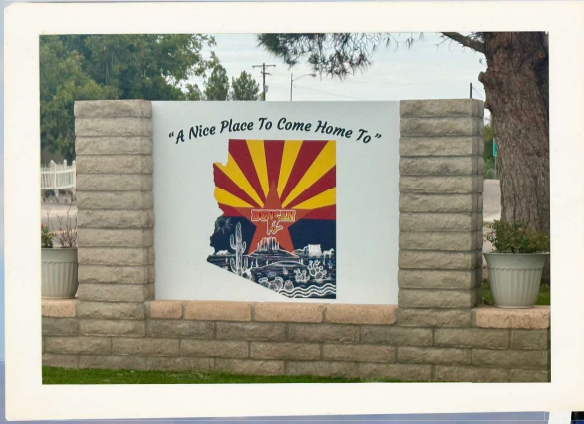


# DUNCAN GENERAL PLAN 2026



April 2026



Duncan Town Hall  
506 SE Old West Highway  
Duncan, Arizona  
85534

April 2026

# Town of Duncan General Plan Update Project Team

## Acknowledgements

The Duncan General Plan Update represents the vision to preserve the Town's unique historic small-town character while growing the economy and future of the Town and its residents. Thanks to thoughtful efforts of its General Plan Advisory Committee, input provided by its citizens, the Town Council, federal, state and local agencies, this General Plan Update represents the future of Duncan.



## Town Council

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Vice Mayor Valerie Smith

Councilmember Jill Wearne

Terry Hinton, Town Manager, Town Clerk

Alyssa Traugher- Duncan Assistant City Clerk

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

The Town of Duncan General Plan is a living document meant to be a steward for the Town policy makers to uphold the Town's vision as well as generate sustainable future growth and economic sustainability. The growth will require decisions to balance the needs of a growing Town in a thoughtful way and this General Plan update will serve as the base for which the vision, goals and policy framework identified during the community outreach process will direct that growth.



## Historical Context

The Town of Duncan is located along the Gila River, at the elevation of 3,535 feet, in southern Greenlee County, Arizona. The Town lies in the central portion of a long, narrow valley extending from east of Virden, New Mexico, and then northward through Duncan and towards the confluence of the San Francisco River. The valley is approximately 30 miles long and varies from two to four miles wide.

The Arizona-New Mexico state line bisects the valley between Duncan and Virden. Tucson lies approximately two and one-half hours and 168 miles to the southwest. Phoenix, the State Capitol, lies three and one-half hours and 205 miles to the west. Most economic needs are served by Lordsburg, New Mexico, and Safford, Arizona. Each is 38 miles from Duncan.



Early in Duncan's history, its location along the Gila River made it a refuge for Native American settlement and life. Pre-historic cultures such as the Anasazi inhabited the area until around 1000 to 1290 C.E. before the population was likely forced to leave or perish due to severe droughts. In the modern era, the area has been the site of artifact findings including pottery, arrowheads, and burial sites.

In the late 1800s, stage and freight stations as well as military outposts began appearing along the Gila River as settlers came from the East. In the 1870s the Town of Purdy was established on the north bank of the river and served as a way station on a railhead that connected Clifton

with Silver Town, New Mexico. Years later, as more people began working and living in the area, the town was moved to the south bank of the river and renamed “Duncan” after Duncan Smith who managed the Arizona Copper Company.

The settlement of the west and the opening of the copper mines in Clifton/Morenci (30 miles north) pulled many people into the area. The Duncan Valley became the heart of the cattle and farming area and exported meat and milk products, vegetables, and wheat throughout the copper mining area of southeastern Arizona. Irrigation and farming were well established when the Duncan Post Office was created in 1883.



Duncan was incorporated on July 5, 1938. The Town annexed the Hunter Estates area, north of the Gila River, in 1974. The Babbitt Heights area was subdivided in 1980 and the Duncan Heights were annexed in 1983. The LOS Church area was also annexed in 1983.

After rail was established, the area bloomed as both an important shipping route as well as fertile land ripe for cultivation. Into the 1970s though, the arrival of the new Interstate 10 to the south caused the rail shipping industry to decline in the area. Duncan has remained a small farming and ranching community and, more recently, has invested heavily in reinvigorating its downtown and becoming a rural destination to attract tourists the Southwest.



## Demographics

Duncan has remained a small town for the duration of its history. The population peaked around 1930 with 1,090 residents. The population decreased in the years following and then again experienced growth between 1990 and 2000, reaching around 800 residents. Since World War II, Duncan's population has fluctuated greatly with the employment levels of the copper mines in the Clifton/Morenci area.

According to the American Community Survey (ACS) demographic estimate, the Town of Duncan had a population of approximately 1,063 people. Most residents are female at 58% and 42% male. The population is majority white alone, at approximately 60%. The next largest ethnic group are Hispanics at around 33%. The median age is 35 years, with people aged 10-19 making up the largest single age group.

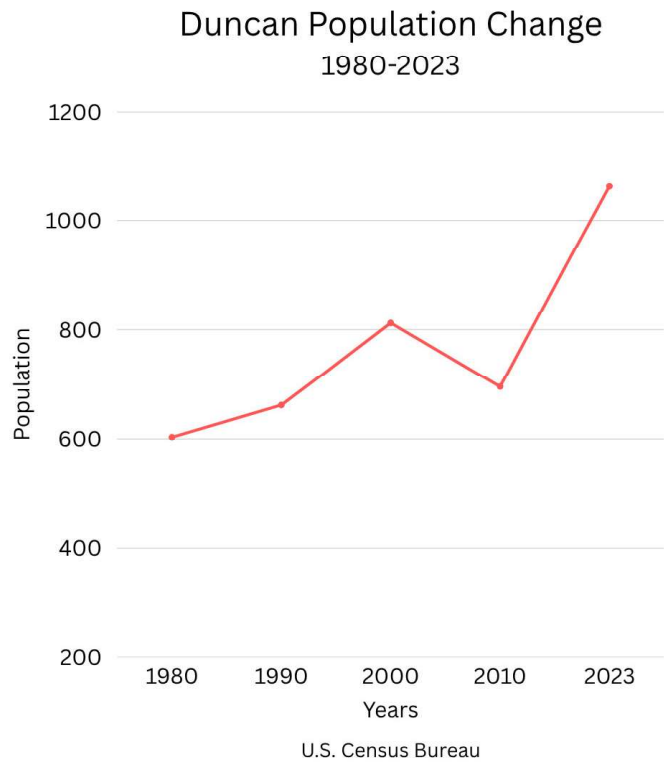


Figure 1. Duncan Population Change

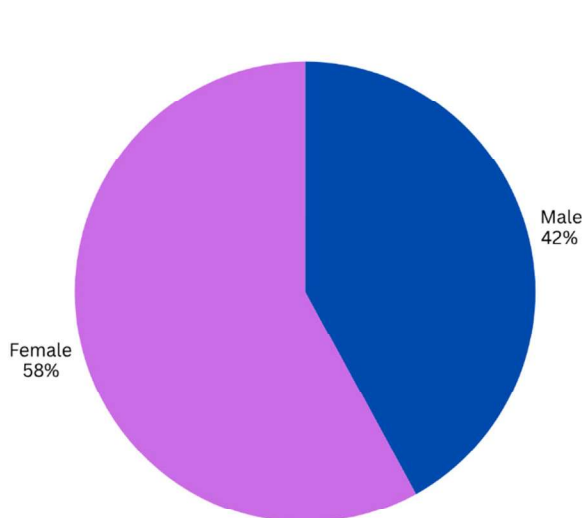


Figure 2. Duncan Sex Demographics

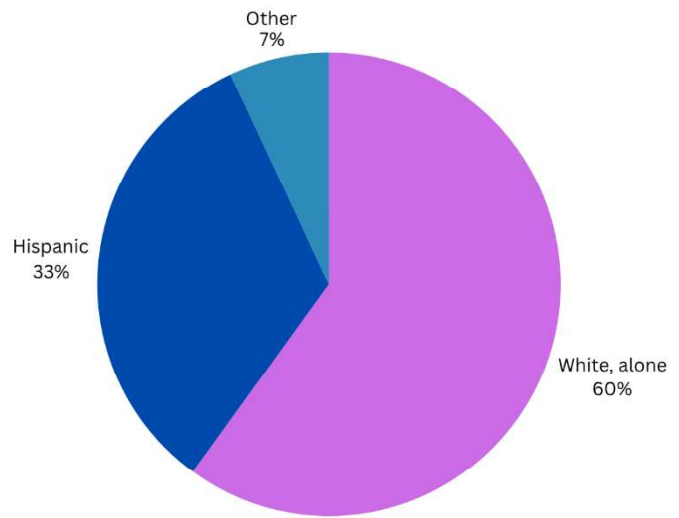


Figure 3. Duncan Racial Demographics

## General Plan Public Planning Process

The Town of Duncan began the General Plan Update process in 2025 through early 2026. Public involvement in the planning process was important to this small Town of Duncan to ensure ownership with the residents of this close-knit community. ARS § 9-461.06 requires municipalities to adopt written public engagement procedures that provide early and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of general plans from all geographic, ethnic and economic areas of the municipality. The procedures shall provide for:

- The broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives
- The opportunity for written comments
- Public hearings after effective public notice
- Open discussions, communications programs and information services
- Consideration of public comments

ARS §9-461.06 also requires municipalities to consult with, advise and provide an opportunity for official comment by public officials and agencies, the county, school districts, associations of governments, public land management agencies, other appropriate government jurisdictions, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional and other organizations, property owners and citizens to secure maximum coordination of plans and to indicate properly located sites for all public purposes on the General Plan.

In compliance with ARS §9-461.06, the Town of Duncan General Plan Public Participation Plan (PPP) was adopted in September 2025. The Town has engaged to the General Plan Process update in a variety of ways to engage residents, visitors and employees or the Town regarding the General Plan update and receive public comment through public events, online surveys, public meetings, and interactive events in order to get the best participation from the people of Duncan.

The Town of Duncan Background and Current Conditions Report summarizes the challenges impacting development within the Town of Duncan and the new General Plan Study Area. This report also assessed demographic and socio-economic trends.

The Community Vision and the Background and Existing conditions report guided the preparation of the Vision, goals, policies and implementation strategies in this General Plan.



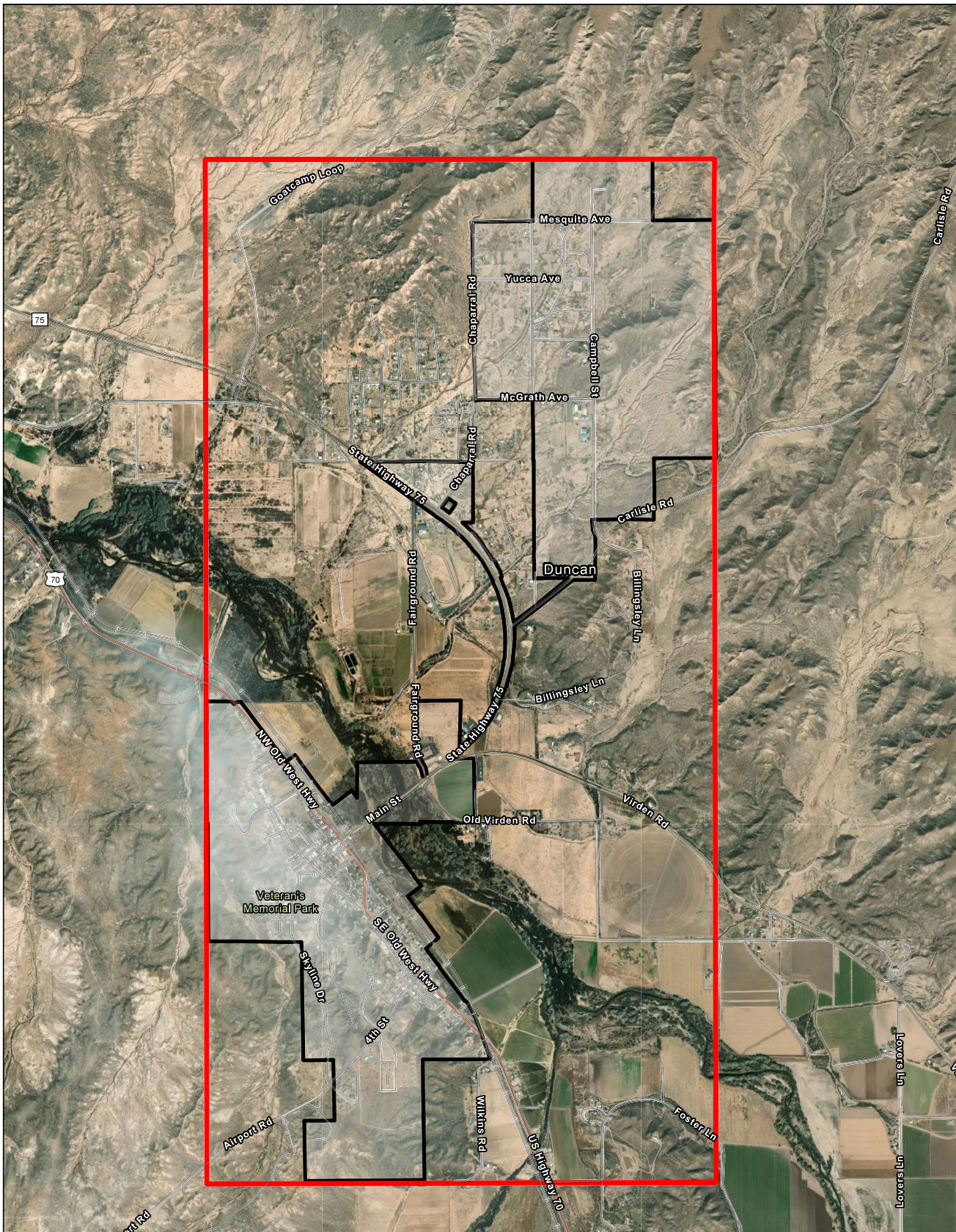
## General Plan Documents

1. **The Public Participation Plan** adopted by the Mayor and Council at early stages of the General Plan process, outlined the community engagement efforts in compliance with the ARS §461.06.
2. **The Community Vision Report** summarizes the input received at the various community meetings, workshops and visioning efforts.
3. **The Background and Existing Conditions Report** contains all existing information about the current status of the Town and background information. This report assesses the current state of conditions in the Town and identifies the physical, regulatory, demographic, infrastructure and fiscal realities impacting development within the Town.
4. **The General Plan** is the policy document guiding growth and development within the Town of Duncan. Each chapter element includes goals, policies and implementation strategies. This document also includes an administrative and implementation chapter to direct how to implement, monitor and amend the General Plan. According to ARS § 461.05, The General Plan for the Town of Duncan, with a population under 10,000, must include: a statement of community goals and policies, a land use element and a circulation element. The previous General Plan included several more elements which will continue to be part of this new plan.
5. **General Plan Maps** include all the maps prepared during the general plan process as part of the Background and Existing Conditions Report and the General Plan chapter elements.

