and Draft Plan

PURPOSE:

This memo provides an update on the planning process, and a summary of Character Area-1: Papago/North Draft Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Tempe's General Plan 2040 provides a vision of what Tempe will look like, and how it will function as a community. Compared to the population and employment in 2020, Tempe is expected to grow by more than 57,000 new residents, and the city is projected to add nearly 57,200 new jobs by 2040. Although this growth can be well accommodated in the City, more important than numeric change is Tempe's ability to maintain sustainable and livable communities while growing.

Character Area Planning is one of the ways to accomplish the design-related goals of the General Plan 2040. Themes woven throughout the General Plan include developing Tempe as a leader in urban living; expanding pockets of urban activity centers or "hubs"; and enhancing pedestrian, bike, and transit connections to produce a "20-minute City". While advancing these goals, a Character Area Plan is a policy-level document to help guide new development, redevelopment and public investment in the area that would make the new additions and changes consistent with the character of the area, and reflect the aspirations of the residents.

Character Area 1 – Papago/North Tempe

Character Area 1 consists of approximately 3.35 square miles area that is roughly bounded by the Loop 202 Freeway on the south, McClintock Drive on the east, the City boundary lines on the north, and approximately Priest drive alignment on the west. This area has a population of 9,920 (2020). It includes a county island 63 acres in area situated at the northeast corner of Loop 202 Freeway and Scottsdale Road.

Outreach for the planning process has included obtaining input from area residents, business community, and stakeholders to create principles that will be taken through the Tempe City Council adoption process. The plan will provide a background of the area, summarize its history, list character defining elements, and recommend goals and principles to guide the future planning and design in the area.

A Character Area Plan is policy-level document. It is non-regulatory and does not change the legal rights of property owners, codes, and ordinances applicable to any property.

Public Outreach Process

Staff has been conducting an extensive outreach effort to consult with the residents, businesses, and stakeholders in the area to seek input and comments. These efforts have included the following activities.

- Two kick-off meetings were held on March 15, 2021
- Public survey conducted for preference. March 15-April 4, 2021
- Two public meetings held on May 11, 2021
- Two in-person meetings. June 14 and 26
- Two focus group meetings on June 29, 2021
- "Dot.ocracy" survey. May 11 - June 30, 2021
- Draft plan released to the public, August 27, 2021
- Survey to review the draft plan August 27-September 19, 2021
- Two public meetings to review the draft CA-1 plan, September 13, 2021

- Presentation so far to twelve City Boards and Commissions

Through the public process, residents and stakeholder have identified the following as the priority topics to be addressed in the Character area Plan.

Shade; Extreme Heat Management; Landscape; Climate Change; Mobility; Open Space; Housing; Passive Natural Systems; Ageing in Place Streetscape; Canal Oriented Design; Balanced Land Use; Public/Private Art; Historic Preservation; Green Infrastructure and Construction; Connectivity and Quality Design.

Remaining Timeline

Staff will continue to solicit and receive input throughout the adoption process. Below are the significant milestones for the remaining calendar for the adoption process.

- Late September 2021 – Begin working to refine CA-1 Plan draft based on the public input
- October 12, 2021. present at the DRC Study Session
- Late October 2021 – Plan draft released for the public hearing
- November 10, 2021 – DRC hearing
- Second week of December 2021 – Council hearing for possible adoption

Draft CA1 Plan Contents

The [draft CA - 1 Plan](#) consists of the following sections.

- Introduction
- Purpose of the Plan
- Existing character
- Discussion on the county island
- History of the area
- How the plan was developed through public process
- Planning and design guidelines and principles (for four sub-areas, and 17 elements)
- Appendices
 - Recommended plant pallet
 - Images from the area that help to define the character of the area
 - Images related to the design guidelines
 - Selected socio-economic data
 - A summary of public inputs

Design Principles

The [draft plan](#) includes design principles for the following elements.

1. Papago/North Tempe four Sub-Areas
2. Historic Preservation.
3. Preserving Neighborhood Character
4. Neighborhood Standards for Walkability
5. Open Space/Public Gathering Space
6. Landscape and Vegetative Shade
7. Mobility & Connectivity
8. Canal Oriented Design
9. Quality Design
10. Public Art
11. Housing: Affordability & Aging in Place.
12. Green Stormwater Infrastructure & Green Buildings
13. Clean Energy

14. Climate Change & Resilience to Extreme Heat
15. Public Health Friendly Planning

For each element, an introduction and goals are provided. This is followed by the list of specific planning and design principles to achieve the goals. Illustrative images for some the principles are also provided in the plan.

Further Information

Information on Character Area Planning can be found at the website: <https://characterareas.tempe.gov/>. Additional information including examples of previous Character Area plans, and the 2021 Public Meeting Series, summary of public surveys, and recorded videos of meetings are also available on the website. Questions can be directed by email to characterareas@tempe.gov.

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