

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING MINUTES

May 28, 2026

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Strategic Planning Session in the Inspirian Room at the Gateway Library, 5036 S. Eastmark Parkway, on May 28, 2026, at 7:42 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

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

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Scott Butler
Holly Moseley
Jim Smith

(*Participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Mayor Freeman conducted a roll call and welcomed the Council and staff.

City Manager Scott Butler explained the purpose of the meeting and noted that staff would facilitate the discussion.

- 1-a. Conduct a review of the draft Council Strategic Plan developed during the February 19, 2026 Council Strategic Planning session and obtain feedback on the plan's framework, structure, and overall direction.

Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Freeman introduced Performance Administrator Michelle Trejo, Performance Advisor II Megan Drazek, and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Freeman explained that the purpose of the 2026 Council Strategic Plan is to provide a shared governing framework that aligns Council's priorities with City operations. She outlined the parameters and expectations for the meeting, with the goal of gathering high-level feedback that reflects the Council's direction and vision to be applied to the Strategic Plan. (See Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Freeman discussed the Strategic Retreat held on February 19, 2026, which was moderated by Jen Daniels, Founder and CEO of AZP Consulting. She commented that the Strategic Plan intentionally aligns with the Mesa General Plan and noted that the action plan was not included to allow Council to provide feedback before finalization. She identified four core strategic drivers of the Strategic Plan as people, economy, land & infrastructure, and intentional governance &

transparency, which serves as an organizing structure for priorities and resources to achieve desired outcomes. (See Pages 4 through 6 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Freeman instructed Council on the process and flow for discussion on each of the drivers and introduced the first strategic driver, People, which focuses on building strong communities. (See Page 7 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Trejo highlighted strategic outcomes associated with the People driver, and the areas where the City intends to focus its efforts with actionable commitments. (See Page 8 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler clarified that the Governance Principles were developed to reflect and consolidate Council's feedback from the Strategic Retreat into workable actions.

In response to a question posed by Councilmember Duff, Mr. Butler advised that any priority Council believes is missing should be added before the plan is finalized. He mentioned once the plan is finalized, staff will develop an action plan for implementation and a user-friendly public dashboard with key performance indicators (KPIs) to promote transparency and accountability.

Councilmember Duff added that while identifying new priorities is important, Council should also ensure valuable existing priorities are not unintentionally eliminated if they are currently performing well.

Responding to multiple questions posed by Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Butler replied that the intent is to update the Strategic Plan every two years to coincide with the Council's election cycle, allowing adequate time for implementation, evaluation, and reporting before priorities are revised. He noted that the Strategic Plan identifies areas where Council wants greater emphasis and improvement, while the City's budget and daily operations will continue supporting all existing programs and services. He reiterated that the City is not abandoning existing services or initiatives, but focusing additional attention and resources to the areas identified by Council as needing improvement.

Mayor Freeman emphasized that the Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document that is updated regularly. He stressed the importance of flexibility, adapting to changing conditions, and using measurable performance data to guide decisions.

Ms. Freeman explained that staff intentionally limited the plan to four strategic drivers to maintain focus, noting that too many priorities reduce the City's ability to achieve meaningful results. She requested Council evaluate whether each governance principle accurately reflects their vision and whether they can support the language, encouraging discussion where clarification is needed.

Mr. Butler stated that the workforce readiness objective focuses on supporting educational institutions and workforce development efforts to ensure Mesa has a skilled workforce capable of meeting industry demands.

In response to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Butler confirmed that the City's role is to support workforce development by helping ensure industries such as semiconductor manufacturing and supply chain businesses have access to qualified workers.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Interim Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Director Andrea Alicoate discussed the City's Workforce Development

Strategic Plan, which focuses on workforce alignment, partnerships, mentorships, internships, post-secondary attainment, and collaboration with education and industry partners. She explained that although the City is not responsible for K–12 education, the City serves as a connector to strengthen workforce development and economic growth.

Discussion ensued regarding Council feedback, lack of communication, and workforce strategies, patterns and trends identified by Council, KPIs and accountability.

Ms. Trejo emphasized that each section of the Strategic Plan follows the same concept and approach.

Responding to a question posed by Councilmember Adams, Assistant City Manager Ken Cost advised that the Public Safety and Trust Index is a new metric currently under development. He shared that the goal is to combine existing public safety data into a single, understandable index that demonstrates community safety and trust, and he mentioned several of the proposed components.

Ms. Trejo added that the Strategic Plan KPIs and drivers represent only one layer of the City's broader performance measurement system.

Ms. Freeman highlighted the guiding and governance principles for the Economy driver. (See Page 9 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Trejo discussed the strategic outcomes for the Economy driver and the ways it will be supported. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

Economic Development Director Jaye O'Donnell provided an overview of a model for Mesa's Competitive Positioning Index, a framework that will assess Mesa's business attractiveness, livability, and talent competitiveness in comparison with other communities.

Mr. Butler added that the City is developing a standardized, measurable process using outcome-based KPIs so Council and the public can track progress on strategic priorities instead of relying on subjective reports from developers or attorneys.

Ms. O'Donnell explained the City is balancing high-value industries with water and power demands and has begun declining companies that consume excessive resources or provide low-wage jobs and want employers whose workers can afford to live in Mesa.

Mayor Freeman said that Mesa must become more selective about future development since the City will be largely built out within the next decade.

Councilmembers provided their feedback on the Economy strategic driver.

Councilmember Duff suggested that commercial developments reflect the community character and fit into the Land and Infrastructure driver.

Mayor Freeman stressed that Mesa's success depends on being a full-service city with strong utilities, employee morale, police services, and fiscal stability, and wants City services and employees to be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Trejo reviewed the Land and Infrastructure strategic driver and inquired whether the content accurately reflects Council's previous discussions. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Mayor Freeman confirmed that the strategic driver for Land and Infrastructure reflects their previous discussions.

Ms. Trejo discussed the Land and Infrastructure strategic outcomes, explaining that Community Character Plans, placemaking, and resilient infrastructure are central elements. (See Page 12 of Attachment 1)

Assistant City Manager Marc Heirshberg stated that Community Character Plans will identify the unique identity of different areas through stakeholder engagement and may eventually be combined with the City's Placemaking Playbook.

Responding to a question posed by Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Heirshberg explained that the intention is for the community character to be defined by residents of each specific area, and encompasses various types of land use, creating a shared vision that guides future growth without becoming overly burdensome or regulatory.

Mr. Butler clarified that Community Character Plans are intended as guidance rather than regulations, helping justify future development, infrastructure, and park investments based on community-supported visions.

In response to a question from Councilmember Adams, Mr. Heirshberg replied that the Placemaking Playbook is in the development stages and may integrate into the Community Character Plan, and is not meant to replace the Subarea Plan, which is the regulatory document.

Councilmember Taylor described how Mesa's districts each have unique identities, lifestyles, and priorities, emphasizing that Community Character Plans should reflect the distinct voices and aspirations of residents in each area.

Ms. Trejo commented that the Placemaking Playbook emerged from Council's strategic planning discussions and is intended to connect placemaking, city services, parks, libraries, and KPIs into a coordinated strategy.

Ms. Trejo identified the guiding and governance principles for the Intentional Governance and Transparency strategic driver. (See Page 13 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Trejo explained the City will create a public KPI dashboard-based system for Council and residents to have access to the progress toward strategic goals and departmental objectives. (See Page 14 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Trejo provided an overview of the new framework that aligns Council priorities, major strategic plans, departmental purpose statements, and operational priorities, so Citywide planning is coordinated. (See Page 15 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler added that the goal is for Council priorities to flow through departmental strategies into daily operations, noting the City's organizational restructuring was designed to improve alignment and collaboration.

Mayor Freeman stressed that accountability begins with City leadership and that improved communication across departments is necessary to deliver services more efficiently.

Mr. Butler agreed the City must eliminate departmental silos, saying clear Council priorities will help departments work collaboratively toward shared goals.

Mayor Freeman concluded that improving efficiency, supporting staff, and reducing costs for developers and residents are critical to the community.

Ms. Freeman closed by outlining the next steps, including incorporating Council's feedback, finalizing the strategic plan and action plan with City leadership, and providing the completed documents to Council. (See Page 16 of Attachment 1)

Councilmember Duff commented that Council shares responsibility for achieving the City's strategic goals by making holistic decisions that support KPIs and priorities rather than treating issues as isolated decisions and hold staff and the City accountable.

Mayor Freeman thanked staff for the presentation.

(Mayor Freeman declared a recess at 9:01 a.m. The Council Strategic Planning Session resumed at 9:10 a.m.)

1-b. Hear a presentation, discuss and receive an update on the City's assessment of the current commercial development review process, with an overview of the identified opportunities for improvement and an overview of the phased 18-month implementation plan.

