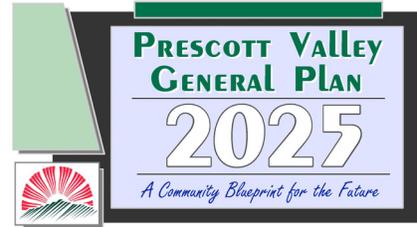


# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION



Every 10 to 20 years, towns, cities, and counties throughout Arizona and the Southwest revisit their general plans to ensure that an up-to-date connection exists between residents' values, visions, and objectives; State law; and the physical development of their community. In 2011, the Town of Prescott Valley initiated an update process for its 2025 General Plan. The outcome of the 14-month update process is *The Prescott Valley General Plan 2025 — A Community Blueprint for the Future*.

According to State law, towns, cities and counties are required to prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan for the development of the community. In Arizona, general plans consist of statements of community goals and development policies, and include maps, any necessary diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, development standards and plan proposals.

Implementing *General Plan 2025* is very important to present and future generations. In Prescott Valley, residents have a strong sense of civic pride, value the quality of life the Town offers, and desire to preserve the community's positive characteristics into the future. The degree to which the physical development of the community supports community values will be directly related to community involvement in the general plan implementation. To this end, *General Plan 2025* will serve as residents' official statement defining the nature of future growth, development and revitalization in the Town.

### **What is a General Plan?**

*In simple terms, a general plan can be best described as a community's blueprint for future development. It represents a community's vision for the future; it is a constitution comprised of goals and policies used by a community's planning commission and town/city council to make land use and development-related decisions. The general plan — and the goals, policies, and diagrams within — have a long-term outlook, identifying the types of development patterns allowed and the spatial relationships of land uses. General plans (with emphasis on the land use map) provide the foundation from which zoning regulations are created.*

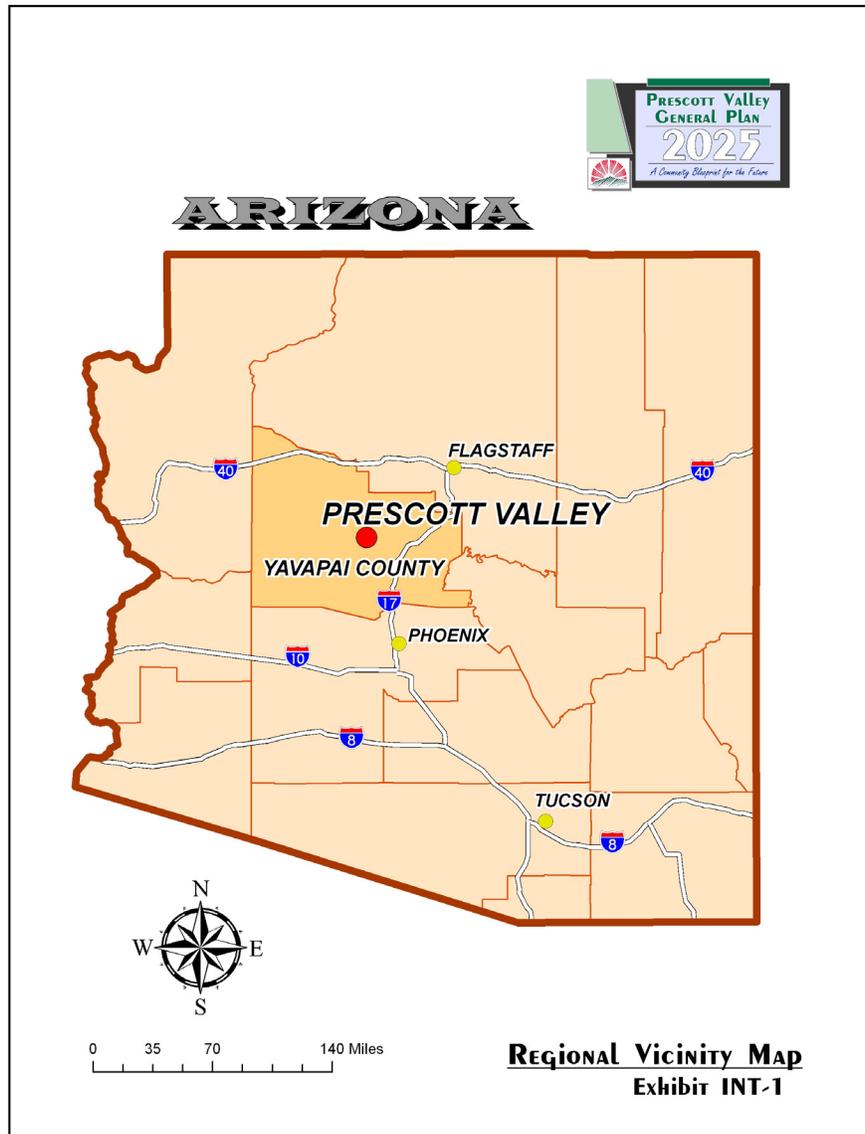
## **1.1 WHO WE ARE: AN OVERVIEW OF PRESCOTT VALLEY'S GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT**

