



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

PHASE I – ISSUES AND NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

Prepared by



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In fall 2013, an intensive public involvement effort was undertaken to engage residents, business owners, recreational users and special event visitors in Cave Creek and Carefree to determine the transportation issues they are experiencing and their needs and priorities for addressing these issues.

More than 1,300 community members and visitors participated in this effort through multiple engagement opportunities. These included:

- Online **surveys of more than 500 residents, business owners and bicyclists**
- In-person **surveys of more than 700 attendees at four large, local events**
- Three **community workshops** with business owners, community organizations, special event organizers and recreational users, which drew 42 key stakeholders,
- A **public meeting**, which included 1 elected officials from both Towns and
- **Key stakeholder interviews** with Town staff and community organizations.

Key Findings

Community members in both Towns expressed similar concerns about local transportation problems, as well as potential solutions. The top concerns are:

- **Pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity**
- **Accommodating special event traffic and parking**
- **Adequate business parking, and**
- **Controlling unsafe driving**

To address these issues, community members want safe pedestrian and bicycle connections (either sidewalks and bike lanes or multi-use paths), shared parking adjacent to businesses, more special event parking and a local detour route to minimize impacts of the many special events in the Towns, more enforcement of speeding and reckless driving and improvements in roadway design to slow traffic or reduce other unsafe behaviors.

Community members do not believe major roadway improvements, such as widening or extending streets, are needed. Rather, they want the Towns to focus on





keeping existing streets and landscaping well-maintained and fixing roadway elements that cause driver confusion or traffic and safety issues, such as the traffic circles in Carefree, medians in Cave Creek and some crosswalks in both Towns.

Transit improvements are not a priority for residents, though some see a need for modest transit improvements to better serve seniors and provide a seasonal local shuttle for visitors.

Residents and business owners feel strongly that any solutions proposed to address these issues should be context-sensitive and fit the unique characters and needs of each Town, rather than being a one-size-fits-all solution for both communities or something that might be seen anywhere in the Valley, particularly in “the city.”

A small percentage – about 10 percent – think the Towns are perfect the way they are and no improvements are needed.

The Cave Creek/Carefree area is a mecca for avid cyclists, primarily from Scottsdale and Phoenix, who are attracted to ride there because of the area’s natural beauty and ideal terrain for training. However, cyclists say they don’t feel safe riding there, due to a lack of dedicated bike lanes, limited shoulders and poor pavement quality on most major arterials. Nearly all cyclists who ride in the area come back without their bikes to shop and dine in the Towns, but feel frustrated by local merchants and drivers, whom they say are not bike-friendly. **Bicyclists say dedicated bike lanes/paths are the highest priority for improving cycling in the Towns.**

While local residents believe special event traffic and parking are issues, **most special event visitors are not reporting any difficulty traveling to events and locating parking.** The majority of attendees are parking at local businesses less than three blocks from an event. Those who experienced some issues were visitors who arrived at the highest peak travel time and parked at least one-half mile away at the largest all-day events. Despite experiencing few issues, **most event visitors would be willing to consider alternative parking options**, such as a free event shuttle from a centralized parking lot, priority carpool parking and paying for convenient parking. Most special event visitors are from other communities outside Cave Creek and Carefree – with only one-third being local residents – and the majority has or is likely to return to the Towns to shop and dine as a result of attending an event.

A detailed summary of each public engagement activity is listed in the corresponding sections of this report.

