



RIO PHX COMMUNITY PLAN ENGAGEMENT REPORT

2025





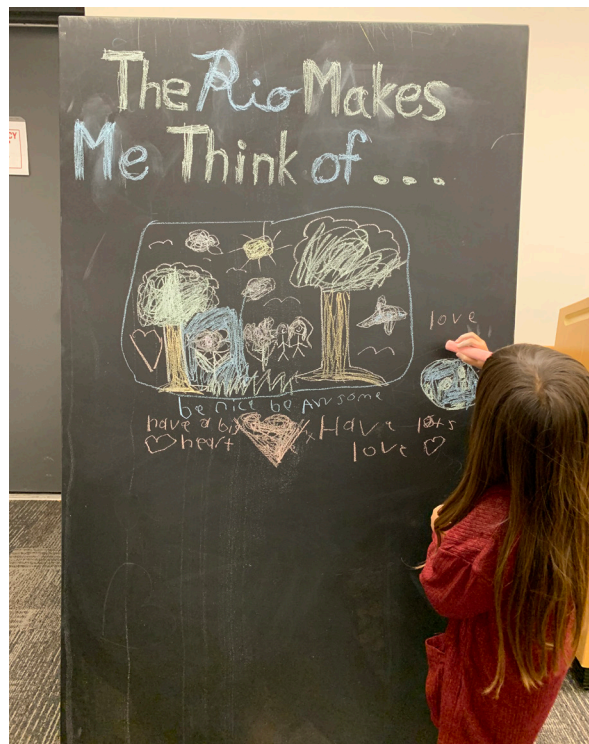


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COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGY

WHAT METHODS WERE USED

The project utilized a Community Engagement Plan designed specifically to engage the subject of RIO PHX. The outreach strategy and methods considered a diverse audience that included: residents, businesses, agencies, organizations, elected officials, city departments, governments, and other stakeholders within and beyond the limits of the project area.

Opportunities for gathering input included:

- Community Workshops held on:
 - October 1, 2024
 - February 4, 2025
 - April 16, 2025
- Project Expos held on:
 - April 22, 2025
 - April 24, 2025
- Rio Reimagined Partnership meeting with regional

stakeholders held on October 1, 2024 (hybrid meeting)

- Online and in-person surveys
- Neighborhood association and block watch meetings
- Community-led events such as festivals, pop-ups, school events, etc.
- Presentations to City Boards and Commissions including the Central City and South Mountain Village Planning Committees, and Parks and Recreation Board.
- Meetings and other communication with individuals, groups, and organizations
- Website comment box
- Review of existing policy plans and reports that include relevant vision ideas and technical information.

Communication methods used to reach the community and other stakeholders during the planning process included:

- Printed and digital materials
- E-blasts (emails)
- Social media platforms (i.e. X, Next Door, etc.)
- In-person and virtual meetings and events
- Sign advertising at several public library locations
- Project website information
- Local radio
- Postcard notification to property owners



* BY THE NUMBERS (COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS):

96	REGIONAL PARTICIPANTS THROUGH RIO REIMAGINED INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION (MENTI) RESPONSES
141	WORKSHEETS WITH INPUT
190	WORKSHOP ATTENDEES (3 WORKSHOPS)
607	WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 WORKSHOPS)

* SEE PAGE 8-9 FOR ADDITIONAL CITY-LED ENGAGEMENT



MEETING THE COMMUNITY: City-Led Outreach

VISION THEMES FROM CITY-LED OUTREACH

Since the Fall of 2023, the City of Phoenix project team has engaged the community using various methods identified in the Community Engagement Plan. These methods included community/board meetings, email blasts, interagency meetings, mobile workshops (pop-up events), postcard mailers, social media, surveys (online and in-person), and website information. A vast amount of outreach was conducted by the project team in the neighborhoods within and beyond the limits of the project area, reaching not only residents but also schools, local organizations, property owners, and others. These city-led engagement efforts were parallel to the consultant team’s efforts, resulting in a comprehensive and diverse amount of feedback, particularly from a community survey that was organized around the six planning elements using a best-practice investment menu.

The below figures summarize the city-led outreach as of April 25, 2025, while survey results on the top 10 community identified investments are shown to the left, organized by the six planning elements.

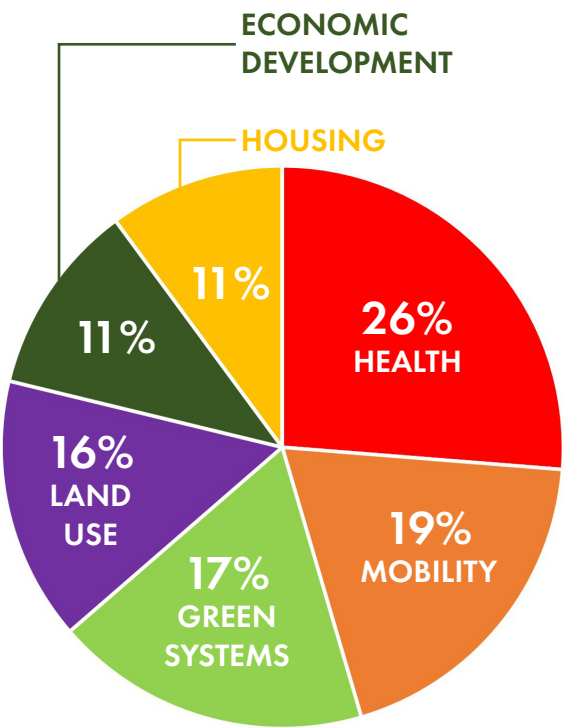
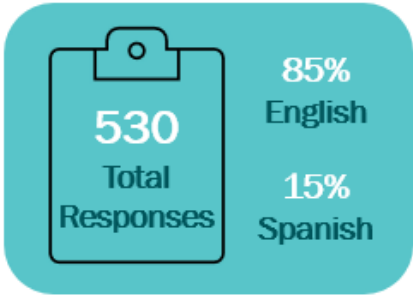
45
EVENTS/MEETINGS
ATTENDED

530
SURVEY RESPONSES

1000+
STAKEHOLDERS REACHED
AT EVENTS

8
PUBLIC LOCATIONS WITH
PROJECT INFORMATION

2
PROJECT EXPOS



Top 10 Identified Investments By Community Survey



Active + Passive
Use Parks



Natural/Engineered
Shading + Cooling



Trails + Paseos



Grocery Stores



Public Art



Farmer's Market
+ Mobile Grocery



Community
Garden



Gathering Areas +
Recreation Centers



Water
Efficiency



Mixed Use +
Walkable
Neighborhood

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

"Don't create the past for the future"

- Sandra Trotter-Jones

The consultant team organized three community workshops to engage the community by using multiple methods including presentations with workshops, surveys, tabling exercises, exhibits, maps, and kids activities. The workshops captured local voices of what residents, local workforce, and other stakeholders want to see across the study area in the future to guide development decisions, investments, and policies. By collecting community feedback, the City of Phoenix is able to translate how they can take action by addressing the requests from those who experience Area 1 on a day-to-day basis.

