

# City of Phoenix

*Meeting Location:  
City Council Chambers  
200 W. Jefferson St.  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003*



**City of Phoenix**

## **Agenda**

**Wednesday, April 8, 2026**

**10:00 AM**

**City Council Chambers**

### **Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee**

*Councilwoman Ann O'Brien, Chair  
Councilwoman Laura Pastor  
Councilman Kevin Robinson  
Councilwoman Debra Stark*

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#### OPTIONS TO ACCESS THIS MEETING

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- <https://phoenixcitycouncil.webex.com/phoenixcitycouncil/j.php?MTID=mbe240ef460df506ef3eef232c0dccc90>

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

## **000 CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

### **1 Minutes of the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee Meeting**

*Attachments*

[Attachment A - 3.11.26 EDA Subcommittee Minutes .pdf](#)

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**CONSENT ACTION (ITEM 2)**

- 2      **Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Grant and  
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**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEM 3)**

- 3      **Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District  
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**INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 4-6)**

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- 5      **Opportunity Zones Guidance - Citywide**      **Page 182**
- 6      **Phoenix Economic Overview and Update: Part 3 - Land,  
Real Estate, and Economic Geography - Citywide**      **Page 184**

**000 CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**ADJOURN**

For further information or reasonable accommodations, please call the City Council Meeting Request line at 602-262-6001. 7-1-1 Friendly.

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**Members:**

Councilwoman Ann O'Brien, Chair  
Councilwoman Laura Pastor  
Councilman Kevin Robinson  
Councilwoman Debra Stark



Report

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Agenda Date: 4/8/2026, Item No. 1

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**Minutes of the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee Meeting**

This item transmits the minutes of the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee Meeting on March 11, 2026 for review, correction, or approval by the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION.**

The minutes are included for review as **Attachment A**.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Ginger Spencer and the City Manager's Office.

# ATTACHMENT A

**Phoenix City Council  
Economic Development and the Arts (EDA) Subcommittee  
Summary Minutes  
Tuesday, March 11, 2026**

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

Subcommittee Members Absent

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman O'Brien called the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee to order at 10 a.m. with three members present. Councilwoman Pastor arrived at 10:05 a.m.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

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

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026, Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee meeting. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

**CONSENT ACTION (ITEMS 2-3)**

Items 2-3 were for consent action. No presentations were planned, but staff was available to answer questions.

**2. Acquisition of Vacant Land in Spark Area 2 Located at 627 S. 9th Place**

**3. Youth Workforce Development Services Contract**

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve Items 2-3. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

**INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEM 4)**

**4. Phoenix Economic Overview and Update: Part 2-Global Positioning and Market Access**

The Community and Economic Development Director Ryan Touhill introduced Deputy Community and Economic Development Director Nathan Wright, Program Manager Claudia Whitehead and International Relations Administrator Joesph MacEwan to present the Phoenix Economic Overview and Update.

Mr. Touhill stated Phoenix has had one of the fastest economic turnarounds since the Great Recession and this is because of intentional strategies, policies, land use decisions, and partnerships that have helped push the City toward global growth. He explained Phoenix is competing on a global stage for investment, talent, and market access. The Community and Economic Development Department (CED) has developed a strategy of creating innovation hubs across Phoenix to catalyze growth. He described the six sectors anchoring these innovation hubs: advanced manufacturing, aerospace and defense including emerging sectors like advanced air mobility and electronic and autonomous vehicles, biosciences and healthcare, the circular economy, corporate headquarters, and emerging technologies including artificial intelligence and quantum computing.

Mr. Touhill shared CED helps facilitate company locates and expansions, job creation, and private investment across these six target industries using a multifaceted approach. He explained this approach includes building connections with site selectors, attending industry trade shows to meet companies and build relationships, meeting with existing companies to help them remain and grow in Phoenix, talking to brokers and real estate developers, and partnering with state, regional, and international partners to build leads that can be converted into company locates and expansions. Mr. Touhill announced this work has resulted in 11 business locates this fiscal year with a goal of 12, over 2,600 job creations, 1.3 million square feet of commercial space occupied, and \$647 million in capital investment. Mr. Touhill emphasized the average salary of the jobs created is \$96,830.

Mr. Touhill stated Phoenix benefits from its strategic location and export-oriented industries driving economic growth due to strong relationships with trading partners in Mexico and Canada. He shared the Phoenix Hermosillo Trade Office has helped drive activity in Mexico and has assisted over 812 businesses over the last five fiscal years, helped 26 incorporate in Arizona, and located nine in Phoenix. Mr. Touhill announced the Arizona Commerce Authority reported Phoenix as a leader since 2020 in international investment driven by Mexico, Canada, Taiwan, and other countries. He highlighted exports are growing in areas where Phoenix ranks 3rd in the nation for computer equipment, 5th for semiconductors, and 10th for aerospace parts and production. Mr. Touhill emphasized that our CED locates have grown by 30 percent in the last 10 years, and the City is benefiting from the increased activity. Mr. Touhill reported Phoenix has added more than 262,000 jobs from 2010 to 2024 and Arizona businesses have seen a 37 percent increase in exports from 2024 to 2025.

Deputy Community and Economic Director Nathan Wright stated the 2020 \$12 billion Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) announcement, which has since grown to \$165 billion, and its effects are being felt throughout the City. He explained TSMC has been a great company to work with, is a Top Ten market cap company globally and is acquiring 900 additional acres from the State Land Department. Mr. Wright highlighted the TSMC project as the largest construction project in North America, bringing thousands of construction workers to Phoenix and building some of the most complicated buildings in the world. He stated the company's supply chain is putting Phoenix on the map for new technologies including space, quantum, aerospace, medical device manufacturing, and CED is focused on using this supply chain to attract additional companies. Mr. Wright explained that every Council district has TSMC suppliers, creating a 5.8 percent economic multiplier and ripple effects across the City with suppliers from Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands and existing local companies. He stated Phoenix is ranked 4th as a corporate headquarters destination and although office vacancies rose after the pandemic, Mayor and Council leadership allowed the City to protect key buildings, resulting in 90 percent of CED locates going into existing space. He added there is significant new office growth along the 101 in North Phoenix, including campuses such as Republic Services and Fender, and CED will provide feedback to Public Works to explore future office space opportunities. Mr. Wright stated Arizona is the 3rd most attractive state for aerospace and defense due to engineering talent and legacy companies like Honeywell, which recently spun out its aerospace division in Deer Valley. He emphasized thanks to Mayor and Council leadership, Phoenix has become a place where new mobility companies can operate and has been named the #1 large city for startups.

CED Program Manager Claudia Whitehead stated that under Council leadership growing biosciences and health care in Phoenix has been a priority because residents benefit from bio innovations, which positively impact health and create quality jobs. She explained a recent study showed bioscience jobs on average pay 30 percent higher than the rest of the private sector in Arizona. Ms. Whitehead shared Phoenix has experienced unprecedented growth with almost \$7 billion in new capital investment, more than 8 million square feet of new primary facilities, and 14,000 new quality jobs since 2020. She shared the example of Backfax, a homegrown early-stage company originating at Phoenix Children's Hospital, which developed vaccines for ear infections and caught the attention of Australian company GPN Vaccines, which acquired Backfax and is committed to scaling and growing in Phoenix because of the strong ecosystem. Ms. Whitehead stated Phoenix is home to a number of incubators, accelerators, and soft-landing programs providing resources for growth, including the Healthcare Innovations Accelerator led by Mayo Clinic and Arizona State University (ASU). She explained companies such as NeuroCatch and MyHealth have located in Phoenix through this accelerator, which helps introduce companies to the local ecosystem. Ms. Whitehead stated Phoenix is home to world-class research hospitals with built-in institutes of research excellence, contributing to Arizona's ranking as 8th in the nation for clinical trials. She noted Phoenix is also home to top tier research universities, with ASU and the University of Arizona each investing \$1 billion in research last year,

making them global research institutions and key partners for industry collaborations. Ms. Whitehead stated Phoenix is home to TGen, the Translational Genomics Research Institute, which has made Phoenix a global leader in precision medicine, and international manufacturers such as Schott Minifab, which strengthens the City's Australian connections. She highlighted Venture Café Phoenix as a key part of the infrastructure supporting local, national, and global connections, with more than 150 innovators attending weekly gatherings and international delegations participating. She stated through the leadership of the Taipei Sister Cities partnership, Taiwan signed a declaration of collaboration to open the Taiwan AI Smart Health Showcase Center on the Phoenix Bioscience Core campus bringing 18 Taiwanese companies to Phoenix. She added Venture Café Phoenix is part of an international network of 16 cities and was recognized at the global gathering in Tokyo with the Making It Happen Award for the 2nd time, where the City's hackathon was featured as a model for other cities.

CED International Relations Administrator Joseph MacEwan stated Phoenix Sister Cities has been the backbone of the City's economic diplomacy for decades and has kept key relationships with key markets strong. He explained, an example is Phoenix's engagement with Grenoble including an outbound delegation in 2024, reconnection with companies at the CES event in 2025, and a follow-up business delegation later that year, which supports Phoenix's ability to attract capital, talent, and partnerships. Mr. MacEwan stated the recent Global Links luncheon brought key strategic leaders across industries, resulting in active conversations on quantum opportunities for Phoenix and Arizona and securing partnerships and speakers for the upcoming Phoenix Global Forum. He emphasized convenings are used to identify opportunities for long-term engagement and execute on them. Mr. MacEwan highlighted the civic side is equally important, with the strongest recent example being the Double Ten event, which under Chairwoman O'Brien's leadership has become a signature event for Phoenix and is now the largest Double Ten celebration in North America. He stated Phoenix and Sister Cities are not doing this work alone and are part of an ecosystem including universities, GPEC, the Arizona Commerce Authority, trade groups, the consular community, and other civic partners. Mr. MacEwan explained Sister Cities utilizes this network to maintain strong connectivity with Sky Harbor playing an important role enabling trade, investment, executive travel, and technical visits for global firms and those being attracted to Phoenix. He stated Sister Cities is where opportunities and ongoing engagement are brought together so Phoenix can be ready to act when opportunities present themselves rather than starting from scratch.

Councilman Robinson stated he had the opportunity to sit down with the leadership from China Airlines, which is headquartered in District 6, and they had nothing but good things to say about economic development including CED's outreach and assistance. He stated China Airlines are very happy and looking forward to a long-term relationship.

Councilwoman Stark agreed with Mr. MacEwan on the Double Ten event, congratulated Chairwoman O'Brien, and asked are there any other cities we are trying to zero in on.

Mr. MacEwan replied there are a number of cities such as Colombia and specifically Melbourne, Australia. He stated there are other cities CED is exploring but cannot announce those at this time.

Councilwoman Stark thanked the team for the presentation.

Councilwoman Pastor thanked the team for the presentation and stated it is a testament to all the work being done. She shared she has learned more about the business market of TSMC and the suppliers of TSMC are now wanting to move here. She congratulated the team and thanked them for their great work.

Chairwoman O'Brien highlighted the increase in average salary from \$36,000 to \$86,000 between 2014 and 2025 and noted the presentation showed the average salary for jobs created in the last several months is now \$96,830. She applauded the department for continuing to raise the bar for community members and citizens and emphasized the importance of Phoenix ranking 4th as a corporate headquarters destination. Chairwoman O'Brien explained Phoenix came out of the Great Recession because leaders before her, including the Mayor, made a conscientious decision to pursue TSMC, and as Councilwoman Pastor mentioned, the ripple effects of TSMC and its suppliers. Chairwoman O'Brien stated Ms. Whitehead noted life sciences jobs pay 30 percent higher, and it is remarkable leaders made difficult decisions that resulted in attracting major businesses while not resting on prior success to raise the bar for Phoenix and surrounding communities. Chairwoman O'Brien added Phoenix welcomes wins, including when companies locate in nearby Arizona communities. She stated she was reminded at an event of a comment made by a small business owner and requested staff to develop the six-part series including a discussion of small businesses, which are the backbone of the community and the support of larger companies. Chairwoman O'Brien noted people often comment on how differently the City of Phoenix approaches the Sister Cities program, focusing not only on cultural exchanges and friendship but also on the economic aspect, which contributes to success. She added the department does amazing work and must continue because there is still much to accomplish for citizens and businesses in Phoenix.

Councilwoman O'Brien recognized and thanked board members.

### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman O'Brien adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Taniya Williams  
Management Fellow

DRAFT



Report

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Agenda Date: 4/8/2026, Item No. 2

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**Arizona Department of Economic Security Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Grant and Advanced Manufacturing Employer Contracts - Citywide**

Request the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee to recommend City Council approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) and accept up to \$5 million in grant funding for Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Programs and further request authorization to enter into agreements with employers to implement the Industry-Driven Skills Training program.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR CONSENT ACTION.**

**Summary**

In August 2025, the U.S. Department of Labor launched the Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Grant (Industry Skills Grant) through Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 02-25, establishing a new national initiative under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to support employer-led, outcomes-based workforce training. The program is designed to ensure local employers define and drive training that meets critical workforce needs, strengthens talent pipelines, and up-skills workers using industry-recognized standards. DES applied for this competitive funding opportunity and was awarded \$5 million for a three-year project beginning in September 2025. The City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department, on behalf of the Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board, has been designated as a subrecipient of the state award. DES's initial allocation to the City is \$1,630,647, which represents the City's guaranteed allocation under the Grant. DES is expected to make additional grant funding available, which Phoenix maybe eligible for in the near future.

The Industry Skills Grant will provide targeted support to Phoenix advanced manufacturing employers seeking to strengthen and upskill their existing workforces. This funding is designed to address critical skill gaps within the sector by supporting training that enhances employee capabilities, improves company competitiveness, and helps businesses retain experienced talent. The grant will also support workers in gaining industry-recognized skills needed to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving labor market.

To be eligible, employees must have at least six months of tenure with an employer and all training must result in measurable skills advancement. The grant enables employers to prepare their workforces for emerging technologies and evolving industry demands by funding industry recognized credentials, certifications, and technical training programs, as well as other employer-driven upskilling activities. Through this grant, employers are eligible to receive up to 80 percent reimbursement for approved training costs, with the required 20 percent employer match that can be met through financial contributions or in-kind support. In-kind contributions may include wages paid to employees while attending training, or other non-cash resources such as facility access, equipment, or staff time dedicated to implementing or supporting training.

**Financial Impact**

There is no impact to the General Fund. Funding will be provided by the DES Industry Skills Grant.

**Concurrence/Previous Council Action**

- The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board approved entering into an IGA with DES to administer the Industry Skills Grant on January 8, 2026.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Ginger Spencer and the Community and Economic Development Department.



Report

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Agenda Date: 4/8/2026, Item No. 3

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**Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Implementation Plan - Districts 7 and 8**

This report requests the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee recommend City Council approval to adopt the Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Implementation Plan.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.**

**Summary**

In 2019, Conventions, Sports & Leisure International completed a market study on behalf of the Phoenix Convention Center (PCC). The study included an analysis of the PCC's strategic advantages along with recommendations to enhance the PCC market capture through near and long-term space and site planning, convention hotel development, and destination enhancements. In 2022, an update to the study was completed to incorporate the effects and changes of COVID-19 pandemic had on the industry. A key finding and recommendation of both the 2019 study and the 2022 update was the creation of an entertainment district, generally surrounding PCC. An entertainment district would provide conventioners, visitors, and residents a walkable, vibrant, safe and navigable area that could include hospitality amenities such as a density of restaurants, bars, attractions, street performers, public art, significant lighting and landscaping, scooter docks and electric vehicle shuttles.

In September 2023, staff issued a solicitation for consulting services to assist in the identification, establishment, and activation of an entertainment district. The scope of work included a comprehensive consulting effort encompassing project management, viability assessment, public engagement and visioning, a market and feasibility analysis, implementation action matrix, and governance strategy. In 2024, City Council awarded the contract to HR&A Advisors and staff began working with the consultant team. The consultants implemented an outreach plan to engage downtown stakeholders and obtain feedback through direct stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, City staff, and community forums. An advisory committee was formed along with City department leadership and other community member committees to provide local insights and vision. In late 2025, the consultant team provided a draft of the study for City review and public engagement.

The Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Implementation Plan (**Attachment A**) builds on the area’s growing momentum by addressing gaps in connectivity, public space cohesion, and emerging identity. Developed through a robust stakeholder-driven process and tactical approach, the plan identifies strategic interventions and ten catalyst projects, such as enhancements to the PCC South Building, Jefferson Street Garage, and Chase Field Plaza, to activate key sites and elevate the overall visitor experience. Grounded in themes of public realm, mobility, real estate activation, programming, and branding, the plan provides targeted recommendations across open space, streetscape, shade, signage, marketing, funding, and governance. A detailed implementation matrix defines timelines, responsibilities, and funding pathways to ensure accountability and progress.

**Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact for this item.

**Public Outreach**

Throughout the formation of this plan, the consultant team and City staff engaged downtown stakeholders through interviews, forums, and community meetings. An advisory committee was formed along with a City Department Leadership committee to provide insights and vision for the plan. In 2026, City staff provided presentations to the Roosevelt Action Association, Downtown Voices Coalition, Phoenix Revitalization Corporation, Enhanced Municipal Services District Advisory Board, Evans Churchill Neighborhood Association, Eastlake Park Neighborhood Association, Warehouse District Council, Phoenix Core Community Association, the Phoenix Community Alliance Arts, Culture and Public Life Committee and the Phoenix Community Alliance Central City Planning and Development Committee.

**Location**

Council Districts: 7 and 8

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Ginger Spencer and the Community and Economic Development Department.



City of Phoenix



# DOWNTOWN PHOENIX ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Prepared by:

**HR&A** Multistudio



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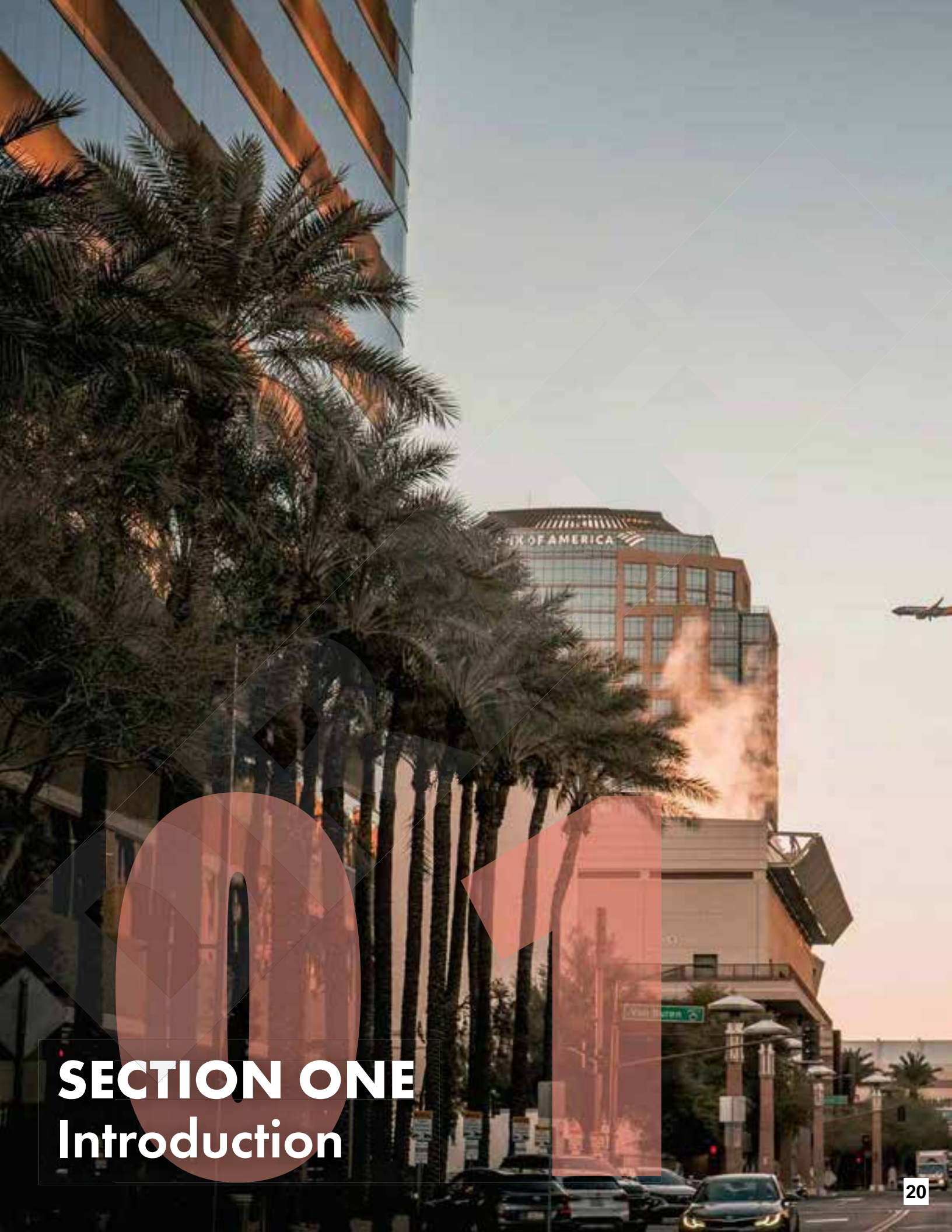
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# SECTION ONE

## Introduction



# Letter from Community and Economic Development Department



The Entertainment District Study provides a roadmap to transform the area surrounding the Phoenix Convention Center into a vibrant, walkable, and sustainable urban core. Leading the city to creating a district that can celebrate the unique identity of Phoenix while harnessing our strengths, world-class cultural venues, nationally ranked sports arenas, and a growing residential base to build an inclusive, 24/7 destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. By integrating and elevating the assets of downtown, this plan will position Phoenix as a premier city for entertainment, culture, and innovation.

Our momentum is undeniable. Chase Field and Mortgage Matchup Center attract over four million visitors annually, generating millions in economic impact. downtown is home to more than 14 live music venues, over 245 restaurants and bars (80% locally owned), and 1.6 million square feet of retail space, making it a powerful engine for local business growth. Since 2005, we've seen over \$8.5 billion in public-private investment downtown, which generated more than \$21 billion in economic activity just last year. With the Entertainment District, we're building on this foundation investing in key infrastructure like enhanced shade, mobility, signage, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes to improve quality of life and ensure downtown is as accessible as it is enjoyable.

Phoenix is uniquely positioned to lead the nation in entertainment-driven economic development. With one of the only downtowns within 15 minutes of an international airport and key attractions all within walking distance, we offer a seamless experience for conventioners, tourists, and locals alike. Our population downtown has nearly doubled since 2010, supporting a true live-work-play ecosystem that fuels entrepreneurship and drives job creation. Over the next five years, we anticipate adding 6,700 new jobs and up to 1,200 new hotel rooms to meet growing demand. Through strategic investment and this plan's collaborative vision, we are unlocking downtown Phoenix's full potential and we invite you to join us in shaping the next chapter of our city's evolution.

*Ryan Touhill*

*Director, Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department*

# Letter from Phoenix Convention Center



The Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District offers the opportunity to take the Phoenix Convention Center to new heights. Already a top-tier, nationally recognized space for premier meetings and events, the Phoenix Convention Center & Venues aims to leverage the incredible offerings of downtown Phoenix to draw in more visitors each year.

Creating and molding a vibrant, walkable and inclusive urban core around the Phoenix Convention Center reflects the energy and goals of our city. The Convention Center draws hundreds of thousands of visitors to downtown Phoenix each year, creating demand for downtown restaurants, businesses and entertainment.

In 2024, the Phoenix Convention Center hosted 62 conventions with more than 315,000 delegates. The economic impact of the Convention Center was an estimated \$488 million, up significantly from the year before. The Phoenix Convention Center & Venues also includes Symphony Hall and the historic Orpheum Theatre Phoenix - both venues host hundreds of shows each year, drawing thousands of theatre patrons downtown.

The Entertainment District plan is a natural extension of this success. It will enhance the infrastructure that supports our growing residential population, improve mobility and wayfinding and create public spaces that invite people to linger, explore, and return. These are the kinds of forward-thinking investments that have already transformed our downtown into a hub for innovation, education and entertainment.

Phoenix has long been a place to do business; we know this Entertainment District will fortify our downtown as a place for memorable experiences.

*Jerry Harper*  
*Director, Phoenix Convention Center*

# Acknowledgements

## **City of Phoenix Mayor and Council**

Kate Gallego, Mayor

## **City Council Members:**

Ann O'Brien, District 1

Jim Waring, District 2

Debra Stark, District 3

Laura Pastor, District 4

Betty Guardado, District 5

Kevin Robinson, District 6

Anna Hernandez, District 7

Carlos Galindo-Elvira, District 7 (Past)

Vice Mayor Keshia Hodge Washington, District 8

## **Project Lead:**

City of Phoenix, Community and Economic Development Department

## **City Manager's Office Staff**

Ed Zuercher, City Manager

Jeff Barton, Former City Manager

John Chan, Former Deputy City Manager

Ginger Spencer, Assistant City Manager

## **Community and Economic Development Department**

Ryan Touhill, Director

Christine Mackay, Former Director

Eric Johnson, Assistant Director

Xandon Keating, Deputy Director

Eric Prochnow, Economic Development Program Manager

## **Entertainment District Advisory Committee**

John Chan, Former Deputy City Manager, City of Phoenix

Jerry Harper, Director, Phoenix Convention Center

Christine Mackay, Former Director, City of Phoenix

Mitch Menchaca, Former Executive Director, City of

Phoenix

Andie Abkarian, Downtown Voices Coalition

Steve Betts, Betts Real Estate Advisors

Terry Burke, Live Nation

Faith Burton, Arizona Center

Brian Cassidy, Warehouse District

Cindy Dach, Roosevelt Row CDC

Catrina Kahler, Artlink

Devney Majerle, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

Kaitlin Meyers, Culture Shock Hospitality

Eva Olivas, Phoenix Revitalization Corporation

Amilyn Pierce, Arizona Diamondbacks

Ron Price, Visit Phoenix

Paul Rivers, Player 15 Group

## **Phoenix Community Alliance**

Catrina Kahler, Chair of Arts, Culture & Public Life Committee

Leah Fregulia, Vice Chair of Arts, Culture & Public Life Committee

Billy Shields, Co-Chair of Central City Planning & Development Committee

Matt Seaman, Co-Chair of Central City Planning & Development Committee

Brian Cassidy, Vice Chair of Central City Planning & Development Committee

Kyle Foxcroft, Co-Chair of Multi-Modal Connectivity Committee

Mark McLaren, Co-Chair of Multi-Modal Connectivity Committee

CONSULTANT TEAM:

**HR&A Advisors, Inc.**

Cary Hirschstein, Partner-in-Charge

Garrett Rapsilber, Project Manager

Raymundo Cabrera III, Senior Analyst

Samuel Jacobs, Analyst

Alex Stokes, Advisor

**Multistudio, Inc.**

Krista Shepherd, Principal

Aaron Herring, Principal

Nick Ryan, Project Designer



# Executive Summary

## A Different Downtown Plan for a Different Era of Downtown's Growth

Downtown Phoenix has experienced nearly three decades of public and private investment to regain its position as the heart of the fast-growing Valley of the Sun. Corporate and government employers, sports teams, convention and hotel visitors, and arts and performance patrons have at different times served as vanguards for a new era of downtown's growth. This most recent evolution, though, owes its success to the growing critical mass of those calling downtown their home. Harkening back to the city's earliest days, more and more people are living downtown and establishing it as a collection of neighborhoods each with their offerings of places to see and things to do. The distinction between this and other earlier stages of downtown's growth is a focus on maturation—one of shedding the awkwardness of its adolescence into a place equally for live, work, and play.

The Entertainment District Implementation Plan sets forth a vision that seeks to, first, acknowledge this maturation, and next to lay out the elements that are hampering the realization of downtown at its most radiant and livable state. The aim of this plan is to create a vibrant, walkable, and sustainable urban core that celebrates the unique identity of Phoenix. This plan is designed to leverage and integrate the assets surrounding the Phoenix Convention Center, highlighting the area's strengths, addressing its challenges, and unlocking its full potential as a premier destination for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

## Context and Process

Downtown Phoenix is home to a rich tapestry of entertainment anchors, including the Phoenix Convention Center (PCC), Chase Field, and Mortgage Matchup Center. These venues draw millions of visitors each year, yet the area faces significant challenges. Connectivity gaps, underutilized spaces, and a need for cohesive branding and marketing have hindered the district's ability to fully capitalize on its assets. This plan addresses these issues head-on, proposing strategic interventions to enhance the urban experience.

The development of this plan was a collaborative effort, involving extensive stakeholder engagement and a thorough analytical process. Over ten months, the project team comprised of the City of Phoenix's Community and Economic Development Department, HR&A Advisors, and Multistudio employed an analytical approach including assessing existing conditions, exploring feasibility, and developing actionable strategies. Analysis was informed by community engagement such as interviews, focus groups, and stakeholder meetings to gather insights and ensure the plan reflects the community's needs and aspirations.

## Key Findings and Strategy

Downtown Phoenix boasts numerous strengths, including a diverse array of entertainment venues, a growing residential community, and recent investments in mobility and shade infrastructure. These assets provide a strong foundation for further development and their dense concentration positions downtown as a whole to serve as Phoenix's entertainment district. However, challenges such as disconnected public spaces and a lack of cohesive identity need to be addressed to realize the district's full potential.

# Executive Summary

The vision for the Entertainment District is to create a dynamic urban environment where locals and visitors can enjoy world-class cultural offerings and vibrant public spaces. The plan is guided by principles of enhancing walkability, promoting cultural vibrancy, ensuring sustainability, and fostering economic development.

## Major Interventions and Implementation Plan

The plan identifies several catalyst projects, some under way and some proposed, that will serve as the linchpins for broader improvements to vitality and connectivity. Key sites include the Phoenix Convention Center South Building, Jefferson Street Garage, and Chase Field Plaza. These projects will introduce engaging public spaces, improve pedestrian experiences, and activate key locations, transforming downtown Phoenix into a lively and attractive destination.

A detailed action matrix outlines the specific steps needed to bring the plan to life. This includes timelines, order of magnitude costs, and responsible parties within and outside of City government, ensuring that the plan is actionable and trackable. Effective governance and diverse funding mechanisms are essential for successful implementation, which will require leveraging existing tools and exploring new opportunities to support the proposed interventions.

The Entertainment District Implementation Plan promises significant benefits, including increased economic activity, improved public spaces, and enhanced quality of life. By creating a dynamic urban environment, the plan will attract residents, visitors, and businesses, fostering a thriving community. Stakeholders are encouraged to support and participate in the implementation of the plan, working together to transform downtown Phoenix into a world-class entertainment district.





## BACKGROUND

Downtown Phoenix hosts a unique concentration of anchor entertainment facilities, drawing over 5.2 million visitors each year. The intersection of Jefferson and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets is particularly notable with the Phoenix Convention Center (PCC), Mortgage Matchup Center, and Chase Field all sited within just one block of that key intersection.

The PCC opened in 1972 with 120,000 SF of meeting and exhibition space and has grown to more than 900,000 SF to meet the event needs of a variety of users. The PCC also serves as the anchoring facility for a variety of ancillary activities, including major sporting events such as the Super Bowl and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) playoffs. On average, over 615,000 people visit the PCC each year.

Chase Field, home to Major League Baseball's Arizona Diamondbacks, opened in 1998 for the inaugural season of Phoenix's professional baseball franchise. While originally built as a dedicated baseball facility, the stadium has evolved to host a range of concerts, motor sports, and college football bowl games, in addition to MLB and international baseball contests. Chase Field hosts approximately 2,000,000 people visitors annually.

Mortgage Matchup Center opened in 1992 as a multipurpose arena and has since served as the home to the National Basketball Association's Phoenix Suns. Over the years, the arena has delivered on its multipurpose design, serving as a home for Phoenix's professional women's basketball, hockey, arena football, as well as professional boxing and mixed-martial arts matches. Beyond sporting events, the arena boasts a full schedule of premier musical acts. Mortgage Matchup Center hosts over 800,000 visitors every year.

These three premier facilities serve as a primary driver of visitation and activity throughout downtown. However, the significant visitation does not always create broader vibrancy across downtown as many people opt to

attend their event then go home rather than further exploring other downtown businesses and attractions. In recent years, the City has sought opportunities to maximize the impacts and associated benefits generated by the colocation of such valuable facilities. Specifically, a City-commissioned 2019 market study of PCC's competitive position, which was subsequently updated in 2022, recommended the creation of an entertainment district. An entertainment district would provide conventioners, visitors, and residents a walkable, vibrant, safe, and navigable area that could include amenities such as density of restaurants, bars, attractions, street performers, public art, significant lighting and landscaping, pedal bikes, scooter docks, and electric vehicle shuttles.

In September 2023, the City of Phoenix issued a request for proposals for consulting services to study the creation of an entertainment district in downtown centered around the PCC, Mortgage Matchup Center, and Chase Field. This work would explore the following questions:

- What is the viability of an entertainment district in the vicinity of the Phoenix Convention Center?
- What would define the district – how would it be distinct from other parts of the downtown?
- Where would it be?
- What kind of enhancements or improvements would be necessary to facilitate its success?
- What kind of barriers have prevented its organic emergence? Or what kinds of barriers can be removed to ensure prolonged success and growth?

In December 2023, a consultant team comprised of HR&A Advisors, Inc. (HR&A), a national economic and real estate consulting firm, and Multistudio, a locally active multidisciplinary architecture, design, and planning firm, were selected to undertake this study.



**Downtown Anchor Sites/Facilities**

- 1. Chase Field
- 2. PHX Arena
- 3. Phoenix Convention Center
- 4. 201 East Washington
- 5. CityScape
- 6. Symphony Hall
- 7. Phoenix City Hall
- 8. Arizona Financial Theatre
- 9. Heritage & Science Park
- 10. Children's Museum of Phoenix
- 11. Herberger Theater Center
- 12. St. Mary's & Diocese of Phoenix
- 13. Arizona Center
- 14. Phoenix Biomedical Campus
- 15. Civic Space Park
- 16. ASU Downtown Campus
- 17. Roosevelt Row
- 18. Margaret T. Hance Park
- 19. Burton Barr Central Library
- 20. Phoenix Art Museum



# SECTION TWO

## Plan Overview



**SOUTH CONVENTION**

THE SOUTH CONVENTION IS A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER, A NEW BUILDING THAT IS BEING BUILT IN THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER. THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER IS A NEW BUILDING THAT IS BEING BUILT IN THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER. THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER IS A NEW BUILDING THAT IS BEING BUILT IN THE SOUTH CONVENTION CENTER.



**PCC South**

Architectural rendering of the PCC South station, showing a train and modern buildings.



**Plaza of Sol**

Architectural rendering of the Plaza of Sol at night, featuring a large illuminated flower sculpture.



**Reflection Pavilion**

Architectural rendering of the Reflection Pavilion, showing a large circular structure.



**Market Station**

Architectural rendering of the Market Station, showing a train and market stalls.



**The Lot on 1st**

Architectural rendering of The Lot on 1st, showing a train and modern buildings.



**5th Street Canopy**

Architectural rendering of the 5th Street Canopy, showing a train and colorful awnings.



**D-Bank Plaza**

Architectural rendering of D-Bank Plaza, showing a train and modern buildings.



**Canyon Blvd**

Architectural rendering of Canyon Blvd, showing a train and modern buildings.



**Sumner Field**

Architectural rendering of Sumner Field, showing a train and modern buildings.



**The Loop**

Architectural rendering of The Loop, showing a train and modern buildings.

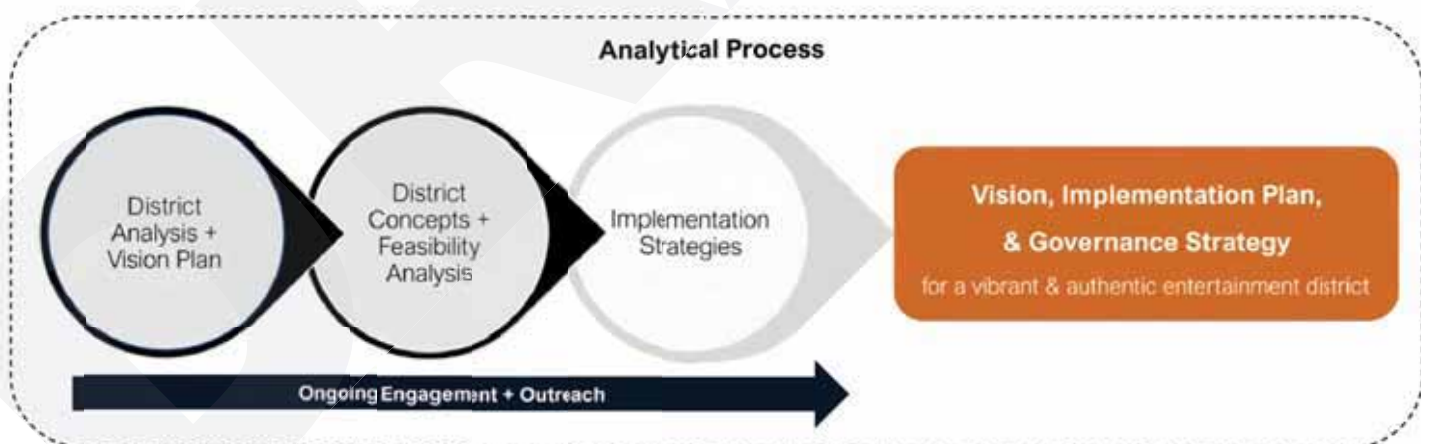


# Process

## PROCESS TIMELINE

The Phoenix Entertainment District Implementation Plan is the result of a 10-month process that included existing conditions analyses, extensive stakeholder engagement, and close collaboration with the City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department (CED) as well as leaders from downtown's key institutions. The Consultant Team followed a three-step analytical process to answer the study's foundational questions and shape this Implementation Plan, supported by ongoing stakeholder engagement.

