



## Economic Development Strategy

November 2024



## Table of Contents

1. The Big Picture
2. Our Engagement: What We Did
3. Discovery Insights
4. Strategic Plan

# 1. The Big Picture

## A New Paradigm for Economic Development

We envision Prescott to be an **innovative, resilient community** where everyone benefits from the clustering of services and amenities.



## Starting From A Place of Strength

As the City of Prescott begins to implement its new strategic plan, we are starting from a position of strength.

1.

Unrivalled quality of place  
assets – a growing destination

2.

Strong position within the  
regional and state economy

3.

Trusted City leadership (new  
City Manager) and department  
staffing

4.

A clear understanding of  
Prescott's strengths and  
advantages by City Council  
and stakeholders

5.

Strategic investments in  
infrastructure and amenities to  
further economic development:  
Airport expansion, greenspace  
initiatives, and land acquisitions

6.

A committed community of  
business and education  
partners, ready to drive growth  
and support development

## 2. Our Engagement

## What Have We Accomplished So

### Far

We assessed Prescott's assets and challenges and convened a diverse group of stakeholders to support the City's strategic planning process.

Conducted a comprehensive **competitive assessment**, benchmarking Prescott against 8 peers, as well as AZ and the U.S.

Established a **steering committee** of diverse community and business representatives to guide planning and strategy development.

Facilitated in-depth **one-on-one interviews with City Council members and Mayor**, followed by joint working session.

Hosted a series of focused **roundtable discussions** key stakeholders from various sectors within the city.

Conducted **one-on-one interviews** with key business and educational leaders in the city.

Engaged **Prescott city staff** to understand economic development **needs and capacity**.

# 3. Discovery Insights



## Prescott At-A-Glance

- Approximately **46,000 residents**
- **9.5%** population growth from 2018 to 2022 - 3 times the US
- **5.5%** forecasted population increase by 2028
- **4 in 10 residents** have a BA and higher
- Prime talent pool (ages 25-44) is **47% smaller** than the U.S. average
- **\$66,330** in median household income - 12% less than U.S.
- **15.7-minute** median commute
- **41%** labor participation rate, significantly below national levels (63.5%)



Photo Credit: Experience Prescott

## Our Opportunity

### Prescott—Where Business and Innovation Leave the Usual Behind for a Bold Tomorrow

Prescott stands at a pivotal moment where embracing economic development today means investing in our workforce to drive the innovations of tomorrow. Workforce development is not just about attracting talent—it's the engine that will break away from the ordinary and fuel our economic transformation. By focusing on strategic growth that nurtures both people and place, Prescott ensures a thriving, resilient economy that remains diverse and dynamic, all while preserving the unique character that makes it special.

By prioritizing workforce development and fostering an environment where bold opportunities thrive, Prescott will unlock the innovative potential needed to build resilient economic sectors. Saying "no" to growth risks not only stagnation but also a gradual erosion of the city's vibrancy, as we age and lose the talent and businesses essential to sustaining vital services.

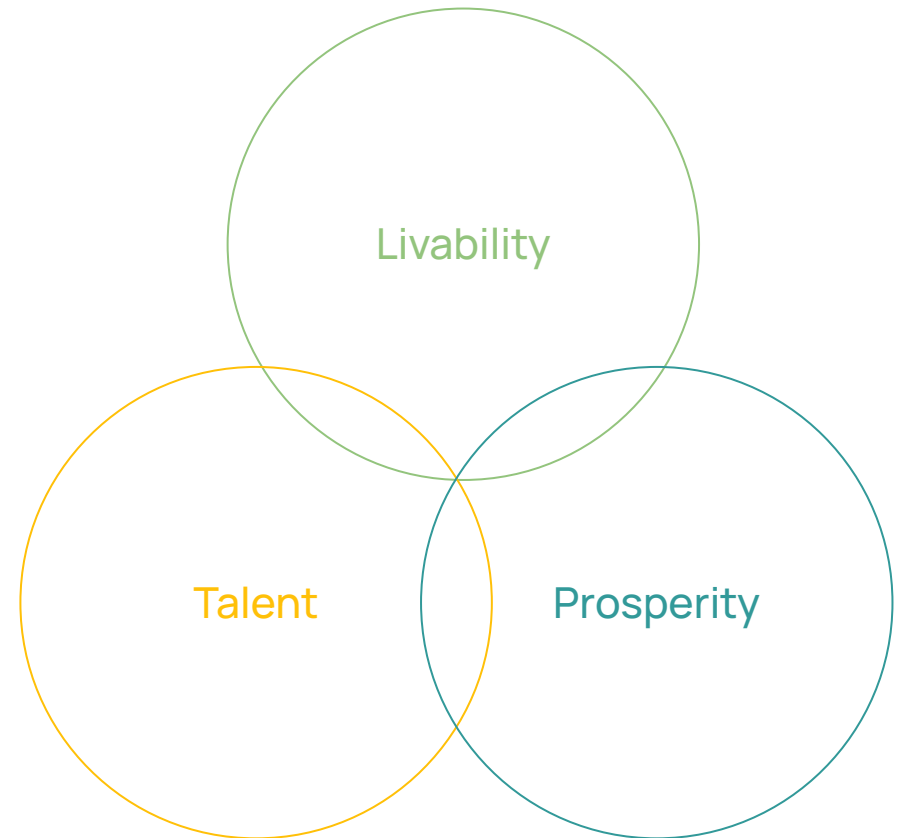
Prescott's strength lies in its ability to dictate its own future—where innovation, economic diversity, and community vitality define our path forward. **Now is the time to act—securing a prosperous, innovative future that embraces Prescott's best while preparing for the opportunities ahead.**

The insights presented in this section aim to illuminate lessons learned and identified through research and stakeholder engagement.

## Peer Communities and Benchmarking Pillars

We selected eight peer communities to better understand Prescott's competitive advantages and opportunities.

City	State	Population
Asheville	North Carolina	93,695
Bend	Oregon	99,442
Casa Grande	Arizona	55,186
Durango	Colorado	19,248
Kingman	Arizona	33,052
Lexington	Kentucky	321,276
Prescott Valley	Arizona	47,015
St. George	Utah	96,174



## Benchmarking Pillars

We then analyzed Prescott and its peers across 50+ indicators, separated into Livability, Talent and Prosperity pillars. This research informs our discovery insights.

