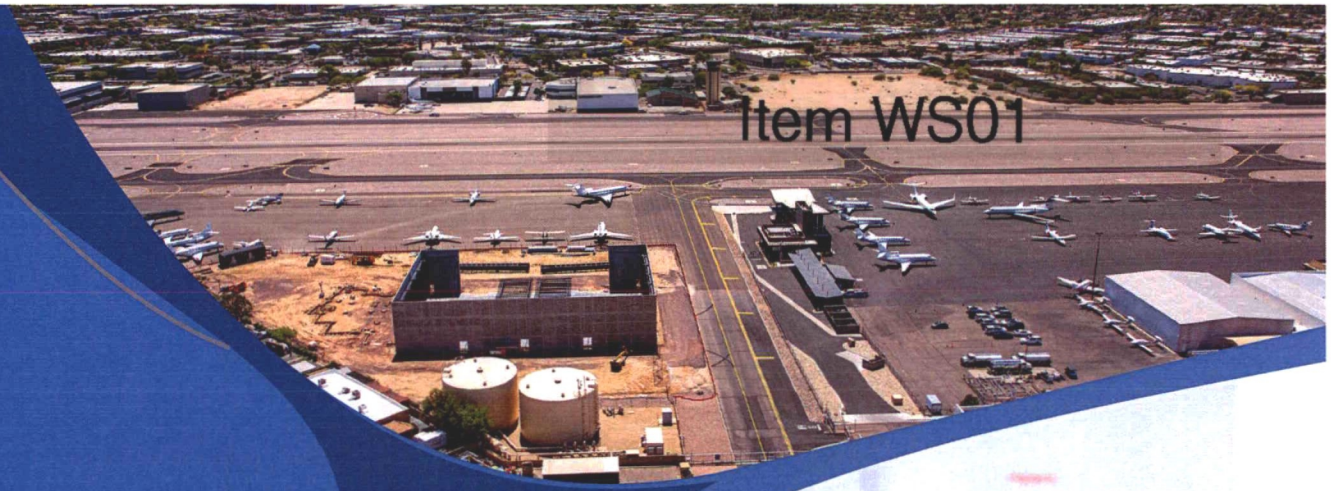
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE

City of Scottsdale, AZ

Strategic Plan

Economic Development

2027–2029









Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Scottsdale's Economic Development Strategic Plan establishes a three-year direction for strengthening the local economy. It focuses on protecting and elevating Scottsdale's brand, pursuing a selective portfolio of high-value industries and business functions that fit Scottsdale, supporting business retention and expansion and actively pursuing reinvestment strategies.

The City engaged Keen Independent Research to develop this plan alongside the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan. The planning process drew on existing City plans and studies, interviews and focus groups, a virtual workshop for business owners, a City staff retreat and input from an Executive Advisory Council. Together, these efforts informed coordinated strategies that connect economic development with tourism and events.

What is an Economic Development Plan?

An economic development plan provides a framework for strengthening a community's economy and creating opportunities for businesses and residents. It identifies priorities for supporting business retention and growth, attracting investment and coordinating the efforts of local government and its partners. The plan connects long-term goals with practical actions, responsibilities and measures of progress.

For Scottsdale, this plan translates research and stakeholder input into a coordinated program of work for the next three years. It builds on existing City plans and services while identifying opportunities for new initiatives.

How to Use this Plan

This plan will be primarily used by the City to guide decision making and initiatives over the next three years. Partner organizations and local businesses can use this document to inform their planning efforts and highlight how their initiatives align with those of the City. Use the plan's strategic priorities to understand the overall direction for economic development and its objectives and supporting actions to identify how the City and its partners can advance that direction. The research and stakeholder findings explain the basis for recommendations. Implementation guidance connects those recommendations with responsibilities, timing, resources and measures of progress.

City staff and partners should use the plan to inform annual work programs, budget requests and partnership discussions. They should regularly review progress as conditions change. Some objectives continue or improve existing services. Others require further study, funding or policy decisions. Proposals for new facilities and other major investments should undergo the necessary evaluations before official approval.

Other City Plans

The City has adopted several plans that support tourism and economic development, including Scottsdale General Plan 2035, Old Town Scottsdale Character Area Plan, Greater Airpark Character Area Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan. Strategic Priorities and objectives for the Economic Development Strategic Plan were developed with these other plans in mind to contribute to related efforts without working against strategies of other adopted plans.

INTRODUCTION

Message from the Study Team

This plan was made possible by City leaders, City staff and representatives of Scottsdale's business and economic development community. The Keen Independent Research study team thanks the following groups and individuals for their time and dedication to developing this plan.

City Council

- Lisa Borowsky, Mayor;
- Maryann McAllen, Vice Mayor;
- Jan Dubauskas;
- Adam Kwasman;
- Kathy Littlefield;
- Barry Graham; and
- Solange Whitehead.

City leadership and staff. City leaders and staff participated in interviews, focus groups and workshops. The study team appreciates their valuable insight. We especially thank City Manager Greg Caton and Deputy City Manager Judy Doyle for their involvement in the planning process, and Kevin Burke, Senior Director, Economic Development & Tourism, for his guidance and feedback throughout the planning process.

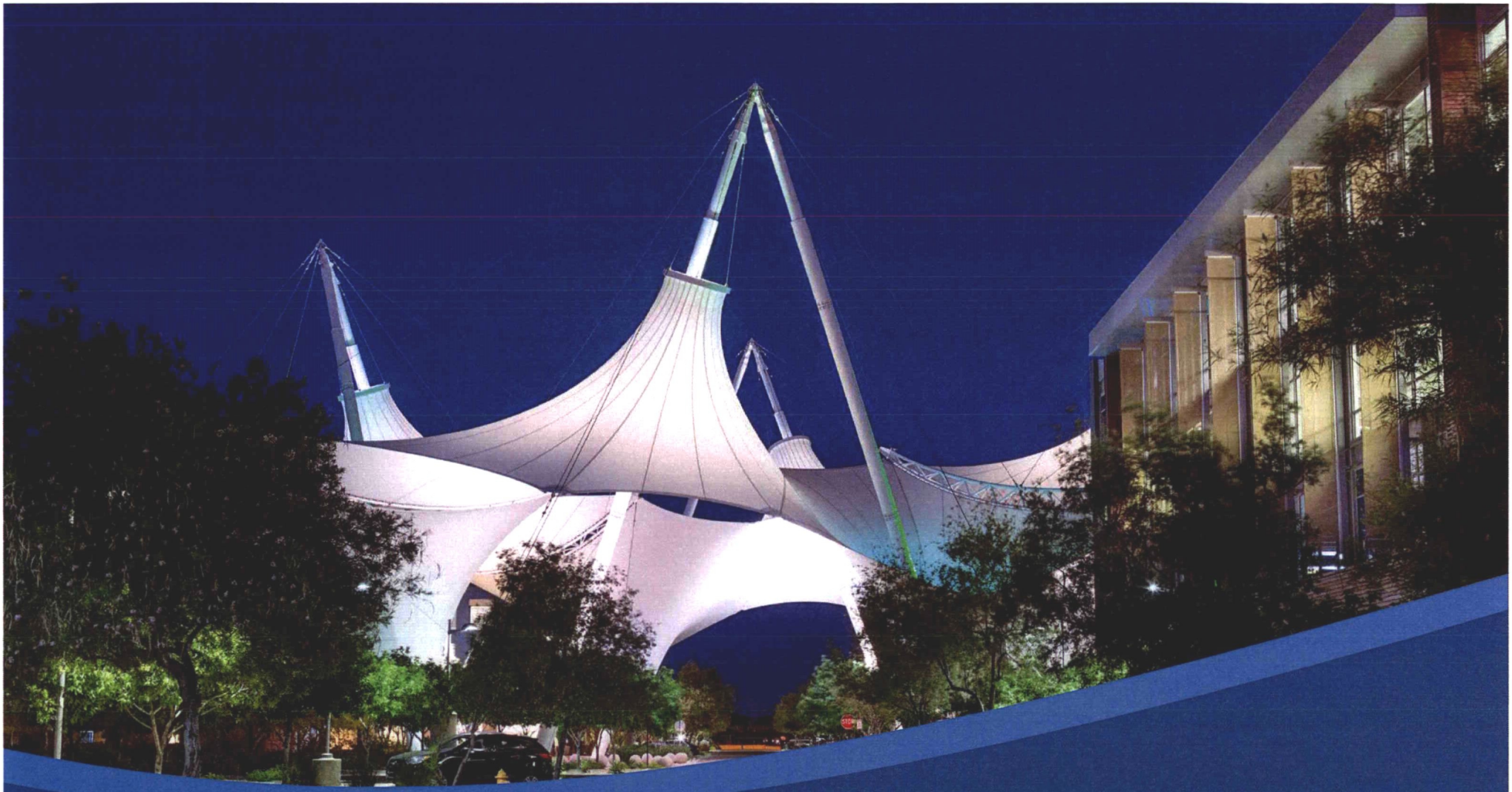
Executive Advisory Council

- Ronen Aviram, Hotel Valley Ho;
- Odette Bakker, Advanced Semiconductor Materials (ASM);
- Jaymes Bell, Scottsdale Fashion Square;
- Neil Calfee, Arizona State University (ASU);
- Payton Kruidenier, Ross Brown Partners;
- Chris Montgomery, Tourism Development Commission and Fiesta Sports Foundation;
- Karla Moran, Salt River Project (SRP);
- Michelle Pabis, HonorHealth;
- Kelly Patton, Arizona Public Service (APS);
- Rachel Sacco, Experience Scottsdale; and
- Mark Stanton, Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce.

Scottsdale business owners. This plan would not have been possible without the participation of Scottsdale business owners who contributed ideas through interviews, focus groups and the virtual workshop.

Study team. Keen Independent Research, www.keenindependent.com, conducted the study. Team members included:

- Alex Keen, Managing Principal and Co-owner; and
- Jennifer Tuchband, General Manager, Senior Consultant and Co-owner.



Executive Summary

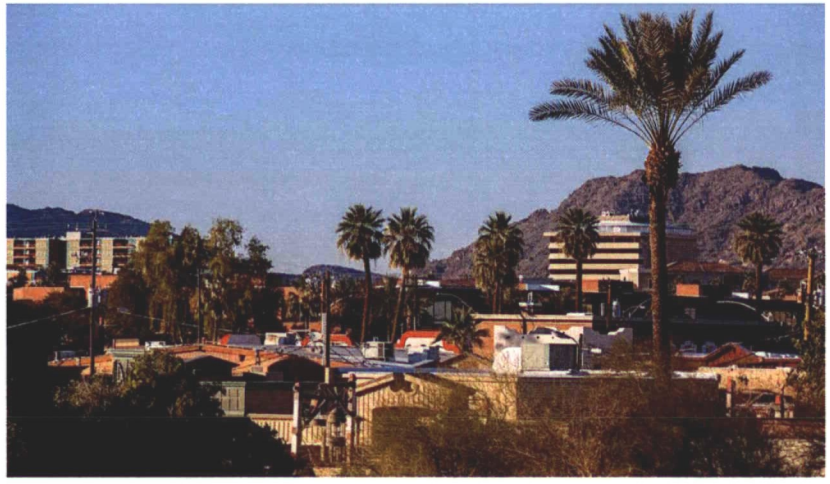
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2027–2029

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY — Key Findings

Scottsdale approaches economic development from a position of strength. Its reputation, quality of life and destination amenities help attract businesses, investment and talent. The findings of this planning process also point to the work needed to sustain those advantages by supporting existing businesses, improving certainty for investment and guiding reinvestment in established commercial areas.

This plan is designed to guide the City's economic development work over the next three years, with clear priorities for supporting existing businesses, attracting investment that fits Scottsdale and advancing reinvestment in established commercial areas. It connects economic development with tourism, events and the community's quality of life, giving the City and its partners a coordinated framework for action and performance measurement.



Methodology

Keen Independent developed the Plan's findings and recommendations through background research and stakeholder engagement. The research included a review of Scottsdale's existing plans, City-commissioned studies, destination marketing strategies and recent tourism and lodging research. This review provided context for the Plan and identified opportunities to build on existing initiatives.

Stakeholder engagement. As part of the coordinated tourism and economic development planning process, Keen Independent engaged 45 key stakeholders through interviews and focus groups. Participants represented City leadership, tourism and hospitality, Old Town businesses, events, arts and recreation and other sectors connected to Scottsdale's economy. A virtual workshop gathered additional input from 180 participants, including business and organizational representatives and City staff. These activities explored Scottsdale's competitive strengths, business and tourism challenges, visitor experiences and priorities for future investment and action.

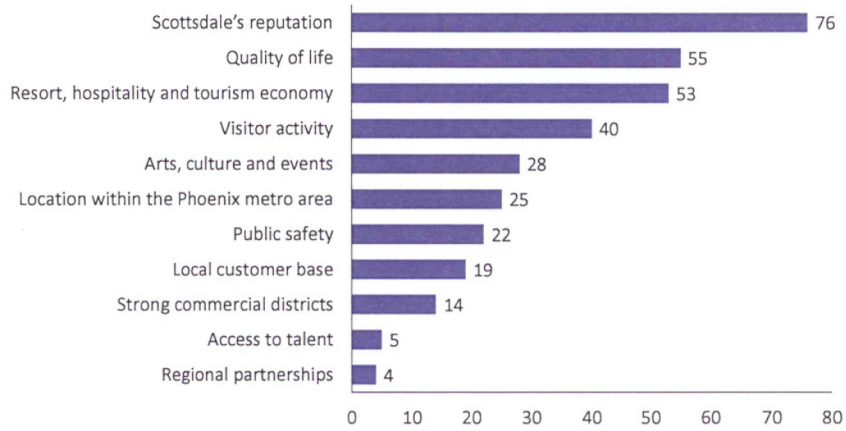
Synthesis. The study team synthesized background research and stakeholder input to identify recurring themes, areas for improvement and opportunities for Scottsdale's economy. City staff retreat discussions and Executive Advisory Council feedback helped refine these findings into the Plan's strategic priorities and recommended actions. Together, these efforts connected research and stakeholder perspectives with the City's priorities and implementation responsibilities.

Scottsdale's Reputation and Quality of Life Are Core Business Advantages

Real estate and economic development stakeholders linked Scottsdale's quality of life, executive appeal, professional talent and amenities to its attractiveness for headquarters and higher-value office functions. Workshop participants also highlighted its affluent customer base, safety and desirability.

Scottsdale's reputation was the most frequently selected business advantage, chosen by 76 of 122 respondents (62%). Quality of life followed at 55 selections (45%) and the resort, hospitality and tourism economy at 53 (43%). These findings connect the city's identity and visitor economy with its broader business appeal.

2-1. Virtual workshop responses to Scottsdale's strongest advantages as a place to do business, n=122



Source: Keen Independent Research.

Scottsdale's brand identity is one of its greatest strengths.

You mention Scottsdale, everyone knows what it is, so I think that's always been a strength.

I think a lot of times we hear businesses that want to have the Scottsdale mailing address.

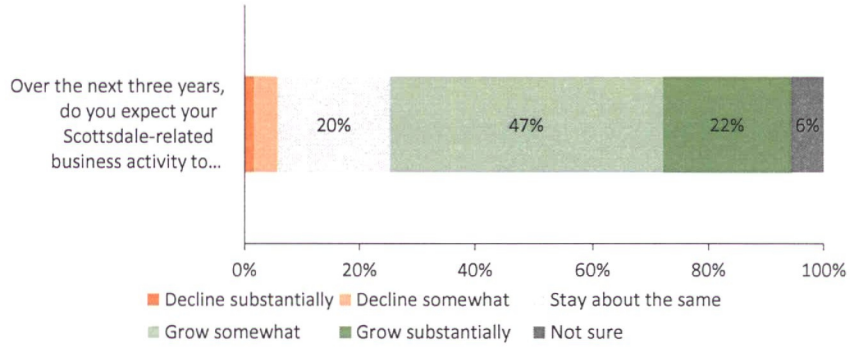
Scottsdale really has a well-founded reputation as sort of the mecca for golfers nationally and internationally.

Existing Businesses Are Optimistic, and Support for Their Success Is a Prominent Priority

Among 122 workshop respondents, 69 percent expected Scottsdale-related business activity to grow over the next three years, compared with 6 percent expecting a decline. Stakeholders indicated a need for greater attention to businesses already operating in Scottsdale, alongside efforts to attract new employers. They emphasized continued engagement and assistance to help existing businesses remain and expand.

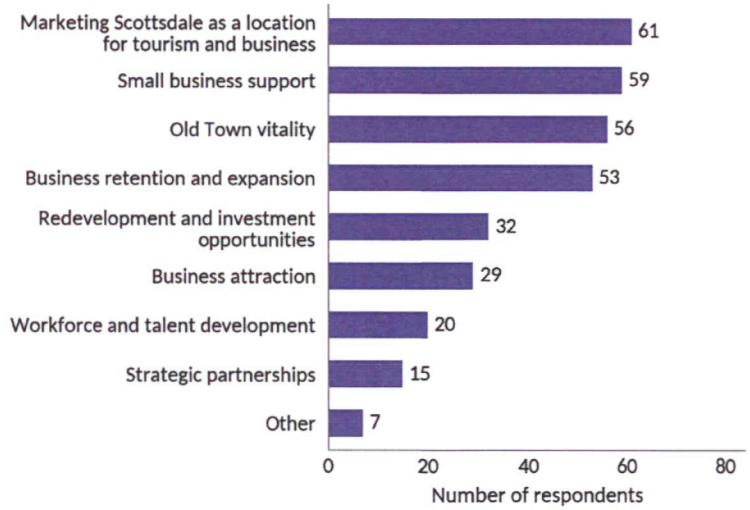
When the virtual workshop asked which economic development priorities should receive the most attention over the next five years, small business support received 59 selections and business retention and expansion received 53, compared with 29 for business attraction. Marketing Scottsdale led with 61. The results highlight support for established businesses alongside promotion and recruitment.

2-2. Virtual workshop responses on the outlook of their Scottsdale-related business activity in the next three years, n=122



Source: Keen Independent Research.

2-3. Virtual workshop responses on preferred economic development priorities for the next five years, n=114



Note: Respondents could select up to three choices. The question used a five-year horizon; this Plan covers three years.

Source: Keen Independent Research.

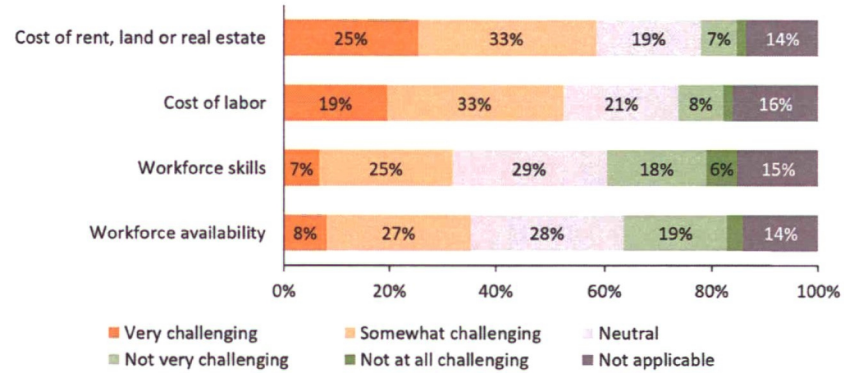
High Costs and Uneven Access to Talent Complicate Business Growth

Costs were prominent concerns in the virtual workshop. The cost of rent, land or real estate was somewhat or very challenging for 58 percent of respondents, and labor costs were challenging for 52 percent. Experiences with workforce skills and availability were more mixed.

