



TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

2024 Town Core Plan

Adopted by Resolution of the Town Council on
November 18, 2024 (Res. No. R2024-15)





Town Core Plan

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Town Core Plan

Acknowledgements

The creation of the Town of Cave Creek Town Core Plan was accomplished through the hard work and dedication of elected and appointed Town officials, town staff, business owners and the residents who make the town their home.

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Tom Aughterton, Councilmember
Cynthia Driskell, Councilmember
Dusty Rhoades, Councilmember

Kathryn Royer, Vice Mayor
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Town Core Plan

Vision

Naturally developed over time, the Cave Creek Town Core exemplifies a sense of place, incorporating an eclectic and diverse mix of thriving and creative businesses and lifestyles, while honoring our western heritage and the beautiful Sonoran Desert that surrounds it.

Introduction

The Town of Cave Creek Town Core Plan (“the Plan”) presents a major opportunity to promote the character, attraction and western culture of the Town Core (“the Core”). The Plan outlines the components that will make such a vision a reality. It builds upon existing assets, capitalizes upon significant uses and features of the natural environment. The Plan addresses the development of privately and publicly owned parcels of land within the Core. With the formal adoption by the Town Council (“the Council”), this document will serve as a guide in making decisions that affect the future development of the Core.

Guiding Principles

The range of actions presented and identified in the Plan were selected based on a foundation of guiding principles which, while general in nature, were consistent with the issues identified during this planning process by the citizens of the Town of Cave Creek (“the Town”). Those guiding principles are identified as follows:

- The Town Core is the center of the community’s history and is the key to its identity.
- The Town values its downtown and desires to give preference to the development and use of the Core.
- Growth areas within the Core should focus on sites where desired types of development are likely to be most successful while achieving economies of scale; support existing service systems; and maintain land use compatibility with other property in the vicinity.
- The Core should provide safe and attractive public spaces and facilities and be an exciting place to live, work and play.

Location

Beginning at the intersection of East Cave Creek Road and North Scopa Trail and extending parallel to Cave Creek Road north to the East LaSalle Road alignment and south to the East Skyline Drive alignment; thence west along East Cave Creek Road to its intersection with North Spur Cross Road then extending parallel to North Cave Creek Road west to the North Conestoga Trail alignment and East to the North Basin Road alignment; thence south along North Cave Creek Road to a point 275 feet (+/-) south of East Carriage Drive to its terminus, an area of approximately one and a quarter (+/-) square mile.

Town Core Area Map: See Appendix A, Map 1 - Town Core Area Map for details.



Town Core Plan

Existing Attributes

Introduction:

Cave Creek's Town Core is rich with historic resources, different architectural styles, archeological treasures and a unique natural setting. With its eclectic character, the Core remains the single most significant tourist draw for the community.

Existing Attributes that constitute and define the Core are characterized by:

- Historic buildings;
- Specialty shops and general retailing;
- Eateries, fine restaurants, bars, lounges;
- Galleries, museums, parks, and trails;
- Studios and professional offices;
- Mixed residential forms;
- An amalgam of styles, shapes, materials and details;
- Streets shared with pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians;
- Authentic native plant material and desert vistas.

Challenges / Opportunities

- Support the development of a coordinated marketing theme that celebrates the local flavor;
- Strengthening of the community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base;
- Positioning the Town Core for new development in the future;
- Advance regional partnerships with the other governmental entities in the area;
- Marketing the Town Core as a regional tourist destination;
- Facilitating the hosting of large groups of people;
- Alleviating conflicts between business development and environmental protection efforts;
- Getting multiple interests working toward common goals;
- Regional population growth;
- Balancing the mix of land uses;
- Choices and tradeoffs the community must make when values conflict;
- Working relationships with surrounding jurisdictions despite differing goals;
- Coordination of regional traffic and water management issues;
- Identifying the necessary infrastructure improvements needed in the Town Core, prioritizing those upgrades & allocating funding to complete them;
- Ensure that new development will fit within the Town's finite water resources;
- Traffic calmed streets.



Town Core Plan

Land Use

Introduction:

In the past, downtown retail main streets served as the historic centers of communities. Today, they are being supplanted by shopping malls, power centers and most recently, lifestyle centers. With this in mind, historic downtown retail is often one of the most complex and difficult land uses to preserve.

