

4. INCORPORATED CITIES AND TOWNS

General Information on Municipalities

Overview

Pima County incorporated communities:

	Date of Incorporation
City of Tucson	1877
South Tucson	1940
Oro Valley	1974
Marana	1977
Sahuarita	1994

Municipal Incorporation

Local governments in Pima County exist at the will of the state and can form only if permitted by the State of Arizona. Local governments thus derive their right to exist and most of their powers from state law.

Incorporating gains the city or town the power to impose taxes, borrow money and make ordinances to spend their resources to improve their area of jurisdiction. Local government services are limited geographically and to certain municipal functions, except in charter cities (Tucson is the only chartered city in Pima County). Incorporation gives towns and cities some autonomy from the state (more than counties are granted). Municipal functions include police and fire protection, operating trial courts and jails, and providing residents with water, sanitation and other vital utilities, as well as land use management. They may provide other services as well such as community development and social services to low-income and disadvantaged residents.

Unincorporated, informal communities do not have the powers or all the services of incorporated towns or cities. Pima County is permitted by law to provide some municipal services to these areas.

How to incorporate as a municipality

To become incorporated as a town or city, two-thirds of qualified electors in the area must sign a petition and submit it to the Pima County Board of Supervisors. No election is needed if this many sign, unless the area is within six miles of an existing incorporated area. Then the community must have approval of the neighboring city or town. Incorporation can also occur if 10 percent of electors propose an election and a majority vote in favor of incorporation.

A city or town can also dis-incorporate and become part of the county again by special election in which two-thirds of the qualified voters vote in favor of dis-incorporation. The City of South Tucson has incorporated, voted to dis-incorporate and then voted again to incorporate.

Types of Municipal Government

General Law Town

Incorporated towns have some autonomy in practice but legally they are not sovereign governments. In practice this means the state mandates in detail how they are to operate and if and when there is a conflict between a town or city's ordinances and state laws, the state laws prevail over local matters.

- Incorporated towns are required by the Arizona Constitution to have a council (rather than a town meeting legislative process);
- To qualify to become a town, an area must have a population of at least 1,500;
- As long as it has a council, the town decides on a weak or strong mayor system; and,
- Most town officials have job descriptions mandated by the state.

General Law City

- A city must have a population of at least 3,000;
- The city council is given more discretion to hire and fire, establish salaries, and prescribe duties of appointed officers;
- The city council may be bigger than in a town and have up to seven members;
- The city council has more discretion in exercising regulation within the city; and,
- Pima County has one general law city – City of South Tucson.

Charter City

- A charter city must have a minimum population of 3,500;
- Only incorporated cities may adopt a charter and be granted home rule;
- A city must go through the state determined process to become a charter city – elect a charter commission to draw up a charter and then have a majority of the city's population approve it in an election;
- Charter means the state has given a city the power to run things locally including how to organize, what officials to have, how to elect them and what local issues to address. They can sue the state if it interferes in their processes or decision that comply with the overall grants of power;
- Pima County has one charter city – the City of Tucson; and,
- Charter cities are sometimes called home-rule cities which commonly refers to the specific provision that allows any city or town to go over the state imposed spending limit if a proposition allowing overspending is passed by a majority of voters.

Forms of Government

All local governments in Pima County have a council/manager form of government. This differs from a mayor-centered city or town where the mayor is the operating executive. A council/manager form of government means a council makes the laws and a professional manager executes the law. A mayor in this system, whether directly elected or selected by the council members, serves more as a legislative leader and an honorary head of the city or town. The office of mayor was weakened in the progressive era at the turn of the century when

reforms transferred the appointive and firing power and supervisory powers to a professional city or town manager.

The Arizona Constitution mandates that local government may only have a council form of government. This means they are not permitted to have a town meeting form of government where the population would actually make the laws. But the state leaves to each jurisdiction the decision whether they have a strong executive mayor or an appointed manager. All have opted to have a professional manager rather than the strong mayor system.

Annexation

An incorporated city or town may grow in area by annexation – legally adding on geographical areas to their jurisdictions. Adjoining areas may ask to be annexed to a town or city to gain more municipal services. Cities or towns in Arizona may annex areas where more than 50 percent of the property owners as well as more than 50 percent of the assessed valuation ownership sign petitions in favor of annexation, the city or town passes an ordinance. State law requires that an annexation touch existing municipal boundaries and there are some limits on the shape of the annexed areas to avoid long corridors.