Concerns regarding access to talent. Business owners described access to entry level talent in some fields but difficulty finding specialized workers in others. Education and workforce participants connected housing costs and commuting with recruitment, retention and young families' ability to remain in Scottsdale. Labor affordability, worker availability and specialized skills were distinct concerns.

Existing education-employer partnerships include internships, advisory groups, scholarships, clinical placements and career pathways. Participants identified a need for training to respond more quickly to artificial intelligence, changing technical occupations and worker reskilling.

2-4. Virtual workshop responses regarding business costs and workforce challenges, n=118–120



Note: Percentages include all response categories shown.
Source: Keen Independent Research.

[Cost of living in Scottsdale] could be a barrier to entry, or maybe they start a business here, but they're living elsewhere ....

The business growth is great, I just need to be able to staff it.

I hope, when it comes to industry, that we're able to be a little more proactive and understand the impact of AI in industry, and how that impacts the community college curriculum.

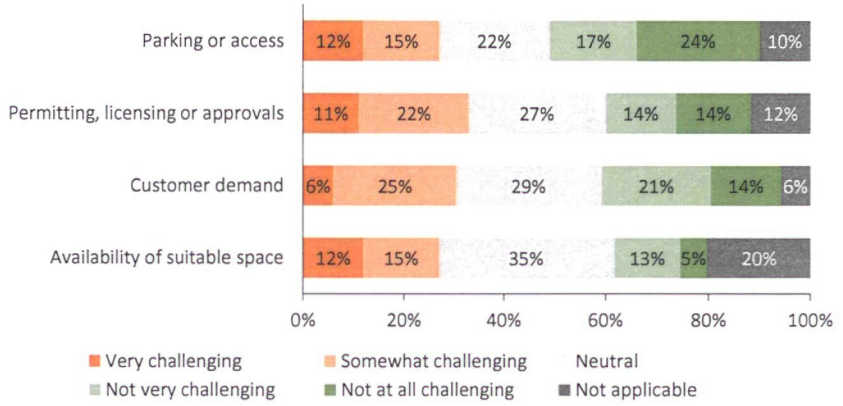
City Assistance Is Valued, but Experiences with Development and Approval Processes Vary

Virtual workshop participants described both positive experiences with City staff and concerns about navigating City processes. Some workshop respondents praised staff responsiveness, clear information and assistance in opening a business. Business owners also valued City support and connections to universities and other resources.

Experience with permitting, licensing or approvals. Other participants identified permitting delays, inconsistent procedures, staff turnover and uncertainty surrounding development decisions as barriers to investment. Note that these experiences varied among the stakeholder engaged. Some interviewees described experiences working with the City without comparable permitting problems. Across the discussions, clear accountability, communication and dependable timelines emerged as important considerations for business growth.

In the workshop, approximately one-third of 118 respondents rated permitting, licensing or approvals as somewhat or very challenging. Other respondents reported neutral or less challenging experiences. The findings point to uneven experiences and concerns about predictability.

2-5. Virtual workshop responses on business conditions in the city and with the City, n=117–118



Source: Keen Independent Research.

Everyone was so kind and helpful at City Hall when setting up a business.

The thing that can really hurt the most deals isn't necessarily cost. It's just uncertainty and timing.

[Expansion or development in Scottsdale] is not as challenging as other communities, but there's still opportunity always for improvement.

I've gotten a lot of support from the City and from the economic development folks in running our own business.

Oftentimes, there's projects that require multiple departments to provide input, and so that can take a lot of time.

Reinvestment and Established Commercial Areas Are Important to Future Competitiveness

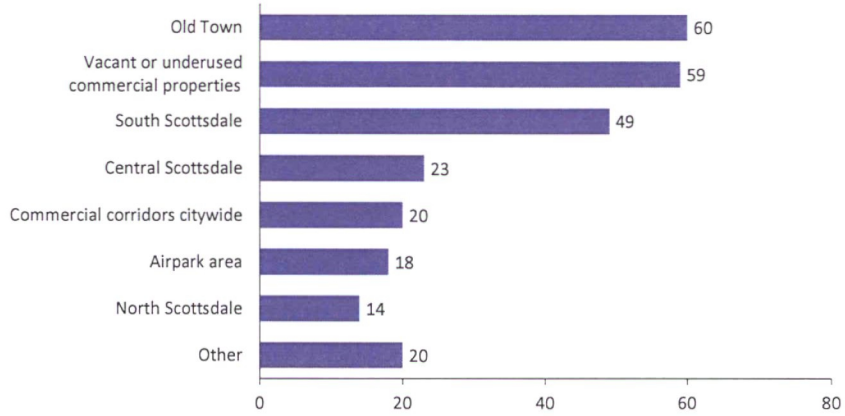
Real estate and economic development participants increasingly saw future opportunities in reinvestment rather than development of vacant land. They identified adaptive reuse, amenity-rich office redevelopment and appropriately located mixed-use housing as ways to update aging properties while preserving Scottsdale's character and improving employees' ability to live near work.

Infrastructure and financing considerations. Stakeholders raised infrastructure readiness (particularly in South Scottsdale) and confidence in long-term water planning as investment considerations. The Scottsdale Industrial Development Authority was identified as an underused financing resource.

Priorities for established commercial areas. The workshop reinforced interest in established places. When asked where economic development efforts should focus, 60 of 111 respondents selected Old Town, 59 selected vacant or underused commercial properties and 49 selected South Scottsdale. (Respondents could choose up to three areas.)

Old Town merchants connected commercial vitality with the area's independent businesses, Western identity and galleries. They distinguished event attendance from spending in nearby businesses, and some reported weaker daytime foot traffic. Stakeholders differed on the relative need for stronger promotion versus changes to buildings, business mix, operating hours and the pedestrian experience.

2-6. Virtual workshop responses on where the City should focus economic development efforts, n=111



Note: Respondents could select up to three areas.

Source: Keen Independent Research.

If you can't keep building out, how do you reinvent what you have?

I think Scottsdale needs to think about a redevelopment infrastructure plan, to think about how these older areas are going to get water lines upgraded, and new power into the areas ...

Until we really understand infrastructure and water needs, I do think a lot of businesses will take a second look.

I think there's a lot of redevelopment opportunities in South Scottsdale.

Retail strip center was built in the 70s ... being active and reactivating or reinventing places like that, those are all important.

To me, this is just purely a marketing issue.

Stakeholders See Growth Opportunities in Scottsdale's Existing Strengths

Interview and discussion participants identified corporate headquarters, bioscience and health technology, research and development and suitable semiconductor-related businesses as promising opportunities. They favored a selective economic development focus built around existing strengths and institutions.

Healthcare opportunities and capacity considerations. Healthcare stakeholders described opportunities beyond patient care facilities, including research, health technology, medical education and translation of research into clinical practice. Connections among healthcare institutions, higher education and the visitor economy were also identified as potential strengths for Scottsdale's medical destination positioning.

Tourism and business recruitment. Business owners also saw tourism and events as openings for executive networking and business recruitment. They described opportunities to turn visits into longer-term business relationships through hosting, connections to local leadership programs and engagement extending beyond major sporting events.

Education and workforce connections. Education and workforce participants highlighted existing employer relationships and career pathways in healthcare, hospitality, business and semiconductor-related occupations. Together, these perspectives identify opportunities to connect assets already present in Scottsdale.

Scottsdale has so many healthcare assets around it ... it would be able to enhance its economic development work and enhance its diversification of this job sector if it had ... more focus on biosciences and health tech.

Medical tourism could be one of those strong focus areas of driving revenue from outside the region into the region, which would then drive even more life sciences and health tech.

I think tourism can convince people that this is a place to do business.

[At the WM Phoenix Open] We got to meet people who were thinking about moving here, or thinking about bringing companies here.

Our nursing program is very connected to the healthcare providers through placement within the City of Scottsdale and around the City of Scottsdale, so there's some strong connections there.

Among the universities, community college and K-12, there's strong collaborations and a willingness to ... work directly with employers to develop those pipelines.

Scottsdale's reputation, quality of life and visitor economy provide a strong foundation for continued economic success. Workshop respondents' positive assessments of Scottsdale as a business location and expectations for growth reinforce these strengths. At the same time, stakeholder feedback identifies business costs, access to talent, process predictability and the condition of existing commercial properties as challenges to continued competitiveness. Together, the findings underscore the importance of supporting businesses already invested in Scottsdale, renewing established commercial areas and pursuing growth opportunities that build on the community's strengths and distinctive character.

These findings inform the Plan's four strategic priorities for the next three years. The following section presents these priorities, along with the objectives and supporting actions that translate them into a coordinated program of work for the City and its partners.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

E1
Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

E2
Pursue a selective portfolio of high-value industries and business functions

E3
Support business retention and expansion

E4
Actively pursue redevelopment strategies



Strategic Priorities

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2027–2029

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES — Introduction

This section presents four strategic priorities to guide Scottsdale's economic development work during 2027–2029. Together, they connect the City's brand, selective business attraction, support for existing businesses and redevelopment with opportunities for investment and long-term economic vitality.

How to Use the Strategic Priorities

Each strategic priority establishes a broad direction, and the numbered objectives identify areas for action. Each objective includes potential tactics for implementation. Use these priorities and objectives as focused guides for action.

Approaching strategic priorities as a road map. Each priority includes objectives that reflect findings from the planning process and provides suggestions for implementation. This Plan is intended to be a living document, meaning the City can take the suggestions under each objective as starting points for initiatives while making adjustments that respond to stakeholder feedback and needs.

Connecting the Economic Development Strategic Plan with the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan. Given the overlap between the two focus areas and City staff responsibility for both, the Economic Development Strategic Plan was developed in conjunction with the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan. The strategic priorities of this plan were developed and refined alongside those of the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan and are designed to work in tandem.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY E1. Protect and Elevate Scottsdale's Brand

Scottsdale's quality of life and visitor experiences help attract employers, entrepreneurs and investment. This priority connects those assets with coordinated marketing, reliable business information and responsive City services so the city's reputation is reflected in both its message and its business environment.

E1.1. Position Scottsdale's quality of life and destination assets as advantages for business investment

Scottsdale's destination appeal can influence where executives and entrepreneurs choose to locate a business. Connecting its amenities, hospitality and cultural experiences with business location information would help prospective employers understand the advantages of operating in Scottsdale. This approach would build on the city's established reputation while presenting it as a place to invest, not only a place to visit.

This may include:

- Developing shared business investment messages with Tourism & Events and Experience Scottsdale that connect Scottsdale's quality of life and destination assets with the needs of employers, executives and entrepreneurs; and
- Incorporating those messages into Choose Scottsdale materials, prospect presentations and partner outreach so business location information consistently reflects Scottsdale's destination strengths.

E1.2. Unify economic development and Old Town marketing within the in-house team's program of work

Economic development and Old Town marketing serve different audiences but draw on many of the same strengths and relationships. An integrated program of work could help the in-house team coordinate campaigns, content and partner outreach while retaining distinct messages for businesses and visitors. Shared planning could also connect marketing activity with business development priorities and make coordinated use of staff resources.

This may include:

- Organizing Choose Scottsdale, Old Town Marketing Program and partner outreach within a shared work program and content calendar, with clear responsibilities and audience specific messages;
- Coordinating campaigns, market visits and conference participation with tourism partners and the proposed City International Office where audiences and objectives overlap; and
- Using business intelligence and campaign results to refine messages, outreach channels and the balance of business and visitor promotion.

E1.3. Establish the department as a trusted source of Scottsdale business intelligence

Reliable business intelligence could help Scottsdale explain its advantages, respond to investment inquiries and evaluate economic development efforts. Maintaining current knowledge of companies, workforce, visitors, real estate and development assets could give City staff and partners a stronger basis for decisions. Translating that information into accessible resources could also make the department more useful to existing businesses, prospective employers and site selectors.

This may include:

- Maintaining company and contact records in the existing customer relationship management system and assigning responsibility for data quality and follow-up to keep information current on Scottsdale's businesses, workforce, visitors, venues, institutions, sites and economic trends;
- Combining business and real estate data, appropriate tax information, survey findings and tourism research into useful business intelligence; and
- Translating that information into marketing evidence, site selection resources, business communications and performance reports.

E1.4. Advance high-impact facilities and assets that strengthen Scottsdale's brand and business appeal

Major facilities and other destination and business assets could strengthen Scottsdale's appeal to employers, investors and visitors. Preparing business cases could help the City compare opportunities, understand their potential benefits and bring appropriate partners together. Defining Economic Development's role early could connect these opportunities with site readiness and investment priorities before major resource commitments are considered.

This may include:

- Identifying high-impact destination and business asset opportunities and preparing business cases that describe their intended benefits, potential users and resource needs;
- Convening development partners and coordinating feasibility and location analysis, including the convention and performing arts studies addressed in E4.5 and Tourism and Events objective T2.2; and
- Using the attraction criteria in E2.1 and site readiness work in E4.4 to guide project selection and investor outreach, with major commitments subject to further evaluation and approvals.

E1.5. Build confidence in Scottsdale as a community open to business investment

A strong reputation does not by itself establish confidence in the business investment process. Addressing feedback about working with the City could help align Scottsdale's business message with the experience of employers and investors. Direct communication should be paired with service improvements, allowing the City to demonstrate responsiveness through practice rather than promotion alone.

This may include:

- Gathering and documenting business and investor feedback through direct outreach, referring service issues to the improvement work under E3.2 and communicating follow-up actions to affected businesses; and
- Communicating completed service improvements and using subsequent business engagement to assess whether those changes address feedback and where further action is needed.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY E2. Pursue a Selective Portfolio of High-value Industries & Business Functions

Scottsdale can focus business attraction on functions that offer above median wages and fit its assets and available sites. This priority combines clear selection criteria with targeted industry outreach, international relationships, business hosting and defined partner roles.

E2.1. Define business attraction criteria around functions, wages and fit with Scottsdale's assets

Selecting prospects by business function, wage levels and fit with local assets could focus resources on opportunities suited to Scottsdale. This approach recognizes that executive offices, research activities and headquarters may offer strategic value. Matching these functions to available sites could also connect attraction efforts with realistic development opportunities.

This may include:

- Establishing a prospect screening framework that limits attraction efforts to functions that support wages above Scottsdale's median wage and fit its assets, with a defined wage measure and data source;
- Identifying priority functions, including research and development, corporate headquarters, regional and executive offices, nonprofit and philanthropic headquarters and family offices, recognizing strategic value beyond employment counts; and
- Applying the criteria to prospects citywide and matching suitable functions with greenfield and redevelopment sites in coordination with the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) and development partners.

E2.2. Cultivate executive and innovation functions in targeted industries and headquarters segments

Industry labels alone do not identify the operations best suited to Scottsdale. Focusing on executive and innovation functions within selected industries would connect business attraction with the city's wage, site and asset criteria. Developing relationships within these segments would help staff identify relevant opportunities.

This may include:

- Identifying priority prospects in healthcare, biotechnology, technology, finance and insurance, public safety, cybersecurity and the semiconductor ecosystem as well as nonprofit and philanthropic headquarters and family office wealth management;
- Conducting targeted outreach to decisionmakers about executive, headquarters and innovation functions that meet the criteria in E2.1, using relevant information on Scottsdale's workforce, sites and business assets;
- Following up with interested prospects, documenting location requirements and moving suitable opportunities into site evaluation or partner assistance; and
- Coordinating with tourism partners where healthcare-related business opportunities create demand for lodging, dining and visitor services, consistent with Tourism and Events objective T2.4.

E2.3. Establish a City International Office to lead international business and intergovernmental relationships

International business and intergovernmental relationships require sustained contact and coordinated follow through. Establishing a City International Office would provide a clear lead for developing these relationships and connecting them with business attraction and visitor promotion. Defining its responsibilities and resources before launch could help the City build on partner efforts.

This may include:

- Defining the office's mandate, organizational placement and reporting relationships, including how its responsibilities would complement those of other City departments, Experience Scottsdale and regional partners;
- Establishing staffing and budget requirements, securing applicable approvals and assigning or recruiting staff to carry out the office's responsibilities; and
- Launching the office with an initial work program that identifies priority markets, business and intergovernmental objectives, planned activities and performance measures.

E2.4. Strengthen relationships with site selectors and business location advisors

Site selectors and business location advisors can connect Scottsdale with companies considering where to locate or expand. Maintaining useful relationships could help these advisors understand the city's advantages, available sites and desired business functions.

This may include:

- Developing an annual outreach plan that identifies priority site selectors and business location advisors serving Scottsdale's target industries and business functions, with defined City and Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) responsibilities;
- Building and sustaining relationships through regular meetings, briefings and selected conferences, supported by current information on Scottsdale's business advantages, workforce and available sites; and
- Following up on advisor inquiries and referrals, assigning responsibility for next steps and tracking resulting business prospects to evaluate and refine outreach.

E2.5. Use tourism visits, signature events and City venues to introduce business prospects to Scottsdale

Visitors may encounter Scottsdale as a place to vacation or attend an event without learning about its business opportunities. Connecting selected visits with introductions to local employers, sites and City staff could turn familiarity with the destination into business location interest. A structured hosting approach would focus these opportunities on prospects that meet Scottsdale's attraction criteria.

This may include:

- Identifying and scheduling business hosting opportunities at signature events and City venues with tourism partners and organizers, prioritizing prospects that meet Scottsdale's attraction criteria;
- Hosting selected prospects through coordinated itineraries that combine destination experiences with business introductions, relevant site visits and meetings with Economic Development staff;
- Following up with hosted prospects to document their interests, assign next steps and track resulting business location inquiries and opportunities; and
- Evaluating outreach through Scottsdale Airport and airlines as additional ways to reach business prospects, coordinated with the air connectivity work in Tourism and Events objective T3.2 and without presuming new service.

E2.6. Extend business development capacity through defined regional and local partnerships

Regional and local partners can extend Scottsdale's reach through business relationships, market knowledge and development resources. Clear responsibilities could help the City use those strengths while retaining direct engagement where Scottsdale has a distinct role.

This may include:

- Agreeing on complementary business development responsibilities with GPEC, the Arizona Commerce Authority, Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce, Salt River Project (SRP), Arizona Public Service (APS) and other partners, including prospect referrals, site information and assistance;
- Carrying out shared outreach and prospect assistance activities with designated contacts, clear handoffs and regular review of outstanding referrals; and
- Maintaining direct engagement with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community to identify regional investment and destination development opportunities and agree on next steps for joint work.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY E3. Support Business Retention and Expansion

Existing businesses provide a foundation for Scottsdale's economy and future growth. This priority strengthens employer relationships, coordinated City services and access to investment and workforce resources. It builds on existing staff capacity and partner networks to help businesses remain and expand in Scottsdale.

E3.1. Build proactive relationships with existing employers to identify retention and expansion needs

Regular contact with major employers and other established businesses could help Scottsdale understand retention and expansion needs before an urgent problem arises. These relationships can provide insight into operating challenges, growth plans and opportunities for City or partner assistance. Proactive engagement could help staff connect individual businesses with support and identify recurring issues that warrant broader attention.

This may include:

- Maintaining a priority employer contact list and regular outreach schedule, with designated staff contacts for major employers and other established businesses;
- Meeting with employers to understand operating challenges, growth plans, space and workforce needs and requests for assistance, documenting retention concerns and expansion opportunities; and
- Coordinating City and partner assistance, tracking follow-up and progress on retention and expansion opportunities and referring recurring issues to the relevant service, workforce or site readiness initiatives.

E3.2. Strengthen a predictable, coordinated experience for businesses working with the City

Businesses benefit from knowing which department to contact, what information is needed and how a request moves through the City. Clear roles and handoffs among departments make assistance more predictable and reduce conflicting information. Improved City coordination could help businesses navigate required processes more easily.

