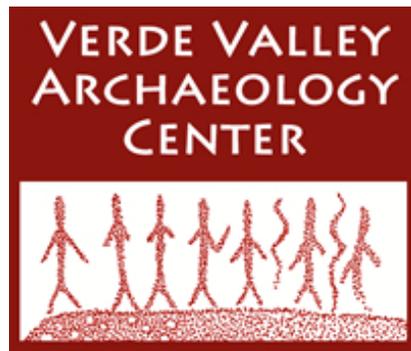
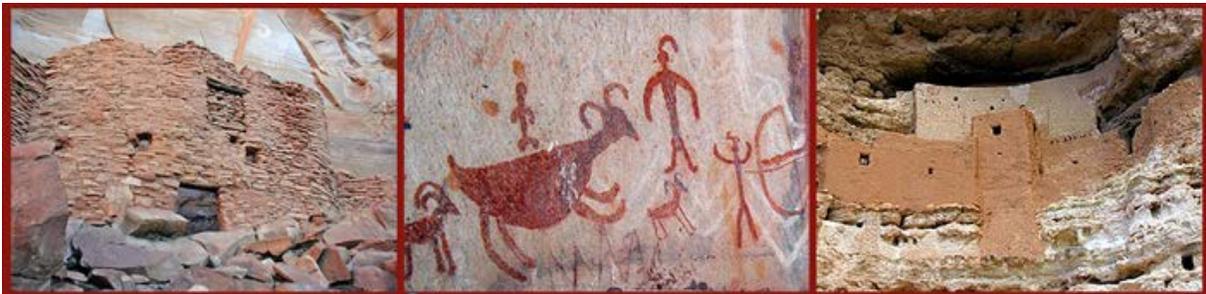


# Verde Valley Archaeology Center, Inc.



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019



**Protecting the Past, Shaping the Future!**

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### **Appendix – 2010-2015 Strategic Plan Accomplishments**

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Verde Valley Archaeology Center (hereafter referred to as “the Center”) is an educational institution that can expand the understanding of who we were in the past, who we are today, and what we want to become in the future. This is a powerful purpose. To better describe how the Center is essential in the surrounding communities, its mission, vision and goals have been developed and are presented in this document.

Historically, ancient cultural materials originating in the Verde Valley lacked a local facility for curation and preservation and, by necessity, were sent to institutions out of the area. Creating an accredited facility for the curation and preservation of cultural resource materials originating in the Verde Valley has been the ultimate goal of the Center. A Conservation Assessment was performed of the Center’s current physical space, environment, policies and procedures by staff from the Arizona State Museum in June 2014. The final report of this assessment stated that the Center was “highly qualified” to curate items from Federal, State and private lands. This was a major accomplishment that met the ultimate purpose for establishing the Center.

Another significant development was the acquisition of 15.28 acres of land within the Simonton Ranch development area of Camp Verde. This property not only provides space to build new facilities, but it also contains several undisturbed prehistoric pit houses and associated cultural deposits. The land-use planning of this property in an efficient and ethical way will be a major focus of this Strategic Plan

Taking into consideration these developments, the Center will focus its activity on six broad strategic areas over the next five years:

1. To build a stable financial base for operations;
2. To develop a land-use plan and resources for property development;
3. To hire full-time paid staff;
4. To provide enriching educational experiences;
5. To promote heritage tourism;
6. To enhance protections for archaeological sites; and,
7. Serve the community through research and preservation

This plan is the culmination of an effort by the Board of Directors to prioritize and guide the Verde Valley Archaeology Center’s activities for 2015 through 2019. It presents the objectives and strategies of the Center and is designed to be consistent with our mission, character and core values.

## II. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

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### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center is to preserve archaeological sites and collections, to curate the collections locally, and to make them available for research and education; to develop partnerships with American Indians, cultural groups and the communities it serves; and to foster a deeper understanding of prehistory and American Indian history in the Verde Valley through the science of archaeology.

The Center is dedicated to enhancing knowledge of the prehistory and ethnology of inhabitants of the Verde Valley region. We will promote a greater understanding of the diversity of cultures past and present, for our guests and the citizens of the Verde Valley. We will advocate for the *retention* and preservation of the Verde Valley's irreplaceable cultural resources that include significant structures, sites and artifacts.