It is essential to strengthen the Town Core through thoughtful land use planning that accommodates new growth in a manner which creates new business opportunities, builds upon the historic and cultural past, maximizes existing infrastructure use and encourages multi-modal transportation opportunities.

Land Use:

1. GOAL: Promote a balance of land uses and facility development that reflects and enhances the Core's character (e.g., visitor attractions, specialty shopping, & museums).
 - a. ACTION: Adopt the Town Core Land Use Plan as contained herein.
2. GOAL: Respect the physical, social, functional, historical and cultural attributes when approving development plans within the Core.
3. GOAL: Strengthen the identity and image of the Core as an historic center by expanding cultural and leisure facilities and activities.
4. GOAL: Create and maintain safe multi-use open space areas within the Core.
5. GOAL: Invigorate the Core by the establishment of active pedestrian-scaled mixed use districts for shopping, restaurant, entertainment, office and compatible residential uses.

Mixed Uses:

1. GOAL: Promote a vibrant mix of retail shops, restaurants, art galleries and professional services such as architects and attorneys.
2. GOAL: Encourage a wide mix of uses that offer retail and commercial services along street level; and business/office and residential on upper floors.
3. GOAL: Assure appropriate buffering and screening between dissimilar uses, particularly between residential and commercial uses.

Land Use Plan: See Appendix A, Map 2 - Town Core Land Use Plan for details.



Town Core Plan

Circulation

Introduction:

Citizen and visitor convenience and enjoyment are critical for the vitality of the Town Core area. Special emphasis should be placed upon:

- Helping to create a sense of community;
- Creating a memorable experience for visitors and residents alike;
- Safely managing multi-modal transportation.

Circulation:

1. **GOAL:** Continue to enhance the Town's quality of life by providing an efficient, safe, convenient and aesthetically pleasing transportation system for the movement of people, goods and services.
 - a. **ACTION:** Contract with the Town's consulting Traffic Engineer for the development of a Town of Cave Creek Master Transportation Plan that comprehensively examines existing level of service and provides recommendations for future improvement.
 - b. **ACTION:** Create an interconnected Town Core Street Plan that links land use and transportation and that supports existing and future Core land uses.
 - c. **ACTION:** Within the Master Transportation Plan identify prospective transportation corridors within the Core that can provide alternative access options necessary to meet both existing and future traffic demands.
 - d. **ACTION:** Analyze the potential impact of all new development, within the Core, on the existing transportation system and for conformity to the Town adopted Transportation Plan.
 - e. **ACTION:** Identify within the Master Transportation Plan potential cross-town collector linkages used to relieve bottle-necks and to provide for emergency access.
2. **GOAL:** Continue to provide for a balanced transportation system that gives mobility to all segments of the community.

Circulation Map: See Appendix A, Map 3 - Town Core Circulation Map for details.

Streetscape

Introduction:

Streetscape, as defined in this document, means the appearance or view of the Cave Creek Road corridor as located within the Town Core and is inclusive of other elements contained within this document.



Town Core Plan

Streetscape:

1. GOAL: Integrate the existing Technical Design Guidelines with studies and plans to enhance and, where possible, upgrade the Streetscape in the Town Core.
 - a. ACTION: Periodically review and update the Town's Technical Design Guideline Numbers 4 – Landscaping and 5 – Trails.
2. GOAL: Develop common streetscape design elements that serve to create a unified and coherent streetscape expression. Include room for unique elements that reflect the character, history and development objectives of the Core.
3. GOAL: Utilize traffic improvements and supplemental landscaping to abate negative vehicle impacts on the Core's desired pedestrian orientation while creating new frontage exposure for other properties.
4. GOAL: Incorporate the use of public and private outdoor social gathering and circulation spaces (e.g., monument square, plazas, shade walks, porches) within the Core's streetscape.
5. GOAL: Expand and improve the Core's streetscape so that people will want to visit and spend time in the community.
 - a. ACTION: Examine the feasibility of a pathway interconnect with the Town of Carefree.
6. GOAL: Enhance the pedestrian environment within the Core by utilizing treatments from a Town adopted streetscape palette.
 - a. ACTION: Implement applicable sections of Technical Design Guideline Number 4 – Landscaping and Number 5 – Trails for all new development and redevelopment projects.
7. GOAL: Develop a long-term median enhancement program to promote native plant material within the Town Core.
 - a. ACTION: Discourage use of herbicides and other chemical pre-emergent treatment within medians.
 - b. ACTION: Provide training to all staff responsible for routine maintenance of medians in order to maintain the health and vigor of plant material.

