



HONOR
THE
PAST.



COMMEMORATING SCOTTSDALE'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY



IMAGINE
THE
FUTURE.



HONOR.
IMAGINE.

SCOTTSDALE CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Break out the party hats; the City of Scottsdale celebrates its 75th anniversary of incorporation June 25, 2026!

We're commemorating this civic milestone throughout 2026 with special events, publications, talks, tours and traditions. From farm town to fabulous in seven decades, Scottsdale has been built on citizen participation, innovation, inclusion, public-private partnerships, respect for the environment and planning for the future.

Perhaps you'll remember how we've celebrated Scottsdale over the years:

- Scottsdale's 10th: Mayor Mort Kimsey invited residents to a birthday party on June 25, 1961 held at Scottsdale High School. Attendees enjoyed music by the Ray Ludovici band and talks by Scottsdale pioneer Mae Mathis and Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce President Rollie Feltman. Mayor Kimsey and officials also dedicated the new \$160,000 municipal building on Main Street next door to then-City Hall (now the Scottsdale Historical Museum/Little Red Schoolhouse).
- Scottsdale's 25th: It was a dual celebration, combined with the nation's Bicentennial in 1976. Mayor Bill Jenkins welcomed residents for cake and ice cream at the then-new Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. Attendees were serenaded by a barbershop quartet and toured a display of historic memorabilia at the Little Red Schoolhouse.
- Scottsdale's 35th: Mayor Herb Drinkwater and City Council hosted a street fair on Civic Center featuring Arizona's Official Balladeer Dolan Ellis as well as the Scottsdale Sizzlers and the Calico Cloggers. Historic plaques were dedicated on numerous buildings in Old Town.
- Scottsdale's 50th: From Mayor Mary Manross' breakfast recognizing businesses that pre-dated the town's incorporation in 1951, to downtown walking tours, an employee cake decorating contest and birthday parties at City Hall and the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, we gathered to mark our golden anniversary in 2001.
- Scottsdale's 70th: Families braved the heat for a Legacy Quest scavenger hunt around Old Town and Civic Center, and attended the opening of the Milestones & Memories Exhibit at Civic Center Library sponsored by Scottsdale Leadership.

Much has changed over 75 years, but not Scottsdale's desire to celebrate its milestones. We're loud; we're proud...Happy Anniversary, Scottsdale!



1976 Mayor Bill Jenkins presented a plaque of appreciation to City seal designer Gene Brown Pennington at the city's 25th anniversary party.

2001 At a 50th anniversary event, Mayor Mary Manross congratulated Rural Metro's Karl Keierleber and R/M founder Lou Witzeman for being in business before the city incorporated in 1951.



2011 Singing Cowboy Gary Sprague welcomed residents to the city's 60th birthday party at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts.

HONOR THE PAST,

IMAGINE THE FUTURE

At 75, Scottsdale is a young city in a very old place.

At 75, Scottsdale is a young city in a very old place. It's known as much for its pre-incorporation history – a place in the beautiful Sonoran Desert with an eclectic blend of cowboy, Hispanic and Native American culture – as it is for a modern vibe, thriving and diverse economy and spirit of innovation.

Scottsdale's bedrock dates back 1.8 billion years; people have called Scottsdale home for 8,000 years. Archaeologists uncovered evidence that Archaic people hunted on our land circa 6000 BCE. From approximately 300 BCE to the 1400s, Hohokam people lived throughout what is now Scottsdale. The Riverine Hohokam farmed the southern part of Scottsdale where they could divert Salt River water through hand-dug canals to their cropland. The Upland Hohokam built villages and farmed at the north end of the McDowell Mountains, relying on mountain springs for water. Yavapai people followed the Upland Hohokam; the Pima and Maricopa people are descendants of the River Hohokam.

Scottsdale's land was relatively unpopulated between the 1400s and the late-1800s. Growth in the Salt River

Valley began after the Civil War, and was boosted as an agricultural center when W.J. Murphy finished the Arizona Canal in 1885. In 1888, U.S. Army Chaplain Winfield Scott – Civil War veteran and ardent promoter of the American West – visited the Salt River Valley. He and his wife Helen homesteaded a 640-acre section along the Arizona Canal at what is now the northeast corner of Scottsdale and Indian School roads. Their vision was to create a community where settlers could farm and raise families.

By 1900, the Scotts' settlement had a name, "Scotts-Dale," (although Orangedale and Utleyville were also considered), a hand-built wooden schoolhouse, a general store/post office, prospering farms and about 75 residents. Scottsdalians were leaders in the Arizona Territorial temperance movement. Alcohol was banned here until the 1930s. Scottsdale farms began to grow cotton and raise cattle in the 1910s. Young men left to fight in the Great War. The village survived the 1918-19 flu epidemic. By the 1920s, the Main Street and Brown Avenue business district had grown to include two-dozen shops and services.

Farming was Scottsdale's economic engine through incorporation in 1951; however, tourism, health care and the arts began to increase in importance. Early resorts – some billing themselves as a place to convalesce -- included Graves Guest Ranch, Ingleside Inn, Adobe House, Jokake Inn and Camelback Inn. Marjorie Thomas opened the town's first art studio in 1909; artists gravitated to Rachel and George Ellis' Cattle Track enclave in the 1930s; and by the end of World War II, artists and craftspeople had opened studios in Scottsdale's downtown area or nearby desert. World War II brought hundreds of new residents and war work to Scottsdale. Thunderbird Airfield

No. 2 trained 5,500 aviation cadets for flying duty. German POWs were interned at Camp Papago just southwest of Scottsdale. After the war ended in 1945, using the new G.I. Bill benefits, veterans stayed or relocated here to start businesses and families.

For its first 60 years, Scottsdale residents saw no need to incorporate as their neighbors Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa had done. Despite the attraction of a family and business-friendly atmosphere, Scottsdale lacked infrastructure. Unpaved streets created constant dust, businesses were unlicensed and buildings burned to the ground for lack of a fire department. By 1949, residents and businesses began attending public hearings hosted by the Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce to consider incorporating. Following a successful petition drive among residents, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors declared Scottsdale incorporated as a town on June 25, 1951. The 2,032 residents living on less than a square mile (now the heart of Old Town) entered a new era as the Town of Scottsdale. ■



1890s Young Blount children milking cows; Camelback Mountain in background



c. 1900 Winfield and Helen Scott with their mule, Old Maude



c. 1910 Graves Guest Ranch located on the northwest corner of Indian School and Scottsdale roads

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 1950s

Board and batten building facades...jeans, boots, Stetsons and cowboy shirts... rodeos...a Western Arts-inspired fashion industry...dude and guest ranches...tying up your horse in front of downtown shops and cafes...a friendly “howdy” to everyone you met...this was Scottsdale in the 1950s. As Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce ads proclaimed, we were not only The West’s Most Western Town, but also Arizona’s Resort Capital, Fashion Center of the Southwest, Arts & Crafts Center of the West, Most Unique Shopping Center in the Nation, Fastest Growing City in America and Showplace of Phoenix. Ill-equipped to handle all the new opportunities and challenges coming their way in a post-World War II boom in business, tourism and residential growth, citizens of Scottsdale decided to finally incorporate their town in 1951. The new town government (mayor, council and only a handful of town staff), together with involved residents, helped put a town infrastructure in place which included a town marshal's office, rural fire service, zoning ordinances, contracted garbage collection services, street signs and more. Meanwhile, community organizations of volunteers – the Civic Coordinating Council, Scottsdale Boys Club, Scottsdale Baseball Club, veterans’ organizations, Jaycees, churches – formed to enhance the quality of life for the growing number of families living here. Major industries were farming; arts, crafts and fashion; and tourism. However, Motorola’s 1957 move onto land that would be annexed later into Scottsdale, launched the town’s high-tech industry. It was a fun time, but not without growing pains. In 1951 the town was less than one square mile in area and had 2,032 residents. In order to have more control over its destiny, and to accommodate those residents who wanted town services from Scottsdale, the town began to annex land in all directions. By 1960, Scottsdale had grown to 4.9 square miles and 10,026 people. And the city didn’t stop there... ■



1951 Town signs contract with Rural Fire Company for fire protection.

Tying up your horse in front of downtown shops and cafes...a friendly 'howdy' to everyone you met...



1959 Inset: The “Howdy Dudes” become Scottsdale’s official welcoming group.
1955 The original Scottsdale Stadium was built as the spring training home for the Baltimore Orioles.



1951 The Scottsdale Sunshine Festival was established to celebrate the city’s sparkling winter climate and to attract visitors. It evolved into the Parada Del Sol, which today features a downtown parade and other events.



1957 Motorola facility in surrounded by farms and new neighborhoods.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



TOWN INCORPORATION

Plentiful cars and gasoline, no more food rationing and newly developed air-conditioning made life easier in the post-World War II boom town on the outskirts of east Phoenix. But constant dust, the smell of sewage and no fire department to quell frequent blazes were menaces to the the 2,000 residents, and to the growing number of businesses and well-heeled winter visitors. Residents and visitors alike needed housing, shopping, services and recreation. By 1949, Scottsdale residents and businesses began talking about the need to incorporate as a town in order to get fire protection, street paving, street lighting, police protection, garbage pickup and other basic services. They also wanted control over Scottsdale’s well established western and arts identity, and feared being absorbed by neighboring cities. The threat of annexation and disagreements over water rights and access heightened interest in incorporation. The Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce began organizing town meetings. They brought in legal and political advisors such as attorney Orme Lewis and Phoenix Councilman Barry Goldwater to help residents look at the pros and cons. One who was skeptical about the need to incorporate was T-Bar-T Theater owner and businessman Malcolm White. In January 1951, a citizens’ committee began circulating petitions for a vote on incorporation. If 10 percent of the taxpayers signed, an election would be called; if two-thirds signed, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors could declare Scottsdale incorporated without the cost of an election. Petitions with more than two-thirds were turned in on May 21.

On June 25, 1951, the Board of Supervisors declared Scottsdale an incorporated town and appointed a five-member town council to serve until an election could be held the following May. At their first town council meeting on July 2, Malcom White became the first Mayor and Jack Sweeney the first clerk.



