

tomorrow's  
**mesa**  
*moving forward together*  
MESA GENERAL PLAN 2050

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# Mayor's Welcome

Dear Mesa,

I am fond of saying that we stand on the shoulders of giants in our City. Our successes are rooted in smart planning, strong partnerships, and wise investments that keep Mesa moving in the right direction.

In recent years, Mesa has experienced remarkable growth and economic successes while preserving its unique character and excellent quality of life. The development of Mesa's *2050 General Plan* is a testament to our collective determination to ensure that Mesa remains a thriving and resilient City for generations to come.

This document is the culmination of countless hours of collaboration, dedication, and visionary thinking. I am especially proud of the community engagement efforts that have shaped this *Plan*. From traditional outreach methods to using innovative technology, every effort was made to ensure inclusivity and transparency throughout the process. I commend the entire team for their tireless efforts in ensuring the voices of our residents were heard.

I want to thank the members of the 2050 General Plan Citizen Advisory Committee, the Planning and Zoning Board, and the City Council for their commitment to steering this planning toward success. The result is a *Plan* we can all take pride in, with a clear and cohesive roadmap for Mesa.

We cannot plan for the future without honoring our past. This *Plan* pays homage to Mesa's rich history, guiding us in crafting a compelling vision for our future. It articulates three core values in three sections - The Land, The People, and The Economy.

Keeping these core values at the heart of our planning, the *Plan* calls upon us to safeguard our open spaces and ensure access to recreation, continue to prioritize public safety, and to preserve the unique character of our neighborhoods while embracing redevelopment and investment.

Thank you, to the people of Mesa who gave their time, energy, and ideas to help shape Tomorrow's Mesa. I look forward to continuing to work with you as we implement the *Plan* together. The future is bright, and I am confident that Mesa's best days are ahead of us.

Thank you,



Mayor John Giles



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



# Acknowledgments

## MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL



Mayor  
John Giles



Mark Freeman  
District 1



Julie Spilsbury  
District 2



Vice Mayor  
Francisco Heredia  
District 3



Jenn Duff  
District 4



Alicia Goforth  
District 5



Scott Somers  
District 6

## GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Chair  
Ron Williams



Vice Chair  
Scott Thomas



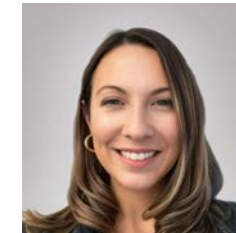
Jocelyn  
Skogebo



Ivonne Garcia  
Rodriguez



Jessica  
Sarkissian

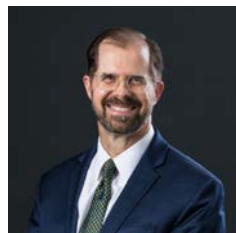


Megan Neal

## PLANNING & ZONING BOARD



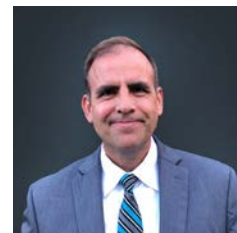
Chair  
Benjamin Ayres



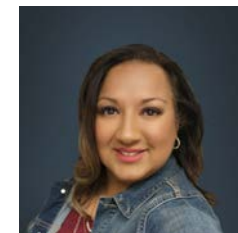
Vice Chair  
Jeff Pitcher



Jeffrey Crockett



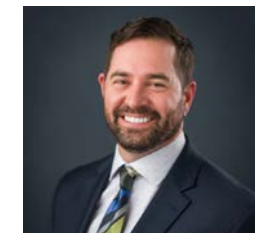
Troy Peterson



Genessee  
Montes



Jamie  
Blakeman



Jayson  
Carpenter

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# Acknowledgments

## **CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**

Chris Brady, City Manager  
Scott Butler, Assistant City Manager  
Marc Heirshberg, Deputy City Manager  
Candace Cannistraro, Deputy City Manager  
Michael Kennington, Deputy City Manager/Chief Financial Officer  
Andrea Alicoate, Assistant to the City Manager  
Natalie Lewis, Former Deputy City Manager

## **CITY OF MESA RESIDENTS**

Thank you to the countless residents who participated and provided feedback through the General Plan update process.

## **ADVISORY BOARDS**

Planning and Zoning Board  
Historic Preservation Board  
Design Review Board  
Economic Development Advisory Board  
Human Relations Advisory Board  
Board of Adjustment  
Housing Community Development Advisory Board  
Parks and Recreation Board  
Transportation Advisory Board  
Library Advisory Board

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Nana Appiah, Development Services Director  
Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director  
Rachel Nettles, Assistant Planning Director  
Jeffrey Robbins, Project Manager  
Brett Hanlon, Principal Planner  
Kellie Rorex, Senior Planner  
Sean Pesek, Senior Planner  
Noah Bulson, Planner I

## **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Sabine King, Transportation  
Mark Venti, Transportation  
Spencer Taylor, Water Resources  
Julie Bigler, Fire and Medical  
Spencer Houk, Mesa Police  
Jeff McVay, Downtown Transformation  
Laura Hyneman, Sustainability  
Michelle Alabanese, Community Services  
Jodi Sorrell, Transit  
Andrea Moore, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities  
Jaye O'Donnell, Economic Development  
Maria Laughner, Economic Development  
Illya Riske, Arts and Culture  
John Petrof, Energy Resources

## **DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

RJ Zeder, Transportation  
Chris Hassert, Water Resources  
Sheri Collins, Solid Waste  
Ruth Giese, Community Services  
Brian Ritschel, Office of Management and Budget  
Nicole Nelson, Business Services  
Ana Pereira, Public Information Office  
Polly Bonnet, Library Services  
Jessie Simms, Library Services  
Tony Garvey, Library Services  
Corinne Nystrom, Falcon Field Airport

## **CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Jim Smith, City Attorney  
Kelly Whittemore, Deputy City Attorney  
Sarah Steadman, Assistant City Attorney III

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

Mariano Reyes, Senior Public Information & Communications Specialist  
Mark Cornell, Senior Public Information & Communications Specialist

## **CONSULTANT**

Logan Simpson

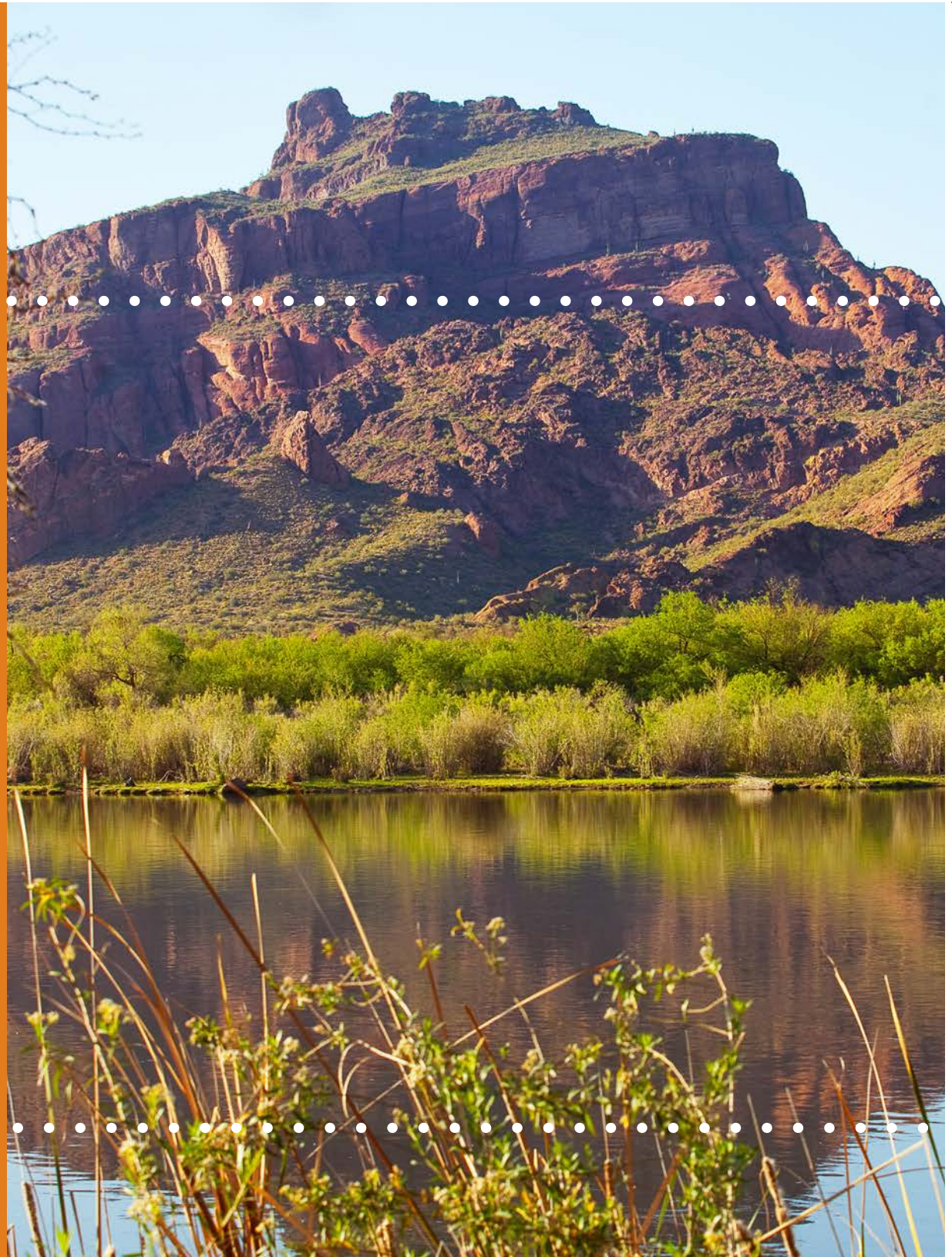


# Land Acknowledgment

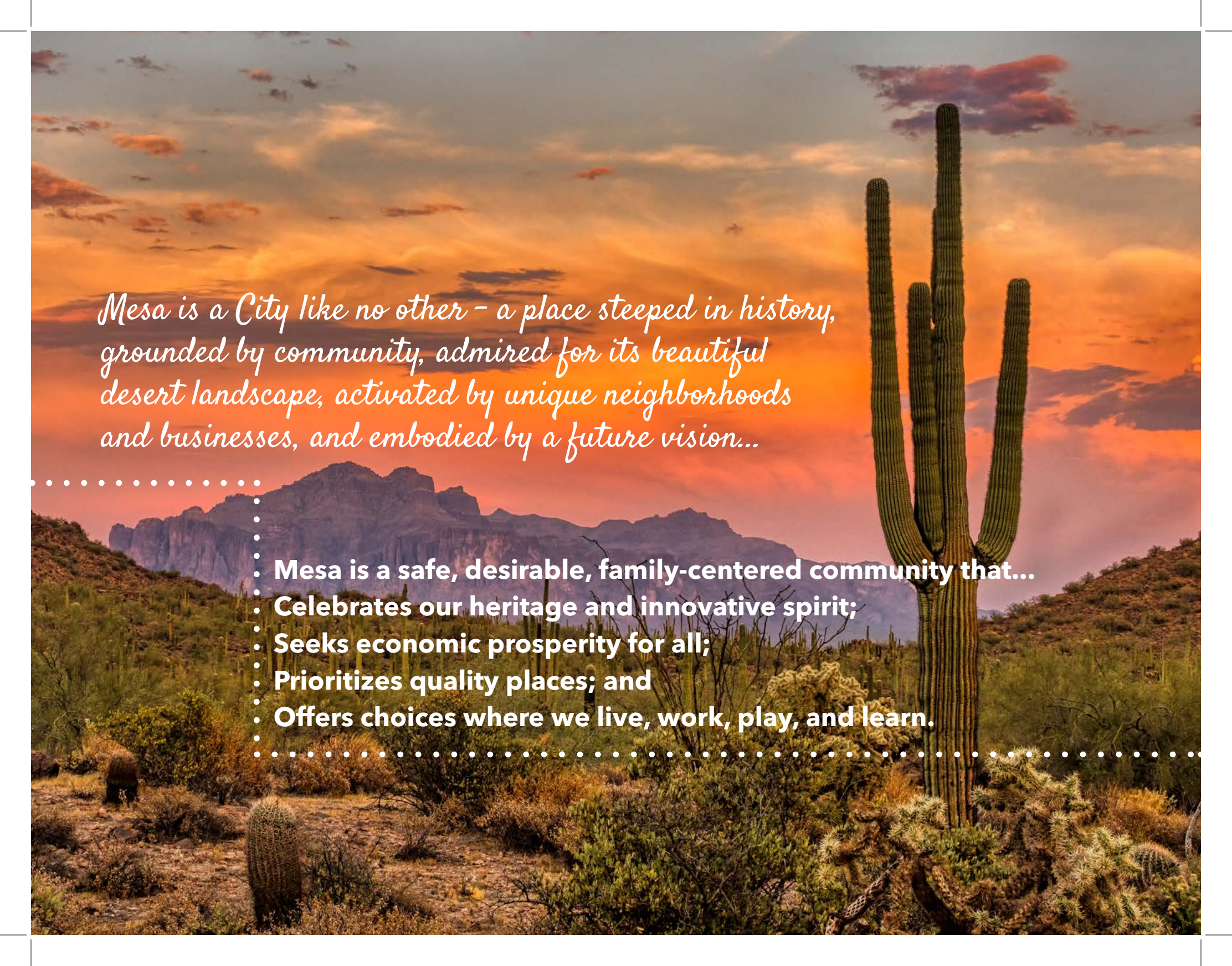
*The City of Mesa acknowledges that we gather on the homeland of the Native people and their ancestors, who have inhabited this landscape from time immemorial to the present day.*

The landscape is sacred and reflects cultural values central to the O’Odham (known as the Pima) and the Piipaash (known as Maricopa) way of life and their self-definition. This acknowledgment demonstrates our commitment to work in partnership with Ancestral indigenous Communities to foster understanding, appreciation, and respect for this heritage.

The City of Mesa has preserved and continues to steward sites and landscapes located within the boundaries of Arizona’s tribal nations, including the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRP-MIC) and the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC), which are among the 22 federally recognized Arizona Indigenous tribes. We appreciate and value the opportunity we have to share in the significance and beauty of these lands that mean so much to so many. We offer our respect to all O’odham and Piipaash of the past, present, and future, and honor their legacy through the vital meaning and intent of this land acknowledgment statement.







*Mesa is a City like no other - a place steeped in history, grounded by community, admired for its beautiful desert landscape, activated by unique neighborhoods and businesses, and embodied by a future vision...*

- Mesa is a safe, desirable, family-centered community that...
- Celebrates our heritage and innovative spirit;
- Seeks economic prosperity for all;
- Prioritizes quality places; and
- Offers choices where we live, work, play, and learn.



# CONTENTS



<b>INTRODUCTION</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
Planning Mesa’s Future . . . . .	3
Your Voice, Our Future. . . . .	5
Our Story, From the Past to the Present . . . . .	7
Our Present . . . . .	11
Our Vision for the Future . . . . .	12
<b>THE PEOPLE.</b> . . . . .	<b>17</b>
The People . . . . .	19
Great Neighborhoods . . . . .	20
History, Arts, and Cultural Resources. . . . .	26
Human Services . . . . .	31
Public Safety . . . . .	37
<b>THE LAND</b> . . . . .	<b>43</b>
The Land . . . . .	45
Housing . . . . .	46
Circulation and Mobility . . . . .	51
Parks and Open Space. . . . .	56
Land Use and Urban Design . . . . .	61
Future Land Use Plan . . . . .	67
<b>THE ECONOMY</b> . . . . .	<b>105</b>
The Economy . . . . .	107
Economic Development. . . . .	108
Environment, Conservation, Energy, and Water. . . . .	114
Public Facilities and Services . . . . .	119
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b> . . . . .	<b>125</b>
Our Path Forward. . . . .	127
Implementation Tools . . . . .	128
Tomorrow’s Mesa Action Plan . . . . .	131
General Plan Amendments . . . . .	132

# FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Public Participation Overview . . . . . 6

Figure 2. Mesa Annexations and Eras Timeline . . . . . 8

Figure 3. Mesa Regional Context Map . . . . . 11

Figure 4. Placetype Map . . . . . 71

Figure 4. Growth Strategy Map . . . . . 72

Table 1. Placetype Typical Land Uses . . . . . 70

Table 2. Placetype Change - Minor and Major Criteria . . . . . 133

Table 2. Placetype Change - Minor and Major Criteria (Continued) . . . . . 134



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK





01

INTRODUCTION

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# Planning Mesa's Future

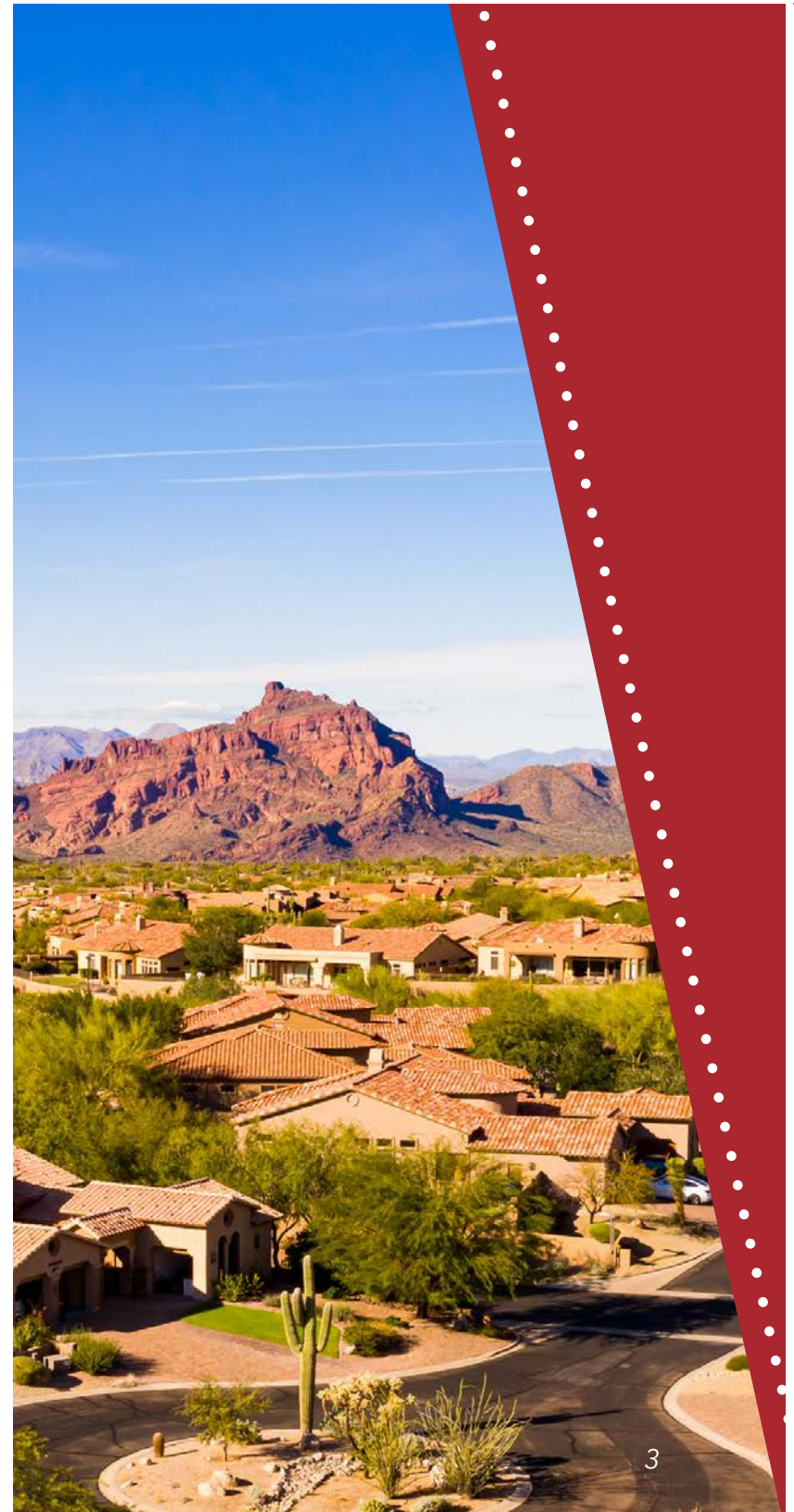
## TOMORROW'S MESA 2050 GENERAL PLAN

*Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* (also referred to as *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*, *Mesa 2050 General Plan* or simply the *General Plan* or *Plan*) is the City's overarching policy document that shapes what the City will become over the next 10 to 20 years.

The *General Plan* is a living document that integrates community feedback and best practices into a visionary framework to help guide both near- and long-term investment and decision-making regarding development, resource management, public safety, public services, and general community well-being.

*Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* provides the City of Mesa with:

- A clear Vision that is memorable, easy to understand, and reflects the community's input.
- A cohesive set of Strategies organized around our shared values that promote broad community ownership.
- A Future Land Use Plan based on desired development patterns, coordinated with transportation, transit, and economic development policies, which are based on strategies to successfully manage change.
- An implementation guide that identifies measurable Actions and steps towards achieving Mesa's Vision.







**WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?**

A General Plan is a comprehensive framework to guide the future of Mesa.



**THE TOMORROW'S MESA 2050 GENERAL PLAN**

Creates a Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategies to tie together the City's plans and policies related to the following three Core Values:



**THE PEOPLE**



**THE LAND**



**THE ECONOMY**

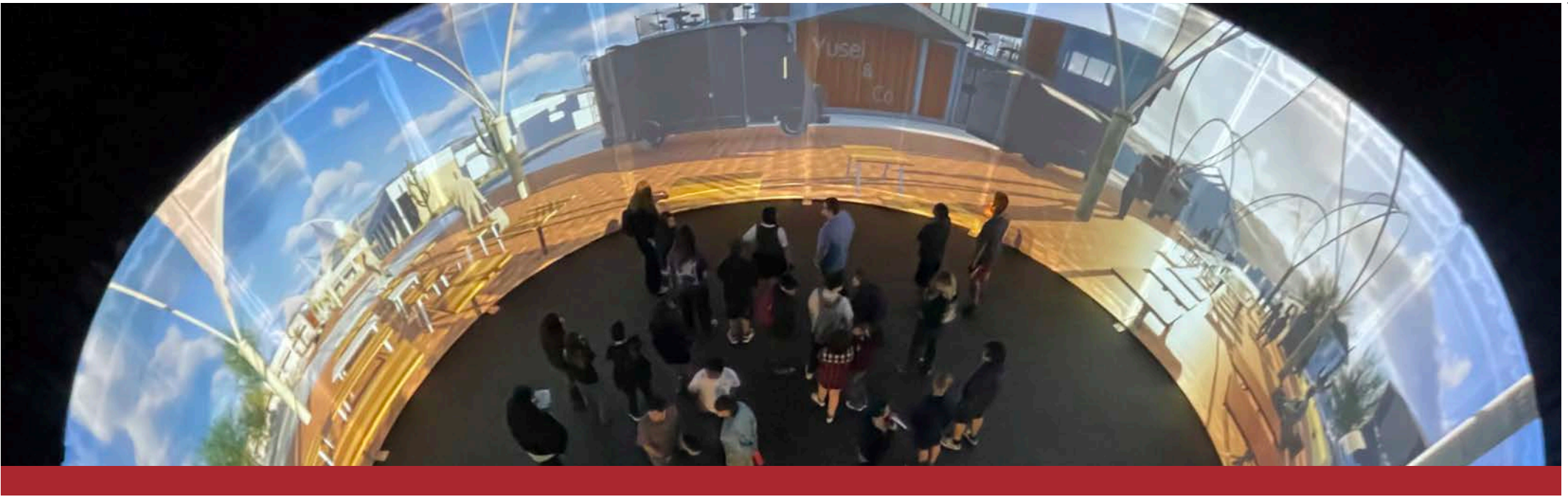
**CITYWIDE PLANS**

Help implement the *General Plan*.



- Transit Master Plan
- Smart City Strategic Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Water Resources Master Plan
- Redevelopment Area Plans
- OED Strategic Plan
- Housing Master Plan
- Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities Master Plan
- Arizona Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum, and Mesa Arts Center Strategic Plan





# Your Voice, Our Future

## A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLAN

Public outreach and community engagement were key to the creation of *Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*. The information and feedback collected from residents, business owners, subject matter experts, and stakeholders were critical in understanding the community's concerns, aspirations, and priorities for the future and led to the development of the community's Vision, Core Values, Guiding Principles, and Strategies.

The *Mesa 2050 General Plan* update was a robust, innovative, and inclusive process that included nearly 32,000 interactions with residents and business owners. What we heard from the community led to the development of the community's Vision, Core Values, Guiding Principles, and Strategies.

The following graphic illustrates the key phases of the planning process and various engagement opportunities. Appendix 2 includes detailed information on public participation and outreach, including responses to community questionnaires and workshops.

Figure 1. Public Participation Overview



# Our Story, From the Past to the Present

## OUR PAST - MESA'S HISTORIC CONTEXT



### EARLY ORIGINS

The ancestral Sonoran Desert dwellers were the first people to live in the area now called Mesa. They flourished in these lands for millennia and their direct descendants, the O'odham people, remain here to this current day. Between approximately 300 and 1450 CE ancestral Sonoran Desert dwellers developed a complex farming society that established settlements throughout the Salt River Valley, such as Sce:dagi Mu:val Va'aki and S'edav Va'aki, and built a large and advanced network of irrigation canals. Ancestral Sonoran Desert dwellers produced elaborate material culture including pottery, basketry, stone tools, and shell jewelry. This legacy continues today through the work of highly talented O'odham artists.

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*



### THE PIONEER ERA

Mesa pioneers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) arrived in 1877 and founded the Lehi community located in north central Mesa.

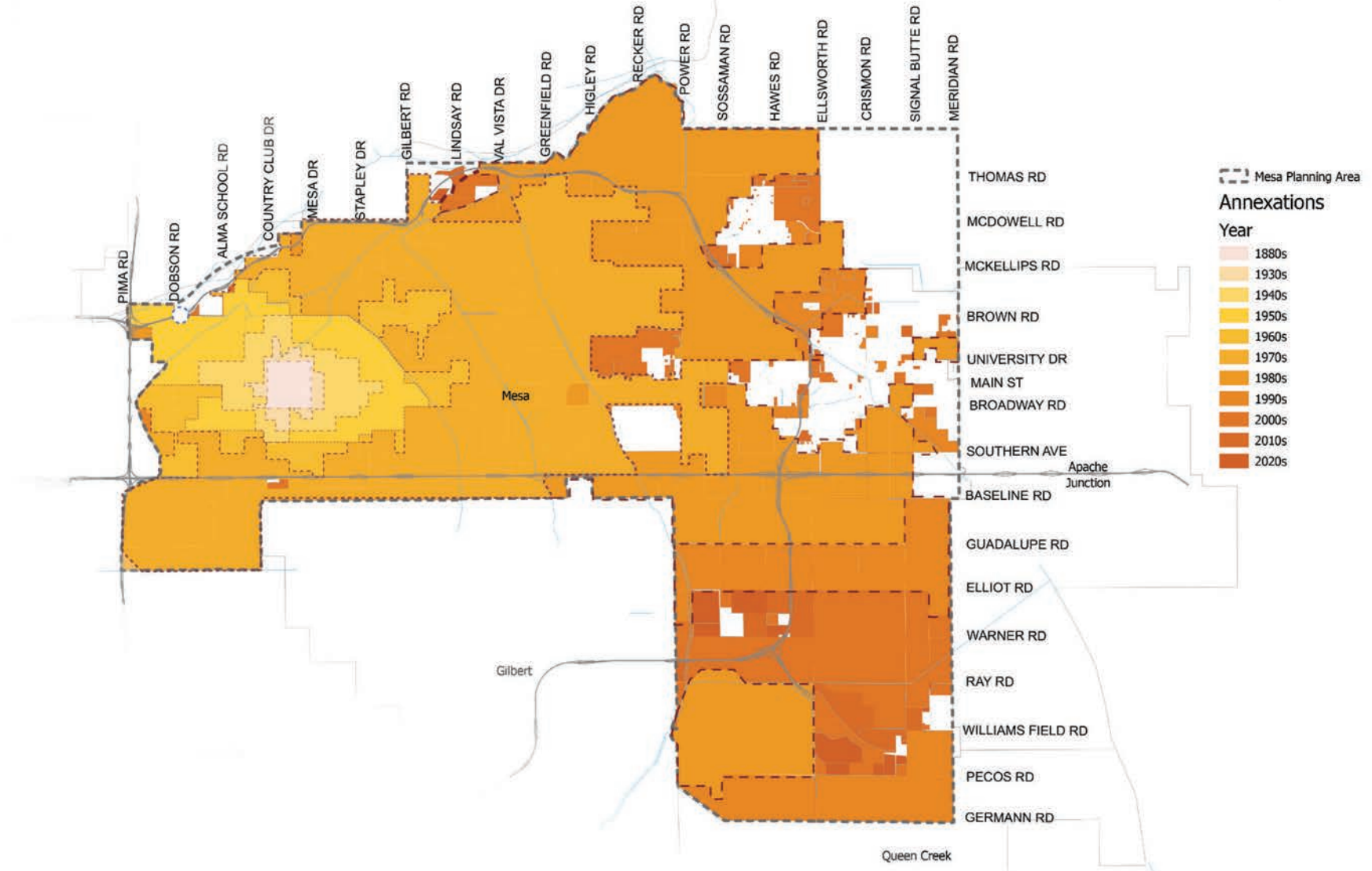
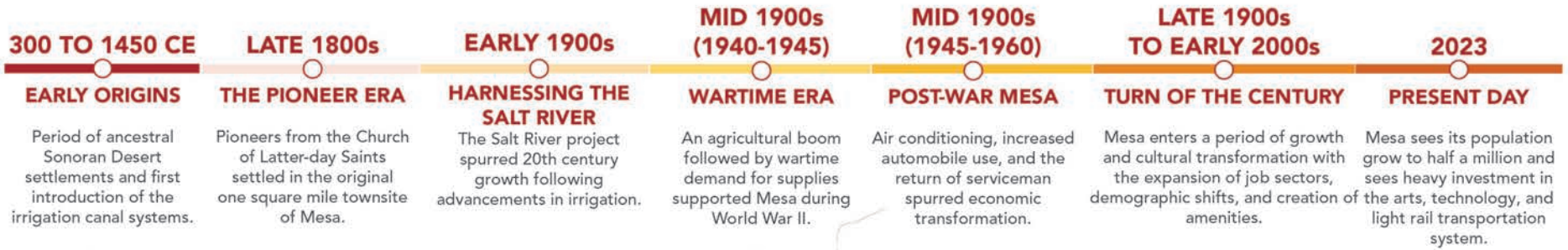
In 1878, a claim was made on a one-square-mile section of land stretching from Mesa Drive to Country Club Drive and from University Drive to Broadway Road. The claim for the land was approved in 1882 and the original townsite of Mesa was born.

Mesa's original townsite utilized the "City of Zion" plan first developed by LDS founder Joseph Smith in the 1830s to help guide the platting of new, self-sufficient communities for new LDS settlements.

This plan called for a "one-square-mile" grid pattern, featuring wide streets to allow for large, ox-drawn wagons to turn around mid-block, a feature still present within Downtown Mesa. Properties within the original townsite were large as they were used for farming.



Figure 2. Mesa Annexations and Eras Timeline







### **HARNESSING THE SALT RIVER— WATER, POWER, AND AGRICULTURE**

Mesa was a prospering community by the end of the 19th century, but the lack of a dependable water supply undermined its future vitality and growth. In the early 1900s, as irrigation issues gained national attention, it was clear to Mesa residents that a dam would be necessary to spur future growth and economic prosperity.