Streetscape Design Palette to include but not limited to:

- Plazas, squares, courtyards & extra-wide pathways;
- Planters or hanging baskets;
- Sitting space;
- Public art;



Town Core Plan

- Special paving;
- Benches and historic light fixtures;
- Drinking fountains & horse troughs;
- Shade structures and trees;
- Entry signage;
- Landscaping;
- Short-term bicycle storage and bike racks;
- Low water use landscaping that reflects and respects our desert environment.

Plaza:

1. GOAL: Encourage the development of a multi-use plaza located in the heart of the Town Core.

Recommended Plaza Functions/Purpose:

- Designated civic assembly space in the Core;
- Accommodation for a variety of public gathering and seasonal events year-around;
- Safe and inviting setting for public events and other gatherings;
- Durable, long-lasting design that requires low maintenance.

Pathways

Introduction:

Pathways, as defined in this document, mean the paths and trails including on-street bicycle lanes; off-street bicycle trails; pedestrian and equestrian paths and trails; multiple use easements; trailheads; and staging areas that encompass the Town Core area.

Pathways:

1. GOAL: Continue to develop a pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian pathway system within the Core that serves as an amenity for current and future Town residents and visitors.
 - a. ACTION: Implement various design and pathway materials to accommodate pedestrians within the Town Core.
2. GOAL: Ensure that the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians utilizing the pathways system within the Core is the number one priority.
 - a. ACTION: Implement recommendations identified in the MAG Pedestrian Safety Study.
3. GOAL: Identify and provide for pathways and trails in all future transportation projects.
 - a. ACTION: Continue to identify prospective pathway corridors specific to the Town Core area. Respect and mitigate the impact on said corridors when planning future transportation projects.



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4. GOAL: Continue to provide for adequate pedestrian access and connectivity within and between commercial areas and adjoining residential neighborhoods.
 - a. ACTION: Examine the feasibility of a pathway interconnection(s) with the Town of Carefree.
5. GOAL: Continue to encourage pedestrian movement through good designs, safe crossings, and identifiable connections.
 - a. ACTION: Periodically review and update the Town's Technical Design Guideline No. 5 – Trails.

Public Amenities Map: See Appendix A, Map 4 - Town Core Amenities Map for details.

Site Design

Introduction:

Site Design governs how buildings relate to one another, their location and to the surrounding natural environment.

Site Design:

1. GOAL: Identify the Core area's essential qualities, its distinctive characteristics and its vision for its physical development.
 - a. ACTION: Protect the Core's character through dedicated open space buffers and protected view corridors.
 - b. ACTION: Promote the private acquisition of hillside property within the Town Core for the purposes of conservation.
2. GOAL: Develop Site Design Guidelines that contribute to the Town remaining a community where the constructed environment complements its natural physical and cultural setting.
 - a. ACTION: Institute flexible design guidelines that achieve creative, varied, context-sensitive building designs and site planning solutions.
 - b. ACTION: Develop opportunities/incentives for incorporating sustainable design and construction practices within the Core.
 - c. ACTION: Develop design and buffering techniques to reduce and control light and noise pollution.
 - d. ACTION: Encourage energy efficient design and site planning techniques (e.g., solar orientation, thermal mass, increased insulation, xeriscape landscaping) & reduce the impact of illumination on night skies.



Town Core Plan

- e. ACTION: Facilitate equestrian access.
3. GOAL: Preserve and enhance views of hills and mountains from Town Core walkways and businesses.
 - a. ACTION: Staff will meet with and encourage developers and builders to use lot design and uses that maximize views of nearby and distant hills, mountains and mesas.