### LIVABILITY METRICS

Population Burdened by Mortgage & Rental Costs

Median House Price and Rent Value

Median Commute Time

Home Ownership Rate

Growth in Share of Employment in Arts

Percentage of Population who Bike or Walk to Work

### TALENT METRICS

Median Age

Prime Talent Pool (25-44)

Educational Attainment

In-Migration Residents, by Educational Attainment

Share of Remote Workers

In-Migration Residents, by Age

### PROSPERITY METRICS

5-Year Population Growth

Gross Regional Product (GRP)

Job Growth

Labor Force Participation Rate

Median Household Income

Gini Coefficient of Income Inequality

## 1. Balanced Growth

### Prescott's expansion must protect its charm while embracing opportunity.

Prescott's rich history and natural beauty have long made it a desirable destination for residents and tourists alike. As the city continues to expand, it's essential to balance growth with the preservation of its historic downtown and outdoor charm. Strategic investments in downtown infrastructure and placemaking—such as enhancing Courthouse Square, Whiskey Row, and other key areas—are vital for promoting vibrancy and attracting new businesses. These efforts not only help local businesses thrive but also ensure that Prescott's unique character remains intact.

To foster continued vibrancy, Prescott must support small business development by nurturing a healthy business ecosystem. This includes simplifying city processes, offering shared workspaces, and creating mentorship opportunities—particularly tapping into the expertise of Prescott's retired population to mentor small businesses in areas like strategic planning and finance. By fostering innovation from within, Prescott can capitalize on growth while maintaining its distinctive charm, ensuring it remains an attractive destination for both newcomers and long-term residents.



Photo Credit: Experience Prescott

## 2. Talent Attraction

### Prescott must appeal to younger professionals to support future economic growth.

Prescott is starting from a position of strength. As a growing destination with a unique quality of life and forecasted population increases, the city has a solid foundation to build upon. However, with a median age of 60.5, Prescott's population is older than its peer cities, and much of its growth is concentrated in the 55+ age group. This trend underscores the critical need for Prescott to attract younger professionals to ensure long-term economic sustainability. Currently, only 41.1% of residents participate in the labor force, well below the national average—highlighting the importance of addressing workforce challenges.

Prescott's future success hinges on its ability to attract innovative employers while fostering a thriving environment for younger, skilled workers. This is where Prescott's business attraction efforts must meet workforce development, requiring investments in affordable housing, upskilling programs, and connecting residents to upwardly mobile jobs in high-growth sectors like aerospace, healthcare, and technology.

By leveraging Prescott's strong quality of life—its outdoor recreation, vibrant downtown, and small-town charm—the city can position itself as a desirable home for the next generation of talent, securing a prosperous economic future.

Metric	Rank*	Value
5-Year Population Growth	4th	9.5%
Share of Residents with BA and Higher	5th	40.5%
Prime Talent Pool (Age 25-44) Share of Total Residents LQ	9th	0.53
Median Age	9th	60.5
Labor Participation Rate	9th	41%

\*Rank out of 9 peer cities  
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018-2022



### 3. Workforce Housing

#### Prescott's housing affordability challenges threaten talent recruitment.

Prescott faces a growing workforce housing challenge, with more than 32% of households considered “home-burdened,” meaning they spend over 30% of their income on housing. This lack of affordable housing impacts not only young professionals and middle-income families but also essential service workers like police, firefighters, and those in service-based jobs. Without affordable housing options, the city struggles to attract and retain the talent necessary for long-term economic growth.

The ripple effect is clear: when workers can't afford to live in Prescott, they don't spend in the community, diminishing local business growth and ultimately weakening the city's economic base. Implementing policies such as mixed-use zoning and incentivized workforce housing—successful strategies used in peer cities like St. George—will help make Prescott more affordable. Addressing this challenge is essential for maintaining Prescott's competitive edge, attracting diverse talent, and supporting a resilient, vibrant local economy.

“The shortage of middle-income housing is a major challenge for Prescott's local workforce. Limited affordable housing options make it difficult for essential workers—like police, firefighters, and service staff—to live in the community they serve.”

Source: Stakeholder Roundtables and Interviews

## 4. Healthcare Expansion

### **Building a robust healthcare cluster in Prescott will drive economic growth while improving well-being.**

Prescott is uniquely positioned to develop a thriving healthcare cluster that not only serves local needs but also attracts patients and businesses from across the region. With a 17.5% increase in residents over the age of 60, the demand for healthcare services continues to rise, creating a strong foundation for expansion. By building a robust healthcare ecosystem that includes specialty care clinics, outpatient surgery centers, telehealth platforms, and senior care facilities, Prescott can become a leading healthcare destination. Following the model of Scottsdale's partnership with the Mayo Clinic, Prescott has the potential to attract world-class healthcare providers and medical innovations.

However, expanding the healthcare sector will require addressing talent growth challenges. Prescott can tap into local educational partners, such as Yavapai College, which offers a Bachelor of Nursing program, to create talent pipelines for the healthcare workforce. By collaborating with these institutions and investing in upskilling programs, Prescott can ensure a steady supply of skilled workers, positioning the city to support long-term healthcare growth. Building this cluster offers significant potential for job creation, innovation, and economic development, while improving the well-being of residents and making Prescott a hub for healthcare excellence.

“Prescott’s growing healthcare needs create a significant opportunity to build a healthcare destination that serves both the local community and beyond.”

Source: Stakeholder Roundtables and Interviews



## 5. Aviation, Cybersecurity, and Beyond

### Leveraging Prescott's airport investments and building partnerships with Embry-Riddle will drive innovation and growth in North Prescott.

Prescott's regional airport, bolstered by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, positions the city as a potential leader not only in aviation but also in aerospace, cybersecurity, and unmanned systems. The city's strategic investments in North Prescott, including a \$51 million airport infrastructure upgrade, create a foundation for future growth, making Prescott an ideal location for developing an aviation services cluster. Additionally, the presence of the National Forest Service's Prescott Fire Center adds another key aviation asset that can be leveraged for broader opportunities.

Prescott's potential mirrors the success of Embry-Riddle's Daytona Beach campus, where public-private partnerships and strategic collaborations with companies like Boeing and Lockheed Martin have transformed the region into an aviation innovation hub. By replicating this model, Prescott can attract aerospace and cybersecurity companies, develop drone technology initiatives, and foster R&D partnerships that drive innovation.

