



Greater Airpark Community Area Plan Public Outreach Interim Summary Report



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Introduction

The Greater Airpark Community Area Plan is a project initiated by the Scottsdale City Council that is managed by the Advance Planning Division of Planning & Development Services with assistance from numerous city departments and the community. The process encourages the participation of business and property owners, community members, and organizations to develop a community-based vision and policies for the Greater Airpark Planning Area.

Because of the Greater Airpark Plan's importance to the future of the area and city as a whole, the public outreach program was designed to engage a broad cross-section of Greater Airpark stakeholders in the development of the plan. The guiding principles of the public outreach program are as follows:

- * Conduct a process that is open and transparent;
- * Engage a broad audience and enhance public awareness of the planning effort and its importance;
- * Educate the public on the Greater Airpark Community Area Plan policy document;
- * Guide the development of a community-based vision for the area;
- * Acknowledge past efforts and show how they affect the future of the Greater Airpark; and
- * Conduct a formal and professional public participation process.

Phase One, Visioning and Data Gathering, of the project produced a comprehensive understanding of the community's priorities and visions. The complete result of each public outreach method is available on the City's website at:

<http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/planning/areaplans/GreaterAirparkCAP.asp>

Phase One included the development of the vision for the Greater Airpark, in addition to getting an understanding of the needs and issues in the area. Phase One included a variety of ways to get community input, including:

- * Presentations and discussions were conducted with business organizations, community groups, and city boards and commissions beginning in March 2008 and continuing throughout the process;
- * Business and Property Owner Cafes brought the business community together on May 21, 2008 to discuss the current market, business environment, and their visions for the area;



Community members and city staff worked together to create vision themes for the area.



- * A Community Visioning Workshop on May 22, 2008, asked the Greater Airpark and surrounding community to identify community treasures, challenges and their visions for the area's future;
- * A Visioning Survey which asked for respondents' issues and assets of the Greater Airpark and their visions was available on the city's website and by mail or fax to Greater Airpark stakeholders between June and September 2008;
- * A Vision Priorities Workshop held on July 16, 2008, which invited the community to return to review, edit and prioritize vision themes developed in May 2008, and a virtual version of this event was available on the city's website between July and October 2008; and
- * A series of focus groups on themes such as land use, mobility, design and economics, was held in September 2008 to further refine and examine issues and ideas mentioned in earlier public outreach efforts. A virtual version of these events was also available on the city's website between September and December 2008.

Phase Two, Data Analysis, of the project, which is underway at the time of this report, involves the development of a background report for the Greater Airpark that examines all of the current conditions in the area. The project team will use the information collected and analyzed in the background report, in addition to all of the community input collected in Phase One, to create a draft plan in Phase Three.

Phase Three, Draft Plan, will take all of the information gathered to date and a draft plan will be created based upon that data. The community will be asked to comment and revise policies in the plan. The plan will also be taken to sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council.

Phase Four, Final Plan, will take all of the gathered input and revise the Draft Plan into a final form.

Phase Five, Implementation, will involve an the incorporation of the final plan into the update of the city's General Plan.

This report summarizes Phase One's commonly agreed-upon visions within the Greater Airpark community. Information in this report and the Greater Airpark Existing Conditions Report will serve as the basis for the development of draft policies in Phase Three of the process.

Common Visions

The following vision themes, together with representative supporting comments from the community, reflect the dialogue and comments received in Phase One of the project process. They represent the major themes that were heard from the community and provide a snapshot of the input that many community members share.

Enhance Mobility and Wayfinding

While access and location are the greatest assets of the Greater Airpark, internal circulation and mobility should be enhanced. Greater Airpark should continue to develop a well-connected transportation system with internal wayfinding and signage as well as better access to public transit, an internal transit circulator, park-and-ride lots, bicycle facilities and pedestrian pathways. Defining gateways and entrances into the Greater Airpark, as well as the enhancement of connections to major destinations within the area, are imperative to achieving this vision.

“[My ten year vision involves] timely mass transportation routes [that] feed in and out of the Airpark from various park-and-ride locations within the greater Phoenix area. One or two major transportation centers evolve within the Airpark as spoke and hub interfaces on a local basis. A stronger partnership exists with the city of Phoenix along the Scottsdale Road interface with the Airpark and pedestrian movement from one side to the other is much improved. The retail components of the Airpark are more defined and include opportunity for pedestrian, bike, and other access from any point in the Airpark. Some small and meaningful open space is offered as focal points for walking or biking in the airpark. Shaded and lighted pedestrian walkways are common and can tie any one area with the other, even across the busiest of streets.” –Participant vision statement, 2008.

Sustain Existing Neighborhoods

The Greater Airpark should continue to maintain its internal and surrounding stable neighborhoods and neighborhood open spaces. Transitions between residential and business areas in and around the Greater Airpark should be preserved and enhanced, providing a mutually supportive environment where both residents and businesses thrive. In addition, the City should continue to encourage dialogue among area residents, businesses, property owners and developers to ensure that that environment is created.

