



## Minutes

# City of Tempe Sustainability Commission February 27, 2023

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Monday, February 27, 2023, 4:30 p.m. at a virtual meeting on MS Teams, through City Hall, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona.

### **(MEMBERS) Present:**

Kendon Jung (Chair)	Jake Swanson
Barbie Burke (Vice Chair)	Shawn Swisher
Natalie Mendoza	Morgan Winburn
Katja Brundiers	

### **(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Erin Boyd  
Meaghan Coon

### **City Staff Present:**

Brianne Fisher  
Andy Escobar  
Maddie Mercer  
Evelyn Brumfield  
Braden Kay

### **Guests Present:**

Taylor Conley – Communications Director, AZ Youth Climate Coalition

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m.

### **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Mission of SRC**

Chair stated the commission's mission, which is to research and advise on how to advance sustainability in Tempe in areas of city management, operations, and the city as a whole.

**Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances**

Taylor Conley is the Communications Director for the AZ Youth Climate Coalition. She is a high school student attending to observe the meeting.

**Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Chair mentions one edit in the heading of the minutes.

Vice Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes from January 23, 2023.

**Motion:** Barbie Burke

**Second:** Morgan Winburn

**Decision:** Approved 6-0

**Voted to Approve:**

Kendon Jung

Barbie Burke

Morgan Winburn

Shawn Swisher

Katja Brundiars

Jake Swanson

**Absent:**

Erin Boyd

Meaghan Coon

Natalie Mendoza (arrived to the meeting after this motion)

**Agenda Item 4 – Resilient Tempe Master Plan and Utility Feasibility Study**

Chair called for a motion to make the Resilient Tempe Master Plan and Utility Feasibility Study Agenda Item 4 (was previously Agenda Item 5).

**Motion:** Kendon Jung

**Second:** Barbie Burke

**Decision:** Approved 6-0

**Voted to Approve:**

Kendon Jung

Barbie Burke

Morgan Winburn

Shawn Swisher

Katja Brundiars

Jake Swanson

Braden Kay and Maddie Mercer presented about the Resilient Tempe Master Plan and Utility Feasibility Study.

- The Resilient Tempe Master Plan and Feasibility Study (RTMP) aligns with the city's commitment to expanding green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), which is one of the highlight actions in the Tempe Climate Action Plan Update.
  - o Benefits of GSI include stormwater capture, nuisance flood reduction, creation of shade, urban cooling, and reduced usage of potable water.
- Project includes a range of internal and external partners, including the following City of Tempe departments: Municipal Utilities, Community Services, Engineering and Transportation, and Community Development.
- The RTMP builds upon previous GSI pilot projects that have been done in Tempe, including ROW projects on College Avenue, Rio Salado Pkwy & Hardy Dr, and Lemon St & Dorsey Ln.
- The funding for the RTMP has been approved, and funds will cover both the Master Plan and Utility Feasibility Study (\$250,000) and infrastructure design (\$150,000).
- Scope of Work includes:
  - o Master Plan
    - Includes an assessment of current stormwater infrastructure, a review of opportunities for green infrastructure within new and existing projects, and a plan for future infrastructure investment.
  - o Urban Forestry Master Plan Update
    - Includes an exploration of tree banking system, code updates, and review of upcoming investments.
  - o Codes and Standards
    - Includes the co-development of revisions to Engineering Design Criteria for Engineering and Transportation (for city projects) and the co-development of new GSI standard codes for Community Development (private projects).
  - o Infrastructure Design
    - Includes 15% pilot project designs for a range of site types (e.g., park, school, neighborhood street, arterial Street, and preserve/open space).
  - o Utility Feasibility Study
    - Includes the development of funding scenarios and a proposal for the phased expansion of Stormwater Fee (established by the Water Rate Study) to cover future urban cooling initiatives.
  - o Stakeholder Engagement
    - Includes public outreach and the creation of an Ambassador Program.
  - o Operations and Maintenance

- Includes the development of a guide on how to maintain native landscapes and accompanying training resources, which will be informed by principles of indigenous land stewardship.
- To begin this work, the City of Tempe took 15 members of the RTMP project team on a trip to Tucson, AZ to learn about the Storm-to-Shade Program, which develops GSI projects across the city.
  - Staff had the opportunity to see active and in-development GSI projects in roadways, schools, parks, and neighborhoods.
- Next Step: City Council vote on Master Plan contract with consultant on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

Swisher noted the impact that simple code/standard changes could have in the development of GSI installations (e.g., raising the drainage pipe to allow more water to be collected by a bioswale).

