

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

September 2, 2025

The Economic Development Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in the boardroom at 120 North Center Street, on September 2, 2025, at 7:30 a.m.

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT

Kurt D. Ferstl
Michelle Genereux
Charles Gregory*
Amanda Kay
Anthony Ruiz*
Frank Sanders
Andrew Schreiner
Susan Stephensen

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT

J. Steven Beck (excused)

STAFF PRESENT

Jaye O'Donnell
Brent Stoddard
Maribeth Smith
Rob Stirling
Amanda Elliott
Benjamin Snow

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Sonny Cave*
Mark Drayna
Sally Harrison

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Mark Freeman, Mayor (excused)
Scott Butler, City Manager (excused)
Richard Blake (excused)
Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh (excused)

GUESTS

(*Participated in the meeting via video conference equipment)

1. Call meeting to order.

Chair Michelle Genereux called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

There were no items from citizens present.

3. Approval of minutes from the August 5, 2025, Economic Development Advisory Board meeting.

It was moved by Board member Amanda Kay, seconded by Vice Chair Kurt Ferstl, that the August 5, 2025, Economic Development Advisory Board meeting minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Ferstl-Genereux-Gregory-Kay-Ruiz-Sanders-Schreiner-Stephensen

NAYS – None

ABSENT – Beck

Chair Genereux declared the motion carried unanimously.

4. Hear a FY2025 Year in Review presentation from the Office of Economic Development, followed by a discussion.

Economic Development Director Jaye O'Donnell provided an overview of Fiscal Year 2025 achievements. She introduced Deputy Economic Development Directors, Amanda Elliott and Benjamin Snow, who are responsible for small business services, administration, and redevelopment and business development, workforce development, and retail attraction, respectively. Ms. O'Donnell highlighted the office's achievements, focusing on three key performance measures: Our Projects, Our Programs, and Our People.

Deputy Director Benjamin Snow highlighted the team's banner year, noting the completion of 47 company relocation and expansion projects, representing over five million square feet and over 3,300 jobs. He discussed the first year of Mesa's Retail Attraction Strategy, which generated more than 30 new prospects and successfully located six retailers. Catalytic projects took shape such as Medina Station, Cannon Beach/Revel Surf, and the first Tempo by Hilton in Arizona at Gallery Park. The Asian District's new monument signage and the planned mixed-use redevelopment of Fiesta Mall emphasize the city's collaborative approach to revitalization. To further support this effort, the city established a dedicated redevelopment team composed of Economic Development, the Office of Urban Transformation, and Development Services/Planning.

Deputy Director Amanda Elliott provided data on business retention and expansion efforts, highlighting the success of the Mesa Business Builder program which provided extensive consulting services to small businesses, and discussed the city's workforce strategic plan and partnerships aimed at improving the local workforce. She shared the department's proactive media and marketing strategy which delivered measurable impact amplifying the Mesa story to audiences nationwide. With a focus on earned media, targeted campaigns, and strategic partnerships, the department positioned Mesa as a dynamic hub of innovation, growth and opportunity.

Director O'Donnell emphasized that the success of the City's economic development efforts is inextricably tied to the private sector's investment and continued confidence in Mesa. She acknowledged the vital role of City Council and executive leadership, highlighting their unwavering support for the department's efforts. Ms. O'Donnell extended her appreciation to the Board for their commitment, insight, and ongoing stewardship. She also announced the release of the department's Annual Report and encouraged attendees to share it within their networks to further amplify the City's message. In closing, she expressed optimism about maintaining strong momentum into the upcoming fiscal year. (See pages 1-20 in Attachment 1)

Board member Frank Sanders complimented the ambitious goals, tremendous progress, and actual results.

5. Hear a FY2026 Look Ahead – Program of Work presentation from the Office of Economic Development, followed by a discussion.

Director O'Donnell outlined the Office of Economic Development's vision, mission and lines of service, emphasizing its goal to be regarded as a premier location for companies and investors seeking an innovative, dynamic city to enhance their competitiveness.

Targeted industries of opportunity where Mesa holds a competitive advantage include biotech, aerospace, technology, advanced manufacturing, tourism, and education. Deputy Director Snow highlighted Mesa's economic development goals, including growing Mesa's economy, ensuring Mesa is known nationally, and building a community and economy that is resilient. Mesa at-a-glance demographics including key statistics about Mesa's population, labor shed, and educational attainment were displayed.

