



TOWN OF
FOUNTAIN HILLS
Arizona

Communications Strategic Plan

2022

Community Relations/Public Information Mission:

The mission of the Community Relations/Public Information Office is to be the TRUSTED SOURCE of information by accurately communicating news and information to Fountain Hills' citizens, elected officials, customers, employees, and news media via internal and external communication sources.

The Community Relations Department has four key goals:

- 1) To establish the Town of Fountain Hills as the primary source for Town news, emergency communications, and information on events.
- 2) To inform, educate and engage residents and stakeholders about Town responsibilities, services, activities, and results.
- 3) To inform Town elected officials and Town leadership of any Town projects, incidents, and potential and current media coverage.
- 4) To help inform, educate and engage Town employees about the policies, procedures and information they need to succeed in their jobs and represent the Town in public interactions.

These goals are achieved through the following activities:

- Raise public awareness of the decisions made by the Town Council and Town Manager using multiple communication channels
- Crisis communications planning and action as needed
- Provide Town information via the web, social media, printed newsletters, and the news media
- Stream Town Council meetings live on www.fh.az.gov Ch. 11 and Cox Cable Government Access Ch. 11 with replays on YouTube
- Respond in a timely manner to media and public records request
- Utilize video, digital and multimedia content to enhance communication
- Design and produce printed and digital content that engages and informs the reader
- Create custom communication plans to address Town client needs
- Speech writing and coaching for elected officials and key town staff, as needed

Town of Fountain Hills Communications Strategic Plan

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Goal: Deliver Effective CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS residents will depend on in the event of an emergency

Strategy: Be a key resource for residents, businesses, and media partners for up to date information during emergency situations in or near the Town of Fountain Hills. Emergency situations include: wildfires, floods, public safety, and road closures.

Action Steps:

- Be proactive with communications and anticipate the needs of residents to ensure emergency preparedness during the wildfire and/or monsoon seasons for example. Share information and resources to help residents be prepared in the event of an emergency.
- Produce up-to-the-minute communications in the event of an emergency. Provide accurate and current information and resource information as it becomes available.
 - Work closely with agency PIOs to disseminate and share critical information
 - Develop a communications network among Town departments and business/social organizations to distribute critical information to clients/customers/residents
- Develop strong media relations which are utilized to provide current and accurate information about emergency situations in Fountain Hills.
 - Press releases and direct communications with reporters will provide accurate information to the media.
 - Town’s PIO will establish a media safe zone for interviews with Town officials, and live updates to the media.
- Develop emergency communication resources to provide residents and media with up-to-the-minute information during an emergency
 - Social Media – Facebook and Twitter will be utilized to share current situational information and will be updated frequently as needed. Each post will have a time stamp ensure the information is the latest.
 - CodeRed – Subscribed residents will be updated with latest information of events and activities. An ongoing registration campaign will raise participation.
 - Website – fh.az.gov will have information of an ongoing event updated each hour, if available.
 - FH Emergency Hotline – 480-816-5234 will allow residents who do not subscribe to digital resources to call a dedicated phone number with a recorded message for current emergency information (Wildfires, Floods, Road Closures)
 - Ch. 11 – In the event of a major emergency, the channel will be used to post available resources and emergency contact information.
- Promote Town emergency communication resources to community residents: CodeRed, Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor), and Website, Ch. 11. In the event of an emergency these channels will be utilized to communicate with residents.

Goal: Produce highly visual and informative SOCIAL MEDIA posts that engage the community

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, NextDoor, YouTube

Strategy: Use social media to communicate Town information, promote events, and emergency communications to the public and employees.

