

## ReinventPHX District-wide Vision for

# *Uptown in 2040*

In 2040, the Uptown District has a unique identity with local, independent businesses in adaptively reused and mixed-use buildings and cool, walkable streets. Distinctive historic neighborhoods have preserved a family-friendly community and sense of place. Multi-income housing and employment are available throughout the area, especially on major streets. Street-level pedestrian-friendly environments include bike and running paths, local farmers markets, and civic plazas. Located near the light rail, the District's parks contribute to an active and healthy community.

### ***Theme: Historic Preservation and Sense of Place***

In 2040, historic preservation anchors the Uptown District. Charming single-family homes in historic neighborhoods are indispensable for unique place-making throughout the District [W2; IN; SE3; SE4]. Although new residents occupy mixed-use, live/work, and apartment-style housing developments along major streets, the “Four Corners” residential neighborhoods still stand strong [SE2; SE3; SE4; W1; W2; IN]. Each

neighborhood sponsors historic home tours, and raise capital to further improve and preserve these prized communities. Their thriving sense of place has attracted residents, business owners, and visitors who appreciate the District's uniqueness and strive to keep it a place in which they are proud to live.

### ***Theme: Economic Vitality with Unique Small Businesses***

In 2040, Uptown is a hub for local independent businesses and entrepreneurial activity that keeps money in the local economy, reduces the use of natural resources, and provides diverse local employment opportunities [W2, VESC; ED]. Local business associations and business incubators centralize support for businesses and entrepreneurs, with both private and government financial support encouraging the continued growth of the strong local economy. Independent restaurants, cafés and coffee shops, retail, and various ‘mom and pop’ shops populate the area, enhancing the draw of the Melrose Curve [IN; SE3; SE2; W2; ED]. The

7th Ave. Merchants Association has also received a national grant to grow businesses along the Curve, bringing in exciting new vintage stores, internationally inspired restaurants, seasonal food markets, coffee shops, and community centers [SE3; SE2; IN; ED]. The Curve's annual "buy local festivals" feature businesses, restaurants, musicians, and artists [W2; SE2; ED]. Wide, shaded sidewalks along the Curve have numerous covered patios, and beautiful landscaping that creates a year-round pedestrian-friendly shopping destination [SE2; GS].

Along Central Avenue and Camelback Road, many businesses are on the ground floor below housing or offices [IN; W2; SE2; LU; GS]. Other shops have moved into adaptively reused buildings that create aesthetic and architectural cohesion in the District [W2; IN; SE3; GS]. The major thoroughfares also house business incubators that develop and support entrepreneurs as they organically maintain the District's character [W2; VESC; ED; LU]. These incubators are innovative, sustainable workspaces sharing creative office spaces, and using green building materials, such as energy-star appliances. They have spurred sustainable adaptive reuse projects across Uptown, and have drawn young professionals in pursuit of entrepreneurial support. This trend has made Uptown a housing destination and has attracted a diverse range of new companies - from eco-friendly wedding dress shops to small, creative design firms. Service and retail jobs available to varying education levels and office spaces offer opportunities

for professionals.

***Theme: Cool Neighborhoods and Active, Healthy Lifestyles***

In 2040, the Uptown District promotes public health and provides improved accessibility to parks and civic spaces along west Camelback road. With cool pavements, complete streets, and shaded open spaces, the District is much cooler. This has made walking more enjoyable for residents and visitors, increased the use parks and promoted active, healthy lifestyles for all [W2; VESC; GS; HE]. Most residents don't use cars to get to work, leisure activities, and entertainment destinations. In particular, buffered bike lanes and street parking have replaced a lane of traffic on Camelback Road.

The District's complete streets provide safe passage for bicyclists and shaded sidewalks for pedestrians [W2, VPS]. In the summer, trees [IN; SE3], solar panel covered parking [W2, VESC], and cool pavements [W2, VESC] reduce temperatures so pedestrians can access amenities even in the heat of the afternoon [MO, GS]. Throughout the District, revenue from historic home tours, local music festivals, and government grants have paid for tree plantings. These projects have built community among residents and families and cooled down and beautified the District.

