



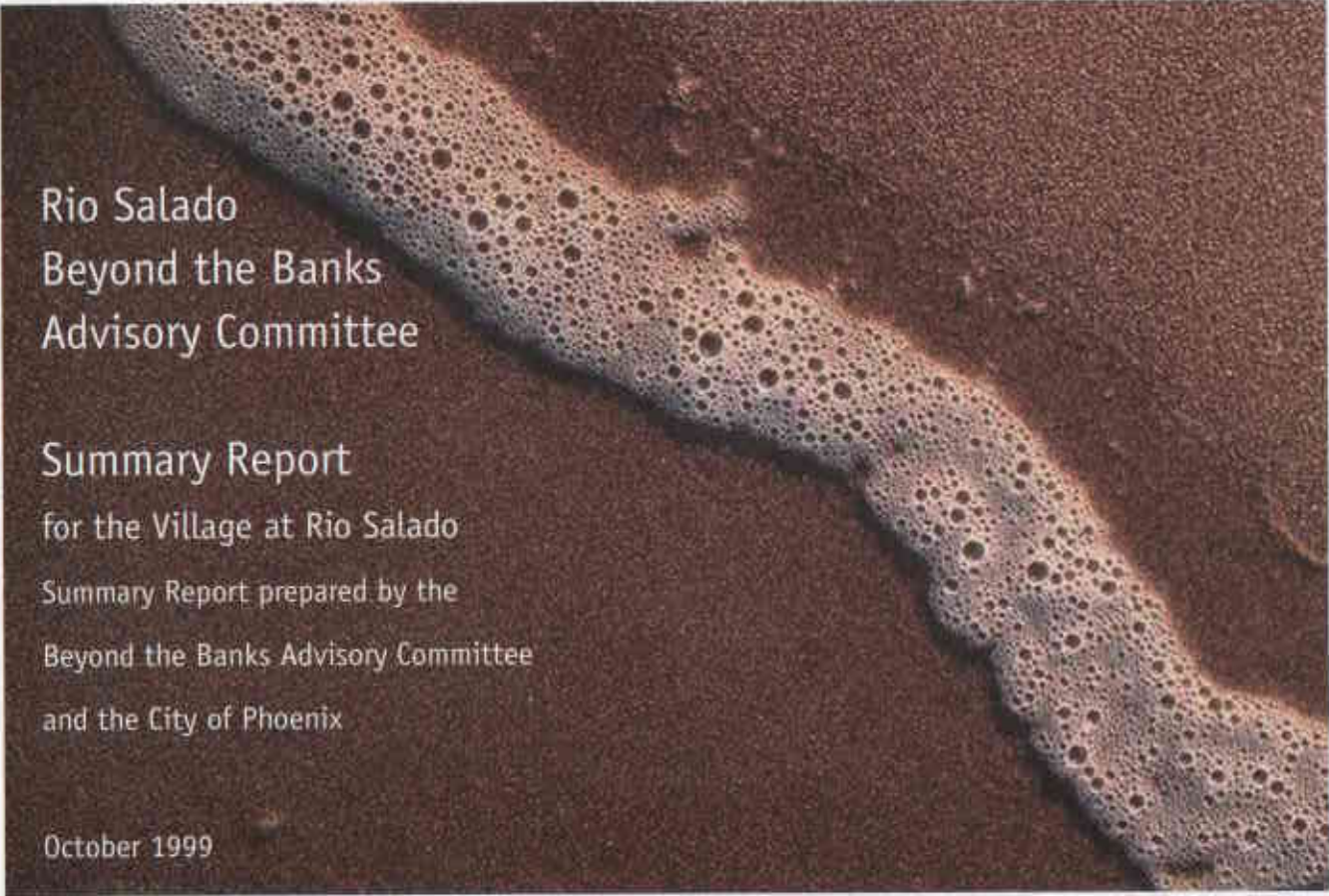
Rio Salado



Beyond the Banks



Summary Report

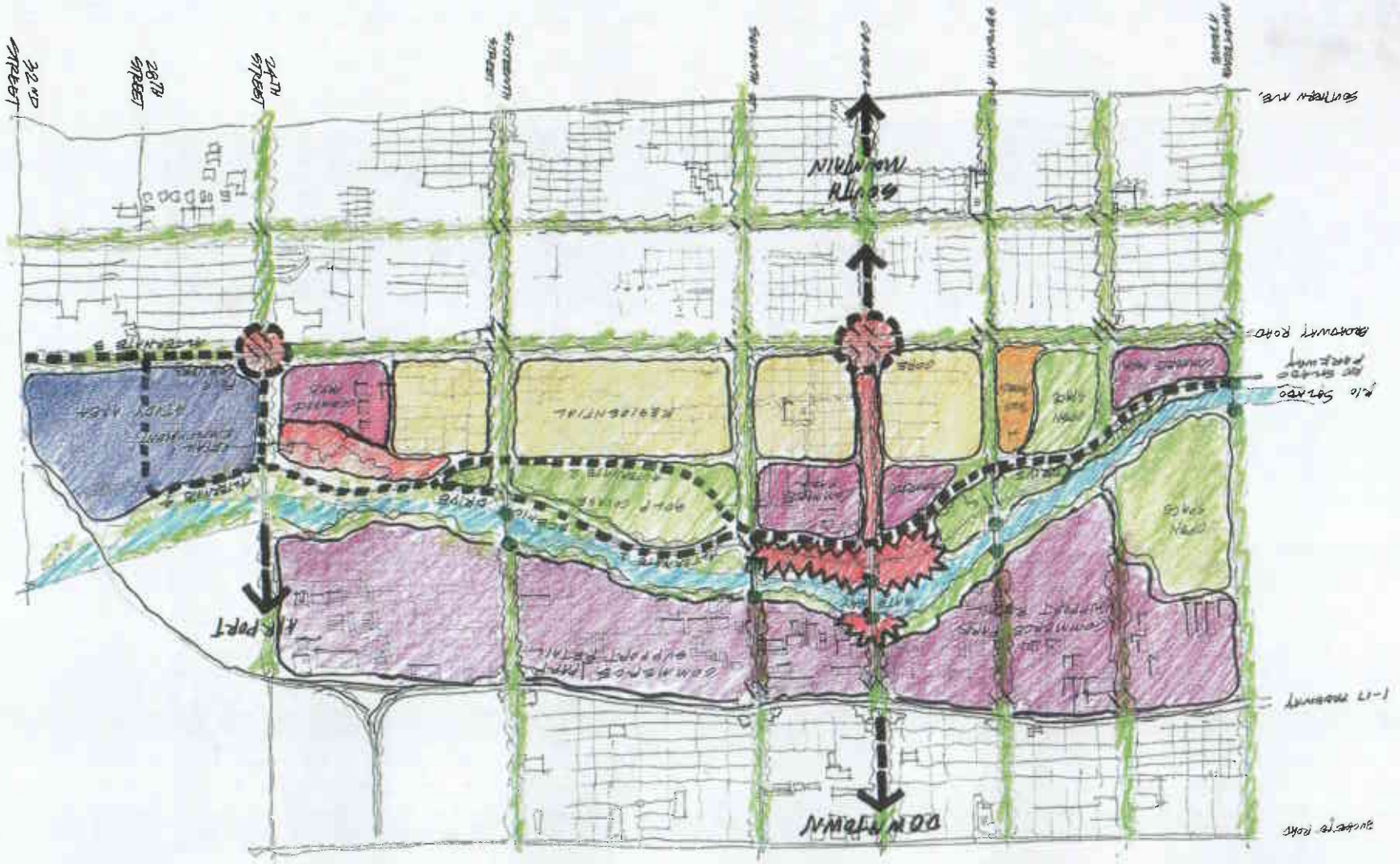


Rio Salado
Beyond the Banks
Advisory Committee

Summary Report
for the Village at Rio Salado
Summary Report prepared by the
Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee
and the City of Phoenix

October 1999

Illustrations by Christy Ten Eyck



INTRODUCTION

Construction of a habitat restoration project in the Salt River, or Rio Salado, in the heart of Phoenix will begin in the spring of 2000. For nearly a century this River has been dry as a result of dams built in the early 1900's. The restoration project will transform the riverbed to provide a variety of amenities including recreation opportunities, improved flood management, riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat.

