

# REINVENT PHOENIX

## SUSTAINABILITY VISION FOR THE **GATEWAY** TRANSIT DISTRICT

Partners:



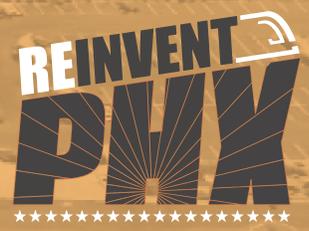
City of Phoenix



St. Luke's Health Initiatives



GLOBAL INSTITUTE  
of SUSTAINABILITY  
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY



# Vision Report for The Midtown District, Phoenix

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The following summarizes the Midtown Transit District Vision Report with specifics on economic development, health, housing, green systems, mobility, and land use. Three areas with broad community support for future change receive more detailed treatment. The summary concludes with a brief analysis. This vision builds on rich inputs from residents, workers, business owners, and landowners to describe Reinvent Phoenix's Midtown Transit District in 2040. This vision was gathered from comments by over 150 residents in 4 mapping activities, 2 workshops, and more than 20 stakeholder meetings. Further details and supporting documentation can be found in the report proper and its appendix.

## District Vision

In 2040, the Midtown District hosts renovated and repopulated high-rise buildings on Central Avenue, a rejuvenated Park Central, and pedestrian-oriented independent businesses along 3rd Street. Mobility in the District revolves around walking, bicycling, and transit options that include the light rail and its circulator. People live close to where they work, shop, and run errands, and meet their daily needs without a car. Overall, Midtown in 2040 aspires to a series of objectives:

- **Economic Vitality through Strong Local Businesses** – Buy-local programs and small-business development loans have made Midtown an incubator for local, independent businesses, while high rises are home to regional businesses that support innovation and job growth.
- **Walkable and Bikable Neighborhoods** – Midtown residents enjoy pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to regional shopping destinations.
- **Cool Neighborhoods** – Tree canopy cover and cool pavements keep temperatures low.
- **Diverse Employment and Training Opportunities** – University-community partnerships, small business support, and co-working spaces provide training options for skills and entrepreneurship.

- **Saving Money through Conserving Natural Resources** – Adaptive reuse of vacant high-rises and under utilized low-rises make construction costs manageable. New construction reuses materials to capitalize on the existing building stock and infrastructure.

- **Reduced Transportation and Infrastructure Costs** – Development is mostly mixed-use, with residents living close to where they work and shop. Away from single-family neighborhoods, buildings range 10–20 stories, hosting workers and residents along the light rail. Jobs and housing near the light rail reduce car use and transportation costs, and maximize returns on infrastructure investments.

## Areas of Transition vs. Stability

After pooling nearly 150 stakeholder responses, the following areas of preservation and stability emerged:

1. Existing residential neighborhoods, including historic districts
2. Existing medical institutions, including St. Joseph's
3. Existing cultural resources, including The Heard Museum
4. Educational institutions, including St. Mary's Catholic High School
5. Iconic high-rises including the IBM Punch Card building

From that same process, three areas with strong opportunity for transitions were selected:

1. Park Central Mall
2. The Central Avenue Corridor
3. The 3rd Street Corridor

## Key Synergies – An Interconnected District

Across the District, capitalizing on “solution multipliers” will drive the strategy building process and focus

implementation efforts in the District. Key synergies in 2040 include:

- Building Heights up to 20 stories / Lane Replacement or narrowing / Circulator / Pedestrian Malls and Promenade / Business in Mixed Use Building: Tall buildings and reduced lanes and street widths boost demand for circulator busses, which connect to promenade(s) and businesses in mixed-use buildings.
- Adaptive reuse / Co-working spaces / Strong local businesses: Formerly vacant high-rise office space has been adaptively reused for co-working spaces and smaller more affordable offices for local businesses.
- Energy efficient home / Adaptive reuse: Adaptive reuse provides opportunities for improved energy efficiency.
- Economic Development / Buy-local initiative / Pedestrian Malls and Promenade: Economic development through a buy-local initiative keeps money in the District and increases foot traffic.

“there are no bus turnouts at transfer points; there should be bus turnouts wherever there is a light rail stop...” [SE2]. Fewer roads will increase reliance upon public transit, but that infrastructure and maintenance can be costly in its own right.

The 3rd Street Corridor vision includes adaptive reuse of buildings to house small, independent businesses [VESC], and turning the area into a pedestrian and bicycle promenade. Unfortunately, reducing traffic may only divert it to 7th Street, increasing that road’s already high traffic

## Sustainability (with lead indicators and targets)

Park Central’s redesign will make the space more walkable and bikable [VESC]. Neighboring Thomas Road had two votes for lane replacement for every lane narrowing vote to: “slow traffic down because it is difficult and dangerous to cross the street [VPS; W1].” These street designs, in addition to support for circulator busses, discourage cars and encourage pedestrians and bicyclists, which improves public health [VESC; Vision Pool]. Stakeholders also approved of transitioning some surface parking to mixed-use mid- and high-rises to support the “businesses in mixed-use” vision option and reduce transportation and infrastructure costs.

For the Central Avenue Corridor, participants voted for building heights up to 20 stories [VPS] because it: “uses less energy and resources” [VPS; W1]. Tall buildings in walkable areas with transit access require fewer cars and associated infrastructure (e.g. roads, parking spaces, and gas stations). Smaller roads and less parking will feedback into increased pedestrian traffic and reduce infrastructure maintenance costs. However, one resident pointed out:

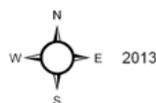
# Correspondence to Scope of Work

Scope of Work – Guiding Question	Corresponding Chapter
Which areas within the district should be changed? Why?	Chapter 3.2 (Introductory Sub-Chapter) – This chapter presents results from satellite events in the Midtown
Which areas within the district should be preserved? Why?	District that identified transition areas, as well as provides stakeholders’ and residents’ justifications for why these areas were selected.
What types of changes (within the land use, housing, economic development, mobility, green infrastructure, and health element framework)?	Chapter 3.1 – This chapter presents the district-wide vision for the Midtown District (according to stakeholders and residents). Each sub-chapter details the changes for the most relevant elements.
Where should each type of change occur?	Chapter 3.2 – This chapter specifies desirable changes for the three transition areas within the Midtown District. Each sub-chapter details the changes for one specific transition area.
Which changes are of highest priority?	Chapter 3.2 – This chapter specifies which changes received the highest priority scores or support for the three transition areas within the Midtown District (based on the visual preference survey and the visually-enhanced sustainability conversations).
Which properties should develop at greater heights and intensities? How much greater? Where?	Chapter 3.2 – This chapter specifies which properties should develop at greater heights and intensities in the three transition areas within the Midtown District (based on the visual preference survey).
Sustainability Outcomes	Chapter 3.5 – This chapter summarizes a sustainability appraisal of key elements of the Midtown District vision.  However, unlike in the Gateway District vision study, the visioning methodology adapted for the Midtown District vision study makes sustainability outcomes the main reference point throughout the study (Chapter 2.1).

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

## 1.1. Profile of the Midtown District

Lying just north of Downtown Phoenix, Midtown is bounded by 7th Avenue to the west, 7th Street to the east, Indian School Road to the north, and McDowell Road to the south. The parcels on the north side of McDowell, including the Phoenix Art Museum, are not included in the Reinvent Phoenix Midtown District.



### Reinvent PHX Midtown District Landmarks



Midtown can be conceptualized as four distinct quadrants. The northwest quadrant (north of Thomas and west of Central) is home to many high-rise buildings, Park Central Mall, and St. Joseph’s Hospital, the District’s largest employer. The southwest quadrant is a single-family residential area, including Willo and Encanto, two of Phoenix’s most prominent historic neighborhoods. The southeast quadrant features a diverse mix of land-uses.

Historic neighborhoods, such as Alvarado and Los Olivos share the quadrant with high-density multi-family housing, big box retail, commercial space, and cultural institutions. The northeast quadrant also features a mix of land uses. High-rises line Central Avenue, and most of the land between Central and 3rd Street is commercial. East of 3rd Street is predominantly residential, with a mix of older single-family homes and newer multi-family units. Table 1

Table 1: District data estimates based on 2010 census tract data

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>NE</b>
Median age	40	45	45	33
Male/female	57/43	55/45	59/41	55/45
Average household size	1.75	2	1.75	2
Under 18	18%	8%	8%	18%
Elderly (65+)	12%	6%	20%	10%
African American	15%	2%	6%	15%
White	75%	85%	85%	60%
Hispanic	25%	15%	15%	30%
Asian	8%	<1%	1%	2%
Native American	10%	<1%	<1%	10%
Speak Spanish	+10%	+10%	+10%	+10%
English only	+85%	+85%	+85%	+70%
Socio-economic				
Median household income	+\$38k	+\$60k	+\$60k	+38k
Unemployment	3-5%	1-3%	1-3%	5-9%
Below poverty line	30%	9%	9%	20%
Housing / vehicles				
Median house age	60s-70s	1950s	1950s	80s-90s
Owned mortgage	25%	+50%	+45%	30%
Renter occupied housing	+80%	25%	35%	+80%
Median rent	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750

The character of Midtown’s historic, single-family residential neighborhoods creates a unique sense of place, augmented by cultural institutions. The Heard Museum and the Phoenix Art Museum are located in and adjacent to Midtown, respectively. The Midtown Museum District Neighborhood Association covers the majority of non-historic neighborhoods in the District, and mostly consists of high-rises and multi-family developments around Central Avenue. St. Joseph’s Hospital is the

District’s largest employer and a significant property owner. Phoenix’s first shopping mall, Park Central, borders the hospital and houses some medical office facilities. St. Mary’s Catholic High School is the only large school in the District.

