



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ELEMENT⁺

Scottsdale is a Sonoran Desert community, and citizens recognize that the unique and delicate desert environment is valuable for community health, character, economic vitality, and quality of life. We pride ourselves as a leader and are committed to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

The city's environment includes both the ecological systems, which sustain Sonoran vegetation and wildlife, and natural and man-made elements that provide clean air and water, protect the community from hazards, and create a naturally beautiful and enjoyable setting.

Without careful planning and stewardship, our healthy natural systems may be negatively impacted by regional population growth, urban development, climate change, and everyday life. Some of the impacts can be rising temperatures, poor air quality, resource depletion, increased waste, and stress on our water supplies. To preserve Scottsdale as a highly livable city that is environmentally and economically healthy, Scottsdale proactively seeks ongoing mitigation and resiliency solutions to these challenges. This element provides goals and policies for protecting and enhancing Scottsdale's natural and human habitats and built environments for current and future generations.

Goals and Policies

Goal EP 1

Protect and enhance Scottsdale’s human and Sonoran Desert habitats.

Policies

- EP 1.1** Retain Scottsdale’s Sonoran Desert aesthetic values and heritage. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Arts, Culture & Creative Community; and Conservation Elements]*
- EP 1.2 †** Protect the unique, rare, and significant features of Scottsdale’s natural environment, and educate landowners and developers on their preservation options using the Environmentally Sensitive Lands District (ESL) as a guide. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Open Space; and Conservation Elements]*
- EP 1.3** Require developments to retain and integrate the Sonoran Desert ecosystem. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Conservation Elements]*
- EP 1.4 †** Preserve local plants, wildlife, and natural resources to maintain the biodiversity and long-term sustainability of the area’s ecology. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Conservation Elements]*
- EP 1.5** Integrate environmental quality protection into all phases of local planning, policy, and development. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Conservation Elements]*



Goal EP 2

Demonstrate and expand the city’s leadership in environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Policies

EP 2.1 Educate and inform the community of the significance and fragility of the Sonoran Desert environment and the city’s environmental protection efforts, including the Environmentally Sensitive Lands District (ESL) and its role in securing Natural Area Open Space. *[Cross-reference Open Space and Conservation Elements]*



EP 2.2 Support and encourage citizens, groups, community partnerships, and local businesses to maintain and enhance environmental features and landscapes. *[Cross-reference Open Space and Community Involvement Elements]*

EP 2.3 Foster community stewardship and a sense of personal responsibility for the natural environment. *[Cross-reference Open Space; Healthy Community; and Community Involvement Elements]*



EP 2.4 Expand Scottsdale’s Green Building Program to maintain regional and national leadership in green and low-impact development. *[Cross-reference Conservation and Energy Elements]*

Goal EP 3 †

Participate in local and regional efforts to improve air quality.

Policies

EP 3.1 Reduce automobile emissions through traffic management; transportation improvements; promotion of a wide variety of mobility options; travel demand reduction strategies; expansion of regional connectivity; and use of electric and alternative fuel vehicles. *[Cross-reference Energy; Circulation; and Bicycling Elements]*



EP 3.2 Actively participate in regional coordination, partnerships, and funding decisions for air quality improvement and reduced vehicle emissions and trips.

EP 3.3 Expand the use of alternative mobility options, for example electric and clean fuel alternatives, through investment in environmental infrastructure such as electrical recharge and clean-fuel refilling stations, to achieve or exceed regional clean air goals. *[Cross-reference Energy Element]*

EP 3.4 Seek to reduce activities that contribute to air pollution and significant air pollution events by promoting alternatives such as the conversion of wood to gas fireplaces and gas to electric yard equipment.

EP 3.5 Reduce the community’s contribution to regional dust and particulate air pollution created by man-made sources, such as construction, maintenance equipment, vehicles, and untreated vacant lots/unpaved parking areas.

Goal EP 4

Expand the circular economy by maximizing resource recovery, reuse and recycling, and promoting use of recycled, recyclable, and renewable materials.