Revenues

Sources of local government funding are mainly sales taxes, fees for services, fines and forfeitures collected from those who have engaged in illegal activity, revenue sharing from the federal and state governments, and charges for licenses and permits. Municipalities use the primary property tax sparingly because there is a strict state limit on its use for local governments. Under state law, municipalities may not levy income taxes.

Sales Tax (Transaction Privilege Tax)

The local sales tax is the major revenue source for most local jurisdictions in Pima County. Cities and towns and the state (but not the county) use the sales tax.

Property Tax *webcms.pima.gov*

Property tax is a source of revenue available to all local governmental jurisdictions – state, county school districts, municipalities, fire district, flood control districts, and so forth. Each jurisdiction determines its own tax rates and levies its own taxes, but the county does all the administration of property assessment and collection of local taxes through the County Assessor and County Treasurer. Only the county, the City of Tucson, the City of South Tucson and school districts and other special purpose districts now levy property taxes.

Privately owned property is subject to taxation unless exempted by statute (schools, churches, certain buildings for use of indigents, properties owned by qualifying 501c3 charitable organization properties owned by governments. Your property tax statement includes the taxes for all the local jurisdictions. Property owners may appeal their property's assessed valuation to the county Board of Supervisors sitting as a Board of Equalization. The appeal may then be taken to the State Board of Tax Appeals.

Primary Property Tax

The Primary Property Tax may be used for anything, that is, any town or city purpose. This is called general fund money or general government operations. However, it is not a major source of funding for municipalities because of the strict state limits on the amount of allowed annual increases.

Secondary Property Tax

The Secondary Property Tax is called a limited tax since it may be used only for paying back bond monies – retiring debt from general obligation bonds for capital expenditures such as buildings, streets, sewers, special assessments for fighting flood control, and overrides of tax limitations.

Municipalities are prohibited from using:

- income tax;
- gas tax; and,
- real estate transfer tax.

Other revenue sources

Local taxes and fees (the county also uses these):

- state shared sales taxes;
- state shared income taxes;
- state shared highway user revenue funds (HURF) – for maintaining major roads;
- other local taxes such as use tax, transient tax (hotel tax, mobile home tax), franchise fees, and alcohol and beverage tax;
- Licenses and permit fees, business licenses and permits, residential and commercial building permits, sign permits, special inspection fees, grading permit fees, and so forth; and,
- charges for services: court costs, fees for recording documents, zoning and subdivision fees (impact fees), user fees for swimming pools, parks and recreation fees for special programs, fees for defensive driving classes of justice courts, town hall usage fees, fines and forfeits, court fines, bail bond forfeitures and so forth.

Municipal Bonds

There are three kinds of Municipal Bonds a city or town may use to fund its capital projects:

- General Obligation Bonds finance buildings, streets, schools, and projects that do not generate revenues
- Revenue Bonds finance projects that generate income for services (water, sewer). That generated income covers the cost of the project over time; and,
- Improvement Bonds finance local improvements (street lighting, etc.) in a specific area designated as an improvement district. The bonds must be approved by 51 percent of property owners in the proposed district for this type of bond. All property owners are assessed to meet the interest and principal of the bonds.

Certificates of Participation (COP)

A certificate of participation is like a bond in that a municipality borrows from the public investors to fund a capital project and then pays the investors back. But it differs in that the municipality pays back the loan by means of “leasing payments” for the use of the facility which is technically owned by the investors. The municipality starts those payments immediately on completion of the project and not after an extended period waiting for the bond to mature. An investor prefers COPs because repayments start immediately. The municipality likes COPS because they do not count in a municipality’s indebtedness, thus can be available even after the city has reached its allowable bonding limit. The leases are paid through annual appropriations by mayor and council and not through general obligation bonds.

Intergovernmental Funds

Pima County and its municipalities receive a substantial portion of their revenues from federal and state government. These include:

- State shared income tax – for general fund;
- State shared sales tax – for general fund; and,
- State shared Highway User Revenue Funds (HURF) – use restricted to development and maintenance of roads;
- State restricted grants – many specific grants, for example, safe schools grants
- Federal grants restricted to specific purposes
 - Health (Medicaid funds go to support the state ACCCHS program administered at the county level;
 - Law enforcement and court programs
 - Public transit
 - Community service and development block grants including housing; and,
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Homeland Security funding.