#### Questions:

- Jung asked to clarify if the Stormwater Fee exists but doesn't yet cover cooling initiatives.
  - Fisher responded in the chat: The Stormwater Fee was passed by the Council, which aims to cover unfunded mandates (additional regulations for MS4).
  - Kay: Correct; the Stormwater Fee doesn't cover new stormwater infrastructure yet, but we would like to see the fee eventually cover GSI, urban forestry, and cooling projects (potentially resilience hubs).
- Swisher asked if the project would include codifying changes to GSI codes/standards and if there is a way to reference these changes more directly in the General Plan.
  - Kay: The RTMP will be referenced in the General Plan, County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, Federal MS4 Reporting, and it will include code/standard changes that get voted on as part of the project. Because the RTMP will include the proposed code/standards changes and utility feasibility proposal, it will have more regulatory teeth. This will require a significant amount of culture-building and support around the proposed code/standard changes.
  - Brundiers responded in the chat: Great comment, Shawn. This reminds me of the method of "Plan Integration" which we piloted for "heat vulnerability" earlier this year. Something to keep in mind especially as Braden was mentioning the translation into city ordinances.
- Swisher asked if there will be a process by which the SRC can review the GSI pilot projects and provide feedback.
  - Kay: We will continue to communicate with the SRC as we analyze potential projects with the consultant.
- Swanson typed in the chat: There was the mention of engaging with Indigenous land practices, I was curious about the operationalizing of that. Are we communicating with

local Indigenous land experts, communicating with communities, or using methods that have been documented prior?

- Kay: A team of indigenous landscape designers and indigenous ecology experts will be consulted throughout the project, including during the development of the maintenance guide and pilot projects.
- Brundiers typed in the chat: One quick question - what were the objections that people brought forth with regards to changing the pipe as shown in the picture?
  - Fisher responded in the chat: Katja - none specifically. Braden is just speaking of the types of concerns we will likely hear. Standing water and the concern of mosquitos for example. We have also heard some concerns about GSI projects and having too steep of a bioswale and residents falling in.

Brundiers shared a [link in the chat to the heat vulnerability map](#), which can be used to identify areas to invest strategically for equitable urban cooling.

Kay noted in the chat that we are already seeing an opportunity for O and M in school projects, and he mentioned that Richard Adkins and his team will be training school district staff in tree and shrub care.

Swisher noted that it would be beneficial if the scope of work for the pilot projects could include a cost assessment and comparison to traditional landscaping, with the goal of addressing the concern that sustainability can cost more money.

Winburn noted in the chat that one reason Tucson was so successful in building their GSI program is because of strong resident support. She mentioned that she knows several Tempe residents that would be interested in integrating GSI into their yards and serve as advocates for the program.

- Fisher responded in the chat: That's great Morgan, we would love to know the names. If you want to email them to me and Maddie that would be awesome.

Chair thanked Kay and Mercer for their presentation.

### **Agenda Item 5- Neighborhood Award Nominations**

Chair thanked Fisher for taking the time to score the commissioners' award nominations.

Chair acknowledged that several commissioners had difficulty identifying people to nominate for the Neighborhood Awards and asked the commissioners what they found difficult and if there was anything that could be done to improve upon the process.

Burke noted that after showing a business the criteria for the award, the business owners felt like their business wasn't sustainable enough to be nominated. She mentioned that it may be

beneficial to do more to educate businesses ahead of time and ask what they're doing in terms of sustainability in advance of the nomination process. She continued to say that it was challenging to identify other sustainable businesses without knowing more about their operations, and that it would be helpful to talk to businesses throughout the year.

- Jung proposed that they talk to the Tempe Chamber to identify possible candidates in the future.

Swisher noted that he felt limited in his connection with Tempe businesses and that he wonders if there is a way better communicate the value of the Neighborhood Award, which could spur a greater number of self-nominations. He agreed that it is difficult for outsiders to know what businesses are doing in terms of sustainability practices.

Swanson agreed with Swisher, noting that a greater number of self-nominations could diversify the pool and provide more nominees to choose from. He asked if the applications are open to the public and, if not, if that might be a way of attracting perspectives on sustainability that differ from the perspectives and spaces within the field that the SRC represent.