In order to dive deeper into what the public envisions, all workshop results were carried into the succeeding workshop to acknowledge the fruition of each idea and its progress from continuous community exposure. Each workshop is summarized in the following pages.



Emergent Themes from ASU Rio Reimagined Partnership Interactive Presentation

The following diagrams display results from a virtual survey provided during the ASU Rio Reimagined Partnership Interactive Presentation the morning of October 1, 2024. With 96 people in attendance, a presentation on the RIO PHX planning initiative goals and objectives was provided as well as an interactive discussion to ask key questions to this diverse group of local, regional, tribal, and federal partners.

1) SUMMARIZE YOUR BACKGROUND AS IT RELATES TO THE RIO.



2) WHAT ARE YOU EXPECTING FROM THE RIO ENGAGEMENT PROCESS?



3) WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE GOALS FOR THIS PHASE OF THE RIO?



4) CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT OTHER CITIES, RIVERS, AND OR PARKS THAT YOU THINK ARE GREAT.



Community Workshop #1

ORIENTING OURSELVES

The first community workshop happened on October 1st of 2024, when 47 community members came together in the Warehouse District at Multistudio's office. To spread the word and encourage the community's attendance, contact methods included in-person recruitment, e-blasts, and flyers.

Starting off the first of three workshops within the Multistudio office, participants were able to see previous efforts made relating to RIO PHX efforts such as the process behind South Central Transit-Oriented Development.

An introduction presentation was provided to orient our focus to the RIO PHX, the past and present conditions, and beginning of an imagined future where we are reorienting ourselves to the Rio Salado as a vital open space in a growing city. Following a presentation, everyone participated in breakout table exercises. To conclude the workshop, each table brought their ideas to the big map.



Table Discussions to bring up concerns and aspirations about the study area. Source: Multistudio

"Rio has been a dump for so many years. I know how great it used to be and some of the history behind it, so that's why I'm here." - Participant

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS: RIO REIMAGINED PARTNERSHIP INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

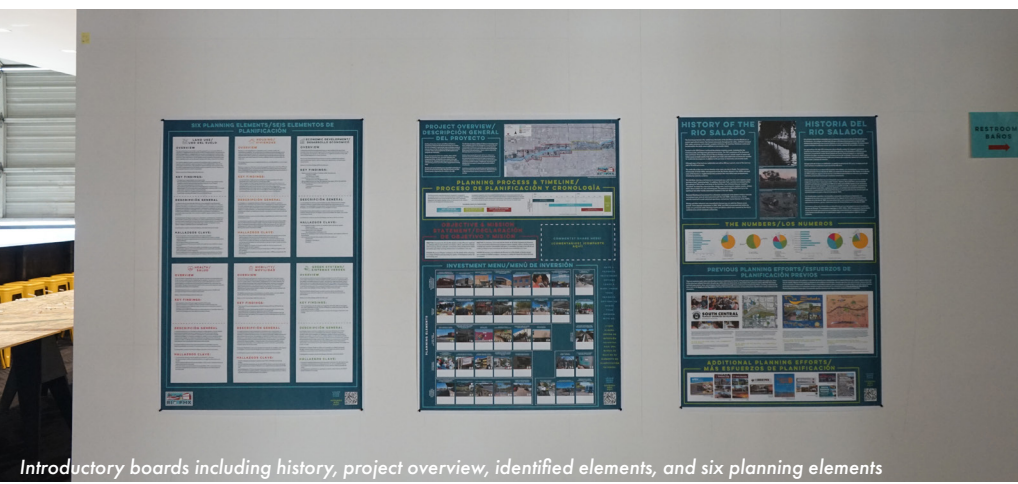
On the morning of October 1, 2024, the City of Phoenix and consultant team provided an interactive presentation on the project at the Rio Reimagined Partnership meeting, held in a hybrid format (online and in-person). Over 90 participants attended this meeting and provided input representing local, regional, tribal, and federal agencies. An online survey (Menti) was utilized to engage participants.

Given that the RIO PHX planning effort for Area 1 is the most recent effort for community engagement and will set the stage of subsequent planning efforts in a coordinated vision for the future, input from the partnership stakeholders helped inform precedent research, themes for planning. The following pages summarize survey results through each question and a word cloud showing most popular responses in larger text.



