

# Community Engagement Strategies



Sustainable Cities Network

Arizona State University

Project Cities



A Spring 2022 Collaborative Project with Arizona State University's Project Cities & the City of Peoria



City of Peoria

BE AWARE OF MR. GRABBY! WATCH OUT!

#ONECITYONETEAM

# **PART 1:**

## **Project and Community Introduction**

**GET TO KNOW THE PROJECT**

**ABOUT ASU PROJECT CITIES**

**ABOUT THE CITY OF PEORIA**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**KEY STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

*This page was intentionally left blank.*

*This report represents original work prepared for the City of Peoria by students participating in courses aligned with Arizona State University's Project Cities program. Findings, information, and recommendations are those of students and are not necessarily of Arizona State University. Student reports are not peer reviewed for statistical or computational accuracy, or comprehensively fact-checked, in the same fashion as academic journal articles. Editor's notes are provided throughout the report to highlight instances where Project Cities staff, ASU faculty, municipal staff, or any other reviewer felt the need to further clarify information or comment on student conclusions. Project partners should use care when using student reports as justification for future actions. Text and images contained in this report may not be used without permission from Project Cities.*

*Cover images:*

**City of Peoria,  
Andrea Passarella,  
and Project Cities**

# **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

## **City of Peoria**

Cathy Carlat, Mayor

Jon Edwards, Vice Mayor

Bill Patena, Mayor Pro Tem

Michael Finn, City Councilmember

Vicki Hunt, City Councilmember

Bridget Binsbacher, City Councilmember (2015-2022)

Brad Shafer, City Councilmember (2022-Present)

Denette Dunn, City Councilmember

Jeff Tyne, City Manager

Erik Strunk, Deputy City Manager

Katie Gregory, Deputy City Manager

Andrew Granger, Deputy City Manager

## **Arizona State University (ASU)**

### **Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory**

Peter Schlosser, Vice President and Vice Provost, Global Futures Laboratory

Meredith Simpson, Director of Operations, Global Futures Laboratory

Dave White, Director, Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation, and Associate Vice President of Research Advancement, Knowledge Enterprise

Diane Pataki, Director, School of Sustainability

*On behalf of the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, the Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation, and the School of Sustainability, we extend a heartfelt thank you to the City of Peoria for enthusiastically engaging with students and faculty throughout the semester. These projects provide valuable real-world experience for our students and we hope that their perspectives shine light on opportunities to continuously improve Peoria's future livelihood and community well-being.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **PART 1** GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE PROJECT

- 4** Acknowledgments
- 6** About Project Cities
- 7** About Peoria
- 8** Foreword From City of Peoria Leadership
- 9** Peoria Community Profile
- 13** Map of Partner Communities in Phoenix Metropolitan Area
- 15** Executive Summary
- 17** Key Student Recommendations
- 18** Sustainable Development Goal Alignment

## **PART 2** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 21** Developing Strategies for Sustainable Living in Peoria through Community Engagement Initiatives
  - 22** Foreword
  - 24** Acknowledgments
  - 25** Community Context
  - 28** Acknowledgments
  - 29** Introduction
  - 35** Research Methods
  - 39** Findings & Analysis
  - 46** Reflections & Recommendations
  - 48** Conclusion
- 49** References

*To access the original student reports, additional materials, and resources, visit:*  
[links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S](https://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S)

## ABOUT PROJECT CITIES

The ASU Project Cities program uses an innovative, new approach to traditional university-community partnerships. Through a curated relationship over the course of an academic year, selected community partners work with Project Cities faculty and students to co-create strategies for better environmental, economic, and social balance in the places we call home. Students from multiple disciplines research difficult challenges chosen by the city and propose innovative sustainable solutions in consultation with city staff. This is a win-win partnership, which also allows students to reinforce classroom learning and practice professional skills in a real-world client-based project. Project Cities is a member of Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities Network (EPIC-N), a growing coalition of more than 35 educational institutions partnering with local government agencies across the United States and around the world.

## ABOUT SUSTAINABLE CITIES NETWORK

Project Cities is a program of ASU's Sustainable Cities Network. This network was founded in 2008 to support communities in sharing knowledge and coordinating efforts to understand and solve sustainability problems. It is designed to foster partnerships, identify best practices, provide training and information, and connect ASU's research to front-line challenges facing local communities. Network members come from Arizona cities, towns, counties, and Native American communities, and cover a broad range of professional disciplines. Together, these members work to create a more sustainable region and state. In 2012, the network was awarded the Pacific Southwest Region's 2012 Green Government Award by the U.S. EPA for its efforts. For more information, visit [sustainablecities.asu.edu](http://sustainablecities.asu.edu).

### PROJECT CITIES TEAM

#### Director

Anne Reichman  
anne.reichman@asu.edu  
480-965-2168

#### Program Manager

Julia Colbert  
julia.k.colbert@asu.edu  
602-543-1218

#### Graphic Design & Communications Assistant

Shraddha Bejgam, Master of Science in User Experience

#### SCN Program Assistant

Catelyn Nieves, Bachelor of Arts in Sustainability

#### Project Cities Program Assistant

Alison Almand, Master of Science in Community Resources and Development

**ASU** Sustainable Cities Network  
Arizona State University

Project Cities



## **ABOUT PEORIA**

Ranked as the No. 1 place to live in Arizona by Money Magazine, the City of Peoria is currently home to over 190,000 residents. The City enjoys a reputation as a family-oriented, active community with an exceptional quality of life. Peoria entertainment and recreational amenities include attractions such as Lake Pleasant, trails, and community parks.

The City has also demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability, as evidenced by its incorporation of LEED building design standards, a council-adopted Sustainability Action Plan, and the "Green Team" staff dedicated to managing organization-wide sustainability initiatives.

## **PEORIA TEAM**

### **Project Cities Community Liaison**

Sharon Roberson, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office

### **Spring 2022 Peoria Project Leads**

Cape Powers, Water Services Director

Kristina Perez, Marketing and Communications Manager

Nathaniel Washburn, Library Manager

Beckie Borquez, Environmental Coordinator

Sharon Roberson, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office



---

*Peoria is the place*  
*World class ▪ Sustainable ▪ Future Ready*  
peoriaaz.gov





8401 West Monroe Street  
Peoria, Arizona 85345  
T 623.773.7300  
F 623.773.7309

February 28, 2022

Dear Peoria community members,

On behalf of the City of Peoria, we would like to express our appreciation to all who have been involved with Arizona State University's (ASU) Project Cities program. Over the last year, our staff has had the opportunity to collaborate with faculty and students across several academic programs, benefitting from their insights, ingenuity, and diverse perspectives on a number of projects. Many of these entailed public participation, and you may have met some of these engaging students at a community event, or completed a community survey.

Project Cities is one of several partnerships we enjoy with ASU, and part of our ongoing strategy to connect with community partners to leverage our resources as we address the many challenges facing local governments. Working with students at an undergraduate, graduate and capstone project level brings a fresh perspective and resourcefulness to complex issues. This partnership has resulted in extensive research, recommendations, and deliverables that take several key initiatives to the next level. These include our efforts around increasing transit ridership, community engagement strategies, historic preservation and innovative recycling methods. Through this partnership, we have developed an understanding of the feasibility of each initiative much more quickly than we could have without their collaboration.

The results provided on each project position us to serve our community with cost-effective and innovative programs in the interest of continuous improvement. The city has already begun to incorporate the students' deliverables into next steps in advancing these projects. We look forward to continuing this work on additional projects in the coming year with such talented students and faculty.

The City of Peoria appreciates the ongoing and growing relationship with Arizona State University and the many ways in which the alliance provides mutual value.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Carlat".

Cathy Carlat, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Tyne".

Jeff Tyne, City Manager

# Peoria, Arizona



Proud partner of

**ASU** Sustainable Cities  
Network  
Arizona State University

Project Cities

*Rio Vista Recreation Center*

## Demographics

total population: **190,985**

median age: **35**

**highly skilled and educated workforce  
of 85,252**

**11,997 veterans live in Peoria**

**78% of residents are homeowners**

median property value: **\$399,025**

**33% of residents hold a Bachelor's  
degree or higher**

median household income: **\$79,700**

## Schools

**#3** of 131 Best School Districts for Athletes in Arizona

**#5** of 40 Best School Districts in Phoenix Metro Area

**#7** of 130 Best School Districts in Arizona

The Peoria Unified School District consistently receives high ratings and offers signature programs such as the Career and Technical Education programs. Deer Valley Unified School District has two highly-rated K-8 schools within the city, including an Academy of Arts.

Peoria is also home to Huntington University, a liberal arts college offering digital media education in animation, broadcasting, film, graphic design and other digital media arts.

## Leading industries

Peoria, Arizona is not just a scenic suburb of Phoenix, but also a thriving economic development hub with an educated workforce and high-end residential living. There are over 4,000 employers and more than 75,000 people employed within Peoria. Leading industries include health care and social assistance, retail trade, and finance and insurance. Highest-paying industries include utilities, manufacturing and public administration. Beyond these industries, Peoria works actively to attract businesses from aerospace and defense, film and digital media, technology and innovation, hospitality and tourism, and research and development. Peoria is the place for business owners, developers and investors.



**Health Care & Social Work**

10,905 employees



**Retail Trade**

10,628 employees



**Finance & Insurance**

6,574 employees



# History

Founded in 1886 by Midwestern settlers, Peoria is nestled in the Salt River Valley and extends North into the foothills around Lake Pleasant. Beginning as a small agricultural town, the economy received a major boost when a railroad spur line was built along Grand Avenue. The construction of the Roosevelt Dam in 1910 secured a reliable water supply, attracting more settlers to the area and business endeavors to the town center. Peoria's economy continued to have an agricultural focus for decades. Continually growing, Peoria assumed city status in 1971 with a population of 4,792. It has since grown into a city with a population over 190,000, and is renowned for its high quality of life and recreational amenities.

