

**PROTECT AND PRESERVE SCOTTSDALE  
TASK FORCE**

**AMENDED REPORT**

**MARCH 28, 2024**

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## FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

We would like to thank Mayor Ortega and members of the City Council for giving us the honor and privilege to lead this Task Force in order to study and identify a financial solution for the perpetual maintenance, preservation and protection of our city parks and open spaces. The Task Force was created to specifically study the unfunded needs of the city's Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and other city parks, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and other community priorities, and to explore extending the expiring 0.20% sales tax rate to accomplish these needs.

We wish to thank our fellow Task Force members for their dedication and commitment to the process of arriving at consensus around our recommendations. The Task Force members brought diverse perspectives to the table and engaged in meaningful dialogue respectfully and effectively as we studied and discussed considerable amounts of information through twenty meetings over the last year.

We also wish to thank all the city staff from the City Treasurer's Office, the Community Services Department, Police and Fire personnel, the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Communications Office, and the City Clerk's Office who stepped forward to support the efforts of the Task Force, providing their experience and expertise during the development of recommendations contained in this report.

On behalf of the Task Force, we respectfully submit this report with our final recommendations for Council consideration and action. The Task Force has carried out its mission in accordance with the objectives and work plan as set forth by Council Resolution and will be dissolved without further action when the Council makes a decision on whether to send a sales tax question to the voters. While much work remains to be done, we hope that the recommendations included in this report will meaningfully contribute to Council's considerations and decisions for preserving and protecting our city parks and recreational facilities, our McDowell Sonoran Preserve and our citizens' quality of life.

Cynthia Wenstrom  
Chair

Raoul Zubia  
Vice Chair

## MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

### Chair and Vice Chair

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Cynthia Wenstrom (Chair)

Raoul Zubia (Vice-Chair)

### Members

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Carla

Nicholas Hartmann

Jace McKeighan

Daniel Schweiker

Mark Winkelman

John Zikias

James Eaneman (resigned February 1, 2024)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scottsdale is a world class city where residents and visitors enjoy an exceptional quality of life, in part due to the city's parks and recreation facilities and abundant open spaces. The Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt, an 11-mile urban oasis that runs through the heart of Scottsdale was completed and dedicated in 1985 after 20 years of hard work by citizens and city staff to turn a flooding problem into a community asset with acres of park and recreational amenities. In the same spirit, in 1995 and 2004, Scottsdale citizens voted to raise a 0.20% sales tax (the 0.20% Preserve Tax) and a 0.15% sales tax (the 0.15% Preserve Tax) respectively, to acquire over 30,000 acres in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve to protect desert open spaces and its native plants and wildlife, and to construct 12 trailheads and 235 miles of trails in the Preserve for our residents and visitors to enjoy. The city has a responsibility to care for, maintain and protect these wonderful community assets that Scottsdale citizens invested in decades ago, as well as the 982 acres of city parks, 74 athletic fields, 72 tennis/pickleball courts, 35 volleyball courts, 39 basketball courts, dog parks, equestrian facilities and other recreational amenities that make Scottsdale a unique and desirable place to live.

- The Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt parks are now aged, and Task Force members agree that the city's aged parks are in need of rebuilding and revitalization to meet the community's interests, and with the increase in citywide park and recreational facilities, additional funding for on-going maintenance for all city parks is also needed for Scottsdale to remain a world class city.
- For the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, the Task Force believes that additional dedicated funding is needed to ensure the perpetual care and protection of the Preserve and its native plants and wildlife.
- For safety and security of the city's parks and the Preserve, the Task Force believes that an expanded Police park ranger unit and Fire fuel mitigation and technical rescue resources are priority needs requiring additional funding.
- The Task Force also considered drainage and shade improvements and other critical infrastructure improvements for WestWorld, a recreational event facility which includes open space for polo events, equestrian and other events, as needing funding.

The city's total local transaction privilege tax (or sales tax as commonly known) is at a 1.75% rate, of which a portion (the 0.20% Preserve Tax approved by voters in 1995) will expire in 2025. The Task Force explored the option of funding the above identified needs without increasing the city's overall tax rate, by extending and replacing the 0.20% tax rate expiring in 2025 at the same or reduced rate as a viable financial solution.

The Task Force retained EMC Research, an independent consulting firm to conduct a citizen survey to understand community priorities around parks and the Preserve, as well as resident's opinions around the city's fiscal environment. Results of the survey showed that an overwhelming super-majority of Scottsdale voters believe funding Scottsdale parks and recreation facilities and the Preserve without increasing the

tax rate is a good idea. With that information, and after twenty meetings over 12 months of studying and discussing the unfunded needs and funding options, the Task Force developed the following recommendations for Council consideration and action:

**(1) Request Voter Approval to Extend and Reduce the 0.20% Tax Rate Expiring in 2025, to 0.15% for 30 Years, Effective July 1, 2025**

The Task Force recommends that the Council request voter approval to extend the 0.20% tax rate at a reduced rate of 0.15% for another 30 years, effective July 1, 2025 to fund the unfunded needs identified and name the tax “2025 0.15% Tax”.

**(2) Unfunded Needs to be Funded by the 0.15% Tax**

The Task Force recommends that the Council fund the following unfunded needs with the 2025 0.15% Tax:

- Improvements to aged city parks prioritizing the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt parks
- Additional funding for citywide parks and recreation maintenance needs
- Maintenance, preservation and protection of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve
- Fire fuel mitigation and technical rescue for citywide parks and the Preserve
- Police park rangers and security for citywide parks and the Preserve
- Drainage, shade and other critical infrastructure improvements for WestWorld

**(3) Distribution of the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues for the Unfunded Needs**

The Task Force recommends that the Council distribute the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues as follows:

Distribution of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues after debt requirements are satisfied will be as follows:

- (1) Payment of debt requirements. Annual debt requirements shall not be more than \$4,500,000.
- (2) After payment of debt requirements, the remaining tax revenues to be allocated by percentages as follows:
  - 51% to Park improvement needs with an emphasis on aged parks
  - 18% to Preserve maintenance and protection
  - 14% to Citywide park maintenance needs
  - 10% for Fire fuel mitigation program and technical rescue team
  - 7% to Police park ranger unit

It is anticipated that the WestWorld improvements proposed will be funded by debt.

**(4) Considerations for the 2004 0.15% Preserve Tax Expiring In 2034**

The Task Force also considered whether the 0.15% Preserve Tax approved by voters in 2004 and expiring in 2034, can be used for funding the maintenance and protection of the Preserve if excess revenues remain from this tax after payment of current debt principal and interest. However, the 0.15% Preserve Tax revenues and any excess collected to date, are restricted by voter approval for Preserve land acquisitions and improvements only and cannot be used for maintenance and protection of the Preserve. The city could consider asking voters to authorize future excess collections to be used for maintenance and protection of the Preserve. However given that there will not be room on the November 2024 ballot for such a request to voters, and also given that the 0.15% Preserve Tax is still needed for future debt service and improvements or land acquisitions in the Preserve, **the Task Force recommends that the Council take no action on the 0.15% Preserve Tax expiring in 2034, but to ensure that there is a plan in place for any excess collections resulting after payment of debt principal and interest. And if there is no longer a need to continue collecting the 0.15% Preserve Tax, that Council consider asking voters to terminate the 0.15% Preserve tax.**

#### **(5) Recommended Ballot Language**

The Task Force drafted ballot language for voter approval and recommends that Council adopted the ballot language included in Appendix C.

Members of the Task Force believe that these recommendations will ensure the citizens' investment in our parks and the Preserve and Scottsdale's quality of life are protected, preserved and maintained for generations to come.