## 1.2. Profile of the Reinvent Phoenix Project

“Reinvent Phoenix” is a City of Phoenix project in collaboration with Arizona State University and other partners, and funded through HUD’s Sustainable Communities program. This program is at the core of HUD’s mission to “create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.” It specifically strives to “reduce transportation costs for families, improve housing affordability, save energy, and increase access to housing and employment opportunities” and to “nurture healthier, more inclusive communities” (Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, 2012). The program explicitly incorporates principles and goals of sustainability/livability (HUD/DOT/EPA, 2009):

1. Enhance economic competitiveness
2. Provide more transportation choices
3. Promote equitable, affordable housing
4. Support existing communities
5. Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

In this spirit, from 2012–2015, Reinvent Phoenix aims to create a new model for urban development in Phoenix. The goals for this new model are to improve quality of life, conserve natural resources, and maintain desirability and access for the entire spectrum of incomes, ages, family sizes, and physical and developmental abilities along the light rail corridor. Reinvent Phoenix aspires to eliminate physical and institutional barriers to transit-oriented development. To do so, the grant will work to catalyze livability and sustainability through capacity building, regulatory reform, affordable housing development, innovative infrastructure design, economic development incentives, and transformational research and planning.

Participatory research design ensures that a variety of stakeholder groups identify strategic improvements that enhance safe, convenient access to fresh food, healthcare services, quality affordable housing, good jobs, and education and training programs. Reinvent Phoenix focuses on six topical elements: economic development, green systems, health, housing, land use, and mobility (corresponding to the Livability Principles). These planning

elements are investigated in five transit Districts (from east to west and south to north): Gateway, Eastlake-Garfield, Midtown, Uptown, and Solano. Planning for the Downtown District of the light rail corridor is excluded from Reinvent Phoenix because of previously completed planning efforts, partly using transit-oriented development ideas.

Reinvent Phoenix is structured into planning, design, and implementation phases. The project’s planning phase involves building a collaborative environment among subcontracted partners, including Arizona State University, Saint Luke’s Health Initiatives, Discovery Triangle, the Urban Land Institute, Local First Arizona, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, Sustainable Communities Collaborative, and others. While the City of Phoenix coordinates these partnerships, Arizona State University and Saint Luke’s Health Initiatives are working with residents, business owners, landowners, and other relevant stakeholders in each of the grant’s five transit Districts. This effort will assess the current state of each District, as well as facilitate stakeholder expression of each District’s sustainable vision for the future. Finally, motivated actors in each District will co-create step-by-step strategies to move toward those visions. Transit District Steering Committees, formed in the planning phase, will host capacity building for their members, who will shepherd their Districts through the remaining Reinvent Phoenix phases.

City of Phoenix staff and Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company will lead the design phase. Designs for canal activation, complete streets, and form-based code will complement the compilation of a toolbox for public-private partnerships to stimulate economic development along the light rail corridor. The design phase will take its cues from the public participation in the planning phase, and maintain ongoing monthly contact with Transit District Steering Committees to ensure the visions of each District are accurately translated into policy and regulations. These steps will update zoning, codes, regulations, and city policies to leverage the new light rail system as a major asset. The design phase is crucial for preparing an attractive environment for investment and development around the light rail.

Finally, the implementation phase will use the city’s partnerships with the Urban Land Institute, Local First Arizona, and Sustainable Communities Collaborative to usher in a new culture of development in Phoenix. With the help of all partners, transit-oriented development can be the vehicle to renew Phoenix’s construction industry, take full advantage of the light rail as a transformative

amenity, and enrich Phoenix with a livable and dynamic urban fabric.

### 1.3. Objectives of the District Visioning Study

The visioning research activities summarized in this report were conducted as part of the Reinvent Phoenix grant, mandated to foster transit-oriented and sustainable development of urban communities in Phoenix. The objectives of the study were manifold:

i) To generate a vision of transit-oriented and sustainable community development, specific to the Midtown Transit District for the year 2040. The vision was expected:

a. To comply with a set of widely recognized quality criteria, including compliance with sustainability criteria, consistency, and specificity (Wiek and Iwaniec, 2013).

b. To spell out specific formations of the vision in transition areas within the Midtown District that are distinct and recognizable.

c. To be generated through a variety of public engagements in order to integrate local knowledge, values, and preferences, as well as create public buy-in for the visions created (willingness to contribute to the implementation).

d. To integrate several formats, including descriptions, visuals, narratives, and operationalized targets (for specific indicators) to resonate with different audiences and provide information that can be used for various subsequent activities.

e. To be applicable in the transformational planning effort of Reinvent Phoenix that integrates visioning, current state assessment, and strategy building (Wiek 2009; Johnson et al., 2011). This requires coordination with ongoing current state assessment activities (indicator selection).

ii) To create a network of key stakeholders and residents who are willing to stay involved in the subsequent Reinvent Phoenix activities and phases (design and implementation) in the Midtown District (Johnson et al.,

2011).

iii) To improve the process and content template for visioning research in the Reinvent Phoenix project that has been developed and applied previously (Gateway District) to further guide the Reinvent Phoenix visioning activities (Wiek, Iwaniec, et al. 2012).

iv) To enhance capacity in visioning and public engagement for planning professionals as well as for stakeholder groups and the public that can be utilized in subsequent initiatives and projects (Smith and Wiek 2012). This is critical for the bridging the recognized gap between planning research and practice (Krizek et al., 2009).

v) To enhance the capacity of students and faculty to collaborate in urban visioning and public engagement efforts that can be utilized in other research and teaching programs and professional projects (Hoyt, 2005).

# Chapter 2 – Visioning Research Process

## 2.1 Overview – SPARC Visioning Research Methodology

The methodological framework employed in this study is based on the so-called “SPARC” methodology – a novel sustainability visioning methodology that has also been adapted for urban planning research (Wiek, Iwaniec, et al. 2012). The SPARC methodology adopts and modifies various visioning methods currently in use in urban planning practice (Minowitz and Wiek, 2012). The acronym “SPARC” represents the first letter of key methodological features: Sustainability-oriented, Systemic, Participatory, Action-oriented, Relevant, Consistent. Here, we give a very short overview of the SPARC methodology. In the next chapter, we provide more details about the specific application in the Midtown District visioning study. For further details, consult the two working papers referenced above.

We use the term “vision” in this methodology to reference a state in the future deemed desirable. As such, visions are a subgroup of scenarios (possible future states) and demarcated from predictions (likely future states). Visions can be operationalized in specific (qualitative and quantitative) goals and targets (Wiek and Binder 2005; Machler et al. 2012). A vision is different from the process that leads to the achievement of the vision (which is relevant for strategy building). Accordingly, visioning is the process of creating a vision in a more or less structured and reproducible way, as opposed to scenario building (possible future states), forecasting (likely future states), and backcasting (pathways to desirable future states).

Today, cities around the world develop their sustainability visions to guide investments, policies, and action programs, or at least to promote a sustainability attitude. Similarly, the majority of cities in the United States and Canada have adopted visioning processes for their plan updates, often incorporating sustainability ideas; prominent examples include: Imagine Austin (Austin, Texas), New Orleans 2030, VisionPDX (Portland), Imagine Calgary, GoTo2040 (Chicago), 100 Year Sustainability Vision (Vancouver), Sustainable Montreal, Jacksonville Vision, and Rockford Plan for Sustainability (Rockford). These processes are usually characterized by large public engagement (>1,000 participants), a variety of public engagements settings (e.g., surveys, forums, workshops), and moderate data processing and research support.

The enthusiasm for visioning activities has not been fully matched with rigor and accuracy. The lack of a sound theoretical base and methodology has repeatedly been criticized (Shipley 2002; Van der Helm 2009; Wiek and Iwaniec 2012). Scholars and practitioners recognize deficits in visioning projects such as lack of public involvement, extractive engagement techniques, and insufficient data processing. The resulting visions are then flawed, lacking systemic relationships (‘laundry lists’), with inconsistencies and conflicts between vision statements, and reliance on insufficient sustainability concepts. The observed deficits can ultimately lead (and have led in the past) to planning that results in ineffective and conflicting projects and programs, misuse of public money, unintended negative consequences for society and environment, and subsequent public disappointment and dissatisfaction.

