



2023-2026

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# STRATEGIC PLAN

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Message from the Chief
- 4 Community Profile
- 5 Scottsdale Demographics
- 8 Organizational Overview
- 9 SFD Values
- 11 Strategic Plan Process

## *Strategic Goals*

- 12 *Initiative 1 -*  
Health and Wellness
- 15 *Initiative 2 -*  
Next Level Leadership
- 16 *Initiative 3 -*  
Strategic Recruitment
- 18 *Initiative 4 -*  
Strategic Mapping
- 19 *Initiative 5 -*  
Community Engagement



# MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF

**Tom Shannon**



**I respectfully offer** the following Strategic Plan as Scottsdale Fire Department's guiding document for years 2023 to 2026.

Scottsdale Fire Department enters the next three years with great optimism and focus as we experience substantial attrition of our current workforce into retirement. Because SFD was created on July 1, 2005, the inaugural employees are achieving 20 years of service in the state pension system, making them eligible for retirement on July 1, 2025. This legion of employees is comprised of Administrative Staff, Chief Officers, Captains, Fire Engineers and Firefighters who possess tenured skills in their discipline that need to be replaced.

Our previous three years were principally focused on workforce resiliency and reliability to ensure quality services. We have utilized commissioned studies and professional consultants to help shape the strategy of the coming three years. They will be extremely important to the reconstruction of the fire department in both technical skill set and public safety assurance within an all-hazards response model.

The following Strategic Plan will anchor our fundamental goals required to successfully set up the department for the workforce exodus that is approaching. Readiness for response within an all-hazards environment will remain our key responsibility. A robust hazard mitigation plan through community risk reduction will offer temperance of the impacts of accidents and injuries to the community. We must concentrate our efforts to the development of the next generation of Scottsdale Firefighters and offer personal growth opportunities to the future leaders of the organization.

The department continues to grow with the addition of Fire Station 612 and our regional training center. Both projects will contribute to the need for a workforce that will exceed 400 members. Managing the growth of SFD alongside the transfer of responsibilities to the next generation will consume the next three years. The Strategic Plan offers a pathway toward assuring the highest quality services to the citizens, visitors and businesses of Scottsdale.

Please accept this document with special thanks to our employees and elected officials for their continued support and dedication to public safety. It is a great pleasure and privilege to serve our residents and visitors. As always, we welcome your feedback as it pertains to the operation of the organization. Please e-mail your comments to [fire@ScottsdaleAZ.gov](mailto:fire@ScottsdaleAZ.gov) or call 480-312-8000.

## **Staffing 2023**

320.5

Daily Positions

## **Expected Staffing 2026**

422.5

Daily Positions



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## A World-Class Community

Located in the beautiful Sonoran Desert, Scottsdale is nestled at the foot of the McDowell Mountains in the Valley of the Sun. Scottsdale is a premier community known for a high quality of life with attractive residential, working and shopping areas. It is an internationally recognized destination and a thriving home to businesses of all kinds.

Scottsdale ranks among the nation's best places to live, with top-rated schools, award-winning parks, low crime rates and a vibrant economy. The city boasts world-class restaurants, shops, art galleries and resort hotels. There are recreational opportunities with golf courses, tennis courts, parks, pools, bike paths and trails. Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve is a permanently protected Sonoran Desert habitat encompassing nearly 48 square miles.

Scottsdale was founded by Army Chaplain Winfield Scott in 1888 but was not incorporated until 1951 when Scottsdale was a small community of 2,021 residents situated on about two square miles of land. Today, Scottsdale has more than 243,000 residents enjoying the rich diversity of experiences offered within the city's 185 square miles.

## Business

Scottsdale is one of the state's leading job centers with a robust economy anchored by bio-life science companies, high-tech innovation, financial services, tourism and corporate headquarters. Almost 34,000 companies do business in Scottsdale, with nearly 220,000 jobs. SkySong, the ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center, is designed to help companies grow through a unique partnership with Arizona State University. Scottsdale's

downtown, "Old Town Scottsdale," is an emerging center for high-tech businesses. To the north, the Scottsdale Airpark is the city's largest employment area, and the Scottsdale Cure Corridor is a hub of premier healthcare providers and biomedical companies.

## Tourism

With great weather, breathtaking scenery and a calendar full of special events, Scottsdale is a popular tourist destination in Arizona that welcomes millions of visitors annually. The city boasts many hotels, resorts, restaurants and spas. That activity adds up to big business. The annual economic impact of Scottsdale visitors is estimated at \$2.5 billion dollars. Visitors generate almost \$56 million dollars of annual tax revenue— representing more than one in every five city tax dollars.

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## Special Events

Every spring, Scottsdale garners national attention with an eclectic mix of sporting and cultural events that draw hundreds of thousands of spectators and millions of television viewers. Scottsdale resorts annually host Fiesta Bowl teams as Old Town becomes a focal point for pep rallies and fan parties. The Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction headlines a week of automotive attractions and becomes the star of more than 40 hours of live television coverage.

