



# COUNCIL MINUTES

February 23, 2026

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Special Council Meeting in the Study Session room at City Hall, 20 East Main Street, on February 23, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Mark Freeman  
Scott Somers  
Rich Adams  
Jennifer Duff  
Alicia Goforth  
Francisco Heredia  
Dorean Taylor

## COUNCIL ABSENT

None

## OFFICERS PRESENT

Scott Butler  
Holly Moseley  
Jim Smith

Mayor Freeman conducted a roll call.

1-a Hear a presentation, discuss, and provide direction on Mesa City Center, including the redevelopment of the Post Office into Arizona State University Creative Technologies building, construction of a new retail Post Office, and development of the Light Walk.

Manager of Urban Transformation Jeff McVay introduced Urban Transformation Project Manager Stephanie Monge, Economic Development Director Jaye O'Donnell and Rick Naimark, Associate Vice President for Program Development at Arizona State University (ASU) and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Mr. McVay provided an overview of the Downtown Arts and Innovation District, noting that the Mesa City Center project, including the ASU Media and Immersive Experience (MIX) Center, Studios, and Civic Plaza, served as the City of Mesa's (COM) initial investment in establishing the District. He stated that this investment has helped create an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship and innovation and attracts private investment and economic activity. He pointed out that since the ASU MIX Center announcement in 2018, Downtown has seen approximately \$325 million in private investment across 10 projects, with additional projects underway. (See Pages 2 through 7 of Attachment 1)

Ms. O'Donnell discussed the importance of strategic investment downtown, emphasizing that proximity and density are key drivers of economic activity. She stated that integrating education and business support, particularly through a partnership with ASU, enhances the success and feasibility of both public and private investments. She recalled that the vision for the ASU presence downtown extends beyond a single facility, with plans to develop a more active, campus-like environment that fosters collaboration between students, industry, and entrepreneurs. She

confirmed that the COM and ASU are jointly pursuing an attraction strategy to recruit corporations, entrepreneurs, and creative technology companies to locate and grow downtown. She reminded the Council of current initiatives, including the City's brand refresh and the economic development strategic plan create a strong opportunity to align efforts and further establish downtown as a hub for innovation, investment, and economic growth. (See Page 8 of Attachment 1)

Mr. McVay explained that the 2024 Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the COM and ASU was approved to further advance the Downtown Arts and Innovation District. He pointed out that the agreement identifies five potential sites for future partnership and development opportunities between the COM and ASU. (See Pages 9 and 10 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Monge highlighted the property located at 51-55 E. Main Street as a key opportunity to support the continued development of the Arts and Innovation District. She explained that staff are requesting Council approval to issue a Request for Proposal/Request for Qualifications (RFP/RFQ) to identify a development partner for the project. She advised that the COM would lead the solicitation process, select a developer, and negotiate a long-term ground lease, with the developer owning the building improvements. She reported that the project has generated interest from the development community. She described the proposed development to include ground-floor space dedicated to Mesa Arts Center programming, including food service and event-related uses, as well as COM office space. She added that ASU may also occupy a portion of the building, with remaining space available for lease. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Ms. O'Donnell noted that there are currently no Class A office spaces available in Downtown Mesa and identified this project as an opportunity to attract businesses seeking a high-quality office environment. She confirmed that a demand exists. (See Page 12 of Attachment 1)

Councilmember Duff expressed support for the proposed project, noting the opportunity to enhance Main Street and serve as an anchor for the Arts and Innovation District and Light Rail corridor. She pointed out that the project has the potential to support vertical development downtown, expand job opportunities, and contribute to a vibrant mix of education, entertainment, and economic activity.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. McVay stated that the rendering shown on Page 12 is a concept from an older feasibility study and does not represent the current proposed design.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Somers, City Manager Scott Butler emphasized the importance of obtaining developer input on project feasibility, partnership structure, and financial considerations, including potential lease terms and COM participation. He reiterated that issuing the RFP/RFQ does not obligate the COM to proceed and allows flexibility to evaluate proposals and determine whether the project aligns with COM goals. He advised that if proposals do not meet expectations or financial terms are not favorable, the COM retains the option not to move forward.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. McVay referred to Page 11 and explained that the proposed framework for the RFQ/RFP indicates an initial expectation for a minimum eight-story building totaling approximately 100,000 to 120,000 square feet. He added that the concept includes ground-floor retail and restaurant space, with upper floors accommodating Mesa Arts Center related uses, including food service and pre- and post-event

space. He clarified that the structure of the deal remains open-ended until a qualified development partner is identified, then the financial feasibility and partnership terms will be evaluated based on developer proposals and brought back to Council for consideration. He added that the RFQ/RFP will also request architectural and design concepts.

In response to a comment from Councilmember Adams, Ms. O'Donnell acknowledged increased interest in Class A office space which is currently lacking downtown and has limited availability citywide. She emphasized that the proposed development would position Mesa to attract employers seeking proximity to higher education, light rail, and urban amenities. She recalled that the project is anticipated to take approximately two to three years to complete.

Responding to a question from Mayor Freeman, Mr. McVay explained the RFQ/RFP process and timeline following submissions.

Mr. Naimark discussed the vision to repurpose the existing Post Office building for the ASU Creative Technology Center. He reflected on the success of the Mesa City Center, particularly the MIX Center, which has become a hub for academic innovation, industry collaboration, and workforce development. He stated that the facility supports programs in film, immersive media, and design, including the Sidney Poitier New American Film School. He pointed out that the MIX Center has significantly exceeded initial projections, with enrollment and participation far surpassing original goals with weekly activity of approximately 1,500 students, and that staffing levels had also exceeded the original targets. (See Pages 13 through 16 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Naimark reported that ASU continues to fund ongoing operations and programming at the facility and noted that community engagement has been substantial. He confirmed that the facility has also attracted regional and national attention, hosting conferences, media features, and economic development events. He commented that the Studios at Mesa City Center provides a collaborative, community-focused space supporting entrepreneurship through ASU's Edson Institute and the City's Mesa Business Builder program and that these efforts collectively contribute to a growing innovation ecosystem and economic development in Downtown. (See Page 17 of Attachment 1)

In response to an inquiry from Vice Mayor Somers, Mr. McVay stated that the COM reports downtown tax receipts monthly, but it is not possible to directly attribute increases in tax revenue to specific events.

Ms. O'Donnell recommended leveraging Mesa Business Builder data to survey event participants could provide insight into their spending behavior before and after attending.

Councilmember Duff added that the COM does track development and business growth in the downtown area, noting that approximately 50 new businesses have opened since ASU's presence expanded, compared to only a handful previously. She also highlighted the importance of increased residential development in supporting sustained business activity.

Mr. Naimark offered that since opening, the MIX Center has attracted corporate engagement from more than 100 companies and that these partnerships include collaboration with local Mesa businesses, as well as regional, national, and international organizations. He pointed out that these businesses are actively engaging students and faculty, often through paid opportunities, to develop immersive media applications that support their operations and innovation goals and

provided a few examples. He emphasized alignment with the COM's workforce development priorities and noted that continued collaboration between the COM, ASU, and industry partners will enhance Mesa's ability to attract businesses and grow a skilled workforce. (See Pages 18 and 19 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Naimark explained that ASU had evaluated the former post office building and determined it is well-suited to support program growth, particularly for film and immersive media. He confirmed that the building's layout allows for the addition of production studios, collaborative student workspaces and flexible-use areas that would address current space limitations at the MIX Center. He stated that the proposed concept includes relocating the existing post office retail operations to allow full use of the building, enabling phased renovation while maintaining postal services. He remarked that if implemented, the expansion would support the relocation, expansion, and creation of new programs in Mesa, including animation and collaborative gaming. He noted that these additions could nearly double the student capacity originally anticipated and further position Mesa as a hub for emerging technologies and creative industries. (See Pages 20 through 23 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Naimark presented renderings of the proposed adaptive reuse of the building, including indoor-outdoor student spaces, enhanced natural lighting, and integration with surrounding civic and cultural assets. He pointed out that the project also highlights opportunities for community use and activation of the area. (See Pages 24 through 28 of Attachment 1)

Mr. McVay reviewed the feasibility concept for the ASU Creative Technologies expansion, highlighting benefits such as strengthening the Downtown Arts and Innovation District, activating a key COM-owned property, and maintaining post office services in the area. He verified that the existing post office, originally operating under a long-term ground lease since 1971, is now under a new three-year lease with the COM. He said that staff had been coordinating with the United States Postal Service (USPS) on a proposal to construct a new standalone retail post office on the north side of the site, which would improve operational efficiency and space utilization while maintaining minimal budget impact. He stated that the preliminary cost estimates include approximately \$3.4 to \$4 million for the new post office, \$25 million for renovation of the existing building for ASU use, and a \$5 million placeholder for potential infrastructure improvements. He reiterated that staff is seeking Council direction to proceed with negotiating lease terms, including cost-sharing with ASU, and to continue discussions with USPS, with agreements anticipated to return to Council within six months. (See Pages 30 through 33 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler added that this request is to obtain Council direction to move forward with a deeper evaluation of the partnership with ASU, including gaining a clearer understanding of what the partnership would look like, how both parties could contribute to the project, and returning to Council with a more refined plan. He explained that previous updates occurred early in the process and a more developed concept is now available, noting that future presentations will include additional details in return on investment and funding considerations. He emphasized that this effort aligns with the COM's long-standing strategy initiated in 2015 in partnership with the Brookings Institution and similar strategies are being implemented at ASU Polytechnic and in the Falcon Field area with partners such as Boeing. He noted that each innovation district is anchored by a key institution; in downtown Mesa, ASU serves as that anchor, which led to the establishment of the partnership and IGA. He pointed out that this approach is intended to continue strengthening the innovation ecosystem, supporting economic and workforce development, and reinforcing downtown Mesa as a catalyst for jobs.

In response to a question from Mayor Freeman, Mr. McVay expressed concern that delaying could risk loss of momentum currently being presented downtown and negatively impact the COM's economic development efforts over the past decade.

Mr. Naimark added that program expansion and relocation decisions are driven by available opportunities and space. He explained that without additional capacity beyond the existing MIX Center, ASU is unlikely to expand programs in Mesa beyond current growth projections. He stated that, as a result, the COM could miss a significant portion of the anticipated program growth, limiting the overall impact and critical mass of ASU's presence in downtown Mesa.

Mr. Butler reiterated the importance of anchor institutions within the City's economic districts, noting that areas such as Fiesta are supported by assets like the hospital and Mesa Community College, Southeast Mesa by Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, and the Falcon Field area by Boeing and other aerospace partners. He pointed out that ASU serves as the anchor institution for downtown Mesa, like university-driven innovation hubs seen in regions such as the Research Triangle. He said that continuing to strengthen and expand this partnership is critical to attracting a skilled workforce, supporting high-wage job creation, and fostering growth in emerging industries such as gaming and creative media. He added that failing to advance the partnership could result in missed opportunities to build the type of innovation ecosystem needed to achieve the COM's long-term economic development goals.

Councilmember Duff stressed the importance of intentionally building on to the Arts and Innovation District to create a unique identity for Mesa that attracts talent and positions the city as forward-thinking and competitive.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Butler verified that the COM and ASU are the primary parties involved in evaluating potential development opportunities and have identified a total of five sites for consideration. He noted that three sites are intended for potential independent development, while two sites have been identified as opportunities for partnership and collaborative development.

Mr. Naimark added that with the current investment in the MIX Center, student capacity is expected to grow from approximately 845 to about 1,500 students without additional major investment. He remarked that with expanded facilities, including reuse of the post office, potential use of 55 North Center and development of the library parking lot site, ASU anticipates the ability to nearly double that capacity again, reaching approximately 3,000 students.

In response to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. McVay discussed the City's current lease arrangement with the USPS, noting the current lease rate of approximately \$450,000 annually since the COM's transition to landlord last year, compared to the previous ground lease of approximately \$1,500 per month. He explained that while the proposed standalone retail post office would have a lower overall lease rate due to its smaller size, it is anticipated that the revenue would be sufficient to offset the COM's capital costs for construction. He confirmed that lease terms, including rates, would be negotiated with ASU and brought back to Council for consideration.

Mr. Butler reiterated that the return on investment would extend beyond lease revenue to include broader economic impacts, such as increased activity and visitation to downtown. He pointed out

that the MIX Center currently operates under a \$100,000 annual lease, with significant interior investments made by ASU, and that a similar model is anticipated for the proposed project.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Naimark clarified that the initial outreach regarding the post office location came from the COM. He explained that COM leadership invited ASU to explore opportunities for collaboration, and ASU was receptive and enthusiastic about establishing the partnership.

Mr. McVay responded to Councilmember Taylor's question about a potential timeline for the project and noted that the earliest opportunity to begin redevelopment would align with the expiration of the current post office lease in May 2028. He noted, in the interim, design and preliminary work could be completed so construction could begin immediately following lease termination, with an estimated project duration of 18 months to two years.

Mr. Butler added that there is a possibility of coordinating with the USPS to relocate earlier if a more functional facility is provided and clarified that the proposed building use would be primarily academic, with no current plans for additional retail.

