

## Museum and Cultural Advisory Board – Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular hybrid meeting via Zoom and at Arizona Museum of Natural History on Thursday May 25, 2023.

### **Members Present:**

Katelyn Armbruster  
Kerry Lengel  
Greg DeSimone  
Theresa Schlechty  
Melvin Van Vorst  
Angela Buer  
Annalisa Alvrus  
Nick Willis  
Brad Peterson  
Colleen Byron

### **Members Absent:**

Ivan Martinez

### **Staff Present:**

Cindy Ornstein  
Mandy Tripoli  
Sarah Goedicke  
Simon Tipene Adlam  
Kevin Vaughan-Brubaker  
Andrea Alicoate

Board Chair Nick Willis called the meeting to order at 4:01pm.

**Public Comments:** No members of the public were present.

### **Approval of Minutes from the March 23 Meeting:**

Melvin Van Vorst moved to approve the minutes from the March 23 meeting as presented and Theresa Schlechty seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from March 23 as written and they will be posted to the city's website.

### **Hear a presentation and discuss the Together Mesa Art in the Park project – Andrea Alicoate, Assistant to the City Manager and Mandy Tripoli, Deputy Director of Mesa Arts Center**

Andrea Alicoate gave a brief presentation on the Together Mesa Art in the Park project (see **Exhibit A**), which will bring arts programming into all council districts. She gave a recap of what the Together Mesa diversity initiative is. She reviewed the strategy and approach for the project, and the RFQ timeline. Joint meetings with the Human Relations and Museum & Cultural Advisory Boards are planned for August. Members from both boards will help steer the vision of this program.

Andrea will have a table at MAC's Season Kickoff Festival to announce the program and share information. Events will start in Fall 2023 and the final installation will go up in Fall 2024. The final installation will be a culmination of art created in the series of events throughout the fiscal year. Board members are welcome to volunteer at events and the grand opening of the final installation. The final piece will temporarily live in the new city hall so there are specifications for size and space.

Board members voiced excitement for this project. Andrea thanked MAC Festivals Manager Kevin Vaughan-Brubaker for his support on this project, as he will be managing all the in-person events. Melvin Van Vorst asked about the timeline for artist selection. Kevin said the deadline to apply is June 5 and then there will be a panel selection process to select finalists. Those finalists will be paid to create full proposals.

Nick Willis asked if there was any vision for community engagement and Cindy explained that the RFQ has a paragraph describing what we are looking for from artists. The focus should be on celebrating Together Mesa including diversity, connectivity, community, unity, and connection.

Colleen Byron asked where the piece will live after it leaves City Hall. Cindy explained that depends on materials and sturdiness of the piece. It's not designed to be permanent so we should not anticipate it will have a life expectancy beyond that. Colleen recommending auctioning the piece off if possible.

### **Update on Mesa as All-America City Finalist – Andrea Alicoate**

Andrea then gave a presentation on Mesa's selection as a finalist for an All-America City (see **Exhibit B**) by the National League of Cities. Mesa was last bestowed this award in 1979. From twenty finalists, ten are awarded this distinction. This title can lead to economic stimulus, pride and collaboration, and national recognition.

Finalists will convene in Denver June 9-11 to bring their applications to life and showcase their cities. Finalists are only allowed to select three programs to highlight that are related to the year's theme, and MAC's Project Lit program was one of those featured in the city's presentation. Andrea thanked MAC Engagement, specifically Tomas Stanton and Mandy Tripoli, for their help creating the presentation that will be given in Denver. In addition to Project Lit, the city will highlight Hactivate Mesa and Public Safety's SPARC (Sports, Programs & Activities Reuniting Communities) Youth Programs. Mesa's delegation will include youth, nonprofit, school, business, and government leaders. Andrea invited the Board to join in the delegation's send-off event on June 8, starting at 8:30am.

Nick Willis asked if the presentation will be recorded and available to watch and Andrea said that it will be streamed on Facebook Live to the City of Mesa's account. Cindy asked if Andrea knew when the city would be presenting, and Andrea shared that Mesa is scheduled to present at 2:20pm Arizona time Saturday June 10.

### **Creative Economy Fund Recommendations – Sarah Goedicke**

Theresa Schlechty represented the board on this year's Creative Economy Fund community review panel. Sarah Goedicke and Cindy Ornstein gave the Board a brief history of the Creative Economy Fund and explained that this is an in-kind grant awarded in the form of a reduction in rental fees. This year there were nine eligible applicants, which is less than the pre-pandemic average of 17-18, but still a strong showing in light of the struggles of arts organizations over the past few years. The Board received a summary of the applications and their recommended awards (see **Exhibit C**). Sarah briefly reviewed each applicant's request summary with the board and their request and award recommendations.