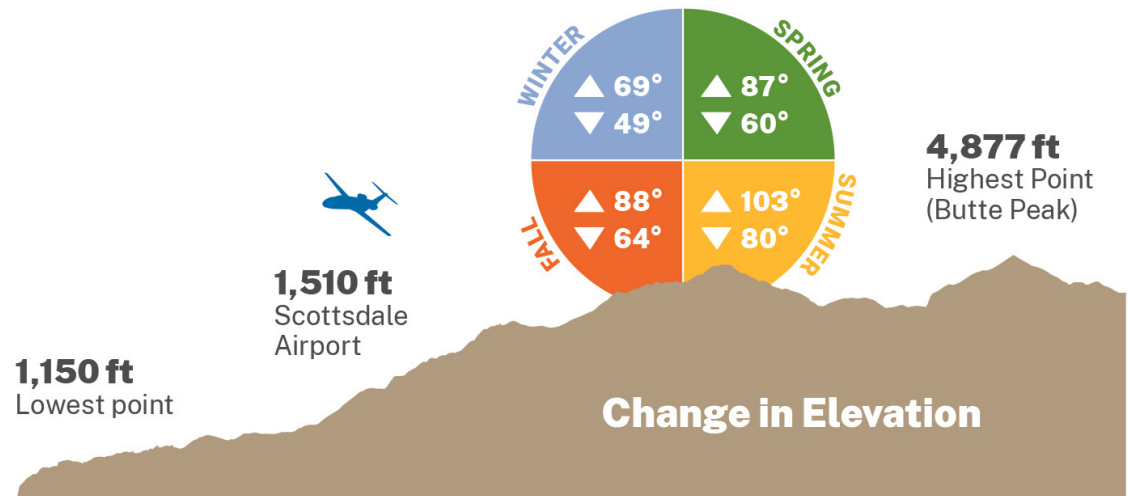
The Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show — among the largest horse shows in the nation — and Scottsdale's festive Parada del Sol Parade and Rodeo follow later. In March, Major League Baseball takes center stage. Old Town Scottsdale serves as the spring training home of the San Francisco Giants and makes the city a home base for visiting fans and media from across the nation.

In 2023, the WM Phoenix Open unfolded at the same time as Super Bowl LVII, which put Scottsdale squarely in the center of the sports world, hosting national TV coverage of the one of the largest galleries in golf along with 40 plus hours of live telecasts from the Historic Old Town ESPN Main Street Tailgate.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

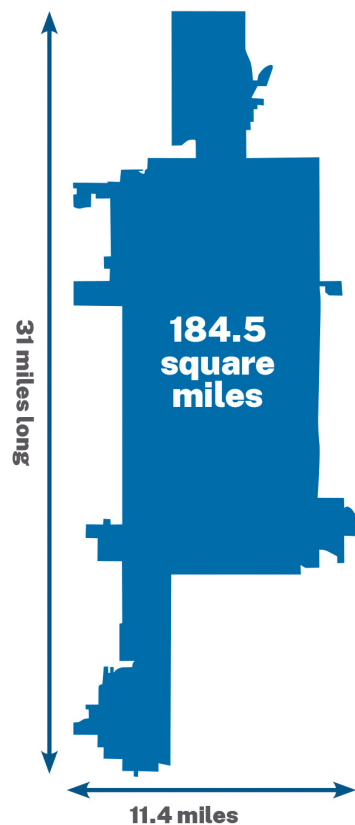
## Scottsdale's elevation rises by nearly 4,000 feet from south to north.

Source: Scottsdale Airport Weather Station (2021-2022) and City of Scottsdale



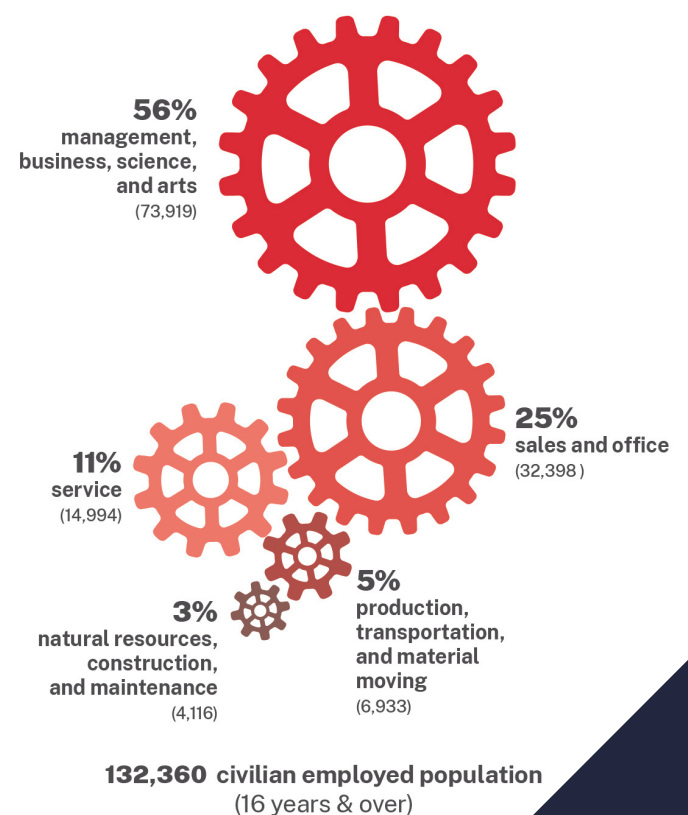
## Scottsdale is the 48th largest city in the U.S. by area.

