

ATTACHMENT A

**Phoenix City Council
Economic Development and the Arts (EDA) Subcommittee
Summary Minutes
Thursday, May 14, 2025**

City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson St.
Phoenix, Arizona.

Subcommittee Members Present

Councilwoman Ann O'Brien, Chair
Councilwoman Debra Stark
Councilman Kevin Robinson
Councilwoman Laura Pastor, joined meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Subcommittee Members Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman O'Brien called the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee to order at 10:00 a.m. with Councilwoman Stark, and Councilman Robinson present. Councilwoman Pastor joined the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee Meeting

Councilman Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2026, Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee meeting. Councilwoman O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

2. Annual Public Art Plan

Deputy City Manager Frank McCune, Interim Arts and Culture Director Carrie Brown, and Interim Deputy Arts and Culture Director Catina Crum presented this item.

Ms. Brown mentioned the percent for art funds that help financially support art throughout the City and the work done to create the Annual Public Art Plan.

Ms. Crum spoke about art projects located throughout the City and highlighted the Environmental Excellence Award that was received by one of the shade art projects.

Councilwoman Stark highlighted the art room at Alice Cooper's The Rock Teen Center. Councilwoman Stark asked if there is an opportunity to partner with schools to do an art project such as a mural.

Ms. Brown confirmed that there are opportunities for partnerships for art projects with the City.

Councilwoman Stark offered to connect the Office of Arts and Culture with the school.

Councilwoman Pastor highlighted the Environmental Excellence Award that the City received for the Sombra art piece. Councilwoman Pastor mentioned shade and heat mitigation as an important aspect for the art shade structures.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked what steps are taken to get community input.

Ms. Brown shared that the community is engaged through surveys and public meetings throughout the various phases of art projects.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked how stakeholders are identified for engagement with the art projects.

Ms. Brown shared the Office of Arts and Culture identifies stakeholders with the help of City Council Offices, the Office of Arts and Culture's grants and community engagement, Neighborhood Associations, and Village Planning Committees.

Chairwoman O'Brien suggested engaging with community alliances and community block watch groups as well to ensure residents near the art are involved. Chairwoman O'Brien highlighted the various art projects shown in the presentation and the importance of having art throughout the community.

Councilwoman Pastor made a motion to approve the item. Councilwoman Stark seconded the motion.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

3. Phoenix Economic Overview and Update: Part 4 – State of Downtown Phoenix

Community and Economic Development Director Ryan Touhill and Deputy Community and Economic Development Director Xandon Keating presented this item.

Mr. Touhill highlighted various areas that attract people to downtown Phoenix, such as dining, nightlife, sports, major events, and conventions. Mr. Touhill provided a comparison of downtown Phoenix in 2010 compared to today, including the increase in median income, which he shared highlights the positive impact.

Mr. Keating spoke about the main drivers of downtown Phoenix growth, such as the Arizona State University campus, Light Rail and other transit connectivity, residential

growth, the Phoenix Bioscience Core, and entertainment and amenities. Mr. Keating discussed how these factors have made downtown Phoenix a civic, cultural, and economic hub.

Mr. Touhill highlighted that the success of downtown Phoenix is a collaborative effort between various City departments and other external organizations.

Chairwoman O'Brien thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilwoman Stark highlighted the Downtown Strategic Plan that Downtown Phoenix, Inc. has been working on and asked for an update in a future subcommittee meeting on the Downtown Strategic Plan.

Councilman Robinson asked who the biggest employer in downtown Phoenix is.

Mr. Touhill answered that staff would work on getting an answer.

Councilman Robinson noted that in the past, the largest employer was Valley National Bank.

Councilwoman Stark suggested perhaps the City of Phoenix or Maricopa County is the largest employer in downtown Phoenix.

Chairwoman O'Brien agreed that perhaps City of Phoenix or Maricopa County may be the largest employer in the downtown area.

Mr. Touhill confirmed that he would work on getting an answer.

Chairwoman O'Brien requested information on the largest public and private employer in downtown.

Councilman Robinson also asked how many Black-owned businesses there are in downtown Phoenix.

Mr. Touhill noted the information is not tracked in the City's licensing process; however, the information may be found through other sources.

Councilman Robinson noted that there are many successful Black-owned businesses in downtown Phoenix and shared that other cities in the metro area have asked how the City has done this.

Councilwoman Pastor noted that even with current residential growth, there is still further need for residential growth in the City, especially in downtown Phoenix.

Councilwoman Pastor asked for more information on residential growth.

Mr. Keating confirmed there is additional need for downtown residential growth. Mr. Keating shared there is interest from developers to continue building more residential

units, however, developers also like to ensure that units are filled. Mr. Keating noted the importance of growing the residential base to support additional amenities and businesses, such as retail stores and other services.

Councilwoman Pastor noted the City needs to keep up with the demand for residential units to support the Downtown Entertainment District and Downtown Strategic Plan. Councilwoman Pastor noted the importance of the Downtown Strategic Plan for moving towards the future and helping with downtown Phoenix as an entertainment district.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked if the Clean and Green team are volunteers or City employees.

Mr. Keating shared that the Clean and Green team are Downtown Phoenix, Inc. employees that focus on keeping downtown Phoenix clean and inviting, such as caring for trees and shrubs in the right-of-way.

Chairwoman O'Brien highlighted the concerted effort to keep downtown Phoenix beautiful. Chairwoman O'Brien asked about future challenges and opportunities for downtown Phoenix.

Mr. Touhill answered that future opportunities and challenges include a variety of different types of residential units in downtown. Mr. Touhill shared the number of hotel rooms is also of importance to the Convention Center and Visit Phoenix. Mr. Touhill highlighted a recent project to transform an office building to residential units. Mr. Touhill mentioned the importance of adding to, or enhancing, amenities such as venues.

Chairwoman O'Brien highlighted the importance of transforming downtown Phoenix and the success of National Collegiate Athletic Association's Women's Final Four.

Councilwoman Pastor asked about the diversity of small minority-owned businesses in downtown Phoenix.

Mr. Touhill confirmed that staff could explore the diversity of businesses.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked if additional information could be voluntarily collected from businesses about whether they are minority-owned or other information.

Mr. Keating clarified that the City does not track business licenses, but can get information from other databases and Downtown Phoenix, Inc.

Councilwoman Pastor suggested that staff work with the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Asian Chamber of Commerce, and Black Chamber of Commerce to get data.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilwoman Stark asked for an update on the Downtown Strategic Plan in September or October.

Councilwoman Pastor also asked for an update on the Downtown Strategic Plan and to hear a little bit about the Entertainment District at a high-level.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman O'Brien adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cecilia Alcantar
Management Fellow

DRAFT