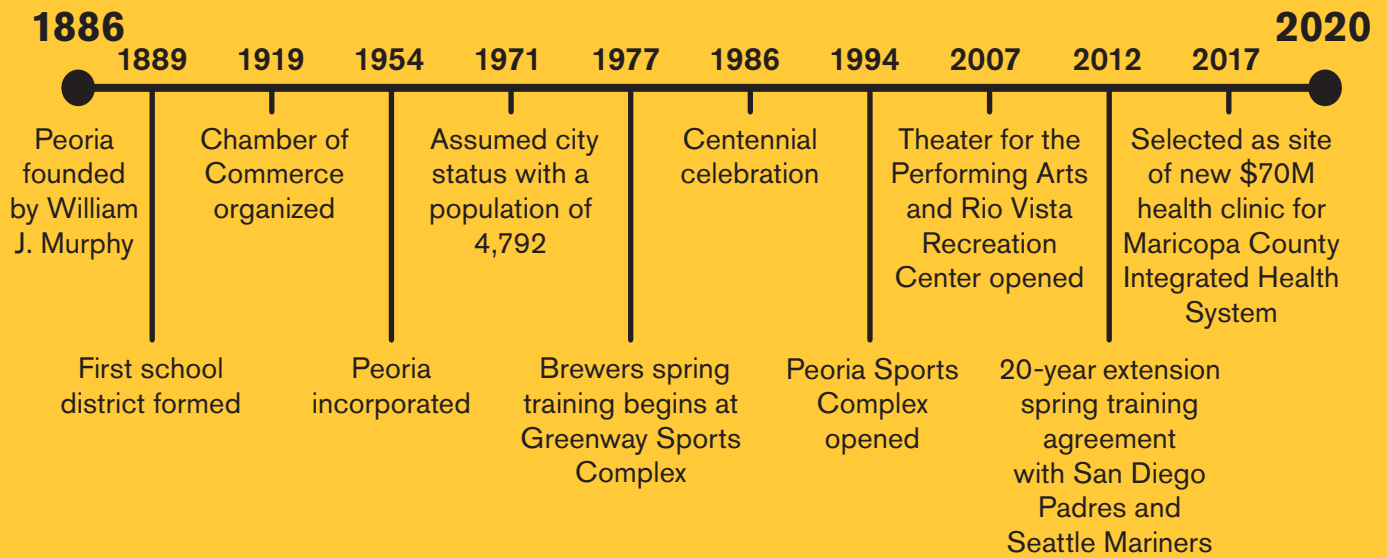
# Sustainability

Peoria has demonstrated leadership in municipal sustainability efforts through a wide range of actions. Listed below are some of the City's sustainability accomplishments.

- Incorporation of LEED building design standards
- Appointment of a full-time city staff member who manages and coordinates sustainability initiatives
- Sustainable urban planning practices including open space planning and water management principles
- Sustain and Gain: Facebook page and brochures keep residents up to date on city sustainability efforts and ways to get involved
- Water Conservation Program: free public classes, public outreach at city events, and water rebate incentives for residents
- Council-Adopted Sustainability Action Plan: this strategic planning document, in its second iteration, ensures city departments are developing sustainability-oriented goals, tracking success metrics, and encouraging cross-communication in the preparation of Sustainability Update presentations made to the Peoria City Council on an annual basis
- Sustainable University: courses and workshops to empower residents to make small changes that make Peoria a better place to live; topics covered include residential solar, gardening, composting and recycling

# Awards and recognition

- Award of Distinction for Technology Innovation, ROBO Ride Autonomous Vehicle Project, 2022 (*Arizona Forward*)
- Best Neighborhood Program for Social Revitalization/ Neighborliness, 2022 (*Neighborhoods USA*)
- No.1 City to Live, Work and Play in 2021 (*Ranking Arizona*)
- Outstanding Facility Award for Paloma Community Park, 2021 (*Arizona Parks & Recreation Association*)
- Best of the West Excellence in Innovation Award for Pop-up Peoria, 2021 (*Westmarc*)
- Top 15 Safest Cities in the U.S. 2017-2019 (*Wallethub*)
- 10th Best City to Raise a Family in 2018 (*Wallethub*)



# Livability

Peoria is renowned as a great place to raise a family and start a career. A plethora of

local amenities and attractions contribute to Peoria's livability. Beyond the tourist attractions of Spring Training and Lake Pleasant, the City offers many community facilities and recreational opportunities for all ages and interests such as an extensive public park system and annual community events. Peoria's dedication toward livability is also evident in the City's latest General Plan which addresses sustainable water use, housing, public services and more.

**Ranked as the No. 1 place to live in Arizona and one of the best cities in the United States.**

*-Money Magazine and Yahoo! Finance*

Peoria strives to uphold these six major livability priorities in order to maintain an exceptional quality of life for its citizens:

	Arts, Cultural and Recreational Enrichment		Economic Prosperity
	Smart Growth		Superior Public Services
	Healthy Neighborhoods		Integrated Transportation

## Community Facilities

- Peoria Community Center
- Rio Vista Recreation Center
- Peoria Sports Complex
- Peoria Center for the Performing Arts
- 39 neighborhood parks
- 2 libraries
- 3 swimming pools
- 5 golf courses
- 9 lighted multi-purpose ball fields
- 15 tennis courts

Peoria Sports Complex



*Lake Pleasant*

# Urban ecology, ecotourism and recreation

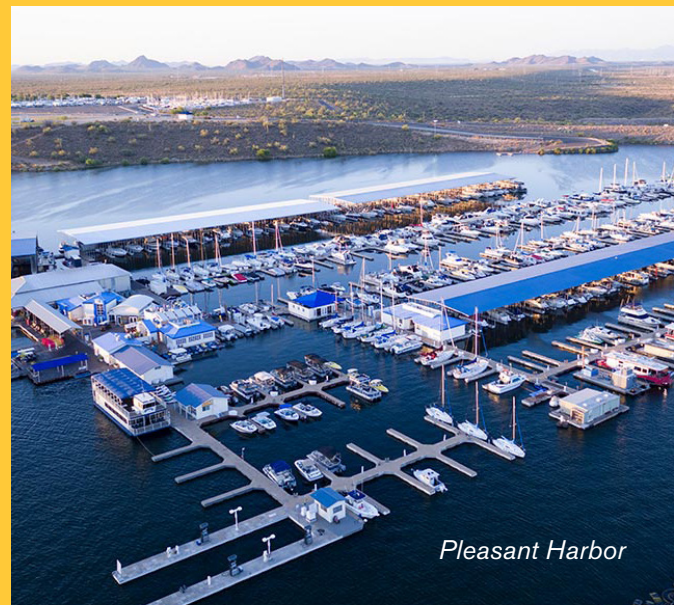
Peoria is surrounded by the natural beauty of the Sonoran Desert and is home to Lake Pleasant, a 23,000-acre park and major recreational asset to the North Valley. The transient Agua Fria River and New River flow through Peoria, as do a multitude of washes and creeks. Most notable perhaps is Skunk Creek — known for the recreational trails running alongside it — which forges a connection between Peoria and Glendale. Northern Peoria is home to beautiful mountains and buttes including Sunrise Mountain, Calderwood Butte and Cholla Mountain.

Boasting over 300 days of sunshine annually, Peoria's ecotourism opportunities are a steady industry for residents and visitors. The City features over 60 miles of trails for walking, biking and horseback riding, as well as 570 total acres of accessible park land.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park contains a full-service marina, providing opportunities for water-oriented recreation such as kayaking, water skiing and even scuba diving. Visitors can also go horseback riding, take gliding lessons, hike, camp and more.

