



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

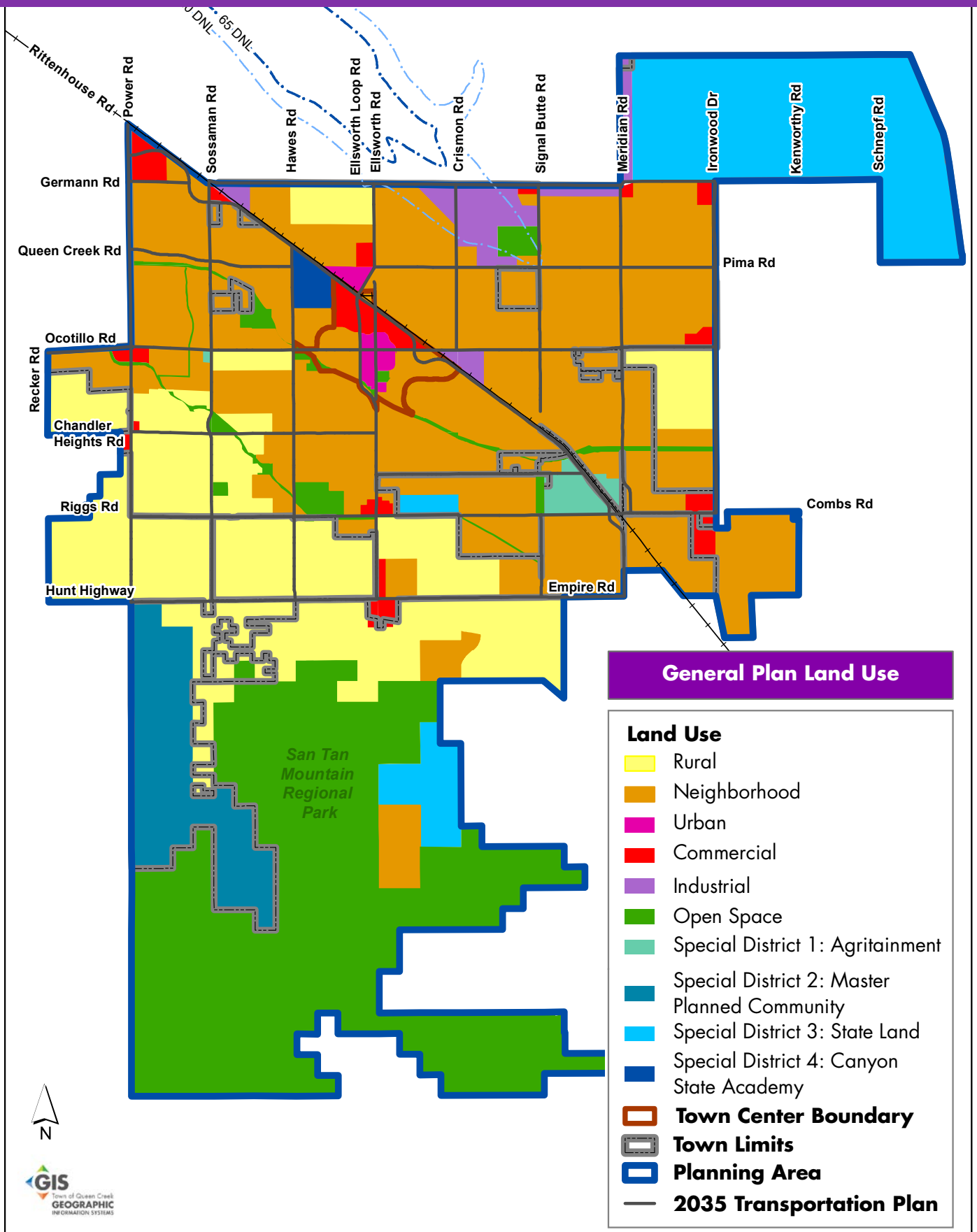


Figure 2: Land Use Categories

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><b>Residential:</b> very low-density single family (up to 1 dwelling unit per acre)</p> <p><b>Commercial:</b> agriculture related (farm stands)</p> <p><b>Employment:</b> agriculture and recreation-related; home office; garage industry</p> <p><b>Open Space:</b> trails, trailheads, open space (washes), community parks</p>	<p><b>Residential:</b> single family, patio homes, multifamily or other forms of residential uses up to 20 dwelling units per acre.</p> <p><b>Commercial:</b> neighborhood retail and services with requirements</p> <p><b>Employment:</b> home office; limited live/work; office</p> <p><b>Public &amp; Quasi Public:</b> civic/institutional</p> <p><b>Open Space:</b> buildings, neighborhood / community parks, pocket parks, tot lot</p>	<p><b>Residential:</b> single family (above 6 dwelling units per acre), multifamily, patio homes</p> <p><b>Commercial:</b> commercial retail, office, and services. No drive-thrus</p> <p><b>Employment:</b> office buildings; live/work</p> <p><b>Public &amp; Quasi Public:</b> civic/institutional buildings</p> <p><b>Open Space:</b> plazas, parks</p>	<p><b>Commercial:</b> Town-wide commercial center and other auto-oriented commercial centers</p> <p><b>Employment:</b> office buildings</p> <p><b>Public &amp; Quasi Public:</b> civic/institutional buildings</p> <p><b>Open Space:</b> plazas, parks</p>	<p><b>Employment:</b> warehouse; manufacturing; office</p> <p><b>Open Space:</b> plazas, parks</p>	<p><b>Open Space:</b> park shelters, restroom facilities; community and Town-wide parks; conservation areas; Sonoqui &amp; Queen Creek washes, protected natural features</p>	<p><b>Economic:</b> Agritainment</p> <p><b>Residential:</b> Master planned community</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Arizona State Land Department managed land, Canyon State Academy property</p>
Land Use Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predominantly large lot single family residential up to 1 dwelling unit per acre.</li> <li>• Buildings spaced significantly apart to create a sense of intermittent rather than lined up buildings.</li> <li>• A variety of deep setbacks from the road, creating an informal pattern.</li> <li>• Roadways without curb, gutter, or sidewalk.</li> <li>• Informal streetscapes and tree placement.</li> <li>• Commercial developments with less intense uses rather than auto-centric and/or high turnover uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predominantly residential with range of densities up to 20 dwelling units per acre allowed with requirements.</li> <li>• Adequate transitions and/or buffering abutting Rural or Urban areas or between different land uses or densities required.</li> <li>• Higher densities should decrease towards edges when abutting single family developments within this Land Use Category.</li> <li>• Densities above 8 dwelling units per acre require direct access to collector or arterial streets.</li> <li>• Commercial sites less than 20 acres. All commercial uses require direct access to at least one arterial or collector street.</li> <li>• Buildings spaced to create separation while maintaining cohesive street wall.</li> <li>• Modest building setbacks, generally aligned with neighboring buildings.</li> <li>• Streets with curb, gutter, planter strips, and sidewalk.</li> <li>• Semi-formal streetscape with aligned street trees.</li> <li>• Diversity provided by a variety of building styles and sizes.</li> <li>• Commercial developments with less intense uses rather than auto-centric and/or high turnover uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Buildings close together with significant street frontage.