



General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

Minutes

Location: City of Mesa Lower Level Council Chambers
57 E. 1st Street

Date: September 25th, 2023 Time: 4:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ron Williams, Chair
Scott Thomas, Vice-Chair
Megan Neal
Ivonne Garcia Rodriguez
Jessica Sarkissian
Jocelyn Skogebo

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Sarah Frechette

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeff Robbins
Rachel Nettles
Brett Hanlon
Ashley Scott

GUESTS:

Marilyn Crosby

1. **Call meeting to order.**

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm.

2. **Approval of minutes from the July 24th, 2023 General Plan Advisory Committee meeting.**

Chair Williams called for the approval of minutes from the July 24, 2023, meeting. Committee member Neal motioned, and Committee member Garcia Rodriguez seconded the motion. Upon tabulation of the votes, it showed:

AYES: Williams, Garcia Rodriguez, Neal, Skogebo

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Sarkissian, Thomas, Frechette

3. **Hear an introduction and receive instructions from the City Staff for recommending concepts for the draft strategies and actions section of the 2050 General Plan.**

Chair Williams welcomed everyone and then asked Jeff Robbins to speak about the instructions from City Staff. Mr. Robbins welcomed the committee to the meeting and

introduced himself and the Assistant Planning Director, Rachel Nettles. Mr. Robbins explained that he sent the committee an email about the meeting materials a week before the meeting so they could have time to review the materials. He also told the Committee that there was a printed copy of the public comments for the committee members. The materials include the 2050 General Plan Survey 1 & 2 Write-In Comments, 2050 General Plan Report Survey 1 & 2, the Community Conversation Interview Summary Notes, and an early draft of the Guiding Principle and Strategies 2050 Mesa General Plan. Staff gave the committee time to review the materials and encouraged them to ask questions.

Committee members Skogebo and Garcia Rodriguez asked City Staff for clarification on the documents and what they are doing today. Staff responded by stating today's goal for the committee is to identify common priorities from the public feedback and recommend the inclusion of these priorities in draft strategies and actions of the 2050 General Plan.

Chair Williams asked the committee if they understood the Staff response. There was a consensus that committee members were not prepared for today's meeting. Chair Williams asked for the committee's opinion on what they would do for the next steps of the meeting. Committee member Sarkissian suggested the committee focus on the high-level topics mentioned in the materials for the rest of the meeting. The committee agreed to focus the rest of the meeting high-level thoughts about public feedback.

The Committee and City Staff agreed to table agenda items for the next meeting and to focus the next meeting on making recommendations for the 2050 General Plan.

Committee member Sarkissian spoke about the 2050 General Plan Survey 2 Write-In Comments and question 8. She noted that the high-level themes are workforce, housing, quality, and diversity of housing. She said she agreed with a write-in comment about the lack of different types of housing in the City. Committee member Sarkissian stated that the need for different housing types is a national problem and multifamily should be expanded in the City. In addition, she believes there are underused areas with open space and parcels that can be improved in the lots and parks. The final topic Committee member spoke to is the importance of managing our water, but she acknowledged that this is largely outside the control of the City.

Committee member Neal mentioned the City of Mesa has a lot of suburban areas and there is a need for diverse housing and affordable housing depending on the family income. She spoke about Eastmark wanting retail and she lives in west Mesa and there needs to be redevelopment within this part of the City. She mentioned how short-term rentals have impacted traffic, parking, and the noise within the neighborhoods.

Committee member Garcia Rodriguez spoke about the water issues and asked what SRP is doing about that. Staff stated this would be a part of the Water Master Plan and the City doesn't have control over or information about this item at this time.

Committee member Sarkissian said that affordable housing is a theme and asked about strategies so people can afford housing and be educated about real estate. Chairperson Williams stated he is not sure how to address the issue. Committee member Neal said mentioned the importance of attainable housing the diversity of housing to achieving affordable housing. Staff responded that the Balanced Housing Master Plan (BHMP) is where the City will have more specific strategies for addressing attainable housing. Chairperson Williams said that there is a public concern that low-income houses can negatively affect nearby neighborhoods. Committee member Sarkissian stated policy needs to be creative. She also said the City should focus for higher density townhomes that people can afford and everyone has to work together to fix the housing issue. She recommended an internal committee to help with the attainable housing issue and also engage policy at a state level.

Vice Chair Thomas mentioned the importance of public transportation near attainable housing. He stated the City does a great job but needs to look at the details and review if apartments have enough parking spots. Sometimes there is not enough parking slots for complexes in the City.

Chair Williams said the next general plan should have the Council City members work with the General Plan Advisory Board so they can discuss their district with the elected body. Committee member Sarkissian mentioned the write-in comments should have asked the citizens what districts they live in. Committee member Garcia Rodriguez mentioned that the City did this in the public meetings with the Urban Lab.

Committee member Skogebo stated nothing so far has addressed the strategies and actions for the historic preservation areas of the city and the impacts are meaningful.

Ms. Nettles reminded the committee that the survey will close next week and asked the Committee to review the land use map via www.tomorrowmesa.com before it closes.

4. **Discuss concepts from public comments and take action to recommend concepts for the draft strategies and actions section of the 2050 General Plan.**

Tabled until the next GPAC meeting.

5. **Items from citizens present.**

Marilyn Crosby, President of Lehi Community Association, thanked the committee for a minute of their time. She stated that she feels like this committee has given them hope and feels that they have embraced where the last general plan fell short. The 2040 plan did fall short for their

neighborhood and she appreciates GPAC caring about their neighborhood. She suggests to the group that they have a roadmap of the General Plan Advisory Committee for the next group to follow in their footsteps.

Chair Williams tells Ms. Crosby thank you for showing up and her kind comments.

6. **Adjournment.**

Without objection, the General Plan Advisory Committee adjourned at 5:43 pm.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the General Plan Advisory Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 25th day of September 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.



JEFF ROBBINS, SENIOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MANAGER