Building Orientation:

1. GOAL: Create streetscapes that are attractive to pedestrians, create a sense of enclosure and provide activity and interest along the street edge of the building.
 - a. ACTION: Implement applicable Design Guidelines for all new development and redevelopment projects within the Town Core.
2. GOAL: Design and implement innovated, context-sensitive solutions to protect developed areas and unique natural features from localized flood damage;

Parking

Introduction:

Citizen and visitor convenience and enjoyment are critical for the vitality of the Town Core area. Special emphasis should be placed upon:

- Creating a memorable experience for visitors and residents alike;
- Access that facilitates safe multi-modal transportation;
- Shopper friendly parking.

Parking:

1. GOAL: Create greater flexibility in Core parking.
 - a. ACTION: Identify public/private parking areas suitable for use as shared parking facilities.
2. GOAL: Provide for adequate parking within the Core area.
 - a. ACTION: Prepare a long-term Town Core Parking Plan that maximizes the use of shared parking facilities.
 - b. ACTION: Integrate subsidiary parking spaces (e.g., garages, potential shared parking areas) in all site plan designs.
 - c. ACTION: Feature designated bicycle and horse parking areas within the Core.
3. GOAL: Minimize the visual impacts of parking lots on the Core area.



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Economics & Growth

Introduction:

Throughout its history the Town Core has been a major economic asset to the community. Today, the Core continues to be the major visitor attraction for the Town supporting a vibrant commercial and residential area, arts and entertainment venues, hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, and museums, among other tourist and retail uses.

Within the Town there is an expressed concern that local Core retail businesses may be displaced by new development that can out-pay and out-perform these businesses. The community does not want the Core to end up with the same shops and restaurants that can be found in any regional shopping center.

Economics:

Strengths:

- Location;
- Local architecture;
- Pedestrian scale;
- Natural environment.

Weaknesses:

- Seasonality of activities;
- Location at the edge of the region.

Growth:

1. GOAL: Maintain a vibrant local business environment that contributes to the unique character and economic diversity of the Core.
2. GOAL: Encourage neighborhood-oriented businesses that are generally of a smaller scale, but that also contribute to sales tax revenues and, equally important, assures the availability of goods and services for area residents in close proximity to homes and workplaces.
3. GOAL: Develop, invest in and maintain the amenities and attractions that draw visitors to the community.
4. GOAL: Enhance the character of the Core so as to retain its historic attraction as a tourist destination and encourage a mix of businesses needed to support that tourism as well as local citizen shopping and service needs.
 - a. ACTION: Periodically review and update the Town's Technical Design Guideline Numbers 4 – Landscaping and 5 – Trails.



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- b. ACTION: Implement recommendations identified in the MAG Pedestrian Safety Study.
5. GOAL: Position the Town as a regional tourist destination center.
6. GOAL: Encourage retail development in the Core that is largely tourism oriented businesses but that also includes the arts, cultural, entertainment and hospitality services.
7. GOAL: Preserve the historic assets of the Core and promote the arts and cultural amenities so as to increase the economic capacity of the Core.
8. GOAL: Promote a positive image of the commercial area that encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Core.

Town Utilities:

1. GOAL: Manage water resources to meet the demand of existing and future Town Core customers with safe and reliable water supply.
 - a. ACTION: Implement recommendations as contained within the Town's Integrated Utilities Master Plan & Drought Management Plan.
 - b. ACTION: Construct a water interconnect site in partnership with the City of Phoenix south of the Town Core Plan boundary.
2. GOAL: Improve the Town's wastewater collection operations.
 - a. ACTION: Ensure that all existing commercial and multi-family projects are connected to the Town's wastewater system.
 - b. ACTION: Examine the feasibility to connect the public wastewater system to existing neighborhoods currently served with private on-site septic systems.

Town Core Fire Safety:

1. GOAL: Limit severity of damage caused by fire within the Town Core.
 - a. ACTION: Ensure that an adequate supply of water and spacing of fire hydrants is provided to limit a fire event to the building of origin within the Town Core.
2. GOAL: Address the increased fire risks present with the older, commercial nature of the Town Core.



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- a. ACTION: Conduct annual fire safety inspections for the commercial properties within the Town Core to monitor and advise property owners of IFC requirements, fire safety compliance and knox-box access.
- b. ACTION: Update Building and Fire Codes as necessary.
- c. ACTION: Identify, build and/or improve emergency bypass routes for Fire and EMS respondents through the Town Core.

