

Historic Preservation Board Retreat Meeting



Minutes

Alston House – 453 N Pima Mesa, AZ 85203
Date: January 10, 2026 Time: 9:00 am

MEMBERS PRESENT:

James Babos, Chair
Jocelyn Skogebo, Vice Chair
Bruce Nelson
BJ Parsons
Jessica Sarkissian
Jason Ludwig

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Lamont Slater

STAFF PRESENT:

Matthew Kriegl
Charlotte McDermott
Meg Eaton
Kellie Rorex

CITIZENS PRESENT:

Vic Linoff

(*Board members and staff participated in the meeting through the use of telephonic and audio conference equipment.)

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Babos called the meeting to order at 9:18 am and conducted roll call.

2. Guest Introductions*

Matthew Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer, welcomed the Board to the Alston House and thanked them for spending their Saturday at the retreat and then outlined the day's agenda. Kellie Rorex (Senior Planner) and Meg Eaton (City Archeologist) were both introduced.

3. Staff Presentations, Part 1

3-a. Presentation and discussion on the Mesa Historic Preservation Office 2025 accomplishments

Summary:

Matthew Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (see attachment 1)

Mr. Kriegl detailed the review and issuance of COAs and Section 106 Reviews. As well as work on the Neighborhood Story Maps, the Downtown Façade Projects, website updates, and new staffing.

In response to questions from Chair Babos, current & future solar panel and ADUs regulations in relation to historic districts were discussed amongst the group. Mr. Kriegl explained there are currently no restrictions on solar panels on historic homes, but they are usually placed at the rear of the house. He also stated the City is updating their ADU regulations. Since ADU's are often not visible from the street they do not need to match the house exactly.

Ms. Eaton shared her expertise and experience as well as her role as an Archeologist with the city. She discussed the Arizona Antiquities Act Reviews and Cultural Resource Assessments she has conducted. She will be working on standardizing the archeological review process for city projects. The challenges of coordinating with various agencies and organizations were highlighted by both Mr. Kriegl and Ms. Eaton.

3-b. Presentation and discussion on the Arizona Open Meeting Law

Summary:

Charlotte McDermott, Assistant City Attorney III, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (see attachment 1)

Ms. McDermott provided an overview of the Arizona Open Meeting Law, which requires all public bodies to conduct meetings openly and provide proper notices and agendas. She further discussed the rules for email communications, the importance of avoiding serial meetings, as well as best practices for social events and social media. She emphasized the need for public confidence in the system and the importance of open meetings.

3-c. Presentation and discussion on role, powers, and duties of the Historic Preservation Board as outlined within the Mesa City Code, Mesa Zoning Ordinance, and Historic Preservation Bylaws

Summary:

Matthew Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (see attachment 1)

Mr. Kriegl explained the main roles, powers, duties, and bylaws of the Historic Preservation Board as listed in the presentation.

Mr. Kriegl stated for historic preservation efforts to be successful there is a need for collaboration between the Historic Preservation Office, the Board, the Mesa Preservation Foundation, the public, and other city departments. The Historic Preservation Office advocates for historic preservation at a broader level and communicates to the city, while the Board and the Preservation Foundation focus on community-level advocacy. So, the Historic Preservation Office acts as a facilitator. He also discussed the challenges and opportunities within these Historic Preservation roles. This led to a larger discussion of the Board's role in creating a supplemental list. Specifically, about the Board's ability to approach property owners directly and how Historic Preservation can be and has been used as a "carrot" to encourage citizens to participate in historic programs such as building registration, creating historic districts, historic signage, neon signs, etc.

4. Break – NOTE: Charlotte McDermott and Boardmember Jessica Sarkissian left the meeting at the start of this break, approximately 11:00 am.

5. Staff Presentations, Part 2

5-a. Presentation and discussion on Historic Preservation Project Updates, including, but not limited to, city projects, historic landmarks and historic districts, archaeology, text amendments, and design guidelines

Summary:

Matthew Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (see attachment 1)

Mr. Kriegl began the presentation by explaining the city's ownership of the Alston House and the ongoing efforts to improve ADA compliance and find a use for the building. In response to Boardmember Nelson suggestion to convert the Alston House into a museum, Mr. Kriegl explained the constraints of grant funding and the potential for ADA compliance to be optional for historic buildings. The challenges of ADA compliance in historic buildings and the potential for alternative solutions were discussed.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 10, 2026 HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING

Ms. Eaton provided an update on the archeological project at the Serrine House and the removal of the modern porch.

Mr. Kriegl shared the idea of a Mesa Architectural History Story map to highlight different types of buildings. The challenges of working with consultants and the need for public engagement in the design guidelines were also discussed. Mr. Kriegl explained the process of consolidating text amendments and design guidelines to streamline historic preservation regulations.

Mr. Kriegl gave updates on the Downtown Façade Project and the challenges faced by Union Pacific Railroad in the PIRATE Project Section 106 review. The importance of archeological evaluations for city-owned properties and the need for public guidance in private development projects was discussed. Ms. Eaton and Mr. Kriegl discussed the potential for creating maps to indicate archeologically sensitive areas and the challenges of implementing these regulations.

5-b. Presentation and discussion on the 2026 Historic Preservation Workplan, including, but not limited to, cultural resources review, GIS maps, historic landmarks and historic districts, student art & essay contest, archaeology, and community / stakeholder outreach

Summary:

Matthew Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer, and Meg Eaton, City Archeologist, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (see attachment 1)

Mr. Kriegl highlighted the Historic Preservation Workplan and the following items were discussed:

- Ongoing efforts to preserve Buckhorn Baths and the challenges of working with the property owner and developers. The potential for landmarking the Buckhorn Baths and the importance of community engagement in preservation efforts was discussed.
- An application for an Urban Transformation grant to survey historic properties along Main Street was announced. The grant aims to leverage the historic significance of properties to attract investment and support preservation efforts.
- Mr. Kriegl noted the rising construction costs and the urgency of starting the urban garden and farm project.
- SHPO's regional meeting cancellation due to funding issues, with Mesa offering to host a future conference/meeting.
- The mayor and city council are planning to restore the clock on Main Street, which turns 100 years old in 2026, and has been unmaintained for almost three decades. The clock's historical context and its current state of disrepair were detailed and the possibility of including it as a historic sign under a new ordinance.

Ms. Eaton presented the following talking points on the Archeology Workplan:

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 10, 2026 HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING

- The 2026-2027 archeology work plan, focusing on three main goals: cultural resource compliance, stakeholder relationships, and strategic planning.
- The plan includes standardizing assessments for capital improvement projects, tracking archeological reviews, and creating a cultural resource geo database.
- The importance of fostering relationships with partner agencies and city departments, along with the need for a standardized outreach protocol.
- Strategic planning involves benchmarking with other municipalities, creating an archeological compliance training program, and public outreach initiatives.