In 1903, Salt River Valley farmers joined together and founded the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association, which is now known as the Salt River Project (SRP). The SRP was a part of several major water resource projects—including the Roosevelt Dam, which helped pave the way for Mesa's phenomenal growth in the 20th century.



### **MESA'S WARTIME ERA**

Through the early 20th century, Mesa experienced an agricultural boom, spurred by wartime demand for cotton needed for uniforms, parachutes, and other military necessities.

In 1940, the City purchased land for Falcon Field Airport and leased it to a British flying and training school. The one-square-mile air base opened in September 1941 as a military airport, and was responsible for training more than 2,000 British Royal Air Force and US Army Corps pilot cadets during World War II. The first training flight was an American-made Boeing PT-17 "Stearman" biplane.



### **POST-WAR MESA**

Between 1945 and 1960, Mesa experienced a population boom as service members returned from WWII. Increased availability and affordability of air conditioning along with increased automobile usage also contributed to the viability of residing in Mesa's warm sunny climate.

This post-war surge in population was accompanied by a major economic transformation as the City's traditional agricultural base declined and construction, technology, defense, and tourism grew.



## MESA AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Mesa's extraordinary growth continued during the decades surrounding the turn of the century. The population surged as retirees and job-seeking families were drawn to the City by its combination of accessible housing, warm and inviting climate, and ample employment opportunities.

Mesa's two airports—Falcon Field Airport and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport—played pivotal roles in the City's population expansion. Before their transition to civilian use, these airports attracted military personnel and their families. Following this transition, they became significant drivers of economic growth, attracting individuals with well-paying jobs and fostering the growth of the City's aerospace, defense, and logistics industries.

The turn of the century ushered in significant shifts in Mesa's cultural landscape as people from diverse backgrounds made the City their home. Mexican immigrants, in particular, have had a significant impact on the City's culture, and you'll find a thriving Latino community in Mesa today. There is also a significant Asian American population in Mesa and a remarkable assortment of Asian-owned businesses, including restaurants, markets, and specialty shops.

Mesa's turn of the century growth was also supported by a proliferation of amenities attractive to tourists and residents alike. In addition to its natural wonders, the City began to offer arts and cultural attractions such as the Arizona Museum of Natural History, the i.d.e.a.

Museum for youth, the Mesa Arts Center (MAC), and the Mesa Grande Cultural Park. Recreational amenities, including spring training baseball facilities for the Oakland Athletics and Chicago Cubs, as well as theme parks and adventure activities, catered to tourists and residents.

The expansion of higher education and healthcare facilities fueled Mesa's remarkable growth, with colleges and healthcare providers becoming significant contributors to the City's robust economy. This era also witnessed the development of highways, transit and transportation networks and other vital infrastructure, making Mesa an even more appealing place to live, work, play, and learn.



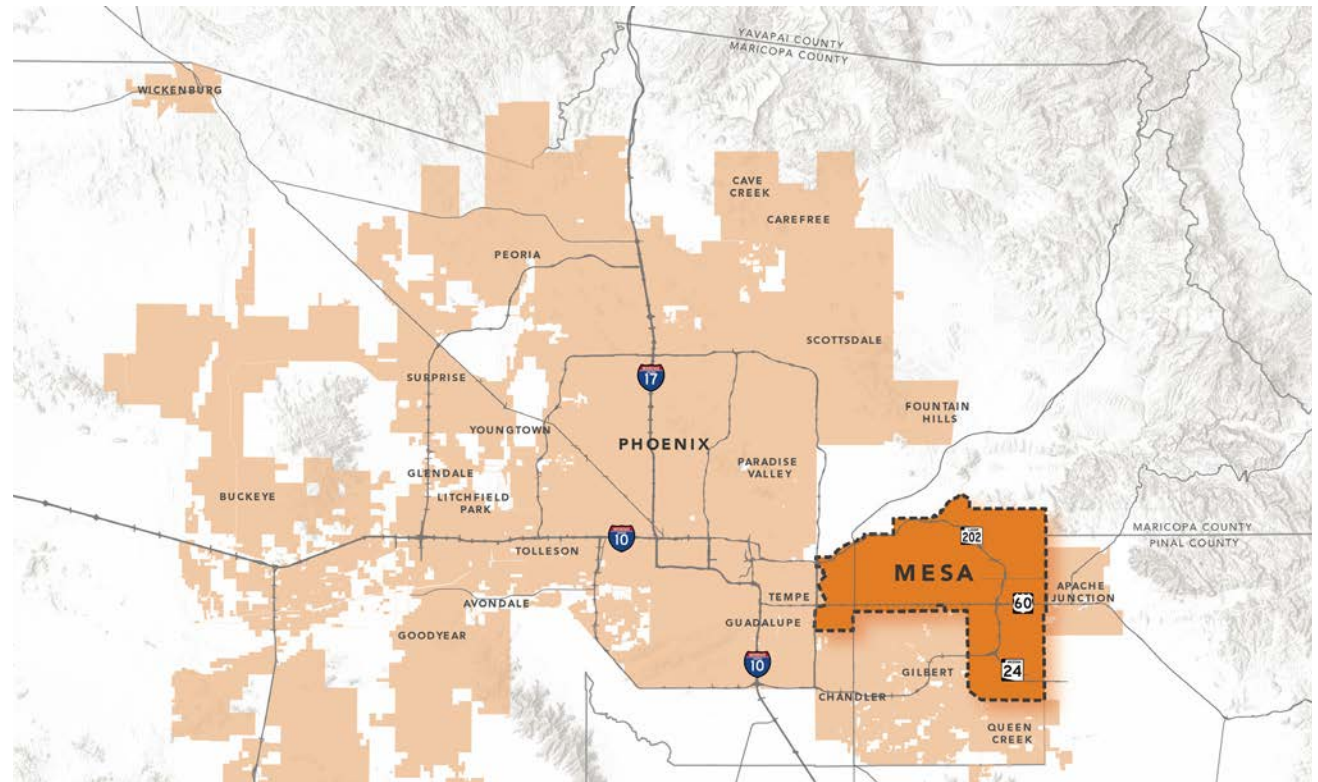
# Our Present

## MESA'S FOUNDATION FOR TOMORROW

The City of Mesa is in the East Valley of the Phoenix Metropolitan Area (PMA), within Maricopa County, Arizona. The City is bordered by the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community to the north; the City of Apache Junction to the east; the City of Chandler, Town of Gilbert, and Town of Queen Creek to the south; and the City of Tempe to the west.

Mesa's prime location in the Valley provides access to a workforce population of 1.3 million within a 30-minute drive, and access to regional highways and interstates linking Mesa to other Arizona markets, California, and Mexico.

Figure 3. Mesa Regional Context Map



## Mesa at a Glance

- **544,976** RESIDENTS WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING AREA
- **3RD** MOST POPULOUS CITY IN ARIZONA
- **36TH** MOST POPULOUS CITY IN THE US
- APPROXIMATELY **170 SQUARE MILES** IN THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING AREA
- PART OF THE **PHOENIX METROPOLITAN AREA (PMA)**
- APPROXIMATELY **243,003** HOUSING UNITS
- **\$65,725** MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



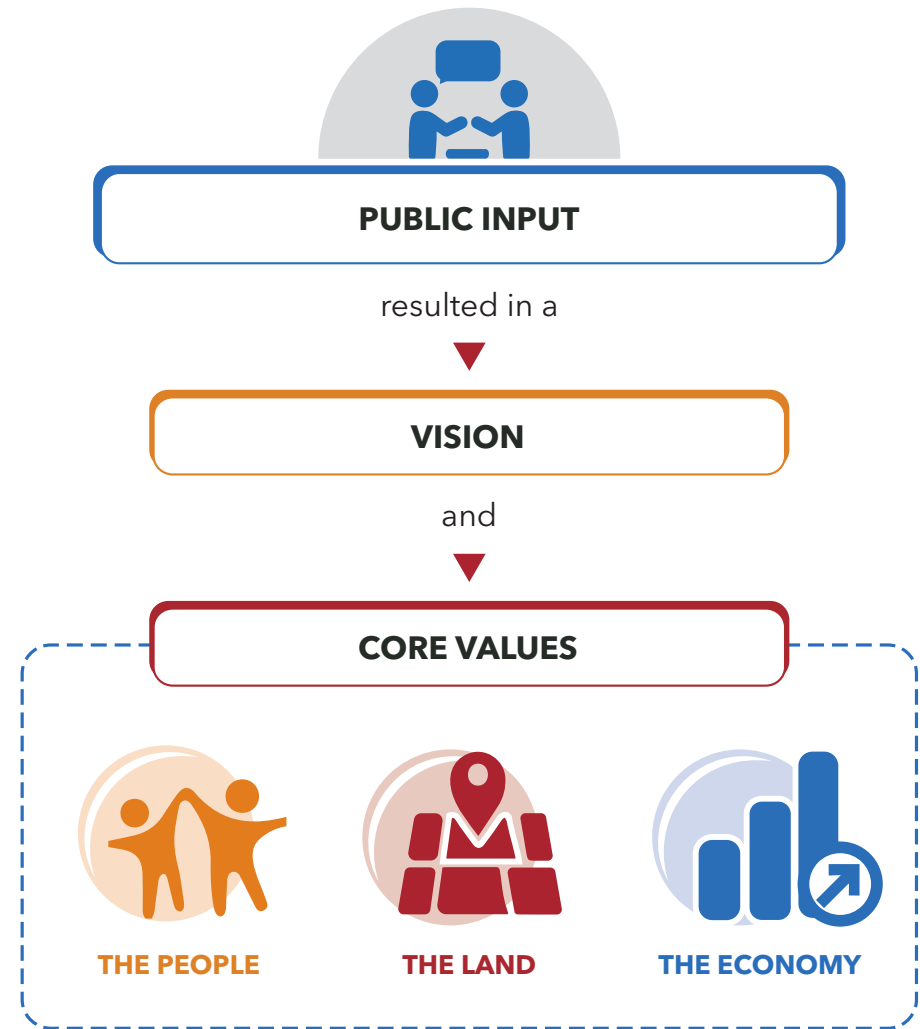
# Our Vision for the Future

## FROM COMMUNITY VALUES TO GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan's Vision* expresses what the community wants to be in 2050 and is based on feedback from community residents, businesses, property owners, community and next generation leaders, and local officials.

Throughout the two-year Tomorrow's Mesa planning process, thousands of stakeholders shared their unique perspectives on what makes Mesa great and how it can evolve to be even better.

Public input was provided through many forms: public meetings and workshops, one-on-one interviews, online surveys, immersive virtual experiences, and interactive maps. Common themes voiced by the community resulted in a Vision, Core Values, and a set of Guiding Principles that embody the community's commitment to preserving the best of Mesa and striving to improve the quality of life for all.



*Mesa is a safe, desirable, family-centered community that...*

Celebrates our heritage and innovative spirit;  
Seeks economic prosperity for all;  
Prioritizes quality places; and  
Offers choices where we live, work, play, and learn.



## CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES - FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLAN

The Guiding Principles and Strategies in this *General Plan* aim to shape the future of the places we live, work, play, and learn.

*Tomorrow's Mesa Vision* is a forward-thinking vision created through the robust community outreach process and expresses what the community wants Mesa to be in 2050.

Underlying *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan Vision* are three Core Values, 11 Guiding Principles, and 49 Strategies which further articulate the desired long-range outcome for our community.

The **Core Values** are common themes that emerged from community conversations which provide a framework for how the *General Plan* is organized. These Core Values—**Chapter 2: The People**, **Chapter 3: The Land**, and **Chapter 4: The Economy**—contain important elements, such as housing, transportation, and economic development, which drive the function and success of our City.



### The People



**Great Neighborhoods**  
Our neighborhoods are vibrant, diverse, and safe places where our people thrive.



**History, Arts, and Cultural Resources**  
Our community values our heritage and embraces its diverse culture.



**Human Services**  
Our human services are compassionate and equitable.



**Public Safety**  
Our City is safe and has exceptional public safety services.



### The Land



**Housing**  
Our housing is attainable for all.



**Circulation and Mobility**  
Our transportation network is efficient, safe, and well-connected.



**Parks and Open Space**  
Our parks and open spaces offer rich recreation and support active lifestyles.



**Land Use and Urban Design**  
Our City offers integrated and balanced land uses with a variety of neighborhoods and business opportunities.



### The Economy



**Economic Development**

Our economy is innovative and prosperous.



**Environment, Conservation, Energy, and Water**

Our City is resilient and sustainable.



**Public Facilities and Services**

Our public service enterprises are efficient, reliable, and cost-effective.





Each element in the *2050 General Plan* is provided with **Guiding Principles** which are action-oriented expressions of the envisioned outcome for these topic areas.

Each element then contains **Strategies** that support the Guiding Principle and describe the focus area(s) that will help achieve the Guiding Principle.

**Actions** are the activities the City will undertake to implement the Strategies of the General Plan. Actions are provided in a separate document, titled the "Action Plan". The Action Plan defines the responsible party for carrying out the actions, the anticipated timeframe, and includes measures to track progress where applicable. The Action Plan is intended to be a living document that will be periodically updated to reflect the City's most current policies, data, progress, and accomplishments.

**Chapter 5: Implementation** outlines how to use the Action Plan and the process for *General Plan* amendments.

Appendices in the *Plan* include:

- **Appendix 1: Existing Conditions Report** sets the stage for the *General Plan* and includes an analysis of current conditions within the City.
- **Appendix 2: Public Outreach** provides more detail on each phase of the outreach process, including summaries of public comment from online questionnaires, activities, meetings, and events.

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



02

THE PEOPLE



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# The People

Today, Mesa is a thriving community of over 544,976 residents whose varied backgrounds contribute to the vibrancy of the City. At the heart of Mesa are the people who shape the City through their diverse cultures, traditions, and aspirations.

During *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* engagement process, residents shared that friends and family are central to what they love about Mesa and that the City's strong sense of community is one of the main reasons they choose to call Mesa home.

Mesa values the uniqueness of our neighborhoods and wants to ensure they are safe, well-maintained, stable, and attractive places where people can thrive. Mesa values the heritage, arts, and cultural diversity that contribute to our community's character and quality of life. It is important to our residents that our culturally significant history is preserved and that people from all walks of life can express and celebrate their culture.

Mesa is also a community that cares about the welfare of its residents and wants to ensure everyone has access to resources they need to flourish, including access to quality education, healthcare, and human services.

This Chapter outlines a set of Guiding Principles and Strategies for **Great Neighborhoods; History, Arts, and Cultural Resources; Human Services; and Public Safety** that work together towards a future where Mesa is a safe, desirable, family-centered community that celebrates our heritage and innovative spirit. In addition to the Strategies of this Chapter, related Strategies that will help accomplish this Vision are found in Chapter 3: The Land and Chapter 4: The Economy. The Strategies related to each topic are provided below for reference.



## Guiding Principles

OUR NEIGHBORHOODS ARE VIBRANT, DIVERSE, AND SAFE PLACES WHERE OUR PEOPLE THRIVE.

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES OUR HERITAGE AND EMBRACES ITS DIVERSE CULTURE.

OUR HUMAN SERVICES ARE COMPASSIONATE AND EQUITABLE.

OUR CITY IS SAFE AND HAS EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES.



# Great Neighborhoods

*Guiding Principle - Our Neighborhoods are Vibrant, Diverse, and Safe Places Where Our People Thrive.*

Mesa residents live in a variety of distinct, safe, and attractive neighborhoods that provide opportunities for a high quality of life. The distinct character and qualities of these neighborhoods, whether it is the vibrancy of Downtown, the heritage of the Lehi neighborhood, or the rich culture of the Asian District, make Mesa a unique place to live. Each neighborhood's character contributes to the vibrancy and vitality of the City.

Neighborhoods are not just a place to live; they contain schools, places of worship, parks, and commercial amenities that foster social interaction and connect us to our family, neighbors, and the community.

Neighborhoods are dynamic, change over time and will be impacted by external forces, such as shifting investment patterns.

The City's role is to ensure that neighborhoods are high-quality environments that offer a safe and welcoming community, can adapt to changing needs, and preserve the most cherished assets and values.

The following Strategies focus on preserving and improving the quality, diversity, and safety of our neighborhoods ensuring they remain great places to live, work, play, and learn.



## Strategies

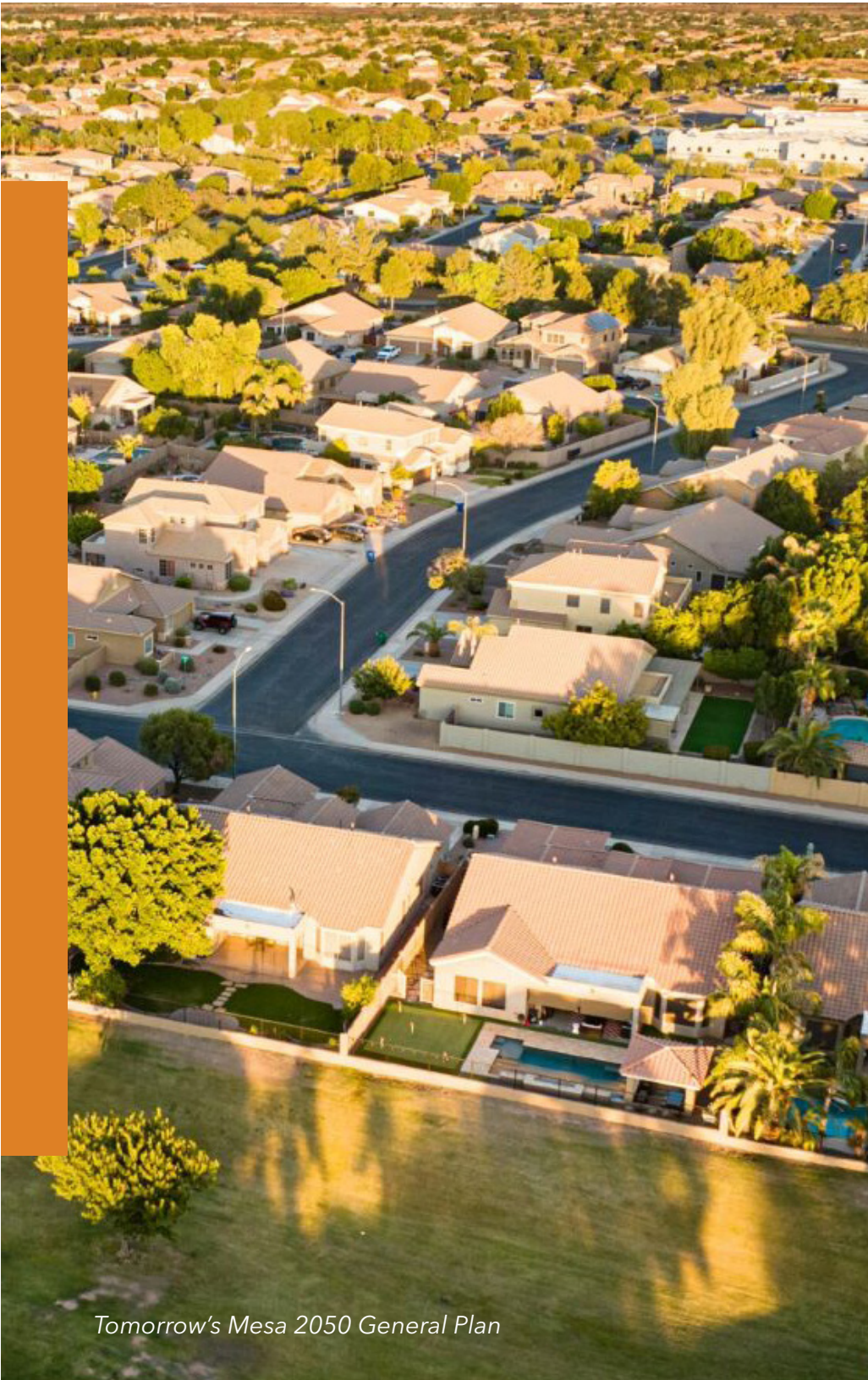
**N1. PROMOTE COMPLETE COMMUNITIES IN BOTH EXISTING AND NEW NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**N2. PROMOTE ADAPTIVE REUSE AND INFILL AS TOOLS TO REJUVENATE AND REVITALIZE ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**N3. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ROBUST CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS TO ENSURE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE CLEAN AND WELL-MAINTAINED.**

**N4. USE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING TO ENGAGE LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND DEFINE NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIFIC CHARACTER, VALUES, AND POLICIES.**

**N5. IMPROVE STREET AND OPEN SPACE NETWORK CONNECTIVITY WITHIN NEIGHBORHOODS AND TO LOCAL SERVING AMENITIES.**



Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan

## N1. Promote complete communities in both existing and new neighborhoods.

---

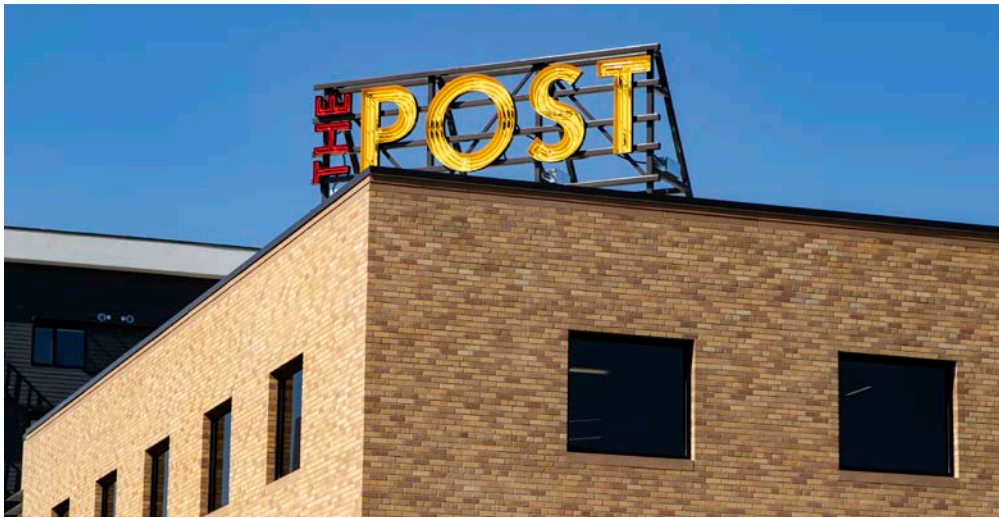
Currently, there are many neighborhoods in Mesa that are composed mostly of single-family homes, with few nearby services or employment opportunities. As a result of these single-use areas, Mesa residents must travel farther and longer to access services, which adversely impacts their quality of life. A desired outcome expressed by the community is that all areas of Mesa become complete communities.

A complete community is comprised of a variety of complementary, interconnected places that provide opportunities for people to live, work, play, and learn. Strategically locating these land uses near each other is mutually beneficial. For instance, homes positioned with convenient access to shopping and dining options, or employment hubs located near commercial areas that provide services and amenities for people after work, can enhance the overall community experience.

In addition to offering a complementary blend of places, a complete community provides a range of amenities and advantages within each of these places. Such communities are defined by the integration of high-quality parks, open spaces, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, parking, and various other community-enhancing features which are seamlessly woven into the fabric of the community.

Achieving neighborhoods that are complete communities is a strategic way to optimize land use, support sustainability, and, most importantly, make Mesa a City where everyone finds their ideal place to live, work, play, and learn.





## N2. Promote adaptive reuse and infill as tools to rejuvenate and revitalize established neighborhoods.

---

Incorporated in 1883, Mesa is still a relatively young community. However, approximately 54% of our neighborhoods were developed prior to 1990 and some are experiencing decline in their character and vibrancy.

A variety of actions, such as, adaptive reuse and infill development can be utilized to maintain the quality of older neighborhoods and encourage reinvestment in an area.

Adaptive reuse, which is the reuse and adaptation of buildings for another purpose, transforms aging buildings and sites into functional, desirable spaces, promoting sustainability and retaining the unique character of each neighborhood. Infill is the practice of developing vacant or underutilized sites in established areas that were bypassed while other development occurred, or the site has deteriorated over time due to destruction or neglect.

Targeted adaptive reuse and infill are excellent strategies that can catalyze additional revitalization within an area, increase property values, and improve the safety of our neighborhoods.

## N3. Continue to provide code compliance programs to ensure neighborhoods are clean and well-maintained.

---

Maintaining great neighborhoods throughout the City requires deliberate actions that ensure established neighborhoods are well-maintained, comfortable, safe, and attractive, and that they continue to receive improvements to help sustain property values and preserve neighborhood character.

Neighborhood conservation and regular improvements are essential to ensuring our neighborhoods are not neglected. The City continues to provide code compliance programs that enforce the City's nuisance and property maintenance codes, and keep our communities clean, safe, and welcoming. Efforts will continue to focus on education, outreach, and the direct interaction with property owners to help the community understand the importance maintenance and continued investment play in stabilizing our neighborhoods.



## N4. Use neighborhood planning to engage local communities and define neighborhood specific character, values, and policies.

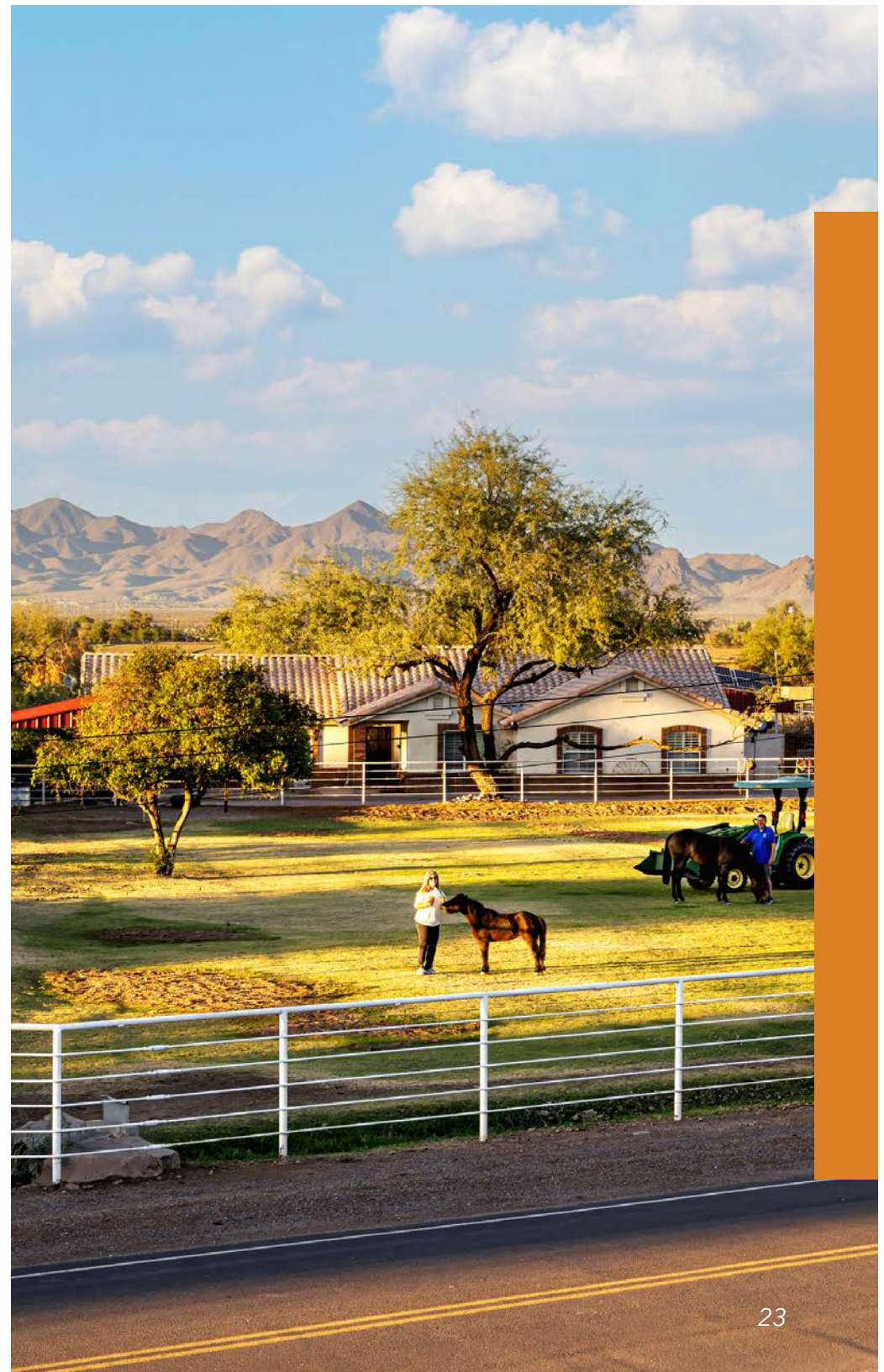
---

Neighborhood planning provides residents the opportunity to identify issues particular to their neighborhoods that may be unique from Citywide policies.

Because neighborhoods have unique values, amenities, natural environments, and local priorities, neighborhood planning involves creating policies that support neighborhood residents in their efforts to preserve the quality of their homes and the community assets they value. Policies will encourage neighborhoods to improve and enhance the aspects that make them distinct and encourage ongoing communication between neighborhoods and the City—empowering neighborhood residents to share neighborhood-specific priorities, opportunities, and concerns directly with City staff.

Currently, the City has six neighborhood plans, also known as sub-area plans. These plans are the Lehi Sub-Area Plan, Citrus Sub-Area Plan, Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan, West Main Street Area Plan, Central Main Street Plan, and the Gateway Strategic Development Plan.

As Mesa continues to grow, neighborhood planning, along with other strategies, can be used to strengthen the character of our neighborhoods and improve the quality of life for their residents.







## N5. Improve street and open space network connectivity within neighborhoods and to local amenities.

---

As one of Arizona's largest and fastest growing cities, Mesa is at a pivotal juncture where enhancing connectivity is essential to elevating the quality of life for our residents. Throughout *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* planning process, community members expressed their desire for improved connectivity to amenities like shopping and dining. They also emphasized the importance of walkability and bike-friendly options, underscoring that the foundation of seamless connectivity must originate at the neighborhood level.

Improved connectivity supports multiple facets of a thriving community. For residents, it shortens commutes and provides easier access to essential services like healthcare, schools, and shopping. For local businesses, it supports the timely delivery of goods as well as increases foot traffic, enabling a stronger, more resilient economy.

Neighborhood connectivity supports the broader strategies of creating complete, self-sufficient neighborhoods that reduce the need for long commutes, thereby decreasing traffic congestion, reducing environmental impacts, and promoting healthier lifestyles.

Targeted investment in existing neighborhoods and an emphasis on the connectivity of uses, open space, and road networks in the design of new neighborhoods help ensure our residents live in neighborhoods that provide them with mobility choices.





## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**HAC1.** Enhance community character and heritage through the identification and preservation of significant historic sites, properties, structures, and districts.

---

**HAC3.** Promote and expand access to arts and culture opportunities across the City.

---

**PS1.** Continue to provide high-quality and responsive police, fire, and emergency services to all residents and businesses.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**CM2.** Provide a complete, connected, and safe network of on- and off-street active transportation infrastructure.

---

**PO1.** Provide a diverse range of neighborhood, community, and regional parks within one-half mile of all residential areas.

---

**LU1.** Promote a balance of land uses to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

---

**LU2.** Create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**H1.** Create more opportunities for housing options.

---

**PF3.** Provide sustainable energy, water, sewer, solid waste, and storm sewer services to residents.

---

# History, Arts, and Cultural Resources

*Guiding Principle - Our Community Values Our Heritage and Embraces its Diverse Culture.*

Mesa is a beacon of cultural diversity and heritage, welcoming people from all backgrounds and walks of life. The City is deeply committed to preserving and celebrating its rich historical and cultural identity that enriches the lives of residents and visitors.

