



# Town of Cave Creek General Plan 2021

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Ratified by the Voters of Cave Creek  
May, 18, 2021

# Acknowledgments

## Town of Cave Creek

### Town Council

Ernie Bunch, Mayor  
David Smith, Vice Mayor  
Thomas McGuire, Councilmember  
Susan Clancy, Councilmember  
Paul Diefenderfer, Councilmember  
Robert Morris, Councilmember  
Kathryn Royer, Councilmember

## Town of Cave Creek Planning Commission

Bob Voris, Chairman  
Paul Eelkema, Vice Chairman  
Tom Davenport, Commissioner  
Steve LaMar, Commissioner  
John Patton, Commissioner  
Ron Sova, Commissioner  
Dan Baxley, Commissioner

## Contributing Town Staff

Carrie Dyrek, Town Manager  
Luke Kautzman, Planning Director  
Bambi Muller, Planner  
Marie Carsia, Assistant Planner  
Hal Marron, Town Engineer  
Shawn Kreuzwiesner, Utilities Manager  
Brian Poore, IT Coordinator

## Town of Cave Creek Citizen's Water Advisory Committee

Kerry Smith, Chairman  
Reg Monachino, Vice Chairman  
Ralph Ferro, Commissioner  
Richard Johnson, Commissioner  
Alex Nadesan, Commissioner  
Ron Sova, Commissioner

## Consultant

Michael Baker International

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# Introduction

Nestled between the crests of Elephant Mountain and Black Mountain, the Town of Cave Creek was settled along the wash of its namesake as an outpost during a prospecting gold rush in the late 1800's. As mining made way for cattle and sheep, the town emerged as a ranching hotspot in northern Maricopa County in the 1900's. While the community has grown into a modern town, embodying the values of living in untouched desert on the frontier remains at the heart of Cave Creek's residents. Today, Cave Creek looks towards the future while embracing its rich cultural heritage, where the wild west still lives.

*Image Source: Tripadvisor*

# Town of Cave Creek General Plan 2021

## WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

The Cave Creek General Plan is the community's long-range guide for future physical, economic and social development decisions over the next 20+ years. The General Plan contains a vision statement, along with plans, goals, policies, and implementation strategies that address issues such as land use, growth, circulation, open space, and the environment. Collectively, all of the general plan components serve as a policy document for the Town outlining the future envisioned by the public.

## WHY DO WE NEED IT?

State law mandates that each city and town in Arizona adopt a "comprehensive, long-range general plan for the development of the municipality." These plans must also be updated and adopted by voters every ten years. Cave Creek's current General Plan was last ratified by voters in 2005 with two subsequent Council-adopted versions and ratification attempts in 2016 and 2018, respectively.

This General Plan has refined specific aspects of these prior General Plan drafts as well as developed new and distinct content through an exhaustive public outreach process to ensure this Plan is in alignment with the residents' vision for the community. Upon completion, it is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted by Town Council, then placed on the May 2021 ballot for ratification which would bring the Town into compliance with Arizona State Statute.

There are both State-mandated and optional "elements," or topics, that go into a General Plan. State law (A.R.S. §9-461.05) requires that a General Plan for a community the size of Cave Creek address the following core elements: Land Use and Circulation as well as Growth Areas, Open Space, Environmental Planning, Water Resources, and Cost of Development.

To address specific topics that are unique to Cave Creek, the General Plan may also include additional elements such as Arts and Culture, Public Facilities, or Health and Wellness if there is strong community interest in these areas.



*Image Sources Left Page*

*Top: Zillow*

*Middle: World Championship Barrel Racing*

*Bottom: AZ Central*

## HOW WILL IT BE USED?

In accordance with Arizona law, the General Plan guides land use and zoning decisions by the Town. The General Plan does not change existing zoning; however, future zoning changes must conform to the General Plan, as may be amended. The public is encouraged to consult the General Plan, as well as the Town's other adopted and accepted guidelines (a list of which can be found in Appendix A), as it provides specific information with respect to the types of land use, transportation and open spaces the Town encourages. The General Plan provides information and recommendations to Town decision makers regarding the existing quality of life and lifestyles enjoyed by the residents of Cave Creek. Beyond Cave Creek's government, the General Plan may also be used by various other stakeholders such as residents, local businesses, and community groups to understand the future vision for the Town.

*Image Source This Page: Lowestravels*



# General Plan Vision

## VISION & VALUES

The Vision statement for the Cave Creek General Plan reflects the foundational values and lifestyles the Town desires to maintain and enhance in the future. The Vision is written in a positive, affirmative and inspirational style, to describe the Town as it will be, based on this General Plan.

### VISION

*Cave Creek is focused on maintaining our western heritage that is defined by our passion for open space and low-density residential development. We promote outdoor lifestyles such as equestrian, hiking and biking activities. Dramatic views, trails, open spaces and wildlife habitats are the hallmarks of the quality of life we seek and desire to protect. We also desire to encourage our artistic community.*

The following Core Values flowed from the development of the Vision statement and specifically address important considerations in making decisions about the community's future over the next decade and beyond in order to promote the Town's overall Vision. While individually specific in direction, each Value has broader impacts and considerations that cut across multiple aspects of the Town and this General Plan. Thus, these Core Values help to guide implementation of this Plan by giving priority to the various goals, policies and actions that address them.

### VALUES

*Over the ten-year life of this General Plan, Cave Creek strives to:*

- Continue to contribute to our unique western, equestrian character and diverse lifestyles by honoring the Town's western heritage and culture that establishes our Wild West brand;*
- Encourage the preservation of our dark skies, scenic views, and quiet, peaceful environment with cooperation from our fellow citizens and local merchants as well as working with adjacent communities to mitigate the impacts of development;*
- Conserve our public open spaces and rich, varied, self-sustaining natural environment for their continued enjoyment and recreational benefit;*
- Promote a low density rural residential environment;*
- Encourage a robust, vibrant Historic Town Core entertainment and tourist district that is compatible with the Town's character and contributes to the fiscal health of the community;*
- Recognize commercial areas outside the Historic Town Core that provide complementary business activities to the Historic Town Core offering citizens services and goods they can use, as well as, revenue needed for operation of the Town;*
- Provide a safe, reliable transportation network system that facilitates use by automobiles, horses, pedestrians, hikers and bikers with well-maintained streets and trails;*
- Maintain a reliable water system that provides abundant, clean water and an efficient sewer and wastewater treatment system; and*
- Uphold a well-managed, efficient Town government that is responsive to community concerns.*

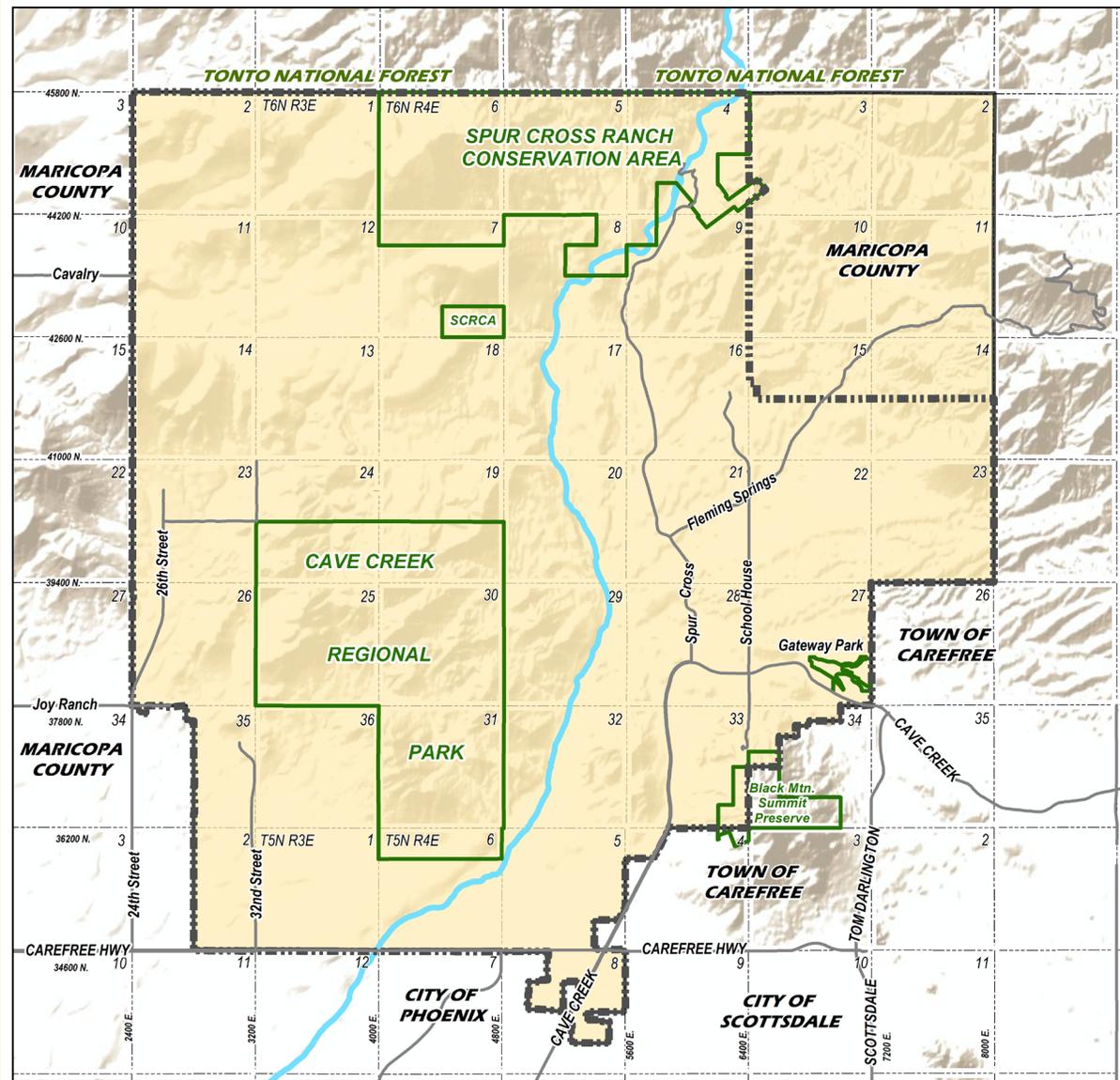
# Planning Area

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Town of Cave Creek is well situated for access to regional transportation. Interstate Highway 17 (I-17) is located approximately eight miles to the west, via Carefree Highway. This north/south route connects Phoenix and Flagstaff. The Loop 101 (Pima Freeway) is accessible approximately 12 miles to the south, via Cave Creek Road or Scottsdale Road. These roads provide connections to the commercial, medical and shopping areas in the Phoenix valley. Air transportation is available at Scottsdale Municipal Airport, Deer Valley Airport and Sky Harbor International Airport. Recreation opportunities are available at nearby Lake Pleasant and Bartlett Lake, as well as Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, Cave Creek Regional Park, Desert Awareness Park, Black Mountain Summit Preserve and selected nature preserves of the Desert Foothills Land Trust.

## MUNICIPAL LIMITS AND PLANNING AREA

The Town of Cave Creek is located in northern Maricopa County and is bounded by the Tonto National Forest to the north, Phoenix to the west and south, Carefree to the east, Scottsdale to the southeast and various parts of Unincorporated Maricopa County. Cave Creek's Municipal Limits represent the area in which the Town has jurisdiction over, encompassing approximately 38 square miles. Cave Creek's Municipal Planning Area represents the Town's largest future extent if it were to annex surrounding land. Just slightly larger than the existing Town limits, the planning area is nearly annexed entirely. The Town will be approaching build-out as it is land locked by other local jurisdictions and develops remaining available land.



### Legend

- Cave Creek Municipal Planning Area
- Cave Creek Municipal Limits
- SECTION LINES
- Major Roads
- Cave Creek
- Park Boundary



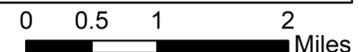
SEATTLE: WPA - JACOBSON ASSOCIATES

## TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

### GENERAL PLAN - PLANNING BOUNDARY

NORTH  
Town of Cave Creek

Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_





# Town Heritage

## EARLY CAVE CREEK

The Town of Cave Creek is named for Cave Creek Wash, a stream that originates in the remote areas about 25 miles to the north. It flows through the Town, and continues south into Phoenix. The stream derives its name from a high, overhanging bluff along its west bank that forms a wide open-mouthed cavern north of the Town's Historic Town Core.

The Town of Cave Creek can trace its European based history back more than 100 years, although Native Americans were living in these foothills long before any Europeans came. Various tribes of prehistoric Native Americans came into the area periodically to hunt game and gather wild foods. The Hohokam settled permanently in small villages along Cave Creek Wash to grow crops. These people used the waters of Cave Creek Wash and nearby springs to irrigate their fields. These inhabitants occupied the land from about 800 A.D. until 1400 A.D. and left the area due to a changing climate. They left behind the crumbling remains of their irrigation ditches and the foundations of their small houses.

After the departure of the Hohokam, the Tonto Apaches claimed the land. The Tontos did not build villages, but roamed central Arizona in small groups from their homeland in the Tonto Basin east of the Verde River. Their dominance over the land was ended by events elsewhere.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 brought thousands of miners to the West. In 1863 central Arizona had its turn at gold rush days. As prospectors explored mostly eastward from California, the Tontos resisted their influence and raided their mining camps. To protect the miners, the U.S. Army established Fort McDowell in 1865 on the west bank of the Verde River.

The Town of Cave Creek can trace its beginnings to the Army's decision. In 1870, following a Native American trail through the Cave Creek area, the military forces built the first wagon road through the present Town of Cave Creek. This road connected Fort McDowell with Fort Whipple at Prescott. In 1873, Cave Creek Road was built from the small village of Phoenix northward to join the Army's road near the flowing springs on the east bank of Cave Creek Wash. On Christmas Eve of 1873, the Army ambushed a small group of Apaches at the Cave. With this campaign, the area became safe for settlement.

In 1874 William Rowe found a rich gold deposit on Gold Hill to the north-east and far above the Creek. His discovery touched off a gold rush to the area. Tales of great riches to be had soon circulated through mining camps and saloons.

In 1877, Jeriah Wood, a cattleman from Missouri, built a home along Cave Creek Wash which he named Cave Creek Station. This became the location of a post office called Overton. By 1886, local families had established a one-room schoolhouse.



After a brief boom of about 20 years, mining activities quickly declined. The desert has reclaimed many of these mining sites although some remains of our mining history have been preserved in the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, some private holdings and other open space locations.

## 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

In 1900, Cave Creek had a population of 97 people. James D. Houck bought Cave Creek Station and turned it into a sheep shearing camp. Other sheep ranchers followed. A post office and school were built and regular stagecoach service to Phoenix was established. Cattlemen followed the sheep ranchers but they also found it hard work to make a meager living. Later, some of the ranches, including Spur Cross and Rancho Mañana, became dude ranches.

From 1935 to 1939, the building of Bartlett Dam on the Verde River brought increased activity to the village of Cave Creek. From 1940 to 1943, Horseshoe Dam, also on the Verde River, was cause for another boom for the village. In 1946, electricity and telephone service came to the village of Cave Creek and, in 1952 Cave Creek Road was finally paved all the way from Phoenix. Cave Creek citizens banded together in 1974 to transfer ownership of 250 acres around the summit of Black Mountain from the Bureau of Land Management to the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department. This was done to preserve the summit property from development.

In 1986 Cave Creek was incorporated as a self-governing community. Maricopa County zoning was carried over to the Town. In 1994 the Town of Cave Creek adopted its own zoning to provide for planned growth from the western theme of the Town Core, to progressively larger lot zoning in the outlying areas. Building envelopes established on many large lots have preserved natural desert in spite of private ownership.

Since 1991 the Desert Foothills Land Trust has assembled 11 separate preserves within the Town of Cave Creek, mostly in riparian areas along the Creek, as it flows through the Town from the boundary of the Tonto National Forest, south to Carefree Highway. The purchase of the 2,200 acre (roughly 3 square miles) Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area occurred in the year 2000. This was achieved in a consortium between the Town, Maricopa County and the State of Arizona. Each of the three partners provided approximately \$7.5 million. The citizens of Cave Creek voted to tax themselves to pay for the purchase. The Spur Cross movement helped define our community and unify us in our successful efforts to honor and preserve our High Sonoran Desert environment.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Top: Visit Phoenix*

*Middle: Desert Foothills Land Trust*

*Bottom: History of Cave Creek Museum*

*Image Sources This Page*

*Top & Middle: True West Magazine*

*Bottom: Visit Phoenix*





## Cave Creek Museum

The Cave Creek Museum houses and displays items that reveal the history of Cave Creek. Books giving more details about the history of Cave Creek are also available at the Cave Creek Museum or the Desert Foothills Library.

*Image Source: Cave Creek Museum*

## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The new century is bringing a variety of new challenges to Cave Creek. As adjacent municipalities extend their boundaries and associated development farther north, Cave Creek must do what it can to influence such development to honor our dark skies, low density, and quiet environment.

The General Plan is the guideline for how the Town can bring its visions to reality. The Town must practice careful stewardship of its open spaces and its commercial opportunities to compliment the Town Core while strengthening the Town's fiscal position and services to the Town's residents and visitors. The General Plan Map, outside of the Town Core, has been drawn in a manner to protect and promote low density, desert flora and fauna preservation and conservation, open space, limited high volume traffic corridors, and best uses of sewer and water infrastructure.

The Town's finite water supply and its sewage collection and treatment system must be continuously protected and monitored carefully and thoughtfully. The Town must use its water system and facilities in a manner to bring fiscal balance and water service to best serve and protect its citizens and to promote beneficial and conservative water use.

The Town of Cave Creek purchased the Cave Creek Water Company in 2007 to secure water supplies and support planned growth. Additionally, the Town purchased the Desert Hills Water Company, designed and constructed a Wastewater Treatment Plant and modernized the Water Treatment Plant.

In 2008, Town boundaries were expanded to include approximately 5,418 acres of State Trust Land through three annexations that included the implementation of three pre-annexation agreements (Rogers Wash, Willow Springs, and Apache Springs) and one Development Agreement for State Land already within the Town boundaries (the Core Site Land). Those agreements describe the process for preserving and developing those lands over a twenty-year period. Approximately 4,000 acres of the Rogers Wash, Willow Springs, Apache Springs and the Core Site Land have been zoned by the Town as open space for either conservation or recreation purposes.

Arizona State Land Department's mission is to manage the Land Trust and to maximize its revenues for the beneficiaries. All uses of the land must benefit the Trust.

# A Community Planning Process

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Numerous Cave Creek residents and stakeholders participated in one-on-one interviews, mobile workshops, community meetings, surveys and other activities over the course of this General Plan Update process. These engagement activities focused on presenting information, soliciting input, as well as reaching specific interest groups and other community members to connect with the greatest cross-section of Cave Creek residents.

Through this public involvement process it was recognized, Cave Creek is extremely well-loved by its residents and visitors alike. It is this popularity that has also created an atmosphere of civic engagement, small-town democracy and intense debate within the community about the Town's future. While Cave Creek's residents are welcoming to new people and have a long history of open-mindedness, they are

also fiercely protective of their town. People do not want to lose the qualities that prompted them to stay put or come here in the first place.

This Plan respects this public concern, and therefore has been developed to reflect the most commonly heard values and desires of the community that were collected throughout the public involvement process. This means that while there are many goals and policies that are universally agreed upon in this Plan, there are others that may not be universally supported, but are included because they relate to an expressed segment of the community and share a common thread with the overall vision and principles that this Plan is based on.



*Image Source: March 9, 2020 Community Workshop*

# General Plan Framework

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

### THEMES

For this General Plan, a new organizational structure and chapter format is used that is based on a set of Themes which work to better convey what is most important to Cave Creek relative to achieving the Town’s desired Vision and Core Values. Rather than have generic, state mandated, elements (e.g. land use, circulation, water resources, etc.) function as chapters and organize the General Plan, this plan recognizes that these required elements don’t adequately express the highest-level thoughts about the desired future of the Town.

Consequently, each of the seven state mandated elements have been incorporated within four mutually supportive Themes, which emerged through the planning process based on public feedback. Required elements and additional guiding Topics were organized within each Theme based on their inherent overlap as detailed below.

### TOPICS

A series of Topics are provided to further describe specific focus areas within each Theme. Each Topic provides background information and establishes context for their accompanying goals, policies and actions.

### GOALS

Goals are intended results expressed in simple terms for the plan’s specific Topic areas. They represent overarching desired outcomes that collectively roll-up to align with the Town-wide Vision and Core Values. Goals are not tied to specific dates or quantifiable targets, but are enduring and provide a general direction for their more refined policy statements.

### POLICIES

Policies support the achievement of goals and should be used to provide guidance for the daily decisions made by Town government as well as inform the actions of community members.

### ACTIONS

Actions consist of short-, medium- and long-term projects, programs or efforts that should be carried out to assist in the facilitation of their associated Goals and Policies.

\* A.R.S. Required Element

Theme: A Distinctive Town	Theme: Sensitive Development, Balanced Growth	Theme: Vital Environment	Theme: A Safe , Responsive & Connected Community
<p>Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rich History, Eclectic Culture</li> <li>Sense of Community</li> <li>Neighborhood Preservation</li> </ul>	<p>Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Use &amp; Growth*</li> <li>Cost of Development*</li> </ul>	<p>Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural Resources*</li> <li>Open Spaces*</li> <li>Water Resources*</li> </ul>	<p>Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hazard Mitigation</li> <li>Community Facilities &amp; Services</li> <li>Efficient Mobility*</li> </ul>



# RICH HISTORY, ECLECTIC CULTURE

Cave Creek's heritage is recognized as one of the Town's greatest strengths, both culturally and economically. Throughout its evolution from a small gold mining camp, to an enclave of sheep and cattle ranches, to a renowned destination for art and leisure, diverse individuals have been drawn to Cave Creek. All of them have contributed in some way to the eclectic mix that is the Town today.

This Topic aims to preserve and protect Cave Creeks western identity, historic assets, and cultural resources; expand opportunities for arts enrichment; and celebrate the vibrant aspects of the community in order to maintain the Town's sense of place and ensure that these qualities can be enjoyed by current and future residents and visitors, together.