Mr. Kriegl mentions the 2026 historic preservation student art and essay contest, encouraging participation. The conversation shifted to community outreach and updating existing materials, with a focus on the A250 and Fourth of July celebration. Ms. Rorex suggested involving other city groups in the art contest and wrapping it into the overall celebration.

6. Field Trip to tour the Washington-Escobedo neighborhood *

7. Lunch Break

8. Discussion Items

8-a. Identify and discuss Historic Preservation Board goals for 2026-2027

Chair Babos requested a discussion of the supplemental list be included on the next meeting's agenda. He requested Board members to come to the meeting with one or two suggested buildings for consideration. He mentioned the possibility of the Board designating a location for the city to install a descriptive sign, much like the one that stands in front of the Alston House.

Boardmember Nelson suggested recognizing people who have contributed to history, such as those involved in the arts and preservation. Board members agreed to recognize individuals at events like Preservation Month and Chair Babos mentioned involving students in the recognition process and using the 250th anniversary as an opportunity to recognize contributions.

Mr. Kriegl emphasized the importance of reinstating Preservation Awards to honor individuals and projects that contribute to preservation. Several nominees, individuals, groups and locations were discussed.

Mr. Kriegl encouraged engaging with the community through events and educational outreach to raise awareness about the role of the Board and preservation. Boardmember Nelson suggested connecting with the historical museum and other community organizations to promote preservation.

The importance of advocating for laws that protect historic districts from changes that could harm their character was discussed.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 10, 2026 HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING

The Board discussed the need for additional staffing, funds, and resources to support preservation efforts in the city. Boardmember Parsons suggested connecting with organizations like the Chamber of Commerce to help with historic preservation event promotions.

9. Items from citizens present **

Vic Linoff, of the Mesa Preservation Foundation, mentioned the upcoming opening of the Arizona Baseball Museum mid-February.

10. Adjournment

Chair Babos thanked Mr. Linoff for his contributions to historic preservations and the Board for their attendance and participation in today's retreat.

It was motioned by Boardmember Nelson, seconded by Boardmember Ludwig, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



James Babos
Historic Preservation Board Chair

* These items are not for Board discussion and no Board action will be taken on the items.

** The public may address the Board on any item. The Arizona Open Meeting Law (ARS § 38-431 et seq.) limits the Historic Preservation Board to discussing only those matters specifically listed on the agenda.

The City of Mesa is committed to making its public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. For special accommodations, please contact the City Manager's Office at (480) 644-3333 or AzRelay 7-1-1 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Si necesita asistencia o traducción en Español, favor de llamar al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión al 480-644-2767.

An audio recording of the meeting is available at www.mesa.gov.

Historic Preservation Board Retreat

Alston House
2026



Saturday, January 10, 2026



Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome Remarks
 - Board Chair Babos
- Mesa Historic Preservation Office
 - Matt Kriegl, Historic Preservation Officer
 - Kellie Rorex, Senior Planner
 - Meg Eaton, City Archaeologist

Retreat Overview

STAFF PRESENTATION ITEMS

- 2025 HP Accomplishments
- Arizona Open Meeting Law
- Roles, Powers, and Duties of HP Board

Break

- HP Project Updates
- 2026 HP and Archaeology Workplan

TOUR & LUNCH

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEM

- Specific HP Board Goals for 2026

QUESTIONS

ADJOURNMENT

Staff Presentation Items

Accomplishments

Accomplishments:

- COAs
- Section 106 Reviews
- Arizona Antiquities Act Reviews
- Cultural Resource Assessments
- Heritage Neighborhood Story Maps
- Downtown Façade Project
- Website Update
- New Staff



COAs and Section 106 Reviews in 2025

- **27** COAs reviewed (24 last year)
 - **23** COAs issued (21 last year)

COA Projects included: Solar Panels, Signage, Driveway Work, New Roof, Additions, ADUs, fences, and more

- **20** Section 106 Projects Reviewed (53)
 - **14** Section 106 reviews (37)
 - **6** Section 106 comments issued (16)



Staff Presentation Items

Accomplishments

Arizona Antiquities Act Reviews in 2025

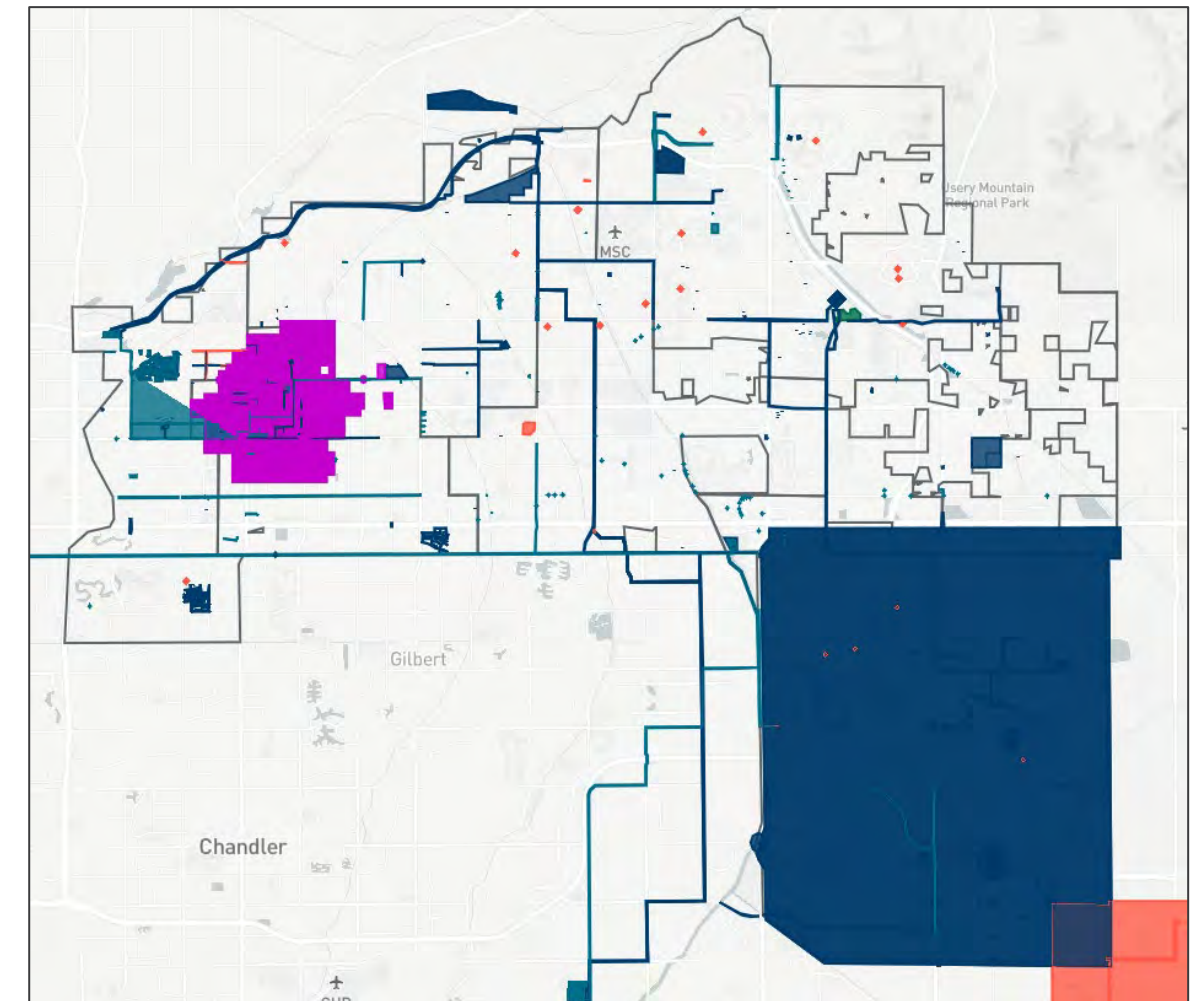
- 2 AAA Projects Reviewed
- 1 AAA comment issued

