

The Rio Reimagined

2018, YEAR ONE



OUR COMMUNITY OUR RIVERS

The **RIO REIMAGINED** project, the late Senator John McCain’s desire to revive an expansive and inclusive vision for the Salt River corridor, has had an *exceptional* first year. The University City Exchange office at Arizona State University has served as a project ‘ambassador’, convening 8 river communities and stakeholders since late 2017 in early planning of this complex urban design initiative. The intent of this 50-mile project is a collective effort to create public spaces that enrich people’s lives, strengthen communities, foster economic development, and protect the river ecosystem as a valued natural and cultural asset. We are delighted to recap “*YEAR ONE*” 2018 milestones and highlights:

2018 MILESTONES & HIGHLIGHTS

Project Structure & Federal Partnership

A Statement of Intent

At the official project launch, leadership of all river communities (2 Native American communities and 6 cities), Maricopa County and Salt River Project, formalized political support for the Rio Reimagined – the Rio Salado Project, and committed to move the project forward.

Project Working Group

Designated representatives from municipal, county, state and federal agencies met bi-monthly to facilitate a comprehensive framework for the Rio Reimagined. Focused on understanding existing projects within the corridor, river revitalization case studies across the country, regional resources, creative financing opportunities and programming for a diverse set of environmental, economic and community vitality for project.

2018 MILESTONES & HIGHLIGHTS

PROJECT STRUCTURE

FEDERAL

PARTNERSHIP

CONVENING EVENTS & COMMUNITY

COMMUNICATION

RESOURCE

ASSISTANCE

COLLABORATION

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Zone Subcommittees

Three subcommittees – West|Central|East, met monthly to address geographical synergies including boundaries for project; future community outreach and engagement process; organizational structure; funding strategies (federal, state and local sources), integrated regional community planning; project status and interests.

EPA's Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP)

EPA staff has keen interest in Rio Reimagined as it relates to their award-winning program, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, a cooperative of 20+ federal agencies and 19 national non-profits, supporting 19 urban river system projects across the country. In addition to attracting UWFP interest in Rio Reimagined, ASU has been asked to initiate a university consortium that will convene higher education institutions in science-based support of urban ecosystems within the UWFP program. Lastly, EPA and ASU are drafting a project 'work plan' that will serve as a guide for current and future programming.

Non-Profit Organization

As part of ASU's precedent research and coordination work, efforts began to form a single-purpose non-profit organization dedicated to the Rio Reimagined vision and implementation. This future entity will provide project-specific management, including design framework, funding and communication strategies, policy and advocacy, etc.

Convening Events & Community

ULI AZ Trends Day January

Rio Reimagined informed hundreds of Valley professionals at Urban Land Institute's annual conference.

Project Launch, March

Over 200 dignitaries and community leaders symbolically launched the Rio Reimagined at Tempe Center for the Arts.

Arizona Forward Sustainability Summit

Non-profit origin of the Rio Salado Project focused on Rio Reimagined their Sustainability Summit earlier this spring, engaging over 200 attendees in early project discussion.

Rio Reimagined Federal Partners Tour

Over 50 federal, tribal, state, county and municipal participants spent two days visiting existing and designed projects along the river corridor.

AIA Metro Phoenix, August-November

The local chapter of Architects Institute focused their November competition on Rio Reimagined, resulting in twenty creative design entries for this visionary project.

Communication

Website:

Events and useful community resources...www.rioreimagined.org

Community Presentations:

Educational briefings continue to be provided to many Valley organizations, including Greater Phoenix Leadership, Westmarc, Valley Partnership, AMULLI, Arizona Rock Products Association, etc. as well as numerous conferences (APAA, AZNA, UWFP Training Workshop, AHS)

Rio Reimagined Brochure:

[CLICK HERE](#) for a link to an informative project brochure

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Resource Assistance

Grant funding notifications:

Through its federal outreach, the Rio team has provided cities and tribes with regular notices of grant funding opportunities and continues to actively support the applicant when grants are awarded.

Formation of Water Principles + Workshops:

The Rio Project Working Group requested draft Water Principles on the use of water associated with future Rio projects. The ASU Kyl Center for Water Policy, SRP and municipal water managers collaborated on aspirational statements upholding existing State water law and rights. The team is now designing an educational workshop on how water has been included in existing wash/river corridor projects.

MAG Planning Portal:

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has supported the Rio effort through the design and implementation of a GIS planning portal specific to the Rio project. Plans for 2019 include collaboration and integration of other data sets through academic and non-profit partners.

ASU Research & Academics:

ASU has initiated the design of a data science digital index through Central Arizona Phoenix Long-Term Ecological Research (CAP LTER), and the creation of a customized economic valuation modeling tool through its Decision Center for a Desert City program.

Collaboration

The Rio Reimagined team has actively worked with a number of community organizations and collaborative groups since project inception, including the Lower Gila River Collaborative, Maricopa County Flood Control and Gila River Indian Community invasive species removal projects, the Arizona Cross-Watershed Network efforts to maintain healthy source water and numerous open space initiatives. We are deeply grateful for the constructive partnerships in our community that will ensure our success.

CONGRATULATIONS on a productive and successful 'YEAR ONE' of Rio Reimagined!

We look forward to our work together in the New Year and wish you **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**