Source: U.S. Census (2020-2021) and City of Scottsdale



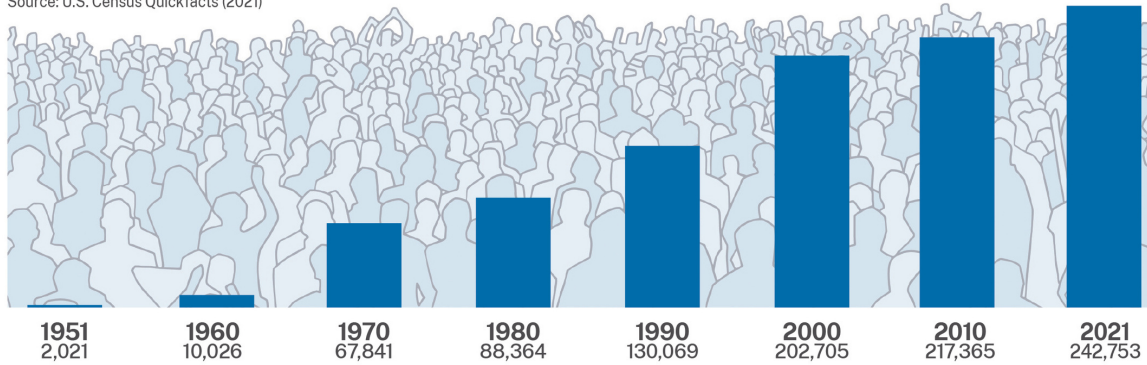
## Most Scottsdale residents work in management or office jobs.

Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



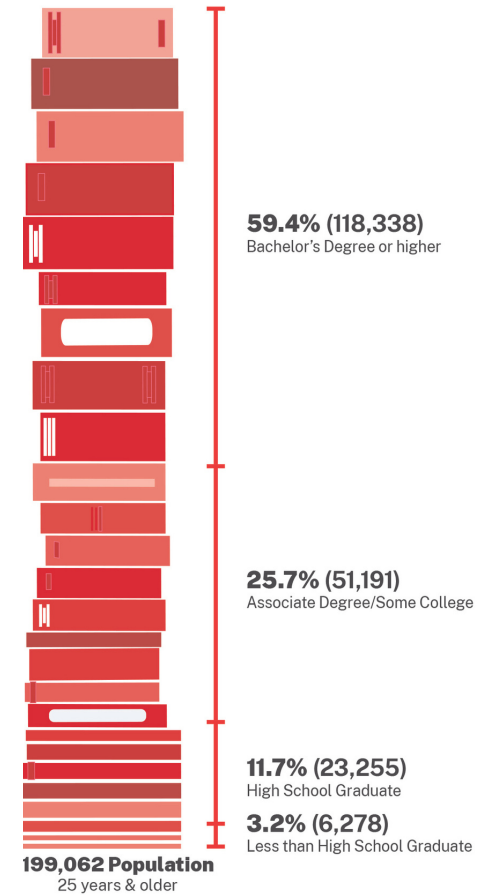
# Scottsdale by the Numbers: A Demographic Summary

Source: U.S. Census Quickfacts (2021)



Nearly 4 out of 7 Scottsdale adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

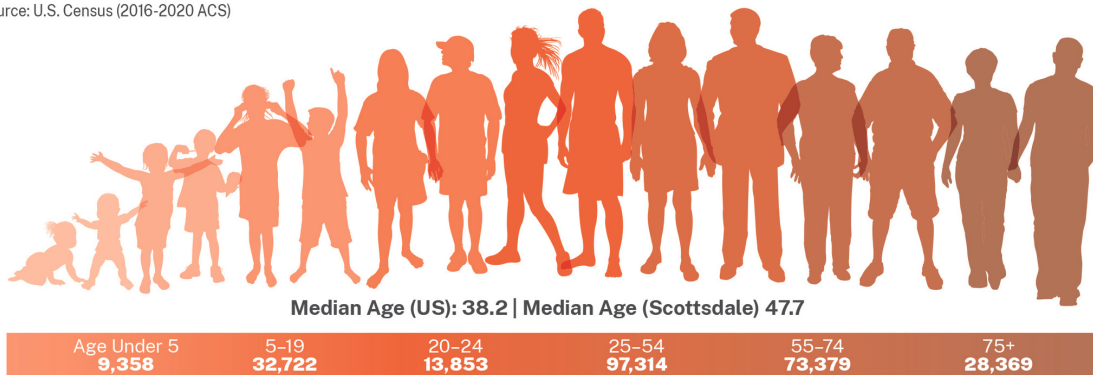
Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