Action Steps:

- Share external information via the Town’s social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube) following best practices, the Town of Fountain Hills Social Media Policy and tailoring our message to targeted audiences.
- Utilize video, digital and multimedia content to support and enhance communication.
- Manage content contributed by departments
- Update the Social Media Policy as needed
- Develop video and audio content for distribution on Social Media
- Monitor social media closely to address concerns and trends in communications from residents
- Develop cross promotional opportunities on social media for various Town departments (i.e. tourism, economic development, community services)
- Develop social media advertising when appropriate and requested to promote Town events
- Develop promotional opportunities on Facebook through “boost” avenues to increase likes and shares when appropriate
- Monitor and archive interactions on all Town social media sites through ArchiveSocial

Goal: Build and maintain strong MEDIA RELATIONS

Strategy: Be responsive, timely and accurate regarding media inquiries, proactively promote Town information as media stories, and seek media coverage for special events and programs.

Action Steps:

- Always be responsive to media inquiries with a less than one-hour reply
- Develop and distribute media releases to media list which includes FH Times, news outlets in the Phoenix Metro, and other media outlets as necessary
- Direct communication in person, on the phone, via email, with reporters to deliver information, discuss stories and schedule interviews.
- Meet with Town departments to develop and plan media strategies
- Conduct media training for department directors and staff to prepare for interviews

- Collect media inquiries from around the Town and send a weekly media inquiry summary to Town Manager

Goal: Build a strong Online Digital Management System

WEBSITE (fh.az.gov or fountainhillsaz.gov) and INTRANET (<https://intranet.fh.az.gov/>)

Strategy: Use the Town’s external and internal websites to communicate Town information to the public and employees.

Action Steps:

- Update the design of the Town of Fountain Hills website so that it is easy to navigate and people can quickly find what they are looking for.
 - Average 2-4 minutes per visit
 - Increase overall visitors
 - Visual site that promotes the town brand
- Maintain and/or refresh content
 - Follow analytics and work with departments to remove any content that is no longer relevant or is outdated.
 - Update visuals on site
- Support departments in creating content that meets standards for accessibility so that all visitors to fh.az.gov are able to access the content they need.
- Utilize video, digital and multimedia content to support and enhance communication
 - Add current content relevant to employees to Intranet
 - Archive or remove content that is outdated
- Utilize video, digital and multimedia content to support and enhance communication
- Support departments in creating content that meets standards for accessibility so that all visitors to fh.az.gov are able to access the content they need.

Goal: Produce Proactive and Responsive PUBLIC INFORMATION/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Strategy: Encourage proactive community engagement with Town leadership and departments. Community engagement campaigns will increase awareness, transparency and active citizen participation. Community engagement activities will be focused around Town initiatives and delivered based on community interest.

Action Steps:

- Produce engaging and informative quarterly community newsletter – Fountain Hills Insider
- Develop strategic community relations plan to guide current and future efforts
- Be a trusted Town resource for community questions and guide Town residents to the best resource to help answer their specific concern
- Hold community meetings and meet with key stakeholders specifically related to major Town initiatives
- Speak to groups and organizations proactively and regularly about Town services. (PIO, Town Manager, Department Leads)
- Develop communication strategies to target select demographic groups. (Youth, Seniors, for example)
- Participate in Town Podcast and Valley Focus radio interviews and redistribute on social media and Town's websites
- Develop informative slides for Ch. 11 government channel playback
- Create posters, fliers, and mailers as necessary

Goal: Create Engaging EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

Strategy: Town employees are an important marketing and communications tool which enhances the Town's messaging strategies. A strong Employee Communications program will provide important, timely and accurate information to all employees using a variety of communication channels.

Action Steps:

- Produce All Staff emails when needed to communicate urgent information to employees.
- Produce and email monthly newsletter to employees to highlight events and feature stories.
- Design posters, bulletin boards, mailed letters, and other products as needed.
- Help Human Resources in communicating important news and educational information.
- Proactively use Town social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to tell the Town of Fountain Hills story.

- Post relevant internal information to intranet.fh.az.gov
 - Calendars, HR information, Events

Goal: CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT

Strategy: A well-informed citizenry is crucial for effective government communications and strong accountability of government agencies and leadership. Civic engagement creates and maintains an educated, aware, motivated, engaged, and fulfilled community. The level of public engagement can range from keeping the public informed to involving the public's participation in the decision-making process. Engaging the public early and at the appropriate level helps create buy-in for the process and the final decision.