## The Town of Duncan General Plan Vision Statement

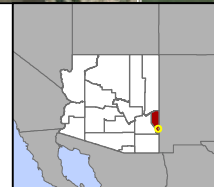
The Town of Duncan General Plan Vision is based community members comments, ideas and suggestions during the public visioning process and encompasses a vision of a small town community partnered with thoughtful growth.

*“The Town of Duncan strives to provide a safe, family friendly community that supports economic growth and quality affordable housing while maintaining the small town feel with the historic downtown character.”*

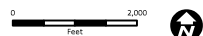


 General Plan Study Area

 Town Limits



**UPFRONT**  
Planning & Entitlements, LLC



**General Plan Study Area  
Duncan, Arizona**

# CHAPTER 2

## LAND USE ELEMENT



The **Land Use Element** is one of the elements required under the Arizona Revised Statutes. The following items are required to be addressed:

- A) Designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of such uses of land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land as may be appropriate to the municipality.
- B) Includes a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan.
- C) Identifies specific programs and policies that the municipality may use to promote infill or compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.
- D) Includes consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use.
- E) Includes policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the municipality when the plan is adopted, readopted or amended.

F) Includes sources of currently identified aggregates from maps that are available from state agencies, policies to preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development and policies to avoid incompatible land uses, except that this subdivision shall not be construed to affect any permitted underground storage facility or limit any person's right to obtain a permit for an underground storage facility pursuant to Arizona Revised Statute Title 45, chapter 3.1.

The *Land Use Element* specifically addresses items A, B and E in detail. The Goals, Objectives and Policies of the *Environmental Planning Element* of the General Plan address items C and D, respectively.

## **Duncan General Plan Land Use Map**

### **Land Use Map Purpose**

The land uses, as indicated on the **Duncan General Plan Land Use Map**, designate the proposed general distribution, location and extent of such uses of land as residential housing, commercial, industrial, open space and recreation and public uses. Densities and intensities of uses indicated on the map are discussed within the *Land Use Element*.

The land use map and the *Land Use Element* both function as a guide for all implementation strategies for development including zoning. However, they do not have the effect of rezoning any property. The map gives an indication of the existing and possible future land uses within a given area. It indicates a range of densities, which already exist or may be possible in the future in a certain area. It also indicates the intensities of commercial and industrial uses, for both existing and future development. It is required under the Arizona Revised Statutes §9-462.01. F that when rezoning a particular property, the rezone must be consistent with and “conform” to adopted General Plan goals and policies.

However, a particular land use projection by the land use map does not automatically guarantee a specific zoning will be approved on a specific site. The Town Council can consider timing of the rezoning request in terms of available infrastructure and access when determining the proper zoning. The land use map is also not static in that it may be amended by the Town Council when it determines that conditions warrant.



## Land Use Categories

The Duncan General Plan Land Use Map designates land uses within the General Plan Study Area as either Agricultural, Residential, Commercial or Public.

**Residential Land** uses are broken into two separate categories that are characterized in terms of density, and which specify a number range of **dwelling units per net acre (du/ac)**.

For the purposes of this General Plan:

$$\text{Net Density} = \text{Gross Acreage} - (\text{ROW} + \text{Public Parks \& Schools} + \text{Commercial and Industrial})$$

The five (5) land use categories are as follows:

**Agriculture**– 1 dwelling unit per acre or less; This residential category focuses on large lot rural homes and a rural agricultural lifestyle. This land use supports agriculture and very low density single-family residential development that maintains a rural character. This land use also supports low intensity rural commercial uses as an accessory to the agricultural component. Districts may include but are not limited to: Duncan Residential Zone (DR).



**Low Density Residential**– approximately 1-2 dwelling units per acre; This land use area provides a rural lifestyle with transition to nearby suburban development. This land category allows low density residential development with transitional elements that protect the character of lower-density established residential areas. Districts may include but are not limited to: Duncan Residential Zone (DR).

**Medium Density Residential**– approximately 2-8 dwelling units per acre; This land use area includes residential areas that allow up to 8 dwelling units per acre of land density and intends to provide for a more suburban residential development and medium density attached housing. This land use also allows higher density apartments as appropriate for workforce housing as well as commercial opportunities along Main Street which utilize the residences. Districts may include but are not limited to: Duncan Residential Zone (DR).

The density of housing is always a fundamental decision in Town design. Public costs of services and private development costs are closely linked with residential densities. Density provides a

benchmark from which the amount and type of public services that must be furnished can be measured.

The overwhelming majority of housing stock in the Town of Duncan is comprised of single family detached homes, while County areas within the plan area are mostly manufactured homes. Both areas have residential densities primarily within the Low and Medium Density residential categories. The residential land use categories on the map, however, do not indicate a specific dwelling type (i.e. single family detached, single family attached, manufactured homes, mobile homes, apartments)). The specific types of dwellings are determined by the uses permitted in each zoning district. However, the number of dwelling units per acre does give an indication of the type of residential development density that may occur. For example: Low Density Residential Areas are generally going to be characterized by single family homes while Medium-Density Residential Areas are generally going to be characterized by mostly higher density single family homes, duplexes, triplexes and apartment complexes.

Affordability and single-family home ownership have become a large constraint for many reasons throughout the Town, the state and country. The goal of this element is also to provide opportunities for creative solutions and opportunities to offer a variety of housing options to provide safe and secure housing for all demographics and people who wish to reside in Duncan.



**Commercial:** These are low to mid intensity commercial areas typically disbursed throughout various areas at major crossroads and along the highway. This land use category should provide for goods and services that serve the local residents of Duncan. This would generally include offices and low-intensity small scale retail and tourism uses. These uses may also support traveler-oriented establishments such as: hotels, motels, and full-service automotive gas stations. Typical zoning categories may include but are not limited to: Commercial Zone (C).

**Public** land uses include public uses such as government buildings and properties, school sites, the County Fairgrounds and other similar uses. The typical zoning category for the public land use is but is not limited to: Public Zone (P)





## Population Growth

The Town of Duncan and the surrounding areas within the Duncan General Plan Study Area have experienced slow steady growth. Currently the Town of Duncan population is 879 with a median age of 35.2. The population has experienced fluctuations due to economic changes and weather events with flooding, however there has been a steady increase since the 2010's.

**Figure 1: Duncan, Arizona Population (US Census)**

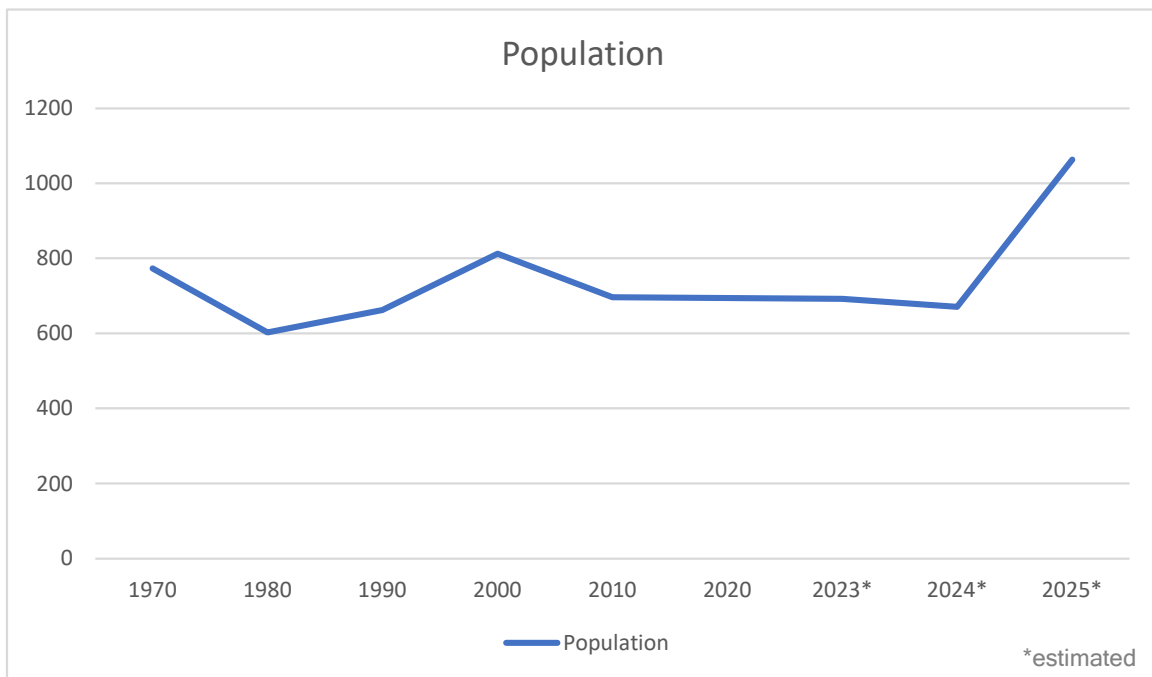


Table 1 shows the population of Duncan, Greenlee County and the State of Arizona based on the year 2000, 2010 and 2023 Census counts. Duncan has seen a slight decrease in population since 2023, however has seen a steady increase once again.

<b>TABLE 1: POPULATION</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2023(est)</b>
Duncan	812	695	692
Greenlee County	8,547	8,440	9,593
State of Arizona	5,130,632	6,401,569	7,285,370

Source: Arizona Department of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

### Population Projections

The Arizona Population Statistics provided by the Census Bureau and Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity prepares the accepted population projections for counties and municipalities within the State of Arizona. It should be noted that no assumptions have been made as to how the population growth rate may be affected should the Town annex any populated areas during the next 20 years or attribute for new large developments.

Table 2 shows the medium series population projections for Greenlee County. The overall area is expected to experience slow and steady growth for the foreseeable future, reaching around 10,000 residents in 2032. An estimated increase of 947 persons is expected in Greenlee County in the next 20 years.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Greenlee County Projected Population</b>
2026	9,784
2027	9,808
2028	9,841
2029	9,877
2030	9,915
2031	9,957
2032	10,002
2033	10,050
2034	10,099
2035	10,150
2036	10,204
2037	10,260
2038	10,316
2039	10,375
2040	10,435
2041	10,492
2042	10,546
2043	10,598
2044	10,648
2045	10,695
2046	10,741
2047	10,785

2048	10,827
2049	10,868
2050	10,908

Sources: 2022-2060 State and County Population Projections, Greenlee County Medium Series, Arizona Population Statistics, Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity

## A Balance of Land Uses

**Table 3: Land Use Allocation in the Duncan General Plan Study Area**

LAND USE CATEGORY	ACRES	% OF TOTAL AREA
Agriculture	1531	26.5%
Residential	4113	71.3%
Commercial	45	< 1%
Public	82	1.4%
<b>Total General Plan Study Area</b>	<b>5,771</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Residential Land Use Projections

The residential land uses represent **4,113 acres** or **71.3%** of the land area within the Duncan General Plan Study Area. Duncan has traditionally developed in a rather low-density manner with large lots in many areas. As a result, the plan devotes a majority of the land uses to future residential development.

### Non-Residential Land Use Projections

In order to determine a balance of non-residential land uses needed to support future residential growth, we have designated certain percentages of the land in the Duncan General Plan Study Area for agriculture, commercial and public uses.

The agriculture land uses represent **1,531 acres** or **26.5%** of the land area within the Duncan General Plan Study Area.

The commercial land uses represent **45 acres** or **< 1%** of the land area within the Duncan General Plan Study Area.

The public/ land uses represent **82 acres** or **1.4%** of the land area within the Duncan General Plan Study Area.

The **Duncan General Plan Land Use Map** attempts to provide a reasonable overall balance of land uses to meet the future needs of area residents as the population continues to grow as well as

maintaining the small town and agricultural history and commerce that exists today. Once again, the land use map is not static in that it may be amended by the Town Council when it determines that conditions warrant. The land use map should only be amended when there is clear evidence of changes in assumptions, conditions or dynamics exist. The *Town Code of Duncan* provides further details for implementing the land use plan through Town Code to help guide short-term and long-term growth and development within the study area as a whole.



### **LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL 1:** To adopt appropriate growth management systems which provide for a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public land uses which preserve and protect property, provide economic opportunity, and encourage sound development and redevelopment.

**Objective 1:** Provide projected residential, commercial, and industrial development ability to connect to public utility services.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should identify specific development areas for commercial, industrial, and residential land use close to public utilities and services.

2. The Town should adopt/revise adequate land use and development regulations which will encourage the needed land use types and quality development.
3. The Town should continually work on training of staff or a volunteers and continuing education opportunities through another agency such as Greenlee County.

**GOAL 2: Provide strategic organized growth in Duncan for continued opportunities for all residents, employers and visitors.**

Objective 1: Encourage a compatible mix of land uses, which allows accessibility to goods and services without extensive travel.

*Policies:*

1. Encourage a variety of commercial and employment opportunities for local and regional residents.
2. Encourage denser development adjacent to existing infrastructure or within infill areas.
3. Seek out calibrated areas for annexation to grow the Town with an equal level of services provided to income to the Town.
4. Work with land owners on existing underutilized residential lots to improve the site or provide opportunities to update the site for new residents.

Objective 2: Ensure new development provides opportunities to support public employees such as: police, fire, teachers and Town and county employees to live near where they work.

*Policies:*

1. Encourage a diversity of quality housing types for a variety of demographics and income levels.
2. Work with builders to provide thoughtful solutions for higher density residential while also providing quality developments.
3. Identify lots within the downtown that may be underutilized or redeveloped with higher density homes

Objective 3: Provide commercial opportunities for locally owned business while also providing areas for larger commercial uses with good transportation access.

*Policies:*

1. Look for retail, restaurants, and entertainment uses that strengthen the local economic base.
2. Encourage the development and preservation of locally-owned businesses and historic buildings.
3. Encourage preservation of the character and function of historic established neighborhoods and parts of the community.

**GOAL 3: Encourage a Mix of Housing Types and Affordability**

**Objective 1:** Work with residential builders to encourage options for a mix of housing types in the densities between to single family residential and apartments.

*Policies:*

1. Update the zoning ordinance to allow ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in every zoning category.
2. Provide housing density examples to enable better representation of available density types for every zoning category.