## Scottsdale Residents

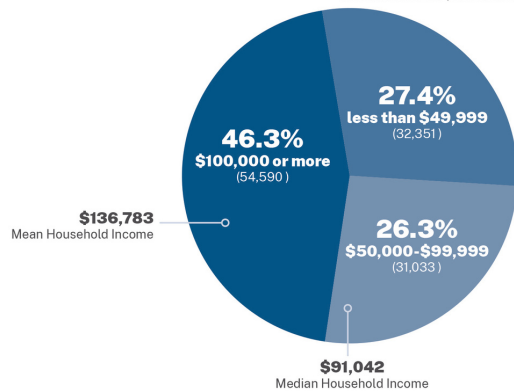
Scottsdale's median age of 47.7 is almost 10 years older than the U.S. median age of 38.2.

Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



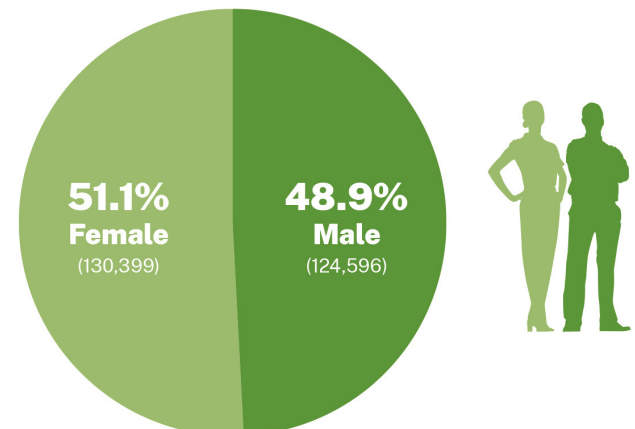
Nearly half of all Scottsdale households make more than \$100,000 a year.

Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



There are slightly more women than men in Scottsdale.

Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



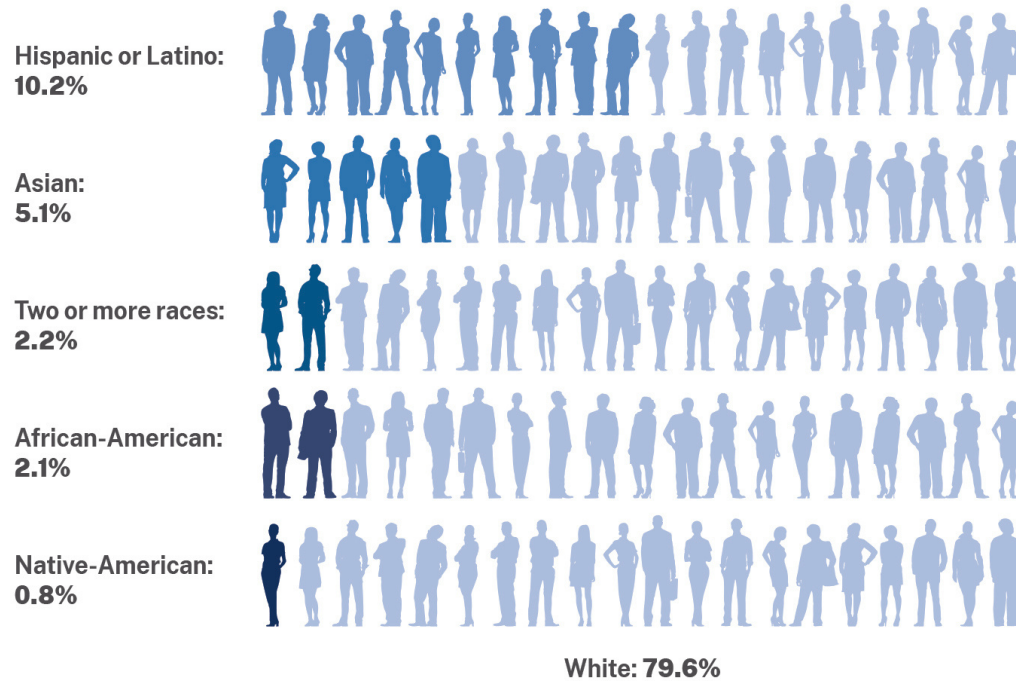
The majority of housing units in Scottsdale are owner occupied.

Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)

139,189 total housing units

**One in five Scottsdale residents is a person of color.**

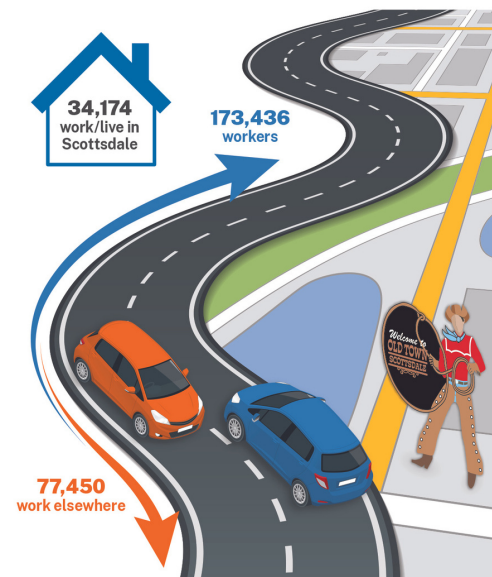
Source: U.S. Census (2016-2020 ACS)



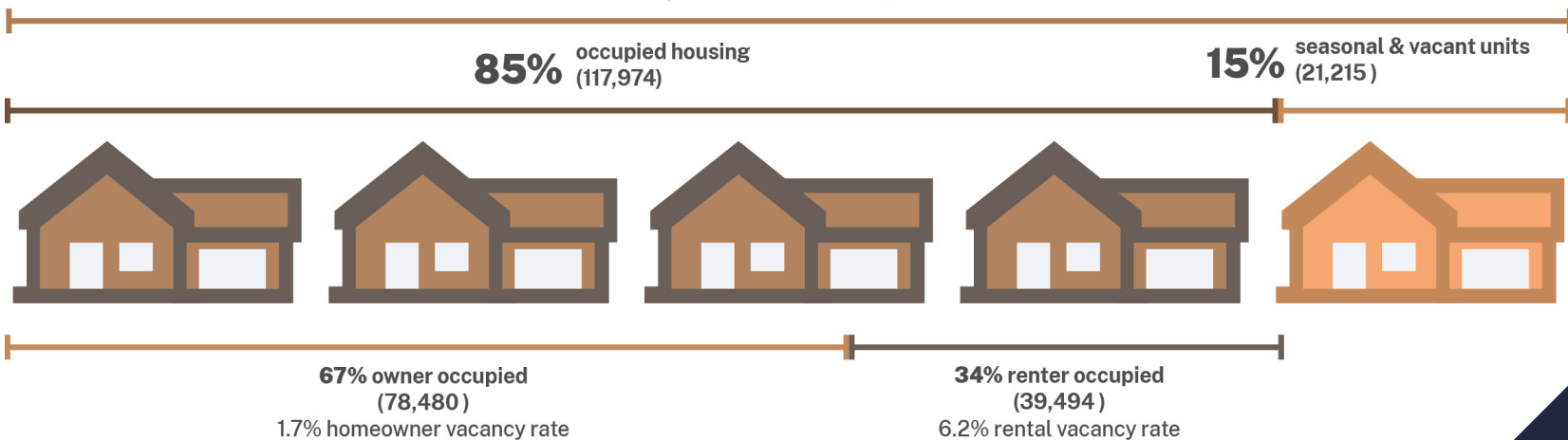
**More people come to work in Scottsdale each day than leave to work in other communities.**

Source: U.S. Census Inflow/Outflow Analysis (2019)

Scottsdale has  
**207,610 jobs**



**139,189 total housing units**



# WE CARE FOR YOU

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Scottsdale Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services within an “all-hazards” approach. Each of the city’s 255,310 residents and 9.1 million annual visitors are provided the highest quality prevention, education, response and recovery services possible.

Scottsdale Fire employs 320 highly trained professionals whose primary goal is to provide relevant and responsive services to their customers. SFD proudly provides fire, medical and all-hazards response capabilities for Scottsdale and the region as a key member in the Phoenix Regional Dispatch and Deployment system known as Automatic Aid.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement clearly and simply states: “We Care for You.” This embodies our philosophy of providing emergency services in an all-hazards approach regardless of circumstances.

## VISION OF THE FUTURE

Scottsdale Fire Department provides our customers essential fire and life safety services thereby enhancing the public safety experience in Scottsdale.

## OUR COMMITMENT

The members of Scottsdale Fire Department are dedicated to public service. We adhere to the basic tenets of mutual respect, active collaboration and being relevant in our customers’ lives. As public safety providers, we view our responsibilities as essential to ensuring a safer community.

Our approach is inclusive, with each member of the organization playing their role and position, while contributing at the highest levels of leadership. We view individual accomplishments as organizational success and encourage each member to seek opportunities to serve.

