

Meeting Summary

Heritage District Redevelopment Plan and Master Plan
 Town of Gilbert, Arizona
 November 30th and December 1st

Meetings & Public Workshop #1

The first of the Town of Gilbert (committee meetings, stakeholders meetings, and public workshop) were held on November 30th through December 1st of 2017. During that period, the consultants presided over a total of 15 hour-long meetings with various stakeholder groups including a Technical Committee of Town staff, the Redevelopment Commission, Town officials, business owners, developers, stakeholders, and residents. Additionally, a public workshop was held to engage the Town residents and community of Gilbert, Arizona.

The Public Workshop #1 was held on November 30th from 6:30-8:00pm at the 92 W Vaughn Ave, University Building, Assembly Room and was attended by 40 community members.

The following pages include:

- Meetings and Workshop Summary
- Project Goals
- Response Sheet Tally- Issues, Concerns, & Opportunities
- Focus Group Summaries and Notes

Meetings and Workshop Summary

The purpose of the meetings and workshop was:

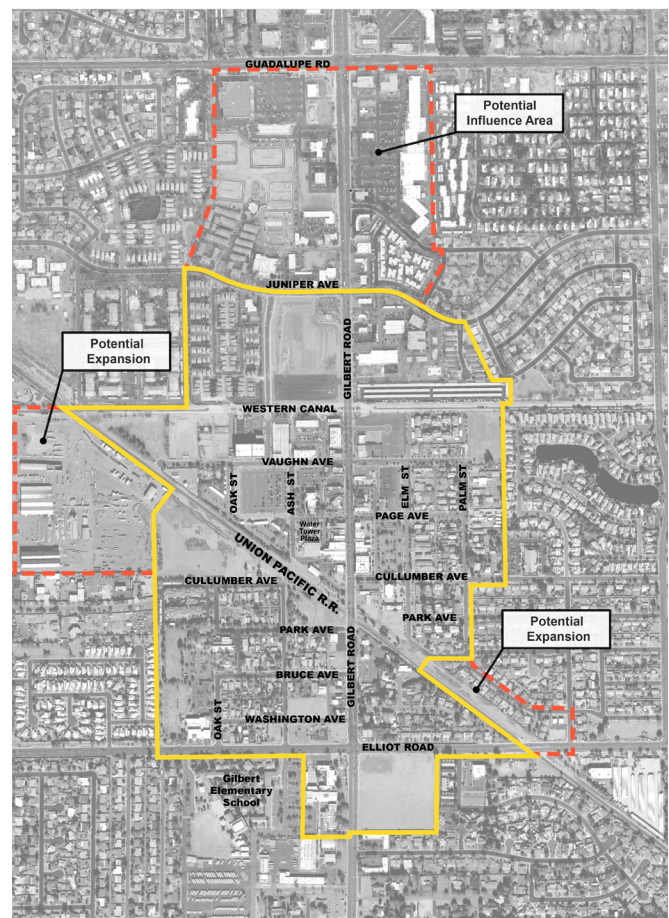
- Inform the committees, stakeholders, and citizens about the planning process
- Identify key issues, concerns, and desires of the town
- Answer questions

Stakeholder & Focus Group Meetings

Each meeting began with the consultant's presentation of the project overview, including schedule, study area, and a summary of background information. Following the presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to discuss issues, concerns, desires, and other feedback as well as ask questions. Written response sheets were provided to all with the purpose of documenting the top three issues and concerns and as well as areas presenting special design opportunities.

Public Workshop

The Public Workshop commenced with the same presentation given in the Stakeholder and Small Group Meetings, summarizing the process, schedule, study area, and background information. Following the presentation, attendees discussed their issues and concerns amongst their round-table group. Table maps and markers were provided to each of the eight tables to mark areas of concern as well as



Heritage District Study Area Graphic Presented to Town

write additional notes. The workshop portion concluded with table reports from each group summarizing the discussion and presenting their map. Main points of each summary were transcribed on a presentation-sized notepad and easel. Written response sheets were provided to all with the purpose of documenting the top three issues and concerns and as well as areas presenting special design opportunities.

Project Goals

A summary of the issues and concerns recorded on the Response Sheets form the basis for creating the project goals.

In all, twenty six response sheets were collected and fifteen project goals were identified and subdivided into three categories as indicated below.

These goals will guide the planning and development of the Heritage District Master Plan and updated Redevelopment Plan throughout the planning process.