**GOAL 4: Work with neighbors to understand the communities needs and encourage developments that meet the needs of the Town of Duncan.**

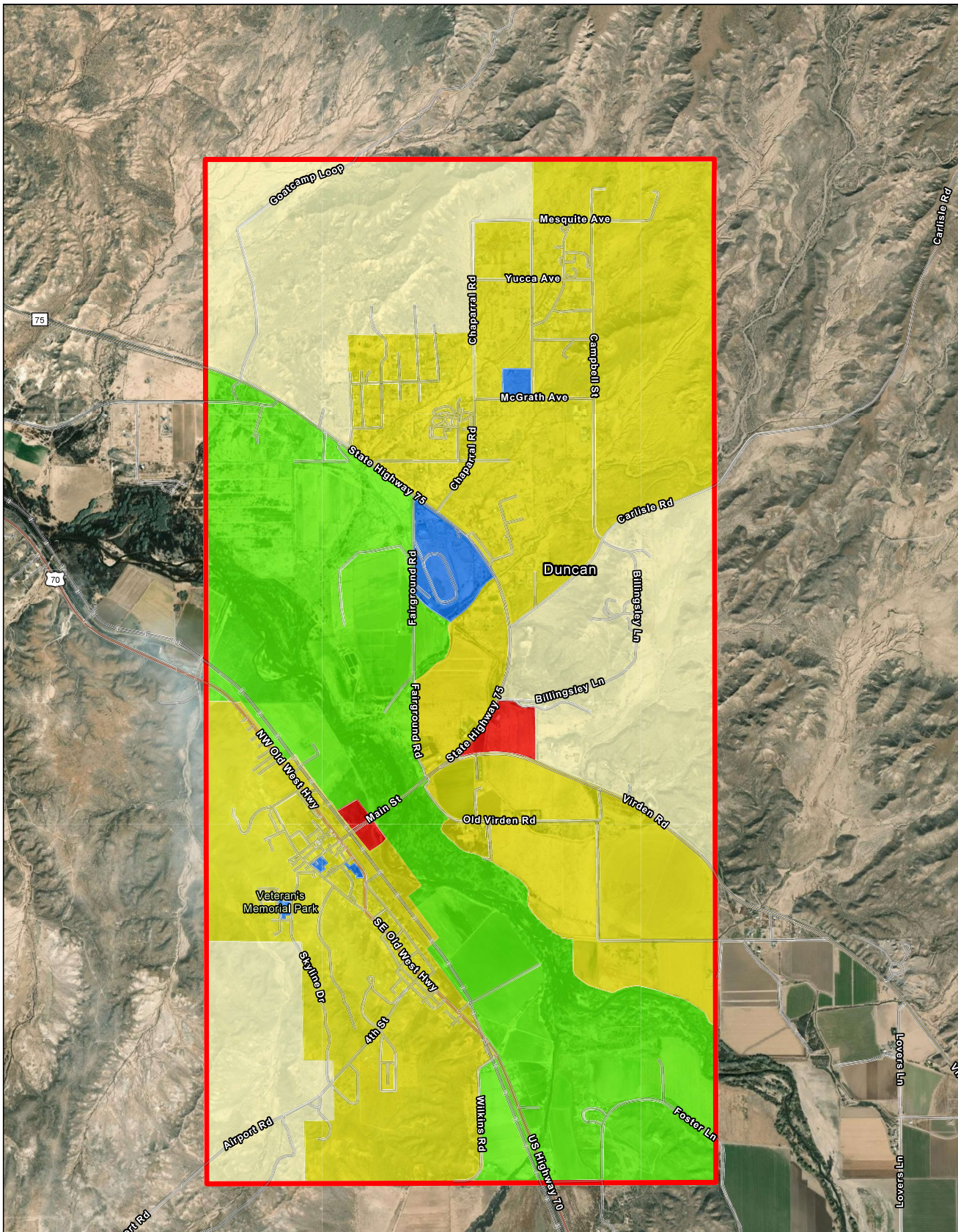
**Objective 1:** Work to provide education open houses for residents to learn about the development process and funding options for their own home improvements.

*Policies:*

1. Update the Town development application processes to be more user friendly.
2. Provide flow charts online to better demonstrate the process to encourage development within the Town.
3. Look to establish community liaisons to help homeowners manage and understand funding options for home improvements and renovations.

<b>Land Use Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
<b>To adopt appropriate growth management systems which provide for a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public land uses which preserve and protect property, provide economic opportunity, and encourage sound development and redevelopment.</b>	The Town should identify specific development areas for commercial, industrial, and residential land use requiring public utilities and services.
	The Town should adopt/revise adequate land use and development regulations which will encourage the needed land use types and quality development.
	The Town should continually work on training of staff or a volunteers and continuing education opportunities through another agency such as Greenlee County.
<b>Provide strategic organized growth in Duncan for continued opportunities for all residents, employers and visitors.</b>	Encourage a variety of commercial and employment opportunities for local and regional residents.
	Encourage denser development adjacent to existing infrastructure or within infill areas
	Seek out calibrated areas for annexation to grow the Town with an equal level of services provided to income to the Town.
	Work with land owners on existing underutilized residential lots to improve the site or provide opportunities to update the site for new residents
	Encourage a diversity of quality housing types for a variety of demographics and income levels.
	Work with builders to provide thoughtful solutions for higher density residential while also providing quality developments.
	Identify lots within the downtown that may be underutilized or able redeveloped with higher density homes

	Look for retail, restaurants, and entertainment uses that strengthen the local economic base.
	Encourage the development and preservation of locally-owned businesses and historic buildings.
	Encourage preservation of the character and function of historic established neighborhoods and parts of the community.
<b>Encourage a Mix of Housing Types and Affordability</b>	Update the zoning ordinance to allow ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) in every zoning category
	Provide housing density examples to enable better representation of available density types for every zoning category.
<b>Work with neighbors to understand the communities needs and encourage developments that meet the needs of the Town of Duncan.</b>	Update the Town development application processes to be more user friendly.
	Create flow charts online to better demonstrate the process to encourage development within the Town.
	Look to establish community liaisons to help homeowners manage and understand funding options for home improvements and renovations.



- General Plan Study Area
- Medium Density Residential
- Future Land Use
- Public
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Low Density Residential



Project T25007973  
December 08, 2025

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Feet

**Future Land Use  
Greenlee County, Arizona**

20

# CHAPTER 3

## STREETS & CIRCULATION



The **Streets & Transportation Element** provides a policy framework for a comprehensive circulation system that incorporates all modes of transportation including pedestrians, bicyclists, trains and automobiles in a safe and efficient manner. The Circulation element balances development and land use with future transportation demands. This element presents existing transportation conditions and identifies a variety of issues important to the community in the future. An examination of future conditions correlates the future development with transportation system needs and provides an approach for dealing with those needs in a manner that is both financially feasible and generally acceptable to the community.

### **Existing Conditions**

Duncan is located in Greenlee County in southeastern Arizona along the Old West Highway (Rte. 60) and Arizona State Route 75 (SR 75), just over 160 miles northeast of Tucson and approximately 150 miles northwest of Las Cruces. U.S. Highway 70 provides a primary east-west link for the Town. Highway 70 East connects Duncan to Lordsburg, New Mexico, where connections can be made to I-10 and points further east. Highway 70 West connects Duncan to

Safford and Globe, Arizona, where access is ultimately provided via U.S. 89 to Maricopa County and the City of Phoenix. Arizona Highway 75 connects Duncan north to Clifton, where connections are made to points north via U.S. Highway 191. Connections can also be made outside Clifton east into New Mexico via Arizona Highway 78.



## **Roadways**

Roads serve as the foundation of the regional transportation network, accommodating motor vehicles, trucks, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Roads are the main component of the transportation network throughout the Duncan area, and the primary public space in which residents travel daily. The efficiency, safety, and condition of the region's road and bridge network is essential to the functionality of the other transportation modes and to the economic prosperity and quality of life in the General Plan study area.

Roadways are classified based on the type of traffic they are intended to serve. For example, arterials move people for long distances at higher speeds within a Town or between cities. Collector streets are lower speed and shorter distances than arterials and connect travelers to the arterials. Local streets are very low speed, extend for short distances, and provide direct access to residential and commercial properties. This categorization is referred to as functional classification. Functional classifications have an inverse relationship between access and mobility. The Town classifies roads within the jurisdiction as to their traffic volumes and future needs.



### **Railroad**

Class III carrier Arizona Eastern Railway (AZER) provides rail service through the study area via railroad tracks that run southwest to northeast. The railroad follows Rte. 70 through downtown Duncan, then follows SR 75 as the rail continues north. There are two railroad crossings in Duncan: One at the intersection of Hwy 70 and Main Street, and the other near the intersection of Hwy 70 and Wilkins Road.

AZER that operates 206 miles (332 km) of railroad between Clifton, Arizona, and Miami, Arizona, in the United States. This includes trackage rights over the Union Pacific Railroad between Lordsburg, New Mexico, and Bowie, Arizona. The railroad serves the copper mining region of southeastern Arizona, and the agricultural Gila River Valley. The railroad offers a transload location for lumber, building materials and other consumer commodities at Globe, Arizona, and can handle railcars weighing up to 286,000lbs. The Town of Duncan is one of the many municipalities connected to the Arizona Eastern Railway and it remains an important freight route.

### **Greyhound Bus Route**

Greyhound Lines, Inc. is an American operator of intertown bus services. Greyhound operates the largest intertown bus network in the United States. Based in Dallas, Texas, Greyhound is a subsidiary of Flix SE, owner of FlixBus. Greyhound operates 1,700 coaches and serves 230 stations and 1,700 destinations. Greyhound serves the Town of Duncan with a station located at Hotel Duncan. Greyhound provides daily trips to and from the Town.



### **Bicycle & Pedestrian Circulation**

It is important for every individual to be able to move efficiently throughout the Town; this includes pedestrians and cyclists as well. Improvements which aid the movement of pedestrians and cyclists can include bike lanes, sidewalks, paved roadway shoulders, multi-use trails, activated crosswalks with lights, and other opportunities in the future. The Town is hoping to reopen a previous pedestrian-friendly birdwatching trail on Hwy 70. The Town encourages private landowners to work the Town to create trail easements, which can be maintained more regularly and opened for use by the public. Future roadway designs and plans should incorporate future pedestrian and bicycle connections.

The streets and circulation element objective is to fill in the missing mile between transportation systems such as the ones above to ensure all residents, tourists and workers are able to arrive at their destinations in a safe and efficient manner.



### **STREETS AND CIRCULATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL 1: Develop and maintain an adequate transportation system for residential and commercial access as well as transit access for the community.**

Objective 1: Rehabilitate and maintain all public streets and roads to appropriate Town standards.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should identify and inventory all public and private streets within the municipal limits.

2. The Town should adopt standards for the development and maintenance of its streets and roads.
3. The Town should develop a street program which will adequately maintain all public streets.
4. The Town should develop a public transportation service via van or bus.
5. Review development projects and lot splits to provide access and/ or easements to adjacent parcels for future development.

Objective 2: Provide adequate and reliable public transit for the elderly and handicapped population of the Town.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should continue to support a special needs public transit system for the community.
2. The Town should continue to update existing buildings to implement Americans with Disabilities Act standards for accessibility to those with special needs and mobility issues.

Objective 3: Provide adequate and reliable infrastructure to ensure the safety of residents during flooding.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should look to design and implement a safe second river crossing to enable all residents to exit the Town if necessary.
2. The Town should plan for improvements surrounding the intersection of Hwy 70 and the railroad, preventing future flooding.
3. The Town should propose drainage improvement projects to improve safety during flooding, particularly in the East Avenue and High Street intersection area.

Objective 4: Improve cyclist and pedestrian safety on Town roadways.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should prioritize sidewalk improvements.
2. The Town should increase lighting along roadways and sidewalks to provide safety from automobiles.
3. The Town should work towards traffic calming on East Avenue and High Street to create a safer environment for the community.

<b>Streets &amp; Circulation Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
<b>Develop and maintain an adequate transportation system for residential and commercial access as well as transit access for the special needs population.</b>	The Town should identify and inventory all public and private streets within the municipal limits
	The Town should adopt standards for the development and maintenance of its streets and roads
	The Town should develop a street program which will adequately maintain all public streets.
	The Town should develop a public transportation service via van or bus.
	Review development projects and lot splits to provide access and/ or easements to adjacent parcels for future development.
Provide adequate and reliable public transit for the elderly and handicapped population of the Town	The Town should continue to support a special needs public transit system for the community
	The Town should continue to update existing buildings to implement Americans with Disabilities Act standards for accessibility to those with special needs and mobility issues.
Provide a second river crossing, allowing for ease of movement in and out of Town, in particular during severe flooding.	The Town should provide a second river crossing to enable all residents to exit the Town if necessary.
	The Town should plan for improvements surrounding the intersection of Hwy 70 and the railroad, preventing future backups.
	The Town should propose drainage improvement projects to improve safety during flooding, particularly in the East Ave and High Street intersection area.
Improve cyclist and pedestrian safety on Town roadways.	The Town should prioritize sidewalk improvements.
	The Town should increase lighting along roadways and sidewalks to provide safety from automobiles.
	The Town should work towards traffic calming on East Avenue and High Street to create a safer environment for the community.

# CHAPTER 4

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT



The **Parks and Open Space Element** is one of the elements required by the Arizona Revised Statutes 9-461.05. The following items must be addressed:

- A. A comprehensive inventory of open space areas, recreational resources, and designations of access points to open space areas and resources.
- B. An analysis of forecasted needs, policies for managing and protecting open space areas and resources and implementation strategies to acquire additional open space areas and further establish recreational resources.
- C. Policies and implementation strategies designed to promote a regional system of integrated open space and recreational resources and consideration of any existing regional open space plans.

### **Current Conditions**

**Table 1** is an inventory of existing park facilities by park type, size, location, and amenities within the Duncan General Plan Study Area. Three parks are currently in operation and available to the public in the Town of Duncan: Centennial Park, Veterans Park, and Packer Park.

**Table 1: Existing Park Facilities**

PARK NAME	PARK TYPE	SIZE	AMENITIES
Centennial Park	Neighborhood	0.758 acres	Playground, picnic kiosks, restrooms, bandstand, ebird.org Hot Spot, long-distance cycling campsite
Veterans Park	Neighborhood	2.14 acres	Playground, shaded picnic plaza,
Packer Park	Neighborhood	0.81 acres	Shady picnic tables next to the Post Office, War Memorial Honor Walk

### Greenlee County Fairgrounds

The fairgrounds, located at 1258 Fairgrounds Road, include a seasonal horse racing track and community meeting facilities. Greenlee County operates the fairgrounds. The annual Greenlee County Fair is typically held on the third weekend of September each year.



Greenlee County Fairgrounds have mastered the fine art of balancing fun and safety for the whole family by staffing events with on-site first-aid, first responders on duty, and emergency medical personnel on duty. In recent years, operations have expanded from only three to five rides on the ground to 14 to 16 rides, eight games, and three concessions.

Local and regional performers, participants, and visitors offer excitement and entertainment. Greenlee County Fair & Racing offers a rodeo arena, boarding stables, and racetrack. Attendees can watch the Greenlee County mud drags and rodeo. Afterwards, guests can continue spending time with their horses in small-town country parades or take them for a ride on local trails. Local organizations such as the Junior Livestock Association Show and Auction, Junior Rodeo Finals, and many food booths showcase at the fair as well.

In addition to the yearly fair, the grounds are an excellent venue for weddings, dances, and a variety of other community events. Baseball and softball fields can also be utilized for sporting events and are also in the processes of being updated for future users and benefits the Duncan community.