</li> <li>• Building façades at or near sidewalk.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Formalized streetscape with equally spaced street trees.</li> <li>• May include civic park/plaza/gathering space.</li> <li>• Buildings with active ground-floor uses and entries, storefronts and windows oriented toward sidewalks.</li> <li>• On-street parking, especially along streets with retail.</li> <li>• Drive-thru commercial uses prohibited.</li> <li>• Off street parking located behind buildings when possible and practical.</li> <li>• Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood or Rural) required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial development; accommodates existing conventional suburban shopping centers.</li> <li>• Flexible configuration of buildings; building facades and entries may be associated with site-internal circulation rather than street frontage.</li> <li>• Streets with curb and gutter, planters and sidewalks.</li> <li>• Streetscape with street trees and shrubs intended to screen surface parking and service areas from view and buffer sidewalks from vehicle traffic.</li> <li>• Generally, auto-oriented development with safe and comfortable pedestrian routes and streetscapes.</li> <li>• Adequate transition to abutting areas (Neighborhood, or Rural) or between different land uses or densities may be required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserved for employment-focused development not appropriate in other categories, including warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and office buildings.</li> <li>• Building siting accommodates truck access, loading and storage areas.</li> <li>• Roadways designed to accommodate larger vehicles while maintaining a safe, shaded, and comfortable sidewalk network.</li> <li>• Where abutting other Land Use Categories, proper transition and/or buffering is required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely undeveloped land intended to protect and preserve the natural environment and provide recreational opportunities and public parks.</li> <li>• Development limited to use-specific structures and recreation facilities, including trails, picnic shelters, restroom facilities, and equestrian facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set aside for development not appropriate for any of the other categories and requiring greater flexibility.</li> <li>• Development governed by Master Plan.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>Appropriate in RURAL Land Use Category.</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Appropriate zoning adjacent to RURAL.</li> </ul>
		Type B	R1-18		X				
	Suburban Development	Type B	R1-15		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Minimum density of 6 du/ac required.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
		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"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	
	General Commercial	C-2		X	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks.</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged.</li> </ul>	
	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks.</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged.</li> </ul>
	Downtown Core	DC			X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Site layout, parking orientation and building design to emphasize pedestrian orientation, including active facades abutting sidewalks.</li> <li>Within URBAN Land Use Category: Drive-thrus are prohibited. Auto-oriented uses are discouraged.</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Specific buffering and transition details shall be determined through the rezoning process.</li> </ul>
	Non-Traditional Housing Product	-						X	

