



MESA CONNECTED

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

City Council
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Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director
Rachel Phillips, Assistant Planning Director
Sean Pesek, Senior Planner



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Background
- Community Engagement
- Plan Content
- Next Steps

What is MesaCONNECTED?

Connecting Our Neighborhoods for NExt-Generation Community, Transit, & Economic Development

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan for a 5-mile transit corridor that integrates land use, housing, transportation, and economic development with a focus on:

- Promoting a diverse mix of housing types;
- Supporting business growth and retention;
- Strengthening business centers such as Riverview, Fiesta District, and Downtown;
- Revitalizing properties in Redevelopment Areas;
- Encouraging infill, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment;
- Expanding mobility options;
- Reducing traffic congestion and pollution; and
- Enhancing public spaces and placemaking.

What is TOD?

BUILDING COMPLETE, WALKABLE COMMUNITIES AROUND PUBLIC TRANSIT



Mixed-use spaces that integrate residential, commercial, and employment uses



Vibrant, pedestrian friendly environments where land uses and building design encourage safe, convenient walking



Built around planned or existing transit and has multi-modal connectivity to surrounding areas



Includes inviting public spaces that encourage social interaction



Increases economic opportunity by supporting local businesses and creating vibrant areas that can help stabilize property values

What TOD is Not

NOT a transit plan → Land use strategy around transit

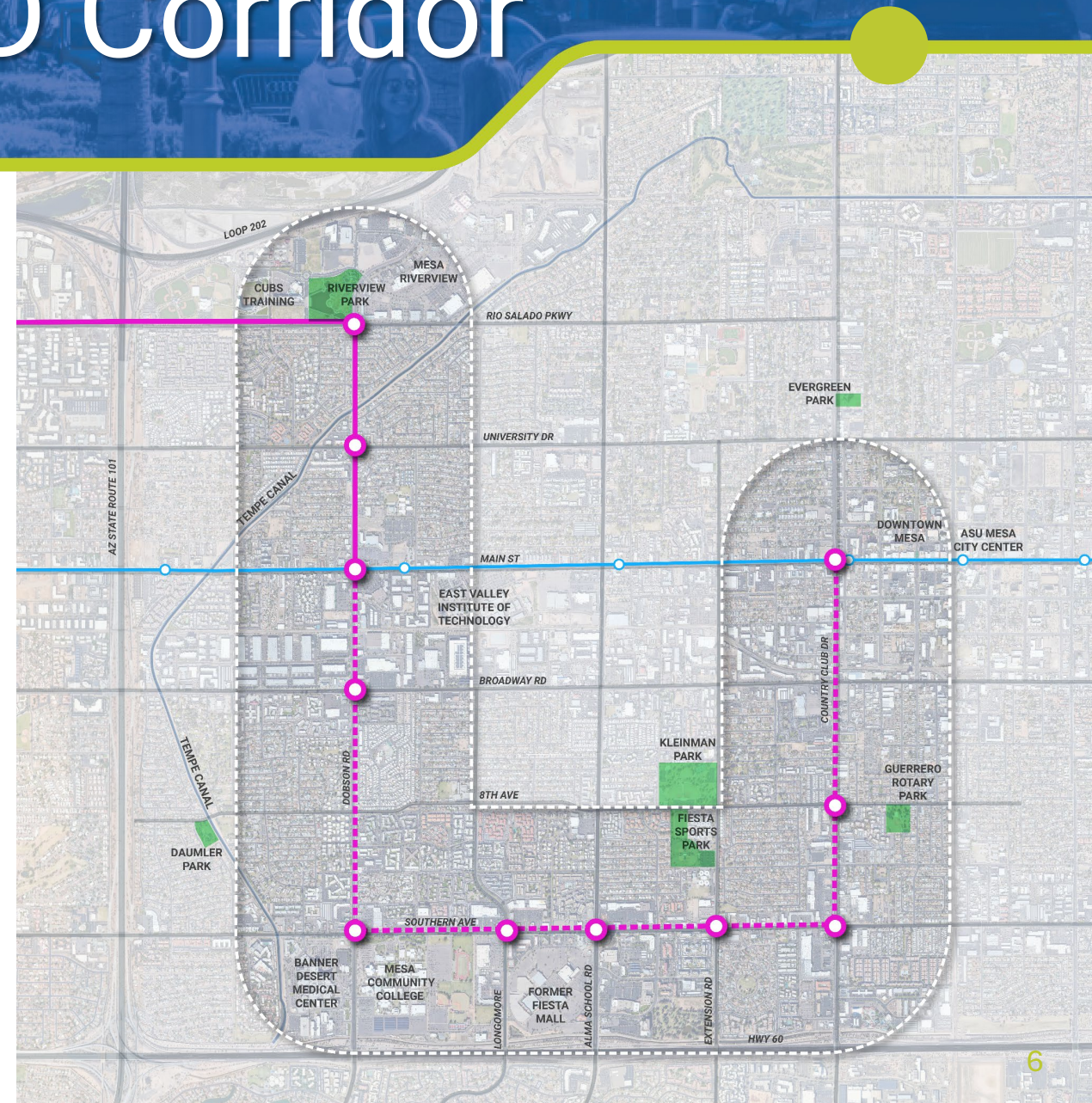
NOT specific to one transit mode → Works with all transit types