Historic Preservation

Introduction:

The protection and preservation of the Town's historic and cultural resources in the form of commercial buildings, residences, neighborhoods, businesses and archeological sites is critical in maintaining and enhancing the Core's character as well as sustaining tourism.

Remain true to our past. History shapes the community's future. An appreciation of the community's roots, the terrain and scenic surroundings cannot be understated.

Historical Preservation:

1. GOAL: Encourage Core businesses to preserve, renovate and maintain building facades that would enhance the historic character of the Core.
2. GOAL: The design of new buildings should be compatible with the scale and character of existing historic structures.
3. GOAL: Recognize and respect the Core's historic character.
 - a. ACTION: Support non-profit organizations whose mission supports the preservation and promotion of the Town Core.
4. GOAL: Encourage that historic elements and the Core's unique character are evident in public improvement projects.

Cultural Resources

Introduction:

Today's Cave Creek continues to culturally enrich residents and visitors in the visual and performing arts. Located in an historic setting unmatched elsewhere in the state, these amenities along with libraries and museums afford residents and visitors alike a unique cultural experience.



Town Core Plan

Cultural Resources:

1. GOAL: Provide for high-quality and distinctive public art elements in public improvements projects.
 - a. ACTION: Support the creation of a Public Arts Commission to consider, evaluate and recommend to the Town Council public art components for infrastructure improvements projects.
 - b. ACTION: Identify and provide links to existing Artist Directories that list local artists and craftsmen.
2. GOAL: Build upon the strong volunteer support and active non-profit organizations for the various activities and organizations within the Town. Volunteerism in the Town is an asset of both monetary and qualitative importance.
3. GOAL: Continue the support for and the promotion of the expansion of cultural offerings, including theaters, museums and festivals within the Core.

Natural Areas

Introduction:

The Town Core public realm is a collection of outdoor spaces that provides an open and inviting atmosphere for young and old alike. Cave Creek's character relies as much on its broad vistas and upper Sonoran Desert environment as its "old west" theme. The scenery and outdoor living attributes along with trails, parks and community programs exemplify the American West and the Cave Creek lifestyle.

Maintaining the integrity of the natural environment, preserving open space and protecting significant natural features, such as Black Mountain and other public and privately owned hillside areas surrounding the Town Core, from development continues to be an ongoing challenge.

The complexity of this environment demands careful planning to avoid serious degradation in the future and further serves to mitigate the potential for wildfire damage to the community.

Natural Areas are:

- For public use;
- Sited as a focus of activity and development, not leftover space;
- Adaptable for a variety of activities both active and passive;
- Incorporate sustainable practices.

Natural Areas:

1. GOAL: Promote and celebrate open space projects that capitalize on the Core's unique natural environment.



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2. GOAL: Marshal scarce community resources so as to carefully target and manage public investments in open space or natural landmarks.
 - a. ACTION: Identify innovative public and private preservation mechanisms.
3. GOAL: Promote a rate of growth that allows for the preservation and protection of critical areas of open space, environmental habitats and significant natural, prehistoric and historic resources.
 - a. ACTION: Seek out and identify the community's desired balance between preserving natural areas and environmental quality and the need for economic prosperity.
4. GOAL: Include sensitive areas, riparian resources, wildlife habitat/corridors, native vegetation and hillsides as preservation priorities.
 - a. ACTION: Allow for creativity in development configurations and densities so as to preserve natural space.
5. GOAL: Provide for green connections to major attractors within the Core.
 - a. ACTION: Implement Town Core specific pathway elements that provide connections to major attractions and public open spaces within the Town Core and beyond.
6. GOAL: Promote, enhance, preserve, and encourage the use of the Desert Awareness Park as a delightful Sonoran Desert experience for visitors and residents.

