

**Our
Vision...**

Building on our heritage, our vision for Yuma is a community that is livable and competitive.

Yuma is a Healthy, Vibrant Community
Where people feel safe, basic human needs are met, diverse educational opportunities are available, diversity is cultivated, citizens are interested, informed and involved, the environment is clean and aesthetically appealing, the arts, culture and recreational offerings flourish.

Yuma has a Sustainable, Diverse Economy
Where educational opportunities support and promote economic development, existing businesses are nurtured, the environment supports new business development, the community thinks globally, and older neighborhoods remain vital.

1 – INTRODUCTION

The purpose and intent of the General Plan is to provide general guidance for the future development of the City of Yuma. No Objective, Goal, Policy Action Item or other material in this General Plan shall be effective unless it was previously adopted by the official passage of an Ordinance or Resolution of the City of Yuma, or it is an individual amendment to this plan that is separately approved by official action of the Yuma City Council during the consideration of this General Plan.

The General Plan is a policy document and guide to where Yuma wants to be in the future. It provides comprehensive direction for the growth and development of the City of Yuma. The plan is intended to be both long range and visionary and to provide guidance for actions to be taken in the next ten to twenty years. Building on local conditions, needs and desires and following state guidelines, the General Plan is many things:

- A local decision about the kind of community, Yuma wants to be. The plan has been developed here in Yuma, not by legislators in Phoenix or Washington.
- A growth guide that steers development to appropriate locations and away from places where it could harm major community economic assets, such as farming and military operations.
- A compilation of coordinated plans for land use, roads, parks, fire stations, police facilities and utilities we will need as Yuma grows.
- A means of support and protection for older, established neighborhoods.
- And an essential component of the City's efforts to attract new jobs to Yuma.

The plan does not legislate any new fees, taxes or changes to development and building codes.

The General Plan was developed for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, it is a way for Yuma to prepare for the future. By identifying where development will occur, the City can allocate resources and provide infrastructure in a timely and cost effective manner. The Plan can help the City identify and develop solutions for complex urban problems. For example, through the Housing Element the City can identify older neighborhoods that may be on the verge of deterioration or neglect and offer solutions to the residents to maintain the quality of their local community. The Plan allows the City to better manage resources through the identification of potential shortfalls in services or resources for future residents and businesses. The Plan helps sustain the community's long-term economic vitality and quality of life through the protection of important community assets.

- Prevents encroachment on the Marine Corps Air Station – Yuma, by limiting residential development around the base and allowing compatible adjacent land uses.
- Protects farming areas through the identification of long-term agriculture in the Yuma and Gila Valleys and the reduction of urban density close to the urban fringe.
- Protects homeowners and business property values for the long term by identifying appropriate locations for those and adjacent property.
- Protects landowners and industry, as stockholders in the City, by developing a plan that protects long-term economic interests and quality of life.
- Provides for parks, open space and emergency services to maintain a quality community.
- Saves taxpayers money for needed public physical improvements.

VISION AND THEMES

The Plan was developed on the foundation of Council and citizen direction through existing plans and policies. The development of the Joint Land Use Plan, in partnership with Yuma County, the City of Yuma Strategic Plan, Heritage Area Planning and Neighborhood Revitalization efforts have involved thousands of citizen hours. These efforts have included mass mailings, work groups, civic groups, public forums and hearings and culminated in City Council debate and adoption.

As a result of these efforts an overriding vision and themes for the plan have been developed. The Vision parallels the Strategic Management Plan Vision with the themes as follows:

- **Economic Development** – We encourage the development of both small and large businesses that improve the standard of living for our families, friends and neighbors.
- **Neighborhoods** – We recognize our neighborhoods are the foundation of our community and we maintain and enhance their value, character and stability.
- **Growth** – We have an attractive place in which to live, work and visit, where continued growth is orderly, financially sound and supported by community consensus.
- **History** – We recognize the vital importance of Old Town’s relationship with our past, with the Colorado River, and as a location for cultural, recreational and entertainment activities.
- **Culture and Recreation** – We utilize and sustain our natural spaces and resources, including the River’s edge, waterways, parks and historic sites, for recreation and cultural experiences to improve the economy and our quality of life.