- 1. District Analysis and Vision Plan:** Assessed the existing conditions that shaped this area of downtown (shown in map) and set a vision to guide the remainder of the project and eventual implementation.
- 2. District Concepts & Feasibility Analysis:** Identified the physical and programmatic interventions that could support a cohesive downtown as the 'Entertainment District' and assessed the feasibility of each intervention based on their scale and the availability of existing or potential funding mechanisms.
- 3. Implementation Strategies:** Developed specific strategies and associated actions grounded in economic, financial, political, and physical realities to advance the creation of an Entertainment District.



# Process



## PRIOR PLANS

This Implementation Plan is heavily guided by and seeks to leverage the extensive planning efforts and initiatives already completed or underway in downtown, delivered by the City of Phoenix, Phoenix Convention Center, Downtown Phoenix Inc., and key downtown institutions. Plans referenced in developing this Plan include:



*Market Feasibility Study for the Phoenix Convention Center and Surrounding Hospitality Assets (2022)*



*Phoenix Convention Center & Venues Five-Year Strategic Plan (2024)*



*Shade Phoenix: An Action Plan for Trees and Built Shade (2024)*



*Downtown Phoenix Comprehensive Parking Study (2022)*

# Process

## TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Building on previous planning efforts, the Team studied seven topics reflective of the diverse needs of downtown:

1. Real Estate Market
2. Mobility Interventions
3. Programming and Interim Activation
4. Tenanting Strategies
5. Code and Regulation Changes
6. Funding and Financing Mechanisms
7. Physical Study of the Public/Private Interface

## ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

In conjunction with CED, the Consultant Team established a robust calendar of stakeholder engagement to serve as a critical input in shaping the recommendations and implementation actions within this Study. Over the course of the Study, the Consultant Team conducted:

- 12 interviews of representatives of City departments, downtown entertainment anchors, and economic development organizations.
- 5 focus groups, including the Enhanced Municipal Services District Board, Phoenix Community Alliance Arts, Culture, and Public Life Committee, Downtown Phoenix Inc. CEO Roundtable, and City departmental leadership.
- 2 Advisory Committee meetings, as described further below.
- 2 community meetings open to the public, attended by 30+ members of the Phoenix community.

In particular, the Advisory Committee was central to the analytical process. The Consultant Team, in collaboration with the City, established the Advisory Committee as a set of informed stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds to provide input and guidance on the development of this Plan. The Advisory Committee included representatives of City

leadership, anchor institutions, arts organizations, local business, and community advocates. For a full list of Advisory Committee members, please reference the Acknowledgements section.

Advancing the Plan centered around milestone engagement sessions with the Advisory Committee, which provided insight into the needs of downtown Phoenix and shaped the pathway to implementation. In November 2024, the Consultant Team convened the first Advisory Committee meeting to present an assessment of existing market and built environment conditions as well as takeaways from initial stakeholder engagement to solidify a vision statement to guide the project. In January 2025, the second meeting offered Advisory Committee members the opportunity to respond to preliminary recommendations while highlighting areas that may require additional study to inform the final Implementation Plan.

For more details on the Entertainment District Study process and outcomes such as the market scan and community meeting survey results, please reference the [Appendix](#).



**12 Interviews**



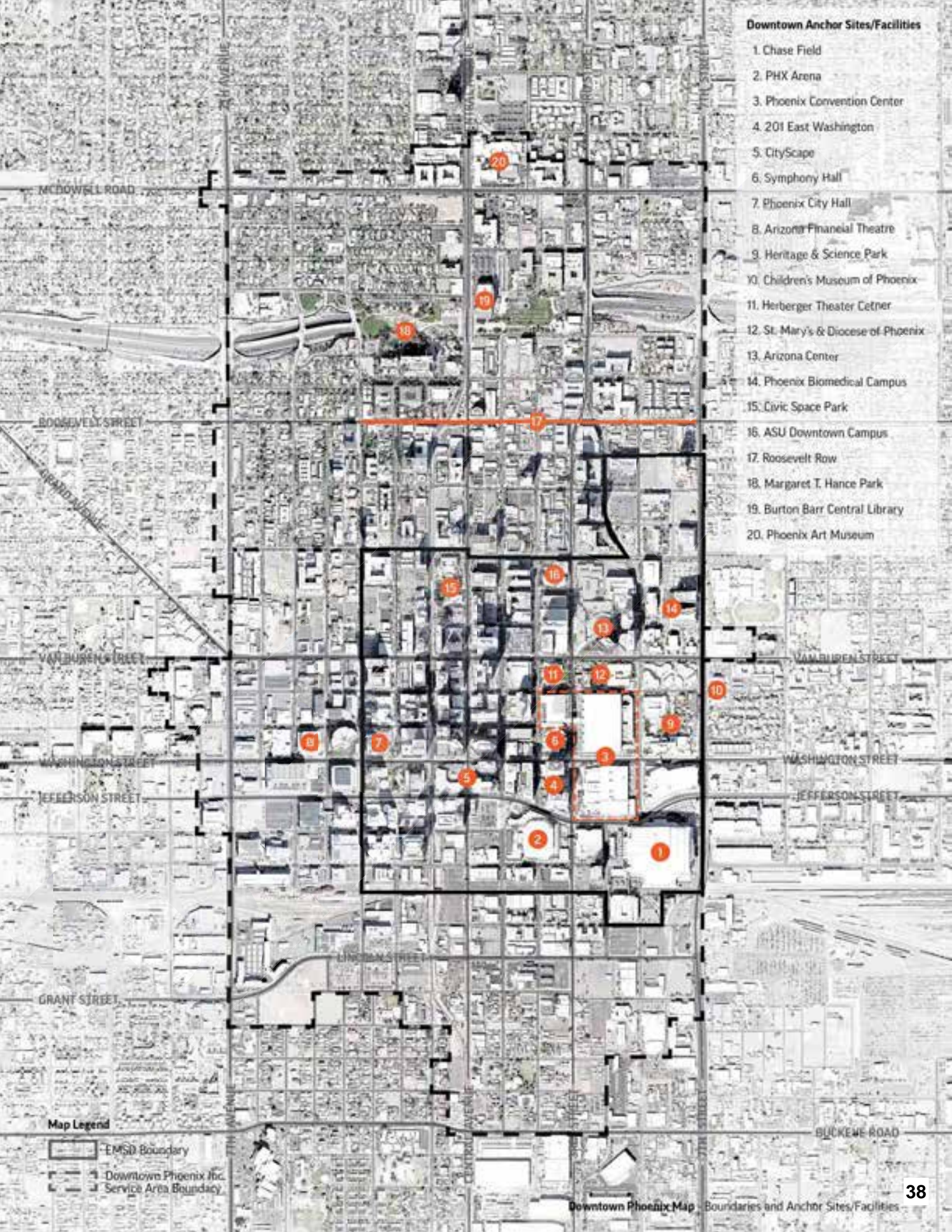
**5 Focus Groups**



**2 Advisory Committee Meetings**



**2 Community Meetings**



**Downtown Anchor Sites/Facilities**

- 1. Chase Field
- 2. PHX Arena
- 3. Phoenix Convention Center
- 4. 201 East Washington
- 5. CityScape
- 6. Symphony Hall
- 7. Phoenix City Hall
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- 13. Arizona Center
- 14. Phoenix Biomedical Campus
- 15. Civic Space Park
- 16. ASU Downtown Campus
- 17. Roosevelt Row
- 18. Margaret T. Hance Park
- 19. Burton Barr Central Library
- 20. Phoenix Art Museum

**Map Legend**

- EMSD Boundary
- Downtown Phoenix Inc. Service Area Boundary

# Strengths + Opportunities

Phoenix is growing rapidly, ascending to the status of 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in the United States within the last decade. As the city's population and profile increases, downtown in particular is undergoing a significant evolution. Bolstered by the influx of residents in new housing options in the downtown area and new developments such as Cityscape, the Phoenix Bioscience Core, Arizona State University's Downtown Phoenix Campus, and Central Station, cultural vibrancy and a density of activity are beginning to ignite among the many longstanding, iconic entertainment anchors and their environs. In the face of both citywide and local changes, downtown currently faces an inflection point – an opportunity to capture the momentum of recent growth, invert the history of dispersed regional development, and embrace an urban identity befitting Phoenix's world class status.

Rooted in Phoenix's multicultural history, a collection of strengths shaped and will continue to inform the city's growth. Similarly, in the face of recent changes, the city is presented with opportunities that when embraced will enable Phoenix's ascension as a world class city. The table below summarizes an assessment of the strengths and opportunities that informed planning efforts for the Entertainment District and will continue to inform the future of downtown Phoenix.



Pop-up Art, Entertainment, F+B, Retail Vendors - First Friday at Roosevelt Row / Credit: Nick Ryan

# Strengths + Opportunities

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<b>MARKET</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Downtown is increasingly becoming a residential community, adding over 7,000 housing units in the last decade.</li> <li>A diversity of entertainment anchors and assets drive visitation to downtown from residents across the Valley (sports and entertainment, arts and culture, etc.).</li> <li>Downtown hosts a concentration of locally owned businesses that celebrate and enhance Phoenix’s unique identity.</li> <li>Downtown’s Roosevelt Row has emerged as a vibrant, arts-rich, walkable retail corridor supported by a variety of local food and beverage options.</li> <li>The area west of the Convention Center has a significant local food and beverage retail program that provides local flavor to downtown office workers and residents.</li> <li>Downtown’s collection of subdistricts (Roosevelt Row, Evans Churchill, Warehouse District), sports venues, arts institutions offer a series of distinct experiences, catering to the diverse interests of downtown residents or visitors.</li> <li>There is a diversity across downtown users unmatched by any other location across the Valley. These users include residents, workers, students, event attendees, tourists, fans of national sports teams, and conventioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the downtown residential population continues to grow, it will drive increased demand for additional amenities (variety of retail, food and beverage options, increased walkability, signature open space, and quantity and diversity of entertainment destinations).</li> <li>Demand for a new large-scale “headquarter” convention hotel and luxury hotel will support the Phoenix Convention Center by enabling downtown to draw larger events and better compete with other entertainment destinations across the Valley, nationally, and globally for convention audiences.</li> <li>An increased diversity of retail types (shopping, casual food and beverage, fine dining) and locations within downtown can fill gaps in activity, better connect anchor institutions, and provide amenities to patrons of entertainment anchors.</li> <li>Expanded hours of use, further diversification of downtown uses and widening demographic composition can increase market resiliency, offsetting a potential decline in downtown’s daytime office worker population due to national office market challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Downtown has a unique concentration of world class entertainment assets, including: Mortgage Matchup Center, Chase Field, Symphony Hall, Herberger Theater, Arizona Financial Theater, Arizona Science Center, and the Phoenix Children’s Museum. This dense collection of diverse entertainment anchors serves as a draw for a variety of regional residents as well as national and international visitors.</li> <li>Many downtown entertainment assets align along key corridors (3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Jefferson Street, and Washington Street) that have already experienced recent investments to improve mobility (i.e., light rail, bike lanes, etc.), providing a strong foundation for further connections and investment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are a number of key sites available for activation and improvements adjacent to entertainment assets that create a concentration to support greater energy for redevelopment or reactivation (including PCC South, Jefferson Street Garage, and Regency Garage). Mutually reinforcing corridors with a new density of residents and downtown users and amenities is building greater vibrancy.</li> <li>The existing PCC South building site currently provides—and its suggested redevelopment can be—a site and funding mechanism for expanded open space or increased retail space to support a diversity of food and beverage options.</li> </ul>

# Strengths + Opportunities

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown is well connected, by freeways and transit, to the airport, and regional cities that have recently invested in light rail infrastructure.</li> <li>• Largely favorable climate with lots of sun and pleasant temperature outside of summer makes being outdoors viable almost year-round and allows for unique desert flora not found elsewhere in the nation.</li> <li>• In recent years, the City of Phoenix has invested in significant planning efforts that lay a strong foundation for implementing improvements to downtown’s shade infrastructure (Shade Phoenix   2024) and parking strategy (Downtown Phoenix Comprehensive Parking Study   2022).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued improvements to existing infrastructure will encourage more locals and visitors to travel downtown, while new opportunities for micromobility options and a circulator could incentivize them to stay downtown longer.</li> <li>• Many smaller open spaces adjacent or connected to key entertainment anchors present opportunities for design interventions that transform underutilized spaces into social hubs, provide additional shade, and improve thermal comfort.</li> <li>• The Rio Salado is a crucial element of natural infrastructure that connects cities and tribal nations via open space and habitat restoration of the riparian flora and fauna. A regional effort is underway to leverage this infrastructure for greater sustainability and tourism.</li> <li>• Increase the deployment of shade strategies along streets, parks and other shared open spaces to increase the opportunities for social activities among residents, events, and visitors.</li> </ul>
GOVERNANCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City of Phoenix is supported by very active and committed partners focused on the promotion and betterment of downtown. Strong partnerships already exist in marketing, events programming, and streetscape maintenance.</li> <li>• The Streetscape Improvement District offers a proven model for long term success in funding capital improvement and maintaining enhanced streetscape corridors.</li> <li>• The City has proven tools that can support further economic development in the area and fund capital-intensive investments. Established City funding structures such as General Obligation Bonds (G.O. Bond), Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET), or the Streetscape Improvement District can support key interventions.</li> <li>• An existing infrastructure of artists, and art centered community organizations (e.g., Latino Cultural Center, Phoenix Center for the Arts, Phoenix Theater, Children’s Museum, ArtLink) can support the City’s Office of Arts and Culture in advancing arts programming and public art across downtown.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several prominent sites are located on public land allowing for easier coordination on long-range planning for the Entertainment District.</li> <li>• Downtown Phoenix Inc.’s significant marketing experience in support of downtown events and programming can support downtown entertainment anchors (sports teams, performance venues, and arts and cultural destinations) in considering opportunities for cross promotion of downtown attractions.</li> <li>• Community organizations and entertainment destinations across downtown are interested in expanding events and programming if supported by a more accessible permitting process.</li> <li>• Downtown has an opportunity to commit to a large-scale public art program that creates landmark art installations (beyond mural making), which express the City’s cultural identity and invites locals and visitors to experience the City through this arts lens.</li> </ul>

# Vision Statement

*The downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Implementation Plan will shape downtown's physical, civic, and social fabric to enhance downtown's collection of entertainment destinations, celebrating the unique identity of each. These destinations will be joined by proximity and allure – a string of interests that enable locals and visitors to have a memorable experience of Phoenix's world-class cultural offerings, planned and serendipitous.*



# Tactical Approach

## DOWNTOWN IS “THE DISTRICT.”

Downtown Phoenix exists as a network of distinctive areas, from Roosevelt Row to the Warehouse District, encompassing a wealth of destinations for living, working, entertainment, and culture. This plan defines a strategy to enhance the area surrounding the PCC, Mortgage Matchup Center, Chase Field, and the arts and cultural destinations surrounding these venues. While the charge of this strategy is to enhance an “entertainment district,” the recommendations herein are formed by understanding that downtown contains great places, and the primary job of this work is to highlight and connect them.

## TACTICAL STITCHING – A FRAMEWORK IN LIEU OF A MASTER PLAN

Downtown has grown outward (physically and socially) over time. As a relatively young city, investments have focused on dispersed development. As the city matures beyond its current adolescence, now is the ideal moment to develop the texture of its public realm. This texture, created by the layering of history and different types of uses, requires a tactical approach rather than a sweeping master plan. The act of stitching brings together many great destinations in a dynamic way.

“  
The thing that determines whether a trip is too far to walk isn’t distance, or comfort – it’s interest. I walk until I’m no longer interested.

– CINDY DACH

Downtown boasts numerous great places, but they are often isolated, with unclear and unimproved paths connecting them. Visitors may question, “Is it worth the walk through this area?” to reach a destination found on Google. In older cities, a quick glance around can reveal interesting paths with various sights, making the journey feel shorter.

A tactical focus for an entertainment district prioritizes developing the interface between public and private realms – the sidewalks for pedestrians, public land and buildings, and the edges of private buildings and sites that connect these destinations.

“

The approach proposed is like stitching together a string of pearls – it seems appropriate for downtown.

– STEVE BETTS

## ENHANCED CONNECTIONS

Through conceptual and technical reviews, along with input from the Advisory Committee and public engagement, specific pedestrian connections were identified as priorities to link visitors to various existing entertainment venues. These connections vary in condition – some feature well-crafted public edges and sidewalks, while others are ready for improvement. The tactical approach aims to preserve what works well and create new interventions at identified opportunity sites, addressing specific conditions such as building shade, tree canopy, sidewalk width, storefront activity, wall openings, lighting, and programming.

This approach builds on existing investments and acts as a catalyst for further change. It supports small, medium, and large investment opportunities that can occur on different timelines, emphasizing that all city occupants have a role in creating a vibrant public realm. Business owners, property owners, non-profits, cultural institutions, sports teams, and City departments can all contribute to welcoming the public and promoting public life.

NEEDS DAILY USE RETAIL - VAN BUREN STREET IS UNWELCOMING - VENUES - FARMERS MARKET  
HIDDEN GEMS **SOCIAL ACTIVITY** RESTAURANTS AND STORES CLOSE TOO EARLY - SAFE  
CORPORATE CHAINS - BIOSCIENCE HUB - WALKABLE - WELCOMING **RIPARIAN CONNECTION**

## CIVICALLY + PHYSICALLY CONNECTED

DIFFICULT TO ACCESS - HOT  
CLEAN - TOO CAR FOCUSED

UNDISCOVERED - TRANSFORMATION - ECLECTIC - LIVABLE - RELEVANT - LACK COHESIVENESS - ART  
EXPENSIVE PARKING - DISJOINTED - INNOVATIVE - DEVELOPING **SAFER STREETS** LIVELY

**SONORAN DESERT CITY** GROWING - SPORTS - CLEAN - BIKING - BLENDED - EVOLVING  
A COMMUNITY

FUN - DIRTY

## CULTURALLY + ENVIRONMENTALLY ROOTED

CAPITAL - DISCONNECTED - COMMUNITY FOCUSED - IDENTITY CRISIS - TOO MUCH PARKING - TRAINS  
EMPTY PARKING LOTS - LOCAL - MORE RETAIL **INDIGENOUS** UP AND COMING - APPROACHABLE

**CONNECTIONS TO SOUTH PHX** MATURING - GHOST TOWN AT NIGHT - NOT ENOUGH DIVES  
DOWNTOWN PHX ITSELF IS NOT A DESTINATION - ARTSY - A CENTRAL PLACE FOR BUSES - SUSTAINABLE

MANHATTAN OF THE SOUTHWEST - MORE HIGH END - VIBRANT **LOCAL BUSINESS** DENSE  
COSMOPOLITAN - PUBLIC SPACE - SHADE CORRIDORS - GREAT POTENTIAL - DIVERSE - CONNECTED

## WORLD CLASS SOPHISTICATION

PEDESTRIAN FIRST - LIVE-WORK-PLAY  
MUSIC SCENE - POCKETS OF ACTIVITY

WALKABLE CONNECTIONS - MORE TRANSIT - UNIQUE - THRIVING - CHARMING - MORE RESIDENTS  
REGENERATIVE - BAR CARS - ACCESSIBLE - MAJOR METRO - SHADE **SCALABLE EVENTS**

## PHX HISTORY + STORIES

LONG TERM - OPEN LATE - EASY TO GET IN AND OUT  
ART GALLERIES - GREEN SPACE - AN URBAN DESERT

RESTROOMS FOR VISITORS - WALKABLE WINTER PARADISE **LATIN-AMERICAN INFLUENCE**  
LIGHT RAIL **INTERGENERATIONAL** OUTDOOR LIVING SPACE - FRIENDLY - MULTICULTURAL

EXPRESSIVE - SUNSETS - RESILIENT - PATIOS **UNIQUE EXPERIENCES** STRONG - FOOD  
OUTDOOR CONCERTS AND EVENTS - BIKING CULTURE - TRANSPARENT - AUTHENTIC - AIR CONDITIONING

TIMES WITH FAMILY  
MUSIC - ACTIVATE

## WALKABILITY + UNEXPECTED MOMENTS

NO 3-LANE AVENUES - DISCONNECT TO RECONNECT - ENJOYING THE MOMENT - STIMULATING - ESCAPE  
CULTURAL FESTIVALS - ENTERTAINMENT VENUE **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS** CLUBS

**SIDEWALK AMENITIES** REDUCE CAR SPACE - MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION - VACATIONS  
CONVENTIONS - FAMILY FRIENDLY - EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE - CONNECTIONS TO THE RIO SALADO

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE - ART MURALS - ADAPTIVE - NATIVE PLANTS - EVENT DRIVEN - LIGHT

# Guiding Themes

The Consultant Team’s tactical design response to “stitching” together great destinations throughout downtown was informed by themes that emerged from stakeholder engagement and were confirmed through existing conditions analysis. These themes provide guidance on how best to achieve this in ways that reinforce Phoenix’s unique identity.

## CULTURALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY ROOTED

The climate, geography, and people of the Southwest, especially those of the Sonoran Desert, shape distinctive and responsive cultures. Residents adapt their activities in tune with the dramatic and subtle shifts in weather. Visitors are captivated by the exotic beauty and overwhelming intensities of scale, traffic, sun, landscape, flora, and fauna. Rich desert places thrive through their connection to water, which is life-giving. Despite irrigation and reclamation efforts distancing residents and visitors from it, Phoenix and the surrounding Valley owe their existence and survival to the Rio Salado. downtown’s proximity to the river offers opportunities to experience a unique landform and riparian micro-climate that reminds us of the importance of water in an arid land. This distinctive landscape, combined with the region’s unique sociological makeup—including significant concentrations of Indigenous and Latin-American communities—and the rapid growth of Phoenix and its metropolitan area, creates a popular destination for visitors. Interventions to improve public space should emphasize the diverse cultures, distinct landscapes, and unique materials of this place.

“

Visitors ask us where they can take their picture next to a Saguaro cactus or where they can see the desert.

– DPI DOWNTOWN AMBASSADOR

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## CIVICALLY AND PHYSICALLY CONNECTED

Downtown’s growth has created much-needed interior space, but less attention has been paid to the relationship between activities inside air-conditioned buildings and the city’s public realm. Programming and designing the edges of private buildings and sites to allow for the improvisation of unexpected uses and spaces is crucial for generating interest. Externalizing social activities and community gatherings in these spaces will create opportunities for unexpected moments and small wonders unique to each visit to the Entertainment District, whether it’s a first-time visitor or a lifelong resident of the city.

“

Phoenix has an authentic culture that the Entertainment District can tap into to create unplanned moments.

– MEMBER OF THE PCA ARTS, CULTURE, AND PUBLIC LIFE COMMITTEE

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# Guiding Themes

## WORLD-CLASS SOPHISTICATION

Phoenix's position as the largest city of the Southwest and the fifth largest in the United States, confer on it a certain expectation for sophistication. Visitors expect to find a full range of experiences in one place. A sophisticated experience in Phoenix can be as simple as enjoying a taco stand with authentic local flavors or dining at a fine restaurant. Sophistication in public space welcomes people of all economic and social backgrounds and supports a variety of cultural experiences, from pop-up street artists and performers to galleries and museums. The city's sophistication is also evident in how residents voluntarily share public spaces for entertainment and leisure. downtown's sports, performing arts, and other entertainment venues contribute to this inclusive sophistication, offering a wide range of unique experiences across different costs and levels of participation.

## WALKABILITY

What makes a city walkable depends on multiple factors, including cultural perceptions of acceptable mobility modes, convenience and time, the desirability or hostility of the pedestrian environment, and safety and the perception thereof. Having useful destinations that attract people can create activity, visual interests, and comfort that enhances both interest and security through having more eyes on the street.

Creating interest, diversity, variability and separation from traffic along urban streets are essential for desirable walking conditions. The details matter: quality of shade, nighttime, easy access points to buildings, and public amenities for trash and pet-waste disposal.

Climate, particularly sun and heat, affects walkability. All cities face environmental challenges, and Phoenix is no exception. In downtown Phoenix, addressing thermal comfort is crucial and can be accomplished through various methods, including public investments in street trees and shade structures. Incentivizing private property owners to incorporate shade elements like awnings and structural features in the public right of way through sensible use-permits and stronger enforcement

“

Phoenix as the major city of the Southwest has the opportunity to be the place where you come to see the big show along with all the major cultural happenings.

– CHRISTINE MACKAY

---

“

No one ever goes to New York City and says, wow, that city has great 'throughput' on traffic.

– RICK NAIMARK

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of landscape plans can enhance comfort and visual interest without straining public resources. As new construction and redevelopment occur in the downtown area, careful attention, shade provisioning, landscape opportunities, building orientation, and materials choice during the design process can help improve thermal comfort and the walkability of public and private spaces.

Safety, whether from actual or perceived risks, is vital for creating walkable places. The growing residential population downtown and additional "eyes on the street" will enhance safety. As the quality of the walking environment improves and supports resident and pet needs, a greater sense of safety may result. downtown Phoenix Inc.'s Ambassador and Clean and Green Team programs foster a sense of hospitality even as the critical mass of downtown residents grows.

# Guiding Themes

Private property owners have a remarkable opportunity to create 'inviting edges' that present a welcoming face to public spaces and right of ways. Caring for the public realm in front of private properties can greatly promote a desirable walkable space. A sense of ownership, investment, and loyalty to responsive private property owners who personalize and give character to the city through property maintenance, monitoring local activities, edge activation, and investments in the right of way for desired amenities can create a rich tapestry of the public realm.



I feel safe when I see other people around in a city.

– MARK METTES

## THEMATIC FOCUS OF STRATEGIES & RECOMMENDATIONS



**Public  
Realm**



**Mobility &  
Circulation**



**Real Estate  
& Activation**

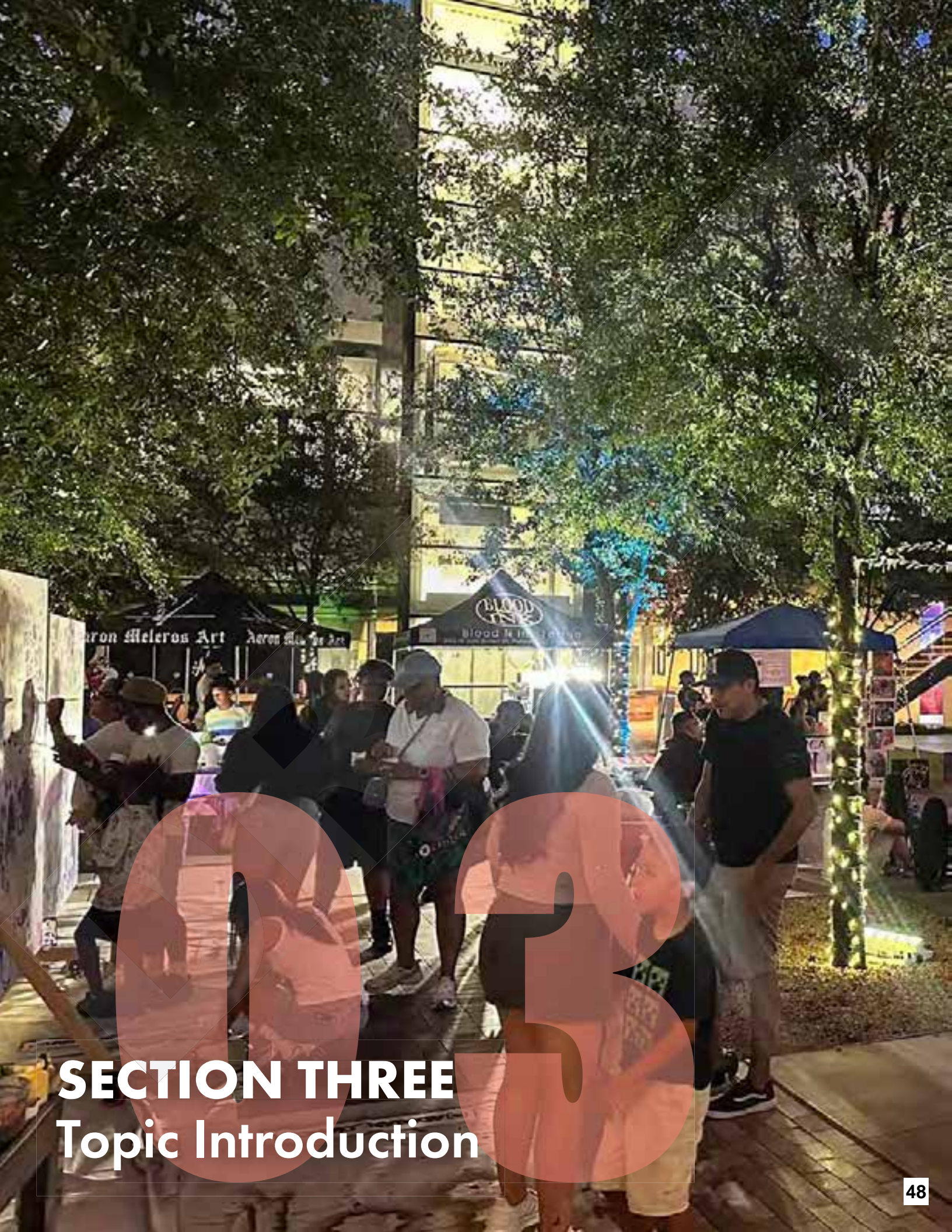


**Events &  
Programming**



**Marketing  
& Branding**

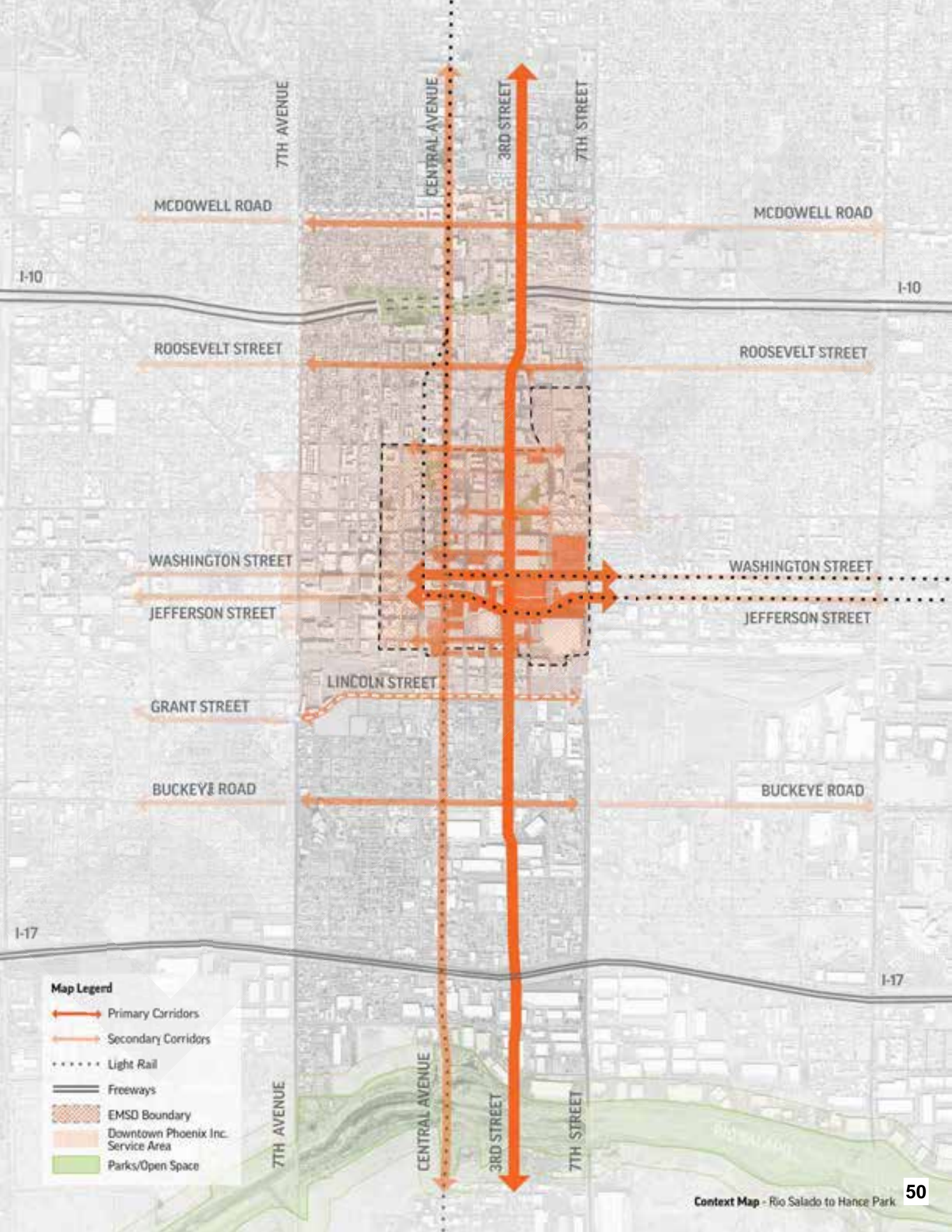
**Rooted in an investigation of funding and governance strategies necessary for implementation**



# SECTION THREE

## Topic Introduction





**Map Legend**

-  Primary Corridors
-  Secondary Corridors
-  Light Rail
-  Freeways
-  EMSD Boundary
-  Downtown Phoenix Inc. Service Area
-  Parks/Open Space

# Topic Introduction

## PURPOSE OF THE TOPICS

The Consultant Team identified nine distinct yet interconnected topics as lenses through which to observe the existing conditions of downtown and to propose tactical inventions to realize the vision for the Entertainment District. For each topic in this section, the key strategies will advance the guiding themes underlying the plan's vision and the ability of key partners, both public and private, to facilitate a public realm that serves as a stronger foundation and connector for the many entertainment anchors and institutions that call downtown home.

The specific topic areas are as follows:



### Topic A. Open Space

Open space refers to outdoor gathering areas, both public and private, which serve as an amenity to all of downtown's users. Whether public, private, or somewhere in between, this space can come in a range of sizes, from pocket parks to plazas to signature destination parks. Open space can incorporate green space into the urban environment and, perhaps most importantly, serves as a publicly accessible gathering space capable of hosting an assortment of events that bring vibrancy to a city.



### Topic B. Streetscape

The streetscape includes the public right of way, serving the comprehensive transportation needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers, including the ways in which each user experiences nature, lighting, and sidewalk activity along their journey.



### Topic C. Shade

The reality of Phoenix's climate necessitates critical resources for the shade throughout the urban realm. Shade can be provided as a natural element with trees or as a manufactured asset in the form of shade structures and creative architecture. Tall building forms also provide shading on the ground and, when clustered together as in downtown, create an environment of shaded corridors.



### Topic D. Signage

Signage refers to the physical elements that can announce the identity of a place, direct people throughout downtown, or provide additional vibrancy to public spaces as a design element. Signage includes a wide range of scales, from the monumental, to a directional marker in the pavement, and can exist on both public right of way and private property.



### Topic E. Real Estate

Real estate includes the entire built environment outside of the public right of way and public parks. Specifically, real estate is housing, offices, retail, hotels, entertainment venues, and public institutions.

# Topic Introduction



## Topic F. Retail Activation

A key, publicly oriented component of real estate is retail space. Retail activation refers to the density and variety of retail businesses and the value of this activity in creating a vibrant downtown. This retail is pedestrian-oriented for easy access from the street that is not dependent solely on automobile patronage.



## Topic G. Marketing & Branding

Marketing and branding refers to the ways in which downtown stakeholders leverage the story of a place to attract existing and new users to the many entertainment options in downtown. This includes existing ways that entertainment anchors tell downtown's story as the go-to place for special events, and more subtle ways of talking to resident groups and convention visitors about downtown as a collection of neighborhoods with opportunities for more spontaneous experiences.