Mayor Malcolm White (1951-1958)



Mayor Mort Kimsey (1958-1962)

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 1951-1959

- 1951**

 - Scottsdale incorporated, June 25th
 - Residents hold Street Pavers Ball to fund street paving
 - Town contracts with the Rural Fire Company to provide fire protection
 - First Sunshine Festival held in November to kick off tourist season
- 1952**

 - Town of Scottsdale office located in Rural Fire Company station on northwest corner of Brown and 2nd Street
 - The first official election of Town Council was held, electing George Cavalliere, V.D. Frederick, Mort Kimsey, E.G. Scott, John B. Shoeman, John F. Sweeney and Malcolm White. From among their ranks; the council elected Malcolm White mayor
 - Chamber of Commerce erected the Cowboy Sign at Scottsdale Road and Main Street
- 1953**

 - Town adopted a zoning ordinance and uniform building code
 - Scottsdale Jaycees formed; took over hosting the Sunshine Festival, renaming it the Parada del Sol
 - Sundown Ranch Golf Course opened north of town (now Starfire at Scottsdale Country Club)
 - Lulu Belle’s opened on Main Street
- 1954**

 - Town nicknamed “Stops-dale” when four stop signs were installed on Scottsdale Road
 - Town took first steps to limit billboards and control signs
 - Civic Coordinating Council debuted a Community Center in the old Adobe House

- 1955**

 - Scottsdale Baseball Club sold box seats for \$500 each to finance Scottsdale’s spring training ballpark
 - Volunteer-run Scottsdale Public Library opened on the Adobe House grounds
 - Scottsdale School District began major school expansion program
- 1956**

 - Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show moved to the McCormick’s ranch
 - Baltimore Orioles held spring training baseball games at Scottsdale ballpark
 - LIFE magazine featured Scottsdale’s lifestyle
 - Hotel Valley Ho and Safari opened as town’s first year-round resort hotels
 - Town offices moved into the former Scottsdale Grammar School/Little Red Schoolhouse
- 1957**

 - Motorola opened its Government Electronics Group plant on McDowell Road, launching a high-tech era and creating demand for housing, shopping, schools and healthcare
 - Civil Defense wardens were trained in case of nuclear war; drills held periodically

- 1958**

 - Gordon Allison hired as the first Town Manager
 - A Holbrook-to-Scottsdale ride, re-enacting the historic Pony Express, became part of the annual Parada del Sol activities
 - Jack Huntress opened the Sugar Bowl ice cream parlor on Scottsdale Road
- 1959**

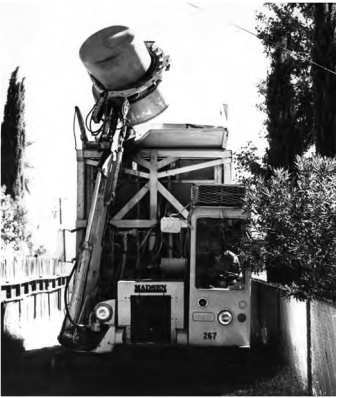
 - Boston Red Sox replaced the Orioles as Scottsdale ballpark’s spring training team
 - “Howdy Dudes,” a group of high school coeds sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, began welcoming groups to Scottsdale
 - The first of three traffic signals along Scottsdale Road was installed at Indian School and Scottsdale roads



LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 1960s

Where "Sands of Desert Turn Gold"

Heralded in the national media as a place where “Sands of Desert Turn Gold,” Scottsdale entered the 1960s with a reputation as the playground of the rich and famous. But to those who lived here, it was a pleasant hometown with an increasing number of schools, businesses and living areas. After eight decades as an agricultural community, Scottsdale’s farms and ranches had nearly all been turned into subdivisions to house relocating high tech, tourism and services industry employees and their families. Although long recognized as a place to come for health reasons, Scottsdale finally got its first medical facility when the City Hospital of Scottsdale opened in 1962. The hospitality industry continued to expand, and larger year-round hotels began to replace the host of small guest ranches scattered around the Scottsdale area. Considered a shopper’s paradise, Scottsdale added shopping malls (Scottsdale Fashion Square and Los Arcos Mall) to its mix of local boutiques and retail outlets. The city continued to annex land to the north and northeast, including an area that was designated for a municipal airport and industrial park. One hundred residents participated in the 1964-65 Scottsdale Town Enrichment Program (STEP) committees to help their newly-chartered city plan for its future and solve some of its biggest infrastructure challenges, like taming the floods of the Indian Bend Wash and creating a Civic Center as a focal point for government and cultural life. The city benefitted from regional efforts, joining the Maricopa Association of Governments, a five-city sewer treatment effort and Metropolitan Water Users Association. Residents enjoyed attending the Scottsdale Follies, having a soda or pie at Lute’s Pharmacy, growing a beard for the Parada Del Sol “Whiskerino” contest or attending pool-side fashion shows at Scottsdale area resorts. ■



1969 Scottsdale begins world's first automated garbage pickup with this truck, nicknamed "Godzilla."



1960s Scottsdale Airport looking southwest



1962 Inset: City Hospital of Scottsdale opens on the northwest corner of Osborn Road and Ballpark Plaza (now Civic Center Boulevard).

1968 The Scottsdale Civic Center development opens with the Scottsdale City Hall (pictured here) and the Scottsdale Public Library. Both buildings were designed by architect Bennie Gonzales.



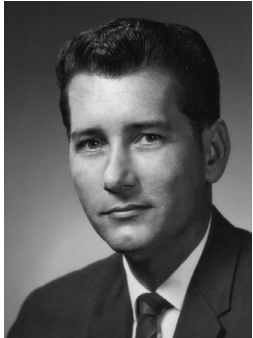
Mayor William Schrader (1962-1964)



Mayor John Woudenberg (1964)



Mayor C.W. "Bill" Clayton (1964-1965)



Mayor Bud Tims (1966-1974)



1961 Scottsdale Fashion Square opens with Goldwater's department store as the anchor tenant.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



CITIZENS CREATE INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH SCOTTSDALE TOWN ENRICHMENT PROCESS (STEP)

Residents of Scottsdale had been involved in governing their city long before it was even incorporated in 1951. In 1964, however, citizens “STEP-ed” up to the plate to serve on the Scottsdale Town Enrichment Program (STEP) and came up with a whole host of innovative solutions to Scottsdale’s planning challenges.

During its first 15 years as a municipality, Scottsdale grew from 2,000 residents to over 50,000. Such staggering growth required immediate and forward-thinking community planning. Enlisting and empowering action-oriented citizens from all walks of life was the answer. Organized in late 1964, STEP committees were organized by purpose: to plan for public works; public utilities; public health and safety; parks, recreation and city beautification; civic center; libraries, museums and galleries; and an airport. Citizens were joined on each committee by city staff and at least one member of the city council.

Paul Messinger chaired the Junior College Committee and also served on the Civic Center Committee. “An important element of STEP was the process itself. You worked together on an issue with city staff from beginning to end, and arrived at the solution together. There were no personal agendas pushed. The committees were empowered and given responsibility. As a result, when decisions were made, there was a constituency (committee members) there to support it,” he said.

Messinger recalled that the Civic Center Committee had two choices for location: a 10-acre site which included the Scottsdale Grammar School (Loloma School) or a 40-acre, L-shaped site which included Scottsdale Stadium at one end and the Little Red School House on the other. The latter was chosen. Finding a location for a junior college was also a challenge until the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community came forward with the land. Since the committee didn’t want the envisioned Scottsdale Community College to use temporary buildings long-term, they opted to hold evening classes the first year at Scottsdale High until a few buildings were erected at SCC’s present site.

Among STEP’s larger accomplishments such as the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt Flood Control, the Scottsdale Airport and the main library, there were also bold decisions like the strict sign ordinance. Said Roberta Pilcher, a STEP Committee member, “There’s no doubt about it - banning billboards has been a good thing for Scottsdale, and, although it was a hot topic at the time, it was the right thing to do for Scottsdale.”

Scottsdale received statewide and national accolades for the STEP program and its citizen participants, who were thinking out of the box before it was considered “cool.” Based on the creative solutions contributed by Scottsdale citizens through the STEP process in the 1960s, the city revitalized the program in the 1970s and the 1980s.



1964 First STEP meeting.

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 1960-1969

- 1960**

 - Scottsdale population/size: 10,026 residents on 4.9 sq. mi.
 - First sales tax (3/4 of 1 percent) and property tax (48 cents per \$100 valuation) enacted by Town Council
 - Town Recreation Department created to administer programs previously run by volunteers
- 1961**

 - Town of Scottsdale became City of Scottsdale; voters approved city charter
 - Scottsdale Fashion Square opened with Goldwater's as its anchor store
 - Scottsdale Charros formed to promote sports and host spring training
 - City assumed responsibility of the Scottsdale Public Library
- 1962**

 - City Hospital of Scottsdale opened on Osborn Road as first hospital; renamed Baptist Hospital of Scottsdale
 - City passed ordinance prohibiting new billboards
- 1963**

 - 34-sq. mi. annexed into Scottsdale, including former Thunderbird Airfield No. 2 and most of the McDowell Mountains
 - U.S. Supreme Court granted Arizona 2.8 million acre feet of Colorado River water annually, leading to Central Arizona Project canal system
 - The Town Marshal's Office officially became the Scottsdale Police Department
- 1964**

 - Scottsdale Town Enrichment Program (STEP) formed committees of residents to study infrastructure needs
 - Citizen committee began studying a greenbelt alternative to a concrete channel to tame the often-flooded Indian Bend Wash through Scottsdale
 - City began in-house garbage collection
- 1965**

 - City launched beautification program and planted more than 400 trees
 - City purchased former Chesnutt home and land for Chesnutt Park and a temporary senior center
 - City Council passed an ordinance requiring undergrounding of utility lines in all new subdivisions/areas
 - Annexation of land to the east added 20,000 new residents to Scottsdale
- 1966**

 - Voters approved a \$2.4 million bond to build Scottsdale Civic Center
 - Scottsdale tied into a 5-city sewer system, taking sewage to a treatment plant at 91st Avenue
- 1967**

 - Chicago Cubs replaced the Boston Red Sox as spring training team at Scottsdale's ballpark
 - Scottsdale Municipal Airport opened on the site of former Thunderbird Airfield No. 2
 - Eldorado Park established as Scottsdale's first community park; the McCormick's donated land for a railroad-themed park
 - City's Fine Arts Commission began acquiring art and sculptures for Civic Center
- 1968**

 - City Hall and Civic Center Library, designed by Bennie Gonzales, debuted at the east side of Civic Center
 - Scottsdale Historical Society formed to "Save the Little Red Schoolhouse"
 - First businesses opened in the Thunderbird Industrial Airport at Scottsdale Airport
 - City adopted its first flag
- 1969**

 - Los Arcos Mall, a fully-enclosed shopping center, opened on the southeast corner of Scottsdale and McDowell roads
 - Alamos, Mexico became Scottsdale's first Sister City
 - Scottsdale Community College began holding classes at Scottsdale High School before moving onto its campus on Chaparral Road

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 1970s

Scottsdale entered the 1970s as the third largest city in Arizona.

