



## Quality of Life is Great in Fountain Hills

According to the Town-wide survey, 93% of citizens think the quality of life in Fountain Hills is "excellent" or "good," 16% higher than the U.S. average (77%). During the year-long strategic planning process, citizens discussed many current and potential municipal services. Many of the existing services and amenities are operating satisfactorily; therefore, improving them is not a strategic priority in this strategic plan. Examples include police, fire protection and economic development, all considered important for the future and operating at acceptable levels.

## Keeping the Plan Alive

The Town Council will create and appoint members to a Strategic Planning Advisory Commission (SPAC) by February 2, 2006, to oversee implementation and periodic updates of Strategic Plan 2006-2010.

## The Strategic Plan 2006-2010 has the citizens of Fountain Hills to thank for their dedication to the year-long process:

Youth Visioning Institute – 50 high school students and a dozen citizen volunteers

Community Leaders – 30 interviews with civic, business and cultural leaders

Town Hall 1 – 256 citizens participated

Informed Choices workshops – more than 50 people attended at least one of the four workshops

Town Hall 2 – 163 citizens participated; 330 citizens attended at least one Town Hall event

Committees – more than 50 citizens provided logistical and communications support

Community survey – 1,206 adults responded (50% response rate)

More than 70 newspaper articles in the *Fountain Hills Times* or the *Arizona Republic*

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## Thank You

**Grateful appreciation is due to the citizen volunteers of the Technical Advisory Committee, who gave freely of their time and passion to bring this plan to life:**

Janice Abramson, Market Research Subcommittee Chair

Curt Dunham, Town Hall Subcommittee Chair

Peggy Fiandaca, Youth Visioning Institute Subcommittee Co-chair

Jim Hamblin, Speakers' Bureau Subcommittee Co-chair

Edwin Kehe, Town Council representative

Kathleen Nicola, Town Council, In Memoriam

Henry Leger, Youth Visioning Subcommittee Co-chair

Roger Riggert, Fountain Hills Civic Association

Mike Tyler, Communications Subcommittee Chair

### Supporting the Technical Advisory Committee were:

Tim Pickering, Town Manager  
Shaunna Williams, Executive Assistant

### Project management and facilitation services:

Phillip Blackerby and Lynne Brown, Blackerby Associates, Inc.

### Communications and media relations:

Francesca Carozza and Charlotte McCluskey, Image Weavers, LLC

The full Strategic Plan 2006-2010, and other downloadable reports are available at [www.fh.az.gov/ourtownourchoices/](http://www.fh.az.gov/ourtownourchoices/)

## Celebrate FOUNTAIN HILLS!

Wed, Dec. 15, 2005  
6-7:30 p.m.  
Fountain Park  
Playground area

35th Anniversary of the Fountain & Completion of the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan

Entertainment, Refreshments  
Ground Display Fireworks!  
Bring the whole family!



# Our Town. Our Choices. A Road Map to the Future

## The Town Road Map to 2010 is Complete – Let the Road Trip Begin!

The 2006-2010 Strategic Plan is complete, and will serve as a guideline for the Fountain Hills Town Council and the Town staff as they set priorities over the next five years.

Fountain Hills has a proud 20-year history of Town Halls that explore ideas and create goals for improving Town amenities. This year's strategic planning process had a number of additional components:

- All citizens in the Town were invited to give input during two Town Halls, and more than 1,600 citizens participated.
- Individual input was invited through the Town website and information phone line.
- Key stakeholders from the civic, business and cultural communities were interviewed.
- A Youth Visioning Institute gathered input from teens.
- Four public education sessions were held prior to Town Hall 2.
- A scientific random sample survey reached 1 in 8 households.
- Approximate annual "per household" costs were assigned to initiatives under consideration.
- A commission to oversee the implementation of the plan was initiated.



Evaluating tough choices at Town Hall 2.

## Citizens take a Practical Approach to Strategic Initiatives

The 2006-2010 *Strategic Plan* focuses on the Town staff and Town Council's responsibilities for maintaining and improving the quality of life in Fountain Hills. With build-out and potential growth from the State Trust Land on the horizon, citizens shaped a strategic plan designed to maintain the natural beauty, small town essence, and the financial stability of Fountain Hills during the next major stage of growth.

In the initial implementation phase, residents want the Town to foster a closer working relationship with our schools, developing programs that share facilities (e.g., lifelong learning programs), strengthening ties between school programs and residents, and strengthening town zoning ordinances. This first phase also focuses on educating the public about the pending financial shortfall due to loss of construction revenues and addresses the creation of a financial plan to avoid a deficit.