Projects included: Capital Improvement Projects, private development

City Cultural Resource Assessments

- 3 Project Areas Reviewed

Projects included: Conceptual utility design



Staff Presentation Items

Accomplishments



New Staffing

- City Archaeologist
 - Meg Eaton

City Archaeologist Role

- compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations
- archaeological reviews for developments on City property
- communicates with community groups and government agencies

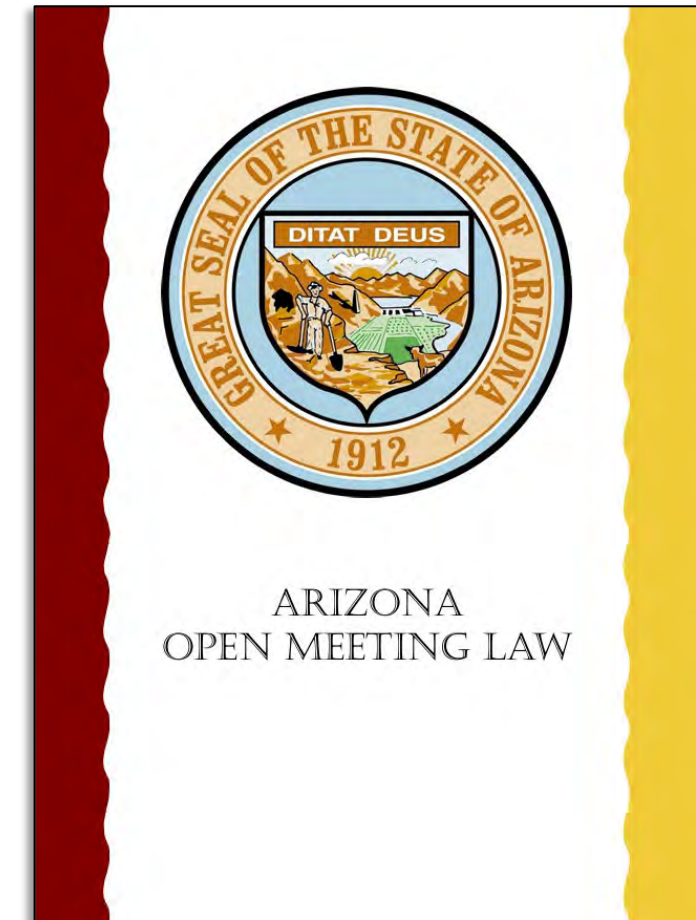
Arizona Open Meeting Law

Arizona Revised Statutes

Title 38, Chapter 4, Article 3.1

A.R.S. § 38-431.09

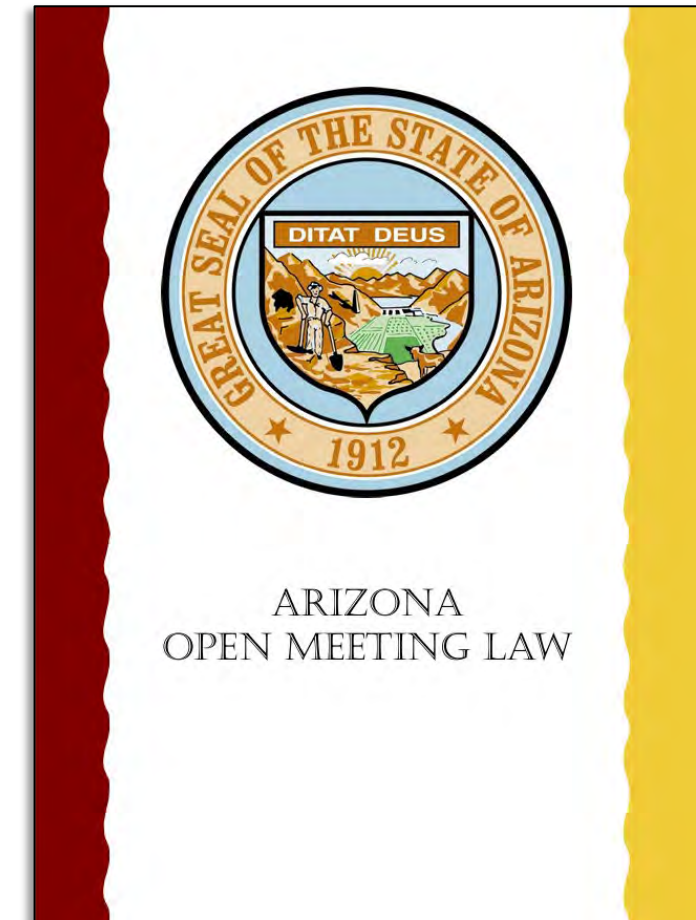
“It is the public policy of this state that meetings of public bodies be conducted openly and that notices and agendas be provided for such meetings which contain such information as is reasonably necessary to inform the public of the matters to be discussed or decided.”



