

COUNCIL MINUTES

October 24, 2024

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower-level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 24, 2024, at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

John Giles
Francisco Heredia*
Mark Freeman
Alicia Goforth
Scott Somers
Julie Spilsbury

COUNCIL ABSENT

Jennifer Duff

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Holly Moseley
Jim Smith

(*Participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Mayor Giles conducted a roll call.

Mayor Giles excused Councilmember Duff from the entire meeting.

1-a. Hear a presentation, discuss, and receive an update on the Mesa Climate Action Plan (MCAP), including the Trees are Cool initiative.

Energy and Sustainability Director Scott Bouchie introduced Environmental and Sustainability Deputy Director Laura Hyneman and Urban Forest Program Manager Stephen Addison and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Mr. Addison provided an update on the MCAP and the efforts being made to achieve the goal for the Trees are Cool initiative. He explained that the data obtained while working with internal and external partners was essential to moving this initiative forward and for achieving the citywide goal of a 15% tree canopy cover. (See Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Addison supplied information from a recent internal assessment that provided strengths, vulnerabilities, opportunities and constraints, and reported that the analysis helped with strategic planning for urban forestry in Mesa. He highlighted one point from each category in the assessment. He reported that these results shaped the objective and key performance indicators in the urban forestry part of the strategic plan and provided an overview of the plan. (See Pages 4 and 5 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Addison supplied results from recent shade tree distribution programs, noting the Electric Shade Tree program where 104 trees were distributed to 56 participants. He pointed out that the

native trees were unpopular among participants and the temperature was a deterrent to attendance. He said that despite the strong outreach efforts in the Reed Park area, only 77 people attended the program, adding that the neighborhood consisted of older adults that could not plant or care for the trees. He announced the upcoming free workshops called Get Answers, Get Planting, where citizens can learn about which trees would be best for them, the care required, and provide feedback about where they would like to see more trees in the city. (See Pages 6 and 7 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Addison summarized the Tree Stewards program hosted by partners Arizona Sustainability Alliance and American Forests, noting that 500 trees are expected to be planted. He said the Heritage Park Tree planting project included the planting of 60 trees and installation of infrastructure to ensure planting success. (See Pages 8 and 9 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Addison reported that staff will continue to collect data in collaboration with the Planning and Parks departments, which will provide a baseline of what type and amount of canopy cover is being planted and to direct future planting efforts for cool routes. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Addison presented two maps which illustrate the tree canopy cover in the Reed Park area and highlighted areas where there are vacant sites at single family homes where trees could be planted, adding that there are no public sites available for planting in this area. He stated that to achieve the 15% canopy cover goal in this area, 120 trees would be needed and would cost approximately \$90,000 for 15-gallon trees. (See Pages 11 and 12 of Attachment 1)

Responding to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Addison confirmed that the private properties identified are front yards only and were determined by a Level 1 assessment that consisted of a visual assessment done while driving by from the road.

In response to a question from Councilmember Spilsbury, Mr. Addison referred to the Tree Steward program, indicating that the teams will be directed to plant at three specific sites. He confirmed that two cohorts will be offered in January and February. He confirmed that people must attend an event to receive a tree to ensure they receive education on proper planting and tree care.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Ms. Hyneman confirmed that Objective 1.4 is a part of the department plan with a strong connection to the MCAP.

Mr. Addison replied to Councilmember Goforth that the data collected will be used to encourage and provide developer incentives to increase the tree canopy in new and existing developments.

Additional discussion ensued regarding incentivizing citizens and developers to plant trees.

In response to a question from Councilmember Freeman, Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown reiterated that at this point staff are collecting data to determine what future requirements might look like and highlighted the strong partnership between the departments.

Discussion ensued regarding data collection and building the programs to support the initiative.

Mayor Giles expressed his opinion that the goal of planting one million trees seems tedious, but he is confident that over time the culture in the community will change and embrace the need to increase the tree count in Mesa.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation

1-b. Hear a presentation, discuss, and provide direction on placemaking initiatives and objectives.

Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown introduced Assistant Planning Director Rachel Nettles and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 2)**

Ms. Nettles explained that placemaking was identified as a strategic priority by Council earlier this year and highlighted a statement that was created by Council regarding placemaking. She pointed out that there is not one clear definition of placemaking and summarized the meaning as using public spaces to strengthen the connection between people and places to create a place where people want to live, work, play and learn. She confirmed that placemaking occurs in many places and pointed out several unique districts in Mesa that create a sense of place. She described paths, parks, and landmarks, such as art, which will trigger recognition of a place. (See Pages 2 through 5 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Kopaskie–Brown continued by saying that a great place is more than a design, it is a safe place that can be activated where people gather and where memories are created. She identified the need for continued investment in public assets to create programming that can be used in existing and new spaces. She emphasized the importance of signage and branding to make events attractive and easy to find. (See Pages 6 through 9 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Kopaskie–Brown summarized the importance of strong policy and design development as well as cooperation from public and private developers to initiate unique attractions which stimulate placemaking opportunities. (See Page 10 of Attachment 2)

Discussion ensued regarding the definition of placemaking and the desire of Council to see an action plan that outlines future placemaking enhancements within the city.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation.

2. Current events summary including meetings and conferences attended.

Mayor Giles and Councilmembers highlighted the events, meetings and conferences recently attended.

3. Scheduling of meetings.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the schedule of meetings is as follows:

Thursday, October 31, 2024, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

4. Convene an Executive Session.

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Councilmember Spilsbury, that the Council adjourn the Study Session at 8:59 a.m. and enter into an Executive Session.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Giles–Heredia–Freeman–Goforth–Somers–Spilsbury
NAYS – None
ABSENT – Duff

Mayor Giles declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

- 4-a. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the City Attorney. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A (3)) Discussion or consultation with the City Attorney in order to consider the City's position and instruct the City Attorney regarding the City's position regarding pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A (4))

1. *Patricia Lopez v. City of Mesa and Heath Carroll*, United States District Court, Case No. CV-19-04764-PHX-DLR

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:34 a.m.

JOHN GILES, MAYOR

ATTEST:

HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 24th day of October 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

sr
(Attachments – 2)

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION | October 24, 2024



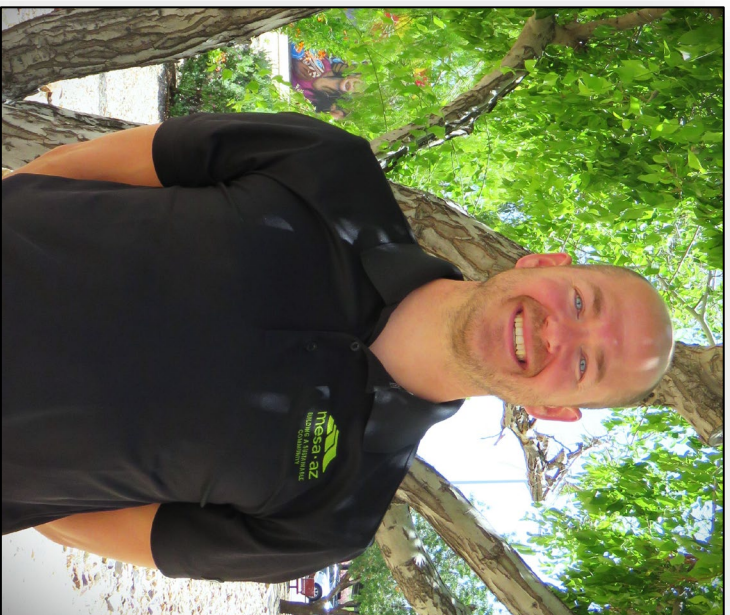
CLIMATE
ACTION PLAN

For a Sustainable Community

CITY OF MESA

Scott Bouchie, Energy and Sustainability Director
Laura Hyneman, Deputy Director, Environmental & Sustainability
Stephen Addison, Urban Forest Program Manager





Stephen Addison

- Master's in Public Administration, University of Arizona
- ISA Certified Arborist & Tree Risk Assessment Qualification
- Hoping to pursue the Municipal Arborist Credential



Understanding Mesa Mesa's Tree Board:



Meeting the Community:



Collaborations with Regional Partners:



CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



Strengths

- Collaborative & well-supported tree planting initiative
- Engaged contractor partnerships
- Urban heat mitigation efforts
- Data-driven urban forestry management

Vulnerabilities

- Long term funding for residents' trees
- Hesitant to embrace desert plants
- Water management challenges
- Public perception and inconsistent practices

Opportunities

- Mesa Climate Action Plan funding
- Federal, state, and private funding/grants
- Partnerships, regional collaborations, and cross-training initiatives, student engagement and industry advancement
- Strategic approach
- Exceed canopy goals
- Enhance community engagement

