

TOWN OF SAHUARITA

SAHUARITA TOWN CENTER VISION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



June 2017



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Town Center Visioning

The Town of Sahuarita has embarked upon this visioning process to provide a guiding framework for the Sahuarita Town Center District Master Plan that will inform the design guidelines, analysis, recommendations and phasing opportunities. The Master Plan will be used to guide the Town's future decision-making and design processes to develop a Town Center District. The elements of the Town Center District will respond to the community needs and priorities. The master planning process will evaluate development opportunities and available resources within the Town to most strategically invest and prioritize an action plan.

Roger Brook's Branding Report

The Roger Brook's Branding Report for the Town of Sahuarita serves as a foundational document for the Town Center Visioning, which builds on the report's findings and recommendations. A branding, development, and marketing action plan within the report was developed through a collaborative effort of consultants, stakeholders, and the community. It is a recommendation-driven plan dependent upon available resources, private-public partnerships, and cooperation of all involved throughout implementation. The report expresses an overall Vision for the Town of Sahuarita with an appealing brand crafted for tourism, economic development, and quality of life. The Branding Report provides a 40-month Action Plan for implementing a new brand for the Town.

TOWN CENTER VISION PROCESS

The Town Center Vision Process can be summarized in the following 5 Steps. These steps are further described at a summary level in this Executive Summary, and in detail in the Appendices.

1. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS
 - a. Facilitated Advisory Group Meetings
 - b. Visioning Questionnaire
2. TOWN CENTER ANALYSIS
3. TOWN CENTER CASE STUDIES
 - a. Queen Creek, AZ
 - b. Daybreak, South Jordan, UT
 - c. Paseo Cayala, Guatemala
4. TOWN CENTER VISION, RECOMMENDATIONS,

AND ACTION PLAN

- a. Create a Destinalional Draw
- b. Offer a Mix of Uses
- c. Expand and Enhance Connectivity
- d. Showcase Arts, Culture, Food and Entertainment
- e. Foster Community Collaboration

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The public engagement and outreach approach for this effort required a set of focused, facilitated discussions with and Advisory Group, paired with a broadly distributed visioning questionnaire, which cast a wide net for public input. This two-pronged approach allowed the Town to seek guidance from a core set of community leaders while leveraging the broader voice of desires and opinions from the Sahuarita Community.

Facilitated Advisory Group Meetings

Three facilitated meetings were held with the Advisory Group to discuss the opportunities for a new Town Center District in Sahuarita. The first "kick-off" meeting brought key decision makers together to discuss existing assets, issues, and opportunities. The Advisory Group considered potential sites and case studies, and established evaluation criteria for assessing the viability of each. Three subsequent meetings followed, exploring



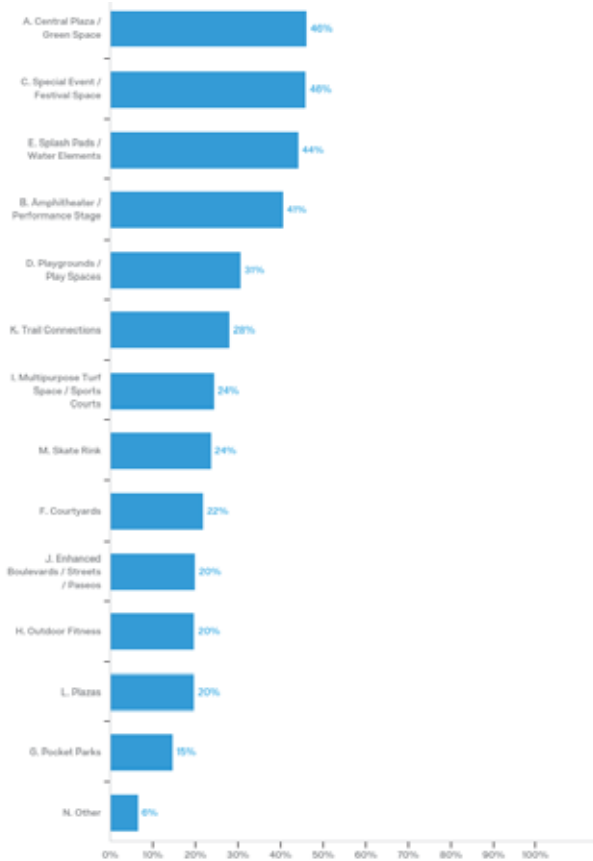
the overall vision for a Town Center District while also reviewing and commenting on preliminary planning and design concepts.