Definition of a “Public Body” Under the Open Meeting Law

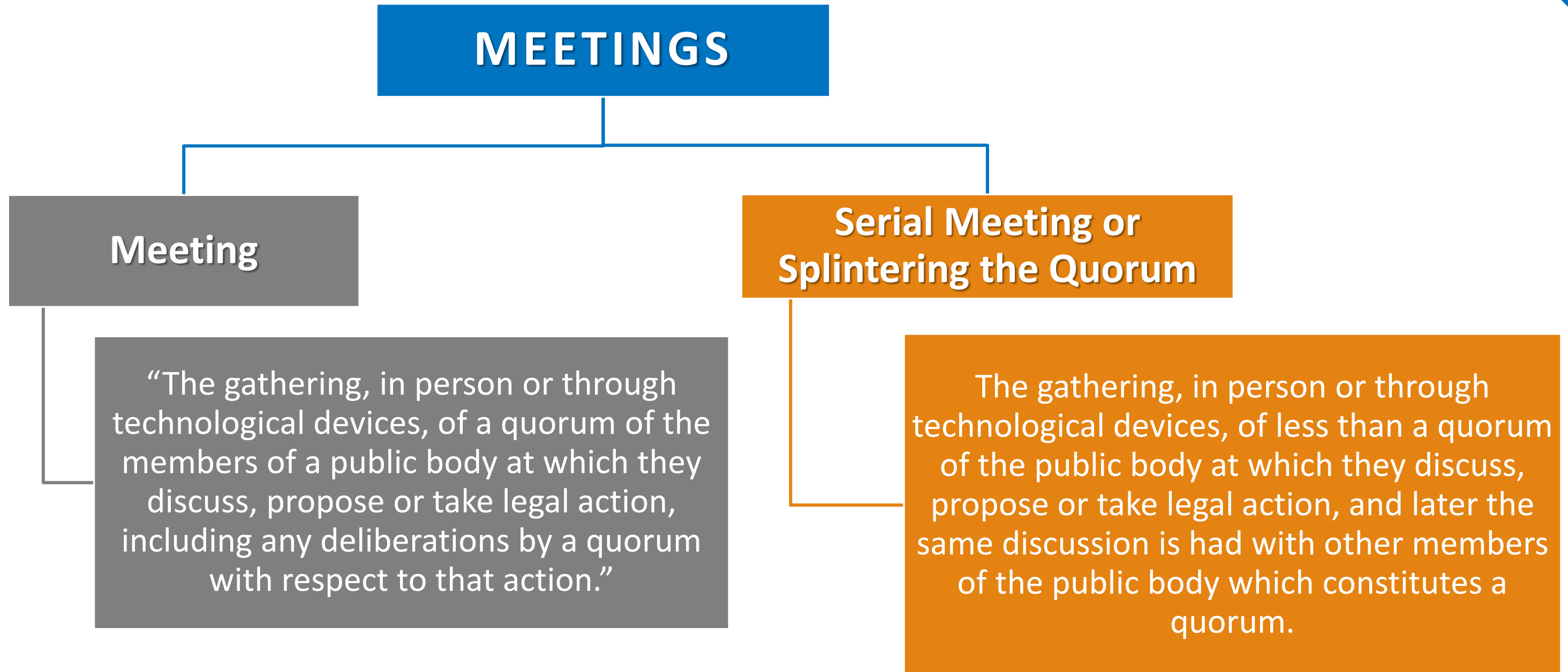
A.R.S. § 38-431

Public body means the legislature, all boards and commissions of this state or political subdivisions, all multimember governing bodies of departments, agencies, institutions and instrumentalities of this state or political subdivisions... Public body includes all quasi-judicial bodies and all standing, special or advisory committees or subcommittees of, or appointed by, the public body.



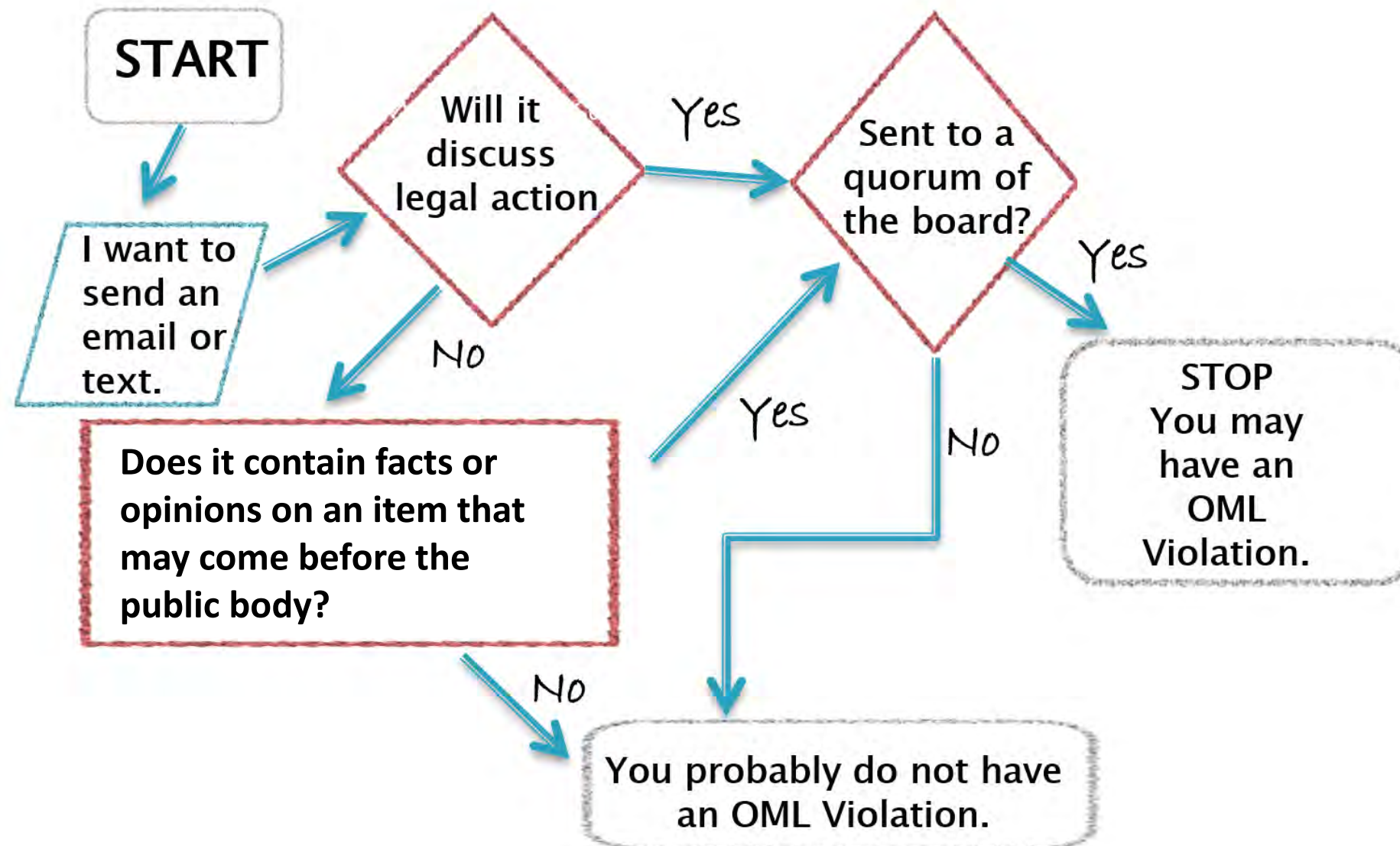
Staff Presentation Items

AZ Open Meeting Law



Best Practice: “assume the Open Meeting Law applies whenever a majority of the body discusses the business of the public body.”

