

CASE STUDY

# The Inspirador Project

How one solopreneur transformed a historic landmark into a multimillion-dollar adaptive reuse ecosystem and replicable operating model.



historic preservation

DILAWOOD

adaptive reuse



# More Than Redevelopment — A Living Business Model

## Proof of Concept: Inspirador Operating System™ (IOS)

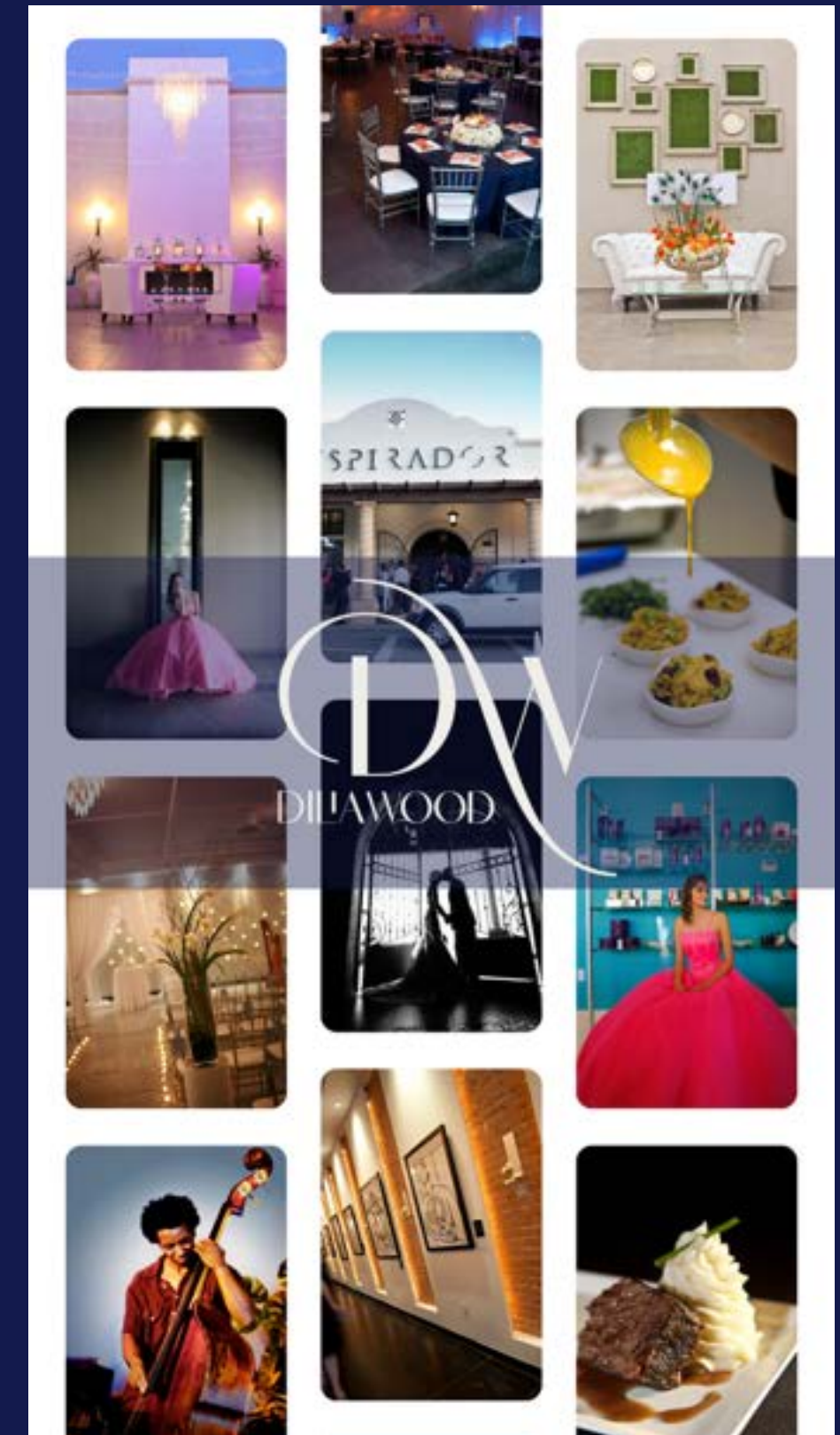
**Dilia Wood** transformed the historic **O.S. Stapley Hardware Store** at **63 East Boston Street in Chandler, Arizona** into a multimillion-dollar adaptive reuse project and a fully operational wedding and events business ecosystem.

She not only preserved and redeveloped the 12,000 sq ft landmark but also designed, launched, and operated a turnkey model of venue, food and beverage, cultural programming, and retail under one roof. This integrated system stabilized income, created jobs, and anchored community life downtown.

