

# **Friends of Tucson's Birthplace\***

## **Position Statement**

### **Prehistoric/Historic Preservation within Development Plans**

#### **Areas of our interest/concern:**

Tucson Origins Heritage Park (TOHP) and all its voter-approved (Prop 400-approved in 1999) components, listed below:

Mission Garden

San Agustin Convento

Cultural Plaza

Festival area

Heritage/Native American Plaza

Interpretive Center

Santa Cruz Restoration

Scuk Son

Carrillo House

Sonoran Desert Park

Other structures and areas of prehistoric/historic importance not yet identified under the National Register of Historic places.

#### **Our Position and Requests**

**First and foremost, prehistoric/historic structures and areas must be protected and preserved from inappropriate development. We do support development that will maximize educational opportunities and tourism amenities using plans already developed, approved and paid for. We also anticipate additional plans may be needed. These plans must meet all Environmental Protection Agency standards.**

**The prehistoric/historic structures and areas exist in a context or environment that will either enhance and amplify, or distract and degrade their importance. Negative aspects can be in the form of discordant architecture and landscape, overwhelming noise, tasteless commercialism and/or the lack of recognition of the historical importance, among other**

things. Our position is to support those elements of development that enhance the context of these attractions and to oppose those elements that distract from or degrade them.

FOTB recognizes that development and preservation can and must coexist. Indeed, we hold these positions, not only for the inherent value of preserving a community's prehistory and history, but also for the potentially symbiotic commercial value that a major collection of cultural/historical tourism sites will offer within walking/biking/streetcar distance of major convention sites and of commercial ventures along the modern streetcar route.

Therefore, as a significant stakeholder in the area we request the properties identified as Tucson Origins Heritage Park and Sonora Desert Park be protected from any commercial development and that the surrounding properties be developed through the adoption of the following recommendations:

- a. FOTB has input prior to any designs of projects being done adjacent to or within a buffer zone. \*\*

**Recommendation: FOTB has a seat at the table of any committee or process that is formed.**

- b. A limitation be placed on building heights surrounding TOHP measured in feet not in stories.

**Recommendation: Buildings in the buffer zone be no higher than 2 stories (20 feet) and beyond the buffer zone no higher than 4 stories (40 feet)**

- c. Setbacks and stepbacks are established to ensure protection of prehistoric/historic sites.

**Recommendation: Building walls be set back a minimum of 20 feet from the TOHP property lines**

**Stepbacks (see b. above)**

- d. FOTB is at the table during discussions leading to decisions about the types of business activities allowed in proximity to prehistoric/historic sites.

**Recommendation: Businesses permitted in the buffer zone of TOHP must not be franchised fast-food establishments, night-clubs and bars not serving food.**

**Lighting at these establishments must follow the Dark Skies Ordinance expectations and should not impinge on TOHP property**

- e. FOTB be at the table during discussions leading to decisions about the type of architecture allowed within the buffer zone surrounding prehistoric/historic sites.

**Recommendation: Any walls of businesses in the buffer zone facing TOHP must be built to reflect some part of the history of the site.**

- f. Approved buildings within this buffer zone require signage showing people where to find the prehistoric/historic attractions.

**Recommendation: Historical information and direction signs similar to the ones directing people to Sentinel Peak should be required on buildings leading from Cushing St to TOHP and its elements.**

- g. Space(s) be provided in buildings within this buffer zone for displaying interpretive materials regarding TOHP prehistoric/historic attractions.

**Recommendation: Space in one or two adjacent buildings be provided to be occupied by**

1. an information center and gift center
2. a display area for artifacts, photos and a place for videos to be shown to visitors

- h. Any businesses within the Mercado development and any commercial development south of Cushing Street, including those utilizing GPLET, include a requirement for contributions to Friends of Tucson's Birthplace to use for developing and maintaining Tucson Origins Heritage Park.

**Recommendation: Either a flat fee up front, an annual contribution, or the formation of a localized TIFF.**

- \* a 501 c(3) organization whose mission is **"to preserve, re-create and authentically present the historic structures and landscapes to the regional community and visitors in the area known as Tucson's Birthplace"**

- \*\*a buffer zone is an area of land from the property line of TOHP extending at least 100 feet out.