

City of South Tucson



El Paso and Southwestern Greenway Project

May 2011



The Drachman Institute

College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA · TUCSON, ARIZONA



The Drachman Institute is the research-based outreach arm of the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (CALA) at The University of Arizona dedicated to environmentally-sensitive and resource-conscious planning and design with a focus on underserved and vulnerable communities. We engage students, staff, faculty, and citizens as an interdisciplinary collaborative striving to make our communities healthier, safer, more equitable, and more beautiful places to live. We embrace a service-learning model of education serving the needs of communities while providing an outreach experience for students as a fundamental educational goal consistent with the mission of CALA and The University of Arizona.

Drachman Institute
 Amy Wood, Project Coordinator
 Katie Gannon, Project Director
 Marilyn Robinson, Associate Director
 R. Brooks Jeffery, Director
 2011



Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) is a national initiative of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The goal of CPPW is to prevent or reduce the spread of obesity and related diseases by increasing opportunities for improved nutrition and active living, via policy, systems and environmental change.

Pima County was one of 44 communities nationwide that received funding for the CPPW grant. CPPW is being developed and administered by the Pima County Health Department, in partnership with Activate Tucson, a coalition advocating healthy eating & active living.

The Drachman Institute, serving as the Built Environment Team, is one of seven partner organizations. Other partners include:

- The YMCA of Tucson and Southern Arizona;
- The Community Food Bank;
- PRO Neighborhoods;
- The United Way of Tucson & Southern Arizona;
- The Carondelet Health Network;
- Drachman Institute (College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture);
- College of Public Health, and the Center for Physical Activity and Nutrition.

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El Paso and Southwestern Greenway Project in South Tucson

A Community Planning Process

MASTER PLAN

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The Drachman Institute
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Prepared for:
The City of South Tucson
Tucson, AZ

May 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Context

South Tucson is a city in Pima County, Arizona, United States and an enclave of the much larger city of Tucson. South Tucson is known for being heavily influenced by Hispanic, and especially Mexican, culture; restaurants and shops which sell traditional Mexican foods and other goods can be found throughout the city.

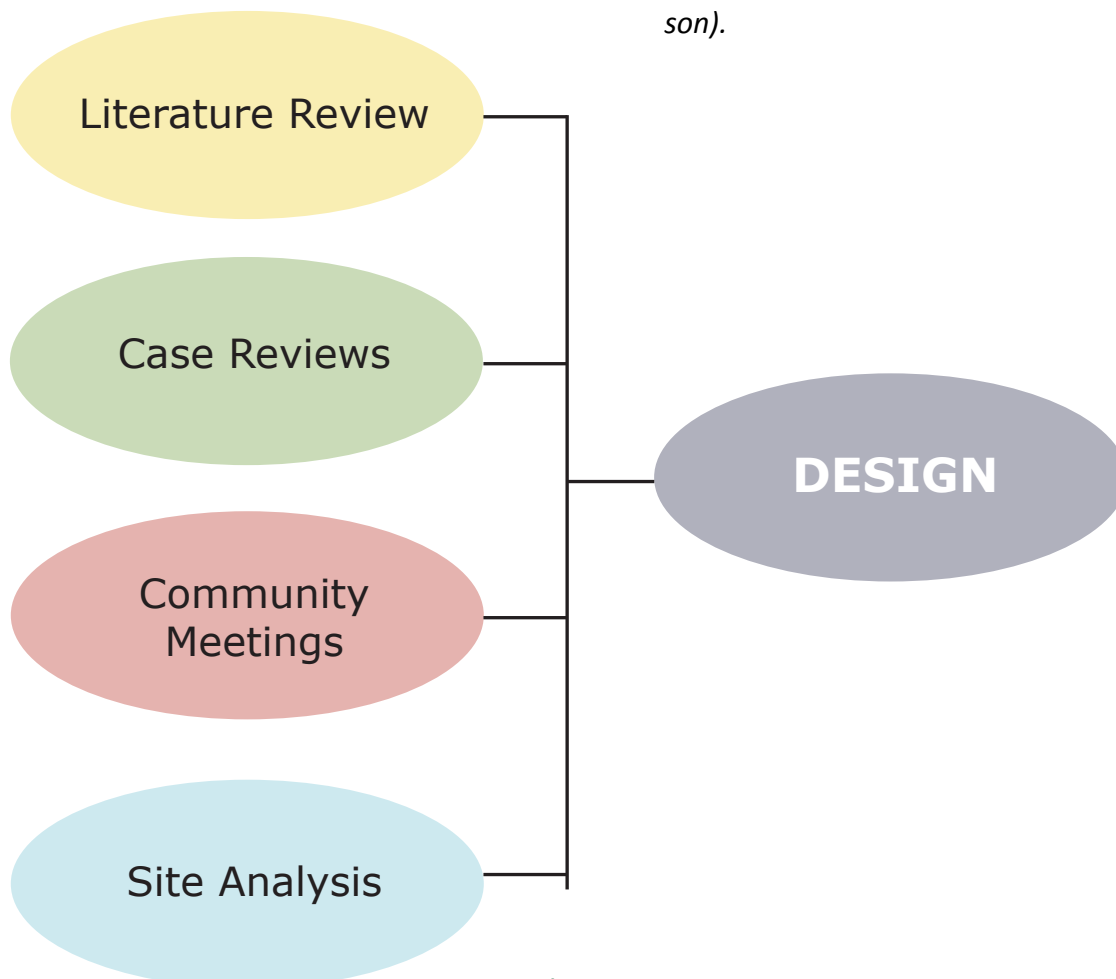
South Tucson was incorporated as a city in 1940 in an area south of the Tucson city limits. The city of Tucson now surrounds South Tucson because of later annexations.

South Tucson was incorporated as a city chiefly to take advantage of provisions in Arizona statutes of the time that permitted an incorporated city to have more alcohol licenses than comparable county areas and

to permit dog racing to be allowed within city limits if regulated by the city (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Tucson,_Arizona)

Today, South Tucson is a mile-square community just south of downtown Tucson and is completely surrounded by the City of Tucson. Of its population of about 5,500, 83% are Mexican-American and 10% are Native American. South Tucson's ethnic character is evident in its widely known Mexican restaurants and its architectural styles, including colorful outdoor murals celebrating its ethnic heritage.

Visitors from throughout the metropolitan area are attracted to South Tucson's annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade and to the Norteño Music Festival and Street Fair held in August (<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/sotucson>).



Project Description

The El Paso and Southwestern Greenway will be a 6-mile long multi-use path for bicyclists and pedestrians. The pathway will extend along a corridor that was once used by the railroad, from north of downtown Tucson, through the City of South Tucson to the Kino Sports Complex. The new path will be car-free and will connect to other regional bikeways and to many of the neighborhoods that the path travels through (<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/projects/elpaso>).





In 2005, a preliminary concept plan for the Greenway was developed by the Drachman Institute at the University of Arizona. This document will provide guidance for the master planning process that is currently underway. Some of the objectives of the plan are to promote connectivity and recreation; coordinate with other active projects to ensure compatibility; reflect local/regional identity and character; celebrate local history; and serve as a catalyst for positive development (<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/projects/elpaso>).

The Master Plan developed in this book is the section of greenway that crosses the City of South Tucson within its city limits.

A intense community outreach process is the guide for the creation of this section of the greenway. As described on the Community Outreach section of this book, it was of relevant importance the needs and interest from the community in South Tucson. Different age groups were approached and a summary of findings were collected for later on transfer them to design implications.

The Master Plan is divided in four pieces for scale purposes, followed by a series of sections that describe the differences on elevations, concluding with some perspectives to describe the details.

Goals and Objectives

-  Propose a series of multiuse trails to create opportunities for physical activities
-  Design pocket parks along the alignment to engage the community on social activities such as fairs, farmers' markets, and special events
-  Recommend a vegetation palette and design elements that emphasize human well-being and comfort
-  Suggest a phased master plan to enable extensions to the base design as additional funds become available

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Location

Located just south of downtown Tucson, the City of South Tucson is a one-square-mile community within metropolitan Tucson. The city proudly reflects the slogan:

“The Pueblo Within a City”

by retaining the cultural background, language and beliefs of its people (<http://www.southtucson.org>)

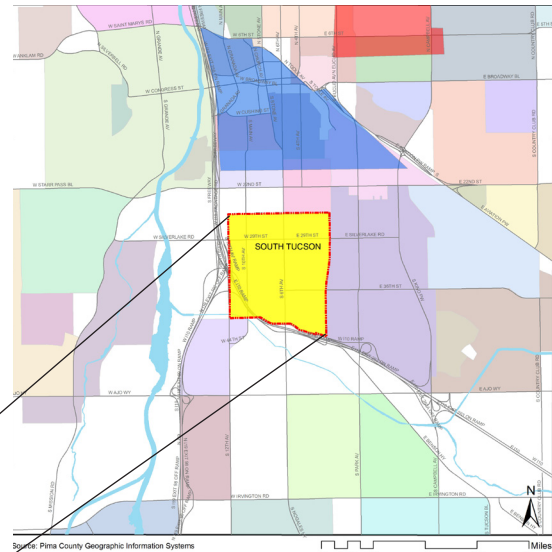
BOUNDARIES:

North - 25th Street

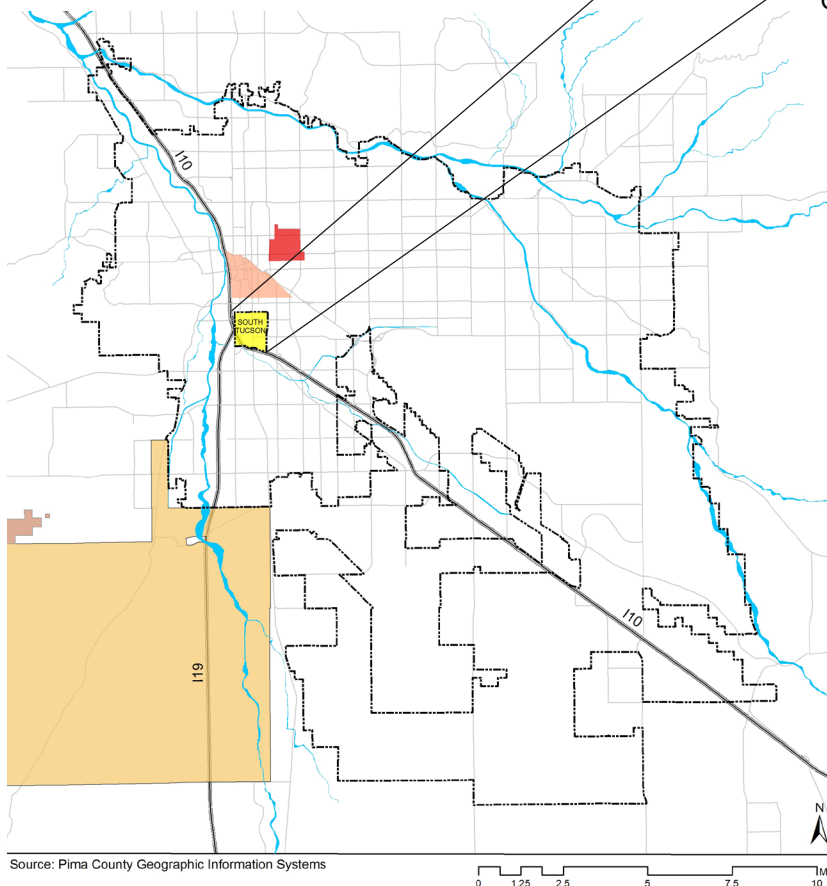
East - Union Pacific Railroad tracks

South - 40th Street and Benson Highway

West - 12th Avenue



City of South Tucson



City of Tucson, AZ

History

CITY OF SOUTH TUCSON TIMELINE



(SOUTH TUCSON new_highway_overpas.jpg)