Visioning Questionnaire

The Town distributed an eight-question visioning questionnaire to the broader Sahuarita community to gather input on possible programming, uses, public space, and types of business that the community would prefer to see as part of a new Town Center District in Sahuarita. The questionnaire was distributed on-line by Qualtrics, with 2,200 responses collected. Ninety-one percent (91%) of those who responded were residents of the Town of Sahuarita. Forty-one (41%) of those who responded live in the Rancho Sahuarita neighborhood, with the others reporting from 20 additional neighborhoods within and around the Town. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents were over the age of 33.

Seven of the questions focused on four key areas, including land use, public space, desired

Question 2. What kinds of public space associated with a Town Center would improve livability in Sahuarita? (Mark all that apply)



businesses, and a clarification of overall preference. The top six desired land uses included: restaurants, retail and shopping, market space (farmer’s market/food trucks), public gathering space, indoor recreation center, and kid activities.

Seventy-nine (79%) of the participants responded ‘yes’ when asked if Sahuarita should establish an outdoor public gathering space such as a central plaza, town green, performance stage, etc., to diversify the activities and create a more aesthetically appealing Town Center District. The top six public spaces desired by the community included: a central plaza and green space, special festival space, a splash pad or water elements feature, an amphitheater/performance stage, along with playgrounds, play spaces, and trail connections.

Restaurants of all kinds topped the list for preferred businesses; the top three priorities were dinner restaurants, lunch restaurants, and breakfast restaurants respectively. Coffee shops, taverns and nightlife venues, and a movie theater rounded out the top six. In addition to the options listed in the questionnaire, recreational facilities such as a pool and/or courts for pickleball also received much support.

Further honing in on key desired elements, the questionnaire asked respondents to list their top six desired elements for a new Town Center District. Below are the top ten items expressed.

- Dinner Restaurants
- Lunch Restaurants
- Bars/ Brewery/ Tavern/ Pub/ Nightlife Venues
- Breakfast Restaurants
- Coffee Shop
- Splash Pads/Water Elements
- Movie Theater
- Bowling Alley
- Clothing Retailers
- Central Plaza/Green Space

TOWN CENTER ANALYSIS

For the Town of Sahuarita to have a thriving Town Center District, a known, viable location to develop is critical to the success of the Town Center Master Plan. In support of this, the Town and consultant team reviewed town parcel information in search of vacant and underutilized properties that could be identified as potential development

sites. The team evaluated strategic areas of the community, analyzing physical site characteristics and observations, zoning, economic and political climates, and qualitative assessments of social, cultural, and aesthetic factors. The intent of this exercise was to identifying preferred locations of interest deemed most suitable for a new Town Center District in Sahuarita.

Physical site analysis considered natural and environmental features such as topography and slope, floodplain, washes, drainage patterns, noise, hazards, vegetation, existing uses, soils, and habitat. Future maintenance and operations impacts were also reviewed. Legal, economic, and political realities were assessed by reviewing ownership and entitlements, zoning, land use, compatibility, utilities, infrastructure, legal and