In response to a question from Councilmember Heredia, Mr. Naimark provided a comparison to the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus that was established with the initial public investment of approximately \$230 million to support the development of a university presence, light rail expansion, and improvements to the convention center and surrounding infrastructure. He stated that this effort attracted multiple academic programs and eventually brought approximately 15,000 students to Downtown Phoenix, serving as a catalyst for significant private investment in housing, retail, and employment opportunities. He pointed out that Mesa has a similar opportunity, particularly given the rapid evolution of programs such as immersive media and gaming, which are influencing multiple industries, including education and healthcare. He added that timely investment is important to capture this momentum, as these programs will continue to grow regardless of location, and positioning them in Mesa would support long-term economic and workforce development goals.

Responding to an inquiry from Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Naimark stated that current students at the MIX Center already spend significant time in Downtown Mesa, with some present throughout the day and evening. He explained the different campus models that ASU operates across the Valley, including full-service campuses with housing and student amenities, but Mesa's model is intentionally different due to its proximity to the Tempe campus and existing ASU presence in Mesa. He recalled that redevelopment of the post office would allow for expanded program capacity and more efficient use of existing resources at the MIX Center. He commented that certain functions and programs could be shifted to the post office, freeing up space at the MIX Center for additional uses and improving overall operational efficiency based on program needs, equipment, and studio requirements.

Mr. McVay added that multiple options were evaluated to retain retail post office operations within the same building as ASU; however, due to the distinct operational needs of each use, including separate security, entrances, and facility requirements, it was determined that a shared space would not be efficient or cost-effective. He acknowledged that while job creation and private investment are key goals, success could also be achieved through broader redevelopment outcomes, including increased residential and retail activity, while emphasizing that the ultimate

objective remains the creation of a downtown that supports both housing and employment opportunities.

Ms. O'Donnell explained that this project represents one component of a broader, ongoing effort to build a vibrant Downtown Mesa, and that progress is occurring in stages and contributing to positive momentum. She highlighted that the initial announcement of the ASU MIX Center catalyzed additional development, including residential and business investment, and that this proposal would serve as another key step in strengthening that trajectory. She added that continued reinvestment will be necessary to sustain this momentum, as building a successful downtown is not a one-time effort but an ongoing process.

Mayor Freeman confirmed that the consensus of the Council is for staff to move forward with releasing an RFQ/RFP for selection of a developer to enter into a public-private partnership for development of 51-55 E. Main Street.

(Mayor Freeman declared a recess at 4:38 pm. The Special Council meeting reconvened at 4:48 p.m.)

Mr. McVay announced that in conjunction with the ASU Creative Technologies concept for the post office site, Council had directed staff to move forward with developing a public space concept known as the Light Walk. He explained that the proposed Light Walk would connect key civic assets from University Drive to Main Street, with the goal of increasing economic activity and supporting future development, and that the concept is guided by eight principles intended to create an active, connected space that fosters a strong sense of place. He pointed out that the alignment of the Light Walk with existing activity centers, and additional nearby developments which are expected to further enhance activity in the area. He added that the Light Walk design also incorporates programmed activity nodes and emphasizes user comfort through features such as shade structures and landscaping to address Arizona's climate. He stated that the concept is organized into seven program zones, each designed with distinct elements that reflect adjacent uses while maintaining a cohesive, overarching theme which allows for phased implementation over time through future public and private investment. (See Pages 34 through 40 of Attachment 1)

Mr. McVay presented several conceptual renderings with views between buildings, emphasizing how the Light Walk could function similarly to the MIX Center plaza in linking public space with academic activity. He also showcased the importance of nighttime design, incorporating lighting elements that both reference the COM's historic neon character along Main Street and support the evolving identity of the downtown Arts and Innovation District. (See Pages 41 through 46 of Attachment 1)

Ms. O'Donnell outlined several benefits of the proposed Light Walk and pointed out that the project is intended to provide clearer wayfinding from the Convention Center to Main Street, guiding visitors to nearby restaurants and retail. She emphasized that the concept aligns with Council's strategic priorities related to placemaking and that the Light Walk would support activation through features such as food trucks, markets, special events, and music, while also serving as an anchor for future commercial and office development. She commented that the unique nature of the project could help attract investment and encourage longer visits downtown and added that well-designed public spaces that connect activity centers are proven drivers of economic development.

She indicated that additional case studies would be presented to demonstrate benefits observed in other communities. (See Page 47 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Monge presented case studies from other cities to illustrate the economic impact of similar public space investments. She highlighted the Tampa Riverwalk, Atlanta BeltLine, and the Indianapolis Cultural Trail as examples of projects that demonstrate how connected public spaces can extend visitors' stays and drive economic activity. (See Pages 48 through 50 of Attachment 1)

Ms. O'Donnell shared results from an independent economic impact analysis conducted for the proposed Light Walk, reporting that over a 20-year period, total visitor spending is projected at approximately \$372 million, resulting in an estimated \$7.4 million in sales tax revenue. She remarked that the analysis does not account for additional economic benefits associated with new development or increased visitation generated by the Light Walk. (See Page 51 of Attachment 1)

Mr. McVay displayed a video of the proposed Light Walk experience. (See Page 52 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler requested Council feedback on the proposed Light Walk concept, noted that the concept aligns with ongoing efforts to connect the Convention Center, downtown businesses, and new residential developments, including Culdesac. He emphasized the goal of attracting visitors downtown and encouraging them to stay longer, drawing on examples from other cities where well-designed public spaces serve as key destinations. He added that the Light Walk concept was described as part of a broader vision to link civic and cultural assets, building on prior discussions involving ASU and community partners. He confirmed that the project would be implemented in phases, allowing flexibility to align with future decisions regarding the Convention Center and Amphitheater. He verified that the RFQ related to the Convention Center and Amphitheater is expected to be released imminently, following input from the private sector.

Discussion ensued regarding how the amount being spent per person per visit to the COM was determined.

Mr. Butler discussed the role of gathering places and public activation areas to generate economic activity, and pointed out that features such as parks, splash pads, and similar amenities can draw people downtown and encourage additional spending at nearby restaurants and businesses. He added that these types of public spaces help attract visitors, while the private sector can build upon that activity through complementary development, resulting in increased sales tax revenue and broader economic benefit to the COM. He reiterated that the State of Arizona does not provide tax increment financing as a tool, such as that available in many other states, but the COM must continue to pursue activation and investment strategies using the resources currently available.

In response to questions from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. McVay verified that outreach has been limited because the proposal remains at the conceptual stage and is intended to establish a framework for Council consideration before additional staff resources are committed to final design and public engagement. He stated that the concept includes misting and water elements as part of a broader goal to create a space that feels noticeably cooler. He said that although no formal outreach had been conducted on this concept, downtown stakeholders such as the Delta Hotel and Culdesac have consistently emphasized the importance of improving connectivity and creating a stronger sense of place to better link visitors and residents to downtown. He reiterated

that the project could create a unique destination and provide Mesa with a competitive advantage within the Valley.

Councilmember Duff emphasized that the concept is rooted in creating a gathering place that encourages additional economic activity and sales tax generation and connects key assets while providing a thoroughfare that draws people into downtown. She noted that the vision could be implemented in phases and may include opportunities for private investment, with future development over parking areas potentially contributing to the Light Walk concept. She highlighted the potential to pursue grants and other funding sources for placemaking and public art, particularly given the area's connection to the Arts and Innovation District.

Mayor Freeman thanked staff and Mr. Naimark for the presentation.

2. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Special Session adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

  
MARK FREEMAN, MAYOR



ATTEST:

  
HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Council Meeting of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

  
HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK



# Mesa City Center & Downtown Innovation District

## ASU – Post Office – Light Walk

City Council Study Session  
February 12, 2026

**Jeff McVay**

Manager of Urban Transformation

**Stefanie Monge**

Urban Transformation Project Manager

**Jaye O'Donnell**

Economic Development Director

**Rick Naimark**

Associate VP Program Development Planning

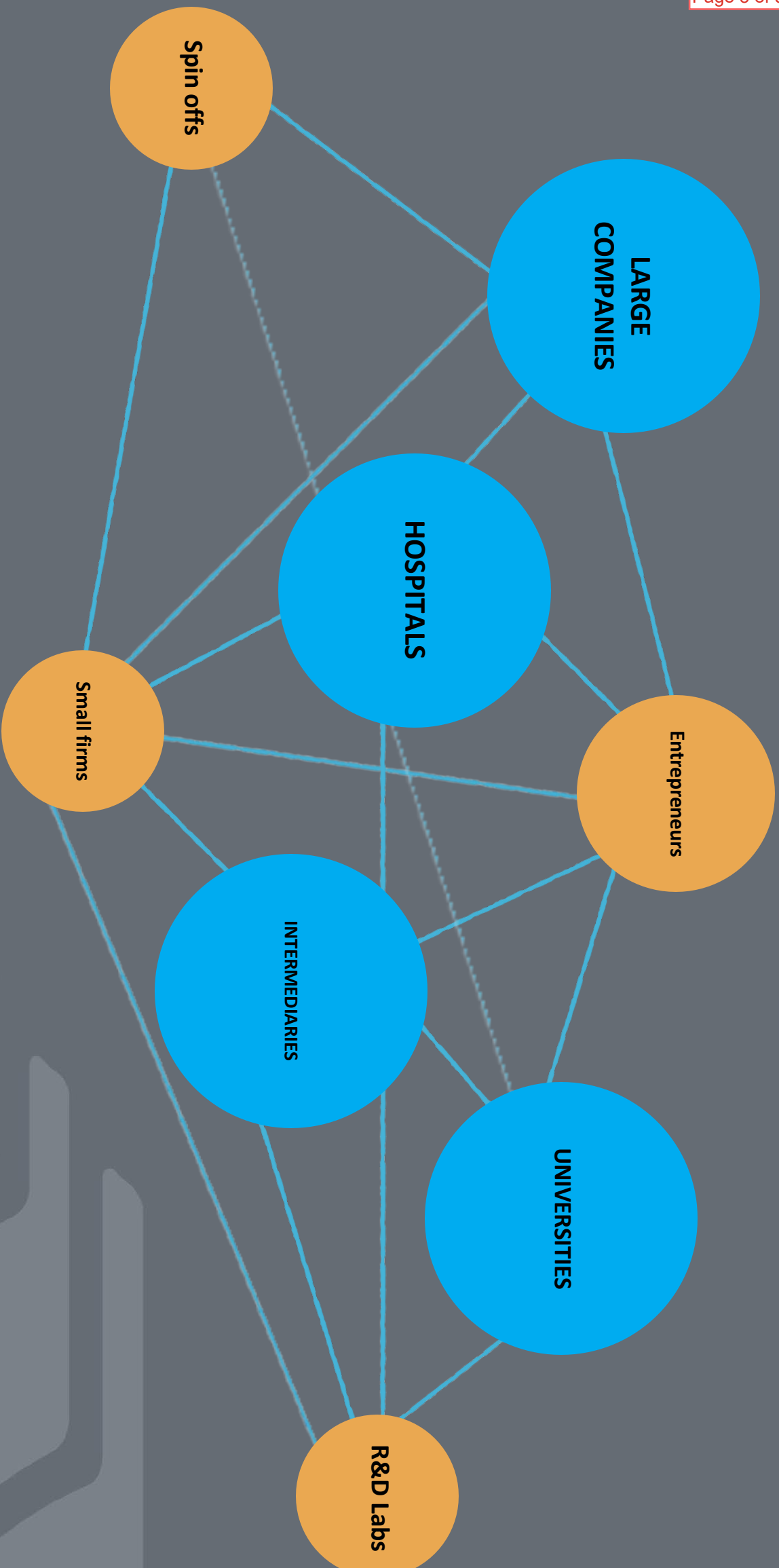


## DOWNTOWN ARTS AND INNOVATION DISTRICT



- The MIX Center: a deliberate public investment
- Anchors Downtown Arts and Innovation District
- ASU's established the Digital Technology Zone in downtown
- Downtown is a burgeoning ecosystem of entrepreneurship and innovation
- Significant private investment in small business growth and redevelopment