This report provides a summary of considerations by the Task Force including the results of a citizen survey that was conducted. For details on Task Force discussions including the data and materials studied by the Task Force, please follow the link to the Task Force meeting agendas and minutes: [City of Scottsdale - Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/protect-and-preserve-scottsdale-task-force)

#### **(6) Adopt an Ordinance to Ensure the City Properly Distributes the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues and to Ensure Official Oversight for the Spending of the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues**

The Task Force drafted an ordinance to ensure the city allocates the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues as contemplated. The Task Force recommends that Council also adopt the ordinance included in Appendix D to require City Council action to modify the revenue allocation. The ordinance will only take effect on the passage of the ballot measure if the voters approve the ballot measure, and then it will become effective on July 1, 2025, the date the 2025 0.15% Tax would begin.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This section provides background information, the Task Force's mission, considerations and recommendations.

### **General Plan 2035**

In November 2021, Scottsdale voters approved the city's General Plan 2035 which includes various elements to maintain, preserve and protect the city's parks and recreational facilities and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. In FY 2021/22 City Council established strategic priorities to implement elements of the General Plan, including exploring extending the 0.20% Preserve Tax expiring in 2025 to fund the perpetual maintenance, preservation and protection of the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt, McDowell Sonoran Preserve, public safety and other unfunded needs.

Link to voter approved General Plan 2035:

[City of Scottsdale - General Plan \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/city-council/general-plan-2035)

### **The McDowell Sonoran Preserve Taxes (the Preserve Taxes)**

In 1995 and in 2004, Scottsdale voters approved a 0.20% tax (the 0.20% Preserve Tax) to fund land acquisition only and a 0.15% tax (the 0.15% Preserve Tax) to fund land acquisition and improvements in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Revenues from the 0.20% Preserve Tax and the 0.15% Preserve Tax were used to acquire over 30,000 acres of land in the Preserve and to construct 12 trailheads and 235 miles of trails in the Preserve, and will continue to fund improvements.

The 0.20% Preserve Tax is set to expire in 2025 and the 0.15% Preserve Tax is set to expire in 2034. Revenues collected from these two Preserve taxes are currently used to pay debt service on Preserve land acquired. The debt issued to acquire Preserve land are structured to align with the expiration of the Preserve taxes with all Preserve debt maturing when the 0.15% Preserve Tax expires in 2034.

### **Master Planning Efforts for Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and Scottsdale Parks and Recreation**

In 2018 the city started master planning efforts for Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt parks as they were approaching 50 years old. The Indian Bend Wash Master Plan -Thomas to McKellips was completed and adopted by the City Council, Design Review Board, and Planning Commission in FY 2019/2020. The city is currently in the process of completing the Indian School Park master plan and the Scottsdale Parks and Recreation master plan.



## TASK FORCE MISSION

### The Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force

The Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force was established pursuant to Resolution No. 12532, dated September 13, 2022, to explore extending the expiring 0.20% Preserve Tax to fund the perpetual maintenance, preservation and protection of the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt, McDowell Sonoran Preserve, public safety and other unfunded needs.

City Council selected nine City of Scottsdale residents at the December 6, 2022 Special Meeting to serve on the Task Force. The nine members consist of three residents from Scottsdale's North side, three residents from Scottsdale's South side and three residents from Central Scottsdale.

The City Council adopted Resolution No. 12722 on January 10, 2023 establishing a work plan for the Task Force to govern and guide the efforts of the Task Force to study, define and quantify the unfunded needs of the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and other city parks, the Preserve, and other community priority unfunded needs. The work plan also provided direction for the Task Force to conduct a community survey and develop specific recommendations to City Council including a recommended tax rate and suggested ballot language for voter approval if the Task Force recommendation was to replace or extend the expiring 0.20% Preserve Tax.

The Task Force held twenty meetings from February 2023 through February 2024 to study, discuss and evaluate unfunded needs presented by city staff, and to consider various financial strategies to fund the unfunded needs.

Link to Task Force meeting agendas and minutes:

[City of Scottsdale - Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/protect-and-preserve-scottsdale-task-force)

## TASK FORCE CONSIDERATIONS

### CONSIDERATION OF UNFUNDED NEEDS

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The Task force received and considered presentations on the following unfunded needs from city staff as called for in the work plan, or at the request of the Task Force.

#### **Parks Improvement Needs**

As noted above, the city's Indian Bend Wash Master Plan -Thomas to McKellips (for Vista Del Camino Park and Eldorado Park) was completed and adopted by the City Council, Design Review Board, and Planning Commission in FY 2019/2020. The master plan identified significant improvement needs from improvements to the irrigation lakes and ponds to renovation of restrooms, ramadas and ballfields and other improvements. In 2018/2019, the city included the improvements to irrigation lakes and ponds in the Vista Del Camino Park in the Bond 2019 program approved by voters in 2019. All other elements of the Indian Bend Wash Master Plan – Thomas to McKellips for the Vista Del Camino Park (52 years old) and Eldorado Park (56 years old) remain unfunded.

The city is currently in the process of completing the Indian School Park Master Plan and the Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Master Plan which are anticipated to be completed in 2024. The Indian School Park is 43 years old. Significant community input has been received and continues to be gathered through these master planning efforts.

Based on these master plans and information provided by staff, the Task Force identified funding improvements to the aged Indian Bend Wash parks, currently estimated at \$248 million, as the immediate top priority, as well as the need to ensure future funding for parks in central and north Scottsdale as those parks age over the next 20-30 years. The city currently has no identified funding for these master plan improvements desired by the community.

Links to city's park and recreation master planning efforts:

[Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Master Plan \(shapescottsdaleparks.com\)](https://shapescottsdaleparks.com)

[City of Scottsdale - Parks & Recreation \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://scottsdaleaz.gov)

[City of Scottsdale - City Construction Projects - Indian Bend Wash Master Plan: Thomas to McKellips \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://scottsdaleaz.gov)

### **City-Wide Parks and Recreation Maintenance Needs**

The Task Force also identified additional funding for on-going maintenance of city-wide parks and recreation facilities as a priority to ensure Scottsdale continues its high standards for its parks and recreation facilities. Funding for city-wide park maintenance is currently limited in the city's General Fund and a current estimate of \$2.8 million was developed and proposed by Parks and Recreation staff as additional annual funding needed to enhance maintenance for city-wide parks and recreational facilities.

### **Public Safety for City-Wide Parks and the Preserve**

The Task Force considered increasing public safety with additional Police park rangers as a priority to ensure the safety of the city-wide parks and the Preserve. The city currently has 3 Police park rangers funded with limited Proposition 207, the Smart and Safe Arizona Act allocations from the state. Expanding the Police park ranger unit and acquiring addition park security equipment would enhance park and Preserve security. Annual funding of approximately \$1.7 million would be needed to fully support the expanded Police park ranger program.

### **McDowell Sonoran Preserve Protection, Preservation and Maintenance Needs**

The Task Force considered increasing funding for wildlife habitat protection, invasive plant management, wildland fire fuel mitigation and other maintenance and protection efforts in the Preserve and other preservation efforts for the Preserve as a critical priority. The city currently has limited funding available through its General Fund and limited available grants for the care and protection of the Preserve. Given the city's investment in acquiring the Preserve and community interest in protecting the Preserve and its native plants and wildlife, a dedicated funding source to consistently fund on-going care and protection of the Preserve is needed. Annual funding of approximately \$3.5 million was presented by staff and approved by the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission as the amount needed to fully support an expanded maintenance and protection program for the Preserve.

### **Fire Fuel Mitigation and Technical Rescue Team for Citywide Parks and the Preserve**

The Task Force considered additional funding for the Fire department's fuel mitigation program as well as staffing additional Technical Rescue Team and resources as high priority for the community. The fire fuel mitigation program provides for city-wide fire fuel mitigation working in conjunction with the Preserve Management Objectives to ensure fire mitigation in and around the Preserve. There is currently limited grant funding and limited funding through the city's General Fund for these critical needs. Grant funding for fire fuel mitigation can only be awarded once to a specific area.

Annual dedicated funding of approximately \$2.3 million was presented by staff to fully support the Fire department's city-wide fuel mitigation program and technical rescue efforts.

