



The General Plan *for the* Town of Carefree

Public Involvement Plan

December 6, 2022

Michael Baker

INTERNATIONAL

INTRODUCTION

This document specifies how the Town of Carefree will engage and inform its citizenry during efforts to update the Town's current General Plan 2030. The Town of Carefree believes that public input in the planning and policy development process is crucial to building consensus and buy-in from community members. As Carefree embarks on planning for the next 10 to 20 years, the Town seeks to engage the community and allow public input to inform planning and policy out comes in a clear and consistent manner.

Periodic review and update of the Town's General Plan is necessary to reflect current laws, local needs, new data, correct errors, and/or clarify intent. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is based upon a set of objectives intended to involve the community in decisions regarding the General Plan Update Project:

- To provide the public with timely information, an understanding of the process, and opportunities to review and comment on the drafting of the General Plan.
- Ensure that information about the process is provided to the public at regular intervals to maximize public awareness and participation in the process.
- Actively solicit information from all residents, property owners and stakeholders about their concerns, questions and priorities for the update process and the future of Carefree.
- Utilize effective and equitable engagement tools. There are many techniques and tools available to ensure that the public is well-informed and able to play a role in the update process. The Town is committed to seeking new and innovative ways to engage and keep the public involved throughout the process.
- Provide a transparent record of public engagement. To maintain transparency and consistency, Carefree will share results of public participation efforts with the public.

As this PIP is designed to work hand-in-hand with the development of the General Plan, one of the first steps to creating a successful public involvement plan is to know the demographic and socioeconomic composition of the community. As it stands, the following is a brief snapshot of the community of Carefree (sourced from 2020 Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates census data for the Town of Carefree):

- Total Population: 3,863 (Decennial Census 3,690)
- Total Households: 1,811
- Residential Units: 2,536
- Median Age: 69.4
- 3.4% Under age of 18
- 98.81% White
- 59.7% have a bachelor's degree or higher
- Average household size is 2.00
- Median Household Income: \$112,768
- Median Housing Value: \$758,200

Beyond the composition of the community, the public involvement plan must also give consideration to any challenge's residents may face in staying involved and informed about projects and current events in their community. Recognizing personal or work schedules, technological ability and the seasonal travel

behavior of some residents are just a few of the challenges that were considered in the development of this PIP.

It is also important to recognize; this PIP is subject to change as opportunities for different and/or additional community participation arise over the course of the General Plan Update process.

THE PUBLIC

The Town of Carefree is made up of many individuals, stakeholders, groups and neighborhoods. This section provides an overview of the varying members of “The Public” that will be engaged during the General Plan Update.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The Town of Carefree is a product of an assortment of individuals and groups with varying points of views, life experiences, and priorities. In an effort to capture those and see them reflected in the General Plan Update, public outreach to the following individuals and groups will be invaluable to the process:

- Residents
- Neighborhood/Homeowner Associations
- Places of Worship
- Hotels/Resorts
- Education Organizations/Associations
 - Cave Creek Unified School District
- Community Service /Social Groups
 - Kiwanis Club of Carefree/Cave Creek
 - Foothills Caring Corps
 - Desert Foothills Land Trust

DECISION MAKERS

Decision makers range from elected officials to appointed committee members.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Town Council

RECOMMENDING COMMISSIONS, HEARING BODIES, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- Planning & Zoning Commission
- Board of Adjustment
- Development Review Board
- Carefree Water Board
- Economic Development Committee

STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are groups with direct interests in the community that wish to participate in the planning process or whose support is key to implementing certain aspects of the General Plan. Stakeholders range from major employers and large landowners, to public service providers and agencies. The more diverse

the group of stakeholder’s expertise is, the more encompassing and successful the General Plan will be. Stakeholders identified to date include:

- Landowners
- Business and Commercial Community
- Public Agency and Service Representatives
 - Water/Wastewater Service Providers
 - Power Providers
 - Public Safety Providers (Rural Metro & Maricopa County Sheriff)
 - Solid Waste Providers
 - Communication Providers

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH AND GOALS

The overall Carefree General Plan Update project process is comprised of three primary phases; **Recognize, Enrich, and Achieve**. As the following process flowchart displays, Carefree community members, decision makers and stakeholders will also be **Engaged** at each phase of the project. While specific engagement techniques are outlined in subsequent sections, the following is an overview of the engagement process with the key goals and supporting actions of each phase.