	Goals	Times Mentioned
Land Use	Strengthen and Increase Downtown Retail	29
	Increase Public Space and Seating	17
	Encourage Office Development	5
	Provide Housing	4
	Provide Hotel and Convention Facilities	1
Transportation	Solve Parking & Transportation Flow/Congestion	22
	Increases Bike/ Pedestrian Network	15
	Provide Rail/Trolley Transit	2
Policy and Guidelines	Improve Maintenance Structure	19
	Provide Public Amenities (wifi, bike share, investment opportunity)	11
	Preserve Heritage District Uses and Character	10
	Address Utilities	8
	Expand the Study Area	8
	Address the Noise Pollution	7
	Address Community Safety Concerns	6

Response Sheet Tally - Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

The comments below are a summary of the issues, concerns, and downtown opportunities mentioned in the response sheets collected from the committee meetings, stakeholder meetings, and Public Workshop #1. Individual comments are grouped under the over-arching project goal.

Land Use

Strengthen and Increase Downtown Retail

- No chain Restaurants
- Need retail – Shopping
- Need neighborhood market
- Small locally owned shops only a few more restaurants
- Lack of grocery store
- Lack of shopping/library
- Lack of grocery store in district
- Bakery
- Grocery store
- Grocery Store
- More Retail
- Would like some mom and pop shops, Especially specialty grocery such as a cheese shop, a meat shop, a bread shop, etc.
- Retail is lacking
- Business Improvement District would focus on Downtown issues
- Needs small grocery store/pharmacy
- Add 1-2 organic type of grocery store/ markets
- Add boutique retail for customers as they wait for restaurants
- Adding amenities to keep people, encouraged to shop – before or after eating.
- Small boutique shops – unique (to keep the unique feel of the eating places)
- Development area on Washington small shops – not one big merchant
- More retail
- Restrictions on how many restaurants
- Book Store Changing Hands
- It would also be nice for an art gallery or two.
- More than just restaurants. Mixed use (retail/ office/ tech/ residential/ lofts/ college lifestyle)
- Balanced mix of high quality development

- Retail Shopping
- Antique district
- Museum store

Increase Public Space and Seating

- Sitting areas
- More open space for events
- Needs to be at least one good open space permanently
- Entertainment, performing arts, concert venue.
- Dog Park
- Family park area – Not just the water tower park
- Need more open space with for gathering. Whiskey row noise is too loud.
- Open space! Parks Outdoor venue, amphitheater
- Community Gather space
- More places for art/ entertainment – we have Hale theatre but no real places for small concerts, either inside or outside
- Dog Park
- Public restrooms in veteran's park (locked after hours) and garbage receptacles (not a big black can)
- More trees, parks and especially benches and places for people to sit(also Consider it is extremely Hot 4-6 months out of the year – so shade is critical to get people outside)
- Performing arts area
- More activities ... Art walk, concerts
- Art stuff maybe with seating areas
- Public Theatre
- Great communities have a sense of place, often with open space. Sundance square is a great example. Our farmers market and Art walk is a huge draw and is only available to us because of the open space.

Encourage Office Development

- General Public Opportunities
- Employment in the District

Response Sheet Tally - Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Attracting a couple of legitimate of employers to with 500 + high/mid income salaries (maybe Intel, Infusionsoft, or another software company, GE innovation Center)
- I would be careful not to develop a huge corporate office for a company that would create a huge vacancy if they went out of business or moved in the future
- Premium Office space

Provide Housing

- What happens to low-income housing as redevelopment moves in?
- High rise, luxury condos
- Add some but not a tremendous amount of luxury condos or small pockets of high-end SFRs, in addition to the gentrification that is already happening in the smaller homes nearby
- Provide for residential; redevelopment.

Provide Hotel and Convention Facilities

- Convention Hotel

Transportation

Solve Parking and Transportation Flow/ Congestion

- Parking. Street parking gets problematic when crowded.
- Parking
- Protection of on street parking
- Parking and traffic flow
- Traffic/ parking
- Traffic through down town
- Cullumber & Palm corner very busy (traffic, Speeding,)
- Need more access points for traffic flow.
- So hard to turn left on the Gilbert Rd. from neighbors
- The idea to expand ash street is a must do! It will free up Gilbert Road. When it gets backed up, It deters from people coming to the Heritage district.
- Rd traffic- divert
- What about some roundabouts in the (HD)?
- Convert some intersections to traffic circles