Legal Limits on Revenues

Primary Tax Rate Limitation

The State Constitution – Article IX, Section 20(1) – imposes a limit on local government primary taxes of 2 percent increase per year over the prior year’s maximum allowable primary levy, plus an added amount due to growth of construction during the year. For this reason, property tax does not play an important role in local revenues.

City charters may also impose a limit on the primary property tax rate. For example, Tucson’s charter limits the tax rate to no more than 10 percent over the previous year’s rate. There is also a statewide controlled assessment system to hold the value of property down. Property values can only go up a certain amount and cannot fluctuate as markedly as the market value.

Secondary Tax Rates – Not Limited

Secondary tax rates are not subject to these state limitations for either increases in rates or property values.

Expenditures

Municipal expenditures, as with other public budgets, are constrained by locked-in expenses. Bond debts have to be paid on time. Legal mandates to provide certain services must also be met. But state law has placed even more constraints on local government discretion in budgeting by limiting not only tax rate increases but by mandating strict expenditure limits as described in following text.

Legal Limits on Expenditures

State Mandated Limits on Municipal Spending *azdor.gov*

Before a political subdivision draws up its budget every year (or every two years) the state's Economic Estimates Commission determines its expenditure limit or cap for the county and each local government or district. This limit is based on the jurisdiction's actual spending for 1979/80 (when the law requiring the limit passed) and adjusted each year for population growth and inflation.

Municipalities may exceed the spending limit only if a majority of voters pass what is called a "home rule" initiative. This vote signifies the city or town may exceed the spending limit but only for a period of four years.

Local Governments' Self-imposed Limits

Cities and towns and districts may impose more stringent limits than the state on their spending or tax rates. For example, the City of Tucson imposes a \$1.75 per \$100 assessed value limit on the combined primary and secondary property tax rate they levy.

Accounting and Budget Funds

Local governments in Pima County keep accounts according to the State Accounting Manual using "funds" to separate different uses for the monies. These "funds" are also the way the budget is organized, so it is important to know this when reading the budget or locating revenue information for your special interest.

- The General Purpose Fund is money that goes to pay for general government purposes, for example, police, fire, parks and so forth. It comes mainly from taxation revenues. This is the only revenue that can be used for any legitimate government purpose.
- Restricted Funds (sometimes called special revenue funds or named for a specific restricted grant) include a variety of grants that are designated for particular programs and must be accounted for separately; for example, grants for low-income housing, youth programs, transportation or virtually any specific purpose. They also include Secondary Property Taxes collected for a specific purpose or bond monies collected for a specific major capital project.
- Enterprise Funds are monies earned by the government charging fees for an enterprise they run such as water sales, garbage pick-up or parking garages, golf courses or use of an airport. The revenues go back into running the enterprise much as a private business.

Budget Adoption

There are both state and city legal requirements for the budget – its process, dates for completion and some of the content. The budget process does not start with an independent determination of need but with the total amount the statewide Economic Estimates Commission calculates for each political subdivision. Then the county and municipalities determine needs and adjust them to the limit. The budget must be adopted by the third Monday in July of each fiscal year.

Budget Revisions

Spending is monitored during the year and if any budget shifts are needed, they may only be made by the administrators if they are within “purposes” defined as the basic units of the budget. The cities and towns may define what they mean as a specific purpose but usually it is defined as a separate “department”. Pima County defines purposes as “programs.” State statutes say that local governments may only change budget allocations between “purposes (from department to department) with a majority vote of the council or supervisors. No changes may be made between funds and no increases in the total budget.

Audits

State law requires each incorporated municipality to have an annual independent audit. Towns may do an audit every two years but must include each of the years. Audit reports are public record.

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

State law requires each municipality to produce an annual report, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) on actual revenues and expenditures. The CAFR is public record.

Specific Budgets

Although specific budgets are quickly outdated, the budgets for 2013-2014 are presented in the county and municipalities chapters to describe how budgets are constituted, where revenues originate and where those funds are expended. Knowledge of such basics can help keep up with and understand future budgets.

