



NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION

Chair Patrick Garman

Vice Chair Geoff Yazzetta

Commissioner VACANT

Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Commissioner Polly Bonnett

Commissioner Bernie Hoenle

Commissioner VACANT

TIME: 4:00 PM - REGULAR MEETING
DOORS OPEN 15 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MEETING
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2026
WHERE: FOUNTAIN HILLS COUNCIL CHAMBERS
16705 E. AVENUE OF THE FOUNTAINS, FOUNTAIN HILLS, ARIZONA

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

Request to Comment Cards - To speak or submit written comments, a **Request to Comment** card is required. **Cards must be completed and submitted to the Clerk before the meeting begins. Late or incomplete cards will not be accepted.** A separate card is required for each agenda item.

Agenda Items (Consent or Regular) - Request to Comment cards must include the **agenda item number**, whether the speaker is **FOR** or **AGAINST** the item, and whether the individual wishes to speak or submit written comments.

Call to the Public requests are accepted in person only. Request to Comment cards must be submitted prior to the meeting commencing.

Speaking Rules - Speakers may speak only when recognized by the Presiding Officer and are limited to **three (3) minutes**. All comments must be directed through the Presiding Officer, not to individual commission members or staff.

Request to Comment cards and submitted information are public records subject to public disclosure.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. INVOCATION

A Moment of Silence

3. ROLL CALL

4. STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION

Anyone wishing to address the Commission regarding items listed on the agenda or during Call to the Public must completely fill out a Request to Comment card located in the back of the Council Chambers and hand it to the Clerk prior to the start of the meeting. Once the meeting has started, late requests to speak cannot be accepted. When your name is called, please approach the podium, speak into the microphone, and state your name and if you are a resident for the public record. Comments may not exceed three minutes. It is the policy of the Commission not to comment on items brought forth under "Call to the Public." However, staff can be directed to report back to the Commission at a future date or to schedule items raised for a future Commission agenda. To avoid disruption of the meeting, to maintain decorum, and provide for an equal and uninterrupted presentation, applause is not permitted, except during Proclamations, Awards, and Recognitions. All meeting participants must maintain proper decorum as specified in Section 6 of the Council Rules of Procedure.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY DIRECTOR

6. PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITIONS

None

7. PRESENTATIONS

None

8. CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed are considered to be routine, non-controversial matters and will be enacted by one motion and vote of the Commission. All motions and subsequent approvals of consent items will include all recommended staff stipulations unless otherwise stated. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commission Member or member of the public so requests. If a Commission Member or member of the public wishes to discuss an item on the Consent Agenda, he/she may request so prior to the motion to accept the Consent Agenda or with notification to the Director or Chairperson prior to the date of the meeting for which the item was scheduled. The item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered as the first item on the Regular Agenda. The remaining items on the Consent Agenda will be enacted by one motion and vote of the Commission.

- a. **CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:** Approving the meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Advisory Commission regular meeting held on May 26, 2026, and the work session of June 24, 2026.

9. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. **UPDATE:** from the Commission Work Groups.
- b. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION:** Organize Commission Teams to interface with Town Staff to review and validate tasks for inclusion in the Strategic Plan.
- c. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:** Consideration of Future Agenda Items Pertaining to the Strategic Plan.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.01, or as prescribed by state law.

11. COMMISSION DISCUSSION/DIRECTION TO THE DIRECTOR

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. ADJOURNMENT

Dated this 18th day of August, 2026.



Hannah Martin, Executive Assistant

The Town of Fountain Hills endeavors to make all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Please call (480) 816-5100 (voice) or AZRelay 7-1-1 the Thursday prior to the meeting to request reasonable accommodation.



TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/26/2026
Meeting Type: Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
Submitting Department: Administration / Town Clerk
Prepared by: Angela Espiritu, Deputy Town Clerk
Staff Contact Information: Phone: 480-816-5116
Email: aespiritu@fountainhillsaz.gov

Request to Town Council Regular Meeting (Agenda Language)

CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Approving the meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Advisory Commission regular meeting held on May 26, 2026, and the work session of June 24, 2026.

Staff Summary (background)

The intent of approving meeting minutes is to ensure an accurate account of the discussion and action that took place at the meeting for archival purposes. Approved minutes are placed on the town's website and maintained as permanent records in compliance with state law.

Related Ordinance, Policy or Guiding Principle

Risk Analysis

n/a

Recommendation(s) by Board(s) or Commission(s)

n/a

Staff Recommendation(s)

Staff recommends approving the meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Advisory Commission regular meeting held on May 26, 2026, and the work session of June 24, 2026, as presented.

Suggested Motion

MOVE TO APPROVE the meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Advisory Commission regular meeting held on May 26, 2026, and the work session held on June 24, 2026, as presented.

FISCAL IMPACT

Fiscal Impact:

Budget Reference:

Funding Source:

ATTACHMENTS

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| 1. | SPAC 05262026 Summary |
| 2. | AZTOFH-00313_05-26-2026_FINAL |
| 3. | AZTOFH-00319_06-24-2026 |
| 4. | SPAC 06242026 Summary Minutes |

**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
MAY 26, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Patrick Garman called to order the meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 4:00 p.m.

2. INVOCATION – Moment of Silence

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Paul Smith; Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Members Absent: Commissioner Polly Bonnett; Commissioner Randy Crader

Staff Present: Town Manager Rachael Goodwin Town Clerk Bevelyn Bender

4. STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY DIRECTOR

GOODWIN:

- A reminder was provided that the FY 2027 Final Budget adoption is scheduled for Tuesday evening's Town Council meeting.
- The Tentative Budget was adopted last month; Tuesday's action represents the final approval of the FY 2027 Budget.
- The adopted budget will provide funding and support for the various initiatives and activities identified in the Town's Strategic Plan.

6. PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITIONS

None

7. PRESENTATIONS

None

8. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:** Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on March 18, 2026.

MOVED BY Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta to APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on March 18, 2026, of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Meeting, **SECONDED BY** Commissioner Joseph Reyes
Vote: 5–0 | motion passed unanimously

9. REGULAR AGENDA

a. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Future Strategic Plan Signature Strategy – Quality of Life and Safety.

1. Park Development
2. Fire Safety and Trail Development
3. Connecting Public Area

Park Development

Commission members discussed the Town's award-winning park system and the need to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which was last adopted in approximately 2018–2019. Staff noted that while Fountain Hills parks are highly valued by residents, challenges include maintaining facilities at expected service levels, addressing increasing park usage, and providing adequate staffing during evenings and weekends. Staff also noted the Town falls below national standards for park accessibility and open space per capita, particularly on the western side of the community. Discussion included future park improvements, maintenance planning, capital projects, programming opportunities, and the importance of balancing community needs with available resources.

Fire Safety, Trail Development, and Connectivity

The Commission discussed a long-term concept of combining wildfire mitigation efforts with the development of multi-use trail connections throughout the community. Chairman Garman suggested that ongoing brush and fuel reduction efforts within Town-owned washes could eventually support a trail system connecting parks, neighborhoods, and public spaces. Commissioners noted that similar concepts have been successfully implemented in other communities. Staff explained that existing Town ordinances and a voter-approved initiative currently prohibit public use and development within washes, creating significant hurdles for such a concept. Staff indicated that fuel reduction and wash maintenance activities are already underway as part of the Town's wildfire mitigation efforts. Commissioners discussed the possibility of future exploration, pilot projects, community outreach, and collaboration with other Town commissions and community organizations.

Wildfire Preparedness

Commissioner Yazzetta asked about community outreach regarding wildfire prevention and defensible space around homes. Staff reported that the Town is actively providing public education through social media, public information campaigns, and Fire Department resources to help residents understand wildfire risks and take preventative measures on their properties.

Pedestrian and Multi-Use Connectivity

The Commission discussed the Town's Active Transportation Plan and ongoing efforts to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and multi-use connections throughout the community. Staff noted that the plan identifies priority connections between parks, commercial areas, and other destinations, and that the Town continues to make progress through sidewalk infill projects, shared-use pathways, and grant-funded improvements.

No formal action was taken. The discussion will help inform future Strategic Plan priorities related to Quality of Life and Safety.

b. UPDATE: from the Commission Work Groups

YAZZETTA:

Two community outreach events were held in April:

- April 4 at the Community Center
- April 16 at the Fountain Hills Unified School District Learning Center

These events are part of a three-year strategic planning effort:

- Year 1: Gathered high-level community input to establish the Strategic Plan pillars.
- Year 2: Focused on identifying strategies to support those pillars.
- Year 3: Collected detailed action-item ideas to help implement the plan.
- Participation included more than 50 residents and generated 166 comment cards.

All comments were transcribed and organized into themes such as:

- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- Public Safety
- Other strategic planning categories

The compiled data, including raw comments, curated themes, and a word cloud highlighting the most frequently mentioned topics, was shared with the Commission for use in developing future action items.

c. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Consideration of Future Agenda Items Pertaining to the Strategic Plan.

Chairman Garman outlined the Commission's roadmap for completing the next Strategic Plan. He stated that the June meeting will be dedicated to the Commission's annual workshop, where members will review a draft Strategic Plan that incorporates the priorities, signature strategies, and action items identified throughout the year. Commissioners will receive the draft in advance and are encouraged to review it closely and come prepared to discuss specific areas of interest or concern.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None

11. COMMISSION DISCUSSION/DIRECTION TO THE DIRECTOR

None

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta to APPROVE adjourning the meeting of May 26 ,2026, of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission, **SECONDED** BY Commissioner Joseph Reyes.

Vote: 5–0 | motion passed unanimously

Chairman Patrick Garman adjourned the meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 5:12 PM

Post-Production File

Town of Fountain Hills
Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2026

A Regular Meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission was convened at 16705 E. Avenue of the Fountains in an open and public session at 4:00 PM

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Paul Smith; Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Members Absent: Commissioner Polly Bonnett, Commissioner Randy Crader

Staff Present: Town Manager Rachael Goodwin; Town Clerk Bevelyn Bender

Transcription Provided By:

eScribers, LLC

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Transcription is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

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GARMAN: Call to order.

Thank you. Okay. So we're done with the -- number one on the -- on the agenda.

Number two is the invocation. Do we -- do we have to stand to do the moment of silence or seat --- I thought -- seems okay.

So we're going to do a moment of silence, please, which is fitting. Yesterday was -- was Memorial Day, so we'll do that now. Thank you.

Okay. We'll move on with that. I know we had a great Memorial Day ceremony yesterday down by the fountain, so that was great, as far as the town goes. That's what I was thinking of during the moment of silence.

So we're going to move down to roll call.

Bev, can you do the roll call for us, please?

BENDER: Chair Garman.

GARMAN: Here.

BENDER: Vice Chair Yazzetta.

YAZZETTA: Here.

BENDER: Commissioner Crader is absent.

Commissioner Smith.

SMITH: Here.

BENDER: Commissioner Hoenle is absent right now.

Commissioner Reyes.

REYES: Here.

BENDER: And so is Commissioner Bonnett. She is also absent.

Chair, you have a quorum.

GARMAN: We do have a quorum. Thank you.

And was there any comments or any statement of participations given to us, Bev?

BENDER: No, that does not need to be read.

GARMAN: Okay. Thank you. All right. We're flying by. We're down to agenda item five, which is a summary of current events by the director.

Rachel, our town manager, do you have any comments?

GOODWIN: No, no real comments. I just wanted to share that if you were not aware, the adoption of the final budget is set for Tuesday evening before the Council. The tentative budget was adopted last month, so this is the final action for adopting the FY '27 budget that supports all of the different activities that obviously fall under our strategic plan. So that is scheduled for Tuesday night. Yes. Here.

GARMAN: Wednesday night or Tuesday night?

GOODWIN: Tuesday night. Council meeting on Tuesday.

GARMAN: Next Tuesday?

BENDER: June 2nd, uh-huh.

GARMAN: Next Tuesday? I'm sorry. Because I was --

BENDER: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: Okay. So next Tuesday.

Okay. Is that it?

All right. Moving down to proclamations, awards, and recognitions. We don't have any. Hearing, no motions, I don't think we have any proclamations or awards or recognitions. We don't have any presentations either from the town today. So we're going to move down to the consent agenda.

The first item under agenda item eight is a consideration of possible action, which is regarding the approval of the meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Advisory Commission meeting of March 18th. We were not able to meet in April.

Before we hear any motion, does anybody have any comments, edits, anything related to the minutes from March? Because their verbatim and then the summary was great. So I don't have any comments either reading through them.

Okay. So we do need to have a consideration to approve the minutes. Is there a -- is there a motion on the table?

YAZZETTA: Motion to approve the minutes.

GARMAN: We have a motion to approve the minutes. Do we have a second?

REYES: Second.

GARMAN: Thanks, Joe.

Any other discussion about March. Hearing, none, we can move on to the vote.

All in favor of approving the minutes for the March 18th meeting, say aye.

ALL: Aye.

GARMAN: I hear Bernie say aye on the way in. Any opposed, say no.

Hearing none, it's unanimous. The minutes are approved for March 18th.

Okay. So we're now moving on to agenda item nine, which is our regularly scheduled agenda for today.

The main pieces we're going to talk about today for our -- for -- for our priorities -- our strategic priorities today, which was safety and quality of life. And then underneath them we have some signature strategies that we're going to discuss today and talk about tasks underneath them.

But we also had a couple events that happened over the last couple of months, which is from one of our work groups. We had some town work groups, and we had a couple of them, and we have a presentation that Geoff was going to talk to us about. So I wanted to -- to prioritize that in our meeting today to make sure we have enough time to talk about that before we move on to the -- a -- under the regular agenda a, discussion -- discussion and possible action. So in other words, all of that was for me to say that I'd like to change the agenda around.

And I need a motion if anybody would be willing to. Provide a motion to start with B and then go on to A.

SMITH: I'll make a motion that we start with B.

GARMAN: All right. Thanks, Paul.

Motion on the table. Is there a second.

HOENLE: I second it.

GARMAN: There's a second Bernie.

Any other discussion? Nope. I wanted to get through that I appreciate it. All right. So let's have a quick vote then.

All in favor of changing the agenda to start with the update from our commission work group. Say aye.

ALL: Aye.

GARMAN: Any opposed? Hearing none. It's unanimous. So we're going to change the agenda for today. Thank you all very much.

So let's start with the commission work groups. And I'm going to hand it over to Geoff to talk about -- was it March and April, right?

YAZZETTA: Just April.

GARMAN: Both in April?

YAZZETTA: Yeah. Yeah.

GARMAN: Okay. Go ahead.

YAZZETTA: Thank you. Chair.

Okay. Good afternoon everyone. Just wanted to give a quick update on the two outreach events we held in the month of April. We had two events. The first was Saturday, April 4th at the community center and the second was Thursday, April 16th at the Learning Center -- the Fountain Hills Unified School District Learning Center.

Just some quick highlights. The purpose of this, and this is the third year we have held these outreach events. Two years ago, we were looking for the very high level feedback that created the pillars for the upcoming strategic plan.

Last year, we were looking for the strategic -- the different strategies. And this year we're looking more at the ground level tasks that are the action items that will be put into the plan, you know, for the town staff and you know, people to follow through with.

So over the two events, we had over 50 residents that participated and we collected 166 note cards. I went and took those note cards and transcribed them into a Excel spreadsheet, you know, just verbatim. Exactly, you know, as it was written. I then curated that and put them into the different themes that we had. So there's economic development, infrastructure, quality of life, safety, et cetera and from that I pulled the different themes for you know, what those topics are all about.

The file that has the raw data and the curated data has been shared with the commission, which we can take into consideration when we are coming up with those

individual ground level tasks. And then at the end of the presentation, there's a word cloud that kind of shows, you know, the largest are the themes that came up the most and the smallest, those came up, you know, less -- less frequently.

But all in all, you know, the three years' worth of these outreach forums have been very valuable for us, just, you know, as we kind of drill down and create the next iteration of the strategic plan, which, you know, we're going to be presenting in less than a year now.

So that's my high level update on the events that were held last month. If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer them. And also, thank you to those of you who were present at those events and helped out.

SMITH: Are we going to discuss any of these items or --

YAZZETTA: I was going to open it up, yeah. So if you just let me know if anybody wants to comment about anything Geoff's presenting.

Go ahead, Paul.

SMITH: My main comment is that in reading through all these --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

SMITH: -- before I got here, I came to the conclusion that we've got a different attitude out in the public than we had a year ago, and a -- positive. And I -- and a lot of the things like saying we need this because of our school system being --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

SMITH: -- we need to save the all these different things. We didn't get any of that last two years ago. I don't think so. That's -- that's my comment on the overall view of it.

YAZZETTA: Sure. Yeah. Good observation.

SMITH: Very, very positive stuff.

YAZZETTA: Yeah. And one of the things that was kind of a hot topic, or I guess continues to be is the museum, because that was on a lot of note cards recently.

SMITH: Oh, yeah.

