

# MESA GENERAL PLAN 2050



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

ADOPTED BY MESA CITY COUNCIL JAN X, 2023



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## INTRODUCTION

Updating the City of Mesa 2040 General Plan is a significant undertaking for the City as it continues to experience unprecedented growth in the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. A thoughtful, well-planned public participation process ensures that the Vision set by the City is embraced by residents and business owners.

The Public Participation Plan developed as part of the Mesa General Plan 2050 Update (Update) guides the community outreach and engagement efforts through the duration of the project. The Public Participation Plan:

- Meets the Arizona regulatory requirements;
- Defines participation strategies;
- Identifies engagement tools and techniques; and
- Provides an anticipated timeline for implementation.

The Public Participation Plan will evolve as the General Plan is being updated, with tools and techniques being added to capture events and activities throughout the planning process to appeal to the greatest number of people in Mesa.

## GENERAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

A general plan lays out the long-term aspirations for a community and articulates its vision. The general plan guides the physical, economic, and social development decisions of community leaders, residents, and businesses over the upcoming ten years.

Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) 9-461.06 requires that a municipality readopt or update its general plan every ten years. Mesa's current general plan (The Mesa 2040 General Plan) was adopted and ratified by voters in 2014. The Update offers an opportunity to revisit and update the City's vision. With a clear Vision, Guiding Principles, Policies, and Actions, the City of Mesa can realize the aspiration: ***"moving forward together."***

ARS 9-461.06 requires that the governing body adopt a written public participation procedure that provides:

- The broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives;
- The opportunity for written comments;
- Public hearings after effective notice;
- Open discussions, communication programs and information services; and
- Consideration of public comments.



During the Update process, the City must also consult with, advise, and provide an opportunity for official comment by public officials and agencies, the county, school districts, associations of government, public land management agencies, other appropriate government jurisdictions, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, and other organizations, property owners and citizens.

This Public Participation Plan statutory requirement promotes meaningful and inclusive public participation that provides effective, early, and continuous participation from all geographic, ethnic, and economic areas within a municipality.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES

Public participation is an important part of an inclusive, comprehensive planning process. Meaningful public input provides valuable direction to inform the City's vision and is achieved by both listening and responding to the community.

The City has identified key strategies to guide the public input process for the Update. These strategies illustrate the City's commitment to a process that encourages input throughout the entire project timeframe. The key strategies include Inclusive Engagement, Innovative Use of Technology, and Seamless Coordination with Other City Plans In-Process. The tools and techniques are not exclusive to the strategy and will interweave. They are listed under but will weave together to create a comprehensive opportunity for residents to participate.

### INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

The City of Mesa believes that all residents have a voice that must be heard in preparing the Update. Everyone has a right and will be encouraged to participate in the Update process and Plan preparation.

The Public Participation Plan includes tools and techniques designed to solicit participation from a range of stakeholders. This includes using the following tools and techniques:

- **COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS:** A series of one-on-one and small group interviews with self-selected and/or selected community members. The purpose of these conversations is to listen to community members' perspectives on challenges and opportunities for Mesa and to set the foundation for the Update.
- **TRANSLATION:** Because nearly 30% of the City's residents are Hispanic/Latino, public notice, and materials will be available in both English and Spanish. Spanish interpretation services will also be available at all major outreach activities.
- **IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL EVENTS:** Activities and events will be held both in person and virtually at locations throughout the City's six City Council Districts to appeal to the greatest number of residents.
- **PLAN SHOWCASE EVENTS:** The City of Mesa will host community open house events to gain input on key topics during the Update. These events will be held across the City's six City Council districts.