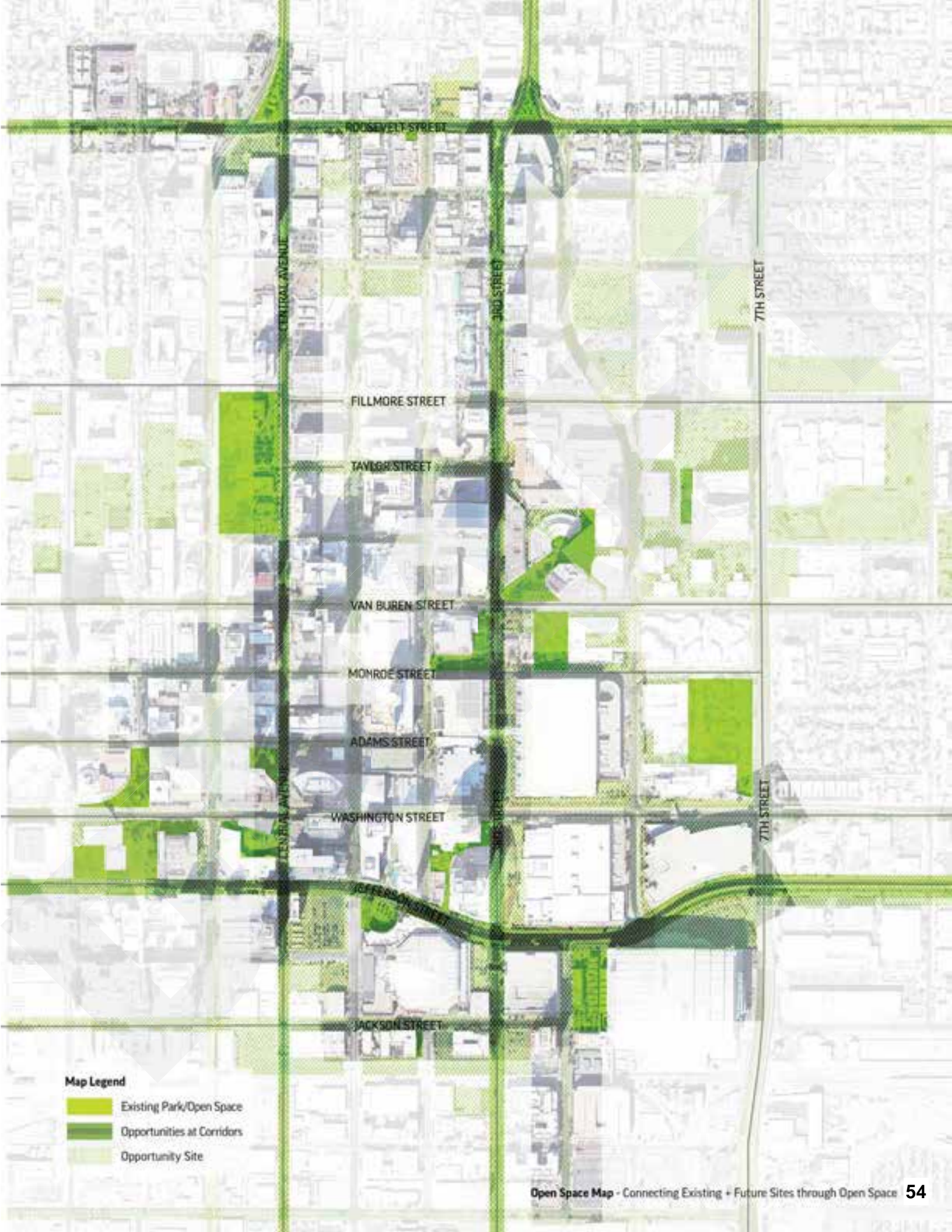


## Topic H. Governance & Funding

Governance is the set of policy or partnership mechanisms used to implement actions recommended in this Plan whereas funding is the set of tools that can be used to pay for each action.







**Map Legend**

-  Existing Park/Open Space
-  Opportunities at Corridors
-  Opportunity Site



# Topic A: Open Space

## IMPACT STATEMENT

Downtown's open space will be cemented as one of the critical elements of a vibrant and widely accessible public realm experience. A range of open space, including a new signature park and stronger connections between the existing network of City parks and quasi-public plazas, will enable locals and tourists alike to experience downtown in ways unique to them within collectively shared public spaces.

## OBSERVATIONS

Downtown's open spaces have evolved in recent decades. The longstanding civic gathering space at Block 23 and park space at Patriots Park transitioned to accommodate new development and significant City investments opened Civic Space Park (2009) and a revitalized Margaret T. Hance Park (2023). Key investments increased options for increased programming as well as daily use of open space, but the parks remain concentrated in the northern half of downtown, further from key entertainment anchors and cultural institutions.

While many downtowns have centrally located, signature open spaces, this area of downtown Phoenix lacks that central gathering space. Instead, the public gathers in smaller plazas, streets, and interstitial spaces, all which can be leveraged as a network. Across these public spaces there is a lack of public amenities such as restrooms, pet waste stations, and trash receptacles are limited, and stakeholders consistently call for more public art and performance spaces.

It is important to understand that the impact of open space on the public realm is not directly attributable to a larger size. The former Block 23 site served as a large event gathering space previously and downtown's current comparable space are the streets themselves. Several sites identified in this study may propose large-scale civic spaces that present opportunities for the extension of districtwide events and downtown activation. However, the smaller transitional spaces between public and private developments are just as impactful, providing intimate connections to local businesses and creating spaces for street performers, art installations, and other unexpected moments essential to the characteristics of an enriched public space.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Open space interventions focused on the history of downtown Phoenix and the region's Sonoran Desert will reflect the identity of the city's community, culture, and environment in the identified zones for improvement. downtown businesses and developers can partner with local artists to activate their underutilized spaces, while redevelopment and adaptive reuse projects can focus on protecting the historic elements that tell the story behind downtown Phoenix's past. Street closures for events and the transformation of parking lots into farmers markets are examples of temporary activation of shared open spaces that are important to Phoenix's downtown community and must continue to be associated with the Entertainment District.

# Topic A: Open Space



**Shaded Open Space for F+B/Retail** - The Churchill /  
Credit: Nick Ryan

A unique opportunity exists to align the critical redevelopment of the Phoenix Convention Center's South Building with an investment in a new signature downtown open space. The signature space can support a greater balance of parks and open space across downtown. The space's ability to host large scale civic gatherings while serving as a daily amenity for nearby residents, workers, tourists, and conventioners will establish an unparalleled asset for downtown befitting of Phoenix's status as a world class city.

Opportunities to transform vacant lots into parks or plazas with native landscaping will provide visitors with an immersive experience into the desert environment, without leaving the urban core of the city. While current trends prioritize—and should continue to favor—broader-leaf, desert-adapted street trees, due to their ease of maintenance and bounty of shade, intentional efforts in areas that are suitable can incorporate our native desert flora, offering an opportunity to celebrate our unique ecosystem and express the exotic nature of our region to visitors. To be successful in this harsh urban environment, desert trees and plants need to be properly sized, appropriately selected to suit their specific location, and installed and maintained effectively.

Maintenance is the cost of a climate responsive city much like snow removal in mountain cities, hurricane debris in coastal cities. It is a demonstration of care and pride in the city.

As downtown embraces a hybrid ecology where desert vegetation enhances the people-made structures and non-native vegetation, there is also the opportunity to provide visitors with access to other aspects of the region's unique desert ecology with access to open space outside of downtown. There are opportunities to better connect visitors and promote Phoenix specific open spaces, such as Rio Salado, South Mountain, and Papago Park in addition to downtown's signature open space assets.



**Open Space and Shade** - Roman Catholic Diocese of  
Phoenix Virginia G. Piper Plaza / Credit: Nick Ryan

# Topic A: Open Space

## ACTIONS

**A1. Increase the number of events at outdoor parks or plazas by designating new and revitalizing existing civic gathering spaces.** The promotion of new and existing gathering spaces should align with downtown's portfolio of events.

Due to the current lack of an iconic, centralized, downtown open space with regular programming, the City and its partners must designate gathering spaces to enable a mix of events in terms of type, scale, and location. In highlighting and, as necessary, revitalizing designated civic gathering spaces the City will further emphasize nodes of activity and enable expanded programming. Specifying locations and cultivating different themes of activity will provide a clearer roadmap for local community organizations to contribute more to the activation of downtown.

DPI event types include: family friendly, activating public spaces, inclusive, promoting downtown businesses, budget-friendly, multi-cultural, and arts-centric.

Locations for civic gathering include: Chase Field plazas, Herberger Theater East Lawn, Mortgage Matchup Center East Parking Lot, CityScape, St. Mary's Basilica, Heritage Square, and Civic Space Park.

**A2. Establish a streamlined permitting process for downtown events** that reduces time and offers a clear, accessible, and affordable path for community organizations to secure permits. Specifically, a coordinated working group comprised of relevant City departments involved in the permitting process (e.g., zoning, fire, police, and streets) should meet monthly to provide the community with a single forum for permitting and improve interdepartmental coordination. Additionally, the process should expand the approval duration associated with permits to allow a series of events to be approved under a single process.

Incorporating informative signage to advertise the accessible temporary use permitting process of parking lots, vacant sites, and other locations frequent of temporary uses will raise awareness and help facilitate an increase in community led programming and events.

The following zoning ordinance adjustments would support a more effective and efficient temporary permitting process, and thus enable more downtown events:

- City will review Section 307.B to explore if the permit application can be streamlined.
- Section 708.C.3 should include the following amendments:
  - allow a reduction in parking beyond zoning requirements when events are held outside of operational hours
  - increase the maximum of five events per calendar year and two events per month on commercial properties, particularly allowing reoccurring events to be covered under a single permit remove the requirement for events to not emit direct light greater than one foot candle at the property line or broadcast sound beyond the boundaries of the property

Reference Section 708.C, Section 708.D, and Section 708.M of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance for Administrative Temporary Use Permits, Temporary Use Permits, and Interim Vacant Land Uses

# Topic A: Open Space

## ACTIONS

**A3. Establish a pilot or temporary navigator position within the City of Phoenix** to serve as a designated point person capable of guiding members of the community through the event permitting and planning process.

A designated contact at the City, in close collaboration with DPI, will pair with a streamlined permitting process to enable more grassroots events and programming across downtown. Currently, the City's permitting process for a basic event without a stage or tents includes 8 steps costing \$2.5K+. In addition to the likely prohibitive cost, a specific point of contact, the process will remain inaccessible for any smaller scale community organizations or groups looking to plan an event for the first time. This position could look similar to that in the City of Tempe, which hosts a dedicated Special Events Office to efficiently facilitate programming and events across the City.

Sections of the Zoning Ordinance and Phoenix City Code related to temporary use permits and temporary use of the right of way should include amendments to reference the event permit navigator position as a resource for organizations planning events.

**A4. Incorporate a new, iconic downtown open space, into the Phoenix Convention Center South redevelopment plan**, capable of hosting large gatherings and accessible to both conventioners and the general public.

An additional iconic downtown gathering space will provide the platform to host increased events and programming adjacent to the PCC, Mortgage Matchup Center, and Chase Field. The iconic space can also serve as an additional day to day public amenity/open space outside of events and programming and serve as a central civic gathering space for residents, regional visitors to downtown, and conventioners and tourists.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development
- Office of Arts and Culture
- Planning and Development Department
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Phoenix Convention Center
- Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Phoenix Art Museum
- Heard Museum
- Phoenix Suns
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Herberger Theater Center
- St. Mary's Basilica





2ND STREET

3RD STREET

6TH STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

MONROE STREET

MONROE STREET

ADAMS STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

2ND STREET

5TH STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

3RD STREET

4TH STREET



## Topic B: Streetscape

### IMPACT STATEMENT

Strengthening downtown's streetscape, the interface between buildings and the street, while promoting diverse mobility options, will help aggregate a critical mass of people downtown, creating a more concentrated, yet diverse urban fabric. Enhancing multimodal connections through streetscape and mobility interventions will improve the experience between existing and new entertainment venues. A pedestrian-first approach is necessary to consider the transit modalities that pedestrians take to and from the district emphasizing sidewalks, lighting, shade, and street activation making moving between sites more comfortable, safe, and inviting.

### OBSERVATIONS

Sidewalks are essential to mobility and defining the pedestrian experience, with the ability to activate the public realm and create a connected downtown. Wide sidewalks with shade, ample lighting, landscaping, seating, and dining opportunities create important third spaces and enhance pedestrian comfort and engagement.

While generally clean and well-maintained, many sidewalks remain utilitarian, lacking the comfort and character more suited to a vibrant entertainment district. Lighting is inconsistent, impacting safety and ambiance, especially during peak nighttime activity. Moreover, narrow sidewalks in critical locations make it difficult for people to walk together or pass and are less desirable for circulation. Additionally, the network is fragmented with circulation around the PCC unclear and connections to adjacent neighborhoods like Roosevelt Row and the Warehouse District spotty or underdeveloped, often with poor signage. Public amenities such as restrooms, pet waste stations, and trash receptacles are limited, and stakeholders consistently call for more public art and performance spaces.



## Topic B: Streetscape

Since the redevelopment of the Block 23 site that had served as downtown's large public gathering space for events like NCAA Final Four and NFL Super Bowl Fan Fest, downtown no longer has a flexible gathering space for civic events. Public places are increasingly being utilized to accommodate these needs, but the lack of dedicated gathering spaces in the public realm hinders opportunities for the unexpected moments that make a place special to occur. Relatedly, event-related clutter, such as traffic signs and barricades, often remain in public spaces long after the event has concluded, which detracts from the streetscape and impedes non-vehicular mobility.

Much of downtown's streetscape improvements to date have been conducted in a piecemeal fashion out of necessity. downtown's entertainment district has over the past two decades been the nucleus of many large-scale development projects, evolving as needed as one project begins construction while another completes its redevelopment. These projects, private and public, often

responded to singular site conditions with an inward focus rather than interacting with and enhancing the surrounding environment. The entertainment district is at a point where more holistic design and implementation planning for streetscape improvements are needed. The City of Phoenix must employ high level design thinking in interactions between City departments and with private landowners to ensure that the resulting public realm (whether built by the City directly or by private developers) reflects a long-term and cohesive visual identity instead of one that is disconnected.

### OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown's streetscape, the interface between buildings and public streets, can play a crucial role as the venue for entertainment at the individual or group levels. To encourage greater connectivity between entertainment anchors and provide opportunities for more spontaneous experiences, new streetscape interventions should be employed at a range of scales, from tactical and site-specific, to comprehensive district wide.



Streetscape and Shade - Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel / Credit: Nick Ryan



Streetscape Shade and Cooling - Blanco Cocina + Cantina / Credit: Nick Ryan

## Topic B: Streetscape

These interventions must result in streets that more effectively serve those traveling to and within downtown on foot, by bike, and via other micromobility options. This includes **creating more visual interest via more flexible use of materials by public and private landowners** and investing in amenities that promote comfort and encourage interaction in the public realm. For example, **paving materials, shade amenities, chilled water stations, street and venue lighting, signage, and well-maintained, diverse landscape zones** can be creatively utilized as visual identifiers that establish interest along the ground plane. This promotes clearer walking paths, evoking the idea of a yellow brick road or trail of breadcrumbs between destinations. In addition, these strategies can be applied to the interior corridors and spaces that have direct connections to the streetscape and various opportunity sites. The **connection from Adams to 5<sup>th</sup> Street through the Phoenix Convention Center** is one opportunity to integrate these design strategies and create a new, thermally protected corridor that can provide adjacent art space or food vendors to conventioners, locals, and visitors.

**Opportunities to experience art installations and performances in the public realm should be incorporated into streetscape improvements.** Underutilized space and blank walls around downtown are ideal opportunity sites and corridors for art and performance spaces to strengthen connections between existing areas of activity and become destinations of their own. Whether through murals, sculptures, or interactive installations (temporary or permanent), artists can respond to existing conditions by utilizing these spaces as a canvas for their expression and encourage further evolution of downtown's cultural identity.

In addition to the need for more art, the support for having day-to-day street performers and vendors was a high priority voiced by community stakeholders. Residents and visitors expressed the desire to have a changing experience with each visit to downtown Phoenix.



Street Lighting - 2<sup>nd</sup> Street / Credit: Nick Ryan



Street Lighting and Open Space - Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix Virginia G. Piper Plaza / Credit: Nick Ryan



Shaded Sidewalk and Public Art - Local Studio / Credit: Nick Ryan



Streetscape Lighting and Activity - Arizona Center / Credit: Nick Ryan

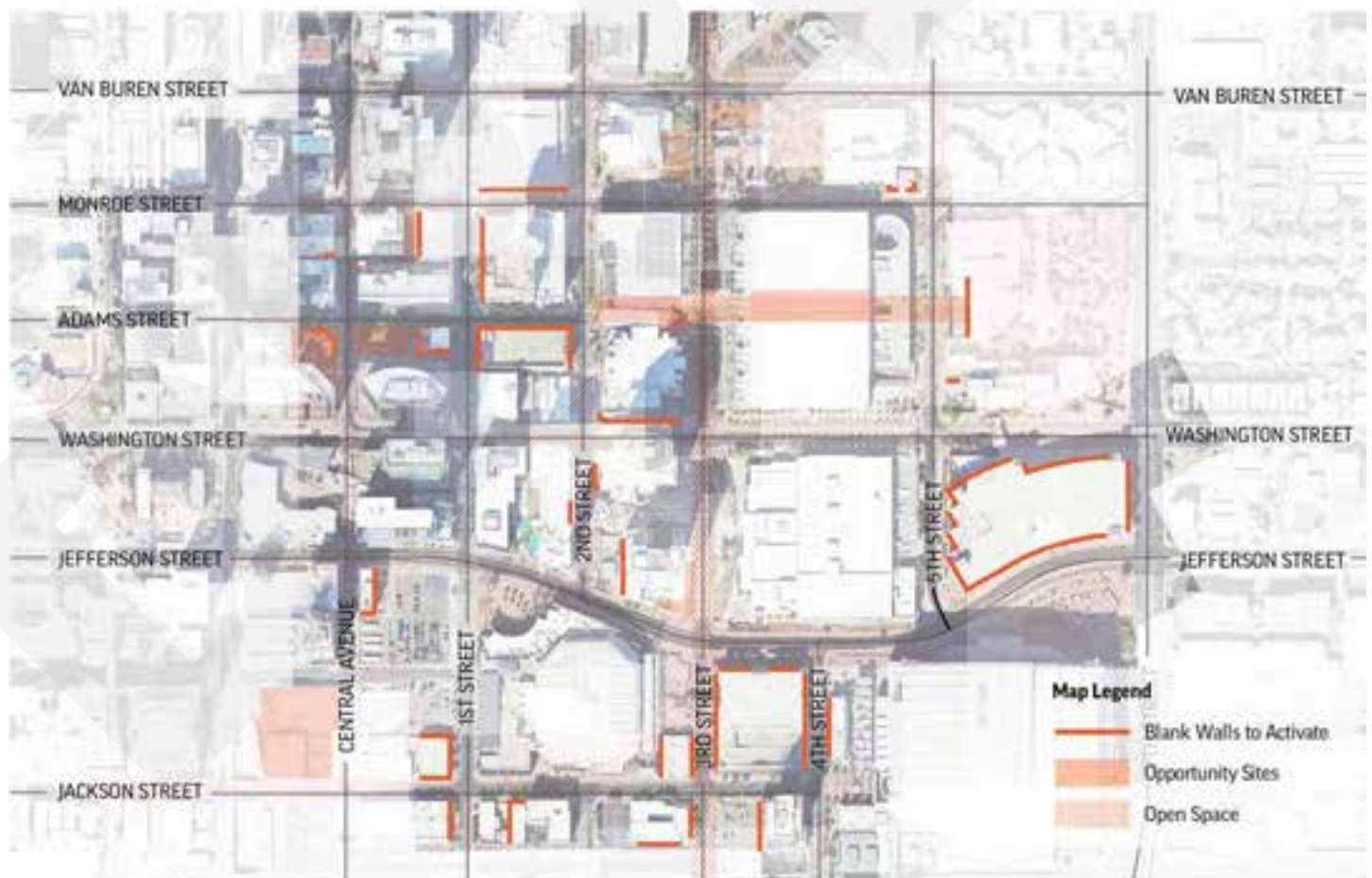
# Topic B: Streetscape

**Encouraging pop-up musical performances in open space from local artists, food trucks along streets, and other activation strategies in the public realm will build the audience for and further strengthen the identity of the Entertainment District.**

Beyond streetscape interventions that create safer conditions, enhance visual interest, and strengthen connectivity for the day-to-day user, downtown stakeholders are exploring ways to enable flexible use of the existing streetscape to accommodate civic gatherings and special events of all sizes. Currently, the goal of this exercise is to **identify an appropriate location that can host civic gatherings and**

**major events in the public right-of-way.**

This need was made more apparent following the development of the former Block 23 site that previously hosted large gatherings for concerts and major sports events. The use of Block 23 occurred in response to the loss of the original Patriot's Square open space that was replaced by the CityScope development. If changes are made to existing streets to serve as the home for large, temporary events, those **improvements must incorporate street design elements that make use safe and attractive outside of event closures.** The resulting street improvements should create better conditions for the everyday user, not just event attendees.



Street Activation Map - Open Space + Blank Walls to Activate

## Topic B: Streetscape

Equally important to streetscape improvements are the policy tools that support long-term investment in mobility and access. The City's **Parking Master Plan outlines strategies to reinvest parking revenues into infrastructure that supports walking, biking, and last-mile connections—critical components of a thriving entertainment district.** By dedicating a portion of on-street meter revenue to a special fund, in collaboration with the Street Transportation Department and with City Council approval, the City can ensure a sustainable source of funding for these improvements.

Additionally, **updating the Sunburst Event Management Plan to reflect the district's growing residential population and multimodal transit options** will help balance the needs of visitors and locals, making downtown more livable and accessible for all.

### ACTIONS

**B1. Conduct a streetscape master planning exercise and associated implementation plan** that builds upon the priorities and recommendations in this report. This plan will guide DPI's and the City's shade and streetscape investments in downtown's public rights-of-way. Capital investments for priority corridors designated in the plan should be included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and in the next GO Bond effort, with maintenance agreements executed between the City and DPI in coordination with the Street Transit Department and Office of the City Engineer.

DPI is a trusted partner who works closely with various City departments and private property owners to plant and maintain trees, landscaping, and some street furniture on behalf of the wider district. This work often unfolds on an ad-hoc basis, aligned with funding availability and coordination with partners. A master plan could go beyond replacement of trees in existing tree wells to include a kit of parts that improve streetscape environment at differing levels of intensity and investment. This could include expanded corners with seating and benches, rain gardens/stormwater collection sites, and structural shade elements where right-of-way conflicts are not amenable tree planting.

**B2. Leverage the proposed Street Outdoor Event Space project** to prioritize day-to-day pedestrian safety and comfort, traffic calming measures, and enhanced streetscape and beautification.

Streets Department and Downtown Phoenix Inc. are working together to plan improvements to a corridor in downtown that will enable greater flexibility for hosting major events in the public right-of-way. These improvements must include greater investment in street design elements that make this a safe and attractive corridor outside of event closures. Downtown Phoenix Inc.'s commitment to replacing the palm trees and other landscaping being removed in the median with shade trees on the sidewalks are a good start, but other design elements should be incorporated including mid-block crossings with special paving, bulb-outs, flexible landscape planters, and street furniture as coordinated by the Street Transportation Department.

## Topic B: Streetscape

### ACTIONS

**B3. Invest in on-street storage solutions paired with public art to house traffic signs and barriers** used in facilitating event traffic.

Currently, the traffic maintenance signs to facilitate the Sunburst Plan are left out on the street in between uses, creating a less visually appealing atmosphere and presenting the risk of theft or vandalism. Storage units, containers, or mobile trailers could remove the signs and barriers from the public eye and provide a canvas for increased public art.

**B4. Create a pedestrian-oriented east-west connection from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to Heritage Square**, from the PCC and across 5<sup>th</sup> Street to increase visual interest, access, and clarity of connections along the corridor. The pairing of Washington Street as a complimentary pedestrian-oriented east-west corridor will support circulation when the PCC is hosting events. Streetscape improvements and integration of art along Washington Street will help improve the pedestrian experience and create more connections throughout the Entertainment District.

The creation of a new, thermally protected corridor can provide pedestrians with spaces for art, food vendors, and other unexpected moments in a unique way. The use of paving as a visual identifier, through different materials and patterns as approved by the Streets Department, will help encourage exploration along a specific route or define a space to invite activation along this interior corridor. Incorporating shade structures and utilizing existing building shade can create extensions of the corridor, strengthening pedestrian connections to adjacent entertainment venues/sites.

**B5. Invest in amenities identified in the streetscape master planning exercise**, as described in Action B1. These amenities should include water stations, furniture, pet stations, and trash receptacles and have clear locations identified for their placement.

The location for these amenities should be considered under the master planning exercise listed under Action B1.

**B6. Continue to invest in 3<sup>rd</sup> Street as an intensified pedestrian-oriented north-south corridor**, connecting the anchor entertainment destinations of Mortgage Matchup Center and Chase Field with the PCC, Canyon on Third, Herberger Theater, Roosevelt Row, and the Warehouse District to Rio Salado 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Pedestrian Bridge. This can be accomplished through improved conditions from shade, lighting, art murals/installations, and other streetscape interventions to enhance the pedestrian experience and encourage circulation along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Working with adjacent stakeholders to transition from a car-centric street, Transitioning from a car-centric street to a multimodal street that promotes the use of micromobility programs and shared circulators, where compatible with Canyon on Third's use as rentable space for PCC events, will improve accessibility and connections to all the adjacent entertainment destinations. Increased activation of the public realm in this primary corridor will help populate the spaces that stitch public and private developments together, while the transformation of existing entertainment venues will create opportunities for unexpected moments that attract exploration and wonder. Reference details of opportunity sites for PCC South, Canyon on Third, and The Lawn in Section 4 of Implementation Plan for site specific streetscape interventions.

# Topic B: Streetscape

## ACTIONS

**B7. Establish Jefferson and Washington Streets as primary pedestrian-oriented east-west corridors for the Entertainment District.** Along Jefferson Street, this will connect the Collier Center to the PCC, Mortgage Matchup Center, and Chase Field with activations of sidewalks through improved landscaping, shade structures, lighting, and extensions of entertainment venues, retail, and food and beverage space as approved by appropriate City departments. Streetscape improvements and integration of art along Washington Street will help improve the pedestrian experience and create more connections throughout the Entertainment District.

Activation of sidewalks through improved landscaping, shade structures, and outdoor extensions of entertainment venues, retail, and food and beverage space will change the character of Jefferson Street and continue the momentum developing along Washington Street. Transformation of parking lots, garages, and underutilized sites into parks, cultural hubs, and new developments will create opportunities to further build upon the success of the major venues along the Jefferson Street Corridor. New, innovative strategies for signage will assist with circulation through the corridor during the day, while interactive lighting methods activate open spaces and animate the corridor at night. Reference details of opportunity sites for Market Station, Sonora Field, Plaza del Sol, and Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> in Section 4 of Implementation Plan for site specific interventions.

**B8. Coordinate with Street Transportation Department and Active Transportation to reevaluate.**

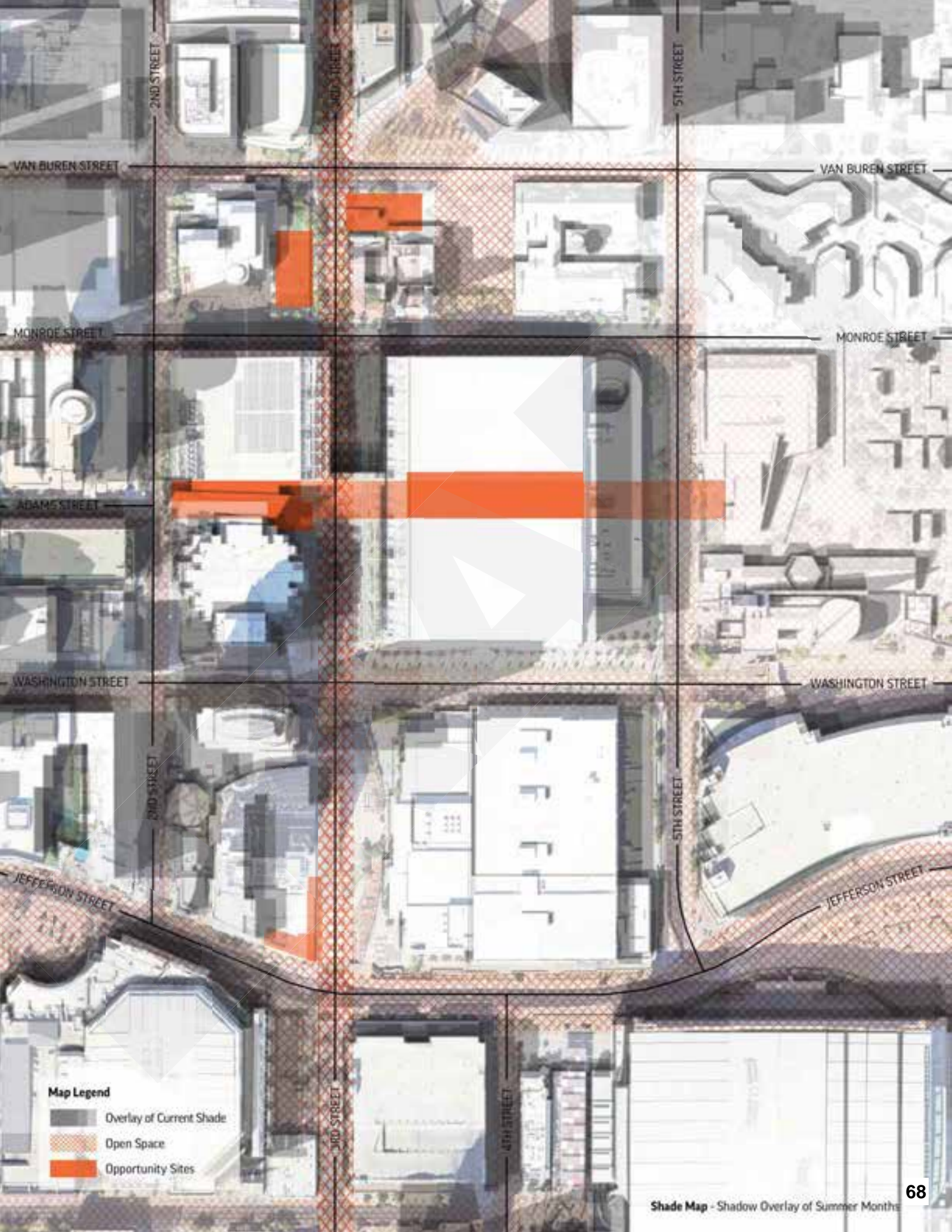
The City should assess the existing micromobility options to ensure full coverage of downtown, including strategic placement of adjacent to existing transit infrastructure, entertainment attractions, residential communities, hotels, and dining locations.

Reintroduce micromobility options, like the E-Bike, to pair with the electric scooters to diversify options to accommodate downtown Phoenix's intergenerational community. A series of micromobility "stations" should be located strategically along key corridors and venues to promote continued exploration to/from other entertainment locations.

**B9. Launch a pilot for a private downtown circulator** in partnership with a corporate sponsor, connecting major destinations and enhancing accessibility in a way that is additive to the City's existing public transit investments.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development Department
- Planning and Development Department
- Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
- Arts and Culture
- Phoenix Convention Center
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Phoenix Suns
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Street Transportation Department
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Police Department



2ND STREET

3RD STREET

5TH STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

MONROE STREET

MONROE STREET

ADAMS STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

2ND STREET

5TH STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

3RD STREET

4TH STREET

**Map Legend**

-  Overlay of Current Shade
-  Open Space
-  Opportunity Sites

Shade Map - Shadow Overlay of Summer Months

## Topic C: Shade

### IMPACT STATEMENT

All great cities prioritize interesting, walkable corridors between destinations, despite their own unique climate or weather conditions. By investing in and incentivizing new shade infrastructure while maintaining existing shade assets, downtown Phoenix will reach its fullest potential for connectivity, ensuring that entertainment and other destinations are walkable, regardless of the unique challenges posed by its Sonoran Desert climate.

### OBSERVATIONS

Downtowns in cities of all climates and geographies largely rely on plentiful “free” shade that results from existing buildings and structures. Shade trees, awnings, balconies, and other shade structures add to create a comfortable environment for those walking or biking the city’s streets. And while Phoenix is not unique in this regard, its climate elevates the importance of shade infrastructure for making walking safe and comfortable. Like other elements of downtown’s streetscape, the amount and quality of shade varies by location and is largely dependent on site ownership, deployment of scarce resources, and coordination among parties in control.



Shade Structure along Open Space - Arizona Center / Credit: Nick Ryan

## Topic C: Shade



**Building Shade along Streetscape** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue + Monroe Street /  
Credit: Nick Ryan

Essential corridors connecting downtown's entertainment anchors, for example, are especially devoid of shade infrastructure. Intersections along much of Jefferson Street lack natural or built shade and the street light timing is such that pedestrians may be waiting on four corners of what feels like an extended period on a sunny day. Neglected trees can be found throughout downtown reducing the potential for shade and negatively impacting the visual quality and character of the district. Empty planting zones are also scattered throughout the district, drawing attention to areas where trees once lived. One corridor that provides consistent built shade to pedestrians from existing high-rise buildings is Washington Street. However, pockets of retail and business dispersed along this corridor that are paired with a lack of activation at the ground plane, currently challenge the creation of a strong East-West connection for the Entertainment District.

In a rapidly changing environment like downtown Phoenix, growing and mature street trees are often victims of progress. Development projects consistently remove mature trees along tree lined streets, often sanctioned by City of Phoenix, going against the city's stated goals and regulations. While these trees are typically replaced, this restarts the long and slow process of a young tree's struggle to adapt to the harsh heat island of downtown. This also has the effect of reducing the visual quality of a street with a consistent tree canopy derived from trees planted together at the same time. Trees not only provide shade for people, but also provide habitats for small birds, and visually soften the walking experience. Building robust shade requires diligence and close collaboration among all downtown players to maintain mature trees and work around them to ensure widespread shade coverage and curb appeal. Downtown Phoenix Inc.'s advocacy for greater street tree coverage and investment in tree plantings throughout its district are notable bright spots that need far wider deployment.



**Natural Shade along Open Space** - ASU downtown Campus /  
Credit: Nick Ryan

# Topic C: Shade

Downtown's urban typology is often seen as antithetical to the surrounding desert landscape—these are in many ways different ecosystems that support different types of life. Native trees, for example, often struggle to provide effective shade in planting areas that are ill-suited for their survival. In many cases, native desert trees have been replaced with tree species that have broader leaf structure with a goal to provide more shade and reduce maintenance. Downtown stakeholders have long adopted a “right tree, right place” framework for planting trees that are well-equipped to surviving in downtown's harsh environment. These often include non-native, desert-adapted species that grow faster and in a form more amenable to tight planting environments. While this is not unique to Phoenix, many visitors and stakeholders lament the absence of native Sonoran Desert flora in downtown. For visitors, seeing the indigenous trees in downtown is a way of experiencing what a desert city is like. Many visitors marvel over the unique character of desert trees, saguaro cactus and seek them out for photo opportunities.

## OPPORTUNITIES

One of the main challenges that comes along with providing new shade is how to identify which areas need to be prioritized and which sites can maximize existing shade conditions. **Understanding which type of shade is appropriate for each location and factoring in which season and times require the most shade due to extreme heat through studies that overlay existing shade conditions can help identify the areas with efficient coverage from buildings and which areas will need the most support.** These studies and other similar strategies used to address locating shade should be considered for where public realm improvements and the comfort of those exploring downtown's entertainment district.

Consistent and coordinated maintenance is necessary for the maturation and longevity of shade from trees.