Cooling initiatives have also increased the use of community parks and outdoor amenities that promote active lifestyles [W2, VESC, IN; SE2; SE3; HE]. Shade trees and canopies provide year-round respite for bicyclists, pedestrians, and visitors, whether they're travelling, picnicking,

or relaxing. Uptown Plaza's shaded courtyard and open-air market has become a model for redevelopment of other large shopping plazas in the District. Safe outdoor spaces, like Steele Indian School Park, host residents and visitors for festivals and movies-in-the-park [VPS, W2]. The city commissioned a local artist to make a large interactive, Sonoran-inspired sculpture in Uptown Plaza, which draws visitors from around the Valley. The plaza art has inspired an increasing number of art galleries, public art exhibits and local art markets around the District. The emergences of these markets has sparked mobile economic development that helps residents share and sell their home crafts and cooking, and builds community around sharing skills and hobbies with neighbors [IN; W2; VPS; ED]. Weekends bustle with the brunch crowd and local residents out to pick up their groceries.

New pockets parks and open spaces dot the interior of blocks, bringing together neighbors out walking the dog or tossing a frisbee [W2, VPS; IN; SE3]. These small spaces help create a sense of place for residents and promote active lifestyles for families and individuals. Larger parks support the District's fitness focus with basketball courts, baseball fields, and the canal enjoyed by runners and bicyclists. Each Sunday morning, residents flood the Grand Canal bank with bicycles, skateboards, and rollerblades.

The canal has shaded and landscaped paths [SE3; SE4; IN] that provide recreation space and a pleasant environment for walks in the District [HE, MO]. Murals and sculptures, desert sunrises, and the

Valley's rich history line the path. Cafes and coffee shops along the banks create a bustling canal "waterfront" where families can grab ice cream after a walk along the water. With this pedestrian and bicycle-friendly canal, multiple parks and open spaces, and safe complete streets, Uptown is a highly connective and active mobility network.

***Theme: Housing diversity***

In 2040, the Uptown District provides a mix of housing stock for different residents. Mixed-use and mixed-income buildings of a range of heights supply a diversity of clean and secure apartments for families and individuals of all ages, income levels, and occupations [IN, W1, W2 VESC, SE3, HO]. Mixed-use and live/work buildings provide services [W2, VESC], and residents can easily commute to work from their apartments, using the light rail or buffered bike lanes along the District's major roads [IN; SE3; W2, VESC]. Ground floor restaurants and coffee shops have created bustling café streets where people grab a morning coffee or stop for lunch. Canopied outdoor seating provides cool restaurant patios and cooler sidewalks for pedestrians [SE3, SE6, IN, MO] walking to outdoor shopping centers.

Vacant and older buildings on major corridors have been adaptively reused for local businesses below lofts and apartments, providing diverse housing stock for residents [IN; SE3, HO]. Taller buildings buffer surrounding neighborhoods from traffic noise on major roads, and the District's aesthetic attracts people from all over the Valley [SE2]. Overall, Uptown

corridors are family-friendly and safe, with diverse housing options, lively local economic activity, and year-round cool, shaded, outdoor entertainment options for residents and visitors.

## **Visions for Investment Areas in the Uptown District in 2040**

### **Investment Area 1: Central Avenue and Camelback**

Theme: A Regional Destination

In 2040, Central Avenue south of Camelback Road is a hub for independent and start-up businesses, with a variety of locally-owned stores, retail, and restaurants unique to Phoenix. This transition area is a regional destination for shopping and dining [IN; SE3; SE4; W1, VESC; W2, VESC], anchored by the shopping plaza containing Hula's Modern Tiki. This neighborhood is a pedestrian-friendly balance of commercial and residential development [IN; SE2; W1, VESC; W2, VESC].

**Theme: Vibrant Businesses in Mixed-use Development**

Central Avenue and Camelback Road is lined with mixed use and live-work buildings [W1, VESC; SE4; IN] hosting cafes, small retail stores, and restaurants on the ground floor, with offices and apartments above.

The 4 to 5 story buildings [W2, VPS] that line Central Avenue buffer surrounding neighborhoods from the noise and activity of the street, and have activated the area's previously vacant lots [SE2; SE3; IN]. There is activity throughout the day, with commuters stopping for coffee before

work, students coming to and from the high schools to the south, and local employees enjoying lunch. Residents and visitors dine, enjoying drinks and the convenient neighborhood nightlife [SE4; SE3; W1; VESC].

The area's live/work buildings have encouraged artists to exhibit in Indian School and Culver parks, as well as in the civic space at Uptown Plaza. Public art, markets, and annual festivals attract people from all over the valley [SE2; SE3; W2, VESC]. Central Avenue and Camelback Road is only more desirable in 2040, attracting professionals and artists to move into the area [W1].

