

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interview Summary

Interviewers: Lakshmi Rajagopalan, Kimberly Carter, and Loreli Cappel
Interviewees: 24 total
Date: 8.18 and 8.19.08

* Indicates X # of duplicate answers

1. Give or provide your impressions of Central Peoria.

* Run Down, Declining	Without feeling
Non-descript	Obsolete
Plain	Historical, but not too much activity
Hodge-podge of look and use	Project area is much too big; revise project boundary
There is nothing there	Has nice hometown feel
Not a place to stop, just drive-through	Store facades deteriorating
Blighted, neglected, deteriorating portion of the City	No vibrancy
Lacks focus & identity	No continuity

2. What is your favorite thing about Central Peoria, esp. in Old Town Area?

*Remaining Historical Buildings
*The small town look, feel, and scale
Osuna Park
Amphitheatre at City hall& Evening Concerts
Passion for the History of Peoria (which comes from the pioneers & descendants)
Pioneer Statue
There is nothing there to like
Commitment of local business
Used to be pedestrian friendly
Presbyterian Church
Outdoor shopping

3. What is your least favorite place or thing in Old Town?

*Circulation – Intersection at 83rd and Peoria is confusing
Buildings in need of rehab
There's no reason to stop along Grand at Old Town
Residents not willing to change, over populated with historic population
Around 87th Ave – Tired, blighted
Grand Ave – Connectivity is an issue
Trophy store on Peoria Ave
Empty building next to Trophy store – underutilized
Old Wal-Mart and Smitty's buildings
No commercial activity

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Looks tired and unclean
No vitality
Too many vacant lots and underutilized commercial sites

4. What do you think are the biggest challenges in revitalizing Central Peoria and the Old Town area?

- *Circulation constraints (access to Old Town)
- *Creating consensus/divided community (different vision for different people)
- *Project Area is too big, needs to be more focused or subdivided
- Capture diversity & ideas of native Peorians
- Getting council to agree & support a unified vision
- Aversion to density
- Outspoken group of preservationists
- City needs action, not just a vision
- Old Town is still a neighborhood, not just a downtown
- Public fear of government
- Shift in demographic to the north. No reason to come to Central Peoria anymore
- Trying to figure out what revitalization is
- Railroad tracks
- Blighters
- Realistic expectations
- Perception from businesses that working with the City is difficult
- Not losing hometown feel
- Competing with new development
- Physical problems of Grand Ave and the railroad
- Finding a leader that others will follow (as far as business goes)
- Keeping merchants downtown

5. What kind of changes would you like to see (if any)?

- ***Good restaurants (sit-downs)
- Destination uses
 - Coffee shop, Ice Cream Parlor, Retail/Apparel stores, Family-oriented shops
 - An economic attraction in Old Town
- A 24 hour (or 18 hr environment in Old Town)
- Higher density
- Circulation improvements
- Creation of a greater public space at Osuna Park
- Events
- Connections between City hall to Performance Center with Paseos/ Walkways
- Climate oriented design, places to meet & greet
- Signage, Gateways, Improved wayfinding system
- Events or festivals that would draw people to downtown and support services (like retail, dining etc) to make them linger longer
- School arts program => City beautification/ Murals
- Landscaping in "old town" and at Grand Avenue corridor
- Hispanic flare/culture incorporated
- Land assemblage
- Larger parcels
- Interesting housing

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Get developers in to develop Old Wal Mart and Smitty's
Trade School
More green zone
Large employer
Signage
Unique retail

6. What ideas do you have for improving the area?

*Beautification of public spaces/OS
Possible closure or convertible space adjacent to Osuna Park?
Grand needs to be more inviting/beautified to draw people in
Overall Image/upkeep
More density
Signage and wayfinding
Connectivity and transit improvements
Embracing the historical presence
Conversion or reuse of old buildings (firehouse and jailhouse to museum/restaurants)
Trolley Car circulator (volunteer)
Tree City USA application
Cleanup of Varney area and buildings in Madison area
Education of City programs
Parks, retail etc.
Need new reasons to come to downtown
Need a venue similar to Westgate in Glendale
Small office parks
Theme buildings
Tie in Osuna Park to theatre
Have Mexican independent festivals
Huka bar, tamale shop, limited service banking, bookstore, gallery, insurance services, cell phone store, farmers market, wine bar, yoga studio, kickboxing, internet café, Mexican restaurant, movies

7. What have you liked about other cities that is lacking here?

Glendale, AZ – "Glendale Glitters"
Alexandria, VA – Promenade
Charlotte, NC – Public art, children's museums
Savannah, GA – Tree, Public spaces
Phoenix, AZ – Encanto Park Area – Revitalized historic neighborhoods
New Orleans, LA – Trolley
Scottsdale – It's districts (old town, entertainment, business core, balance of uses to support commercial) and it's farmer's market
Flagstaff, AZ – Downtown is completely revitalized and very pedestrian friendly
Other: San Francisco, CA – walkable, transit access and pedestrian oriented, good mix of entertainment and retail uses
San Diego, CA – signage and lighting
Tempe, AZ – Tempe Market Place
Oklahoma City – Canals, ponds and parks
Avondale, AZ – hometown feel and feels very welcoming