This may include:

- Mapping the business assistance, permitting, licensing and development approval processes to clarify departmental roles, contact points and handoffs;
- Agreeing on departmental contact points, referral procedures and responsibility for communicating requirements, request status and next steps to businesses;
- Implementing service improvements with assigned leads and completion dates while maintaining each department's responsibilities; and
- Reviewing response times, unresolved requests and business feedback to determine whether changes improve coordination and predictability and where further adjustments may be needed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY E3. Support Business Retention and Expansion

E3.3. Prioritize entrepreneurial support through investment and business networks

Entrepreneurs, innovation oriented startups and established local businesses have different support needs. Connecting them with appropriate investment and business networks could help Scottsdale provide more useful assistance than a single approach for all firms. A network-based strategy could draw on partner expertise and relationships, focusing the City's role on making connections and helping businesses find relevant resources.

This may include:

- Identifying investment and business network needs through outreach that distinguishes entrepreneurs and innovation oriented startups from established local businesses;
- Building and maintaining connections with venture capital and entrepreneurial networks, including opportunities involving SkySong and other partners; and
- Making introductions and following up with businesses and partners to determine whether entrepreneurs accessed relevant resources and what support gaps remain.

E3.4. Strengthen ongoing local business engagement and promotion through City and Chamber partnerships

Year-round engagement could give local businesses more consistent connections to City staff, peers and promotional opportunities. Coordinating with the Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce could help combine business outreach, promotion and recognition. Extending participation across Scottsdale could also recognize the contributions of businesses beyond Old Town and across different sizes and stages of growth.

This may include:

- Coordinating a year-round City and Chamber outreach and promotion calendar that connects businesses with participation opportunities and relevant contacts;
- Recruiting businesses throughout Scottsdale to participate in Small Business Saturday and other promotions, tracking participation beyond Old Town; and
- Establishing legacy business recognition criteria and delivering recognition activities that include longstanding small businesses and larger employers where appropriate.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY E3. Support Business Retention and Expansion

E3.5. Sustain Old Town business retention and expansion through existing staff capacity

Old Town business retention and expansion depend on sustained relationships with merchants, property owners and district partners. Continuing liaison work through existing staff could help the City understand business needs and connect them with available support.

This may include:

- Maintaining a regular liaison schedule with the Old Town Action Team, businesses and property owners through existing staff to identify operating concerns and growth plans; and
- Coordinating assistance and follow up on identified business needs, connecting district feedback with marketing, programming and redevelopment work.

E3.6. Strengthen workforce access through regional education, utility and workforce partnerships

Access to workforce resources can influence whether existing businesses remain and grow in Scottsdale. Connecting employers with education, utility and workforce partners could help address their needs through regional expertise and programs. Maintaining a partner led approach could focus the City's role on identifying business needs and making useful connections.

This may include:

- Using employer outreach to identify workforce needs and arrange targeted connections with Scottsdale Community College, Arizona State University, APS, SRP and other education and workforce partners according to their existing roles; and
- Following up with employers and partners to determine whether businesses accessed relevant services, document unmet needs and refine referrals.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY E4. Actively Pursue Redevelopment Strategies

Preparing underused properties and remaining greenfield sites for investment requires clear planning and coordination with owners and developers. This priority pairs actionable property information and area specific planning with evaluation of acquisition tools, development partnerships and long-term funding options.

E4.1. Identify, analyze and market redevelopment opportunities through a more actionable property inventory

A property inventory is more useful when it helps owners, developers and investors understand how a site could move toward reinvestment. Adding development concepts, indicative costs and timelines could connect opportunity identification with practical next steps. A more actionable inventory could also help Scottsdale focus outreach on properties that fit its business attraction and redevelopment priorities.

This may include:

- Updating the redevelopment opportunity inventory and determining whether to publish a map that helps owners, developers and investors identify relevant properties, with responsibility assigned for verifying property status and keeping information current;
- Preparing profiles or tools for priority properties that illustrate potential development concepts, indicative costs, timelines and site preparation needs, using outside technical assistance where needed; and
- Using the inventory in property owner discussions and targeted developer and investor outreach, documenting inquiries and next steps for opportunities aligned with target functions and area specific reinvestment priorities.

E4.2. Develop area-specific reinvestment approaches

Old Town, South Scottsdale and the Airpark have different assets and reinvestment opportunities. Area specific approaches would help the City address those differences rather than apply one redevelopment model across Scottsdale. Evaluating the planning tools needed in each area would connect broader economic development priorities with the work required to advance individual projects.

This may include:

- Identifying area-specific reinvestment priorities and barriers in Old Town, South Scottsdale and the Airpark with Planning, property owners, businesses and development partners;
- Evaluating special area plans, overlays and districts to identify the planning approach best suited to each area's needs; and
- Advancing selected approaches through a sequenced planning work program, with defined leads, resource needs, stakeholder engagement and required approvals.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY E4. Actively Pursue Redevelopment Strategies

E4.3. Develop a strategic acquisition approach and the financing tools needed to support it

Some redevelopment opportunities may require land assembly, entitlement work or site preparation before private investment can proceed. A strategic acquisition approach would help Scottsdale determine where City participation could advance a project and what resources it would require. Evaluating financing tools alongside potential acquisitions could clarify costs, risks and public benefits before the City commits funds or assumes responsibilities.

This may include:

- Establishing criteria for when City acquisition, land assembly, entitlement or site preparation could support private investment, including expected public benefits and partner responsibilities;
- Assessing candidate opportunities against those criteria through project specific analysis of acquisition and preparation needs, costs and risks;
- Evaluating dedicated funding and financing options, including the Scottsdale Industrial Development Authority (IDA), with financial and legal review of eligibility, project fit and City obligations; and
- Preparing a recommended acquisition and financing approach for City consideration, identifying decision points and approvals required before any property acquisition or financial commitment.

E4.4. Advance site readiness and guide buildout of the corporate corridor and remaining greenfield opportunities

The corporate corridor and remaining greenfield opportunities can accommodate business functions that require suitable sites and coordinated preparation. Understanding infrastructure, entitlement and site preparation needs could help Scottsdale connect attraction efforts with development opportunities. Working with ASLD and developers could also clarify what the City can advance while recognizing State and private sector control over development decisions and timing.

This may include:

- Completing a shared assessment with ASLD and developers of infrastructure, entitlement and site preparation needs for the corporate corridor and remaining greenfield sites, matched to target functions in E2.1;
- Agreeing on a site readiness work program that identifies City and partner responsibilities, sequencing and milestones for addressing priority requirements; and
- Advancing City-assigned readiness actions and updating site information for prospect outreach as conditions change, while recognizing State and private sector authority over development decisions and timing.

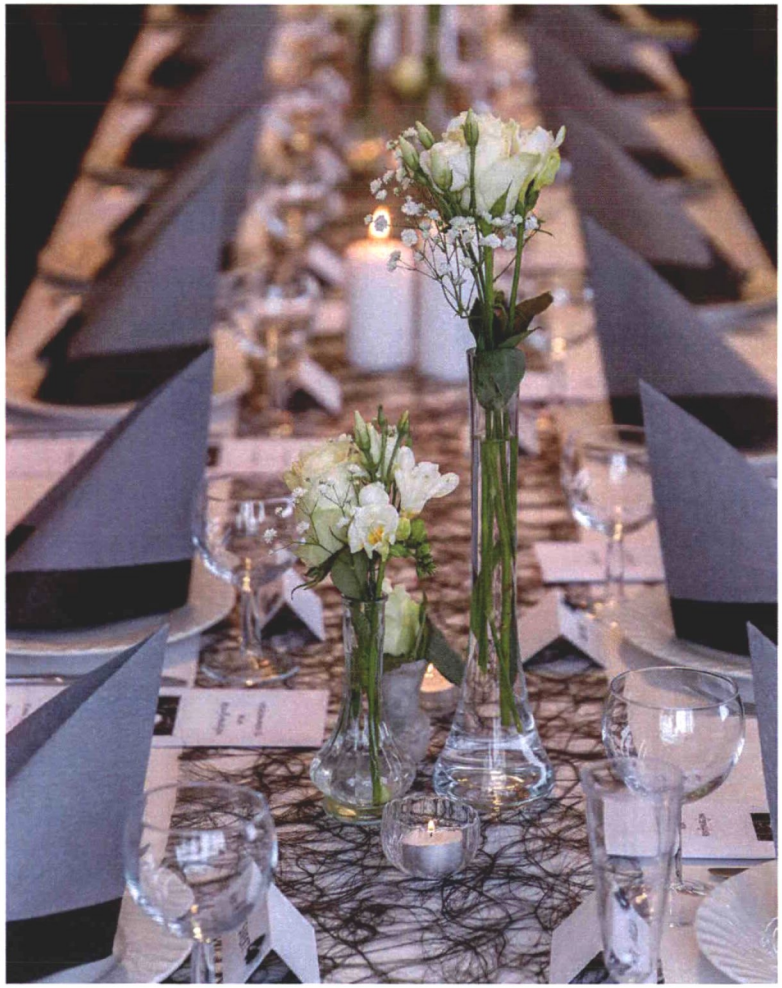
STRATEGIC PRIORITY E4. Actively Pursue Redevelopment Strategies

E4.5. Assess meeting and performing arts facilities as potential development and reinvestment projects

Convention and performing arts facilities could serve as development projects as well as visitor attractions. Evaluating their locations, partnerships and financing could help determine whether either type of facility could support reinvestment and complement surrounding uses. This objective connects Economic Development's project development role with the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan's separate market and feasibility studies.

This may include:

- Coordinating location analysis with the separate convention and performing arts studies in Tourism and Events objective T2.2, considering surrounding development, access, nearby lodging and existing facilities;
- Evaluating potential locations, surrounding development, access and nearby lodging alongside development partnerships, capital and operating costs, financing options and public and private responsibilities; and
- Presenting findings and recommended next steps for each facility, identifying further work and approvals needed or reasons not to proceed, without committing to construction.



Item WS01

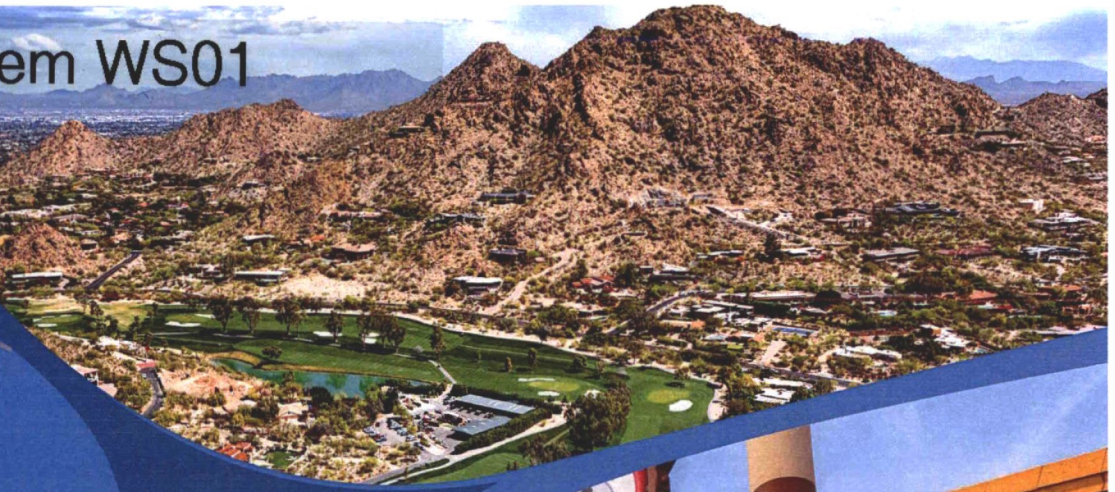
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE

City of Scottsdale, AZ

Strategic Plan

Tourism and Events

2027–2029









Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Scottsdale's Tourism and Events Strategic Plan establishes a three-year direction for strengthening the City's visitor economy while preserving the character and experiences that make Scottsdale distinct. This plan focuses on protecting and elevating Scottsdale's brand, building future tourism demand, expanding international visitor and business connections and enhancing Old Town as a distinctive experiential district.

The City engaged Keen Independent Research to develop this plan alongside an updated Economic Development Strategic Plan. The planning process drew on existing City plans and studies, interviews and focus groups, a virtual workshop for business owners, a City staff retreat and input from an Executive Advisory Council. Together, these efforts informed coordinated strategies that connect tourism with broader economic opportunities.

What is a Tourism Plan?

A tourism plan guides how a community attracts visitors, strengthens its destination offerings and translates visitation into local benefits. It addresses the experiences, events, facilities, public spaces and partnerships that shape a destination, as well as how those assets are promoted and supported. For Scottsdale, this plan provides a shared framework for City leadership, staff and tourism partners to guide investments and coordinate their work.

How to Use this Plan

This plan will be primarily used by the City to guide decision making and initiatives over the next three years. Partner organizations and local businesses can use this document to inform their planning efforts and highlight how their initiatives align with those of the City. Use the plan's goals to understand the overall direction for tourism and events, and its objectives and supporting actions to identify how the City and its partners can advance that direction. The research and stakeholder findings explain the basis for recommendations. Implementation guidance connects those recommendations with responsibilities, timing, resources and measures of progress.

City staff and partners should use the plan to inform annual work programs, budget requests and partnership discussions, and regularly review progress as conditions change. Some objectives continue or improve existing services. Others require further study, funding or policy decisions. Proposals for new facilities and other major investments should proceed through the necessary evaluations before official approval.

Other City Plans

The City has adopted several plans that support tourism, including Scottsdale General Plan 2035, Old Town Scottsdale Character Area Plan, Greater Airpark Character Area Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan. Goals and strategies for the tourism plan were developed with these other plans in mind to contribute to those tourism-related efforts without working against strategies of other adopted plans.

Message from the Study Team

This plan was made possible by City leaders, City staff and representatives of Scottsdale's tourism industry. The Keen Independent Research study team thanks the following groups and individuals for their time and dedication to developing this plan.

City Council

- Lisa Borowsky, Mayor;
- Maryann McAllen, Vice Mayor;
- Jan Dubauskas;
- Adam Kwasman;
- Kathy Littlefield;
- Barry Graham; and
- Solange Whitehead.

City leadership and staff. City leaders and staff participated in interviews, focus groups and workshops. The study team appreciates their valuable insight. We especially thank City Manager Greg Caton, and Deputy City Manager Judy Doyle, for their involvement in the planning process. We would also like to thank Kevin Burke, Senior Director, Economic Development & Tourism, for his guidance and feedback throughout the planning process.

Executive Advisory Council

- Ronen Aviram, Hotel Valley Ho;
- Odette Bakker, Advanced Semiconductor Materials (ASM);
- Jaymes Bell, Scottsdale Fashion Square;
- Neil Calfee, Arizona State University (ASU);
- Payton Kruidenier, Ross Brown Partners;
- Chris Montgomery, Tourism Development Commission and Fiesta Sports Foundation;
- Karla Moran, Salt River Project (SRP);
- Michelle Pabis, HonorHealth;
- Kelly Patton, Arizona Public Service (APS);
- Rachel Sacco, Experience Scottsdale; and
- Mark Stanton, Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce.

Scottsdale business owners. This plan would not have been possible without the participation of Scottsdale business owners who contributed ideas through interviews, focus groups and the virtual workshop.

Study team. Keen Independent Research, www.keenindependent.com, conducted the study. Team members included:

- Alex Keen, Managing Principal and Co-owner; and
- Jennifer Tuchband, General Manager and Senior Consultant and Co-owner.



Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY — Key Findings

Scottsdale approaches its next phase of tourism and events development from a position of strength. Stakeholders identified the community's reputation, hospitality offerings, distinctive local experiences and quality of place as important assets. These strengths not only support visitation but also contribute to Scottsdale's appeal to businesses, investors and talent.

This plan is designed to preserve the characteristics that distinguish Scottsdale while creating new reasons to visit, explore and return. The Plan's direction is to connect experiences more effectively, target demand strategically and translate tourism activity into measurable benefits for businesses and the community.



Methodology

Keen Independent developed the Plan's findings and recommendations through background research and stakeholder engagement. The research included a review of Scottsdale's existing plans, City-commissioned studies, destination marketing strategies and recent tourism and lodging research. This review provided context for the Plan and identified opportunities to build on existing initiatives.

As part of the coordinated tourism and economic development planning process, Keen Independent engaged 45 key stakeholders through interviews and focus groups. Participants represented City leadership, tourism and hospitality, Old Town businesses, events, arts and recreation and other sectors connected to Scottsdale's economy. A virtual workshop gathered additional input from 180 participants, including business and organizational representatives and City staff. These activities explored Scottsdale's competitive strengths, business and tourism challenges, visitor experiences and priorities for future investment and action.

The study team synthesized the background research and stakeholder input to identify recurring themes, areas for improvement and opportunities for Scottsdale's visitor economy. City staff retreat discussions and Executive Advisory Council feedback helped refine these findings into the Plan's strategic priorities and recommended actions. Together, these efforts connected research and stakeholder perspectives with the City's priorities and implementation responsibilities.

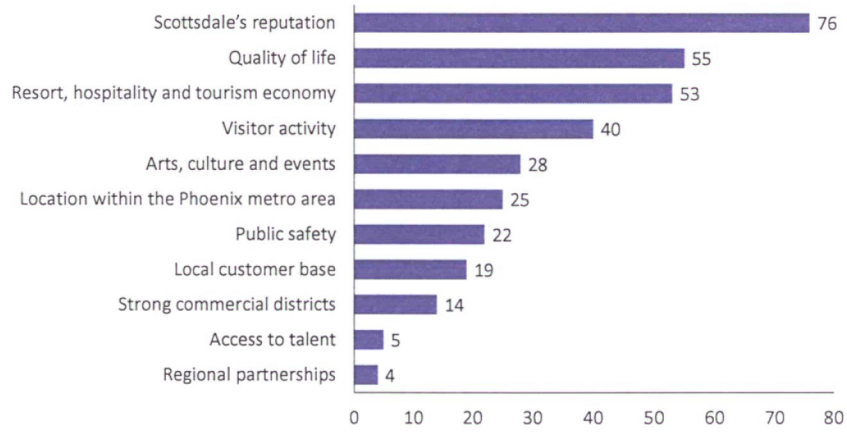
Scottsdale's Reputation is Sustained by Distinctive Experiences and Quality of Place

Scottsdale's established reputation is a foundational asset. Stakeholders emphasized authentic local experiences, dining, arts, wellness, outdoor activities and luxury accommodations as aspects that contribute to this strong reputation.

The virtual workshop reinforces the importance of this foundation. When asked about Scottsdale's strongest advantages as a place to do business, most respondents (62%) selected Scottsdale's reputation. Quality of life followed at 45% and the resort, hospitality and tourism economy at 43%. Note that these are business perspectives, not measurements of visitor brand awareness.

Stakeholders also emphasized continued reinvestment and adapting to changing traveler expectations and ways of discovering destinations. Participants described growing interest in authentic, locally distinctive experiences and the increasing role of social media and artificial intelligence in travel planning. They highlighted opportunities to refresh visitor amenities, develop events and experiences, and adjust marketing approaches to help Scottsdale remain competitive and give visitors new reasons to return.

2-1. Virtual workshop respondent response to Scottsdale's strongest advantages as a place to do business, n=122



Source: Keen Independent Research.

Scottsdale's brand identity is one of its greatest strengths.

You mention Scottsdale, everyone knows what it is, so I think that's always been a strength.

I think a lot of times we hear businesses that want to have the Scottsdale mailing address.

Scottsdale really has a well-founded reputation as sort of the mecca for golfers nationally and internationally.