## Planning Considerations:

The Town's heritage and cultural resources are a key component of its quality of life and tourism economy. As such, the community has a long-standing commitment to the preservation of these resources. Balancing the need to preserve the historic attributes and character of buildings and other cultural resources with the ever-evolving modern needs of future businesses is of constant consideration.

## GOAL

Preserve, promote, and enhance Cave Creek's western heritage and eclectic culture.

## Policies

- Foster the importance of protecting the Town's historic built environment and landscape characteristics which add to the cultural and historic definition of Cave Creek's character.
- Collaborate with local and regional partners, such as the Cave Creek Museum, to highlight and celebrate the area's historic and cultural significance.
- Provide educational resources to allow community members and visitors to be stewards of Cave Creek's rich heritage and culture.
- Support a tourism bureau that familiarizes visitors and residents with Cave Creek's Western heritage, culture and its desert environment while promoting local merchants.

## GOAL

Maintain the Historic Town Core's authentic identity and character.

## Policies

- Support the Historic Town Core, through identification of historically significant buildings.
- Establish preservation standards that ensure new development and rehabilitation activities in the Town Core reflect surrounding building heights, scale, materials, landscaping and other character contributing features.



## GOAL

Develop and promote diverse art and cultural experiences that enhance Cave Creek's quality of life, built environment, and local economy.

## Policies

- Support opportunities to include art installations by local artists and other creative projects and solutions as part of private development and public infrastructure, facilities, amenities, and public spaces.
- Partner with local, community-based associations, such as the Sonoran Arts League and Foothill Community Foundation, that support performing and visual arts.

## Actions

- Work with the State Historic Preservation Office to develop programs and policies that encourage restoration and rehabilitation of older and original businesses, buildings and homes.
- Document the iconic/historic qualities of the Historic Town Core by:
  - Creating a map which identifies iconic/historic structures, authenticating their history and establishing a chronology of their use in Cave Creek.
  - Developing information to ensure that the purpose for identifying iconic/historic buildings is understood.
- Prepare a quality development handbook that can be used as a tool to clearly convey desired character defining elements to interested parties as it relates to new, reuse, and infill development in the Town Core.
  - Avoid defining rigid design regulations that discourage creativity and potentially create a Town Core that lacks authenticity because it is too structured and too sterile.
  - Encourage design styles that help reflect our western heritage.



*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Left: Cave Creek Rodeo*

*Middle: Street Scout*

*Right: AZ Food and Wine*

*Image Sources This Page*

*Left: Arizona Builder's Exchange*

*Middle: Tripadvisor*

*Right: Haroldscorral*

# SENSE OF COMMUNITY

By definition, a community is a group of individuals joined together in a common setting or by interrelated interests and values. Cave Creek is a community that fosters individuality, diversity and respect for one another, but at its core is united by a common thread that upholds an unwavering tradition of neighbor helping neighbor. This pioneer spirit creates a sense of community that is unlike any other, not only is it common to pass your neighbor on the road or on the trails, it is desirable. There are also a number of events, from Rodeo Days and Taste of Cave Creek, to the many organized recreational outings, nightly music performances, and volunteer opportunities that many residents attend and enjoy.

While Cave Creek's natural setting and quality of life is what brought many people to Town, it is the strong Sense of Community that keeps people here. This sentiment was echoed frequently within the community survey and resident interviews conducted during the General Plan public engagement process. This Topic reflects how essential it is to Cave Creek residents that the Sense of Community they know remains intact.

*Image Sources This Page*  
Left: Sonoran News  
Middle: MCSO Facebook  
Right: Town of Cave Creek

## GOAL

Foster a culture of collaboration and support.

## Policies

- Promote a range of opportunities and events for residents of all interests, backgrounds and ages to interact with other members of the community and to inspire civic pride, volunteerism and unity.
- Partner with civic, cultural, and philanthropic organizations involved in physical improvements to the community.
- Use a variety of methods to communicate information regarding current events and community resources.

## Actions

- Periodically conduct a community survey to gauge citizen satisfaction level with Town services, governance and other issues.
- Conduct annual public recognition and awards that celebrates Cave Creek's long tradition of civic engagement and philanthropic contribution.



# NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

Cave Creek residents take pride in their community and each of the distinct, and in some places more organic, neighborhoods that define the Town. Community members value the Town's overall identity, as well as the distinctive identities of the Town's neighborhoods, each with their own character, assets, and challenges. Residents want to embrace the qualities that make their neighborhoods special—including the size and use of parcels along with the scale and architectural features of buildings—in order to preserve and strengthen their identities.

This Topic presents a framework of goals, policies and implementing actions that correspond directly with other General Plan topics in protecting the form, quality, and character of Cave Creek's community of neighborhoods. By respecting established neighborhoods, this Topic further provides guidance to mitigate the impacts of future public and private development within these areas.

## GOAL

Preserve and enhance the desirable characteristics of existing neighborhoods.

## Policies

- Use development standards to ensure smooth transitions between existing and proposed land uses and development, especially residential and commercial, so that existing neighborhoods maintain their unique qualities and new development promotes compatibility.
- Require a higher standard of cohesive neighborhood-based design features for infill development or redevelopment projects.
- Maintain and enhance residential and commercial neighborhoods throughout the Town with appropriate infrastructure investment.
- Support the formation and growth of neighborhood groups.
- Identify and share ways residents can play an active role in making improvements to their neighborhoods through partnerships and grant programs.

## Actions

- Facilitate regular interaction among neighborhood groups and Town staff to identify issues and opportunities.
- Work with community members in the Carefree Highway corridor area to update the Carefree Highway Specific Area Plan. Collaborate with community members to identify distinct features, visions, goals, uses, buffers and design elements specific to the Carefree Highway corridor to preserve the unique identities of surrounding neighborhoods and establish strategies that mitigate impacts from economic development.
- Develop Area Plans for specific neighborhood areas within the Town as necessary to identify and address unique character features and development pressures.



# Sensitive Development, Managed Growth

This chapter presents a framework for governing future decisions about allowable, context-sensitive land use and desirable development patterns to maintain the high quality of life and distinctive, small-town character of Cave Creek. Topics, Goals, Policies and Actions within this chapter aim to effectively manage growth and development by drawing from and contributing to the community's distinct history, scenic beauty, environmental carrying capacity, Historic Town Core, low-density residential lifestyle and existing and proposed infrastructure systems.

*Image Source: Shutterstock*

# LAND USE & GROWTH

Land Use and Growth integrates the guidance contained in the Vision and Core Values along with community input and the following technical analysis that spans factors including land ownership, anticipated population trends, economic development objectives, desires for open space preservation, environmental constraints, and existing and anticipated development pressures. This information is then used to define and map a series of land use designations to represent the envisioned future land use pattern for all areas in Town. This topic also identifies select areas in Cave Creek that are unique in relation to other areas of Town and includes policies to maintain and/or enhance them.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

### Land Ownership

The Town of Cave Creek encompasses almost 38 square miles. Approximately 46% of the Town is comprised of privately-owned land which could be developed. The remaining 54% of the land area of the Town is publicly owned and designated as Open Space or mandated Open Space through ordinance. Specifically, various public entities (this category includes Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area and Cave Creek Regional Park) own 21%; 32% is owned by the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) and 1% is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (Table 1).

Table 1: Cave Creek Land Ownership

OWNER	ACREAGE	PERCENT OF LAND
Private	10,956	46.0%
State Trust Land	7,697	32.0%
Public	4,992	21.0%
Bureau of Land Management	325	1.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,970</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Town of Cave Creek

Image Sources This Page  
Top: Zillow  
Middle: Stagecoach Village  
Bottom: Sonoran News



## Population

According to the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) 2019 Socioeconomic Projections, Cave Creek has an estimated population of 6,000 in 2020. Based on U.S. Census data, between 2010 and 2020, Cave Creek added approximately 985 new residents as shown in Table 2.

Cave Creek is expected to continue to experience moderate growth in the future. According to MAG, Cave Creek is expected to reach a population of approximately 7,000 by 2040. The current projected build-out population for Cave Creek is 12,210. In addition to its permanent residents, there is a large population that resides in the Town during the winter months.

Table 2: Cave Creek Population

PROJECTED POPULATION							
YEAR	1990 <sup>1</sup>	2000 <sup>1</sup>	2010 <sup>1</sup>	2020 <sup>2</sup>	2030 <sup>2</sup>	2040 <sup>2</sup>	Build-Out <sup>3</sup>
POPULATION	2,925	3,728	5,015	6,000	6,500	7,000	12,210

Source: <sup>1</sup>US Census; <sup>2</sup>MAG 2019 Socioeconomic Projections; <sup>3</sup>Based on 2016 Maricopa County Association of Governments Socioeconomic Projections and land capacity under current zoning, this build-out figure was not adopted by MAG.

## Age

Cave Creek has one of the older populations within Maricopa County with a median age of 57.7 as of 2018. In fact, Cave Creek's median age has steadily increased over the last two decades from 44.7 in 2000 to 49.5 in 2010.

Image Sources Opposite Page

Top: Zillow

Middle: Rancho Manana Golf Club

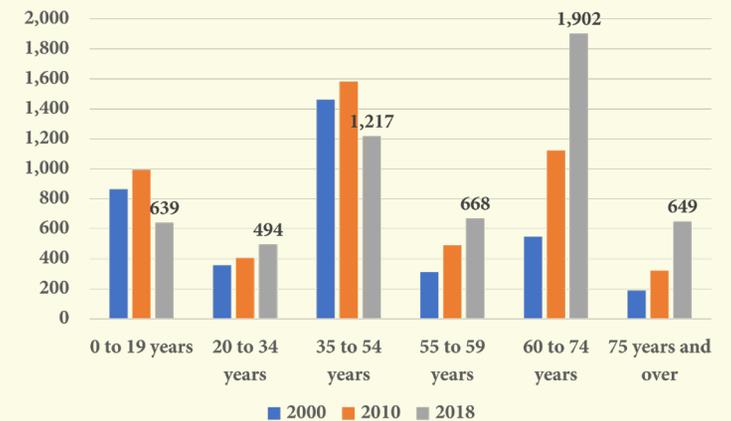
Bottom: Zillow

Table 3: Cave Creek Median Age

MEDIAN AGE			
YEAR	2000*	2010**	2018***
MEDIAN AGE	44.7	49.5	57.7

Source: \*Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data. \*\* 2010 ACS 5- year estimates. \*\*\* 2018 ACS 5- year estimates

Figure 1: Cave Creek Age Composition



Source: Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data. 2010 ACS 5- year estimates. 2018 ACS 5- year estimates

## Housing Units

As population increases, so too does the total number of housing units in Cave Creek. According to the 2010 Census, Cave Creek had a total of 2,579 dwelling units. Between 2010 and 2020, Cave Creek recorded an increase of 208 dwelling units, bringing the total to 2,787. According to MAG, it is projected that the total housing units over the next decade in Cave Creek will increase at a slower rate than previous decades, reaching a total of 3,192 units by 2050. In addition to its direct relationship to population, assessment of housing unit growth – coupled with lot size – can also be used to consider the potential rate of land consumption within Cave Creek.

Table 4: Cave Creek Total Housing Units

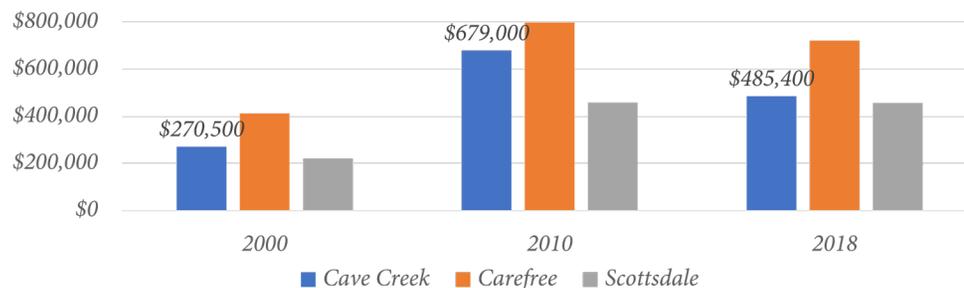
	CENSUS*		PROJECTED**			
YEAR	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
HOUSING UNITS	1,573	2,579	2,787	2,925	3,113	3,192

Source: \* US 2000 and 2010 Census; \*\* MAG 2019 Socioeconomic Projections

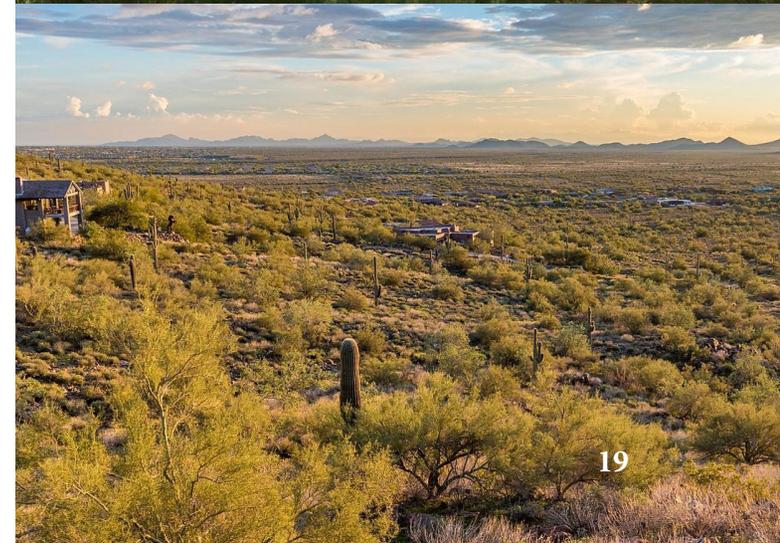
## Home Value

The median value of a home in Cave Creek drastically increased from \$270,500 in 2000 to \$679,000 in 2010. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), this increase in median home value decreased to \$485,400 by 2018. During the General Plan public engagement process, housing affordability was frequently mentioned as a concern relative to supporting Cave Creek’s workforce and aging populations. Further, according to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), if a household is spending 30% or more of their income on rent, they are considered rent burdened. Based on the 2018 ACS, 35% of all households in renter-occupied housing units are rent burdened in Cave Creek.

Figure 2: Cave Creek Median Home Value



Source: 2000, 2010 and 2018 ACS 5- year estimates





## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

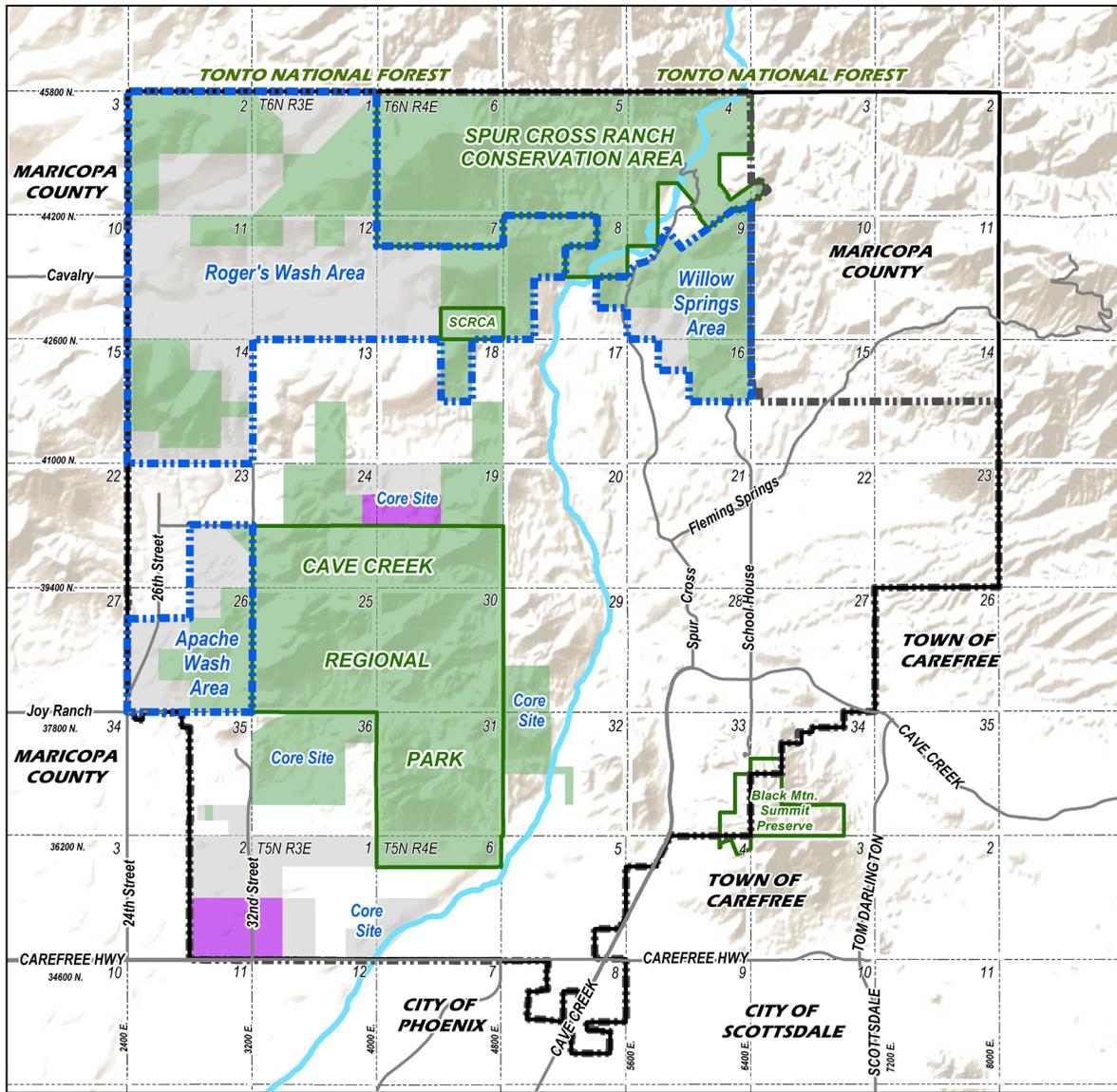
- Regardless of whether current projections accurately reflect the forthcoming level of change within the Town, it is clear that some growth is inevitable. The challenge is how to respond to this inevitability and maintain the Town's distinctive qualities.
- The Town has historically favored slow growth in a manner that is congruent with the rural, western character of the Town.
- The Town wants to maintain a high quality of life based on low-density housing and managed commercial growth consistent with the carrying capacity of land and resources, especially water, and all other infrastructure. The coordination of all land use decisions with water availability is essential to assure the Town is sustainable.
- New commercial opportunities should be targeted which will enhance the community's sales tax base with the goal of securing the fiscal health of the Town. However, the Town wishes that the community's quality of life is maintained and enhanced by any decisions, including those that develop new tax bases.
- The Town desires a vibrant, fiscally healthy Historic Town Core to reinforce and enhance its character and historic western heritage.
- Preservation of the Town's rural, western, equestrian character is important and will, in part, be accomplished through careful stewardship of appropriate commercial development within the Historic Town Core and in the Cave Creek/Carefree Highway commercial corridor that is complementary to the entertainment, retail, dining and tourist activities found in the Town Core.
- Commercial development in the Cave Creek Road/Carefree Highway commercial corridors should be complementary to and supportive of the entertainment and tourist activities in the Historic Town Core.
- The percentage of the Town's population above the age of 60 has grown at a faster rate than the population as a whole; however, limited services and a lack of housing oriented toward older residents are in place to support those who wish to age in place.
- Housing values in Cave Creek are higher than other parts of the region, and many people who work in Cave Creek cannot afford to live here. A more diverse range of housing, with a particular focus on the service workforce and senior housing may help to address this issue.

- The northward expansion of the Phoenix metro area south of the Town of Cave Creek is a concern to the Town in terms of the impacts to traffic levels and patterns, particularly on Cave Creek Road south of the Carefree Highway and along Carefree Highway westerly.
- The Town will strive to balance quality of life issues such as enhancing recreational opportunities and mitigating the impact of traffic with practical concerns such as creating employment and shopping opportunities for residents and providing economic benefits for the Town.
- The future disposition of the 7,697 undeveloped acres of State Trust Land (see pg. 22), of which approximately 4,000 undeveloped acres currently identified as Open Space, will have substantial impacts on Cave Creek. (In 2008 the Town and ASLD entered into three pre-annexation agreements and one development agreement wherein the Town was given a process by which to acquire this open space within a twenty-year period.)
- With the annexation of State Trust Lands (see pg. 22) in the Rogers Wash, Apache Wash and Willow Springs areas, the Town's current boundaries closely match those of the designated Planning Area for Cave Creek. The annexation lands currently have land use designations and zoning classification already established. Approximately 2,700 acres of the land is designated for low density single residential uses with a minimum lot size of one acre per dwelling unit. Lands with slopes in excess of 15% have been designated as suitable for open space.
- Maintaining the character of Cave Creek in the next ten years will take a determined effort by the elected leadership, the Commission and Boards, the Town staff and, most importantly, the residents. This will require clear definition of preservation, education for all parties, and ordinances which enforce the direction residents seek.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*  
 Top: Zillow  
 Middle: Local Jonny's  
 Bottom: Anthony Dolce

*Image Sources This Page*  
 Top: Ventana Fine Properties  
 Middle: Oreganos  
 Bottom: Youtube





**Legend**

- Cave Creek Municipal Planning Area
- Cave Creek Municipal Limits
- SECTION LINES
- Major Roads
- Cave Creek
- Park Boundary
- Annexed Areas
- ASLD Land Use**
- Commercial
- Desert Rural
- Open Space

## TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

# GENERAL PLAN - STATE TRUST LAND

Town of Cave Creek

Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_



## State Land Considerations

The Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) manages 32.0% of the Town's area. The mission of the ASLD is to manage the Land Trust and maximize its revenues for the beneficiaries. All uses of land must benefit the Land Trust, a fact that distinguishes it from the way public land, such as parks or national forests, may be used.

