

# El Paso Path Project Public Input Summary

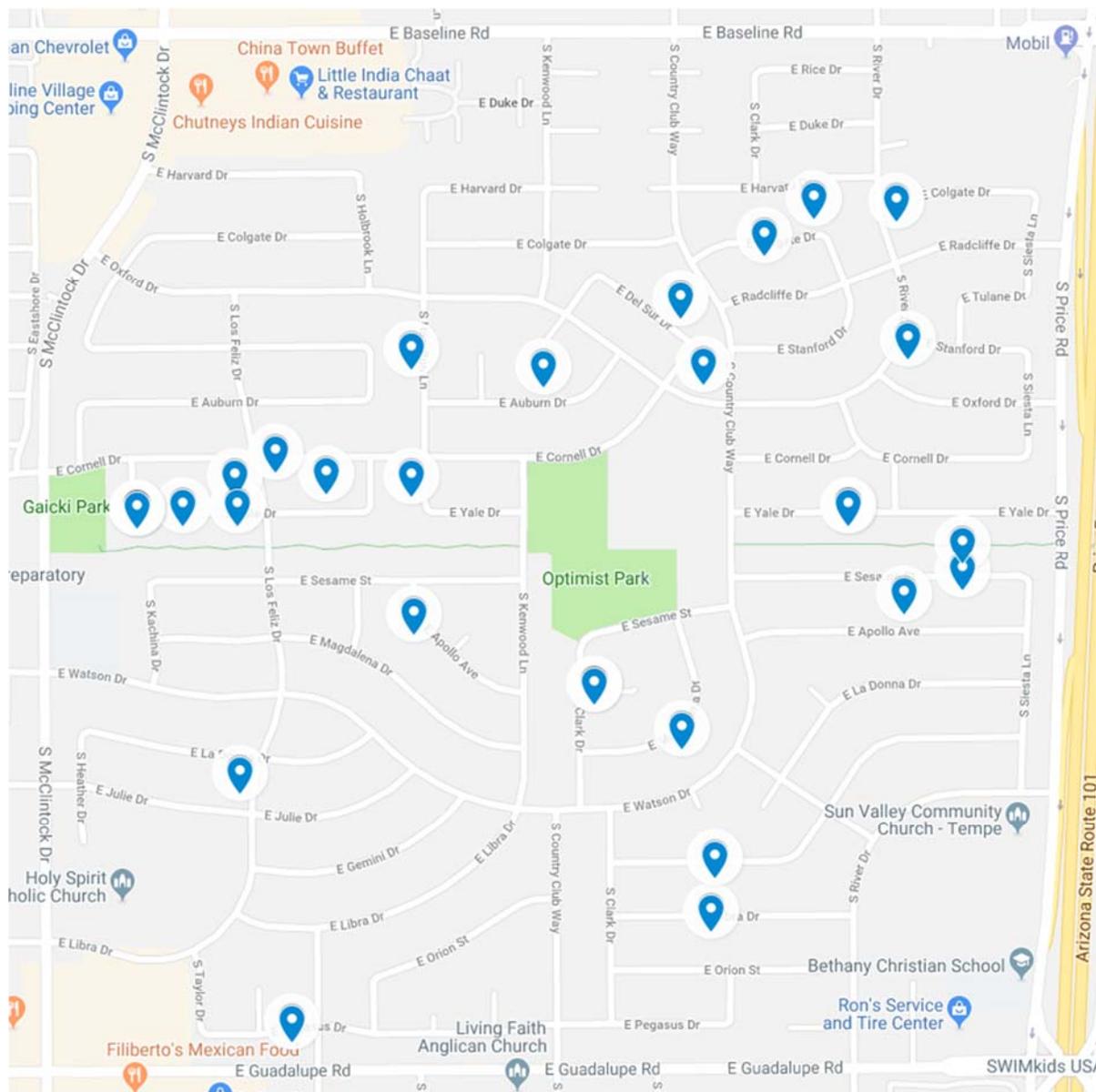


November 2018

## OVERVIEW

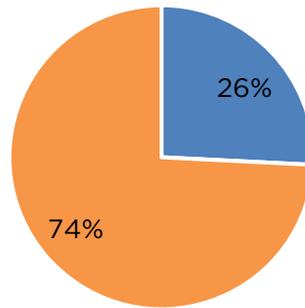
A public meeting was held on Monday, November 5, 2018 to collect feedback on scheduled El Paso Path expansion and improvements, including expanding the path through Optimist Park, lighting replacement and upgrades to landscaping with concrete improvements. Residents in the area of McClintock Drive to Price Road and Baseline Road to Guadalupe Road were invited to participate in the process through direct mail, with additional outreach done through Nextdoor and area neighborhood and homeowners' associations. Twenty-five attendees signed in at the meeting. A total of 31 survey responses were received; 12 at the meeting and 19 online.