The City of South Tucson

1936	1938	1940	1950's-60's
It was incorporated	It was disincorporated	South Tucson was incorporated to take advantage of provisions in Arizona statutes. To permit an incorporated city to have more alcohol licenses. To permit dog racing to be allowed within city limits if regulated by the city.	Speed Trap -speed limits and stop signs when traveling through South Tucson to and from California -South Tucson received only a very short length of I-10 going through its boundaries

History

EL PASO AND SOUTHWESTERN RAILROAD TIMELINE

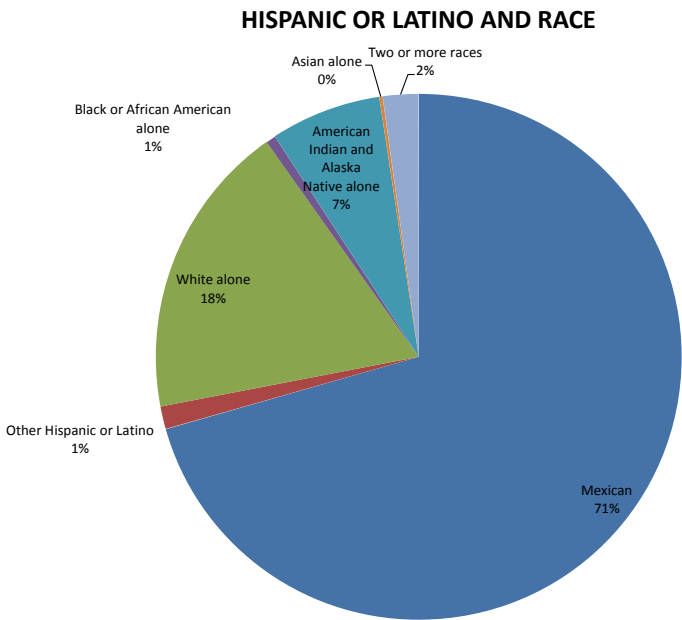


El Paso and Southwestern Rail Road

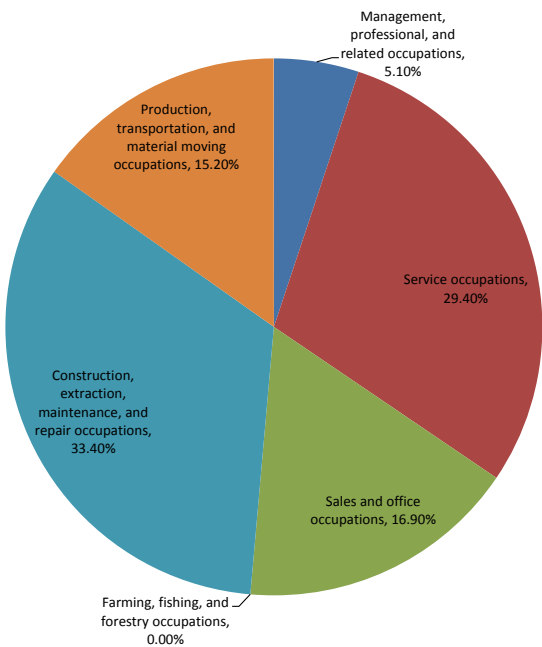
1880	1900	1911	1912	1924	1960
The Southern Pacific rail arrives in Tucson	Corporate name of EP&SW adopted for lines extending from Benson to El Paso. Tucson Chamber of Commerce convinces Phelps Dodge to bring EP&SW line into Tucson.	Phelps Dodge announces extension of line from El Paso to Tucson	EP&SW rail arrives in Tucson and Depot opens	Southern Pacific acquires EP&SW and operates extension as its "south line"	The EP&SW railroad was abandoned

(The Drachman Institute 2005)

Site Analysis
DEMOGRAPHICS



Race and Ethnicity

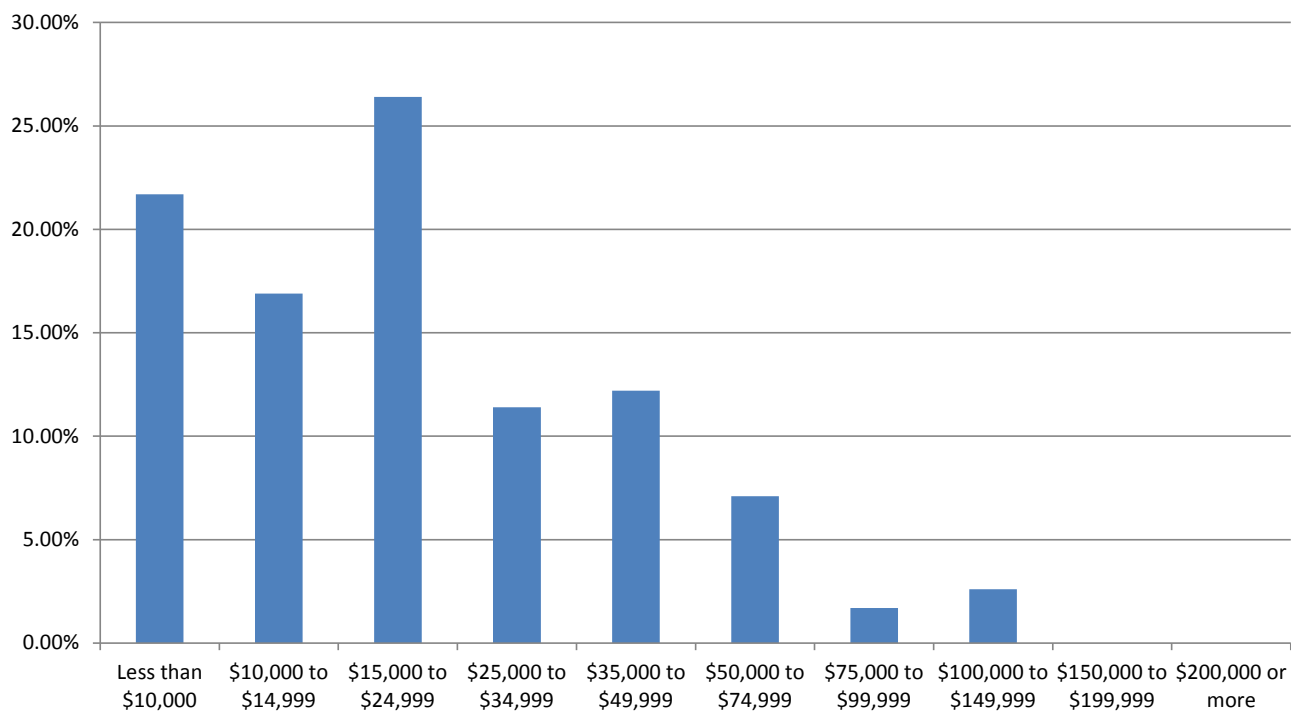


Occupation

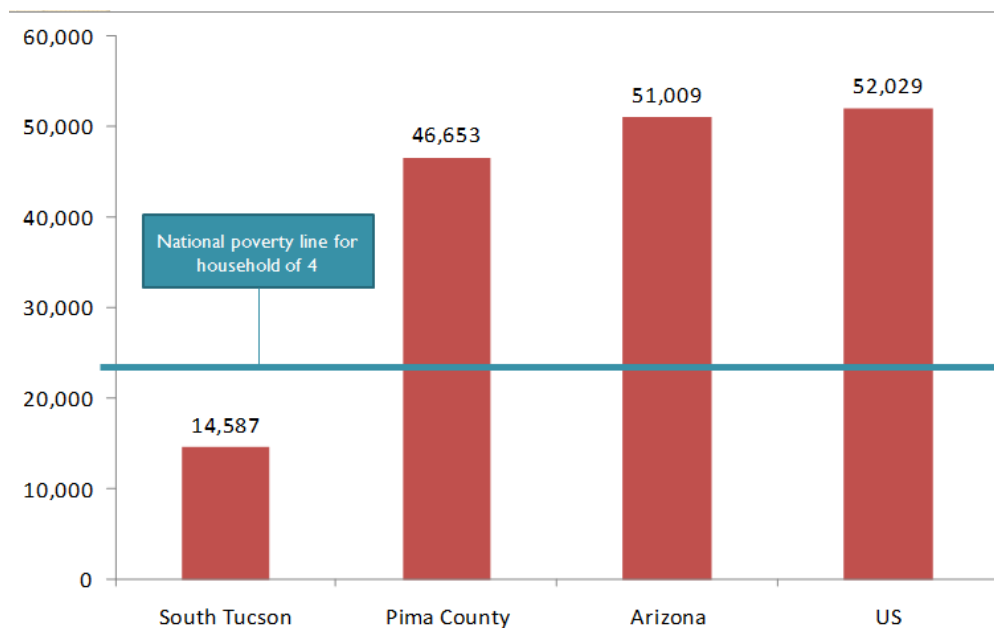
Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Site Analysis

INCOME



Income Levels



Comparison of Income Levels

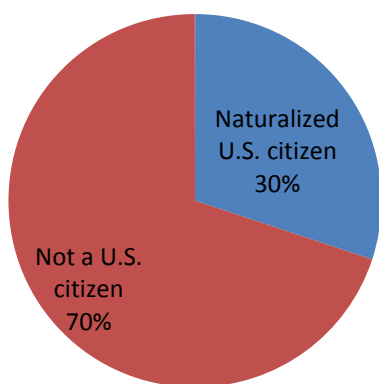
Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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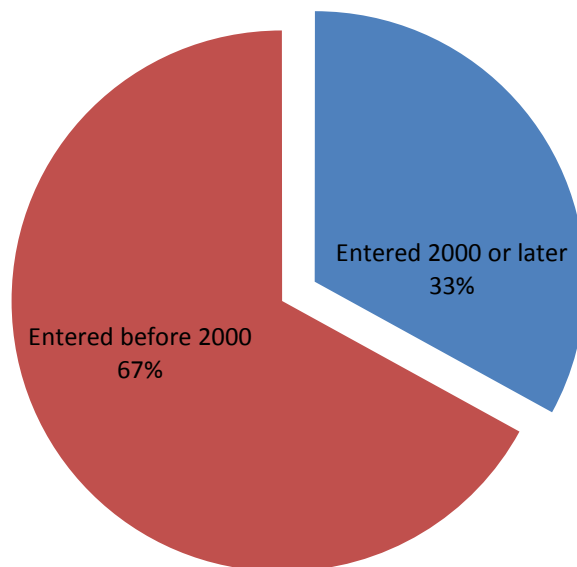
Site Analysis