\*See Buffer and Transition Manual for more information.

Figure 4: Growth Areas Map

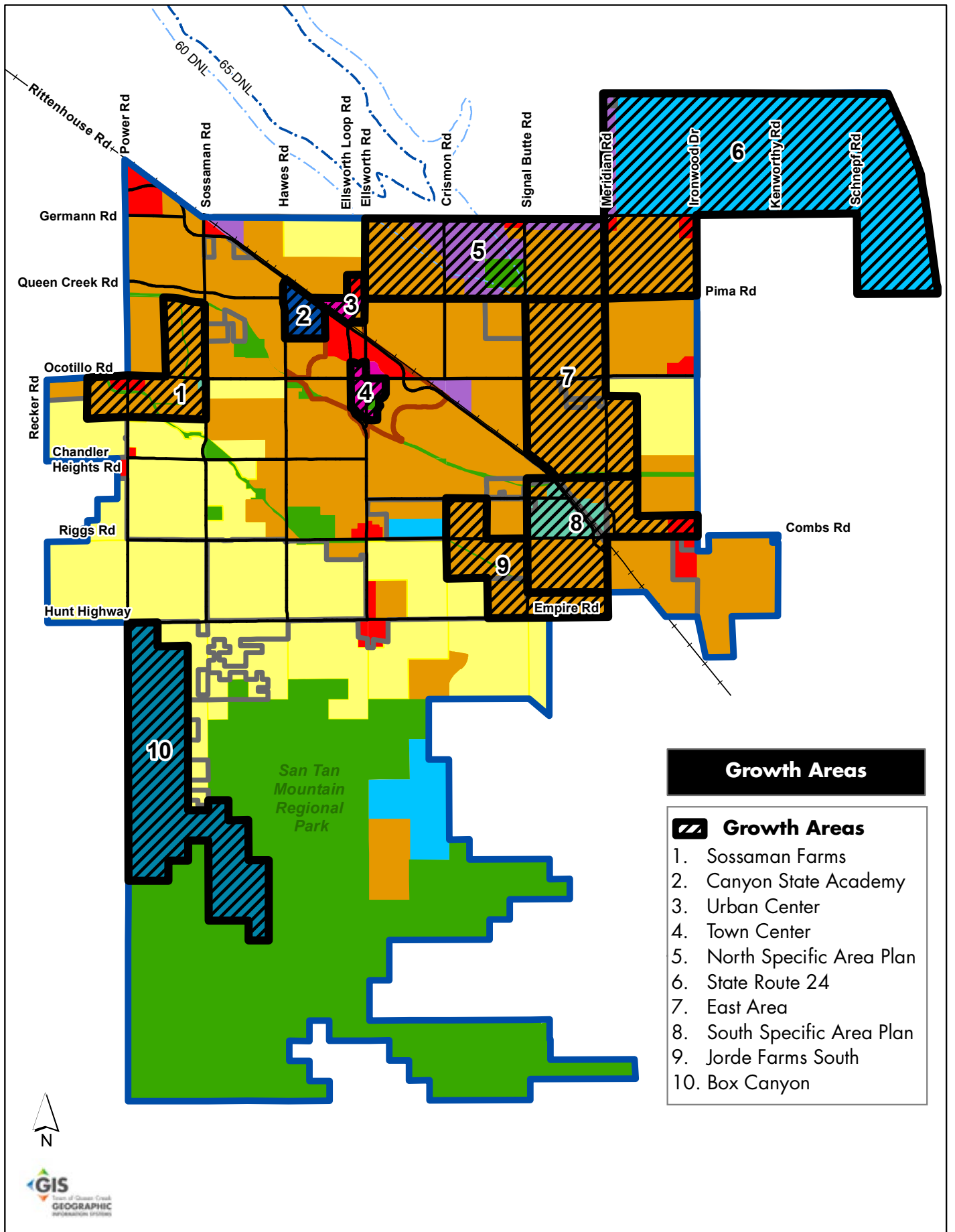