- **CITY OF MESA NEWSLETTER AND UTILITY BILLS:** Project updates and “calls-to-action” will be included in City utility bills and newsletters that go out on the first of each month.
- **PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS (INCLUDING PRESS RELEASES):** Building on the look and feel of the website and social media communication, regular updates will be given, both in written and digital form, on the Update progress to increase awareness of the project and encourage engagement. Distributing information cards, flyers, newsletters, videos, press releases, swag, etc., at public events will help the City ensure that residents are aware of the Update. Local media news releases will also be used to advertise public events.
- **CONTACT/COMMENT CARDS:** Contact/comment cards will be available at in-person events for willing participants to share their email, general address (nearest street intersection), how they heard about the project, any written comments they wish to share on the Update, and for the City of Mesa to compile with online demographic responses.
- **ENGAGEMENT TRACKING TOOL:** Demographic and geographic information will be collected throughout the Update process to gauge participation. Using this information, and an engagement tracking tool, the City will be able to adjust engagement tools and techniques to target all groups and areas.

## INNOVATIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

While traditional in-person engagement methods will continue to play an important role in the Update, the use of technology is paramount to disseminate information and broaden outreach. The City of Mesa will use infographics, immersive 360-degree panorama images, renderings, and modeling to help the community better visualize the future that they envision.

Tools and techniques to be used include, but are not limited to:

- **ArcGIS STORYMAPS AND ArcURBAN:** The mapping and data collection tools will be used to encourage input on existing conditions and allow citizens to participate in scenario planning.
- **WEBSITE:** The public engagement activities, and all Update documents, will be provided online on the City’s umbrella website, [www.TomorrowsMesa.com](http://www.TomorrowsMesa.com). This site will host the Update and the in-process City Plans including the Balanced Housing Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Transit Master Plan, and Integrated Water Master Plan. The website will include information on events, including logistics, and all deliverables such as the draft and final plan. The City will collect feedback through interactive mapping, questionnaires, quick polls, etc. The website will be maintained by the City’s consultant and link with the website.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Social media notices will be used to help promote and solicit input throughout the planning process. Working with the City’s Public Information Officer, the City will post the various events to the City’s different platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Next-door, etc.) to advertise events for all to attend.



- **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES:** Four questionnaires will be developed in tandem with in-person events. Links to these questionnaires will be included in all printed and online materials. Questionnaires will be designed primarily for online engagement; however, questionnaires can also be made available in a printed form upon request.
- **URBAN LAB WORKSHOPS:** Staff and community members will lead technology-supported workshops in all six City Council districts to visualize and evaluate choices for different land uses across Mesa.

## SEAMLESS COORDINATION WITH OTHER CITY IN-PROCESS PLANS

While the Public Participation Plan meets the statutory requirements for the Update, the City of Mesa is providing a seamless public participation process for concurrent planning efforts. These in-process City Plans include the Balanced Housing Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Transit Master Plan, and Integrated Water Master Plan.

Public engagement (e.g., website, questionnaires, events, etc.) will be designed and executed in tandem with the Update to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in a coordinated and comprehensive discussion on the future of the City. Some tools and techniques to be used include, but are not limited to:

- **INFORMATION BOOTH EVENTS:** Information booths will be set up at events in all six City Council Districts to share information and seek public input. These booths will include information on the City Plans in the process of being updated, including the Update.
- **SPEAKER PANEL EVENT:** Moderated panel events for community members to learn about present trends and opportunities in Mesa will take place during the Update process. Topics/speakers will be chosen in consultation with the City and General Plan Advisory Committee. The events will be livestreamed and/or available on the website to offer opportunities for those who could not attend to learn and participate.
- **BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS:** Throughout the Update, City staff will attend various Board, Commission, and City Council meetings. Progress updates will be provided, and various input solicited throughout the planning process. ARS requires two public hearings before for the Planning and Zoning Board and one public hearing before City Council for adoption of the Plan prior to the citizen vote. These hearings will be noticed and open to the public as required by the Arizona Open Meetings Law and will provide the opportunity for the public to make comment.
- **CELEBRATORY EVENT:** The City of Mesa will invite citizens to join City Board, Commission, and Council members in a virtual event to celebrate the completion of the Update and other City Plan updates.



