



## OPEN SPACE ELEMENT<sup>‡</sup>

Safe, accessible open space is vital for sustaining a high quality of life; thus, a strategically planned, balanced, and connected system of open spaces is essential to both citizen and visitor enjoyment. The City of Scottsdale commits to providing, maintaining, enhancing, and expanding both active and passive open spaces throughout the community to serve the local citizens and remain a highly desirable tourism destination.

Common open spaces serve a variety of functions, such as recreation, aesthetics, and flood control. Throughout Scottsdale, several types of open spaces create different experiences. The Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve is a continuous tract of natural open space. It protects significant wildlife habitat, maintains the community's connection to the natural Sonoran Desert, and represents an image and character that is uniquely Scottsdale. A major developed open space, the Indian Bend Wash greenbelt, serves as a recreation and flood control spine, as well as, a significant segment of the regional park system. Smaller parks next to school sites allow for dual use by the neighborhood and school. Preserved desert washes help maintain the lush desert character and wildlife corridors in developments. Still, other open spaces offer protection from natural hazards and conservation of natural resources, including watersheds, streams, and aquifers.

As Scottsdale nears build-out, sustaining existing open spaces and creating new open spaces will be even more important. Regional collaboration in open space matters will help to ensure that current and future community members and visitors continue to enjoy our open spaces.

Through the goals and policies of this element, Scottsdale will sustainably protect and manage its open space resources.

## Goals and Policies

### Goal OS 1 †

Provide four primary public and private open space types: the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, natural open spaces, developed open spaces, and continuous open spaces.

#### Policies

**OS 1.1 (NEW) Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve.** Provide an integrated desert open space system consisting of mountains, desert, and natural areas to maintain scenic views, preserve wildlife and desert plant habitats, and protect archaeological and historical resources and sites, while providing public access for educational purposes and passive outdoor recreational opportunities. It is important to sustain Scottsdale’s Preserve as natural Sonoran Desert for current and future generations. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Recreation; Environmental; Planning and Conservation Elements]*

**OS 1.2 Natural Open Space.** Provide public and private, natural open spaces to preserve wildlife habitat, views, and sensitive historical/archeological sites, and, where appropriate, incorporate areas for passive recreation. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Healthy Community; Arts, Culture & Creative Community; Recreation; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*

**OS 1.3 Developed Open Space.** Offer public and private parks and open spaces to accommodate both active and passive recreation. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Healthy Community; and Recreation Elements]*

**OS 1.4 Continuous Open Spaces.** Develop a system of continuous open spaces that connect citywide and regionally. Such open spaces include Vista Corridors, streetscapes, trails, and canals. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Healthy Community; Recreation; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*



Goal OS 2 †

Fulfill the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve initiative to create an integrated desert open space and wildlife corridor system that connects to the regional Sonoran Desert open space system.

Policies

**OS 2.1** Complete the land acquisition for the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Conservation; and Environmental Planning Elements]*

**OS 2.2** Provide educational and research opportunities to learn and interpret the natural elements, history, and archaeology of the Sonoran Desert and mountains. *[Cross-reference Healthy Community; Arts, Culture & Creative Community; Recreation; Economic Vitality; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*



**OS 2.3** **(NEW)** Ensure development next to the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve respects its unique location, minimizes impacts to the natural environment, and contributes to the community’s visual and physical access to open space and the mountains. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Healthy Community; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*

**OS 2.4** Restore ecological habitat in degraded areas (e.g. burned, grazed, vehicular damage, invasive species) of the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *[Cross-reference Environmental Planning and Conservation Elements]*

**OS 2.5** **(NEW)** Consider wildlife corridors, habitat, and trail crossings when planning mobility routes through and adjacent to the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *[Cross-reference Recreation; Environmental Planning; Circulation; and Conservation Elements]*

Goal OS 3

Visually and physically connect open spaces to maintain a continuous open space system.

*Policies*

- OS 3.1 Develop a public trail and path system that links to other city and regional systems. *[Cross-reference Healthy Community and Recreation Elements]*
- OS 3.2 Identify and consider the positive and negative impacts of proposed projects on viewsheds. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Land Use Elements]*
- OS 3.3 As development and redevelopment occurs along transportation corridors, encourage the preservation of mountain viewsheds, the Sonoran Desert, natural features, and landmarks that enhance the unique image and aesthetics of major streets through open space buffering. The following Visually Significant Roadway designations should be applied: *[Cross-reference Visually Significant Roadways Map in Character & Design Element]*