Wiek and Iwaniec (2013) have recently reviewed and synthesized the academic literature on quality criteria for developing desirable future states (visions), specifically for sustainability visioning – which is critical for the visioning activities within the Reinvent Phoenix grant (specific mandate). Sustainability-oriented quality visions resulting from participatory urban planning activities display ideally 10 synergistic quality features (Tab. 1). They ought to be: visionary, sustainable, systemic, coherent, plausible, tangible, relevant, nuanced, motivational, and shared.

Table 1. Key features of the quality criteria for sustainability-oriented visions

	<b>Quality Criterion</b>	<b>Key Features</b>
1	Visionary	Desirable future state; with elements of (aspirational) surprise, utopian thought, far-sightedness, and holistic perspective
2	Sustainable	In compliance with sustainability principles; featuring radically transformed structures and processes
3	Systemic	Holistic representation; linkages between vision elements; complex structure
4	Coherent	Composed of compatible goals (free of irreconcilable contradictions)
5	Plausible	Evidence-based – informed by empirical examples, theoretical models, and pilot projects
6	Tangible	Composed of clearly articulated and detailed goals
7	Relevant	Composed of salient goals that focus on people, their roles, and responsibilities
8	Nuanced	Detailed priorities (desirability)
9	Motivational	Inspire and motivate towards the envisioned change
10	Shared	Display a critical degree of convergence, agreement, and support by relevant stakeholders and residents

These quality criteria can then be used as design guidelines for visioning methodology. The guiding question is: What methods, tools, and procedures need to be employed, and how do they need to get combined in order to be capable of creating high quality sustainability visions (i.e., visions that comply with the compiled quality criteria)? Sustainability-oriented visioning methodology ought to meaningfully combine and iteratively apply visualization and creativity techniques (corresponding to different quality criteria). These should be embedded in participatory settings with methods for vision review, sustainability assessment, system analysis, consistency analysis, plausibility appraisal, target specification, actor-oriented analysis, and priorities analysis.

The “SPARC” methodology applied in this study has specifically been developed to comply with these design guidelines and quality criteria (as mentioned above, the acronym “SPARC” represents the first letter of key methodological features). The key ingredients of SPARC are: iterative procedures from vision drafts to a sophisticated vision; linking creative and analytical approaches; collaborative interactions with stakeholders and residents; and, visioning as capacity building (Wiek, Iwaniec, et al. 2012).

The general SPARC methodology offers a large variety of options for designing visioning processes. We detail below the specific choices we made to build on previous visioning research experiences in the Reinvent Phoenix project (Wiek et al., 2012) and optimally adopt the SPARC methodology for the Midtown District visioning study, considering partnerships, opportunities, and constraints.

## 2.2 Steps, Methods, and Participatory Settings (Public Engagement)

The visioning process was conducted with several public engagements and was structured into seven phases:

- i. Framing
- ii. Research on evidence-based sustainable vision options
- iii. Mapping satellite events and stakeholder interviews with transition area mapping
- iv. Visioning workshops with visual preference survey and visually-enhanced sustainability conversations
- v. Online visioning survey with visual preference survey
- vi. Analysis and synthesis (including consistency analysis and sustainability appraisal)
- vii. Reporting back to the community

We provide details on each phase and summarize some of the key features of the public engagement approach at the end of this chapter.

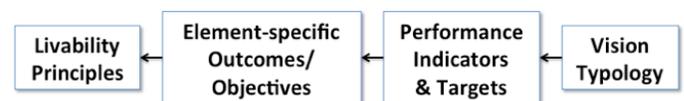
### *I. Framing*

The framing phase oriented, structured, and bounded the visioning process. Framing outcomes include: visioning objectives, i.e. content (planning elements), format (description, narratives, indicators), temporal scope (2040), spatial boundaries (Gateway District); visioning methodology and participatory design (including type and number of participants; number of events); project duration, structure (timetable), and resources (budget); as well as lists of participants (potential, invited, recruited). Some of these features had been determined in the preparation of the grant proposal (Johnson et al., 2011) and in the subsequent negotiations on the specific Scope of Work. The remaining features were defined in preparation of and during the first few weeks of the visioning study. The results of this phase are presented under Chapter 1.3 above (Objectives).

### *II. Research on evidence-based sustainable vision options*

In the second phase, the research team developed the core content for all subsequent visioning activities, including the various participatory events. Unlike in the Gateway District vision study, the visioning methodology adapted for the Midtown District vision study makes sustainability outcomes the centerpiece throughout the study. Putting sustainability at the center of the study reinforces the overall intention and mandate of the Reinvent Phoenix grant. As stated before, the visioning studies in the Reinvent Phoenix project are not simply about asking residents and stakeholders what they want their district to be in the future – the grant is mandated to promote and support transit-oriented and sustainable community development in the light rail corridor. Accordingly, in this phase of the Midtown District Midtown District vision study we developed vision options for all planning elements or core issues (in part vetted through early stakeholder engagements), which are oriented towards sustainability and livability. Vision options are physical things, processes, services, and so forth that contribute to sustainability and have been realized somewhere (or have at least a proof of concept).

To make sure that the vision options were clearly focused on sustainability, we linked them to three normative reference points (principles, outcomes/objectives, targets), representing different levels of operationalization. First, we listed the set of livability principles compiled by the federal administration (HUD/TOD/EPA, 2009). We then aligned a set of outcomes/objectives with these principles, which are specific to each of the six planning elements (land use, housing, economic development, mobility, green infrastructure, and health). Third, we operationalized each outcome/objective through a small number of performance indicators and targets. This normative framework not only served the purpose of putting sustainability upfront and center, but also allowed a translation from abstract principles to tangible vision options.



We developed for each planning element a matrix that linked principles, outcomes/objectives, performance indicators with targets, and vision options (see Appendix). All normative components (principles, outcomes/objectives, targets), and in particular the vision options were based on a broad review of scientific literature,

project documents, and web sources – to ensure that the resulting vision would be evidence-based and plausible.

Based on initial (formal and informal) stakeholder conversations and interviews (see Phase III), the research team selected a subset of vision options to be further developed and then used in the subsequent public participation events described below (see Phases IV & V). For each of the selected vision options, the team compiled detailed information in a profile, including description, sources, examples, and other data points (see Appendix).

In collaboration with graphic designers, the research team finally brought the vision material into an appropriate format for the visual preference survey, the visually-enhanced sustainability conversations, and the online survey (Phases IV & V).

### *III. Mapping satellite events and stakeholder interviews with transition area mapping*

The research team organized 4 satellite events and 21 stakeholder interviews to identify transition areas through a structured mapping activity. Transition areas are defined as sections of the District where residents and city staff are most open to seeing change. The satellite events did not only identify specific locations for where change would be desirable or at least acceptable, but also identified areas where change was considered undesirable or unacceptable. Finally, through the mapping the research team received insights on what type of change and what degree of change is desired. The preparation of the satellite events comprised of several steps, including drafting of mapping activities and material, reviews, facilitator training, run-through, dry-run, and so forth. Satellite events were offered in English and Spanish depending on the composition of the stakeholder group. The guides of the satellite events are included in the Appendix to this report. Information about location, participants, etc. of all satellite events is compiled in Table 2 below.

### *IV. Visioning workshops with visual preference survey and visually-enhanced sustainability conversations*

While the mapping satellite events were primarily designed to identify transition areas in the Midtown District, the visioning workshops were designed to elicit preferences on the desirability of the pre-selected vision (investment) options.

The research team organized three visioning workshops with the following objectives and activities: (i) Collect data on participant preferences for vision options, explicitly linked to sustainability objectives; and (ii) Collect data for vision narratives that would make the vision tangible and enhance the relevance of the vision to the people living in the Midtown District. The workshops used a visual preference survey and visually-enhanced sustainability conversations as the main instrument to elicit this information.

The visual preference survey (VPS) was designed to present options for height, lane reduction, and open space in each transition area. Participants were asked to comment on and prioritize on the presented options. The height VPS (Figure 1) included three options all that were City Council approved; an incentive height of 6 stories (considered sustainable), 4-5 stories (considered adequate), and 2-3 stories (which does not support the objective of reduced transportation and infrastructure costs). The streets VPS asked for whether residents would be willing to replace a lane of automobile-centered traffic with facilities for walking, biking, and or parking. The current street layout, and an option of adding some facilities through lane narrowing was also offered. The VPS for open space asked residents to rank their preference for event, sports, and relaxed recreation. The VPS allowed researchers to determine key aspects of the desired future infrastructure in the district though using simple images that were developed from actual places in each Transition Area.