To fully capitalize on these opportunities, Prescott could establish aerospace incubators, launch accelerator programs, and host aviation-related conferences, positioning the city as a leader in emerging technologies.



Photo Credit: City of Prescott

## 6. Sustainable Development

**Economic development and sustainable development practices can coexist to drive Prescott's future growth.**

Resource sustainability is one of the most pressing challenges facing Prescott as the city grows. To ensure long-term viability, sustainable development practices must be central to Prescott's strategy. Rather than attracting resource-intensive industries, Prescott can focus on sectors that support Arizona's tech ecosystem, such as advanced manufacturing for semiconductor machinery. While chip production is highly water-intensive, Prescott can leverage its growing expertise at Yavapai College to develop and produce the advanced machinery used in semiconductor manufacturing—allowing the city to contribute to the industry while minimizing water consumption.

Drawing inspiration from places like Fort Collins, which targets carbon-neutral businesses, Prescott can create an attraction strategy that prioritizes water sustainability. By promoting eco-friendly development, conserving water, and attracting businesses that align with sustainable growth, Prescott can expand both residential and commercial sectors while safeguarding its water resources. This approach positions Prescott as a forward-thinking, environmentally conscious city that balances economic growth with responsible water management.



Photo Credit: Experience Prescott

## 7. Workforce Development

### Growing partnerships with Prescott's educational institutions can drive talent retention and growth.

Prescott's higher education institutions—including Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Yavapai College, and Prescott College—are essential to the city's workforce development strategy. With 77.1% of residents having some college education or higher, Prescott outpaces national averages. However, the city continues to struggle with talent retention, as many graduates leave due to limited local career opportunities.

Strengthening partnerships between these educational institutions and local businesses can create talent pipelines to retain students in Prescott. Yavapai College's Bachelor's programs in nursing and business, Embry-Riddle's cutting-edge programs in aerospace and cyberspace, and Prescott College's diverse academic offerings all provide a foundation for developing local career pathways. Involving Prescott High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs will also be crucial in connecting younger students to future job opportunities.

By fostering programs like internships, apprenticeships, and direct career pathways in sectors like aerospace, healthcare, and technology, Prescott can position itself as a place where individuals don't just start a career but grow one. This approach not only keeps talent local but also builds a skilled workforce to drive long-term economic growth—all within the backdrop of Prescott's unique quality of life and natural beauty.

"Ensuring that graduates find opportunities to stay in Prescott is essential for building a sustainable local workforce."

Source: Stakeholder Roundtables and Interviews

## 8. Retail Development

### **Prescott's retail sector must evolve to enhance economic vitality and support city services.**

Prescott's retail sector plays a vital role in its economy, particularly within its historic downtown, and there is an opportunity to further promote and grow this important asset. Enhancing the downtown shopping experience through promotions, improving walkability, and expanding pedestrian-friendly areas will make the retail sector even more attractive to both locals and tourists. Public investments in placemaking initiatives—such as expanding pedestrian zones and enhancing public spaces—will drive foot traffic to local businesses and further strengthen Prescott's unique character.

However, Prescott's retail strategy must also extend beyond downtown. While downtown retail is key to maintaining Prescott's identity, attracting high-volume retail in other areas is essential to supporting the city's growing population and generating the revenue needed for vital city services. Regional collaboration with neighboring communities like Prescott Valley and Chino Valley to develop a regional retail corridor could attract major retail developments that benefit all communities. This approach ensures that Prescott's retail sector complements rather than competes with its neighbors, fostering long-term economic vitality for the entire region.



Photo Credit: Experience Prescott



## 9. Midweek Tourism

### Unlocking midweek travel will boost Prescott's tourism economy and diversify its visitor base.

While Prescott enjoys strong weekend tourism, midweek business remains an untapped market. To grow beyond weekend visitors, Prescott can position itself as a destination for corporate retreats, business conferences, and professional gatherings. Modern-day tourism isn't just about leisure—it's about attracting business travelers who can boost hotel occupancy and restaurant revenue during slower periods. With its scenic beauty, historic downtown, and wealth of outdoor activities, Prescott is an ideal destination for both business and leisure travelers.

The Experience Prescott brand and collaboration will play a key role in promoting Prescott's unique offerings to midweek visitors. By partnering with local hotels, event venues, and conference planners to cross-promote activities, the Experience Prescott initiative can help the city attract more midweek visitors. This strategy will strengthen Prescott's tourism industry and diversify its economic base, making it less dependent on weekend travelers and better positioned for sustainable growth.



Photo Credit: Experience Prescott

## 10. Investments in Economic Development

**Building internal capacity and fostering strong partnerships are vital to securing Prescott's future success.**

For Prescott to achieve sustainable long-term growth, the city must prioritize investing in its economic development and tourism efforts. Strengthening its internal resources, conducting critical research, and enhancing internal infrastructure are essential steps. By doing so, Prescott will be better positioned to proactively attract businesses, retain talent, boost tourism, and secure the necessary funding to fuel future growth. A well-resourced economic development and tourism team will ensure that Prescott can lead its own economic development and tourism initiatives with agility and vision.

While investing in internal resources is crucial, regional collaboration with neighboring communities, and partnerships with the business, education, and non-profit sectors, are also key to Prescott's long-term success. By combining strong local resources with strategic partnerships, the city can leverage its business community's pro-economic development mindset and compete in a rapidly evolving economic landscape.

“Investing in internal capacity for economic development and tourism is essential for our long-term success.”

Source: Stakeholder Roundtables and Interviews

## 4. Strategic Plan

## Elements of the Strategy

**A strategic plan with actionable items garners stakeholder engagement and pursues a vision of the future.**

### 1 Vision

A preferred future

### 2 Goals

Desired outcomes

### 3 Strategies

How we activate and measure impact

### 4 Actions

Steps, resources, partners



BIG PICTURE

---

VISION STATEMENT

## **Prescott: Where Business and Innovation Leave the Usual Behind for a Bold Tomorrow**



Prescott is a vibrant destination where breaking away from the ordinary meets bold opportunities for tomorrow, welcoming thinkers, innovative businesses, and talented residents to shape a dynamic future.

## Prescott: Where Business and Innovation Leave the Usual Behind for a Bold Tomorrow

### GOAL 1

#### **Talent for Tomorrow:**

We will develop a skilled workforce that embraces opportunities for tomorrow.