8. What would you not like to see?

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Apartments (condos maybe)
Gas Stations/Service Stations
City shouldn't purchase any more property
Tattoo shops
Bars
Discount stores (target/Wal-Mart...etc)
No high end retail stores or restaurants
No housing development specific to low income – need a mix
Band aid approach to making downtown look prettier
Osuna Park revitalized
Strip/big box type of development
Don't re-create, come up with something unique
Less high density downtown
No more single family housing

9. How can Central Peoria/Old Town be more inviting?

*Events – 5 K run, concerts, art fairs, farmer's Markets
*Restaurants/outdoor dining
*Evening atmosphere
Entertainment/Amusement
Smarter growth
Renovations
Revitalization of buildings
Substantial employer
Trees in old town

10. Do you like the area being referred to as Central Peoria? What do you think about keeping the name (Central Peoria Revitalization Plan and/or Old Town) ? Would you change it and if so, to what?

Greater Central Peoria
Downtown Peoria
Old Town Peoria
*Area is too big – Old town is only 2-3 blocks, the rest is Downtown or Central Peoria
Not Downtown – sounds too big
Get rid of 'OLD'
"Revitalization" can carry a negative connotation
Too generic
"Beautifying Peoria"
Peoria 2020
Define "central" or "old town"
Planning language

11. What retail shops or other consumer establishments are missing? What kind of shops would you like to see?

****Restaurants (pizza, Mexican, southwest, in old Fire house?)
Specialty Retail
Commercial to support the PAC
Movie theatre
Coffee shop

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Wine shop/ tasting bar
Entertainment (comedy, music venue)
Furniture store
Bookstore
Botique
Clubs/bars
Fast food
Employment
Convention center
Huka bar, tamale shop, limited service banking, bookstore, gallery, insurance services, cell phone store, farmers market, wine bar, yoga studio, kickboxing, internet café, Mexican restaurant, movies

12. What businesses would draw you and your friends to Central Peoria?

*Organic farmers market

*Evening Uses

*Entertainment (jazz club)

Antiques

Show cultural diversity

Specialty Niche for arts

Wine Shop

Class A office buildings

Dunkin Donuts

Attorney

Recruiting Office

Hardware store

Healthcare

Upscale commercial

13. What features would draw you to Central Peoria and the Old Town area– for example, water fountain, children’s play area, movie theaters, entertainment, concerts, and seasonal events?

**Spring events (parade/festivals)

*Restaurants

Advertizing and signage (get people to Old town)

Bring back the Hispanic Festival

Employment

Historical statues and monuments

14. Where would you like to see bulk of public funds spent for improvements and enhancements? Walkways, landscaping, signs, façade improvements, developer incentives?

*Fix up Osuna Park (new grass and furniture/fixtures)

Whatever the immediately local residents need (ask them and prioritize their need)

Rehab fire station, hotel , jail

Signage

Events

A grand public space

Partner with businesses to help implement the plan

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Streetscape improvements
Landscaping and building façade
Business incentives
Transportation
Developer incentives

15. How pedestrian friendly do you think this area is? What improvements, if any, would you suggest to make this area more walkable and inviting to the pedestrian?

Fine, no change

Good – Old Town is nice scale, just need a destination/ Monroe to Peoria is where you should focus and see growth & redevelopment

Old town is a 3 on a 1-10 scale/ Out of old town is a 2 on a 1-10 scale (due to traffic design)

No – no connectivity – would create pedestrian safe shade or environment

Need narrow streets for walking, needs to be reconfigured

Not attractive, parking is a problem

Dark, no street lights in certain areas, sidewalks need work

Not ADA accessible

No bike lanes

16. What brings you to Old Town?

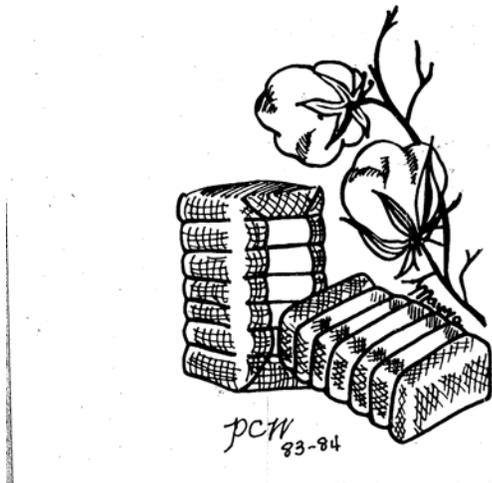
Theatreworks

Business

Other Notes:

Use City Seal in wayfinding (not a special logo)

Use Cotton bale/Kiwanis Seal in wayfinding (capture history of Peoria) – PDF file (File from Priscilla Cook for Wayfinding.pdf) with image is under W:\Arizona\Peoria\Central Peoria RevitalizationPlan\Outreach\Stakeholders\Interviews



Wayfinding and monumentation "entering Old Town"

Central Peoria Revitalization Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews

Sedona Rock Entries?

Speak with James Mason Prokapect – great resource for this project

Outreach ideas: 5 or 6 churches, Kiwanas club

Don't increase Old Town density, look at existing stock and improve

Look at density at 85th

See Plans to widen Grand to 3 lanes each

Need to look for LRT station locations along grand

Add Hispanic culture

Grand Avenue biggest impediment

Implement the plan

Start with employment core and the rest will follow