

Stakeholder Responses to a Request for Comments on a Welcome Sign for Rio Vista Natural Resource Park, Tucson, Arizona

*Friends of Rio Vista
Rio Vista Conservation Project*

Report submitted to

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Department of Parks and Recreation
City of Tucson
900 S. Randolph Way
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Report RVCP 24-01

December 3, 2024

FRIENDS OF
RioVista



On November 20, 2024, the City of Tucson Department of Parks and Recreation (Tucson Parks and Recreation) requested that Friend of Rio Vista solicit comments from stakeholders on a proposed Welcome sign for Rio Vista Natural Resource Park (see Appendix A). Friends of Rio Vista is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that partners with Tucson Parks and Recreation and other stakeholders to protect and enhance the ecological values of the park. The organization is in its sixth year of collaboration with the city through the Rio Vista Conservation Project.

To address Tucson Parks and Recreation's request, Friends of Rio Vista sent an alert to our mailing list of nearly 300 individuals on November 21, 2024 (see Appendix B). We received 16 responses, which are recorded verbatim in Appendix C and are summarized here. Please note that only the direct suggestions for improving the Welcome sign are included in the summary. We encourage Tucson Parks and Recreation staff to read the additional comments (and support for specific parts of the sign) recorded in Appendix C.

RULES: CONTENT

- Instead of <No removing vegetation>, the Rules list should indicate that **nothing** (including deadwood, rocks, and animals) should be removed from the park.
- The list of rules on the Welcome sign is unnecessary, as rules are posted on the park Rules sign.
- Repeating the rules on the Welcome sign may reinforce desired visitor behavior.
- The Rules section should include a statement that violating the leash law is subject to a large fine (amount should be indicated).
- The Rules section should include the following: <NO motorized vehicles on trails>.

AMENITIES

- The icons for locations of drinking water may not be accurate.
- Cactus Boulevard should also be labeled as the Treat Avenue Bicycle Boulevard.
- The restroom should be labeled to indicate that it is ADA accessible (see Appendix C for suggested icon).
- The main diagonal trail through the natural area should be labeled to indicate that it is ADA accessible.
- The location of the *Red Stallion* equestrian sculpture and the cement memorial bench in the northeast sector could be identified on the map.

MAP STYLE

- Background visuals on the aerial image are distracting and should be removed from the map.

SIGN LOCATION

- The Welcome sign should be installed at all access points marked with red dots on the map.

SIGN MATERIALS

- The material used for the sign should be chosen for resistance to fading in the sun.

SIGN COPY: FORM

- Periods should be added to the ends of the statements in the Rules section.
- The entire sign should be in Spanish as well as English.
- The word <Welcome!> should be in English, Spanish, and O'odham.
- <Natural Arroyo> should be changed to <Natural Wash>.
- <Rillito River> should be changed to <Rillito> ("Rillito River" is redundant, as "Rillito" means "Little River").
- <PICKUP> should be changed to <PICK UP>.
- <visable> should be changed to <visible>.
- <No removing vegetation> should be changed to <Do not remove/prune vegetation>

Friends of Rio Vista is grateful for our partnership with Tucson Parks and Recreation and for this opportunity to engage Rio Vista stakeholders in making the Welcome sign as inviting and informative as possible for park visitors, both longtime and new.

APPENDIX A

Tucson Parks and Recreation's Proposed Welcome Sign for Rio Vista Natural Resource Park November 20, 2024



A PDF of the sign image is available online at <https://friendsofriovista.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/RioVistaMap.pdf>.

APPENDIX B

**Friends of Rio Vista's Alert to Stakeholders
regarding Invitation to Comment on Welcome Sign
November 21, 2024**

Friends of Rio Vista Alert: REMINDER: Invitation to Comment on a Welcome Sign

From: Friends of Rio Vista (friendsofrioistanrp@gmail.com)

To: friendsofrioistanrp@gmail.com

Bcc: shopland@aol.com

Date: Sunday, December 1, 2024 at 10:40 AM MST



REMINDER: Invitation to comment on a Welcome sign

Tomorrow is the deadline for submitting comments on the proposed Rio Vista Welcome sign (see below). All suggestions will be included in a report to Tucson Parks and Recreation as part of our Rio Vista Conservation Project report series. Thanks to all the park supporters who've sent comments so far!

Tucson Parks and Recreation staff have asked Friends of Rio Vista to invite comments from Rio Vista Natural Resource Park stakeholders on a **proposed Welcome sign** to be installed at park entrances. We hope that you'll send us your suggestions so that we can compile them and submit them to Parks as a report.



Click [here](#) for a PDF of the draft sign on the Friends of Rio Vista website. The PDF is also attached to this message.

The deadline for your response is **Monday, December 2, by 8:00 p.m.**

Please send your comments by replying to this message. Your response will be included in the report **verbatim**—please make sure that it reads as you would want a public response to appear. **You will not be identified** as the respondent; all comments will be anonymous.

Please note:

- Tucson Parks and Recreation will not accept comments on the trail system at this time.
- Parks staff are interested in any park “amenities” (features like the Compassion Garden) that have not been called out on the map.
- We’ll send comments on misspellings in the copy—not need to offer corrections for those.

The final form of this Welcome sign will be with us for a long time. Please join us in trying to make it as inviting as possible for visitors, longtime and new.

Thank you for being part of the Rio Vista community!

