



# Show Low General Plan

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ♣ GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS ♣

Goals stated in each of the eleven Elements help to support the General Plan Vision Statement. Elements are interrelated with cross-referencing, many including complementary aims such as housing variety helping to promote job attraction. All Goals, with their accompanying Objectives, contribute to Action Recommendations. Plan consistency, from start to finish, results from integrating Element recommendations into the coordinated Implementation Action Program.

#### LAND USE ELEMENT

Show Low's land resource accentuates its historic agricultural/forest setting. Less than one-fourth of the land area is developed. Sound land use policies (including master planned communities fitting into natural surroundings) will allow the City to add homes, commerce, jobs and recreation space without creating urban sprawl. Land Use recommendations include:

- \* Establish Land Use Compatibility Guidelines
- \* Develop Land Use Decision Keys
- \* Implement urban design themes suggested by the Tejido Study and Main Street Program

The Development Plan graphic (located on the reverse side of this Executive Summary) illustrates, in concept, where growth can be accommodated while preserving the City's spacious, natural setting. There is ample room for future development without compromising natural resources.

#### CIRCULATION ELEMENT

In addition to street transportation improvements, the Plan recognizes the importance of transit, bicycling, and walking to provide options for residents and visitors. Multi-modal transportation factors consider aviation and trucking as well. Recommendations cover a wide range of circulation initiatives:

- \* Adopt a detailed, prioritized Master Street Improvement Plan, coordinated with ADOT
- \* Provide pedestrian amenities in the Master Street Improvement Plan and Trails Master Plan
- \* Require major projects to provide a Traffic Impact Analysis or Traffic Management Plan

Existing and proposed street system alignments are shown on the Circulation graphic (located in the complete General Plan document). The Element meshes with the 2007 Sub-Regional Transportation Study for Southern Navajo and Apache Counties.

#### OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Commitment to open space -- both active and passive -- is evident. Major water features, such as Show Low Lake and Fool Hollow Recreational Area, offer special attraction for visitors and residents alike. Golf courses and parks add to the overall open space acreage.

Open Space relates with many other plan Elements, such as Land Use, Trails, Circulation and Water Resources. Environmental Planning stresses retention of natural open space areas. Coordinating recommendations include:

- \* Establish criteria to incorporate forest or other natural preservation areas into developments
- \* Allow additional open space credits or tradeoffs for highest sensitivity lands and investigate funding options for acquiring natural resource areas
- \* Involve local businesses in sponsoring recreational programs
- \* Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Open spaces set the character of Show Low's past, present and future. Scenic qualities preserve the image of The Mountain.

#### WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT

This Element was added as an amendment to the 1999 General Plan. It established goals for maintaining high standards for water delivery service in the community. Unlike many Arizona municipalities, Show Low enjoys plentiful water availability from a variety of sources. Citizens set a high priority on maintaining water quality and supply through such recommendations as:

- \* Update the Water Resource Master Plan in a comprehensive manner
- \* Expand constructed wetlands and determine improvements to treatment facilities
- \* Strengthen requirements for water conservation in construction and provide information on water conservation to the public
- \* Include upgraded and water planning standards in CCR and Water Gazettee reporting
- \* Evaluate costs/benefits of consolidated municipal water service

Show Low presently serves about eighty percent of local water customers. The City actively seeks additional water supply and plans for expanded treatment/distribution.

### ♣ VISION STATEMENT ♣

Show Low citizens and property owners are setting their future aspirations higher for a progressing municipality that has planned with foresight. Preserving the history, agricultural heritage and culture that is unique to Show Low is a fundamental principle of this General Plan. "Small town", family-oriented values emphasize the strong sense of community that characterizes the City as hub of the White Mountains region. Quality of life here is appreciated by persons of all ages, seasonal residents and recent settlers as well as long-time residents, and, particularly, visitors who quickly recognize Show Low's special attributes.

The Ponderosa Pine Forest symbolizes the area's outdoor enjoyment, spacious environment and natural resources. Stewardship in water resources, open space, woodland protection and trails system establishment exemplify a shared ideal to maintain the City's surrounding, rural setting.

