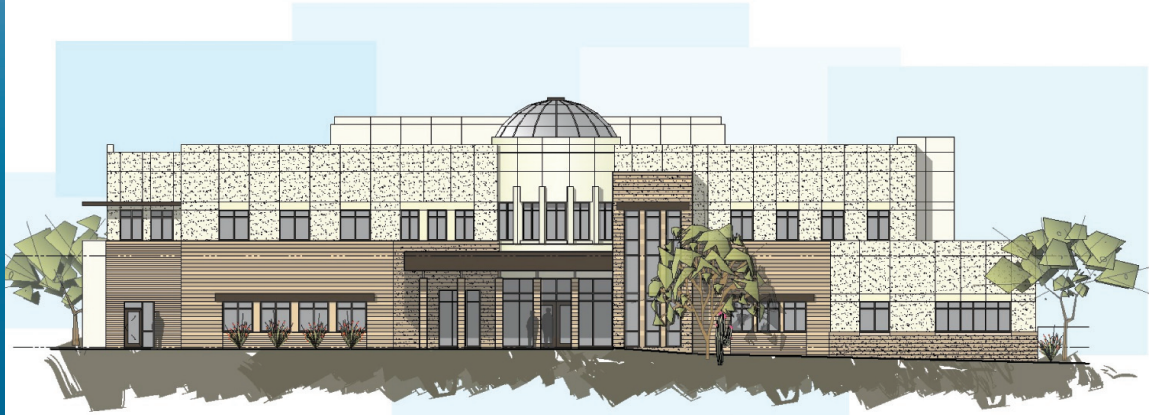




**Our Town. Our Choices.  
A Road Map to the Future**

# The Town of Fountain Hills



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2006-2010**

# WITH GRATEFUL APPRECIATION



We wish to thank everyone who contributed their time, thoughtfulness and imagination to making this strategic plan “citizen-driven.” Fountain Hills is a town of volunteers and that spirit of citizen involvement made the strategic plan a true reflection of our values and vision.

Fountain Hills has a proud 20-year history of Town Halls to identify amenities desired by its residents. The 2005 strategic planning process has a number of additional components:

- All citizens in the Town were invited to give input during two Town Halls, and more than 1600 citizens participated.
- Individual input was also invited through the Town website and information phone line.
- Key stakeholders from the civic, business and cultural community 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.

This strategic plan represents a broad spectrum of citizen input amounting to thousands of hours of citizen involvement and thoughtful debate. *Strategic Plan 2006-2010* reflects these ideas and will guide Town Council Members and staff as they establish budgets and priorities over the years.

We are pleased to have played a part in bringing this *Strategic Plan* to completion and will continue to support its implementation by keeping citizens informed and involved.

Thank you to everyone who brought this plan to fruition.

Sincerely,

Wally Nichols  
Mayor, Town of Fountain Hills

Roger Riggert  
President, Civic Association



Youth contribute ideas to Strategic Plan.

PHOTO BY DERALD HOFFMAN

### Informed Choices Education Outreach:

A significant sample (30%) of participants in the random survey indicated the need for more information on the Town’s financial future to make informed decisions. The Town and the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission will coordinate educational efforts to provide a broader scope of financial information to the Town’s citizens. These sessions will provide information on alternative methods of achieving long-term financial stability. Workshops will be conducted to illuminate the causes and depth of the projected shortfall, and will demonstrate the pros and cons of alternative solutions.

The SPAC, Town management team and the Town Council will begin to implement the Plan’s Strategic Priorities listed on the following pages.

### Strategic Planning Advisory Commission:

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

### Financial Implementation Plan for Strategic Priorities:

The Town Manager and staff will develop and maintain with Town Council approval, a financial plan showing (a) strategies to maintain long-term stability of the Town’s finances, and (b) how the strategic priorities will be implemented, including refinements of the cost estimates in the *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*, by June 30, 2006.



Citizens weigh options at Town Hall 2.

