

Tempe Community Center Campus Master Plan

Tempe Forum survey posted 5/3 – 5/17 for citywide input

Introduction:

Community input shared over two previous Tempe Forum surveys has been instrumental in shaping the development of the Community Center Campus Master Plan. We are excited to share with you the vision and recommendations arrived at through this master planning effort and welcome your feedback on the outcome. At the end of the comment period, the provided remarks will be compiled with previous comments and included in the appendix of the Master Plan report.

The Community Center Campus is an important cultural hub where a variety of amenities and services are available to Tempe residents in a central location, easily accessible by public transportation. The campus is home to Tempe Public Library, Tempe History Museum, Edna Vihel Arts Center and Pyle Adult Recreation Center and is a primary location for the Community Services and Human Services departments which currently share space within three of the four campus facilities. A major goal of this study is to locate an ideal location for a new Human Services facility on campus as recommended by a previous City of Tempe facilities master planning study. This will enable the Human Services department to consolidate its functions and provide better service to the public, while freeing up space that the department currently occupies within the Library, Edna Arts and Pyle Centers. To learn more about Human Services please visit the [department website](#). Additional goals of the Master Plan include enhancing visibility and security, improving pedestrian experience, optimizing use and functionality of plazas and campus buildings, and recommending sustainable environmental improvements.

This survey will be the final opportunity to share your feedback on the Community Center Campus Master Plan, however this Master Plan is only the first step in a long-term endeavor. The public will have multiple opportunities to provide additional input as phases of the Master Plan begin to be implemented in years to come. At this stage, the primary objective is to establish the general scope of future improvements and propose a phased approach towards accomplishing the Master Plan vision. Please keep in mind that the solutions and imagery shown in the attached exhibits are conceptual in nature and future improvements may deviate from these preliminary renderings depending on direction taken by future campus improvement projects.

Open Ended Survey Question:

1. Please share any comments or suggestions you have related to the Tempe Community Center Campus Master Plan.

1. All in all I think it's a good plan but far too much real estate dedicated to cars. Also, please think about incorporating affordable housing on the air rights above the buildings, particularly for seniors and supportive housing for the chronically homeless. This use has been done in many cities across the nation and can work here as well.
2. As a homeowner on E. La Jolla Drive I have concerns to express about the Tempe Community Complex Master Plan. Although expressed during the virtual meeting on May 3 that this option would be more expensive, I support Option 3 for the following reasons: I believe the Human Services building location would be better served on Southern instead of Rural because the aesthetics and purpose of such a building would be complimentary to the commercial enterprises on the north side of southern Avenue. Aside from building placement, I feel the issue of TRAFFIC should be addressed aggressively within the Master Plan. Foot traffic (i.e., Jaywalkers) on Southern Avenue between Rural Road and McCallister Road has always been a serious problem since I have moved here in 2003. I can't count the number of times I have almost hit a Jaywalking pedestrian in the area I have dubbed "The Gauntlet". Due to the

commercial buildings that produce vehicles entering and exiting the parking lots on the north side of Southern Avenue, and the fact that it is a major public transit intersection that attracts pedestrians; a new traffic light system on Southern that would address both public safety issues of heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic would be much more suited than a traffic light on Rural and Laguna Drive. Cut through vehicular traffic (with many vehicles far exceeding the posted neighborhood speed limit) avoiding the traffic light at Southern Avenue and Rural Road has always been an issue since I have lived on E La Jolla Drive. Although some mitigation efforts have been enacted in the past (No turn signs during rush hour at La Jolla Drive and Rural Road, Speed Bumps installed on E La Jolla Drive) the effectiveness of these mitigation efforts have been questionable. If Option 1 were to be allowed to continue this would exacerbate the current situation. If Option 1 were enacted, I would much rather see the "Speed Bumps" replaced with "Speed Tables" on McAllister Road and E. La Jolla Drive (similar to the ones constructed on Hardy Drive between University and 13th Street)