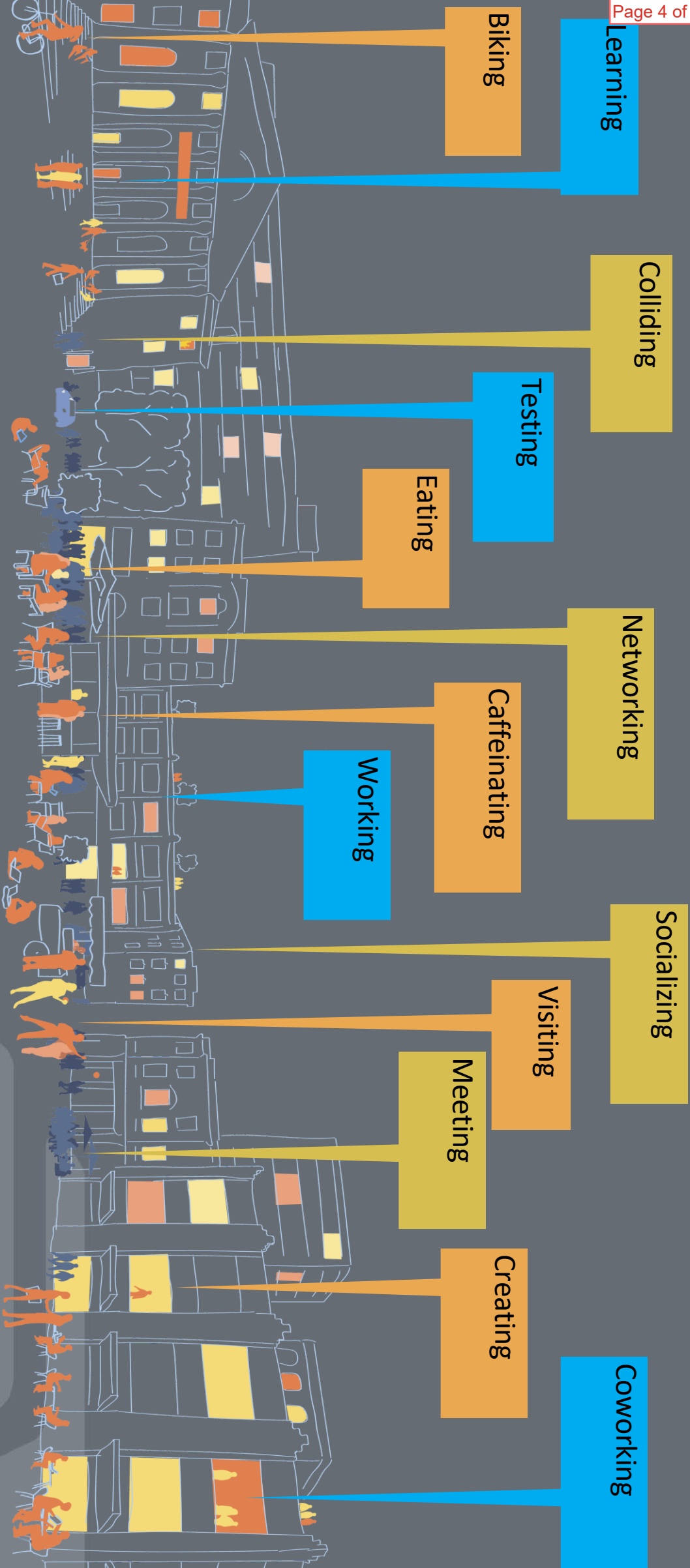
# DOWNTOWN ARTS AND INNOVATION DISTRICT



Innovation processes increasingly demand collaboration.



# DOWNTOWN ARTS AND INNOVATION DISTRICT



Downtown Mesa brings together a diversity of **economic,** **place** and **networking assets** in one destination.

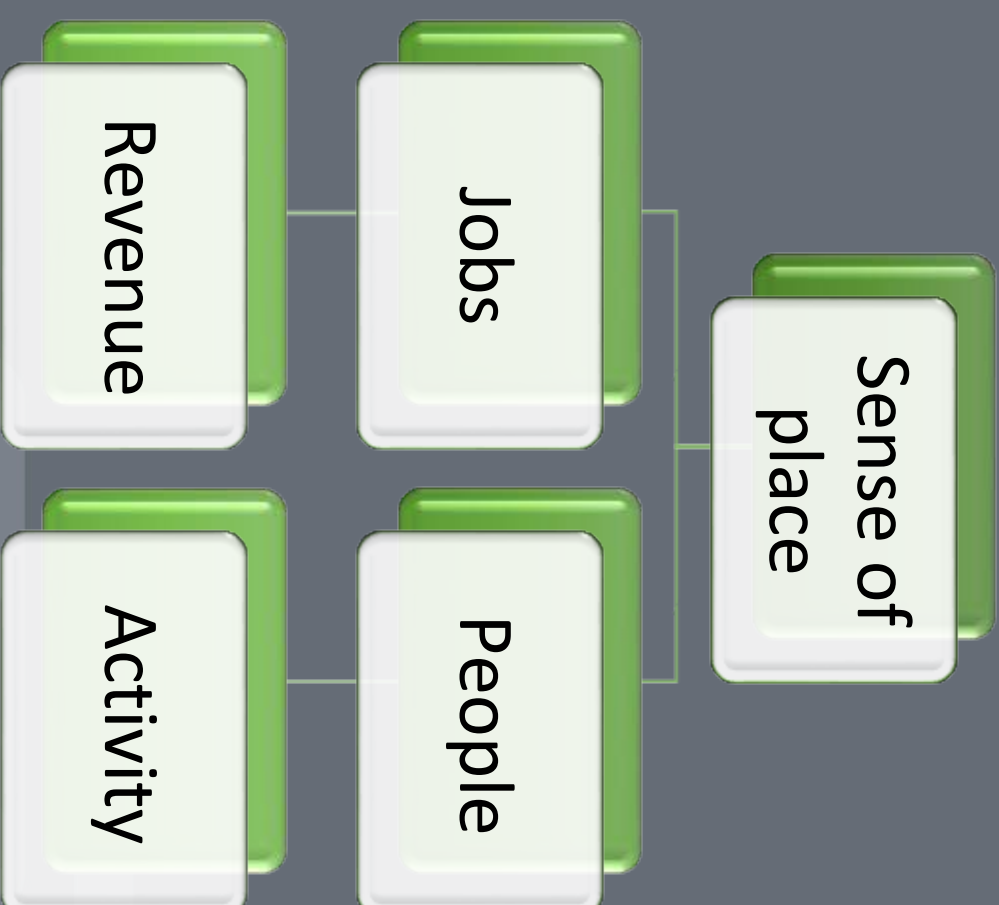
Sense of place establishes  
conditions for consistent presence



Predictable presence brings  
economic activity



Increased activity brings revenues that  
supports further economic activity and  
job creation





**University of Cincinnati Downtown-Urban Design  
Produces \$10.6 billion of Innovation Investment in  
2022**

Campus connectivity transforms downtown into a hub for design and entrepreneurship. High quality urban design, public realm investment tied to campus growth

**Portland State University Campus Model  
Generates \$1.8 billion in Retail, Food &  
Transit Spending in 2024**

Students and faculty fuel daily activity with no isolated campus bubble with shared use buildings and an emphasis on urban living and sustainability

**ASU Phoenix Downtown Campus  
Generates \$21.2 billion in total economic  
activity**

Integrated mixed-use campus activates retail, civic space, private investment and a strong partnership with the City

**Temple University Expansion Spurs \$1.5  
billion in Healthcare & Life Sciences Output in  
2025**

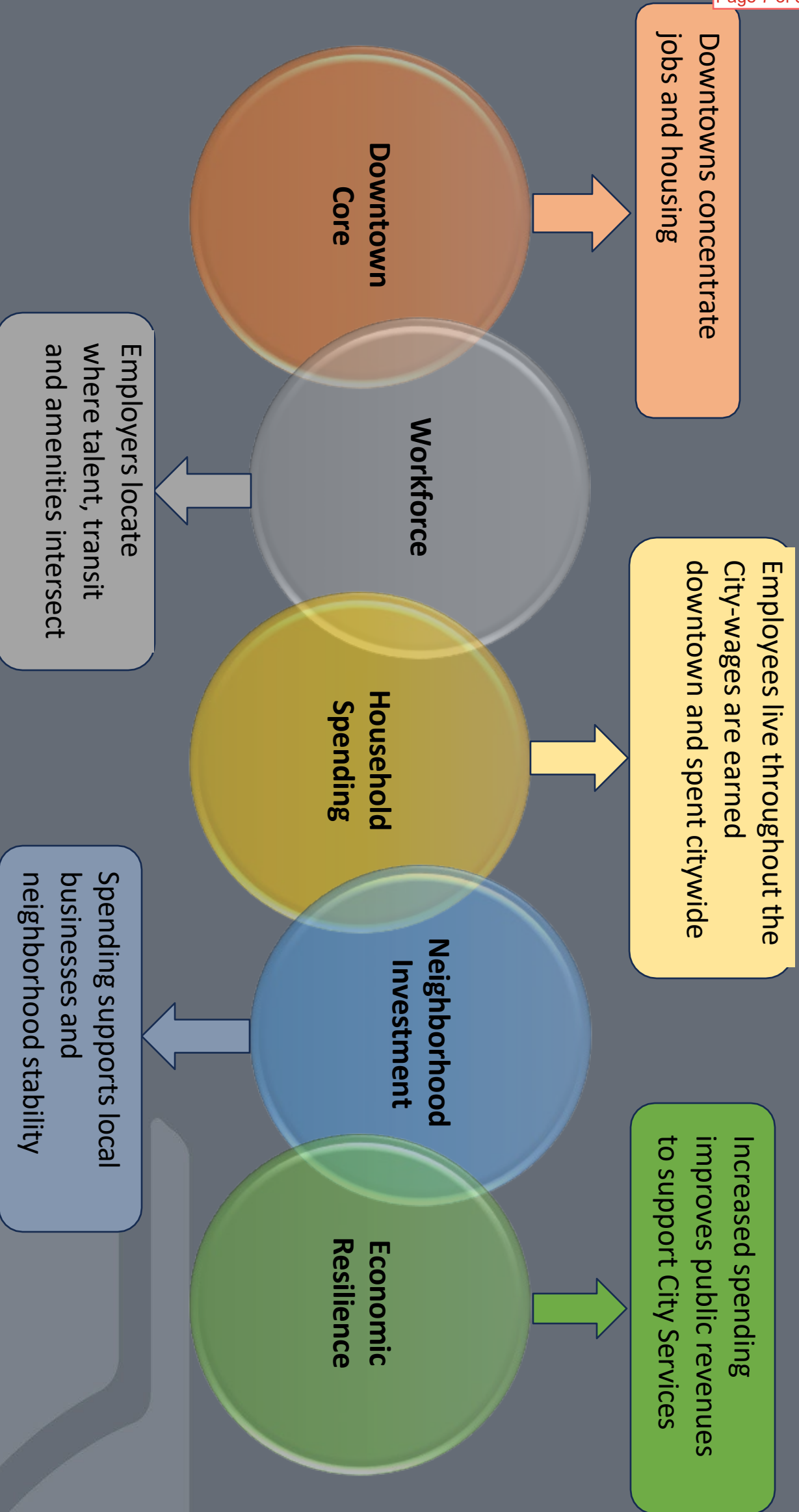
Record enrollment due to professional programs strengthen employer alignment and year-round activity increases downtown housing demand

**Georgia State University's Adaptive Reuse of Downtown Buildings  
Drives \$3.22 billion in Economic Activity in 2024**

Vacant offices converted to housing stabilizes downtown and supports transit-oriented student population along with local spending.



# DOWNTOWN JOBS AND REVENUES BENEFIT THE ENTIRE CITY





## DOWNTOWN ARTS AND INNOVATION DISTRICT

### MOVING FORWARD

- Proximity and density drives economic activity
- Integrated education and business support matters
- Public investment can improve the feasibility and success of private projects
- Intentional employer attraction
  1. City and ASU will partner to identify target businesses
  2. City and ASU will partner on business attraction strategy