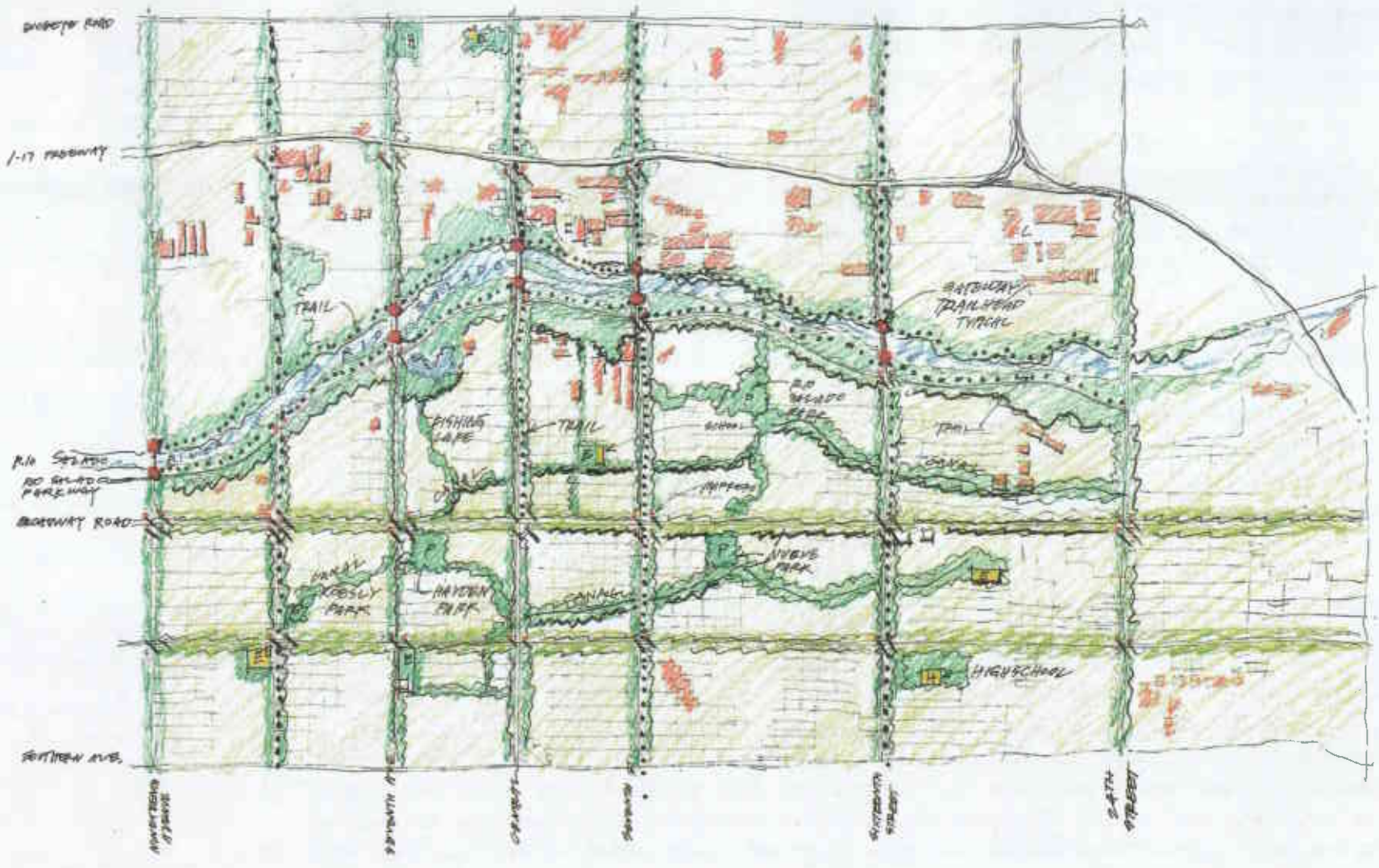
Members of local organizations, Phoenix residents, and city staff recognize that the opportunity presented by the habitat restoration project is one that is unique in the history of a city. This opportunity is extraordinary in both its timing, and in its location within the Phoenix metropolitan area. Today's economy is the strongest the Valley has experienced in many years. The central city, where restoration of Rio Salado begins, is in particular need of investment. As more and more natural desert is lost to sprawl, a new desert riparian habitat can serve as a magnet for infill development in an area long in need of revitalization.

