

SOUTHERN SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN VISION THEMES AND PRIORITIES WORKSHOP SUMMARY

May 7th and 8th, 2008

Southern Scottsdale is comprised of strong family-focused neighborhoods, rich in character and history, and connected through recreation, community activities, and local gathering places. It is a unique community with viable retail and entertainment that serve both residents and visitors. Neighborhoods are founded on strong community values, diversity, and sustainability (Community Outreach March, 2008).

Introduction

The Southern Scottsdale Community Area Plan project encourages the active participation of business and property owners, community members, and organizations to develop a community-based vision for the Community Area Plan. To kick-off the project, an intensive Vision Week that provided a variety of participation opportunities ranging from Business Cafes to a Community Visioning Ice Cream Social was held from March 26th to March 29th 2008. Following these workshops, a draft of fifteen Vision Themes were developed.

In order to further define and refine these themes, two Vision Themes and Priorities Workshops were held on May 7th and 8th, 2008.

Vision Themes and Priorities Workshops

Two Vision Themes and Priorities Workshops were held on Wednesday, May 7th and Thursday, May 8th, 2008 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Each workshop started with a short presentation on what was heard during the March 2008 vision week process and a summary of the themes that were developed from the combined community input exercises. Following the presentation, participants were divided into groups of 5-6 participants to review each of the vision themes in more depth. Each group was asked to present their prioritized findings back to the entire group. Following the presentations, each participant had on

SOUTHERN SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN Vision Themes & Priorities Worksheet			
VISION THEMES	PRIORITY (YES/NO)	WHY / WHY NOT?	TOP 5
Balance Growth			
Maintain and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods			
Develop a Strong Economic Core			
Strengthen Community Identity			
Cherish Open Space and Recreation			
Focus on Local Mobility			
Encourage Walkability			
Promote Well Designed Architecture			
Celebrate the Neighborhood			
Encourage Green Building and Developments			
Retain and Encourage Variety in Housing Options			
Promote Tourism			
Create Community Gathering Places			
Maintain Safe Neighborhoods			
Support Education			

Group Worksheet

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additional opportunity to “vote” on the vision themes and assign their priorities for Southern Scottsdale by placing dots on a large wall chart next to the vision themes they felt were personally most important to them.

Wednesday, May 7th, 2008

Over 80 participants attended Wednesday’s Vision Themes and Priorities Workshop. Priorities identified varied from group to group, however “Maintaining and Enhancing Existing Neighborhoods” ranked most often as either the top priority or among the top 5 priorities.

Group Summaries

Group 1: This group’s top priority is to maintain and enhance existing neighborhoods with code enforcement listed as being one way to do so. Also important to this group was housing variety, education (through neighborhood volunteers), safety, strong economic core (including neighborhood shopping, McDowell Road.) and community health/walkable neighborhoods.

Group 2: The top two priorities for this group included sustainability and the mixed-use evolution of McDowell Road, however all of the priorities were seen as important.

Group 3: This group’s top priorities included developing a strong economic core, education, housing variety, mobility, and walkability. All other vision themes were marked as priorities with the exception of balanced growth and tourism; these were identified as not being a priority. Also, noted under the safe neighborhood vision theme was the need for more police and the desire for the substation to stay open.

Group 4: The vision themes that were important to this group were maintaining strong, safe, identifiable neighborhoods, strong economic core, open space, gathering spaces, and green and well designed architecture. This group identified balanced growth as important; however, it was not a priority because they felt there is already a good balance in Southern Scottsdale.

Group 5: This group’s top priority was to maintain a well-defined sense of community. Also, important to this group was encouraging non-auto transportation, such as pedestrian walkways, bicycle paths, and bus routes, promoting market/affordable housing diversity and developing public/community



Participants at the Vision Themes and Priorities Workshop

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gathering spaces. A strong economic core was desired along the Scottsdale and McDowell Road corridors.

Group 6: This group's priority was maintaining and enhancing existing neighborhoods. In particular, they would like better noise control. They would like developers to pay impact fees and to have specific hours of construction adhered to. The group did not want to see zoning/ upzoning changes and they would like clean up of the superfund/superfund sites, encouraging green building in the area. In addition, they would like there to be a cooperative effort between the community and schools in support of education, mentioning top heavy administration – no taxes.

Group 7: This group's top priorities were developing a strong economic core and encouraging green building and developments. Other priorities included balanced growth, housing variety and maintaining and enhancing safe and identifiable neighborhoods. Two vision themes, which were identified as not being priorities of this group, include promoting tourism (which they further identified as a City function) and support education (labeled "school district neighborhood schools"). Remaining vision themes are marked as priorities but ranked lower than the priorities already listed.

Group 8: This group listed all 15 vision themes as priorities with the top 5 listed in the following order: local mobility, maintain/enhance neighborhoods, housing variety, strong economic core and education support. The group would like to preserve the ability to drive their own cars, but have a choice of public transportation such as buses and trolleys. They would like to preserve density in neighborhoods, but would like to see more retail and shopping. They believe that if all of the above visions were met, the support of education will follow.

Group 9: This group's top priority was to maintain and enhance existing neighborhoods – citing examples of existing neighborhood grocery stores and affordable restaurants with outdoor seating. Other priorities included developing a strong economic core, sidewalks with parkways, safe neighborhood with police presence to deter crime, and celebrating the neighborhood by maintaining historic and western theme in South Scottsdale – Indian School to Tempe border.