## MAP OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



## SURVEY RESULTS

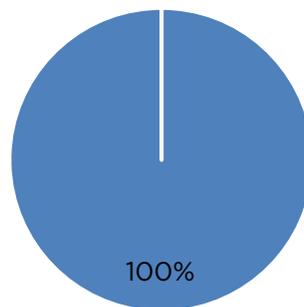
1. Is your home located adjacent to the El Paso Path on Sesame Street or Yale Drive?



■ Yes (8) ■ No (23)

Total responses: 31

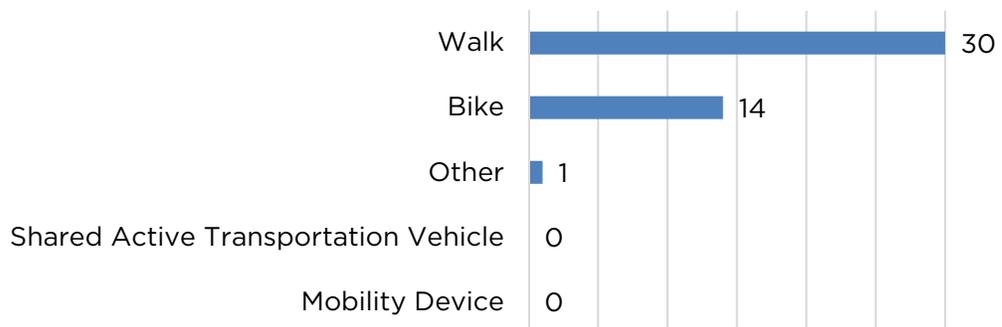
2. Do you use the El Paso Path?



■ Yes (31)

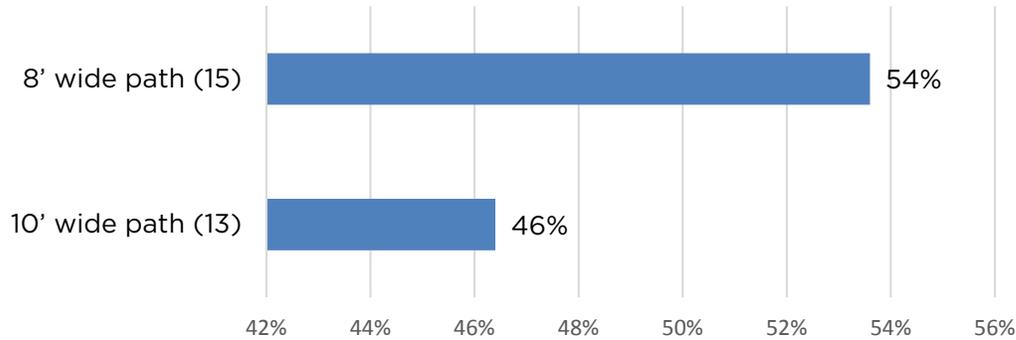
Total responses: 31

3. If yes, how do you travel on the El Paso Path? Check all that apply



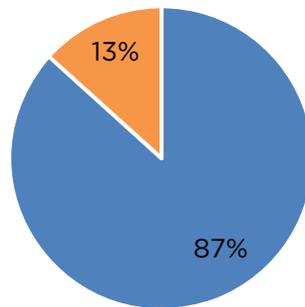
Other: kids push cart

4. Concrete improvements to the path are included in this project. Would you prefer an 8' or 10' wide path? All existing vehicular access will be maintained with either option.



Total responses: 28

5. Are you in favor of expanding the path through Optimist Park?



■ Yes (26) ■ No (4)

Total responses: 30

Why or why not?