Greg DeSimone asked some awards were just shy of the requested support for each organization and Sarah explained that the awards are based on a score from the panelists. Higher scores get a higher percentage of their request. The panel receives a grading rubric and guidelines to make the process as equitable as possible. Melvin Van Vorst asked if financial need is a consideration and Cindy said no, financial need is not considered for this program. Applicants are awarded based on their ability to demonstrate they will produce a successful program, community or audience engagement, and whether they bring something new to Mesa or Mesa Arts Center audiences. They are required to be a 501(c)3 organization. Sarah stated that this program also acts as a learning experience for applicants who may not have as much exposure to grant applications and processes. There is a lot of assistance offered to applicants and they are required to submit a simple final report at the end of the year. Angela Buer asked if there are other grants organizations can apply for that do cover production costs, as this award is only for rental fees, and Cindy explained that the Mesa Arts Foundation does have a grant program that waives rental fees and offers up to \$1,000 in financial support to offset production costs. However, organizations cannot receive both grants.

With no further questions, Nick Willis moved to endorse the community panel's awards and Angela Buer seconded. The Board voted unanimously to endorse the panel's award recommendations. Sarah stated organizations will receive their award letters no later than June 2, 2023.

### **Discuss: Public Art – Nick Willis, Mandy Tripoli, Kevin Vaughan-Brubaker**

Kevin and Mandy gave a presentation regarding a mural installation at Mesa Arts Center by artist Shepard Fairey, whose work will be featured in Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum's (MCA) fall exhibition (see **Exhibit D**). Mandy shared this presentation with the Public Art working group and will present this to City Council on June 8 with MCA Curator Tiffany Fairall. There will be two murals on the west side of Mesa Arts Center's Studios North and South buildings and would be the first Shepard Fairey murals in Arizona. Expected installation is in October 2023. Mandy thanked the Board for championing public art in Mesa and Kevin for his public art expertise.

### **Arts & Culture Department Update – Cindy Ornstein**

The institutions continue to do very well, and participation is at or above target. Budget is also on or above target across the board and every institution is at record membership levels.

Cindy gave a huge thank you to Sarah Goedicke for her work on Mesa's participation in Americans for the Arts' Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6. Mesa was tasked with collecting 800 audience surveys and financial forms from all Mesa-based cultural organizations. We set an internal goal of collecting 1,200 audience surveys and Sarah exceeded that goal with an estimated final tally of 1,260. We are very grateful for the assistance from AzMNH, i.d.e.a. Museum, and the other arts organizations that assisted with collection. We expect a robust result showing a large jump in economic activity since the prior study from 2015. This will also be the first time we will have results for the entire state of Arizona. Arizona Commission on the Arts stepped up to ensure collection from rural communities in Arizona. Sarah stated that the data rollout will begin in October.

### **Staff Reports**

Mesa Arts Center (MAC) Update on Programs and Operations – Cindy Ornstein, Illya Riske, Randy Vogel, and Mandy Tripoli

Performing Live has had the largest record year by far, with over \$4.6 million in ticket sales for this fiscal year. The previous record in 2018-2019 was over \$3.3 million in ticket sales. Last year probably would have been a record year but so many shows cancelled due to the Omicron COVID variant that there was a lot of lost revenue. The public on sale for next season's shows sold over \$190K in one day, about \$70K higher than the prior record. We are already at \$1 million in revenue for next season.

MAC received a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town grant in the amount of \$75K for Catalyzing Connection Neighborhood Art Residencies. This is in partnership with Parks and Recreation, Community Services, Mesa Public Schools, and RAIL CDC. This will take place in the Whitman Park area, based on a recommendation from Community Services.

MCA's new exhibition opened two weeks prior to this meeting. Cindy stated that the exhibitions are stunning, and she hopes the board gets a chance to see them. They will be up all summer.

A community panel has selected the artists they want to have develop a concept for the Dobson Ranch Library public art. Board Members Kerry Lengel and Katelyn Armbruster served on the panel. Kevin described the artists that were selected. Concepts are due May 31, will be reviewed, and then recommendations will be made. Library staff and city leadership are very interested in art with three dimensional elements.