NOT always high-density → Context-sensitive density

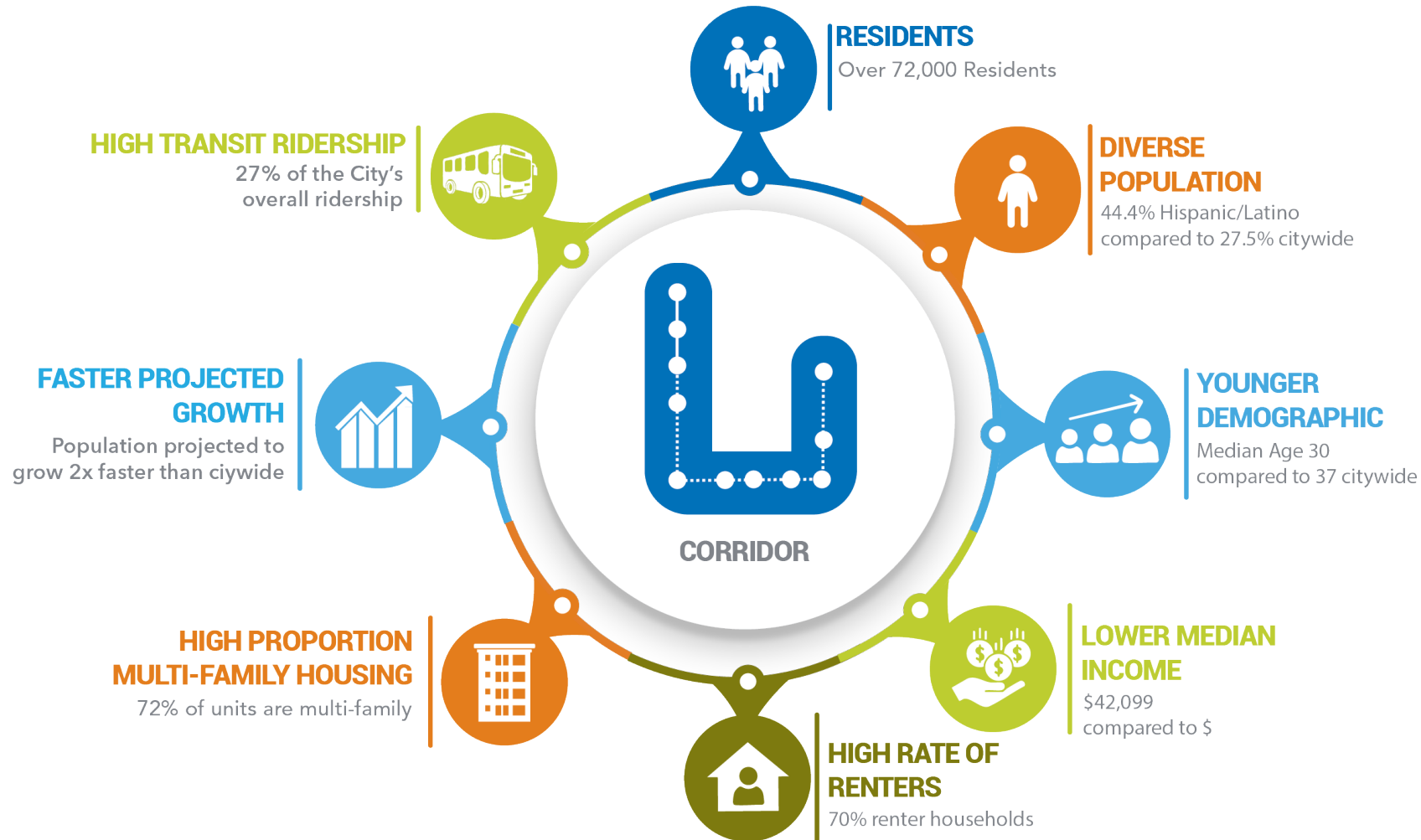
NOT standardized → Tailored to each neighborhood