### **Vision Statement**

Verde Valley Archaeology Center will be strongly supported, well known, and widely recognized as a major cultural and archaeological destination with fully accessible exhibits, educational programs and activities serving a large and diverse audience. We will be known for our high professional standards and practices, as well as an important center for research and preservation of the Verde Valley's ancient legacy. The Center's museum will strive to identify and serve the emerging needs and service expectations of a dynamic community, and to make a lasting and positive impact on its guests.

### **Value Statement**

Understanding diversity helps us to work together and serve our community. We will develop close relationships with our American Indian partners and other cultural organizations to enable us to better present our uniqueness and individuality, as well as commonalities. Our differences and similarities enable us to find many paths to success through partnerships and collaborations. We will put this belief into action to provide effective services to our diverse community.

### **III. Elements of the Plan**

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#### **A. The Program**

The primary emphasis of the Strategic Plan is to protect and interpret the archaeological features of the Verde Valley while providing for education and research about the native peoples of the region. The principle of perpetuity is the philosophy underlying the Center's Strategic Plan. Protection of the Valley's sites, features and artifacts through proper management and curatorial practices, as well as up-to-date storage facilities, will serve the principle of perpetuity at the Verde Valley Archaeology Center.

- The essential value of the Center is in its emphasis on protection. Although many sites on the National Forests and the National Parks are protected, as time passes and as visitation increases, stresses will impact these sites. Likewise, archaeological resources on private land can be degraded by lack of care. Because archaeological resources are finite in number, they grow in cultural value through time. The longer archaeological features and artifacts are protected, the more the scientific potential of these elements increases with advances in scientific methods and techniques.
- The principle of perpetuity can be applied to both the protection of archaeological resources and the commitment to provide information about the cultural implications of the archaeological resources to future generations living in, and for those visiting the Verde Valley. The transfer of information about the Verde Valley's ancient and historic residents through the interpretation of local archaeology is also an important driver of the Strategic Plan.

#### **B. The Demographics**

According to a 2009 national research study on U.S. Cultural and Heritage Travel by Mandela Research, 78% of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling. Cultural and heritage visitors spend, on average, \$994 per trip compared to \$611 for all U.S. travelers.

Studies have shown that most cultural travelers want to enrich their lives with new travel experiences. This is particularly true among those aged 18-34, 75 percent of whom agreed that trips where they can learn something new are more memorable to them.

- The demographic profile of the cultural heritage travel segment today is younger, wealthier, more educated and more technologically savvy when compared to those surveyed in 1996.

- Gen Y and Millennials (ages 18-34) are more apt than Matures (aged 55+) to agree that trips where they can learn something new are more memorable to them (75% vs. 63%).
- Households headed by Baby Boomers are most likely (41%) to participate in these activities.

To help determine potential visitation, visitor counts for Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot national monuments and Fort Verde State Historic Park were obtained. The statistics reflect declining visitation at most National Parks since the start of the Great Recession in 2007. Venues that may see more local visitation show a smaller reduction in visitors, perhaps a positive trend for the Center.

	<u>Montezuma Castle</u>	<u>Tuzigoot</u>	<u>Fort Verde</u>
2013	389,091	85,746	10,086
2012	455,305	97,388	11,319
2011	573,731	101,104	11,005

### C. Archaeological Tourism

What is archaeological tourism? It is travel that focuses on visiting and experiencing ancient sites and historical places, and is related to the broader field of cultural heritage tourism. The motivating forces behind archaeological tourism are a passion for the past and an interest in learning about the ancient or historical cultures that inhabited the area being visited. Archaeological tourism may include visits to museums, places of historical significance, historically and archaeologically focused parks, undeveloped archaeological sites and attendance at traditional dances, festivals or other events.