3. Concept is good - like shade over plaza and other areas. Moving roadway to perimeter makes for a better pedestrian experience. Kids areas in sunken library areas will encourage folks to actually use these spaces. Timely to do replanting - many trees have reached the ends of their live spans
4. Consider adding a small area for seniors to exercise. AARP has grants for public parks. <https://blog.aarp.org/aarp-media-relations/aarp-donating-fitness-parks-for-all-ages>
5. Don't want to loose the ability to keep having the "Loud" outdoor concert associated with the Tempe Museum's concert series. Current amphitheater is not used for this (or anything that I have seen), but there should be tiered seating like in an amphitheater to make Loud more enjoyable. Agree that there should be more shade, but I disagree with it being vegetation given the current and approaching more severe water shortage. It should be man made with solar panels incorporated into the design. Maybe even cover whole campus with solar panels as shade. The vegetation that is there should be native, low water use. Solar powered electric car charging parking spaces. Please keep voting in mind when designing pedestrian flows, voting booth placement, shade, and water fountains. Tempe is known as a politically active part of the Valley. in that spirit I think we should keep the petitioners and voter registration tables close to the library entrance, but with a more comfortable environment (shade) for petitioners and signers. Like the main road being at edge of property.
6. E Laguna Dr -- located just east of the complex -- is a private street within an HOA. Due to the post-construction net loss of parking spaces at the complex, if that street experiences excessive street parking by patrons and staff of the new community services building, the city should stand prepared to help the HOA enforce parking restrictions. In addition, there is a Rural Road northbound bus stop at E Laguna Dr. A stoplight or other form of mechanized crossing control to ensure the safety of pedestrians must be installed before or during construction.
7. I am also a homeowner in the Tempe Royal Palms Unit 5 neighborhood that would border the proposed Human Services facility. And I am in agreement with many of the concerns expressed by my friends and neighbors. Danielle Plaza would be a much better site for the Human Services facility. City of Tempe staff and Council is well aware that Danielle Plaza is in desperate need of revitalization. So why not kill two birds with one stone and start with a new public service facility? There is good accessibility and there would be little disruption to any neighborhood as compared to the Tempe Royal Palms neighborhood. I also agree that a new Human Services building would better serve the Tempe community by locating it in Downtown Tempe, which is also the location of the Tempe Transportation Center, i.e. Tempe's transportation hub. Downtown Tempe has multiple light rail stops, multiple bus services, all of the Orbit routes, and soon the Tempe Streetcar. Why not locate Human Services in the area of the City

Hall/Municipal Complex, where it can better serve those that may need the most services and located with the most access to public transportation options? Tempe Royal Palms Unit 5 neighborhood cut-through traffic has been a long-term issue for our neighborhood. Southbound streets off of E Southern Ave between S College Ave and S McAllister Ave leading to E La Jolla Drive are used to bypass the intersection of Rural and Southern by drivers. It's bad enough now, on E La Jolla Dr from S College Ave to S Rural Rd, with the speeding drivers and speeding buses (Orbit Jupiter) through our neighborhood. Speed bumps do not help. Speeding vehicles cruise right over them or cut around on the sidewalks. Imagine a bus speeding through a neighborhood street. It's like 5-10 cars coming at you at once. How fast can that vehicle stop? The addition of a new traffic signal on S Rural Rd at E Laguna Dr is an awful idea and WILL exacerbate an already congested area and add further cut-through traffic, as drivers will want to avoid stopping at yet another signal. We appreciate and support the goals of the plan, but strongly believe there are much better options in Tempe. We encourage Tempe staff to be creative and investigate alternative solutions that would have fewer negative impacts on neighborhoods.

8. I am very much in favor of the changes. It will provide a "one-stop shop" for the Human Services Department and make the campus more welcoming and sustainable.
9. I believe that a new Human Services building would better serve the Tempe community by locating it in Downtown Tempe, which is also the location of the Tempe Transportation Center, i.e. Tempe's transportation hub. Downtown Tempe has multiple light rail stops, multiple bus services, all of the Orbit routes, and soon the Tempe Streetcar. Why not locate Human Services in the area of the City Hall/Municipal Complex, where it can better serve those that may need the most services and located with the most access to public transportation options? As a homeowner in the Tempe Royal Palms Unit 5 neighborhood, I have the following concerns.
 1. Cut-through traffic has been a long-term issue for our neighborhood. E La Jolla Drive and S McAllister Ave are used to bypass the traffic signal at Rural and Southern by drivers heading northbound during the a.m. peak and eastbound/southbound during the p.m. peak.
 2. It's bad enough now, on E La Jolla Dr between S College Ave to S Rural Rd, with the speeding drivers and speeding buses (Orbit Jupiter) through our neighborhood. Speed bumps do not help. Speeding vehicles fly right over them or cut up on the sidewalks. Imagine a bus speeding through a neighborhood street. It's like 5-10 cars coming at you at once. How fast can that stop?
 3. According to the City of Tempe Traffic Count Studies from 2018 (the last published studies found), the Rural/Southern intersection is the busiest intersection in the city. Based on those studies, Rural Road north/south traffic count was 43,716 cars in a single day, while Southern east/west count was 38,719 cars. (The only higher traffic counts were Baseline at I-10 and Elliot at I-10. Both of these areas are extremely congested during rush hour and aren't adjacent to residential neighborhoods.)
 4. In non-pandemic times, p.m. peak traffic on southbound Rural Road is commonly backed up between Alameda Drive and the US 60. Northbound traffic is similarly congested during the a.m. peak period.
 5. Similarly, eastbound traffic on Southern Avenue frequently backs up as far as College Avenue during the p.m. peak
 6. Traffic congestion on the arterial streets makes it attractive for commuters to cut through the neighborhood, which in turn makes it more difficult for those who live here to get in and out of our neighborhood.
 7. The addition of a new traffic signal on Rural at Laguna could potentially exacerbate an already