Figure X

*The visually-enhanced sustainability conversations were designed allow residents to learn about potential investments, in order to jump start conversations about the desired future of the District. Conversations about the investments allow researchers to determine which goals are most important residents for each Transition Area, and to determine which investments to emphasize in each Transition Area.*

# Diverse Employment and Training Opportunities

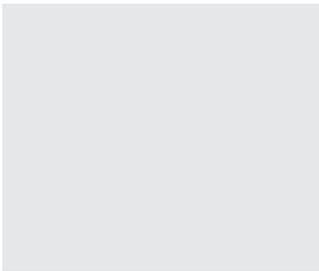
Diversificación del empleo y oportunidades de capacitación

## Co-Working Spaces

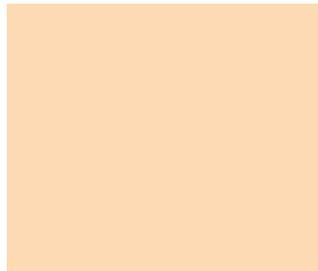


- Offices where several organizations can share working space
- Exposes workers to knowledge and training of other organizations, creates resourceful employees, and stimulates collaboration.
- Oficinas en las que diversas organizaciones comparten el mismo espacio de trabajo
- Los trabajadores se mueven en un ambiente de conocimiento y capacitación con las demás organizaciones, creando mejores recursos humanos y estimulando la colaboración.

### Pros



### Cons

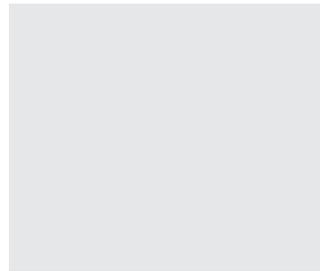


## Training Opportunities

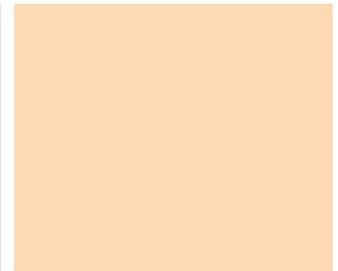


- A network that offers training services to increase opportunities for employment, job retention, and skills improvement of a community
- Una red que ofrece servicios de capacitación para incrementar las oportunidades de empleo, retención de empleo y mejora en las habilidades de la comunidad.

### Pros



### Cons



The preparation of the visioning workshops took place in several steps, including drafting of workshop activities and material, reviews, facilitator-training, run-through, dry-run, and so forth. All workshop activities were offered in English and in Spanish (simultaneous translation);

for some breakout groups workshop activities were facilitated in Spanish only. The detailed guide of the visioning workshop is included in the Appendix to this report. Information about location, participants, etc. of the visioning workshops is compiled in Table 2 below.



## V. Analysis and synthesis

The fifth phase was structured into a series of analytical procedures including data coding, statistical analysis, data interpretation, consistency analysis, sustainability appraisal, and numerous visualizations (GIS mapping, priority mapping, etc.). The various analytical methods ensured that the resulting vision would adequately represent and summarize the elicited information, but also provide critical insights on to what extent the community vision is in compliance with sustainability criteria, and how coherent (consistent) the vision elements are with each other. For details about the analytical methods consult Wiek, Iwaniec, et al. (2012). All analytical results are presented in the next chapter (Chapter 3).

## VI. Reporting back to the community

Reporting back to the community has not yet been completed, but is planned for completion in fall 2013. This step is critical to make sure that participants can process and reflect on the results from the visioning process. It also allows for feedback that can result in further modifications of the Midtown District vision. Finally, reporting back keeps residents and stakeholders engaged, and prepares them for the next stage of Reinvent Phoenix activities in the Midtown District (strategy building).

### Public engagement

Public engagement was a very high priority throughout the visioning process. The research team engaged approximately 150 residents and stakeholders through forums, workshops, and other public engagement activities. A key activity, in parallel to the major public engagement events, was conducting exploratory and informal interviews. Researchers conducted these interviews to gain further understanding of the Midtown District, identify transition areas, determine plans for particular parcels, and the explore needs of stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with a wide variety of stakeholders that included city staff, neighborhood association leadership, local business leaders, property owners, and residents. The City of Phoenix Planning and Development Neighborhood Services Departments provided the initial list of interviewees, and then a snowballing approach was used to identify additional key stakeholders. Interviews were conducted under the rules and guidelines of Arizona State's Institutional Review Board, and accordingly, quotes are not attributed to specific stakeholders without individual approval.

While stakeholder participation in this study was robust with roughly 150 involved residents and stakeholders, and is sufficient to fully substantiate the presented vision, there is room for improvement. Stakeholder recruitment encountered barriers over the course of the study, including: stakeholder burnout and time constraints, lack of trust in city- and university-run processes, and low interest from disenfranchised communities based on perceptions of insufficient results from similar efforts. Property owners and business leaders were also difficult to engage, as some did not want to share future development plans, and others were not convinced that community-oriented visioning is a worthwhile endeavor. The barriers identified in this process will be used to devise stronger participation strategies for future work in Reinvent Phoenix, and the Steering Committee for this District will work with the research team to ensure that more residents and business leaders are included in subsequent Reinvent Phoenix activities.

Unlike conventional community-based visioning or action research approaches, the public engagement approach adopted in this study is conceived of as capacity building as much as it is intended to generate a high-quality district vision. This requires more than just consultation with residents and stakeholders in the Midtown District, but actual collaboration with them. The Midtown District vision is supposed to be a community vision – or more precisely, a vision that, ideally, would be signed off by all relevant constituencies, including various residents, stakeholder groups, as well as the city government and administration. However, the visioning activities conducted under the Reinvent Phoenix grant are different from conventional community-based planning activities – which have the sole purpose of eliciting what the community wants. The visioning task under the Reinvent Phoenix grant is more complex – the goal is to create a district vision that fulfills two requirements (as opposed to only one): (i) the vision ought to comply with livability principles and sustainability concepts, according to the mandate of Reinvent Phoenix (enabled through funding from HUD); and (ii) the vision ought to be agreed upon by the community (and, in fact, agreed upon to an extent that the community is willing to actively pursue it). These are challenging requirements, but critical for successful visioning efforts; and therefore, the visioning study presented in this report constitutes another milestone in building professional capacity in planners and stakeholders to craft thorough visions for the future of Phoenix.

Event	Location	Date	Total Participants	ESL Participants	Activities
SE1	Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition	2/28/13	16	0	Mapping activity and discussion
SE2	M7 Street Fair	3/2/13	32	0	Mapping activity and discussion
SE3	St. Joseph's Hospital	3/8/13	30	0	Mapping activity and discussion
SE4	Off Central Block Party	3/10/13	32	0	Mapping activity and discussion
W1	Steele Indian School Park	3/30/13	8	0	VESC; VPS; Narrative statements; discussion
W2	Seed Spot	4/3/13	9	0	VESC; VPS; Narrative statements; discussion
IN	1-on-1 Interviews		21	0	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>Total</b>			<b>148</b>	<b>0</b>	

- *Mapping activity: change/stability area mapping*
- *VESC: visually enhanced sustainability conversations*
- *VPS: visual preference survey*

# Chapter 3 – Results

The results of the visioning study are presented in four sections:

1. *District-wide vision description* – Summarizes the objective-based sustainability vision of the Midtown District in 2040, according to stakeholders. Markers are placed where the vision refers to specific planning elements, so that those vision descriptions can be used to build planning element strategies (i.e., Mobility, Land Use, Housing, Health).
2. *Vision descriptions for specific transition areas* – Details the objective-based sustainability vision for specific transition areas within the Midtown District in 2040, according to stakeholders (who also chose the transition areas). Each transition area description includes a narrative that illustrates how people envision they will live, work, and play in the District in 2040.
3. *Consistency appraisal of visions* – Summarizes the coherence of the vision provided by stakeholders, identifying potential synergies and conflicts.
4. *Sustainability appraisal of visions* – Summarizes the sustainability of the vision, using a broad range of sustainability criteria, including HUD's performance measurement and flagship sustainability indicators (Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities 2012). This section is of critical importance for Reinvent Phoenix's mandate to foster sustainable community development.

All results presented in Chapters 1 and 2 are based on empirical data from the various participatory research activities summarized above (Chapter 2). These result chapters reference their respective data following a simple data source code (see Box below).

## Data Source Code

- *IN = Interview (1-on-1s)*
- *SE = Satellite Event (Group mapping activities)*

- *SE1 = Phoenix Historic Neighborhoods Coalition*
- *SE2 = M7 Street Fair*
- *SE3 = Saint Joseph's Hospital*
- *SE4 = Off Central Block Party*
- *W = Visioning Workshop*
  - *W1 = Visioning Workshop 1 (March 30, 2013)*
  - *W2 = Visioning Workshop 2 (April 3, 2013)*
- *N = Narrative Activity*
- *VPS = Visual Preference Survey*
- *VESC = Visually Enhanced Sustainability Conversation*
- *SLHI = Saint Luke's Health Initiatives' Midtown district workshop report (Hager et al., 2012)*

## 3.1. District-Wide Vision for the Midtown District in 2040



*The Midtown District in 2040 – A Synopsis*

In 2040, the Midtown District is a vibrant community characterized by strong independent businesses, cool and comfortable neighborhoods, diverse housing options, and transportation infrastructure that allows for easy movement via bicycle, foot, and transit.

