

# Scottsdale's Values and Vision

*The General Plan is the primary tool for guiding the future development of the city. On a daily basis the city is faced with tough choices about growth, housing, transportation, neighborhood improvement, and service delivery. A General Plan provides a guide for making these choices by describing long-term goals for the city's future as well as policies to guide day-to-day decisions.*

## Community Values

***In the year 2025, Scottsdale will be a community that:***

- Demonstrates its commitment to environmental, economic, and social sustainability and measures both the short and long-term impacts of our decisions;
- Creates, revitalizes, and preserves neighborhoods that have long-term viability, unique attributes and character, livability, connectivity to other neighborhoods in the community, and that fit together to form an exceptional citywide quality of life (i.e. the whole is greater than the sum of its parts);
- Facilitates human connection by anticipating and locating facilities and infrastructure that enable human communication and interaction; and by promoting policies that have a clear human orientation, value and benefit;
- Respects the environmental character of the city with preservation of desert and mountain lands, and innovative ways of protecting natural resources, clean air, water resources, natural habitat and wildlife migration routes, archaeological resources, vistas, and view and scenic corridors;
- Builds on its cultural heritage, promotes historical and archaeological preservation areas, and identifies and promotes the arts and tourism in a way that recognizes the unique desert environment in which we live;
- Coordinates transportation options with appropriate land uses to enable a decreased reliance on the automobile and more mobility choices;
- Maintains or improves its high standards of appearance, aesthetics, public amenities, and levels of service;

- Recognizes and embraces change: from being predominantly undeveloped to mostly built out, from a young town to a maturing city, from a bedroom community to a net importer of employees, and from a focus on a single economic engine to a diverse, balanced economy;
- Simultaneously acknowledges our past (preservation of historically significant sites and buildings will be important), and prepares for our future;
- Promotes growth that serves community needs, quality of life and community character;
- Recognizes and embraces the diversity of the community by creating an environment that respects the human dignity of all without regard to race, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or physical attributes.

### Community Vision

Each of us has a vision of what Scottsdale should be like in the future. Although our visions are different, they share common qualities and reference points. We hope to create a safe, attractive city for ourselves, our children, and for future generations. We envision a city where the natural environment is protected, where excellent services are provided, and where citizens are true partners in their city government. We aspire to create a city that is economically healthy and a good place to do business. We envision a city that has balanced mobility options and connections to citywide and regional networks. We see our community as a great place to live now and in the future.

Many characteristics combine to make Scottsdale what it is now. The physical setting of the Sonoran Desert, the character of our downtown, thriving businesses and industries providing diversified employment, a historical emphasis on arts and culture, and a variety of neighborhoods, each unique in character, allowing for a broad range of lifestyles.

The passage of time inevitably brings changes. Scottsdale today differs from the city of twenty or fifty years ago and is different now than the city it will be in twenty or fifty years. The task facing us is to retain the most important characteristics of our city in the face of changes we cannot control, and manage as well as possible, those forces we can control.

Unanimous agreement about the future is not the goal of the General Plan. Rather it strives to create balance and blending of opinions to form a community that collectively manages change. Only then can we retain the community's unique characteristics and still welcome the future. The Scottsdale General Plan strives to reflect a coherent vision of the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of a diverse population - senior citizens and children,



long-term residents and newcomers, those living in established neighborhoods and those living in newly created neighborhoods.

The community vision is built from a foundation of citizen-driven processes. Building on the Scottsdale Town Enrichment Program (S.T.E.P.) forums of the 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's, the most recent "visioning" processes, Scottsdale Visioning (1991-'92) and CityShape 2020 (1994-'96), identified dominant themes and created Guiding Principles for the community. Through the General Plan update public participation process known as Future in Focus (1999-2001), the vision, themes, and principles were validated. Changes have taken place since the Visioning and CityShape processes, and there are differences of opinion in the community about what the future should hold, but the foundation laid by the Shared Vision and CityShape 2020 holds true.

*Scottsdale's Shared Vision is a path into the next century. It does not presume to "know" the future. Rather it sets forth the clear magnetism of our special character and purpose in order that we may all pull in the same direction.*

- letter to the City Council from the co-Chairs of the Citizens' Visioning  
Advisory Committee  
Shared Vision Report, December 1992

*The six Guiding Principles are intended to highlight and organize in the General Plan, the most important goals of the community. [The goals and policies contained in the General Plan] must be capable of addressing community decisions in mature, redeveloping, and emerging areas of the community. They must be applicable to all of our diverse and ever-changing community... A key to understanding these principles is to recognize that they can apply with equal effectiveness to a wide range of circumstances in a uniquely appropriate way.*

- CityShape 2020 Comprehensive Report, March 1996

*This Summary Report represents a major effort and tool to assist in the development of the General Plan and is intended to serve as a tool to validate previous efforts, such as CityShape 2020 and Scottsdale Visioning. Integrating the Future in Focus results into the General Plan is a directive of the Scottsdale City Council, a goal of the City's Planning Systems Department, and an expectation of the citizens of Scottsdale.*

- Future in Focus Community Involvement Outreach Summary Report,  
November 2000



## Scottsdale Visioning and the Shared Vision

In 1991, a process of “community visioning” was initiated to identify the most important and significant beliefs and desires about the long-term future of the community. In December 1992, the City Council accepted a report outlining Scottsdale’s Shared Vision. The Shared Vision identified four mutually supportive Dominant Themes, which reflect Scottsdale’s special qualities and are the foundation for Scottsdale’s long-term vitality. The Four Themes represent Scottsdale’s core expression. They define who we are and present an inspiring vision of our emerging special place in the broader regional, national and global economy. The Four Dominant Themes are:

**Sonoran Desert:** Our growth and development should proceed with clear awareness of the impact on our rare and beautiful environment.