Public participation in the development of the General Plan is ongoing as the Plan is a “living” document that will respond to changing economic conditions and community needs and desires.

Yuma has Orderly Growth
Where regular investment in existing infrastructure and neighborhoods sustains their vitality, proper planning for new infrastructure protects and strengthens our quality of life and promotes economic development, natural resources are sustained, and the essential values and vision of the community remain intact.

**- City of Yuma
 City Council
 Strategic
 Management
 Plan
 2000-2002**

SMART GROWTH (STATE OF ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

The State of Arizona has been working for over a decade to actively manage growth and preserve open space. In 1998, the Arizona Legislature passed the Growing Smarter Act, which clarified and strengthened planning elements in the required plans of municipalities and counties and added four new elements, namely: Open Space, Growth Areas, Environmental Planning, and Cost of Development. In 2000, the Legislature passed Growing Smarter Plus to further enhance land use planning statutes in Arizona.

Growing Smarter Legislation

An excerpt from the Growing Smarter Act:

The purpose of this act is to more effectively plan for the impacts of population growth by creating a more meaningful and predictable land planning process, to increase citizen involvement in the land planning process, to directly acquire and preserve additional open space areas within this state through necessary reforms to the master planning and open space conservation programs of the state land department and to establish a growth planning analysis process to consider and address various statewide growth management issues so that the future development of land in this state will occur in a more rational, efficient and environmentally sensitive manner that furthers the best interests of the state's citizens by promoting the protection of its natural heritage without unduly burdening its competitive economy.

What is Smart Growth?

The cumulative effects of population growth, its patterns and form have long-term social, environmental, and economic consequences. Smart growth is a continuous planning process to guide the preservation, development, or redevelopment of a neighborhood, community, or region to promote the goals and ambitions of its residents when facing growth pressures. Quality of life, infrastructure, and land use are typically key considerations in the process. Smart growth communities prudently manage and direct their growth-strained resources to assure an economic future consistent with their goals. In addition, smart growth informs economic development efforts by providing a framework to coordinate investments and policies.

Smart growth is guiding growth in ways that result in vibrant communities, strong economies, and a healthy environment. Smart growth means adding new homes, schools, businesses, jobs and infrastructure to Arizona's economy in ways that make sense and promote balance. Smart growth enhances the communities where we live, without over-burdening our transportation and infrastructure systems, polluting our air and water, or depleting our open spaces and magnificent natural landscapes. Smart growth embodies qualities that make communities great places to live and give them a sense of place – walkable neighborhoods, recreational amenities, historic spaces, vibrant downtowns, choices in transportation, jobs, and housing, prudent investments in capital facilities and infrastructure and opportunities for diversity and citizen involvement.

Around the country, communities are striving to implement new practices of land use development that will maximize investments while also preserving natural lands and critical environmental areas, protecting water and air quality and reusing already-developed land. In turn, the resulting higher quality of life in many of these communities makes them more economically competitive and creates more business opportunities that improve the local tax base.

The Smart Growth Network developed a set of ten principles that reflect the new ways that many communities are positively affecting land use and development:

- 1. Mix land uses*
- 2. Take advantage of compact building design*
- 3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices*
- 4. Create walkable neighborhoods*
- 5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place*
- 6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas*
- 7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities*
- 8. Provide a variety of transportation choices*
- 9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective*
- 10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions*

In Yuma, the Smart Growth principles listed above have been demonstrated in a variety of ways and are a part of the development pattern of Yuma. From the mix of land uses found in the downtown area, to the compact building design of the Sunset Mesa development, to the protection of farmlands in the Gila and Yuma Valleys to the walkable neighborhoods of the future Laurel and Estancia projects.

Through the elements of the City of Yuma General Plan the Smart Growth legislation of the Arizona Legislature has been addressed and the Smart Growth Principles endorsed by the State of Arizona have been considered.