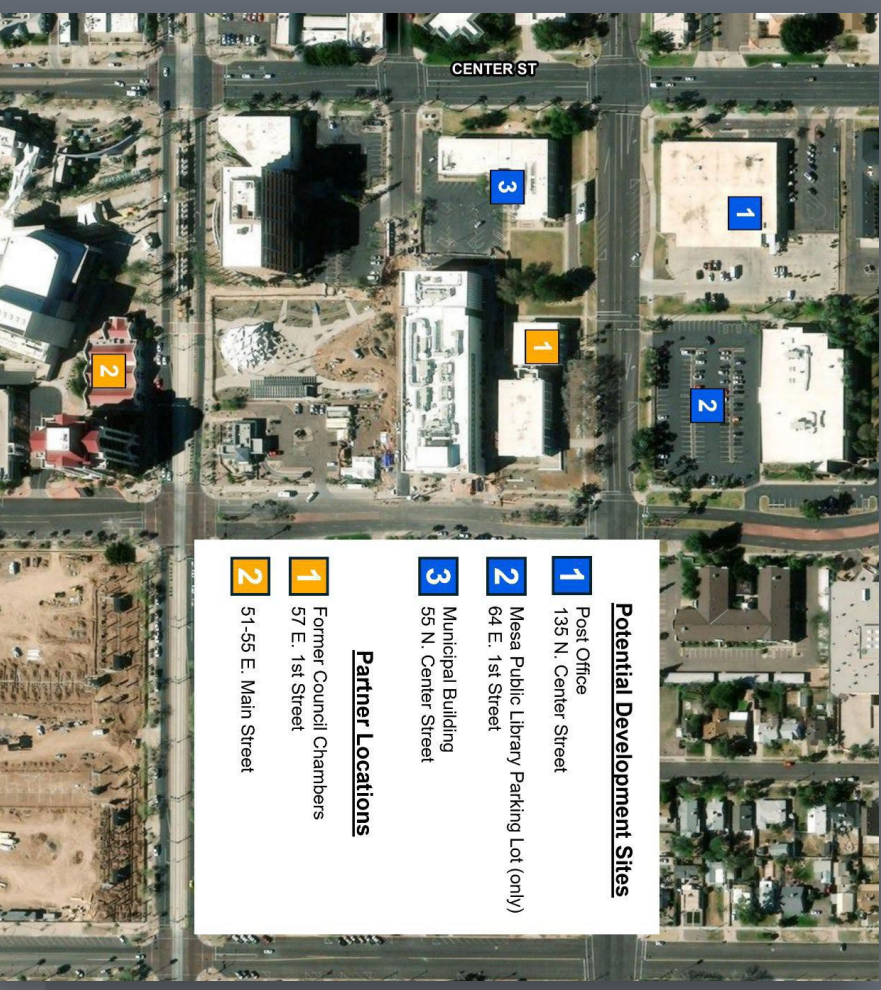


Identifies three potential development sites for future ASU projects

1. Post Office, 135 N Center St
2. Mesa Public Library Parking Lot, 64 E 1st Street
3. Municipal Building, 55 N Center

Identifies two potential partner locations

1. Former Council Chambers, 57 E 1st Street
2. 51-55 E Main Street



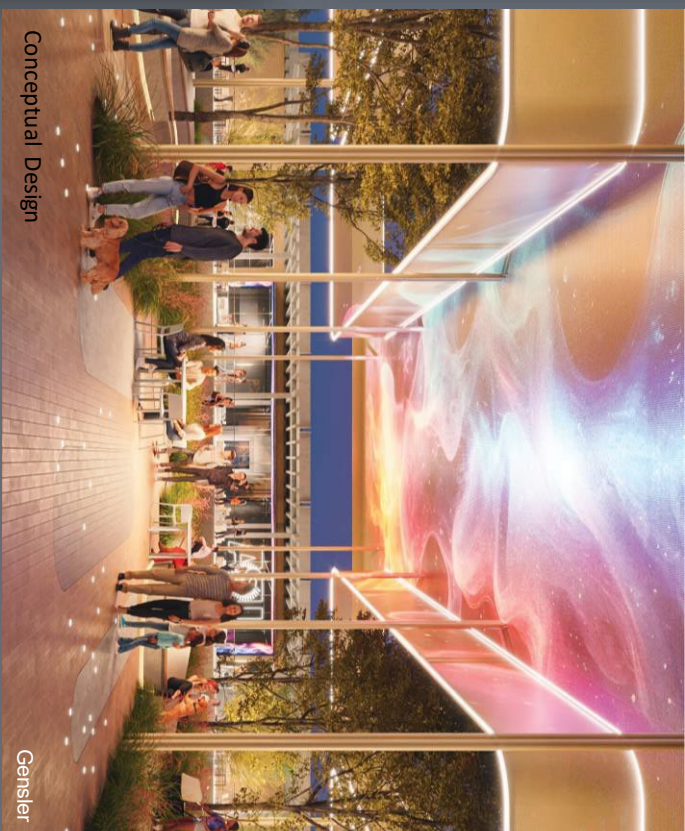
# FEASIBILITY CONCEPTS

1. 51-55 E Main Street
2. ASU Creative Technologies at Post Office
3. The Light Walk



Conceptual Design

Gensler



Conceptual Design

Gensler



Conceptual Design

Gensler



## FEASIBILITY CONCEPTS: 51-55 E MAIN STREET

### DEVELOPMENT OF 51-55 E. MAIN STREET

City, with ASU engagement, will release an RFP/RFQ

- Vision for minimum eight-story mixed-use building
  - 100-120K SF
  - First floor retail and restaurant
  - MAC food service and event space
  - Upper floors office uses
  - City, with ASU engagement, will select developer to negotiate a public-private partnership to develop project
  - City will maintain ownership of the land and enter into long term ground lease
  - The City will use a portion of the building for office space and Mesa Arts Center support functions
  - ASU may use a portion of the building
  - There is demonstrated interest from qualified development partners
- Provide Class A office space to companies
- Currently no Class A office space to offer
  - Possibility to collaborate with businesses who want to locate near ASU
  - Possibility to reach companies who want to be near students and downtown vibrancy



Conceptual Design

Gensler



## FEASIBILITY CONCEPTS: 51-55 E MAIN STREET

Seeking Council direction on moving forward with releasing an RFQ/RFP for selection of a developer to enter into a public-private partnership for development of 51-55 E. Main Street



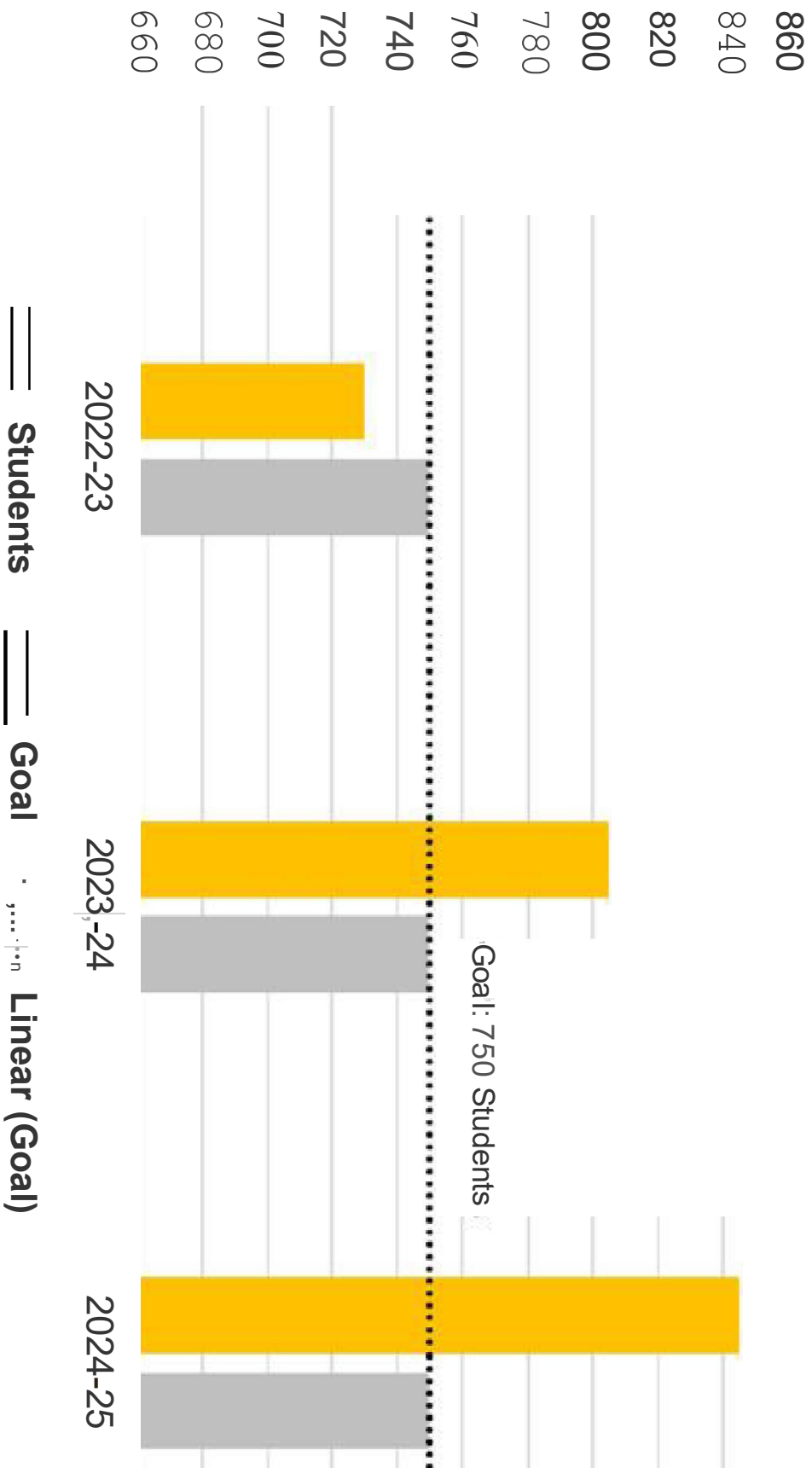




**ASU Creative Technology Building – Reuse of the Post Office**

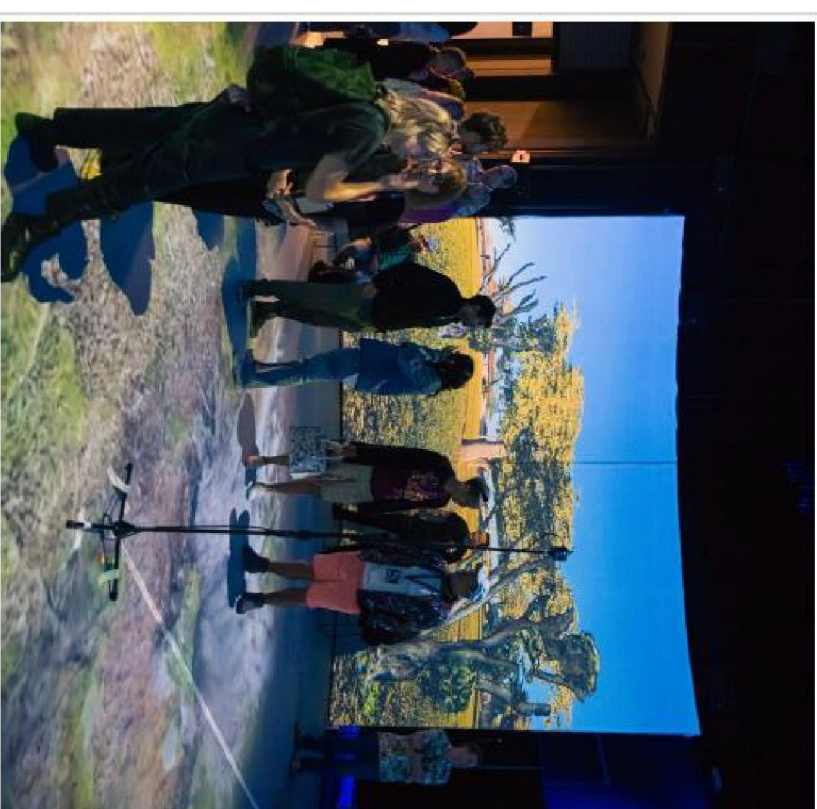
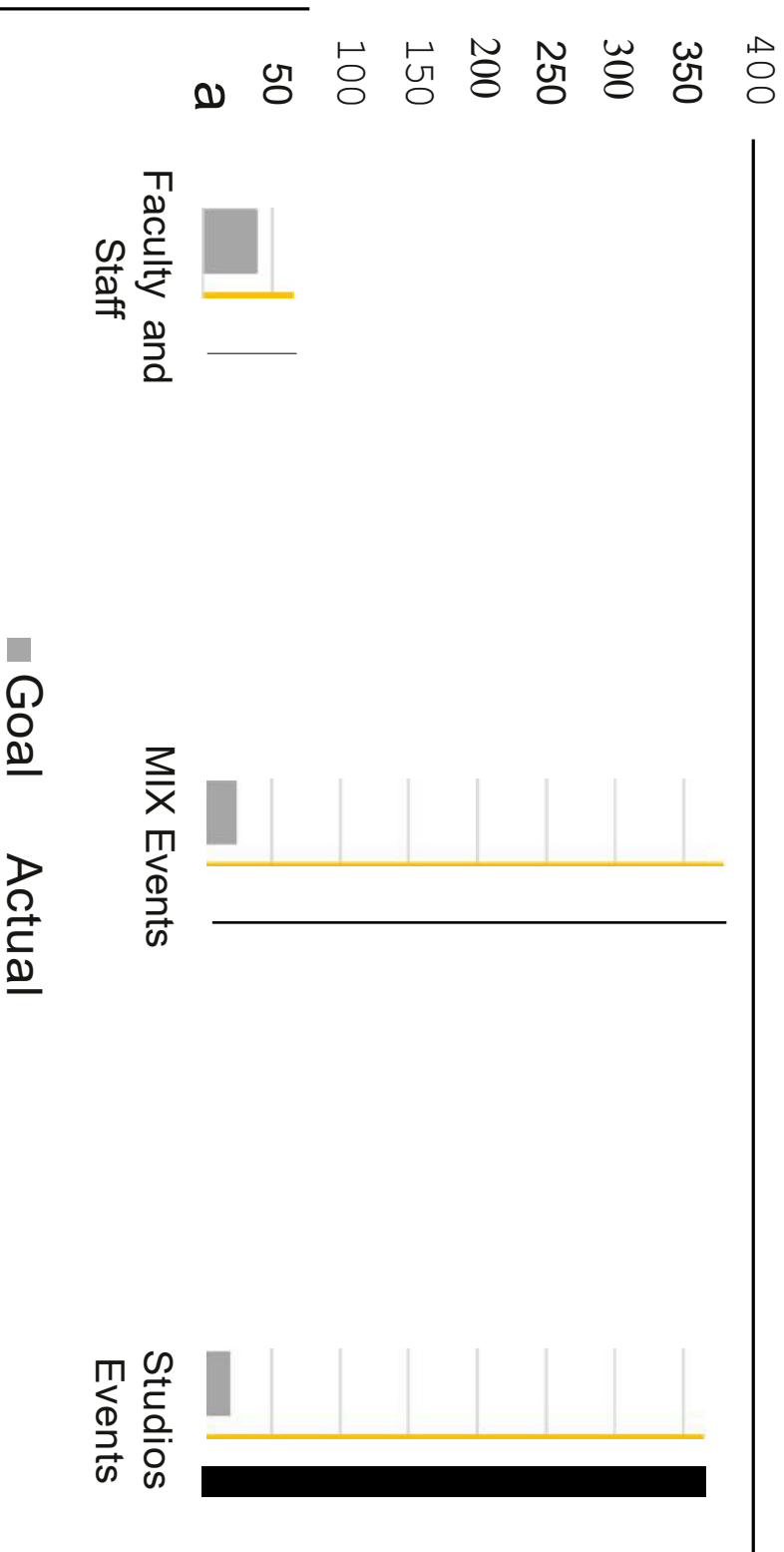
# The M X Center

## Student Growth



# The MIX Center and The Studios

## Faculty/ Staff and Events



# 2025 Year in Review

## ASU Center for Creative Technology at Mesa City Center



### The MIX Centre<sup>1</sup>

- 379 Events
- 19,482 Event attendees
- 250 Tours offered
- 3,476 Tour attendees

### The Studios

- 337 Events
- 46 Community-based orgs, companies, & institutions formally reserved space
- 6 Major collaborations and sponsored initiatives
- 3'65 Or, ganizations engaged with The Studios
- 313 Companies & organizations utilized coworking space along with an additional 411 individual members

# Industry Collaborations

## The MIX Center

### Sponsored Research

- Amazon Web Services (AWS)
- Canon U.S.A., Inc.