YAZZETTA: That is probably outside the purview of the strategic plan, because we're looking five to ten years in advance, and that is a -- an emergent issue. But you know,

good feedback, you know, just the same from the community.

GARMAN: No other comments on the -- on the -- I was at the one in the community center. I think my -- my -- my wife showed up to the one at the school. Thanks for Bernie for having it at the school. There was a lot of good -- good comments. But as you can see, the spreadsheet is -- I know this is all like a good package. The spreadsheet is really good.

So I like the way if you look, Geoff curated it down to -- or at least itemized it under, like economic development and infrastructure. But there are places on there I know under infrastructure. I think of parks is quality of life as well as infrastructure.

And so is there anything that you think supports or -- or adds to kind of the -- the priorities that we have, the pillars we have, the five pillars we have and the signature strategy underneath them? Is there something that's like, wow, we totally missed the ball on that, or you know, everything that kind of came out of this generally could fit under the structure that we have?

YAZZETTA: Yeah, that's a good question, chair. Thank you. A lot of the feedback that we got was kind of right down the fairway with what we anticipated. You know, the vacant land in the downtown corridor, you know, some of the, you know, needs for you know, additional housing options. Those came up frequently.

I'm trying to look through this and see if anything, you know, was really outside of what we were anticipating, at least as it comes from the five pillar structure that we have. Not really anything that I can think of.

Again, the museum came up a number of times at both events a month ago. But again, that is an issue that is being addressed as we speak. Yeah. That's -- I can't think of anything that kind of took us all by surprise.

GARMAN: Everybody's quiet today. It's a three -- three day weekend hangover. No, I see a lot of this that fits underneath the -- the current plan. Underline, highlight and go through it.

Okay. All right. Sounds like you did a good job covering it. There's not a lot of questions.

YAZZETTA: Yeah. Thank you.

GARMAN: Thanks. All right. Thanks, Geoff.

Okay. Now we're going to move back up to a, which is our future strategic future strategic plan, signature strategy. Today we were talking about quality of life and safety.

So everybody kind of think about that as we as we dive into this. And I appreciate all -- your all's your comments. If you remember, last June at our workshop, we kind of narrowed it down to -- the ones that I pulled out when we were done there was park development, fire safety and trail development, connecting public areas, were the three -- kind of main, main ideas that came out of our workshop last year.

So I was going to start. I mean, we can go through them one at a time if you'd like. I know park development, we have a whole commission on that. I get that and -- and our resident expert, you were like the -- the OG for that for a long time. We have an extremely successful park system here in Fountain Hills. So and it's --- and you can tell it's really important when we go out and talk to the community, the parks that we have here.

So I will throw one thing out here. So park development. So here's a little paragraph that, I appreciate if you guys have comments or add to it. But this is this is what I wrote, by the way. I've been pecking away at the plan, drafting kind of a plan for you all to look at.

So Fountain Hill Parks are among its most beloved assets, from the iconic fountain and its 560 foot landmark to neighborhood parks, sports fields, and open desert spaces. As the community matures, the town must invest thoughtfully in its park system to meet the needs of all residents, families, seniors, youth, and active outdoor enthusiasts alike.

So my first question is, do we have -- and I think this is a yes, but -- and how old is it? The our comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan, how old is that plan? I know we have one, and it's a good one.

GOODWIN: You're right. We do have one. I want to say it was probably adopted in maybe '18 -- '18 or '19.

GARMAN: Before the pandemic. Really?

GOODWIN: It was, yeah. It was. The only reason I know that is -- is because it's a prerequisite for -- it was a prerequisite for some of our applications that we had to do. So yes.

GARMAN: So we've grown a lot since then as far as thinking, you know, we have plots of land and thoughts on some of these being smaller parks, future parks, stargazing. Try to do a park out in SunRidge Canyon. Right?

So does that plan need updated, do you think over the next --

GOODWIN: Yeah.

GARMAN: -- five to ten five to ten years?

GOODWIN: It's probably due, yeah.

GARMAN: Does the commission update that and then give it over to the town, or how does that.

GOODWIN: Typically it is it will filter through the commission, the Community Services Advisory Commission, it's usually staff initiated, much like this group went out to do public feedback.

GARMAN: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: There's usually feedback and stakeholder conversations to find out, you know, to identify priorities, et cetera, those types of things. So it's -- it's not a fast thing, right? It's usually a year to 18 months to do.

GARMAN: Any other comments about parks?

YAZZETTA: We've got an award winning park system. What does staff need?

Just kind of open ended question for you, Rachel.

GOODWIN: That is -- you know, and I'm speaking on behalf of staff that I have not asked that question to. So I'm sort of going -- shooting from the hip here, so to speak. You know, as our park system grows and as the demands grow on it, it has been difficult to sort of keep up and maintain it to the quality and the standard that has -- is the expectation of our town.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: For instance, we do not have full time staff in the parks in -- on evenings or weekends. So as of 2:00, there are no full time staff in our parks. That, you know, from the outside looking in, is a little bit scary in the sense that we have very, very high usage, particularly on weekends.

So how then do we balance the need to maintain our parks in the -- during the same times that the resources are being utilized, i.e., you know, during events, or during high season golf tournaments or whatever else may be going on when ramadas are in use, or the splash pad is being used, those types of things.

So how are we maintaining our facilities and keeping track of things when we don't have the staffing support across all times -- days and times, so to speak? Same thing, we're asked a lot for -- for more new and more of what we do. Well, we do events really, really well in this town. There's no shortage of asks for more, which is great. We want to do more. They do really well.

But we are at a point where the staff and the budget can't assume any more. So what then? How do we - how do we manage the ask with the existing resources? Park specifically, and I know Patrick was just talking about, you know, we we've been trying to develop some of our earmarked spaces and move forward with introducing new parks into our community.

And so I think there's a little bit of an education opportunity for a lot of our residents, because our parks are great, and we've done a lot to make sure that the parks that we have are top notch.

What we don't have, though, is that -- surprisingly, we don't meet the standards, the national standards for open space per capita. We are very, very low. We're also very, very low on the walkability of folks being able to get to a park without needing a vehicle, without needing a car, to being able to walk to one, to bike to one.

So essentially, the -- the rule of thumb, if you want to call it that, is being able to walk to a park within ten minutes the base, the way our parks are situated they're very heavy and denser to our eastern edge, or if you want to call it that, if you look at a map of the town, a lot of our parks are more situated on our eastern side versus the western half,

which is sort of why the SunRidge Park, when that was originally envisioned, kind of helped underscore that helped kind of balance that out a little bit.

But it is the opportunity to bring -- to utilize our spaces, make sure that all of our parks are maintained well, and then hopefully consider thoughtfully adding where appropriate. And that can sometimes be met with resistance, as we've seen.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: So kind of wanting to make sure that we are in line with what the community wants as well as can then execute them to the standard we need to. So does that answer your question?

YAZZETTA: Yes it does. Thank you. Very thorough. As far as staffing after hours or on weekends, is that one staff member? Is it two? Have -- is that a whole other can of worms?

GOODWIN: Theoretically, it would be great to have, even now, even during the day, even during our full time staff hours, we don't have a full time staff in every park.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: We have some staff that -- a single staff split between two parks. I'll use -- I'll use our dog park as an example. It's not fully staffed. It's not staffed, meaning there's not a person there --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- at all times to kind of monitor what's going on. They move between different parks, and that's okay. There's nothing wrong with that.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: That's not an unusual model. I think the challenge, again, mostly on weekends that we see is just the uptick in demand and the uptick in use.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: We do have part time staff as well as a number that go around to help, you know, pull trash, make sure bathrooms are clean --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- you know, make sure just the public resources are being maintained. But let's just say, you know, the splash pad has an issue. Well, that person is now going over to try to figure out splash pad. And while at Golden Eagle, the trash is overflowing because there's a big tournament --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- or there's a big, you know, tennis match or whatnot. So it's one of those things you can't be all places at all the time.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: So what we've done is we've actually in this current budget, the one that I mentioned earlier is there is a regular full time -- or regular part time position for weekends proposed in that budget to start chipping away at that, because we really can't just come in full force and be everywhere all the time. We have to be thoughtful about how we --

YAZZETTA: Sure.

GOODWIN: -- do that. So we felt like having a regular part time person that was assigned to the parks on the weekends, so that there's some consistency, that they would have a little bit higher level training to address more high level maintenance issues --

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- as opposed to just, you know, keeping the wheels on, just running, you know, trash and bathroom

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- maintenance kind of thing. So I think that will help. And then we will work and try to balance that out and see what kind of impact that has. If it -- if it turns the tide and keeps us even and we're on good -- then we'll stay there.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: If not, we'll have to look at what the next step might be. But no, it's not a it's not a -- it's not a throw everything at it. We will take it incrementally.

YAZZETTA: Understood. Thank you.

GARMAN: Does Fountain Hills -- and I think it does, but do we have a specific park capital improvement plan or is it just part of the larger --

GOODWIN: It is part of the larger. And in each project gets proposed as part of the overall CIP. So if you've ever watched one of ours -- Kevin takes a portion of it and talks about the park projects, and then Justin sort of steers towards the infrastructure and other projects through the community.

So we break it out sort of between public works and parks.

GARMAN: Okay. So we don't know any kind of given time, there's like a specified or prioritized section. It's like, hey, this is what we'd like to do now and into the future to improve our parks. Like facility upgrades and deferred maintenance and things like that?

GOODWIN: It is -- so we try to build out a five year outlook when it comes to that, and some of it is handled through CIP, some of it's handled through our regular budget, and some of it's handled through our facility reserves. And so it really kind of can fluctuate. Sometimes things come up that we weren't expecting. A good example of that is the new youth bike park that was presented and championed.

Right? Right, Bernie? You want to talk about that?

HOENLE: It was a combination effort. We've always been working with bikes, and kids, in the schools, and there wasn't a real beginning place for families to come out. So we worked with the town, we worked with other donors, and we got some matching. We found a place where it would be with the help of Kevin, and right now it's moving forward. It turned out from a \$25,000 effort to about a \$200,000 park.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

HOENLE: So it should be under contract soon if it's not already.

GOODWIN: Yeah, it's moving pretty quick from what I heard. I haven't heard a recent update, but I know Kevin's been pretty -- pretty vested in it.

HOENLE: It's over there near where the dog park is, and it's next to where the other skateboard park is.

GOODWIN: Yes. So if you said is that was that on our high five year horizon? No. But

the opportunity presented itself, and it made sense, and it complimented what we have, and where we're trying to go. So we were able to make that happen.

But yeah, there is -- to your point, there is a horizon. And we do try to plan for that with the flexibility of taking on opportunities if they arise.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What -- has this town selected a guy to kind of run the program?

GOODWIN: Not yet. It is in -- it's -- it's budgeted for -- or is proposed in the budget for next year. So that will be It would be --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

GOODWIN: Yeah. We would -- our IT administrator would drive that process to make sure, you know, there's other compliance issues and types of things like that. But yes, he'll drive that process.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That would keep track of all your capital improvements --

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- probably in section --

GARMAN: Comments as we get down in parks?

So do we have a -- a specific plan for just the Fountain Park area? Is it split off? Because that's like the most iconic portion. And that's what draws in some tourism and other things.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: It seems like, you know, Lakeline and all of that. Do we have something that's hey, this is what we need separate from everything else, just for the -- the fountain park?

GOODWIN: So each park has its own assessment and is scored independently, with all of its different amenities and bits and pieces, so that there is a maintenance process for that, as well as a repair -- repair, replace, upgrade, whatever that gets scored. Each gets scored annually so that they can track.

And then in terms of greater improvements, i.e. what I'll call capital level improvements, the lake liner is obviously the biggest one and is on -- certainly on the

radar, no doubt about it.

There are a number of few -- smaller projects that have come along that we've taken on as we've seen as we face challenges. I'll give you an example. One is getting ready to start here in the next coming week or two, where they're going to be leveling out and trying to improve what I'll call is the -- the Great Lawn, the area where we hold most of our festivals.

That footprint is -- is pretty uneven. We have the -- the drainage swale through there. You have a number of other things. We're working to make that more level, more accessible, so that we have a greater space to accommodate more folks and a bigger, bigger footprint down there.

So that is one improvement that they're working towards. But most of them are being identified either by challenges as we grow and the usage of the space changes and the demands on the park change. So that -- and so those are being identified as we move forward. So that's why it's usually a three to five year vision for each of the parks.

GARMAN: Yeah. Go ahead, Bernie.

HOENLE: I think one of the things that contributed to improve that area is not necessarily at the Fountain Park, but it's the pavilion. I think it's taken some of the load off of a few activities that they would have tried to have at the park.

GOODWIN: Absolutely. The pavilion has been a great add.

HOENLE: So, I think it's the combination so.

GOODWIN: Well, and keeping that in mind, the pavilion was more almost a three year effort before it came, before it was ever realized in the CIP, before it was ever budgeted for and then came to fruition, really in the last year. As the space was redone, the shade structure was added, the lighting was just added. So it has become a much more usable gathering space from what it once was.

GARMAN: The pavilion is the --

GOODWIN: Centennial --

GARMAN: -- Centennial.

GOODWIN: The Centennial Circle. Yep, that's -- that's the Centennial Pavilion. Uh-huh.

But it's the home of a number of events, concerts and things like that.

GARMAN: Okay. I'm going to keep going until I see red lights flash. Okay. Chime in whenever you want.

Do we have spaces? I would call them programing spaces. We just talked about the pavilion, but identified spaces at our parks where events can take place, whether it's sunrise yoga. I know we have high school graduations and do we have those throughout?

Or is it just, you know, we always do high school graduation here? Or do we have a plan that we're doing yoga over at 4 Peaks Park and we're doing -- you know what I mean for different age groups, and different -- just kind of a coordinated effort of -- I would call them programing spaces or program spaces.

I think Bernie wants to wants to comment.

What you think? Go ahead.

HOENLE: Two of them, one, the disc golf tournament. I mean, that's a pretty big deal. It uses most of the park. And then the other one is the cross country school meets that --

GARMAN: Uh-huh.

HOENLE: They run around the park, and it's a fairly large student event that comes around at least once, sometimes twice a year.

GOODWIN: I would tell you, we -- we have a very --

GARMAN: And I'm not just talking about events. I'm talking about locations, you know? Park locations --

GOODWIN: Sure.

GARMAN: -- that are dedicated to programs.

GOODWIN: Yeah. We have a very I think we have a very wide variety of programmatic areas that are based on community asks and community evolution. I mean, we have very traditional spaces, like our rentable ramadas for your picnic, your birthday party or whatnot. All parks have those.

We also have some, you know, some are more larger than others. Specifically, I'm

thinking of -- Golden Eagle has a much larger one down by the basketball courts. And then we have more traditional ones with two or three picnic tables. You know, those are designed more for public use.

The larger ones, especially like the one that was just added adjacent to the splash pad, is designed to be available for both public use as well as rentable for larger events. And hopefully we will be working towards hosting more community wide programming under there, whether it's, you know, family game nights or music or other things like that. But that one was designed as a multi-purpose and multifunction space.

But as -- again, as our community has grown, as our community asks, have changed, what was once popular and traditional is no longer. So being able to adapt our spaces is really what's key.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry about that.

GOODWIN: That's all right. I think a good example of that is the avenue, the linear park on the avenue, you know, is used for a lot of different things. We were able to develop the concert series on it. We do host yoga out there seasonally. It's also the home of the farmer's market.

So it's the ability to adapt our spaces as the use asks fluctuate. And I think that's what we've done a good job of.

GARMAN: What do you think? Do you think that there's anything I had written down here? Fountain Hills theater --

BENDER: You may want to turn on your mic.

GARMAN: Thanks. Thanks. I had written down the Fountain Hills Theater and you know, cultural performing arts, public arts programs. And I was trying to link it back to opportunities for public, private partnerships, which I brought up before.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: And is there anything like that under parks? Under the parks program or any of those other things I mentioned where there's -- there's -- you have something big. The town just doesn't have the, I don't know, tax base or the budget to support, but it might be able long term, five years, ten years, 15 years, 20 years of public -- private

partnership can make it into a reality.

Any of those wish -- wish lists out there?

GOODWIN: I'm sure there's lots of wish lists out there. What really has traction and the has withstood the test of time is really the question. You know, we have our performing, we have the theater, which is a really great asset for community of our size. They do a great job. You know, we have a number of, you know, the community band, the community chorus and another --

So the arts are, you know, well represented here. Having, you know, a dedicated performing arts space is not something that we have explored.

Obviously one of the most popular topics that has come and gone well before I got here, and probably well after I leave, is the idea of a pool. Public pool. I know that there was a -- at one point there was some traction with a partnership, like with the YMCA and the school district that obviously did not get legs for whatever reason. That was, again, before my role here.

So there is there's no shortage of interest. I think that the question really comes back to what can the community actually sustain? And so it's a little bit -- we got to broaden that just a bit before we can, I think, drill down as to what could actually work.