Participants placing dots on their top priorities

Individual Priorities

Vision Themes	# dots
Develop a Strong Economic Core	33
Maintain and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods	30
Retain and Encourage Variety in Housing Options	21
Maintain Safe Neighborhoods	20
Cherish Open Space and Recreation	19
Focus on Local Mobility	17
Encourage Walkability	15
Support Education	14
Encourage Green Building and Development	13

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Balance Growth	11
Celebrate the Neighborhood	9
Strengthen Community Identity	8
Promote Well Designed Architecture	8
Create Community Gathering Places	6
Promote Tourism	2
Other Priorities	
Sustainability	11
Traffic Reduction	7
Evolution	5
Shopping Diversity	4

Thursday, May 8th, 2008

Thursday's Vision Themes and Priorities Workshop had over 20 people in attendance. Three small groups worked to prioritize and better define each of the vision themes and priorities. Two themes were prominent in this workshop; "Balance Growth" and "Develop a Strong Economic Core".

Group Summaries

Group 1: The top priority for this group was to develop a strong economic core. Other top priorities included balance growth (which they feel is out of control), local functional mobility, maintain/enhance existing neighborhoods while taking into consideration historical significance, and encourage walkability for circulation/health. Other vision themes were priorities as well, with the exception of strengthening the community identity, which the group did not feel was a priority and felt this is the community's responsibility to do.



Group 2: This group listed their top 5 priorities as neighborhoods, economics, urban vitality and diverse architecture, integrated buffer zone and education. Also noted as priorities were balanced growth and mixed use/businesses.



Group 3: This group identified their top 6 priorities as balance growth, strong economic core, local mobility, housing variety, safe neighborhoods and support of education. Two other Vision Themes were identified as priorities, these include open space/recreation and promoting tourism.

Individual Priorities

Participants working in groups

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Vision Themes	# dots
Balance Growth	11
Develop a Strong Economic Core	10
Focus on Local Mobility	7
Promote Well Designed Architecture	7
Maintain and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods	6
Support Education	5
Encourage Walkability	4
Create Community Gathering Places	4
Cherish Open Space and Recreation	2
Promote Tourism	2
Strengthen Community Identity	1
Retain and Encourage Variety in Housing Options	1
Celebrate the Neighborhood	0
Encourage Green Building and Development	0
Maintain Safe Neighborhoods	0

Revised Vision Themes and Priorities

The following vision priorities and themes are based on the dialogue and comments received at all eleven Vision Week community activities and have been further refined based on comments during the two Vision Themes and Priorities Workshops. Participants generally felt that there was a high degree of overlap amongst the original list of vision themes, and requested that the themes be merged to create a shorter list that represented their collective vision for Southern Scottsdale. The revised list represents these collective ideas and provides a more concise snapshot of the input received.

Develop a Strong Economic Core with Community Gathering Places

Southern Scottsdale's economic centers should be upgraded and revitalized. Economic development should strive to retain small and local businesses that serve the area's residents and visitors, as well as enhance itself as a destination location and stand out as a regional attraction. As economic development occurs in Southern Scottsdale, new development and redevelopment should create areas where people can both shop and gather. Opportunities for these gathering spaces could include the neighborhood corner store, coffee shop, public plazas, and open space. These gathering places can help to develop and promote the community identity, through community events, community partnerships, and cultural diversity.

Focus on Local Mobility and Walkability

Southern Scottsdale should continue to develop a well-connected and integrated transportation system by creating inter-modal connections with trolley, bus, bicycle, pedestrian, and auto. By strengthening the connectivity between these modes of transportation, the increased movement and flow would benefit many facets of Southern Scottsdale. Additionally, the traveling conditions should be improved for user comfort and appeal, including providing more shade, pedestrian friendly streetscapes and amenities, bus shelters and pullouts, and creating a more effective traffic flow.

Maintain and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods and Identity

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Southern Scottsdale is composed of a series of strong, safe neighborhoods - rich in history and character. Southern Scottsdale should celebrate its unique strength in neighborhoods, further defining each one's boundary and identity, as well as continuing to develop a strong educational system with top-ranking schools, neighborhood community centers, and educational programs for all ages. In neighborhoods that need maintenance assistance, Southern Scottsdale should provide incentives for rehabilitation. Other neighborhoods would benefit from historic preservation and beautification projects, including streetscape, infrastructure and public art. In turn, these actions would assist in eliminating the perceived stigma of Southern Scottsdale.

Balance Growth

In order to address Southern Scottsdale's growth, the City should practice good planning through a balanced mix of height, density, and distribution of traffic. This should be accomplished through focusing growth on major arterials, while preserving and maintaining established residential neighborhoods and open space/ recreation. In addition, Southern Scottsdale should retain and encourage a variety in housing options in order to support Southern Scottsdale's teachers, city workers and firefighters, and to recapture older adults. A variety of both rental and for sale housing options should be promoted and distributed throughout the city.

Promote Well Designed Architecture and Sustainability

As Southern Scottsdale grows, new and rehabilitated buildings should be contextually compatible with surrounding architecture. These buildings would have a sense of continuity by using design guidelines and standards while being of high quality. Rehabilitated buildings should protect the historic heritage of Southern Scottsdale. Additionally, new architecture should include historic character and preservation including the 1950's and 60's style single-family housing and the desert setting, while incorporating new innovation in design including green building (through the City's Green Building Program), energy conservation, native landscaping, and xeriscaping.

Conclusion

With over 100 participants in two days, the vision themes developed during Vision Week were reviewed and fine-tuned to further reflect community priorities. These themes and priorities will be further refined through online survey and virtual open house (located on the City's website) <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/planning/areaplans/CAPsouthern.asp> throughout the summer months. Also, throughout the summer and early fall, Advance Planning will be offering business owners the opportunity to participate in business oriented focus groups to help identify future policies to guide the City in its efforts to enhance economic activity in Southern Scottsdale. The combination of these and future outreach exercises is to ensure that the overall vision for the Southern Scottsdale Community Area Plan is truly a community-based plan.