Action Steps:

- Outline Needs and Desired Outcomes:
 - Create clear activity outline defining goals and outcomes;
 - Identify decision makes and dates when formal decisions will be made
 - Determine the level of public engagement based on the scope and impact of the project
 - Determine which public to target and how to engage them
 - Develop a timeline to achieve public engagement
 - Determine how to measure and archive public engagement results
 - Determine how the results will be shared with the public

Goal: Develop versatile VISUAL CONTENT Library

Strategy: Share Town of Fountain Hills' story with photographs and video content.

Action Steps

- Develop a digital media library of photographs and video for all Town department use
- Take and share photographs of events, activities, and projects to enhance the messaging for the Town's communications.
- Take and create video content for use in social media, web, and for video programming (State of the Town, etc.)
- Use visuals for Ch. 11 slides where appropriate

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS 2021-2022

<p>Goal: Deliver Effective CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS residents will depend on in the event of an emergency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal ZERO complaints about emergency communications • Each designated emergency event hits targets of Social Media, Webpage, Code Red (if applicable), FH Times/Media
<p>Goal: Produce highly visual and informative SOCIAL MEDIA posts that engage the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase platform likes/followers by 2% yearly • Increase in engagement/shares • Reach
<p>Goal: Build and maintain strong MEDIA RELATIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure and track through online media tracking service (TVeyes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories generated • Advertising value, where measurable • Impressions, readership and viewership • Increased year over year TV and Radio placements • Increased external sites online placements
<p>Goal: Build a strong Online Digital Management System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website design • Increase overall usage • Maintain 2-4 minutes per visit
<p>Goal: Produce Proactive and Responsive PUBLIC INFORMATION/COMMUNITY RELATIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly publication home delivered within 5 days of target date • 24-hour response to resident inquiries • Attend major community events • Represent Town at community meetings • Community Survey 2021
<p>Create Engaging EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create yearly Survey Monkey for internal usage • Increase usage of Intranet Chat communications • Monthly employee newsletter distributed on last pay-day of month
<p>Goal: Develop a versatile VISUAL CONTENT Library</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Library established in June 2021 • All Departments utilizing in 2021

Citizen Engagement Plan

Adopted 2022

PREPARED BY BO LARSEN
COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER

2022 Communications Plan
Appendix





A well-informed citizenry is crucial for effective government communications and strong accountability of government agencies and leadership. Civic engagement creates and maintains an educated, aware, motivated, engaged, and fulfilled community. The level of public engagement can range from keeping the public informed to involving the public's participation in the decision-making process. Engaging the public early and at the appropriate level helps create buy-in for the process and the final decision.



Citizen Engagement brings government and citizens together to foster collaborative conversations, build positive relationships, and promote new, innovative ways for citizens to be informed, engaged, and involved in decision making. Through the use of social media, other digital platforms, neighborhood collaboration, public outreach, and other special projects, the Public Information/Community Relations Office provides a one-stop-shop for engaging with the public.



The Town of Fountain Hills is committed to being approachable, transparent, and accessible. Advancing the free flow of accurate and truthful information is essential to serving the public interest and contributing to informed decision-making. By communicating clearly, the Town will maintain relationships with the media, government officials, and the public. Most importantly, keeping these stakeholders informed will build the relationship between Town leaders and citizens, promote trust and respect between local government and its constituents, and create an atmosphere that invites citizen involvement in decisions that affect the community.

Connecting with Residents on Key Policy and Election Issues

Town Council and the Town Administration make decisions that often have a direct effect on residents and businesses. Decisions made can be in a policy, recommendation for bonds, ballot initiatives on an upcoming election or changes to the Town budget, as examples. It is imperative that when programs, policies and election related decisions are enacted that residents are made aware and have the opportunity for comment. The Citizen Engagement Plan provides a guideline in how the Town will communicate with constituents on important topics and issues.