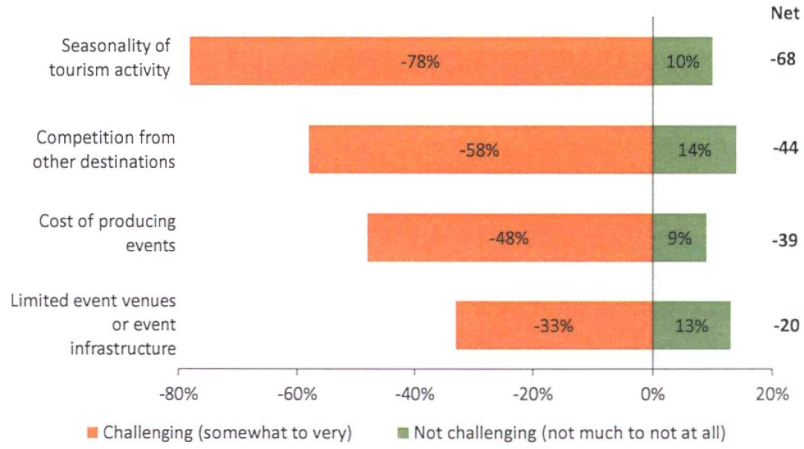
Seasonality Calls for Targeted Demand Development

Seasonality was the clearest reported tourism challenge in the business virtual workshop with 56 of 72 respondents (78%) rating it as very much or somewhat of a challenge. Competition from other destinations followed at 57% and event-production costs at 49%.

Tourism industry participants described different audiences and tactics for different seasons, including summer affordability, meeting- and group-business incentives and appropriately timed fall and holiday events. They cautioned against treating luxury travelers as one uniform customer segment.

Participants also identified opportunities to connect existing assets. They indicated that guided outdoor experiences, arts, dining and wellness offerings could be linked more effectively with hotels, visitor information and itineraries. Event stakeholders sought clearer target audiences, reliable venue arrangements and stronger alignment with seasonal opportunities.

2-2. Virtual workshop respondent rating of how much of a challenge the following are for Scottsdale's tourism, events or visitor economy, n=69–72



Source: Keen Independent Research.

It would be excellent if we had year-round visitors and business.

You won't pay the same rates at these fantastic resorts and hotels during the summertime as you would during peak season.

We know a lot of our hotel partners really do lean on that group business in the summer months to help get them through shoulder season.

Old Town Needs Both Preservation and Improvements to the Visitor Experience

Old Town's independent businesses, Western identity, galleries and historic character are important differentiators. Merchants emphasized unique experiences rather than replicating branded shopping districts. They also expressed interest in stronger connections to resort guests and clearer distinctions between visitor and local audiences.

Stakeholders differed on whether the principal need was stronger marketing or changes to buildings, business mix, operating hours and street activity. Maintenance, shade, wayfinding and pedestrian comfort also surfaced. This input points to a combination of promotion and improvements to the experience itself, not a single solution supported by every stakeholder.

As shown in Figure 2-3, better coordination among businesses, property owners and the City was the most frequently selected destination improvement, chosen by 40 of 114 workshop respondents. Other leading choices included support for arts and cultural activity (35), better marketing and visitor information (34), improved pedestrian experience (32) and more consistent events and programming (31). Although the question addressed Scottsdale as a whole, these priorities suggest a combined approach for Old Town to pair marketing with coordinated cultural programming and pedestrian improvements that make the district more inviting to explore.

Coordination and Implementation with Partners Need Strengthening

Better coordination among businesses, property owners and the City was also the most frequently selected destination improvement in the virtual workshop. Together, the interview and workshop findings identify coordination, clarity of responsibilities and follow-through as areas for improvement within Scottsdale's partnership network.

2-3. Virtual workshop responses to what would most strengthen Scottsdale as a visitor-facing business, tourism and events destination, n=114



Source: Keen Independent Research.

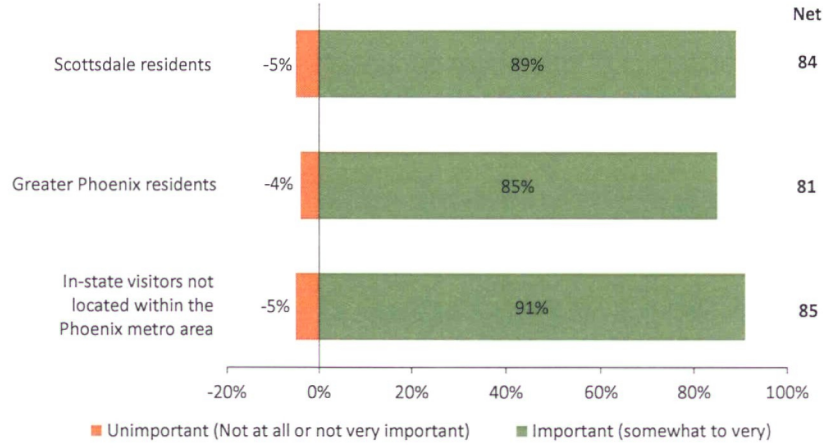
Event Attendance Does Not Automatically Translate into Benefits for Nearby Businesses

Merchants distinguished event attendance from spending at nearby businesses. Some described self-contained events that attracted participants but generated limited spillover for surrounding businesses. Event stakeholders also identified a need for clearer objectives, target audiences and definitions of economic and community benefit, highlighting that attendance alone does not fully describe an event's value.

Local customers are also an important part of Scottsdale's visitor-facing economy. In the virtual workshop, 63 of 71 respondents (89%) rated Scottsdale residents as very or somewhat important to their business or organization. Meanwhile, 11 of 71 respondents (16%) rated balancing visitor activity with resident quality of life as very much or somewhat of a challenge. These responses underscore the importance of residents as customers without indicating widespread concern among respondents about resident–visitor conflict.

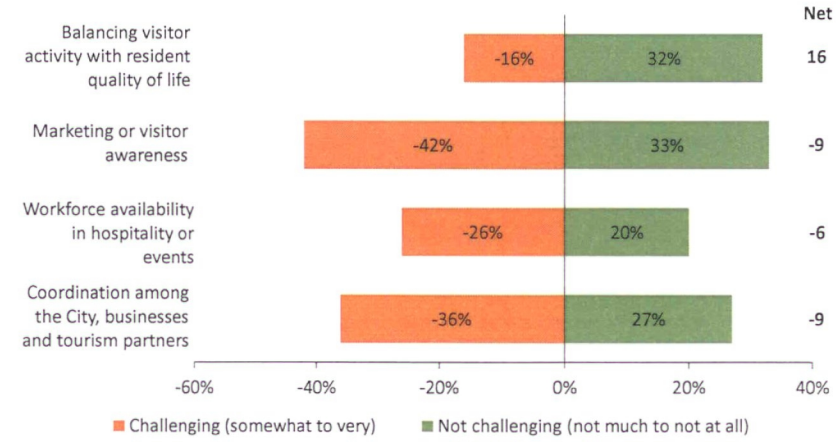
Together, these findings highlight the distinction between attracting people to an event and generating benefits for surrounding businesses and the community. Stakeholder perspectives encompassed both visitor spending and community value, rather than attendance alone.

2-4. Virtual workshop responses to how important the following audiences are to businesses/organizations, n=70–71



Source: Keen Independent Research.

2-5. Virtual workshop responses to how much the following are a challenge for Scottsdale's tourism, events or visitor economy, n=70–71



Source: Keen Independent Research.

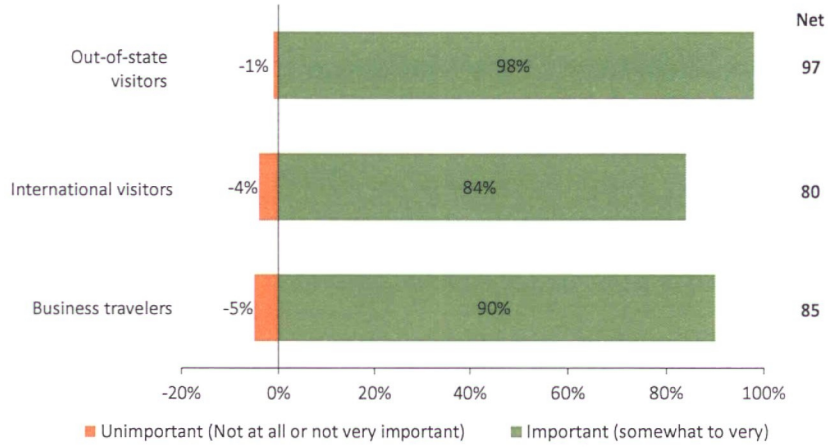
International and Business Visitors Require Connections and Promotion

International visitors and business travelers are important audiences among workshop respondents. Fifty-eight of 69 respondents (84%) rated international visitors as very or somewhat important to their business or organization. For business travelers, 64 of 71 respondents (90%) reported the same.

Tourism participants identified air connectivity and international perceptions of the United States as constraints that destination promotion alone cannot address. Business stakeholders saw opportunities to turn visits into longer-term relationships. The workshop establishes audience importance among respondents, but it does not quantify untapped demand or demonstrate the viability of a particular route or facility.

Stakeholder discussions identified interest in expanded meeting capacity, including a study of an Old Town convention facility and upscale meeting space suited to corporate customers. The discussions also highlighted demand, convenient lodging, walkability and hotel competition as important considerations.

2-6. Virtual workshop responses to how important the following audiences are to businesses/organizations, n=69–72



Source: Keen Independent Research.

The challenge that we have had is, even if the hotels have enough rooms, they don't have enough meeting space.

I think the next three years should be like ... let's commit to a feasibility study. What's it going to take? What are the locations? Who are the partners in town?

That high value corporate customer wants to be under one roof. They want to be in a resort.

I do think we need some larger [meeting space] options. I don't know if the convention center idea is the route for that.

Scottsdale's reputation, hospitality offerings, Western heritage, arts and culture and desert setting provide a strong foundation for its visitor economy. The research and stakeholder engagement highlighted the value of these assets alongside opportunities to strengthen destination appeal and connect visitor activity with local businesses.

Together, these findings establish a direction centered on preserving Scottsdale's distinctive qualities, developing demand strategically and strengthening the connections among experiences, businesses and partners. The Plan organizes this direction around four strategic priorities that connect the research findings with the strategies and implementation actions that follow.



TOURISM AND EVENTS STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

T1
Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

T2
Build the next generation of Scottsdale tourism demand

T3
Expand international visitor and business connectivity

T4
Position Old Town as Scottsdale's distinctive experiential district



Strategic Priorities

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES — Introduction

This section presents four strategic priorities to guide Scottsdale's Tourism and Events work during 2027–2029. Together, they connect destination marketing, events, partnerships and public investment with the quality of the visitor experience and the benefits tourism delivers to Scottsdale.

How to Use the Strategic Priorities

Each strategic priority establishes a broad direction, and the numbered objectives identify areas for action. Each objective includes potential tactics for implementation. Use these priorities and objectives as focused guides for action.

Approaching strategic priorities as a road map. Each priority includes action items that reflect findings from the planning process and provides suggestions for implementation. This Plan is intended to be a living document, meaning the City can take the suggestions under each action item as starting points for initiatives while making adjustments that respond to stakeholder feedback and needs.

Connecting the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan to the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Given the overlap between the two focus areas and City staff responsibility for both, the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan was developed in conjunction with the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The strategic priorities of this plan were developed and refined alongside the strategic priorities of the Economic Development Strategic Plan and are designed to work in tandem.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY T1. Protect and Elevate Scottsdale's Brand

Scottsdale's brand depends on the quality and character of the experiences it delivers. This priority connects destination identity, distinctive events, public safety and accountable partnerships to protect that reputation and guide tourism investment.

T1.1. Unify Scottsdale's citywide destination brand while reinforcing the distinctive identities of its districts and attractions

A unified destination brand would help visitors understand the range of experiences Scottsdale offers and how they connect, while preserving the distinctive qualities that make individual districts and attractions worth exploring. Aligning messages across City departments, tourism partners and businesses would strengthen recognition of Scottsdale and make promotional efforts more mutually supportive.

This may include:

- Reviewing the existing tourism drivers with Experience Scottsdale and City departments to clarify how they guide destination messaging, programming and investment; and
- Developing shared destination language that presents Old Town and other districts and attractions within Scottsdale's overall brand while retaining their distinctive identities.

T1.2. Elevate arts, culture, culinary experiences, shopping, golf, Western heritage and the desert as defining elements of Scottsdale's destination identity

Scottsdale's arts, culture, culinary experiences, shopping, golf, Western heritage and desert setting offer distinctive reasons to choose the city and explore beyond its resorts. Giving these assets greater prominence in the destination's identity would communicate a fuller picture of Scottsdale, appeal to varied visitor interests and connect travelers with local businesses and experiences. Strengthen the visibility of these experiences in destination storytelling and programming, including public art, Scottsdale Arts, Western Spirit, Fashion Square, luxury retail, local restaurants and the Preserve.

This may include:

- Assembling stories, images and visitor experiences with arts, heritage, culinary, retail and recreation partners for use in destination content and programming;
- Developing themed content that connects public art, Western heritage, local dining, shopping, golf and desert experiences; and
- Coordinating public art planning with Economic Development & Tourism staff and cultural partners to strengthen the visitor routes, gathering places and experiences featured in destination promotion.

T1.3. Recruit new signature events and identify existing events that could grow into the next tier of destination draws

Developing the next generation of signature events would give travelers new reasons to choose Scottsdale and help sustain its appeal as visitor interests change. Recruiting new events and supporting existing events with growth potential could attract additional overnight visitors, strengthen demand during slower periods and showcase Scottsdale's distinctive assets.

This may include:

- Establishing criteria for attracting, retaining, improving and supporting events based on destination fit and intended benefits;
- Prioritizing opportunities that complement Scottsdale's established event calendar and generate additional visitation and spending; and
- Preparing recruitment or growth proposals with event organizers, hospitality partners and venue staff that identify intended audiences, venue needs, City participation and expected benefits.

T1.4. Enhance partnerships with event organizers to improve event quality and audience appeal

The quality of Scottsdale's events shapes visitors' impressions of the destination and their interest in returning. Working more closely with event organizers could help align programming, promotion and the attendee experience with the interests of intended audiences. Sharing visitor insights and coordinating improvements could strengthen event appeal, encourage repeat attendance and connect attendees with nearby businesses and attractions, increasing the value of events for both organizers and the community.

This may include:

- Selecting events for joint planning with organizers and agreeing on specific City and organizer roles in promotion, logistics, public safety and visitor services; and
- Reviewing event results and audience feedback with organizers to identify improvements before renewing or expanding City participation.

T1.5. Target and strengthen tourism and event investments through clear performance measures

Clear performance measures would help Scottsdale understand which tourism and event investments deliver the intended benefits and where adjustments are needed. Evaluating results such as overnight visitation, visitor spending, seasonal demand and community benefits alongside City costs would provide a stronger basis for funding decisions. A consistent approach would also help partners improve their efforts over time and enable the City to explain the value of its investments to residents, businesses and decision makers.

This may include:

- Setting outcome measures before awarding support, distinguishing events intended to generate overnight stays from those primarily serving community participation and destination identity;
- Using consistent post-event reporting on attendance, visitor origins, estimated room nights, spending and City support costs, with data sources and limitations identified; and
- Reviewing results across funded events, marketing activities and tourism infrastructure investments to inform renewals, funding adjustments and future priorities.

T1.6. Strengthen oversight of major destination contracts and partnerships to align activities with City priorities and deliver measurable public benefit

Major destination contracts and partnerships represent significant commitments of City resources and influence how Scottsdale is promoted and experienced. Strengthening oversight would help ensure that partner activities advance City goals, responsibilities are clearly defined and results can be evaluated against agreed expectations. Regular reporting and review would support timely adjustments, strengthen accountability and demonstrate the tourism, economic and community benefits these investments deliver.

This may include:

- Clarifying responsibilities, City access to partner-managed City-owned assets, performance expectations and reporting arrangements with Experience Scottsdale, Scottsdale Arts, Fiesta Sports Foundation, Western Spirit and other destination partners;
- Establishing coordinated work planning and performance reviews with each partner, tied to applicable agreements, City priorities and intended public benefits; and
- Sharing performance information across departments and documenting follow-up on any issues or unmet expectations so that partnership commitments and contract responsibilities are understood internally.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T2. Build the Next Generation of Scottsdale Tourism Demand

Sustaining Scottsdale's visitor economy requires new reasons to visit and stronger connections between existing experiences, venues and audiences. This priority focuses on generating additional stays and spending through targeted seasonal opportunities, coordinated venue use and evaluation of investments that could support future demand.

T2.1. Grow high season demand and selectively pursue shoulder season and summer opportunities

Building demand during Scottsdale's high season would strengthen its appeal when travelers are most inclined to visit, while targeted efforts during shoulder seasons and summer could help sustain business activity throughout the year. Different seasons call for different audiences, experiences and pricing approaches, reflecting weather conditions, travel motivations and available capacity. Focusing on opportunities suited to each season could help attract additional overnight stays, support local businesses and make effective use of tourism resources.

This may include:

- Building on Scottsdale's strongest visitor periods through events, experiences and marketing that generate additional visitation and spending;
- Pursuing fall activations and selected shoulder season or summer offerings where Scottsdale has a clear competitive proposition, including strategic use of indoor venues, resort experiences, WestWorld and the stadium; and
- Evaluating additional stays, spending, participation and delivery costs before expanding seasonal offerings or committing to recurring support.

T2.2. Assess meeting and performing arts facilities as potential sources of new demand

Convention and performing arts facilities could give visitors new reasons to travel to Scottsdale, support local businesses and expand opportunities for residents. Assessing these facilities would help the City determine whether they could attract meetings, performances and audiences that existing venues cannot accommodate. This evaluation should consider market demand, location, nearby lodging, development and operating costs, and potential effects on existing hotels and venues to determine whether either type of facility would generate sufficient additional tourism and community benefits to warrant investment.

This may include:

- Undertaking separate market and feasibility studies for a Scottsdale convention facility and performing arts facilities that examine prospective users, event demand and the relationship to existing facilities; and
- Using the studies to clarify demand and potential next steps, distinguishing those achievable planning actions from a commitment to constructing facilities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T2. Build the Next Generation of Scottsdale Tourism Demand

T2.3. Invest tourism revenues in long-lived destination assets

Investing a portion of tourism revenues in long-lived destination assets would help Scottsdale turn today's visitor activity into lasting value for the community. Improvements to public spaces, cultural facilities and visitor amenities can strengthen the experiences that attract travelers while also benefiting residents. This approach would help sustain Scottsdale's competitiveness over time by supporting assets that give people reasons to visit, stay longer and return.

This may include:

- Identifying priority assets, assessing capital financing and bonding options and connecting proposed investments to potential tourism outcomes;
- Preparing project-specific funding and implementation plans that distinguish capital costs, ongoing operating needs, potential partner contributions and required approvals;
- Advancing project-specific funding approaches subject to eligibility, financial analysis and required approvals.

T2.4. Strengthen Scottsdale's health and wellness positioning through coordinated experiences and partnerships

Health and wellness present an opportunity to connect Scottsdale's resorts, spas, outdoor recreation and health-related services into a more cohesive visitor experience. Coordinating experiences and partnerships would make these offerings easier to discover and combine, helping Scottsdale appeal to travelers seeking relaxation, renewal and active lifestyles.

This may include:

- Developing itineraries with pool experiences, yoga and group fitness programming that appeal to younger visitors as well as Scottsdale and regional residents year-round; and
- Integrating lodging, dining and recreation opportunities into healthcare-related visits and aligning these efforts with Economic Development's healthcare and biotechnology work.