congested area and add further cut-through traffic, as drivers will want to avoid the possibility of stopping at yet another signal.

We appreciate and support the goals of the plan, but we think there are better options in Tempe. We encourage you to be creative and investigate alternative solutions that would have fewer negative impacts on neighborhoods.

Thank you.

10. I believe the proposed changes (Option 1) look like a win for our city and its residents. Thank you for the thoughtful, cost-mindful, and well-planned proposal.
11. I just wonder why the new Human Services facility is scheduled in the year 2025. It seems to be a critical project to serve under served communities and bring the standard of living as whole for all the Tempe residents. Please consider moving this project to the earlier fiscal year.
12. I know several of us, myself included, opposed the location of the current, planned Human Resources Building it is like to cause traffic congestion in a residential area. But it was stated that no one opposed the proposed location. This of course leads to a lack of trust in City Administrators to tell the truth. The City Planner was very dismissive of comments that he did not consider relevant. They have not done a traffic study suggesting that it was not needed at this time. They have not taken into account the number of parking spaces that are going to be lost with the new building, and how many new employees will likely work and park in the Tempe Community Center. Overflow traffic would as a consequence, be shunted into the local neighborhood streets. Turning left or right onto Rural Road from neighborhood street could be greatly impacted. A good plan would have addressed these elements, and could have put to rest the concerns that many of us have, but these were simply dismissed as not important at this time. I disagree.
13. I live in walking distance to the area your addressing, while project sounds appealing the issue I'm concerned about is possible over population of even more panhandlers. Honestly, I haven't been to the library in years and when I asked 4 neighbors they admitted they hadn't. By the time you get hassled at the bus stop on Rural and Southern, you're ready to come home.
14. I love the out door reading spaces. The more trees and natural shade, the better. On the placement of the Human Services campus versus the Pyle Center, I believe the departments need to decide. If keeping the Human Services Campus more removed from the rest of the activities, then option 1 is best. If integrating those using the Human Services Campus with other amenities and activities on the Tempe Community Center Campus, than option 2 would be better.
15. I love this Master Plan. The library campus is in serious need of renovations. Adding a traffic light to Laguna Drive is SO needed - it is impossible to turn left onto Rural Road and difficult at times to even turn right. Adding a new Human Services building and renovating the other structures will make this area the hub for services and activities that the city needs.
16. I prefer not to have these services in our neighborhood. If you must locate these services to our neighborhood, put them on Southern Avenue across from the Walmart.
17. I really appreciate the community and cultural opportunities around the library and am excited to see that area improved and expanded.
18. I support the goals of the Community Center Master Plan. I'm proud and grateful to live in a city that takes care of PEOPLE. However, I don't think this is the best location for adding a new building and new services that will increase traffic to the complex (more employees, more customers), resulting in increased traffic and congestion on the surrounding arterial streets and ultimately more traffic cutting through our neighborhood (Superstition Neighborhood Association). Cut-through traffic has steadily increased over the years, negatively impacting our

quality of life as it is. I strongly encourage the City to look at alternative locations for adding more facilities and services. Danelle Plaza, for example, has abundant unused space and is located further from residential neighborhoods. IF the proposed expansion is to take place at the Community Center Campus, please work with the neighborhood to take a comprehensive look at neighborhood traffic calming and strategies to address both current and future cut-through traffic and speeding. (Actually, we would like to see this happen regardless of where the new building is located.)