While existing neighborhoods have been preserved and their character maintained [IN2; IN3; IN4; W2], new development is predominantly mixed-use and adaptive reuse. In new mixed-use buildings, small independent businesses complement residential spaces. Although there is District-wide interest in mixed-use buildings, design and execution look different in each transition area [W2; SE].

### *Economic Vitality through Strong Local Businesses*

In 2040, thriving local businesses drive Midtown's economic vitality. These businesses support the District's growth and prosperity by keeping money local and providing opportunities for employment and job training. Diverse goods and services are available from coffee shops, restaurants, small grocery stores, yoga studios, fitness clubs, clothing stores, business incubators, and small legal and accounting firms [IN7; IN10; SE2; SE3; SE4]. While the Midtown District continues to attract large-scale businesses, it has evolved to also support small, local, and independent businesses [W2; VESC].



### *Cool Neighborhoods*

In 2040, Midtown is cool with reduced temperatures and sun exposure. As a result, residents and visitors lead comfortable, outdoor lifestyles throughout the year [W1; VESC]. Both young and old enjoy outdoor walks, relaxation, and chatting with neighbors. Mature trees line streets and sidewalks where people browse shops shaded from the sun. Aesthetic landscaping makes the area beautiful, and invites residents out to enjoy their community [W1; W2].



In addition to tree cover, cool pavements further reduce temperatures. Instead of using black asphalt that absorbs heat, streets, parking lots, and driveways have colored surfaces that reflect heat and lower temperatures [W1; VESC; Vision Pool].

*The parking lot at 1st Street and Taylor Street in Downtown Phoenix exemplifies a new, cool pavement technology that brings both thermal comfort and a unique style to the area. The pavement is covered with a cement-like material that uses nanotechnology to fill every surface pore and provide reflectance, which helps reduce the surface temperature by 25–30°F (Gersema, 2011).*



### *Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods*

In 2040, Midtowners move throughout their District with a wide variety of transportation options, including bicycle, foot, and transit. Safe and comfortable sidewalks and bike lanes provide easy access to destinations, and more Midtowners travel within the District by these modes than by automobile [SE2; SE3; W1; VESC]. These transportation options reduce arterial and neighborhood traffic through lane reductions and narrowing, as well as some speed limit reductions [W1; W2; VPS]. While pedestrian and

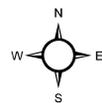
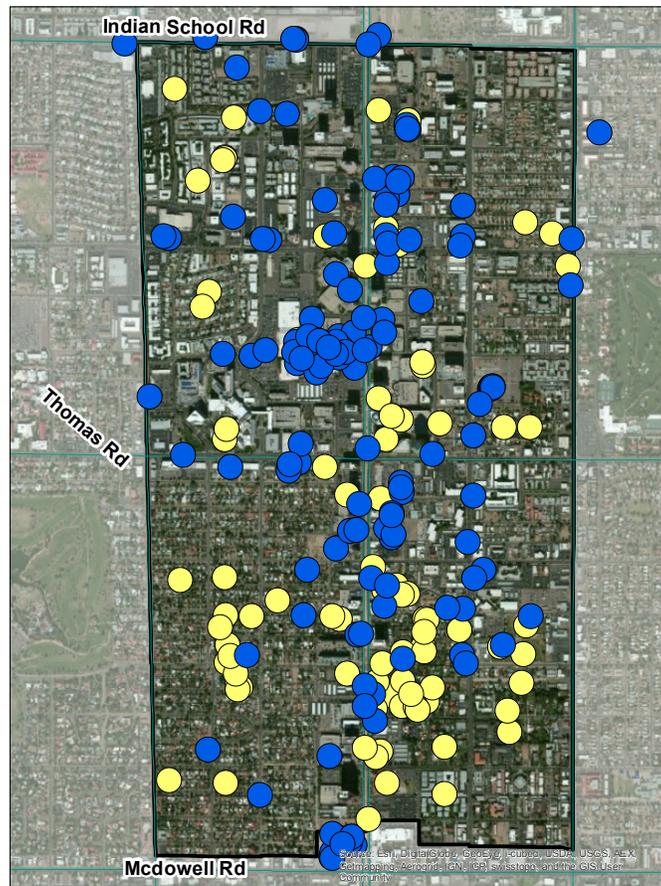
bicycle infrastructure is common throughout the District, design and aesthetics are site-specific.



Light rail circulators cover the District, extending the reach of walkers and bikers [VESC], and boosting light rail ridership [W1; VESC]. They stop at bustling hubs such as Park Central Mall, St. Joseph’s Hospital, and restaurants and shopping locations on Central Avenue and 3rd Street.

### 3.2. Vision Descriptions for Specific Areas of Change within the Midtown District

In satellite events and interviews, Midtown stakeholders identified specific and general areas of preservation and change. The map below shows stakeholders’ preferences for these areas. Yellow dots indicate areas



**Reinvent PHX**

Mid-Town District



where participants support preservation and stability (no significant changes), and blue dots indicate areas where participants supported transition.

Stakeholders showed strong preference to preserve some areas in the District. Locations prioritized for preservation (yellow dots) include:

- Historic neighborhoods – There was strong interest in preserving Midtown’s historic neighborhoods, including Willo, Encanto, Los Olivos, and Alvarado. These neighborhoods have distinct characters, sense of place, and are protected under historic preservation codes.
- Existing medical institutions, including St. Joseph’s – Medical institutions are appreciated because they provide jobs to residents, and St. Joe’s is the largest employer in the District.
- Existing cultural resources, including The Heard Museum – Cultural resources support Midtown’s Museum District. The Heard Museum is one of the most important First Nations museums in the country. The Phoenix Art Museum, just south of Midtown, is another prized cultural institution.
- Educational institutions – There are three schools in close proximity on 3rd Street, and St. Mary’s Catholic High School is the largest school in the District. Stakeholder wanted to attract young families to the District, and strong schools are important for achieving that goal [SE2].
- Iconic high-rises – Central Avenue is lined with high-rises, some of which have architectural significance. Stakeholders specifically wanted to preserve the IBM Punch Card building.

Based on clusters of blue dots, four areas with strong opportunities for transitions were selected (please see map for boundaries). The four transition areas are:

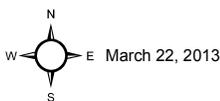
1. Park Central Mall – Park Central was Phoenix’s first shopping mall, and was, at one time, a thriving center of commerce in the District. Today, Park Central has significant vacancies, and much of the former retail space is filled with call centers and offices. Stakeholders would like Park Central to be reinvigorated with new retail and dining options, as well as mixed-use development. St. Joe’s and its partners have some offices on the premises, and the relationship between the

hospital and Park Central is an asset upon which to build.

2. The Central Avenue Corridor – In the 1970s, Central Avenue was zoned for unlimited height. As a result, high-rise development has dominated the corridor ever since. Today, over 30% of the office space in those high-rises is vacant, which constitutes roughly three million square feet of available office space. Stakeholders showed a strong interest in tenanting these high-rises, and remaking the Central Avenue Corridor into a thriving business center.

3. The 3rd Street Corridor – The 3rd Street Corridor is a four-lane road lined with a mix of single-family residences and some one to three-story office buildings. There is significant traffic, and small and unattractive sidewalks. Roughly five years ago, a public planning process generated the 3rd Street Promenade Plan, which provides street design guidelines for creating a walkable and bikeable corridor. Stakeholders expressed support for this plan, as well as augmenting the area with independent business, aiming for a feel like the Melrose District on 7th Avenue.

4. The Area around Central Avenue and Indian School Road – This transition area spans the Midtown-Uptown District boundary and will only be discussed in the Uptown District Vision Report.



## Reinvent PHX Midtown District Park Central

0 0.14 Miles  
1 inch = 401 feet

### 3.2.1 Park Central Vision

#### Synopsis

In 2040, Park Central is the anchor of the Midtown District. Its large physical footprint has provided an opportunity to create significant change [IN7; IN8; IN9; SE1; SE2; SE3; SE4]. Mid- to high-rise buildings front Central Avenue, [IN9; IN13] and a pedestrian-oriented outdoor shopping center occupies the heart of the property. The shopping mall is now a mixed-use landscape that blends outdoor mall retail [SE3; IN7], restaurants, housing [SE2; SE4], and office space [SE2; SE4].

In 2040, Park Central is a vibrant space that draws a diversity of people. On-site apartment residents have easy access to mall services and nearby office jobs [IN8; W2]. Residents from Willo enjoy walking to its restaurants and shops, and medical researchers from St. Joe’s often visit for lunch. The hospital has partnered with a university to do medical research at Park Central [IN8; W2; VESC], which provides centralized amenities such as housing, shopping, and eating options for hospital staff and visitors [IN9; IN13; W2].

