CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
GENERAL PLAN 2035
Task Force Recommended Draft
November 2014
# CONTENTS

## Executive Summary

### Section 1 - Preface

**Prologue**

**Vision and Values**

- Vision Statement
- Community Aspirations
- Our Community Values
  - Foundation for the Vision

**Introduction**

- Purpose of the General Plan
- Community Profile

### Section 2 - Chapters

1) **Character & Culture Chapter**

- Character & Design Element
- Land Use Element
  - General Plan Amendment Criteria
- Arts, Culture & Creative Community Element

2) **Environment Chapter**

- Open Space Element
- Environmental Planning Element
- Conservation Element
- Water Resources Element
- Energy Element

3) **Collaboration & Engagement Chapter**

- Community Involvement Element
4) Community Well-Being Chapter 136
- Healthy Community Element 139
- Housing Element 147
- Recreation Element 151
- Safety Element 159

5) Connectivity Chapter 166
- Circulation Element 169
- Bicycling Element 177

6) Revitalization Chapter 182
- Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Element 185
- Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Element 191
- Growth Areas Element 197
- Cost of Development Element 203
- Public Services & Facilities Element 207
- Public Buildings Element 213

7) Innovation & Prosperity Chapter 220
- Economic Vitality Element 223

8) Implementation Chapter 230

Section 3 - Appendix

Appendix 248
- Abbreviations 249
- Glossary 250
- Related Plans & Policies 274
- Photo Credits 278
- Acknowledgements 280
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 it also addresses other aspects, such as human services, protection of desert and mountain lands, arts and culture, community health, and the character of neighborhoods.

The General Plan provides a guide for day-to-day, short- and long-term decision-making. Scottsdale’s General Plan 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 and City Charter legal requirements.

The goals and policies in the General Plan are implemented through ordinances, regulations, 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 General Plan takes many forms.

Some of the most recognizable applications of the General 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 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 ten (10) years, the City is required to update its General Plan and send it to the Scottsdale 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 zoning regulations and rezoning actions. Applicants for such requests should refer to the whole document, as well as any adopted Character Area or Neighborhood Plans. The Elements in each chapter of the General Plan, taken into consideration with the goals, policies, 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 include new state requirements and 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 values, and organization of the overall plan.
- Enhanced emphasis on tourism, fiscal sustainability, open space, community health, arts and culture, and safety.
- Enhanced focus on community character, such as building height, transitions/buffers, scenic views, noise and light pollution, and contextual compatibility.
- Shift from a primary focus on new development to revitalization, redevelopment, and preservation.
- Two state-mandated elements: Energy and Neighborhoods Preservation & Revitalization.
- Two community-added elements: Arts, Culture & Creative Community and Healthy Community.
- Revised Character Area Planning map showing existing/adopted plans and possible boundaries for future Character Areas.
- 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:
  - Land use changes of 10 or more acres,
  - Proposed land use changes to the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve,
  - Designation/expansion of Infill Incentive Districts,
  - Proposed changes to the text of the amendment criteria,
  - Proposed growth area designation or expansion, and
  - Clarification of major/minor amendment determinations for criteria maintained from the 2001 General Plan—such as properties with land use category overlays (e.g. Shea Corridor or Regional Use).
- 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 city-wide.
- Recognition that Scottsdale is primarily a residential, Sonoran Desert community and that the automobile will continue to be the primary form of transportation in Scottsdale for the next twenty years.
- Scottsdale’s leadership role in environmental stewardship and open space preservation.
- The existing Growth Areas (Downtown, 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 three main Community Aspirations—Exceptional Experience, Outstanding Livability, and Community Prosperity.

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 Statement
Scottsdale will be an exceptional Sonoran Desert experience and the premier southwestern tourist destination. Our diverse neighborhoods will foster outstanding livability through connected, healthy and sustainable communities. Scottsdale will thrive by attracting and retaining business centers of excellence that encourage innovation and prosperity.

