



UNDERSTANDING PLANNING-DEVELOPMENT

Welcome to “Understanding Planning and Development in Avondale”, a detailed guide meant to enhance your understanding of zoning, the General Plan, and common planning and development terminology. We hope you’ll find this both interesting and resourceful.

WHY WE HAVE ZONING AND A GENERAL PLAN

Zoning, the legal classification of property into certain land uses, dates back to 1916 when New York City’s zoning ordinance segregated residential areas from more intense commercial and industrial uses for the health and well being of the citizens. Currently, zoning and land use law addresses conflicts between private property rights—the rights of ownership—and government’s efforts to create a functional, safe, and beautiful community. We all know that private property ownership is part of the American dream. But, private property ownership does not give an owner unfettered rights to develop their land. Private property rights are at the heart of issues concerning the development of Avondale. To better understand how Avondale has dealt with these issues, you need to understand the City’s history.

Prior to becoming an incorporated city in 1946, Avondale’s land was part of Maricopa County and much of it was zoned for residential and agricultural uses. Why? At the time, Avondale was seen as a suburb of the City of Phoenix, with most of the Valley’s commercial activity occurring in Phoenix’s downtown. In the mid-1960s, the City began discussing what lies in the future for the community. This effort resulted in the adoption of the City’s comprehensive General Plan in 2002 (see General Plan on the other side of this document). The General Plan, now required of all Arizona communities, guides the future development of the community through policies and vision as defined by the citizens. Because Avondale is always growing and changing, the vision for the General Plan has been revised over the years to ensure we’re on the right track. In early 2000, the community participated in a visioning process that defined key themes for the community to ensure its health and vitality. In 2002, the citizens dissected the General Plan with the help of a consultant and called for various elements to be incorporated that requires the City view its future from city-wide down to a specific area and then to a neighborhood perspective.

An owner’s development of land must reflect acceptable uses prescribed by the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Otherwise, either a General Plan amendment or a rezoning request, or both as appropriate, must be initiated by the developer, and approved by a vote of the City Council prior to any development of the property. This map is designed to help you understand some of the intricacies of the planning and development process in the City of Avondale.

How does the General Plan differ from the Zoning Ordinance?

The General Plan establishes development policies and expectations for the ultimate development of the City.

The Zoning Ordinance is used to implement the policies and expectations set forth in the General Plan. The ordinance contains the specific local laws on what can be done on every piece of land in Avondale. It also includes the standards for development in a variety of different zoning districts.

The City’s General Plan is a living document that adapts and changes with the needs of our community. For current updates, contact the Development Services Center One-Stop Shop at 623-333-4004.

For more information, please check out our website. Go to ... www.avondale.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the difference between CC&R's and City regulations?

City regulations are laws, policies, or processes that have been approved by the City Council and are applied throughout the City. Codes, Covenants and Regulations, or CC&R's, apply to specific master-planned developments or neighborhoods and are not enforced by the City, but rather by a homeowners' association.

How do I find out what might be built in the vacant lot across the street?

Contact the Development Services Center One-Stop Shop at 623-333-4004 and talk with City staff. Provide them with the specific location, e.g., cross streets, address, etc., of the vacant lot in question. If an application has been submitted for that location, the City will provide you with the details of that development application. If nothing has been submitted, City staff will consult the General Plan and will show you the plan for that area, e.g., type of use, etc.

Will the street near my house remain a two-lane road?

There are several possibilities to pursue in discovering an answer to that question. You could contact the Development Services Center One-Stop Shop at 623-333-4004 and talk with City staff. Provide them with the specific location. They'll consult the General Plan/Transportation Plan and share with you the City's plan for that roadway. You can also contact the City's Traffic Division at 623-333-4200 to find out the same information, plus new developments that have not yet been added to the City's General Plan/Transportation Plan.

Do I need a permit if the work was done before I bought the house?

No. You do not need a permit if work was done on your house before you bought the house. However, setbacks or the distance from an adjacent property line, or life safety issues, such as substandard construction and fire hazards, are not exempt and do require a permit—even if the work was done before you bought your house.

What time can construction work begin?

One half hour before sunrise and one half hour after sunset. Building Inspections can be contacted for waivers to this requirement; they can be contacted at 623-333-4004.

How many garage sales can I have?

Two garage sales per year. Your homeowners' association may also have limitations for garage sales—contact them for more information.

Do I need a business license if I work out of my home?

If you plan to claim your residence as a place of business for tax purposes, you do need a business license. You can obtain a business license through the City's Sales Tax office in the Finance and Budget Department. For more information, contact them at 623-333-2001.

What is the definition of an abandoned vehicle?

Any vehicle that is inoperable, has deflated tires, or expired tags is considered abandoned.

Who maintains the alley behind my house?