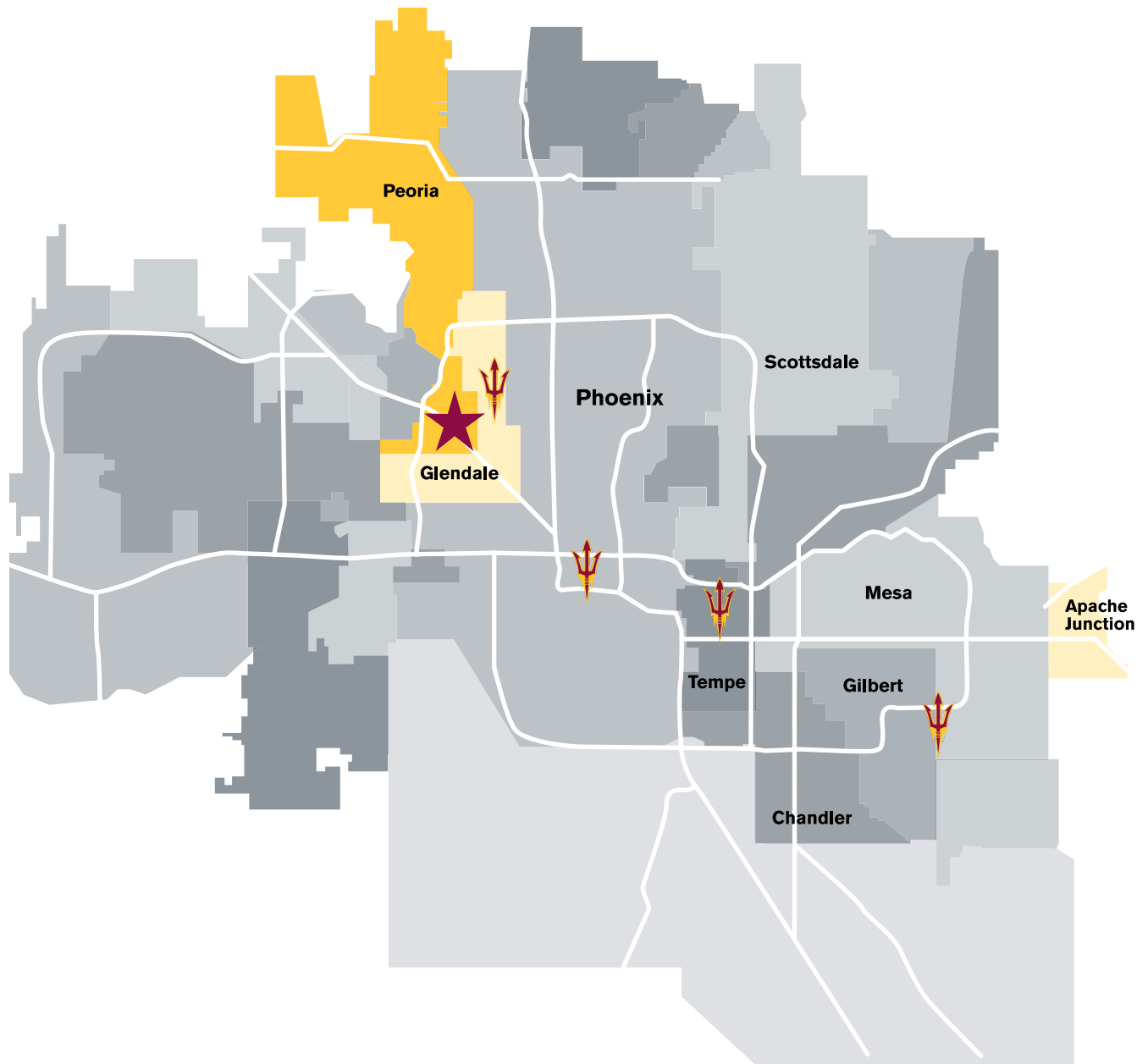


*Skunk Creek*



*Pleasant Harbor*

# MAP OF PROJECT CITIES PARTNER COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER PHOENIX METROPOLITAN AREA



 Peoria City Hall

 ASU campus



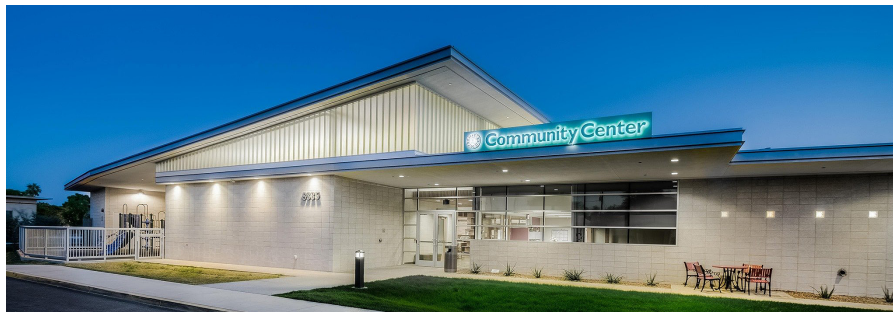
*The following report summarizes and draws highlights from work and research conducted by students in JUS 301/500 Research Methods and JUS 456 Human Rights & Sustainability for the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 partnership between ASU's Project Cities and the City of Peoria.*

*To access the original student reports, additional materials, and resources, visit:*

[links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S](https://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Peoria has long dedicated itself to providing residents with an excellent standard of living, which is reflected in its general planning documents, including its *Sustainability Action Plan* and Livability Initiatives. As a growing community, continuing to engage residents with its planning and information sharing is pertinent to maintaining its livability. Continually engaging with the public is essential for any municipality, and community engagement strategies seek to engage its residents in planning processes.



*Figure 1 Community Center, by City of Peoria*

Given the recent shocks to the community with COVID-19, Peoria's Office of Communication strives to reach all Peoria residents with community activities like public engagement processes, public safety updates, and much more. In order to better communicate with its residents, the City is interested in identifying its "hard-to-reach" residents to design strategies for reaching these populations.

In the fall 2021 semester, students from LaDawn Haglund's **JUS 456 Human Rights & Sustainability** course met with Peoria staff to interview them about sustainability initiatives in the City and how the community was engaged during those processes. Student focus areas were based on topics from the Peoria Sustainability Town Halls hosted in spring 2021. Students were asked to watch the Town Halls before meeting with the City staff so they could ask questions through a series of virtual interviews. Students analyzed the interviews to write a report of their reflections and recommendations for the City of Peoria. The students' findings were then used to inform the project scope.

Concurrently during the fall 2021 semester, three graduate students from Greg Broberg's **JUS 500 Research Methods** course created a project plan, which the students from his spring 2022 **JUS 301 Research Methods** course put into action. Undergraduate students in the School



of Social Transformation conducted surveys of Peoria residents to gauge how residents receive information. Through an online community survey and an in-person survey, students analyzed Peoria residents' perception of community services, such as childcare, financial resources, and resource accessibility. Students then crafted recommendations for the City of Peoria to consider in expanding its community engagement efforts and identifying Peoria's hard-to-reach residents.

The following student research is intended to provide Peoria with additional ways to communicate to Peoria's residents. Students recommend expanding Peoria's communication methods, including social media or through a neighborhood app. Additionally, survey results revealed that residents would like expanded community services, such as childcare and financial resources. By expanding its reach to all Peoria residents, the City of Peoria can carefully consider how to engage community members further to inform its planning efforts.

## KEY STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for community development	Read more
Develop a Peoria neighborhood app that can serve as a social networking space for Peoria residents, where the City can communicate directly about upcoming community events and services.	pp.42, 47
Partner with local childcare services to expand childcare access to Peoria residents.	pp.42, 47
Collaborate with Peoria's local banks and credit unions to develop informational programs about financial resources for Peoria residents.	pp.42-43, 47-48
Consider conducting focus groups with Peoria residents to identify desired activities that Peoria residents will want to engage in.	pp.43-44, 48
Expand Peoria community events, such as art and food festivals, to further engage uninvolved communities.	pp.45-46, 48
Maintain regular communication with Peoria residents through the City's social media, mailers, and community events to reach all Peoria residents.	pp.48

# CITY OF PEORIA PROJECTS: ALIGNMENT WITH THE UNITED NATIONS'

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As the leading international framework for sustainable decision-making, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) lay out a path for partnerships toward global peace and prosperity. The SDGs provide a set of goals and metrics for project impact to be measured, offering an illustration of the benefits experienced by the cities, towns, and students who participate in a Project Cities partnership. For details on the SDGs, visit [sdgs.un.org/goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals).



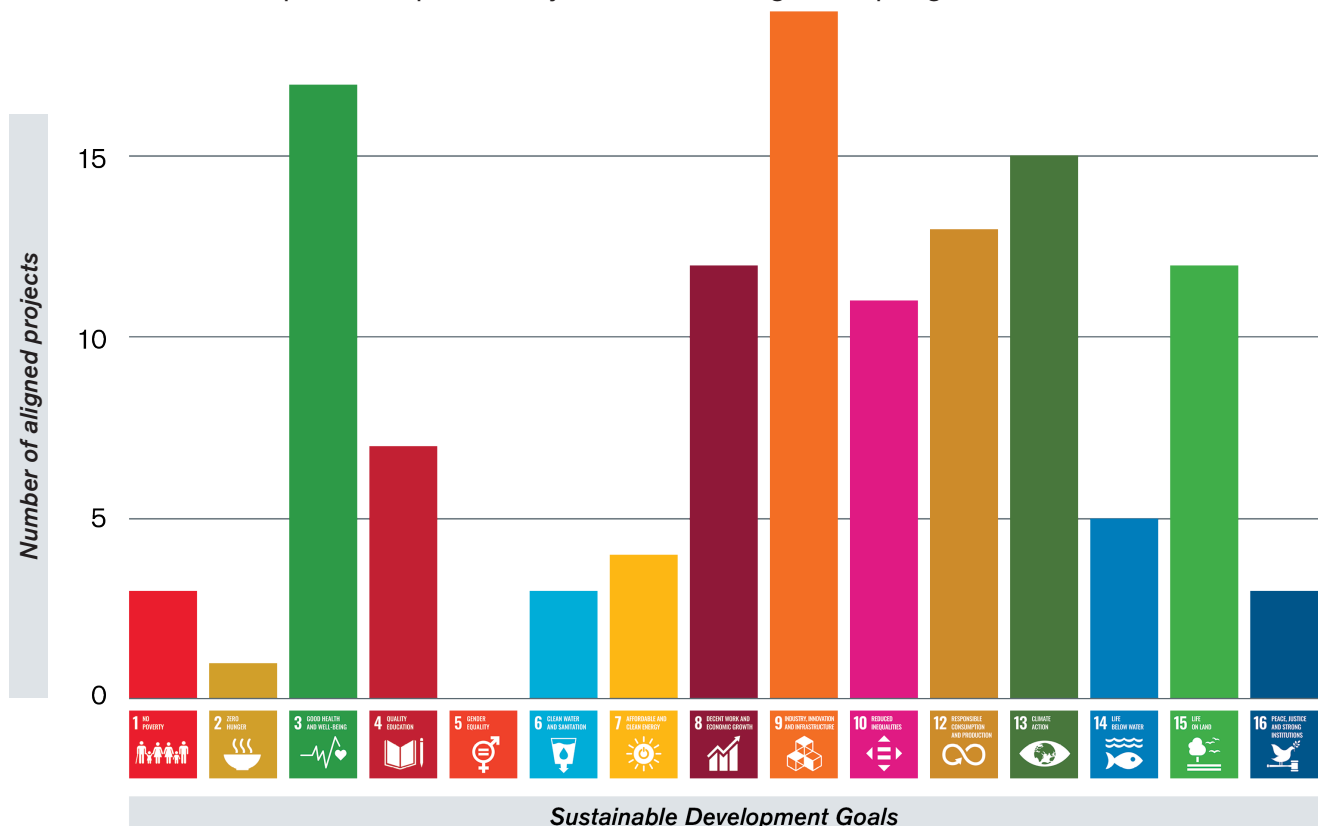
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Every project in the PC program aligns with SDGs 11 and 17.

