

# GENERAL PLAN

## ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY



for mesa  
**2018**

# GENERAL PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Development of the *Mesa 2040 General Plan* began in 2012. A citizen Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) was appointed to work with staff in the development of the plan. The City Council approved the *Mesa 2040 General Plan* in June 2014 and the voters adopted it in November 2014.

Input received from a variety of sources led to establishment of three guiding principles for the *General Plan* and for development activity in Mesa over the next 10 years.

THOSE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE:

- Creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods
- Growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs
- Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural resources

## 2018 NEIGHBORHOOD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Planning

The Planning Division processed 21 residential final plats in 2018 resulting in City Council approving an additional 1,946 lots in Mesa. These plats have ranged from small infill parcels to large developments such as Cadence and Eastmark.

### Downtown Mesa

Located in the heart of the city, Downtown Mesa is quickly becoming an area of innovation and offers a wealth of opportunities for business owners, consumers, and art and music enthusiasts alike. In addition to offering a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere and miles of light rail, Downtown Mesa is host to many high-profile events that entertain and inspire the young and young-at-heart.

The light rail extension has brought a lot of interest and activity to downtown, improved the connectivity of the downtown area and invigorated the need for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) surrounding the light rail stations.

Downtown Mesa witnessed the growth of two existing Mesa-made businesses in 2018. Restaurants, Worth Takeaway, expanded their dining area into the adjacent suite and Cider Corps not only expanded their production space, they also added Myke's Pizza inside their taproom. These two businesses have substantially brought many more visitors to the area.





## Infill and Redevelopment

Fiesta Village has, for many years now, struggled both economically and visually in the City of Mesa. However, WM Grace Companies has been approved to develop a mixed-use project with a blend of retail, restaurant, and multi-family uses that will better fit in the area and create a synergy that will help sustain the area for years to come. The intent of the mixed-use development is to provide convenient retail services to the residents in the neighborhood and bring employment and new commercial opportunities to the immediate area. The retail component includes four retail pads consisting of 20,500 square feet. The multi-resident component includes a gated community with 220 units and several amenities. This project is anticipated to help revive the Fiesta Village District and provide economic opportunities in the area.

## Neighborhood Planning & Revitalization

Washington Park area is an older neighborhood in Mesa. The initial development of this neighborhood occurred in the early 1900s as the place for minority residents. This neighborhood developed outside the City of Mesa and was annexed into the City in 1930 as one of the first expansions of the City’s original boundaries. Property owners and residents in this neighborhood have actively worked over the last several years to preserve and maintain their neighborhood. This resulted in the development of a “Quality of Life Plan” to guide their preservation efforts and maintain the historic nature of the neighborhood. Due to the number of vacant lots, the number of newer homes that have been built, the modifications to older homes, and some homes that are in a state of disrepair, utilizing standards for a typical historic district could not properly address the needs and goals of the neighborhood. Therefore, the City employed the use of the Infill Development (ID) District that allowed for the creation of a district that specifically met the needs of the area to maintain its historic fabric while allowing appropriate infill and redevelopment.



## Employment Districts

Grande Vita, a medical, commercial and residential, mixed-use campus development located in the Superstition/Power Road Economic Activity Area, was approved in 2018. The Superstition/Power Road Economic Activity Area is one of the four main employment activity areas in the city. The area focuses on expanding medical services and other employment opportunities associated with the Loop 202 and US 60 Freeway. The approved plans for the Grande Vita campus include seven new buildings, including two medical office buildings, a hotel, a nursing school, two restaurants and a residential tower. The three main buildings, a medical office building, the residential tower and the nursing school, are located in the middle of the property and are connected by two elevated pedestrian walkways that allow residents and guests to travel between the buildings without having to walk through the drive aisles and parking areas. This type of pedestrian connection will be very unique to the area. The buildings also offer designs that are unique to the area. Instead of more traditional forms, the buildings feature a curvilinear design and include design enhancements such as green roofs and several water features.



## 2018 JOB GROWTH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Business Climate

Over the course of the 2018 calendar year, Mesa's Office of Economic Development (OED) identified 39 attraction, expansion and retention efforts throughout the City of Mesa. These 39 projects resulted in nearly 1,300 jobs created and/or retained and approximately \$65 million in total annual payroll generated.

- Business Locates/Retentions 39
- Jobs Created/Retained 1,300
- Total Annual Payroll Generated ~\$65 million
- Total Capital Investment ~\$78 million
- Total Square Footage Created/Absorbed 1.9 million SF

### Redevelopment Areas

The Mesa Office of Economic Development's mission is to enhance Mesa's economy by promoting a culture of quality, supporting the creation of quality jobs, promoting direct investment, increasing prosperity, and improving life for our residents. To fulfill this mission and maximize development opportunities in Mesa's more established areas, the City has formally established four Redevelopment Areas (RDA) to promote revitalization of those areas and attract investment. Specifically, in October 2018, the East and West Redevelopment Area Plans were approved by City Council.

The West RDA is a unique and iconic destination attracting residents and visitors because of its safe, live-work-play environment. The area features distinguished educational and job training institutions that support a growing employment base with innovative, high-wage industries, which are accessible from across the region through three major freeway corridors and the light rail system.