The popularity of cultural sites as tourist attractions makes them valuable sources of revenue. However, the Archaeological Institute of American (AIA) has pointed out that this economic exploitation is often not matched by reinvestment in proper site management to ensure the protection of sites. As a result, the AIA and the Adventure Travel Trade Association teamed up to create a manual of best practices for archaeological tourism to help ensure that the public enjoy the experience of visiting ancient places for generations to come. These good practices are:

- Proper practices should minimize impact on the site and ensure preservation
- Support local site preservation efforts
- Balance economic considerations against cultural heritage concerns
- Encourage and support community involvement in planning the future of sites
- Provide proper interpretation by providing visitors with an authentic experience
- Encourage education and understanding of sites

In order to establish the Verde Valley Archaeology Center as a quality center for information and protection of ancient culture, the Strategic Plan has been developed to create a learning environment in which the story of the origin of the Verde Valley people can be told. The quality of the facilities and interpretive exhibits needs to be commensurate with the demographic described in the earlier section.

#### **D. The Permanent Facility**

The goal as expressed in this Strategic Plan is to build the necessary facilities to meet all of the Center's current and future needs. Buildings will include space for artifact curation and exhibits, as well as for administrative, research and educational functions. Since the property includes archaeological features, a park with interpretive signage will be included in the overall plan design.

The building(s) will be designed to reflect the simple forms of Southwestern pueblo-style buildings. All facilities will serve as backdrops to the archaeological features of the park, but construction will not adversely impact the cultural resources on the property.

### **IV. MASTER PLAN**

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#### **A. Overview**

The Center is the only organization in the Verde Valley dedicated to preservation of ancient cultural sites, and the care (curation), management and use of archaeological artifacts found throughout the Verde Valley region. The Center's vision is to sustain an archaeological center and museum where:

- the preservation of prehistoric and Native American historic sites will be fostered
- archaeological materials will be cared for in a state-of-the-art environment
- archaeological materials will be available for academic and professional research
- artifacts will be used in educational programs and exhibits so the public can enjoy learning about the prehistory and Native American history of the Verde Valley region

The Center will evolve with a variety of tools and services including training, research, publications, public and school programming, exhibits and internet resources.

## **B. Strategic Initiatives, Goals and Action Items**

A set of *Initiatives* was drafted by the Board of Directors for the period 2015-2019. The *Goals* define a shared vision of the future of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center and provide a framework for a work plan. The *Action Items* provide a set of more detailed programs and design statements which refine the Strategic Plan to help direct future decisions related to implementation and updating the plan.

### ***Strategic Initiative 1: Build a stable financial base for operations***

**Goal 1:** Develop a Capital Campaign

**Action Item 1.1:** Develop and run a Capital Campaign with incentives, such as naming rights, for property development.

**Target Date:** January 2016

**Goal 2:** Build business sponsorship opportunities

**Action Item 1.2:** Develop a business membership base through incentives and cooperative ventures.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Goal 3:** Promote the Planned Giving Legacy program and the Endowment Fund

**Action Item 1.3:** Develop a strategy to increase endowment and planned giving.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

### ***Strategic Initiative 2: Develop a sustainable land-use plan for property development***

**Goal 1:** Conduct a study of long-term facilities needs to maximize the Center's operational potential.

**Action Item 2.1:** Conduct a long-term feasibility study, driven by programmatic considerations, considering the needs of a permanent long-term facility, including teaching and exhibit space, curation standards, and collections conservation.

**Target Date:** December 2015

**Goal 2:** Develop a balanced land-use policy

**Action Item 2.2:** Develop a land-use policy balancing the competing demands for the property considering heritage tourism, wildlife conservation, archaeological training, Native American settlement

concerns, and local zoning/building codes and regulations.

**Goal 3:** Develop a landscape architectural plan for the Archaeology Park

**Action Item 2.3:** Develop a landscape design plan for the Archaeology Park considering green landscaping, gardens, site planning, storm water management, environmental restoration, trail and interpretation, which will cause minimal impacts to surface or buried cultural resources..

### ***Strategic Initiative 3: Hire full-time paid staff***

**Goal 1:** Provide the Center with the full or part-time staff necessary to manage and grow the organization.

**Action Item 3.1:** Determine the proper mix of positions by identifying the “must-have” and the “nice-to-have” positions.

**Target Date:** May 2015

**Action Item 3.2:** Create a realistic compensation and benefits package for each position.

**Target Date:** July 2015

**Action Item 3.3:** Establish a search strategy, budget, and timeline for the staffing plan.

**Target Date:** September 2015

### ***Strategic Initiative 4: Provide Enriching Educational Experiences***

**Goal 1:** Expand efforts to support the Grade 4 education community with resources on archaeology.

**Action Item 4.1:** Offer tours and in-school programs to Grade 4; present teacher workshops.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Goal 2:** Provide educational opportunities to adults through conferences, workshops and training.