Constraints

- Environmental issues
- External influences: including HOA regulations, out of state landscape architects, and financial incentives





Objective 1.4		Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
Grow a healthy, resilient, and inclusive urban forest to cool our community.	15% Tree Canopy by 2050	
	Leadership and Governance	Funding per capita
	Mobilize the Community	Number of Projects worked in prioritized census tracts (below 15% canopy, high heat vulnerability)
	Innovative Urban Forestry Practices	Number of trees planted by Mesa
	Diverse Urban Forestry Workforce	Number of Arborists city wide



sa Electric Shade Tree Program:

Workshop, 9/21

- Total Registered: 111
- Total Attendance: 56

Distribution

- Total Participants: 56
- Trees Distributed: 104

Notes:

- Natives were unpopular among participants, 2:1 ratio
- Parking lot distribution was hot, over 105F by 9am

Mesa Neighborhood Shade Tree Program, Reed Park:

Workshop, 10/19

- Total Registered: 160
- Total Attendance: 77

Notes:

- Neighborhood Rep led to strong outreach efforts
 - 400 doorhangers distributed by a group of neighbors
- Older adults who can care for trees but can not plant trees are asking for planting support



Trees Are Cool Presents: Get Answers, Get Planting!

We are hosting tree workshops across Mesa on the first Friday of every month.

Join us to learn where to find trees for your home, chat with an arborist, participate in a tree activity, and learn about the Park Ranger Program.

This is a free event and registration is not required.





Tree Stewards Program

- A 3-year program
- Arizona Sustainability Alliance and American Forests led program, specific to Mesa
- First Cohort started on Oct 12th
- First Cohort Highlights:
 - Approx 15 individuals
 - Free training about urban forestry, tree care, and maintenance
 - Cohort will plan and plant 100 trees in the City of Mesa
 - Participants receive a certificate from the State (AZDFFM)

Heritage Park Tree Planting

- Leveraged a community business partner
- Arizona Sustainability Alliance project managed the event
- Parks led the installation of the tree infrastructure to ensure planting success
- Highlights:
 - 50+ community business partner volunteers
 - 60 new, desert native and/or adapted trees
 - Before the event, 4% canopy cover and 16 existing trees
 - Due to the donation, this project was completed at half the cost



What are we doing with data?

- Collecting forecasted canopy data in proposed developments (Planning)
- Cool Routes to Parks (Parks)
 - A park-by-park study by Parks department of incorporating shaded walkways and trees into and around our parks
- Developing tree planting plans alongside this research and data
- A Case Study to understand “what does 15% canopy cover look like?”



Reed Park

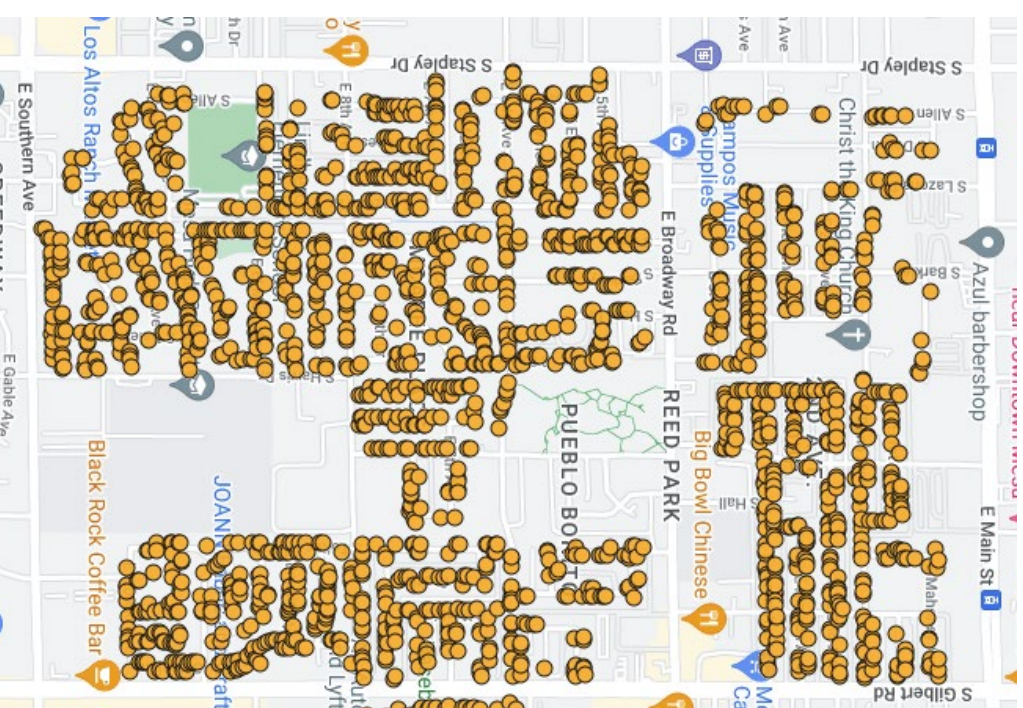
9.3% Tree Canopy Cover (American Forests)