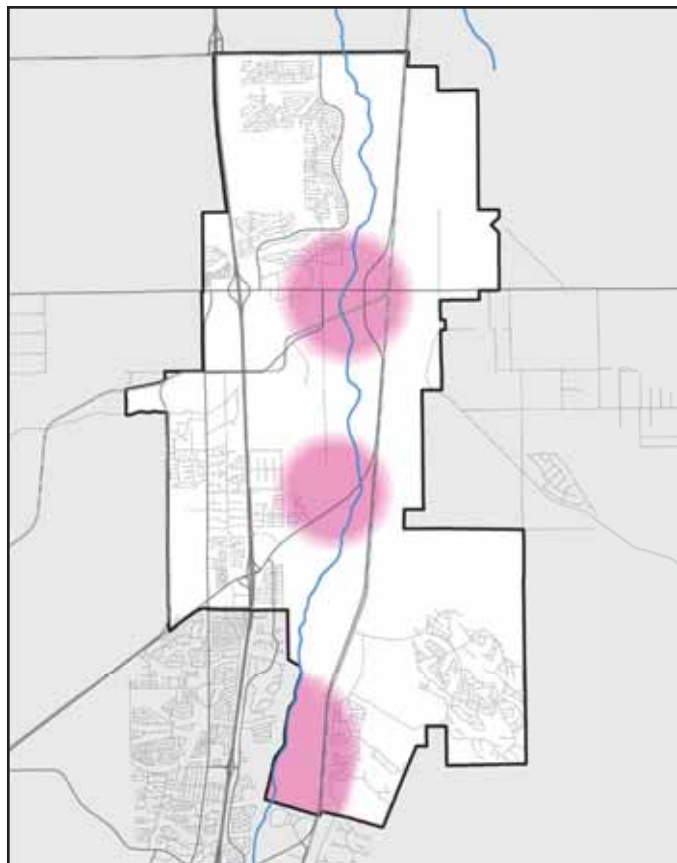
political impacts, and potential cost. Review of the social, cultural, and aesthetic aspects measured influences of adjacent uses, transportation impacts of connectivity, access, and capacity, community support and demographics, along with visibility, proximity, size, flexibility, and the potential for expansion of each site.






TOWN CENTER CASE STUDIES

The Town of Sahuarita evaluated other town centers that have completed similar goals by creating a new Town Center District for their community. As a result, over 10 different town centers and downtown districts were studied by the consultant team in order to identify and select a set of example communities. Best practices were extracted from these case studies and guided the master planning framework. Three very distinct and unique locations were chosen based on a comparison assessment of relative size (acres), land use mix, tenant mix, and site observations of function, form, and character. The three standouts included:

- **The Queen Creek Town Center Plan** of Queen Creek, AZ for its overall planning framework;
- **Daybreak** Master Planned Community of South Jordan, UT for its identifiable core elements for a Town Center; and
- **Paseo Cayalá** of Guatemala City, Guatemala for its success as a new town center that achieves a character of historical significance and respect with its overall architectural look and feel.

Sahuarita Town Center Areas of Interest



-  SAHUARITA TOWN LIMITS
-  AREAS OF INTEREST
-  STREETS
-  RAILROADS
-  SANTA CRUZ RIVER

Queen Creek Town Center Plan | Queen Creek, AZ





Queen Creek, home of the Mesa Gateway Airport, is growing in both employment and income. A town of approximately 26,000, Queen Creek updated their Town Center Plan in 2002 in order to respond to the town's changing needs and provide a framework for decision-making.

The Town works to attract, retain and enhance locally owned business through planning and design, small business initiatives and educational opportunities. The Town's goal to strengthen the economic vitality of the Town Center can be seen through initiatives such as public-private partnerships, the Town Center Committee and Gangplank Queen Creek. Among the programs offered to businesses within the Town Center are banner space on the pedestrian street lights, assistance with improving street-facing exteriors with the Facade Improvement Program, and membership in the Shop Queen Creek program.