Sending Emails or Texts



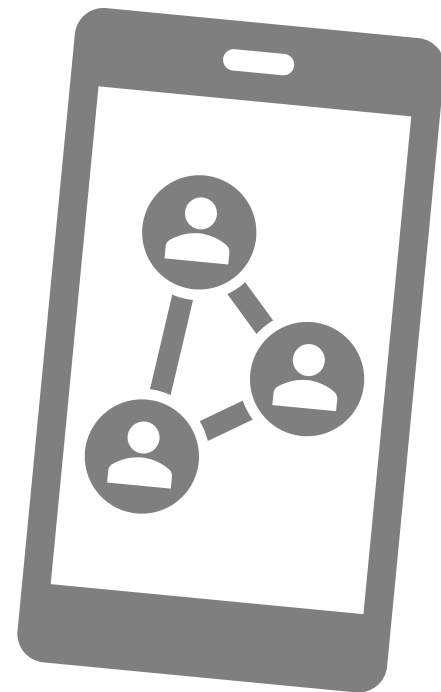
What About Social Events?

- If a quorum of the Historic Preservation Board is present at a social event, the board members cannot discuss any topic that may foreseeably come before the Historic Preservation Board.
- Best Practice: Do not discuss historic preservation business or items that may come before the Historic Preservation Board with other board members outside of a formal, noticed, and agendized meeting.

Staff Presentation Items

AZ Open Meeting Law

Social Media



A board member can express an opinion or discuss an issue with the public at a venue other than a meeting, through the media, other public broadcast communications or technological means if:

The opinion or discussion is not principally directed at or directly given to another member of the public body.

There is no concerted plan to engage in collective deliberation to take legal action.

Meeting Notice, Agenda & Minutes

- **Notice of the meeting must be posted and an agenda must be available 24 hours in advance or NO meeting can be held**
- **Notice must include:**
 - Date, Time, and Place
 - An agenda of the matters to be discussed or decided or information on how the public may obtain a copy
 - ✓ Agenda must list the specific matters to be discussed, decided, or considered.
- **Minutes must be taken and made available**



Staff Presentation Items

AZ Open Meeting Law

Can the Board Discuss Matters Not on the Agenda?

No, can only discuss or take action on items adequately described on the agenda and all discussions on the agenda item must be “reasonably” related to it.

Can the Board Respond to Questions or Comments from Citizens Present?

No. Open meeting law does not permit members to discuss matters raised during “Items from Citizens Present” unless the specific matter is properly noticed on the agenda.

Staff Presentation Items

AZ Open Meeting Law

Violations

Actions taken by the Board may be null and void

Attorney General or County Attorney may investigate

Potential Penalties

Civil penalty each violation

Removal of a board member if court determines intent to deprive and knowingly violates

Assess the board member with all costs awarded to the plaintiff.

May not spend public monies for legal counsel.

Staff Presentation Items

Roles, Powers, and Duties

Role of the Historic Preservation Board

Design Review

- Appeal body
- Updates to design guidelines

Historic Designations

- Designate properties for listing on the MHPR
- Ideas for future areas for designation

Help Maintain MHPR

- Educational outreach to historic property owners
- Resources for property owners – funding resources, handbook, website
- Demolition policy

Staff Presentation Items

Roles, Powers, and Duties

○ Powers and Duties

(A) **Review and make recommendations** on any matter or request or appeal that will appear on an agenda before the Downtown Development Committee or Planning and Zoning Board or City Council **involving sites nominated or approved for Historic Landmark (HL) or Historic Preservation (HP) overlay district, or other matters involving general historic preservation** issues as they pertain to Mesa.

(B) **Hold public hearings and make recommendations** to the Downtown Development Committee or Planning and Zoning Board on **requests for amendments to the zoning map and Zoning Ordinance regarding Historic Preservation (HP) overlay districts and designation of Historic Landmarks (HL)** within the corporate City limits.

Staff Presentation Items

Roles, Powers, and Duties

○ Powers and Duties

(C) Hear and decide appeals from the decisions of the Historic Preservation Officer regarding proposed development, renovation, additions, alterations, or demolition of buildings and structures or sites designated or nominated Historic Landmark (HL) or within Historic Preservation (HP) overlay districts for the purpose of deciding whether clearance for a building permit should be issued. The review shall be limited to building size, scale, exterior elevation, design, color, and appearance to assure compatibility with the historic character of the property, neighborhood, and environment.

(D) Establish and maintain the Mesa Historic Property Register and periodically conduct studies for the purpose of assessing the potential of buildings, structures, or areas for designation as historic sites or districts.

Staff Presentation Items

Roles, Powers, and Duties

○ Powers and Duties

(E) Hear and/or make recommendations to the City Council and periodically review guidelines to evaluate requests for development, renovation, alteration to historic districts, landmarks, and historic properties, or demolition of buildings and structures on sites designated as historic districts or historic landmarks. Such guidelines may include building location, minimum yard sizes, average heights, materials, color, architectural features, and other characteristics and cultural features found in the approved district.

(F) Hear and/or make recommendations to the City Council regarding acquisition by the City of structures or easements for maintenance or repair of structures for their preservation, where private preservation is not feasible.

(G) Hear and/or make recommendations on other matters as directed by the City Council.