Arizona State law addresses "Adoption and amendment of general plan; expiration and re-adoption". In applying an open space element or a growth element of a general plan a municipality shall not designate private land or state trust land as open space, recreation, conservation or agriculture unless the municipality receives the written consent of the landowner or provides an alternative, economically viable designation in the general plan or zoning ordinance, allowing at least one residential dwelling per acre.

In 2000 the Town approached the ASLD with the request to acquire land held in trust with the State in order to preserve said land as open space. Representatives of the Land Department outlined a process whereby a land use study would be conducted for all State Land holdings from New River to Carefree in order to plan for the highest and best use, while potentially allowing for the conservation of land with environmentally significant features, such as steep slopes and drainage areas. Eventually the land use study was limited to land located both within Cave Creek's jurisdictional boundaries as well as the Town's Planning Area, as determined by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG).

Town and ASLD staff collaborated for several years while gathering input from citizen groups. That input was used to both determine appropriate land uses within the Town and provide a minimum value of one dwelling unit per acre for all land held in trust with the ASLD in the Planning Influence Area. Concurrently, the Town Council negotiated for the planning of three areas of State Land holdings to be potentially

annexed into the Town's jurisdictional boundaries. These areas became known as Willow Springs, Rogers Wash and Apache Wash. In 2007, as a precursor to the proposed annexations, the Town amended the Cave Creek General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to enable the rezoning of 360 acres of State Land in the vicinity of Carefree Highway and 32nd Street to General Commercial, Commercial Buffer, and Desert Rural (DR-70), at 120 acres each.

Eight years of planning and negotiation culminated in the approval of three annexations of State Land by the State Selection Board in October, 2008. The Town and State entered into three pre-annexation agreements as well as one development agreement that addressed the planning for State Land already located within the Town at the time of approval. The agreements, change of land use and rezoning of 7,686 acres of land still owned by the State were implemented in public hearings by resolution (for land use and agreements) or ordinance (for rezonings). No referenda were filed.

The agreement enabled the Town to amend the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Map to allow for future development and conservation. Further, the Town was given a process by which to acquire those lands dedicated to open space within a twenty-year period. The Town will continue to explore means to assure permanent conservation of those lands that have been temporarily rezoned open space pursuant to the 2008 agreement.



*Image Source: Surgent*

# LAND USE FRAMEWORK PLAN

One of the most prominent components of a General Plan is the physical approach to how land use and growth is managed. Cave Creek's approach to land use and growth management is influenced by the preceding Planning Considerations and the broader General Plan Vision and Core Values which reflect the fundamental cornerstones of the community's expressed desires for the future.

**Land Use Classifications:** The specific land use classifications expressed in this section identify uses and the density and intensity of development allowed in each category. For context comparison and reference, examples of potential building types and development patterns for each land use classification are provided.

**Land Use Plan:** The Land Use Plan is a geographic representation of the defined land use classifications that defines direction for the physical development of Cave Creek. The Land Use Plan also works in tandem with the Town's growth management goals by focusing targeted development in key areas, while maintaining the character of other existing areas and neighborhoods. The Land Use Plan further acknowledges mobility, open space and environmental factors expressed within this General Plan to balance these dynamics with existing and anticipated development conditions in a manner that upholds the Town's rural lifestyle and quality of life.

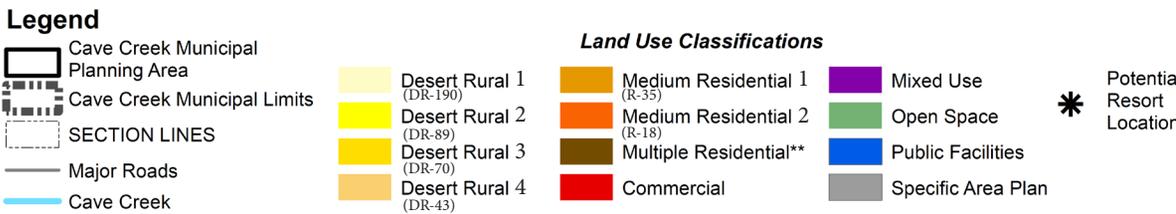
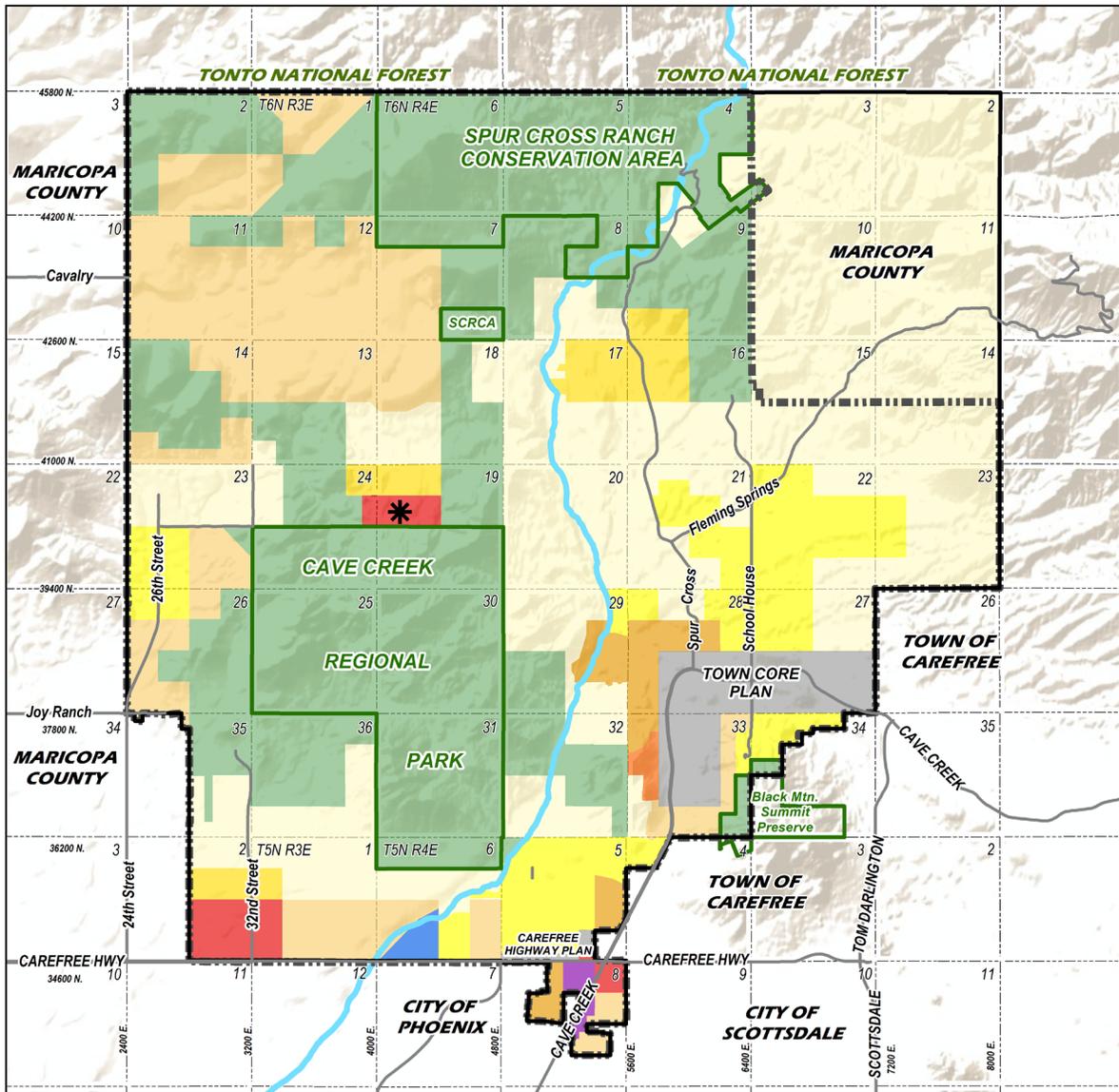


Image Sources Opposite Page  
 Left: Thomas McGuire  
 Right: Zillow

**TOWN OF CAVE CREEK GENERAL PLAN - LAND USE**

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

**NORTH**  
Town of Cave Creek

\*\*Multiple Residential areas are currently contained within the Town Core Plan boundary.

# LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS



## DESERT RURAL (DR)

**Overview:** The Desert Rural (DR) land use designation is comprised of four distinct classifications as detailed below. The purpose of the Desert Rural designation is to protect the natural setting of Cave Creek and ensure development is harmonious and sensitive to the natural environment. The large lot sizes permitted in these classifications provide ample opportunity for development to include preservation and conservation of significant natural features located

on subject sites. These may include, but are not limited to, unique rock formations, mountains, slopes, hillsides, washes and views of the mountains and steep slopes.

**Intent:** To prevent urban and desert land use conflicts by establishing large-lot residential conditions that enable greater ability for harmonious protection of scenic vistas and sensitive natural habitats and natural features such as hillsides and washes.

CLASSIFICATION		MAXIMUM DENSITY (DU/AC - Dwelling Units per Acre)		PRINCIPAL USE
	Desert Rural – 1 (*DR-190)	0.23 DU/AC (Approximately 1 dwelling unit per 4.3 acres**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record
	Desert Rural – 2 (*DR-89)	0.5 DU/AC (Approximately 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record
	Desert Rural – 3 (*DR-70)	0.62 DU/AC (Approximately 1 dwelling unit per 1.6 acres**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record
	Desert Rural – 4 (*DR-43)	1.0 DU/AC (1 dwelling unit per acre**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record

\* associated zoning district designation

\*\* shaded area represents 1-acre



## MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL

**Overview:** The Medium Residential (R) land use designation is comprised of two distinct classifications as detailed below. The purpose of the Medium Residential designation is to provide a transitional residential density between Rural Residential uses and higher density/intensity uses most often found in the vicinity of the Town's Core Commercial and General Commercial land use areas.

**Intent:** The intent of this land use category is to provide for the continuation of single residential dwelling uses at densities compatible with existing and planned development in proximity to the Town Core and intersection of Carefree Highway and Cave Creek Road areas.

CLASSIFICATION		MAXIMUM DENSITY (DU/AC - Dwelling Units per Acre)		PRINCIPAL USE
	Medium Residential – 1 (*R-35)	1.24 DU/AC (1.24 dwelling units per acre**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record
	Medium Residential – 2 (*R-18)	2.42 DU/AC (2.42 dwelling units per acre**)		One (1) principal residential dwelling unit per lot of record

\* associated zoning district designation

\*\* shaded area represents 1-acre

# LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS



## MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL

**Overview:** The Multiple Residential (MR) land use designation is comprised of one distinct category as detailed below. The purpose of the Multiple Residential designation is to accommodate a range of residential housing types, including single-family, detached or attached residential homes and multiple-family residential projects.

**Intent:** This land use designation provides opportunities for the highest density, multiple family residential uses within the Town.

	MAXIMUM DENSITY	PRINCIPAL USE
Multiple Residential (*MR)	8 DU/AC	One (1) principal residential dwelling unit or multiple residential dwelling units per lot of record

\* associated zoning district designation



## OPEN SPACE

**Overview:** This designation is intended to conserve public open space to protect natural, scenic and wildlife resources and to provide recreational areas. Uses in these areas are further defined and regulated by the Town of Cave Creek Zoning Ordinance, which delineates three distinct types of Open Space zones. The Zoning Ordinance is listed in Appendix A and can be accessed via the Town's website.



## COMMERCIAL

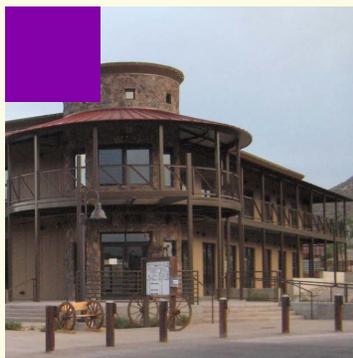
**Overview:** The Commercial land use category designates areas for the development of a wide range of commercial uses, including neighborhood-serving stores, regional commercial centers and tourism, resort-based uses along with select residential uses. Sites with this designation may be developed with a stand-alone commercial use, two or more commercial uses. Harmonious relationships between these commercial uses and adjacent uses shall be

achieved through compatibility of site design, building scale, circulation and pathway design, and architectural treatment of structures.

**Intent:** To allow for a diverse mix of business enterprises serving the needs of citizens and the tourist trade.

Commercial Locations (As shown on the Land Use Map)

- Carefree Highway and Cave Creek Road Intersection and vicinity;
- The North Boundary of the Cave Creek Regional Park (+/- 100 acres);
- 240 acres in the vicinity of North Carefree Highway between 28th Street and 34th Street;



## MIXED USE

**Overview:** This land use category offers the ability to plan for various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional and residential being co-mingled in a single project, with a coherent design and practical function. Uses may be vertically integrated (i.e. residential or office above retail) or horizontally integrated (i.e. residential or office adjacent to retail on a larger site), where appropriate based on impacts to surrounding uses and accessibility to infrastructure and public services.

## LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS



### PUBLIC FACILITY

**Overview:** The purpose of this land use category is to provide for areas within the community for the location of Public Facilities. Facilities include, but are not limited to, sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems and other Town owned utility systems as well as offices and maintenance uses.

### AGGREGATE RESOURCES

**Overview:** Per Arizona legislation, the Land Use Element shall contain identified sources of aggregates. Aggregate resources include land which is primarily used for active mining of cinder, crushed rock or stone, decomposed granite, granite, pumice and sand. Currently, no such aggregate resources, by State definition, are present within the Town of Cave Creek. See appendix B-2.



### SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

**Overview:** Specific plans are designed to implement General Plan goals and policies by designating land uses, densities, and development and design standards in more specific detail. This is accomplished by designating specific locations and intensities for land uses, and specific development standards and design guidelines. A specific plan is able to address specific areas that have unique qualities and require focused planning attention. A specific plan may be prepared

to implement any element of a General Plan. Currently, there are two adopted specific plans within the Town of Cave Creek. For each of these designated areas, development and land use are regulated by the respective specific plans.

- Town Core Plan – Listed in Appendix A and accessed via the Town’s website.
- Carefree Highway Plan – Listed in Appendix A and accessed via the Town’s website.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*  
*Top Left: Village at Surrey Hills Condominiums*  
*Top Right: Cactusshadowpress*  
*Bottom Left: Trip Advisor*  
*Bottom Right: Vermillion Promotions*

*Image Sources This Page*  
*Top: Town of Cave Creek*  
*Bottom: Trip Advisor*

## LAND USE & GROWTH GOALS & POLICIES

### GOAL

Preserve the rural and low-density land use pattern of Cave Creek.

*The character of development, varied lot sizes and the existing Desert Rural land uses of Cave Creek contribute to a small, western town look and feel.*

### Policies

- Maintain the Desert Rural land use classifications as the predominant development pattern within the Town.
- Promote project designs that are sensitive to the environment and that reflect the Town's unique interpretation of the Desert Rural lifestyle.
- Continue to permit horses and other large animals on Desert Rural residential lots two acres and larger.
- Require a significant percentage of undeveloped areas to be preserved as natural open space, while preserving individual property rights.
- Further development patterns within the Historic Town Core that maintain the character defining elements of the surrounding built and natural environment.

### GOAL

Provide opportunities for a balanced mix of land uses to meet the needs of residents and businesses

*As new development occurs, it should contribute to the fiscal vitality of the community in a manner that upholds the greater quality of the Town so that Cave Creek will continue to remain a desirable place to live and work or visit.*

### Policies

- Encourage and support projects of exceptional design and architectural quality or societal benefit (historic or environmental sustainability).
- From an economic perspective, target new commercial and employment opportunities that enhance the community's sales tax base, provides security for the fiscal health of the Town, and contributes to the needs and quality of life of residents.
- Support commercial growth opportunities that help to capture more local spending.
- Foster the Historic Town Core's market niche of local retail, restaurants, entertainment and tourist businesses and attractions.
- Promote the high traffic areas of the Historic Town Core along Cave Creek Road for the primary tourist specialty and entertainment markets. Those areas adjacent to the high traffic areas, foster office, civic/cultural and neighborhood retail and service uses.
- Foster uses along the Cave Creek Road / Carefree Highway commercial corridor that complement and support the entertainment and tourist activities found in the Historic Town Core.
- Ensure that new land use projects are built with adequate utility and Town infrastructure capacity to support them in accordance with applicable Town ordinances and service areas.
- Recognize the benefit of home-based businesses to support our citizens.

## GOAL

Support a diverse range of housing types that meet the needs of all ages, incomes, and abilities and that are sensitive to the environment.

## Policies

- Provide adequate housing sites suitable for residential development of all types of housing units that are properly located, taking into consideration adjacent land uses, environmental constraints, community facilities, and public services.
- As multi-family development is proposed, prioritize such development within land use areas currently dedicated for this use (i.e. Multiple Residential, Commercial, Mixed Use) prior to changing the use of any alternative land use areas.
- Discourage large residential developments that lack place based design elements and that are uniform in design.
- Ensure that existing residential areas are appropriately protected from incompatible land uses.
- Ensure appropriate transition zones, buffers, and/or screening are provided between dissimilar land uses and development intensities, especially between rural/medium residential areas and high-density residential areas, as well as non-residential land uses.
- Encourage the development of energy-efficient housing.

## GOAL

Encourage recreation, public and civic facilities that are rural in character and design.

## Policies

- Promote the development of parks, civic and public facilities, where economically feasible that can support active lifestyles and public events or gatherings.
- Provide low-impact recreational facilities that meet the needs of all age groups and conform to the surrounding environment.

## GOAL

Support regional land use proposals that have the potential to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the town.

## Policies

- Participate in the regional enhanced notification process to review and provide comments on land use, infrastructure or utility proposals that have the potential to impact Cave Creek or its residents, especially in association with areas along the edges of the Town's municipal limits.
- Participate in State, County, local and regional activities that may impact the development patterns or lifestyles of Cave Creek.

## LAND USE & GROWTH ACTIONS

### ACTIONS

- Update the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance as needed to ensure Desert Rural development patterns as established in this General Plan are maintained.
- Investigate possibilities of establishing a new zoning district to allow ranch uses on DR-43 properties that are currently in undeveloped areas and not affecting current DR-43 uses.
- Review the requirements of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to permit all types of housing in a manner consistent with community desires, land use capacity, impact on projected water supplies and legal requirements.
- Evaluate and update performance standards for home-based businesses as allowed in the Town of Cave Creek Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the goals and policies of this General Plan.
- Consider a design review process that helps to promote exceptional design practices in the Town Core, Carefree Highway Corridor and proposed residential subdivisions. Consider the incorporation of guidelines and incentives that promote higher design which are tied to measurable community design benefits and consistent with overall base zoning allowances.
- Develop additional specific plans for areas that are identified through public dialogue as needing enhanced design or land use guidance.
- Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions (i.e. Carefree, Scottsdale, Phoenix and Maricopa County) to better understand the impacts of proposed development and to define mutually beneficial solutions to mitigate potential development impacts that are not consistent with this General plan.

*Image Sources This Page  
Bob Hughes*



# COST OF DEVELOPMENT

Providing quality municipal services to the residents and businesses of the Town of Cave Creek is of critical importance. As growth occurs, resources need to be allocated to maintain existing systems and services, while simultaneously making necessary increases to accommodate new demand. The Town has historically favored growth in a manner that is congruent with the rural character of the Town and that requires little or no extension of services. Development that occurs within or directly adjacent to existing infrastructure or service areas is the most cost-effective since much of the investment in providing those services has already been made. Building outside of existing service areas is very expensive to the community unless the vast majority of costs are borne by the development entity that prompts the need for expansion.

State law requires municipalities to identify various funding and financing mechanisms that may be used to finance additional public services and infrastructure necessary, beneficial, and useful to serve new development. The purpose of this Topic is to identify possible funding implementation options and establish policies that will clarify the roles of the public and private sectors to ensure development pays its proportionate share toward the cost of additional public service needs generated by new development, with exceptions where the public's interest is being served.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

The following items outline several options commonly used for funding public projects (i.e. Capital Improvement Projects), as well as mechanisms to ensure any private developer whose project shares in the benefit of such improvement would be responsible for repayment of a determined proportionate amount of the overall cost. Additionally, the Town has flexibility to adjust funding strategies as alternative methods become available or legislative changes occur. Currently available funding options include:

### Pay-As-You-Go Out Of Current Revenues

This is generally considered the optimum way to pay for service expansion. Current revenues for municipalities generally consist of local sales and use taxes, state-shared revenues, user fees, and grants. These revenues are usually necessary to fund day-to-day municipal operations. While all organizations would prefer to pay for items with current revenues, this is not often feasible. This is especially the case for municipalities since revenues usually follow development while most service expansions must occur prior to or simultaneously with development.

*Image Sources This Page  
Top: AZ Central  
Middle: The Foothills Focus  
Bottom: Surgent*



## In Lieu Of Fees

In Lieu of fees are dollars collected from developers when, for a variety of reasons, dedications are impractical. They are different from impact fees and are not as flexible because the expenditure of those funds is for a particular use. For example, houses in several new developments may pay a fee for the future construction of a regional park in lieu of the developer(s) constructing the park at the time of development.

## Development Fees & Capacity Charges

A development fee is a mechanism in which a fee is assessed to new development so as to ensure that the development satisfies its share for the cost of required additional public service needs. A development impact fee schedule for the Town of Cave Creek was revised in October 2014 in response to new State law. Fee categories that address wastewater and water are now identified as Capacity Charges. The Capacity Charges will only apply to new development that will use these services.

## User Fees

These are fees that are charged for services such as water, sewer, park and recreation or facilities venue admissions. The fee structure can, not only cover operating costs, but also service the debt for financing expanded services.

## General Obligation Bonds

The most commonly utilized large project municipal financing method in the United States is the General Obligation Bond. This is an inexpensive way to finance projects because the bond's repayment is based on the taxing authority of the municipality and backed up by real property. Voters would have to approve a property tax to support the issuance of any General Obligation Bonds.

## Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are a method of borrowing to finance services expansions. The bonds are paid back through future revenues that are legally pledged to the bond issuer. Revenues generally utilized for debt service are privilege taxes (sales tax), Highway User Revenue Funds (payments made to municipalities from state taxes), and user fees. Use of these bonds must be approved by a public vote, and they are typically more costly to the municipality than General Obligation Bonds since future revenues, which can be uncertain, are the method of security and repayment.

## Improvement Districts

Improvement Districts can be formed to implement a specific improvement for a particular area of the community as a Special Improvement District or more broadly as a Community Facilities District. The property owners in the area to be benefited by the project can agree to assess themselves to pay back the cost of improvements as a "private" property tax. An improvement district can be designated by the Town. This funding mechanism is typically used for neighborhood road improvements, street lighting, utilities and downtown revitalization programs and others.



## Certificates Of Participation/ Municipal Property Corporations

These are methods of borrowing that are paid back by municipal revenues. They are usually not legally tied to a specific revenue stream, such as revenue bonds. These methods can be utilized by action of the Town Council and are not generally subject to public vote.

## Special Tax Districts

Commonly called Tax Increment Financing in other states, this funding mechanism is typically utilized for redevelopment and revitalization purposes. Arizona Statutes currently limit the availability of this funding mechanism, but changes have been proposed that may allow them to be used more broadly in the future.

## Loans

A bank loan is a personal loan that's issued by either a local or national bank. Recently, local governments have begun to use this financing tool more frequently. Government loans are another source of funds for financing capital projects. Although the number of government agencies that provide loans is diminishing, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Water Infrastructure Funding Authority (WIFA) are still large providers.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- The Town may experience increased demands for service from new development. Any new contemplated service will require a cost benefit analysis and will be subject to approval by Council.
- Additional information regarding planning for Public Facilities & Services is provided in the A Safe, Responsive & Connected Community chapter of this Plan.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Top: Long Realty*

*Middle: Compass Real Estate*

*Bottom: Foothills Community Council*

*Image Sources This Page*

*Top: Youtube*

*Middle: Yelp*

*Bottom: MBI*



## **COST OF DEVELOPMENT GOALS & POLICIES**

### **GOAL**

Minimize the town's costs of services and facilities

### **Policies**

- Promote development in areas with existing infrastructure and services that have available capacity. Particularly, in the Town Core where infrastructure and services appropriate to commercial uses are available.
- New development is subject to an analysis process that examines water requirements and water usage.
- Encourage residents currently on septic systems to connect to the Wastewater Treatment system, where practical.
- Incorporate grants, in-kind donations and partnerships, when possible and practical, to defray the cost of necessary expansions to the Town of public and municipal services and facilities.

### **GOAL**

Preserve the existing quality and expand the level of public facility and service provision.

*Cave Creek residents expect that the services they receive from the Town will continue to enhance their quality of life.*

### **Policies**

- Continue to recover through fees, the costs for the expansion of municipal services and facilities associated with new development.
- Require new development to satisfy its fair share of service and infrastructure costs.

### **GOAL**

Maintain and enhance the fiscal viability of the town

*Keeping the Town fiscally viable will enable it to continue to provide services, facilities and other benefits to residents that will enhance their quality of life and help to protect the value of their property.*

### **Policies**

- Maintain and enhance tax revenue streams.
- Explore and monitor partnerships with other entities that achieve economies of scale in the provision of municipal services.

## COST OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

### ACTIONS

- Periodically update the Town's development fee/capacity charge ordinance.
- Engage local State representatives to promote regulations that give communities more control on determination and application of impact fees.
- Work with residents on septic systems to form a Sewer Improvement District, where appropriate.
- Continue to support the Carefree/Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Bureau, local businesses, and other private and public entities for their efforts in making Cave Creek a desirable destination.
- Continue to explore and seek out grants appropriate to the Town's needs.



*Image Source: Shutterstock*



# Vital Environment

The Town of Cave Creek is perhaps located amongst the most beautiful scenery in the Valley. Positioned within the Sonoran Desert adjacent to the Tonto National Forest, and a gateway for the Cave Creek Regional Park and the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, this is a unique and diverse landscape that draws visitors from all around the world. The Town is not merely positioned in this location, however; but instead has an interdependent relationship with it. The environment provides the community with its historic roots, eclectic identity, renowned tourism, economic opportunities, first-class recreation, and high quality of life. Without this environment, the Town of Cave Creek would not be the unique community that it is today, and the Community Survey reflected an overwhelming majority of residents agree. Recognizing this valuable asset, Cave Creek will continue to give back to the environment through its efforts toward preservation.

This theme addresses the Town's plans to preserve open spaces, natural resources, and water resources within the Town and throughout the Planning Area. Within each topic the goals, policies, and actions layout a roadmap for enhancing open space connectivity, strengthening development guidelines that protect natural resources, and protecting/increasing water stores to build a water-confident future. Multi-jurisdictional cooperation and planning for the protection and management of resources are imperative for the residents of both today and tomorrow. As the Town moves forward, they will work with all related parties to ensure the community's resources are balanced with its desire for conservation.

*Image Source: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

# NATURAL RESOURCES

This topic describes the natural surroundings and environmental quality within the Town of Cave Creek. It contains goals policies, and actions aimed at protecting the unique natural setting and conditions of the planning area and maintaining an environmental ethic in future growth. Growing Smarter (Arizona law) dictates that this topic addresses the potential effects of the other plan topics on the environment, including natural resources and air and water quality.

The location of the planning area within the high Sonoran Desert landscape and the rural character of the Town of Cave Creek are important reasons why residents choose to live here. Consequently, residents play a key role in developing and implementing a General Plan that preserves both their surroundings and their quality of life. The Town of Cave Creek is committed to maintaining strong environmental values and protecting its natural surroundings and environmental quality.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

The Town of Cave Creek planning area ranges in elevation from approximately 1,800 feet to over 3,900 feet, with a varied topography that includes low mountains and hills, valleys, and broad alluvial fans. A substantial portion of the planning area has relatively steep slopes and mountainous topography.

The planning area is located within the Cave Creek drainage basin. Almost all drainage originating in the planning area discharges to Cave Creek Wash, either within or south of the planning area. Most drainages are ephemeral in nature, supporting surface flows only in response to storm runoff. Portions of the upper reaches of Cave Creek Wash are perennial or intermittent. Intermittent reaches are also found along some of the tributaries to Cave Creek Wash. Other significant drainages in the planning area include Galloway Wash, Grapevine Wash, Willow Springs Wash, Rogers Wash, Apache Wash, and Rowe Wash. Springs, many of them seasonal or intermittent, are of historic value and provide valued habitat.

The planning area is also located in the Arizona Upland Sonoran Desert scrub biome and supports Palo Verde-Mixed Cacti-Mixed Scrub in the upland areas and Sonoran Riparian Scrub along drainage ways. Riparian vegetation is further classified as either Xeroriparian Mixed Scrub or Mixed-Broadleaf Woodland. The riparian areas may also support limited wetlands formation. Special status species in the planning area include protected plants and special interest wildlife species.



*Image Sources This Page*

*Top: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

*Middle: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

*Bottom: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- It is important to protect unique and sensitive riparian environment including plant and wildlife habitats along Cave Creek Wash and its tributaries on public lands and to seek the cooperation of private landowners in this endeavor. Controlling non-motorized access to these areas is desirable.
- Recreational use of the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area should be restricted to public uses that display and preserve the natural environment.
- When considering projects, special consideration must be given to cultural and sacred sites, springs, and caves.
- The night sky is a crucial natural resource for Cave Creek. Light pollution is a major factor in the ability to see stars and enjoy our night sky. Therefore, serious efforts should be made to preserve the starry appearance of the night sky.

## NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS & POLICIES

### GOAL

Protect important natural surroundings from development

*The Town's natural surroundings are one of the cornerstones that shape our development pattern, lifestyle, and economy. We must protect and conserve them to ensure that the Town of Cave Creek remains a desirable place to live and visit.*

### Policies

- Conserve mountains and hillsides in the planning area by discouraging development on slopes of 15% or greater.
- Limit disturbance of stream courses and minimize impacts to riparian habitats as well as wildlife habitat and movement corridors.
- Encourage placement of utilities underground and adjacent to roads.
- Through effective planning and site plan review, minimize the development of road, trail, or utility crossings that would have negative effects on native vegetation or wetlands in the planning area.
- Coordinate wash conservation corridors or drainage easements with the Town and other jurisdictional agencies and discourage development in them.
- Encourage private and public open spaces to be adjacent to drainages and contiguous with protected natural open space on contiguous lots.
- Discourage the use of constructed channels in stream courses.
- Discourage the intrusion of development into delineated jurisdictional waterways.
- Work cooperatively with the Desert Foothills Land Trust, Maricopa County and other stakeholders on common environmental objectives.

### GOAL

Retain the natural character of the planning area

*The character of the Sonoran Desert, defined by the vegetation, wildlife, views, sounds and dark skies is integral to the enjoyment of the Town of Cave Creek residents.*

### Policies

- Encourage the use of indigenous plants for landscaping; limit the use of exotic plants and turf to areas immediately adjacent to residences.
- Encourage the salvage and relocation of significant vegetation.
- Protect and conserve native plant species in accordance with applicable laws.
- Proactively support efforts that help to manage the spread of invasive plant species such as globe chamomile, also referred to as stinknet.
- Retain natural character along roadways and avoid disturbance of significant vegetation such as large trees and saguaros to the extent possible during roadway design.
- Use only the indigenous plant palette adopted by the Town for revegetation of roadsides and medians. Encourage local salvage and revegetation.
- Preserve our dark skies from inappropriate, excessive, or unnecessary artificial light.
- Preserve our quiet skies.
- Support projects, programs and regulations to control and abate noise generated by stationary and mobile sources.

## GOAL

Preserve habitat for wildlife in the planning area.

*The habitats provided to wildlife by open spaces are fundamental to the character of the Town of Cave Creek.*

## Policies

- Limit development densities in areas surrounding or adjacent to large natural open space areas such as the Cave Creek Regional Park, the Tonto National Forest, Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, and significant stream courses.
- Progressively decrease development density with greater proximity to open spaces and wildlife habitats.
- Enhance wildlife habitat by encouraging open spaces on contiguous lots.
- Consider wildlife connectivity when reviewing development proposals and give special care to avoid fragmentation of drainages, including riparian areas and dry/ephemeral washes
- Wildlife-friendly fencing and crossings should be utilized where appropriate and feasible.

## GOAL

Protect and improve water and air quality in the planning area.

*Protection of water quality is important to support a variety of uses, including human consumption, wildlife habitat, aquatic species and recreation. Clean air protects human health and maintains unaltered views of the natural setting.*

## Policies

- Protect ground and surface water resources from pollutants.
- Monitor the implementation of best management practices under the Federal National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System permit program for commercial businesses and construction sites.
- Ensure dust control measures during construction activities (i.e., watering or use of dust suppressants and clean up dirt tracked onto public roadways) to minimize fugitive dust emissions.
- Defer to Maricopa County Flood Control Regulations any proposed developments adjacent to floodplains and floodways.

*Image Source This Page  
Bob Hughes*

## NATURAL RESOURCES ACTIONS

### ACTIONS

- Continue to work with property owners, the Desert Foothills Land Trust, and other entities to preserve natural and aesthetic views of our hillsides and mountain slopes.
- Update the plat and site plan review process to ensure they include current and consistent procedures to identify and protect native vegetation, native washes, and defined wetlands by limiting crossings.
- When washes must be crossed, encourage wash crossings as perpendicular to the wash as is reasonable, and require trails be parallel to washes in all cases unless proved unavoidable.
- Update the plat and site plan review process to ensure they include current and consistent procedures to identify and protect wash conservation corridors and drainage easements.
- Follow the Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guidelines, as applicable, and update them regularly to maintain consistency between Town policy desires and specific development controls. The Technical Design Guidelines are listed in Appendix A and can be accessed via the Town's website.
- Continue to work with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport and regional airports to help ensure that the Town is not negatively impacted by the FAA or other designated flight paths.
- Prepare and distribute information brochures or other media to educate new homeowners on the ecological and aesthetic values of using indigenous vegetation for landscaping.
- Continue to implement landscape requirements, which incorporate an approved plant list.
- Continue to increase awareness of the value of maintaining optimal night dark sky conditions through focused educational outreach, newspaper articles, brochures, etc.
- Continue to officially institute an ongoing education program, with the assistance of local community groups, to inform current residents and businesses of the Town's lighting ordinance and proper application of correct lighting, including light shielding, light temperature and usage to meet safety, security, and utility needs as well as reduce environmental impacts.
- Continue to evaluate the guideline requirements and benefits of becoming an International Dark Sky Association certified community.
- Ensure noise compatibility is considered as part of the land use planning and development process, recognizing the community impact, local attitudes, and characteristics of the surrounding environment.

# OPEN SPACES

The objective of open space is to enhance the livability, character and appreciation of the Cave Creek community by preserving as many of its natural characteristics as possible. Within the Town of Cave Creek, these amenities help reflect the livability and character of the Town, and its desire to protect as much open space as possible for future generations of citizens and wildlife to enjoy.

Two components, preservation, and development must be considered together or neither will be successfully implemented in achieving the Town's Vision. The Open Space topic describes the Town's ethic for preserving publicly owned open space and for encouraging conservation of open space on private property in concert with development. This topic documents those lands that have been or are intended to be, preserved as open space.

Open Space has been defined differently in the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. For this topic, Open Space essentially describes the natural land areas, wash corridors, steep slopes, and peaks that have defined Cave Creek since before the community's settlement in 1870. As Cave Creek's attraction as a destination for tourists and incoming residents alike continues to grow, the preservation of the Sonoran Desert in which the Town of Cave Creek is located becomes imperative.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

The Town of Cave Creek abuts the southern edge of the Tonto National Forest and is in the transition zone below the Colorado Plateau. This area includes varied high Sonoran Desert topography ranging from gently rolling hills to steep mountainous areas. The Sonoran Desert is integral to providing connectivity for wildlife corridors, as well as trail connections across the Town. Coyotes, javelina, deer, mountain lions, and bobcats use the wash corridors and prescribed undisturbed areas across private property.

The Town's Zoning Ordinance supports preservation through the requirement of a 12-foot Native Habitat Corridor around the perimeter of all Desert Rural Zoned properties. Further, the ordinance establishes minimum undisturbed land percentages for residentially and commercially zoned properties. The establishment of these areas is encouraged to be contiguous with undisturbed areas on adjacent properties to allow for greater connectivity for wildlife corridors. The Subdivision Ordinance requires an assessment of Environmentally Sensitive Land before planning residential subdivisions. It includes an incentive whereby density may be transferred to provide for and to encourage greater areas of open space which can be conserved through a platting process.

Another way the Town has worked to conserve open space is through annexation. In 2008, the Town completed three annexations of State Land with the implementation of three pre-annexation agreements (Rogers Wash, Willow Springs, and Apache Springs) and one Development Agreement for State Land already within the Town boundaries (the Core Site Land). Those agreements describe the process for preserving and developing those lands over twenty years.

Table 5: Cave Creek Major Open Space

DESCRIPTION	ACREAGE	OWNERSHIP
Cave Creek Regional Park	2,730	Maricopa County
Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area	2,235	State/County/Town of Cave Creek
Rogers Wash	1,900	Arizona State Land Dept
Core Site Land Within the Town	1,125	Arizona State Land Dept
Willow Springs	645	Arizona State Land Dept
Desert Foothills Land Trust Protected Land Within the Town *	375	Desert Foothills Land Trust
Apache Springs	360	Arizona State Land Dept
Black Mountain Preserve	75	Maricopa County
Desert Awareness Park	29	Town of Cave Creek
Saguaro Hill	6	Town of Cave Creek/ Desert Foothills Land Trust
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,480</b>	

Source: Town of Cave Creek

\*Acreage includes the Desert Enclave Preserve, Go John Canyon Preserve, and the Jewel of the Creek Preserve.

## Preserved Open Space

The Preserved Open Space areas listed here are connected by approximately 50 miles of the Town's non-motorized trail system for use by residents and visitors. For more information regarding trails and connectivity, please refer to Chapter 5: A Safe, Responsive & Connected Community.

### CAVE CREEK REGIONAL PARK – 2,730 acres

This 4.5 square-mile (2,730 acres) area is currently under Maricopa County jurisdiction. The Cave Creek Regional Park includes a visitor's center, commercial horseback riding, ramadas, picnic areas, horse trailer parking, and non-motorized trails used by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians and is an important open space resource. The Cave Creek Regional Park is primarily oriented towards use as a recreational and a nature study area. The rodeo grounds, currently controlled by the Town of Cave Creek and located at the southwest corner of the Park, have contributed toward establishing the Cave Creek Regional Park as an important equestrian area in the region. The Cave Creek Regional Park Trails are connected to the Town of Cave Creek's Trail System.

### SPUR CROSS RANCH CONSERVATION AREA – 2,235 acres

In September 2000, the citizens of the Town of Cave Creek overwhelmingly supported a bond to provide funding for the purchase and maintenance of Spur Cross Ranch, now referred to as Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area (SCRCA). The SCRCA is a 2,235-acre area located at the northern end of the Town of Cave Creek. Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area includes unique stream features and habitat along Cave Creek Wash, numerous archaeological sites, and Elephant Mountain, which rises to a height of 3,900 feet.

The Town currently funds the maintenance of the SCRCA. The SCRCA is operated by the Maricopa County Parks Department. The Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area Master Plan includes the following vision statement: "To protect and enhance the conservation area's archaeological, historical and natural resources including the integrity of its ecological processes, while providing opportunities for non-motorized public day-use recreation and education." The Jewel of the Creek Preserve, managed by the Desert Foothills Land Trust, has provided access contiguous with SCRCA within the creek's most important habitat.

### BLACK MOUNTAIN SUMMIT PRESERVE -75 acres

Black Mountain Summit Preserve is approximately 235 acres sprawling across both Cave Creek (approximately 75 acres) and Carefree (160 acres). The Preserve is owned and managed by Maricopa County. Public Access to the property is from the north through Cave Creek on a trail that is located along the School House Road alignment within a 66' wide Bureau of Land Management Patent Reservation for a public easement.

### DESERT AWARENESS PARK – 29 acres

Desert Awareness Park was established in 1994. The approximately 29-acre park is located in the Town Core and includes an amphitheater, interpretive center, desert landscape demonstration garden, and restrooms. Its northern boundary is generally located one-third of a mile north of Cave Creek Road. Its eastern boundary is an alignment with Tom Darlington Drive and its western boundary is approximately one-fourth of a mile west of the Vermeersch Road alignment.

### SAGUARO HILL – 6 acres

Overlooking downtown Cave Creek is a unique hill known as "Saguaro Hill", named for the hundreds of saguaro cactus. This hill is a Cave Creek landmark and was the first land purchased by the Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT) in 1997. In 2007, in partnership with the Town of Cave Creek, an additional two acres were added to the east side of the preserve, successfully creating approximately 6 acres of permanently conserved land for the community.

### DESERT FOOTHILLS LAND TRUST (DFLT) PRESERVES - 375 acres

The DFLT is a well-respected organization working to conserve the most sensitive and important open spaces in the North Valley including areas in the Town of Cave Creek. Part of their Mission statement is to conserve and steward sensitive lands and species for the survival of the Sonoran Desert, and especially sensitive riparian areas.

In addition to Saguaro Hill, the DFLT has preserved approximately 375 acres within the Town of Cave Creek boundaries, including well-known areas such as Desert Enclave Preserve, Go John Canyon Preserve and the Jewel of the Creek Preserve.



## Arizona State Trust Lands

Resolution Numbers R2008-12 Willow Springs, R2008-13 Rogers Wash, R2008-14 Apache Wash, and R2008-15 Core Site Land were adopted by the Cave Creek Town Council on March 17, 2008. These Resolutions authorize the State of Arizona and the Town of Cave Creek to enter into a 20-year term agreement to facilitate the annexation, zoning designation, and development of these State Trust Lands (see pg. 22).

The Pre-Annexation Development Agreements and Core-Site Development Agreement that are referenced in the aforementioned resolutions are acknowledged in Appendix A of this General Plan.

Table 6: Arizona State Trust Lands

DESCRIPTION	ACREAGE
Core Site Land	1,125
Rogers Wash	1,900
Willow Springs	645
Apache Springs	360
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,030</b>

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- In 2008, Cave Creek entered into an agreement with the Arizona State Land Department to acquire 4,030 acres and preserve it as open space. The Town is actively working to secure creative funding to purchase the land while continuing its preservation.
- The Town continues to explore ways to protect open space through intergovernmental efforts and private property sales.
- Potential exists for the development of additional recreational uses to supplement the existing Cave Creek Regional Park, subject to fiscal resources. These uses may include passive uses, such as multi-use non-motorized trails, or more developed recreational facilities.
- Preservation of natural wildlife land bridges (corridors) between major preserved open space areas.

