

GRANT ROAD

Improvement Plan

MILESTONE REPORT



Mobility

Vitality

Sustainability

Winter 2011

PLANNING NOW FOR A BETTER FUTURE

LAND USE PLANNING FOR GRANT ROAD – THE GRANT ROAD DISTRICT OPTIONAL URBAN OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Community Character & Vitality Land Use phase of the Grant Road Improvement Plan has begun and will be complete in about a year. In keeping with the Context Sensitive Solutions* process that was used to design the improved roadway, a land use planning phase is necessary to define the character the community would like to see in the future along the new Grant Road. The goal of the Community Character & Vitality Plan is to establish an **optional urban overlay district – The Grant Road District**. The optional Grant Road District **will not change existing zoning** and is proposed only for properties fronting on Grant Road and adjacent non-residentially zoned properties. The new optional zoning will:



Conceptual simulation showing courtyard townhouses and offices.

Options, Incentives, Benefits

The Grant Road District will provide more options and incentives for property owners and developers seeking to re-develop on Grant Road and will integrate design and performance standards for more effective and efficient development implementation, which could include:

- Enable a development review process that is more effective and efficient;
- Focus on the character of future development - the design of buildings, open spaces, and parking in relation to the street;
- Define how building heights and setbacks, as well as landscaping, will buffer adjacent single family neighborhoods from active mixed use development along Grant Road;
- Use a zoning format that is being successfully implemented as part of the Downtown Links project; and,
- Will serve as a model for similar efforts along other major streets in Tucson.

- Standards that improve the feasibility of the mix of land uses the community desires along Grant Road
- Design standards for how development fronts Grant Road, so that properties compliment improvements to the roadway and help create an environment that supports pedestrians and transit
- Buffering of surrounding residential properties
- Adjustments to building height limits that may be higher or lower than existing zoning, depending on location, but that **always** require a stepping down of building heights towards existing 1 and 2-story adjacent residential neighborhoods

In order to implement the new Grant Road District it may be necessary to slightly amend some Area and Neighborhood Plans to more clearly define what type of development the community would like to see along Grant Road. The amendments to Area and Neighborhood Plans will be minimal and are meant to **create the type of character the community wants to see along Grant Road and protect and enhance the valued aspects of adjacent neighborhoods**. The Grant Road District will **not be applied to R-1 zoned single family residential properties where the existing house is intact after the Grant Road widening**.

* *Context Sensitive Solutions is a planning approach that ensures a roadway planning and design process is transparent, involves the public early and often, and takes into account the design and mobility context for the entire area, not just the roadway itself.*

USING FORM-BASED CODE TO CREATE MIXED USE

The Grant Road District is not meant to encourage greater density along the roadway than current zoning allows. Instead, the zone will use a form-based code approach to encourage a mix of uses on Grant Road and the built form the community



desires. A desire for mixed use development was expressed repeatedly by the public at community conversations, workshops and public meetings during the past four years while the roadway design concept was being discussed and completed. This approach is also included in the Grant Road Improvement Plan Guiding Principles, developed by the Citizen Task Force with input from the public and validated by Tucson's Mayor and Council.

Form-based code is a method of regulating development that emphasizes the physical form of the structure and how buildings and open space are arranged on the property, rather than a separation of land uses. Form-based code relies on the form and coordination of buildings and their relationship to adjacent development, the public realm, and public open spaces.

Citizens at a Land Use Workshop in January 2010 work together to explore potential future development options for grant Road.

HOW IS THE GRANT ROAD DISTRICT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER OVERLAY ZONES?

The Grant Road Optional Urban Overlay District will be a template for other major roadway improvement projects in Tucson. The City has recognized the need to include a land use planning component with major roadway design projects to **better define the complete context and character of a roadway**, an approach that takes into account not just vehicle use like cars, buses and bicycles, but also the people who use the road and the many ways they use it.

Unlike the Infill Incentive District or other overlay zones the community may be familiar with, the Grant Road District will have more design requirements and direction for compatibility, which will include specific lot setbacks, and will define the types of surrounding uses. Building height will be more restricted with the Grant Road District and projected to specific areas where height already exists or a commercial center exists. The overlay zone implemented as part of the Downtown Links project is similar to the Grant Road District and is also a form-based code.



Conceptual simulation of new residential lofts on the left and a new office and retail building on the right.



CHARACTER AND VITALITY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Grant Road Optional Urban Overlay District concept originated from the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles that were created for the Grant Road Improvement Plan by the Citizen Task Force with input from the public. The character and vitality principles include:

- 2.1 Preserve and enhance the scale and character of existing residential neighborhoods by providing appropriate transitions and buffering from Grant Road and the uses fronting onto it and the neighborhoods behind.
- 2.2 Support opportunities for a range of options for housing tenancy and housing type, which serve and expand upon the diversity of residents who live along and nearby Grant Road.
- 2.3 Support the viability of small, local, and independent businesses.
- 2.4 Preserve and enhance opportunities for a range of employment along Grant Road, including restaurants, retail, manufacturing, construction, repair, service, professional office and medical jobs.
- 2.5 Create a cohesive public realm that adds new public spaces to existing parks, plazas, schools and other community gathering places; forming an accessible network that supports and is supported

by the design and function of Grant Road, and the neighborhoods and businesses along it.

