

TOWN OF
QUEEN CREEK
ARIZONA

2018 GENERAL PLAN

Approved May 15, 2018



-
- Editorial note: This is back of cover and a blank page

RESOLUTION 1165-17

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK, ARIZONA PURSUANT TO A.R.S. 9-461.06, ADOPTING P17-0103 (“2018 General Plan Update”); ORDERING THAT THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN BE SUBMITTED TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE TOWN AT A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON MAY 15, 2018; AND IF PASSED TO BE EFFECTIVE UPON CANVASS OF THE RESULTS OF SAID ELECTION.

WHEREAS, A.R.S. §9-461.06 establishes criteria for adoption of General Plans; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of Arizona law, the Town of Queen Creek has adopted a public involvement plan for amending, updating and adopting the Queen Creek General Plan; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Town’s public involvement plan, fourteen (14) work study sessions with the Planning and Zoning Commission, Land Use Work Shop, focus groups, in addition to the normal and usual committee, Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council meetings have been conducted; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Arizona law, the Town has published advertisements in the newspapers circulated in Queen Creek about the plan and steps in the public involvement process, including notice of the time and place of hearings, and provided information on the Town website regarding the proposed amendment, steps in the public involvement process and information on the proposed plan;

WHEREAS, at least sixty (60) days prior to the adoption of this Resolution, the Planning and Zoning Commission as the designated Planning Agency of the Town has filed a copy of the plan with the Mayor and Town Council and submitted for review and further comment to: Maricopa Association of Governments, Central Arizona Association of Governments, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Arizona State Land Department, Arizona State University, all community school districts, Maricopa and Pinal Counties, Town of Gilbert, City of Mesa, City of Apache Junction, Town of Florence, City of Chandler, Gila River Indian Community, Arizona Commerce Authority, property owners within the planning area including various utility companies, any person requesting in writing to receive a copy; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Queen Creek Planning Commission has conducted public hearings on August 9, 2017 and September 13, 2017, recommending the case be approved; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Queen Creek Town Council held public hearings for the proposed amendment on August 16, 2017 and September 20, 2017; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Queen Creek General Plan shall consist of map(s) and statement of community goals and development policies with descriptive text covering the objectives, principals and standards used to develop the essential elements of the plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK, ARIZONA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: Required Notice and Hearings Given and Held.

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona find and determine that Notice has been given in the manner required by A.R.S. §9-461.06 of the proposal to adopt a new general plan and that each of the required publications have been made in newspapers of general circulation in the Town.

Section 2: Date of Adoption.

The proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona shall be deemed to have been adopted as of the date of this Resolution and shall be valid for a term of Ten (10) years from the date of adoption. Nothing herein shall preclude the Mayor and Council of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona from adopting a new general plan in the manner provided by law prior to this date.

Section 3: Submission to Qualified Electors of the Town.

- (a) The proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona as adopted by this Council shall be submitted to the qualified electors of the Town of Queen Creek, as a referred item at the Town Election to be held in May 15, 2018.
- (b) Arguments in favor or in opposition to the Proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona may be submitted to the Town Clerk of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona in the manner provided by law.

Section 4: Notice to Voters

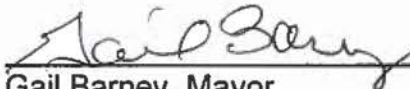
- (a) The Town Clerk on behalf of the Town shall include a general description of the Proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona and each of its elements in the publicity pamphlet that will be published for election to be held on May 15, 2018 and such information as with other election information shall be translated into Spanish in accordance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as amended.
- (b) The Town Clerk shall cause to be placed for public inspection copies of the proposed General Plan for the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona in each of the following locations and shall post notice of such placement in the same manner as agenda's for meetings of the public bodies in the Town.
 - a. Municipal Services Building, 22358 S. Ellsworth Road, Queen Creek, Arizona 85142
 - b. Town of Queen Creek Library, 21802 S. Ellsworth Rd, Queen Creek, Arizona 85142

Section 5: Effective Date.

The Mayor and Town Council shall canvass the election in the manner provided by law. Upon determination by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona that a majority of the votes cast on the issue of the ratification of the Proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona were cast in favor and upon proclamation of the results by the Mayor, the Proposed General Plan of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona be deemed approved and ratified by the qualified electors of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and Common Council of the Town of Queen Creek, Arizona, this 20th day of September, 2017.

FOR THE TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK:



Gail Barney, Mayor

ATTEST TO:



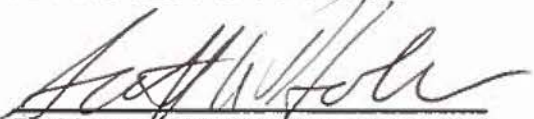
Jennifer F. Robinson, Town Clerk

REVIEWED BY:



John Kröss, Town Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Dickinson Wright PLLC, Attorneys
for the Town

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



2017 Town Council

Town Council

- Gail Barney, *Mayor*
- Jeff Brown, *Vice Mayor*
- Robin Benning
- Jake Hoffman
- Dawn Oliphant
- Emilena Turley
- Julia Wheatley



2017 Planning and Zoning Commission

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission actively led the 12-month process to develop the General Plan. Their engagement in the process included discussing the Plan during work sessions held before monthly public Planning and Zoning Commission meetings, facilitating the public Land Use Workshop, and reviewing and providing direction on the development of the Plan and the website.

- Alex Matheson, *Chair*
- Gregory Arrington, *Vice Chair*
- Shaine Alleman
- Steve Sossaman
- Chris Webb
- Nichelle Williams
- Josh Ehmke

And the businesses, residents, and citizens that participated in the development of this Plan.

Town Staff

- Brett Burningham, *Planning Administrator*
- Sarah Mertins, *Planner II*
- Constance Wilson, *Public Information Officer*
- Shawny Ekadis, *GIS Coordinator*

With assistance from:

- Chris Anaradian, *Development Services Director*
- Tracy Corman, *Sr. Management Assistant*
- Doreen Cott, *Economic Development Director*
- Paul Gardner, *Utilities Director*
- Marissa Garnett, *Development Research Specialist*
- Darren Farar, *Engineering Manager*
- Ron Knight, *Fire Chief*
- Alexis Ramirez, *Management Assistant Recreation Services Division*
- Adam Robinson, *Recreation Superintendent*
- Marnie Schubert, *Communications, Marketing, and Recreation Director*
- Ramona Simpson, *Environmental Programs Supervisor*
- Jennifer Snyder, *Digital Media Specialist*
- Connie Speelman, *Water Conservation Specialist*
- Mohamed Youssef, *Transportation Engineering Manager*

And the Town of Queen Creek

- Economic Development Committee
- Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee
- Transportation Advisory Committee



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: Introduction and Overview	1
A. Executive Summary	3
B. Vision and Purpose	17
C. How This Plan Was Developed	18
D. Queen Creek and the Region	19
E. Strategic Themes	21
F. Town-Wide Planning Considerations	22
Section II: General Plan Elements	25
A. Land Use Element	27
B. Housing Element	45
C. Growth Areas Element	49
D. Circulation Element	53
E. Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Element	59
F. Our Environment	
• F.1. Environmental Element	65
• F.2. Water Resources Element	69
G. Economic Development Element	73
H. Cost of Development Element	79
I. Public Safety Element	82
Section III: General Plan Administration	87
A. General Plan Amendments	89
B. General Plan Implementation and Annual Reporting	92

Figures

A. Figure 1: General Plan Land Use Map	5
B. Figure 2: General Plan Land Use Categories	6
C. Figure 3: General Plan Land Use Categories Requirements Table	7
D. Figure 4: Growth Areas Map	8
E. Figure 5: Transportation System Map	9
F. Figure 6: Planned and Existing Parks and Trails	10
G. Figure 7: Water and Wastewater Service.....	11
H. Figure 8: Public Safety: Fire.....	12
I. Figure 9: Public Safety: Police.....	13
J. Figure 10: Regional Context Map	20
K. Figure 11: Existing Land Use Map.....	28
L. Figure 12: Town of Queen Creek Land Use Map	32
M. Figure 13: Land Use Categories Requirements Table.....	40
N. Figure 14: Growth Areas Map	50
O. Figure 15: Transportation System Map	54
P. Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map	60
Q. Figure 17: Water and Wastewater Service Map	70
R. Figure 18: Public Safety Fire Map.....	85
S. Figure 19: Public Safety Police Map.....	86





SECTION 1:
**Introduction
and Overview**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past decade, the Town of Queen Creek's population has increased over 80%. The Town Center, and new schools, roads, parks, and shopping areas were developed to support and maintain the high quality of life in Queen Creek. Over the next decade, the Town population is projected to double. To ensure that the agricultural character and quality of life in Queen Creek is conserved and enhanced as new homes, parks, roads, and shopping are constructed to serve new residents, this General Plan puts in place a vision, goals, strategies, and actions for the next decade and beyond.

GENERAL PLAN VISION

Queen Creek is a unique community known for its friendly, hometown atmosphere, and strong sense of agricultural heritage. This culture is woven throughout the community's neighborhoods, businesses, and recreational opportunities. The Town General Plan provides for a range of land uses and opportunities that are consistent with the desired community character. The strategic vision of the community aims to continue the environment of "convenience of the city, comfort of the country."



HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

State law requires cities and towns with more than 2,500 residents to update or readopt their General Plan every 10 years, and cities and towns with populations over 10,000 people must submit an adopted General Plan to the voters for ratification. This General Plan updates the adopted 2008 General Plan that was ratified by Queen Creek voters in September 2008 and provides guidance to Queen Creek elected and appointed officials, Town staff, and residents as they make decisions impacting the future of Queen Creek.

The Town of Queen Creek 2018 General Plan vision and goals set a broad agenda for the future of Queen Creek. The Plan contains three sections that focus on a total of 10 elements that contribute to the quality of life in the Town. Each element includes strategies and actions that support the Plan vision and implement the Plan goals. Section I: Introduction and Overview includes an Executive Summary and background information about Queen Creek and planning opportunities. Section II: General Plan Elements includes the 10 General Plan elements and maps. Section IIA: Land Use Element includes a Land Use Map and Land Use Categories that describe the types and locations of land uses, residential densities, and commercial intensities that are planned within the Town. The General Plan Land Use Map does not change existing zoning. If a requested rezoning does not conform to the General Plan Land Use Map and Land Use Categories, Section IIIA: General Plan Amendments outlines how to request an amendment to the General Plan.

PLAN GOALS

» Land Use Element

This element includes the Land Use Map (Figure 1: Land Use Map) and Land Use Categories (Figure 2: Land Use Categories) that designate the location, density, and intensity of land for a variety of uses. Figure 3: Land Use Categories Requirements Table describes requirements associated with specific zoning categories within each Land Use Category.

Goal 1: Maintain the Town's unique community character.

Goal 2: Effectively manage the Town's growth.

Goal 3: Ensure long-term employment diversity and economic stability.

Goal 4: Promote seamless development between the Town and adjacent jurisdictions.

» Housing Element

Goal 1: Provide a diverse range of quality housing options for current and future residents.

» Growth Areas Element

This element provides guidance for areas where new development is needed to accommodate future population. The Growth Areas Map (Figure 4: Growth Areas Map) identifies planned Growth Areas.

Goal 1: Plan for and prepare to guide development within growth areas.

» Circulation Element

The Circulation Element includes a Circulation Map (Figure 5: Transportation System Map) that describes current and planned arterial and collector streets and on-street bicycle routes.

Goal 1: Develop a multimodal transportation system for all users.

» Recreation, Parks, & Open Space Element

The Parks and Recreation Element incorporates, by reference, the adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan and includes maps that describe current and planned parks, trails, and open space (Figure 6: Planned and Existing Parks and Trails).

Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive park system to provide open spaces and recreation opportunities appropriate to a community the size of Queen Creek.

Goal 2: Provide parks and recreation programs that reflect the culture and character of Queen Creek, and that leverage existing and planned recreation facilities.

Goal 3: Leverage parks and recreation facilities to promote economic development.

Goal 4: Coordinate with other jurisdictions and public and private entities to expand recreation opportunities for Queen Creek residents and visitors.

Goal 5: Design parks and trails that are safe.

» Environmental Element

Goal 1: Protect and improve air quality.

Goal 2: Reduce the amount of solid waste.

Goal 3: Prevent pollution of the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes and groundwater system.

Goal 4: Promote environmental sensitivity in the built environment.

Goal 5: Maintain the desert character and environment in the San Tan Foothills.

» Water Resources Element

The Water Element describes an approach to meeting the water needs of the Town. Figure 7: Water and Wastewater Service describes the Town of Queen Creek water and wastewater service areas.

Goal 1: Effectively and efficiently manage water resources.

Goal 2: Protect and conserve water resources

» Economic Development Element

Goal 1: Attract private investment and foster job creation in Queen Creek.

Goal 2: Create an entrepreneurial culture that fosters new ideas and the creation of new business.

Goal 3: Position Queen Creek as the agritainment capital of Arizona.

Goal 4: Leverage trails and outdoor recreation to attract visitors.

Goal 5: Plan for and invest in the infrastructure that supports economic development.

Goal 6: Generate more economic synergy within the Town Center.

Goal 7: Develop a robust Queen Creek economic development marketing program.

» Cost of Development Element

Goal 1: Maintain a consistent level of high quality services for all Queen Creek residents.

» Public Safety Element

The Public Safety Element describes how the Town will meet its public safety (fire, police, and emergency medical services) needs and responsibilities as the Town grows. Figures 8: Public Safety: Fire and 9: Public Safety: Police show existing emergency service locations.

Goal 1: Foster a safe and vibrant community to enhance the quality of life.

Goal 2: Increase community trust, interactions, involvement, accountability and enhance the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) District 6 identity in the Town of Queen Creek.

MAPS AND INFORMATION

Figure 1: General Plan Land Use Map

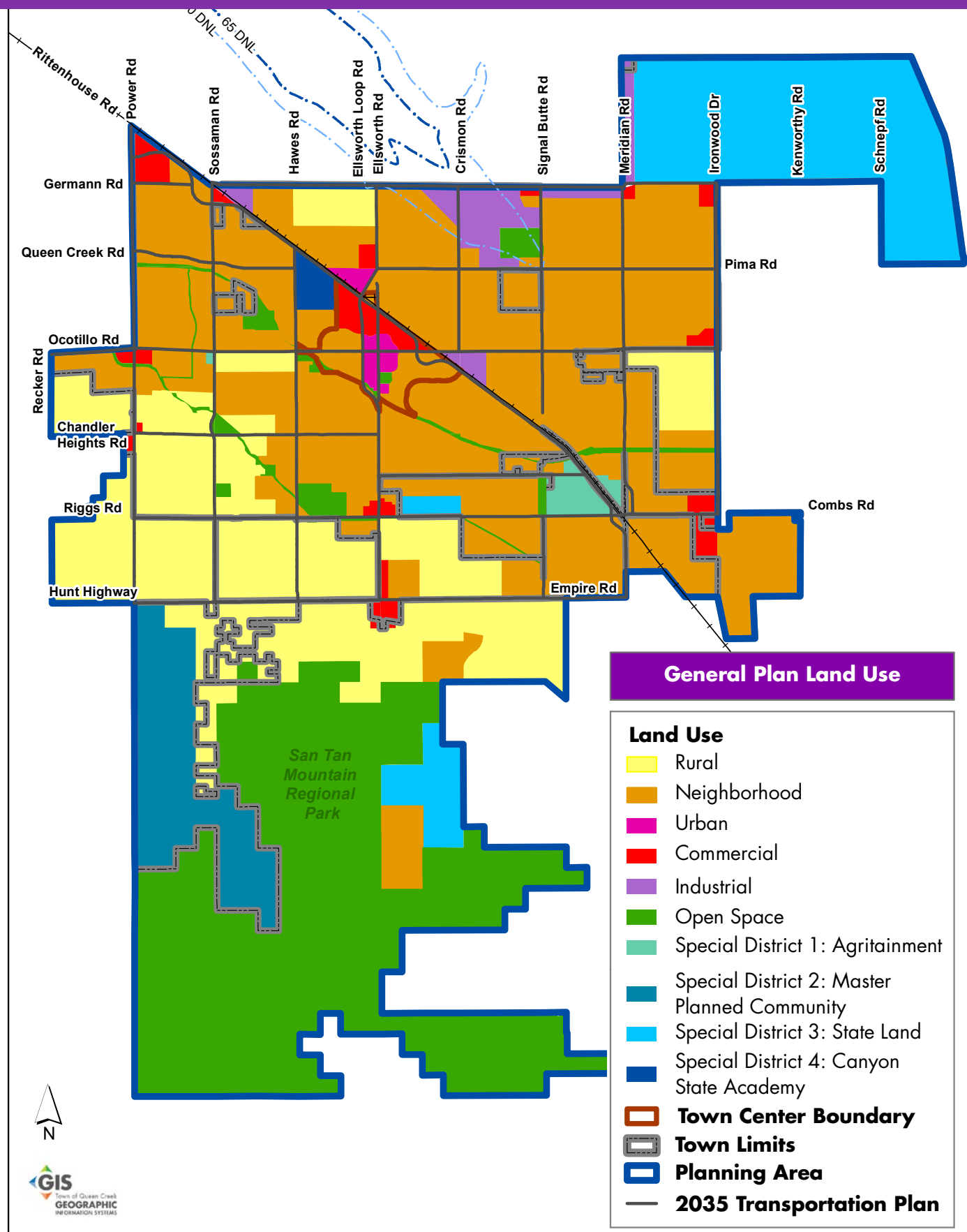


Figure 2: Land Use Categories

Figure 2: Land Use Categories describes the types of allowed land uses, land use character, and appropriate zoning districts for each of the Land Use Categories shown on Figure 1: General Plan Land Use Map.

Town of Queen Creek General Plan Land Use Map: Land Use Categories							
Land Use	Rural*	Neighborhood*	Urban*	Commercial*	Industrial*	Open Space*	Special District*
Types of Allowed Land Uses	<p>Residential: very low-density single family (up to 1 dwelling unit per acre)</p> <p>Commercial: agriculture related (farm stands)</p> <p>Employment: agriculture and recreation-related; home office; garage industry</p> <p>Open Space: trails, trailheads, open space (washes), community parks</p>	<p>Residential: single family, patio homes, multifamily or other forms of residential uses up to 20 dwelling units per acre.</p> <p>Commercial: neighborhood retail and services with requirements</p> <p>Employment: home office; limited live/work; office</p> <p>Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional</p> <p>Open Space: buildings, neighborhood / community parks, pocket parks, tot lot</p>	<p>Residential: single family (above 6 dwelling units per acre), multifamily, patio homes</p> <p>Commercial: commercial retail, office, and services. No drive-thrus</p> <p>Employment: office buildings; live/work</p> <p>Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional buildings</p> <p>Open Space: plazas, parks</p>	<p>Commercial: Town-wide commercial center and other auto-oriented commercial centers</p> <p>Employment: office buildings</p> <p>Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional buildings</p> <p>Open Space: plazas, parks</p>	<p>Employment: warehouse; manufacturing; office</p> <p>Open Space: plazas, parks</p>	<p>Open Space: park shelters, restroom facilities; community and Town-wide parks; conservation areas; Sonoqui & Queen Creek washes, protected natural features</p>	<p>Economic: Agritainment</p> <p>Residential: Master planned community</p> <p>Other: Arizona State Land Department managed land, Canyon State Academy property</p>
Land Use Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominantly large lot single family residential up to 1 dwelling unit per acre. • Buildings spaced significantly apart to create a sense of intermittent rather than lined up buildings. • A variety of deep setbacks from the road, creating an informal pattern. • Roadways without curb, gutter, or sidewalk. • Informal streetscapes and tree placement. • Commercial developments with less intense uses rather than auto-centric and/or high turnover uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominantly residential with range of densities up to 20 dwelling units per acre allowed with requirements. • Adequate transitions and/or buffering abutting Rural or Urban areas or between different land uses or densities required. • Higher densities should decrease towards edges when abutting single family developments within this Land Use Category. • Densities above 8 dwelling units per acre require direct access to collector or arterial streets. • Commercial sites less than 20 acres. All commercial uses require direct access to at least one arterial or collector street. • Buildings spaced to create separation while maintaining cohesive street wall. • Modest building setbacks, generally aligned with neighboring buildings. • Streets with curb, gutter, planter strips, and sidewalk. • Semi-formal streetscape with aligned street trees. • Diversity provided by a variety of building styles and sizes. • Commercial developments with less intense uses rather than auto-centric and/or high turnover uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkable development pattern with a variety of residential uses above 6 dwelling units per acre, mixed-use, commercial, and civic/cultural within walking distance (1/4 mile) of each other. • Buildings close together with significant street frontage. • Building façades at or near sidewalk. • Pedestrian-friendly streets with curb and gutter, planters or tree wells, and generous sidewalks; sidewalk width scaled to context, with greater sidewalk widths abutting retail frontages. • Formalized streetscape with equally spaced street trees. • May include civic park/plaza/gathering space. • Buildings with active ground-floor uses and entries, storefronts and windows oriented toward sidewalks. • On-street parking, especially along streets with retail. • Drive-thru commercial uses prohibited. • Off street parking located behind buildings when possible and practical. • Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood or Rural) required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial development; accommodates existing conventional suburban shopping centers. • Flexible configuration of buildings; building facades and entries may be associated with site-internal circulation rather than street frontage. • Streets with curb and gutter, planters and sidewalks. • Streetscape with street trees and shrubs intended to screen surface parking and service areas from view and buffer sidewalks from vehicle traffic. • Generally, auto-oriented development with safe and comfortable pedestrian routes and streetscapes. • Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood, or Rural) or between different land uses or densities may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserved for employment-focused development not appropriate in other categories, including warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and office buildings. • Building siting accommodates truck access, loading and storage areas. • Roadways designed to accommodate larger vehicles while maintaining a safe, shaded, and comfortable sidewalk network. • Where abutting other Land Use Categories, proper transition and/or buffering is required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely undeveloped land intended to protect and preserve the natural environment and provide recreational opportunities and public parks. • Development limited to use-specific structures and recreation facilities, including trails, picnic shelters, restroom facilities, and equestrian facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside for development not appropriate for any of the other categories and requiring greater flexibility. • Development governed by Master Plan.
Appropriate Zoning Districts	<p>Rural Development R1-190</p> <p>General Rural Development: R1-54</p> <p>Rural Estate: R1-43</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p> <p>Agritainment: AT</p>	<p>Rural Estate: R1-43,</p> <p>Suburban Residential: R1-35, R1-18</p> <p>Suburban Development R1-15, R1-12</p> <p>Urban Development – Type A: R1-7, R1-9</p> <p>Urban Development Type B: MDR, HDR</p> <p>Urban Development: R1-4, R1-5</p> <p>Light Commercial: C-1</p> <p>General Commercial: C-2</p> <p>Public Quasi Public: P/QP</p> <p>Residential Commercial: RC</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p> <p>Agritainment: AT</p>	<p>Urban Development: MDR, HDR, R1-4</p> <p>General Commercial: C-2</p> <p>Public/Quasi Public: P/QP</p> <p>Residential Commercial: RC</p> <p>Downtown Core: DC</p> <p>Mixed-use: MU</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p>	<p>General Commercial: C-2</p> <p>Regional Commercial Center: C-3</p> <p>Residential Commercial: RC</p> <p>Office/Industrial Park: EMPA</p> <p>Public/Quasi Public: P/QP</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p> <p>Agritainment: AT</p>	<p>Office/Industrial Park: EMPA</p> <p>General Industrial: EMP-B</p> <p>Public/Quasi Public: P/QP</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p>	<p>Parks, Recreation, and Conservation: PRC</p> <p>Public/Quasi Public: P/QP</p> <p>Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD</p> <p>*Other types of open space can be included in all other zoning districts including parks, plazas, etc.</p>	<p>Agritainment: AT</p> <p>Planned Community: PCD</p> <p>Planned Area Development: PAD</p> <p>Non-Traditional Housing Product: N/A</p> <p>Public/Quasi Public: P/QP</p>

*Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transition Manual for more information.

Figure 3: Land Use Categories Requirements Table

Zoning Districts		Rural	Neighborhood	Urban	Commercial	Industrial	Open Space	Special District	Special Consideration and Notes	
District	Zoning									
Residential Districts	Rural Development	R1-190	X						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate in RURAL Land Use Category. 	
	General Rural Development	R1-54	X							
	Rural Estate	R1-43	X	X						
	Suburban Residential	Type A	R1-35		X					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate zoning adjacent to RURAL.
		Type B	R1-18		X					
	Suburban Development	Type B	R1-15		X					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be considered adjacent to properties designated as RURAL and adjacent to lower density residential zoning districts if appropriate measures are provided to create a compatible transition between adjacent properties using methods such as: compatible lot widths/sizes; open space/landscape buffers; and roadways. Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process.
		Type B	R1-12		X					
	Urban Development	Type A	R1-9		X					
		Type A	R1-7		X					
		-	R1-5		X					
-		R1-4		X						
Type B		MDR		X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category densities above 8 du/ac require direct access to a collector or arterial roadway, or placement directly abutting commercial uses Within URBAN Land Use Category: Minimum density of 6 du/ac required. May be considered adjacent properties designated as RURAL on the General Plan Land Use Map or within, or adjacent to, any properties designated NEIGHBORHOOD on the General Plan Land Use Map and adjacent to lower residential density zoning districts if appropriate measures are provided to create a compatible transition between adjacent properties using methods such as: compatible lot widths/sizes; open space/landscape buffers; and roadways. Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process. 	
Type B		HDR		X	X					
Non-Residential Districts	Light Commercial	C-1		X					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. 	
	General Commercial	C-2		X	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged. 	
	Regional Commercial Center	C-3				X				
	Office/Industrial Park	EMP-A					X			
	General/Industrial	EMP-B					X			
	Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Zone	PRC						X		
	Public/Quasi-Public	P/QP	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Residential Commercial	RC		X	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged. 	
	Downtown Core	DC			X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged. 	
	Mixed-Use	MU			X			X		
Agritainment	AT	X	X		X			X		
Planned Community	PCD							X		
Overlay Districts	Planned Area Development Overlay	PAD	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process. 	
	Non-Traditional Housing Product	-						X		

*See Buffer and Transition Manual for more information.