**Downtown Phoenix Inc.'s tree planting and maintenance work through its Clean and Green Team should be expanded and**

**appropriately resourced** so that they can effectively serve as managers of downtown's urban forest. Enhancing downtown's shade amenities through more intentional planting areas created to demonstrate the beauty of Phoenix's natural landscape could complement the more suitable non-native trees used in sidewalks and would **provide a missing ecological and cultural connection to the Sonoran Desert within downtown.**

Additionally, the protection of existing healthy trees needs to be a priority for the City as new developments are commenced. These trees are essential to maintain existing shade across downtown Phoenix's urban desert environment and take years to mature and produce shade. **Development projects should work around sidewalk trees to avoid the replacement of mature trees previously invested in and the City should more actively enforce landscape plan compliance and expand tree removal penalties.**

The use of manufactured shade through built structures and art installations provides another option for addressing extreme heat where trees are not feasible due to physical and spatial limitations. Super structures and large-scale shade pavilions can transform the highly exposed open space areas by providing thermal comfort, infrastructure for other uses like art installations and event spaces resulting in opportunities for new activities. Innovative designs for these new structures downtown can serve as a precedent to Phoenix's commitment of becoming the most sustainable desert city, especially when integrating newer technologies for energy generation and climate control. **City could revise its including permitting, inspection insurance, and regulations of overhangs in the public right of way when providing necessary shade coverage.**

# Topic C: Shade

## ACTIONS

**C1. Empower and resource DPI to more fully play the lead role for planting, installation, and maintenance of trees and plantings in the downtown public right of way** through more maintenance agreements with City departments and via fee-based agreements with private property owners.

downtown Phoenix Inc.'s Clean & Green Team has built strong partnerships with City departments who govern landscape areas in the public ROW as well as private property owners who have contracted with them to manage their trees and other landscape assets. The Clean & Green Team's regular presence downtown and their demonstrated body of work speak to DPI's ability to serve as the go-to landscape manager for downtown's tree canopy. The City should expand the landscape zones for which DPI is responsible and should divert resources from City departments to DPI via their annual contract. Precedents for this work include the Streetscape Improvement District, which DPI is contracted to manage on the City's behalf.

**C2. Ensure compliance with approved landscape and planting and landscape maintenance plans on private development** in support of Shade Phoenix Action #16 on enforcing tree code and Action #25 on updating the City plan species guidance. Consider the role of desert trees and vegetation in the identity of the city for use in appropriate areas. Landscape can create wayfinding strategies with consistent use along corridors.

The City of Phoenix and DPI have made great strides in increasing shade canopy and increasing landscaped areas of respite in downtown at considerable investment. This work can be impeded when private property owners (and the City, in some cases) remove or fail to appropriately maintain landscape improvements that are part of their approved site plans. The City may leverage an amendment to Section 703.E of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance on the general landscape standards and requirements for all trees, plants, and cacti to recommend native or approved species for all trees, plants, and cacti within the Entertainment District area.

**C3. Revise internal development approval processes to incentivize projects to maintain existing tree canopy** (or replace or contribute to a replacement fund that accounts for the full value of canopy loss) on or adjacent to their sites.

Recognizing the benefits that mature shade trees provide in pedestrian areas, both in capital/planting investment, and ongoing cost of maintenance, developers and private property owners must be incentivized to maintain existing tree canopy or account for the loss of an asset that will take years to recover to its previous maturity and public value it provides. In particular, the City should require new developments to work within existing tree conditions, especially when developments occur along pedestrian corridors with consistent mature tree canopies. Any financial penalties for the removal of mature trees should be redirected into investments in new plantings.

**C4. Review/audit projects built within last 10 years to ensure compliance with approved landscape plans**, with additional reviews every 2 years moving forward, to support implementation of Shade Phoenix Action #16 to strengthen the enforcement of tree code.

Coinciding with increased attention to the necessity of shade for building a walkable, healthy pedestrian environment, the City of Phoenix Planning & Development Department and Neighborhood Services Department in partnership with Downtown Phoenix Inc. should conduct a review of all projects built since January 2015 to audit for compliance with City-approved landscape plans and use of revocable permits for shade elements in the public right-of-way.

# Topic C: Shade

## ACTIONS

**C5. Explore potential modifications to City development permitting policies for downtown developments to encourage the creation of manufactured shade by way of building overhang in right of way.**

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## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development Department
- Planning and Development Department
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Street Transportation Department
- Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
- Neighborhood Services



2ND STREET

3RD STREET

5TH STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

VAN BUREN STREET

MONROE STREET

MONROE STREET

ADAMS STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

WASHINGTON STREET

2ND STREET

5TH STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

4TH STREET

**Map Legend**

- Downtowns Phoenix Inc. Wayfinding
- Phoenix Convention Center Wayfinding
- Public/Private Signage
- Legends Entertainment District Brand Signage
- Art/Installations



## Topic D: Signage

### IMPACT STATEMENT

The exploration of signage interventions will improve and elevate the overall experience of downtown for visitors, helping stitch the connections and shape the identity of downtown's diverse areas and community.

### OBSERVATIONS

Similar to the prioritization of shade interventions, signage needs to focus on the pedestrian and vehicular routes that will draw the most traffic and maximize engagement. Understanding that current signage for popular destinations within the entertainment district fits the character of its venue and likely will remain the same, attention can be focused on updating outdated media, wayfinding, and temporary signage conditions.

There is currently a wide range of different wayfinding and identification signage designs across the district, which can be confusing to visitors and does not effectively communicate cohesion. In addition, proper upkeep and collection of traffic signage and equipment that is used for downtown events can help limit confusion for those traveling through the city, while also improving the pedestrian experience along the sidewalks and streets of the entertainment district.

Stakeholders also spoke of the need to promote a visual sense of arrival to downtown for visitors and residents from other areas through wayfinding signage or entrance monuments.

### OPPORTUNITIES

With the selection of Jefferson Street as one of the key corridors for the Entertainment District, upgrading static billboards and signage will help promote a more modern identity for downtown Phoenix. Creation of a digital signage district, interactive wayfinding kiosks, and other innovative signage strategies can transform Jefferson corridor and influence the implementation of similar techniques throughout the subdistricts of downtown Phoenix. New gateway signage into the Entertainment District, with the tactical placement of secondary signage and wayfinding, has the potential to establish a visual identifier for the district and define a character that best represents downtown Phoenix and its community.

The desire to establish Washington Street as another key corridor for the Entertainment District presents an opportunity to create a monumental entry that could double as a shade element. Introducing an innovative shade structure that spans over the bridge connecting the East Garage and Arizona Science Center could present an iconic, artistic piece to serve as a wayfinding element to those arriving downtown, whether that be by light rail, car, or pedestrian-oriented mobility.

Outdated directional signs should be updated with consistent themes supporting vehicular traffic to the parking garages and activity centers such as Arizona Center. The parking study indicated one way to address this without significant static wayfinding investments is through a digital app platform that can be promoted in lieu of an abundance of directorial signs that can further clutter the visual experience. More cohesive signage across the area can help signal the sense of a district and communicate the thematic connection of currently disparate destinations.

# Topic D: Signage



Signage for downtown Phoenix - Herberger Theater / Credit: Nick Ryan



Signage for Billboard Advertisements - Jefferson Street Garage / Credit: Nick Ryan 76

# Topic D: Signage

## ACTIONS

**D1. Explore the modification of current signage district regulations to allow for dynamic digital signage along Jefferson Street** to emphasize the corridor as a dynamic entertainment environment - branding the area as one of the unique nodes within the downtown experience.

The modernization of the digital signage district along a dynamic corridor like Jefferson Street calls for the utilization of dynamic signage techniques like animation and video advertisements. Specifically, the City should amend Section 705.C.1 of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance on animation of on-premises signs to permit animation within the Entertainment District area. Amendments to Section 705.C.13 on electronic message displays would also be beneficial to flexibility of messages. Additionally, the City should amend Section 705.C.6 of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance on illumination of signs. Currently, direct illumination is prohibited on signs from 11:00 pm until sunrise on any face exceeding 150 watts, which would present challenges for visibility in a 24/7 walkable district.

**D2. Design and install gateway signage that serve as entry markers for downtown Phoenix at primary entry points** giving a visual sense of arrival downtown for visitors.

Stakeholders spoke of the need to promote a visual sense of arrival to downtown for visitors and residents from other areas. Design funding could come from multiple sources, including the funds identified for the Wayfinding Signage Study or a partnership with Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture.

Implementation could be funded by future Percent for Arts funds from adjacent capital projects, Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture commission funds, future GO Bond funds, philanthropic support or public-private partnerships.

**D3. Design and install secondary signage that represent subdistricts of downtown**, e.g., "Roosevelt Row", "Evans-Churchill District", "Grand Avenue Arts District", "Grant Park", etc.

Signage is a way to celebrate and emphasize downtown as a collection of unique identities and distinct experiences. It will be important to embrace a certain level of flexibility of design to enabling representation of each subdistrict's unique character within the context of the broader design aesthetic for downtown. This is reflected in the Wayfinding Signage Study recommended in the Parking Master Plan as "sign families" for distinct areas of downtown and design could be sourced through that RFP.

Implementation could be funded by future Percent for Arts funds from adjacent capital projects, Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture commission funds, future G.O. Bond funds, philanthropic support or public-private partnerships.

**D4. Modernize signage assets and revisit the usage of "Legends Entertainment District"** as the name for joint signage venture operations to reduce confusion with downtown as an entertainment destination more broadly.

Legends Entertainment District remains a valuable partner in supporting signage along Jefferson Street, however, usage of the term "district" creates additional ambiguity regarding the identity of the surrounding area, especially as the City works to establish the entertainment district around the Phoenix Convention Center.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development Department
- Planning and Development Department
- Phoenix Convention Center
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Phoenix Suns
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Legends Entertainment District
- Street Transportation Department
- Arizona Center



**Map Legend**

-  Activation Sites
-  Redevelopment Sites



## Topic E: Real Estate

### IMPACT STATEMENT

Short term, targeted interventions will reactivate underutilized sites as strategic public funding and evolving market dynamics facilitate catalytic development projects, all in support of a reconnected urban fabric and activity from new uses in downtown.

### OBSERVATIONS

The recent evolution of downtown is marked by a significant rise in real estate development activity. The rapid growth in downtown users, including residents, college students, and employees at companies who call downtown home shaped the demand for new development. Previously a neighborhood comprised of high-rise office towers interspersed with retail and surface parking lots, over the last decade downtown experienced a shift toward high density residential development and an increasing supply of both ground floor and standalone retail. Specifically, downtown added over 7,000 new residential units over the last decade. The shift in the density and form of development contributes to a better-connected urban fabric and a more active, vibrant downtown moving beyond the label as a central business district towards a collection of mixed-use, urban neighborhoods.

Despite shifting economic conditions, downtown will remain a target for increased real estate development, particularly multifamily housing, in the years to come. Additionally, downtown's status as a destination for tourists and conventioners will drive the development of new hotel rooms. While the continued influx of development will advance the cohesiveness of downtown as a mixed-use neighborhood, a significant share of parcels could remain as underutilized gaps in the built environment if not properly targeted for activation and eventually development.



# Topic E: Real Estate



Credit: Britain Eriksen via Unsplash

## OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown already hosts a strong set of anchors, attracting users for conventions, theater, music, and sports. However, many of downtown's greatest anchors draw internalized activity, events where users travel to their destination – oftentimes indoors – and then vacate downtown immediately after. Broadly speaking, new development can and has restored urban fabric by adding reasons for additional stops on a trip downtown, driving greater vibrancy and activity, which in turn helps catalyze further investment. Large scale projects will require coordinated, strategic planning and significant investment but offer the potential to deliver hundreds of new hotel rooms serving tourists and conventioners, residential units to expand the downtown population, and additional retail as an amenity for all of downtown's users.

Initial key developments will fulfill premium redevelopment opportunities or address sites at some of the most critical locations adjacent to downtown's entertainment anchors along Jefferson Street. Each redevelopment will also present the opportunity to deliver an improved pedestrian-oriented streetscape experience by providing lighting, landscaping, and ground floor activation that advances the authentic identity of downtown.

The Real Estate Map – Activation and Redevelop Sites on page 62 establishes a comprehensive list of opportunities for both near-term reactivation and long-term development within the Entertainment District. The map and accompanying matrix of opportunities establish priorities for intervention. Given the time-intensive and capital-intensive nature of real estate development, prioritizing lower cost options to facilitate increased activation will be critical to increasing district activity in the near term. Targeted reinvestments in existing and potentially underutilized public or private spaces capable of hosting events and programming can provide a near term solution to stitching together gaps in the urban fabric.

# Topic E: Real Estate

## ACTIONS

**E1. Advance the redevelopment of the Regency Garage** by releasing an RFP to identify a development partner capable of delivering a mixed-use, full-service hotel to serve the PCC and downtown visitors.

In addition to delivering new hotel rooms, the development should also implement recommendations outlined in the Adams Street Activation Study, specifically including lighting and landscaping to establish an authentic identity for the street as a front door of the PCC and the exploration of tenant signage perpendicular to the flow of traffic. Simultaneously, the project should capitalize on its prominent downtown location and proximity to the PCC by incorporating F&B and community/cultural tenants to provide ground floor activation as an amenity to conventioners, hotel guests, and visitors to nearby cultural institutions (e.g., Herberger Theater, Symphony Hall, etc.).

**E2. Establish an internal development and outreach strategy for the priority sites for future real estate development or increased activation.** See [the above Real Estate Map – Activation and Redevelop Sites](#) for a map of opportunity sites and the table on the following page indicating the type of opportunity, priority, potential timeline, and ownership characteristics. A development and outreach strategy should consider viable actions based on current site control, particularly whether the property is publicly or privately owned.

**E3. Ensure future redevelopment of the Phoenix Convention Center South Building facilitates the Entertainment District Study.** To advance the redevelopment opportunity, the City and PCC should revisit the SmithGroup development concept to assess:

- 1) the financial viability of the proposed program, specifically the feasibility of a residential tower, luxury hotel, new convention and the new convention hall;
- 2) the viability of integrating a central open space within the plan to emphasize places for public gathering, as well as the potential for an iconic rooftop civic gathering and event space, and other amenities to attract visitation, such as a food hall; and
- 3) funding structures, including the potential to integrate elements of the project into an upcoming G.O. bond issuance.

Finally, the City and PCC should begin market sounding conversations with local and national developers to increase awareness and excitement surrounding the potential project while gaining a developer perspective on the preferred program.

The redevelopment will help to advance 4 goals:

- 1) provide a venue for near-term interim activation that aligns with the adjacent entertainment anchors
- 2) increase long-term activation along the Jefferson Street corridor, complementing both convention and sports/entertainment visitation
- 3) deliver new amenities such as a range of food and beverage options (food hall and fine dining) to attract new visitation to the site
- 4) deliver a new iconic civic gathering space that can serve as a core open space for downtown

The redevelopment program should draw on the concepts developed by SmithGroup to include new convention space connected to the North Building, a multifamily residential tower, and a luxury hotel tower. In addition to the existing concept, the program should include an iconic ground-level open space, rooftop gathering / event space, and retail capable of hosting a range of F&B options (fine dining and food hall/restaurant incubator).

# Topic E: Real Estate

## ACTIONS

**E4. Revitalize the Jefferson Street Garage into an entertainment hub for gamedays and year-round activation by repositioning a portion of the ground floor closer to Jefferson Street.** The repositioning could offer additional F&B space, increase heat mitigation infrastructure to enable year-round gathering, and pedestrianize the surrounding streetscape to increase street level activity.

Improved integration with the adjacent Chase Field, Mortgage Matchup Center, and PCC South building and increased ground floor activity will better position the garage as a connection point across key downtown entertainment anchors while improving both game day and non-gameday experiences around the stadiums.

In the long term, the full redevelopment of the parking garage should be considered. A high-rise mixed-use property that expands the set of downtown's everyday users with multifamily, hotel, or office could further enhance downtown. Any approach to full redevelopment must include considerations for replacing the existing parking capacity that serves the Phoenix Suns and Arizona Diamondbacks on gamedays.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development
- Phoenix Convention Center
- downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Phoenix Suns
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Arizona Center
- Herberger Theater Center
- St. Mary's Basilica



# Topic E: Real Estate

SITE (PRIORITY - 1 IS HIGHEST)	TIMING IMMEDIATE: <1 YEAR SHORT: 1-2 YEARS MEDIUM: 3-5 YEARS LONG: 6+ YEARS	SITE OWNERSHIP SITE CONTROL
<b>Redevelopment Opportunities</b>		
<b>Phoenix Convention Center (PCC) South Building (1)</b>	Medium	City of Phoenix City of Phoenix and Phoenix Convention Center
<b>Jefferson Street Garage (1)</b>	Medium	Phoenix Suns and Arizona Diamondbacks Joint Venture
<b>Regency Garage (1)</b>	Immediate	City of Phoenix City of Phoenix and Phoenix Convention Center
<b>Garretson Parcels (2)</b>	Long	Jefferson Place Partners LLC John E. Garretson Living Trust
<b>Collier Center (2)</b>	Short	Sumitomo Corporation
<b>Madison Parking Lot (3)</b>	Medium	Phoenix Suns

# Topic E: Real Estate

## GOALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OR REINVESTMENT & ACTIVATION

The redevelopment program should draw on the concepts developed by SmithGroup to include new convention space connected to the North Building, a multifamily residential tower, and a luxury hotel tower. Ultimately, redevelopment should advance four goals:

1. Provide a venue for near term interim activation that aligns with the adjacent entertainment anchors
2. Increase long term activity along the Jefferson Street corridor
3. Deliver new amenities such as a range of food and beverage options (food hall and fine dining)
4. Deliver a new iconic civic gathering space

See Action E3 for more details on the redevelopment strategy and goals for PCC South.

In the long term, given the garage's key central location among three major downtown anchors in Chase Field, Mortgage Matchup Center, and the PCC, the site should be leveraged as a point of connection that enlivens the district. Potential uses could include open space or mixed use development with entertainment programming on the ground floor. Any future changes to the site would require a revised parking strategy, likely involving the use of adjacent parking structures to match the current supply at Jefferson Street Garage.

See Action E4 for an overview of a redevelopment strategy and goals for the Jefferson Street Garage.

Transform the site into a high-rise hotel with an activated ground floor hosting food and beverage opportunities for community organizations. The new hotel and active ground floor bolstered by a lively F&B scene will serve downtown's need for more hotel rooms to support the PCC, provide amenities for conventioners, residents, and patrons of the nearby arts and culture venues, and serve as a model for future PCC South hotel development.

Eventual development should fill a vacant gap along Jefferson Street, contributing to activity and providing shade along the key corridor. Additionally, the development should extend the existing activity and vibrancy of Central Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Street further south into the Warehouse District. The development typology should follow adjacent new buildings, employing an active, pedestrian oriented ground floor, mixed use podium, and high rise housing with housing, hotel, or office that continues to diversify the downtown user base. In addition to following the development style of adjacent buildings, development plans should incorporate the preservation of the existing Public Works Building into the broader site plan.

The current property owners are working to reposition the existing retail space on the site. Given the central location of the site along a key corridor for downtown (Jefferson Street), a renewed retail program, particularly one supported by a food and beverage program, will contribute to additional activity and vibrancy along the corridor.

Private development should target mid to high rise multifamily development to pull existing activity along Jefferson Street further south to facilitate better connectivity between Jefferson and the Warehouse District and a further energized Jackson Street.

# Topic E: Real Estate

SITE (PRIORITY - 1 IS HIGHEST)	TIMING		SITE OWNERSHIP SITE CONTROL
	IMMEDIATE: <1 YEAR	SHORT: 1-2 YEARS	
<b>Parking Lots South of Mortgage Matchup Center (3)</b>	Long	MEDIUM: 3-5 YEARS LONG: 6+ YEARS	301 Jackson LLC JTD Properties Arena Park Place
<b>Activation Opportunities</b>			
<b>Chase Field (Ballpark, West Plaza, and Northeast Parking Lot) (1)</b>	Short		Maricopa County Arizona Diamondbacks
<b>Herberger Theater East Lawn (1)</b>	Immediate		City of Phoenix Herberger Theater
<b>Mortgage Matchup Center East Parking Lot and Suns Mercantile Building (1)</b>	Short		City of Phoenix Phoenix Suns
<b>Chase Tower and Adjacent Parking Garage (2)</b>	Medium		Viola Lordsmeer LP
<b>Arizona Science Center (2)</b>	Short		City of Phoenix included in the Heritage Square parcel
<b>East Garage (3)</b>	Long		City of Phoenix
<b>Heritage Square (3)</b>	Immediate		City of Phoenix
<b>Arizona Center (3)</b>	Immediate		Arizona Center

# Topic E: Real Estate

## GOALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OR REINVESTMENT & ACTIVATION

Private development should target mid to high rise development that could include housing, midscale or upscale hotel, and office supported by activity generating retail (F&B and entertainment) on the ground floor. The development program should act as a draw that is capable of pulling greater activity to the Warehouse District and Jackson Street. Any future development plans will need to account for replacing the existing parking capacity.

See Section 4: Diamondbacks Plaza and Sonora Field for an overview of an activation strategy for the Chase Field West Plaza and Northeast Parking Lot.

See Section 4: The Pavillion for an overview of an activation strategy for the Herberger Theater East Lawn.

See Section 4: The Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> for an overview of an activation strategy for the Mortgage Matchup Center East Parking lot.

As the private developer reinvests in the Tower to attract new tenants, additional investments should better activate the quasi-public plaza surrounding the building. Small scale F&B stalls could serve new users of the tower and attract other downtown residents or workers while increased shade infrastructure could establish the plaza as a secondary civic gathering space.

Leverage the planned investment in the Arizona Science Center to connect the existing building to the proposed pedestrian oriented East-West connection through the PCC from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to Heritage Square and to support the future redevelopment of PCC South.

In the near term, the City should explore opportunities to reconfigure the existing retail spaces to better attract tenants. Additionally, any reconfiguration of retail should consider the retail program at the future redevelopment of PCC South to ensure complimentary rather than competitive offerings.

Supported by increased connectivity to the PCC and downtown as a whole, Heritage Square should be publicized as a go to City controlled site available to community organizations to host programming.

The current property owners are advancing reactivation of the property with increased retail tenancing (4 new F&B concepts, three clothing stores, and art galleries), improvements to public art, signage, hosting the downtown Farmer's Market and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street facades. Additionally, they are fully occupied with educational space with ASU and private office space for SmithGroup on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.





# Topic F: Retail Activation

## IMPACT STATEMENT

Diverse and well-curated retail, adding a fine-grained texture of activity between larger anchor institutions, can facilitate users' seamless transition across downtown, driving foot traffic and enlivening the public realm, while also serving the distinct wants and needs of residents, workers, students, and tourists.

## OBSERVATIONS

downtown Phoenix hosts an increasingly exciting retail community with over 300+ businesses, at least one third of which offer a food and beverage program and many of which are locally-owned. Recent development in downtown has established a wider customer base for retail offerings. The increased customer base, paired with a well-organized grassroots community development corporation, established a densely energetic retail cluster along Roosevelt Row. That node boasts a unique capacity to serve as a living room type space for some of downtown's biggest gatherings (e.g., First Fridays), while remaining consistently activated as an equal parts arts and food destination on a day-to-day basis. In addition to the relatively recent success of the Roosevelt Row retail corridor, a long-standing food and beverage-oriented retail cluster serving downtown's office workers is further bolstered by the developments of Cityscape and the former Block 23.

While population growth and the continued ascension of Phoenix's profile on the national and international stage drive new demand for retail experiences, downtown cannot yet claim the diversity of offerings that similar destinations across the Valley or the United States are able to provide. The addition of Fry's addressed a long-standing need for a grocery store, but the broad set of downtown users are still unable to find options for destination retail or a range of fine dining, meaning at times they seek those retail experiences elsewhere. Additionally, the level of retail-type activation of the streetscape, whether coordinated events or bespoke vendors, is not commensurate with the scale of downtown and Phoenix's status as a leading city.

Retail offerings are also not evenly dispersed across downtown, with some notable gaps near major anchor institutions such as around the PCC and Chase Field. These gaps in retail activity can create disconnected pockets lacking liveliness across downtown and serve as a perceived obstacle that blocks users from finding their way to the next great experience.

# Topic F: Retail Activation

## OPPORTUNITIES

Phoenix can build on the recent gains in the downtown retail experience and advance a more cohesive network of activated retail spaces. In the immediate future, there is an opportunity to better connect existing retail nodes with temporary street level activation in vacant spaces through the Entertainment District. A curated approach to activation that could include a selection of local businesses and artists could establish a consistent presence along key corridors in downtown, offering a compliment to existing retail that would enhance the vibrancy of the pedestrian experience, encouraging visitors to explore offerings beyond their initial destination.

Even with a retail experience bolstered by temporary activation, clear physical gaps between downtown's existing retail destinations may remain. Between long standing buildings and new mixed-use developments, downtown hosts many vacant or underutilized

retail spaces that could support activation. Targeted investments and support programs can support small businesses in accessing their first storefront retail space. As referenced in the Real Estate topic of this section, new development efforts must consider opportunities to provide new retail space to portions of downtown where there is a shortage of offerings.

Downtown is slated for significant future development, particularly marquee sites that the City currently controls, presenting the opportunity to shape the design and distribution of new retail spaces. Whether prioritizing active ground floor retail in the Regency Garage redevelopment that can host F&B and community gatherings to serve as an amenity to the PCC or prioritizing an expansive F&B program ranging from a food hall to fine dining for the redevelopment of PCC South, the City can play an active role in cultivating an increasingly diverse retail scene in more areas of downtown.



# Topic F: Retail Activation

## ACTIONS

**F1. Promote temporary activations in vacant spaces in the Entertainment District along key corridors,** focusing on primary corridors like Jefferson and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (from Jefferson Street up to Roosevelt Row) and the secondary corridors that connect to key entertainment venues/sites (Adams Street, Monroe Street, Taylor Street, etc.)

Temporary activation must meet the regulations for type of use and services provided, ensuring activations are not just for the promotion/benefit of the individual business, but also the collective success of the downtown community that is shaping the identity/culture of the Entertainment District. Regulations could include requiring an official business license; use/service must be associated with local retailers, F+B, artists, performers, etc. that support the character of the Entertainment District.

**F2. Leverage City owned real estate and philanthropic partnerships to establish a third-party property management organization that can offer subsidized retail space or artist studio space in support of the creation/growth of local small businesses.** The City owns a significant amount of downtown real estate. Whether that real estate already includes retail space (East Garage) or may be redeveloped to include retail space (Regency Garage, PCC South, etc.), the City can leverage its ownership by leasing space at market rents to a third party operator supported by philanthropic funding sources or other capital, which can in turn offer subsidized retail space in support of the creation and growth of local small businesses, particularly those in the F&B and clothing industries. As the City explores this partnership structure, close coordination with legal staff should ensure the approach remains aligned with the requirements of the regulations of Arizona's "Gift Clause".

Filling vacant retail spaces can increase activity and foot traffic, diversify retail offerings, and serve as an amenity to distressed properties experiencing high vacancy in downtown. Typically, programs offering subsidized retail space are operated by non-profit, economic development-oriented entities (similar to downtown Phoenix Inc. or Local First Arizona) through partnerships with local landlords. Examples of similar programs can be found in Seattle Restored, downtown Austin Alliance's Space Activation, or Fort Lauderdale's Zero Empty Spaces programs. In the same way that those programs partner with downtown landlords at key locations to identify pathways to subsidized rents (philanthropic funding to offset rents or even accepting temporary activation at a lower rent to make use of otherwise vacant space), as a large downtown landlord, the City of Phoenix could partner with philanthropy and the non-profit community for City-owned retail space.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development
- Neighborhood Services Department
- Planning and Development Department
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Local First Arizona

# Things To Do

## Looking for things to do?

We've got options.

Welcome to Downtown Phoenix, where vibrant city life meets authentic Southwestern charm.

Whether you're here to explore local art, indulge in culinary delights, catch a game, or simply soak in the unique energy of Arizona's capital, Downtown Phoenix offers something for every kind of adventurer.

<b>BARS &amp; RESTAURANTS</b> 240	<b>THEATRE SEATS</b> 12.5 K	<b>MURALS</b> 150	<b>PRO SPORTS</b> 3
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# Topic G: Marketing & Branding

## IMPACT STATEMENT

Downtown has evolved past its daytime employment and sporting event destination reputation and is becoming a place for visitors, employees, and residents of all types. More intentional marketing collaborations between institutions and a stronger focus on human-focused storytelling can amplify a brand that emphasizes the collection of experiences in downtown Phoenix that can't be replicated anywhere else.

## OBSERVATIONS

Downtown's current success and growth trajectory owes largely to the efforts of many players who have consistently told its story through their specific voices. These stories have often centered on elevating downtown as a sports or major event destination, or reinforcing its image as an arts, entertainment, and employment hub to those most inclined to visit. This work has served to create a collection of captive audiences that views downtown as the place to be for their type of experience.

Downtown has since reached a new stage of maturity—one where it is becoming more widely perceived as a collection of unique neighborhoods or districts that hold a place for residents, students, employees, and visitors of all types during different times, not just for special occasions. These users are not just visiting (or living) downtown to have a singular experience; rather, they view downtown's neighborhoods as a collection of places to gather, dine, experience cultural amenities, and share unexpected moments.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Efforts to rebrand downtown Phoenix under alternative names have historically been met with skepticism by those who live, work, and spend leisure time in the area. This plan reaffirms—based on strong and consistent stakeholder input—that the most effective and authentic way to represent the city's urban core is simply as "downtown Phoenix." This straightforward identity resonates with users and reflects the area's evolving character. As downtown continues to grow and diversify, so too should the ways in which it is marketed. Entertainment anchors and local businesses have a unique opportunity to collaborate with one another to reach more marketing channels to amplify this brand beyond traditional platforms. Events like ball games and concerts, while major draws on their own, can be promoted as part of a broader downtown experience—encouraging visitors to explore dining, nightlife, and cultural offerings before and after the main event. This approach not only enhances the visitor experience but also increases the duration, frequency, and economic impact of visits to downtown Phoenix. Downtown's

# Topic G: Marketing & Branding

growing audience for event and destination attendees, combined with its fast-growing residential population present multiple avenues to tell more human-centered stories. These stories can go beyond just how people experience downtown, but what those experiences mean to people from all walks of life. This can also include storytelling about our history—of downtown, of the City, the Valley, and the State. Downtown is but

one destination in a crowded field of regional draws, but also one that has the potential to be unlike any other due to its history and role that it has played and will continue to play. Targeted promotional efforts, especially in competing markets, can bring greater awareness of the many activities, entertainment destinations, or food and beverage options that are available to potential downtown visitors.

## ACTIONS

**G1. Hire a creative marketing agency to create an awareness campaign for the “downtown Phoenix” brand** which will amplify downtown’s identity as a must-visit destination for regional residents in addition to tourists.

downtown is a major destination, but an increased focus on downtown’s history, local resident stories, and human connection can emphasize the many unique neighborhoods of downtown. An approach that tells the story of downtown as the array of neighborhoods will establish downtown as a place where people gather, dine, experience cultural amenities, and share unexpected moments. The creative marketing agency can explore ways to highlight and amplify Jefferson Street corridor and the area adjacent to the PCC. Additionally, the awareness campaign should emphasize the use of public transit as a means of accessing downtown.

**G2. Facilitate a cohesive marketing strategy for cultural corridors**, building on existing planning efforts for corridors that represent the different cultures or identities across Phoenix. Signage along the heritage/cultural walking trails should align with the messaging and design aesthetic established by the marketing agency engaged under Action G1.

Cultural Corridors are being developed throughout Phoenix (Central City South, Rio Salado, Central Avenue/Central Idea, Heritage Square, Miracle Mile (McDowell)). All are relevant for connections between downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. Similar examples include Tempe Historic Sites and Papago Park, and Gilbert Heritage Walk. Coordinate the collection of art pieces/landmarks across downtown and along the light rail to connect all cultural areas. Utilize partner’s existing event calendar assets to promote a wide-range of cultural, artistic, and general events in each corridor and throughout downtown.

## KEY PARTNERS

- Community and Economic Development
- Phoenix Convention Center
- Communications Office
- Office of Arts and Culture
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Visit Phoenix
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Phoenix Suns/Phoenix Mercury
- Arizona Science Center
- Herberger Theater Center
- Roosevelt Row CDC
- Phoenix Symphony Hall



FOOTPRINT CENTER



SUPER BOWL LVII

UPCOMING EVENTS

93.3

ARIZONA'S ALTERNATIVE





# Topic H: Governance and Funding

## IMPACT STATEMENT

As the City pursues the tactics to create an active and connected collection of entertainment destinations in downtown, it will need to utilize already-existing tools, explore new ways of using existing tools, and, where necessary, create new mechanisms to fund and implement these tactics.

## OBSERVATIONS

Phoenix's growth has been exceptional in terms of new residents, companies, jobs, and overall vitality. Much of this owes to policies and investments that the City has made to diversify its economy, build new housing options, revitalize underinvested neighborhoods, invest in new transportation modes, and plan for a more urban and sustainable future. From this standpoint, downtown can be observed as a distillation of these policies and investments in one compact geography.

The policies the City has relied on for growing into the country's fifth largest are similar to those utilized to encourage downtown's transformation over last 20+ years. This includes direct investment of public funds into projects like the light rail starter line, the PCC's West and North Building's expansions, development of the Sheraton Phoenix downtown, or improvements like the Hance Park Master Plan or development of Civic Space Park. Other successes can be attributed to innovative partnerships the City has led with collaborators like in the case of Arizona State University's significant downtown Campus expansion, the redevelopment of the former Block 23 site into the CityScape project, and renovation of the home arena for the Phoenix Suns and Mercury, and numerous other residential, hospitality and other projects developed via City policy and financing incentives.

The City continues to utilize tools like Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET) incentives, General Obligation (G.O.) Bond program funds, and partnerships with public and private entities, especially in the case of its close relationship with Downtown Phoenix Inc. and their resultant management of the Enhanced Municipal Services District, to continue investments in downtown.

# Topic H: Governance and Funding

## OPPORTUNITIES

For downtown to realize its fullest potential as an 18-hour live, work, and play district, the City will need to: continue utilizing all policy and funding tools at its disposal, strengthen its relationships with critical implementation partners, and create additional mechanisms to fund and implement an array of public and private projects that remain critical to this vision.

The **2023 G.O. Bond** identifies projects and funding for several downtown projects managed by various departments and efforts should be made to align these investments with this Plan, where possible, to increase their combined effects. Traditionally, these have included funding for uses such as:

- Heat Resiliency Funds for Tree Planting, Green Infrastructure, and Cool Corridors projects that can connect anchors with surrounding neighborhoods.

- Equity Based Transportation Mobility projects to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections with trees, shade, and protected bike lanes between the core of downtown to neighborhoods immediately to the south.
- Arts and Culture bond-funded projects that are themselves downtown entertainment destinations and should be more intentionally connected with other anchors including Children’s Museum of Phoenix Expansion, Phoenix Center for the Arts Theater Improvements, and the Latino Cultural Center development, especially along corridors that connect to entertainment anchors - 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Central.

The **City’s use of GPLET** was defined with more specific goals and procedures in its 2022 policy update (Policy #C106). This update explicitly names the creation of an “Entertainment District”



# Topic H: Governance and Funding

as a goal but also more generally espouses goals that are well-aligned with the recommendations in this report including promoting better and more walkable connections between downtown neighborhoods and centers of activity, providing more opportunities for retail and other small and ground-floor businesses, and creating more open space, public art and overall improved public realm.

Streetscape improvements, shade, and public art are investments that will require more significant funding and innovative governance structures. A useful precedent to advance these projects is the **Streetscape Improvement District** that was created by Council in the 1990s and which is overseen by Downtown Phoenix Inc. Expansion of the current district or creation of new districts should prioritize connecting areas of downtown that are already heavily trafficked on foot, have new residential or commercial development that is amenable to increased pedestrian traffic, and/or connects critical entertainment anchors more intentionally. The following corridors should be considered at minimum:

- Jefferson Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- Washington Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Monroe to Lincoln Streets
- 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Fillmore to Lincoln Streets
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Polk to Mortgage Matchup Center and south of Mortgage Matchup Center to Lincoln Street
- 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Hance Park to Grant Street

Additional revenue for streetscape, shade, and public art improvements could be generated through a **Percent for Art Program** applicable to private developments downtown, and from increased diversion of parking meter revenue in the **Parking Special Revenue Fund** in coordination with the Street Transportation Department.

More generally, implementation of the recommendations in this plan will need to draw on other sources that require policy or tax changes or creating new ways of co-governance with strategic partners, including, but not limited to:

- Incorporating the more capital-intensive recommendations in the City's **next G.O. Bond program** will be a crucial need for which planning should commence.
- The **Downtown Phoenix Enhanced Municipal Services District**, especially as managed by Downtown Phoenix Inc., has been a crucial champion and shepherd of downtown's growth since the district's inception in 1990. To ensure the district's funding and programmatic offerings are best positioned to support downtown's next era of growth and maturation, the district should conduct a benchmarking study to understand its comparative position relative to other major metro BIDs in the country, with special focus on revenue, budget, and infrastructure investment and management.
- Supplementing the City's capital investments via the **Capital Improvement Plan**, and next round of G.O. Bond funds, the City and DPI should partner on seeking implementation funds via **philanthropic support**.

In the pursuit of funding and planning for the interventions of this Plan, the City should continue to maintain and strengthen its relationships with major private and non-profit stakeholders who will be critical to the Plan's implementation. The City should also see this Plan as an opportunity to form stronger partnerships with other stakeholders, notably with organizations and institutions from Phoenix's vibrant arts scene to both create unexpected experiences and authentically embed the full spectrum of Phoenician culture, including Latino and Indigenous cultures, across downtown. Potential partners could include the Arizona Latino Arts and Cultural Center, Roosevelt Row CDC, Phoenix Children's Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, Heard Museum, and Artlink Inc.