The Scottsdale Fire Department Strategic Plan is a three-year plan that guides the department’s efforts and identifies the framework under which subsequent actions and planning activities will be developed. This plan considers current and future economic trending and contrasts those trends against the all-hazards response nature of the fire service.

Management and Labor are committed to a collaborative and cooperative approach to problem solving. We believe the greatest assets impacting public safety are our employees and as such we look for ways to find innovation in everything we do.



# SFD VALUES

**Representatives of** Scottsdale Fire Department met to renew our commitment to our mission of caring through the identification of our Core Values.

The collaborative identified 5 key values that are essential to our success now and for our future. They acknowledge that our members come to work every day to do great work. We anchor from the foundation of trust in our community and each other as we lean forward for our future.

We respect every contribution of our past and veteran members as we invest in the next generation of caring professionals. In order to be effective, we will foster mutually beneficial relationships and do so in a healthy, safe and supportive way.



## Character Counts

Good people doing good work.



## Trust

Community and family loyalty built on trust



## Value

Fostering relationships that assure mutual respect.



## Wellness

Committed to the complete wellbeing of our past, present, and future members



## Stewardship

Respecting the past while intentionally investing in the future.

**Our members are *sworn to care*.**  
**It is our mission and *our promise*.**



**Scottsdale Fire Department** again utilized the services of the locally based company, Advanced Strategy Center, to facilitate the development of the department's 2023-2026 strategic plan.

Scottsdale Fire Department's intent was to provide a collaborative and transparent opportunity for the key internal and external stakeholders to provide their input. The following were the three groups identified to participate in ASC feedback sessions:

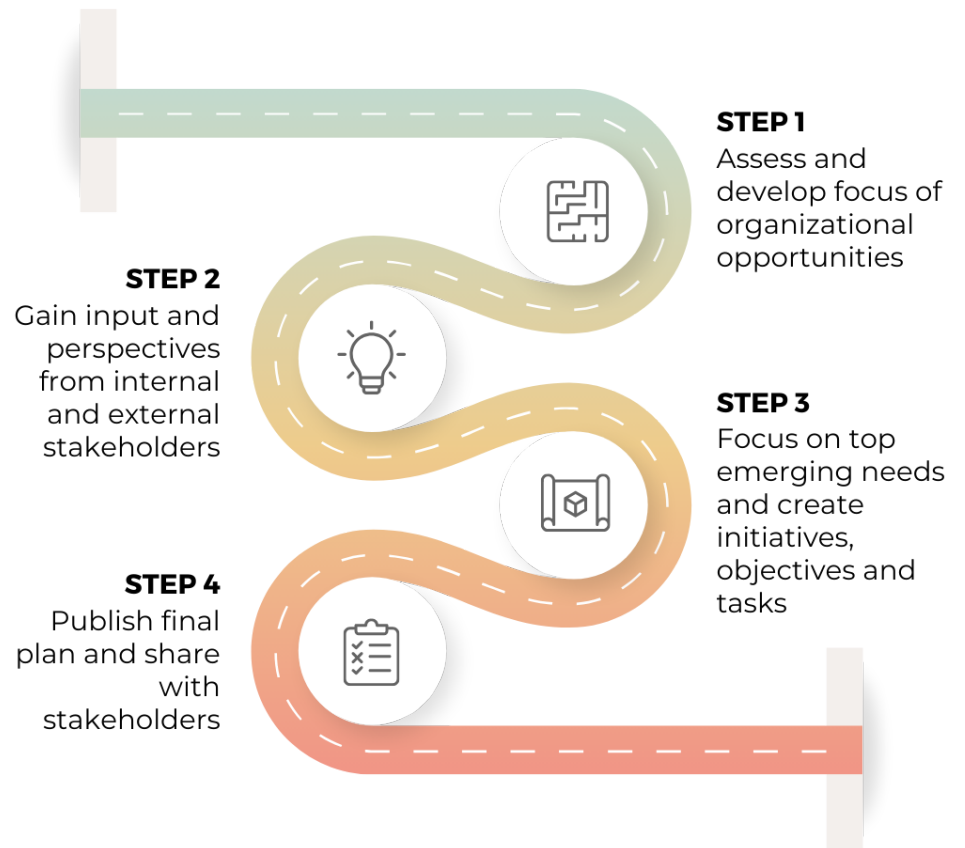
- Employees of the Scottsdale Fire Department of varying ranks, roles, years of service, and from both the Labor group and Management group.
- Employees of the City of Scottsdale from varying departments with day-to-day relationships with the fire department, and varying levels of responsibility within the city.
- External partners to the Scottsdale Fire Department from both the private and public sector with day-to-day relationships.

ASC engaged the stakeholder groups in a very innovative process that enabled them to provide feedback via a virtual session approach. The process combined web-based input for responses on open ended questions about the future of the department with a traditional voice conference call.