- Would be great to access HD from Neeley
- Ventilation of traffic flow from Gilbert Rd -> Sec other side
- Regional Transportation
- Evaluation of Traffic circulation.
- Additional entrances to HD other than Gilbert RD.
- How is Gilbert/ HD Planning for autonomous vehicles, zero emissions vehicles, the ride sharing movement.
- Ride share for circulation
- Traffic
- Ride share
- Housing opportunities- not 'program' residents

Increase Bicycle/ Pedestrian Network

- Bike traffic
- Bike-ability should be available with bike lanes
- Lack of bike paths
- Better walking, biking, routes
- Biking/ walking paths
- Pedestrian Walkway
- Sidewalks repaired or replaced. (Many tripping and safety hazards)
- Beautification of biking/ walking paths
- Become pedestrian friendly
- Pedestrian Bridges
- Providing a destination, family friendly, good pedestrian circulation.
- Bikes & pedestrian walkways

Provide Rail/ Trolley Transit

- Yes to the passenger railway
- Automated Trolley

Response Sheet Tally - Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

Policy and Guidelines

Maintenance

Cleanliness

- Power wash the sidewalks in front/ Behind Whiskey Row.
- Clean up neighborhood ... Funding for exterior Paint
- Maintenance district – (entertainment) -streets
- Public works – how do they plan to keep everything clean?
- Out to dump garbage before 6:00 AM
- Centralized trash collection

Cats

- Get rid of wild cats – law against feeding them? They are a health hazard and can be aggressive
- There are more than 50 feral cats alone roaming & Bruce Ave. please get them removed professionally!
- Feral cats (Bruce Ave)

Signage

- Lack of signage and awareness for heritage marketplace. Monument on Vaughn needed.
- Public awareness of free parking garage on Vaughn
- Arch way- designating “Heritage District” When north and south Boundaries are determined
- The business heritage market place behind the restaurants on Gilbert Rd. (between Barro/Zin and parking garage) have little to no awareness to the general public. Signage directing to free covered parking, monument sign for interior tenants is needed.
- People don't realize they can access Vaughn garage off Vaughn Ave. entrance from Gilbert Road.
- They drive by because no lighting/signage for entrance.
- Arch way- designating “Heritage District”
- Welcoming entrance to the Heritage District

Foliage

- Plant winter grass, maintain parks
- Money into keeping grass around the sidewalks green and always planting winter grass.
- Heritage district grass (winter grass)

- Keep what is existing – Trees + grass dying
- Remove dead trees and plant nicer ones.

Public Amenities

- Public Wifi
- Wifi connection
- Public Wifi
- Public Wifi
- Public Wifi
- Bike Share
- Bike Share
- Bike share Program
- Ride Share – Areas
- Gilbert should invest into a “Kindness” brick program
- Folks can donate/buy invest back into (HD)

Preserve and Heritage District Uses and Character

- Losing 3+ generation family homes to “update” image of town
- Gilbert feels like a “country”, quaint, area not a metropolitan, “entertainment” area. An atmosphere like mill Ave. in Tempe, young- part driven center isn't attractive for this area.
- Don't think homes should be bought up for improvements
- Retain Unique building design structures
- Preserve some sense of farming heritage.
- Protect the HD neighborhood – work with them
- Don't discount older business value as new shiny projects emerge.
- Keep what makes us unique while modernizing
- Historic preservation is economic development – let's keep it wisely and with thoughtful consideration of preserving portions on all the few historic buildings/ infrastructures we have.
- Would like architecture in downtown as well as the homes reminiscent of older architecture such as a wild west theme

Response Sheet Tally - Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

Address Utilities

- Infrastructure needs Identified/prioritized/standardized
- Drainage – regional/district facilities
- Solid waste -> District wide
- Address the infrastructure
- Improve the alley system
- Water and sewer capacity needed for changes in use/density
- Good guiding document for future infrastructure needs
- Consolidated drainage/ garbage collection

Expanding the Study Area

- Expanding the Study Area
- Expanding boundary south and west
- Going and expand South to Warner to the town Square
- Yes, to expanding the heritage district to the west end to the east
- Tie in City Center to development plans
- Lumber yard could become a train station, underground train tracks would be good.
- Go North to Guadalupe and develop
- Need a plan to link with the municipal area
- Don't forget south of railroad before forging head on to include projects outside the current heritage district boundaries