- **Scenic Corridors** should be designated along major streets where a significant landscaped buffer is needed between streets and adjacent land uses, where an enhanced streetscape appearance is desired, and where views to mountains and natural or man-made features will be maximized. Scenic Corridors may provide enhanced opportunities for open space, scenic viewing, trails, and pathways in the community.
- **Buffered Roadways** should be designated along major streets to provide an aesthetic or environmental buffer, enhance the unique image of the streetscape, and reduce the impacts that major streets may have on adjacent land uses.
- **Desert Scenic Roadways** should be designated along the one-mile and half-mile streets within Environmentally Sensitive Lands that are not already designated as Scenic Corridors or Buffered Roadways. These designations should maintain and enhance open spaces along streets in environmentally sensitive locations.
- Apply a **Preserve Scenic Buffer** along streets within and adjacent to the Recommended Study Boundary (RSB) of the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Arts, Culture & Creative Community; Recreation; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*

- OS 3.4 Encourage the use of drainage easements, Vista Corridors, and transmission line corridors as recreation and open space opportunities. *[Cross-reference Healthy Community; Recreation; Conservation; and Public Services & Facilities Elements]*
- OS 3.5 Locate parks to enhance unique landmarks and environmentally significant areas, when possible. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Recreation; and Conservation Elements]*

Goal OS 4

Provide open space and outdoor opportunities in Scottsdale neighborhoods, giving priority to areas that are most lacking open space.

*Policies*

**OS 4.1** Provide opportunities for people to experience and enjoy the Sonoran Desert and mountains, while balancing public access and preservation needs.

**OS 4.2** Provide open space access and trailhead areas with facilities for public use. *[Cross-reference Recreation and Public Buildings Elements]*

**OS 4.3** **(NEW)** Ensure that open spaces in public ownership remain accessible to community members for compatible recreational use. *[Cross-reference Recreation and Public Services & Facilities Elements]*



**OS 4.4** **(NEW)** Locate publicly accessible and useable open spaces within Growth and Activity Areas and established neighborhoods. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Healthy Community; Growth Areas; Recreation; and Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Elements]*

**OS 4.5** **(NEW)** Encourage useable outdoor open space in new development. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Healthy Community; and Recreation Elements]*

**OS 4.6** **(NEW)** Capitalize on opportunities to create new, or connect and expand existing, open spaces in established areas when redevelopment occurs. *[Cross-reference Land Use and Conservation, Rehabilitation, & Redevelopment Elements]*

**OS 4.7 †** Encourage landowners in the development process to dedicate useable open space where there is an identified need. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Recreation; Environmental Planning; Conservation; Public Services & Facilities; and Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Elements]*

Goal OS 5

Design and manage open spaces to relate to surrounding land uses and character.

Policies

**OS 5.1 †** Evaluate the design of open spaces with the following primary determinants: aesthetics, neighborhood and service area needs, public safety, visual and functional connectivity, social and economic impacts, maintenance requirements, water consumption, drainage considerations, multi-use, Character Area, and desert preservation. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Healthy Community; Recreation; Environmental Planning; Conservation; Water Resources; Cost of Development; Safety; Public Services & Facilities; and Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Elements]*

**OS 5.2** Protect the different priorities and management objectives for each of the Open Space Land Use categories. *[Cross-reference Land Use Element]*

**OS 5.3** Aesthetically and sensitively integrate utilities and other public facilities into open spaces. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Public Services & Facilities Elements]*

**OS 5.4** Encourage development plans that respect existing topography, view corridors, wildlife corridors, and open space. Where possible, enhance existing viewsheds as areas are developed and redeveloped. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Land Use; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*

**OS 5.5** **(NEW)** Seek to provide ample shade in public open spaces as appropriate for the type of open space. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Recreation; and Environmental Planning Elements]*



**Goal OS 6 †**

**Manage a comprehensive open space program that is responsive to public and environmental needs.**

*Policies*

**OS 6.1** Continue to encourage active citizen involvement in the development and management of open space. *[Cross-reference Community Involvement Element]*

**OS 6.2** Provide consistent and effective operations and maintenance for all open space facilities. *[Cross-reference Public Services & Facilities Element]*

**OS 6.3** Promote “docent” or “steward” programs to help maintain open spaces and lower associated operational costs. *[Cross-reference Community Involvement and Healthy Community Elements]*

**OS 6.4** Consider important natural areas, parks, and other open space systems as primary elements in growth planning and endangered species and watershed protection. *[Cross-reference Land Use; Growth Areas; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*



**Goal OS 7 †**

**Acquire new, expand existing, and improve established open spaces for public use.**

*Policies*

**OS 7.1 †** Provide development incentives to promote the dedication of new useable or visually significant open space. *[Cross-reference Land Use Element]*

**OS 7.2** Encourage new development and redevelopment to connect and provide public access to neighboring open spaces, park sites, or planned open spaces. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Land Use Elements]*



**OS 7.3 †** Encourage public acquisition of natural or developed open space through direct purchase, purchase of development rights, purchase of open space easements, or other means. *[Cross-reference Land Use Element]*

