



NORTHSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN

AN INTERJURISDICTIONAL PROJECT OF THE CITY OF RIVERSIDE & CITY OF COLTON

ROUND 2 – ALTERNATIVES COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

February 2, 2018

Summary Contents

This summary contains the following sections that provide information about the second round of community involvement activities, including **Purpose, When and Where, Notifications, Attendance, and Format and Summary**, as well as any other considerations specific to each activity. The Major Themes section outlines big ideas received throughout the community involvement process.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Major Input Themes	3
3. Community Organization Meetings.....	6
4. Community Workshop.....	9
5. Online Input	11
6. Pop-Up Outreach	11

Appendix A: Feedback from Community Workshops

Appendix B: Feedback from Drop-In Session: Talk with the Planners

Appendix C: Feedback from Pop-Up Outreach

Appendix D: Online Input

Appendix E: Other Community Input

Appendix F: Tabulated Round 2 Feedback

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1. Introduction

Purpose

Over the last few years, the Riverside community has been actively discussing the future of the Northside Neighborhood with City staff and elected officials. To achieve a common vision for the neighborhood, the City of Riverside initiated a community-based planning process that will result in the creation of the Northside Specific Plan. This plan will establish goals, policies, and regulations to guide future development in the area. When completed, the Northside Specific Plan will be instrumental to the preservation of the Northside's history and environment, while enhancing the area's economics, mobility, recreation, and other quality of life factors.

Guided by the project's Community Involvement Plan, a first round of community outreach was conducted during spring and summer 2017. The goal of this outreach was to inform the Northside Neighborhood about project goals and objectives, share planning implications from baseline studies and technical issues, and solicit input from the neighborhood on vision ideas and topical goals for the Northside Specific Plan. This input was then synthesized and used as a base to develop a set of preliminary concepts.

Input from the community was then sought during the second round of community involvement, synchronized with Community Involvement Plan Step 3, Alternatives. The goal was to solicit input from community members and stakeholders on the preliminary concepts. This round of outreach consisted of coordinated activities, including community organization meetings, focused outreach to Spanish speaking community members, a community workshop, and an Availability Session with City planners. This summary documents the input received in the second round and, most importantly, provides major themes that synthesize such input.

Community Involvement Plan

Activities for the Northside Specific Plan process are guided by The Community Involvement Plan, which can be viewed on the Northside project website at www.northsideplan.com.

The Plan describes how the City of Riverside will engage the community in developing the Northside Specific Plan. The Plan establishes outreach and engagement activities, and shows how such activities synchronize with the planning steps for the Project. The success of the community planning process relies on involvement of community members, landowners, and other stakeholders in shaping and forming the vision and goals of the Project. Moreover, the City is committed to conducting a transparent, inclusive, and meaningful planning process.

Objectives for the Second Round

Activities of the second round of community involvement focused on the following objectives:

- Solicit feedback on the planning of alternative concepts, focusing discussion on the relative merits of the components of each alternative.
- Continue to increase participation of Northside community members, landowners, and other stakeholders in the planning process for the Northside Specific Plan, including community members who have not been involved in previous planning discussions.
- Implement additional activities to engage the Spanish speaking community members, recognizing their culture and language.



- Continue to inform community members and other stakeholders about the launch of the Northside Specific Plan process (purpose, need, benefits, and process), role of community involvement in the process.
- Share planning implications from the baseline studies and technical issues.
- Continue to collect contact information from interested community members for future project announcements and updates.

Activities

Activities for the second round of community involvement were selected to achieve a specific set of objectives, which are listed below in the “Round Two Activities and Purpose” table.

Table 1.1 – Round 2 Activities and Purpose

Activity	Role				
	Invite People to Workshop	Collect Contact Info for Future Announcements and Updates	Create Interest and Engagement in Northside Specific Plan	Solicit Feedback on Concepts	Provide Engagement Options Outside of Workshop
Announcements at Community Organizations’ Meetings	X	X	X	X	X
Pop-Up Outreach		X	X	X	X
Coordination with Owners of Land with Significant Development Potential	X		X		
Community Workshop		X	X	X	
Online Input	X	X	X	X	X

2. Major Input Themes

The themes below represent the ideas that were repeatedly discussed during the outreach activities. Importantly, because understanding the breadth and depth of input often requires reviewing the direct input provided by the community, the attached appendices include the direct input received from participants at the workshops. The comments are largely focused on the benefits and disadvantages of the three conceptual land use plans and include suggestions for mixing and matching elements from the different concepts.