LANGUAGE AND HERITAGE

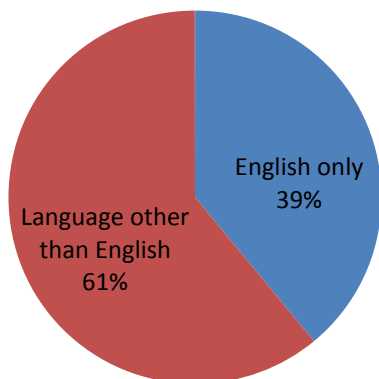
U.S. CITIZENSHIP STATUS



FOREIGN BORN



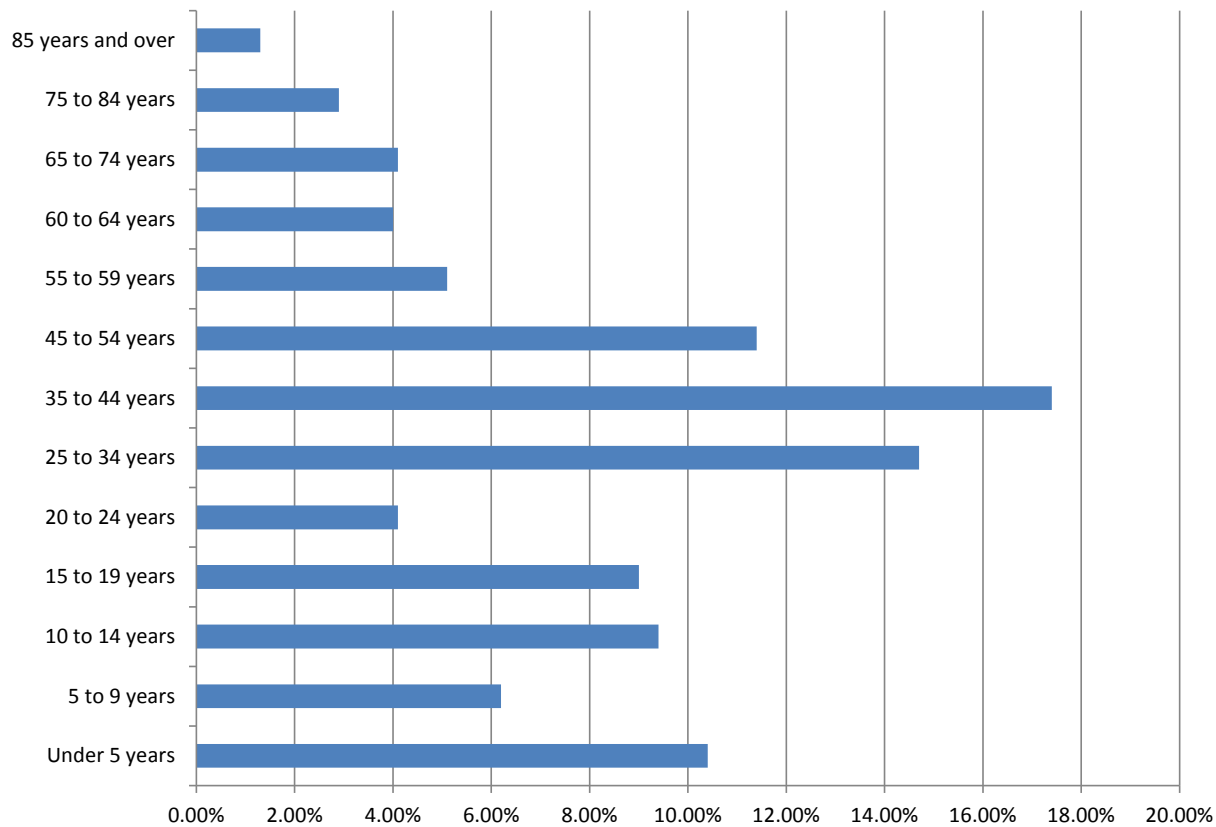
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME



Language and Heritage

Site Analysis

DEMOGRAPHICS



Demographics

Site Analysis

SCHOOLS

City of South Tucson

Schools

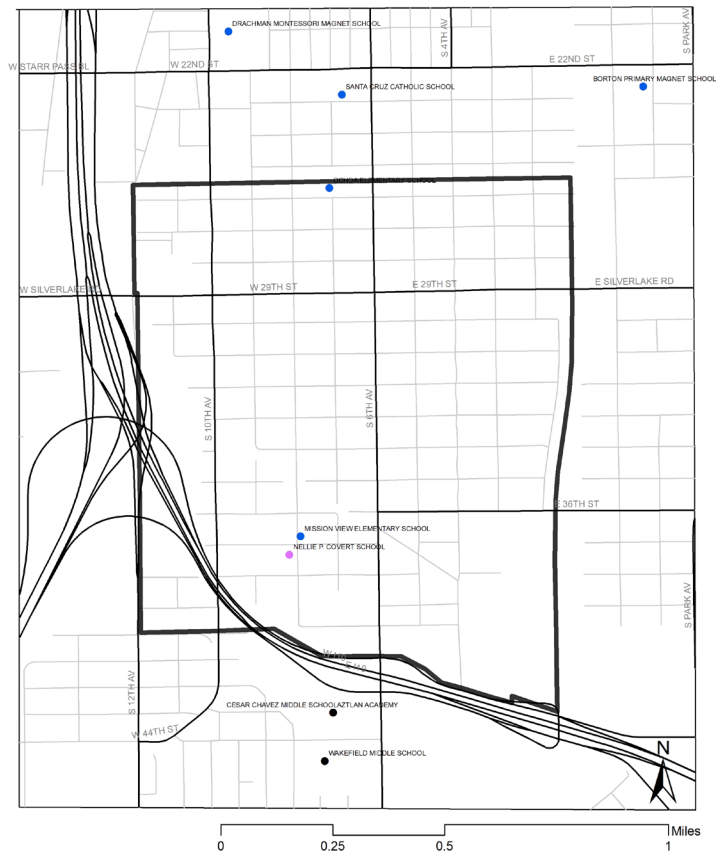
Legend

Schools

- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- MIDDLE SCHOOL
- HIGH SCHOOL
- OTHER

Streets

Major Roads



Source: Pima County Geographic Information Systems
 Drachman Institute GIS neighborhood mapping 2010

Schools

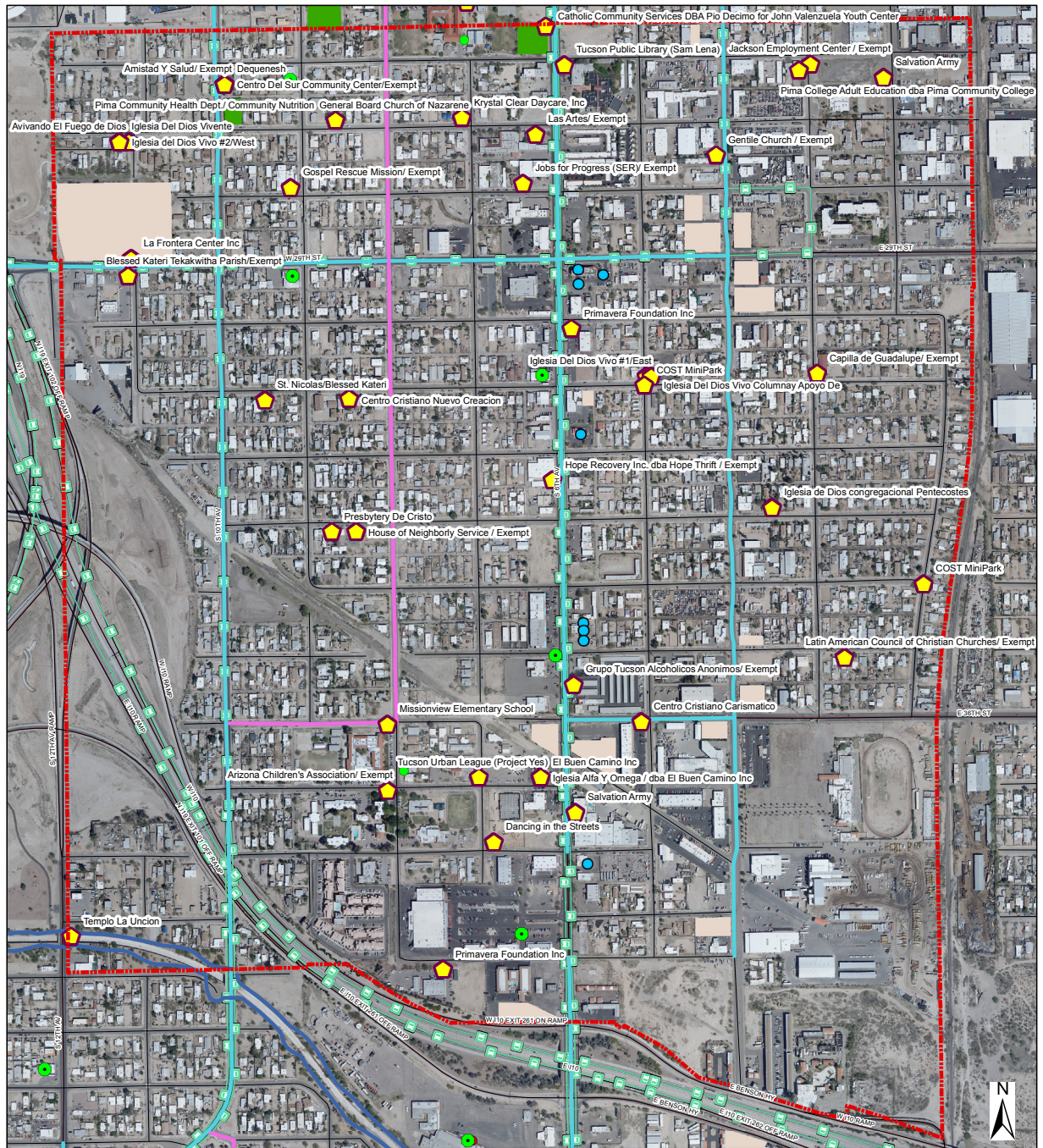
Ochoa Elementary School



Mission View Elementary School



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0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Churches & NPOs | Bike Route | Parks |
| Supermarket | Bike Route Striped | Medical Centers |
| Fastfood | Shared-use Path | City of South Tucson |
| Elementary School | Bus Routes | |
| Middle School | All Streets | |
| High School | Major Roads | |

Source: Pima County Geographic Information Systems

Destinations

Drachman Institute GIS neighborhood mapping 2010

Drachman Institute 2011

Site Analysis

FOOD ACCESS

Places to Eat:

- Mi Nidito
- Rigo's
- Taqueria Pico de Gallo
- Micha's Restaurant
- Los Portales
- Guillermo's Double L
- Real Tortilleria y Panaderia
- Paves Bakery
- El Torero
- Birrieria Guadalajara
- Las Cazuelitas de Tucson
- El Dorado
- McDonalds
- Crossroads
- Molcas Mexican Grill
- Alfonso's Carnitas
- Little Caesar's Pizza
- Karamelo King