Figure 5: Transportation System Map

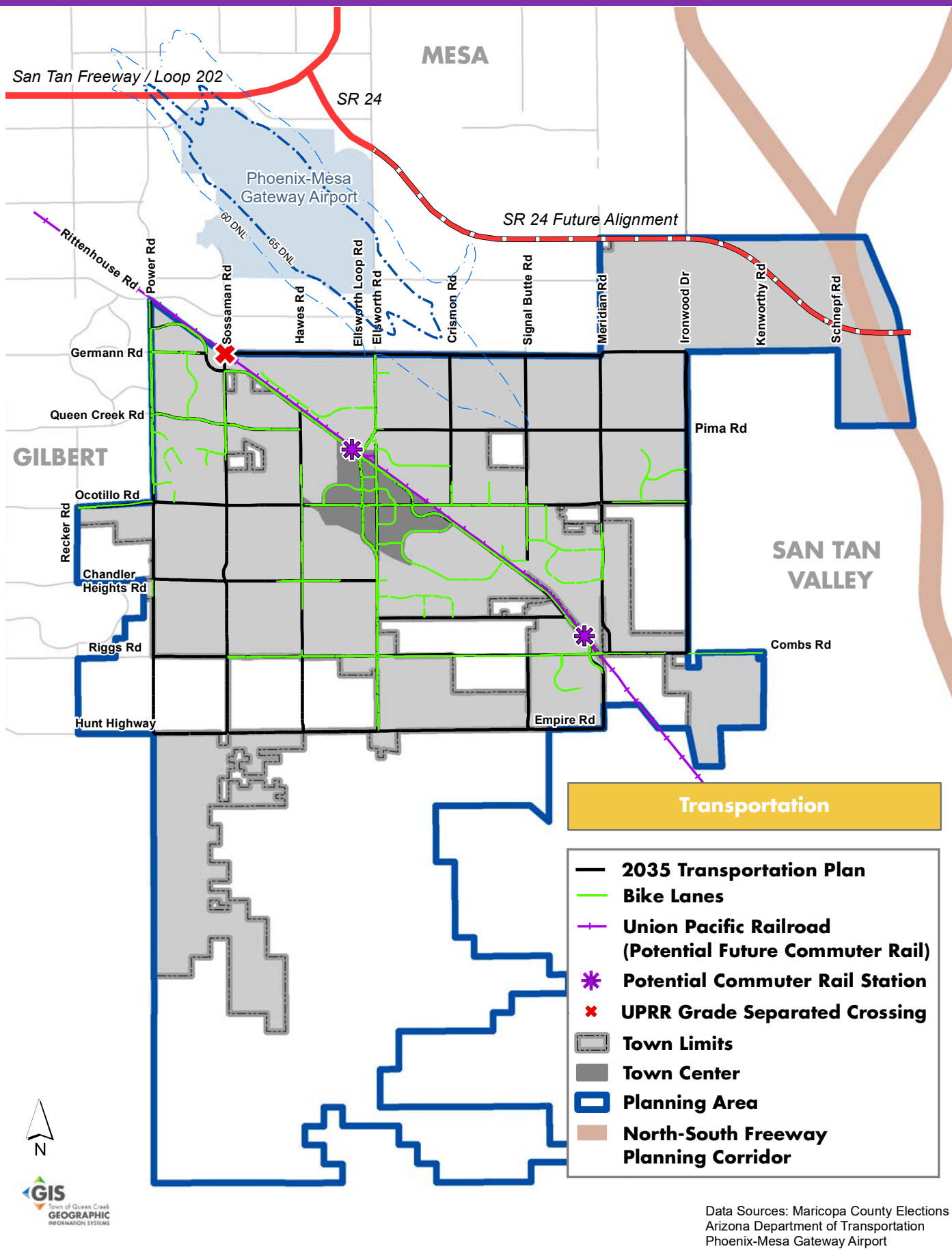