Scottsdale's area and population had been multiplied many times over during the Sixties; we entered the Seventies as the third largest city in Arizona with a 62.20 square mile area and 67,800 people. Many long-awaited community facilities opened – Scottsdale Community College, several city parks, the Vista Del Camino Neighborhood Center and the Civic Center Senior Center. The tourism industry expanded to include larger hotels and resorts – the Registry, the Hilton, Doubletrees at Fashion Square and on Civic Center, the Scottsdale Conference Resort and others -- as well as new attractions and events, such as Rawhide, the first Culinary Festival, the first Barrett-Jackson Classic Auto Auction and the first Scottsdale Arts Festival. The McCormick's Arabian and cattle ranch was sold to Kaiser-Aetna and developed as the first planned community in the state. With planned communities and resorts came a renewed interest in building golf courses in Scottsdale. Although the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt Flood Control Project had begun in 1971, it was not far enough along to prevent the damaging effects of major floods in 1970 and 1972, which closed schools and businesses and cut the community in half. Scottsdale art and cultural life flourished – the Scottsdale Symphony formed, the Art Walk started, and the Scottsdale Center for the Arts opened. As the first luxury communities opened in the newly-annexed Pinnacle Peak area, residents became more conscious of the need to preserve Scottsdale's scenic beauty. At leisure, Scottsdalians enjoyed going to the Windmill Dinner Theatre or Jed Nolan's Music Hall, running into Dick Van Dyke while his television show was taped here, shopping at the new Los Arcos and Camelview malls or eating at Trader Vic's on Fifth Avenue. ■



1975 The Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts opens on the Civic Center, bringing a world-class performing venue to downtown.



1978 Scottsdale Arts Festival at Civic Center



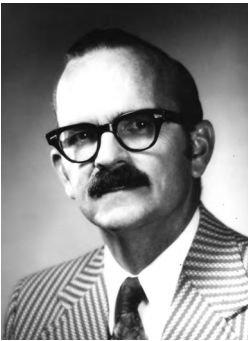
1975 Computer data center



Late 1970s Scottsdale Mayor Bill Jenkins chugs along the Paradise & Pacific Railroad on Engine No. 12.



Mayor Bud Tims (1966-1974)



Mayor William C. Jenkins (1974-1980)



1972 Massive flooding from a June storm set in motion final plans for the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt project. This photo shows flooding at the intersection of Hayden and Indian School roads.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



INDIAN BEND WASH

The Indian Bend Wash, a seven-mile long dry wash, ran along the center of Scottsdale. It created nightmarish conditions when it suddenly became a raging river, destroying anything and anyone in its path. It became obvious to Scottsdale citizens and city of Scottsdale leaders that some action must be taken. The Army Corps of Engineers was consulted and returned a verdict—a seven-mile long concrete canal emptying into the Salt River. The idea did not sit well with the citizens of Scottsdale, who rallied behind the recommendations of the STEP Committee and defeated a county bond election to fund the channel. Along came a new concept called a greenbelt—take an unusable piece of land and turn it into a series of parks, recreational centers, golf courses and lakes. This non-traditional idea of flood control was unlike any put before the Corps of Engineers. It took some convincing. It took

Scottsdale citizens a while, too. The first two attempts at the polls failed. Then, following a devastating flood in 1972, Scottsdale citizens approved a \$10 million bond issue for flood control that included the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt. With such overwhelming support by the citizens, private developers became interested in building apartments, condos and single family homes along the greenbelt. By 1976, the Corps of Engineers

had agreed to finance the parks and recreation project over a five-year period. Through the foresightedness, innovation and determination of Scottsdale citizens, what had been the bane of the community was changed to an award-winning landmark. Today, it is enjoyed by thousands of residents and visitors, as well as those who drive along Hayden Road and enjoy the beauty of this green, open space.

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 1970-1979

- 1970**

 - Scottsdale population: 67,823 residents on 62.2 sq. mi. – third largest city in Arizona
 - Kaiser-Aetna bought the former McCormick Arabian cattle ranch and developed it into Scottsdale's first General Plan-directed master-planned community
 - Former Police Chief Hugh Cleary became the city's first Director of Data Services, ushering in the computerization of city departments
- 1971**

 - First Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction held at Safari Resort
 - Scottsdale renamed and renumbered many of its streets to reflect the metropolitan addressing system
 - City created its in-house Water Department and began acquiring private water companies
- 1972**

 - City annexed 3,520 acres eastward that included Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West
 - Indian Bend flooded three times, causing \$8.5 million in damage; a rare tornado touched down in the Cactus corridor
 - Homes were purchased and razed to make way for construction of the west side of Scottsdale Civic Center
- 1973**

 - City opened the Vista del Camino Neighborhood Center on Roosevelt
 - Voters approved a \$10 million bond to help fund the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt Flood Control Project
 - The Louise Nevelson sculpture "Windows to the West" was dedicated on Civic Center
 - Scottsdale Foundation for the Handicapped (now STARS) formed
- 1974**

 - The west side of Civic Center was dedicated
 - New FAA control tower dedicated at Scottsdale Airport; Sen. Barry Goldwater was principal speaker
 - Three bat-wing Bricklin sports cars were leased to the Scottsdale Police Department for one dollar a year
- 1975**

 - Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts opened
 - McCormick Railroad Park opened
 - Scottsdale began to reap the benefits of the U.S. Housing & Community Development Act of 1974; received \$1.8 million in federal funds
 - Scottsdale Artwalk began throughout the gallery district
- 1976**

 - Armour-Dial opened a research and development facility in the Scottsdale Airpark, drawing other new companies to the area
 - Scottsdale celebrated its 25th anniversary, and joined the U.S. in celebrating its Bicentennial
- 1977**

 - City Council adopted the Hillside Ordinances in an attempt to 'save' the McDowell Mountains from development; later rescinded as illegal
 - Voters approved a 'bed tax' on hotel stays to fund tourism promotion and tourism infrastructure improvements
- 1978**

 - Scottsdale established the Human Services Advisory Commission
 - City published the biography of founder Winfield Scott, as written by historian Richard Lynch
- 1979**

 - The Oakland A's replaced the Chicago Cubs as the spring training team at Scottsdale's ballpark
 - Dial-a-Ride transit service began, serving Scottsdale's seniors and residents with disabilities

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 1980s

Mayor Herb Drinkwater epitomized the eternal optimism and entrepreneurial spirit of Scottsdale residents.

Still in the growth mode, Scottsdale entered the Eighties with a population of 88,622 and had annexed more land to bring the area to 88.60 square miles. The newly-elected Mayor, Herb Drinkwater, epitomized the eternal optimism and entrepreneurial spirit of Scottsdale residents. The city, its residents and businesses grappled with many issues, from the lack of adequate downtown parking, to the need to diversify a tourism-dominated economy, to ensuring a secure water supply, to whether it should annex more land to the north. Following the example of McCormick Ranch, other planned communities developed – Gainey Ranch, Desert Highlands and Troon Village – creating cities-within-the-city and increasing demand for city services, schools and retail. Mayo Clinic joined the two-hospital Scottsdale Memorial Health System to further enhance the city's reputation as a medical hub. The area around the Scottsdale Airport – once considered “far north” of town -- began to take shape, with many businesses locating in the Scottsdale Airpark as well as WestWorld, the TPC-Scottsdale Golf Course and the Scottsdale Princess Resort opening nearby. Archaeologists studied a newly-discovered Hohokam Village in the Pinnacle Peak area, unearthing pottery, metates/pestles and other artifacts of early life in Scottsdale. Homeowners’ associations became more involved in city issues, with a desire to control the future of their neighborhoods and quality of life. To relax, residents attended performances at the Kerr Cultural Center or Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, attended San Francisco Giants Spring Training games at Scottsdale Stadium, shopped at the new Borgata or el Pedregal shops, attended the Phoenix Open now held in Scottsdale at the TPC and celebrated Scottsdale’s centennial of founding by Winfield and Helen Scott in 1888. ■



1986 “The Yearlings” sculpture, on the Scottsdale Civic Center Mall, dedicated.



Mayor Herbert R. Drinkwater (1980-1996)



1987 WestWorld, the city’s equestrian and special events center opens in what was then desert.



1987 Inset: Gratitude Train boxcar—an expression of gratitude from the people of France to the United States for aid during and after World War II—brought to McCormick Railroad Park.



1986 Scottsdale’s Tournament Players Club opens in a retention basin designed to protect the Central Arizona Project Canal.



1987 The Mustang Wall by artist Ken Williams dedicated at Scottsdale’s first branch library.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



WATER RESOURCES

In the 1980s, Scottsdale ensured its future water supply by focusing on a master plan that included developing satellite water reclamation facilities, as well as planning for an integrated treatment, reuse and recharge facility now known as the Scottsdale Water Campus. This plan also concentrated on increased use of Central Arizona Project (CAP) surface water supplies. In 1980, the number of Scottsdale water customers was a little more than 13,000 using nearly 3.5 billion gallons of water annually. Ten years later, the number of water customers had more than tripled, increasing to nearly 48,000 and consuming more than 15.5 billion gallons of water each year. This rapid growth meant that Scottsdale had to give serious consideration to its water supplies. The acquisition of the Phoenix water system within the Scottsdale city limits was a significant purchase for the city because it acquired a large portion of their system and 15,000 customers. More importantly, it was the first time the acquisition of a water company was put to a vote. Scottsdale citizens taxed themselves to purchase this water system. In 1980, the Arizona Legislature passed the Ground Water Management Act requiring municipalities to reduce their reliance on ground water. This meant that no more water could come out of the ground than was naturally or artificially replaced into the ground. Scottsdale took several steps to comply. The first was purchasing Planet Ranch, located near Parker, Arizona. It included approximately 15,500 acre-feet of surface water rights, intended as a long-term surface water supply. Changes in legislation later resulted in the ability for water providers to acquire more readily available CAP supplies from other providers unable to use their supplies due to their geographic locations. The completion of a 36-inch water main connecting the Scottsdale water system to the CAP plant was completed in February 1987. This made Colorado River water available to Scottsdale. In April 1987, CAP water was distributed into the Scottsdale water system at a rate of 400 acre-feet (1 acre-foot is 325,852 gallons of water) monthly. This was the first notable amount of CAP water used by Scottsdale. In 1989, Scottsdale voters approved funds for the Scottsdale Water Campus to deliver reclaimed wastewater to golf courses, while excess supplies were used to recharge the aquifer, allowing continued use of groundwater wells, while complying with the intent of the 1980 legislation. These steps during the 1980s helped ensure Scottsdale’s water supplies for generations into the future.