Legend

-  Restaurants
-  Fast Food
-  Grocery
-  Convenience Markets
-  Farmers Market

Food Access

City of
Land Use

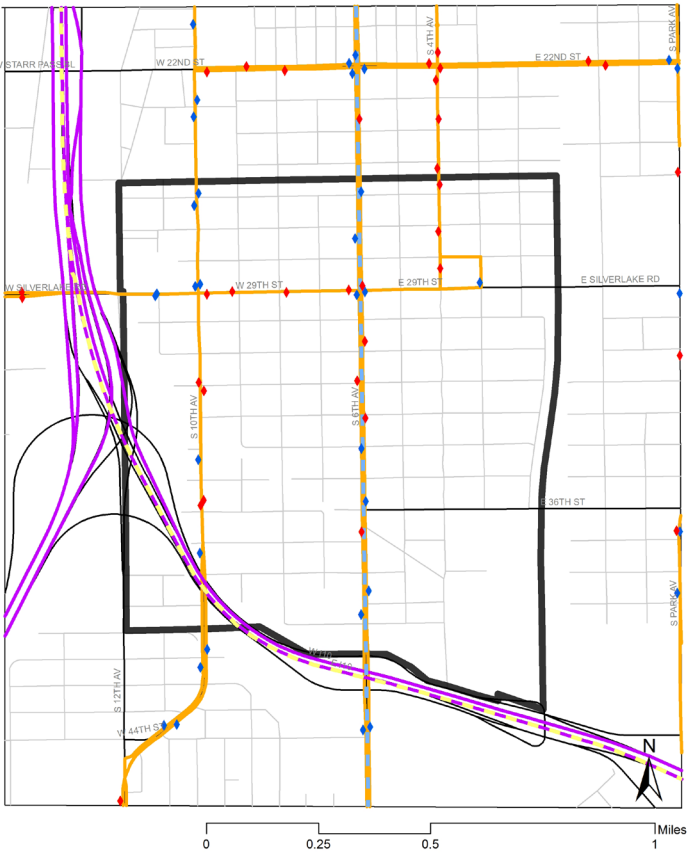
Site Analysis

ROUTES

City of South Tucson
Alternative Transportation - Bus

- Legend
- Bus Routes**
- Express Routes
 - Bus Routes
- Transit Project 2040**
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
 - Streetcar
- Bus Stops**
- No Shelter
 - Shelter
 - Park and Ride Lot
- Streets
- Major Roads

Bus Routes

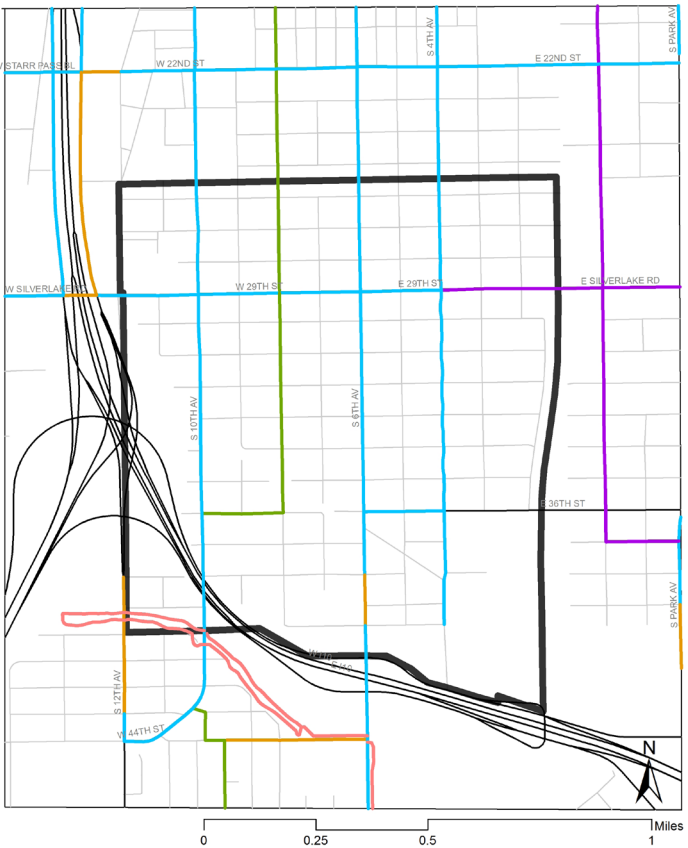


Source: Pima County Geographic Information Systems

City of South Tucson
Alternative Transportation - Bike

- Legend
- Bike Routes**
- Bike Routes**
- Bike Route
 - Bike Route with Striped Shoulder
 - Key Connecting Streets
 - Residential Streets
 - Shared-use Path
- Streets
- Major Roads

Bike Routes



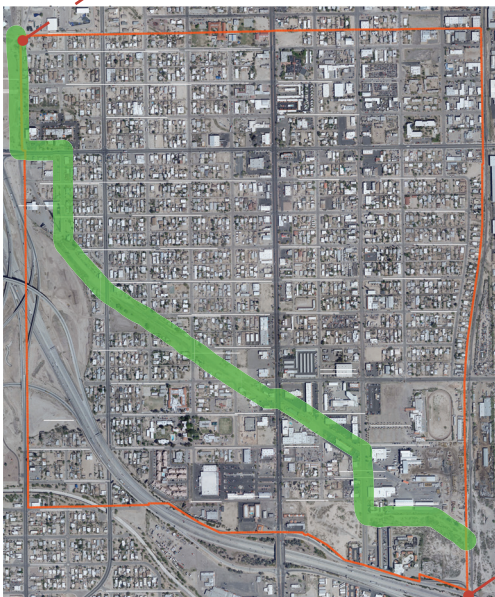
Source: Pima County Geographic Information Systems

Site Analysis

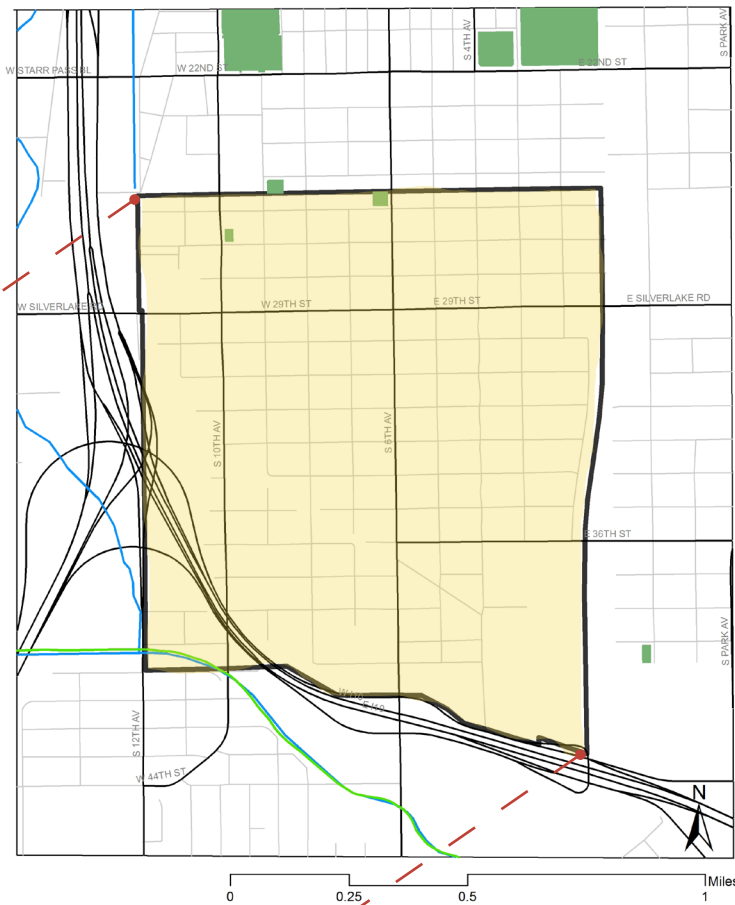
EXISTING OPEN SPACE COMPARED TO PROPOSED GREENWAY