T2.5. Position Scottsdale as a premier sports tourism, cycling, endurance and outdoor recreation destination

Cycling, endurance sports and outdoor recreation offer opportunities to connect Scottsdale's desert setting with travel motivated by competition and adventure. Strengthening this positioning could attract athletes, recreational visitors and accompanying families.

This may include:

- Connecting the Preserve, Greenbelt and hiking and cycling experiences with destination marketing and event development;
- Expanding events like Tour de Scottsdale and recruitment of major endurance events, working with event organizers, recreation partners and hospitality businesses to connect participation with overnight stays and spending; and
- Coordinating participant and companion itineraries that connect events with Scottsdale lodging, local dining and activities before and after competition.

T2.6. Expand and modernize visitor marketing across Scottsdale

How travelers discover destinations and plan trips continues to change, making it important for Scottsdale's visitor marketing to reach audiences through the channels and content they use. Expanding and modernizing these efforts could help connect prospective visitors with experiences across the city, tailor messages to different interests and seasons, and turn awareness into bookings and visits. Coordinated marketing informed by audience insights and performance results could also help tourism partners use resources effectively and adapt as travel preferences evolve.

This may include:

- Creating a coordinated in-market content calendar featuring experiences throughout Scottsdale (expanding beyond Old Town and Fashion Square to McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, restaurants citywide, golf courses, the Preserve, Taliesin West, WestWorld, SkySong, the Airpark corridor and the Greenbelt), with defined responsibilities for the City's marketing team and Experience Scottsdale;
- Equipping hotels, venues and local businesses with current digital visitor information, event listings and recommendations that encourage exploration beyond familiar destinations; and
- Piloting selected digital channels and staff-reviewed, artificial intelligence assisted visitor information, comparing performance with existing approaches before expanding their use.

T2.7. Convert business and conference travel into longer stays and broader participation in Scottsdale experiences

Business and conference travel brings visitors to Scottsdale who may have limited opportunities to experience the city beyond their meetings. Connecting these travelers with convenient options for dining, arts, shopping, golf, wellness and outdoor recreation could encourage them to extend their stays and explore more of Scottsdale.

This may include:

- Improving coordination with Experience Scottsdale around its existing contracted conference and concierge services, encouraging attendees to explore Scottsdale beyond their meetings through dining, event and itinerary recommendations;
- Developing pre- and post-meeting itineraries and companion activities tailored to meeting locations and schedules, including dining, cultural, outdoor and family experiences; and
- Working with meeting planners, hotels and local businesses to make these experiences easy to discover and book.

T2.8. Manage City venues as a coordinated portfolio that grows tourism and economic outcomes

Event organizers may approach one City venue without realizing that another could better meet their needs. Assigning the Venue Business Development Manager responsibility for coordinating event placement across City venues would help match events with facilities suited to their size, format and operational requirements. This portfolio-wide approach can better serve organizers while opening dates and capacity at other venues for higher-impact events that generate more overnight visitation and local spending.

This may include:

- Inventorying venue capabilities and improving consistency in access, scheduling, catering and event use;
- Supporting coordination of event placement through shared calendars, coordinated event recruitment and a customer relationship management system that tracks prospective events for all City venues and cross-venue opportunities; and
- Tracking venue utilization and tourism and economic outcomes for each event.

T2.9. Capture more visitation and local spending from regional sports and entertainment tourism activity

Regional sports and entertainment events bring audiences within reach of Scottsdale, creating opportunities to attract overnight stays and spending beyond the event itself. Connecting these audiences with Scottsdale's lodging, dining, shopping and recreation could encourage them to make the city part of their trip. Coordinated promotion and partnerships with regional event organizers, such as Fiesta Sports Foundation, and tourism businesses could help turn nearby activity into additional visits and local business revenue.

This may include:

- Developing spring training transportation concepts with neighboring destinations and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, linking ballparks with Scottsdale lodging, dining and attractions;
- Coordinating regional event promotions that invite attendees to stay, dine, shop and explore Scottsdale before and after events; and
- Reviewing regional venue proposals for partnerships that use Scottsdale's existing assets and connect event audiences with local businesses.

T2.10. Align the Special Events Ordinance and event support practices with desired outcomes and full City costs

Aligning the Special Events Ordinance and event support practices with Scottsdale's desired outcomes could help the City attract events that advance tourism and community priorities while making informed use of public resources. Reviewing event requirements, approval processes and funding practices can identify barriers to desirable events, while accounting for the full cost of City services. Together, these steps would provide a more transparent and consistent basis for determining which events merit City support, the appropriate level of subsidy and which costs organizers or partners should cover.

This may include:

- Quantifying the City resources required to support events, particularly police and fire services, and using those costs and expected benefits to inform a transparent discussion of which high-impact events merit public subsidy and which costs should be recovered;
- Mapping event approval processes and duration, frequency and funding constraints with organizers and City staff to identify barriers to desired events; and
- Preparing options for ordinance changes, event subsidies, cost recovery, sponsorship and partner participation for stakeholder input and legal review before seeking required approvals.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T3. Expand International Visitor and Business Connectivity

International tourism and business relationships offer complementary opportunities to introduce new audiences to Scottsdale and encourage longer stays. This priority builds on existing partner efforts to strengthen air access for international visitors, include Scottsdale in broader travel itineraries and connect business visitors and accompanying families with local experiences.

T3.1. Coordinate international visitor development with Scottsdale's international business relationships

Scottsdale's international business relationships offer opportunities to build awareness of the city as a travel destination, while tourism can introduce visitors to its business community and investment opportunities. Coordinating these efforts would help tourism and economic development partners share market knowledge, connect with overseas partners and incorporate destination promotion into business exchanges.

This may include:

- Aligning Tourism & Events, Economic Development and Experience Scottsdale around selected markets, shared outreach and complementary visitor and business objectives; and
- Coordinating work with the City International Office described in the Economic Development Plan (E2.3) so that international travel, trade positioning and relationship building follow a shared strategy.

T3.2. Expand air connectivity through regional international service and define Scottsdale Airport's appropriate future role

Convenient air access helps Scottsdale compete for international leisure visitors, business travelers and meetings by reducing the time and complexity of reaching the destination. Working with regional airport and tourism partners to expand international service could strengthen connections with key visitor and business markets.

This may include:

- Supporting Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and regional partners in pursuing additional international service;
- Assessing premium public charter opportunities with Scottsdale Airport staff for compatibility with business aviation, facility requirements and applicable approvals; and
- Coordinating destination and business promotion around air access opportunities that airport and regional partners identify as viable.

T3.3. Integrate Scottsdale into international multi-destination itineraries

International visitors may combine several destinations within a single trip, creating opportunities for Scottsdale to attract travelers already considering Arizona and the broader Southwest. Working with travel trade and regional partners to include Scottsdale in these itineraries could introduce the city to new audiences and encourage overnight stays. Connecting Scottsdale's resorts, arts, dining and desert experiences with complementary destinations would give travelers clear reasons to include the city in their plans.

This may include:

- Building on Experience Scottsdale's existing partnerships to connect Scottsdale with Sedona, the Grand Canyon and other Arizona destinations, as well as broader Western U.S. itineraries where appropriate; and
- Positioning Scottsdale for stays at the beginning or end of those trips through shopping, golf, wellness, desert, cultural and culinary experiences.

T3.4. Develop extended stay experiences for international executives and accompanying families

International business travel creates opportunities to extend visits beyond scheduled meetings and introduce executives and their families to Scottsdale's broader offerings. Developing experiences that combine business needs with recreation, arts, dining and family activities could encourage longer stays and additional spending at local businesses. These experiences could also build familiarity with Scottsdale as a place to visit, live and do business, supporting repeat travel and stronger international business relationships.

This may include:

- Connecting international business visits, particularly those associated with the regional semiconductor and technology economy, with Scottsdale lodging, dining, recreation and family experiences and coordinating this work with business attraction and conference visitor services; and
- Developing extended stay guides that combine lodging, dining, recreation, cultural and family experiences across different visit lengths and business schedules.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T4. Position Old Town as Scottsdale's Distinctive Experiential District

Old Town brings together many of the cultural, historic and commercial experiences that distinguish Scottsdale. This priority connects marketing and recurring programming with improvements to comfort, access and public spaces so visitors explore more of the district and support its businesses.

T4.1. Continue implementing and improving the Old Town Marketing Program

Consistent marketing helps prospective visitors and residents discover Old Town's businesses, cultural attractions and events, giving them reasons to visit and return. Continuing and refining the Old Town Marketing Program would build on existing efforts while adapting messages and outreach to changing audiences, travel planning habits and seasonal opportunities. Using performance results and business feedback to guide improvements would help keep the program relevant and direct resources toward efforts that encourage visits and support local businesses.

This may include:

- Organizing campaigns around complete Old Town visits that combine arts, shopping, dining, nightlife and daytime activities for different audiences and life stages;
- Developing themed itineraries linking businesses, cultural venues and public spaces with locally distinctive, behind the scenes and hands-on experiences; and
- Using campaign performance and visitor engagement data to refine content and channels and coordinating those efforts with the citywide brand and integrated program of work in the Economic Development Plan (E1.2).

T4.2. Establish coordinated, recurring programming throughout the Old Town district

Coordinated, recurring programming would give residents and visitors more reasons to explore Old Town, stay longer and return throughout the year. Connecting activities across businesses, cultural venues and public spaces could encourage people to visit multiple locations and support a broader range of local businesses.

This may include:

- Maintaining a shared programming calendar with merchants, property owners, cultural partners and City staff, identifying activity leads and coordinating dates;
- Increasing live music, fashion shows, chef competitions, culinary festivals featuring Old Town restaurants, seasonal activities and street performer events, building on existing business activities where practical; and
- Extending activation into different areas and times of day rather than concentrating activity in the same locations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T4. Position Old Town as Scottsdale's Distinctive Experiential District

T4.3. Improve Old Town's pedestrian comfort, wayfinding and connections to surrounding experiences

A comfortable, easy to navigate pedestrian environment can encourage visitors to spend more time in Old Town and explore more of its businesses and attractions. Improving shade, places to rest and wayfinding would help people move confidently between destinations, particularly during warmer weather.

This may include:

- Identifying gaps in shade, signage and pedestrian and cycling connections along visitor routes linking Old Town, Civic Center, the canals and the Greenbelt; and
- Integrating shade producing public art with stronger pedestrian and cycling connections among Old Town destinations, Civic Center, the canals and the Greenbelt.

T4.4. Explore pedestrian-oriented streets and outdoor gathering places

Pedestrian-oriented streets and outdoor gathering places could make Old Town more inviting by creating space to linger, socialize and enjoy dining, arts and community activities. Exploring these opportunities would help the City identify where changes to street design or use could enhance the visitor experience and support nearby businesses while maintaining access for deliveries, emergency services and people with mobility needs. Temporary demonstrations or pilot projects could help assess benefits and address practical concerns before committing to permanent improvements.

This may include:

- Identifying candidate streets, patios and gathering places with merchants and property owners, considering pedestrian connections, programming opportunities and continued business access;
- Testing temporary street closures and outdoor gathering layouts with clear arrangements for deliveries, emergency access, cleanup and ongoing operations; and
- Evaluating visitor use, merchant feedback and operating costs before extending pilots or considering permanent changes.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T4. Position Old Town as Scottsdale's Distinctive Experiential District

T4.5. Secure distinctive attractions and public spaces through private development partnerships

Private development offers opportunities to add distinctive attractions and welcoming public spaces that strengthen Old Town's appeal. Working with developers early in the planning process could help incorporate cultural experiences, gathering places and connections to nearby businesses that advance shared tourism and community goals. These partnerships could combine private investment with public objectives.

This may include:

- Defining the visitor experiences and public spaces sought from private development and negotiating collaborative agreements that connect projects with those outcomes;
- Working with SRP and private development partners to extend the Scottsdale Waterfront in both directions and strengthen its connections to Old Town; and
- Evaluating project concepts through the above partnerships, negotiating project-specific contributions, public access, operating responsibilities and implementation milestones before advancing collaborative agreements for required approvals.

T4.6. Lead the prioritization and shaping of continued capital improvements in Old Town

Continued capital investment can help Old Town maintain its appeal, address aging infrastructure and meet changing visitor and business needs. Taking an active role in identifying and shaping these improvements would help ensure that projects advance tourism goals, reinforce the district's character and respond to the needs of residents and businesses. Coordinating project selection, design and timing would also help the City direct resources toward improvements with the greatest benefit.

This may include:

- Maintaining a prioritized list of Old Town visitor improvements led by Tourism & Events and informed by businesses, cultural partners and public space users;
- Translating priorities into project scopes, sequencing and visitor outcomes for coordination with the departments responsible for planning, engineering and delivery;
- Connecting continued public investment with shade, walkability, wayfinding, public spaces and district activation; and
- Coordinating construction timing with district programming and business access.

Item WS01

Scottsdale Economic Development and Tourism & Events Strategic Planning Updates for City Council Work Session

Presented by:
Alex Keen, Managing Principal
Jennifer Tuchband, General Manager and Senior Consultant

Keen Independent Research LLC
2929 E. Camelback Rd., Suite 115
Phoenix AZ 85016

alexkeen@keenindependent.com
jennifer.tuchband@keenindependent.com

www.keenindependent.com

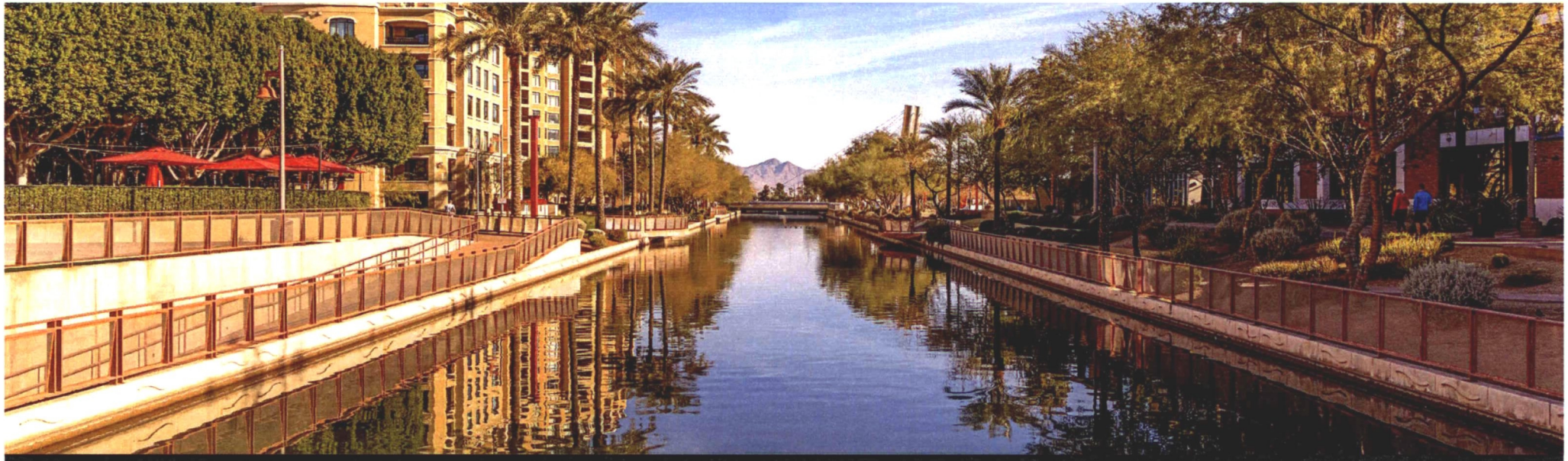
November 2026

Presentation Overview



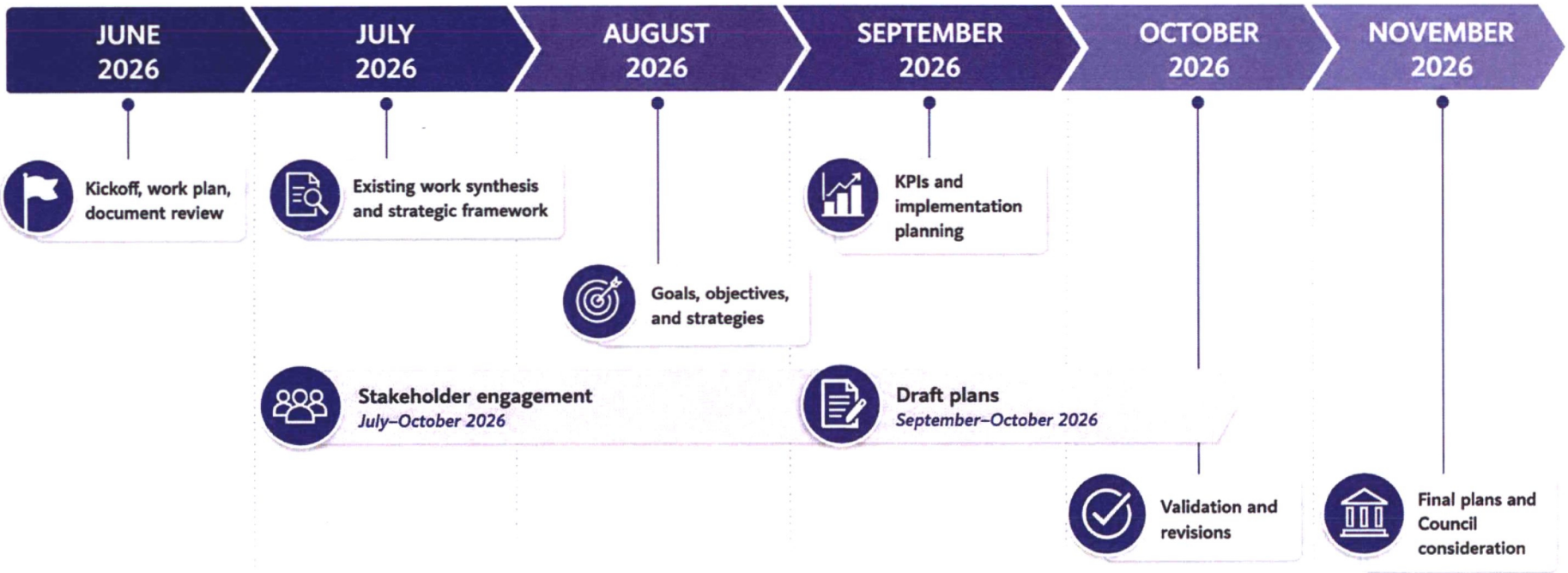
- Project status
- Draft findings
- Planning overview
- Overall strategies

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH



Project Status

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH



Our goal is to deliver two coordinated, actionable strategic plans that guide implementation and inform Council decision-making by **November 2026.**