This section contains major themes from the community’s input received during the second round of outreach. They represent the reoccurring comments, feedback, and ideas. Many of the topics that emerged in round one also emerged in round two. Understanding the full range and depth of the input requires reviewing the documentation in the appendices, found at the end of this summary. Appendix G contains a tabulation of input recorded on flip charts at all outreach events. The major themes are listed in alphabetical order below. Note that ordering does not reflect any prioritization or ranking.



Amenities, Services, and Infrastructure Improvements

Similar to the first round of input, participants highlighted the need for improved or added amenities, public services and infrastructure. Participants generally reacted positively to consideration of adding a grocery store (Sprouts, WinCo, etc.), schools, a police facility, restaurants, and affordable shopping alternatives, and there was some consensus that the most appropriate location would be along Columbia Avenue between Main Street and Orange Avenue. Some commented on the need for expanded neighborhood health services such as medical labs, dentists, and an urgent care, as well as better childcare and afterschool options. Other suggestions for stores and services included a gym, neighborhood Walmart, hardware store, fast food, coffee shops, and affordable day-care.

There was a focus on making the area more family-friendly with family restaurants and community centers. Some younger residents expressed sentiment for getting involved with community service in the neighborhood, as well as having more jobs available for youth. Some participants noted that the segment of Main Street south of State Route 60 should be incorporated in the plan, and suggested that it should be generally improved aesthetically, creating a gateway to the Northside and promoting a natural, new neighborhood commercial strip with local mom-and-pop stores.

Agriculture and Local Agriculture Economy

Many participants engaged in discussions about opportunities for local agriculture, both from a land use perspective and from an economic perspective. Some commented that local agriculture could be paired with farmers markets or farm-to-table restaurants, creating a local food economy. Some reacted positively to incorporating the “agrihood” concept into future development of Pellissier Ranch and in the “Central Park” area, as presented in Concept B. Some suggested the use of agriculture from an educational aspect, possibly creating partnerships with local schools and universities. There were also those that expressed concern about the negative visual aesthetics of “off season” community gardens or gardens that are not adequately maintained.

Cultural and Historical Sites

The Trujillo Adobe and adjacent sites were focal points for many. A contingency of community members voiced strong support for preserving the Adobe. For the Spanish Town element of the plan, many participants noted that they would prefer options that restore and maintain the original adobe, rather than building a re-creation. Many noted that special consideration should be given to the cultural history of the area, and if development occurs, it should focus on appropriately themed uses. Additional comments focused on educational opportunities, historic and cultural preservation, and celebration of historic settlements with consideration of the potential for archaeological artifacts in the area.

Housing

Similar to the first round of community involvement, there were varying perspectives on constructing new housing in the Northside. Some commented that a higher housing density would provide an opportunity for a “live-work” type neighborhood, and that it would help support commercial development and job creation. Others expressed a desire to maintain the rural feel of the neighborhood, preferring low-density housing or no additional housing at all. Some participants noted that the hydrology of the neighborhood should be considered, and that houses should not be built in areas prone to flooding. Establishing a buffer between residential and industrial areas was suggested.

Industrial Uses

There was continued discussion around industrial uses in the Northside, including concerns about growing noise, safety issues, truck traffic, and reduction in air quality. Many participants expressed opposition to



expanding industrial uses (manufacturing, warehousing, etc.) outside of the areas that they currently occupy. Several community members suggested a comprehensive review of the existing zoning code to address restrictions that prevent new industrial uses that could benefit the neighborhood as a whole. Views on development options for Pellissier Ranch were mixed, with some viewing it as a preferable location for industrial, as it is located away from existing residential; and others advocating for minimal or no development out of concerns for open space preservation, community character, traffic and sensitive archaeological resources.