Elections

The Town of Fountain Hills holds elections every even year for Mayor and eligible Town Council seats, and any ballot initiatives. All elections for county and town initiatives and representatives are managed by the Maricopa County Elections Department. When elections are occurring in Fountain Hills, the Town follows strict guidelines set forth by the county elections department, and provides information to the public.

Town Communication Tools

Town Website – www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Media

Messaging

The Town of Fountain Hills' Town Clerk maintains an election page www.fountainhillsaz.gov/180/Elections-Elecciones that provides Voter Registration information, Campaign Finance Reports, Election Results, Forms & Information, Local Candidate Elections, and candidate and referendum information.

The Town will promote upcoming elections and information about these elections in the Fountain Hills Times through press releases.

Press releases for elections at www.fountainhillsaz.gov/674/Public-Information-Office

Social Media

Town of Fountain Hills Public Information Office will announce upcoming elections and provide links to appropriate Town/County websites.

Publication of Election Information

Town produces a printed election overview of upcoming elections and referendum for Fountain Hills' residents to review.

Town Sponsored Meetings

- Town Council Meetings
- Town Hall Meetings
- Press Conferences
- Open Houses

Public meetings may be held to allow residents to ask questions of Town leadership or candidates.

www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Town website provide information about the election and where residents may vote in person, or drop-off mail-in ballots.

www.recorder.maricopa.gov/elections

Maricopa County Elections Department administers city, town, school district, special district, state and federal elections in Maricopa County.

News Releases

Town provides written information for local and regional print and website media with factual information about Town policies and events.

Cox Cable Channel 11

Cox Cable provides a government access channel (11) to the Town. Static displays and short videos are shown about upcoming events or items of community interest.

Speakers Bureau and Community Outreach

Town Council or Town Leadership are invited to community civic organizations and stake holders to provide updates on Town activities.

Major and Minor Policy

The Town Council of Fountain Hills makes policy decisions for Town staff to implement. Policy is a “law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions. Policy decisions are frequently reflected in resource allocations” (www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy). When policies are enacted, either major or minor is scope and resources, the Town will communicate this information to residents. An example of a major policy could be a change to utilization fees of a park or sign ordinance change. A minor policy or “guiding principle” example could be a liquor license approval or approval of new board commissioners.

Communication Tools

Policy

Messaging

Town Website
www.fountainhillsaz.gov

All Policies

Information about approved policies is available on the Town’s website through the agenda management system - Agenda - View Meetings (destinyhosted.com)

Media

Major Policies - Major Policy approvals have a larger impact to Town resources (staff time and financial), and will bring more impact to residents.

Town press release (s) about the policy and its impacts are shared with local print media, and other media outlets if deemed of high interest.

Local media will publish a story about the policy change in the Fountain Hills Times.

Communication Tools

Policy

Messaging

Town Website
www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Major Policies

Press release shared on Town Website

Information is posted on the appropriate department website pages.

Social Media

Major Policies

If a policy has an impact on the entire community then a social media posting is warranted to educate the public.

Fountain Hills Insider - Newsletter

Major Policies

Major policies will generally have an effect on residents. Articles will highlight the benefits and impacts of the policy.

Mayor and Town Council

Major Policies

Any press releases delivered to Town Council prior to local publication.

Town Website
www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Though a policy may have little to no effect on residents, there may be an interest. Depending on the uniqueness of the minor policy Social Media may be utilized to promote or highlight the minor policy.

Minor - Depending on the impact of the policy to residents or Town operations

Information may be found at - Agenda - View Meetings (destinyhosted.com)

Information may be found on Department website pages if needed

Bond Referendums

A bond referendum is a **voting process that gives voters the power to decide if a municipality should be authorized to raise funds through the sale of bonds.**

Town Council may choose to ask residents for additional funding to support major capital projects. These projects may include streets repair and replacement, park construction, Fountain Lake repairs, or other infrastructure need that far exceeds the normal Town budget.