### **Public Art Preservation and Maintenance and Art Programs**

The Task Force received presentation and public comments to fund public art preservation and maintenance and art programs. The city has a contract arrangement with Scottsdale Arts to fund preservation and maintenance of public art and various art and entertainment programs. Funding for the arts is available through the City's General Fund, Percent for the Arts ordinance and Transient Lodging Tax (as it relates to tourism). Given the city's contractual arrangement with Scottsdale Arts and the funding sources already available for the arts, the Task Force determined that public art and art programs should not be included as a priority for additional funding consideration.

### **West World Infrastructure Improvements**

The Task Force considered funding for certain WestWorld improvements to address drainage issues, shade structures for year-round flex-use, paving and other infrastructure improvements as critical to the success of WestWorld. WestWorld is considered a recreational facility and portions of WestWorld must remain as open space in accordance with the city's agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation. The city has traditionally funded infrastructure improvements for WestWorld through a combination of WestWorld revenues, bond programs, transient lodging sales taxes and the General Fund. There is currently limited or no identified funding for the critical drainage and shade issues and other critical improvements needed for WestWorld, which staff estimated at \$44.2 million.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

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The city has limited funding for the priorities identified by the Task Force. Grant funding is limited and inconsistent, and the city's General Fund resources are constrained due to funding needed for other core city services. No other sources of funding are currently available. Recent state legislative action to eliminate residential rental tax and reduce state income tax revenues further limits the availability of the city's General Fund to fund these priorities.

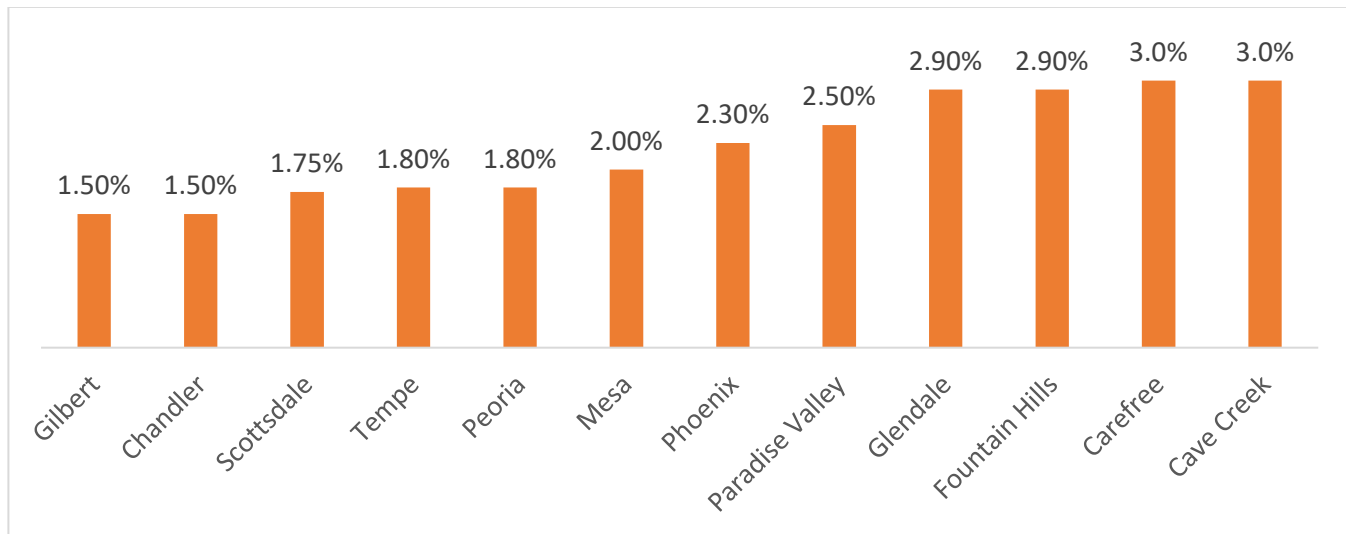
The Task Force considered extending and replacing the 0.20% Preserve Tax to fund the priorities listed above as a reasonable financial strategy to recommend to Council and present to voters. The Task Force reviewed expenditure projections for each priority identified and reviewed revenue projections at various tax rates (0.10%, 0.13%, 0.15% and 0.17%). The Task Force determined that extending the 0.20% tax rate at a reduced rate of 0.15% for 30 years would be a good financial strategy as it provides dedicated funding

for the priority needs identified and significant value to Scottsdale citizens and visitors, while reducing the city’s current total sales tax rate by 0.05% from 1.75% to 1.70%.

**Scottsdale’s Low Sales Tax Rate Compared to Other Cities in the Valley**

The city has one of the lowest local sales tax rates in the valley and replacing the 0.20% tax rate with a 0.15% tax rate would ensure the city continues to maintain one of the lowest local sales tax rates in the valley.

Table 1: Comparison of Current Local Sales Tax Rates



**Cost to Average Household**

The 2025 0.15% Tax is estimated to cost an average household \$3.71 per month which is a reduction from the current estimated \$4.95 per month with the expiring 0.20% Preserve Tax.

Household cost estimates were based on the consumer expenditure survey published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics which reported that households in the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area spent an average of \$71,750 per year or \$5,979 per month in 2021-2022. Categories of spending subject to sales tax totaled approximately \$2,375 per month in 2021-2022 (or \$2,473 per month in 2023).

**Projections of 0.15% Tax Revenues**

A 0.15% tax is estimated to initially generate \$23 million to \$25 million annually to fund the priorities identified by the Task Force. Over a 30-year term, the 2025 0.15% Tax is expected to generate sufficient funding for the needs identified and considered by the Task Force. The Task Force studied detail revenues

and expenditure projections based on assumptions of cost escalations and revenue growth. Please refer to the 11-06-23 Task Force meeting agenda for detail projections.

**Example of Parks and Open Space Sales Tax in Other Communities**

Dedicated parks and preserve sales taxes are utilized in other communities to fund parks and preserve needs. The following represents examples of other communities with a park and preserve sales tax.

City	Parks and Open Space Sales Tax Rate	Total General Sales Tax Rate
Boulder	0.77%	4.50%
Kansas City	0.50%	4.95%
Denver	0.25%	4.13%
Columbia, MO	0.25%	2.00%
St Louis	0.19%	3.07%
<i>Scottsdale (Proposed)</i>	<i>0.15%</i>	<i>1.70%</i>
Colorado Springs	0.10%	3.86%
Phoenix	0.10%	2.30%

**Visitor Contribution**

According to the Scottsdale Tourism Study – Visitor Statistics, about 12 percent of total sales tax collections in the city in 2022/2023 can be attributed to visitors (includes domestic and international overnight visitors and domestic visitors traveling more than 50 miles that are not part of a normal routine and do not involve an overnight stay).

Link to Scottsdale Visitor Report:

[2023+Visitor+Report.pdf \(scottsdaleaz.gov\)](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/2023+Visitor+Report.pdf)

**Consideration of the 2004 0.15% Preserve Tax Expiring in 2034**

The Task Force also considered the potential use of the remaining 2004 0.15% Preserve Tax expiring in 2034, for on-going care and maintenance of the Preserve.

As mentioned above, the 0.20% Preserve Tax expiring in 2025 was for land acquisition only, and the 0.15% Preserve Tax expiring in 2034 was to acquire land and to construct improvements in the Preserve. Based on voter approval, these Preserve Taxes can only be used for land acquisition and improvements and cannot for used for on-going maintenance and care of the Preserve or city parks. Future excess collections may potentially be used for on-going maintenance only if voters approve an expanded use of *future revenues* for such purpose.

Revenues collected from these Preserve Taxes are currently used to pay debt service on the land acquired. When the 0.20% Preserve Tax expires in 2025, the remaining 0.15% Preserve Tax is still needed to cover outstanding debt that will mature through 2034 when the 0.15% Preserve Tax expires. Excess revenues collected from the remaining 0.15% Preserve Tax can be used for voter approved purposes or can be used to early retire debt. If debt is retired early and there is no longer any need to continue collecting the remaining 0.15% Preserve Tax, the city can request voter approval to terminate the 0.15% Preserve Tax earlier than 2034.