Arizona Museum of Natural History (AzMNH) – Simon Tipene Adlam and Alison Stoltman

AzMNH has just come out of the school season, which is very busy. AzMNH hosted a fantastic science conference – the Arizona Nevada Academy of Science – in collaboration with Mesa Arts Center. The museum is working on collaborations with Brigham Young University's fine arts department and young O'odham artists. The Arts and Culture Department is collaborating with ASU on a project focused on engaging Hispanic and Latino youth. ASU received a large grant from NASA and invited Arts and Culture to partner with them on a national team with several other cities across the country to explore and experiment with ways of engaging Hispanic communities with formal science education.

AzMNH was awarded a \$100K grant from the Mead Foundation to support education programming. Dani Vernon, Curator of Education, is revisioning the entire education program at the museum. As part of this grant, there will be a focus on science literacy in high schools.

AzMNH is building a good relationship with the Arizona State Museum. They issue all the permitting rights in the state and AzMNH has regained paleontological permitting rights. The Arizona State Museum is closing for four years for a huge renovation and asked AzMNH to engage with their anthropology program and host exhibits in Mesa.

i.d.e.a. Museum – Jarrad Bittner

Jarrad Bittner is out of the office and will give a report to the board at the next meeting.

**Discuss projects or presenters of interest and report on events attended**

Nick Willis asked if anyone had any requests. The Board will continue to invite people to speak to the board. They would like to invite someone to speak about the neon sign garden.

***The next scheduled meeting date is September 21, 2023 and will be a hybrid meeting via zoom and in person at Mesa Arts Center.***

There being no further business, Melvin Van Vorst moved to end the meeting and Greg DeSimone seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Ornstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized 'C' and 'O'.

Cindy Ornstein, Director  
Arts and Culture Department



EXHIBIT A

# Mesa City Hall Public Art Projects



Thursday, March 16, 2023

Mandy Tripoli, Deputy Director, Mesa Arts Center



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Celebrate our vibrant city and boldly announce Mesa as a premier location for people to live, work and visit.





## Goals:

- Respond to interest and energy about adding public art to our Mesa environments.
- Create a beacon to viewers, communicating that Mesa is an innovative, welcoming community.
- Authentically enhance the city's sense of place.





## City Hall Public Art: Five Components

1. Vertical interior sculpture
2. Exterior sculpture or series of sculptures
3. Interior display screen - digital art
4. Iconic Mesa Image for a perforated metal wall
5. Changing gallery wall to feature local artists



## Process:

- Artist and artist teams respond to open call and competitive review process
- Finalist(s) chosen through staff and community/expert panel recommendations
- One artist or artist team commissioned for each opportunity



## Three Major Commissioned Pieces:

1. Vertical Interior Sculpture
2. Exterior Sculpture or Series of Sculptures
3. Interior Display Screen, Digital Art

## Timeline:

- Artist Selection Process April – September 2023
- Design Process: October 2023 – January 2024
- Fabrication: February – August 2024
- Installation: Fall 2024



## Vertical Interior Sculpture

- Rising to 26' of available vertical space
- Visible at different levels and from the outside
- Lighting elements will give a stunning nighttime presence
- Budget: up to \$250,000







## Exterior Sculpture (or series)

- Sculpture(s) will aesthetically fit surrounding native Sonoran Desert plants
- Artwork must be able to withstand extreme outdoor environmental conditions
- Lighting elements for an exciting nighttime presence
- Budget: up to \$250,000





## Interior Display Screen, Digital Art

- Commission digital content for 16'x8' digital screen in public waiting area (e.g. video, animation, or other digital media)
- Inaugural content references the unique urban/desert environment of Mesa
- Option to use data visualization relevant to COM Climate Action Plan
- Budget: up to \$100,000





# Perforated Metal Wall Red Mountain Image

- Image created by perforations in metal wall
- Celebrate the Sonoran Desert and feature a view of iconic Red Mountain
- Artist selection through RFQ process; criteria is prior landscape photography
- Budget: \$5,000



