

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-28

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF
FOUNTAIN HILLS, ARIZONA, ADOPTING THE 2023-2026 COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, the Town of Fountain Hills' adopted General Plan and Strategic Plan identifies economic development as a priority; and

WHEREAS, the Town's Strategic Plan states an essential element of a thriving community is its economy. Fountain Hills is a small, active community whose long-term sustainability requires an effective targeted economic development plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2023-2026 Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to focus on measurable strategic goals and objectives to increase the Town's competitiveness and create a vibrant economy that contributes to the health and well-being of the community

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF
THE TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS** as follows:

ENACTMENTS:

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS as follows:

SECTION 1. The recital above is hereby incorporated as if fully set forth herein.

SECTION 2. The Economic Development Director is hereby authorized and directed to take the necessary steps to implement the CEDS attached hereto as Exhibit A.

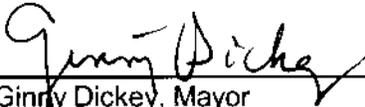
SECTION 3. The Mayor, the Town Manager, the Town Clerk, and the Town Attorney are hereby authorized and directed to execute all documents and to take all steps necessary to carry out the purpose and intent of this Resolution.

This Resolution supersedes Resolution 2013-31 and replaces all other Resolutions pertaining to the Economic Development Plan or in any way addresses the Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Fountain Hills.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Fountain Hills, Arizona, this 6th day of September, 2023.

(Signatures on the following page)

FOR THE TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS:



Ginny Dickey, Mayor

ATTESTED TO:



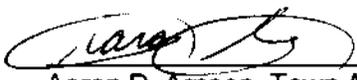
Linda G. Mendenhall, Town Clerk

REVIEWED BY:



Rachael Goodwin, Interim Town Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Aaron D. Arnson, Town Attorney

"EXHIBIT A"

DRAFT

Community Economic Development Strategy

Town's Mission

The Town of Fountain Hills' purpose is to serve the best interests of the community by: providing for the safety and well-being of its residents and visitors; respecting its special, small-town character and quality of life; providing superior public services; sustaining the public trust through open and responsive government; and maintaining the stewardship and preservation of its financial and natural resources. To serve and respect and provide trust and stewardship.

Town's Vision

Fountain Hills is a distinctive community designed to invigorate the body, mind and spirit, and strives to: Be stewards of this unique enclave, dedicated to preserving the environment and visual aesthetic and to living in balance with the Sonoran Desert; Champion the diversity of experiences our residents bring to our community and rely on this depth of experience to innovatively address our challenges; Be economically sustainable and anchor our vitality in an active, vibrant town core that serves us culturally, socially and economically; and, Be civic-minded and friendly, taking responsibility for our Town's success by building partnerships and investing our talent and resources.

Executive Summary

Using the Town's mission, vision, adopted General Plan and Strategic Plan as a driver, the Town of Fountain Hills' 2023-2026 Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to focus on measurable strategic goals and objectives to increase the Town's competitiveness and create a vibrant economy that contributes to the health and well-being of the community.

The CEDS serves as a roadmap to build upon the Town's strengths and opportunities, as well as leverage strategic partnerships to address local challenges and enhance economic opportunities.

Prior to drafting the CEDS, the Town of Fountain Hills held two workshops with business and community leaders. Based on the feedback from participants, the CEDS will have five focus areas:

- Business Attraction
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Marketing
- Strategic Partnerships
- Tourism

Focus Area 1: Business Attraction

Business attraction is important to a community, because it builds and diversifies the local economy with new businesses; brings in new investment and revenues, expanding the tax base; increases the number and type of jobs available to residents; and generates investment in community assets by providing local options for services, shopping and entertainment improving the overall quality of life.