Single Family Residence Impact Fees (also called Development Fees)

Impact fees are one-time charges on construction in new residential and commercial developments. These development fees are to cover the added costs of infrastructure and services that the county or municipal governments must assume because of the new development. Included in such things are roads, parks and recreation, fire and police services, flood control, wastewater management and even administrative overhead related to these services. Municipalities vary in what services they say will be included.

New State Regulations on Municipal Impact Fees

Municipalities in Pima County are required by state laws to reflect only costs attributed to necessary public services that are directly impacted by a new development. “Necessary public services” are limited to those services specifically listed in state statute.

City of Tucson

tucsonaz.gov

History

The City of Tucson, commercial and cultural center of Pima County, second largest city in Arizona, takes its name from an early village called *Chuk Son*, of “mountain dark at base,” by the Tohono O’odham. Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, the Jesuit explorer, first mentioned the area north of his San Xavier del Bac Mission in his 1967 records as the “richest soil in the whole fertile Santa Cruz Valley.”

In 1776, Hugo O’Conor, an Irishman who fled from British occupied Ireland and was fighting for the Catholic King of Spain in the Pimeria Alta, made the decision to move the northernmost garrison of New Spain in Tubac farther north to Tucson to expand the Spanish reach. His decision to establish the Royal Presidio de San Augustin del Tucson, with its walled city, marks the founding of the “Old Pueblo”, modern day Tucson.

After the liberation of Mexico from Spain in 1821, the Old Pueblo became the military outpost for the province of Sonora, Mexico, to fight the Apaches. It remained the northernmost outpost of Mexico until the arrival of American soldiers in the 1856 after the purchase of the area by the United States, the Gadsden Purchase in 1853.

Tucson became part of the United States and for the next few decades it remained isolated and in battle with the Apaches. When Arizona was organized as a federal territory in 1863, Tucson was its capital. First the mines and then the arrival of the transcontinental Southern Pacific Railroad in Tucson in 1880, attracted a greater Anglo/American population. Fort Lowell, established in 1873 as a military outpost, defended the population against Apache raids. It was deactivated as a fort when the Apache raids ended with Geronimo’s surrender in 1886.

In 1912, when Arizona became a state, Tucson was its largest city and remained so until the 1920s when it was surpassed by Phoenix. Tucson had been incorporated as a city in the Arizona Territory in 1877 and became a charter city in 1883. Its charter was reformulated in 1929 when it was changed from a strong mayor system to a council/city manager form of government. This change created a professional, civil service system that it maintains today.

Form of Government

Council/Manager
Charter City

Legislative Branch

Mayor and Council

Powers

- Legislate and form policy for improving the city by enacting ordinances;

- Legislate changes in structure or governing processes for the city as a charter city while some changes require voter approval;
- Pass “resolutions” that express opinion, will, or intentions of the mayor and council. Resolutions are not entered into the code;
- Appoint city manager, city clerk, city attorney and the city magistrates;
- Approve city manager appointment of the police chief and fire chief;
- Adopt budgets
- Establish and appoint members to citizen advisory boards, commissions and committees;
- Set tax rates and levy property taxes; and,
- Place charter changes and sales tax increases on the ballot.

Meetings

- Held at City Hall in the Council Chambers on the first floor;
- Held on the first four Tuesdays a month at 5:30;
- Meetings are open and public except for some financial, legal or personnel issues; and,
- Meetings are cablecast live on Channel 12.

Members

- Total of seven – six council members and mayor;
- Council and mayor serve four-year staggered terms;
- Elections are held in November of every odd-numbered year;
- Council members are nominated by primary election in the ward in which they reside, but are elected in November at large; and,
- Elected in a partisan election.

Staff

City Clerk

- Appointed by mayor and council for a two-year term;
- Is the official secretary to the council and custodian of city records, deeds, subdivision plats, and other documents;
- Runs elections and oversees campaign finance;
- Publishes official notices and is historian for the city; and,
- Prosecutes criminal misdemeanor offenses that occur in the city.

City Attorney

- Appointed by the mayor and council for a two-year term;
- Legal advisor to mayor and council and all city departments, boards, commissions, and agencies;
- Prepares city ordinances, resolutions, contracts, opinions requested by the council;
- Represents the city in litigation in which the city is a party; and,
- Prosecutes criminal misdemeanor offenses that occur in the city.