Mesa's historic neighborhoods and landmarks are not just relics of the past but living spaces that contribute to the City's identity. Preservation of these resources celebrates Mesa's past, heritage, values, and the people who created them.

As Mesa continues to be a culturally diverse City, exposure to historical resources and the arts can introduce people to different cultures, traditions, and art forms. Art and cultural institutions and events, whether planned, permanent, or temporary, give residents and visitors the opportunity to engage with the community and learn about cultural traditions. When the arts

are integrated into the urban design of an area, they enrich the quality and vibrancy of places. The City's objective is to incorporate art, culture, and historical assets into Mesa's physical environments—not only Downtown, but across the entire City, thereby enhancing its appeal from multiple perspectives.

Communities that support strong and diverse arts and cultural programs and institutions benefit economically by attracting tourists, businesses, jobs, and trade. Mesa continues to enhance its reputation as an arts and cultural leader and tourism destination in Arizona by promoting and making investments in arts and culture opportunities across the City.

The following Strategies build upon Mesa's history, arts, and cultural resources and provide ways to integrate them more fully into the community, built environment, economy, and branding of Mesa in the coming years.



## Strategies

**HAC1. ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND HERITAGE BY IDENTIFYING AND PRESERVING SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC SITES, PROPERTIES, STRUCTURES, AND DISTRICTS.**

**HAC2. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE A VARIETY OF ARTWORK IN PUBLIC PLACES, SUCH AS PARKS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND PLAZAS.**

**HAC3. PROMOTE AND EXPAND ACCESS TO ARTS AND CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE CITY.**

**HAC4. EXPAND MESA'S REPUTATION AS AN ARTS AND CULTURE TOURISM LEADER IN ARIZONA.**





## HAC1. Enhance community character and heritage by identifying and preserving significant historic sites, properties, structures, and districts.

---

Mesa's commitment to safeguarding and enriching its history, culture, and heritage, all of which are integral to the community's identity and continuity, takes various forms. In some cases, this may mean active involvement in the preservation and renovation of historic resources; in others, historical interpretation or recognition may be sufficient.

Mesa currently has eight locally designated historic districts and 11 locally designated historic landmarks. The City also has two recognized heritage neighborhoods. While not officially designated historic resources, heritage neighborhoods are recognized and celebrated for their unique heritage—including its people, buildings, and events—that provide an important link to previous generations and contribute to a sense of place in Mesa.

Furthermore, the City pays tribute to its history by naming streets and public places after figures, groups, and events from its past.

As the City continues to grow, it becomes increasingly important to both maintain the inventory of designated historic resources and identify additional buildings and places deserving recognition as historic assets worth preserving.

This Strategy includes education and outreach so residents understand the significance heritage plays in creating quality places and their shared community responsibility in preserving these valuable resources. To protect these irreplaceable community assets for future generations, regulations and design standards are used and regularly updated.





## HAC2. Support and encourage a variety of artwork in public places, such as parks, public buildings, and plazas.

---

Artwork integrated into the built environment can enliven public spaces, create engaging architectural details, enhance City and neighborhood character, and serve as a landmark in the community. Art can be integrated into many locations: streetscapes, plazas, neighborhood entrances and gateways, buildings, landscapes, and parks are just a few examples.

Public art presents an outstanding avenue for community involvement and showcasing the City's cultural heritage.

The City is committed to collaborating with local artists, businesses, and residents on projects that amplify Mesa's cultural richness and diversity through the medium of public art.

## HAC3. Promote and expand access to arts and cultural opportunities across the City.

---

The City believes that exposure to the arts and culture improves the quality of life in Mesa and is a community benefit that should be accessible to all residents.

By fostering creative experiences, Mesa aims to cultivate a sense of inclusion, community, and belonging—ultimately reinforcing the social, economic, and creative fabric of the City. To realize this vision, the City is dedicated to expanding access to arts and cultural opportunities throughout the City.

The City is currently exploring approaches that bring experiences directly to the people in the neighborhoods in which they live, work, play, and learn—be it through the use of planned events or innovative programs like Mesa's Mobile Art-Based Engagement Lab (MABEL).

As Mesa continues to grow, the City will continue to evaluate arts and cultural programming to ensure that offerings match the diverse needs and desires of the community which includes working to remove financial barriers that may prevent participation. The City will also continue to evaluate its public facilities and technology to ensure that art and cultural opportunities are provided across the City and accessible to all.



## HAC4. Expand Mesa's reputation as an arts and culture tourism leader in Arizona.

---

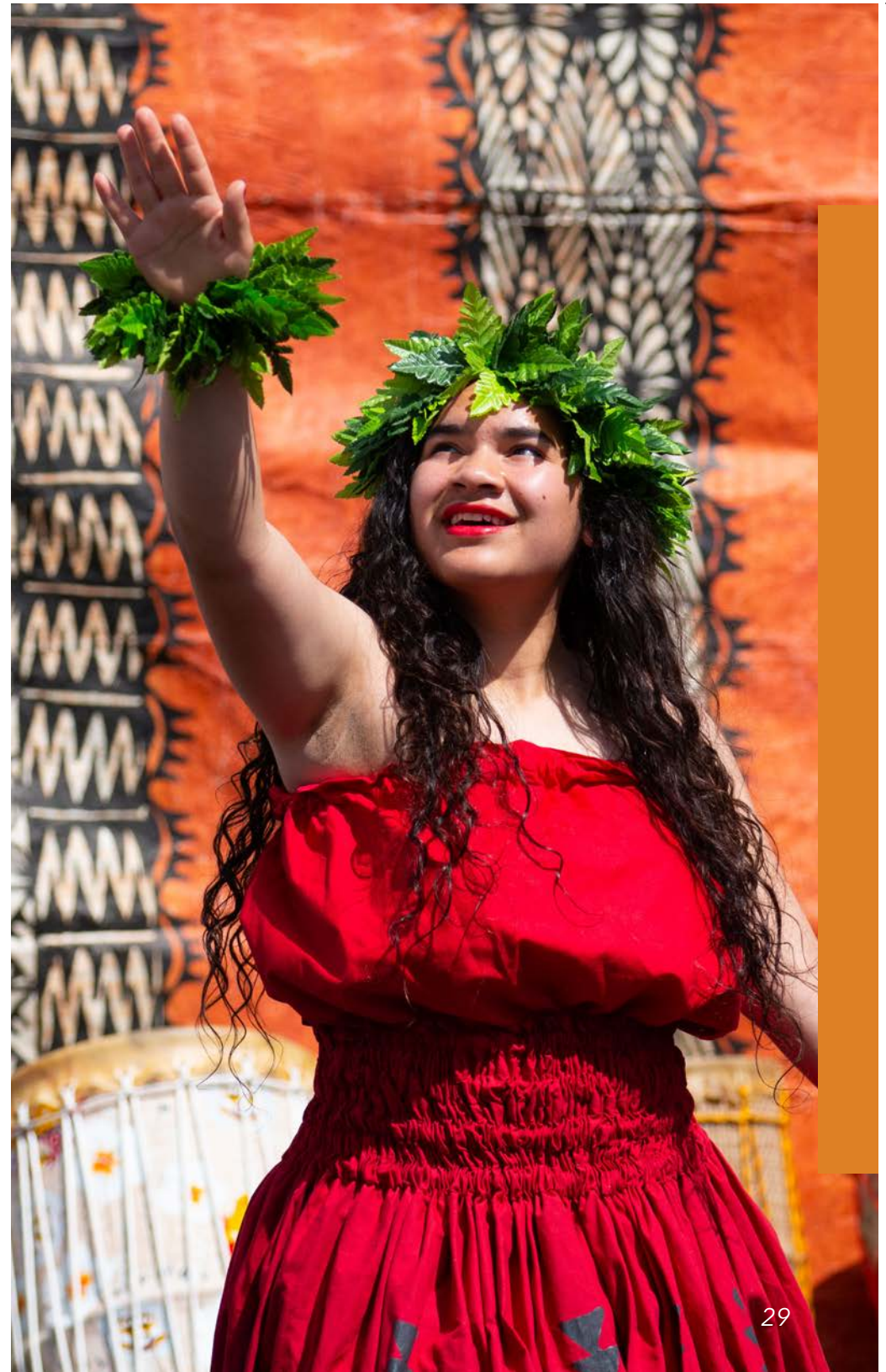
Mesa strives to be an internationally acclaimed destination, celebrated for its innovations and diverse offerings in arts, science, and culture. Mesa is home to several thriving cultural hubs that draw visitors from across the City and from around the Valley.

The Mesa Arts Center stands as one of Arizona's premier venues for both performing and visual arts, hosting up to 800 performances a year. Activities at the Mesa Arts Center attract more than 335,000 visitors a year. Mesa is also home to the Mesa Amphitheatre, an outdoor music venue that draws on average over 45,000 visitors annually from around the Valley.

The Arizona Museum of Natural History is a community hub and active science research facility that interprets and preserves the stories and records of our natural world and our place in it. With over 170,000 visitors per year, the museum remains a cultural anchor, which has engaged, educated, and enriched visitors since 1977.

The i.d.e.a. Museum is an interactive museum dedicated to nurturing creative thinking through hands-on interactive experiences. Drawing approximately 98,000 visitors annually, the i.d.e.a. Museum is another cultural magnet that supports early learning and fosters strong family bonds.

These thriving cultural assets significantly contribute to tourism, serving as a substantial driver of the economy. According to a 2022 City of Mesa Arts & Economic Prosperity Study, the arts sector alone generates an annual economic impact of approximately \$35 million. Strategically developing and expanding these cultural assets, especially in the heart of Downtown Mesa, will enhance the City's allure and play an integral role in nurturing a vibrant visitor economy.







## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N5.** Improve street and open space network connectivity within neighborhoods and to local-serving amenities.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**LU2.** Create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place.

---

**LU4.** Create design and development standards that improve the City's visual quality, urban form, and function to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**ED5.** Promote Mesa as a regional commercial, entertainment, and tourist destination.

---



# Human Services

*Guiding Principle - Our Human Services Are Compassionate and Equitable.*

Mesa is committed to supporting compassionate, equitable, and high-quality human services. These services enable individuals and families to meet basic needs (physical, economic, and social) and offer support that includes intervention, prevention, and enhancement. Human services include healthcare, education, and social services.

Healthcare, education, and social services provided in the City are available from a network of small and large organizations that offer varied services based on individual needs. While these services are largely dependent on private businesses and agencies, the City often partners with these entities along with various stakeholders, including school districts, employers, and nonprofit organizations, to ensure that every member of our community has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and enhance their quality of life.

Mesa is an education-friendly City where schools are a priority. Students benefit from small class sizes, universal access to cutting-edge educational technologies, and classes held in clean, safe, well-maintained, and environmentally friendly facilities.

Mesa upholds high educational standards that are applied and achieved in all neighborhoods, ensuring that its educational system, spanning from preschool to advanced degrees, equips people with the skills needed for the numerous, well-paying, skilled, and professional jobs that have proliferated in the City.

The following Strategies describe how the City will support the delivery of high-quality human services.



## Strategies

**HS1. PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY AGENCIES TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS.**

**HS2. INCREASE AWARENESS OF AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS AND OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN MESA.**

**HS3. SUPPORT AN INTENTIONAL LOCAL COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS WITH HOUSING AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.**

**HS4. SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD, PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN MESA.**



## HS1. Provide leadership and collaborate with community agencies to encourage and promote the development and expansion of human services programs.

---

While the provision of human services is largely a function of the private sector, the City recognizes the pivotal role played by local government, school districts, and other public sector agencies in ensuring the delivery and accessibility of these services. Through partnerships with local agencies and service providers, the City assumes a leadership role and actively fosters community awareness, facilitates decision-making, and allocates resources through:

- Planning – assessing and anticipating needs and crafting appropriate policies and program responses.
- Facilitating – convening and engaging the community in problem-solving to develop and improve services.
- Funding – distributing funding from both Federal funding and the City's general fund to support a network of services that respond to community needs.
- Informing – promoting awareness of needs and resources through effective marketing and public relations.

The City believes these partnerships are critical to addressing community challenges and needs, representing an investment in the development of healthy individuals and families.



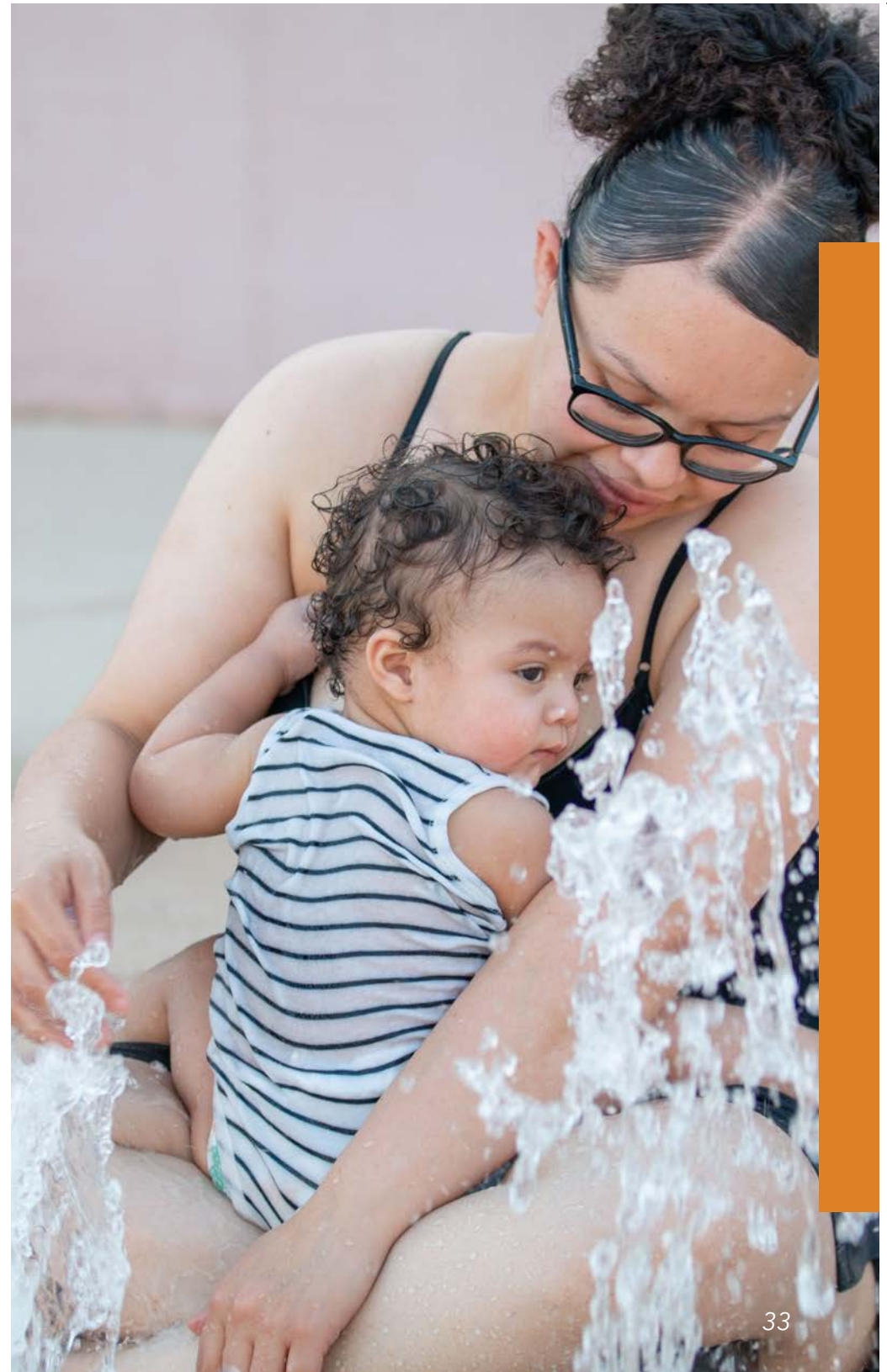
## HS2. Increase awareness of and access to information about social service programs and options available in Mesa.

---

Facilitating community awareness and providing accessible information about the array of social services and healthcare facilities accessible to residents is crucial so that residents can readily utilize these services when needed.

Various barriers may impede residents' access, such as language barriers, lack of internet access, or distance from service providers.

While reaching out to the diverse population of Mesa can present challenges, the City remains committed to expanding the avenues through which residents can be engaged. As the City continues to diversify, Mesa will continue to find ways, such as collaborating with partners from school districts, non-profit organizations, and places of worship to enhance the dissemination of information.







### HS3. Support an intentional local community response to homelessness with housing and supportive services.

---

Addressing homelessness is critical for the well-being and stability of Mesa. Mesa is committed to working with local partners and coordinating with neighboring municipalities across the Valley to address the homelessness problem.

Mesa regularly conducts analyses of the homeless population and evaluates the capacity of our emergency shelters. In partnership with non-profit organizations, the City offers transitional housing programs such as Mesa's Housing Path, that serve as a bridge between emergency shelters and permanent housing.

These programs extend beyond simply providing shelter by offering essential services such as counseling, job training, and access to healthcare. These comprehensive services are instrumental in assisting residents in maintaining stable housing situations over the long term, aligning with the overarching goal of rehabilitating and stabilizing individuals in need.

## HS4. Support high-quality early childhood, primary, secondary, and higher education systems in Mesa.

---

The City of Mesa is home to many of the best primary education schools in the State as well as an impressive array of top-rated educational institutions. Mesa is served by four school districts and the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT). Mesa Public Schools serves the largest portion of the City, while Gilbert Public Schools, the Higley Unified School District, and the Queen Creek Unified School District each serve a portion of southeast Mesa. In addition, Mesa has dozens of charter schools that provide primary and secondary education. Mesa's school districts tout average ACT and SAT scores that beat both the state and national averages. Together, these institutions provide an educational foundation for over 100,000 students residing in Mesa.

Beyond K-12 education, Mesa is proud to be the home of numerous institutions of higher learning, such as, two Arizona State University (ASU) campuses (Polytechnic and Mesa City Center), A.T. Still University, Benedictine University, Mesa Community College, and Chandler-Gilbert Community College.

While the City does not have jurisdiction over or provide educational services, Mesa has a vested interest in the provision of high-quality education for our residents and provides enrichment opportunities through various City programs. For example, the City's Department of Arts and Culture supports education in Mesa through field trips to its museums as well as hosting theatrical performances for children at the Mesa Arts Center.

This comprehensive educational ecosystem underscores the City's dedication to nurturing the intellect and potential of its residents as well as the cultivation of a skilled workforce pipeline.

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*







## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**PS1.** Continue to provide high-quality and responsive police, fire, and emergency services to all residents and businesses.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**H2.** Sustain an adequate supply of attainable housing units to meet the needs of residents vulnerable to rising housing costs.

---

**PO3.** Continue to provide inclusive park and recreation programs for all residents, including underrepresented populations.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**ED2.** Invest in Mesa's workforce development.

---

# Public Safety

*Guiding Principle - Our City is Safe and Has Exceptional Public Safety Services.*

Public safety is a key contributor to the quality of life in Mesa. During *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* update, public safety was identified as one of the top issues facing Mesa today and in the future.

The community shared that Mesa is a safe place to live, work, play, and learn and emphasized the importance of maintaining this prevailing sense of safety. Safety, as the community sees it, is not just the absence of crime or threats; it involves a proactive approach encompassing comprehensive public safety initiatives aimed at supporting residents.

Public safety is multifaceted. It includes police, fire, and medical services, education, technology, and community involvement. It also involves readiness for significant events and environmental challenges.

The City of Mesa is committed to delivering top-tier police, fire, and emergency medical services to all its residents and businesses. The City is well-prepared to handle large-scale public safety incidents, with up-to-

date protocols aligned with national standards.

Continuous interdepartmental training will help ensure seamless responses to large-scale emergencies as well as facilitating resource allocation and operational coordination that is both efficient and effective.

Forging a stronger relationship between public safety providers and the community is essential in Mesa. Mesa residents support public safety providers and have developed a profound trust in the services they deliver.

Mesa remains dedicated to delivering educational programs, outreach initiatives, and community resource personnel to ensure transparent, open communication and mutual trust.

The City is committed to protecting its citizens and visitors from conditions, circumstances, and influences that would threaten, disrupt, or diminish their quality of life. The following Strategies address how Mesa will continue to provide excellent public safety services now and into the future.



## Strategies

**PS1. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY AND RESPONSIVE POLICE, FIRE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES TO ALL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.**

**PS2. PREPARE FOR LARGE-SCALE PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENTS.**

**PS3. PROVIDE PREVENTIVE SAFETY EDUCATION TO MESA RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.**

**PS4. CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN TRUST BETWEEN PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE PUBLIC.**





## PS1. Continue to provide high-quality and responsive police, fire, and emergency services to all residents and businesses.

---

Mesa's Police Department and Fire and Medical Department are dedicated to providing comprehensive, community-oriented services for residents, workers, visitors, and business owners. Similarly, our community's reputation for safety is essential in attracting new residents, employees, and businesses.

The City continues to use innovative technology to ensure that its public safety services remain responsive and efficient. Using technology and data-decision-making serves to help guarantee resources are optimized and equitably allocated, ensuring responses are swift and effective.



## PS2. Prepare for large-scale public safety incidents.

---

Planning and preparation for large-scale public safety incidents is critical for the City's residents and infrastructure. Unified cross-training across all emergency services, aligned with the National Incident Command Systems (NICS), ensures standardized, efficient responses to major events. This strategic focus ensures coordination, timely resource allocation, and operational effectiveness.

Collaborative training exercises between fire and police departments further bolster inter-departmental communication, fostering a unified approach to managing large-scale incidents. Periodic review and updates to the Emergency Operation Plan are made to adapt to changing risks and leverage best practices and new technologies.







### PS3. Provide preventative safety education to Mesa residents and businesses.

Public safety education and intervention are vital for enhancing community well-being, reducing risks, and strengthening trust and relationships. To implement effective preventative safety education for Mesa residents, a multifaceted approach is essential. The City will continue to collaborate with local schools, community organizations, and public safety agencies to develop age-appropriate safety programs for students from kindergarten through high school. These programs can cover a wide range of topics, including fire safety, emergency preparedness, personal safety, and traffic awareness.

Mesa can also leverage digital platforms and social media to disseminate safety tips and resources to residents of all ages. Regular workshops, seminars and community events focused on safety awareness can be organized in collaboration with local community centers and neighborhood associations. These initiatives should include not only traditional safety concerns but should also address emerging issues like cybersecurity and online safety. Engaging local businesses to sponsor and participate in safety awareness campaigns can also enhance the outreach efforts.

### PS4. Continue to strengthen trust between public safety and the public.

Establishing trust within the community is a fundamental component of effective policing. Law enforcement authorities depend on community members to share information about neighborhood crime and to work with the police to identify solutions. Similarly, community members' willingness to work with the police is based on trust.

A 2021 study conducted by ASU entitled, "Mesa Residents' Perceptions of the Mesa Police Department and Community Safety" found that respondents generally had positive experiences with the Mesa Police Department and believed they were treated fairly in their latest interaction.

It is important that police continue to proactively engage with community members in non-enforcement settings to build relationships with residents through our Community Resource Officers, and through programming from our Community Relations Division with community-based events such as Coffee with a Cop, Cops and Bobbers, and Mesa's Housing Path program. Mesa also continues to examine its recruitment process to identify ways to increase diversity and provide training to improve cultural competency.



## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N3.** Continue to provide robust code compliance programs to ensure neighborhoods are clean and well-maintained.

---

**HS1.** Provide leadership and collaborate with community agencies to encourage and promote the development and expansion of human service programs.

---

**HS2.** Increase awareness of and access to information about social service programs and options available in Mesa.

---

**HS3.** Support an intentional local community response to homelessness with housing and supportive services.

---

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**CM2.** Provide a complete, connected, and safe network of on- and off-street active transportation infrastructure.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**ECEW4.** Promote sustainable practices that foster resilient systems and reduce hazard risks.

---

**PF2.** Continue to implement smart city strategies in the planning, operation, and delivery of public facilities and services

---



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK





03

THE LAND





THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# The Land

Mesa's identity now and in the future is significantly shaped by land use, design, transportation infrastructure, and the physical layout of the City and its neighborhoods. How people live and get around is partly determined by the distance to services and other destinations. Spatial arrangement and design of buildings, streets, and other public spaces also influence their function and how people use them. Together these design characteristics help determine whether: (1) a community is walkable, (2) children have safe places to play and safe routes to school, (3) people have places to gather,

and (4) businesses and services are easy to access.

During the *Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* engagement process, residents shared what they loved about the City and their big ideas for the future of Mesa. A common theme communicated by stakeholders was the desire for complete communities that provide connectivity and access to their everyday essentials, as well as amenities such as parks, shops, restaurants, paths, and community centers near their homes.

This Chapter outlines a set of Guiding Principles and Strategies for **Housing, Circulation and Mobility, Parks and Open Space, and Land Use and Urban Design** which work together to move Mesa towards a future where the land is made up of a variety of quality places that offer choices for where people live, work, play, and learn.

Related Strategies that help accomplish this Vision are located throughout the *General Plan*, specifically in Chapter 2: The People and Chapter 4: The Economy.



## Guiding Principles

OUR HOUSING IS ATTAINABLE FOR ALL.

OUR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IS EFFICIENT, SAFE, AND WELL-CONNECTED.

OUR PARKS AND OPEN SPACES OFFER RICH RECREATION AND SUPPORT ACTIVE LIFESTYLES.

OUR CITY OFFERS INTEGRATED AND BALANCED LAND USES WITH A VARIETY OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.



# Housing

## *Guiding Principle - Our Housing is Attainable For All.*

Mesa is a community of choices. As such, the community embraces a variety of housing options that blend contextually with our neighborhoods. By 2030, Mesa's population is expected to reach over 580,000 residents, requiring 21,800 additional housing units. In recent years, the cost of a median value home has risen 44.4%, a larger increase than Phoenix (41.5%), Chandler (36.7%), Scottsdale (37.3%), and Gilbert (38.5%). As we look towards the future, the Guiding Principle that "Our Housing is Attainable for All" holds more importance than ever.

While single-family housing will continue to be the predominant housing type in Mesa, an increasing number of people, from young professionals to retirees, seek a more urban lifestyle or need more attainable and diverse housing options. Expanding diverse housing options for Mesa's residents with a focus on attainable and executive housing solutions is critical for the City's sustainable growth and community vitality.

Attainable housing for all must address the full spectrum of housing needs in our community which includes not only workforce housing, but high-end real estate as well. As Mesa continues to become a destination for business and development, the need for high-end and executive housing to meet the needs of our expanding economy is paramount.

What type of housing is built and where it will be built is largely dependent on the market and housing developers. The following Strategies describe how the City can influence the types of housing available and how Mesa can encourage a housing market that meets the needs of current and future residents, the demands associated with an expanding economy, and provides the housing and lifestyle options desired by Mesa residents.



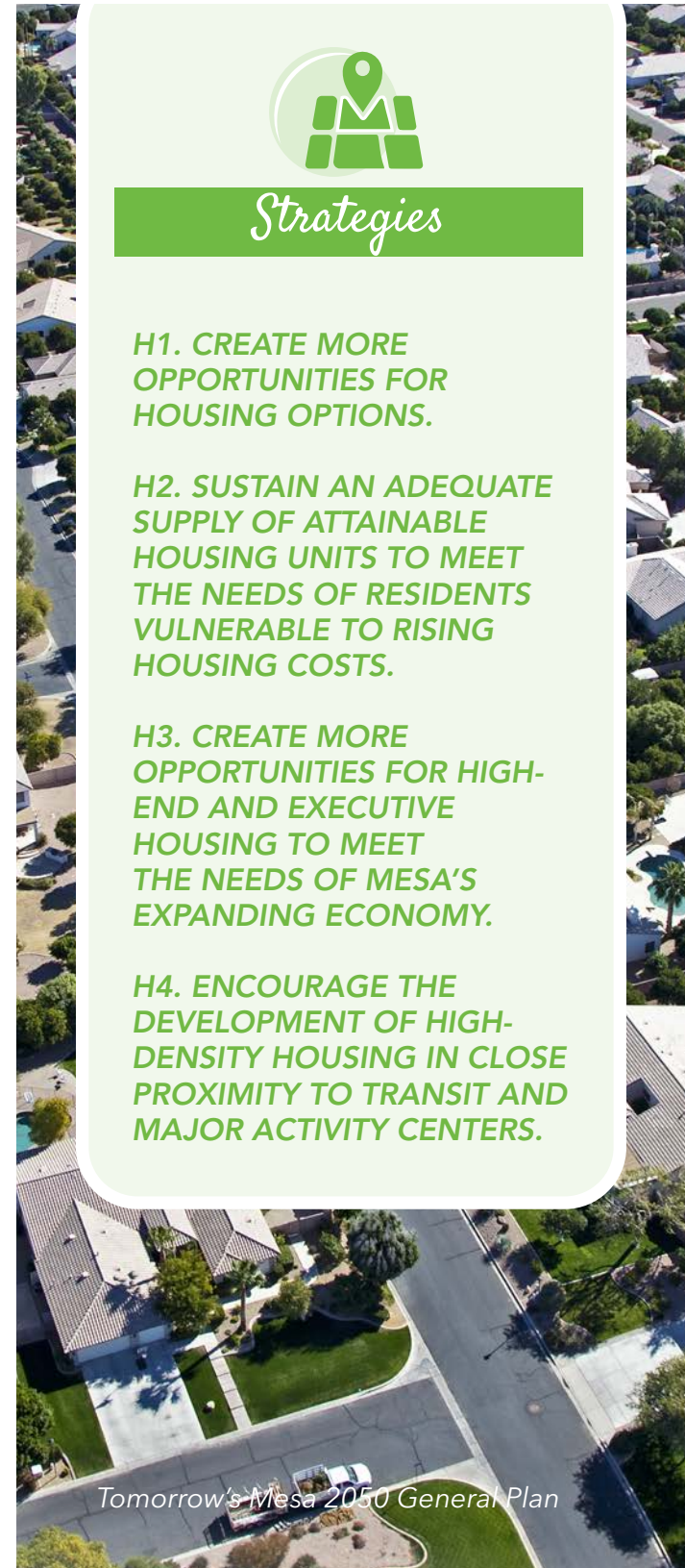
## *Strategies*

**H1. CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOUSING OPTIONS.**

**H2. SUSTAIN AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF ATTAINABLE HOUSING UNITS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS VULNERABLE TO RISING HOUSING COSTS.**

**H3. CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH-END AND EXECUTIVE HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MESA'S EXPANDING ECONOMY.**

**H4. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO TRANSIT AND MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTERS.**





## H1. Create more opportunities for housing options.

---

A variety of housing options, including single-family homes, townhouses, condos, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage courts, and apartments are important to the future of the City of Mesa.

Mesa's housing market should provide housing at an appropriate price point for all housing types. This includes housing choices that allow residents to move through different housing types during different phases of their lives.

While Mesa boasts a robust market of single-family homes that are essential for stable neighborhoods, there is a notable gap in housing choice. Mesa is committed to providing housing options for residents of all ages and lifestyles and the diversification of its housing stock.

## H2. Sustain an adequate supply of attainable housing units to meet the needs of residents vulnerable to rising housing costs.

---

As Mesa's population continues to grow, the availability of attainable housing becomes increasingly important. High interest rates and persistently high housing prices—particularly in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area—are significantly impacting the ability of residents to afford housing in their desired locations.

Construction of new housing units is an important component of housing supply. However, the complexities of the construction process and the associated costs of material, labor, and transportation add to the attainability challenges for households as these costs are incorporated into the sales price.

As Mesa strives to ensure that 'Housing is Attainable for All', a variety of strategies such as land use incentives (i.e., density bonuses, reduced lot sizes, tax incentives, etc.) will be considered as mechanisms to influence the housing stock and sustain affordability.