In November 1998, the Phoenix City Manager created a committee to look into the opportunities presented by the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project. As a result, a group of citizens supported by city staff members formed the Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee. This 28-person Committee spent countless hours volunteering their time over a one-year period to become familiar with the Rio Salado project, explore potential community revitalization opportunities and ultimately develop a vision for the area "beyond the banks" of the Rio Salado project. The Beyond the Banks area surrounds the Rio Salado project and is bounded by I-17 Maricopa Freeway to the north, 32nd Street to the east, Broadway Road to the south and 19th Avenue to the west. This committee has adopted the name "Village at Rio Salado" for this area. Since this group has operated as the Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee throughout the entire visioning process, however, the area will be referred to as "Beyond the Banks" in this report.

Over the course of the Committee's monthly meetings, they received presentations on the Rio Salado project and toured the Beyond the Banks area. The Committee saw first-hand the blight in the area, including dilapidated and environmentally degraded areas and non-conforming land uses and zoning. They also reviewed relevant Beyond the Banks demographics such as population, ethnicity, housing, age distribution, income levels and airport noise contours. The group also took into consideration land use plans that are currently being developed for other areas around the Rio Salado. This information provided them with the background they needed to develop a vision for community revitalization and development, and to define the goals, objectives and ultimately, recommendations on how to implement the vision for the Beyond the Banks area.

THE RIO SALADO BEYOND THE BANKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the
Rio Salado Beyond the Banks
Advisory Committee
is to develop a long-term vision
for community revitalization of
the Phoenix Salt River Corridor
that can occur as a result of
the Rio Salado Project
and to identify
implementation strategies
for the Committee's vision.



THE RIO SALADO HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Shortly after the turn of the century, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation placed dams along the Salt and Verde Rivers, providing a reliable supply of water year-round, for the Salt River Valley. While the dams provided a reliable water supply for the valley, they created a dry, barren river filled with sand and cobbles. The land along the riverbed has become lined with landfills, sand and gravel pits, and industrial areas interspersed with a few older neighborhoods.

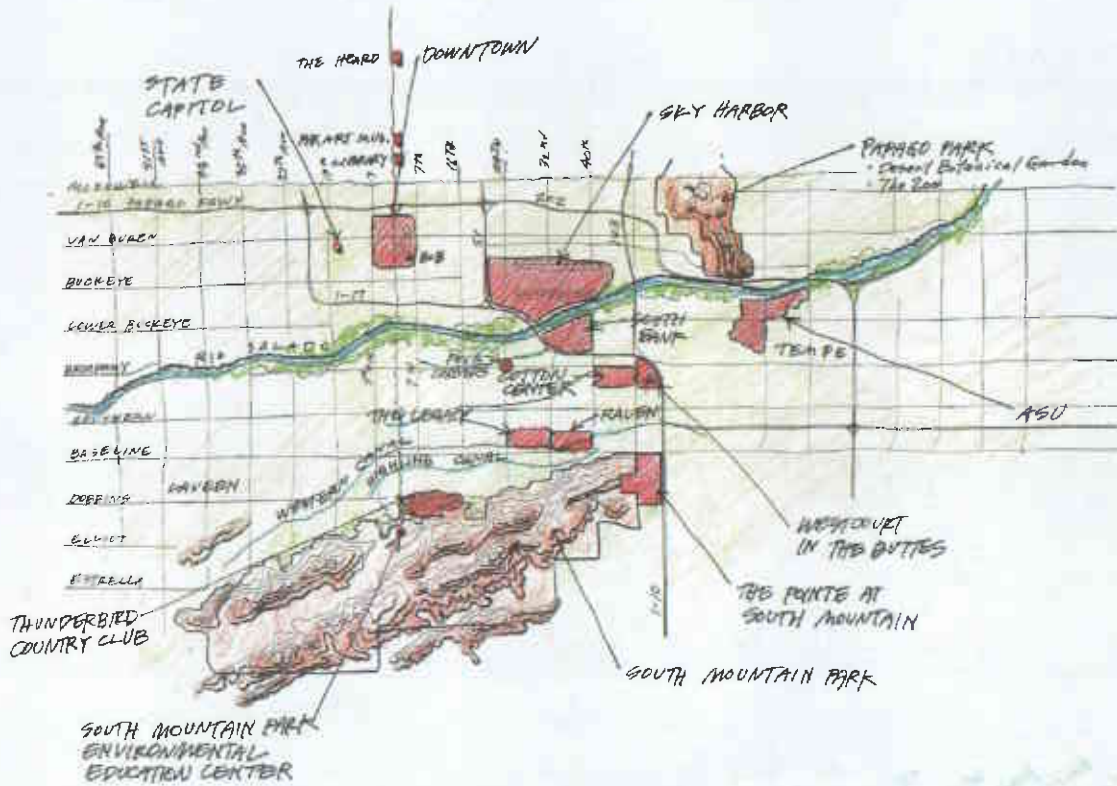
In 1993, the City of Phoenix was successful in a request for a restoration study of the Salt River. After review of the area by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, they determined that there was enough federal interest in the project to partner with the City of Phoenix on the \$80 million dollar Phoenix Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project. In August 1999 President Clinton authorized the matching federal construction funding for the Rio Salado project by signing the Water Resources Development Act.