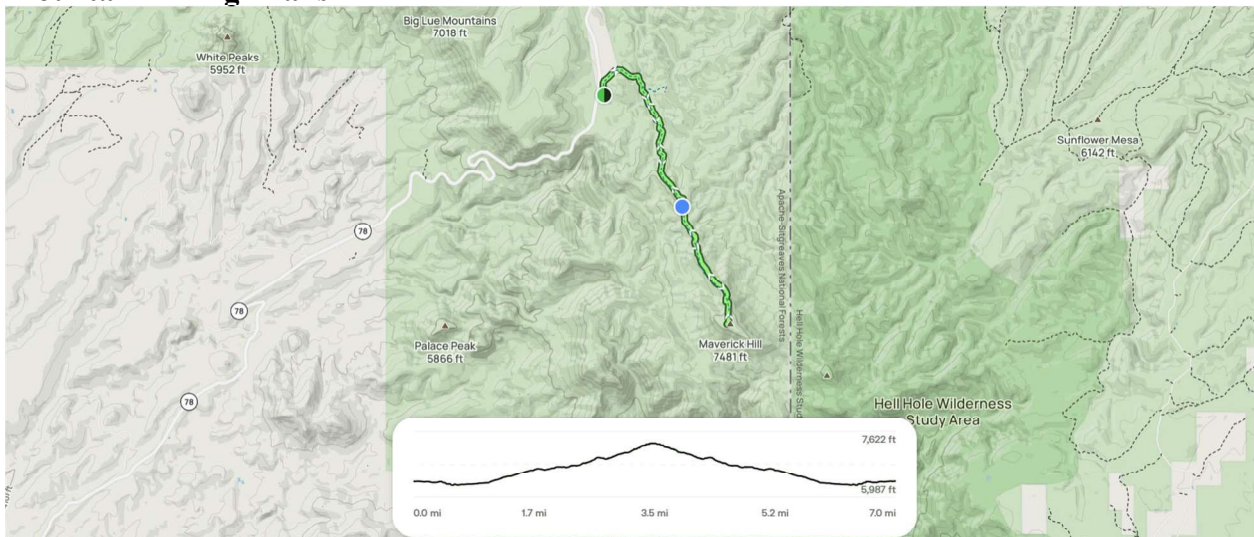


### Greenlee Country Club



The Greenlee Country Club is located north of Duncan at 510 Country Club Road and includes a golf course, driving range, and putting greens. This is a private facility but is open to the general public. The 9-hole "Greenlee" course at the Greenlee Golf and Country Club facility features 3,192 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 36. Established in 1950, this beloved course has been a favorite among locals for over 70 years.

### Mountain Biking Trails



The Maverick Hill Trail (#568) is a 7.0-mile out-and-back trail near the Town. This mountain biking trail is a moderately challenging route, averaging a 3 h 40 min completion time. Naturalists can also enjoy backpacking, camping, and hiking, on this pet-friendly trail.



### **Road Biking**

The Town of Duncan welcomes many long-range cyclists. Adventure Cycling Association Southern Tier route recommends stopping in Duncan to refresh food and water supplies on the way to Silver City, NM. Cyclists can use Duncan facilities at Centennial Park to camp or enjoy a night at the Simpson Hotel.

The Town was previously a part of the Javelina Chase, a biking event active from 2013-2019. The 72-mile course concluded at the Greenlee County Fairgrounds in Duncan. Expecting over 200 attendees, the event was postponed in Spring 2020 and has been on hiatus since, but the Town would like to reopen the event.

### **Existing Open Space and Trail System**

Currently, the Town contains several birdwatching trails and parks, such as the one-mile Gila River Birding & Wildlife Trail. The trail is a short walk from downtown Duncan, offering easy access to a wealth of bird life. Agricultural, riparian, and residential habitats overlap here and attract a rich diversity of birds. Duncan's Centennial Park, located just across the street from the Duncan Birding Trail on Hwy 70, offers a convenient vantagepoint for birdwatching as well. The Stagecoach Loop is located farther southwest of downtown Duncan, passing through an agricultural area near the Gila River. Other trails ideal for birdwatching nearby Duncan include the Lower Gila Box, Hwy 70 Pond, Railroad Wash Rd, and the Virden Bridge on Hwy 92.



## **Future Planned Improvements for Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trail Facilities**

Active improvement projects on Centennial Park and Veterans Parks are currently underway. Both parks are receiving sidewalk upgrades, replacement playground structures, and parking lot enhancements including repaving, repainting, and installation of curb stops. Centennial Park will also receive a new CMU wall to separate it from the surrounding neighborhood. A pickleball court, volleyball court, and shade structure will be installed in Veteran Park.

Greenlee County has completed and continues to execute upgrades to the fairgrounds. In recent years, there have been improvements to the rodeo arena, kitchens and food service areas underneath the grandstands, public restrooms, the livestock barn, and the dance floor. Additional planned amenities and facility upgrades encompass the rodeo arena, baseball and softball fields, and a play area including a splash pad, pickleball courts, a shaded playground, a basketball court, sand volleyball courts, a walking path, and ample shade.

The Town is in discussions to provide a potential catch-and-release fishing lake and surrounding park on the northeast side of Duncan. The recreation area would span around 11 acres of open space.

## **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

### **GOAL 1: Provide the necessary recreational opportunities to meet the needs of the citizens of Duncan.**

Objective 1: Maintain existing park, recreation, and open space quality for all members of the community.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should collaborate with the senior center to incorporate activities focused on seniors.
2. The Town should look into offering afterschool programs for children.
3. The Town should ensure library activities such as seed banking and geocaching continue.

Objective 2: Enhance birdwatching opportunities.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should encourage coordination with private landowners to reopen and maintain trails.

Objective 3: Create a recreation center for residents.

*Policies:*

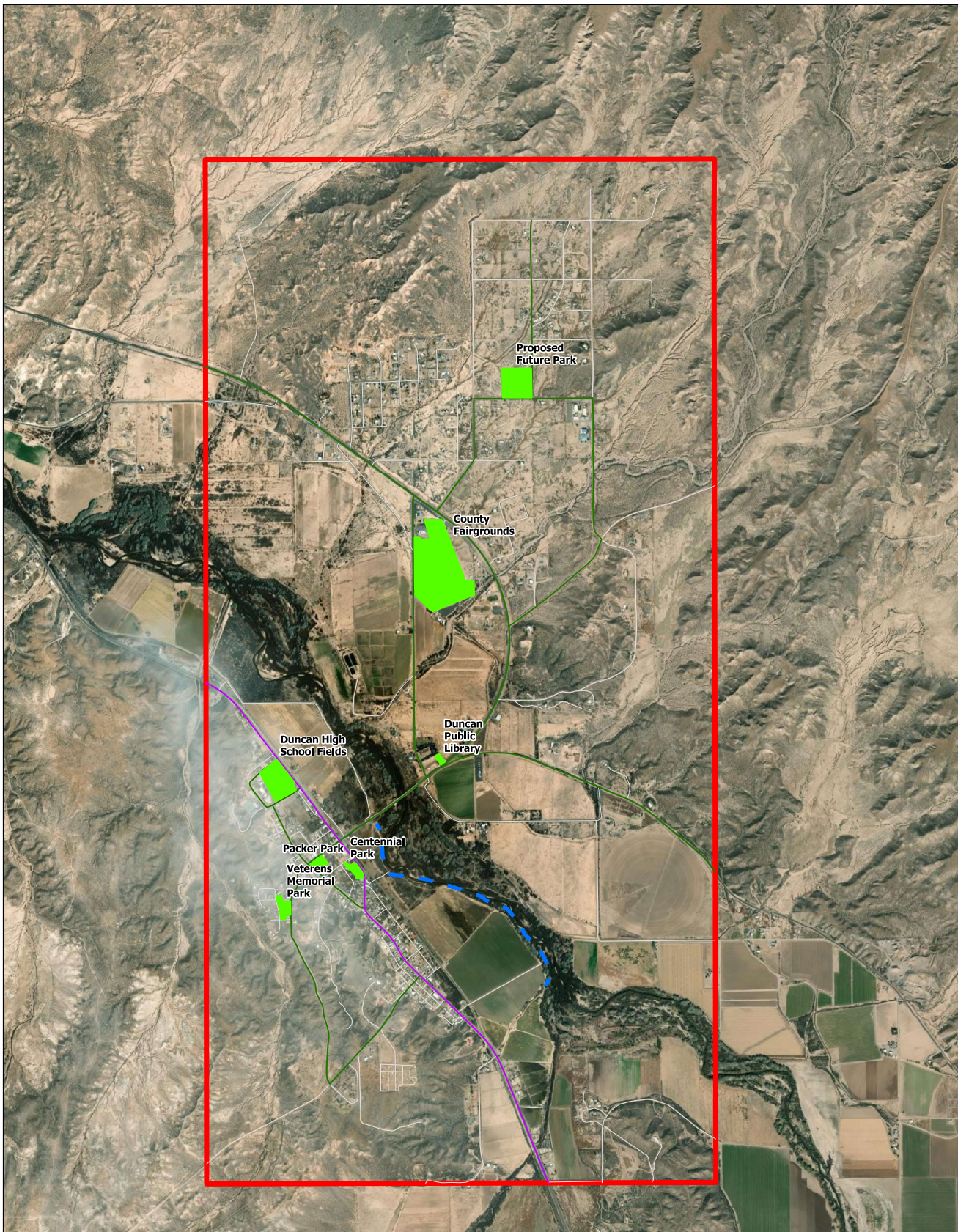
1. The Town should investigate opportunities for properties that may be converted into a recreation space through public-private partnerships and infill development.

Objective 4: The Town should seek partnership with volunteer community-led projects.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should work with local artists and youth groups to create a graffiti wall.
2. The Town should create a community garden to provide free food, education, and a sense of togetherness to residents.

<b>Parks and Open Space Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Maintain existing park, recreation, and open space quality for all members of the community.	The Town should collaborate with the senior center to incorporate activities focused on seniors.
	The Town should look into offering afterschool programs for children.
	The Town should ensure library activities such as seed banking and geocaching continue.
Enhance birdwatching opportunities.	The Town should encourage coordination with private landowners to reopen and maintain trails.
Create a recreation center for residents.	The Town should investigate opportunities for properties that may be converted into a recreation space through public-private partnerships and infill development
Encourage community-led projects.	The Town should work with local artists and youth groups to create a graffiti wall.
	The Town should create a community garden to provide free food, education, and a sense of togetherness to residents.



- ▭ General Plan Study Area    - - - Proposed Birding Trail
- ▭ Open Space
- Arterial
- Collector
- Local



Project T25007973  
November 04, 2025

**Duncan Open Space**  
Duncan, Arizona

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# CHAPTER 5

## PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT



Essential in all community planning is an evaluation of the **Public Facilities**, which include plans for police, fire, emergency services, sewage, refuse disposal, drainage, local utilities and facilities. The element is used to determine the current community facilities and potential future need for growth of the community. Town Hall is located along SE Old Highway 70 and provides the offices for the Town as well as the Town Council Chambers.

### Library

The Duncan Public Library serves the Duncan Valley, providing children and adults with reading materials, movies, magazines, and more. Duncan is a member of Libby which provides a large catalogue of online materials for reading and writing when users register with their library card.

Duncan also provides computers, coworking space, a seed library, free GED testing and a summer reading program.



## Police Services

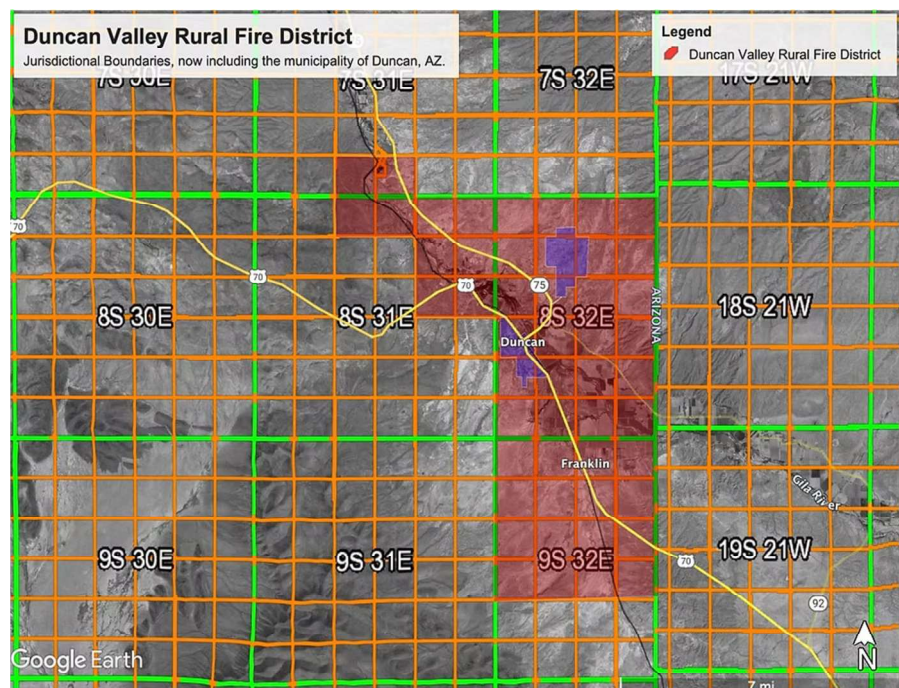
The Town of Duncan does not have a municipal police department and is instead served by the Greenlee County Sheriff's Department. Greenlee County Sheriff's Department has an annex office in Duncan which has part-time staffing.



The main office of the Greenlee County Sheriff's Department is in the Town of Clifton. The Sheriff's Office provides contract law enforcement services, ensuring the safety and security of the county's residents. Their mission is to deliver responsive and effective service, earning and maintaining the public's trust and confidence.

## Fire Service

Duncan Valley Rural Fire District provides fire safety and emergency services to the Town of Duncan and the surrounding Duncan Valley. The provided map shows the current boundaries of the Duncan Valley Rural Fire District. If a property owner in the Duncan Valley is not currently within the fire district, the property owner can request to be annexed into the fire district through the Duncan Valley Rural Fire District that will go through the Board of Supervisors.



Duncan Fire District reviews building permits and annexations online and in-person. In addition, they provide training to volunteers seeking to become fire fighters and emergency response personnel. The Fire District can also install Knox Box's on commercial properties upon request, which provide emergency access keys to fire emergency responders.

## Water and Wastewater



Water in the Town of Duncan is sourced from wells. The majority of residences within Town limits receive water through the Town of Duncan. Rates for new water service and meter installation, cost per gallon, and bulk water can be found on the Town website.

Sewer service is provided through the Town of Duncan and all existing and new residences must connect to the sewer system if it is available. Hunter Estates does not have sewer available at this time and is connected to septic systems. Rates for new sewer service installation for single-family, multi-family, condominium, and commercial units is available on the Town website along with the fee for a mandatory inspection.

