City of Benson
City Council Communication

Regular Meeting **February 23, 2015**

To: Mayor and Council Agenda Item # 2

From: Bradley J. Hamilton, P.E. Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Subject:

Discussion and possible action on Resolution 8-2015 of the Mayor and Council of the City of Benson, Arizona, readopting the City of Benson General Development Plan, a General Plan for Municipal Development Policy pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, A.R.S. §9-461 et. seq., establishing Planning Goals, Objectives and Policies; and considering each of the Plan Elements required by Statute as well as others determined essential by the City

Discussion:

In accordance with Arizona Statute §9-461.06(K), the City of Benson is required to readopt its General Development Plan every 10 years. The current plan was adopted in 2002 and under a state extension to the 10-year rule, the General Development Plan is targeted for Mayor and Council readopting by the summer of 2015.

Beginning in 2011, the Planning and Zoning Commission and staff held multiple public workshops and Commission meetings. After an 18 month hiatus, the Commission and staff reconvened the public process in May 2014, with additional public workshops, regular and special Commission meetings and multiple work sessions. Discussions between staff, the Commission and the community at the various meetings lead to the creation of the preliminary draft of the 2015 General Development Plan.

This preliminary draft was sent to multiple state and regional agencies for their review and comment. Additionally, the preliminary draft was available to the public for review and comment. As required by statute, a 60 day comment period was held, opening on September 10, 2014 and closing on November 10, 2014.

Several comments were received, which are summarized and analyzed below.

<u>Summary of Comments received from Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative:</u>
Comments received from the local electric cooperative relate to the relationship between the City and the utility in regard to location, cost and availability of service. The comments received from SSVEC clarify the text as to the responsibility and division of service between the various utilities that serve the city.

<u>Summary of Comments received from Benson Hospital:</u>
The Benson Hospital would like for the General Development Plan to more specifically and clearly emphasize aspects of community health as health relates to the various elements discussed in the GDP. Particularly, the Hospital mentions focusing on alternative transportation (biking and trails) for health as well as for recreation. Additionally, the hospital objects to the implied statement that the existing hospital is insufficient to meet community needs.

<u>Summary of Comments received from Eldorado Benson LLC (purchasers of Whetstone Ranch):</u>
As the new owners of Whetstone Ranch intend to present a community master plan, they are requesting that the property be reclassified from the existing combination of Mixed Use, Medium Density Residential and Industrial to Mixed Use. The request does not ask to remove the existing open space acreage. The request does not ask to remove the Wildlife Corridors, but acknowledges that the specific washes that remain undisturbed may not be the exact washes shown on the land use map.

Also required under the Section 404 Permit, an additional 144 acres adjacent to the San Pedro Rivers have been purchased by the new owners for off-site mitigation. They request that these 144 acres be classified as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. (See map "Eldorado Proposal".)

Summary of Comments Received from Councilmembers
Several handwritten notations were jotted in the binders returned by Councilmembers. These notes included comments-to-self and suggestions to be included in the document.

Analysis of Comments Received and Staff Recommendation on Comments:
Comments received from Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative:
The comments from SSVEC are very precise to specific phrases and terminology within the document. Because the comments help to clarify SSVEC's position and responsibility as the city grows, it would be wise to consider their clarifying statements to the text.

Comments received from Benson Hospital:
The Benson Hospital is currently undertaking a grassroots effort to promote community health and wellness, both on a personal level and at a structural level. While staff does not have expertise regarding medical and public health issues, the fact that community design and planning affects public health is unarguable. As such, staff recommends consideration of adding a phrase to the City of Benson Vision Statement in support of public health.

As to the specific wording of Economic Development Goal 2.1, the term "acquire" may be not accurate. Staff recommends consideration of a phrase along the lines of "Strengthen and grow medical facilities…"

Comments received from Eldorado Benson LLC (purchasers of Whetstone Ranch):
As Eldorado Benson LLC expects to present a Community Master Plan, they request that the multiple GDP land use classifications be changed Mixed Use. Staff agrees that reclassification allows both Eldorado and the City more flexibility to plan for both commercial and residential uses within the same area. Staff recommends that the existing areas of Medium Density Residential (except for the platted area of The Canyons subdivision) and Industrial, be reclassified to Mixed Use. Note that this reclassification does NOT include the existing Open Space.

Staff does not agree with changing the classification of parcels of land owned by others, specifically the parcel owned by the State of Arizona, to Mixed Use (See map "Eldorado Proposal-Staff Comments"). Because Eldorado are not the owners of the parcel in question and the owner has not been given the opportunity to comment upon Eldorado's suggestion of Mixed Use, staff recommends leaving the parcel classified as Low Density Residential.

Under their existing Section 404 Permit (navigable waterways of the United States), 424 acres of the 8,200 acres on the eastern side of Highway 90 are federally required to be maintained in an undisturbed state. However, the 404 permit does not specify which washes must remain undisturbed so as development plans progress, Eldorado Benson LLC will likely request to have the GDP map more accurately reflect which undisturbed washes should be classified as Wildlife Corridors and which, if any, should be removed from the GDP land use map because they will be disturbed. Thus, staff recommends that all designated Wildlife Corridors remain as shown with updated designations and removals upon further review and development in conjunction with Eldorado Benson LLC.

Lastly, the 404 permit requires an off-site mitigation parcel. As Eldorado Benson LLC has already purchased this parcel and understands the development restrictions upon the parcel, staff recommends that this parcel be classified as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (See map "Eldorado Proposal-Staff Comments").

Comments Received from Councilmembers
Several sentences were rephrased, though no changes altered the content or spirit of the document.

Attachments:
Resolution 8-2015, Updated GDP, Amended Technical Appendices
Comments received from SSVEC
Comments received from Benson Hospital
Comments and map entitled Eldorado Proposal received from Eldorado Benson LLC (see letter from Vigneto GP)
Map entitled Eldorado Proposal-Staff Comments received from Staff

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that in accordance with the Planning and Zoning Commission's unanimous recommendation on December 9, 2014, that Mayor and Council:

Adopt the document such that it includes SSVEC's clarifying comments, specifically:
Section I

Page 7: delete the word "municipal"
Page 9: after the word "utilities," add the phrase "and other required infrastructure components"
Page 27: rephrase "…east-west rail routes and on pipeline and electric transmission corridors" to "…east-west routes for railroad, pipeline and electric transmission."
Page 47: remove the word "wet" so that the statement includes all classes of utilities

Section II

Page 5: Add the word "municipal" to clarify that only municipal-owned utilities are affected by a proposed rate study; rephrase from "current state and capacity of municipal utilities" to "current state, capacity and coordination of utilities that serve Benson"

Technical Appendix
Page 13: Rephrase to "Among others, electricity is presently generated and supplied by..."

Adopt the document such that it includes the revised Vision Statement to reflect a public health commitment, adding the word "healthy" to the phase "...a strong, HEALTHY, self-sufficient community…" in the first sentence and updating the last sentence to read "Our vision includes an attractive, well-maintained community that is family oriented and friendly, which offers a wide range of goods and services and an array of HEALTH, recreational and cultural activities."

Adopt the document such that it includes the revised Economic Development Goal 2.1, to include the phrase "Strengthen and grow the existing medical facilities…" rather than the term "Acquire…."

Adopt the document such that it includes the revised the Future Land Use Classification Map to include Eldorado Benson LLC's request of Mixed Use for their property and the addition of an Environmentally Sensitive Area adjacent to the San Pedro River.

Adopt the document such that it includes the revised the list of Environmentally Sensitive Areas contained within Section I. B. Plan Elements with Goal and Objectives (pages 15 and 16) to include a description of the new Environmentally Sensitive Area.

> **ESA Area 5.** Immediately adjacent to the San Pedro River, this parcel in Sec. 24, T17S, R20E serves as an off-site mitigation parcel for development occurring in the southern part of the city, in the area known as Whetstone Ranch.

Adopt the document such that it reflects general comments received, specifically:
Section 1

Page 10 top paragraph: add terminology to reflect collaboration with local businesses
Page 12 HDR Location: remove reference to Gracie's Station and Desert Rose Inn as those sites are no longer known by those names

RESOLUTION 8-2015

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENSON, ARIZONA, READOPTING THE CITY OF BENSON GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, A GENERAL PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PURSUANT TO ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, A.R.S. §9-461 ET. SEQ., ESTABLISHING PLANNING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES; AND CONSIDERING EACH OF THE PLAN ELEMENTS REQUIRED BY STATUTE AS WELL AS OTHERS DETERMINED ESSENTIAL BY THE CITY

WHEREAS, the City of Benson desires to establish policies for increasing the quality of life for its citizens, enhancing business opportunities, and fostering desired community growth in ways that are consistent with its citizens' values; and,

WHEREAS, an open public participation process has provided direction for Benson's future which was derived from the ideas, commentary, priorities, preferences, review and suggestions offered by residents, business people, civic organizations and representatives of local institutions; and,

WHEREAS, the General Development Plan serves as a framework for municipal preparedness and planning; and,

WHEREAS, the City wishes to be in full compliance with the State of Arizona "Growing Smarter Plus" legislation requirements; and,

WHEREAS, advisory comments pertaining to the General Plan document have been sought from those agencies and jurisdictions specified by A.R.S. §9-461.06(D) to be included in the sixty-day statutory review period and the written comments and public hearing testimony received pursuant to such required review have been duly considered; and,

WHEREAS, after two public workshops, one open house and multiple public work sessions over the course of eight months, the City of Benson General Development Plan was presented at a public hearing conducted by the Benson Planning and Zoning Commission on December 2, 2014, and the updated proposal was then forwarded to the City Council for its review and possible action; and,

WHEREAS, the Benson City Council held a public hearing to receive public comments on this plan on February 23, 2015; and,

WHEREAS, A.R.S. §9-461.06 requirements for voter ratification at the next regularly scheduled election are not applicable as the population growth rate did not exceed an average of two percent per year for the ten year period before the most recent United States decennial census;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Benson, Arizona as follows:

SECTION 1. ADOPTION OF PLAN. That the City of Benson hereby adopts the City of Benson General Development Plan, Section I, The General Development Plan and Section II, The General Development Plan Implementation Program; and

SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. That upon adoption by the Mayor and Council, the City of Benson General Development Plan shall take effect from and after April 1, 2015.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Benson, Arizona this 23rd day of February, 2015.

_____
TONEY D. KING, SR., Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
VICKI L. VIVIAN, CMC, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
MESCH, CLARK AND ROTHSCHILD, P.C.
By Gary J. Cohen
City's Attorney

City of Benson
General Development Plan

Adopted by the Benson City Council on: _____, 2015
By Resolution _____-2015

The City of Benson
120 W. Sixth Street
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-2245

City of Benson General Development Plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Benson wishes to express its gratitude to the following agencies for their assistance in the preparation of the City of Benson General Development Plan:

Arizona State Land Department
Arizona Department of Water Resources
Arizona Department of Transportation, Safford District
Fort Huachuca Electronic Proving Grounds
Cochise County
Benson Hospital

Thanks are in order to the City's Elected Officials, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and City of Benson Staff for their guidance through the Plan development process.

City Council
Mayor Toney King, Sr.
Vice Mayor Lori McGoffin
Councilmember Joe Konrad
Councilmember David Lambert
Councilmember Peter Wangsness
Councilmember Patrick Boyle
Councilmember Jeff Cook

Planning and Zoning Commission
Chairman Cliff Deane
Vice Chair Randy Robichaud,
Jim Thelander
Debra Braatz
Bob Baden
Terry LaDuke
Chris Moncada

City Staff
William Stephens, City Manager
Michelle Johnson AICP, Planner
Brad Hamilton, City Engineer

City of Benson General Development Plan Contents:

Section I: The General Development Plan .....

A. Introduction 1

1. Background 1
2. How to Use This Plan 1
3. General Plan Update Objective 3
4. Process for Plan Development and Community Input 3
5. Plan Adoption, Administration and Amendment Procedures 4
6. Statutory Plan Requirements 5
7. City of Benson Vision Statement 6

B. Plan Elements with Goals & Objectives 7

Land Use 7

I. Existing Land Use Conditions 7
II. Land Use Goals & Objectives 8
III. Land Use Recommendations 8
IV. Land Use Policies 10
V. Land Use Designations 11

Circulation 21

I. Existing Circulation Conditions 21
II. Circulation Goals & Objectives 22
III. Circulation Recommendations 23
IV. Circulation Policies 23
V. Circulation Plan 25

Economic Development 27

I. Existing Economic Conditions 27
II. Assets & Advantages 28
III. Barriers & Obstacles 29
IV. Economic Development Goals & Objectives 30
V. Economic Development Recommendations 30
VI. Economic Development Policies 33

Housing 34

I. Existing Housing Conditions 34
II. City of Benson Real Estate Survey 35
III. Housing Goals & Objectives 36
IV. Housing Recommendations 36
V. Housing Policies 37

Water Resources **39**
I. Existing Water Resources Conditions 39
II. Future Water Demand vs. Future Supply 40
III. Water Resources Goals & Objectives 40
IV. Water Resources Recommendations 41
V. Water Resources Policies 42

Cost of Development **43**
I. Existing Cost of Development Conditions 43
II. Cost of Development Goals & Objectives 43
III. Cost of Development Recommendations 44
IV. Cost of Development Policies 45

Growth Areas **47**
I. Existing Growth Area Conditions 47
II. Growth Areas Goals & Objectives 47
III. Growth Areas 49
IV. Growth Areas Recommendations 51
V. Growth Areas Policies 51

Open Space **53**
I. Existing Open Space Conditions 53
II. Open Space Goals & Objectives 54
III. Open Space Recommendations 54
IV. Open Space Policies 55

Environmental Planning **56**
I. Existing Environmental Planning Conditions 56
II. Habitat & Sensitive Area Summary 57
III. Environmental Planning Goals & Objectives 58
IV. Environmental Planning Recommendations 58
V. Environmental Planning Policies 60

Figures

Future Land Use Map 19
Future Land Use Map (Downtown Detail) 20
Circulation Plan 26

Tables

Land Use Designations 18
Housing Value Inquiries 36
City of Benson Projected Water Use, 2000-2030 40
Subdivisions in Benson.....50

Section II: The General Development Plan Implementation Program

A. General Plan Amendment Procedures 1
B. Phased Action Plan 3
C. Plan Monitoring 7
D. Land Use Guidelines and Decision Keys 9

Section I: The General Development Plan

A. Introduction

1. Background.
Established in 1880, the City of Benson has been slowly, but steadily developing beyond its small, southwestern, desert town status into a keystone community of southeastern Arizona. This General Development Plan seeks to provide the City with the blueprint to help reach its full potential.

The City of Benson plays an important role as a regional transportation hub, with its economy closely linked to its surrounding region. The City's current slogans are that of "Gateway to the San Pedro Valley" and "Home of Kartchner Caverns State Park". The City was also recognized as a Train Town USA by Union Pacific in 2011, the first of only two municipalities in Arizona to receive this designation. The future of the City will be to capitalize on its site, situation and connectivity to the region and nation and as an emerging residential, recreational and retirement destination.

The following narrative introduces how to best approach and use this Plan, and introduces its various components.

2. How to Use This Plan.
The City of Benson General Development Plan is a general, long-range, comprehensive expression of the desired direction of the City. The Plan provides focus for the community through the presentation of an overall Vision Statement, and through Goal, Objective and Policy statements. Goal and Objective statements are intended to serve as a framework and guide for decision making which impact the City's future growth and development. Based on the goals and objectives, the recommendations within each element serve to provide a transition to policy statements. Policies are intended as specific directions with following action steps which implement the adopted plan.