### GOAL 2

#### **Investments for Tomorrow:**

We will build an innovative economy that attracts bold investments for the future.

### GOAL 3

#### **Entrepreneurship for Tomorrow:**

We will empower local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow and scale for tomorrow's opportunities.

### GOAL 4

#### **Placemaking for Tomorrow:**

We will promote and elevate Prescott's quality of place and unique identity to shape the future.

### GOAL 5

#### **Partnerships for Tomorrow:**

We will invest in Prescott's economic development ecosystem and build strong partnerships for sustained growth.

## GOAL 1

## TALENT FOR TOMORROW

We will develop a skilled workforce that embraces opportunities for tomorrow.

## WHY IT MATTERS?

Developing a skilled workforce is essential for Prescott's long-term economic success. As the city continues to grow, attracting and retaining young professionals will be key to sustaining local industries and fostering innovation. Local educational institutions such as Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Yavapai College, and Prescott College provide a strong foundation for building this pipeline. By strengthening partnerships between these institutions and local businesses, Prescott can create career pathways that connect students and young professionals with opportunities for upward mobility. Investing in workforce development is, in essence, investing in economic development. A skilled workforce will not only attract new businesses but also ensure that local industries remain competitive and resilient.

## TALENT FOR TOMORROW

We will develop a skilled workforce that embraces opportunities for tomorrow.

STRATEGY 1.1	Establish sector partnerships between local colleges and targeted innovation sectors.
STRATEGY 1.2	Invest in workforce housing — options that support young professionals, service workers, and middle-income families.
STRATEGY 1.3	Engage and align Prescott High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs local industry needs.
STRATEGY 1.4	Launch a mentorship marketplace connecting retirees with young professionals.

### STRATEGY 1.1

Establish sector partnerships between local colleges and targeted innovation sectors.

Sector partnerships between local colleges and targeted innovation sectors are vital for Prescott's economic growth. These partnerships unite job creators, educators, and economic development officials to build a cohesive ecosystem that supports business development in key sectors such as aerospace, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and healthcare. By connecting training programs with industry needs, Prescott ensures that talent development aligns with job requirements, fostering sector-oriented growth and positioning the city as a competitive, business-friendly hub where innovation and industry thrive.

#### Actions:

- Engage with an external consulting team to outline sector engagement frameworks, plan working sessions, and identify initial sector stakeholders.
- Formalize partnerships with local colleges and targeted innovation sector representatives and convene quarterly working sessions to share insights and align objectives.
- Collect data on sector requirements by conducting targeted surveys and holding sector-specific convening meetings.
- Based on the needs identified, develop a list of prioritized actions that will support sector growth and partnerships.
- Execute the defined action steps in partnership with colleges and sectors, with continuous monitoring and adjustments as needed.

## STRATEGY 1.2

Invest in workforce housing — options that support young professionals, service workers, and middle-income families.

Workforce housing is crucial for Prescott's economic sustainability. Over 32% of households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, limiting affordable options for young professionals, middle-income families, and essential service workers. This shortage affects the city's ability to attract and retain talent, weakening local businesses and the economy. Targeted policies, such as mixed-use zoning and incentivized developments, help make Prescott more affordable and support a vibrant workforce and resilient economic base.

### Actions:

- Develop an RFP and hire a consulting team to assess Prescott's housing system.
- Conduct a comprehensive housing study to understand Prescott's workforce housing needs.
- Engage stakeholders and gather input through focus groups and public meetings.
- Identify market needs and gaps in current housing options based on the study results.
- Execute recommendations and policy actions identified in the study.

### STRATEGY 1.3

Engage and align Prescott High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs local industry needs.

Prescott High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs must align with local industry needs to foster a strong talent pipeline. Connecting these programs with key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, aerospace, healthcare, and technology ensures students are prepared for in-demand careers, supporting local economic growth. Collaborating with industry leaders aligns training with job market demands, creating direct pathways from education to employment. This strategy attracts businesses and young professionals while allowing local residents to build fulfilling careers closer to home.

#### Actions:

- Catalog existing CTE programs offered within Prescott schools.
- Align CTE programs with the identified sector partnerships.
- Host internship and apprenticeship programs, including city-supported job fairs as necessary.
- Catalog internship and apprenticeship programs and track their success.

### STRATEGY 1.4

Launch a mentorship marketplace connecting retirees with young professionals.

Prescott's community of experienced retirees offers an opportunity to strengthen the local workforce through mentorship. Connecting retirees with young professionals leverages their expertise to guide career development, enrich skill sets, and foster professional growth. Partnering with local organizations ensures strong participation and aligns with Prescott's goal of nurturing talent. This mentorship marketplace supports economic development by creating pathways for young workers and fostering community ties that contribute to a resilient, multi-generational workforce.

#### Actions:

- Pull together an advisory committee to guide the mentorship initiative.
- Develop a program action plan that includes planning for the platform, programming, and participant engagement.
- Partner with local organizations such as the Prescott Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Prescott, and senior associations to recruit retirees as mentors.
- Track and evaluate the mentorship program engagement and outcomes to refine and expand it.



## TALENT FOR TOMORROW

We will develop a skilled workforce that embraces opportunities for tomorrow.

### MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

- **Sector partnerships established:** creating sector partnerships and tracking the programs and initiatives resulting from the engagement.
- **Educational attainment:** monitoring the city's educational attainment levels.
- **Housing starts:** tracking the number of housing starts and building permits issued in the city.
- **Completed training, degrees, and CTE programs:** tracking the number of completed training initiatives, degrees, and CTE programs aligned with the city's target sectors.
- **Mentorship participants:** recording the number of residents participating in the city's mentorship program.

## GOAL 2

## INVESTMENTS FOR TOMORROW

We will build an innovative economy that attracts bold investments for the future.

## WHY IT MATTERS?

Prescott is at a critical juncture where building an innovative economy is essential for securing its long-term success. Attracting bold investments in high-growth sectors is key to diversifying the city's economic base and creating a resilient future. By fostering an environment that encourages innovation, Prescott will attract new businesses, retain skilled talent, and ensure sustainable community growth. An innovative economy allows Prescott to move beyond traditional industries and approaches, positioning the city as a leader in forward-thinking economic development. Through smart investments in infrastructure, strategic partnerships, and proactive workforce development, Prescott can build an economy that reflects its vision of breaking away from the ordinary and seizing bold opportunities for the future.

