



# Faster permit review coming to Prescott Valley Development Services

By GILLIAN 'GUS' ANDREWS  
Prescott Valley Tribune

Permits to build single-family homes, developments, commercial buildings, and engineering projects may move through the Prescott Valley Development Services Department a little faster in the new year.

Starting the first week of January, the town will offer three options for development plan review: standard, fast-track, or expedited, with a new website to track application progress. The town will charge an additional fee for fast-track or expedited review.

That additional fee might be 10% to 20% of the application fee, said Interim Development Services Director Stacy Bristow. But because the processes are new, she said Development Services would likely adjust it as they get



(Tribune stock photo)

a sense of customer response and flow of the new processes.

The change comes as part of a new statewide requirement that local jurisdictions meet a certain turnaround time on project applications. The measure was discussed at November forums on housing as one level governments can move to ensuring there is more housing.

Prescott Valley is contracting

with four local firms to assist with reviewing applications, Bristow said. Fees for expedited review will go toward paying these third-party vendors. Fast-track applications will be reviewed only by town officials.

Applicants will be able to compare current predicted approval timelines on the town's website as well, to decide whether a faster review is worth the extra fee. The department's new site will make it possible to update weekly the current workload of reviewers, giving a snapshot of the estimated time for reviews.

Small, medium and large commercial and engineering projects will be eligible for expedited review, Bristow said. Residential permits, including custom homes and master plans, will all be eligible for either fast-tracked or expedited review. Sign permits could also be fast-tracked.

Bristow said the faster options were requested by a number of local stakeholders in listening sessions the town held. Similar options are also in use in a number of other local governments. "It keeps us competitive — our neighbors are doing it too," Bristow said.

"We want projects to move forward expeditiously and efficiently," she said. "We're trying to be transparent and share out the information as much as possible."

Development Services will share more information on these processes at the Yavapai County Contractors Association monthly meeting from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Jan. 14, held in the Crystal Room of the Prescott Valley library. For more information, visit [prescottvalley-az.gov/departments/development\\_services](http://prescottvalley-az.gov/departments/development_services) in the first weeks of January 2026.

# Library cards unlock free admission to top attractions

By GILLIAN 'GUS' ANDREWS  
Prescott Valley Tribune

Tour the unique architecture and visit the ceramics studio at Arcosanti. View artifacts from ancient cliff dwellings of the Yavapai-Apache people at the Verde Valley Archaeology Center. Say hi to meerkats and giraffes at Reid Park Zoo. All for free.

Prescott Valley and Prescott library cards let patrons participate in the Act One Culture Pass program. Culture Passes get their holders free access to Arcosanti, Reid Park Zoo, the Phippen and Sharlot Hall museums, the Lowell Observatory, archaeological sites, and many more resources.

Checking out a pass lets one library card holder get entry for two people at these sites. Families may be able to check out more than one pass at once, to get every family member in for free.

Act One began in 2011 with the observation that under-served schools in Phoenix didn't have the resources that wealthier schools did to take students on field trips to museums and theaters. Russ and Linda "Mac" Perlich, whose company published programs for theaters in Phoenix, found that schools often could not afford tickets or transportation to daytime matinees.

Two years later, Act One added the culture passes to their program, expanding access to arts and history not only for students, but seniors, veterans, and any other library card holder who otherwise might not be able to afford entry to these cultural resources.

Prescott Valley library has seen over 580 Culture Pass checkouts this year alone. Statewide, Act One has helped 400,000 students at Title 1 schools access the arts, and checked out 640,000 passes to arts and culture sites.



ABOVE: Ithiel and Arye Szeto collaborate on a painting at the Sharlot Hall Museum, one of the 11 venues open to local library card holders through the Culture Pass program. (Gillian "Gus" Andrews/Tribune)

BELOW: Arcosanti, Arizona. (Jens Kauder/Courtesy)



# Small moments, big impact: the role of rituals in family life

By HILARY DARTT  
For the Tribune

As one year comes to a close and another stretches ahead, it's common for people to reflect on the past and plan for the future. In many cases, reflections and planning include rituals and traditions. While these customs may seem insignificant day-to-day, experts say they offer myriad benefits to children and families.

"Small rituals play a critical role in sustaining positive child-parent relationships," said Leah Webb, director of Children's Services at Polara Health in Prescott Valley. "Brief, predictable moments of connection throughout the day are especially powerful for young children."

Rituals are common—and they've been around for a long time.

Billions of people practice rituals daily, according to an article by Christine H. Legare and Mark Nielsen, "Ritual Explained: interdisciplinary answers to Tinbergen's four questions."

"Rituals," the authors wrote, "have social, psychological and instrumen-

tal functions."

They've done so for tens of thousands of years: a BBC article by Karan Johnson, "The surprising power of daily rituals," references an example of human ritual practice in Southern Africa dating back 70,000 years.

The good news is that despite their significance, rituals can be small, daily acts that don't require much time or energy. In fact, Webb said, they might be even more powerful that way.

While "parents often conceptualize rituals as larger, infrequent activities, such as family dinners, religious observances, or vacations," she said, "the impact of small, consistent daily rituals is often underestimated."

Webb shared some examples of those brief, predictable moments of connection: a loving phrase during transitions (such as, "I love you to the moon and back"), intentional physical touch, encouraging notes placed on mirrors, shared singing or dancing, or incorporating playfulness into routine tasks.

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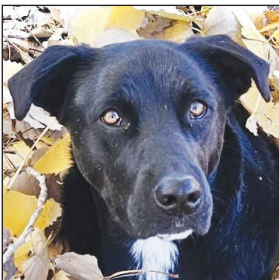


(Tribune stock photo)

## Pets of the Week

Ripley is among the pets up for adoption

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## Cooking in Prescott Valley

Dark Chocolate Espresso Mousse with Amaretto Cherries

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## Today's Weather

High 63° | Low 41°



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