Advisory Citizen Boards, Commission, and Committees

- Tucson has more than sixty boards and commissions of volunteer citizens who assist and advise mayor and council;
- Citizens are selected by the City Council; and
- Administered by the city clerk.

Executive Branch

The Mayor (and Vice Mayor in the absence of the Mayor)

- Is directly elected and the Vice Mayor is selected by council from among its members;
- More a legislative mayor than an executive, but provides informal executive and legislative leadership;
- Run council meetings;
- Heads the agenda committee, which determines issues the council will handle;
- Is the official representative of the city for legal and ceremonial purposes;
- Votes on all issues except the firing of the city manager; and,
- Not formally responsible for funning the city.

City Manager

- The de facto chief executive/administrator of the city;
- Appointed by the Mayor and Council;
- Responsible for administering the city departments and carrying out the policies set out by the Mayor and Council;
- Formulates a budget to be finally approved by Mayor and Council and oversees its implementation; and,
- Hires and fires the department heads that are not appointed directly by the Council.

Judicial Branch

The City Court has:

- Twelve regular magistrates;
- Special magistrates are attorneys on call for extraordinary circumstances such as night court;
- Two “limited special magistrates” sometimes known as hearing offices help with regular magistrate functions such as hearing civil traffic violations;
- City court (magistrate) judges are appointed by the mayor and council upon recommendation of the City Magistrate Merit Selection Commission; and,
- Magistrate Courts have two supervisors: the city manager and Mayor and Council in the executive branch and the state court system through a presiding magistrate.

A key feature of government in Tucson is the active role neighborhood associations take in relating to government and shaping city policy. Unlike homeowners’ associations, which are private entities, neighborhood associations are public organizations officially recognized by the city council. Neighborhood associations that are registered with the city Department of Housing and Community Development are permitted rights of notification and participation in proceedings that deal with crimes and potential hazards in their neighborhood.

Tucson International Airport (TIA) *tucsonairport.org*

Tucson International Airport is not run by the City of Tucson, but by a nonprofit corporation, the Tucson Airport Authority (TAA) formed in 1948. In 1948 Tucson had neither the money nor the desire to take on an airport so several businessmen formed the TAA. TAA leases land from the City of Tucson and owns some additional land. Its income come for airport revenue bonds and charges to airline tenants for services. The TIA is governed by a nine-person board.

History

In 1940, the Town of South Tucson incorporated in an area just outside Tucson's city limits. Over time, the City of Tucson acquired all the land around the 1.2 mile area of South Tucson, but never succeeded in convincing the business and property owners of South Tucson to agree to annexation. In 1975, the Town of South Tucson incorporated as the City of South Tucson and today remains an independent municipality surrounded entirely by the City of Tucson.

Form of Government

- Council/Manager; and,
- General law city.

Legislative Branch: City Council

- Passes ordinances to direct city improvements;
- Selects the Mayor from among council members at the first meeting after an election as well as the city manager, city magistrate, and city attorney;
- Adopts budget;
- Meets every 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, Mondays; and,
- Establishes and appoints members to citizen advisory boards and councils.

Council Members

- Seven members, including the mayor;
- Four year terms with 3 members elected in odd-number years and 4 members elected in even number years;
- Elected first in a partisan primary on the second Tuesday in March, followed by an at-large general election held the following second Tuesday in May; and,
- Members receive an annual stipend including benefits.

Executive Branch - Mayor and Vice-Mayor

- Selected by the council;
- Mayor selects the vice-mayor;
- Provides informal legislative leadership and executive oversight;
- Mayor chairs council meetings;
- Presiding officer votes only in event of a tie; and,
- Officially represents the city, but does not administer the city.

City Council Appointees

- **City Manager:** executes Council policies and ordinances and appoints the City Clerk who works for both the city manager and council. The Clerk prepares agenda, council minutes, oversees elections, is custodian of all official documents, including legislation, resolutions, minutes, licenses, and permits. City Manager appoints the following heads:

- Public Works which handles traffic, solid waste, parks, adult probation/elder care, streets and drainage;
 - Human Resources manages employment and personnel requirements;
 - Housing Authority manages low income housing programs;
 - South Tucson Prevention Coalition to reduce youth substance abuse;
 - Development Services houses building inspection to ensure building code compliance;
 - Finance Department does the budget;
 - Planning and Zoning;
 - Fire Department; and,
 - Police Department.
- City Attorney provides legal advice to the council and departments;
 - City Magistrate presides over and administers city court; and,
 - Citizen Boards and Commissions including Board of Adjustments, Economic Development, Industrial development Authority, and Planning and Zoning Commissions to name a few.