Deputy Director Elliott discussed the department's active five-year strategic plan, which serves as a dynamic roadmap of strategies and tactics designed to achieve these goals year after year. This is not a static document. It is reviewed annually by staff to identify which efforts should be continued and which should be discontinued. This year's initiatives reflect a more targeted, data-informed approach to sector development and relationship building. She outlined Mesa's economic development strategy, focusing on targeted data-informed approaches in high-impact sectors like bio/pharma and international trade. She announced plans to enhance partner communications, expand lead generation efforts, and rebrand the business retention and expansion program as "Business Connect" to improve outreach to companies. The team will develop a new Mesa-based business survey, expand small business programming with creative workshops, and build a LaunchPoint lead generation pipeline, while also creating a comprehensive redevelopment toolkit for key sites like Superstition Springs Mall, Riverview, and Fiesta Reimagined.

Director O'Donnell presented performance metrics in three key areas: Industry Attraction, Retail Attraction and Department Programs/Services/Marketing efforts. The team aims to attract or retain 38 companies, create 2,700 jobs, among other targets. The department will pursue continued certification as an Accredited Economic Development Organization, develop a new comprehensive strategic plan for Fiscal Years 2027-2029, and expand foreign direct investment efforts. (See pages 21-39 in Attachment 1)

Vice Chair Kurt Ferstl suggested a discussion on supply chain challenges to supplement the industry attraction efforts. Board member Sally Harrison offered assistance from the Chamber's Mesa Industry and Defense Council as well.

Chair Genereux thanked staff for the presentations.

6. Economic Development Director's current events summary including conferences attended.

Director O'Donnell highlighted recent announcements including FlightSafety International, a global leader in aviation training, and Gulfstream's opening of its newest Technical Training Center. The Mesa Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Dink and Dine, a 72K square foot indoor/outdoor entertainment venue with pickleball, restaurant, and stage for live music in the Riverview District. Coworking Café Report ranked Mesa the fourth best in the nation for economic growth. According to the study, Mesa saw a 38% growth for median earnings between 2019 and 2023 – the second highest in the nation.

Ms. O'Donnell became the chair of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council Economic Development Director Team Committee (GPEC EDDT) for Fiscal Year 2026. She also outlined upcoming business development activities, including an international sales mission to SEMICON Taiwan with the Arizona Commerce Authority, the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones Conference, and the International Council of Shopping Centers Western event.

7. Introduction of new business to be discussed at a future meeting.

No new business.

8. Schedule of meetings.

The next Economic Development Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2025.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Economic Development Advisory Board meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Board meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 2nd day of September 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Submitted by:



Jaye O'Donnell
Economic Development Director

ms

(Attachments – 1)