Address the Noise Pollution

- Train is very open, make it a quiet zone
- Whiskey row Noise & put silent zone for train
- Whiskey row & the train is super loud and need to be silenced especially for everyone on the west side of gilbert rd.
- Noise
- Noise from whiskey row is terrible and train is loud.
- Dierks Bentley's does not fit Gilbert (Whiskey Row)
- Train

Address Community Safety

- Police Presence
- Parking garage safety - stop the kids racing
- People avoid parking garages due to large groups of kids gathering with loud cars, music and smoke
- Someone getting hurt in parking garage- unruly kids
- Parking garage- Hooligans
- Connectivity safe welcoming atmosphere

Focus Group Summaries & Notes

The following bullet points are a summary of the issues, concerns, and downtown opportunities discussed during the Stakeholder and Focus Group meetings which took place on November 30 and December 1. Comments are grouped by meeting in order of occurrence.

Technical Committee

- Careful to coordinate with existing standards & policies, cross-referencing is important
- Establish understanding of loads on infrastructure (e.g. storm water; will there be a regional management facility?)

Maintenance and cleaning issues in HD

- Trash facilities
- Think holistically - individual or system approach?

Top needs/Concerns

- Centralized Trash
- CIP, needs to be well established for infrastructure sizing and loads
- Bike parking & connectivity, connection to trail
- Diversity of uses (other than restaurants) – 1.5 hr wait for seating
- Public restrooms
- Long range planning for transportation – connections, “place”, pedestrian vision to form network
- Expectations and best practices for implementation and seamless maintenance integration
- Plan AV routes? Assume more ride share, etc.
- Traffic circulation – no expansion/widening of current roadways, must optimize
- Destination and sense of arrive - e.g. gateway with reduced speed
- Clear sense of vision in plan with ‘road map’ to guide process
- Intentional shift from suburban to urban
- Undergo a “Transportation Revolution”
- Don’t tie hands with over-prescriptive plan/standards, establish priorities to allow flexibility for some things and more specific guidelines/standards for others
- Avoid overestimating capabilities

Town 2 - Police & Fire

- Problem areas for Police: Public garage top floor (annoyance but not a crime)
- Need for designated Uber Pick-up locations
- Possibility of having future satellite station within HD with storefront
- Bollards and other protection for events
- Fire concerns: Easy and intuitive escape routes, especially outdoor events
- Need ability to add more cameras
- Historic buildings need upgrades in order to meet code

Town 3 - Parks & Rec, Digital Marketing, Branding

Parks & Recreation

- Aspire to host multi-day events
- Expand splash pad under water tower
- More trails and bike paths (requested for the two regional parks to south)
- Need special events supervisor

Digital Marketing

- Improve signage & add digital way finding (parking)
- Digitize HD experience (Kiosks?) - appeal to the young population
- Uber Pick Up location
- Encourage pop-up restaurants, pedicabs, bike share
- Interest for tech office – Class A (no space available currently)

Branding

- Tie in with Discover Gilbert tourism to start
- Lacking diverse hip vibe identity (LGBTQ, etc)

Focus Groups & In-Depth Feedback

Small Group - Town Manager, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development

Town Manager

- Anticipate need for 3rd parking garage
- Town needs M-F support, cannot survive on weekend boom alone
- Maximize flexibility
- Keep parking free
- Mind barriers preventing visitors from coming to district
- Benefit from technology for car counting, etc. - can be linked to way-finding
- Parking could accommodate charging stations
- “Disney experience” - everything is designed, cohesive, and intentional
- Embrace disruptive change

President/CEO Gilbert Chamber of Commerce

- Make sure business are heard and valued
- #1 concern is safe streets
- Foster sense of pedestrian excitement - how do people see one space to the next
- No on-street parking on Gilbert Rd / removing travel lanes (D.O.A)
- Very important to have community feedback loop and explain why some ideas aren't integrated
- Affordability for office important
- Encourage development on light industrial zoned parcels e.g. Maker Space connecting to downtown

Railroad

- Tracks below grade possibility
- More crossings
- Less noise
- Less obstacle/divide

Civic

- Improve event space
- Embrace Farmer's market (needs more shade)

Housing

- 55+ population wants condos/flats; opportunity to buy. (3-4 stories)
- Pursue intergenerational housing and more diversity.
- Limit growth of nightlife to assure older population is not driven out.

