

Community Profile



Tucson: A City of Natural Beauty, Cultural Richness, and Culinary Excellence

Renowned for its breathtaking, saguaro-studded landscapes and an abundance of golden, sun-drenched days, Tucson stands as one of the most extraordinary and visually stunning destinations in the country. Yet, the true heart of Tucson lies not just in its scenic splendor but in the warm, diverse, and authentically welcoming spirit of the people who proudly call it home.

Nestled within a lush Sonoran Desert valley, Arizona's second-largest city is surrounded by four majestic mountain ranges, offering an unparalleled backdrop for adventure and discovery. Both residents and visitors revel in an endless array of outdoor experiences, from hiking and biking along scenic trails to birding and stargazing beneath some of the clearest night skies in the world.

Beyond its natural wonders, Tucson has earned international recognition as the first UNESCO City of Gastronomy in the United States—a testament to its rich agricultural heritage, deep-rooted food traditions, and vibrant culinary scene. Here, food is more than just a meal; it is a celebration of the cultures, stories, and flavors that make Tucson uniquely special.

The city's dynamic cultural tapestry is further woven through its many signature events, including the world's largest gem, mineral, and fossil showcase, the deeply moving All Souls Procession, and the joyful celebration of heritage at Tucson Meet Yourself. Adding to its vibrancy, downtown Tucson thrives with energy, featuring an eclectic mix of theaters, performance spaces, and museums, all of which showcase a flourishing arts community that pulses with creativity and innovation.

Tucson is more than just a destination—it is an experience, a feeling, and a way of life, where the natural and cultural wonders intertwine to create a city like no other.

America's Best Mexican Food

Tucson, Arizona, is known as the "home of America's Best Mexican Food," and the "23 Miles of Mexican Food" area is a popular term used to describe the concentration of Mexican restaurants in South Tucson, according to KGUN 9 and the Arizona Daily Star. This area, particularly around South 12th Avenue, is home to many generations of family-run Mexican restaurants, including El Merendero and Perfectos. The "23 miles" concept is a promotional initiative by the city, the tourism board, and a local tour company to highlight Tucson's culinary heritage. View details of City of Gastronomy: <https://tucson.cityofgastronomy.org>



Tucson Special Events

Tucson hosts several spectacular annual events:

El Tour De Tucson is one of the premier bicycling events in the country. The annual event draws nearly 10,000 cyclists. Charity, community, health and wellness are what Perimeter Bicycling and El Tour are all about. They all go hand-in-hand when it comes to building awareness for a bike ride that has been part of the Tucson community for nearly four decades. <https://eltourdetucson.org>

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, one of the largest and most prestigious events of its kind, is held in Tucson, Arizona. The Gem Show draws a massive crowd of collectors, enthusiasts, and industry professionals. It is a showcase for gems, minerals, fossils, jewelry, and other related items.

Tucson Jazz Festival is a world-class jazz act of genres from straight-ahead to contemporary jazz. These acts are featured during the HSL Properties Tucson Jazz Festival. The 2026 Festival will continue the tradition of hosting high-caliber national-level talent and many of the local partnerships established over the last ten years will remain intact.

La Frontera Tucson International Mariachi Conference is planning its return to the Tucson Convention Center Arena area in downtown Tucson. You can experience this exuberant symbol of Mexican culture in Tucson, a mariachi hub of the United States, every April at the La Frontera Tucson International Mariachi Conference. Enjoy concerts of vibrant music and dance, and discover why mariachi music is recognized by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The Cologuard Classic, a longtime PGA TOUR Champions tournament host, exudes a tradition of excellence and is laid out so fans can view the competition up close. The 2025 event marks the 63rd year that the Tucson Conquistadores have hosted a professional golf tournament to raise money for local youth athletic programs and colon cancer awareness. The 2025 competition takes place on the Jack Nicklaus Signature-Designed Course at La Paloma Country Club at Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa nestled in the Santa Catalina Mountains.

Dia de Los Muertos, all souls procession, an event inspired by Dia de los Muertos, is a two-mile, human-powered procession in Tucson, Arizona, that honors ancestors and lost loved ones. It is a public ceremony that celebrates life and mourns the universal experience of death. The event began in 1990 and is now a vibrant community-powered celebration.

The Tucson Rodeo Parade and La Fiesta de los Vaqueros Tucson Rodeo are held annually in Tucson. <https://www.tucsonrodeoparade.org> and <https://www.tucsonrodeo.com>

City Government



By charter from the State of Arizona, the City of Tucson is governed by a Mayor and Council. Council member candidates are nominated in primary elections in each of six wards but are elected in citywide elections. The Mayor is nominated and elected citywide. Elections occur on an odd-year cycle. The Mayor and Council set policy and appoint a city manager to provide the general supervision and direction for city government operations. Tucson is the county seat for Pima County, which is the second-largest county in population in Arizona. Only 65% of Pima County is incorporated into a city or town. Tucson has continued to grow its borders through the establishment of a strong annexation policy that brings state-shared revenues to the city.

Tucson Delivers

The Tucson Delivers program tracks the progress of three voter-approved initiatives in the following areas:

Proposition 101: Safer City, Better Streets In 2017, a half-cent sales tax increase was approved to provide \$150 million for vehicles, equipment, and facilities for the Tucson Fire and Police departments. Purchases include police patrol cars, fire trucks, ambulances, and police motorcycles. A new southside police substation, police academy training track, and five fire station rebuilds are included in the facilities' category. The sales tax increase also provides \$100 million for road improvements. Of this \$100 million, 60% is dedicated to arterial road improvements, while the remaining 40% will be used for local street improvements.

Proposition 407: Parks + Connections In November 2018, a bond package was approved to provide \$225 million to improve City park amenities and connections. Park projects include improvements to playgrounds, sports fields, pools, splash pads, and recreation centers and other amenities. Connection projects include greenways and shared-use paths, pedestrian safety and walkability, and bicycle boulevards.

Proposition 411: Tucson Delivers Better Streets | Safe Streets In May 2022, voters approved the Better Streets | Safe Streets initiative, which will generate \$740 million over 10 years exclusively for neighborhood street improvements and system-wide street safety enhancements. Of that estimated funding, \$590 million will be dedicated to improving the condition of every City neighborhood street and \$150 million will be dedicated to safe street improvements that benefit all users and modes.

The Tucson Delivers program initiatives thrived during the past few fiscal years. Revenues collected exceeded expectations of the sales taxes. Oversight boards and commissions continued to meet and make decisions, public engagement continued with virtual town halls, as well as online and paper surveys. Project construction advances and efficiencies were found as staff combined projects, bundled project elements, and supplemented projects with existing Arizona Department of Transportation and Community Development Block Grant project funds.

For more Tucson Delivers information, please visit: <https://tucsondelivers.tucsonaz.gov>.

Safe & Vibrant City (Pending Ballot Measure)

In the Spring of 2025, the City will be holding a special election to seek voter approval on a ballot measure with the objective of creating and maintaining a "Safe and Vibrant City." Voters will be asked for approval of a 0.5% (half cent) transaction privilege tax (sales tax) for a 10-year duration. This measure is projected to generate approximately \$800 million over a 10-year period. The proposed ballot measure would invest in five vital areas:

- Affordable Housing and Shelter
- Neighborhood & Community Resilience
- Enhanced Emergency Response
- Technology Investments
- Capital Investment for First Responders