Growing Smarter goals accomplishments, from improved public facilities to positive municipal growth, provide a strong foundation for an updated Show Low planning vision that balances natural and heritage preservation with new development and population increase. Policies promoting the creation of well-paying jobs, excellent housing value, compatible land use and cultural attractions are intended to serve growing families, active retirees and, especially, to nurture Show Low's youth to grow into productive adults.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

As the hub of the White Mountains, Show Low plays the regional economy's lead role. Continuing strength in commerce depends on creative ways to attract business. Expanded retail and hospitality industry components produce revenue for the local economic base. Special efforts are needed to increase median household incomes through improved job opportunities. Economic development recommendations are:

- \* Encourage the role of Northland Pioneer College in job development and training
- \* Initiate a strategic program that targets specific industries to attract better paying jobs
- \* Plan for a civic center for events and utilize existing facilities
- \* Promote the expansion of Downtown through site planned commercial centers
- \* Maintain strong tourism attraction with additional special events and promotions

Economic development objectives also interrelate with goals for Housing, Land Use and Growth Areas.

#### HOUSING ELEMENT

More than three thousand dwelling units have been added since the 1999 Plan. Because the affordability gap for working families has increased sharply, this Element addresses concerns about housing choice opportunities, maintaining residential quality and assuring that developers follow through on their promises. Some recommendations are:

- \* Provide residential development options to allow builders to vary dwelling types
- \* Create incentives for path connections and open space in developments
- \* Adopt additional property maintenance guidelines and create opportunities for neighborhood clean-ups

Good housing value, at an affordable price, is a key component of the City's economic well-being. Residential development policies should contribute to a positive community image that draws new businesses and residents.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ELEMENT

Managing natural resources requires attention to land and forests, water and clean air. Show Low's peaceful attributes -- reducing noise, residential privacy, dark nighttime sky -- need to be observed, as well. Recommended Environmental Planning actions seek to:

- \* Set priorities and assign responsibilities for studying sensitive ecological issues
- \* Prepare simplified Environmental Analysis evaluation methods for property owners
- \* Encourage private sector preservation efforts
- \* Develop and adopt a forest fire prevention plan

Protecting the environment -- wildlife, woodlands, open range, water -- benefits residents and attracts visitors.

#### GROWTH AREAS ELEMENT

This Element suggests locations where growth could occur most economically, utilizing existing or nearby infrastructure. Examples range from improvements along the Deuce of Clubs and Downtown Redevelopment to planned, mixed-use neighborhoods and the Airport Industrial area. Sound growth management principles prompt investment through tactical recommendations such as:

- \* Adopt a Downtown Redevelopment Overlay District
- \* Develop mixed-use development design models in concert with major landowners and developers
- \* Allow flexibility for site planning and architectural design creativity in Growth Areas

The City does not control growth. However, by designating sites with high development potential, it can offer practical alternative locations for industrial, retail, hospitality and residential uses.

#### COST OF DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Show Low should scale its Capital Improvement Program (funding for municipal systems, programs and facilities) to stay ahead of growth. New development would be expected to contribute sufficient amounts to cover its increased demand on City services. Recommendations to assure "fair share" funding include:

- \* Monitor General Plan Growth Areas on an annual basis
- \* Require cost/benefit evaluation for projects that extend municipal services
- \* Revisit City fees and impact cost assessment policies to assure new development is paying its own way

Cost of Development management targets improvements to highest priority community needs such as public safety, parks and education.

### ♣ GENERAL PLAN OVERVIEW ♣

The Show Low General Plan, adopted by City Council on October 16, 2007, expands on the previous Plan that has served the City since 1999. The document is comprehensive in scope, blending the community's respect for its distinctive, historic character with its commitment to continuing, quality growth.

The new document features heightened emphasis on four season outdoor enjoyment with an independent Trails Element. The Economic Development Element advocates well-paying employment together with a solid revenue base. It plans for recently annexed areas, confirming compatible relationships with our neighbors from the Forest Service, the White Mountain Apache Tribe, and nearby communities. The Housing Element addresses affordability and quality housing issues facing our city.