PHASE I: Recognize (November 2022 - February 2023)

- GOAL: Recognize the value in what exists today and build on that foundation.
- GOAL: Understand how the existing General Plan’s policies and goals guided growth.
- GOAL: Investigate how will residents’ needs change as the community advances.
- GOAL: Explore how the Town manages growth and mitigates impacts from growth.
- GOAL: Investigate how policy changes will (if at all) affect residents and the Town.
 - ACTION: Prepare and share the Existing Conditions Assessment Report
 - ACTION: Execute Public Outreach Campaign
 - ACTION: Launch Online Engagement
 - ACTION: Conduct Community Workshop
 - ACTION: Engage Town Decision Makers

PHASE II: Enrich (February 2023 - November 2023)

- GOAL: Integrate expertise from a variety of disciplines and feedback received in Phase I to establish goals and policies on community issues.
- GOAL: Explain why and how public input was integrated into the Plan/Elements.
 - ACTION: Prepare and share the draft Elements of the General Plan with the community
 - ACTION: Conduct Council and Commission Work Sessions (1 meeting each, 4 rounds)
 - ACTION: Conduct Community Workshops (1)
 - ACTION: Host Discussion Hubs (2)
 - ACTION: Continue Online Engagement
 - ACTION: Facilitate State mandated 60-Day public comment period for the draft General Plan

PHASE III: Achieve (December 2023 - May 2024)

- GOAL: Finalize the plan by creating actionable policies that can be carried forward by the Town and the greater public.
 - ACTION: Conduct final Planning Commission and Council Work Sessions (1 each)
 - ACTION: Conduct State mandated Planning Commission Public Hearing.
 - ACTION: Conduct State mandated Town Council Public Hearing for formal adoption.
 - ACTION: Continue Online Engagement and Public Education for ratification.
 - ACTION: General Plan ratification by voters - November 2024 Election.

ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

While techniques may ultimately vary to address new community-based issues that may arise during the General Plan Update process, Michael Baker anticipates a community-wide public engagement process that would, at a minimum, encompass the following key efforts:

TOOLS

A broad range of techniques and tools will be used to engage and inform Community Members, Stakeholders, and Decision Makers.

- **VISUAL IDENTITY**

Graphic designers, in coordination with Town staff, will create a unique graphic format and project branding to create a recognizable identity for the General Plan Update and garner enthusiasm and unity. This brand will then be used for all project products, meeting materials, and planning documents.

- **DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT**

The following digital engagement tools will be applied to establish a “go to them” outreach approach that will cast a wider net than traditional “come to us” engagement methods. The following tools will allow busy residents to engage in the General Plan Update process at their optimal time.

- **General Plan Update Website:** A priceless resource of the General Plan Update is the project website. This will be the hub of the General Plan Update where residents can learn about the project, follow the public meeting schedule, find frequently asked questions, review project documents, leave comments, pose questions and locate links to surveys. The project team will work with staff to develop the content, design, and promotion of the General Plan Update website.
- **Virtual Mapping:** To extend the reach and diversity of participation in the update process, the project team will utilize virtual mapping, a highly effective online engagement tool that provides residents with one central location to get involved from the convenience of their home computer, tablet, or smart phone. The virtual mapping portal is a comprehensive tool

that allows residents to geographically post or “pin” location-based feedback on an interactive map of the community. This one central location for geographic based feedback will help to minimize the number of “clicks” or the process in which a community member must go through to provide their feedback. Minimizing clicks is essential to capturing and maintaining community interest once they willfully choose to engage.

- **Digital Survey:** A digital community survey will be designed to identify community priorities as well as solicit feedback on the current General Plan itself.

The virtual mapping portal and Digital Survey will be hosted on the General Plan Update website. Community residents will be directed to the website through existing Town social media accounts, local print media, and email blasts. However, for residents who may not be comfortable with online engagement, printed copies of the community survey will be made available at Town Hall and by mail via direct request to Town staff.

- **Social Media:** Using the Town’s existing Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts, the project team will work together to create content providing project updates and promoting public meeting involvement, as well as create a schedule for message frequency. Public social media platforms such as Nextdoor may also prove to be valuable in the distribution of pertinent project information.
- **E-Mail Lists/Newsletters:** Throughout the General Plan Update process, Michael Baker will utilize existing town focused email lists and newsletters (i.e. Carefree Connection and the various neighborhood, church, social and service organizations, etc.) and a central General Plan Update contact list of e-mails (created from contacts obtained via sign-in sheets at public meeting events and website requests from residents asking to be added to this central contact list) to notify community members of General Plan news and events.