Kids Activity - future habitat ideation. Source: Multistudio

Community Workshop #1 Content



Community Takeaways

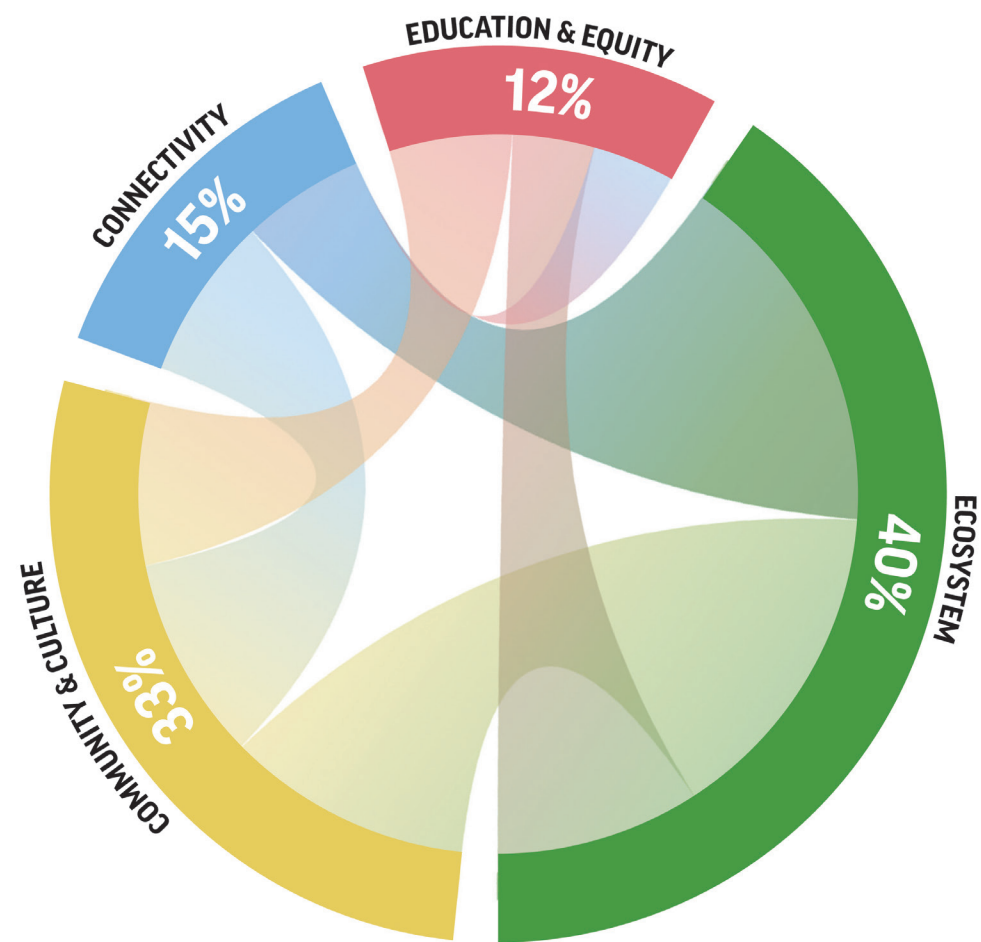
Four general themes emerged from the first of a couple planned community workshops. The graphic below represents the themes that emerged from the workshop and the interconnectedness of those themes: **Ecosystem, Social/Cultural, Access and Education.**

REGIONAL LANDMARK

The Rio Salado is a significant physical, social and historic Landmark. Part of a vast water management system, the RIO PHX now has the capacity to be a regional biocultural condenser, engendering a diversity of uses including gathering spaces for

individuals, recreational activities, habitats for dry and wet ecologies along with being a newly desirable location or businesses, cultural investments, and light industrial legacy uses. The RIO PHX also presents an opportunity to mend a social and ecological fabric that was impoverished by a history of inequitable planning practices as well as segregated and homogenized use.

WORKSHOP #1 COMMON THEMES



WATER AND DESERT

Water is a vital resource. Even in its limit, it is an important element contributing to social, cultural, biological, economic, educational and health of the region. Water, in the Sonoran Desert, connects to thriving dry ecologies that persist in their native arid habitat. Dry ecology includes people, along with plants, and animals. Sustainable tactics are necessary to reverse the overheating associated with concentrations of building mass and emission. Discovering and supplementing opportunities for shade that mediate the added effects of heat island and attend to the thermal comfort that promotes walking and respite for a diversity of desert species.

ACCESSIBILITY DIVERSITY

Arterial roads should not be the only entrances to the

RIO PHX. There is concern of safety on these corridors. Alternative corridors should be identify to create micro mobility and enhanced pedestrian pathways. Lighting, shade, wayfinding, seating and trash receptacles are critical. Restrooms and potable water at reasonable increments support use and cleanliness of the area.

LEARNING CENTERS

Learning happens with greater exposure to the open public space for diverse cultures, and nature. A “center” for education was mentioned in contrary to a “cultural center” because it more inclusive and open to the diverse knowledge of the inhabitants of this area -past and present. Greater opportunities for learning is an everyday activity desired for kids as well as adults therefore the center is part of the education but not the whole.



RIO PHX Workshop 1 Activity



*“The river should be developed first.”
-Numerous Participants*

Big Map Activity & Areas of Change (Vision 2050) + Catalyst Sites Table Map - Participants selecting imagery and commenting on what represents their vision of Area 1

Community Workshop #2

REIMAGINING THE AREA

On February 4th, 2025, 74 members from both the public and City of Phoenix gathered at the Travis L Williams Family Services Center in South Phoenix for the second workshop. The primary focus of this workshop was to:

- Share and incorporate feedback from Workshop #1 graphically and in writing.
- Share history, process, goals for the project, technical research and precedents from other communities around priority topics stemming from the six planning elements
- Gather additional feedback on:
 - Areas to protect, enhance, and change
 - Proposed land use changes to reach goals
 - Proposed increased connectivity priorities from neighborhoods to the Rio Salado and along the banks of the Rio Salado
 - Scenic drive and paseo proposed design details
 - Gather information and priorities on which sites

and types of improvements could be catalytic for change in the study area.

Being an open-house style, participants followed a path of travel starting with a RIO PHX overview and gradually ending with community call-for-action activities regarding Area 1. To begin, informational boards regarding Rio Salado history and framework goals were displayed, including elements from the Existing Conditions Report and precedents. Following the introductory boards, participants had a chance to review the RIO PHX Visual Guide and content that came as a result from the first workshop, comprising of the Top 10 Identified Investments per public feedback. The review deemed beneficial for both participants who joined the previous workshop in October to see how their feedback was accounted for along with seeing how others who participated selected priorities. New attendees were able to see a comprehensive overview of information to support the feedback requested.

The “Big Map” activity from the first workshop was displayed to collect and layer new feedback with previous input to see what new information and ideologies may emerge. Community members were then encouraged to participate in the activities at each station including:

Areas of Change (Vision 2050) + Catalyst Sites

The map displayed proposed Areas of Change and protected existing residential neighborhoods with a goal to reduce displacement. Four key sites and connections were identified, and participants were asked to select three priorities for change from what is identified (either sites or connectors). If participants felt that there was a greater alternative to what was identified, it was encouraged for them to share.

Existing + Proposed Land Use Map (Vision 2050)

2045 population projections obtained by the City of Phoenix anticipate an increase population in the study area from about 9,500 to 31,500 people. In addition, there are nearly 20,000 employees in the study area today, with 89% of employers having less than 100 employees. After comparing existing and proposed land uses that balance population growth and employment uses, participants were asked to share what areas they support and where they would like to see a different land use mix.