Policies

- EP 4.1** Maintain and expand citywide recycling programs, particularly for tourist areas, businesses, multi-family housing, institutional facilities, special events, and public spaces. *[Cross-reference Public Services & Facilities Element]*
- EP 4.2** Encourage private establishments to minimize waste generation, and establish effective programs for waste reduction, reuse, and recycling of resources. *[Cross-reference Public Services & Facilities Element]*
- EP 4.3** Strive for zero waste in city operations.
- EP 4.4** Whenever possible, use paperless media and limit the use of hard copy materials for city programs and projects. *[Cross-reference Community Involvement Element]*
- EP 4.5** Ensure the recycling and/or reuse of building materials to reduce construction waste.
- EP 4.6** Support regional waste reduction efforts, policies, and regulations.
- EP 4.7** Identify, promote, and support opportunities to use solid waste and recycled materials as marketable commodities.
- EP 4.8** Strive to reduce single-use, non-recyclable, and non-compostable packaging and bags.
- EP 4.9** Implement programs and initiatives, such as composting, to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste going to the landfill. *[Cross-reference Public Services & Facilities Element]*
- EP 4.10** Promote zero waste certified events in the city, such as the Waste Management Open, as a means to educate the community on the importance of understanding and reducing waste.
- EP 4.11** Adopt city green purchasing policies and practices.
- EP 4.12** Promote commercial and multi-family recycling and green waste diversion.



Goal EP 5

Encourage environmentally sound green buildings and low-impact site plans that support sustainable desert living.

Policies

- EP 5.1** Protect and enhance the natural desert elements of all development sites. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Open Space; and Conservation Elements]*
- EP 5.2** Increase the use of green infrastructure, including low-impact development (LID) stormwater management techniques, such as curb openings and permeable pavement. *[Cross-reference Conservation Element]*
- EP 5.3** Construct durable and sustainable buildings using green building principles. *[Cross-reference Character & Design; Housing; Conservation; and Energy Elements]*
- EP 5.4** Promote passive solar site and building design strategies that recognize and respond to the Sonoran Desert climate. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Energy Elements]*
- EP 5.5** Expand Green Building construction standards to include all new and remodeled residential and commercial buildings. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Energy Elements]*
- EP 5.6** Reduce regulatory barriers to encourage green commercial and residential building retrofits. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Energy Elements]*



Goal EP 6 †

Meet or surpass all applicable water quality standards.

Policies

- EP 6.1** Continue to provide a safe and healthy environment for community members through water and wastewater treatment processes. *[Cross-reference Water Resources Element]*
- EP 6.2** Ensure Scottsdale drinking water continues to meet or surpass all Federal Environmental Protection Agency standards by updating or adding necessary treatment technologies to existing facilities. *[Cross-reference Water Resources Element]*
- EP 6.3** Maintain the Industrial Pretreatment Program to ensure businesses and industries meet city, state, and federal regulations to protect publicly owned wastewater collection and treatment systems. *[Cross-reference Water Resources Element]*
- EP 6.4** Partner with public agencies, water providers, and water industry associations to participate in water quality and treatment research for the benefit of Scottsdale citizens. *[Cross-reference Water Resources and Conservation Elements]*

Goal EP 7

Identify and reduce heat islands.

Policies

- EP 7.1** Identify areas most impacted by the heat island effect, and prioritize mitigation for these areas to reduce heat impacts.
- EP 7.2** Incorporate development strategies such as shared parking models and the use of “cool materials” (e.g., landscaping, green roofs, reflective pavement, heat reduction asphalt coatings, permeable concrete, and treated dirt areas) to help reduce the heat island effect. *[Cross-reference Character & Design Elements]*
- EP 7.3** Develop and support programs, such as a Tree Canopy Plan, that identify and increase vegetation and shading in areas of high pedestrian activity. *[Cross-reference Character & Design and Open Space Elements]*
- EP 7.4** Promote the long-term management and maintenance of urban and open area vegetation and protect and expand the provision of private and public open spaces to reduce the heat island effect.
- EP 7.5** Minimize asphalt and promote alternative parking surfaces.
- EP 7.6** Engage with, learn from, and collaborate with regional, statewide, and national governmental and other entities for best practices on heat mitigation strategies.

Goal EP 8

Plan, prepare, and adapt for significant climate impacts on city infrastructure and operations.

Policies

- EP 8.1** Develop, adopt, and implement climate action and resiliency strategies that address areas of climate mitigation planning such as emissions, drought, energy, transportation, and extreme heat.

- EP 8.2** Increase energy efficiency in buildings and vehicle fleets.

- EP 8.3** Encourage use of clean, renewable energy sources.

- EP 8.4** Employ green building and green infrastructure best practices.

- EP 8.5** Establish land use and mobility plans that decrease transportation carbon emissions.

- EP 8.6** Encourage waste reduction and water conservation.