The View From Here

Office of Economic Development FY 2025 Annual Report Highlights

Jaye O'Donnell, Economic Development Director

Ben Snow, Deputy Director

Amanda Elliott, Deputy Director

Agenda

ANNUAL REPORT

Highlights

Projects

Programs

People / Accolades

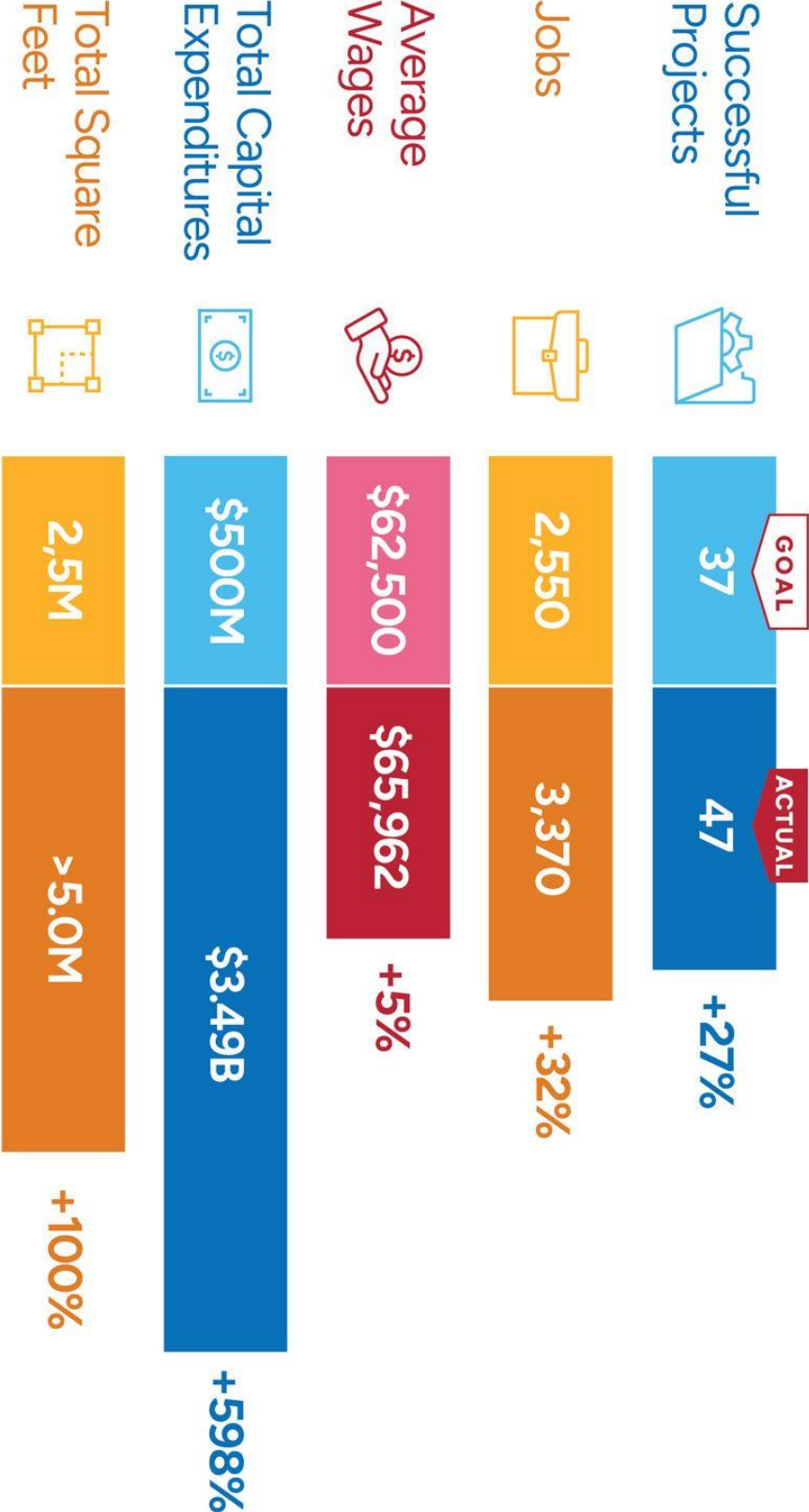
FY 2026 LOOK AHEAD



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our Projects

Business Attraction Successes



Business Attraction Successes

Hilo Industries Niagara Water

Crawford Mechanical Services Nucleus Radio Pharma

BEMO Google KoMiCo Urbix