The City of Benson General Development Plan is divided into two sections to facilitate ease of use and reference, these are:

Section I: The General Development Plan, containing:

A. Introduction
1. Background
2. How to Use This Plan
3. General Plan Update Objective
4. Process for Plan Development and Community Input
5. Plan Administration, Adoption and Amendment Procedures
6. Statutory Plan Requirements
7. City of Benson Vision Statement

B. Plan Elements with Goals & Objectives

1. Land Use
2. Circulation
3. Economic Development
4. Housing
5. Cost of Development
6. Water Resources
7. Growth Area
8. Open Space
9. Environmental Planning

Section II: The General Development Plan Implementation Program, containing:

A. General Plan Amendment Procedures
B. Phased Action Program
C. Plan Monitoring Program
D. Land Use Decision Keys

A separate volume contains a detailed technical appendix which includes supporting data and background information. **The General Development Plan Technical Appendices** contains:

A. Public Participation Summary
B. Plan Element Technical Appendices & Data

1. Existing Conditions Technical Appendix
2. Land Use Technical Appendix
3. Existing Zoning Summary
4. Circulation Technical Appendix
5. Economic Development Technical Appendix
6. Housing Technical Appendix
7. Water Resources Technical Appendix
8. Public Participation Plan
9. Studies and Plans referenced for the General Development Plan

The General Development Plan is intended to provide a framework for all of the interrelated functions of the City of Benson. To clarify the role of the plan:

The General Development Plan ***is:***

- *an expression of the preferences of residents and property owners*
- *a statement of City policy*
- *an inventory of community facilities and capacity*
- *a framework for future decision making*
- *a means of enhancing the quality of life of the citizens*
- *a legal requirement under Arizona State Law*

The General Development Plan ***is not:***

- *a tool to promote special interests*
- *a rigid, unchanging or inflexible document*
- *a detailed policy or ordinances for specific properties or areas*
- *a Capital Improvement Plan*
- *a zoning map*

3. General Development Plan Update Objective.

The primary objective of the 2015 City of Benson General Development Plan Update is to revise the 2002 General Development Plan (itself an update of the 1993 Plan), respond to Arizona's Growing Smarter/Plus requirements and provide a tool for the community to guide its growth over the coming 20-year period. An additional factor for updating the General Development Plan is the availability of data from Census 2010.

Citizens of Benson and the surrounding areas, armed with an awareness of the inevitable growth along State Routes 80, 90 and Interstate 10 became involved in the planning process. They assisted in the development of a plan that embraces their vision of "small-town, rural lifestyle" with supporting services. The hope, aspiration and expressions of the citizens of Benson provided the guidance for the General Development Plan Update.

This comprehensive planning document, the **City of Benson General Development Plan**, shall serve as a general guide for the City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, city staff and the public regarding development and growth for the City of Benson.

4. Process for Plan Development and Community Input.

Public workshops were conducted by city staff and Planning and Zoning Commissioners on:

Thursday, June 12, 2014 Evening Public Workshop
Thursday, July 10, 2014 Evening Public Workshop
Tuesday, October 21, 2014 Evening Public Workshop
Friday, November 7, 2014 Half Day Open House
Tuesday, December 9, 2014 Public Hearing

These sessions were used to gather public input and commentary and conduct map exercises on future land use. Additionally, seven Planning and Zoning Commission work sessions were held between May 2014 and September 2014.

The First Public Workshop. Held at Benson City Hall, the event was designed to introduce the existing General Development Plan document and its purpose in long range planning. The existing vision statement, and goals and objective statements were available for discussion to determine if these existing goals and objectives were still relevant in the public perception.

The Second Public Workshop. Held at Benson City Hall after multiple Planning and Zoning work sessions, the second public workshop summarized the discussions and presented the first draft of the General Development Plan. The proposed land use and circulation maps were also provided and comments on both the text and maps were taken for consideration in the final draft.

The Third Public Workshop. Held at Benson City Hall, this even was designed to present the 2015 General Development Plan draft to the public.

Open House. A City of Benson General Development Plan Open House was held on November 7, 2014 at Benson City Hall. Benson City Staff and members of the Planning and Zoning Commission were on hand to answer questions, collect comments and present the planning data.

Planning & Zoning Commission Public Hearing. The Planning and Zoning Commission held one public hearing in December 2014 in accordance with local and state requirements. The Commission recommended approval of the updated General Development Plan.

5. Plan Adoption, Administration and Amendment Procedures.
This section is designed to provide administrative direction in accordance with the criteria of Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus legislation regarding General Development Plan monitoring, amendments and updates. In accordance with ARS 9-461.06H, City Council adoption of the General Development Plan requires a 2/3 majority vote.

Plan Amendments. Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus restrict frequent changes to adopted municipal General Development Plans. This Plan was prepared using the input of the community and with attention to existing conditions and community needs. Frequent changes to the Plan serve to weaken the community's work in developing the plan and stray from the City's defined vision.

Major amendments to the General Development Plan are limited by Arizona statute, which permit major changes only once per year. A Plan Amendment must comply with the City of Benson's adopted Public Participation Program and have two-thirds majority approval of the City Council. In accordance with Arizona Statutes, ARS 9-461.06-H, a "major amendment" means a substantial alteration of the land use mixture or balance as a whole established by the municipality's existing general plan Land Use Element.

The City of Benson will review major Plan amendments once per year in accordance with Arizona State Statutes. Minor plan amendments will be reviewed on an on-going basis and handled through the City of Benson's adopted policies.

A detailed review on how the City of Benson can distinguish between and act upon major or minor plan amendments is more fully discussed in **Section II: The General Development Plan Implementation Program.**

Plan Updates. In accordance with Arizona Statutes, ARS 9-461.06-K, the City of Benson General Development Plan is effective for ten years upon its adoption. The Plan can be re-adopted and/or updated at any time at the discretion of the City. As new data is made available

including demographic, economic and housing data, the Plan may require a comprehensive update.

6. Statutory Plan Requirements.
The **City of Benson General Development Plan Update** has been prepared according to Arizona Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus statutory requirements. As the City of Benson's population stands at 5,105 as of Census 2010 and exhibited growth of less than 2 percent annually from Census 2000 to Census 2010, the Plan contains the requisite two elements needed to satisfy the Growing Smarter/Plus requirements. The required elements are: **Land Use and Circulation.**

In the prior decade of 1990-2000, the City of Benson had a growth rate averaging over 2% per year. This meant the City was required to address five more elements in the 2002 General Development Plan: **Growth Areas, Environmental Planning, Cost of Development, Open Space** and **Water Resources**. The City also prepared a **Housing Element** and an **Economic Development Element** above and beyond the required Growing Smarter/Plus requirements. Since these additional elements had already been prepared, they were reviewed and retained for this 2015 document.

The Plan Elements which respond to Planning Statute specifications include:

Land Use. The element designates the proposed general distribution, location and amount of land for residential, commercial, industrial, and open space uses. Further, the element identifies policies and programs to encourage infill and adaptive re-use of parcels.

Circulation. The element identifies the conditions and location of existing and proposed arterial routes, collector streets and other street classifications. The element details multi-modal and means of developing mass transit options to serve the City of Benson and the region. Public transportation and pedestrian circulation facilities are also proposed and discussed. The Circulation Element supports the proposed land use pattern outlined in the Land Use Element of the plan.

Growth Areas. The element identifies locations that are appropriate for development in the 20 year planning horizon, that are consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan and within the natural resource constraints of the identified growth area. The element identifies areas suitable for expansion of infrastructure, where new development should be directed and supported.

Environmental Planning. The element provides standards for the delineation and protection of sites, corridors and areas within the planning area that are sensitive to development and most suitable for conservation protection. Identification of air quality, noise levels, light trespass and conservation of water resources are also discussed for their community-wide applicability. Open Space areas are delineated on the Proposed Land Use Map and are based upon the use, fragility and their value for long-term protection.

Cost of Development. The element details the intent and ability of the City of Benson to ensure that new development pays its fair share of costs of new public services and establishes guidelines on how to make efficient use of municipal funding for planning related activities.

Water Resources. The element identifies existing conditions of water availability and water use and discusses future use in relation to future available supplies.

Open Space. The element inventories existing park and recreational resources and identifies desired improvements and new areas appropriate for open space use. The element provides a forecast of anticipated open space needs and policies for managing open space areas and ensuring their quality. The element also stresses connectivity among open space areas and promotes their effective linkage.

The final two elements, **Economic Growth** and **Housing** survey the conditions of the City of Bneson and contain a series of recommendations and policies to address present and future City needs.

The nine elements of the **City of Benson General Development Plan Update** are not intended to function separately; they contain interlocking issues and should serve as an information resource and solid framework for decision-making.

7. City of Benson Vision Statement

The public and the Planning and Zoning Commission guided the creation of an overall City of Benson planning vision utilizing the ideas and words of participating citizens:

"The City of Benson's Vision for the Year 2025 and beyond, is based on a strong, healthy, self-sufficient community that is diverse in economic and employment opportunities, is attractive to new employers and businesses and faithful to its historic and natural assets. We desire to achieve a sense of community pride through cooperation among residents, businesses, educational institutions and government. We strive to construct a variety of modern community facilities to serve the needs of residents and visitors. Our vision includes an attractive, well-maintained community that is family oriented and friendly, which offers a wide range of goods and services and an array of health, recreational and cultural activities."

B. Plan Elements with Goals & Objectives

Land Use

One of the primary functions of planning is to understand and accommodate various types of land use activities. Land use activities need to be properly situated to ensure the health, well-being, aesthetics, protection of property values and overall quality of life in the community.

I. Existing Land Use Conditions

General Development Pattern. The City of Benson maintains a traditional "small-town" urban form containing a commercial corridor (Fourth Street) intersected by a secondary commercial corridor (Ocotillo Avenue) flanked by pre-WWII residential neighborhoods to the north and south. Development continued through the mid to late 1900s to the south of original neighborhoods from Huachuca Street and San Pedro Street. These areas have evolved into the curvilinear and cul-de-sac development style that emerged in the post World War II era. Undeveloped land occupies the majority of the City's incorporated area, specifically areas to the south along both sides of State Route 90, and land to the northwest surrounding the airport, all of which have been added in a series of annexations since 1988.

Planning Considerations. Broad planning considerations for land use in the City of Benson include:

- The re-use and in-fill of vacant areas and under-utilized areas presently served by utilities.
- The new and potential developments into undeveloped areas of the city, particularly along the State Route 90 corridor.
- Development of an Airport Complex in the City's north end.
- Expansion of commercial frontage southward from Exit 302 down the State Route 90 corridor.
- Development of City-wide recreational trails and access points connecting pedestrian destinations, natural areas and providing access to the San Pedro River corridor and Coronado National Forest.
- Citizen input.

II. Land Use Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Provide for the City of Benson's orderly development with a balance of land use types and intensity in conjunction with infrastructure availability and public preference.

Objective 1.1: Encourage necessary land uses to locate in appropriate locations.

Objective 1.2: Utilize creative design and landscaping techniques for attractive open-space areas and community commons.

Objective 1.3: Create a "design manual" as a guide for understanding and enhancing the City's built environment.

Objective 1.4: Construct civic structures, institutions and common areas that establish a 'sense of place' and a high level of community pride.

Objective 1.5: Encourage infill development that is compatible with existing land uses and structures.

Goal 2: Preserve residents' health, safety and property values by minimizing conflicts among land use activities.

Objective 2.1: Provide a continuous, open and publicly based planning process.

Objective 2.2: Maintain a balance of efficient and equitable zoning enforcement in the City of Benson.

Goal 3: Preserve and enhance the small-town character of Benson, which is viewed as a safe and wholesome place to raise a family.

Objective 3.1: Annually review the City of Benson General Development Plan to ensure that it addresses the community's needs.

Objective 3.2: Update and consistently enforce the community's development codes, including zoning, subdivision, and related regulations, in accordance with General Development Plan principles, goals and objectives.

Objective 3.3: Encourage commercial and industrial development to locate within defined areas where pedestrian linkages, effective signage and adequate parking can be provided.

Goal 4: Promote the revitalization of the Downtown area as a pedestrian-oriented, lively commercial core of the community.

Objective 4.1: Enhance the historic aspects of the community by encouraging historic preservation and rehabilitation of commercial buildings.

Objective 4.2: Create a unique, distinctive identity for the Downtown through uniform signage, design guidelines, landscaping, street lighting and other amenities.

III. Land Use Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the above goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

The City of Benson has a rich historical legacy to influence its future growth and development. The re-development of Fourth Street (also known as Business I-10 and State Route 80) as a "historic downtown" district, including historic building façades, signage, color scheme and design has potential to better define and enhance the downtown. At present there are practical obstacles to this, among them resistance to changing existing building features and the cost of assuming control from ADOT of the Fourth Street right-of-way; however, the potential remains for the City. On a larger scale, a wider "historic district" could be developed to encompass not only Fourth Street but the adjacent residential areas to the south along Fifth and Sixth Streets featuring the recognized historic residences (Apache Powder and Barrio District homes) and the museum. The Historic Preservation Commission should encourage a historic district overlay with the development of design guidelines for signage, color, style, landscaping and overall character for sites and buildings, both public and private.

The City of Benson's physical situation in the San Pedro Valley is visually stunning to the traveler from all directions, as the gradual slope downward provides spectacular views of the Dragoon and Whetstone Mountains and the wide, sweeping San Pedro Basin. The transition from the open rural areas into the heart of the City should maintain this aesthetic appeal. The City has constructed several "welcome signs" on its east and west approaches and could potentially build upon these sites with landscaping, mini-oasis areas containing historical markers or public art. Definitive points of entry make travel to and through the City memorable for visitors and serve as a point of pride for residents.

Although the City of Benson certainly has ample land resources, the re-use of existing lots, vacant sites and buildings within the developed area is desirable. Benefits include savings on new road construction and future maintenance, infrastructure extensions and the overall efficiency of compact development. As the City continues to grow, additional residential development will emerge both within the outlying areas and within the traditional core. Care should be taken to extend existing roads for continued neighborhood connectivity and efficient traffic flow.

The City of Benson's growth to the west has enabled the development of the Exit 302 commercial node, and signals the potential for increased development activity southward along the State Route 90 corridor. With ADOT's realignment of Interstate 10 and slight northward extension of State Route 90, it is feasible to open the land north of Interstate 10 to development, assuming utilities and other required infrastructure components will be economical feasible.

With the potential for development to stretch south down the SR 90 corridor, the City of Benson would be well served by examining select "village" sites or "node" sites at major intersections and areas where the topography and conditions are satisfactory for construction. These "villages" sites would serve to lessen the negative visual impacts and traffic impacts of conventional "strip developments."

The City of Benson is blessed with the natural beauty and wildlife of the San Pedro Valley and surrounding mountain ranges. A key challenge for the City is how to better connect itself with these resources and to keep them intact for the future. Development of trail networks, bird-watching areas, preserved sites and interpretive programs are among the many ways the City can

capitalize on its natural heritage. The City would be well served by recognizing and protecting sensitive habitat areas, initiating Best Management Practices for these areas and their adjacent sites and prohibiting disturbance of steep slope areas and significant washes. The City could benefit by collaborative work with the Bureau of Land Management, the State Lands Office, Cochise County, local land-owners and local business personnel to meet these ends.

IV. Land Use Policies

1. Maintain the existing commercial corridors and nodes as the primary sites of commercial development.

2. Begin efforts to develop Fourth Street as a "Historic Downtown Corridor."

3. Develop a Historic Design Guidelines for the desired Historic Districts with attention paid to the businesses, residences and other local features that connect the city to its heritage.

4. Continually review and update the Benson Zoning Regulations to be consistent with current community needs and with the adopted General Development Plan.

5. Continue to enhance the "gateway" or "point of entry" sites into the City.

6. Maintain the view-sheds and dynamic visual appeal of the City's surrounding environment. This can be achieved by designating certain stretches of roadway to be free of large commercial signs and billboards.

7. Make resources and information available to the public on light fixture design and placement which abate light pollution.

8. Encourage the re-use of vacant sites and under-utilized properties in the commercial core of the City.

9. Encourage new residential development within the City to connect to existing street networks and infrastructure systems.

10. Develop and maintain a City of Benson Parks and Recreation Plan to identify goals, inventory resources and establish tasks for developing this aspect of the city.

11. Establish a city-wide trail and interpretive system with meaningful access to public lands, wildlife viewing, recreational amenities and the San Pedro River Corridor.