Developers of the Daybreak master planned community built with the intention to reveal a new pattern for growth in Salt Lake City. Developers used a traditional neighborhood development model and grouped homes, parks, shopping, schools, offices, and transit within a 5-minute walking and biking distance in order to reduce dependency on cars. When completed, it will contain more than 20,000 residential units, all of which are Energy Star certified. Other site amenities include community garden plots, a stocked lake, and more than 12 parks and 30 miles of walking and biking trails. An HOA manages logistical operations of Daybreak, and LiveDAYBREAK creates community culture through events and programs. SoDa Row is notable as Daybreak's first Town Center. It includes several restaurants and retail shops, a day spa, barber shop, dry cleaner, the Rio Tinto Regional Headquarters, and a multi-specialty clinic featuring a 24-hour Emergency Room.

Daybreak | South Jordan, UT



Paseo Cayalá | Guatemala City, Guatemala





The Town of Cayalá was master planned in 2003 by Léon Krier with the Guatemala-based firm of Estudio Urbano. Cayalá is intended to be a livable, walkable development that offers a variety of housing, shopping and dining options. The 34-acre development at the heart of Guatemala City offers apartments, parks, high-end boutiques, a church, nightclubs, and restaurants, all within a ring of white stucco walls. The project aims to draw Guatemalans into the urban center to participate in the economic and social life of the city.

Designed according to the needs of its inhabitants, the Master Plan of Ciudad Cayalá incorporates diverse buildings that serve the religious, cultural and recreational activities of the community. Each one was designed by renowned local and international architects. Additionally, Ciudad Cayalá has implemented environmentally friendly initiatives since its inception. The Master Plan reduces the need for automobiles, and recycled water irrigates all gardens.

TOWN CENTER VISION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN

Sahuarita’s strong infrastructure and energy has built momentum with the recent improvement in the redevelopment market, and provides a significant opportunity to diversify. The Sahuarita and Green Valley service area has a huge opportunity for development, and a Town Center District can fulfill the needs of a wide range of users within this area. A district model for the Town Center, as opposed to a smaller, more restrictive single Town Center site, has the ability to develop over time, with specific focus areas that may

develop at their own rates with a variety of different structural elements, uses, and programs.

While the town of Green Valley has had stable population growth, Sahuarita has experienced rapid growth in recent years, more than doubling in population between 2005 and 2015. The combined population between the two is as high as 68,000 people, a substantial service area. A Town Center District has the opportunity to serve this extended market by hosting a mixture of valuable uses and experiential elements.

Ultimately, the visioning team determined the Town has key areas of interest. This finding guided the team’s recommendation to evaluate the opportunity to study a Town Center District. The District concept envisions a larger assemblage of properties to accommodate long term development opportunities with a cohesive vision and character. The visioning process allowed the team to objectively analyze and compare the Town with similar communities to arrive at a strategic vision for the Town of Sahuarita’s Town Center District. The following areas of focus establish the framework to advance the process through the Town Center Master Plan.

- A. CREATE A DESTINATIONAL DRAW
- B. OFFER A MIX OF USES
- C. EXPAND AND ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY
- D. SHOWCASE ARTS, CULTURE, FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT
- E. FOSTER COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Sahuarita Town Center Service Area



- SAHUARITA TOWN LIMITS
- SERVICE AREA
- STREETS

A town center is a destination. A town center is an experience that draws people from the community towards its center in order to provide communities with unity and community identity, with social vitality, and with economic focus. It can form a catalyst for population and economic growth as well as being an attraction to those outside of the community.

-Advisory Group member Dr. James G Ward

RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Create a Destinalional Draw

- A1. Develop a Town Center Master Plan
- The development of programming and space elements for a Town Center District and the evaluation of property acquisition will incorporate community outreach and will require strategic efforts by the Town of Sahuarita in conjunction with selected consultants.
 - The master plan process is the next key step to advance the planning in collaboration with the community, stakeholders and the Town.
- A2. Utilize a district framework and definitive boundaries to help guide and focus growth as more intense development; and enabling the cultivation of a strong, distinct and self-sustaining Town Center District.
- A framework of more intense use will ensure