Most alleys are maintained by the homeowners association although some alleys are maintained by the City. To confirm who is responsible for the alley behind your house, contact Field Operations at 623-333-4700.

If I add a patio to my home, do I need to get a permit?

Any construction over 120 square feet requires a permit. You can also call 623-333-4004 for more information.

QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? CALL 623-333-4000

What is this map?

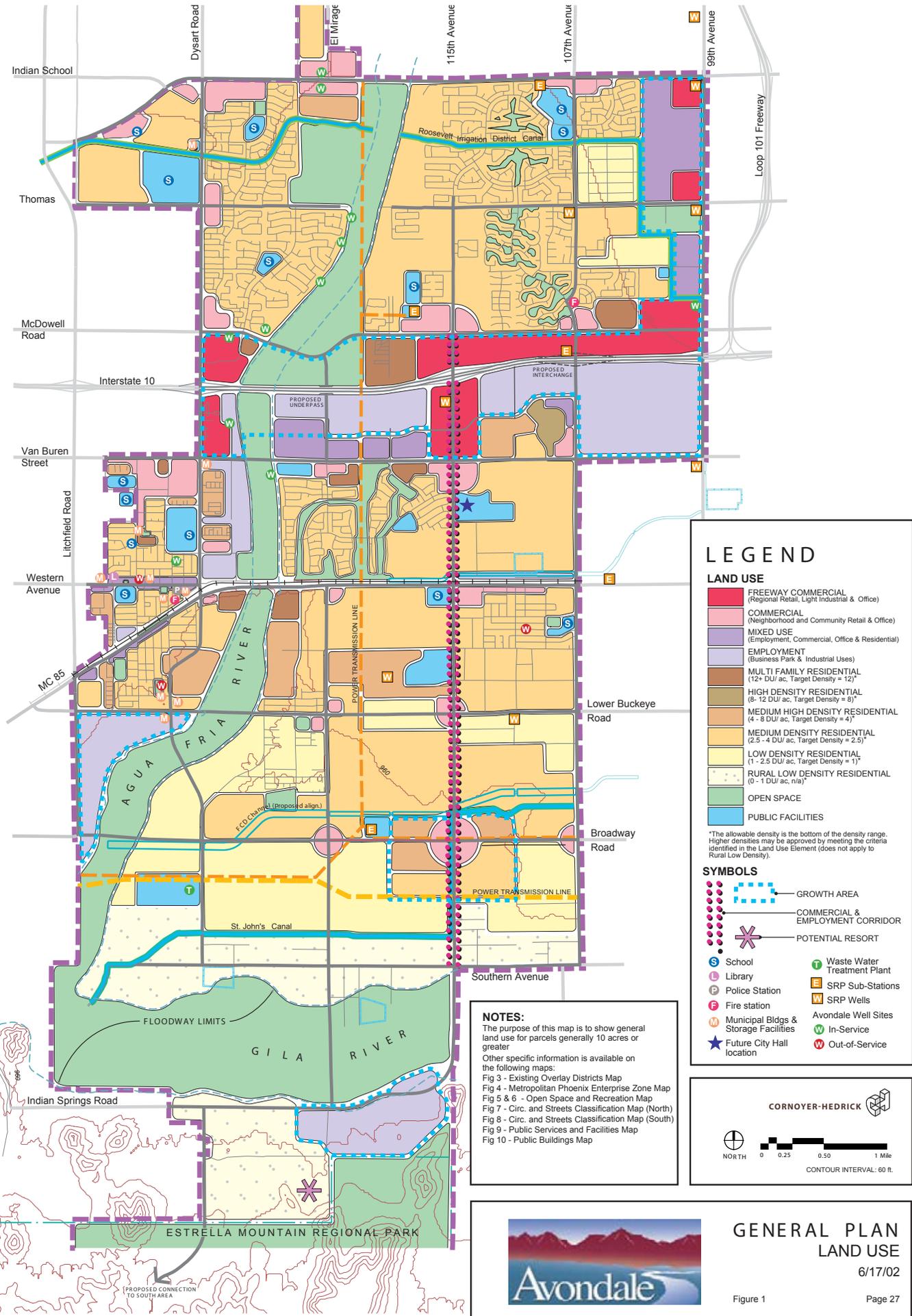
This map is the Land Use Map of the General Plan. It exhibits the different types of uses the City has planned for the community. Also, this map illustrates the relationship between land uses. The legend located to the right of the map defines the different recommended land uses. For example, the lighter yellow areas on the map are slated for "single family residential neighborhoods," and all the green areas are for "open spaces, parks, and golf courses." When someone wants to develop land somewhere in the City, they should first review the zoning on the property, then look at the City's General Plan to see what uses are permissible, and then initiate the appropriate action per their development plans in order to bring zoning and the General Plan into agreement.

Is the General Plan just a land use map?