Obviously we have a lot of community projects and spaces. You know, whether it's the community garden, whether it's the dark sky facility, all of those are partnerships.

Those are usually -- you know, they're based with the town in partnership, but there has to be a cooperative agreement. There has to be other mandatory things that are met. Even -- even the library is an IGA with the county. So there's a lot of partnerships that exist in our community as it is today. So where that goes is really a very open question.

GARMAN: You said one was an IGA?

GOODWIN: An intergovernmental agreement. So we have an agreement with the county to use -- they operate, but use our space.

GARMAN: Is our space -- and that is our space plan for the Performing Arts center at some point.? No?

GOODWIN: No, I'm not sure where that would be.

GARMAN: Well, I know. Yeah. Joe.

REYES: Actually I kind of see this area as having different venues, if you will, for continued promotion of the arts. And the one of the most recent that stands out was I did I finally took a tour through the -- our beautiful in fact you know, big project right here.

And even though we couldn't see because it's still under construction behind the walls, the amount of seats and the staging area that is envisioned and being built there purposely could be used for a venue for small plays and things of that nature. That was brought up by the People that were giving us the tour.

So I think we kind of take different places and people will use them in different ways, from small to large. It would be nice if you had a very large space, like a lot of communities do, and either have outdoor, but we've got the super one with, you know, the Super Bowl one here with our -- our fountain. And from there, we have our unique elements as we have smaller parks throughout. And I think that's -- that's a good thing for us.

But -- but still even within buildings look for more of that if we ever develop more. Side note.

GARMAN: Okay. Thanks for being a good sport, Rachael, and answering all our questions. I'm just going to move on now if it's okay.

The last two are kind of connected. That's a little bit of a pun. Number two is fire safety and trail development. And then number three is connecting public areas and town.

So here's something. You all heard me talk about this before going back a year or so. So I kind of looked -- looked back at what I called -- what I'm calling don't quote me on this, but the-- the Fountain Hills Wash Corridor Initiative, WCI for short.

So you know, I looked at do we have the ability you know, legally and operationally to have a wash initiative in, in Fountain Hills.

So what I kind of came up with is -- like to put these two together, fire safety trail development, conduct connecting public areas. So if you think this is a two-step process.

So first something that we talked about your staff has talked about, Rachel, is a systemic brush removal. I think they call it like fuel reduction program in publicly owned washes and corridors. So that would be under wild -- wildlife -- excuse not wildlife -- wildfire safety.

So going through kind of the washes, especially the main washes that might be, you know, dangerous and high risk for wildfires coming you know, into the town through the washes and kind of those, those wild areas. So removing brush, cleaning those up. And then while the town is doing that -- remember, this is a long term plan. It's not something tomorrow.

But while -- while the town goes through and does that systematically, it would pave the way for the development of a multi-use trail system that would utilize those same corridors that were just cleaned up to connect our parks and neighborhoods, and even the existing trail systems. It doesn't need to be in every wash. And I'm not talking about asphalt, I'm talking about granite pebbles and that -- in that kind of pathways.

But it seemed like over time we could work together to reduce the risk of wildfires and fire in general in our town, and at the same time kind of create, or meet one of the goals that we hear, which is connecting public spaces with these pathways.

Any thoughts on that? That's something I've been thinking of.

Paul?

SMITH: You want me to say something now? No, I don't -- excuse me. I don't remember when exactly, but a few months ago, in the last year, we had a presentation from Parks and RECs, and they talked about -- or he talked about doing or working toward a, a the goal of a trail system that connected all the parks in town. And most of that was the use of the washes. And I think that kind of all goes together.

In other words, you're not going to use the wash unless you clean it up. And if you clean it up, then you don't have the fire safety -- or the fire problem. So I think we need to keep -- keep talking about that. I think that's -- it all kind of goes hand in hand. I think.

GARMAN: You know, this concept of -- concept of using, you know, washes and kind of drainage corridors throughout the, the valley here. You know, it's been done. It's been

done successfully in other towns. You know, my -- my -- my kids live off the greenbelt here in Scottsdale, and that's a wash. It's 11 miles, never miles long. It's beautiful, right?

So you know, you eat an elephant one bite at a time. So I think that that's an ability in our washes to be able to, first of all, minimize wildfire safety and -- and minimize wildfires and then help connect. Now, you could do this over time. And you have to start, you know, before you get there you would identify the town would have a plan. They would look at the town government would look at -- look at the washes that might be best suited for this.

You know, thoroughfares that might be affected. And you know, run it through. So it's all public. Of course, this has to go through the Council and everything else like that, but I think it's something that would connect some of the things that people have said before. I know one of the word charts in here was connecting our public spaces. And Rachel, you've said that quite a few times as well, trying to connect them. And you can't do that until you start.

So one thing I wanted to add before I turn it over. Yep. Don't -- don't -- don't --
GOODWIN: Go for it.

GARMAN: It. I'm going to keep it clean. Don't -- don't -- don't be too rough. There's a polite way.

Anyways the town owns these corridors, right? We already own the washes. We already are supposed to be maintaining, you know, dams and washes and things like that in the town. Anyways wildlife wildfire risk is real, and it's important. And fires have occurred in some of our washes.

So and I think our town has already started that in some of these washes. We've already started some -- not the -- but re cleaning the washes and making them a little easier to get through. I had some of the washes, like the -- did you already start on the Ashbrook wash and some of these others that I had found?

So anyways, I think the town has all of the tools necessary to do a project, a multi-year, maybe multi-decade project like this. We -- we own we -- we have the ability to do this.

And I know one of the negative things is not in my backyard, people might not want to see people walking through their wash, but it's not their wash. It's a public wash.

All right. That's me done talking. Go ahead, Rachel.

GOODWIN: I'll start with the fact that you are supporting something that the community services staff, the park staff have long supported, and even our public works. It has been a concept that has been talked about and serves a -- you know, as a conversation starter and has served as a conversation starter for quite a while.

That being said, we have a couple of hurdles that go beyond this body that go beyond the Council, even -- because there is a voter initiative that voted in our community. I want to say in the late 90s to not use or develop the washes. That includes for purposes like this.

We also have current ordinances on the books that say that there's no public access to our washes. You shouldn't be down in those. So both of those actions are directly opposed to, you know, directly challenge what we just what you just talked about. So there is a, there's a larger set of hurdles that have to be sort of considered as this idea is continued to evolve.

So is that gentle enough?

GARMAN: Yeah. 1990's go back a while.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: That's interesting. You know we're talking not just I mean for peaks and you know wash to -- to problem and things like that. I mean we're talking Darrow and Golden Eagle, and Shadow Canyon, all these big washes that come down through town. I know we have I found like at least eight or nine or ten or twelve or more, like they can have a test case.

But I know I didn't have my light on that whole time.

Geoff, go ahead.

YAZZETTA: The voters, there was a specific ballot item that said the washes shall not be used for any purpose aside from runoff during the storms?

GOODWIN: Barring any direct language because I don't know it off the top of my head.

Essentially, yes.

Now, I hesitate to do this because she's going to yell at me. But I know Bev was here when that initiative happened.

Bev, am I speaking out of turn, or am I forgetting any of the details that might come to mind for you?

BENDER: It came to us in an ordinance, and the Council approved it based upon the petitions that the -- the public presented to them. So they put it into the town code.

YAZZETTA: I see.

BENDER: Yes.

GARMAN: Now the town has to maintain the washes, right? We don't lose wildfire safety initiatives, right? So.

GOODWIN: Correct.

GARMAN: That's even -- even one thing that I know was asked over the last year when some of your folks came in, was to start an initiative to at least start taking the fuel, as they say, fuel out of the out of the washes. Are you allowed to do that? Maintain them?

GOODWIN: So that's been going on for the last two years. But that's staff led or contractor -- you know, we have a contractor that's working with us to do that. Understanding that the washes have not been maintained for a number of years -- a lot of years.

GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: So much to your point earlier, it's not a -- it's not a one and done kind of thing. It is a multiyear effort to get the washes addressed and maintained to, to that standard understanding also that the standard that the town will trim them, maintain them, remove ladder fuels, that type of thing isn't always the same standard that folks would, you know, they would like.

They sometimes there's an expectation of, you know, clear cutting. Well, that leads to a different problem. You know, a healthy native tree, let's just say Palo Verde is far more beneficial there, as long as it's healthy and trimmed and maintained. Is actually a

preventative more than it is an accelerant. But there is, you know, there's some misperceptions that say the washers should be clear.

Again, that leads to a different problem. So -- because when it does rain and there's nothing to slow it down, we have a lot of erosion and a lot of other problems that cause harm from that.

So it's finding that middle ground that maintains them properly, as well as maintains them from, from both floods and fire, so to speak. All of that being said, that is happening, but it doesn't allow -- it doesn't negate the ordinance that says public access is prevented.

GARMAN: Go ahead Geoff.

YAZZETTA: Well, that's a pretty large obstacle, you know, for us as a commission because, you know, Council would need to take some action to reverse that motion. And if they were to do that, I think they'd have to do some type of pilot project to demonstrate the viability of these.

GARMAN: Uh-huh.

YAZZETTA: You know?

GARMAN: Uh-huh.

YAZZETTA: While it may be a great idea, and it sounds like staff would be supportive of it, you know, maybe that's something that we could include where it's like, hey, let's, you know, take a small bite at the apple in this upcoming plan. And you know, following that, you know, figuring out how to branch it out to other and maybe it's not appropriate for every other single wash in town. But yeah.

GARMAN: And that would. Yeah. Exactly. Yeah. Thank you.
Go ahead Joe.

REYES: So -- so it seems like on the one hand, by virtue of promoting the brush fire safety in the last couple of years, plus, we definitely have started to take that and embrace that. And it's not a one and done. It's more of that to program from here forward.

And on the other hand, there are sometimes opportunities to utilize those common

spaces or those washes for -- let's call them, recreation or public use. Except for the fact that we have this little problem where we've put that as out of bounds for some years. I propose this more of a question.

So how would one -- or a body go about bringing about a change to either change and allow for controlled public usage, which the town would define what that is, or at least to evolve and start to come up with ways to partner with others, because we have a string of connection that starts here and goes as far as you want to go, and -- including neighboring cities, right?

GARMAN: Yeah, yeah.

REYES: I seem to recall also in a visit that there's a conservatory or some a couple of groups that have already and are continue to do maintenance and expansion of the trails to improve them for the public use, with an eye always to continuing to string the one to the next. So that goes along with your plan.

But how would is that something that we under our planning here could promote? Or do we need a sponsor like the community development? I don't know who would do it. Parks and rec, combination thereof?

Could you help us out?

HOENLE: And I think that's where the challenge is going to be, since we're a commission working for the town, where it crosses the line for advocacy. So there are different things that need to be considered along the way.

SMITH: Wasn't the botanical garden built in a wash?

GARMAN: It's on the side of a -- it's on the side of the wash. Yeah, it's in a wash. It's on the hill side of the.

SMITH: The question is how do we do that with that ordinance?

GARMAN: That's a good point.

GOODWIN: I'd say my best guess is it was there before the ordinance. But I don't know that to be a fact. And nor do I know if it's in one of our recognized -- once again, it's adjacent. So the answer is, I don't know.

GARMAN: But could the town -- I'm sorry --

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: I -- like I said, I'm a big believer in doing things gradually. I'm not saying, you know, this, this is going to be overnight, but you have to start someplace. And it seems to me that the town already has a good grasp of the inventory of the washes.

They know where the parks are. They know where the streets that cross the washes.

They know where. A good place to start with one wash or two washes or something like that. And kind of have a plan to, to get going to see if people are, you could tolerate it going through and what it would look like, how it would be limited or what, you know, all of that gets worked out over time through the Council and through the People in our town.

But does -- do we need to -- do the people need to vote on it, or can the Council change an ordinance based off the strategic plan? You know.

GOODWIN: The Council can change an ordinance. I would want to -- before I give you a definitive answer, I'd want to go back and double check how this evolved and get a little more concrete information for you, which I'm happy to do. I think, Joe, to kind of piggyback on what you asked, there's a couple of paths that could be explored is the honest answer.

Obviously, just like Bernie said, this is an advisory commission, right. So a recommendation can come out of this body that says, hey, Council, we -- we -- we think you should explore this. They can say, cool, we will. Or they can say no thanks.

It might be prudent to do a couple of other things, just like Geoff was just talking about the you know, we did community outreach to find out what people are interested in. I would suggest potentially reaching out and working with the Community Service Advisory Commission. Right? That's -- their sort of purview is our in our parks and rec space -- to say what has been done.

Because I can tell you, I know that the -- the -- the hiking group, why is that name is the Sonoran Conservancy, and that bill Craig has looked at this before. I know that he has drafted things. I know that these things exist.

So it may be smart to reach out to that commission and maybe develop a joint initiative

or some sort of crossover to say, hey, this, this has legs. What have you done? Where have you seen potential? How can we you know have more force in numbers? And of course, the ultimate, of course, is to represent what the community wants. And being able to have community advocacy is a very, very big part of that. To show why this is needed, why it's wanted, and to what extent our community really supports it. That holds a lot of weight if it's going to come out as a recommendation, whether through our plan, or you know, as a separate initiative to the Council.

GARMAN: Right. And we I mean, we ghostwrite this. This is the council's plan.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: This is the town's plan. So we write this, we socialize it, Council votes on it, accepts it.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: So it becomes their plan.

GOODWIN: Correct.

GARMAN: I would say I -- I just think there's some goodness in there. You guys could tell. I've been thinking about this for way too much of my time when I probably should be working. But things like that, where there's prone to flooding, like, you know, the I don't know all the names, but I'm sure it's like, I think it's Ashbrook from the Mount. The Eagle Park?

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: Behind the school?

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

GARMAN: That wash, right?

GOODWIN: Yep. That's Ashbrook.

GARMAN: And you guys have had to recondition that over time because of the flooding that comes down through there. And where does it go when it heads past town? Does it go to Fountain Park? Does it go to Four Peaks Park? Where does that wash?

GOODWIN: Ashbrook goes all the way through. Yeah, it runs all the way to our eastern border.

GARMAN: I mean, you know, and those people are used to work being done in that wash because of the flooding and the reconditioning to help with the flooding. Anyways. All right. Any other comments on that? I have big plans. Right? We'll start it. Bite the elephant -- eat the elephant one bite at a time.

By the way, there's you know, this has been successfully done throughout the valley and lots of different places. And I'm not talking about just like paved trails, but places -- Queen's Creek is doing this quite a bit. Cottonwood does this, Cave Creek? I don't want to compare it to the greenbelt. Everybody rolls their eyes. But that greenbelt is pretty awesome.

So you know, use this wash. Make it so it's it -- it helps, you know, channel the water when it rains, and then it removes vegetation. So it's not a fire risk. And oh, by the way, people can walk and bike in there to get different places. Win, win, win, win.

Okay. So that was the three things today. By the way we're -- looks like we're doing decent on time. The three things we're going to talk about for safety and quality of life park development, fire safety and trail development and conduct connecting public areas.

Does anybody have anything else they want to bring up, especially maybe fire safety? I mean, I have a whole laundry list on that, but we're running out of time.

Geoff.

YAZZETTA: I know there was a fire wise event that was hosted. I think it was earlier this year coming from LA and knowing plenty of people that lost their homes during the fires last year. How are we doing with just like outreach about brush clearance and making sure that, you know, the defensible space at private residences is maintained?

GOODWIN: Yeah, that's a great question because it is on a -- you know, sort of everybody's mind as the temperatures tick up and all of those things.

We actually just engaged with Mike Pelton, who does a lot of our social media and our PIO, to film and promote a number of different education messages about what defensible space is, what is truly -- what is a risk? What is it that a homeowner can look for?

Again, it's not necessarily a healthy tree and a wash. It's -- it's the low dry grasses that, you know, dry out on, you know, on property at the, at the, you know, floor of a property, so to speak, or along the rocks or along your edge. It's where items might blow and collect. Maybe it's dead grasses or palm fronds or wherever else you know. I know in my -- my property, it's always right in the corner of my driveway.

Well, if that's where things naturally collect, that's your greatest area of risk. Because that's where embers will blow if there happen to be a fire.

My point being here is that we're trying to use our social media resources, as well as our other outlets, to remind folks about what they can do, what they can proactively do to protect their space, what that defensible space is, the fact that the fire department will come out and help evaluate your property and give you recommendations on what you can do.

There are a lot -- a lot of tools and resources available for our property owners and homeowners here to help them feel empowered. And we want to help try to again share those, give those recommendations so that again, they can take those proactive steps.

YAZZETTA: Thank you.

GOODWIN: Sure.

GARMAN: It seems to me that maybe the town has a -- a plan. What do I call this? To connect -- oh, a connect public spaces plan identifying gaps in pedestrian and multi-use path networks between parks.

I know that's been something that we've talked about for years, right? Is -- is there a map? And it's like, boy, if we could snap our fingers, this is what we would do to connect our parks.