Figure 4: Growth Areas Map

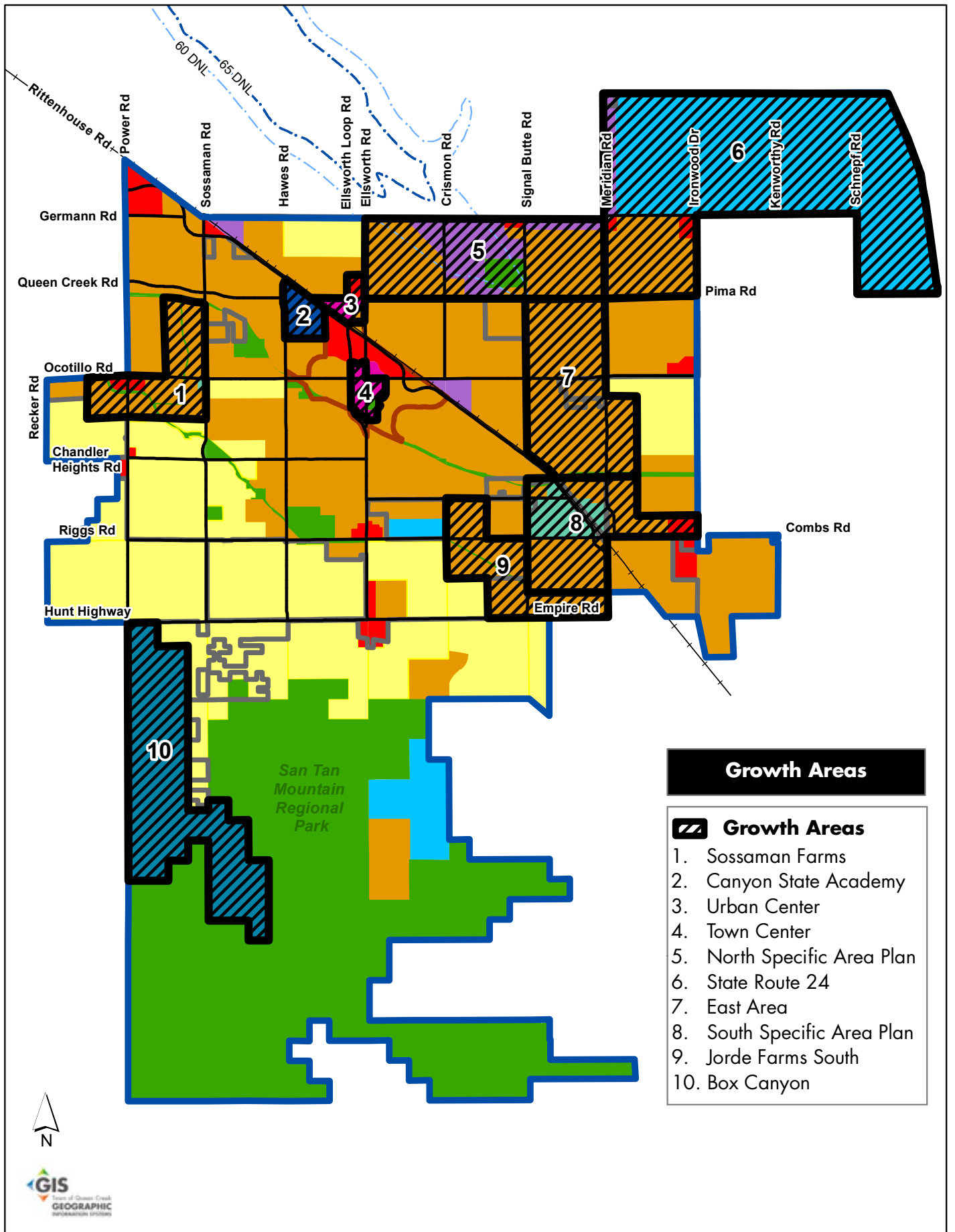


Figure 5: Transportation System Map

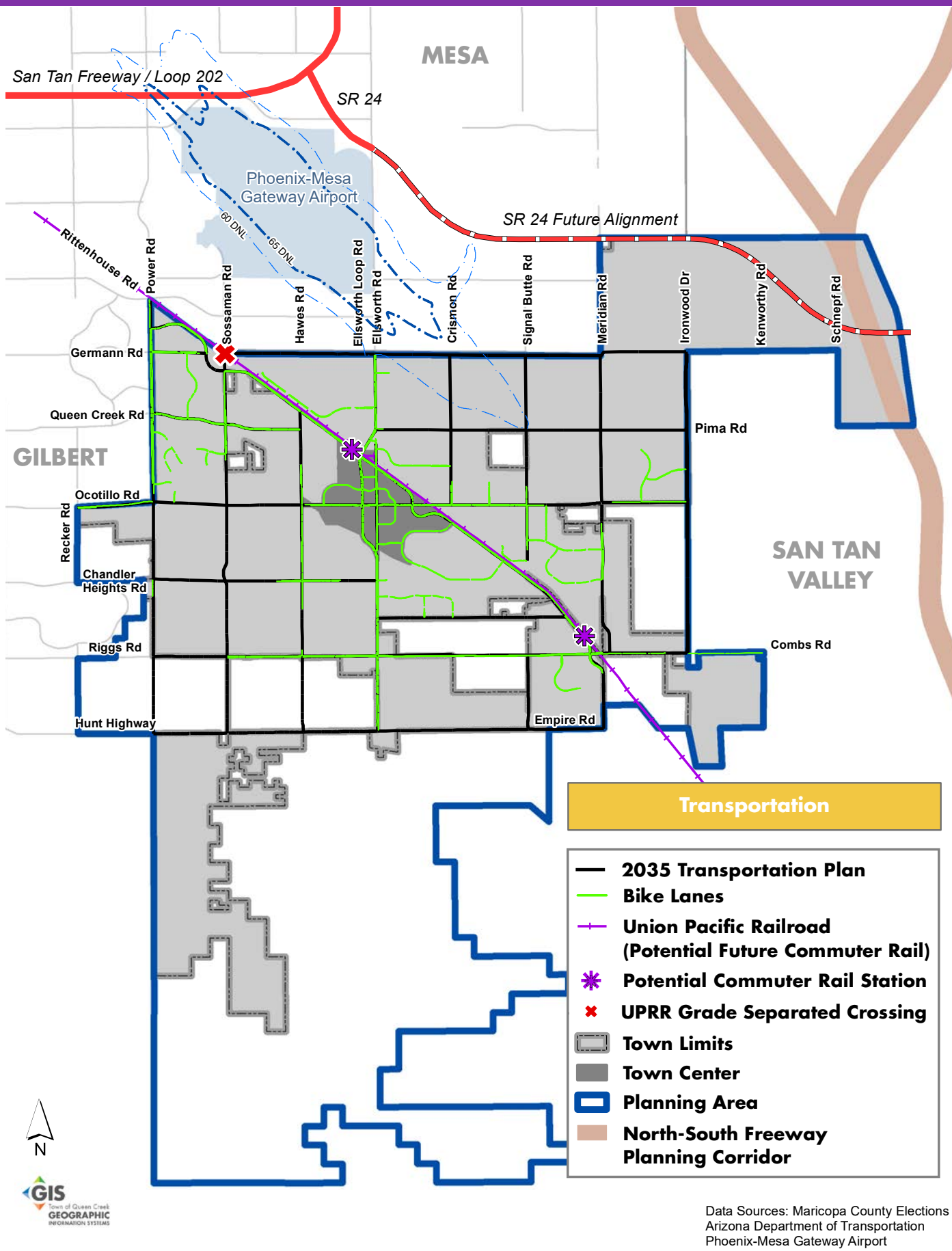


Figure 6: Planned and Existing Parks and Trails

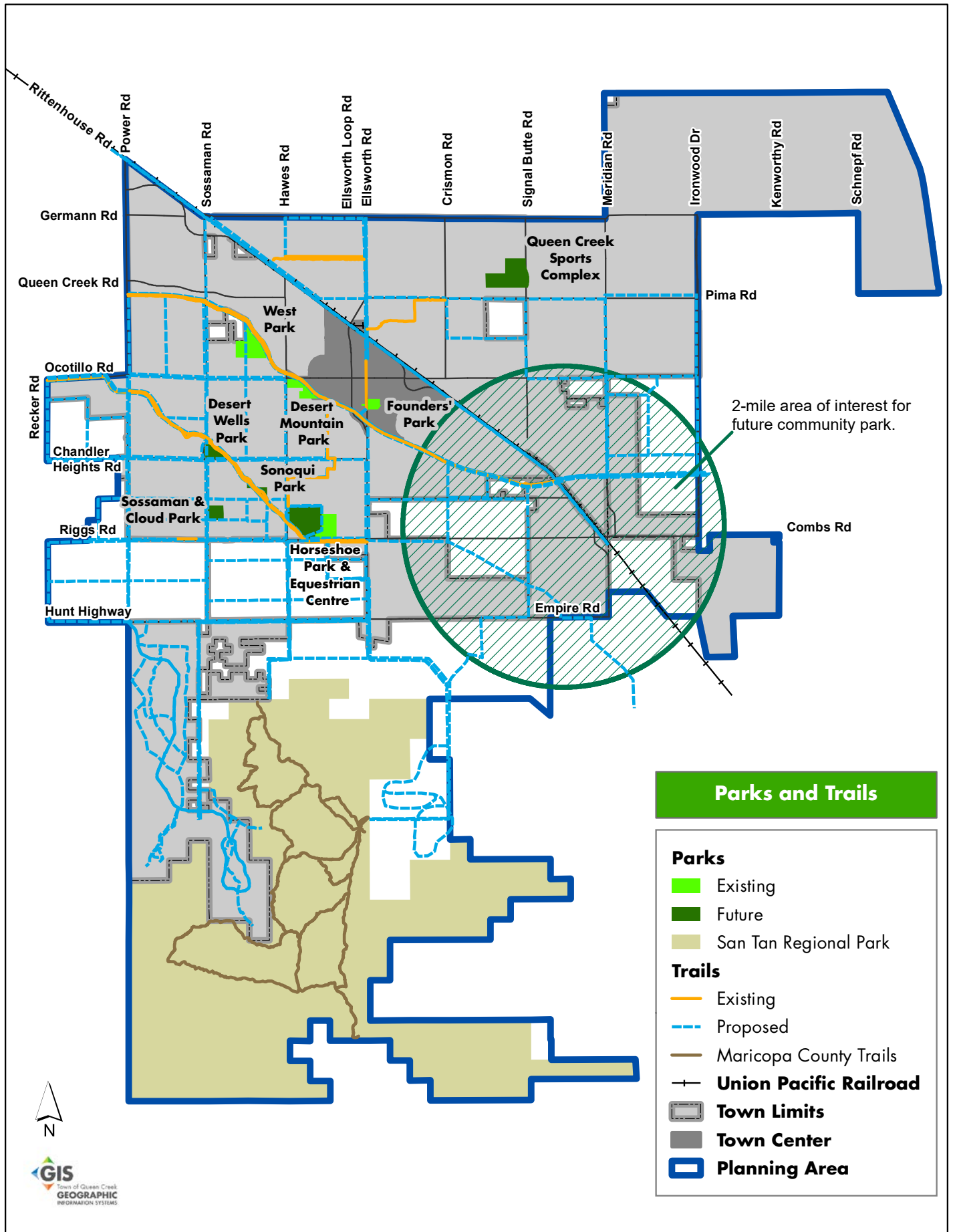


Figure 7: Water and Wastewater Service

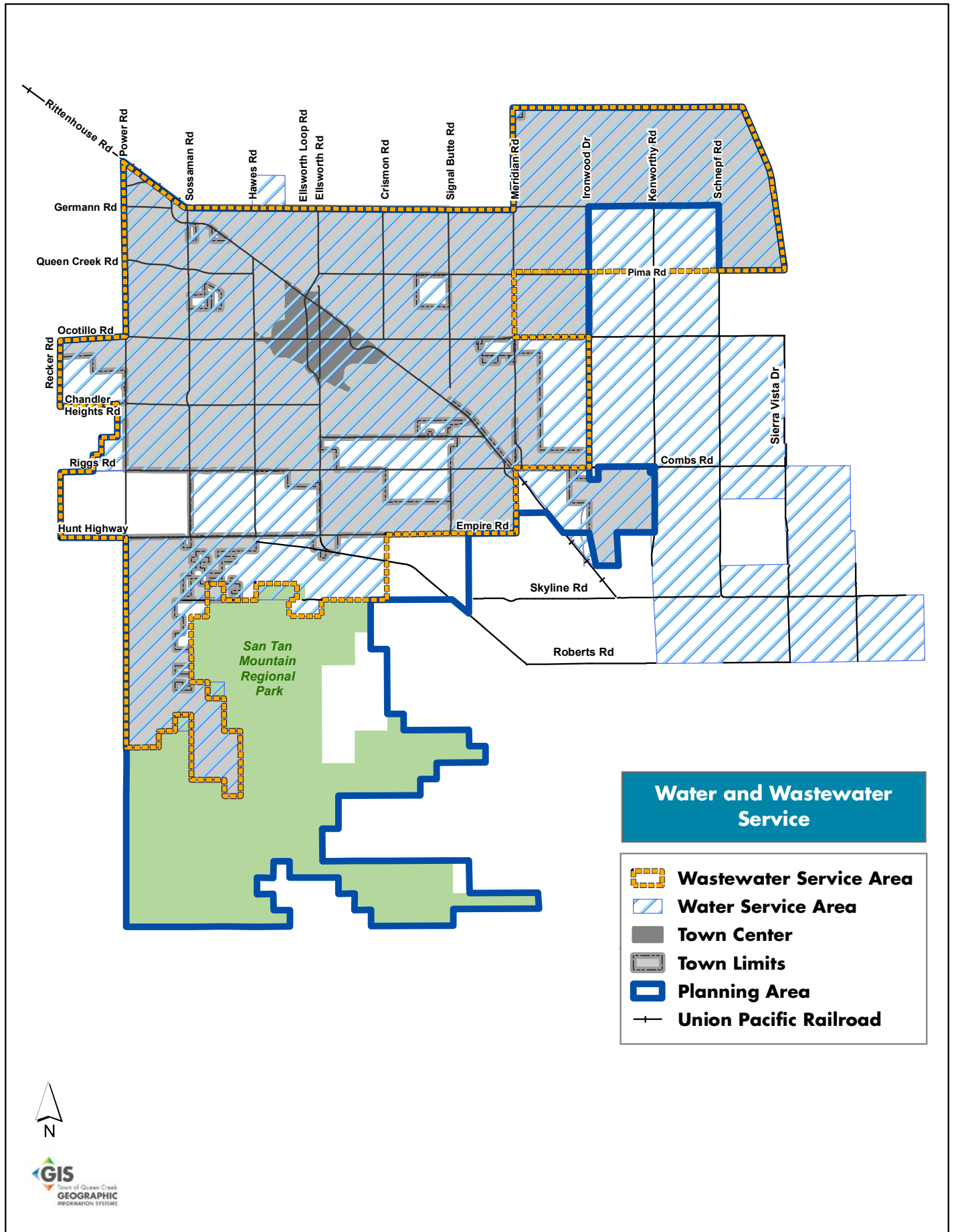


Figure 8: Public Safety: Fire

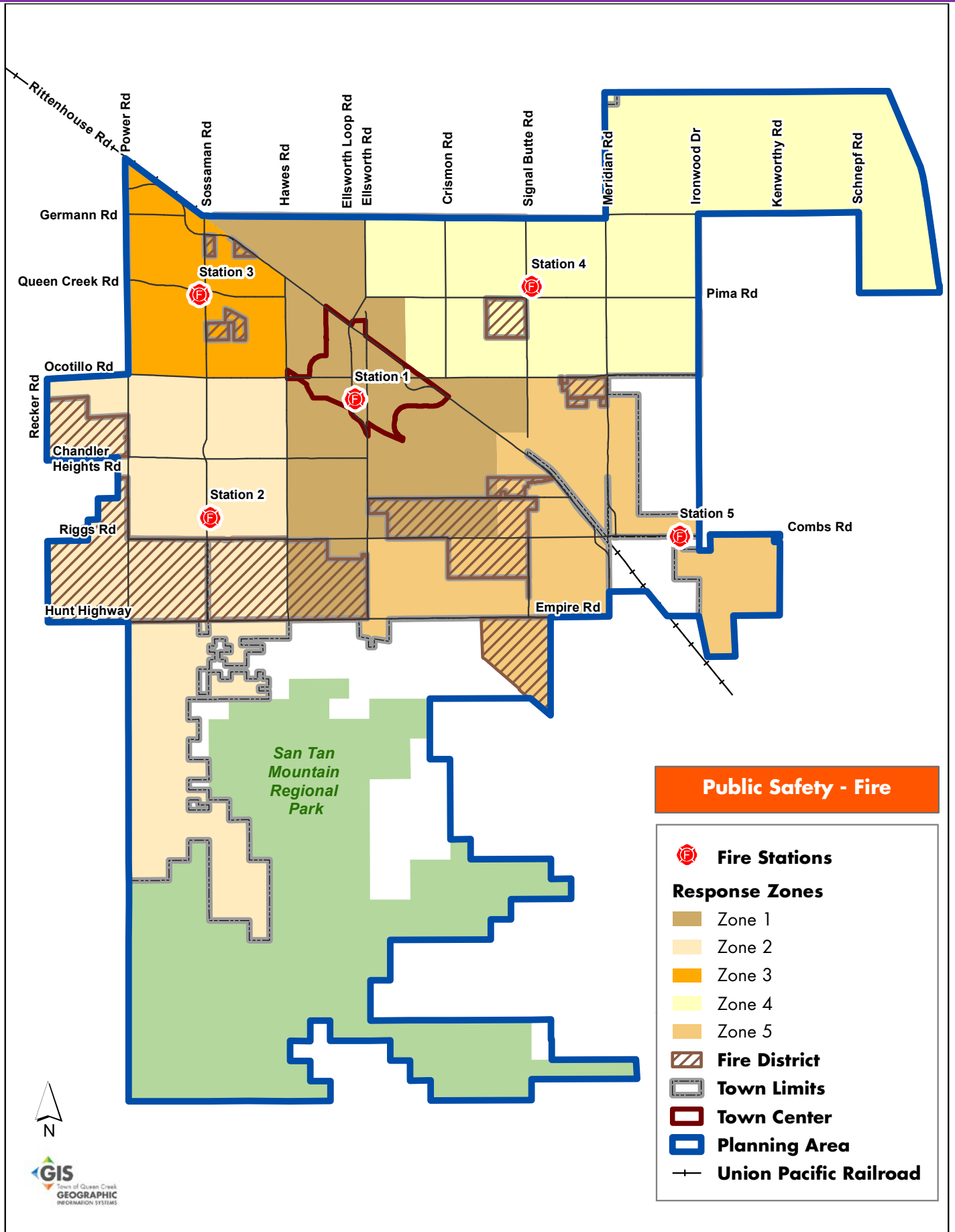
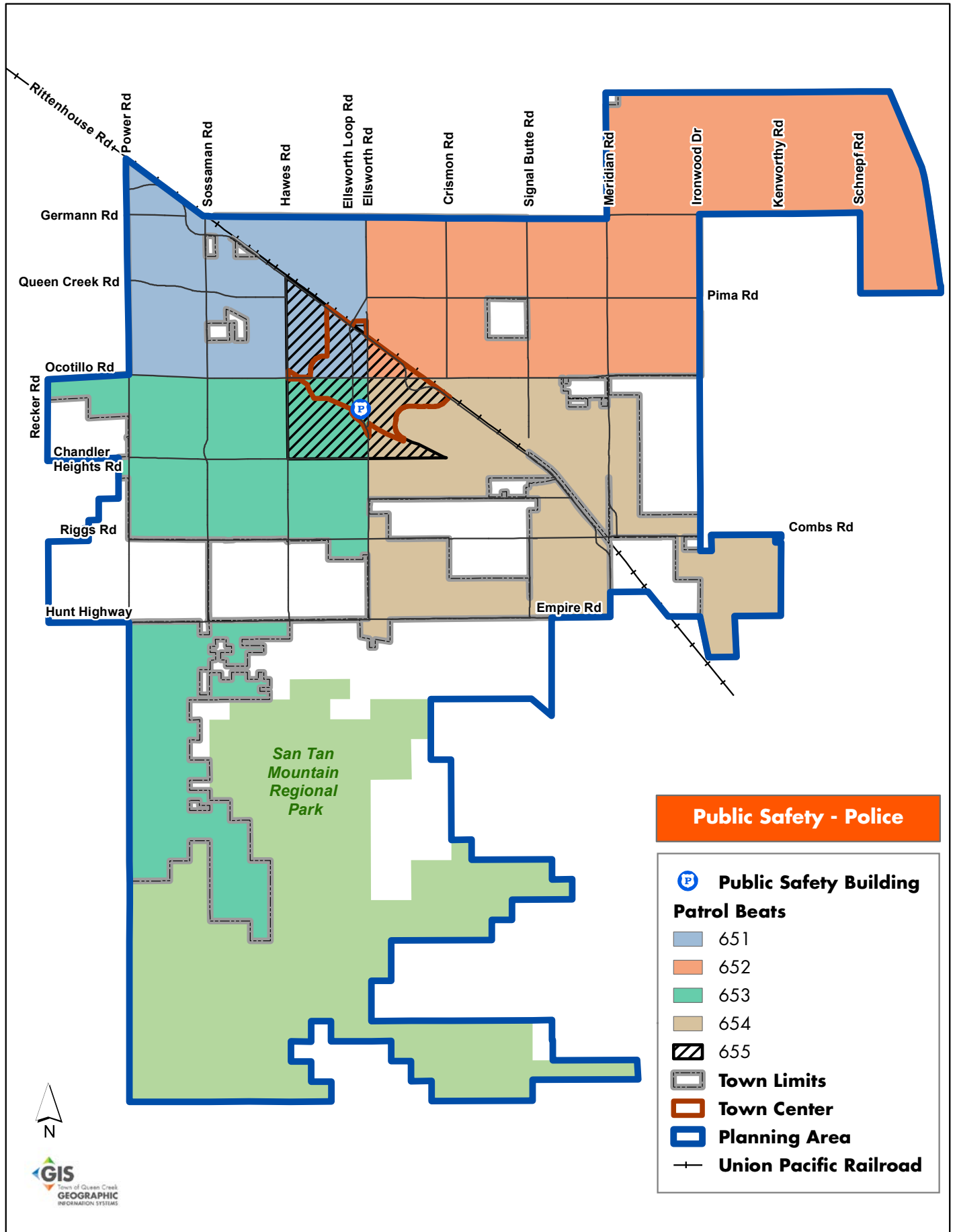


Figure 9: Public Safety: Police



GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

Major Amendments

Major Amendments to the General Plan may be submitted annually. Minor Amendments to the General Plan may be submitted at any time during the calendar year. More information on the General Plan Amendment process is located in Section III: General Plan Administration: General Plan Amendments.

A Major General Plan Amendment would be required for any change to the text of the following Land Use Categories:

» Rural Land Use Category and General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for 10 or more acres of land that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Types, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create 10 or more contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

» Neighborhood Land Use Category and General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for 5 or more acres of land that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Types, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create more than 5 contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

» Urban Land Use Category and General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for land greater than one (1) acre that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Type, appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- Any request for a drive-thru.

- Any rezoning request that would create more than 5 contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

» Commercial and Industrial Categories and General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for land greater than 20 acres that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Type, appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create 20 or more contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

» Special District, Open Space, or Agritainment Categories and General Plan Map

- Any rezoning request not in conformance in the Special District, Open Space, or Agritainment Land Use Categories.
- Special District boundaries may be expanded to accommodate extensions/modifications of its associated master plan or PAD through the rezoning process.

» Text Changes

- Changes to the text of the Land Use Categories, Land Use Categories Requirements Table, descriptions on the Land Use legend, or the elimination or substantial modification of any goals or strategies to the General Plan.

Any rezoning request that is less than the size limit established in the above sections may be approved through the rezoning process and will not require a Major General Plan Amendment. During the rezone review request, consideration will be given to maintain a compatible transition between adjacent properties.

Minor Amendments

Minor Amendments include text amendments, such as updates to goals and strategies which do not change their meaning or intent, to demographic or statistical information, and updates or modifications to actions. Updates to maps included in this General Plan (excluding the Land Use Map) may be done through a Minor General Plan Amendment request. Requests for Minor Amendments would be recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission to the Town Council. Minor Amendment requests can be considered at any Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council public meeting.

Any rezoning request that is less than the size limit established in the above sections may be approved through the rezoning process and will not require a Minor General Plan Amendment. During the rezone review request, consideration will be given to maintain a compatible transition between adjacent properties.

Findings of Fact

In determining whether the proposed amendment should be approved, the Commission and Town Council shall consider the following factors:

1. Whether this change in the General Plan land use map will result in a shortage of land for other planned uses (for example and not limited to, will this change result in a substantial and undesirable reduction in the amount of available land for employment or higher density housing development?)
2. Does the proposed amendment constitute an overall improvement to the Queen Creek General Plan and is not solely for the good or benefit of a particular landowner or owners at a particular point in time.
3. The degree to which the proposed amendment will impact the whole community or a portion of the community by:
 - a. Significantly altering acceptable existing land use patterns in a way that is contrary to the goals, strategies and actions identified in the adopted General Plan.
 - b. Requiring larger or more extensive improvements to roads, sewer, or water systems than are needed to support the prevailing land uses and which may negatively impact development of other lands. The Commission and/or the Town Council may also consider the degree to which the need for such improvements will be mitigated pursuant to binding commitments by the applicant, a public agency, or other sources when the impacts of the uses permitted pursuant to the General Plan amendment will be felt.
 - c. Resulting in adverse impacts on existing uses due to increased traffic congestion that will not be accommodated by planned roadway improvements or other planned transportation improvements such as and not limited to non-motorized transportation alternatives, transit, or self driving vehicles.
 - d. Affecting the livability of the surrounding area or the health and safety of present or future residents.
4. Consistency of the proposed amendment with the vision, goals, strategies, and actions of the adopted General Plan.
5. Whether there was an error or oversight in the original General Plan adoption in that the Council did not fully consider facts, projects or trends which could reasonably exist in the future.
6. Whether events subsequent to the General Plan adoption have superseded the Council's original premises and findings made upon Plan adoption.
7. Whether any or all of the Council's original premises and findings regarding General Plan adoption were unsubstantiated.
8. Whether events subsequent to the General Plan adoption may have changed the character and/or condition of the area so as to make the application acceptable
9. The extent to which the benefits of the Plan amendment outweigh any of the impacts identified in the above subsections.



GENERAL PLAN VISION AND PURPOSE

GENERAL PLAN VISION

Queen Creek is a unique community known for its friendly, hometown atmosphere, and strong sense of agricultural heritage. This culture is woven throughout the community's neighborhoods, businesses, and recreational opportunities. The Town General Plan provides for a range of land uses and opportunities that are consistent with the desired community character. The strategic vision of the community aims to continue the environment of "convenience of the city, comfort of the country."



GENERAL PLAN PURPOSE

The Queen Creek General Plan serves as the Town's decision-making road map for future growth. It contains a vision supported by goals, strategies, and actions to guide Town development, support a sustainable and robust economy, provide quality recreation, and effectively conserve Queen Creek's natural resources.

The Plan was developed with extensive input from the community to ensure it embraces the vision of Queen Creek. The General Plan provides decision-making guidance to the Town to ensure that future growth proceeds in a manner consistent with that vision.

Arizona revised statutes (ARS119-461.05) requires each municipality of a population more than 2,500 to prepare and adopt a General Plan every 10 years. This Plan meets the requirements of, and was prepared in accordance with State law.

The Town of Queen Creek 2018 General Plan vision and goals set a broad agenda for the future of Queen Creek. The Plan contains three sections that focus on a total of 10 elements that contribute to the quality of life in the Town. Each element includes strategies and actions that support the Plan vision and implement the Plan goals. Section I: Introduction and Overview includes an Executive Summary and background information about Queen Creek and planning opportunities. Section II: General Plan Elements includes the 10 General Plan elements and maps. Section IIA: Land Use Element includes a Land Use Map and Land Use Categories that describe the types and locations of land uses, residential densities, and commercial intensities that are planned within the Town. The General Plan Land Use Map does not change existing zoning. If a requested rezoning does not conform to the General Plan Land Use Map and Land Use Categories, Section IIIA: General Plan Amendments outlines how to request an amendment to the General Plan.