# Topic H: Governance and Funding

## ACTIONS

**H1. Utilize increased interdepartmental coordination to execute projects identified in the 2023 General Obligation Bond** that will create greater mobility, streetscape, and shade connecting downtown's entertainment anchors and adjacent neighborhoods.

Various departments have projects that were approved as part of the 2023 General Obligation bond that can realize elements stakeholders have identified as critical to the creation of a more lively urban built environment downtown. The 2023 GO Bond identifies projects and funding for several downtown projects managed by various departments and efforts should be made to align these, where possible, to increase their combined effects. These include:

- Heat Resiliency Funds for Tree Planting, Green Infrastructure, and Cool Corridors projects that can connect anchors with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Equity Based Transportation Mobility projects to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections with trees, shade, and protected bike lanes between the core of downtown to neighborhoods immediately to the south.
- Arts & Culture bond-funded projects that are themselves downtown entertainment destinations and should be more intentionally connected with other anchors including Children's Museum of Phoenix Expansion, Phoenix Center for the Arts Theater Improvements, and the Latino Cultural Center development, especially along corridors that connect to entertainment anchors - 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Central.

**H2. Utilize the Streetscape Master Planning and Shade Phoenix Plan as the basis for soliciting philanthropic support** from private donors, crowdfunding campaigns, adopt-a-street efforts, and other grant funding.

Supplementing the City's capital investments via the Capital Improvement Plan, and next round of GO Bond funds, the City and DPI should partner on seeking implementation funds via philanthropic support.

**H3. Leverage strategic partnerships with organizations and institutions from Phoenix's vibrant arts scene to both create unexpected experiences and authentically embed Latino and Indigenous cultures across downtown.** Potential partners could include the Arizona Latino Arts and Cultural Center, Heard Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, Roosevelt Row CDC, Phoenix Children's Museum, and Artlink, Inc. In addition to facilitating partnerships, engagement with organizations should assess and rectify the physical barriers that often preclude members of the Latino or Black community from accessing downtown despite driving its vibrant arts scene.

Increased instances of interactive public art will provide additional activation and authentically embed Latino or Indigenous cultures across downtown. There are two pathways to expand on the existing arts programming: Extending existing events onto the streetscape or into the public space will attract additional visitation and provide greater vibrancy as new users stumble upon the programming. For example, the Arizona Latino Arts and Cultural Center and Artlink, Inc. already host events in their respective gallery spaces within downtown and the Heard Museum and Arizona Center have a robust calendar of events that could be extended to additional locations in downtown like Civic Space Park or Heritage Square.

# Topic H: Governance and Funding

## ACTIONS

**H4. Study the expansion of a new streetscape improvement district(s) within the Enhanced Municipal Services District** for the purpose of funding capital improvements and maintenance of enhanced streetscape corridors that connect downtown’s entertainment anchors.

The current Streetscape Improvement District was approved by Council in the 1990s and maintained by Downtown Phoenix Inc. Expansion of the current district or creation of new districts should prioritize connecting areas of downtown that are already heavily trafficked on foot, have increased residential or commercial development that is amenable to increased pedestrian traffic, and/or connects critical entertainment anchors more intentionally.

The following corridors should be considered at minimum:

- Jefferson Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Monroe to Lincoln Streets
- 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Fillmore to Lincoln Streets
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Polk to Mortgage Matchup Center and south of Mortgage Matchup Center to Lincoln Street
- 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Hance Park to Grant Street

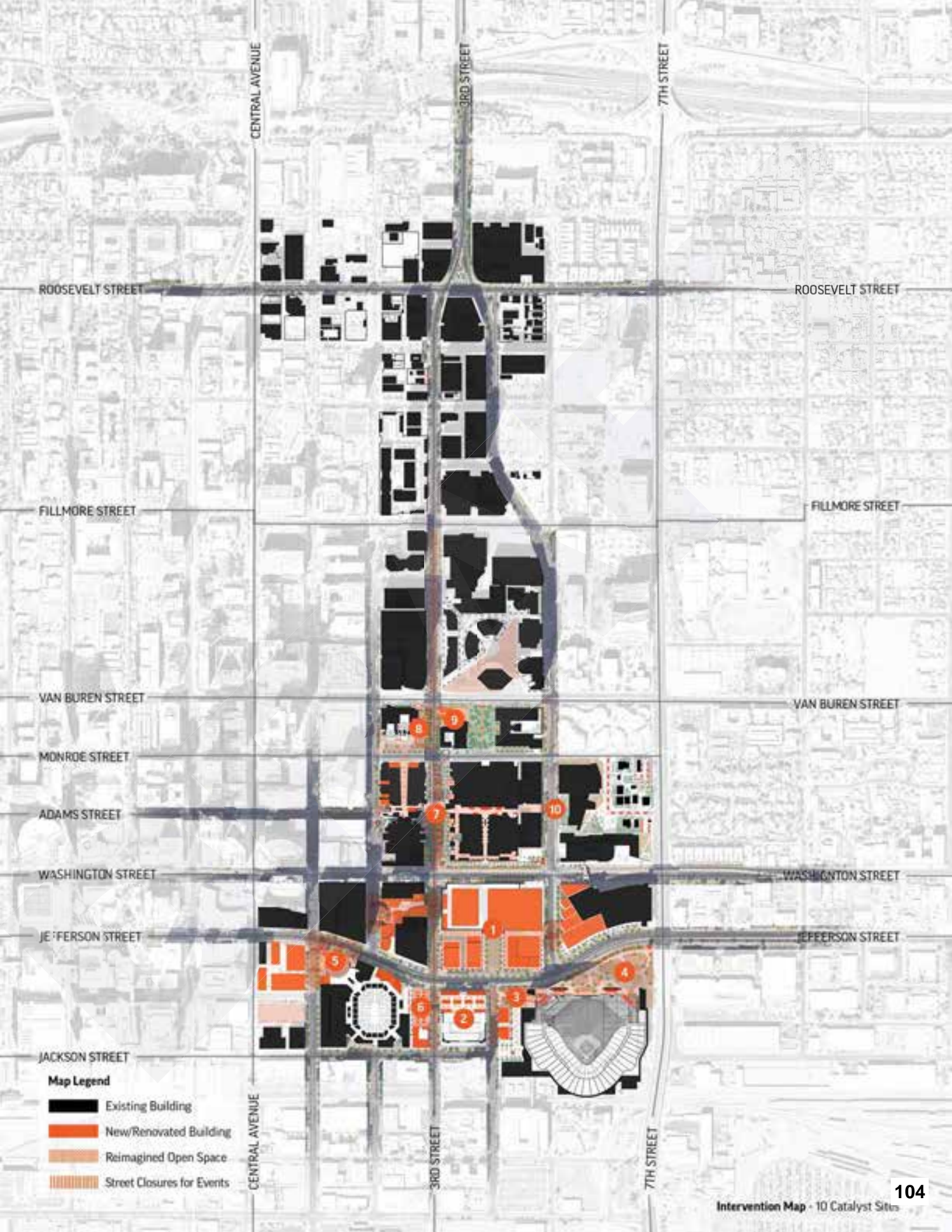
## KEY PARTNERS

- Phoenix City Council
- Office of the City Manager
- Community and Economic Development Department
- Phoenix Convention Center
- Street Transportation Department
- Finance Department
- Office of Arts and Culture
- Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
- Downtown Phoenix Inc.
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Phoenix Suns/Phoenix Mercury
- Arizona Science Center
- Herberger Theater Center
- Roosevelt Row CDC
- Phoenix Symphony Hall



**SECTION FOUR**  
**Intervention Areas**





# Intervention Areas

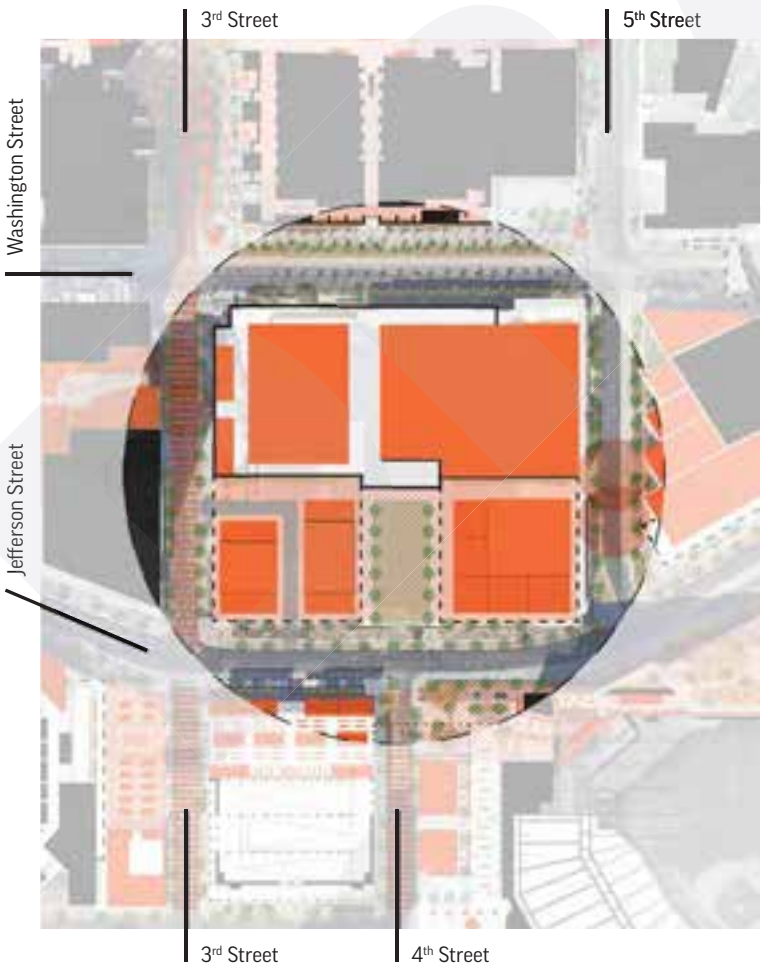
The exploration of potential strategies and improvements throughout downtown Phoenix, paired with comments and feedback from community engagement, led the consultant team to the identification of several opportunity sites for the Entertainment District. The opportunity sites present a variety of conditions that encourage unique design interventions and the overlaying of multiple strategies from this plan to help achieve its goals.

The opportunity sites for the Entertainment District include enhancing the connections among existing sports and performance venues that are spread out across downtown, creating urban islands of entertainment and activity in the city's core. Of critical importance is the need to strengthen connections between these venues and their surrounding communities. A focus on tactical interventions will help maximize the return on investment, as well as break down physical and social barriers currently limiting growth. Activation of the spaces between these critical sites will build upon the culture and history of downtown, utilizing existing and new infrastructure to provide a unique, intergenerational experience for the Entertainment District.

While this study has identified many opportunity sites throughout downtown, ten catalyst locations are essential to establishing a lively and connected Entertainment District experience. These catalyst locations are:

1. Phoenix Convention Center (PCC) South Building (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson)
2. Jefferson Street Garage (3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson)
3. Chase Field Plaza (4<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson)
4. North Parking Lot of Chase Field (7<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson)
5. Mortgage Matchup Center Plaza (1<sup>st</sup> Street & Jefferson)
6. Northeast Parking Lot of Mortgage Matchup Center (3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Jefferson)
7. Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup> at PCC North and West Buildings (3<sup>rd</sup> Street)
8. East Lawn of Herberger Theater (3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Monroe)
9. Northwest Parking Lot of St. Mary's Basilica (3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Van Buren)
10. Interior Corridor of PCC North and West Building (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Street)

Each design intervention proposes new programs and activation opportunities, along with proposed sequencing for the site's evolution (i.e., pilot projects, events, and future redevelopment). The proposed sequencing for each site contemplates an approach that stimulates interest and funding for future capital improvements, offers vibrancy in the meantime, and establishes related place-specific behavior.



## PCC South Expansion

*Phoenix Convention Center South Building –  
3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson Street*

The redevelopment of the PCC on the site of the current South Building is central to the Entertainment District, serving as one of the major venues and sitting at the corner of two major corridors. Activation of the ground plane along Jefferson, Washington, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets will provide new opportunities for food and beverage and retail spaces, with connections to a new public plaza protected by the shade of the new towers and trees. Two new towers, with hotel and market driven supportive development, will introduce a new central hub for residents and visitors, providing close proximity to many of the Entertainment District’s venues and attractions.



PCC South Expansion - Concept Render

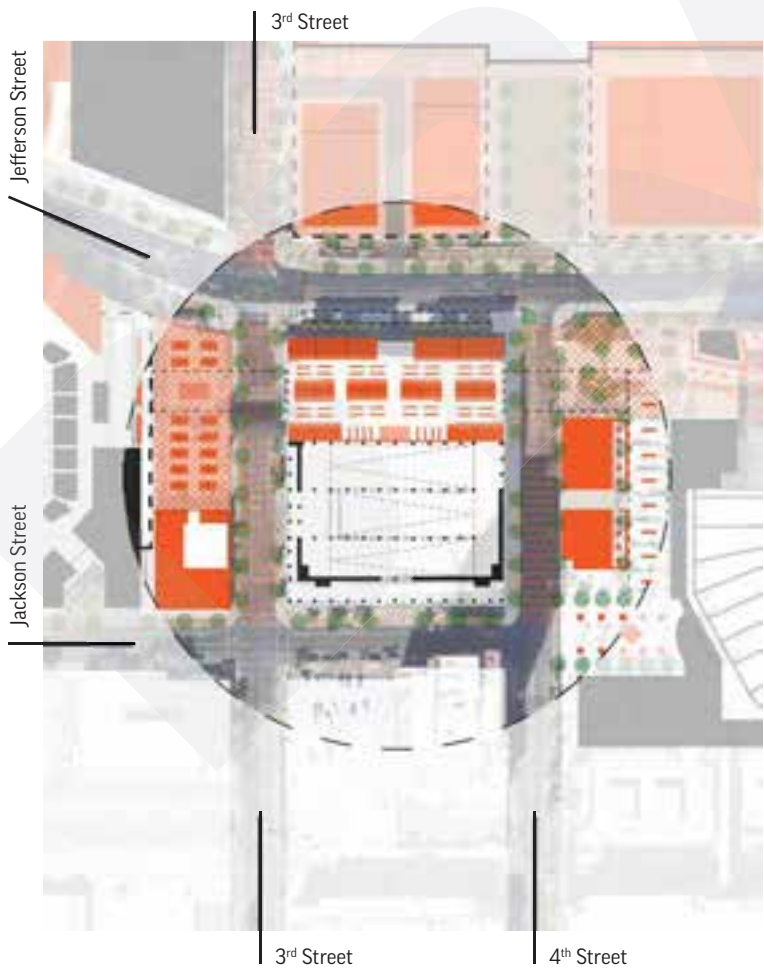
#### DETAILS:

- An iconic new central public space, including opportunity for indoor-outdoor connections for public programming, creating a new center for public gatherings downtown.
- Food, beverage, and retail spaces provided on the ground level of hotel and residential towers, enhancing Jefferson, Washington, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets, offering the opportunity to support new uses not yet present in downtown (e.g., food hall).
- Convention expansion to include new meeting/conference space, galleries, and integrate with new food and beverage, retail, and public spaces.
- Road providing valet service and covered spots for exclusive cars; also could serve as an extension of food, beverage, and retail spaces.
- Signage for local venues and events on the facades of tower bases.
- Exterior corridor connection between Collier Center and retail in Level 1 of East Garage. Opportunity to create unexpected moments in the space; art corridor with murals and installations, rotating interactive gallery, etc.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Event** - Continue/Expand PCC events. Maintain programming along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and increase long term activity along the Jefferson Street corridor.

**New** - New South Convention Building with towers for with hotel and market driven supportive development. Tower Base features opportunities for new amenities such as a range of food and beverage options and a new iconic civic gathering space.



## Market Station

*Jefferson Street Garage - 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson*

Opening the double height space of the north end of the Jefferson Street Garage and the adjacent historic building creates a double-sided pavilion to enhance the gameday experience for Chase Field and the Mortgage Matchup Center. The renovation adds formal and informal mercantile uses and expands the light rail stop giving it greater significance as a major transportation hub for big game and convention activities, as well as local patrons. The new public space provides a shaded corridor that centrally connects the sports venues and offers opportunities for vending like food stalls, farmers markets, and sales of sports memorabilia.



#### DETAILS:

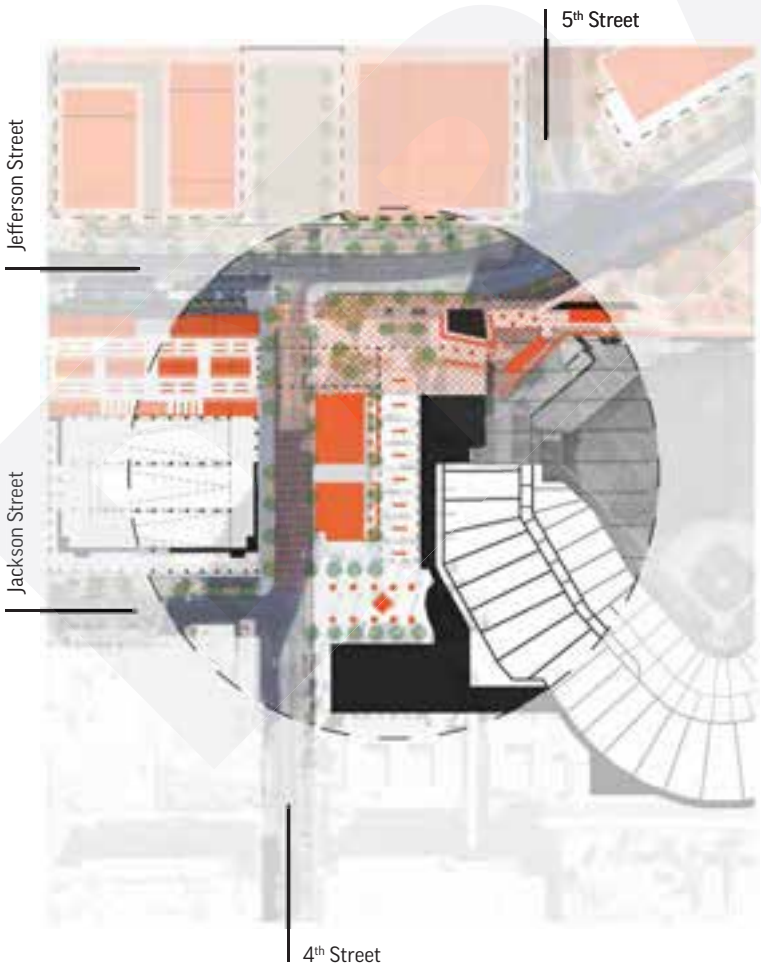
- Remove facades at north, east, and west ends of the garage.
- Open historic building to garage side with local food and culture.
- Revise sidewalk/curb/surfaces to better connect from east to west.
- Expand the “misted zone” from the Chase Field Plaza to the Mortgage Matchup Center to ensure comfort, especially in the hotter seasons.
- Remove pedestrian bridge between garage and Mortgage Matchup Center; rework vertical circulation of garage.
- Modernize “Legends” signage with more immersive and/or dynamic content.
- Incorporate new tree plantings for both softening and shade.
- Enliven with environmental and artistic lighting threaded through the garage to establish continuity across the hardscape that connects venues for both sports teams.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Free vendor spots, selected by lottery, with an emphasis on local businesses - Monday, Wednesday, Friday and game days.

**Event** - Pre- and post-games, Art Detour exhibition space, Viva Phoenix performance space.

**New** - Remove garage for higher use that expands public space and connectivity; new food, beverage, and retail options. Intertwine infrastructure needs with greater number of uses.



## Diamondbacks Plaza

*Chase Field Plaza - 4<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson*

The redesign of Diamondbacks Plaza into an entertainment hub is centered around the connection of the ballpark plaza, private on-site buildings, and Chase Field. Weaving the programs of these three spaces creates a new destination and provides complementary uses to Jefferson Street Garage and PCC South. The new plaza presents a stage for pop-up vendors and organized events that can function independently or as an amenity to events at Chase Field. Shade, from both trees and solar canopies, provides a space for visitors to escape the heat and socialize. No longer serving as a one-stop destination, the Diamondbacks Plaza provides locals and visitors with several activity options for an entire evening of entertainment.



Diamondbacks Plaza - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

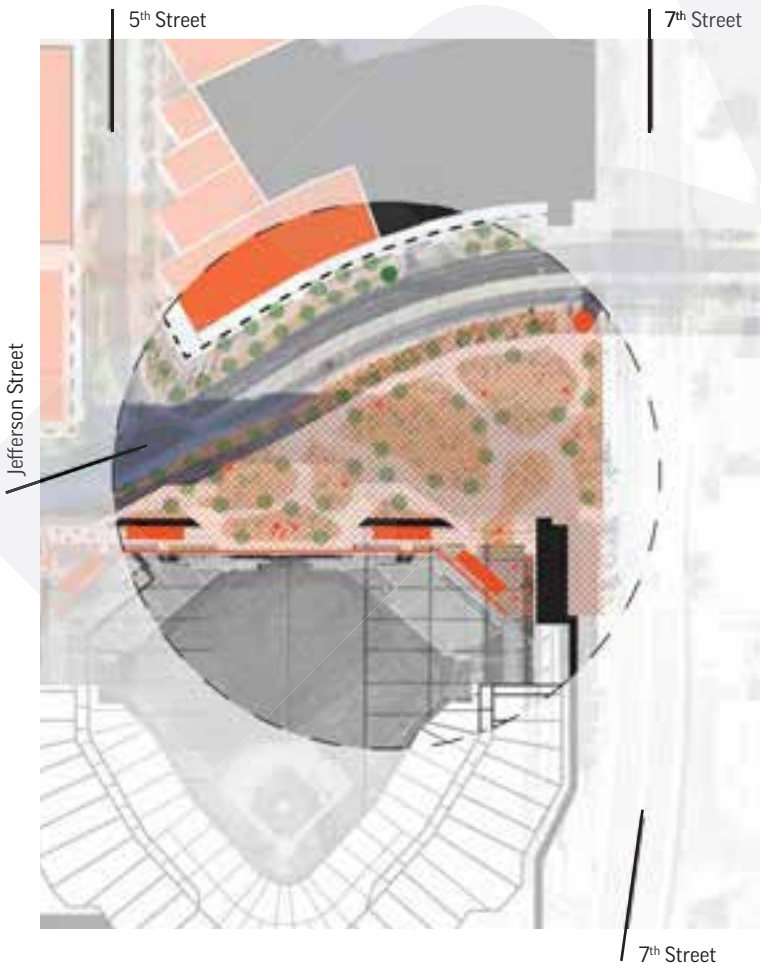
- Redesign the hardscaped area at the corner of Jefferson and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets with shade structures, trees, and landscaped zones to create pockets for activities.
- Activate the space between Chase Field and Guy Fieri's/Sportsbook Building. Take advantage of the existing shade from the solar canopies by hosting vendors for game day, farmer's markets on the weekend, art installations, etc.
- As part of the overall improvements to the ballpark, redesign the Guy Fieri's/Sportsbook Building to open out and present the program to 4<sup>th</sup> Street, creating a visual connection between the activity at Chase Field and Jefferson Street Garage improvements.
- Open up solid portions of the northwest facade of ballpark and activate the space with food and beverage on gamedays with operable glass doors.
- Create a landscape buffer with a mix of native and desert-adapted trees and plants along the light rail guardrail, providing visual comfort to pedestrians.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Vendor spots outside of Chase Field on game days. Promote happy hour/discount deals at Guy Fieri's/Sportsbook Building after games to encourage continued engagement.

**Event** - Pre-and post games, event-free weekends.

**New** - Redesign ballpark plaza, private buildings, and Chase Field into a cohesive hub of activities.



## Sonora Field

*North Parking Area of Chase Field -  
7<sup>th</sup> Street & Jefferson*

This corner welcomes visitors to a desert city. Mounded desert and grass landscapes marry the opportunity to experience the unique desert landscape of the region with playful natural grass mounds—opportunities to experience, play, or sit. A network of paths promotes the flow of people from nearby parking venues to venue waiting areas. New venues on the north support pregame and post-game food and beverage options. Curating a mix of local businesses in the retail spaces in the East Garage connects visitors to PCC South, Heritage & Science Park, Chase Field, and Mortgage Matchup Center.

Sonora Field - Concept Site Plan



Sonora Field - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

- Create a public park with a mix of desert native and desert-adapted landscaping, grass grounds, benches, lighting, and infrastructure to extend the mist zone for event days at Chase Field. This would be an ideal location for visitors to encounter a saguaro—a key request as voiced by stakeholders.
- Replace the “Legends” marquee with other forms of shade and experiential art.
- Update the advertising installations on the East Garage to create dynamic video signage.
- Modernize “Legends” signage with improved visual displays and revised visual content of advertisements
- Incorporate new tree plantings for both softening and shade.
- Enliven with environmental and artistic lighting threaded through the garage to establish continuity across the hardscape that connects venues for both sports teams. Open up solid portions of the northwest facade of ballpark and activate the space with food and beverage on gamedays with operable glass doors.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Vendor spots outside of Chase Field on game days. Provide temporary shade structures to create space to gather pre- and post-game.

**Event** - Pre- and post-game, event-free weekends.

**New** - Remove parking lot and replace it with a park space for visitors that represents desert identity. Incorporate accessible parking within redesigned corner and in local garages with accessible routes to the entry.

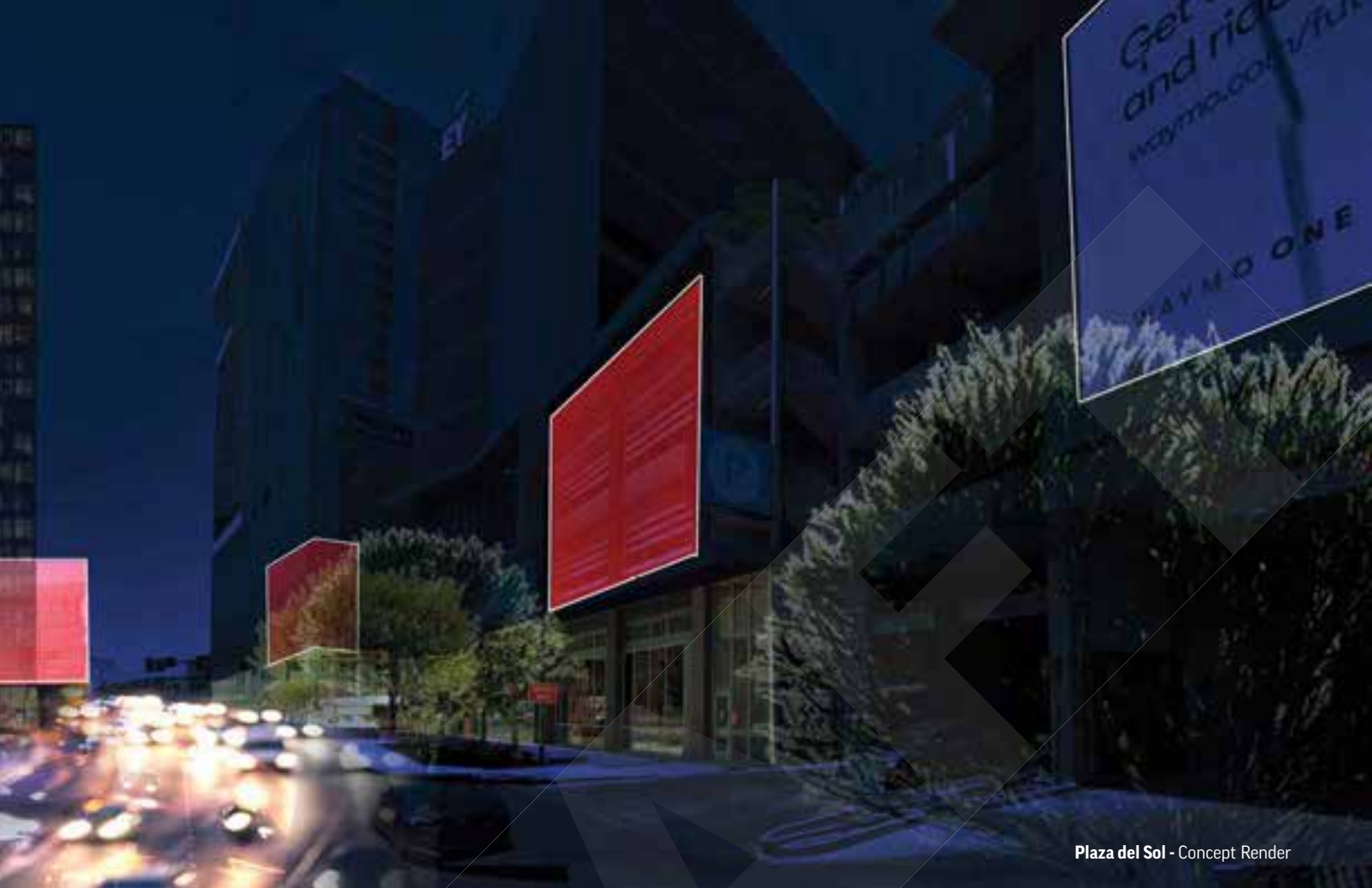


## Plaza del Sol

*Mortgage Matchup Center Plaza - 1<sup>st</sup> Street & Jefferson*

The openness of a new outdoor plaza establishes a theater-in-the-round-style space to complement the surrounding urban fabric. The plaza embraces its openness, capable of operating as a public gallery boasting nationally significant public art installations that attracts visitors, whether temporary or permanent. The plaza embraces the collection of activities that form along 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Jefferson Street, and the nearby light rail station.

Plaza del Sol - Concept Site Plan



Plaza del Sol - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

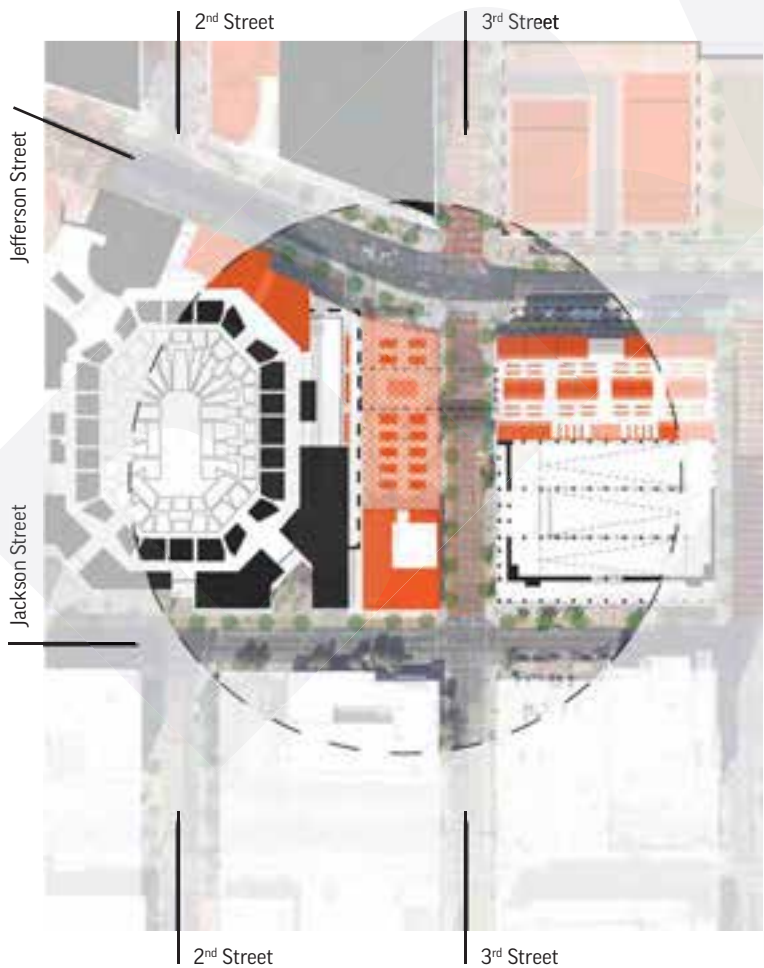
- Orient new developments at adjacent properties so their facades to face the plaza with a mostly continuous digital display
- Commission place-specific nationally significant public art at a civic scale that considers social and environmental climate in its expression.
- Expand the civic programming of the space for everyday activities such as music, public performance, games, and outdoor dining.
- Create a landscape buffer with a mix of native and desert-adapted trees and plants along the light rail guardrail, providing visual comfort to pedestrians.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Promote daily, weekly, and monthly cadences of interactive performance or pop-up art exhibitions for community gatherings; set example for 'unexpected moments' and build an audience.

**Event** - Arts in the Plaza (similar to Tempe's 'Arts in the Park') on event-free weekends.

**New** - Redesign plaza with sculptural shade structures and lighting, design for flexible-use/activity.



## The Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Mortgage Matchup Center Parking Lot - 3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Jefferson*

The Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> presents an opportunity for a new venue for a wide range of programs and activities near the Mortgage Matchup Center and other destinations in the downtown core. The outdoor venue can become a home for large-scale gatherings - sports fans can come together to watch the Triple Crown, music fans to catch the latest local act, or pre- and post-event activities at the arena. A new shade structure spans the entire space, offering opportunities for both large-scale events and multiple smaller scale programs through the division of the space. Private events hosted by the Mortgage Matchup Center can transform the space into a unique performance amenity, while local groups can activate the space at all other times of the year for temporary uses such as creative performances or markets. As a featured destination along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Jefferson, the Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> presents year-round entertainment opportunities to locals and visitors of Phoenix.

**The Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Concept Site Plan



The Lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

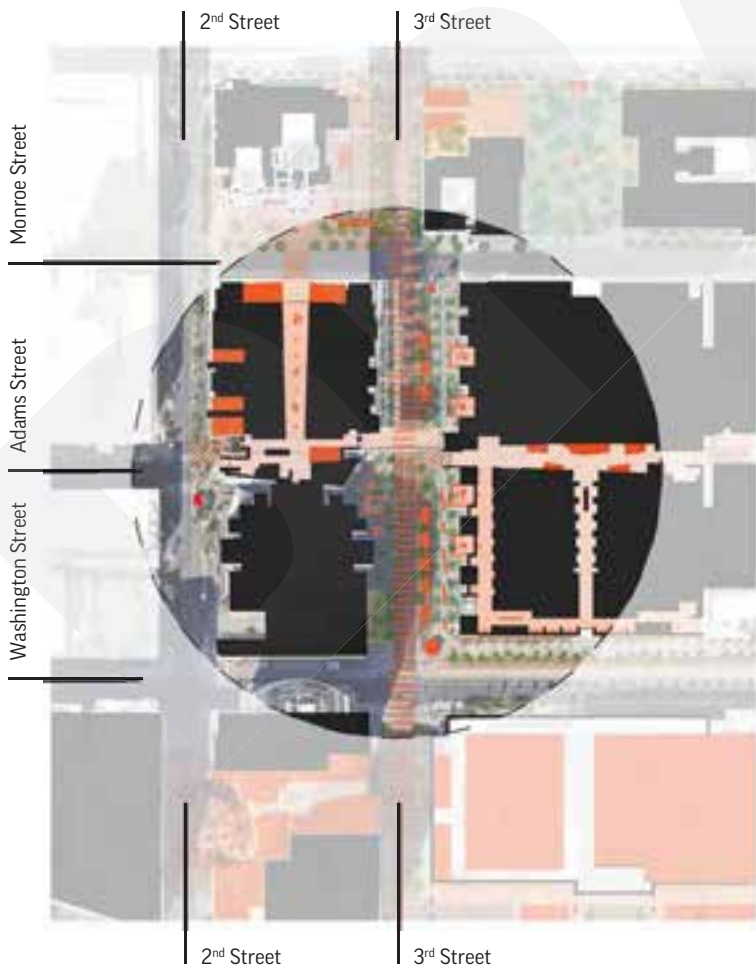
- Convert the parking lot at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Jefferson Street into a year-round flexible use space. The space should be open to the public and could be used for events related to Mortgage Matchup Center programming or as a venue for community organized events when the Arena is inactive.
- Adapt the historic Sun Mercantile Building to include new entertainment and cultural uses, such as an art gallery, restaurant, events venue, or a brewery. The new uses should tie into the flexible space outside and be an amenity of the Mortgage Matchup Center and Entertainment District. A venue that has a changing program over time can add more repeat visits to downtown.
- Create a landscape buffer with a mix of native and desert-adapted trees and plants along the light rail guardrail, providing visual comfort to pedestrians.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Promote daily, weekly, and monthly cadences of interactive performance or pop-up art exhibitions for community gatherings; set example for 'unexpected moments' and build an audience.

**Event** - Pre- and post amenities that support games/events.

**New** - Redesign parking lot with new shade structure, new plaza with flexible programming layout, adaptive reuse of Sun's Mercantile Building.



## Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Phoenix Convention Center - 3<sup>rd</sup> Street*

Improvements to the Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup> should focus on enhancing its current identity. The transformation of existing convention-only food and retail venues into day-to-day services provides locals and visitors with convenient amenities. Adding shared spaces along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street creates opportunities for activation: whether space for food trucks, pop-up vendors in the drop-off zones, or open space for street performers and musicians. Private courts are transformed into public spaces for sculpture gardens and shade pavilions. While the buildings and existing trees already provide a great deal of shade around the PCC, continuing the placement of trees along the sidewalk will create a more comfortable environment to entice pedestrians to travel further along the corridor.

**Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Concept Site Plan



Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup> - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

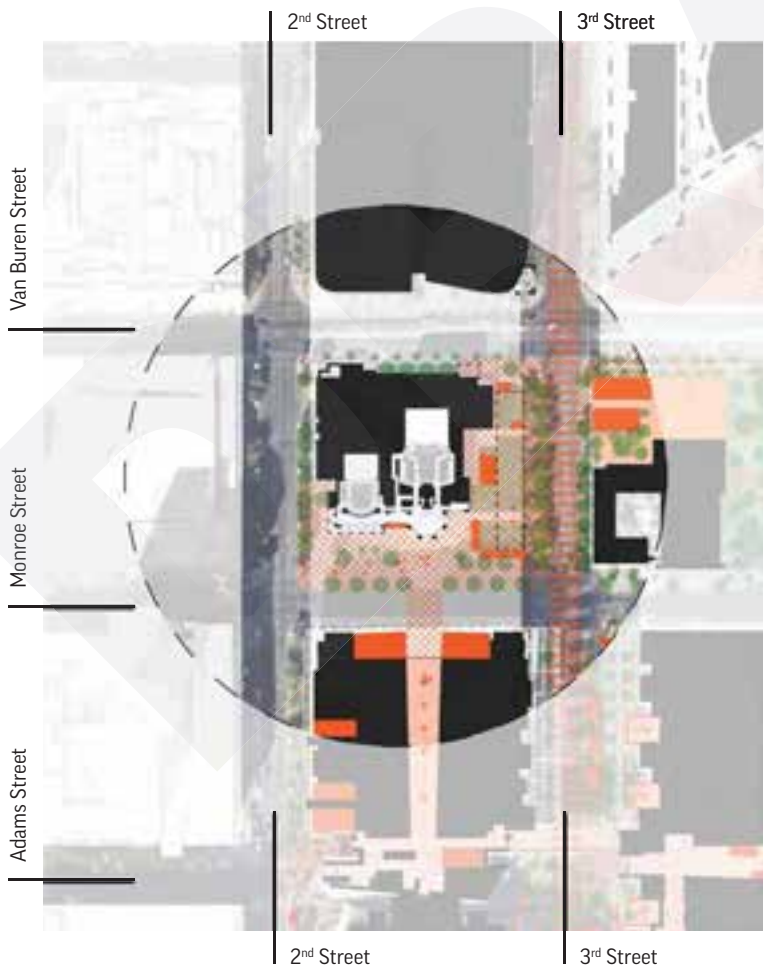
- Incentivize convention attendees and employees to visit nearby storefronts outside the convention center for food and beverage choices. Leverage the underutilized, private courtyards adjacent to convention rooms as a rotating exhibition space or a publicly accessible court with connection to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Install new paving and materials to create visually separate drop-off areas along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and establish flexible space for public activation when there are no planned convention events. Allow for non-convention event gathering in an area that already successfully accommodates event on weekdays
- Provide greater wayfinding/directory to other areas of the city for amenities
- Active and improve visibility of PCC's first floor retail spaces along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Incorporate opportunities for murals, art installations and improve interactive signage throughout the Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Continue to activate outdoor space and direct visitors to local venues.

**Event** - Continue Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup> events.

**New** - Improvements to Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup> with updates to streetscape, food/concession venues, and private courtyards. Improve entries to the existing convention center to promote greater visibility and transparency.



## The Pavilion

*Herberger Theater - 3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Monroe Street*

The Pavilion serves as an extension of one of Arizona's foremost arts institutions, Herberger Theater, introducing a unique venue for the community to engage with the performing arts. The Pavilion features a state-of-the-art stage for a variety of concerts and performances. A new solar pavilion serves as an innovative and sculptural structure, providing shade to patrons during the day and opportunities for interactive lighting at night. A new building on the south end of the Pavilion doubles as a coffee shop for day-to-day public use and a full-service bar to serve public and private performances. The Pavilion with its lawn presents an exciting new program to Herberger Theater, helping expand its audience and creating new connections to the Entertainment District.

**The Pavilion** - Concept Site Plan



The Pavilion - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

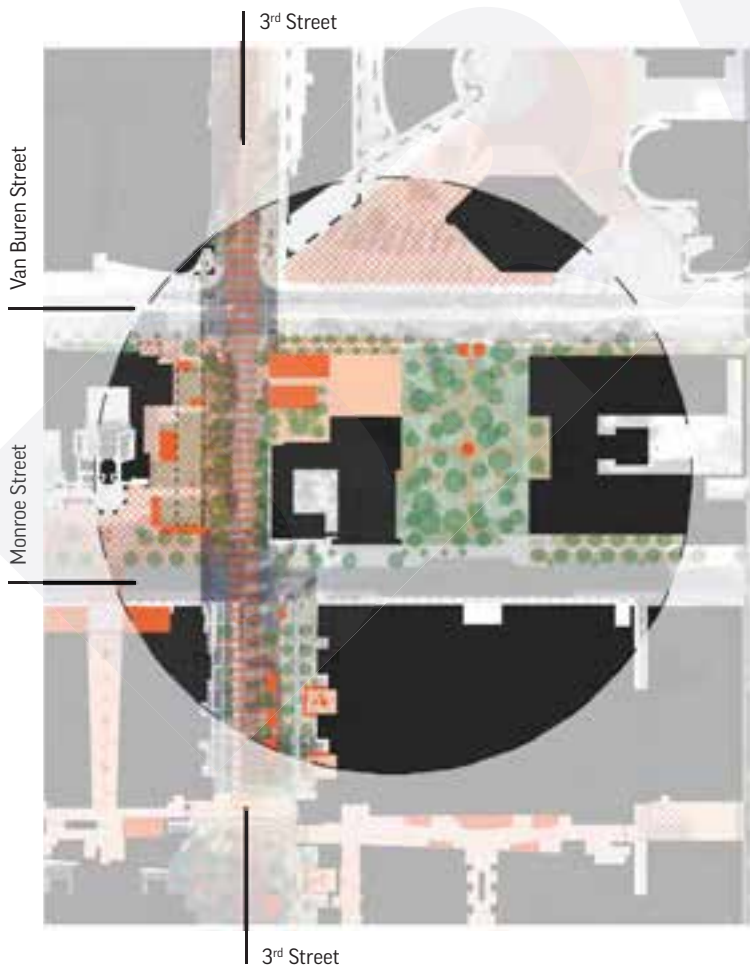
- The addition of a permanent stage for art performances, concerts, and shows.
- A permanent shade structure over the Pavilion for event seating, markets, galleries, or daily local/visitor uses.
- A new building on the south end of the Pavilion to serve as a multi-functional food and beverage space, with both day-to-day and event- focused functions.
- The corners of the Pavilion are adaptable for food trucks and vendors that will support events at Herberger Theater and the Pavilion.
- An indoor-outdoor service window will convert the interior bar of Herberger Theater to a full-service bar for both performances and outdoor events.

#### SEQUENCE:

**Pilot** - Continue to promote pop-up concerts and performances that are open to the public and free of charge; build up the audience for Herberger Theater and local performing arts groups.

**Event** - Nights on the Lawn, bi-monthly event that can complement Roosevelt Row's First Fridays and serve as an amenity for Canyon on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**New** - Redesign plaza with new shade pavilion, stage, and building, design for flexible-use/activity.

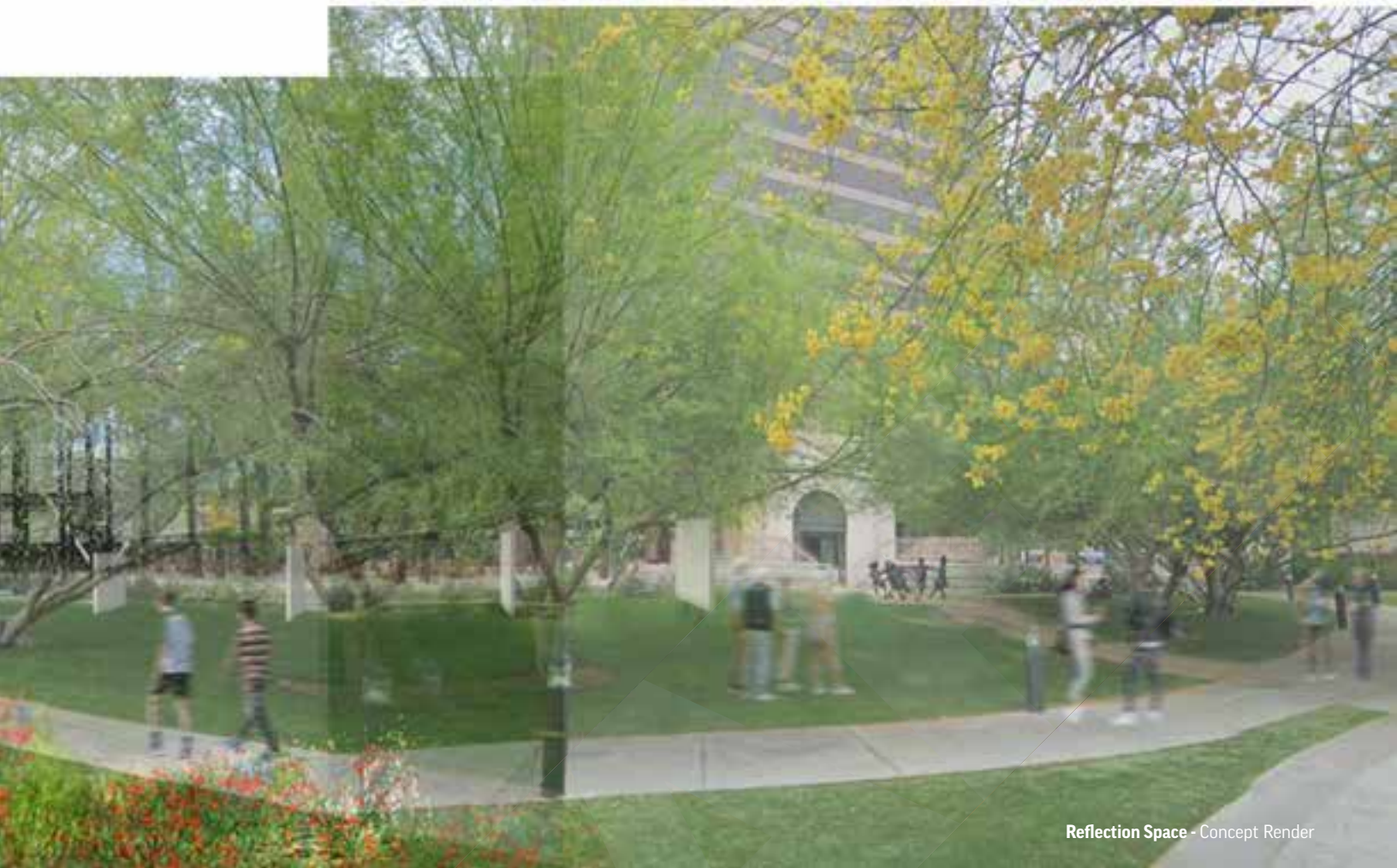


## Reflection Space

*St. Mary's Basilica North Parking Lot - 3<sup>rd</sup> Street & Van Buren Street*

The conversion of the parking lot into a Reflection Space will introduce a new place for the community to gather and reflect. Open to the public, the space lends a contemplative respite to find shade and quiet in an energetic downtown. As a work of art, the shade structure that spans multiple small-scale gathering places that can support flexible uses and share the history of the Catholic Diocese importance placed on conversation and reflection and actions in supporting community over time. Welcoming to all people, the central plaza and courtyard have the ability to serve as everyday reflection for the public and onsite residents, while also having the necessary infrastructure to support events.

**Reflection Space** - Concept Site Plan



Reflection Space - Concept Render

#### DETAILS:

- A new pavilion, with a shade structure and small-scale building and gathering spaces would be operated by St. Mary's and the Diocese of Phoenix, but open to the community for shared use with a flexible program.
- Art that includes story telling expands this point of pride to further convey the history of the St. Mary's Basilica and the Diocese in building assets for the entire community.
- A landscape buffer with desert trees and plants along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Van Buren to provide shade, welcoming those on their way to Roosevelt Row, the Arizona Center, or the PCC.

#### SEQUENCE:

- Pilot** - Continue to invite all people to the landscaped space, relocate parking at this corner and invite pop-up events along with First Friday's on the corner.
- Event** - Silent Auction, supports local artists and sculptures and presents opportunities to raise donations for charity groups to support funding for the Reflection Space.
- New** - Redesign parking lot with new pavilion, central plaza and courtyard, and new trees/landscaping.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Street Canopy

5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Street & Adams Street

Given the potential of 5<sup>th</sup> Street as a key corridor within the Entertainment District, there is an opportunity to create a new open space connection between the PCC North Building and Arizona Science Center. The expansion of the Arizona Science Center Creative Building's west lawn creates a new park space for the community by removing existing site walls and the drop-off lane. The addition of a shade structure that spans 5<sup>th</sup> Street can connect the PCC North's interior corridor to this new park, while the surrounding open space provides opportunities for locals and visitors to gather and watch street performances. Improved signage and wayfinding guide circulation through this corridor, enlivening an area that is currently treated as a "backdoor" for the PCC.

5<sup>th</sup> Street Canopy - Concept Site Plan



#### DETAILS:

- Transform the 5<sup>th</sup> Street drop-off parking by removing the existing wall and extending the open space to street's edge to maximize usable public space.
- In addition to shade trees in the new open space, a new structure with overlapping shade canopies extends and spans the street to provide shade up to the interior corridor of the PCC North Building.
- Events and markets can use Adams and 6<sup>th</sup> Street as a vendor corridor, while day-to-day use remains as a primary drop-off for groups visiting Heritage Square and the Arizona Science Center.

#### SEQUENCE:

- Pilot** - Organize local neighborhood gatherings, groups, and clubs to meet at new park space.
- Event** - Joint monthly event with Heritage & Science Park to activate their four-square blocks.
- New** - Redesign Science Center Creative Building's west lawn and build new sculptural shade structure that spans 5<sup>th</sup> Street.



# SECTION FIVE

## Implementation Matrix





# Implementation Matrix

The following series of tables comprise the Actions Matrix (Matrix). Each action, grouped into nine categories in Section 3, serves as a recommendation to facilitate the implementation of the Entertainment District strategic plan. Since each action was previously referenced in the corresponding topic area in Section 3, this matrix serves to provide more context, including information on timing, cost, and ownership, allowing for easier execution of the plan's ideas and tracking of progress.

In addition to the actions, the Matrix includes the following columns:

- **Timing to Initiate Action** – Implementation of the plan will be a long-term commitment. This column identifies when the City, or other lead entity, can and should initiate work on the action—not when it should necessarily be completed. The goal of providing timing is to ensure that quicker, more tactical interventions can occur sooner while larger, more capital-intensive investments navigate funding, coordination, and regulatory steps. The Matrix defines timing as:
  - **Immediate: <1 year**
  - **Short: 1-2 years**
  - **Medium: 3-5 years**
  - **Long: 6+ years**
- **Cost to the City** – Actions will range in cost from nominal, requiring mostly staff time, to highly capital intensive, requiring a thoughtful funding strategy to implement. The Matrix defines cost as:
  - \$: budgeted administrative time
  - \$\$: <\$1 million
  - \$\$\$: \$1 - 5 million
  - \$\$\$\$: >\$5 million
- **Action Lead** – Successful implementation plans clearly identify lead organizations or departments. In most cases only one lead is named, though there are a few cases that likely require joint leadership across multiple actors.
- **Key Partners** – Implementing actions should not occur in a vacuum. The Phoenix Entertainment District study process has deepened engagement with different downtown stakeholders which should continue through implementation.

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic A: Open Space

### ACTION

**A1. Increase the number of events at outdoor parks or plazas by designating new and revitalizing existing civic gathering spaces.** The promotion of new and existing gathering spaces should align with downtown's portfolio of events.

**A2. Establish a streamlined permitting process for downtown events** that reduces time and offers a clear, accessible, and affordable path for community organizations to secure permits. Specifically, a coordinated working group comprised of relevant City departments involved in the permitting process (e.g., zoning, fire, police, and streets) should meet monthly to provide the community with a single forum for permitting and improve interdepartmental coordination. Additionally, the process should expand the approval duration associated with permits to allow a series of events to be approved under a single process.

**A3. Establish a pilot or temporary navigator position within the City of Phoenix** to serve as a designated point person capable of guiding members of the community through the event permitting and planning process.

**A4. Incorporate a new, iconic downtown open space into the Phoenix Convention Center South redevelopment plan,** capable of hosting large gatherings and accessible to both conventioners and the general public. The new open space should be designed to accommodate significant gatherings.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Parks and Recreation Department	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development, Arizona Diamondbacks, Herberger Theater Center, Phoenix Suns, Phoenix Convention Center, City of Phoenix
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>4. Long-term</b>	\$\$\$\$	Phoenix Convention Center	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Planning and Development Department, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, Parks and Recreation Department

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic B: Streetscape

### ACTION

**B1. Conduct a streetscape master planning exercise and associated implementation plan** that builds upon the priorities and recommendations in this report. This plan will guide DPI's and the City's shade and streetscape investments in downtown's public rights-of-way. Capital investments for priority corridors designated in the plan should be included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and in the next GO Bond effort, with maintenance agreements executed between the City and DPI.

**B2. Leverage the proposed Street Outdoor Event Space project** to prioritize day-to-day pedestrian safety and comfort, traffic calming measures, and enhanced streetscape and beautification.

**B3. Invest in on-street storage solutions paired with public art to house traffic maintenance signs and barriers used in facilitating the Sunburst Plan.**

**B4. Create a pedestrian-oriented east-west connection from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to Heritage Square**, running from the PCC and across 5<sup>th</sup> Street to increase visual interest, access, and clarity of connections along the corridor. The pairing of Washington Street as a complimentary pedestrian-oriented east-west corridor will support circulation when the PCC is hosting events. Streetscape improvements and integration of art along Washington Street will help improve the pedestrian experience and create more connections throughout the Entertainment District.

**B5. Invest in amenities identified in the streetscape master planning exercise** under Action B1. These amenities should include public restrooms, water stations, furniture, and trash receptacles and have clear locations identified for their placement.

**B6. Continue to invest in 3<sup>rd</sup> Street as an intensified pedestrian-oriented north-south corridor**, connecting the anchor entertainment destinations of Mortgage Matchup Center and Chase Field with the PCC, Canyon on Third, Herberger Theater, Roosevelt Row, and the Warehouse District to Rio Salado 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Pedestrian Bridge. This can be accomplished through improved conditions from shade, lighting, art murals/installations, and other streetscape interventions to enhance the pedestrian experience and encourage circulation along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Transitioning from a car-centric street to a multimodal street that promotes the use of micromobility programs and shared circulators, where compatible with Canyon on Third's use as rentable space for PCC events, will improve accessibility and connections to all the adjacent entertainment destinations. Increased activation of the public realm in this primary corridor will help populate the spaces that stitch public and private developments together, while the transformation of existing entertainment venues will create opportunities for unexpected moments that attract exploration and wonder. Reference details of opportunity sites for PCC South, Canyon on Third, and The Lawn in Section 4 of Implementation Plan for site specific streetscape interventions.

**B7. Establish Jefferson Street as the primary pedestrian-oriented east-west corridor for the Entertainment District**, connecting the Collier Center to the PCC, Mortgage Matchup Center, and Chase Field with activations of sidewalks through improved landscaping, shade structures, lighting, and extensions of entertainment venues, retail, and F+B space.

**B8. Re-evaluate the City's approach to micromobility programs downtown.** The City should assess the existing micromobility options to ensure full coverage of downtown, including strategic placement of adjacent to existing transit infrastructure, entertainment attractions, residential communities, hotels, and dining locations.

**B9. Launch a pilot autonomous downtown circulator** in partnership with a corporate sponsor, connecting major destinations and enhancing accessibility in a way that is additive to the City's existing public transit investments.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$-\$\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Street Department, and Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department	Downtown Phoenix Inc., Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department	City of Phoenix - Police Department
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$\$	Phoenix Convention Center	City of Phoenix
<b>3. Medium-term</b>	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Parks and Recreation Department, Streets Transportation Department	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>3. Medium-term</b>	\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department	City of Phoenix - Parks and Recreation Department, Phoenix Convention Center
<b>3. Medium-term</b>	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department	City of Phoenix - Parks and Recreation Department, Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix Suns, Arizona Diamondbacks
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Public Transit Department	Valley Metro
<b>3. Medium-term</b>	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Public Transit Department	Downtown Phoenix Inc.

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic C: Shade

### ACTION

- C1. Empower and resource DPI to more fully play the lead role for planting, installation, and maintenance of trees and plantings in the downtown public right of way** through more maintenance agreements with City departments and via fee-based agreements with private property owners.
- C2. Ensure compliance with approved landscape and planting and landscape maintenance plans on private development** in support of Shade Phoenix Action #16 on enforcing tree code and Shade Phoenix Action #25 on updating the City plan species guidance. Consider the role of desert trees and vegetation in the identity of the city for use in appropriate areas. Landscape can create wayfinding strategies with consistent use along corridors.
- C3. Revise internal development approval processes to incentivize projects to maintain existing tree canopy** (or replace or contribute to a replacement fund that accounts for the full value of canopy loss) on or adjacent to their sites.
- C4. Review/audit projects built within last 10 years to ensure compliance with approved landscape plans**, with additional reviews every 2 years moving forward, to support implementation of Shade Phoenix Action #16 to strengthen the enforcement of tree code.
- C5. Explore potential modifications to City development permitting policies for downtown developments to encourage the creation of manufactured shade by way of building overhang in right of way.**

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	Downtown Phoenix Inc.	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Neighborhood Services, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development, Street Transportation Department	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic D: Signage

### ACTION

**D1. Explore the modification of current signage district regulations to allow for dynamic digital signage along Jefferson Street** to emphasize the corridor as a dynamic entertainment environment - branding the area as one of the unique nodes within the downtown experience.

**D2. Design and install gateway signage that serve as entry markers for downtown Phoenix at primary entry points** giving a visual sense of arrival downtown for visitors.

**D3. Design and install secondary signage that represent subdistricts of downtown**, e.g., "Roosevelt Row", "Evans-Churchill District", "Grand Avenue Arts District", "Grant Park", etc.

**D4. Modernize signage assets and revisit the usage of "Legends Entertainment District"** as the name for joint signage venture operations to reduce confusion with downtown as an entertainment destination more broadly.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Legends Entertainment District, Arizona Diamondbacks, Phoenix Suns
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department and Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department and Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Legends Entertainment District, Arizona Diamondbacks, Phoenix Suns

DRAFT

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic E: Real Estate

### ACTION

**E1. Advance the redevelopment of the Regency Garage** by releasing an RFP to identify a development partner capable of delivering a mixed-use, full-service hotel to serve the PCC and downtown visitors.

**E2. Establish an internal development and outreach strategy for the priority sites for future real estate development or increased activation.** See the Real Estate topic section for a table indicating the priority, potential timeline, and ownership characteristics of each priority site. A development and outreach strategy should consider viable actions based on current site control, particularly whether the property is publicly or privately owned.

**E3. Ensure future the redevelopment of the Phoenix Convention Center South Building facilitates the Entertainment District Study.** To advance the redevelopment opportunity, the City and PCC should revisit the SmithGroup development concept to assess:

- 1) the financial viability of the proposed program, specifically the feasibility of a residential tower, luxury hotel, new convention and the new convention hall;
- 2) the viability of integrating a central open space within the plan to emphasize places for public gathering, as well as the potential for an iconic rooftop civic gathering and event space, and other amenities to attract visitation, such as a food hall; and
- 3) funding structures, including the potential to integrate elements of the project into an upcoming G.O. bond issuance.

Finally, the City and PCC should begin market sounding conversations with local and national developers to increase awareness and excitement surrounding the potential project while gaining a developer perspective on the preferred program.

**E4. Revitalize the Jefferson Street Garage** into an entertainment hub for gamedays and year-round activation by repositioning a portion of the ground floor closer to Jefferson Street. The repositioning will offer additional F&B space, increase heat mitigation infrastructure to enable year-round gathering, and pedestrianize the surrounding streetscape to increase street level activity.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	Phoenix Convention Center
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development (for publicly owned parcels)	City of Phoenix, Phoenix Suns, Arizona Diamondbacks, Phoenix Convention Center, Herberger Theater Center, St. Mary's Basilica
<b>4. Long term</b>	\$\$\$\$	Phoenix Convention Center, City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	Downtown Phoenix Inc, Phoenix Suns, Arizona Diamondbacks
<b>3. Medium-term</b>	\$\$\$	Phoenix Suns, Arizona Diamondbacks	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic F: Retail Activation

### ACTION

**F1. Promote temporary activations in vacant spaces in the Entertainment District along key corridors,** focusing on primary corridors like Jefferson and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (from Jefferson Street up to Roosevelt Row) and the secondary corridors that connect to key entertainment venues/sites (Adams Street, Monroe Street, Taylor Street, etc.)

**F2. Leverage City owned real estate and philanthropic partnerships to establish a third-party property management organization that can offer subsidized retail space or artist studio space in support of the creation/growth of local small businesses.** The City owns a significant amount of downtown real estate. Whether that real estate already includes retail space (East Garage) or may be redeveloped to include retail space (Regency Garage, PCC South, etc.), the City can leverage its ownership by leasing space to a third party operator supported by philanthropic funding sources which can in turn offer subsidized retail space in support of the creation and growth of local small businesses, particularly those in the F&B and clothing industries. As the City explores this partnership structure, close coordination with legal staff should ensure the approach remains aligned with the requirements of the regulations of Arizona's "Gift Clause".



## Topic G: Marketing and Branding

### ACTION

**G1. Hire a creative marketing agency to create an awareness campaign for the "downtown Phoenix" brand** which will amplify downtown's identity as a must-visit destination for regional residents in addition to tourists.

**G2. Facilitate a cohesive marketing strategy for cultural corridors,** building on existing planning efforts for corridors that represent the different cultures or identities across Phoenix. Signage along the heritage/cultural walking trails should align with the messaging and design aesthetic established by the marketing agency engaged under the Action G1.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Planning and Development Department, Downtown Phoenix Inc.	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Neighborhood Services Department	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Local First, and Downtown Phoenix Inc.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	City of Phoenix - Communications Office and Phoenix Convention Center Downtown Phoenix Inc. Visit Phoenix
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	City of Phoenix - Office of Arts and Culture and Communications Office

# Implementation Matrix by Topic Area



## Topic H: Governance and Funding

### ACTION

**H1. Utilize increased interdepartmental coordination to execute projects identified in the 2023 GO Bond** that will create greater mobility, streetscape, and shade connecting downtown's entertainment anchors and adjacent neighborhoods.

**H2. Utilize the Streetscape Master Planning and Shade Phoenix Plan as the basis for soliciting philanthropic support** from private donors, crowdfunding campaigns, adopt-a-street efforts, and other grant funding.

**H3. Leverage strategic partnerships with organizations and institutions from Phoenix's vibrant arts scene to both create unexpected experiences and authentically embed Latino and Indigenous cultures across downtown.** Potential partners could include the Arizona Latino Arts and Cultural Center, Heard Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, Roosevelt Row CDC, Phoenix Children's Museum, and Artlink, Inc. In addition to facilitating partnerships, engagement with organizations should assess and rectify the physical barriers that often preclude members of the Latino or Black community from accessing downtown despite driving its vibrant arts scene.

**H4. Study the expansion of a new streetscape improvement district(s) within the Enhanced Municipal Services District** for the purpose of funding capital improvements and maintenance of enhanced streetscape corridors that connect downtown's entertainment anchors.

TIMING TO INITIATE ACTION	COST TO THE CITY	ACTION LEAD	KEY PARTNERS
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$\$\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	City of Phoenix - Office of the City Manager, Street Transportation Department, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, and Office of Arts and Culture
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development	Downtown Phoenix Inc.
<b>1. Immediate</b>	\$-\$\$	City of Phoenix - Office of Arts and Culture	Phoenix Art Museum, Heard Museum, Latino Cultural Center
<b>2. Short-term</b>	\$-\$\$	City of Phoenix - Street Transportation Department	City of Phoenix - Community and Economic Development, Downtown Phoenix Inc., and Private Property Owners



# APPENDIX



# Public Survey





Which of these places in Downtown Phoenix do you most frequently visit? (select up to 3 places)



Are there other places in Downtown Phoenix that are not listed which you frequently visit? (write up to 3 responses)

43 responses







# Public Survey

If you listed another entertainment district, what was it about that place that stood out and resonated with you?



San Antonio river walk, endless entertainment

Urban density that creates a critical mass that fosters cultural originality

Walkability

Scale of the streets and buildings

The lively atmosphere, with street performers

Small business! Southern Spanish cities use narrow streets and 3-4 story buildings to beat the heat with consistent shade. There shouldn't be any roads that feel hostile to cross (like Van Buren)

Walkability Safety City streets should all be 25 mph max No 3 lanes streets and arterials Side walks that are wide enough

Interconnected music and arts scene. Interconnected. Art crawls. Live music crawls.



If you listed another entertainment district, what was it about that place that stood out and resonated with you?



Plenty of retail and niche shops

Atlanta used parks and open space to connect neighborhoods with integrated rail use

Lower Denver and the restored historic Train station with connection to the suburbs via light rail.

Strong sense of community and cultural identity represented through art, street activity, and local restaurants and retail





**What are the top 3 issues that should be addressed in Downtown Phoenix to make it more attractive for visitors? (select up to 3 options)**



**If you selected "Other" as one of the issues, please explain what you believe Downtown Phoenix needs to address to make it more attractive to visitors**

More shade	focus on less people driving in and parking and encourage biking and transit as ways to get to and around this area	Biking infrastructure.	The homelessness crisis. DT PHX has a partially earned reputation as a large homeless encampment. This needs to be solved to attract additional residents and visitors.
Multi modal transportation. Connect Roro to Rio salado	Shade, address how to travel from place to place	N/A.	More free family friendly events



# Public Survey

If you selected "Other" as one of the issues, please explain what you believe Downtown Phoenix needs to address to make it more attractive to visitors



No 3 lane streets. Van  
buren sucks Wider  
sidewalks

More retail outside of  
restaurants and things  
for families to do

We need to minimize the "dead  
zones": Entire blocks where  
there is zero retail, hardly any  
windows and no eyes on the  
street. Empty parking lots

Connectivity between  
neighborhoods with with  
walkable shade. But it must  
be safe..



Outside of work or school trips, what would make you visit Downtown more often?



Concerts, games,  
visitors.

Light Rail connectivity

less space for cars and  
more space for people!

Live here

N/A - I live and work in  
downtown

Endless variety, venue  
hopping (not go only  
one place)

Comfort: being able to feel  
safe; from other people and  
from vehicles

If my ability to get  
downtown, without driving,  
was easier, more  
comfortable & safer to do.



Outside of work or school trips, what would make you visit Downtown more often?



Easier access and parking. Shade

Festivals and Bars

Live music

Live here

More retail shops

Just connecting with like minded people who appreciate walkability. Sense of community

The only reasons I ever leave downtown are: to go to a hardware store and to go hiking

Concerts, Sports, Family Events, Art.



Outside of work or school trips, what would make you visit Downtown more often?



More weekly/monthly events like First Fridays





# Market Feasibility Analysis



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# Market Feasibility Analysis

## 01

# Executive Summary

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The City of Phoenix and the Economic Development Department commissioned the Entertainment District Study to understand the potential to **provide conventioners, visitors, and residents** with a **walkable, vibrant, safe, and navigable area surrounding the Phoenix Convention Center** bolstered by a **density of amenities** such as restaurants, bars, attractions, street performers, public art, and significant lighting and landscaping.

### GEOGRAPHIES CONSIDERED

As a component of the Study, HR&A identified a range of geographies within the Phoenix MSA and adjacent to comparable convention destinations to analyze the role of existing demographic and real estate conditions in establishing an entertainment district.

Category	Phoenix Geographies	Phoenix MSA Entertainment Nodes	National Comparable Convention Centers
<b>Description</b>	<i>Capture existing demographic and real estate conditions for Downtown Phoenix and the broader region.</i>	<i>Compare real estate dynamics and entertainment options with destinations across the Valley.</i>	<i>Compare real estate dynamics and entertainment options with competitive convention destinations. All geographies are defined as a 10-minute walk radius from the convention center.</i>
<b>Geographies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale MSA</li> <li>City of Phoenix</li> <li>Downtown Phoenix (<i>Downtown Phoenix Inc. Service Area</i>)</li> <li>10-Minute Walk Radius around the Phoenix Convention Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phoenix Biltmore</li> <li>Old Town Scottsdale</li> <li>Scottsdale Quarter &amp; Kierland Commons</li> <li>Glendale Westgate</li> <li>Tempé Mill Avenue</li> <li>Downtown Mesa</li> <li>Downtown Chandler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Diego Convention Center</li> <li>Denver Convention Center</li> <li>Seattle Convention Center</li> <li>Austin Convention Center</li> <li>Oregon Convention Center (Portland)</li> </ul>

### REAL ESTATE USES STUDIED

In analyzing existing demographic and real estate uses, HR&A considered the range of groups that engage with Downtown and specific real estate uses relevant to Downtown and a future entertainment district.

Demographic Considerations	Real Estate Uses Studied
<i>HR&amp;A considered demographics across the range of groups that interact with Downtown Phoenix and would contribute to the vibrancy of an entertainment district:</i>	<i>HR&amp;A selected real estate uses that were relevant to Downtown and a future entertainment district, informed by the mix of uses surrounding competitive convention destinations as raised by the City and Phoenix Convention Center.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents</li> <li>Workers</li> <li>Visitors</li> <li>Conventioners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Multifamily</b> Downtown Phoenix is experiencing <b>rapid multifamily development</b> and many competitive convention destinations host similar residential programs that can drive activity around their convention centers</p> <p><b>Retail</b> Many amenities that <b>support a vibrant atmosphere</b> around a convention center are categorized as retail (restaurants, bars, shopping, etc.)</p> <p><b>Hotel</b> Hotels are essential to attracting conventions and previous studies raised the <b>need for more hotel rooms</b> in Phoenix when compared with national convention competitors.</p> <p><b>Office</b> Convention centers at some comparable destinations (Seattle, Denver, Austin) are located within a central business district – all of which must consider <b>weakening office market conditions following the Pandemic</b>.</p> <p><b>Entertainment</b> The Phoenix Convention Center is surrounded by a <b>unique mix of entertainment assets</b> that can serve conventioners and attract additional visitation, especially if better connected.</p>

# Market Feasibility Analysis

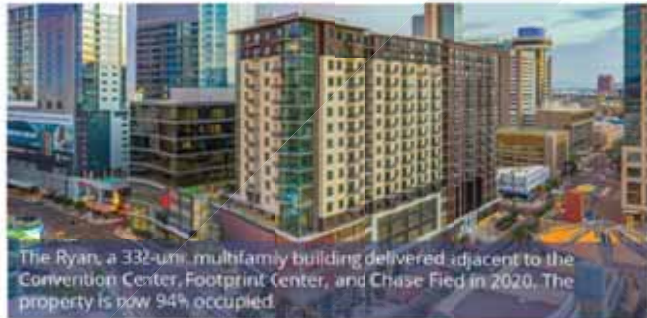
## TAKEAWAYS AND OPPORTUNITY AREAS

### *Downtown Phoenix as a Residential Community*

Historically the central business district, **Downtown is increasingly becoming a residential community.** Downtown Phoenix added over 7K units in the last decade and 5.5K more units are in various stages of development. **As the Downtown residential population continues to grow, it could drive increased demand for additional amenities** (retail, food and beverage, walkability, and open space) that could align with the goals for supporting the Phoenix Convention Center as a destination.

### *Downtown Visitation*

As development increases in Downtown and population grows across Greater Phoenix, the many entertainment assets surrounding the Phoenix Convention Center attract a significant local population. While the Convention Center plays a significant role in the fabric of Downtown as a driver of visitation and host for major events, **Downtown visitation is driven by Phoenix metro residents at many other entertainment assets.** Interventions supporting an entertainment district should **consider both convention attendees and local Downtown visitors.**



The Ryan, a 332-unit multifamily building delivered adjacent to the Convention Center, Footprint Center, and Chase Field in 2020. The property is now 94% occupied.