GOODWIN: So we have the -- I think it's called the active transportation plan, which is --

GARMAN: Yeah, that's --

GOODWIN: Yes. And so that identifies -- it's not just limited to parks, it's limited. You know, it connects a number of different areas, whether they be, you know, commercial corridors, retail areas, recreation spaces, whatever.

Connection to the parks was prioritized in that roadmap because our park spaces are very popular. And I want to say it was built on a ten year plan that we're probably coming up on, and each year we make a little bit more progress. It's --you know, you can see where we've infilled sidewalk areas --

GARMAN: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- to, again, to connect sidewalks that -- sidewalks to nowhere, so to speak. The Saguaro Corridor is a good example. We've made a lot of progress and headway on sidewalk connections along the Saguaro Corridor. Both all the way up towards where it connects to Fountain Hills Boulevard. That was a huge grant paid, you know, federal grant that paid for a lot of sidewalks through there as well as we're doing smaller infill down on the lower portions.

So we are making progress as the to answer your question but that plan was built on, you know, based on available funds, based on priority areas and it -- it's -- it's a slow go. It's a slow go as the answer sometimes. Sometimes --

GARMAN: Grants and --

GOODWIN: Yep.

GARMAN: Bernie.

HOENLE: Yeah I think about five years ago they updated and included more on the pedestrians and bike lanes, stuff like that.

GOODWIN: They did, your right.

HOENLE: That tied in.

GOODWIN: Yes. Because we did develop -- I want to say Justin mentioned something like eight miles of new shared road space without actually changing the width of the road.

GARMAN: Okay. Does anybody have any other comments on this? Safety quality of life? Going to move on.

Okay. Hearing none we're going to move on to, I guess it's c under our regular agenda, which is discussion and possible discussion and possible action, future agenda items. My plan was just as an overview, and then I'll see if anybody has any comments is and

this is going to take place of future agenda items number 12 as well.

But we were going to have our annual workshop in June. So we'll use our meeting in June for our hour and a half workshop like we've done the last two years. My plan was to circulate best way possible, but through electron send out a draft -- kind of just a draft plan, a template that's filled in to a certain extent for things for us to talk about. We'll go through the different priorities, signature strategies, some of the tasks that we identified throughout the, throughout the year. I mean, it could be a lot of stuff. So I was going to send that out ahead of time and hopefully people could leaf through it, read through it, circle some stuff, highlight here or there and come to the our workshop in June ready to talk about specific areas. You know, it's hard to talk about the whole thing, but there might be things that you're passionate about, that you're interested in, that you want to make sure is in there or not in there. But -- but I will circulate a document for that in June.

And then I'll take everything that we've, we talk about in June, all the, all the comments and make edits so that when we come back to our meeting in August, because we would skip July, we'd come back in August and I'd say, hey, here's a plan that I think you all can look at and we can start to circulate -- socialize with the town and the Town Council, more importantly, the Town Council, because I know the town Council is going to want to make edits to it as well.

This is post -- is the election the last week in July or something like that, like, right? So I figured it'd get us past that maybe even into the new the town Council is that -- that's both too, right?

So some of those might go into November, but into the fall, we can start having opportunities to socialize. And I say this again, I know it's different. You know, it used to be I was able to talk meet in a group setting with the Mayor. And the Mayor said, oh, yes, I can see this. This is I think this is the way it should go. This is the way it should go. Let's socialize it with the rest of the Council. And she acted like a shepherd to help shepherd the plan through and give advice on what people might be looking for. I kind of throw myself on the court, you know, this year I'd love to take the plan after we

get through it at the end of the summer and just walk in each individual Council person's work area and say, let's talk about this for a little bit.

I know that's not the way politics are done these days, so but I don't think we can have a Council workshop every month to socialize it. And I can't wait till February 27th either.

GOODWIN: Why? What's February 27th?

GARMAN: Isn't that when they have their annual work --

GOODWIN: Oh, when their -- their retreat, yes.

GARMAN: Off-site retreat. Yeah.

GOODWIN: So let me ask a different question, just to make sure I'm on the same, same track when you're looking. Hopefully this is looking to be adopted by the end of this calendar year. Is that right?

GARMAN: End of 20 -- during '27. Last time we got approved in March.

GOODWIN: Okay.

GARMAN: So we socialize it during the fall. It was ready to go come December. They didn't. Something happened with the meeting in December. We came in the new year, and the first time we could get in front of them for a vote was in March, and they approved it in March.

GOODWIN: Okay. So no --

GARMAN: SO '27.

GOODWIN: Gotcha. Knowing that you have a little bit of a hurdle in that it is an election year, you already kind of noted that and that the new Council members won't be seated until December.

GARMAN: So unless -- they could get a lot of votes in July and --

GOODWIN: They can, but they won't be seated.

GARMAN: Okay.

GOODWIN: The new Council isn't seated until the first meeting in December. So we may know who the elected is or who the. But our guess is based on the number of candidates running. There will be some level of runoff that will take us into November. That being said, of course, you know, sharing it and getting feedback with members of

Council that may be moving off the dais, I still think it's valuable to get their input. I still think it's valuable to -- but then we're going to need to make sure that we build in time for the new electeds as well, and work from there.

I do think format wise, we can certainly set we can hold a number of meetings as long as we don't have the quorum where we have small groups, maybe two or three at a time, to kind of get some feedback.

GARMAN: That would be great. Thank you for that.

GOODWIN: I think we can certainly set that up. I think it would be critical to have a number of staff involved, too, because if there's questions about certain things or specific areas we want to make sure that there's the right folks around the table to either offer input or give some other guidance, but I think we can work towards that.

GARMAN: That is outstanding. Thanks.

So any comments on what I just laid out? At least over the -- through now into June and into August.

Yeah, Bernie.

HOENLE: It's more of a question than a comment. Are you going to include summaries of the different outreach efforts?

GARMAN: Do you mean outreach to the Council she just talked about? Or do you mean the workshops? Community workshops. You mean like -- yeah, absolutely. If you want. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. With the last two we've had -- how many have we had the last couple years?

YAZZETTA: We've had two per year.

GARMAN: Two per year. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And the number -- I have to put the number of people we've interacted with and you know all of that as well. Yes, okay. All right. So that's -- that's the plan. You guys are going to get a draft before the June and promised not the day before our June workshop. So please print it out, whatever you need to do and be brutal with it, and then come prepared to -- to -- to discuss it at our workshop here in June.

All right.

GOODWIN: (Indiscernible)

GARMAN: I can look on my phone to when Angela sent it out to us. You're not allowed to take vacations. It's -- it's an election year. I'm sorry. Just kidding.

Nothing pops up. Let me look at my other phone. So normally it would happen on Wednesday, the 24th of June. That's the meeting that I have from Angela. At 4:00, Wednesday the 23rd of June.

Cancel all your vacation plans for that week. I'm just kidding. I'm smiling when I say that.

Okay. So we're going to move down to call to the public is now at the end, and we don't have any public here, and then we haven't had -- submitted anything. So we don't need to review that.

We're going to go down to 11, which is commission discussion direction to the director. And we've been talking about this, is there any comments that any of you have going forward between now want me to consider as we head into June? By the way, you're all allowed to send me comments as long as you CC or put Angela on it. You know, you can -- one on one. You know, we can we can you can comment and we can put something we can talk about what we're going to do on the agenda or something like that. But so you just go through agenda -- or go through go through Angela whenever you do that. That would be my request.

Okay. We talked about future agenda items on number -- on letter c, so we talked about what we're going to do over the next couple months. And that's good.

All right. Sorry we're past the hour. We went a little over. Is there a motion on the table as far as adjournment goes for this month?

YAZZETTA: Move to adjourn.

GARMAN: Okay. We have a motion. Is there a second?

REYES: Second.

GARMAN: I have a second to adjourn. Hearing any -- not seeing any red lights, any comments about this month's meeting? Next month's meeting?

Okay. So we'll proceed to a vote. All in favor of adjourning the meeting for today. Say

aye.

ALL: Aye.

GARMAN: Any opposed? Nope. Unanimous. The meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

HAVING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, CHAIRMAN PATRICK GARMAN ADJOURNED THE MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION HELD ON MAY 26, 2026, AT 5:12 PM.

APPROVED:

PATRICK GARMAN, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

ANGELA PADGETT-ESPIRITU, DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

CERTIFICATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING MINUTES ARE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION, FOUNTAIN HILLS, ARIZONA HELD ON MAY 26, 2026. I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT THE MEETING WAS DULY CALLED AND HELD AND THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT.

ANGELA PADGETT-ESPIRITU, DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Post-Production File

Town of Fountain Hills
Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Minutes
June 24, 2026

A Work Session of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission was convened at 16705 E. Avenue of the Fountains in an open and public session at 4:02 PM

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Joseph Reyes; Commissioner Polly Bonnett

Members Absent: Commissioner Paul Smith; Commissioner Randy Crader

Staff Present: Town Manager Rachael Goodwin; Deputy Town Clerk Angela Padgett-Espiritu

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Transcription is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

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CHAIR GARMAN: I call to order this meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission for the -- for Fountain Hills on Wednesday, June 24th.

Angela, can you call roll, please?

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Yes.

Chair Garman.

CHAIR GARMAN: Here.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Vice Chair Yazzetta.

YAZZETTA: Here.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Commissioner Crader.

Commissioner Reyes.

REYES: Here.

Commissioner Bonnett.

BONNETT: Here.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Commissioner Hoenle.

HOENLE: Here.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: And Commissioner Smith.

We have a quorum.

CHAIR GARMAN: We do have a quorum. Thank you.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: Just to be clear with the -- the Commissioners, this is a workshop today, so we're not voting on anything or making any decisions. We're discussing, talking, putting out ideas. And we're not reviewing the minutes from last month either. So those minutes will be -- be made available by -- by Angela. And then, we'll -- we'll look to review, edit, and or approve them in -- at our August meeting.

So that leads me to one other tidbit. If you remember, we don't have a meeting scheduled in July, so we're going to have our workshop today, get as far as we can, and then reconvene in -- in August to look for kind of the -- the new session the remainder of '26 and into '27.

Angela, one other thing, seeing the -- but we don't have the call to the public for -- for

workshop either, right?

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Correct.

CHAIR GARMAN: All right. Just wanted to make sure.

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: Yes.

CHAIR GARMAN: So the way we're going to do it today, I'm going to start.

I think Geoff and I are going to go over here to take notes and talk, so we can kind of talk to you. This is a -- a -- a thought experiment is what I put in front of you. I've been working on this for a little while. Just understand that the -- the -- the tasks, the timelines that are in there was something to get you thinking.

I think some of these tasks, actually, the Town might have already accomplished. Some of them might be, you know, way out in left or right field. Others, you might think, be a good idea. But I -- on each one of these, I put spaces underneath for you to add your ideas, add your thoughts, and you can give those to me after we're done here so I can put them into the plan.

So if you want to just write by hand today, or if you feel like, you know, you want to send them to Angela for me to incorporate, that's fine too. But just use this as, like, scrap paper, or scribble, or whatever you want to do on these today. And we'll try to get some good ideas as we go through.

So with that, because of the makeup, I think the -- yeah, the microphones are not working as well out in the chair section. So we can't sit and kind of look at each other. So Geoff and I were just going to try to lead the conversation from the front while we're looking at the slides and talking.

I saw some movement to my right, Bernie?

HOENLE: Okay. So briefly, what are the rules of engagement? Since I saw AI on almost every page, I brought an AI expert from the community here. That's his career area. And Jason Reith is his name, and he'd be happy to participate as much as he can.

CHAIR GARMAN: Well, this is for our commission. You saw what I handed out. You've been to the workshop the last two years. So the rules of engagement are we're talking to each other.

You could see one of our strategic -- or signature strategies is AI. You know that, right? It's underneath the finance, I think. So I wanted to stimulate you guys' thinking on what AI can do, if we should put in AI tasks, if we shouldn't.

I mean, it's kind of like, you know, AI is here. It's not like, should we put it in? It's how should we put it in? How should we use it as a town? And this is a strategy that goes out five to ten years. So it's not today. You know, we rode in horses and next week we're going to come in in a car, or we're going to use computers today and we're using paper yesterday.

I mean, it's already here. We just need to manage it. And I wanted you guys to think about it. This is just a draft to stimulate -- stimulate thoughts.

HOENLE: So the answer is?

CHAIR GARMAN: That was my answer. And that's what I'm going to go with.

So you want to go up front?

YAZZETTA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

REYES: Before we proceed, I think Bernie was just looking for clarification. Being that this is a workshop, we cannot use call to the public. So sir, if you want to, like, jot down notes and then share them with the commission afterwards, I think that would allow us to, you know, take your subject matter expertise and, you know, kind of filter it through the process. Does that work?

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

REYES: I just joined Rachael, so --

CHAIR GARMAN: We can't have call to the public today. So that's why this is just a workshop. So that's all I got.

You want to walk down the front with me?

YAZZETTA: Sure, Yeah.

I'm going to try to manage this.

CHAIR GARMAN: So you guys know we've been working on this, right? The year before last, we did our strategic pillars. So that's the first page. I put it on the computer in front of you, and you have a worksheet in front of you as well.

So those are the five that we approved. Wow. It's been -- has it been two years ago now. And worked through those. So infrastructure finances, economic development, quality of life and safety, land use and development.

Last year at our workshop, we then codified or produced a draft of our signature strategies, which is underneath each one of those pillars. So we -- we identified those last year. And then throughout this year, between last June and now, we've been talking about actual tasks. We bring up a signature strategy underneath the pillar and then talk about identifiable tasks under each one.

So we have minutes from each one of our meetings going back all the way through the fall, going through each one of these. So I tried to bring a lot of those together. I read through the minutes, did the best I could to put some things in, to stimulate thoughts on what could be good, what you like going forward.

Just understand that I wanted to put like actual tasks that we talk about today. Put them into a draft so we can come back in August and have -- you know, I don't want to assign a percentage, but have kind of a draft plan that you guys can look over and it looks familiar.

It goes from pillars, to strategies, to tasks with some responsibilities and timelines built in.

Am I leaving anything out, Geoff? I want to --

YAZZETTA: No.

CHAIR GARMAN: And part of it is, you know, part of the -- I was looking at a draft plan. Remember, we have a vision and a mission or -- excuse me, a yeah, we have a mission. Vision and a mission for the Town. It's on our it's on our website. And part of that then is getting ideas from the -- the -- the citizens that live and work in Fountain Hills. So Geoff has been doing a lot of that over the last few years.

So we have a number in the hundreds. It's getting close to 1,000 different people we've touched base with, based with over the last five years to get their opinions, whether it's in your community work center, workshops, or the outreach that we did a couple years ago.

So we do have opinions from the Town and hopefully those are filtered through all of you to try to make this plan the best -- best we can. We're time now to -- with the elections that are happening, the mayoral election, the Council elections, so that we have a draft plan as all the potentially, you know, new people or the people who are coming back for their terms to serve this fall.

And they'll be able to look at this plan, you know, maybe in a fresh way, and we can work through getting it approved over the next year. That's the plan. Have it approved in '27.

Okay. That was a lot of talk. I'm going to go through these. I wanted you guys to talk about each one. The first one is infrastructure, if you remember. Very important. The signature strategies that we identified under infrastructure was roads, irrigation strategies, and multi-use public, private, or P3, as I see it called.

So the first one though, roads, we have a lot of expertise. So I'm just diving right in now. What are some of the tasks that you think fall under roads that we can look at? Not today, but five years, ten years from now so that we can get to some type of state as far as the roads go.

I'm going to open it up with that. I don't want to specify. I put some things there. I -- you know, I put each one of those in light blue or kind of AI goals that I wanted everybody to think about what AI might be able to do as far as each one of these signature strategies.

So the floor is open. Does anybody have any comments or discussion points on -- on roads going forward?

HOENLE: Well. I do. I'm going to kind of work backwards.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

HOENLE: I'm going to go to the end and then tell you what, a couple three steps that maybe we need to take in order to get there. And I think with respect to this whole issue of roads, since it's so huge, and since there already are some activities that are aimed at number one, evaluating the PCIs here and getting us some data that can be used to take it from this to this and tell us how many in which category, how many

arterials, how many majors, et cetera.

And second, since we're doing a lot of in this vein, also programing for identifying the projects along with the attendant costs and timelines, and putting them into various documents that go from anywhere, you know, budget and next year, and then five years at least out, I think we really do need to push a little bit.

And on the one that you suggest on here that -- since our -- we're striving for PCI one and it's degrading, I think we need to start now, number one, doing the evaluation -- the PCI evaluation, to rank all of the streets to update that.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah, I was going to say, right?

HOENLE: But since looking at -- at when and I know it was relatively recent that that was done. But -- and maybe what's a little bit misleading is the wording on yours here which -- which kind of implies or infers that we're going to go out one to seven years. And I'm thinking, we have all this data now, right? Right.