Connectivity (Vision 2050)

A goal of the project is to provide greater connectivity throughout the study area and from adjacent neighborhoods to the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration

Area for bikes and pedestrians. Participants were asked to share how they would prioritize pedestrian and bike corridor connections as well as how are they currently accessing the Rio Salado.

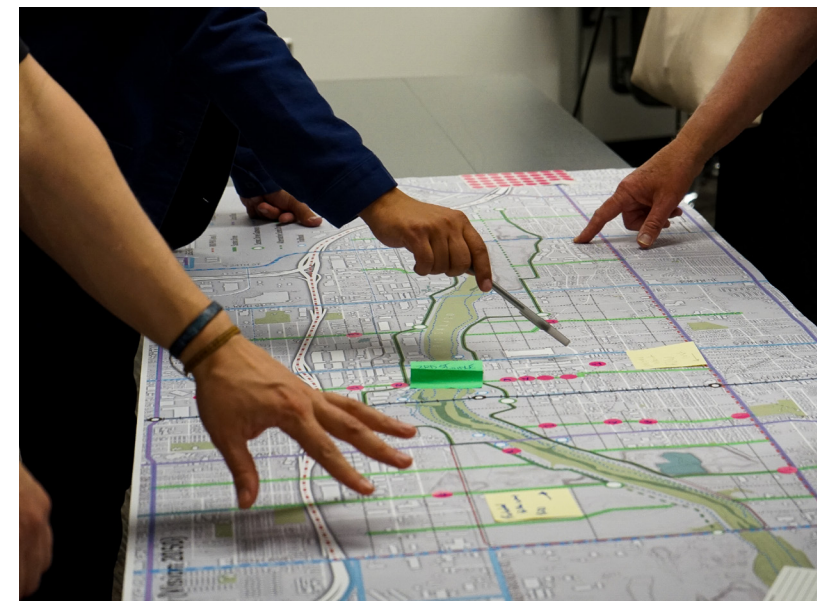
Proposed Scenic Drive: North & South

The 2003 Beyond the Banks Area Plan identified the concept of having scenic drives or roadways parallel to the north and south banks of the Rio Salado. A graphic showing a revised roadway alignment and design elements was provided for inspiration. Participants were asked to provide feedback on what elements they support or would like to change.

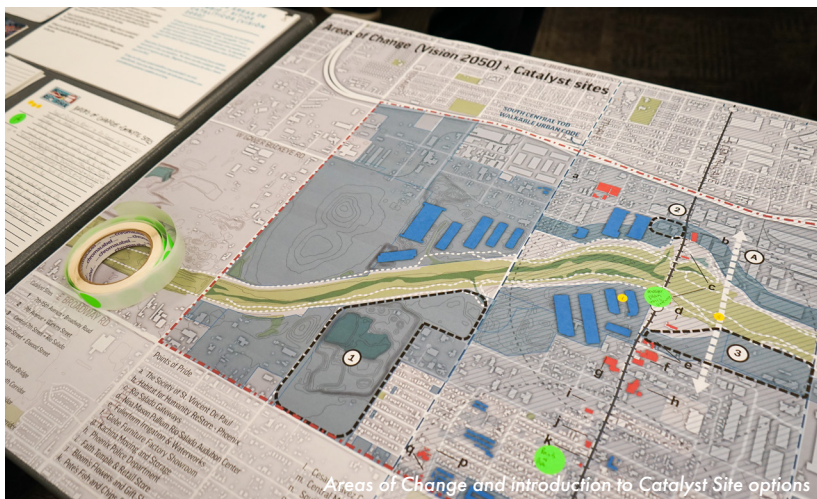
Proposed Paseos & Pedestrian River Edge

A goal of the project was to create greater walkability to connect neighborhoods to Rio Salado by foot and by bike and to do so with green infrastructure that provides amenities along paths including shade. In addition, having an appropriate transition where Rio Salado Park meets private development is important to respect the natural habitat that exists there while creating a pedestrian-friendly environment that activates this area. Participants were asked to share additional thoughts on elements that they liked or would like to change on paseos and pedestrian river edge treatment.

All input received, whether within an activity note, or recorded by Multistudio team members, or included in the comment box, was taken into account in an overall document.