#### *Economic Vitality Through Strong Local Businesses*

In 2040, Park Central’s mixed-use buildings are home to

strong, local, independent businesses, which are able to afford rent in smaller commercial spaces [W2; VESC]. Not only do local residents frequent these businesses, but Park Central draws regional visitors to Midtown with its diverse offerings [W2].



#### *Diverse Employment and Training Opportunities*

In 2040, Park Central provides unique employment opportunities for Midtowners. A strong partnership between St. Joe’s and a university hosts a medical research center at Park Central [IN8; W2; VESC]. Close contact between university researchers, hospital staff, and Park Central residents and shoppers has turned the site into a vibrant urban environment, with a college-

town feel. This university-community partnership provides many training opportunities to Midtowners. Community members increase their academic and professional capacities through high-quality classes open to the public [W2].

*The University of California – San Francisco’s (UCSF) Science & Health Education Partnership is active in 90% of San Francisco’s public and charter schools, and connects UCSF researchers with students of all grade levels for in depth exploration of biology and chemistry. In programs such as Bio&ChemTeach, middle and high school students have hands on learning experiences such as dissecting squids. Bio&ChemTeach helps students learn, gets them excited about science, and gives them resources to which they would otherwise lack access (Feeney & Eisenmann, 2012).*

### Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods

In 2040, Park Central is connected to surrounding neighborhoods. Along bordering streets like Thomas Road, bike lanes and wider sidewalks have replaced automobile lanes to allow bicyclist and pedestrian access [W1; W2; VPS]. Within Park Central, streets are designed for slower traffic with narrow lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks [W1; W2; VPS]. Wide, green sidewalks [W1] and shaded bus stops [SE1; SE4; W1] provide comfort to pedestrians walking to and within Park Central, and Midtowners that live farther away can ride free circulator buses [W1; VESC]. People feel safe using well-lit streets and bus stops at any time of day [W1]. Inside Park Central, a promenade orients pedestrians to outdoor mall retail [W1; VESC]. The proximity of businesses, restaurants, and office spaces, and residences helps mall-goers meet their needs without having to travel far.



Pedestrian pathways connect spaces for relaxation and community events. Small-scale pocket parks provide green spaces for eating lunch and relaxing [W1; VPS]. Other spaces host low-key community events that draw residents, employees, and visitors together [W1; W2].

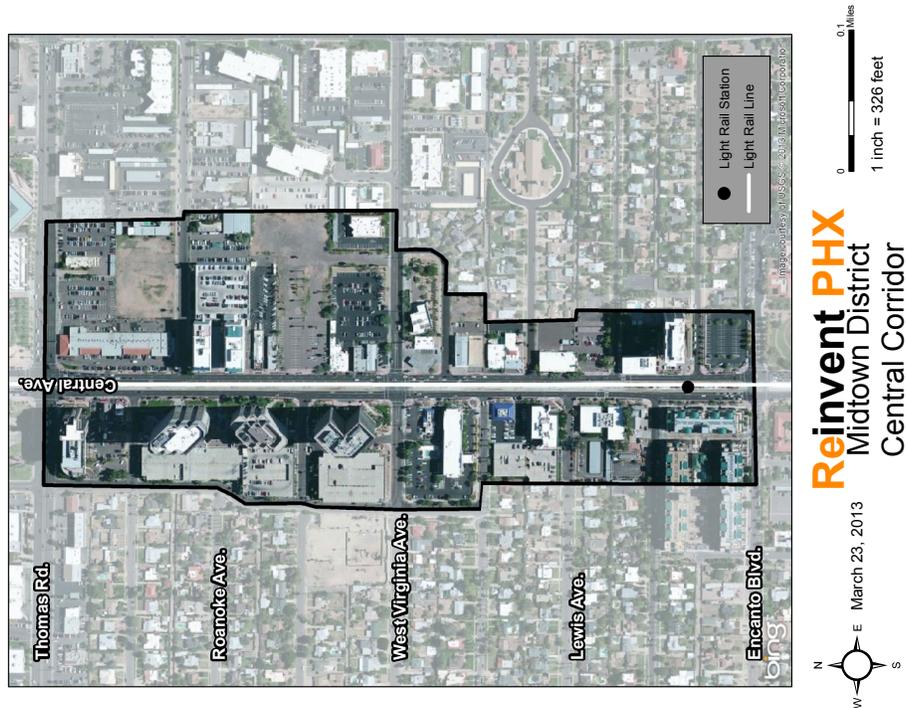
### Reduced Transportation and Infrastructure Costs

In 2040, Park Central’s mixed-use design reduces transportation and infrastructure costs because local residents and employees travel shorter distances for work, shopping, services, and other amenities. Buildings are a mix of mid- and high-rise, which centralizes infrastructure needs [W1; W2; VPS].

### Park Central Narrative

I see the “Welcome Home” greeting at the entrance to Park Central (Midtown’s “Living Room”) [MTN02] every day on my way to the open-air park where families picnic, and business and hospital staff unwind after work [SE3]. The square is a nexus point for local shops and restaurants, as well as a coveted home base for businesses ranging from professional offices to food co-ops and eco-design services, among others [SE2; SE3; MTN03]. The square features amphitheater seating, and solar-powered A/V capability for public events [W1; W2; MTN02].

Park Central has great access to local restaurants and live entertainment, and I often entertain friends when I’m not out in the evening [W2]. Midtown’s “Living Room” also fuels my professional and academic life. I intern with Park Central’s rooftop community garden [W1] for St. Joseph’s community health and rehabilitation initiative. The program is a new partnership between the hospital, local universities, regional farmers, and several restaurants and food vendors in the area [W2]. Today, I am excited to help occupational therapy patients improve strength and mobility through gardening. This initiative is just one example of how Park Central has reclaimed status as the go-to retail and dining destination of the District [MTN02; MTN03; SE3]. It feels good to see the positive impacts my job has on my neighbors and community.



### 3.2.2. Central Corridor Vision

#### Synopsis

In 2040, the Central Avenue Corridor is Midtown’s central business area [IN7; IN10; SE3]. Lined with mixed-use high rises that once suffered from high vacancy rates, Central Avenue is now a bustling corridor of commerce and energy that welcomes visitors to Midtown [IN1; IN2; IN9; SE2; SE3; W1; W2].

#### Saving Money Through Conserving Natural Resources

Over the decades leading to 2040, Midtown has overcome a more than 30% vacancy rate in its commercial high rises [IN9] through an adaptive reuse strategy that has repurposed the buildings into mixed-use towers that house both commercial and residential uses [W1; W2; VESC]. This strategy has filled roughly three million square feet of vacant commercial space. As the high-rises were renovated,

*One Lexington was originally a high rise office tower built in 1974 known as Century Plaza, and it was seen as an eyesore to the community. In 2005 a developer stripped and gutted and converted it into high rise condominiums. The light rail stop at Osborn Road is right outside the front door, making*

*downtown Phoenix and Tempe very accessible to One Lexington owners and renters. Because the building was originally constructed thirty years ago it has less of a “set-back” meaning that it sits closer to Central Avenue than all the newer buildings in the area. This gives occupants great views up and down Central Avenue; you’re not looking into other buildings because they are set back further from the street, and it has been described as floating above Central Avenue looking right up and down the street (Daly, 2011).*

the structures and individual units were made more energy efficient to save both resources and money. Beyond these savings, improved insulation also provides a better sound barrier that allows residents to live in close quarters with each other as well as with offices [W1].



*Economic Vitality Through Strong Local Businesses and Diverse Employment and Training Opportunities*

In 2040, the office spaces in Midtown’s reenergized high rises are filled with small, local businesses. Economic development along Central Corridor focuses on service-oriented private companies and nonprofits [IN10; W1; W2]. The Central Corridor is perfect for small firms like legal businesses, accountants, and advertising agencies that want to be in Downtown Phoenix, but can’t afford the rents [IN9]. Start-ups and nonprofits benefit from a small business support organization that is funded by a Midtown-based bank. This program provides microloans to assist with start-up costs

*CO+HOOTS is a downtown Phoenix co-working office space that promotes collaboration and provides a professional, inspirational, and self-sustaining space to nurture and grow entrepreneurialism. For a small fee, anyone can drop in to Co+Hoots and receive a desk, free wifi, access to a copy machine and printer, utilities, a bathroom and all the coffee/tea desired. Despite its numerous amenities, Co+Hoots’ most valuable asset may be its social setting and community aspect, with 16 companies ranging from UX design to web development to landscape architecture operating out of the space (CO+HOOTS,*

2012).

and general operating expenses [Vision Pool; W2; VESC]. Some high-rises on Central Avenue feature floors dedicated to co-working spaces, which allow organizations to share office resources and expertise [W2; VESC]. Co-working spaces significantly reduce operating costs [Vision Pool] and allow these smaller organizations to join the Central Corridor business community.



*Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods*

With more people living and doing business on Central Avenue in 2040, the corridor has become more walkable and bikeable to reduce traffic. Central Avenue features two lanes of traffic in either direction, but the lanes have been slightly narrowed, and the service lane buffering the light rail from the road has been removed to provide space for a bike lane [W2; VPS]. Wide sidewalks have facilitated a streetscape project with shade trees and storefront enhancements [SE2; SE4].