## Opportunity Zones

Working with the Governor's Office and the Arizona Commerce Authority, 11 census tracts within the city were approved as Opportunity Zones by the U.S. Department of Treasury. This federal program is meant to spur investment in low-income areas by providing tax benefits to investors who reinvest capital gains into Opportunity Zones.

## Higher Education

Mesa City Council took action in 2018 to bring Arizona State University (ASU) programs and classes downtown with construction of a new higher education facility in the heart of Downtown Mesa. Along with the ASU building, the City is designing Mesa City Center as part of a burgeoning downtown innovation district.

LaunchPoint, Mesa's technology incubator, is located within Mesa's Center for Higher Education (MCHE). This city-owned facility is a 42,000 square foot building which also houses Benedictine University business and lab classes. LaunchPoint provides companies, startups, and solopreneurs a place to work and grow their business. LaunchPoint's current participants are tech, web, mobile, SaaS, and professional services businesses. In 2018, the City upgraded infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing number of Benedictine students and Launchpoint clients. Launchpoint continues to be an enticing option for growing businesses.



## Phoenix-Mesa Gateway

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prides itself on its innovative ideas to accelerate business growth and development. SkyBridge Arizona, a recently announced master-planned development, is situated on 360 acres at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. This development will include the nation's first international air cargo hub with both Mexican and United States customs. The Unified Cargo Processing Program (UCP), a joint effort between United States Customs and Border Protection and Mexican Customs will streamline the movement of goods between Mexico and the United States. SkyBridge Arizona will have sufficient available space and plans to build-to-suit specifically for projects invested in the area.

To round out some of the major accomplishments of 2018 in the Gateway District, VIVO Partners started the process with the Planning Department for a new mixed-use destination located on 40 acres southeast of the 202 Freeway and Power Road called Gallery Park. This project brings office space, luxury housing, entertainment, restaurants, and shopping to the region. Expected to be home to more than 3,000 employees and residents, this development plans to be a social destination focused on placemaking.

## 2018 PUBLIC SPACES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Public Spaces

In 2018, Mesa voters approved a \$196 million Bond Program. to allow the City to pay for major capital investments having a public purpose, such as public safety facilities, as well as quality of life enhancements related to libraries, parks and recreation, and cultural facilities.

### Arts & Culture

In 2018, the Arts and Culture Department continued to provide extraordinary programs while increasing access and engagement for Mesa and Valley residents, and for visitors. Mesa's cultural institutions sustained high levels of participation, and grew the reputation of Mesa as a community devoted to creativity and innovation.



Total visitation to the three City-owned Arts and Culture venues in calendar year 2018 was over 673,000, a 4.4% increase over calendar year 2017.

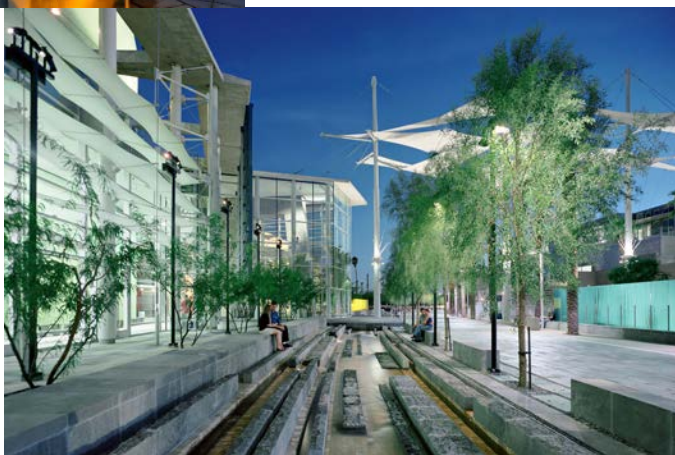
The Arts and Culture Department continued its strong relationships with numerous community and educational partners to create opportunities for our citizens, including local colleges/universities and school districts, especially ASU and Mesa Public Schools, as well as with Benedictine, Mesa Community College, and many other K-12 districts/schools. The department continues to provide well over one hundred thousand services to K-12 schoolchildren each year.

## Fantastic Planet

In May of 2018, Phoenix hosted the national convention of the American Alliance of Museums. Mesa was the site for one of the large opening night parties, held as a progressive dinner at all three downtown Mesa arts and culture venues. For that occasion and as an exciting temporary art installation for the regional community, Mesa Arts and Culture hosted a nine-day installation of Fantastic Planet, featuring six giant inflatable sculptures of humanoid figures on buildings throughout downtown. Many free public events were held during the nine days, and the community participated in the project in large numbers, with thousands of visitors enjoying the temporary public art.

## Mesa Arts Center (MAC) Strategic Plan

During 2018, Mesa Arts Center (MAC) completed work on a new strategic plan that will guide its activities for the coming three years. While a process is not yet in place for creating a Community Cultural Plan, the strategic planning work of both MAC and i.d.e.a. Museum, provided insight into community interests, needs and desires, laying the groundwork for a future community-wide cultural planning processes. The Department continues to explore cultural planning processes used in other cities to identify the best practices for application to Mesa's needs.