Public Trees



Vacant sites within Census Tract

1,878 vacant sites at single family homes, identified by arborist



CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY





Parcel Area: 821,920 SF
Building Footprint: 750 SF
Existing Shade Area: 6%
Recommended Shade Area: 123,288 SF
(15%)
Achieve 15%: Add new 120 trees
Cost estimate 2024: \$90,000

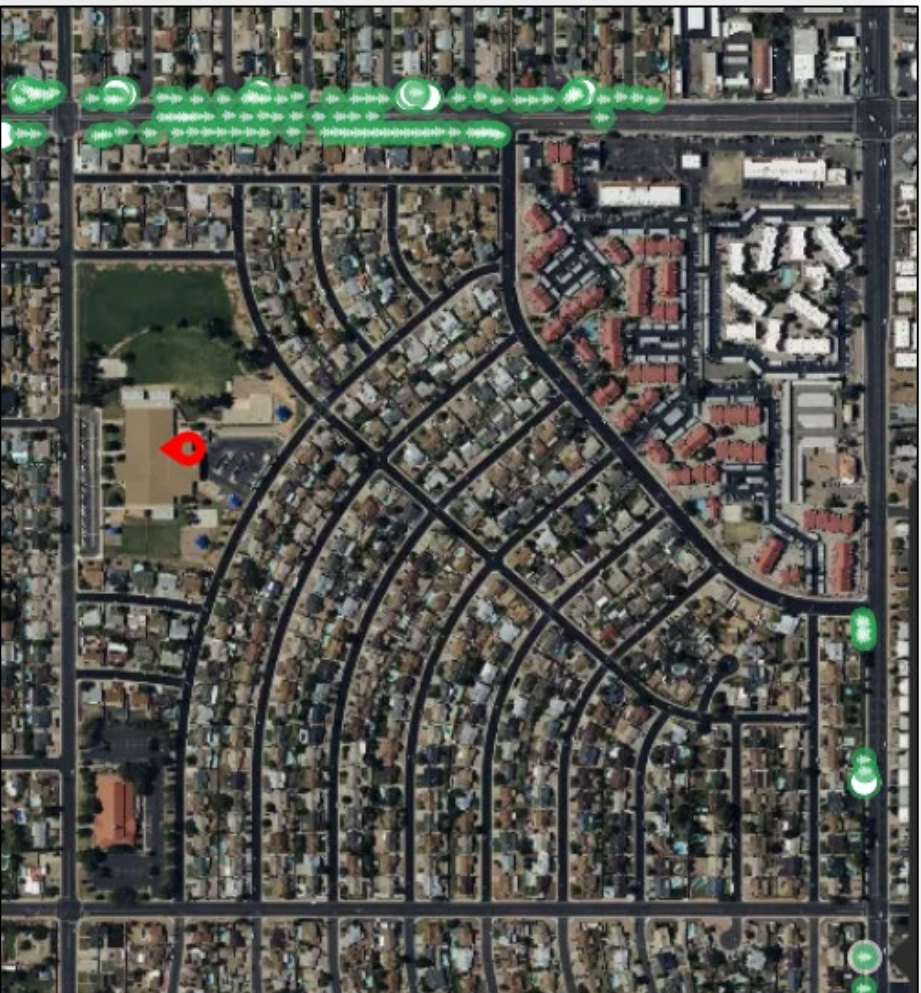


Questions?