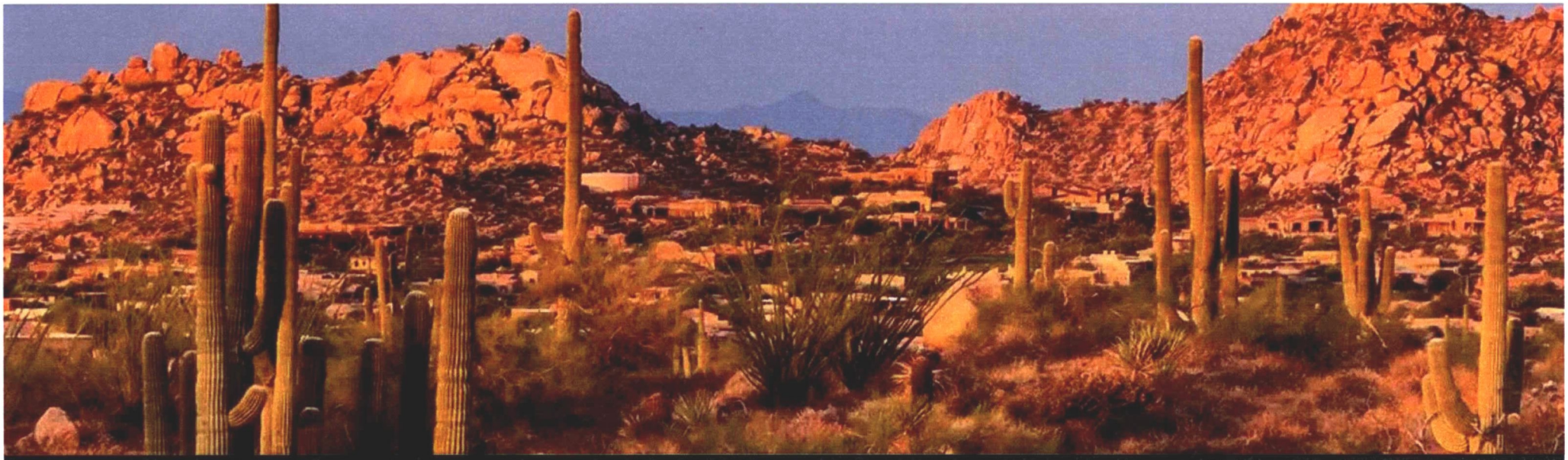
KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Engagement

- Virtual workshop responses: 180 (incl. 10 City staff)
- Stakeholders interviewed: 45
- Tourism Development Commission meetings
- Economic Development Committee meetings
- Executive Advisory Council meetings
- Staff retreat



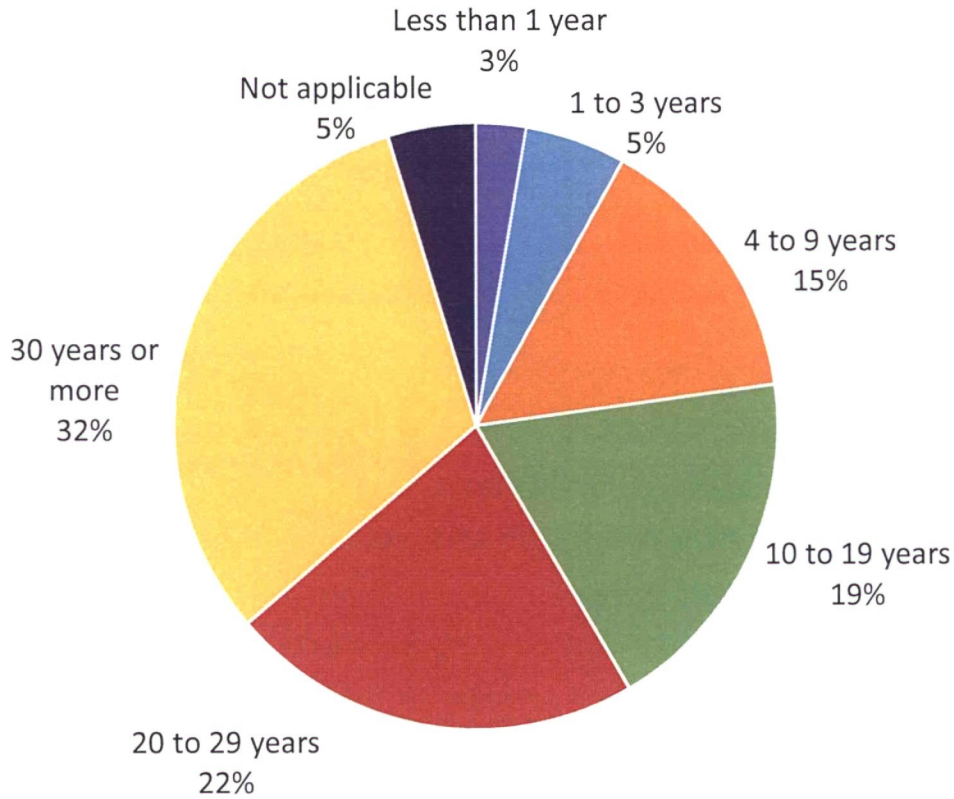
KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH



Draft Findings

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

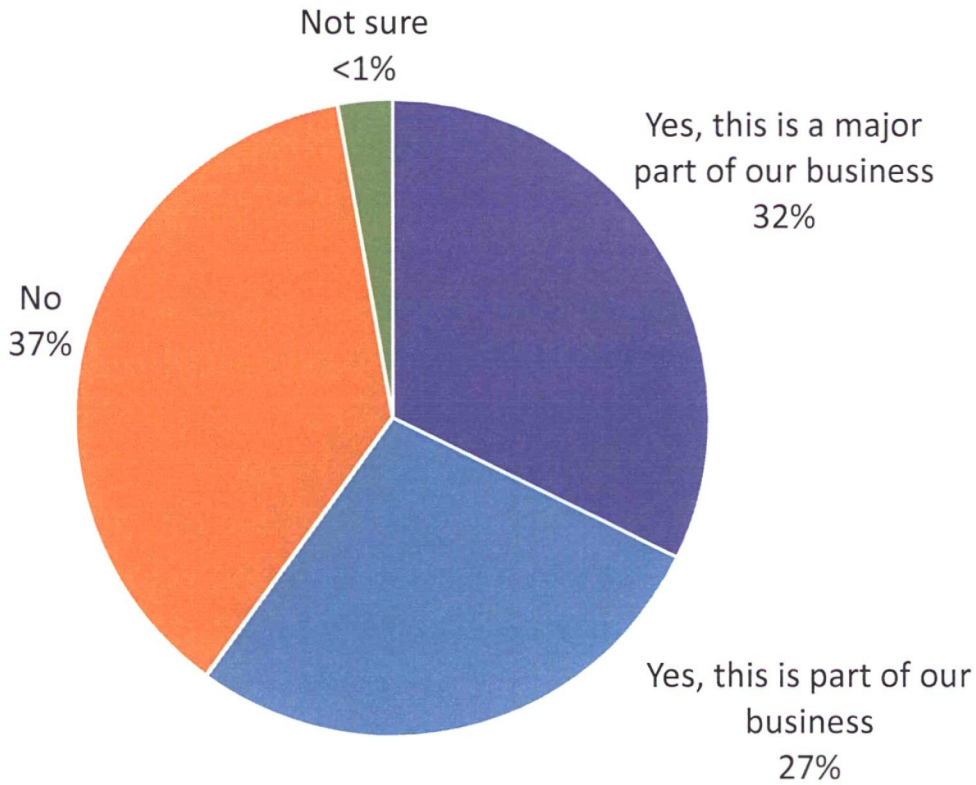
Early Findings — Length of time business has operated in Scottsdale



n = 149

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

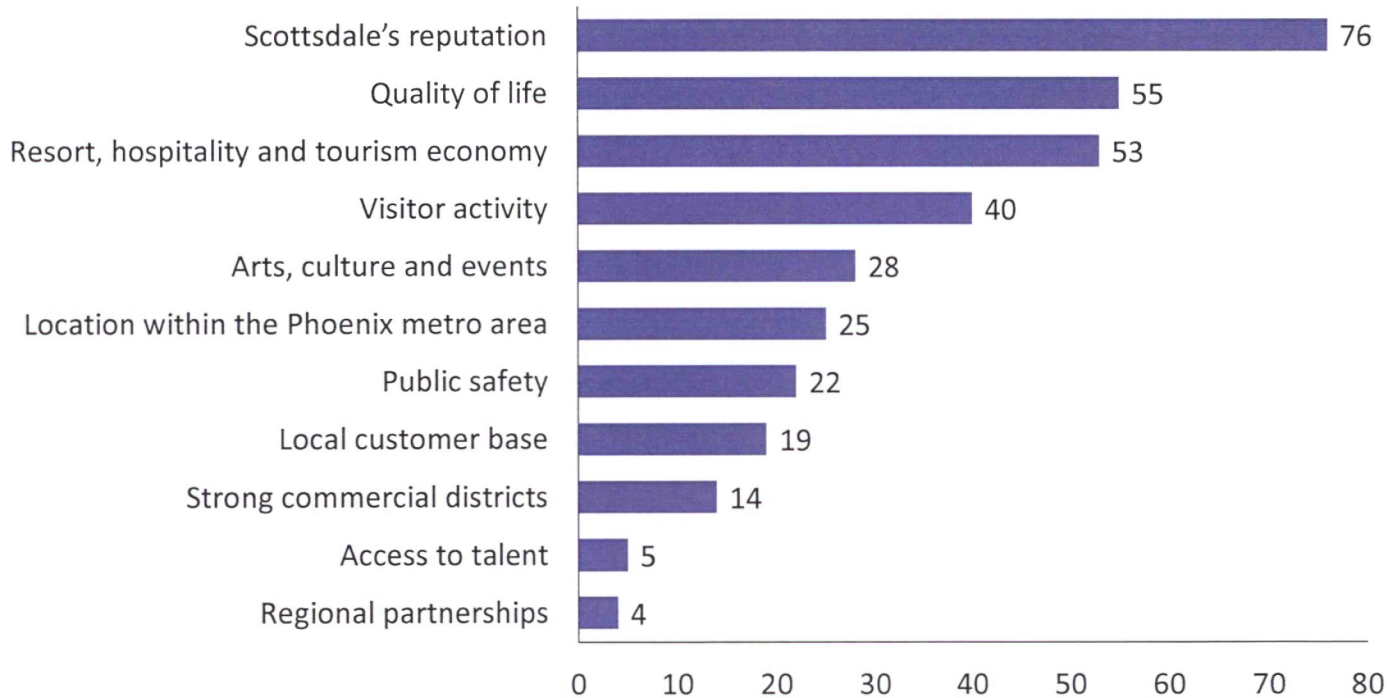
Draft Findings — Businesses that directly serve tourists or event attendees



n = 180

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

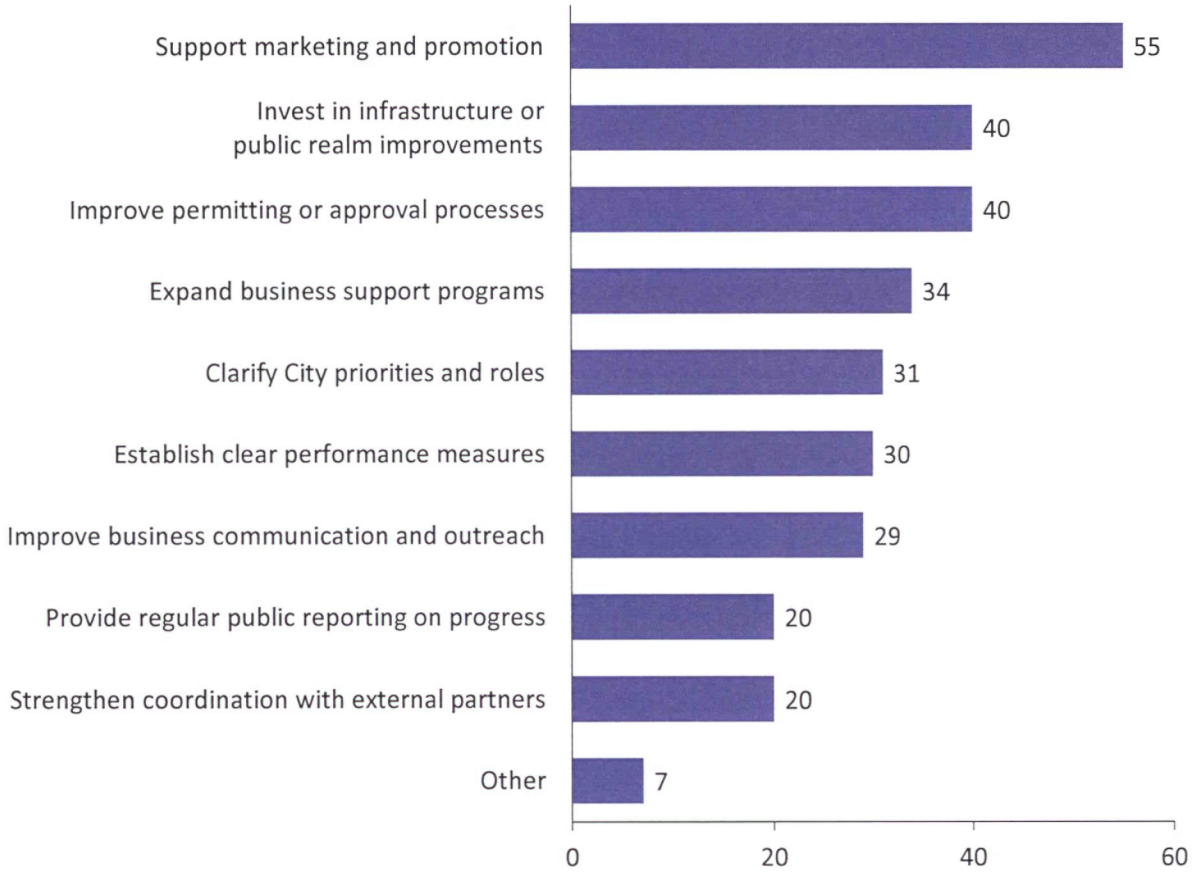
Draft Findings — Scottsdale's strongest advantages as a place to do business



n = 122

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

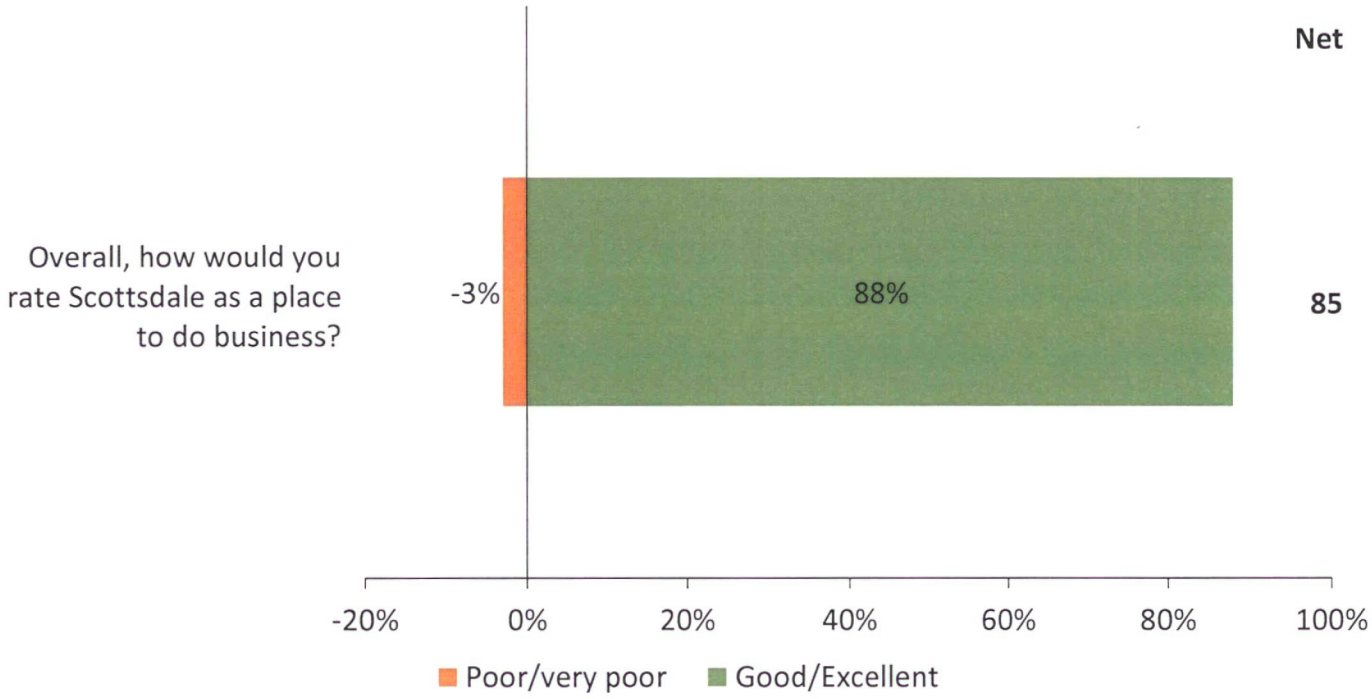
Draft Findings — Most important actions the City could take to support implementation of the strategic plans



n = 113

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

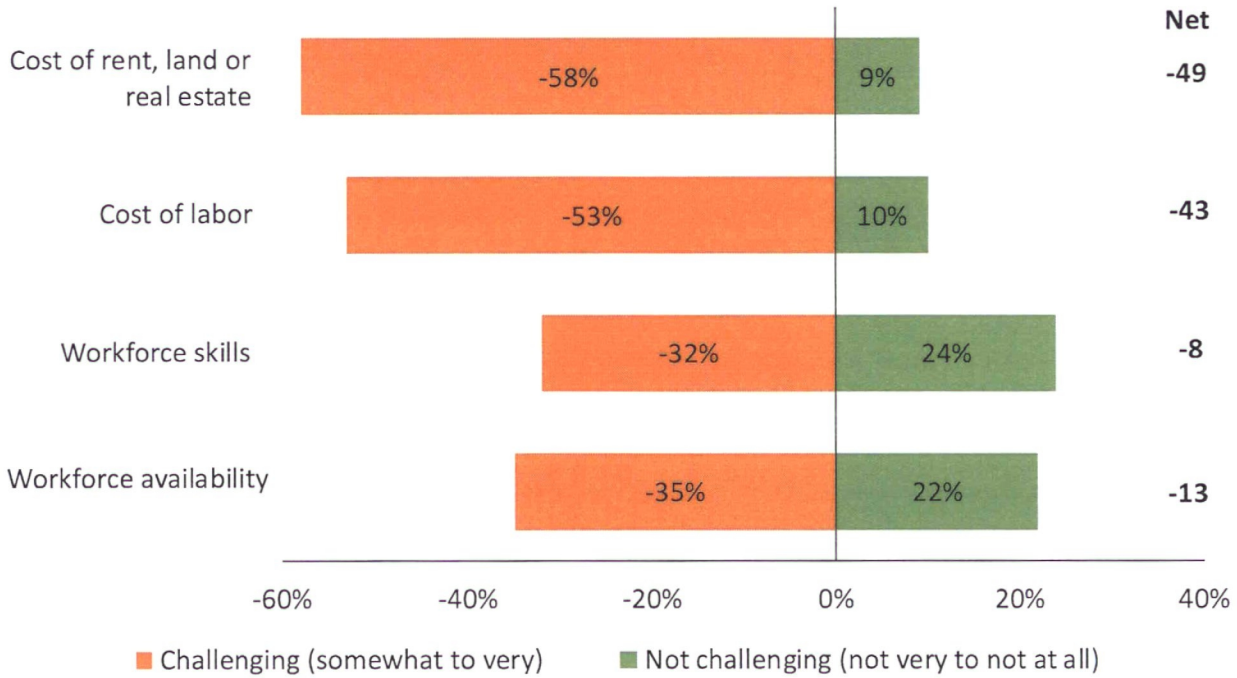
Draft Findings — How Scottsdale is rated as a place to do business