**Action Item 4.2:** Conduct specific educational programs for the general public through events, classes and lectures.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Goal 3:** Provide opportunities for the public to participate in active conservation

and preservation of our cultural history through volunteer opportunities.

**Action Item 4.3:** Provide opportunities and appropriate supervision and training for community members to volunteer rehabilitating collections, conducting fieldwork at archaeological sites and assisting with outreach events.

**Target Date:** March 2016

### ***Strategic Initiative 5: Promote Heritage Tourism***

**Goal 1:** Develop the Sinagua Trail self-guided tour of the Verde Valley.

**Action Item 5.1:** Work with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service to formalize the Sinagua Trail tour and expand the stops as resources permit.

**Target Date:** January 2016

**Goal 2:** Research, quantify and evaluate heritage tourism data and trends to advance heritage tourism to the Verde Valley region.

**Action Item 5.2:** Study heritage tourism trends; create a heritage tourism portion of the VVAC website; identify other strategies to enhance heritage tourism; develop our own demographics.

**Target Date:** January 2016

**Goal 3:** Develop a full length video of the Verde Valley prehistory for use as part of a visitor orientation program and for DVD sales.

**Action Item 5.3:** Create a script for the program, obtain filming permits, and apply for production funding.

**Target Date:** March 2016

### ***Strategic Initiative 6: Enhance Protections for Archaeological Sites***

**Goal:** Identify a range of tools to enhance the effectiveness of the Federal and private property owners toward protection of cultural resources.

**Action Item 6.1:** Research, examine and prioritize a range of programs, incentives, and mechanisms to increase the number, and oversight of, protected cultural resources.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Action Item 6.2:** Develop a suggested Archaeological Protection Building Code for local governments that would require an archaeological survey

prior to the issuance of a building permit in most public or private development.

**Target Date:** October 2016

**Action Item 6.3:** Contact all Verde Valley governmental bodies that issue building permits to encourage the adoption of such a code.

**Target Date:** January 2017

### ***Strategic Initiative 7: Serve the Community through Research and Preservation***

**Goal 1:** Assist the community in preserving our cultural resources.

**Action Item 7.1:** Conduct sponsored research in areas to be impacted by construction or other activities that would potentially destroy archaeological sites and to mitigate damage by recovering and curating artifacts when necessary.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Goal 2:** Publish Verde Valley regional research results and present research results at professional conferences.

**Action Item 7.2:** Encourage members to submit research results to peer-reviewed publications and to mentor members in this process.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

**Action Item 7.3:** Invite distinguished scholars to study artifacts within the Center's collection to develop published papers or monograms.

**Target Date:** Ongoing

## V. IMPLEMENTATION

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For our Strategic Plan to be successful, we must follow through to incorporate these initiatives into our everyday management, operations, and decision-making. An implementation process will be developed that will ensure that the strategic plan is carried out effectively, which is critical to our success. The first step was to translate each of the Strategic Initiatives into actionable items. This was accomplished and was presented with each Initiative.

Our next step is to mobilize a Team to support and accomplish the implementation goals. The Team will assess volunteer and staff time needed to implement the strategy. The Team may determine that it is necessary to shift finances or acquire new resources to support strategic goals.

Once this has been accomplished the Team will create a blueprint for the actionable items that considers the entire set of strategic initiatives to ensure that their scope, length, and required effort are realistic and appropriately sequenced. Specific individuals or sub-teams will be assigned to each action item, with specific timeframes.

Organizations that are effective at strategic implementation have strong processes in place for systematically measuring and evaluating progress towards their goals. The Team will explore processes that can help ensure that the Center stays focused on executing its strategies, while learning and adjusting along the way.

The Team will periodically revisit the strategic initiatives, viewing the strategies as anchors, not constraints, as to what the Center can achieve.

## **2010-2015 Strategic Plan Accomplishments**

The first VVAC Strategic Plan was intended to cover the years 2010 through 2015, with periodic review and adjustments. The current Strategic Plan is an update since many of the goals have been accomplished and major new initiatives are underway. Below is a listing of the items accomplished through 2014.