*“This wasn’t just redevelopment — it was the launch of a profitable wedding and events business model embedded inside a historic landmark.” — Dilia Wood*

That framework later became known as the Inspirador Operating System™ (IOS) — a replicable framework that integrates Asset (historic preservation + redevelopment), Model (multi-stream wedding and events operations), and Capital (SBA-backed financing and public-private grants).

IOS proved that adaptive reuse is not just about saving buildings — it’s about activating them with resilient businesses that can weather crises and inspire future developers.



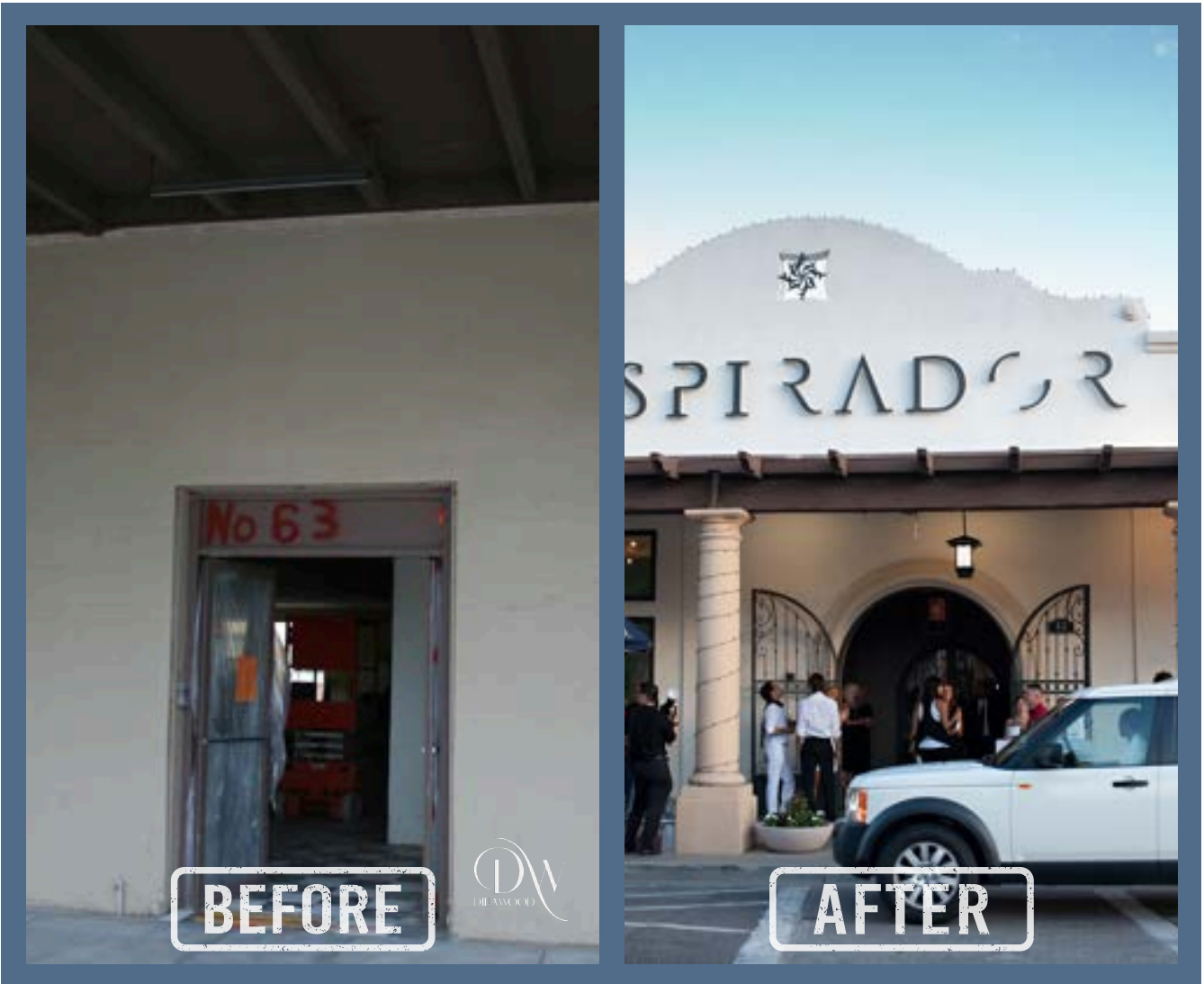
Scenes from Inspirador, the multi-stream wedding and events business model developed by Dilia Wood inside the historic O.S. Stapley Hardware Store.

# Executive Snapshot

## Multi-Million Dollar Adaptive Reuse & Historic Preservation Success

O.S. Stapley Hardware Company Store – Historic Downtown Chandler, AZ  
*By Dilia Wood, Founder, CEO – Adaptive Reuse & Historic Redevelopment*

This was not simply a real estate redevelopment. In addition to preserving and reactivating the 12,000 sq ft O.S. Stapley Hardware Store, I conceived, launched, and operated a multi-stream wedding and events business model inside the property – venue, catering, cultural events, and retail under one roof. That model became known as the Inspirador Operating System™ (IOS), a framework for adaptive reuse that combines asset, operations, and capital into a replicable system.