Community Aspirations:

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE
Scottsdale is a special place in the Sonoran southwest. Our community will continue to draw visitors, businesses, and new residents from around the world because of our natural desert beauty; vast open spaces and environmental assets; high standards for design; world-class events and resorts; vibrant downtown; and distinctive heritage and culture.

- Character & Culture- Chapter 1
- Environment- Chapter 2

OUTSTANDING LIVABILITY
Scottsdale will continue to offer 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. Our neighborhood experiences will advance well-being and safety through promotion of physical and social connection.

- Collaboration & Engagement- Chapter 3
- Community Well-Being- Chapter 4
- Connectivity- Chapter 5
- Revitalization- Chapter 6

COMMUNITY PROSPERITY
Scottsdale will be a thriving, prosperous city that attracts and grows world-class businesses, leverages technology, encourages innovation and creativity, and cultivates a well-educated workforce. Our citizens will have opportunities to prosper.

- Innovation & Prosperity- Chapter 7
EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE

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 development appropriateness, character types, building height, 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 should be carefully considered when contemplating a change in Land Use Category (General Plan Amendment Criteria). Topics covered in this element include land use transitions, land use balance, resource conservation, land use and transportation, airport compatibility, the Future Land Use Map, and General Plan Amendment Criteria.

- 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 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 regional cultural standing, arts and culture programming, historic preservation, and the creative community.

[‡ = State-required]
EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE

2) Environment Chapter

The Environment Chapter focuses on Scottsdale’s environmental resources and open spaces—from protecting natural systems and the water supply to creating a green built environment. Goals and policies in this chapter also seek to provide a comprehensive system of open spaces, including further enhancement and protection of 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, and water quality.

■ 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, water conservation, stormwater management, and biodiversity.
Executive Summary

- **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.

**OUTSTANDING LIVABILITY**

3) **Collaboration & Engagement Chapter**

The **Collaboration & Engagement Chapter** underscores the importance of community involvement to capture new ways to promote citizen involvement and engage diverse perspectives in 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, collaborative solutions, and engagement techniques under the umbrella of civil dialogue.

4) **Community Well-Being Chapter**

The **Community Well-Being Chapter** emphasizes the importance of health, housing, safety, and recreational opportunities in the overall well-being of the community. Three state-mandated elements, Housing, Recreation, and Safety are included in this chapter. In addition, the community 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, promote lifelong learning, and provide opportunities for youth to grow and become leaders in the future. Topics covered in this element include healthy food, health and wellness, life-long learning, supporting senior citizens, and diversity and inclusion.

■ 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 context and character, fair housing, and housing choices for a variety of needs.

■ 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 programming.

■ 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
OUTSTANDING LIVABILITY

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, multimodal choices, 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.

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.

[‡ = State-required]
Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Element‡

As Scottsdale nears build-out, the city must 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, and neighborhood planning.

Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Element‡

As a maturing city, it is increasingly important for Scottsdale to focus on the conservation and rehabilitation of aging properties, seek creative infill development strategies, and support context-sensitive redevelopment in areas showing signs of decline. The 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 development intensity and building height, multimodal connections, and growth and activity area character.

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 infrastructure and economic sustainability.
■ **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, libraries, and community services.

■ **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 public building design and locations.

**COMMUNITY PROSPERITY**

7) **Innovation & Prosperity Chapter**

The Innovation & Prosperity Chapter seeks to foster the economic sustainability of the community, with focus on tourism, retention and attraction of core industries, and high-quality jobs. The Economic Vitality Element is a community-added element in this chapter.

■ **Economic Vitality Element**

The city is committed to supporting and expanding its existing economic strengths through protection and adaptation of Scottsdale’s tourism industry and diversification of the economic base to provide for the future fiscal health of the city, all 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 tourism, economic resiliency, and fiscal sustainability.

[‡ = State-required]
8) Making It Happen—Implementation

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. See the Implementation Chapter for a list of implementation programs.

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, values, goals, and policies of City of Scottsdale General Plan 2035.