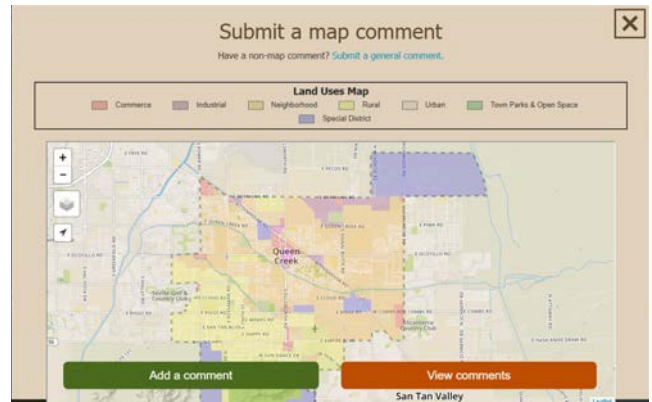
HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

State law requires cities and towns with more than 2,500 residents to update or readopt their General Plan every 10 years, and cities and towns with populations over 10,000 people must submit an adopted General Plan to the voters for ratification. This General Plan updates the adopted 2008 General Plan that was ratified by Queen Creek voters in September 2008 and provides guidance to Queen Creek elected and appointed officials, Town staff, and residents as they make decisions impacting the future of Queen Creek.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The 2018 Town of Queen Creek General Plan is an update to the 2008 General Plan. The update process, spanning from August 2016 through September 2017, included extensive public input using an interactive website, social media, and several public meetings. In addition to the public input received on the General Plan, public input from the Transportation Master Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update was also incorporated. The process also included periodic updates at the Town's various board and commission meetings, including monthly presentations and work sessions at the Planning and Zoning Commission meetings. The community actively participated in the General Plan Update through a variety of methods:

- More than 6,000 "likes," comments, and shares on Facebook, and an additional 4,500 views, likes, and comments received through other social media outlets (website, Nextdoor, and Instagram).
- Survey on the 2008 Goals and Strategies distributed on the General Plan website.
- More than 50 people participated in the General Plan Land Use Workshop held on February 2017.
- More than 35 people participated in interviews and focus groups held in September 2016.
- Public hearings in August and September 2017.



The Town hosted an interactive General Plan Update website that provided information about the Plan's updating process, opportunities to get involved, and educational material on the Town's current demographic trends and data. The site also encouraged residents to comment on the Plan's Land Use Map, goals, and policies, and allowed residents to view other comments on the Plan to stimulate online discussion about similar topics in their area.

QUEEN CREEK AND THE REGION

The majority of the Town of Queen Creek is located in the southeastern portion of Maricopa County. Portions of the Town, east of Meridian Road and south of Empire Boulevard (including the 2,100 acre Box Canyon Master Planned Community), are within northern Pinal County. The Town's Planning Area lies in Maricopa and Pinal counties. It includes areas outside the Town's municipal boundary, some of which may be annexed into the Town in the future.

Queen Creek is bordered to the west by the Town of Gilbert, to the north by the City of Mesa and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, to the northeast by the Apache Junction Planning Area and the undeveloped Superstition Vistas master planning area, and to the southeast by the San Tan Valley area. A portion of The San Tan Valley area is included in the Town of Florence Planning Area. The 10,200-acre San Tan Mountain Regional Park, which is managed by Maricopa County, and the Gila River Indian Reservation, borders the Town on the south within the Town's Planning Area.

The Town is among many areas located in the Southeast Valley experiencing significant growth. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport is envisioned as a regional employment center with a focus towards mixed-use facilities that are combined and integrated with Arizona State University's Polytechnic Campus. The San Tan Valley area has over 90,000 residents, and may incorporate as their own municipality in the future. If the San Tan Valley area were to incorporate, services will be provided by the new, potential municipality, and may reduce the number of San Tan Valley area residents that use Queen Creek services and shop and spend tax dollars in the Town of Queen Creek. Regardless of the San Tan Valley area's incorporation, the growth of the region will continue to exacerbate and impact the challenges of the Town's projected growth, including increased traffic congestion and the use of Town infrastructure and resources.

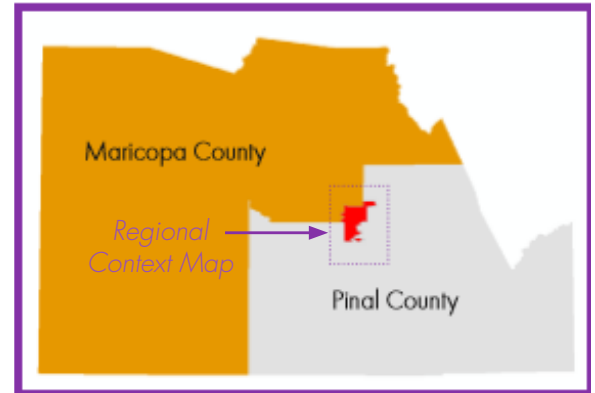
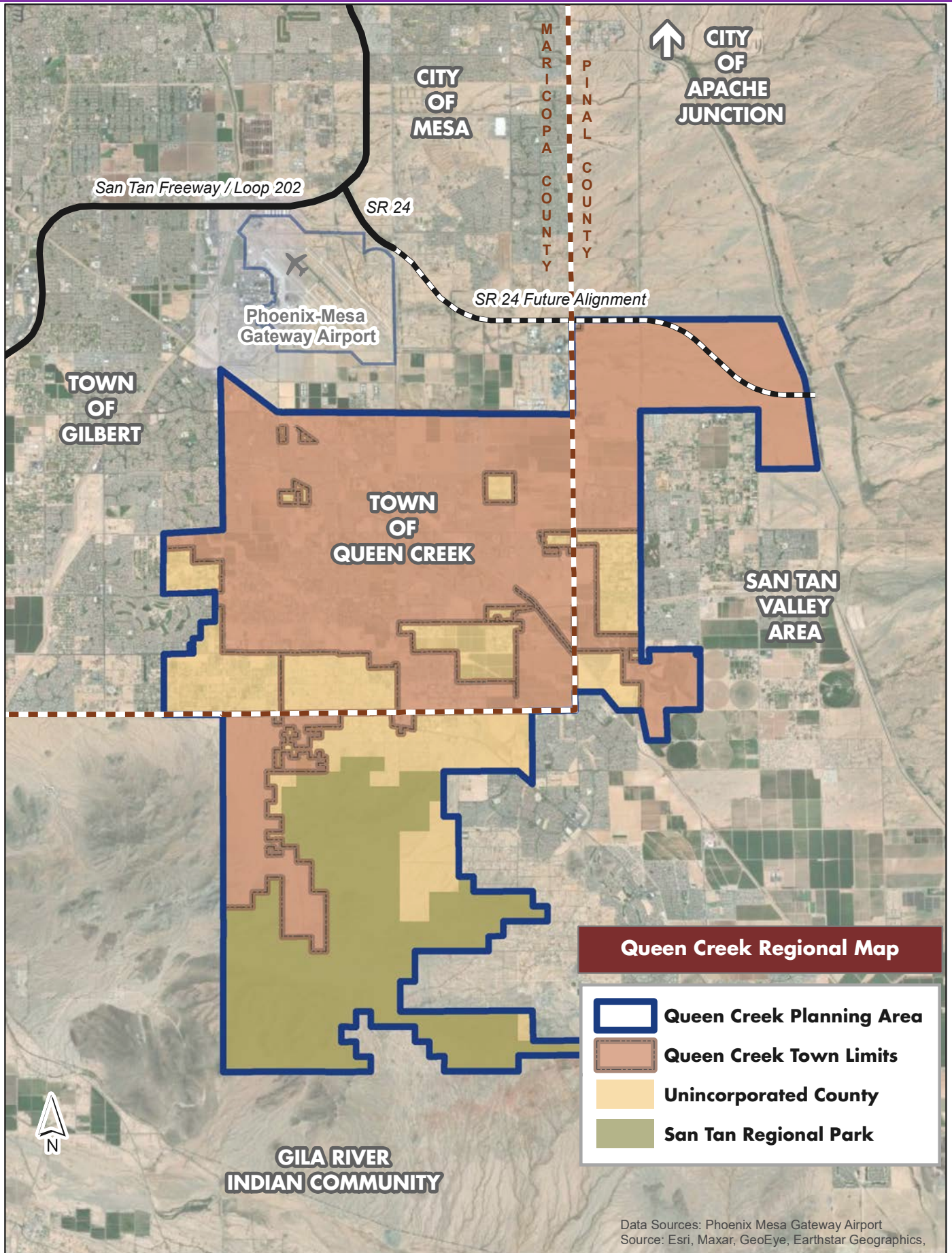






Figure 10: Regional Context Map



Queen Creek Regional Map

-  Queen Creek Planning Area
-  Queen Creek Town Limits
-  Unincorporated County
-  San Tan Regional Park

Data Sources: Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport
Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics,

STRATEGIC THEMES

This General Plan identifies four strategic themes: Quality of Life, Economy, Environment, and Health which act as overarching principles that augment the Vision of the General Plan. The goals, strategies, and actions for all elements support the implementation of these four strategic themes and further realization of the General Plan Vision.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Queen Creek's high quality of life and unique lifestyle make the Town a desirable place to live, play and learn. The Town celebrates its heritage by incorporating agricultural and equestrian features into its parks, commercial areas, and neighborhoods.



ECONOMY

A vibrant and diverse economy will result in jobs for residents, provide attractive options for shopping and dining and increased revenues for Town services. The economy of Queen Creek generates revenues that pay for public services and amenities.



ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment is a fundamental component of the high quality of life offered by the Town. The Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes provide a unique element to the community, adding both recreation and environmental opportunities. Sustainable practices will help keep Queen Creek a highly desirable place to live, now and in the future.



HEALTH

Creating a healthier community benefits everyone; the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states that the effects of the community design choices we make, and the opportunities those choices afford or deny, can influence mental and physical health. Research indicates that providing opportunities for physical activity such as walking, interaction with others that comes from informal interactions and strong social institutions, and access to transit, parks, trails, and paths all contribute to a healthier community.

TOWN-WIDE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This section identifies specific considerations that affect the Town as a whole and influence how we plan for the future.

Maintaining agricultural character and heritage

The 2018 General Plan recognizes the importance of the Town's agricultural character and heritage. To celebrate the agricultural character of the Town, the General Plan Land Use Map includes the Rural Land Use Category and Agritainment Special District areas that are designated for development that conserves the Town's agricultural history. The General Plan Land Use Map also classifies 35% of the land within the Town Planning Area for rural development appropriate for densities of one dwelling unit per acre or less (a significant portion of this area is unincorporated). The General Plan Land Use Map and Plan goals, strategies and actions designation will help to ensure that rural and equestrian areas will remain a significant feature of the Town even as the projected population of Queen Creek increases 78% over the next decade.

Incorporated Queen Creek is nearing build-out

Slightly less than eight percent of the land in the Town is vacant and unplanned. To preserve opportunities for future development, and encourage a more efficient use of land, this General Plan creates a neighborhood category that permits a range of housing densities that use the Town's remaining land efficiently and maximizes opportunities for new development.

Creating options for a variety of lifestyles and demographics

Queen Creek has a diverse population with varying needs. The median age is 30.3 years old and the average household size is 3.44; however, 36% of Queen Creek households have two or less people. Currently, Queen Creek offers fewer multifamily units than Chandler, Gilbert or Mesa. To enable the Town's youngest residents housing options when they move out of their parent's homes, and to provide options for families when their children leave home as well as others seeking a more walkable lifestyle, the General Plan creates two types of Land Use Categories. The Urban Land Use Category encourages high-density housing in walking distance to shopping, employment and services, and the Neighborhood Land Use Category allows for a diversity of housing types and densities.

Reduce congestion through land use and design that supports a variety of transportation modes

The Town of Queen Creek adopted the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan in December 2016. Included in the plan are recommendations for a variety of improvements to the roadway system, including the construction of additional lanes and arterial roadway connections. However, even with those identified improvements, many roads are still likely to experience congestion. A 2012 Land Use and Traffic Congestion study by the Arizona Department of Transportation found higher density corridors had considerably less congestion than suburban corridors due to a better mix of land use that led to shorter trips, more transit and non-motorized travel, and fewer vehicle miles traveled. Encouraging land use patterns that mix uses in an appropriate manner can help to reduce future congestion in Town and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Planning for Superstition Vistas

The Queen Creek Planning Area includes over 3,500 acres of unplanned land within the Superstition Vistas Planning Area managed by the Arizona State Land Department. Many of the original plans for the area have been shelved since the 2008 Great Recession, however as the economy continues to recover, interest in the area is increasing. The planned extension of SR 24 is aligned along the northern border of the Town's planning area, and is planned to be constructed within the next decade. This will provide another option for vehicles to access the US 60 and Loop 202 via future connections to Signal Butte and Ironwood roads, and provide access to the portion of the Superstition Vistas land within the Town Planning Area. When the Arizona State Land Department is prepared to plan and dispose of this land for development, the General Plan provides guidance for the planning and development of this land through the Land Use and Growth Areas Elements that encourage land uses that provide new jobs and take advantage of best land use and practices.

Working regionally to enhance the role of the Town in the region

Located between the growing areas of south Gilbert, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, San Tan Valley area and the Superstition Vistas Planning Area, Queen Creek has the opportunity to become a regional hub with a unique lifestyle. As a regional hub, the Town can benefit from visitor spending, and visitors can support a variety of shopping and services that require a larger market area than the Town alone can provide. To help the Town remain an important regional destination and determine its role in the larger region, it will be important to ensure that Queen Creek is informed as areas around the Town are developed. This will ensure that development in the surrounding communities does not negatively impact the quality of life in Queen Creek. To help maintain the lifestyle and high quality of life in the Town as the areas around it continue to develop, this Plan includes strategies for inter-jurisdictional cooperation and participation.

Providing employment and land use options that could reduce congestion and travel times

The average Queen Creek resident commute time is eight minutes longer than the average Maricopa County resident. Almost all of the Town's wage earners do not work in Queen Creek; in 2016, 95% of all Queen Creek working residents commuted outside of Queen Creek for work, adding to the traffic congestion. Part of the reason so many Queen Creek residents work outside of the Town is a lack of employment opportunities within Queen Creek. Providing opportunities for high-wage employment in Queen Creek could help reduce traffic congestion and diversify the economy. These opportunities could be provided in offices in the Town Center, high tech operations in the industrial areas near Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, and in the health care field.

Developing a walkable Town Center

This General Plan creates an Urban Land Use Category that encourages walkable, mixed-use development. Throughout this General Plan update process, residents stated they wanted walkable areas that offered shopping, dining, and entertainment. Nationally, downtowns and main streets are replacing auto-oriented commercial centers as places that people want to be. Statistics show that millennials (people born between 1980 and 2000) and older adults (Baby Boomers) are choosing to live in well-designed, higher density, walkable, mixed-use, communities. A 2013 survey by the National Association of Realtors found a majority prefer houses with small yards (55 percent) with an easy walk to schools, stores and restaurants over houses with large yards (40 percent) lacking walkability to area destinations. This General Plan includes Land Use Categories and goals, strategies, and actions that support a walkable Town Center.

Creating and building on unique economic assets within the Town

The South Area Specific Plan, adopted in 2015, includes the Queen Creek Olive Mill and Schnepf Farms within an Agritainment Land Use Category. This General Plan incorporates the South Specific Area Plan by reference, and identifies an additional Agritainment area at the planned Sossaman Farms development. These areas are unique economic engines that celebrate the Town's agricultural history.

The North Specific Area Plan, also adopted in 2015 and incorporated into this Plan by reference, creates more areas for housing, and conserves areas under the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport noise contours for industrial development.

While the General Plan Land Use Map designates the Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre (HPEC) as a park, it is also an important economic asset that is unique to the Town. In addition to equestrian-based events that attract visitors, HPEC hosts other regional and statewide events that result in increased revenues for the Town.

Conserving and enhancing the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes

The Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes are iconic features of the Town. Residents use the washes for both physical fitness (walking, biking, running) and social activities (hiking groups, scout adventures, equestrian activities). The washes also provide unique desert environments for wildlife and contribute to the reduction of the urban heat island effect. Historically, the Town has diligently maintained public access to the washes as development has occurred alongside them. Continuing to maintain access and the quality environment of the washes is recommended in this Plan.

Designing a healthy community

Statistics show that where we live impacts our health as much as our genetics. Feeling connected to our neighbors, having choices to be physically active, how we travel, having access to healthy food, employment and healthcare, and feeling safe and economically secure all impact our mental and physical health. People in good health generally have a higher quality of life and how we build our communities influences all of these factors. Through the General Plan, Queen Creek can put in place policies and strategies that result in walkable, transit supportive neighborhoods that are connected to parks, retail, and community services.



Less than **8%** of the land in the Town is **vacant** and **unplanned**.



Healthy communities help to reduce the incidence of chronic, obesity related disease.





TOWN OF
QUEEN CREEK
ARIZONA



SECTION 2:
**General Plan
Elements**

LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element provides a framework for Town decision-making about future land use and development. This element discusses the planning considerations that inform the Land Use Map, Land Use Categories, and the Land Use Element’s goals, strategies, and actions. In accordance with State law, the Land Use Map describes the location and extent for the uses of land within the Town and its Planning Area. The Plan’s goals, strategies, and actions provide guidance to the Town as it reviews and makes decisions about the types of new development that are appropriate to Queen Creek.

Queen Creek is an Attractive and Thriving Community

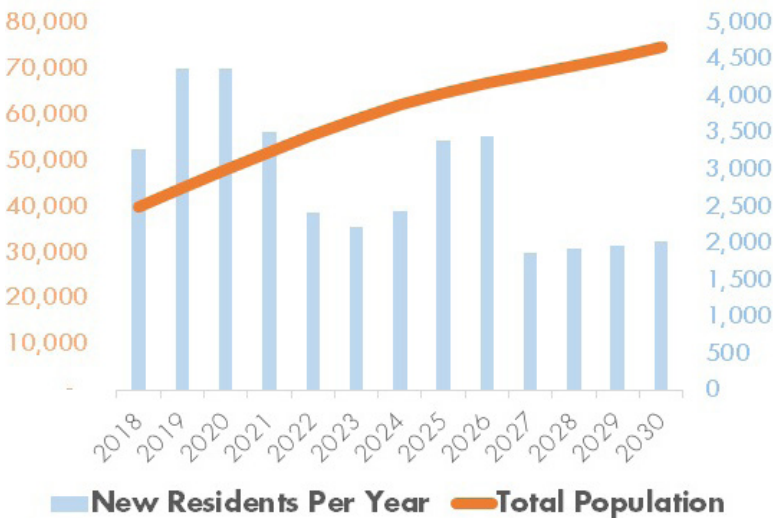
QUEEN CREEK’S POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO INCREASE BY **78%** BETWEEN THE YEARS 2017 AND 2027

In March of 2017, Maricopa County was the fastest growing county in the U.S. (U.S. Census). Queen Creek is one of the fastest growing jurisdictions in Maricopa County. Projections prepared by

the Town anticipate Queen Creek population to almost double from about 41,200 to 73,200 between 2017 and 2027. In 2017, there are 1,435 acres of vacant, unplanned land within the Town limits. Typically, when land becomes scarce, redevelopment starts to occur. The Town needs to carefully consider how it uses its remaining vacant land so that it can continue to thrive, support a diverse economy, and maintain its agricultural heritage.

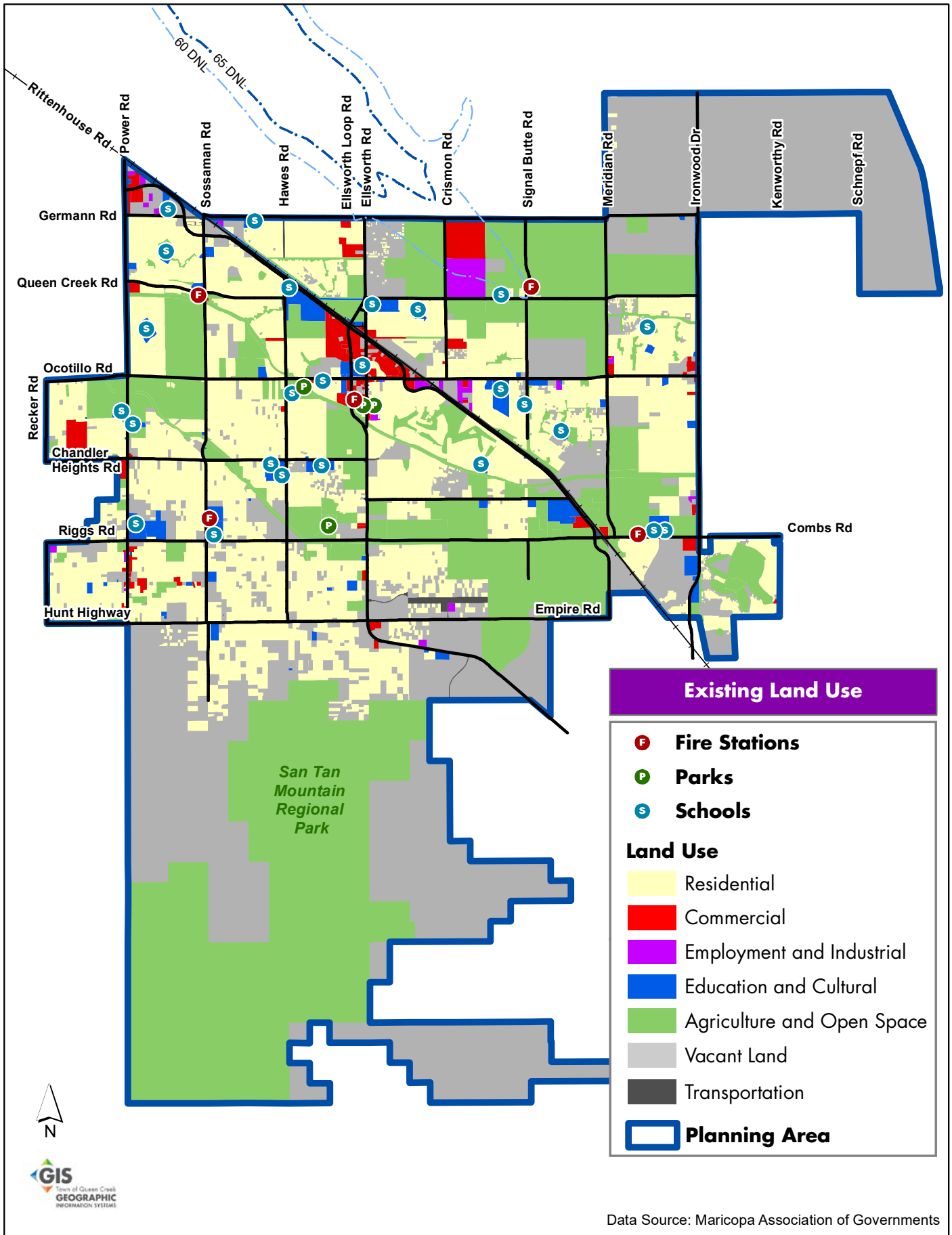
Residents like the Small Town Character of Queen Creek

Queen Creek residents like the small town character of their community. They like the feel of quiet residential areas, the agricultural character, and the calmer pace of life. Residents want to retain the character of their community as new housing, retail, and employment is constructed to accommodate new residents and the businesses that will support them. The Town offers limited opportunities for a range of lifestyles. In the future, current residents’ lifestyle choices may evolve (for example, youth moving out of the house to live on their own, first time families who want to stay in the community, or “empty nesters” who once had children at home and want to remain near family and friends). This update offers the Town the opportunities to guide future development so that it accommodates the needs of current and future residents and businesses while retaining its small town and agricultural character.



This chart shows the number of new residents that are projected to move into Queen Creek each year, and the total projected Town population growth between 2018 and 2030.

Figure 11: Existing Land Use Map



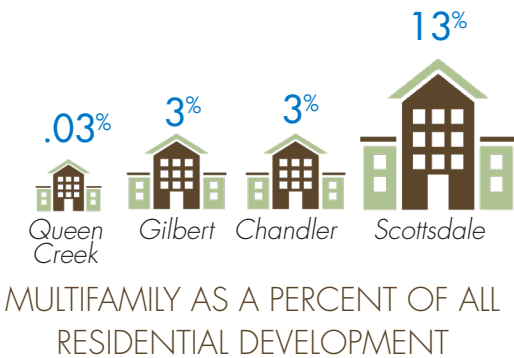
Planning Considerations

Land use distribution

Land is an important resource for the Town. How it is distributed among different land uses and densities of development will influence the amounts of housing, employment, and retail uses within Queen Creek.

Nearly half of all the land in the Queen Creek Planning Area is developed residential uses which is generally comparable to the percent of developed residential uses in neighboring communities. However, less than half of one percent of the developed residential areas in Queen Creek are multifamily housing, much lower than in neighboring communities. Queen Creek also has a smaller percent of land developed for employment uses than comparable communities.

Throughout this planning process, residents stated that they wanted a walkable Town Center. Multifamily housing mixed with a range of employment uses and shopping are the ingredients of a successful, walkable, Town Center. Additionally, the low percentage of land developed for employment uses within Queen Creek affects traffic within Town, and is one of the reasons Queen Creek residents have the longest commute to work times in Maricopa County (Queen Creek 2014 Transit Study). The update of this Plan provides an opportunity for a more balanced land use mix that can help reduce congestion, commute times, and provide for employment of Town residents.



Only a small portion of land within the Town is unplanned

Over 92% of the total land within the Town is planned for housing and commercial development. Because the Town’s population is growing so quickly, it is important to provide flexibility so new development of this remaining, unplanned land can provide uses that can meet unanticipated needs, provide choices for future residents and contribute to the quality of life within the Town.

The Planning Area provides opportunities for long-term growth

The Planning Area includes land that is outside the municipal limits that could annex into the Town. Such areas provide opportunities for long-term growth. Once this land is developed, new population and business may have to be accommodated through redevelopment and infill. While the Town of Queen Creek does not have planning and zoning authority over land outside its limits, the development of these areas could have an impact on the Town. As such, Town staff should continue to review and comment on rezoning requests that occur within Queen Creek’s Planning Area.

The San Tan Valley area will continue to impact the Town

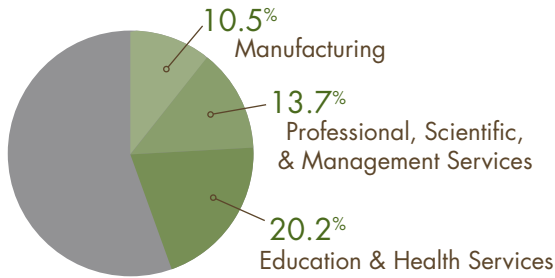
The San Tan Valley area includes over 90,000 residents (2016). The San Tan Valley area largely consists of master planned communities and subdivisions amounting to over 31,000 homes and there is limited retail, employment, parks, and services to serve the San Tan Valley area residents. Many San Tan Valley area residents drive through Queen Creek to work and shop. This benefits Queen Creek because sales tax from shopping adds to the Town’s revenues, and the San Tan Valley area residents create a market for restaurants and retail services in Queen Creek that the Town could not support on its own. However, the San Tan Valley area residents’ use of Town roads, parks, and other services also places stress on the Town’s infrastructure.

There are limited areas that are developed for employment uses that support the median housing values in the Town

The Town’s largest employment sector is retail jobs. The second largest employment sector is government and quasi-government (Queen Creek School District, Canyon State Academy, and the Town of Queen Creek).

Queen Creek Industry Employment

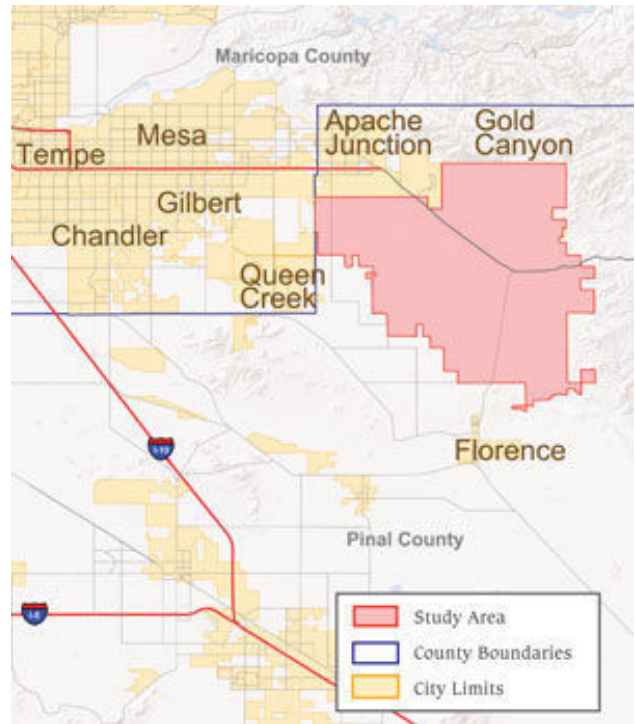
Source: Economic Development Strategic Plan



The Town’s Economic Development Strategic Plan reports that almost half of all residents work in education and health services (20.2%), professional, scientific and management services (13.7%), and manufacturing (10.5%).

