



Village News



Spring 2005
Volume 2 Issue 1

Just like a bird rising out of the ashes, downtown Phoenix is being born again!

Unlike other metropolitan cities of the same size, Phoenix's downtown primarily inhabits workers by day and is vacated at night. In accordance with the mayor and City Council's "Downtown Strategic Vision and Blueprint for the Future," the city of Phoenix Planning Dept. is doing its part to help revitalize downtown and transform it into a thriving core with amenities that will benefit everyone.

The plan focuses on Community, Connectivity and Integration with seven priority themes to guide the planning process and spur economic growth. The revitalized downtown will foster a knowledge economy consisting of a strong bioscience industry with the Phoenix Biomedical Center at Copper Square anchored by the TGen/IGC headquarters along with a new Medical School and a new ASU Phoenix Campus. The transformed 'heart of the city' will attract more people to the area with new amenities such as a new 1,000-room Sheraton Hotel, Light Rail Transit and the completion of the Civic Plaza Expansion project. This will position Phoenix as a world-class city making it more attractive to conference groups and tourists; ultimately stimulating the economy.

The Planning Dept. will work with the residents of Phoenix, the Central City VPC and the Planning Commission to create a vibrant downtown with a unique character of its own. The plan allows for connected oases with pedestrian pathways with adequate shading, distinctive shopping, various housing options and arts and entertainment venues. To achieve the goals set forth in the plan, we will place a strong focus on Urban Design while preserving historic resources. We value your input and encourage you to participate in community planning meetings. Together we can make downtown Phoenix the place to be!

Sincerely,

Planning Director



David Richert

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Glossary of Terms

**VPC – Village Planning
Committee**

**CLI – Continuous Learning
Institute**

Continuous Learning Institute

March 25 2005



The Spring Continuous Learning Institute (CLI) is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, March 25, 2005 at the City Hall 1st Fl Assembly Rooms, 200 W. Washington St. This promises to be a “must attend” event. The topics for this CLI are: Forming Effective Collaborations for Development in Downtown Phoenix, Planning for our Housing Future and Urban Design. We have managed to assemble an impressive team of experts from the Downtown Phoenix Partnership, T-Gen, Valley Metro Rail, Arizona State University and the City of Phoenix among other organizations.

During the city-sponsored luncheon, the City Council will present the much-coveted “Community Planning Leadership Awards.” These awards will recognize some of the outstanding achievements of our Village Planning Committees.

CLI is designed to build the capacity of our citizen volunteers and operates on the premise that a more informed public makes better decisions for its’ future. It includes but is not limited to workshops designed to inform our citizens, DVD learning modules produced from each workshop that are available for future reference and quarterly electronic newsletters. A segment of each workshop is aired on PHX11 for up to 30 days after the event.

Come enjoy the lively exchange of ideas and be a part of history to help shape the future of Phoenix. Don’t miss out on this enlightening event, call 602-262-6364 to RSVP.

Phoenix Housing Market

Housing in the Phoenix area continues to be a bright spot in the Arizona economy, with record sales of new and resale homes. Prices for new and resale single-family (SF) homes continued to increase, with the median price of resale SF homes increasing from \$155,700 in the fourth quarter of 2003, to \$185,000 in the fourth quarter of 2004. New SF homes rose from \$177,821 in fourth quarter of 2003 to \$207,192 in the fourth quarter of 2004.

The increase in housing price is only surpassed by the torrid pace of sales. In 2003, new SF homes reached 32,699, while 2004 saw a 17-percent increase to 38,285. Resale homes showed an even greater pace with 2003 sales of 73,786 increasing over 38-percent to a sales record of 102,111 in 2004.

Council Adopts Downtown Blueprint

After nearly a year of public dialogue, consisting of Town Halls, neighborhood meetings and city Boards and Commission meetings, the council adopted the final downtown strategic plan, "Downtown Phoenix: A Strategic Vision and Blueprint for the Future" on Dec. 14, 2004.

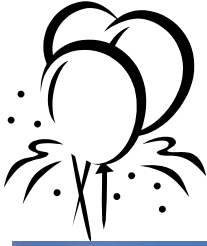
The timing of the plan is crucial with the significant development occurring within the downtown core. Light Rail, Civic Plaza Expansion, the 1,000-room Sheraton Hotel, the ASU Phoenix campus and the recent occupancy of the TGen/IGC headquarters facility at the Biomedical Center at Copper Square.