Judicial Branch has on magistrate appointed by the City Council.

Intergovernmental Agreements and Other Contractual Arrangements

Contracts with other municipalities provide essential services such as water service provided by the City of Tucson Water and sewer services by Pima County Wastewater.

SunTran ***suntran.com*** bus service is coordinated through the Regional Transportation Authority, and the Public Library is a branch of the Pima County Library System ***library.pima.gov***.

South Tucson is represented on the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) ***pagregion.com*** and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) ***rtamobility.com***.

ORO VALLEY *orovalleyaz.gov*

Oro Valley was incorporated as a town in 1974 with 2.5 square miles and an estimated population of 1,000. It has grown rapidly in population and in area through land annexations.

Form of Government

- Council/Manager
- General law town.

Legislative Branch

Mayor and Council

Powers:

- Pass ordinances giving policy direction for the town, subject to state law;
- Appoint the town manager, the town magistrate, town attorney, the town clerk, and chief of police;
- Adopt budgets;
- Establish and appoint members to citizen advisory boards, commissions, and committees; and,
- Meet every first and third Wednesdays.

Council Members

- Seven members including the mayor;
- Serve four-year staggered terms;
- Elected every odd-numbered year in November;
- Elected in at-large, non-partisan elections; and,
- Selects one member to serve as vice-mayor.

Staff:

Town Attorney

- Appointed by the Council
- Under the supervision of the town manager.

Town Clerk

- Prepares agenda and records minutes of town council meetings
- Works under the supervision of the town manager.

Citizen advisory boards, commissions, and committees

- Established and appointed by the town council;
- Include:

- Planning and Zoning Commission
- Board of Adjustment
- Finance and Bond Committee
- Development Review Board
- Municipal Property Corporation

Industrial Development Authority
Water Utility Commission
Storm Water Utility Commission
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Historic Preservation Commission
Citizen Corps Council for emergency preparedness

Executive Branch

Mayor orovalleyaz.gov

- Directly elected;
- Referred to as chief executive but only has honorary duties representing the town;
- In legislative capacity, provides informal policy leadership;
- Runs council meetings and votes on all issues; and,
- Has no formal supervisory or administrative duties.

Town Manager orovalleyaz.gov

- Appointed by the mayor and council;
- Serves as chief administrative officer of town government;
- Appoints town officers except the town magistrate, attorney and the chief of police; and,
- Supervises staff and department heads who report to manager, except for the magistrate and Chief of Police.

Departments orovalleyaz.gov/town/departments

- Community Development and Public Works
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Magistrate Court
- Parks and Recreation
- Police
- Town Clerk
- Water Utility

Town of Marana

marana.com

Marana/Avra Valley area was first inhabited by the Hohokam Indians who developed extensive canal systems to use the waters of the Santa Cruz River for irrigated agriculture. The Hohokam disappeared by the fifteenth century. The Tohono O'odham were forced out of the area in the 1850s when both Mexican ranchers and gold rush miners discovered high grade copper ore in the Silver Bell Mountains and moved into the area. During World War II and after during the cold war, the federal government built an air base near Marana and then missile sites around the area. They developed a road system for these weapons systems and from this Marana began to develop. In 1961, The Arizona Highway Department and the federal government removed most of the Marana business district to widen Interstate Highway 10. Consequently, there is no real main street and an original town center. Today the southern part of Marana has become the town center.

The Town of Marana is about 120 square miles and rapidly expanding. It was incorporated in March 1977 in order to preserve the local water rights. In early 1979, Marana began an aggressive annexation policy and expanded from the original 10 square miles to over 120 square miles.

Form of Government

- Council/Manager
- General law town.

Legislative Branch

Mayor and Council

Powers:

- Pass ordinances related to town improvement within strict state limits;
- Appoint the town manager and the town magistrate;
- Meets first and third Tuesdays;
- Establish and appoint members to citizen advisory boards, commissions, and committees;
- and,
- Adopt budgets.