Performance Administrator Michelle Trejo introduced Performance Advisor II Megan Drazek and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 2)**

Ms. Trejo reviewed the assessment of the City's current state regarding its processes and facilitation findings. (See Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 2)

(At 9:15 a.m., Mayor Freeman excused Councilmember Heredia from the remainder of the meeting.)

Ms. Trejo explained that the development review improvements are intended to make Mesa a more welcoming place to do business by providing a faster, more predictable, high-quality, and positive customer-focused review process. She highlighted Mesa's organizational strengths in regard to improving the process and the complexity, noting that up to 15 City departments may be involved at different stages. (See Pages 4 through 7 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Trejo identified five sequential recommendations focused on collective ownership, cross-department collaboration, and eliminating organizational silos through a new advisory structure. (See Pages 8 through 11 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Butler advised the structure of the recommendations are designed to sustain long-term collaboration, with dedicated leadership ensuring implementation continues and stressed the importance of accountability rather than creating unnecessary bureaucracy. He added that the structure gives frontline staff a voice and shifts the City's perspective to one integrated system approach.

Ms. Drazek outlined the next phase of improvements, which included deep-dive assessments to ensure all proposed related processes are aligned and integrated for implementation. (See Pages 12 and 13 of Attachment 2)

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Somers, Chief of Emerging Technology Ian Linssen replied that the City is actively exploring artificial intelligence (AI) tools for development review but noted the technology is still evolving and not yet proven reliable enough for complex commercial projects.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Linssen confirmed that the City's workflows have largely been mapped, allowing technology vendors to evaluate how their systems could integrate with existing processes.

Mayor Freeman questioned whether reviews could generally be completed within three reviews.

Discussion ensued related to the development review process, shared accountability, new review tools and better-quality submissions.

Ms. Drazek introduced the recommended transformational process innovations rather than simply streamlining existing procedures. She explained that the recommendations are customer-focused and propose multiple pre-submittal service options, allowing applicants to receive quick written answers or targeted planning assistance, making the system more flexible and responsive. (See Pages 14 and 15 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Trejo discussed how the Placemaking Playbook will become an integral partner with the Community Character Plan for a comprehensive strategic approach to catapult economic vitality. (See Page 15 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Heirshberg stated that discussions with the development community identified an opportunity to combine the Community Character Plan and the Placemaking Playbook into a community-driven plan. He explained that the intent is to establish goals and desired character without creating overly regulatory requirements, then work through the regulatory process to implement them. He added that the effort is intended to ensure City departments share a consistent understanding of the approach. (See Page 15 of Attachment 2)

In response to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Heirshberg replied that the Placemaking Playbook was driven by feedback from both large developers and an individual homeowner. He emphasized that the process was driven by community feedback received over the past two and a half years. He reported that staff wants to shift to finding proactive solutions for the reactive nature of our business.

Responding to multiple questions from Councilmember Adams, Mr. Heirshberg explained that the development of Community Character Plans is to be based on the voter-approved General Plan by focusing on designated large-targeted activity centers as the foundation for placemaking.

Mr. Butler added the Community Character Plans should be flexible vision documents rather than regulations, and they should communicate community goals and preferences so developers understand what types of projects will fit and resonate with the surrounding area.

In response to a question from Councilmember Goforth, Mr. Heirshberg mentioned that property owners often participate through their land use attorneys rather than directly, making attorneys an important point of contact.

Discussion ensued in relation to the stakeholders involved in the process, communication methods, and feedback received.

Mr. Butler added that the City also uses trade associations, such as Valley Partnership, and other communication tools to engage the various avenues of community development.

Ms. Drazek stated that implementing the initiatives requires significant design and planning before workflow improvements and standardized processes can be developed. (See Page 15 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Drazek indicated that the principles will apply both to existing processes and to any newly designed services and concepts developed through the initiative. She described the two areas of workflow optimization and standardization process, which will focus on technology improvements, establish standard operating procedures and staff training. (See Pages 16 and 17 of Attachment 2)

Ms. Drazek discussed the focus on improving customer experience by providing comprehensive guidance, consistent communication, coordinated interaction processes across departments, and easier access to City resources. (See Pages 18 and 19 of Attachment 2)

Responding to a question from Councilmember Duff, Ms. Drazek explained that the board's KPIs will focus on collective efficiency, collaboration, implementation of process improvements, and overall effectiveness. She noted that the metrics will measure how all participating departments contribute to improving development review timelines and outcomes.

Ms. Trejo reviewed the five phases of the 18-month implementation schedule and commented that the schedule is currently in the first two phases. She advised that developing the community character concepts will take the most time, followed by a pilot program in which volunteer developers will test the new process and provide feedback before full implementation. (See Pages 20 and 21 of Attachment 2)

Mayor Freeman thanked staff for the presentation.

(Mayor Freeman declared a recess at 10:21 a.m. The Council Strategic Planning Session resumed at 10:29 a.m.)

1-c. Hear a presentation, discuss and receive an update on the citywide branding efforts, including the selected partner and proposed work plan.

Economic Development Director Jaye O'Donnell introduced Director of Communications Casey Blake; Jason Hackett, Founder of HAPI branding agency; and displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 3)**

Ms. O'Donnell reviewed Council's previous discussions and feedback, explaining that the presentation would outline the branding process, expected deliverables, and project timeline. She emphasized that the project is focused on creating consistent citywide messaging and

identity, not a complete rebrand. She said the branding plan will assess how Mesa is currently perceived and define its desired future identity. (See Pages 2 through 4 of Attachment 3)

Ms. Blake explained that the process will identify gaps between public perception and reality, allowing Mesa to better tell its story. She indicated that a stronger brand will support economic development, workforce attraction, resident engagement, and consistent communication across City departments. She provided an overview of the practical tools that will be utilized to create a clear brand strategy. (See Pages 5 and 6 of Attachment 3)

Ms. Blake announced that HAPI was chosen as an outside consultant for rebranding through a competitive RFQ process following Council's direction. (See Page 7 of Attachment 3)

Mr. Hackett highlighted HAPI's rebranding expertise in marketing and branding since 2009, including extensive work with Mesa organizations. He said the firm's familiarity with Mesa and experience leading branding projects qualified the firm to guide the City's branding effort. (See Pages 8 and 9 of Attachment 3)

Mr. Hackett described HAPI's scope of the work for Mesa's brand realignment and outlined the process, which involves stakeholder and Council feedback. He discussed HAPI's research approach, explaining that the firm's "Eight Pillars of the Perfect Smile" framework will guide the assessment of Mesa's brand. He identified the three-phase branding realignment expected to take approximately six to eight months. (See Pages 10 through 13 of Attachment 3)

Ms. O'Donnell reported that staff will provide Council with regular progress updates and seek feedback throughout the process. She encouraged Councilmembers to help engage their constituents in surveys and stakeholder interviews to ensure broad community participation. (See Page 14 of Attachment 3)

Discussion ensued relative to Mesa's brand identity, strategies for new branding, different aspects of Mesa, and a standard template.

Mayor Freeman thanked staff for the presentation.

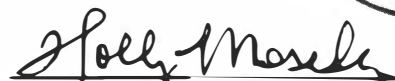
2. Adjournment.

Without objection, the City Council Strategic Planning Session adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

ATTEST:




For MARK FREEMAN, MAYOR


HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Strategic Planning Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 28th day of May 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

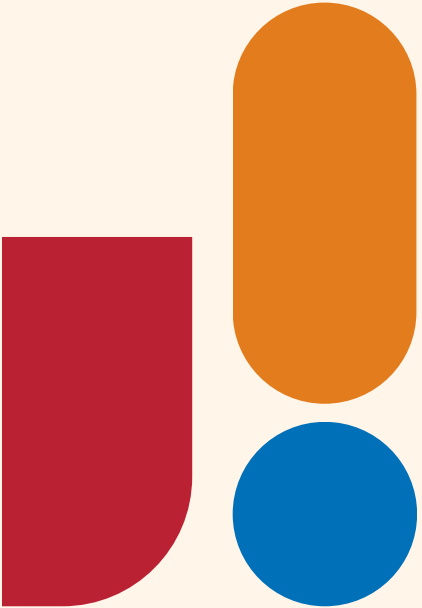
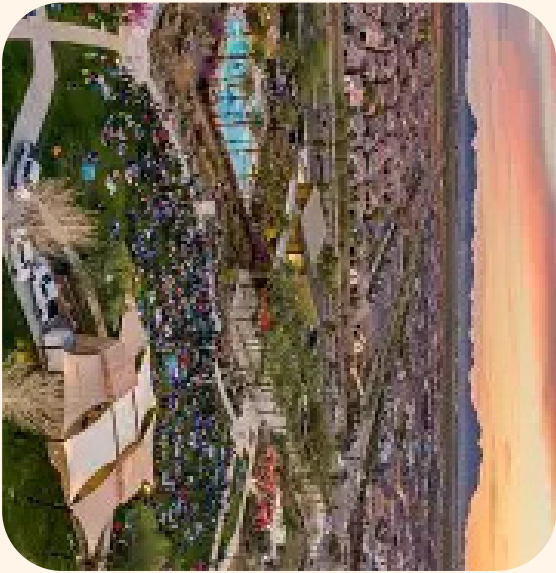


HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

lr
(Attachments – 3)



Council Strategic Plan 2026





Expectations and Parameters:

1

Governance-level Review ONLY

**Goal is feedback & avoid
wordsmithing**

Not Final Adoption

**Staff/Facilitator will Synthesize
feedback afterward**



Feedback Questions:



Does each section generally reflect the direction Council intends?

