



## CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION







Surprise General Plan 2035 policies provide guidance for future City ordinances, regulations, specific plans, and other plans. Surprise General Plan 2035 policies influence decisions on the annual city budget priorities and the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The plan is the impetus for City departments to coordinate on a variety of plans and projects. The Implementation chapter outlines the specific action strategies for the City of Surprise to ensure implementation of the Surprise General Plan 2035. The Implementation chapter also addresses how the General Plan will be reviewed and updated.

Implementation is the goal of any planning process. Plan implementation carries out the vision of the citizens who participated in the planning process, and provides the opportunity to evaluate the outcome of the policies. Although the administration of the General Plan rests with the Community and Economic Development Department, the responsibility for plan implementation can only be realized with cooperation from the decision makers, other departments and the community.



## INTRODUCTION

This Section identifies specific Administration Procedures and Implementation Initiatives that are necessary to ensure the overall vision and diverse goals of the Surprise General Plan 2035 are carried out effectively. These procedures and initiatives include the development of an annual monitoring report to review the General Plan's various policies and assess their effectiveness in achieving desired plan outcomes. Conversely, this chapter also identifies an Implementation Strategy Matrix that clearly defines those ordinance and/or code changes, additional planning studies, and other programs that are needed to carry-out the long-term goals and policy recommendations made throughout the Plan.

Beyond the direct guiding aspects of this chapter, much of the General Plan implementation occurs on a case-by-case basis through review of proposed zoning applications, site plans, conditional uses, plats, public improvements, and facilities. Implementation also occurs on a daily basis within the City administration through an ongoing system of analysis, studying of changes in the marketplace, and reaching rational conclusions about community needs and the best courses of city action within the framework established by the Surprise General Plan 2035.

Overall, Surprise General Plan 2035 encourages consistent community and individual landowner based decisions that will result in logical, desirable and sustainable development. To accomplish this, the General Plan relies on a comprehensive planning perspective that incorporates progressive Character Area Land Use implementation techniques with strategic economic, cultural, and infrastructure values.

### Administration Procedures

To ensure ongoing implementation of Surprise  
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General Plan 2035 as an important, practical, up-to-date, and consistent statement of city policy, the following actions should occur.

### **General Plan Monitoring Report**

Arizona Revised Statutes mandates all Cities to provide an annual status report to their City Council on the progress of enacting the defined elements of their General Plan.

During each monitoring cycle, a "State of the Surprise General Plan 2035" report will be prepared to determine whether implementation of the plan is occurring in an anticipated fashion and whether it is achieving desired results, such as developing the housing and employment the City needs.

On a yearly basis implementation monitoring will provide qualitative information on the specific steps that the city and its partner agencies are taking to carry out the plan (for example, the adoption of new policies and regulations, or the investment in specified infrastructure).

More quantitative performance monitoring data will be tracked and detailed on five-year increments to measure changes in vital indicators such as jobs and housing growth, transportation behavior and performance, changes to the landscape, changes to assessed property values, fluctuations in building permits issued, and variation in retail sales tax revenue.

This overall monitoring approach will ultimately allow City staff and elected officials to determine how policies and strategies are influencing and promoting the type of growth and investment that is necessary to achieve the desired vision for Surprise.

### **General Plan Amendments**

#### Major Amendments to the General Plan

A Major Amendment to the Surprise General Plan 2035 is any proposal that would result in a change to the Character Area Land Use Plan

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that would substantially alter the city's planned mixture or balance of uses. It is important to examine the implications of the project on the cumulative impact on the entire planning area. The criteria for categorizing a proposed amendment to the Surprise General Plan 2035 as a major amendment includes determining the relative size and amount of the proposed change. Additionally, the relationship with surrounding land uses and its impact upon major public infrastructure is considered. The following are criteria for determining a major amendment to the Surprise General Plan 2035:

- Any change in the Character Area Land Use designation from Neighborhood to Commerce & Office or Employment on 640 or more acres.
- Any change in the Character Area Land Use designation from Commerce & Office or Employment to Neighborhood.
- An increase or decrease in the planned number of acres designated for Open Space Character Area Land Use of 160 acres or more.
- Revisions to the text of the General Plan 2035 that are "not purely technical in nature."