**OS 7.4 †** Create usable open spaces from existing rights-of-way, sidewalk widening, street realignment, development of trails, and other creative solutions. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Recreation; Circulation; and Public Services & Facilities Elements]*

**OS 7.5 †** **(NEW)** Renovate, renew, and upgrade the city’s parks and recreation facilities in response to changing community demographics, priorities, and needs. *[Cross-reference Public Services & Facilities Element]*

**OS 7.6** **(NEW)** Ensure the interconnectivity of trails and streets before abandoning rights-of-way. *[Cross-reference Circulation and Bicycling Elements]*

**Goal OS 8 †**

**Cooperate with other agencies to preserve, protect, connect, maintain, and expand the regional open space system.**

*Policies*

**OS 8.1 †** Engage with other public and private agencies on the planning and development of open space sites and facilities next to city boundaries.

**OS 8.2 †** Support the regional open space network and coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to supply open space systems, interconnected trails networks, recreation opportunities, stormwater drainage, and sensitive wildlife habitat and migration routes. *[Cross-reference Recreation; Environmental Planning; and Conservation Elements]*

JENNY LIN RD.

CIRCLE MOUNTAIN RD.

HONDA BOW RD.

ROCKAWAY HILLS RD.

DESERT HILLS DR.

JOY RANCH RD.

STAGECOACH PASS

CAREFREE HWY.

DOVE VALLEY RD.

LONE MOUNTAIN RD.

DIXILETA DR.

DYNAMITE BLVD.

JOMAX RD.

HAPPY VALLEY RD.

PINNACLE PEAK RD.

DEER VALLEY RD.

LOOP 101

UNION HILLS DR.

BELL RD./FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BLVD.

GREENWAY PKWY.

THUNDERBIRD RD.

CACTUS RD.

SHEA BLVD.

DOUBLETREE RANCH RD.

McCORMICK PKWY.

INDIAN BEND RD.

LINCOLN DR.

McDONALD DR.

CHAPARRAL RD./CAMELBACK RD.

CAMELBACK RD.

INDIAN SCHOOL RD.

THOMAS RD.

McDOWELL RD.

LOOP 202

McKELLIPS RD.

Spur Cross Ranch  
Conservation Area

Cave Creek  
Regional Park

BARTLETT DAM RD.

Tonto National Forest

McDowell Mountain  
Regional Park

Fountain Hills McDowell  
Sonoran Preserve

Papago  
Park

### Open Space<sup>†</sup>

- Open Space, Useable
- Open Space, Common\*
- Major Wash
- Regional Open Space
- Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve

\* Does not include on-lot NAOS dedications.



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JENNY LIN RD.

CIRCLE MOUNTAIN RD.

HONDA BOW RD.

ROCKAWAY HILLS RD.

DESERT HILLS DR.

JOY RANCH RD.

STAGECOACH PASS

CAREFREE HWY.

DOVE VALLEY RD.

LONE MOUNTAIN RD.

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LOOP 101

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CACTUS RD.

SHEA BLVD.

DOUBLETREE RANCH RD.

McCORMICK PKWY.

INDIAN BEND RD.

LINCOLN DR.

McDONALD DR.

CHAPARRAL RD./CAMELBACK RD.

CAMELBACK RD.

INDIAN SCHOOL RD.

THOMAS RD.

McDOWELL RD.

LOOP 202

McKELLIPS RD.

BARTLETT DAM RD.

RIO VERDE DR.

CAVE CREEK RD.

TATUM BLVD.

PALISADES BLVD.

BEELINE HWY. (87)

56th ST.

64th ST.

SCOTTSDALE RD.

HAYDEN RD.

PIMA RD.

LOOP 101

GALVIN PKWY.

96th ST

104th ST

112th ST

120th ST

128th ST

136th ST

142th ST

### Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve

-  Recommended Study Boundary (RSB)
-  Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, City Owned
-  Other Preserved lands, within RSB
-  State Trust Land, within RSB, not reclassified\*\*
-  State Trust Land, within RSB, reclassified, suitable for conservation\*\*\*
-  Existing Trailheads\*
-  Planned Trailheads\*

\* Refer to McDowell Sonoran Preserve Access Areas Report for additional trailhead detail.

\*\* Land that was not reclassified by the State Land Commissioner as suitable for conservation and therefore has no conservation restrictions.

\*\*\* Land reclassified by the State Land Commissioner as suitable for conservation, but not restricted to conservation use.

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LOOP 101

### Visually Significant Roadways

-  Scenic Corridor
-  Scenic Corridor/Desert Foothills Scenic Drive†
-  Buffered Roadway
-  Themed Streetscape
-  Desert Scenic Roadway
-  Desert Scenic Roadway/Preserve Scenic Buffer
-  Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve



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