- **PRINT MATERIAL**

The following more traditional print resources will be utilized to complement digital outreach methods and engage residents.

- **Media Releases:** Prior to each phase of outreach, press releases will be prepared and distributed by the Town to local media outlets or through existing Town hosted communication methods.
- **Foothill Focus/Sonoran News:** Efforts will be made to encourage media personnel from local newspapers and periodicals to prepare articles related to the General Plan. This notification will expand upon the typical press release and required public notifications placed in the newspaper.
- **Informational Display Posters/Flyers:** Michael Baker will design and distribute informational posters and flyers to display at Town facilities (i.e. Town Hall, Desert Garden, etc.) as well as local gathering places (i.e. Post Office, churches, etc). Flyers will also be shared with Homeowner Associations (HOA’s) and social groups to distribute through their print communication channels. Posters/Flyers will include background information, web address

and contact information as well as Quick Response (QR) codes that can be scanned to conveniently take viewers directly to the General Plan Update website.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach events and online activities will accompany each milestone of the process. When appropriate, these will tag on to other local Town efforts and be designed as interactive, accessible events. These events provide an opportunity for all interested residents and business owners to share and receive feedback on results of each phase.

- **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AND TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS**

Woven throughout the project process, there will be a series of work sessions with the Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Council. Members of the Commission and Council will be met with at key project milestones to seek guidance, provide opportunities for questions, review findings and/or plans and to prepare for formal public hearings. A total of ten work sessions, five with the Planning Commission and five with the Town Council will be conducted over the duration of the project. These work sessions may be held as part of Council's and Commission's regularly-scheduled meeting times or as dedicated special meetings on a case-by-case basis.

It is anticipated that talking points and status updates will be provided at key milestones. Such updates may be provided independently of the aforementioned work sessions and may be provided by Town staff.

- **COMMITTEE BRIEFINGS**

Town staff will provide quarterly work-in-progress updates to the Town's various sub-committees throughout the plan process. Updates will be given at a regularly scheduled meeting of these committees.

- **DISCUSSION HUBS**

Discussion Hubs will be utilized to address any specific issues that may have greater diversity of perspectives within the town. Discussion Hubs provide the opportunity for residents to learn and build consensus on issues by exploring them in a deeper manner. Discussion Hubs will occur independent of the overall project schedule to allow proper time to review and explore alternatives associated with subject topics.

- **COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**

Two Community Workshops will be conducted at key points in the General Plan Process. For each workshop, meeting announcements will be prepared in coordination with Town staff for advertising and distribution. All draft materials will be carefully reviewed with Town Staff prior to their dissemination. The following is a conceptual format for each workshop that will be modified and refined based on further discussion with Town Staff upon the facilitation of each meeting.

Meeting	Topic	Timeframe	Format	Objective
Workshop #1	Kick-off, Visioning, Principle Values behind the elements	Winter 2023	In-person presentation with interactive Elements	The information gained as part of this workshop will help to refresh or amend the existing General Plan vision statement and principle values/themes for the elements which will then guide the development of the General Plan Update. A multi-media presentation and interactive exercises will be used to obtain feedback from the community in a physical setting.
Workshop #2	Goals and Policies Validation	Summer 2023	Physical or virtual open house with interactive elements	A physical or virtual meeting will be utilized to present key aspects of the draft plan to engage the community in open dialogue, seek their final concurrence on the plan goals and policies, and identify any remaining and/or necessary changes that must occur prior to finalizing the General Plan Update.

- **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

As mandated by Arizona Revised Statutes, one Planning Commission Public Hearing and one Town Council Public Hearing will be conducted. These hearings will follow the normal Town public hearing procedures. The general public will be encouraged to participate during these hearings to ensure concerns, suggestions, and related matters are addressed.

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH

Additional outreach methods may be used to maximize public participation over the life of the project. Modified traditional and digital based methods that may be utilized in association with the engagement tools and public outreach methods listed above include:

- **Preparing business cards** that can be easily distributed across the community (i.e. Town Hall, post office, etc.) to direct residents to the project website to gain more information.
- **Hosting Pop-up meeting locations** to intercept residents where they frequently visit (i.e. Town Hall / Post Office, and community pop-up events) for casual conversations.
- **Prerecorded presentations and educational videos** can be posted to the project website to give residents the ability to virtually listen to project team members directly share information or background material on key issues to help inform those watching on the nuances of the issue &/or the basis for future decision making.

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE CONTACTS

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