Proof of concept for a scalable adaptive reuse framework – integrating preservation, community alignment, and resilient revenue.



### Project Overview

- **Type:** Adaptive Reuse + Historic Preservation
- **Property:** 12,000 sq ft landmark building, one of only 14 recognized in the downtown district
- **Designation:** Registered with the National Historic Preservation Program as part of the Chandler Commercial Historic District
- **Role:** Sole developer, visionary, and CEO—led project independently from acquisition through successful exit



### Community & Cultural Impact

- **Activated Landmark:** Converted an underutilized historic property into a multi-tenant hub.
- **Downtown Anchor:** Drove ongoing foot traffic as a venue for art walks, festivals, and civic events.
- **Heritage Stewardship:** Preserved a property tied to Roosevelt Dam & Arizona statehood, balancing historic standards with modern usability.



### Capital & Strategy

- **Capital Stack:** Personal equity + SBA 504 + public/private grants
- **Risk Mitigation:** Diverse financing + community engagement + preservation compliance
- **Governance:** Public forums + unanimous City Council approval for assembly, alcohol, parking, construction permits



### Scalability & Replication

- **Turnkey Ecosystem:** Beyond real estate, the project was structured as the Inspirador Operating System™ – a fully integrated, franchise-ready model enabling seamless replication in similar high-growth districts.
- **License-Ready Framework:** Structured to serve as a transferable blueprint for adaptive reuse projects in culturally significant districts



### Economic Outcomes

- **Rent Growth:** \$12–16 NNN → \$22+ NNN
- **Valuation Lift:** +\$1M post-construction appraisal increase
- **Foot Traffic:** Transformed dormant site into destination hub, attracting thousands of monthly visitors
- **Operational Resilience:** Models weathered both the 2008 financial crisis and 2020 pandemic
- **Revenue Diversification:** Created a multi-stream operating model (venue, catering, retail, events) through the Inspirador Operating System™ – stabilizing cashflow, broadening impact, and extending beyond traditional real estate returns.



# Vision & Market Context

## Why Chandler?

- Fastest-growing U.S. city at the time of acquisition (+33% in a decade).
- Now a hub for global tech employers including Intel, Microchip, PayPal, and Honeywell.
- Downtown revitalization anchored by the \$74M LEED-Certified City Hall.
- Designated Historic District with cultural and architectural significance.

Where most adaptive reuse projects stop at redevelopment, Inspirador went further. It demonstrated that a vacant landmark could house not just tenants, but a fully integrated wedding and events ecosystem, designed to generate sustainable revenue streams while serving the community.

## Market Alignment

- Aligned with Chandler's city planning and revitalization goals.
- Captured demand signals: population growth, license volume, and cultural participation.
- Addressed a market gap in event-ready, multi-tenant cultural/commercial space.

