

SOUTHERN SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN CAFÉ EXERCISES SUMMARY

October 14th and October 29th, 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 (Gathered from Community Outreach participants March, 2008).

Introduction

The Southern Scottsdale Café Exercises represent a portion of the public outreach process associated with the Southern Scottsdale Community Area Plan (CAP). Beginning in spring 2008, the outreach process asked residents and stake holders to identify themes they felt were important for expressing a future vision for the Southern Scottsdale Community.

To address this outcome, Advance Planning held a series of two Café Exercises and a continuous Online Café Exercise to engage the community in a conversation about the area's future. During October, fifty eight people participated in the two real time cafe events, and fourteen people participated in the online event. The results of this discussion can be found in the following summary of the responses offered by these participants.

Business & Property Owners Focus Group Questions

Economic Vitality

In terms of business mix, what is working well in Southern Scottsdale? What is missing?

Working well....

- Lowe's
- Grocery stores
- ASU – SkySong good addition to the local community
- Schools
- General Dynamics
- Hayden Road landscaping
- Single family housing stock

Needs to be improved....

- Support for small businesses
- Grocery stores (Fresh and Easy, Trader Joes)
- Lack of restaurants
- General Service businesses (dry cleaners, small groceries, etc.)
- Concern about vacant businesses
- Vacant auto dealerships on McDowell Motor Mile
- Lack of offices
- Development of more tourist attractions
- Employers offering more employment opportunities
- Allowance for greater building density
- Availability of more rental housing like apartments
- Some (limited) big box stores Target etc.

Where is reinvestment needed in Scottsdale? What possible methods can be used to achieve this?

Participants identified the following;

Where reinvestment is needed?

- Scottsdale and McDowell Roads;
- Scottsdale Road from McDowell to Osborn Roads;
- 68th Street and McDowell Road is a key area;
- Along the Motor Mile;
- Los Arcos Crossing has become a “ghost town”; and
- Arterial commercial strips need to be refreshed.

Possible methods to achieve reinvestment:

- Offer tax incentives for new development;
- Promote businesses that adaptively reuse existing structures;
- Create a “Center for Green Technologies” (outlet for a new green industry);
- Façade improvement program;
- Micro business loans;
- Fund Matching;
- Provide incentives or more density;
- Reduce development fees; and
- Increase mobility options.

What specific steps can the City and private sector take to insure a strong economic core for Southern Scottsdale?

Participants suggested the following steps:

- Tax incentives, permanent and/ or graduated;
- Provide seed monies for startup businesses;
- Subsidies;
- Enhance the character of major roadways with “greening” of the corridors;
- Encourage merchants to invest in and improve the appearance of their store fronts and landscaping;
- Southern Scottsdale needs to be different and distinguished from other homogenous areas;
- Zoning regulation adjustments;
- Encourage more housing with a variety of price points; and
- Provide Mixed Use incentives.

MOBILITY AND WALKABILITY

What is working well in Southern Scottsdale as it relates to mobility? What needs to be improved?

Working well....

- Trolley system is a great start/ asset to the community;
- Expanded Trolley service especially the neighborhood connectors;
- Availability of parking; and

- Greenbelt and the bicycle paths within it.

Needs to be improved....

- A better variety of transportation options (light rail);
- Need interesting and unique destinations to encourage people to walk, bike and ride the Trolley;
- Auto traffic during commuting times; and
- Intersection light timing is off.

How do you get in and around Southern Scottsdale today? What could change in 5 or 10 years?

Participant responses included the following:

- All of the participants use the auto for major transportation needs;
- Some walk on occasion and would be willing to try the Trolley;
- Many felt there are not enough convenient transportation options, besides their auto;
- Some respondents felt that by providing bus turn out bays at each stop would alleviate traffic;
- Express bus with dedicated lane;
- More frequent transit service especially in hot summer months;
- Wider paths along Indian Bend Wash;
- Expanded Trolley service; and
- Light rail service to Southern Scottsdale at least to SkySong.

What approaches would you suggest the City take to help support this future vision?

- Commitment and follow through on plans that support the Southern Scottsdale vision;
- Continue to inform citizens and increase educational opportunities;
- Attempt to design for the pedestrian and not necessarily for the vehicle;
- Follow the example of other successful cities that have adapted to changes;
- Support for alternate transportation methods besides the automobile;
- Reductions in parking requirements and actual parking;
- Expanded and enhanced bus and trolley systems; and
- Support and expand public safety elements (police, fire).

NEIGHBORHOODS AND IDENTITY

How do you define/describe your neighborhoods and its identity?

Responses:

- Neighborhoods were particularly defined by the development or by school affiliation, in particular by people with primary school children. Examples like Sherwood Heights, Town home Complexes, and etc.
- Participants felt that the demographic was changing and evolving.

