



## *Our Vision...*

*The Town of Quartzsite is a dynamic, attractive and vibrant community providing for all:*

*job opportunities;*

*adequate housing;*

*medical services;*

*educational opportunities;*

*support for the arts and*

## **1 - Introduction**

General Plans in the United States have gone by a number of names over the past hundred years, such as a city plan, development plan, urban plan, master plan, growth management plan, comprehensive plan, land use plan, and policy plan. Although the names have changed, the basic intent has remained the same: To provide an official public document, adopted by the appropriate local government, to serve as a guide for policy decisions relating to the relationships between land use, transportation, quality of life, the environment and the economy desired by the community. The Plan is intended to be both long range and visionary and should provide guidance to where Quartzsite wants to be in the future. The Plan is intended for a variety of users. New and existing residents, as well as developers and people working with the Town can use the 2003 Plan to learn about the Town of Quartzsite and its future plans for development. Town Staff, the Town Council and the Town Planning Commission will use the 2003 Plan as a guide to land use planning and to ensure that policies and procedures remain consistent with the Town's Vision. The Plan is to be both long range and visionary and should provide guidance for actions to be taken in the next ten to twenty years. The Plan is not set in stone, but instead remains flexible to allow for the most beneficial planning strategies to be implemented dependent on the varying conditions within the Town. The General Plan is therefore intended to be flexible, practical, performance based and an effective means of creating compatibility within the environment. Building on local conditions, needs and desires and following State guidelines, the General Plan is many things:

- A statement of policy and a local decision about the kind of community, Quartzsite wants to be. The plan has been developed here, at the Town level, not at the State or Federal Offices.
- A growth guide that steers development to appropriate locations and away from places where it could cause incompatible land uses that harm major community economic assets.
- More than a land use map, it is a set of coordinated plans for the roads, parks, public facilities and utilities that Quartzsite would need if it chooses to grow.
- A way to improve the quality of life in Quartzsite and a means of support and protection for homeowners and businesses.



However, the General Plan is not:

- A rigid, static document or a detailed policy for specific areas.
- A tool to promote special interest.
- A zoning ordinance.
- A management plan.

This General Plan was developed for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, it is a requirement by ARS §9-461.05 that all jurisdictions have a General Plan to guide future land use and development in their community. Secondly, it is also a way for Quartzsite to prepare for the future. By identifying where various types of development will occur, the Town can allocate resources and provide infrastructure in a timely and cost effective manner. The Plan can help the Town identify and develop solutions for complex planning problems. For example, through the Transportation Element, the Town can identify the busiest streets and offer multi-faceted solutions on how to best minimize the amount of traffic on those streets during times of congestion. The Plan allows for the Town to better manage limited resources through the identification of potential shortfalls in needed services or resources for existing and future residents and businesses, throughout the year, but especially through the slow summer months. The Plan helps sustain the community's long-term economic vitality and quality of life through the promotion and protection of important community assets.

- Protects homeowners and business property values for the long term by identifying appropriate locations for those uses and adjacent properties.
- Protects landowners and industry by developing a plan that protects long-term economic interests and quality of life.
- Provides for parks, open space, bicycle, equestrian, walking paths, and emergency services to maintain a quality community.
- Protects historical sites through identification and classification.
- Provides for cultural and arts resources.
- Prevents encroachment on wildlife corridors by limiting densities of nearby residential and commercial development.

A general plan should not be confused with zoning. Zoning is a legal mechanism whereby land is classified according to specific allowed uses, whereas the General Plan is a guide for future growth and development. Zoning should be utilized as a complement to the General Plan and as an implementation tool for the development of the community to reflect the direction and desired urban form outlined in the General Plan. The zoning ordinance is used to implement the vision, goal, objectives and policies of the Quartzsite General Plan.