IS Clinical

Jerit Automation Metso Outotec Hims & Hers

Avanti Windows & Doors

Retail Attraction Results

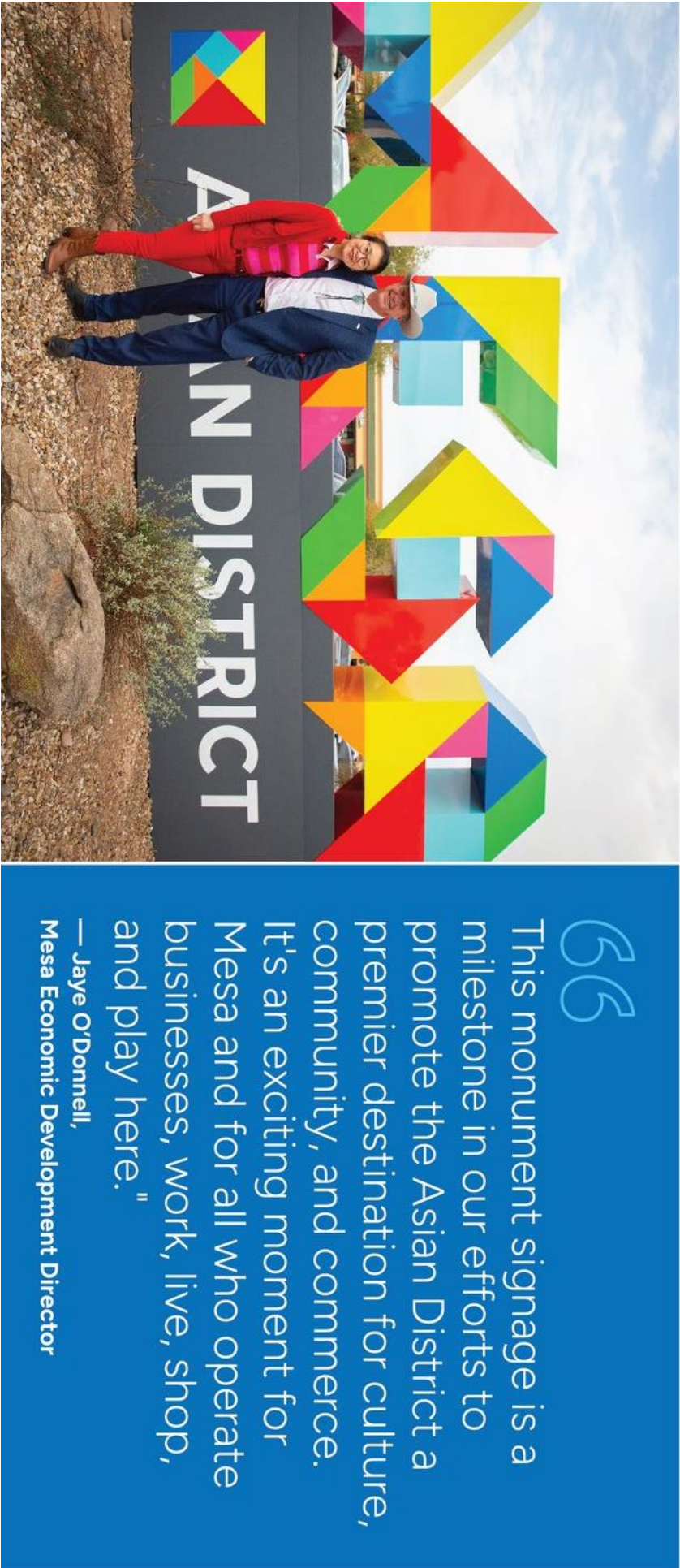


Launched
targeted local
and regional
consumer
campaigns
and business
development
efforts



Redevelopment & Revitalization

ASIAN DISTRICT BRANDING AND SIGNAGE



“

This monument signage is a milestone in our efforts to promote the Asian District a premier destination for culture, community, and commerce. It's an exciting moment for Mesa and for all who operate businesses, work, live, shop, and play here.”