### H3. Create more opportunities for high-end and executive housing to meet the needs of Mesa's expanding economy.

---

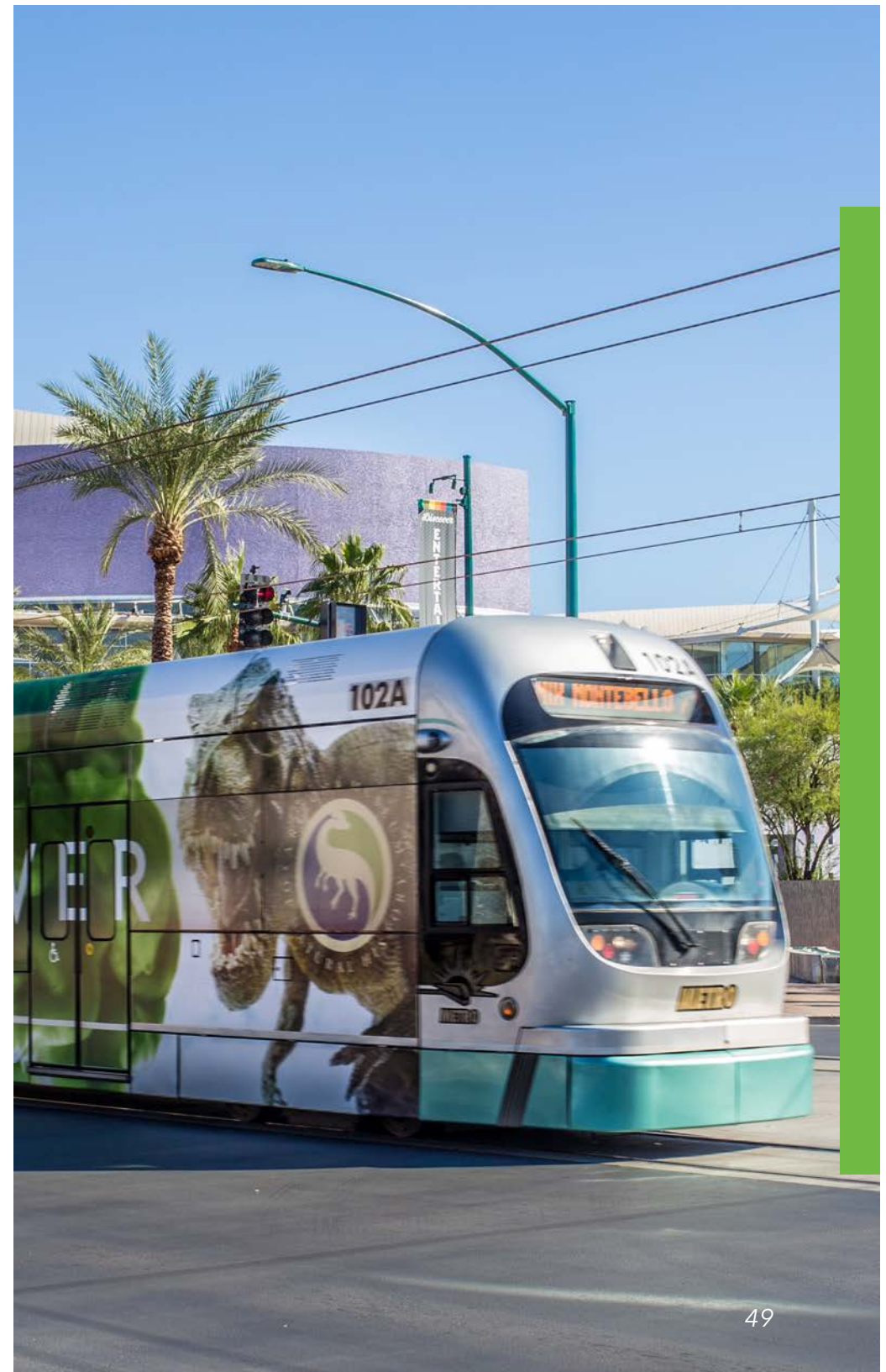
Mesa is considered one of the most affordable cities in the Valley with a median home sales price of \$455,000 (Zillow, July 2023). However, there is a noticeable gap in higher-end housing (i.e., mortgages over \$750,000) compared to surrounding jurisdictions. Only 4.3% of Mesa's housing stock is considered high-income, versus a Maricopa County average nearing 10%, Chandler and Gilbert over 7%, and Scottsdale at 37.3%.

Providing "Attainable Housing for All" extends beyond affordable housing and must address the full spectrum of Mesa's housing stock. Increasing the supply of high-end and executive housing has positive economic effects and impacts the City's ability to attract high-wage employers who seek locations that can provide their employees with a high quality of life. Retaining this segment of the workforce as residents further influences the type and quality of commercial and entertainment businesses that decide to locate in Mesa. Because the businesses make decisions based on the market analysis, an increase in this demographic will result in higher quality developments that will benefit all Mesa residents.

## H4. Encourage the development of high-density housing in proximity to transit and major activity centers.

Encouraging and enabling the development of high-density housing near transit and activity centers is not just a practical approach, but also a visionary one for Mesa. By locating housing near transit and amenities, we can significantly reduce residents' reliance on personal vehicles, leading to a reduction in traffic congestion and carbon emissions. This aligns with Mesa's commitment to environmental stewardship and its goals to create a more sustainable, eco-friendly City for future generations.

Furthermore, concentrating housing near transit services and amenities enhances community vibrancy and spurs economic growth. When residents live close to these hubs, they are more likely to use public transportation, bike, or walk, which increases foot traffic and supports local businesses. The result is more dynamic, pedestrian-friendly environments that stimulate economic growth and promote a sense of community. Additionally, high-density housing can attract a diverse range of residents, contributing to a more inclusive and culturally rich City. By embracing this approach, Mesa can position itself as a forward-thinking City that not only addresses current challenges but also lays the foundation for a prosperous and connected future.







## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N2.** Promote adaptive reuse and infill as tools to rejuvenate and revitalize established neighborhoods.

---

**N3.** Continue to provide robust code compliance programs to ensure neighborhoods are clean and well-maintained.

---

**HS2.** Support an intentional local community response to homelessness with housing and supportive services.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**ED1.** Attract businesses and employers that provide jobs and wages at or above the regional average.

---

# Circulation and Mobility

*Guiding Principle - Our Transportation Network is Efficient, Safe, and Well-Connected.*

Spanning approximately 142 square miles within the current City boundary, Mesa is a diverse City. The way residents, visitors, and employees travel through the City affects the overall quality of life and community image.

Mesa envisions a future where everyone has access to an efficient, safe, and well-connected transportation system regardless of age, ability, or financial means. While the automobile will remain an important means of travel in Mesa, the City's vision for the future is for multiple transportation modes being integrated into the larger transportation network.

A variety of mobility choices will provide greater accessibility and connectivity; alleviate pollution and congestion; and foster community well-being and quality of life.

Different areas within the City have unique mobility needs requiring specific-area solutions. For example, building upon and improving transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian networks in Downtown Mesa is key to its revitalization as a vibrant center; however, the same improvements may not be appropriate elsewhere. To correspond to the character, needs, and lifestyles of different areas in Mesa, the City will need to diversify its mobility options and focus on location-based strategies.

The Strategies described below focus on ensuring a connected, diverse, and integrated transportation network that can safely and efficiently meet the needs of Mesa's residents and businesses.



## Strategies

**CM1. DESIGN AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THAT SAFELY AND EFFICIENTLY MOVES PEOPLE AND GOODS.**

**CM2. PROVIDE A COMPLETE, CONNECTED, AND SAFE NETWORK OF ON- AND OFF-STREET ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**CM3. ENHANCE THE PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, INCORPORATING LIGHT RAIL, STREETCARS, BUS, AND SHARED ON-DEMAND SERVICES.**

**CM4. PROMOTE TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT ALONG EXISTING AND FUTURE HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT ROUTES.**

**CM5. INTEGRATE INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES.**





## CM1. Design an integrated transportation network that safely and efficiently moves people and goods.

---

As Mesa evolves and expands, developing an integrated transportation network will be essential. The City's vision for its future mobility network is for a tiered modal system where different modes of transportation are strategically interconnected.

This Strategy addresses more than roadway connectivity and roadway design, providing tailored mobility options in different areas of the City, and how the facilities interact to provide seamless, integrated travel throughout the City.

As the City continues to build and improve this network, a core focus remains on enhancing the safety of our transportation network for all users—be it pedestrians, cyclists, or motorists. This vital Strategy is not merely an aspiration, it is a deep-rooted commitment to the well-being of everyone who calls Mesa home or visits the community.

## CM2. Provide a complete, connected, safe network of on- and off-street active transportation infrastructure.

---

Building a robust, active transportation network is more than an amenity, it is a cornerstone for a sustainable and inclusive future. Throughout the General Plan engagement process, the community expressed the desire to expand the City's shared-use path network, especially along canals.

A focus on developing functional, low-stress pathways is crucial, ensuring that individuals of all ages and abilities can comfortably navigate the City using non-motorized forms of transport like cycling and walking. These pathways will serve as the lifelines between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreational spaces.

## CM3. Enhance the public transit system, incorporating light rail, streetcars, bus, and shared on-demand services.

---

Mesa is still growing, and our population is expected to reach 596,100 by 2050. Currently, only 11.7% of Mesa's land area is vacant (2023). This means that as Mesa reaches buildout, growth will be accommodated through the revitalization of older parts of the City rather than development of vacant parcels of land.

In order to accommodate this growth, housing will densify similar to surrounding jurisdictions that have reached buildout. Providing diverse transit options, such as light rail, streetcars, bus, and shared on-demand services, will help ensure that our transportation system is not overburdened, remains efficient, and meets the needs of all residents.

## CM4. Promote transit-supportive development along existing and future high-capacity transit routes.

---

Transit-supportive development is an integrated approach to land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning that directs growth to areas well-served by transit.

Providing walkable, mixed-use developments of appropriate size and density can effectively support high-capacity transit service and make transit projects more viable by increasing ridership.

Building vibrant and active communities with a balanced mix of jobs, housing, and shopping—all within steps from transit—will require active involvement and partnerships between City departments, Valley Metro, and private developers. However, this strategic planning can reap a number of benefits for the City such as increased reinvestment and revitalization of declining areas, efficient use of existing infrastructure, reduced traffic congestion, and greater convenience and flexibility in how residents move around.

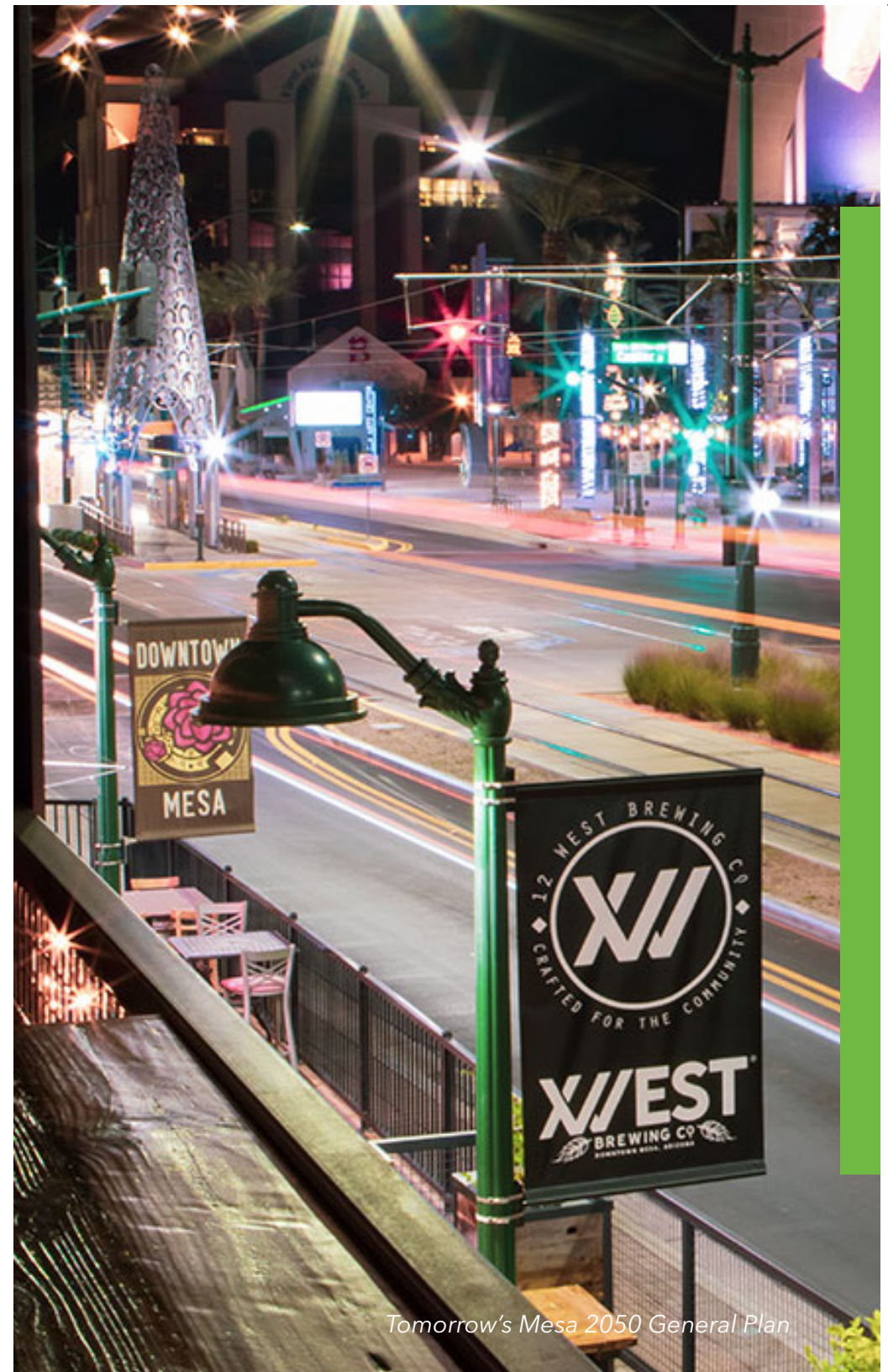


## CM5. Integrate innovative transportation technology strategies.

Innovative technology's role in shaping the future of Mesa's transportation landscape cannot be overstated. Embracing cutting-edge solutions is not just about staying current; it will play a key role in realizing Mesa's vision of mobility, sustainability, and a high quality of life for all residents.

Continued investment in innovative transportation technologies such as shared mobility, demand responsive microtransit, and intelligent traffic systems will allow the City to respond to traffic growth, variable traffic patterns, changing modal preferences, and transportation innovations such as autonomous vehicles.

Mesa is planning to be at the forefront of the anticipated transition from fossil fuel to alternative fuel vehicles as this shift accelerates nationally. A widespread, reliable network for refueling and recharging will be vital in enabling more residents, businesses, and visitors to choose eco-friendly transportation options. Having easily accessible vehicle refueling and charging stations throughout the City will also make Mesa more attractive to those who have alternative fuel vehicles or who prioritize sustainability, further establishing the City as a progressive, forward-thinking community. Mesa will continue to monitor advances in alternate transportation options and consumer behavior to inform strategic investments, wherever the future leads.







## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N5.** Improve street and open space network connectivity within neighborhoods and to local-serving commercial areas.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**H4.** Encourage the development of high-density housing in close proximity to transit and major activity centers.

---

**PO2.** Integrate the park system with comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian pathways.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**PF4.** Ensure that private development contributes its fair share towards the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure.

---



# Parks and Open Space

*Guiding Principle - Our Parks and Open Spaces Offer Rich Recreation and Support Active Lifestyles.*

Mesa's quality of life is inextricably linked to the richness of its public spaces. Parks and open spaces are more than just amenities; they are essential assets that enrich residents' lives in countless ways. From enhancing well-being to bolstering the local economy and fostering community bonds, these spaces are the heart and soul of Mesa.

As one of the most rapidly growing cities in the Southwest, Mesa has a unique opportunity to shape a parks and open space network that increases property values, attracts tourism, and enhances the livability of neighborhoods.

Parks are not mere luxuries, but essential for a community's physical and psychological health. The City's parks serve as natural gyms and stress relief centers by offering various recreational options, such as sports fields and courts, playgrounds, water-based amenities, and shaded areas for respite from the Arizona sun. Their value in promoting active lifestyles and mental well-being cannot be overstated.

The City of Mesa boasts a 2,500-acre parks network that includes 205 parks. An impressive 95% of Mesa's population currently lives within a 10-minute walk or half-mile of an outdoor recreation area. However, as we look to the future, the City aims to deepen this impact, ensuring every resident is within walking distance of a park or facility. This goal is rooted in the principle of equity and inclusion and enhancing access to the entire community.

Strategies below focus on ensuring a robust parks and open space network that provides diverse opportunities and support active lifestyles for all residents.



## Strategies

**PO1. PROVIDE A DIVERSE RANGE OF NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, AND REGIONAL PARKS WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF ALL RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

**PO2. INTEGRATE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS INTO THE CITY'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM.**

**PO3. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE INCLUSIVE PARK AND RECREATION PROGRAMS FOR ALL RESIDENTS, INCLUDING UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS.**

**PO4. MAINTAIN THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES THROUGH ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND INVESTMENT.**



Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan

## PO1. Provide a diverse range of neighborhoods, community, and regional parks within one-half mile of all residential areas.

---

In Mesa, the significance of accessible and varied parks is critical to the thriving urban environment. Focusing on equitable access to these spaces, the goal is to ensure that every household is within a convenient 10-minute or half-mile walk from a park. This proximity offers more than leisure and recreational activities; it enriches the fabric of neighborhoods, fostering a sense of community pride and belonging. Currently, 95% of Mesa's residents already live within walking distance of an outdoor recreational facility, and 69% have access to a variety of at least five different recreational amenities within a ten-minute walk.

The City's impressive, existing parks system presents exciting opportunities for the City to expand indoor recreation opportunities, diversify public amenities, and leverage public-private partnerships to provide community opportunities. Citywide events and a focus on the equitable distribution of recreational opportunities close to home add immeasurable value to neighborhoods across Mesa.





## PO2. Integrate bicycle and pedestrian pathways into the City's parks and open space system.

---

As the City of Mesa looks toward a sustainable and inclusive future, connecting parks and open spaces through a comprehensive network of shared-use pathways, bike lanes, and other accessible routes cannot be overstated.

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* is pioneering in this regard, as it prioritizes the creation of safe, ADA-accessible pathways as a method to achieve many of the City's goals for the future. It aims to efficiently utilize every inch of public space, from irrigation canals to extra right-of-way width, to expand the City's active transportation network. This initiative does more than merely link point A to point B; it brings many benefits that resonate on economic, social, and environmental levels.

Connecting various transportation networks, such as bicycle lanes and shared-use paths, magnifies the reach and utility of our parks and open space system and enhances Mesa residents active lifestyles.

## PO3. Continue to provide inclusive park and recreation programs for all residents, including underrepresented populations.

---

In Mesa, the goal is not just to create public spaces but to make them inclusive and accessible for everyone in the City. Equal access to recreation and cultural enrichment is particularly important for communities and groups historically underrepresented in City-organized programs.

Engaging residents and addressing barriers to participation can lead to effective, targeted solutions that make the City's parks and recreation programs genuinely inclusive. Creating affordable recreation options, whether through fee structures or fee assistance, can break down financial barriers. Moreover, activating community spaces has the added benefit of fortifying neighborhood bonds and fostering socialization, enriching the lives of residents. Mesa is committed to cultivating an environment where all its residents feel welcome, seen, and engaged.



## PO4. Maintain the long-term viability of park and recreation facilities through ongoing maintenance and investment.

---

Mesa's parks and recreation system spans 2,500 acres across 205 parks, as well as nine aquatic facilities, six recreation centers, two professional baseball stadiums, and a championship golf course. Keeping these facilities safe and enjoyable requires constant attention and investment.

In accordance with the City's climate action goals, innovative ways to approach construction and major maintenance which limit water and energy usage will be deployed to maximize environmental sustainability.







## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N1.** Promote complete communities in both existing and new neighborhoods.

---

**N5.** Improve street and open space network connectivity within neighborhoods and to local-serving amenities.

---

**HAC2.** Support and encourage a variety of artwork in public places, such as parks, public buildings, and plazas.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**CM2.** Provide a complete, connected, and safe network of on- and off-street active transportation infrastructure.

---

### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**PF2.** Continue to implement smart city strategies in the planning, operation, and delivery of public facilities and services.

---

# Land Use and Urban Design

*Guiding Principle - Our City Offers Integrated and Balanced Land Uses With a Variety of Neighborhoods and Business Opportunities.*

Often considered the heart of the *General Plan*, the Land Use and Urban Design section provides guidance for land use decisions to maintain an attractive, livable, healthy, and economically sustainable City and to guide future development. This guidance is provided by the Future Land Use Plan which includes Placetypes, a Placetype Map, Growth Strategies, and a Growth Strategy Map.

The Placetypes describe the character of different parts of the City, and the land uses, zoning districts, densities/intensities, growth strategies, and urban design characteristics that further the goals of the *General Plan*. The Placetype Map serves as the blueprint for where the Placetypes are located in the City.

The Growth Strategies provide guidance on the level of change the community envisions in various parts of the City. The Growth Strategy Map identifies which Growth Strategy applies to different areas of the City.

The Placetype Map and Growth Strategy Map are used together to help guide future development in Mesa.

Mesa envisions a future that offers choice in where people live, work, play, and learn. Therefore, Mesa's future land use patterns support balanced employment, housing, and activity centers which include opportunities for moderate- and high-density mixed-use.

Mesa also envisions a future where our built environment is admired by other communities and synonymous with high-quality. The land use and urban design policies contained in this section seek to create a City that is people-oriented, aesthetically pleasing, and functionally understandable through continued development.



## Strategies

**LU1. PROMOTE A BALANCE OF LAND USES TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

**LU2. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLACEMAKING IN NEIGHBORHOODS THAT REINFORCE THEIR UNIQUE CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE.**

**LU3. ENCOURAGE INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT TO MEET THE COMMUNITY'S STRATEGIC NEEDS.**

**LU4. CREATE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS THAT IMPROVE THE CITY'S VISUAL QUALITY, URBAN FORM, AND FUNCTION TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

**LU5. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIBRANT ACTIVITY CENTERS IN DOWNTOWN AND THROUGHOUT THE CITY.**





## LU1. Promote a balance of land uses to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

---

During *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* update, many residents expressed a desire for a mix of housing types at varied price points, more mixed-use development, and neighborhood-scale retail in walkable neighborhoods. However, an ideal place to live, work, play, and learn looks different for people of different backgrounds, ages, and interests.

As discussed throughout the *General Plan*, emerging conditions such as the cost of housing, a growing population, and a decline in vacant land will influence the type of development that will occur and their intensities/densities.

The City must carefully consider how it will accommodate growth in ways that will both preserve the character and lifestyle of existing neighborhoods and provide opportunities for the development of a variety of environments. Balancing land uses also means paying close attention to the placement of uses that require use permits so there is not an over-concentration of uses in any one area.

## LU2. Create opportunities for placemaking in neighborhoods that reinforce their unique character and sense of place.

---

A desired outcome expressed both during the *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* update and during the creation of the City's last General Plan, *Mesa 2040 General Plan*, is to create a "more identifiable City" and move away from the perception that Mesa is merely a bedroom community. The *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* encourages placemaking to enhance the unique character of Mesa's diverse neighborhoods and enhance their identity.

Placemaking is an iterative, collaborative process for creating public spaces that people love and feel connected to. As both a strategic and hands-on approach for improving a neighborhood, placemaking is an intervention in which people collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community.

Placemaking incorporates the best of many disciplines and approaches, including urban planning, urban design, economic development, community development, arts, engineering, infrastructure, sustainability and more.

Mesa will continue to use and create more opportunities to use placemaking in incremental ways that improve the quality of our neighborhoods. The goal, over time, is to maintain or transform our neighborhoods into spaces with a strong sense of place serving as a magnet for people and new development.

## LU3. Encourage infill and redevelopment to meet the community's strategic needs.

---

As Mesa nears buildout, development will begin to shift from expansion and the development of large areas of vacant land to reinvestment in existing spaces and development of small vacant parcels.

With approximately 142 square miles of incorporated land in Mesa (2023) there is a significant opportunity for infill and revitalization throughout the City as our neighborhoods and commercial centers age.

Mesa currently recognizes four redevelopment areas (RDAs) within the City that exhibit characteristics of decline and need revitalization. The redevelopment plans for these RDAs—Town Center, Southwest, West, and East Redevelopment Areas—outline specific policies and actions to guide their redevelopment. However, the City is committed to expanding its tools and incentives to encourage reinvestment throughout the City.

There is a cost when growth is built in areas with little or no infrastructure, especially when the growth is in areas far away from existing services. Development and revitalization of vacant and underutilized properties within urbanized areas reduces the cost of managing growth by focusing new development in areas where the infrastructure has already been developed. Redevelopment and infill development are not only fiscally responsible but are also crucial for maintaining the quality of life in older parts of the City by reducing blight and crime and improving the vibrancy of Mesa's neighborhoods and activity centers.



## LU4. Create design and development standards that improve the City's visual quality, urban form, and function to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

---

Building and urban design are important factors in shaping Mesa's built form. They help both conserve and enhance the aspects of the City that make it appealing to residents and visitors alike.

Urban design is implemented through private and public investment in both development and revitalization by targeted interventions, special projects, or the incorporation of design principles identified by the City.

In 2020 Mesa adopted City-wide Quality Development Design Guidelines and comprehensive Mesa Zoning Ordinance revisions to enhance design requirements for private development. These tools have elevated the overall design of the City; however, additional plans and policies are needed to guide the specific character and qualities of areas in Mesa.

Mesa can enhance its sense of place and pride through further refinement and development of programs and policies that result in elevated design in the built environment.





## LU5. Encourage the development of vibrant activity centers in Downtown and throughout the City.

---

During *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* public participation process residents expressed the desire for more retail, dining, and entertainment in Mesa. Many residents expressed frustration that their tax dollars were spent in other jurisdictions because they did not have the opportunity to patronize businesses close to home. Residents also commented on the quality of Mesa's commercial developments which they felt did not meet their needs.

Residents were optimistic about the reinvestment that has occurred in Downtown and want to see it continue to develop into a vibrant destination that competes with surrounding jurisdictions. They also want similar nodes of activity to be developed in other parts of the City.

Currently, gaps exist in Mesa's commercial offerings. Residents often have to drive miles to meet their everyday needs or for destination-based experiences. The *General Plan's* Placetype Map looks to reduce these gaps by designating nodes for varying levels of commercial activity centers throughout Mesa. Preservation of these areas is vital to balance land use needs, especially as the pressure for converting such areas for more housing occurs.





## RELATED STRATEGIES

### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N1.** Promote complete communities in both existing and new neighborhoods.

---

**N2.** Promote adaptive reuse and infill as tools to rejuvenate and revitalize established neighborhoods.

---

**N5.** Improve street and open space network connectivity within neighborhoods and to local-serving amenities.

---

### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**H1.** Create more opportunities for housing options.

---

**H2.** Sustain an adequate supply of attainable housing units to meet the needs of residents vulnerable to rising housing costs.

---

**H3.** Create more opportunities for high-end and executive housing to meet the needs of Mesa's expanding economy.

---

**CM1.** Design an integrated transportation network that safely and efficiently moves people and goods.

---

# Future Land Use Plan

From the Downtown to the Lehi neighborhood to southeast parts of the City, Mesa is a community of unique places weaved together into a unified community. In vibrant cities, great places most often take the form of unique neighborhoods and active mixed-use districts. *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* builds on its diverse neighborhoods and balances growth by creating unique places.

This Future Land Use Plan contains **Placetypes**, a **Placetype Map**, **Growth Strategies**, and a **Growth Strategy Map** that work together to inform and direct development proposals. They direct growth in Mesa, ensuring that development is consistent with the long-term Vision and Guiding Principles—preserving the unique character of Mesa while setting the stage for its future.













**Placetypes** describe the overall character of a place, its typical land uses, densities/intensities, growth strategies, and the urban design characteristics of residential, commercial, and industrial development envisioned throughout the City.

As Mesa proactively plans for its future, the **Placetype Map** depicts the spatial arrangement and the development that is compatible within each specific area. This charts the City's path toward sustainable growth, vibrant communities, and a flourishing economy. This forward-looking representation embodies the City's long-term Vision for how the City should develop. The Placetype Map is the result of extensive engagement and collaboration with residents, businesses, and the larger community that fosters a cohesive community that cherishes its past while embracing its future.

The **Growth Strategy Map** is a spatial depiction of the **Growth Strategies**. There are three Growth Strategies including **Conserve**, **Sustain**, and **Evolve**. The Growth Strategies identify the level of change the community envisions in various parts of the City.

Over time, the land use patterns illustrated by the Future Land Use Plan will be achieved through the administration of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance and the review of development proposals.

## PLACETYPES

	Rural Residential
	Traditional Residential
	Mixed Residential
	Urban Residential
	Neighborhood Center
	Urban Center
	Downtown
	Regional Center
	Local Employment Center
	Regional Employment Center
	Industrial
	Parks/Open Space



## TYPICAL LAND USES

The typical land uses described below represent the general category of land uses that establish the character of the *General Plan's* Placetypes. Principal land uses are the primary and dominant use and play a pivotal role in characterizing a Placetype. Supporting land uses are secondary to principal land uses and less prevalent. Supporting land uses assist the principal land use in fulfilling the purpose of a Placetype. For example, Traditional Neighborhoods primarily consist of single-family residences; however, the neighborhood also contains supporting uses such as schools and places of worship that help strengthen the fabric of the neighborhood.

Typical land uses for each Placetype are identified in the Placetype descriptions and in Table 1: Placetype Typical Land Uses, as either a principal use or a supporting use. While the typical land uses in the *General Plan* describe the general categories of land envisioned for each Placetype, the Mesa Zoning Ordinance regulates the permitted and prohibited land uses, the land uses that require a conditional use permit, definitions, and other land use regulations and standards.

**Single-Family Residential.** Detached or attached dwelling units designed to be occupied by one family and located on a separate lot from any other residential unit.

**Multi-Family Residential.** Residential structure providing two or more dwelling units on a single lot.

**Public/Semi-Public.** Buildings, structures, uses, and sites that are publicly accessible and utilized by community members on a regular basis. Public/Semi-public uses include government buildings, parks, public parks and recreation facilities, community centers, schools, places of worship, arts and cultural institutions, and community gardens.

**Retail.** Business selling goods, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer. Retail uses may be low-intensity and small in scale, or large in scale.

**Personal Services.** Professional services provided on-site for customers, such as hair, nail, and aesthetic services, massage therapy, tailoring, funeral parlors and mortuaries, and photography studios.

**Eating and Drinking Establishments.** Businesses that prepare and provide food and/or beverage for consumption on premise.

**Entertainment and Recreation.** Land uses that provide recreation, entertainment, amusement, or support tourism. Entertainment and recreation land uses include hotels/motels, bed and breakfasts, theaters, concert halls, event centers, and recreation facilities.

**Convenience Services.** Commercial businesses that provide goods and services in a quick, easily accessible fashion often from the convenience of an automobile or automated operations. Convenience services include automobile washing facilities, drive-through facilities, convenience stores/gas stations, and quick lube and oil change facilities, automobile sales and services, large vehicle rental and repair.



**Business Office.** Buildings used for professional services and administrative functions.

**Medical Facilities.** Institutions providing medical care and services including hospitals, skilled nursing, clinics, medical offices, rehabilitation facilities, and nursing and convalescence homes.

**Light Industrial.** Low intensity industrial uses generate minimal impacts such as noise, odor, and traffic. Light industrial uses include light assembly and handicraft, limited manufacturing, research and development, small recycling facilities, automobile service and repair, large equipment sales and repair, and minor utilities.