## Trash Collection



The Town of Duncan contracts with Vista Recycling for trash collection, which is conducted through the Town of Duncan and billed to customers as part of the water/sewer bill. Residents are able to rent a 99-gallon trash container on a per-month basis. Discounted rates are available for senior residents. Customers may also contract directly with Vista Recycling for a 300-gallon container.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

### **GOAL 1: To provide adequate and well-managed utilities**

Objective 1.0: Provide adequate, cost effective, and uniform public utilities and services to the community.

*Policies:*

- 1: The Town should review its service standards and rate structure annually, both the costs and fees for operation and maintenance, as well as extension of services.
2. The Town should develop an annual and five-year capital improvement and maintenance program for its public utilities.
3. The Town should use its ability to provide public services and facilities as an incentive for economic development.
4. Where feasible, the Town should provide utility services outside the Town limits where customers are willing to commit to annexation.
5. Work with the County and ADWR to ensure municipal water is able to meet potable water standards and provide safe drinking water to the residents of Douglas

### **GOAL 2: To maintain police and fire services for public safety**

**Objective 1.0:** Support existing relationships with Greenlee County Sheriff's Department and Duncan Valley Rural Fire District

*Policies:*

1. Look to maintain staffing at the Sheriff's annex office.
2. Maintain relationship with Duncan Valley Rural Fire District and highlight employment opportunities within the Fire District
3. Encourage infrastructure improvements to maintain access for emergency vehicles

### **GOAL 3: Create opportunities for improved amenities and services**

Objective 1.0 Rehabilitate Town Hall building and find location for new Post Office

*Policies:*

1. Find funding opportunities for the rehabilitation of Town Hall
2. Encourage public-private partnerships when finding a location for a new post office which could include coworking or office space.

3. Identify favorably located properties or land to be redeveloped for public amenity purposes.

Objective 2.0 Create a community center and rehabilitate the AFW Legion building

*Policies:*

1. Find funding opportunities for the rehabilitation of the AFW Legion building.
2. Find funding opportunities for the creation of a community center for recreational activities.
3. Identify favorably located properties or land to be redeveloped for public amenity purposes

Objective 3.0 Expand and support current public amenities

*Policies:*

1. Expand and maintain the recreational fields at the Duncan Elementary School.
2. Expand and maintain the current library building
3. Identify funding sources for improvements made to buildings and land providing public amenities
4. Use grant funds to connect Hunter Estates residences to the sewer system

<b>Public Facilities Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
To provide adequate and well-managed utilities	Provide adequate, cost effective, and uniform public utilities and services to the community.
To maintain police and fire services for public safety	Support existing relationships with Greenlee County Sheriff's Department and Duncan Valley Rural Fire District
Create opportunities for improved amenities and services	Rehabilitate Town Hall building and find location for new Post Office
	Create a community center and rehabilitate the AFW Legion building
	Expand and support current public amenities

# CHAPTER 6

## COST OF DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



**The Cost of Development Element** should be used in conjunction with the other elements of the Duncan General Plan to guide the physical development of the Town. This element includes policies and strategies that the Town may use to require development to pay its “fair share” compensation toward the maintenance and cost of additional public service needs generated by new development. The Cost of Development Element identifies:

- A. Various mechanisms that can be used to fund additional public services necessary to serve new development, including, but not limited to: bonding, special taxing districts, development fees, in lieu fees, facility construction, dedications, and service privatization.
- B. Policies to ensure that any mechanisms adopted by the Town of Duncan under this element result in a beneficial use to the development and bear a reasonable relationship to the burden imposed on the Town to provide the additional public services.

### **Maintenance and Upkeep**

The Cost of Development element further discusses what new development and improvements will cost the Town. Development also has long term costs with the maintenance and upkeep of those development projects which the Town may or may not take on once complete. This element

hopes to better provides options and direction through policy and implementation strategies for the Town to better manage those and determine which items they are willing to take over for developers and which they will need to establish private associations for the private entities to make and maintain.

Consideration should be given to future policies, code and ordinance updates to ensure the Town is not inadvertently overburdened with private development maintenance which benefits a select few. Associations to manage those direct beneficiaries should be encouraged to ensure those land owners directly pay for their usage and benefit.

### **Funding Mechanisms**

In order to achieve Duncan’s goal of meeting the needs of our growing community, the Town must continue to expand and improve public infrastructure and services. It is important that the Town establish specific policies, plans and strategies that can be implemented to address financial needs and achieve our community goals.



Town facilities and services are funded through a combination of federal grants, local taxes, sales tax and direct federal funding into the general fund. Sales tax revenue tends to be unpredictable due to fluctuating economic conditions such as employment rates, stock market changes, and tourism levels.

A significant amount of funding for the Town of Duncan comes from the Special Revenue Fund. Historically, instead of the local governments collecting monies for road improvements, it was agreed amongst the State of Arizona and local governments that the State would collect Highway User Revenue Funds and share with local governments. Due to State of Arizona budget shortfalls, the distribution of these funds to local governments has been significantly reduced so the State would not have to increase its taxation of the taxpayers in the State and leave such a burden to the local governments.



The Town of Duncan has a property tax on its residents and also depends on State Shared revenues to fund its operations and capital improvements. The reduction in State shared revenues has significantly reduced the Town’s capital improvements program.

Under Arizona statutes, there are a number of options available to Duncan to fund infrastructure and public facilities that are

necessary to service new development. An overview of these mechanisms is listed below but are not limited to:

### ***Community Facilities Districts***

Community Facility Districts (CFD) may be formed by cities or towns, but not counties. They may be used for specific public improvements including roadways, water and sewer, pedestrian ways, landscaping, lighting systems, traffic control, public buildings, parks, and public recreational facilities. Community Facility Districts must rely on the revenue generated by the property tax generated in the district and cannot turn to the Town's general fund if there is a shortfall in revenue. This source of funding is often used when a large commercial development is anticipated that will generate sufficient revenues to fund the public infrastructure funded by the CFD.



### ***Improvement Districts***

Improvement Districts may be formed by towns for projects that provide specific community benefit such as roadways, water, sewer, streetlights and parking facilities. While counties may form an improvement district to establish and maintain a park or recreation area for the benefit of the property within the district, the statutory list of improvements financed and constructed by a municipal improvement district does not include recreational facilities.

### ***Development Agreements***

Development agreements are permitted under A.R.S. 9-500.5 for municipalities. Development agreements permit contractual arrangements between the Town and property owner(s) regulating the permitted uses, density, maximum height, and other aspects of the land subject to the agreement. Advantages of development agreements are that they are voluntary and, therefore, mutually agreeable to all parties involved in the negotiations. Also, they can enable the Town to attain planning goals at minimal or no costs.



### ***Development Impact Fees***

The Arizona State law requires projects to be financed by development impact fees prior to their levy and collection, and that the monies collected are actually committed within five years to a project of “direct benefit” to the development which paid the fees. The amount of development impact fees must bear a reasonable relationship to the burden imposed upon the municipality to provide additional necessary public services to the development. A development should receive a direct beneficial use from the results of the fees.

### ***Dedications***

A dedication is a conveyance of land by a private owner in the nature of a gift or grant and the acceptance of that land by a public entity. Streets in a subdivided development are usually acquired through a dedication to the public of the property comprising the streets. Other dedications may include land for parks, a birding trail and recreational facilities, school sites, bike paths, or local transit facilities.



### ***General Obligation Bonds***

General obligation bonds are a flexible financing option for the Town, spreading the benefits and burdens of the fund uniformly throughout the community and can be used for almost any capital purpose. This often includes cost intensive capital improvements such as roads, parks, and sewer facilities and equipment.

General obligation bonds are somewhat restrictive however, because voter approval is required to authorize the issuance of bonds. This can be time consuming and costly. Additionally, because costs are spread uniformly throughout the community, infrastructure to support new development may be unfairly subsidized by existing development.

### ***Motor Vehicle In-Lieu Revenue***

Motor vehicle license taxes collected by the state are shared with the Town based upon its population in relationship to the total incorporated population of the county. Historically, this revenue source has been highly erratic and susceptible to economic change, and legislature whim.

### ***Permit Fees***

Revenues from permits include fees collected from building permits, zoning fees and a variety of other programs. Normally these are not earmarked but fund operations. These fees generally do not cover the costs of the services provided.

### ***Revenue Bonds***

Revenue bonds are issued by a municipality and backed by a dedicated revenue stream. Improvements to existing sewer facilities are often made utilizing revenue bonds because there is a steady revenue stream from the utility users to attract bond buyers. Revenue bonds do not require voter approval and the constitutional debt cap do not apply to the issuance of revenue bonds. Municipalities with population of 75,000 or less may issue revenue bonds for utilities and recreational facilities, which include swimming pools, parks, playgrounds, municipal golf courses, and ball parks.

### ***State-Shared Sales Tax and Income Tax Revenues***

Revenue includes the state sales tax and income tax collection, which are shared with cities and towns, based upon population. Cities and towns share in a portion of the 5.6-percent sales tax collected by the state. Fifty percent is retained by the state, 40 percent is designated for schools and the remaining 10 percent is allocated to cities and towns.

### ***Specialty Industry Tax***

Specialty industry taxes, such as bed taxes have been used to fund a variety of public services and facilities around the State of Arizona. Cities do not need legislative authorization or voter approval to enact a specialty industry tax, while counties must have legislative authorization. Advantages to a specialty industry tax are that the local residents do not pay the tax and voter ratification is not required. Duncan currently has a 2% on bars, restaurants, cocktail lounges, and similar establishments where food and beverages are served, commonly referred as the restaurant and bar tax. The Town assesses a 3% bed tax on lodging uses.



### ***Transaction Privilege (Sales) Tax***

The Arizona transaction privilege tax is commonly referred to as a “sales tax”; however, the tax is on the privilege of doing business in Arizona and is not a true sales tax. This tax is levied on the seller, not the purchaser. The seller may pass the burden of the tax on to the purchaser; however, the seller is ultimately liable to Arizona for the tax. Aside from the state tax rate, the Town may impose a transaction privilege or sales tax within its jurisdiction to fund the costs of a variety of public services. The Town currently has a sales tax of 2.0%.

### ***Transportation Revenues***

Transportation revenues include Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF - Gas tax). A state constitutional restriction on use of the HURF required the funds to be used solely for street and highway purposes.

HURF revenues are distributed based on population and cities and towns participation in the lottery. The State of Arizona retained a significantly higher portion of these revenues to fund its transportation operations without raising taxation. This action left a reduction in revenues to the local governments.

### ***User Fees***



User fees are assessed for the specific use of a service or activity. An example is a fee charged for admission to a pool, park or fees charged for recreation facilities and programs. A user fee can be employed to defray a portion or the entire cost of a project. The advantage of a user fee is that the person using the specific service incurs the charge. In Duncan user fees are most associated with recreational activities.

### **Other Funding Options**

#### ***Enterprise Funds***

Enterprise Funds include fees collected for Town water, sewer, and sanitation services that are used to fund certain infrastructure expansion and capital improvements.

#### ***Property Tax***

A property tax is a tax levied on land and improvements on a specific parcel of land. For many communities, it is their primary source of revenue. The Town of Duncan receives minimal amounts of its revenue from property taxes.

### **Current Conditions**

The Town of Duncan relies primarily on sales tax, urban revenue sharing, general grant funds, refuse fees, auto Lieu fees and HURF funds to fund operations. The total General Fund budget for fiscal year 2026 is \$16,932,218, slightly up from the previous year.

Local revenues include the 2.0% sales tax, 3% percent room tax, 2%-percent restaurant and bar tax, utility franchise fees, business license fees, building permit and inspection fees. These fees represent revenue of \$871,350 or 5% of the General Fund revenue sources for Duncan. Urban Revenue Sharing and the local privilege tax (sales tax) are Duncan's largest sources of revenue.

State-shared revenue sources include the state sales tax, income tax, and auto lieu tax, which are shared with cities and towns based upon a formula which relates the Town's population to the total state population. The State Department of Revenue collects, distributes sales and income tax funds, and provides revenue forecasts to cities and towns for these income sources. Duncan receives a

portion of the auto lieu tax collected by the County based upon its relationship to the total incorporated portion of the County. In fiscal year 2026 the state-shared revenue was budgeted at \$292,375.

A number of special revenue funds in the Town's budget are used for a wide variety of purposes. The Arizona Department of Revenue also collects and distributes transportation revenues including the highway user revenue tax (HURF - gas tax) and local transportation assistance funds (LTAF - State Lottery). A state constitutional restriction on the use of the HURF and LTAF requires the funds to be solely used for street and highway purposes. HURF revenues are distributed based on population and cities and towns participation in the State Lottery. The LTAF revenue sharing was capped in 1989 by the state legislature resulting in no growth in this source of revenue. The fiscal year 2026 budget estimated \$80,869 in state-shared HURF revenue. Duncan uses HURF and the lottery funds for various street maintenance purposes and street and sidewalk improvements.

Other special revenue funds include Grant Funds for various CDBG projects, capital improvements such as the railroad depot, and trails and park improvements, the Improvement District Bond Repayment Fund, Benefits Reserve Fund, and the Transit System Fund. Grant Funds for budget year 2026 are estimated to be \$15,500,000 which help support Town operations.

Duncan's Enterprise Funds are comprised of Water Funds, Wastewater Funds and the Sanitation Fund. The Water and Wastewater Operating Funds revenues are primarily from residential and commercial water and sewer service fees as well as water meter connection fees. The Town also collects water expansion fees to help fund various water system expansion projects. Finally, the Sanitation Fund collects revenues from fees that all water customers pay on a monthly basis. The fees are used for personnel, supplies and service and capital expenses associated with sanitation services.

Capital improvements have been funded largely through Grant Funds awarded.

## **COST OF DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL 1: Ensure that development pays its “fair-share” of the costs for the impact on existing public infrastructure and any new required public service facilities, generated by new development.**

Objective 1: Ensure that Town services, facilities, equipment and infrastructure properly serve the community and optimizes existing facilities for future needs.

*Policies:*

1. Maintain adequate levels of Town facilities and services for existing and new development.
2. Identify way to provide opportunities for reinvestment, infill and to enhance the services provided with the Town.
3. Identify and use a variety of sources to finance necessary Town services, facilities, equipment and infrastructure that meet community needs.
4. Adopt a Town Capital Budget program annually as well as a five-year program.
5. Direct development to areas where infrastructure is already in place or planned.
6. Encourage private dedication of open space; parks and park sites in consider conjunction with development.
7. Require infrastructure improvement or development with any zoning approval where required.

Objective 2: Ensure new development pays its fair share of municipal costs necessary to support impacts created by new development.

1. Continue to require new development pay for its fair, proportionate share of service and infrastructure costs through development agreements, development impact fees, community facilities districts and other appropriate methods.
2. Periodically review the need for development impact fees to ensure that the Town collects sufficient monies to construct additional infrastructure needed to serve new development in Duncan.

Objective 3: Cooperate with other governmental and public entities or private entities as a strategy to reduce and share certain costs of development.