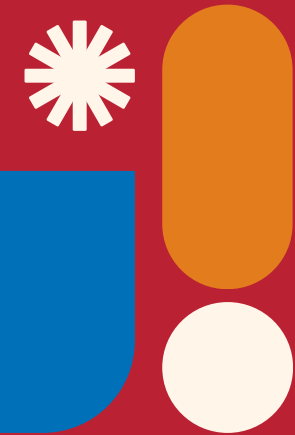
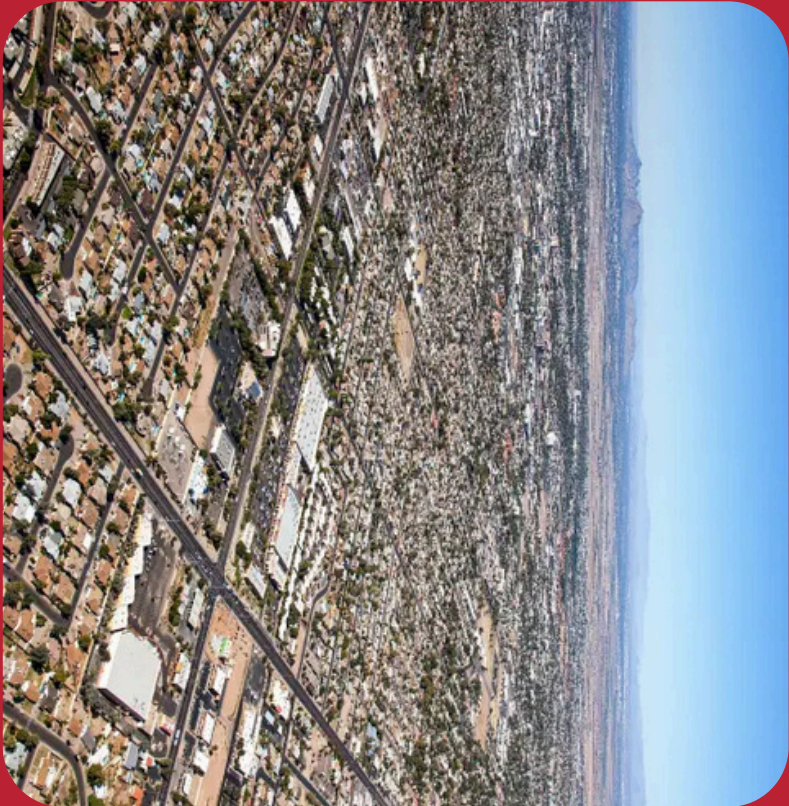
What, if anything, is missing?

Is there anything that feels unclear, duplicative or overemphasized?



Introduction

On February 19, 2026, the Mesa Mayor and City Council convened for a Strategic Retreat to establish shared priorities, align on direction, and to map their collective visions. The retreat focused on defining the Mayor's community initiative Elevate Mesa, hearing from the Vice Mayor and Councilmembers on their district vision and priorities, outlining the financial policies and principles as they impact the City budget, discussing economic development opportunities, and brainstorming placemaking as a value creator for the City.





Why This Plan Matters

Mesa’s Strategic Plan establishes a governing framework that aligns the Mayor and Council’s strategic drivers with the City’s operational priorities—into one cohesive strategy. It guides Mayor and Council decision-making to ensure that long-term vision, implementation, and financial stewardship operate together.

Where We Want To Be

Mesa’s approach **emphasizes quality, proactive investment, and transparency**, and is guided by the Mayor and Council’s four strategic drivers aligned with the Mesa 2050 General Plan and realized through the City’s operational priorities.

Together, these ensure that people, economy, land, and governance function as one coordinated system. These themes reflect Mesa’s commitment to honoring its foundation, expanding opportunity, governing collaboratively, and ensuring long-term sustainability.





Core Strategic Drivers

Core Strategic Drivers translate Mesa’s long-range vision into enduring areas of focus that shape how resources are prioritized, growth is managed, and outcomes are achieved to advance community prosperity, quality of life, and long-term sustainability.

A white gear icon with two circular arrows inside, set against a red background.

PEOPLE

A white gear icon with two circular arrows inside, set against a blue background.

LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE

A white gear icon with two circular arrows inside, set against an orange background.

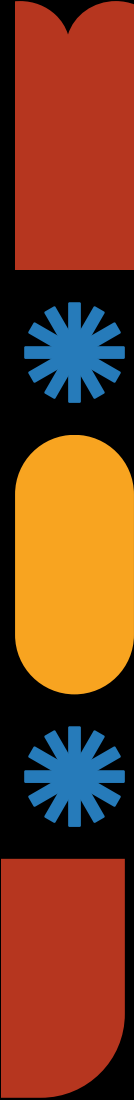
ECONOMY

A white gear icon with two circular arrows inside, set against a light green background.

INTENTIONAL GOVERNANCE & TRANSPARENCY



PEOPLE



Guiding Principle

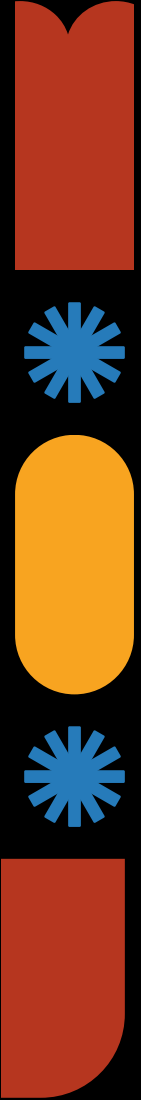
Mesa’s strong communities are built through safety, opportunity, and neighborhood stability.



Governance Principles

Council will:

- Prioritize safety and neighborhood stability.
- Support education tied to economic needs.
- Align housing and workforce strategies.
- Serve as ambassadors for strong communities.
- Invest in livability and community design.



Strategic Outcomes

Mesa will:

Support the purpose of the driver and the Governance Principles through strategic outcomes with actionable commitments as follows:

- Public Safety
 - Unified public safety, driven by outcomes—advancing continuous improvement, innovation, and community protection.
 - Implementation of a Public Safety and Trust Index
- Opportunity
 - Pursue and sustain strategic partnerships that support workforce readiness in alignment with economic opportunity
 - Ensure balanced and attainable housing to support long-term stability.
- Neighborhood Stability
 - Strengthening neighborhoods and livability through consistent standards
 - Implement a coordinated placemaking approach that leverages community connectivity, public spaces, and enriching experiences to strengthen neighborhood vitality and long-term prosperity

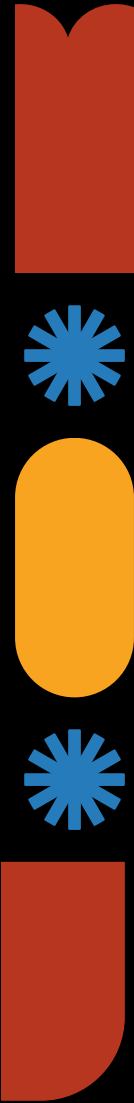


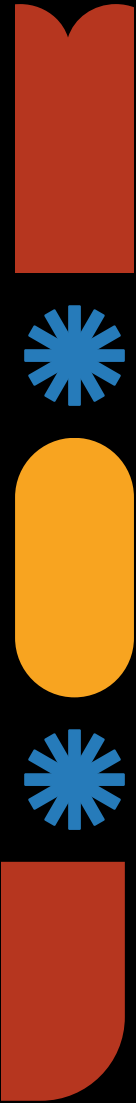
Mesa's focus on Economic Development will generate long-term fiscal value and increased regional competitiveness.



Council will:

- Focus on long-term economic sustainability.
- Prioritize high-value industries.
- Align economic policy with infrastructure capacity.
- Ensure consistent evaluation standards.
- Strengthen public-private partnerships.





