



# LAND REUSE STRATEGY

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport  
Land Use Strategy (LRS)  
North Area Community Meeting  
February 11, 2016, 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM  
Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church  
Meeting Summary

A community meeting was held on February 11 as part of the PHX Land Reuse Strategy. The meeting consisted of a presentation by members of the Land Reuse Strategy project team, with a Question & Answer session following for meeting attendees.

## **Presentation**

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### **Welcome & Opening Comments**

*Trina Harrison, City of Phoenix Aviation Department (AVN Rep. Harrison)* welcomed attendees and began the meeting by giving a short overview of what the meeting would cover, including why the Land Reuse Strategy is being prepared, a brief history of what led to the project, defining objectives and providing an overview of steps involved in the process. *AVN Rep. Harrison* also showed a map which showed all of the project area.

In 2002, the City of Phoenix City Council approved the Community Noise Reduction Program (CNRP) which produced the Voluntary Acquisition and Relocation Services Program (VARS), the Residential Sound Mitigation Services, and Sound Insulation and Mitigation Services. The Sound Mitigation programs have both ended and the VARS program is in the final stages. This land that the Airport acquired through the VARS Program is the reason for the Land Reuse Strategy, which includes 743 parcels within the program boundary that the Airport now owns.

*Michael Hotaling, C&S Companies (Consultant Rep. Hotaling)* began by thanking everyone for their participation. He first addressed why the City of Phoenix (COP) was undertaking the Land Reuse Strategy. One reason is as an obligation to the regulations set forth by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Because the COP purchased the land with FAA money, they are required to go through a Land Reuse process to develop a long-term strategy. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* also mentioned other benefits to the project including economic development to the project areas.

### **Land Reuse Strategy Overview**

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* stated that there are two major components to the Land Reuse Strategy. One of those is to take a detailed inventory of all of the Airport parcels and document all information. Once you have completed that inventory, the second component is to develop a long-term strategy.

The study breaks down into four major elements:

- Community Engagement – This will be accomplished through a variety of different ways, including technology, interpersonal communication, community leaders, and project committees. The four major stakeholder groups of the project are the community, which is the center of the entire project, the Roundtable Groups, the Advisory Group, and the Project Management Committee.
- Inventory – *Mark Johnson, Ricondo & Associates (Consultant Rep. Johnson)* reported that the project team is nearing the completion of the inventory process. The goal is to have a report to project staff by the end of February. The purpose of the inventory is to document the current status of the properties which includes looking at the city's planning documents, any environmental constraints there may be, documenting what utilities are available, and examining any historical and cultural resources. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* added that the goal of the project was to make sure the outcome does not conflict with outcomes and any other work of other processes and community projects which have already taken place.
- Market Analysis – *Barbie Schalmo, C&S Companies (Consultant Rep. Schalmo)* explained that they would be looking at how the local market will influence and impact this project area. This will be done in the following ways:
  - Potential Land Uses
  - Preliminary Market Analysis – This will be done by looking at what they think will happen in the next ten years. They will also use benchmarking to look at other communities and see how they have utilized nontraditional community development.
  - Demand Allocation Strategy – This will look at how the parcels will play into the local market.
  - Implementation Models – This will explore what options there are.
  - Retention/Disposition Strategy – This will look at the results and start to determine the best options available.
- Strategy Development – *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* stated that the final component of the project is the Strategy Development. Before this plan will be put into action, a draft strategy will be developed which will be reviewed by all stakeholders and city staff, then by the Phoenix Aviation Advisory Board, and then submitted to the FAA for review. A final strategy can then be published.

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* reviewed the study timeline. He stated that it is a lengthy process but it is lengthy for a purpose. There needs to be adequate time to consider all elements of the process which is a continuous process.

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* went on to say that there is another follow-up piece which is the Airport Compatible Land Redevelopment Program. The City of Phoenix took part in an FAA Pilot Program which provides a grant to the city for plan implementation. Phoenix is one of only two airports in the country to take advantage of the FAA opportunity.

## Community Engagement Plan

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* reviewed the Community Engagement Plan which helps guide the process and define the ways in which community engagement will take place. The full document will be posted on the project website.

## Benchmarking Airports

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* stated that we reviewed five other similar airports that have completed FAA-required land reuse studies. This benchmarking process provides opportunity for the project team to learn from these other airports. The airports under review as part of the benchmarking task:

- Seattle/Tacoma International
- Atlanta Hartsfield – Jackson International
- Fort Lauderdale – Hollywood International
- Detroit Metropolitan – Wayne County
- Baltimore/Washington International

## Question & Answer

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*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* opened the meeting up to questions regarding the materials just presented.