MesaCONNECTED Corridor

- 5-mile transit route
- Extends ½ mile on either side of:
 - Rio Salado Parkway
 - Dobson Road
 - Southern Avenue
 - Country Club Drive
- Will connect to the Tempe Streetcar and Light Rail



Why this Corridor?



Project Schedule



Public Engagement



EXPLORE

15 Stakeholder Conversations
between October 2023 and February



ENVISION

58,898 Mailers

2 Events at Mesa Community College
26 people engaged

1 Neighborhood Pop-Up Event
16 neighbors attended

2 Virtual Public Meetings
5 people attended

3 In-person Community Meetings
150 people attended

Online Survey
258 Responses



PLAN

28,898 Mailers

2 In-person Community Open Houses
20 people attended

4 Focus Group

What We Heard From Residents

- **Walkability matters** - Strong desire to walk/bike to shops, restaurants, and public spaces
- **Safety first** - Increased safety, shaded paths, and better bike routes
- **Protect West Mesa's character** - Residents value Mesa's diversity and community identity
- **Context-sensitive development** - Higher density in urban areas, lower density next to established neighborhoods
- **Everyday amenities nearby** - Public spaces, restaurants, retail, and grocery stores need to be within walking distance

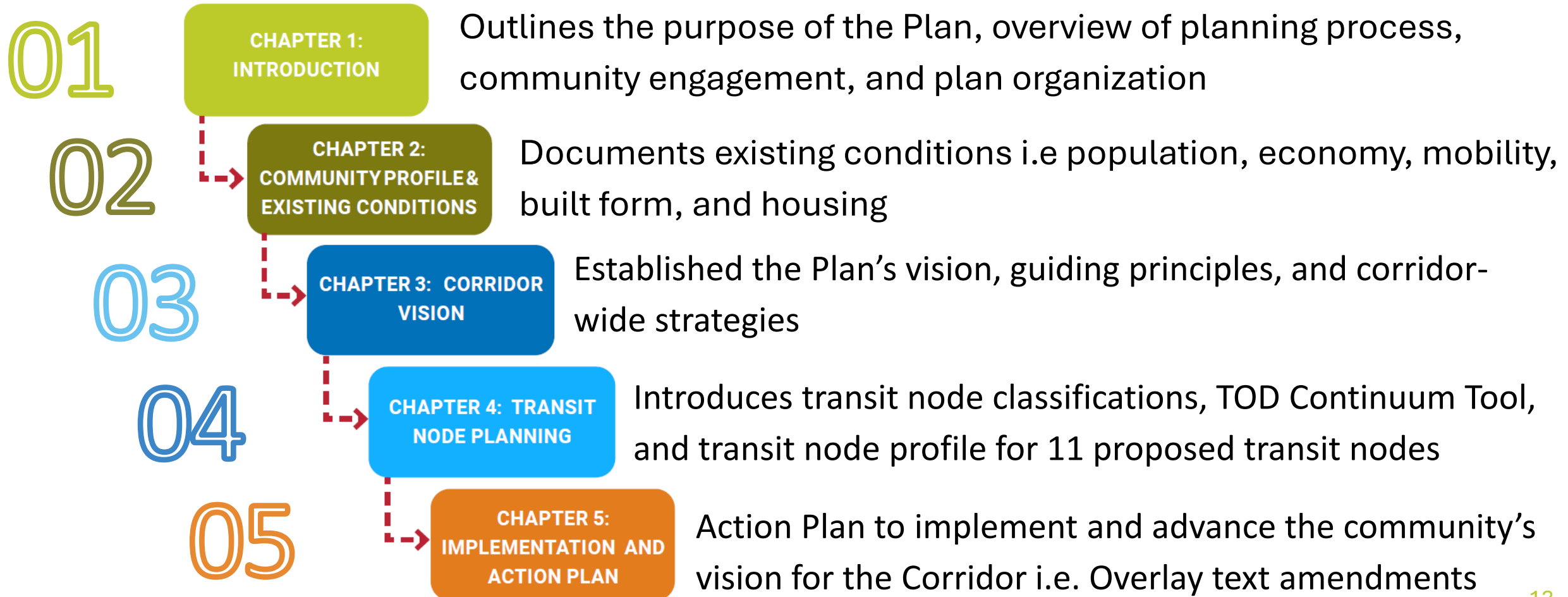
What We Heard From the Development Community

- **Align plans with market realities** - Ensure TOD vision matches demographics and economic feasibility
- **Reduce barriers to development** – TOD specific zoning + simplified review and approval processes
- **Provide development incentives** – Financial or regulatory tools to encourage investment
- **Prioritize shade and walkability** - Design standards that create comfortable pedestrian environments