Appendix A

Map 1 – Town Core Area Map (page 16 of 19)

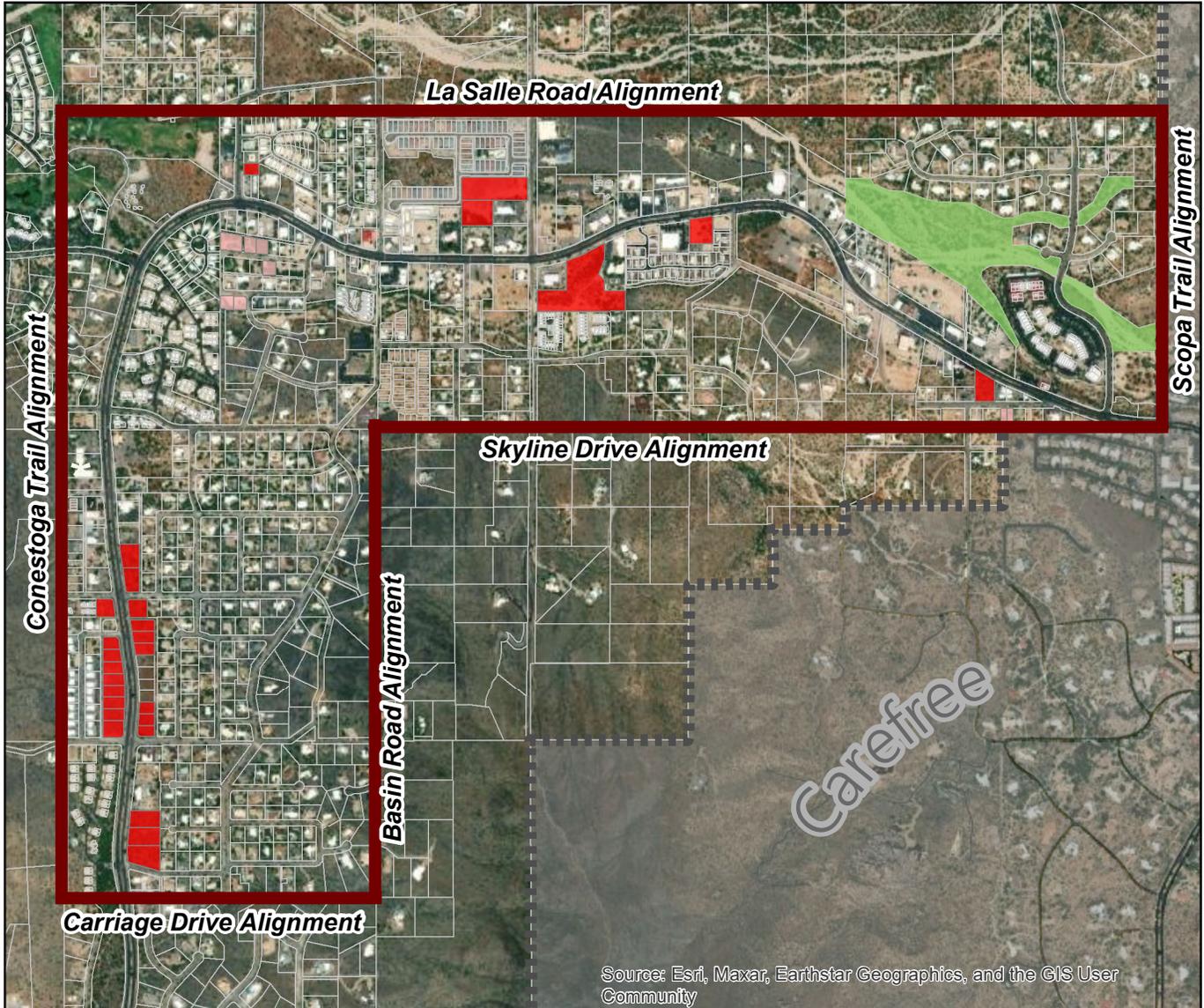
Map 2 – Town Core Land Use Plan (page 17 of 19)

Map 3 – Town Core Circulation Map (page 18 of 19)

Map 4 – Town Core Public Amenities Map (page 19 of 19)