### Workforce Exploration

- Boeing

### Research Partner

- National Cardiovascular Research Center of Spain

### Collaboration Exploration

- Cox Communications
- Cox Science Center & Aquarium - FL
- Mesa Youth Creative Agency

### Delegations

- St George's, University of London
- Budapest Metropolitan University

### Partners

- Netflix - Screening
- Mesa Arts Center Youth - Program
- Japanese Film Festival of Arizona (JFFA)

## The Studios

### Company Sponsored Events

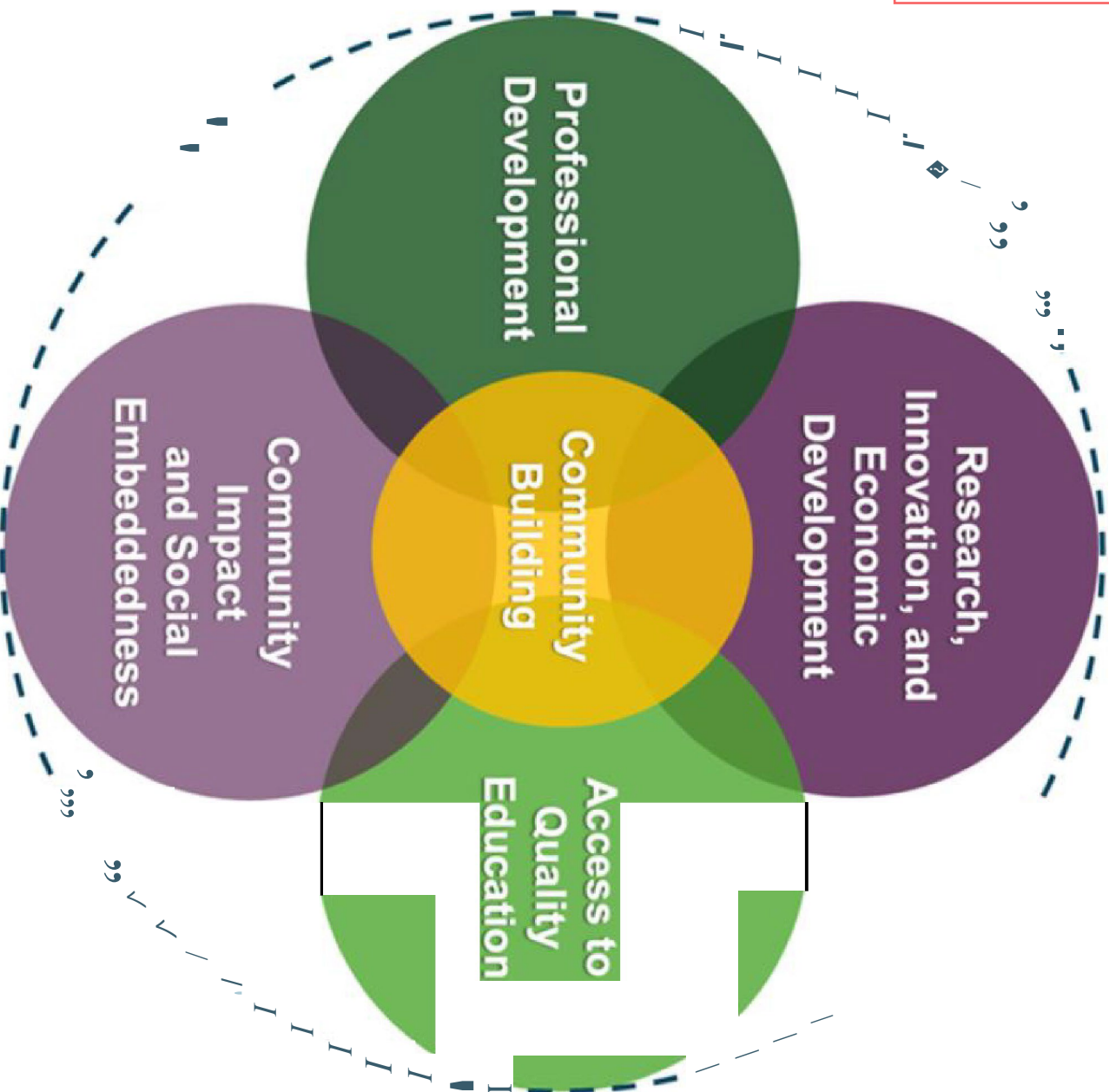
- East Valley Innovation Night - Meta
- Igniting Innovation Venture Challenge - Mesa West Rotary

### Community Companies Reserving Space: 337 Events

- Arizona Association of Teachers of Mathematics
- Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Mesa Public Schools
- Mesa United Way
- OPTICS for Healthcare (OHC)
- Proof Bread
- Valley Leadership