Not only is Central Avenue more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists, but the corridor also offers more attractions for visitors. Small pocket parks provide relaxation spaces [VPS], and cafes with outdoor patios occupy the ground floor of many high-rises [IN1]. With trees lining the road and sidewalk, the corridors public spaces are cool and shaded. Midtowners now have restaurants at which they can enjoy lunch, and residents have many options for dinner [IN7].



### Reduced Transportation and Infrastructure Costs

In 2040, the Central Corridor is home to many new residents and businesses, and the increased activity reduces transportation and infrastructure costs because residents live in close proximity to where they work and do business [IN1; IN2; IN9; SE2; SE3; W1; W2]. While most of the Corridor’s economic development has focused on repurposing existing buildings, there has also been new construction on vacant lots, and new buildings on Central Avenue range from 10–20 stories [VPS]. By 2040, the high-rises along Central Avenue are full of tenants, after an intentional process that took the time necessary to match the right tenant with the right building. New development was slow, so as not to saturate the real estate submarket before it could support additional commercial and residential units [IN9]. Once the vacant high-rises were converted to mixed-use, and fully occupied, the market was able to support new office and residential development.

### Central Corridor Narrative

Every morning I open my eyes to a beautiful sunrise over the Phoenix Mountains, shining onto the bustling streets below [MTN05]. My apartment is a renovated office building on Central Avenue, and I call the fourteenth floor home [VPS]. I begin my morning by [MTN05] taking the elevator down to the lobby, while chatting with one of my neighbors who works at the community development firm on the second floor [SE3; IN7; SE2; SE4; IN8; W2].

Once outside, I walk my son to his elementary school on 3rd Street, then head back to Central to grab a coffee on the ground floor of my office building. My office is in a co-working space in a high-rise, just two light rail stops from where I live [W2]. We have been able to make

such progress in this new location, building invaluable connections with other small businesses in the area through a mentorship program [VESC; IN10; W1; W2]. For lunch, I walk to a local sandwich shop in Park Central, and eat with friends who are enjoying a lunch meeting. While waiting for the light rail, we often overhear folks from St. Joe’s excitedly discussing new research [N8; W2]. I end my day early so I can pick up my son after school, and bike [SE; MTN04] to the Heard Museum for an arts festival hosted in their outdoor exhibition center [MTN04].

### 3.2.3 3rd Street Corridor Vision

#### Synopsis




**Reinvent PHX**  
 Midtown District  
 3rd Street Corridor

March 23, 2013
 
 0.1 Miles  
 1 inch = 321 feet

The Reinvent Phoenix vision for 3rd Street draws heavily on the exemplary work done to create the 3rd Street Promenade Plan (Otak Team, 2010). The plan garnered favorable public support for street designs that transform the corridor into a walkable and bikeable promenade [IN18], and is predicated on 3rd Street’s location within the transit oriented development overlay zoning (Otak Team 2010). New zoning from Reinvent Phoenix should complement and promote the street design in the 3rd Street Promenade Plan [IN1; IN9; SE1; SE2; SE4].

In 2040, the 3rd Street is a walkable corridor with bike lanes. Independent businesses front the street, with residential neighborhoods on the interior of blocks. Contrasting the larger scale of development on Central Avenue, the 3rd Street Corridor is conscious of the smaller, more personal scale of adjacent historic neighborhoods, and is visually integrated into that setting [IN4; W2].

#### *Economic vitality through strong local businesses*

In 2040, 3rd Street is a thriving, small-scale business area. Inspired by the Melrose District on 7th Avenue, 3rd Street's commerce is dominated by independent and boutique businesses that create a distinct sense of place [IN5; IN7; IN10; SE2; W2]. To make their businesses more viable, and integrate themselves into the Midtown community, local-business owners have created a buy-local initiative to provide incentives for keeping Midtown money in the District [W2; VESC]. Residents participate in this initiative because they appreciate the "friendly atmosphere [W2]" that local businesses have brought to the area.

*Local First Arizona (LFA) is a non-profit organization working to strengthen communities and local economies through supporting, maintaining, and celebrating locally owned businesses throughout the state of Arizona. Studies have shown that for every \$100 spent in a locally owned business, roughly \$42 remains right here in Arizona, while for the same \$100 spent in a national chain store, only \$13 remains here, thus the mission of Local Arizona First is to encourage buying locally and community building. LFA is currently the largest organization of its kind in the country with over 1300 members (Local Arizona First, 2013).*



#### *Walkable and bikeable neighborhoods*

In 2040, 3rd Street is a walkable and bikeable promenade [IN1; SE4; Otak Team 2010]. In each direction, one lane of traffic has been replaced by a bike lane and wide sidewalk [SE4; W2; VPS; Otak Team 2010]. This development slows and diverts traffic away from the corridor. As a result, residents near 3rd Street comfortably walk and bike to the shops along the road. To reinforce the connection between walkability and local commerce, 3rd Street is closed to cars every Sunday for a public market and community events [SE4].



Along the corridor, small portions of open space are dedicated to relaxation activities [W2; VPS]. With wider sidewalks and shade trees in 2040, 3rd Street has become a green corridor between Steele Indian School and Hance Parks [IN9; IN18, SE3]. Between new trees and cool pavement, which reflects heat from the sun, 3rd Street is a hot spot for walking and biking [SE4].



#### *Saving money through conserving natural resources*

In 2040, some single-story residential buildings and two to three-story office buildings have been adapted to house 3rd Street's independent businesses [IN4; W1; W2].

Adapting older buildings saves resources that would have otherwise been used in new construction. To further save money and resources, buildings have been renovated for energy efficiency and fitted with energy generating solar panels. To honor the historic character of surrounding neighborhoods, solar panels are aesthetically placed, and structures with historic character do not have visible solar panels [W1; W2].



#### *Reduced transportation and infrastructure costs*

In 2040, 3rd Street's mixed-use character reduces transportation and infrastructure costs. With many people living in proximity to businesses, shoppers do not have to travel far to meet their shopping needs. Because shade has encouraged many people to walk and bike to shops, transportation costs are further reduced. New construction along the corridor is up to three stories, slightly increasing population, but not conflicting with the character of the surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods [W2; VPS].

#### *3rd Street Corridor Narrative*

It's another gorgeous Sunday morning, as I leave my two-story townhouse in East Alvarado [IN4; W2]. I'm eager to get to work on Clarendon at my corner bakery. I love to ride my bike to work and see all the families already out and about, heading to the park, or to the shops down the block to get an early start on errands [MTN02; W2; IN1; SE1; SE4; Otak team 2010]. As I approach my bakeshop, I'm greeted by the aroma of fresh bread and several tables of smiling, loyal patrons who wave and say hello [MTN02]. Customers love dining in our shaded garden patio that fronts the sidewalk, especially because they can see the

fruits, vegetables and herbs used in our most coveted recipes.

My husband has been working all morning with our dedicated staff, who all live in the Midtown [IN5; SE2]. It's hard to believe we've been open nearly a decade, with many thanks to the buy-local initiative seed grant program [IN5; IN7; IN10; SE2; W2]. Today is sure to be particularly busy, as we are one of the local eateries catering (and sponsoring) the monthly community development fundraiser in Monterey Park [MTN05]. This month's event revolves around a walk/run/wheel a-thon, featuring a relay race down 3rd Street [SE4] for special needs community members. The program is organized by our high schools, in conjunction with St. Joseph's medical center and Midtown's wheel-share co-ops. Events like this have been a great source of re-investment in our neighborhood institutions, and have boosted the success of independent local businesses like ours. These events help us to unite family, friends and guests under a common cause—a vibrant, thriving community [MTN04].

### 3.3 Consistency Analysis

The following section discusses the results of a consistency analysis conducted to identify synergies and conflicts between elements in the Midtown District Vision. Consistency is a critical quality criterion for visions, suggesting that they should be composed of compatible goals and free of inconsistencies and conflicts. Incompatible or conflicting goals would provide an ambiguous direction and might lead to conflicting or, at least, non-synergistic developments in the world (when the vision gets implemented), which might undermine the overall aspirations of the vision (Wiek & Iwaniec 2012). The results of the consistency analysis provide important insights for modifications and fine-tuning of the vision (reconciling potential conflicts) in order to enhance its consistency and thereby its chances of success (delivering on the promise). The full consistency analysis is presented in the Appendix to this report.

#### 3.3.1 District-Wide Synergies

Central Corridor / 3rd Street Corridor: Combined, the Central Avenue and 3rd Street Corridors provide a nice contrast. The Central Corridor is marked by high-rise, repurposed residential and commercial buildings, the 3rd Street Corridor offers a more relaxed, small-scale atmosphere. The 3rd Street Corridor envisions a future where buildings are no higher than three stories, with

pedestrian malls and promenades. These two visions create a natural balance within the District. Those seeking a bustling urban environment will appreciate the Central Corridor, others will prefer 3rd Street's calmer malls and walkways.