12. Secure public access to National Forest Service lands by pursuing agreements at the time of development, zoning approval or annexation as appropriate.

13. Address wildfire threats through design review and cooperation with the National Forest Service.

14. Consider existing and potential aggregate areas on a regular basis and update the land use map accordingly.

V. Land Use Designations

The following categories describe the Proposed Land Use designations for the City of Benson. These areas are intended to guide future development and growth. The intent is to minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses, provide workable transitions between land uses and to identify areas where new land uses are appropriate to the larger fabric of the community.

These designations do not represent zoning districts; however, they should correspond with the zoning districts found within the City of Benson. Unfortunately, the existing zoning districts as described in the Zoning Regulations do not easily conform to the purposes of the Land Use Designations. There is significant overlap in Land Use Designation/Zoning District classification which results in individual zoning districts being associated with multiple Land Use Designations. The City should consider updating the zoning districts to determine specific land uses and development standards that more appropriately correspond with each Land Use Designation according to its stated purpose.

1. Residential Land Use Designations

LDR - Low Density Residential

Purpose: This designation is intended to provide for low-density, rural development within the city limits. The development density of the LDR designation is a maximum of 3 dwellings per acre.

Location: As shown on the proposed Land Use Map, LDR areas are found primarily on the perimeter and periphery of the City of Benson. These areas are seen as most desirable for low density development, ranches and large-parcel residential holdings. Outside of the city limits, the LDR designation has been applied to most of the area within the defined Planning Area boundary.

Zoning: Four of the City of Benson Zoning Districts can be applied to meet the purposes of the LDR designation, these are:

RT-Rural Transitional (1 residence per 4 acres)
R-1-43 Residential (1 residence per acre)
R-1-21 Residential (2 residences per acre)
R-1-12 Residential (3 residences per acre)

MDR - Medium Density Residential

Purpose: This designation provides for medium-density residential development within the City of Benson. The district serves as a transitional role between the rural character low-density areas and the higher-density urban uses. The development density for the MDR designation is between 4 and 8 dwellings per acre.

Location: As shown on the proposed Land Use Map, MDR areas comprise the majority of the existing residential area of the City and a significant portion of the Whetstone Ranch area. Outside of the city limits, the MDR designation has been applied to the Pomerene Rd. / Pomerene area.

Zoning: Four of the City of Benson Zoning Districts can be applied to meet the desired development density levels of the MDR designation, these are:
R-1-8 Residential (5 residences per acre)
R-1-7 Residential (6 residences per acre)
R-2 Residential (8 residences per acre)
R-3 Residential (8 residences per acre)

HDR – High Density Residential

Purpose: This designation provides for high-density residential development within the City of Benson. The target density of the HDR designation is 8 or more dwellings per acre, suitable for apartment complexes, duplexes, condominium units and townhouses.

Location: As shown on the proposed Land Use Map, HDR is comprised of several disparate areas within the residential area of the City of Benson. The largest area designated High Density Residential includes the developed area between 4th Street and Interstate 10, bound by the Adams Street to the west and the San Pedro River to the east. The second developed HDR area is the WaterCrest Subdivision, located on the northeast corner of Union Street and Ocotillo Avenue.

Four undeveloped HDR locations are:
1) behind the Post Office and hospital, accessible from Ocotillo Street;
2) approximately 240 acres located south of Interstate 10 and West of SR 90,
3) San Pedro Golf Estates on Darby Road, and
4) surrounding the San Pedro Golf Course which has been proposed for condominiums.

Zoning: The City of Benson Zoning Districts that can be applied to meet the intent of the HDR designation are:

R-3 Residential (8 residences per acre)
B-1 Commercial (8+ residences per acre)
B-2 Commercial (8+ residences per acre)

2. Mixed Land Use Designation

MXU - Mixed Use Designation

Purpose: This designation is intended to provide the opportunity for a variety of land use activities interspersed with one another; primarily for commercial and industrial development with attendant planned residential and recreational uses at higher densities.

Location: The primary MXU designation area is the approximately six-mile stretch of the SR 90 between its intersection with Cottonwood Canyon Wash and Kartchner Caverns State Park. Other MXU areas are located both north and south of Interstate 10 in the vicinity of State Route 90 and along the Union Pacific railroad. The MXU designation encourages Planned Area Developments as allowed by the Zoning Regulations.

Zoning: Several City of Benson Zoning Districts can be applied to meet the goals of the MXU designation. The attendant zoning districts allow both employment and living opportunities within close proximity to each other.

B-1 Business (residences in conjunction with commercial/business use)
B-2 Business (residences in conjunction with commercial/business use)

3. Commercial/ /Industrial Land Use Designations

C - Commercial

Purpose: This designation provides for the orderly development of commercial and service activities including retail and wholesale businesses. The designation is intended to promote connectivity of new commercial development to existing commercial areas and provide suitable sites for new commercial development and use.

Location: Areas designated for Commercial use include the following:

The Exit 302 node. Intersection of I-10 and SR 90; this area is already developing and contains tremendous potential for future growth. The realignment of Interstate 10 and Dark Star Road has opened up the interstate frontage for commercial or mixed use development.

SR 90 Corridor. This area extends from Exit 302 south toward Cottonwood Canyon Wash and can be serviced by the infrastructure already in place at the Exit 302 node.

The SR 80/Fourth Street Corridor. This strip comprises the City of Benson's "Main Street" and extends roughly from Exit 303 to the City's eastern boundary.

South down SR 80. Several commercial concerns are located along the SR 80 corridor as it heads out of the City toward St. David, Tombstone and Bisbee.

Ocotillo Avenue. Ocotillo Avenue, running north/south, intersects I-10 and Fourth Street and contains a range of commercial activity.

Nueva Jenella. A planned right-of-way extending from SR 90 west toward J-6/Mescal.

Zoning: Three City of Benson Zoning Districts can be applied to meet the goals of the C-Commercial land use designation.

B-1 Business
B-2 Business

I –Industrial

Purpose: This designation provides for the orderly development of industrial and non-retail commercial activity within the City of Benson. Retail and wholesale activity are in no way prohibited from locating in the Industrial designation; however, the preferred use is for industrial use and light manufacturing development. Additionally, alternative energy production and manufacturing is also actively encouraged and pursued.

Location: Several sites are identified within the City, these include;

Airport Complex. The City of Benson looks to take advantage of its airport and its prime location to both rail and roadway connections. Access to the site is presently gained via Airport Road which is in need of some immediate repair and resurfacing. An extension of SR 90 north to the airport is not currently a planned option, but much discussion has taken place regarding the possibility.

Ocotillo Avenue Sites. Just off the eastern side of Ocotillo are several parcels designated as Industrial. Most of the parcels within the area are presently vacant but adequately served by municipal sewer and water.

SR 80 Site. This site along SR 80 forms the southeastern entry way to the City of Benson; the Industrial designation for this area has been carried over from the Benson General Development Plan adopted in 1993.

Union Pacific Holdings. This area is bounded by SR 80 on the west, Fourth Avenue (as it exits the city) to the north, the city limits to the east and the golf course to the south. These lands are primarily under the ownership of the Union Pacific railroad. The site is ideal for development with its rail and roadway access.

Whetstone Ranch. Several sections of Whetstone Ranch, formerly designated Medium Density Residential, were amended to Industrial land in early 2011.

Zoning: Two of the current City of Benson Zoning Districts are applicable to the I designation.

LI – Light Industry
HI – Heavy Industry

4. Open Space –Environmentally Sensitive Area – Wildlife Corridors

OS – Open Space

Purpose: The Open Space designation recognizes the need for developed community parks, both natural and developed recreational areas which add to the attractiveness of the community and to the quality of life of the residents. Areas that are environmentally unique or otherwise present a natural barrier to development also add to the aesthetic appeal of the City of Benson's physical landscape and encourage recreation opportunities. Additionally, open space encourages separation between potentially incompatible land uses. The OS designation is intended to be consistent with the State's Open Space Planning law.

Location: There are multiple Open Space designations in the City; these include areas that are specifically designated for recreation and areas that have topographical challenges to development:

Recreation Areas:

Apache Park. Maintained for day-use recreation

Lions Park. Maintained for recreation and community events.

Golf Course. The City of Benson operates its own golf course in town.

State Parks. Kartchner Cavern.

Known Conservation Easements. One half of T18S R20E Section 10.

Zoning: The Open Space designation is specifically for developed or undeveloped locations intended for outdoor recreational purposes Presently, the City has no zoning district nor development standards which encourages additional areas to be reserved for recreation purposes. The above listed sites are owned by the City or under legal easement, but maintaining these designated areas may fully depend upon the careful review of site plans and development proposals by the City, for proposals adjacent to these areas.

ESA - Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Five specific locations are defined by their rough terrain and steep slopes.

ESA Area 1. This area is north of I-10 and is bisected by the city boundary north to south. It falls into the west half of the southeast quarter, the southwest quarter and the south half of the northwest quarter below the rail line of Section 5, T17S, R20E. It also intrudes into the eastern half Section 6, T17S R20E south of the rail line. The "tongues" of land that jut into the area from the west may serve as suitable future building sites.

ESA Area 2. This area covers the north-central and northeastern portions of Sec. 17, the southern portion of Section 8 and the western portion of Sec. 16 in T17S, R20E.

ESA Area 3. This area occupies the north-central portion of Sec. 21 T17S, R20E.

ESA Area 4. This area occupies the southern portions of Sections 20 and 21 and the northern portions of Section 27, 28 and 29, T17S, R20E. This area is bounded on the north by a Wildlife Corridor wash area.

ESA Area 5. Immediately adjacent to the San Pedro River, this parcel in Sec.24 T17S, R20E serves as an off-site mitigation parcel for development occurring in the southern part of the city, in the area known as Whetstone Ranch.

Location: Five specific areas within the City of Benson Planning Area have been identified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Zoning: Presently the City has no zoning district which sets aside areas for conservation. Maintaining these designated areas may fully depend upon the careful review of site plans and development proposals by the City, in and adjacent to these areas.

WC – Wildlife Corridor

Purpose: The Wildlife Corridor designation is intended to recognize specific riparian areas and wash corridors throughout the City of Benson to be maintained in their natural state. The maintenance of these corridors in their natural state is intended to provide wildlife habitat, recreational access and maintain watercourse retention. The WC designation is intended to be consistent with the State's Open Space Planning law.

Location:
Multiple wildlife corridors have been identified. The wash areas have been identified using aerial photography to delineate riparian areas extending back toward the San Pedro River flood basin. The San Pedro River and four major wash systems described below are included as part of the wildlife corridors.

The San Pedro River Corridor. The San Pedro River has been identified as a unique resource and landscape feature of the City of Benson and surrounding region. The designation of the San Pedro as Wildlife Corridor is intended to protect the flora and fauna of the corridor and provide a buffer between the corridor and new development on adjacent parcels. The unique attributes of the San Pedro Corridor are more fully discussed in the Environmental Planning Element of this Plan.

Cottonwood Canyon Wash. This wash system extends approximately seven miles from the northern boundary of the Coronado National Forest to the San Pedro River on the City of Benson's eastern boundary. This wash serves as a unique corridor that has future recreational potential to connect the City to the Whetstone Ranch development and eventually grant meaningful access to the Coronado National Forest.

Whetstone Wash (Central). This wash system extends diagonally from southwest to northeast through the center of the proposed Whetstone Ranch area from the City's western boundary with the Coronado National Forest to one mile beyond the City's eastern boundary in Sec. 35, T17S, R20E. The western end of the wash corridor splits into distinct branches with accommodation of the Mixed Used Area between the branches. A buffer of 600 feet centered on the centerline of the wash is recommended.

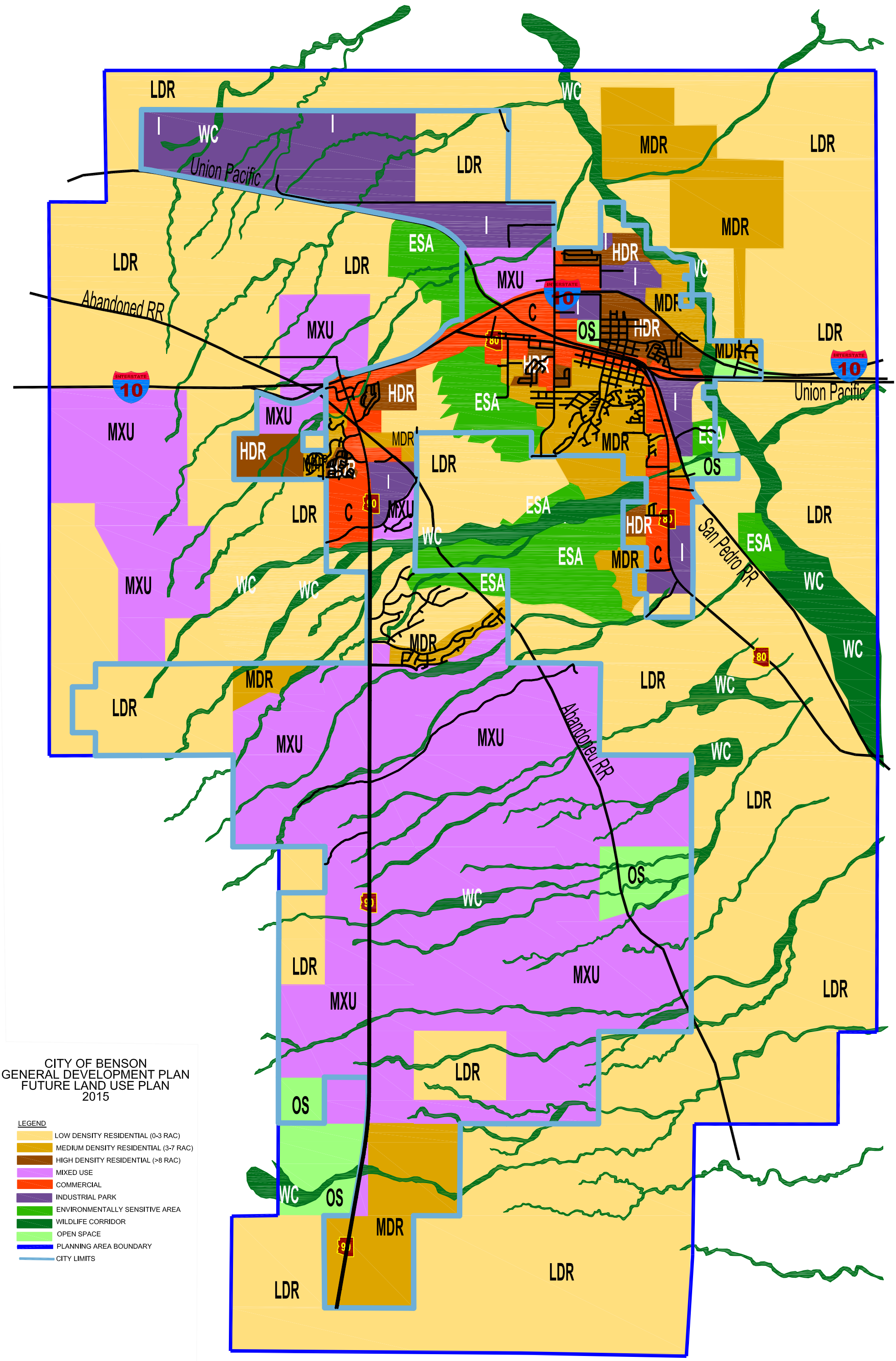
Whetstone Wash (Southern). This wash system extends approximately four and one-half miles east to west across the southern end of the Whetstone Ranch area; originating in Section 24, T18S, R19E along the City's western boundary with the Coronado National Forest and terminating on the City's eastern boundary in Sec. 14, T18S, R20E. A buffer of 300 feet for the wash corridor is recommended.

Cadillac Wash. This wash system extends approximately four miles, flowing west to east from Section 1, T17S R19E (south of the airport) and joining the San Pedro in Section 28, T16S R20E. A buffer of 300 feet for the wash is recommended.

