



**City of Phoenix**  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT  
STAFF ANALYSIS**

<u>Application:</u>	GPA-EN-1-14-4
<u>Applicant:</u>	Planning Commission
<u>Location:</u>	Area generally bounded by 7th Avenue on the west; 7th Street on the east; Indian School Road on the north; McDowell Road on the south
<u>Approximate Acres:</u>	1,285+/-
<u>Requested Change:</u>	To establish the Midtown District Policy Plan as part of the ReinventPHX Initiative
<u>Reason for Requested Change:</u>	To provide a District Policy Plan with policies for land use decisions and investments in the Midtown Transit Oriented Development District.
<u>Steering Committee Action:</u>	Midtown – October 15, 2014
<u>Village Planning Committee Action:</u>	Encanto – March 2, 2015
<u>Staff Recommendation:</u>	Staff recommends approval of the request

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this request is to establish the Midtown Transit Oriented Development District Policy Plan for an area of approximately 1,285+/- acres. The Midtown Transit Oriented Development District Policy Plan is a document which further supports the Transit Oriented Development Strategic Policy Framework which was adopted as part of the General Plan in 2013 (GPA-1-09). The District Policy Plan provides policies to guide land use and investment implementation decisions and to improve competitiveness for federal transit funding.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the Planning Commission initiated General Plan Text Amendment GPA-1-09 to amend the General Plan Land Use Element to improve the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Goal. Staff requested the initiation in response to a proposed change in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) evaluation criteria for funding high capacity transit projects. In 2012, the FTA officially adopted a new rule that increased the importance of transit-supportive land use when awarding competitive transit funding.



*Policy basis for best practice form based code implementation.*

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the availability of competitive grants to help cities and regions plan sustainable urban development. One of the factors HUD considered when selecting the award was the degree to which the funds would leverage related projects that were already underway. The proposed project plan for the grant was therefore designed to directly build on the policy framework created in the TOD General Plan Amendment. In 2012, the City was awarded a \$2.9 million grant (ReinventPHX) to plan for development along the existing light rail corridor.

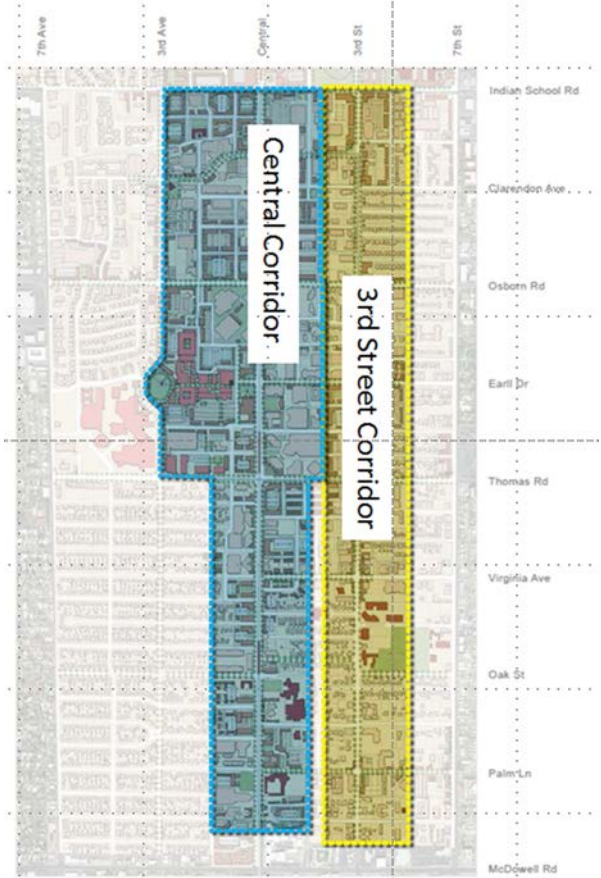
This intensive focus on individual station areas allows a strategic placement of land use intensity and identification of investment priorities. The District Policy Plan has these chapters:

- Introduction (About the Plan)
- Today (Current State Assessment)
- Tomorrow (Vision for 2040)
- How We Get There (Goals, Strategies, Policies and Actions)

**How We Get There** is organized around elements and associated strategies:

- Land Use
  - S1: Adopt a Best Practice Form Based Code
  - S2: Improve Predictability and Transparency in the Development Review Process
  - S3: Create Standard Plans