### 3.3.2 Key Synergies by Transition Area

#### *Park Central*

Business in Mixed Use Building / Building Heights up to 20 stories / Circulator / Pedestrian Malls and Promenade: Tall buildings house more residents and boost demand for alternative forms of transit, such as a circulator. The circulator can shuttle increased pedestrian traffic onto the promenades. Businesses in mixed-use buildings will provide more attractions to which people can walk. Combined, these elements stimulate economic development, encourage public transit, and foster livability.

Lane Replacement or narrowing / Pedestrian Malls and Promenade / Building Heights up to 20 stories: Combining taller buildings with reduced street widths and pedestrian malls and promenades will enhance the walkability and bikeability of Park Central and its surrounding roads.

#### *Central Corridor*

Adaptive reuse / Co-working spaces / Strong local businesses: Central Corridor high-rises offer ample vacant office space. Adaptive reuse of these spaces can be done intentionally to create diverse options. Co-working spaces could utilize renovated office space for start-up and local businesses with small operating budgets, which could share total costs and resources. Adaptive reuse can make office space more affordable and encourage co-working spaces.

Energy efficient home / Adaptive reuse: Adapting existing buildings requires renovation, which provides opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency into new designs.

#### *3rd Street Corridor*

Economic Development / Buy-local initiative / Pedestrian Malls and Promenade: Economic development is the core vision for the 3rd Street Corridor. A buy-local initiative would encourage residents to support their community by making more local purchases. This would keep more money in the District and the Corridor. A buy-local initiative

coupled with pedestrian malls and promenades will stimulate economic growth while providing the community with a walkable area to shop and relax. Walkable neighborhoods match the smaller scale of independent business districts.

Adaptive reuse / Mixed-Use / Relaxation: Retrofitting existing spaces on the 3rd Street Corridor offers the area a variety of use options, such as mixed-use buildings for commercial and residential use or open spaces for parks and recreation. Reusing these spaces has the additional benefit of adding economic value to previously vacant and unusable spaces.

### 3.3.3 Potential Conflicts

#### *Park Central*

Taller buildings with lane reductions will create more traffic if improperly managed. Replacing a lane on Thomas Road should precede new taller buildings. This will allow investors to accurately assess the viability of their projects. Future residents will know the area is pedestrian centric with car traffic a lesser priority.

#### *Central Corridor*

Stakeholders have expressed interest in Central being more walkable and bikeable, but voting data shows respondents are divided between new street designs and the current state [W1; W2; VPS; VESC]. Repopulating the high-rises and filling street-facing spaces will increase traffic, if pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure isn't included. Without reducing the width of Central Avenue, there will be very little room for the expansion of pedestrian sidewalks and bike lanes necessary to accommodate increased pedestrian traffic.

#### *3rd Street Corridor*

Reduced transportation and infrastructure costs are central objectives for the 3rd Street Corridor, but stakeholders showed preference for buildings heights only up to three stories [VPS]. While three-story buildings will moderately increase density over the current state, three-story buildings may not reduce infrastructure and transportation costs, as higher heights may be required (Bertaud & Brueckner, 2005; Norman et al., 2006; Hortas-Rico & Sole-Olle, 2010). Costs can be low with pedestrian and bicycle oriented development, but any new utility infrastructure will feed a smaller concentration of users

than in taller buildings.

### 3.4 District-Wide Sustainability Appraisal

The following section discusses the results of a sustainability appraisal conducted to determine in how far the Midtown District vision aligns with the sustainability objectives and sustainability-oriented options as derived from various academic and professional literature sources. The methods section of this report details the specific process through which sustainability matrices were created to frame the visioning activities and inform the structure of this appraisal. “Reinvent PHX” is a grant funded through the U.S. Department for Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Program and has the explicit mandate to foster sustainable community development. Accordingly, sustainability becomes a critical quality criterion for the Midtown vision – not optional, but mandatory. It is important to note that sustainability visions are a specific type of visions. These visions ought to be not only desirable, but also guide us towards a more sustainable future. In fact, there might be tensions between what is desirable and what is sustainable – what is desirable from a short-term or individual or even community perspective might not be sustainable from a long-term and collective perspective. Thus, we expect sustainability visions to comply with multiple value-laden or normative principles, in short, with sustainability criteria (Wiek & Iwaniec, 2012). The sustainability appraisal is summarized in the next sub-section (3.4.1); votes and ranking data are presented in the Appendix to this report.

#### 3.4.1 Appraisal of Park Central

The vision to redesign Park Central as more pedestrian-oriented supports the objective of creating walkable and bikeable neighborhoods [VESC]. To address this objective, stakeholders are willing to replace or narrow lanes along Thomas Road. For every 1 vote in favor of lane narrowing there were another 2 votes in favor of lane replacement [VPS], which shows a commitment to creating a walkable and bikeable community. One stakeholder’s justification for his vote was, “Slow traffic down because it is difficult and dangerous to cross the street [VPS; W1].”

Replacing or narrowing a lane encourages cyclist and pedestrian traffic, and may help reduce automobile traffic. Stakeholders also identified a public circulator as a way to reduce the use of personal automobiles and increase walkability & bikeability [VESC]. The vision for Park Central also supports the objective of reducing

transportation and infrastructure costs with interest in replacing existing surface parking with mixed-use mid- and high-rise buildings. This measure would increase housing availability, offer local jobs, and support economic vitality with ground floor business in taller buildings. Surface parking reductions also help address the objective of creating cool neighborhoods, by reducing pavement that releases absorbed heat, which increases nighttime temperatures.

#### 3.4.2 Appraisal of Central Corridor

Reducing transportation & infrastructure costs is a key tenet of the Central Corridor vision. The objective would be achieved by with mid- and high-rise development, so that there was a higher concentration of people living and working within walking or biking distance to jobs, goods and services. Workshop participants supported building heights up to 20 stories [VPS], which can help achieve those benefits and aligns with the sustainability objective. A participant who voted for this option justified their selection by noting that development at this height “uses less energy and resources” [VPS; W1]. With proximity to the light rail and the pre-existing height of the corridor, it is feasible to adequately address the objective reducing transportation and infrastructure costs and make Central Avenue a model for walkable, livable urban development.

The other prominent vision for the Central Corridor involves a robust and vibrant economy that fosters diverse employment and training opportunities. Participants expressed interest in having more co-working spaces, as they noticed that many people currently use coffee shops for co-working [VESC]. One participant realized the importance of co-working spaces in order to foster a diverse economy, stating that “many non-profits struggle to afford space and few have offices [co-working spaces] could alleviate that pain and give them access to amenities or necessities that a smaller business may not be able to afford” [W2, VESC]. Participants also wanted university-community partnerships, with many community members expressing interest in having a resident college or university in the District [W2, VESC]. They envisioned this college or university would educate Midtowners, creating a group of educated young people who would stay in the District after graduation. [W2, VESC]. Maintaining local talent is a key driver of a vibrant, local economy, which is important for achieving the economic vitality through strong, local businesses objective. Residents want to ensure that “Midtown is a place where people want to stay and live” [W2]. In all, the economic vision of the central corridor is well aligned with the sustainability objectives

for economic development and seems to be supported by the local community in the area as a motivating vision element.

### 3.4.3 Appraisal of 3rd Street Corridor

Saving money through the conservation of natural resources is exemplified in the vision for the 3rd Street Corridor by support for adaptive reuse for small, independent businesses [VESC]. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings reduces the amount of construction materials that would be required for new construction, which is directly in line with resource conservation. Another central theme for the 3rd Street Corridor is transformation into a more pedestrian- and bicycle- friendly street. 3rd Street's quarter-mile proximity to Central Avenue may attract pedestrian traffic from people that live and work in the high-rises [IN10]. Thus, the benefits of enhancing pedestrian-oriented design (which have been discussed above) are further supported in the vision for 3rd Street.

Participants were open to lane replacement, which would reduce the number of lanes for cars and increase opportunities to create bike lanes or widen sidewalks [W2, VPS]. Participants saw benefits in reducing the speed of traffic and giving more space to pedestrians and cyclists [W2, VPS]. However, participants did not discuss traffic diversion to nearby streets, mainly 7th Street and Central Avenue. In order to achieve District walkability, a comprehensive mobility plan to reduce automobile use in favor of public transit and alternative modes of transportation (walking and biking) needs to be part of the vision. While participants are supportive of pedestrian enhancements and the objective of creating walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, it is unclear as to whether they are fully committed to a comprehensive vision for sustainable mobility throughout the district.

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# Appendix

- I. Satellite Event Maps
- II. Visioning Workshop Guides
- III. Visioning Workshop VESC and VPS Posters
- IV. Results from Visual Preference Survey – Pie Charts
- V. Consistency Matrix
- VI. Detailed Voting Data for Sustainability Appraisal