So what's -- why don't we add something in here that kind of gives us the starting point as of year one, not two, three, four, five, but year one, to make use of that data and get our -- some of our other plans already off and running? So identify those for the short-term plans and next year's budgets and all of that.

And also to maybe take a stab at -- since there's down in the on your suggested, I think it's two, financial strategic P2 --

CHAIR GARMAN: Uh-huh.

HOENLE: -- 1 there's another AI there pointed at using that to model the cost elements so that you know what -- or forecasts on what a model that tells you what those are from here on out. I think that in conjunction with what we already know, would give us a really good updated kind of program to guide us. So that's a thought.

CHAIR GARMAN: Go ahead, Geoff. Yeah.

YAZZETTA: We have done a number of the PCI reviews. I think, to hone in on the first bullet point here. Maybe -- is there like, a best practice for how often we should be doing that? Is it every five years? Is every ten years? I think that's how we kind of zero in on this particular supporting task.

GOODWIN: Sure. I think that's a good point, Geoff. I would argue probably five years, but I would probably defer to Justin --

YAZZETTA: Okay.

GOODWIN: -- to know best --

YAZZETTA: Got it.

GOODWIN: -- practice there.

REYES: Okay. I want to -- I want to tell you that I saw in here, in the most recent one, a very good little explanation about how they derived the pieces. But the point that was also made that's germane to what you just brought up, Geoff, is that the PCIs are going to change, even if you do nothing to the to the streets.

So that if you have a certain index for Shea, okay, and you make no improvements or anything, it's going to change next year automatically.

YAZZETTA: Uh-huh.

REYES: The -- the point I was trying to make is that you need to look at this on an ongoing basis, because they're going to change even a lot more if you do anything. But even if you do nothing, you know, that number is going to change all over the place. So it might be okay today on a certain street, but next year it may go down. And unless you're looking at it, you're not going to know that. You're going to be programing for something until you get it done. Kind of misses out on the opportunities of using these resources to their fullest advantage.

So it's just my caution.

YAZZETTA: I agree, and when I was with the City of Los Angeles, we did a PCI report every year. I think it's more of a budgetary issue for the Town.

HOENLE: Yeah.

YAZZETTA: And I don't know how many lane miles there are in our road network off the top of my head, but being that it's a smaller road network, it's easier to keep track of that deterioration and make projections. Just my thought.

GOODWIN: And they do have modeling that kind of can predict that out that says, okay, if it's -- and to Joe's point, he's right. You know, it does change over time. Doing

nothing is still impacts it. Thankfully there is modeling that can kind of predict that that says if it's a, you know, if it's a sixty PCI today, doing nothing over the next five years would likely projected at 52 or whatever it was. So we can at least have some sort of predictive model without expending it, you know, expending that effort every year, over year, over year.

YAZZETTA: I would imagine those models are also incorporating AI, those private companies that are doing it.

CHAIR GARMAN: What is the -- I mean, I think you guys have done -- when I was writing this down, I was like, I try to look on our website and I try to remember some of our conversations. You've done a lot of this, but I need a starting point. We need a starting point to go -- like, what's the PCI now of the Town? And is it okay to have a goal of a certain PCI?

GOODWIN: I think it's okay to have a goal. I think when I kind of glance at the second bullet, the PCI index score of 70 or higher in -- by year seven is probably unreasonable without any funding. It's not something we'll be able to achieve without some sort of funding mechanism, and that's been pretty well documented on our --

CHAIR GARMAN: We have one now, or last year when you did this?

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: What was the score for the Town?

GOODWIN: I don't know it off the top of my head.

CHAIR GARMAN: Okay.

GOODWIN: But I can tell you 70 is pretty high in terms of a national average.

YAZZETTA: These are five year plans. So maybe we figure out from Justin Weldy what a reasonable number at the end of five years, which would be, what, 2032? Like where we should -- from where we are today to where we could be five years from now? Because the PCI year over year has improved over the last couple of years because it has been a main focus, right?

GOODWIN: Not exactly. It has been a main focus. And I think that that -- that is sort of the crux of the issue. And so I'm going to answer your question and I'm going to tell you

one other piece.

Because we've done a lot of work on primary roads, on our collectors and our major arterials, that has -- that has helped the underlying PCI. But the problem is those that are in our backlog continue to fall, and more fall into the backlog. And those are really our residential, right? Those are our smaller streets that are harder to kind of keep up with.

All of this being said, is that we, as staff, have been asked to put together an update on our roads, particular to a bond discussion, a funding discussion, and that is likely to be scheduled for the first week in August. So I think maybe pending that, that may have some influence on this particular pillar, and how the Council may choose to move forward. And that may indicate what the future should include or not, depending on which way they go.

REYES: That's --

CHAIR GARMAN: But you know, as --

I'm sorry. Go ahead, Bernie. Oh, who had -- I saw your light on.

REYES: Mine's on.

CHAIR GARMAN: I can't see it.

REYES: Just to follow up. '24, '25. Very good report. I guess he had this citizens whatever it was, advisory da da da, group, which I'm sure -- I think Bernie was one of the people on there, and a few others. And there I really like the executive summary probably addresses this as best as I've seen anywhere, and we use that kind of as our baseline recent. And add to that the updates, which we've heard also from public works that come in and can tell us.

The -- the -- I think what I remember hearing is that this number for some of our streets has degraded slightly. And part of the reason for that is just what Rachel said, because we focused on some of the big, big heavyweights and apparently that somehow changes things. I don't know how.

But the whole point of this exercise, and the reason that I'm trying to focus on setting a near-term goal is because, yeah, number one, I am aware that we've already taken a --

kind of a straw poll and recognized that the citizens really would like to get involved in being the ones that say yay or nay with respect to a bond.

On the other hand, those that are going to be responsible for getting that bond up there. Timing is everything. So they want to be able to get that information and put it in place on their timing. Understandable.

So if all of that is really on the near term, why don't we similarly reflect in our documents that those should have a higher priority now? You can change them from here forward. But I think it's important because the way we -- all the paperwork that I see so far from our group, we've got dates that are like -- we're talking years and it's okay, but I'd like to I'd like to talk about year one, more importantly.

Okay. That's all I'm going to say for now. Thank you.

CHAIR GARMAN: Bernie, do you still have a comment?

HOENLE: Yeah. I think it goes back to Rachel's first comment. Funding. So without the funding, we're going to continue with a backlog. Now, if you're in business, a backlog is good. That means you got orders and you got customers that need something. But a backlog in roads isn't good.

So we have a backlog and it's not going to get better without additional funding. And you can go through a process. They've gone through three or four different iterations of ways to do it by zones, by whoever makes the most noise about their area. There's lots of different ways to approach it.

And the committee that was just referred to, we came out to hit all three different categories in a priority basis, and that can change. And obviously it has changed. But the biggest point is you get other unknowns that are happening, like the water system, the sewage system, the digging up roads because the utilities -- our utilities are deteriorating under the roads as well as the surface structure. So there's a lot to it and it's fairly complex.

The other thing is roads are really here for the community. And you talk about safety. So roads in themselves, it sounds like we're talking about pavement, but it ought to be intersections. It ought to be pathways, it ought to be for pedestrians and nonmotorized

vehicles. So the road network ought to be a way of people get around this town. So --

CHAIR GARMAN: So what I'm not hearing is any identifiable tasks to tell the Town to do over five to ten years, which is where we are today.

So I would ask, is PCI a good starting point? Is -- is that a reference point? I mean, in other words, a strategic plan would say, hey, Town of Fountain Hills, we want your PCI to be this. Town Council, you figure out how to get there. You want to -- you know, you want to raise a bond? Okay. Go raise a bond.

You want to not raise a bond, and you want to do it by zone, or you want to do this or that if you need more revenue. But our strategic plan thinks that the status of our roads should be this. This is the goal.

We can talk about how to get there, but we're not down in the weeds every day, you know, doing the work that the Town does. Do you know what I'm trying to say? We need to set an aspirational goal. This is my opinion. An aspirational goal for the Town that's -- that's doable. It can't be not doable at all.

But we're in the business of giving a goal for the Town to get to in one year, three years, five years, seven years, ten years. And we don't necessarily have to paint by the numbers and tell them exactly how to do it, because things happen over that time frame that we don't know.

So I know I keep looking over at you, but we need a cornerstone for -- for roads. It's a strategic thought. And I looked at PCI. It could be something. Maybe there's something else. I'm not I'm not sure, but -- Polly?

HOENLE: But maybe we should generically, maybe we should generically say that we should use AI in the evaluation of such key indicators as and then we put two PCI this, that and the other whatever, to use that information in the upcoming year for all the various reasons of budgeting, planning interaction with other plans and so on.

Yeah. I mean, if it's just something like that that gets us focused, I think we'd be better off.

CHAIR GARMAN: Before I turn it over to Polly, I do know that I think we already used, like, a things called a drone. Right? I was pretty sure when they were talking about --

about roads that we already fly over the company. The private company, maybe?

GOODWIN: We do have drone operators on staff, and we do -- do drone evaluations. For instance, a lot of our publicity about the Palomino repaving was done with drones and things like that.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: But in terms of are you talking like, evaluating the conditions of the roads via visual? I mean, that's one element, but to kind of -- I guess kind of to Bernie's point and PCI, that's all, you know, that's done with core drilling and some other -- and other surface level type evaluations. But drone footage is something we have used, yes.

CHAIR GARMAN: Polly.

BONNETT: This might exist. I'm not sure. I guess I'm going to be asking that question. But Bernie mentioned, you know, the prioritization has changed on a variety of reasons or based on different reasons, whether it's the loudest voices or condition of the streets. Is there a prioritization plan in place for road replacement throughout Fountain Hills at the moment?

GOODWIN: I think that's kind of where Bernie was going. Is it -- it has changed and it has changed by elected body to elected body. So originally it was sort of a -- a zone concept, so that every seven years you would be back to the zone. Right? So that was sort of abandoned and gone to a worst first sort of concept where we're just kind of finding the worst of the worst and trying to address them.

And then it became more about doing the higher priority roads, i.e. volume based. And then again, it kind of became -- so it has shifted focus depending on the different leaders, the different available funds that we have. So it has been a little bit shifting sands in that way.

So we have not kind of stuck to one plan. And I think that's part of the problem, to answer the questions we've been having, is that we have not developed the perfect version of this. And so sometimes it feels like we're recreating the wheel a little bit every so often. Because we're not making the same -- the progress that we'd like to be making and a lot of that doesn't come down to what approach it is.

None of them are wrong, per se. It's just a matter of trying to address backlog, trying to hit a certain PCI number, trying to appease, you know, folks that have streets that are in, you know, pitiful, pitiful condition. So they're all -- are all kind of competing priorities there.

So the short answer is no, there is not one specific plan in place right now.

BONNETT: Okay. Thank you. And I guess the next part of my question is with those shifting priorities at times that makes it a challenge for town staff, I imagine, because then you have to shift resources to whatever that current priority is, if it's a -- an elected officials priority or just residents priority.

So what would -- what would be the easiest way forward for staff as far as execution of improving roads? Would it be something like a zoning plan that did not shift, or would that just create other problems?

GOODWIN: I'm probably not the best person to answer --

BONNETT: Okay.

GOODWIN: -- on the spot. Is the -- it truly -- and that's why I think pending this work session that is probably coming in August, may give more clarity on that and may break down a little bit more and help this group sort of have a more depth and background as to what has been done, what hasn't been done, what we're currently working on, what tools we have in place, and how we got here today.

And then hearing what the Council decides will help dictate potentially where we go for a plan like this.

BONNETT: Okay. Thank you.

YAZZETTA: I think for us too, as commissioners, it's important to consider that we're going to have an election this year. Two years from now, there's going to be another election. This upcoming five year plan is going to see multiple bodies sitting on this dais. So I think we need to zoom out and try to simplify things where it's just, hey, let's find out what a reasonable PCI score is to try and achieve by 2032.

The bond, that's going to be up to the voters if it even gets put on the ballot. So we can't factor that in. Because that's an unknown.

So you know, interesting, thoughtful discussion. But you know, we've got a lot of ground to cover, and we're still on priority one, strategy one, task one. So just my thoughts.

CHAIR GARMAN: Well, you know, it's -- you know, it's all good to sit around and talk. But once you put something on an -- ink on a piece of paper, then the argument starts, right? A discussion. Let's be polite about it. Discussion. So that's why we're here today.

HOENLE: The problem I see with using a PCI though, if you have a small neighborhood road or you got -- like a Saguaro, they're going to affect the PCI much greater than others.

CHAIR GARMAN: So what --

HOENLE: So when you try and average them out, it's --

CHAIR GARMAN: what would you recommend? I mean, I wrote down like, prioritization of road improvements. Are we talking main arteries? Are we talking neighborhoods? Or maybe there's another way to think about it.

HOENLE: Yeah. In the last -- the last report in the summary, we had it set out in the three main areas in a certain percentage in each. So --

CHAIR GARMAN: All right. So please write down notes. If you could give that to me when we're done. I was going to move on now. Okay. Thanks.

The next one I thought was an interesting one that we brought up was irrigation strategies, because it crosses with saving water, but also the look of the Town. So I still remember -- gosh, it's been so long ago, maybe a couple of years ago. I think one of -- who was it, though?

Weldy?

YAZZETTA: It was probably Justin Weldy, maybe --

CHAIR GARMAN: Justin. Yeah. Yeah. Was talking about, you know, how much -- how many miles of irrigation and things we have throughout the Town. So that was something that -- that we identified as a signature strategy that maybe is not talked about in the newspaper every single day, but something that we could improve the

Town over time in a strategic way.

So that's why irrigation strategy is on there. I thought there -- you know, I researched through -- through the through the United States, through the country to try to find some things to, to put in there.

So remember, this is just to stimulate, stimulate your thoughts. But what do you think about some of those tasks, as far as irrigation strategies? I know some of them -- the one over on Shay and Fountain Hills Boulevard. I think that little piece of property that you cleaned that up and changed that and added some special kind of irrigation as far as that goes, or less irrigation.

YAZZETTA: Yeah, yeah, yeah,

CHAIR GARMAN: So it's a way to save money as well.

YAZZETTA: For bullet point number three, reducing potable water consumption for irrigation by 20 percent. Isn't all of the Town's irrigation recycled gray water from the sanitary district?

CHAIR GARMAN: No.

GOODWIN: No. There are two parks that are not. One is 4 Peak's Park and one is the Avenue.

YAZZETTA: 4 Peak Park Avenue.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh. And so I guess the question I would have there is, you know, if we're going to reduce that irrigation by 20 percent, what are we doing to get there? So that would be one of the tasks because I don't see remodeling the avenue. Or are we pulling out turf? Are you recommending not overseeding? What where does that look like? I guess because that's a hard task to support from a staff level.

CHAIR GARMAN: What -- what percentage do you think of the irrigation around town is potable? Those two areas?

GOODWIN: Again, I -- I wouldn't know. I'd have to look at them. But I know they all have high turf, high use --

CHAIR GARMAN: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- sport fields. So short of removing those, I don't know how you reduce

the water, I guess, because that's what it takes to maintain them.

YAZZETTA: So those two parks are using fresh water. Do you know if the infrastructure for the gray water is nearby? It is not.

GOODWIN: That's those were both modeled for potable, which is why they're both still on it.

YAZZETTA: Huh-uh. And is it unreasonable to take them off of potable water?

GOODWIN: I don't know what that infrastructure investment would look like.

YAZZETTA: Okay. Not so much for the infrastructure cost, but if they were modeled for fresh water, there's probably a reason that they were designed that way. Is it because of the uses?

GOODWIN: The -- remembering that 4 Peaks used to be part of the school. And so --

YAZZETTA: Yeah.

GOODWIN: -- most of that was part of the school district property. So we inherited it that way. And then the avenue -- again, the avenue was modeled -- it was redesigned. I imagine it was run that way originally because of just the high volume of users, i.e. whether it's pets, or people, or whatnot.

YAZZETTA: Got it. Yeah. The way I see this one is, based on the Town's needs to have -- need -- need to haves, which are roads and the future lake liner. I don't think a Council work session is going to favor an irrigation project over those two things, so I don't know if this is worth adding to our upcoming strategic plan. My thoughts.

CHAIR GARMAN: You mean the potable water?

YAZZETTA: The potable water to gray water. Because if the infrastructure isn't already there and it's just a matter of running new irrigation lines in those parks, that is going to be very, very costly.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. I mean, I'm -- I'm tracking along with you. I don't think it's a huge -- huge deal, but you can't finish something unless you start. If you're going to eat an elephant, you got to start one bite at a time.

So people always say, oh, it's a big deal. It's very expensive. But if you start and do it a little bit at a time, you can get there. But I don't know if that's -- that's a hill we want to

die on for sure. You know what I mean?

YAZZETTA: Yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: I kind of tend to agree. Plus, you mentioned the fountains. The fountains -- I mean, I walked down there a lot and all of those fountains in the water, and I would want that to be clean water. I know it's chlorinated and everything, but my dog jumps in there by accident all the time. So I can totally understand Avenue having to be clean water.