Communication Tools

Messaging

Media

Town will produce press releases to raise awareness of the referendum for local newspapers, radio, and television news outlets.

Town Website

www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Town would have an information page on the bond referendum to explain what it would accomplish.

Social Media

Town social media postings would highlight what the bond referendum would accomplish, and links to an information page on the Town's website www.fountainhillsaz.gov.

Newsletter – Fountain Hills Insider

Town would publish awareness articles in the Town produced newsletter to educate readers on the purpose and cost of the referendum.

Cox Channel 11 (Government TV channel)

Town may place awareness slides and or video of the proposed referendum to educate viewers.

Mayor and Town Council

Town Council will receive press release information prior to local publication

Budget Process, Adoption and Updates

Transparency is a core value of governmental budgeting. Good public participation practices can help governments be more accountable and responsive to their communities and improve the public's perception of governmental performance and the value the public receives from their government. Developing a transparent budget process will enhance the government's credibility and trust within the community.

Communication Tools

Messaging

Media

Town will produce press releases to raise awareness about public meetings with discussions concerning Town budget

Town Website
www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Town has an information page on the budget process and the approval timelines.

Newsletter – Fountain Hills Insider

An article will provide an overview of the Town's budget.

Mayor and Town Council

Town Council will receive press release information prior to local publication

Get Connected. Stay Connected.

Residents of Fountain Hills are provided with a variety of passive communication outlets to stay engaged and be informed of Town activities and services, events, and public meetings.

Communication Tools

Citizen Connection

Opportunity

Social Media – The Town uses a variety of Social Media outlets to share information concerning Town activities and events.

Fountain Hills
Facebook – @
TownofFountainHills

Twitter – @ fhazgov

Instagram – @
townoffountainhills

LinkedIn – @ town-of-
fountain-hills

YouTube – @
/c/TownFountainHills

Economic Development
LinkedIn – @ fountain-hills-
economic-development

Community Services
Facebook – @ fhparcsandrec

Instagram – @ fountainhillsrec

www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Cox Cable Ch. 11
www.fountainhillsaz.gov/386/Channel-11

YouTube
www.youtube.com/c/TownFountainHills

Residents have the ability to be an active participant in the conversation, and respond to Town posted communications in an appropriate manner.

Residents can keep up to date with news through the press release feature, see upcoming meeting notices, and contact department staff and Town leaders.

Ch. 11 on Cox Cable is a channel dedicated to government communications. Residents can watch a live broadcast of the Town Council meetings, as well as other information about upcoming events. All Town videos are available on YouTube.

Get Connected. Stay Connected.

Communication Tools

Citizen Connection

Opportunity

Fountain Hills Insider – Town of Fountain Hills community newsletter

Media Relations – Public Information uses local and regional media outlets to share stories of upcoming events, projects or critical news.

Public Town Meetings and Community Outreach Events

Delivered quarterly to all Town residential homes and businesses

Most Common News Outlets

- Fountain Hills Times
- fhetimes.com
- Arizona Republic
- AZCentral.com
- ABC15
- 12News
- Fox10News
- AZFamily (Ch. 3 & 5)
- KTAR – 92.3 FM
- KFYI – 550 AM
- KJZZ (NPR) 91.5 FM

- Town Council Meetings
- Boards and Commission Meetings
- Community Events and Outreach

Articles in the Fountain Hills Insider provide a call-to-action to contact Town departments or Town leadership

The Fountain Hills Times will publish and report stories about Town events and activities on a weekly basis.

Regional news media outlets carry Fountain Hills stories

Attending Town meetings allows residents to learn about important issues being discussed, and these meetings allow for input from the public.

Staying Informed During an Emergency

Most emergencies occur unexpectedly, and information provided by neighbors, social media, and many times, local media is often not current or accurate for the moment. Emergencies include wildfires, floods, public safety, and road closures. The Town of Fountain Hills is the critical resource for residents, businesses, and media partners for up-to-date information during emergencies in or near the Town of Fountain Hills.