City of South Tucson

Land Use - Parks Land Use



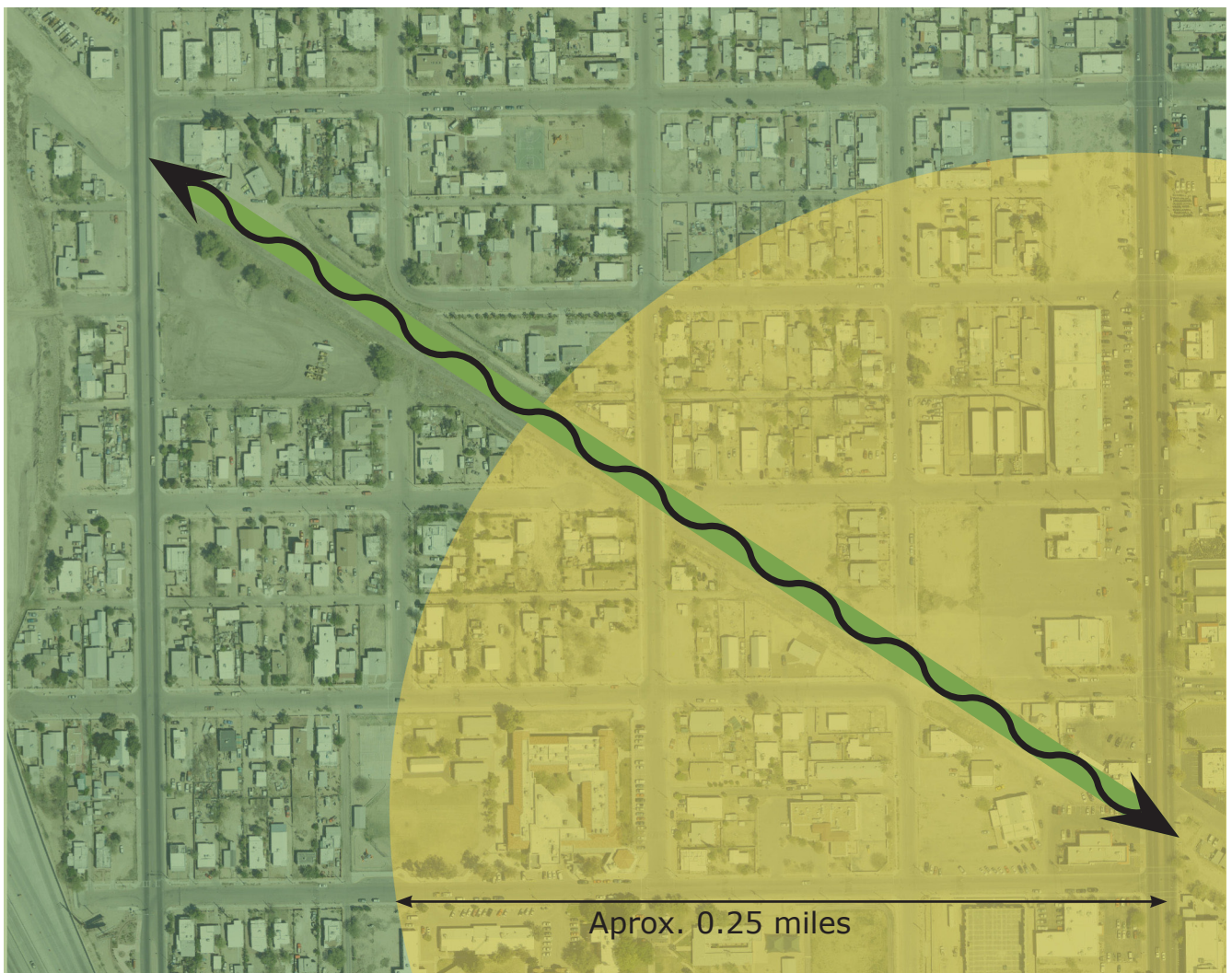
Open Space Opportunity



Existing Open space

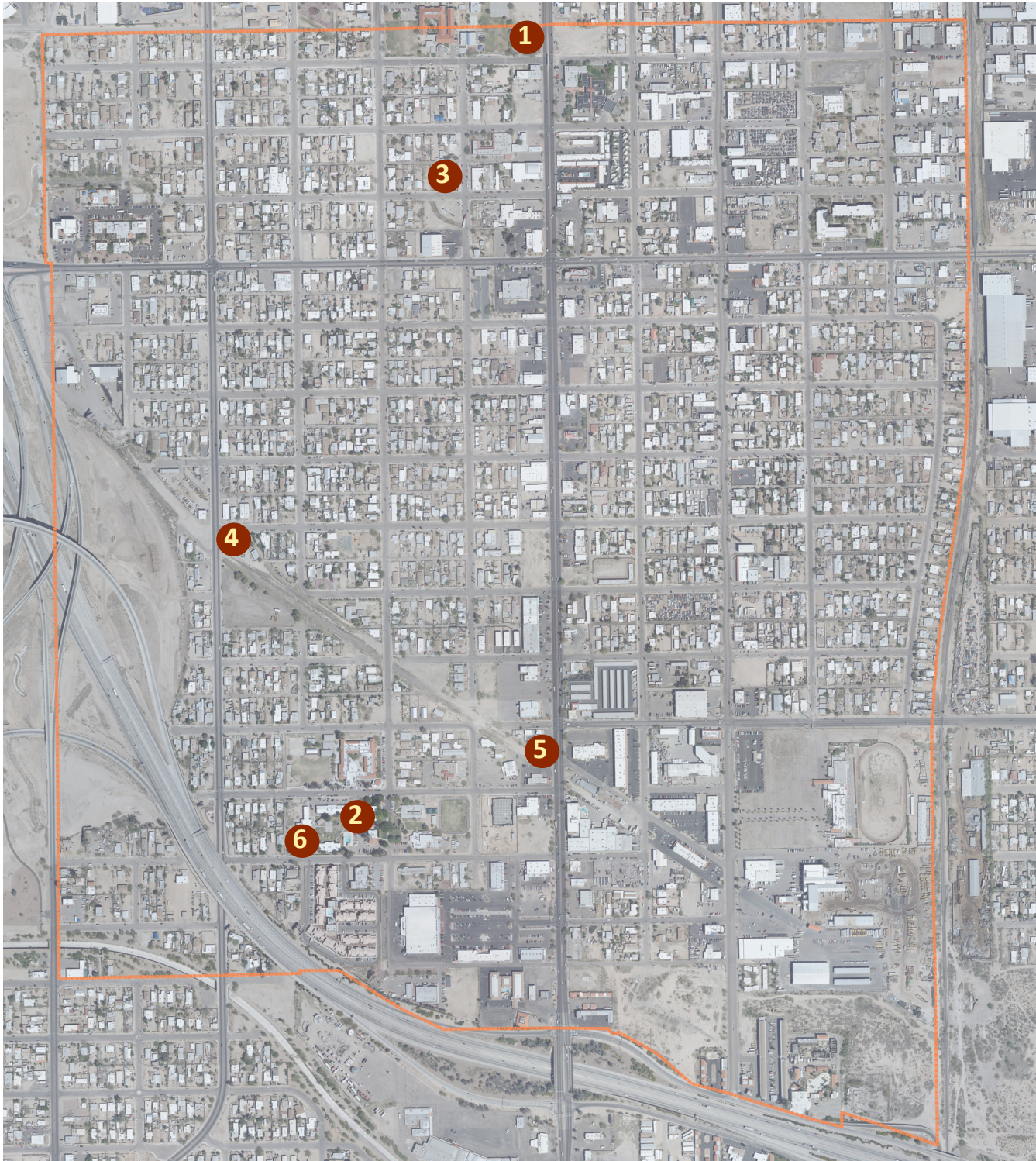
Site Analysis

WALKABILITY



Walkability

Visual Tour



City of South Tucson

0 245 490 980 1,470 1,960 Feet



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John Valenzuela Youth Center (JVYC)



John Valenzuela Youth Center (JVYC)



Arizona Children Association (AzCA)



Taqueria Pico de Gallo



<http://culinarytravel.about.com/od/photogalleries/ig/Tucson-Restaurants/Taqueria-Pico-de-Gallo.htm>

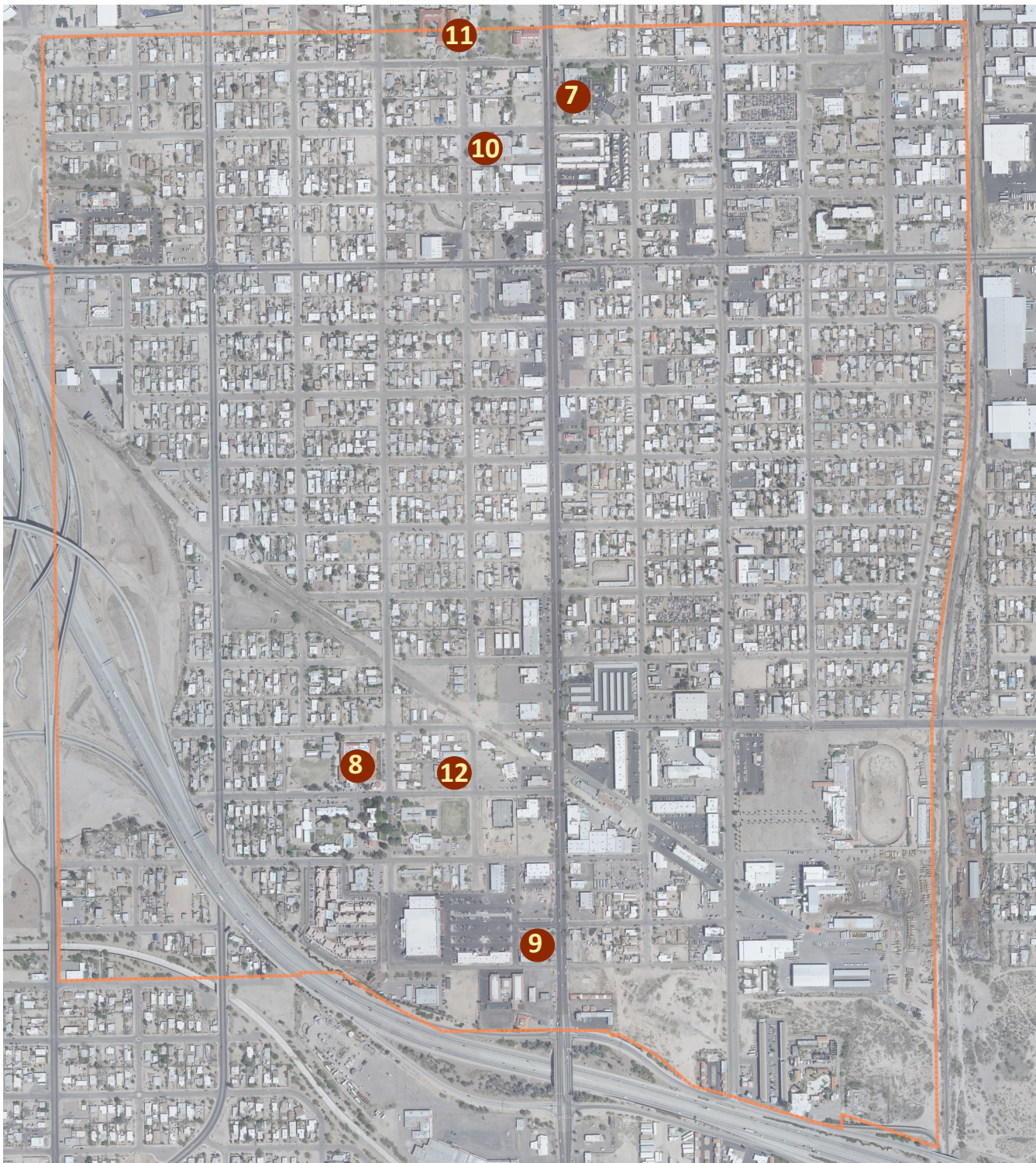
Childcare



AzCA Community Garden



Visual Tour



City of South Tucson

0 245 490 980 1,470 1,960 Feet



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City of South Tucson Offices

7



Las Artes Learning Center

10



Mission View Elementary School

8



Ochoa Elementary School

11



Commercial Area on 6th Avenue

9



Project YES

12



Visual Tour



City of South Tucson

0 245 490 980 1,470 1,960 Feet



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La Escuelita

13



Casa Maria

14



La Jalisciense Market

15



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Introduction

Several outreach events were held with residents of the City of South Tucson to attain community input on the design of the El Paso and Southwestern Greenway. Each event was conducted at a unique venue, using a variety of methods to gain input, including surveys, focus group discussions, a field trip, and other exercises. Information received from the community directly influenced the planning and design of the El Paso and Southwestern Greenway through South Tucson.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

VENUE	DATE	PARTICIPANTS	METHODS
National Night Out	Tuesday, 8/3/10, 5-8pm 15	South Tucson residents, various ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booth: one-on-one discussion • Boards: route & history • Survey: 9 questions
John C. Valenzuela Youth Center and Greenway site	Thursday, 9/23/10, 5:30-8pm	7 middle school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit/night walk • Round table discussion • Survey: 13 questions
John C. Valenzuela Youth Center	Friday, 9/24/10, 2-4pm	18 elementary school students (3rd – 5th grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round table discussion • Route mapping exercise • Drawing exercise
Mission View Elementary School	Friday, 11/19/10, 8:30-10:30am	15 parents of elementary -aged children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cafecito: informal discussion & presentation • Survey: 10 questions

Process

Place: Mission Elementary School Cafecito

Date: Friday, November 19, 2010

Participants: 15 parents

Methods: Cafecito invitation flyers were sent to parents of students of Mission Elementary School one week before the date of the event. Signage was posted on entry doors the day of the Cafecito meeting so that attendees were able to locate the room in which the meeting was held. The Cafecito meeting started with informal roundtable discussions. A large-scale aerial photograph of South Tucson was posted to acquaint parents with the proposed route of the El Paso and Southwestern Greenway through the community. A five-minute introduction was made, with the balance of time for discussion, questions, comments, and suggestions. Upcoming open houses were mentioned so residents would be expecting the invitations that would be mailed to them in January.

Observations: Parents (all mothers or grandmothers) were very participative, engaged, and excited about the project. They discussed current walking patterns and customary outdoor activities and the kinds of open spaces they desire. Many participants visit existing parks but they indicated that these parks are somewhat far and insufficient for many types of uses. Existing parks function solely as playgrounds and do not provide enough activities for parents or young adults. Fitness circuits, walking loops, and gathering areas were of high interest to participants.