They were charged to identify the following:

- Challenges Ahead
- Emerging Community Risks
- Strategic Initiatives

## Strategic Plan Process



The facilitated feedback sessions were culled by ASC to produce a "Consolidated Stakeholder Input" document utilized to guide the final Leadership Workshop with current and emerging leadership from both the Labor and Management groups.

The outcome of the Leadership Workshop session provided the top five emerging concepts and initiatives to serve as the framework to guide the final development of the Scottsdale Fire Department Strategic Plan.

# STRATEGIC GOALS

## INITIATIVE 1 ADVANCING THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF OUR PEOPLE

### **Strategic Objective 1.1**

Implement comprehensive wellness programs and initiatives to promote physical and mental health among Scottsdale Fire Department members.

- **Task 1.1.1** Conduct regular member surveys to assess and provide personalized exercise plans for Scottsdale Fire Department members.
- **Task 1.1.2** Offer mental health workshops and resources, such as stress management and resilience training.
- **Task 1.1.3** Provide access to confidential coaching and counseling services and support groups for firefighters struggling with mental health issues.

### **Strategic Objective 1.2**

Enhance access to quality healthcare services and resources for all members, including preventative screenings, treatment options, and mental health support.

- **Task 1.2.1** Collaborate with local healthcare providers and organizations to establish a comprehensive network of medical and mental health professionals who specialize in firefighters' unique health needs.
- **Task 1.2.2** Develop an educational campaign to raise awareness among firefighters about the importance of regular preventative screenings and

SFD must ensure our existing and retired members have a safe and healthy lifelong career and retirement, optimum health, safety, education, and care to prevent physical, cardiac, cancer and behavioral health issues.

provide resources for scheduling and accessing these services.

### **Strategic Objective 1.3**

Develop and maintain a supportive and inclusive working environment that fosters the overall well-being and satisfaction of Scottsdale Fire Department members.

- **Task 1.3.1** Regularly assess and improve communication channels. Encourage feedback, suggestions, and concerns to be shared and addressed in a safe and non-judgmental manner between members and leadership.
- **Task 1.3.2** Implement diversity and inclusion training. Provide training to members of the benefits of embracing different perspectives and backgrounds to foster a sense of belonging for everyone.
- **Task 1.3.3** Create opportunities for members to work together in diverse groups, fostering positive relationships and mutual respect.
- **Task 1.3.4** Celebrate milestones, outstanding performances, and contributions made by the members to boost morale and reinforce a positive culture within the workplace.





# INITIATIVE 2

## DEVELOPING THE NEXT LEVEL OF LEADERSHIP

### **Strategic Objective 2.1**

Implement a comprehensive succession planning program that includes mentoring, training, and leadership development opportunities for identified future leaders.

- **Task 2.1.1** Conduct a skills assessment for potential future leaders within the department to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Task 2.1.2** Create and deliver leadership development training programs that focus on critical skills and competencies necessary for future leadership positions, such as strategic thinking, effective communication, and decision-making.
- **Task 2.1.3** Develop a leadership handbook or guide that outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and communication protocols for current and future leaders. This will provide a clear framework for communication channels and ensure consistency in knowledge transfer.
- **Task 2.1.4** Implement regular mentorship or coaching programs where current leaders can share their expertise and provide guidance to future leaders. This can be done through scheduled meetings, workshops, or even online platforms, allowing for open communication and knowledge sharing.

SFD must be intentional about succession planning and adequately prepare the next generation of leaders within the organization. We must ensure a seamless transition in guidance and championing the organization, while also developing future leaders who will continue to drive the mission forward.

### **Strategic Objective 2.2**

Create a culture of continuous learning and professional development within the department, encouraging current and potential leaders to enhance their skills and knowledge through ongoing education and training.

- **Task 2.2.1** Organize monthly or bi-monthly lunchtime sessions using guest speakers and internal experts to share their knowledge and experiences about new industry trends, best practices, or relevant skills.
- **Task 2.2.2** Establish a centralized online/intranet platform where members can access a variety of learning materials, such as articles, e-books, videos, and webinars. Curate content that aligns with the department's objectives and encourages self-directed learning.
- **Task 2.2.3** Create an online platform or forum where current and future leaders can connect and communicate. This can include discussion boards, messaging features, and document sharing capabilities to facilitate efficient and effective communication throughout the transition process.

# INITIATIVE 3

## STRATEGIC RECRUITING PROCESS

### **Strategic Objective 3.1**

Create a well-planned recruitment process that aims to attract diverse candidates for all ranks. The strategy should include targeted outreach efforts, effective marketing campaigns, and the use of various recruitment channels to ensure a diverse pool of highly-qualified applicants.