## PROJECT BRANDING

Attractive and engaging branding will be used for all communication materials used throughout the Update process and for all in-process City Plans. The City created two taglines and logos to be used during the Update process. During the public engagement process of the Update and concurrent plan updates, the tagline, “Tomorrow’s Mesa: Planning Our Future” and logo will be used. The logo provides a unifying, recognizable brand and messaging for the Plans being completed by the City. Once public engagement for the plan updates is complete, the “Tomorrow’s Mesa: Moving Forward Together” logo will be used for the Mesa General Plan 2050 document.



## PROJECT TEAM AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Human capital is one of the most important tools the City can use to ensure participation in and buy off from the community on the Update. Several teams have been assembled to guide the Update process, to provide technical expertise, and represent the interests of the City. These groups include a Project Team (PT), a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), as well as the Community At Large.

### PROJECT TEAM

The Project Team (PT) includes City of Mesa staff that will provide technical expertise and support throughout the Update process. The PT will review and comment on all deliverables for the Update as they are prepared. The PT will guide the direction of the Plan and supplement the technical expertise needed to ensure the Update reflects the needs of the City of Mesa.

PT members will assist with event logistics, including but not limited to venue reservations, support staff, audiovisual equipment, printing, digital communication, food, and beverage, etc. The PT will participate in biweekly coordination meetings as needed, and support the consultant with community interviews, event logistics, notification, and facilitation.



Members of the PT include:

Project Team	
Nana Appiah	Development Services Department Director
Michelle Albanese	Housing Director
Mary Kopaskie Brown	Planning Director
Rachel Nettles	Assistant Planning Director
Jeff Robbins	Senior Economic Development Project Manager
Kellie Rorex	Senior Planner

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is a working group composed of City staff that will provide technical input as the subject matter experts. TAC members will review and comment on the content of the Update as it is prepared. TAC members will also participate individually in technical interviews, plan audits, questionnaires, and public events. The following are members of the TAC:

Technical Advisory Committee	
Michelle Albanese	Housing Services Director
Jodi Sorrell	Transit Services Director (Transit Master Plan Project Manager)
Andrea Moore	Parks Recreation and Commercial Facilities Director
Spencer Taylor	Senior Civil Director (Integrated Water Master Plan Project Manager)
Mary Kopaskie-Brown	Planning Director
Rachel Nettles	Assistant Planning Director
Jeffrey Cutler	Mesa Police Commander
Laura Hyneman	Deputy Director of Environmental Management and Sustainability
Illya Riske	Deputy Director of Arts and Culture
Jeff McVay	Manager of Downtown Transformation
Andrea Alicoate	Equity and Special Projects Manager
Elyce Gobat	Economic Development Project Manager
Jeff Robbins	Senior Economic Development Project Manager (General Plan Project Manager)
Sabine King	Supervising Engineer (Transportation Master Plan Project Manager)
Kellie Rorex	Senior Planner
Cheryl Landvatter	Senior Budget Analyst
John Petrof	Energy Resources, Senior Fiscal Analyst
Julie Bigler	Management Assistant II -Fire & Medical





## GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GPAC)

The General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) is a City Council appointed Committee who represent a diverse cross-section of the City of Mesa and will work with staff and the public to guide and advise the Update. The GPAC will review and provide input on the content of the Update as it develops and to ensure it is consistent with City policies, coordinated with in-process City Plans, and reflects the community's values. GPAC members will assist with community engagement activities and serve as Catalysts to promote participation in the Update process. The following are members of the GPAC:

General Plan Advisory Committee	
Sarah Frechette	Housing and Community Development Board
Jessica Sarkissian	Planning and Zoning Board
Jocelyn Skogebo	Historic Preservation Board
Ron Williams	Human Relations Board
Megan Neal	Transportation Advisory Board
Scott Thomas	Design Review Board
Ivonne Garcia- Rodriguez	Community Member

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND INTEREST GROUPS

All community members and interest groups will be invited to participate throughout the Update process. The following is a preliminary and broad list of community groups that City of Mesa staff and consultants will engage during the Update. This list will be augmented and refined as the planning process evolves and additional groups are identified.