While these professions pay wages that support a robust housing market in Queen Creek, and the U.S. Census American Community Survey reports Queen Creek 2011-2015 median household income is one of the highest in Maricopa County; almost all of these jobs are located outside Queen Creek, and more than 95% of Queen Creek’s workforce leaves Queen Creek for work.

Queen Creek residents have the highest average commute times in Maricopa County. As the Town population increases, commute times will increase as more residents travel outside of Queen Creek for work. To maintain the Town’s housing values and lifestyles, it is important for the Town to continue to provide an environment that provides jobs for its workforce.



The Superstition Vistas includes 175,000 acres, some of which is located in the northeast portion of the Queen Creek Planning Area. Source: Pinal County Tri-Valley Dispatch. February 15, 2017.

North and South Area Specific Plans

The North Specific Area Plan (NSAP) and the South Specific Area Plan (SSAP), approved by the Town Council in 2015, set development patterns for northeast and southeast Queen Creek. The NSAP coordinated land use patterns to be aligned with the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport updated Land Use Compatibility Plan, right-sized employment development to reflect recent absorption studies for industrial uses in Town, and provided opportunities for unique residential neighborhoods. The SSAP created the Town’s hallmark Agritainment area and identified other areas for future housing and commercial development. While the 2018 General Plan Land Use Map updates the land use maps included in the NSAP and the SSAP, each plan includes additional information, standards, and requirements that still remain and shall be adhered to as the area develops.

Planning for land within the Superstition Vistas offers opportunities for new types of development

Over 4,300 acres of unplanned, vacant land owned by the State Land Department is located in the northeast edge of the Town Planning Area, between Germann and Frye (extended) Roads, and the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and the CAP Canal. State Route 24 (SR 24) is planned to be constructed along the northern edge of the Town Planning Area at the Frye Road Alignment within the next 10 years, and will provide access to this portion of the Planning Area. This General Plan includes guidance for the development of this land so it contributes to the quality of life and economy of the Town.

Current land uses within the Town could not support transit

One effective way for reducing traffic congestion is to support the use of alternative transportation modes, such as transit. The adopted Queen Creek 2016 Transportation Master Plan includes mid-term and long-term recommendations to support and expand opportunities for transit, including, “Develop land use policies that encourage higher density that could support transit.” Figure VII-6 in the plan also identifies a Possible Circulator Service Area that supports transit services as generally bounded by Meridian, Ellsworth, and Crismon roads on the east and west, and Queen Creek, Chandler Heights, and Combs roads on the north and south. Higher density land uses that support transit should be strategically located along high volume arterial roadways, in the Town Center, or surrounding future commuter rail stations.

95%
OF QUEEN CREEK
COMMUTES OUTSIDE OF
THE TOWN TO WORK.

As Queen Creek builds out, pressure on unincorporated areas to redevelop could occur

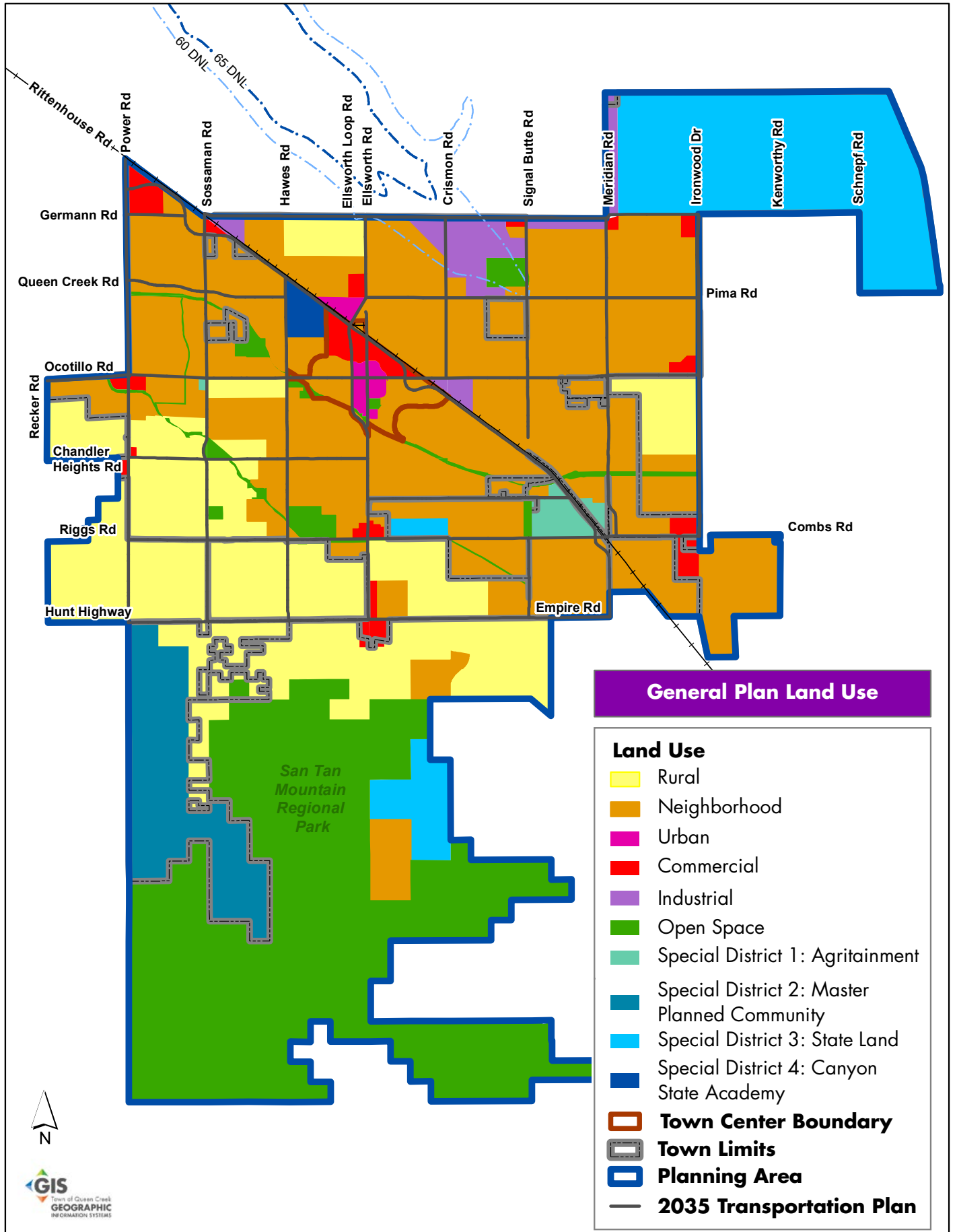
All unincorporated areas of the Town Planning Area are still under the jurisdiction of Maricopa and Pinal counties or the Arizona State Land Department. As land planned for new development is built, these areas will become opportunities for new development. This General Plan update provides an opportunity to ensure that these areas are managed appropriately as the Town population increases.

LAND USE MAP

The General Plan Land Use Map establishes seven development patterns (Land Use Categories) within the Town. Each of these development patterns and the types of land uses appropriate to them are described in the Land Use Categories portion of this element. The Land Use Categories are intended to:

- Conserve agricultural, rural, and equestrian areas within the Town and the Town Planning Area.
- Provide guidance for new development in undeveloped areas that may be annexed into the Town. These areas include land in the Town Planning Area that is owned and managed by the State Land Department, and land along the eastern border of Queen Creek.
- Provide guidance so new development uses land efficiently, and positively contributes to the quality of life in Queen Creek.

Figure 12: Town of Queen Creek Land Use Map



Development Patterns (Land Use Categories)

RURAL



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Predominantly large lot single family residential up to 1 dwelling unit per acre (du/ac).
- Buildings spaced significantly apart to create a sense of intermittent rather than lined up buildings.
- A variety of deep setbacks from the road, creating an informal pattern.
- Roadways without curb, gutter, or sidewalk.
- Informal streetscapes and tree placement.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: very low-density single family (up to 1 dwelling unit per acre)
- Commercial: agriculture related (farm stands)
- Employment: agriculture and recreation-related; home office; garage industry
- Public & Quasi Public: not permitted
- Open Space: trails, trailheads, open space (washes)

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Rural Development: R1-190
- General Rural Development: R1-54
- Rural Estate: R1-43
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD
- Agritainment: AT

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

NEIGHBORHOOD



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Predominantly residential with range of densities up to 20 dwelling units per acre allowed*.
- Adequate transitions and/or buffering abutting Rural or Urban areas or between different land uses or densities required.
- Higher densities should decrease towards edges when abutting single family developments within this Land Use Category.
- Densities above 8 du/ac require direct access to collector or arterial streets.
- Commercial sites less than 20 acres. All commercial uses require direct access to at least one arterial or collector street.
- Buildings spaced to create separation while maintaining cohesive street wall.
- Modest building setbacks, generally aligned with neighboring buildings.
- Streets with curb, gutter, planter strips, and sidewalks.
- Semi-formal streetscape with aligned street trees.
- Diversity provided by a variety of building styles and sizes.
- Guest parking accommodated on-street.
- Materials and detailing should evoke residential character.
- Commercial developments with less intense uses rather than auto-centric and/or high turnover uses.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: single family, patio homes, and multifamily* or other forms of residential uses up to 20 dwelling units per acre.
- Commercial: office, neighborhood office, retail and services*
- Employment: home office; limited live/work; office
- Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional
- Open Space: buildings neighborhood parks, pocket parks, tot lots

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Rural Estate: R1-43
- Suburban Residential: R1-35, R1-18
- Suburban Development R1-15, R1-12
- Urban Development- Type A: R1-7, R1-9
- Urban Development- Type B: MDR, HDR
- Urban Development: R1-4, R1-5,
- Light Commercial: C-1
- General Commercial: C2
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP
- Residential Commercial: RC
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD
- Agritainment: AT

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

URBAN



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Walkable development pattern with a variety of residential uses above 6 dwelling units per acre and within 1/4 mile of mixed-use, commercial and civic/cultural uses.
- Buildings close together with significant street frontage.
- Building facades at or near sidewalk.
- Pedestrian-friendly streets with curb and gutter, planters or tree wells, and generous sidewalks; sidewalk width scaled to context, with greater sidewalk widths abutting retail frontages.
- Formalized streetscape with equally spaced street trees.
- May include civic park/plaza/gathering space.
- Buildings with active ground-floor uses and entries, storefronts and windows oriented toward sidewalks.
- On-street parking, especially along streets with retail.
- Drive-thru commercial uses prohibited.
- Off street parking located behind buildings when possible and practical.
- Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood or Rural) required.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: single family (above 6 dwelling units per acre), multifamily, patio homes
- Commercial: retail, office, and services. Drive-thru uses are prohibited.
- Employment: office buildings; live/work
- Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional buildings
- Open Space: plazas, parks

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Urban Development: MDR, HDR, R1-4
- General Commercial: C-2
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP
- Neighborhood Commercial: NC
- Downtown Core: DC
- Mixed-use: MU
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

COMMERCIAL



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Commercial development; accommodates existing conventional suburban shopping centers.
- Flexible configuration of buildings; building facades and entries may be associated with site-internal circulation rather than street frontage.
- Streets with curb and gutter, planters and sidewalks.
- Streetscape with street trees and shrubs intended to screen surface parking and service areas from view and buffer sidewalks from vehicle traffic.
- Generally auto-oriented development with safe and comfortable pedestrian routes and streetscapes.
- Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood or Rural) or between different land uses or densities may be required.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: not permitted
- Commercial: auto-oriented commercial centers and existing Town commercial centers
- Employment: office parks; office buildings
- Public & Quasi Public: civic and institutional buildings
- Open Space: plazas, parks

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- General Commercial: C-2
- Regional Commercial Center: C-3
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP
- Residential Commercial: RC
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD
- Agritainment: AT

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

INDUSTRIAL



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Reserved for employment-focused development not appropriate in other categories, including warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and office buildings.
- Building siting accommodates truck access, loading and storage areas.
- Roadways designed to accommodate larger vehicles while maintaining a safe and comfortable sidewalk network.
- Where abutting other Land Use Categories, proper transition and/or buffering is required.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: not permitted
- Commercial: limited retail supporting employment uses
- Employment: warehouse; manufacturing; office
- Industrial: Contractors' yards, uses with screened outdoor storage.
- Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional buildings
- Open Space: plazas, parks

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Office/Industrial Park: EMP-A
- General Industrial: EMP-B
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

OPEN SPACE



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Largely undeveloped land intended to protect and preserve the natural environment and provide recreational opportunities and public parks.
- Development limited to use-specific structures and recreation facilities, including trails, ballfields, multi-purpose fields, picnic shelters, restroom facilities, and equestrian facilities.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: not permitted
- Commercial: not permitted
- Employment: not permitted
- Public & Quasi Public: permitted
- Open Space: park shelters, restroom facilities; community parks; conservation areas; Sonoqui & Queen Creek washes, protected natural features, plazas, parks
- Plazas open to the public
- Developed parks open to the public

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Parks, Recreation and Conservation: PRC
- Public/Quasi-Public: P/QP
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD

*Other types of open space can be included in all other zoning districts including parks, plazas, etc.

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

SPECIAL DISTRICT



LAND USE CHARACTER

- Set aside for development not appropriate for any of the other categories and requiring greater flexibility.
- Development in accordance with an approved Master Plan.

LAND USE TYPES

- Residential: master planned community
- Commercial: Agritainment
- Public & Quasi Public: civic/institutional buildings
- Other: Arizona State Land Department managed land, Canyon State property, plazas, parks

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS*

- Agritainment: AT
- Planned Community: PCD
- Planned Area Development Overlay: PAD
- Non-Traditional Housing Product
- Public/Quasi Public: P/QP

* Transitions and other requirements provided in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table. See Buffer and Transitions Manual for more information.

Figure 13: Land Use Categories Requirements Table

Zoning Districts		Rural	Neighborhood	Urban	Commercial	Industrial	Open Space	Special District	Special Consideration and Notes
District	Zoning								
Residential Districts	Rural Development	R1-190	X						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate in RURAL Land Use Category.
	General Rural Development	R1-54	X						
	Rural Estate	R1-43	X	X					
	Suburban Residential	Type A	R1-35		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate zoning adjacent to RURAL.
		Type B	R1-18		X				
	Suburban Development	Type B	R1-15		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be considered adjacent to properties designated as RURAL and adjacent to lower density residential zoning districts if appropriate measures are provided to create a compatible transition between adjacent properties using methods such as: compatible lot widths/sizes; open space/landscape buffers; and roadways. Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process. Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category densities above 8 du/ac require direct access to a collector or arterial roadway, or placement directly abutting commercial uses Within URBAN Land Use Category: Minimum density of 6 du/ac required. May be considered adjacent properties designated as RURAL on the General Plan Land Use Map or within, or adjacent to, any properties designated NEIGHBORHOOD on the General Plan Land Use Map and adjacent to lower residential density zoning districts if appropriate measures are provided to create a compatible transition between adjacent properties using methods such as: compatible lot widths/sizes; open space/landscape buffers; and roadways. Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process.
		Type B	R1-12		X				
	Urban Development	Type A	R1-9		X				
		Type A	R1-7		X				
		-	R1-5		X				
-		R1-4		X					
Type B		MDR		X	X				
Type B		HDR		X	X				
Non-Residential Districts	Light Commercial	C-1		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. 	
	General Commercial	C-2		X	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged. 	
	Regional Commercial Center	C-3				X			
	Office/Industrial Park	EMP-A					X		
	General/Industrial	EMP-B					X		
	Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Zone	PRC						X	
	Public/Quasi-Public	P/QP	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Residential Commercial	RC		X	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within NEIGHBORHOOD Land Use Category: Permitted on sites up to 20 acres, adjacent to at least one arterial or collector roadway. Site layout, parking orientation, and building design to include pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged.
	Downtown Core	DC			X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks. Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged.
	Mixed-Use	MU			X			X	
Agritainment	AT	X	X		X			X	
Planned Community	PCD							X	
Overlay Districts	Planned Area Development Overlay	PAD	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process.
	Non-Traditional Housing Product	-						X	

Goals, Policies, & Actions

GOAL 1:
**MAINTAIN THE TOWN'S UNIQUE
 COMMUNITY CHARACTER.**

Strategy 1.A: Protect and promote the Town's history, location, amenities, and development potential to create a unique, attractive, desirable, and economically sustainable community.

Action 1.A.1: Continue to conserve rural areas by replacing the San Tan Foothills Specific Area Plan Land Use Map with the Land Use Map included in this General Plan and through the incorporation by reference of the San Tan Foothills Specific Area Plan into this General Plan.

Action 1.A.2: Continue to promote Agritainment uses in appropriate locations within Town.

Action 1.A.3: Incorporate access to the Sonoqui and Queen Creek washes into new development.

Action 1.A.4: Ensure compatibility between new projects and existing neighborhoods by providing appropriate transitions as described in the Land Use Categories Requirements Table included in this Plan.

Action 1.A.5: Incorporate into developments private parks, trails, and/or open spaces that provide connectivity to the Town's existing and proposed parks, trails, and open spaces.

Action 1.A.6: Continue to promote residential development which uses innovative subdivision design to maintain, enhance and connect to the natural environment.

Action 1.A.7: Continue to encourage to provide a variety of housing options and development styles in keeping with the character of the Town.

Strategy 1.B: Retain the Sonoran Desert character of the San Tan Foothills and areas designated rural on the General Plan Land Use Map.

Action 1.B.1: Continue to implement the San Tan Foothills Specific Area Plan, and with adoption of this General Plan, incorporate the San Tan Foothills Strategic Area Plan into this General Plan by reference.

Action 1.B.2: Recognize and maintain the unique character of the Town's low density areas in the density, design, and construction of both public and private projects in areas designated Rural on the General Plan Land Use Map.

Strategy 1.C: Ensure that new public and private projects reflect the Town's historic character in their design and appearance.

Action 1.C.1: Continue to implement the Town Design Standards.

Action 1.C.2: Enforce Town codes to ensure properties are well-maintained and contribute to the quality of life within the Town. For properties located within the Town Planning Area, work with code enforcement for Pinal and Maricopa counties to ensure properties are maintained and up to code.

Strategy 1.D: Encourage development of a walkable Town Center within the Urban Land Use Category.

Action 1.D.1: Update the Town Center Plan for the area identified as Urban in this General Plan. Ensure the updated Town Center Plan is in conformance with the General Plan. Include in the update:

- A design standard for complete streets that include shade, street furniture, lighting, directional signs and other elements that will contribute to produce a pedestrian oriented, comfortable year-round environment.
- Areas for a variety of medium and high-density housing such as lofts, artisan cottages, town homes, live-work units, senior housing, multi-story structures and other land uses such as hotels to promote a unique residential environment.

- Places for outdoor dining, pocket parks, informal passive activities, and formal and informal events.
- On-street parking and parking areas that do not separate main building entrances from the sidewalk.
- Opportunities for multi-story, multi-use developments.
- An implementation plan that includes steps to:
 - » Promote private Town Center investment and the attraction of new private sector developments which reflect the land use and design goals for the Town Center.
 - » Work with existing businesses to upgrade their facilities.
 - » Work with the private sector to establish “one of a kind” uses which reflect the Towns’ historical character and cultural diversity.
 - » Promote development of a limited service hotel.

Action 1.D.2: Ensure the design of development within the Town Center reflects the character and culture of Queen Creek through architectural and site design.

Action 1.D.3: Develop a corridor plan for Ellsworth Road from Ocotillo Road north to Rittenhouse Road and the UPRR tracks to connect the areas that connects this area to the planned Town Center on the Ellsworth Loop Road and identifies a strategy for appropriately converting existing single family and other development into a cohesive destination within the Town Center.

Action 1.D.4: Create an Urban Overlay Zoning District that prohibits drive-thrus, and requires walkable development oriented to the street.

GOAL 2:
EFFECTIVELY MANAGE THE TOWN'S GROWTH.

Strategy 2.A: Encourage development patterns that maximize opportunities to use land efficiently.

Action 2.A.1: Encourage higher density mixed-uses and residential development within the Urban Land Use Category.

Action 2.A.2: Encourage a variety of residential densities within the Neighborhood and Urban Land Use Categories.

Strategy 2.B: Work with the Arizona State Land Department to identify land uses for State Lands that benefit the Town of Queen Creek.

Action 2.B.1: Prior to the construction of SR 24, work with the Arizona State Land Department to develop a Specific Area Plan (SAP) for the State Lands north of Germann Road. When this SAP is developed, it will be incorporated into this General Plan by reference. As this SAP is developed, consider land uses and planning strategies that:

- Direct vehicular traffic away from already congested travel routes within the Town.
- Provide an appropriate housing to jobs employment ratio.
- Identify areas for technical, managerial, and other employment that provides above average wages.
- Creates a range of housing densities that support transit and employment.
- Integrate parks, open space, and trails into this area.
- Promote health through the development of walkable mixed-use developments, non-motorized access to parks and open space, and healthy transportation options.

Action 2.B.2: Work with the Arizona State Land Department prior to the sale of the land located northwest of Crismon and Riggs roads to identify appropriate land uses for this site.

Action 2.B.3: Work with the Arizona State Land Department prior to the sale of the land located on the east side of the San Tan Mountain Regional Park to identify appropriate land uses for this site that are appropriate to the surrounding environment and in keeping with current low-density development patterns.

Strategy 2.C: Ensure new development within the Airport Overflight Areas is compatible with the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Action 2.C.1: All proposals should develop in compliance with all applicable standards of Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Regulations for the safe, efficient use and preservation of navigable airspace

Action 2.C.2: All development should comply with the intent of federal guidance to minimize bird and wildlife attractants near airports.

Action 2.C.3: Consider the development of an Airport Overlay Zone to minimize impacts of Airport Overflight Areas to residents.

GOAL 3:
**ENSURE LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT
DIVERSITY AND ECONOMIC STABILITY.**

Strategy 3.A: Develop a diversified and robust economic development base to ensure the Town's long-term economic stability.

Action 3.A.1: Reserve the area within the 60 to 65 DNL noise contour of the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport for future employment that is compatible with lower altitude overflight activity.

Action 3.A.2: Partner with the private sector to actively promote development of a variety employment and industrial related uses in the Commercial and Urban Land Use Categories.

Action 3.A.3: Work with the City of Mesa to encourage a diversity of employment within and adjacent to the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Action 3.A.4: Work pro-actively with the Arizona State Land Department to facilitate the annexation of the State owned property in the northeast portion of the Planning Area and develop it in accordance with Action 2.B.1 of this element.

GOAL 4:
**PROMOTE SEAMLESS DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN
THE TOWN AND ADJACENT JURISDICTIONS.**

Strategy 4.A: Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and other entities on development and the implementation of land use regulations.

Action 4.A.1: Establish and maintain an agreement between the Queen Creek Town Council and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors regarding goals and expectations for development in the San Tan Foothills and San Tan Valley.

Action 4.A.2: Provide a Town recommendation on all land use changes proposed in Pinal County that are within, or adjacent to, the San Tan Foothills.

Action 4.A.3: Maintain contact with citizen groups and homeowners associations in the San Tan Foothills which are interested in participating in future land use recommendations and decisions related to the area.

Action 4.A.4: Participate in the San Tan Valley planning and incorporation processes, and the planning and zoning processes of adjacent jurisdictions to ensure decision making is mutually beneficial.

Action 4.A.5: Participate, review, and provide comments on rezoning requests and other land use planning activities that occur on land under the jurisdiction of Maricopa County that is adjacent to or within the Town.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The housing element is required in the General Plan under State law to establish standards and programs for the elimination of substandard dwelling conditions, for the improvement of housing quality, variety and affordability, and for provision of adequate sites for housing. A further purpose is to ensure equal provision for the housing needs of all segments of the community. While this housing element addresses these particular issues, it also recognizes the vital connection between housing and the neighborhoods in which they are found. The goals, strategies, and actions outlined in this element will address both neighborhood and housing issues.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

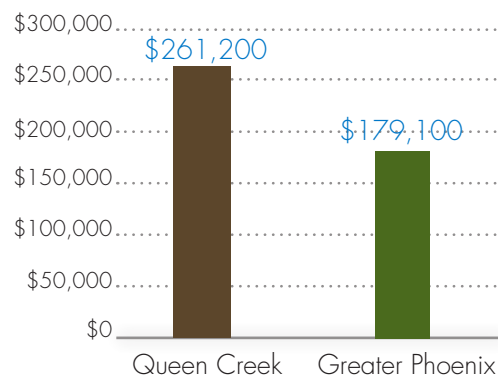
Throughout its history, Queen Creek has developed in a suburban character with primarily single family homes and few multifamily units. Comparatively, 65% of the Greater Phoenix’s housing inventory is single family units with much higher levels of high-density housing.

Queen Creek also possesses a high percentage of owner-occupied units relative to the region and the median home value is well above the Greater Phoenix median value. Homeownership in Greater Phoenix has declined precipitously primarily due to the housing crisis and Great Recession; Queen Creek has not experienced a similar decline.

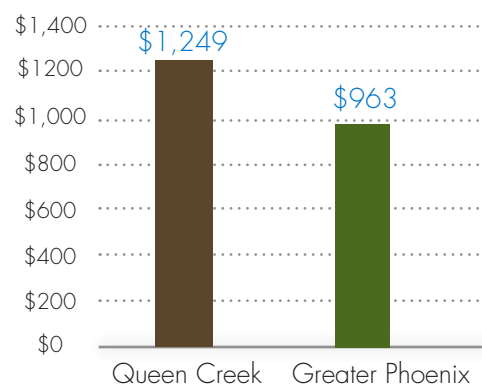
Units in Structure		
Unit Type	Queen Creek	Greater Phoenix
Total housing units	10,002	1,832,045
1-unit, detached	90.9%	65.3%
1-unit, attached	0.0%	5.0%
2 units	0.0%	1.1%
3 or 4 units	1.8%	3.7%
5 to 9 units	2.5%	5.0%
10 to 19 units	1.6%	6.1%
20 or more units	2.5%	7.2%
Mobile home	0.6%	6.4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.2%

2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

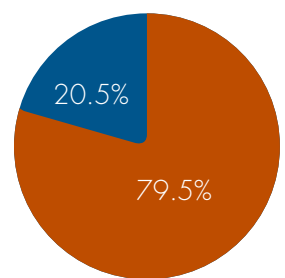
Median Home Value
Source: 2011-2015 ACS



Median Rent
Source: 2011-2015 ACS



Housing Occupancy by Tenure
Town of Queen Creek
Source: 2011-2015 ACS

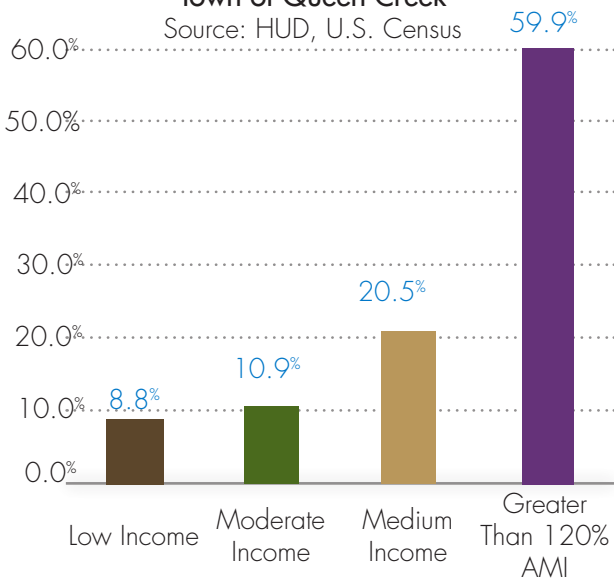


- % Owner-Occupied
- % Renter-Occupied

Percentage of Low and Moderate Income Persons

Town of Queen Creek

Source: HUD, U.S. Census



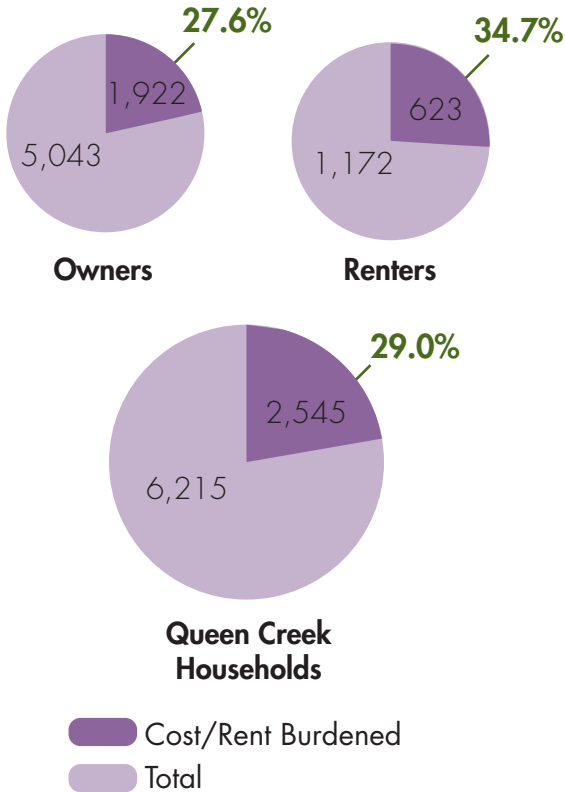
Housing Cost Burden

Among major cities in Greater Phoenix, Queen Creek households have one of the highest median incomes at more than \$83,000. These lower income households are the ones typically burdened by housing costs.