n = 125

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

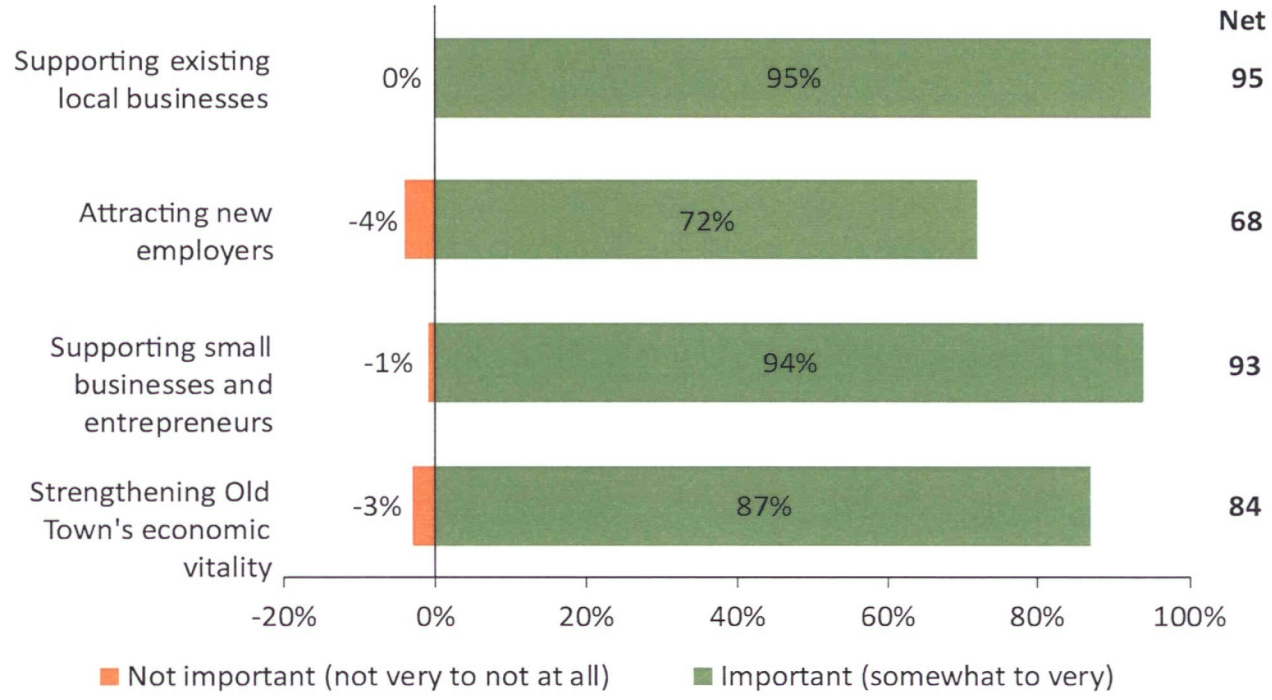
Draft Findings — How much of a challenge are the following



n = 118

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

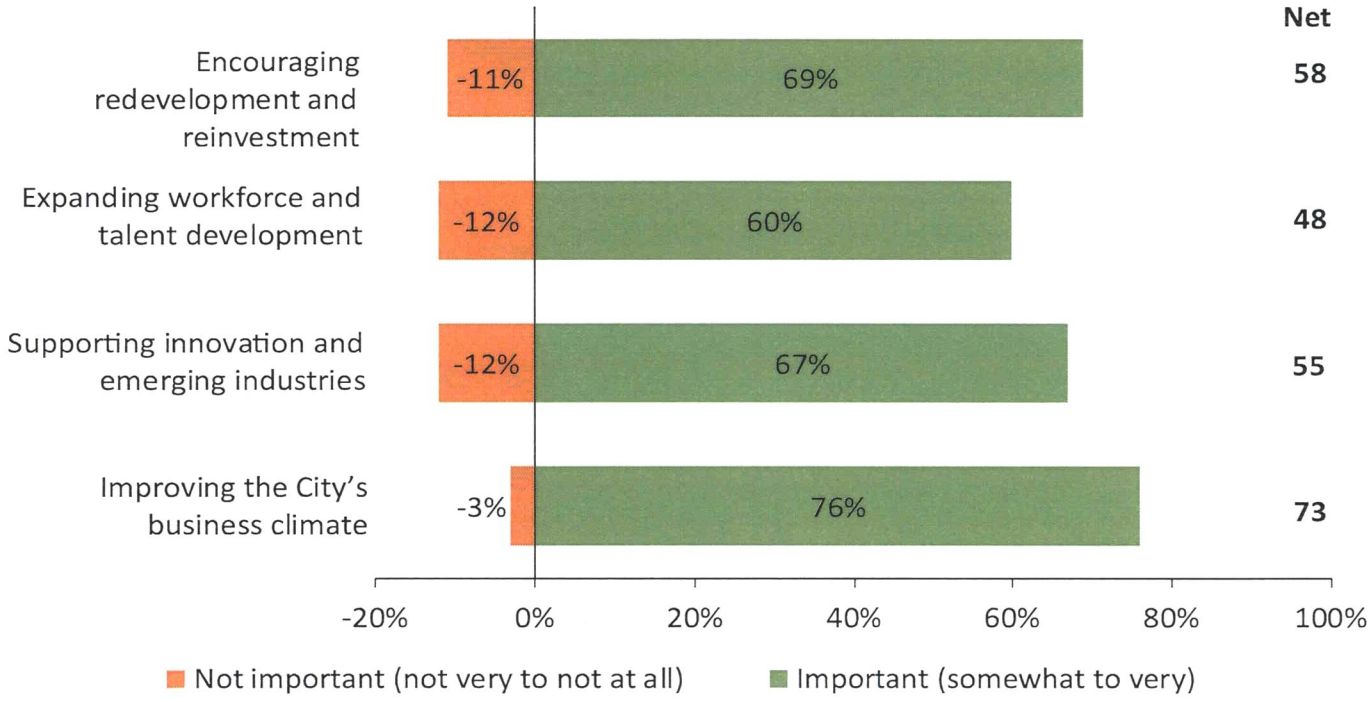
Draft Findings — How important are each of the following for Scottsdale's Economic Development Strategic Plan?



n = 114–115

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

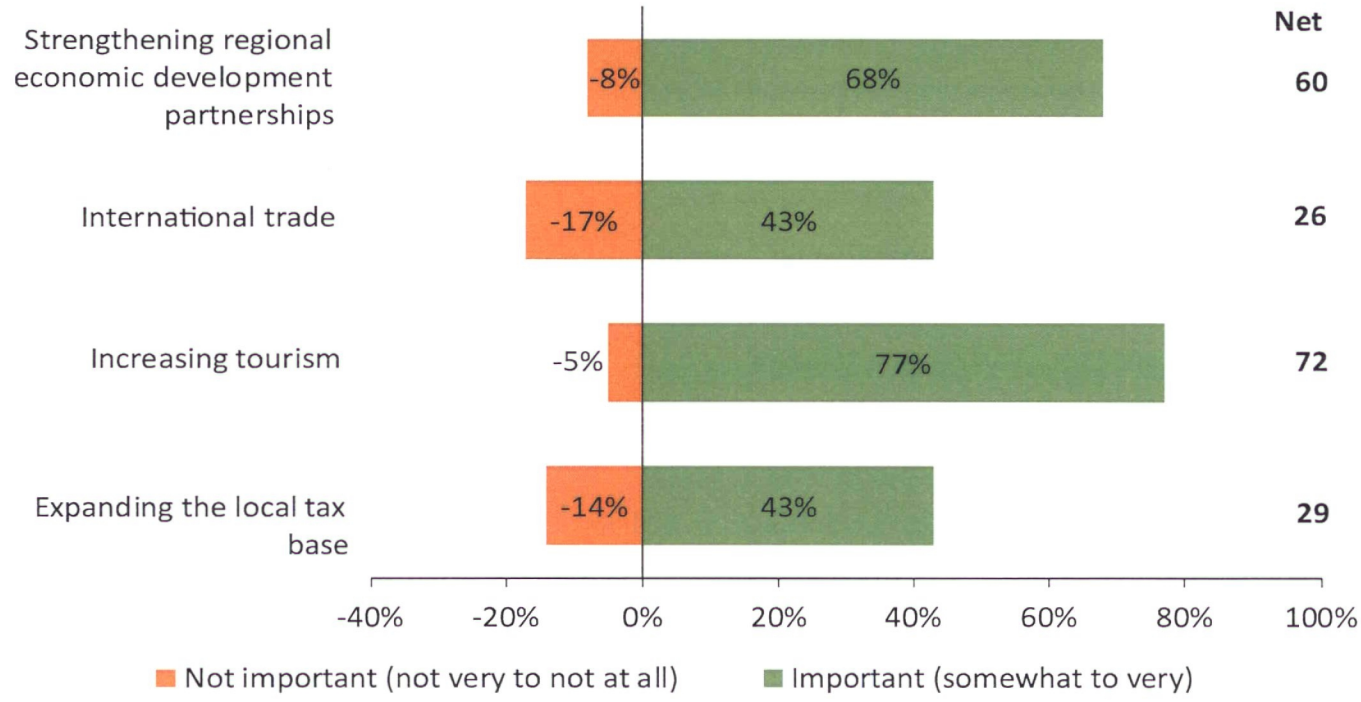
Draft Findings — How important are each of the following for Scottsdale's Economic Development Strategic Plan?



n = 112–114

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Draft Findings — How important are each of the following for Scottsdale's Economic Development Strategic Plan?



n = 112–114

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

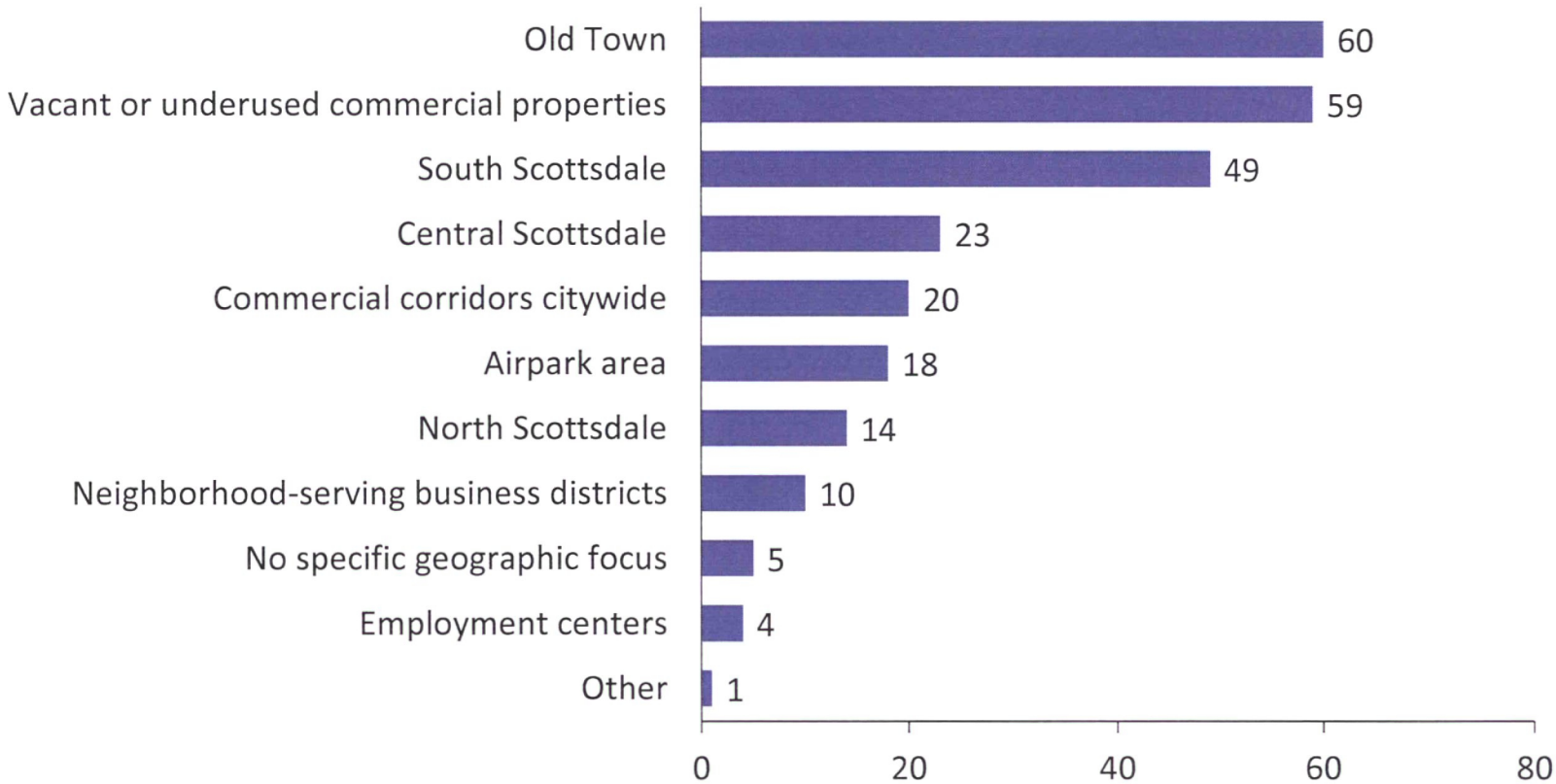
Draft Findings — What economic development priorities should receive the most attention over the next five years



n = 114

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

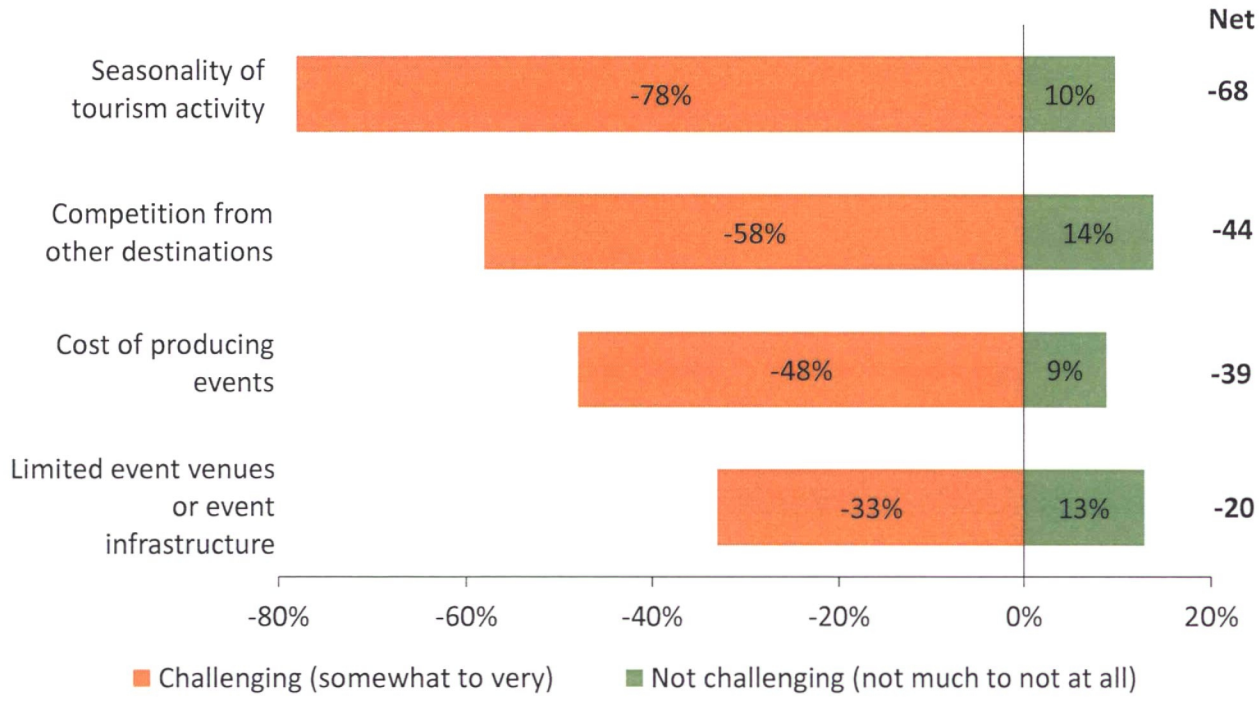
Draft Findings — Where the City should focus economic development efforts



n = 111

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

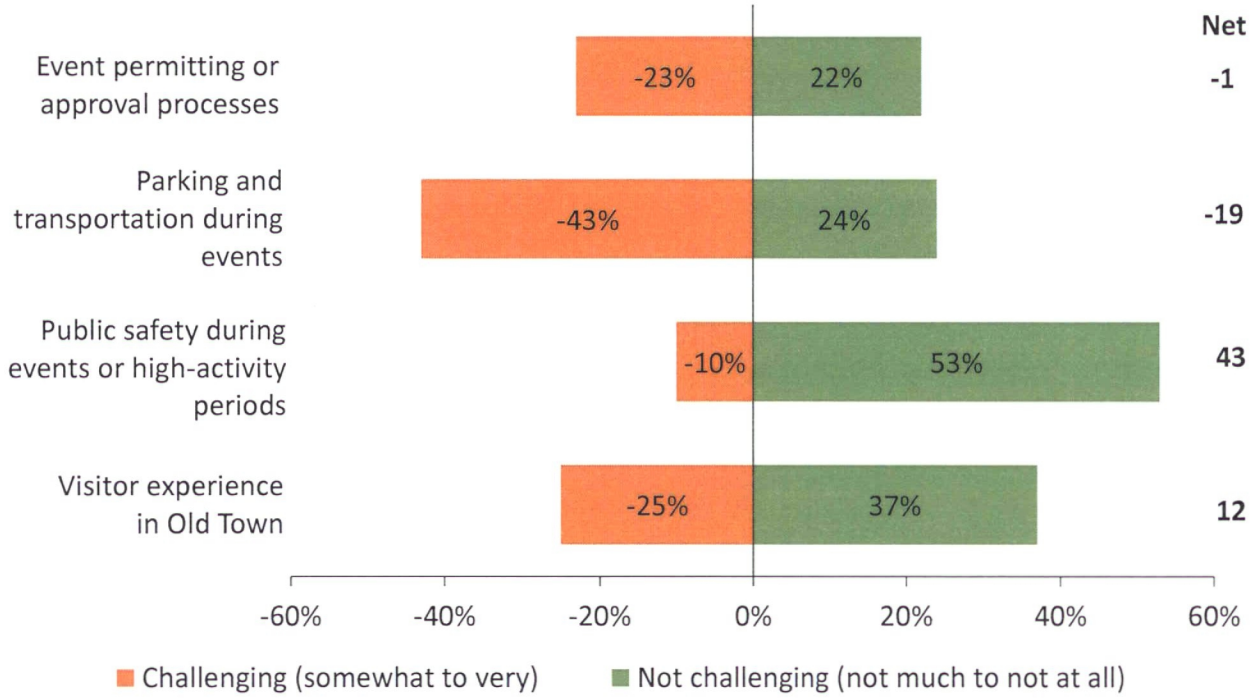
Draft Findings — How much of a challenge are the following for Scottsdale's tourism, events or visitor economy?