**Warehousing and Storage.** Businesses and facilities that store and/or distribute goods, materials, data, or personal possessions. Warehousing and storage include outdoor storage yards, warehouses, contractor's yards, mini-storage, boat and recreational vehicle storage, data centers, wholesale facilities, towing and impound, and freight terminals.

**Heavy Industrial.** High intensity industrial uses generate significant impacts. Heavy industrial uses include general manufacturing, hazardous waste facilities, metal refining, smelting, casting, and extrusion, large recycling facilities, crematoriums, salvage and wrecking, major utilities, oil refineries, and cement plants.



Table 1. Placetype Typical Land Uses

PLACETYPES	TYPICAL LAND USES												
	Single-Family Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Public/Semi-Public	Retail	Personal Services	Eating and Drinking Establishments	Entertainment and Recreation	Convenience Services	Business Office	Medical Facilities	Light Industrial	Warehousing and Storage	Heavy Industrial
Rural Residential	●		○										
Traditional Residential	●	○	○	○	○	○			○				
Mixed Residential	●	●	○	○	○	●			○				
Urban Residential	●	●	○	●	●	●			●				
Neighborhood Center		○	○	●	●	●			●				
Urban Center		○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
Downtown	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○				
Regional Center		○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		
Local Employment Center			○	●		○			●	●	●		
Regional Employment Center			○			○		○	●	●	●	○	●
Industrial						○		○			●	●	●
Parks and Open Space			●										

- Principal land uses are more prominent and play a pivotal role in establishing the character of the Placetype
- Supporting land uses are less prominent and serve to support the principle land uses

Figure 4. Placetype Map

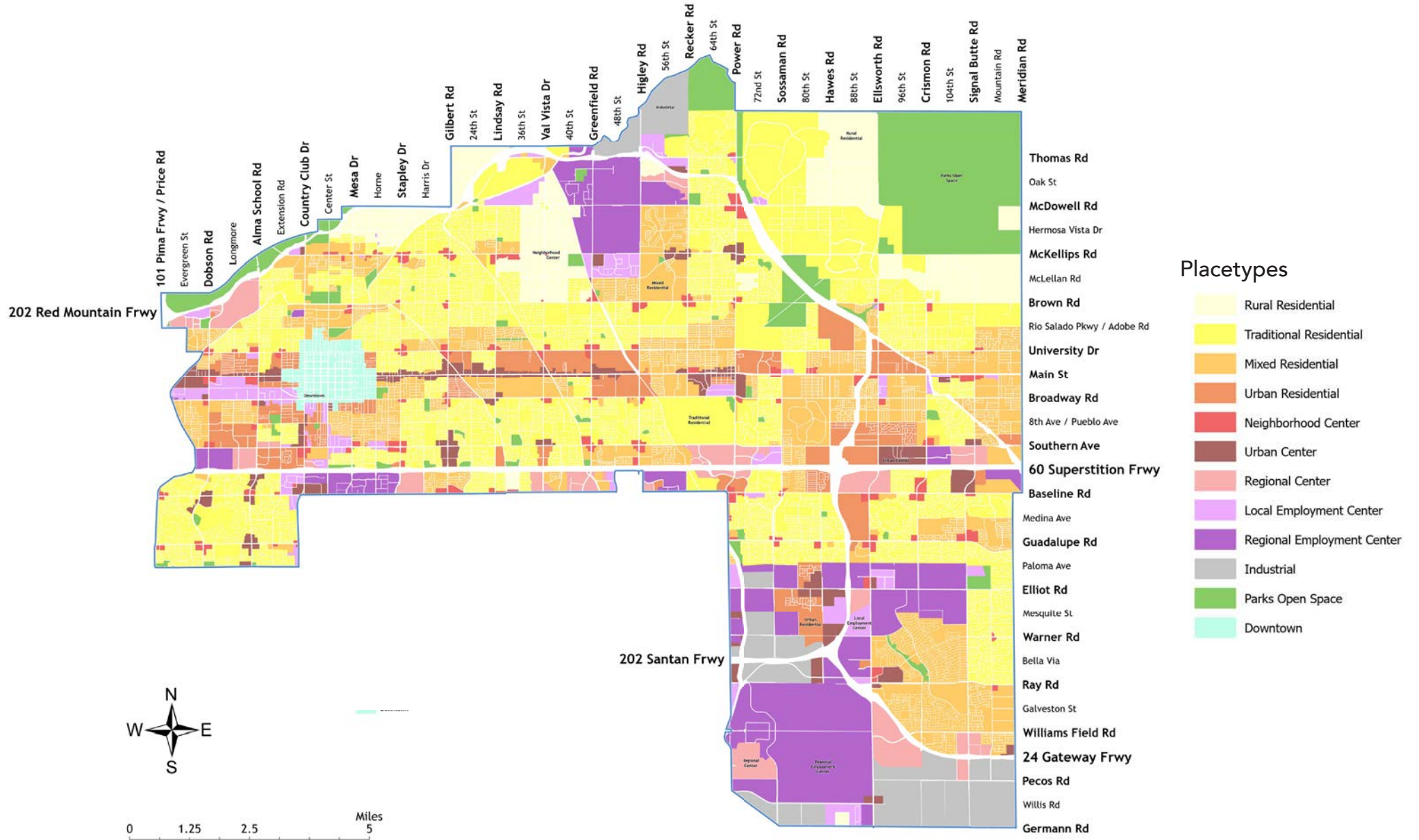
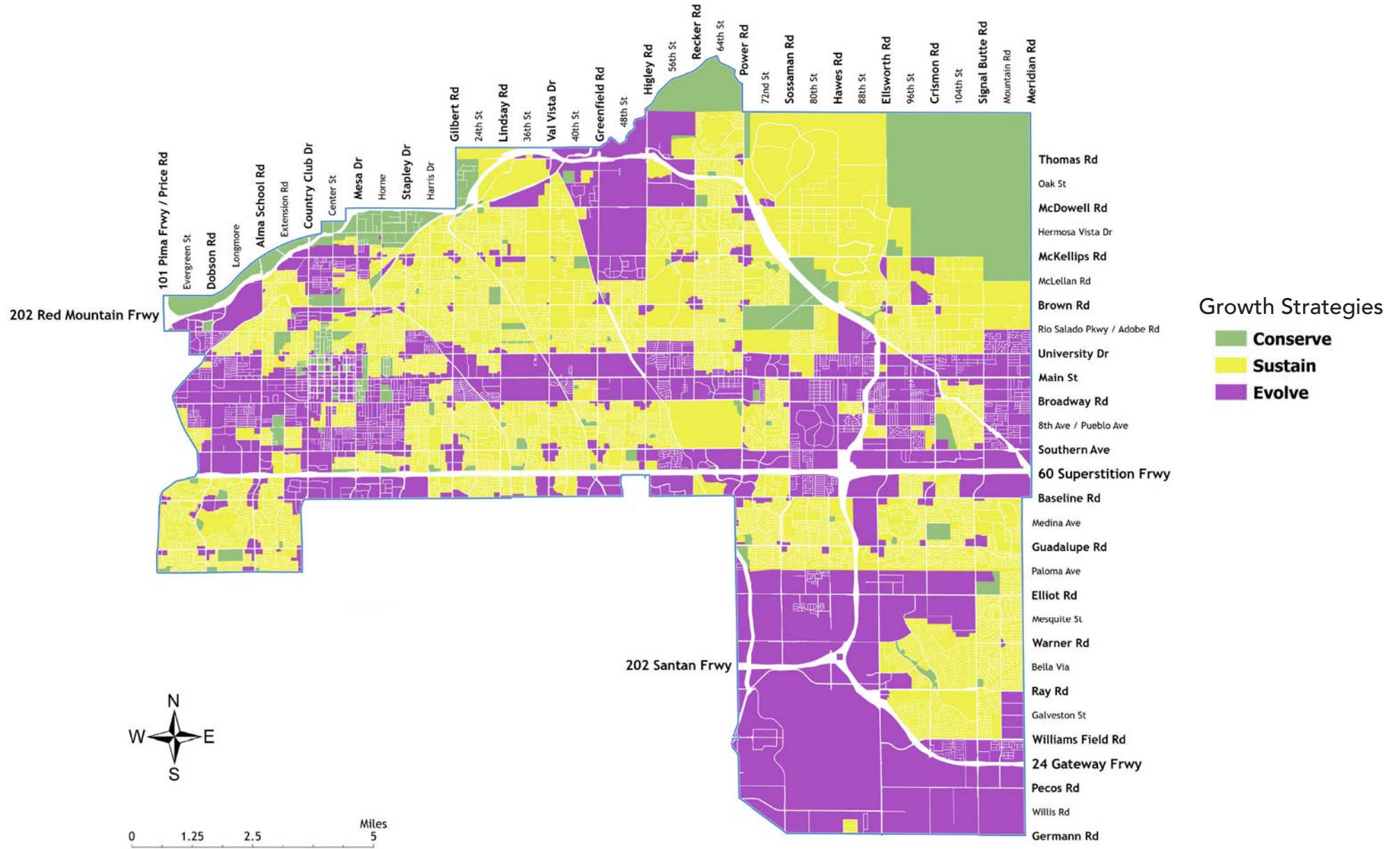
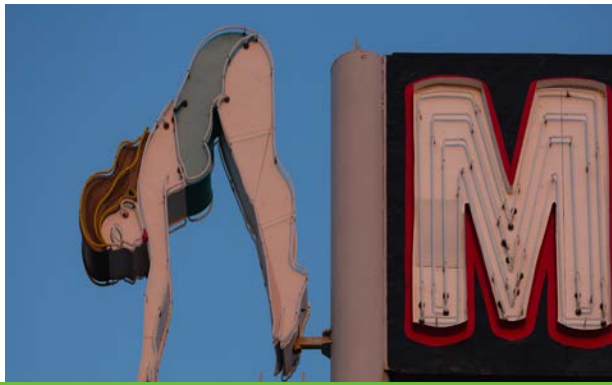




Figure 5. Growth Strategy Map





### **CONSERVE**

Areas that should be preserved and protected and remain largely in their current condition. These areas include land with significant development constraints, historic resources, neighborhoods with a significant heritage, school sites, public lands, and parklands.

Rural Residential, Traditional Residential, Mixed Residential, Urban Residential, and Downtown Placetypes with a Conserve strategy should experience little change and be limited to home improvements.

### **SUSTAIN**

Areas of stability that are encouraged to remain generally in their current condition but may see minor changes and transition of use over time.

Rural Residential, Traditional Residential, Mixed Residential, and Urban Residential Placetypes with a Sustain strategy should see limited changes. However, the edges may experience slight transition, including new infrastructure, home improvements, targeted infill, and adaptive reuse projects.

Neighborhood Centers, Urban Centers, Regional Centers, and Downtown Placetypes with a Sustain strategy may experience adaptive reuse of older structures or incremental changes of crucial sites.

### **EVOLVE**

Developed areas are encouraged to improve as development ages. Vacant, transitioning, or underdeveloped land that supports new development will bring reinvestment to Mesa. These areas will continue to develop or be reused as the development patterns change and align with City priority.

Traditional Residential, Mixed Residential, and Urban Residential Placetypes with an Evolve strategy may gain improved amenities like parks, civic spaces, and services. These areas may experience increased density with targeted infill and a diversification of housing types. Where appropriate, they may also experience greater integration and connectivity with commercial and public/semi-public uses.

Neighborhood Centers, Urban Centers, Regional Centers, Downtown, Local Employment Centers, Regional Employment Centers, and Industrial Placetypes with an Evolve strategy may undergo substantial changes particularly along major transportation corridors and planned or established transit routes.

Within Urban Centers, Regional Centers, and Downtown, increased density/intensity may occur. These areas are expected to transform into mixed-use spaces that incorporate additional commercial and housing options.

Local Employment Centers, Regional Employment Centers, and Industrial Placetypes may see continued development as they build out. Older developments, with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, present opportunities for thoughtful redevelopment. New development and redevelopment of these areas will include enhanced amenities, design, and smoother transitions between land uses. These enhancements will foster increased economic development activity by elevating the design quality of the area.



## **RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

**Land Use:** Rural Residential areas are characterized by large lot, single-family residential developments, and agricultural uses. Suitable housing in Rural Residential areas is single-family, detached homes on large lots with a density up to 1.3 dwelling units per acre.

Keeping livestock and accessory buildings such as barns and stables are common in Rural Residential areas. Streets may take on a more rural character which may or may not include sidewalks.

Rural Residential areas may contain public/semi-public uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks that are centrally located for convenient neighborhood access.



### **PRINCIPAL LAND USES:**

- Single-Family Residential

### **SUPPORTING LAND USES:**

- Public/Semi-Public

## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Agricultural (AG)
- Single Residence-90, 43, 35 (RS-90) (RS-43) (RS-35)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family up to 1.3 du/ac
- Multi-Family - N/A
- Mixed-Use - N/A
- Non-Residential up to 1.6 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Rural Residential areas which are within or contain designated historic resources, such as historic districts, historic landmarks, or heritage neighborhoods, should be conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to home improvements.
- **Sustain.** All other Rural Residential areas should generally remain in their current condition. Improvements and minor changes that are consistent with the area's current form and character may occur over time. This could include

infrastructure improvements, home improvements, targeted infill, and adaptive reuse projects.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Developments are designed to retain existing topography, native vegetation, and other natural features.
- Buildings with historical value are preserved or reused to maintain the existing character of the area.
- Public/semi-public uses are placed and oriented to terminate vistas, providing a focal point for the neighborhood.
- Public and semi-public uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks co-locate where possible for deliberate cross use of parking and amenities.
- Accessory buildings are subordinate to residential dwellings and located on the side or behind the main residential structure.
- Pedestrian paths are provided that connect to natural areas, parks, schools, local and regional trail networks.





## TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

**Land Use:** Traditional Residential areas contain primarily detached single-family homes on medium or large lots with densities up to 7.26 dwelling units per acre. These neighborhoods may also contain low-density multi-family with densities up to 15 dwelling units per acre. Multi-family developments are located along arterial and collector roadways and serve to buffer single-family neighborhoods from more intense land uses.

Traditional Residential also include complementary public/semi-public uses such as parks, schools, and places of worship that are integrated throughout the neighborhood to increase walkability. This Placetype may also contain a limited amount of supportive land uses such as small-scale business offices, personal services, retail, and eating and drinking establishments. These supportive uses are located along arterial roadways and designed to be compatible with and connected to the surrounding neighborhood.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Single-Family Residential

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Multi-Family Residential
- Public/Semi-Public
- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Business Office



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Single Residence-43, 35, 15, 9, 7, 6 (RS-43) (RS-35) (RS-15) (RS-9) (RS-7) (RS-6)
- Small Lot Residence-4.5 (RSL-4.5)
- Multiple Residence-2 (RM-2)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

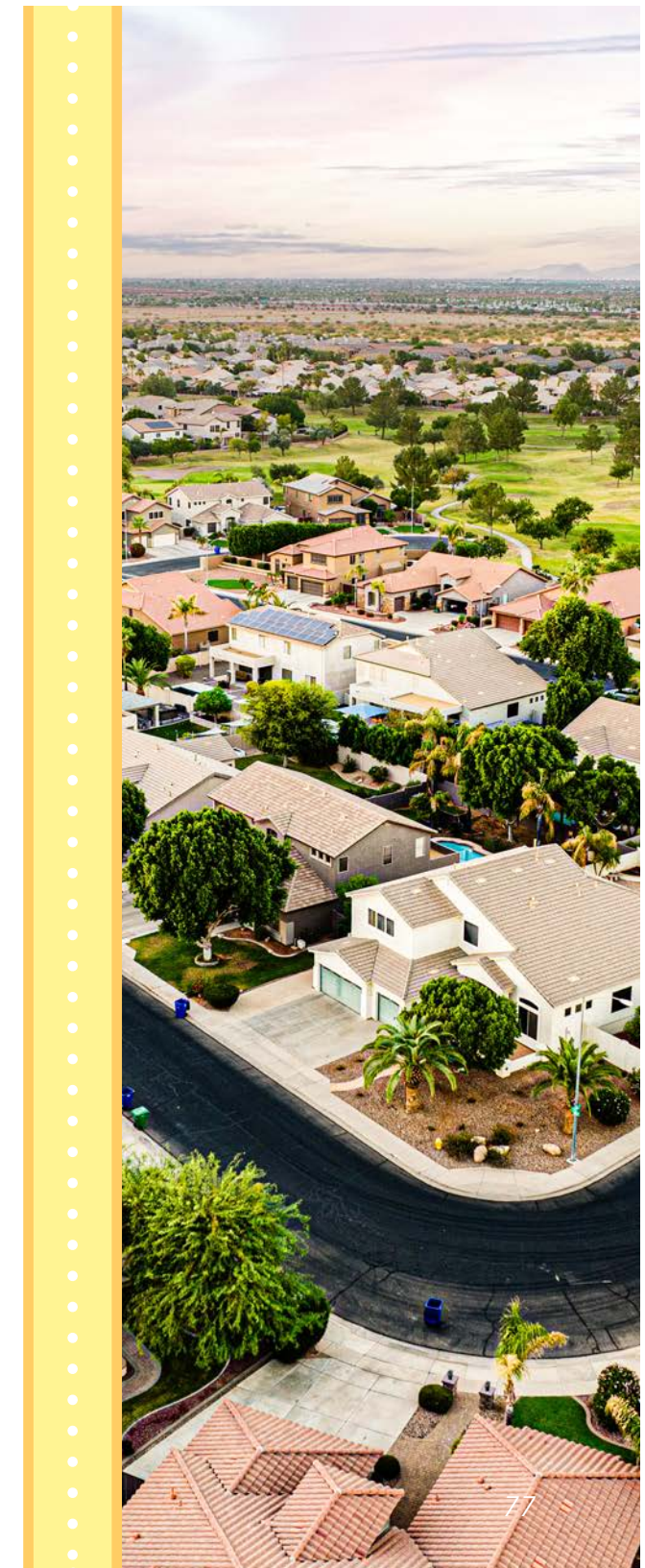
- Single-Family up to 7.26 du/ac
- Multi-Family up to 15 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 1.6 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 1.6 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Traditional Residential areas which are within or contain designated historic resources, such as historic districts, historic landmarks, or heritage neighborhoods, should be conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to home improvements.
- **Sustain.** Traditional Residential areas that are not conserve or evolve should generally remain in their current

condition. Improvements and minor changes that are consistent with the area's current form and character may occur over time. This could include infrastructure improvements, home improvements, targeted infill, adaptive reuse projects, and slight transitions in uses along arterial roadways.

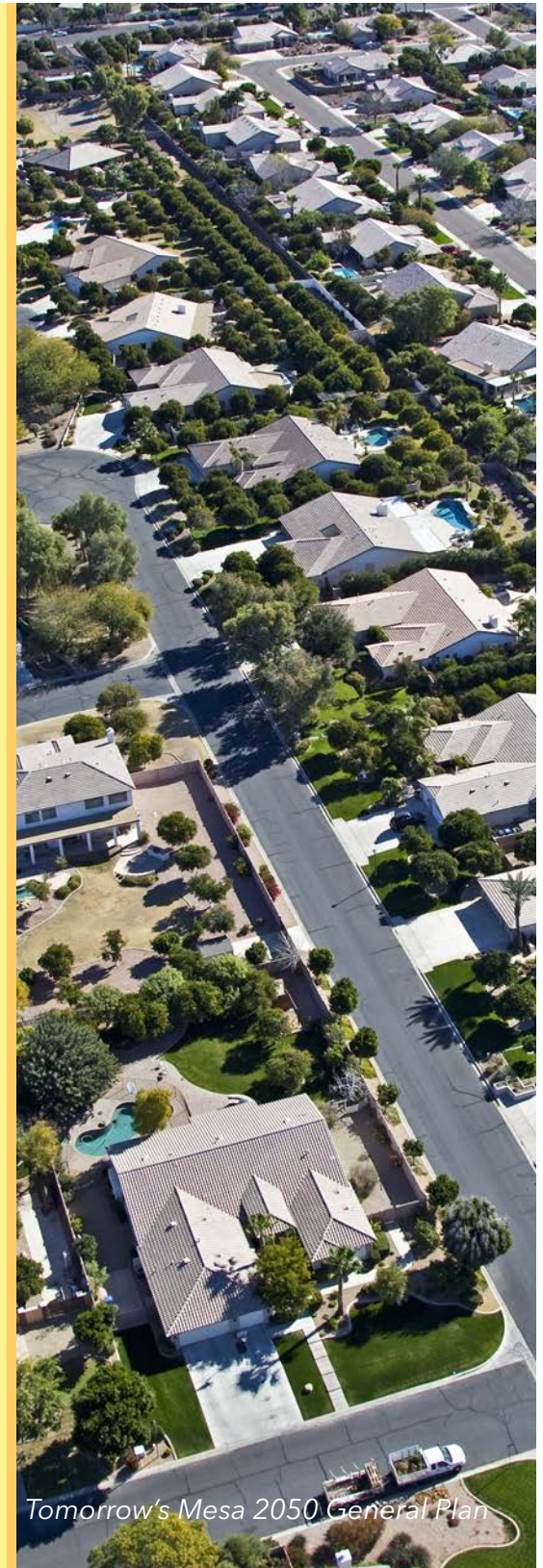
- **Evolve.** Traditional Residential areas with vacant land or blighted land, as identified by one of the City's Redevelopment Area Plans, should transform with land uses and development patterns that align with City priorities. Where appropriate, these neighborhoods may experience increased density with a more diverse array of housing types.





## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Major intersections and corners are treated as neighborhood entryways that provide a sense of arrival through the use of monument signs, special landscaping, specialty pavement, and architectural features.
- Common open space is incorporated into the layout of the neighborhood at intervals and locations that provide access to the entire neighborhood.
- Common open space is placed to terminate vistas, providing a focal point for the neighborhood.
- Non-single-family uses are located along arterial roadways.
- Single-family uses are buffered from commercial uses with vegetated open space or by public/semi-public or multi-family uses.
- Residential infill projects in established neighborhoods use similar facade articulation and architectural features as existing structures.
- Public and semi-public uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks co-locate where possible for deliberate cross use of parking and amenities.
- Streets are designed on a grid pattern and provide connectivity within and to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Street trees and sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street.
- Pedestrian and bicycle paths connect adjacent commercial centers, natural areas, parks, and schools.





## MIXED RESIDENTIAL

**Land Use:** The Mixed Residential Placetype is primarily a residential area that contain a variety of housing, such as single-family detached and attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, and low- to medium-density multiple residences, not to exceed 30 dwelling units per acre.

Lot sizes vary from small to large lot and support innovative development patterns such as cluster development and cottage courtyards.

A limited amount of supportive land uses such as public/semi-public, small-scale business offices, retail, eating and drinking establishments, and personal services may be integrated alongside a variety of housing types and densities to create a complete community.

Mixed Residential areas have excellent connectivity and include multimodal paths and greenway systems that connect the various land uses to each other and to open space, surrounding commercial developments, and neighborhoods.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Eating and Drinking Establishments

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public
- Retail
- Personal Services
- Business Office



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Single Residence-35,15, 9, 7, 6 (RS-35) (RS-15) (RS-9) (RS-7) (RS-6)
- Small Lot Residence-4.5, 4.0, 3.0, 2.5 (RSL-4.5) (RSL-4.0) (RSL-3.0) (RSL-2.5)
- Multiple Residence-2, 3, 4 (RM-2) (RM-3) (RM-4)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- Mixed Use (MX)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Infill District-1, 2 (ID-1) (ID-2)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

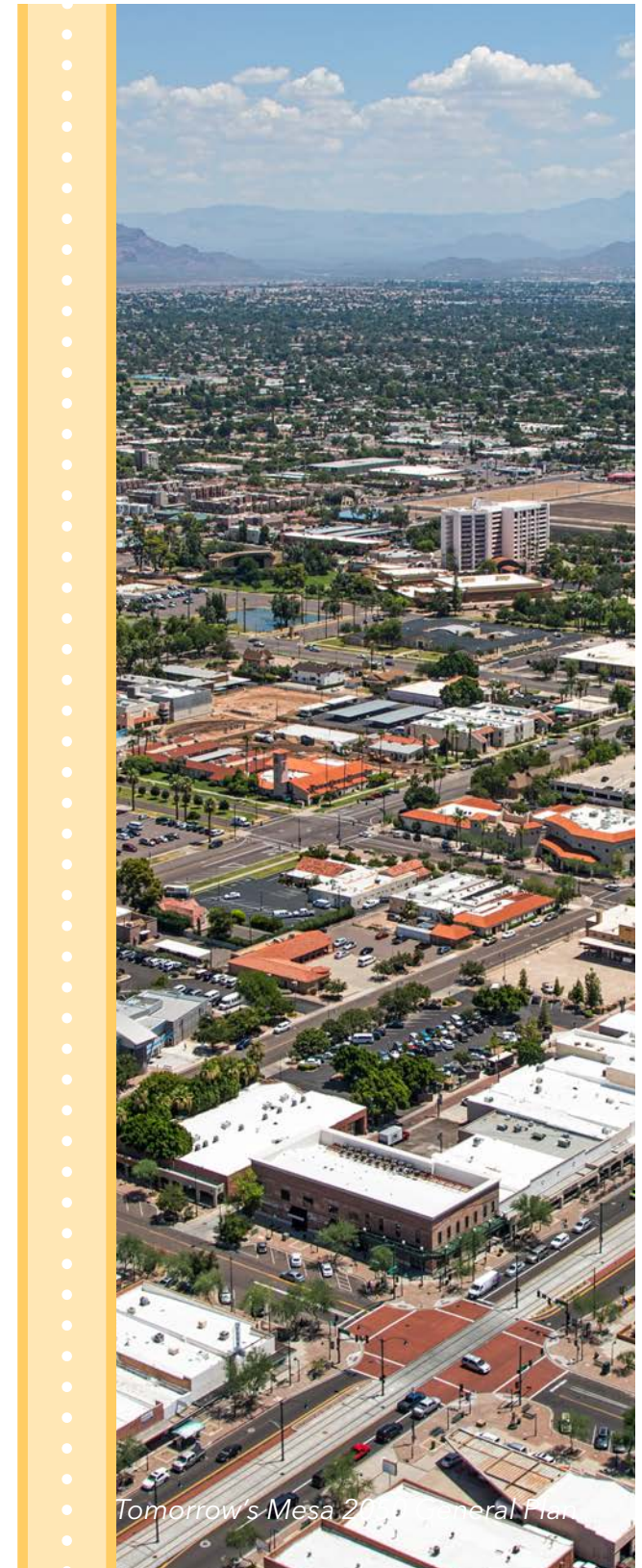
- Single-Family up to 7.26 du/ac
- Multi-Family up to 30 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 2.4 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 2.4 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Mixed Residential areas which are within or contain designated historic resources, such as historic districts, historic landmarks, or heritage neighborhoods, should be

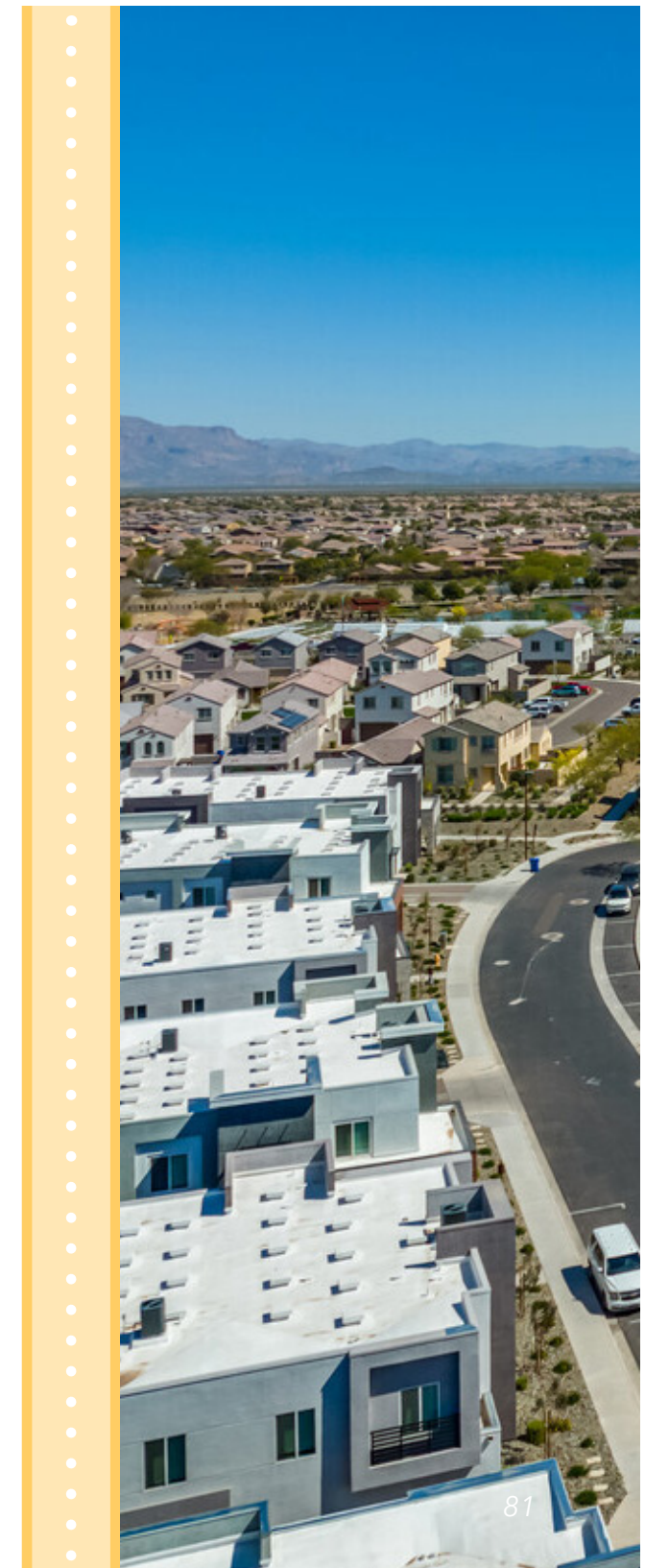
conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to home improvements.

- **Sustain.** Mixed Residential areas that are not conserve or evolve should generally remain in their current condition. Improvements and minor changes that are consistent with the area's current form and character may occur over time. This could include infrastructure improvements, home improvements, targeted infill, adaptive reuse projects, and slight transitions in uses along arterial roadways.
- **Evolve.** Mixed Residential areas with vacant or underutilized land that can support new development, older development with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, and/or blighted land, as identified by one of the City's Redevelopment Area Plans, should transform with land uses and development patterns that align with City priorities. Where appropriate, these neighborhoods may experience increased density with a more diverse array of housing types and greater integration with commercial and public/semi-public uses.



## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Major intersections and corners are treated as neighborhood entryways that provide a sense of arrival through the use of monument signs, special landscaping, specialty pavement, and architectural features.
- Common open space is incorporated into the layout of the neighborhood at intervals and locations that provide access to the entire neighborhood.
- Common open space is placed to terminate vistas, providing a focal point for the neighborhood.
- Buildings adjacent to public spaces should be oriented towards, and engage with, existing or planned amenities such as parks and open space.
- A variety of housing types are provided and integrated throughout the neighborhood.
- Transitions are provided between lower-density and higher-density areas to prevent abrupt changes in height.
- Public and semi-public uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks co-locate where possible for deliberate cross use of parking and amenities.
- In multi-family projects, perimeter walls include view fencing, striking a balance between security, creating a pedestrian friendly streetscape, and providing integration into the greater neighborhood.
- Street trees and sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street.
- Pedestrian and bicycle paths connect adjacent commercial centers, natural areas, parks, and schools.
- Streets are designed on a grid pattern and provide connectivity within and to adjacent neighborhoods.