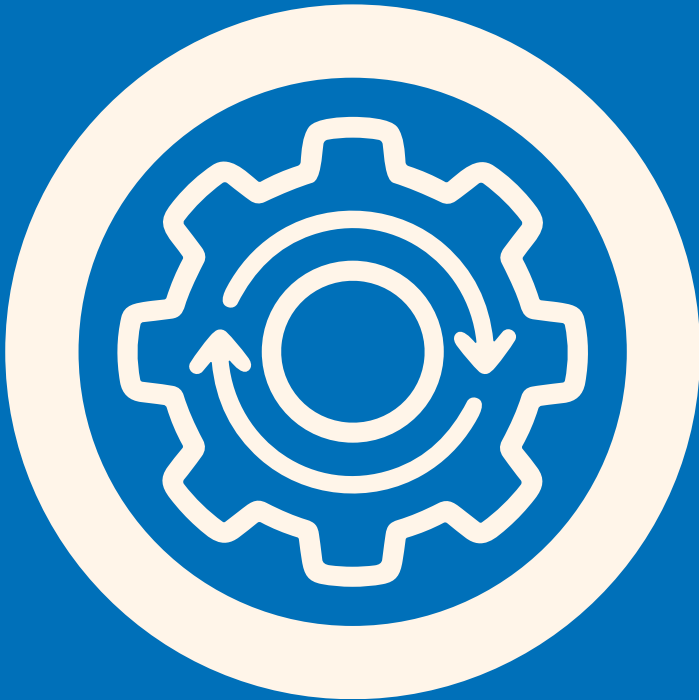
Strategic Outcomes



Mesa Will:

Support the purpose of the driver and the Governance Principles through strategic outcomes with actionable commitments as follows:

- Long-Term Fiscal Value and Regional Competitiveness-
Drive an integrated business ecosystem that aligns people, capital, infrastructure, and governance to drive business growth, attract investment, and maximize long-term fiscal value—ensuring a resilient, sustainable, and opportunity-rich community.
- Implementation of the Mesa Competitive Positioning Index.
- Implementation of the City of Mesa's Commercial Development Review Process Improvement Initiative
- Implement Community Character Plans



LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE

Guiding Principle

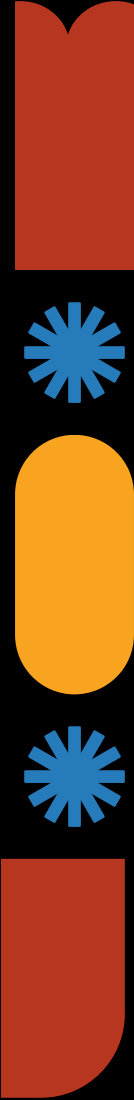
Mesa's approach to land & infrastructure will support strong communities and long-term economic productivity through intentional, place-based, resilient land use and infrastructure development.

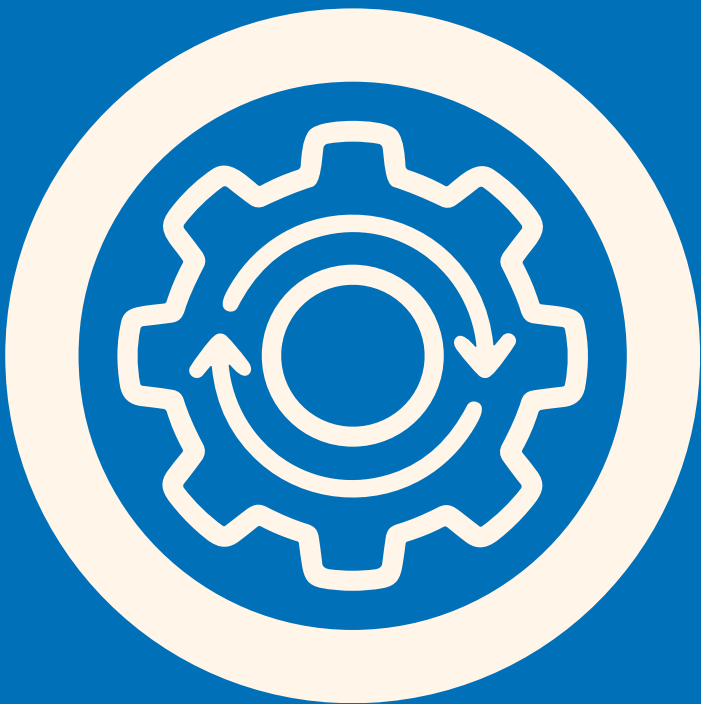


Governance Principles

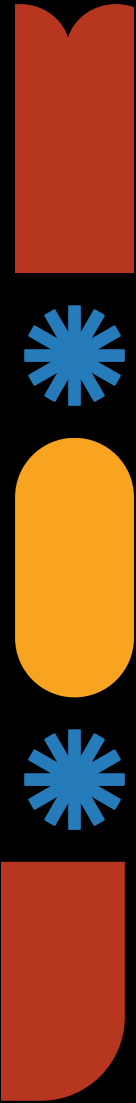
Council will:

- Prioritize high-value infrastructure investments.
- Align land use with fiscal sustainability.
- Coordinate across planning, transportation, and utilities.
- Support placemaking and redevelopment.
- Ensure growth reflects long-term capacity.





LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE

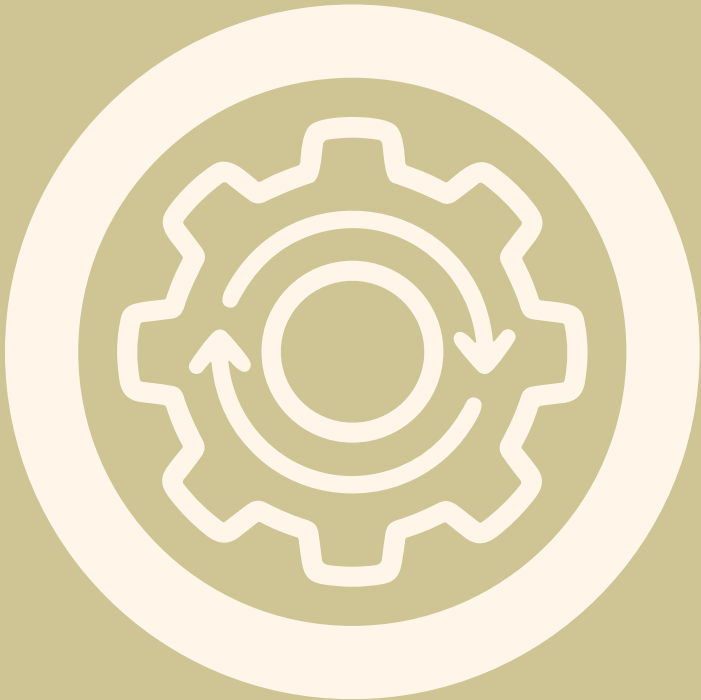


Strategic Outcomes

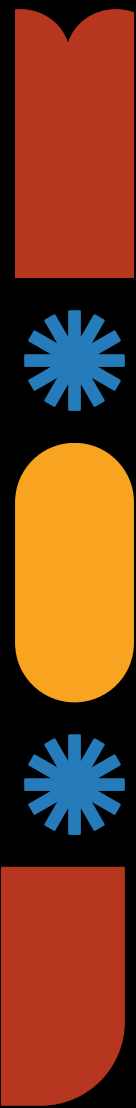
Mesa Will:

Support the purpose of the driver and the Governance Principles through strategic outcomes with actionable commitments as follows:

- Intentional, Place-Based, and Long-Term Economic Productivity - Advance a coordinated, place-based pattern of growth and redevelopment that is intentional and responsive to the unique context of each area—creating connected, high-quality places that strengthen community connection and identity while supporting sustained economic productivity and long-term value.
 - Invest in place-based branding and City pride strategies aligned with the Placemaking Playbook in tandem with Community Character Plans
 - Implement Redevelopment Toolkit programs that offer place-based, coordinated support
- Resilient Infrastructure - Maintain a high-performing infrastructure system that is aligned with growth, sustainably managed, and capable of supporting long-term reliability, adaptability, and resilience.
 - Certification of the 100 Year Water Supply
 - Execute recommendations and strategies in the Mesa Conservation Action Plan and align efforts with citywide development strategies for long-term reliability, adaptability, and resilience in Mesa’s infrastructure.
 - Execute recommendations and strategies in the City of Mesa Transportation Master Plan and align efforts with citywide development strategies for long-term reliability, adaptability, and resilience in Mesa’s infrastructure.