Given that there will not be room on the November 2024 ballot for such a request to voters, and also given that the 0.15% Preserve Tax is still needed for debt service and improvements or land acquisitions in the Preserve, the Task Force recommends that the Council take no action on the 0.15% Preserve Tax expiring in 2034, but to ensure that there is a plan in place for any excess collections resulting after payment of debt principal and interest. And if there is no longer a need to continue collecting the 0.15% Preserve Tax, that Council consider asking voters to terminate the 0.15% Preserve Tax.

#### **CITIZEN SURVEY CONDUCTED BY EMC RESEARCH FOR THE TASK FORCE**

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The Task Force sought community input by conducting a statistically valid voter survey and also engaged the community through an open participation feedback tool to understand community priorities related to the city's parks and the Preserve as well as the current opinions of Scottsdale residents around the City's fiscal environment. The efforts involved two phases and included 1,733 Scottsdale voters and residents. Results of the survey indicate that Scottsdale voters and residents are supportive of funding parks and Preserve needs and believe that it is a good idea to extend the expiring 0.20% tax rate to do so. The statistically valid survey results showed that:

- 92% of voters agree that Scottsdale's parks and the Preserve improve quality of life and the local economy.
- 62% of voters believe the City needs additional funding to maintain, improve, and operate parks and recreational sites and facilities, and rate many aspects as high priorities for funding.

- 94% of voters respond positively that it's a good idea to fund parks, recreation and Preserve without increasing the tax rate.

An executive summary of the citizen survey is attached and a presentation of survey results, presented by EMC Research, can be found in the 12-18-23 Task Force meeting agenda.



## TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force developed and approved the following recommendations to City Council. **There was unanimous vote among current Task Force members on these recommendations.**

### **Recommendation #1– Request Voter Approval to Extend and Reduce the 0.20% Tax Rate Expiring in 2025, to 0.15% for 30 Years, Effective July 1, 2025**

The Task Force recommends that the Council approve a replacement tax for the expiring 0.20% Preserve tax. The replacement would be a 0.15% tax rate (the 2025 0.15% Tax) effective July 1, 2025 for 30-years, for the preservation, maintenance, and police and fire protection of city-wide parks and the Preserve, and for improvements to aged city parks and recreational facilities including certain improvements to WestWorld. This recommendation will result in a reduction of the City's total sales tax rate from 1.75% to 1.70%.

### **Recommendation #2 - Unfunded Needs to be Funded by the 0.15% Tax**

The Task Force recommends that the Council fund the following areas of unfunded needs for the City's parks and the Preserve with this 2025 0.15% Tax:

1. Improvements to aged city parks with a priority for the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt parks
2. Additional citywide parks and recreation maintenance needs
3. Maintenance, preservation and protection of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve
4. Fire fuel mitigation and technical rescue for citywide parks and the Preserve
5. Police park rangers and security for citywide parks and the Preserve
6. Drainage and other critical infrastructure improvements for WestWorld

### **Recommendation #3 - Distribution of the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues for the Unfunded Needs**

The Task Force recommends that the Council appropriately allocate and distribute the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues as follows.

The Task Force recommends that the Council distribute the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues as follows:

Distribution of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues after debt requirements are satisfied will be as follows:

- (1) Payment of debt requirements. Annual debt requirements shall not be more than \$4,500,000.
- (2) After payment of debt requirements, the remaining tax revenues to be allocated by percentages as follows:
  - 51% to Park improvement needs with an emphasis on aged parks
  - 18% to Preserve maintenance and protection
  - 14% to Citywide park maintenance needs
  - 10% for Fire fuel mitigation program and technical rescue team
  - 7% to Police park ranger unit

It is anticipated that the WestWorld improvements proposed will be funded by debt.

#### **Recommendation #4 - Considerations for 2004 0.15% Preserve Tax Expiring in 2034**

The Task Force recommends that the Council take no current action on the 2004 0.15% tax, which does not expire until 2034, because this tax is still needed and that the Council study the 0.15% tax annually to determine if the tax is still needed for Preserve improvements and land acquisition or if the debt service can be paid off early and, for Council to decide if this tax can be placed on a future ballot to sunset early. As part of this process, the City Treasurer will provide an annual update to the City Council and McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission related to the 0.15% Preserve Tax, which will include information on the fund balance and current and projected funding needs.

#### **Recommendation #5 – Ballot Language for 2025 0.15% Tax**

The Task Force recommends the attached ballot language (Appendix C) to request voter approval at the November 2024 ballot.

#### **Recommendation #6 - Adopt an Ordinance to Ensure the City Properly Distributes the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues and to Ensure Official Oversight for the Spending of the 2025 0.15% Tax Revenues**

The Task Force recommends the attached draft ordinance (Appendix D) which enforces distribution of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues by law established by Council ordinance. The ordinance also provides for official oversight for spending of the revenues through the existing Parks and Recreation Commission and McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission and annual reporting by the City Treasurer.

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Appendix A – Task Force Work Plan

**PROTECT AND PRESERVE SCOTTSDALE TASK FORCE**  
**Work Plan**  
 (1/10/2023)

**Goal:** develop a recommendation to City Council on a financial strategy to protect and preserve Scottsdale’s open spaces and quality of life, through identifying and quantifying the unfunded needs for the protection, preservation and perpetual maintenance of the City’s open spaces (e.g., Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and McDowell Sonoran Preserve), public safety and other needs.

PHASE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	PRELIMINARY TIMELINE (subject to change)
<b>Determine Community Priorities and Support for Replacing 0.2% Preserve Tax</b>			
Phase 1	1.1	<b>Conduct Preliminary Community Survey</b>	Feb-Mar 2023
	1.2	<b>Review and Refine Workplan</b>	
<b>Define and Quantify Priority Unfunded Needs</b>			
Phase 2	2.1	<b>Identify and Quantify Unfunded Needs for the Perpetual Maintenance, Protection and Preservation of the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and Other City Public Parks</b>	Apr-Aug 2023
	2.2	<b>Identify and Quantify Unfunded Needs for the Perpetual Maintenance, Protection and Preservation of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve</b>	

**PROTECT AND PRESERVE SCOTTSDALE TASK FORCE**  
**Work Plan**  
(1/10/2023)

PHASE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	PRELIMINARY TIMELINE (subject to change)
	2.3	<b>Identify and Quantify Other Community Priorities indicated by Community Survey</b>	Task involves identifying, defining and quantifying other community priorities indicated in the community survey.
<b>Develop Funding Recommendations</b>			
Phase 3	3.1	<b>Explore Funding Options for Priority Needs Identified</b>	Explore and consider funding options for needs identified in Phase 1 & 2 (e.g., General Fund, grants, dedicated funding source including replacement of the 0.2% Preserve Tax expiring in 2025).
	3.2	<b>Conduct Community Survey (if needed)</b>	If voter approval is required for funding option(s) considered, task force may consider conducting a community survey on voter support. If community survey is conducted, analyze survey results and findings.
	3.3	<b>Develop Financial Strategy and Funding Recommendations</b>	Task involves developing financial strategy and funding recommendations for priorities and critical needs identified.
<b>Report and Present Recommendations to Council</b>			
Phase 4	4.1	<b>Develop Report and Presentation for Council Consideration</b>	Organize and develop recommendations for City Council consideration. If voter approval is required, recommendation must include recommended ballot question(s), specific tax rate, etc. Recommendations are subject to City Attorney and City Treasurer review to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations and city financial policies and practices. Draft report and presentation to City Council.
	4.2	<b>Report and Present to Council</b>	Participate in Council work study session to present findings and recommendations to City Council.
<b>Community Education and Outreach</b>			
Phase 5	5.1	<b>Community Education and Outreach</b>	Assist in community education and outreach as directed and subject to applicable laws.