## URBAN RESIDENTIAL

**Land Use:** Urban Residential areas contain a diverse mixture of uses where commercial, residential, and public/semi-public uses coexist.

Urban Residential areas are typically located near Downtown, Urban Centers, or Regional Centers with access to transit and multi-modal transportation.

Urban Residential areas can accommodate various low-, medium-, and high-density housing types, including single-family detached and attached homes, townhomes, and multi-family.

High-density residential with densities up to 43 dwelling units per acre is appropriate in these areas and adds to the vibrancy and economic health of the nearby activity centers. Higher densities should be located along major arterials and activity nodes and serve as a transition of intensities to surrounding areas.

Non-residential uses are integrated through either horizontal or vertical mixed-use development. Non-residential uses in vertical mixed-use development are located on the ground floor(s) with residential above providing an active pedestrian realm. In horizontal mixed-use developments, non-residential uses are oriented around shared open space that creates an active amenity for residents and patrons.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Business Office

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public

## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Single Residence-9, 7, 6 (RS-9) (RS-7) (RS-6)
- Small Lot Residence-4.5, 4.0, 3.0, 2.5 (RSL-4.5) (RSL-4.0) (RSL-3.0) (RSL-2.5)
- Multiple Residence-2, 3, 4, 5 (RM-2) (RM-3) (RM-4) (RM-5)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Mixed Use (MX)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Infill District-1, 2 (ID-1) (ID-2)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family up to 40 du/ac
- Multi-Family up to 43 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 3.2 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 2.4 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Urban Residential areas which are within or contain designated historic resources, such as historic districts, historic landmarks, or heritage

neighborhoods, should be conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to home improvements.

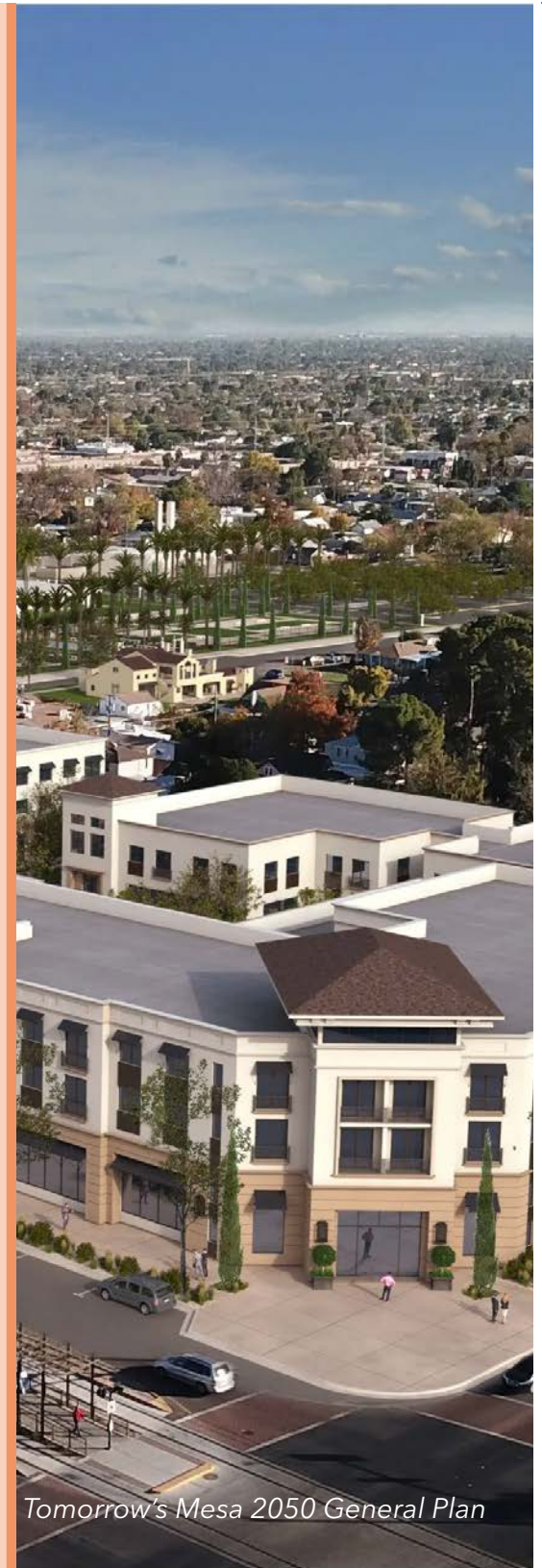
- **Sustain.** Urban Residential areas that are not conserve or evolve should generally remain in their current condition. Improvements and minor changes that are consistent with the area's current form and character may occur over time. This could include infrastructure improvements, home improvements, targeted infill, adaptive reuse projects, and slight transitions in uses along arterial roadway
- **Evolve.** Urban Residential areas with vacant or underutilized land that can support new development, older development with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, and/or blighted land, as identified by one of the City's Redevelopment Area Plans, should transform with land uses and development patterns that align with City priorities. Where appropriate, these neighborhoods may experience increased density with a more diverse array of housing types and greater integration with commercial and public/semi-public uses.





## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Shaded open space, such as plazas, courtyards, and pocket parks are centrally located for the enjoyment of residents and commercial patrons.
- Buildings adjacent to public spaces should be oriented towards and engage existing or planned amenities such as parks and open space.
- Buildings are responsive to street width, with taller buildings located along wider streets.
- Transitions are provided between lower-density and higher-density areas to prevent abrupt changes in height.
- Higher-density housing is located along arterial roadways and near non-residential uses.
- Active ground floor uses located along primary street frontages.
- Public and semi-public uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks co-locate where possible for deliberate cross use of parking and amenities.
- Windows, balconies, and patios provide views onto sidewalks and gathering spaces.
- Awnings, canopies, and overhangs provide weather and sun protection.
- Alleys and/or side streets provide vehicular access where possible in lieu of interrupting primary streets with driveway entrances.
- Pedestrian routes are designed with sufficient width to accommodate heavy pedestrian activity and active modes of transportation.
- Utility and solid waste facilities should be screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Landscape setbacks, street trees, and other design approaches are used to buffer residents from heavy street traffic.
- Pick-up and drop-off zones that are easily accessible are provided for riders and rideshare operators.



## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

**Land Use:** Neighborhood Centers are small, walkable, low-intensity commercial developments that provide residents convenient access to goods, services, and dining within a short, comfortable walk or convenient drive of their home.

Neighborhood Centers contain local-serving commercial uses such as small-scale retail, personal services, business offices, and eating and drinking establishments. In very limited circumstances multi-family residential up to 25 dwelling units per acre may be appropriate as supportive uses when they contribute to specific goals of the area.

Neighborhood Centers are adjacent to or embedded within residential neighborhoods and located at frequent intervals to reduce travel time and distance.

Neighborhood Centers are designed to a size and scale compatible with surrounding areas with small to medium one- to two-story buildings connected to one another by shaded pedestrian paths and gathering spaces.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Business Office

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Multi-Family Residential
- Public/Semi-Public



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Multiple Residence-2, 3 (RM-2) (RM-3)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- Mixed Use (MX)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Infill District-1 (ID-1)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family up to 25 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 2.4 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 2.4 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Neighborhood Centers may undergo significant changes and transformation, particularly along established or planned transit routes, such as light rail or streetcar. Urban Centers should transform into pedestrian friendly spaces, and transition to less auto-centric uses, with improved connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Buildings are oriented towards the street or when not located adjacent to a street, oriented towards primary internal drives to provide spatial definition.
- Buildings located on street corners are angled to the street or have facades parallel to the corner and have landscaping, special paving, public art, seating areas, and other amenities which create a gateway.
- Buildings have a unified architectural style with similar colors, textures, materials, finished, and form.
- Parking is located behind or along the sides of buildings. Where constraints exist, no more than two rows of parking are located between the building and the street.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Gathering spaces such as plazas are provided to enhance the pedestrian experience and sense of community.
- Pedestrian circulation is clearly delineated by using colored and textured materials and raised pedestrian crossings.
- Shade elements, both landscape and architectural, are provided at prominent pedestrian points such as entries, common open space, and along paths serving parking lots.
- Pedestrian and bicycle paths connect adjacent residential uses.



*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*

## URBAN CENTER

**Land Use:** Urban Centers are compact, mixed-use areas where many people live, work, and play. Urban Centers are typically located adjacent to transit or major arterials. Their compact form supports pedestrian-oriented development and vertical mixed-use.

Urban Centers contain retail, personal services, public/semi-public uses, entertainment, and recreation facilities, eating and drinking establishments, and convenience services.

Limited multi-family residential may be integrated into Urban Centers to support the vibrancy and economics. High-density residential is appropriate along major transit corridors and along major roadways. Medium- to low-density residential may serve as appropriate transitions from higher intensity uses to surrounding neighborhoods. In some instances, where a higher-intensity urban form is anticipated or desired, multi-family residential up to 43 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) may be allowed. Densities above 43 du/ac may also be considered on a case by case basis.

Urban Centers can accommodate substantial revitalization and increased density over time. As revitalization occurs, these areas should redevelop with an urban form—with buildings located close to the street and a focus on the pedestrian realm.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public
- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Entertainment and Recreation
- Convenience Services
- Business Office
- Medical Facilities

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Multi-Family Residential



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Multiple Residence-2, 3, 4, 5 (RM-2) (RM-3) (RM-4) (RM-5)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Mixed Use (MX)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Infill District-1, 2 (ID-1) (ID-2)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family up to 43 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 2.4 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 2.4 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Urban Centers may undergo significant changes and transformation, particularly along established or planned transit routes, such as light rail or streetcar. Urban Centers should transform into mixed-use activity centers that include varied commercial uses such as retail or dining, a variety of housing choices, and recreational opportunities. Along established or planned transit routes increased density/intensity should occur.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Buildings have a unified architectural style with similar colors, textures, materials, finishes, and form.
- The ground floors of buildings are designed with a high degree of transparency, clear and unobstructed windows, and non-reflective glass coatings to provide visual connection to the street.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Buildings located on street corners are angled to the street or have facades parallel to the corner and have landscaping, special paving, public art, seating areas, and other amenities which create a gateway.
- Where multi-family projects abut single-family zoning districts, upper floors are stepped back to provide a transition in height and reduce shade/shadow and privacy impacts.
- Shaded pedestrian paths are provided from parking structures and/or lots to buildings or the street.
- Signs are designed using similar style, materials, and colors that coordinate with building architecture.
- Pick-up and drop-off zones that are easily accessible are provided for riders and rideshare operators.

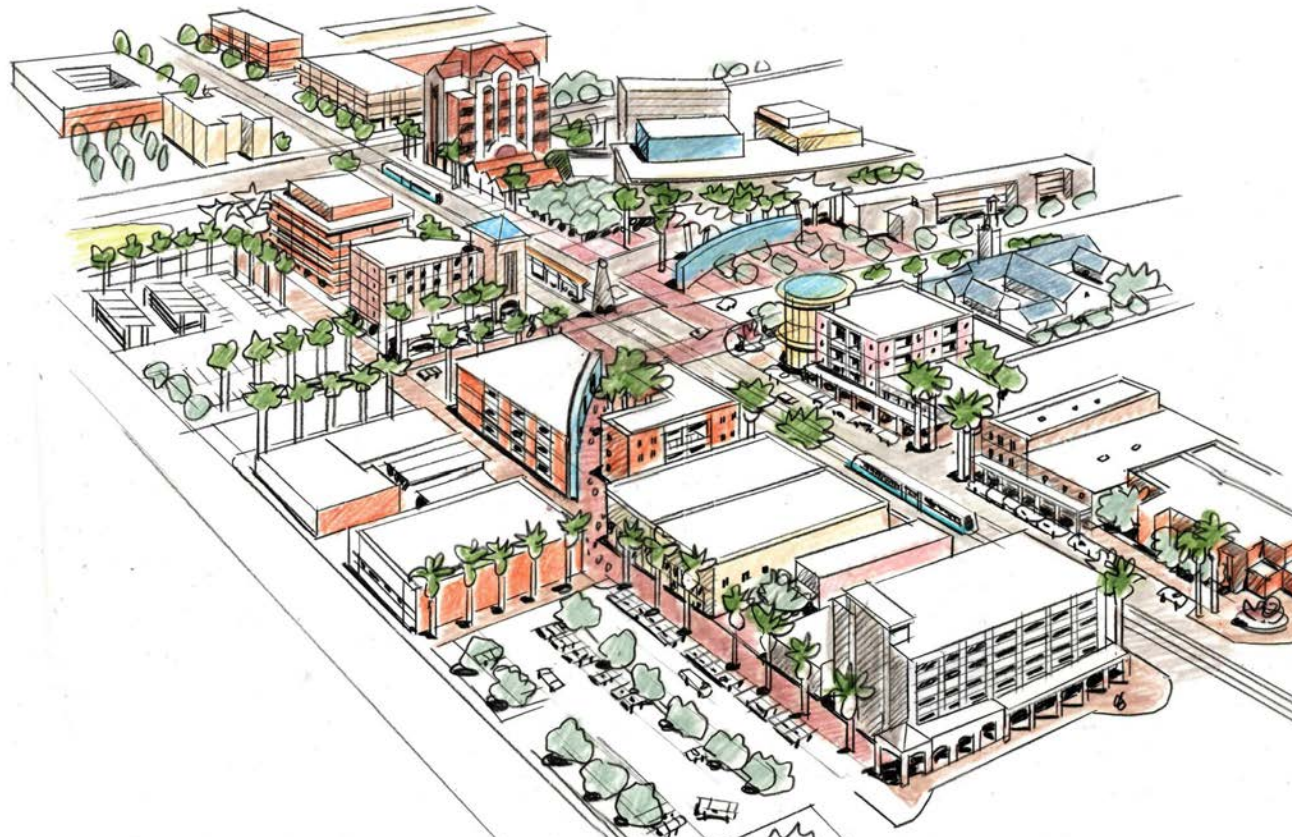


## **DOWNTOWN**

**Land Use:** Downtown is the City's most intensely developed area with entertainment and recreation, retail, eating and drinking establishments, personal services, business offices, and public/semi-public uses alongside single-family and multi-family residential.

Downtown offers a unique mix of uses in a relatively dense urban form that provides a pedestrian-friendly environment and a place to live, work, shop, dine, recreate and more. This mix and intensity of uses is intended to provide around-the-clock activity.

Downtown contains Mesa's historic retail core of one- and two-story buildings along Main Street and is surrounded by several historic neighborhoods. Medium to high-density residential in vertical mixed-use buildings are appropriate in the downtown core and add to an active, vibrant, and culturally rich Downtown. A diverse mix of housing options ranging from historic detached single-family homes, townhomes, multi-family condominiums and apartments, and live-work units are also found throughout Downtown.



### **PRINCIPAL LAND USES:**

- Multi-Family Residential
- Public/Semi-Public
- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Entertainment and Recreation
- Business Office

### **SUPPORTING LAND USES:**

- Single-Family Residential
- Medical Facilities



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Single Residence-9, 6 (RS-9) (RS-6)
- Small Lot Residence-4.5, 4.0, 3.0, 2.5 (RSL-4.5) (RSL-4.0) (RSL-3.0) (RSL-2.5)
- Multiple Residence-2, 3, 4, 5 (RM-2) (RM-3) (RM-4) (RM-5)
- Downtown Residential-1, 2, 3 (DR-1) (DR-2) (DR-3)
- Downtown Business-1, 2 (DB-1) (DB-2)
- Downtown Core (DC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Mixed Use (MX)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Transects (T3N) (T4N) (T4NF) (T4MS) (T5N) (T5MS) (T5MSF) (T6MS)
- Infill District-1, 2 (ID-1) (ID-2)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - 40 du/ac
- Multi-Family up to 100 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 10 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 10 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Downtown areas which are within or contain designated historic resources, such as historic districts, historic landmarks, or heritage neighborhoods, should be conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to home improvements.
- **Sustain.** Downtown areas with established single-family neighborhoods should generally remain in their current single-family development character. Improvements and minor changes that are consistent with the area's current form and character may occur over time. This could include infrastructure improvements, home improvements, targeted infill, adaptive reuse projects, and slight transitions in uses along arterial and collector roadways.
- **Evolve.** All other Downtown areas should continue to transform into a pedestrian-friendly, mixed use, urban environment. Along established or planned transit routes, increased density/intensity should occur. Increased density/intensity may also be appropriate in other parts of Downtown but should respect the surrounding context and provide for thoughtful transitions in intensity.



## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Active ground floor uses are located along primary street frontages.
- The ground floors of buildings are designed with a high degree of transparency, clear and unobstructed windows, and non-reflective glass coatings to provide visual connection to the street.
- Buildings are designed with compatible heights, scale, bulk and massing to the urban context and character of the surrounding area.
- Buildings located on street corners are angled to the street or have facades parallel to the corner and have landscaping, special paving, public art, seating areas, and other amenities which create a gateway.
- Primary building entrances are highlighted through building massing and their oriented towards the street.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Awnings, canopies, trellises, or tree groupings are provided in pedestrian areas.
- Lighting, landscaping, and art are incorporated into alleys to create safe, vibrant pedestrian areas.
- Windows, balconies, and courtyards provide views onto sidewalks and gathering spaces.
- Parking garages and podium parking areas are wrapped with active uses, landscaping and/or architectural elements.
- Where multi-family projects abut single-family zoning districts, upper floors are stepped back to provide a transition in height and reduce shade/shadow and privacy impacts.



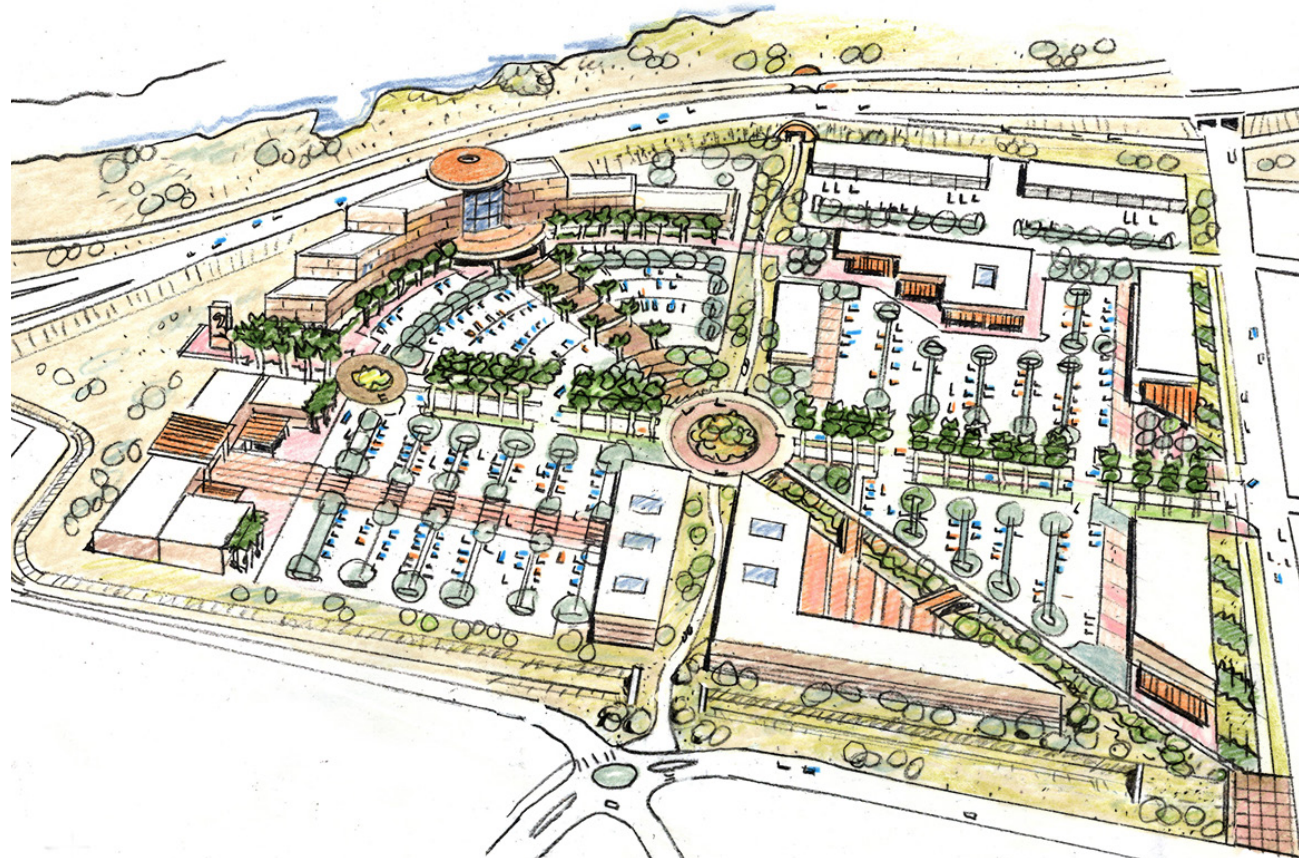


## REGIONAL CENTER

**Land Use:** Regional Centers are the major retail, cultural, recreational, and entertainment destinations in Mesa. They feature major retailers, national chains, specialty shops, and a wide range of services and amenities that draw consumers from across the City and greater metropolitan area.

The focus of the Regional Center Placetype is commercial activity, and as such, its principal uses are retail, personal services, eating and drinking establishments, entertainment and recreation, convenience services and business offices. Multi-family residential are secondary uses and allowed as part of mixed-use projects. Densities up to and above 43 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) may be allowed. Densities above 43 du/ac may also be considered on a case by case basis.

Regional Centers are typically developed with a common design theme or character. The densities, building heights, and overall character of a Regional Center will depend on its location; however, compared to other commercial centers, Regional Centers will have the highest intensity and feature the largest scale of development.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Retail
- Personal Services
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Entertainment and Recreation
- Convenience Services
- Business Office

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public
- Multi-Family Residential
- Medical Facilities
- Light Industrial

## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Multiple Residence-3, 4, 5 (RM-3) (RM-4) (RM-5)
- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Mixed-Use (MX)
- Employment Opportunity (EO)
- Planned Employment Park (PEP)
- Light Industrial (LI)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Infill District-1, 2 (ID-1) (ID-2)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family up to 43 du/ac
- Mixed-Use up to 3.2 F.A.R.
- Non-Residential up to 3.2 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Regional Centers may undergo significant changes and transformation, particularly along established or planned transit routes, such as light rail or streetcar. Regional

Centers should be mixed-use activity centers that include varied commercial uses such as retail or dining, a variety of housing choices, and recreational opportunities. Along established or planned transit routes increased density/intensity should occur.

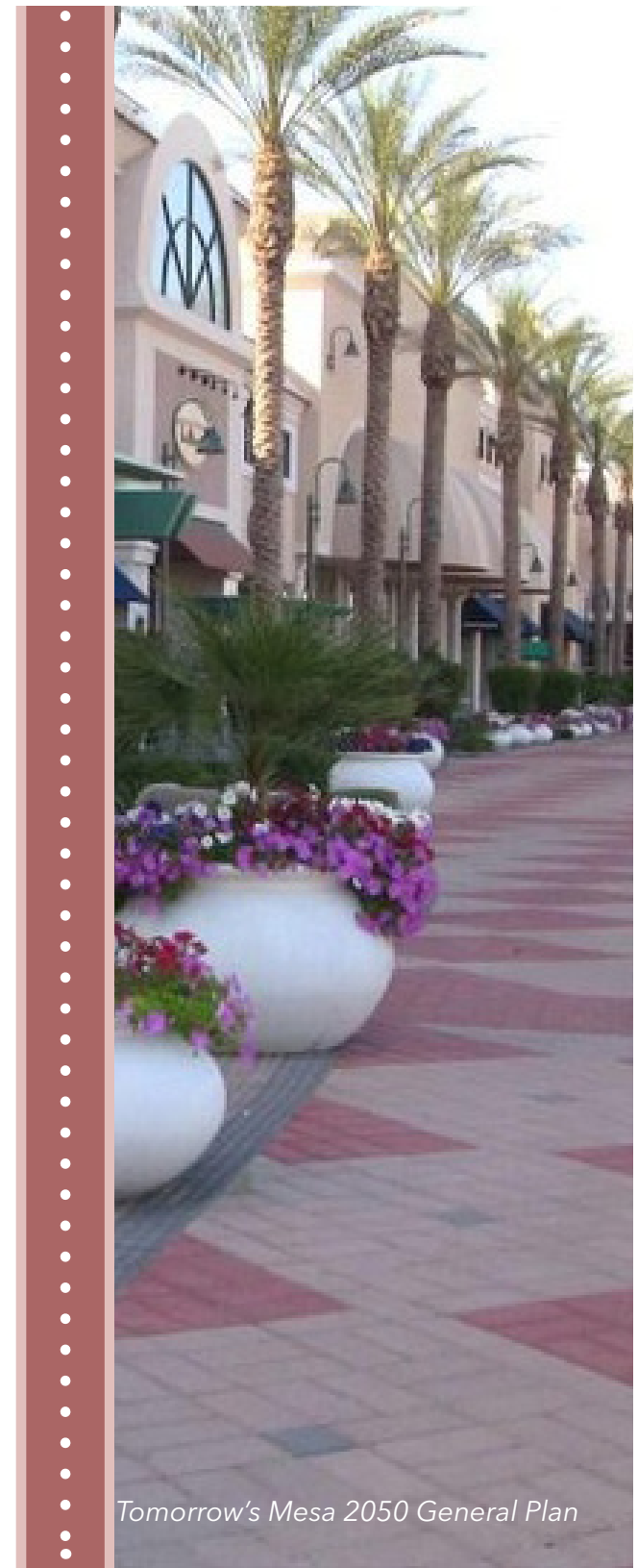
## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Buildings are oriented towards the street or when not located adjacent to a street, oriented towards primary internal drives to provide spatial definition.
- Buildings located on street corners are angled to the street or have facades parallel to the corner and have landscaping, special paving, public art, seating areas, and other amenities which create a gateway.
- An internal pedestrian circulation system provide attractive connections between buildings, through large parking areas, connections to the street, and linkages to surrounding properties and neighborhoods.
- Shade elements, both landscape and architectural, are provided at prominent pedestrian points such as entries, common open space, and along paths serving parking lots.
- Parking garages and podium parking areas are wrapped with active uses, landscaping and/or architectural elements.





- Parking is located behind or along the sides of buildings. Where constraints exist no more than two rows of parking are located between the building and the street.
- Pick-up and drop-off zones that are easily accessible are provided for riders and rideshare operators.
- Landscape elements screen and shade parking areas, utility services, and loading areas from street view and adjacent uses to create visual appeal, de-emphasize the prominence of parking areas, and to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Utility and solid waste facilities should be screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Street frontages are activated through site design.
- Where multi-family projects abut single-family zoning districts, upper floors are stepped back to provide a transition in height and reduce shade/shadow and privacy impacts.
- Signs are designed using similar style, materials, and colors that coordinate with building architecture.



## LOCAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER

**Land Use:** Local Employment Centers are areas that support a variety of low-intensity business operations that are compatible with residential uses. Typical uses include offices, medical facilities, research and development centers, and other small-scale employment-focused activities.

Local Employment Centers generate low to moderate traffic volumes and may be located along collector or arterial streets and near residential uses. These areas should have a business park-like setting and incorporate elements that minimize negative impacts on surrounding commercial and residential uses.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Business Office
- Medical Facilities
- Light Industrial
- Retail

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public
- Eating and Drinking Establishment



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Office Commercial (OC)
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Planned Employment Park (PEP)
- Light Industrial (LI)
- Employment Opportunity (EO)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family - N/A
- Mixed-Use - N/A
- Non-Residential up to 2.7 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Local Employment Centers with vacant land or underutilized land that can support new development, older development with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, and/or blighted land, as identified by one of the City's Redevelopment Area Plans, should transform with land uses and development patterns that align with City priorities. Local Employment Centers should be developed with high-quality cohesive designs that provide smooth transitions between land uses and fit into the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Primary entries are enhanced with ornamental landscaping, low-level decorative walls, monument signs, and decorative paving.
- A variety of building material and colors are used in building facades. Side and rear facades visible to the public shall include materials of equal quality to the front facade.
- Loading and service areas are located away from public view and screened with materials, colors, and finishes compatible with the building design.
- Pedestrian circulation is clearly delineated by using colored and textured materials and raised pedestrian crossings.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Employee sitting, eating, and gathering amenities are located near buildings and designed as focal points in projects.
- Shade elements, both landscape and architectural, are provided near building entries, employee amenity areas, and along paths serving parking lots.



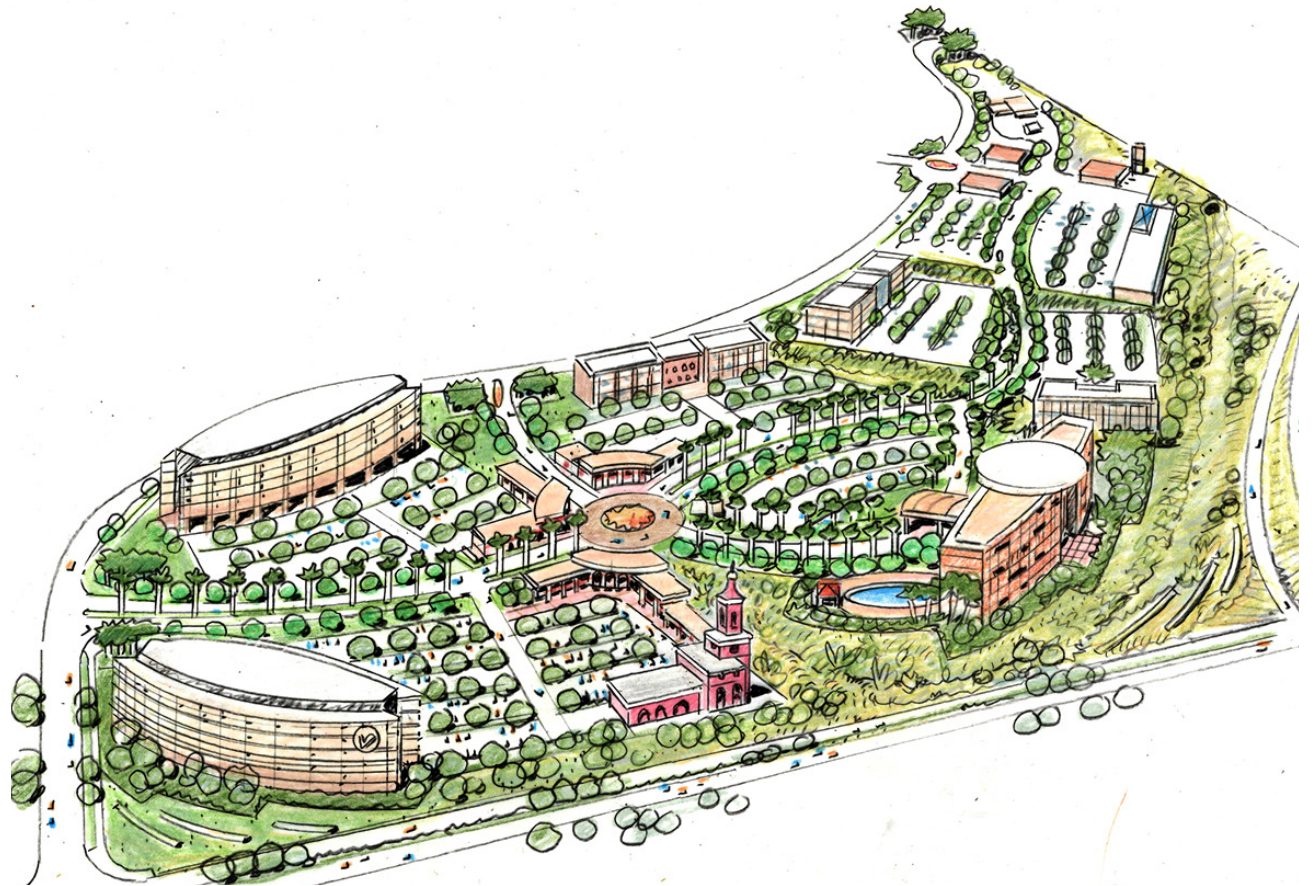
Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan

## **REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER**

**Land Use:** Regional Employment Centers are areas that accommodate large employers such as hospitals and medical centers, airports, universities, corporate headquarters, high-tech companies, and research parks.