## City Hall Gallery Wall

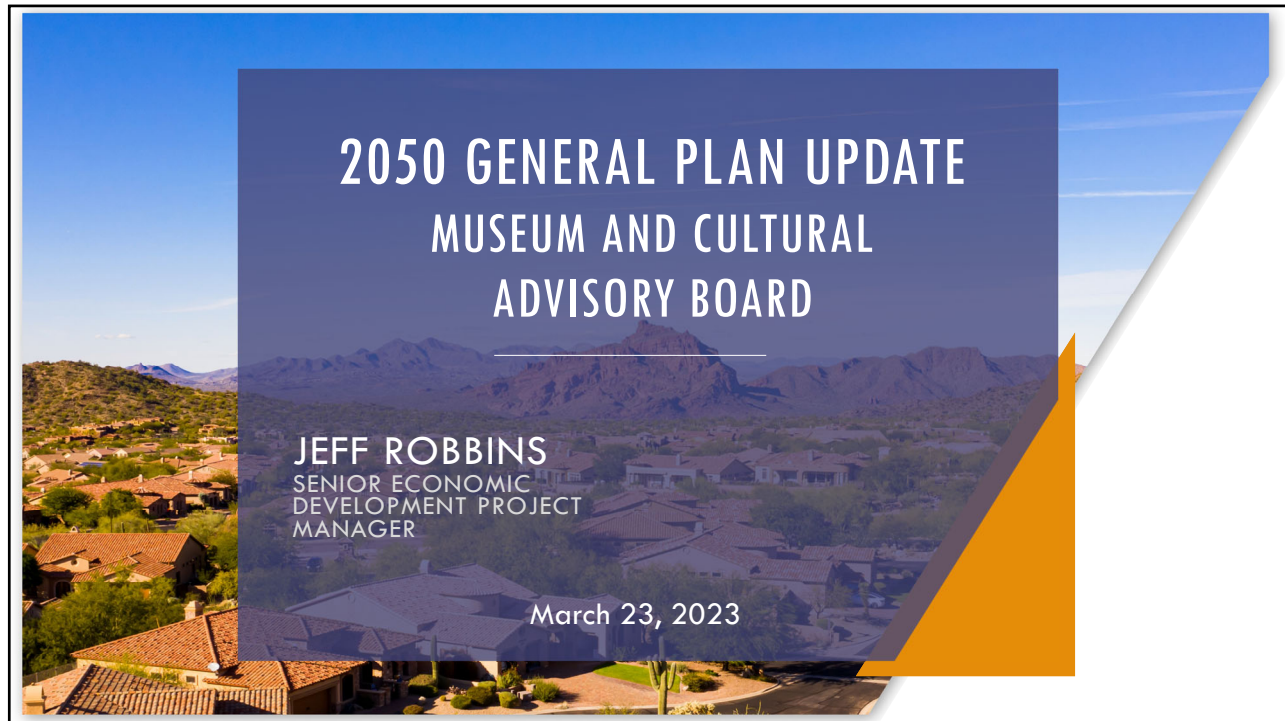
- Interior wall to display work by local/regional artists in periodic rotation
  - Call for artist(s) for first long-term exhibition to occur in Fall 2023/Winter 2024
  - Installation for grand opening of City Hall
-



Questions or  
Comments?



# EXHIBIT B



1

## WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

- Official statement of a municipal government which sets forth its major policies concerning desirable future physical development
- Formalizes agreements among various players in land use (i.e., Government, Interests, Market, and Planners)

An aerial night view of a modern urban development. The image shows a large, curved building with a red-tiled roof, surrounded by trees and other buildings. The scene is illuminated by streetlights and building lights, creating a vibrant urban atmosphere.

2

2

## ARIZONA REVISED STATUTE REQUIREMENTS

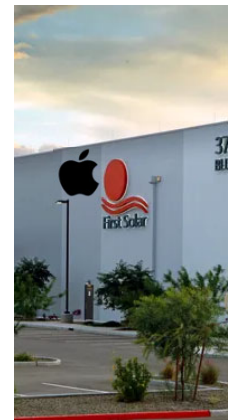
- Every municipality must prepare a comprehensive, long-range general plan
- Must adopt every 10 years
- Affirmative vote of 2/3 of Mesa City Council (5 members - June 2024)
- Approval by Mesa residents (November 2024)



3

3

## A SNAPSHOT IN TIME 2013-2014



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## 2040 PLAN THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES



**Creating and maintaining  
a variety of great  
neighborhoods**



**Growing and maintaining  
diverse and stable jobs**



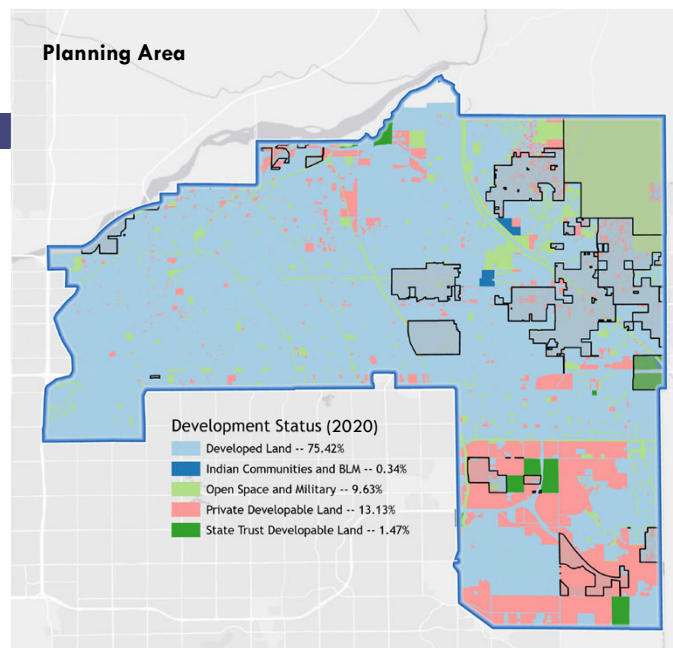
**Provide rich, high quality  
diverse public spaces and  
cultural amenities**