The project itself will cover a five-mile bank-to-bank stretch of the Salt riverbed from the I-10 Bridge to 19th Avenue. The project will create a 550-acre desert river habitat consisting of streams, ponds and wetlands, stands of cottonwood and willow trees, mesquite groves, and desert grasslands and shrubs.



Specific elements of the project include:

- A flood management feature – a low flow channel constructed in the bottom of the river, designed to pass the more frequent low flow releases, and storm events.
- Wells and a water delivery system to bring water to the trees and other vegetation, wetlands, canals, ponds and streams.
- Habitat elements (food, water, shelter, space) for wildlife.
- Three public parking entrances and information facilities.
- Environmental education center.
- Recreation and interpretive trail system.



WHERE IS THE RIO SALADO?

The Rio Salado riverbed runs through the heart of Phoenix. The location of the Rio Salado enhances prospects for revitalization. It is minutes from Downtown Phoenix, near Sky Harbor International Airport, surrounded by key transportation hubs with Interstates 10 and 17, and numerous cultural activities, business districts and entertainment venues.

THE BEYOND THE BANKS VISION

The Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee has developed a rich, diverse vision for community revitalization that will occur as a result of the Rio Salado project. In this vision, the Rio Salado project will serve as a catalyst for transforming the area adjacent to the project into places where people not only work and live, but also places where people from all over Phoenix will come to enjoy the experiences that have been created.

The Committee believes revitalization Beyond the Banks should encourage diverse and balanced uses; provide safe, family-friendly opportunities for recreation and relaxation; and preserve and promote neighborhoods, a sense of identity, and an appreciation for Phoenix's history. To implement this vision, the Committee has developed goals for the following 10 categories: Access, Ambience, Education, Employment and Economic Development, History, Housing, Public Participation, Recreation, Safety and Transportation.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee has developed a set of goals, objectives, and strategies to define and direct implementation of its Vision. These can be obtained in their entirety by contacting the city's Rio Salado Project Coordinator at (602) 262-4717 or by visiting the City of Phoenix website at www.ci.phoenix.az.us. The Committee's goals, objectives, and strategies are summarized in the following recommendations. The recommendations are arranged alphabetically, rather than in priority order, according to the categories of goals established by the Committee.

Access

Revitalization Beyond the Banks should encourage and enhance access for the public to the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project, not restrict it.

Revitalization should comply with the mandates in the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ambience

Revitalization adjacent to the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project should create attractive, natural spaces for public enjoyment that extend and enhance the natural setting provided by Rio Salado.



Design standards should be developed so that as revitalization occurs, the Rio Salado corridor is transformed in accordance with the Committee's Vision. An enforcement mechanism should be developed to ensure design standards are met.

Education

Nearby schools should be encouraged to develop science and environmental curricula that involve a first-hand observation of the ecological systems of the restored River.

Public/private partnership efforts should be initiated to develop an environmental educational center adjacent to the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration to facilitate hands-on learning opportunities for students throughout the Phoenix area.

Employment and Economic Development

Business ownership opportunities created by economic development should be available for both small and large businesses.