### Companies Using Coworking Space: 313

- LISC Phoenix
- Mesa Community College
- CompuSol of Santa Fe New Mexico

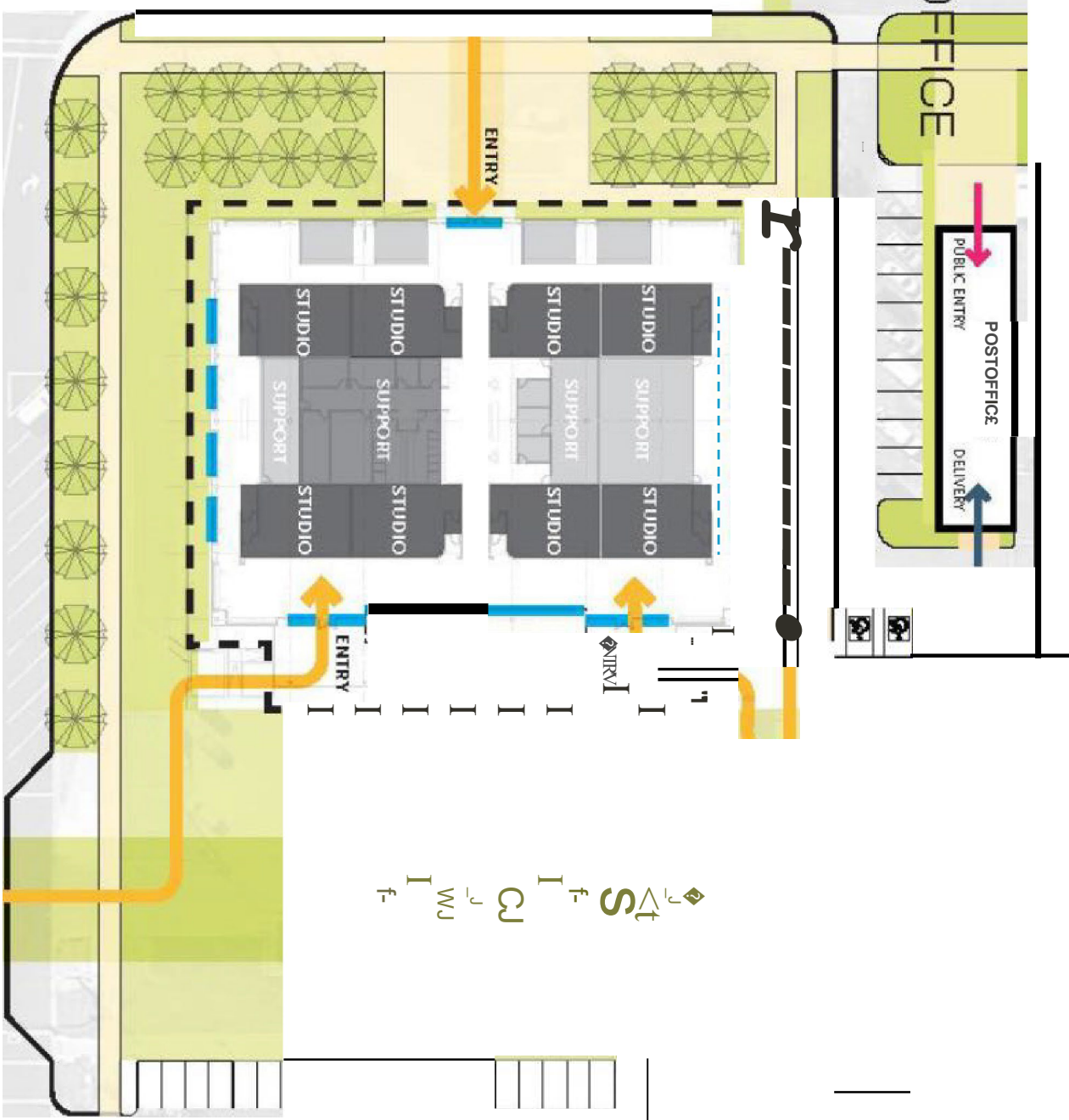


# Comprehensive City Partnership



# SITE PLAN

## POSTOFFICE

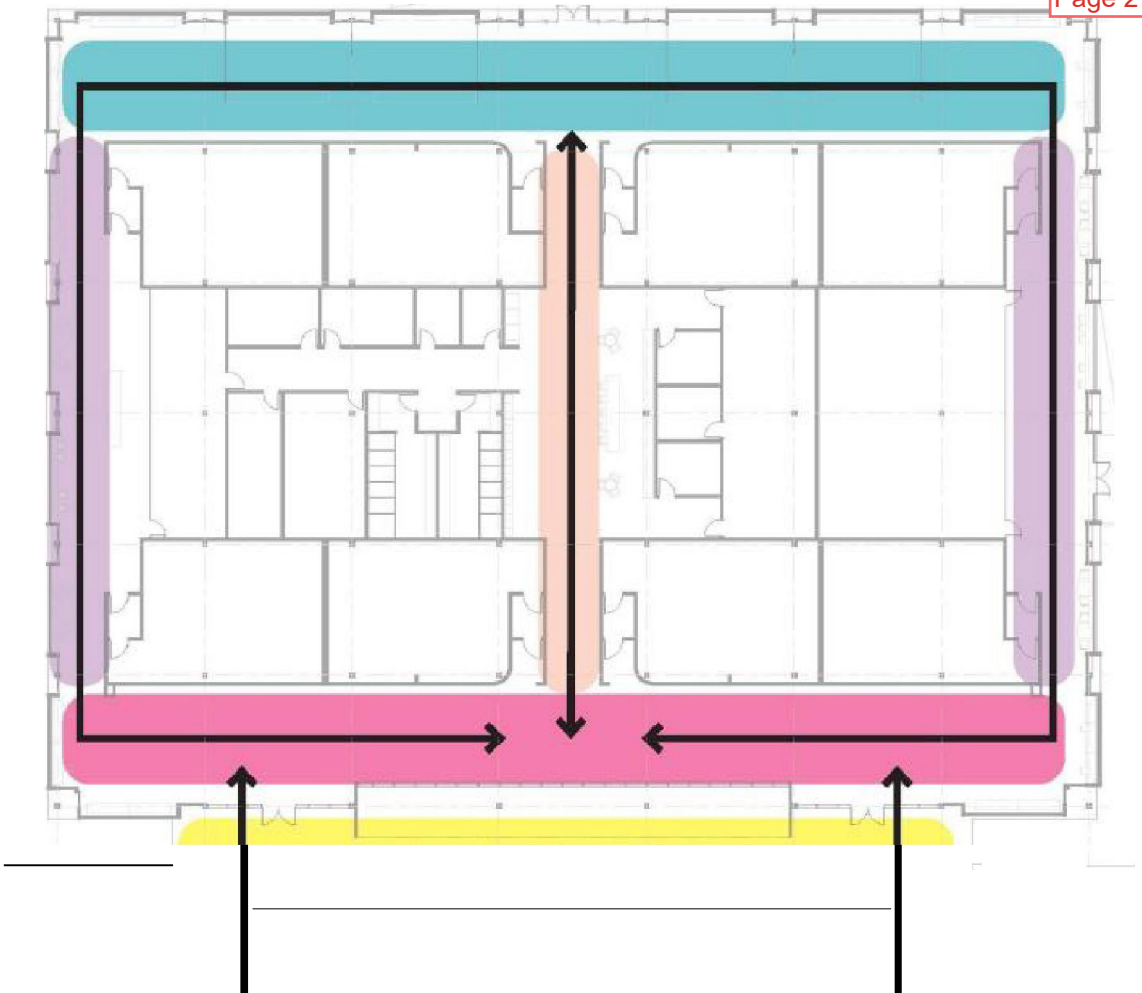


STUDIO  
SUPPORT  
STUDIO  
SUPPORT

STUDIO  
SUPPORT  
STUDIO  
SUPPORT

E. FIRST ST.

# POST OFFICE | PLANNING ZONES



WELCOME ZONE | SOCIAL + EVENTS

SHARE ZONE | PINUP + COLLABORATION

TECH ZONE | SMALL GROUP + INDIVIDUAL

QUIET ZONE | FOCUS + STUDY

CONNECT ZONE | BREAK & SUPPORT

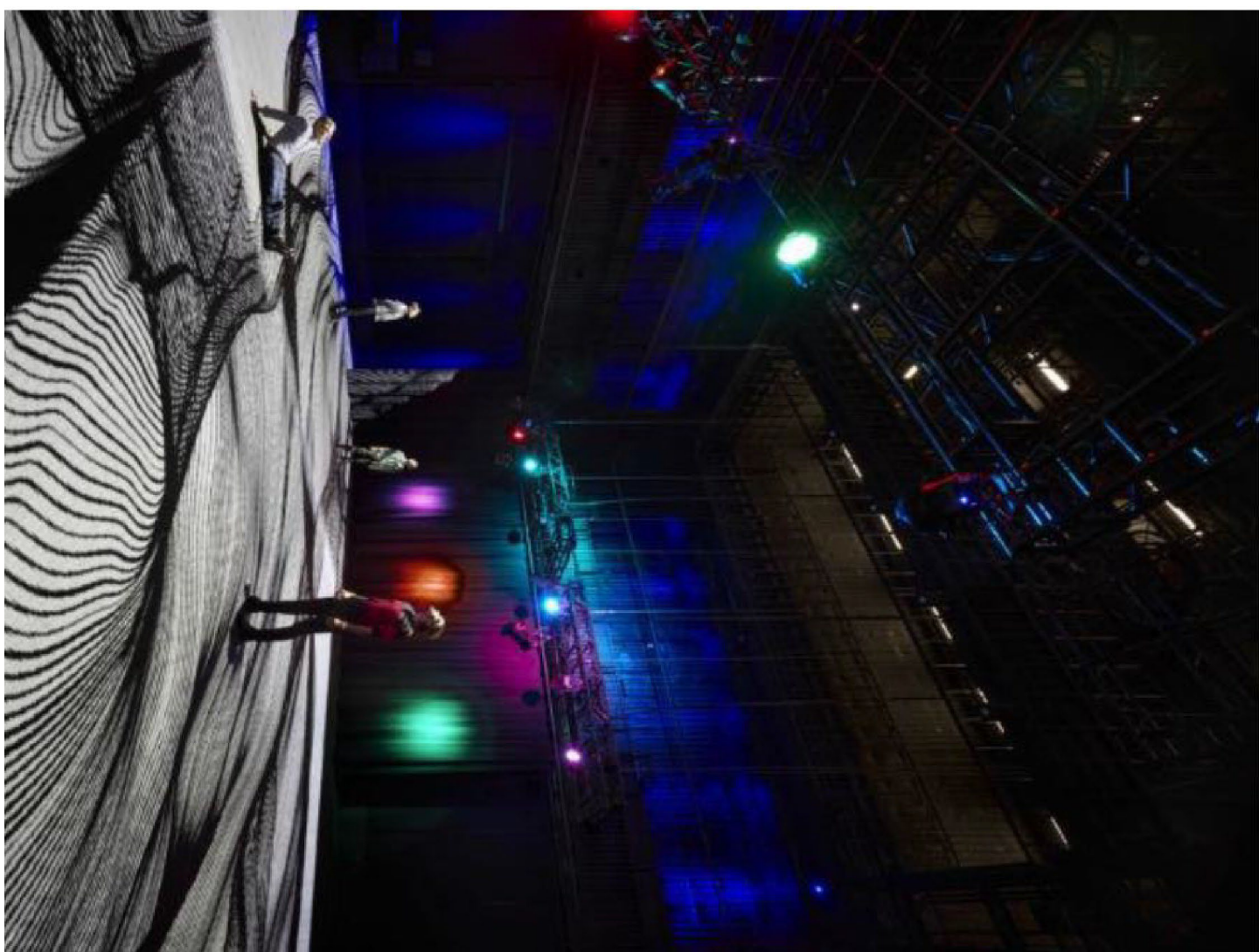
# Program Growth

**Potential Program**

**Projected Enrollment 2035**

Upper Division Creative Tech (such as interdisciplinary Design, Game, Animation to join Film	600
Low-residency Emerging Creative Tech (such as Virtual Film Production)	300
Graduate Degrees in Creative Tech (such Immersive Experience Design, Extended Reality, Entertainment Engineering)	250

**\* Stackable programs depending upon program growth needs and availability of capital funding / space**



# Conceptual Program Elements

## Growth of ASU Center for Creative Technology at Mesa City Center

- Computer Classroom
- R Labs
- Flexible Studios
- Black Box
- Print Lab or Production
- Exhibit or Showcase Space
- Offices
- Open Office for Workstations
- Lecture















**End of ASU Slides**

ASU Creative Technology Building - Reuse of the Post Office



## FEASIBILITY CONCEPT: ASU CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES



### **BENEFITS OF ASU CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AT POST OFFICE**

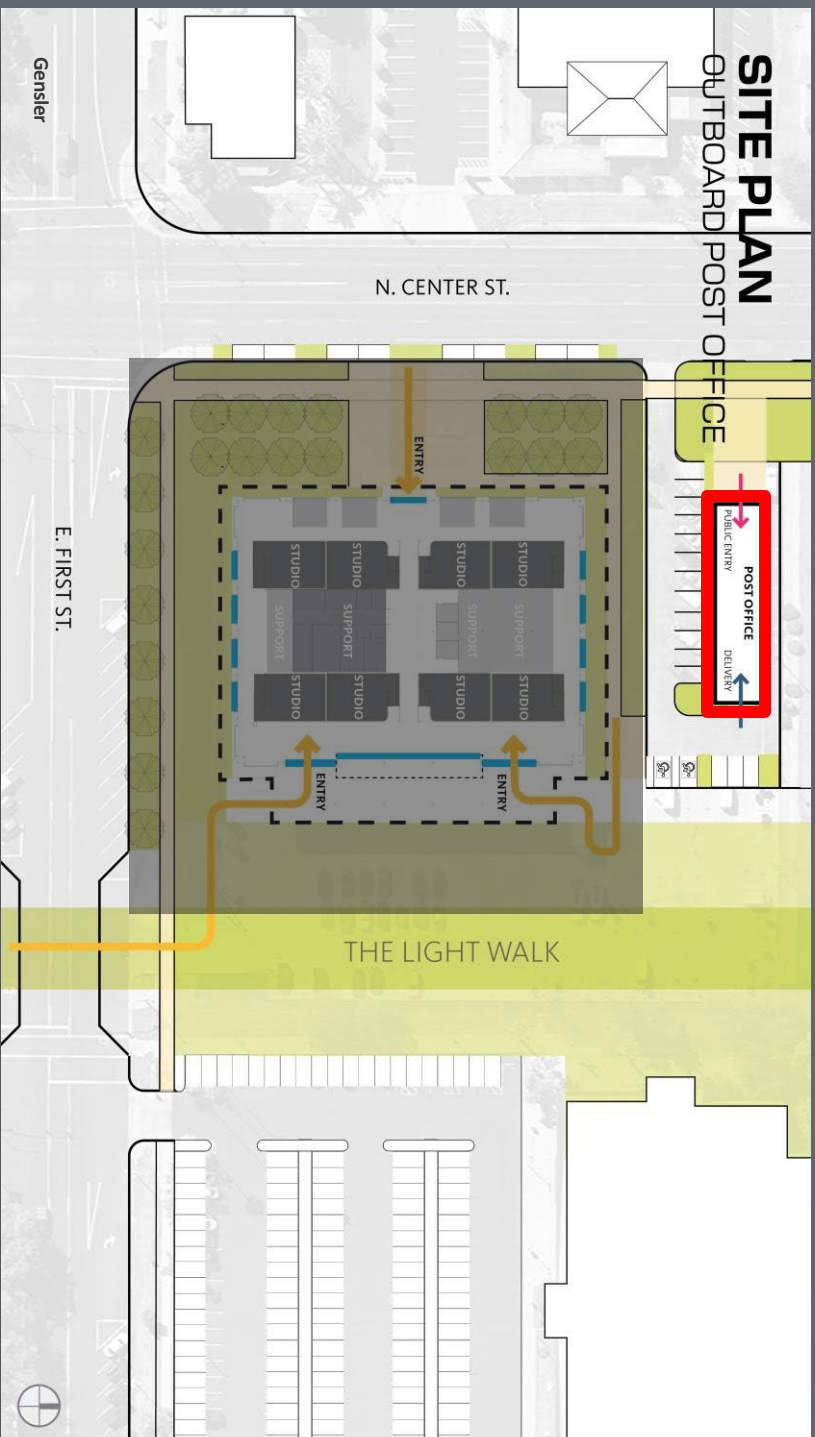
- Strengthen the Downtown Arts and Innovation District through expanded ASU presence
- Adaptive reuse of a strategic downtown asset
- Provide additional opportunity for academic programming
- Drive demand for ASU aligned businesses
- Maintains a retail postal presence while providing greater building efficiency for USPS and ASU

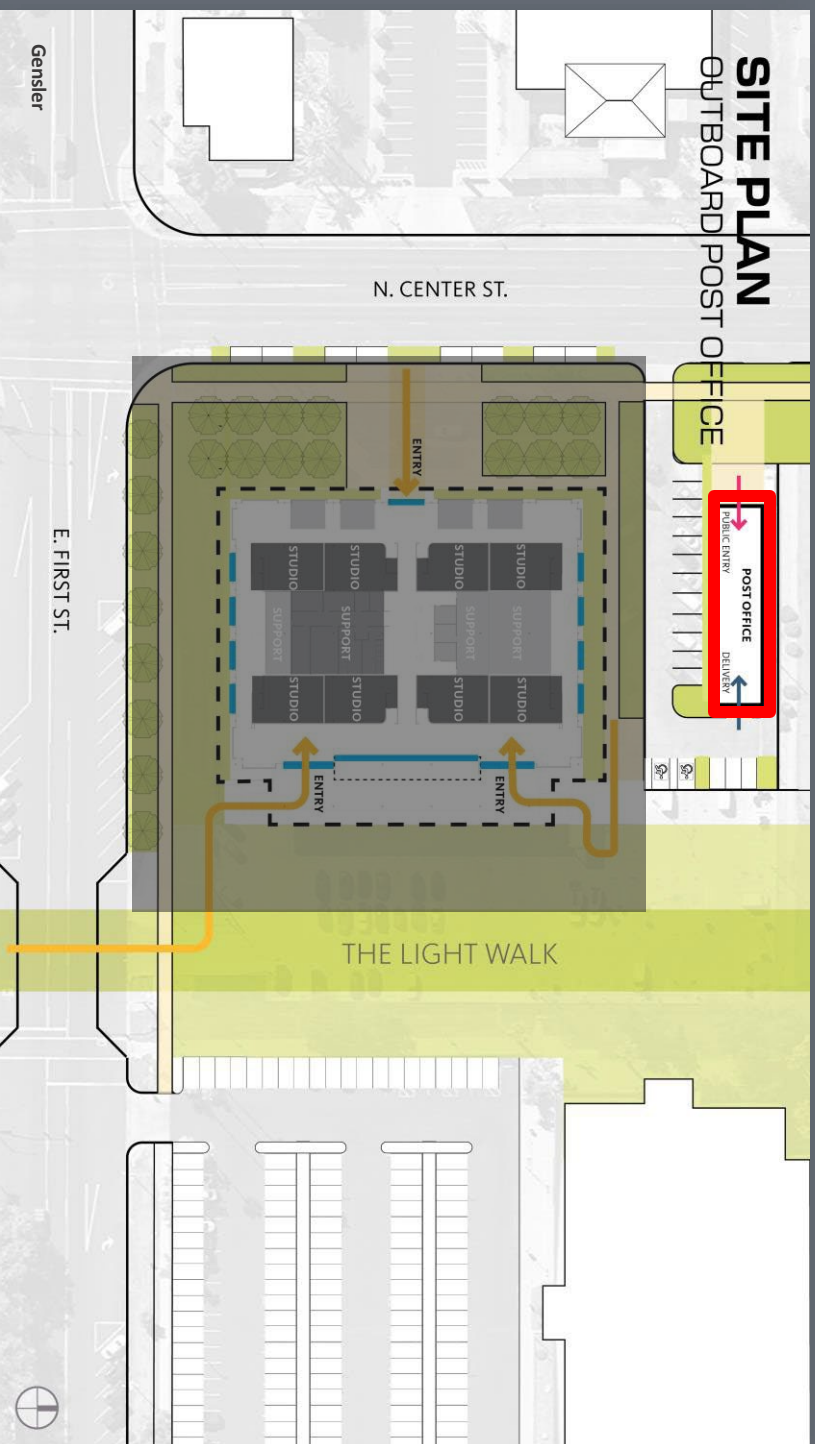
## BACKGROUND

USPS operations in 1971 after outgrowing Mesa's first post office, now The Post. The City held a 55-year ground lease that expired May 31, 2025. Upon the expiration of the ground lease, the City became the "landlord."

