Project Description:

- The City of Apache Junction aims to attract new residents, tourists, and development opportunities as city grows into the future.
- Apache Junction has unique natural and cultural amenities, but faces negative reputation in Metro Area that hinders tourism and other development.
- The city partnered with ASU’s Project Cities to counter prevailing reputation and developed ‘Positively Apache Junction’ rebranding.
- This project engaged with Apache Junction residents with a map survey to identify the community’s most valued locations in and around the city.
- Locations with high density of values can be promoted to counter negative reputation held by people outside of AJ.
- This project quantified how the community values locations and will be shared with the city to increase decision-making capacity.
- Integration of local values promotes positive aspects of Apache Junction and facilitates sustainable development through rebranding campaign to attract investment.

Process:

- Community is experienced in location, and locations feelings residents have attached to them through experiences and memories.
- Public Participation Geographic Information System (PPGIS) methodology was used to combine local values with geographic locations.
- Values: Recreational, Cultural, Aesthetic, Spiritual, and Special Place.
- Administered survey at public events with color coded stickers to represent a specific value on map of the city and surrounding areas.
- Engagement sessions: Marathon Fitness Expo February 17th; Lost Dutchman Days Rodeo February 23rd and 24th, 3 survey days, 4 hours each session.
- Sticker data was replicated on Maptionnaire website to compile values, identify value hot spots, and generate value density maps.
- Online version of values survey was administered by an ASU class to expand data set and will be shared with the city of Apache Junction.

Findings:

- Sticker data gathered from resident engagement.

Findings:

- Residents identified 6 locations with highest density of values.
- Superstition Mountain and Lost Dutchman State Park (40), Multigenerational Center and Library (19), Superstition Mountain – Lost Dutchman Museum and Elvis Presley Memorial Chapel (17), Prospector Park (14), Flatiron Community Park (18), and Los Gringos Locos Restaurant (6). (Number of Values)

Recommendations:

- 6 locations should be promoted as areas of interest to outside visitors in ‘Positively Apache Junction’ rebranding to counter negative reputation.
- Residents highly valued unique natural amenities and built environment.
- City should invest further into unique attractions and public amenities.