19. I think anything titled 'Master Plan' sounds both suspicious and nefarious, and I'm glad to be moving out of this sordid little hole. I hope you're summarily defunded and dragged through the coals of public opinion as you so righteously deserve.
20. I think you should build a new Human Services Building on the south of the campus. It looks like a lot of areas will be put to much better use with these plans. We need all the shade we can get. Play areas make sense. Take kids to the library and the Vihel Center, and let them play outside, too. I am concerned about moving the library drop off area farther from the library entrance. Elderly people and moms with multiple little kids use the library. They need access with minimal walking. So close parking and drop off areas are important.
21. I wish I had seen Option 2 when it was proposed in the fall. I think that option would have been best because I believe there would have been advantages/synergies to having the Human Services building attached to the Pyle Center. Also, how much does the City want to allow or promote walk-in services, including for the homeless. Are there Human Services satellite centers, along the lines of the "store-in-store" concept? The landscaping options look good. Does the budget contain funds for the extensive upkeep and trimming that will be necessary?
22. It looks like a lovely plan; it shows hard work. Please don't scrimp on the landscaping. Include lots of SHADE trees, not just sparse desert trees. Don't forget that we need to keep this landscaping up. Please don't neglect it.
23. Living in the neighborhood that will border the planned Human Services building, I am in complete agreement that the new building should not be built on the library campus. Danelle Plaza is a much better alternative no matter if it is more expensive, accessibility will be better off of Southern and there would be no disruption to any neighborhood as there would be to the Superstition neighborhood. Sometimes the cheapest alternative is not the best.
24. Move the location of the Center to the southwest corner of Mill and Southern, which has been a "no man's land" and eyesore of Tempe for 40 years.
25. Plan 1 looks great. I would love children to be able to use the sunken garden areas. If remodel of Pyle included windows, that would be wonderful. The more shaded outside areas the better! Human Services out of library = room to expand the library!
26. Please be sure to use decomposed granite in parking spaces along perimeter, to support tree growth and cool the environment. Trees and landscape infrastructure are a priority that has been delayed for too long.
27. Please make it a priority to enable the north door on the library to be kept open during normal hours. It's a shame it hasn't been done in the recent past. It would make access to the plaza between buildings from the library much easier.
28. Since over the past three days I've had four neighbors come to me with this notice concerned that this Community Center is going to make our already serious transient situation even worse. I would like to know more. As it is now, I certainly wouldn't feel comfortable to walk in the area of rural and southern right now. And the last Thing we need is more people Aggressively panhandling.

29. Some of the nearby residents seem to be concerned about the increased traffic. I listened to the Council Workshop in which this project was presented. Some Council members are suggesting constructing affordable housing in this campus. Can you imagine increased traffic when new residents live in this campus? Currently most Human Services staff appear to be already in this campus. Constructing the new Human Services office in this campus must be a lot less impact on traffic compared to building new affordable housing in this campus.
30. The Community Center is a tremendous resource, and has wonderful staffing. Most of the people utilizing it are very appreciative. Please keep it interesting and vibrant. Thank you.
31. The proposed improvements seem to indicate removing all of the parking shade structures with no intent for re-use. Wasn't there a recent investment in adding solar to them? How will parking in the desert sun be an improvement?
32. The proposed Main Access Drive will cause more traffic and noise to the neighbors who bought those houses to be away from more traffic and noise. This will also lead to a traffic light at Laguna and Rural and we don't need more traffic lights. It will also lead to more traffic on La Jolla Dr at Rural. Option 1 got the lowest rating and option 3 got the highest rating from the online survey.
33. The proposed plan #1 is fantastic. The idea of improving the public spaces with shade and entertainment geared to a desert environment is brilliant. Furthermore, the new building for Human/Social services being generated with the least amount of disruption to all the existing structures is smart. Lastly, by creating a better rainwater capture and irrigation systems will display the beauty of outdoor spaces combined with drought tolerant foliage.
34. We support the idea of Human Services building to benefit the residents and City staff. What we do not support in the location, Southern and Rural is one of the busiest intersections in Tempe, why add more staff, traffic and another building to that location and lose parking spots. What about more creative ideas, like using Southern and Mill for expansion? This is not the way to improve quality of life for adjoining neighborhoods, this is a damaging short-sighted solution/suggestion and a traffic nightmare. Let's be more creative and protect our neighborhoods.
35. We support the idea of Human Services building to benefit the residents and City staff. What we do not support is the location, Southern and Rural is one of the busiest intersections in Tempe, why add more staff, traffic and another building to that location and lose parking spots? What about more creative ideas, like using Southern and Mill for expansion. This is not the way to improve quality of life for adjoining neighborhoods, this is a damaging short-sighted solution/suggestion and a traffic nightmare. Let's be more creative and protect our neighborhoods.
36. Where there is a need for aligning human services, but the plan with the stop light and the added cut through traffic has not been addressed off of Rural, this hasn't been a priority to protecting the impacted neighborhood. How are we able to support something of this financial significance, when the adjoining neighborhoods have not been a part of the solution but you will make our traffic problem even worse. We need Council support on traffic calming not adding to the problem
37. While I am uncertain about all of the plans shown for the canyon areas for children I am accepting of the proposed building plans. I am pleased with the traffic change to the exterior of the site and with a new building built specifically for Social Services and its location on Rural as I feel it will provide clients the most privacy in seeking services. I reviewed all 3 initial plans and spent a great deal of time considering which plan would serve our community the best.