The figure below illustrates SDG project alignment throughout the City of Peoria's partnership with Project Cities, through the spring 2022 semester.



## TOP THREE GOALS ADDRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING REPORT

The multi-semester projects presented in the following report touched on a variety of challenges related to community engagement, including recommendations to improve community input processes and strategies for engaging hard-to-reach populations. The research covers an array of sustainability efforts in Peoria, but primarily addressed SDGs 3, 10, & 16.



### **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being**

*“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.”*

Messaging about community resources and services, especially relating to COVID-19, gives people the tools to lead healthy lives.



### **Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities**

*“Reduce inequality within and among countries.”*

Improving information accessibility for vulnerable populations can provide essential resources for community members.



### **Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

*“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”*

Efforts to engage hard-to-reach audiences seek to create inclusive communities by engagement.

*This page was intentionally left blank.*

# **PART 2:**

# **Community Engagement Strategies**

**DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING IN PEORIA  
THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**JUS 301/500: RESEARCH METHODS &  
JUS 456: HUMAN RIGHTS & SUSTAINABILITY**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

**FACULTY:  
GREG BROBERG  
LADAWN HAGLUND**

## FOREWORD

The City of Peoria strives to provide its residents with the best standard of living through its dedication to sustainability, economic development, and growth. As the City continues to expand its sustainability efforts through its *Sustainability Action Plan* and Livability Initiatives, community input is paramount to designing resilient communities. In partnership with Project Cities, the City of Peoria has actively sought community-engaged research to inform their efforts through three years of student projects. Project focus areas span topics such as community forestry, sustainability planning and funding, placemaking, water conservation, housing, and more. Through this partnership, students have reached Peoria residents through virtual surveys and community events like the Halloween Bash, as well as facilitating town hall sessions to gather input on Peoria's future planning efforts.

---

### *Editor's Note*

---

The City of Peoria released its first sustainability planning document in 2009, the *Sustainability Action Plan* (SAP). Since then, the City has made continuous updates to the planning document through resident input. In preparation for the third revision (SAP3), the City partnered with ASU Project Cities on several sustainability planning projects with graduate and undergraduate sustainability students. In August 2022, the City adopted the *Sustainable Peoria Plan*, which outlines the City's new sustainability goals and initiatives, as well as the release of a virtual dashboard to illustrate progress towards those goals.

Read more about the student work at [http://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaPlacemaking19F\\_Report](http://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaPlacemaking19F_Report)

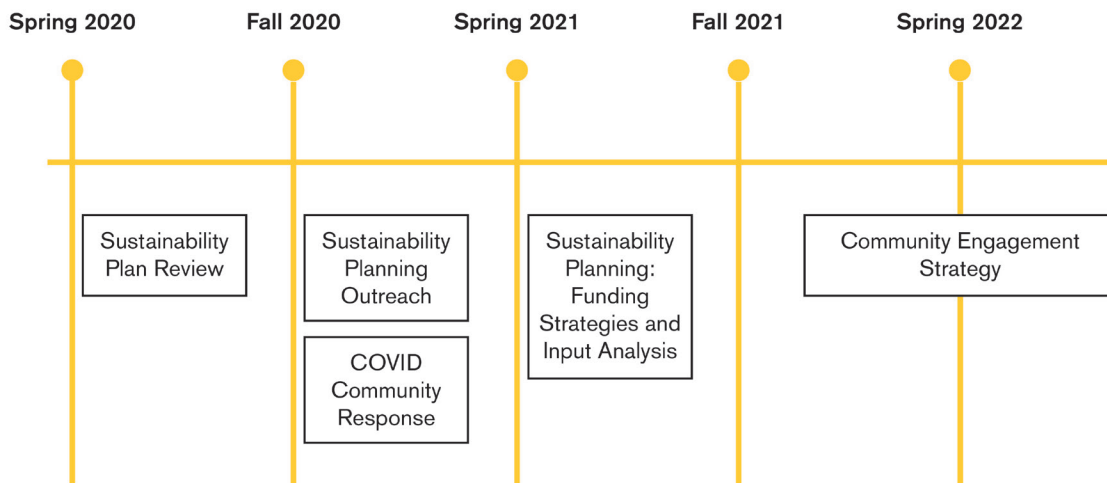
---

As COVID-19 struck Peoria in spring of 2020, students from the School of Social Transformation, School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning, and School of Social and Behavioral Sciences collaborated during fall of the same year to provide a snapshot of **COVID community impacts** relating to local businesses, organizations, and communications messaging. From this research, students demonstrated a clear need to better communicate with Peoria residents about its services as they relate to COVID-19 mitigation. As students conducted interviews with local organizations, students identified a pressing need for better community outreach to not only individual community members, but local businesses and organizations to provide accurate and reliable information about COVID as it progresses.

As a result, additional projects were affected by the barriers posed by the pandemic, including the **sustainability planning** group, composed of students conducting Town Hall sessions in the spring of 2021 with the community to gather feedback and input on the *Sustainability Action Plan* updates. From this, the students identified a unique opportunity for community engagement: virtual sessions and meetings to provide an opportunity for community members to participate from their homes. However, this led to a new challenge: *How might the City of Peoria effectively share information about these opportunities with residents so that Peoria's services can be community-informed?*

As Peoria continues to grow and cultivate its livability, continued community engagement is crucial to designing community-informed policy and practices. As the COVID pandemic shifted the way in which community members engage with each other, as well as their local government, renewed strategies for community engagement seek to share critical information with Peoria community members, as well as continue to engage residents to inform community-based efforts throughout the City of Peoria.

The findings and recommendations provided by the students in the following report are ultimately a culmination of five semesters of student efforts surrounding community engagement in Peoria. While the landscape of community engagement is ever-changing, especially in local government, the student findings aim to highlight new opportunities and ideas to engage hard-to-reach audiences in Peoria.



**Figure 1** Timeline of community engagement-focused Project Cities projects from 2020-2022



# LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR COMMUNITY-INFORMED RESEARCH

## Faculty

LaDawn Haglund

## JUS 456 Students

Breanna Aispuro Perez	Taylor Miller	Kai Sanford
Christopher Arteaga	Bryn Norwood	Annika Sra
Samantha Davis	Jazmin Nunez	Daanish Tung
Anh Giang	Kiara Ortloff	Ashley Waldron
Camryn Grimm	Mary Pagnillo	Malia Wilson
Anisiasunta Guzelides	Fiza Qazi	Audrey Wood
Vanessa Guzman	Caroline Quintero	
Rachel Lee	Arielle Rauch	
Olivia Lovejoy	Bianca Ren	
Liliana Luna Rodriguez	Marissa Ruiz	

## Editors

Alison Almand  
Shraddha Bejgam  
Julia Colbert  
Anne Reichman

## Peoria Staff Team

Kristina Perez  
Sharon Roberson

## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Sustainability is a driving force for the City of Peoria, and the City is empowered to do so through continuous engagement with the community. Through its sustainability planning and SustainableU educational courses, the City has demonstrated a clear commitment to educating and engaging the community on its sustainability vision. To develop its *Sustainability Action Plan 2.0*, the City employed several strategies to involve resident input in the plan's design and planning process, both through surveying and virtual town hall sessions. Through its engagement strategies, the City aspires for a collaborative planning approach with the Peoria community; however, barriers to access, including COVID and information accessibility, can limit its reach.

As part of a multi-class community engagement project, students in LaDawn Haglund's Human Rights & Sustainability course conducted virtual interviews with Peoria staff members about the City's sustainability initiatives and what the city is doing to advance its livability initiatives. Student topical categories were based on Peoria's Sustainability Town Halls, hosted by Peoria's Water Services and Sustainability Coordinator as part of a spring 2021 student project.



**Figure 2** Topical categories discussed in the Peoria's Sustainability Town Halls meetings



**Figure 3** Town hall meeting on Natural Systems & Community Forestry, by City of Peoria



**Figure 4** Town hall meeting on Community Health and Wellness, by City of Peoria

Following the interviews, students reflected on their conversations with Peoria staff and highlighted recommendations for the City to consider to advance its sustainability efforts. While the recommendations covered many topics such as urban forestry, transportation, and community education, the students identified a common need for continued community engagement. The City of Peoria remains a leader

in sustainability, and it is crucial to continue engaging all community members to better inform the community services the City offers. With this in mind, students working with Greg Broberg in the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters continued the efforts of LaDawn Haglund and her students to deepen the City's understanding of how to engage with community members. More specifically, hard-to-reach residents who may have been absent from the Town Halls due to a variety of accessibility issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The efforts of JUS 301 students aim to reach beyond those engaged through the Sustainability Planning project from spring 2021 to ensure the City of Peoria is offering the best quality of life for all residents.