The traditional standard for evaluating housing cost burden is a household spending more than 30% of income on housing. The Town also has a segment of the population that is considered low and moderate income, earning less than 80% of the region’s median income. Overall, 29.0% of Queen Creek households are considered cost burdened, with a greater portion of renters than owners cost-burdened.

Percentage of Households Paying More than 30% Towards Housing Cost

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Housing Demand

Queen Creek’s population in 2017 is estimated at 41,200. The Town is expected to continue to grow rapidly, reaching 73,200 persons by 2027 (Town of Queen Creek forecast). Assuming that the average household size of 3.44 persons remains the same over the next 10 years, the demand for housing in Queen Creek is estimated at 9,300 units.

Planning Considerations

In general, Queen Creek's housing inventory is in good condition since the majority of units have been built since 2000. Challenges still exist, however.

Dominance of low-density, single-family homes

- Low density single family homes dominate the residential housing market. An estimated 91% of all housing units in the Town are single family compared to 65% for Maricopa County. The lack of diversity in the housing market has several consequences:
 - » Prospective employers may not consider Queen Creek for relocation because of the lack of housing diversity for their employees.
 - » Housing densities are not high enough to support retail development in some areas of the Town. This could be a particular issue with regards to redevelopment efforts in the Town Center.
 - » The lack of housing diversity may force young families and individuals to move out of Queen Creek if they cannot afford a single family home or do not wish to live in one.
 - » The lack of a diverse housing stock negatively affects the tax base of the Town and hinders the growth of property tax revenue for needed services and infrastructure.
- Based on the Queen Creek Housing Cost Burden calculations (Percentage of Households Paying More than 30% Towards Housing Cost) housing affordability is an issue for 29% of Queen Creek's households.
- Affordability affects homeownership and renters. Renters are more affected than owners by the supply of affordable housing since there are fewer options for them to alleviate the cost of housing. Persons living below the poverty level have the most need for safe and adequate housing. This segment of the population could include retired and elderly persons living on fixed incomes.
- The demand for housing over the next 10 years is extensive. Upwards of 9,300 units will be needed to accommodate the expected population. Providing more housing options for existing and prospective residents is an important element of the Town's future economic development.
- As housing units and neighborhoods age, maintenance and upkeep of homes can become an issue. While most of Queen Creek's housing stock is new and in good condition, over time neighborhoods can fall into disrepair. Homeowners' associations (HOAs) typically assist in requiring upkeep of homes and maintain a certain level of housing quality throughout a community. Neighborhood maintenance is an important aspect of preserving and growing housing values throughout the community.

Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:

PROVIDE A DIVERSE RANGE OF QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS FOR CURRENT & FUTURE RESIDENTS

Strategy 1.A: Promote the creation and maintenance of attractive, high-quality neighborhoods to ensure a healthy, safe, and attractive environment today and into the future.

Action 1.A.1: Maintain minimum standards for architecture and landscape treatments within neighborhoods thru Town Zoning and Design Standards.

Action 1.A.2: Work with homeowners' associations to address neighborhood maintenance in addition to Town enforcement efforts.

Action 1.A.3: When approving new housing development, coordinate with the appropriate school district.

Strategy 1.B: Identify and encourage investment in neighborhoods that are aging, at risk, transitional, or in general need of restoration.

Action 1.B.1: Begin to identify neighborhoods that may be showing signs of aging and disinvestment.

Action 1.B.2: Develop the foundations of programs that may be needed in the future to address at risk neighborhoods.

Action 1.B.3: Assure the Town has adequate public facilities to support its housing stock.

Strategy 1.C: Work with developers to provide a variety of housing options that meet the socioeconomic needs of people who live and work in Queen Creek.

Action 1.C.1: Integrate higher density housing options where they are most appropriate and fit into the surrounding neighborhood.

Action 1.C.2: Promote the development of both for-sale and for-rent high-density residential products in appropriate areas as designated and described in the Land Use Element.

Strategy 1.D: Encourage housing development in the Town Center that provide for live, work, and play relationships to support continued development and expansion of the Town Center.

Action 1.D.1: Identify Town Center sites that are appropriate for higher density residential development including live/work housing.

Strategy 1.E: Ensure that every person has access to safe and affordable housing.

Action 1.E.1: Promote fair housing opportunities for all residents.

Action 1.E.2: Promote the development of workforce housing for persons working in the community.

GROWTH AREAS ELEMENT

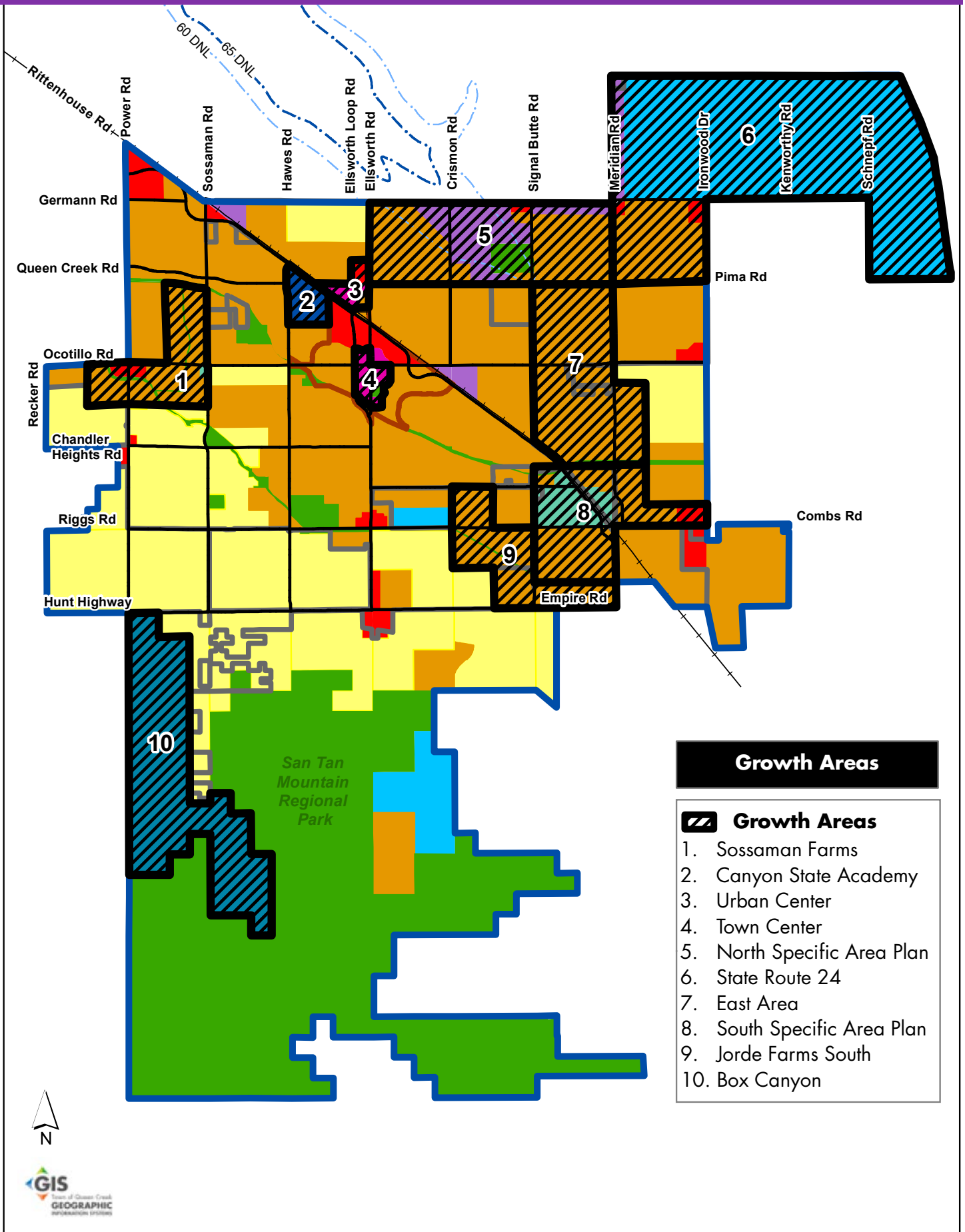
As the population of Queen Creek increases, new areas will be developed with housing, services, and employment uses to support these residents. State law requires that the General Plan identify where areas to support growth are located within the Town. Over the next decade, this Plan anticipates that 10 locations within the Town's Planning Area will be developed to provide new housing, services and employment. Each of these areas are identified and described in this element.

GROWTH AREAS

This update of the General Plan identifies 10 Growth Areas:

1. **Sossaman Farms Growth Area** - This growth area includes Sossaman 300 residential development, Sossaman Agritainment (known as Heritage Corner Agritainment), and future commercial and residential development.
2. **Canyon State Academy Growth Area** - The 183-acre site includes Canyon State Academy which is located on the southeast corner of Rittenhouse and Hawes roads.
3. **Urban Center Growth Area** - This approximately 107-acre site is designated Urban on the General Plan Land Use Map and is generally bound by Ellsworth and Ellsworth Loop roads to the east, the railroad to the south, and the Queen Creek Station residential neighborhood to the west and to the north. This area is adjacent to the Town Center and includes the site slated for the future potential commuter rail station.
4. **Town Center Growth Area** - This area is part of the Queen Creek Town Center. It includes the Queen Creek Library, the Town of Queen Creek government buildings, office and commercial developments, single-family homes that have been converted to commercial uses and other single-family homes along Ellsworth Road, apartments, and undeveloped land. This area is planned for a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use, Town Center. The Town is currently updating the plan for this area, and is actively encouraging development within it.
5. **North Specific Area Plan Growth Area** - This developing area includes the Barney Farms, Jorde North, Gateway Quarter, and Terravella residential neighborhoods, East Park, and future industrial areas.
6. **State Route 24 (SR 24) Growth Area** - This area includes more than 3,600 acres of State Land Department owned and managed land in the northeast portion of the Planning Area. The planned alignment of the SR 24 runs directly along the boundaries of this growth area and construction of the SR 24 will provide access to the area, inciting development.
7. **East Growth Area** - This growth area includes the Meridian, Ovation at Meridian, Spur Cross, and Meridian Ranch residential areas and is currently developing.
8. **South Specific Area Plan Growth Area** - This area is designated as a growth area to reflect ongoing plans for the continued development of the area within the South Specific Area Plan boundaries. It includes Schnepf Farms, Queen Creek Olive Mill, the Meridian Crossing residential neighborhood, and the area east of the Queen Creek Olive Mill (future residential).
9. **Jorde Farms South Growth Area** - This area consists of residential development including the Jorde Farm property and the Arizona Thoroughbred property at the northwest corner of Empire Boulevard and Gary Road.
10. **Box Canyon Growth Area** - This growth area encompasses the 2,089-acre Box Canyon Master Planned Community located south of Hunt Highway on the west side of the San Tan Mountain Regional Park.

Figure 14: Growth Areas Map



Growth Areas

 **Growth Areas**

1. Sossaman Farms
2. Canyon State Academy
3. Urban Center
4. Town Center
5. North Specific Area Plan
6. State Route 24
7. East Area
8. South Specific Area Plan
9. Jorde Farms South
10. Box Canyon

Planning Considerations

Population growth will likely result in the development of some Growth Areas prior to the next General Plan update

As the population of the Town and the surrounding area continues to increase, new areas will be developed to provide housing, employment, retail, and services. Some of these areas that have been identified to accommodate such growth are currently under construction (East Growth Area) and others are approved for development, including the Sossaman Farms, Box Canyon, and the South and North Specific Area Plan Growth Areas. Further, population growth will also encourage infill development of new commercial and office uses within the Town Center.

The redevelopment of the Canyon State property could result in new higher wage jobs and innovative opportunities for a health care sector

Canyon State Academy is a school for at-risk youth. The re-planning and expansion of the campus would generate more employment opportunities in the health care sector and provide an improved learning environment for students.

The Arizona State Land Department is an important partner in the development of State Land

The State Route 24 Growth Area largely consists of land owned by the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). The ASLD collaborates with local governments on planning for and rezoning of State Trust Land as well as other planning topics such as general or comprehensive plan updates and amendments. Should the ASLD consider developing plans for or selling of the land it owns within the Town's Planning Area, the Town should work with the Department to ensure that planned land uses benefit the Town; infrastructure should add service requirements associated with the development of this land, not impact levels of service provided to existing development.

Goals & Strategies

GOAL 1:
PLAN FOR AND PREPARE TO GUIDE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN GROWTH AREAS

Strategy 1.A: Encourage the following within the State Route 24 Growth Area:

- Mixed-use, walkable, transit supportive development located along SR 24 with access to SR 24
- Office or commerce parks suitable for high-tech or airport related high-wage jobs
- Walkable, mixed-use commercial or retail center located at Ironwood Road to also serve San Tan Valley and Superstition Vistas
- Higher density residential areas

Strategy 1.B: Encourage the following within the Urban Center Growth Area:

- Commuter rail supportive development
- Mixed-use
- Connectivity to adjacent commerce through a variety of transportation modes
- Opportunity for development of high-wage employment uses

Strategy 1.C: Should the Canyon State Growth Area be re-planned and/or redeveloped, encourage:

- A walkable, secure, connected campus style appropriate to adjacent residential uses
- More urban densities adjacent to Urban Land Uses (Urban Center Growth Area)
- If appropriate, land uses that support transit adjacent to the Urban Center Growth Area

Strategy 1.D: Implement the North Specific Area Plan and South Specific Area Plan for each respective Growth Area.

- Explore with Banner Ironwood Medical Hospital opportunities to create healthy connections between the hospital and nearby destinations, including the 11-Mile Loop Trail.
- Explore opportunities to provide a community park to serve residents in this area or in the East Growth Area.

Strategy 1.E: Encourage the following within the Town Center Growth Area:

- Walkable, vertically mixed-use development
- Development in conformance with updated Town Center Plan
- Cultural destinations, such as and not limited to, local museums, theaters, amphitheatres, art galleries, performance spaces, and public art, incorporated into development or as stand alone developments
- Development that is appropriate to a regional cultural or recreation destination
- Development of transit, pedestrian, and bicycle connections, linking this area to commuter rail

Strategy 1.F: Encourage the following within the As the Box Canyon Growth Area:

- Development is in conformance with the Box Canyon Master Plan.

Strategy 1.G: Encourage the following within the Sossaman Farms Growth Area:

- Residential development appropriate to the neighborhood category
- Exploration for potential agritainment opportunities
- Trail connection to complete the 11-mile Loop

Strategy 1.H: Encourage the following within the Jorde Farms South Growth Area:

- Residential development appropriate to the neighborhood category
- Trail connection to complete the 11-mile Loop

Strategy 1.I: Encourage the following within the East Growth Area.

- Development appropriate to the Neighborhood Land Use Category
- Non-motorized connections to the 11-Mile Loop Trail
- If appropriate, transit-supportive development should there be a commuter-rail station within this Growth Area

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The Town of Queen Creek planned transportation network provides for the movements of persons and goods within and through the Town via vehicular and non-vehicular transportation methods. The transportation goals and policies detailed in this element assist in the development of a comprehensive multi-use transportation network based on the following principles:

- **Safety** - All areas of design, operations, and maintenance of the transportation system should minimize hazards and emphasize safety for all modes of travel. Special consideration should be given to minimizing conflicts between travel modes.
- **Efficiency** - Transportation systems must be well-designed to effectively serve adjacent land uses. The degree to which each mode meets the needs of the community should be considered in terms of efficiency.
- **Balance** - A balanced transportation system provides multiple choices that are convenient and accessible for travelers. Balance is important to meet the diverse travel needs of a growing community.
- **Integration** - A multimodal system provides convenient, easy access between travel modes.
- **Mobility** - Mobility describes a person's ability to travel to destinations within a community. A balanced transportation system provides the ability to choose a travel mode based on the type and distance of a trip.
- **Accessibility** - Accessibility describes the degree to which travelers can use various modes in the transportation system. Accessible transportation systems provide ease of use for all people, regardless of physical ability or economic status.
- **Aesthetics** - Aesthetics form a uniqueness of the area and creates a theme that invites people to use the system and includes facility design, landscaping, and art.

The proposed transportation network provides a network of roadways designed to support the land use patterns provided in the Land Use Element. Figure 15: Transportation System Map shows the planned transportation network.

Planning Considerations

Roadway improvements

The Town has a limited number of arterial roadways that run the length of the community due to the railroad and two washes that run diagonally through Queen Creek. Crossings at both the railroad and the washes present challenges related to designing and building roadways. As a result, the arterial roadways that do run the length of Town experience increased congestion. Additionally, the absence of a freeway system and the lack of regional transportation alternative to the rapid growth southeast of the Town significantly impact the available capacity and contribute to saturated traffic flow during peak hour traffic.

Residents traveling through Queen Creek from the San Tan Valley area also contributes to the traffic congestion experienced along arterial roadways. Due the limited roadways that access the San Tan Valley area, traveling through Queen Creek is one of the only options. Connecting gaps in the arterial roadway system and minimizing cut-through traffic over time will help reduce the costs associated with maintaining the roadways.

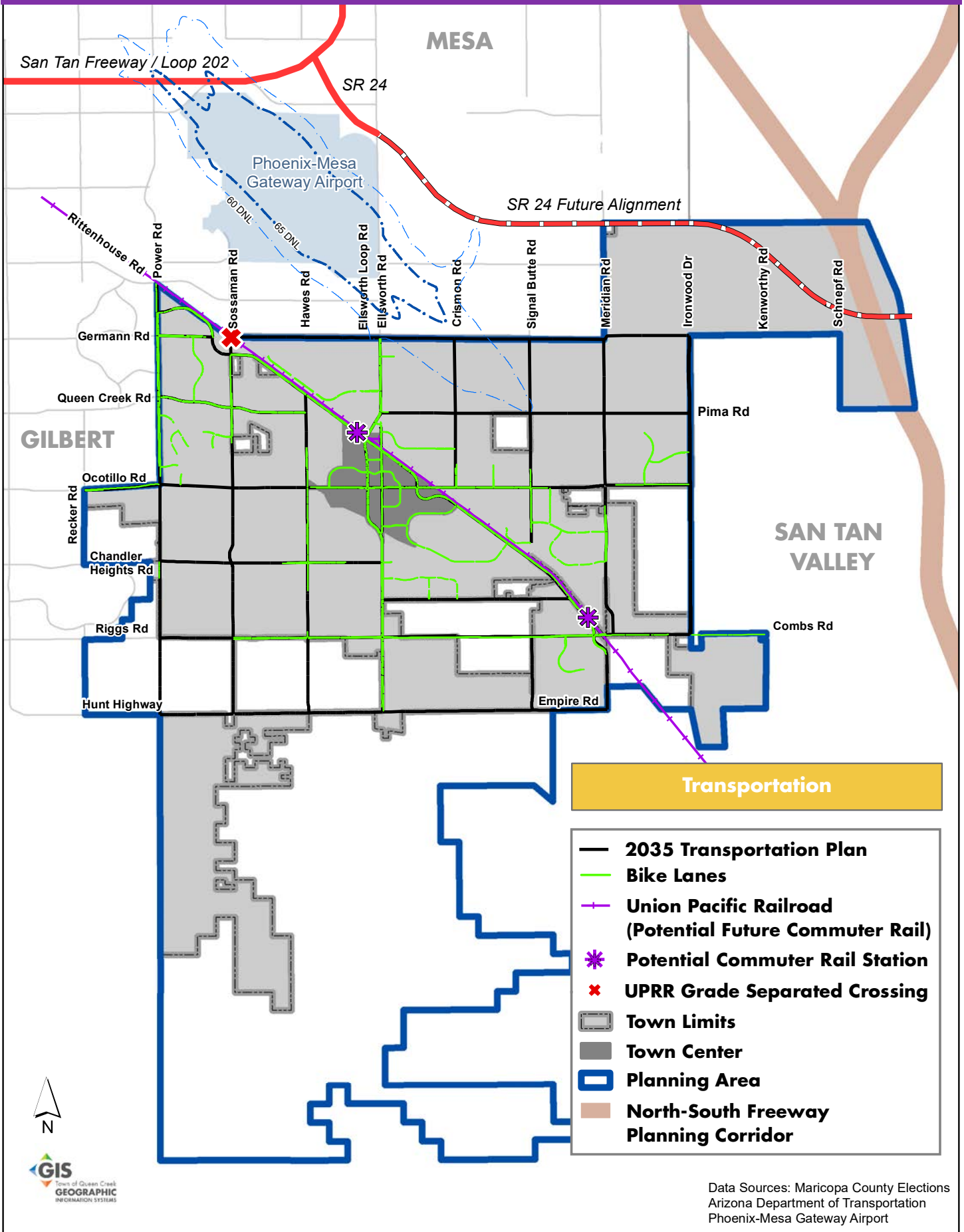
Employment opportunities and traffic

The lack of employment opportunities in Town and in the San Tan Valley area force residents to travel outside of the Town's boundaries for work. As a result, heavy traffic congestion can be observed heading northbound to the SR 24 in the morning hours and southbound from the SR 24 in the evenings as residents drive to and from work.

Transit

Based on a review of current and projected densities conducted as part of the 2016 Transportation Master Plan, a fixed route transit service may not be justified in the next 10+ years based on projected employment and population densities. Transit, however, is a key strategy in reducing roadway congestion and increased density in key areas contribute to the feasibility of future transit services.

Figure 15: Transportation System Map



Data Sources: Maricopa County Elections
 Arizona Department of Transportation
 Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport

Queen Creek and regional population growth

Infrastructure planning is essential to accommodate growth in Queen Creek and in surrounding areas. With growth comes additional demand on the Town’s transportation system. To serve such needs, it is necessary to identify and implement improvements to transportation infrastructure.

While regional transportation options in the Town are limited to Ellsworth and Rittenhouse roads, which connect the Town to SR 24 and Loop 202, future plans are in progress to expand accessibility in Queen Creek. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is studying a North-South major freeway corridor to improve regional transportation access. Construction of the SR 24 (Williams Gateway Freeway) will link to the Town’s northeast border and Superstition Vistas Planning Area from Loop 202 towards Pinal County. This major corridor will expand regional connectivity between Phoenix and Tucson, and could assist in alleviating the current congestion within the Town from the southeast upon completion.

Commuter rail

The Arizona Department of Transportation Passenger Rail Corridor Study will document the purpose, need, options, and funding opportunities for intercity passenger rail service between Phoenix and Tucson. One of the three alternatives (known as the “Yellow” Alternative) uses the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right of way through Queen Creek and includes one station in the vicinity of Rittenhouse and Ellsworth Loop roads. Of the three remaining alternatives, the “Yellow” Alternative was identified as the preferred alternative. The potential for a commuter rail station in the Town Center, with the possibility of additional stations in Queen Creek, provides a unique opportunity for transit-oriented development.

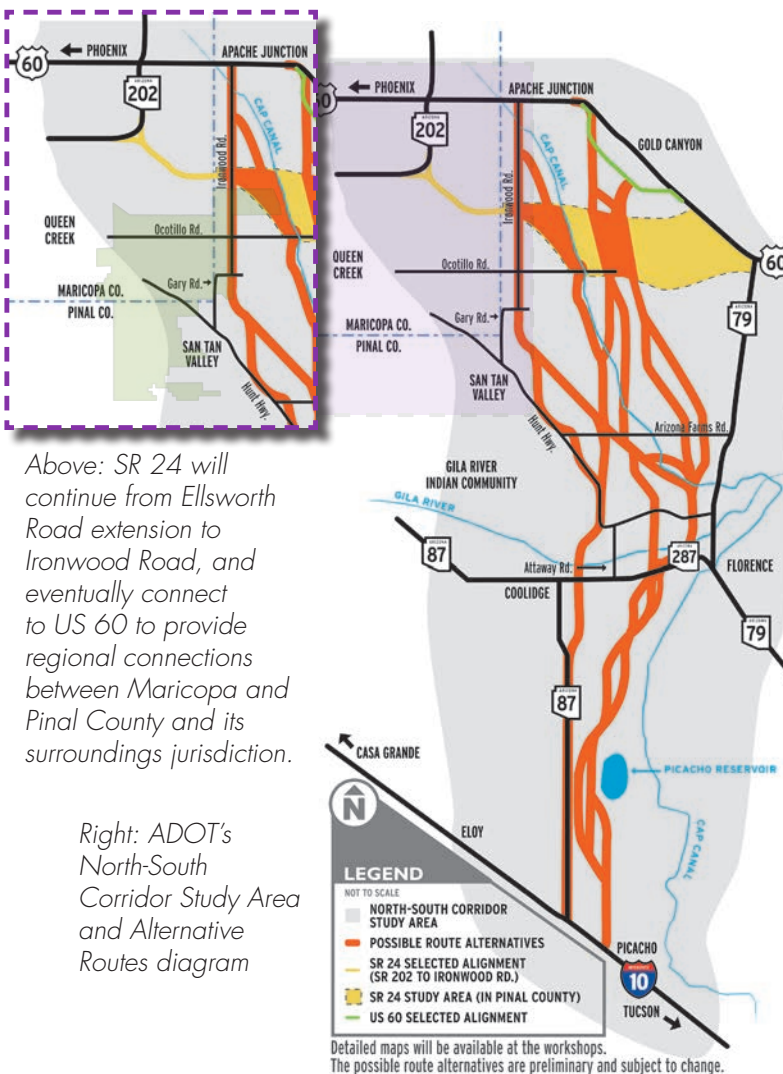
Aging population and changes in driving behaviors and preferences

Today, about one in eight people in the United States is over 65; by 2030, this age group will include one in five people. Changes in driving behaviors and preference will influence how we plan for transportation opportunities now and in the future. Arizonans who choose to not retire in dense cities will require different transportation options in their own communities when they no longer drive motor vehicles.

Millennials (people born between 1980 and 2000) are now the largest group of Americans. They tend to drive less compared to other age groups. In addition, evidence points to a declining interest in driving among this age group; the percentage of 16-24 year olds with driver’s licenses has been declining.