**TOWN CORE PLAN
TOWN OF CAVE CREEK**

Town Core Study Area



Legend

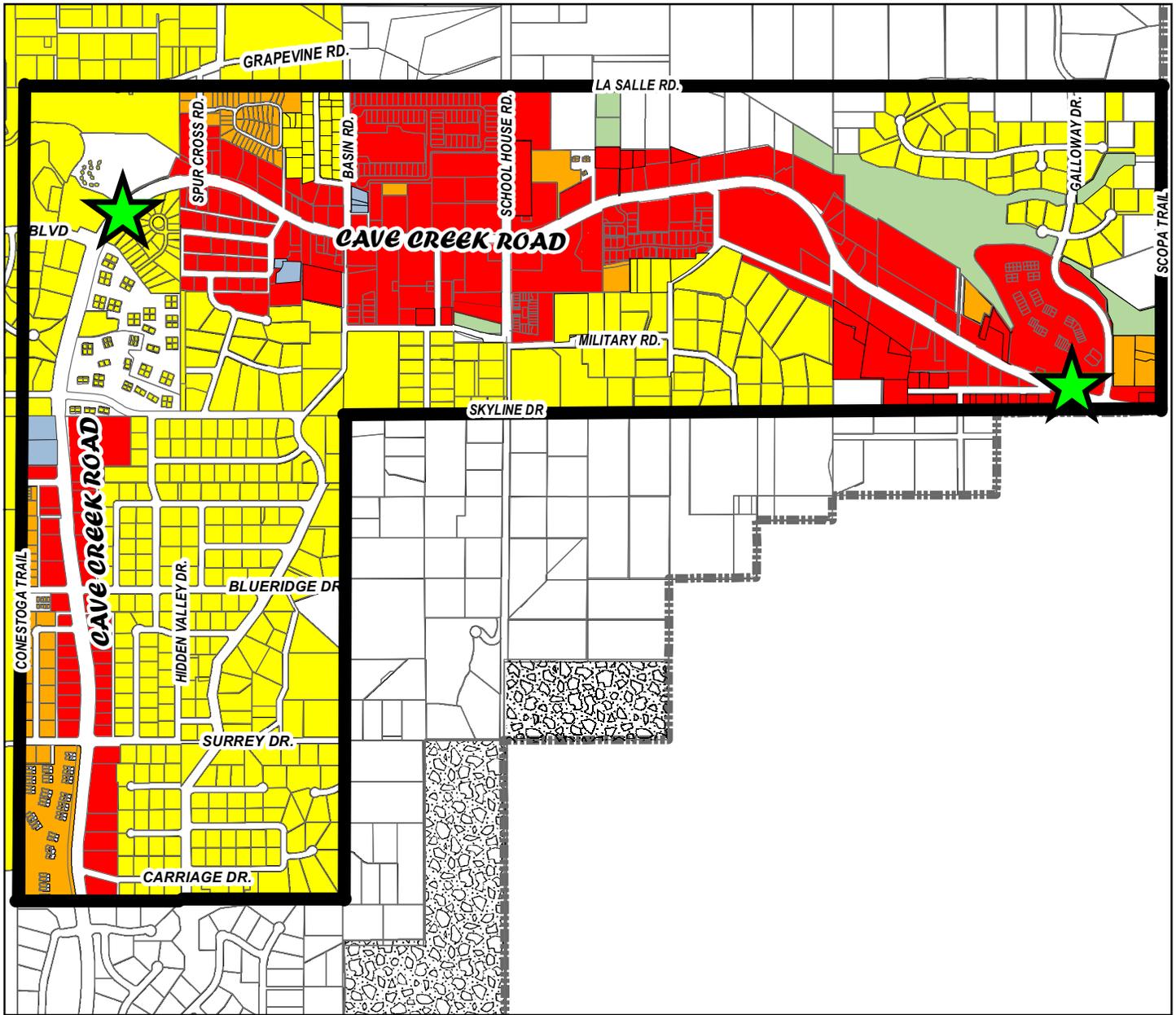
-  Study Area Boundary
-  Town Boundary
-  Desert Awareness Park
-  Unentitled Vacant Parcels
TCC - 26 parcels, 21.7 acres
-  Unentitled Vacant Parcels
CB - 8 parcels, 2.4 acres



