

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE GENERAL PLAN 2035

Executive Summary



Experience. Livability. Prosperity. Character.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



OVERVIEW

The General Plan is the primary tool for guiding the future of the city. It contains the community's goals and policies on character and design, land use, open space and the natural environment, business and economics, community services, neighborhood vitality, transportation, and growth. It shapes the physical form of the city, yet also addresses other aspects, such as human services, education, protection of desert and mountain lands, arts and culture, community health, and the character of neighborhoods.

The General Plan is a guide for short- and long-term decision making in order to achieve the vision. Scottsdale's General Plan 2035 has three interrelated roles:

- It is an expression of community vision, aspirations, values, and goals;
- It is a decision making guide; and
- It fulfills State Statute and City Charter requirements.

The goals and policies in the General Plan are applied through ordinances and ongoing procedures, recommendations from city boards and commissions, and decisions made by the City Council. The General Plan is also carried out by private actions and initiatives in the community. Whether public or private, implementation of the plan takes many forms.

Some of the most recognizable applications of the plan include the city's physical development, road expansions or abandonments, neighborhood revitalization projects, preservation efforts, capital improvements, fiscal planning, budgeting and project funding, and recreation facilities. The General Plan is a living document reshaped by decisions and events that cause it to respond to the changing conditions, needs, and desires of the community over time.



The framework for the General Plan is regulated by the State of Arizona, which requires the General Plan to establish community-wide goals and development policies for a variety of topics. Every 10 years, the city is required to update its General Plan and send it to the voters for ratification. The city is also required to render an annual report on the status of the General Plan and progress in its application.

Arizona State Statues require consistency between the adopted General Plan and all land use regulations, such as zoning and rezoning actions. Applicants for such requests should refer to the whole document as well as any adopted Character Area Plans, as several elements may pertain to a single suggested development or improvement. The goals and policies of the 24 elements, taken into consideration with the vision, aspirations, and community values, supply a “checklist” for evaluating any proposed development application for consistency with the General Plan.

THE GENERAL PLAN IS:

- ✓ A Statement of Vision
- ✓ A Set of Community-Wide Goals
- ✓ A Decision Making Guide for Quality Development and Programs
- ✓ A Framework for More Specific Planning

THE GENERAL PLAN IS NOT:

- ✗ A Zoning Ordinance
- ✗ A Rigid/Static Document
- ✗ A City Budget
- ✗ “Just a Land Use Map”

What's New?

General Plan 2035 updates the 2001 General Plan to reflect community, regional and national changes that have occurred since the original plan was created in the 1990s. The following are some aspects of General Plan 2035 that are different from the 2001 General Plan:

- New vision statement, community aspirations and values, and organization of the overall plan.
- Strengthened language to make the plan more action-oriented.
- Enhanced emphasis on tourism, fiscal sustainability, open space, community health, arts and culture, and safety.
- Enhanced focus on community character, such as transitions/buffers, scenic views, noise and light pollution, and contextual compatibility.
- Shift from a primary focus on new development to revitalization, redevelopment, and preservation.
- Four new community-added elements: Arts, Culture & Creative Community, Healthy Community, Tourism, and Education.
- Revised Character Area Map showing existing/adopted plans and possible boundaries for future Character Areas.
- The identification of the Downtown Core on the General Plan Character Types map within Old Town (Urban Character Type); and on the Old Town Growth Areas Map, along with a description in text format of what the Downtown Core represents.
- Removal of ambiguous designations from the Land Use Map (e.g. “resort stars,” golf course (G), and open space circle designations).
- Expanded and more specific General Plan Amendment Criteria addressing:
 - Proposed changes to the text of the amendment criteria or land use category definitions,
 - Proposed growth area designation or expansion,
 - Proposed modification or expansion of land use overlay category, and
 - Clarification of major/minor amendment determinations.
- A list of programs to carry out the plan and evaluate annual progress.

What's Not New?

