

XXX RESONANCE

Scottsdale Tourism & Events Strategic Plan: Governance

COMMISSIONED BY CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EXPERIENCE SCOTTSDALE
NOVEMBER 2022



Governance

The success of the Scottsdale Tourism & Events Strategic Plan depends, to a great extent, on the partnerships and the resources that are put in place for its implementation. As a result, the implementation of the plan is driven by the roles and the responsibilities within the Tourism & Events Department necessary to address a broad range of destination management and development issues and opportunities.

Resonance offers the following suggestions and recommendations for the governance of this plan. While the ultimate execution of this plan will be powered by the City of Scottsdale, and its Tourism & Events Department in partnership with Experience Scottsdale, we see other partner agencies filling critical roles in seeing that the community continues to grow and prosper within an environmentally sensitive and sustainable framework.

As this Tourism & Events Strategic Plan, in many cases, addresses heretofore unbudgeted initiatives, it will be up to the city to develop the funding mechanisms and timelines for the plan's recommendations. As many of the goals and objectives are just as much (if not more) focused on community sense of place and quality of life, we encourage city officials to think beyond tourism-generated taxes to realize the promise of this plan.

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Responsibilities within the goal of Community Well-being would appear to have several parents. As establishing Scottsdale as a well-being community (CW.1 and CW.3) is well outside the wheelhouse of the Tourism & Events Department and other visitor agencies, primary healthcare providers in Scottsdale would be most suited to lead such an initiative. And, in transportation and connectivity (CW.5), the local transportation entities would be the appropriate home. All other strategies fall within the purview of the Tourism & Events Department.

CULTURE & CREATIVITY

Cultural organizations in Scottsdale are perfectly positioned, in conjunction with partners, to take a leadership role in most of the strategies identified in the Culture & Creativity goal.

Positioning Scottsdale as a leading culinary and wine destination would appear to call increased collaboration between the Tourism & Events Department and Experience Scottsdale to better understand the gaps and opportunities of the taste economy to advance initiatives with the industry.



To advance the development of Native American experiences, enhancing the relationship between the Native American communities, the Tourism & Events Department, and Experience Scottsdale would support the execution of Native American driven strategies (CC.5).

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

During our collective work with interests throughout Scottsdale, Festivals & Events emerged as a goal of significant importance. From developing an iconic signature event to expanding existing events, FE.1 signals the need for significantly more investment in this area. Involving the Stadium (FE.4) takes this concept even further and will necessitate the engagement of Parks & Recreation.

Outside of the strategy regarding WestWorld (FE.2), most of these strategies appear to fall within the Tourism & Events Department's authority and guidance. Thus, additional professional staff is indicated to ensure that these strategies are addressed.

SUGGESTED STAFFING: The Tourism & Events Department added an events specialist position in 2020. However, given the outsized interest in expanding the event footprint and offerings in Scottsdale, Festivals & Events may well be positioned to be its own division within the Tourism & Events Department.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Continuing to position Scottsdale as the perfect destination for business meetings and events has traditionally fallen to the team at Experience Scottsdale, and, until the pandemic, they routinely broke goals, records, and expectations in this market.

Going forward, however, we believe the Tourism & Events Department needs to be more engaged in guiding the future growth of meeting and events facilities to meet the changing marketplace in the area. From feasibility studies for new facilities to identifying opportunities to enhance existing venues, it's a role that is well within the Tourism & Events Department's expertise and purview.



OUTDOOR PURSUITS

The Outdoors gained significant traction during the pandemic, and Scottsdale appears perfectly poised to capitalize on this consumer travel trend. Each of the strategies within these goals has a home with another agency within the region; the Tourism & Events Department has limited expertise to lead any of the strategies.

PLACEMAKING & ENTERTAINMENT

As Old Town is the beating heart of the Scottsdale experience, it cannot be left to organically grow or fail. It needs a steady hand to guide an overall vision to ensure that it continues to be the heart of the community. As the strategies within this broader goal require engagement with the arts community, public works, parks and recreation, transportation, and other agencies, there needs to be a central individual/group that can coordinate all the moving parts of these critical initiatives.

The strategy (PE.4) of positioning Scottsdale as a luxury destination should fall directly to Experience Scottsdale.

SUGGESTED STAFFING: Add an Old Town District Manager and/or a Director of Downtown Programming

SPORTS TOURISM

With a focus on community-driven events in City sports and park facilities, the development opportunity of Sports Tourism is dependent on availability in the calendar year. The coordination of logistics and the collaboration in the sales process between departments and agencies is key to optimizing existing assets and attracting new sports events.

TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY ADVOCACY

The Tourism & Events Department has the opportunity to be the expert voice, advising the city, other inter-related governments and agencies, the State, and the community at large of the facts behind this economic driver. In terms of industry advancement, the Tourism & Events Department will work closely with the City Manager's Office to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (TA.1).



SUGGESTED STAFFING: While the Tourism & Events Department Director is the most appropriate public representative to fill the public-facing role, it may be advantageous to add a community affairs position to monitor and coordinate all the strategies included in this goal.