Zoning: Presently the City has no zoning district which sets aside land for conservation, recreation or natural resources, such as water regulation. Maintaining these designated areas may fully depend upon the careful review of site plans and development proposals by the City, in and adjacent to these areas.

Land Use Designations

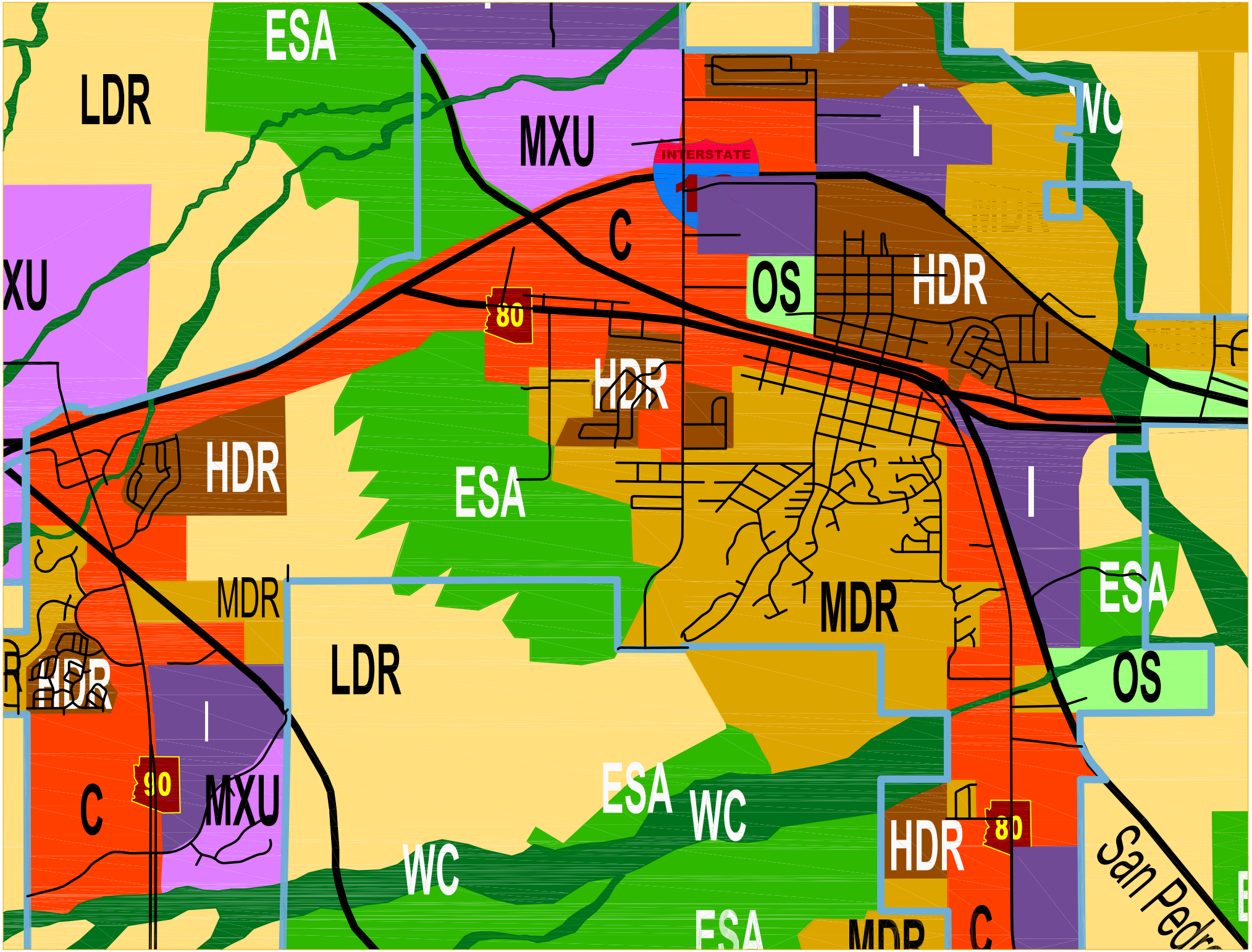
Land Use Designation	Residential Density	Applicable Zoning
LDR (Low Density Residential)	0 – 3 R/Ac.	*RT (Rural Transitional)* *R-1-43* *R-1-21* *R-1-12*
MDR (Medium Density Residential)	4 –8 R/Ac.	*R-1-8* *R-1-7* *R-2* *R-3*
HDR (High Density Residential)	8+ R/Ac.	*R-3* *B-1* *B-2*
MXU (Mixed Use)	8+ R/Ac.	*B-1* *B-2*
C (Commercial)	0	*B-1* *B-2*
I (Industrial)	0	*HI* *LI*
OS (Open Space)	---	*Any*
WC (Wildlife Corridor)	---	*Any*



CITY OF BENSON
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
2015

LEGEND

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (0-3 RAC)
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (3-7 RAC)
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (>8 RAC)
- MIXED USE
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL PARK
- ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA
- WILDLIFE CORRIDOR
- OPEN SPACE
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- CITY LIMITS


ESA
LDR
MXU
INTERSTATE
I
WC
C
OS
HDR
80
HDR
XU
HDR
ESA
I
MDR
MDR
ESA
LDR
OS
HDR
I
90
C
MXU
ESA
WC
HDR
80
WC
ESA
MDR
C
San Pedro

Circulation

I. Existing Circulation Conditions

The present condition of transportation in the City of Benson emphasizes personal transportation by privately owned vehicle, yet acknowledges the need to provide viable travel alternatives for those who do not drive or do not have a vehicle available. The State Highway system is and will remain crucial to the City because it provides linkages to rural areas and to other Arizona cities. State Route 80/Fourth Street/Business I-10 functions as the City's "Main Street". State Route 90 will provide the primary access to the growth belt north of Kartchner Caverns State Park. Alternate transportation modes, including public transit, walking, and bicycling will play an increasingly important role as the City of Benson grows in population and area. Additionally, golf cart travel, the preferred travel mode of many winter visitors, must be considered. It is hoped that extensions and improvements to the existing Benson Area Transit system will garner support for alternative transportation modes.

The City of Benson will continue to plan and implement a transportation system that provides mobility for all people and ready access to their chosen destinations and travel modes. The vision also recognizes the role of transportation in the City's economic development efforts and the fulfillment of the land use elements of this plan.

Traffic Volume. The Arizona Department of Transportation measures Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes on state, federal and interstate roadways throughout the state. Measurements on I-10, SR 80 and SR 90 from 2004 to 2009, the most recent years, indicate an increase in traffic volume, ranging from a 4.51 percent increase between Exits 302 and 303, to a 10.39 percent increase between Exits 304 and 306. Traffic volume on SR 90 between I-10 and Kartchner Caverns has exhibited a 13 percent increase from 2004 to2009; volume increases on SR 80 have been dramatic within city limits, with an astonishing 44.93 percent increase. This increase in traffic declines as one moves toward Saint David, with traffic increasing only 6-10 percent at the various measurement sites.

Rail Service. The City of Benson is one of the few communities in Arizona with Amtrak passenger rail service. The City has the potential for providing future enhanced rail linkage to communities to the east and west due to the existence of tracks and spur lines.

Air Service. Regarding air passenger service, the City of Benson will continue to rely on facilities in the Tucson metropolitan area as the primary providers of service to residents, visitors and businesses. The existing municipal airport, operated by the City of Benson, is included in this vision as a general aviation facility. The Benson Airport is included in the Regional Aviation System Plans for both Cochise and Pima Counties.

Circulation Planning Considerations

- Allocating for new and expanded roadways as population grows within the region; promoting and building multi-modal routes and trails.

- Future land use patterns and transportation systems will be planned in a coordinated, continuous, and comprehensive manner.

- Encourage the expansion and use of public transportation and multi-modal transportation.

  Promoting land use patterns that reduce unnecessary vehicle miles and encourage use of transportation alternatives, which may serve to protect air quality.

- Vehicular, public, bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian and other travel modes, will be coordinated with land use planning, especially within and between activity centers and growth corridors.

- Attractive design of the City of Benson roadways and assurance of recreation and scenic linkages will be characteristic of the transportation system.

- Citizen participation will be a significant part of the decision-making process.

II. Circulation Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network that enhances the flow of goods, commerce, vehicular traffic and people to and through the City of Benson.

Objective 1.1: Develop a Complete Streets Program for adoption and implementation.
Objective 1.2: Develop and implement a short and long-range parking plan to address critical parking issues downtown and maintain a supply of well-designed parking areas.
Objective 1.3: Develop and maintain a series of safe and well-designed non-motorized thoroughfares which connect activity center destinations, trail networks and open-space areas and the schools.
Objective 1.4: Promote the development of a multi-purpose transit system that efficiently and cost-effectively connects Benson to other communities in the region.
Objective 1.5: Promote the use of public transportation or alternative transportation methods while traveling between core areas of the city.

Goal 2: Improve multi-modal transportation coordination.

Objective 2.1: Maintain a solid working relationship between the City of Benson and the Arizona Department of Transportation, including improved access management, aviation enhancements and traffic engineering design.
Objective 2.2: Support expansion of aviation assets by emphasizing airport development with air, truck, rail accessibility.
Objective 2.3: Expand bus and rail service, including support for AMTRAK.

Goal 3: Preserve traffic capacity and efficient flow on major routes.

Objective 3.1: Eliminate discontinuity by linking State Route 80 and State Route 90.
Objective 3.2: Maintain a safe flow of truck traffic through or around the City.
Objective 3.3: Coordinate with the necessary agencies to regulate traffic flow on to major routes (traffic signals, etc).

III. Circulation Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

The goals of the City of Benson's transportation system are to improve the mobility of people and goods, continue to provide viable alternatives to the "drive alone" mode, protect the natural environment, support economic development, and sustain public support for the transportation planning and funding efforts. The factors considered in the development of a comprehensive transportation and circulation plan must also include supporting the economic viability of the area, increasing the safety of the transportation system, and improving accessibility and mobility options for people and goods.

In order to meet these goals, the General Development Plan focuses on actions which enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, enhance integration and connectivity of modes, promote efficient system management and operation, and emphasize the preservation of existing surface transportation systems.

IV. Circulation Policies

Circulation and Safety

1. Promote an effective, well-planned system of roadways that establishes a functional, safe, and aesthetic hierarchy of streets while incorporating the best traffic engineering practices.

2. Promote the development of an alternative access linking Exit 302 to the Fourth Street corridor.

3. Work together with ADOT and Cochise County to accommodate existing and future demand for transportation and to facilitate a sustainable system, reduce congestion, and provide for efficient and economic movement of people and goods.

4. Periodically monitor and report on system demand, operating conditions, and performance for all travel modes to assist in the planning process and investment decisions.

5. Assure integration of multi-modal circulation between neighborhoods, and the improvement of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to key destinations such as parks, adjacent services, transit facilities, and schools.

6. Design streets with continuous pedestrian and non-motorized facilities to provide safe accessible use and opportunities for shade and shelter.

7. Design neighborhood streets using appropriate traffic calming techniques and street widths to sustain the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

8. Provide for the planning, design, construction, and operation of facilities and services to reduce, to the greatest possible extent, the losses from accidents.

Mobility and Accessibility

9. Include facilities for multiple modes of travel in transportation improvement projects.

10. Review transportation investments to assure improvement in the mobility of all segments of the community, including the underserved, disabled, and economically disadvantaged.

11. Develop a strategy to reduce peak period demand through car-pooling, flexible hours, alternate modes of travel, and other travel reduction tools.

12. Identify and pursue funding mechanisms for ongoing maintenance of existing transportation investments and for future improvements needed to maintain mobility within the transportation system.

Public Transit Services

13. Work collaboratively with AMTRAK, Union Pacific and local concerns to utilize the Train Depot (Benson Visitor's Center) as the stop for passenger rail in Benson.

14. Continue to operate a safe, efficient, and accessible public transportation system that provides a viable alternative to the private vehicle.

15. Provide convenient public transit connections at and between urban activity centers.

Alternative Travel Methods-Bicycle, Pedestrian and Other

16. Plan for bicycle, equestrian, and golf cart facilities throughout the community that provide for the safe and efficient means of transportation and recreation.

17. Promote bicycle travel as an alternate mode of transportation.

18. Promote bicycle safety education programs to increase awareness of and adherence to laws and regulations regarding bicycle use.

19. Work pro-actively with ADOT to promote and develop bicycle lanes along SR 90 to connect Kartchner Caverns with the City.

20. Provide for the construction of accessible alternative travel facilities with all street construction and major reconstruction projects; all appropriate private residential, commercial, and industrial development; and all public development in the urban area.

21. Develop a program for the installation of pedestrian facilities in appropriate areas where they do not currently exist.

22. Strive for fairness and equity in who pays for transportation improvements and who benefits from them.

23. Develop hiking trail access to Kartchner Caverns and other public lands, possibly facilitated through the Rails to Trails program.

Transportation Planning and Funding

24. Create a functional classification system, and a Major Streets and Scenic Routes plan that defines the ultimate right-of-way of major facilities, their locations, and their scenic or historic attributes.

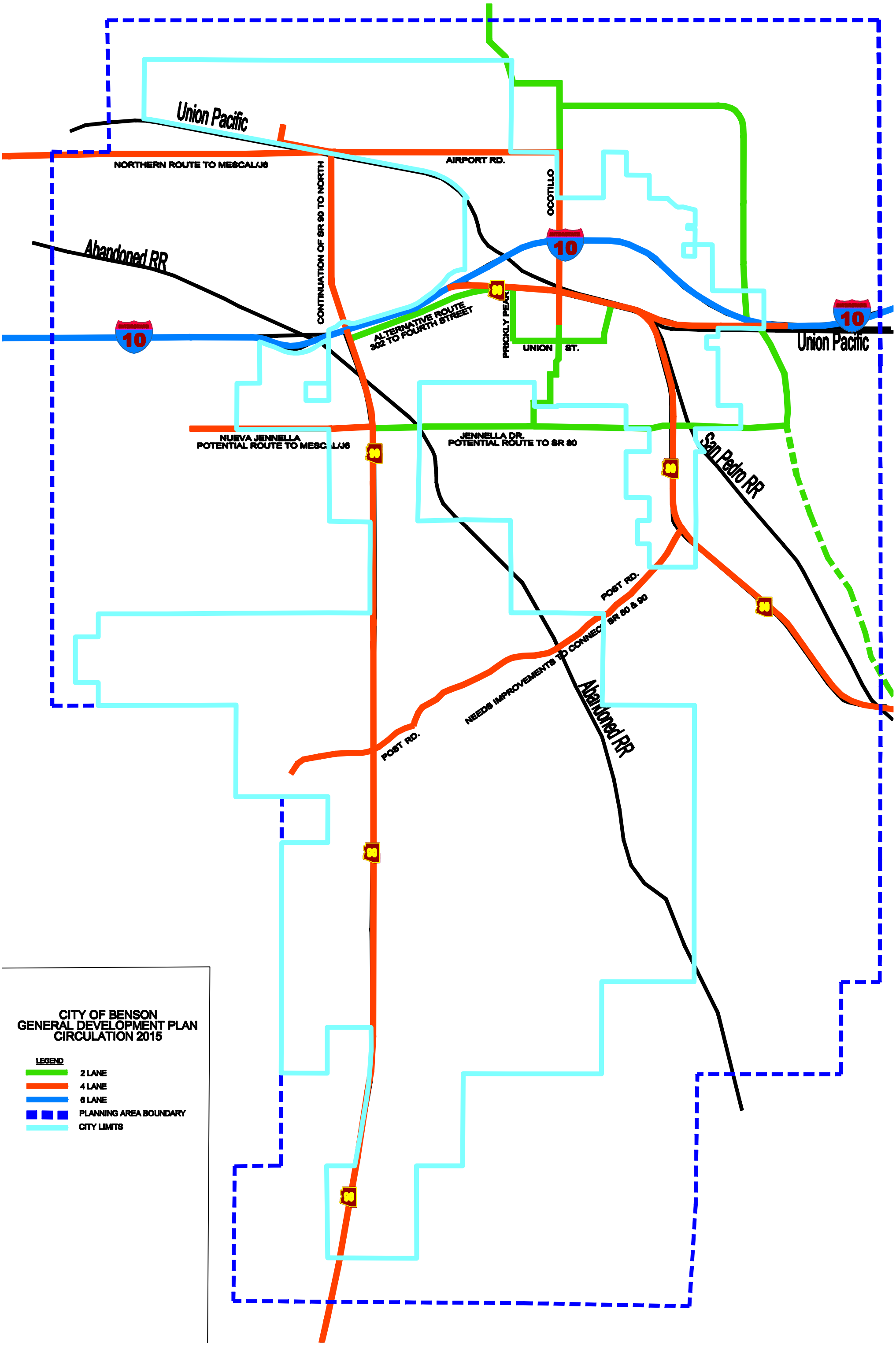
25. Periodically update the City's General Development Plan Circulation Element in coordination with ADOT, Cochise County, and SEAGO.