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 1980-1989

1980

- Scottsdale population: 88,622 residents on 88.60 square miles
- Molly the Trolley system began serving Downtown Scottsdale area
- The former Gainey Arabian Ranch developed as Gainey Ranch master-planned community

1981

- City adopted a Native Plant ordinance to protect Sonoran Desert plants and cacti
- City annexed 16.2 sq. mi. that included Pinnacle Peak Mountain

1982

- City of Scottsdale debuted a cable television channel
- San Francisco Giants replaced the Oakland A's for spring training at Scottsdale's ballpark
- Scottsdale Airport runway extended

1983

- Scottsdale annexed a large area that included the cable television channel
- San Francisco Giants replaced the Oakland A's for spring training at Scottsdale's ballpark
- Scottsdale Airport runway extended

1984

- Final large annexation of 36 sq. mi. to the north brought the municipal area to 184.5 sq. mi.
- Scottsdale Memorial North opened at 90th Street and Shea Boulevard, with First Lady Nancy Reagan as the featured guest
- Gainey Ranch Water Reclamation Facility dedicated, first to return non-potable water for golf course irrigation
- City adopted the Downtown Plan

1985

- Percent for the Arts ordinance adopted by city council
- Scottsdale Police Department added a mounted horse unit
- Scottsdale implemented a fire sprinkler ordinance, the first in Arizona and strictest in the U.S.
- Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt Flood Control Project formally dedicated

1986

- East and west sides of Civic Center were joined when Civic Center Boulevard was undergrounded. 700-car parking garage built adjacent to Civic Center Library
- Tournament Players Club Scottsdale opened to the public; became home to the Phoenix Open golf tournament in January 1987
- Hayden Road was extended north through the Scottsdale Airpark

1987

- Scottsdale Leadership conducted its first class for up-and-coming community volunteer leaders
- Mustang Library opened as the first purpose-built branch library
- Mayo Clinic Scottsdale opened on East Shea Boulevard
- Scottsdale began using Central Arizona Project water in its city system
- HorseWorld, later named WestWorld, dedicated as an equestrian and event center

1988

- City contracted with the non-profit Scottsdale Cultural Council (now Scottsdale Arts) to administer the Center for the Performing Arts and Public Art Program
- Cairns, Australia became a Scottsdale Sister City
- City established the Transportation and Hospitality (now Tourism Development) commissions

1989

- The Barrett Jackson Classic Car Auction and the Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show both moved to the newly-renamed WestWorld of Scottsdale
- Voters passed a \$230 million bond to fund a new Scottsdale Stadium, expand Civic Center Library and make other infrastructure improvements
- New FAA control tower dedicated on the east side of the Scottsdale Airport runway

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE THE 1990s

Honored as America's Most Livable City with the feel of The West's Most Western Town.

Although honored by the U.S. Conference of Mayors as "America's Most Livable City," Scottsdale experienced an identity crisis in the Nineties. With a population of 130,000-plus in 1990, and an area of 184.5 square miles, it had all the opportunities and challenges of a major city, with many wanting to retain the feel of "The West's Most Western Town." A community-wide Scottsdale Visioning Program highlighting four dominant themes helped Scottsdale focus on what was important as the city moved forward: Sonoran Desert, Resort Community, Arts and Culture and Health and Research. Citizens were pro-active in preserving scenic beauty through a self-imposed sales tax increase to buy thousands of acres of land, creating the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. With traffic at an all-time high, the Loop 101/Pima Freeway opened in segments. The Scottsdale Airpark had grown to become one of the top three employment centers in Arizona. Additional high-tech industries and corporate headquarters located in Scottsdale, rounding out its previously tourism-dependent economy.

However, tourism continued to draw millions annually, attracted by climate, scenery and a growing number of amenities – a greatly expanded Scottsdale Fashion Square, more than 40 golf courses, four- and five-star resorts and a year-round calendar of signature events. As older sections of the community matured, neighborhoods and community planners began to focus on redevelopment. The community embraced the Information Age, computerizing, digitizing and using the Internet as a key source of information and global commerce. As the city topped the 200,000 mark at the turn of the 21st Century, Scottsdalians still favored activities with a small-town flavor: stopping by the Sugar Bowl for ice cream, roller-blading along the Indian Bend Wash, watching kids slither through the "goo" at Mighty Mud Mania, enjoying Ballet Folklórico performed by the Paiute Center's International Club or ice skating at the new Ice Den in McDowell Mountain Ranch. ■



Mayor Herbert R. Drinkwater (1980-1996)



Mayor Sam Kathryn Campana (1996-2000)



1993 Scottsdale receives the "Most Livable City" award from the U.S. Conference of Mayors.



1999 The Pima Freeway opens to Shea Boulevard, marking the first section of freeway within the city limits and features an acclaimed public art project.



1999 Scottsdale Water Campus opens.

1990s City of Scottsdale Mobile Recycling Center



1995 The Paiute Neighborhood Center opens, bringing an array of community services and recreation opportunities to the Holiday Park area.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE

The Sonoran Desert. A series of contrasts. Vibrant yet subtle. Dramatic yet subdued. Hearty yet fragile. The McDowell Mountains. A purple mountains majesty awaiting the seasons of the sun. Both are unique in the world. The flora, fauna and archaeological significance of these precious areas cannot be found anywhere else. Once pieces of them are gone, they're gone forever. In 1990, Scottsdale citizens initiated the preservation of Scottsdale's McDowell Mountains and Sonoran Desert by forming the non-profit McDowell Sonoran Land Trust. Dedicated citizens spoke out and took people on hikes to see the natural beauty threatened by encroaching development. The trust's preservation message quickly spread. An impassioned plea was made to the City Council, leading to a partnership that created the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The ultimate vision was to preserve approximately 36,400 acres, equivalent to one-third of Scottsdale's total land area—an area larger than the city of San Francisco. The Preserve consists of mountains, Sonoran Desert and natural corridors linking open space in Scottsdale with open space in adjacent communities and with the Tonto National Forest and Maricopa County's McDowell Regional Park. These lands will provide a sustainable natural desert habitat for wildlife and desert flora, and for appropriate public use, while protecting the archeological remains found in the Preserve. Once the need to save this public treasure was identified, the race was on. The first victory came on May 23, 1995, with a public election approving a 2/10ths of 1 percent sales tax for buying land within the Preserve boundary. In all, voters have since five times affirmed their commitment to the Preserve by authorizing bonds and expanding the Preserve boundary, preserving the land in perpetuity. The Preserve includes some of Scottsdale's most prominent landmarks: Tom's Thumb, Brown's Ranch and Windgate Pass. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission, a citizen oversight body, provides input into the acquisition process. The City Council makes final land acquisition decisions. The McDowell Sonoran Land Trust continues to serve as the community advocate, providing educational programs, seasonal trail-building crews and training volunteers to help steward the land. With this sort of public input and sensitivity, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve will be protected for all future generations to enjoy its mystique.



EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 1990-1999

1990

- Scottsdale population: 130,075 residents on 184.5 sq. mi.
- Renovated Roald Amundsen Pullman car used by 4 U.S. Presidents dedicated at McCormick Railroad Park
- McDowell Sonoran Land Trust formed to advocate for saving McDowell Mountains

1991

- Downtown Streetscape project completed and Goldwater Boulevard downtown 'couplet' opened
- Citizens and businesses participated in the Scottsdale Visioning Program
- City adopted the Environmentally Sensitive Lands ordinance

1992

- City enacted Americans with Disabilities Act measures to ensure all residents were accommodated
- Saguaro High School students collected pennies to fund a Martin Luther King Jr. civil rights exhibit at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.
- The Scottsdale Historical Museum opened in the former Scottsdale Grammar School #1, operated by the Scottsdale Historical Society

1993

- U.S. Conference of Mayors named Scottsdale a "Most Livable City"
- Scottsdale Stadium began hosting Major League Baseball's Arizona Fall League games, with the Scottsdale Scorpions as the home team

1994

- Scottsdale established the McDowell Sonoran Preserve with an initial three parcels of land
- Kingston, Ontario became a Scottsdale Sister City
- The first annual Scottsdale History Hall of Fame was sponsored by the Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce

1995

- Voters approved a modest increase to the sales tax to fund land purchases for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve
- Citizens participated in the CityShape 2020 General Plan Review, incorporating concepts from the Scottsdale Visioning Program
- City launched its first website on the Internet, at www.ci.scottsdale.az.us
- Via Linda Senior Center and Paiute Neighborhood Center opened

1996

- City began curbside recycling and the use of photo radar
- City opened the Urban Design Studio in a former church on Indian School Road
- Scottsdale hosted several Super Bowl XXX events when the game was played in the Phoenix area for the first time
- Scottsdale made its first land purchases for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve using proceeds of the 1995-voter approved sales tax

1997

- The Scottsdale Historic Preservation Commission and ordinance were established
- City purchased assets at WestWorld and began operating the equestrian and events center
- Renamed the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, the renovated park reopened with new amenities

1998

- Scottsdale Fashion Square expanded with a retail bridge over Camelback Road, adding 54 new stores
- The Ice Den opened in McDowell Mountain Ranch
- Ladies Home Journal named Scottsdale the third best city in the U.S. for women; American Style magazine named Scottsdale among the top 10 art destinations in the U.S.