Appendix B – EMS Research Citizen Survey Executive Summary

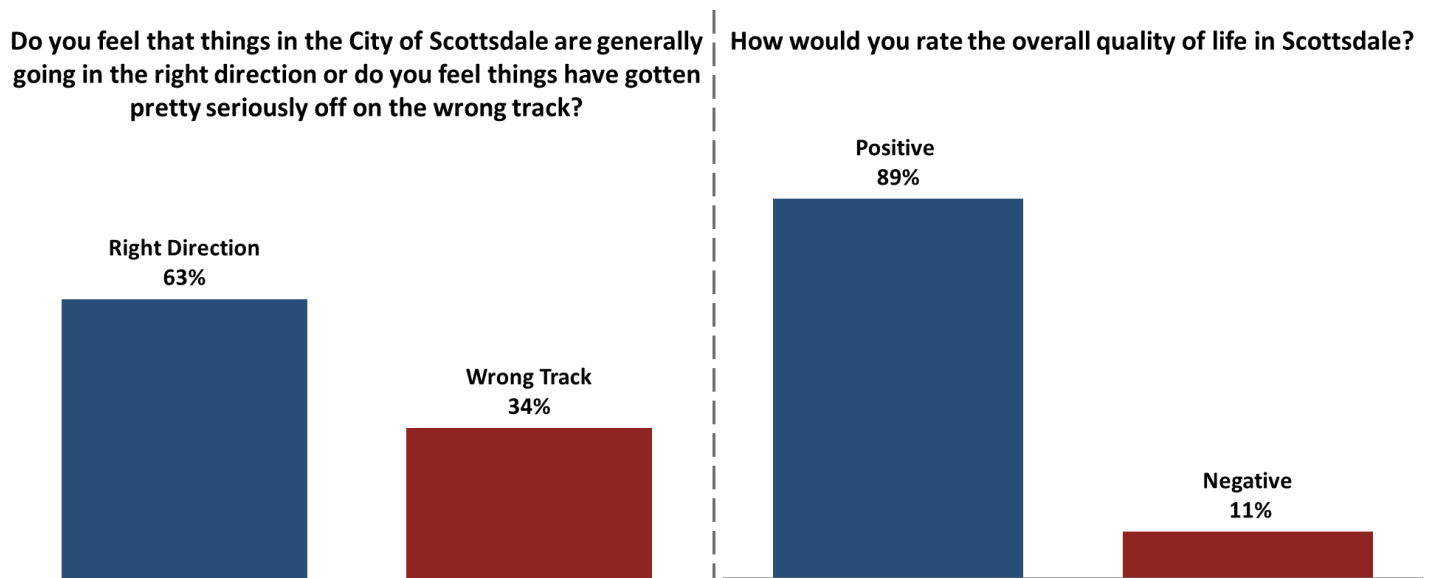
**TO:** Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Taskforce  
**FROM:** EMC Research  
**RE:** Survey Results  
**DATE:** February 2, 2024

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The following are key takeaways from research investigating community priorities related to Scottsdale’s parks and recreation, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and the current opinions of Scottsdale residents around the City’s fiscal environment. The research was conducted from October 19 to November 19, 2023 in two phases – a statistically valid survey, open only to invited Scottsdale voters using random sample methodology, and a public, open participation feedback tool that any interested Scottsdale resident could participate in. The key takeaways below highlight the results of the voter survey, while incorporating comparisons to the open participation feedback tool.

### Key Findings

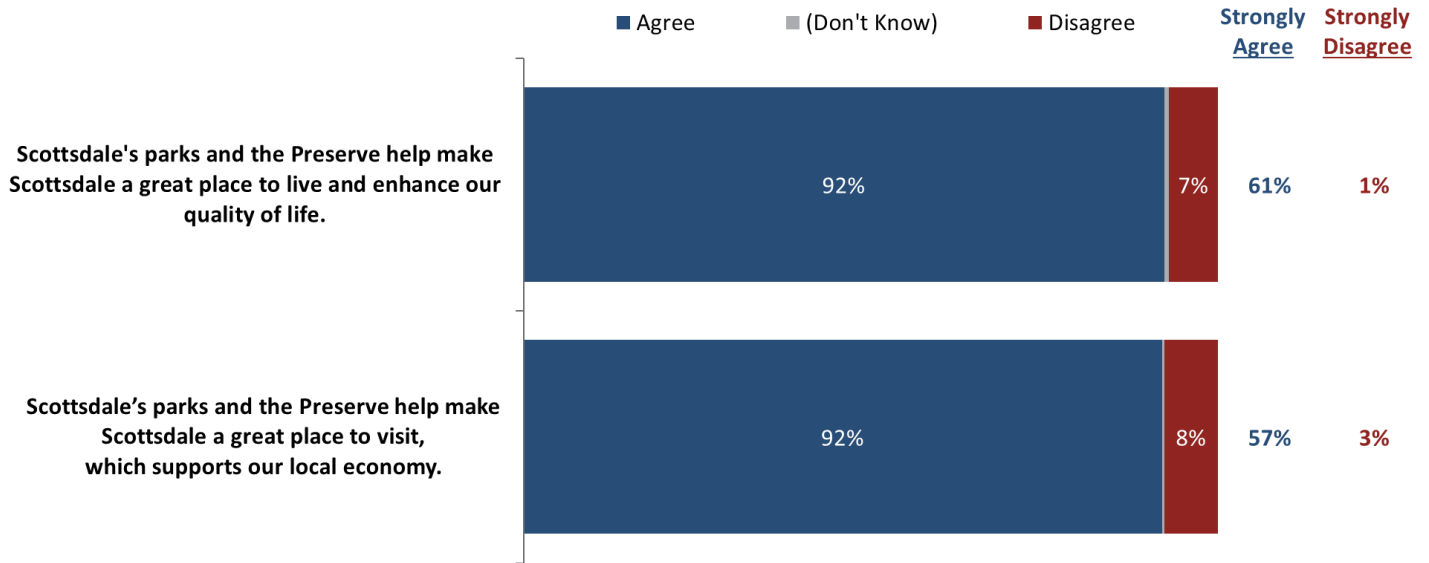
**Voters are optimistic about Scottsdale’s direction and the overall quality of life in the city.** Almost nine-in-ten (89%) voters rate the city’s quality of life positively, while six-in-ten (63%) say the city is going in the right direction. A majority also rate city government and the financial health of the city positively (67% and 74%, respectively), with about three quarters (78%) saying the city does an “excellent” or “good” job delivering services.



Overall, the **open participation feedback tool participants** held similar sentiments to voters and were positive (91%) about the quality of life in Scottsdale.

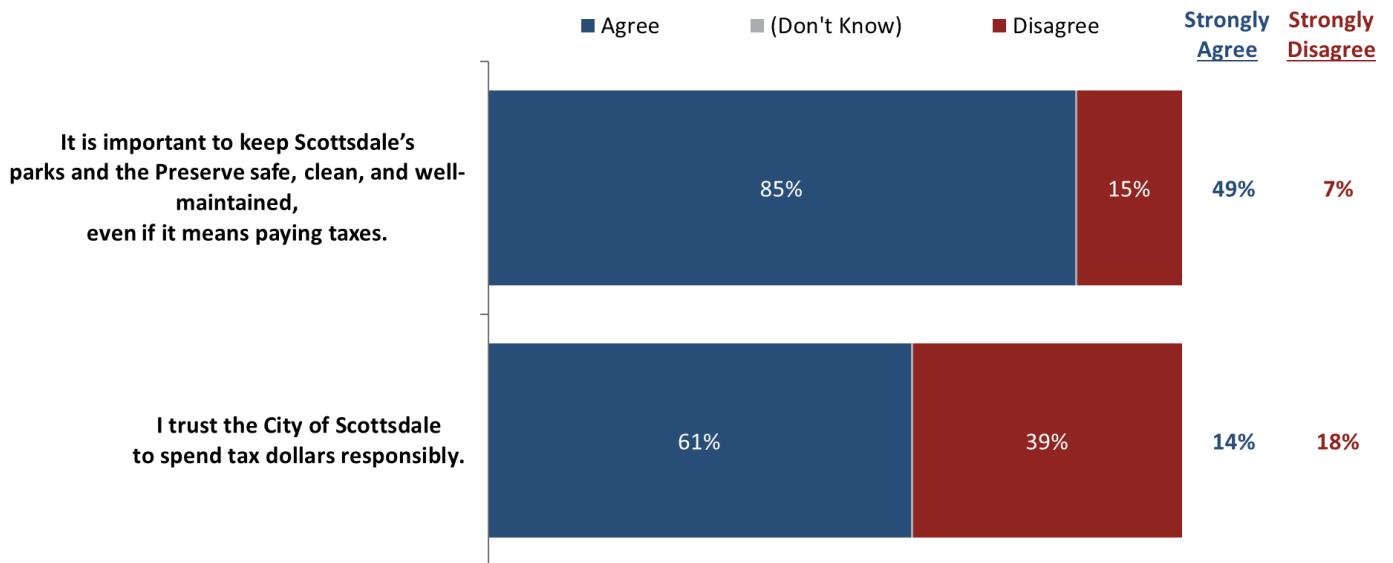
**Voters see City parks and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve as a contributor to Scottsdale’s high quality of life.** Scottsdale voters are in near-unanimous agreement that parks and the Preserve help make Scottsdale both a great place to live and a great place to visit, enhancing the city’s quality of life as well as its economy, with over nine-in-ten (92%) agreeing with both statements.