Council Members

- Seven members, including mayor;
- Members are elected for staggered four-year terms;
- Elections are held in odd-numbered years in May;
- Mayor is directly elected and the vice mayor is selected by the council;
- Members run at large; and,
- Members run in nonpartisan elections.

Town Clerk

- Appointed by and serves under the direction of the town manager;
- Staffs the council under the supervision of the town manager;
- Responsible for overseeing elections and official records;
- Coordinates relations between the council and the town manager; and,
- Records the minutes for all council meetings.

Town Attorney

- Appointed by and serves under the town manager; and,
- Gives legal advice to town officials, council and departments.

Marana Citizen Forum

- Citizens volunteer to assist the council in studying issues and advise in specific cases that come before the council;
- Members are appointed by the council following submission of application; and,
- Forums meet twice annually.

Executive Branch

Mayor

- Called the chief executive but has only honorary duties representing the town;
- Has informal leadership of city legislative and executive personnel;
- Voting member of the town council;
- Run meetings and breaks tie votes; and,
- Does not have formal responsibility for running the city.

Town Manager

- Appointed by the town council;
- Executes the policies of the mayor and council;
- Administers the town and supervises the town employees;
- Appoints and fires all department heads and officials except the town magistrate; and,
- Formulates the budget.

Departments

- Development and Development Services
- Operations and Maintenance
- Community and Neighborhood Development
- Municipal Water
- Police
- Court
- Marana Northwest Regional Airport
- Parks and Recreation
- Community Programs.

Partnerships with other public authorities and agencies:

- Sewer – Pima County
- Solid Waste Management – private contracting
- Fire Service – Contracts with the Northwest Fire District, a special taxing district
- Marana Public Library – branch of Pima County Library System
- Corrections facilities – private; and,
- Marana Health Center – private facility.

Judicial Branch

Marana Municipal Court

- Magistrate Court has one magistrate appointed by the town council; and,
- Marana contracts with the City of Tucson for public defender services and with private attorneys for its prosecutors.

Town of Sahuarita

sahuaritaaz.gov

The area was originally populated by the Hohokam Indian Tribe who created an extensive irrigation system. In 1879, James Kilroy Brown established the Sahuarita Ranch south of Tucson, naming it after the many saguaros. The ranch was used as a stage station between Tucson, Arivaca and Quijotoa. The settlement around the ranch came to be known as Sahuarito. Brown sold the ranch in 1886 when Geronimo was active in the area and the settlement declined. The community experienced a resurgence and by 1994, it was incorporated that has been one of the fastest growing communities in Arizona.

Form of Government

- Mayor and council
- General law town.

Legislative Branch

Mayor and Council

Powers

- Make policy decisions within strict state limits;
- Appoints the town manager, town attorney and town magistrate;
- Meets second and fourth Mondays;
- Adopts town annual budget; and,
- Establishes and appoints members to commissions and committees.

Council Members

- Seven members including the mayor;
- Serve staggered four year terms;
- Elections in odd numbered years in March;
- Mayor and vice mayor are selected by council from among its members;
- Serve as at-large members; and,
- Elections are nonpartisan.

Town Attorney

- Appointed by the town council; and,
- Gives legal advice to the council and town officials.

Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions and Committees

- Established by and members appointed by the town council;
- Staffed by the town clerk and the relevant departments
- Advise and assistance to the council
- Five citizen boards and commissions:
 - Planning and Zoning Commission
 - Board of Adjustments

- Board of Appeals
- Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Board
- Parks and Recreation Commission.

Executive Branch

Mayor and Vice Mayor in absence of Mayor

- Call chief executive but has only honorary duties to represent the town;
- Selected by the Town Council;
- Informal political leader;
- Runs council meetings;
- Votes on all issues; and,
- Not formally responsible for administering the city.

Town Manager

- Appointed by the town council;
- Executes the policies of the mayor and council;
- Administers the town and supervises the town employees;
- Handles customer service; and,
- Formulates the budget.

Departments

- Finance
- Public Works (Town Engineer)
- Planning and Building
- Human Resource
- Town Clerk
- Police
- Parks and Recreation
- Municipal Court.

Contracted Services

- Fire Services – Green Valley Fire District and Rural Metro Fire;
- Financing mechanism – Quail Creek Community Facilities District.