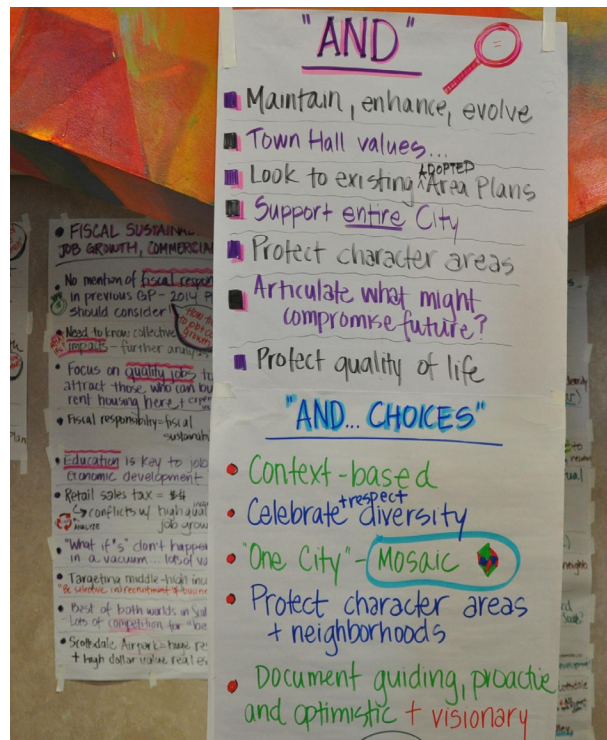
Although many new or enhanced concepts are included in General Plan 2035, many concepts from the 2001 General Plan remain:

- The foundation for the vision statement: Scottsdale's Shared Vision and CityShape 2020.
- The three-levels of planning—General Plan, Character Area Plan, and Neighborhood Plan—established in CityShape 2020.
- A substantial focus on community character and design.
- The mix and distribution of land uses citywide.
- Recognition that Scottsdale is primarily a residential, Sonoran Desert community.
- Scottsdale's leadership role in environmental stewardship and open space preservation.
- The existing Growth Areas (Old Town, Airpark, and McDowell), but with specific rather than generalized boundaries.
- The existing adopted Character Areas.
- Four major General Plan amendment criteria that focused on changes in land use, acreage, Character Area conformance, and Water/Sewer infrastructure.

Framing the Future—Our Vision and Values

The content of the General Plan is shaped by the community's vision statement, and four main Community Aspirations—Exceptional Experience, Outstanding Livability, Community Prosperity, and Distinctive Character.

Within the vision and aspirations are seven community values that organize the plan into chapters. Each chapter is further refined by “elements” or specific topics required by state law or community mandate. Each element contains goals and policies to guide Scottsdale's future.



VISION

Scottsdale will continue to be an exceptional Sonoran Desert experience and premier international destination, where our Western heritage is valued. Our diverse neighborhoods foster outstanding livability, connectivity, healthy lifestyles, and a sustainable environment. Scottsdale will thrive by attracting and retaining business centers of excellence that encourage innovation and prosperity.

Exceptional Experience. Scottsdale has a reputation as an inclusive community, with natural desert beauty, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, high-quality design standards, a vibrant downtown, world-class events and resorts, and diverse arts and culture venues.

Outstanding Livability. Scottsdale offers a variety of multi-generational lifestyle choices that are responsibly planned, connected, attractive, and supported with appropriate infrastructure and services for urban, suburban, and rural living. Neighborhood life promotes well-being and public safety via reliable municipal services.

Community Prosperity. Scottsdale will continue to thrive by supporting existing small businesses and fostering a pro-business environment, so that businesses can grow or choose to locate in Scottsdale to leverage technology and accelerate innovation and creativity, buoyed by a knowledge-based workforce.

Distinctive Character. Scottsdale will respect and be sensitive to our history and legacy found in the heart of Old Town, in designated Historic Preservation neighborhoods, at archaeological sites, in the equestrian community, and within cultural and architectural resources which define our sense of place.



The General Plan organizes the 24 elements under the following chapters, based on Scottsdale's Community Values:

1) Character & Culture Chapter

The **Character & Culture Chapter** establishes policies for the character of the community, as well as the types and locations of land uses throughout the city. It emphasizes the importance of the diverse character, unique quality of design, varied lifestyle choices, and commitment to the arts. It includes the State-mandated Land Use Element, Future Land Use Map, and General Plan Amendment Criteria. It also includes two elements added by the community—Character & Design, and Arts, Culture & Creative Community.