**Community Engagement and Education- Engage the community in the development and implementation of sustainable policies and practices while continually offering education to citizens on conservation and sustainability.**

- Create an engagement plan for the sustainability plan process that allows the community to shape the goals and actions.
- Provide continual education opportunities on sustainable topics through the Sustainable University program

Victoria Carter



**Figure 5** Town hall meeting on Community Education & Outreach, by City of Peoria

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

## Faculty

Greg Broberg

## Graduate Teaching Assistants:

Andrea Passarella  
Bianca Ren

## Peoria Staff Team

Kristina Perez  
Sharon Roberson

## JUS 301 Students

Talal Ali

Damaris Andrade

Kitziha Beltran

Cass Castle

Alexis Chapman

Natalie Chavez

Ayden Clytus

James DiBona

Jaylene Drummer

Sarah Garnica

Zachary Gonzales

Madysen

Gonzales-Haro

Olivia Graves

Kasey Hales

Hunter Hedelius

Audrey Javalera

Jeannette Komya

Gabriella La Caria

Chelsea Langerud

Alex Lopez

Melanie Lopez

Guillermo

Liliana Luna

Rodriguez

Michael Monroe

Tatiana Nunez

Rachel Okuagu

Zoe Olbricht

Jezelle Olivares

Analisa Rael

Devon Schroeder

Gabby Simpson

Arianna Taddey

Alexandra

Tarnopolski

Courtney Tarr

Jessica Tolento

Veronica Wendt

Mitchell Wilson

Julianna Wold

Nayeli Zarate

Eyerus Zenebe

## JUS 500 Students

Andrea Passarella

Biance Ren

Natasha Davis

## Student acknowledgment statement

*Dr. Broberg wants to acknowledge Andrea Passarella and Bianca Ren, graduate students who supported this project from the beginning. Additionally, he wants to recognize the students who actively participated in the design, implementation, and data analysis associated with this research project. Dr. Broberg and the students would like to also acknowledge our colleague from the City of Peoria, Kristina Perez. They would also like to thank Julia Colbert and Alison Almand from the Project Cities staff for all their support throughout this effort.*

# INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation and involvement have long been essential themes in the development and sustainability of local communities (Head, 2007). In this sense, the term **community** encompasses the ability to communicate with one another and with the municipal government. For several years, the City of Peoria, Arizona, has partnered with the ASU Project Cities program to understand, develop and reimagine this concept of community. Most recently, an area of interest surrounds the issue of citizen groups and media access. A driving force surrounding this interest is the ongoing discussions with municipal leaders, administrators, and staff related to outcomes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

---

## *Editor's Note*

---

Students from the fall 2019 cohort worked with Peoria's Communications department to research Peoria residents' perceptions about placemaking in their communities, specifically focusing on three of Peoria's character areas, including Old Town Peoria, P83 District, and Four Corners.

Read more about the student work at [http://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaPlacemaking19F\\_Report](http://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaPlacemaking19F_Report)

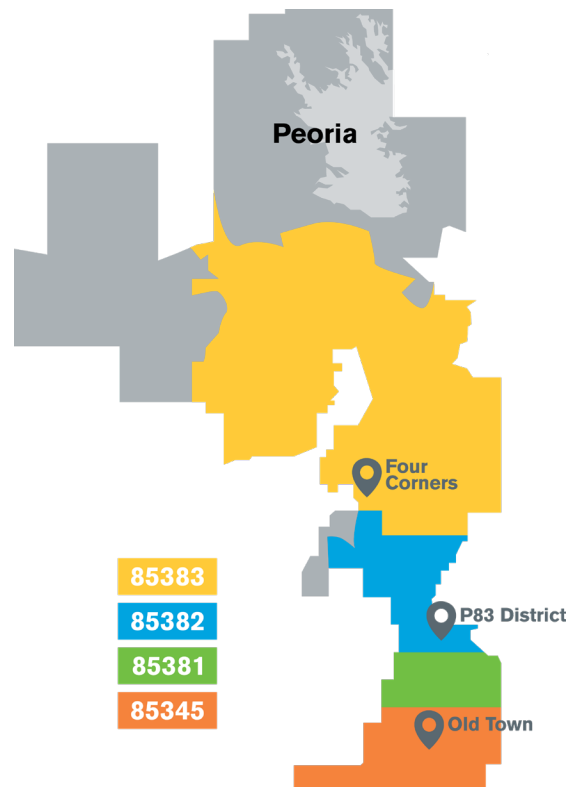
---

To advance the understanding of citizen group use of media, 39 undergraduate students from Dr. Gregory Broberg's JUS 301 Research Methods course collaborated with Peoria's Communications department to answer two research questions:

1. How can we engage the voices of residents in Peoria with particular attention to the communities deemed hard-to-reach?
2. What information has been disproportionately left out of the hard-to-reach communities?

To address the research questions, students conducted two data collection strategies: a community-wide survey and a participant observation activity. The community-wide citizen survey intended to capture a wide range of perceptions related to resource accessibility, childcare, access to financial resources, community involvement, and information accuracy/public engagement. The participant observation activity directly engaged community members to capture an even broader perspective from residents who may not necessarily have access to

or respond to traditional surveys. The results of these two efforts aim to validate the effectiveness of existing outreach efforts and open discussion about new possibilities for engagement.



*Figure 6 Peoria zip codes and study areas*

## **Community engagement**

According to the Pew Research Center (2017), nearly 57% of Americans participate in some community group or organization, including about 11% who say they participate in four or more community groups. Reports by local governments outlining their priorities or approaches to maximize citizen involvement comprise the majority of community engagement practices. At a national level, community engagement as a participatory approach has been leveraged to uncover the complexity and interconnectedness of many local problems (Head, 2007).



**Figure 7a** Peoria Pop-Up Van, by City of Peoria



**Figure 7b** Peoria Pop-Up mobile unit, by City of Peoria



**Figure 7c** Pop-Up Van Volunteer, by City of Peoria

**Figure 7** Peoria Pop-Up Van event designed to bring the City of Peoria into communities in order to engage with residents in meaningful ways.

Citizen participation and involvement have long been important themes within the concept of community engagement. Within scholarly and popular accounts, the term community is often associated with fellowship and inclusion (Dempsey, 2010). There is a growing movement within the United States and internationally to identify strategies for social and economic development, specifically to build capacities for self-management (Head, 2007). The capacity for self-management is essential for citizen groups with an increased need to access municipal, non-profit, or community-based services. These services include housing support, child care, and financial services.



Community engagement can take a variety of forms. Often, it is associated with gathering input from community members to inform local policies. However, it can also be associated with events, festivals, and culture building to cultivate a greater sense of community.

Within local governments, there is an increasing appreciation of the benefits of involving local citizens in identifying problems and contributing to the solutions. Recommended new approaches include greater citizen engagement and public consultation in various social, political, and program contexts (Head, 2007).

Peoria community event elements		
Event name	Event elements (+)	Event elements (-)
Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple hours</li> <li>▪ Public restrooms</li> <li>▪ Available street parking</li> <li>▪ Weekends</li> </ul>	
Art Adventures for Kids at Peoria Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free</li> <li>▪ 1-hour long</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited spaces</li> <li>▪ Non-recurring event</li> </ul>
Second Saturdays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free</li> <li>▪ Street vendors</li> <li>▪ Public parking available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Available during a specific time frame</li> </ul>
Party for the Planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free volunteer clean-up event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific dates and times vary</li> <li>▪ Locations vary</li> </ul>

**Figure 8** Examples of Peoria community events in 2021-2022



**Figure 9** Students from Peoria schools participating in Neighborhood Pride Project, by AZFamily Digital News Staff

---

*Editor's Note*

---

The City of Peoria is very invested in the perspectives of its residents. In fact, the City has administered 13 surveys over the past two years to gather input on how to improve local services. Survey topics have ranged from community forestry, sustainability planning, *Master Plan 2040*, and the arts.

The City lists its past community surveys at <https://www.peoriaaz.gov/government/departments/office-of-communications/surveys>.

---

Regarding events like Party For the Planet and Art Adventures for Kids, the accessibility of said events is a factor to consider in community engagement. Attendance may be difficult to coordinate for residents that work throughout much of the day. The City may consider additional efforts to coordinate the open availability of community events in order to increase engagement. Moreover, another factor that may inhibit engagement in issues of accessibility. Many clean-up events under Party For the Planet occur in distant places, meaning that transportation and accessibility present an issue for those reliant on such services. However, it is important to note that these are only a few factors to consider when discussing community engagement. The topics of transportation and accessibility resources happened to be the most noticeable and addressed for these specific events. Each of these events aims to accomplish the goals of improved community engagement and bring citizens more “in touch” with municipal staff. However, whether these individuals reach citizens who may lack a close connection to municipal offerings is unclear.

**Editor's Note**

Hard-to-reach often describes a subgroup of a population that is difficult to reach, particularly in health services and research.

Some scholars have argued for a more critical view of community engagement efforts. This redefinition seeks to view communities in terms of their heterogeneity, seeing communities as much as points of exclusion as they are by inclusion. **Focusing on the diversity of communities seeks to answer questions of how social, economic, and political differences shape engagement.** Engagement within this context surrounds issues of voice, who may speak or represent issues on behalf of the community, which could be especially important in communities where citizens have a high level of disengagement from community activities and services (Dempsey, 2010). These groups can be defined as **hard-to-reach**.

Accessibility is critical to understanding how communities engage with their local government. With about 19.6% of people living in Peoria identifying as Latino community members (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021), the City should continue to be mindful about consistently engaging with its minority communities. With this in mind, the students identified two studies for Peoria to consider when planning to engage hard-to-reach audiences, which touch on information accessibility regarding education and health care.

The first case study refers to The National Council of La Raza, now known as UnidosUS, a Hispanic civil rights organization that works to address the social, political, and economic barriers of Latinos through research and policy advocacy. In a 1984 study, La Raza studied the accessibility implications of the Education Block Grant, which effectively gave State and local education agencies more discretion over educational spending and its associated reporting (National Council of La Raza, 1984). Race is one of the many factors that should be considered under the broad topic of information outreach. The Latino community is not new to class and racial discrimination, which have stemmed from the time of pre-civil rights (DeSipio, 2020). The social limitations for Latino people have permeated through generations, in which they are marginalized politically and economically.

The second case study takes place in Australia and studied the accessibility of dental care services for new community members, especially migrants. While many participants admitted to not prioritizing dental care, the majority agreed that they would regularly go if they had access (Riggs, Gussy, Gibbs, Gemert, Waters, & Kilpatrick, 2014).