Appealing "showcase" projects near the river emphasizing attractive development should be initiated to kickstart revitalization and demonstrate the opportunities available Beyond the Banks.

History

Revitalization Beyond the Banks should highlight the indigenous and social history of Phoenix's development along the River from historic to recent times.

A survey of special places with historical value should be conducted in neighboring communities to facilitate their recognition and renovation and to provide design themes for future revitalization.

Housing

Revitalization should reflect compassion for existing residents and increased opportunities for home improvement as an option for long-term residents of owner-occupied dwellings.

Incentives should be provided to create better housing and encourage infill development, including better access to shopping, schools, and employment.

New housing should provide a continuum of housing, both in terms of cost and with a balanced mix of single and multi-family dwellings.

If relocation is necessary, opportunities to relocate in the same vicinity should be provided if possible, and assistance should be provided to ensure that people are not left worse off economically than before they moved.

Public Participation

Nearby residents, businesses, communities, and youth should be actively involved in planning and decision-making that affects the Beyond the Banks area.

Public participation should not only provide input to the revitalization process but should encourage active support and a long-term commitment to fulfilling the vision for Beyond the Banks.

Recreation

Recreational opportunities adjacent to the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project should provide activities for both residents and visitors, ranging from active and athletic pursuits to more passive and contemplative ones.

The Rio Salado project should serve as the impetus for creating more family-oriented recreational and entertainment opportunities Beyond the Banks.

Opportunities to connect existing trails and open space corridors to the Rio Salado Project should be pursued. New trails should provide pedestrian-friendly access to the Rio Salado from surrounding neighborhoods.

Safety

Public health, safety, and security should be a priority concern in any planning for revitalization.

The location and proximity of residential areas in relation to industrial areas should carefully consider the health and safety of residents. In areas that are already predominantly industrial, this consideration may ultimately argue for relocation of residents as the most viable means of providing safety. In other cases, relocation of industrial activities, particularly if they represent non-conforming uses, may be the most viable option.