■ Character & Design Element

The goals and policies of the Character & Design Element focus on the important aspects, connections, transitions, and blending of character that ensure our community evolves as an integrated mosaic. Topics covered in this element include character types, development appropriateness, Character Area Planning, design, public spaces, landscaping, light and noise pollution, and western and equestrian lifestyle.



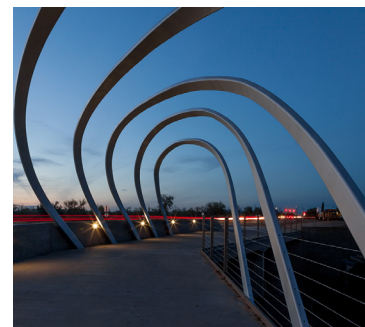
■ Land Use Element[‡]

The goals and policies of the Land Use Element reflect careful consideration for the types and locations of defined land uses and delineate the criteria that are carefully considered when contemplating a change in Land Use Category (General Plan Amendment Criteria). Topics covered in this element include land use transitions and balance, mobility, resource conservation, economic well-being, airport compatibility, General Plan Amendment Criteria, and the Future Land Use Map.



■ Arts, Culture & Creative Community Element

The goals and policies of the Arts, Culture & Creative Community Element speak to the important role that arts, culture and the creative community will continue to play in the city's future. Scottsdale will build on its authentic cultural experiences, innovative programs, and competitive regional standing in arts and culture. Topics covered in this element include arts and culture programming, regional cultural standing, historic and cultural resources, and the creative community.



[‡ = State-required]

2) Sustainability & Environment Chapter

The **Sustainability & Environment Chapter** focuses on Scottsdale’s environmental resources and open spaces, from protecting natural systems and the water supply to creating a sustainable environment. Goals and policies in this chapter also seek to provide a comprehensive system of open spaces, including the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Five State-mandated elements are included in this chapter: Open Space, Environmental Planning, Conservation, Water Resources, and Energy.

■ Open Space Element[‡]

As stewards of parks and open spaces, the city is dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles and a higher-level of livability by providing safe, accessible, and attractive outdoor space. Scottsdale will respect and sustainably manage its open space resources. Topics covered in this element include open space types, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and open space management.



■ Environmental Planning Element[‡]

The city’s natural environment includes both the ecological systems that sustain Sonoran Desert vegetation and wildlife, as well as other elements that provide clean air and water, protect the community from hazards, and create a beautiful and enjoyable setting. This element provides goals and policies for protecting and enhancing the quality of Scottsdale’s natural and human habitats for future generations. Topics covered in this element include Sonoran Desert habitat protection, air quality, recycling, green building, water quality, heat islands, and climate impact planning.



■ Conservation Element[‡]

Scottsdale is active in, and continually improves efforts to safeguard its natural and man-made resources—from wildlife habitat to watersheds. The Conservation Element guides Scottsdale’s resource conservation efforts to provide a healthy and diverse environment for current and future generations. Topics covered in this element include natural resource management, biodiversity, stormwater management, and water conservation.



[[‡] = State-required]

■ **Water Resources Element[‡]**

Conservation of our most precious asset, water, occurs through decreasing use, reducing waste, and maximizing its efficient use on a daily basis. The Water Resources Element ensures that Scottsdale continues to provide safe, reliable, and quality drinking water to the community. Topics covered in this element include long-term water supply and drought preparation.



■ **Energy Element[‡]**

The goals and policies of the Energy Element seek to balance the energy needs of consumers with the sustainability of the community’s renewable and non-renewable energy sources. Topics covered in this element include energy efficiency, city facilities, and renewable energy sources.



3) Collaboration & Engagement Chapter

The **Collaboration & Engagement Chapter** underscores the importance of early and ongoing community involvement in planning, community-building, and decision making. The community-added Community Involvement Element is included in this chapter.

■ **Community Involvement Element**

This element serves as a building block to strengthen ways to effectively inform and involve the community in discussions and decision-making processes. Topics covered in this element include seeking broad public input, information distribution, and collaborative community partnerships.



