Development of the Mesa 2040 General Plan began in 2012. A citizen Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) was appointed to work with staff in the development of the plan. The City Council approved the Mesa 2040 General Plan in June 2014 and the voters adopted it in November 2014.
GENERAL PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Input received from a variety of sources led to establishment of three guiding principles for the General Plan and for development activity in Mesa over the next 10 years.

THOSE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE:

• Creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods
• Growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs
• Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural resources

2017 NEIGHBORHOOD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Planning

Planning Division processed 18 residential final plats resulting in City Council approving an additional 1,839 lots in Mesa. These plats have ranged from small in-fill parcels to large developments such as Cadence and Eastmark.

Downtown Mesa

With the completion of light rail through downtown Mesa, there has been a lot of interest in new development. The Downtown Mesa area also saw new business growth with the introduction of Arizona’s first cidery and taproom. Cider Corps started as a hobby for two brothers and grew quickly when an agreement was signed with Fox Restaurant Concepts. The 4,500-square foot taproom is located on Robson Street south of Main Street and can be credited with bringing additional visitors to Downtown Mesa.

Downtown Mesa’s own Benedictine University started the Fall 2017 semester with 500 students, multiple sports teams, and a new residence hall. The former Alhambra Hotel was also converted to student housing for 53 students with $3.3 million in renovations, demonstrating Benedictine University’s commitment to growth in Mesa.
Infill and Redevelopment

As Mesa continues to mature and fill out, developers are becoming more interested in how to develop some of the challenging by-passed parcels. One example is a project called The Alan on McKellips Road. This triangular shaped 1.2-acre parcel has been designed to provide 18 dwelling units in a semi-urban development.

Staff has also completed the process of establishing the local historic district zoning for the Westside Clark neighborhood west of Country Club.

UConnect Mesa

UConnectMesa is all about connecting Mesa residents to their City. This comprehensive program provides a series of Pop-Up Events, homeowner’s association classes, printable guides, educational videos and workshops to give residents the tools to connect with their community and take care of their neighborhood.

2017 JOB GROWTH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Business Climate

Over the course of the 2017 calendar year, The City of Mesa Office of Economic Development counted 40 attraction, expansion and retention efforts throughout the City of Mesa. These 40 projects resulted in the following annual economic development metrics:

- Business Locates/Retentions 40
- Jobs Created/Retained 1,413
- Total Annual Payroll Generated $66,292,696
- Total Capital Investment $480,526,136
- Total Square Footage Created/Absorbed 1,626,644 SF

Infineon

Infineon added a 11,000 SF Gallium Nitride (GaN) Clean Room Facility to their existing building on Country Club Drive and the U.S. 60. This expansion created 40 new high-paying jobs and resulted in $10 million in capital investment. Bloom Insurance also expanded into Mesa in September 2016, moving into a new office building and hiring up to 170 new employees.
**Elliot Road Tech Corridor**

In June 2017, Niagara Bottling, LLC announced plans for their $76 million bottling plant in the Elliot Technology Road Corridor, which will create 45 new jobs. The Elliot Road Technology Corridor is also home to Dignity Health, a 92,000 square foot, $28 million hospital facility which faced some financial pressures that halted the project but is now being completed. The largest successes have come from multiple data centers establishing roots in the Tech Corridor and purchasing land. In May 2017, Digital Realty closed on a 56-acre parcel near the northeast corner of Crismon Road & Elliot Road with plans to construct over one million square feet in data center space. Then, by October 2017, EdgeConneX made two purchases totaling 170 contiguous acres for close to $40 million at the northwest corner of Elliot Road and the Loop 202.

**Waypoint Office Development**

The Waypoint Office development continues to be one of the premier Class A Office developments in Mesa and the East Valley, and the 158,000 square foot Waypoint 4 property completed construction in May 2017. Shortly after completion, a large tech company signed a lease for 50,000 square feet of the building, which could bring up to 250 new high-paying jobs to Mesa. As an $11 million speculative office building project, we expect the building to be fully leased in the coming months, given the amount of market demand for Class A office space. This will complement American Traffic Solutions’ existing 600-employee Headquarters at the 108,000 square foot Waypoint 3 building.

**Launchpoint**

In 2016, the City of Mesa announced the relocation of Launchpoint, a business accelerator program, from the Gateway area to the Mesa Center for Higher Education (MCHE) in downtown. This program more than tripled in size since the move to downtown throughout 2017. Launchpoint is currently home to 14 startup ventures leasing physical space and participating in collaboration programs. This location shift aligns with fostering entrepreneurship in Mesa and more specifically, the Downtown Mesa area.