While the land use map is an important component of the General Plan, it does not stand alone. The General Plan also contains policies and provisions outlining the City's long term vision for the community. Those policies and provisions are explained via the General Plan's elements. Those elements are:

- Economic
- Growth Area
- Cost of Development
- Housing
- Neighborhoods
- Conservation, Redevelopment and Rehab
- Open Space
- Environmental Planning and Conservation
- Recreation
- Civic Infrastructure
- Circulation
- Bicycling
- Water Resources
- Public Services and Facilities
- Public Buildings
- Safety





LEGEND

LAND USE

	FREEWAY COMMERCIAL (Regional Retail, Light Industrial & Office)
	COMMERCIAL (Neighborhood and Community Retail & Office)
	MIXED USE (Employment, Commercial, Office & Residential)
	EMPLOYMENT (Business Park & Industrial Uses)
	MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (12+ DU/ ac, Target Density = 12)*
	HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (8- 12 DU/ ac, Target Density = 8)*
	MEDIUM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (4 - 8 DU/ ac, Target Density = 4)*
	MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (2.5 - 4 DU/ ac, Target Density = 2.5)*
	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (1 - 2.5 DU/ ac, Target Density = 1)*
	RURAL LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (0 - 1 DU/ ac, n/a)*
	OPEN SPACE
	PUBLIC FACILITIES

*The allowable density is the bottom of the density range. Higher densities may be approved by meeting the criteria identified in the Land Use Element (does not apply to Rural Low Density).

SYMBOLS

	GROWTH AREA
	COMMERCIAL & EMPLOYMENT CORRIDOR
	POTENTIAL RESORT
	School
	Library
	Police Station
	Fire station
	Municipal Bldgs & Storage Facilities
	Future City Hall location
	Waste Water Treatment Plant
	SRP Sub-Stations
	SRP Wells
	Avondale Well Sites
	In-Service
	Out-of-Service

NOTES:
 The purpose of this map is to show general land use for parcels generally 10 acres or greater
 Other specific information is available on the following maps:
 Fig 3 - Existing Overlay Districts Map
 Fig 4 - Metropolitan Phoenix Enterprise Zone Map
 Fig 5 & 6 - Open Space and Recreation Map
 Fig 7 - Circ. and Streets Classification Map (North)
 Fig 8 - Circ. and Streets Classification Map (South)
 Fig 9 - Public Services and Facilities Map
 Fig 10 - Public Buildings Map

CORNOYER-HEDRICK

NORTH 0 0.25 0.50 1 Mile
 CONTOUR INTERVAL: 60 ft.

**GENERAL PLAN
 LAND USE**
 6/17/02

Figure 1 Page 27

DEFINING PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Listed below are key planning terms with brief definitions. These terms are often found in development documents, public hearings, etc.

Annexations

An annexation occurs when the City, at the request of the property owners in an area, extend its boundaries to include lands previously under the jurisdiction of the county.

City Code

The City Code is a collection of laws enacted by the City including, but not limited to, zoning business regulations, taxes, subdivisions, and criminal law.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP)

A Conditional Use Permit is granted for a use or activity that may be allowed in a zoning district only upon showing that such use or activity can or will comply with all criteria and standards as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and comprehensive plan.

Construction Code Regulations

Construction code regulations are the laws that apply to any aspect of the physical construction of buildings, utilities, streets, etc. These codes are organized around issues such as plumbing, electrical, building strength, fire, and mechanical systems.

Flood Plain Management

This includes the planning, management, construction, and review of all development proposals and drainage improvements with the intent to protect life and property while also maintaining protection of natural resources.

Master Infrastructure Planning

For urbanization to occur, infrastructure planning and creation must be in place. This includes streets, sewers, electricity, recreation sites, and waterways.

Private Property Rights

Private property rights are a land owner's legal right to develop and use their land. Development of the land, however, must fall within the uses prescribed by the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Otherwise, a General Plan amendment and a rezoning request must be submitted to the City.

Redevelopment Area

An area designated for revitalization is a redevelopment area. An area must be designated for redevelopment by the City Council. Once an area has been designated, a redevelopment plan is initiated.

Site Posting

Site postings are required where a request has been submitted to change the use or zoning of a parcel. Site postings are also made at sites where a change to the General Plan has been requested. The City of Avondale posts large, wooden, white signs to ensure readability.

Transportation Planning

Transportation planning explores ways to transport people and goods around the City including streets, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? CALL

Development Services - 623-333-4000

- Planning
- Building
- Engineering Plan Review
- Development Services One-Stop Shop

Engineering 623-333-4200

Traffic - 623-333-4229

Field Operations - 623-333-4700

Sales Tax - 623-333-2001

CITY OF AVONDALE
Development Services
11465 West Civic Center Drive
Avondale, AZ 85323
623-333-4000
7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Monday through Thursday
07/2008