Yes responses:

1. It will make the path even more wonderful.
2. My wife and I walk the path but find it difficult to cross the park/school area to reconnect to path on east side. Also, if the path were wider it would be great for bicycles to use without endangering foot traffic. Also the lighting is in disrepair on the Yale street side. I would like to see raised lighting that is difficult to vandalize but with minimum brightness so as not to infringe on homes near the path.
3. I have wanted the continuation of the path since completion of existing pathways.
4. An east-west passage is convenient as opposed to navigating our curvy neighborhood. It gives a nice continuous causeway for exercise or just A-B across. We like being able to walk for 2-3 miles without crossing a major road.
5. I walk the path and would like to avoid mud on the church parking lot. A 6' wide path would be preferable.
6. It only makes sense not to have a break in the path.

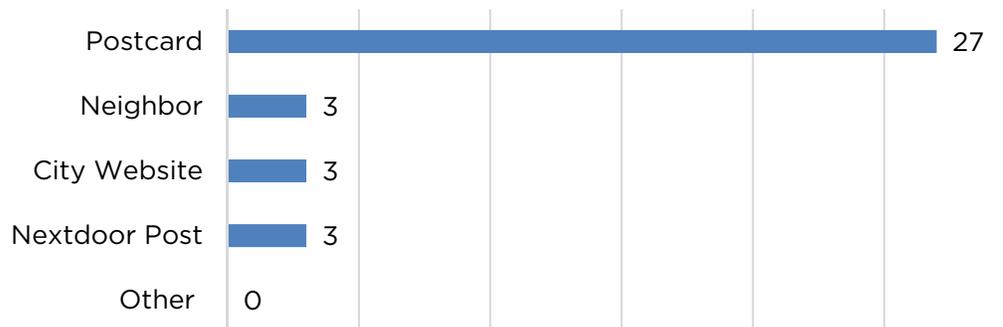
7. If it is done with as little impact to the park as possible, it could be a good connector between the two existing paths. The park is beautiful as it is now. I sometimes ride my bike here, and any extension of biking paths is great.
8. I walk the path daily and I have to walk through the church's parking lot (private property). The school really doesn't use that swath of land so it could be much better used for the path.
9. Sharing the path with other walkers, bikes and scooters. More trees, less plants.
10. It is currently disjointed. A continuous path would be great.
11. To make the path complete. Now you walk a narrow path next to the Fuller playground fence and across the park to Kenwood.
12. pretty hard to pedal a bike through the grass
13. On our walks, we like to use both paths. Crossing south of Fuller is inconvenient due to the church parking lot and uneven grade of Optimist Park. The connection would be fantastic!
14. When using the walkway for exercise between Price and McClintock it is very difficult to navigate around the school, especially during drop-off or pick-up times.
15. The gap in Optimist Park has been a hindrance in walking or biking the path. It would be nice to have a continuous path from Price Rd. to McClintock Dr. and would likely get much more usage.
16. It makes sense for there to be a continuous path. Convenient for those on either end who have mobility issues and would like to add to their walks as they can to increase their therapy, etc.
17. I have always hoped that the El Paso sidewalk pathway would be continued across the Optimist Park because of the possible dog poop one can step into and because of the wet grass and the uneven terrain.
18. I think it improves the utility of both existing segments greatly and improves the walkability of this square mile, which is difficult to accomplish given the traditional car-oriented design of the neighborhood.
19. As long as it does not disrupt other park amenities, I think it is a great idea to create a continuous path for recreation.
20. Seamless paths are best for biking.
21. Depends what you have planned. A simple standard width sidewalk would be okay.

**No responses:**

1. For the small volume of people we see using the path the project seems extravagant and fiscally irresponsible.
2. Will split very large parks into 2 smaller parks.
3. Walking through Optimist park or going around it are no problem at all. The park would seem cut through and divided if the path was extended through the park.
4. You are not talking about expanding through Optimist Park, but about taking the land from the school. I don't want to cut the space out from the school. I would prefer a simple 6 ft wide sidewalk outside the current fence line,

perhaps with a few more trees. Along the current paths, I do not want the current walkways widened, as it will cut into current vegetation, at some places less than 10 ft apart. The path is beautiful the way it is, looks like a Botanical Garden. If you must rip up the walkway, how about you install a softer walking surface, like at school and professional track surfaces? Realize also that the current vegetation was designed to let those who access their back gates to park RVs to get into their gates. If stands are put in to block driving on the path, the RVs would not be able to get in. If stands are not put in, an 8 or 10 ft path would tempt driving traffic. Even stands at the ends could be circumvented. The whole project sounds like a big disruption and waste of money to fix something that isn't broken. Put the money toward more frequent maintenance of the wild vegetation and trash removal on the sides of the alleyway, near the dumpsters. Regarding the lighting issues, upon further observation, 8 ft tall lights will cast light under the trees and will light the path. 12 ft lights will be at the tree level, and simply cast shadows from the tree branches. I appreciate the reduced wattage, but we still look out the back directly into the orbs of the lights. I believe there was some artistic design to the original path. Why is that not included in this renovation? Lastly, I believe there was at one time, some local ordinance that lighting could not interfere with the night sky, could someone find a further reference about that for me?