## 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:
  - 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

Strategic Priorities, 1-2 Years	Estimated cost per hslid per year
Fountain Hills Town government will accomplish the following initiatives by December 31, 2007	
Work more closely with schools	\$ 0
Low water native landscaping – public education program	10
Enforce General Plan and Zoning	8
Create commercial architecture review board	18
Annex State Trust Land	0
Strategic Priorities 1-2 Years	\$ 36
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	

Revenue Shortfall, 1-2 Years	Estimated cost per hslid per year
The Town council will resolve the Town’s projected long-term revenue shortfall by December 31, 2007, by taking actions such as (i) calling an election for voters to decide whether to levy a primary property tax, or (ii) increasing various sales tax rates. This projected shortfall is caused by reduction of construction-related revenues and State shared revenues as the Town nears build-out. Without action, budget deficits are estimated to begin in 9-13 years. The revenue shortfall is currently estimated to require approximately \$66 per household to maintain services at current levels.	
Revenue Shortfall 1-2 Years	\$ 66
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	

Strategic Priorities, 3-5 Years	Estimated cost per hslid per year
Fountain Hills Town government will accomplish the following initiatives by December 31, 2010 (contingent upon resolution of the revenue shortfall issue)	
Add recreation amenities	\$ 17
Strengthen small town identity	32
Enhance pedestrian safety	17
Maintain smooth streets	120
Support lifelong learning	10
Enhance dedication to stewardship of natural environment	68
Strategic Priorities 3-5 Years	\$264
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	\$366

## 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 Town icon

### STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: Municipal Government Services

#### *Increase pedestrian safety*

- Increase use of “striped” crosswalks, pedestrian signals and traffic controls
- Build more sidewalks each year

#### *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

## Citizens Express a Vision for the Ambiance of Fountain Hills

### Vision of Fountain Hills/Residents:

- It is dedicated to careful stewardship of the most beautiful natural desert area in the world. It maintains its starry nights, clean air and water quality.
- It is recognized as the best planned community in Arizona. Growth and density area closely managed to maintain the Town's unique character.
- It is the premier school district in Arizona. The Town offers lifelong learning opportunities to residents.
- Town Government is fiscally sound and has reliable revenue streams.
- New business development mainly serves the needs of residents, rather than primarily focusing on attracting tourists and residents from other communities.

PHOTO BY DERALD HOFFMAN



The stunning desert beauty of Fountain Hills.

### Values of Fountain Hills Residents

- Education
- Cultural diversity
- Public safety
- Environment
- Community participation, involvement and volunteerism
- Preservation of small town character
- Recreational opportunities



PHOTO BY DERALD HOFFMAN

St. Patrick's Day celebration at Fountain Park.

### Commercial Vitality & Business Development

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

### Arts & Culture

Many 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 an arts/theater destination. 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.



Citizens set priorities at Town Hall 2.



PHOTO BY DERALD HOFFMAN

Fountain Park.

### Quality of Life is Great in Fountain Hills

During the strategic planning process, citizens discussed current and potential municipal services. Many of the existing services and amenities such as police, fire protection and economic development are considered important, but are operating satisfactorily, and are not included in the 2006-2010 Plan. Other findings from the survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with a broad range of Town activities.

- Residents think Fountain Hills is a good place to live (96%); U.S. average (84%)
- Residents like quality of life (93%); U.S. average (77%)
- Most residents are aware of the Strategic Planning Process (75%)

### Residents moved to Fountain Hills because:

- Low crime rate
- Appearance, views, beauty
- Quality of housing
- Small town atmosphere
- Local government financial stability

### Residents stay in Fountain Hills because:

- Small town atmosphere
- Low crime rate
- Appearance, beauty, views
- Level of taxation
- Quality of housing

## A WORD OF THANKS

We wish to acknowledge the Citizens of Fountain Hills whose input formed Strategic Plan 2006-2010. The process involved hundreds of individuals who participated in the various events and the volunteers and organizations that stepped forward to help organize and promote the citizen-input events.

Many thanks are also due to the members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), citizens of Fountain Hills who volunteered thousands of hours over more than a year to design and oversee the process and make the Strategic Plan truly citizen-driven.

### Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

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/)



## A Citizen-Driven Process

- Community Leaders – 30 interviews with Civic, Business and Cultural leaders
- Youth Visioning Institute – 50 high school students and a dozen citizen volunteers
- 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
- Committees – more than 50 citizens provided logistical and communication support
- Community survey – 1,206 adults responded (50% response rate)
- Over 70 newspaper articles in the *Fountain Hills Times* or the *Arizona Republic*
- Newsletters (4), Invitations (1), Compass (3) = 12,000 distribution
- Contact list of concerned individuals – 703 citizens

Plan adopted by the Town of Fountain Hills on December 1, 2005.