INTENTIONAL GOVERNANCE &
TRANSPARENCY



Guiding
Principle

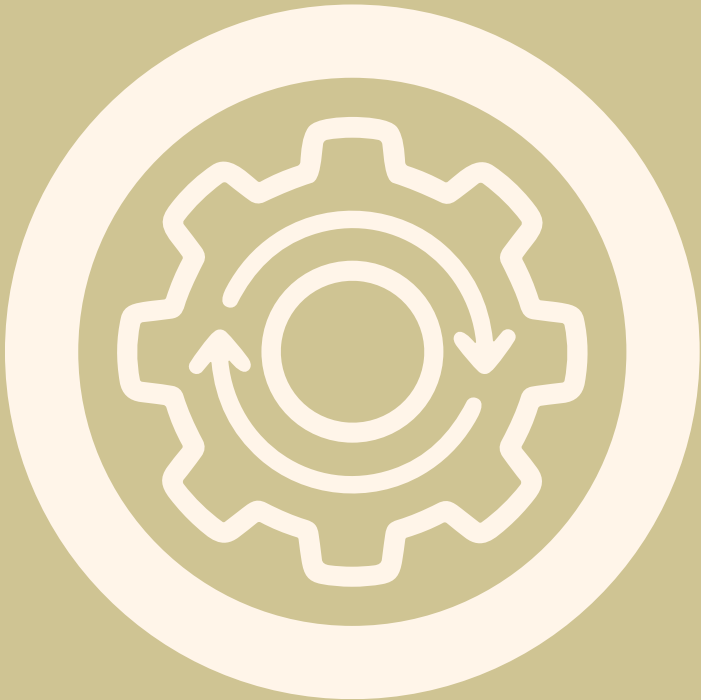
Mesa’s approach to governance will be intentional, transparent, and disciplined—clearly communicating fiscal accountability, priorities, performance, and impacts to build trust, protect taxpayers, and ensure long-term value.



Governance
Principles

Council will:

- Maintain strong fiscal policies.
- Evaluate decisions through a long-term lens.
- Ensure transparency across all funds.
- Align policy, budget, and outcomes.



INTENTIONAL GOVERNANCE &
TRANSPARENCY

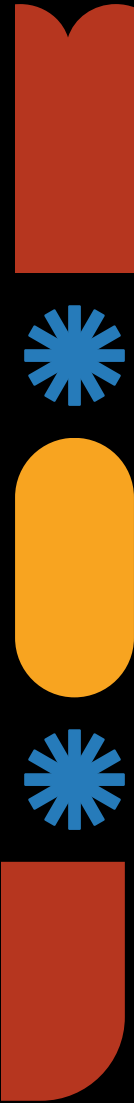


Strategic
Outcomes

Mesa Will:

Support the purpose of the driver and the Governance Principles through strategic outcomes with actionable commitments as follows:

- Transparent & Disciplined Governance
 - Advance a Strong and Transparent Financial Reporting Strategy
 - To include a communication strategy on the role of the Enterprise Fund
- Clear Communication of Priorities, Performance & Impacts
 - Operationalize and Advance PerformancePlus, an Outcomes Based Management & Reporting System



COUNCIL STRATEGIC DRIVERS



PEOPLE

Mesa's strong communities are built through safety, opportunity, and neighborhood stability.



ECONOMY

Mesa's focus on Economic Development will generate long-term fiscal value and increased regional competitiveness.



LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE

Mesa's approach to land & infrastructure will support strong communities and long-term economic productivity through intentional, place-based, resilient land use and infrastructure development.



INTENTIONAL GOVERNANCE & TRANSPARENCY

Mesa's approach to governance will be intentional, transparent, and disciplined—clearly communicating fiscal accountability, priorities, performance, and impacts to build trust, protect taxpayers, and ensure long-term value.

MAJOR CITY STRATEGIC PLANS

TBD

TBD

TBD

TBD

TBD

TBD

CITY OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES



Thriving Community



Jobs & Prosperity



Quality Developments



Safe Community



Fiscal Responsibility

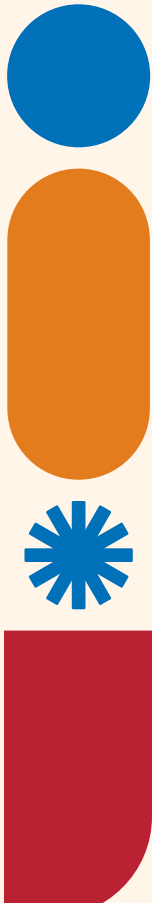
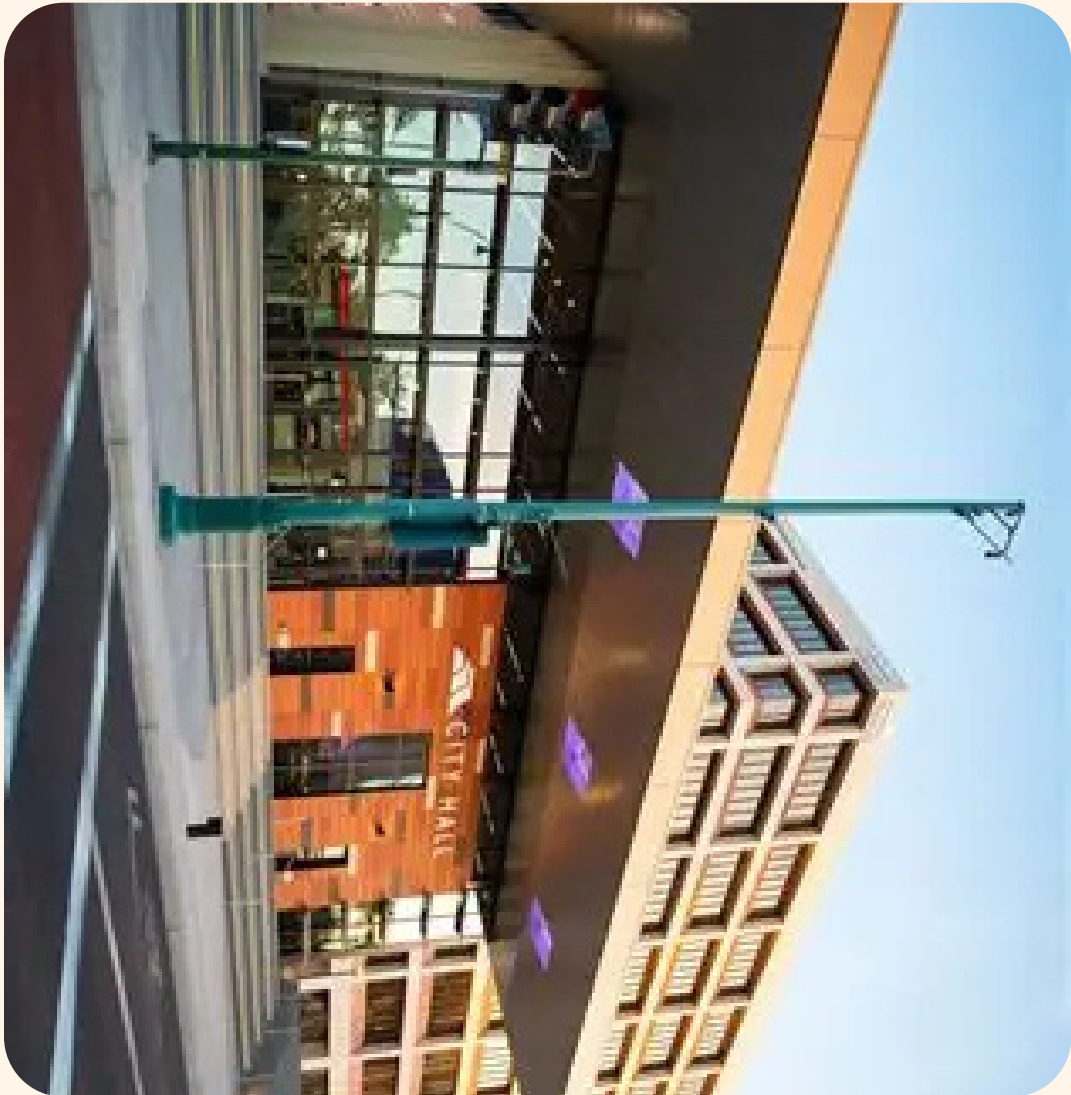


Effectiveness & Efficiency

Moving Forward Intentionally



2026



Honoring Foundation.
Expanding Opportunity.
Governing Collaboratively.
Ensuring Long-Term Resilience.



OFFICE OF INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY

PLAN REVIEW PROCESS MAPPING

PROJECT REPORT

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ENVISION. ELEVATE. IMPACT.