Figure 6: Planned and Existing Parks and Trails

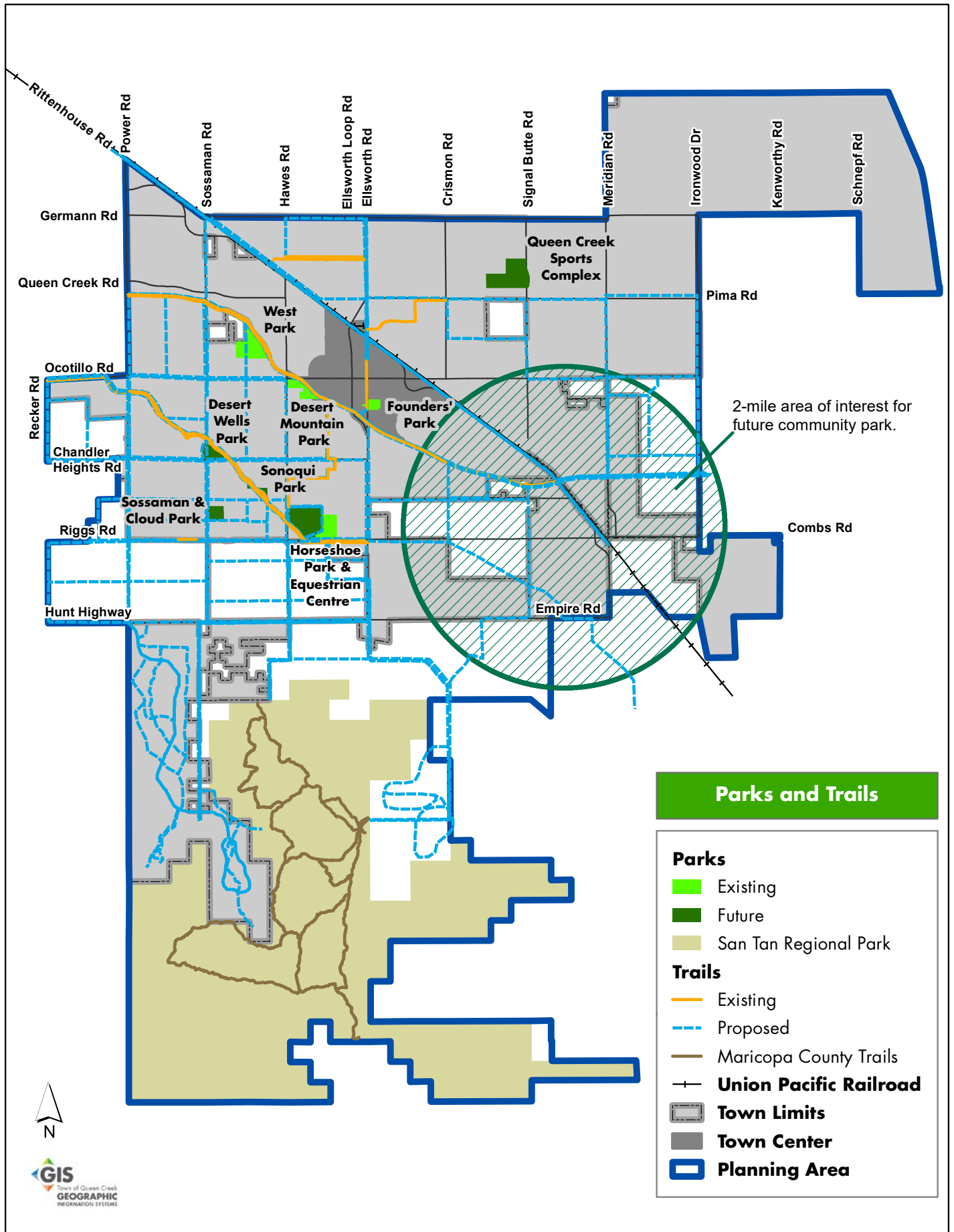


Figure 7: Water and