Connected vehicles and driverless cars

Advances in transportation technology will change the cars of the future. The US Department of Transportation’s Connected Vehicle program is working with state and local transportation agencies, vehicle and device makers, and the public to test and evaluate technology that will enable cars, buses, trucks, trains, roads and other infrastructure, our smart phones, and other devices to “talk” to one another. The federal government, in partnership with state and local agencies, industry, and the public, is also exploring the feasibility of partially or fully automated vehicles, possibly combined with connected vehicle technology. The combination of connected vehicles and automated vehicles could fulfill their full potential to provide unprecedented levels of safety and mobility.



Above: SR 24 will continue from Ellsworth Road extension to Ironwood Road, and eventually connect to US 60 to provide regional connections between Maricopa and Pinal County and its surroundings jurisdiction.

Right: ADOT’s North-South Corridor Study Area and Alternative Routes diagram

Goals & Strategies

**GOAL 1:
DEVELOP A MULTIMODAL
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR ALL USERS.**

Strategy 1.A: Identify transportation projects that do not reduce existing roadway capacities and address identified needs for expansion of the system in line with the Town’s goals, priorities, design standards and available funds.

Action 1.A.1: Implement the Town’s 10-Year Transportation CIP projects.

Action 1.A.2: Implement the Transportation Master Plan 2025 and 2035 recommended improvements.

Action 1.A.3: Continue coordinating with adjacent municipalities and counties to address regional transportation issues and identify solutions.

Strategy 1.B: Develop a safe, continuous arterial street network that can accommodate all modes, minimize congestion, and connect to arterial street networks of neighboring communities.

Action 1.B.1: Implement the Town’s 10-Year Transportation CIP projects and the Transportation Master Plan 2025 and 2035 recommended improvements to the arterial and collector street network.

Action 1.B.2: Continue to use a hierarchy of arterial and collector streets to accommodate expected traffic volumes.

Action 1.B.3: Use street design as a means of discouraging through traffic in residential areas.

Action 1.B.4: Incorporate all-weather crossings at Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes in the design and construction of arterial streets.

Action 1.B.5: Designate truck routes to keep heavy vehicles away from residential areas when possible.

Action 1.B.6: Develop priorities for roadway improvements based on existing and future traffic demand.

Action 1.B.7: Explore opportunities for public/private partnerships and other funding options for roadway improvements.

Action 1.B.8: Promote the importance of continued roadway maintenance and paving for new and existing roads consistent with adopted traffic engineering and construction design standards.

Action 1.B.9: Continue to require Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for major new projects and for the expansion of existing projects.

Strategy 1.C: Develop a safe network of collector and local streets that connect neighborhoods to the arterial street network, encourage bicycling and walking, and incorporate traffic calming strategies.

Action 1.C.1: Promote connectivity between key public and private facilities within the planning area, including San Tan Mountain Regional Park, Town parks, schools, and other activity areas through the design and construction of paths and trails.

Action 1.C.2: Maintain the Town’s current standards for requiring sidewalks and bike lanes on all new arterial and collector roadways.

Action 1.C.3: Implement the Transportation Master Plan recommended additions collector street system.

Strategy 1.D: Foster economic development through an integrated multimodal transportation system.

Action 1.D.1: Encourage multimodal connections to major economic generators to the region, each other and to neighborhoods and other facilities.

Action 1.D.2: Encourage transportation facilities that support employment opportunities within Queen Creek and help to reduce commute times for residents.

Strategy 1.E: Provide for non-motorized modes of transportation through construction of bicycle, pedestrian, multi-use and equestrian paths/trails in the right-of-way in coordination with existing paths/trails and facilities in adjacent properties.

Action 1.E.1: Continue to provide bicycle lanes and sidewalks in conjunction with development of arterial and collector streets where right-of-way exists.

Action 1.E.2: Evaluate gaps in the non-motorized transportation system and identify funding for future projects to close such gaps.

Action 1.E.3: Identify and pursue all options for supplemental public and private funding assistance to improve the Town's trail system.

Action 1.E.4: Expand the availability of multi-use paths and trails to accommodate equestrian and non-motorized modes of transportation as provided in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Strategy 1.F: Promote multi-jurisdictional transportation planning involving the Town, adjacent municipalities, and counties that share a common transportation system and face common transportation issues.

Action 1.F.1: Promote intergovernmental coordination in development of a multi-use transportation system with Maricopa and Pinal counties and surrounding jurisdictions.

Action 1.F.2: Maintain involvement with surrounding multi-jurisdictional transportation planning initiatives including the ADOT North-South Corridor study, the SR 24 expansion, and the Phoenix-Tucson intercity rail project.

Action 1.F.3: Promote transportation planning programs in coordination with adjacent municipalities, Maricopa County, Pinal County, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), Central Arizona Association of Governments (CAAG) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

Action 1.F.4: Coordinate with the City of Mesa regarding the construction of connections to the SR 24 expansion at Signal Butte and Ironwood roads.

Action 1.F.5: Coordinate with Phoenix-Mesa Gateway airport to retain convenient access to passenger terminals and airport amenities.

Strategy 1.G: Promote expansion of local or regional public transportation service.

Action 1.G.1: Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions regarding new or expanded service to ensure appropriate transit connections and continuity of service.

Action 1.G.2: Evaluate the feasibility for transit services, identifying any changes in population and employment density, as well as transit expansion in neighboring communities that could connect to fixed route service in Queen Creek.

Action 1.G.3: Continue to promote vanpools.

Action 1.G.4: Work with Valley Metro to initiate one circulator service within the Town and evaluate potential expansion of the circulator program if successful.

Action 1.G.5: Explore express route service to nearby transit centers and/or downtown Phoenix.

Action 1.G.6: Evaluate potential park-and-ride locations such as Queen Creek Marketplace.

Action 1.G.7: Encourage transit oriented development surrounding potential future UPRR station stops.

Action 1.G.8: Evaluate other potential UPRR station stops for additional transit oriented development opportunities.

Strategy 1.H: Support and promote technology enhancements to the transportation system such as electric vehicles and charging stations; vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to infrastructure communication; and autonomous vehicles.

Action 1.H.1: Implement the TMP recommended projects for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) including the ITS Strategic Plan, improvements to the fiber optic communications network, traffic signals, closed-circuit television cameras, dynamic message signs, and regional connectivity.

Action 1.H.2: Support opportunities for electric vehicle charging stations in new and existing development.

Action 1.H.3: Stay informed on improvements to connected and autonomous vehicle technology and potential future uses in Town.

Strategy 1.I: Implement a transportation system that is compatible with adjacent land uses and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources while balancing safety, mobility, and access.

Action 1.I.1: Promote use of landscape themes for arterial streets that include low water drought-tolerant plants to enhance the appearance of the community.

Action 1.I.2: Incorporate “rural design characteristics” in the design of arterial streets in equestrian areas to reflect the adjacent residential character and allow the continued use of right-of-way for equestrian and multi-use trails.

RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

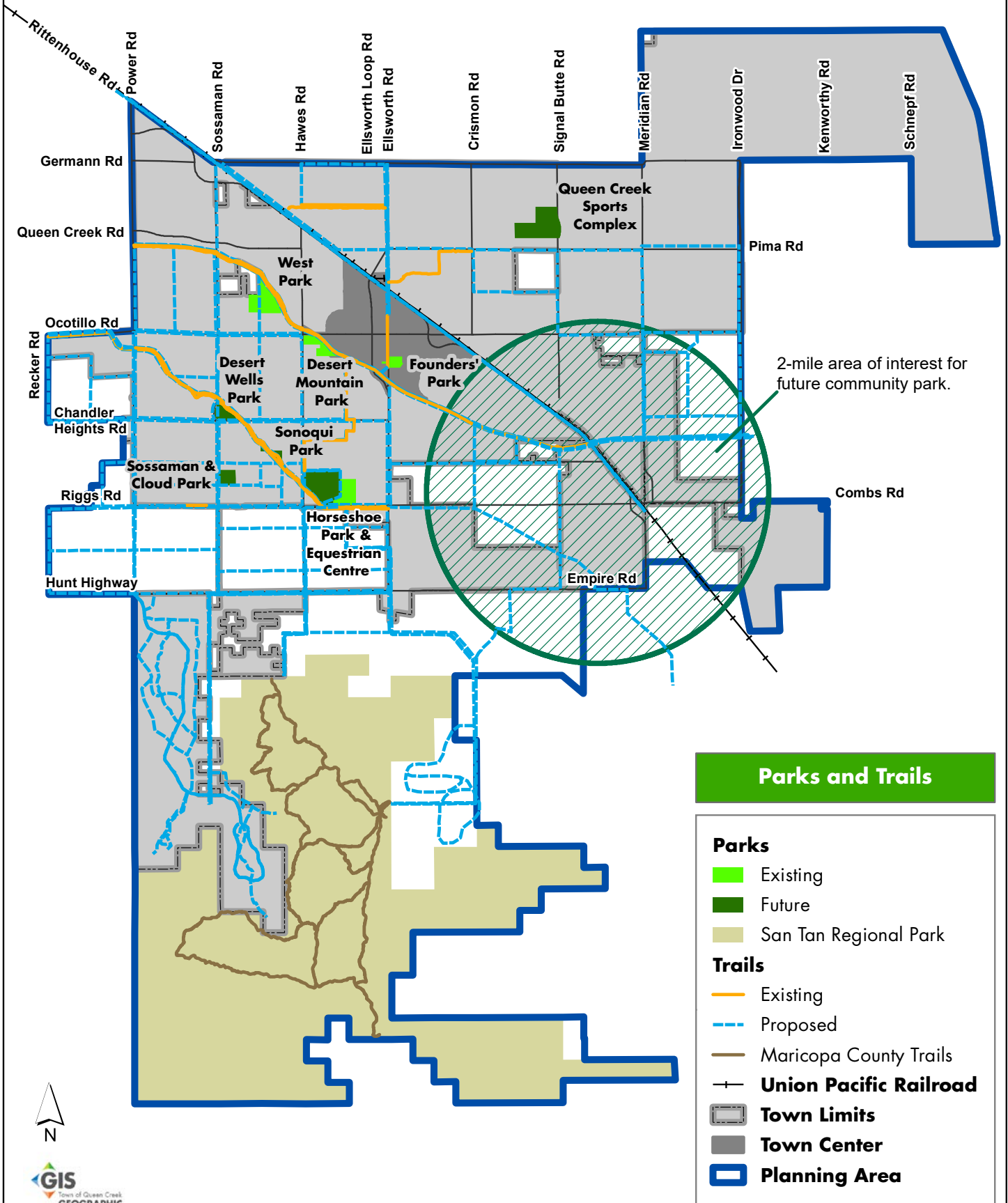
Queen Creek has 127 acres of developed parks and 17.5 miles of constructed trails, which include the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes and trails constructed within private communities (see Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map). Town parks include:

- **Desert Mountain Park** (29 acres) includes 4 ball fields, 2 multi-purpose fields, volleyball courts, a small amphitheater, an equestrian trailhead with trailer parking, a Dino Dig, a shaded play area, and open spaces.
- **Founders' Park** (11 acres) includes a ball field, multi-use field, splash pad, skate park, basketball court, and ramadas.
- **Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre** (38 acres), this unique facility provides a community arena for the general public and an event center. The commercial event center hosts a variety of activities and includes a covered arena, three uncovered arenas, over 300 barn stalls, and 56 RV stalls equipped with water and electricity for other event competitors.
- **Pocket Park for Pups** (1 acre) is an off leash dog park located in Town Center.
- **West Park site** (48 acres plus 13 undeveloped acres) is planned to open in fall 2018. It will include 4 baseball fields, 2 multi-purpose fields, a splash pad, basketball and volleyball courts, ramadas, a play area, open space, a fishing lake, a fitness course, and an access point to the 11-mile loop trail along Queen Creek Wash.

The Town also owns 256 acres of undeveloped land planned for parks. This land includes the historic Desert Wells Stage Stop, land along the Sonoqui Wash, and land northwest of Queen Creek and Signal Butte roads.



Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map



Parks and Trails

Parks

- Existing
- Future
- San Tan Regional Park

Trails

- Existing
- Proposed
- Maricopa County Trails
- + **Union Pacific Railroad**

Town Limits

Town Center

Planning Area

Planning Considerations

Town population is increasing

Over the next 10 years, the population of the Town will increase 78%, which means the amount of parks and recreation facilities will have to double to meet the needs of new residents.

Town demographics are changing

Queen Creek's current population has a larger percent of population under age 19 than all East Valley jurisdictions and Maricopa County. The next largest population group in Queen Creek is 40-64 year olds. The Town's development patterns support a continued large youth population. Within the next 15 years, the 40-64 year old population will be over age 55. This population will need recreation programs and facilities that are different from what the Town currently provides.

The Town Lacks Recreation Facilities that Many Quality Towns with Over 40,000 Residents Have

Many quality Towns over 40,000 provide multi-generational recreation centers, pools or aquatic centers, and tennis courts. Queen Creek does not currently provide these amenities.

Renovation & repairs

In 2026, Desert Mountain Park will be 20 years old and Founders' Park will be nearing 30 years old. The facilities in these parks will need to be updated, or in the case of Founders' Park, potentially redesigned to better align with facilities provided at new parks.

Multi-use trails

Using trails and trail-based activities are the most popular recreation pursuits of Queen Creek residents, according to a 2016 Resident Recreation Preference Survey. Completing the 11-mile loop trail along the Queen Creek and Sonqui washes and other trails to connect parks and other destinations in Town is important to residents and the quality of life in Queen Creek.

Park administration

As the number of parks and recreation facilities increase, administrative and maintenance responsibilities will also increase, requiring additional staff.

State land

Over 10 square miles of undeveloped State Trust Land is within the northeast portion of the Town Planning Area. As this land is developed, new parks, trails, and recreation facilities will be needed to serve these new residents.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Town Parks and Recreation Master Plan is incorporated by reference into this Plan. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes detailed recommendations for parks and recreation facilities. These include:

- Completing the West Park site by fall 2018, and Sossaman and Cloud Park by FY2020
- Building a park at the East Park site by the time the Town population is 65,000.
- Building an aquatic center by the time the Town population is 100,000.
- Providing additional facilities in new parks to serve residents including, but not limited to, tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts, ball fields, multi-use fields, exercise courses, playgrounds, and ramadas.
- Reorganizing the Recreation Division into a Recreation Department that is combined with parks maintenance.
- Expanding recreation programs by leveraging existing and planned facilities, and providing more family based, senior, and adult inclusive programs.

Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:

DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PARK SYSTEM TO PROVIDE OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES APPROPRIATE TO A COMMUNITY THE SIZE OF QUEEN CREEK.

Strategy 1.A: Implement the adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action 1.A.1: When updating the Capital Improvement Program, include in the update trails, parks, and recreation facilities identified in the plan for that year or period.

Action 1.A.2: Work with the Planning Department to ensure that as rezoning occurs, trails and parks continue to be included in new developments, and are connected to trails identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action 1.A.3: When approving requests for development in southeast Queen Creek, consider all options to obtain land for a new 30+ acre park (See Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map). Options considered could include and not be limited to land swaps, dedications as a part of development, acquisition, and density transfers.

Action 1.A.4: As the State Land is planned, work closely with the State Land Department to ensure parks and recreation facilities, in keeping with the Level of Service in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, are provided as a part of all development.

Strategy 1.B: Complete the Town trail system as described in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and in Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map.

Action 1.B.1: As new roads are constructed, and as existing roads are improved, include trail segments identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan along those roads in roadway design.

Action 1.B.2: Require new development to complete trails adjacent to their developments as described in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and in Figure 16: Parks and Trails Map as a condition of rezoning.

Action 1.B.3: Apply the Trail Design Guidelines in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to all public and private trails.

GOAL 2:

PROVIDE PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT REFLECT THE CULTURE AND CHARACTER OF QUEEN CREEK, AND THAT LEVERAGE EXISTING AND PLANNED RECREATION FACILITIES.

Strategy 2.A: Recognize Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes and San Tan Mountain Regional Park as recreation assets.

Action 2.A.1: Use the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes for a variety of programs and events including races, outdoor education, and outdoor experience classes for all ages.

Action 2.A.2: Coordinate with the Maricopa County San Tan Mountain Regional Park Supervisor to offer outdoor education programs for Queen Creek residents.

Strategy 2.B: Consider partnering with the Queen Creek Unified School District to offer aquatic programs to build a clientele for a Town-owned aquatic facility.

Action 2.B.1: Develop an intergovernmental agreement with the Queen Creek School District to use their pool during the summer.

Strategy 2.C: Encourage the inclusion of features that reflect the culture and character of Queen Creek in private parks.

Action 2.C.1: During the rezoning process, and when possible and practical, request a description of cultural references that will be included in neighborhood and private parks and/or trails.

GOAL 3:
LEVERAGE PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Strategy 3.A: Promote the Town’s parks, trails, and open spaces as a quality of life asset.

Action 3.A.1: Market parks, trails, and open spaces on the Town website, and in economic development and other Town informational material to recruit new employers and residents to the community.

Action 3.A.2: Use Town parks for events such as fairs and festivals when possible and practical. Use the rental and other revenues from these events to maintain and upgrade parks and recreation facilities.

GOAL 4:
COORDINATE WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS AND PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES TO EXPAND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUEEN CREEK RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

Strategy 4.A: Use partnerships to reduce park development and acquisition costs to the Town.

Action 4.A.1: Work with San Tan Mountain Regional Park to create a trailhead on the west side of the park that is accessible from Bell Road and the Box Canyon Master Planned Community. Discuss the option of providing space for a BMX park at this trailhead.

Action 4.A.2: Develop an IGA with the Flood Control District of Maricopa County to provide the grading (as indicated in the East Mesa Area Drainage Master Plan) for the East Park site.

Action 4.A.3: Coordinate with developers to incorporate neighborhood parks and recreational facilities including tennis courts, swimming pools, ball fields, and multi-use fields into their development.

Action 4.A.4: Apply the park design guidelines in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to all public and private parks.

Action 4.A.5: When possible, incorporate the park attributes in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Appendix B: Park Types and Attributes to public and private parks. Update this table through the Minor General Plan Ammendment Process as the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is updated.

Action 4.A.6: As the State Land is planned, work closely with the State Land Department to ensure parks and recreation facilities, in keeping with the Level of Service in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, are provided as a part of all development.

Action 4.A.7: Incorporate into developments private parks, trails, and/or open spaces that provide connectivity to the Town’s existing and proposed parks, trails, and open spaces.

Strategy 4.B: Coordinate with Pinal County as it develops the San Tan Specific Area Plan and updates its General Plan.

Action 4.B.1: Meet regularly with Pinal County to ensure trails connect to Town trails, and parks planned for this area complement Town parks.

Action 4.B.2: Request copies of, and provide input on, site plan submittals and requests for General Plan Amendments in San Tan Valley to ensure that master planned communities and other developments are providing recreation facilities for residents.



GOAL 5:
DESIGN PARKS AND TRAILS THAT ARE SAFE.

Strategy 5.A: Prioritize trail crossings over traffic volumes when designing new or improving existing roads.

Action 5.A.1: Implement the crossing guidelines included in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action 5.A.2: Coordinate roadway improvements and trail crossings identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action 5.A.3: Ensure that state and county transportation facilities include safe, signalized or below or above grade trail crossings in their design and construction.

Action 5.A.4: Ensure trail connections are preserved with the expansion of SR 24 on the north border of the Town planning area.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENT

The Town strives to ensure that Queen Creek residents live in a clean, safe, and environmentally friendly community. The Town believes in and supports sustainable development and practices in efforts to conserve our most precious resources. The Town's current sustainability programs include:

Green Building

Queen Creek's Green Building Policy, adopted in 2007, commits the Town to finance, plan, design, construct, manage, renovate and maintain its facilities in accordance with the U.S. Green Building Council's Leaders.

Air Quality

Since 2007, the Town has been a leader in the region in reducing dust pollution and improving air quality. PM-10, particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less, which includes small particles of dust, dirt, smoke, or soot, can create health problems and air quality challenges. The Town has committed to providing a high level of outreach and communication to the community about easy steps they can take to keep our air clean.

Recycling

The Town has a goal of diverting 23% of the residential curbside material from the landfill through curbside recycling. The Town also holds a variety of recycling events and diversion programs throughout the year for items like appliances, metals, electronics, latex paint and Christmas Trees.

Hazardous Household Waste Disposal

The Town has an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town of Gilbert to dispose of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) at Gilbert's HHW facility preventing disposal of hazardous waste materials into landfills, sewer, and stormwater facilities.

Water Conservation

The Town is responsible to meet Best Management Practices (BMP's) as required by the Arizona Department of Water Resources Conservation Program in order to provide a more integrated approach to water conservation in Arizona.

Stormwater

The Town is developing a new Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) to prevent pollution and protect water resources, including the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes and the groundwater system. The SWMP will identify pollution prevention efforts through public outreach and education; public involvement and participation; preventing illegal discharge into the washes and open spaces; monitoring construction activity for pollution runoff; observing constructed developments for proper stormwater controls; and maintaining Town-owned facilities and operations.

Planning Considerations

Air pollution

In 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency found the Maricopa County area was in "nonattainment" or did not meet the PM-10 Emissions Standard, which includes small particles of dust, dirt, smoke, or soot, can create health problems and air quality challenges. As a result, Maricopa County was designated as a Serious Area under the Clean Air Act. In response, the MAG's Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee was tasked to bring regional municipal, tribal, and private entities together to commit to implementing air quality control measures to reduce air pollution in the region. Due to these efforts, the region has now been designated as "in attainment." The region and the Town is committed to maintaining the "in attainment" status and continue to implement air quality control measures and show continuous improvement to reduce PM-10 emissions.

Water conservation

Fresh potable water is vital in order to sustain life in the desert. Without diligent conservation efforts, this essential supply of water may be exhausted. While the Town is able to meet water demands when the Planning Area is at build-out, the Town will need to continue to implement and evaluate water conservation practices to conserve water resources.

Water quality

In 2016, the Town was designated as an Urbanized Area of at least 10,000 people, which required the Town to submit a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit to address stormwater runoff and pollution prevention. The permit includes the development of a Stormwater Management Plan, which includes six Minimum Control Measures and select Best Management Practices to reduce stormwater pollutants and identify progress toward measureable goals.

Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:

PROTECT AND IMPROVE AIR QUALITY.

Strategy 1.A: Educate and inform the public on air quality issues in the region.

Action 1.A.1: Continue to educate the public on air pollution challenges utilizing the Town’s website, events, and social media.

Action 1.A.2: Develop step-by-step guides for residents on how they can reduce air pollution.

Action 1.A.3: Leverage Maricopa Association of Governments’ resources to help educate the public about air quality in the region and its importance to the health of Queen Creek residents.

Strategy 1.B: Implement programs that the Town can initiate to reduce air pollution.

Action 1.B.1: Continue providing dust emission minimization services, including the annual unpaved shoulders stabilization program and street sweeping.

Action 1.B.2: Continue to control dust emissions at Town facilities and during Town dust generating operations by implementing the Reasonably Available Control Measures as outlined in the Town’s Annual Block Permit from Maricopa and Pinal counties, including training and recordkeeping processes.

GOAL 2:

REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SOLID WASTE.

Strategy 2.A: Promote and provide opportunities to utilize “waste as a resource” through extensive public education and outreach efforts.

Action 2.A.1: Develop new programs for green waste and hard to recycle materials.

Action 2.A.2: Continue to provide opportunities to recycle, divert materials from the landfill, and reduce litter through special events and programs including:

- Shut Your Lid program
- Cooking Oil Recycling program
- Textile Recycling program
- Recycling events for special waste materials

Action 2.A.3: Continue to provide recycling services to multifamily communities or businesses without in-house recycling through the Queen Creek Recycling Center.

Action 2.A.4: Continue to partner with other agencies in the effort to provide proper waste disposal opportunities and other best management practices including:

- Partnership with the Town of Gilbert Household Hazardous Waste facility
- Partnership with the Queen Creek area elementary and middle school outreach and education program.

GOAL 3:
**PREVENT POLLUTION OF THE QUEEN
 CREEK AND SONOQUI WASHES AND
 GROUNDWATER SYSTEM.**

Strategy 3.A: Develop outreach, education and enforcement programs and policies to meet the Clean Water Act requirements and prevent pollution of the Queen Creek and Sonoqui washes and groundwater system.

Action 3.A.1: Develop a stormwater page on the Town's website to educate the public on stormwater management.

Action 3.A.2: Work with regional and state stormwater programs (STORM and AZWater) to research and develop educational materials on stormwater pollution prevention and develop appropriate materials for dissemination to the public.

Action 3.A.3: Support community events which provide citizens the opportunity to clean up the watershed and washes.

Action 3.A.4: Continue to implement and document trash cleanup and recycling programs to minimize trash accumulation in the Town washes.

Action 3.A.5: Identify locations of outfalls and other features of the basin and update the GIS-based maps.

Action 3.A.6: Maintain and clean Town-owned stormwater structures and conduct inspections of the appropriate stormwater outfalls and investigate any non-stormwater discharges.

Action 3.A.7: Continue to implement regular construction site inspections and record reports of illicit discharges and/or illegal dumping.

Action 3.A.8: Develop a procedure to provide a review of plans submitted to the Town for construction projects so that the appropriate best management practices to minimize or eliminate pollutant discharges from active construction sites are in place.

Action 3.A.9: Create outreach materials for the business community to educate them about best management practices and requirements for stormwater and pollution prevention.

Action 3.A.10: Develop an inspection schedule and written procedures for assessing municipal facilities to meet the stormwater management plan requirements.

Action 3.A.11: Review and develop an Operations and Maintenance Program to meet the requirements of the stormwater management plan and modify the program as appropriate.

GOAL 4:
**PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY IN
 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.**

Strategy 4.A: Implement programs that encourage sustainable building and development practices in new and existing development.

Action 4.A.1: Continue the "green" building program.

Action 4.A.2: Develop programs to promote energy conservation and use of renewable energy sources in the design and construction of new projects.

Action 4.A.3: Promote xeriscapes and the use of indigenous drought-tolerant plant materials and those compatible with them, for all new public and private construction projects.

Action 4.A.4: Discourage the use of non-native plant materials where a comparable or compatible native plant species is available which would achieve the same result.

Action 4.A.5: Implement a program to identify and protect the Town's historic and archaeological assets.

Action 4.A.6: Continue implementing standards to minimize glare and light control through the "dark sky" program.

Action 4.A.7: Consider noise implications and use of appropriate noise mitigation techniques in the design and location of new projects, particularly when adjacent to residential areas.

GOAL 5:
**MAINTAIN THE DESERT CHARACTER AND
ENVIRONMENT IN THE
SAN TAN FOOTHILLS.**

Strategy 5.A: Evaluate and implement development standards for the San Tan Foothill area.

Action 5.A.1: Maintain and expand programs to encourage identification, maintenance and reuse of existing native plant materials as an element of all new construction projects.

Action 5.A.2: Retain, and enhance where possible, the Sonoran Desert character of the area through use of sensitive building design, architecture, orientation, landscaping and access in the construction of new projects in the area.

Action 5.A.3: Develop standards for development in the area which employ the building envelope concept to minimize the use of cut and fill, and limit development on hillside property.

Action 5.A.4: Where possible, maintain the locations and appearance of natural drainage ways as an element of new development.

Action 5.A.5: Develop alternative street and infrastructure improvement standards which provide for environmental sensitivity, as well as site access and service, for use in desert areas.

Action 5.A.6: Develop programs and policies to minimize large retaining walls, steep landscape banks or cut and fill to create buildable lots.

WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT

A key area of concern for the Town is the ability to provide high quality water to meet the needs of our current and future residents and businesses within the Town's Planning Area and the Town's Utility Services Area. The purpose of this element is to outline the goals, strategies, and action items to conserve the Town's water resources while meeting the needs of current and future customers.