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## DEVELOPED LAND

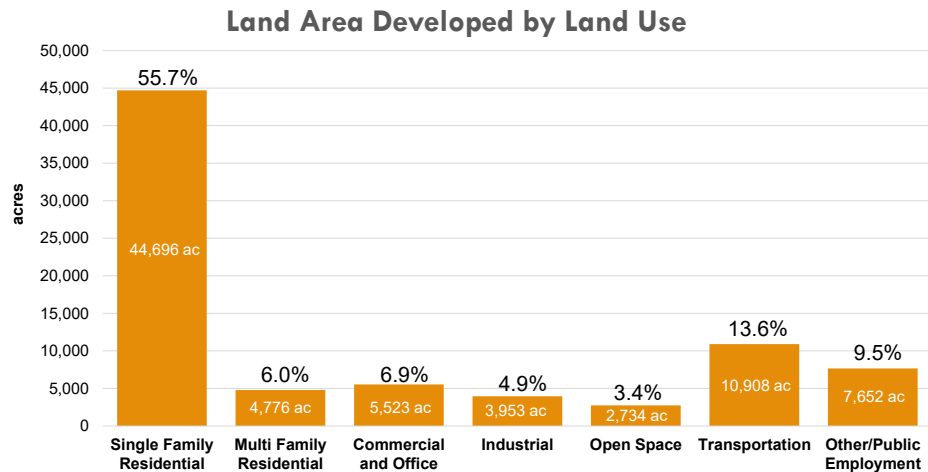
**Total Developed Land: 85.4%  
Total Undeveloped Land 14.6%**



6

6

## DEVELOPED LAND - BY LAND USE



7

7

## CHALLENGES FACED TODAY

- Conversion/Pressure – Balance of Land Uses
  - Job creation vs Housing/Commercial development
  - Revitalization – Redevelopment
  - Infill Development
- Infrastructure Expansion and Timing
- Auto-centric development patterns
- Network/Connecting Green and Open Spaces
- Connectivity/Mobility
- Sustainability
- Public Perception – A New Narrative
- Covid Refocus and Impacts



8

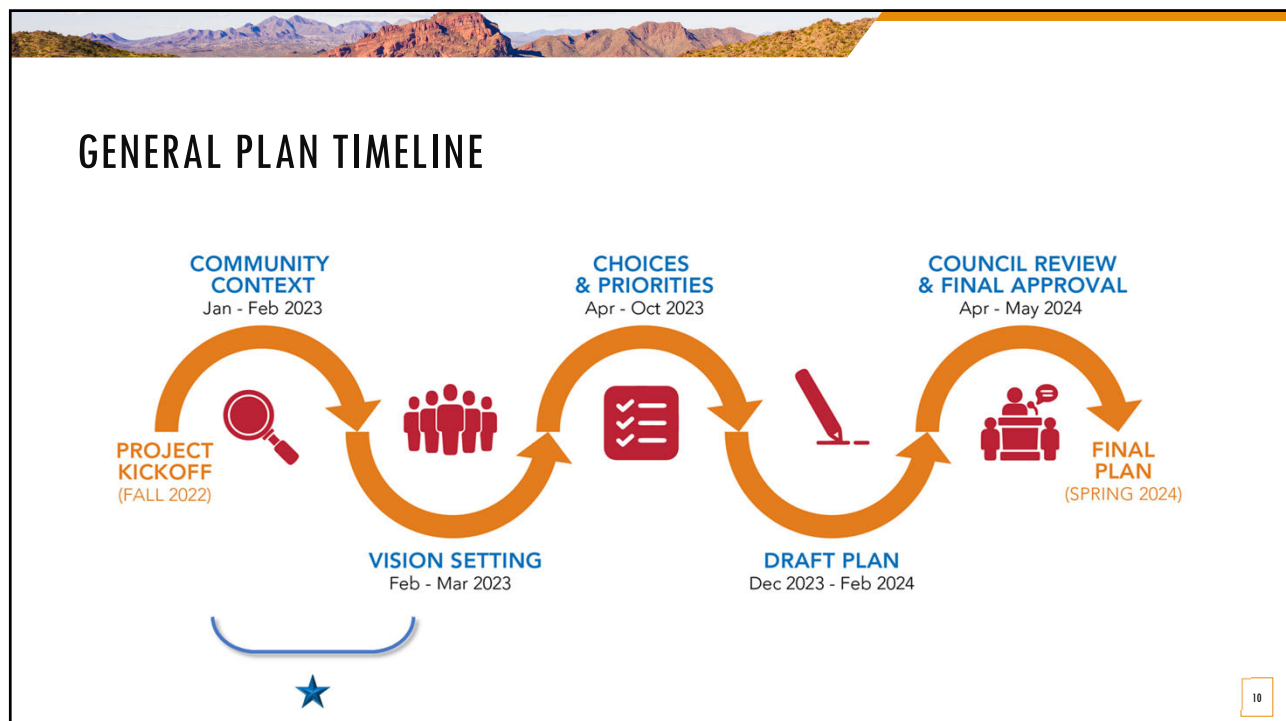
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**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