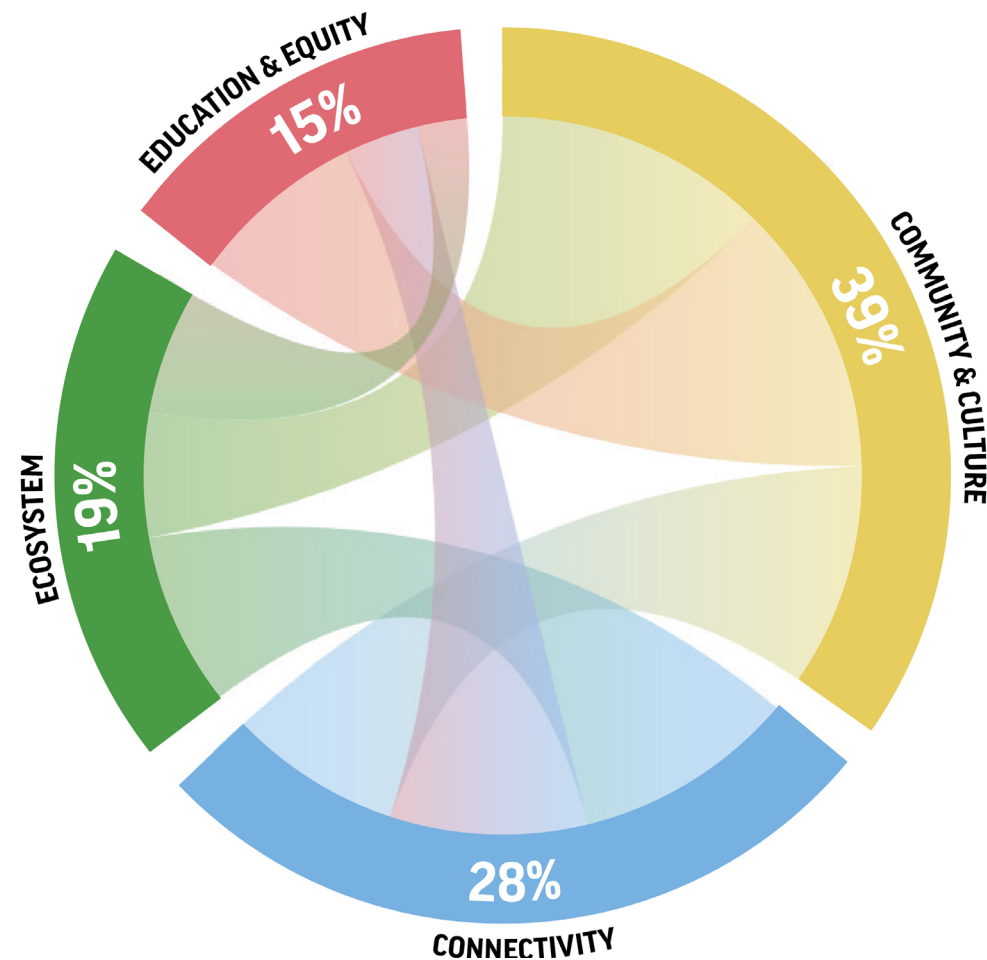
Community Workshop #2



Community Takeaways

The participants provided over 100 individual comments on the areas of change, land use and connectivity maps as well as the Big Map and comment cards. Out of this the main themes that emerged were **Community & Culture, Connectivity, Ecosystem and Education & Equity**. The distribution of comments is reflected in the diagram below where you can see the priority shown in percentage and secondary priority shown in the connections. We notice that, through this interconnection of themes, all the priorities are closer in relevance than shown by the percentage.

WORKSHOP #2 COMMON THEMES



EVENTS

The study area presents an opportunity for underutilized open land to incrementally develop into landmarks and gathering spaces. Places for events are desired by the community to come together along Rio Salado. Beyond local spaces, the community expresses their desire to host regional events, such as 2.5-mile river walk, or a monthly market at a trail head.

HERITAGE AND DEVELOPMENT

The histories and current culture of the study area should be preserved and carried in new development. As the area moves to the future, it should embody the ways in which this community relates to the land.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

- **Activation of Public Spaces:** Include commercial areas, entertainment venues, and cultural spaces in new mixed-use spaces to foster more community interactions.
- **Tourism and Economic Growth:** Establish Rio Salado as a regional destination and build supporting entertainment districts, parks, and vibrant cultural zones.
- **Local Art and Heritage:** Phoenix's cultural identity, indigenous knowledge, and historical references exhibited through local art opportunities and public installations.
- **Connectivity:** Corridors should connect and improve access to underutilized areas advocating for art, culture, and nightlife.
- **Family-Friendly Community Spaces:** Open areas inclusive for families that can host festivals, outdoor performances, and diverse gatherings options.
- **Nature and Ecology:** Sustainable initiatives should integrate cultural experiences with ecological preservation.

CONNECTIVITY

- **Improved Pedestrian and Bike Infrastructure:** Design safe and accessible pedestrian walkways, biking routes, and multimodal paseos to connect neighborhoods and key destinations.
- **Public Transit Integration:** Introduce local shuttle or bus routes and consider temporary road closures to prioritize other modes of transportation on special occasions.
- **Canal-Based Mobility:** Rethink and integrate existing canals as active mobility corridors in the city grid, to enhance bike and pedestrian access through underutilized infrastructure.
- **Safety Concerns:** Implement measures to ensure safer intersections, bike lanes, and pedestrian paths, particularly in older neighborhoods.
Connect Key Sites: The Audubon Center, AZ Fresh, and Liberty Wildlife can collectively support ecological, economical, and cultural opportunities in the study area.
- **Parking and Accessibility:** Balance Phoenix's car-centric needs by integrating parking solutions while promoting non-motorized travel and access to the Rio.

ECOSYSTEM

- **Habitat Restoration:** Give continuity to previous efforts on avoiding invasive species, include new diverse bioactivities and keep finding opportunities or ecological repair.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Stitching native plants and sustainable ecosystems to the urban fabric.
- **River Management:** Maintain the natural river channels, flow corridors, and discharge canals and eliminate toxic elements for the ecologies.
- **Recreational Bioactivities:** Support bio-friendly activities that engage those of all-ages, plants, animals, and the landscape while addressing concerns about ecological sustainability and habitat improvements.
- **Infrastructure Improvement:** Modify industrial areas and existing developments to better integrate with the surrounding environment. Facades and corridors to include shade and interactive natural elements.
- **Increased Maintenance and Investment:** Allocate budget and staff to maintain existing landfills and mining sites to ensure a healthy ecosystem.

EDUCATION & EQUITY

- **Affordable Housing:** Plan for affordable mixed-use developments with integrated amenities and services that also focus on homeless and social housing needs in the study area.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Bring job training initiatives near key areas such as Central, Broadway, or Rio Salado to support workforce development, local employment, and entrepreneurship.
- **Equitable Access to Public Spaces:** Address concerns about land acquisition and right of way processes for multimodal paseos, to ensure enough pedestrian spaces while maintaining acceptability and accessibility for all.
- **Displacement Prevention:** Implement strategies to prevent displacement in the transit-oriented development (TOD) area around Central Avenue, such as community land trusts, renter protections, and incremental development.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Increase opportunities for children through outdoor educational spaces, while integrating bioactivities similar to those planned around Liberty Wildlife.

Community Workshop #3

ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

On April 16th, 2025, 68 members of the community reunited for the final workshop at the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center in South Phoenix. This third workshop focused on the following items:

- Share and incorporate feedback from Workshops 1 and 2, graphically and in writing.
- Share the latest update on Catalyst Sites and how the community helped drive the RIO PHX team toward the final selection.
- Exhibiting the comparison between existing and future Design Guidelines for RIO PHX.
- Displaying what Actions & Implementations RIO PHX prioritizes as a result from community feedback.
- Gather additional feedback on the four proposed Catalyst Sites, Design Guidelines, and Actions & Implementations.
- Lastly, celebrating the progress of RIO PHX.