### Image Sources This Page

Top: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation

Middle: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation

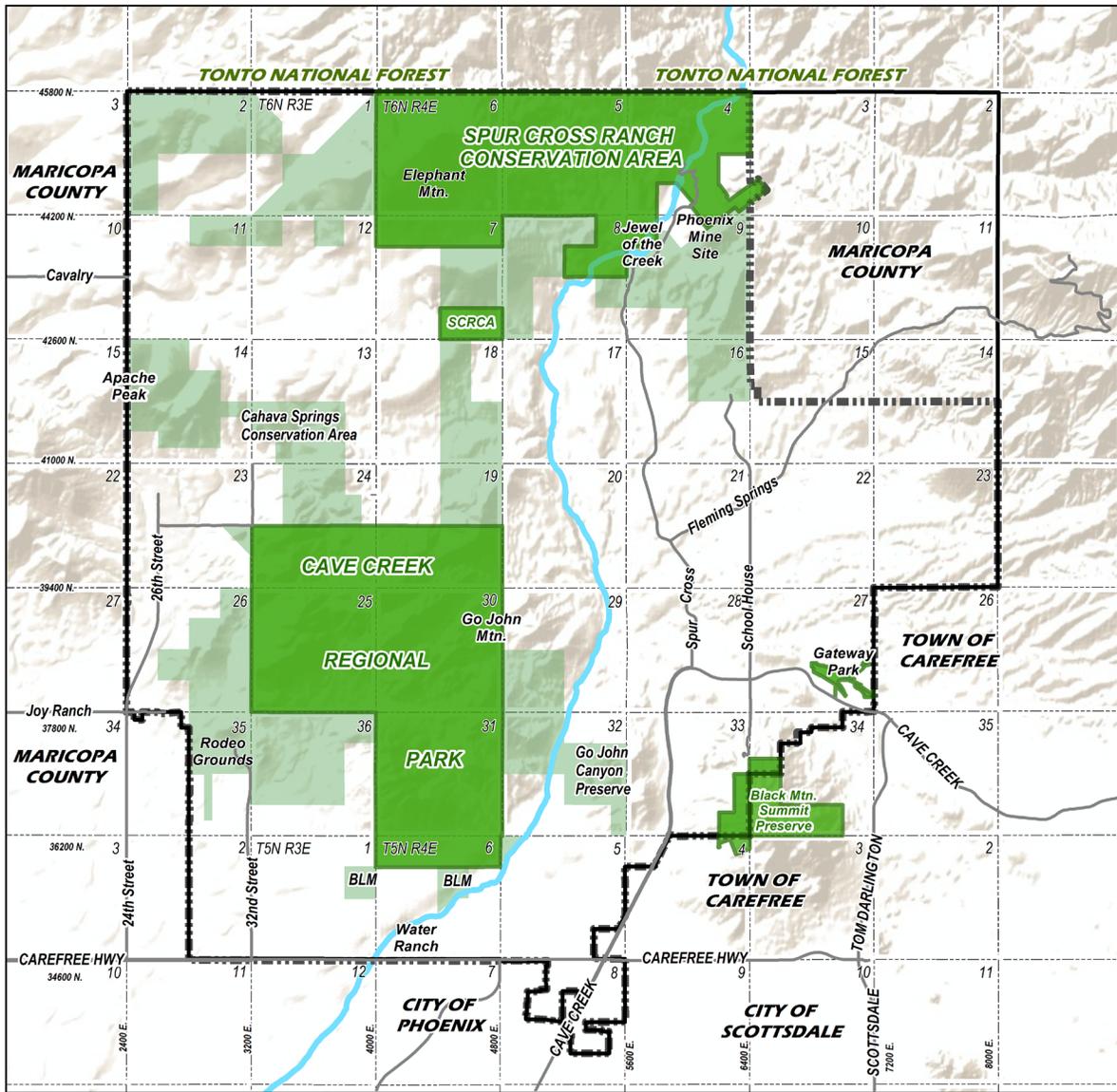
Bottom: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation

# OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Natural open space is one of the principal elements of Cave Creek development pattern, lifestyle, values, and economy. During the General Plan outreach process residents expressed how important it is to protect and conserve open space to ensure that Cave Creek remains a unique and desirable place to live and visit.

In that regard, the Open Space Framework Plan governs future decisions about how Cave Creek will sustain natural undeveloped areas for the enjoyment of today's residents, as well as future generations. It aims to protect, maintain, and enhance Cave Creek's open space system, by defining strategic opportunities to link independent open space areas. These linkages within the community also create a framework for recreation opportunities and greater connectivity to regional open space areas.

To further support this Open Space Framework Plan, the Town has identified three kinds of open space which are described in the Town of Cave Creek Zoning Ordinance (The Zoning Ordinance is listed in Appendix A and can be accessed via the Town's website).



## Legend

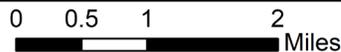
- Cave Creek Municipal Planning Area
- Cave Creek Municipal Limits
- SECTION LINES
- Major Roads
- Cave Creek
- Open Space
- Park Boundary



### TOWN OF CAVE CREEK GENERAL PLAN - OPEN SPACE



Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_



## OPEN SPACES GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

### GOAL

Conserve natural open space associated with land development.

### Policies

- Prioritize potential conservation areas for acquisition based on their proximity to existing conservation areas or natural open space. These areas include Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, Cave Creek Regional Park, and the Tonto National Forest.
- Prioritize the protection of areas that connect existing and planned open space areas identified in this Plan or other documents acknowledged in this Plan from development. These areas could include landscape and geological features, washes, mountains/hills, and vegetation in the planning area.
- Prioritize the protection of those open spaces adjacent to existing open spaces or conservation areas identified in this Plan or other documents acknowledged in this Plan from development.
- Encourage collaboration with partner organizations that can assist in preserving and acquiring open space.

### GOAL

Respect public and privately-owned open space by conserving and protecting the geology, flora, fauna, and water resources within them.

### Policies

- Prioritize the protection of those areas that have significant natural landscape features, vegetation, wildlife habitat or activity, or areas that provide views of the mountains or other important features identified in this Plan or other documents acknowledged in this Plan from development.
- Prioritize the protection of areas that contain, or directly impact, water resources from development.

### Actions

- Continue to define strategies for funding and acquiring open space.
- Meet with development applicants early in the entitlement process to review open space initiatives.
- Meet with ASLD regularly to review current development conditions and to collaborate on long range planning policy.
- Continue to collaborate with the Desert Foothills Land Trust.
- Encourage residents, either as individuals or through an organization, to contribute to the care and maintenance of established open space areas.

# WATER RESOURCES

Planning for the Town's future requires proper management of current and future water supplies. The Town is committed to providing safe, reliable, and cost-effective water services. By assessing future water demands and identifying new water resource needs, the Town will be able to plan for and meet the requirements of future development, while ensuring the needs of our current customers. The Water Resource section of the General Plan outlines a set of desirable goals and policies to help ensure sustainable water supplies for the Town.

The Town of Cave Creek, with voter approval, acquired the assets of the Cave Creek Water Company. It also acquired the Desert Hills Water Company. The Town incorporated both water operations into the Town's municipal services by the end of 2007. The Town purchased the water companies to control this vital resource and to ensure the future water needs of Cave Creek. The Town also provides wastewater service for a portion of the Town's residents and businesses.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

The Town of Cave Creek's Utility Department provides water services within the Town's municipal limits. The Town also provides water services to areas outside the municipal boundaries including the western portions of Carefree and unincorporated areas to the west of the Town limits. As of 2019, the Utilities Department served 2,775 accounts in the main Cave Creek water system, which includes 538 Carefree accounts. The Town also served 1,778 accounts in the Desert Hills water system. Additionally, the Town has a small number of residents that receive hauled water from two water standpipes, one located in Cave Creek and the other in Desert Hills. Within both the Cave Creek and Desert Hills service areas, there are many homes and businesses with private wells that are not connected to the Town's water systems.

The Utilities Department also provides wastewater service to 729 accounts, of which 595 are residential homes. The treated reclaimed water is currently used to provide irrigation water for the Rancho Mañana golf course. In 2009, the Town entered into a long-term financial agreement with the golf course to provide at least 330 acre-feet (AF) of irrigation water annually. To-date the Town has used a combination of reclaimed water, backwash water from the water treatment plant, raw CAP water, and untreated well water to meet this irrigation obligation.

The primary water supply for the Cave Creek Water Service Area is renewable surface water from the Central Arizona Project (CAP). The town has a 16-inch raw water pipeline that extends over 12 miles from the CAP canal, located near Cave Creek and Deer Valley Road, to the Town's water treatment plant. The approximately 600-foot rise in elevation from the CAP canal to the water treatment plant is addressed through four in-line booster stations.



The Cave Creek CAP water allocation of 2,606 AF/yr. is used to supply connections within the Town's municipal limits and the lots in Carefree connected to the town's distribution system. Some of this allocation is also used to supply Desert Hills accounts. In addition, the Town has an agreement with the Town of Carefree to treat and deliver a portion of Carefree's CAP allocation.

Prior to the water treatment plant being constructed to treat CAP surface water, the Cave Creek water system relied on groundwater wells. The Town has eight well sites. None of these wells are currently operational. Until recently, one of these wells had been used to provide supplemental irrigation water to the Rancho Mañana golf course. Due to the deterioration of the well casing, it is no longer operational. In the past, some of these wells had been found to have high levels of arsenic. As a result, the raw water from three wells had been piped to the water treatment plant site for treatment.

The Town has the right to pump groundwater from its wells. However, the Town's withdrawal of groundwater could be detrimental to the aquifer supporting all the wells in the area and potentially create water availability problems for residents on private wells. This aquifer is designated as the Carefree Sub-Basin aquifer. In planning future water resources the Town needs to evaluate the prospects for future use of its groundwater wells. This analysis would help outline if wells could assist the Town meet its contractual requirements to provide irrigation water to the Rancho Mañana golf course and help to reduce Desert Hills reliance on transfers from Cave Creek's CAP allocation to meet the needs of accounts in this system.

The Desert Hills service area was originally supplied only with groundwater wells. Desert Hills currently has no CAP allocation. At present, there are three active wells in the Desert Hills system. When the Town took over operating this system it had to address elevated arsenic levels in one well. The Town completed improvements to allow treated CAP water from the Cave Creek water system to blend with the well water to ensure the system met water quality regulations. Another issue facing the Desert Hills system is that over the past decade, the pumping rate from the wells has been dropping to a current combined total of 330 gallons per minute or 533 AF/yr. As a result in addition to the CAP water sent to the Desert Hills system for blending with well water to reduce arsenic concentrations, Cave Creek has used an increasing amount of its CAP allocation to meet the growth in the Desert Hills system water demands. In 2006, for example, 127 AF of Cave Creek's CAP water was used to service Desert Hills accounts. Thirteen years later in 2019 the amount of CAP water needed for Desert Hills increased to 453 AF.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Top: MBI*

*Middle: Town of Cave Creek*

*Bottom: Alex Nadesan*

*Image Sources This Page*

*Top: Alex Nadesan*

*Middle: Town of Cave Creek*

*Bottom: Alex Nadesan*





Concerned about the growth in both water systems, in December 2017, Town Council adopted a Water Policy to ensure safe and reliable water supplies for new and existing customers. The Policy requires all new Subdivision developments to provide evidence of new external water resources before construction can begin. All individual residential and non-residential lots requesting 1-inch or smaller water meters have to be evaluated to determine if water is physically available or what improvements would be required to provide service. In cases where individual meters larger than 1-inch are requested, or if the aggregate number of meters requested exceeds the volume of water supplied from a one inch meter, a water master plan must be submitted demonstrating either (i) a source of water supplied from a source other than existing Town water supplies or (ii) relying on water provided by the Town pursuant to a Development Agreement approved by the Town Council in the exercise of its sole discretion whereby a site plan applicant pays the Town on an annual basis for the right to draw against the Town's water allotment or otherwise complies with the terms of the Development Agreement

As part of managing our Water Resources, the Town is concerned about the ongoing drought on the Colorado River system. The Colorado River system has been experiencing a drought for a number of years. If the water level in Lake Mead continues to drop, a shortage will be declared that will reduce the amount of water that Arizona can withdraw from the river. While Cave Creek is only a small portion of the CAP supply in the State, any shortage could impact the Town. The Town does have a Drought Management Plan to help provide guidance in case a shortage is declared.

The physical ability to treat the Town's CAP supply is also an area of concern for the Town. Currently a single 16-inch raw water pipeline runs from the CAP Canal to the Town's water treatment plant. This pipeline is a key "lifeline" for the Town. Its condition and maintenance are vital to a reliable water supply. In the past few years, an assessment was completed on the pipeline and booster stations. The assessment outlined needed improvements and the Town is moving forward with the recommendations. Once completed, these improvements will greatly increase the reliability of the Town's CAP raw water delivery system. In addition, the Town has recently undertaken projects to improve the water treatment process and is focused on enhancing the maintenance of both the water and wastewater systems.

In 2019, Cave Creek entered into a water service agreement with the City of Phoenix. This agreement allows Phoenix to divert, treat and deliver a portion of the Town's CAP allocation. The initial delivery rate is limited to 1.44 million gallons per day – but this represents almost half of the current maximum summer water demands for the Town. Once the connection to the Phoenix water system is complete, the ability to request access to the Phoenix system will greatly increase the ability of the Town's water system to respond to emergency needs due to unplanned outages. The agreement calls for completion of the improvement by 2024.

The agreement with Phoenix also provides a mechanism to store up to 500 AF/yr. of the Town's CAP water supply in underground areas. Currently, the Town is not using our entire 2,606 AF annual CAP allocation. By storing the excess allocation, the Town would start to generate long-term storage credits. The storage credit could be used by the Town as backup supply or sold at a later date to generate new revenue.

*Image Sources This Page  
Top: Zillow  
Middle: Foothill Focus  
Bottom: Alex Nadesan*

# UNCERTAINTIES

By 2040 the number of dwelling units estimated to be in Cave Creek will be 3,800 and the total number of lots in Carefree that could be directly connected to the Cave Creek water system could be 669. In 2019, the Town provided 453 AF of CAP water to the Desert Hills systems, which is also expected to increase over time. There are several issues to be considered in judging whether the town has sufficient water to service all these potential accounts. These issues are the source of some of the uncertainties that must be considered in how the town plans for the future. Four of the most important are:

The Town's agreement with Carefree allows the town of Carefree to assume responsibility to provide water service for the households physically located within their municipal limits that are currently served by the Cave Creek water system. Carefree and Cave Creek have agreed to an arbitration process that would outline the requirements for how Carefree can assume responsibility for these accounts. Cave Creek would receive, per agreement, monetary compensation for assets, accounts, and other related associated costs. In addition, there would a transfer of a portion of Cave Creek's CAP water allocation that is estimated to be associated with servicing the current and future accounts in Carefree. In addition to the loss of the associated CAP allocation of water, this change could affect the costs of servicing Cave Creek accounts as the fixed costs of operating the treatment and distribution systems would be spread over fewer accounts. Until the arbitration process is complete, Cave Creek will not be able to fully plan for the outcome

Development in the Desert Hills service area is not regulated by the Town of Cave Creek. The Town requires new subdivisions with 4 or more homes to provide new water resources. Currently there are very few restrictions on individual homes from obtaining new 1-inch or smaller water meters. If infrastructure is available to service new 1-inch or smaller meters, the Desert Hills system is allowing them to be serviced. This contributes to the increasing demand from the Desert Hills system. The wells servicing this system are marginal. An increasing amount of Cave Creek's CAP allocation has been used each year to meet the needs of this system. If one or more of the wells currently servicing the system fails, the share of Cave Creek's CAP water being used to service Desert Hills could increase dramatically. The town does not at this stage have a plan to respond to these possibilities. As a result, this issue represents another source of uncertainty.

Before Cave Creek introduced a policy requiring developers of new subdivisions to provide the Town commitments for a 100 year water supply, the Cave Creek Water Utility had issued a number of indefinite commitments that are sometimes referred to as "will serve letters" for new subdivisions. Previous Water Advisory Committees and town staff have developed estimates of the extent of these existing commitments. In principle, these will serve letters "guarantee" the town's water system will provide a 100 year water supply to those parcels that have them.

*Image Sources This Page  
Top: Alex Nadesan  
Middle: Alex Nadesan  
Bottom: Bob Hughes*

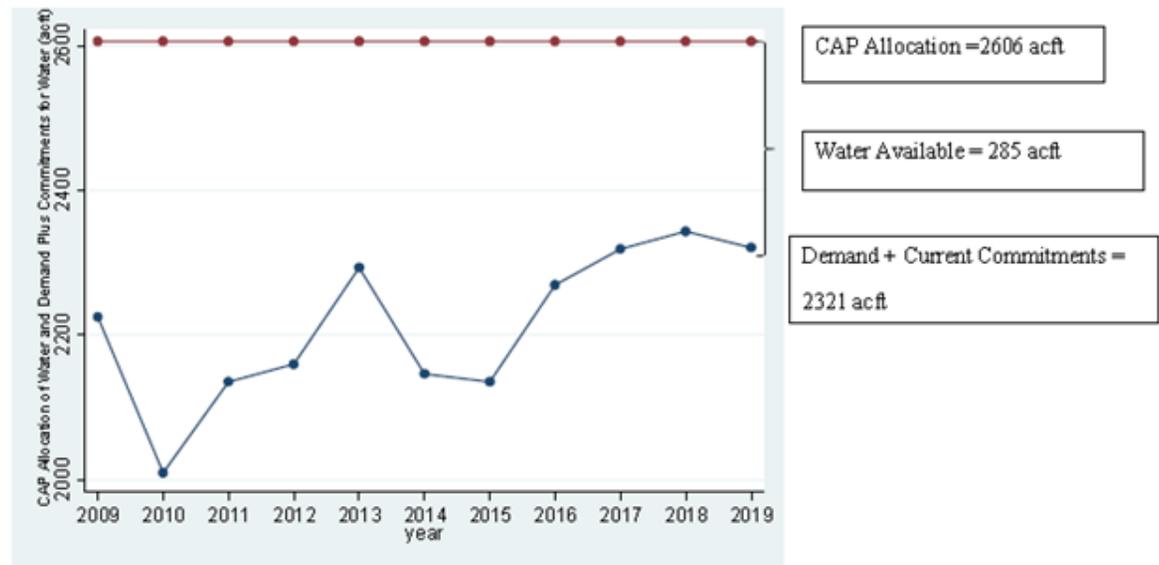




In 2019, the AZ Department of Water Resources estimated Cave Creek’s experience in delivering water from the CAP canal and processing that water so it was potable for its customers led to fairly high losses, averaging 12.76%. The state’s regulatory limit for lost and unaccounted for water is 10%. In 2017, the average lost and unaccounted for water among the large municipal water providers who met the limit was 5.9%. The 2017 report indicates Cave Creek also failed to meet the limit with an average of 13.76%.

When all four of these considerations are included and compared to the CAP allocation, one set of estimates implies that as of 2019 Cave Creek has a limited amount of uncommitted water remaining. Figure 3 compares the CAP allocation of 2606 AF to the amount used or subject to commitments from 2009 to 2019. This used and committed water includes an estimate of water losses assuming they persist at levels above the regulatory limit, an estimate of the water needed for the current will serve commitments, an estimate of the net amount of water that would be transferred to Carefree (i.e. water in excess of the amount used to service the current Carefree accounts in the Cave Creek system), and the 2019 CAP amount transferred to meet the needs of the Desert Hills system.

Figure 3: CAP Allocation vs. Demand



Source: Estimates, Kerry Smith, Citizen’s Water Advisory Committee

Image Sources This Page

Top: Alex Nadesan

Middle: Alex Nadesan

Bottom: Town of Cave Creek

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- The CAP water supply is expensive with prices that increase each year, but not as expensive as the cost has been in updating the Town's water supply system to conform to the current best practice standards or the future long-term expense of maintaining the system and increasing its capacity to bring additional CAP water into Town.
- The Town intends to conform to the State Land Department's Pre-Annexation Development Agreements for the areas known as Apache Wash, Rogers Wash, Willow Springs and the Core Site recorded with the Maricopa County Recorder's Office as documents 2009-0065336 (Apache Wash), 2009-0065339 (Rogers Wash) 2009-0065342 (Willow Springs) and 2008-0334349 (Core Site). Developments in these areas are expected to adhere to the Town's adopted Water Policy of being required to bring new water resources before development can occur.
- In evaluating the number of homes that could be built on State Trust Land (see pg. 22), there could be as many as 2,860 new homes built that the Town would be responsible for providing with water. The Town's internal water policy requires that any new development within the Cave Creek Water Service Area must provide an outside source of water for development to occur.

## WATER RESOURCES GOALS & POLICIES

### GOAL

Increase the use of existing sewer and wastewater treatment systems to reduce the large General Fund subsidy, generate water resources, utilize existing capacity, and protect groundwater quality.

### Policies

- Maintain and upgrade wastewater collection facilities to ensure that wastewater generated in Cave Creek can be effectively managed.
- Promote the expansion and reuse of treated wastewater
- Evaluate possible new connections to the wastewater collection system.
- Investigate recharging excess treated effluent to generate water credits and help generate a new water resource for the Town.
- Maintain the Town's CIP and wastewater system to conform to current best practice standards.

# WATER RESOURCES GOALS & POLICIES

## GOAL

Provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective water services for our customers.

*Potable water supply is a crucial element to the ongoing sustainability of the Town.*

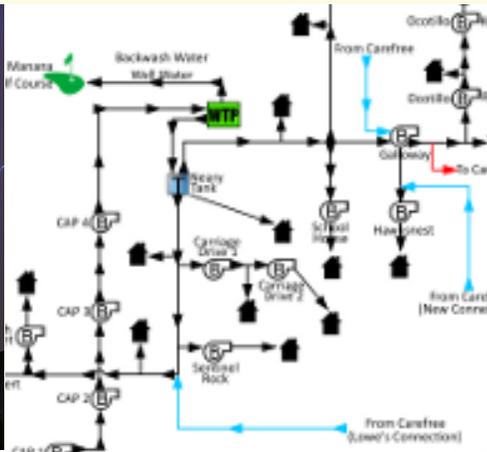
## Policies

- Uphold the Town Water Policy as approved by Council on December 4, 2017 and update the document to as required to address new issues brought on by development or changing water regulations.
- Evaluate options to assure a reliable water supply through, among others, groundwater, CAP supplies, conservation, recharge facilities, and interconnects with other providers.
- Assure potable water is provided that complies with federal, state, and local water quality standards.
- Manage the water enterprises efficiently.
- Continue to require that any new subdivision developments within the Cave Creek Water Service Areas must provide new legal and physically available water resources before construction can occur.
- Explore opportunities to provide water services to parcels within the Towns' service areas that rely on private wells but are experiencing decreased production.
- Participate in Regional, State, and Federal study groups discussing the future of drought on the available water supplies in the Southwestern United States and the potential negative impacts it may have upon the Town of Cave Creek's water supply.
- Promote the use of water conservation techniques in the design and construction of all new public and private development projects.
- Maximize the beneficial use of any unused portion of the Town's Central Arizona Project water entitlements.
- Maintain short- and long-term plans for addressing water emergencies due to entitlement reductions or catastrophic water access/distribution failures caused by equipment or other water infrastructure failure.
- Promote Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure practices to increase groundwater stores.
- Extend the Town's overall water supply by working to reduce the lost and unaccounted for water in the system. The current State requirement is for these losses to be below 10%.

