

Tempe Adaptive Streets Implementation Design Guide

Neighborhood and Business Focus Group Meeting

November 10, 2021 12pm-1:30pm

Zoom Meeting

1. Meeting Attendees

The City Project Manager, Bonnie Richardson, kicked off the meeting and invited the Consultant Team members to introduce themselves. The Consultant Team includes Kimley-Horn, with team members Amy Garinger and Samantha Erdmann, and Y2K Engineering, with team member Eileen Yazzie.

There were 22 participants at the focus group who were representative of the following groups:

- Neighborhood Representatives – 6 participants
- Business Community (including Downtown Tempe Authority) – 4 participants
- ASU – 2 participants
- Developers – 9 participants
- Multimodal Advocacy – 1 participant

In addition to the participants, the following City of Tempe staff were represented:

- Transportation
- Engineering
- Communications
- Neighborhood Services

2. Goals of the Focus Group

- Introduce the Adaptive Streets project and why the City is pursuing it
- Introduce the definition and concept of adaptive streets
- Gather input from diverse perspectives: Neighborhoods, Businesses, Developers, Special Events
- Gather input on needs that might drive adaptive streets in Tempe
- Gather input on what elements/aspects of an Adaptive Streets Guidebook would be most beneficial

3. Project Purpose

The purpose of the Adaptive Streets project is to identify low-cost strategies that leverage multi-functional street space to respond to changing demands of the public right-of-way.

Adaptive Streets strategies are categorized as:

- Rapid response strategies to adapt streets
- Temporary and low-cost measures

This Adaptive Streets project is not intended to be a COVID-specific initiative, but the concept of Adaptive Streets has been particularly relevant during the COVID pandemic, where demands on public right of way rapidly changed, with increasing needs for more room for walking and biking, safer streets, more room for community gathering and recreation, and placemaking opportunities.

Interactive Poll Question 1:

Because Adaptive Streets is a need-driven concept, participants were asked what their primary need or demand for roadways within the City:

Aligned with your representation, what is most important to you about the City's roadways? Mentimeter



Themes from participants' input to this question:

- Safety for all users, including dedicated space for bicyclists and pedestrians and safe crossings
- Multimodal options
- Shade and reducing heat island effects
- Transit access
- Equity, with examples around having quality and accessible choices for people of all agencies and abilities
- Walkability and complete streets
- Efficient traffic flow with minimal congestion
- Limiting speed and cut thru traffic on neighborhood streets
- Most important is that my employees can get to and from work in a timely manner.
- Reducing heat island
- Connectivity between facilities and between modes
- Aesthetics

Summary of follow up discussion:

- Safety will be a primary focus of adaptive street strategies – safety should never be compromised for any user
- Adaptive Streets need to be attractive (or, at a minimum, not unattractive) even though they are temporary.
- Need to clarify and define as part of the project the timeline for adaptive streets – how long can something be temporary. And will there be a process in place to take something temporary and make it permanent?
- Adaptive street strategies are not limited to closing streets – there are many adaptive street applications we will consider that do not include closures, and some strategies will have no impact on vehicular capacity of the roadway.

Interactive Poll Question 2:

For Tempe, what is the greatest/most prominent need that might drive the consideration for implementing adaptive streets?



Note: the larger the word, the more times it was mentioned by participants

4. Project Process and Overview

The project is on a nine month schedule, beginning in Fall 2021 and concluding in Summer 2022.



- ‘Discover’ phase: has been completed and included a review of current City processes and projects and discussions with City staff about the opportunities for adaptive streets.
- ‘Analyze and Create’ phase: we are currently gathering input from stakeholders and the public related to needs and possibilities for adaptive streets. This will help us finalize our definition of adaptive streets and start identifying an adaptive street strategy toolbox. There will also be the first round of public meetings in this phase, which will occur in January 2022.
- ‘Evaluate’ phase: evaluate public input and other data inputs to identify specific adaptive street strategies that are most applicable to Tempe and identify the conditions and situations where they are applicable.
- ‘Integrate’ phase: assemble all inputs and develop Adaptive Street Implementation Design Guide.

The following process and inputs will help define the adaptive street strategies that are acceptable and appropriate in Tempe:

- Driven by specific needs identified by the community
- Informed by existing City plans and initiatives (ex: Vision Zero, Mobility Hubs, Climate Action Plan)
- Informed by the land use and community contexts of the proposed location – there may be some strategies that are applicable only in certain contexts or conditions
- Adaptive streets will not replace existing City policies around traffic control, parking, special events, etc., but will integrate them and may provide suggestions for the City to consider.

5. Interactive Feedback and Discussion

A virtual, interactive application called Google Jam Board was used to provide participants opportunities to provide feedback on a variety of questions that will help define the direction of the adaptive streets project.

Question 1: The Adaptive Streets Guide will be driven by changing needs and demands on the Public Right-of-Way. From your perspective, what do these needs look like?