Recreation

Many participants continued to highlight the importance of maintaining and expanding recreational opportunities in the Northside. Offering a diversity of sports activities and facilities to support those activities in the neighborhood was noted to be a priority. Participants generally reacted positively to components that improved parks, and suggested the addition of swings and water features for kids to play on. In addition to outdoor activities and trails, many participants suggested development of indoor recreation options, including an indoor pool and a gym facility. While many participants reacted positively to the inclusion of cross-country trails, there was discussion about how to best implement them into the plan. It was suggested that the project team should continue to work closely with local cross-country organizations to better accomplish this. Additionally, some participants suggested development of a skate park and a dog park. Many participants reacted positively to improved connections between park features, residential areas, and commercial areas, noting that these connections help promote walking and biking rather than driving and parking.

Open Space and Visual Character

Some participants expressed strong views on maintaining open space and community character in the neighborhood, commenting that none of the concepts maintained a suitable balance of development and open space. Others commented that locating parks and open space adjacent to commercial and residential areas could benefit those businesses and their customers by attracting residents and visitors to outdoor areas for eating or relaxing after shopping. The Springbrook Arroyo remained a major focus, with some participants reacting positively to the “daylighting” of the creek, and others commenting that the creek should not be incorporated into developed areas, but should instead remain more natural. Planting of trees and other greenery was encouraged by some participants. Other points of interests were community gardens and agricultural uses. There was continued concern about the flood plain of the Santa Ana River, which was justification given by some for maintaining as much open space as possible.

Overall Process

Some participants expressed concern that the alternatives seemingly focused exclusively on City-owned property and did not address issues faced by the neighborhood as a whole. There was also concern that the project’s planning process did not fully or accurately consider other neighborhood proposals, such as the Springbrook Heritage Alliance’s “Springbrook Heritage Parklands and Walking Trails” proposal, or the adjacent “Roquet Ranch” development proposal in Colton.

Safer Streets and Improved Transportation Options

Safe streets, traffic, and access for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists continued to be a major theme of input from participants. Creating trails for cyclists and pedestrians was discussed, along with improving the walkability of the area, including consideration of safe routes to schools. Comments regarding the poor condition of sidewalks and streets continued, as well as comments on cleanup of trash around the neighborhood. There was also concern about truck travel through the neighborhood, especially along Columbia Avenue, with concerns including congestion and air quality. Improving bus transportation by adding new routes, extending service areas, and adding bus stop shelters was also a topic of discussion.



Springbrook Heritage Parklands and Walking Trails Proposal

Although not a formal proposal by the City of Riverside, representatives from the Springbrook Heritage Alliance (SHA) have shared an alternate vision for the Northside area known as the “Springbrook Heritage Parklands and Walking Trails” proposal. This alternate vision has been in development for a number of years and has also been endorsed by the Northside Improvement Association and the Spanish town Heritage Foundation. The SHA has expressed concern that the draft alternatives presented as part of the Northside Specific Plan effort are inconsistent with the “Springbrook Heritage Parklands and Walking Trails” proposal. SHA representatives identified a desire to include additional open space than what was presented in any of the three alternative concepts presented and the creation of a number of historic preservation areas. They also expressed concern about any development proposed in low-lying areas, referred to in comments as the “flood plain.” Commenters also expressed concern that cultural resources and heritage surrounding the Trujillo Adobe, Pellissier Ranch, and other historic sites are not adequately addressed, and that proposed adjacent development is incompatible. The “Springbrook Heritage Parklands and Walking Trails” proposal, as well as further comments, can be found in Appendix E.

3. Community Organization Meetings

Purpose

In the weeks leading up to the workshop, the Northside Specific Plan team coordinated outreach with various stakeholder organizations by attending their standing monthly meetings in the Northside. The Project Team provided a brief overview of the Northside Specific Plan project launch, purpose, process, and the role of community involvement to meeting attendees. The Project Team also announced the upcoming community workshop, addressed questions, distributed project literature, collected mailing list contact information, and encouraged participants to share project information with their networks.