Staff Presentation Items

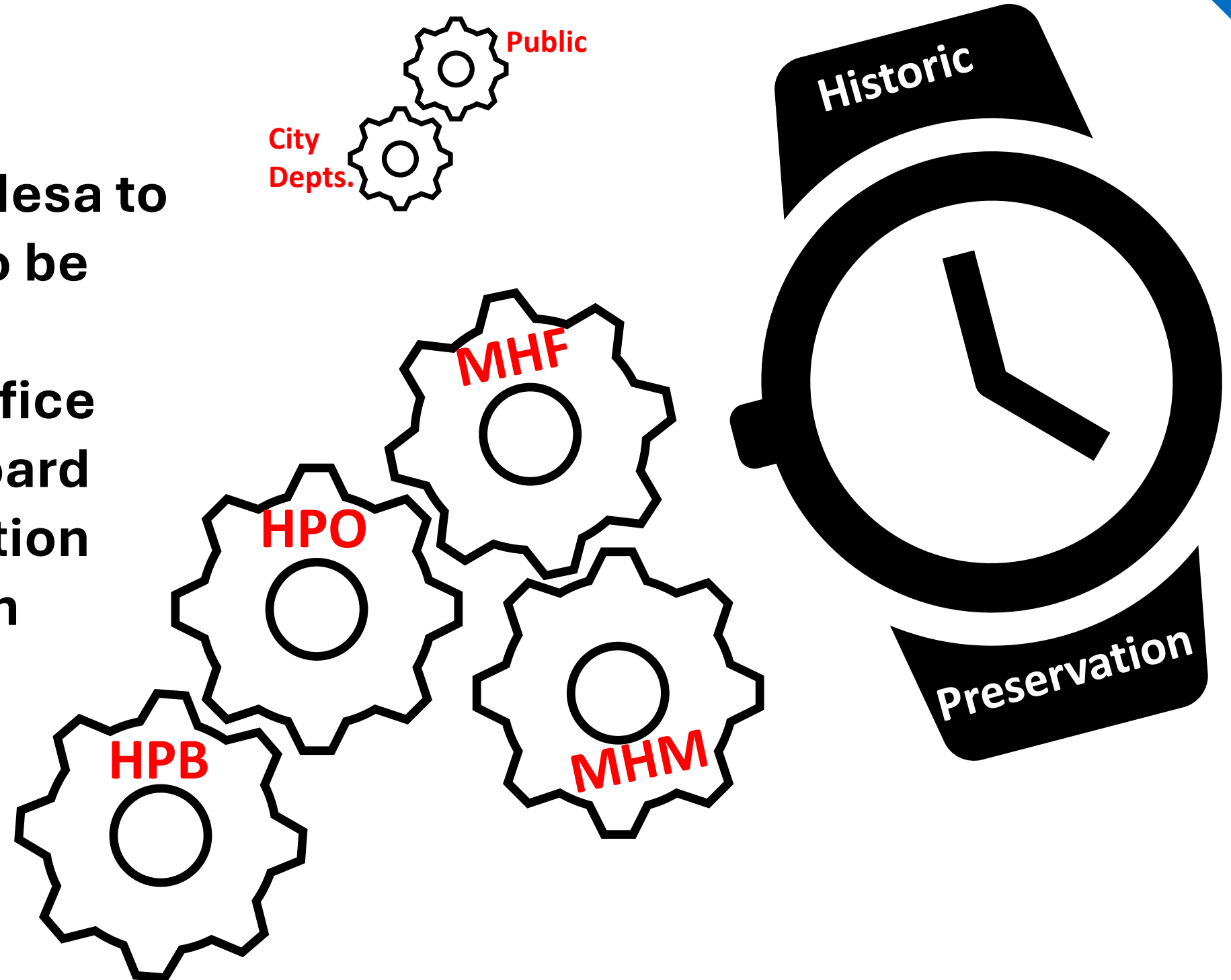
Roles, Powers, and Duties

Collaborative Efforts

For Historic Preservation in Mesa to be successful, there needs to be collaboration

- Historic Preservation Office
- Historic Preservation Board
- Mesa Historical Foundation
- Mesa Historical Museum

Additional support from the public and other City departments



Staff Presentation Items

Roles, Powers, and Duties

HPO acts as a Facilitator.

Successful Historic Preservation in Mesa means that the Staff and the Board must work together with the understanding that:

- **Staff can support the goals of the Board**
- **Staff can provide a forum for Historic Preservation activities**
- **Staff responsibility and process outlined in Mesa City Code**



HP Board Retreat – 2026 Break!

**BREAK
Time!**

2025-2026 HP Update:

- Alston House Project
- Sirrine House Project
- Archaeology Recap
- Lehi Story Map
- Washington-Escobedo Story Map
- HP GIS Map Updates
- LM Discrepancy Issue with SHPO



2025-2026 HP Update:

- Downtown Façade Project
- Historic LM Designation Discrepancy
- Mesa Architectural History Story Map
- PIRATE MOA
- Text Amendments
- Design Guidelines



Zoning Code Text Amendments

- Centralizes Historic Preservation within the Zoning Code
 - Streamlines this portion of the code
 - Combines HD and HL overlays into single HP overlay
 - Adds archaeology section
- Adds additional definitions pertaining to Historic Preservation

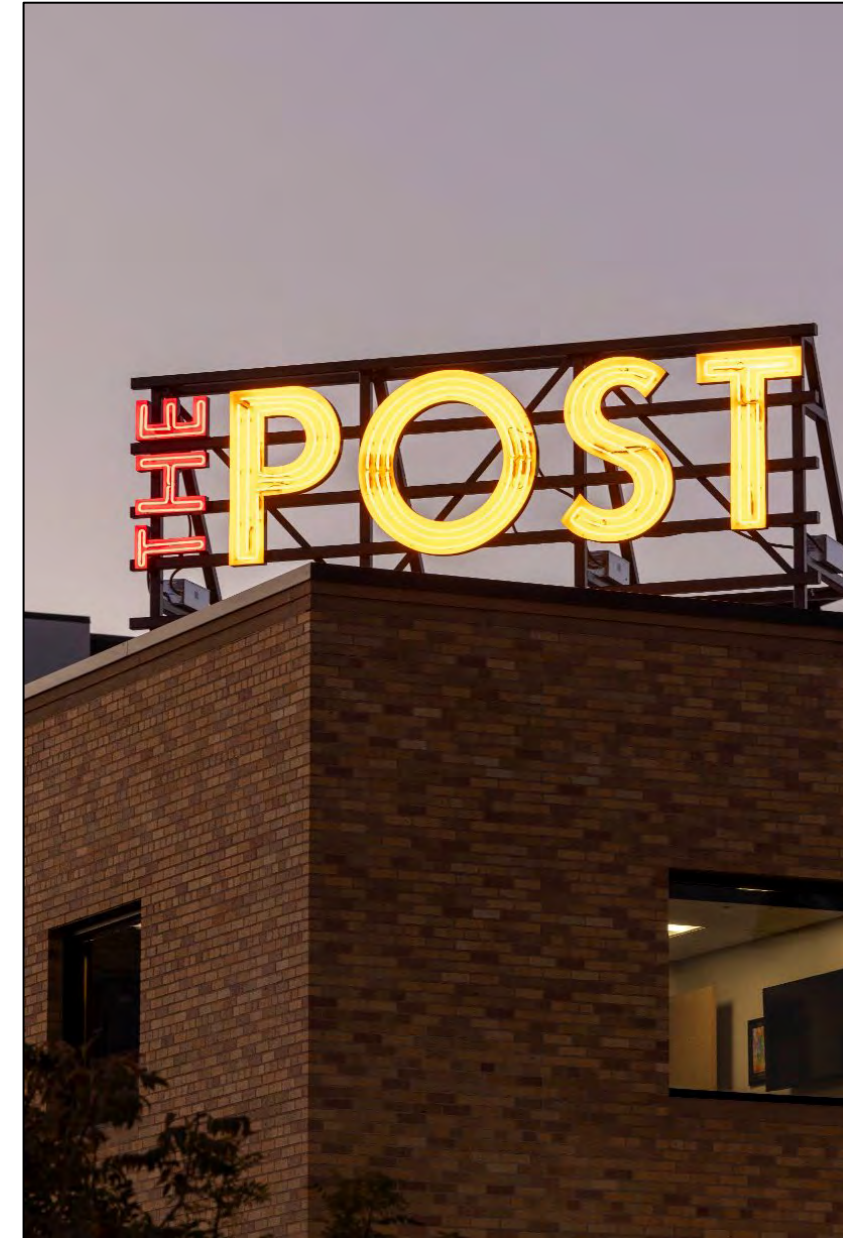


Design Guidelines

- Provide a framework for evaluating projects (COA).
- Decision-making tool for the Historic Preservation Office, the Historic Preservation Board, the Planning and Zoning Board, the Mesa City Council, and property owners.
- Support property owners, local professionals, architects, contractors, and City officials, in understanding how to preserve and enhance the unique qualities of these historic areas.