## 6. How did you hear about this project?



## 7. Additional comments

1. What happened to the 12ft wide option? That is what I would like it to be. (I saw 3 width options on earlier city communications.)
2. Put the lights down to 2500 K. Prefer trees to bushes. Prefer a softer surface than concrete. Have the light be 8 feet tall.
3. Keep lights dim and low so they aren't seen from adjacent backyards. Do not put lights at Heather/Yale alley location. Continue path to park on McClintock Road. Do not put path in the alley to Heather/Yale.
4. Lights non-evasive and dim pathway route should continue to McClintock via parking lot.
5. If they are running fence for the continuation segment across the park could they fence in the northeast corner of the park by Desert Rose Church for a dog park? There isn't a dog park nearby and many people run their dogs off leash, thereby the need is there. This is the largest bedroom community in Tempe; just trying to blend the effort if possible.

6. New lights should be lower than the back fences. Most are 6' tall. Keep path in curvilinear style.
7. So these changes like phase 3. That section is beautiful and is not dealing with the same vandalism.
8. The low lights on the path between S Kenwood Ln & S McClintock Dr seem to be the target of continued vandalism. As nice as they look, it may be better to have taller lights that are more difficult to damage. I'm thinking of the curved light structure at the entrance to the eastern path right at S Country Club Way.
9. You are not talking about expanding through Optimist Park, but about taking the land from the school. I don't want to cut the space out from the school. I would prefer a simple 6 ft wide sidewalk outside the current fence line, perhaps with a few more trees. Along the current paths, I do not want the current walkways widened, as it will cut into current vegetation, at some places less than 10 ft apart. The path is beautiful the way it is, looks like a Botanical Garden. If you must rip up the walkway, how about you install a softer walking surface, like at school and professional track surfaces? Realize also that the current vegetation was designed to let those who access their back gates to park RVs to get into their gates. If stands are put in to block driving on the path, the RVs would not be able to get in. If stands are not put in, an 8 or 10 ft path would tempt driving traffic. Even stands at the ends could be circumvented. The whole project sounds like a big disruption and waste of money to fix something that isn't broken. Put the money toward more frequent maintenance of the wild vegetation and trash removal on the sides of the alleyway, near the dumpsters. Regarding the lighting issues, upon further observation, 8 ft tall lights will cast light under the trees and will light the path. 12 ft lights will be at the tree level, and simply cast shadows from the tree branches. I appreciate the reduced wattage, but we still look out the back directly into the orbs of the lights. I believe there was some artistic design to the original path. Why is that not included in this renovation? Lastly, I believe there was at one time, some local ordinance that lighting could not interfere with the night sky, could someone find a further reference about that for me? Thank you for the opportunity to have input on our neighborhood and our home investment.
10. Neighborhood meetings are great way to find out new information, share information and hear other opinions.
11. Please add trees. Shrubs don't do anything for me. Trees give shade.
12. Placement of shrubs (considering growth) and the impact of lighting would be appreciated. I've had people suddenly appear from behind a bush - scary and didn't see him due to low lighting in bush area. 10 ft would be nice. People with dogs are not always courteous - forcing walkers to move to the gravel to accommodate them. Not everyone is a dog lover.
13. I live on Colgate drive and regularly walk through the park and use the path. Occasionally I bike and when I do there is no problem cutting through the park along the alleyway to the South, then to the sidewalk running south of the playground and around past the church and back to the path again. If the path was extended through the park I feel it would be less attractive and make the park feel disconnected.

