

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements:

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 3:02 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call. The following commissioners arrived after roll call:

- Eric Gorsegrner at 3:12 p.m.

2. Review and approval of February 9, 2023, Minutes

Commissioner Colin Tetreault made a motion to approve the February 9, 2023, minutes. Commissioner Bill Sandweg seconded the motion and it carried 9:0.

3. Public Comment

No one spoke.

4. GI/LID Memo UHITS Accomplishments

Tiffany Halperin, UHITS Commissioner spoke about the low impact development (LID) implementation and urban design action items memo/report from the Urban Heat Island and Tree and Shade Subcommittee (UHITS) to EQSC.

LID involves features to support water systems to collect rain/storm water. A study was conducted by The Nature Conservancy and Bureau of Reclamation. LID was proven to lower land surface temperature by 4.2 degrees Fahrenheit. The study also revealed air quality benefits with up to 344 pounds of ozone removed annually. LID strategies were outlined in the Greater Phoenix Metro Green Infrastructure Handbook. The City of Phoenix Street Transportation Department anticipates including the LID strategies from the handbook with the exception of curb extensions and bioretention planters. Therefore, UHITS has made a request to the EQSC Committee to look at all nine of the strategies outlined in the handbook. Recommendations also made to the City of Phoenix are adoption of standards that do not require variances for public and private LID implementation. Another strategy would be permeable pavement; however, a variance is still needed and makes it harder to implement.

Chair Caroline Lobo asked UHITS Commissioner Tiffany Halperin what the purpose for curb extensions is. UHITS Commissioner Tiffany Halperin responded that curb extensions capture water runoff. In addition to the review by EQSC of the nine strategies outlined in the handbook, UHITS Commissioner Tiffany Halperin outlined other practices to be studied by EQSC and the City of Phoenix which include:

- No requirements for a variance in order to create and adopt sustainable building standards.
- Establish codes for new construction on buildings, including setbacks for detached sidewalks, LID, to include plenty of shade canopy.
- Protect older infrastructure.
- Reduction of parking minimums within transit-oriented districts (TOD). Parking still remains an issue since trees still cannot be planted.
- Public outdoor cooling stations.
- Actively improve 10 minutes or less in walking distance.
- Cool corridors that allow LID curb extensions.
- Protected bike lanes within cool corridors.

Commissioner Anna Bettis mentioned incentivizing and a growing group of interested people from the Nature Conservancy's Urban Heat Leadership Academy especially in current drought conditions. Commissioners entered into a discussion about engagement strategies.

5. General Plan

Joel Carrasco, Acting Special Projects Administrator, Planning and Development Department spoke about the General Plan Update: 2025. Cities are required to update the plan every 10 years with a requirement to review public outreach with City Council. The General Plan was last approved in 2015. The 2015 Choice Neighborhoods as approved by voters included Eastlake-Garfield and Edison Park as transit-oriented developments (TOD) among others. Since 2015, Planning 101 Videos both in English and Spanish have been made, 19 North TOD Plan, South Central TOD Community Plan and the 27th Avenue to Do List was implemented. A more strategic approach is being taken for the 2025 plan with significant progress already made. Other considerations being made are current challenges such as outreach methods and approach. Mayor/City Council appointed a 2025 Leadership Committee to work on vision alignment, outreach, and support. A unique partnership has been formed with ASU to create a robust marketing campaign. A community health fair was held in Sunnyslope on Saturday, February 11. Over 80 ideas were gathered at the fair. Other outreach efforts included the Laveen Barbeque held on February 24.

Joel Carrasco, Acting Special Projects Administrator, Planning and Development Department also spoke about the timeline of events for 2023-2024. Draft plans will be completed during the summer of 2023. A public hearing process will occur in January 2024, elections will be held in November 2024.

Commissioner Bill Sandweg asked if there were any deficiencies due to COVID. Joel Carrasco, Acting Special Projects Administrator, Planning and Development Department responded with plans were made to create a more vibrant downtown with more emphasis on communities especially with regards to water and transportation.

Chair Lobo asked who is on the Leadership Committee. Tricia Gomes, Acting Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department replied the committee consists of 16 members which have been appointed by Mayor Gallego and encompasses cross-pollination.

Chair Lobo mentioned not being made aware of the Sunnyslope event and if there is a way for neighborhood groups to be notified. Joel Carrasco, Acting Special Projects Administrator, Planning and Development Department indicated that equity has become part of the dialog. They are doing their best to get information out to the communities such as a call to action through water bill inserts and other coordinated efforts. Unfortunately, they are faced with staffing shortages.

Chair Lobo asked about revitalization of the Sunnyslope Community and whether there are zoning issues being addressed. Tricia Gomes, Acting Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department indicated that discussions are going on however, zoning has not been addressed in the General Plan. Currently looking at policies that support changes. Chair Lobo also mentioned that metrics have not been accomplished in the past 10 years. Tricia Gomes, Acting Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department mentioned discussions are being held with

the Leadership Committee. Joel Carrasco, Acting Special Projects Administrator, Planning and Development Department spoke about the Office of Heat Mitigation and Response is a huge component, as well as other initiatives.

Chair Lobo encouraged commissioners to figure out ways to assist and help get the word out.

Commissioner Kathy Knoop asked what social media platforms are being used. Tricia Gomes, Acting Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department is working with PIO to get information published on Facebook, Twitter and newsletters, as well as an enhanced, working website.

Commissioner Kevin Groman asked about outreach efforts to corporate partners. Tricia Gomes, Acting Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department replied they are trying to attend various events, but are being very strategic due to understaffing.

Chair Lobo asked Commissioner Keven Groman to gather corporate contacts. Chair Lobo will provide contact information for the school districts and asked that commissioners send outreach contact information to Anita Ponce and Nancy Allen.

6. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Chair Caroline Lobo requested the Planning and Development Department come talk about Zoning for the next meeting in April, and Dr. Hondula of Heat Mitigation also present at the April meeting. Commissioner Kevin Groman is interested in a presentation on the homeless issue with regards to shelter especially during the heat. Additionally, Commissioner Kevin Groman is interested in receiving an update on sustainable efforts and waste due to water leakages, electricity and gas. Chair Lobo replied to Commissioner Kevin Groman that an update on sustainability, water and homelessness can be presented at the commission meeting being held in May. There was also a request for a presentation on fire codes and response, in particular, related to recycling plants.

Commissioner Bill Sandweg suggested Human Services, Phoenix Cares Program present on homelessness issues.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anita Ponce,