[‡ = State-required]

4) Community Well-Being Chapter

The **Community Well-Being Chapter** emphasizes the importance of health, housing, recreation, and safety in the overall well-being of the community. Three state-mandated elements, Housing, Recreation, and Safety are included in this chapter. In addition, Scottsdale has added a Healthy Community Element in this chapter.

■ Healthy Community Element

The Healthy Community Element seeks to maintain Scottsdale’s leadership role in health and human services, respond to the needs of families, take care of our neighbors and our elders, and provide opportunities for youth to grow and become leaders in the future. Topics covered in this element include health and human services, healthy food, health and wellness, diversity and inclusion, supporting senior citizens, and fostering a caring community.



■ Housing Element[‡]

Scottsdale is committed to the provision and preservation of housing opportunities to meet the needs of current and future residents. The Housing Element will ensure that future housing options include a wide-range of opportunities for people living and working in Scottsdale, as well as people at different life stages, income levels, and social and physical abilities. Topics covered in this element include housing choice and variety, generational housing, and preventing housing discrimination.



■ Recreation Element[‡]

Recreation is a part of Scottsdale’s image, provides social interaction, and promotes community well-being. Through the Recreation Element, the city’s recreational facilities and programs will provide for the leisure and fitness needs of Scottsdale’s current and future generations. Topics covered in this element include quality recreation facilities and diversity.



■ Safety Element[‡]

Scottsdale is committed to protecting citizens and visitors from conditions, circumstances, and influences that would threaten, disrupt or diminish the quality of their lifestyles. The goals and policies of the Safety Element will ensure that the community is prepared and resilient when faced with disaster, and that our community is safe and enjoyable for all. Topics covered in this element include emergency management, transportation safety, crime prevention, and hazardous materials.



[‡ = State-required]

5) Connectivity Chapter

The **Connectivity Chapter** contains goals that promote a variety of mobility choices for the movement of people and goods throughout the community. Two State-mandated elements are included in this chapter: Circulation and Bicycling.

■ Circulation Element[‡]

The automobile historically has been, and will continue to be, the predominant mode of transportation in Scottsdale. However, to match the character and lifestyle of different areas and residents in the community, it is important to diversify the city's transportation choices. The Circulation Element concentrates on accessibility, connectivity, mobility choices, and the interrelatedness of transportation and land use. Topics covered in this element include safety, trip reduction, multimodal choice, neighborhood needs, and school circulation.



■ Bicycling Element[‡]

Scottsdale is recognized as a bicycle-friendly community that actively supports bicycling and encourages residents to use bicycles as an alternative mode of transportation and as part of a healthy lifestyle. The goals and policies of the Bicycling Element provide a guide for a safe, connected, and convenient on-street and off-street bicycle networks. Topics covered in this element include bicycle networks, use, and safety.



[[‡] = State-required]

6) Revitalization Chapter

The **Revitalization Chapter** recognizes that the majority of future development in Scottsdale will consist of revitalization, redevelopment, and infill projects. The goals and policies in the Revitalization Chapter focus on preserving the unique qualities and character of Scottsdale’s neighborhoods, addressing the fiscal impacts of development, guiding the locations for concentrated growth and reinvestment in the city, providing public services, and allocating public facilities citywide. Six State-mandated elements are included in this chapter: Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization; Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment; Growth Areas; Cost of Development; Public Services & Facilities; and Public Buildings.

■ Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Element[‡]

As Scottsdale nears build-out, the city needs to preserve and enhance the qualities that make neighborhoods safe, special, and vibrant. The goals and policies of this element recognize that the preservation and revitalization of Scottsdale’s mature neighborhoods is critical to maintaining and strengthening the health, safety, prosperity, and enjoyment of the community. Topics covered in this element include neighborhood identity, homeownership, neighborhood safety, neighborhood planning, and community building.



■ Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Element[‡]

As a maturing city, it is increasingly important for Scottsdale to focus on the conservation and rehabilitation of mature properties, seek creative infill development strategies, and support context-sensitive redevelopment in areas showing signs of decline. This element addresses both “informal” and “formal” redevelopment, recognizing that any “formal” redevelopment must be approved by the City Council and conform to Arizona State Statute requirements. Topics covered in this element include context-appropriate redevelopment, economic well-being, and use of redevelopment authority.