*Policies:*

1. Coordinate with Greenlee County with regard to sharing infrastructure improvement costs and maintenance.
2. Actively coordinate with local school districts and institutions of higher learning in the planning, construction and rehabilitation of joint use of park facilities.
3. Work with regional partners for shared funding for wildlife overpasses/ corridors, trail and trailhead improvements and creation.

**GOAL 2: Assess the functionality, suitability of the existing Town public facilities and infrastructure.**

Objective 1: Explore financing strategies and alternative resources for upgrading existing roads and infrastructure necessary to support the existing community quality of life as well as provide opportunities for new growth.

*Policies:*

1. Review the existing Town services and create a plan to itemize level of importance for infrastructure improvement plans for capital improvements.

**GOAL 3: Explore cost-sharing opportunities for Duncan with private developments and land owners.**

Objective 1.0: Seek out partnerships for the positive growth of the Town.

*Policies:*

1. Build a stronger economic development strategy and partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to support growth and development collaborations.
2. Evaluate public/ private partnerships and development agreements.

<b>Cost of Development Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Ensure that development pays its “fair-share” of the costs for the impact on existing public infrastructure and any new required public service facilities, generated by new development.	Coordinate with Greenlee County with regard to sharing infrastructure improvement costs and maintenance.
	Actively coordinate with local school districts and institutions of higher learning in the planning, construction and rehabilitation of joint use of park facilities.
	Work with regional partners for shared funding for wildlife overpasses/ corridors, trail and trailhead improvements and creation.
Assess the functionality, suitability of the existing Town public facilities and infrastructure.	Review the existing Town services and create a plan to itemize level of importance for infrastructure improvement plans for capital improvements.
Explore cost-sharing opportunities for Duncan with private developments and land owners.	Build a stronger economic development strategy and partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to support growth and development collaborations.
	Evaluate public/ private partnerships and development agreements.

# CHAPTER 7

## ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & HAZARD MITIGATION ELEMENT



The **Environmental Planning & Hazard Mitigation Element** is one of the elements required by the Arizona Revised Statutes. This element is required to contain analysis, policies, and strategies to address air quality, water quality, and natural resources under the General Plan. The policies and implementation strategies under this element are written to have community-wide applicability to maintain the natural resources and environment of the Town of Duncan.

### **Flooding**

Due to Duncan's location adjacent to the Gila River, the Town is susceptible to flooding. There have been multiple major floods over the last 100 years. In December 1978, heavy rainfall caused Gila River water to rise to seven feet in the Town, destroying 75 homes. In October 1983, Tropical Storm Octave caused devastating flooding throughout southeast Arizona, resulting in many of the Town's residents choosing to relocate. In December 1992 and January 1993, runoff from melting snowbanks flooded the town, flooding five businesses and six homes with up to two feet of water. In February 2005, a section of the dike system broke, flooding the highway and area near Duncan

High School. In August 2022, monsoons caused a breach in levees along the Gila River, resulting in evacuations for residents.

The most influential of the aforementioned floods was in October 1983. In the years following the storm, the population in Duncan declined, and economic growth halted. Many homes were declared a total loss, forcing residents to relocate while expensive repairs were completed. With housing in short supply in Duncan and the surrounding towns, many chose to leave Greenlee County altogether. Several businesses were so badly damaged they were unable to rebound from the flooding. Preventing future flooding on this scale is imperative to the health and safety of the residents of Duncan as well as the Town itself.

## **Air Quality**

The air quality in Duncan falls under the “fair” category; The air quality is acceptable for most individuals, but some with sensitivities may experience some symptoms from long-term exposure. The top air contaminants found in the Town are particulate matter and fine particulate matter. This is mostly due to emissions from automobiles.



## **Water Sources**

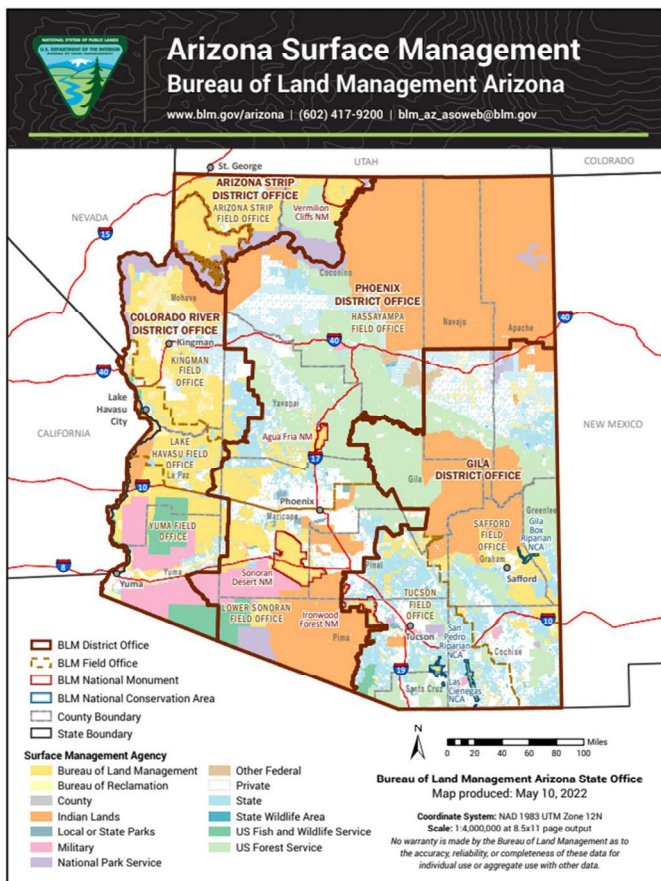
The Gila River is a 649-mile-long tributary of the Colorado River, flowing through New Mexico and Arizona in the United States. The river drains an arid watershed of nearly 60,000 square miles that lies mostly within the U.S., but also extends into northern Sonora, Mexico.

The Gila River has its source in western New Mexico, in Sierra County on the western slopes of the Continental Divide in the Black Range. It flows southwest through the Gila National Forest, the Gila Wilderness, and Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument, then westward into Arizona, past the town of Safford. After flowing along the southern slope of the Gila Mountains in Graham County through a series of canyons, the Gila is impounded by Coolidge Dam in San Carlos Lake south of Peridot.

The river emerges from the mountains into the valley southeast of Phoenix, Arizona, where it crosses the Gila River Indian Reservation as an intermittent stream due to large irrigation diversions, primarily at the Hayden Ashurst Diversion Dam. Far west of Phoenix,

the river bends sharply southward along the Gila Bend Mountains, then it swings westward again near the town of Gila Bend. It flows southwestward between the Gila Mountains to the south and the Laguna and Muggins ranges to the north in Yuma County, and finally it empties into the Colorado at Yuma, Arizona. The Gila has a tributary called the San Francisco that joins the river above the Town of Stafford and stretches for approximately 159 miles.

The source of groundwater for the Duncan area is the Gila River aquifer. It provides the Town with drinking water and the surrounding agricultural areas with supplemental irrigation water. The depth to water in the alluvium along the floodplain ranges from 8 to over 60 feet below the land surface. A review of U.S.G.S records for the Gila River Basin indicates that groundwater resources should be adequate well into the foreseeable future.



### Natural Environment Resources

Duncan is in the Gila River valley, four miles west of the Arizona–New Mexico border. The town limits are on both sides of the Gila River, but the primary portion of the town and the entire downtown area lie on the south side of the river. The total land area of the Town is 2.15 square miles. Duncan is accessible by three main roadways: U.S. Route 70, State Route 75, and the Virden Highway. Duncan is about 167 miles northeast from Tucson, 205 miles from Phoenix and 130 miles north from the United States–Mexico border.

The regional context may vary depending on the time of the year, but Duncan is characterized by its location along the Gila River, surrounded by scenic mountains, historic mining sites, and cottonwood trees.

Duncan sits at around 3,600 feet elevation with mild variations, lower than the nearby mountain ranges to the north and Mount Graham to the west. Duncan is located in a natural basin between mountain formations, near the Madrean Sky Islands. The area is rich in minerals, with historical gold, silver mines, copper, lead, and iron mines dotting the landscape, both at the surface and underground.

Duncan has a semi-arid climate with large diurnal temperature fluctuations. The summers see fierce extreme temperatures than the Phoenix valley, but highs still reach 95 -100° F. However, nights in the summer are much milder with lows in the 50°s and 60°s. The winter months bring

cooler temperatures, with highs around 60° F and lows in the 20°s and 30°s. Duncan has a dry climate with minimal rainfall that usually occurs during the monsoon season between June and December. The average annual rainfall is 11.8 inches; however, the Town's location along the Gila River makes it vulnerable to flooding that can result from snowmelt in the mountains.



## **Plants and Animals**

### *Flora*

The vegetative communities found in the Duncan area are predominately grasslands and desert shrubland consisting of shrubs, yucca, cacti, herbs, and some trees. Areas near the Gila River provide an excellent example of a Desert Riparian Community where scattered cottonwood, willow, sycamore, and mesquite trees grow in dense thickets of arrow weed. In some permanently wet or salty areas, salt grass, seepweed, chamiza, water-tolerant grasses, and tules grow. The alluvial plains away from the river's edge support a complex and varied association of plants including mesquite, creosote bush, black gramma, bush muhly, mescat acacia, and a number of flowering annuals.

### *Fauna*

More than 240 species of birds can be found in and around Duncan. Sandhill Crane, great horned owls, bald eagles, northern cardinals, red-tailed hawks, cliff wrens, and great blue herons can be spotted at varying points in the year. Bighorn sheep, javelina, white-tail and mule deer, and beavers reside in the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area.

## **Soils**

There are five (5) soil types within the Duncan area. There are Pima Silty Clay Loam, Torrifluvents-Riverwash Complex, Glendale-Gila Complex, Tres Hermanos-Continental-Nickel Complex, and Calciorthids and Torriorthents.

The Pima Silty Clay Loam soils are found adjacent to the river within the outside the floodplain. This soil unit is well suited for both irrigated crops and pasture. It is also suitable for homesite development, but consideration should be given to shrink-well potential and low soil strength.

The Torrifluvents-Riverwash Complex is located primarily within the floodplain and extends into the Whitfield Wash. It is very permeable soil with stratified layers of sand and gravel.

The Glendale-Gila Complex is found in the Hunter Estates area. It is deep and well-drained soil with moderate permeability. It is well suited for both irrigated croplands and homesite development.

The Calciorthids and torriorthents have severe building limitations due to their slow permeability, high shrink-swell potential, low soil strength, and steep slope. These soils are confined primarily to slopes in the southwest section of Duncan.

The Tres Hermanos-Continental-Nickel Complex soils are located in the hilly areas to the southeast of Duncan. Associated limitations for home site development are steepness of slope and shrink-swell potential.

## Historical Resources

Preservation plays an important role in the historic sites that can still be found in Duncan. By working with town government, community leaders and area residents, the Duncan Preservation Society (previously the P.R.I.D.E. Society) has been instrumental in preserving the history and physical structure of



many notable buildings in the Town. These structures are detailed in Table 1 below. With more than 20 historic homes, buildings, points of interest and other historically significant locations from the 1800s to early 1900s, Duncan boasts an impressive historic culture of preservation. Emphasizing preservation and continuing to advocate for these historic resources is central to maintaining the environment and character of the Town of Duncan. These qualities of the built and natural environment combine to form Duncan's own unique image. Integrated planning and foresight can be used to protect and enhance the distinctive qualities that make up Duncan's identity and ensure it is maintained for the future. Following is a list of historical structures of interest in Duncan, Arizona

**Table 1: Historic Structures**

Name	Details
Benjamin F. Billingsley House	built in 1900 and located in 202 Main St. The Billingsley House is a one-story, slightly asymmetrical Queen Anne house with a steeply pitched, truncated hip roof. There is a corbelled brick chimney projecting from the south roof slope. Benjamin F. Billingsley was a prosperous dry goods merchant in Duncan from 1895 to 1940. NRHP August 25, 1983, Ref: #83002998.
Simpson Hotel (former Hotel Hobbs)	built in 1914 and located in 116 Main Street
Freiheit Building	built in 1913 and located in Spezia Square Park on Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
Country Store	built in 1909 and located in 105 Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
Duncan Restaurant	built in 1909 and located in 107 Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
Duncan Theater	built in 1921 and located in Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
River Front Lounge (former Bonnie Heather Bar/Pool Hall)	built in 1925 and located in Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
Bonnie Heather Inn	built in 1920 and located in 105 Main Street
First Duncan School Building	built in 1908 and located in 100 High St. Originally the school had a second floor. Now the American Legion, minus the second floor, which was removed, is housed in the building.
Duncan Bus Station	Now the Duncan Hotel, was built in 1920 and located in 302 Old US 70
Lonesome Dove Mercantile	built in 1860 and located in 404 North Ave.
Saint Mary's Catholic Church	built in 1936 and located in 111 3rd Street
Bank of Duncan	built in 1908 and located in 118 Main Street
Duncan Opera House	built in 1920 and located in 218 Hill Street

S & L Enterprises	built in 1896 and located in 108 Main Street
Bart Tipton's Saloon (former Ford Motors, Peterson's Garage)	Bart Tipton's Saloon (former Ford Motors, Peterson's Garage)
Greenlee County Building	built in 1890 and located in 115 Madison Street
House on 211 Railroad Ave.	built in 1920
Germaine store	built in 1900 and located in 417 North Ave
Knights of Pythias building	built in 1900 and located in 449 (216) Main Street. This building housed the Duncan Lodge num. 27 of the Knights of Pythias
Duncan Church of Christ	built in 1914 and located in 328 East Ave,
Duncan Stage Stop	built in 1890 and located in Madison Street
Antique town clock	located in Spezia Square Park on Railroad Ave. (Old US 70)
1950 Chevrolet 6400 2-ton fire truck	located on the corner of Main and Railroad Ave.



## Hazard Mitigation

The area of hazard mitigation of the utmost importance to the Town of Duncan is flood control. Duncan has flooded multiple times in the last 100 years, often causing devastating damage. Currently, the only protection the Town possesses against flooding from the Gila River are earth dikes, which have been intermittently maintained and inspected by Town officials. The 2016

Duncan Floodplain Analysis Report suggests two strategies to mitigate uncontrolled flooding: implementing a levee, restoring the Gila River, or a combination of both. Implementing a levee would aid in physically blocking excess water from spilling over and entering the Town. Restoring the Gila River would focus on removing vegetation overgrowth. Around 60% of salt cedar and cotton-wood trees growing in the river bed would be removed or trimmed. This would allow the river to increase in capacity, retaining larger volumes of water and preventing spillage and flooding in the Town.



**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND HAZARD MITIGATION**  
**GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL 1: To adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town of Duncan that satisfies the legislated requirements set forth by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.**

Objective 1: The Planning and Zoning Commission should serve as the Town of Duncan planning team.

*Policies:*

- 1: The Planning and Zoning Commission should encourage leaders of the community to become involved.
- 2: The Planning and Zoning Commission should educate the public about all hazards that could potentially impact the community and the need for mitigation.

Objective 2: The Planning and Zoning Commission should identify any hazards, natural or anthropogenic.