- Jung responded that the nominations have always been public, but that there is limited public awareness about the awards and the benefits of winning them.

Winburn noted that she got mixed reactions from individuals and groups when she approached them about nominating them. She shared that it would have been beneficial to have better talking points about the award and its benefits when she approached people about nominating them.

Brundiers proposed an alternative scoring system for the award to reflect a focus on collaboration and the pairing of efforts within distinct areas of sustainability. Katja suggests the following:

- First, sustainability is a collective action movement where success manifests in the moving of the field. A leader without a second person to follow and more people to support the cause is not a leader, but a lonely fighter. This approach is sometimes called “collective impact approach” – various organizations share the same cause, and ultimate goal, as well as a senior agenda while they work towards that goal at their own pace and with their unique capacities.
- Second, if we award an individual person, we follow a scarcity-mindset, which fosters competition not cooperation. Appreciation and gratitude for service are common goods that are abundant and regenerative.
- Third, by recognizing a group of people who work towards the same cause, we can foster inter-generational collaboration (lighter and darker colors).

- Fourth, by recognizing a group of people who work towards the same cause, we can foster their actual connection and collaboration – e.g., towards a local economy (blue colors) or a circular economy (orange colors) or lifelong learning for sustainable development.

Commissioners discuss the opportunity to change the scoring criteria and Fisher states that it could be done but that it was not communicated that way during the application process. The Commission decides to move forward with the current scoring materials and take up this conversation for the next cycle.

### **Agenda Item 6- FY23/24 Budget Updates**

Fisher presented the updated budget supplemental proposals for the next fiscal year, which have been amended based on feedback from the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer announced that the City will have a conservative budget due to concerns about the economy. This year, the process for reviewing proposals has changed, and the office is still waiting to hear back from upper management about what needs to be rescoped. This is not the last time that the supplementals will be shown to the commission, and the office will continue to provide updates as staff learn more about the new review process.

Below are the draft supplemental proposals, listed in terms of priority:

- Extreme Heat Mitigation and Resilient Neighborhood Roadmap
  - To advance work with FMR around EnVision and community resilience.
  - To fund education, outreach, and program development for resilience hubs and resilient energy hubs.
  - To develop a Resilience Hub Master Plan.
- Shade and Indigenous Land Stewardship
  - To support adding shade and Indigenous land stewardship to the Resilient Tempe Master Plan.
  - To increase water-efficient vegetation and expand shade by consulting with indigenous landscape design and ecology experts.
- Energy Equity Program Development
  - To advance outreach work around energy burden and energy equity.
  - To hire energy policy consulting.
  - To pilot residential energy equity project.
- Mobile Water Distribution
  - To provide resources to the Special Events Team and Human Services Team.
  - Acknowledges and puts visual message that we care about water conservation and access to water.
- Food Access and Food Justice

- To support food access pilot projects, relating to hunger relief, backyard production, and food entrepreneurship.

Fisher noted that the Youth Climate Action Coordinator supplemental was removed, as the initial ask was based on a budget error.

Swisher noted that some of the headline budgets do not match the totals for each section (e.g., the Shade and Land Stewardship).

Questions:

- Jung asked if staff have a sense of which budget items are likely to be funded/
  - Fisher: No, that is part of the process we're waiting to hear back about. Because the process is different, we're still waiting to hear from upper management about which items might need to be resized or rescope.
- Swisher asked if there is anything that the office is not asking for that should be added to the list.
  - Fisher: We feel that the budget request adequately aligns with our office's priorities and workstreams, as well as the areas that will need funding moving forward. We aim to emphasize collaborative requests with other departments, as we're trying to be mindful of a potential economic downturn and the resulting resident needs.
- Jung asked how the SRC can support the office throughout the next stage of the budgetary process.
  - Fisher: Similar to the commission's advocacy efforts around the CAP Update and resulting programmatic/staffing asks, the commission could provide support during the budgetary process by submitting public comments to support both the supplemental budget and CIP budget requests.
  - Fisher continued to discuss the upcoming Council meeting for the 5-year CIP budget, describing the acceleration process for specific Performance Measures (like tree canopy coverage). Fisher stated that the staff can develop resources to help prep the commission for these advocacy opportunities at the next SRC meeting.

### **Agenda Item 7 – Housekeeping Items**

Jung announced that the celebration event for Neighborhood Award winners will take place on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Sustainability Award winners will be recognized at the event, and Jung encouraged the commission to attend the event to meet the awardees.

