



Menlo Park 2019 Progress Report and Needs Assessment

Following the MPNA Focus Areas, the MPNA will focus on the following deliverables in 2019, powered by engaged committees of neighbors, and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and jurisdictions

Transportation and Traffic

- Develop plans and timelines for putting in streetcar signaling along Cushing at streetcar ingress and egress points.
- Proactively establish a strategic plan with ParkTucson forecasting any neighborhood permitting and parking plans, and for Mercado district parking overall.
- Work to activate the State parking garage on the east side of the I-10 for weekend and event parking.
- Have close communication with Rio Nuevo, Gadsden, Ward 1, and City of Tucson about underground parking plans across from the MSA.
- Get updated traffic count numbers from Ward 1 at least twice a year (Jan 2019 and TBD).
- Evaluate the proposed Complete Streets Policy going through Mayor and Council, for relevant initiatives for traffic calming and overall livability that can be applied to Menlo Park.

Progress

- Invited Adam Weinstein (Ward 1 representative to ParkTucson) to a neighborhood meeting to discuss potential strategies
- Got updated traffic count numbers from Ward 1 in January 2019. Plan in place to get updated counts at end of 2019.
- Begun discussion with Ward 1 about streetcar signaling along Cushing at streetcar ingress and egress points

Assessment

- Need to engage the T&T committee more and work on items 1-3 above more proactively.

Development and Preservation and Compatible Use of Open Land (including Historical Preservation)

- Work with Mission Garden to better advertise to the Menlo Park and broader Tucson community.
- Work with Rio Nuevo, County, City and relevant neighborhood and community stakeholders to develop and execute open space plan for the A mountain landfill site.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic neighborhood and development vision/plan for how remaining open land is preserved and/or developed.
- Work with relevant jurisdictions and community stakeholders to ensure **Barrio sin Nombre Improvements** (Westside Development Projects (Ward 1) Memorandum, August 8, 2017) expenditures and improvements are carried out in good order.
- Working with Helen Erickson from the University of Arizona to develop historic preservation plan

Progress

- The Neighborhood Association has been incredibly active with AMLF issues – Westside coalition. Items #1-#3.
- Zach Yentzer (P) and Raul Ramirez (First VP) have been very active with Ward 1, City Manager's Office, and the Tucson Department of Transportation to move forward Barrio sin Nombre Improvements, and in stakeholder meetings facilitated by Ward 1 to figure out best ways to move forward the goals and vision of heritage sites preservation.
- Successfully worked with Helen Erickson from the UA to develop historic preservation plan. See attached shortly.

Assessment

- We are fulfilling these listed strategic goals in a **very satisfactory** way

Housing Affordability and Gentrification

- Work with census and Ward data to figure out areas where older seniors are at risk of being displaced by rising property taxes, and/or predatory prospectors who want to buy homes for less than they are worth
- Work on a property tax exemption/abatement initiative for seniors
- Run a neighborhood campaign informing at-risk residents (seniors especially) about the correct market-rate for their home so they can make an informed decision as to the sale or retention of their home.
- Look into ways that the housing stock in Menlo Park can be increased appropriately to balance supply-and-demand that keeps housing costs lower.
- Explore use of HUD CDBG money for homeowner renovations, and home renovation mortgage programs that make it easier for homeowners and homebuyers to maintain and purchase homes at a lower cost.

- Explore establishment and implementation of a Neighborhood Stabilization and Loan Program to assist low-income homeowners to provide long-term, low-interest loans to those who are paying for more than 30 percent of their income on housing (see University of Texas Study and Austin anti-displacement strategy).

Progress

- Zach working with Ward 1 on items #2 and #3. Data and information pulled, and being organized into something useful for neighborhood distribution. Look for shortly.
- Raul, Steve (Parliamentarian), and Zach active on the Barrio Neighborhood Coalition and Toolbox committee to establish tools that can work for these items in a broader community way, that can be applied locally.

Assessment

- These items are being worked on in a **satisfactory** way, but could be accelerated further and faster.

4. Children, Youth and Families

- Works with the Clean and Beautiful committee to clean up and fully activate the Menlo Neighborhood Park
- Assess opportunities, with Menlo Park's current growth, to re-open the Menlo Park School.
- Assess child care options in Menlo Park as a resource for families and promote those opportunities to working families.
- Engage El Rio as local health care providers to promote local healthcare services.
- Collect and market services for helping families with financial planning and fitness.