GOODWIN: For example -- you're exactly right, right? It's the usage that kind of dictates. It's why Four Peaks Park is the home to our Wacky Wet Wednesdays, and our Back to School Bashes and all of our water based programing, because it's the only one that has it and can support it.

Otherwise, those programing activities aren't available in any of our other parks.

YAZZETTA: And that is part of our award winning park system. Right?

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

YAZZETTA: Okay.

CHAIR GARMAN: Any other comments from commissioners? What do you think about the -- the AI piece of that? Is that possible over time? Soil moisture sensor data, weather forecasts, all that kind of stuff can be programed in over time.

GOODWIN: I think all that's feasible.

CHAIR GARMAN: I think it's a feel good issue too. Just, you know, going through improving irrigation and -- and reducing water usage.

All right. No other comments on there. If you guys got comments, write them down please.

We're going to go on to the next one, which is also an interesting one that we came up with, which was multi use public-private partnerships, kind of P3 for short. Remember we talked about ways for these public private partnerships. We had a pretty robust conversations about these, I think, during our monthly meetings.

Any comments on any of those, stimulate any thoughts?

YAZZETTA: I feel like for the two active agreements, we would need to specify a target

for those, just so that we have something to aim for. What other -- are there any existing public-private partnerships in Fountain Hills, current or former?

GOODWIN: This one's a challenge for me to kind of -- because everything that we do -- we have a lot of partnerships, there's no doubt about that.

But the -- most of our partnerships are usually more from a public to -- from public to public or other IGA, i.e., you know, we have partnerships with the sanitary district. We have partnerships with the school district.

YAZZETTA: They're vendor relationships, right?

GOODWIN: Exactly. Or we have partnerships with the Elks Club or the disc golf club. You know, certainly this town does not operate without those partnerships. Let's be very, very clear on that.

I think the challenge is when it says we'll execute two active agreements. Well, that seems very sweeping to just say, well, we think you should go have these two -- in -- from what context? In what way are we trying -- what where are we trying to go with those partnerships? You know, whether it's dark skies, that's a public -- that would be a public to that would be a public to nonprofit. We have a relationship with them. But it's not a -- it's more of a lease agreement than anything.

So there's partnerships out there, no doubt. But I guess I'm digging a little deeper into what the goal or outcome of these -- established private sponsorship programming generating \$50,000 annually for public amenities.

Again, I think that that is not something that is a reasonable direction. Sponsorships are hard to come by. We do a lot of sponsorship for our events and things like that. So it feels like the directive doesn't necessarily align with the functional realities, I guess, in that concept.

So I'd like to understand more where we're trying to go with it so that maybe we can model the tasks in -- in line with that, I guess.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. I mean, the two active agreements was to give you guys flexibility, to give the Town flexibility instead of saying -- I mean, we can be as prescriptive as possible, but that becomes onerous very quickly. We want to give you

freedom.

GOODWIN: That's not what's important, though.

CHAIR GARMAN: They don't understand public private partnerships?

HOENLE: Well, it's not targeted a specific area or specific function. So that's the challenge I was having with it also. Where can you find a profit sharing or something of that nature? It's really hard to work out between a government and a private entity, whether it's a 501 C3 or for profit. But we --

YAZZETTA: There needs to be a -- oh, sorry, Bernie, were you continuing?

HOENLE: No, I'm just going to say we have to have a targeted, functional area to go after with the Town and another party that would gain from it.

YAZZETTA: Yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: Do you have ideas for that?

HOENLE: No, that's why I said it was --

CHAIR GARMAN: But this is -- this is the multi-use public private signature strategy. So what are some tasks underneath that strategy. We agreed on that strategy last year and we've been talking about it. We had a month or a month and a half talking about public-private partnerships.

I mean I can give you examples. But I got the feeling that you're going to say no to every one of them, so I can just write them down and you can give me your -- your notes. But I mean, this is pretty common as far as towns go. And it might be too small. We might have a smaller scale, but it's pretty commonly done.

HOENLE: Go for it. Let us know. What are you thinking?

CHAIR GARMAN: Well, I'm looking at folks who are -- I mean, if you if you don't like this, what do you recommend? Put forward your ideas. That's what the workshop is about.

YAZZETTA: In my experience, with a P3 there's some need that is filled. And it's a situation where everybody benefits by participating in it. The City of Los Angeles, the city would build parking structures. They would lease them to a company that manage that parking structure.

Now, I don't know if Fountain Hills is ready for a parking structure, though maybe we will need it in the future. But it's -- the city built it, and then they lease it to somebody that, you know, staffs it, charges whatever hourly rate they charge, and they, you know, would do other types of maintenance there.

I feel like we would need to have a specific. And I guess when we reverse a year prior when we were talking about this, there's all these different brainstorming ideas. But I think in the discussion we're finding some obstacles, like what is it that the Town needs? And who in the Town of Fountain Hills on the business side could provide that specific service?

So a good goal to have, but I think we need to have the need first to figure out what it is. So --

CHAIR GARMAN: And that's always the difficulty I have with these, is we don't know what the Town's going to need in five years or ten years. We want to give them a goal and the flexibility and it might not go the direction we wanted.

I -- one example of this is -- I mean, it's easy when I get specific to -- to -- to, you know, criticize it, but you want to build something.

You have the opposite of what you talked about, where you have a private company come in and do the development. So that the Town doesn't have to, like, do a bond, or a tax increase to pay for something.

Private company comes in and then they rent it or lease to own it back to the -- to the -- to the Town over the next twenty years. So they build a -- performing arts and the private company develops that, and then they lease it to own back to the Town. And after twenty years, the Town owns a performing arts center.

I mean, that's a big scale, but there's also you can do smaller scales like that as well. I mean, those -- those type of things are done, maybe not in Fountain Hills, but they're -- but they're done.

GOODWIN: It's not to say that. It's not to say that it's a bad idea or that it's not done it, but it feels like we're putting it on there and saying, here's staff, go do this because you need something else to do.

And fortunately, I would argue that it -- staff probably has great ideas when it comes to how we can do this, or what the goal is. If the goal is a performing arts center, let's just assume that that's a good example and say, yeah, that's -- that's the goal. How do we get there? Then we can talk -- work backwards from that and look at what those options are.

But frankly, I -- the takeaway from this is simply that it is a goal without a connection to what we're trying -- where we're trying to go. So if we can identify a few more of those bigger picture, okay, what are we trying -- are we trying to bring in a performing arts center? Are we trying to bring in a, you know, an event again, or some other type of education outlet, or something of that nature? What is that? And then we can work towards that.

But having staff work towards something simply for the sake of saying, well, it's on the plan, I have to do it. It doesn't -- it needs to also align with what the staff goals, are with the -- with the Council directives are those types of things. And that's -- that's where I'm trying to make sure that we're in alignment with all of those different elements. Does that make sense?

YAZZETTA: I think we need to spend some more time thinking about this individually and revisit it, because I don't think we should get stuck on this one right now.

CHAIR GARMAN: Well, yeah, we're not stuck on it. I -- it's easy -- and this is the way these usually go. This is why I wanted to, like, sit here in chairs and just and just talk. But it's the way strategic planning goes across the board, forever.

You can get things done in the macro. When you get on the micro, it becomes difficult. So we need to set strategic goals. I know we had talked about, as an example before we move on, Geoff, I know it's a slow process.

If you remember a -- our earlier plan, we wanted to have a -- or a mobility plan around town, connecting parks, connecting sidewalks. But we didn't say, hey, build a sidewalk in front of, I don't know, Boshes or somewhere. We said, look at the Town and see where you can connect different areas. And then the Town went out and found money and grants and other ways, and then devised a plan to build more sidewalks to connect

the Town better so that people could walk, or ride a bike, or whatever.

And we didn't have to specify exactly where or how to do that. We just said that's a goal that the Town wanted. So I kind of used those way of thinking as we go ahead. Just think -- as we go ahead, think of goals we need to get to. Anyways, I'll stop talking about it, but --

HOENLE: Except part of that was a total active transportation plan. They had all that stuff spelled out.

CHAIR GARMAN: Right. All right. Infrastructure a tough one. Finances is next. You know, finance is always kind of difficult for -- for me. I'm not an expert on it. So we did have some conversations on -- on -- on finances. And one of them we -- we fleshed out was specifically to use a little more AI when it comes to town finances.

So I put together a few kind of tasks for you to look at. But overall, I mean, I know this is probably none of our expertise, but thoughts on ways that AI can help support the Town going forward as far as finances go? And does anything I put there stimulate any ideas?

HOENLE: Well, I just pointed to the one related to the roads as taking that and adding this element into it to, you know, create a different model, a different approach that on the one hand, takes all that data and we have all the priorities, and what you're going to fix, and all that, and the attendant projected cost.

But then you put it through something like this that'll help you then figure out how to best, then go to the next step, the implementation, the work, et cetera, and then that's on a schedule where it's kind of maintained from there forward also. Really, you could plug this into almost anything you do, but take your pick. I picked roads.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yep. Oh, I'm on the wrong page.

YAZZETTA: For the -- the overall AI policy, is there anything that MAG or maybe a state level group has that kind of guides local cities and towns on how to implement artificial intelligence?

GOODWIN: That's probably a great question for Mike. I know he's part of an AI statewide group, and it is -- a, I think we all know it's moving fast and it's evolving rapidly, faster than most of us can sort of stay on top of it. So I think that that's a great

question.

I -- I have to imagine that there is and that it is a continual learning process. Mike Ciccorone is probably a great resource to ask what that might look like and what -- what is already out there.

YAZZETTA: Thank you.

GOODWIN: Yes.

CHAIR GARMAN: We already have a chatbot kind of launched, right?

GOODWIN: We do. Her name is Misty.

CHAIR GARMAN: Misty. Yeah. Have we kept track of how people are using it?

GOODWIN: Yeah. Yeah. She's pretty well used, actually. She -- I forget now. Pelton told us. Mike Pelton is sort of the keeper of that project. And I can't remember. I want to say he -- we have more -- more than 100 users or more than 100 questions a month on it. In the most popular of no surprise is what time does fountain operate? Why is the fountain not on?

And typically event based questions. What time are the fireworks? What time is the egg hunt? What time is, you know, the parade, whatever that might be. Those are the primary. But there's a -- there is a very good log of what people are asking and helping them get to the answers they're looking for.

CHAIR GARMAN: What -- what is that tied to a -- to a company --

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: An AI company? Which one? Like is it a small one or is it one of the big ones?

GOODWIN: No, it's a bigger one. I mean, they modeled this after other communities that had launched it so that we were able to sort of take advantage of their lessons learned and whatnot. I want to say it's City Bot, but I can't -- I wouldn't swear to that.

CHAIR GARMAN: So there's potential to, to tie that in to other areas, right? You know, I want to start a business in Fountain Hills. Where would be the best place? Well, what's your business? Well, we have an area over here. Have you looked at this underused parcel? You know, things like that too.

Anything else on finance? You're writing it down. Thank you for that. Thank you for that.

Okay. We already have some type of rolling forecasting tool, I think, don't we? Don't we? I put in there, you know, five year rolling plan. But that's just because this is a five year plan. But I think we have a rolling forecast already for the Town, right? Annual five years. Ten years, something like that.

GOODWIN: Yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. All right. All right. Alternate funding, alternate funding support. Another interesting signature strategy of ours.

I'm on page six for everybody as well. Let me scroll down. So this one, you can be inventive. I don't know if you all had some thoughts. I wrote some stuff down. But I'd be interested to hear if there's any ideas on alternate funding for the Town. That tends to be, you know, besides taxes or bonds, but anything that's inventive, I think is worth -- worth talking about.

YAZZETTA: The main obstacle to hiring a grant writer is the budget, right? Okay. Is that something that would be worth including to guide current future Council towards carving out some funding in the budget for a position like that?

GOODWIN: If you recall, and I think it may be even in our current strategic plan to evaluate a grant role. Frankly, the -- the challenge in that that we have seen, at least from our perspective as a staff, is that the -- the -- the need for the grant administrator is not on the written side. It's not on the actual application portion. It's on the back side.

It's on after a grant is received and the administration of the, you know, reporting, and all of the documentation, and the tracking. It's really not on that front end. The industry experts for each area tend to know and are -- tend to be more familiar with their grants.

For instance, Fire and Finance just put in a huge grant that's funded through FEMA to fund an element. I go -- they know their needs and their details better. Grant administrator, unfortunately, is probably not going to be able to put together a financial

package. They're going to need Finance to answer the questions. They're going to need Fire to talk about what type of resources are needed or what our deficiencies are.

So they're -- they're sort of -- the role would be to package everything. But unfortunately it doesn't it doesn't allow other staff to -- to be disengaged from it. It doesn't take the place of finance or the in this case, the fire experts. So the need is really on that back end of when we -- if we get those types of grants.

YAZZETTA: And on the back end, you're talking the implementation, reporting, compliance --

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

YAZZETTA: -- all those things?

GOODWIN: Yep.

YAZZETTA: That sounds like it might be more than one position, depending on what it is. And didn't this happen with the Discovery Center last year, where there was the, you know, idea of applying for a grant, but then there was a lot of kind of baggage, I guess, that came with that on the back end?

GOODWIN: It is a challenge. It is a challenge. You know, it's -- I call it grants are not free -- or like free puppies. You know, you get the puppy and it's cute and it's fun, but it comes with a whole other set of work that is not always recognized on the front end. We get excited. It's, you know, it's the cleanup and the training and all the other things that come along with it.

HOENLE: Maybe it makes sense in this to consider more the -- the rental aspects. Instead of hiring right up front for this, maybe using consultants and other, you know, types like that to steer you through, kind of like we're doing taking that first big step with respect to the -- the liner and coming up with not -- not, you know, the fix it A to Z. But tell us how to go through the steps to get to the next level and going. Does it make sense to maybe consider that a little bit more? Adding someone that can be our guide, if you will, to move us closer, you know. Because I think most people are automatically to say, gee, look at this. What's the big problem here, Rachael, just go out and hire somebody and plug them in.

And with or without someone saying, well, wait a minute, now, there's a lot more than just that, you know, it's -- it's so easy to -- to come to that conclusion.

YAZZETTA: I can't speak for future Councils, but I know consultants have come under scrutiny.

HOENLE: Oh. Then you better put this one on the back burner.

CHAIR GARMAN: I mean, usually that -- that person, a dedicated administrator, would -- if you see, you know, something, a program like AI or something else that can look across prospective grants that might fit what we're looking for in our town, then that person would be a filter or an entry point to funnel it out to the different areas that might be receptive, or might be looking to that type of grant.

We've been talking about that for a long time. This is at least six -- six or so years we've been talking about a grant writer. Do you think it's still a need? Because this came up five years ago when we wrote the plan.

GOODWIN: You know, I think to your point, where you -- where you were kind of going is I think we have, what with the new AI tools that are continuing, this may be a great area for us to implement more of that versus an actual body in that world.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: And again, a lot of grants -- are the lift isn't on the beginning, it's on the finish. And it's if we get them. And if we do get them, maybe to Joe's point, you know, if we find that we get -- if we -- if we were to ever get that -- the -- the big grant we were talking about with the dark skies, then we talk about, you know, does it make sense to have some sort of administrator, whether it's outsourced or whether it's time to bring someone on in a temporary capacity for the duration or something of that nature.

But I think that that could be potentially broached as the need arises. But in terms of actually filtering and looking for opportunities, you know, perhaps that's an opportunity for AI to help -- help generate that or do those searches and those crawls. Because it's a -- it's a pretty intensive process that I feel like that could help support.

HOENLE: And then there's the opportunity where you get the grant and then it's not executed.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. And it's my perception though that -- that the Town does -- does a good job at this. We just want to try to support it and help them. That's all. Okay. Any other comments? Alternate funding. That was less energetic than I thought. I thought we were going to have all kinds of -- by the way, I hate to go backwards, but did you see the Fountain Hills Community Foundation? Were you ever had conversations with them? They collect money and do good deeds.

GOODWIN: I'm familiar with them. I -- Patrick, I have to tell you, I feel bad because I keep -- I know you feel like we're poo pooing on everything that was done. I would think we need to talk about offline, because that's not something the Town can just pick an agency and say, we're going to give you money and -- and work together. We have so many philanthropic groups in this town, so that would be a challenge.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah, I think we're reading it differently. I don't think that's the intent.

GOODWIN: Okay. Well, then -- then perhaps we can have some further conversation on where that's looking to go.

CHAIR GARMAN: I think we've done some of these. You know, I'm kind of clumsy and I phrase it sometimes, but sometimes I think we're doing some of these. I mean, some of the shade that you put on Avenue of the fountains, and some of that's funded by private funds, right? Whether it's whether it's a single person or even an organization.

GOODWIN: Not recently, but I mean, there have been in the past, typically when we have funds donated.