MesaCONNECTED Vision

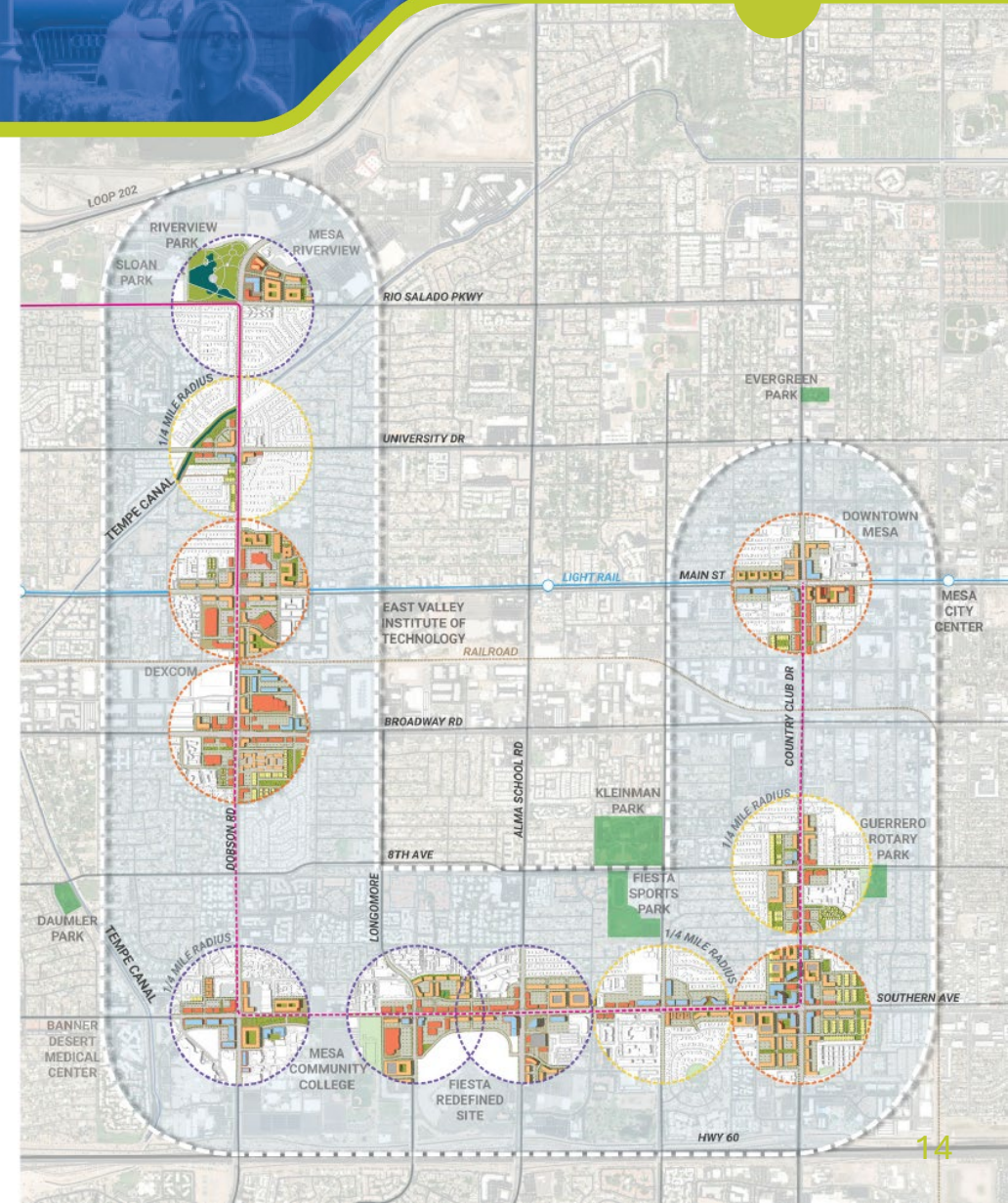
The MesaCONNECTED Corridor is a vibrant, connected community that is safe and resilient, easy to move through, seamlessly linked to transit, and rich in economic opportunity

Plan Organization



Transit Node Planning

- Transit Node Classifications – context specific approach
- Transit Node Evaluation & Continuum Tool – assess readiness for transit-oriented growth
- Transit Node Profiles for 11 potential Transit Nodes
 - Introduction - describing the area
 - Transit Node Snapshot
 - Illustrative Concept Plans
 - Design Considerations