## Project Proximity







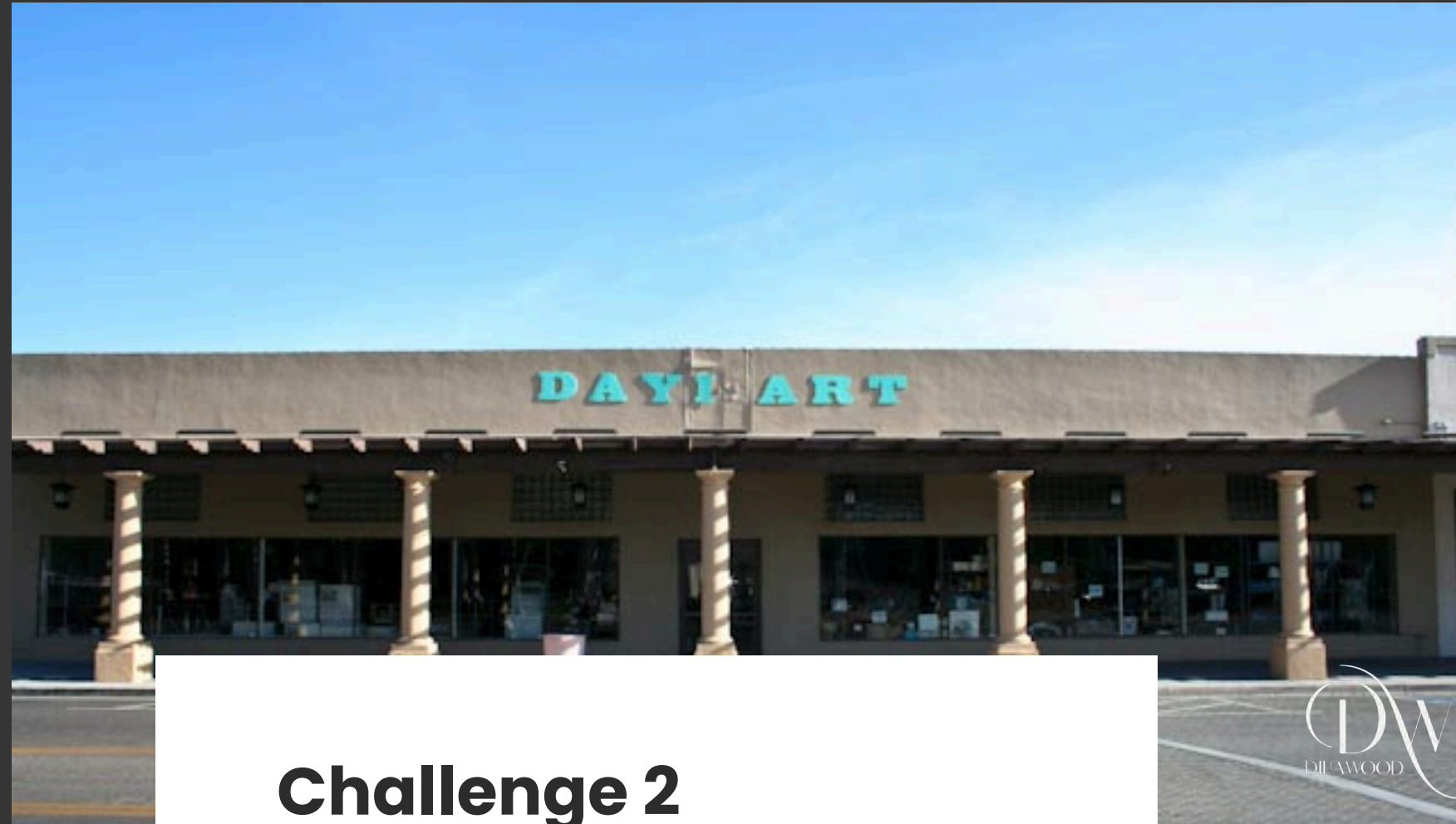
## Challenge 1 CAPITAL STRATEGY

Raising and structuring capital for a multimillion-dollar redevelopment, then navigating unforeseen cost overruns common in historic projects.



- **Challenge:** Securing funding for acquisition and development of a multimillion-dollar historic property — and navigating unexpected cost escalations. During demolition, 6,000 sq ft of roof trusses were discovered damaged beyond repair. Replacement nearly doubled construction costs, exceeding the standard 10% contingency reserve.
- **Approach:** Structured a diversified capital stack including personal equity, SBA financing, and public/private grant funding. Leveraged the flexibility of the SBA 504 loan program to secure a loan increase that covered overruns dollar-for-dollar, supported by full AIA documentation and revised estimates.
- **Outcome:** Closed the funding gap without halting construction. Demonstrated financial agility, lender negotiation skills, and the ability to manage unforeseen risks common in historic redevelopment. The challenge was not only to finance and stabilize a historic property but to design an operating model that could endure crises, scale revenue, and deliver cultural value.

That dual challenge — property plus business ecosystem — defined the project.



## Challenge 2

### ADAPTIVE REUSE + DESIGN

Reimagining a 1924 hardware store into a multi-tenant hub, balancing modern usability with adaptive reuse principles and city design requirements.

- **Challenge:** Reimagining an aging 1924 hardware store into a modern, multi-use commercial space.
- **Approach:** Mobilized an expert team including a general contractor, architect, and engineers to integrate adaptive reuse principles while ensuring modern usability and compliance.
- **Outcome:** Preserved the building's historic fabric while transforming it into a multi-tenant commercial hub ready for retail, events, and cultural engagement.