When and Where

Table 3.1 – Community Organization Meeting Schedule

Organization	Location	Date
Hunter Park Business Council board meeting	Habitat for Humanity, 2180 Iowa Avenue	Tuesday, September 5, 2017
Riverside Neighborhood Partnership	Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main Street, 5 th floor	Thursday, September 7, 2017
Northside Improvement Association	Ruth Lewis Community Center, Reid Park, 701 N. Orange Street	Monday September 11, 2017
Reid Park Advisory Team	Ruth Lewis Community Center, Reid Park, 701 N. Orange Street	Wednesday, September 13, 2017
Beatty Elementary School English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC)	Patricia Beatty Elementary School, 4261 Latham Street	Wednesday, September 13, 2017
Riverside Unified School District	Riverside Unified School District Offices – 3380 14 th St., Riverside, 92501	Friday, September 15, 2017
Beatty Elementary School Parent Teachers Association Meeting	Patricia Beatty Elementary School, 4261 Latham Street	Tuesday, September 19, 2017
Latino Network	Centro de Ninos, Bordwell Park, 2010 Martin Luther King Boulevard	Wednesday, September 20, 2017



Springbrook Heritage Alliance	Ruth Lewis Community Center, Reid Park, 701 N. Orange Street	Thursday, September 21, 2017
Fremont Elementary School ELAC	Fremont Elementary School, 1925 Orange Street	Tuesday, October 3, 2017
Highgrove Elementary School ELAC	Highgrove Elementary School 690 Center Street	Tuesday, October 10, 2017
Highgrove Elementary School Site Council	Highgrove Elementary School 690 Center Street	Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Notifications

Because these activities took place as part of existing, scheduled community meetings, other than coordinating schedules with key staff, it was not necessary for the team to actively promote the events (e.g., publish notifications, social media, etc.).

Attendance

Attendance at each meeting varied, and is reported in the summary of each event below.

Format and Summary

What follows is a description of meetings attended by the Project Team.

Hunter Park Business Council

The Hunter Park Business Council meeting took place on Tuesday, September 5, 2017 at Habitat for Humanity. The Council is one of the Greater Riverside Chambers’ of Commerce six geographical divisions and encompasses the Northside Neighborhood within its district boundaries.

The Project Team attended this event and encouraged the group to outreach to members to attend the next workshop. The Council indicated that the chambers sent a multiple representatives to the first workshop in June and provided information about a couple of warehouse projects (Invesco and the Norton Projects) in the Hunter Park and Northside Neighborhoods. The Project Team addressed questions, distributed the round two fact sheet, collected contact information, and encouraged participants to share project information with their networks. Meeting participants had the opportunity during the break to network with other participants and to discuss the project one-on-one with Project Team members present. There were 15 participants at this meeting.

Riverside Neighborhood Partnership

The Project Team conducted outreach to the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership (RNP), a city-wide council of neighborhoods with representation from all neighborhoods, by attending their monthly meeting on Thursday, September 7, 2017, on the 5th floor of City Hall. The mission of the RNP is to encourage the formation of neighborhood associations city-wide and to provide a forum for neighborhood concerns and community collaboration and mobilization. The City’s Our Riverside, Our Neighborhoods Initiative is implemented in large part by the RNP, and the RNP is staffed by the Community and Economic Development Department’s Neighborhoods Programs staff.



At the meeting, the team announced the upcoming community workshop, answered questions, distributed the round two fact sheet, collected contact information for future project announcements, and encouraged further outreach to RNP-affiliated members and groups. Participants made various comments regarding design standards, land uses, traffic, and further engagement with community members. There were 7 participants at this meeting.

Northside Improvement Association

The Northside Improvement Association (NIA) meets monthly at the Ruth Lewis Community Center at Reid Park, and is the oldest neighborhood association in the City of Riverside, established in 1912. The Northside Improvement Association provides a forum and clearinghouse for issues affecting the neighborhood.

Project Team members attended the monthly meeting on Monday, September 11, 2017, and provided a brief review of the Northside Specific Plan, purpose, process, and the role of community involvement. The team announced the upcoming community workshop, answered questions, distributed the round two fact sheet, collected contact information for future project announcements, and encouraged the participants to do further outreach to their communities. A community member offered to produce and post another sign on his fence regarding the workshop updates. A meeting participant inquired as to who will decide on the final preferred plan and who is producing the three concept plans. There were 18 participants at this meeting.