Chase Field, across the street from the Convention Center, drew the most visitors to Downtown Phoenix of any entertainment asset in 2023.

Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study | HBA Advisors

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## TAKEAWAYS AND OPPORTUNITY AREAS

### *Hotel*

As indicated in prior studies, the Phoenix Convention Center's adjacent hotel supply trails national competitors. **A large-scale hotel will support the Convention Center in attracting larger events that seek hotels that can support block reservations.** Additionally, competitive convention destinations and local entertainment nodes boast luxury hotels. **Downtown Phoenix could benefit from luxury hotel rooms that can support convention attendees and allow Downtown to compete with other entertainment nodes across Phoenix.**

### *Retail (Food and Beverage)*

West of the Convention Center hosts a significant food and beverage program, but to the east (**Heritage Square**) and the north (**before reaching Roosevelt Row**) of the Convention Center a gap in food and beverage limits vibrancy and a pedestrian friendly entertainment environment.

### *Office*

Significant vacancy adjacent to the Convention Center (30%) poses a challenge to daytime activity. Downtown Phoenix is no longer solely reliant on office workers to drive demand for retail and restaurants. **Interventions around the entertainment district should consider office workers as only one among several complementary sources of demand.**



The Grand Hyatt hotel adjacent to the San Diego Convention Center offers over 1,600 luxury rooms.



Heritage Square hosts the nationally recognized restaurant Pizzeria Bianco and pedestrian-only streets but is limited in scale and disconnected from adjacent destinations.

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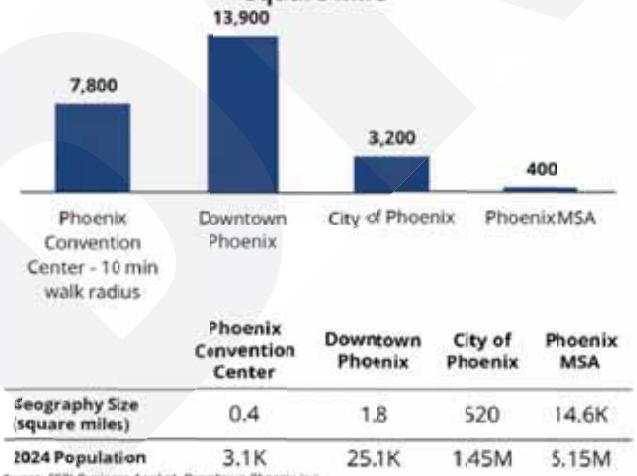
# 02

## Demographics and Visitation

### DEMOGRAPHICS | RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

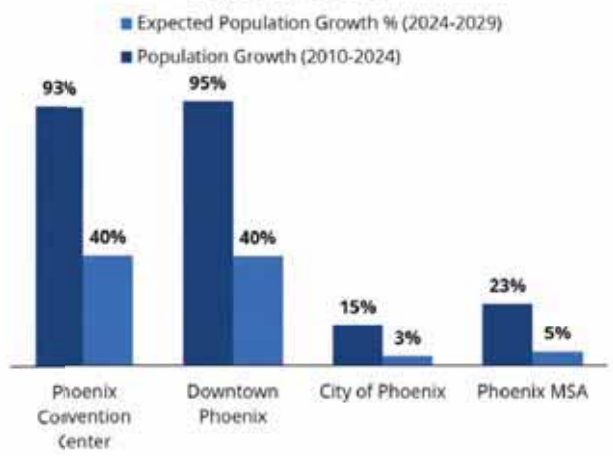
Growth in Downtown Phoenix and adjacent to the Convention Center rapidly outpaced the significant growth across the metro, a trend expected to continue over the next 5 years.

**Greater Phoenix Population Density by Square Mile**



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

**Greater Phoenix Past and Projected Population Growth**

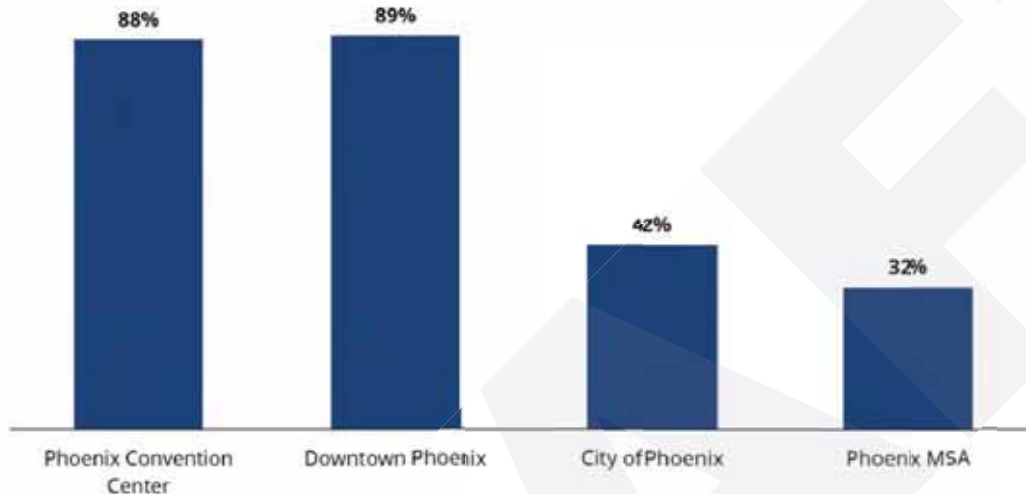


# Market Feasibility Analysis

## DEMOGRAPHICS | RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

Downtown Phoenix hosts a greater share of renters compared to the broader region. It is also home to a significant student population across multiple colleges.

### Greater Phoenix Renter Occupied Units



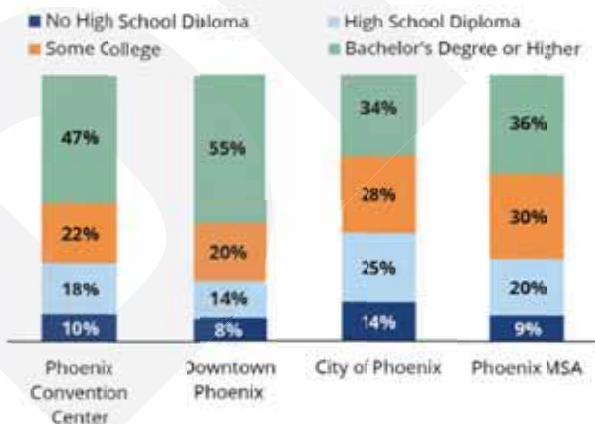
**15K**

College students in Downtown Phoenix

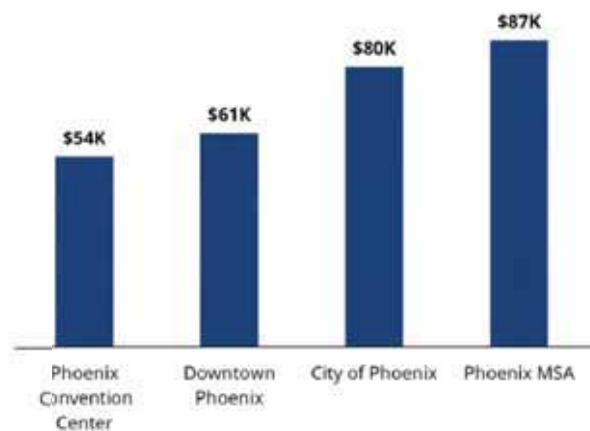
## DEMOGRAPHICS | RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

Despite a greater share of residents with bachelor's degrees or higher, households in Downtown and adjacent to the Convention Center have lower median incomes.

### Greater Phoenix Educational Attainment (Among Population greater than 25 y.o.)



### Greater Phoenix Median Income



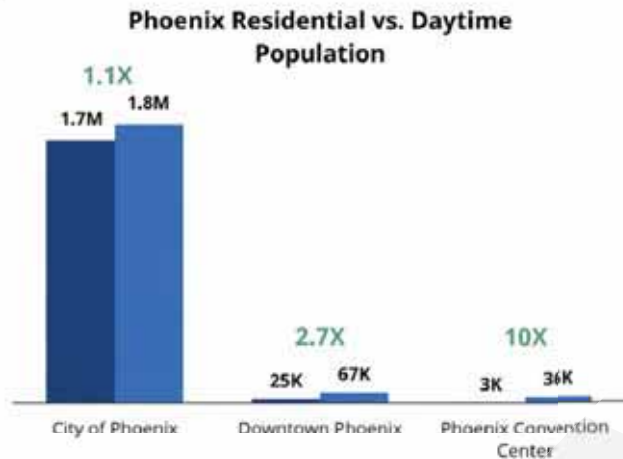
Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study | NEMA Advisors

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

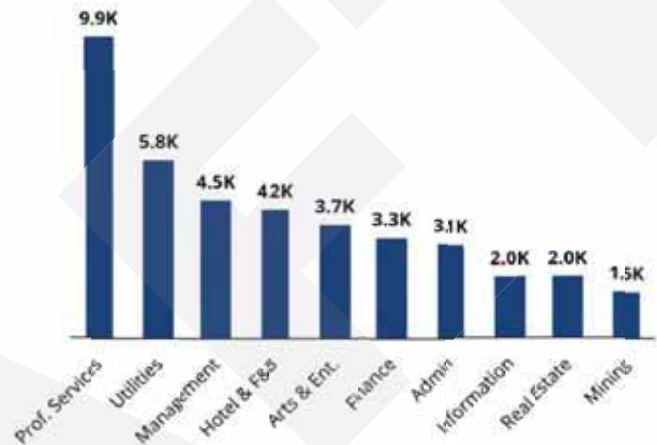
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## DEMOGRAPHICS | DAYTIME POPULATION

As a core component of Phoenix's Central Business District, the Downtown daytime population balloons with workers from professional services.



### Top Industries within 10 Minute Walk of PCC



As a significant employment hub, the area within a 10-minute walk of the Phoenix Convention Center experiences a population increase of over 10x each day.

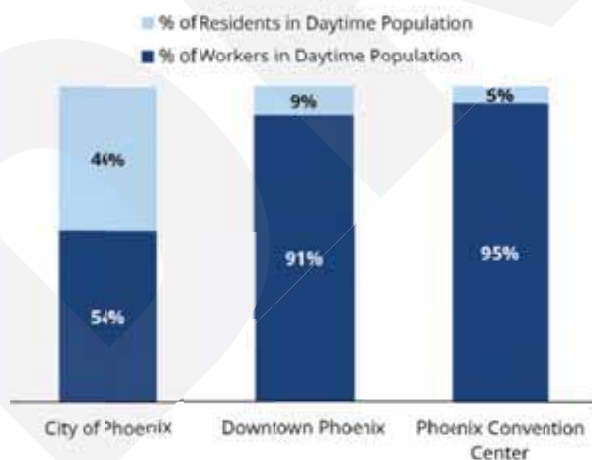
Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Lightcast, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study | HESA Advisors

## DEMOGRAPHICS | DAYTIME POPULATION

Post-pandemic, Downtown Phoenix activity is recovering. Daytime activity remains reliant on workers, but increased nighttime and weekend visitation can bring additional vibrancy.

### Share of Workers and Residents among Daytime Population



Source: ESRI, University of Toronto School of Cities

### Downtown Recovery Analysis

The University of Toronto School of Cities conducts research to understand the recovery of downtowns following the Covid-19 Pandemic. The research team leveraged 2023 cell phone data to count the number of unique visitors to a downtown at a specified time then compares that figure to the number of unique visitors during an equivalent period in 2019.

**89%**  
of total

Downtown Phoenix ranks 9<sup>th</sup> among major North American cities with **89% of total pre-pandemic visitation**. Phoenix maintains an upward trajectory according to 2024 data demonstrated by a **22% increase in downtown visits from May 2023 to May 2024**.

**>100%**  
during non-business hours

Downtown Phoenix's recovery is primarily driven by visitation outside of work hours (8am-6pm on Monday through Friday). During non-work hours, downtown visitation is greater than 100% of pre-pandemic levels.

Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study | HESA Advisors

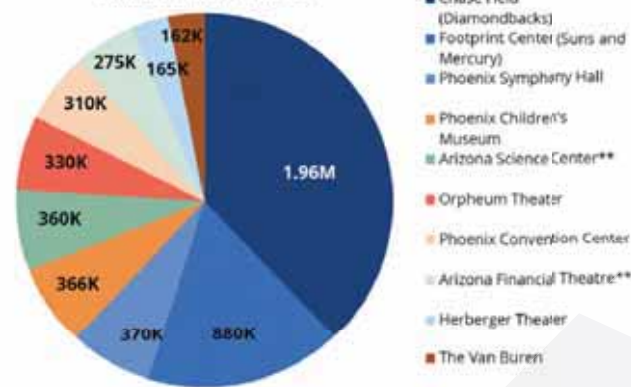
# Market Feasibility Analysis

## DEMOGRAPHICS | VISITORS

As the Convention Center recovers to pre-COVID visitation, many Downtown visitors attend events at sporting venues or cultural institutions.

### Downtown Phoenix Venue Approximate Annual Visitation\*

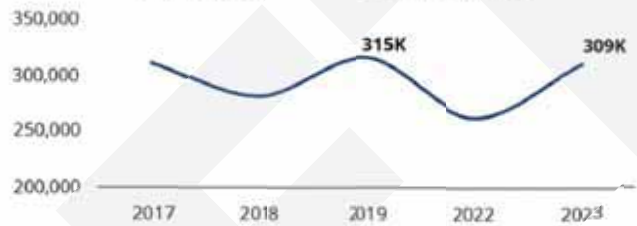
5.2M Annual Visitors



\*Sports venue visitation data is representative of professional sports event attendance during the most recently completed full season.  
\*\*2022 visitation data.

Source: Phoenix Convention Center, Visit Phoenix, ESPN, AZCentral, Across the TImeline, Pollstar

### Phoenix Convention Center Visitation 2017-2023 (Excluding COVID years)



**28%**

Of PCC visitors in the last 5 non-pandemic years attended sports events like the Super Bowl Fan Experience and Rock n' Roll Marathon Expo

**16%**

Of PCC visitors in the last 5 non-pandemic years attended entertainment events like Phoenix Fan Fusion (Comic-Con)

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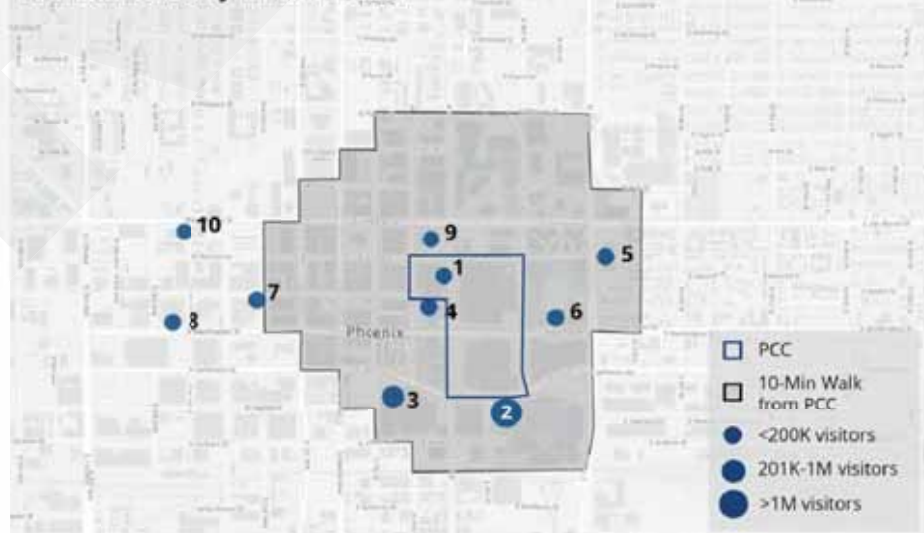
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## DEMOGRAPHICS | VISITORS

Downtown visitation to key venues is distributed across 9 major destinations that surround the PCC in all directions.

#	Venue
1	Phoenix Convention Center
2	Chase Field (Diamondbacks)
3	Footprint Center (Suns and Mercury)
4	Phoenix Symphony Orchestra
5	Phoenix Children's Museum
6	Arizona Science Center
7	Orpheum Theater
8	Arizona Financial Theatre
9	Herberger Theater
10	The Van Buren

### Downtown Venues by Annual Visitation



Source: Phoenix Convention Center, Visit Phoenix, ESPN, AZCentral, Across the TImeline, Pollstar

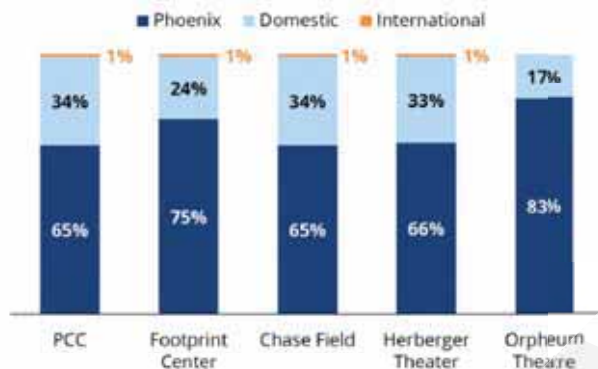
Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study | HBS&A Advisors

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## DEMOGRAPHICS | VISITORS

A significant majority of visitors to Downtown Phoenix points of interest are local to the metro area or Arizona.

**Downtown POI Visitor Origin (2023-2024 YTD)**



**Most visitors to Downtown points of interest originate from Phoenix.** Outside of Phoenix, the **top origin market is Tucson**, with anywhere from 10-21% originating from Tucson.

Source: Symphony Tourism Economics, Near, US Census Bureau

## Visit Phoenix Points of Interest Visitation Data (2023-2024 YTD) Takeaways

- At all five points of interest **visitation is generally evenly distributed across adult age groups** (19-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+). Each group comprises at least 10% of visitors at each location.
- **Top origin markets outside of Arizona include Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Albuquerque, and Dallas-Fort Worth.**
- **Shopping destinations such as Tempe Marketplace, Scottsdale Fashion Square, and Chandler Fashion Center are common cross-visited points of interest** for visitors at all five Downtown points of interest. Cross-visitation to retail destinations may indicate **potential for increased retail around Downtown.**

## DEMOGRAPHICS | VISITORS

PCC-adjacent hotels do not appear to lose rooms to comparable entertainment nodes, but they may not host as many convention attendees as hotels in other destinations.

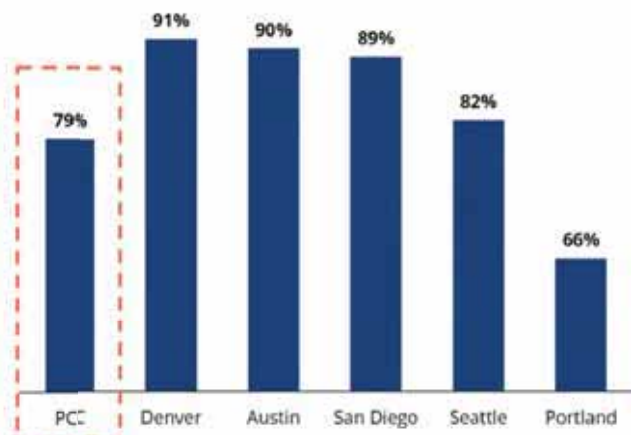
**<1%**

Over the last year **less than 1%** of convention center visitors originated from hotels at comparable entertainment nodes across the Valley\*. The **lack of visit originations from competitive entertainment nodes suggests that they are not competitors for hotel stays among PCC attendees.**

**79%**

While 79% of PCC visits that begin at a hotel come from a hotel within a 10-minute walk, most competing convention destinations see a greater share of visits from a hotel originating nearby. This could indicate that **convention attendees are more likely to stay nearby other convention centers.**

**Share of Journeys from Hotel to Convention Center Originating at a Hotel within a 10-Minute Walk**



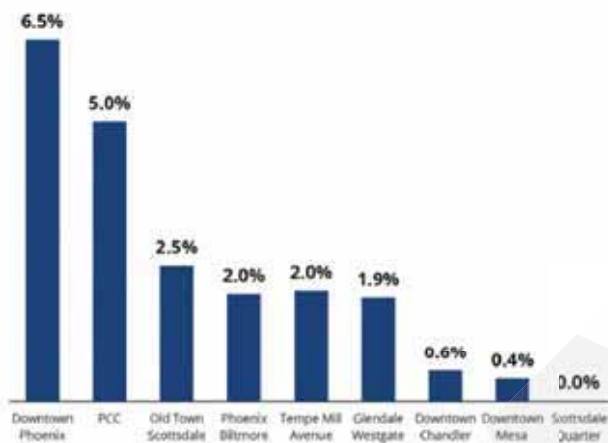
Entertainment nodes across the valley include Phoenix Biltmore, Old Town Scottsdale, Scottsdale Quarter & Kerland Commons, Glendale Westgate, Tempe Mill Avenue, Downtown Mesa, and Downtown Chandler. Source: Ploccer.ai

# Market Feasibility Analysis

## DEMOGRAPHICS | VISITORS

Downtown Phoenix attracts a large portion of hotel stays and entertainment options are improving, but stakeholders note that higher-end options may attract additional visitors.

Percentage of Greater Phoenix Hotel Room Nights in the Last Year



Source: Costar, PCC Stakeholder interview

### Stakeholder Engagement Takeaways

- **Organic local destinations are a tremendous asset for tourists and conventioners.** Nearby Roosevelt Row is an attraction, but lacks connectivity to the PCC and downtown.
- **Downtown could benefit from higher-end dining options** such as destinations in Scottsdale like Maestro's or Maple & Ash.
- Visitors often reference a **desire for increased retail options** ranging from Target, to grocery stores, to non-boutique clothing stores.
- While a significant portion of Greater Phoenix hotel visitation is concentrated in downtown, stakeholders note the **lack of a large marquee/luxury hotel** may cause downtown to miss out on additional visitation.

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## 03

# Multifamily

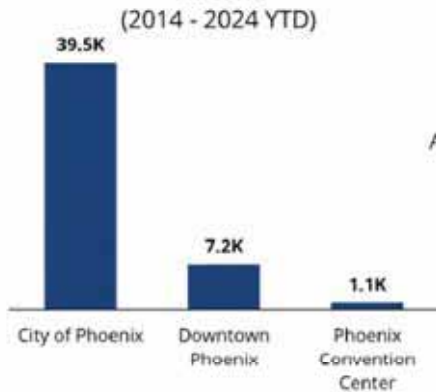
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## MULTIFAMILY | RECENT GROWTH

The Downtown multifamily market, including the area adjacent to the PCC, experienced rapid growth that is expected to continue in the years to come.

### Greater Phoenix Multifamily Growth (2014 - 2024 YTD)

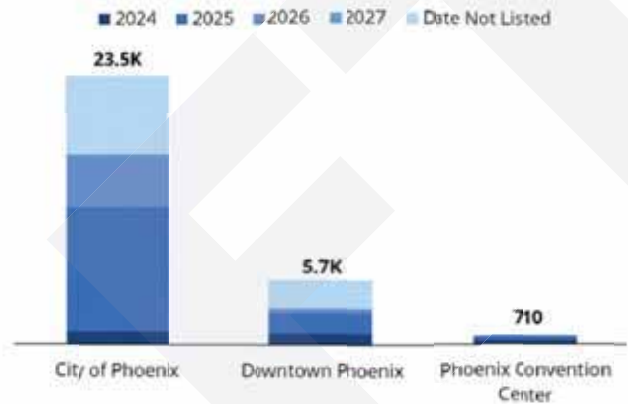


**7%**  
Average vacancy in Downtown multifamily units within stabilized buildings.

The **Downtown Phoenix multifamily market growth** represents a significant influx of new housing and low vacancy indicates an increase in new residents.

Source: Costar, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

### Pipeline Units by Delivery Year

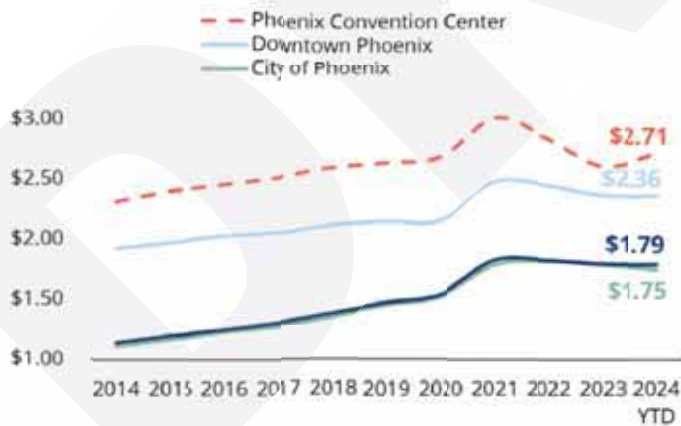


An **increase in the growth of multifamily units is projected** as the pipeline across Downtown Phoenix roughly equates to the last decade of growth.

## MULTIFAMILY | DOWNTOWN PHOENIX

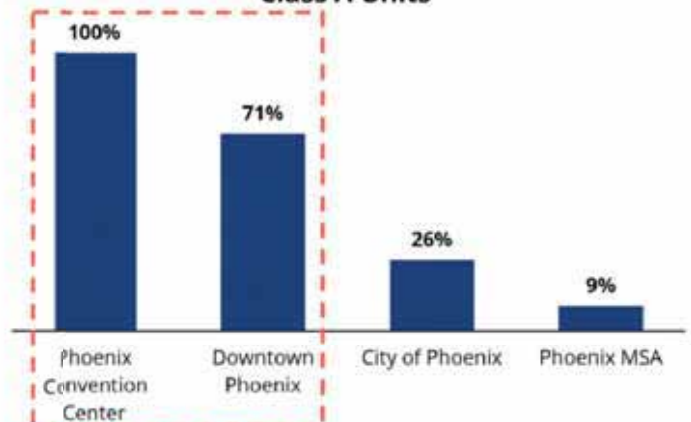
There is a premium on rents in Downtown and adjacent to the PCC relative to the Phoenix MSA, driven by the greater share of class A units.

### Phoenix Average Asking Rents PSF (2015-2024 YTD)



Following years of rent increases across the MSA, rents plateaued or even declined post-pandemic, except for the PCC area where rents increased so far in 2024.

### Percentage of Multifamily Inventory as Class A Units

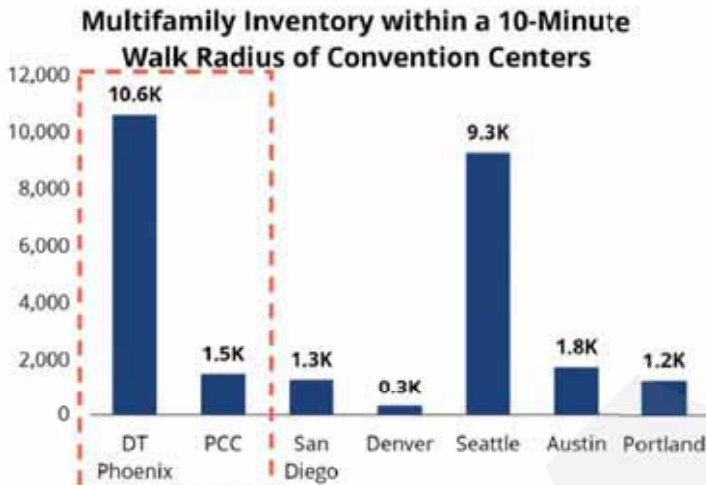


The **entire multifamily supply adjacent to the PCC is class A**. Moving outward, each subsequent geography hosts a smaller share of class A units.

# Market Feasibility Analysis

## MULTIFAMILY | COMPARABLE CONVENTION DESTINATIONS

While the multifamily supply in Downtown Phoenix grew rapidly in recent years – the area around the convention center trails Seattle and Austin in density of residential options.



### Pipeline Units by Delivery Year within a 10-Minute Walk Radius of Convention Centers

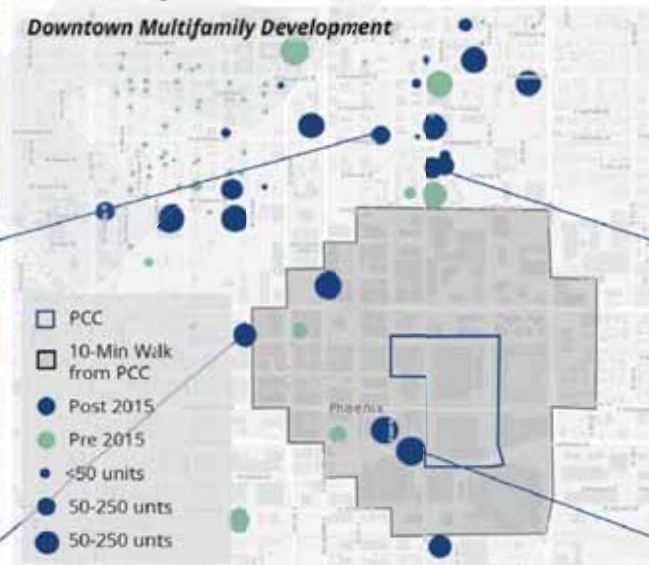


The PCC area hosts a similar multifamily program to San Diego, Austin, Oregon. Seattle far outpaces all comparable

Downtown Phoenix hosts a large multifamily pipeline, but the PCC area trails Denver, Seattle, and Austin in pipeline

## MULTIFAMILY | DOWNTOWN PHOENIX AS A RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

The rapid growth of multifamily in Downtown Phoenix establishes the area as a residential community, building on its history as the hub for the Phoenix business community.



# 04

# Retail

## RETAIL | DOWNTOWN PHOENIX

Limited retail development in Downtown Phoenix in recent years allowed existing space to be absorbed, translating to a decline in vacancy following a spike during the Pandemic.

**Downtown Phoenix Retail Inventory, Absorption, and Vacancy (2015-2024 YTD)**



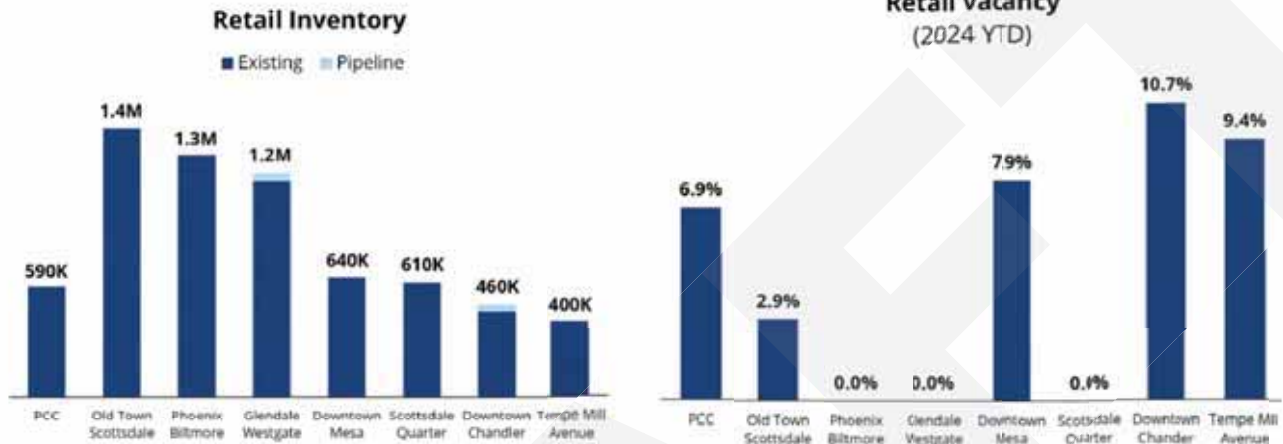
While absorption in 2024 to date is negative by approximately 8K SF, this could be a result of a few recently closed restaurants (such as the Ahii Poki on Jefferson Street) and does not necessarily indicate a challenged retail market.

Source: Costar, Lightcast

# Market Feasibility Analysis

## RETAIL | REGIONAL SUPPLY

While the PCC area retail vacancy rate indicates a steady market, it trails comparable entertainment nodes with much larger retail programs.



The PCC area has less retail than all comparable entertainment nodes besides Mill Avenue and Chandler. None of the nodes boast a significant pipeline of retail.

In terms of retail vacancy rates, the PCC area lags behind much larger retail nodes across the Valley in Old Town Scottsdale, the Biltmore, and Glendale Westgate.

Source: Costar

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## RETAIL | DOWNTOWN FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Within a 10-minute walk of the PCC, there are over 100 F&B establishments, primarily full-service restaurants. Aside from Heritage Square, F&B is concentrated west of the PCC.

**115**

Food and beverage establishments within a 10-minute walk of the Phoenix Convention Center. Roosevelt Row hosts an additional 50+ restaurants.

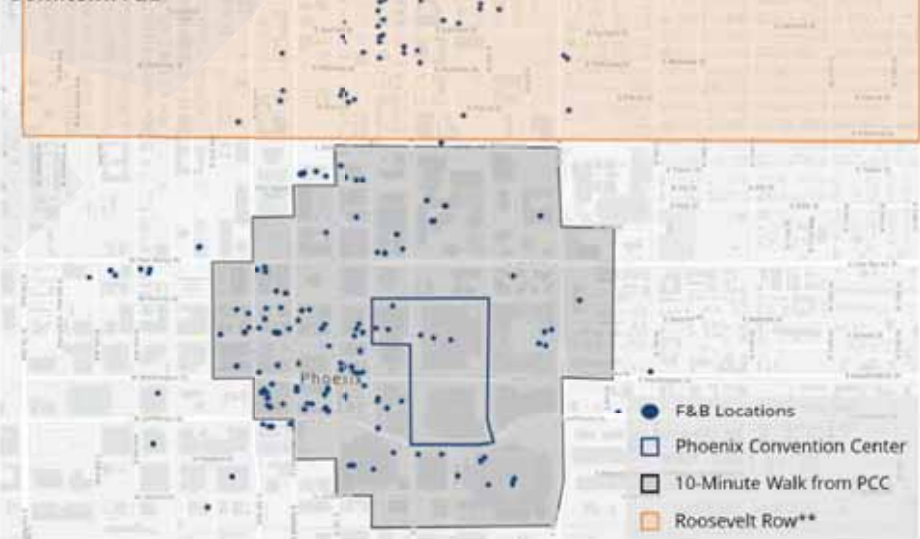
**95%\***

Of food and beverage establishments within a 10-minute walk of the Phoenix Convention Center are open on the weekend.

**88%\***

Of food and beverage establishments within a 10-minute walk of the Phoenix Convention Center are open past 5pm on weekdays.

Downtown F&B



\*Does not include restaurants located in Roosevelt Row.  
\*\*According to Visit Phoenix boundaries for Roosevelt Row.  
Source: Google Maps, Visit Phoenix HR&A Analysis

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RETAIL | FOOD AND BEVERAGE NATIONAL COMPARISONS

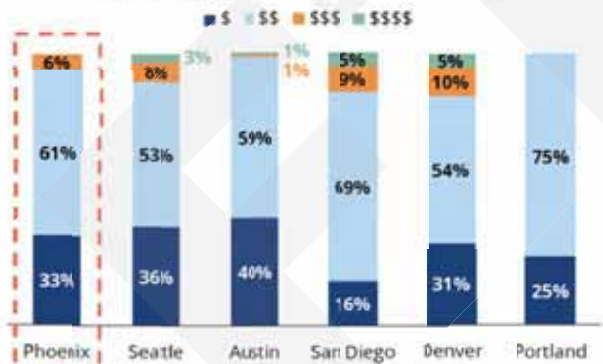
In line with the 2019 CSL study, Phoenix trails competitive convention markets in adjacent F&B options. However, Phoenix hosts a competitive supply of moderately priced options.

Total F&B Locations within a 10-Minute Walk Radius



Phoenix lags Seattle, Austin, and San Diego in terms of convention center-adjacent F&B.

F&B Locations within a 10-Minute Walk Radius by Google Price Classification



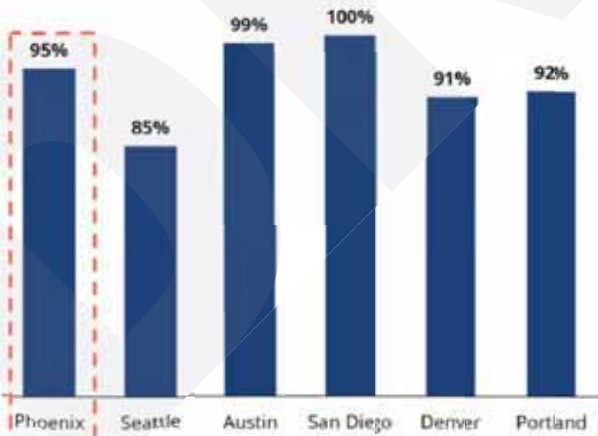
The majority of PCC adjacent F&B is moderately priced. However, in terms of price, Phoenix lacks a higher end dining option adjacent to the Convention Center.