26. Pursue alternate revenue sources for all modes of transportation from Federal, State, and regional sources, and from the private sector.

V. Circulation Plan

Future circulation patterns and roadway volumes are tied closely to patterns of future land use and development. There are multiple sections of unused land, particularly in the Whetstone and Sands Ranch areas along SR 90. These areas are currently zoned for a mix of industrial, commercial and residential use with small areas of open space. At this time, there are no known plans for future residential or commercial development.

The map on the following page graphically depicts the existing and potential routes in the City of Benson at the planning horizon of 2030. Dashed segments indicate potential connections that offer meaningful and efficient access to and from the traditional town core to Whetstone Ranch, J-6 and St. David.


Union Pacific
NORTHERN ROUTE TO MESCAL/J6
AIRPORT RD.
CONTINUATION OF SR 90 TO NORTH
OCOTILLO
Abandoned RR
10
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE
302 TO FOURTH STREET
PRICKLY PEAR
UNION ST.
Union Pacific
NUEVA JENNELLA
POTENTIAL ROUTE TO MESCAL/J6
JENNELLA DR.
POTENTIAL ROUTE TO SR 80
90
San Pedro RR
POST RD.
NEEDS IMPROVEMENTS TO CONNECT SR 80 & 90
Abandoned RR
POST RD.
CITY OF BENSON
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
CIRCULATION 2015
LEGEND
2 LANE
4 LANE
6 LANE
PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
CITY LIMITS

Economic Development

I. Existing Economic Development Conditions

Site and situation. The City of Benson is located on the western edge of Cochise County in the San Pedro River valley. With an elevation of 3,585 feet, it enjoys mild winters and summers that are cooler than those found in the lower Sonoran desert to the west. The City's climate and other natural amenities contribute to the perception that Benson is a pleasant and livable community. To date, quality of life based on natural amenities has not driven significant growth. In the future, this variable together with the City's physical location at a transportation cross roads can be expected to be a major force driving substantial population growth and associated growth in demand for consumer goods.

The City of Benson's strategic situation has been, and will continue to be, a major asset. The City's location on Interstate 10 assures it exceptional access to points west and east. In the winter especially, I-10 is a favored east-west transcontinental route. Whereas the City does not have an airport with scheduled service, I-10 puts it only 45 minutes from Tucson International Airport.
The City is also the northern terminus of State Highways 80 and 90. In other words, Benson is an intervening opportunity for almost all traffic to or from Tucson, Southern Arizona's dominant center.

Additionally, the City of Benson is situated on a key east-west route for railroad, pipeline and electric transmission. Whereas the potential benefits of the City's situation from an economic development standpoint are understood, it appears that only a small portion of the economic significance of Benson's situation has been realized. The City's location may be its greatest asset.

Employment Structure. Whereas definitive data is hard to come by, data and estimates from Census 2000, Census 2010 and the Arizona Department of Economic Security allow for general comparisons. Both Cochise County and Benson are driven by the service economy.

Government. Approximately 1/3 of Cochise County's non-farm payroll employees are involved in government, including the Federal government in Sierra Vista and along the U.S.-Mexico Border and state and local agencies *(Cochise College Center for Economic Research Local Statistics)* Benson has approximately 9.3% of its work force in public administration *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)*

Services. This sector is important throughout Cochise County; near 95% of non-farm payroll employment is in the service-providing sector. Locally, just over 15% of employment in the City of Benson is in the service sector. *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)* The City's role as service center for travelers on the I-10 corridor together with its role as a service center for northwestern Cochise County account for its role in this sector.

Household Income. The median Cochise County income is $43,304 in 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars.(*US Census)* The median household income in the City of Benson is approximately $36,278 with a per capita income of $21,481 *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)*

Age structure and labor force. Demographic change from 2000 to 2010 has revealed a net loss of individuals aged 19 and under, but an 11% increase in individuals aged 20 and older. The City of Benson sustained a net gain of individuals aged 25 to 34, but individuals aged 35 to 64 dropped slightly from 37% of the City's population in 2000 to 35% in 2010.

Together, the population aged 25-64 represents a key working age demographic. Despite the small net loss of workers aged 35-64, the increase of younger workers aged 25-34 balanced the labor force, with 44.7% of individuals being in their prime working years (between the ages of 25 and 64). This percentage is nearly identical to the 2000 Census measure, when 44.9% of individuals were in their prime working years.

Individuals aged 65 and older comprise a slightly larger percentage (31%) of the total population in 2010 than they did in 2000 (29%). (*US Census*)

Aging Households.
According to the 2010 Census, there are 2,369 households within the City of Benson. Most of these households, 59.3%, are considered "family" households, meaning there is some combination of spousal and/or parent-child relationship present. The remaining 40.7% of households are considered "non-family," generally meaning there is either a single individual or multiple non-related individuals.

Nearly half (47.2%) of the total 2,369 households have an individual aged 65 or older. Therefore, if nearly 60% of the households are "families," a significant number of "families" in the City of Benson have at least one senior in residence. Conversely, only 16.9% of households have children 18 and younger. Clearly, it is far more likely that any given household in the City will have a senior in residence than a child.

Should these trends persist in coming years, the City of Benson may find it increasingly difficult to provide services to the growing elderly population while replenishing its prime working age cohort. Attracting and maintaining its working age population will be a challenge to the City.

The Economic Technical Appendix found at the end of the plan contains more detailed data of Benson's current economic status.

II. Assets & Advantages

The City of Benson's distinctive assets are tied to specific areas of comparative advantage.

Location Advantages
• Proximity to Tucson, Sierra Vista, Ft. Huachuca and Southeastern Arizona
• Area's significance within US and military history

Climatic Advantages
• Elevation of 3,600 feet
• Desert climate; mild winters; summers cooler than lower elevations; dry climate

Natural Environment Advantages
• Wide open spaces, beautiful views, night-sky viewing
• Maintains high-level of environmental quality
• San Pedro Riparian area

Network Advantages
• Situated on transcontinental east-west I-10 corridor, Union Pacific corridor
• Situated at northern terminus of north-south corridor reaching to Southern Cochise County and Northern Mexico (State Route 80 and 90)
• Direct access to interstate highway network (I-10)
• Direct access to transcontinental Union Pacific railroad
• Direct access to Amtrak passenger rail service

Residential Advantages
• Low to moderate housing costs
• Small-town ambiance, safety, low crime, quality of life
• Easy access to nearby "big city" goods and services
• Local access to essential goods and services
• Improving public schools and a local community college

Commercial Advantages
• Easy access to Southern Arizona labor market
• Easy access to goods and services regionally and nationally
• Low to moderate site and operating costs
• Excellent municipal infrastructure system
• Ample land available for development; land zoned for Industrial and Commercial use
• Local community college with nearby University of Arizona in Tucson to train and supply an active workforce

III. Barriers & Obstacles
All communities and regions have barriers to development and the City of Benson is no exception. Some of these barriers are clearly more correctable than others.

Proximity to Tucson and Sierra Vista. This is a two-edged sword. The fact that the City of Benson is near to Tucson and Sierra Vista means that it is in direct competition with Tucson's and Sierra Vista's superior commercial sectors.

Lack of a Clearly Defined Town Center. In some respects the City of Benson is two commercial strips, not a conventional community. There is the "old downtown" which follows the east-west SR 80/Fourth Street corridor and two potential commercial strips following State Routes 80 and 90 south of I-10. To some extent this morphology detracts from the traditional sense of community.

Work/Residence Separation. The Tucson and Sierra Vista employment centers drain off local demand for goods and services because of a combination of work commuting and shopping trips. The lack of local industry robs Benson of a potential tax base.

IV. Economic Development Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Strive to retain a skilled and diverse labor force in the City of Benson.

Objective 1.1: Identify business needs for training programs and seminars, such as offered by Cochise College, especially opportunities geared toward small business owners.
Objective 1.2: Investigate and pursue grants or loans to support the City's local economic development effort and community development projects.

Goal 2: Encourage new economic activity by providing up-to-date infrastructure, amenities, a positive local development climate, and opportunity sites to draw desired types of growth.

Objective 2.1: Strengthen and grow the existing medical facilities to serve a diverse, growing population, meet emergency service needs and support related development such as assisted living campuses.
Objective 2.2: Promote development of an airport complex which builds on its existing infrastructure and prime location, including the nearby railroad.
Objective 2.3: Attract a variety of new retail enterprises to retain shopping.
Objective 2.4: Create a historic downtown district to promote retail activity in the historic structures with ample parking and signage.

Goal 3: Establish and maintain an attractive community to promote the economic prosperity of the City of Benson.

Objective 3.1: Continue to market a distinct "Benson" identity that can be marketed and built upon by the business community.
Objective 3.2: Maintain a high quality of life that supports the development of the arts and cultural activities.
Objective 3.3: Capitalize on proximity to Tombstone, Bisbee, Tucson and Mexico to develop history tours, day-trips and related activities to increase visitor stays.
Objective 3.4: Create regional recreation attractions with activities for all ages, especially youth and families.

V. Economic Development Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

In the long term, the City of Benson has the potential to be a significant player in the Southeast Arizona economy. The City's industrial potential is modest at present but this will likely not be the case in the future. There is land allotted for industrial and manufacturing use but the infrastructure is not sufficiently in place to support the development and access to the transportation network. The City is presently a small town with growing economic development potential; it must plan for the time that it will be larger, have a much larger budget, and will support increased levels of development both economically and residentially.

The City of Benson should target the types of industries it desires through a marketing campaign; developing marketing materials which extol the virtues and benefits of the community. Key features to be accentuated include: the low local operating costs, quality of life, ample sites for development served by infrastructure, proximity to Tucson and the region, access to the local labor market and its access to nationwide transportation networks.

Residential developments can produce many of the same benefits as attracting new industry. Development along the SR 90 corridor- commercial, industrial and residential- will attract residents who will bring with them their demands for goods and services.

The City of Benson is part of a dynamic region and will do well to exploit opportunities that come to other parts of the region, i.e. "spill-over" opportunities from the Tucson growth center. The City can work to attract businesses that thrive in a small-town environment and actively solicit businesses in Sierra Vista and Tucson that are looking to expand, to do so in Benson.

The City of Benson needs to identify it's specific niche in the region and capitalize upon it. The niche it presently occupies is a quiet, railroad town, and a gateway to the tourism attractions of Southeastern Arizona. The City's identity will change dramatically over time, particularly if any master planned communities take shape. Development programs and policies should be designed to fit the realities and constraints of the City as it stands presently and be flexible enough to accommodate the changes on the horizon.

Attraction of new businesses is very important, but so too is retention and expansion of existing firms. The City of Benson would be well served to provide a report or analysis of existing businesses, their growth potential, their current and anticipated needs and how they can be promoted for future growth.

Economic development is a team sport and the City of Benson needs to continue to partner with area communities to promote both its uniqueness and connectivity to the larger region. Tucson and Sierra Vista, while competitive with Benson in some arenas, are natural regional allies and partners. Benson can provide small-town atmosphere (safety, community, livability) and cost effectiveness in terms of developable land, infrastructure and labor which are attractive pull factors for development.

Community development and capacity building are real complements to economic development. Infrastructure capacity in the City of Benson is presently prepared to handle some additional development in the short-term; however, a conscientious program of phased development is needed for the long term.

Economic development efforts should include manufacturing, professional services and more. A non-traditional option includes alternative energy. Any activity which brings new money into the community is an appropriate focus for economic development.

The City of Benson is not an island. To some extent, the City can control its future – but only to some extent. The City's future is tied to the Southern Arizona region in general and to Tucson

and Sierra Vista in particular. The general plan should reflect an awareness of regional issues and opportunities.

Economic development involves attraction of export industries but it also involves holding on to what you have, helping existing firms grow, and finding new ways to meet needs locally by establishing new, local-serving firms. The City of Benson needs an active retention and expansion effort and it needs to commission a trade leakage study. This study can uncover current unmet needs for goods and services that could (and should) be met locally given the local population. Unmet demands might be met by expanding the offerings of existing firms or by the establishment of new firms.

In the long run the City of Benson wants to attract industries which have high wage rates and which have a large locally based managerial cohort. Firms of this sort provide opportunities for upward mobility and for economic security. The sort of job that is described is a "quality job" that promotes retention in the community of "Benson's best and brightest" and it makes the City a quality destination for outsiders.

Whereas this is certainly a worthy goal for the long run, it is not necessarily a practical short-run strategy. In the near term, a strategy that serves the immediate needs of local residents while building toward the long term is called for.

The short term strategy may involve creation of often lower-wage service jobs to serve visitors and local residents alike. Jobs of this sort take advantage of the City of Benson's location advantages and its signature attraction (Kartchner Caverns). Further, service jobs contribute to leakage reduction for local expenditures and this ultimately translates into bigger and better local offerings. Finally, jobs of this sort are often appropriate given the skill levels available in the community.

The demand for quality jobs will increase as the City of Benson grows in terms of both number of people and affluence of its population. Contributing to these shifts in demand are out-commuters, people who call Benson home but who work elsewhere. With the nearness of military installations, the City may find it easier to attract "quality population" than "quality jobs" in the immediate future.

The City of Benson's potential in the master planned community arena is enormous. The City is strategically located relative to both Tucson and Sierra Vista. It offers easy access to both places and a distinctive life style. Additionally, the City's lower land costs can translate into very competitive housing and community amenity costs. This consideration is very supportive of the "quality population" argument advanced in the previous discussion of quality jobs.

Given traffic concerns it is arguably wise to make sure that there is considerable transition between planned communities and the Caverns. Second, the Caverns are a natural attraction and a natural landscape on the surface complements the subsurface attraction. Low visual impact tourist-serving activities in the vicinity of the Caverns should be considered.

With such a high percentage of households containing adults over the age of 65, communities

aimed at seniors and retirees are certainly one appropriate option. To encourage more affluent retirees, with their greater demands for goods and services, quality developments with golf and other amenities should be encouraged. Affluent seniors and retirees with enhanced capabilities to consume locally available goods and services are in many ways a proxy for "quality jobs."

Planned communities aimed at out-commuters, such as military personnel, are also appropriate as are intergenerational communities.

VI. Economic Development Policies

1. Plan for a time when the City of Benson's Operating Budget, level of development and overall development capacity will be much larger.

2. Ensure the City of Benson maintains a consistent supply of business and industrial development sites that are served by infrastructure and roadways, and do not conflict with adjacent land uses. The City should work to enhance business development through a streamlined and efficient zoning and permitting process.

3. Continue to maintain the City of Benson Asset Inventory with a community profile, maps, graphics, labor force information and a detailed list of development potential features that can be used to target businesses and industries to locate in Benson.

4. Promote residential construction on platted lots to encourage infill development with the goal of increasing demand for goods and services, construction and related work and contribution to the tax base and local market.

5. Creatively work to attract businesses from Tucson and Sierra Vista that could more easily/inexpensively operate and just as easily serve their customers, based from Benson.

6. Provide an environment that enables the City of Benson to attract non-traditional economic opportunities, i.e. beyond service sector jobs. These include emphasis on alternative energy, tourism, retirement communities and cross-commuting.