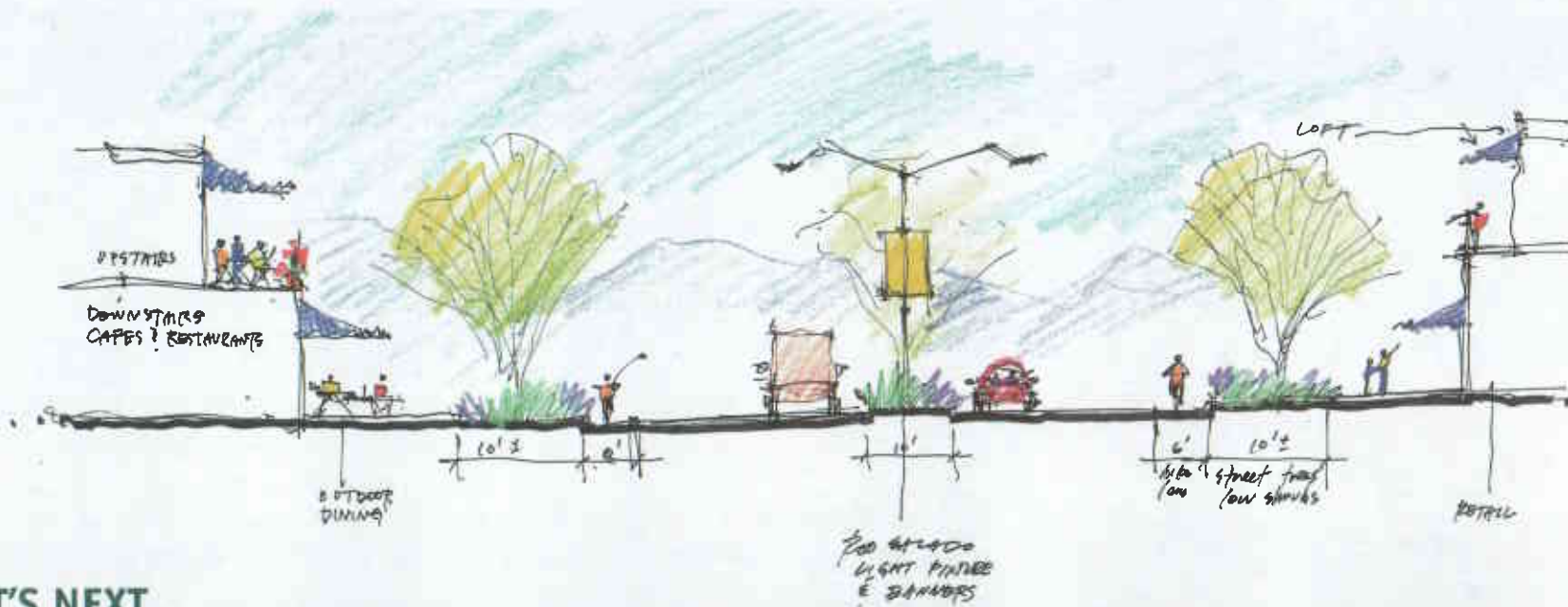


Transportation

Creating pedestrian and bicycle friendly opportunities for accessing and enjoying the Rio Salado Project should be given a high priority in transportation planning.

Better public transportation to the project area should be provided from all areas of the city.

A Rio Salado Scenic Drive should be created that complements the natural river setting and encourages slower vehicular speeds and non-vehicular uses.



WHAT'S NEXT

Excavation of the Salt River channel has started. The Maricopa County Flood Control District has partnered with the City of Phoenix and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to begin construction of the low flow channel by spring 2000.

Spring 2000	2001	2002	2003
Low Flow Channel Construction begins	Habitat Construction from 19th to 7th Avenue begins	Habitat Construction from 7th Avenue to 16th Street	Habitat Construction from 16th Street to I-10 Bridge

THE RIO SALADO GATEWAY PROJECT

Located at the intersection of Central Avenue and the Rio Salado, this area will serve as a "gateway" into the heart of the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project.

The first phase of improvements in the Gateway area will begin in December 1999 and will include interpretive gardens, graded walks, ramadas, trails, a new bicycle lane on Central Avenue, directional signage and links to public transit.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

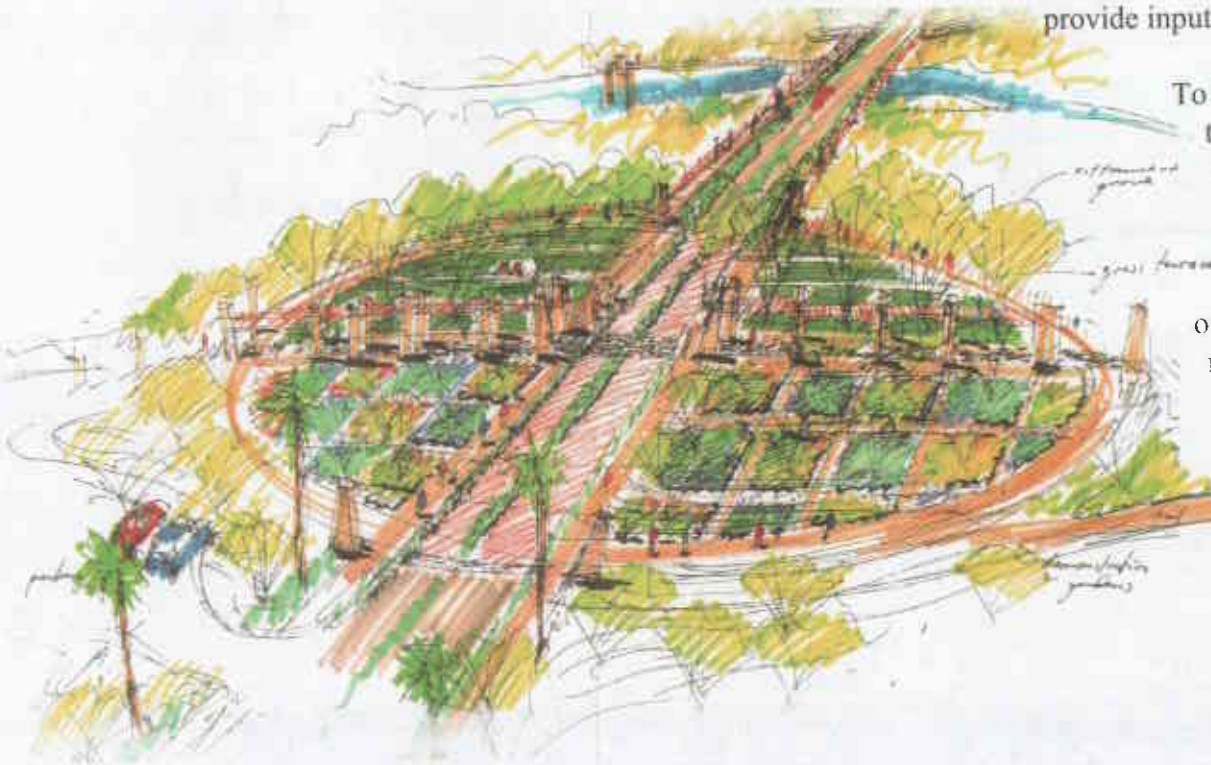
The vision that the Beyond the Banks Committee has created will become a reality only with ongoing involvement from the city and residents alike. It is a vision open to interpretation and as such it is crucial to the success of the project to not only seek input, but incorporate it as well. There are many opportunities to participate in the future of the project and help ensure that the vision is implemented.

