



ARIZONA ASSOCIATION FOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2020-2023

STRATEGIC

PLAN





# 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 October of 2019, Patrick presented his findings, including that AAED was at an intersection – “become more assertive regarding its strategic focus, fortify its value proposition and increase its visibility as an organization with a renewed role by the Executive Director or maintain its concentration on operations via events and programming.” The Board of Directors chose the former path, convening a strategic planning process to create a cohesive set of strategic goals to provide a solid foundation for the future.

The beginning of 2020 saw many changes for AAED. Long-time Executive Director Joyce Grossman left the organization, the Coronavirus pandemic swept across the world, and Carrie Kelly was hired as Executive Director. With the assistance of Patrick Ibarra, the Executive Committee with Carrie Kelly developed a framework for a new Strategic Plan using survey data, the Organizational Review, and input from interviews with AAED Members. The Board of Directors and Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs met virtually and in-person in Tombstone, Arizona, to affirm the plans’ goals and strategies and to develop tactics to accomplish the goals. Committee members subsequently provided input to the plan as well. The plan was then affirmed by the Board of Director of AAED.

AAED’s three-year strategic plan is the first long-term strategic plan for the organization and includes the creation of a new vision statement, refinement of our mission statement, and development of values statements for AAED. The original pillars of the organization, Educate, Advocate, and Collaborate remain the same, but how AAED accomplishes the goals of the organization have changed with time. 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 economic development policies, and creating opportunities for networking and advancement. It is a catalyst for AAED to be the premier organization and most trusted resource for economic development stakeholders committed to promoting a vibrant Arizona economy.

# Arizona Association for Economic Development



## 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 collaborate 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.

## Priority Area Pillars:



Educate



Advocate



Collaborate

## Organizational Foundations:



Member Services



Financial Management



Marketing/PR



# PILLAR SUPPORT STRUCTURE

## AAED Committees and Affinity Groups

### Priority Area Pillars



#### **EDUCATE** COMMITTEES

- Professional Education, Fall Forum, Spring Conference

#### **AFFINITY GROUP**

- Workforce Development, Young Professionals



#### **ADVOCATE** COMMITTEE

- Government Affairs



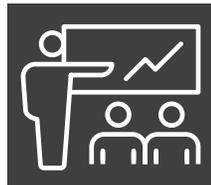
#### **COLLABORATE** COMMITTEES

- Awards Banquet, Awards, Events

#### **AFFINITY GROUPS**

- Northern Economic Development, Rural Economic Development, Southern Economic Development, Tribal Economic Development

### Organizational Foundations



#### **MARKETING/PR** COMMITTEE

- PR/Communications



#### **MEMBER SERVICES** COMMITTEE

- Membership



#### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT** COMMITTEE

- Finance



# AAED STRATEGIC PLAN

## PRIORITY AREA PILLARS

### 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

Engage young professionals in AAED activities

#### STRATEGY 2.2

Support the growth of the next generation of economic development leaders



# AAED STRATEGIC PLAN

## PRIORITY AREA PILLARS

### 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 important 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**

Align our technology with our advocacy role

#### **STRATEGY 3.4**

Encourage responsible economic development policy from elected leadership



# AAED STRATEGIC PLAN

## PRIORITY AREA PILLARS

### 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

**STRATEGY 4.2**

Engage state and local leaders and provide best practices and resources to aid in decision making

► **Goal #5: AAED brings together economic development stakeholders to strengthen economic development efforts in Arizona**

**STRATEGY 5.1**

Provide forum for collaboration between members

**STRATEGY 5.2**

Collaborate with organizations with a similar mission to identify best practices and emerging best practices in ED in the country



# AAED STRATEGIC PLAN

## ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATION AREAS

### Marketing and Public Relations

#### Goal #6

AAED has a strong presence and impact throughout Arizona

#### STRATEGY 6.1

Prioritize marketing and public relations for AAED

#### STRATEGY 6.2

Raise profile of AAED throughout the state

#### STRATEGY 6.3

Serve as a resource for AAED member marketing professionals

#### STRATEGY 6.4

Reimagine the member experience through marketing and PR

### Member Services

#### Goal #7

AAED has a wide and diversify membership base to better support economic development efforts in Arizona

#### STRATEGY 7.1

Target specific industry clusters that will strengthen our organization, provide additional value, and increase awareness of AAED

#### STRATEGY 7.2

Increase our value proposition for all members and strategic partners

#### STRATEGY 7.3

Ensure meaningful networking through events and member engagement

#### STRATEGY 7.4

Expand member outreach and inclusion

### Financial Management

#### Goal #8

AAED has a sustainable financial plan to support its mission

#### STRATEGY 8.1

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

#### STRATEGY 8.2

Implement nonprofit financial management best practices

#### STRATEGY 8.3

Enhance the value of sponsorships to encourage investment



# AAED STRATEGIC PLAN

## Transformational Initiatives

The AAED Strategic Plan is accompanied by a set of transformative initiatives that are intended to create positive, lasting change for AAED and the State of Arizona. These initiatives should well position AAED to move into its 50th year in 2024. This is a working list of initiatives and will likely change over time to adapt to changing conditions and opportunities.

1. Young Professionals Economic Development Mentoring Program
2. Refresh of the Arizona Academy – AZED Pro Certification
3. Defining what advocacy looks like for AAED
4. Creation of a CEcD Mentoring Program
5. Establishment of a scholarship fund for economic development mentorships/internships
6. Economic Development 101 for Elected Officials
7. Development of an AAED Policy Guide
8. Collaboration through online AAED forums

### 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.