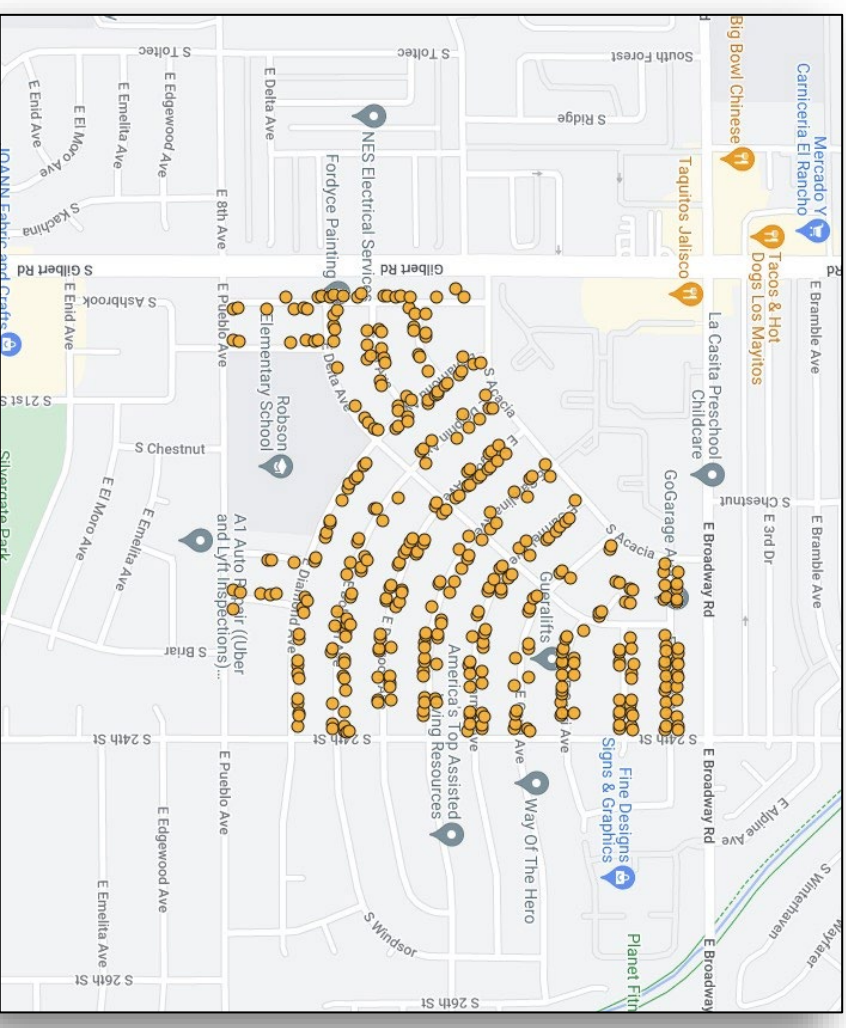
CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



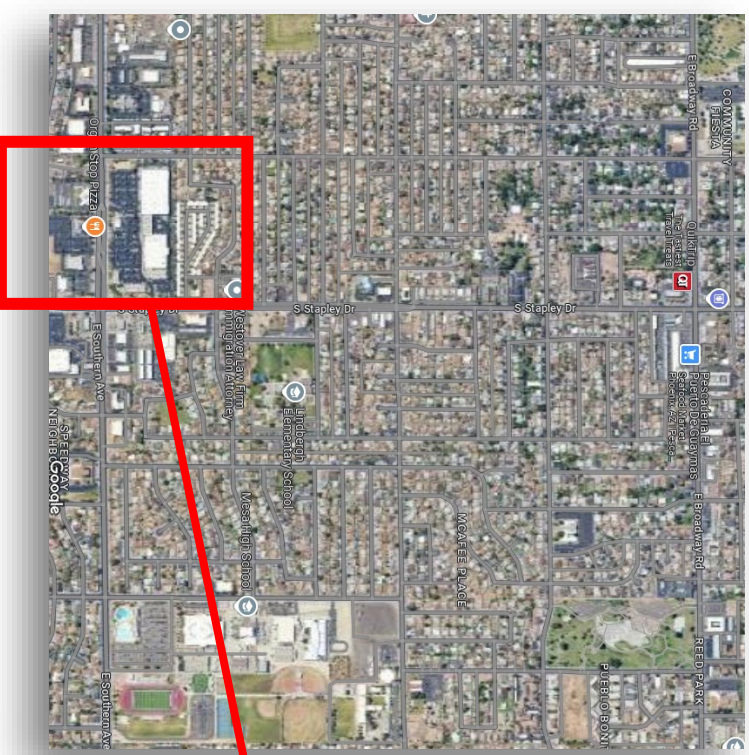
Fuller Ranch Neighborhood 10% Tree Canopy Cover (American Forests) Public Trees