The plan's three common principles are Community, Connectivity and Integration with these seven priority themes:

- Theme 1: Knowledge Anchors
- Theme 2: Downtown Living
- Theme 3: Great Neighborhoods
- Theme 4: Arts and Entertainment Hub
- Theme 5: Distinctive Shopping
- Theme 6: Great Places/Great Spaces
- Theme 7: The Connected Oasis

Downtown Urban Design Plan

The Planning Commission initiated the process of preparing the Downtown Urban Design Plan which will include Urban Design Guidelines that will provide guidance for future development. The Urban Design Plan is the first step in the process of implementing the vision for Downtown identified in "Downtown Phoenix: A Strategic Vision and Blueprint for the Future," which was adopted by the City Council in December. The Urban Design Plan will include the details that further define the downtown vision and result in the overall coordination of design elements that will create a unified physical environment. A draft of the urban design plan will be completed in May and distributed for community review in June. Once the urban design plan is complete, work will begin on the urban design guidelines with a draft ready for public review in October.



TGEN Dedication Ceremony



The TGen Dedication Ceremony is scheduled for March 22 from 7:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. The ceremony includes a Health & Research Fair which will host exhibit booths from more than 40 TGen partners. The building inauguration is the culmination of a \$46 million project to construct the facility consisting of 170,000 gross square feet of research space, six stories high and 120 feet tall. The facility will eventually employ up to 450 people within five years, earning an average salary of \$70,000.

Civic Plaza Expansion Project Update



On March 5, the contractor began work to bring new power service from the APS electric substation at Fifth Avenue & Lincoln Street to the new utility yard on the south side of Symphony Hall. This work is being completed in phases, and is required to provide power to the expanded Civic Plaza and the new North wind district cooling plant adjacent to Symphony Hall. Work involves excavation of large, deep trenches that will house underground power lines, starting at Washington and Third streets, running westbound on Washington to First St, running southbound on First to Lincoln streets, and running westbound on Lincoln to Fifth Avenue. The Downtown Phoenix Partnership continues to send notices via its fax / email blast network to downtown stakeholders communicating all relevant details. This work should be completed by June.

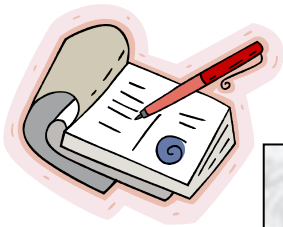


Congratulations to **David Richert** for his appointment to Growth, Land Use & State Land Manager by City Manager Frank Fairbanks. Richert will work out of the City Manager's Office and be responsible for land use planning and development in the outlying portions of the city. In his new capacity, Richert will represent the city with the State Land Department and oversee the Planning Department.

Join the Planning staff to congratulate Assistant Planning Director, **Joy Mee**, on her recent retirement. Joy started with the city as a Planner I - July 26, 1971. Her illustrious career with the city spanned 33 years and in March 2001, she was inducted as a Fellow in the American Institute of Certified Planners. Joy spent her entire career in the Planning Department except for 10 months that she worked as a Management Asst. III in Budget & Research. Joy will continue to serve the department on a part-time basis as a consultant until her former position is filled.

The department will open recruitments for a new Planning Director and Assistant Planning Director later this year. Until the positions are filled, Richert will work in a dual capacity as the Growth, Land Use & State Land Manager and Planning Director.

Karen Craver is the newly assigned planner to staff the Estrella Village VPC and will continue to staff the Laveen Village. For information on either of these villages, contact Karen at 602-534-5829.



Mark Your Calendar

Spring Continuous Learning Institute Scheduled...

The next CLI for VPC members is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, March 25 at Phoenix City Hall (200 W. Washington St.) in the 1st floor assembly rooms. Topics include: Downtown, Housing and Urban Design. **Call 602-262-6364 to RSVP.**

Thank you for your interest in Planning in Phoenix. We want to hear from you and place a spotlight on your Village. Please forward articles regarding new developments, special events or topics of interest to Cynthia Weaver at cynthia.weaver@phoenix.gov for the next edition of *Village News*. Questions should be addressed to Leonard Knight at 602-534-9804. Please keep in mind that articles may be edited to meet spacing requirements. Again, thank you for taking an interest in your community and participating in your Village Planning Committee.

In accordance with the requirements of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the city of Phoenix provides persons with disabilities equal access to its services, programs and activities. The city of Phoenix will provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities whenever necessary to ensure their full participation. For more information, call Theresa Damiani of the Planning Department at 602-262-6368/voice or 602-534-5500 TTY.