- The second online questionnaire is live!  
[www.tomorrowsmesa.com](http://www.tomorrowsmesa.com)
- MESA Talks in June at ASU MIX Center
- Urban Lab Workshops (summer)
- Meetings in each district

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10



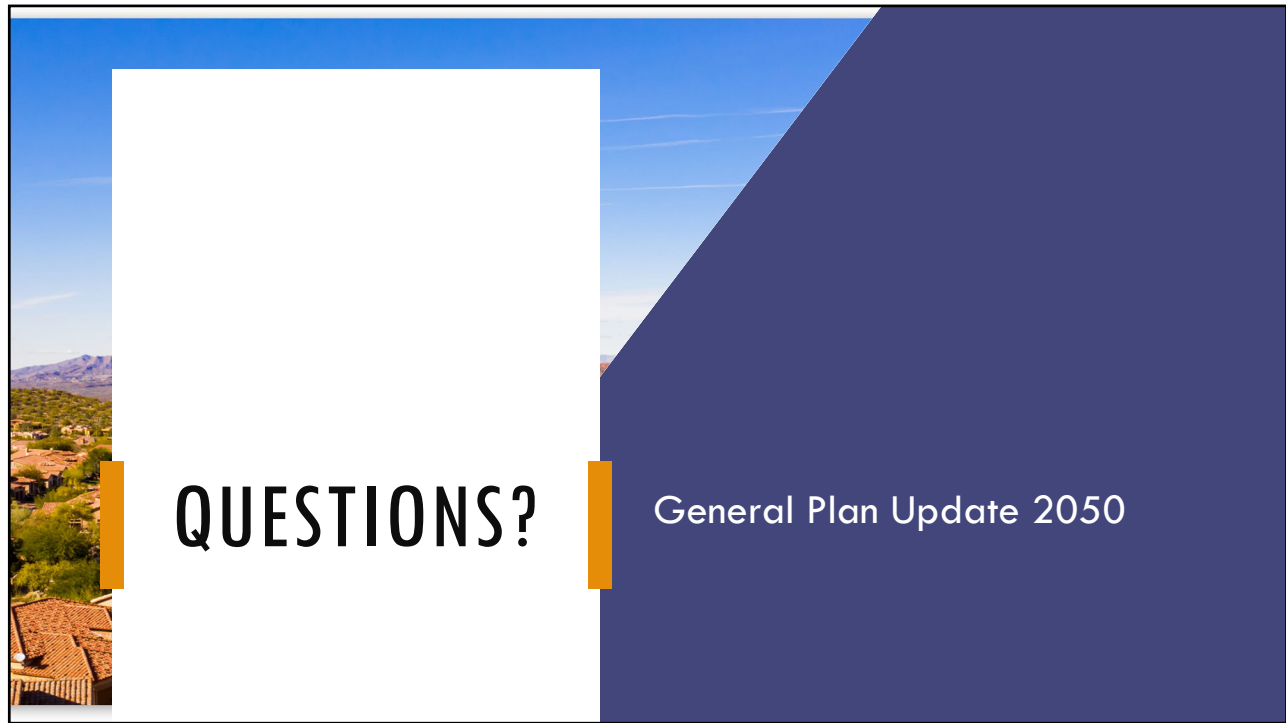
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12

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**Creative Economy Fund Awards  
2023-2024**

***Ballet Etudes:***

Ballet Etudes seeks support for its annual *Nutcracker* production during the second and third weekends in December 2023. This production has been well-received in the past and plays to near-capacity audiences in the Piper Theater. *The Nutcracker* is performed under professional choreography, direction, and costuming. Sets and scenery are professionally crafted and guest artists are employed to perform the technically difficult portions of the program. Ballet Etudes keeps the production fresh by rechoreographing one or more major scenes and designing new costumes and sets.