1999

- Scottsdale Airpark became one of Arizona's top three employment centers
- Interlaken, Switzerland became a Scottsdale Sister City
- Scottsdale's Water Campus on Hualapai Drive dedicated
- Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA) opened

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 2000s

Scottsdale residents and businesses embraced technology in all its life-changing forms.

After the uneventful “Y2K” transition, Scottsdale residents and businesses fully embraced rapidly advancing technology. The city of Scottsdale began offering many services online, reducing in person visits and printing costs. Local businesses expanded their web presence and began using blogs, email, and emerging social media to reach customers. Online shopping grew quickly, and combined with the 2008–10 recession, pushed some retailers to close or shift to virtual operations. By the decade's end, residents, visitors, and employees were tweeting, texting, posting, and using apps on smartphones and tablets.

Even as Scottsdale grew, residents remained committed to preserving land and local history. Voters supported a small sales tax increase to acquire more McDowell Sonoran Preserve land and build eco-friendly trailheads and trails. Scottsdale added its first properties to the Historic Register, and thousands of historic photos were digitized for the public library’s website. Upscale resale and consignment shops flourished during the recession as “recycling” gained popularity.

Tourism remained strong but felt the effects of post 9/11 uncertainty, the recession, and a strict state immigration law. Resorts renovated and expanded; seven new golf courses opened; the San Francisco Giants drew record spring training crowds to the upgraded Scottsdale Stadium; and Kierland Commons, Gainey Ranch Shops, Scottsdale 101, and the Scottsdale Quarter became top luxury destinations.

New luxury condos and apartments—especially downtown—shifted Scottsdale toward a vibrant, year-round urban center. The aging Los Arcos Mall was demolished, and the site ultimately became SkySong - The ASU Scottsdale Center for Innovation. The once vacant Galleria was transformed into a corporate center, adding hundreds of downtown employees. New retirement communities opened, the Granite Reef Senior Center debuted, and schools modernized older facilities while new charter schools launched.

Despite becoming more urban and global, Scottsdale maintained a strong hometown spirit. Families filled parks, celebrated the reopening of Pinnacle Peak Park, visited the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, and lined up for photos with the iconic LOVE sculpture. The Scottsdale Jaycees disbanded in 2009, but their beloved Parada del Sol parade and rodeo continued to entertain new generations. ■

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 2000-2009

- 2000**

 - Population: 202,260 residents on 184.5 sq. mi.
 - Voters approved 6 of 9 bond measures, totaling \$352 million for city projects
 - First 6 properties placed on Scottsdale Historic Register
 - New city parks: Apache, La Mirada, Ironwood
 - Civic Center Boulevard renamed Drinkwater Boulevard to honor late mayor
 - U.S. Customs office opened at Scottsdale Airport for international arrivals
- 2001**

 - Scottsdale, one of only 8 U.S. cities, achieved highest possible bond rating – Triple A
 - Los Arcos Mall on McDowell Road razed; the Galleria reopened as a corporate center
 - Independent Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau established
 - City upgraded technology, installed fiber optics, began e-newsletters
 - Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center opened at Scottsdale Healthcare Shea
- 2002**

 - Loop 101 Pima Freeway completed through/around Scottsdale with 15 on/off ramps
 - Voters approved updated Scottsdale General Plan
 - Via Linda Senior Center expansion doubled its size
 - Robert Indiana's LOVE sculpture installed on Civic Center Mall
 - Pinnacle Peak Park opened
 - Scottsdale Police Dept. substation opened on Alma School Parkway
- 2003**

 - Northsight and Scottsdale 101 opened as shopping areas off Loop 101
 - Sonoran Hills Park opened
 - ASU's Morrison Institute released the "Which Way Scottsdale?" report
 - Fire station opened on Alma School Parkway
 - City and Yaqui residents published book, "The Yaquis of Scottsdale, Arizona"
- 2004**

 - Voters defeated proposition to create voting districts in Scottsdale; approved sales tax increase to fund trails, trailheads for McDowell Sonoran Preserve and to enhance public safety
 - Frank Lloyd Wright's 125-foot spire was erected at The Promenade at Scottsdale Road and FLW Boulevard
 - Canal Bank Improvement Project broke ground in downtown Scottsdale
 - City cable network began streaming City Council meetings



Inset: The Titus House, on North Hayden Road, is noted on both the Scottsdale's Historic and National registrars
Robert Indiana's LOVE Sculpture on the Scottsdale Civic Center mall.



2009 Appaloosa Branch Library Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Mayor Mary Manross (2000-2009)



Mayor W.J. "Jim" Lane (2009-2021)



2002 Pinnacle Peak Park Opening Day Dedication

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



LOOP 101 PIMA FREEWAY

Originally conceived in 1960, and finally completed through Scottsdale in 2002, residents, visitors and businesses now wonder how they did without the Loop 101 Pima Freeway. A Papago Freeway route proposed in the early 1970s would have cut southern Scottsdale in half along McDowell Road, and was opposed by residents and officials alike. As the Phoenix metro area and Scottsdale grew by leaps and bounds, however, it became imperative that a Valley-wide freeway system be built.

Maricopa County voters approved a 20-year sales tax increase (one-half cent) in 1985 to build the “Outer Loop” freeway system, including Loops 101 and 202. Concurrently, transportation officials negotiated with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community to gain right-of-way for the Loop 101/Pima Freeway to proceed north through tribal land east of Scottsdale. An agreement was reached, community members compensated, and ground was broken in August 1990. Building from south to north, the first Loop 101 exits into Scottsdale opened at McDowell and Thomas roads in the early 1990s. As construction moved from tribal land into Scottsdale at 90th Street, Pima Road was permanently closed in 1995, impacting businesses between Via Linda and Shea. With Scottsdale advancing funds for early completion of the final legs between Pima/Princess and Scottsdale roads, the Loop 101 was completed in April 2002.

During its first decade of operation through the Scottsdale area, development along Loop 101 skyrocketed. Existing and new businesses opened near Scottsdale’s 15 exits to take advantage of new access for Valley-wide customers, residents and event attendees. The Scottsdale Airpark became the third largest employment center in Arizona during the 2000s, with its four new freeway exits. Retail and residential areas blossomed, as did the walls along Scottsdale’s portion of the freeway – adorned by Carol Braaksma’s “The Path Most Traveled” miles-long public art installation. Scottsdale became the first city in the nation to install photo radar speed cameras on a freeway system in 2006; however, by 2008 the cameras were shuttered by state edict. By 2009, Scottsdale’s portion of the Loop 101 had rubberized surfaces to dampen noise to nearby neighborhoods, and also had a carpool lane. Development along the Loop 101 on Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community land – such as casinos, retail, office parks and entertainment districts – contributed to Scottsdale’s tourism and economic vitality.

One can credit the opportunities provided by the Loop 101 freeway for somewhat lessening the severity of the national recession of 2008-10 on Scottsdale’s economy. Attendance at the Phoenix Open golf tournament, Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction and other major events at TPC Scottsdale and WestWorld grew after the freeway opened.



2001 The Path Most Traveled (Pima Freeway Public Art) by artist Carolyn Braaksma

- 2005**

 - Sunrise Trail, first major trail in McDowell Sonoran Preserve, dedicated
 - In-house Scottsdale Fire Dept. created, ending decades-long contract fire service
 - Village Grove and Town & Country neighborhoods added to Historic Register
 - Hayden Road completed between Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd. and Pinnacle Peak Rd.
 - U.S. flag-emblazoned 120,000 sq. ft. tent erected at WestWorld to host events
- 2006**

 - SkySong breaks ground at site of former Los Arcos Mall on McDowell Road
 - Along the north bank of the Arizona Canal, Scottsdale Waterfront dedicated; Fiesta Sports Foundation and museum opened; Marshall Way Pedestrian Bridge opened
 - The CAP Basin Sports Complex opened
- 2007**

 - Southbridge in downtown Scottsdale developed
 - Scottsdale Healthcare Thompson Peak Hospital opened
 - Arabian Library and the Aquatic Center both opened at McDowell Mountain Ranch
 - A citizen-funded statue honoring Winfield and Helen Scott was dedicated
 - Chaparral Water Treatment Plant opened
 - First building at SkySong opened
- 2008**

 - Camelback Park opened at the former site of Villa Monterey Golf Course
 - Sculpture honoring the 50th anniversary of the Pony Express re-enactment ride was unveiled at the Scottsdale Waterfront
 - Vista del Camino Neighborhood Center renovation completed
 - Fire station opened on Indian School to serve downtown area
 - City moved its primary and general elections to coincide with state and national election days
- 2009**

 - The Gateway to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve trailhead opened
 - Scottsdale Quarter opened at the former site of Dial R&D Center
 - Formerly Rawhide Western Town, Appaloosa Library opened
 - Veterans groups dedicated “The Chaplain” statue
 - McKellips Police Station, crime lab and property & evidence building opened
 - SCPA renovation debuted

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 2010s

There was hardly an area of Scottsdale's 184.5 square miles that wasn't touched by change.

Throughout the decade, nearly every part of Scottsdale's 184.5 square miles experienced change. Officials and residents worked to balance economic growth, quality of life, sustainability and preservation—often with differing viewpoints. As the city modernized, many wondered whether it could still claim its 1940s slogan, "The West's Most Western Town." While Rawhide Western Town left in 2005 and iconic cowboy restaurants and retailers closed, WestWorld expanded its Western and equestrian offerings, and the long-awaited Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West opened in 2015 as a Smithsonian affiliate. The city revived Western Week and continued expanding the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, which surpassed 30,000 acres, reinforcing a modern twist on its Western identity.

Development along the Loop 101 and in neighboring communities brought major business parks, entertainment venues, casinos and Salt River Fields, boosting tourism and the local economy. Scottsdale strengthened global ties through e-commerce and four new Sister Cities, while also navigating the challenges of the emerging "sharing" economy: short-term rentals, ride-sharing, and rental bikes and scooters. Height and density debates grew as mid-rises and multi-family projects replaced earlier low-rise patterns.

Scottsdale's position as a bioscience and healthcare hub advanced through the Cure Corridor initiative. Mayo Clinic and ASU opened a medical school on the Scottsdale Shea campus, and Scottsdale Healthcare became HonorHealth, expanding clinics and cancer research capabilities.

Unexpected shifts also shaped the decade: the arrival of medical marijuana dispensaries; the loss of beloved institutions like the Pink Pony and Don & Charlie's; and the demolition of The Borgata and Papago Plaza, even as Scottsdale Fashion Square expanded.