Executive Summary





1

Assessment of Current State

- Extensive effort to understand what is happening NOW and not how it is “supposed” to be
- Allows a deeper dive for better findings & recommendations

2

Comprehensive Process

- 84 staff & stakeholders
- 15 departments & 1 partner organization
- 32 process mapping sessions
- frontline staff AND management
- 70% of participants frontline who do day-to-day work

3

Active Engagement through OIE Facilitation

- Participants documented roles
- Freely spoke with concerns AND innovations
- Leveraged experience & expertise to capture:
 - inefficiencies
 - bottlenecks
 - redundancies
 - technology issues & limitations
 - gaps in processes & role clarity





Enhancing Mesa as THE Welcoming Place To Do Business Through a Development Review Process that:





Speed to Market

- Reduced cycle times



Predictable & Quality-Assured

- High quality & helpful reviews



Positive, Responsive Customer Service

- Warm & responsive interactions with clear & intentional communication



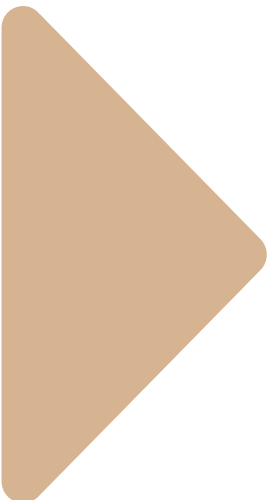
Organizational Strengths





Improvement Capital

Subject Matter Expertise



5 Areas of Recommendations

1

Foundational Changes to Strengthen Organizational Culture

2

Deep Dive Assessments Required to Inform Total Improvement

3

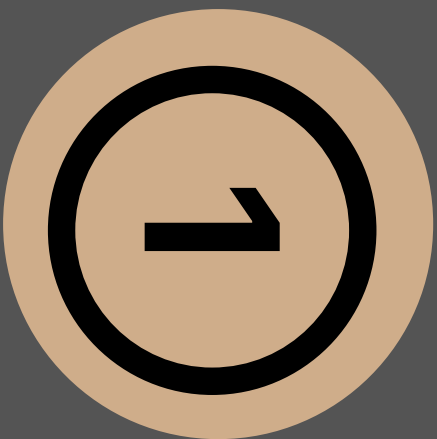
Process Innovations to Address Unmet Customer Needs and Improve Outcomes

4

Workflow Optimizations & Standardizations for Streamlined & Consistent Processes

5

Articulate and Comprehensive Customer Guidance to Enhance Customer Experience

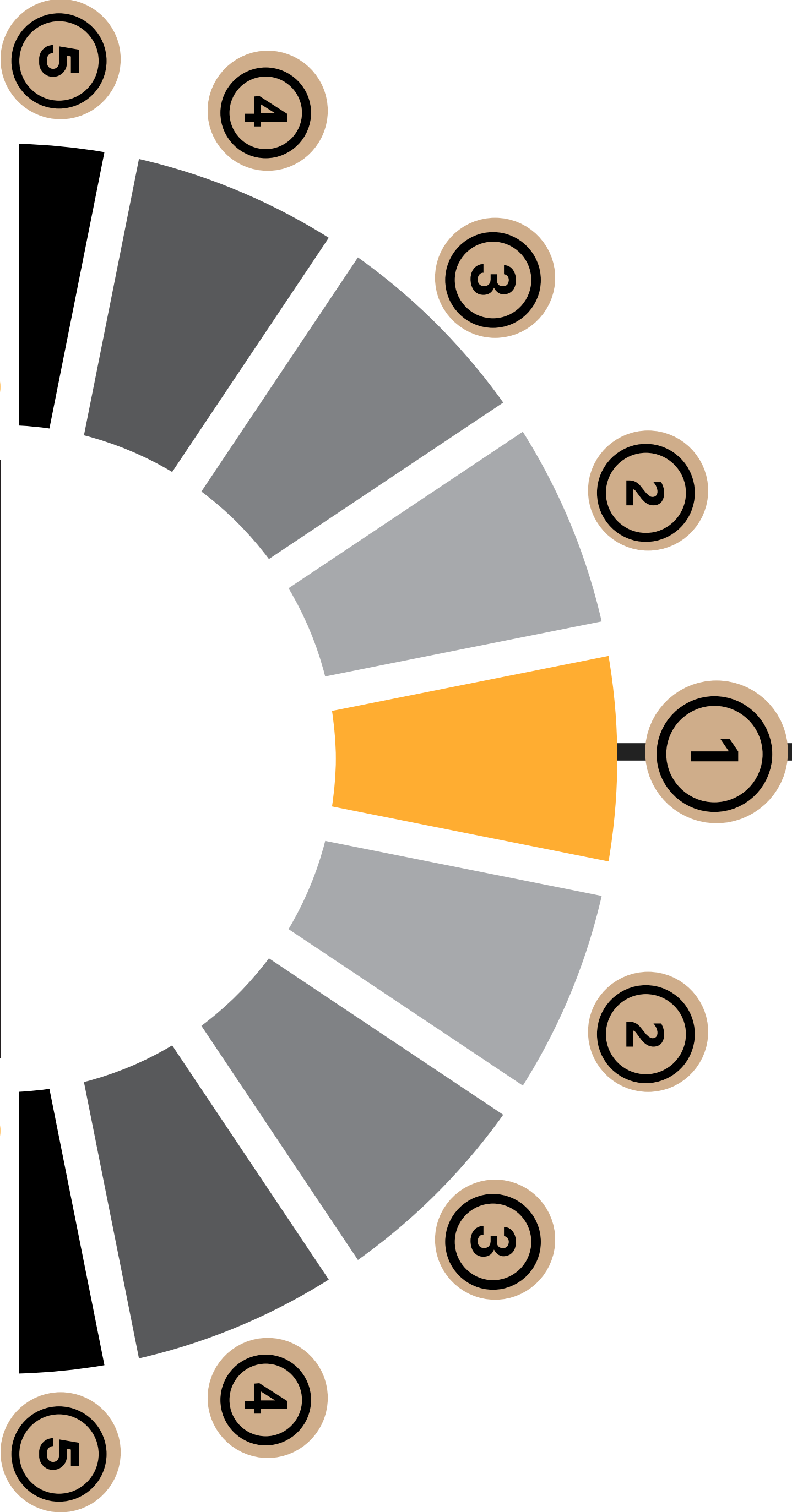


Foundational Changes to Strengthen Organizational Culture



1.1 - EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT

1.2 - Dev. Rev. Collective Advisory Board



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN





COLLECTIVE ADVISORY STRUCTURE

KEY ROLE- DRIVER



2

Deep Dive Assessments Required to Inform Total Improvement



Customers

- **VALUE MAPPING**



Development -Related Processes

- **DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS**
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & URBAN TRANSFORMATION**
- **UTILITY SERVICE COORDINATION**