7. High priority should be given to the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the City of Benson and to better understanding leakage to Tucson and Sierra Vista.

Housing

The Housing Element of the City of Benson General Plan serves as an inventory of existing conditions, a summary of past trend indicators that have led to the present conditions and works to identify and address the issues and concerns of housing in the community.

I. Existing Housing Conditions. As of Census 2010, the City of Benson had 2,941 total housing units, reflecting an increase of 119 total units from 2000. Of this total, 1,646 are owner occupied, 723 are renter occupied and 572 are listed as vacant. Data collected from the Federal Census reports of 2000 to 2010 reveal the following trends:

- There was a significant drop in housing units classified as vacant, from 26.2% in 2000 to 19.4% in 2010.

- In 2010, only 196 housing units were listed as for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. That is only 6.7% of the total housing units, which is a significant drop from the 15.3% of housing used seasonally in 2000.

- In 2010, of the 572* vacant housing units, 142 are on the renters market, 111 were for sale and 123 were listed as Other Vacant. Other Vacant implies abandoned or otherwise uninhabitable. Therefore 4.2% of the housing stock is assumed to be unusable. This is a one percent increase from the year 2000 when only 89 units (3.2%) of the vacant units were designated as abandoned/boarded up. *(142 rent + 111 sale + 123 other + 196 seasonal = 572 total vacant)

There are several defined neighborhoods within the City of Benson, each having fairly distinct housing types. The neighborhoods along State Route 90 are solely site built single-family residences. These are new neighborhoods and the housing quality is of good condition.

In town, the Heights neighborhood and the neighborhoods of High Street, Foothill, and Cactus are also made up of site built single-family residences. Most of these residences are in good condition, though some are in need of cosmetic repairs.

The neighborhoods around Union Street and Ocotillo offer a mix of single family residences, apartments, duplexes and manufactured homes. The Ironwood subdivision, located off Ocotillo, is the only manufactured home specific subdivision in the city. The residences in these neighborhoods are all in good condition.

The neighborhoods on both sides of Silverwood Lane are generally site built housing in good or fair condition. These are generally older homes. There are pockets of manufactured homes on Loma Caterina and Catarina. There is one small apartment complex in this neighborhood, on Valley View Street.

The oldest neighborhoods are directly south of Fourth Street, including two historic districts, Apache Powder and the Barrio. Most of the housing in these neighborhoods is in good to fair condition, with several individual structures in poor condition. Most of the residences are site

built single-family residences though there are several manufactured homes scattered about, one manufactured home park and several small multi-family housing units. There are several small commercial entities along Fifth Street.

Housing along Prickly Pear, another residential neighborhood south of Interstate 10, is made up of manufactured housing ranging from older units in poor condition to new units in good condition.

The main neighborhood north of Fourth Street, east of Lions Park, is a mix of site built and manufactured homes. Structures range from poor to good condition. There is one large, relatively new apartment complex in the area.

The House Ridge Estates subdivision is composed of site built single family residences, all in good condition The neighborhood areas of Barbara and DidiAnn, located east of House Ridge, are primarily manufactured homes ranging from poor to fair condition. Further east, in the Comstock neighborhood, the homes are site built single family dwellings in good to fair condition.

Old Homestead is a site built single family residential subdivision along the eastern boundary of the city off Pomerene Road. All homes in this area are in good condition.

Additional residential manufactured home communities and RV parks are located along the main thoroughfares of the city, particularly along State Routes 80 and 90.

Housing value. The median value of a home in the City of Benson during the year 2010 was $129,950 as indicated by the Benson Multiple Listing Service (MLS). During calendar year 2010, only 36 houses were sold in the City. However, the selling prices of these 36 homes ranged from $28,033 to just over $250,000 with only 8 homes (22.2%)
selling for less than $80,000. This contrasts greatly with 2000 MLS figures in which far more homes were sold (145), but a far greater percentage (82 homes, 56.5%) were valued at less than $80,000.

Therefore, while quantity of homes sold has significantly decreased in the decade between 2000 and 2010, the value of housing rose significantly, despite the nation's economic difficulties.

II. City of Benson Real Estate Survey

The City of Benson conducted a survey of the real estate businesses selling homes and property in the City of Benson and the immediate vicinity. A summary of their findings reveals that the highest demand for home ownership was for homes priced $50,000 to $100,000, followed by homes priced under $50,000. Demand for homes to rent and apartments were highest for units priced between $500 and $1,000 per month.

Home Value Inquiries January 2010-June 2011	**Demand Ranking***
Under $50,000	4
$50,000-$100,000	1
$100,001-$150,000	2
$150,001-$200,000	3
over $200,000	5

**1 is most demand, 5 is least demand.*

Rental Value Inquiries January 2010-June 2011	**Demand Ranking***
Less than $500 per month	**1**
$500-$1,000 per month	**2**
over $1,000 per month	**3**

**1 is most demand,3 is least demand.*

III. Housing Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Encourage an adequate supply of housing stock in a range of prices and dwelling types to accommodate the shelter requirements of residents.

Objective 1.1: Ensure that new housing developments provide residential quality features including open space, recreational amenities and attractive landscaping.
Objective 1.2: Enforce property maintenance standards with particular attention to health and safety issues.
Objective 1.3: Apply residential infill and affordability incentives for improved housing value.
Objective 1.4: Promote site-sensitive designs for new residential developments that work with the existing features of the landscape.

Goal 2: Work to improve the quality of the City of Benson's existing housing stock.

Objective 2.1: Facilitate private sector efforts to replace substandard homes with habitable structures.
Objective 2.2: Pursue avenues of funding to connect residents with financial resources for improving or maintaining their property.
Objective 2.3: Encourage a housing rehabilitation program to stabilize existing structures and/or neighborhoods, focusing on maintenance, protection and enhancement.

IV. Housing Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

The quality of many housing units need improvement. Residents and property owners are encouraged to make use of federal and state programs for housing improvements.

Severely dilapidated and abandoned structures are a blight on the community. They serve to decrease the values of adjacent properties, are a hazard to health and safety and detract from the community's overall appearance. Owners of dilapidated or abandoned properties are encouraged to rehabilitate or demolish their structures in a timely fashion. The City of Benson may find it

desirable to provide assistance or incentives for the removal of uninhabitable properties, and to generate a list of properties that are in severe need of demolition or rehabilitation. Contact with owners/residents of these properties should be proactive and positive and stress the long-term health, well being and property value of the community. Punitive actions (fines, court orders) should be made use of only as a last resort for un-safe or uninhabitable properties.

Although the City of Benson has significant undeveloped areas as a result of the annexations over the past 10-years, the cohesiveness of existing neighborhoods remains a desirable goal both for maintaining a "small town character" and for efficiency of services. The City should explore incentives and actions that encourage in-fill of underutilized properties within existing service areas both for residential and commercial development. New residential developments should be encouraged to develop adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, with infrastructure and appropriate road access. This fosters neighborhood cohesiveness, lessens costs of infrastructure amenities and maintains efficient traffic flow.

Private sector developers, contractors and home builders as well as non-profit and charitable agencies can often pool their knowledge and resources for partnerships in improving community housing conditions. The City of Benson should encourage the integration of private sector concerns with charity and non-profit groups (church groups, local booster organizations, Habitat for Humanity, etc.) for strategies and efforts to improve the City's overall housing stock.

As is identified in the City of Benson's demographic profile, the age structure of the City is changing. This includes a slight decrease in the number of individuals aged 65 and up, but the increasing proportion of households containing a member who is age 65 or older. This may indicate that multi-generational households are becoming more common. The type and structure of housing units may need to change in order to accommodate "granny flats" inside or adjacent to established single-family homes.

The number of prime family-and-working age adults between ages 35-64 increased slightly since 2000. This indicates that traditional single family housing is still relevant to Benson. The number of younger working age adults, aged 20-34, also increased from the year 2000. This indicates that starter homes, condos or apartment are needed to house these younger individuals who may not yet need a traditional single-family style home. The "granny flat" housing units mentioned above could also be used as rental units for the increasing number of young adults.

A key element of a successful housing rehabilitation and development program is the cooperation of financial institutions. Local lending institutions can secure low-interest loan programs targeted to improvements to older homes and homes needing rehabilitation.

V. Housing Policies

1. Facilitate the use of federal and state housing programs and housing improvement programs for Benson residents and homeowners.

2. Encourage owners of dilapidated and abandoned properties to rehabilitate or demolish them in a timely manner.

3. Stress the use of voluntary improvements to homes and property through housing programs, community incentives, charity groups and community efforts to improve housing conditions.

4. Increase enforcement of housing and zoning code violations for abandoned and dilapidated properties.

5. Promote in-fill and redevelopment of residential neighborhoods in conjunction with new subdivision development.

6. Integrate private sector developers, manufactured home developers, local home builders, as well as non-profit and charity agencies into partnerships for new home development and housing rehabilitation projects.

7. Periodically re-examine the City of Benson Zoning Regulations for applicability and flexibility in meeting the community's short-term and long-term housing development needs.

8. Respond to the on-going demographic trends in the community, and their changing needs for housing.

9. Work collaboratively with developers to ensure a mix of housing choices are provided which strengthen both the City's housing stock and diversity.

10. Facilitate the formation of partnerships between local financial institutions, private and non-profit concerns and the City for housing rehabilitation and development.

Water Resources

Understanding water availability, rates of use, physical and geological factors as well as future impacts are crucial for long-term community planning throughout Arizona. The Water Resource Element provides a framework through which the City may review its present conditions, review impacts of anticipated growth, and work to ensure both the quantity and quality of its future water supply.

I. Existing Water Resources Conditions

The City of Benson currently provides water and wastewater service to an area approximately 7.5 sq. miles in size. This service area encompasses all of the presently developed area, extending outside the city limits along Jenella Road and includes the Exit 302 commercial node.

In 2010, a total of 866 acre-feet of water (equivalent to 282,187,337 gallons) was pumped, resulting in an average of 55,276.7 gallons per person per year, or 151 gallons per person per day. The 2011 projected annual water usage was 886 acre feet (288,704,365 gallons) or approximately 155 gallons per person per day. Municipal uses are generally defined as water used by home-owners and businesses, irrigation of parks and school grounds, fire fighting, and other miscellaneous public and private uses.

Water distribution and storage. Household and commercial water is presently provided to the developed portions of the City of Benson from 8 active wells. Currently, five wells serve the core of the City, one well serves the area of Whetstone Ranch and two wells serve the airport. The depth of the existing wells range from 910 to 1,100 feet. Current pumping capacity is 4,100 gallons per minute. Twelve storage tanks are distributed throughout the City with a total storage capacity of 3,476,000 gallons.

Wastewater treatment. The City completed a major upgrade to its wastewater treatment plant in July 2002. This upgrade doubled the capacity of the plant—from 600,000 to 1,200,000 gallons per day. Quality effluent is now available as an alternative to using groundwater to provide irrigation to public and private facilities. A percolation plant was built to serve the Whetstone Ranch area and has a capacity of 250,000 gallons.

Water supply. The Arizona Department of Water Resources administers the Assured and Adequate Water Supply Program. In areas outside existing Active Management Areas, new subdivisions must conduct hydrologic investigations to demonstrate that there is a 100-year supply of water for planned developments. Should these demonstrations either fail or not be performed, prospective purchasers of the real estate must be informed that inadequate water resources exist to serve the development.

A July 2008 ADWR Decision and Order certifies that studies conducted on behalf of local landowners have demonstrated to the Arizona Department of Water Resources' satisfaction that the City of Benson has the ability to support the 2021 estimated annual water demand of 13,474 acre-feet for 100 years.

II. Future Water Demand vs. Future Supply

Projected Use. To further refine the scenario for future water use the following table was generated. Based upon the **151 gallons per person per day scenario** (taken from 2010 City of Benson rates of use) water use estimates can be calculated for the projected population over the coming 30-year period.

City of Benson, Projected Water Use, 2000-2030

	2000	2010	2020	2030
Benson Population	4,711	4,691	6,130	7,360
Gal. p/day	683,095	708,341	925,630	1,111,360
Gal. p/year	249,329,675	258,544,465	337,854,950	405,646,400
Whetstone Ranch	0	190 connections x 2.18# = 414	1005 lots* x 2.18 = 2,191	2000 lots** x 2.18 = 4,360
Gal. p/day	0	62,514	330,825	658,360
Gal. p/year	0	22,817,610	120,751,453	240,301,400
Totals				
Population	4,711	5,105	8,321	11,720
Gal. p/day	683,095	770,855	1,256,471	1,769,720
Gal. p/year	249,329,675	281,362,075	458,611,915	645,947,800

**Refers to planned and/or platted lots in Canyons I,II, Highlands and Bluffs*
***Indicates doubling of planned/platted lots*
 # 2.18 refers to the largest average household size recognized in the City of Benson in the 2010 Census (Average Size of Household Renter Occupied)

The ADWR Decision and Order indicates the presence of over 13,000 acre-feet of water per year for 100 years, indicating adequate subsurface water for proposed developments.

Of note, the present 151 gallons per person per day measure is substantially low in comparison to rates in other municipalities which average up to 200 gallons per person per day. As development increases and attendant resort and golf course developments take place, the projected water use statistics will need to be reviewed and revised accordingly.

Additional data on City of Benson and regional water resources is found in the Water Resources Technical Appendix of this plan.

III. Water Resource Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Ensure the quality and supply of water to the City of Benson through community education, wise-use and conservation efforts.

Objective 1.1: Maintain a high-quality water supply system through the development of the water resource.

Objective 1.2: Encourage increased study and understanding of the City's subsurface water resources for their long-term use and protection.

Objective 1.3: Encourage the implementation of water conservation measures in all new developments.
Objective 1.4: Encourage water conservation practices for existing structures through retrofit and remodel programs.

Goal 2: Undertake wastewater recycling programs.

Objective 2.1: Distribute treated effluent for recreation areas' irrigation.
Objective 2.2: Encourage the use of gray water for private irrigation.

IV. Water Resource Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

Alternatives to groundwater pumping for municipal use may need to be examined if proposed developments and population growth exceed local water capacity in the Benson vicinity.

A detailed cost/benefit assessment must be made for each new proposed development falling outside of the existing water service area. Approval of new developments outside of the service area should meet the City of Benson's criteria before municipal infrastructure is extended out.

As precipitation rates vary from year to year, water recharge rates are neither consistent nor predictable. The preparation and implementation of a drought management plan and water recovery plan for the City of Benson is advised.

The San Pedro River corridor has been identified as one of the City of Benson's key amenities, and its protection is viewed as one of the community's highest priorities. Of critical importance to the health of the corridor are the protection of vegetative buffers and habitat areas of the corridor. Additionally, large tributary wash corridors should be maintained in their natural and unaltered state. Coordination of local effort with the appropriate state agencies (notably Arizona Department of Game and Fish and the Bureau of Land Management) for long-term monitoring of the health of the San Pedro River corridor would be useful to gauge changes as development increases. Special attention should be paid to plant and animal species sensitive to habitat disruption.

The City of Benson should examine areas not presently served by infrastructure and plan for the most efficient means of future service- whether private systems, extension of the city's network or a cohesive phasing of both private and public efforts.

Encourage the development of water conservation initiatives in the City of Benson, including public education programs through the schools and business community. This may be achieved by providing an annual leaflet or brochure with the water or electric bill received by water users.

Numerous studies and reports have illustrated the potential sensitivity of the water resources feeding the Kartchner Caverns cave system. Developments in the vicinity of the cavern systems

should take into consideration the subsurface resources and natural carrying capacity limits—particularly on groundwater extraction, surface runoff and landscape alterations.

V. Water Resources Policies

1. Review potential for alternative water resources and team with other area communities to strengthen future efforts to secure the long-term availability of the resource.

2. New developments will construct and dedicate water infrastructure extensions to the City of Benson.

3. New golf course development and other proposed high volume water use developments should minimize their use of groundwater resources and have effluent re-use systems in place to meet their water needs.