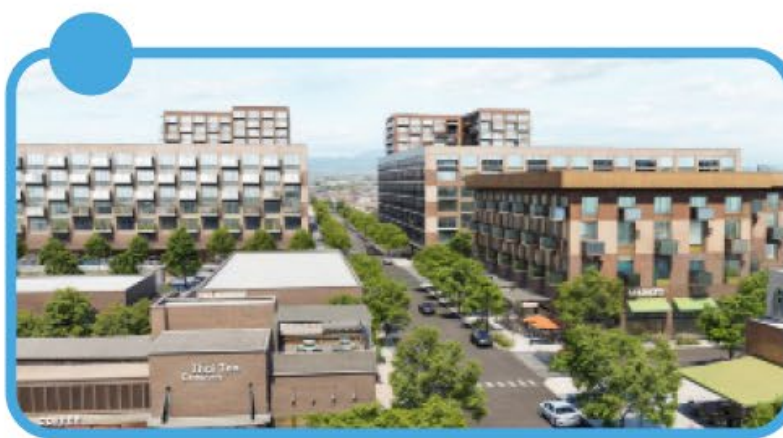


Transit Node Classifications



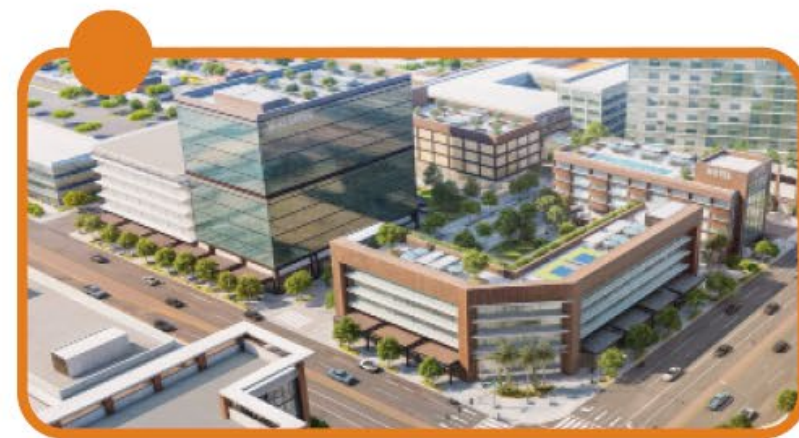
NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSIT NODE

- Compact, community-oriented hubs
- Retail, small office, and medium density housing (e.g. duplexes, townhomes, small apartments)
- Delivers everyday goods, services and diverse housing options



URBAN TRANSIT NODE

- Medium density mixed-use hub
- Employment, retail, and medium density housing (e.g. townhomes, small apartments, and mid-rise condos)
- Designed to provide a “walk-everywhere” experience



REGIONAL TRANSIT NODE

- Primary economic, cultural, and entertainment hub
- Large format office, employment centers, destination retail and entertainment and dense mix of housing
- Vibrant, accessible attraction

Transit Node Evaluation

TOD Continuum

- Tool that assesses how prepared transit node is to support transit-oriented growth and attract investment
- 3 Metrics - TOD Characteristics, Redevelopment Potential, and Transit Readiness
- Can be updated anytime to provide a current snapshot of the Corridor
- Informs various strategies and interventions

	Measure	Variable
TOD CHARACTERISTICS	Pedestrian Access	% of area within a 5 min. walkshed
	Pedestrian Comfort	Sidewalk width
	Bicycle Access	# of lanes present
	Development Density	F.A.R.
	Street Presence	Building setback
	Regional Attraction	# of destinations
	Mix of Uses	# and % of land uses
REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL	Underutilized Properties	% parcels with an improvement-to-land-value >1.0
	Parcel Size	# of parcels/block
	Parcel Ownership	# of owners/acre
	Stable Land Use	% of parcels that are single-family
TRANSIT READINESS	Population	# of residents
	Minority Population	% minority population
	Low Income Households	% households earning under \$28,007/year
	Total Employment	# of employees
	Transit Supportive Job Density	Jobs and residents/gross acre
	Transit Supportive Job Density	Jobs/gross acre

Transit Node Profiles

Introduction

Describes the nodes place within the corridor, existing conditions, redevelopment potential, and TOD Continuum strategy



DOBSON & RIO SALADO

ABOUT THIS NODE

The **Doatson & Rio Salado** transit node serves as the Corridor's gateway from Tempe. With direct connections to the Tempe Streetcar, this location is strategically positioned to capture regional trips across the East Valley while also benefiting from proximity to major recreational destinations including Riverview Park and Sloan Park. This combination creates opportunities to transform from a primarily auto-oriented environment into a premier, walkable mixed-use destination that combines game day excitement with everyday urban amenities.

This transit node demonstrates strong TOD readiness, though redevelopment opportunities are limited by existing land uses. Riverview Park and established single family neighborhoods south of Rio Salado Parkway are unlikely to experience significant change. However, the Mesa Riverview shopping center already exhibits TOD-conducive characteristics. The TOD Strategy for the area is Prepare because of the unique characteristics of the surrounding land uses. Strategies should focus on building on existing strengths and increasing density rather than large scale redevelopment.