Still, Scottsdale maintained its hometown spirit by honoring veterans with new memorials, renovating aging schools, and adding new public art and events such as Canal Convergence—continuing its legacy as a community that values culture and innovation. ■



2019 Taliesin West - Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home, now listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List



2019 Pinnacle Peak during a snowstorm



2018 Inset: Aviation Business Center opened
2019 Scottsdazzle holiday event along the Arizona Canal



Mayor W.J. "Jim" Lane (2009-2021)



2015 Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West opened

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



DOWNTOWN, MCDOWELL CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION

After the 2008–10 national recession, Scottsdale moved quickly to reinvest in its maturing urban areas. Long range plans crafted in the 1990s and 2000s began reshaping both downtown and the McDowell Corridor for residents, businesses and visitors.

In downtown, major public and private investment centered on the historic Arizona Canal. Development of the Scottsdale Waterfront on the north bank and Southbridge on the south drew new residents to luxury condos and apartments, expanded retail and dining options, and created venues for events like Canal Convergence and Scottsdazzle. New offices added thousands of employees to the area, while Scottsdale Fashion Square expanded to stay competitive in the era of online retail. HonorHealth, formed from the merger of Scottsdale Healthcare and John C. Lincoln, continued modernizing its Osborn campus. Throughout downtown, a wave of multi-family housing introduced a lively, around the clock atmosphere to what was once largely a daytime district. To unify its growing identity, the area was rebranded as Old Town Scottsdale.

South along McDowell Road, SkySong—the ASU Scottsdale Center for Innovation—became the anchor for dramatic reinvestment. Built on the former Los Arcos Mall site, SkySong attracted tech companies, apartments, a hotel, restaurants and retail. As auto dealerships left McDowell's former "Motor Mile," their sites were rebuilt as luxury housing. Nearby, the aging 1959 Papago Plaza was demolished in 2019 to make way for the mixed-use Papago Marketplace. Additional projects, including Lowe's, McDowell Village and the Granite Reef Senior Center, brought new energy to the area surrounding General Dynamics.

Redevelopment also reached the Scottsdale Airpark and Airport. What had long been an industrial park evolved into a major employment hub for high tech companies and a desirable residential and entertainment destination with thousands of new apartments and condos. The aging 1968 airport terminal was demolished and replaced in 2018 by the Scottsdale Aviation Business Center, meeting the needs of one of the nation's busiest single runway airports.



SkySong — the ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center



Scottsdale Waterfront

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 2010-2019

- 2010**

 - Population: 217,385 residents on 184.5 sq. mi.
 - Scottsdale voters approved a bed-tax increase from three percent to five percent, with collections split evenly between the Scottsdale CVB for destination marketing and to the City for special events and tourism projects
 - Haikou, China became a Scottsdale Sister City
 - Soleri Bridge dedicated on the Arizona Canal in Downtown Scottsdale
- 2011**

 - The Miracle League's Dan Haren Field, designed for children with special needs, dedicated
 - Model railroad building dedicated at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park
 - New fire stations at Eldorado and Cactus parks opened
 - Villa Monterey Units 1-7 added to Scottsdale's Historic Register
 - Annual polo championship debuted at WestWorld
 - Salt River Fields opened on the SRPMIC for spring training
- 2012**

 - Cavalliere Park opened on Alma School Parkway
 - Tom's Thumb Trailhead was dedicated in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve
 - Scottsdale Philharmonic had its debut season
 - Voters defeated an update to Scottsdale's General Plan
- 2013**

 - 100 Scottsdale residents participated in a town hall regarding Scottsdale's future
 - Cure Corridor branding and event introduced, highlighting Scottsdale's bio-science and healthcare assets
 - Marrakech, Morocco became a Scottsdale Sister City
 - Brown's Ranch, Granite Mountain and Fraesfield trailheads opened in the Preserve
 - Park and Ride facility opened in the Scottsdale Airpark
- 2014**

 - The enclosed 275,000 sq. ft. Tony Nelssen Equestrian Center at WestWorld opened to host major events
 - Uasin Gishu, Kenya became a Scottsdale Sister City
 - Roundabout installed at Northsight/Hayden, including Aspire public art sculpture
 - Loop 101 widening project began impacting traffic along Scottsdale's route
- 2015**

 - Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West opened
 - Scottsdale Healthcare and John C. Lincoln merged; renamed HonorHealth, with headquarters in Scottsdale
 - Voters approved 2 bond measures to upgrade streets and build fire stations
 - Mayor/City Council endorsed a Unity Pledge as presented by the LGBT community, calling for equal, inclusive and fair treatment of all Scottsdale people
- 2016**

 - New operations center dedicated at Scottsdale Airport
 - Killarney, Ireland included as Scottsdale Sister City
 - Scottsdale CVB became Experience Scottsdale; Scottsdale Cultural Council became Scottsdale Arts
 - Scottsdazzle and Western Week events debuted
 - Scottsdale's annual Back-to-School event provided 922 children with clothing, backpacks and school supplies
- 2017**

 - Mayo Clinic/ASU Medical School opened on Mayo's Scottsdale Shea campus
 - Mustang Transit Center and roundabout on 90th Street eased access to Mustang Library, HonorHealth Shea and adjacent retail center
 - Rental bikes and scooters provided both transportation options and regulatory challenges
 - Scottsdale was proclaimed a Golden Rule City, fostering mutual respect and courtesy
- 2018**

 - New Aviation Business Center opened at Scottsdale Airport, replacing former terminal.
 - Thunderbird II Airfield Veterans Memorial dedicated, with authentic WWII Stearman bi-plane display
 - Entire downtown area rebranded as Old Town Scottsdale
 - New Desert Foothills Fire Station 613 replaced a temporary facility
 - Scottsdale became a test market for self-driving vehicles
- 2019**

 - Scottsdale Veterans Advisory Commission established
 - Scottsdale Heritage Connection Messenger Family Research Room opened at Civic Center Library
 - McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park was named best park in the U.S.
 - Taliesin West became a UNESCO World Heritage Site
 - Voters approved 3 bond questions for city infrastructure improvements; first all-mail-in election for Scottsdale

LIFE IN SCOTTSDALE
THE 2020s

The 2020s began smoothly for Scottsdale, but everything changed with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. A statewide stay at home order halted daily life and major events. Cactus League spring training, the Scottsdale Arts Festival (held virtually), the Scottsdale Culinary Festival, and other gatherings were canceled. Tourism declined sharply. At the same time, several new events relocated to WestWorld from more restrictive cities and states, keeping some activity alive.

Daily routines shifted to the “COVID new normal”: social distancing, mask wearing, virtual Zoom meetings, remote work, online classes, hybrid K-12 schedules, limited capacity venues, and drive-through testing sites. Public campaigns like Shop Scottsdale and Mask Up Arizona encouraged safety and local support. Residents experienced virtual graduations, curbside pickup expansion, drive-in concerts, and restrictions such as no buffets or fitting room use. Businesses relied on Payment Protection Program loans to stay afloat.

By late 2021 and early 2022, vaccines allowed Scottsdale to return to near normal conditions. Many organizations used the pause to rethink or update their missions and events. The first half of the decade brought substantial changes to local life and the economy. Scottsdale Civic Center underwent a major year-long renovation, new parks opened, and existing parks added amenities like pickleball courts and dog parks. Residents and officials debated issues including multi-family housing, downtown parking, short-term rentals, traffic, and water resources.

Large community events grew, with Canal Convergence and Scottsdazzle drawing thousands to the Arizona Canal. Scottsdale and HonorHealth also launched efforts to earn Blue Zone status, emphasizing long-term well-being.

Technology adoption accelerated. Scottsdale Police and Fire introduced aerial drones, autonomous vehicle services expanded citywide, virtual and hybrid meetings became standard, and organizations across sectors worked to develop responsible uses and policies for artificial intelligence. ■

All systems were go at the start of the 2020s decade, then the unexpected happened



2023 Children's Garden and East Bowl, Scottsdale Civic Center



2020 Human Services staff serving the community during COVID-19



Mayor W.J. "Jim" Lane
(2009-2021)



Mayor David Ortega
(2021-2025)



Mayor Lisa Borowsky
(2025-Present)



2024 Reata Sports Complex: Scottsdale's newest sports facility, opened

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DECADE



CELEBRATING THE BEST OF SCOTTSDALE

Scottsdale has a long tradition of celebrating its ‘wins,’ and the 2020s decade is offering numerous milestones for residents to commemorate. The Parada del Sol, begun in 1951 as the Sunshine Festival, marks its 75th anniversary, and continues to attract thousands of spectators to the parade and party in Old Town during the city’s annual Western Week. After a year-long-closure for renovation and upgrade, Scottsdale’s Civic Center was unveiled with great fanfare in 2023. A beautiful mosaic by Tammi Lynch joined the 50-year-old Louise Nevelson Windows on the West public art, complemented by the photogenic Robert Indiana LOVE sculpture. The community embraced its veterans through the Scottsdale Salutes banner recognition program, and honored its war dead by privately funding Scottsdale’s Memorial to the Fallen on City Hall’s Memorial Lawn. During 2025, both the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts and the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park celebrated 50 years of entertaining Scottsdale residents and families. A permanent display at Civic Center Library debuted in 2022, saluting the long-term non-profit organizations that have served Scottsdale and added to its cachet. For over 30 years, the Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce has inducted individuals, non-profits and businesses into the Scottsdale History Hall of Fame, and Scottsdale Leadership – celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2026 – annually recognizes the volunteer leaders who serve our community. Each year on February 26, Scottsdale gathers to celebrate Founders’ Day, keeping the inspiring accomplishments of founders Chaplain Winfield and Helen Scott alive for a new generation. The Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show celebrated its 70th anniversary in the Scottsdale area, and Spring Training has been played in Scottsdale since 1956 – 70 years! Although founded by the Scotts in 1888, Scottsdale did not incorporate as a town until June 25, 1951. Reaching its 75th anniversary milestone called for more than a one-day celebration, so the city and its non-profit organizations have been hosting a myriad of commemorative events throughout 2026. So what are you waiting for...put on your party duds and celebrate!