# ACTIONS

- Develop a water rate structure to promote water conservation by users and work towards making the water and wastewater enterprise funds financially self-sufficient.
  - Develop plans to acquire, use and/or store new CAP water resources.
  - Complete the interconnection to the Phoenix water distribution to improve the overall reliability of the Cave Creek water system. Explore future opportunities for increasing the amount of water that can be treated and delivered by Phoenix to further enhance the Town's water system.
  - Work with Phoenix and other agencies to allow for banking of water credits in association with the Town's CAP entitlement.
  - Maintain the Town's Capital Improvement Program for each water system and the wastewater system to monitor, upgrade or replace infrastructure as needed.
- Regularly update the Town's Water and Wastewater Master Plans. Ensure the plans address at a minimum:
    - Interim and build-out evaluation of the balance between future water availability and future water needs, including the status of the water commitments by each water system.
    - An assessment of the long-term viability of the groundwater supplies from each water system's wells
    - Recommendations of other entities that have CAP water entitlements or other relevant water resources

# WATER RESOURCES ACTIONS



*Image Sources This Page  
 Left: Bob Hughes  
 Middle: Town of Cave Creek  
 Right: Zillow*



# A Safe, Responsive & Connected Community

There is interdependence between the level of safety within the community, the level of mobility across Town and the overall quality of life Cave Creek residents maintain in a spectacular setting. This chapter focuses on all aspects of safety and connectivity as well as the community services that underpin these conditions. The chapter contains goals, policies, and actions to further enhance the Town's present level of resiliency, to ensure services are provided in relation to growth, and to preserve the rural character of Cave Creek through adaptive on street and off-street transportation systems.

*Image Source: MBI*

# HAZARD MITIGATION

Resiliency can be defined as the capacity to recover quickly from disasters and adapt to threats. While the Town's proximity to the natural desert is a large part of the appeal for residents and visitors, it also poses the greatest threat; wildland fire. Given the Town's interface at the urban/rural edge and proximity to wide open spaces with dense vegetation and low fuel moisture, Cave Creek has a high potential for wildfires. This topic reflects wildland fire resiliency measures to ensure the long-term safety of the Town.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

Cave Creek is home to one of the largest forest fires in the state's history; the Cave Creek Complex Wildfire in 2005. Most recently, On May 17th, 2020 the East Desert Fire broke out west of Cave Creek quickly becoming a threat to the Town and forcing widespread evacuations. The fire consumed 1,492 acres over the span of 6 days. Only a few days after containment of the East Desert Fire, the Ocotillo Fire broke out on May 30th, 2020 between Cave Creek Regional Park and the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. The fire consumed 980 acres, destroyed eight homes and twelve structures, and required the evacuation of approximately 860 people as well as numerous livestock before it was contained.

These events highlighted the extensive coordination and collaboration that is needed between numerous agencies including the Town, the Rural Metro Fire Department and the Daisy Mountain Fire Department, the City of Phoenix Fire Department and the City of Scottsdale Fire Department, the Arizona State Forestry Department, the Cave Creek Marshal's Office, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, the Red Cross, and firefighters from numerous departments around the state, as well as residents, businesses, and a well-organized network of volunteers.

Providing the community with accurate information in ample time is paramount to public safety and property preservation. The Town provides CodeRED Emergency Notification and Weather Alerts to residents and businesses. Participants can sign up online to receive warnings prior to weather that poses a risk such as heavy rains and flooding, as well as wildland fire alerts. The Town also regularly updates the Cave Creek Facebook page with 4,175 followers and the Cave Creek Twitter account with 910 followers.

In addition, the Town provides information regarding wildland fire prevention on the Cave Creek website educating readers on how to defend their homes both before and during a wildland fire, as well as information on fire-resistant building materials and practices for contractors. Cave Creek also hosts a fire danger webpage dedicated to the National Fire Danger Rating System to educate the public on the varying levels of fire risk.

*Image Sources This Page*  
Top: KTAR  
Middle & Bottom: AZ Central



## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- » As residential growth continues, so too will potential danger from fire hazards. Fires that once burned as part of a natural process now threaten lives, property, and valuable resources.
- » While large lot development contributes to the desired rural character of Cave Creek, the large areas of natural open space on these parcels also present higher potential for increased fuel conditions if defensible space is not properly maintained.
- » Cave Creek's limited roadway connectivity, especially in the northern portions of Town, can impact evacuation and emergency response routes.
- » The rural nature and ranching uses of the land (i.e. livestock) within the Town demands a heightened level of evacuation coordination in emergencies.

## HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS & POLICIES

### GOAL

Maintain and enhance the resiliency of the Town.

### Policies

- Support continued investment in and ongoing maintenance of the Town's infrastructure to ensure efficient and equitable provision of effective services and improve resilience to fire hazards.
- Ensure the most safe and efficient evacuation procedures in an emergency.
- Ensure adopted plans and regulations incorporate considerations for fire hazards and reflect best practices to promote a more resilient community.
- Utilize multiple, coordinated channels (i.e. online, telecommunication, and in-person) through which first responders, the Town, and the community can communicate with one another during or following a major event or crisis.

### GOAL

Minimize the risk of property damage for residents.

### Policies

- Continue to educate residents and business owners on fire hazards and prevention. Periodically conduct a community survey to gauge citizen satisfaction level with Town services, governance and other issues.

# HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS

## ACTIONS

- Continue to encourage residents and business owners to subscribe to the CodeRED Emergency Notification and Weather Alerts.
- Implement the Emergency By-Pass Route Evacuation Plan as identified in the Town Core Plan and plan for alternate access in other anticipated bottlenecks throughout Cave Creek (See the Cave Creek/Carefree Transportation Framework Study as listed in Appendix A).
- Inform residents and business owners of the Ready, Set, Go Campaign with Maricopa County and encourage participation.
- Educate residents and business owners on their defensible space.
- Explore the creation of a livestock rescue network.

*Image Sources This Page*  
*Left: Foothill Focus*  
*Middle: Town of Cave Creek*  
*Right: Wildfire Today*



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

This section provides information on the services provided by Cave Creek and the Town's contracts and agreements with various public and private entities to provide local facilities and services. Public safety, education, roadway maintenance, solid waste, water, and wastewater are all integral to a strong community. Thus, to comprehensively plan for the future, the provision of these critical facilities and services must be considered and undertaken in a manner that is responsive to community need as well as all other chapters of this Plan. The intent of this topic is to provide an adequate level of community facilities and services for the entire area that is subject to this Plan.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

### Fire Protection Services

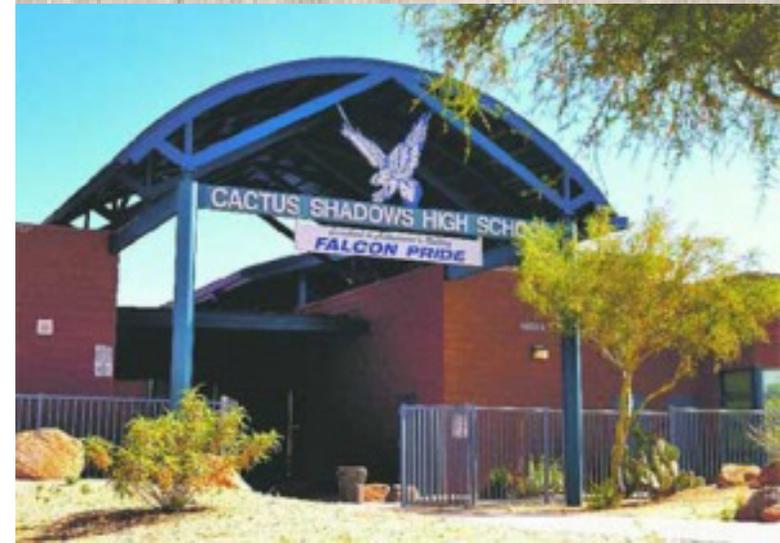
Fire protection service for the Town is available through Rural Metro Corporation, a private firm. Homeowners who elect to subscribe to Rural Metro are charged a subscriber fee for these services. Emergency medical services are provided by Rural Metro or Professional Medical Transport, another private firm. A central 911-dispatch center selects the ambulance that is nearest the emergency location and dispatches the respective unit.

### Law Enforcement

In addition to the Town Marshal, law enforcement services are currently provided through a contract with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

### Schools

Open enrollment is available in the State of Arizona. The citizens of Cave Creek are served by the Cave Creek Unified School District and the Deer Valley Unified School District, as well as private and charter schools.



## Water

Water supply is of critical importance in determining growth in Cave Creek. This is discussed in the Water Resource Element of the General Plan.

## Wastewater

The Town of Cave Creek owns, manages and maintains the sewer system that serves the Town's businesses and some residences. Most residents, however, have private on-site sewer systems. Currently, the treated effluent is sold under contract with the Town. Commercial development is required to be on the Town's sewer system.

## Waste Disposal

Private companies provide solid waste disposal at resident's expense.

## Roadway Maintenance

Public roadway maintenance is provided by the Town of Cave Creek.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Cave Creek may need to adapt services to meet the changing needs of the Town's population over time.
- Above expansion, maintaining and/or updating aging infrastructure systems within Cave Creek is a key priority.

*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Top: Rural Metro*

*Middle: MCSO District 4*

*Bottom: Cactus Shadows High School*

*Image Sources This Page*

*Top: Land and Farm*

*Middle: Cave Creek Rodeo*

*Bottom: Town of Cave Creek*



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

## GOALS, POLICIES, & ACTIONS

### GOAL

Provide outstanding service to the community and work collaboratively with residents and businesses to address issues and resolve problems.

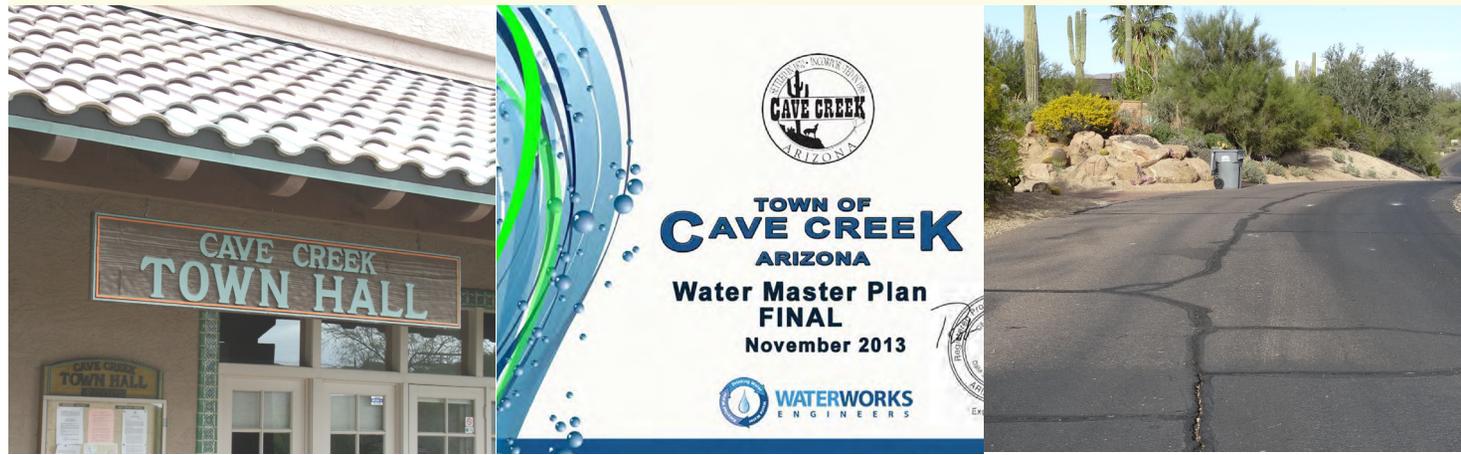
### Policies

- Align functional plans for Town facilities and services with the General Plan Land Use Plan to ensure the Town, in conjunction with other service providers, can meet the community's short and long-term needs.
- Incorporate sustainable practices into Town operations and maintenance.
- Maintain and share a capital improvement plan.

### Actions

- Develop and routinely update plans for all Town facilities, infrastructure, and services to help guide the Town's capital improvement planning and long-term budgeting.
- Periodically review existing service agreements with surrounding agencies and private service providers to ensure they meet the needs of residents and align with the goals and policies of this Plan.

*Image Sources This Page*  
Top: Sonoran News  
Middle: Town of Cave Creek  
Bottom: Town of Cave Creek



# EFFICIENT MOBILITY

Transportation systems do not just provide physical connection, they provide economic, social, and environmental connections. They can impact safety, development, tourism, and emergency response times. This chapter will provide an understanding of possible circulation needs associated with future growth to mitigate the negative impacts that can come with such growth. This section contains existing conditions of all components of the transportation system in Cave Creek; the roadway network, the off-street trail system, transit, and parking as well as related goals, policies and actions to maintain or enhance them. The largest component of the chapter is the roadway network section as it supports multiple modes, motorized, equestrian, bicycle, and pedestrian, upholding one of the Core Values of the General Plan.

## CAVE CREEK TODAY & INTO THE FUTURE

### Roadway Network

Cave Creek is located at the northeast corner of the greater metropolitan area and therefore experiences much less through traffic than other jurisdictions. Because there is little through traffic, there are no arterial streets that traverse the entire Town. There are two principal arterial streets that connect Cave Creek to the metropolitan area. The first of these is Carefree Highway, which runs along the southern edge of Town. Carefree Highway connects Cave Creek to I-17, about eight miles to the west. West of Cave Creek Road, Carefree Highway is a 4-lane divided street. It transitions to two lanes east of Cave Creek Road. To the east, Carefree Highway terminates at Tom Darlington Drive in Carefree.

The second principal arterial, Cave Creek Road, south of Carefree Highway, runs diagonally to the southwest from Carefree Highway. It connects Cave Creek to the center of the Phoenix metropolitan region. Cave Creek Road north of Carefree Highway serves as a major collector.

The section of Cave Creek Road through the Town Core serves many adjacent retail and eating and drinking establishments, as well as other non-residential uses. The Town has completed construction of bicycle lanes along this section and is implementing a system of pedestrian pathways. The Town is also actively seeking placement of equestrian trails through the Historic Town Core area that are not in conflict with bicycle lanes nor pedestrian pathways.

Other streets in the Town of Cave Creek are two lanes wide, having a bituminous or chip seal surface, or are unpaved. Some cross the numerous washes at grade, while others are served by culverts. Low-density residential lots have direct access to all local roads. In other parts of the Town there is an attempt to minimize or discourage residential lots from having direct access onto collector streets. Nevertheless, several of these residential roads have characteristics of minor collector streets. They have trip lengths along them of one mile or more and they serve traffic to and from residences on other streets. These are discussed in the adjacent sidebar, while all other streets are considered local streets and are a mixture of 2-lane paved and 2-lane unpaved cross-sections.

### PRIMARY ROADWAY DESCRIPTIONS

- Cave Creek Road is a principal arterial, 4-lane divided street south of Carefree Highway. North of Carefree Highway, Cave Creek Road transitions to a 4-lane, partially divided street that travels through the heart of Cave Creek and into the adjacent Town of Carefree. In the Town Core there are numerous existing commercial driveways and median cuts. There is also a 4-way stop sign controlled intersection on Cave Creek Road at School House Road.
- Spur Cross Road is a minor collector street with two lanes. It begins on Cave Creek Road at the west end of the Historic Town Core and continues north to Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.
- School House Road is a minor collector street with two lanes that also travels north from Cave Creek Road into residential areas of Town. It begins at the base of Black Mountain and continues north through a 4-way stop sign controlled intersection at Cave Creek Road adjacent to the post office and terminates at State Land approximately 2 ¼ miles from the 4-way stop.
- Fleming Springs Road is a northeast-southwest running two-lane minor collector street with a “T” intersection at Spur Cross Road and a 4-way stop intersection with School House Road.
- 32nd Street and 26th Street are 2-lane paved major collector streets in the western extension of Cave Creek. 32nd Street connects the Cave Creek Regional Park with Carefree Highway.
- Carefree Highway is maintained and operated by Maricopa County. It is a principal arterial street connecting the Cave Creek area to the I-17 corridor and will experience increased traffic due to development in Phoenix and Scottsdale. Plans exist to increase the cross section to a 4-lane, divided road from Scottsdale Road to Cave Creek Road and a 6-lane divided road from Cave Creek Road to the western edge of Town.



## Off-Street Trails

Cave Creek's open spaces are connected by many miles of non-motorized public trails. Emphasis is given to riparian areas and other natural features on public land as well as places where new trail segments could enhance non-motorized connectivity of different parts of the Town. Trail connections at the boundaries of the Town provide easy access to a far larger network of trails within the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, State Trust Land, the Maricopa (County) Trail and more than 4,000 square miles of the Tonto National Forest. The 305-mile Maricopa Trail was completed in November, 2018 and connects 10 regional parks, including providing connection from the Cave Creek Regional Park to the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area through Cave Creek. There is a well-developed system of trails in the Cave Creek Regional Park and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. There are also hiking and biking trails along sections of the Cave Creek, Grapevine, Andora, Ocotillo and Willow Springs washes, with connections along Cave Creek, Spur Cross and School House Roads

The Town continues to work with the State Land Department and Land Trusts to obtain access and trails in State Trust Land and Preserves, as well as with property owners to secure connecting trails providing safe access to a town wide inter-connecting network of trails.

## Transit

There is no regularly scheduled transit service to Cave Creek. Tourist and charter buses visit area resorts, private shuttles are used to facilitate large events, and guided tours use jeeps for trips into the backcountry.

## Parking

In 2002, the Town Core Plan and Implementation Program inventoried parking availability. The inventory documented 1,262 spaces total within one-eighth mile of Cave Creek Road on the north side, and 1,278 spaces within one-eighth mile on the south side of Cave Creek Road. Several new developments have been approved since that analysis, increasing the parking inventory. The Town established a 70-vehicle parking area at the Neary Water Tank site located at 6109 E. Hidden Valley Road, south of Cave Creek Road.

*Image Sources This Page*

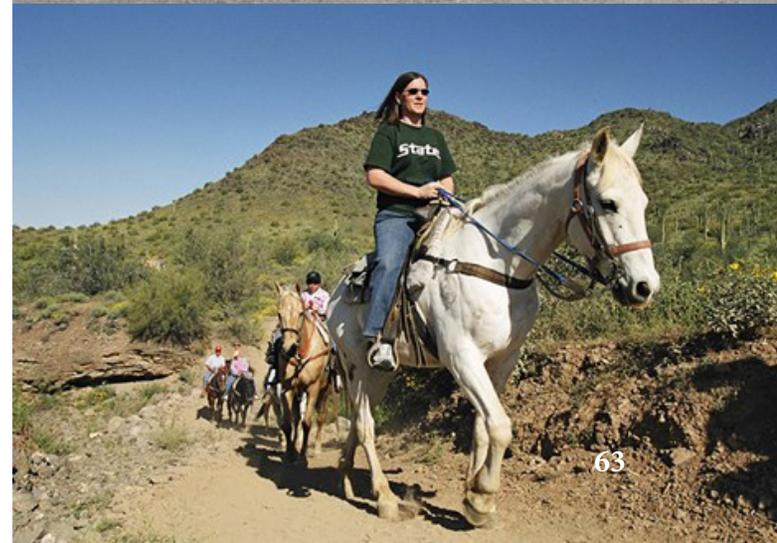
*Top: MBI  
Middle: MBI  
Bottom: MBI*

*Image Sources Opposite Page*

*Top: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation  
Middle: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation  
Bottom: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

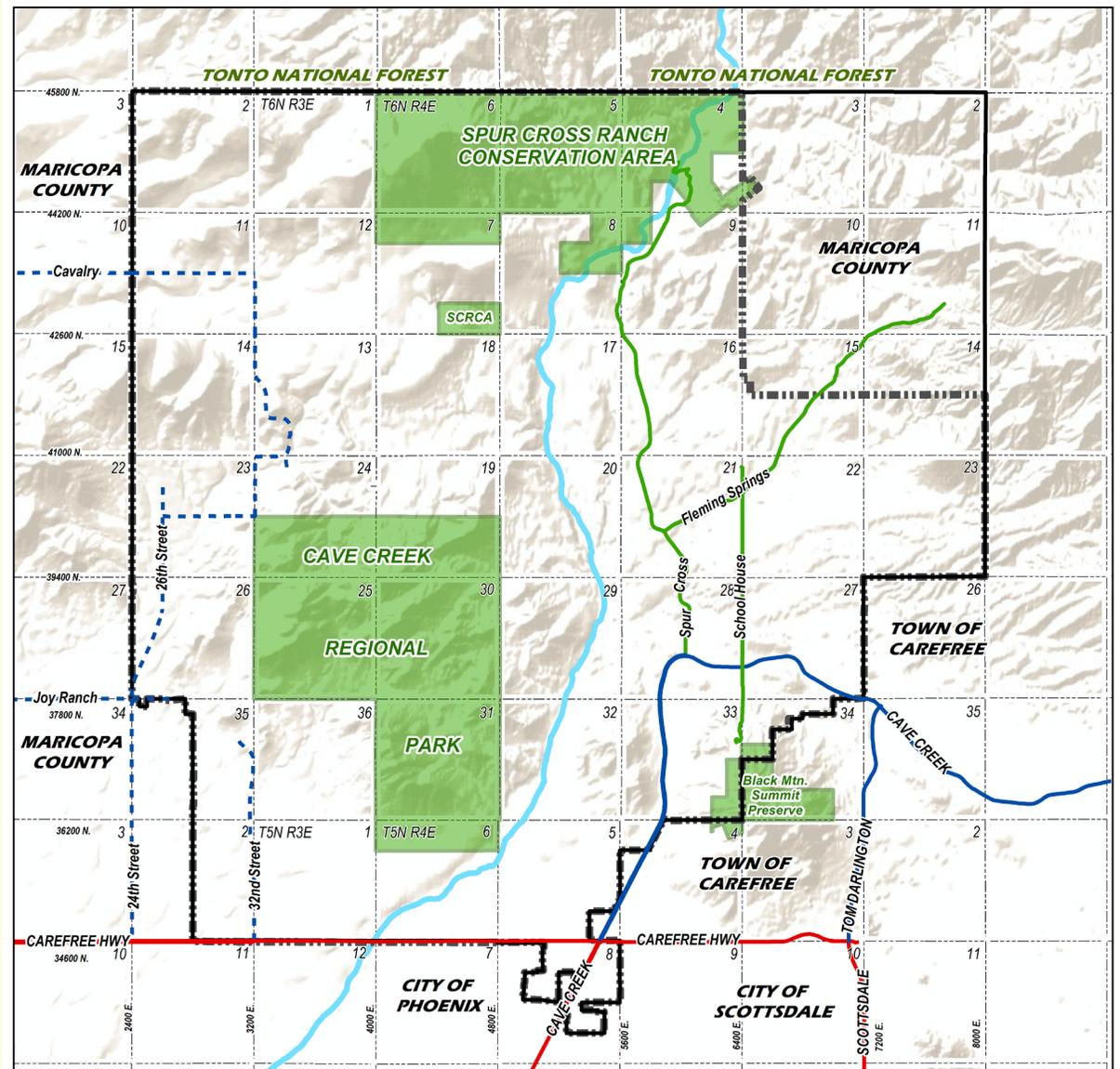
- The Town wants to keep a rural atmosphere and maintain natural landscape along its roadways. This will continue to be a challenge as the volumes of cut-through and local traffic increase with population growth.
- Growth of the Town Core has produced pedestrian, bike and equestrian traffic. The Town continues to address the impact and safety of motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation.
- The Town desires to expand its multi-purpose non-vehicular circulation facilities to connect all parts of the Town, as well as with adjacent parks and the National Forest.
- Increase in traffic along Cave Creek Road may affect the capacity and safety needs of the 4-way stop sign at Cave Creek Road and School House Road, creating congestion
- Access across Cave Creek Wash remains an issue, with conflicting desires to provide access to land while not increasing traffic volumes in the Town or disturbing the natural qualities of the wash.
- Most of the roads in the Town of Cave Creek are designed and operated as local roads. They are two lanes wide and have a bituminous or chip seal surface, or are unpaved. The Town is currently in year three of a ten-year road maintenance program.
- There is a shortage of parking in the Town Core during special events.
- Trail signage and wayfinding is important in maintaining the safety of trail users. It is the Town's policy to sign trails within the Trail System. The number and location of signs should be carefully considered.
- With the exception of emergency services and maintenance vehicles, all trails located within the Town's Trail System shall be reserved exclusively for non-motorized use.
- Planned trails are not authorized for public use until they are dedicated.
- Trailheads and trail parking shall be clearly identified and signed.
- All new public trails on private property shall be processed in accordance with procedures approved by the Town Council.