Technology

- **DIMES GOVERNANCE PROCESS**
- **INITIAL ACCELA OPTIMIZATION ASSESSMENT**



Process Innovations to Address Unmet Customer Needs and Improve Outcomes



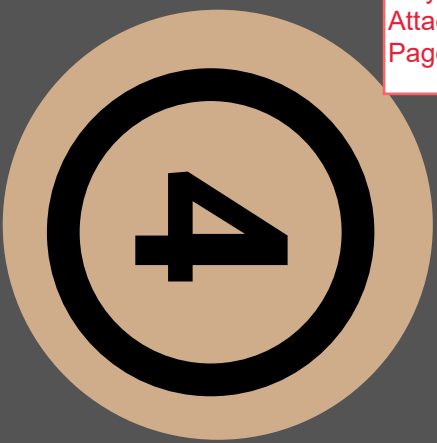


**Pre-submittal and Site
Discovery Options**

**Redesigned Submission
Processes**

**Internal Development
Review Group Practices**

**Community Character
Plans**



Workflow Optimizations & Standardization & Consistent Processes





Workflow Optimizations

TECHNOLOGY/ ACCELA

PROCESS FLOW

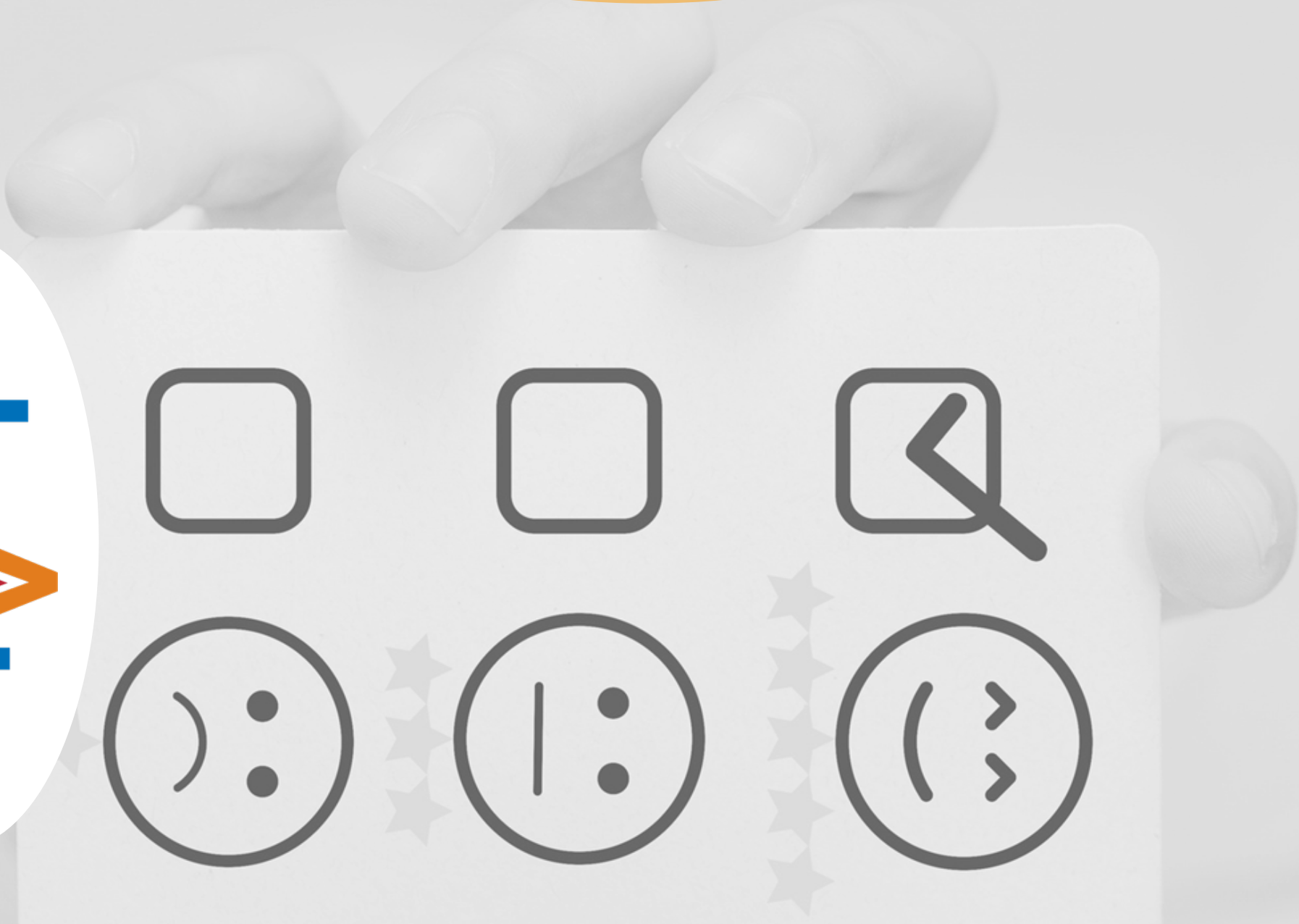
Standardization

OPERATING PROCEDURES

TRAINING PLANS

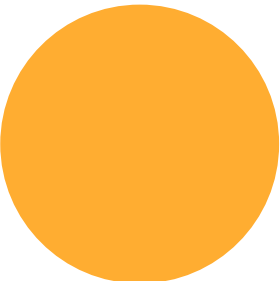


Articulate and
Comprehensive
Customer Guidance
to Enhance
Customer
Experience

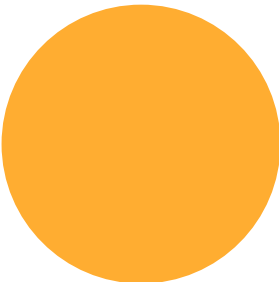




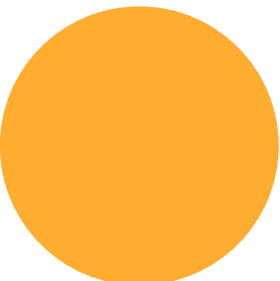
**Comprehensive Customer
Guidance Framework**



GUIDANCE, CHECKLISTS, AND RESOURCES



CONSISTENT & CLEAR COMMUNICATION



COHESIVE ACROSS CITY PROCESSES



The Next Steps





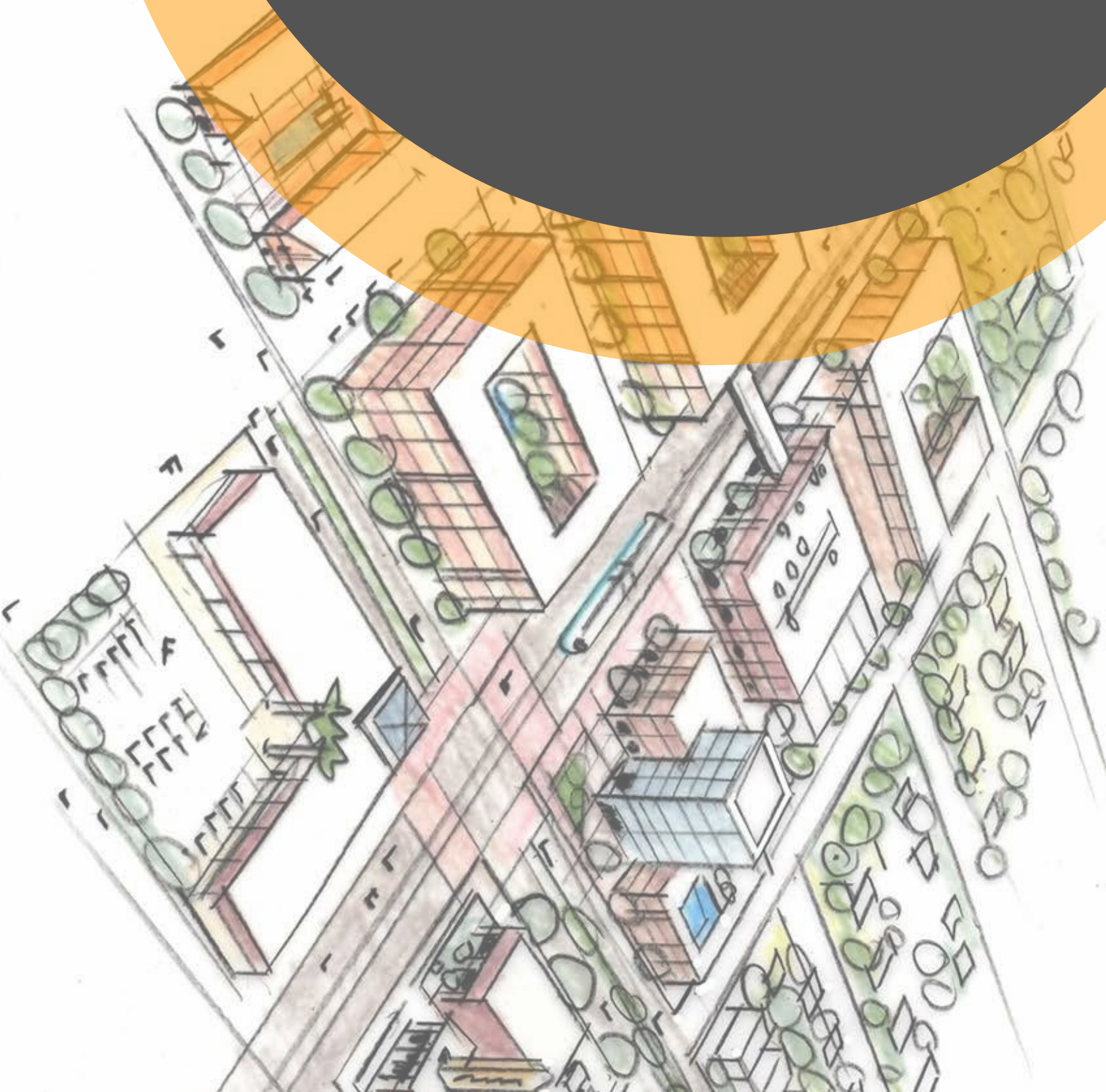
Dev. Review Process Improvement Initiative

	4/26	5/26	6/26	7/26	8/26	9/26	10/26	11/26	12/26	1/27	2/27	3/27	4/27	5/27	6/27	7/27	8/27	9/27	10/27	11/27	12/27	1/28
Executive Commitment																						
Establish Advisory Board and Outcomes																						
DIMES Governance Assessment																						
Accelea Feasibility Assessment																						
Value Mapping - Customer Focus Groups																						
Customer Guidance Initial Review																						
Development Agreement Assessment																						
OED, OUT, and DSD Coordination Assessment																						
Utility Coordination Assessment																						
Community Character Area Planning Assignments																						
Quick Service Pre-Submittal Options & Site Discovery																						
Submission Processes																						
Project Assistance & Coordination Support																						
IDR Standards & Optimization																						
Workflow Optimizations - Accelea & Process																						
SOPs & Training Plans																						
Customer Guidance Framework Update																						
Pilot New Processes																						
PHASE I																						
PHASE II																						
PHASE III																						
PHASE IV																						
PHASE V																						





Enhancing Mesa as **THE** Welcoming Place To Do Business





Thank
You



OFFICE OF INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY



PERFORMANCE **PLUS**
ENVISION. ELEVATE. IMPACT.