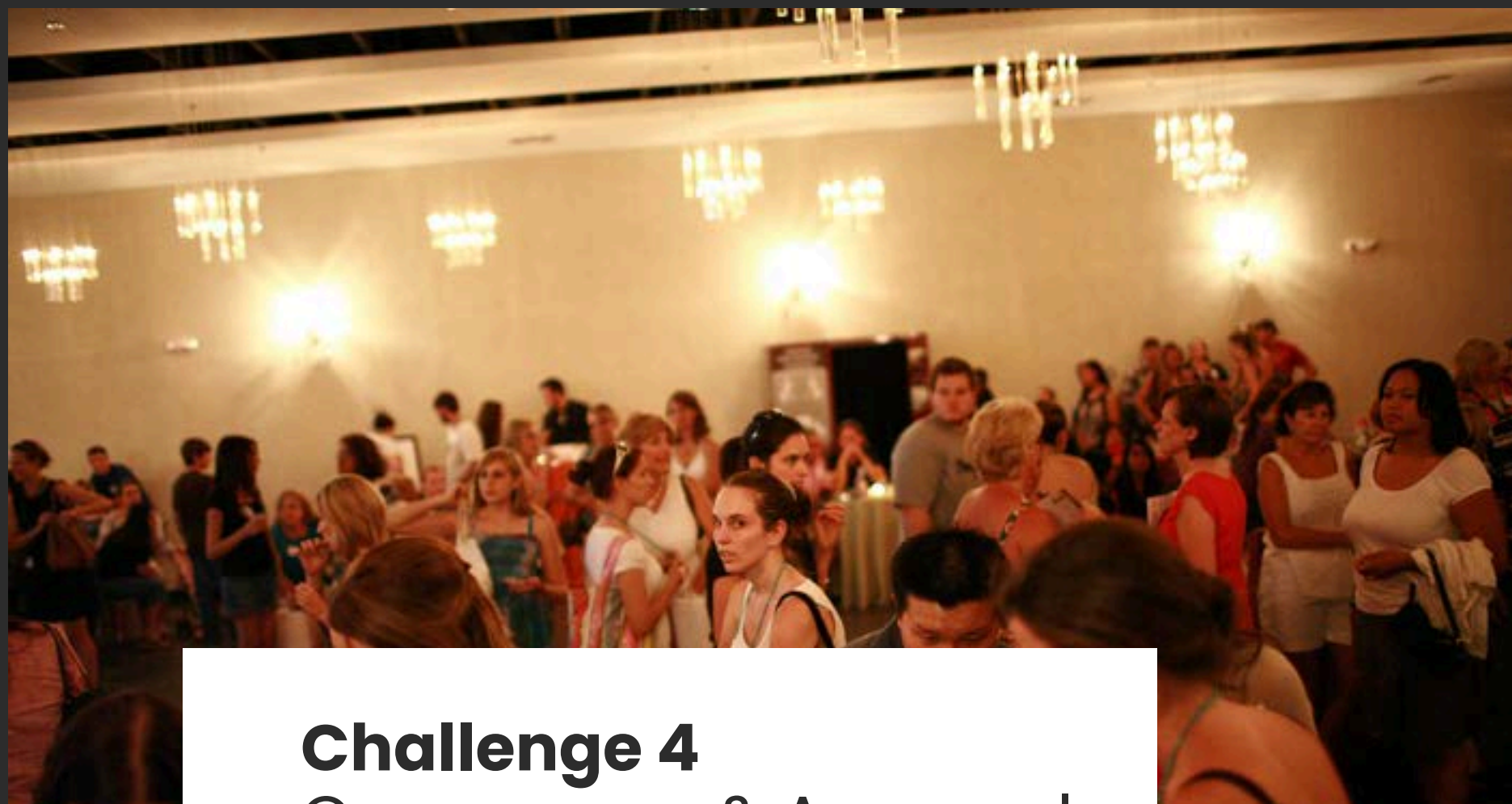
## Challenge 3

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Complying with preservation standards for the O.S. Stapley Hardware Co. — one of downtown's 14 designated landmarks — while ensuring the building met modern tenant needs.