Source: Google Maps, HRBA Analysis

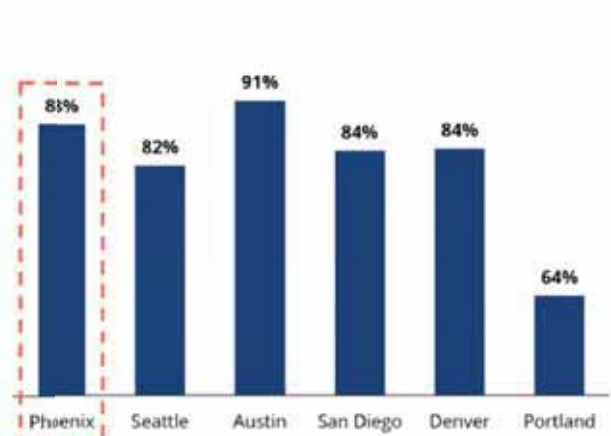
RETAIL | FOOD AND BEVERAGE NATIONAL COMPARISONS

The F&B options adjacent to the PCC are typically open outside of standard office hours, offering a competitive advantage relative to other destinations on weekdays after 5pm.

F&B Locations Open on Weekends within a 10-Minute Walk Radius\*



F&B Locations Open on Weekdays after 5pm within a 10-Minute Walk Radius\*



\*Determined by business hours listed on Google Maps. Source: Google Maps, HRBA Analysis

# Market Feasibility Analysis

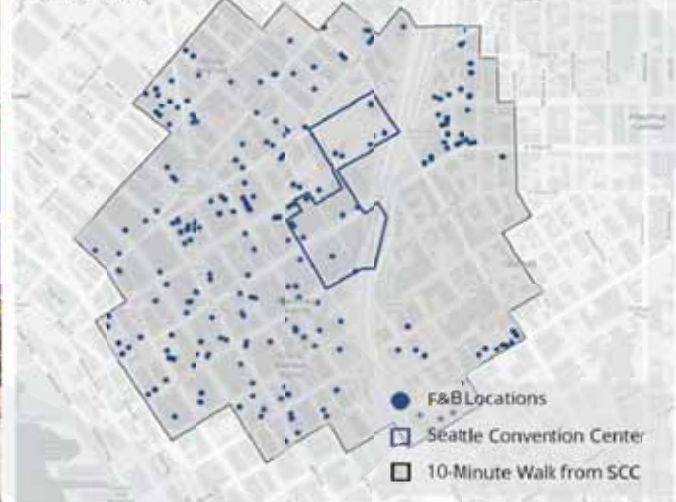
## RETAIL | SEATTLE

The density of F&B adjacent to the SCC creates a pedestrian-oriented experience but does not offer local authenticity due to the concentration of national chains.



Source: Google Maps, HR&A Analysis

Seattle F&B within 10-Minute Walk  
240 locations



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## RETAIL | AUSTIN

The dense concentration of F&B adjacent to the Austin Convention Center is primarily a result of proximity to 6<sup>th</sup> street, a popular entertainment destination for visitors and locals.



Source: Lightcase, 6street.com, Visit Austin

Austin F&B within 10-Minute Walk  
199 locations



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## RETAIL | SAN DIEGO

The San Diego Convention Center is located across the street from the Gaslamp District, a concentration of local F&B, entertainment, and retail serving a mix of visitors and tourists.



Source: Google Maps, Gaslamp.org

San Diego F&B within 10-Minute Walk  
154 locations

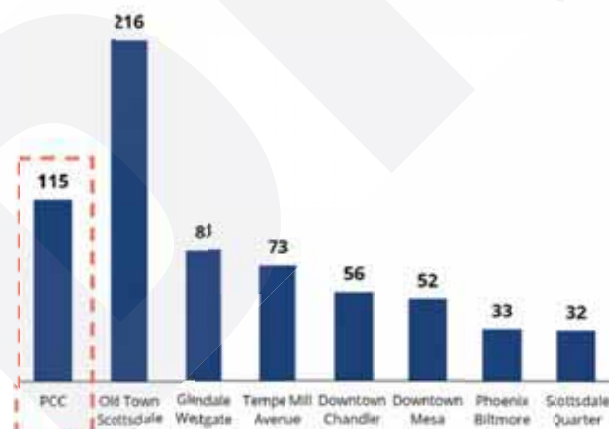


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## RETAIL | FOOD AND BEVERAGE LOCAL COMPARISONS

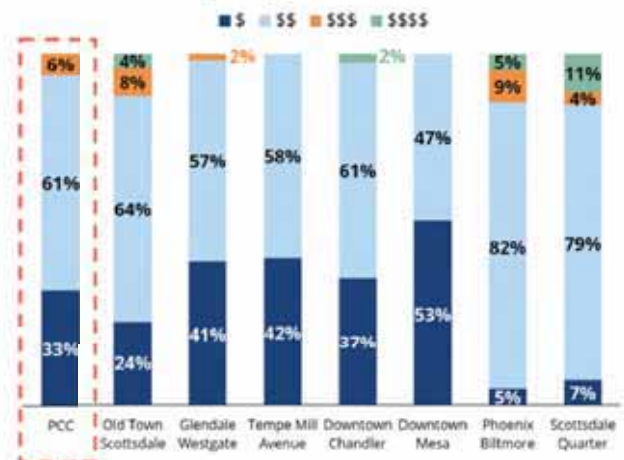
The PCC area hosts more F&B establishments than any comparable destination aside from Old Town Scottsdale but lacks the higher end locations that other destinations offer.

Total F&B Locations within a 10-Minute Walk Radius



Source: Google Maps, HR&A Analysis

F&B Locations Within a 10-Minute Walk Radius by Google Price Classification



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# Market Feasibility Analysis

## 05

## Hotel

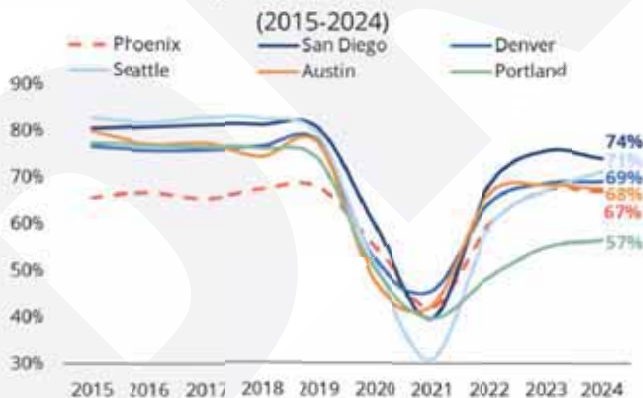
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### HOTEL | COMPARABLE CONVENTION DESTINATIONS

Even prior to the 2020 Pandemic, the PCC area trailed competitive convention destinations in terms of occupancy and average daily rates.

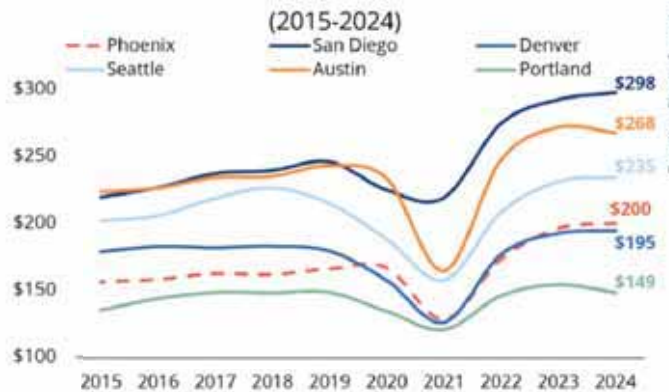
**Average Occupancy for Hotels within 10 Minute Walk Radius (2015-2024)**



Prior to the 2020 Pandemic, the PCC area trailed competitive convention destinations in occupancy, but recently is more competitive with other destinations.

Source: Costar

**Average Daily Rates for Hotels within 10 Minute Walk Radius (2015-2024)**



The hotels adjacent to the PCC offer a significant discount compared to San Diego, Austin, and Seattle – potentially a result of the lack of a luxury hotel.

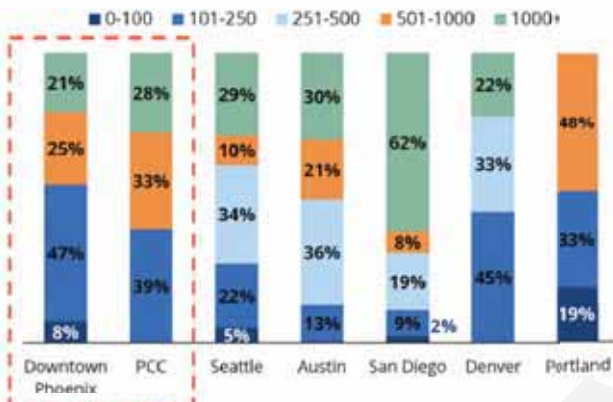
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## HOTEL | COMPARABLE CONVENTION DESTINATIONS

The PCC area also trails comparable destinations in full-service hotel supply, but the existing rooms are typically located in larger, full-service hotels.

### Share of Hotel Rooms by Hotel Size



The PCC area has a similar portion of its hotel rooms within large hotels (500+ rooms). However, a smaller overall supply means PCC trails other destinations in large hotels available for block reservations.

### Full-Service\* Hotel Supply



### Average Full-Service Hotel Size

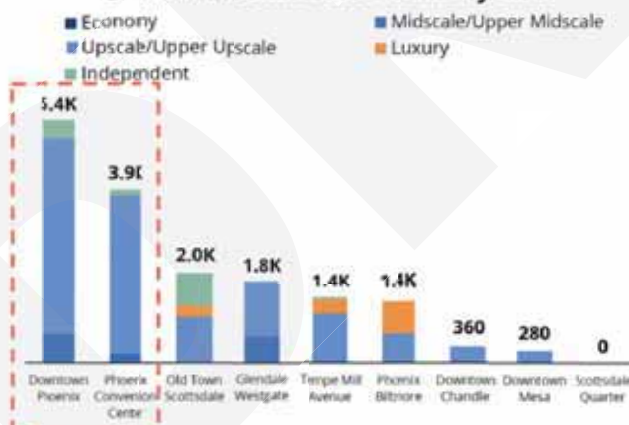
City	Average Size
DT PHX	322
PCC	414
Seattle	364
Austin	450
SD	560
Denver	301
Portland	258

\*Costar does not provide data on full-service hotel supply. For the purpose of this analysis, full-service hotels are defined as those with meetings space and restaurants.  
Source: Costar

## HOTEL | GREATER PHOENIX SUPPLY

Within the Valley, the PCC has more rooms than comparable entertainment destinations but generates less revenue per room, potentially due to a lack of luxury rooms.

### Greater Phoenix Hotel Rooms by Class



The PCC area has a significantly larger supply of hotel rooms compared to other entertainment destinations in Phoenix but lacks the luxury offerings included elsewhere.

Source: Costar

### Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) (2015-2024)



PCC is competitive with the Biltmore and Old Town Scottsdale on occupancy but trails in RevPAR, likely due to lower nightly rates due to preference for location or luxury.

# Market Feasibility Analysis

## HOTEL | TRENDS SINCE 2022 CSL CONVENTION CENTER HOSPITALITY STUDY

In 2022, CSL completed an update to the PCC Market Feasibility Study, accounting for changes to Phoenix and national convention markets following the COVID-19 pandemic

### Hotel Inventory Comparisons

CSL highlighted the lack of available hotel inventory adjacent to the Phoenix Convention Center as a disadvantage relative to national convention destinations.

Renewed plans for The Edith and a Downtown Fairmount location were announced following the CSL study, but these **new hotels are not expected to reduce the gap between PCC adjacent hotel rooms and competitor convention center adjacent hotel rooms.**

### Improved Placemaking

CSL recommended a wholistic approach to the convention center product, considering not just the building but the district and the destination.

Within this Study, HR&A and Multistudio outline pathways to **create an improved pedestrian experience** with placemaking, wayfinding, and activation to **cultivate vibrancy adjacent to the PCC and connect visitors with existing Downtown Phoenix attractions.**



Proposed Hotel, The Edith

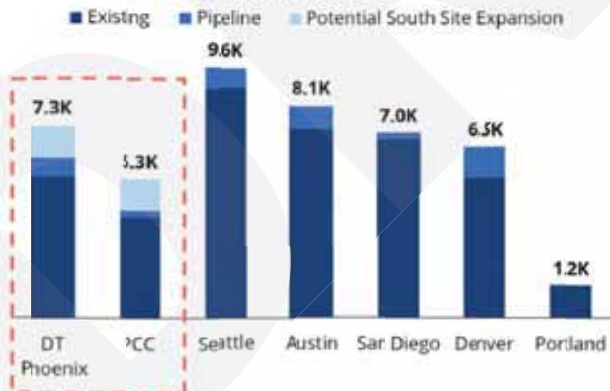
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Source: Costar, 2022 CSL Market Feasibility Study for the PCC and Surrounding Hospitality Assets

## HOTEL | PROPOSED PCC SOUTH BUILDING REALIGNMENT

In June 2023, City of Phoenix staff recommended advancing the Convention Center Expansion Master Plan, including the development of a new 1,200 room hotel.

### Future Hotel Supply within 10 Minute Walk Radius



Even with the addition of a 1,200-room hotel on the South Site, the **PCC area will trail Seattle, Austin, San Diego, and Denver** in terms of nearby hotel rooms.



PCC South Site Studies from June 2023 Expansion Master Plan

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Source: Costar, 2023 Phoenix Convention Center Expansion Master Plan

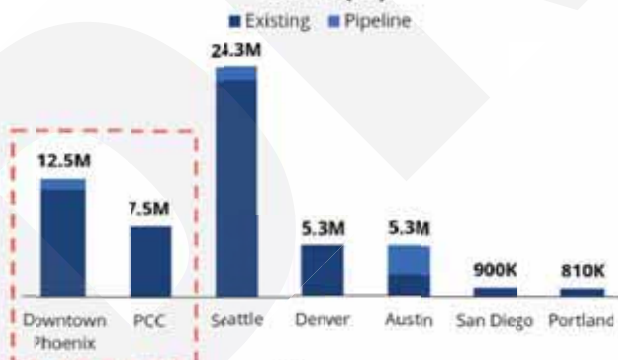
# 06

## Office

### OFFICE | COMPARABLE CONVENTION DESTINATIONS

The PCC trails only Seattle in terms of convention center adjacent office space – presenting both an opportunity, in terms of daytime population, and a challenge as vacancy rises.

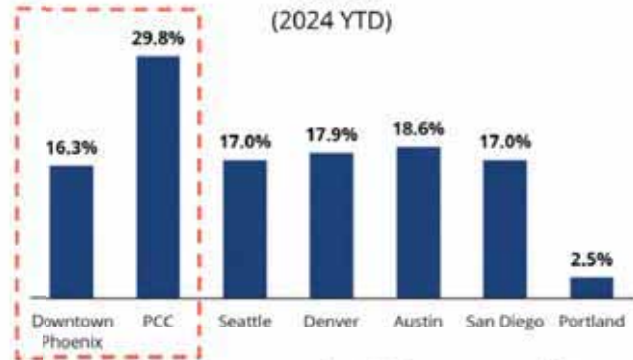
**Comparable Convention Destination Office Inventory within 10 Minute Walk Radius (SF)**



Outside Austin, pipeline office development is limited across comparable convention destinations. **Weekday activity will likely be shaped primarily by users of existing office space.**

Source: Costar, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

**Comparable Convention Destination Office Vacancy within a 10 Minute Walk Radius (2024 YTD)**



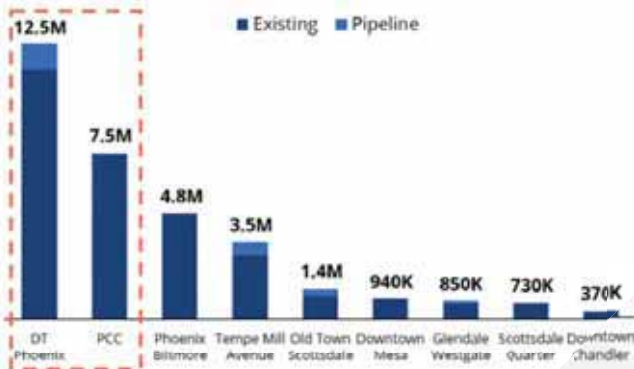
**Vacancy is far greater near the PCC than comparable destinations** – potentially creating a vacuum for daytime activity and a limited customer base for amenities like F&B.

# Market Feasibility Analysis

## OFFICE | REGIONAL SUPPLY

Due to high vacancy rates, over 2M SF of office space is vacant in the area around the PCC, creating increased pressure on residents and visitors to activate the neighborhood.

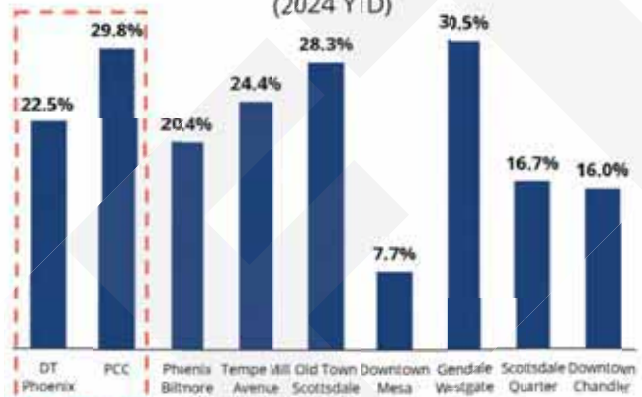
### Greater Phoenix Office Inventory and Pipeline



Due to its location within the CBD, the **PCC area has the greatest supply of office** compared to other entertainment nodes around the Valley.

Source: Costar

### Greater Phoenix Office Vacancy (2024 YTD)



Throughout Greater Phoenix, vacancy rates are elevated. **The Downtown and PCC-adjacent rate is more alarming in the context of lower rents compared to the Biltmore, Mill Avenue, Old Town, and Scottsdale Quarter.**

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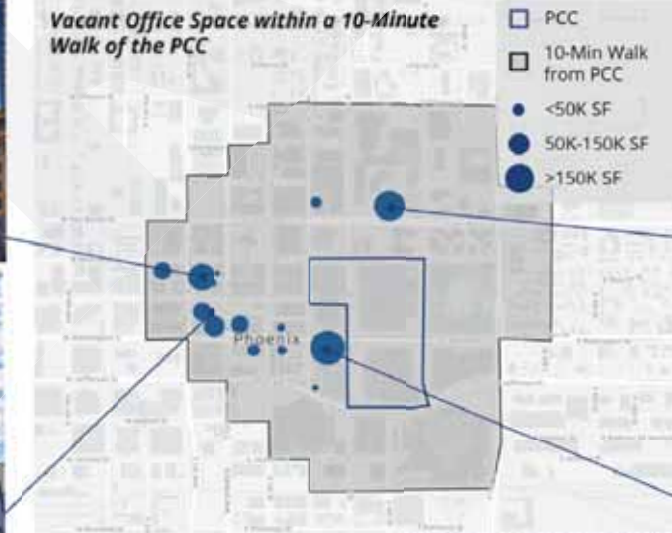
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## OFFICE | NOTABLE DOWNTOWN VACANCIES

Concentrations of high vacancy are a current challenge for Downtown activity, it also could drive future activation adjacent to the PCC should the space become occupied.



### Vacant Office Space within a 10-Minute Walk of the PCC



There are 7 buildings with over 100K SF in vacant space adjacent to the Phoenix Convention Center.

Source: Costar

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# 07

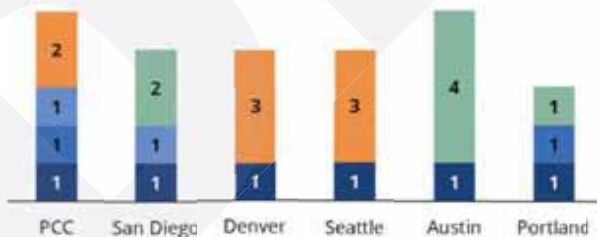
## Entertainment & Programming

### ENTERTAINMENT AND PROGRAMMING | GREATER PHOENIX

Relative to comparable convention destinations and entertainment nodes around the Valley, the area surrounding the PCC boasts a unique supply of entertainment and assets.

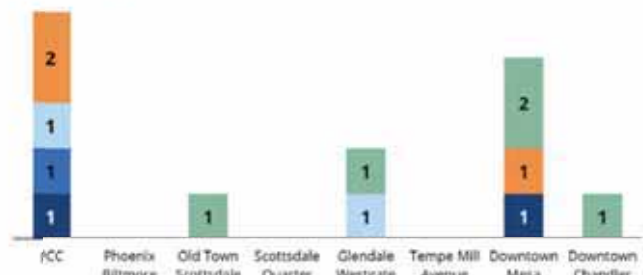
#### Entertainment Assets within 10 Minute Walk Radius of Convention Center

- Convention Center
- Pro Sports Arena
- Pro Sports Stadium
- Performing Arts Center
- Concert Venue



#### Entertainment Assets at Comparable Valley Entertainment Nodes

- Convention Center
- Pro Sports Arena
- Pro Sports Stadium
- Performing Arts Center
- Concert Venue



While the 10-minute walk radius surrounding the PCC does not include a concert venue, the blocks immediately west of the radius host two notable Phoenix concert venues – the Desert Financial Theater and the Orpheum Theater.

Source: Costar, HR&A Analysis

# Market Feasibility Analysis

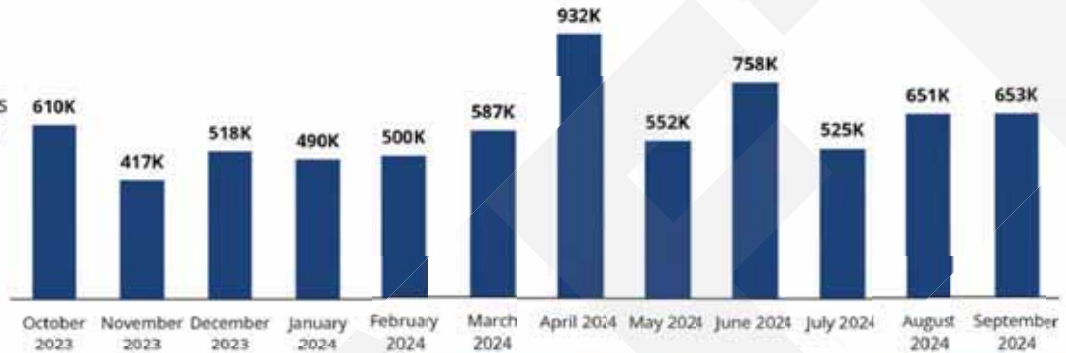
## ENTERTAINMENT AND PROGRAMMING | DOWNTOWN ACTIVATION

Downtown programming hosts at least 500K attendees nearly every month. A spike in attendance in April 2024 is likely driven by NCAA Men's Final Four programming.

**Total Downtown Programming and Event Attendance by Month**  
(October 2023 - September 2024)

**7.2M**

Total attendance at DPI highlighted events and programming in downtown Phoenix over the last year (October 2023 - October 2024)



Month	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	March 2024	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024
Average Event Size	1,380	1,380	1,120	2,040	1,210	1,440	2,240	1,780	2,130	2,570	1,840	2,070

Source: Downtown Phoenix Inc, HR&A Analysis

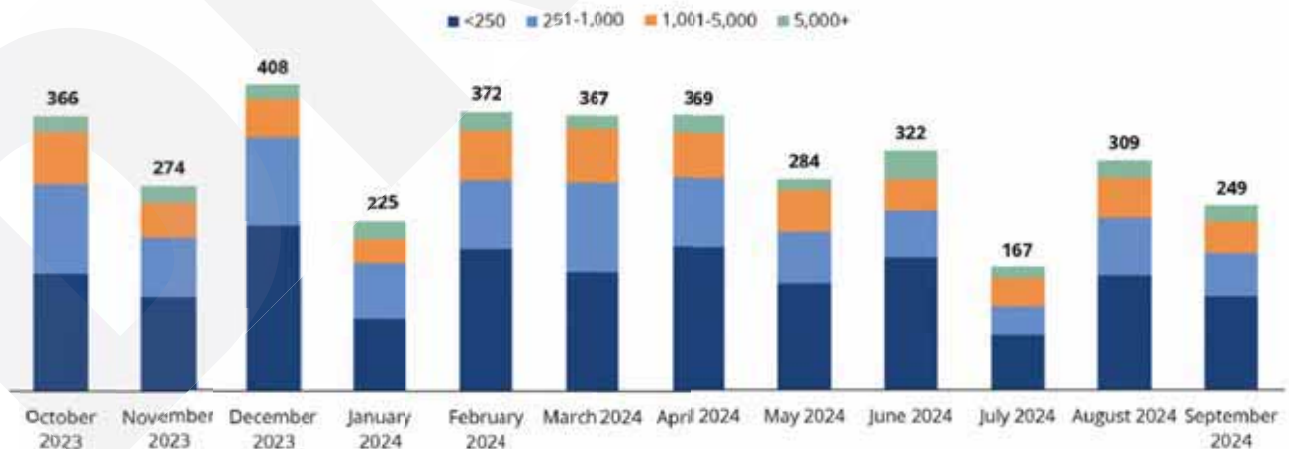
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## ENTERTAINMENT AND PROGRAMMING | DOWNTOWN ACTIVATION

The number of events in Downtown Phoenix was generally consistent month to month. The greatest activity occurred in October, December, and from February through April.

**Total Downtown Events by Size by Month**  
(October 2023 - September 2024)



Source: Downtown Phoenix Inc, HR&A Analysis

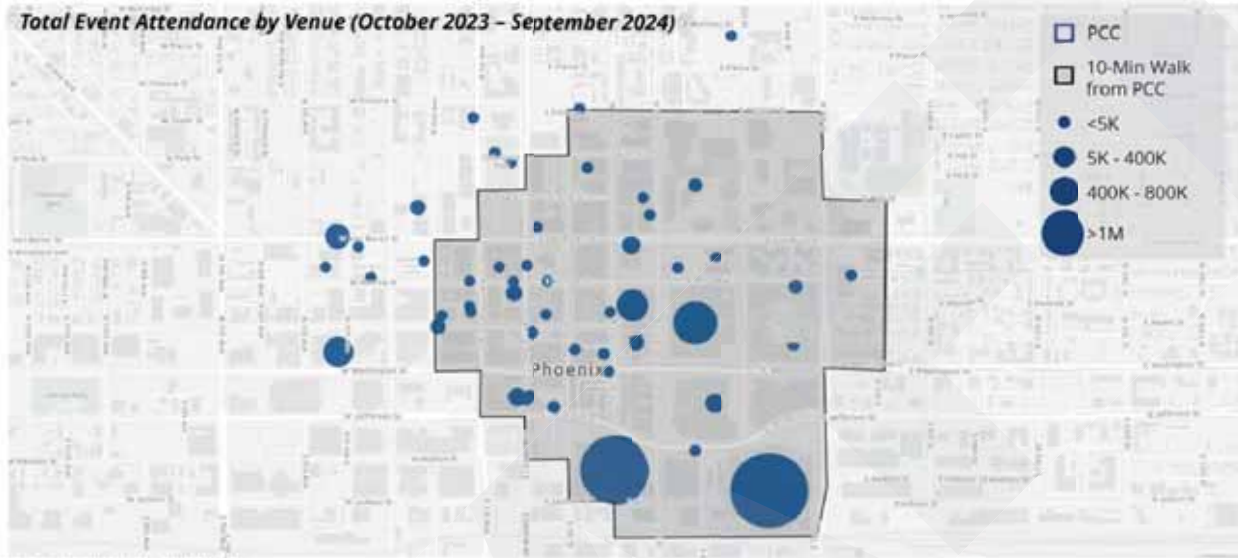
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## ENTERTAINMENT AND PROGRAMMING | DOWNTOWN ACTIVATION

Downtown programming is concentrated at the PCC, Chase Field, and Footprint Center, but over 50 venues hosted events with over 5K total attendees in the last year.

Total Event Attendance by Venue (October 2023 – September 2024)



Source: Downtown Phoenix Inc, HR&A Analysis

HR&A

m\*  
multistudio



PHOENIX  
CONVENTION CENTER  
BY THE ARTS

# Downtown Phoenix Entertainment District Study

## Market Scan

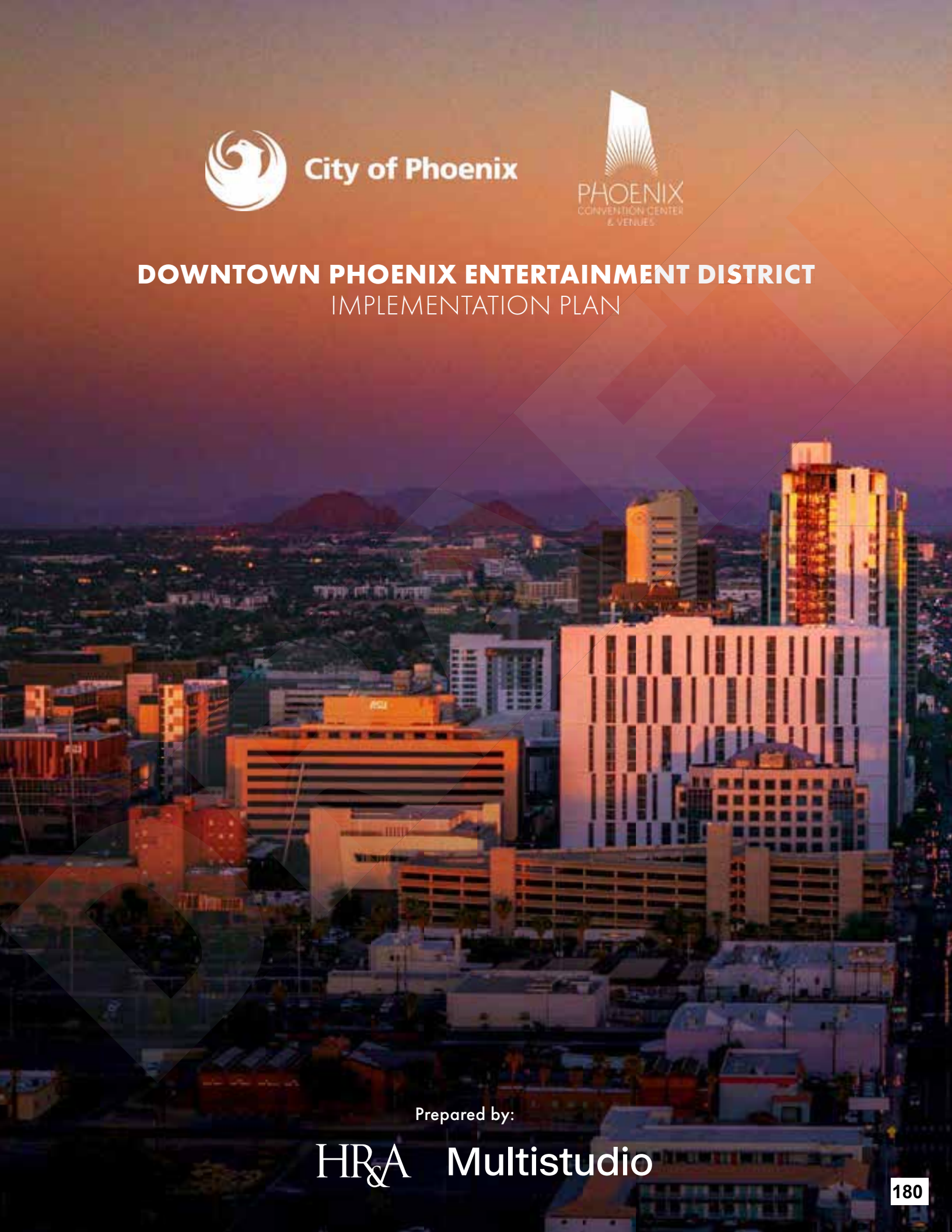
November 2024



City of Phoenix



# DOWNTOWN PHOENIX ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Prepared by:

**HR&A Multistudio**



Report

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Agenda Date: 4/8/2026, Item No. 4

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**Upcoming Events and Programs at Cultural Organizations- Districts 4 ,6, 7, and 8**

Representatives from City-managed cultural facilities will present upcoming events and programs offered at their organizations.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.**

**Summary**

The Arts and Culture Department manage cultural facilities through the City General Obligation Bonds. The voter-approved City General Obligation Bonds funded a majority of these facilities and through the bond program the City of Phoenix has developed, grown, and sustained a vibrant mix of cultural facilities that engage and serve residents through education and outreach programming; which help to attract new business development and draw more than six million total attendances each year . The department primarily manages the physical building and property. It is not responsible for the tenants' programming, services, and administration, except for the S'edav Va'aki Museum and Archaeological Park.

The Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture manages the following cultural facilities:

- Arizona Opera
- Ballet Arizona
- Black Theater Troupe
- Children's Museum of Phoenix
- Phoenix Art Museum
- Phoenix Center for the Arts
- The Phoenix Theater Company
- S'edav Va'aki Museum and Archaeological Park
- Shemer Art Center
- Tovrea Castle at Carraro Heights
- Valley Youth Theater

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Deputy City Manager Frank McCune and the Arts and Culture Department.



Report

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Agenda Date: 4/8/2026, Item No. 5

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## Opportunity Zones Guidance - Citywide

This report will provide the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee with an update about the City's process to submit Qualified Census Tracts to the State of Arizona for federal Opportunity Zones 2.0 consideration.

### **THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.**

#### **Summary**

The federal Opportunity Zones (OZ) program was established in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long term private investment in economically distressed communities. The program provides tax incentives to investors that reinvest capital gains into Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOF). Arizona's designated OZ 1.0 census tracts included 42 in the City of Phoenix. The City of Phoenix will need to submit a new list of census tracts to the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) by May of this year.

Under the original OZ framework (OZ 1.0) investors received:

- Temporary deferral of capital gains invested in a QOF until December 31, 2026.
- Reduced taxable gain (10 percent at five years, 15 percent at seven years).
- Phoenix supported OZ 1.0 activity with streamlined development services, including planning, reviews, and guidance on community and site readiness.

The U.S. Treasury and Congress are modernizing the OZ program (OZ 2.0) to increase transparency, tighten eligibility, and ensure investment benefits flow to genuinely disadvantaged communities. OZ 2.0 introduces a new eligibility map that significantly narrows qualifying areas. States must re-nominate eligible census tracts for OZ designation, and federal criteria are significantly stricter than for OZ 1.0. Existing projects will retain OZ 1.0 benefits, but new investments after 2026 will depend entirely on the updated federal map.

To qualify for OZ 2.0, a census tract must meet one of the criteria below based on 2024 census data:

- Median Family Income (MFI) less than or equal to 70 percent of the surrounding Metropolitan Statistical Area (Required MFI threshold at or below \$69,911); or

- Poverty rate greater than or equal to 20 percent and up to 125 percent of the MFI (\$133,210).

The Governor's Office will submit the official list of census tracts to the U.S. Treasury on July 1, 2026. City staff is conducting a structured three-phase process to identify the most strategic and community-aligned tracts. Under federal rules, states may designate up to 25 percent of eligible tracts statewide as OZ. According to the ACA, Arizona is applying the same 25 percent cap at the jurisdiction level to promote geographic equity, helping ensure nominations are distributed across communities rather than concentrated in a few larger cities with more eligible tracts. The City's census tract submittal must be provided to the ACA by May 8, 2026, and include no more than 33 tracts, the number restriction based on the 25 percent cap. The state used a similar approach during the OZ 1.0 designation process.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Ginger Spencer and the Community and Economic Development Department.



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## Phoenix Economic Overview and Update: Part 3 - Land, Real Estate, and Economic Geography - Citywide

This report will provide the Economic Development and the Arts Subcommittee with an update on how Phoenix’s land use policies, development capacity, and infrastructure investments have driven recent growth and will shape future developments.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.**

### Summary

This presentation is part three of the Phoenix Economic Overview and Update series and will examine how land availability, development strategy, and infrastructure investment have supported Phoenix’s economic growth since the Great Recession and positioned the City for continued competitiveness.

Phoenix has leveraged land use policy, strategic infrastructure investments, and coordinated planning to support large-scale development and attract private investment. Compared to many peer cities facing land constraints, Phoenix has maintained development capacity that enables continued economic expansion.

The presentation will review real estate trends and compare them with Phoenix’s development activity across retail, entertainment, sports, hospitality, and convention-related sectors, noting the role of major civic assets like the Phoenix Convention Center in supporting tourism and downtown economic activity. It will also outline upcoming development and redevelopment opportunities Citywide, including infill projects, underutilized site redevelopment, and infrastructure investments that will support future employment centers and mixed-use districts.

Discussion will focus on how Phoenix has used land use policy, zoning, and infrastructure to enable growth; the remaining development capacity within the City; and how Phoenix should prioritize redevelopment and infrastructure investments to maintain long-term economic competitiveness.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Ginger Spencer and the Community and Economic Development Department.