## INVESTMENTS FOR TOMORROW

We will build an innovative economy that attracts bold investments for the future.

STRATEGY 2.1	Build an Aviation and Cyberspace District in North Prescott.
STRATEGY 2.2	Develop Prescott into a cutting-edge medical services hub that meets local needs and attracts regional demand.
STRATEGY 2.3	Strengthen Prescott's light manufacturing and role in supplying key machinery for Arizona's growing chip and semiconductor industries.
STRATEGY 2.4	Position Prescott as a destination for midweek business travel, corporate retreats, and professional events to boost tourism revenue.
STRATEGY 2.5	Implement policies, financial incentives, land-use strategies, and toolkits to ensure Prescott is well-positioned for sustainable future development.

## STRATEGY 2.1

### Build an Aviation and Cyberspace District in North Prescott.

Prescott's regional airport, supported by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, positions the city to lead in aviation, aerospace, and cybersecurity. Strategic investments in North Prescott, including a significant airport infrastructure upgrade and the presence of the National Forest Service's Prescott Fire Center, provide a strong foundation for growth in these sectors. Prescott can follow the successful example of Embry-Riddle's Daytona Beach campus, where public-private partnerships and collaborations with major companies transformed the region into an innovation hub. By fostering similar partnerships, developing drone technology initiatives, and launching R&D projects, Prescott can attract aerospace and cybersecurity firms and position itself as a center for technological advancement.

#### Actions:

- Assemble an advisory committee, including city partners, entrepreneurs, and Embry-Riddle officials, to guide the development of an innovation district economic plan.
- Catalog best practices for "innovation districts" across North America, focusing on examples from smaller communities and their programming and placemaking efforts.
- Visit Embry-Riddle's campus and the innovation district in Daytona Beach to learn from their collaboration between the university and city officials.
- Create a comprehensive plan that aligns with the sector partnerships outlined in the economic development strategy, Embry-Riddle programming/research, and regional start-up programs.
- Implement necessary land use policies and pursue land acquisitions to support the development of the district as needed.

## STRATEGY 2.2

Develop Prescott into a cutting-edge medical services hub that meets local needs and attracts regional demand.

Prescott is well-positioned to develop a robust healthcare cluster that serves local needs and attracts regional patients and businesses. With a rising senior population, the demand for healthcare services creates a strong foundation for growth. Establishing a comprehensive healthcare ecosystem with specialty clinics, outpatient centers, and senior care facilities can make Prescott a leading medical destination. Partnering with local educational institutions like Yavapai College to build talent pipelines ensures a skilled workforce. This approach supports job creation and economic development, enhancing residents' well-being and positioning Prescott as a hub for healthcare excellence.

### Actions:

- Engage healthcare sector partnerships to guide and inform the cluster development work, with these partnerships serving as an advisory committee.
- Conduct a health services cluster study to assess current capabilities and research, including existing healthcare training opportunities at Yavapai College and other local institutions.
- Identify and analyze gaps in the current healthcare service delivery model.
- Examine best practices from cities such as Scottsdale (leveraging partnerships with the Mayo Clinic and ASU) and Gilbert, Arizona (noting their partnership with the University of Arizona), to gain insights on building strong medical hubs.
- Develop an attraction and retention strategy to support the hub's growth, including participation in trade shows, fostering site selection relationships, and establishing anchor partnerships.

### STRATEGY 2.3

Strengthen Prescott's light manufacturing and role in supplying key machinery for Arizona's growing chip and semiconductor industries.

Arizona's significant investments in the chip industry, supported by federal funding from the CHIPS Act, present an opportunity for Prescott to contribute meaningfully. Prescott can leverage its expertise in advanced manufacturing to supply key machinery for this sector while remaining water- and resource-conscious. By focusing on sustainable practices and partnering with Yavapai College to build a skilled workforce, Prescott can support the state's tech ecosystem responsibly. This approach balances economic growth with resource conservation, positioning Prescott as a forward-thinking hub for industry support and long-term resilience.

Actions:

- Conduct a cluster analysis to assess Prescott's advanced manufacturing capabilities and identify strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Catalog programs at Yavapai College that can support machinery production and workforce development in light manufacturing.
- Understand the supply chain needs of chip and semiconductor providers through targeted interviews and discussion groups with industry stakeholders.
- Engage with the Arizona Commerce Department and partner with other regional economic development organizations (EDOs) to gain insights and collaborate on supporting a value supply chain within Arizona.
- Develop strategic initiatives based on findings to enhance Prescott's role in supplying key machinery, including outreach to potential industry partners and aligning local resources with identified needs.

### STRATEGY 2.4

Position Prescott as a destination for midweek business travel, corporate retreats, and professional events to boost tourism revenue.

Prescott's strong weekend tourism leaves midweek business travel as an untapped market. Positioning Prescott as a destination for corporate retreats and business conferences can increase hotel occupancy and restaurant revenue during the week. With its scenic beauty, historic downtown, and outdoor activities, Prescott is ideal for business and leisure travelers. Promoting this through the Experience Prescott brand, along with partnerships with local hotels and event planners, will attract midweek visitors and diversify the city's tourism economy, fostering sustainable growth and reducing reliance on weekend tourism.

#### Actions:

- Identify and catalog existing venues and accommodations that can support business tourism, including hotels, conference centers, and unique event spaces.
- Engage with regional and national event planners to promote Prescott as an ideal location for midweek business activities, including hosting familiarization tours and participating in industry trade shows.
- Develop incentive packages for businesses and organizations that choose Prescott for their events, offering discounts on venue rentals, accommodations, or local attractions.
- Partner with the Prescott Chamber of Commerce and local tourism organizations to coordinate efforts and promote midweek event offerings.
- Conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential for a dedicated conference center in Prescott, evaluating market demand, economic impact, and resource requirements.

### STRATEGY 2.5

Implement policies, financial incentives, land-use strategies, and toolkits to ensure Prescott is well-positioned for sustainable future development.

Effective economic development in Prescott requires an appropriate toolkit of financial incentives, land-use policies, and strategic resources. Implementing these measures positions the city to attract sustainable investments while balancing growth with community goals. Policies that support well-planned land use and provide development toolkits enable projects that align with Prescott's long-term vision and resource conservation. Coordinating across city departments to inventory available sites and assess infrastructure needs ensures clear pathways for development. This comprehensive approach enhances Prescott's economic resilience and sets the stage for sustainable prosperity.