Community Groups		
City Elected Officials, Boards, and Commissions	Chambers of Commerce	Major Businesses / Employers
State, Federal, County, and other Local Agencies	Special Districts and Utilities	Large Landowners and Major Developers
Educational Institutions	Non-Profit Groups	Youth Groups
Health Organizations	Sports & Cultural Facilities	Ethnic Groups
Airports	Faith-Based / Charity Groups	HOAs/Retirement Communities

## COMMUNITY CATALYSTS

Early in the Update process, all members of the community will be given the opportunity to self-select to become Community Catalysts. A key strategy to engage under-represented groups will be to identify these Community Catalysts. Community Catalysts are those community members willing to take on a greater role to assist in reaching out to their networks, provide information to their community and garner input on the Update. Community Catalysts serve as a familiar bridge between the planning process and community groups.



## PROCESS AND TIMING

The Update process was initiated in November 2022 and has an anticipated completion date of June 2024. Following City Council adoption of the Plan in Summer 2024, the Update will be placed on the November 2024 election ballot for ratification by the citizens of Mesa.

There are several key stages in the Update process that are summarized in the diagram below:



Through the twenty-month process, residents will have various opportunities to participate in the planning process. The Public Participation Plan will be updated to include specific dates, times, and venues, and each public event will be broadly and legally noticed. Generally, public participation events and activities will coincide with the key stages of the Update process shown above and follow the time periods included below.

### COMMUNITY CONTEXT | January - February 2023

During the community context stage, conversations with the community, via one-on-one/small group interviews, informational booths, and an online questionnaire, will occur. Depending on participant preferences, interviews will take place in person (with an option to join online/by phone) at accessible locations across the City's six City Council Districts. The online questionnaire will replicate questions asked at the listening sessions. This stage offers the community opportunities to get involved, share what they love about Mesa, and learn about ways to stay engaged throughout the process.

- Planned Activities and Events:
  - TAC / GPAC Meetings
  - Community Conversations
  - Online Questionnaire
  - Informational Booths
  - City Council Work Session



## VISION SETTING | February - March 2023

During the vision setting stage, feedback from community conversations and questionnaires will be used to engage residents and elected officials in discussion on a shared vision for the city. This includes obtaining comments on a draft vision statement and identified opportunities and challenges. Developing a strong shared vision for Mesa (e.g., one that responds and represents how the community wants to be in the future) ensures that policies and programs are shaped by and for the community.

- Planned Activities and Events:
  - TAC /GPAC Meetings
  - Online Questionnaire
  - Information Booth Events
  - Planning and Zoning Board/City Council Work Sessions

## CHOICES AND PRIORITIES | April - October 2023

During this portion of the Update process, the community will have the opportunity to participate in workshops with immersive 3-D and virtual images to better visualize and evaluate choices for different land uses across Mesa. Additionally, the City will host a panel event to educate and excite the community about key trends, issues, and opportunities. Results from this stage will inform the policies and actions developed for the Update.

- Planned Activities and Events:
  - TAC / GPAC Meetings
  - Speaker Panel Event
  - Online Questionnaire
  - Urban Lab Workshops
  - Planning and Zoning Board/City Council Work Sessions

## DRAFT PLAN | December 2023 - February 2024

While drafting the Plan, the City will present concepts and content for the key elements (e.g., chapter sections, the future land use map, implementation actions, etc.). As with other outreach stages, participants will be able to join events in person or online. The beginning of this stage also launches the ARS required 60-day review. Results from this stage will include documentation of how public comments were addressed.

- Planned Activities and Events:
  - TAC / GPAC Meetings
  - Online Questionnaire
  - Plan Showcase Events



## COUNCIL REVIEW AND FINAL APPROVAL | April - May 2024

At this time in the process, most of the community engagement will be complete. Community members will have the opportunity to review and share thoughts on the Final Draft Plan. Review will also take place at both Planning and Zoning Board Hearings and City Council Hearing. The Update adoption is anticipated in late May 2024. ARS requires at least 120 days between Council adoption and the public vote, which will be in early November 2024.

- Planned Activities and Events:
  - Virtual Celebratory Summit
  - Planning and Zoning Board Hearings
  - City Council Hearing