*Policies:*

- 1: The Planning and Zoning Commission should make a comprehensive list of potential hazards for each category
- 2: The Planning and Zoning Commission should develop a plan in the event of any of these identified hazards.

Objective 3: The Town should annually review and update their general plan and zoning ordinances to limit development in hazard areas and require building to standards that will prevent or reduce damage.

*Policies:*

- 1: The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Duncan Town Council should annually review the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the General Comprehensive Plan, and Chapter 15 of the Zoning Ordinances to ensure that development is limited in hazard areas.
- 2: The Planning and Zoning Commission should review each request for new development or buildings to ensure they are in accordance with Chapter 15 of the Code Book and the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Objective 4: The Town should adopt policies which serve the natural environment and prevent flooding.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should encourage the planting of native trees and groundcover plants to prevent losses to storms and flooding.
2. The Town should work with Greenlee County officials and the US Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the Gila River.

Objective 5: Protect and reinvest in the historical resources of the Town.

*Policies:*

- 1 The Town should strive to identify and preserve all significant historical resources and sites within the Town.
- 2 The Town should identify and promote opportunities for adaptive reuse of underutilized historic structures.
- 3 The Town should identify grants and other financial assistance programs to help rehabilitate and make habitable historic and significantly important buildings.
- 4 The Town should create new reuse and historic building design requirements to allow historic properties to be updated without requiring negative impacts to the historic façade.
- 5 The Town should investigate reducing or eliminating requirements for improvements that cannot be met on historic buildings due to the building's design and structure in order to make the building useable.
- 6 The Town should continue to collaborate with the Duncan Preservation Society.

<b>Environmental Planning and Hazard Mitigation Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
The Planning and Zoning Commission should serve as the Town of Duncan planning team.	The Planning and Zoning Commission should encourage leaders of the community to become involved.
	The Planning and Zoning Commission should educate the public about all hazards that could potentially impact the community and the need for mitigation.
The Planning and Zoning Commission should identify any hazards, natural or anthropogenic.	The Planning and Zoning Commission should make a comprehensive list of potential hazards for each category.
	The Planning and Zoning Commission should develop a plan in the event of any of these identified hazards.
The Town should annually review and update their general plan and zoning ordinances to limit development in hazard areas and require building to standards that will prevent or reduce damage.	The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Duncan Town Council should annually review the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the General Comprehensive Plan, and Chapter 15 of the Zoning Ordinances to ensure that development is limited in the hazard areas
	The Planning and Zoning Commission should review each request for new development or buildings to ensure they are in accordance with Chapter 15 of the Code Book and the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
The Town should adopt policies which serve the natural environment and prevent flooding.	The Town should encourage the planting of native trees and groundcover plants to prevent losses to storms and flooding.
	The Town should work with Greenlee County officials and the US Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the Gila River.

<p>Protect and reinvest in the historical resources of the Town.</p>	<p>The Town should strive to identify and preserve all significant historical resources and sites within the Town.</p>
	<p>The Town should identify and promote opportunities for adaptive reuse of underutilized historic structures.</p>
	<p>The Town should identify grants and other financial assistance programs to help rehabilitate and make habitable historic and significantly important buildings.</p>
	<p>The Town should Create new reuse and historic building design requirements to allow historic properties to be updated without requiring negative impacts to the historic façade.</p>
	<p>The Town should investigate reducing or eliminating requirements for improvements that cannot be met on historic buildings due to the building’s design and structure in order to make the building useable.</p>
	<p>The Town should continue to collaborate with the Duncan Preservation Society.</p>

# CHAPTER 8

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



The **Economic Development Element** ties everything together in the General Plan by utilizing the strengths and goals of the Town to continue its growth and economic success. There is ample opportunity to strengthen the Duncan economy and create opportunities for future investment and development in line with its classic small-town character.

Serving as a strategic framework, the Economic Development Element provides direction for Town officials, developers, businesses, and the public in evaluating projects and policies that affect the community's economic and fiscal well-being. Despite not being a required component of the General Plan Update, it remains a critical element for achieving the Town's long-term vision of sustainable growth. This element maintains strong connections with the Land Use, Circulation, Growth Areas, and Cost of Development Elements and underscores the importance of growing the local employment base, diversifying job opportunities, and fostering educational and career advancement.

Duncan recognizes the economic contributions made by existing businesses and facilities already operating and seeks to expand upon and support these economic assets while also diversifying the local consumer and employment opportunities. Further support of these existing businesses is highlighted herein, as well as the goals for creating new economic opportunities within Duncan.

## Employment

The Duncan economy employed 257 people in 2022 with only a 1.6% unemployment rate and an average household income of \$67,100. Education, Health Care, and Social Assistance services are the highest employers, employing 98 residents followed by the second highest employer Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining employing 41 people and Construction employing 29 people. From 2010 to 2022 there was a steady employment rate (257 persons) as well as a marked decrease in unemployment from 16.3% to 1.6%.

<b>2022 Duncan Employment by Industry</b>		
<b>Industry</b>	<b>Employed Duncan Residents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Education, healthcare & social assistance	98	40.2%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	41	16.8%
Construction	29	11.9%
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services	17	7.0%
Public administration	14	5.7%
Finance, insurance & real estate	13	5.3%
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	13	5.3%
Professional, scientific, & administrative services	10	4.1%
Retail trade	9	3.7%
Information	0	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%
Wholesale trade	0	0%
Other services	0	0%

*Source: American Community Survey, Arizona Commerce Authority, 2022.*

Education dominates the Duncan economy, with over 40% of the civilian workforce being employed through the Duncan Unified School District. Mining and construction are also strong pillars of the Duncan economy employing 17% and 12% of the population, respectively.

<b>LABOR FORCE</b>			
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>
Civilian Labor Force	307	257	257
Unemployed	15	42	4
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	16.3%	1.6%

*Source: Office of Economic Opportunity, Arizona Commerce Authority, 2022*

### **Workforce**

The percentage of residents with a Bachelor’s or more advanced degree is 24.1%, with some college or an Associate’s degree accounts for 23.9%, high school or equivalent with no college is 34.2% and residents with less than a high school education make up for 17.7% of the Duncan population.

The workforce education attainment shows that just over 50% (51.9%) of residents have primarily attained a high school diploma or less. 48% of residents have attempted some college, obtained an Associate’s degree, or completed a Bachelor’s program or beyond. This makes for a largely even split between college-educated and high-school education residents.

<b>WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT</b>		
	<b>COUNT</b>	<b>SHARE</b>
Less than high school	83	17.7%
High school or equivalent, no college	160	34.2%
Some college or Associate degree	112	23.9%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	113	24.1%

*Source: American Community Survey, Arizona Commerce Authority in cooperation with other sources, 2022*

### **Economic Development Opportunities**

Duncan has a strong economic base of civil servant jobs focused around education which serve the local residents. There is also a significant number of mining and construction jobs within and adjacent to the Town. In order to continue to grow and provide a stronger revenue stream for the Town to update and expand their own services, Duncan needs to reach employers and businesses who serve a greater regional area and capitalize on the close proximity to Tucson and greater Greenlee County. The Town is already attracting students from nearby Virden, New Mexico and

by creating a stronger economic base there is opportunity to attract tourism and shopping revenue from New Mexico as well. By targeting key employers, evaluating incentives and investing in housing construction, the Town can successfully work to attract more employment and tax revenue opportunities.

### Existing Highlighted Businesses



#### *Chaparrall Mini Mart*

Chaparrall Mini Mart and Hotel is a convenience store, gas station and motel located along Old West Highway in Duncan. The owner of Chaparrall, Meghan Wagley, was awarded the Gila Valley Small Business Woman of the Year in 2018 in recognition of her dedication to the service of Duncan residents and her success as a business owner. Chaparrall is a destination for essential items in Duncan.

#### *Greenlee Golf and Country Club*

Greenlee Golf and Country Club was founded in 1950 and has been offering year-round, nine-hole layout golfing experiences for over 70 years. Open to the public, the golf course serves as a great recreational experience for Duncan residents and greater Greenlee County.



#### *Humble Pie*

Humble Pie is a take-out focused restaurant known for its friendly service and use of quality, fresh ingredients. Located along Main Street, Humble Pie is a family favorite in Duncan and, as written in the Arizona Highways article featuring the business, attracts patrons from across Arizona and into New Mexico. The owners of Humble Pie have been mastering their craft for over 30 years and they have many loyal customers to show for it.

### *The Simpson Hotel*

The Simpson Hotel is a classic feature of the Duncan townscape, first opening its doors in 1914 as the Hotel Hobbs. The Hotel was soon after sold to Thomas Simpson where it received its iconic name and painted façade. By the 1940s the Hotel was owned by Second and Nadine Francese who helmed the business in its heyday as Duncan welcomed mining, agricultural, railway, and teaching professionals.



After the new Interstate 10 drew traffic away from Duncan and to the south, business slowed. Still, after flooding and years of renovations the Simpson Hotel reopened in 2007 as a Bed and Breakfast.

Today, the Hotel is a popular stop for travelers exploring southeastern Arizona and southern New Mexico.



### *The Stage Shop Mini Mart*

The Stage Shop is the best, and currently only, place in town to refill on gasoline and diesel. The mini mart offers great deals on convenience store items, as well as featuring fun drinks such as slushies during the summer months.

### *The Ranch House Restaurant*

The Ranch House, founded in 2010 is Duncan's premier dining experience. The menu is inspired by Mexican dishes with something for everyone. Ingredients are locally and sustainably sourced and the service is world-class with raving reviews from loyal customers and travelers passing through Duncan. The Ranch House is open 7 days a week and provides dine-in and takeout options.



## Economic Opportunities

### *SEAGO*

The Town of Duncan is a member of the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO) which was created in 1991 as an Economic Development Administration (EDD). EDD's help lead the locally based, regionally driven economic development planning process that leverages the involvement of the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Duncan, and Greenlee County at large, are part of the Mining Region designated by SEAGO. As a mining region, Duncan's economic vitality is largely dependent upon mining in Greenlee County.

SEAGO has identified redevelopment of the Business District as a top priority. Suggestions include retrofitting better lighting, installing electric car battery recharge stations, bringing businesses into compliance with ADA regulations, and rehabilitating Town-owned structures in the business district.

	Project Name	Project Description	Costs	CEDS-Related Focus Area	Local Ranking	Regional Ranking
Duncan, Greenlee County	Expand Critical Infrastructure	Water, Sewer, and Broadband extended to inner and outer city limits; Connect infrastructure to commercial and residential areas	\$1.9M	Focus Area 2	1	12
	Road, Sidewalk, and Cycle Lane Infrastructure	Improve roads and sidewalks to new and existing commercial and housing areas; expand traffic signage and rehabilitate roads	\$1.3M	Focus Area 2	2	28
	Redevelopment of Business District	Retrofitting better lighting; Electric Car Battery Recharge Station; ADA Friendly Businesses; Rehabilitate Town-owned Structures in Commercial District	\$860K	Focus Area 1, 2 & 3	3	24
	Water Tank Storage	Update Water Tank Storage Capacity for businesses and home owners; current capacity does not meet fire protection service and is underserved in many parts of Duncan	\$789K	Focus Area 2	4	14
	Park Retrofitting, Updating, and Promoting	Retrofitting two parks with ADA-friendly bathrooms, Ramadas and picnic areas; repositioning the Mesa "360 view" as a recreation magnet for trail hikers and cyclists;	\$900K	Focus Area 2	5	42
	Study of Wastewater Treatment Plant	Study the existing and future capacity of the wastewater treatment plant.	\$300K	Focus Area 2	6	21
	Conversion of Stressed Agriculture Assets	Educate and support river-corridor landowners, whose livelihoods are threatened by water rights adjudication and litigation, in converting their properties to nature-tourism destinations; expand facilities and signage, online marketing and other outreach for the Duncan area's nature tourism assets	\$80K	Focus Area 1	7	11

**Southeastern Arizona Government Organization Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2021 (p. 52)**

### *Mining*

Many residents, full-time and part-time, are employed at the Morenci Mine operated by Freeport-McMoRan. The mine has been continuously operating since 1939 when it was owned and operated by Phelps Dodge & Company. In the time since it opened, it has transitioned from an underground mine to an open-pit operation and has greatly expanded its daily and annual production. Morenci mine employs around 4,000 workers



Safford Mine, located in Graham County, began operating in 2007 and was the first new large-scale copper mining project in Arizona in more than 30 years. Safford mine is located approximately 53 miles west of Duncan.

### *Joint Technological Education District*

Duncan Unified School District is partnered with Gila Institute for Technology (GIFT) to facilitate career and technical education opportunities for high schoolers and high-school aged children. GIFT is a Career and Technical Education District (CTED) GIFT serves southeastern Arizona including Graham and Greenlee counties in order to prepare students for advanced degree training and success in the workforce.

Duncan Unified School District also offers a wide array of Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses that allow students to find and stoke their passion, as well as establish strong practical skills they can take with them into the workforce. Some CTE courses offered include: Agricultural Science, Carpentry, Culinary Arts, Accounting, Business Management, Early Childhood Education, Welding and Marketing.

### *Agriculture*

Duncan is in the heart of Greenlee County's principal agricultural area, the verdant and fertile Duncan Valley. Some 10,000 acres of Duncan Valley are under irrigation and produce about 5,000 bales of cotton annually. Other crops are grains, potatoes, melons and chilies. Cattle continue to play an important role in the economy, both on dairy farms and cattle ranches.

Capitalizing on Agribusiness and Agritourism would create valuable new opportunities for growth, diversification, and community development. By promoting activities such as farm tours, local produce markets, and hands-on agricultural experiences, agritourism could attract visitors from nearby towns and states, increasing spending at local businesses like restaurants, shops, and lodging. Agribusiness ventures, such as value-added food production, sustainable farming, or

specialty crops, would provide new jobs and encourage entrepreneurship within the community. Together, these industries would help strengthen Duncan's economic resilience, preserve its agricultural heritage, and foster a stronger connection between residents, visitors, and the land.

### *Tourism*

The Town of Duncan offers a wealth of tourism opportunities that highlight its natural beauty, rich history, and welcoming community. As a stop along a major cross-country bicycling route (Adventure Cycling Southern Tier), Duncan attracts cyclists from across the nation, providing opportunities for local businesses to cater to visitors with lodging, dining, and recreational amenities. The town's scenic bird-watching trails draw nature enthusiasts eager to explore its diverse wildlife and tranquil landscapes, making Duncan a hidden gem for eco-tourism. In addition, investing in the restoration of historical buildings would encourage even more visitors to Duncan to experience its small-town charm and a glimpse into Arizona's frontier past. Together, these features position Duncan as an ideal destination for travelers seeking authentic rural experiences and genuine Southwestern hospitality.

### *Downtown Business District*

Duncan has a unique opportunity to bring a new life to its historic downtown by creating a downtown business district. This kind of district can help to encourage a Town identity to take form and breathe life back into both the character and economy of the area.