4. Develop and implement a drought management plan.

5. Protect the San Pedro River corridor by maintaining native vegetation, minimum setbacks for development and preservation of unique and sensitive habitat areas.

6. Work collectively with other jurisdictions and agencies to protect and maintain the San Pedro River corridor.

7. Steward water resources by encouraging (or requiring) turf areas such as golf courses to be irrigated with treated effluent.

8. Avoid duplication of water service efforts to promote efficient service.

9. Promote water conservation by a campaign in Benson schools and through water conservation information provided to utility customers.

Cost of Development

Preparedness planning, one of the fundamental principles in Growing Smarter, requires a realistic understanding of economic feasibility. Financial resources, both public and private, are prerequisites for recommended General Development Plan implementation actions.

Development investments create expectations of positive returns. The municipality's "paybacks" include tax revenues, better jobs that raise household incomes and enhanced service quality for residents, businesses and visitors. Profits, increased land values and successful project recognition motivate developers. Planning processes that rely on value-added assessments, measuring probable benefits against established improvement expenses, are most likely to result in decisions that are mutually rewarding to the private and public sectors.

I. Existing Cost of Development Conditions

The City of Benson has adequate, but aging, infrastructure in most developed portions of the City. Infill construction can utilize available street, wet utilities and private utility capacity. Extensions of service to outlying Growth Areas will be borne by developers.

Development Infrastructure Needs. Planned developments require improving the City of Benson's municipal systems' delivery efficiency to all parts of the community as well as extending services to outlying areas. In some instances, existing facilities such as roads, pipes, and public buildings will be up-sized; in others, developing areas will construct separate, decentralized assets such as schools, branch libraries, water systems, public safety substations, and recreational venues to meet their residents' needs.

Depending on demographics (i.e., proportions of new families with school-aged children), the school district will have to expand accordingly. Slow, but steady growth would entail less expenditure, and, perhaps, lower increments of return on investment; yet community quality would still rise. By contrast, the costs of non-development—fewer contributors to improvements and added per capita expense to renew or replace, flat or decreasing property values—could presumably be most expensive of all.

Capital Investment Resources. The City of Benson looks to a variety of sources for the income stream that pays for growth. Sales tax revenue, traditionally the anchor for Arizona municipalities, helps support Benson's General Fund. Any additional population in the platted, but not constructed residential developments will provide additional sales tax revenue. This sales tax growth could also expand as less "leakage" to other market areas takes place. Another source is the capture of additional tourism dollars. Additional fiscal components directly related to growth include: municipal bond programs, State aid (such as school construction equalization, highway funds, revenue sharing), development fees, Federal assistance and grants programs, all of which have become more scarce.

II. Cost of Development Goals & Objectives

The overriding concern regarding the City of Benson’s growth is exercising caution in municipal commitments of public investment so as not to create false expectations. Likewise, local

taxpayers are entitled to assurances that, when expenditures are made, there will be cost-benefits that accrue to the general public as well as to the property owners.

Cost of Development Principles. This Element is about spending wisely to secure the City of Benson's economic future. Projected growth should pay for itself. New development contributes to overall community quality in manageable increments, so that the economies of scale brought by increased population consistently offset any negative impacts brought by demands on municipal systems and facilities.

Expenditures by public and private entities work together to strengthen the community's long-term value as a place to live, work and play. By facing costs directly, weighing them carefully, allocating them fairly among existing and future residents, the City of Benson is determined to become a better city, not just a bigger one.

Goals. Fiscal responsibility underscores the City of Benson's planning to cover future development costs. The overall aim should be to ensure return on investment in terms of municipal revenues, quality of life improvements and stable property values. Costs of Development Goals and Objectives are:

Goal 1: Ensure that new developments pay their own way.

Objective 1.1: Maintain an equitable and flexible system of development fees for residential, commercial and industrial activity to promote new growth in balance with municipal costs.

Objective 1.2: Conduct cost-benefit assessments to determine projected contributions and costs resulting from proposed projects.

Goal 2: Foster Downtown development to utilize City of Benson facilities and systems.

Objective 2.1: Consider incentives for infill investment.

Objective 2.2: Strive for full utilization of service capacities, such as roads and utilities that are already in place.

Goal 3: Encourage new business development in locations adjacent to existing commercial sites and corridors to minimize new municipal infrastructure costs.

Objective 3.1: Avoid the expense of discontinuous, leapfrog development and unplanned sprawl.

Objective 3.2: Identify a planned, phased approach for infrastructure extensions and improvements, such as a Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which recognizes the City’s needs and budget.

III. Cost of Development Recommendations

Existing infrastructure capacity, when fully utilized, allows maximum recapture of investment. Sharing some of the financial benefits through infill incentives is a sound municipal business practice.

Development impact fees were adopted by the City in 2000 and have been subsequently amended. However, by action of the Arizona State Legislature in 2011 (SB 1525), the process for setting impact fees became more difficult. Specifically, intensive studies are required to determine accurate and mathematically proven costs associated with development. Only when true financial cost is determined can impact fees be assessed. No longer can jurisdictions estimate the costs via unproven assumptions. The cost of the intensive study may not justify itself in terms of funds recouped via impact fees assessed.

Annexation Evaluation. Because the City of Benson intends to serve all areas within its incorporated limits, a thorough cost-benefit analysis is key to determining whether, and when, properties may reasonably be taken into the City. Annexation can be termed a business decision for the City. Generally, a positive revenue-to-expenditure balance is expected within five years following annexation.

Joint-Use Facilities. Opportunities for sharing development costs make investment dollars go further. Examples might include: public/private parking space, park-school recreation facilities and programs, oversized improvements with payback mechanisms.

Grant Programs. Funds earmarked from State and Federal sources, as well as private foundation grants, can contribute to infrastructure funding. The City of Benson should explore all sources of planning, design and construction grants that relate to community improvement priorities.

IV. Cost of Development Policies

1. Infrastructure improvements are a standard part of the City of Benson's annual budget considerations.

2. Encourage utilization of existing infrastructure to help meet Growing Smarter purposes of infill, housing affordability and cost-effective growth.

3. Maintain levels of development fees that support the City’s cost-competitive advantage among municipalities in the region.

4. Assist in-fill developers with expedited, streamlined permitting service where possible.

5. Evaluate each annexation request, determining indirect benefits (such as housing variety) that will help attract employment as well as the projected revenues that contribute to defraying municipal service costs.

6. Identify and acquire land for municipal facilities in advance of demand to accommodate joint-use possibilities.

7. Require dedication of lands in master-planned communities for public and/or municipal needs.

8. Encourage school site dedications or purchases to include park lands with cooperative improvement financing (City, developer, school district), maintenance and programming operations.

9. Institute payback mechanisms with formulas for reimbursing private developer's installation of over-sized improvements.

10. Seek grant funds for transportation, open space and other projects, including non-governmental sources such as the Nature Conservancy.

Growth Areas

In accord with Arizona's Growing Smarter legislation, the City of Benson designates general locations that are considered to have significant development potential. Growth Areas constitute sectors where significant infrastructure investment and absorption of new or replacement land use may be expected over the ten-year vision span of this General Development Plan document. Only those sites with development probability during the 2015-2025 period receive explicit attention; however, it is acknowledged that Growth Areas may be expanded, or new ones added, by General Development Plan Amendment (see: Implementation Program) as a result of changed conditions in the City.

These factors point toward an accelerated growth rate for Benson: 1) Arizona's continuing attraction; 2) changing demographics pertaining to job mobility and retirement; and 3) the popularity of master-planned communities. Much of the projected population gain is earmarked for designated Growth Areas—both in new developments and adding/infilling where municipal systems are already in place. There are opportunities for local builders and businesses as well as for large-scale outside investment.

I. Existing Growth Areas Conditions

Transportation system improvements continue to provide access for expanding City development. Freeway and interchange design, together with State Routes 80 and 90, open up developable property along the tourist-attracting Kartchner Caverns as well as at major intersections where there is demand for traveler services and other highway-related uses. Continued development of the municipal airport increases prospects for employment growth in the airport vicinity.

Established infrastructure, services and institutions provide a head start for future development. Plans for greater capacity in utilities, airport facilities, schools and community parks provide the foundation for infill growth that can utilize these in-place facilities and for larger-scale, new communities that can build upon them.

Kartchner Caverns brings a steady flow of visitors into the community. Not only tourism dollars, but also as an introduction to the City of Benson as a prospective place for returning to live, contribute to growth potential. Downtown revitalization, golf course development and accessibility to the San Pedro River contribute to the municipal goals for increasing the City’s stature as a tourist destination.

Public and private sector cooperation is an essential precondition for aggressive marketing of the City's growth potential.

II. Growth Areas Goals & Objectives

Additional population and new businesses will increase the City of Benson's scale, will enlarge the local economy and, as a result, will help to finance quality of life improvements. Focus on Growth Areas is intended to maximize the community's return on investment.

Growth Areas Themes. Benson citizens envision growth from various sources: master-planned communities (often with retirement components); tourism business; alternative energy developments, location on international trade routes; job development. Natural resources—the San Pedro River, the Caverns, beautiful scenery and a climate that allows year round outdoor enjoyment—enhance the City's attractiveness as a place to live and to visit. Proximity—to Tucson, Interstate highway convenience, Mexico and day trip experience—provides accessibility without urban congestion. Small town atmosphere—friendliness, wholesome family activities and the community's spirit serve to welcome newcomers with the opportunity for secure living and business stability.

Goals. The spectrum of Benson's Growth Areas goals express broad aims, accompanied by supporting objectives that take advantage of the City's themes for potential success.

Goal 1: Promote high-quality residential and commercial development in the City of Benson and its greater municipal planning area.

Objective 1.1: Encourage the use of water-conserving landscaping, architecture, site planning, subdivision ordinances and aesthetic guidelines to enhance the character and visual quality of the City.
Objective 1.2: Work to ensure that land development costs are reasonable and encourage joint planning between the City, utilities and land owners.
Objective 1.3: Establish quality criteria when land is annexed into the City.

Goal 2: Treat infill development as a Growth Area.

Objective 2.1: Focus on community revitalization in conjunction with Cost of Development efficiencies.
Objective 2.2: Accentuate Benson's historic, small town character as an attraction for core area redevelopment.

Goal 3: Encourage balanced growth of the Kartchner Caverns State Route 90 Corridor.

Objective 3.1: Link residential development with existing and proposed recreational amenities.
Objective 3.2 Encourage and promote the development of planned areas along State Route 90.
Objective 3.3: Develop and maintain a solid working relationship among the City of Benson, Kartchner Caverns State Park and all other governmental jurisdictions and agencies.
Objective 3.4: Encourage a variety of commercial, recreational, residential and other uses along corridor frontages to serve both visitors and residents.

Goal 4: Emphasize industrial and business growth in the Airport vicinity.

Objective 4.1: Improve existing access road to the airport.
Objective 4.2: Expand employment opportunity north of Interstate 10.

Goal 5: Build on San Pedro River corridor, Kartchner Caverns and Whetstone Mountains as key natural assets.

Objective 5.1: Establish these local scenic areas as tourist attractions.
Objective 5.2: Improve recreational venues with sensitivity to the environment.

III. Growth Areas

There are several identifiable locations in and near the City of Benson that are designated in this General Development Plan to accommodate substantial portions of expected development. Some are specific, with defined boundaries; others are general areas where multiple, individual projects can be developed. These are not the only sites for new investment over the next decade and beyond because there are many other opportunities. However, the focal points of Benson's Growth Areas planning are:

Master Planned Developments. Master planned developments are expected to be proposed in the next 10-year period. These major Growth Areas are generally proposed to include a mix of land uses—commercial employment, institutional and recreational facilities—that will allow the planned neighborhoods to become largely self-sufficient for day-to-day activities.

Whetstone Ranch. This large stretch of land straddles State Route 90, south of Interstate 10. The SR 90 corridor, nine miles in length, could provide access to multiple residential villages, commercial clusters or industrial complexes. New cross-town access could be established for these future uses by improving Post Road to connect SR 80 and SR 90.

Commercial nodes along State Route 90 are envisioned to establish entry points into the interior neighborhoods. Variations in lifestyle, mixes of use in core areas and recreational opportunities mixed in could create a distinctive character for each Whetstone Ranch village.

Additionally, Whetstone Ranch has allocated land for a large scale solar facility. If developed, this alternative energy development will cover a large portion of the interior land south of the existing residential neighborhoods.

Tourism. Another Growth Area identified during the General Development Plan process includes focusing destination tourism toward the City of Benson's outstanding natural assets, the San Pedro River and Whetstone Mountains. Tourism lends itself to being a Growth Area concept rather than tied to a specific site within the community. A combination of recreational opportunities, hospitality industry and other tourist-serving facilities, vacation homes as well as year round residences could be integrated with sensitive development standards into the areas and foothills at the City's eastern edge.

Tourist Attraction. Environmentally unique areas adjacent to the San Pedro River may serve as the focus for an eco-tourism Growth Area. Hiking and equestrian trails, bird-watching and nature oriented activities could be planned with appropriate accessibility that respects fragile natural resources. The potential for identifying, securing and preserving a special area for conservation growth should be studied.

Protection for the San Pedro River habitats could be enhanced by revenue-generating tourism in the form of privately-financed lodging facilities and outfitters. Connections to BLM lands could establish excellent outdoor daytrip opportunities emanating from Benson.

In-City Growth Areas. There are ample opportunities for growth in and around developed portions of the City of Benson. Established community focal points have significant potential for expansion, improvement and return on public investment. Although the greater share of new housing and population is projected to occur in outlying areas, there are ideal locations for commerce, industry and infill housing in northern portions of the community.

Employment and businesses convenient to I-10 are essential ingredients to Benson's economic development. Three key locations have the necessary attributes for growth in the presently established community. These sites include downtown redevelopment, airport expansion and interchange-proximate parcels.

Downtown. Business properties fronting Fourth Street will experience increased demand as population and tourism growth begin to be realized. Concepts for preservation and re-use of historic structures, recommended design guidelines, establishment of a tourism-oriented pedestrian precinct and, especially, serving a greatly expanded central place function, create a plausible scenario for Downtown revival. Shops, offices, or enlarged governmental facilities could fill existing, reusable structures and, in time, require construction of additional commercial space.

Infill housing has definite prospects in central city neighborhoods. In Benson’s core, there are currently more than 550 platted lots in varying states of improvement. A variety of housing types can include "move-up market" homes as well as shelter that is affordable for renters and first-time home buyers.

Subdivisions in Benson	**Number of parcels**	**Status**
San Pedro Golf	225	platted, no construction
House Ridge	18	platted, some houses
Radine Ridge	30	platted, some houses
Water Crest	53	platted; some houses
La Cholla Heights II	42	platted, no construction
La Mesa San Pedro	11	platted, no construction
Sunset Trails	179	platted no construction
Loma Linda	11	Platted, no construction

Airport. Industrial/commerce park development in the Benson Airport vicinity is intended to address the City's jobs-to-housing ratio. Light manufacturing or assembly enterprises, research and development firms and other businesses for which general aviation facility availability is important could be drawn to this location.

Fly-in subdivisions are an option for those who operate their own aircraft. Benson Airport could become a highly-desirable location for pilots wishing to avoid congestion in metro airport traffic patterns.

Interchange Node(s). Interchange 302, 304 and 306 sites constitute opportunities for additional highway-related and tourist-serving commerce. The trend has already been established at these locations; however, growing demand for overnight lodging, vehicle service, restaurants and convenience shopping is projected from a growing volume of stopovers by both vacationers and truckers traveling on I-10 and/or State Route 90.

IV. Growth Areas Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

The City of Benson has a facilitator role in Growth Area planning. In most instances, the General Development Plan provides a roadmap for private development investment; however, in appropriate instances, the municipality may also consider partnering with certain projects.

Additional levels of municipal planning, such as specific area or functional plans, may be tailored to provide pre-development detail for key Growth Area sites. Streamlined entitlement/plan review procedures encourage development investors to take advantage of Growth Area opportunities.