— Jaye O'Donnell,
Mesa Economic Development Director

Redevelopment & Revitalization

FIESTA REDEFINED: INFILL INCENTIVE PLAN



80
ACRES

PERMITS
UP TO

4,000
RESIDENTIAL UNITS

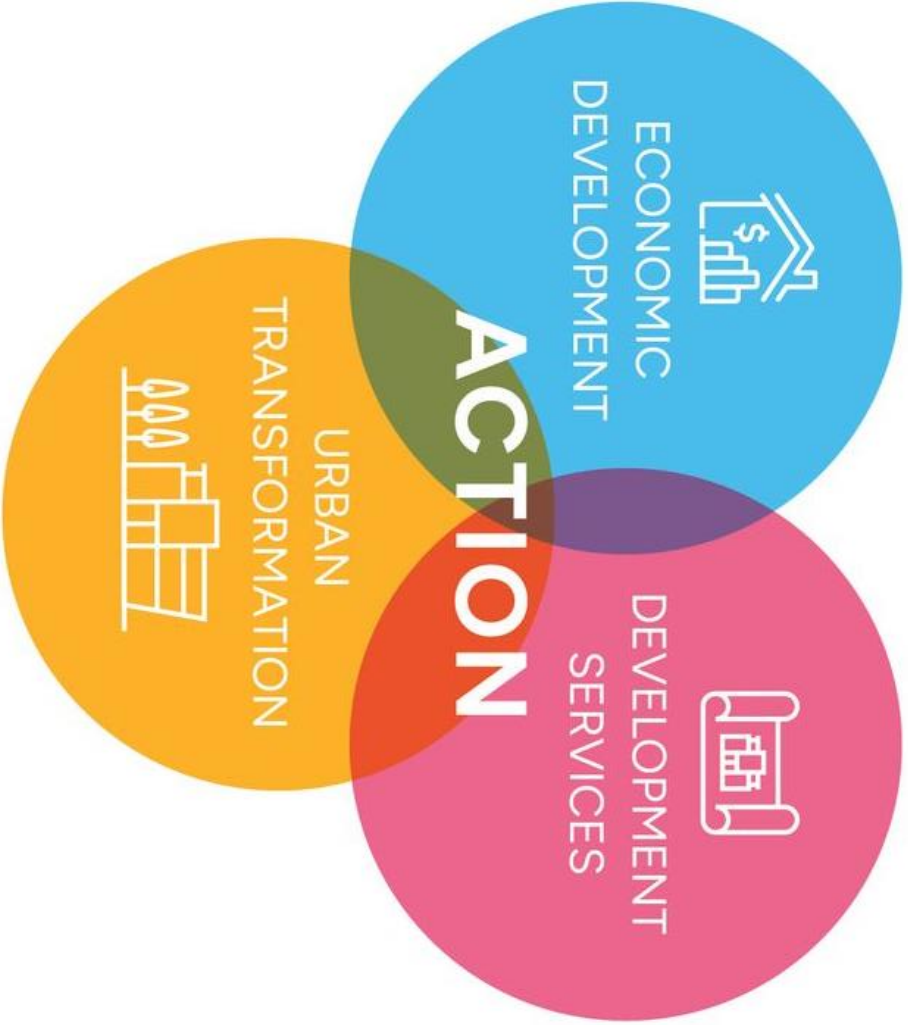
UP
TO

1.1M
SQUARE
FEET

OF NON-RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment & Revitalization