A core component of water management is the ability to provide an Assured Water Supply for all new development. An Assured Water Supply is defined by State law as the ability of the water provider to provide a water supply for at least 100 years to all new water customers. At build-out for the Town's current General Plan Planning Area (2050 projections) and Utility Service Area, there will be nearly 69,000 water connections, an estimated population of nearly 213,000 people, and a water demand of nearly 40,000 acre feet of water per year. The Town is able to meet the anticipated build-out water demands using groundwater, surface water, and reclaimed water resources.

Planning Considerations

Groundwater Pumping

The Town relies primarily on groundwater pumping as a water source. Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD) is a groundwater replenishment authority operated by the Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) throughout its service area, Phoenix, Tucson, and Pinal County. As a member of the CAGRD, subdivisions must obtain a Certificate of Assured Water Supply (CAWS) and pay the CAGRD to replenish any groundwater pumped that exceeds the pumping limitations imposed by the CAWS rules. When CAGRD was first formed, the cost per acre foot of groundwater was \$250 or about \$125 per home. In 2016, the cost was \$652 per acre-foot and \$326 per home, and in 2020, the cost will be \$700 per acre foot or \$350 per home. The Town is evaluating strategies to use other water supplies such as CAP water and reclaimed water to help supplement pumping of groundwater to reduce costs of CAGRD obligations for homeowners and homeowners' associations.

Surface Water Use

The Colorado River Basin is the source for the Central Arizona Project (CAP) water system. The Town currently receives an allotment of CAP surface water and plans to obtain additional allotments as quantities become available. The Town is analyzing innovative ways to better utilize CAP water allotments by recharging it into the ground water system via the Town's washes or by entering into agreements with neighboring irrigation districts to use CAP water in exchange for receiving groundwater pumping credits. Both recharged water and pumping credits allow the Town to pump groundwater without incurring CAGRD obligations.

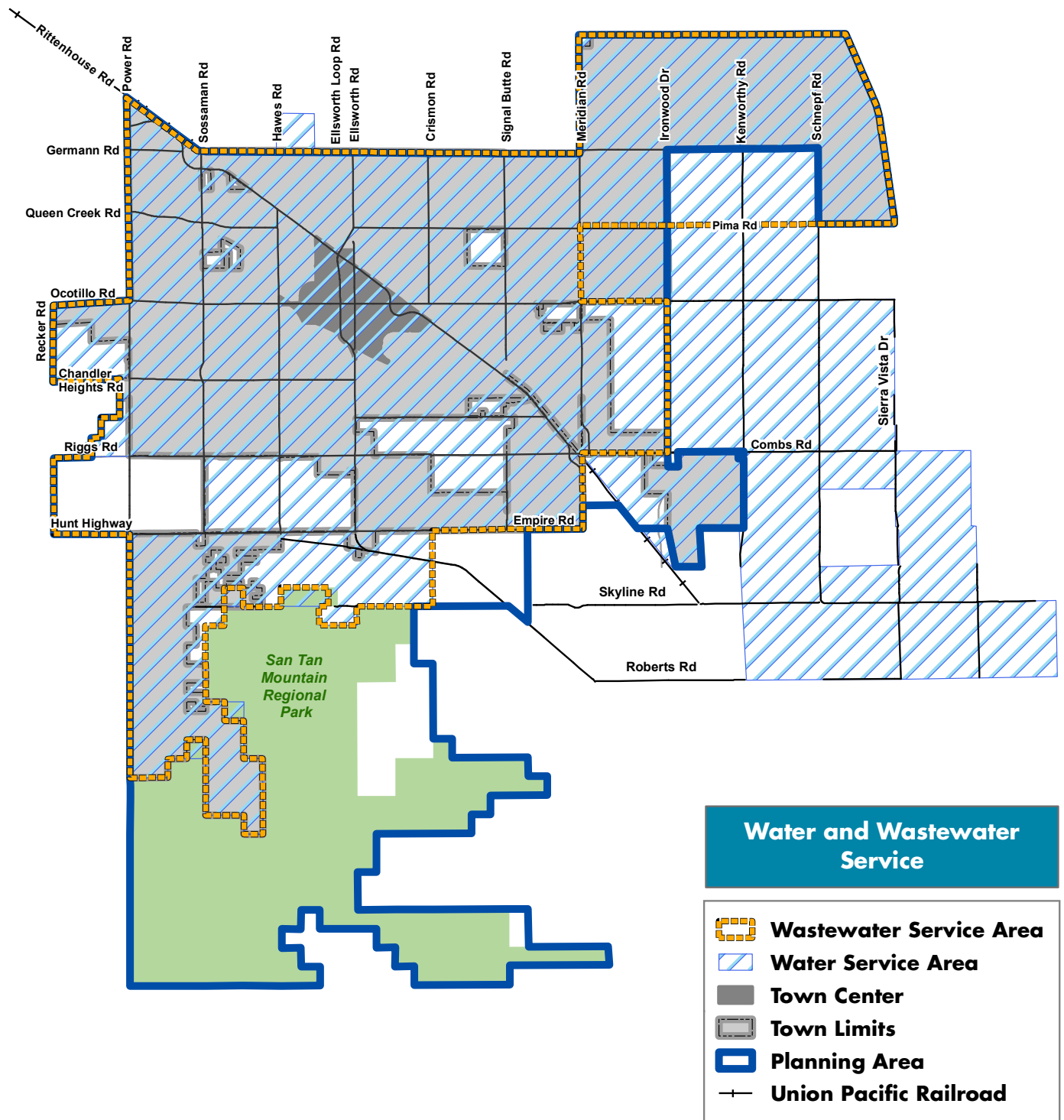
Reuse of Wastewater Resources

Currently, the Town collects on average two million gallons per day (GPD) of wastewater, which it conveys to the Greenfield Wastewater Reclamation Plant (GWWRP) for treatment. At build-out, the Town will have the ability to treat up to 12 million gallons of wastewater per day at the GWWRP. Treated effluent, otherwise known as reclaimed water, is a resource that provides the Town with an opportunity to reduce the amount and cost of pumping groundwater. Like CAP surface water, reclaimed water can be recharged into the ground or exchanged to entities such as irrigation districts that are allowed to use the resource. Reclaimed water recharged into the ground utilizes the land and soil as filters and allows the water to be pumped out for landscaping and irrigation needs for developments. As with surface water, this strategy would significantly reduce the pumping of potable groundwater for irrigation needs, reduce the amount of potable water storage facilities at build-out, and reduce the CAGRD groundwater pumping costs for homeowners and homeowners' associations.

Infrastructure

While the Town is able to meet projected water needs at build-out, water infrastructure must keep up with future demands. The Town's 2015 Water Master Plan identifies a framework for water infrastructure improvements that, upon construction, will satisfy the Town of Queen Creek's water needs through build-out of the service area.

Figure 17: Water and Wastewater Service Map



Goals, Strategies, & Actions

**GOAL 1:
EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY MANAGE
WATER RESOURCES.**

Strategy 1.A: Proactively manage the Town's potable water resources.

Action 1.A.1: Analyze and implement programs to reduce reliance on groundwater by recapturing and reusing other water resources including CAP water and effluent.

Action 1.A.2: Promote the use of water conservation techniques in the design and construction of all new public and private development projects.

Action 1.A.3: Develop programs that promote responsible water use applications while maintaining an attractive landscaped environment on new public and private projects.

Action 1.A.4: Promote a policy of groundwater recharge and rainwater harvesting where feasible and possible.

Strategy 1.B: Promote effective use of reclaimed water within the Town.

Action 1.B.1: Develop programs to implement the effective reuse of the Town's share of the reclaimed water generated by the Greenfield Water Reclamation Plant.

Action 1.B.2: Investigate the option of using reclaimed water as well as ground water recharge facilities as an amenity within the Queen Creek Wash to create resident accessible water-oriented recreational opportunities identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action 1.B.3: Develop options to use reclaimed water in lieu of potable water in public and private development open space and landscape areas within the Town.

Action 1.B.4: Encourage development and landowners to construct lakes as a public amenity and as the main source of irrigation for landscaping inside the development using Town reclaimed water from the GWRP or effluent credits recovered through Town-owned wells.

Strategy 1.C: Protect the quality of the Town's groundwater assets.

Action 1.C.1: Develop programs that effectively reduce contamination of stormwater and runoff of contaminated stormwater to downstream areas.

Action 1.C.2: Promote use of stormwater retention/detention basins to retain stormwater on-site, reduce sedimentation of public and private stormwater collection facilities and stormwater runoff.

Action 1.C.3: Develop programs that identify and reduce sources of groundwater contamination.

Strategy 1.D: Promote responsible use of the Town's wastewater system

Action 1.D.1: Educate residents and business owners on the effects and costs of treating materials that are illegal or unsuitable for the Town's wastewater system.

Action 1.D.2: Develop programs that effectively reduce the discharge of illegal materials into the Town's wastewater system.

Action 1.D.3: Implement innovative strategies to reclaim and reuse effluent water resources.

Strategy 1.E: Proactively plan for water infrastructure needs.

Action 1.E.1: Coordinate and construct the recommended infrastructure improvements as outlined in the 2015 Water Master Plan.

GOAL 2:
PROTECT AND CONSERVE WATER
RESOURCES.

Strategy 2.A: Continue to implement programs that encourage and facilitate water conservation.

Action 2.A.1: Continue to provide education programs to the public regarding water conservation strategies including special events, new resident welcome packets, and public workshops.

Action 2.A.2: Continue to send high-use notification letters to users with high water usage to notify them of their actions and provide solutions to reduce their water consumption.

Action 2.A.3: Continue the water meter repair and maintenance program to ensure water meter equipment function properly.

Action 2.A.4: Continue to analyze the Town's changing characteristics to determine the best and most appropriate water conservation practices to implement.

Action 2.A.5: Evaluate water conservation best management practices and programs on an annual basis to determine effectiveness.

Strategy 2.B: Evaluate and implement innovative water management solutions.

Action 2.B.1: Develop a reclaimed water recharge program utilizing the Queen Creek and Sonoqui wash system.

Action 2.B.2: Implement "smart water meter technology" to capture water use in real time.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

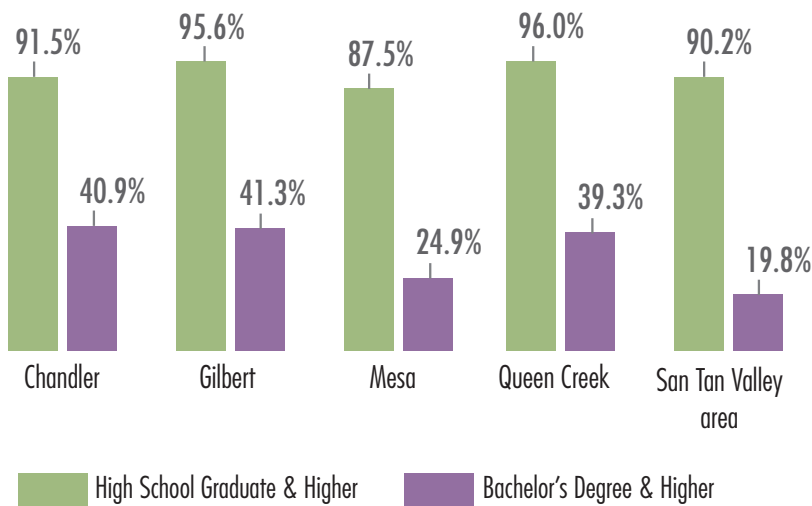
This Element focuses on several key areas that will improve the quality of life for Queen Creek’s residents by:

- Generating job growth within industry groups by maximizing existing assets.
- Promoting job creation and revenue generation for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Guiding infrastructure and capital projects to stimulate private sector development.
- Encouraging commercial activity in the Town Center.

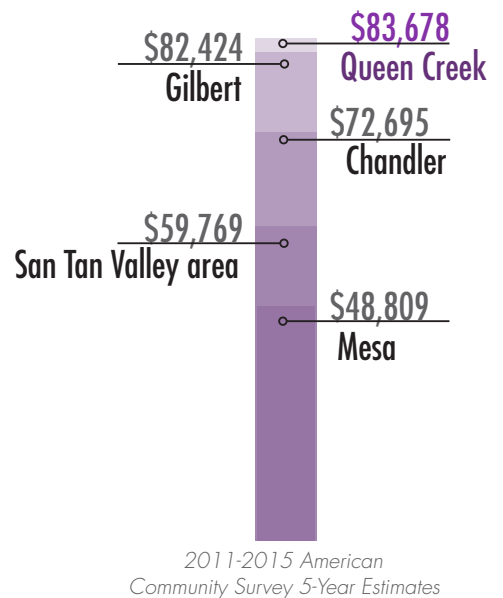
Queen Creek has evolved from a small farming town of 4,000 residents in 2000 to a bustling community of 41,200 persons in 2017. This growth trajectory is expected to continue with a 2027 population forecast of 73,200 (Town of Queen Creek forecast). Queen Creek’s rapid population growth has stimulated the development of a number of retail centers that provide services to residents of the Town as well as the surrounding region. The Town Center of Queen Creek has become a hub of commercial activity that includes education, healthcare and entertainment.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

PERCENT HIGHER EDUCATION



2015 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Queen Creek’s residents are an important asset that will assist in economic development efforts. High-skilled employment and technical jobs often require a workforce with higher educational attainment and can provide higher income levels. Residents are highly educated with nearly 40% of all persons over 25 years of age having a bachelor’s degree or higher. Among major cities in Greater Phoenix with a population over 15,000 persons, Queen Creek households have the highest median income at more than \$83,000.

The Town's adopted Economic Development Strategic Plan has identified five target industry groups that will promote job creation and complement the Town's strengths. Those groups include:

Queen Creek's 5 Target Industry Groups



Agritainment & Tourism



Healthcare & Biotechnology



Higher Education



Software & Info. Technology



Manufacturing

Within these industry groups, entrepreneurship and small business growth are important components of economic development.

Planning Considerations

While Queen Creek has achieved significant success over the past two decades and developed a highly recognizable brand, challenges and the growing pains of a young community persist.

Lack of Freeway Access

Cities to the west and north of Queen Creek are served by major freeways which provide sites for retail, office and industrial uses. Increasingly over the decades, freeways have become the primary determinant of employment opportunities in Greater Phoenix. While the Town is adjacent to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, most of the current development near the airport is occurring to the north of Queen Creek near existing freeways. The SR 24 freeway currently extends to Ellsworth Road and is planned for extension to Meridian Road sometime between 2027 and 2035. That future freeway alignment will adjoin the State Land within the Town's Planning Area. The lack of freeways near Queen Creek will be a competitive disadvantage in the near term for future office and industrial growth in the Town.

Currently, the largest employers in the Town are government, education and retailers. The long-term economic development outlook for Queen Creek is positive due to the Town's proximity to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, which will become a major employment center. However, in the near to mid-term the forecast jobs-to-population ratio for Queen Creek is expected to lag well behind the Maricopa County average and those of Chandler and Gilbert.

Commuting

Approximately 95% of Queen Creek's workforce commutes out of the Town to jobs in other cities. While this is not unusual for a young, growing community, it places stress on workers' quality of life and on the Town's transportation infrastructure.

Infrastructure

Queen Creek's infrastructure needs, particularly for transportation, are extensive. The conversion of two-lane county roads to five-lane arterials is needed to accommodate traffic generated by both current and future residents. The Town has limited resources to address these needs that are critical to economic development.

Land Availability

Queen Creek possesses land assets that can provide for future employment growth. However, the lack of shovel-ready sites for office and industrial prospects hinders job creation in the near term.

Town Center

Strategic development of privately-owned and Town-owned sites in the Town Center is crucial to creating a vibrant, walkable downtown. The Town Center has seen significant investment over the past several years. Attracting office employers and hotel users to complement existing retail in Town Center would strengthen the Town's economy and quality of life.

Public Investment

In order to promote economic development, investment of public dollars in infrastructure must be prioritized to generate the greatest impact through the leveraging of private investment.

Housing

Low density single family homes dominate the residential housing market. The lack of diversity in the housing market could affect the recruitment of prospective employers to Queen Creek if affordable and varied housing options are not available for employees.

Agritainment

A primary component of economic development is tourism and the tax dollars that flow from those uses. The Town’s agritainment and agritourism assets, which include Schnepf Farms and the Queen Creek Olive Mill, need to be supported and expanded through the addition of complementary uses.

Retail Leakage

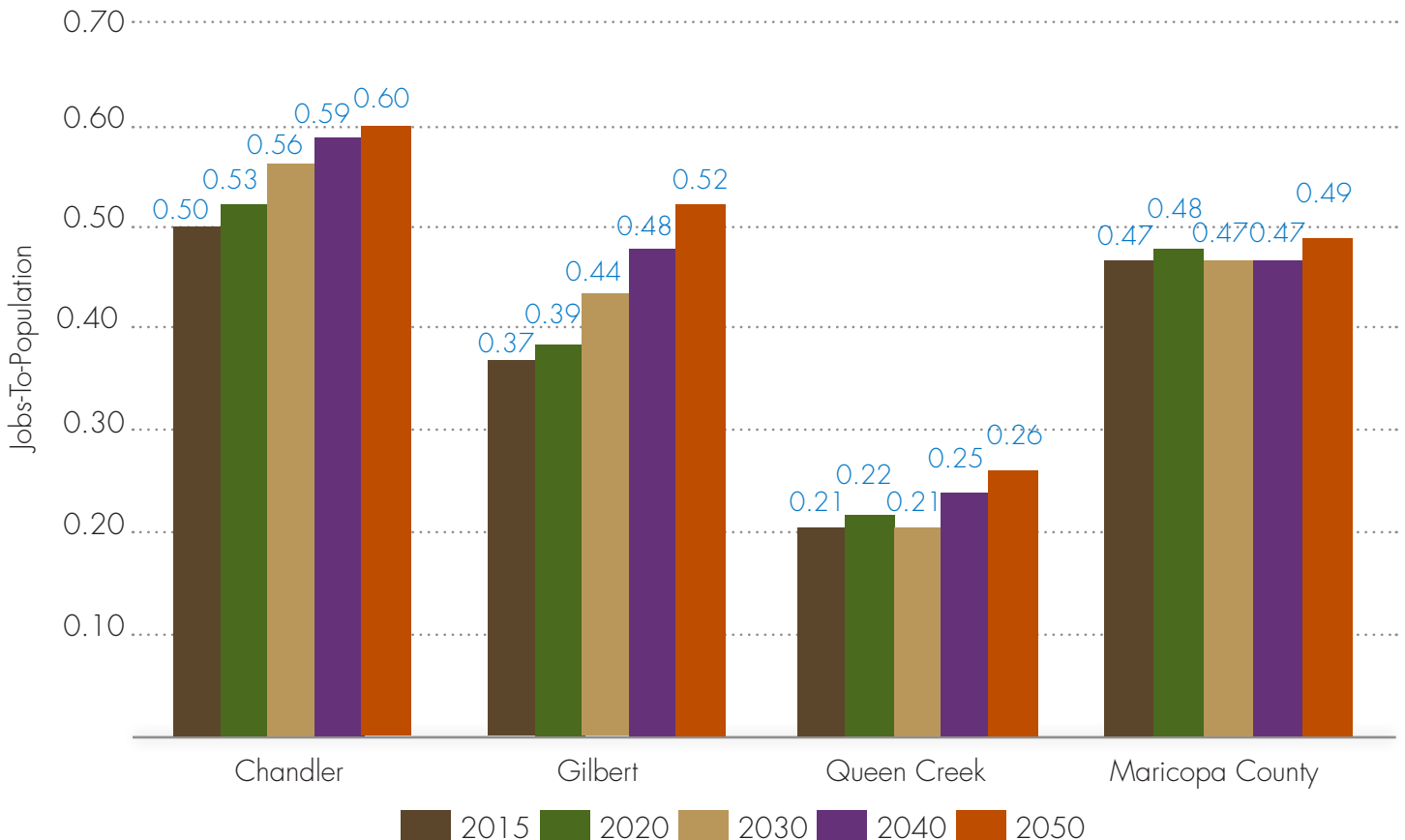
Queen Creek does not currently have a full range of retail services and will experience leakage of retail spending to nearby cities, such as Mesa and Gilbert where regional malls are located along with high value merchandisers such as car dealers and furniture retailers. On the other hand, Queen Creek likely enjoys an influx of retail spending from residents of the San Tan Valley area where retail facilities are under-supplied and not well developed.

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (PMGA)

The PMGA is located on the northern boundary of the Town Planning Area. As this airport develops, airport-related business may choose to locate in the Town’s designated industrial areas or other areas within the Town Planning Area. This could provide additional high-wage jobs for Town residents.

**Forecasted Jobs to Population Ratio
Selected Communities**

Source: Maricopa Association of Governments 2016



Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:

ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND FOSTER JOB CREATION IN QUEEN CREEK.

Strategy 1.A: Foster office development within the Town.

Action 1.A.1: To reduce the costs of site selection and preparation, identify sites within the Town that are fully serviced with infrastructure and are currently zoned for office use and promote these sites to the development community.

Strategy 1.B: Attract hotel development within Queen Creek and specifically the Town Center.

Action 1.B.1: Develop a tactical marketing strategy to target hotel operators combined with a hotel feasibility/market study.

Strategy 1.C: Recruit industries identified within the targeted group analysis.

Action 1.C.1: Participate in applicable Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) and Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) prospecting missions or business calls.

Strategy 1.D: Streamline the permitting process and remove potential barriers and explore innovation in the permitting process. Maintain a culture of customer service.

Action 1.D.1: Monitor the results and tracking performance analytics.

Action 1.D.2: Actively communicate improvements to the business community.

Strategy 1.E: Position Queen Creek as a destination for health and wellness.

Action 1.E.1: Promote Box Canyon as a location for a destination resort and spa.

Action 1.E.2: Complete the 11-mile loop to attract tourism activities.

Strategy 1.F: Determine the market potential for additional higher education providers.

Action 1.F.1: Prepare a market analysis that documents current and future demand for higher education.

Action 1.F.2: Leverage the Communiversy by partnering with other institutions to provide classes and other higher-education opportunities with the Town.

Strategy 1.G: Attract clean manufacturing and sterilization companies to Queen Creek that serve the healthcare industry.

Action 1.G.1: Outreach to large biotech and medical device companies in the area to understand their need for clean manufacturing and sterilization.

Strategy 1.H: Develop an international strategy in conjunction with already established tourism efforts.

Action 1.H.1: Evaluate data for new international markets. Join relevant trade organizations and participate in appropriate sales missions.

GOAL 2:

CREATE AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE THAT FOSTERS NEW IDEAS AND THE CREATION OF NEW BUSINESS.

Strategy 2.A: Provide true collaborative, entrepreneurial co-working space for start-up companies.

Action 2.A.1: Provide support for Gangplank and other co-working operations.

Strategy 2.B: Provide comprehensive support to those who want to launch a business.

Action 2.B.1: Offer training sessions and seminars; identify funding sources for business startups.

Action 2.B.2: Create a mentoring program for entrepreneurs using seasoned executives.

GOAL 3:

POSITION QUEEN CREEK AS THE AGRITAINMENT CAPITAL OF ARIZONA.

Strategy 3.A: Develop and launch a Queen Creek Agritainment promotional campaign.

Strategy 3.B: Expand agritainment to include wineries, breweries, distilleries, creameries, bakeries and other value added food business.

Action 3.B.1: Identify buildings and sites that may meet the site location needs of the industry.

Strategy 3.C: Diversify events at Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre when equestrian events are not taking place.

GOAL 4:

LEVERAGE TRAILS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION TO ATTRACT VISITORS.

Strategy 4.A: Place trails and parks as a cornerstone for destination recreation and tourism.

Action 4.A.1: Complete the 11-mile loop trail to attract a wide variety of tourism activities.

Strategy 4.B: Become a destination for league sporting events.

Action 4.B.1: Evaluate the demand for league sports and potential gaps in the region that could be addressed by Queen Creek.

GOAL 5:

PLAN FOR AND INVEST IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Strategy 5.A: Improve the Town's regional transportation access.

Action 5.A.1: Continue working with area governments to advocate regional solutions to transportation challenges, including the extension of SR24 and future development of the north-south freeway.

Action 5.A.2: Implement the findings and recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan.

Strategy 5.B: Provide shovel-ready sites to attract new business.

Action 5.B.1: Implement an infrastructure improvement plan for the Town's employment areas that includes water, wastewater, streets and other facilities.

Action 5.B.2: Work with State Land Department and the City of Apache Junction to conceptually plan the 5.5 square miles of State Land within the Town Planning Area.

GOAL 6:
**GENERATE MORE ECONOMIC SYNERGY
WITHIN THE TOWN CENTER.**

Strategy 6.A: Enhance the sense of place and attract additional investment within the Town Center.

Action 6.A.1: Develop and implement design guidelines for Ellsworth Road.

Action 6.A.2: Plan for higher density residential uses at key locations.

Action 6.A.3: Evaluate the acquisition of land within the Town Center for the siting of strategic projects and shared parking options.

Action 6.A.4: Create a public arts program that adds identity and character to urban spaces.

GOAL 7:
**DEVELOP A ROBUST QUEEN CREEK
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING
PROGRAM.**

Strategy 7.A: Promote a unifying and distinct brand that sets Queen Creek apart as a viable business location.

Action 7.A.1: Develop and actively manage a branding strategy.

Strategy 7.B: Implement content marketing strategies.

Action 7.B.1: Develop and deploy a print and digital marketing strategy leveraging the Queen Creek brand.

Action 7.B.2: Create a targeted marketing program on social media.

Strategy 7.C: Collaborate and partner with other organizations.

Action 7.C.1: Continue the tourism partnership with "Visit Mesa."

Action 7.C.2: Utilize the cooperative advertising programs provided by ACA, GPEC and the Arizona Office of Tourism.

Action 7.C.3: Coordinate activities with the Communiiversity, GCCC and ASU Polytechnic to assist with marketing higher education assets.

Action 7.C.4: Identify other collaborative marketing opportunities that may assist in achieving the Town's economic development goals.

COST OF DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Queen Creek has enjoyed significant growth over the last 15 years and is forecasted to maintain this growth trajectory into the future. With the expected influx of new residents, long-term financial sustainability is a key focus for the community. The demands of growth include not only the capital facilities needed to serve new residents (streets, parks, public safety and water and wastewater services), but also the ongoing operations and maintenance of those facilities.

The purpose of this Cost of Development Element is to identify goals and strategies that require new development to contribute its fair share toward the cost of public services needed to serve new development. State law requires that any costs imposed by a community on new development must result in a beneficial use to that new development and be in proportion to the burden imposed on the community.

Queen Creek's total primary property tax levy fell by 37% between FY2010 & FY2014

The Great Recession caused harm to the financial health of cities across Arizona. In addition to declines in sales tax revenue, property tax valuations also dramatically decreased. As a result of the recession, Queen Creek's primary property tax levy fell by 37% between FY2010 and FY2014 while the Town held the tax rate at \$1.9500 for each \$100 of assessed value. The levy, reserved for emergency services, declined from \$5.6 million in FY2010 to \$3.6 million in FY2014. A decline in valuation of this magnitude can cause a reduction in services and delay of capital improvements. At the same time, new legislation and the approval of Proposition 117 modified the way in which impact fees are assessed and the manner in which taxable property values are calculated.

Queen Creek takes a conservative approach to financial sustainability, which has led to a financial surplus over the last four years as a result of the Town's thorough budgeting process. While the Town levies a primary property tax for public safety, Queen Creek does not have a secondary property tax levy. The Town depends on several major sources of revenue to contend with the growing population. Those sources include:

- Sales tax, the largest source of revenue
- Property tax (primary tax levy only dedicated to emergency medical services, no secondary levy)
- State shared revenues
- Development impact fees

Development impact fees are one of the major resources used to finance infrastructure related to new growth. However, they cannot be used for the repair, maintenance or operation of any existing or new facilities. In addition, under State law an additional 2% construction or contracting sales tax charged by Queen Creek must be reserved as a direct reduction to impact fees and used for capital improvements.