This is a citizen-driven General Plan. It represents the entire community: neighborhoods, business, civic and environmental interest groups. A Public Participation Program featured hands-on planning workshops, open houses and progress briefings as well as a broadly-based survey of residents' preferences for Show Low's future. Community goals are reflected in each Element's Goals and Objectives. The Vision Statement sets the stage for the plan direction.

#### TRAILS ELEMENT

This new Plan component, requested by members of the public, highlights the Show Low enthusiasm for outdoor activity. Forest trails, urban pathways, separate facilities for equestrians and OHVs are proposed future improvements. Organizations and businesses partnerships could result in Trails excellence for the City.

Recommendations for enhancing Show Low's trail systems include:

- \* Coordinate partnerships with local businesses for trail amenities and maintenance responsibilities
- \* Designate types and hierarchies of trails and create trail guideline standards

The General Plan emphasizes Trails as a major community point of pride. It also addresses the community's awareness of and desire for quality alternative transportation systems.

#### PUBLIC FACILITIES and SERVICES ELEMENT

Show Low provides an excellent quality and variety in municipal services, outdoing many cities of much greater size. Previous Plan recommendations have been accomplished, such as the Public Library and City Hall offices. The municipal airport and Four Seasons transit represent major accomplishments in transportation services. In addition, the Show Low School District and Northland Pioneer College distinguish the community's educational attainment.

Shared resources, including private sector and institutional investment as well as the City's Capital Improvement Program, would help to expedite development of new civic assets. Public facilities and services recommendations include:

- \* Implement Downtown Plan Recommendations with phased strategy.
- \* Work with Northland Pioneer College to support its growth and evaluate the need for shared facilities.

Public safety is a top municipal service priority. Municipal and private utility providers have prepared for continued growth as well.

### ♣ IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN ♣

Accomplishing General Plan goals and objectives depends on commitment by citizens, developers, Show Low City Council, and Planning Commission as well as support from neighboring communities, Navajo County, and the State. This document serves as a guide to accomplish Show Low's vision.

The backbone of General Plan implementation is a step-by-step action program. Some steps may be achieved relatively soon, others may require years -- and many, cumulative steps. With specific Show Low planning goals and objectives in mind, this section suggests some incremental activities to mark progress from where the City is today toward where area citizens want to be ten or twenty years from now.

The schedule illustrated in the Action Plan Table (located in the complete General Plan document) is not intended to dictate decisions by elected representatives, but it does offer some probable choices that may, after careful evaluations, be considered as City resources permit.

#### SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (2008-2010)

Implementation is already beginning with public works projects and considerations of code revisions in preparedness of future growth. Efforts that can be initiated -- or completed -- within a year or two of Plan adoption are specified as "short term". Downtown planning, for example, is already underway.

#### MID-TERM ACTIONS (2011-2015)

Value-added actions are in place, Show Low is positioned to continue key programs (such as Downtown redevelopment and providing pathway connections). Some previous initiatives may have been completed; others could require "next steps" adjustments.

#### LONG-RANGE PLANNING (2016 and beyond)

Value-added public facilities, planned years earlier, allow for cost-effective municipal expansion. High standards for quality engineering will help to assure that roads, drainage, parks, wet utilities, public safety and other local government functions can serve an expanded community with economy.

#### GENERAL PLAN MONITORING

The Show Low General Plan serves as a broad policy statement for shaping decisions to preserve and improve the City's quality of living. It is meant to be used when developments are proposed and when community leadership evaluates them. The document is a reference for fulfilling citizens' preferences. The Plan is adaptable, flexible. The Implementation Program serves as a guide. Its proposed actions should be reviewed regularly: first, to see if progress is being made toward stated goals; second, to adapt to changes in the City or region.

The Plan notes three ways to assure that the goals are being implemented.

- \* Status Reporting -- frequent compilations of demographic and financial data.
- \* Success Measurement -- a "report card" on progress toward Goals.
- \* Amendment/Updating -- providing appropriate revisions.