The Town's major employers are primarily service-based industries to include Bashas', Brokers Alliance, Fry's, Fountain Hills Unified School District, Safeway, Target, and Town of Fountain Hills. While not necessarily new industries to the community, the Town will be focusing efforts to expand targeted industries over the next several years to include:

Targeted Industries

Assembly (small scale)

Biosciences

Financial Services

Healthcare

Hospitality

Retail

Start Ups

Implementation Strategies:

- Create a new Downtown Strategy consistent with current economic trends.
- Collaborate with the property owner of Four Peaks Plaza, located in the Shea Corridor, to redevelop the commercial center to a mixed-use property.
- Explore opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization to attract new residents, visitors and businesses, specifically in the Downtown area, Shea Corridor, Saguaro and Fountain Hills Boulevard/Glenbrook.
- Create Zoning Districts that allow for flexible zoning uses within the Downtown and Shea Corridor to attract targeted industries and new skilled talent.
- Develop and publicize a streamlined development review process for commercial projects that will have a high economic impact on the community.
- Diversify housing opportunities within Fountain Hills by pursuing multi-family and workforce housing developments with amenities that are desired by younger professionals.
- Develop architectural design standards to encourage cohesiveness throughout the community.
- Partner with Arizona State Land Department to prepare for a feasible conceptual land use and circulation plan for the State Trust land in the McDowell Mountain area of the Town.
- Modify the public art policy to allow for performing and temporary art.
- Create a placemaking strategy to enhance the vibrancy of Downtown.

Focus Area 2: Business Retention and Expansion

80% of new jobs and capital investment comes from companies that already exist in our community. Existing businesses and the local workforce are key components of a community's economic health and research shows that small businesses are the major drivers of job growth, which is why the Town of Fountain Hills and Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce partnered together in June 2022 to launch a formal Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program. BRE Programs preserve and increase local jobs, preserve and increase local tax revenues, maintain or diversify the local economy and maintain or diversify access to goods and services.

Implementation Strategies:

- Evaluate trends from the Business Retention and Expansion Program and determine appropriate next steps.
- Continue the eight-week Shop Local Summer Campaign to support businesses during the slower months and explore other opportunities to promote the importance of shopping locally.
- Partner with the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce to create a "Welcome Package" for new businesses.
- Create a "2nd Thursday" concept along the Avenue of the Fountains to support the economic vitality of the downtown.
- Conduct a market analysis of existing businesses who have the potential to expand in Fountain Hills.

Focus Area 3: Marketing

Today's businesses can locate anywhere; however, they will only come to our community if they know about it and if our community has what they need. A significant element of economic development is telling a story that creates an attractive brand identity for business, capital investment, and prospective residents. To achieve long-term economic development success, it will be essential for Fountain Hills to prioritize efforts to attract new talent in search of a better place to live, young professionals in search of a place to build a career, and entrepreneurs and investors who are looking to build companies.

Implementation Strategies:

- Create a comprehensive economic development marketing plan and industry-specific infographics for targeted audiences.
- Create an economic development marketing brochure that promotes Fountain Hills as an ideal destination for businesses.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders on consistent brand messaging for Fountain Hills.

Focus Area 4: Strategic Partnerships

Community and business leaders have expressed their commitment to seeing Fountain Hills as a growing and vibrant community. Fountain Hills can leverage the engagement from community and regional partners to support current and future economic initiatives.

Implementation Strategies:

- Determine the possibility of creating a co-working space to assist startups and home-based businesses.
- Identify opportunities to attract a university or satellite campus.

- Collaborate with ASU, NAU, Maricopa Community College, and local employers to build a talent pipeline through flexible certificate programs and on-the-job training initiatives.
- Collaborate with Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation to improve aesthetics along the entryway into Fountain Hills.
- Partner with Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community to explore economic growth opportunities along the Beeline.

Focus Area 5: Tourism

Tourism is one of the largest economic contributions to Arizona and its local communities. The Town of Fountain Hills is a tourist destination that offers the benefits of Arizona's sunny climate with outdoor recreational adventures, scheduled special events, golf courses, hiking trails and other attractive visitor amenities. The Town has four hotels with a total of 320 rooms, which contributes to the local economy through bed and sales tax.

Implementation Strategies:

- Create a comprehensive tourism marketing plan for targeted audiences.
- Attract new resort to support new meetings and conventions that generate bed and sales tax revenues for the Town.
- Attract a new signature event and/or tournament to generate overnight stays in Fountain Hills' hotels and resorts.
- Collaborate with hotels on existing events in an effort to generate overnight stays.
- Support the progress of the International Dark Sky Discovery Center to serve as a national and international attraction for visitors.
- Partner with the Fountain Hills Dark Sky Association to identify a permanent location within Fountain Hills for stargazing.
- Cross promote events with nearby community partners to capitalize on regional experiences, such as Spring Training and WM Phoenix Open.
- Determine potential economic development and tourism opportunities within Fountain Park to increase visitation.