**Theme: A Cool, Walkable, and Accessible Corridor**

With popular, local businesses, restaurants, and residential developments, this section of Central Avenue has transformed into a lively pedestrian environment [W1, VPS; W2, VPS; SE4; IN]. The street is multi-modal, with the light rail, lanes for automobiles, and a shared bike lane that reaches the Bridle Path [IN, W2; VPS]. There are wide, shaded sidewalks on both sides of the street [SE3; W2, VPS], and the bicycle lane has slowed the street's cars. People feel safe walking, biking and enjoying the businesses and parks at any time of day [W1, VESC; W2, VPS; SE4; IN]. Further, increased pedestrian safety has improved light rail ridership, with more neighbors walking to the stations. Parents are more comfortable with students relaxing in the area, now that traffic is reduced and there are people about, "eyes on the street" [SE4]. Walkability, bike lanes, and light rail use have reduced the demand for parking,

and in 2040, District businesses thrive on local bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and light rail users. Uptown is a popular destination, with Central's vibrant commercial streetscape is a major contributor [W1, VESC; W2, VPS; SE4].

**Theme: A Green Corridor**

In 2040, a collaboration between local schools, Central Avenue businesses, and SRP has created a lush, green Central Avenue. The corridor's street trees, small parks, and shade structures have created a beautiful, cool, and walkable street for pedestrians [W1, VESC; W2; SE3; IN]. Visitors and residents can comfortably travel Central Avenue from the Grand Canal to the Bridle Path under well-maintained trees with large, dense canopies. People walk, cycle, and relax in the shade. [SE3; SE4].

**Investment Area #2: Central Ave. & Indian School Rd.**

**Theme: Healthy and Affordable Living**

In 2040, Central Avenue and Indian School Road is home to healthy lifestyles and affordable residences. The variety of affordable housing opportunities attracts a diverse population from artists in live/work apartments to small families in mixed-income apartments [SE2; SE4; IN; W2]. Residents enjoy walking or biking to their destinations on shaded, safe pathways [SE3; SE4; SE5; SE6; IN; W2], and Steele Indian School Park is a landmark destination for sports and recreational programs [SE2; SE3; SE4; IN].

**Theme: Mixed-Income Housing**

The vacant lots that once surrounded

this corner now host diverse housing stock [IN]. Live/work housing draws artists who can exhibit in the park or in the civic space at the new Uptown Plaza [SE3; SE4; IN]. Families of all incomes live in mixed-income apartments [SE3; W2, VESC], some in buildings up to 15 stories, which were constructed to meet the high demand for housing in the District. A strategic partnership between the VA Hospital, HUD and housing agencies led to the development of high quality supportive housing for veterans on the VA campus. The location has been especially great for disabled veterans, as they are now a very short walk to healthcare services and can experience the calming serenity of Steele Park right outside of their doors. The investment has contributed to Phoenix's huge drop in homelessness over the past two decades, which is now one of the lowest in the nation.

The apartments in the area are a short walk or bike ride to both the light rail station and Steele Park, with its art exhibits and hugely popular farmers market [W2, VPS]. Taller buildings gently transition into low-rise toward existing residential areas [SE3]. Ground floor retail and work spaces in the area draw many local residents for lunch and to relax after work [SE4].

Along Central, local restaurants provide outdoor dining in plazas, and food trucks frequent the park for festivals and fairs [SE3; IN]. Residents of the new mid-rise buildings wake up to the Phoenix sunrise and mountain vistas each morning, and enjoy views of lively streets [IN]. PHX Renews, a community-based initiative to transform vacant lots with temporary

activation projects, began here decades ago. The initiative has since been a key catalyst for revitalizing areas all along the light rail system. To memorialize this program, real estate developers along Central have preserved a large community garden that was originally built by PHX Renews. The decision has been a huge payoff, as it's one of the most popular amenities for residents of the fully-occupied buildings.