Map 1

TOWN CORE PLAN TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

Land Use Plan



Legend

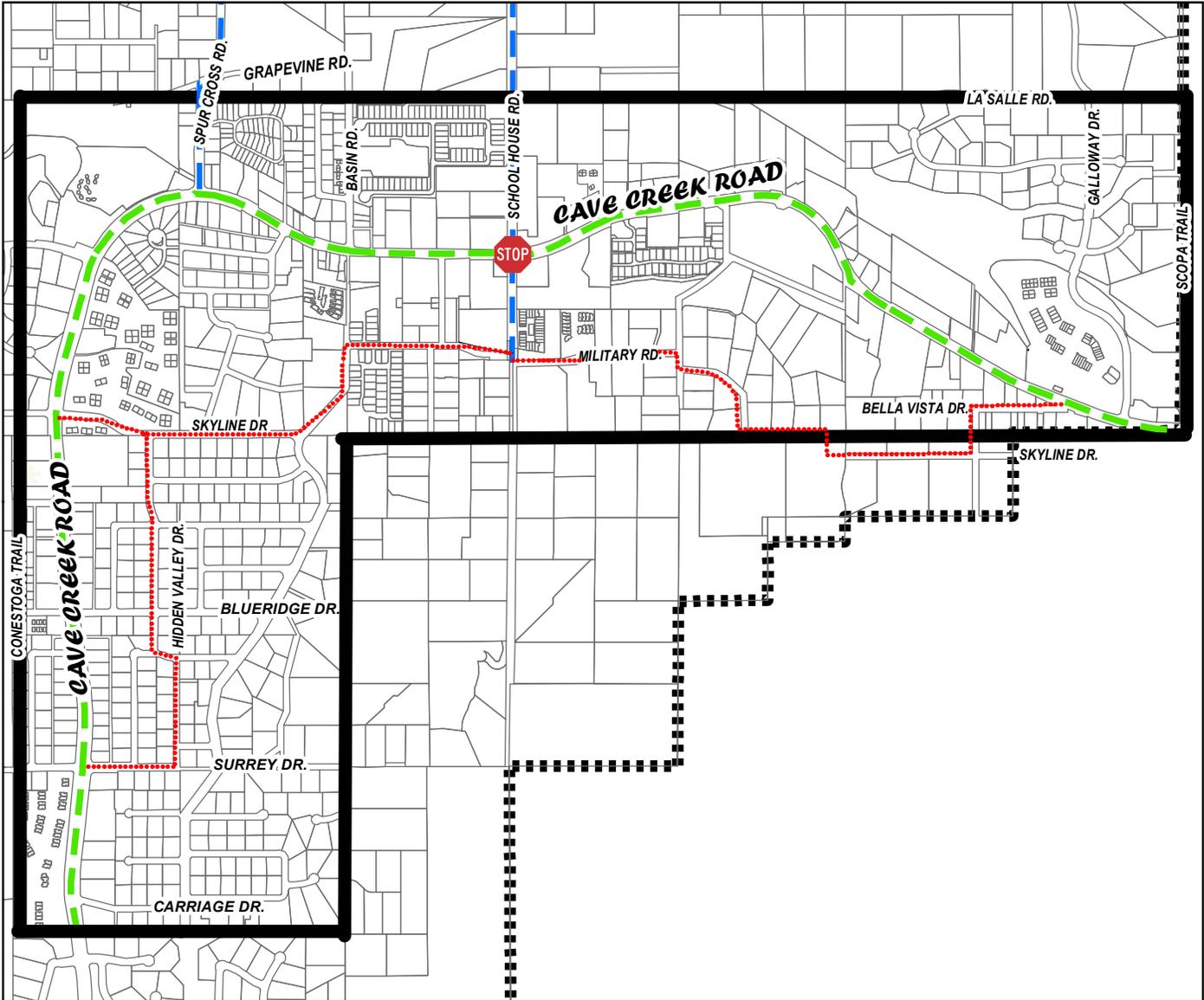
- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Open Space |  | High Density Residential |  | Public Facilities |
|  | Desert Rural |  | Commercial Use |  | Town Core Entry Feature |
|  | Medium Density Residential |  | Mixed Use | | |

Symbols

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
|  | Town Core Boundary |
|  | Town Boundary |



TOWN CORE PLAN TOWN OF CAVE CREEK Circulation Plan



Symbols

-  Town Core Boundary
-  Town Boundary
-  Emergency By-Pass Route
-  Arterial Road
-  Collector Road



TOWN CORE PLAN TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

Public Amenities



Legend

-  Town Boundary
-  Cave Creek Trail Network
NOTE: All Trails are for non-motorized use only
-  Public Parking
-  Designated Crosswalks