- **Task 3.1.1** Conduct a market analysis. Research and analyze the current job market trends, candidate preferences, and competitor strategies. Identify any gaps or opportunities that can help shape our recruitment strategy.
- **Task 3.1.2** Evaluate and enhance SFD's branding by highlighting its unique selling points, values, and member benefits. Enhancing our online presence through social media, career websites, and employer review platforms to attract top talent.
- **Task 3.1.3** Develop and launch a member referral program that encourages members to refer qualified candidates. Expand our talent pool and encourage current members to actively participate in the recruitment process.

It is critical for SFD to strategically recruit candidates for all ranks by implementing a well-planned recruitment process that strives to build a diverse and highly-qualified workforce who embody our core values and will actively invest in the community and maintain our culture of "We care for you."

### **Strategic Objective 3.2**

Implement a structured selection process that ensures fair and unbiased evaluations of candidates. This objective includes defining clear selection criteria, conducting thorough assessments (such as physical and written exams, interviews, and background checks), and involving diverse panels of assessors to minimize biases.

- **Task 3.2.1** Develop targeted outreach efforts. Identify organizations, schools, and communities that have diverse demographics and establish partnerships with them. Outreach to these groups, attending their events, and conducting informational sessions to promote and educate potential candidates about the opportunities within Scottsdale Fire Department.
- **Task 3.2.2** Develop creative marketing campaigns that are specifically designed to reach a diverse audience. Explore and utilize various recruitment channels to ensure a diverse pool of applicants. Post job openings on specialized websites or job boards that cater to underrepresented groups. Attend career fairs and events that attract diverse populations. Network with diverse professional associations or organizations.





# INITIATIVE 4

## STRATEGIC SERVICE/RESOURCE MAPPING

### **Strategic Objective 4.1**

Optimize the fire department resources in strategic locations within Scottsdale to ensure rapid response and deployment.

- **Task 4.1.1** Collect and analyze historical data on fire incidents, response times, and population density in different areas of Scottsdale to help identify high-risk areas and allocate resources accordingly.
- **Task 4.1.2** Study demographic data from census reports and other sources (Core Score) to understand population growth and changes in specific neighborhoods over time and anticipate future demands to allocate resources in strategic locations.
- **Task 4.1.3** Analyze geographic trends and patterns, such as urban development, road networks, and traffic congestion. Use GIS mapping to visualize and analyze data for informed decision-making.

SFD must strategically allocate staffing and response resources placed throughout the city to effectively address calls for service and hazard types, enhance overall service effectiveness, and optimize community safety and satisfaction.

### **Strategic Objective 4.2**

Enhance training and development programs to ensure personnel remain ready for all hazards response.

- **Task 4.2.1** Create a budget proposal to include the latest technologies and equipment that would support the new state-of-the-art Training Center and enhance firefighter training.
- **Task 4.2.2** Develop a comprehensive plan for organizing large-scale wildland simulations, including securing suitable locations, coordinating with relevant agencies and organizations, and ensuring the safety of participants.
- **Task 4.2.3.** Implement tailored specific professional development programs for firefighters, such as workshops, conferences, and online courses, to encourage continuous learning and growth in their field.

# INITIATIVE 5

## INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS/ENGAGEMENT

### **Strategic Objective 5.1**

Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to engage the community and provide timely information about fire safety tips, emergency preparedness, and updates on department activities.

- **Task 5.1.1** Regularly post informative content related to fire safety tips, emergency preparedness, and updates on fire department activities.
- **Task 5.1.2** Develop a content calendar outlining daily or weekly posts on social media platforms that align with key fire safety events or awareness campaigns throughout the year, such as Fire Prevention Week or National EMS Week.
- **Task 5.1.3** Encourage community involvement and engagement by hosting interactive Q&A sessions or live video streams on social media platforms where residents can ask questions about fire safety, emergency preparedness, or other related topics.

SFD will build a resilient Scottsdale by providing timely information through technology, social media and educational programs to further empower the public to be prepared and knowledgeable about hazards and emergencies.

### **Strategic Objective 5.2**

Collaborate with schools, community centers, and other relevant organizations to deliver fire safety and prevention educational programs for citizens of all ages.

- **Task 5.2.1** Develop and distribute educational materials that provide information on fire safety, prevention techniques, and emergency preparedness.
- **Task 5.2.2** Conduct hands-on training sessions. Organize workshops where citizens can learn practical skills related to community risk reduction.
- **Task 5.2.3** Provide Community Outreach to schools, community centers, and other organizations to conduct presentations or workshops for students, parents, and other community members.

### **Strategic Objective 5.3**

Establish a reliable and efficient communication system through technology to inform citizens about safety alerts, and community events.

- **Task 5.3.1** Research a user-friendly mobile application that allows citizens to receive safety alerts and updates about community events.
- **Task 5.3.2** Research and implement an email and SMS notification system to send safety alerts and community event updates directly to citizens' inboxes or cell phones.



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