The Town of Prescott Valley is located in central Yavapai County, approximately 80 miles northwest of the City of Phoenix, via U.S. Interstate 17 and State Highway 69 (refer to Exhibit INT-1, *Regional Vicinity Map*). The Town is situated between Highway 69 and State Highway 89A. It is approximately 20 miles west of I-17 and six miles east of



Highway 89. U.S. Interstate 40 is 60 miles north of Prescott Valley via Highway 89 North. The Prescott Valley terrain is characterized by rolling hills, long mesas and deep ravines, covered with native grasses and shrubs. Two major drainage patterns cross the Town, one to the north and one to the south. In the north, the Agua Fria River flows from west to east, then southeasterly through the north and eastern portions of the area. On the south side of Town, Lynx Creek flows from west to east, joining the Agua Fria to the east. Similarly, Clipper Wash flows through a small portion of the southern quadrant of Prescott Valley's strip annexation area. The Bradshaw Mountains form a backdrop to the southern boundaries of Prescott Valley and Mingus Mountain lies just beyond its northeasterly

boundary. Glassford Hill, a prominent terrain feature, is the landmark of the Town's western limits, and played a prominent role as a heliograph station for transmission of sun-reflected messages for Fort Whipple in the 1880s.



## 1.2 WHERE WE'VE BEEN: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PRESCOTT VALLEY

Prescott Valley, formerly known as Lonesome Valley, was part of a vast ancient mountain lake where prehistoric horses and mammoths once roamed. In more recent historic times, a small village of pueblo dwellers existed near Lynx Creek where water, nuts, berries, and game were plentiful. The short tenure of the pueblo people from approximately 1140 to 1390 AD, was followed later by the Yavapai and Apache Indians over the next five centuries. In the 1860s, cattlemen arrived, attracted by the lush grasses and available water. The early pioneering families of Tom Sanders and Dan Fain settled in Lonesome Valley and nearby areas, establishing ranching as the Valley's primary activity for the next 100 years.

In the 1960s, a vast change to the primary activity of ranching was initiated. Urban land development began in Lonesome Valley on property owned by the Fain family with the subdivision platting of Lynx Lake Estates, followed

closely by the first subdivided unit of Prescott Valley in 1966. Twenty (20) subdivision units, totaling almost 12,000 lots on nearly 5½ square miles were recorded by 1972. Simultaneously, the Castle Canyon Mesa and Prescott East subdivisions, with over 1,300 lots, were also platted. The subdivisions created a full urban complement of lots for single-family homes, apartments, mobile homes, commercial, and industrial uses on the previously open, grazing lands.

With rapid lot sales, the area now known as Prescott Valley started to develop. In 1977, the 1,000+ residents began talking of incorporation to improve road conditions and police protection. On August 22, 1978, the Town of Prescott Valley was incorporated. A council-manager form of government was established and a manager and clerk were hired. Within one year, a planner and building inspector were added to the Town's staff, followed shortly by a police chief and road grader operator. Zoning, building, and safety codes were adopted.

The Town of Prescott Valley was incorporated on August 22, 1978.

By 1980, the Town of Prescott Valley was the 54<sup>th</sup> largest municipality in Arizona; in 1990, the 25<sup>th</sup> largest municipality. By 1994, the Town adopted its second General Plan; by 2000, Prescott Valley was the 21<sup>st</sup> largest municipality in the State, with a population of 23,535. Despite the economic challenges in the late 2000's, the town grew to 38,822 by 2010, an increase of 65%.

### **1.3 WHERE WE'RE GOING: HOW PRESCOTT VALLEY GENERAL PLAN 2025 CAME TO BE**

The *General Plan 2025* is very important to present and future generations and serves as residents' official statement defining the nature of future growth, development, and revitalization in Prescott Valley. Equally important as the document embodying *General Plan 2025* is the process by which it was created.