## CURRENT POST OFFICE LEASE

- Entered into a 3-year lease on June 1, 2025
- Lease expires May 31, 2028
- Engaged with USPS throughout the lease negotiations and during conceptual study





**PROPOSED RETAIL-ONLY POST OFFICE**

- Concept is reflective of current retail-only post office facilities
- City partners with USPS to complete final design and construct a new retail post office
- City and USPS negotiate a long-term lease for the new retail post office

New Retail Post Office

\$3,361,875

ASU Creative Technologies at Post Office

\$24,896,850 (excludes FF&E)

Infrastructure

\$5,000,000

Seeking Council direction on moving forward with negotiating a lease, including a cost share with ASU for development of ASU Creative Technologies at the Post Office and negotiating with USPS for a new retail post office with long-term lease



## VISION

As iconic as it is welcoming, Downtown Mesa's Light Walk will provide a safe and shaded connection from Mesa Arts Center at the south to The Convention Center and Amphitheatre to the north, with moments of interest and respite along the journey. Immersive and engaging activations will change from day to night, responding to visitor movement and energy, creating a fresh experience each time people return.



# WALKING DESIGN DESIGN PRINCIPLES - THE LIGHT WALK



Maximize comfort and shade



Transforms from day to night



Welcoming for all



Identifiable from Google Earth



Design references Mesa's history and identity



Engaging, Immersive experience



Adjacent facilities influence & benefit from the Light Walk



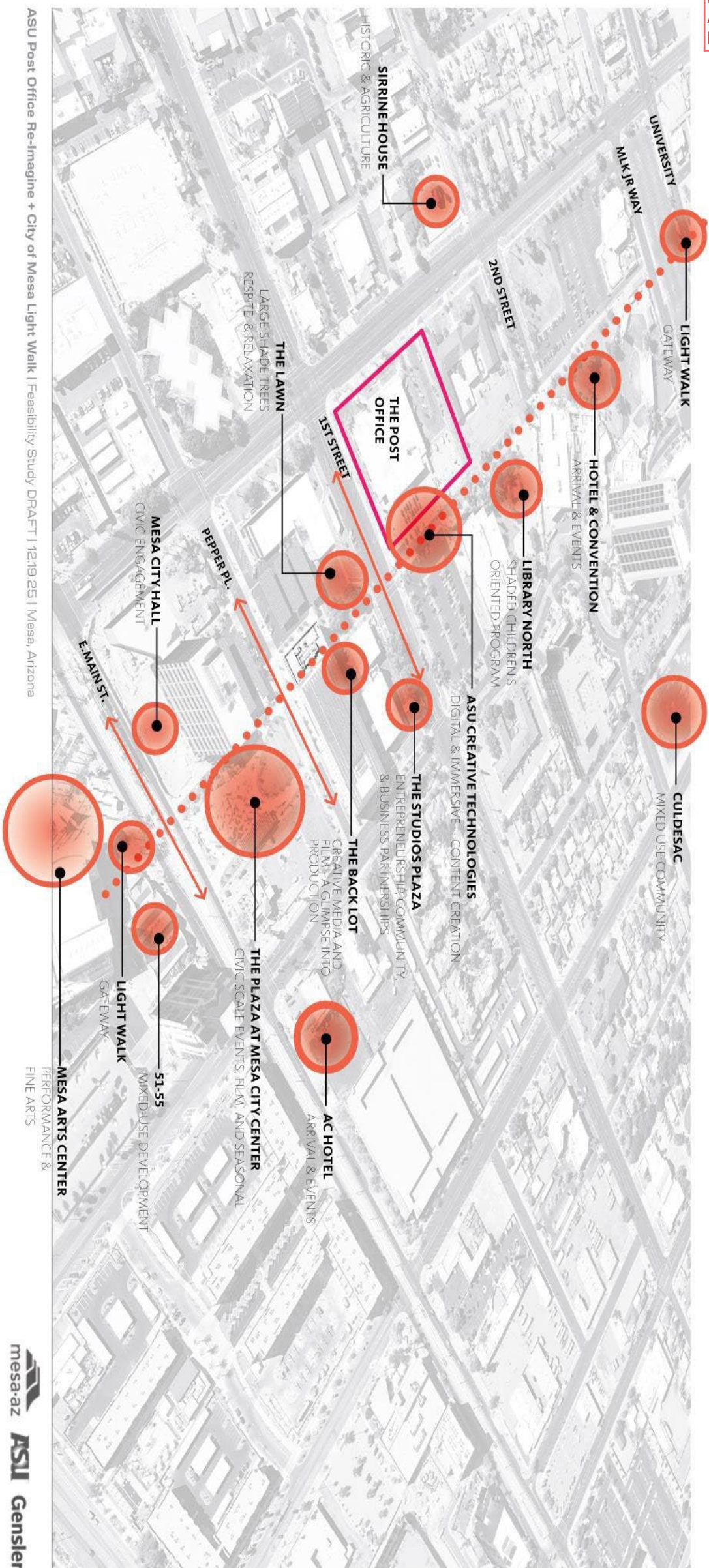
Fosters a sense of discovery



# LIGHT WALK - SCOPE



# LIGHT WALK - PROGRAMMATIC NODES





THE LIGHT WALK

# LIGHT WALK - LANDSCAPE





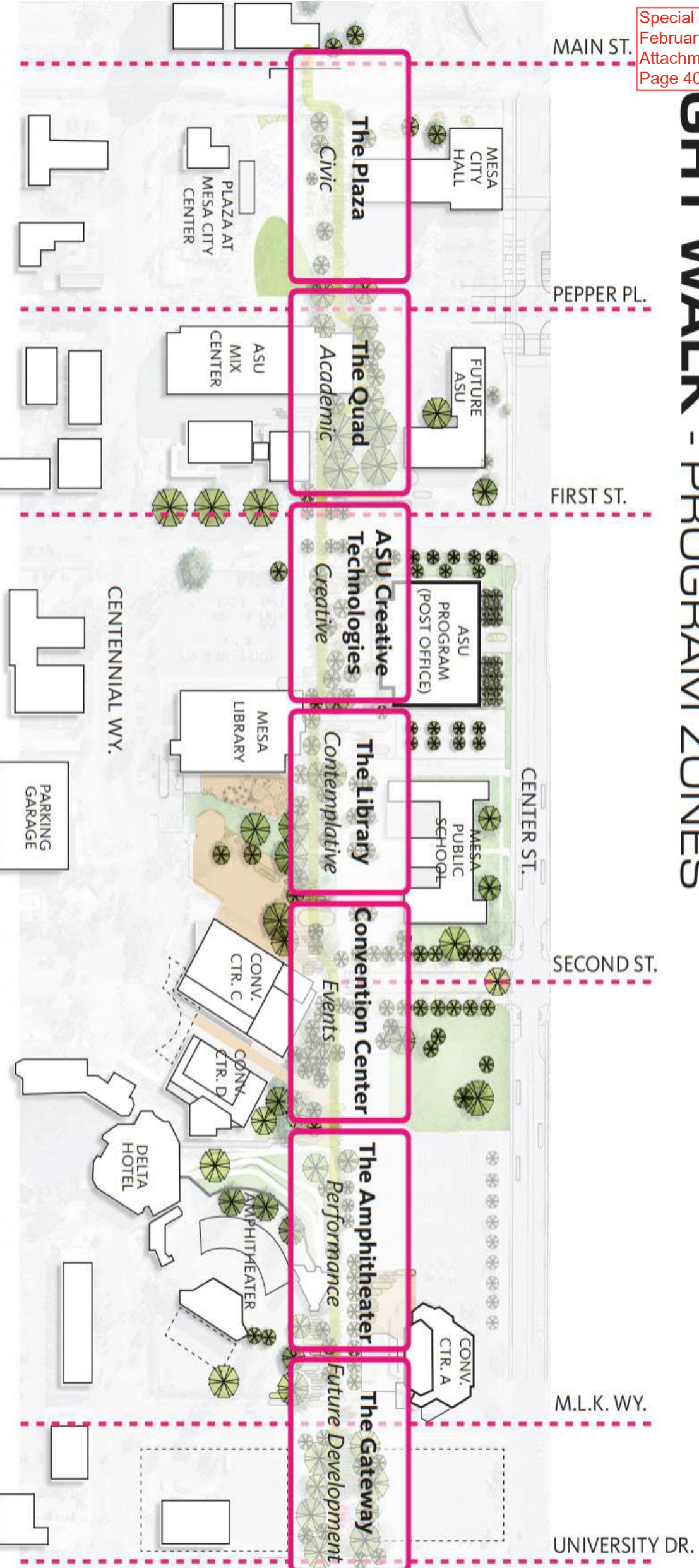
THE LIGHT WALK

# GHY WALK - STRUCTURED SHADE





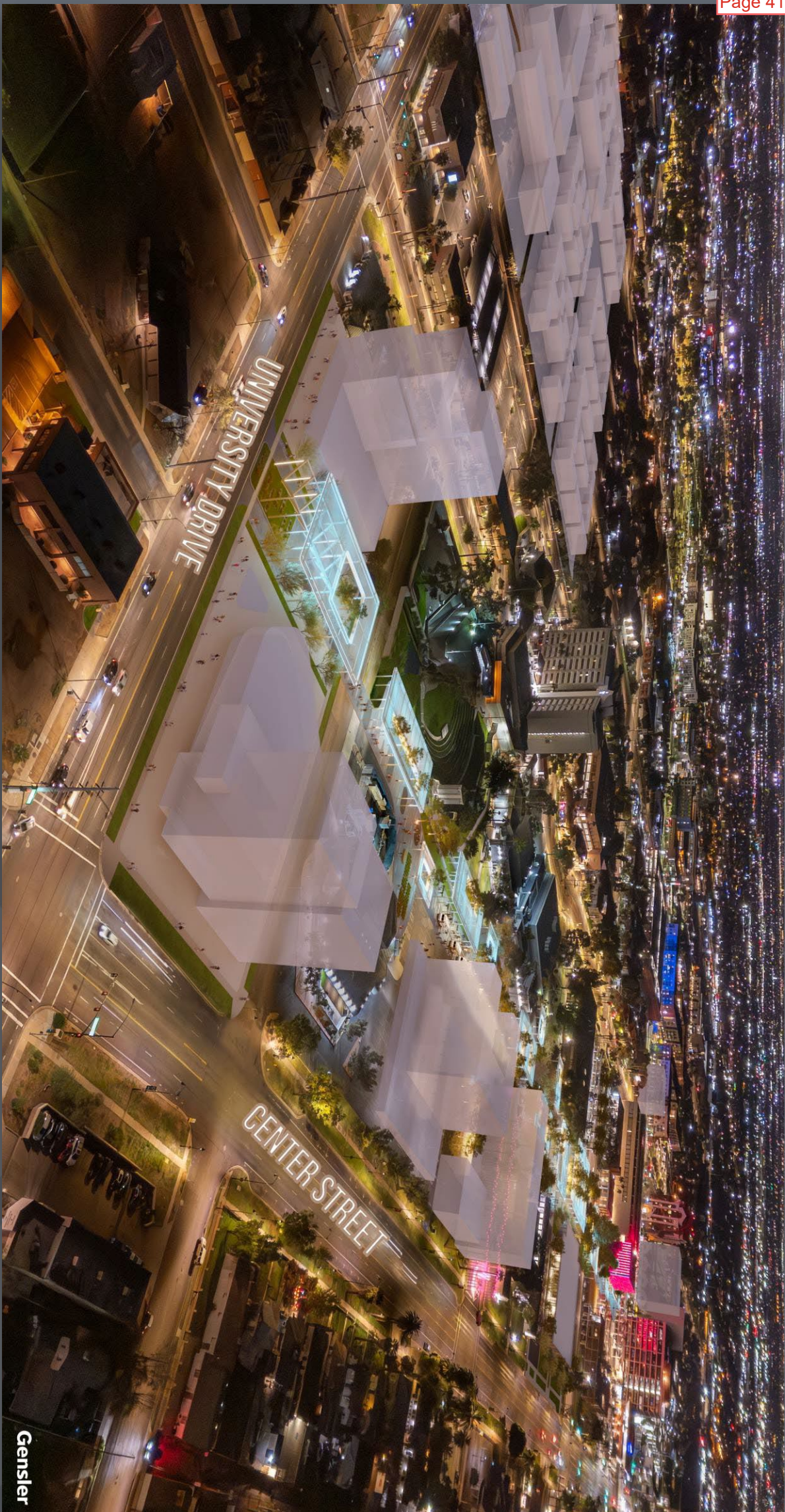
# GHGT WALK - PROGRAM ZONES





mesa·az

THE LIGHT WALK



Gensler



mesa·az

# THE LIGHT WALK



First Street looking NW Post Office

Gensler



Library looking West at the Post Office

Gensler



Post Office looking South

Genster



Library looking West at the Post Office



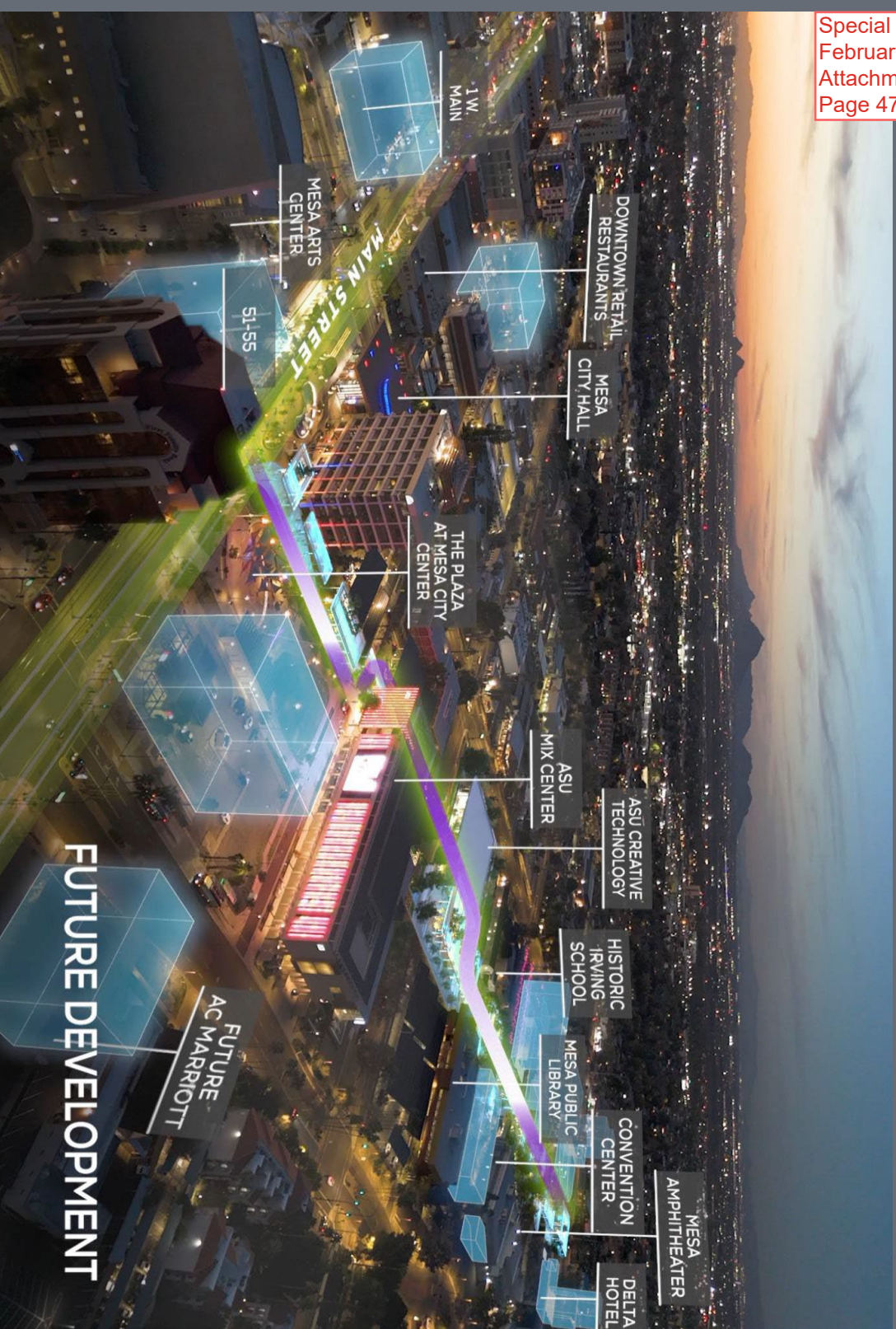
mesa·az

THE LIGHT WALK



Post Office looking South

Genster



## BENEFITS OF THE LIGHT WALK

- Strengthen Main Street connectivity from Amphitheater and Convention Center
- Enhance employee, resident, and visitor experience
- Support increased economic activity
- Reinforce Downtown Arts and Innovation District
- Support future economic development opportunities



## RIVERWALK – TAMPA, FLORIDA

- 2.6 mile long open space and pedestrian trail opened in 2016