Open participation feedback tool participants held similar attitudes, with most agreeing Scottsdale's parks and the Preserve enhance Scottsdale's quality of life (96% agree) and enhance the local economy (92% agree).

Voters display some tax sensitivity, with around four-in-ten voters expressing hesitancy around the City's use of tax dollars. While most (85%) agree that parks and open spaces are important to maintain through taxes, fewer, though still majority (61%), show trust in the city to spend tax dollars responsibly.

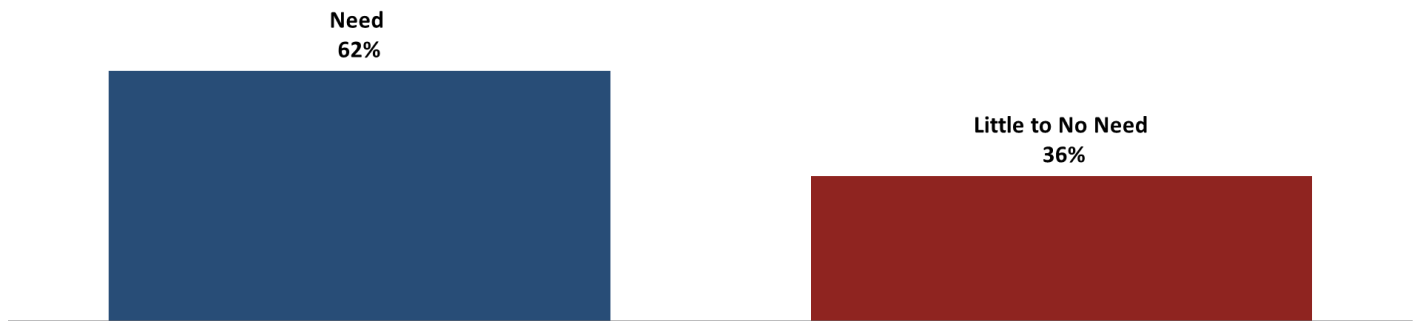


Among open participation feedback tool participants, there was even broader agreement that it's important to maintain parks and the Preserve through taxes (90% agree), and trust in the city to spend tax dollars responsibly was even higher (70% agree).

**A majority (62%) of voters believe the City needs additional funding to maintain, improve, and operate parks and recreational sites and facilities, and rate many aspects as high priorities for funding.**

Top priorities include protecting nature and wildlife habitats (48% very high priority, 83% total high priority), increasing fire prevention in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve (39% very high priority, 76% total high priority), and improving the city’s parks that are in the worst condition (38% very high priority, 82% total high priority). Maintenance efforts are rated as less of a high priority.

As you may know, the City of Scottsdale owns a number of parks and recreational sites and facilities, including City parks, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt, and the WestWorld events center. How would you rate the City of Scottsdale’s need for more funding to maintain, improve, and operate these sites and facilities?



While **open participation feedback tool participants’** priorities for parks were largely similar to voter opinions, participants in the open participation tool were more likely to express uncertainty when rating the conditions of the Preserve and City parks.

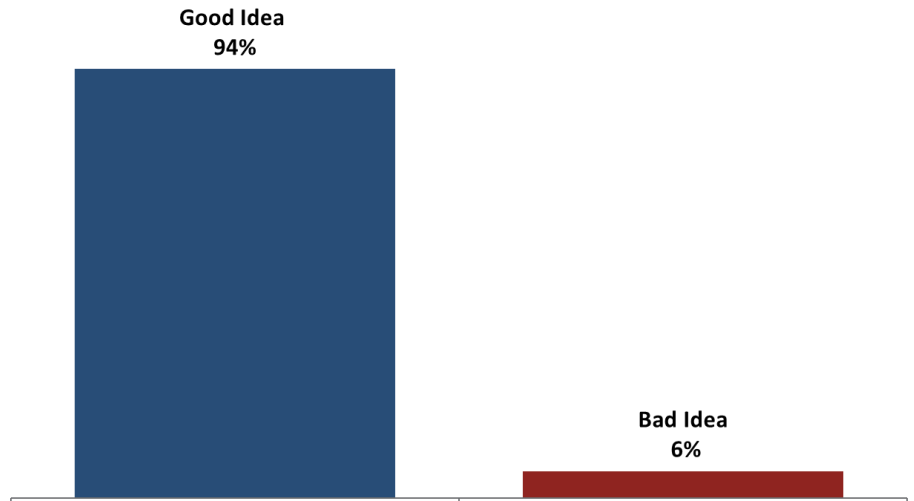
**Scottsdale voters report frequently making use of the city’s parks and open spaces.** Two-thirds (67%) of Scottsdale voters report visiting a park or other facility at least monthly, and just under half (45%) report visiting one at least once a week. Only a third (33%) of voters indicate visiting a park or facility less than monthly. Among the most visited parks are the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt with 34% reporting that they visit a few times a month or more. WestWorld events center was the least frequented facility with just 3% saying they visit often.

Similarly, **open participation feedback tool participants** said they visited the McDowell Sonoran Preserve most frequently, with a third (33%) visiting at least a few times a month, followed closely by 32% who report frequenting the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt at least a few times a month. Overall visitation numbers were also similar to voters, with just under half (47%) visiting a park or facility at least weekly, another 22% said they visit at least monthly, and only about a third (31%) who visit less than monthly.

**Voters respond positively (94% good idea) to the overall idea of funding the Preserve and other Scottsdale parks and recreation facilities without increasing the tax rate.** Most voters also see the more specific potential mechanisms of replacing an expiring tax and expanding the allowable uses of another tax as good ideas, but enthusiasm declines slightly (87% good idea) after they learn more about the specifics.

The City of Scottsdale is facing a shortfall in the funding needed to maintain and improve the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and other city parks and recreation facilities and is looking for ways to fund those needs.

If the City found a way to fund maintenance and improvements to the Preserve and other city parks and recreation facilities without increasing the tax rate, would you say this is a very good idea, a somewhat good idea, a somewhat bad idea, or a very bad idea?



**Like voters, those who participated in the open participation feedback tool approved of maintaining parks and facilities and believed funding them through replacing and expanding the existing taxes is a good idea.** Initially, 91% of participants indicated funding maintenance and improvements is a good idea. However, when exposed to more information about mechanisms, support softens and the final ask resulted in 86% of participants saying it is a good idea.

**Methodology**

The findings in this memo come from a voter survey conducted by EMC Research from October 19 –25, 2023 among 400 registered voters in the City of Scottsdale. The multi-modal survey included live telephone interviews and email/text invitations to complete the survey online. Telephone interviews were conducted by professional interviewers, landline and mobile phones included. Data are demographically and geographically representative of voters in Scottsdale. The overall margin of error for the poll is ±4.9 percentage points.

Additionally, EMC Research collected and analyzed data from an online open participation feedback tool that was open to all Scottsdale residents October 27—November 19, 2023. The City of Scottsdale distributed the survey through the Polco platform, and 1,333 total responses were collected.