14. Please keep the little library where it is. A new bench would be nice but not necessary.
15. The section between Price and Country Club is almost unusable for several days following any measurable rain. The water floods over the sidewalk in several areas. If the landscaping could be modified to eliminate this problem it would be greatly appreciated.
16. The new style lighting is far superior to the old ones and will not be vulnerable to vandalism as the old ones are.
17. We really like the El Paso path and regret that some folks vandalize this amenity and/or fail to pick up after their dogs. Like the desert landscaping. However, it appears that those responsible for the landscaping, especially the trees, have no training in pruning trees. Many are horribly butchered and improperly maintained. When extending the path through Optimist Park, please maintain "open use" access to the Fuller playground, fields and courts. Important active living amenity for our neighborhood children and families.
18. If you are going to have trees and shrubs then you need to do something with the watering system. Plants and trees are currently dying in the path from lack of water. The tree lighting that's proposed would work better and eliminate the vandalism.
19. Excellent idea to expand. Lighting needs to be addressed as indicated.
20. I attended the neighborhood meeting at Fuller School on November 5, 2018. At that time we were notified of the plan to widen the sidewalk from 6ft wide to 8ft or 10ft. I would prefer that the sidewalk remain at its 6ft width. If the sidewalk pathway is widened that means tearing out the cement now there. We waited years for this pathway to be completed and to now have the cement torn out and replaced with a wider slab of cement seems very ambitious and unnecessary. The sidewalk pathway that we have now is sufficient and is pleasant to walk on. The sidewalk pathway is bordered on both sides by wide gravel vehicle sized roads which can and are utilized by runners and bicycle riders leaving the sidewalk for those others who prefer to enjoy walking and observing the birds and butterflies on a peaceful stroll. We have to also be addressing the lighting proposed for all sections of this El Paso sidewalk pathway. I noticed that this response form isn't addressing the lighting proposed for the El Paso sidewalk pathway. We were told that the new light pole replacements for the present lighting will be 12ft tall with softer lighting that will not be annoying to the home owners via shining into their backyards. This is an important concern for homeowners along the pathway.
21. I really appreciate all of the effort that the city is putting into this project. Thanks!!
22. I attended the Oct 5 meeting. I heard comments and concerns which I found enlightening. Furthermore, it seemed some viewpoints were potentially competing. I've summarized below what I think the priorities should be given all fixed constraints of budget, materials and schedule. I think the designers have a lot to consider, and so I hope they have access to the best design/modeling tools that can take into account all these factors.
  1. ----- Maximize Safety -----

- a. Eliminate dark areas (night time) and blind spots (any time of day) that may be formed from configuration of:
  - poor positioning/orientation or lack of adequate lighting (affects night time scenario only)
  - poor positioning of trees and tall bushes (both in relation to lighting at night and in general)
- b. Reduce the incidence and ease of pedestrian loitering at the perimeter of school grounds. I think this is already being addressed.
- c. Reduce vagrancy in general. Someone in the meeting brought up the thought of positioning of bushes in order to make it harder to raise squat shelters. More good ideas like this should be considered in design.
- d. Reduce unnecessary vehicle traffic on path, for example, via adequate use of vehicle blocking bollards.

2. ----- Minimize Light/Noise Pollution -----

- a. Reduce light spillover into back yards from the taller lighting posts to be used. The city rep suggested that the light fixture type should address this, hopefully to the satisfaction of residents. Furthermore, I do realize that this could potentially conflict with 1a, so hopefully designers can properly satisfy both.
- b. Noise is probably not much of an issue here since traffic is primarily pedestrian.

3. ----- Aesthetics and Quality of Experience -----

- a. Vandalism is being addressed by taller light posts, which hopefully are not contributing to light pollution (2a).
- b. I agree with the view point of favoring more trees over bushes as they provide better shade in warmer seasons without screening visibility too much. However, they should be properly positioned in relation to light posts in order not to create dark spots as much as possible at night (1a). Having said that, I'm certainly not in favor of eliminating all bushes and shrubs, as there is something to their aesthetics in combination with trees.
- c. I think 8' wide paths are ideal for accommodating the amount of foot traffic and any wide strollers. 10' might be overkill, but I probably can live with it. Wider paths might be less discouraging to people blazing through on bicycles, however.
- d. I do like the aesthetics of a curvilinear path over a simple straight path. Also, I think the curved path helps to discourage people blazing through on bicycles (depending on the degree of curvature and wideness of the path to start).
- e. I hope the dirt area around the paved path is kept fairly smooth and even so that it can be fully utilized in addition to the pavement. For example, keep it smooth enough for bicycles to easily ride through in case they need to divert from the pavement in order to accommodate pedestrians. Also, I know that I and others like to jog and/or walk on the dirt area and not just the paved path.