Regional Employment Centers also allow for smaller business and medical offices, light industrial uses, and other employment-based activities that are part of a master planned, cohesive development. Outdoor storage, data storage, and warehousing are not found in Regional Centers as a primary use.

Regional Employment Centers should have excellent access to major arterial roadways and freeways that can accommodate high traffic volumes, including moderate truck traffic. Regional Employment Centers exhibit high-quality design which includes cohesive architecture and design themes, ample landscaping and open space, and amenity areas for employees and visitors.



### **PRINCIPAL LAND USES:**

- Business Office
- Medical Facilities
- Light Industrial

### **SUPPORTING LAND USES:**

- Public/Semi-Public
- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Convenience Services
- Warehousing and Storage



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- General Commercial (GC)
- Limited Commercial (LC)
- Planned Employment Park (PEP)
- Light Industrial (LI)
- Employment Opportunity (EO)
- Planned Community (PC)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single Residence - N/A
- Multiple Residence - N/A
- Mixed-Use - N/A
- Non-Residential up to 4.5 F.A.R.

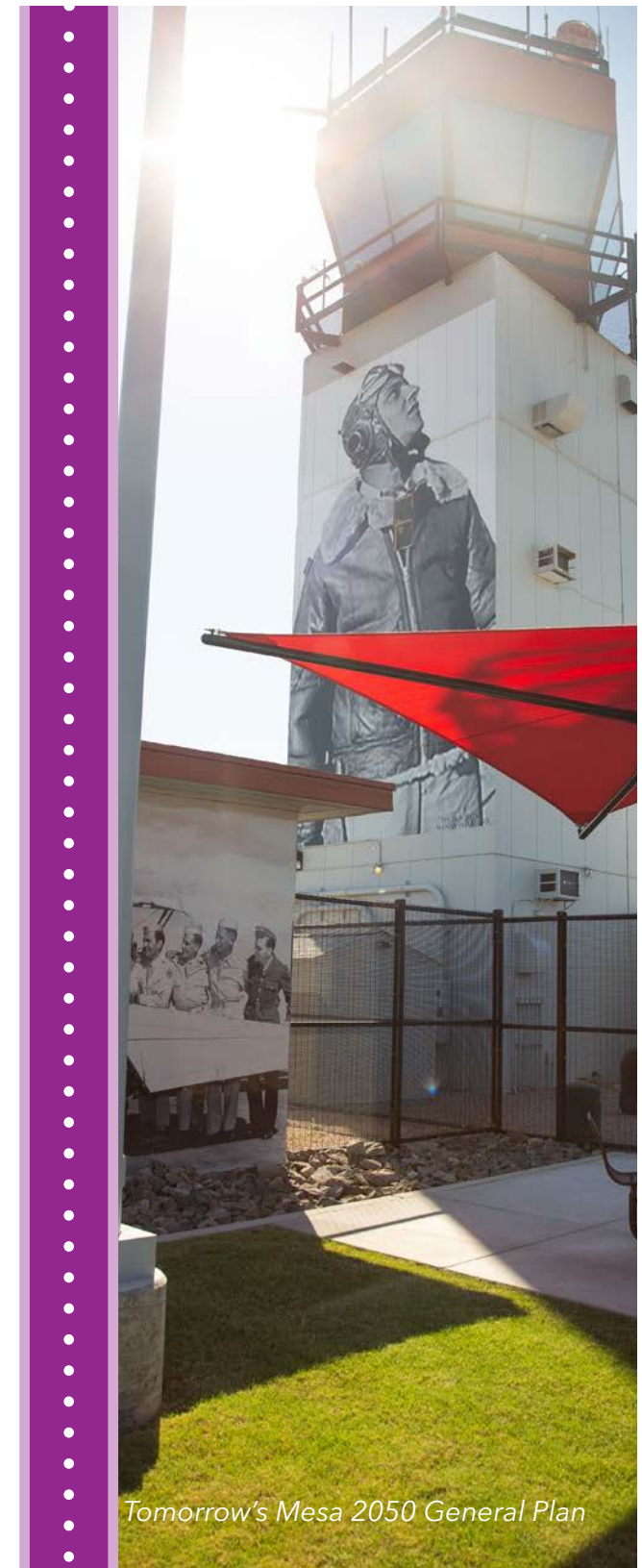
## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Regional Employment Centers with vacant or underutilized land that can support new development, older development with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, and/or blighted land, as identified by one of the City's Redevelopment Area Plans, should transform with land uses and development patterns that align with City priorities. Regional Employment Centers should be of high-quality design, provide sufficient amenities to support employees, and provide smooth transitions between land uses.

Improvements should complement and support investment in the area, elevate the quality of the urban environment, and bolster economic development.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Primary entries are enhanced with ornamental landscaping, low-level decorative walls, monument signs, and decorative paving.
- Buildings have a strong relationship to the street and include a functional public entrance that is also a visual focus for the building.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Horizontal and vertical articulation are provided in building facades and roofs to reduce the massing of buildings.
- A variety of building material and colors are used in building facades. Side and rear facades visible to the public shall include materials of equal quality to the front facade. Loading and service areas are located away from public view and screened with materials, colors, and finishes compatible with the building design.
- Shade elements, both landscape and architectural, are provided near building entries, employee break areas, and along paths serving parking lots.



*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*

## INDUSTRIAL

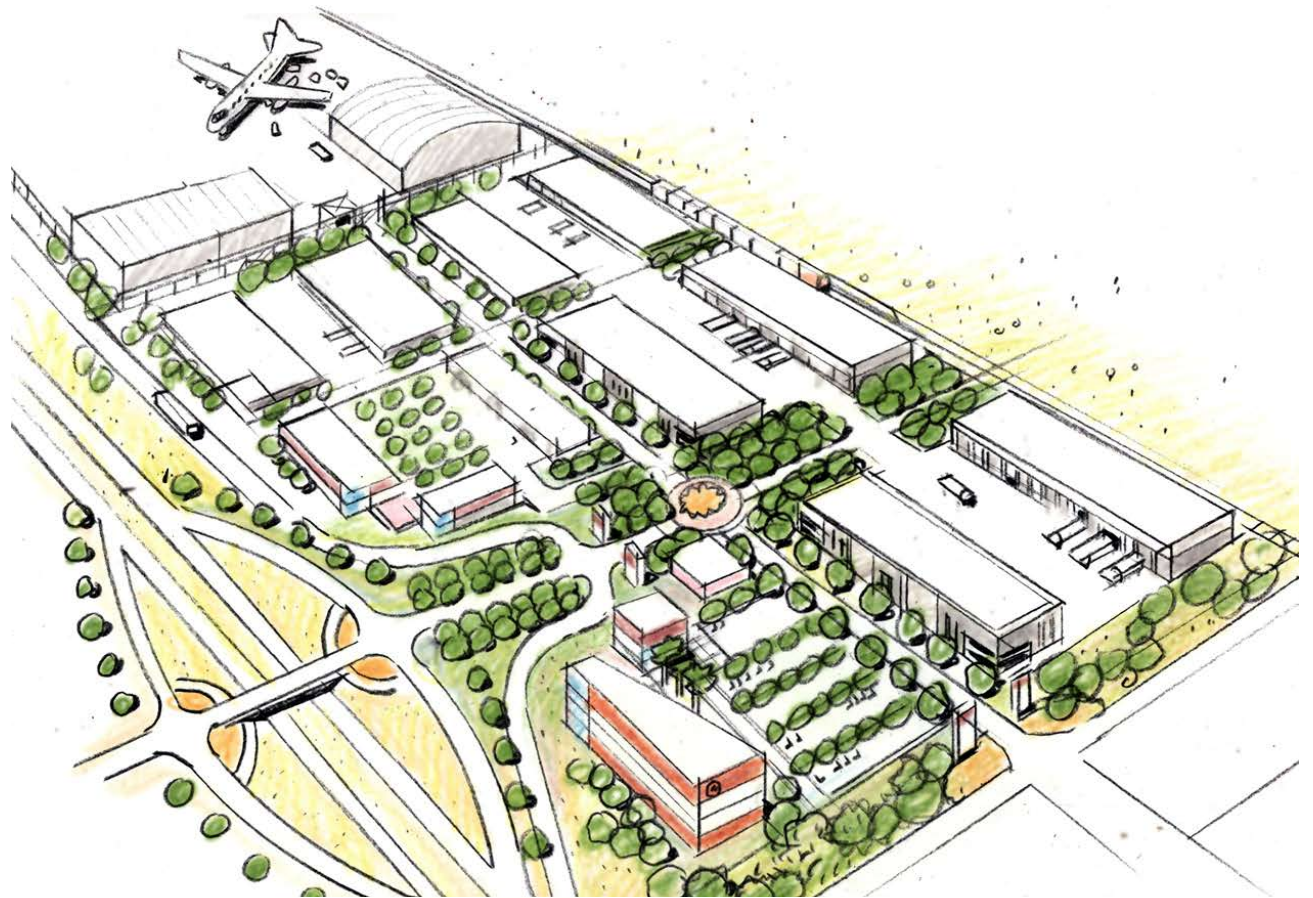
**Land Use:** Industrial areas are intended for high-intensity industrial activities such as manufacturing, warehousing and storage, data storage, freight, and distribution.

Uses typically have special infrastructure needs such as power or utility equipment, large truck delivery, air handling/venting systems, transmission corridors for power, and water.

Industrial areas should have excellent access to arterial roadways, freeways, and rail that can accommodate heavy truck traffic and distribution needs.

This Placetype plays an important role in the City's employment base and economy but may have impacts that should be mitigated to ensure compatibility with other commercial or residential areas.

Industrial Placetypes should be well-designed to stand the test of time and enhance the image of the City. Additionally, these areas should include design elements that buffer and mitigate negative impacts from surrounding areas.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Light Industrial
- Warehousing and Storage
- Heavy Industrial

### SUPPORTING LAND USES:

- Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Convenience Services



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Light Industrial (LI)
- General Industrial (GI)
- Heavy Industrial (HI)
- Employment Opportunity (EO)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family- N/A
- Mixed-Use - N/A
- Non-Residential up to 4.5 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Evolve.** Industrial areas with vacant or underutilized land that can support new development, older development with structures nearing the end of their lifespan, and/or blighted land should redevelop with uses that support investment in the area, elevate the quality of the urban environment, and bolster economic development. Industrial areas should be of high-quality design, provide sufficient amenities to support employees, and provide smooth transitions between land uses.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Buildings have a strong relationship to the street and include a functional public entrance that is also a visual focus for the building.

- A variety of building material and colors are used in building facades.
- Side and rear facades visible to the public include materials of equal quality to the front facade.
- Horizontal and vertical articulation are provided in building facades and roofs to reduce the massing of buildings.
- Shade elements, both landscape and architectural, are provided near building entries, employee break areas, and along paths serving parking lots.
- Loading, service, and storage areas are located away from public view and screened with materials, colors, and finishes compatible with the building design.
- Loading and service areas are provided with separate access and circulation systems from employee visitor traffic where possible.
- Utility and solid waste facilities are screened from the streets and located away from main building entrances
- Primary entries are enhanced with ornamental landscaping, low-level decorative walls, monument signs, and decorative paving.
- Landscaping, berms, and site walls are used to buffer residents from operations that emit noise and/or pollutants.



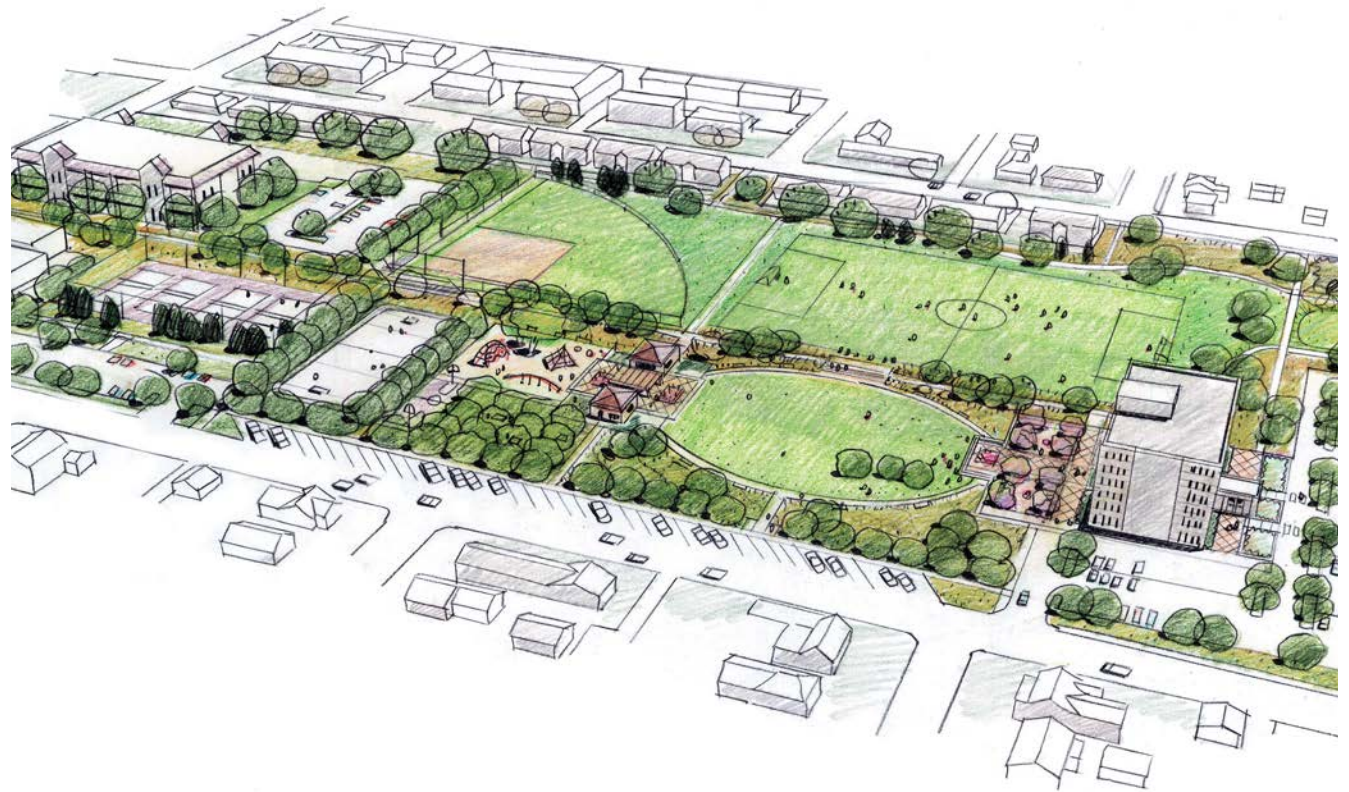
*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

**Land Use:** Various forms of green space are integrated into all Placetypes as supporting elements. What defines the Parks and Open Space Placetype is the regional importance, connectivity, and scale of these signature parks, trails, and open space assets.

Parks and Open Space Placetypes include large parks—generally 20 acres or larger, greenways, preserves, and environmentally sensitive lands. These areas may be key destinations that provide recreational opportunities for residents or passive areas that have significant ecological value.

Parks and Open Space areas should be connected to one another whenever possible and to other private open space networks, amenities, and parks to maximize their benefit to humans and wildlife.



### PRINCIPAL LAND USES:

- Public/Semi-Public



## ZONING DISTRICTS:

- Agricultural (AG)
- Leisure and Recreation (LR)
- Public and Semi-Public (PS)

## DENSITY/INTENSITY:

- Single-Family - N/A
- Multi-Family - N/A
- Mixed-Use - N/A
- Non-Residential up to 0.3 F.A.R.

## GROWTH STRATEGIES:

- **Conserve.** Parks and Open Space areas with significant natural resources or development constraints should be conserved. These areas should experience little change and the change that occurs should be limited to necessary remediation.
- **Sustain.** All other Parks and Open Space areas should generally remain in their current condition. Minor improvements that are consistent with the area's current form and character of the Parks and Open Space should occur over time. This could include infrastructure, landscape, and facility improvements.

## URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

- Design sites to retain existing topography, native vegetation, and other natural features.
- Quality architecture is used to anchor and define the public realm.
- Sites are designed with a pedestrian-focus and offer places for gathering.
- An interconnected system of pathways provides pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within sites and to surrounding neighborhoods
- Unified and comprehensive systems of wayfinding signs, kiosks, and other environmental graphics are used to provide direction to pedestrians.
- Gateway features and monument signs are provided at entries to provide a sense of arrival and identity.



## GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

### CONSISTENCY REVIEW

Zoning divides the City into areas organized by compatible uses and defines districts that specify permitted uses and development standards. Zoning is the means to implement the Future Land Use Plan; promote land use compatibility; enhance aesthetics; help maintain property values; promote public health, safety, and general welfare; and ensure adequate municipal services.

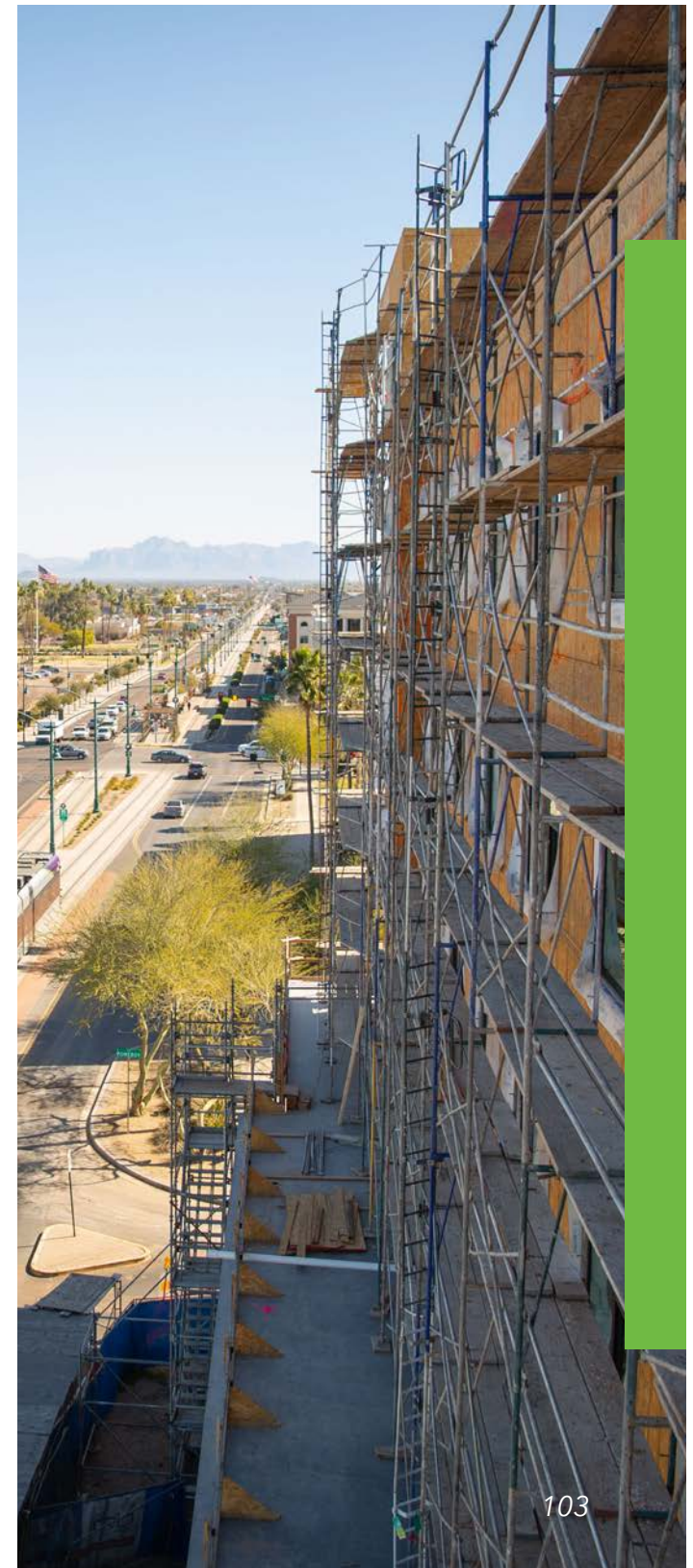
A.R.S. § 9-462.01 requires that all zoning and rezonings be consistent with, and conform to, the adopted general plan of the municipality. A zoning or rezoning is consistent with the *General Plan* if it is consistent with the site's Placetype and furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the *Plan*.

In addition to zonings and rezonings, pursuant to the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, applications for other land use requests, such as Site Plan Review, Design Review, Substantial Conformance Improvement Permits, Development Incentive Permits, and Conditional Use Permits, collectively

referred to in the *General Plan* as "development applications," "land use requests," or "development proposals", are also reviewed and evaluated for consistency with the *Plan*.

Before approving development applications, the *General Plan* is reviewed to ensure that the development application furthers the implementation of, and is not contrary to, the Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and applicable elements of the *Plan*. The analysis applicable to development applications does not prohibit any permitted land use(s) when the land use(s) are permitted by right in the existing zoning district.

In very limited instances, a rezoning or development application may be found consistent with the *General Plan* despite using a zoning district, Principal or Supporting land use, or a density/intensity that deviates from those listed for the site's Placetype. In these cases only, deviations from the site's Placetype described as minor deviations in the *General Plan* may be considered.







Minor deviations are limited to development applications that furthers the goals of the *General Plan* and may only include:

- A zoning district that is in the same base zoning district groups as defined in the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, as those listed for a Placetype; and/or
- A compatible land use that is not identified in the General Plan as a typical land use, or as a Principle or Supporting land use for a site's Placetype; and/or
- A density/intensity no more than 25% higher than those listed for the site's Placetype.

Additionally, zonings and rezonings with minor deviations may require a site plan or a development agreement to further ensure consistency with the *General Plan*.

## **DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS**

In certain instances, a development agreement may be required to further ensure consistency with the *General Plan's* Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and Future Land Use Plan; neighboring development; Sub-area and Neighborhood Plans; and other policies of the City. In these cases, a development agreement may include restrictions on permitted land uses, densities/intensities, and provisions to encourage high-quality development on a site to further implement the *General Plan*.



04

THE ECONOMY



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# The Economy

Mesa is home to a diverse and growing economy that is shaped by our location, environment, natural resources, public infrastructure and services, people, and industries. Mesa is poised for growth, and we have the power to create a prosperous future by fostering conditions that provide economic opportunities and sustain our City.

For *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*, prosperity is more than just economic vitality; it is about ensuring a brighter future for our current and future residents. During the General Plan public engagement process, residents

shared their aspirations for an economy in which small businesses thrive, residents have access to high-quality commercial offerings, natural resources are responsibly managed and preserved through sustainable development practices, and residents have access to a variety of high-paying jobs.

This Chapter outlines a set of Guiding Principles and Strategies for **Economic Development; Environment, Conservation, Energy, and Water; and Public Facilities and Services**, which collectively work together to create a prosperous Mesa that prioritizes quality

places and offers choices where to live, work, play, and learn.

Related Strategies that help accomplish the community's Vision are discussed throughout the *General Plan*, specifically in Chapter 2: The People and Chapter 3: The Land, are provided as reference below each topic.



## Guiding Principles

OUR ECONOMY IS INNOVATIVE AND PROSPEROUS.

OUR CITY IS RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE.

OUR PUBLIC SERVICE ENTERPRISES ARE EFFICIENT, RELIABLE, AND COST-EFFECTIVE.



# Economic Development

*Guiding Principle - Our Economy is Innovative and Prosperous.*

It is the mission of the Office of Economic Development to enhance Mesa's economy, create quality jobs, and increase per capita income to improve the quality of life for Mesa's residents.

For many years Mesa was regarded as a bedroom community, primarily a residential suburb which served as a home base for residents working outside the City. In recent years, Mesa has taken tremendous strides to establish itself as a key player in the state's economy. Mesa's prime location within the metropolitan area provides a competitive advantage that helps attract healthcare, education, aerospace, defense, technology, and manufacturing industries. The City provides access to the regional freeway system; rail, transit, and aviation hubs such as Falcon Field Airport and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport; and a large, diverse employment pool exceeding 150,000 individuals.

Mesa's potential for economic growth is immense. However, the prosperity of our local economy is not just about the number of new jobs brought to the area by our prime location; Mesa must continue to innovate and be competitive in the regional market.

Mesa's approach to economic development must be multi-faceted. The Strategies discussed below focus on business recruitment and retention programs that target high paying jobs; development of a highly skilled, knowledge-based workforce; support for small business and entrepreneurship; diversification of Mesa's economic base; investment in infrastructure to support innovation; and improving the quality of life and image of the City to attract business and employees.



## Strategies

**ED1. ATTRACT BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYERS THAT CREATE JOBS WITH WAGES AT OR ABOVE THE REGIONAL AVERAGE.**

**ED2. INVEST IN MESA'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.**

**ED3. SUSTAIN A BUSINESS CLIMATE THAT FOSTERS ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESSES.**

**ED4. PROTECT AND PROMOTE MESA'S AIRPORTS AS GLOBAL CONNECTIONS FOR TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.**

**ED5. PROMOTE MESA AS A REGIONAL COMMERCIAL, ENTERTAINMENT, AND TOURIST DESTINATION.**



## ED1. Attract businesses and employers that create jobs with wages at or above the regional average.

---

For the average resident, our economy ultimately comes down to one thing—jobs—and the quality of those jobs is largely determined by pay. A robust business environment leads to job creation, particularly for higher-paying jobs, which in return facilitates a strong economy and more disposable income for Mesa residents.

In 2021, Mesa’s median household income was \$65,725, which was lower than the median household income for the greater Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale Metropolitan Statistical Area, including surrounding communities such as Chandler, Glendale, and Gilbert.

Mesa is committed to improving the quality of life for its residents by proactively working to attract industries that create high-wage and skilled jobs and will continue to position itself as a premier location for new business relocations and expansions to ensure high-quality jobs are created.

During the *General Plan* update process, major businesses and representatives from key industries were interviewed and asked to provide insight into the current condition of Mesa’s business climate and their individual aspirations for the future. A common theme discussed by stakeholders was the characteristics they sought when selecting their next business location. Businesses and investors seek to locate in places that have a skilled and knowledgeable labor pool, offer their employees a high-quality of life, and provide environments that support innovation and the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and resources.

These topics are pertinent to many of the Strategies within the *General Plan* and will require collaboration across various City departments to achieve these goals.



## ED2. Invest in Mesa's workforce development.

---

The availability of a skilled and educated workforce is a key consideration when employers make site selection decisions. To remain competitive in the region, Mesa must continue to attract, retain, and cultivate a strong employment base.

Mesa is home to several higher education institutions, such as, two Arizona State University (ASU) campuses (Polytechnic and Mesa City Center), A.T. Still University, Benedictine University, Mesa Community College, and Chandler-Gilbert Community College. Most of Mesa's future labor demands will be met by the approximately 40,000 students currently enrolled in these institutions.

Mesa currently partners with educational institutions, businesses, and organizations on a number of workforce initiatives such as the Mesa College Promise which provides qualifying Mesa high school graduates with two years of free tuition to Mesa Community College (MCC).

In order to remain at the forefront of workforce training and understand the needs of the labor market, the City will continue to partner with educational institutions, businesses, and agencies to ensure its residents have the in-demand skills desired by employers.

## ED3. Sustain a business climate that fosters entrepreneurs and small businesses.

---

Small businesses are the backbone of Mesa's economy, playing a pivotal role in fostering economic growth, innovation, and job creation. Their significance lies not only in the substantial number of jobs they provide, but also in their ability to infuse local communities with vitality and resilience.

Small business and entrepreneurship are often at the forefront of innovation, bringing fresh ideas and products to market and promoting healthy competition, which can lead to improved

quality, lower prices, and increased consumer choice.

Mesa's Downtown Innovation District, anchored by the ASU MIX Center and the Studios at Mesa City Center provides an ideal environment in which small businesses can cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators, restaurant incubators.

As the community and region undergo economic change, Mesa residents want to ensure small businesses and entrepreneurs have the resources they need to thrive. Mesa is committed to fostering a thriving small business ecosystem and our commitment is shown through Mesa's small business assistance program known as "Mesa Business Builder", a small business toolbox that offers Mesa small businesses resources, financial assistance, entrepreneurship programs, and assistance with data, research, licensing and permitting.



Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan

## ED4. Protect and promote Mesa's airports as a global connection for tourism and business development.

---

Mesa is home to two regional airports— Falcon Field Airport and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. These airports are integral to Mesa's economy, driving economic development, employment, and innovation while also directly connecting Mesa to broader domestic and global economies.

As major economic drivers of aerospace, aviation, defense, and technology industries, it is important that Mesa support its regional airports and cultivate the development of these industries both at and around the airports. This can be achieved by prioritizing infrastructure and transportation investments that support our airports and facilitate surrounding development. The City should also ensure that areas surrounding the airports are planned for an appropriate mix of compatible land uses that support the economic development and sustainability of the airports.



## ED5. Promote Mesa as a regional commercial, entertainment, and tourist destination.

---

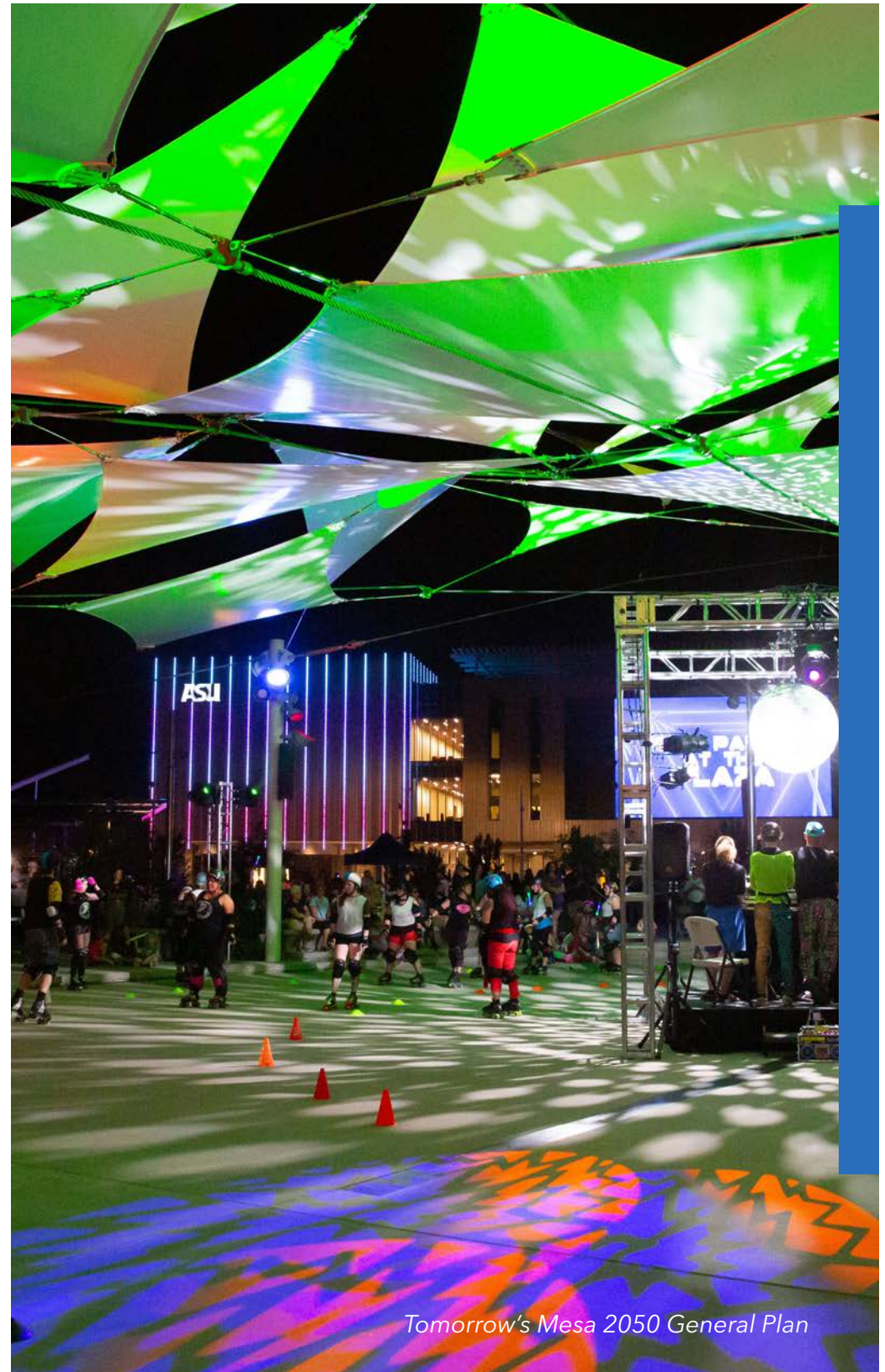
Mesa's future depends on a dynamic, diversified, and growing economic base that complements the character and livability of the community. Mesa celebrates its existing economic strengths and seeks to diversify its offerings and competitive position in the regional market as a commercial, entertainment, and tourist destination.