*A meeting attendee* asked if there was a feeling for after the plan is finished and what the disposition will be. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that it depends on what the recommended disposition is and what the market will bear. *The attendee* commented that the Airport owns nearly 800 properties which could have a negative impact on the market and the value of the existing properties when the Airport begins to sell them. He would like to see this as a significant consideration in the project. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that it is and some of the benchmarking examples showed that as a key part of the process so as not to disrupt the existing market.

*A meeting attendee* asked what the FAA's interest is in the project. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that the FAA had provided grant funding to the airport to purchase the properties and help relieve noise issues the communities were experiencing. A condition of that grant money is to then conduct this process as the airports are not allowed to keep the acquired properties indefinitely. *The attendee* then asked why the FAA cares. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* explained that the airport cares and the FAA provides grant money to help with development projects and noise projects.

*A meeting attendee* commented that there was a lot of talk about mixed-use plans for the areas which are currently a patchwork of residential properties scattered throughout. What are the plans to incorporate the residential properties into the mixed-use areas? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* explained that the FAA has never allowed residential back in to parcels acquired with federal funding. However, the city sees the North area as having a viable argument for allowing mixed-use residential back into the area as the

noise contours have changed. The FAA answer will not be known until they have been presented with and reviewed the Land Reuse Strategy documents.

*A meeting attendee* stated that given the history of the FAA's plans for noise reduction, have there been any studies done for noise in the areas as the noise contours are now smaller. Could mixed use include residential development, or affordable housing options with the new contours? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that they do believe they have a very good case in the North area to include housing in the mixed-use because of those new contours.

*A meeting attendee* commented that she had lived part of the project area for 54 years. In 1997 a city council representative came and spoke with people in her community about revitalizing the neighborhood and nothing happened. She commented that that area has deep, cultural roots and had been excited at the prospect of revitalizing it. A few years after that meeting with the city council representative, everyone in the area was getting bought out. When community members attended a meeting about this, they were told the FAA had deemed the area "uninhabitable." Residences were torn down but residents were told there would be an effort to save as many trees as possible. All trees in the area have now been taken down as well. *The attendee* commented that she has doubts about the process because in her experience, plans are already made in these types of projects. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* commented that we recognize a lot has happened in the area's history but ask for patience and participation so as to hear these types of comments from residents and be able to communicate back to them about it and ultimately, plan the future of the community.

*A meeting attendee* asked where the remaining houses in the area were located. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that it was easier to see on some of the larger maps and pointed out areas on a project display.

*A meeting attendee* asked how long the process would take. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that it was estimated to have a finished plan in early 2018 and the implementation step could be starting in the next few months. The team for the implementation process had been selected and would be working parallel to the Land Reuse Strategy process. *The attendee* commented that he had been on the City Council during the time when people were getting moved out of their homes and he hoped this process would be better. He asked if the project team would come back to the community with a final report before anything began to be implemented. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that there would be multiple check-in points along the way with opportunities for the community to review the project plans and materials.

*A meeting attendee* asked that because the city currently owns the land, once the process is over, would the land be put up for sale or will there be a percentage that the city has an interest in retaining ownership of. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* explained that that would be looked at in the study process so there is no answer to that question today.

*A meeting attendee* asked what the final timeline was for city ownership since the city cannot own the properties permanently. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* answered that the FAA does not necessarily have a timeline but there are grant assurances which ensure they dispose of the properties in one of several ways as soon as they can. There are land swap options available but there is no hard timeline. *The attendee* then asked that besides dispersing properties to developers, were there any other tools such as grant money to improve the areas. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that the Land Redevelopment Pilot Program grant, which awarded the city \$5 million for plan implementation, was for that specific purpose to help the areas with any infrastructure, or utility improvements necessary to begin improving the areas. The city has selected a team for that process and will likely begin in the next few months.

*A meeting attendee* commented that \$5 million wouldn't buy 800 pieces of property and that he was told the money came from revenue generated from Sky Harbor Airport and not money from taxpayers. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* clarified that all the properties have already been purchased. This \$5 million being talked about is for improvements to the properties to help start leasing or selling off the properties, whatever is decided from the outcome of this process. *The attendee* then asked if grant money was the classification for what bought the 800 properties. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that federal grant money had bought the properties but the properties are already purchased. The \$5 million grant currently being talked about is for a separate process of preparing those properties for a future use. *The attendee* commented that the price that had been offered to residents to sell their properties was significantly higher than the property value. Does the airport know how much they may sell the properties for? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that purchase of the properties was accomplished through fair market value appraisals. In the course of this process, values would be determined through appraisals again when properties were ready to go back on the market. *The attendee* commented that the picture shown in the presentation of a purchased home and the new home a resident was relocated to was not of the same value.