Vacant sites within Census Tract 379 vacant sites at single family homes, identified by an ISA Arborist



7% Commercial Site Existing Conditions



CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

14% Canopy Cover Commercial Site Rendering



Parcel Area: 727,598 SF

Building Footprint: 210,847 SF

Existing Shade Area: 61,371 (7%)

Recommended Shade Area:

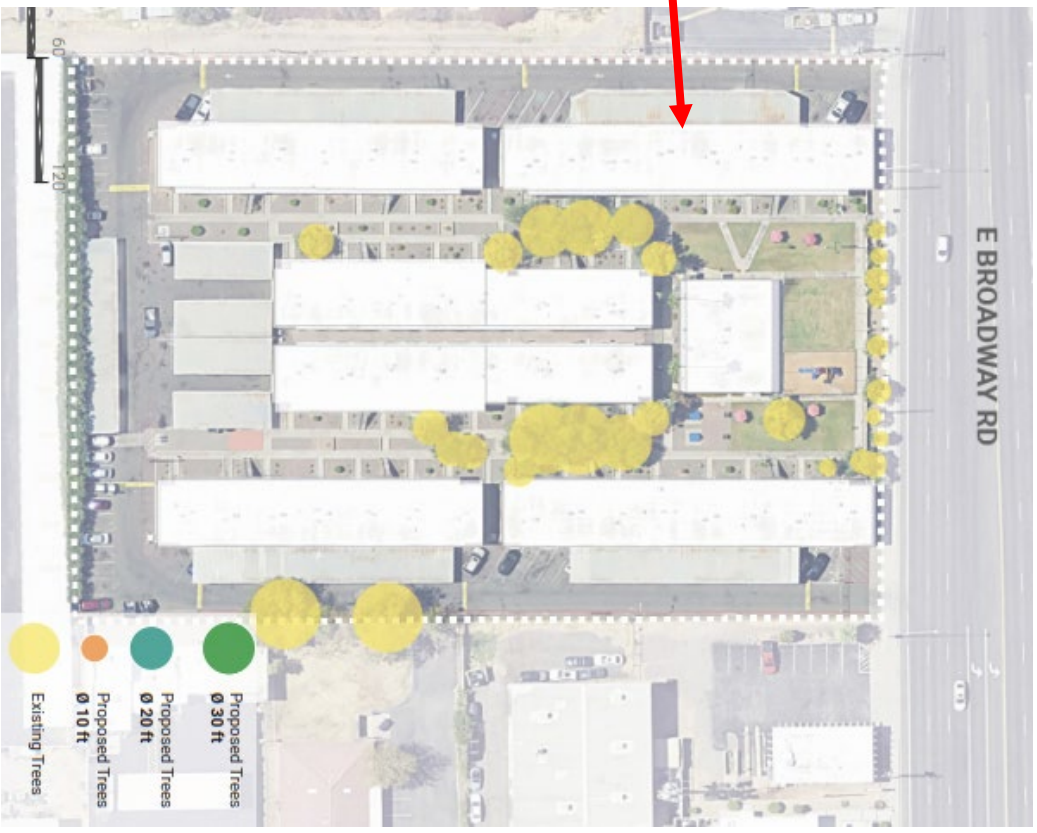
104,134 SF (14%)

Achieve 14%: Add 113 trees

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5% Multifamily Residences Existing Site Conditions



CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



15% Canopy Cover Multifamily Residence Rendering

Parcel Area: 141,566 SF
Building Footprint: 48,070 SF
Existing Shade Area: 7,848 SF (5%)
Recommended Shade Area: 21,234 SF (15%)
Achieve 15% Canopy Cover: 17 trees



CITY OF MESA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



Placemaking Overview

Mary Kopaskie-Brown, AICP,
Planning Director
Rachel Nettles, AICP,
Assistant Planning Director

October 24, 2024

ty Council Strategic Priority Discussion

Placemaking

Create vibrant, attractive, and functional public spaces that foster a sense of community and connectedness.

Assess opportunities to design and build the physical environment to encourage social interaction, pedestrian activity, and multi-modal transportation options between various destinations, such as activity centers, parks, and signature public spaces.

What is a Placemaking?

Placemaking is...