Public comment is strongly encouraged, as it has been throughout the entire visioning process of the Committee. This commitment to public comment will continue into the new millennium as a number of public workshops will be conducted within the Beyond the Banks area. Through these public meetings the public will have the opportunity to learn more about the Committee's vision, goals and objectives and, the process that got them there. Most importantly, guests will have the opportunity to provide input and comments about the vision.

To oversee the implementation of the vision and to ensure that the recommendations are put forth as requested, a citizen committee will be formed to provide advice on community revitalization activities that occur in the Rio Salado Beyond the Banks area. Volunteer opportunities will also be available throughout the design and construction phases of the Habitat Restoration Project as well as the implementation of the Beyond the Banks Vision.

Comments, questions and suggestions are strongly encouraged. Comments can be forwarded to Karen Williams, the city's Rio Salado Project Coordinator.

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Phoenix, AZ 85003
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BEYOND THE BANKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The members of the Beyond the Banks Advisory Committee represented a wide range of sectors of the Rio Salado Beyond the Banks area. These members met for a year developing a vision and recommendations that captured the essence of their respective concerns and issues. Below is a list of Committee and city staff members that worked collectively to make this process successful.

Citizen Members

Allied Tool and Die – Michael Jordan
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality – Juanita Guidry
Copeland
Arizona Homebuilders Association (formerly) – Tom Simplot
Arizona Opportunities Industrialization Center – Gene Blue
Audubon Society – Dwayne Fink
Bank of America – John Salgado
Barrios Unidos Neighborhood – Arthur Luera
Bethesda Community Baptist Church – Rev. James Preston
Calmat of Arizona – Lee Edmonson
Chicanos Por La Causa – Manuel Gauna
Combined Fraternal Organization of South Phoenix – Michael Johnson
Community Excellence Project (CEP) – Charlene Howard
CEP, Economic Development Committee – Mike DeMuro
Elliott Homes – Greg Brownell
Friendly House – Luis Ibarra
Griggs Paint & Silk Screen – Don Commisso
Neighborhood Resident – Frances Castillo
Parks Board (formerly) – Flo Eckstein
Phoenix Community Alliance – Donald Keuth
Phoenix Revitalization Corporation – Julian Sodari

Phoenix Union School District – Josephine Pete
Roosevelt Action Association – Mark Jamieson
Salt River Project – Bruce Hallin
South Mountain Chamber of Commerce – Carlie Billen Back
Sunbelt Holdings – John Graham
Target Area B – George Young
United Metro Materials – Archer Shelton
Valley Forward – Diane Brossart

City of Phoenix Support Staff

Sheryl Sculley, Assistant City Manager
Karen Williams, City Manager's Office
Peter Atonna, Planning Department
Steve Branca, Community and Economic Development
Gina DePinto, Public Information Office
Sarah Hall, Parks, Recreation and library
Carol Johnson, Planning Department
Walt Kinsler, Engineering and Architectural Services
Kate Krietor, Neighborhood Services Department
Carlos Morales, Neighborhood Services Department
Donn Stoltzfus, Environmental Programs
Rene Vera, Parks, Recreation and Library

Facilitation

Lewis Michaelson, Jason Associates
Heather Curry, Katz & Associates