Linked with Smart Growth is Sustainability. Sustainability is the ability to sustain growth and development while minimizing the long term effect on the environment. The American Planning Association has developed a Policy guide on Planning for Sustainability which identified various dimensions/objectives to sustainability that should be considered in the development of General Plans:

- 1. Sustaining communities as good places to live,*
- 2. Sustaining the values of our society – like individual liberty and democracy.*
- 3. Sustaining the biodiversity of the natural environment.*
- 4. Sustaining natural systems to provide the life-supporting “services”.*

General Plans and planning as a whole can work toward meeting those four objectives through land use actions, transportation planning, economic development, etc.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

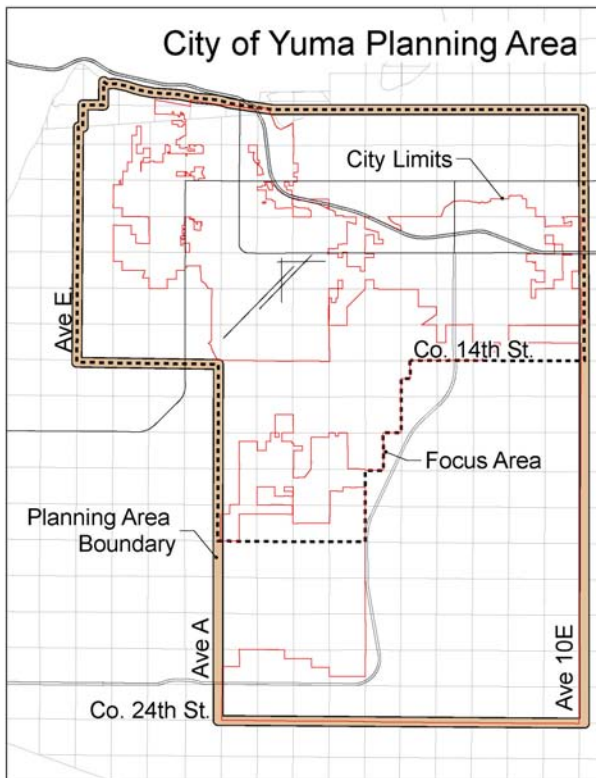
The Plan is organized into thirteen chapters, ten of which contain the elements of the General Plan. Within each of these elements are specific goals, objectives and policies that will be used to guide the City's growth and development.

- Goals are defined as desired results and are stated as broad policy.
- Objectives are a measurable level of achievement or process to achieve the goal.
- Policies are defined as specific measures to reach the objectives and attain the goals.
- Action Plans are also included which identify a list of projects that will implement the Policies.

PLAN BOUNDARIES

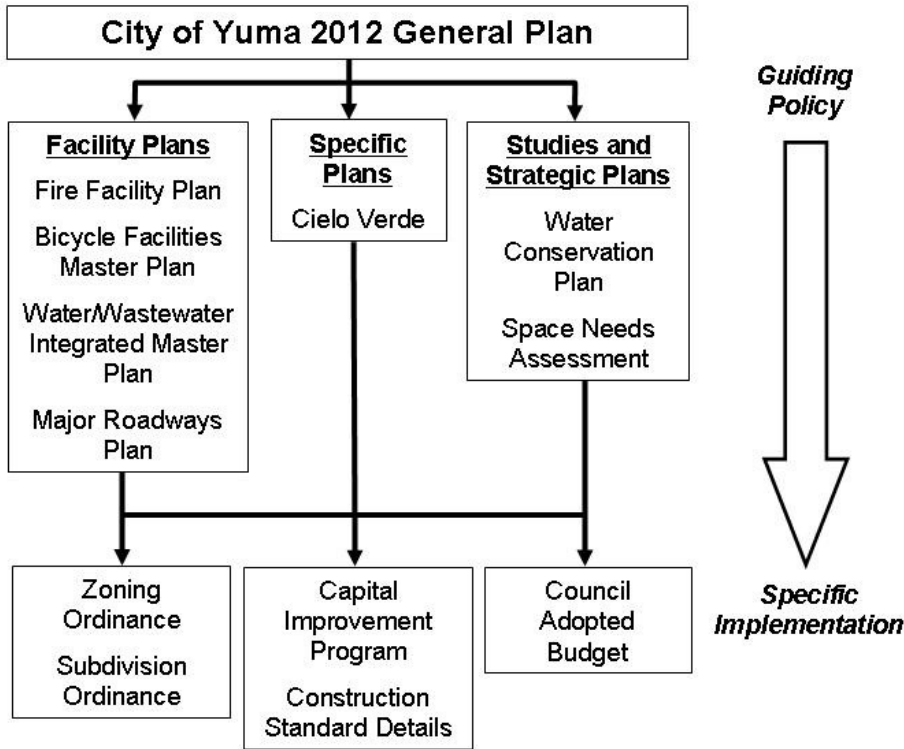
There are three different areas of the Yuma area that have been considered throughout the Plan's development.