- 2.6 Build on the attraction and strengths of community and social service organizations to revitalize districts and enhance the public realm with activity along Grant Road.
- 2.7 Develop districts with multiple uses and shared parking that will be destinations for neighborhood residents as well as people from the region at large.
- 2.8 Recognize the differences in demographics, environment, scale, neighborhoods, business types, and other aspects of character; and use them to reinforce the identities of Grant Road's Community Character Segments.
- 2.9 Work to create safer environments that discourage crime and increase personal safety.
- 2.10 Support and build upon the ethnic diversity in relation to the social and economic vitality in the Grant Road study area.
- 2.11 Encourage private investment that revitalizes opportunity sites along Grant Road.

The entire Vision Statement and Guiding Principles document for the Grant Road Improvement Plan is available at www.grantroad.info

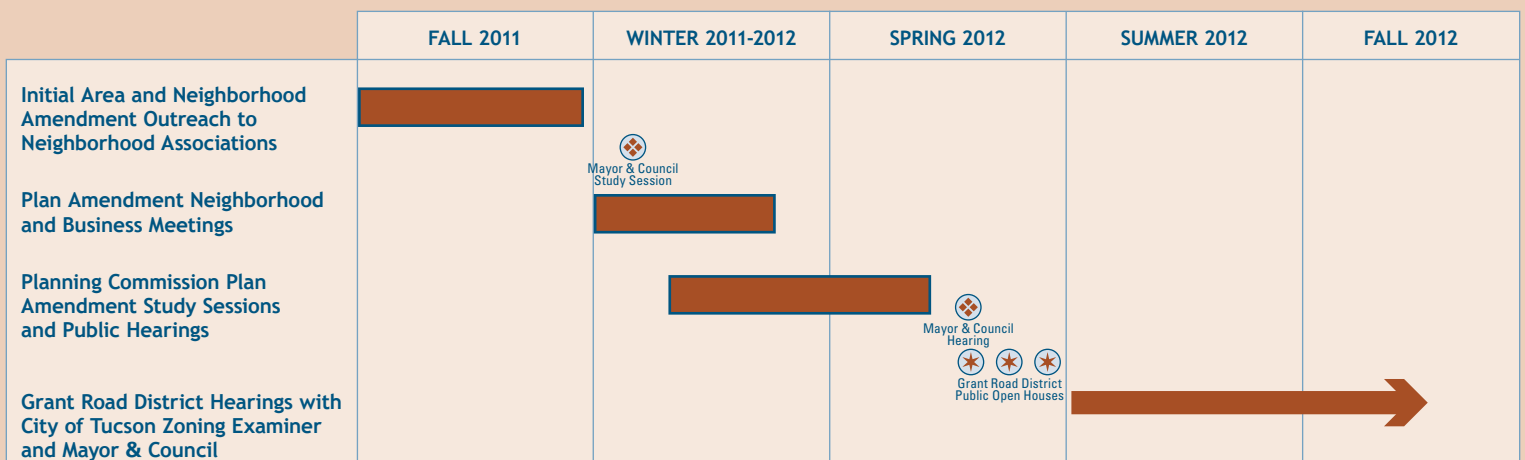
PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Public input has been important in shaping the Grant Road Improvement Plan to date (see summary on the back page) and will continue to be as the plan is further developed. The public will be notified of opportunities to provide input and participate in meetings and open houses for the area and neighborhood plan amendments land use planning, and zoning. These will be available for public review and comment prior to their submittal for consideration to the Tucson Planning Commission, Zoning Examiner and Mayor and Council.

To make sure you don't miss any updates or opportunities to review documents or provide input, sign up for the Grant Road email list by emailing information@grantroad.info or calling the project information line at (520) 624-4727.

For more information on the Grant Road Improvement Plan visit www.grantroad.info

Grant Road Community Character & Vitality Plan Timeline & Public Involvement Opportunities



Grant Road Milestone Report

WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE THE NEW GRANT ROAD — WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

- Citizen Task Force appointed — **August 2007**
- Character Segment Workshops — **January 2008**
- Vision Statement & Guiding Principles for the project completed by the Task Force with input from the public — **February 2008**
- Character Segment Workshops (Round 2) — **May 2008**
- Recommended Alignment for Grant Road approved by Mayor and Council — **January 2009**
- Community Character & Vitality Workshops — **June 2009**

- Mobility, Access and Streetscape Workshops — **November 2009**
- Community Character & Vitality Workshops — **January 2010**
- Reconstruction phasing announced and Grant-Oracle decided as first improvement project — **January 2010**
- Design Concept Report completed — **October 2010**



- More than **80** opportunities to provide public input and participation held to date (not including one-on-one meetings with property owners)

There have been **14** Community Character & Vitality based workshops to date with an additional **14** opportunities for the public to provide input on the Community Character & Vitality of the roadway as part of other Grant Road conversations, workshops and open houses.