“If you could combine the best of a pedestrian-friendly and eclectic downtowns like Mill Street in Tempe with the high-tech, high-quality environment at Kierland and attract top tier companies to base themselves within the airpark proper while still keeping the single-family home environments on the periphery, that would be ideal.” –Participant vision statement, 2008.

Encourage a Variety of Land Uses and Activities

People provide the lifeline to the businesses in the Greater Airpark. Encouraging a variety of land uses in the area helps make Greater Airpark a destination where people can live, work, and play. The incorporation of mixed-use development helps to create an around-the-clock active and lively place, as well as helps to encourage a sense of community and security. Adding more cultural and entertainment activities to the area will further enhance the area's appeal. New developments and activities in the Greater Airpark, however, should also be compatible with and compliment existing land uses.

“[My vision is...] Visitors come from around the world to look at the marvelous relationship and natural interaction of commercial, residential, shopping and aviation interests.” –Participant vision statement, 2008.

Support and Expand Business Diversity

The diversity of businesses in the Greater Airpark makes it the viable and successful location that it is today. Business diversity should be preserved and expanded, including the addition of new restaurants, retail, and recreation opportunities. Programs that assist with business start-up, retention and attraction are all key components to achieving this vision.

“In ten years, the area will be a combination of several large anchor businesses supported by a majority of mid/small companies and retail shops that support the employees and businesses of the area.” –Participant vision statement, 2008.

Sustain and Enhance Aviation

In 1942, the Scottsdale Airport began as a military training facility. Today the Greater Airpark is one of the largest employment centers in the region and a major economic driver for Scottsdale. The City should continue to sustain and enhance its roots in aviation by preserving and promoting growth of aviation-related businesses, continuing to support and maintain the Scottsdale Airport, and promoting aviation-related entrepreneurial opportunities.

“My vision is that everything that has been built meshes nicely with the airport.”
–Participant vision statement, 2008.

Encourage Recreation and Open Space

Neighborhood parks and open space are important to the success and well-being of the community. Continuing to maintain and expand parks, recreation, and open space opportunities is a priority for the Greater Airpark community. In addition, recreational land uses (i.e. gymnasiums, health clubs, and recreational facilities) should continue to be encouraged in the Greater Airpark for the overall health and well-being of the community.

“[In my vision,] lots of open space is preserved, with low-water shade trees cooling and cleaning the surrounding areas. There are off-street bicycle paths and parks, and a walking mall - like in European cities - for the shopping needs. There are no mega stores.” –Participant vision statement, 2008.

Promote Sustainability and “Green” Design

The Greater Airpark should be a global model for sustainability and green design. The City should encourage property owners to incorporate “green” construction, landscaping, and sustainable renovation practices for residential and business development. Additionally, the Greater Airpark should promote sustainability through multi-modal public transit; diverse modes of transportation (such as bicycling, walking, and trolleys); pedestrian connectivity; recycling programs; economic diversity and high-tech infrastructure, such as wi-fi.

“[The Greater Airpark should become] a self-sustaining esoteric metropolis focused on the use of renewable energy providing a harmonious home and work environment with no need for personal transportation within the Greater Airpark community.”

–Participant vision statement, 2008.

Enhance Identity and Architecture

Quality architecture is highly valued in the Greater Airpark, and the area should become a model for innovative architecture in the Valley. It should be obvious when a person is in the Greater Airpark area and when they are not. To achieve this vision, architecture, landscaping and marketing tools should reflect the diverse and technological atmosphere created by area businesses and aviation, as well as luxury which is often associated with northern Scottsdale.

“I dislike the train of office buildings down the freeway. They are all the same level, same material and are monotonous. I want to see more interesting buildings. Additionally, all of the shopping areas look the same off of the freeway. Wal-Mart and Costco are not what Scottsdale is. In contrast, I love Kierland Commons. It has the spirit of something thriving.” –Participant statement, 2008.

Maintain and Enhance the Area’s Regional Role

The Greater Airpark should continue toward becoming a well-designed regional, state and national destination that attracts new businesses and visitors from various backgrounds such as business travelers, families, seasonal residents, year-round permanent city residents, regional residents, and vacationers. Along those lines, the area should continue to provide a significant economic base for Scottsdale and the Valley, but it should also look to new, innovative market niches to further the success of the area.

“[In my vision, the Greater Airpark] functions as it's own micro-city that has creative spaces that intentionally attracts international ultra high-end consumers and business people, has live/work spaces for artists, has walkable areas with artistic designed shaded sidewalks (or no sidewalks, more European layout) - a light industrial area that feels like a small city - think Seattle's Pike Street fish market with the addition of fiber optics and other high-tech areas for professionals to interact in casual, community areas. Less reliance on retail, more focus on office and boutique hotels (tourist and business).”

–Participant vision statement, 2008.

Conclusions

The success of the Greater Airpark Community Area Plan will be measured in part on successfully bringing people together to discuss their visions for the future of the area. Although not all ideas can be agreed upon within the community, the results of the public outreach show that there are several areas in which the community can come together in common support. The information summarized in this report, along with the Greater Airpark Existing Conditions Report, will serve as the basis for the development of a draft plan in Phase Three of the process.