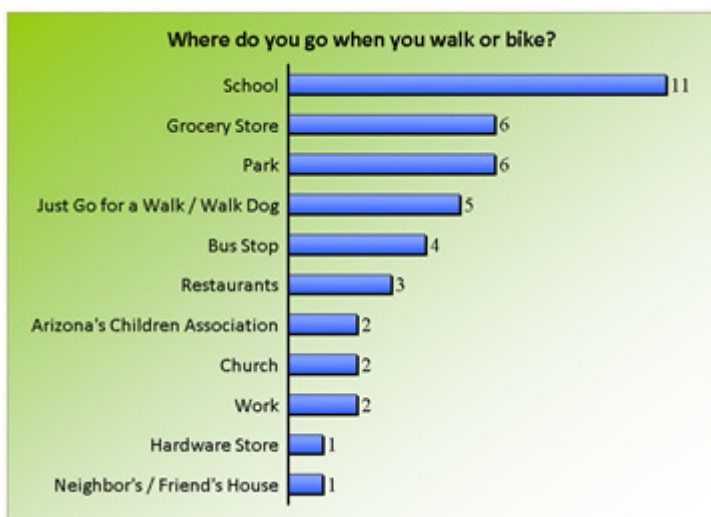
Presentation of EP&SW Greenway at Mission Elementary School Cafecito.

Survey Results

Mission Elementary School



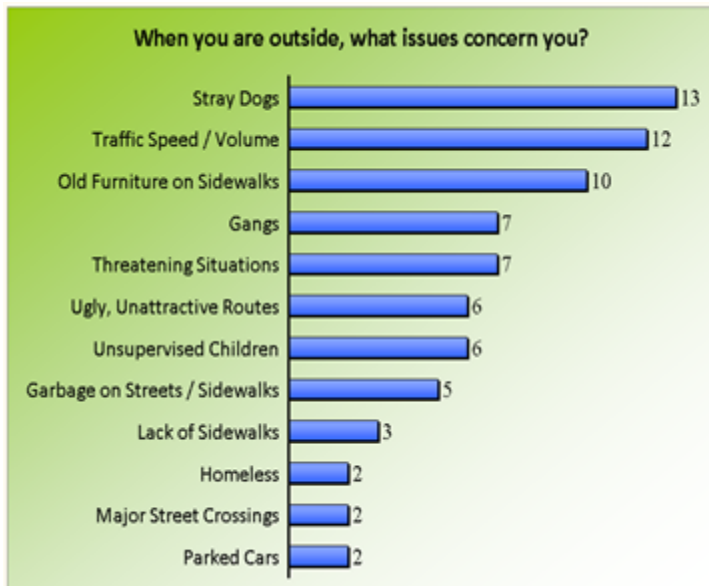
The survey of mothers and grandmothers with children enrolled at Mission View Elementary school indicate that 67%, or 10 out of 15 respondents, currently walk or bike within the City of South Tucson.



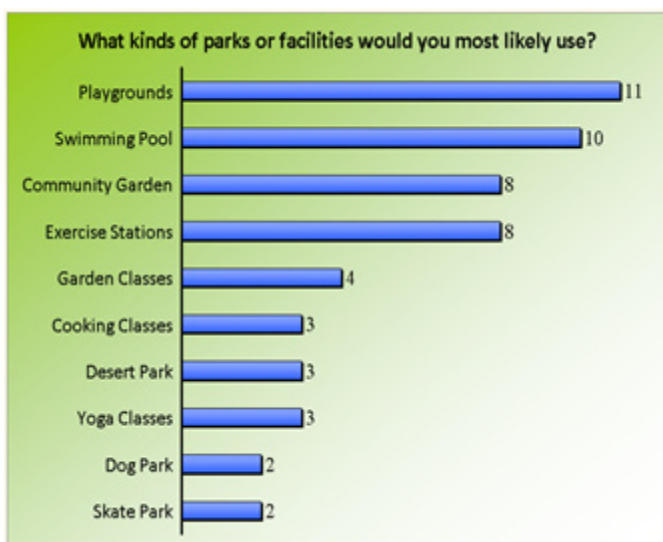
Mission View Elementary School was cited by 11 out of 15 respondents as the most frequent walking destination. Less than half the respondents walk to other local destinations.

Survey Results

Mission Elementary School



Safety was a big concern for parents/grandmothers and was a topic of much interest and discussion. Fear of stray dogs was identified by 86% of the respondents as a major concern. 80% identified traffic speed and/or traffic volume as concerns when outside in the neighborhood. In addition, junk and obstruction of sidewalks was listed as a concern by 66% of respondents. Transient and gang activity were also of concern when it came to walking and being outside in the neighborhood.



Survey results show support for playgrounds, parks and sports fields in the community. Community gardens and fitness circuits were of interest to over half the respondents.

Survey Results

Mission Elementary School



In addition to parks playgrounds and sports fields, walking paths, sidewalks and crosswalks were identified as the most important facilities to invite walking within the community of South Tucson. 73% of respondents requested additional police presence, and 73% requested more trees within the community.

Process

Place: John Valenzuela Youth Center Visit

Date: Friday, September 24, 2010

Participants: 18 elementary school students (3rd – 5th grade)

Methods: A meeting at the John Valenzuela Youth Center was scheduled during its after school program. The visit entailed several activities intended to raise awareness about the Greenway project and to obtain input and ideas about the types of amenities residents would like to see along the greenway. The first activity was a brief discussion about outside recreational activities and how they are beneficial for both physical and mental health. Children were encouraged to share their own ideas about play and physical activity. The next activity was a mapping exercise. Using colored markers and different line styles to indicate transportation modes (biking, driving, or walking), participants were asked to map routes and modes they utilize to reach local destinations on a regular basis. A brief introduction to the EP&SW Greenway project was presented using a large aerial map. Children pointed out where they live in relation to the greenway route and made drawings of all the things that they would like to have on the greenway.

Observations: The kids were generous and suggested many ideas. Many ideas, such as a swimming pool, do not fit within the scope of the greenway project, but all ideas provided important perspectives that contributed to the design process and provide a sense of participation to potential users of the facility.



John Valenzuela Youth Center Visit with elementary students.

Results

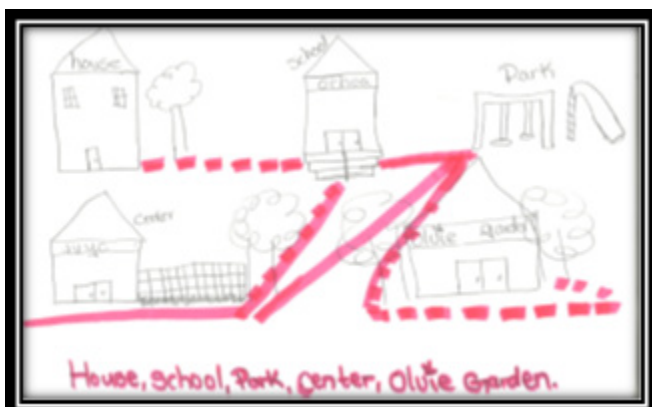
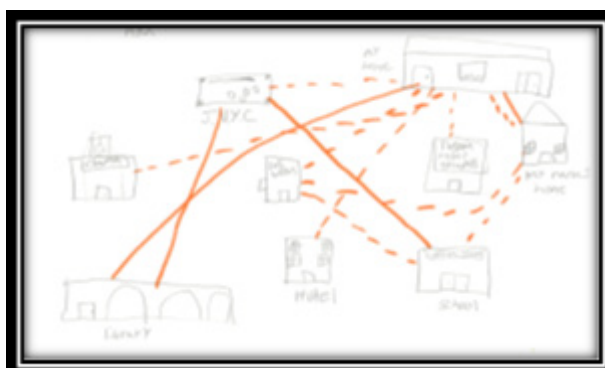
John Valenzuela Youth Center

Sample drawings: where kids go on a typical day and how they travel (bike, walk, car).