- The first is the incorporated *City Limits*. This is the area that is currently part of the City of Yuma. This area includes a portion of the Goldwater Range and other federal lands to the south.
- The second is the *Planning Area*. This boundary is inclusive of the entire City limits and the neighboring urban areas that are likely to annex to the City of Yuma. These non-City areas have been included in planning efforts because of their close proximity to the City and the potential impact to the City of their development or of the City's development on them. It is likely the urban section of the Planning Area will be part of the City of Yuma at a future date. The Planning area includes the portion of the City limits located within the Goldwater Range.
- The third boundary is the *Focus Area*, which is the area examined in detail within this General Plan. The Focus Area is where major facility planning has taken place and is primarily where urban development is anticipated except the area of the City within the Goldwater Range which is not anticipated to need urban services.



RELATED DOCUMENTS

The General Plan provides the overall guide for more detailed decision-making. It fits within the Framework of urban development as that guide. More detailed Master Facility Plans and Utility Plans are developed to address specific needs but rely on the General Plan to provide the guide for service standards and service areas. Below is a drawing that shows this framework.



STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS

The City of Yuma 2012 General Plan meets the requirements of State Law for content and scope. State Law, within section 9-461.05 of the Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.), defines the number of elements that should be included and their areas of interest. Due to overlapping areas of concern and content, the City of Yuma has grouped several elements into various chapters of the General Plan with the intent being to provide a more readable and understandable document. Following is a table identifying the contents of the City of Yuma 2012 General Plan. Noted within the table is the state required element and where it can be found in the City of Yuma 2012 General Plan.

City of Yuma 2012 General Plan Element	State Required Element	Content
Chapter 1 – Introduction	N/A	Introduction to City of Yuma 2012 General Plan
Chapter 2 – Land Use	Land Use Element	Identify various and appropriate land uses within the community.
Chapter 3 – Transportation	Circulation Element	Develop a plan that identifies major roadways and bicycle facilities.
	Bicycle Element	
Chapter 4 – Parks, Recreation and Open Space	Recreation Element	Develop plan to provide parks, recreation and open space opportunities.
	Open Space Element	
Chapter 5 – Housing	Housing Element	Develop standards and programs for housing quality, variety and affordability.
Chapter 6 – Redevelopment	Conservation, Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Element	Develop plans for community redevelopment and the elimination of blighted areas. Identify programs that promote home ownership, assistance to improve appearance, promote maintenance for commercial and residential and provide for safety and security of neighborhoods.
	Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Element	
Chapter 7 – Conservation and Environmental	Conservation Element	Develop plans to protect natural resources and mitigate impacts on the environment from urban development. Identify policies that encourage and provide incentives for efficient use of energy and greater uses of renewable energy.
	Environmental Element	
	Energy Element	
Chapter 8 – Public Services	Public Services and Facilities Element	Develop plans and programs for police and fire services, water, sewer, stormwater, sanitation and schools
	Public Buildings Element	
	Water Resources Element	
Chapter 9 – Safety	Safety Element	Develop plan to protect the community from natural disasters.
Chapter 10 – Cost of Development	Cost of Development Element	Identify the fair distribution of infrastructure costs for new development.
Chapter 11 – Growth Area	Growth Area Element	Identify areas suitable for a mix of developments and multi-modal opportunities.
Chapter 12 – Public Participation	N/A	Identify means by which the public can be informed and participate in the administration and development of the General Plan.
Chapter 13 – Implementation	N/A	Identify process by which to implement and administer the General Plan and its amendment.
Appendix A – Reference List	N/A	Reference list of background documentation.