Wastewater Service

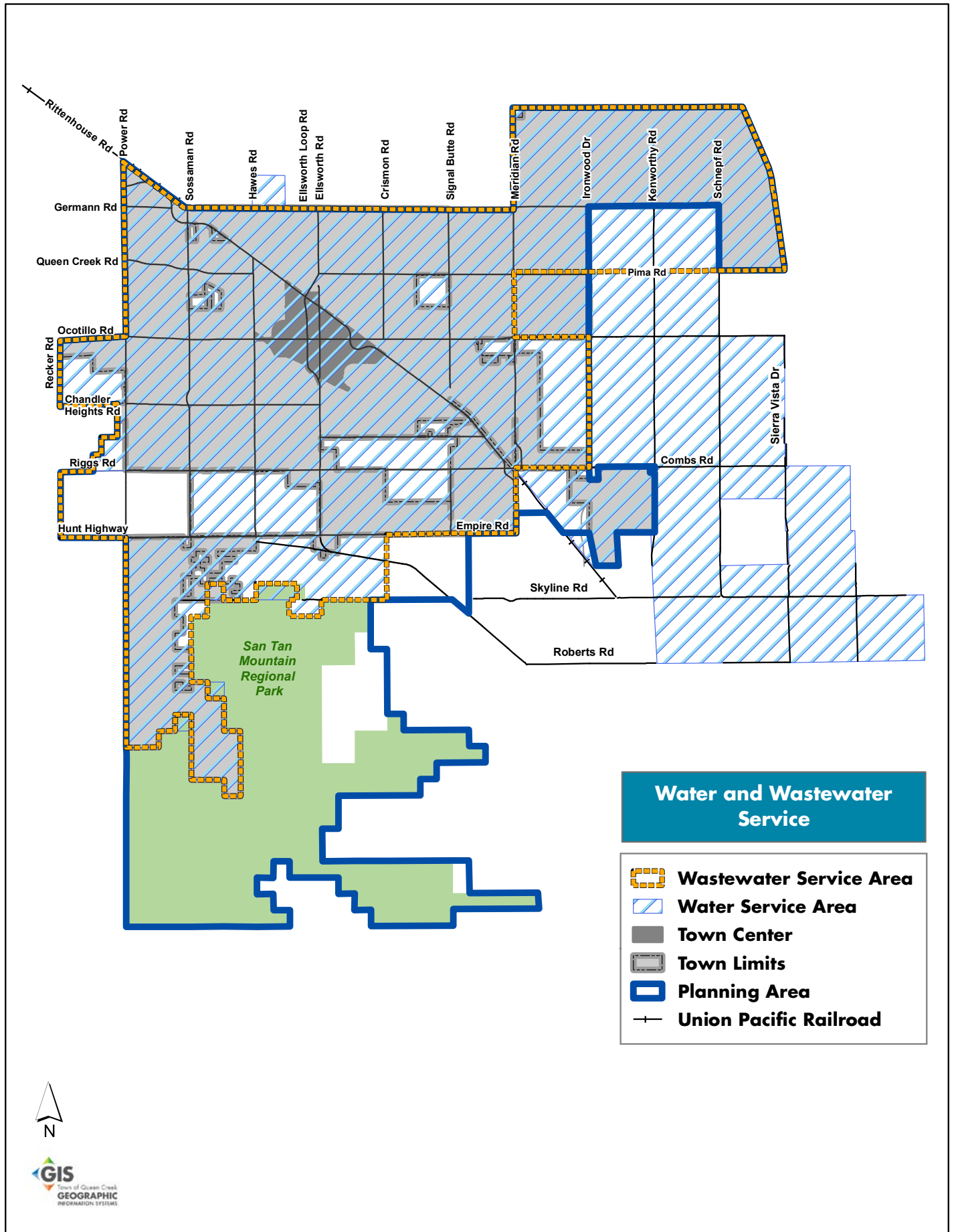


Figure 8: Public Safety: Fire