2026-2027 HP Workplan:

- Landmarking City Buildings
- Code Amendment Updates
- Design Guidelines
- Buckhorn Baths
- Alston House
- Student Art & Essay Contest
- Urban Transformation Grant
- Sirrine House Project
- SHPO Regional Meeting
- Main Street Clock
- Story Maps



Staff Presentation Items

HP Workplan

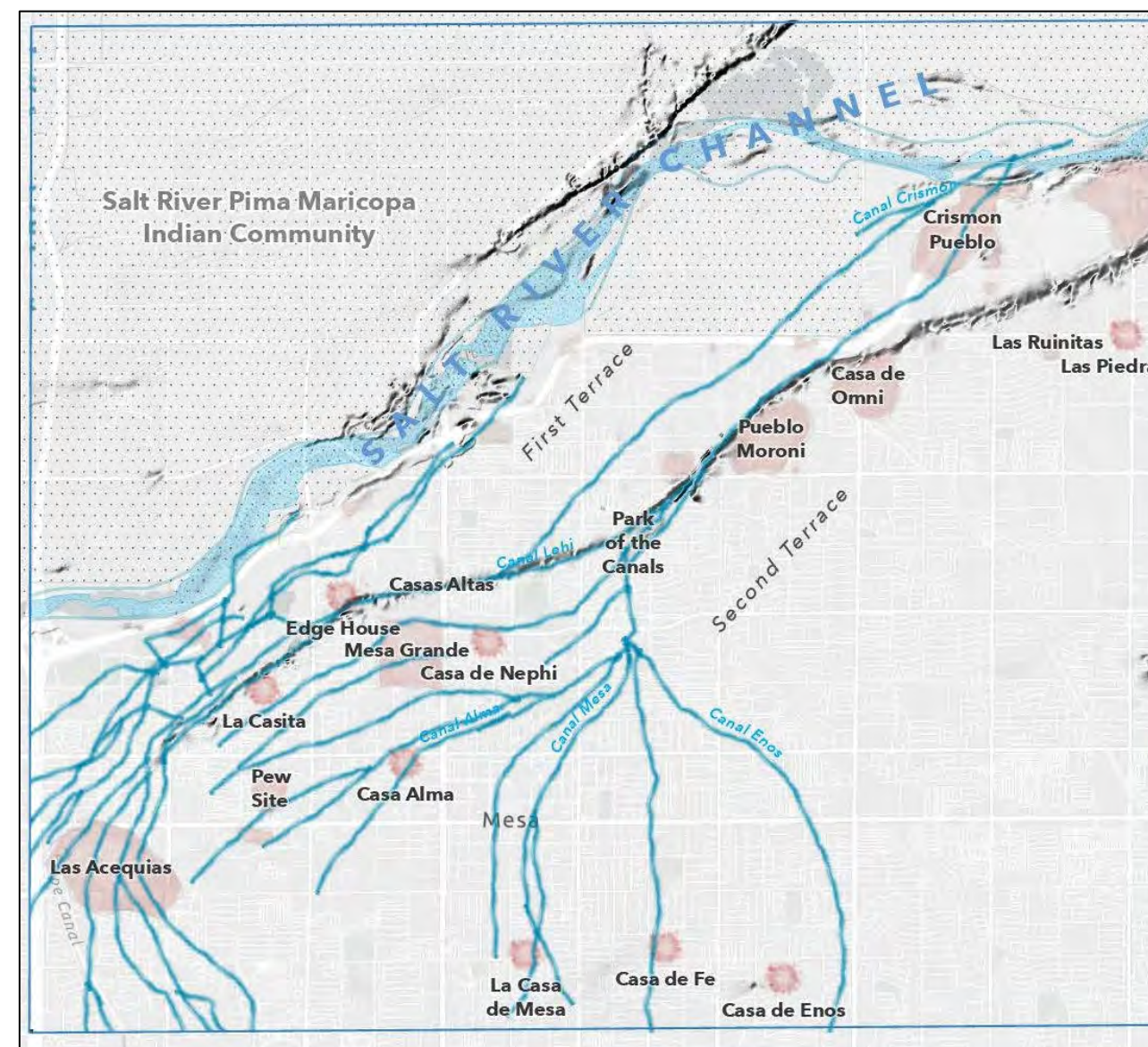


Staff Presentation Items

Archaeology Workplan

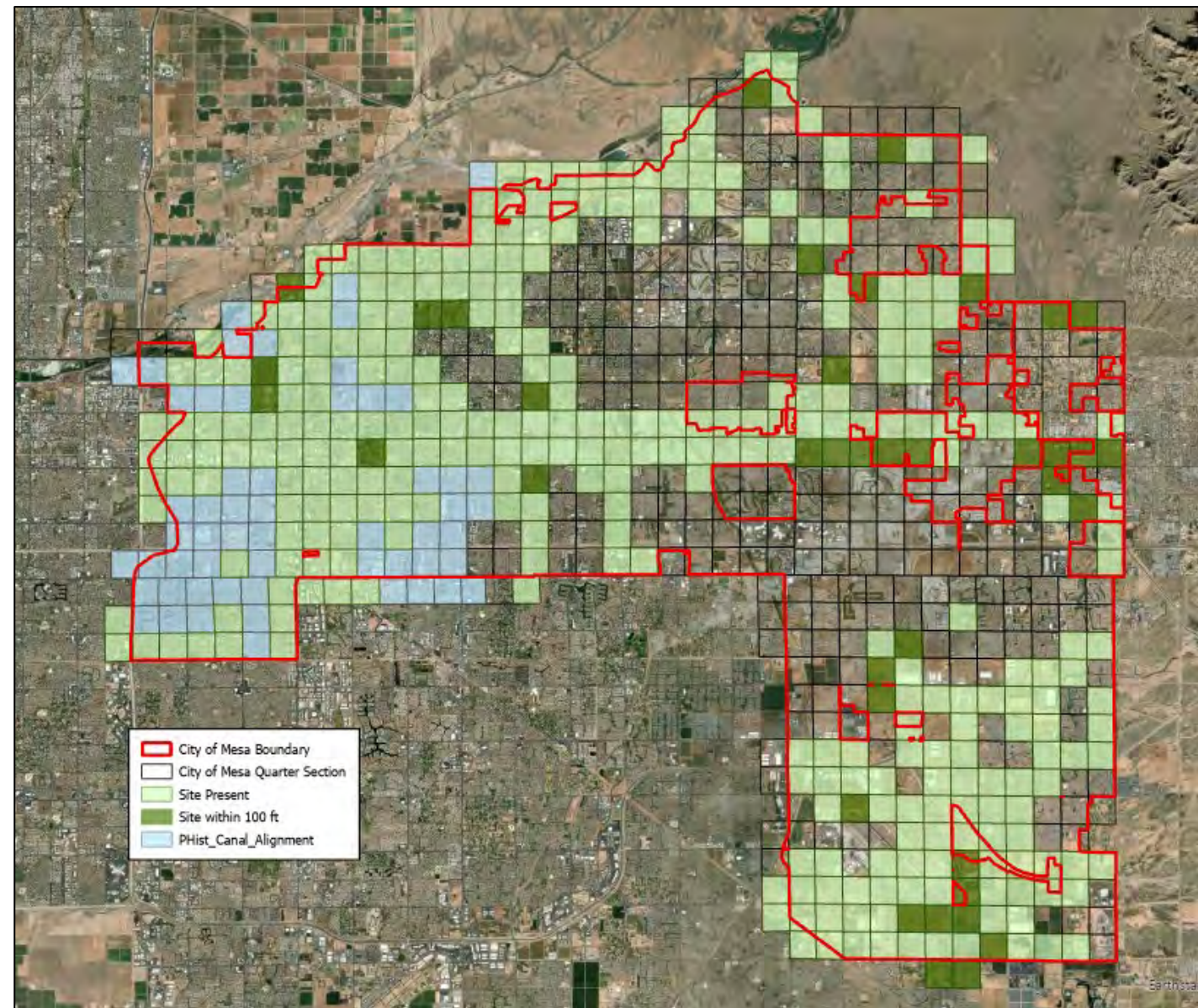
2026-2027 Archaeology Workplan:

- Cultural Resources Review
- Stakeholder Communication
- Strategic Planning



Strengthen Cultural Resources Compliance and Review

- Create cultural resource geodatabase and sensitivity mapping tool



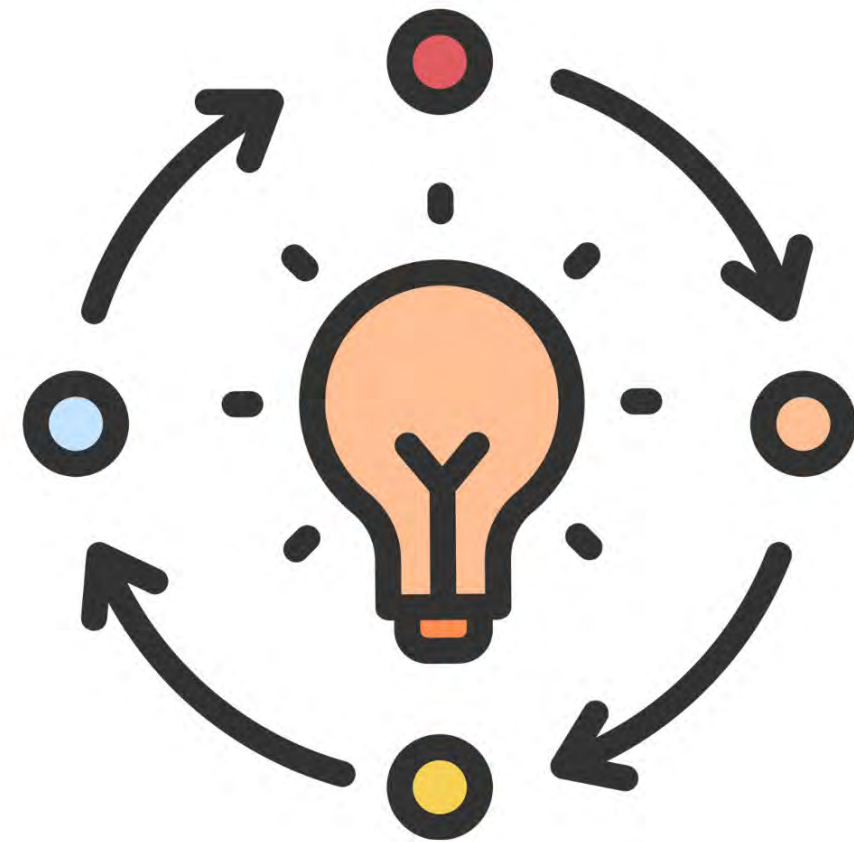
Foster Relationships with Stakeholders

- Line of communication with partner agencies
- Outreach protocol
- Text amendments to include Archaeological Resources



Strategic Planning for Long-Range Goals

- Municipal best practices & tools
- Compliance training
- Building internal partnerships
- Public education / outreach



2026 Historic Preservation Mesa Student Art & Essay Contest

*Celebrating National
Historic Preservation Month*

— PRESENTED BY —

The Mesa Historic Preservation Board

and

The Mesa Historic Preservation Office

All School-Age Residents Are Eligible To Apply!