### Minor Amendments to the General Plan

"Minor Amendments" to the Surprise General Plan 2035 are considered minor text changes and corrections that do not impact substantive portions of the Character Area Land Use plan's mixture or balance. All amendments to the City of Surprise General Plan that are not defined as Major Amendments are considered Minor Amendments. Minor Amendments may be considered by the Surprise Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council at any time during the calendar year.

### **General Plan Amendment Procedures**

Per Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) 9-461.06, the City of Surprise will consider major amendments to the Surprise General Plan 2035

once each year at a single public hearing. The major amendment applications must be submitted within the same year they are heard and a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council is needed to approve them. In addition, all major amendments must meet the public involvement criteria outlined in ARS 9-461.06 that reads, "effective, early, and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of the (Surprise General Plan 2035) from all geographic, ethnic, and economic areas of the municipality."

### General Plan Amendment Evaluation Criteria

In considering plan amendments, the proposal will be considered in terms of all the General Plan Elements. A thorough evaluation shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- Whether the proposed change is generally consistent with goals, objectives, and other elements of Surprise General Plan 2035.
- Whether the proposed change is justified by a change in community conditions or neighborhood characteristics since adoption of the Plan.
- Whether the proposed change creates an adverse impact on public facilities and services, including roads, sewers, water supply, drainage, schools, police, fire, and parks, that cannot be reasonably mitigated.
- Whether the proposed change creates an adverse impact on landmarks or other culturally significant structures or properties that cannot be reasonably mitigated.
- Whether development resulting from the proposed change would create an undue adverse impact on surrounding neighborhoods.
- Whether the proposed change would have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment, including washes, vegetation, slopes, groundwater, and other significant natural resources that could not be

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reasonably mitigated.

- Whether there was a change in city adopted policies or codes that would justify a change in Surprise General Plan 2035.

## Development Proposal Review Criteria

On a routine basis the Planning & Zoning Department is tasked with the review of development proposals for compliance with the Surprise General Plan 2035. To evaluate the quality and appropriateness of a development proposal, City staff shall utilize the goals, policies, recommendations and guidelines outlined within each element of this plan.

Depending on the project's size, location, and use, the review may address the project's impacts in a variety of areas including (but not limited to):

- Does the proposed development carry forward the vision and relevant goals and policies expressed in the General Plan or adopted Sub-Area plans as applicable?
- Does the proposed development adhere to the design guidelines of the applicable Character Area(s) and/or Development Type(s)?
- Does the proposed development strengthen or compromise the character of the area by adding to the mixture of uses?
- Does the proposed development maintain compatibility with or contribute to the quality of existing land uses in the surrounding area?
- Does the proposed development offer a range of mobility options and promote connectivity to adjacent or future development?

- Does the proposed development preserve natural systems (i.e. washes, wildlife corridors) and/or promote environmentally conscious practices (i.e. protect natural terrain, vegetation, viewsheds)?
- Does the proposed development improve and/or expand the existing infrastructure to the surrounding area?
- Does the proposed development further the provision of jobs in the surrounding area or the City as a whole?

Based on the outcome of the review, the City may work with the applicant to modify the project's size, density, land use mix or design, or take other measures to ensure compliance with the General Plan.

While many elements of the General Plan largely define the appropriateness of a development proposal, it is recognized that some specific conditions relating to the application of Character Areas and their associated Development Types (as defined in Chapter 1: Land Use Element) require the following additional implementation and review criteria.

### Greenfield Development

The City's large supply of vacant land both within the city limits and its planning area provide significant opportunities for development on previously undeveloped land — in fact most growth in Surprise will likely occur on vacant land. This is commonly referred to as greenfield development. Greenfield development on land that has no preexisting adjacent development represents an opportunity (as the initial development proposal for a given area) to define the type of neighborhoods, commercial nodes and job centers, or in other words the "Character" of an area, that does not exist today.

Greenfield development that in essence "sets

the character” of an area should be reviewed over a larger geographic area and against key planning and infrastructure documents (i.e. Sub-Area plans, Transportation Master Plan, and Water and Sewer Infrastructure Plans) in order to measure long term impacts to the surrounding region and in turn assess its compliance with the overarching vision and goals of the General Plan 2035.