CORE REDEVELOPMENT TEAM

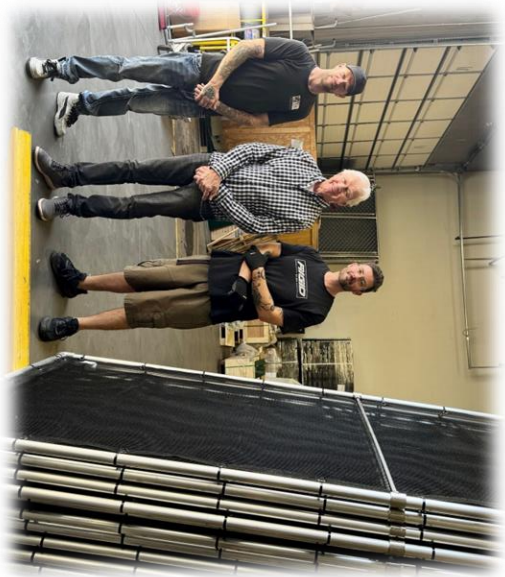


Our Programs

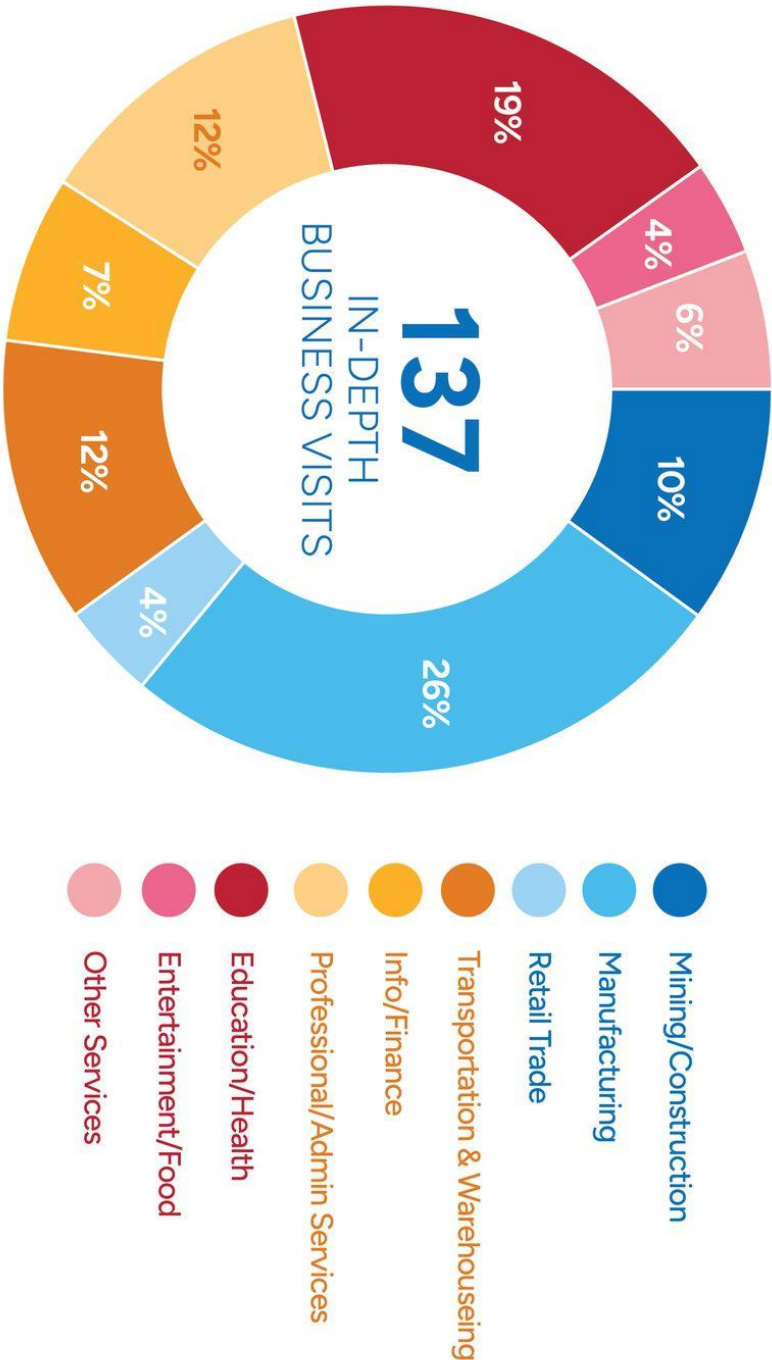


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Business Retention & Expansion



Business Retention & Expansion



Small Business & Entrepreneurship



**150+ BUSINESSES
RECEIVED**

\$278,000+ WORTH OF ONE-ON-ONE
PROFESSIONAL ADVISING
AND CONSULTING SERVICES



MESA HUB DIGITAL PLATFORM
REACHED A MILESTONE OF
**1,000 PARTICIPATING
BUSINESSES**



THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE HAD
8,500 SUBSCRIBERS

WITH 47% AVERAGE OPEN RATE



MESA BUSINESS BUILDER @
THE STUDIOS HOSTED
**5,400+ ATTENDEES
IN YEAR ONE**

Workforce Development



Marketing Results

359M+
EARNED MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

2,105,248
IMPRESSIONS ON LINKEDIN

16% 
IN LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS
FROM 7,589 TO 8,803

 LAUNCHED A
RETAIL AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN

1,500+
FOLLOWERS ON
INSTAGRAM IN FIRST
THREE MONTHS

Our People



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City Leadership

MESA CITY COUNCIL



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD



OED Staff



Awards and Accolades



INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL



Arizona Association for
Economic Development

- IEDC Gold Award in the Entrepreneurship and Small Business category for **Mesa Business Builder**
- AAED Golden Prospector Award of Merit **Business Advocate Newsletter**
- AAED Golden Prospector Award of Merit **Asian District, Mesa, AZ Brochure**
- Niagara Bottling Award **Innovation in Public Private Collaboration**