A qualitative study conducted in 2010 by BioMed Central focused on the importance of defining the term hard-to-reach, while reducing inequalities within the mental health service system. The study was performed through a combination of surveys and interviews, which allowed for a variety of results offering personal experiences, suggestions, and opinions centered around the depth and meaning of the term. One specific respondent stated that the notion hard-to-reach means people who have had barriers set up for them. This response suggests that present inequalities ultimately remain from the systems in which they live and reside. **To increase citizen participation, the barriers for marginalized communities must be recognized.**

With respect to community engagement, groups deemed hard-to-reach generally fall in the category of low socio-economic status. By analyzing previous studies, these hard-to-reach communities and the associated information disproportionately excluded can be identified and connected to trends within the City of Peoria. Additionally, identifying these hard-to-reach communities can enable the students and Peoria staff to explore possible solutions for the engagement of said communities.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Students identified topical themes to address through their surveying by developing specific research questions based on a past City of Peoria survey. In the fall 2021 semester, Project Cities facilitated a community survey related to communication campaigns in order to inform the efforts of the transit and recycling programs.



*Figure 10 Areas of Interest*

Part of the survey evaluated how residents received information, as well as how trustworthy they found various sources of information. After reviewing the results from this survey, the student developed research questions based on their areas of interest:

1. Resource Accessibility
2. Childcare
3. Financial Resources
4. Community Involvement
5. Information Accuracy
6. Public Engagement

Students utilized two research approaches to gather information and pull insights from Peoria residents. The students started with a community-wide virtual survey comprising questions related to the six themes students identified. During a class session, students were split into groups based on the themes to draft potential survey questions, which were shared with the staff project lead from the City of Peoria. The staff project lead was then able to provide feedback on the proposed questions so that students could finalize the survey questions for distribution. The survey was programmed via Qualtrics and distributed to Peoria residents through the water bill mailers and social media. Survey participants were offered an incentive to enter a random drawing for gift cards to local businesses. The final survey comprised 22 questions posed by the six student-led groups related to resource accessibility, childcare needs, access to financial resources, community involvement, information accuracy, and public engagement. To view the survey questions as a respondent would see them, see the Appendix in the student content folder at: <http://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S>

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Take a survey and enter to win a prize!



The City of Peoria and ASU Project Cities Program want to know how you receive information about your community. We are surveying residents to understand preferred media sources (social media, TV, radio, etc.) used to keep up with community news. Your participation in this survey will help Peoria grow their communication strategies and keep you informed.

Link: [http://links.asu.edu/Peoria\\_ASU\\_Survey](http://links.asu.edu/Peoria_ASU_Survey)



Project Cities



OR scan this QR code for mobile access

*Figure 11 Survey distributed through the water bill mailers*

The second research effort focused on an in-person engagement at the Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival that took place in March 2022. A total of 15 students attended the festival to survey residents to further corroborate the data from the community survey. To incentivize engagement, students developed activities and prizes to bring in families. Each group took similar research approaches, including asking questions to the older festival attendees while the younger attendees were occupied with games provided by the other students. These games ranged from physical activities like throwing a ball to more artistic activities like coloring on a bracelet. While the activities were geared towards children, the students found that adult festival attendees were often just as engaged in the games and prizes as youth. Students then analyzed the data collected from the online and in-person surveys to draw out key themes from the responses.

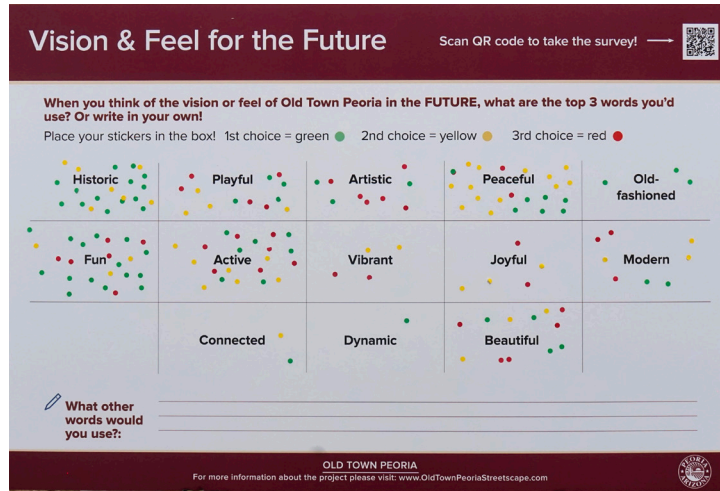
### Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival Survey Questions

What can be done to get you more engaged in your community?  
What issues in your neighborhood are important?  
What things in your community would you like to see improved?

*Figure 12 Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival in-person survey questions*



**Figure 13a** Student volunteer at Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival



**Figure 13b** Survey collecting information for City of Peoria

## Limitations

Several factors related to the survey distribution posed limitations to the data collection and analysis. The City distributed the survey link to residents through water bill notices. However, residents living in apartments or in a rental property may not receive water bill notices, thus limiting the survey distribution to homeowners. The survey was also posted to Peoria’s website and distributed through its social media, so if a resident did not have reliable internet access, they may have faced challenges accessing the survey.

Additionally, the physical survey area limited data collection at the Peoria Arts & Cultural Festival. The students conducted their surveying within the festival’s “Free Speech Zone,” which narrowed the population sample. While the community survey methods and in-person engagement engaged approximately 500 residents, it is pertinent to consider cross-collaborative efforts with the City’s Neighborhood and Human Services department to reach more residents.

# FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

In total, 258 individuals participated in the survey. Of those 258 responses, 75 participants left some items blank or incomplete, leaving an overall survey sample size of 183 participants. Of these 183 participants, a majority were white females and 52% of participants have lived in the City of Peoria for 1 to 10 years. The survey also found that 45% of the participants who have recently moved to the City of Peoria came from neighboring areas, such as Phoenix.

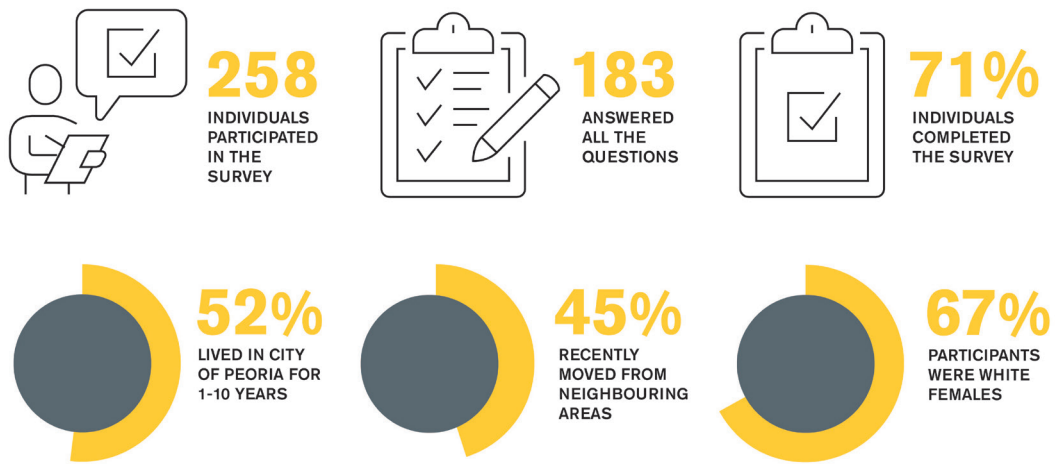


Figure 14 Infographic representing Survey data

## Survey Results

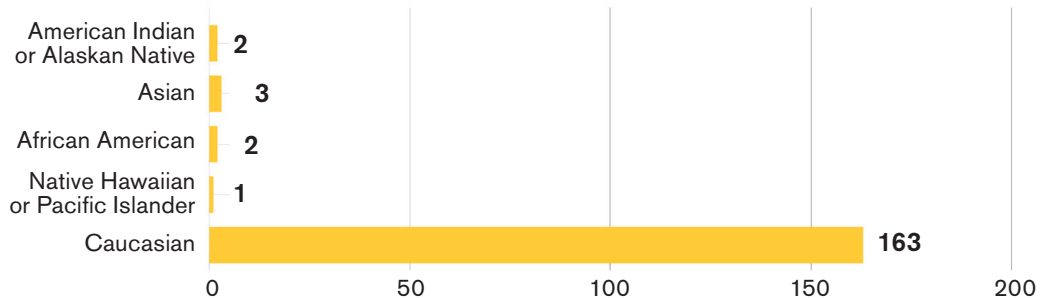
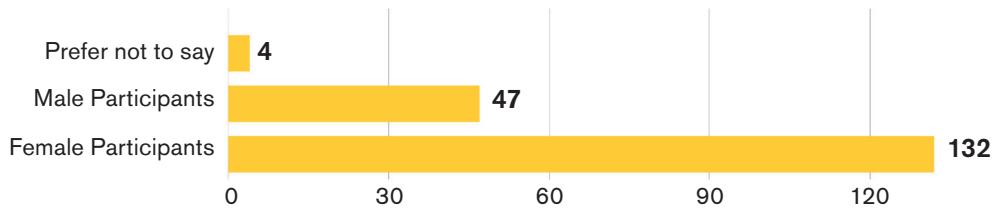
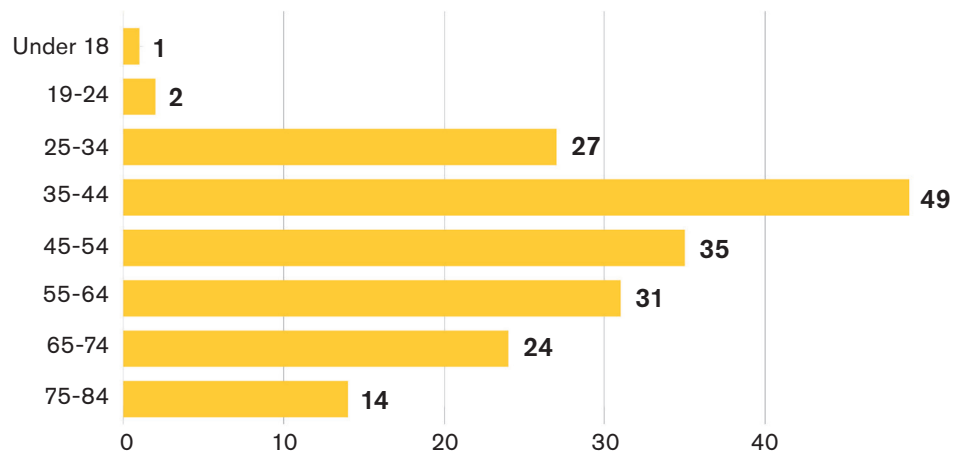


Figure 15 "Which of the following best describes your race or origin?"