The second phase of the Strategic Plan expands the lifelong learning opportunities, improves the Town's hiking and biking trails, and calls for increased street maintenance and pedestrian safety. Because the "small town" feeling in Fountain Hills is of primary importance to the majority of citizens, phase two of the Plan calls for expanding the use of Fountain Park and the downtown corridor as a venue for more activities that bring the townspeople together.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 1-2 YEARS

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Education Higher and Continuing Education and Support of Educational Excellence

### *Integrate the Town and schools more closely*

- Increase sharing of facilities
- Support and promote "Falcon Pride"
- Support mentoring programs with town volunteers
- Connect businesses with students in need of employment

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Physical Planning Zoning and Architecture

### *Require new developments to use native vegetation*

- Develop public education programs to demonstrate the benefits of following native vegetation standards in residents' homes
- Require low-water native vegetation in all commercial projects
- Require low-water native vegetation landscaping in common areas in new developments

### *Strictly enforce General Plan and Zoning ordinances*

- Enforce height restrictions to protect views
- Continue current build-out plan
- Include population projections when considering P&Z cases
- Improve build-out population projections

### *Establish controls over commercial architectural compatibility*

- Establish a citizens architectural review committee:
  - Establish commercial architectural standards
  - Review commercial projects against standards
  - Recommend approval/disapproval of proposed commercial architecture

### *Annex State Trust Land*

- Annex and assume responsibility for infrastructure and municipal services
- Apply planning and zoning standards consistent with other areas of the Town

## Commercial Vitality and Business Development

The completion of Fountain Hills' downtown was the cornerstone of commercial vitality discussions. Participants were united in their desire for a distinctive and "pedestrian-friendly" downtown corridor for enjoyment primarily by residents, rather than focus on attracting shoppers and tourists from all over the Valley. Many citizens supported the development of "gathering places" on the Avenue of the Fountains, including cafes, restaurants, and park-like walkways.

## Arts and Culture

Town Hall 1 participants suggested a lively cultural environment as an opportunity to draw people from both within and outside Fountain Hills, and some suggested making the Town a destination center for arts and theater. In the community survey respondents were asked to choose between an approach to arts and cultural programs to serve local residents (31%), serve as a destination for tourists (37%) or neither (25%). Because of the lack of consensus in this area, Strategic Plan 2006-2010 includes no new Town initiatives to foster or promote either approach.

## Addressing Town's Projected Deficit

Due to the loss of construction revenue at build-out, and loss of state tax revenue, the Town is facing a projected deficit. Residents who responded to the random sample were 2.2 times more likely to prefer having the Town raise taxes now to offset the Town's projected deficit (48%) than they were to think the Town should cut services or postpone raising taxes until a future date (22%). Among the 48% who supported a tax increase, residents were split on the method that should be used: 25% preferred levying a property tax and 23% preferred increasing the sales tax. Although residents preferred raising taxes to cutting services, 30% of those surveyed in the random sample did not have an opinion on the issue. This suggests that the Town will need to conduct a significant education effort before proceeding with any of the options that are currently being considered.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 3-5 YEARS

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Parks and Recreation

### *Add new amenities to Parks and Recreation system*

- Build additional hiking trails
- Develop pedestrian-friendly pathways/walking trails
- Expand bike lanes connecting hiking/walking trails
- Increase the frequency of concerts and movies in Fountain Park
- Increase programs to bring together people with different backgrounds

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Small Town Atmosphere and Town Identity

### *Strengthen the community's small town identity*

- Promote citizen involvement in Town activities and community dialogue
- Partner with Ft. McDowell on local events
- Welcome and mentor new residents
- Establish a "one stop shop" for Town information
- Emphasize the Fountain as an icon of the Town

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Municipal Government Services

### *Increase pedestrian safety*

- Increase use of "striped" crosswalks, pedestrian signals and traffic controls
- Build more sidewalks each year throughout Town

### *Ensure all streets in Fountain Hills are well maintained and smooth*

- Increase the frequency of street resurfacing

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Education Higher and Continuing Education and Support of Educational Excellence

### *Create lifelong learning opportunities*

- Increase availability of on-line classes
- Increase learning opportunities for seniors
- Provide access to college courses with accreditation

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Preservation of the Environment

### *Enhance dedication to stewardship of the natural environment*

- Establish restricted view corridors
- Educate public on avoiding light pollution
- Increase frequency of wash maintenance
- Improve street sweeping program and equipment
- Monitor/maintain McDowell Mountain preserve trails
- Start proactive code enforcement to ensure the Town has a well-maintained and clean environment

## Not Town Priorities at This Time

The strategic planning process considered hundreds of ideas, but few made it through the rigorous process to become strategic priorities in the current planning cycle. An important purpose of strategic planning is to avoid focusing on non-priority programs. Citizens and groups who are enthusiastic about these ideas are encouraged to develop funding partnerships, and to educate citizens on how their ideas improve the quality of life in Fountain Hills. Ideas that are not Town priorities at this time include:

- Build a new teen activity center
- Increase enforcement of housing quality codes with occupancy change inspections
- Build a new aquatic center that has features for people of all ages
- Improve public transportation services to and from Fountain Hills and other communities
- Create a curbside recycling program
- Establish a town-operated garbage collection service
- Acquire land, develop and maintain a new 15-acre community park
- Widen Fountain Hills Boulevard
- Build a new performing arts center
- Build a larger stand-alone senior center

KICKOFF  
JANUARY 29

YOUTH VISIONING  
MARCH 16

TOWN HALL #1  
APRIL 15-16

INFORMED CHOICES  
WORKSHOPS  
JULY & AUGUST

TOWN HALL #2  
AUGUST 13

SURVEY  
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

TOWN COUNCIL  
APPROVAL  
DECEMBER 2005

CELEBRATION  
DECEMBER 2005

