



Tempe Crosscut Canal Multi-Use Path



Pedestrian and Bicycle
Information Center

Problem

The City of Tempe needed better bicycle and pedestrian connections to local bus routes and a generally improved multi-modal environment.

Background

Tempe is dedicated to implementing environmentally-friendly projects that provide alternative modes of transportation, improve air quality, and decrease traffic congestion. The 4-square-mile project area of Papago Park's more than 3,300 people helped ensure that a trail would receive high usage.

Solution

The Crosscut Canal Path provided new opportunities for bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians. It also incorporated more than typical lighting, landscaping, and — most impressively — public art that highlights unique elements of the local natural environment.

Planning for the path began in 1998 by the City of Tempe, the Metropolitan Canal Alliance, and the Papago Salado Organization. The City of Tempe coordinated a neighborhood planning process with the North Tempe Neighborhood Association and other residents. Numerous public meetings brought together representatives from a wide diversity of institutions, including the Phoenix Zoo, the Desert Botanical Gardens, the Salt River Project, and nearby cities. The representatives developed a project master plan to aid in preserving the environmental quality of the area. The design team consisted of landscape architects, a local project artist, engineers, and a project historian.

The final 1.25 mile path, completed in 2003, provided an off-street link to neighborhoods and transit services. The innovative art element, called the Centerline, features a six-inch wide granite tile line that runs unbroken down the center of the path until it reaches eight different areas of scenic importance. At these points, the centerline breaks up into abstract patterns reflecting scenic elements such as nearby Hunt's Tomb, large native cottonwood and mesquite trees, mature saguaros, and one of the oldest creosote stands in the region. The additional amenities match the color schemes and materials used to create picnic areas and other improvements in Papago Park.

Results

The project received numerous positive comments from neighbors, the 2003 City of Tempe Beautification Award, and the 2003 Maricopa Association of Governments Livable Community Award. More than 150 people turned out for the grand opening ceremony.



Tempe multi-use path showing
the artistic centerline.



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Contact

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Images Source

*Institute of Transportation Engineers Pedestrian Project Award Application. City of Tempe.
<http://www.ite.org/awards/pedproject/Tempe.pdf>*