2026 Parada Del Sol



2026 Scottsdale Family ArtsFest

EVENTS THAT SHAPED SCOTTSDALE 2020-2026

2020

- Extensive upgrades to Scottsdale Stadium, including a Fieldhouse event center, debuted
- COVID-19 pandemic closed businesses and cancelled events from March through May and impacted tourism, events and business throughout the year.
- Wearing masks was temporarily mandated; most meetings were held on-line
- Scottsdale celebrated its first Juneteenth holiday at Eldorado Park
- Fire stations on Indian Bend Road and Loving Tree Lane opened

2021

- Several Scottsdale facilities dispensed COVID-19 vaccines; and events and in-person meetings began to resume
- Scottsdale Airport runway was repaved
- Camino Campana interpretive trail at Fraesfield Trailhead and the Arthur DeCaboater Amphitheater at the Pima-Dynamite Trailhead debuted in the Preserve
- Scottsdale City Council approved an anti-discrimination ordinance
- The Thomas Groundwater Treatment Facility was dedicated

2022

- The Bell/94 Sports Complex and DC Ranch Neighborhood Park were dedicated
- City Council established rules governing short-term rentals
- Roundabout installed on Redfield Road at Hayden Road

2023

- A privately-funded Scottsdale Memorial for the Fallen, honoring Scottsdale military who died on active duty, was dedicated at City Hall
- Scottsdale Civic Center was renovated, adding two outdoor performance venues, a Tammi Lynch mosaic, children’s play area and relocating public art pieces
- Waymo began autonomous vehicle service in Scottsdale
- Scottsdale began a Blue Zones initiative to promote healthy living and aging



2023 Scottsdale Memorial to the Fallen

2024

- Reata Sports Complex near WestWorld opened
- Scottsdale Police Department began using aerial drones, following the lead of the Scottsdale Fire Department

2025

- The Roundhouse indoor play area and an outdoor splash pad debuted at the now-50-year-old McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park
- Ashler Hills Park was dedicated in far north Scottsdale
- Scottsdale Fire Department began in-house ambulance service and opened a new station on Hayden Road at Mayo Blvd.
- Vista del Camino moved its food bank into a larger facility on McKellips Road

2026

- Scottsdale celebrates 75 years of incorporation



SIMPLY BETTER SERVICE

for Fiscal Year 2025/26

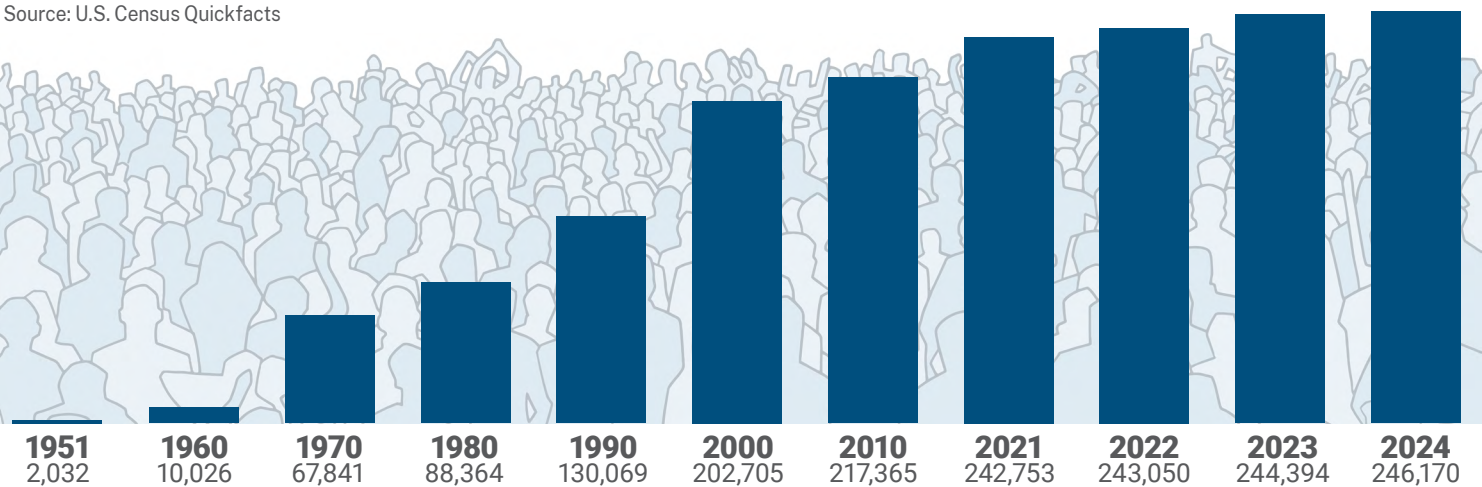


DEMOGRAPHICS

for Fiscal Year 2025/26

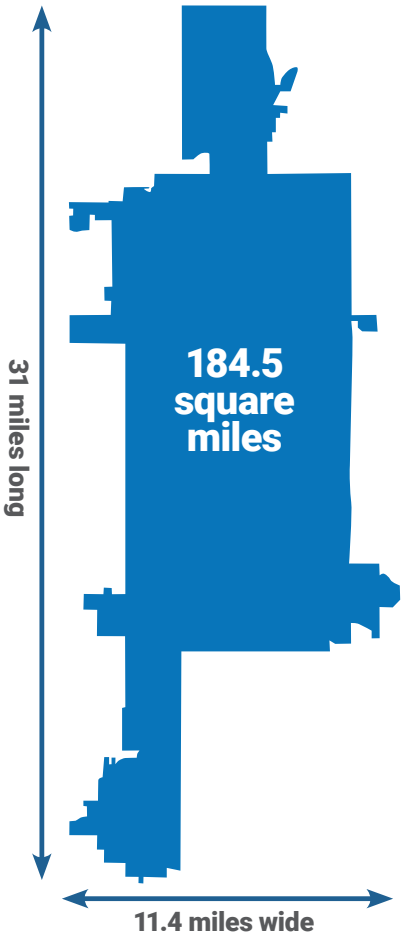
Scottsdale by the Numbers: A Demographic Summary

Source: U.S. Census Quickfacts



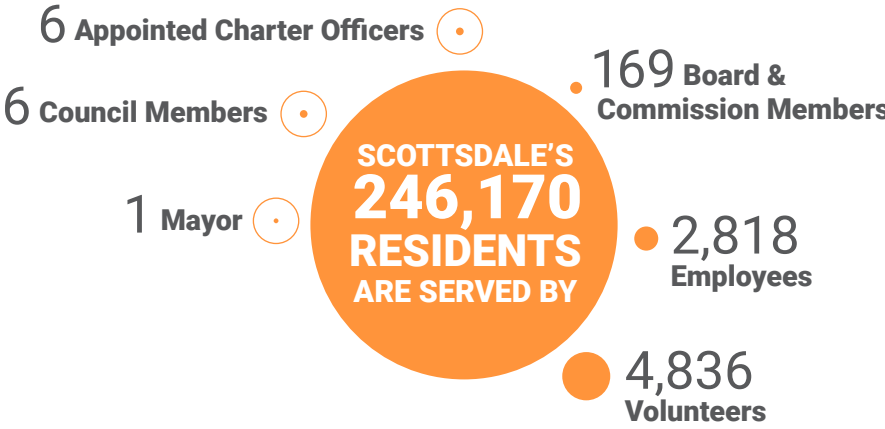
Scottsdale is the 48th largest city in the U.S. by area.

U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts and City of Scottsdale



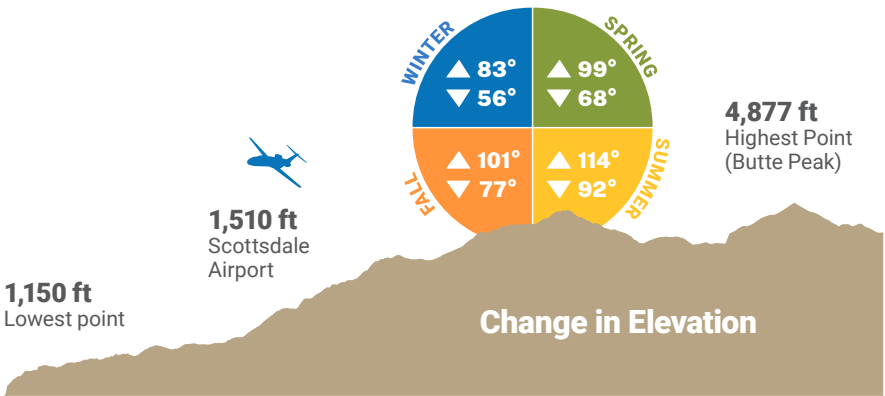
Over 7,800 people directly serve the residents of Scottsdale.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts and City of Scottsdale



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

Source: National Weather Service

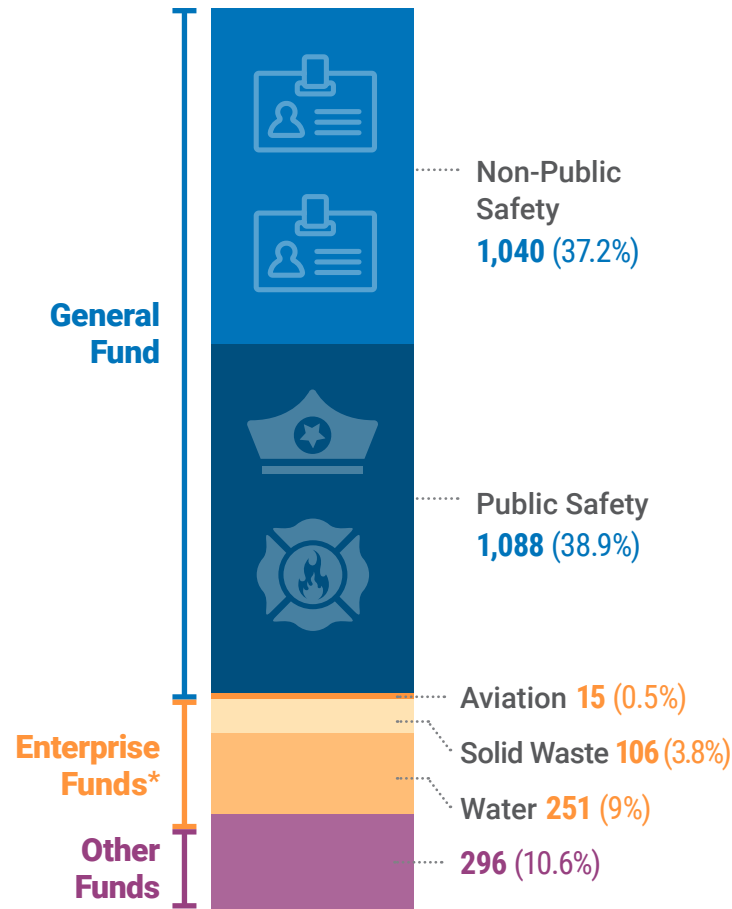


7,451 employees



Healthcare and finance firms lead the list of top employers.
Source: City of Scottsdale Economic Development Department (2025)