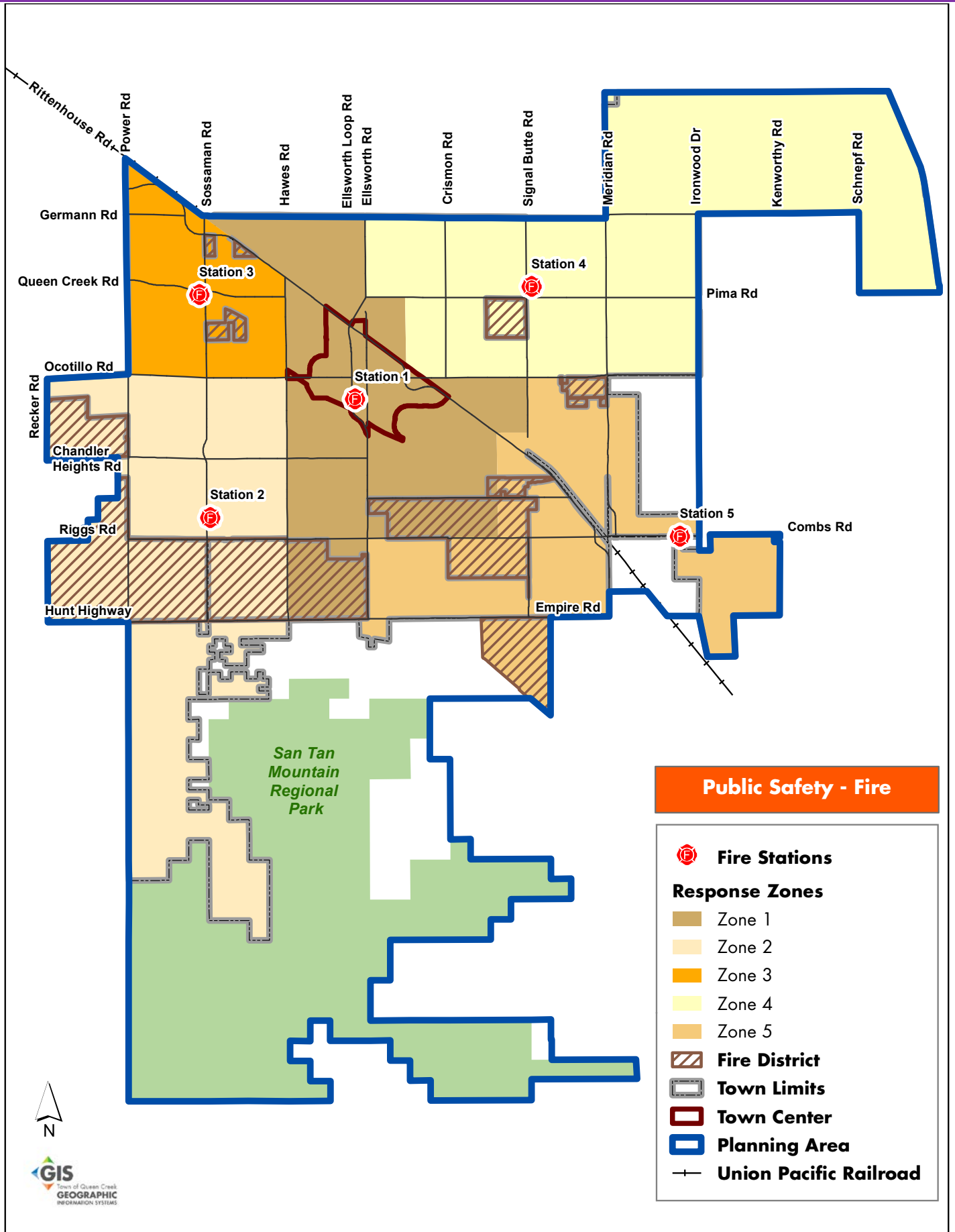
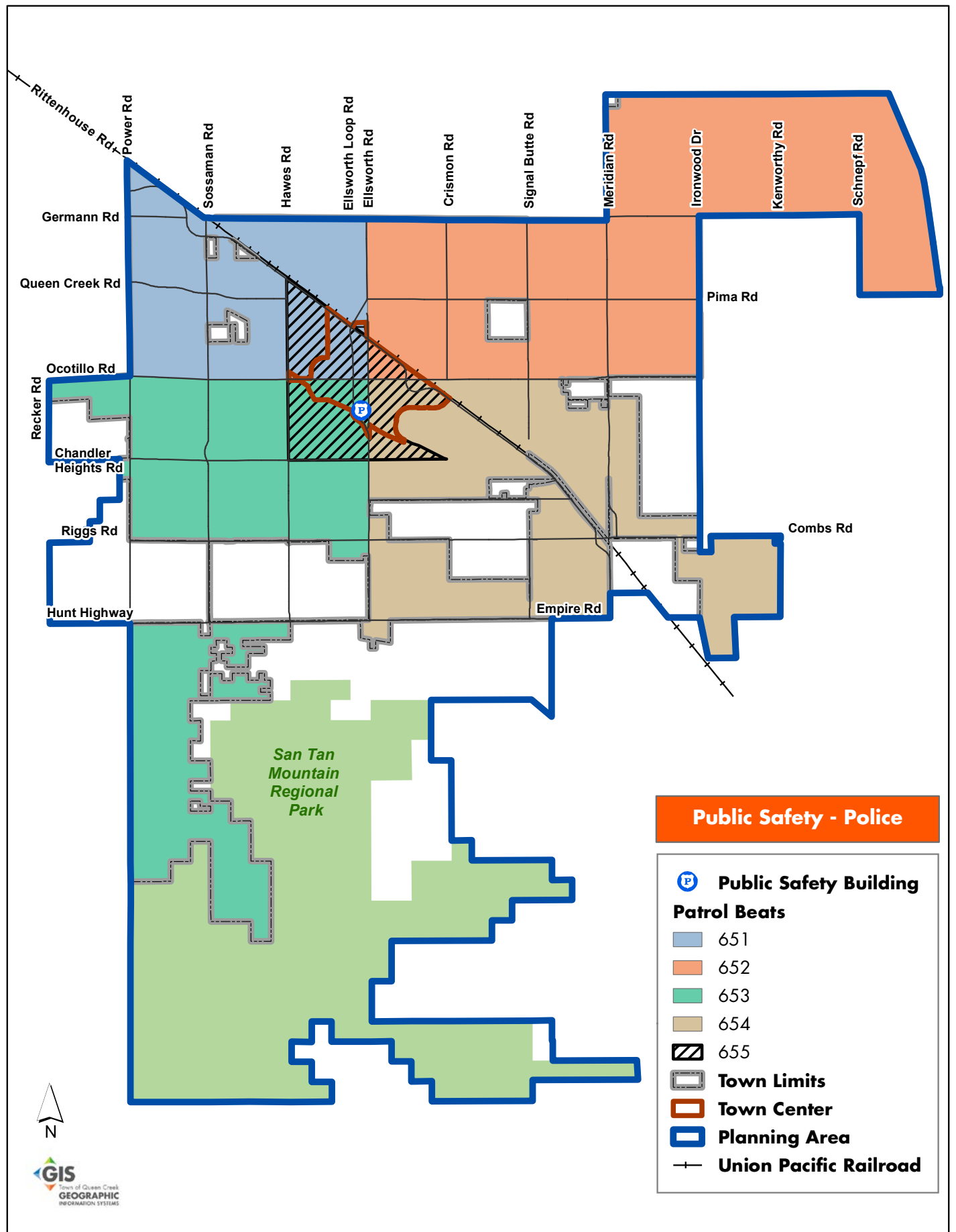


Figure 9: Public Safety: Police



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## 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.