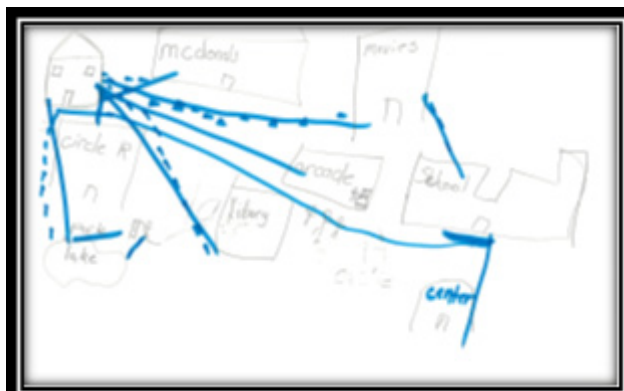
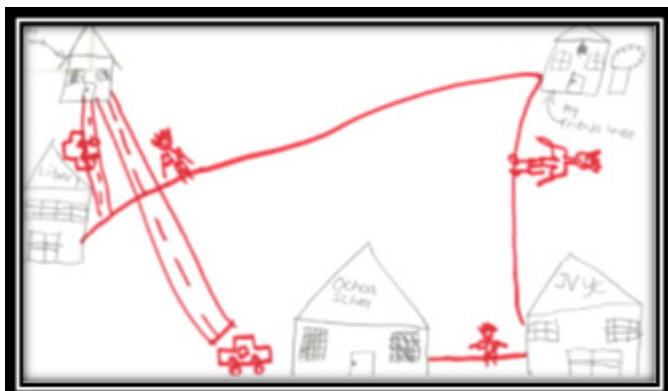
———— Indicates Walking

~~~~~ Indicates Bicycling

— — — Indicates Automobile Travel



These renderings were drawn by elementary school children from the John Valenzuela Youth Center. This mapping activity was used to identify where children travel within the City of South Tucson, and what modes of transportation they use to get to these destinations.





## Results

### John Valenzuela Youth Center

Sample drawings: features kids would like to see along the greenway.



These sample drawings are of features that children said they would like to see along the greenway. Children desire features such as green open spaces, playgrounds, parks, and other similar outdoor recreational uses. There also is a strong interest in uses that incorporate water, such as splash parks and swimming pools. Although outdoor areas with water are outside the scope of the greenway, ideas such as splash parks should be kept in consideration for future development.



## Process

Place: John Valenzuela Youth Center Visit

Date: Thursday, September 23, 2010

Participants: 7 middle school students

Approach: An evening meeting with high school students was scheduled at the John Valenzuela Youth Center. A brief introduction to the EP&SW Greenway project was followed by a field trip to the greenway site with a short walk back and forth along the greenway route. Flash lights were provided to each participant. Two to three small groups were formed during the walk along the greenway route with discussion facilitated by a member of the Drachman team. The meeting concluded with a questionnaire.

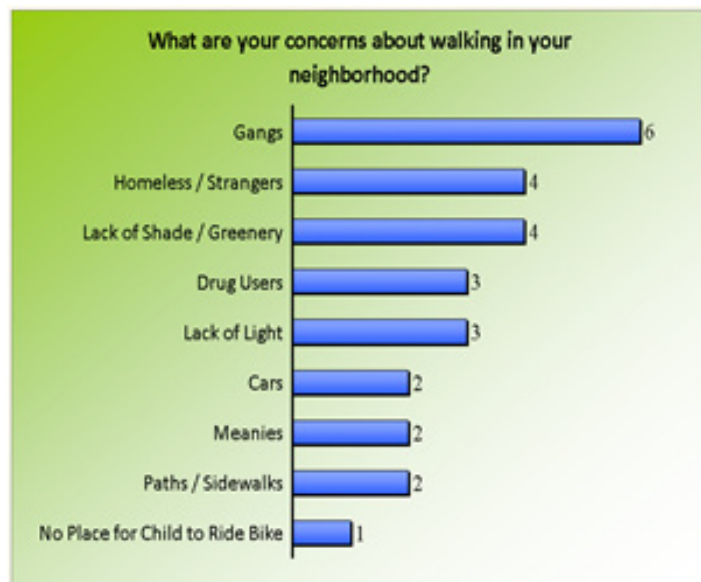
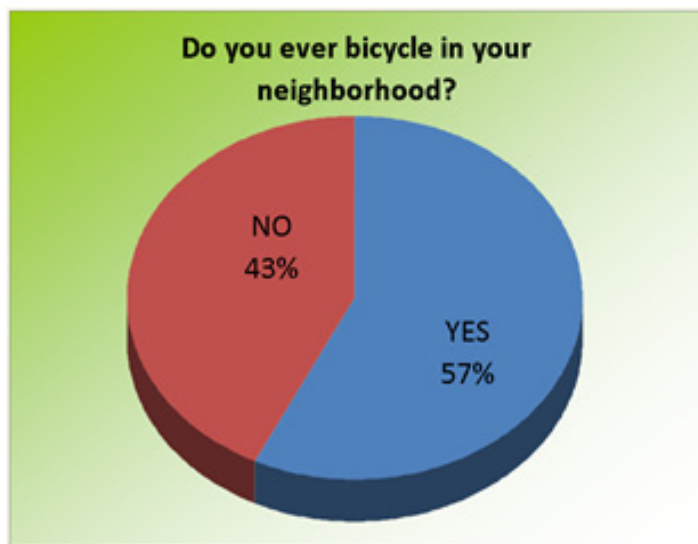
Observations: The students responded very well to the greenway project making numerous suggestions. Graffiti and vandalism were discussed in some detail. The students suggested a graffiti wall along the greenway as both a privacy screen for adjacent properties and a legitimate outlet for artistic tagger-types. They admitted they admired good graffiti and felt a dedicated graffiti wall might reduce the amount of unwanted graffiti within the community. A graffiti wall may also potentially reduce vandalism because kids would be proud of the wall and have more respect for greenway facilities. They all expressed the need for seating, gathering areas, and places to “hang out” with their friends. They indicated that night use would be very desirable and would require night lighting. They also requested a drinking fountain and restroom in the vicinity.



Middle School students from the John C. Valenzuela Youth Center on an evening walk along the greenway route in South Tucson.

## Survey Results

## John Valenzuela Youth Center

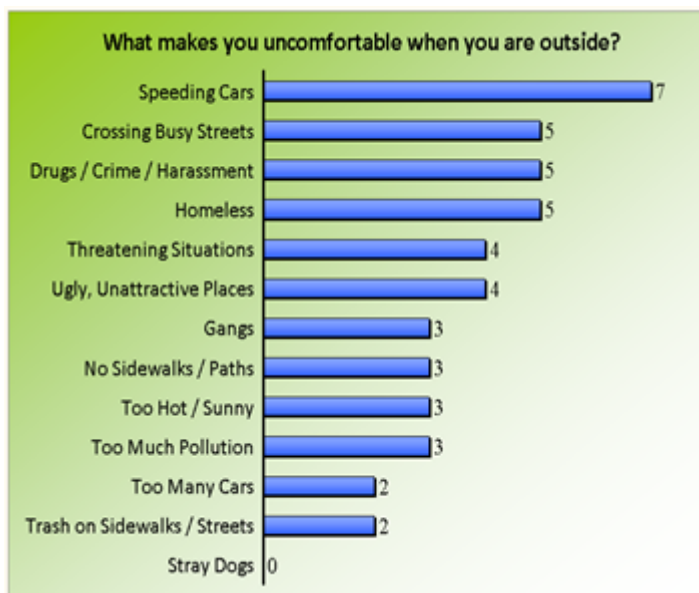


Survey answers demonstrate a strong presence of bicycle use within the City of South Tucson community. Even greater than those that currently use a bicycle, all the youth indicated they wanted to be able to bike within the community.

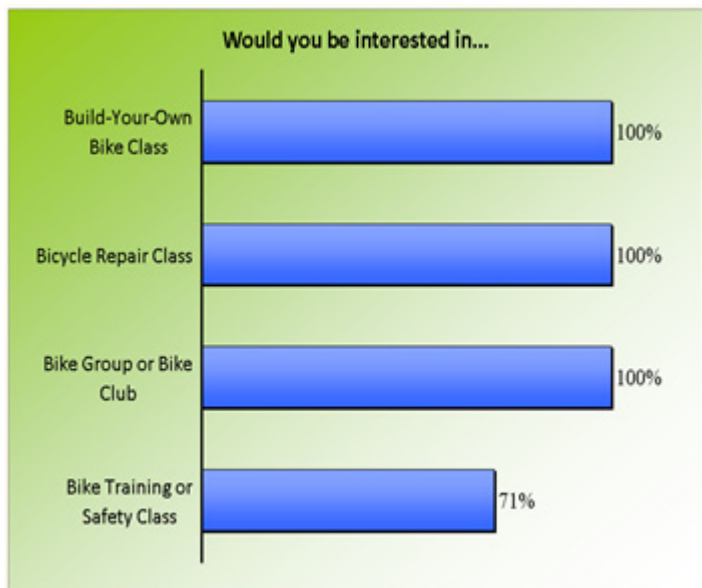
The youth at John C. Valenzuela youth center stated that when they walk or bike they typically go see friends or go to destinations such as the Youth Center or a store. Their biggest concern about being out and about in their neighborhood is gang activity.

## Survey Results

### John Valenzuela Youth Center



Survey responses indicate these middle school students, when outside, do not feel comfortable around busy streets and fast traffic. Criminal activities and transient populations also contribute to a feeling of discomfort.



Strong interest was shown for educational opportunities about bicycle's and bicycle maintenance

## Process

Place: Annual National Night Out

Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2010

Participants: 14 residents of varying ages

**Approach:** A table with an informal and inviting atmosphere was set up for National Night Out. This event was held outdoors at the City of South Tucson Town Hall-Sam Lena Public Library complex. Boards from phase one of the EP&SW Greenway process were displayed on easels. Surveys were offered to people who were interested and wanted to know more about the EP&SW Greenway project. The event atmosphere provided a good opportunity for one-on-one discussion.

**Observations:** Many people asked questions and made comments about how the use of the alignment has changed over time. They were excited about the idea of having additional open space in their community and were optimistic that the project would also clean up the image of the vacant and abandoned land that the corridor has become.

## Survey Results

### Annual Night Out Outreach

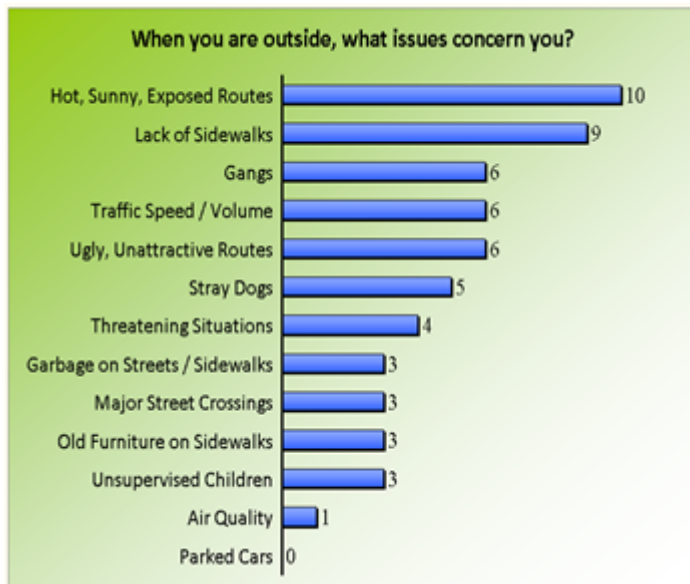


Surveys collected from National Night Out indicate that respondents typically walk or bike for leisure and recreation activities.

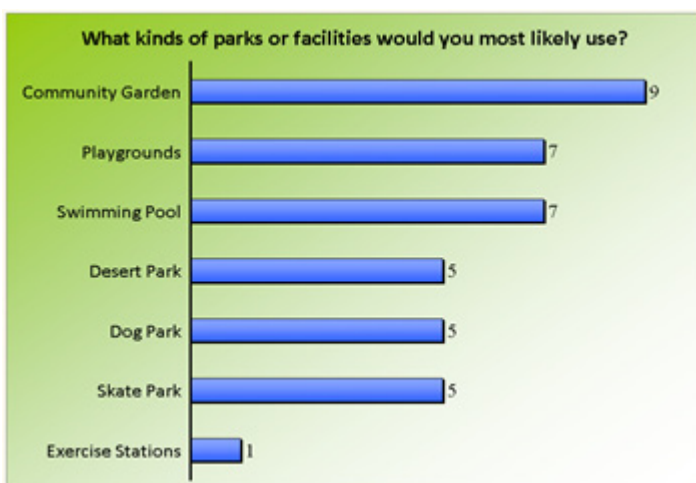


## Survey Results

### Annual Night Out Outreach



Exposure to the hot sun, especially in the summer, and a lack of sidewalks, were of most concern to survey respondents.



Active public spaces received the most positive feedback. Spaces such as community gardens, parks, and playgrounds were identified as types of facilities that would be most useful.

## Summary Findings

- Few City of South Tucson residents had already heard of the El Paso & Southwestern Greenway project, though most are familiar with the raised bed/ alignment that run through the community between South 6th and 10th Avenues.
- The majority of residents currently walk or bike within the community.