# CIRCULATION FRAMEWORK PLAN

Given the overarching vision and principles of this General Plan, the Circulation Framework Plan focuses on the provision and use of an integrated transportation system to meet the Town's future transportation needs in a safe and efficient manner. This plan classifies major roads in Cave Creek according to the standard classification system. Street cross sections that represent Town roads are described in the Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline No. 2 – Transportation (The Technical Design Guideline document is listed in Appendix A and can be accessed via the Town's website.

Further, the Towns of Cave Creek and Carefree have jointly accepted the Transportation Framework Study prepared by the Maricopa Association of Governments. The study suggests additional short and long-range plans for the consideration of bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular traffic in both Town Cores. The study also identifies possible solutions to issues created by parking and special events in both communities. The Transportation Framework Study is listed in Appendix A and can be accessed via the Town's website.



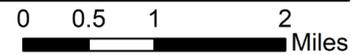
## Legend

- |                                    |                    |                        |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cave Creek Municipal Planning Area | Principal Arterial | Minor Collector        |
| Cave Creek Municipal Limits        | Major Collector    | Future Major Collector |
| SECTION LINES                      |                    |                        |
| Cave Creek                         |                    |                        |

## TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

### GENERAL PLAN - CIRCULATION

Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_



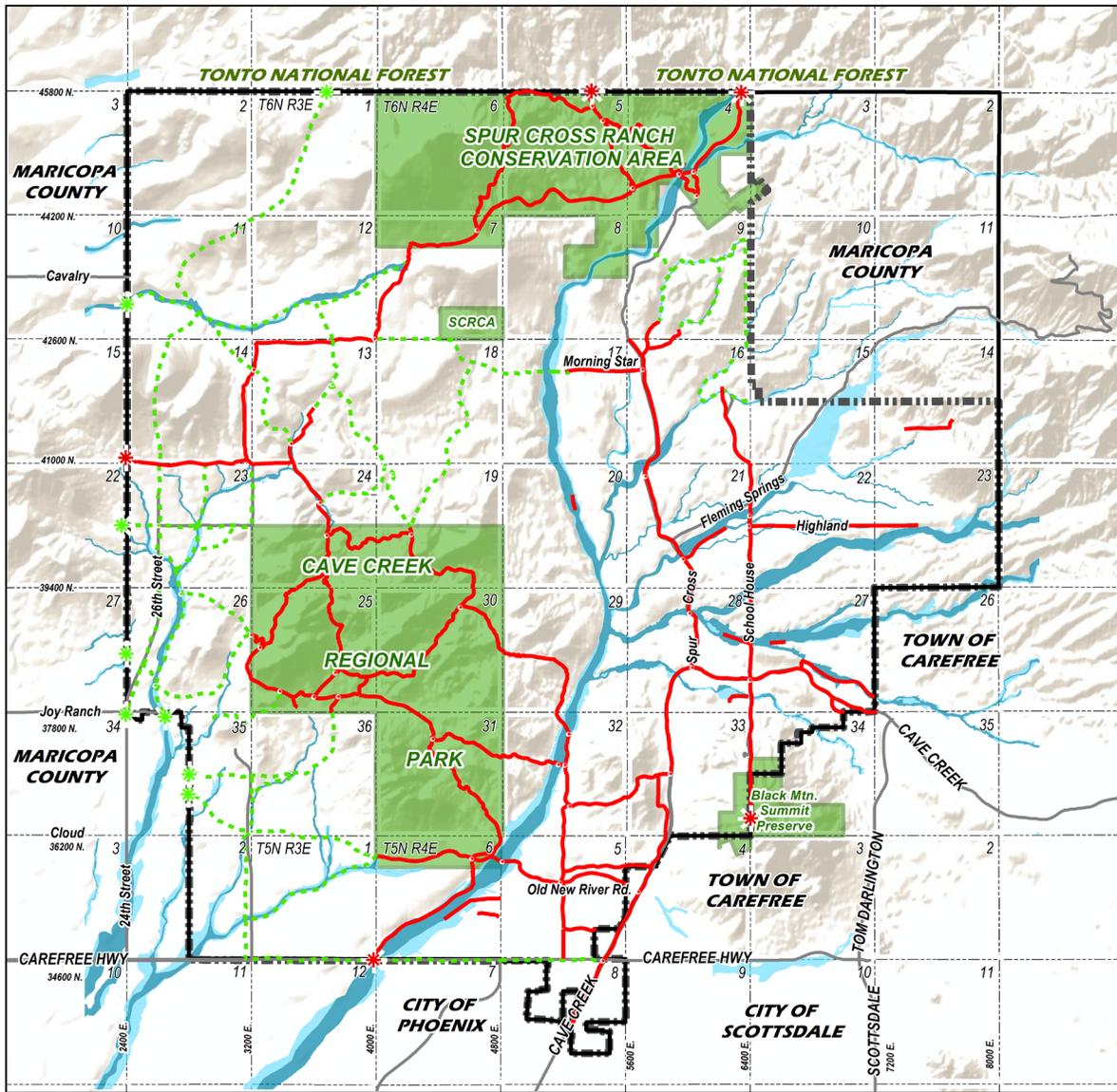
# TRAILS FRAMEWORK PLAN

Cave Creek residents enjoy outdoor recreational activities and accessibility to the exceptional natural environment that surrounds the Town. Results of the General Plan community survey and outreach efforts showed there is a desire in the community to better identify, develop and preserve a trail network within Cave Creek that encourages recreation and fosters connectivity to various destinations within the Town. In addition to encouraging recreation, the development of a non-motorized trail system can help reduce vehicle trips and traffic congestion. The result will be a community resource providing transportation alternatives, recreational opportunities, environmental aesthetics, open space preservation and increased property values.

The General Plan Trails Framework Plan shows existing, dedicated trails as well as proposed alignments that will be considered for future trails if applicable landowners elect to grant trail easements. This plan is a reference document for planning and securing a town-wide trail system. It is not intended to set forth strict standards, but to present sound guidelines for the conceptual location, policies, type, and construction of trails.

This plan is designed for decision makers to: set policy for staff regarding trail acquisition, development and maintenance; give direction regarding priorities for trail funding; provide ideas and options for trail funding; and set policy guidelines for trail implementation priorities, and direction on special projects such as: community volunteer projects, community information materials, user information materials, and user conflicts management.

Additional details related to the design, designation and construction of trails are contained in the Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline No. 5 – Trails (listed in Appendix A and accessed via the Town's website).



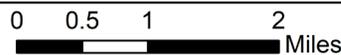
## Legend

	Cave Creek Municipal Planning Area		FCDMC Floodplain		Trail Type
	Cave Creek Municipal Limits		Floodplain (A)		Dedicated/Existing Public Trail
	SECTION LINES		Floodplain (AE)		Potential/Proposed Future Trail
	Major Roads		Floodway		Existing Trail Connection
					Potential Future Trail Connection

NOTE: This Plan is a Planning Document ONLY. This is NOT an official Trails Access Map. Proposed trails are NOT existing trails until they are dedicated. Trail locations depicted on this Plan are approximate.

## TOWN OF CAVE CREEK GENERAL PLAN TRAILS FRAMEWORK PLAN

Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_



## EFFICIENT MOBILITY GOALS & POLICIES

### GOAL

Keep roadways consistent with the rural land use patterns and natural appearance of Cave Creek.

*Transportation patterns can have a significant impact on the land use pattern of a community. Keeping our roadways appropriate to the level and types of development desired by the Town will help to prevent impacts from transportation that make our desired development pattern impractical.*

### Policies

- Discourage new roadway crossings or enhancement of existing roadway crossings of Apache Wash, Ocotillo Wash, Cave Creek Wash and other significant washes.
- Re-vegetate areas that are disturbed as a result of roadway, off-road vehicles, and bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian improvements.
- When private and public roads are warranted, ensure they have negligible impact on the native habitat and environmental resources.
- Limit all roads other than Cave Creek Road and Carefree Highway, to two lanes maximum, with a standard design providing shoulders instead of curb and gutter.
- Discourage the use of traffic lights.
- Prohibit unlicensed all-terrain vehicle use on any public right-of-way.
- Discourage the extension or reclassification of Spur Cross, Fleming Springs, School House, Morning Star, Cahava Ranch, Honda Bow, Echo Canyon and Old Stage Roads and other roads that may have undesirable impacts on the visual quality, traffic patterns and rural character of the existing neighborhoods that access these roadways as well as the Town overall.
- Future development of State Trust Land south of Cloud Road shall tie into existing road alignments at the north side of Cloud Road; such limitation would not preclude connecting those alignments with 32nd Street by loop roads.
- Encourage future development of State Trust Land south of Cloud Road to take access from Cloud Road to maintain a neighborhood appearance.
- Provide safe roads to access established recreational sites and trailheads and for users and emergency response in keeping with surrounding land uses.

## GOAL

Provide for parking facilities within the Town of Cave Creek which are safe and minimize the visual impact upon the community.

## Policies

- Ensure additional, sensitively designed parking opportunities throughout the Town Core as development occurs.
- Encourage below-ground parking conditions and consider multi-level above-ground parking, only when appropriate.
- Prohibit parking which requires reversing onto Cave Creek Road.

## GOAL

Provide accessible, non-motorized, on-street facilities where appropriate.

## Policies

- Integrate facilities for bicycles, pedestrians and equestrians within the Town's transportation system in a manner that respects safety, traffic flow, rural landscape, and the natural desert setting.
- Encourage developers to include public or private facilities such as shade structures, hitching posts, and bicycle racks to be included as part of any improvements to existing or future developments.
- Provide signs for non-motorized crossings in areas where there is a potential for pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian conflicts with vehicles.
- Provide equitable, non-motorized access for seniors and persons with disabilities that meet the 2010 ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Standards for Accessible Design.



*Image Sources This Page*  
Left: MBI  
Middle: MBI  
Right: Sonoran News

## GOAL

Provide accessible, non-motorized, off-street trail connections to town resources, services, and recreational open spaces.

*The purpose of the transportation system is to provide safe mobility and access that benefits residents.*

## Policies

- Promote the development of alternative funding sources and mechanism for trail development and maintenance.
- Clearly mark off-street trails that are open to public use.
- Identify locations for trailheads throughout the Town to assure adequate areas for bicycle parking, horse trailer parking and horse hitching.
- Continue to prohibit motorized vehicle use on any public trail. Trail easements will not become public roadways.
- Ensure access to and develop trails in State Trust Lands and Preserves.
- Continue to work with property owners to secure connecting trails that provide safe access to a town wide inter-connected network of trails.
- Promote uniform standards of trail design and usage that:
  - Define safe, environmentally appropriate regulations for trail use
  - Minimize impacts to riparian habitats and wildlife habitat and movement corridors.
  - Enhance trail users' understanding and enjoyment of cultural resources, vegetation and views.
  - Establishes a program of sign use and placement to indicate trail locations, inform users and discourage off-trail travel.
- Recognize only those trails located within public parks and lands, public rights-of-way and dedicated trail easements, and prohibit Wildcat trails.
- Connect open spaces within and adjacent to the Town with non-motorized, off-street shared use trails so as to:
  - Identify, develop, and maintain connections to county-wide, regional, and local trails associated with Arizona State Land Department and the jurisdictions of Phoenix, Scottsdale, Carefree, Maricopa County and the Tonto National Forest.
  - Provide trail connectivity between the Cave Creek Regional Park, Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, the Tonto National Forest, and significant wash corridors and mountains in the planning area.
  - Identify opportunities for north-south connections along Carefree Highway to the Sonoran Preserve Cave Creek Buttes Recreation Area.
  - Protect and enforce trail and conservation easements, discouraging the abandonment of rights-of-way and public access easements so as to provide for possible future trail development.
  - Maintain an inventory of historic trails within the Town and encourage their integration into the future Trail System.
  - Encourage developers and landowners to incorporate trails as a part of development.



# EFFICIENT MOBILITY ACTIONS

## ACTIONS

- Periodically review the accepted Cave Creek/ Carefree Transportation Framework Study and continue implementation.
- Evaluate existing non-motorized crossing signage in the Town Core for safety, effectiveness and visual impact.
- Create enhanced parking design guidelines that address surface parking conditions as well as below- and above-grade parking conditions and promote the natural and visual quality of the Town.
- Maintain a Trails Map that is separate from the General Plan Trails Framework Plan (see pg. 65). This map should only depict existing, maintained and approved trails that can be used by the public.
- Update Technical Design Guideline #5 - Trails as necessary.
- Work with the Arizona State Land Department, Land Trusts and private property owners to maintain access and increase trails.
- Support the enforcement of the Cave Creek Regional Park boundaries and access points to minimize vandalism and wildcat trails.
- Prepare a detailed operation and maintenance cost analysis to determine funding needs of the entire (existing and proposed) trail system.
- Continue to apply for Federal, County, State and other grants for the acquisition of land and the design, construction and maintenance of trails.
- Maintain the adopt-a-trail and volunteer programs for trail maintenance and construction.
- Develop a program informing trail users about trail etiquette as well as the ecology and history of the area.

*Image Sources Opposite Page:*

*Top: Phoenix With Kids*

*Middle: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

*Bottom: Maricopa County Parks & Recreation*

*Image Source This Page:*

*Top: MBI*

*Middle: Town of Cave Creek*

*Bottom: MBI*





# General Plan Administration

Arizona law states that a Major Amendment to the General Plan shall be approved by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the legislative body, and that these amendments must be presented at a single public hearing during the calendar year during which the proposal is made. The law also states that to be considered a Major Amendment, a proposal to amend the General Plan must result in a substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in its existing General Plan Land Use Element and that the General Plan shall define the criteria to determine if a proposed amendment to the General Plan is to be addressed as a Major Amendment.

Major and Minor Amendments will be evaluated in the same manner, the only difference is in the timing and procedural requirements.

*Image Source: Rancho Manana Golf Club*

# General Plan Amendments

In accordance with Arizona law, the General Plan guides land use and zoning decisions by the Town. The General Plan does not change existing zoning; however, future zoning changes must conform to the General Plan, as may be amended. Any Town initiated amendment to the General Plan may be processed at any time, subject to all other amendment procedures.

## MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Residents of Cave Creek enjoy open spaces and primarily a low density lifestyle. To ensure new development is appropriate to the land uses envisioned and existing in the Cave Creek General Plan, a major amendment to the Cave Creek General Plan shall include any proposal that would meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Any single application that would, in aggregate, request changes in land use classifications described on the General Plan Land Use Framework Plan (see pg. 24) of 5 acres or more, except if changing to Open Space.
- Any change in land use classification from land designated Desert Rural (DR) to any other land use classification, except Open Space, but including any increase within the DR land use classifications (for example, increasing from DR-1 to DR-2 or DR-2 to DR-3.) regardless of size.
- Any change in land use classification for any area designated Open Space on the General Plan Land Use Framework Plan (see pg. 24) regardless of size.
- A modification to the Town boundary or planning area resulting in a net increase in land area.
- Changes to the current roadway classifications or alignments depicted in the Circulation Framework Plan (see pg. 64) as follows:
  - Establishing or upgrading any roadway to a minor collector classification or above within or adjacent to land designated Desert Rural on the General Plan Land Use Framework Plan (see pg. 24).
  - Realignment of an established roadway or roadway alignment that has been determined by the Town Manager, or designee, to be impactful to the community.
- Requests to amend the text of the adopted General Plan if their approval will result in:
  - A change to the descriptions of any of the densities or intensities of the General Plan land use classifications;
  - A change in the areas identified for open space or conservation; or
  - A change that would eliminate or substantially modify any goals or policies of the General Plan.

*Image Source This Page:  
Top: AZ Central  
Middle: Taste of Cave Creek  
Bottom: Yelp*



## MAJOR AMENDMENT PROCESS

Requests for a Major Amendment to the General Plan shall be submitted, each year by a specific date as defined by the Town's Major Amendment Schedule, to the Planning Director. Requests for a Major Amendment shall be evaluated by Town staff and shall include, but will not be limited to, the major and minor General Plan amendment considerations listed in this element. The staff evaluation, along with a copy of the request for a General Plan amendment, shall be forwarded to the public as per State law and the Town's adopted Public Involvement Policy and the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission for review, consideration, discussion, and recommendation. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation together with the staff report shall be forwarded to the Town Council for review discussion and action at a regularly scheduled meeting.

## MINOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

Minor amendments to the Cave Creek General Plan are considered as minor text changes, minor land use adjustments, and corrections/updates that do not meet the criteria defined as a major amendment. Minor amendments will involve a standard public review period and can be requested and heard at any time during the calendar year.

## MINOR AMENDMENT PROCESS

Applications for Minor Amendments will be processed as they are received, within the normal planning and zoning calendar and as resources permit. The staff shall prepare a report regarding the request for a Minor Amendment and submit it to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review discussion and recommendation at a regularly scheduled public Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation, together with the staff report, shall be forwarded to the Town Council for review, discussion, and action at a regularly scheduled public meeting.

Should a minor amendment be denied, either by the Town Council or by the vote of the citizens of the Town of Cave Creek, the applicant must wait one (1) year from the date of denial before resubmitting the same application to the Town of Cave Creek.

## Major and Minor General Plan Amendment Considerations

The recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council prepared for each request for a major, minor or text amendment to the General Plan shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of how the proposed amendment furthers the goals of the General Plan and impacts the following:

- **Water:** How will the proposed amendment impact current and future water supplies and water quality?
- **Circulation:** How will the proposed amendment impact the existing transportation system?
- **What is the extent to which new roads, non-vehicular transportation facilities and access and egress proposed as part of the development contribute to the Town's planned vehicular and non-vehicular transportation system and trails?**
- **Environment:** What is the impact of the proposed amendment on riparian areas, perennial stream flow of Cave Creek, the natural environment, open spaces and conservation areas identified in the Plan?
- **How does the proposed amendment contribute to the sustainability and quality of existing and proposed open spaces, conservation areas or the creation of new open spaces or conservation areas?**
- **Open Space:** What is the impact of the proposed amendment on recreation facilities, parks, and open space and natural resources identified in the Plan?
- **How does the proposed amendment contribute to the Town's existing and proposed recreation, parks, and open space and natural resources?**
- **Land Use** Does the proposed amendment contribute to the Town's rural development pattern?
- **What is the impact of the proposed amendment on air quality?**
- **Cost of Development:** Does the proposed amendment affect the Town's ability to maintain its current level of service or will it discourage it from maintaining or enhancing its range and level of public services in the future?
- **Will this request require the Town to provide additional services?**
- **Sewer:** How will the proposed amendment impact current and future sewer capacities?

# Glossary

## A

### **Annexation**

To incorporate a land area into an existing district or municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction.

### **Area**

An area of a town that has a unique character identifiable as different from surrounding areas because of distinctive architecture, streets, geographic features, culture, landmarks, activities, or land uses.

### **Arterial- Principal Arterial Roadway**

Roadway of regional importance that provides regional continuity and carries large traffic volumes. It provides high level of traffic mobility and a low level of access to adjacent development. The design speed is 35-55 mph and design volume is 30,000-60,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Principal Arterial is along the section line. The right-of-way requirement is 130 to 150 feet.