- that the Town Center District is a vibrant use center with an array of activities at all times.
- A3. Explore increasing residential densities in conjunction with more intense mixed-use development.
- Nodes of mixed-density residential opportunities together with mixed-use areas will contribute to the development of the Town Center District.
 - Providing a variety of housing will make the Town Center District a unique location in Sahuarita, and diversify housing options for residents.
- A4. Incorporate community gathering spaces and a green infrastructure plan in the design of infill and future development.
- Open space is a vital component of a Town Center District, and should be considered during the initial phases of planning and development. Green spaces provide flexibility and opportunity for development, and should not be relegated to an afterthought. Green infrastructure is a priority for development in the Town Center District.
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- A5. Form Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) at key commercial nodes within the Town Center District.
- BIDs help sustain and enhance a Town Center District, have the capacity to fund events, and create a sustaining destinalional draw.
 - BIDs can assist in making local small businesses successful.
- A6. Evaluate Acquisition of Properties
- Incentives can energize opportunities for development.
 - Determine mechanisms to encourage development.
 - Evaluate the opportunity to coordinate a request for qualifications for a development partner.
- A7. Develop and Economic Development Program
- Work with the Town of Sahuarita Economic Development Department to develop strategic programs related to the Town Center District.
 - Leverage new Town Branding to promote the Town Center District to potential employers.

B. Offer a Mix of Uses

- B1. Establish a set of design guidelines that honor the local history and architectural character of the area while offering opportunities for creativity in design to foster a robust and unique sense of place for the Town Center District.
- Design guidelines provide the opportunity to create a cohesive district with a unique sense of place.
 - Site design, open space, and streetscape design should work synergistically in order to develop a sense of place in the Town Center District.
- B2. Review Zoning / Develop an Overlay District
- Voluntary overlay districts can include incentives that entice developers to join. Incentives encouraging open space and parking reductions, accelerated plan reviews, or reduced plan review and permit fees, encourage developers to join in exchange for committing to the character, architectural design guidelines and standards of the overlay district.
- B3. Create incentives for small businesses to help keep small businesses in town while maintaining the community's unique character.
- Develop a strategic program to grow programs or incubator facilities to encourage local business.
- B4. Integrate higher density housing such as town-homes and condominiums into higher-intensity, mixed-use development to ensure all public spaces are well used and active for

the entirety of each and every day.

- Higher-density housing options will activate open space during a wide time-frame, creating a sense of community ownership of public space
- B5. Offer a variety of housing to support the community's set of diverse housing needs.
- Mixed-density housing will invite all ages of users to call Sahuarita home.

C. Expand and Enhance Connectivity

- C1. Guide development and land use patterns at key nodes along the corridor focusing more intense walkable mixed-use environments towards the center of each key node while decreasing the mix and intensity of uses moving away from the core.
- The Town of Sahuarita has a unique opportunity to provide alternate transportation options toward the interior of the Town Center District because the road structure is still in flux.
 - Phasing may be an important component of Master Plan development, as it can be beneficial for planning, budgeting, and development.
- C2. Cluster a mix of compatible uses and amenities such as residential, schools, retail districts, and recreational facilities within a walkable quarter- to half-mile radii to support a reduced dependency on cars.
- Combining compatible uses makes for a strong user experience and contributes to sense of place.
 - Integrating potential future amenities into



the Master Plan, such as the proposed new county library, can focus and direct development moving forward.

- C3. Cultivate social connections for community members through HOA supported outreach programs, education, special events, festivals, and performances.
- Providing a variety of activities and programs will make the Town Center District a hub of activity and draw people from around the region.
- C4. Implement Complete Street strategies to diversify transportation options such as transit lanes, bikeways, multi-use paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Diversifying transportation options creates a unique district that differs from the surrounding automobile-oriented development.
- C5. Utilize universal design and ADA concepts such as curb cuts, crosswalks, mid-block crossings and pedestrian refuges to create safer connections for the most vulnerable of users.
- Create a place for users of all abilities to enjoy.
- C6. Explore opportunities to diversify the way people travel with multi-modal transportation strategies.
- Accommodating bicyclists, pedestrians, and public transit users will invite a wide range of users into a Town Center District.
- C7. Consider a reallocation of available space along existing public rights of way through lane diets, road diets, and right-of-way acquisition to accommodate more types of

travel and offer more comfortable connections for pedestrians.