- S4: Facilitate Walkable Urban Demonstration Projects
- S5: Develop an Innovative Infrastructure Financing Tool
- S6: Provide Master Developer Services
- Housing
  - S7: Construct Innovative Housing Demonstration Projects
  - S8: Encourage Live-Work and Accessory Dwelling Units
  - S9: Coordinate Affordable Housing Programs with the Conceptual Master Plan
- Economic Development
  - S10: Revitalize Unique and Historic Commercial Buildings
  - S11: Develop a Midtown Hiring and Purchasing Program
  - S12: Grow the Number of Jobs in Key Midtown Industries
  - S13: Develop Residents' Skills in Key Midtown Industries
- Health
  - S14: Develop a Healthy Corner Store Program
  - S15: Encourage Community Based Healthy Food Sources
  - S16: Enhance Existing Recreation Facilities
  - S17: Develop Additional Open Space in the District
  - S18: Improve Safety in Public Spaces
- Mobility
  - S19: Adopt Best Practice Complete Street and Subdivision Standards
  - S20: Coordinate Transportation Programs with the Conceptual Master Plan
  - S21: Provide District Parking Services
- Green Systems
  - S22: Develop Best Practice Green Systems Standards
  - S23: Encourage Green Infrastructure Demonstration Projects
  - S24: Support the Development of District Clean Energy System
  - S25: Provide District Stormwater Management Services



*Midtown Action Areas*

District Plan policies are included that support a pedestrian-oriented zoning code, enhancement of the Central Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street corridors, retrofit of Park Central, enhanced efficiency and quality of existing housing, revitalization of historic commercial buildings, utilization of neighborhood schools as opportunity hubs, skill development for residents, Complete Streets, green construction, green infrastructure and open space development. The approach for

development of the District Policy Plan emphasized robust community involvement, interdisciplinary collaboration and the use of performance measures to improve accountability and provide a focus on outcomes. Each focus area within the Midtown Transit Oriented Development District has Priority Action Plans for these subareas: Central Corridor (including Park Central Mall), and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Corridor. The priority action plans identify community priorities for 2015-2020.

### ***Public Participation***

Planning activities for the content of the District Policy Plan occurred in 2012, 2013 and 2014, in collaboration with project partners Arizona State University, St. Luke's Health Initiatives and various other local non-profits.

*Existing Conditions Assessment* - Residents and District stakeholders participated in surveys, workshops, and field audits designed to identify and map assets, liabilities and improvement opportunities. Input was synthesized with secondary data such as demographic, land use, crime, traffic injuries, and economic conditions and analyzed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), statistical software, and other data tools to complete the existing conditions assessment.

*Visioning* – A long term vision for the future of the District was created through a series of community participation events that progressed from broad, general themes to specific, detailed designs. Workshops were conducted in large presentation formats as well as small round-table conversations that facilitated a two-way exchange of knowledge between residents and the project team. A community design workshop lead by city staff and the consultant team assembled by Duany Plater Zyberk was held in March/April 2014.

*Strategies* – The strategy-building phase included small discussions and large capacity-building forums with urban development professionals and community stakeholders. Evidence-based best practices were identified to respond to the unique conditions in the District and help advance the current conditions towards the vision. The Midtown Transit Oriented Development District Steering Committee was formed in 2014 and met regularly to work with staff to set priorities for investments and establish an action plan for the District Policy Plan. The Steering Committee voted to recommend adoption of the District Policy Plan on October 15, 2014.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Staff approval of General Plan Text Amendment GPA-EN-1-14-4 per the language in Attachment A. This district plan will guide land use and investment decisions in the Midtown Transit Oriented Development District. In addition, it will enhance the competitiveness of the region to apply for future federal transit funding.

### **Author**

Katherine Coles  
(2/18/15)

### **Attachments**

Midtown Transit Oriented Development District Policy Plan

## ATTACHMENT

### Midtown Transit Oriented Development District Policy Plan Document

**Midtown 11X17:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dv93j8zlbmcgqg9/MIDTOWN%20Draft%20TOD%20Plan%2011X17.pdf?dl=0>

**Midtown 8.5X11:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ctijbzfqcypvsdn/MIDTOWN%20Draft%20TOD%20Plan%208.5X11.pdf?dl=0>

Once at the Dropbox page, click on Download. The document is large and will take a minute or so to download to your computer. Once it has finished downloading, click on the file name at the bottom left of your screen to open the document, or look for the document in your Downloads folder.

Contact Katherine Coles at [Katherine.coles@phoenix.gov](mailto:Katherine.coles@phoenix.gov) or 602-256-5648 with questions.