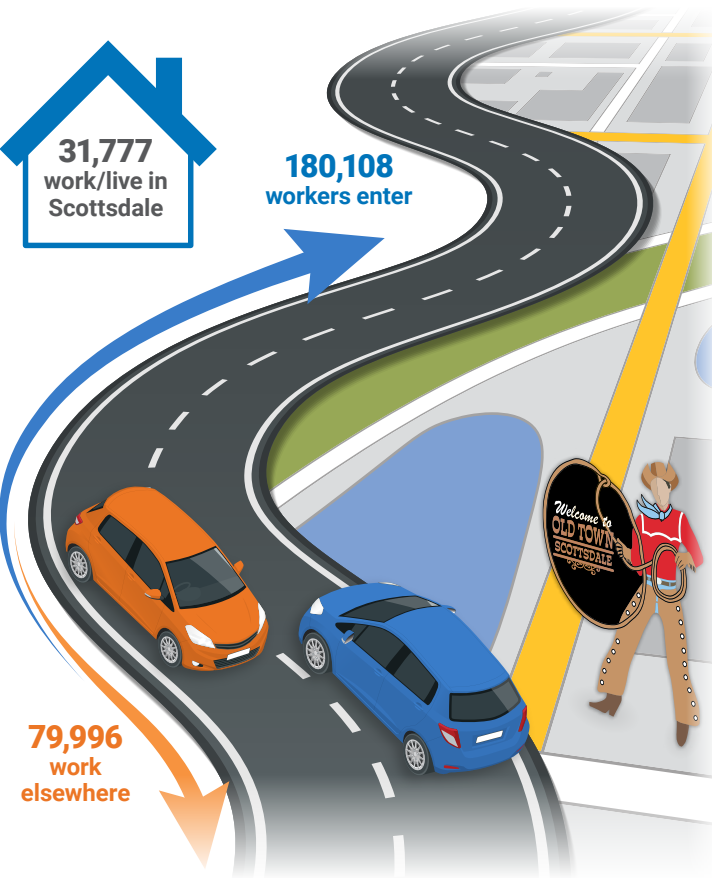
City of Scottsdale Full-time Employees and Their Funding Sources



*An Enterprise Fund operates similarly to a private business. Instead of taxes, revenues are generated from user fees or charges which cover all operating and capital expenses.

More people come to work in Scottsdale each day than leave to work in other communities.
Source: U.S. Census Inflow/Outflow Analysis

Scottsdale businesses and organizations have **211,885** employees



To view additional demographic information, visit [ScottsdaleAZ.gov](https://scottsdaleaz.gov) and search "about"

Note: Total population is determined by the Decennial Census. Demographic numbers are based on five-year estimates.



1951

2026

CITY FACTS

Population of Scottsdale 2,032	Population of Scottsdale Approx. 240,000
Average rainfall 12.82 inches	Average rainfall 9.33 inches
Size of Scottsdale Less than one square mile	Size of Scottsdale 184.5 square miles
Median income \$3,700	Median Income \$110,000
Number of town parks 0, covering 0 acres	Number of city parks 47 covering 982 acres
Number of preserves 0, covering 0 acres	Number of preserves 1 covering 33,000 acres
Number of golf courses 0	Number of golf courses 51
Number of restaurants 15	Number of restaurants 900
Number of hotels 0	Number of hotels 55
Average cost of a car \$1,500	Average cost of a car \$50,000
Average cost of a house \$9,000	Average cost of a house \$965,000
Average cost of a movie \$0.45	Average cost of a movie \$16.08
Average cost of a gallon of gas \$0.19	Average cost of a gallon of gas \$4.72
Average cost of a pound of meat \$0.50	Average cost of a pound of meat \$6.49
Average cost of a dozen eggs \$0.24	Average cost of a dozen eggs \$3.59

The 1951 research was supplemented by the research of lifelong Scottsdale resident Tom Droze, who is a docent for the Scottsdale Historical Society.

SCOTTSDALE'S MUNICIPAL LAND AREA HISTORY

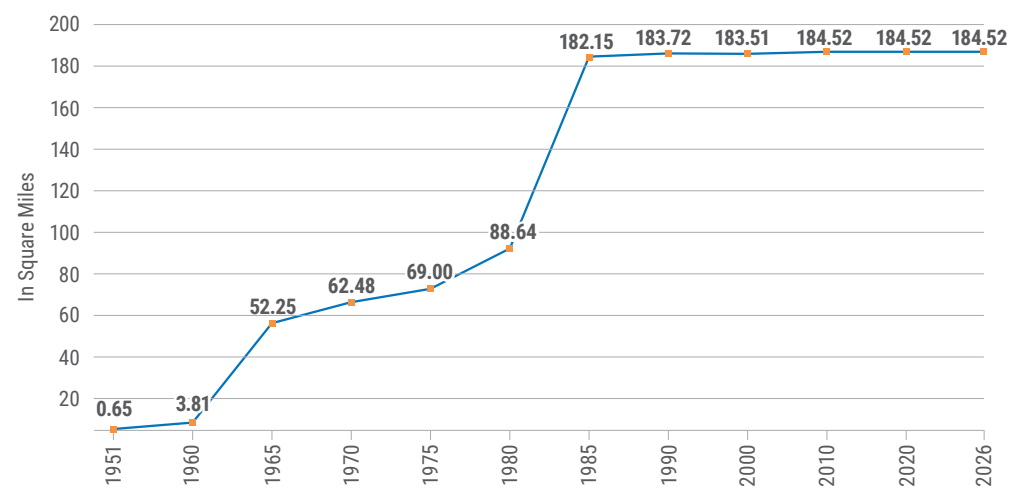
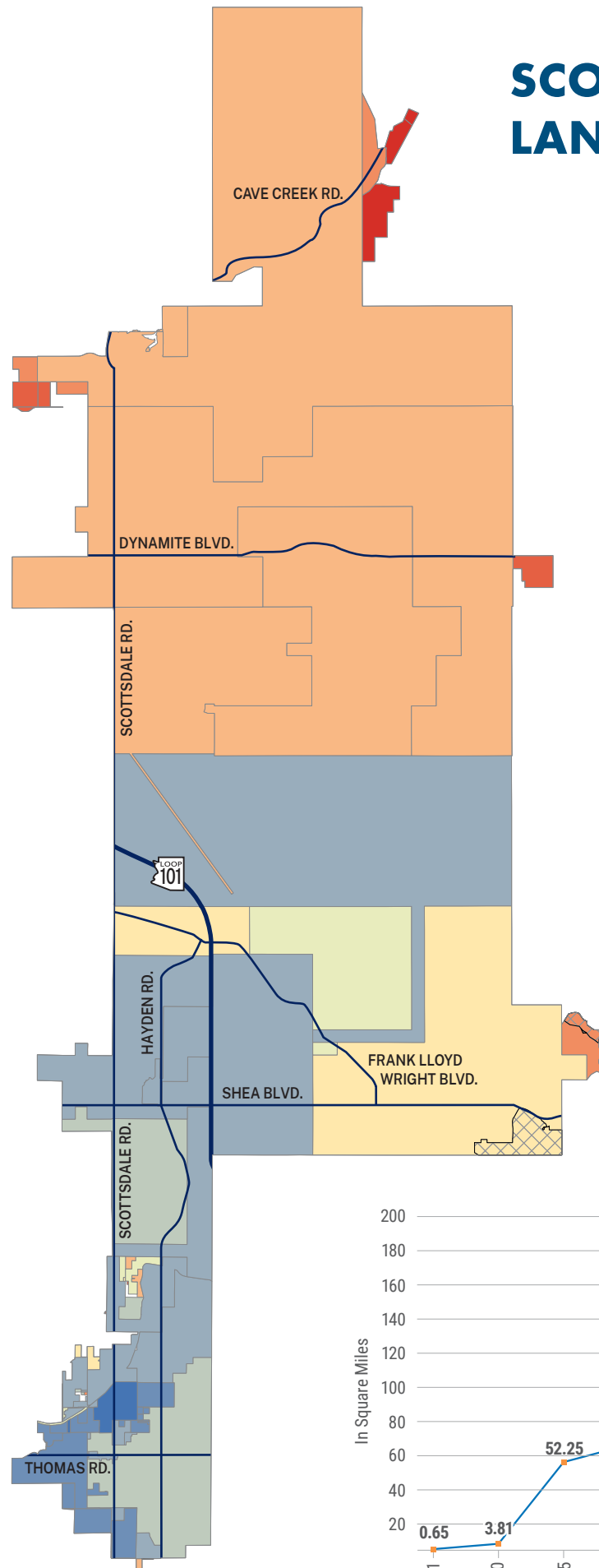
Annexations

Year

- 1951
- 1952-1959
- 1960-1964
- 1965-1969
- 1970-1974
- 1975-1979
- 1980-1984
- 1985-1989
- 1990-1999
- 2000 - Current

DE-ANNEXATION

SOURCE: CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
LONG RANGE PLANNING SERVICES



HONOR.
IMAGINE.



City of Scottsdale Mayor: Lisa Borowsky

City Council:

Jan Dubauskas

Barry Graham

Adam Kwasman

Kathy Littlefield

Maryann McAllen

Solange Whitehead

City Manager: Greg Caton

Deputy City Managers:

Judy Doyle

Kira Peters

Contributing Writers and Editors:

Joan Fudala

Holly Peralta

Joy Racine

Alex Sanchez

Bruce Wall

Research:

Tom Droze

Joan Fudala

Bruce Wall

Graphic Design: Shannon Slocum

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City of Scottsdale

Joan Fudala collection

Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce

Scottsdale Historical Society

Scottsdale Public Library and Scottsdale
Heritage Connection