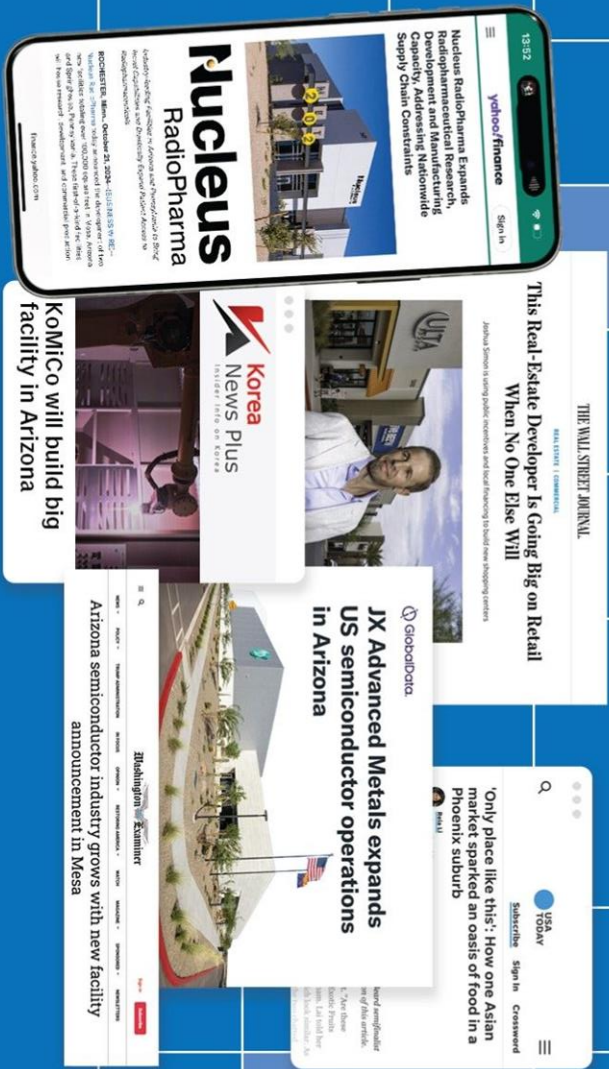
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Please share!





Office of Economic Development Fiscal Year 2026 Look Ahead

Our Vision

CITY OF MESA OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mesa, Arizona will be regarded as a premier location for companies and investors seeking an innovative, dynamic city to enhance their competitiveness, including:

- A diverse and sustainable economy
- A leadership team who supports a regional, national, and global approach to economic development
- A partnership between industry and government

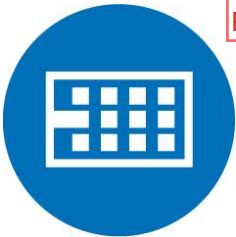
Our Mission

CITY OF MESA OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

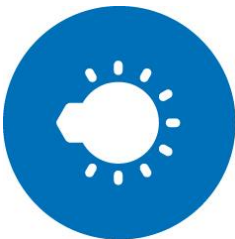
Mesa's Office of Economic Development (OED) works to enhance Mesa's economy by:

- promoting a culture of quality
- supporting the creation of higher wage jobs
- promoting direct investment
- increasing prosperity of our residents

Lines of Service



**Business
Attraction,
Retention &
Expansion**



**Entrepreneurship /
Small Business
Development**



**Redevelopment /
Revitalization**



**Workforce
Development /
Talent Attraction**

Support Services



**Marketing &
Communications**



**Data &
Research**

Industries of Opportunity

INDUSTRIES / SECTORS

- Healthcare / Biotechnology / Medical Devices
- Aerospace / Aviation / Defense
- Technology / Semiconductors / Electric Vehicles / Batteries
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Education

OED Goals

1

Grow Mesa's economy

Attract new companies and expand existing companies in Mesa to create and retain quality jobs.

2

Mesa is known nationally as a premier location for companies to land, grown and prosper

Increase Mesa's visibility and improve Mesa's image to create additional momentum and reach new audiences in key industry segments and critical talent pipelines.

3

Build a resilient community

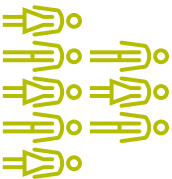
Increase capacity for attracting quality development citywide and for driving equitable economic development.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mesa At-A-Glance



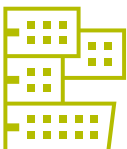
523,220

Population



37th

Largest U.S. city
Larger than Miami,
Minneapolis, and Kansas City.



2nd

Largest city
in the Phoenix-Mesa
Metro. 3rd largest in AZ.



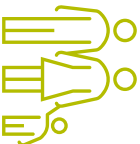
1.2M+

workforce population within
30-minute drive.



44%

Residents age 25+ with
associates degree or higher.