The Town of Queen Creek uses a conservative approach to financing infrastructure, often relying on a pay-as-you-go philosophy through the use of general fund resources such as sales taxes and state shared revenues. Development impact fees are the primary component of paying for growth-related infrastructure needs along with the 2% contracting sales tax.



Some of the financing mechanisms that assist in providing infrastructure improvements include the following.

- **Development Agreements (DA):** Development agreements are an important element of the development approval process, outlining the responsibilities of both public and private parties to construct improvements.
- **Community Facilities Districts (CFDs):** This important financing mechanism is used in many communities to construct major public facilities. The districts are created upon petition by property owners and managed by the Town. CFD debt, however, is not a liability of the Town. CFD debt is assessed against the real property that benefits from the improvements. CFDs are used for large master planned communities and may not be feasible for smaller subdivisions and residential projects typically found in Queen Creek.
- **Improvement Districts (IDs):** These districts provide for the construction of public infrastructure (water, sewer and streets). Property owners are assessed a special assessment lien by the Town for repayment of the improvement bond. In the case of default by property owners, the Town is responsible for any delinquencies and must institute foreclosure proceedings.
- **Street Light Improvement Districts (SLIDs):** These districts have been required in new subdivisions in Queen Creek to pay for the maintenance and operation of street lights through a property tax.
- **Financing Authorities:** Arizona has two authorities that assist in the financing of water and sewer infrastructure, streets and drainage improvements, municipal buildings and other Town improvements. The Arizona Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA) and Greater Arizona Development Authority (GADA) are designed to provide borrowers below market interest rates on loans and lower issuance costs.

Planning Considerations

Infrastructure to support new residential and commercial development

The provision of infrastructure to support new residential and commercial development is a critical element of the Town's economic development efforts. Adequate water and sewer service, transportation access, public safety services, and parks and recreation amenities all contribute to an enhanced quality of life and the ability of Queen Creek to attract new businesses and provide for the demands of its residents. Infrastructure improvements are prioritized to provide the most benefit for the community.

Diversity of financial mechanisms

Queen Creek uses a variety of financial resources to improve and maintain its infrastructure assets. It is important that the Town promote a variety of housing options and mix of commercial and employment uses in its planning efforts to grow those revenue sources over time and ensure the financial sustainability of the community.

The Town needs to monitor development impact fee revenue and update impact fees on a routine basis to ensure that new development continues to pay for its fair share of growth-related impacts.

Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:

MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT LEVEL OF HIGH QUALITY SERVICES FOR ALL QUEEN CREEK RESIDENTS

Strategy 1.A: Ensure that new development pays its fair share of public improvements and facilities under current State law.

Action 1.A.1: Evaluate and update development impact fees on a regular schedule.

Action 1.A.2: Employ development agreements in the entitlement process in order to formalize responsibilities for the provision of capital improvements.

Action 1.A.3: Consider the use of Improvement Districts or CFDs for major public investments.

Strategy 1.B: Update the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) on a regular basis.

Action 1.B.1: Use the Town's CIP as an input to the development impact fee program.

Action 1.B.2: Use the CIP to prioritize public investment in connection with economic development projects that produce high-wage jobs.

Action 1.B.3: As part of the CIP process, identify the ongoing annual cost of operations and maintenance for all new public facilities.

Action 1.B.4: Pursue available grants and loans from State, County and Federal sources to assist with the development of new and existing infrastructure projects.

Strategy 1.C: Identify costs related to new economic development projects that may be waived or reimbursed as part of an incentive package.

Action 1.C.1: Consider the reimbursement of permit fees, sales taxes and other Town fees for qualified economic development projects that produce employment in the community, subject to any restrictions in state law.

Action 1.C.2: Provide expedited plan review for qualified economic development projects.

Strategy 1.D: Consider the use of revenue and cost sharing agreements with adjacent communities.

Action 1.D.1: Where mutually beneficial, establish revenue and cost sharing agreements with adjacent jurisdictions for projects that will generate net revenue to Queen Creek and promote economic development.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Quality fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical services are essential components to safe communities. Ensuring the safety of the community is among the Town's highest priorities. It is essential that the Town maintain a high level of safety for our residents, creating a safe environment, a safe community, and fostering a high quality of life for all.

- The Town of Queen Creek contracts with Maricopa County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services. The contract amount for FY2017 is approximately \$6.1 million and includes 44 personnel (deputies, detectives, sergeants, lieutenant, captain and administrative support staff). The contract also includes access to SWAT teams, special investigative services, aircraft and other special equipment as needed.
- The Town has five patrol beats providing law enforcement services to the community.
- In the 2016 Queen Creek Citizen Survey, 98% of residents gave their neighborhood a safe rating.
- Town of Queen Creek Fire & Medical officially began providing fire and emergency medical services (EMS) to the Town in January 2008.
- Fire and medical services are provided through 51 personnel (operational and administrative).
- The Fire & Medical Department currently operates out of three fire stations, Fire Station 1 is located in Town Center, Fire Station 2 is located on Sossaman Road in the southwest portion of Town, and Fire Station 3 is located on Queen Creek Road in the northwest portion of Town.

Planning Considerations

Future Development and Population Growth

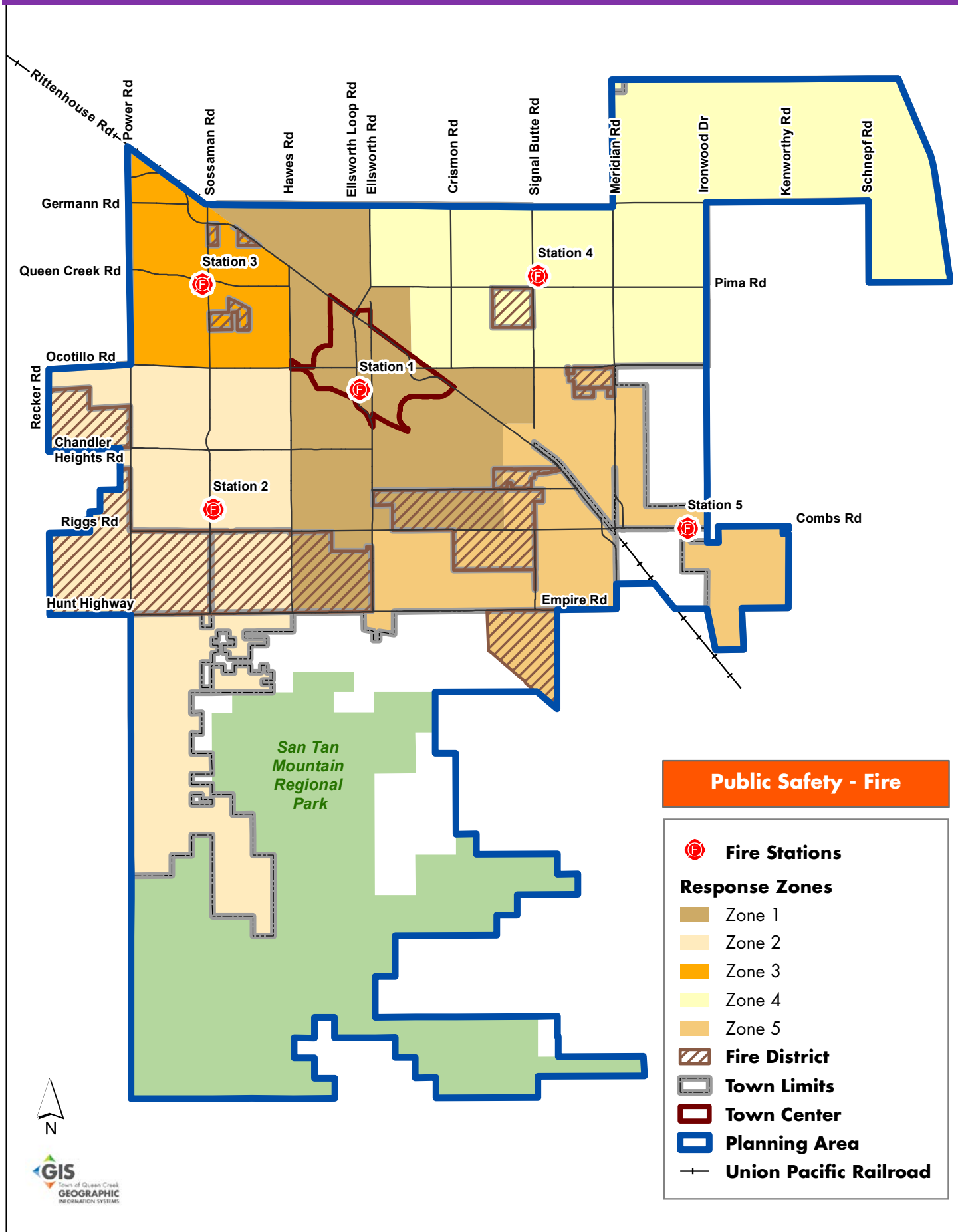
As the northeast and southeast areas of the community develop, public safety services will see an increase in calls for service. It is essential that the Town coordinates facility planning with growth so that emergency response is timely and efficient, minimizing potential loss of life and damage to property.

Traffic

Queen Creek's rapid growth and necessary roadway expansion, along with it being a major thoroughfare for morning and evening commuter residents who live outside Town, has created traffic related issues. High volumes of traffic contribute to accidents and pose a public health problem. Consequently, an overwhelming concern from Town residents has to do with traffic safety as identified in the 2016 Center for Public Safety Management Report and Analysis of Police Services.



Figure 18: Public Safety Fire Map

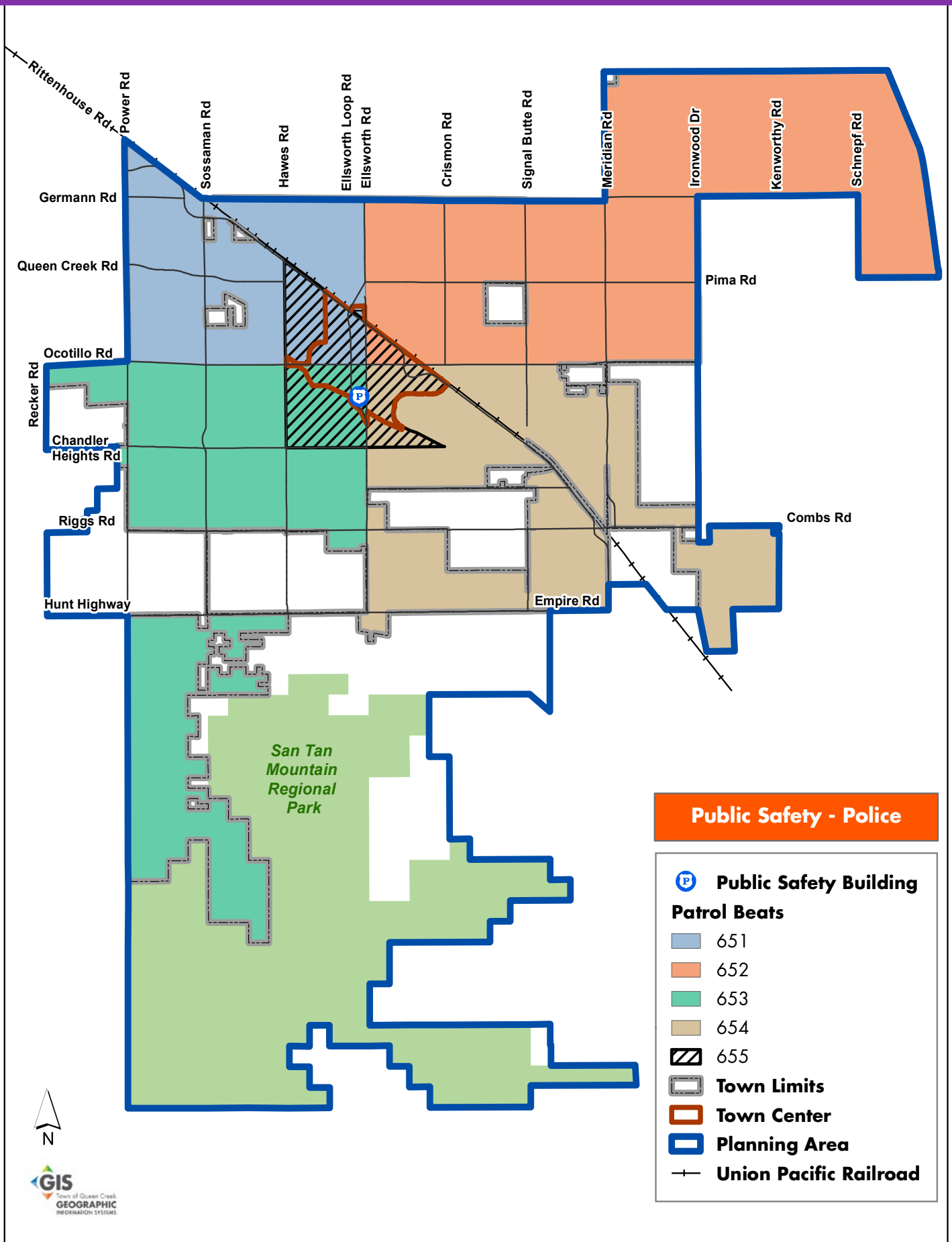


Public Safety - Fire

- Fire Stations**
- Response Zones**
 - Zone 1
 - Zone 2
 - Zone 3
 - Zone 4
 - Zone 5
- Fire District**
- Town Limits**
- Town Center**
- Planning Area**
- Union Pacific Railroad**



Figure 19: Public Safety Police Map



Goals, Strategies, & Actions

GOAL 1:
FOSTER A SAFE AND VIBRANT
COMMUNITY TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY
OF LIFE

Strategy 1.A: Reduce, solve, and prevent criminal activity and the fear of crime.

Action 1.A.1: Continue to deliver law enforcement services that reduce property crime, address the needs of juveniles, and maintain a low crime rate by fostering collaborative partnerships with residents, businesses and organizations to develop solutions to problems.

Action 1.A.2: Sustain established deployment strategies such as: intelligence-led policing, predictive and problem-oriented policing (intelligence, trend analysis, pattern recognition and subject/location clusters).

Action 1.A.3: Maintain or increase crime prevention and public safety events for residents, using social media sites to help solve crime and promote community crime awareness.

Action 1.A.4: Utilize School Resource Officers and Community Services Squad to prevent, deter and solve crime in public and charter schools to enhance the educational environment.

Strategy 1.B: Continue to protect life and property from fire and other life threatening incidents.

Action 1.B.1: Meet or exceed the four-minute travel time goal for first response vehicles.

Action 1.B.2: Complete a comprehensive community risk and vulnerability assessment to guide in future department and Town planning for fire and EMS demand.

Action 1.B.3: Evaluate the need for an additional station in the southeastern portion of the Town as development occurs.

Action 1.B.4: Consider planning and construction of a fire station in the northwest portion of the Town based on current demand. If, in the short term, development continues at a pace whereby demand for service grows more rapidly than anticipated, there are identified service gaps that then need to be closed by additional stations (southeast and northeast).

Action 1.B.5: Evaluate the need for an additional station in the southwest area of the Town, serving the Box Canyon area, and the County Island Fire District, as development occurs.

Action 1.B.6: Establish a capital vehicle replacement plan.

Strategy 1.C: Provide safer roadways in Queen Creek by reducing accidents and improving driving behaviors through traffic enforcement and education.

Action 1.C.1: Using a data driven approach to crime and traffic safety, identify high-crash locations, dates, times and traffic violations for mapping, and institute directed patrol management to actively patrol high-crash areas.

Action 1.C.2: Formalize a structured traffic initiative with specific assignments for concentrated enforcement of high volume traffic/accident zones.

Action 1.C.3: School Resource Deputies and staff from the Community Services Squad will conduct traffic education/safety classes for high school and junior high school students.

Action 1.C.4: One month every quarter the Town will participate in an enhanced traffic enforcement plan, which should include additional signage, a designated traffic car from each patrol squad, and include high visibility and awareness through the Town's communication channels.

Strategy 1.D: Establish a highly skilled workforce that is able to address the future demands for public safety services.

Action 1.D.1: Continue with and enhance training programs that prepare the entire workforce to be able to temporarily fill in positions to include acting engineer, acting captain, acting battalion chief, and paramedic.

GOAL 2:
INCREASE COMMUNITY TRUST,
INTERACTIONS, INVOLVEMENT,
ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENHANCE THE
MCSO DISTRICT 6 IDENTITY IN THE TOWN
OF QUEEN CREEK

Strategy 2.B: Continue advancements in resident participation and increase resident awareness and involvement of law enforcement services.

Action 2.A.1: Create a community policing policy that evolves within the law enforcement contract and allows for the sustainability of recent accomplishments while including elements that adjust for future growth of the community.

Action 2.A.2: The Community Service Squad will produce a formal community policing program document, which includes specific outcomes, strategies, performance measures, and details of the community policing programs and efforts.

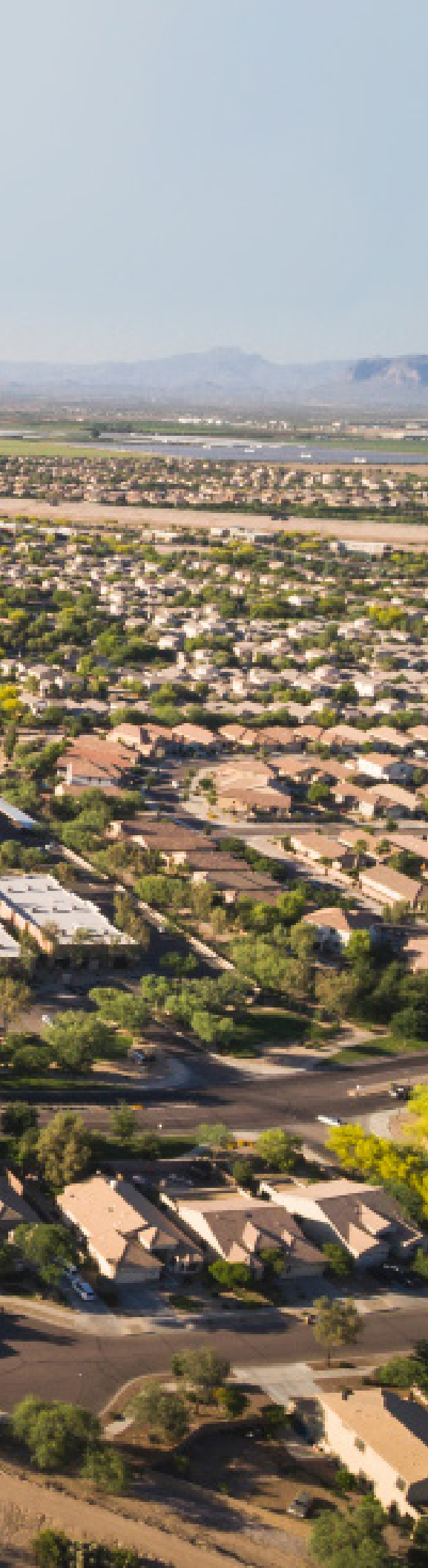
Action 2.A.3: The Community Service Squad will continue to lead community policing (partnership/problem-solving) and outreach efforts and develop new opportunities to inform more residents about the Town’s law enforcement services.

Action 2.A.4: Increase community outreach efforts by requiring all patrol squads to plan and complete bi-annual outreach projects such as: attending HOA/neighborhood meetings, community events, school functions, park visits and other opportunities to interact with the community.

Action 2.A.5: Continue to investigate all misconduct complaints from residents and report findings. Also, track all compliments or commendations and recognize deputies for these occurrences.







SECTION 3:
**General Plan
Administration**

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

The General Plan provides a framework for Town staff and elected and appointed officials as they make decisions to guide future growth and development. Over time, unanticipated or unforeseen changes in technology, economy, environment, population growth and demographics, transportation systems, and other factors may occur and require Major or Minor Amendments to this General Plan. This section of the Plan defines Major and Minor General Plan Amendments and the General Plan Major and Minor Amendment process.

Who Can Request a General Plan Amendment?

Amendments to the General Plan may be initiated by the Town or requested by landowners or their designated representatives, residents, or the owners of businesses located within the Town.

Who Can Approve a General Plan Amendment and What is the General Plan Amendment Process?

All Amendments to the General Plan must be approved by the Town Council. A Major General Plan Amendment can only be considered by the Council after public notice in accordance with ARS 9.461.5, posting on the Town website, and two Planning and Zoning Commission public hearings held in different locations in the Town. Major Amendments must follow the same public notice procedures as a rezone. Additional public outreach may be required. A Major Amendment request must be approved by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Town Council.

A Minor General Plan Amendment shall be noticed according to the same procedure as a rezone, and shall be recommended for approval, denial, or continuance at a public hearing by Planning and Zoning Commission, and can be approved, denied, or continued to a date certain by the Town Council at a public hearing.

MAJOR AMENDMENTS

Major Amendments to the General Plan may be considered annually by the Town. Major Amendment applications may be submitted annually, and will be considered within the same calendar year they are submitted.

What Constitutes a Major General Plan Amendment?

State law requires that zoning conform to the General Plan and the General Plan Land Use Categories and Map. This General Plan's Land Use Categories define the permitted zoning for each General Plan Land Use Category, and lists additional conditions to ensure that zoning is compatible within each Land Use Category. This General Plan Land Use Map and Land Use Categories provide a flexible framework that promote high quality design and development. The Land Use Map and Land Use Categories provide wide latitude that provide and enable landowners a variety of development options that can be used to help the Town achieve the General Plan goals, which are ratified by voters. Because the General Plan offers flexible options, it is not anticipated that Major Amendments to the General Plan will be requested every year. Should a Major Amendment to the General Plan be necessary, one or more of the following would need to be true:

Rural Land-Use Category & General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for 10 or more acres of land that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Types, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create 10 or more contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

Neighborhood Land-Use Category & General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for 5 or more acres of land that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Types, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create 5 or more contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

Urban Land-Use Category & General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for land greater than one acre that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Type, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- Any request for a drive-thru.
- Any rezoning request that creates a contiguous 5-acre area not in conformance with the General Plan.

Commercial and Industrial Land-Use Categories & General Plan Map

- Rezoning request for land greater than 20 acres that is not in conformance with the Land Use Character, Land Use Type, Appropriate Zoning Districts, or the Land Use Categories Requirements Table.
- A rezoning request that would create 20 or more contiguous acres of zoning not in conformance with the General Plan.

Special District, Open Space, or Agritainment Categories & General Plan Map

- Any rezoning request not in conformance in the Special District, Open Space, or Agritainment Land Use Categories.
- Special District boundaries may be expanded to accommodate extensions/modifications of its associated master plan or PAD through the rezoning process.

Text Changes

- Changes to the text of the Land Use Categories, Land Use Categories Additional Requirements table, descriptions on the Land Use legend, or the elimination or substantial modification of any goals or strategies to the General Plan.

Any rezoning request that is less than the size limit established in the above sections may be approved through the rezoning process and will not require a Major General Plan Amendment. During the rezone review request, consideration will be given to maintain a compatible transition between adjacent properties.

MINOR AMENDMENTS

Minor Amendments include text amendments, such as updates to goals and strategies which do not change their meaning or intent, to demographic or statistical information, and updates or modifications to actions. Updates to maps included in this General Plan (excluding the Land Use Map) may be done through a Minor General Plan Amendment request. Requests for Minor Amendments would be recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission to the Town Council. Minor Amendment requests can be considered at any Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council public meeting.

Any rezoning request that is less than the size limit established in the above sections may be approved through the rezoning process and will not require a Minor General Plan Amendment. During the rezone review request, consideration will be given to maintain a compatible transition between adjacent properties.

FINDINGS OF FACT

In determining whether the proposed amendment should be approved, the Commission and Town Council shall consider the following factors:

1. Whether this change in the General Plan land use map will result in a shortage of land for other planned uses (for example and not limited to, will this change result in a substantial and undesirable reduction in the amount of available land for employment or higher density housing development?)
2. Does the proposed amendment constitute an overall improvement to the Queen Creek General Plan and is not solely for the good or benefit of a particular landowner or owners at a particular point in time.
3. The degree to which the proposed amendment will impact the whole community or a portion of the community by:
 - a. Significantly altering acceptable existing land use patterns in a way that is contrary to the goals, strategies and actions identified in the adopted General Plan.
 - b. Affecting the livability of the surrounding area or the health and safety of present or future residents.

FINDINGS OF FACT (CONTINUED)

- c. Requiring larger or more extensive improvements to roads, sewer, or water systems than are needed to support the prevailing land uses and which may negatively impact development of other lands. The Commission and/or the Town Council may also consider the degree to which the need for such improvements will be mitigated pursuant to binding commitments by the applicant, a public agency, or other sources when the impacts of the uses permitted pursuant to the General Plan amendment will be felt.
 - d. Resulting in adverse impacts on existing uses due to increased traffic congestion that will not be accommodated by planned roadway improvements or other planned transportation improvements such as and not limited to non-motorized transportation alternatives, transit, or self driving vehicles.
4. Consistency of the proposed amendment with the vision, goals, strategies, and actions of the adopted General Plan.
 5. Whether there was an error or oversight in the original General Plan adoption in that the Council did not fully consider facts, projects or trends which could reasonably exist in the future.
 6. Whether events subsequent to the General Plan adoption have superseded the Council's original premises and findings made upon Plan adoption.
 7. Whether any or all of the Council's original premises and findings regarding General Plan adoption were unsubstantiated.
 8. Whether events subsequent to the General Plan adoption may have changed the character and/or condition of the area so as to make the application acceptable
 9. The extent to which the benefits of the Plan amendment outweigh any of the impacts identified in the above subsections.

GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND ANNUAL REPORTING

General Plan Implementation

Implementation of the General Plan is based on specific community goals, objectives and resources. The State of Arizona mandates municipal planning agencies to undertake the following actions to implement their General Plans:

- Adopt and implement a General Plan that serves as a guide for orderly growth and development and as a basis for the efficient expenditure of its funds relating to the subjects of a General Plan.
- Render an annual report to the Mayor and Town Council on the status of the Plan and progress of its application.
- Promote public interest in an understanding of the General Plan and the regulations relating to it.
- Consult and advise with public officials and agencies, public utility companies, residents, educational, professional, and other organizations and provide opportunities for written comment throughout the General Plan planning process.
- Following adoption of the General Plan, every governmental, judicial and quasi-judicial agency or commission should provide a list of proposed plans for capital improvements or construction within or partially within the municipality. The agency shall list and classify all such recommendations and shall prepare a coordinated program of proposed public work for the ensuing fiscal year. Such coordinated program shall be submitted to the municipal planning agency for review and report to such agency for conformity with the adopted General Plan.
- All acquisitions and dispositions of real property shall be reported to a municipal planning agency to ensure conformity with the General Plan and supporting plans. The planning agency shall render its report as to conformity with an adopted General Plan within 40 days after submittal.

Roles and Responsibilities

Queen Creek's Town Manager appoints staff persons responsible for the Town's General Plan implementation. Appointed staff should monitor the status of each implementation action throughout the year and provide a general recommended framework to the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission to annually update the General Plan Implementation Program.

The Town's Planning and Zoning Commission is also responsible for the regular monitoring of the General Plan's implementation. In addition, the Commission reviews staff reports and provides recommendations to the Town Council for revisions to the General Plan Implementation Program on an annual basis. The Annual Report can assist in determining if the Town should initiate any major or minor amendments.

General Plan Annual Report

The General Plan Annual Report assists in the implementation of the General Plan and can be incorporated into the analysis and performance for the Development Services Department that is included in the Town's Annual Budget. It includes the following sections:

- Implementation Measure- Lists the actions necessary to carry out each element of the General Plan.
- Lead Department/Agency- Identifies the responsible Town department for accomplishing that particular measure.
- Projected Time Frame- Identifies and prioritizes the time frame for the measure to be initiated.
- Potential Funding Sources- Lists the potential funding source necessary to implement the Plan.