Jung mentioned that the commission is continuing its efforts to track the progress of four of the CAP Update's highlight actions, which the commission has selected to track through to completion. Jung explained that this process uses Fisher's project management tracking



sheet, and that he will continue to meet 1:1 with commissioners to show them how to populate the document.

- Swisher shared an update on the GSI Architecture Design Competition highlight action. He shared that a coalition of professional organizations has been developed to support the competition through the provision of sponsorship dollars and their membership on the competition planning committee. The planning committee is on-track to announce the competition in April 2023 and begin accepting applications in May 2023.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items**

Jung asked the commission to add future agenda items. None did.

**Motion:** Shawn Swisher

**Second:** Morgan Winburn

**Decision:** Approved 8-0

### **Voted to Approve:**

Kendon Jung  
Barbie Burke  
Morgan Winburn  
Natalie Mendoza  
Shawn Swisher  
Katja Brundiers  
Jake Swanson  
Barbie Burke

### **Absent:**

Erin Boyd  
Meaghan Coon

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Prepared by: Maddie Mercer

Reviewed by: Brianne Fisher

### **Addendum:**

Chat record for Sustainability and Resilience Commission February 27, 2023, meeting:

[2/27 4:32 PM] Katja Brundiers

Apologies, I also need to leave today at 6pm. Thank you for your understanding.

[2/27 4:32 PM]

Taylor Conley (she/her) (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

[2/27 4:34 PM] Kendon Jung

<https://music.apple.com/us/playlist/lying-in-the-sun/pl.48ec9106303e40f790a75d416ccf36e0>

Lying in the Sun Playlist · 108 Songs

[2/27 4:41 PM]

Morgan, with LEHR (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

[2/27 4:44 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Thanks for joining Taylor, let us know if you have any questions.

[2/27 4:45 PM] Brumfield, Evelyn

Hello Taylor!

[2/27 4:50 PM] Fisher, Brianne

my bad on moving the slide forward!

[2/27 4:54 PM] Shawn Swisher

Is there a process by which the SRC can review the GSI pilot projects and provide feedback?

[2/27 4:56 PM] Katja Brundiers

Here is a heat vulnerability map, that is open to the public and can help identify where to invest strategically for equitable urban cooling: <https://hue.dtn.asu.edu/>

HUE; Web site created using create-react-app

[2/27 4:56 PM] Katja Brundiers

I can share some use-case videos later as well.

[2/27 5:04 PM] Kay, Braden

We are already seeing an opportunity for O and M in the schools projects we are doing. Richard Adkins and his team will be training school district staff in tree and shrub care.

[2/27 5:11 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Passed by Council was the creation of the "stormwater fee"

[2/27 5:11 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Covering unfunded mandates (additional regulations for MS4)

[2/27 5:17 PM] Katja Brundiers

Great comment, Shawn. This reminds me of the method of "Plan Integration" which we piloted for "heat vulnerability" earlier this year. Something to keep in mind especially as Braden was mentioning the translation into city ordinances.

[2/27 5:17 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

There was the mention of engaging with Indigenous land practices, I was curious about the operationalizing of that. Are we communicating with local Indigenous land experts, communicating with communities or using methods that have been documented prior?

[2/27 5:18 PM] Katja Brundiers

One quick question - what were the objections that people brought forth with regards to changing the pipe as shown in the picture?

[2/27 5:21 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Katja - none specifically. Braden is just speaking of the types of concerns we will likely hear. Standing water and the concern of mosquitos for example. We have also heard some concerns with GSI projects and having too steep of a bioswell and residents falling in.

[2/27 5:23 PM] Morgan, with LEHR (Guest)

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One of the reasons Tucson was successful is because the community really pushed for it. I know several Residents that would love to be able to do this to their yards and be advocates for the program 😊

[2/27 5:24 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Thats great Morgan, we would love to know the names. If you want to email them to me and Maddie that would be awesome.

[2/27 5:24 PM] Mercer, Madeline

Yes Morgan, that would be great! My email is madeline\_mercer@tempe.gov.

[2/27 5:24 PM] Katja Brundiers

Thank you, very helpful Braden! We can maybe show some of the NOAA graphics to understand the increasing number of hot days...

[2/27 5:26 PM] Kay, Braden

We need to build the heat argument for sure.

[2/27 5:27 PM] Kay, Braden

Thanks, everyone!