...the **process of creating quality places** where people want to live, work, play, and learn - Congress of New Urbanism

...**intentional use of public spaces** to strengthen community **connections among people and a place**

itself - Innovation Quarter

...the **process of activating public space** to make them more appealing and useable, and to **create a sense of place** - Project for Public Spaces

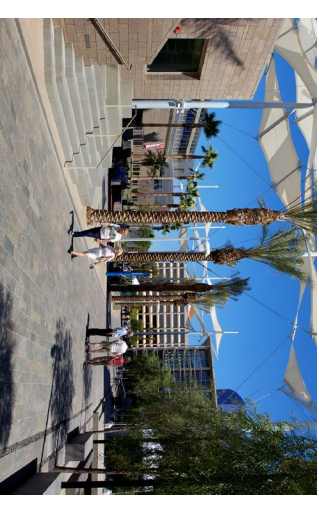
People
+
Places
+
Activities

Where Does Placemaking Occur?



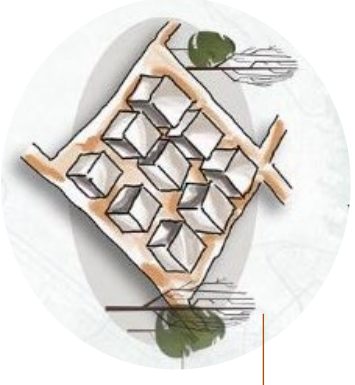
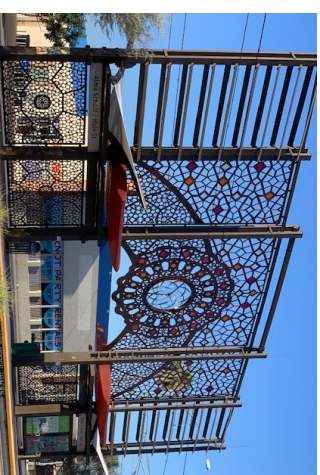
PATHS

Streets, trails, sidewalks, canals
along which people move



EDGES

Walls, buildings, streets, and
features that form a visual
boundary



DISTRICTS

Large areas of the city with
common identifying characteristics

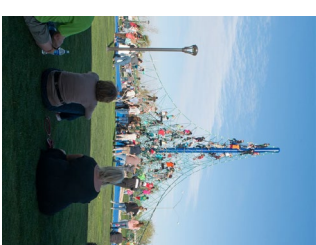
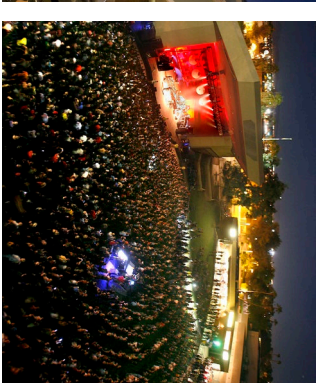


Where Does Placemaking Occur?



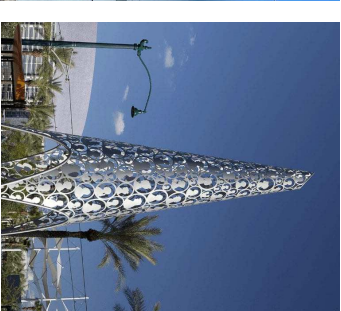
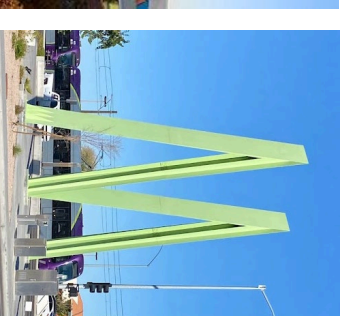
ACTIVITY NODES

Focal points of a city or district that act as gathering spaces



LANDMARKS

Unique points of reference that can be identified from a distance



What Makes a Great Place?

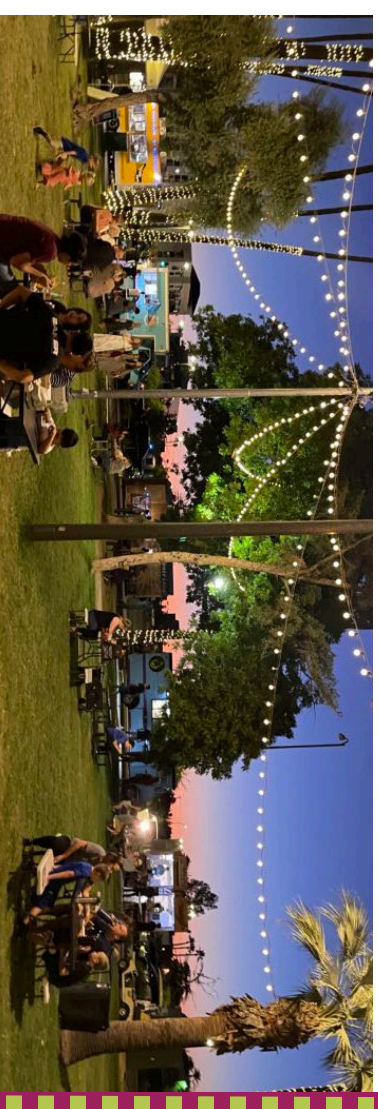
- Interaction between people
- A place that creates experiences
- A mixture of public and private uses
 - food, retail, art, health, recreation that are integrated