- Traffic speed was cited as a concern when walking or biking by nearly all respondents (7 of 7 youth respondents and 12 of 15 parent respondents).
- 13 of 15 parents at Mission View Elementary School identified stray dogs as their biggest concern when outside.
- Homeless people and strangers walking through the community were frequently cited by both youth and parents as a safety concern.
- Youth suggested several features along the greenway, including graffiti walls as privacy screens in areas where backyards directly abut the greenway; seating areas and night lighting were also requested.
- Though outside the scope of the greenway project, most children and several youth mentioned a desire for a public swimming pool within the community.
- Parents and community members identified trees, walking paths and sidewalks, benches and drinking fountains as improvements they would most like to see.
- Facilities most favored by residents and parents included playgrounds, a community garden, a swimming pool, and exercise circuits.
- All youth indicated an interest in bicycling, including bike clubs and bike repair classes.
- Trees and shade were identified as an important amenity that would encourage walking.

## DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

The EP&SW Greenway crosses diagonally through the City Of South Tucson, providing access to and from many of the City's streets. Four major access points to the EP&SW Greenway are suggested: 4th Avenue, 6th Avenue, 8th Avenue, and 10th Avenue. A Gateway City Plaza is suggested as a central gathering area for the community and visual focal point along the busy 6th Avenue commercial corridor, the main commercial between Taque-ria Pico de Gallo and Discount Tire.

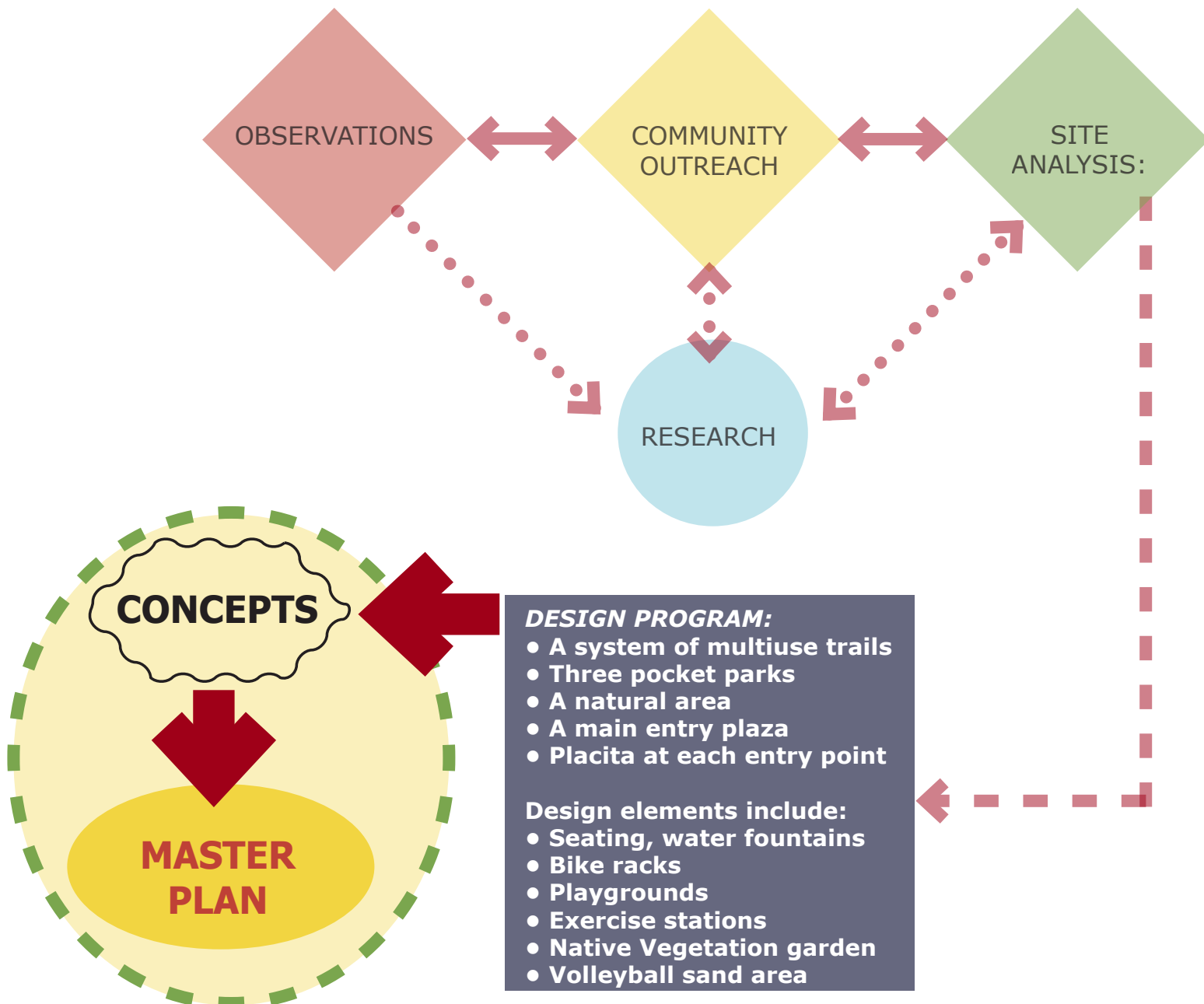
The character of the neighborhood and the activities and customs of survey respondents suggested creating a linear park along the alignment. Respondents suggested a design suitable for small daily gatherings rather than a strict focus on transportation usages such as walking, biking, or rollerblading. Ideas included placitas with seating, trees and vegetation, and where spatial dimensions permit, play areas for different age groups. Survey results highlighted the importance of night lighting to extend the use of the EP&SW Greenway beyond daylight hours, especially in the summer, when the desert weather is more suitable for walking or talking.

Respondents suggested that small exercise stations of various types could be located along the greenway in places with spatial constraints. Areas with more available space could contain larger exercise stations that could host small-group activities such as dancing or yoga classes. A community garden was cited as a popular amenity. Bike racks are suggested, at the minimum, on all main entries and main gathering areas. At minimum one restroom station and two water fountains should be located along the greenway between 10th and 6th Avenues.

# DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## Analysis Diagram

The diagram below shows a summary of the process for the creation of this proposed greenway project. A series of observations and on-site visit were performance prior to the community outreach. This was with the objective of getting familiar with the site and community customs. Some research helped to create a frame for the community outreach surveys that combined with the site analysis studied concluded on a design program. Finally some concept were proposed and analyzed to define the Master Plan presented on this chapter.



## Design Program:

### Design Program:

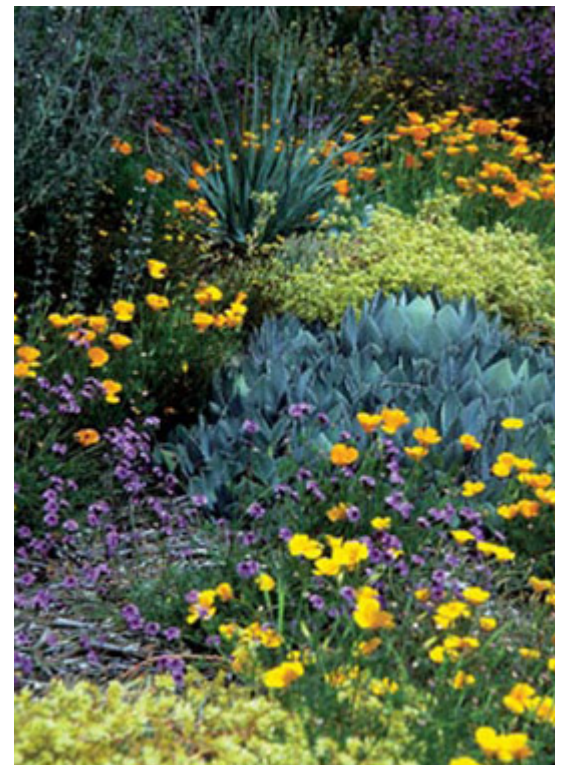
- A system of multiuse trails
- Three pocket parks
- A natural area
- A main entry plaza
- Placita at each entry point

### Design Elements Include:

- Seating
- Water fountains
- Bike racks
- Playgrounds
- Exercise stations
- Native Vegetation garden
- Volleyball sand area

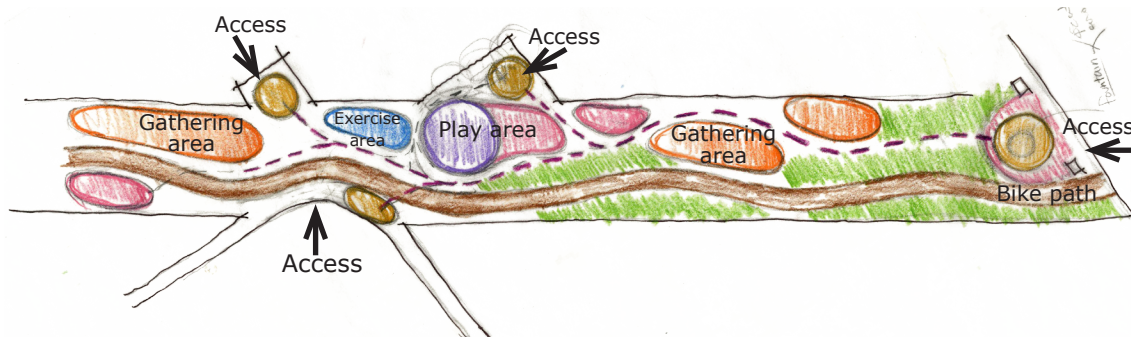


Exercise stations (<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Park-sandRec/Trails/Istephens.php>)



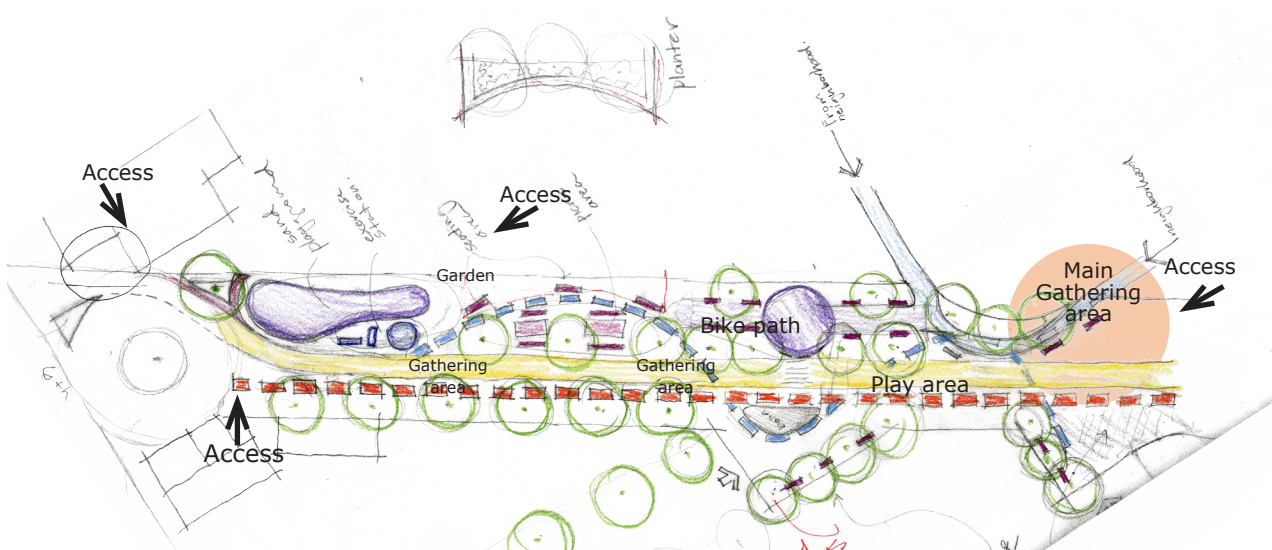
Native vegetation garden ([http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/why\\_native.php](http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/why_native.php))

## Concept



### Concept 1

- Organic pathways
- Activity areas on North side of alignment
- Access from each end street



### Concept Development

- Straight path to preserve EP&SW historic alignment
- Activity areas on South side of alignment
- Alley of tree to emphasize visual point to greenway





## Main Entry Plaza at 6th Avenue

- Large gathering area
- Shaded seating areas
- Mountain views
- Alley of trees







### Plaza Entry at 8th Avenue

- Seating retaining wall
- Murals on walls
- Resting area for cyclists







## Entry from 9th/35th Intersection

- Preserve existing vegetation
- Mountain Views
- Shaded seating areas







### Seating Wall at Raised Bed

- Crossing stairs
- Seating areas
- Picnic area



# CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

There are many challenges to visualize this open space happening in a short period of time, but there are many opportunities for proposing a series of phasing that will help to get found and interest from all the parties involved for the creation of this greenway park. The City of South Tucson is rich in culture and customs and a space to promote and preserve this traditions is a good investment for future generations.

The ideas presented in this book are just a start point to consider.



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