*A meeting attendee* asked if the Motorola issue had been resolved and if everything had been settled for water or if that would be taken care of with grant money. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that *Consultant Rep. Johnson* was collecting that information regarding the Motorola plume and would be evaluating if any additional work would need to be done.

*A meeting attendee* commented that he had noticed multi-family development taking place in the North area in the last few years. Is there anything stopping current land owners from selling their property to developers for apartments or residential structures? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that as long as those developers met building code requirements, the FAA restrictions only applied to land acquired with federal funding through the VARS program.

*A meeting attendee* asked for further information in regards to *Consultant Rep. Schalmo's* comments on the possibilities of hotels being put in and where that might be.

*Consultant Rep. Schalmo* clarified that the process was only evaluating the idea of hotels in the area. They could end up finding that there is a demand for a hotel that would then prompt them to look at where a hotel might make sense based on resources needed by that hotel. Another outcome may be that while there may be demand for a hotel, it might make more sense to locate that hotel off sight. Another important aspect to remember is that it is in a flight path so there may also turn out to be no option for hotels in the project area.

*A meeting attendee* asked if there was any door-to-door activity taking place as part of the process. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that there had been some door-to-door outreach taking place and that kind of feedback is what is needed to make the process a success. *The attendee* added that when dealing with the elderly in the community, the internet and mailings don't always grab people's attention. Face-to-face communication is a better way of reaching out. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* confirmed that there had been a little of that taking place over the last week and he would anticipate more of that happening throughout the course of the project.

*A meeting attendee* asked if noise was the only impact criteria the FAA used. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* confirmed that it was solely for noise purposes and the FAA has a specific fund for noise purposes which is where the money came from for the project.

*A meeting attendee* asked if flight path exclusions, such as building height restrictions, was being looked at as part of the process. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that the data being collected by *Consultant Rep. Johnson* would include any constraints such as those.

*A meeting attendee* commented that the development plans should be for the highest and best use of the area. Commercial and industrial buildings should go in for long term use as the area is ideal with access to the airport, railroad, and multiple major highways. While understanding the history, she suggested the development should go in a new direction of what the area was previously utilized for. Another *meeting attendee* commented that there are still schools and parks in the area that show signs of living there and those should not be wiped out. It was then asked if they would be interested in building new housing. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* stated that because of the FAA restrictions, housing would not be an option on the airport owned parcels. He also reiterated that the goal was to find a blended use for the area that can work for the residents that still remain.

*A meeting attendee* stated that one thing he hopes everyone takes away from the process is that there should not be a repeat of the Golden Gate process where people were displaced. He thanked the city for coming to the residents and stated that they wanted to see an open and transparent process where everyone is involved. He added that he believed they could reach an outcome where both residents as well as business' interests were respected. He stated that he hoped that through the process, people would understand that there are feelings and history involved with those that remain in

the area. *Consultant Rep. Schalmo* asked what progress looked like to him. *The attendee* responded that progress looks like embracing and understanding history, cultures and communities, respecting them, while being inclusive of everyone in the process. He added to have an eye for the future that includes sustainability, and learning lessons from past experiences.

*A meeting attendee* asked if there were any studies being done about pollution. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* answered that there are different actions the airport takes to look at those outcomes but it is separate from this process. There will not be any specific environmental studies taking place.

*A meeting attendee* asked what specific outcomes the project team has seen in situations where there are a patchwork of different use lots left over. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that some examples would be shown in the benchmarking report. However, Phoenix is truly unique from any other city. He added that because the process is also fairly new throughout the country, there is not a deep track record of proven ways to handle this situation. *The attendee* expressed how difficult of a task it will be to find a way to benefit all parties involved, and stated that it would be helpful to see what other cities have done and learn from their mistakes. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* reiterated how important these conversations were from the community meetings to help shape an outcome that would benefit the greatest number of people.

*A meeting attendee* asked how far along the benchmarking cities were in their processes. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that those five cities had completed their plans but were not very far along with the implementation. *The attendee* asked then if everything was still basically on paper. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* confirmed that that was the case.

*A meeting attendee* asked about the other benchmark cities and if they had conducted surveys with the residents in the area. If so, could they have access to the kinds of questions they asked and what they found out in those areas? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* stated that that had not been a specific question to those cities but they could follow up with them. He went on to say that compared to the other cities, Phoenix had a much more extensive community outreach process than most of the others had, some not conducting any outreach at all.