Ballet Etudes has an ongoing goal of engaging underserved communities with the opportunity to experience high quality ballet performances. The organization has forged a relationship with a preschool adjacent to their new location, offered Master Classes by professional instructors to all local students, donated hundreds of tickets to youth organizations, and recently began offering daytime classes for adult students.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$4,000

***CYT Phoenix:***

CYT Phoenix seeks support for two MainStage productions for the 2023-2024 season. MainStage productions consist of Broadway-style musicals with casts of 30-60 valley youth performers between the ages of 8 and 18. Each production with run over the course of two weeks and include eight public performances. One performance is specifically set aside for school field trip groups with discounted tickets.

CYT Phoenix consistently hires talented and professional teaching artists to work with their casts and crews. These artists are specialists in the fields of directing, choreography, music direction, and stage management. In addition, CYT contracts with technical professionals in the areas of lighting and sound design to ensure a quality viewing experience.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$3,000

***East Valley Children's Theatre:***

East Valley Children's Theatre seeks support for its annual Aspiring Playwrights Contest. This year EVCT had 33 entries from all over the world, and the winning play is by Nikki Harmon of New York titled "A Tale of Bravery of a Zebra, a Lioness and a Very, Very, Small Bird." In addition to the experience of a live theatrical performance in the state-of-the-art facility, EVCT will have several workshops with the playwright for the cast and crew. This winning play will have 12 total performances at MAC, with the potential to reach 3,500 people.

EVCT will again hold its Student Playwriting Festival for junior high and high school students. All the submissions will have a staged reading at the Mesa Arts Center with written and verbal comments from the playwright and festival judges. Nikki Harmon will hold a special playwriting workshop at the festival for the student playwrights and, schedule permitting, hold a master's class in playwriting at EVCT's studio for anyone of any age to attend.

EVCT will hold two weekday matinee shows for school aged children with discounted rates. EVCT creates an educational packet to accompany the show for kids to work on prior to and after attending the performance and each child leaves with a gift that includes the theater's website and phone number. During the production's run, EVCT will hold talk back events after the shows with the playwright to talk about their inspiration and process.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$2,506
Recommended Award:	\$2,005

#### ***Mesa Encore Theatre:***

Mesa Encore Theatre seeks support for its 2023-2024 season, featuring six shows: *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Always Plenty of Light at the Starlight All-Night Diner*, *The Lightning Thief*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and *Heathers the Musical*. This season includes a new work and several audience favorites that show appeal to a wide range of ages. With a new Artistic Director and expanded technical team, MET is excited to have new faces and variety of experiences to bring new perspectives to their work.

Mesa Encore Theatre recognizes that not all communities are lucky enough to have an established community theatre program and is proud to be the oldest Community Theater in Arizona. Audience interest is evidenced by increased attendance over the years and a definitive increase this past season post-pandemic. MET is currently exploring educational opportunities such as Master Classes, inspired by their new Artistic Director. Three shows this season were purposely selected to serve as opportunities for families to attend together.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$4,000

#### ***Metropolitan Youth Symphony:***

Metropolitan Youth Symphony seeks support for the 2023-2024 Concert Series and are excited to continue providing quality experiences for over 300 young instrumentalists and their families. Each of the concerts begins with the least experienced musicians and advances throughout the evening, ending with Division I, Full Symphony.

This year MYS will highlight their MYS Jazz Lab and Honors Quartets more prominently, as they will perform more frequently for pre-concert events. Each year MYS collaborates with an area artist or group of artists and the current season concludes with a composition written for MYS by Charles Liu. Working alongside a composer was an incredible experience for our young musicians and conductors. MYS will also feature Zuill Bailey as he performs with their most advanced ensemble. Again, it is not often that youth orchestras experience performing with a professional artist.