Progress

- Zach worked with Mat Godfrey to establish mission and visión around this committee and begin pulling neighborhood interest together.
- Sup. Trujillo visited Menlo Park to talk about TUSD and the re-opening of Menlo Park School (possible based on TUSD plan to break out middle school grade levels again).
- Had a MPNA meeting celebrating Menlo Park School
- Clean and Beautiful committee worked on beautification of Menlo Neighborhood Park

Assessment

- Need to be more intentional about items #3-5.
- Need to activate this committee a little more intentionally

5. Water and Environmental Sustainability

- Work with the Tucson Emerging District 2030 to develop and implement a residential application in Menlo Park, involving homeowner energy and water conservation that saves neighbors money monthly and annually.

Progress

- Neighborhood passed motion to partner with ED2030

Assessment

- Great progress on this area.
- Zach emailed ED2030 reps to talk about next steps. MPNA needs to more intentionally activate this committee.

6. Development of a Neighborhood Plan

- Work with City staff and neighbors to develop a comprehensive and inclusive neighborhood plan that encompasses the areas and focus of this strategic plan.

Progress

- The Menlo Park Neighborhood Planning Steering Committee, led by Wendy (#2 VP) has been one of the most active, working with neighbors, the Ward 1 office and City Manager's office to consolidate resources for writing and implementing a neighborhood plan that works in conjunction with heritage and historic preservation planning.

Assessment

- Probably our strongest and most active working group, both in the neighborhood and also with city staff.

7. Engagement and Outreach

- Ensure that the three areas of Menlo Park (Old Menlo, Mercado District, and Barrio Sin Nombre) are equally represented at Neighborhood meetings.
- Increase participation in the Menlo Park Neighborhood meetings by 50%.
- Work with Menlo Park NA board to schedule "Listening Tours" throughout the year that are hosted in neighbors' houses in different parts of the community to engage neighbors who can't/don't come to the Neighborhood meetings
- Work with MPNA board to schedule more frequent, bilingual newsletters for delivery in the community for neighbors who don't have email, and work with Fundraising to pay for it.

Progress

- Engagement and Outreach team is participated in and supported by neighbors of all three Menlo Park communities. Engagement from/with Barrio Sin Nombre neighbors has been stronger than in the past.
- Newsletter sent out in January 2019, with Spanish-speaker invitation
- Zach met with Pat and Janis about outreach strategy in February 2019, resulting in yard signs around the community promoting meetings.

Assessment

- A strong start with good things happening! Good neighbor efforts needs more executive board support, especially to fulfill the items listed that haven't received as much attention.

8. Fundraising

- Establish crowdfunding platform for neighbors to contribute small funds to specific projects.
- Locate and research neighborhood grants that could be available to fund the elements of the strategic plan.
- Schedule events and fundraisers for funding different projects.
- Work with the various subcommittees to develop fundraising budgets.

Progress and Assessment

- Zach has been busy working with the Ward 1 office on a couple large-dollar Project proposals for parks and planning efforts. Should those end up being possible, they will be brought/have been brought before the neighborhood for final decision.
- Need to pull together the Fundraising committee and team to put in more focused work.

9. Events

- Work with fundraising and other subcommittees to schedule, plan, and execute relevant events and programs.

Progress and Assessment

- Supported the San Ysidro festival as a neighborhood and financially
- Supporting the Dia de San Juan festival financially and with volunteers
- Need to greater support an Events team to be able to in-turn support some of the activities and events of the other committees.

10. Menlo Park “Clean and Beautiful”

- Ensure that public areas are clean and accessible (parks, for example).
- Assist older residents with upkeep of yards and walking spaces.
- Assist with annual A-Mountain buffelgrass and monsoon season maintenance.

Progress and Assessment

- Strong committee team working on park beautification (Menlo Park clean-up earlier in the year).
 - o Now mobilized to more quickly assist older residents with upkeep of yards and walking spaces
- Working with Ward 1 on a 10-year plan to better secure, preserve, and enhance Gethsemane Park! Based on neighborhood motion from earlier in the year to accept a generous offer from a neighbor-affiliated foundation to invest in the Park.
- Zach invited to speak on behalf of the neighbors at the re-opening of the Bonita Park playground earlier in the year.