***Theme: High Quality Recreation and Healthy Food***

In 2040, Steele Indian School Park is a destination for residents and visitors alike. To the north, a shaded path connects the park to the Grand Canal, where people enjoy quiet, shaded walks from the amenities of the park to the scenery of the canal [SE3]. Indian School Park is permeable [IN] and easily accessible by walking, biking, or driving. Trees buffer sidewalks on both Central Avenue and Indian School Road, and give pedestrians shade and quiet from the busy street [SE3; SE5; SE6; IN; W2, VESC]. Central Avenue now has a highly visible shared car / bicycle lane that encourages cycling, improving community health and decreasing traffic accidents [SE3; SE5; IN]. A full service grocery store has been developed on the northwest corner of Central and Indian School, and its front door faces the light rail station. The investment has helped create a new culture of grocery shopping in Phoenix, which was once almost always done by driving to the store once a week. Now, area residents and the 4 million monthly light rail passengers easily drop in to the store on foot or bicycle whenever is most convenient for them. The grocery also has an entire section

devoted to locally grown food. The store's management partnered with local growers who deliver their produce before the weekly farmers market at Steele Park. This has been a win-win, as the store saves on delivery costs and growers have reliable sales each week.

Across Central Avenue, softball fields, basketball courts, and a small skate park have cemented Steele Indian School park as a center for recreational activity [SE3; SE4; IN]. Community members have an Indian School Park event committee, and they plan events small concerts, movies-in-the-park, art shows, and cultural festivals throughout the year [SE2; SE3; IN]. These events have distinguished Uptown in the valley, and helped build a shared identity for the community.

Buildings within the park have been adaptively reused as activity centers for children and senior citizens [IN; SE3]. The dog park continues to be highly popular [SE2; SE3; N2] with pet owners who love the social and relaxing atmosphere [IN]. The park's permeability and many access points help promote physical activity, social cohesion, and neighborhood safety throughout the District (Healthy Communities by Design, 2007).

**Investment Area 3: West Camelback Rd.**

***Theme: A Commercial Corridor***

In 2040, the Camelback corridor balances business and commercial development on Camelback Road with the residential feel of the area. Local independent restaurants, coffee

shops, and retail stores sit a few steps from the sidewalks [SE2; SE3; W1; W2; IN], integrated into a shaded and landscaped street design. Using lighter colored and permeable paving for streets and the remaining parking lots, and installing numerous solar panels for shade, has cooled outdoor temperatures. The panels generate electricity and reduce energy costs for both residents and business owners [W2, VESC]. Restaurants, bars, coffee shops and art galleries encase Uptown Plaza's new civic space. This anchors a lively corridor that hosts new housing developments interspersed with co-working spaces, Changing Hands Bookstore, and Stinkweeds Records. Camelback Road is the spine of attractive neighborhoods that line both sides of the street along the light rail [W2, VPS].

**Theme: Economic vitality through accessible businesses**

The Camelback corridor is full of life. What was once empty lots, shabby buildings, and asphalt parking has been adaptively reused for local business development, or been replaced with new mixed-use buildings offering vibrant and diverse retail at street level and residential apartments in the upper stories [IN; SE2; W2]. Developers at the east end of the corridor were very sensitive to neighborhood concerns about building heights, and have kept new construction to 4 stories or less. Camelback Road is now considered the model for effective height transitions adjacent to neighborhoods. There are some taller buildings (around 7 stories) at 7th Avenue and to the west, with multi-income apartments above ground floor retail and dining [W2,

VPS]. Most buildings are around 5 stories between 7th and 11th Avenues and 3–4 stories between 11th and 15th Avenues [W2, VPS].

In 2040, Camelback Road from Central to 15th Avenue has replaced a lane of traffic with a bike lane, parking and sidewalk expansion [IN; W2]. These changes have stimulated activity on the street, leading to more community interactions and a neighborly culture along the corridor. The street redesign has better facilitated access to the light rail stations and has helped activate both sides of the street [IN; SE3]. In addition, small circulating buses service the Camelback Road light rail stations, easily and quickly transporting residents to the train. The circulators also connect the corridor to Old Town Scottsdale [SE2; SE3], bringing increased retail sales to both areas.

**Theme: Civic Life**

One of the biggest pedestrian improvements to Uptown's Camelback corridor was the redevelopment of the north side of the road between 7th and 11th Avenues. The oversized parking lot has become an open, civic space with an amphitheater [IN; W2] surrounded by mixed use development with housing, restaurants, coffee shops, and nightlife. The amphitheater hosts concerts, speakers, and school recitals and plays, and along with the civic space at Uptown Plaza, has become a gathering point for the whole District [W2]. Many events are free and individuals and families go for unique entertainment. There are also private events there, with a portion of the revenue donated to the Camelback

Business Coalition. The space also brings in various artisan markets [IN; SE2; SE3; W2, VPS], which are popular with both visitors and residents.