**Resort Community:** Tourism and the constant influx of people from all over the world strongly affects our way of life as well as our economy.

**Arts & Culture:** Scottsdale’s cultural assets are an integral part of the community and a basis for further development.

**Health & Research:** Scottsdale has a culture of wellness and an optimistic spirit of innovation. Health, biotechnology, computer, and other high-tech businesses are a natural fit for the growing diversity of our community.

Twenty-four VisionTasks, (not specified here) were developed which relate to these Four Dominant Themes and describe actions that implement the Shared Vision and enhance our city’s character. The VisionTasks were considered when specific strategies presented in this General Plan were developed.

*Building on its southwestern heritage, stylish reputation, and innovative methods for delivering municipal services, Scottsdale has evolved into an internationally recognized resort center, art community, and health care provider. The desert community of Scottsdale has always been its own special place. It has never tried to be all things to all people.*





# CityShape 2020

PLANNING THE PHYSICAL FORM OF SCOTTSDALE'S SHARED VISION

- *Scottsdale Shared Vision 1992*

## CityShape 2020

As a spin-off of the Visioning process, a comprehensive review of the General Plan called CityShape 2020, was begun in late 1994. CityShape 2020 was intended to be an extensive educational and community outreach process that would be responsible for reaffirming and improving the Scottsdale General Plan as an expression of the Shared Vision. CityShape 2020 built upon the legacy of citizen participation from the S.T.E.P. forums of the 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's, and the Scottsdale Visioning program. Completed in 1996, the recommendations from the CityShape 2020 process are the basis for planning in Scottsdale today. The recommendations include:

- An enhanced focus on “character and quality” in development
- A three-level approach to planning:
  - \* Level 1 - Citywide Planning
  - \* Level 2 - Character Planning
  - \* Level 3 - Neighborhood Planning
- The establishment of the Six Guiding Principles (which are equal, with no priority in the listing):
  - \* **Preserve Meaningful Open Space:** The city of Scottsdale is committed to promoting the acquisition, dedication, and setting aside of open space as a community amenity and in support of the tourism industry in Scottsdale.
  - \* **Enhance Neighborhoods:** Scottsdale's residential and commercial neighborhoods are a major defining element of this community. The quality of our experience as a Scottsdale citizen is expressed first and foremost in the individual neighborhoods where we live, work, and play. Scottsdale is committed to maintaining and enhancing our existing and future neighborhoods. Development, revitalization, and redevelopment decisions, including rezoning and infrastructure planning, must meet the needs of our neighborhoods in the context of broader community goals.

see Character-Based Planning in the next section of the preface: The General Plan



- \* **Seek Sustainability:** Scottsdale is committed to the effective management of its finite and renewable environmental, economic, social, and technological resources to ensure that they serve future needs.
- \* **Support Economic Vitality:** Scottsdale is committed to the goal of supporting its existing economic strengths by: targeting new opportunities which can diversify our economic base; providing for the fiscal health of the city; and forming partnerships with the community which strengthen our ability to meet this goal.
- \* **Advance Transportation:** The transportation system must be the backbone of Scottsdale, supporting its economy and serving and influencing its land use patterns in a positive way.
- \* **Value Scottsdale's Unique Lifestyle and Character:** Scottsdale offers a superior and desirable Sonoran Desert lifestyle for its citizens and visitors. The preservation of this unique lifestyle and character will be achieved through a respect for our natural and man-made environment, while providing for the needs of our citizens.

### The Development of the Guiding Principles



*CityShape 2020 ... states strategies for realizing Scottsdale's Shared Vision through the Guiding Principles and the development of Character and Neighborhood Plans.... The Steering Committee believes that the ideas and approaches outlined in the [Comprehensive] report will provide the means for the city to maintain its traditions of strong planning and high quality, and to have a plan with the flexibility to address redevelopment at the same time it guides new development. Above all, this General Plan will be thorough and responsive to the needs of this community.*

*- CityShape 2020 Comprehensive Report, March 1996*

## Future in Focus/General Plan Technical Update

Future in Focus was a community effort to re-evaluate Scottsdale's General Plan, bring it up to date with the Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus laws, and make sure the overall direction for our city's development (through the General Plan) is still in line with the community's goals and visions. In short, Future in Focus took the vision created through Scottsdale Visioning and the guiding principles of CityShape 2020 and examined them in the light of changes that have happened over the last few years. The technical update of the General Plan happened concurrently with the Future in Focus process to be able to include input from the process as the General Plan was crafted.