According to Arizona State law, towns, cities, and counties are required to prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan for the development of the community. In Arizona, general plans consist of statements of community goals and development policies, and include maps, any necessary diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, development standards and plan proposals.

In 1998 and in 2000, legislation was passed by the State entitled Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus, respectively. Collectively, the legislation strengthened the ability of Arizona's communities to plan for growth, acquire and preserve open space, and develop strategies to more comprehensively address growth-related pressures. These strategies were first set forth in the *General Plan 2020*, and have been updated to reflect the changing nature of future growth and development in Prescott Valley. Because of growth in the community since the adoption and ratification of the *General Plan 2020*, the *General Plan 2025* includes a Housing Element, which sets forth a framework for guiding new development and revitalization of mature neighborhoods.

Similar to *General Plan 2020*, The Town of Prescott Valley undertook an ambitious and transparent community involvement process to provide citizens an opportunity to again participate in mapping the future of the community through the *General Plan 2025*.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)**

Pursuant to State Law, in June 2011 the Planning Commission reviewed a public participation plan to garner citizen input to be used in assisting the community in updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan with a vision to the year 2025. This updated planning document is proposed to be known as *Prescott Valley General Plan 2025*. The Planning Commission forwarded the public participation plan to the Town Council with a recommendation of approval. The Town Council adopted Resolution No. 1753 on June 23, 2011 approving the plan. Following approval of the participation plan, the Project Team became "immersed" in the Town of Prescott Valley – collecting information,

meeting with stakeholders, identifying key values and issues, and providing information to Town residents about the upcoming *General Plan 2025* process.

Drafts of the updated chapters of the *General Plan 2025* were presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review in work-study sessions from August to November 2011 and copies were also posted on the Town web site for public comment. All meetings were noticed in the newspaper and via numerous alternate media outlets, including a web portal on the Town's web site, to enable citizen participants to view plan related materials and make comment on the document.

## **PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND OPEN HOUSES**

In conjunction with the Draft Chapter Reviews at the Planning and Zoning Commission, Visioning Sessions were held to elucidate a comprehensive Vision Statement that would set the tone for the *General Plan 2025*. These sessions were held throughout Town and with various demographic groups to garner a broad cross-section of input and assure that the Vision Statement represented all sectors of the community.

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Bradshaw Mountain High School          | 100 students           |
| NAU/Yavapai Leadership Class           | 30 Students            |
| Prescott Valley Chamber of Commerce    | 35 community members   |
| Prescott Valley Citizens Academy       | 20 community members   |
| Arizona Agribusiness & Equine Center   | 100 students           |
| Boys and Girls Club/CASA Senior Center | 10 students, 2 seniors |

Staff synthesized the information gathered to prepare a new vision statement as part of the new *General Plan 2025*. In January 2012, the Planning Commission and Town Council met in Joint Session to consider community input related to this Vision Statement for Town Leadership to use in viewing the Community's strategic plan for the future. This vision for the future approved in Joint Session has been used to guide and direct the development of goals and objectives of *General Plan 2025*.

The updated Planning Elements were presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission in public hearings from February 2012 through May 2012. State Law requires a 60-day Agency Review period that began May 1, 2012. Additionally, prior to the Mayor and Council's consideration to the *General Plan*, the Planning Commission held two public hearings. The adoption of the *General Plan* is required to be approved by affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the Mayor and Council. An updated, revised and adopted *General Plan* is to be submitted to the voters for ratification at the next regularly scheduled municipal election which will be in March of 2013.

## **TOWN NEWS UPDATES**

Each month, the Town of Prescott Valley's *Town News* newsletter included an update on the *General Plan 2025* process and identified upcoming opportunities for the public to get involved. The newsletter is distributed to every household in the Town.

## **WEBSITE AND E-MAIL**

A dedicated *General Plan 2025* site was established on the Town of Prescott Valley's website ([www.pvaz.net](http://www.pvaz.net)), providing the public with instant access to up-to-date information and upcoming meeting dates. Additionally, a specific e-mail address was created at the outset of the planning process ([pvgenplan@pvaz.net](mailto:pvgenplan@pvaz.net)) to further expand opportunities for public comments and questions about *General Plan 2025*.