**Friends of Rio Vista is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Our mission is to support
the City of Tucson Department of Parks and Recreation,
through the Rio Vista Conservation Project,
in protecting and enhancing the ecological values
of Rio Vista Natural Resource Park.**



[Donate to Friends of Rio Vista](#)

Questions? Please e-mail us at FriendsofRioVistaNRP@gmail.com.

Please share this alert with your colleagues, friends, and neighbors.

**Was this message forwarded to you? Would you like to join our mailing list?
Please e-mail FriendsofRioVistaNRP@gmail.com with “Subscribe” in the subject line, or sign up
on the home page of our website, <https://friendsofrio Vista.org/>.**



RioVistaMap-1.pdf
1.1MB

APPENDIX C

Stakeholder Responses to Invitation to Comment on Welcome Sign

COMPILATION OF STAKEHOLDER RESPONSES TO WELCOME SIGN

Respondent 1

Looks good. Easy to read, showing the various features.

I have a couple of comments

1. Is there an operable tap at the parking lot? I could not find one, but I may be overlooking the obvious. Also will the tap by Ramada 2 be taken out? It is not operable now.

2. I notice that the park is accessible on three sides by bike routes. The route on Cactus is part of the Treat Ave. Bike Blvd. and should be labeled, though it might be confusing. Maybe labeled as a Bike Blvd. eg the Loop is labeled.

3. Leash thing bothers me. If city has no intention of enforcing the ordinance why bother? I think that listing this summary of rules is redundant as it is presumably placed alongside the already posted signs with a longer list of rules.

Respondent 2

My comments:

Those are good points.

1. I think that with the play area and ramadas there needs to be water available besides just a drinking fountain.

2. Is there a reason why the additional bike signs were not added or was it just overlooked? A sign on Cactus might keep people from cycling across the park to access the loop.

3. I don't have a problem with repeating the rules in additional places. I think that sometimes when people see something repeated they may notice and pay more attention. (Pollyanna I guess.) Also, if the city ever does want to enforce these rules they need to be made available to the public ahead of time. (In the library we actually had to add - no rolling of cigarettes at library tables - because we did not specifically say that and a group of tobacco users challenged it.) Also keeping dogs leashed is consistent with other city parks.

I hope this is helpful.

I do like the sign showing that horses have priority and giving specific information on how to act when encountering them.

Respondent 3

looks good to me

Respondent 4

I like it but, If more involved people At Friends of Rio Vista, have some tweaks I would go along with those. Can't say I know much about signage.

I do hope one day some of the plants would have signs. And maybe that time is not now.

Respondent 5

Two suggestions

- Make it resistant to fading in the sun
- The satellite image has lots of details that aren't useful. Effective communication includes removing such extraneous detail, and makes room for other useful information - like locations of key features

Respondent 6

I think it looks great. I would add periods at the end of each sentence under the rules section.

Respondent 7

Of course, I don't have much to go on for map review but one thought comes to mind. What about "Leave No Trace?" "Take only pictures; leave only footprints" sort of message. Meaning, instead of "NO removing vegetation," how about something like "Do not remove ANYTHING: NO plants, branches, animals, rocks, etc." Thought people were collecting sticks for firewood? Needs better grammar, of course, but you get the meaning. This is a complex ecosystem and everything needs to remain, as much as possible.

Respondent 8

Looks good! Now not a neighbor, but occasional visitor to the park, my only suggestion is the restroom sign. I may be wrong, but as I recall this restroom is ADA accessible. You could use this:



Respondent 9

Under the heading that states, "keep all pets leashed and under control at all times," in BOLD letters we need to include: there is a fine for violating leash laws in Tucson City Parks, and state the fine amount.(I believe it ranges from \$100 to \$750)

Thank you

Respondent 10

The entire sign should also be in Spanish, perhaps on the reverse.

"Welcome" should be in English, Spanish and O'Odham.

Respondent 11

Hi, that's technically not an arroyo. Just call it a wash. Rillito means little river, so River is redundant. I think it's Rillito Creek per USGS map standards but that too is redundant.

Respondent 12

- Please change <PICKUP> to <PICK UP>.
- Please change <visable> to <visible>.
- Thank you for including the Trail Courtesy image.
- Will the Welcome sign be installed at all the access points marked with red dots on the map?
- Shouldn't the main diagonal trail be labeled with the ADA-accessible icon?

Respondent 13

Looks succinct with all relevant information.

You might wish to consider consider "Do not remove/prune vegetation"

I saw someone on the Rillito Path the other day, pruning as he walked

Respondent 14

Add a rule: "NO motorized vehicles on trails"

I suggest that there should be a rule about no motorized vehicles allowed on the trails. I have seen golf carts, motorcycles, bicycles with gas motors, off-road motorized skateboards and one-wheels, and e-bikes on the paths. None of those mix well with horses or dogs on leashes or pedestrians (especially those using walkers or other aids) on the trails especially as many vehicles are traveling at unsafe speeds.

Respondent 15

There were so many off leash dogs there today, it really wasn't safe.

Respondent 16

Does Parks want to identify the little dedicated cement bench (NE section) and the equestrian statue (near the parking lot)? What's in the Interpretive Garden?

In the northern location in the park, parallel to the loop trail, is the Gneiss Bench. It's kind of interesting to read about its origins and it provides a somewhat hidden place to sit and ponder whatever.