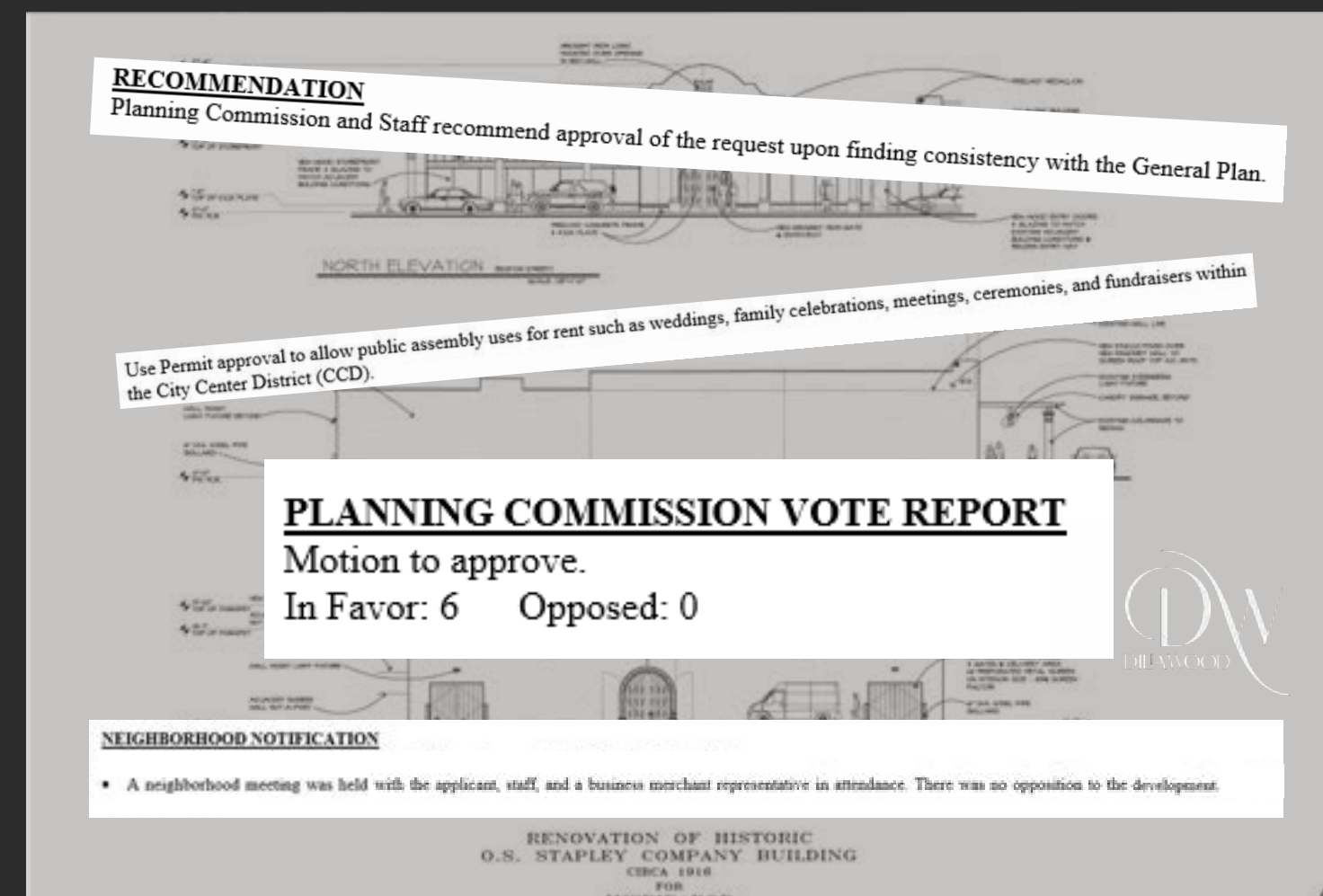


- **Challenge:** Compliance with historic preservation standards for the O.S. Stapley Hardware Company Store, a contributing property within the National Register-listed Chandler Commercial Historic District.
- **Approach:** Personally managed all preservation requirements in coordination with city and state authorities, ensuring historic integrity was maintained throughout redevelopment.
- **Outcome:** Revitalized one of only 14 designated landmarks in the downtown district, protecting heritage while increasing post-construction valuation by \$1M.



## Challenge 4 Governance & Approvals

Leading public meetings and neighborhood forums, building community support, and securing unanimous City Council approval for all special use permits.



- **Challenge:** Navigating complex approvals for a multi-use property (public assembly, alcohol service, parking, construction).
- **Approach:** Actively led public and neighborhood meetings, engaged city planners, and built direct relationships with officials to secure expedited reviews.
- **Outcome:** Achieved unanimous City Council approval for all permits, accelerating project timelines, reducing holding costs, and enabling faster tenant activation.