Town Website -
www.fountainhillsaz.gov

Home page notices are updated as new information becomes available. A date and time stamp will show the most current updates.

Social Media

The Town will use Facebook - @TownofFountainHills, Twitter - @fhazgov, and NextDoor @town-of-fountain-hills to send up-to-the-minute information as it becomes available.

Emergency Hotline

480-816-5234 - This phone number is a recorded message during emergency events.

CodeRED

CodeRED is a FREE emergency notification service provided to all residents within Fountain Hills. The system sends an emergency message through phone calls, text messages, emails, social media and the CodeRED Mobile Alert app. The system is used to keep residents informed of local events that may immediately impact their safety.

Receive notifications for:

- Missing Children
- Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Evacuation Notices
- Wildfires
- Public Health Crisis
- Criminal Activity

Local News Media

Local news media will report on incidents occurring in Fountain Hills.

Fountain Hills Insider

Each quarter, homeowners in Fountain Hills receive an eight-page newsletter from their town government called the Fountain Hills Insider. This publication, produced by the Community Relations Department, provides an overview of recent events, town achievements, and critical upcoming activities. Each issue contains contact information for Town services, Town Council, and other community resources.

Reference Day Helps Residents in Need



at services across the mission to community all to help projects...
 0 Volunteers helped...
 er 40 Volunteers planted...
 Over 100 Holiday Greeting Cards...
 Care Card

FOUNTAIN HILLS Insider

WINTER 2021-22

New Crosswalk Provides Access to Park

Desert Vista Park offers many sought-after amenities, including the town's only lighted skate park, an off-leash dog park, a new mini-pitch court, three multipurpose fields, Ramadas with barbecues, and restrooms. Located in an industrial area, so consequently, there are few homes in the area where residents can safely access the park on a bike or walking.

Thanks to a recently completed pedestrian crosswalk on Saguro Boulevard at Tower Drive, residents now have safe pedestrian and bicycle access to the park. The new crosswalk features an overhead solar Pedestrian Crossing Flashing Beacon system and street lighting to alert drivers of people crossing the road.



What to Know a Garage Sale

Winter is a great time to clean out the unwanted clutter around your house and either donate to a charity or have a garage sale. Garage sales are a fun way to make a little money and get rid of that "stuff" that is no longer needed, or that the kids didn't take with them. But have you thought that having a sale could be an inconvenience for your neighbors by increasing traffic, noise, signage and pedestrian? Be a good neighbor by following the following requirements for holding a garage or yard sale:

- Check first with your Homeowner's Association if you are in a HOA.
- The sale can only be conducted with public property, which includes a garage.
- Sale items must be limited to a maximum of 25 bicycles would not be a garage sale.
- The sale must not last for more than 3 days.
- The sale and related activities (pot with the Town right of way) must be completed by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the sale.
- All signs must comply with the maximum number of signs and three leading to the lot and three along town streets (but still along town streets) must be placed at least three feet from the street.
- On these days, signs may be allowed sign types are / of durable material and other like cardboard and other like material.
- Do you have a lot of water and recycling products?

New Bus Line Gets You There

The new 515 bus service provides two daily trips from Fountain Hills with connector links to downtown Mesa, light rail, Gilbert and Chandler, and Phoenix, including the State Capital. The Route 515 Fountain Hills - Mesa Connector starts at the Fountain Hills Park-and-Ride parking lot behind library on the northeast corner of Saguro Boulevard and La Montana Drive. Bus service departs Fountain Hills Monday through Friday at 6:04 a.m. and 7:04 a.m., arriving at the Gilbert Park-and-Ride at 6:25 a.m. and 7:25 a.m. Return routes from the Gilbert/McDowell PNR start at 5:06 p.m. and 6:20 p.m. There is no weekend service for this route. To see the entire route, connections, and times, check out www.valleymetro.org/maps-schedules.