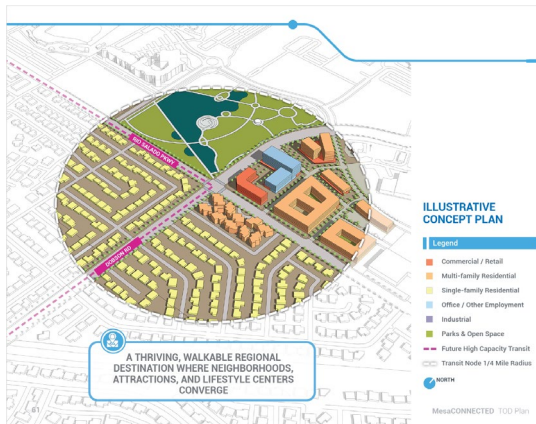
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TRANSIT NODE SNAPSHOT	
Transit Node Classification	Regional
2020 General Plan Placetype	Open Space
2020 General Plan Placetype	Regional Center
2020 General Plan Placetype	Mixed Residential
Redevelopment Area	N/A
Planning Area	N/A
Existing Zoning Districts	Commercial (38%) Public / Semi-Public (14%) Multiple Residence (48%)
Existing Land Use	Commercial / Retail (22%) Office / Employment (1%) Multi-Family (7%) Single-Family (43%) Parks & Open Space (24%) Vacant (3%)
Population	759 residents
Employment	284 jobs
TOD Characteristic Score	5 out of 20
Redevelopment Potential Score	1.7 out of 5
Transit Readiness Score	18 out of 50
TOD Strategy	Prepare

Snapshot Info

- Placetypes
- Zoning
- Land Use
- Population
- Employment
- Continuum Scores
- Planning Areas



Illustrative Concept Plans

Illustrates potential land uses and infill/redevelopment scenarios

Design Considerations

Transit node specific recommendations

TRANSIT NODE RECOMMENDATIONS

Pedestrian Realm Improvements

- Widen sidewalks in the northeast portions of the transit node adjacent to Mesa Riverview shopping center.
- Plant drought-tolerant shade trees along Rio Salado Parkway and Dobson Road sidewalks within Riverview Park.

Bicycle Infrastructure Improvements

- Install a bike lane on the east side of Dobson Road, north of Rio Salado Parkway to complete the network.
- Provide continuous bike lane markings through the Dobson/Rio Salado intersection for north-south and east-west movements.

Crosswalk Enhancements

- Repaint the brick paver crosswalk on the north side of the Rio Salado/Dobson intersection and install matching crosswalk markings on the remaining intersection approaches.
- Install higher-visibility crosswalk markings at the Rio Salado/Riverview intersection.
- Strip high-visibility mid-block crossings along Culebra Way.

Riverview Design Guidelines

- Adopt design guidelines that promote a sports and entertainment theme.

Parking Garage

- Encourage the construction of a parking garage to absorb event parking demand, freeing up existing surface lots for mixed-use development.

Signage

- Install wayfinding signage with directional markers to inform the transit node to Riverview Park, Sloan Park, the Mesa Riverview shopping center, and regional trail networks.
- Consider establishing an off-site sign overlay district to facilitate public-private partnerships and earmark a portion of sign revenues for arts, placemaking, and redevelopment programs within the area.

Enhance Corner Treatments & Urban Plazas

- Revitalize the plaza at the northeast corner of Dobson/Rio Salado intersection; relocating it closer to the intersection and adding shade structures, seating, landscaping, public art, and wayfinding signage.
- Install a shade structure at the northwest corner of Rio Salado and Dobson Road to create a comfortable gateway to Riverview Park.



Next Steps

- City Council Action - December 8th
- Implementation - Draft Text Amendments