CHAIR GARMAN: The Veterans Plaza over around the fountain. I mean, is that all town funded? I thought that that was --

GOODWIN: That was a -- you know, that was a multifaceted element. But the Town actually gives money to the -- to that group the other way around. We -- we give money.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: So --

CHAIR GARMAN: Okay.

GOODWIN: Perhaps. Yeah, we can if I can get a better idea where you're going with that, maybe we can wordsmith that a little bit or.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. I would appreciate that.

GOODWIN: Sure.

HOENLE: And I will join that conversation. I'm on the Board, so --

CHAIR GARMAN: The Board of the -- yeah. Yep.

All right? Now I'm actually -- am going to move on. This one is not the sexiest topic. Budget planning strategies. This is always something where I just put some things down and then ask the Town what they think.

I had a whole bunch of these last go around, and they all got -- most of them got shot down as far as budget planning goes, because I'm not an accountant and I know how to do a lot of this stuff, so I don't know if anything in there struck a chord or if you guys have any other ideas for the way we do -- the Town does budgeting.

Do we do performance based budgeting at all?

GOODWIN: We have not taken that with the (indiscernible) .

CHAIR GARMAN: Do we have a certain amount of income that we put away into a reserve fund? I think I heard that before.

GOODWIN: We do. Sorry. Angela, is going to yell at me for not turning on my microphone.

We do. We do have a reserve policy. It has not always been adhered to -- and it has been adjusted from time to time by the Council because it is set by the Council. So staff have been advocating pretty heavily, particularly in the last, I'd say, the last two to three years, to more actively fund that, because that is where a lot of our deficiencies are, taking care of what we have. So it's not as -- it's not funded as fully as it should be. So we're working on making more aggressive support there.

REYES: Question.

GOODWIN: Yes.

REYES: Does that all of that what you just said include or reference to the lake liner? Monies that were there and then weren't and shifted. And then finally, it's okay, let's

put more money in. Or --

GOODWIN: So it does include the -- so I'm going to I'm going to back up just a second.

And so in -- I think it was 2016, the Town did a town-wide facility maintenance evaluation and said basically every year the Council needs to be putting away a million bucks a year to take care of what we have. And that didn't happen.

And then when they did start to put stuff away, it was about half that -- was about 500,000 a year. And so that was really supposed to be dedicated for all needs, not just the lake liner.

Then as we kind of came up on the lake liner's warranty year, you know, that was around 20 -- 2018, 2019.

Everybody kind of said, oh, we -- we need to -- we need to be more aggressive about saving for that particular project. And so they have been. So they have been earmarking more funds specific to that project. But that doesn't negate all the other maintenance that needs to be happening in all of the other areas that we are not as adequately funding as maybe we should be.

And so staff have been really trying to advance those measures, and anticipate those, and really advocate for that -- making up the difference there. Does that answer your question, Joe?

REYES: Yes, it actually does.

GOODWIN: Okay. Great.

REYES: That being the case, I don't know what to put in here, but I think we ought to say something that more is needed to similarly fund the other town activities and things.

CHAIR GARMAN: So you like that task -- task two?

REYES: Put a marker in there and we'll put something in.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah, something like that.

Just to put it on the record, five years ago, I put in every other year budgeting you know, do the budget every other year instead of every year. And that -- that was shot down pretty early by the Mayor at that time. So --

There are things that you can put in there that are kind of outside the box thinking, but I don't know. They're tough to get through all the time. People come in from a new election, and then they're going to spend the first few months dealing with the budget. Right? I think, you know? And they've never had experience with that. Some of them have never had experience with that before.

So anyways, not that I was going to put that in again. I was just saying that there are things that we can put under here -- put in here that are a little different, maybe move the Town in a different direction. But I look forward to seeing what you guys are writing down.

Geoff, by the way, I think this was scheduled for like an hour and a half, so I know we're past the top of the hour.

YAZZETTA: Ten after.

CHAIR GARMAN: If you guys are okay, 20 more minutes. All right? Okay.

So I'm going to move on to economic development, which is a -- pillar three. And we've done -- the Town has done a lot of work with the downtown planning, but that was one of the items that we identified as a signature strategy.

So I put some numbers in here. Be interested in what you guys think. This is always a tougher one, but one that's always included in all of our strategic plans.

Y'all good with ten new downtown businesses within the next five years? I'm sure Rachael is.

GOODWIN: I'd love ten new businesses downtown. I think it sounds great.

REYES: That only works if we don't lose 20. Got to stay on the plus side.

CHAIR GARMAN: Now we have a downtown overlay already, right? I mean, we -- we were briefed on that -- on that. So --

Do you think we can record, you know -- I put in here an AI one that that looks at kind of where people spend money, where people move around downtown, and what -- what businesses -- what business mix we have to kind of have a target list, so that we know what kind of businesses do well in Fountain Hills and which businesses don't do as well in Fountain Hills.

That's kind of what I was getting at for that. Do we ever have something like that in the -- in the economic side for the Town? Do we kind of have an idea of what works and what doesn't work?

GOODWIN: Sure, we --

CHAIR GARMAN: We do?

GOODWIN: You know, with the overlay, it is -- it does identify the targeted businesses that are intended for the downtown.

And obviously, Amanda and her staff of one work towards identifying those, knowing that we of course, only have so much influence over private property and private development, but actively going and saying, yes, we'd love to see, you know, a new restaurant or a new, you know, retail space or whatnot.

So I know she employs a number of tools because we are such a small staff. She uses all the resources she can get her hands on to help with that, AI included.

YAZZETTA: Does she have access to CoStar or any of the other, like, commercial -- okay. That's where all that data lives.

GOODWIN: Yes. No. She has costar and one other one. I can't remember what it is, but that is where she pulls a lot of our occupancy rates. A lot of those types of different --

YAZZETTA: Proxy or something like that.

GOODWIN: Could be.

YAZZETTA: There's a few of them.

GOODWIN: But yeah, you'd have to ask her. I know costar is one. I know her frustration is often sometimes that, particularly when it comes to vacant properties they're not always listed because they're not always actively marketing them.

YAZZETTA: Yeah Fiona hasn't listed it as vacant. It's kind of a phantom vacancy.

GOODWIN: Exactly.

YAZZETTA: Because it exists, but it is not reported anywhere.

GOODWIN: Exactly. So I know she has had some trouble with, you know, that type of accuracy, especially locally.

YAZZETTA: Sure.

CHAIR GARMAN: Any other comments about economic development or at least downtown planning?

I can continue to work on that a little bit. I know we have the overlay, so we do have a wealth of information on it.

HOENLE: And Amanda has put an economic development plan together, and I know she's been meeting with the chamber on a regular basis. So she's got some goals in mind.

The big thing is to try and target -- what do we want? We want to look at businesses for tourists or for the residents? Because we don't have enough residents to maintain a lot of the businesses. So if you're looking for the tourists coming through here, we have a lot of day events. We need something that keeps them at least overnight or longer, so they can at least see the place enough where they might want to live here, or at least spend more money.

So -- so those are a couple of things that we had talked about in the past. What sort of an event is going on, like at McDowell mountain Park, where they come in for a big event and they camp out up there. But then if we knew about it, we might offer something that would be compatible with what they're doing and bring them down into town.

So just lots of other activities that happen around close to the Town that we don't take advantage of to try and draw in tourists, whether it's going to be a permanent standing business or another ice cream store, and this latest one on wheels, so --

YAZZETTA: Moves around.

CHAIR GARMAN: If you look on the next page Bernie, the next one, the signature strategy is outdoor activities and tourism. I think that fits into there as well.

So I'm going to jump in so I get a chance to cover this while you guys are reading through.

Remember I brought up the wash -- I guess what I -- wash corridor, we talked about that and went back and did the -- did the research and -- got the -- the initiative that was

actually passed by Fountain Hills. So read through it and saw what we can do with our washes and what we can't do without a vote, and kind of devised, kind of a side plan for this -- or is it -- yeah, for this one, for outdoor activities and tourism that kind of goes together with safety as well.

What we what did I call it? At now then ask voters. That's the short. So the act now is fire safety. So you can go through the Town, can go through some of the washes and remove some of the fuel that might that might be there as far as wildfire safety. So that's -- that's allowable under the initiative in Fountain Hills. Now, if we wanted to go further than that and look for ways to connect public spaces, connect parks, connect trails using a wash -- another, you know, one or two washes or a wash or something like that, like they've done in other towns really close to us, right down the road in Scottsdale.

Something like that, where that would probably require some type of vote, like the Council would have to ask and put it on a vote that we could -- what do I want to call it? Condition a -- a green space through a wash.

So it's like a two pronged thing. The first, though, is we can maybe start, like I said, eating an elephant. Start with a plan to identify washes that would benefit from reducing some of the -- the -- the fuel, the fire, the bushes, and trees, and stuff that has grown up in his washes in the name of safety and fire safety. So I think that's something that we can do as part of this strategic plan.

The second part is whether we want to have any type of green space in there that people can walk through, or ride a bike through, or something. That then I think would require some type of vote with the with the Town.

YAZZETTA: The Town's already doing wash maintenance as it relates to fire safety.

Right. I know there's the voter initiative that you shared with us last month that prevents the Town from putting in, like, walking trails, things of that nature. Are there any trails that may not fall under that provision that aren't adjacent to, say, residences where maybe like a pilot project? Like here's an example of what this could look like -- would potentially exist or could potentially exist?

GOODWIN: I think that's a good way -- a good question to explore. I can't answer that right now, but it may be a great topic to maybe broach with the Community Services Commission to see.

Because ultimately, this or the ordinance that we're talking about applies to town washes. So is there something that is not a wash or is not town owned that may be more susceptible or more open to that type of a pilot program?

CHAIR GARMAN: Thanks, Geoff. That's great pilot -- pilot program. But -- but to be clear, something like this -- I mean, first I started thinking about it as safety. Fire safety is always something that we should be looking at. So that's -- that's why I came. And I thought, well, if you're going through and removing stuff, maybe it's an opportunity to -- to connect some of our public spaces, which has been our goal in the in even in the previous strategic plan.

So I think there's things we can do now for safety, and then there's things that we could maybe create some type of pilot program to ask voters about in the future. Is anybody, like, violently opposed to that? You know, it is something strategic. Joe?

REYES: I seem to recall -- and we have so many plans. I remember seeing this real nice one, and it dealt with the -- the bicycles and pedestrians, I think it was. And it identified a lot of really nice maps.

I remember about all the trails and it showed -- you got a real sense for where there were opportunities for interconnection and so on.

And in fact, a lot of photos, as I recall. And -- and projects that they put in place to enhance safety. Not to mention that it wasn't so much fire safety, more traffic conflict. But I think that needs to be updated. Or maybe you have some -- look at that again, because I'm going to go back and look at that, because I'm telling you, I think that in conjunction with where you want to go might be a good pick up point from here to go further.

I'll make a note because there was something that -- I don't remember what it was, but when I went through that, I said, hey, this is kind of close to what -- what you were talking about in our last meeting. All right. That's another good one. I'll put that one.

Do you remember what it's called?

CHAIR GARMAN: The --

GOODWIN: I think it's the active transportation plan.

HOENLE: Active? Yeah. Active. That was it.

REYES: Yeah, it was done by contract. Yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: If you look at page 13 on fire safety and trail development, we kind of --

HOENLE: Thanks.

CHAIR GARMAN: -- revisit the issue there. It ties together. One of them was developed and adopted town wide trail master plan. We might already have that in phase capital improvement schedule. So --

I mean, the goal has always been slowly to try to connect these public areas, you know, so they get from one -- from one park to another 4 Peaks to -- to -- to -- to the Fountain Park. And you know what I mean?

Adero all the way down to the fountain. You know, at some point it's easier said than done, I know, but it could be a long term goal.

What about the -- all the -- did you see where I put in upgrade three priority trailheads over the length of the plan? Our trailheads are pretty good shape. I don't know, I wanted to put something that was measurable, doable.

GOODWIN: I would encourage maybe talking to Kevin Snipes to see if that, you know, what types of improvements. For instance, would they have -- each of them has water, and signage, and shade right now. So is there a need for that, or is there something else that would be beneficial to those trailheads since they are very active --

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: -- during hiking season?

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

And then, Bernie, I don't know if you saw on page nine where we're at now the -- the AI one? I think that ties together a little bit what you were talking about as far as events that might be surrounding Fountain Hills. To try to tie that together with -- I put hotel

occupancy, social media, things like that, to kind of look at not just what's going in in Fountain Hills, but looking around Fountain Hills as well. To see if we could synchronize, you know, event programming.

HOENLE: Okay. That was going to get back to my general comment as we come up to the end of time here, is that we've got AI sprinkled out on all of these places. I think what we need is a -- create a development group, or commission, or something. How to approach AI in total for all these different things?

Because what's it going to ride on? You got different contracts. You got training for people. It's -- it's a whole environment. And just to say AI can do this doesn't answer a whole bunch. It just creates more questions. How are you going to do it? What are you going to use to do it? It doesn't come free. So --

YAZZETTA: That's why I was asking earlier if MAG or some state level organization has guidance for local cities and towns for how best to implement these things, maybe it's a local working group, or there's kind of like a boilerplate that people build off of, but something to explore with you guys.

GOODWIN: Yeah. We're happy -- we're happy to.

CHAIR GARMAN: So we're still on outdoor activities and tourism. I don't know if anybody had any further comments on that one? Nope. Okay.

We got a few minutes left. One that we've talked about that we put in as a signature strategy was the Shay Road corridor. A lot of activity going on in that now with expanding the -- the -- the road there. Sprouts coming in.

So there's always a lot of things going on in that corridor. I don't know if you guys had any thoughts, any tasks that you wanted to put in that -- you can see what I put in there. Just some general -- general tasks to stimulate your guys' thoughts. Anything else you guys were thinking as far as this corridor?

YAZZETTA: As far as the signage goes, I mean, I know we're still installing some of those directional signs throughout the Town. I know that's -- you know, does take a while to get all those put in the ground, but I think all of them on Shay have been installed. Right? Okay.

BONNETT: I'm curious, as part of the market analysis, is there a marketing plan for this corridor and outside of Fountain Hills? So reaching out to Scottsdale residents or Mesa that might drive to use the Target, if they're in North Mesa or on the border of Fountain Hills, is there any sort of marketing plan that exists outside of Fountain Hills?

GOODWIN: I don't think that it's tied specific to this -- the Shea corridor, I mean, there's plenty of marketing outside of Fountain Hills.

BONNETT: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: But I think as this has been under redevelopment there's a lot of -- there's -- there's clearly quite a lot of vacancy still. The Sprouts are still underway. So I would like to think that as, as that becomes more active and more of a retail commercial outlet, --

BONNETT: Uh-huh.

GOODWIN: -- that that may be a better that that may be time to tackle something like that.

BONNETT: Okay. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR GARMAN: Do we have a specific Shea plan? Like we have a downtown overlay? I thought there was a Shea --

HOENLE: Not other than talking to the developer.

GOODWIN: Yeah, there's not a master plan. That's -- that is laid out for Shea or south of Shea there.

HOENLE: Again, got to give the people a reason to stop. We're at the end of the road. We're at the T-intersection and going right or left, going down to Gilbert, or going up to Payson, or the casino.

The other thing is, as far as giving them a reason to stop, a supercharger would really be good in that area, because that's the only stop this side of Scottsdale Boulevard. And people, if they're going up 87, they don't have a place to plug in.

So anyways, that's -- I don't want to get off topic here too much, but yeah, the whole shopping center area and commercializing, if you look at that McDonald's, they're always busy, and so are the gas stations there. They're pretty busy.

So people stop, but they're stopping quickly and moving on. So the whole idea is to try

and get them to stay longer wherever they're at. Loiter time, spending time, those two things go together.

CHAIR GARMAN: Do you have an idea of something we could look at to keep them here>

HOENLE: Yeah. Put in a go cart track, put in some miniature golf, put it -- you know. Yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: Write that down.

HOENLE: House of pies at night. You can't go out and get a coffee and pie after 8 o'clock. I mean, jeez.

YAZZETTA: Preach.

CHAIR GARMAN: This is the -- this is my -- I don't know when you say supercharging station, does that necessarily mean a Tesla charging station or is it a generic charging station? Because, I've seen those.

HOENLE: No, they've really broken out to lots of different companies will do them. And it they usually set up an amenities build up around them.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

HOENLE: Because it's a reason for people to stop.

YAZZETTA: The Tesla Supercharger network is the most established because they've been at it for the longest. But there's the local like ChargePoint, which is right out here where my car is currently plugged in. That's a slower charger, but that's usually around businesses.

But the supercharger networks, they tend to be in commercial areas where people will stop, plug the car in. Maybe they grab a bite or do a little bit of shopping while they're proceeding to their destination.

But yeah, the nearest charger is 101 in Shea in Scottsdale, and then I can't remember where it is down in -- it might even down in Chandler. I don't know if there's one in Mesa. And then your next stop is Payson. So having one here, possibly at the Sprouts, you know, parking lot would be a great improvement.