#### Actions:

- Establish an internal city staff committee, chaired by the City Manager, to guide the city's efforts in developing an incentive program to support economic development.
- Review incentive best practices from other cities and regions across the state.
- Analyze past incentive deals to evaluate their impact, identify successes and shortcomings, and determine existing gaps.
- Draft an updated incentive policy and present it to the City Council for approval.
- Work across city departments to create an inventory of available sites and assess infrastructure needs to support future development.



## INVESTMENTS FOR TOMORROW

We will build an innovative economy that attracts bold investments for the future.

### MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

- **New businesses and investment:** tracking the number of new businesses and investments, and assessing their alignment with target clusters and strategies.
- **Employment (total, by cluster, and by project):** tracking total jobs generated and determining whether they are connected to specific sectors or strategies.
- **Business events/meetings:** counting the number of business events/meetings in the city.
- **Incentive program development:** developing new incentive programs and tracking their usage over time, including return on investment and metrics aligned with the deals.

## GOAL 3

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR TOMORROW**

We will empower local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow and scale for tomorrow's opportunities.

## WHY IT MATTERS?

Empowering local businesses and entrepreneurs is key to Prescott's economic growth and long-term resilience. Local and small businesses are the backbone of Prescott's economy, driving job creation, innovation, and the city's unique identity. Supporting local entrepreneurs with the resources, mentorship, and access to capital they need to grow will help Prescott retain talent and attract new business ventures. By fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, Prescott can build a dynamic economy that adapts to new challenges and opportunities. This focus on empowering local businesses strengthens the city's economic base and ensures it remains competitive while maintaining its distinctive character and small-town charm.

### ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR TOMORROW

We will empower local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow and scale for tomorrow's opportunities.

STRATEGY 3.1	Establish a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) initiative to support local businesses and guide policy development.
STRATEGY 3.2	Develop a city-supported concierge service that connects small businesses with technical, educational, and navigational support.
STRATEGY 3.3	Promote and market Prescott's small businesses and unique city experiences to boost local spending and attract visitors.
STRATEGY 3.4	Celebrate Prescott's businesses and entrepreneurs.

### STRATEGY 3.1

Establish a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) initiative to support local businesses and guide policy development.

Prescott's economic strength lies in the resilience and growth of its existing businesses, which create the majority of local jobs. Establishing a comprehensive Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) initiative will enable the city to proactively engage with local businesses, identify their needs, and respond with tailored support. This initiative should include regular visits and roundtable discussions with business owners and industry leaders to foster open communication and collaboration. By systematically collecting feedback and reporting findings, Prescott can adapt policies and programs to better support its business community. Strengthening these relationships signals that Prescott is committed to nurturing local businesses, ensuring economic stability, and positioning the city as an attractive environment for investment and long-term growth.

#### Actions:

- Host roundtables with companies in target sectors to identify specific needs and growth opportunities within Prescott (aligning these with sector partnerships).
- Grow formal business visitation plan, interviewing at least 60 employers annually in Prescott.
- Utilize these engagements to identify opportunities and needs, and systematically report key findings.

### STRATEGY 3.2

Develop a city-supported concierge service that connects small businesses with technical, educational, and navigational support.

Small businesses are the backbone of Prescott's local economy, driving job creation, innovation, and community vibrancy. However, navigating city processes and accessing necessary resources can be challenging for many small enterprises. Establishing a city-supported concierge service will provide targeted support, connecting small businesses with technical assistance, educational programs, and resources to streamline their growth and success. This initiative fosters an environment where businesses can thrive, reinforcing Prescott's commitment to being a business-friendly community. By offering guidance and facilitating connections, the city can empower local entrepreneurs, bolster economic resilience, and enhance Prescott's reputation as a supportive hub for small business development.

#### Actions:

- Create a portal on the City of Prescott website where businesses can share their feedback with city economic development staff.
- Develop a process for assigning small businesses with a dedicated advisor who can help guide them through the development process or connect them with necessary resources.
- Compile a list of available small business technical, educational, and navigational resources within Buda and the surrounding areas.
- Report annually on the lessons learned from engagement with small businesses.

### STRATEGY 3.3

Promote and market Prescott's small businesses and unique city experiences to boost local spending and attract visitors.

Prescott's small businesses and unique experiences are vital to the city's economic health and community identity. Highlighting these businesses not only supports local entrepreneurs but also enhances Prescott's appeal as a destination for visitors. Leveraging destination economy and tourism efforts can further amplify the reach of local businesses, integrating them into broader campaigns that draw tourists and encourage spending. By collaborating with local partners to update and promote the inventory of Prescott's offerings—including shops, dining, arts, and outdoor activities—the city can create curated experiences that attract both residents and tourists. Marketing these experiences across digital, social, and print platforms will boost Prescott's profile, support local spending, and strengthen its economic base. A focus on storytelling and showcasing local successes ensures Prescott remains an inviting and dynamic place to live, visit, and invest in.

#### Actions:

- Collaborate with destination partners to update the inventory of Prescott's destination assets, including small businesses, music, art, food, breweries, and cultural and recreational amenities.
- Develop curated destination experiences for Prescott residents and target visitors; test ideas on social media.

### STRATEGY 3.4

#### Celebrate Prescott's businesses and entrepreneurs.

Prescott's local businesses and entrepreneurs are central to the city's economic vitality and community spirit. Attracting new entrepreneurs requires showcasing what is possible, and who better to tell that story than Prescott's own successful business leaders? Celebrating these entrepreneurs through city-led events, social media features, and recognition programs demonstrates the city's commitment to fostering innovation and growth. Highlighting their achievements not only inspires local pride but also positions Prescott as a vibrant, supportive environment for new ventures. This approach strengthens community ties, encourages investment, and signals that Prescott is a place where businesses of all sizes can thrive.

#### Actions:

- Develop a systematic approach to identifying diverse small businesses and start-ups in Prescott to feature on the city's economic development site and social media channels.
- Promote local business successes across multiple communication platforms, including the Prescott city economic development website, Chamber of Commerce and partner sites, blogs, social media channels, direct emails, and other outreach methods.

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR TOMORROW

We will empower local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow and scale for tomorrow's opportunities.

### MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

- **Businesses visited:** recording the number of businesses visited for business retention meetings.
- **Business expansion:** tracking the number of expansions among existing Prescott businesses.
- **Small businesses served:** monitoring the number of small businesses supported and promoted through the efforts and programs of the city and its partners.



## GOAL 4

## PLACEMAKING FOR TOMORROW

We will promote and elevate Prescott's quality of place and unique identity to shape the future.

## WHY IT MATTERS?

Prescott's quality of place and unique identity are vital to shaping its future and driving long-term economic success. The city's historic charm, scenic beauty, and vibrant community make it an attractive destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. Promoting and enhancing these qualities will help Prescott maintain its distinctive character while preparing for future growth. By investing in placemaking initiatives, public spaces, and cultural preservation, Prescott can continue to attract talent and investment. A strong sense of place not only strengthens community pride but also makes Prescott more competitive in attracting businesses and visitors seeking a high quality of life. As the city grows, preserving and promoting Prescott's identity will ensure that it remains a desirable place to live, work, and visit, while embracing the opportunities of tomorrow.

## PLACEMAKING FOR TOMORROW

We will promote and elevate Prescott's quality of place and unique identity to shape the future.

STRATEGY 4.1	Conduct a retail study and develop a retail strategy.
STRATEGY 4.2	Invest in placemaking efforts that elevate downtown and other city districts.
STRATEGY 4.3	Develop and promote an outdoor recreation strategy to showcase Prescott's natural assets.
STRATEGY 4.4	Execute the city's tourism strategic plan.
STRATEGY 4.5	Invest in Prescott's investment and tourism brand platforms to strengthen the city's identity and attract both visitors and investors.

### STRATEGY 4.1

Conduct a retail study and develop a retail strategy.

Prescott's retail sector is crucial for economic growth and generating sales tax revenue that funds essential city services. Conducting a retail study and developing a comprehensive strategy will help identify opportunities to strengthen both the historic downtown and expand retail efforts citywide. Enhancing downtown through improved walkability and public spaces can boost local spending, while supporting larger-scale retail developments elsewhere ensures the city meets the needs of its growing population. This balanced approach enhances Prescott's economic resilience and supports sustainable government funding.

#### Actions:

- Develop an RFP for hiring a retail consultant to create a retail attraction strategy for Prescott.
- Formulate a detailed retail strategy that targets both large retail opportunities to maximize sales tax revenue and distinctive boutique retailers to maintain Prescott's unique identity.
- Understand the incentives needed to attract large retail and boutique businesses to Prescott.
- Establish and nurture relationships with site selectors representing retail and hospitality enterprises and brands relevant to Prescott.
- Participate in trade shows focused on entertainment, hospitality, and retail industries to promote Prescott as a prime location.
- Annually update Prescott's pitch deck for entertainment and hospitality brands to ensure it reflects current opportunities and developments.

## STRATEGY 4.2

Invest in placemaking efforts that elevate downtown and other city districts.

Placemaking is what gives a city its character and identity, creating spaces where people come together and connect. Investing in placemaking efforts across Prescott not only elevates the downtown area but extends these enhancements to other city districts. Lessons learned from downtown initiatives—such as improving walkability, creating inviting public spaces, and fostering local culture—can be applied citywide to build vibrant, connected neighborhoods. Expanding these efforts supports local businesses, attracts residents and visitors, and strengthens community bonds, ensuring all parts of Prescott contribute to its economic vitality and quality of life.

### Actions:

- Develop a systematic placemaking investment program with clear selection criteria and defined investment levels for Prescott.
- Pilot the placemaking program in key areas of Prescott, evaluate its impact, and scale the program based on findings.
- Promote all placemaking investments across the city's communication platforms.

### STRATEGY 4.3

Develop and promote an outdoor recreation strategy to showcase Prescott's natural assets.

Prescott's diverse natural landscapes, including lakes, forests, and trails, provide a unique opportunity to develop an outdoor recreation cluster strategy. By capitalizing on key assets such as the Prescott Circle Trail, Watson Lake, and the Prescott National Forest, the city can position itself alongside other outdoor hubs like Bend, Oregon, and Flagstaff, Arizona. Promoting these amenities will attract tourists, support local businesses, and foster a healthy lifestyle for residents. Strengthening and marketing Prescott's outdoor recreation offerings can enhance its identity as a premier destination and drive sustainable economic growth.

#### Actions:

- Convene a working group of stakeholders and community members to support and develop Prescott's outdoor recreation cluster.
- Inventory Prescott's outdoor recreation assets, including local businesses, natural amenities, and the city's outdoor brand identity.
- Promote and position these assets strategically to advance the city's economic development goals.

### STRATEGY 4.4

Execute the city's tourism strategic plan.

Executing the city's tourism strategic plan enhances Prescott's appeal as a year-round destination, attracting visitors drawn to its Western heritage and natural beauty. Promoting unique experiences, supporting local businesses, and preserving cultural assets boost tourism revenue and enrich the community's quality of life. Collaborative efforts with stakeholders ensure sustainable growth, positioning Prescott as a premier destination for travelers and fostering economic resilience.

Actions:

- Engage the Tourism Advisory Committee to help guide the activation of the city's tourism strategic plan.
- Ensure that tourism and economic development resources are coordinated and aligned with the goals represented in both strategy documents whenever possible.

### STRATEGY 4.5

Invest in Prescott's investment and tourism brand platforms to strengthen the city's identity and attract both visitors and investors.

Prescott's unique identity, rich history, and natural beauty are key assets that can drive economic growth. Strengthening investment and tourism brand platforms will amplify the city's profile and attract both visitors and investors. By unifying its branding and ensuring consistent messaging across economic development and tourism initiatives, Prescott can create a compelling narrative that resonates with diverse audiences. Targeted marketing, digital campaigns, and collaborations with local partners will bolster this effort, showcasing Prescott as a dynamic city that balances tradition with forward-looking development, ultimately enhancing its competitive edge and fostering long-term economic resilience.

#### Actions:

- Explore the concept of a unified brand platform that merges destination development and economic development.
- Apply the unified brand across all website platforms, including economic development and tourism sites.
- Invest in necessary marketing materials and channels, including digital, social media, and print.
- Develop a consolidated marketing and communications calendar that highlights economic and tourism successes within the city and informs policymakers of ongoing efforts.
- Consider hosting an annual economic development summit in partnership with the Prescott Chamber of Commerce.

## PLACEMAKING FOR TOMORROW

We will promote and elevate Prescott's quality of place and unique identity to shape the future.

### MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

- **Sales tax revenue:** monitoring annual sales tax figures in Prescott, including revenue generated by new retail and entertainment establishments.
- **Placemaking initiatives:** tracking the number of placemaking initiatives that the city invests in and supports.
- **Visitors:** measuring the total number of visitors to Prescott.
- **Unique website visitors:** counting the unique visitors to the city's economic development and tourism websites and digital platforms.



## GOAL 5

**PARTNERSHIPS FOR TOMORROW**

We will invest in Prescott's economic development ecosystem and build strong partnerships for sustained growth.

## WHY IT MATTERS?

Investing in Prescott's economic development ecosystem is essential to ensuring sustained growth and long-term success. A well-resourced economic development team, supported by strategic partnerships with neighboring communities, businesses, and nonprofit sectors, will enable Prescott to be more proactive in attracting investment, retaining talent, and driving innovation. By building a strong ecosystem, Prescott can better address shared challenges like workforce development, housing, and infrastructure, while positioning the city as a leader in forward-thinking economic development

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR TOMORROW

We will invest in Prescott's economic development ecosystem and build strong partnerships for sustained growth.

STRATEGY 5.1	Increase economic development capacity and resources to lead proactive business attraction, retention efforts, and strategic partnerships.
STRATEGY 5.2	Establish systematic meetings with regional and state economic development partners to support a coordinated RFI response system.
STRATEGY 5.3	Build stronger partnerships with neighboring communities to address shared growth challenges and opportunities.
STRATEGY 5.4	Actively seek grants and funding from state and federal agencies to catalyze large-scale and "game-changing" growth initiatives.

### STRATEGY 5.1

Increase economic development capacity and resources to lead proactive business attraction, retention efforts, and strategic partnerships.

Supporting economic development in Prescott requires strategic investments in capacity and resources. Investing in economic development infrastructure is an investment in the city's future, enabling Prescott to lead proactive business attraction, retention efforts, and strategic partnerships. Expanding staff, tools, and support systems ensures the city can respond effectively to opportunities and challenges, positioning Prescott for sustained growth and increased economic impact. By building this foundation, Prescott can strengthen its economic resilience and foster a thriving business environment that benefits the entire community..

#### Actions:

- Benchmark economic development programs and staffing structures from comparable cities.
- Identify and align resources needed to implement the action plan effectively.
- Develop position postings for new economic development roles and align these with the city budget.

## STRATEGY 5.2

Establish systematic meetings with regional and state economic development partners to support a coordinated RFI response system.

A well-coordinated system for RFI responses is essential for positioning Prescott as an efficient and attractive destination for investment. Systematic meetings with regional partners like the Prescott Chamber of Commerce and the Arizona Department of Commerce streamline communication and coordination, ensuring timely, unified responses to incoming opportunities. Regular engagement with these stakeholders aligns efforts, shares insights, and builds stronger partnerships that support Prescott's proactive approach to business attraction and retention, ultimately enhancing the city's economic resilience and visibility on a state and regional level.

### Actions:

- Strengthen Prescott's city processes for responding to incoming Requests for Information/Proposals (RFIs/RFPs) and ensure Arizona Commerce Authority partners are familiar with the process.
- Refine and build a target site-selection list and conduct community outreach at least biannually.
- Host inbound visits, tours, and trade missions in Prescott with target companies, investment representatives, and site selectors.
- Create cluster marketing and attraction materials specific to Prescott.

### STRATEGY 5.3

Build stronger partnerships with neighboring communities to address shared growth challenges and opportunities.

Long-term economic development requires coordination with neighboring communities, including Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, and Yavapai County leaders. Building stronger partnerships ensures that Prescott can align its interests with regional needs to effectively tackle larger issues such as infrastructure and water management. Collaborative efforts help identify initiatives where regional policy and advocacy make sense, fostering a united approach to shared challenges. By strengthening these connections, Prescott can support its own growth while contributing to the broader region's prosperity and resilience.

#### Actions:

- Host and meet with county and neighboring city economic development and management leadership quarterly.
- Engage with the Prescott Chamber of Commerce to support the implementation of the Western Yavapai County economic development plan.

### STRATEGY 5.4

Actively seek grants and funding from state and federal agencies to catalyze large-scale and “game-changing” growth initiatives.

Grants and funding from state and federal sources are vital for catalyzing large-scale, transformative growth initiatives in Prescott. Federal investment programs, such as those offered by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), along with state-level funding opportunities, provide essential resources that can propel significant economic development projects. Pursuing these funding avenues allows Prescott to enhance infrastructure, boost business attraction efforts, and support long-term strategic goals. State and federal dollars enable the city to undertake ambitious initiatives that stimulate economic resilience, create jobs, and position Prescott as a leader in innovative growth.

#### Actions:

- Partner with the Prescott Chamber of Commerce and the Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO) to identify joint funding opportunities.
- Develop a dedicated team or designate staff to monitor state and federal grant opportunities and coordinate application efforts.
- Engage with state and federal representatives to build support for funding applications and raise awareness of Prescott’s strategic growth initiatives.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR TOMORROW

We will invest in Prescott's economic development ecosystem and build strong partnerships for sustained growth.

### MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

- **RFIs completed:** tracking the number of RFIs received, responded to, shortlisted, and successfully awarded.
- **New grant funding:** monitoring the number of grants secured and the total grant dollars obtained to support the city's economic development initiatives.

## Prescott: Where Business and Innovation Leave the Usual Behind for a Bold Tomorrow

GOAL 1

### **Talent for Tomorrow:**

We will develop a skilled workforce that embraces opportunities for tomorrow.

GOAL 2

### **Investments for Tomorrow:**

We will build an innovative economy that attracts bold investments for the future.

GOAL 3

### **Entrepreneurship for Tomorrow:**

We will empower local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow and scale for tomorrow's opportunities.

GOAL 4

### **Placemaking for Tomorrow:**

We will promote and elevate Prescott's quality of place and unique identity to shape the future.

GOAL 5

### **Partnerships for Tomorrow:**

We will invest in Prescott's economic development ecosystem and build strong partnerships for sustained growth.



## Contact

**Steven Pedigo**

Partner

[steven@civicsol.com](mailto:steven@civicsol.com)

**Laura Huffman**

Partner

[laura@civicsol.com](mailto:laura@civicsol.com)

