



## Planning and Zoning Board

### *Staff Report*

**AGENDA ITEM:** Consideration of the Mesa West Redevelopment Area Plan  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of Plan  
**STAFF PLANNER:** Tom Ellsworth  
**WEBSITE:** Proposed Plan is available at the following website:  
<https://www.selectmesa.com/business-environment/incentives-programs/mesa-s-redevelopment-areas/west-rda-6310>

#### **Purpose and Recommendation**

This report provides an overview of the redevelopment plan for the West Redevelopment Area (the “Plan”) to assist the Planning and Zoning Board in its review and development of a recommendation to the City Council. The Plan defines the vision for the redevelopment of this area and includes strategies and projects to spur redevelopment activity consistent with the vision. Staff recommendation is **approval** of the Plan as presented.

The Planning and Zoning Board is required by statute to review the Plan to ensure its conformity to the City’s General Plan and make a recommendation to the City Council prior to their consideration of the Plan.

#### **Location**

The West RDA is abuts the western edge of Mesa’s existing Town Center RDA, and extends westward to the Tempe Canal, comprising 1,496 acres. The area generally includes properties between, University Drive, W. Main Street and W. Broadway Road, as well as offshoots north along N. Alma School Road and N. Extension Road. There is another large portion extending south between S. Dobson Road and S. Sycamore connecting to the Southwest RDA’s northern border.

#### **Plan Preparation**

Work on the Mesa West Redevelopment Area (RDA) began in 2016 with the selection of a consultant team to conduct the required studies to determine if the area meets the State Statute requirements for designation as an RDA. The survey and market analysis work began in March 2017. A public open house was held in June 2017 to review the findings and receive comments from the public. Notice was mailed to all property owners within the Plan area for all open houses and public meetings associated with this process. In August 2017, the findings were presented to the City Council and the Council, by resolution, approved the designation of the West RDA.

Work on the Plan began in January 2018. The planning process began with a second public open house to receive comments and ideas regarding the vision for redevelopment of the area. Also in January 2018, the consultant hosted a series of interviews with various stakeholders of the area. Drafting of the Plan by the consultant team continued through August 2018 with review and feedback from the City’s Steering Committee. The proposed Plan has posted for public review and an open house was held on September 5 to receive comments.

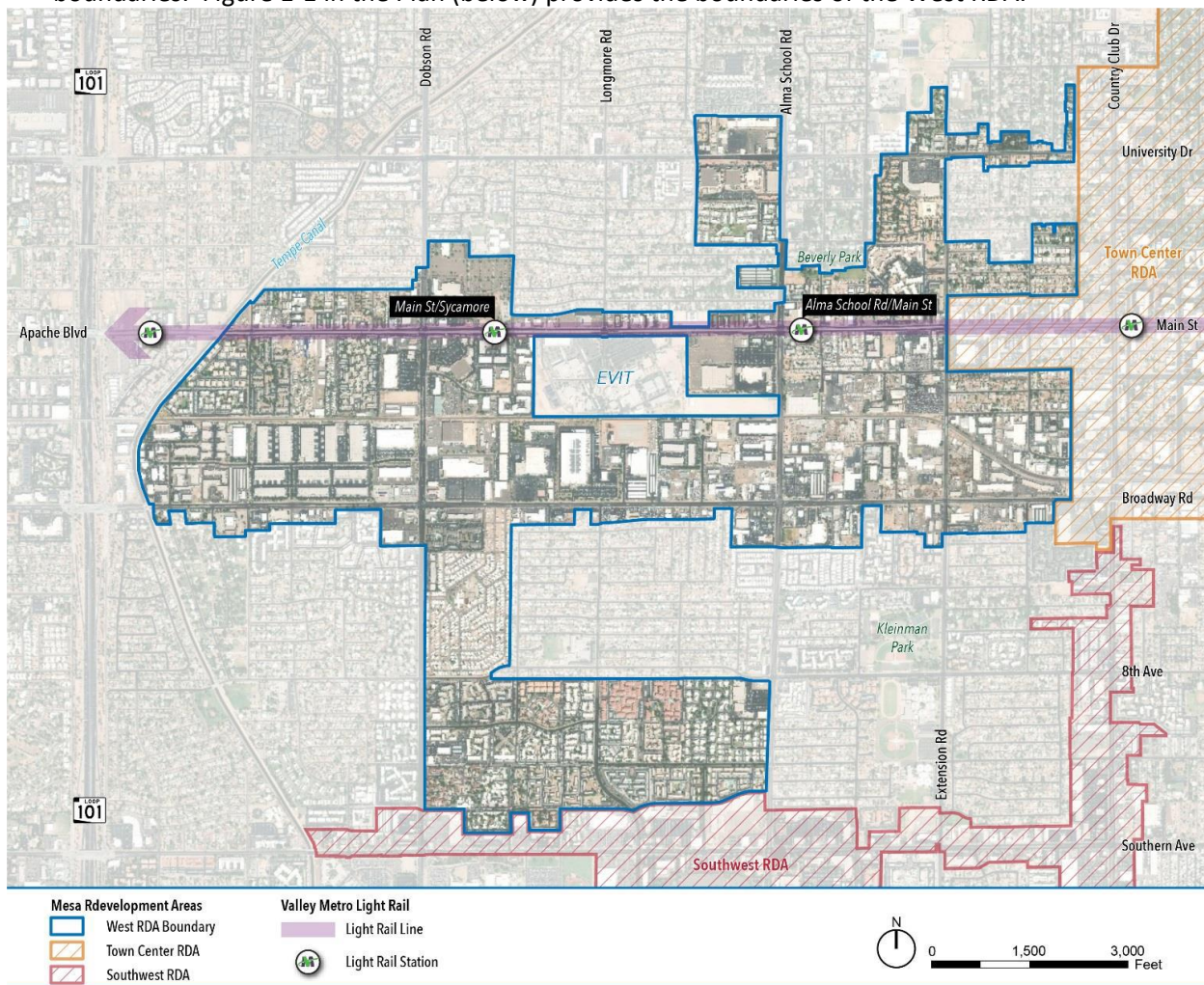
In addition to the formal meetings that have been held to receive public comment, the website established for this process provided the opportunity for citizens to make comments and provide their input regarding the area. Dozens of residents and business owners in the area have emailed or called City staff throughout the process to share their input.