## TOWN VISION STATEMENT

The Town Vision Statement was developed on November 25, 2002 during a public participation workshop. The Vision Statement is a brief description of how community members view the future of Quartzsite. The Vision Statement was developed in order to provide direction for the implementation of the elements of the General Plan. It is as follows:

*The Town of Quartzsite is a dynamic, attractive and vibrant community providing for all: job opportunities; adequate housing; medical services; educational opportunities; support for the arts and cultural resources; parks and recreation opportunities; and a healthy environment.*

## OTHER DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED INTO THE GENERAL PLAN

The following documents are incorporated by reference and considered implementation tools of this Plan:

- Yuma District Resource Management Plan
- La Posa Interdisciplinary Management Plan
- Quartzsite Arizona: No Ordinary Place by Leland Feitz
- Lost Mines and Prospectors' Lore by Bill Keiser

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Plan is organized around the essential themes of the Quartzsite vision, while meeting the State Law requirements for content and scope. The State Law defines the number of elements that are required in the General Plan for Quartzsite. The elements to be included in General Plans are determined by the size of the jurisdiction. Quartzsite, with a population of approximately 3,500 permanent residents is required to include in its General Plan the following elements: a land use element, a transportation element, an open space element, a growth area element, an environmental planning element, a cost of development element, and a water resources element. Municipalities are allowed to add optional elements to facilitate the Town's Vision. Quartzsite has chosen to include a conservation element, a recreation element, a public participation element, a housing element, implementation element, and an economic development element in its General Plan. Following is a table identifying the contents of the Town of Quartzsite 2003 General Plan. Noted within the table is the State required element and where it can be found in the Town of Quartzsite 2003 General Plan. The Town of Quartzsite has grouped several elements into various chapters of the General Plan due to the overlapping areas of concern and content.



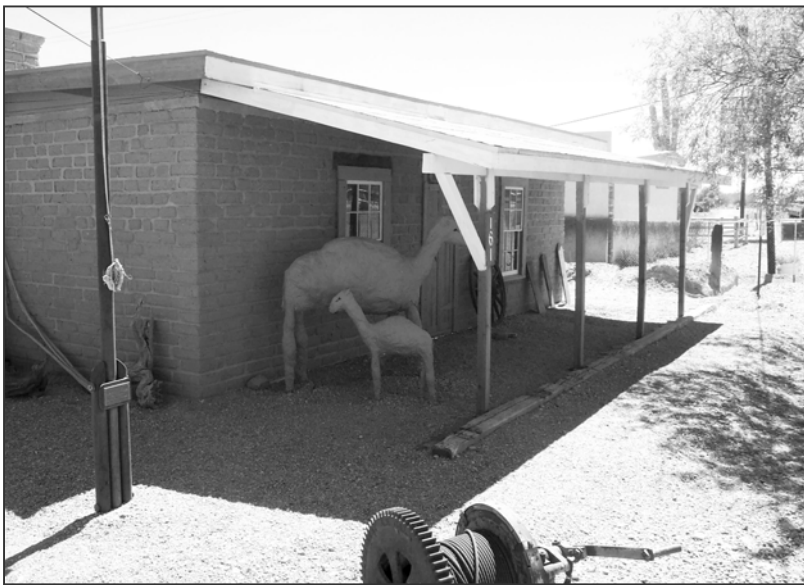
<b>Town of Quartzsite 2003 General Plan Chapters</b>	<b>State Required Element</b>	<b>Content</b>
Chapter 1 - Introduction	N/A	Introduction to the Town of Quartzsite General Plan
Chapter 2 - Land Use	Land Use Element	Identifies the general distribution, location, and extent of various and appropriate land uses within the community.
Chapter 3 - Transportation	Circulation Element	Develop and promote a balanced, comprehensive transportation system that provides for the safe, efficient and convenient movement of goods and people.
Chapter 4 – Housing	N/A	Develop standards and programs for housing quality, variety and affordability. Provide for permanent housing.
Chapter 5 – Parks, Recreation & Open Space	Open Space Element	Develop a plan to provide parks, recreation and open space opportunities.
Chapter 6 - Growth Areas	Growth Areas Element	Protect significant open space resources within the Town to compliment the surrounding areas and to guide the location/area of growth.
Chapter 7 – Conservation, the Environment & Water Resources	Conservation Element Environmental Element Water Resources Element	Develop plans to protect natural resources and mitigate impacts on the environment from development. Ensure water quality and adequate capacity that meets the needs of current and future residents.
Chapter 8 - Cost of Development	Cost of Development Element	Identify the fair distribution of infrastructure costs for new development.
Chapter 9 - Public Participation	N/A	Identify means by which the public can be informed and participate in the administration and development of the plan.
Chapter 10 - Economic Development	N/A	To provide the ability for Quartzsite to strengthen itself economically by attracting quality jobs and diverse employment opportunities while ensuring that existing businesses remain strong and viable.



