



2023-2026

STRATEGIC PLAN



Arizona Association for
Economic Development

EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. COLLABORATE.

Arizona's Unified Economic Development Voice



VISION

AAED is the premier organization and most trusted resource for economic development stakeholders committed to promoting a vibrant Arizona economy.

MISSION

The mission of AAED is to serve as Arizona's unified voice for responsible economic development through professional education, public policy, and collaboration.

VALUES

1. Innovation in the field of economic development;
2. A diverse and engaged membership;
3. A collaborative ecosystem between the public sector and the private sector;
4. Cooperation, partnership, equity, and diversity;
5. Ethical conduct in economic development practice;
6. Continued professional development in the profession; and
7. Enjoyment of each other and celebration of member's successes

PRIORITY AREA PILLARS



Educate



Advocate



Collaborate

ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATIONS



Member Services



Financial Management



Marketing & PR

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MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



Educate



Advocate



Collaborate

GOVERNANCE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In order to better serve the membership and strengthen the organization, the Arizona Association for Economic Development (AAED) Board of Directors hired Patrick Ibarra of The Mejorando Group to conduct an organizational review with an emphasis on Leadership, Strategy, Structure, and Services.

In AAED's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, the Board Of Directors chose a path to become more proactive regarding the organization's strategic focus, to fortify its value-add proposition and to increase its visibility. In 2023, The Board of Directors, guided by AAED Past President Evelyn Casuga, convened a strategic planning process to create a cohesive set of strategic goals to provide a solid foundation for the future.

AAED's three-year strategic plan is the second long-term strategic plan for the organization and includes maintaining resources to position AAED as a trusted educational hub, an

organization which strongly advocates for economic development, and which brings together economic development stakeholders. Through these established goals, AAED has made a strategic shift which emphasizes establishing partnerships and forming relationships with organizations that can provide a mutual benefit to the membership at large.

The beginning of the 2024 fiscal year brought change to AAED, as a new Executive Director was hired to implement the new Strategic Plan. The new Executive Director, Katie Hurst, along with the staff at AAED,



under the direction of the Board of Directors will continue to develop AAED into one of the most professional and diverse Associations in Arizona.

The original pillars of the organization, Educate, Advocate, and Collaborate remain the same, but how AAED accomplishes the goals of the organization have continued to evolve. Arizona is one of the fastest-growing states in the country, and economic development plays a key role in the past, present, and future of our state. The AAED Strategic Plan is a guide for advancing the profession of economic development and industries tied to economic development, proactively advocating for positive professional economic development policies, and creating opportunities for networking and advancement. It is a catalyst for AAED to be the premier organization and the most trusted resource for economic development stakeholders committed to promoting a vibrant Arizona economy.



EDUCATE



GOAL #1:

AAED is the most trusted educational resource guiding economic development practice in Arizona.

>>> STRATEGY 1.1

Provide in-person and online professional development training opportunities to enhance the knowledge and skills of economic development professionals

>>> STRATEGY 1.2

Educate state and local leaders and the public about economic development

>>> STRATEGY 1.3

Continue partnership with IEDC and provide IEDC-accredited courses for economic development

GOAL #2:

AAED is a strong advocate for economic development careers in Arizona.

>>> STRATEGY 2.1

Support the growth of the next generation of economic development leaders

>>> STRATEGY 2.2

Engage and retain current economic development professionals



ADVOCATE



GOAL #3:

AAED is the leading voice for public policy dialogue on economic development policies and programs at a local, state, regional, and federal level.

>>> STRATEGY 3.1

Develop AAED position statements on critical economic development topics and advocate for those positions

>>> STRATEGY 3.2

Build coalitions of advocacy partners and utilize our network for advocacy work

>>> STRATEGY 3.3

Engage AAED members in advocacy efforts

>>> STRATEGY 3.4

Encourage responsible economic development policy from elected leadership

>>> STRATEGY 3.5

Build AAED's presence and impact throughout Arizona



COLLABORATE



GOAL #4

AAED is Arizona's leading clearinghouse and think tank for information and resources for economic development stakeholders

>>> STRATEGY 4.1

Harness the knowledge and expertise of our members

GOAL #5

AAED brings together economic development stakeholders to strengthen economic development efforts in Arizona

>>> STRATEGY 5.1

Provide a forum for collaboration between members and access to practitioners

>>> STRATEGY 5.2

Create opportunities to celebrate members' successes



MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

GOAL #6:

AAED will attract new members, engage current members, and amplify members' knowledge and expertise.

>>> **STRATEGY 6.1**

"Attract" AAED will gain at least seven new members per month (or 84 annually)

>>> **STRATEGY 6.2**

"Engage" Ensure meaningful networking through events and member engagement and retain at least 80% of existing members in a fiscal year

>>> **STRATEGY 6.3**

"Amplify" Utilize social media platforms for member promotion and as a value add for members

GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



GOAL #7:

AAED has a sustainable financial plan to support its mission

>>> STRATEGY 7.1

Maximize funding strategies that will enhance AAED's operations and effectiveness

>>> STRATEGY 7.2

Enhance the value of sponsorships to encourage investment

GOAL #8:

AAED Leadership understands and utilizes nonprofit best practices

>>> STRATEGY 8.1

Emphasize board and leadership training and communication throughout the year



ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATION AREAS

TRANSFORMATIONAL INITIATIVES



PLAN TO ACTION

The AAED Strategic Plan provides a framework for the work of AAED over the next three year. It is intended to be flexible to adapt to the changing needs of the membership and state. The plan is ambitious, but achievable. Along with the plan, AAED is creating an action document with tactics, outcomes, and key measurables to track progress within the plan. Both the plan and action document are intended to be reviewed every year.