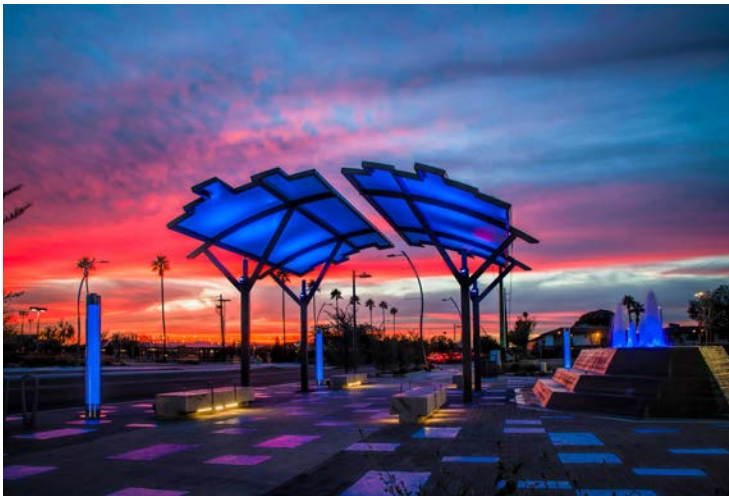


# PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Many departments throughout the City of Mesa are playing a role in the General Plan implementation. Chapters 8-14 of the General Plan outline the goals, policies and strategies involving City Departments. The highlights of the goals and policies include:

## Police & Fire

- Police Communications focused on staffing the Center to meet standards of answering 911 calls within 20 seconds. Communications installed a new non-emergency alarm to better serve citizens reporting a delayed incident or an inquiry.
- Aviation unit trained two Tactical Flight Officers as helicopter pilots to maintain appropriate staffing levels and air unit coverage for the City of Mesa.
- In 2018, the annual Monsoon Preparedness exercise was held. In addition, City Staff participated in the National Mass Care Exercise which involved a simulated evacuation of California residents after a massive earthquake.
- Mesa Fire and Medical (MFMD) continuously monitors response times and analyzes data to adapt appropriate response to the community's needs. Utilizing analytics from the past 12 years, MFMD anticipates an overall increase in demand for service around 4% per year. MFMD explored options to more efficiently respond to medical emergencies, confirming that emergency





response units are in the appropriate locations, providing for timely and appropriate emergency response. MFMD's goal is to have any recommended changes from this process implemented by first quarter of 2019.

#### Transportation

- The *2040 Transit Master Plan* identifies several corridors for potential expansion of high capacity transit (light rail, etc.) and premium bus service. In 2018 work started on the Tempe/Mesa Streetcar Feasibility Study to determine the best connectivity options for the overall transit system, ridership projections, project cost, and traffic interface.

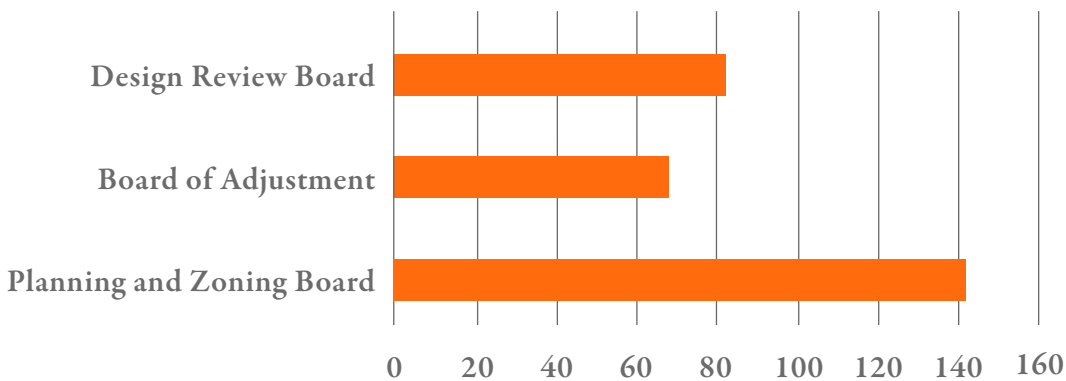
#### Energy Resources

- Mesa has recently participated in Kinder Morgan's capacity release market, which has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars for Mesa's natural gas customers by monetizing any natural gas transportation capacity that Mesa's customers do not require in any given month.

#### Development Services

- In 2018 the case load was up with the Planning Division processing 141 cases to Planning and Zoning Board, 69 cases to Board of Adjustment, 81 cases to Design Review Board.

### Number of Applications Processed



#### Community Development

- Love Your Neighborhood (LYN), expanded beyond the Main to Broadway and Robson to Extension boundaries to the north side of Main Street up to 2nd Street. Habitat for Humanity was brought on to coordinate rehab and outreach activities.

#### Economic Development

- The East Valley Workforce Steering Committee was established in 2018 to create an opportunity for Economic Developers, Academic Leaders, Industry, and Workforce Development Organizations to collaborate in the interest of improving workforce



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DEVELOPMENT SERVICES