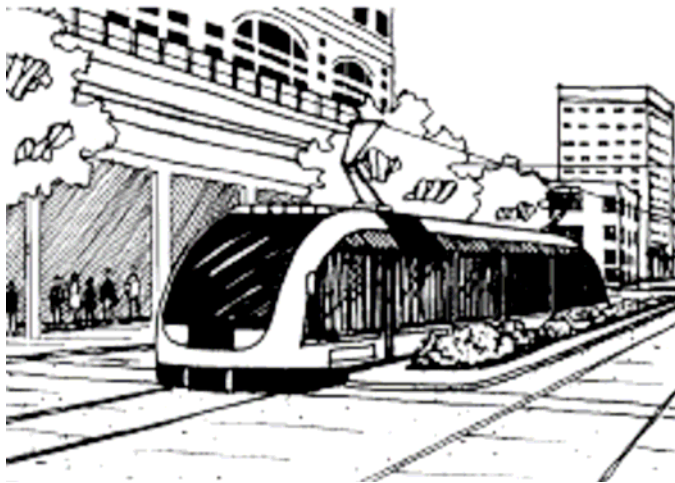


Executive Summary

The West Main Street Area Plan, adopted by Mesa City Council on December 3, 2007 through resolution no 9132, has been created to capture the community's vision for the area to reflect the potential for redevelopment with the arrival of light rail in late 2008 (Appendix A).



The West Main Street Area Plan boundaries include University Drive to the north, Broadway Road to the south, Country Club Drive to the east and the Mesa/Tempe city limits to the west.

History of West Main Street Area



The West Main Street Area has been home to many residents, businesses and enterprises since the late 1800s. Over the years, the uses in the area have emerged into a diverse mix of industries, small businesses, retail establishments, hotels, and single and multi-residences. A glimpse along Main Street captures the diverse styles that have developed as a result of growth in different time spans. The area has a highly diverse social base. The cultural expression is evident in the façade and architecture of buildings in the area. While the buildings along the major street network of the area represent a vibrant face, inner areas boast many well-established and peaceful neighborhoods that mark their own historical identity. In the coming years, this area is expected to change due to Light Rail Transit (LRT) along Main Street (scheduled to start operating in December 2008).

Creating an Opportunity



Early discussions about redeveloping the West Main Street corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods occurred during the Mesa 2025 General Plan update process. Since then, City of Mesa residents, city staff and Council have been learning more about LRT and the appropriate pedestrian-friendly mixed-uses (also known as Transit-Oriented Development, TOD) that can occur in and around station areas. The desire to create the opportunity for TOD projects in West Mesa similar to what has already started in Phoenix and Tempe along portions of planned LRT route has increased over the last couple of years. The process of preparing this planning document began in 2005 with the City Council giving direction to the planning staff to prepare an area plan for the West Main Street Area. After consulting with community leaders and representatives of Mesa Grande Community Alliance and West Mesa Community Development Corporation, the study area was established.

Creating a Vision

Through out this planning process, the staff has worked with the community representatives who formed the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). Staff facilitated various PAC meetings, community wide meetings/forums, TOD Expert Panel Workshop to encourage residents' participation in providing ideas, comments, and input of local knowledge of the areas where they live, work, learn and play. This input led to the creation of a Vision for the West Main Street Area. The vision is of a close-knit community:

- With moderate density and with a small town feel;
- With unique and eclectic components;
- With vibrant and active community life;
- That celebrates, embraces, and cherishes its diversity;
- Rich in mature, stable, and vibrant residential neighborhoods;
- With diverse and high quality housing stock;
- That is economically balanced;
- That is friendly to developers and businesses;
- That is pedestrian-friendly;
- That is transit-friendly;
- Rich in open space and recreational facilities.

Development Strategies and Policies

There is no question that the West Main Street Area will continue to grow and change - but without strategies that are built upon a thorough analysis of existing character and without sharing the vision of the community, the opportunity would be lost to leverage the trends to maximize the advantage for both the West Main Street Area and the City.

This Plan proposes development strategies and policies for the West Main Street Area that are based on the principal of preserving and strengthening the identity of the existing community while creating infrastructure and venues for newer development.

As opportunities for development along the LRT line increases, the character of the West Main Street Area is expected to change towards higher intensity and diversity. The intent of this plan is to proactively provide for transit-oriented development that contains mixed-use development and transit supportive densities. The transit-oriented development design imperatives of the plan for the area emphasize density, mixed-use, shade and pedestrian-friendly streets.

In order to balance the existing and new development, the plan proposes varied intensities and uses in identified locations within the plan boundaries.

Transit Station Areas



Transit Station Areas identified in the plan include locations within five minutes of walking distance (660 feet) of transit stations that would allow for the highest intensity development in the area. The concept is to allow for high-density, mixed-use development that is physically and functionally integrated through various design elements and provides uninterrupted pedestrian connections around transit nodes.

Transit Corridor Area



Transit Corridor Area identified within the plan boundaries includes locations within approximately 1320 feet of transit stations and the transit line. These areas allow for moderate densities of development through new development, redevelopment and infill. High-density, multi-family residential along with mixed-use development is encouraged in the transit corridor.

Development in the Transit Station Areas and Transit Corridor Area will work hand in hand to provide a better ambience and vibrant character along Main Street. In order to achieve this goal, buildings should be placed closer to the street frontage to create a pedestrian-friendly and attractive environment.

Neighborhood Opportunity Area



This plan also identifies *Neighborhood Opportunity Areas* that include well-established neighborhoods in the West Main Street Area. The plan proposes to preserve these neighborhoods from the negative impacts of surrounding developments while enhancing the quality of these neighborhoods by creating an environment that encourages reinvestment in these neighborhoods. The plan enhances connectivity between the neighborhoods and transit stations. The plan proposes to foster a sense of place in these neighborhoods by strengthening their identity and enhancing opportunities for community interactions.

Industrial Corridor



The plan also identifies an *Industrial Corridor* that primarily includes the area south of the Union Pacific Rail up to Broadway Road. The plan proposes to maintain and redevelop employment areas in the Industrial Corridor. The plan discourages the addition of new neighborhood and community-oriented freestanding retail uses in this corridor. Developments such as business parks are encouraged in the area to achieve a more diverse employment base. Subdivision patterns, site design and building orientation are expected to preserve the potential of rail freight that serves the area.

Summary



The West Main Street Area has unique elements with historic character that are part of the identity of the area. These seemingly non-conforming elements are the iconic representation of the uniqueness of the West Main Street Area and, thus, should be allowed to co-exist with the newer development.

Besides maintaining historic identity in the area, the plan proposes to make provisions for new development. The plan proposes improvements to the street system and other infrastructure needed to allow for healthy development in the area.

Community involvement is the key to retaining the character as well as strengthening the identity that is not only physical but also deeply rooted in its community. The plan recommends meaningful community involvement during plan implementation.