WHO DO I CALL FOR EMERGENCIES -

- Town Hall (480) 816-5100 (Monday - Friday)
- Town Website - www.fountainhillsaz.gov
- Community Center - (480) 816-5100
- Activity Library - (480) 816-5100
- Public Library - (602) 644-5000
- Community Services - (480) 816-5100
- Sheriff's Dispatch Station 1 - (480) 837-9377
- Station 2 - (480) 837-9377
- Call 911 for Emergencies
- Fountain Hills School (480) 664-5000
- Fountain Hills Municipality (480) 816-5100
- Century Link Residential customers: (866) 762-2277
- Business customers: (877) 762-2277
- Cox Communications - (602) 496-8888
- EPCOR Water - (480) 816-5100
- Republic Services (Garbage removal) (602) 496-8888
- Salt River Project - (Electrical) (602) 496-8888
- General information: (602) 496-8888
- Emergency (24 hours): (602) 496-8888
- Fountain Hills Sanitary (480) 837-9444
- Maricopa County Animal Services (602) 506-7387
- Code Enforcement Hill (480) 816-5193

Town Council Meetings

- FOUNTAIN HILLS COUNCIL MEMBERS
- Mayor Ginny Dickey
 - Vice Mayor Alan Magazine
 - Councilmember Gerry Friedel
 - Councilmember Sharron Grzybowski
 - Councilmember Peggy McMahon
 - Councilmember Mike Scharnow
 - Councilmember David Spelich



(Photo L-R, front row: McMahon, Dickey, Grzybowski, Spelich, Scharnow, Magazine, Friedel)

NOTABLE TOWN COUNCIL ACTIONS

(All meetings start at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Chambers)

- **August**
 - Approved contract for Desert Vista Crosswalk construction
 - Mini-Pitch construction approved for Desert Vista Park; Approved light installation for Skate Park at Desert Vista
- **September**
 - Amended code to convert many of the criminal penalties to civil penalties
 - Approved posting No Trespassing signs on town owned washes
- **October**
 - Joint session with Fountain Hills Sanitary District
 - Approval of art installation at Havenly

New Mini-Pitch for Big Fun

The Parks Department had a busy fall with two much-needed features at Desert Vista Park. Thanks to a generous donation by Musco Lighting, a Mini-Pitch (outdoor soccer field that plays like an indoor soccer field) was installed. The gift saved the town nearly \$100,000. The Mini-Pitch will have the surface installed by the end of November.



Skate Park Lights

At the skate park in Desert Park, boarders may now use the facility after dark in the summer. For the first time since its opening, the park is using the facility after dark in the summer. The town saved a significant amount of money with this lighting project thanks to Musco Lighting.



Grant Program

The Town of Fountain Hills is a proud member of the community foundation. The town is proud to be a part of the community foundation and recycling program. To be considered for this grant program, the applicant must demonstrate benefits to the community in the following areas: stewardship of the natural beauty of the town, supporting healthy development, opportunities. Applications for this grant program will be accepted through the end of the grant program to local non-profit organizations. The grant program is a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Grant funds are used to offset the cost of the grant program. Grant funds are used to offset the cost of the grant program.

Digital Services and Social Media

The Town's website page, www.fountainhillsaz.gov, contains all the information a visitor and resident needs to be informed about services, programs, and critical information in the event of an emergency.

Social Media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube used by the Town keep residents in the know on events, services, Town activities, and emergencies.



News Media

Television, radio, and print media outlets are integral partners in any communications plan. The Town has a local weekly newspaper, Fountain Hills Times, which reports on most Town Council and local government activities. The paper is a valuable source of information for many community residents. Though Fountain Hills has its "own" newspaper, the Town reaches out to major television, radio, online bloggers, and print reporters with press releases and notices about Town activities.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS ...

THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES

Your Award-Winning Hometown Weekly Newspaper

Volume 48, No. 49 • 24 pages • 2 sections

Monday, December 8, 2021 \$1.00



Mask mandate to be lifted

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Town of Fountain Hills will no longer require face coverings in town facilities effective Jan. 1, 2022.