Appendix C – Recommended Ballot Language

RESOLUTION NO. 13092

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, SEEKING APPROVAL OF THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS AS TO WHETHER THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL BE AUTHORIZED TO EXTEND AND REDUCE THE EXPIRING 1995 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE AND USE TAX RATE FOR IMPROVEMENTS, MAINTENANCE, AND PROTECTION OF CITY PARKS AND CITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND THE MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE.

WHEREAS, the maintenance and improvement of City Parks and Recreational Facilities, and maintenance and protection of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, including Police and Fire protection of City Parks and the Preserve, are of great importance to the community and its residents; and

WHEREAS, Article 6, Section 9 of the Scottsdale City Charter requires the approval of the qualified voters of the City for a tax rate change above 1%; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 1995, the qualified electors of the City authorized the City Council to increase the transaction privilege and use tax rate of the City by 0.20%, for 30 years, for the purpose of acquiring land for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and

WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force and the desire of the City Council to submit to the qualified electors a question as to whether the City Council shall be authorized to extend and reduce the expiring 0.20% tax rate to 0.15%, for 30 years, for the improvement and replacement of Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities including WestWorld, and for preservation, maintenance, and protection of Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities, and the maintenance and protection of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2024, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 13065 calling a Primary Election for Tuesday, July 30, 2024, and if necessary, a General Election for Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Scottsdale, Maricopa County, Arizona as follows:

Section 1. The question as to whether the qualified electors of the City authorize the City Council to extend and reduce the transaction privilege and use tax rate of the City shall be submitted to the voters of the City of Scottsdale, substantially in the form shown in Exhibit A, at the General Election to be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

Section 2. The City Council hereby directs the City Clerk, City Manager, City Attorney, and City Treasurer to take such steps as may be necessary to include this measure on the General Election ballot.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Scottsdale, Maricopa County, Arizona, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, an Arizona  
municipal corporation

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ben Lane, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
David D. Ortega, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry R. Scott, City Attorney

## EXHIBIT A

### Full Text

#### Question X (Proposition XXX)

Proposal Referred to the Voters by the Council of the City of Scottsdale

**OFFICIAL TITLE:** A CITY CODE AMENDMENT TO EXTEND AND REDUCE SCOTTSDALE'S EXPIRING TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE AND USE TAX RATE TO FUND: 1) IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE FOR CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES; 2) MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION FOR THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE; AND 3) INCREASED POLICE AND FIRE RESOURCES RELATED TO CITYWIDE PARKS AND THE PRESERVE.

**DESCRIPTIVE TITLE:** Authorizes the City to extend and reduce the current 0.20% transaction privilege and use tax rate, expiring in 2025, to 0.15%, for 30 years to fund the improvement, maintenance, and protection of Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities, and the maintenance and protection of the Preserve as determined by ordinance.

A **"YES"** vote shall have the effect of authorizing the City to extend and reduce the current 0.20% transaction privilege and use tax rate, expiring in 2025, to 0.15%, for 30 years, effective July 1, 2025, for the purpose of: 1) improvements and maintenance for Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities; 2) maintenance and protection for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and 3) increased Police and Fire resources related to Citywide Parks and the Preserve, with all being more specifically determined by City ordinance.

A **"NO"** vote shall have the effect of denying the City the authority to extend and reduce the current 0.20% transaction privilege and use tax rate, expiring in 2025, to 0.15%, for 30 years, effective July 1, 2025, for the purpose of: 1) improvements and maintenance for Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities; 2) maintenance and protection for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and 3) increased Police and Fire resources related to Citywide Parks and the Preserve.

## Tagline Text

### Question X (Proposition XXX)

Proposal Referred to the Voters by the Council of the City of Scottsdale

**SHALL SCOTTSDALE'S CURRENT 0.20% TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE AND USE TAX RATE, EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2025, BE REDUCED TO 0.15% AND EXTENDED FOR 30 YEARS TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS, MAINTENANCE, AND INCREASED POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION OF CITYWIDE PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND THE PRESERVE AS DETERMINED BY CITY ORDINANCE?**

A **"YES"** vote shall have the effect of authorizing the City to extend and reduce the current 0.20% transaction privilege and use tax rate, expiring in 2025, to 0.15%, for 30 years, effective July 1, 2025, for the purpose of: 1) improvements and maintenance for Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities; 2) maintenance and protection for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and 3) increased Police and Fire resources related to Citywide Parks and the Preserve, with all being more specifically determined by City ordinance.

A **"NO"** vote shall have the effect of denying the City the authority to extend and reduce the current 0.20% transaction privilege and use tax rate, expiring in 2025, to 0.15%, for 30 years, effective July 1, 2025, for the purpose of: 1) improvements and maintenance for Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities; 2) maintenance and protection for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve; and 3) increased Police and Fire resources related to Citywide Parks and the Preserve.

Appendix D – Recommended Ordinance for Distribution and Oversight of 0.15% Tax



ORDINANCE NO. 4633

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, ADDING A NEW SECTION 16-52 TO CHAPTER 16, LICENSES, TAXATION AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS REGULATIONS, ARTICLE III, PRIVILEGE AND USE TAXES, OF THE SCOTTSDALE REVISED CODE (CODE) TO DETERMINE THE SPECIFIC DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUES FROM THE 2025 0.15% TAX IF SUCH TAX IS APPROVED BY THE VOTERS ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024; AMENDING SECTION 20-1 OF THE CODE TO UPDATE THE PURPOSE, POWERS, AND DUTIES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION TO INCLUDE OVERSIGHT OF THE 2025 0.15% TAX RELATED TO PARKS; AMENDING SECTION 21-7 OF THE CODE TO UPDATE THE PURPOSE, POWERS, AND DUTIES OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION TO INCLUDE OVERSIGHT OF THE 2025 0.15% TAX RELATED TO THE PRESERVE; AND ESTABLISHING A CONDITIONAL EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2024, voters will consider whether to authorize the City to impose a 0.15% transaction privilege and use tax (the "2025 0.15% Tax") for 30 years, effective July 1, 2025, to fund the (1) improvements and maintenance for Citywide Parks and Recreational Facilities, (2) maintenance and protection for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and (3) increased Police and Fire resources related to Citywide Parks and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, with all being more specifically determined by City ordinance;

WHEREAS, if the voters approve the 2025 0.15% Tax, the City Council will adopt a subsequent ordinance codifying the new tax rate, to be effective July 1, 2025;

WHEREAS, as contemplated by the 2025 0.15% Tax ballot question, in this Ordinance, the City Council desires to predetermine and codify the specific distribution of revenues from the 2025 0.15% Tax, if approved by the voters; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Scottsdale, Maricopa County, Arizona, as follows:

Section 1. A new Section 16-52 is hereby added to Scottsdale Revised Code, Chapter 16 (Licenses, Taxation and Miscellaneous Business Regulations), Article III (Privilege and Use Taxes) as follows:

**Section 16-52. Use of 2025 0.15% Tax.** All revenues generated from the 0.15% transaction privilege and use tax approved by City voters on November 5, 2024 (the "2025 0.15% Tax") shall be used to improve and maintain the City's Parks and Recreational Facilities (which includes limited WestWorld capital improvements), to maintain and protect the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and to increase Police and Fire resources related

to Citywide Parks and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, for the benefit of all geographic areas within the City, with an emphasis on restoring and updating the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and other aged Parks. Revenues from the 2025 0.15% Tax shall be distributed as determined by the City Council with the following specific ordinance restrictions:

- A. After Section (C) is satisfied, all other remaining 2025 0.15% Tax revenues shall be distributed as set forth below:
  - 51% for City Parks improvement needs.
  - 18% for McDowell Sonoran Preserve maintenance and protection.
  - 14% for City Parks, and Recreational Facilities maintenance (excluding WestWorld).
  - 10% to the Scottsdale Fire Department for Citywide related needs within the purposes of the 2025 0.15% Tax, which specifically includes, but is not limited to, technical rescue team(s) for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and City Parks and for fire fuel mitigation around the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and in and around the City Parks for the protection and maintenance of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and City Parks.
  - 7% for increased McDowell Sonoran Preserve and City Park Police ranger unit(s) and Park and McDowell Sonoran Preserve security.
- B. At the end of each year, any unused 2025 0.15% Tax revenues in each category listed in Section (A) will be carried forward for use in future years within the same category.
- C. Debt may be used to fund capital improvements in accordance with the City's adopted financial policies (for instance, debt will be issued for WestWorld capital improvements). Notwithstanding Section (A) above, on an annual basis, the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues will be used to satisfy any debt requirements as required by bond covenants. Debt requirements will be limited to no more than \$4,500,000 of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues on an annual basis.
- D. Beginning with the 2025/26 fiscal year end audited financial results, and continuing for the term of the 2025 0.15% Tax, the City Treasurer will prepare an annual accounting of the 2025 0.15% Tax for the City Council.