Mesa Branding Plan Update

Jaye O'Donnell, Economic Development Director
Casey Blake, Director of Communications
Jason Hackett, HAPI

May 28, 2026



mesa.az

Background

- Council provided direction in October to update the City's branding strategy
- Additional feedback provided during the February Strategic Planning Retreat
- Today's presentation provides an update on the proposed approach, partner and next steps

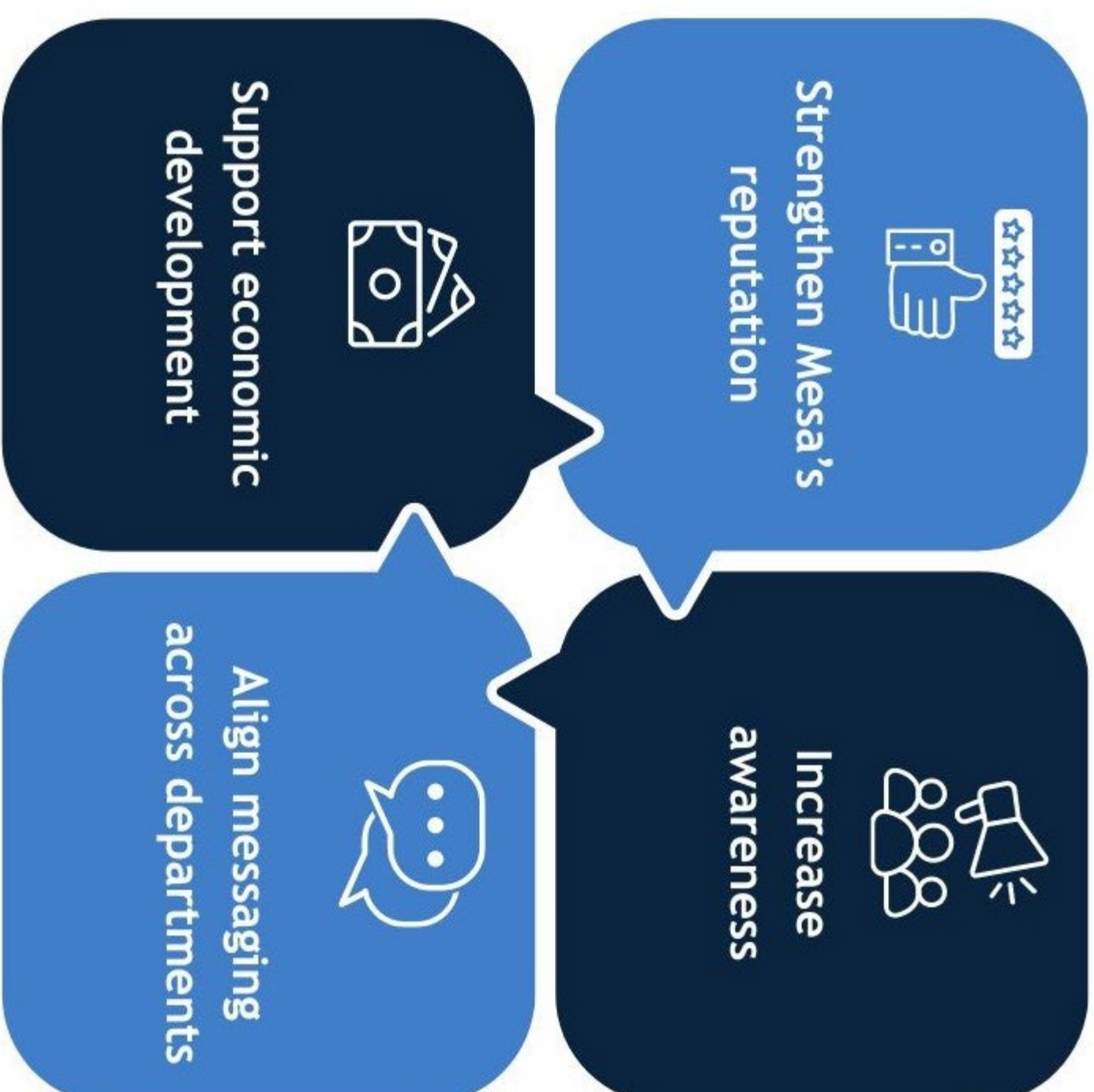
What this is not

- Not a new logo initiative
- Not a complete rebrand of the City
- Not a separate identity for individual districts or areas

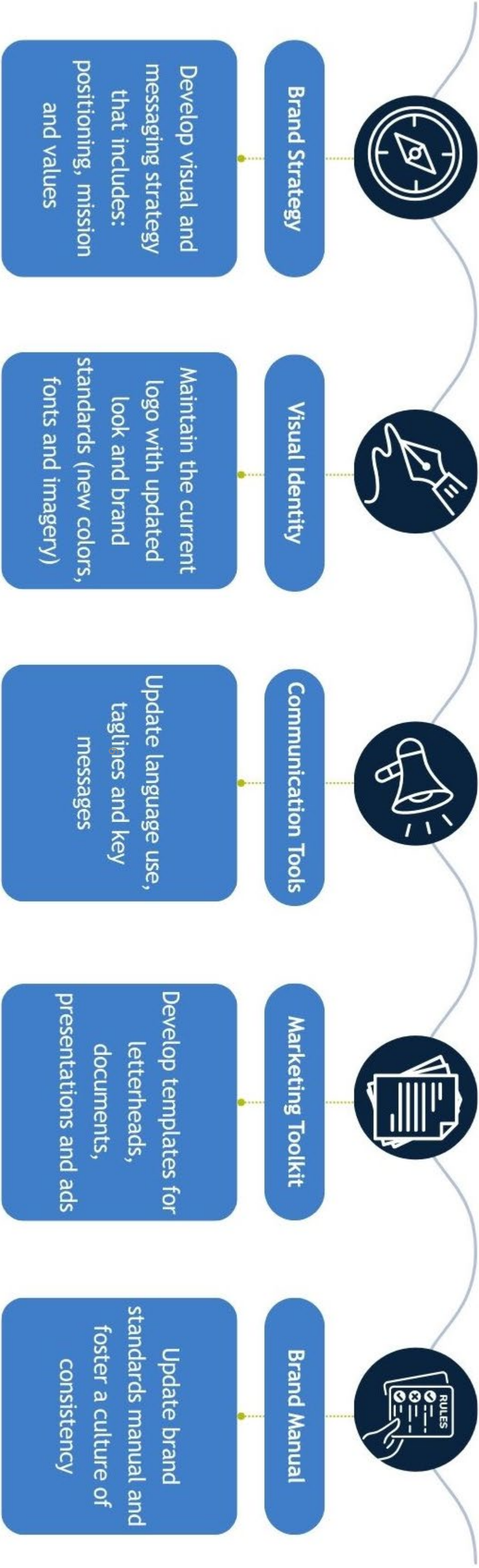
What this is

- Better understanding of how Mesa is perceived
- Defining a clear and cohesive citywide identity
- Creating a strategic foundation for future initiatives, including Community Character Plans and the Mesa Placemaking Playbook
- Modernizing and aligning the City's brand strategy, messaging and visual identity

Why this matters



Deliverables



Introducing HAPI

- Jason Hackett + Danny Stoeller



SMILE

YOUR BRAND

IS IN VERY GOOD THINKING

» Experience & Examples





City of Mesa Brand Re-Alignment

New Communications Framework

- Differentiating and Unified Language
- Tone and Personality
- Brand Book / Brand Essence Video

New Visual Identity Framework

- Colors / Fonts / Graphics
- Style / Brand Usage Guide
- Marketing Templates



Brand Strategy Process

- A.** One-on-one Stakeholder Interviews
- B.** One-on-one Local Business Interviews
- C.** Online Survey
- D.** Eight Pillars of a Perfect Smile Workshop
- E.** Brand Positioning / Strategy / Messaging
- F.** Stakeholder Feedback / Edits / Refinement

»

Eight Pillars of the Perfect Smile

HAPI's research approach is guided by the following pillars that work together to create City of Mesa's brand persona.

1. Public Perception

Do people like you?
2. Social Identity

What is the chatter about your business?
3. Pathos

Emotional impact & personal connection.
4. Ethos

Trustworthiness, authority & credibility.
5. Logos

Facts & scientific evidence.
6. Utility

What is the usefulness of your product or service?
7. Creativity

How many are there like you?
8. Public Awareness

Do people know about you?



Brand Realignment Timeline - 6-8 Months

August - September 2026

Building the Framework for the City of Mesa Brand

- Stakeholder Interviews / Secondary Research
- Online Survey
- Research Report
- Eight Pillars Brand Workshop

October - December 2026

Developing the City of Mesa “Story”

- Messaging / Communications / Pillars Development
- Visual Identity Development- Color Palette, Fonts, Style Guide
- Feedback and Fine-Tuning

January - April 2027

Creation and Execution of New Branding

- “Brand Book” Creation
- Style / Brand Usage Guide
- New Communications and Marketing Templates
- Brand Rollout Announcement

What's next?

- Finalize scope and contract
- Begin stakeholder engagement
- Conduct research and perception analysis
- Return to Council with progress updates and recommendations

questions



Research & Analytics



Budget

- \$55k
- Pending final scope
- May adjust pending focus group additions