The evening began as attendees trickled in, browsing all content in gallery style, which concluded with a brief introductory presentation. The presentation outlined what work has happened behind RIO PHX, how feedback by community members was addressed, and how all efforts brought RIO PHX to where it stands today. To address the progress made from start to finish, material from the prior workshops was on display in addition to newer content, which participants were encouraged to explore and interact with after the presentation. These updates included the following items:

Four Proposed Catalyst Sites (Vision 2050)

The star of the show – four catalyst sites to help

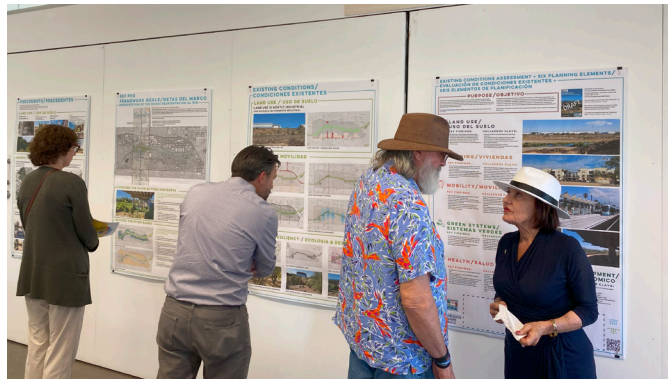
improve activity and restoration around the Rio Salado. After its brief introduction in Workshop #2, the RIO PHX team collected valuable feedback from participants to then narrow down four sites that will encourage the community to embrace the Rio Salado and prioritize its existence. Members were asked to share their thoughts on the locations of each site and the proposed activities that would promote community priorities.

Actions & Implementations

This station presented ideas of how to achieve the vision for the area, including the development of the catalyst sites. How are we going to get each site to where it needs to go? How are we going to move away from ideologies that no longer suit the banks of the Rio Salado and beyond? How are we as citizens not only going to be better ourselves, but treat our environment better? RIO PHX displayed the thinking behind a Vision 2050 plan and asked the public what else can be done or what does not find itself helpful from previous endeavors in return.

Design Guidelines

Hand-in-hand with Actions & Implementations, the Design Guidelines display showed a comparison between existing design guidelines and proposed design guidelines/standards that we should strive to follow for design choices. It's important that RIO PHX does not take away from the environment, but rather it adds to it and invites locals in the area to explore their relationship with our native desert landscape. Participants were asked to share what they feel does and does not work with what's proposed and what would they like to see happen.