Reid Park Advisory Team

The Reid Park Advisory Team meets monthly and is comprised of volunteers involved with the youth sports programs at Reid Park. The group serves in an advisory role to the City of Riverside Parks and Recreation staff. On Wednesday, September 13, 2017, the Project Team discussed the Halloween carnival with the group and their participation in the event. They were in the process of developing the “sign-up” sheet for the carnival and discussing a strategy to solicit booths at the event. They anticipated 300-400 children at the carnival. A member indicated that the Northside Our Riverside Our Neighborhood initiative action plan had not been revisited and no action items had been acted on to her knowledge. There were 7 participants at this meeting.

Beatty Elementary School English Learners Advisory Committee

Project Team members met with the Committee on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 to announce the upcoming community workshop, answer questions, distribute the round two fact sheet, collect contact information for future project announcements, and encourage the participants to do further outreach to their communities. Participants’ questions were focused around new schools in the Northside neighborhood. There were 8 participants at this meeting.

Riverside Unified School District

Project Team members attended the group’s meeting on Friday, September 15, 2017. The team provided a brief overview of the Northside Specific Plan’s purpose, process, and the role of community involvement. Additionally, the Team announced the upcoming community workshop, answered questions, distributed the round two fact sheet, collected contact information for project announcements, and encouraged further outreach to the group’s networks. Various comments, concerns and suggestions discussed by board members included funding for improvements to Fremont Elementary School, the timeline of when the Northside Specific Plan will have impacts on the neighborhood, and possible future schools to serve the neighborhood. There were 7 participants at this meeting.

Latino Network

Project Team members attended a meeting of the Latino Network on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at the Nati Fuentes Centro de Ninos, Bordwell Park. The Latino Network organization was established to provide a

forum for the community to address issues impacting the Latino Community, and their monthly meetings generally feature programs relevant to this specific community.

Project Team members attended this meeting and provided a brief overview of the Northside Specific Plan’s purpose, process, and the role of community involvement in the project. The Project Team announced the upcoming community workshop, addressed questions, distributed the round two fact sheet, collected contact information, and encouraged further outreach to the City of Riverside community. There were 38 participants at this meeting.

Springbrook Heritage Alliance

Members of the Project Team attended a meeting of the Springbrook Heritage Alliance on Thursday, September 21, 2017, to observe community discussions about the Northside Specific Plan, announce upcoming workshops and opportunities to comments, and to be available to answer any questions. There were 6 participants at this meeting.

Fremont Elementary School English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC) and School Site Council (SSC)

Members of the Project Team met with the Fremont Elementary School ELAC and SSC members on Tuesday, October 3, 2017 to announce the upcoming community workshop, answer questions, distribute the round two fact sheet, collected contact information for future project announcements, and encourage the participants to do further outreach to their communities. This meeting was part of the focused outreach to Spanish speaking community members. There were 6 participants at this meeting.

Highgrove Elementary School ELAC and SSC

Members of the Project Team attended meetings conducted by the Highgrove Elementary School English Learners Advisory Committee and School Site Council on Wednesday, October 10, 2017 to announce the upcoming community workshop, answer questions, distribute the round two fact sheet, collect contact information for future project announcements, and encourage the participants to do further outreach to their communities. This meeting was part of the focused outreach to Spanish speaking community members. There were 8 participants at the ELAC meeting and 7 participants at the Site Council meeting.

4. Community Workshop

Purpose

A major component of this round of the Northside Specific Plan process was a community workshop, designed to give participants a chance to comment on three concepts developed. These concepts, and their various components, were built upon feedback received during the first round of community input. Interactive formats facilitated discussion of perspectives among community members and provided a space for them to work together in a step-by-step process to provide input.

Participants were also asked to give feedback on a set of draft vision and goals for the project. Tabulated feedback can be found in Appendix A, and electronic versions of the workshop presentation and attendee packet can be found on www.northsideplan.com.





When and Where

Table 4.1 – Community Workshop Schedule

Location	Date
Springbrook Clubhouse, 1011 Orange Street, Riverside, CA 92501	Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Notifications

As part of the notification process, pop-up events and community organization meetings provided a valuable avenue for notifying the community about the date and time of the community workshop. The project team and the community also used other forms of notifications, as outlined below.