MYS offers ticket vouchers to targeted Title I schools and learning communities. They will continue the outreach program they started last season that was funded through the Mead Foundation to begin and/or enhance small programs in the valley. These struggling programs are not experiencing success in reaching children who cannot otherwise participate in the world of instrumental music. MYS already has requests from three different districts for assistance with before-school programs. The jazz program was piloted in Spring 2023 and will continue into the next season. Because this program was so well received by alums and audiences, MYS will expand the project.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$4,000

#### ***Salt River Brass:***

Salt River Brass seeks support for their 2023-2024 season, which includes five live concerts that will be attended by 5000 people. SRB will also pursue additional outreach performances to grow its audience. SRB has a new Music Director, Julie Desbordes, who has been leading efforts to expand outreach, re-engage fans, and introduce the band to new audiences, including solo and small ensemble performances. This built upon efforts to grow audiences during the 2022-23 season, including a collaborative performance at the International Tuba and Euphonium Conference and a concert at the Greer Butterfly Museum.

SRB cultivates a deeper connection with audiences through pre-performance conversations and on-stage storytelling that highlights the historical significance and personal connections to the musical selections. These talks, given in a clear and often humorous manner, educate concertgoers about the music and culture of our community and world. Attendance at SRB concerts remains high, outperforming local ensembles of similar size. SRB tracks audience satisfaction by collecting feedback at each concert using a survey on a raffle ticket.

SRB has a robust plan for audience engagement and growth, including partnerships with local high schools and colleges, collaborating with other area ensembles, a social media campaign featuring musicians, pre-concert meet and greets, and workshops. This reduction in rental fees will help SRB continue to offer free and reduced tickets to military veterans and community organizations, providing complimentary tickets to area schools, and continue performing at Mesa Arts Center.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$4,000

### ***Silambam Phoenix:***

Silambam is applying for support for 'Yuva Utsav 2024'. Yuva Utsav is an annual festival that Silambam Phoenix conducts to promote young talent and provide a forum for the young and aspiring dancers to explore new themes and create programs of high artistic value with help and guidance from the artistic director Srimathy Mohan. One of the specific objectives of this project is to educate our young Silambam dancers as well as the greater Phoenix community that attends our performance, about the folk arts traditions that have influenced this classical dance form.

As part of the learning and exposition, Silambam will have a talk back with the audience to share learning and exploration process, as well as look for feedback on how well they connected with the audience members. After the Saturday performance, they are planning to hold a short workshop to demonstrate some of the pieces and have the audience members try some of the choreography as well. The workshop will be guided by the artistic director and conducted by the senior students.

This season, Silambam seeks to diversify its audience and show the universality of an ancient South Indian art form, and how it adopts movements and concepts from traditional, indigenous folk art forms. The project will provide a very new experience for audiences in the valley. The typical Bharatanatyam performance does not go beyond the call of duty and do the dramaturgical leg work, talk back and workshop to help the audience learn the intricacies of this dance world. This performance will also be sold on a "pay as you can" scale.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$1,386
Recommended Award:	\$832

### ***Southwest Shakespeare Company:***

Southwest Shakespeare Company requests support for its 30th Anniversary Season Mainstage Production *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, led by a professional team of artists and theatre practitioners, including, but not limited to Southwest Shakespeare's Producing Artistic Director, Debra Ann Byrd, Producing Director Stacey Walston, and classically trained Theatrical Director Vanessa Morasco. Founded in 1993 by two educators, Southwest Shakespeare Company has always been a "user-friendly" theatre concept where high artistic values and has brought award-winning theatre to Mesa audiences for almost 30 years.

This production will play for ten public performances and eight school shows. As is custom with all Shakespeare mainstage productions, they will hold a Flachmann Seminar led and taught by Dr. Susan Willis. In addition to performances and this seminar, Southwest Shakespeare has planned Q&A talk-back sessions with the artists and creatives.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$5,000
Recommended Award:	\$3,000

### ***Youth Symphony of the Southwest:***

Youth Symphony of the Southwest (YSSW) seeks support for their four-concert season at Mesa Arts Center in 2023-2024. All performances will take place in the Ikeda Theater and are free to the public. Four of the concerts are performed by the student orchestra alone, and the final concert is a side by side performance with the Symphony of the Southwest, their parent organization.

The Youth Symphony of the Southwest was founded in 2006 for the express purpose of supporting and fostering the highest quality of music education and to inspire and nurture the love of symphonic repertoire by offering hands on experience to qualified young musicians through age 20. The organization is unique in that it accepts students who have graduated from high school. YSSW also provides scholarships to qualified students to allow them to participate regardless of whether they can pay tuition. Many audience members are attending symphonic concerts for the first time.

Eligible Rental Fee:	\$2,500
Recommended Award:	\$2,000

Total Awards Requested	\$36,392
Total Funds Recommended	\$26,837