### **Arterial Minor Roadway**

Roadway that provides moderate continuity and carries moderate traffic volumes. The traffic mobility is moderate and access to adjacent land use is more frequent and accepted. The design speed is 35-45 mph and design volume is 20,000-35,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Arterial is along the section line. The right-of-way requirement is 110 feet to 120 feet.

## B

### **Bicycle Lanes**

These are on-street facilities, typically 5.5 feet wide, designed for bicycle, created by means of pavement striping.

## C

### **Capacity Charges**

Fees charged by the Town to developers, water and sewer customers for present and future capacity of the sewer and water systems, including the Town's cost of buying water, infrastructure required to transport, store and deliver water, and to collect and treat sewage.

### **Carrying Capacity (Residential Land)**

The number of living units and accessory buildings permitted by the land's zoning while honoring lot coverage restrictions, setbacks, open space requirements, streets, alleys, and easements.

### **Carrying Capacity (Commercial Land)**

The number of square feet enclosed and under roof permitted by the land's zoning plus any outside storage or uses such as patios, while complying with all zoning restrictions such as open space, landscaped areas, parking, setbacks, streets, alleys and easements.

### **Carrying Capacity (Resources)**

The capacity of roads, water, sewers to serve new development.

### **Character (of Development)**

Special characteristics of structures and/or areas that separate it from its surroundings and contribute to its individuality.

### **Character (Town Core)**

The eclectic mixture of architecture, materials, and uses that comprise the Town Core area.

### **Character (Western)**

The overall architectural appearance of improvements and/or nature of uses and/or uses that are commonly viewed as western

### **Collector/Major Roadway**

Roadway that provides short continuity and carry low traffic volumes. It connects local neighborhood and business traffic on local streets to arterial street network. The design speed is 25-35 mph and the design volume is 20,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Major Collector is along the mid-section line. The right-of-way requirement is typically 80 to 110 feet.

### **Collector/Minor Roadway**

Roadway that provide short continuity and carry low traffic volumes. It connects local neighborhood and business traffic on local streets to arterial street network. The design speed is 25-35 mph and the design volume is 5,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Collector is along the quarter-section line. The right-of-way requirement is typically 60 to 80 feet.

### **Commercial Corridor**

The commercial corridor on Carefree Highway is located between 48th and 54th Streets on the north and between 52nd and 56th streets on the south. On Cave Creek Road the commercial corridor extends from Carefree Highway south to Seven Palms Drive.

### **Community Park**

A publicly owned land site with full public access intended to provide recreation opportunities beyond those supplied by neighborhood parks.

**Conservation**

The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or degradation.

**Conservation Corridors (Wash)**

A non-possessory interest in and along washes, streams and rivers having periodic or constant water inundation, and/or containing substantial amounts of flora, fauna and other life, thereby creating habitat and erosion protection.

**Construction Sites (Normal)**

On any parcel of land, an activity or process that requires a building permit and that adds a building or adds to a building, and any activity that requires a permit for the installation of sewer, water, cable, electricity, storm sewers, or other similar uses.

**D****Dark Skies Community**

A dark skies community is a town, city, municipality that is dedicated to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of a quality outdoor lighting ordinance, dark sky education and citizen support of dark skies. A dark skies community promotes responsible lighting and dark sky stewardship, and set good examples for surrounding communities.

**Density**

The number of dwellings of residential units allowed per acre.

**Developer**

Any owner, individual or company engaged in the activity of converting undeveloped land into a commercial, residential or open space use through improvements on, under, over or to the land.

**Development**

Any human-caused change to improved or unimproved real estate that requires a permit or approval from any department of the Town, County or State, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling activities, and storage of materials for use in conjunction therewith. Routine repair and maintenance activities are exempted except as otherwise defined in the Town's ordinances.

**Development Fees**

A fee or fees imposed on a developer to pay for the Town's costs of providing services

to process applications, review plans, issue permits, inspect construction of improvements as well as fees for sewer and water service, sewage treatment, and infrastructure.

**Dwelling Unit**

A room or group of rooms (including sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation facilities, but not more than one kitchen), which constitutes an independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household on a long-term basis for residential purposes.

**E****Environment (Natural)**

All undisturbed and re-established land and flora, fauna, air, water, minerals, noise and objects of historic, aesthetic, or archaeological significance.

**Environmental Ethic**

Environmental ethics is the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its non-human contents.

**Environmentally Sensitive Land**

An identifiable area of land that contains a natural feature or features protected by government regulations.

## F

### **Flood Fringe**

The areas of a delineated floodplain adjacent to the floodway where encroachment may be permitted.

### **Floodplain**

The relatively level land area on at least one side of a continuous elevated landform, regularly subject to flooding. That part of the floodplain subject to a one-percent chance of flooding in any given year is designated as an “area of special flood hazard” by the Federal Insurance Administration. The area susceptible to inundation by a base flood including areas where drainage is or may be restricted by man-made structures which have been or may be covered partially or wholly by flood water from the 100-year flood.

## G

### **General Plan**

A compendium of Town goals and policies regarding its long-term development, in the form of plans and accompanying text.

## H

### **Historic Town Core**

The boundaries of the Historic Town Core are generally located between Spur Cross Road on the west and Scopa Trail on the east and the Grapevine Road alignment to the north and Skyline Drive alignment to the south. It is a Specific Area Plan with its own unique provisions and zoning map, adopted by Resolution, April 2, 2012. It is an amendment to the General Plan.

## I

### **Infrastructure**

Services and facilities, such as sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems, other utility systems, and roads.

### **Intensity**

Any ratio that assesses the relative level of activity of a land use, including, but not limited to, lot coverage or land disturbance.

## L

### **Land Use**

The occupation or utilization of land or water area for any human activity or any purpose defined in the General Plan.

### **Land Use Classifications**

Those designations shown on the Land Use Plan and described in this document.

### **Land Uses (Dissimilar)**

When the permitted uses on a parcel or lot contradict with one or more uses allowed in the adjacent or nearby lot or parcel.

### **Landform**

A specific element of the natural shape of the land such as an embankment, a hill or a stream channel.

### **Local Roadway**

Roadway that provides direct access to adjacent land use and handles very low traffic volumes. It will connect local traffic to collector street network and will not connect directly to arterial streets. The design speed is 15-30 mph and the design volume is 1,500 vehicles/day. The right-of-way requirement is typically 50 to 60 feet.

### **Lot**

Any lot, parcel, or combination thereof, shown on a plat of record or recorded by metes and bounds that is of sufficient area and is occupied or intended for occupancy by a use permitted in the Zoning Ordinance and having its principal frontage upon a street or upon an officially approved place.

### **Lot of Record**

A lot that is part of a recorded subdivision or a parcel of land that has been recorded at the County Recorder's office.

## M

### **Master Plan**

A plan for a large area that may address land use, landscaping, infrastructure, circulation or services provision.

### **Minor Arterial Roadway**

Roadway that provides moderate continuity and carries moderate traffic volumes.

The traffic mobility is moderate and access to adjacent land use is more frequent and accepted. The design speed is 35-45 mph and design volume is 20,000-35,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Arterial is along the section line. The right-of-way requirement is 110 to 120 feet.

### **Minor Collector Streets**

Roadway that provide short continuity and carry low traffic volumes. It connects local neighborhood and business traffic on local streets to arterial street network. The design speed is 25-35 mph and the design volume is 5,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Collector is along the quarter-section line. The right-of-way requirement is typically 60-80 feet.

## O

### **Open Space**

Any parcel or area of land or water that is improved or unimproved, and devoted to an open space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation of natural resources, (2) the managed production of resources, (3) low-impact outdoor recreation, or (4) public health and safety. Open Spaces include functional open space, agriculture, retention/detention areas and floodways and floodplains. Open space may be publicly or privately owned and maintained.

## P

### **Parks**

Open space lands whose primary purpose is recreation, or passive enjoyment by the public.

### **Parcel**

A piece of land created by a partition, subdivision, deed, or other instrument recorded with the appropriate Recorder. This includes a lot, a lot of record, or a piece of land created through other methods.

### **Paths and Trails**

Paths and trails include on-street bicycle lanes, equestrian; multiple use paths and trails; pedestrian, equestrian and multiple use easements; and trailheads and staging areas. These facilities will continue to be publicly and privately owned and maintained. Trailheads may be privately or publicly owned and maintained, and may be constructed privately and dedicated to the Town.

### **Planning Area**

The area directly addressed by the General Plan. A town's planning area typically encompasses the existing town limits, and potentially annexable land which will ultimately form the town limits at build out, and to which the town will provide services.

### **Plant List (Approved)**

A list maintained by the Town of plants permissible for landscaping.

### **Plant List (Prohibited)**

A list maintained by the Town of plants prohibited for landscaping.

### **Property Rights (Private)**

An owner's private-property rights consist of three basic elements subject to certain reasonable land use restrictions imposed by government: the exclusive right to choose how property will be used, the exclusive right to any benefits derived from property, and the right to exchange property with someone else on terms that are mutually agreeable to the two parties. Private-property rights are subject to such restrictions. National, state, and local governments commonly restrict property rights to some extent. They do so for a variety of reasons, including political traditions and beliefs, the desire to promote the well-being of a community through laws, rules, and regulations.

### **Public Land**

Real property owned by government or the society at large.

## R

### **Regional**

Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single jurisdiction, and affecting a broad geographic area.

### **Rezoning**

An amendment to the Official Zoning Map and/or text of a zoning ordinance to effect a change in the nature, density, or intensity of uses allowed in a zoning district and/or on a designated parcel or land area.

### **Ridgelines**

The line described by the crest of an elongated raised band or strip on the surface of something, especially the crest of a chain of hills or mountains.

### **Right-of-Way**

A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roadways, railroads, and utility lines.

### **Roads & Streets**

(Appendix B - Roadway Functional Classification – located behind the Circulation Map).

### **Rural (Character)**

Rural character refers to the patterns of land use and development: (a) In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation are predominate over the built environment; (b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas; (c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities; (d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; (e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development; (f) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

### **Rural (Development Patterns)**

See Rural Character

### **Rural (Lifestyle)**

See Rural Character

### **Rural Community**

Low population density relative to more urban areas.

## S

### **Services (Municipal)**

Common municipal services are:

- Water supply (Partially supplied).
- Sewage collection and disposal (Partially supplied).
- Refuse removal (not provided in Cave Creek).
- Electricity and gas supply. (Not provided by Cave Creek)
- Municipal health services. (Not provided by Cave Creek)
- Municipal roads and storm water drainage.
- Municipal parks and recreation.
- Fire Protection (Not provided by Cave Creek)
- Police Protection

### **Sewage Treatment**

The mechanical and chemical treatment of raw sewage to a quality for re-use.

### **Site**

A parcel of land used or intended for one use or a group of uses and having access to a public or an approved private street.

### **Slope, Steep**

Those areas that exceed 15% slopes as defined in the Hillside Regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Slope Measurement Criteria**

Rise (in feet) / 100 feet = % of Slope.

### **Specific Area Plan**

A specific plan is a planning mechanism authorized through the Arizona Revised Statutes. A specific plan may, in addition to zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, offer regulations determining the location of buildings and other improvements with respect to existing rights-of-way, floodplains and public facilities. In addition, the specific plan may regulate the use of land, buildings and structures, the height and bulk of buildings and structures, and the open space around buildings and structures.

### **Subdivision**

The division of a tract of land into four or more defined lots, either improved or unimproved, which can be separately conveyed by sale or lease, and which can be altered or developed.

## T

### **Town Core Plan**

The Town Core Plan is a Specific Area Plan with its own unique provisions and Land Use Map, (adopted by Resolution No. R2012-03 on April 2, 2012). It is an amendment to the General Plan.

### **Traffic Impacts (Negative)**

Increases in traffic beyond the acceptable capacities of existing streets, roads, and parking.

### **Trails (Public)**

Non-motorized trails that have been accepted and/or created by the Town for use by pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists.

### **Trails (Wildcat)**

Trails that are not dedicated to the Town of Cave Creek.

### **Trailhead**

A trail access location that usually includes parking, trail information, rubbish containers, water and sanitary facilities.

## W

### **Wash Crossing – All Seasons**

Improvements to correct flooding issues at low water crossings.

### **Water Distribution System**

The infrastructure that enables water to be delivered from its source to the user.

### **Water (Preliminary Analysis)**

A study that demonstrates a 100-year supply of water is available to serve a subdivision – although to qualify as an assured supply it must be demonstrated that the developer is financially capable to purchase the water and provide the necessary infrastructure to deliver the water to the individual user.

### **Water Supply (External)**

A water source independent of the Town's water supply.

### **Water Supply (Town)**

The combined total amount of water available to the Town for delivery to customers and for public uses.

### **Water Supply (Wet)**

The amount of water and infrastructure physically available for delivery to customers.

### **Western Heritage**

Those significant activities, uses and peoples that have historically occupied the Town of Cave Creek.

### **Western Lifestyle**

The lifestyles or behaviorisms, of, and resulting from the influence of, the (often romanticized) attitudes, ethics and history of the American Western cowboy and cowgirl and miners.

## Z

### **Zones**

A way of identifying different land uses.

### **Zoning (Divisions)**

The division of a town or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, which specify allowable uses and required development standards for real property within these areas; a program that implements policies of the General Plan.

# Appendix A

*Image Source Right Page:  
Top: Town Website  
Middle: City Sun Times  
Bottom: Trover*



# A: Acknowledged Documents

The following documents, as approved or accepted and periodically amended by the Town of Cave Creek, are hereby affirmed in this General Plan:

- Cave Creek/Carefree Transportation Framework Study
- Pre-Annexation/ Development Agreements with the State Land Department
  - (Willow Springs: Maricopa County Recording No. 2009-0065342)
  - (Rogers Wash: Maricopa County Recording No. 2009-0065339)
  - (Apache Wash: Maricopa County Recording No. 2009-0065336)
  - (Core Site: Maricopa County Recording No. 2008-0334349)
- Town of Cave Creek Carefree Highway Plan
- Town of Cave Creek Town Core Plan
- Town of Cave Creek Subdivision Ordinance
- Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline #1 – Grading & Drainage
- Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline #2 – Transportation
- Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline #3 – Reserved
- Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline #4 – Landscaping
- Town of Cave Creek Technical Design Guideline #5 - Trails
- Town of Cave Creek Town Code
- Town of Cave Creek Zoning Ordinance
- Town of Cave Creek Water Master Plan

# Appendix B

# B-1: Roadway Functional Classification

Roadway	From	To	No. Through Lanes	Pavement Width	Shoulder Width	Curb	Existing Functional Classification	Recommended Functional Classification
Carefree Highway	56th Street	Cave Creek Road	2	48'-88'	Varies	Varies	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial
Carefree Highway	Cave Creek Road	50th Street	4	74'-140'	Varies	Varies	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterial
Carefree Highway	50th Street	46th Street	5	88'-100'	Varies	Varies	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterial
Carefree Highway	46th Street	24th Street	4	74'-116'	Varies	Varies	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterial
Cave Creek Road	Southern Town Limit	Carefree Highway	4	60'-100'	Varies	Varies	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterial
Cave Creek Road	Carefree Highway	Tom Darlington Drive	4	60'-100'	Varies	Varies	Major Collector	Major Collector
School House Road	Blue Ridge Drive	Flemings Springs Road	2	16'-36'	Varies	No	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
Flemings Springs Road	Spur Cross Road	Northern Town Limit	2	24'	Varies	No	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
Spur Cross Road	Cave Creek Road	Northern Town Limit	2	24'-36'	Varies	No	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
32nd Street	Carefree Highway	Maddock Road	2	24'-40'	Varies	No	Major Collector	Major Collector
24th Street/26th Street	Carefree Highway	Saddle Mountain Road	2	24'-36'	Varies	No	Major Collector	Major Collector

## References:

Town of Cave Creek

Cave Creek Carefree Transportation Frame Work Study - Final Report, November 2014

## Classification Description:

Principal Arterial - Roadway of regional importance that provides regional continuity and carries large traffic volumes. It provides high level of traffic mobility and a low level of access to adjacent development. The design speed is 35-55 mph and design volume is 30,000-60,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Principal Arterial is along the section line. The right-of-way requirement is 130 to 150 feet.

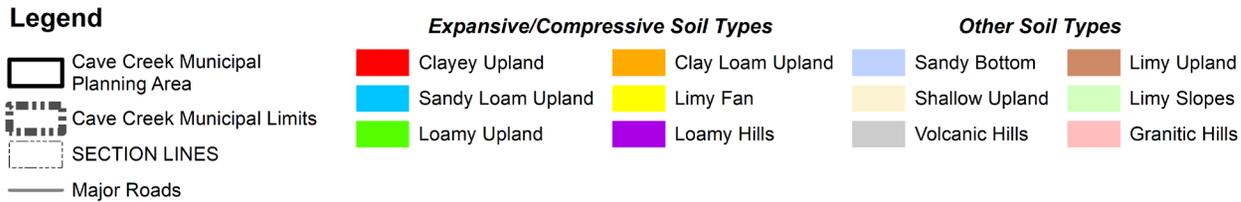
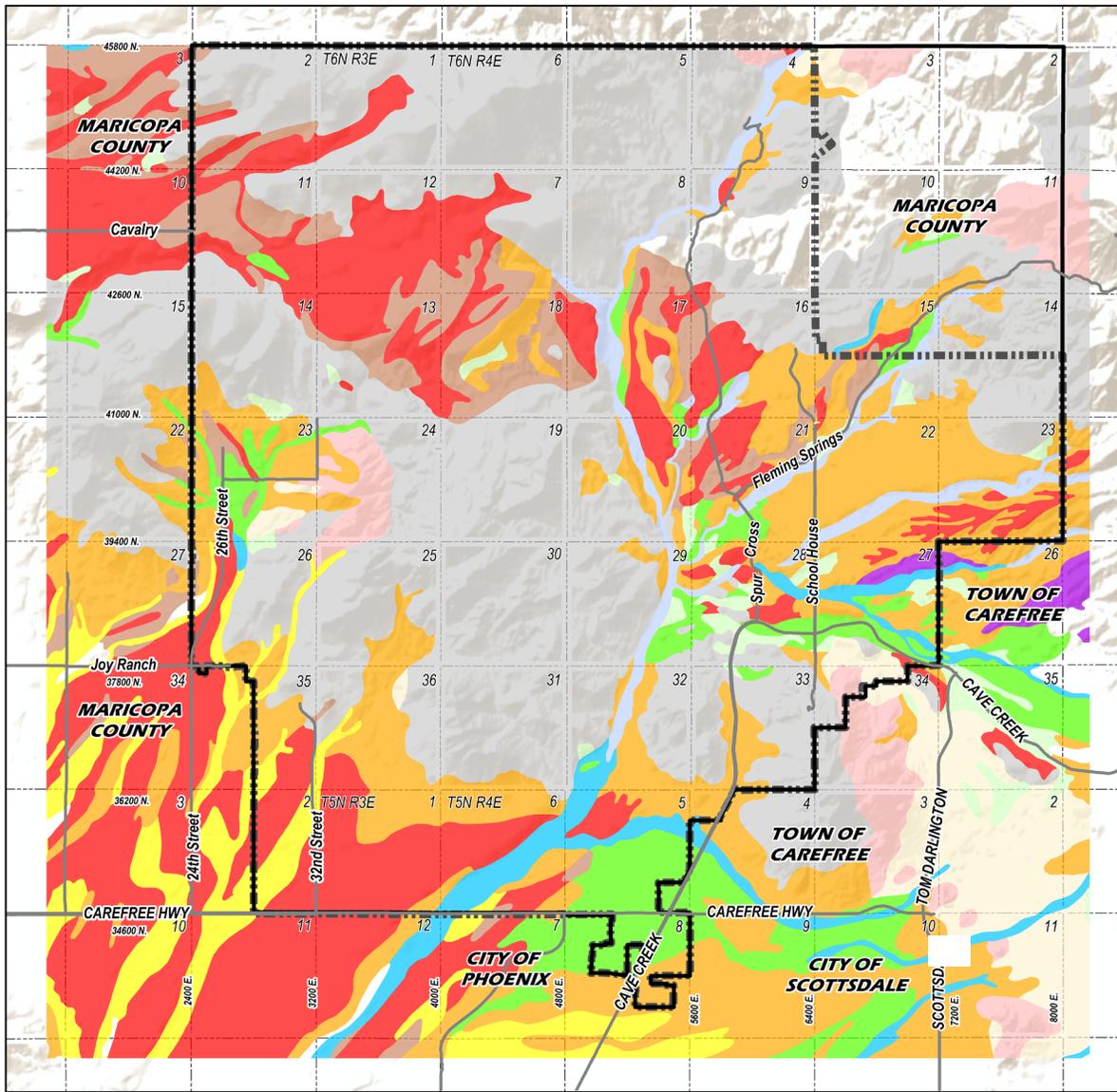
Minor Arterial - Roadway that provides moderate continuity and carries moderate traffic volumes. The traffic mobility is moderate and access to adjacent land use is more frequent and accepted. The design speed is 35-45 mph and design volume is 20,000-35,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Arterial is along the section line. The right-of-way requirement is 110 to 120 feet.

Major Collector - Roadway that provide short continuity and carry low traffic volumes. It connects local neighborhood and business traffic on local streets to arterial street network. The design speed is 25-35 mph and the design volume is 20,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Major Collector is along the mid-section line. The right-of-way requirement is typically 80 to 110 feet.

Minor Collector - Roadway that provide short continuity and carry low traffic volumes. It connects local neighborhood and business traffic on local streets to arterial street network. The design speed is 25-35 mph and the design volume is 5,000 vehicles/day. The typical alignment of a Minor Collector is along the quarter-section line. The right-of-way requirement is typically 60 to 80 feet.

Local Street - Roadway that provides direct access to adjacent land use and handles very low traffic volumes. It will connect local traffic to collector street network and will not connect directly to arterial streets. The design speed is 15-30 mph and the design volume is 1,500 vehicles/day. The right-of-way requirement is typically 50 to 60 feet.

# B-2: Soils Map





## TOWN OF CAVE CREEK GENERAL PLAN - SOILS



Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amended Date \_\_\_\_\_ by Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_