## INFORMATION CENTER

Providing continuously updated and accessible information to the community was important to the success of *General Plan 2025*. To help provide information, a public “information center” was established near the Community Development Department service counter at Town Hall and later at the Library. The information center was maintained throughout the *General Plan 2025* process and provided public access to background information, posted meeting/workshop dates, drawings, maps, photos, and draft reports. The information center was available to the public during regular Town Hall hours, as well as at the Library during regular Library hours.

## PLANNING COMMISSION AND TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOPS AND HEARINGS

Throughout the *General Plan 2025* process, local officials were kept informed and involved in plan development. Formal gatherings for Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council Workshops and Hearings were scheduled at key points to share community input, review the current direction of the planning effort, and receive guidance and input by the local officials. A full listing of meetings and open houses is available on the Town’s website at [www.pvaz.net](http://www.pvaz.net).

## MEDIA COORDINATION

*General Plan 2025* received significant attention in local newspapers (e.g., Daily Courier and The Prescott Valley Tribune), on local radio stations and talk shows (e.g., Talkin’ PV), and on local television (e.g., Channel 15). Local media was a true partner in the planning process for *General Plan 2025* through attendance at numerous meetings and events, reporting of the progress of the process, and announcement of public workshops and open houses.



## PUBLIC AGENCY REVIEW

The *General Plan 2025* was distributed to a number of local, regional, and State agencies during the public review period. The comments received will be reviewed and responded to in the document, as appropriate.

## 1.4 How We Are Going to Get There: A User's Guide to the Prescott Valley General Plan 2025

*The Prescott Valley General Plan 2025 — A Community Blueprint for the Future* was created to be flexible yet intentional. It is based on the community’s vision for accommodating new private development and public improvements that nurture economic vitality, environmental quality, and citizenship while reinforcing the existing sense of community valued by so many. To accomplish the many goals embraced by the community, the General Plan has been organized into the following chapters.

- ▶ **Chapter 1. Introduction** — Describes the location and context of Prescott Valley, summarizes the planning process (including public involvement) that resulted in *The Prescott Valley General Plan 2025 — A Community Blueprint for the Future*, and provides an overview of each element/chapter included in the General Plan 2025.

- ▶ **Chapter 2. Vision and Guiding Principles** — Articulates the community vision for Prescott Valley in 2025, and provides a series of guiding principles that serve as a bridge between the vision statement and the goals and policies set forth in each of the *General Plan 2025* elements.
- ▶ **Chapter 3. Growth Areas Element** — Identifies those areas, if any, that are particularly suitable for planned multi-modal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses, such as residential, office, commercial, tourism and industrial uses.
- ▶ **Chapter 4. Land Use Element** — Designates the proposed general distribution, location, and extent of such uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space, and such other categories of public and private uses of land that may be appropriate in the Town.
- ▶ **Chapter 5. Housing Element** – Describes the housing market in Prescott Valley in both current and historic contexts, examines demographics to determine if gaps in the market can be addressed, and sets forth redevelopment strategies for mature neighborhoods.
- ▶ **Chapter 6. Circulation Element** — Consists of the general location and extent of existing and proposed freeways, arterial and collector streets, bicycle routes and any other modes of transportation as may be appropriate.
- ▶ **Chapter 7. Environmental Planning and Water Resources Element** — Contains analysis, policies and strategies to address anticipated effects, if any, of plan elements on air quality, water quality and natural resources associated with proposed development under the General Plan 2025.
- ▶ **Chapter 8. Recreation and Open Space Element** — Includes an inventory of open space areas, recreational resources and designations of access points to open space areas and resources, an analysis of forecasted open space needs, and implementation strategies to promote a regional system of integrated open space.
- ▶ **Chapter 9. Cost of Development Element** — Identifies policies that the municipality will use to require development to pay its fair share toward the cost of additional public service needs generated by new development, with appropriate exceptions when in the public interest.
- ▶ **Chapter 10. Economic Development Element** — Provides guidance for economic development within the Town's jurisdiction to: attain a range of housing and employment opportunities that meet the needs of residents and workers alike; attract families and businesses to create demand for planned land uses; and establish and fund public service levels that preserve Prescott Valley's quality of life.
- ▶ **Chapter 11. General Plan Administration** — Describes the administrative dimensions and procedures for *General Plan 2025*.
- ▶ **Chapter 12. Implementation Strategies** — Sets forth an implementation program of actions, procedures, projects, programs, and/or techniques that contributes to carrying out the policies contained within each of the *General Plan 2025* elements.

Together, these 12 chapters serve as the basis for decisions regarding the Town's long- term physical development.