GOODWIN: If you've ever stopped at Gila Bend on your way to or from San Diego, that

will tell you what a supercharger can -- station can do for a community. It is -- I was shocked. I mean, Gila Bend is a blink of a community.

YAZZETTA: Yeah.

GOODWIN: 10 o'clock at night on a Monday night, there were cars everywhere because they were charging and looking for coffee and pie, I guess.

YAZZETTA: For go karts.

CHAIR GARMAN: Okay. That's a good one.

Yeah, I was up in Prescott. I was shopping, and you go out and there's a there was one in Prescott as well. Yeah.

We have two minutes. We have two minutes to go through one more. Then we'll just leave the number four later. But diversification of business recruitment. I thought this was a good one.

If you read through those a little bit -- did you see the second one I put on there? I'm sure the Mayor and the Council would love that one. Or. I'm sorry. Rachael. The business retention program go out and visit. I don't know if you already do these type of visits, but identify the businesses that are important to Fountain Hills and -- and visit them or communicate with them.

GOODWIN: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

CHAIR GARMAN: What did you think about the -- the AI one I have on there as far as the -- that AI can go out and look at national businesses, for companies that, you know, we put in what we think we're looking for as far as Fountain Hills go, what we think we want to attract to our town. And then, you know, AI can go out and look for those and bring those back.

I know there's -- you know, you hear about companies that are moving from one state to another versus, you know, this law was passed, so I'm going to move there or this law was passed. So I'm going to move away from there. And you know, trying to identify opportunities to say, hey, have you thought about Fountain Hills when you're, when you're moving?

That type of thing is what I was trying to get to in that specific AI, task.

HOENLE: Well, that can be good for a search, but then it's got to be followed up with what's going to make them move here. You got incentives, you got tax breaks, you got zoning changes, you got procedures that might have speed bumps in them setting up, doing something quickly. You have housing for their employees.

I mean, there's a whole environment that comes with that. So yeah, you can probably identify some businesses, but then you got to look at how they're going to be supported. So people and funds.

CHAIR GARMAN: Any ideas on diversification? The businesses. I was very close, and I still might revisit this, which I'm sure you all say no to, at least -- open parcels and a goal to have some type of manufacturing, because people, you know, our jobs -- they come in. The people -- I mean, a small -- I know the only manufacturing parcels behind over on Shay, behind target or wherever that is.

But you know, making something is always a good footprint. I went back and forth on whether to put that in or not. I know we don't have a lot of manufacturing space, but what do you all think about different types of business and Fountain Hills? It all can't be restaurants.

Or do we want different types of restaurants in Fountain Hills, or do we want them to stay in Scottsdale and Mesa and we just come back here to sleep at night?

Deafening silence. So what's -- so what's going to happen is I'll go through this. I'll work with you all. I'll put tasks in. You guys throw darts at them until we get to something that everybody can live with. But I do want to read all of your comments. Did you have something to say, Polly?

BONNETT: As far as diversification, I think yes, definitely. To the point of restaurants, it has to be what people would travel for. So if it's not Mesa or Scottsdale, we have some really great restaurants. But what is going to bring people here?

It might be a Waffle House, maybe. We -- I've seen, as far as the World Cup, everyone loves -- yeah, everyone loves Waffle House.

YAZZETTA: Charger station in the Waffle House. Is that what we're --

BONNETT: I think that's what we're going to do, is petition for that.

No, but honestly, it would be -- you know, the part of the challenge is, yes, we want a diversification of businesses, but people leave during the summer too. So how do we get those tourists that are coming in and we want to reach residents. We want to draw people from Mesa, from Scottsdale. It's the unique businesses, those that are going to cause people to travel.

GOODWIN: I've said that over the last year. (Indiscernible) .

CHAIR GARMAN: That's -- yeah. Riding by the Marshalls there, and Shea, and the 101, they had the big indoor pickleball. They're opening up. So Prescott had indoor pickleball. Anyways, it's all over.

Okay. So please, hopefully you guys are ready down comments. I think I don't need to like, have -- have a gavel like and ask for everybody's permission to close off the worksheet workshop. But we made it through I think page -- page 11, right?

We can pick up and cover strategic, you know, priority four and five when we get back in August. But I did want to focus you guys and you guys help focus me. I mean, I know I'm partial -- part -- part secretary.

As far as -- you know, I want the plan to represent us. So you can't just say, hey, we should think about this or think about that. You need to say our goal should be this, or we need to do this. We're at the place now where it's a tangible, measurable task that we want to institute.

So we're going to have a plan and I'm going to put together a plan. So I want your guys' tangible input, even if it's just I throw stuff up on the wall as far as tasks go and see what sticks. So think about that. I mean, you have this over July. This was just rough. I can come back in August, tailoring it to what we talked about today and we can and go at it again.

But at some point over the next few months, we need to have a draft that we can take to the Mayor and the Council and start socializing.

HOENLE: I'd like to ask one question to Rachael, and if you could get us some feedback on where you think we should go on measurement, because that's been on and off over the years as far as can something be done with percentages, discrete numbers, things

like that, to goal setting and objectives?

GOODWIN: When you say measurement, just to clarify, do you mean in terms of progress made on the goals so that we can say this is 70 percent done, 20 percent done, whatever that is? Yeah, we can certainly look into that.

One question I had, and whether it's for Patrick or the rest of the group, is at what point are you planning to bring this through for staff review?

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah, I know we talked about this the last couple times. When you say staff, you mean the Town staff now, right?

GOODWIN: Correct.

CHAIR GARMAN: So we need to talk about that because we didn't really do that last time. Grady was the -- kind of the reviewer, so I'm happy to do that. I'm not saying no, I'm saying -- what the time frame was is elections. And we come back in August, and then we can devise a plan with who's the Mayor, who's going to be in the Council and start moving forward with that.

So I definitely would love to identify a time.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: Remember, the goal is to try to get this -- it's going to be council's plan to get Council to vote yes on this sometime in '27, right? So I'd definitely like to get through all the vetting this fall. That's about I'll ask for your help.

GOODWIN: Okay. Because and I may be mistaken, but I was pretty sure this plan actually did come back to staff at the last time, because it was part of a staff meeting where there was pretty substantial questions, and answers, and you know, concerns, and changes made.

So I think that that needs to be factored into our timeline at some point to allow for that, because a lot of them came before this body to share their concerns and insights. And I think that there -- they have an expectation that some of those are reflected here. And I think that that -- frankly, I think that if the staff are the ones that are being asked to carry out the plan, they should have their fingerprints on it.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah. Last time -- and -- okay. Yeah. It was so long ago. I'm just

trying to remember. I remember we had a series of meetings with some of the Town staff and the Mayor at the time. She was very --

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: -- active in this and giving us guidance through it. So I definitely remember going up to the Town hall a number of times with staff meeting some one on one, some in a group. You're right, it's coming back to me. But it wasn't like one big group. It was more in small groups, section by section.

GOODWIN: That's probably more effective.

CHAIR GARMAN: Yeah.

GOODWIN: Uh-huh.

CHAIR GARMAN: I'm at your disposal. I mean, however you think is best to get through it. I'd just like to do it this fall.

GOODWIN: Okay. We can -- we can -- we can plan for that.

CHAIR GARMAN: All right. Thanks for staying for an hour and a half marathon. We're adjourned. The workshop's adjourned. Thank you very much. I'll see you all in August. What's the date in August? It's right before --

PADGETT-ESPIRITU: The 26th.

CHAIR GARMAN: 26th of August. Right before Labor Day.

YAZZETTA: Patrick, do you want to take this?

CHAIR GARMAN: Yes.

YAZZETTA: Yeah.

HAVING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, CHAIRMAN PATRICK GARMAN ADJOURNED THE WORK SESSION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION HELD ON JUNE 24, 2026, AT 5:36 PM.

APPROVED:

PATRICK GARMAN, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

ANGELA PADGETT-ESPIRITU, DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

CERTIFICATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING MINUTES ARE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION, FOUNTAIN HILLS, ARIZONA HELD ON JUNE 24, 2026. I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT THE MEETING WAS DULY CALLED AND HELD AND THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT.

ANGELA PADGETT-ESPIRITU, DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
JUNE 24, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Patrick Garman called to order the work session of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 4:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Polly Bonnett; Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Members Absent: Commissioner Randy Crader; Commissioner Paul Smith

Staff Present: Town Manager Rachael Goodwin; Deputy Town Clerk Angela Padgett-Espiritu

Chairman Garman explained that the meeting was a work session for discussion only; no votes or formal decisions would be taken. Review of the prior meeting minutes was deferred to the August meeting.

3. WORK SESSION AGENDA

- a. **DISCUSSION:** Future Strategic Plan Signature Priorities and Signature Strategies for the Town's Strategic Plan.
- b. **DISCUSSION:** Regarding draft Supporting Tasks, implementation responsibilities, and proposed timelines associated with the Strategic Plan.
- c. **DISCUSSION:** Regarding the process and schedule for stakeholder socialization, refinement, and Town Council consideration of the Strategic Plan.

Overview

The Commission reviewed the strategic-plan framework developed over the previous two years. The framework consists of five strategic pillars, related signature strategies, and proposed supporting tasks with responsibilities and timelines. The purpose of the work session was to turn prior Commission discussions and community feedback into tangible, measurable objectives that could be refined into a recognizable draft for August review and eventual Town Council consideration.

Strategic plan structure and measurements

Commissioners emphasized that the plan should establish long-term outcomes while allowing Town staff and future elected bodies flexibility in how those outcomes are achieved. Proposed measures should be based on reliable starting data, realistic funding assumptions, and meaningful milestones rather than arbitrary numbers. Staff was asked to provide input on methods for reporting progress, including percentages or other discrete measures.

Roads and infrastructure

The Commission discussed using the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) as a possible benchmark for street conditions. Members considered how often PCI evaluations should occur, whether separate road classifications should be measured, and how predictive modeling could supplement periodic field reviews. The group noted that residential-road backlogs can continue to grow even when major arterials and collectors receive improvements.

A target PCI or other road-condition goal would need to be achievable and supported by a long-term funding strategy. Town staff advised that a Council work session concerning roads, bonding, and funding was expected in early August and could inform this portion of the plan. Commissioners generally favored stating the desired condition of the road network while leaving the financing method and project prioritization to the Council and staff.

Irrigation and water conservation

The Commission reviewed opportunities to improve irrigation efficiency through soil-moisture data, weather forecasting, sensors, and related technology. Staff explained that most Town irrigation uses reclaimed water, while Four Peaks Park and the Avenue of the Fountains use potable water. Converting those locations would require substantial infrastructure and could affect water-based community programming. The group supported continued evaluation of practical conservation measures without creating an unrealistic capital commitment.

Public-private partnerships

Commissioners supported partnerships as a potential means of delivering public amenities, but questioned goals based solely on completing a fixed number of agreements or generating a predetermined sponsorship amount. The discussion favored first identifying a specific public need or desired benefit and then evaluating the most appropriate partnership, lease, intergovernmental agreement, nonprofit relationship, or financing model. Any supporting task should align with Council priorities and staff capacity.

Artificial intelligence and financial planning

Artificial intelligence was discussed as a tool that could support road forecasting, financial modeling, grant searches, resident information, economic-development research, tourism analysis, and other Town functions. The Commission reviewed the Town's Misty chatbot and noted that its usage data may help identify common resident questions and service needs.

Members recommended exploring guidance from the Maricopa Association of Governments, statewide municipal groups, or other public-sector resources. Rather than treating each proposed AI use independently, the Town may benefit from a coordinated approach addressing governance, contracts, training, costs, security, and implementation priorities.

Grant administration and alternate funding

The Commission revisited whether the Town should establish a dedicated grant position. Staff explained that departments generally possess the technical expertise needed to identify and prepare grant applications, while the greater workload often occurs after an award through compliance, reporting, documentation, and implementation. AI tools could assist with opportunity searches, while temporary

staff or consultants could be considered when the size and complexity of an award justify additional administrative support.

Potential cooperation with foundations, nonprofit organizations, donors, and community groups was also discussed. Any such strategy would need to avoid favoring a particular organization and should be tied to a clearly defined Town purpose.

Budget planning and asset reserves

The Commission discussed performance-based budgeting, rolling forecasts, reserve policies, and long-term funding for Town assets. Staff noted that facility-maintenance reserves have not always been funded at the level recommended by an earlier Town-wide evaluation. Although funding has been set aside for the future lake-liner project, other facilities and maintenance needs must also be addressed. Commissioners supported adding a measurable objective that promotes consistent reserve funding and responsible stewardship of existing assets.

Downtown and economic development

The Commission reviewed the downtown overlay, targeted business types, commercial-market data, and the goal of attracting new businesses. Members noted that a gross target for new businesses should also account for closures and retention. Staff currently uses available market resources, including commercial-property data, but some locally vacant spaces may not be actively listed and therefore may not appear in the data.

The discussion emphasized attracting distinctive businesses, activities, and amenities that serve residents while also drawing visitors from nearby communities. Business recruitment should consider the full operating environment, including available sites, incentives, zoning, permitting, workforce housing, and the resources needed to support prospective employers.

Outdoor activities, fire safety, trails, and tourism

Commissioners considered a two-part approach to washes and trail connections. Existing wash maintenance and vegetation management may advance wildfire safety, while new recreational access or pathways in Town washes may require additional legal review, public input, Council direction, and potentially voter approval. A limited pilot outside the affected wash areas was suggested for further exploration.

The group also recommended reviewing the existing Active Transportation Plan before creating duplicative trail tasks and consulting appropriate staff regarding any needed trailhead improvements. Tourism strategies could use regional event, hotel, and social-media information to coordinate local programming and encourage visitors attending nearby events to spend more time in Fountain Hills.

Shea corridor and electric-vehicle infrastructure

The Commission discussed redevelopment along the Shea Boulevard corridor, including the new Sprouts development, directional signage, vacancies, and future marketing to residents of neighboring communities. Staff indicated that the Town does not currently have a corridor-specific master plan comparable to the downtown overlay.

Fast electric-vehicle charging was identified as a possible transportation and economic-development opportunity. A charging location near restaurants, retail, or entertainment could encourage travelers to

stop and remain in Town longer. The discussion favored considering charging infrastructure alongside other unique businesses and amenities that could increase visitor activity and spending.

General Direction

The discussion generally supported a strategic plan that:

- Establishes measurable, achievable outcomes based on reliable baseline data.
- Distinguishes strategic goals from detailed operational instructions.
- Recognizes funding, staffing, and legal constraints when setting targets.
- Builds upon existing Town, departmental, transportation, and economic-development plans.
- Provides flexibility for implementation across future Councils and changing conditions.
- Uses artificial intelligence through a coordinated, responsible Town-wide framework.
- Includes meaningful staff input because staff will implement and report on the plan.
- Reflects prior community outreach and allows further stakeholder refinement.

Next Steps

Chairman Garman will revise the draft supporting tasks using the work-session discussion and written comments submitted by Commissioners. The Commission will resume its review on August 26, 2026, including strategic priorities four and five. The anticipated schedule includes additional Commission and Town staff review during fall 2026, followed by stakeholder socialization and refinement. The goal remains to present a completed strategic plan to the Town Council for consideration in 2027.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Patrick Garman adjourned the work session of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 5:36 p.m.



TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/26/2026
Meeting Type: Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
Submitting Department: Administration
Prepared by:
Staff Contact Information: Phone:
Email:

Request to Town Council Regular Meeting (Agenda Language)

UPDATE: from the Commission Work Groups.

Staff Summary (background)

Related Ordinance, Policy or Guiding Principle

Risk Analysis

Recommendation(s) by Board(s) or Commission(s)

Staff Recommendation(s)

Suggested Motion

ATTACHMENTS

None



TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/26/2026
Meeting Type: Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
Submitting Department: Administration
Prepared by: Hannah Martin, Executive Assistant
Staff Contact Information: Phone: 480-816-5107
Email: hmartin@fountainhillsaz.gov

Request to Town Council Regular Meeting (Agenda Language)

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION: Organize Commission Teams to interface with Town Staff to review and validate tasks for inclusion in the Strategic Plan.

Staff Summary (background)

NA

Related Ordinance, Policy or Guiding Principle

na

Risk Analysis

na

Recommendation(s) by Board(s) or Commission(s)

na

Staff Recommendation(s)

na

Suggested Motion

na

ATTACHMENTS

None



TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 8/26/2026
Meeting Type: Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
Submitting Department: Administration
Prepared by:
Staff Contact Information: Phone:
Email:

Request to Town Council Regular Meeting (Agenda Language)

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Consideration of Future Agenda Items
Pertaining to the Strategic Plan.

Staff Summary (background)

Related Ordinance, Policy or Guiding Principle

Risk Analysis

Recommendation(s) by Board(s) or Commission(s)

Staff Recommendation(s)

Suggested Motion

ATTACHMENTS

None