- A human scale design will enhance the sense of place by creating and inviting and safe environment for users.
- C8. Maximize underutilized space in the public right-of-way with complete street supporting Green Street strategies such as bulb-outs, parklets, medians, water-harvesting design elements, bioswales, infiltration trenches, xeriscaping, and rain gardens.
- Enhancements to right-of-way adds to the unique character and feel of the district.
- C9. Incorporate environmentally friendly initiatives to decrease CO₂ emissions by reducing the dependence on cars, and utilizing led lighting and recycled water (irrigating landscaping) to reduce energy consumption
- C10. Investigate existing sites' conditions for any potential brownfield challenges such as presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants;
- Plan for brownfield redevelopment by coordinating with state and other government agencies.
 - Seek out private developers with brownfield site redevelopment experience.
- C11. Share existing and develop new community facilities such as community and recreation centers with schools to maximize development resources and maximize daily use of community-funded facilities.
- Leveraging assets for multiple uses increases efficiency and interaction.



D. Showcase Arts, Culture, Food and Entertainment

- D1. Consider hiring or designating a Town of Sahuarita staff person as the "Town Center Champion" to organize events, coordinate marketing, and generally promote the Town Center District as a desirable place to visit, spend time, and develop businesses.
 - Prioritizing marketing efforts will help increase the visibility of the Town Center District and encourage Town of Sahuarita residents to explore and invest in their community.
- D2. Consider private financing and support in establishing farmer's markets and other public facilities such as a performing arts center or arts district.
- D3. Promote architectural character that acknowledges historic architectural styles of Sahuarita while offering opportunities for unique, distinctive design of different developments.
- D4. Promote employment opportunities in the interior of the Town Center District through small-scale, mixed-use development that offers aspiring entrepreneurs' attainable opportunities to kick start businesses, expand commerce, and activate the Town Center District.
- D5. Focus on kid and family friendly events and activities to engage the community and activate the Town Center District.
- D6. Focus on opportunities to capture the nightlife activities as part of the Town Center District.



- Activities for morning, day and night will enhance the quality of life for current and future residents.

E. Foster Community Collaboration

- E1. Establish a Town Center Advisory Group to actively collaborate in the Town Center planning process.
 - Consider an Advisory Group for the planning process.
 - Consider an Town Center District Review Board as the Town Center District is implements to maintain the character, planning and design objectives.
- E2. Develop the Town Center Program in collaboration with the community through working sessions and community input.
 - As the planning moves forward from the Visioning, the master planning process will refine a development program for the Town Center District responding to key priorities from the community. The Vision identifies key themes to guide the master planning process. The continued involvement with the community will ultimately refine the programmatic elements for the District.
- E3. Facilitate a Public Information Program and Meetings through the master planning process.
 - Continuing the dialogue with the community will build community interest and support. This support will enhance the commitment to fund and populate the District.
- E4. Seek Private-Public Partnerships to leverage resources and attract larger audiences.
- E5. Review Financing/Grants Opportunities/Public Financing Tools.
- E6. Develop Incentive-Based Strategies
 - Create development incentives to encourage development.
 - Development and design incentives/accelerated reviews.
 - Offer a property improvement/facade improvement and incentive program.
 - Offer banner/signage space on pedestrian street lights.

Special thank-you to the Advisory Group members for their time and effort:

Gil Lusk, Council Member

Kara Egbert, Council Member,

Nathan Barrett, Planning and Zoning Commission

John Backer, Planning and Zoning Commission

James Ward, Town of Sahuarita Finance and

Investment Advisory Committee

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Michael Jansen, Town of Sahuarita




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