Planning in Coconino County

History, County Plans, Codes, and Processes
What is “planning”? Planning furthers the “welfare of people and their communities by creating convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient and attractive environments for present and future generations” (APA 2004).
Why do we plan for land uses?

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.”
- Benjamin Franklin

- To prepare for the future.
- Provide residents, land owners, and developers expectations for the future.
- Guide development to meet the vision, values and needs of a community.
- Plans shape communities by logical, convenient and sustaining growth.
- Encourage community investment.
- Protect property values.
Why do we plan for land uses?

- Preserve open space.
- Protect habitat, floodways and other critical environmentally sensitive areas.
- Organize the transportation system.
- Respond to changing trends in housing styles and demands.
- Mitigate runoff and erosion from development.
- Plan for schools, parks, utilities.
- Minimize conflicts between uses.
A Brief History of Planning

And – what is it and why do we do it?
• Humans have organized settlements – hamlet, village, town, city, urban scale development – for centuries.

• Pre-history, Greeks, Romans, medieval towns were designed and planned to meet the needs of the times.
Planning in the United States

Defined “movements” to improve public welfare and separate incompatible land uses:

- Public Health – result of tenement conditions in NYC, Chicago and other cities
- Garden City – bring nature to the city
- City Beautiful – emphasized site planning, design and aesthetics.
- City Efficient – laws established zoning, subdivision regulations, public services, highways, and brought planners to manage the public process.
Legal Authority derived from “police powers”:

- Standard Zoning Enabling Act (1925) – U.S. Department of Commerce as a means to protect business interest.

- Euclid v. Ambler Realty (1926) – separation of land uses is valid use of authority to protect public health, safety and welfare. But “Euclidian Zoning” is changing!

- Standard Enabling Planning Act – determined that zoning and land use must follow comprehensive goals and objectives decided democratically.
Planning in Arizona and Coconino County

Coconino County derives authority for planning from Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) 11-802

- Enabling legislation delegates local control for
- Zoning, subdivisions, nuisances, public health and safety.
Why Plan for Coconino County?

State of Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) enables, provides authority to and requires the County to plan for the future.
Layers of Coconino County Plans

Coconino County Comprehensive Plan (2015)

Area Plans are an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

Flagstaff Regional Plan (2013) amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
2015 Coconino County Comprehensive Plan

Award-winning Conservation-based plan is a policy document with a focus on:

• Open space and resource protection
• Environmental Stewardship
• Dark sky

11 Topic Chapters:

• Sustainability, Natural Environment, Water Resources, Land Use & Growth, Community Character, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Public Safety, Circulation, Energy
What is an Area Plan?

An official amendment to the Coconino County Comprehensive Plan that reflects the local residents’ **vision of the future**, contains **goals and policies for development**, and provides **guidance for decision makers**. An Area Plan may serve a community, specific neighborhoods, or rural areas.
An Area Plan contains:

- **A Vision** of the community’s future
- **Chapters, or elements** that explore topics in depth that are relevant to the area. The format may be similar to Comprehensive Plan.
- **Goals** that are broad statements of desired outcomes to realize the vision.
- **Policies** that provide specific detail for achieving the goal.
An Area Plan's Goals and Policies:

Are

• Realistic “should” statements that consider County resources & funds.

Do not

• Change or reduce existing entitlements! The existing zoning designations are maintained.

Are not

• Regulatory like the zoning or subdivision ordinance, or engineering standards.
An Area Plan may also contain:

Guiding Principles that are broad statements of philosophical values that establish a culture understood to be important.

A Future Land Use Map based on zoning. This is not required and would be NEW for DPTF.

An Implementation Plan with a schedule and responsible agency; this is not required and would be NEW for DPTF.
Coconino County Planning Regulations

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Engineering Standards, Floodplain
Zoning Ordinance

Zones are areas designated for different uses

• Single family, multi family, commercial, industrial, public/quasi public, mineral resources, open space

Performance standards based on intent of zone

• Allowed/disallowed uses, setbacks, height limits, etc.

• Orderly development and to mitigate impacts from neighboring properties
Using the Zoning Ordinance

Chapter 1 – General Provisions

Chapter 2 – Zoning Districts & Land Uses
• P (permitted) uses built with a building permit
• P* (permitted) with an administrative permit
• C (conditional) uses require approval by Planning & Zoning Commission at a public hearing
• Basic performance standards

Chapter 3 – Special Uses and Conditions
• In-depth performance standards for specific uses
Using the Zoning Ordinance

Chapter 4 – Performance Standards
• Mostly for commercial uses

Chapter 5 – Administration

Chapter 6 – Definitions

When in doubt ask a planner!
Recent Zoning Ordinance Changes (2019)

• Accessory Structures
• Accessory Dwelling Units
• RV’s as a permanent residence
• Campgrounds
• 1st floor porches & deck setbacks
• New commercial and industrial uses
• Mixed use development
• Clarified waivers and performance
Planning Review and Project Approval Processes

- Building Permit Review for permitted uses
- Administrative Permit Review with Standards
- Conditional Use Permit Review and Public Hearing

✓ Requires public hearing and Planning and Zoning Commission approval
Conditional Use Permits

For uses not normally expected in that neighborhood/district, or uses with impacts that are hard to predict

• Public hearing before Planning and Zoning Commission
• Pre-Application Meeting → Citizen Participation Plan and submittal → Planner posts/staff report with recommendation → Hearing → Building Permit
Common Special Uses – Animal Keeping

To support animal keeping in our rural county while mitigating odor, noise, pollution, etc.

• All animals to be kept, watered and fed at least 55’ from property line

• Horses and livestock
  • Must have at least an acre
  • # of animals dictated by parcel size
  • Must manage manure
Common Special Uses – Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s)

Maintain *single family residential character* allowing flexibility and affordability as a clearly subservient dwelling unit.

**Distance Requirements**
- $< 4$ acres $= 100$ feet maximum separation
- $\geq 4$ acres $= 200$ feet maximum separation

Size allows half of livable square footage of main home up to:
- 1,200 SF attached
- 1,000 SF detached
I DON'T ALWAYS ASK FOR VARIANCES

BUT WHEN I DO, I AM ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE A HARDSHIP PECULIAR TO THE PROPERTY WHICH IS BEYOND MY CONTROL
Questions?

SITE PLAN REVIEW EXPLAINED

YOUR CONTRACTORS WERE SO PREOCCUPIED WITH WHETHER OR NOT THEY COULD THEY DIDN'T STOP TO THINK IF THEY SHOULD