Merry Main Street



Pioneer Park



Mesa Festival at Pioneer Park

What Makes a Great Place?

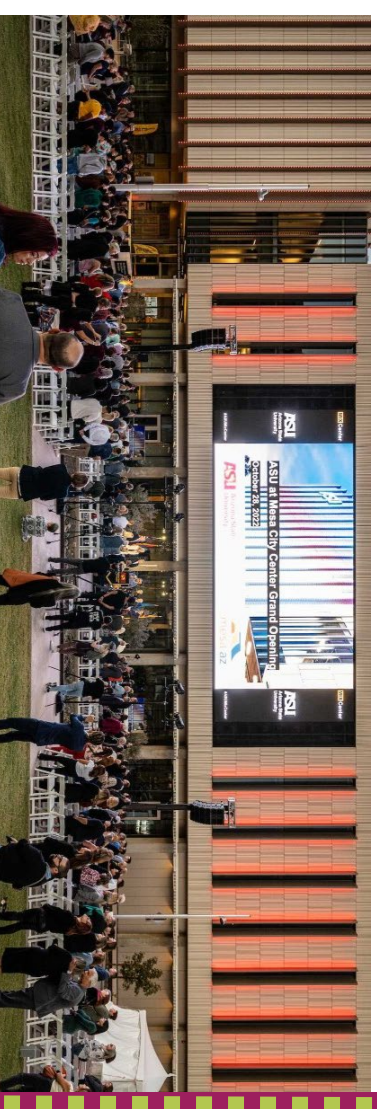
- Gathering spaces – safe and secure, parks, plazas
- Connected and shared spaces – based on adjacent land uses
- Well design places – not just a site – public and private partnership



Monterey Park Express Library



Mesa Urban Garden

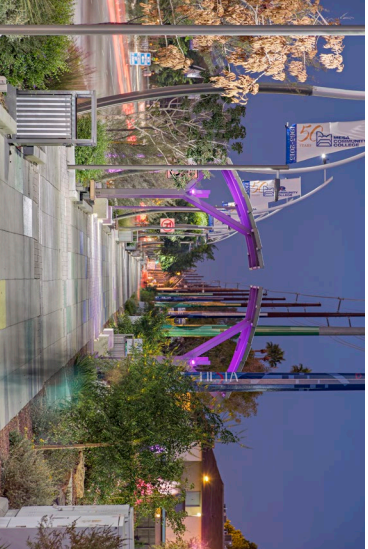


ASU MIX Building and Mesa City Plaza

How Do We Make Great Place in Mesa?

Continued Investment in Public Assets

- Parks, Plazas, and Community Centers
- Municipal Buildings
- Right-of-way
- Trails
- Transit Stops



How Do We Make Great Place in Mesa?

Branding and Programming of Spaces

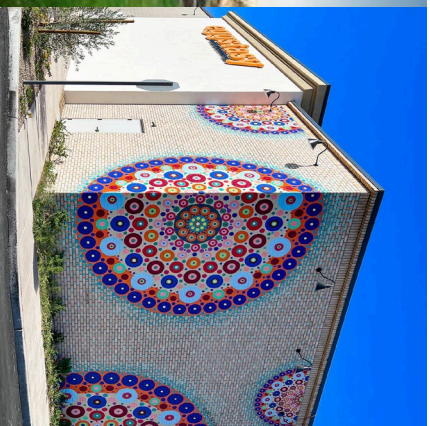
- Special Events
- Murals
- Gateway Signage
- Specialized Facilities



How Do We Make Great Place in Mesa?

Policy Development and Public/Private Cooperation

- Design Guidelines
- General Plan Placetypes
- High-quality Design
- Unique Attractions and Features



Questions/Comments