Since March of 2020, the Town of Fountain Hills has followed federal and state guidelines and directives to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community. Some of these safety measures included closing town facilities, conducting virtual Town meetings, requiring Town staff to work remotely at home if they were able, and wearing face coverings when in Town Hall and the Community Center.

Due to many of the measures taken and the high level of vaccinations in Fountain Hills, the face-covering requirement is being removed starting Jan. 1, 2022. Instead, the Town will recommend wearing face coverings to the general public and employees, leaving the choice to the individual.

In addition to no longer requiring face coverings, the Town will continue to encourage social distancing inside town-operated buildings whenever possible. While the Fountain Hills Municipal Court plans to adhere to this policy change, there may be exceptions to the policy based on direction from the Arizona Supreme Court or Arizona Office of the Courts.

"We have been monitoring statistics and following pandemic guidance provided by the Maricopa County Health Department, Arizona Department of Health Services, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)," Town Manager Grady Miller said in a statement. "Based on the high immunization rate here in our community, the Town of Fountain Hills

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Blazing a trail

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Fountain Hills McDowell Sonoran Preserve provides a network of trails that extend over 10 miles in the 800-acre preserve and those trails offer access to hundreds of miles of trails within the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and the McDowell Mountain Regional Park.

One aspect of the Preserve trail system within Fountain Hills is that every mile was built by hand by a team of volunteers. Soon after the incorporation of the town there were those who began looking toward the McDowell Mountains as a place to develop a natural preserve. Roy Kinsey was a driving force behind these efforts planning a Preserve boundary, pushing for acquisition of the land and planning and building the trail system.

Bill Craig gathered the group where the Overlook Trail meets the Ridgepole Trail to talk about the Fountain Hills Preserve and the trail building process.

Kinsey founded the Trailblazers group and led it until he reached age 90. Many of the volunteers are retired and into their 70s and 80s. About a dozen years ago Bill Craig signed on to volunteer with the group. When Kinsey retired to California he has since passed away Craig took over the leadership responsibilities of the trail building group. Craig had a group of about a dozen interested hikers rather around him as he explained

(cont. on page 7A)

Museum holds annual meeting

By Linda McThral
Times Reporter

The L. Alan Cruikshank River of Time membership held its annual meeting Tuesday, Nov. 30.

Outgoing board members were lauded, while incoming new ones were voted on and accepted. Those going out are Debbie Skehen, Gerald Biceglia, Pat Lawson, Bob Wilson, Jean Linzer and Gerry Colbert.

New members are Annette Mary Albert Nelson and Bill Myhr. Myhr, who retired as education director at Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, left his position as ex-officio member and was appointed to serve

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Other News Outlets that cover Fountain Hills

- Arizona Republic
- AZ Central
- Associated Press
- ASU Newsroom
- AZFamily (Ch. 3 & 5)
- Arizona News Radio
- Cronkite News
- East Valley Partnership
- East Valley Tribune
- KJZZ News (NPR)
- ABC15 News
- Ch. 12 News
- Fox 10 News
- KFYI-FM
- KTAR-FM
- NewTimes
- Valley Focus
- Phoenix Business Journal



A new addition to Stroll in the Glow this year was the Roll in the Glow. Residents showed up with decorated bikes, scooters and strollers to become a mobile holiday display.

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INSIDE THIS WEEK

RVCC:
Anthony Paine takes on general manager role.
See Page 14A

Music program:
FHMS director rebuilding program.
See Page 11A

Coalition:
New initiative targets opioids, vaping, marijuana use by youth.
See Page 2A

Daily News Updates fhtimes.com

	H	L	P
Tues., Nov. 30	81	53	--
Wed., Dec. 1	89	59	--
Thurs., Dec. 2	80	55	--
Fri., Dec. 3	78	50	--
Sat., Dec. 4	77	51	--
Sun., Dec. 5	75	51	--
Mon., Dec. 6	77	49	--

For weather updates and forecasts go to fhtimes.com

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