### ***Strategic Initiative 1: Serve the Public through Community Engagement***

**Goal 1:** To establish a VVAC Board of Trustees consisting of members of the community.

**Action Item 1.1:** Establish responsibilities for members of the Board of Trustees, recruit members; present VVAC strategic initiatives to the Trustees.

**Completion Date:** May 2011

**Goal 2:** To establish a VVAC Advisory Council consisting of constituency representatives to provide a structure through which the Center and constituency representatives may jointly discuss the creation, implementation, and execution of policies and activities that broadly effect archaeological research, education, and stewardship in the Verde Valley region.

**Action Item 1.2:** Establish responsibilities for members of the Advisory Council, recruit members; present VVAC strategic initiatives to the Council.

**Completion Date:** May 2011

### ***Strategic Initiative 2: Develop Resources and Infrastructure***

**Goal 1:** To obtain funding for a facility and utilities in a phased approach.

**Action Item 2.1:** Rent property as the physical location of the Center; purchase furniture and displays.

**Completion Date:** May 2011- Moved into 348 S. Main St. (400 sq. ft.)

**Action Item 2.2:** Design and build out property and obtain funds to move forward with the property build-out.

**Completion Date:** July 2012 – Moved to 385 S. Main St. (3,300 sq. ft.)

**Action Item 2.3:** Obtain funding for the storage of and access to collections by providing equipment and supplies for cataloguing and storage; Obtain funds for necessary hardware and software, including sufficient storage for databases and images, and external hard drives for data backup

**Completion Date:** July 2012 as part of move to 385 S. Main St.

### ***Strategic Initiative 3: Provide Enriching Educational Experiences***

**Goal 1:** To promote participation of the regional community in the mission of the Center.

**Action Item 3.1:** Provide Center-sponsored lectures and programs.

**Completion Date:** May 2011 – Limited classes were offered in the 348 space and free periodic lectures began in Camp Verde Community Center

#### ***Strategic Initiative 4: Serve the Community through Research and Preservation***

**Goal 1:** To develop a preservation policy to protect the Center's investment in its records and respect its obligations to the donors of the collections.

**Action Item 4.1:** Request the Advisory Council to work with the Board of Directors to develop a policy statement and guidelines for the acceptance and preservation of archaeological collections.

**Completion Date:** November 2011 – Preservation Policy was adopted in November 2011; Preservation and Records Ethics Statement was adopted in February 2012.

#### ***Strategic Initiative 5: Promote Heritage Tourism in order to support preservation of cultural resources, stimulate local economies, and increase revenue from tourism***

**Goal 1:** To develop cooperative relationships with Verde Valley regional historical societies, State Park facilities and Federal entities.

**Action Item 5.1:** Form a relationship with other organizations in the Verde Valley and nearby areas with similar interests in promoting heritage tourism; share resources; develop possible joint promotional materials.

**Completion Date:** 2012 – relationships were established with the Camp Verde and Sedona historical societies, as well as with Ft. Verde State Historic Park.

**Goal 4:** To develop a video of the Sinagua Circle locations for use as part of a visitor orientation program and for DVD sales.

**Action Item 5.4:** Create a script for the program, obtain filming permits, and apply for production funding for a short program for viewing in the Visitor Center.

**Completion Date:** October 2012 – a five-minute video was developed for use in the 385 facility for continual play.

#### ***Strategic Initiative 8: To build a stable financial base for operations***

**Goal 1:** To build the organization's financial base through the membership program, donations and the annual fund.

**Action Item 8.1:** Develop the website to permit memberships and donations to be taken electronically.

**Completion Date:** January 2011 – the website with a membership database was established for both membership and donation processing

**Goal 3:** To develop an endowment for long-term sustainability.

**Action Item 8.3:** Develop a gift acceptance policy that will define the types of assets that are acceptable, and establish the policies to manage such assets; undertake an endowment drive with an initial goal of \$5 million in gifts and pledges.

**Completion Date:** November 2011 – a Gift Acceptance Policy was adopted in November 2011; an Endowment Fund bank account was opened in May 2013.