38. While I think it best not to locate the proposed Human Services building within the complex at all, if it must be placed within the complex I prefer Option 1 over the others which place it along Southern Avenue. I agree with Gregg Kent's rationale (which he explained in the 3 May WebEx meeting) for why the Rural Road location was chosen over the others; however, I would like to know why locating the Human Services building outside this complex was not considered. I applaud the upgrades in landscaping and facility improvements, but I do object to the perimeter access road proposed under Option 1. Not enough rationale to moving this road from it's current location - living along the alley adjacent to the complex, I fear for the increase in traffic noise / congestion a perimeter road would create.
39. Would like to see closer public parking to the library. Would like to see more practical/ close parking than pretty artsy fartsy paving and landscaping. If you don't have to walk far, you don't need to do much in that area. Option 1 location for human services building is best. Could they get a real shaded and large bus stop please? (Something that would block the rain.)

May 17, 2021

Hello Mayor & Council Members,

The Superstition Neighborhood Association is directly adjacent to the Community Center Campus and includes a diverse mix of residents, including original owners and older residents who wish to age in place, intergenerational families caring for elderly parents, mid-career professionals and, increasingly, new families with young children. More and more homeowners are improving and investing in their properties, while the neighborhood remains relatively affordable compared to much of Tempe, making it attractive to a wide range of people.

Many SNA residents enjoy the services and amenities the city offers at the complex and consider it to be an integral part of our neighborhood. We appreciate and support the plans for enhanced landscaping and increased foliage. While we support the *goals* of the Tempe Community Center Campus Master Plan, many neighbors have strong concerns about negative impacts to our neighborhood.

Our main concern is increased traffic and the associated negative impacts to our neighborhood. Adding new/more services at the Community Center Campus will undoubtedly increase traffic and congestion in the area, as well as traffic cutting through our neighborhood. Additionally, the proposed perimeter road on the campus would result in residents on McAllister and on La Jolla having considerable traffic, including the Orbit Jupiter buses which are quite loud, adjacent to both the front and back sides of our homes.

We encourage the City to look at alternative locations for adding more facilities and services (e.g., Danelle Plaza, which has ample unused space and is further from residential neighborhoods).

We request that the city work with us to take a comprehensive look at neighborhood traffic calming and strategies to address both current and future cut-through traffic and speeding.

Background

- Cut-through traffic has been a long-term issue for our neighborhood. La Jolla Drive and McAllister are used to bypass the traffic signal at Rural and Southern by drivers heading northbound during the a.m. peak and eastbound/southbound during the p.m. peak.
- According to the City of Tempe Traffic Count Studies from 2018 (the last published studies found), the Rural/Southern intersection is the busiest intersection in the city. Based on those studies, Rural Road north/south traffic count was 43,716 cars in a single day, while Southern east/west count was 38,719 cars. (The only higher traffic counts were Baseline at I-10 and Elliot at I-10. Both of these areas are extremely congested during rush hour and aren't adjacent to residential neighborhoods.)
- In non-pandemic times, p.m. peak traffic on southbound Rural Road is commonly backed up between Alameda Drive and the US 60. Northbound traffic is similarly congested during the a.m. peak period.
- Similarly, eastbound traffic on Southern Avenue frequently backs up as far as College Avenue during the p.m. peak

- Traffic congestion on the arterial streets makes it attractive for commuters to cut through the neighborhood, which in turn makes it more difficult for those who live here to get in and out of our neighborhood.
- The addition of a new traffic signal on Rural at Laguna could potentially exacerbate an already congested area and add further cut-through traffic, as drivers will want to avoid the possibility of stopping at yet another signal.

Again, we appreciate and support the goals of the plan, but we think there may be better options. We encourage you to be creative and investigate alternative solutions that would have fewer negative impacts on neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

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