n = 69–72

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

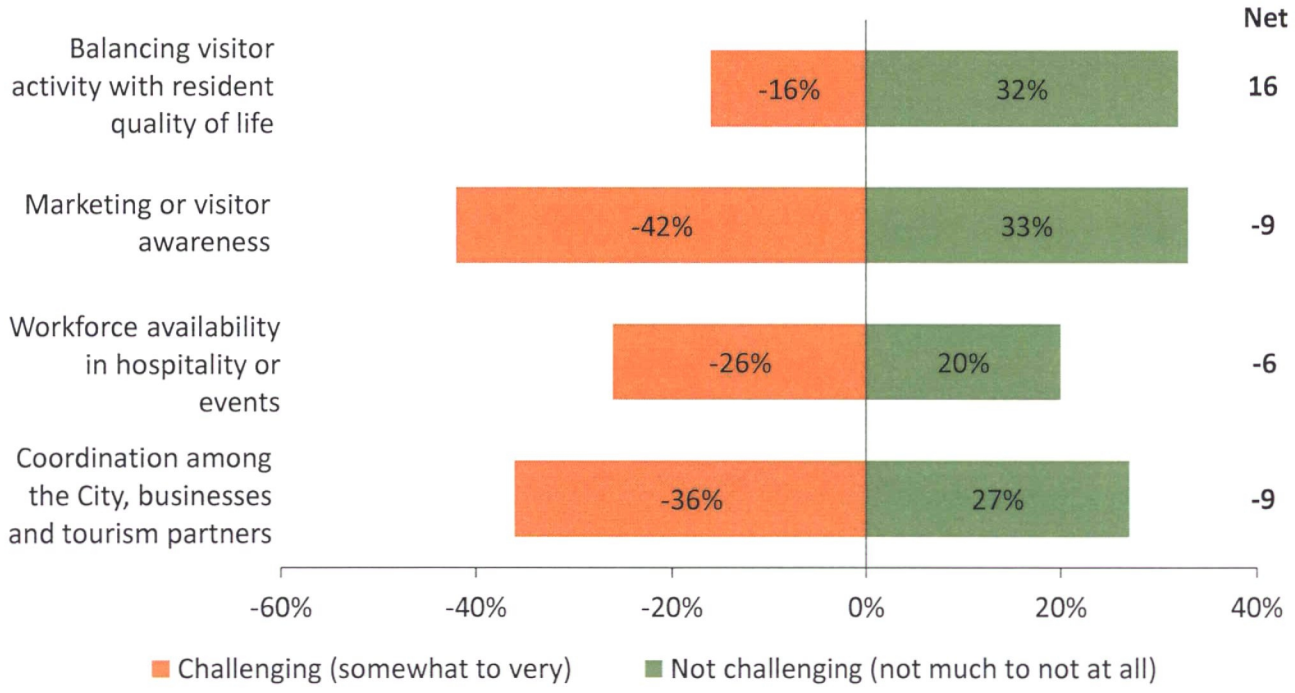
Draft Findings — How much of a challenge are the following for Scottsdale's tourism, events or visitor economy?



n = 70–72

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

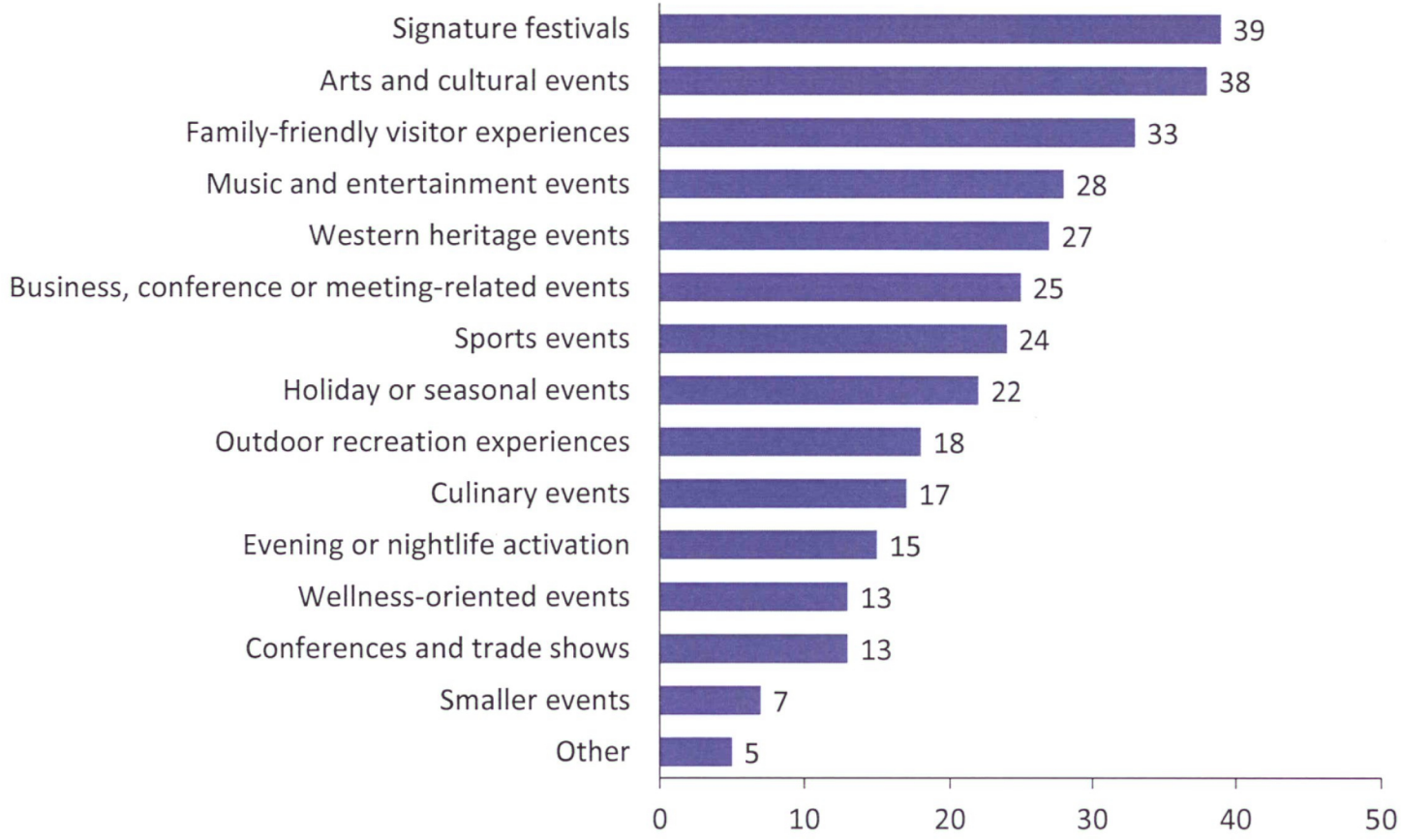
Draft Findings — How much of a challenge are the following for Scottsdale's tourism, events or visitor economy?



n = 70–71

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Draft Findings — Types of visitor experiences or events Scottsdale should prioritize



n = 113

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Draft Findings — Business and Leadership Interview Takeaways

Economic Development

- Scottsdale's brand attracts businesses and executives
- Focus recruitment on industries and functions that fit
- Improve development predictability and follow-through
- Prioritize business retention and reinvestment
- Consider specialized workforce and housing challenges

Tourism Events

- Preserve premium appeal through distinctive experiences
- Tailor visitor demand strategies to each season
- Address barriers to international visitor growth
- Evaluate demand for larger meeting facilities
- Focus on execution, partnerships and measurable benefits

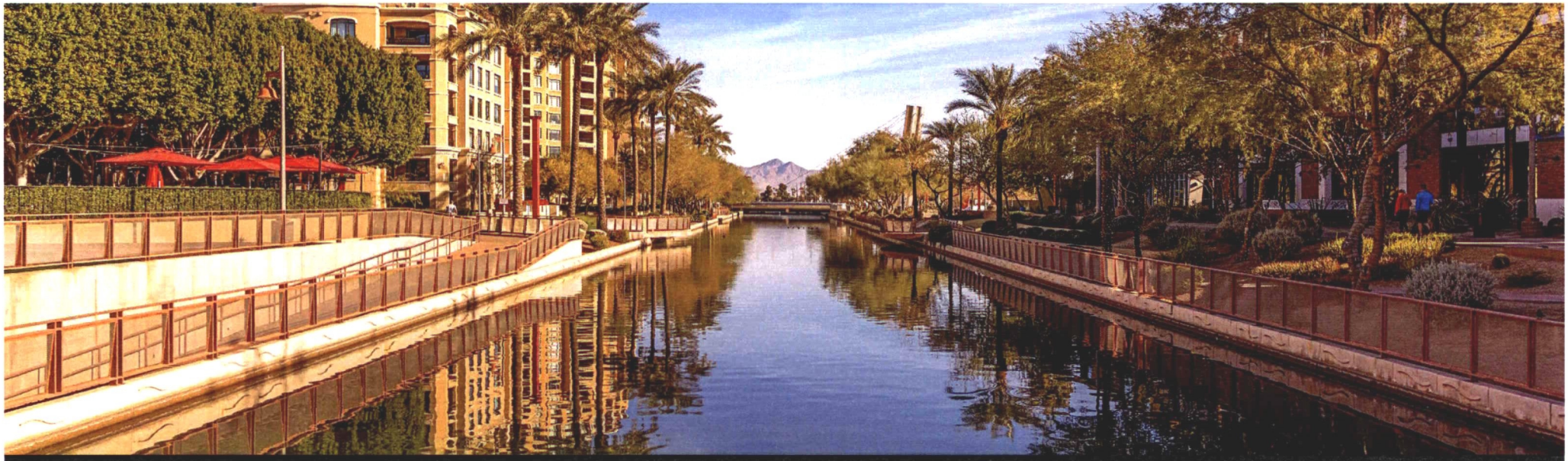
Draft Findings — Executive Council Takeaways

Economic Development

- Diversify around high-value industries
- Capture more of the semiconductor ecosystem
- Prioritize business retention, expansion and certainty
- Address workforce access and demographic balance
- Maintain the infrastructure that supports competitiveness

Tourism Events

- Protect Scottsdale's brand
- Build on success without diluting what works
- Generate new tourism and event demand
- Grow international visitation and connectivity
- Strengthen Old Town as a distinctive destination



Planning Overview

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

TOURISM AND EVENTS STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



T1
Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

T2
Build the next generation of Scottsdale tourism demand

T3
Expand international visitor and business connectivity

T4
Position Old Town as Scottsdale's distinctive experiential district

CROSSWALK

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



E1
Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

E2
Pursue a selective portfolio of high-value industries and business functions

E3
Support business retention and expansion

E4
Actively pursue redevelopment strategies

STRATEGIC PRIORITY T2. Build the Next Generation of Scottsdale Tourism Demand

T2.5. Position Scottsdale as a premier sports tourism, cycling, endurance and outdoor recreation destination

Cycling, endurance sports and outdoor recreation offer opportunities to connect Scottsdale's desert setting with travel motivated by competition and adventure. Strengthening this positioning could attract athletes, recreational visitors and accompanying families.

This may include:

- Connecting the Preserve, Greenbelt and hiking and cycling experiences with destination marketing and event development;
- Expanding events like Tour de Scottsdale and recruitment of major endurance events, working with event organizers, recreation partners and hospitality businesses to connect participation with overnight stays and spending; and
- Coordinating participant and companion itineraries that connect events with Scottsdale lodging, local dining and activities before and after competition.

T2.6. Expand and modernize visitor marketing across Scottsdale

How travelers discover destinations and plan trips continues to change, making it important for Scottsdale's visitor marketing to reach audiences through the channels and content they use. Expanding and modernizing these efforts could help connect prospective visitors with experiences across the city, tailor messages to different interests and seasons, and turn awareness into bookings and visits. Coordinated marketing informed by audience insights and performance results could also help tourism partners use resources effectively and adapt as travel preferences evolve.

This may include:

- Creating a coordinated in-market content calendar featuring experiences throughout Scottsdale (expanding beyond Old Town and Fashion Square to McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, restaurants citywide, golf courses, the Preserve, Taliesin West, WestWorld, SkySong, the Airpark corridor and the Greenbelt), with defined responsibilities for the City's marketing team and Experience Scottsdale;
- Equipping hotels, venues and local businesses with current digital visitor information, event listings and recommendations that encourage exploration beyond familiar destinations; and

Crosswalk example

T2.5	**Position Scottsdale as a premier cycling, endurance and outdoor-recreation destination**							
a.	Integrate the Preserve, Greenbelt, hiking and cycling opportunities into visitor content and event experience planning	Tourism Development Manager	Parks & Recreation; Preserve partners; Experience Scottsdale; cycling partners	2027	2029	Partner commitment	Visitor route content; participating businesses; usage/engagement Success: Outdoor recreation promoted with accurate access and visitor guidance	



Economic Development Plan Strategies

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Economic Development Plan Strategic Priorities

E1. Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

E2. Pursue a selective portfolio of high-value industries and business functions that fit Scottsdale

E3. Support business retention and expansion

E4. Actively pursue reinvestment strategies

Oct. 30th, EDC voted to move forward to council

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

E1. Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

E1.1. Position Scottsdale's quality of life and destination assets as advantages for business investment

E1.2. Unify economic-development and Old Town marketing within the in-house team's program of work

E1.3. Establish the department as a trusted source of Scottsdale business intelligence

E1.4. Advance high-impact facilities and assets that strengthen Scottsdale's brand and business appeal

E1.5. Build confidence in Scottsdale as a community open to business investment



KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

E2. Pursue a selective portfolio of high-value industries and business functions that fit Scottsdale

E2.1. Define business-attraction criteria around functions, wages and fit with Scottsdale's assets

E2.2. Cultivate executive and innovation functions in targeted industries and headquarters segments

E2.3. Establish a City International Office to lead international business and intergovernmental relationships

E2.4. Strengthen relationships with site selectors and business location advisors

E2.5. Use tourism visits, signature events and City venues to introduce business prospects to Scottsdale

E2.6. Extend business development capacity through defined regional and local partnerships

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

E3. Support business retention and expansion

E3.1. Build proactive relationships with existing employers to identify retention and expansion needs

E3.2. Strengthen a predictable, coordinated experience for businesses working with the City

E3.3. Prioritize entrepreneurial support through investment and business networks

E3.4. Strengthen ongoing local business engagement and promotion through City and Chamber partnerships

E3.5. Sustain Old Town business retention and expansion through existing staff capacity

E3.6. Strengthen workforce access through regional education, utility and workforce partnerships

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

E4. Actively pursue reinvestment strategies

E4.1. Identify, analyze and market redevelopment opportunities through a more actionable property inventory

E4.2. Develop area-specific reinvestment approaches

E4.3. Develop a strategic acquisition approach and the financing tools needed to support it

E4.4. Advance site readiness and guide buildout of the corporate corridor and remaining greenfield opportunities

E4.5. Assess meeting and performing arts facilities as potential development and reinvestment projects



KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH



Tourism and Events Plan Draft Strategies

KEEN
INDEPENDENT
RESEARCH

Tourism and Events Plan Strategic Priorities

T1. Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

T2. Build the next generation of Scottsdale tourism demand

T3. Expand international visitor and business connectivity

T4. Position Old Town as Scottsdale's distinctive experiential district

Oct. 20th, TDC voted to move forward to council

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

T1. Protect and elevate Scottsdale's brand

T1.1. Unify Scottsdale's citywide destination brand while reinforcing the distinctive identities of its districts and attractions

T1.2. Elevate arts, culture, culinary experiences, shopping, Western heritage and the desert as defining elements of Scottsdale's destination identity

T1.3. Recruit new signature events and identify existing events that could grow into the next tier of destination draws

T1.4. Enhance partnerships with event organizers to improve event quality and audience appeal

T1.5. Target and strengthen tourism and event investments through clear performance measures

T1.6. Strengthen oversight of major destination contracts and partnerships to align activities with City priorities and deliver measurable public benefit



KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

T2. Build the next generation of Scottsdale tourism demand

T2.1. Grow high season demand and selectively pursue shoulder season and summer opportunities

T2.2. Assess meeting and performing arts facilities as potential sources of new demand

T2.3. Invest tourism revenues in long-lived destination assets

T2.4. Strengthen Scottsdale's health and wellness positioning through coordinated experiences and partnerships

T2.5. Position Scottsdale as a premier sports tourism, cycling, endurance and outdoor recreation destination

T2.6. Expand and modernize visitor marketing across Scottsdale

T2.7. Convert business and conference travel into longer stays and broader participation in Scottsdale experiences

T2.8. Manage City venues as a coordinated portfolio that grows tourism and economic outcomes

T2.9. Capture more visitation and local spending from regional sports and entertainment tourism activity

T2.10. Align the Special Events Ordinance and event-support practices with desired outcomes and full City costs

KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

T3. Expand international visitor and business connectivity

T3.1. Coordinate international visitor development with Scottsdale's international business relationships

T3.2. Expand air connectivity through regional international service and Scottsdale Airport's appropriate future role

T3.3. Integrate Scottsdale into international multidestination itineraries

T3.4. Develop extended stay experiences for international executives and accompanying families



KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

T4. Position Old Town as Scottsdale's distinctive experiential district

T4.1. Continue implementing and improving the Old Town Marketing Program

T4.2. Establish coordinated, recurring programming throughout the Old Town district

T4.3. Improve Old Town's pedestrian comfort, wayfinding and connections to surrounding experiences

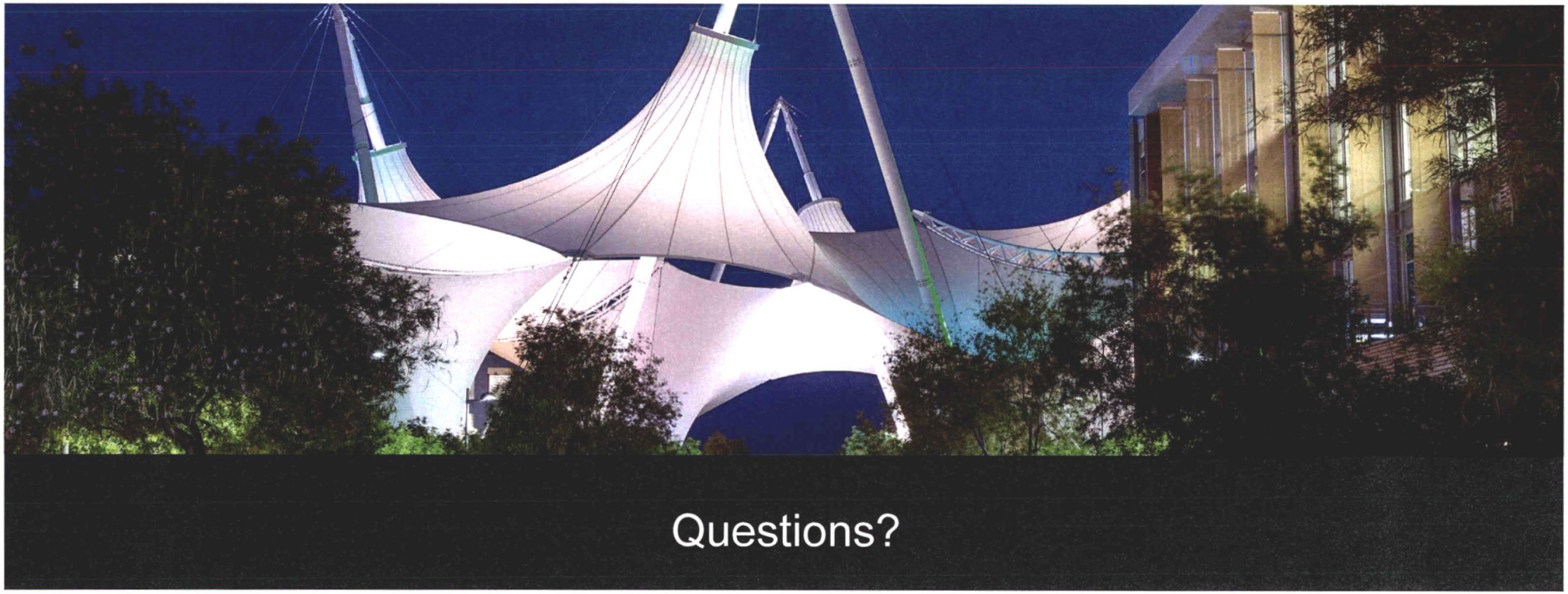
T4.4. Explore pedestrian-oriented streets and outdoor gathering places

T4.5. Secure distinctive attractions and public spaces through private development partnerships

T4.6. Lead the prioritization and shaping of continued capital improvements in Old Town



KEEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH



Questions?

KEEN
INDEPENDENT
RESEARCH