#### ***Theme: Cooler Walking Environments***

Most former large asphalt parking lots have been replaced by buildings in 2040. There are still some surface parking lots, but these have incorporated cool pavement technologies and been covered by solar panels [W2, VPS]. The Camelback Business Coalition has been instrumental in incorporating cool pavement onto curbside parking and the main intersections of Camelback Road [SE2; W2, VPS]. This initiative has helped reduce the temperature of the sidewalks and bike lanes where trees and awnings were not possible.

With grants from the Department of Energy, the city has worked with businesses and housing complexes along Camelback Road to install solar panels over parking lots [W2, VPS] to help cool and shade lots while generating electricity. The renewable electricity decreases dependence on fossil fuels and conserves natural resources [W2, VPS]. Enough power is produced for Camelback Road's street lights, and the lights in the Districts plazas and parks, improving safety for pedestrians at all times of the day [SE3; IN].

### **Daily Life in the Uptown District**

#### ***Central and Camelback***

My husband and I moved into a condo on Central a few years ago. A typical day begins with a breathtaking sunrise over the Phoenix Mountain Preserve. We might take a dip in our

building's pool, or have a coffee at Lux and talk with neighbors. We're amazed at the time we save without an entire house to keep up with. In the evening, we often walk to our daughter's bakery on Camelback to pick up our grandson, who we babysit while she is busy selling croissants.

We couldn't ask for a better area to watch such a spirited 5 year-old. There are several small parks close by, so he gets his pick of playgrounds and grassy areas for running around. He has a little bike, and we let him ride in bike lane, now that it's protected from the street. I don't tear my hair out with fear that he is going to suddenly ride into traffic (as I did with my own children). Sometimes we go downtown for a movie. He loves the train, and sometimes seems more excited about the ride than the movie. Plus, it drops us off just one block from the movie theater. How convenient!

#### ***West Camelback***

I've been making wind chimes in the garage of my Yapple Park home for about 20 years now. I sell them at the plazas at Camelback and 7th, and Camelback and Central. I'm a proud member of a small business incubator that specializes in locally made artisanal goods. It's next to a popular coffee shop where patrons sit on the patio listening to my chimes as they enjoy their coffee. Sales have never been better!

Being disabled, I'm lucky to live in an accommodating part of the city. I can get from home to the light rail station in my wheelchair, then it's one stop to my shop in Uptown Plaza. Sidewalks are wide and shaded, with

plenty of room for my wheelchair, and highly visible crosswalks. There are always people about who can lend a hand if I need it. On a typical Friday, you can find me watching a concert in the plaza, playing mahjong with some friends at the park by my house, or sitting outside of my favorite bar on Camelback, watching all of the people enjoy the nightlife.

#### **Central and Indian School**

I live in an apartment at Indian School and Central. As a single mom raising two kids on a teacher's salary, it's wonderful to be able to afford a home in a safe, lively community. We ride our bikes to school every morning. I have to stay later than my kids, but I'm comfortable with them riding home

now that the bike lanes aren't next to cars, and there are so many other cyclists to watch over them.

When they are finished with school, they go to an afterschool program up the street. They take art classes, and sometimes get to work with professionals in a live-work studio a few doors down from our apartment. The artists love that they can afford workspace and don't have to commute. The parks around Uptown host craft fairs and art exhibits, and I often take the kids. I'm also happy to report that I have lost 10 pounds in the last year since I began cycling to work!

**Table 3. Uptown District Stakeholder Engagement Events**

Event	Location	Date	Participants	Activities
<b>SE1</b>	Solano Elementary	3/1/13	8	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>SE2</b>	M7 Street Fair	3/2/13	42	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>SE3</b>	Amerischools Academy	3/5/13	18	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>SE4</b>	Brophy College Prep	3/8/13	19	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>W1</b>	Steele Indian School Park	3/30/13	12	VESC; VPS; Narrative statements; discussion
<b>W2</b>	St. Francis Neighborhood	4/3/13	12	VESC; VPS; Narrative statements; discussion
<b>IN</b>	1-on-1 Interviews	1/28/13—1/15/14	34	Mapping activity and discussion
<b>Total</b>			<b>145</b>	

- Mapping activity: change/stability area mapping
- VESC: visually enhanced sustainability conversations
- VPS: visual preference survey