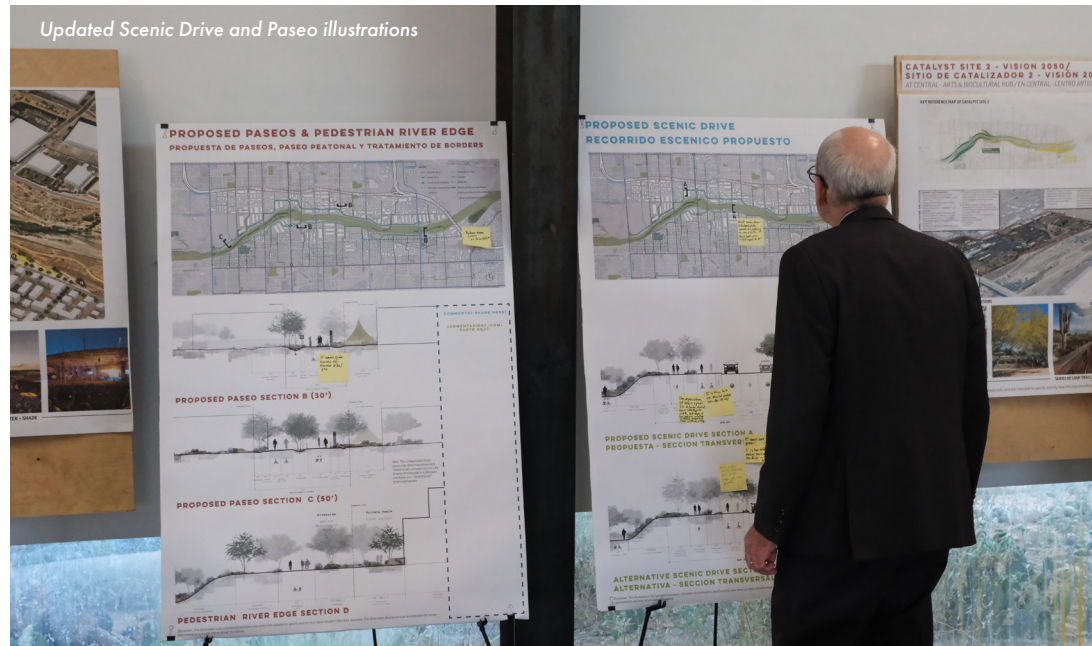




Gallery-style event setup



Catalyst-Site Master Plan



Updated Scenic Drive and Paseo illustrations



Celebratory Photo Opportunity



Proposed Land Use Map



Introductory Boards Review and Resources Table



Catalyst Site 4 Close-Up



Close-up of Catalyst Site display



Actions & Implementations Table



Opening Remarks Presentation

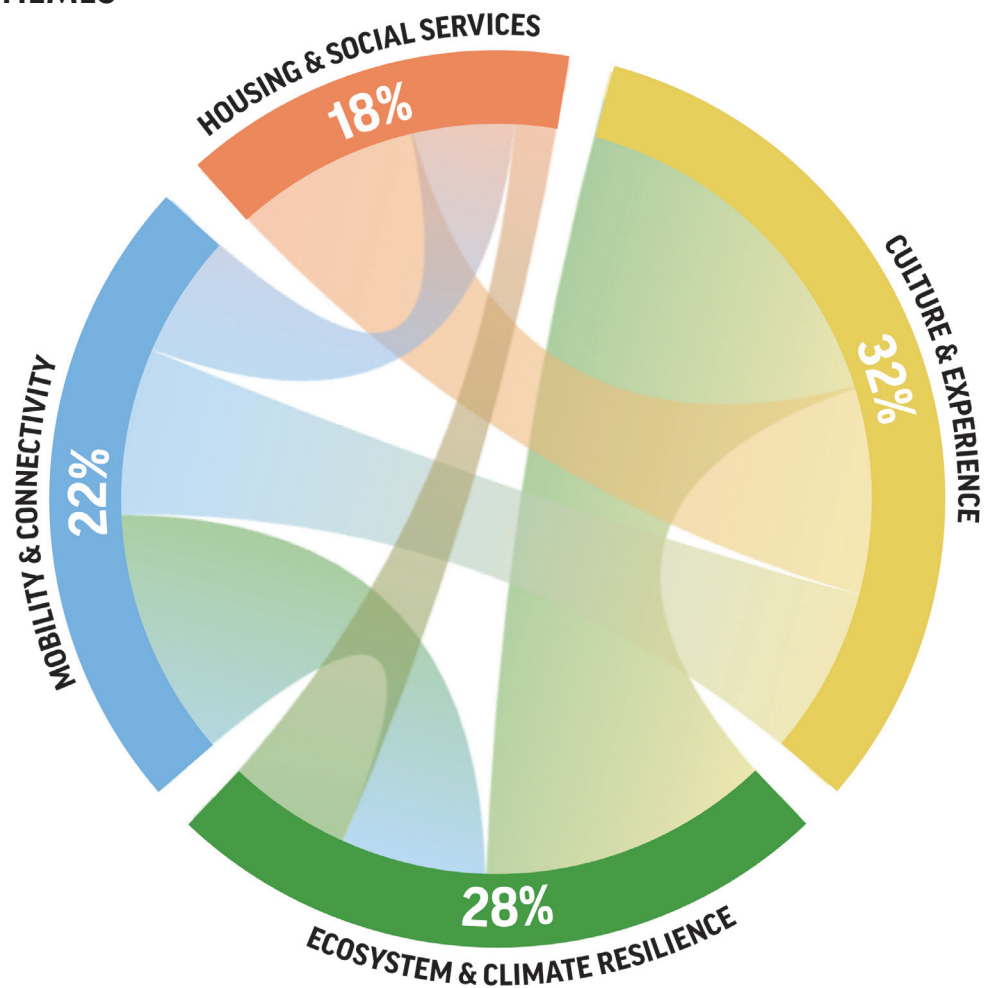


Connectivity Table Map

Community Takeaways

Over 120 comments were provided at this third and last community workshop held along the banks of the Rio Salado in the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center. Participants were able to see the catalyst sites proposed visually alongside the main natural features that connect them all, which are the river and local vegetation. The community primarily commented on Experience, Connectivity, Ecosystem, and Housing as key themes to bring forward by the project interventions. The distribution of comments is reflected in the diagram below, where you can see the priority shown in percentage and the secondary priority shown in the connections.

WORKSHOP #3 COMMON THEMES



SOCIAL SERVICES

Central and Rio Salado was highlighted as an opportunity zone to strengthen social services for residents. The study area includes this key zone in the regional metro area to connect citizens with jobs, education, healthcare, food and shelter resources.

COOLING INFRASTRUCTURE

To bring people to the Rio and imagined active recreation spaces, it has to be coupled with cooling strategies. Throughout the community advocated with “more” shade zones such as the large PV structures. Around the multimodal paseos, people suggested other city of Phoenix’s test projects like the cool pavement.

HOUSING & SOCIAL SUPPORT

“Increase housing for homeless people (open + creative solutions).”

- **Affordable Housing:** the need for access to attainable housing for residents of the study area was expressed by community members. People want affordable options along catalyst sites to prevent displacement due to rising housing costs in the Phoenix metro area.
- **Density & Mix of uses:** Specific areas in the study area were marked by the community as opportunities of higher density with a mix of uses. Specifically along corridors leading to DT PHX and the TOD area around Rio Salado/Audubon Light Rail Station.
- **Job Training:** accessible job training programs for residents of the Rio PHX area, rather than the regional resources available in other places such as the warehouse district and DT PHX.
- **Community Services:** Integration of education, social services, food, and healthcare alongside housing projects is wanted to ensure support for residents.

ECOSYSTEM & CLIMATE RESILIENCE

“Native / drought-resistant plants would be lovely—let’s integrate more desert plants into public spaces.”

- **Drought-Resistant Vegetation:** There is a need to integrate native, drought-resistant plants into landscaping for public spaces to conserve water and enhance Urban design approaches.
- **Water Conservation:** Multiple comments highlighted the importance of water in the region, sustainable water practices need to be in place for this socially aware problem Phoenix has.
- **Shade & Green Spaces:** Creating more shade along green corridors is key for the region’s efforts against heat and to provide comfortable public spaces for socializing and recreation.
- **Eco-Tourism:** Highlight environmental conservation and raising awareness about sustainability through Eco-tourism opportunities will benefit both the local community and visitors.

MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

“Protected bike lanes on North-South streets will help with safer mobility.”

- **Public Transportation:** Expanding and accelerating public transportation options is needed for all residents, especially those who relied on it for their daily commutes.
- **Bike Lanes:** There is a strong desire to add protected bike paths, specifically along north-south corridors. Cyclists relied on safe and shaded routes to move around the city.
- **River Connectivity:** Access to Rio Salado and its trails was mentioned as an opportunity to connect residents and visitors to Phoenix’s natural features, both as recreational and transportation opportunities.
- **Walkability:** Pedestrian-friendly shaded paths and streets encourage walking and mobility through the neighborhoods and local businesses.

CULTURE & EXPERIENCE

“High density development right at the edge of downtown will bring new life and opportunities to underdeveloped areas.”