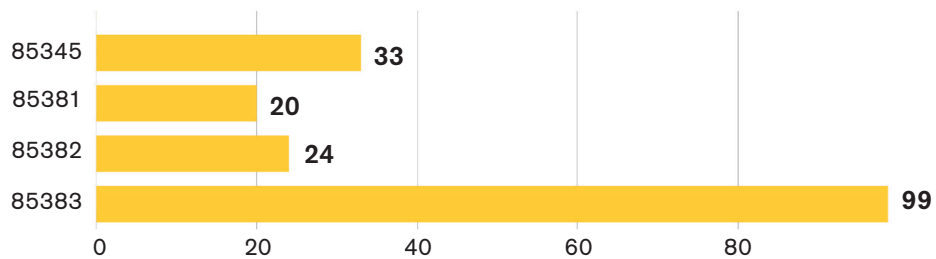


**Figure 16** "Which of the following best describes your sex?"

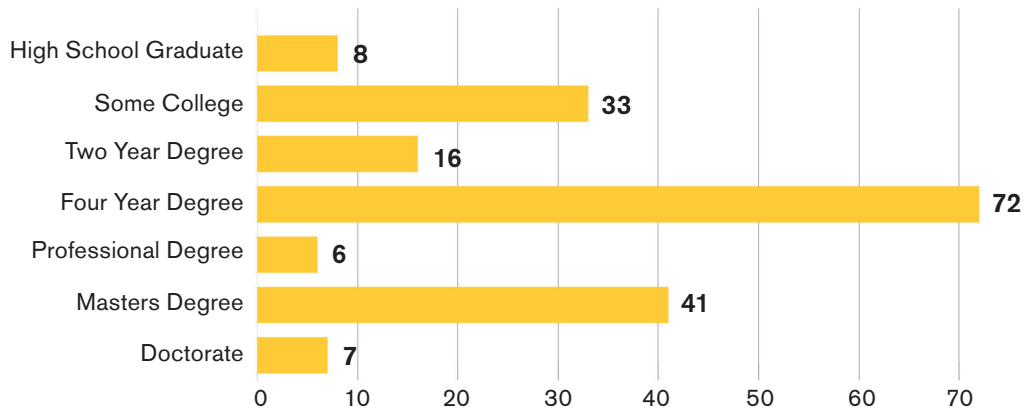


**Figure 17** "Which of the following best describes your age?"

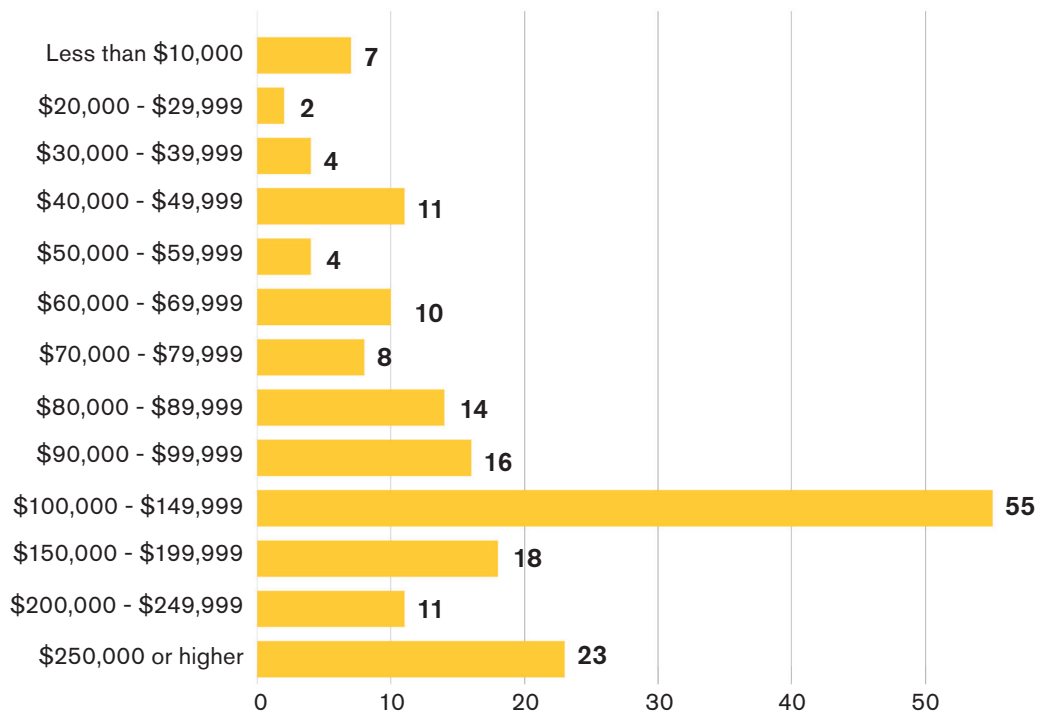
Age range analysis of participants shows that a majority of participants were between the ages of 35 and 44 (see Figure 17). The majority of survey participants are housed in the 85283 area (Figure 18). In terms of education, a majority of participants have a four-year degree (Figure 19). Finally, a majority of participants identified their household income level as between \$100,000-\$149,000. (Figure 20).



**Figure 18** "Which of the following options is your zipcode?"



**Figure 19** "What is the highest level of education you have obtained?"



**Figure 20** "Which statement best describes your 2022 annual household income?"

## **Resource accessibility**

The questions throughout the survey regarding resource accessibility are asked in order to further understand how readily available information surrounding the internet, childcare, banking and financial opportunities, community involvement, and information accuracy are to Peoria residents.

## **Internet**

In the 21st century, the internet has become the main source of information distribution. With this in mind, the internet portion of the study aims to find the levels of internet engagement from those participating in the survey. The data shows that 98% of the respondents have access to the internet. Moreover, 74.9% of respondents are very comfortable with navigating the internet, and all respondents are moderately comfortable with navigating the internet based on the information collected by the respondents. Most people are somewhat very comfortable with navigating the internet.

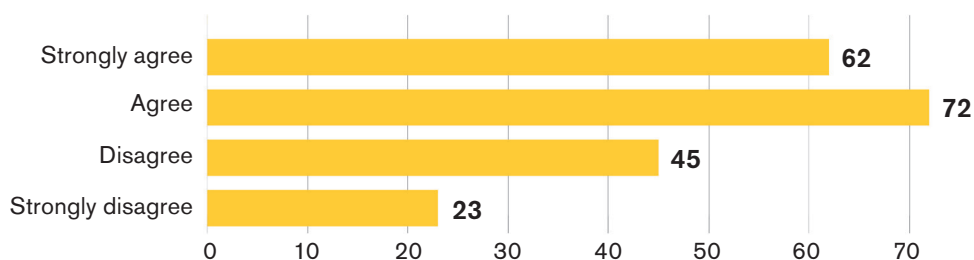
## **Childcare**

This portion of the study seeks to identify what attributes parents are looking for when choosing childcare services. The data shows a large percentage of Peoria survey respondents value quality and trustworthiness as the top characteristics that appeal to them when choosing a childcare provider. Survey participants could choose from multiple responses in the question. In addition to looking at the raw data for desired traits in childcare providers, it is noted that regardless of employment status, quality and trustworthiness are essential characteristics, as opposed to price. The choices for quality and trustworthiness are composed by the most diverse employment status overall.

To further assess the topic of childcare services in Peoria, it is crucial to take into consideration the factor of employment. Most people value quality and trustworthiness in child caregivers regardless of employment status or income. However, the data also finds that most unemployed people value price, quality, and trustworthiness. When asked if they struggle to find information about childcare, the data shows that married couples struggle to locate information about childcare providers in their community, with 31 married couples who agreed and six who strongly agreed. The final question shows that most children (98) live in the 85383 zip code, which requires additional childcare services.

## Access to financial resources

The three questions asked in reference to financial resources are all centered around accessing information surrounding future financial opportunities. After asking whether or not a local bank or credit union takes care of an individual's financial needs, over 62% of participants who answered this question chose to select that they either agree or strongly agree (see Figure 21).



**Figure 21** "A local bank or credit union takes care of all my financial needs?"

Furthermore, this research project acknowledges the variety of sources regarding career-oriented opportunities. The survey asked participants how they obtain information about future opportunities, such as jobs, training, or internships. Over 50% of individuals selected the "other" option. The remaining participants were divided evenly between the options of local government, universities, and community organizations. The final question in retrospect to financial resources presents asked how participants received information about financial assistance for college, and 35% responded with "other" without clarifying where the source of information came from. The second most common answer to this question is universities reaching out to the residents with financial aid.