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Quartzsite is a small desert community with a population of 3,354, situated between mountains dotted with a variety of semi-precious rocks and minerals. Beginning in the mid-1850s, Quartzsite was used as a watering hole by travelers passing through. A few wells in Quartzsite provided for the Tyson's Well Stage Station. Named for Charles Tyson, the Station was a simple adobe building which served desert travelers well into the late 1880s. The original compound was composed of several buildings and was commonly called "Ft. Tyson," although it never served as an actual fort. It did however serve as a

Figure 1-1: Tyson Well Stage Station



Picture Source: Lindsay Holt

US Army stop and may have provided settlers with protection from Indian conflicts.

A post office was established at the Fort in 1893, although it only survived for two years. The Fort ultimately became the Oasis Motel.

In 1896, a second post office was established on Moon Mountain Road, managed by postmaster George Ingersoll.

Shortly after the establishment of the second post office, Quartzsite became something of a supply center, with a hotel, butcher shop, general store and quite a few saloons. The name Quartzsite was suggested due to the abundance of that particular rock found in the area. According to one report, the Post Office Department was responsible for misspelling the name "Quartzite", by adding an "s" to the official name.

Quartzsite enjoyed somewhat of a mild boom when the western states were caught up in mining excitement. Although there was some mining activity around Quartzsite in mines such as the Cinnabar, Copper Bottom, Marquita, Moon Mountain and Gold Nugget, most of this activity has since ended. However, there are a number of residents which continue the mining tradition in local mines around Quartzsite.



When the “boom” ended in the early 1900s, Quartzsite’s population dropped to well under 100 persons. Fifty-seven people are reported to have voted in the 1904 election, in which one Wyatt Earp was listed as a candidate for constable. Upon the arrival of the Great Depression, Quartzsite saw an increase in its number of residents. Many men returned to the desert with their picks and shovels in hand and some were able to make a few dollars.

By the early 1960s, the Town population was back down to fifty residents during summer months. However, it was during this same time that the winter population in Quartzsite began to quadruple. Planning for future winter growth became an important issue in Quartzsite and on March 23, 1965, the Quartzsite Improvement Association met for the first time and was incorporated one month later. Members of the Association are accredited with planning for the first official rock and gem show held in February of 1967. By Pow Wow’s eighth year, lot spaces were leased out to over 450 exhibitors sixty days before the show opened and some 200,000 people came to visit the gem show.

Since then, Tyson’s Well’s Stage Station has been restored by the Central Yuma Preservation Society and now functions as a museum. There are various other landmarks located in Quartzsite, but the big attraction is the grave of Hadji Ali (or Hi Jolly as his name sounded to the residents). In 1835, the Governor of Arizona dedicated the pyramid marking the grave of this Arab camel driver. Ali came to Arizona from his native land of Syria as a hired chief camel driver with a number of camels intended to be used by the United States Army as a desert beasts of burden experiment. Unfortunately, the camels were not compatible with the Army’s mules and the plan was relinquished in 1864.

It is obvious that Quartzsite has a history rich in tradition which should be preserved for the enjoyment of its future residents. However, until it was incorporated in 1989, Quartzsite had experienced a trend of haphazard and careless planning. This kind of planning has resulted in many residents’ homes being built on flood plains and many historical monuments aging quickly with time. The General Plan will allow Quartzsite to preserve its history while adapting to current and future trends by designing elements that takes these issues into consideration.