Section 2. A new Subsection (c)(4) is hereby added to Scottsdale Revised Code, Chapter 20 (Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs), Article I (General), Section 20-1 (Parks and Recreation Commission), as follows:

(c) The Parks and Recreation Commission shall:

.....

(4) For the term of the 2025 0.15% Tax described in Section 16-52 of the Scottsdale Revised Code, serve as the citizens' oversight committee for the implementation of the 2025 0.15% Tax as it relates to the use of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues for all park improvements, capital projects, and master plans relating to the use of the 2025 0.15% Tax with an emphasis on restoring and updating the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt and other aged parks.

Section 3. A new Section (1) is hereby added to Scottsdale Revised Code, Chapter 21 (McDowell Sonoran Preserve), Article II (McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission), Section 21-15244239v1

7 (Purpose; powers and duties), as follows, with the existing Sections (1) through (8) being renumbered as Sections (2) through (9), respectively:

**Sec. 21-7. - Purpose; powers and duties.**

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission, with the assistance of City staff, shall be responsible for making recommendations to the City Council on the following matters:

(1) For the term of the 2025 0.15% Tax described in Section 16-52 of the Scottsdale Revised Code, serving as the citizens' oversight committee for the implementation of the 2025 0.15% Tax as it relates to the use of the 2024 0.15% Tax revenues for maintenance and protection of the Preserve. Specifically, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission shall review and recommend to City Council an annual budget proposal for use of the 2025 0.15% Tax revenues in accordance with master plans and strategies related to:

(a) Wildlife habitat protection:

(i) Invasive Plant removal and management in the Preserve,

(ii) Wildland fire fuel reduction and management in the Preserve,

and

(iii) Restoration of disturbed lands in the Preserve,

(b) Ecological resource plan and natural resource studies, projects, and awareness in support of the Preserve; and/or

(c) Cultural resource protection and management in the Preserve.

....

Section 4. If the voters approve the 2025 0.15% Tax, this Ordinance shall be effective as of July 1, 2025.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Scottsdale, Maricopa County, Arizona this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, an Arizona  
municipal corporation

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
David D. Ortega, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ben Lane, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry R. Scott, City Attorney

Appendix E – Letters of Support

To: Cynthia Wenstrom, Chair & Raoul Zubia, Vice Chair  
Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251

From: City of Scottsdale Parks & Recreation Commission  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251

**Re: Recommendations from the Parks & Recreation Commission for Sustainable Funding for Protecting and Preserving the City's Open Spaces**

Dear Chair Wenstrom, Vice Chair Zubia, and Members of the Protect & Preserve Scottsdale Task Force,

The Parks & Recreation Commission recommends that the Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force recommend to the City Council that a sales tax be levied to support funding for protecting and preserving Scottsdale's Open Spaces. This includes the McDowell Sonoran Preserve as well as park and aquatic facilities operated by the City. Specifically, we recommend that the Task Force recommend Council levy a tax at a rate of at least .15%. This tax will provide benefits primarily to Scottsdale's residents, while the cost will be shared by tourists and residents.

At present, there is no financial strategy identified to address the City's, and the Department's, aging infrastructure. The General Fund cannot support these needs. A sales tax offers a clear financial strategy to match expenditures to revenues. It will support the City's current assets, repair them as they approach their end-of-life, and create assets to offer world-class amenities.

To continue as a world-class community with simply better service and a robust tourism industry, the City must provide world-class parks and open spaces. We recommend that tax revenue support current and future capital improvements and maintenance of the Preserve as well as the City's parks, recreation facilities, and aquatic centers. Tax revenues will support:

- **Continued investment** in Scottsdale's existing Parks and Recreation assets, including capital projects and improvements.
- **Future projects and improvements** that are identified in the resident-driven Parks & Recreation Master Plan (as reflected in the City's General Plan).
- **Maintenance needs and asset management**, including staffing, contractual services, and commodities.

To assure the City remains world-class, the Commission supports a Task Force recommendation of a .15% sales tax to City Council. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Kristen Parrish, the Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission, via email ([kristyparrish@gmail.com](mailto:kristyparrish@gmail.com)) or via phone (510.684.8697).

Thank you,

Parks & Recreation Commission

Chair Kristen Parrish, Vice Chair Teresa Kim Quale, Commissioner Michael Vreeland, Commissioner Eric Maschhaupt, Commissioner Maryann McAllen, Commissioner Susan McGarry

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and City Council and Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force Chair, Vice-Chair and Members  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd. Scottsdale, AZ 85251

**From:** City of Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251

**Re:** **Recommendations from the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission for Sustainable Funding for Protecting and Preserving the City's Open Spaces**

**Date:** February 7, 2024

Mayor and members of the City Council, Chair Wenstrom, Vice Chair Zubia, and Members of the Protect & Preserve Scottsdale Task Force,

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission recommends that the City Council support the Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force recommendation for a sales tax to be levied to support funding for protecting and preserving Scottsdale's Open Spaces. This includes the McDowell Sonoran Preserve as well as park and aquatic facilities operated by the City. Specifically, we recommend that the Task Force recommend Council levy a tax at a rate of at least .15%. This tax will provide benefits primarily to Scottsdale's residents, while the cost will be shared by tourists and residents.

At present, there is no financial strategy identified to address the Preserve's long-term care and protection. Approval of this proposal would reduce the reliance on the General Fund for Preserve care and maintenance costs, while providing a clear financial strategy to match expenditures to revenues. The Preserve Commission for the past several years has been researching the yearly costs necessary to provide care and protection for the Preserve which when completed will represent over \$1.6 Billion of investment from the citizens of Scottsdale. The Preserve Commission has provided the Preserve care and protection costs to the Protect and Preserve Scottsdale Task Force, which are fully included in this package being presented to the Council. This proposal will provide the yearly assurance of funding to support this valuable City asset and thereby keep the Preserve protected for generations to come.

To continue as a world-class community with simply better service and a robust tourism industry, the City must provide world-class parks and open spaces. We recommend that tax revenue support for the care and protection of the Preserve as well as current and future capital improvements and maintenance of the City's parks, recreation facilities, and aquatic centers. Tax revenues for the Preserve will support:

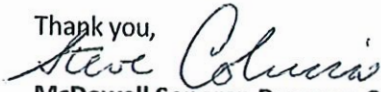
- **Year-round Care and Protection** in Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve.
  - Protect Archeologic Resources
  - Preservation of Wildlife Habitat
  - Habitat Protection from:
    - Invasive Plants
    - Wildland fire fuel loads
    - Historic Scars/Disturbance

- **Maintenance needs and asset management**, including staffing, contractual services, and commodities.

The Commission supports a Task Force recommendation of a .15% sales tax to City Council.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Steve Coluccio, the Chair of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission, via email [scoluccio.preservecommission@gmail.com](mailto:scoluccio.preservecommission@gmail.com) or via phone at 847-207-0109.

Thank you,



**McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission**

Chair Steve Coluccio

Vice-chair Kerry Olsson

Commissioners Laurie LaPat-Polasko, Marsha Lipps, Mark Hackbarth, Jeff Smith and Savannah Engelking