Vehicle	Pedestrian	Bikes and Micromobility	Transit	Public Space	Businesses	Special Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slower speeds • Safer driving • Better traffic flow/efficiency • Narrower streets or roads that feel less wide and open • Safer intersections • Traffic calming / management • Attractive medians & curb extensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk improvements • Shared street signage • More sidewalk space • Shade and cooling • Safe crossings • Universal accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected/ separated bike facilities • More dedicated bike facilities • Bike share • Space for micromobility/ scooters so they do not interfere with pedestrians or bicyclists • Safer/dedicated crossings for bicycles • Wayfinding to destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated bus lanes • More frequent service • More bus stops • Bus stop aesthetics and amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public art • More places for social gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exterior services and dining • Pop-up retail • Pop-up dining • Sidewalk vendors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabling and tents • Public space for gathering • Less parking in event areas • Wayfinding / information about event activities/ services

Summary of follow up discussion:

- Make sure the project defines specific use cases for adaptive streets – this should not duplicate or reinvent existing programs like those existing for block parties or neighborhood traffic calming.
- Need to define ‘temporary’ – how long
- These are meant to be easy to implement, inexpensive, and temporary, recognizing safety is always the first priority.
- Funding for adaptive streets needs to be considered
- Don’t quite understand how this isn’t event or short term situation (like COVID) driven, since it’s not meant for testing future changes. A lot of safety, shade, etc changes needed are not event driven. At least from a neighborhood perspective. For a special event, neighborhoods can’t use this unless they have a way to pay for insurance.
I live close to Four Peaks and as they occasionally use adaptive streets they have expanded to use the sidewalk and use water filled barricades to separate the patio from streets but there is only 3ft for ped passing, the bike lane was eliminated and no signs warning bicyclists that the bike lane is closed. Bikes are getting honked at and arguing with motorists. I am concerned that someone will get hit. (This will be looked into and see how it ended up like this and fix it. ADA is very important to the City and is a must. We have standards of 4-5 ft sidewalk access and ADA ramps.) Last time this happened was Oktoberfest and I spoke to the manger. He had a permit but did not know what to do about the bike problem. The info needs to be given to the businesses as well.
- We will not change existing processes but will be working with them and guiding people to them.
- How about just tabulating the existing activities and requests and start a program around what current needs are?
- We got a postcard for permit approval for a food truck that was going to be there for a week. That worked to tell the neighborhood.

Question 2: See below for the proposed definition of Adaptive Streets in Tempe. What are your thoughts?

Adaptive Street strategies are applications that can be implemented temporarily and at a low cost to adapt the public right-of-way, including roadways, sidewalks, streetscapes, and reallocate space different to address a changing mobility and community need.

- Consider shortening the definition and use bullets to add details
- Need to identify and include a timeframe for an adaptive street installment
- Need to think about how frequently an area might receive an adaptive street treatment
- Need to consider if any streets or types of streets are considered ‘off limits’ to this type of treatment
- Need to address and recognize other Tempe processes in place. Not to replace processes, like Special Event permits.
- Identify how emergency access is being considered
- Define if/how adaptive street strategies might transition to permanent installations/improvements
- Include in definition that there must be universal access in the public right-of-way
- Adaptive streets should be explicitly about changes that make alternative modes (walking, biking, transit) easier
- Define who is able to suggest and implement adaptive streets
- Define the approval process, including who might weigh in on decisions before installing anything (adjacent businesses, landowners, emergency services, etc.).

- Make sure that the approval process does not get bogged down so that the process can still be relatively fast to create change
- Clear signage related to adaptive street installations so that all users understand how to use/navigate them
- Should consider how temporary closures or restrictions from adaptive streets could be provided to outlets like Google Maps or Waze to help keep vehicles from being navigated there

Question 3: Considering Tempe’s diverse needs, which three categories do you think are a priority?

Each participant received three votes to select the categories that they thought should be a priority:

Vehicle	Pedestrian	Bikes & Micromobility	Transit	Public Space	Businesses	Special Events
4 votes	10 votes	9 votes	5 votes	6 votes	2 votes	7 votes

Note: while areas of priority will help provide direction to the project team on where to provide the most detailed information, all categories will be addressed in the Design Guide

Question 4: What should be considered to make the Adaptive Street Guide usable to you?

- Identify a funding source; consider a neighborhood or business grant or sponsorship program to help fund
- Define a request and approval process and make sure that it does not take so long that it negates the intention of being a rapid response
- Make sure toolkit/design guide works appropriately for a diversity of street types and contexts and provide information about which solutions work best on which streets/land uses/event types
- Make it clear how different stakeholders (residents, businesses, special events coordinators) can use the guide
- Use illustrative pictures to go along with descriptions; consider including links to videos that may depict these types of installations in other places so people can get a feel for what is being proposed
- Avoid jargon
- Make sure process is equitable so that all neighborhoods, businesses, landowners can use it, regardless of their influence or status
- Identify items that the City owns that can be borrowed for events (like the tool trailer to use for home improvements)
- Make sure there is adequate promotion of the design guide and adaptive street process so that everyone knows about the resource

6. Next Steps

- Developing an Adaptive Street Toolbox
 - Identify a comprehensive list of adaptive street strategy options that relate to the various types of needs that have been identified by the City and this stakeholder focus group.
 - Vet the needs and the strategy options with the public via public meetings and digital survey
- Public Outreach Activities
 - Transportation Commission; Development Review, Sustainability, & Neighborhood Advisory Commissions – January 2022
 - Public Meetings and digital survey – January 2022