*A meeting attendee* asked what kinds of stipulations the city was allowed to attach to the disposal of properties and if they could have any restrictions to future property owners. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that through this process, they would do just that and make recommendations to the city regarding what kinds of stipulations to attach to certain properties. *The attendee* then asked if they were also then thinking of incentives as well. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that while they were still very early in the process, incentives would most likely be a part of the recommended package to the city.

*A meeting attendee* asked if the intent of the FAA was to acquire all of the residential properties. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* answered that it was a purely voluntary program so they knew they would not have all properties.

*A meeting attendee* asked if they could be shown the project map from the presentation to review the acquired properties in the areas. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* showed that the red parcels were the ones that had been acquired by the airport. *The attendee* commented that if looking east and south of the project area, it appeared that privately, properties were already being transitioned to commercial and industrial uses.

*A meeting attendee* commented that he hoped the process could learn from what has happened in the past to influence the future decisions. He also would like to see more homes come to the area. He asked how many more of the community meetings would take place. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that there were three more rounds of community meetings scheduled throughout the process. He also stated that there were specific project consultants who were brought in to help understand the history and culture of the area and to help guide the process.

*A meeting attendee* asked if the intent of the process is to have the small communities left over stay in the areas or if the intent is to have them removed. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that because it was a voluntary acquisition program, the residents that remained, stayed for a reason. The goal is to develop a plan to integrate those communities into the new development.

*A meeting attendee* asked how the residents that stayed will be integrated into the plans. What are the plans for those residents? *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that there are currently no plans. It is the purpose of these meetings and this process to develop those plans. *Consultant Rep. Schalmo* added that they have to have a starting place for the market analysis which includes hearing feedback and history and ideas. She explained the market analysis process by saying that if they were to look at how the market impacts that area, what would happen. She stated that there is shifting and changing already in the private market and they will look at how that is likely to impact the area in the future. How will that move forward in the next ten years? She stressed that the goal is to blend and reiterated that no one is being asked to leave, but they must begin by having an understanding of who is still there and what resources are available to them to be able to develop a plan.

*A meeting attendee* stated that part of the market analysis is gone with the restrictions of not being able to add residential. *Consultant Rep. Schalmo* stated that the North area may have the residential opportunity.

*Lisa Urias, Urias Communications (Consultant Rep. Urias)* asked what people would like to see in those areas to help restore the communities.

*A meeting attendee* commented that Reinvent Phoenix had developed a 40 and 50 year vision plan. He stated that within that plan, they had looked at developing some of the

parcels into green space or dog parks so as to keep the open spaces but to build on the idea of community. He was not sure if the Reinvent Phoenix plan included the Eastlake Park area or if it was just contained along the Light Rail corridor. He commented that the project may want to be open to those kinds of ideas. *Consultant Rep. Schalmo* agreed that those were the kind of ideas that they wanted to hear.

*A meeting attendee* suggested that tree re-planting should take place as it has many benefits for a community.

*A meeting attendee* commented that there didn't seem to be any opportunity to request specific businesses, such as a grocery store, develop in the area and he didn't see anything that would draw that sort of business to the area. He commented that it seemed the only opportunity left is commercial/industrial land use and questioned what market would even be a viable option to return.

*A meeting attendee* asked if a mixed use/agricultural use was part of the plan. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* replied that it was something to consider. *The attendee* voiced concerns in the city's willingness to return the land to mixed use/agriculture after being commercial use.

*A meeting attendee* commented that he liked the project's commitment to clarity, transparency, accountability, and cultural inclusion.

*A meeting attendee* asked if in the vision, if it would be possible to find parcels that could be assembled to create an economic node that would have access to transportation as there is not a lot along 7<sup>th</sup> Street. He commented that assembling those parcels would then make it possible to look at what is able to be done to revitalize the area. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that the analysis would tell which parcels would have the possibility of being assembled. The question was asked as to what a node was. *The attendee* answered that a node just means an area.

*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* then reviewed the project website and gave an overview of what information could be found on the website.

*A meeting attendee* asked if it was a requirement that the airport have to return the land at some point or if they could keep it. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that there are stipulations set by the FAA that have to be followed regarding keeping and then disposing of the properties.

*A meeting attendee* commented to not let them bring the noise back to the area. *Consultant Rep. Hotaling* responded that noise concerns were a separate process within the airport.

## Closing

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*Consultant Rep. Hotaling* closed the Question & Answer session of the meeting and informed attendees that staff would still be available to answer any questions. He also directed people to visit the project website and provide any feedback they might have. He thanked attendees for their participation and directed any additional input to be submitted to Trina Harrison:

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