Mesa students in Kindergarten through 12th grade are eligible for the arts contest. Mesa students in 4th through 12th grade are eligible for the essay and arts contest.

Entries Are Due By March 24, 2026

Awards will be given to students and teachers in each category for grades K-3, 4-6, and 7-12. To see full contest information, please scan the QR Code below.



2026 Historic Preservation Month Student Essay & Art ★ Contest ★

- Celebrating Mesa's history
- All Mesa students – Grades K-12 eligible
- Submission deadline: **March 24**
- New Group Project this Year!
- Prizes for all 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and group project

Staff Presentation Items

CLG & Community Outreach

In 1776, the United States declared independence!

- Much has been accomplished over these 250 years in the United States of America
- Highlights provided through the year
 - HPB meetings
 - 2026 Art and Essay Contest



Community Outreach

- Continue with Community Meetings
- Update existing HP materials (maps/guides)

HP Board Retreat – 2026

Auditorium Tour

**Field
Trip!**

HP Board Retreat – 2026

Lunch Time

**Time for
LUNCH!**

Historic Preservation Board Retreat

Alston House
2026



Saturday, January 11, 2025

HP Board Discussion

Final Thoughts

HP Board Retreat – 2026



Contact Info:

HistoricPreservation@mesaaz.gov

**55 N Center St
Mesa, AZ**

Adjournment

Historic Preservation Board Retreat

Alston House
2026



Saturday, January 10, 2026