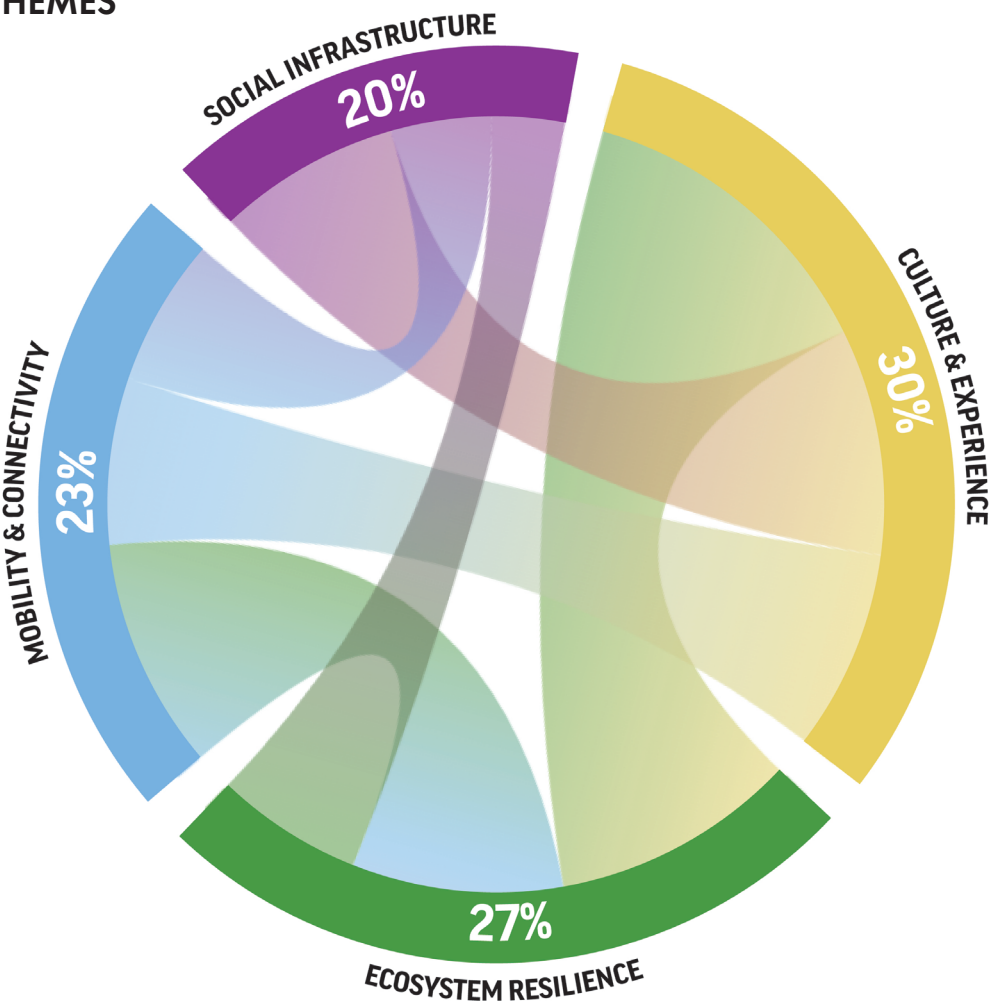
- **Public Art:** Incorporate public art into urban design to reflect Phoenix’s diverse culture and to enhance the city’s future urban aesthetic.
- **Social Gathering Spaces:** Spaces for social interactions are needed. Plazas, mix use spaces and community centers were highlighted for the success of a connected and vibrant community.
- **Skateparks:** Spaces for skating were mentioned as missing activity zones in the Phoenix metro area. Recreational spaces will encourage youth engagement and cultural hubs for safe and physical activities.
- **Urban Vibrancy:** Diverse density developments in underdeveloped areas, especially near major corridors, was suggested as an approach to bring life and opportunity to the study area. The community wants to create a more dynamic and engaging urban environment.

COLLECTIVE RIO PHX 2050 VISION

First we **oriented ourselves**, to the Rio’s ecology, as the conversation with the community heavily orbited around the Rio Salado and its present in the city. Then we began to **reimagine the area** alongside the community’s stories, knowledge and connections to the land. Finally, the **roadmap for the future** brought forward the desire for culture being celebrated through out the urban fabric while also attending social needs through services and supporting infrastructure.

From these three workshops, similar themes were identified: Culture & Experience, Ecosystem Resilience, and Mobility & Connectivity where common themes through out. Social Infrastructure was another theme identified that includes Housing, Education, Healthcare, Job Training and Access.

OVERALL WORKSHOPS COMMON THEMES



CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE

A big portion of the public comments received from the other themes are also told with a cultural and experiential sensitivity. A major theme within this category was the activation of the study area for diverse local recreational activities is one benefit, but the community imagines a regional landmark that connects Phoenix with cities globally.

ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE

The Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area (RSHRA) is itself a story of resilience. Improving shade and conditions for local fauna to thrive were mentioned as strategies to amplify the impact of the RSHRA along and beyond the banks.

Continued management of the RSHRA was also identified as an important steps towards activating and restoring this area.

MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements was a top choice identified by the community. Accessibility to multi-modal paseos through local streets was suggested as means of accessing safer roads.

Completion of the street grid across the study area will improve connectivity and support residents plus commuters alike who can access employment hubs. Elwood Street was identified as a critical roadway that could integrate multi-modal mobility options across the community.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Education, environmental activities, and recreation along the Rio Salado were identified as opportunities at all workshops. Promoting the study area as an accessible hub for jobs, housing, and food centers will support the needs of residents.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Community Workshops

THE PATHWAY TO TODAY: REACHING MULTIPLE AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

The Community Engagement Plan was developed by the City to reach a wide range of residents, businesses and non-profits to consider the six planning elements in the context of the existing conditions and future potentials. A key meeting included outreach to the Rio Reimagined Partnership to expand the reach from the local Phoenix stakeholders to a broader group with interest in the development of the Rio Salado and beyond its banks. The Community Engagement Plan accomplished the following intended goals:

- Listen, ask questions, and capture voices of stakeholders to the community
- Cultivate a more informed community by providing educational information and illustrations.
- Identify the public's preferences, ideas, and recommendations.
- Nurture partnerships to take action.

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The vast community input collected throughout the three workshops and other community engagement activities presents a unique opportunity for the City and others to consider in future/ongoing implementation work. Also, reconnecting with individual property owners or groups on specific sites/properties would be important to advance the vision for the area.

The vastness of the study area (seven square miles) presented challenges, particularly with reaching certain audiences and also balancing the goals of the project with the scope of work and associated timeline. The public engagement and technical analysis process revealed the need for additional investigation around specific topics important to the community.

TAKEAWAYS FROM WORKSHOPS

- Community is looking for implementation of plans on input they have already provided.
- Green infrastructure investments with public amenities is key to reconnect communities to public space across former industrial sites.
- The proposed scenic drive is not a priority when it is there in service of the industrial and private traffic uses.
- Continued Enhancement of the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration area and associated public amenities is key to the vitality of future development beyond the banks.
- Intense and dedicated coordination among all city departments is key to bring forward the complex vision and details necessary to implement them.

MORE WORK TO DO

The community workshop and engagement activities highlighted that there is more work to be done and there are greater opportunities for persistent involvement from the residents, businesses, non-profits, regional partners, and the City of Phoenix.

Future work by the City could include the following:

- Infrastructure needs assessment and broader connectivity study.
- Place-making assessments to guide future investment.
- Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area needs assessment to determine what improvements (and cost estimates) are necessary to fully restore the area.
- Catalyst site assessments and key property owner engagement.
- Zoning and other land use assessments.

HOW THIS PLAN CAN BE USED

This Community Engagement Report can be used to communicate the vision outlined by the community within the study area and inform future development and infrastructure projects, future/ongoing plans and policies, and new investment decisions by the city and others.

