

## Scottsdale, the Greenest Blue Zone

**Scottsdale using its leadership in Green Buildings to Capitalize on Blue Zone limelight**

**By Denise van den Bossche**

February 8, 2024. The City of Scottsdale is leveraging its leadership in green building certification to become the nation's *Greenest* Blue Zone. Scottsdale led the nation with its establishment of one of the first Green Building Departments in 1998. Certification is based on environmental stewardship, sustainability, and the health and well-being of building occupants. 'Blue Zone' is a brand and certification developed in 2004 which defines regions of the world where people have been found to live longer lives, with metrics based on healthy lifestyles and healthy communities. Many of the "Green" and "Blue" metrics are synergistic, so it was no surprise when Scottsdale kicked off its Blue Zones initiative last month.

### **Cultivating Longevity and Well-being**

'Blue Zones' share common characteristics that contribute to the well-being of their inhabitants, including a sense of community, a heavily plant-based diet, regular physical activity, and strong social connections. In comparison, green buildings are focused on the health of the building occupants and minimization of the building's ecological footprint in a sustainable fashion. The green building tenants of health and community align seamlessly with the principles of blue zones.

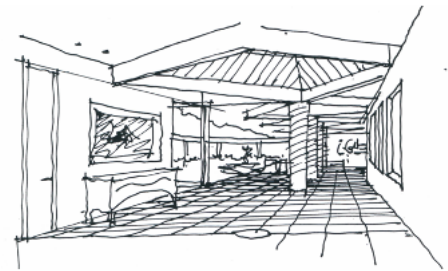


Figure 1-10500 E Lost Canyon #34 Scottsdale 85255, an early recipient of the Scottsdale Green Building Certification

### **The Scottsdale Advantage**

Blue Zones emphasize walkability in communities, which aligns with Scottsdale's 400 miles of well-maintained hiking trails, considered one of the top 15 hiking destinations in the nation. In addition to the hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails, there are farmers markets, parks, sports, art galleries, museums, restaurants, lakes with full marinas and hundreds of annual seasonal events. And Scottsdale is known for more than 200 golf courses, making it a top golf destination. Most importantly is the year-round accessibility to enjoy these activities, since Scottsdale has 299 sunny days per year, with average temperature of 72 to 80 degrees and low rainfall. Within a couple of

hours drive are snow sports like downhill skiing or the beaches of California and Mexico. Less than a day's drive away are activities ranging from the Grand Canyon, Telluride Colorado, Santa Fe New Mexico and more.

Blue Zone attributes include happiness and purpose, and numerous studies place Scottsdale as one of the happiest and healthiest places to live in the U.S. *Wallethub* named Scottsdale as the best place for job seekers. Scottsdale is ranked as extremely low risk for natural catastrophes such as hurricanes, earthquakes, mudslides, hail storms, tornados, wildfires or power grid failure. Scottsdale also enjoys a low cost of living and rare traffic congestion relative to its size. According to the 2021 census, the median age is 47.9, with median household income of \$97,409.



## Conclusion:

The collaboration between certified green buildings and blue zones is a powerful approach to creating sustainable, health-focused communities. Humans spend the majority of each day working, playing and learning indoors, making green buildings an important component of Blue Zone consideration. In 2023, Scottsdale became one of only a few municipalities nationwide to mandate 'green' building code requirements for both residential and commercial construction. Extending the leadership



Scottsdale has already demonstrated in its green building program into the Blue Zone initiative will undoubtedly make Scottsdale the Greenest Blue Zone on the planet.

About the Author: Denise van den Bossche is the Listing Agent of 10500 E. Lost Canyon #34, a Scottsdale Certified Green Home. She is a REALTOR® and Associate Broker with Realty Executives. Denise was the State Chair of the Arizona U.S. Green Building Council™ in 2008, and maintains a Legacy LEED (Accredited Professional) AP®. More information at [www.LostCanyonScottsdale.com](http://www.LostCanyonScottsdale.com)