Table 4.2 – Community Workshop Notifications

Method
Northside Specific Plan website – www.northsideplan.com
Email announcements
Social media announcements
Electronic freeway signs
Press release
Announcements to City Council, Planning Commissioners, and RPU Board, asking to extend the invitation regarding the community workshop
Press Enterprise community affairs column
Announcement on Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance (DANA) podcast/newsletter/Facebook page
2 Large banners: 1) corner of Orange Street and Columbia Avenue, and 2) corner of Main Street and Columbia Avenue
Grassroots notifications by community members

Attendance

A total of 32 participants completed the sign-in form.

Format and Summary

The format for the second round community workshop included a presentation as well as breakout discussion groups. By sharing information and soliciting input using different methods, people with varying communication styles had opportunities to participate in approaches that they found comfortable and appropriate. In order to accommodate the Northside’s Spanish-speaking workshop participants, a number of team members were available to provide translation assistance in the discussion groups.

Handouts outlining individual components of each concept were distributed to workshop attendees to help guide discussion and to provide a reference for participants as they gave input. Attendees were also provided an input form on which they could record comments and submit directly to the project team. Completed input cards, as well as an example of the handout, can be found in Appendix A.

What follows is a brief summary of the various community workshop segments.

Presentation



Project Team members gave a recap of major themes from the first round of outreach, an overview of three concepts, including a focus on four specific components within each, and presented the major conclusions of the baseline assessment. A draft vision and goals for the Riverside Northside Specific Plan were reviewed. Much of the presentation focused on reviewing the planning concepts for the Central Park, Village Center, Spanish Town, and Pellissier Ranch areas. A copy of the presentation can be found in Appendix G.

Breakout Discussion Groups

Upon signing-in for the workshop, participants received randomized group assignments, signified by a number on their name tag. The purpose of this was to ensure a mix of perspectives were represented in each group. The group discussions proceeded in three steps, facilitated by a member of the project team. Breakout discussion activities were guided by two questions: (1) Do you have any feedback on the Draft Vision and Goals? Have any big ideas been missed? (2) For each of the components, what are the benefits and disadvantages of each?

Step 1: Feedback on the Draft Vision and Goals: This activity began by soliciting general feedback on the plan’s vision and goals, and participants were asked to identify any concepts that should be added or removed.

Step 2: Benefits and Disadvantages: Participants worked to identify benefits and disadvantages for Central Park, Village Center, Spanish Town, and Pellissier Ranch concepts.

Step 3: Reporting Back: A community volunteer from each group reported back on the discussion relating to the “Village Center” component of each concept, as well as missing big ideas.

Notes from the discussion groups and completed comment cards from the workshop are located in Appendix A.

5. Online Input

Purpose

To encourage participation by community members who were unable to attend the workshop or other outreach events, an online input activity was provided, linked to the project website, and activated immediately after the community workshop and Drop-In Session, through Friday, November 3, 2017.

Format and Summary

The online input activity paralleled the community workshop questions: (1) Do you have any feedback on the Draft Vision and Goals? Have any big ideas been missed? (2) What are the benefits and disadvantages of the planning options for Central Park, Village Center, Spanish Town, and Pellissier Ranch?

A summary of responses can be seen in Appendix C.

6. Pop-Up Outreach

Purpose

Additional outreach was conducted to solicit input from the Northside’s Hispanic communities, who may not readily attend





the community workshop due to unfamiliarity with public process, culture and language challenges, and time limits due to work and family obligations.

When and Where

Table 6.1 – Pop-Up Outreach Schedule

Location	Date
Ruth Lewis Community Center, 701 Orange St, Riverside, CA 92501	Saturday, October 14, 2017

Notifications

Notifications about the Drop-In Session were made concurrently with notifications about the community workshop.

Attendance

A total of 11 participants signed in for this event.

Format and Summary

Team members set up project information at the Ruth Lewis Community Center and were available to answer questions from those community members who stopped by. Participants were given the opportunity to explore project concepts and provide feedback.

Feedback from the Drop-In Session is provided in Appendix B.