In June 1999, the Scottsdale City Council approved a one-year professional services contract for a comprehensive community involvement process to precede the update of the General Plan. The goals of this process were to:

- To create awareness and understanding of the General Plan;
- To engage non-traditional audiences; and
- To affirm the community vision and values identified in previous city visioning processes.

Following the expiration of the one-year contract, City of Scottsdale staff continued the community involvement process until the adoption of the updated General Plan in October 2001.

The Future in Focus process built upon the successes of Scottsdale's citizen involvement legacy. The process identified ways to reach residents, business and property owners, who are not typically involved in city visioning or planning efforts. To that end, the Future in Focus outreach effort included:

- **Electronic access to information** - In a format that was easy to understand, visually interesting and tailored to the layperson, the city's Web site included the existing General Plan; the "Future in Focus" web site with an overview of involvement and review opportunities, and information about the draft General Plan (and how it responded to input from the community); and "Step-Up," an electronic dialogue site for ongoing, "threaded" conversations between residents.
- **Representation from under-represented populations:**
  - \* **Youth involvement** – staff met with four high-school classes to involve them in a Sim-City computer exercise that prompted a better understanding of the issues involved in city planning. Students provided input on future needs for Scottsdale.
  - \* **Spanish Speaking Dialogues** – three different dialogues were scheduled and moderated by a Spanish speaking facilitator. These dialogues were held at locations that were convenient and readily

accessible, such as a neighborhood church following a Sunday morning service, a neighborhood center, and a Spanish-speaking community service group meeting.

- \* **We Go To You** – Instead of holding random meetings at city locations, city staff went to meeting sites where homeowner associations, service groups, etc. were already meeting. If a neighborhood met on Sunday afternoon, then staff made arrangements to be included on that agenda.
- \* **Catalyst Group** - By creating an ambassador program, staff was able to empower community representatives to assist in gleaning input from a wide variety of organizations - many of whom aren't necessarily involved in city policy issues (such as soccer leagues and church groups).
- **Community Events** - Staff participated in a wide variety of community events, such as the Human Services Forum, the Millennium Speaker's series, and the Realty Expo, to show linkages between citizen values and General Plan policies.
- **Community Town Hall** - Other involvement opportunities were made available for people that were not able to attend a neighborhood meeting or did not have access to the Internet. This Town Hall event featured four panelists who spoke on a wide variety of long-range issues and follow up questions by attendees. Videotaped by the city's municipal channel, the program aired for a month to allow those who could not attend to see the program.
- **Multiple Marketing Venues** - The Future in Focus involvement message was promoted on movie screens, in theater programs, in the quarterly city recreation registration tabloid, in utility bills, through the Scottsdale Citizen magazine, and with frequent updates to the media.
- **Visual Preference Survey** - Along with discussion, citizens were able to provide input based on photographic examples of different development styles, different policy issues, and different character design, etc.
- **Telephone Survey** - This statistically valid survey was conducted to make sure that the General Plan update was "on track" with the citizen's goals for the community.

The Future in Focus process was designed to be an inclusive, comprehensive program. It worked because of the following:





- The use of a wide variety of communication/marketing techniques.
- The involvement of typically under-represented community populations, such as young people, members of the Spanish speaking community, and a catalyst group.
- A wide variety of input vehicles, i.e. Internet, response card in Citizen magazine mailing, telephone hotline, neighborhood meetings, electronic dialogue, Town Hall and community forum events, and a statistically valid survey.
- Ongoing briefings with City Council, citizen Boards and Commissions, and Future in Focus Catalyst group.
- An extensive contact list created from the outreach programs to do mailings and electronic notices for public involvement opportunities.
- Local media invitations to all meetings and provision of regular updates.

The technical update of the city's General Plan included the feedback and input received by residents and business and property owners as a result of the Future in Focus program. Based on input received, the General Plan includes:

- A strong focus on growth management techniques (Cost of Development, Growth Areas, and Open Space Elements, as well as policies to assist in phasing of growth)
- A strong focus on strengthening and preserving community character and neighborhoods (Character and Design, Neighborhood, and Public Services and Facilities Elements)
- A strong focus on expanding transportation choices (Community Mobility Element)
- A Housing Element that addresses affordability and the need for moderately priced senior living facilities

Using the Future in Focus input throughout Scottsdale's General Plan Update ensured that the Plan incorporates the diversity of perspectives and beliefs held by Scottsdale residents, and validated through the Future in Focus process.

*The importance of community participation in the process to update the General Plan cannot be underestimated. For a General Plan to meet the needs, expectations and ultimate desires of its community, it must thoroughly consider all sectors of the community, consider various positions and alternatives, and ultimately analyze and present the results in a fair and non-biased manner.*

- *Future in Focus Community Involvement Outreach Summary, November 2000*

These citizen participation processes, encompassing thousands of work hours, have helped to define the future vision for the community and have provided new tools with which to achieve that vision. The General Plan is one of those tools.



### Reference:

- Scottsdale Shared Vision Report, December 1992
- CityShape 2020 Comprehensive Report, March 1996
- Scottsdale Town Enrichment Program Reports
- Brookings Institute Report, 1972