## Overview of the Plan

The West RDA Plan is divided into four sections: Introduction, Vision, Redevelopment Plan, Appendix.

### Introduction

The Introduction includes some background on the context of the area and a history of the development and decline of the area. Also, included in the Introduction is a review of the public outreach and citizen involvement efforts, as well as a review of the existing land uses within the RDA boundaries. Figure 1-1 in the Plan (below) provides the boundaries of the West RDA.



### Vision

This section of the Plan provides a Vision for the future of the area. The Vision was established through the citizen input and review by the Steering Committee.

The Vision statement for this area is:

*The West RDA is a unique and iconic destination attracting residents and visitors because of its safe, live-work-play environment. The area features distinguished educational and job training institutions*

*that support a growing employment base with innovative, high-wage industries which are accessible from across the region through three major freeway corridors and the light rail system. New, high-quality development, adaptive reuse, and the emerging Asian business core have revitalized the area into an active and vibrant community.*

The West RDA has five focus areas that were identified as areas of significance during the planning process through discussions and feedback between stakeholders, community leaders, and public workshops. The locations of these five focus areas are illustrated in Figure 2-2.

1. Main Street Corridor
2. Asian Multicultural District Core
3. University Drive and Alma School Road
4. Broadway Road and Extension Road
5. South End

Starting on page 2-4, the Plan includes conceptual discussion of each of these areas and provides some alternative redevelopment scenarios for each one.

#### *Redevelopment Plan*

The third section of the Plan contains the actual redevelopment strategies and projects identified to help move the area from its current state to the type of area imagined in the Vision statement. The development of this section started with the blight study, market analysis, and public feedback. That information was used to develop a list of Issues of Concern that need to be addressed for the area to be vibrant and successful. Once these issues were identified, goals and strategies were developed to help address and resolve the problems. This section concludes with a list of possible funding sources to help with implementation.

#### *Appendix*

The Appendix includes background information that was used to analyze the area and draft the Plan. Included are:

- A summary of the blight study findings
- A summary of the market study that was conducted

#### **Review and Analysis**

The Redevelopment Plan acts as a guidebook to foster revitalization within the West RDA by expanding on its assets and providing implementable actions to enhance the overall sense of place and create a thriving, innovative, live-work-play environment. This is accomplished by establishing proactive goals and strategies to encourage new and expanded investment consistent with the Vision Statement and supported by a funding strategy. These goals and strategies originate from the feedback and issues identified through the public outreach efforts, stakeholder interviews, and committee meetings, as well as the data collected during the Findings of Necessity.

The Issues of Concern contained in the Plan were developed through public input, the analysis of the area by the consultant team, and review by the Steering Committee. These Issues of Concern cover a wide range of issues that need to be addressed to implement the vision for the area. The associated Goals and Strategies have been developed to address the issues of concern to provide specific actions that can be taken over the coming years to revise the trend in the area to make it the vibrant and active place it can be.

It is important to note that the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan does not obligate the City to implement or further study the proposed projects and solutions. They are merely ideas to explore

further if directed to do so by the Mayor and Council.

The Projects listed in the Plan are the real meat of the document. Table 3-1, starting on page 3-4 of the Plan, shows the goals and strategies of the plan as well as the cost magnitude and time frame for each one. These recommended strategies have been reviewed internally by City staff and received support.

The Mesa 2040 General Plan is built on three guiding principles:

- Creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods
- Growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs
- Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural amenities

The proposed RDA Plan will help to further the implementation of these principles, especially in growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs and creating vibrant neighborhoods. The redevelopment area is situated to revitalize the neighborhoods and supporting businesses along the major arterial corridors into downtown. The market study which has been done as a part of the Plan provides clear direction on what is needed in this location and how this area can be redeveloped into a vibrant area. The Plan also includes implementation strategies that will help maintain the neighborhood and improve the quality of public spaces.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed Plan for the West Redevelopment Area provides a guiding vision for the redevelopment of an aging area of the City. The Plan, with its proposed goals and strategies, will be a vital tool to revitalize the area west of downtown between the Main Street and Broadway Road Corridors, as well as the high-density residential area north of the Fiesta District.