Many historical buildings along Main Street and in the downtown area have experienced deterioration due to weathering floods and lack of resources. By allowing for innovative and creative zoning and development strategies, resources could be toward redeveloping and restoring these buildings. With respect to Duncan's small size, even a few restored buildings could bring much-needed foot traffic to the downtown to support the local economy. In the Duncan Economic Opportunity Study conducted by Local First Arizona in 2021 found that most people reported they would shop locally if given the opportunity and business owners said they received a lot of support when people found them, but most people did not know they were there. By creating more excitement around the downtown, the likelihood of residents finding the good they need increases, as well as the success of the business owners.

In addition, working to complete the infrastructure update goals set out in the SEAGO would help to modernize the downtown and make it more accessible to the aging population of Duncan. Using redevelopment as an opportunity to come into compliance with ADA regulations will afford elderly residents more independence, physically and economically. Better lighting and electric vehicle charging stations will allow for travelers and residents to stay and enjoy what Duncan has to offer.



### *Commercial*

Duncan has a great need for local commercial developments to support both the population and the local economy. For grocery needs, residents often drive out of the Town of Duncan to Clifton or Safford. A Family Dollar opened in Duncan which has increased access to groceries and fresh produce; however, residents have expressed desire for a locally-owned grocery store to begin operation in the Town in order to slow economic leakage.

### *Greyhound Bus*

The Town of Duncan has a long-standing bus connection through Greyhound Bus that stops at the Hotel Duncan. A Greyhound bus connection provides a vital economic lifeline by linking residents, visitors, and workers to major Southwestern hubs from Deming and El Paso to Phoenix. Improving Duncan's tourist appeal could lead travelers who pass through Duncan on the Greyhound bus wanting to come back to visit again. By strengthening regional mobility and reducing transportation barriers, a Greyhound stop helps sustain Duncan's economic resilience and enhances its role as a gateway between rural communities and larger metropolitan centers.



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL 1: To increase employment, retail sales, and other economic growth opportunities.**

Objective 1: Retain and attract retail commercial and industrial firms.

*Policies:*

1. The Town should pursue its economic development goal through the efforts of an economic organization.
2. The Town should clearly define one or more areas of the community where new development should occur.
3. The Town should pursue a program of public facility improvement and maintenance for utilities and roads which will be required for new development. This program may require a commitment from other public utility providers such as the Duncan Valley Electric Cooperative, Greenlee County, and the Arizona Department of Transportation.
4. The Town should continue to support and/or co-sponsor civic events, festivals, and fairs which could be attended by local residents and tourists. Increased effort should be made toward cooperative promoting, with nearby jurisdiction, of regional attractions including areas within New Mexico.
5. The Town should encourage local merchants and property owners to rehabilitate and maintain their buildings, homes, and vacant lands in a visually attractive and safe condition

**GOAL 2: Provide a diverse and skilled workforce.**

Objective 1.0: Prepare the future workforce for success by offering diverse educational opportunities.

*Policies:*

- 2.1.1: Encourage and strengthen partnerships with local schools and institutions such as GIFT to engage students and create a high level of workforce skills.
- 2.1.2: Encourage regional educational cooperation between post-secondary, trade and technical schools.
- 2.1.3: Create Town conditions that support teacher retention such as affordability and adequate resourcing.

**GOAL 3: Strengthen the downtown core.**

**Objective 1:** Prioritize redevelopment, revitalization and infill efforts as part of the economic development strategy.

- 3.1.1: Formalize and work with the Duncan Chamber of Commerce to provide a program with opportunities for existing businesses to grow and improve their space.
- 3.1.2: Partner with the Duncan Chamber of Commerce to provide a program with opportunities for existing businesses to grow and improve their space.
- 3.1.3: Help with providing a list of funding opportunities for businesses who locate or operate in the downtown area to be able to maintain their historic character while updating to today's building requirements.
- 3.1.4: Encourage county and Town departments to maintain offices and spaces in the downtown area.
- 3.1.5: Update code and policies to better accommodate reuse, infill and difficult to improve parcels in the downtown area.

**GOAL 4: Create an economic development plan and secure regional connections**

**Objective 1:** Make Duncan more attractive for employers and employees.

*Policies:*

- 4.1.1: Work with Local First Arizona to create an economic development plan and make connections with regional business owners and economic development leaders.
- 4.1.2: Create strong professional connections between the Town of Duncan and regional communities to encourage mutual economic support.
- 4.1.3: Formalize and activate the Duncan Chamber of Commerce and potentially the Greenlee County Chamber of Commerce to advocate for economic prosperity in the Town

<b>Economic Development Implementation Strategies</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
<b>To increase employment, retail sales, and other economic growth opportunities</b>	Retain and attract retail, commercial and industrial firms.
	Encourage the development of affordable housing to support a growing customer base and house the future workforce.
<b>Provide a diverse and skilled workforce.</b>	Encourage and strengthen partnerships with local schools and institutions such as GIFT to engage students and create a high level of workforce skills.
	Encourage regional educational cooperation between post-secondary, trade and technical schools.
	Create Town conditions that support teacher retention such as affordability and adequate resourcing.
<b>Strengthen the downtown core.</b>	Formalize and work with the Duncan Chamber of Commerce to provide a program with opportunities for existing businesses to grow and improve their space.
	Help with providing a list of funding opportunities for businesses who locate or operate in the downtown area to be able to maintain their historic character while updating to today's building requirements.
	Update code and policies to better accommodate reuse, infill and difficult to improve parcels in the downtown area.
<b>Create an economic development plan and secure regional connections</b>	Work with Local First Arizona to create an economic development plan and make connections with regional business owners and economic development leaders
	Create professional connections between the Town of Duncan and regional communities to encourage mutual economic support
	Formalize and activate the Duncan Chamber of Commerce and potentially the Greenlee County Chamber of Commerce to advocate for economic prosperity in the Town.

# CHAPTER 9

## IMPLEMENTATION



Under Arizona State law many actions on private land development, such as rezonings, subdivisions, public agency projects and other decisions must be consistent with the Town General Plan. As new projects come before the Town, this document will outline the goals and policies to be applied in guiding Town Staff and decision makers moving forward.

### **General Plan Framework**

The General Plan is comprised of the vision statement, goals, policies and implementation strategies and is the foundation that will guide and support the Town's decision-making in all aspects related to growth and development. The General Plan sets the foundation from which all other studies, policies, guides and documents should orient from and revert back to for support.

The main items within the General Plan are comprised of the following:

- **Elements:** the chapters of the General Plan per the Arizona Revised Statutes requirements.
- **Community Vision:** a concise statement of the desired future Town supported by element goals.
- **Goals:** general statements expressing the desired objectives of the community of Duncan in order to help achieve their community vision of the Town which are listed for every Element.
- **Policies:** action statements supporting a goal, providing an ideal for decision making and guiding Town programs and strategies in the implementation strategies to get to the Town vision.
- **Implementation Strategies:** specific tasks to carry out the policies of the General Plan to achieve or implement its goals located at the end of each element and details responsible parties.

## Implementation

The Town of Duncan General Plan guides decision-making about growth and development for the Town as it continues to grow and change over time. For the plan to stay relevant over time, it should be reviewed and updated periodically on an as-needed basis to respond to changes in economic, physical, environmental, or social conditions. Additionally, it may be amended in accordance with the terms of this General Plan.

### Plan Amendments

General Plan Amendments provide an opportunity to address changing trends, new development styles, inconsistencies in the Plan, or land use-related adjustments which may be needed. Furthermore, plan amendments allow for an opportunity to review how the implementation of the Land Use Plan, Growth Area Plan and General Plan Elements work together to be supported by development proposals. Anyone can request an amendment to the Town's General Plan. Minor Amendments can be considered at any time of the year. Major Amendments will be heard once per calendar year.

Amendments to the General Plan may be initiated in two ways:

- (1) by the Town Council as a comprehensive update, re-adoption of the General Plan or amendment to a portion of the General Plan; or
- (2) by third party as an application filed for a General Plan Amendment.

General Plan amendments will be reviewed and processed in accordance with State law and Town ordinances and administrative procedures, and will occur only after careful staff review. Adoption by the Town Council will occur if the findings of fact support the proposed revisions. Three types of modifications to the General Plan may occur: **Major**, **Minor** or **Administrative Technical Revisions**.

### Major Amendments

Major Amendments are changes to the Duncan General Plan which meet any of the following:

- Any change of 10 or more contiguous acres in the downtown core area.
- Any change from one residential land use classification to another residential classification of 50 acres or more contiguous acres.
- Any change from a residential land use classification to a nonresidential land use classification of 40 or more contiguous acres.
- Any proposed realignment or deletion of an Arterial or Principal roadway.
- Text changes which add a new General Plan element chapter or alter Policy.

## **Minor Amendments**

Minor Amendments are changes to the Duncan General Plan that meet the following criteria:

- Any change of less than 10 contiguous acres in the downtown core area.
- Any change from one residential land use classification to another residential classification of 20-50 acres.
- Any change from a residential land use classification to a nonresidential land use classification of 10-39 contiguous acres.
- Changes mandated by any new state laws.
- Text changes, additions or deletions which are more than corrections/ clarifications and less than adding a new element chapter.
- Any proposed realignment of a Collector roadway (proposed additions or realignments of roadways with a classification lower than Collector do not require a General Plan Amendments.)

Major and Minor Amendments must address the following amendment approval criteria.

1. The identified site is appropriate for the proposed land use.
2. The amendment must be in line with the overall vision of the Town per the General Plan.
3. The amendment will not adversely impact a portion of, or the entire Town by:
  - a. Reducing the jobs per capita in the Town;
  - b. The amendment will not overtax existing infrastructure systems and public services;
  - c. The amendment will not negatively impact the existing community character of the immediate area;
  - d. The amendment will not increase the exposure of residents to aviation generated noise, and/or flight operations;
  - e. The amendment will not diminish the quality of the air, water or cultural resources; or
  - f. The amendment will not significantly decrease the quantity or quality of recreational amenities such as open space, parks and trails

The burden of proof to demonstrate that the amendment helps implement the Duncan General Plan Vision and the applicable goals and policies lies with the party requesting the amendment

Minor amendments and rezoning cases may be reviewed together and heard sequentially at the same hearing; however, the rezoning case must wait until the referendum period is also over for the minor general plan amendment before being heard by the Town Council. Major amendments and rezoning cases can be reviewed together; however, the rezoning case will not be heard by the Town Council until the referendum period for the Major General Plan is completed.

Anything less than the acreages listed herein are considered administrative amendments to the general plan map and do not require a major or minor amendment process.

## Administrative Technical Revisions

Administrative Technical Revisions may be made administratively because they are not considered amendments to the General Plan goals and vision. Revisions may include map changes to reflect developments permitted by General Plan policy, factual changes to the databases/statistics used in preparation of the General Plan and corrections that do not change the meaning of policies and actions as adopted by the Town Council such as text clarifications or corrections to match the existing general plan or zoning code. These revisions will be processed on an ongoing basis.

Land Use Designations	Minor Amendment	Major Amendment
<b><i>Requested Change</i></b>		
Downtown Core Area - Any change of 10 contiguous acres or more		X
Downtown Core Area - Any change of under 10 contiguous acres or more	X	
Any change of 50 contiguous acres or more from one residential land use to another residential land use		X
Any change of 20-50 contiguous acres from one residential land use to another residential land use	X	
Any change of 40 contiguous acres or more from a residential land use to a nonresidential land use		X
Any change of 10-39 contiguous acres or more from a residential land use to a nonresidential land use	X	
Text changes which add a new GP Element		X
Any proposed realignment or deletion of an Arterial or Principal Roadway		X
Changes mandated by new state or federal law.	X	
Text changes, additions, deletions which are corrections and/ or clarifications	X	
Any proposed realignment of a Collector Roadway (proposed additions or realignments of roadways with a classification lower than a Collector do not require General Plan Amendments).	X	

## Adoption

The General Plan is effective from the date the plan is initially adopted, until it is readopted or until a new plan is adopted and becomes effective. The following is the process for adoption:

1. Prior to the first public hearing conducted by the Town Council, the General Plan will be distributed for the formal 60-day agency review process.

According to A.R.S. §9-461.06D, the general plan amendment is noticed, as required by law, and a copy submitted for review and further comment to:

- The Greenlee County planning agency
  - Each county or municipality that is contiguous to the corporate limits of the municipality or its area of extraterritorial jurisdiction.
  - The Arizona Commerce authority or any other state agency that is subsequently designated as the general planning agency for this state.
  - The Department of Water Resources for review and comment.
  - If the General Plan amendment is applicable to territory in the vicinity of an airport, military airport or ancillary military facility as defined in A.R.S. §28-8461, the military airport or airport
  - If the General Plan amendment is applicable to property in the high noise or accident potential zone of an airport, military airport or ancillary military facility as defined in section A.R.S. §28-8461, the airport or facility.
  - Any person or entity that requests in writing to receive a review copy of the proposal.
2. State, regional and local agencies as well as stakeholders, landowners, and the general public have the opportunity to review and submit comments.
  3. The Town of Duncan then reviews all comments and makes recommendations for changes to the draft plan prior to the commencement of the formal review process.
  4. The Manager and the appointed General Plan Advisory Committee review the draft plan before submitting to the Town Council for the first public hearing review.
  5. The Town Council conducts another public hearing to take action on the General Plan. The Town Council can adopt the General Plan and subsequently amend or extend the adopted plan.
  6. Prior to the adoption of the General Plan, the Town Council may change or alter any portion of the Plan.
  7. The Town Council may accept or reject that recommendation.

## **Collaboration and Facilitation**

Although the General Plan is organized into separate elements, not one element stands alone. The document works to interlace chapter elements and tie the together to provide a more cohesive and collaborative document for all Town departments to utilize in determining the Town's direction. The Town Manager should periodically review the Town development code and other regulations and recommend amendments that implement these strategies.

Implementing the General Plan requires a balance between competing goals and there are often trade-offs between community goals, as not all goals can be attained concurrently. Where competition between element goals may result in seemingly incompatible policy direction, Town decision-makers shall determine the priorities of competing needs and act based on that determination.

Zoning Code and Subdivision regulations should be updated to further engage the General Plan implementation strategies and coordinate the compatibility of land uses with each other and available public facilities and services.

Rezoning and development should be compatible with the intended future land use pattern shown in the Plan and be consistent with the vision, goals, policies, and help engage implementation strategies where possible.

It is important to note that the Town of Duncan General Plan does not change existing zoning or subdivision regulations and acts as a policy guiding document for which the Town to use as a resource for guiding development and land use decisions.

### **Monitoring the Plan Implementation**

The Town Manager is responsible for monitoring the General Plan and the consideration for Town-initiated refinements at least once per year. The Manager shall provide an annual report to the Town Council on the General Plan and its implementation measurements taken and anticipated in the coming year. A comprehensive update to the General Plan should occur at a minimum every 10 years. The update process should re-evaluate the goals, policies and implementation measures. Changes are recommended to ensure that the Plan stays up-to-date and effective with implementing the plan.