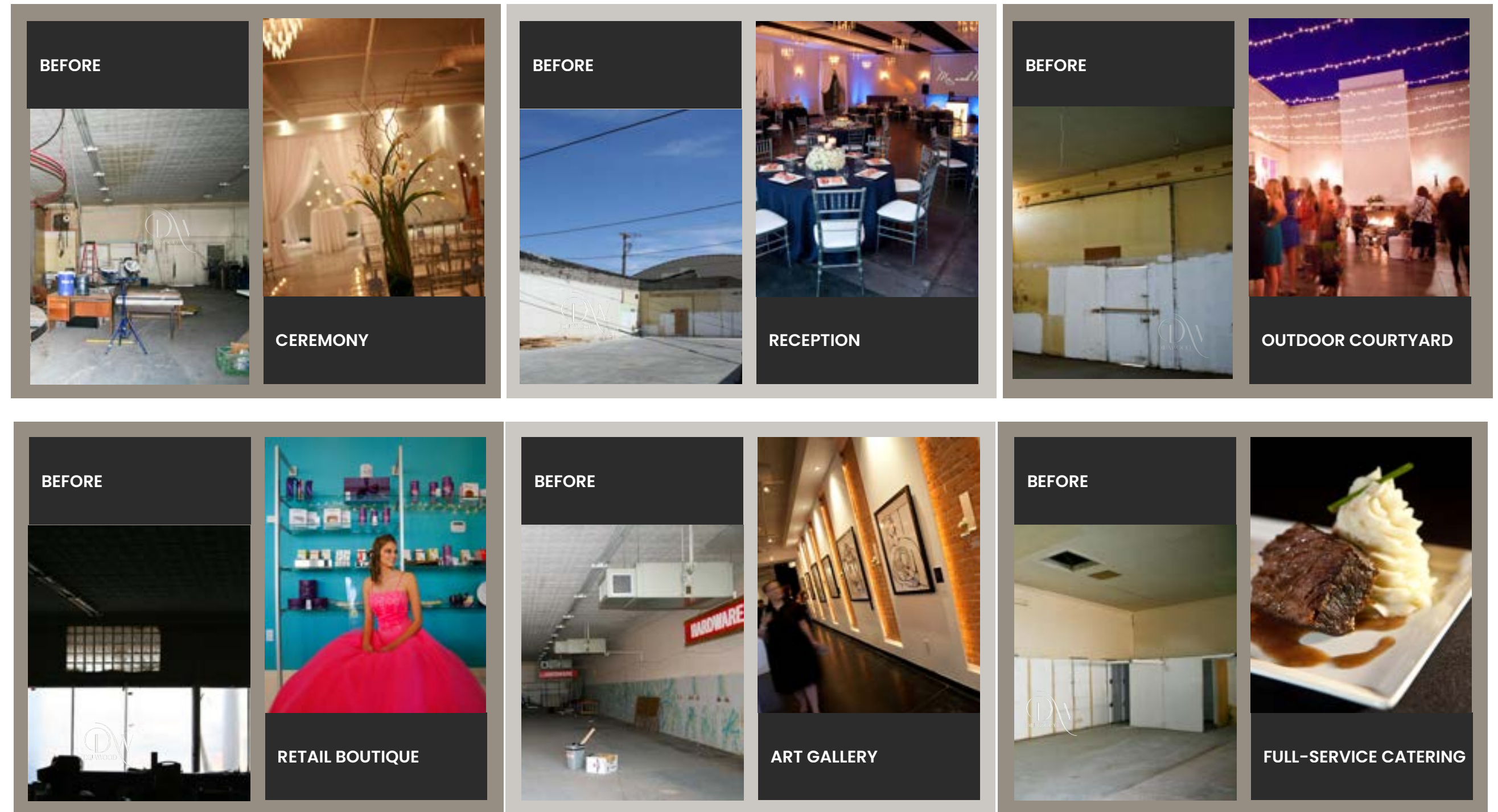


# Tenant-Centric Design Solutions

The solution was to pair adaptive reuse with a turnkey wedding and events operating model. Venue rentals, catering services, cultural programming, and retail created multiple income streams under one roof.

This structure, later codified as the Inspirador Operating System™ (IOS), layered Asset (preservation), Model (multi-stream operations), and Capital (SBA 504 financing + grants) into a replicable framework.

- **Multiple Entrances** → Improved access + privacy for tenants
- **Catering Kitchen** → Dedicated vendor space, reduced operational friction
- **Courtyard + Reception** → Flexible community and event activation
- **Event-Ready Infrastructure** → Built-in AV, lighting, and security
- **Integrated Storage** → Reduced tenant overhead







# Framework for Scalable Adaptive Reuse

This project was more than a stand-alone redevelopment — it established a scalable, repeatable framework for adaptive reuse, aligning with community demand and long-range city planning goals.

## Core Framework:

1. **City Planning Alignment** → Target properties aligned with civic growth and zoning priorities.
2. **Demand Signals** → Track population growth, demographics, and local activity drivers (e.g., weddings, retail, cultural events).
3. **Adaptive Reuse Execution** → Preserve heritage value while adding modern, tenant-ready infrastructure.
4. **Resilient Revenue Models** → Create multi-stream income to ensure durability through economic shifts.

## Proof of Concept:

**Inspirador** demonstrated this framework in action — intentionally structured as a turnkey, multi-stream business ecosystem (venue, catering, retail, and event services). The model stabilized revenue, diversified income, and proved replicable beyond a single site.

## Lessons from Chandler

- **Location:** Fastest-growing U.S. city at acquisition; now a tech hub anchored by Intel and global employers.
- **Heritage:** Landmark site in Chandler's Historic District; tied to Roosevelt Dam and City Beautiful vision.
- **Community:** Designed as a dual-use model serving both residents and businesses, anchoring downtown revitalization.

## Potential for Scale

- Structured as a license-ready, franchise-capable model, designed for replication in high-growth, culturally significant markets
- Even without franchise rollout, the playbook remains transferable: City Planning + Demand Signals + Adaptive Reuse + Multi-Stream Revenue = **Resilient Product Fit.**



# Impact and Outcome

The resilient business models established for this project successfully weathered major economic disruptions, including the 2008 Financial Crisis and the 2020 Global Pandemic.

Today, the property operates under the name SoHo63, though its foundation, design framework, and adaptive reuse model were originally developed by Dilia Wood, Founder & CEO.

The true proof of concept was operational: the wedding and events model ran profitably for years, and its continuation under new ownership validates its resilience. This endurance demonstrates that the Inspirador Operating System™ was not theoretical — it was a functioning business ecosystem embedded in a historic property.



## 01

### COMMUNITY IMPACT & CULTURAL ACTIVATION

Activated a dormant landmark into a high-traffic hub, drawing thousands of additional monthly visitors. Anchored downtown art walks, cultural festivals, and community events — boosting vibrancy for the entire district. This revitalization not only reactivated a dormant landmark but also anchored a thriving cultural ecosystem that significantly increased local engagement and supported regional economic vibrancy.