Retail, entertainment, arts and culture, and hospitality contribute significantly to the economy and provide a diverse range of employment opportunities. Currently, there are parts of Mesa that need commercial, entertainment, and tourism opportunities, and having a continued unmet need can negatively impact residents' quality of life and Mesa's economy.

Throughout the *General Plan* process residents commented on the lack of local commercial establishments in some areas and expressed frustration in having to go to surrounding jurisdictions for their shopping, dining, and entertainment needs.

Increasing opportunities within the City not only helps to meet unmet need of our residents but will also strengthen Mesa's business recruitment and retention strategies because where employers and employees choose to locate is becoming increasingly influenced by the quality of life and authentic, unique places in a community.

As the City works towards improving the quality of life for its residents and creating a prosperous economy, it will continue diversifying its business attraction strategies with a focus on complementary sectors.







## RELATED STRATEGIES



### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**HAC4.** Expand Mesa's reputation as an arts and culture tourism leader in Arizona.

---

**HS4.** Support the provision of high-quality early childhood, primary, secondary, and higher-education systems in Mesa.

---



### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**H3.** Create more opportunities for high-end and executive housing to meet the needs of Mesa's expanding economy.

---

**H1.** Create more opportunities for housing options.

---

**PO1.** Provide a diverse range of neighborhood, community, and regional parks within one-half mile of all residential areas.

---

**LU5.** Encourage the development of vibrant activity centers in Downtown and throughout the City.

---



# Environment, Conservation, Energy, and Water

## *Guiding Principle - Our City is Resilient and Sustainable.*

Mesa's natural and environmental resources are valuable assets that shape the City's development patterns, lifestyles, and economy. Mesa has grown rapidly over the past 40 years, both in population and geography. This growth presents challenges to the protection of the natural environment, including water, air, native vegetation, and open space. As Mesa continues to grow, the continued protection of our environment and natural resources is necessary to ensure a bright future for current and future residents, and to maintain Mesa's attractiveness as a place to live, work, play, and learn.

Mesa's pursuit of resilience and sustainability must respond to local conditions; however, Mesa is part of a larger regional and national community and Mesa should consider its efforts within this larger context as well. The City's framework for sustainability should not only reflect our community values and Vision, but also align with emerging national trends and guidelines.

The City is committed to proactively and responsibly protecting and conserving Mesa's environment and natural resources. In 2022, the City adopted the Mesa Climate Action Plan, a Mayor and Council priority initiative, which set forth ambitious, community-focused goals that will positively contribute to the overall climate impact for Mesa. Ensuring a resilient and prosperous future is a community-wide effort, requiring input, action, and commitment from every stakeholder.

The Strategies described below focus not only on resource conservation but on intelligent usage—two sides of the same sustainable coin.



## Strategies

**ECEW1. MANAGE OUR WATER RESOURCES TO IMPROVE AND SAFEGUARD WATER SUPPLY AND DEPENDABILITY.**

**ECEW2. PROMOTE ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION.**

**ECEW3. IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND WATER QUALITY THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES.**

**ECEW4. PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES THAT FOSTER RESILIENT SYSTEMS AND REDUCE HAZARD RISKS.**

**ECEW5. PROTECT FUTURE AGGREGATE RESOURCE EXTRACTION.**



## ECEW1. Manage our water resources to improve and safeguard water supply and dependability.

---

Water is an essential resource to support human life, a healthy environment, and a strong economy—and Mesa has a diverse portfolio aimed at providing the community with a dependable, long-term water supply. This portfolio consists of surface water supplies, which include Colorado River water from the Central Arizona Project and Salt and Verde River water from the Salt River Project, groundwater supplies, and reclaimed water.

Mesa also has a 100-Year Assured Water Supply designation from the Arizona Department of Water Resources. This designation means that our City has shown continuous, physical, and legal availability of water along with water quality and financial capability standards to maintain water supplies.

However, we realize that as Mesa continues to grow so will the demand for water. The City will continue to plan and manage the City's water supply, conduct ongoing drought and climate vulnerability planning, expand the use of alternative sources of water, and expand water efficiency and conservation programs.

## ECEW2. Promote energy conservation and renewable energy generation.

---

As demand for energy increases with continued growth, we must explore ways to better conserve electricity and utilize renewable systems that allow Mesa to become more energy independent and less reliant on fossil fuels.

Currently, Mesa provides electric utility service to over 17,500 residential and commercial customers, with approximately 20% of the electricity generated from renewable sources such as hydropower. Mesa is also a provider of natural gas, providing service to over 73,000 customers not only in Mesa, but within Queen Creek, San Tan Valley, and Pinal County as well.

The City provides several programs, such as the Renewable Energy Service Rider, Electric Smart Peaks, and the Electric Territory Solar Program, to encourage both reduction in energy consumption and use of renewable sources. The City will continue to lead by example by incorporating energy efficient technology and energy conservation design in the construction and retrofit of municipal facilities, monitoring energy consumption trends, adjusting Mesa's energy portfolio to align with the City's conservation goals, and providing community energy conservation education and energy efficiency retrofit programs.





### ECEW3. Improve stormwater management and water quality through sustainable development practices.

---

Rainwater that falls onto Mesa’s streets and buildings has the potential to contaminate groundwater through a process called “non-point source pollution”. Rains wash oil, grease, animal waste, and other contaminants from the streets into storm drains which then empty into washes and rivers. Proper stormwater management helps reduce flooding and prevents pollutants from entering our surface waters.

In accordance with state requirements, Mesa maintains a Stormwater Management Plan which outlines the regulations and procedures the City employs to reduce the discharge of pollutants into waterways. The City requires all new development and redevelopment to be designed according to the City’s Engineering and Design Standards which includes the requirement that stormwater be retained on-site. The City’s current standards employ traditional engineering techniques that continue to evolve with more innovative and sustainable standards.

As an approach to stormwater management, Low Impact Development (LID) uses the landscape as a means of absorbing stormwater runoff. By utilizing techniques such as permeable surfaces, rain gardens, and bioswales, LID naturally filters stormwater into the ground rather than directing it into storm drains. This practice can also recharge groundwater aquifers and reduce the strain on Mesa’s water supply, where every drop counts.

In 2015, Mesa created a Low Impact Development Toolkit to help educate and encourage LID strategies. However, these design standards currently are not required elements of the City’s development standards. Looking to the future, Mesa should continue to encourage sustainable practices that improve the resiliency of ecological systems.





## ECEW4. Promote sustainable practices that foster resilient systems and reduce hazard risks.

---

Mesa is committed to providing a safe and resilient future. To put this commitment into action, the City must foster resilient systems that address and minimize the risk of hazards, including flash floods, drought, extreme heat, air pollution, and wildfire.

Mesa's location in the Sonoran Desert presents a unique opportunity to promote sustainable land use regulations, building standards, and practices that can significantly contribute to the City's environmental resilience and long-term prosperity.

Encouraging and facilitating the development of compact, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use developments reduces our carbon footprint, maximizes infrastructure investment, and improves air and water quality. Other deliberate efforts, such as increasing the City's tree canopy and the development of more shade structures, can help address extreme heat by mitigating the heat island effect.

Whether expanding tree canopies, promoting sustainable stormwater infrastructure, utilizing native drought-resistant landscaping, or fostering compact mixed-use development, the objective is clear: create a safer, more adaptive environment.

## ECEW5. Protect future aggregate resource extraction.

---

According to the Arizona Geological Survey, there are areas within Mesa that are suitable for aggregate resource extraction. While aggregate mining is an important and necessary part of the economy, the noise, light, dust, and traffic from mines can impact the quality of life of nearby residents.

To protect aggregate mining and safeguard residents' enjoyment of their property, buffering and transitions between adjacent land uses and mining operations is essential.

Mesa is committed to protecting aggregate resource extraction and will encourage mitigation of adverse impacts on adjoining properties.





## RELATED STRATEGIES



### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N3.** Continue to provide a code compliance program to ensure neighborhoods are clean and well-maintained.

---



### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**CM2.** Provide a complete, connected, and safe network of on- and off-street active transportation infrastructure.

---

**CM3.** Enhance the public transit system by incorporating light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, and shared on-demand services.

---



### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**PF2.** Continue to implement smart city strategies in the planning, operation, and delivery of public facilities and services.

---

**PF3.** Provide sustainable energy, water, sewer, solid waste, and storm sewer services to residents.

---

# Public Facilities and Services

*Guiding Principle - Our Public Service Enterprises are Efficient, Reliable, and Cost-Effective.*

Public facilities and services reflect basic functions provided by government to the community.

Public facilities include libraries, police, and fire stations, water treatment plants, community and recreation centers, cemeteries, transportation infrastructure and centers, arts and cultural facilities, and civic buildings. Public facilities also include infrastructure that is the City's hidden support network for development in the City.

Public services are administrative, health, safety, and cultural services provided by the City to meet the community's needs. Some of the public services provided by the City include water and wastewater, electricity, police and fire protection, and solid waste disposal.

The City takes pride in providing public facilities and services that are efficient, reliable, and cost-effective. Mesa owns and operates nearly 500 facilities across the City and employs approximately 4,000 employees that help provide services for the community.

In order to maintain high levels of service, the Strategies discussed below focus on recruiting and retaining a highly skilled workforce; strategic planning with a focus on efficiency and return on investment; and an organizational culture centered around service, excellence, innovation, and transparency.



## Strategies

**PF1. PROVIDE FISCALLY SOUND PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES.**

**PF2. CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT SMART CITY STRATEGIES IN THE PLANNING, OPERATION, AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES.**

**PF3. PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, WATER, SEWER, SOLID WASTE, AND STORM SEWER SERVICES TO RESIDENTS.**

**PF4. ENSURE THAT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTES ITS FAIR SHARE TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.**





## PF1. Provide fiscally sound planning, design, and construction of public facilities.

---

Mesa strives for the efficient utilization of its public facilities, including re-purposing, remodeling, or selling those facilities that no longer serve the community.

Our public buildings (new or remodeled) are designed to function sustainably for the useful life of the facility and to meet green building standards. Creative and environmentally sound building design, construction, and space planning can provide flexibility to meet changing needs and optimize efficiency and the City's return on investment.

By carefully planning and designing public facilities and infrastructure with their long-term viability in mind, the City can minimize operation and maintenance. This fiscally responsible approach to infrastructure and facility development ensures that every taxpayer dollar is used efficiently and transparently.

## PF2. Continue to implement smart city strategies in the planning, operation, and delivery of public facilities and services.

---

In 2019, the City of Mesa adopted a Smart City Strategic Plan which defined a set of strategies, opportunities, priorities, and a path forward for building a smarter City. Smart cities are cities that leverage technology, connectivity, and data to lower operating costs, modernize infrastructure, improve efficiencies, create revenue, better engage residents, enhance inclusion, and increase the overall quality of life.

Successful smart city strategies hinge on the ability for cities to innovate within seven key domains: community, economy, environment and energy, government, and education, living and health, mobility, and safety and security. As it relates to Mesa's public facilities and services, the City's focus is on digital infrastructure, data and information, and connectivity and technology integration.

A strong and reliable digital infrastructure, including high-speed internet connectivity, is essential for collecting, transmitting, and processing data from various sources. In 2022, Mesa's City Council approved license agreements with multiple internet providers, allowing these providers to install their fiber optic networks within the City's rights-of-way. Building this robust bandwidth connectivity will improve reliability, and the ability to transmit large amounts of data supporting interconnected systems that define a smart city.

Data is the core of smart cities. Cities need to collect, manage, and analyze data from people, sensors, devices, and various other sources. This data provides insights into both operations and human behaviors that informs decision-making processes.

The City will continue to expand the use of smart sensors and devices and use data analytics to better meet the needs of its residents, enhance its responsiveness, streamline resource allocation, and optimize its operations for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Leveraging these resources and finding new and innovative ways to integrate various technologies and systems is the key to a smarter future. From the Real Time Crime Center-to the Transportation Management Center-to the conversion to smart water meters throughout the City, the foundation for a smart system is being laid that will carry Mesa into the future.



### PF3. Provide sustainable energy, water, sewer, solid waste, and storm sewer services to residents.

---

Mesa is committed to advancing resilient and eco-conscious services, including energy, water, sewer, solid waste, and storm sewer systems.

Mesa has emerged as a leader in sustainable development placing an emphasis on water and energy conservation, increasing the availability and affordability of renewable energy, and reducing waste.

By 2050, the City aspires to put 100% of reclaimed water to beneficial reuse, divert 90% of waste from landfills, to achieve carbon neutrality, and to use 100% renewable energy.

Current key initiatives include development of green stormwater infrastructure, growth of the City's electric vehicle charging infrastructure, installation of solar on City properties, conversion to electric fleet vehicles, and planning for a new recycling facility, and the formulation of renewable energy plans.

Recognizing that businesses are essential partners in this journey, Mesa will create an ecosystem that attracts and nurtures sustainable and resilient businesses.

As a part of this broad vision, Mesa is not only focused on today but is diligently planning for a future impacted by climate change. Advanced energy efficiency projects, renewable energy plans, and meticulous climate risk assessments are integrated into the City's long-term goals.

### PF4. Ensure that private development contributes its fair share towards the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure.

---

Mesa believes that new development should pay its fair share towards the costs of additional public facilities required to serve that development. Growth and new development should not strain the City's infrastructure and services and adversely impact current residents.

The City will continue to require new development to contribute to or pay toward needed public services as permitted by law and continually evaluate new development's share of public service responsibility.



## RELATED STRATEGIES



### CHAPTER 2: THE PEOPLE

**N3.** Continue to provide code compliance programs to ensure neighborhoods are clean and well-maintained.

---

**PS1.** Continue to provide high-quality and responsive police, fire, and medical services to all residents and businesses.

---



### CHAPTER 3: THE LAND

**CM5.** Integrate innovative transportation technology strategies.

---

**PO4.** Maintain the long-term viability of park and recreation facilities through ongoing maintenance and investment.

---



### CHAPTER 4: THE ECONOMY

**ECEW1.** Manage our water resources to improve and safeguard water supply and dependability.

---

**ECEW2.** Promote energy conservation and renewable energy generation.

---

**ECEW3.** Improve stormwater management and water quality through sustainable development practices.

---

**ECEW4.** Promote sustainable practices that foster resilient systems and reduce hazard risks.

---



THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



05

IMPLEMENTATION





THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# Our Path Forward

The *Moving Forward Together: Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* is a living document that integrates community input and best practices into a road map that aligns City decisions, processes, and regulations with its overarching community-based Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies, and Actions.

The Guiding Principles and Strategies in this General Plan aim to shape the future of the places we live, work, play, and learn by preserving what's important to our community and guiding investments that will help make Mesa a vibrant and unique City for decades to come.

Achieving and implementing this Vision will require time, dedication, and the partnership of many. The City is committed to advancing the Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategies and providing a transparent and accountable path for its implementation. To ensure its success, it is crucial that Mesa regularly monitor and evaluate its progress in implementing the *General Plan*. It is also important that Mesa remains agile and uses this evaluation to identify emerging trends and conditions that may warrant adjustments to the *General Plan* or its implementation tools.

This Chapter describes the City's tools for implementing the *Mesa 2050 General Plan* which includes a description of the Action Plan—a partner document that serves as an adaptable guide to help implement the *General Plan's* Guiding Principles and Strategies through specific Actions. This Chapter also outlines the process by which the General Plan can be amended.





# Implementation Tools

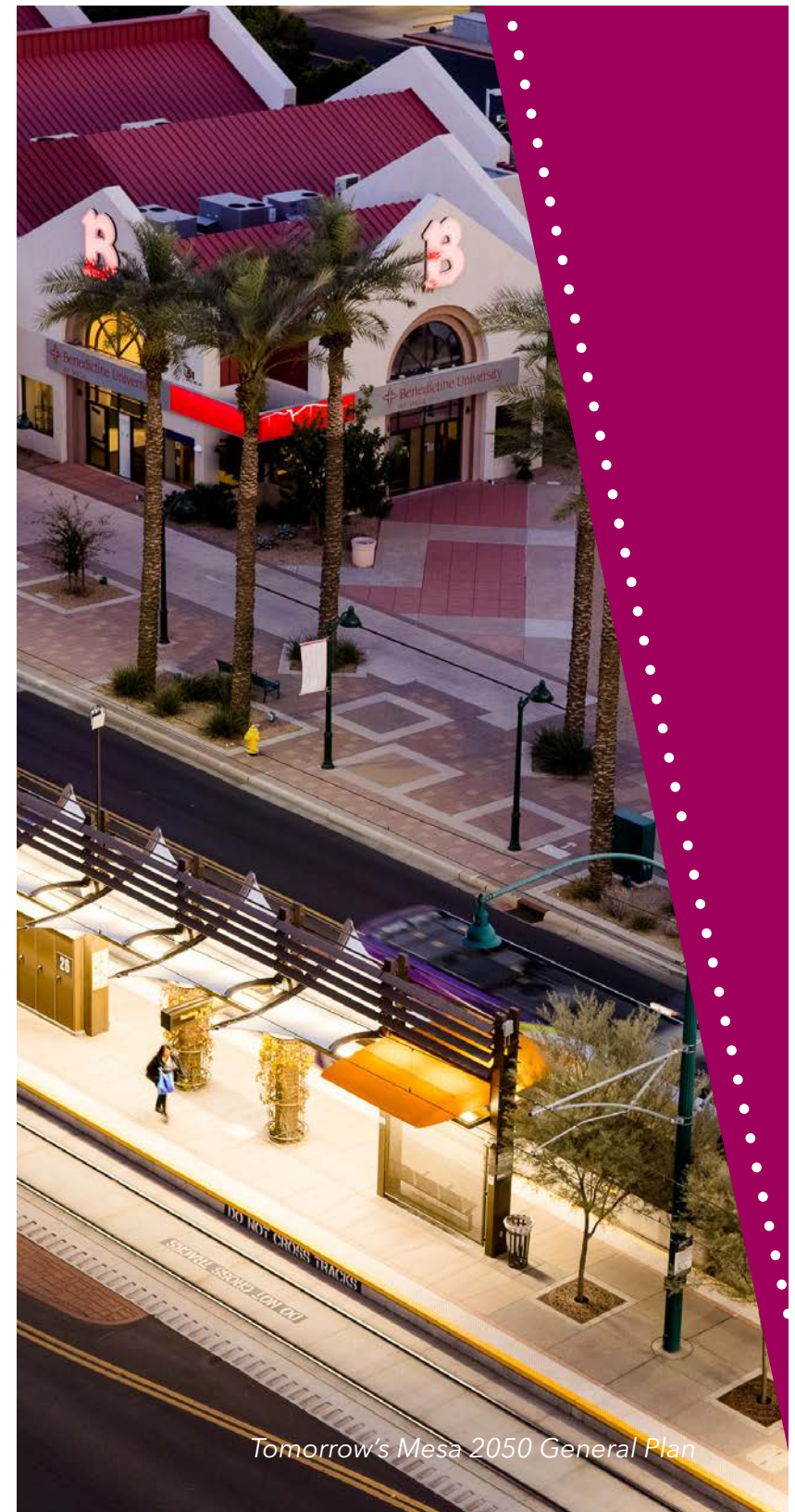
Much of the *General Plan's* implementation occurs on a daily basis, through both private and public actions. The following are some primary implementation tools of the *General Plan*.

## MESA CITY CODE

Many of the *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan Strategies* will be implemented through regulations adopted by the City and the development initiated by private individuals or agencies. The Mesa City Code is comprised of detailed regulations on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, zoning, subdivisions, building, fire, police, stormwater management, and property maintenance. New development, redevelopment, and strategic initiatives will be reviewed for compliance with the Mesa City Code and this *General Plan*. Where appropriate, amendments to the Mesa City Code should be considered to further the efficacy of the *General Plan*.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Design guidelines and standards provide the framework for evaluating development proposals based on design, architecture, context, compatibility, landscaping, and other factors. Design guidelines and standards may apply citywide or be developed to enhance the character of specific areas. Design guidelines and standards are used along with the Mesa City Code during the development review process to ensure consistency with the *General Plan*. The City's design guidelines and standards include but are not limited to Mesa's Quality Development Design Guidelines, Fiesta District Design Handbook, and Mesa's Engineering and Design Standards.





## **MASTER PLANS**

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* is general in nature as it is the overarching policy document that guides the City's future growth and development.

*Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* is just one piece of Mesa's strategic approach to planning. Several master plans are nested under the *General Plan* that address specific topics, disciplines, and focus areas.

Each of the City's master plans work in tandem with the *General Plan*. Their policies and goals are thoughtfully integrated into *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*; however, these master plans contain more detailed analysis and discussion and should be referenced for additional guidance and direction.

## **SUB-AREA PLANS/NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS**

Sub-area or neighborhood plans provide guidance for future decision-making for specific geographic areas within the City. Sub-area plans are largely community driven, allowing residents the opportunity to identify issues particular to their neighborhoods and develop strategies and actions to strengthen the character of these areas.

The City currently has six adopted sub-area plans. It is anticipated that over time these sub-area plans will be updated to reflect evolving conditions and that new sub-area or neighborhood plans will be developed in accordance with *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan's* Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategies.



## STRATEGIC PLANS

Similar to master plans, strategic plans are specialized plans that focus on specific topics. Strategic plans are highly actionable and outline goals and initiatives to attain a specific outcome. Examples of strategic plans are redevelopment plans, economic development plans, and placemaking plans. Because of their actionable nature, these plans are typically developed with a shorter time horizon and are updated more often to address emerging trends and changing needs. These plans should be evaluated often to assess their success in implementing their initiatives and their ability to carry out *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan's* Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategies.

### MASTER PLANS

- Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities Comprehensive Plan (2022)
- Climate Action Plan for a Sustainable Community (2022)
- Transportation Master Plan (Update Anticipated 2024)
- Transit Master Plan (Update Anticipated 2024)
- Water Resources Integrated Master Plan (Update Anticipated 2024)
- Balanced Housing Plan (Update Anticipated 2024)

### SUB-AREA PLANS

- Citrus Sub-Area Plan (2003)
- Lehi Sub-Area Plan (2006)
- Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan (2007)
- West Main Street Area Plan (2007)
- Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan (2008)
- Central Main Street Plan (2012)

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Quality Development Design Guidelines
- Fiesta Design Guidelines
- Desert Uplands Design Guidelines
- Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

### STRATEGIC PLANS

- Mesa Town Center Redevelopment Plan (1999)
- Mesa Southwest Redevelopment Area Plan (2017)
- Mesa West Redevelopment Plan (2018)
- Mesa East Redevelopment Plan (2018)
- Building a Smarter Mesa, Smart City Strategic Plan and Plan Update (2019 & 2022)
- Economic Development Strategic Plan (2022)
- Together We Are All-American Capital Improvement Program, Fiscal Years 2024 - 2028 (2023)
- Mesa Police Department Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028 (2023)
- Arizona Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum, and Mesa Arts Center Strategic Plans (Update Anticipated 2024)



# Tomorrow's Mesa Action Plan

Moving Forward Together: *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan* is the City's overarching policy document that provides a visionary framework to help guide decision-making about development, resource management, public safety, public services, and general community well-being for the next 10 to 20 years. However, because of the *General Plan's* comprehensive scope and its long-term outlook, it is important to define a set of priority actions to facilitate its implementation.

The City has developed an Action Plan to define a set of priority Actions the City will undertake to help facilitate the *2050 General Plan's* implementation. The Action Plan is an evolving tool that should be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect the City's accomplishments, available resources, and potential shifts in policy direction. Therefore, the Action Plan is a standalone policy document that accompanies the *Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan*.

Actions describe specific activities that help implement the *General Plan's* Strategies. In some cases, multiple Actions will be required to implement a particular Guiding Principle and its Strategies. Some of these Actions are already underway or reflect the continuation of ongoing City efforts and partnerships, while others represent movement in a new direction.



# General Plan Amendments

## GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS OVERVIEW

The *General Plan* is a dynamic document. It provides predictability for residents, developers, and policymakers about the City's long-term vision for the future. At the same time, the *General Plan* needs to be flexible enough to respond to changing conditions and should be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

*General Plan* amendments may be initiated by a property owner (other than text amendments to the *General Plan*) or the City through the City Council or City Manager. Amendments must conform to the requirements of A.R.S. §9-461.06, or as amended, and the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. There are generally three types of amendments to the *Mesa 2050 General Plan*:

- (1) Text Amendments which may only be initiated by the City through the City Council or City Manager; and/or
- (2) Changes to the Placetypes Map (Figure 4) that result in a change in a Placetype designation.
- (3) Changes to the Growth Strategy Map (Figure 5) that results in a change in a Growth Strategy designation.

### MINOR AND MAJOR AMENDMENTS

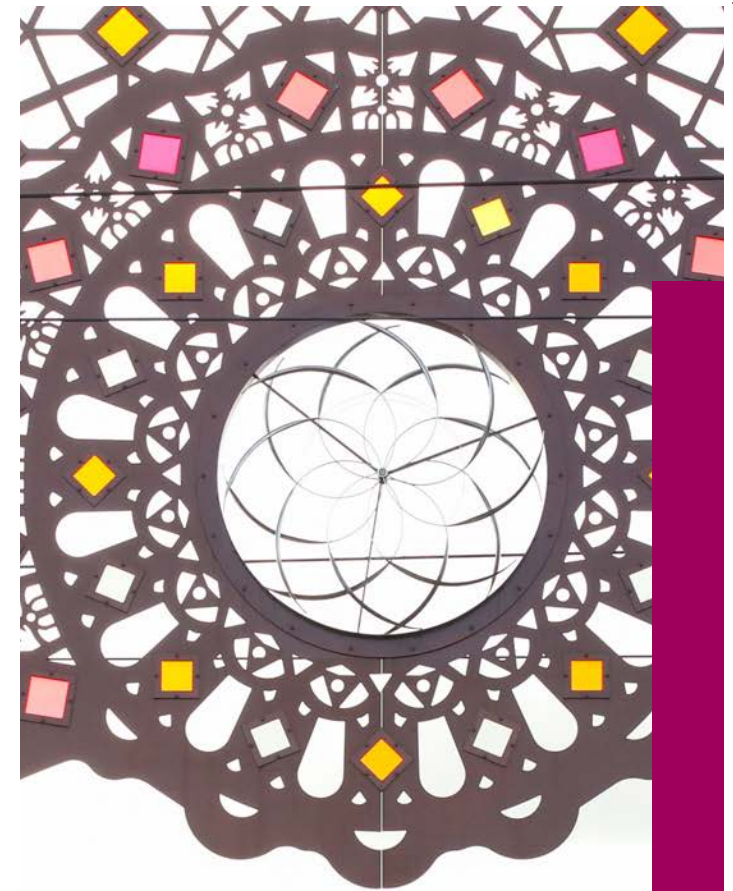
Amendments to the General Plan are either minor or major as identified below.

A **minor amendment** to the *Plan* is as follows:

- Changes from one Placetype to another Placetype that are marked as "minor" in Table 2. Placetype Change - Minor and Major Criteria; and/or
- Changes to the Growth Strategy Map (Figure 5); and/or
- Text amendments to the *General Plan*.

A **major amendment** to the *Plan* is as follows:

- Changes from one Placetype to another Placetype marked as "major" in Table 2. Placetype Change - Minor and Major Criteria; and/or
- Changes of over 40 acres from one Placetype to another Placetype.
- Any change not identified as a major amendment will be considered a minor amendment.



Tomorrow's Mesa 2050 General Plan





Table 2. Placetype Change - Minor and Major Criteria (Continued)

PLACETYPES - CHANGE FROM		PLACETYPES - CHANGE TO												
		Rural Residential	Traditional Residential	Mixed Residential	Urban Residential	Neighborhood Residential	Urban Center	Downtown	Regional Center	Local Employment Center	Regional Employment Center	Industrial	Parks and Open Space	
Downtown	<10 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	—	○	○	○	○	○
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	—	○	○	○	○	○
Regional Center	<10 acres	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	—	●	●	○	●	
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	—	○	○	○	○	
Local Employment Center	<10 acres	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	—	●	●	●	
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	—	●	●	○	
Regional Employment Center	<10 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	—	○	●	
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	—	○	○	
Industrial	<10 acres	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	—	○	
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	—	○	
Parks and Open Space	<10 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	—	
	10-40 acres	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	—	

● Minor General Plan Amendment

○ Major General Plan Amendment



## **AMENDMENT APPROVAL CRITERIA**

In determining whether to approve a proposed major or minor amendment, the City Council may consider the following factors:

1. Whether the proposed amendment will result in a shortage of land for other planned uses, such as, whether the change will result in a substantial and undesirable reduction in the amount of available land for employment or housing.
2. Whether events after the adoption of the General Plan have changed the character or condition of the area, making the proposed amendment appropriate.
3. The degree to which the proposed amendment will impact the whole community or a portion of the community by:
  - a. Altering acceptable existing land use patterns in a significant way that is contrary to the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Strategies identified in the General Plan.
  - b. Requiring larger or more extensive improvements to roads, sewer, or water systems than are necessary to support the prevailing land uses which may negatively impact development of other lands.
  - c. Adversely impacting existing uses due to increased traffic congestion that is not accommodated by planned roadway improvements or other planned transportation improvements such as nonmotorized transportation alternatives and transit.
4. Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Strategies of the General Plan.
5. Whether the proposed amendment constitutes an overall improvement to the General Plan and the City of Mesa.
6. The extent to which the benefits of the proposed amendment outweigh any of the impacts identified by these criteria.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS**

Changes to the General Plan that are not considered amendments may be made administratively under the direction of the City Manager. Administrative actions include:

- Correction of scrivener's errors;
- Correction of references and page numbers;
- Change in formatting;
- Addition of reference plans;
- Any change mandated by state law; and
- Revisions to the companion Action Plan.

## **CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL**

If City Council approves a rezoning, then the City Council has determined the rezoning is consistent with and conforms to the General Plan. No amendment (minor or major), separate determination, or other action related to the General Plan is required.





tomorrow's  
**mesa**  
*moving forward together*  
MESA GENERAL PLAN 2050