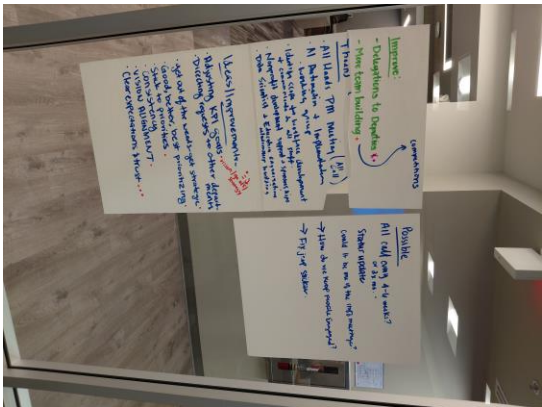
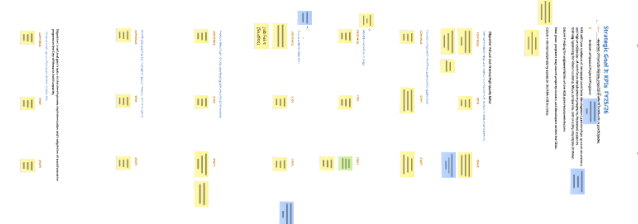


38

Median Age

FY2023-FY2026

SELECTMESA.COM



Y26 Initiatives – Attraction

Strategic Realignment



International Strategy



Supply Chain Clusters



Bio and Pharma Opportunity Analysis



Accelerate Retail Lead Gen

Marketing & Business Development



Retool & Relaunch Broker Roadshow



Partner Communications



Lead Gen Groups



Expand CRE Relationships



Quarterly Attraction Report



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Y26 Initiatives – Business, Attention, and Expansion (BRE)

BRE Targeted Research & Programming



Business Export Assistance Program shift to BRE



Mesa-Based Business Survey



Brand BRE Program to Mesa Business Connect



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FY26 Initiatives – Small Business

Program Innovation



Creative Skills Workshops



Capital Assets Workshop



Mid-Size Business Scaling

Events & Engagement



Increased Event Offerings



New Event Programming



LaunchPoint Lead Gen Pipeline



Broker Awareness Campaign

Specialty Spaces & Marketing



Studios Open Hours



Expanded Outreach

FY26 Initiatives – Redevelopment

Tool Creation & Refinement



Redevelopment Toolkit



Marketing & Outreach

Project Focus Areas



Riverview



Superstition Springs Mall



Fiesta Reimagined



Longbow Parkway



Infill Sites

FY26 Initiatives – Marketing

Brand Launch & Digital Presence



Launch OED Brand Refresh



Launch Updated Website



Enhanced Tradeshow Marketing



Tradeshow Prospect Mining

Storytelling & Engagement



AZTech Week Stories



Narrative-Driven Social Media

Strategic Marketing



Export Program Marketing



Quarterly Ad Report



Update Company Executive Video
& Quote Testimonial Library

FY26 Industry Performance Metrics

Metric	FY25 Actuals	FY26 Goal
New companies attracted or retained	47	38
Jobs created or retained	3,370	2,700
Average Salary of Jobs	\$65,962	\$65,650
New Capital Investment	\$3.5B	\$1B
Square Footage Absorbed	5M SF	3M SF
Prospects Generated	164	220

FY26 Retail Performance Metrics

Metric	FY25 Actuals	FY26 Goal
Retail Capital Investment	\$61M	\$30M
Retail Prospects Generated	30	30
Retail Locates	6	8
Retail Jobs Created	100	160
Retail Square Footage Absorbed	78,000 SF	30,000 SF

FY26 Department Performance

Metric	FY25 Actuals	FY26 Goal
Business Retention and Expansion Visits	137	175
Technical Assists	252	250
Small Business 1:1 Consulting Services	\$278K	\$250K
Additional Services Value (HUUB, etc.)	\$72K	\$50K
Small Business Engagements	2,882	1,750
Media Impressions	359M	300M

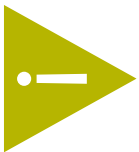
Operations & Strategic Planning



Recertification Process
Spring 2026



RFP Development
Office of Economic Development Strategic Plan
Fiscal Year 2027 - 2029
Completion by May 2026



Call to Action: RFP Committee





DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

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Mesa-Economic-Development



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