Economic Development Director

- 3D visuals and usable materials for marketing
- Open space! - makes a great town/city
- Need other ways in/out and better connectivity (Look at Neeley Rd and Cooper Rd)
- Landscaping & Beautification efforts to enhance experience and soften other inconveniences e.g. parking

Focus Groups & In-Depth Feedback

Resident Group - Homeowner, Byzantine Catholic Church

- Want to preserve memory of farm culture
- Shortage of parking at church
- Boys and girls club events take the residents street parking
- Kids walk from school to B & G club (unsafe, indirect route)
- Prefer boutiques and small shops over grocery & gas
- Interested in small market-type grocery idea
- Boutiques wanted = crafts, art shops, gift shops, “fun stuff”
- Gilbert Rd south of tracks is an unpleasant (avoided) walking route

Past Economic Development and Planning Director

- Area south of tracks needs attention
- Reach more of the public – need voices heard
- Need for drop offs/ staging area in front of Hale Theater
- Vaughn parking could be inset on each side to open up roadway and improve safety
- Consider underground power and all utilities (Paradise Valley as precedent)
- How to motivate storefront improvements?
- Financial incentives to encourage maintaining historic character

Merchant Group 1

- Desire for small affordable leasable space for independent owners and small business
- More specific retail requirements within HD (Diversity of type, percentage, \$/sq. ft.)
- Restaurants suffering behind garage
- Importance of tourism for retail (encourage visitors outside 20 mile radius)
- Way-finding for tourists
- Bus stop location concerns near self-storage parcels

Developer Group

- Need gathering space more substantial than Tower Plaza
- Future garage location with should have ability to grow to into Park and Ride for rail
- “Soft landing” into District - Address power lines coming from the north (all power lines underground?)
- What is BID philosophy?
 - Not ideal with so much government owned land
 - Downtown association beneficial
- Historical preservation
- Shared parking model is a positive quality (No short or long term decisions made about parking for next 5 years)
- Interest in additional height with possibility of roof decks
- Want flexibility within master plan
 - Vision but not hardline
 - What is hard line vs. negotiable?
- Want implementation timeline

Merchant Group 2

- Tempe entertainment serves younger crowd, Gilbert continue to serve slightly older population
- Gilbert Rd. auto activity is positive characteristic for business and atmosphere

Focus Groups & In-Depth Feedback

Council Group

- Skeptical of rail & possible connection to growth of homelessness
- Important ROI
- Need to move people through district better
- Placemaking
- Want recommendation for other parcels town should purchase
- No desire for multi-family
 - Walking to work is not AZ style
 - Prefer market rate over low-income
 - Concern about for-purchase units with noise from entertainment
- Opportunities for noise dampening? (building materials/construction methods; density)
- Want “Virtuous Cycle” (avoid Scottsdale trajectory)
- Support Churches to encourage virtuous cycle
- Riparian reserve to inform development of lumber/truss site
 - Solar array
 - Old fire station
 - Landscape elements
 - Water recharge
- Respect property rights
- Town backlash over all apartments proposed in past
- Provide more tools for residents to improve and maximize their property
- What are supply chain complements to existing businesses?
- Public/ Semi-Public needs
 - Need event space (park? already have regional park to south)
 - Tension with blocking off areas for events
 - Want town square

Stakeholders - Tourism, Events, Circulation

- Traffic Concern
- Want to attract “Name-brand” signature events, annual festivals, causes/benefits

- Events to complement regional draws & other major events in surrounding area
- Diversity in target demographic that changes throughout the day/week/year (Day vs. night events)
- Athletics/sporting events (tie to spring training)
- Important to make sure to address strategies for today’s concerns

Redevelopment Commission

- Keep “Heritage” word in mind
- ROI - Maximize return for entire district over the individual parcel
- How to stay relevant as a town - live/work/play must be self-sustaining
- Cast wider net to attract more of a diversity of uses
- Promote more small local business retail, not national + create policy to discourage the national chains
- Younger entertainment needs?
 - Theatre
 - Dutch bros preferred over Bergie’s (but needs to be expanded and have more seating)
 - Teens want to be “separated but included”
- Want creative space, maker, incubator
- Resident concerns - homelessness, commuter rail, safety concerns
- What are complementary use preferences? (to achieve self-sustaining district and live/work/play balance)
- Should there be design guidelines for alleys?

Councilmember

- Important to keep creating and building culture and community
- Focus on families and networking to create self-sustaining district
- Desired uses: Multifamily to drive retail; boutique hotel
- Doubtful of transit & commuter rail success
- Parking meters are bad idea