What do you like about your neighborhood? What needs to be improved?

?

Working well....

- Park system;
- Southern Scottsdale's location locally and regionally;
- Trolley system;
- Greenbelt and the pathways within.

Needs to be improved....

- Some businesses and neighborhoods need maintenance and beautification of their properties and structures;
- Businesses and public investment have not taken advantage of the location factor;
- Lack of public meeting spaces and places;
- Bus service and frequency;
- Density;
- More code Enforcement.

How would you like to see your neighborhood in twenty years and what steps can the City take to help make this happen?

Twenty year vision...

- Clean and neat alleys;
- Mixed-use developments that compliment single family neighborhoods;
- Community activities like music and festivals;
- Many public spaces for gathering and people watching; and
- Excellent transportation options.

Steps to make it happen...

- Provide incentives to developers with increased height and density;
- Provide incentives to existing homeowners and business owners for upgrading their facilities;
- Encourage new families and a diversity of people to move into older areas;
- Bring a new interest to older neighborhoods;
- Provide pocket parks and places to shop for necessities; and
- Make the community more pedestrian in nature.

LAND USE/ BALANCED GROWTH

**What land uses are most important to maintain the Southern Scottsdale Community?
What needs to be added?**

Land uses important to maintain...

- Greenbelt;
- Smaller businesses (retail and service); and
- Smaller scale parks and neighborhood gathering spots.

Land uses to add...

- Community gardening and Saturday markets;
- Smaller family owned stores and neighborhood serving businesses;
- Land uses that provide local economic stability;
- Build on Sky Song, the greenbelt and McDowell Corridor;
- McDowell Corridor will be a critical redevelopment area;
- Nice hotels;

- Tax generating businesses;
- Developments designed on a more human scale less autocentric; and
- Grocery stores/ neighborhood markets.

What type of housing do you think are most appropriate to be located in Southern Scottsdale and where?

- Diverse housing like single family detached dwellings, single family semi detached dwellings and multi-family dwellings; and
- Rental apartments and mixed-use developments.

What are acceptable building heights for Southern Scottsdale; are there places to consider additional heights; if so where?

- In some cases a maximum of three stories and along secondary arterials;
- Along major arterials at from four or five stories to around 11 stories (Amtrust Building) in height, this would allow for incentives to development; and
- Less height near single family neighborhoods.

ARCHITECTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

What are your favorite buildings in Southern Scottsdale and why? What are your least favorite buildings and why?

Favorite Southern Scottsdale Buildings...

- Papago Plaza, “it’s funky”;
- Granite Reef Senior Center;
- Hacienda del Rey;
- General Dynamics (1950’s international style); and
- Coronado High School.

Least favorite Southern Scottsdale Buildings...

- Empty auto buildings;
- Goodyear Tire;
- Strip retail (Circle K, 7-11);
- Empty strip malls; and
- Vacant Basha’s.

(Buildings not in the Southern Scottsdale C.A.P. Boundary that were mentioned frequently)

- Valley Ho, Mondrian, Hotel Indigo because they are nicely done (Favorite);
- The buildings on Craftsman’s Court;
- Old Town Area;
- City hall, Library and the Hospital;
- Original Buildings on 5th Ave. and Main St.;
- Optima Camelview; and
- South Bridge and P.F. Changs (Least Favorite);

What is your future vision for Southern Scottsdale's character and design (How do the buildings look? Do they use Green building techniques? What will they be: residential, office, mixed use? Is it pedestrian friendly-easy to walk from place to place?)?

Outreach participants identified their collective vision for Southern Scottsdale's character and design as mixing old and new development with an emphasis on quality and longevity. This mixture should provide for a more pedestrian oriented city with a vibrant lifestyle and a diversity of housing and business opportunities that secure long term economic stability.

What suggestions do you have for the City to take to help accomplish your vision?

- Provide businesses with incentives;
- Develop strong relationships with developers and the citizens alike;
- City must listen to all parties involved, not just the most vocal few;
- A small sales tax increase could be tolerated to move toward more parks, better public transit options and more code enforcement;
- Quality over quantity;
- Value Added Tax (VAT) (through legislation);
- Unity among council, mayor and staff;
- Utilize the flip a strip idea;
- Encourage the diversity in and between neighborhoods;
- Encourage green building and industries; and
- Enhance code enforcement.

Conclusion

The results of this café public outreach process have been summarized. This information and the findings of the Southern Scottsdale Existing Conditions Report will be used to draft goal and policy statements and implementation strategies for the Southern Scottsdale CAP. Collectively, these goals, policies, and strategies will help set a path to guide the future development of Southern Scottsdale for the next ten to twenty years.