[2/27 5:27 PM] Katja Brundiers

Thank you Maddy and Braden!

[2/27 5:33 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

All good to go.

[2/27 5:33 PM] Morgan, with LEHR (Guest)

Done

[2/27 5:37 PM] Kendon Jung

Natalie - we are reviewing the Nominations for the Award

[2/27 5:37 PM] Kendon Jung

Please send yours in to Brianne via Email

[2/27 5:37 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Sounds good. I can personally speak to Keep Tempe Beautiful as a very sustainable group.

[2/27 5:38 PM] Kendon Jung

Barbie wants to start recruiting earlier. Connect with groups like Tempe Chamber to recruit

[2/27 5:39 PM] Kendon Jung

Shawn mentioned feeling like not the most connected person. In addition, wants to expand or reshape the value proposition for submitting.

[2/27 5:40 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Kendon: I was planning to nominate Keep Tempe Beautiful (but I see that it has already been nominated). I hadn't had a chance to send my nomination in yet, but I can revise it for a different organization. Next best one I could think of would be ASU---would they fit into the group category?

[2/27 5:42 PM] Barbie Burke (Guest)

Great points Jake!

[2/27 5:42 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

Thank you, my apologies there. That was a difficulty in my comprehension!

[2/27 5:43 PM] Kendon Jung

Jake said he agrees with a lot of what Shawn said. And, if the nominations are coming from the Sustainability Commission, that is a small pool.

[2/27 5:44 PM] Kendon Jung

Morgan: got mixed reactions from individuals and not wanting to be nominated. Looking for a talking point about the award when recruiting.

[2/27 5:46 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Kendon: Or do you mean that you want me to send my nomination recommendations to Brianne? I may have read your initial message in the chat wrong.

[2/27 5:49 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

Great perspective, Shawn. Thanks for that.

[2/27 5:50 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

No---but I will add that Keep Tempe Beautiful is an excellent group to be receiving this award.

[2/27 5:52 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I did not vote yet, but I would support Mauricio over Shalae if we need to have a tie breaker.

[2/27 5:56 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I may have missed an update on this since I wasn't here in the beginning, but wasn't there supposed to be the resilient Tempe master plan and feasibility study starting at 5:25 PM?

[2/27 6:01 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I support that change in grouping.

[2/27 6:05 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Collective action

[2/27 6:05 PM] Fisher, Brianne

inter generational

[2/27 6:05 PM] Fisher, Brianne

local economy

[2/27 6:05 PM] Fisher, Brianne

circular economy

[2/27 6:05 PM]

Taylor Conley (she/her) (Guest) left the chat.

[2/27 6:06 PM] Katja Brundiers

I have to leave unfortunately.

[2/27 6:06 PM] Katja Brundiers

I would like to maybe vote again by the end of this week, since Natalie could also not vote?

[2/27 6:08 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I'm not sure whether or not my microphone is working, so I would like to express my vote in favor of this motion.

[2/27 6:10 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I don't know if you saw my comment earlier, but I would like to vote for Mauricio as a tie breaker vote.

[2/27 6:10 PM] Katja Brundiers

I have to go. I would like to vote on this again. Thanks.

[2/27 6:11 PM] Fisher, Brianne

There is no concern in providing both nominees an award

[2/27 6:11 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

That works as well.

[2/27 6:11 PM] Morgan, with LEHR (Guest)

no concerns

[2/27 6:18 PM] Kay, Braden

and state farm for school greening!

[2/27 6:20 PM] Kendon Jung

<https://sites.google.com/view/tempecap/>

Climate Action: When people speak up, Tempe listens. Submit a public comment to support climate action.

[2/27 6:24 PM] Kay, Braden

It's likely the most important speaking opportunity

[2/27 6:25 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

Will be there, stellar event last year!

[2/27 6:25 PM] Morgan, with LEHR (Guest)

what time?

[2/27 6:28 PM]

Barbie Burke (Guest) left the chat.

[2/27 6:30 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Morgan I believe 8am but when there is a flyer I will circulate it!

[2/27 6:31 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Yes, thank you everyone. I apologize for my late arrival (I have since synced my personal calendar with my the calendar for my commission meetings)

[2/27 6:31 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Again, aye.

[2/27 6:31 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Please note that I recorded my votes in the chat for the two votes

[2/27 6:31 PM] Shawn Swisher

thank you all!

[2/27 6:31 PM] Mercer, Madeline

Thanks, all!