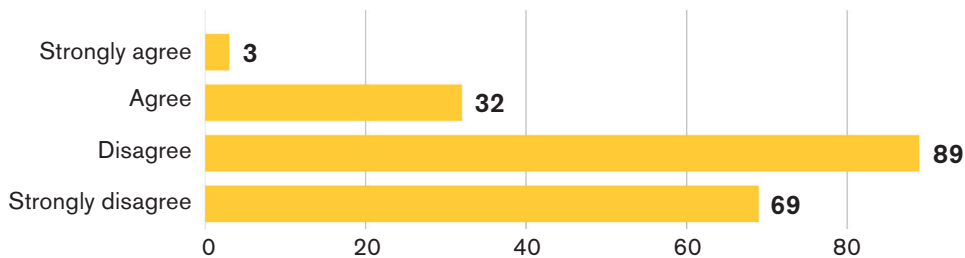
## Community involvement

The City of Peoria offers a variety of community events; however, most individuals who participate in community events are found to be elderly or unemployed. Survey participants were asked if their work schedule prevents them from receiving community information promptly, with about 46% of the respondents reporting their work schedule does not prevent them from receiving information. Meaning, their work schedules are not hindering their accessibility to future event information. Community information, whether it's through a social media platform or an in-person meeting, is generally released during daytime hours or early evening.

With this being said, a large percentage of the surveyed individuals have free time during the day or leeway within their career to access outside information while working. More employed people and students will participate if events are held on the weekends or have various attendance hours.

Additionally, events that occur for multiple days will better serve the working population if they choose to attend, as they have options now, unlike before. By only holding an event, like a town hall, for one day, many people may not be able to attend. If the event lasts multiple hours over multiple days, the City should expect a higher attendance rate overall. Location is an important factor; by having events in central locations in the city, the route will be easy to navigate for all residents. Community involvement relies on attendance; however, this number is lowered when events limit residents' visits, whether related to availability or accessibility. This question aims to understand the logistics behind the attendance rate; therefore, it is essential to look inwards toward the residents themselves.

A particular question in the survey seeks to find how citizens feel regarding their participation in their communities. Only 35 people out of 193 agree or strongly agree with the idea that they spend a “significant amount of time” involved in some type of communal activity.



**Figure 22** “My work schedule prevents me from receiving community information in a timely fashion.”

Finally, when asked about their time spent involved in some type of community activity, 57% of participants indicated that their community activity was not significant, and 23% of participants strongly disagreed with this statement indicating that some aspect within their lives keeps them from community activities.

## Information accuracy and public engagement

To understand perceptions of information accuracy and public engagement, participants were asked three specific questions. When asked if the information they receive from the City of Peoria is accurate, 81% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This indicates that most participants feel the City of Peoria provides accurate information. Conversely, when participants were asked about local news being misleading, 42% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The data suggests that community members value and find information from their local government more accurate and reliable than traditional media coverage.

## Peoria Arts Festival

Fifteen undergraduate students attended the Peoria Arts Festival in March to answer four key questions. Of those four questions, only two received varied answers. The questions included:

1. What issues in your neighborhood are important?
2. What can be done to get you more engaged in your community?

33% of residents reported no issues as important, following quicker construction as an important issue at around 29%.



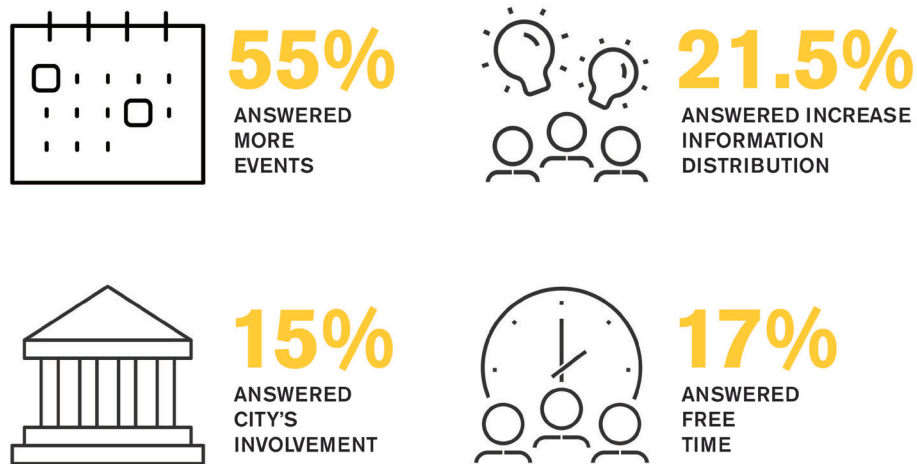
**Figure 23a** Art Showcase at Peoria Arts Festival



**Figure 23b** Student Volunteer interviewing locals at Peoria Arts Festival

When asked what can be done to engage the residents in matters of the City, the majority, around 55%, of participants responded more events, such as the Arts Festival, encourage them to participate in their

community. From there, information was second place with around 21.5%. The answer to “information” is a desire to increase information distribution about communal opportunities. Moreover, residents disclose that City involvement, standing at 15%, and free time, at 17%, contribute to the level of engagement with the City. While factors such as individuals’ free time are not in the City of Peoria’s control, the addition of more community events and opportunities within the City are well within their means.



**Figure 24** Participants’ responses from the Peoria Arts Festival “What can be done to get you more engaged in your community?”

## REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Resource accessibility and internet

Since the data shows that most residents have access to the internet and can navigate it fairly easily, a recommendation entails participants downloading a neighborhood watch app or software with similar features to stay in touch with those in their neighborhoods. An additional recommendation is for the City of Peoria Facebook page to post more of its fliers, links, and invitations to events on its social media platforms. Residents may be unaware of the City’s official website; however, as social media takes precedence in the modern era, they will likely see the information in a space like Facebook.

---

### *Editor's Note*

---

The City of Peoria does not currently offer a neighborhood-specific app, but apps such as NextDoor allow residents to join virtual communities based on their neighborhoods.

---

## **Childcare**

Of the 183 survey participants, 95 reported having issues receiving help for services such as paying utility bills, rental or home assistance, and childcare. Additionally, of those 95 participants, 45% reported having children in their households. A suggestion would be for the City to provide residents with direct access to childcare services or financial assistance to low-income families that qualify. Right now, families in the City of Peoria can pursue care within Kidspark Arrowhead or Learning Works Preschools; however, various club programs and activities within the Peoria Unified School District can ensure their child is being supervised when parents are unavailable.

## **Access to financial resources**

A suggestion for the City regarding access to financial resources is to develop programs through local banks or credit unions that could better prepare citizens for the future. By working with local financial institutions, the City can support individuals who may be “unbanked.” When survey participants were asked if they have easy access to banks and credit unions, around 34% of participants disagreed.

*Editor's Note*  
Unbanked refers to people who do not use traditional finance services. Instead, these individuals may rely on alternative financial services.

## **Community involvement**

Regarding community involvement, the City should conduct focus groups to assess desired communal activities since over 75% of the participants do not spend a significant amount of time involved in any activities. Exploring more hands-on events such as art festivals, food festivals, and more lively activities creates an innovative way to catch the attention of those in uninvolved communities. Also, altering the method of information being released may be a viable option worth attempting; if citizens feel uninvolved, it may be due to the delivery of information hindering their participation.



## **Information accuracy and public engagement**

In the area of information accuracy and public engagement, maintaining regular communication with individuals, especially related to important social issues, can help incorporate the survey participants who feel that the City provides more accurate information than local news/other sources. Since there is trust in the City, utilizing this trust for future research or engagement proves more appropriate than other methods previously attempted.

## **CONCLUSION**

Community engagement is a critical practice for any municipality. The City of Peoria has previously engaged residents through its general planning and sustainability action planning but has had several limitations in reaching all of its residents due to the pandemic. To identify the hard-to-reach audiences, students in JUS 301 conducted two community surveys to gauge residents' opinions on various issues, including childcare, financial services, community involvement, and resource accessibility. The student analysis of the virtual community survey and in-person survey intends to provide City staff with more understanding of how Peoria residents receive information from the City. The survey findings illustrate a clear opportunity for Peoria to continue offering various community-based events, especially in various parts of the City. Additionally, residents seek accurate and continuous information about their community. With the expansion of community-based efforts, the City of Peoria will be able to cultivate a sustainable and thriving community for all of its residents.

## REFERENCES

- Dempsey, S. E. (2010). Critiquing community engagement. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 24(3), 359-390.
- DeSipio, L. (2020). *American Latino theme study: Struggles for inclusion*. National Park Service. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/articles/latinothemestruggles.htm>.
- Flanagan, & Hancock, B. (2010). "Reaching the hard to reach": Lessons learned from the VCS (voluntary and community sector). *BMC Health Services Research*, 10(1), 92-92.
- Head, B. W. (2007). Community engagement: participation on whose terms?. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 42(3), 441-454.
- Perilla, & Orum, L. S. (1984). *Community access to information on education A case study on the education block grant*. ERIC Clearinghouse.
- Pew Research Center. (2017). Americans with higher education and income are more likely to be involved in community groups. Retrieved from <https://pewrsr.ch/2GUhBXj>
- Riggs, Gussy, M., Gibbs, L., Gemert, C., Waters, E., & Kilpatrick, N. (2014). Hard to reach communities or hard to access services? Migrant mothers' experiences of dental services. *Australian Dental Journal*, 59(2), 201-207. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/adj.12171>
- Shaghghi, A., Bhopal, R., & Sheikh, A. (2011). Approaches to Recruiting "Hard-To-Reach" Populations into Re-search: A Review of the Literature. *Health Promotion Perspectives*, 1(2), 86-94. <https://doi.org/10.5681/hpp.2011.009>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *QuickFacts: City of Peoria, Arizona* [Data File]. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/peoriacityarizona>

*To access the original student reports, additional materials, and resources, visit:*

[links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S](https://links.asu.edu/PCPeoriaCommunityEngagement22S)