■ Growth Areas Element[‡]

The Growth Areas Element identifies specific locations that are most appropriate for development focus, can accommodate future growth, or need reinvestment. Scottsdale’s Growth and Activity Areas are intended to direct high-intensity growth and development in certain locations to preserve lower-intensity and open space areas throughout the community. Topics covered in this element include direction for growth, transportation, resource conservation, infrastructure planning, and character.



[‡ = State-required]

■ **Cost of Development Element[‡]**

The purpose of the Cost of Development Element is to establish goals and policies that guide the fiscal impacts created by new development or redevelopment with regard to infrastructure and public services, and determine how such impacts will be addressed. Topics covered in this element include development’s contributions to public service needs, infrastructure timing and need, and coordination of infrastructure investment.



■ **Public Services & Facilities Element[‡]**

Scottsdale provides high-quality community services to its residents, businesses, and visitors. The Public Services and Facilities Element provides guidance about the provision of programs, services and physical facilities that serve to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Topics covered in this element include solid waste, utilities, public service operations, libraries, and partnerships with adjacent jurisdictions.



■ **Public Buildings Element[‡]**

Scottsdale acknowledges the vital role that public buildings play in the shaping of community life and seeks to design facilities that represent the community’s special qualities. Libraries, community centers, schools, and cultural facilities are investments that contribute to a high quality of life for current and future generations. Topics covered in this element include the provision of safe, accessible, adaptable, and well-designed public buildings, and collaboration schools.



7) Innovation & Prosperity Chapter

The **Innovation & Prosperity Chapter** sets forth goals and policies to foster the economic sustainability of the community, with focus on tourism, educational opportunities, retention and attraction of core industries, and high-quality jobs. This chapter includes three elements added by the community: Economic Vitality, Tourism, and Education.

■ **Economic Vitality Element**

The city is committed to supporting and expanding its existing economic strengths through the continued enhancement and diversification of the economic base to provide for the future fiscal health of the city, while protecting the city’s unique southwestern character and quality of life. The goals and policies of the Economic Vitality Element emphasize compatibility, diversity, growth, and flexibility, and acknowledge the economic factors that strongly influence Scottsdale’s future well-being. Topics covered in this element include economic resiliency, socioeconomic prosperity, and fiscal sustainability.



[[‡] = State-required]

■ **Tourism Element**

Tourism is an integral part of Scottsdale’s identity and economy, and it serves as one of the community’s leading economic engines. The Tourism Element provides goals and policies to further validate Scottsdale as the premier southwest tourism and special events destination. Topics covered in this element include tourism, mobility and wayfinding, and special events and venues.



■ **Education Element**

A healthy community and competitive economy are directly based on high-quality education. While the city does not provide direct, traditional education as the schools do, it does have a vested interest in educational outcomes. The Education Element provides goals and policies that enhance lifelong learning opportunities, encourage partnerships with traditional educational providers, and further the community’s role in supporting a safe, healthy, and positive educational environment. Topics covered in this element include lifelong learning, equitable and quality education, positive learning environments, and collaboration with public entities.



8) Implementation Chapter

Establishing the goals and policies of General Plan 2035 is just the first step. The second part of the General Plan is taking action. Initial steps will include a variety of initiatives, such as the creation of Character Area Plans, to achieve specific goals for particular areas of the community; updates to the Zoning Ordinance to oversee the physical development of the city; Capital Improvement projects for the delivery of public services; and a multitude of other short- mid- and long-term programs. The **Implementation Chapter** of General Plan 2035 includes a list of implementation programs to put the vision, aspirations, values, goals, and policies of the General Plan into action.

Measuring Progress

A community’s ability to prepare and respond to change is an indication of its resiliency and sustainability. A regular system of review, monitoring, and adjustment will measure progress towards achieving the General Plan’s short- mid- and long-term goals and policies, and ensure that the General Plan responds to emerging trends, issues, and opportunities.



Reporting

Annual and five-year assessment reports will track the progress of the community in achieving the vision, aspirations and values, goals, and policies of City of Scottsdale General Plan 2035.

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