## 02

### ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE & VALUE CREATION

Increased lease rates from \$12–16 NNN to \$22+ NNN. Post-construction appraisal showed a \$1M valuation lift. Generated ripple effects for surrounding restaurants and retail through consistent visitor flow. This adaptive financial management reinforced project viability through unforeseen complexities and sustained long-term performance. Extended beyond real estate into operations through the Inspirador Operating System™ — demonstrating how an integrated business ecosystem can stabilize revenues and transform a historic site into a replicable model.

*“The true proof of concept was operational. The wedding and events model ran profitably for years, and its continuation under new ownership validates the system’s resilience.” — Dilia Wood*

## 03

### PRESERVATION LEGACY & LANDMARK STEWARDSHIP

Revitalized the O.S. Stapley Hardware Company Store, one of only 14 designated landmarks in the downtown district. Balanced historic compliance with modern usability, setting a precedent for adaptive reuse projects citywide.

By balancing rigorous historic preservation standards with modern usability, this project set a replication-worthy precedent for adaptive reuse, ensuring the long-term stewardship of one of Chandler’s rare historic landmarks.



# About the Developer

## Track Record

Dilia Wood is a solopreneur and former Founder & CEO who successfully executed a multimillion-dollar adaptive reuse project in downtown Chandler, Arizona. As the sole visionary and developer of the O.S. Stapley Hardware Company Store — one of only 14 designated landmark buildings in the historic district — she managed every stage of the process, from capital strategy and construction to operations, marketing, and successful exit.

## Leadership & Resilience

Her leadership included navigating hidden structural damage, closing funding gaps through SBA financing, and securing unanimous City Council approval for all special use permits. Under her direction, the redevelopment became directly tied to Chandler's civic and economic trajectory — adjacent to the new \$74M LEED-certified City Hall and within a district that has since become home to global tech leaders like Intel.

Leadership meant navigating not only the capital stack but the daily realities of running a complex, guest-facing business model. Managing hundreds of events, vendor relationships, and community programming proved the system's resilience in practice, not just in planning.

## Key Achievements

**\$1M+ Valuation Increase** →  
Delivered through redevelopment  
and adaptive reuse.

**14 Landmark Buildings** →  
Preserved one of only 14 designated  
in downtown Chandler.

**Rent Growth:**  
\$12–16 NNN → **\$22+ NNN** →  
Demonstrated strong post-  
redevelopment market demand.

**Historic Legacy** → Revitalized O.S.  
Stapley Hardware Co., tied to Roosevelt  
Dam and Arizona's founding.



**Unanimous City Council Approval**  
Secured all special use permits with  
unanimous support.

**Job Creation** →  
Generated significant opportunities  
across internal and vendor networks.

**\$74M Civic Anchor** → Positioned next  
to LEED-Certified City Hall in a  
growing tech hub.



## Beyond Preservation: Building an Operating Ecosystem

What set this project apart was not only the preservation and redevelopment of a historic property, but the creation of a fully integrated Inspirador Operating System™ — a turnkey business model designed to stabilize revenues, diversify income, and demonstrate replication potential.

- **Workforce & Systems:** Developed comprehensive HR practices, staffing pathways, vendor partnerships, and training manuals, positioning the business for scale or employee ownership.
- **Revenue Engine:** Pre-sold the venue, launched food & beverage programs, curated retail offerings, and built an event-ready infrastructure with layered revenue streams.
- **Market Activation:** Designed marketing campaigns, package models, and community-wide initiatives that positioned the project as both a cultural anchor and a commercial success.

## Today

Dilia applies the same rigor, foresight, and resilience in two ways:

- **Mentorship & Advisory:** Equipping entrepreneurs and women leaders with the frameworks to navigate risk, align with growth, and transform ambitious ideas into lasting impact.
- **Strategic Consulting for Development Projects:** Serving as a trusted ally to emerging developers, civic leaders, and stakeholders — shaping vision, structuring financing, mitigating risk, and guiding execution for adaptive reuse and redevelopment initiatives.

Her unique experience as Founder & CEO of a multimillion-dollar adaptive reuse project positions her to add extraordinary value to historic districts and redevelopment projects across the nation and globally.



# Thank you.

Inspirador proved that adaptive reuse is most powerful when paired with innovative business operations. By creating and operating a profitable wedding and events ecosystem inside a preserved landmark, I demonstrated how vacant spaces can evolve into resilient economic engines — sustaining revenue, serving communities, and inspiring future developers.



**When the stakes are high, you don't need generic coaching — you need strategy rooted in real-world proof.**

I've navigated adaptive reuse redevelopment, SBA financing, and the launch of multi-stream business models inside historic properties.

Now, I provide limited 1:1 strategic consultations for leaders facing critical transitions.

This isn't a program. It's direct advisory, grounded in lived experience, when there's nowhere else to turn.

**[Request a Private Consultation](#)**