- Created over 1,000 jobs
- Has generated more than \$1 billion in economic development
- Currently planning a \$56.8 million 2-mile expansion
- Convention Center expansion of \$40 million tied into this project
- Increased property values near the Riverwalk

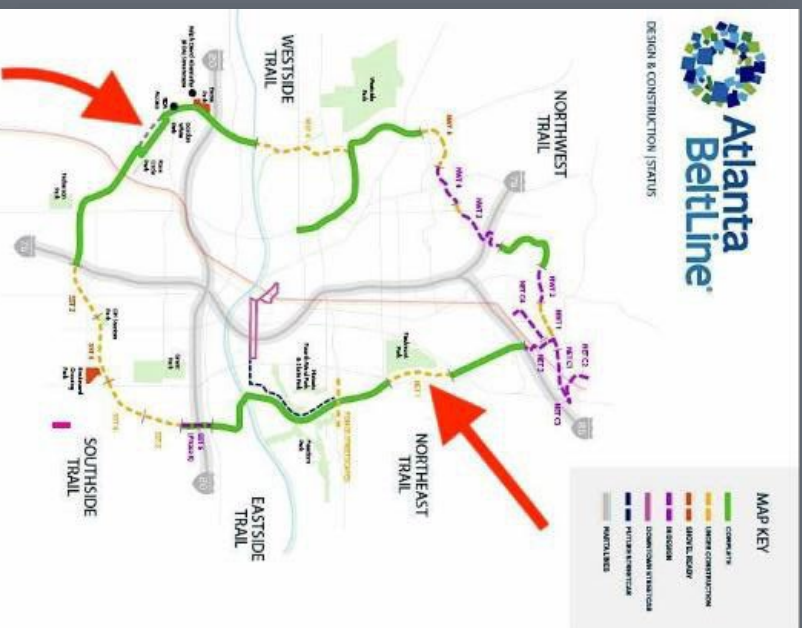




mesa.az

## BELTLINE – ATLANTA, GEORGIA

- 7-miles of planned 22-mile continuous multi-use trail have been completed
- \$9 billion economic impact
- 3,555 affordable housing units completed
- Contributed to creation of 29,500 new jobs
- Instrumental in revitalizing Atlanta's arts and culture



- 8-mile trail opened in 2013
- The \$63 million dollar project focused on beautification
- Between 2008-2014 assessed values of properties within 500 ft increased by \$1 billion
- Created a greater connectivity to downtown
- 48% of business owners have seen an increase in revenue
- On average trail users spent \$53 per person in 2015





## ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF LIGHT WALK

- Amphitheater, Convention Center, Library, and MAC generate approximately 1,000,000 annual visitors
- 327,000 Light Walk users annually
- \$16 million in annual downtown retail and restaurant spending
- 137 jobs supported annually
- \$4.8 million in annual labor income
- \$372 million in total visitor spending over 20 years
- \$7.4 million in City sales tax revenue over 20 years

Source: Applied Economics, January 2026

The Light Walk can help convert arts, education, employment, and civic activity into sustained downtown spending, jobs, and revenue

# Light Walk Concept Fly-Through

<https://vimeo.com/1164003975/249055c6a3?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=cj>



# LIGHT WALK: STAFF RECOMMENDATION

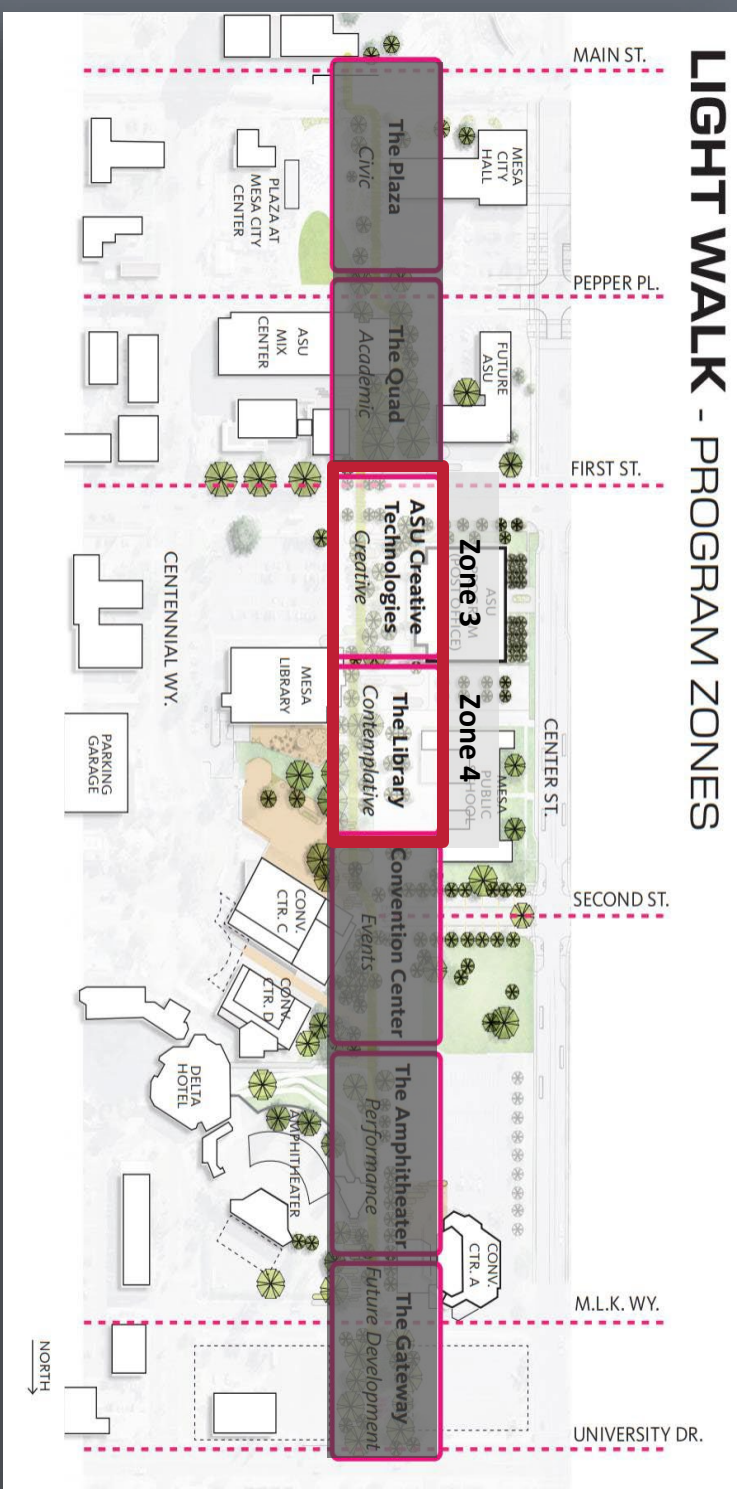
The Light Walk design concept forms the vision for a civic corridor that will be a destination and connector unique in the Valley. The Light Walk concept will be implemented over time, and as part of future public and private investments.

## PROPOSED PHASE 1 LIGHT WALK

Zone 3 and Zone 4

Seeking Council direction to move forward with Zones 3 & 4 of the Light Walk for further refinement and future Council consideration

### LIGHT WALK - PROGRAM ZONES





# DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS



### **WITH COUNCIL'S DIRECTION, STAFF WILL:**

- Negotiate agreements and cost share with ASU for ASU Creative Technologies at Post Office for Council action prior to further design
- Negotiate design/development and lease for new retail post office with USPS
- Release RFQ/RFP for 51-55 E. Main Street
- Focus on Zones 3 & 4 of the Light Walk for further refinement and future Council consideration