**Banner Health**

One of Mesa’s largest employers, Banner Health, expanded their Cardon Children’s Medical Center Level 1 Trauma Center expansion in 2017 with an investment of $26.5 million, bringing the Trauma Center bed count to 248.
2017 PUBLIC SPACES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2012 Park Bond Completions

In 2017 several of the major projects from the 2012 Parks Bond were completed. These included Greenfield Park and fishing lake, Eagles Community Center, Kleinman Park, and Pioneer Park. The grand opening for Pioneer Park drew thousands of visitors. Each of these parks, along with the hundreds of other city parks, large and small, provide a wide range of recreational opportunities to Mesa citizens and visitors throughout the year.

Public Spaces

Consideration of the impact on public spaces was a key part of the review of several developments during 2017. There is an effort in the downtown area, along the light rail line, to improve the quality of the public realm within the walkshed. The second phase of the El Rancho Apartments at Ashland and Main opened in 2017. These urban form apartments made a significant change to the street and created the desired urban environment.

Rio Salado Parkway/Stadium Path Connector

The City of Mesa has two new shared-use pathways for walking, running and bicycling. One is along a riverbank and the other connects both spring training stadiums. Rio Salado Pathway is along the Salt River bank and connects Sloan Park, Riverview Park and Riverview Shopping Center. It already connects to Tempe Town Lake and will eventually expand west along the Salt River bank to Phoenix, providing a regional transportation and recreational corridor. The Stadium Connector Shared Use Path connects Sloan Park to Hohokam Stadium. Both pathways are an important three and a half mile addition to the City’s existing multi-use trail system, along with providing a scenic and unique corridor for all recreation users.
ARTS AND CULTURE

In calendar year 2017, the Arts and Culture Department continued to provide extraordinary programs while increasing access and engagement for Mesa and Valley residents, and for visitors. Mesa’s cultural institutions sustained high levels of participation and grew the reputation of Mesa as a community devoted to creativity and innovation. Total visitation to the three City-owned Arts and Culture venues in calendar year 2017 was over 645,000.

Mesa Arts Center (MAC) served over 403,000 visits in 2017. MAC and community partners completed the Main Street Prototyping Festival project in November 2017, with a celebration enabling community members to explore, play with and provide feedback on 20 prototypes for connecting and enlivening Mesa’s downtown, as well as the culminating projects from artist residencies at CARE Partnership and the Boys and Girls Club.

The i.d.e.a. Museum had a highly successful fourth year under its new brand, and sustained participation of over 90,000 annual visitors. The museum conducted master planning to identify ways to improve the physical plant in the coming years to meet growing demands, and to address opportunities to serve the changing downtown environment and to build new audiences.

The Arizona Museum of Natural History continued to attract large numbers of school groups and public visits, with a total of over 153,000 visits in 2017.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Many departments throughout the City of Mesa are playing a role in the General Plan implementation. Their goals, policies and strategies are contained in chapters 8 – 14 of the Plan. Highlights include:

• Environmental and Sustainability expanded the water conservation program by implementing a new grant funded program that encourages non-residential property owners to replace old, inefficient irrigation controllers and equipment with high performance controllers, sensors and equipment.

• In the first quarter of 2017, Southern Avenue Streetscape Improvements Phase 2 located adjacent to Mesa Community College and the Fiesta Village Shopping area was completed.

• Aviation unit trained two tactical flight officers as helicopter pilots to maintain appropriate staffing levels and air unit coverage for the City of Mesa.

• In 2017, two table top emergency preparedness exercises were held, one on monsoon preparedness, the second in conjunction with Maricopa County Flood Control District.

• Construction of the Porter Park Path was completed.

• Shared use paths are being designed and built near and through neighborhoods.

• In July 2017 initiated an alternatives analysis on extending light rail off the mainline to serve the Dobson/Southern/Country Club corridor.
Primary Method to Implement General Plan is Through New Development!

Number of Applicants Processes

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In 2017 the caseload was up with the Planning Division processing 90 cases to Planning and Zoning Board, 62 cases to Board of Adjustment, 89 cases to Design Review Board.

*Mesa 2040 General Plan focuses at a higher level, providing more flexibility in community development.*