### Non-Conforming Development

Existing development, land uses or structures that are found to be non-conforming per the SUDC, shall not be considered an existing use as it relates to determining the existing Character and/or Development Type of said development.

### Approved Planned Area Developments

The City of Surprise has a large number of approved Planned Area Developments (PAD's) that are all in various stages of implementation. The following criteria have been developed to assist with the incorporation of these PAD's into the Surprise General Plan 2035:

- By virtue of their existing zoning entitlements, these PAD's are permitted to maintain their density and intensity of land use.
- To the greatest extent possible, each PAD shall provide open space areas and/or corridors that are consistent with those shown on the Character Area Land Use Plan. In the event that these open space areas and/or corridors are not consistent with the land use plan of the approved PAD, the development rights of the impacted areas shall be allowed to be transfer to alternate locations within the designated PAD
- Development of the PAD's shall meet or exceed the design guidelines of the applicable Character Area(s) and/or Development Type(s).

## Implementation Initiatives

### **Summary of Implementation Tools**

The City of Surprise can use a variety of regulatory mechanisms and administrative procedures to implement the General Plan 2035. The summary below outlines the general tools and strategies that Surprise can use to implement the vision, goals, and policies of this Plan:

- Surprise Unified Development Code
- Sub-Area Plans
- Infrastructure Master Plans
- Planning and Design Guidelines
- Overlay Districts
- Engineering Development Standards
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Development Agreements
- Public Agencies (MAG, FCDMC, ADOT)
- Local Associations (WESTMARC, Chambers, HOA)

## Implementation Strategy Matrix

The Implementation Strategy Matrix identifies specific actions that Surprise intends to take during the 20-year implementation period of this Plan. The matrix first identifies the relevant Goal and/or Policy and then defines the corresponding implementation strategy, the department or agency charged with executing the strategy, and a timeframe for implementation.

It is important to note that the ability to implement the strategies outlined in the following matrix is dependent upon revenue, staffing, and other resource capabilities of the City of Surprise.

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## Implementation Strategy Matrix

Goal and Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Party	Short-Term (0-5 Years)	Medium-Term (5-10 Years)	Long-Term (10-20 Years)
LU-1	Update the SUDC to be consistent with the General Plan 2035	Community Development Department	•		
LU-1	Prepare and adopt Sub-Area plans as defined in the General Plan 2035	Community Development Department	•	•	
EV-1-3	Periodically update the Economic Positioning Framework to assist in encouraging job growth	Economic Development Department	•	•	•
LU-5	Adopt a new Parks and Trails Master plan to be consistent with the new Character Area Land Use Plan	Community Development Department	•		
LU-1	Update Subdivision code to enhance park dedication standards/requirements	Community Development Department	•		
LU-5	Begin to acquire/preserve desired open space as identified on the Character Area Land Use plan	Community Development Department		•	•
LU-6	Maintain the City's GIS data base to include development statistics to assist in monitoring the performance of the General Plan	Community Development Department	•	•	•
LU-1-7, EV-1-3	Work with other City departments to promote quality of life enhancements that make the area attractive to new residents and corporations	Community Development Department	•	•	•

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RS-4	Continuously review the Surprise Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure each element of the General Plan 2035 is being implemented to the greatest degree possible	Community Development Department	•	•	•
EV-1-3, RS-3-4	Stay involved in regional discussions and cooperative planning efforts (i.e. ADOT, MAG, MCDOT, FCDMC, WESTMARC)	Community Development & Public Works Department	•	•	•
RS-5	Review and update the Planning and Engineering Design Guideline and development standards, as appropriate	Community Development & Public Works Department	•		
RS-1-5	Review and update the Transportation Master Plan to be consistent with the General Plan 2035	Community Development & Public Works Department	•		
RS-2	Develop and adopt a Complete Streets Plan and Policy document	Community Development & Public Works Department	•		
RS-1-5	Implement transportation system improvements as described in Chapter 3: Transportation	Public Works Department		•	•
LU-8	Develop new and expand existing programs to educate of the benefits of sustainable practices	Community Development Department	•	•	
??	Review and update the Surprise Integrated Water Master Plan to be consistent with the General Plan 2035	Water Resources Management Department	•		