Annexation Strategy. The City of Benson should initiate preliminary evaluations of the potential growth management benefits gained from annexing certain environmentally unique, adjacent lands into the City. Public interest in preserving San Pedro River areas and other natural assets encourages exploration of "conservation growth" opportunities.

Jobs/Housing Balance. Even in the City of Benson's existing housing-driven scenario a balance of employment and housing is important. Homebuilders can be encouraged to respond with housing variety appropriate to new job creation.

V. Growth Areas Policies

1. Implement criteria and standards that encourage high quality residential and commercial development including site design, architecture and landscaping in State Route 90 growth areas.

2. Schedule infrastructure extension or enhancement to coincide with Growth Area construction.

3. Develop improvement plans for targeted incentive areas such as specified Downtown blocks or airport complex.

4. Make preservation of all natural assets a consideration in the analysis of development approvals.

5. Schedule infrastructure projects, when possible, to conform with master-planned community development schedules, requiring good faith performance from the private sector.

6. Provide assistance or incentives when possible to prospective job-creating industries located within identified Growth Areas.

Open Space

The City of Benson's tradition of outdoor enjoyment depends on recreational facilities made available to the public and on scenic, natural areas surrounding the developed community. The General Development Plan addresses both of these assets.

To accommodate future population growth, additional recreational space (ranging from playing fields to picnic areas and other leisure-time venues) must be acquired and improved. Much of the necessary acreage shall be planned for in master planned developments where most of the residential development is expected. There will, however, still be demand for new park sites within the presently-developed portions of the City.

As Benson grows, there will be development pressure exerted on adjacent open lands. Therefore, it is essential to preserve areas of special environmental sensitivity or outdoor experience from the impacts of urban expansion. The Growth Areas Element, for instance, calls for a unique conservation sector to protect the San Pedro River.

I. Existing Open Space Conditions

The City of Benson presently provides several areas for park use and recreation. Key existing open space features include:

Lions Park. This area encompasses approximately 30 acres in the City's north side. The park is bound on the south by Pearl Street and to the east by Adams Street. The park contains two baseball fields, a soccer field, a picnic area and several ramadas. Lions Park is a key site for community gatherings and festivals. Approximately 1/3 of the parkland is undeveloped and not easily accessible.

Apache Park. This park encompasses 1.77 acres and is bound to the south by 6th Street and to the west by Central Ave.

Benson School Campus/Playground. This area encompasses approximately 6 acres. The area's primary use is for the School District of Benson. The site contains playground equipment, fields, a combination football field/running track, tennis courts and open areas for recreation.

Benson Railroad Heritage Park. When fully developed, this area will encompass the frontage along the northern side of Fourth Street, parallel to the existing rail lines. The park will highlight the City of Benson's past and present railway heritage and will help turn the AMTRACK station into a more attractive stop.

San Pedro Golf Course. Operated by the City of Benson, the San Pedro Golf Course, an 18-hole tournament class course, is adjacent to the San Pedro River.

There is a consensus that recreation needs and conservation interests must be served in a coordinated manner. Parklands may assist in preserving natural washes, native vegetation and

other physical features. However, unique assets often require prohibition of human activity to preserve wildlife habitats or unique flora.

Municipal growth, on one hand, generates demand for open space use. On the other hand, development threatens to eliminate or degrade natural areas. The City of Benson commits to serving both purposes and there is ample land available for recreation without damaging the City's natural settings.

II. Open Space Goals & Objectives

This Element's direction addresses a spectrum of outdoor uses stretching from relatively intense recreational destinations to restricted or curtailed human access to sensitive natural areas.

Open Space Goals and Objectives respond to the broad scope of outdoor interests that are represented in the community. Active use should be carefully planned and sited. Passive enjoyment requires restraint in human outdoor activity.

Goal 1: Develop new community park facilities, leisure areas and recreational activities that appeal to a broad range of ages and interests.

Objective 1.1: Develop a Parks and Trails Master Plan to identify sites suitable for new open space, park and recreational development.
Objective 1.2: Coordinate open space improvements with economic development objectives.

Goal 2: Promote better trail access and connectivity to State and Federal holdings adjacent to the city limits.

Objective 2.1: Identify and map connecting routes, easements and land acquisition needs for potential trail routes to connect recreation areas with residential areas.
Objective 2.2: Develop multi-use, pedestrian, cycling and equestrian trail networks that effectively links parks, recreation areas and open spaces.
Objective 2.3: Promote Rails to Trails and work with rail-owning landowners for access.

Goal 3: Preserve and enhance the San Pedro River corridor natural attributes.

Objective 3.1: Increase accessibility to the area for visitors.
Objective 3.2: Plan and promote appropriate outdoor recreational activities, such as hiking, bird watching, with sensitivity to the environment.

III. Open Space Recommendations

Fundamental actions that relate Goals and Objectives to General Development Plan policy and implementation success include the following:

- Observing fundamental assurances for open lands reservation and use will enhance all other aspects of the City of Benson General Development Plan.

- Establish a Parks and Trails Master Plan to establish the hierarchy of parks -- neighborhood, community, regional; and work toward maintaining acceptable levels of park acreage, facilities/improvements, program operation and maintenance.

- Plan, acquire and develop multi-purpose pathways, trails and lineal open spaces along rivers and washes to achieve open space connectivity throughout Benson.

- Promote recreational and protected natural area assets as a primary attribute in the City's quality of life and tourism potential.

- Consider annexing fragile lands with adjacent development intended to support these preservation aims. Negotiate access to Federal Lands including holdings of Bureau of Land Management and the Coronado National Forest.

IV. Open Space Policies

1. As the growing populations' recreation space needs are met, equal or greater effort is expected in protecting and preserving natural areas in the Benson vicinity.

2. Evaluate development proposals for conformance with community open space criteria: land area, designated activity and the installation of needed access or improvements.

3. Provide incentives and encouragement to developers who include ample open space areas and meaningful public access to them in their development proposals.

4. Provide buffer space, including pathway linkages, to separate uses or intensities of use that are incompatible.

5. Work with conservation organizations and prospective developers to designate where human access to open spaces should or may be permitted.

Environmental Planning

The environment is a key factor in determining quality of life. Clean air and water, open space, outdoor recreational activity and access to public lands are seen as vital components to residents' way of life. Planning for future growth that encourages the maintenance of these amenities is important for the long-term health and quality of life of the region's residents.

I. Existing Environmental Planning Conditions

Presently, the City of Benson enjoys a high level of environmental quality. The following paragraphs provide summaries of the visual features, noise quality, air quality, environmentally sensitive areas and a brief synopsis of sensitive sites and characteristics.

Visual features. The City of Benson rests in the San Pedro Valley affording it with numerous panoramic views. The City is surrounded by the Dragoon and Little Dragoon Mountains to the east and Whetstone Mountains to the west, providing residents and visitors with a spectacular landscape. Within the planning area there are numerous bluffs and elevated areas with excellent views of the surrounding region. The amenities of open space, panoramic vistas, dark skies and low density development provide the region with its visual and aesthetic characteristics.

Noise quality. Due to the present relatively low traffic levels, modest population density and distance from major metropolitan areas, the City of Benson lacks the large-scale noise pollution problems of larger municipalities; however, there are several sources of local ambient noise. Interstate-10, due to its traffic volume, is one of the key sources of ambient noise in the area. The Union Pacific Railroad, which carries from 40 to 60 trains per 24-hour period, also contributes to the sound load of the vicinity. Increased traffic on I-10, SR 80 and SR 90—the result of increased development and population growth—will also contribute to the ambient noise level in years to come.

Air quality. Much like noise pollution, the City of Benson does not presently have an air quality problem due to its rural character, modest population and distance from major population centers. Most air pollutants emerge locally from a variety of mobile and stationary activities. Mobile pollutants include emissions from motor vehicles and aircraft, while stationary pollutants include runoff/evaporation from roadways, and wind-borne particulate matter from agricultural fields, vacant lots and construction sites. At present there are no studies of air pollution completed for Benson or the vicinity.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas. Throughout the vicinity, there are numerous washes, drainage ways and slopes. These features control erosion, provide habitat and aesthetic appeal to the area, provide natural drainage and should be maintained in their natural condition as much as is possible. These areas have the potential for natural open space use, trail development and equestrian use.

Many sites throughout the city limits and in the San Pedro Valley are of a pristine and sensitive nature. These areas include the hillsides, particularly those with slopes greater than fifteen percent and the San Pedro River itself. The presence of wildlife and vegetation common to the

region contribute substantially to the aesthetics, rural atmosphere and overall identity of the community and vicinity.

Large tracts of undeveloped land within the city limits, currently zoned for residential, mixed use and industrial development with open spaces areas, provide tremendous potential for trail network development, natural areas for bird watching, hiking, equestrian use, wash corridor preservation and open-space retention.

II. Habitat & Sensitive Area Summary

A. Kartchner Caverns State Park. A key feature of the City of Benson's immediate region is Kartchner Caverns State Park. The underground system features a wet "living" cave which has been identified as highly-sensitive to external disturbances affecting its water levels, temperature and internal humidity levels.

B. San Pedro River Valley. The San Pedro River, originating in Mexico and flowing north to its confluence with the Gila River, is perhaps one of the most unique riparian corridors in the United States. The San Pedro corridor is home to 82 species of mammals, 43 species of reptiles and amphibians and over 380 bird species. The corridor is one of the last remaining nesting sites in the United States for the southwestern willow flycatcher and western yellow billed cuckoo. The San Pedro corridor forms a crucial part of the north/south bird migration flyway connecting North America and Central/South America.

C. Significant Washes. Large tracts of undeveloped land within the city limits are bisected by numerous wash corridors. These washes are oriented to flow from the plateau and from the Whetstone Mountains eastward toward the San Pedro River channel. Several of the larger wash systems have been identified as meriting protection as wildlife corridors and many of the remaining washes provide a barrier to development due to the instability of their slopes and potential for periodic flooding.

The topography of the planning area varies widely. Although most of the area has slopes less than two (2) percent, slopes greater than fifteen (15) percent are found in the west and southwest of the City. The general watershed drainage pattern flows from the southwest to northeast, with the local washes and tributaries feeding the San Pedro system and ultimately into the Gila River.

In 2008, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency classified the majority of the planning area as falling into Zone X- areas of minimal or no flood hazard. The entire San Pedro corridor is classified as Zone A (within areas of 100 flood levels but no base flood elevations have been determined) as are a number of prominent washes flowing into it, indicating flood hazard potential.

These include:

1. Cornfield Canyon wash, flowing from the southwest, originating in the vicinity of the Skyline exit on I-10, to the northeast across the airport

2. Cadillac wash, flowing from the southwest, originating in the vicinity of the Skyline exit on I-10, to the northeast across the Ocotillo
3. Cottonwood Canyon wash, flowing from the Whetstone mountains eastward across SR 90 and SR 80
4. Dragoon Wash, flowing from the east in St. David
5. Middle Canyon Wash, flowing east from SR90 in the vicinity of Kartchner Caverns State Park, south of the current city limits-tributary of Sacaton Wash
6. Sacaton Wash, flowing east from SR90, south of Kartchner Caverns State Park
7. Mescal Creek and tributaries, originating in the Whetstone mountains and flowing east toward SR90, south Kartchner Caverns State Park

The many unnamed washes in and around the City of Benson have never been studied to determine FEMA flood classification.

III. Environmental Planning Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Work to maintain overall environmental quality of the City of Benson and its surrounding regions.

Objective 1.1: Maintain the high-level of air quality with monitoring as necessary to identify remediation or prevention actions.
Objective 1.2: Develop and maintain community programs that encourage recycling and waste reduction.
Objective 1.3: Steward water quality by preventing contamination of groundwater.

Goal 2: Protect and preserve the area's natural resource attractions.

Objective 2.1: Encourage the creation of open-space areas that emphasize the natural amenities of the San Pedro riparian corridor and protect its wildlife.
Objective 2.2: Maintain the integrity of night-sky viewing as part of the quality of life by providing guidance and regulation for public and private outdoor lighting.

Goal 3: Encourage the use of alternative energy sources.

Objective 3.1: Encourage the public and private use of renewable energy.

IV. Environmental Planning Recommendations

The following discussion reflects on the agreed upon goals and objectives and identifies issues and strategies as a transition to the specific policies that follow.

A key factor in maintaining the City of Benson's character is retaining a high-level of visual quality of the region. New developments should have careful attention paid to their potential impact on their viewshed or potential to block views and scenic features. Additionally, outdoor advertising (billboards, illuminated signs) can also impact the visual quality of an area. The City may wish to designate "sign free" areas of good views, as well as the implementation of height,

size, color and lighting guidelines to ensure that new signs serve their purpose and do not negatively impact the visual landscape.

Presently noise pollution is not a pressing issue for the City of Benson. In the coming years as increasing amounts of development occur, however, the attendant rise of automotive traffic could contribute substantially to the area's noise level. The City may wish to employ sound buffers, of either natural or fabricated materials. For Benson, natural buffer of native vegetation would be most suitable, particularly in keeping with its "small-town, Southwestern character".

Additionally, a noise quality study would be useful in establishing a "benchmark" for the present condition of noise upon which to gauge the impact of increased levels in the future.

Another defining characteristic of the Benson area is its clean and pure air. As vehicular emissions are presently low in the vicinity, the primary source of air pollutants is dust raised naturally and from traffic on unpaved roads. With the proposed solar developments in Whetstone Ranch, road and site construction has potential for increasing the vicinity's dust load. The City should encourage the timely paving of access roads to effectively reduce increased dust. Presently no air quality studies have been completed for the planning area. As with noise levels mentioned above, the City would benefit from having an air quality survey conducted to establish a present "benchmark" against which to compare future quality levels.

A reoccurring theme is the desire to retain the environmental integrity of the City of Benson and its region. Several key wash areas, slope areas and the San Pedro River have been identified as key landscape features requiring special attention. The several key washes, slopes and habitat corridors that have been identified can be successfully retained and used creatively through unique site designs, and landscaping. Viewing the natural features of the landscape as a component piece, rather than an obstacle to new developments, results in aesthetic and environmental continuity.

Retention of wash corridors addresses the concerns of environmental maintenance, habitat preservation, flood control and limiting development on unsuitable sites. These areas also hold potential for trail use and to link emerging trail systems together.

The San Pedro River has been continually identified as a defining environmental characteristic for the City of Benson and the entire vicinity. The San Pedro corridor provides wildlife habitat and potential recreational uses and will benefit by being placed in the Open Space Land Use Designation. Present access is limited from the City of Benson, due in large part by patterns of ownership along the corridor, most of which is privately owned. The City should work to minimize non-compatible land use activities in the San Pedro corridor, including high-density developments, extractive activity or activity requiring substantial landscape disturbance or manipulation. A "minimal activity" buffer zone along the corridor would serve to meet this aim.

Waste disposal is another factor in maintaining environmental quality and can serve as an educational tool for the community. Recycling works best when citizens are easily able to deposit their recycled goods at a center or centralized recycling site.

V. Environmental Planning Policies

1. Review new developments for their potential impact on view-shed areas and visual impact on the landscape in accordance with adopted design standards.

2. Identify key routes of entry and scenic highway routes and designate them "sign free" and establish guidelines for the placement of outdoor advertising to minimize the negative visual impact on the landscape.

3. Employ noise buffers of native vegetation between roadways and residential areas to reduce the noise load impact of increased traffic.

4. Develop a noise level benchmark of current conditions to compare with future noise levels.

5. Promote the timely paving of existing dirt and gravel roadways and future roads as they develop to minimize excessive levels of airborne dust.

6. Develop an air quality study to establish a benchmark of existing conditions to compare with future air quality studies.

7. New developments shall respond to the unique existing landscape features, vegetative and habitat characteristics and attributes in their design, layout and implementation.

8. Identify major wash corridors that should be encouraged for public access and recreational use, trail use and trail connectivity.

9. Designate and perpetuate the maintenance of the San Pedro riparian corridor as an Open Space Land Use Designation.

10. Minimize non-compatible land use activities in proximity to the identified wildlife corridors, environmentally sensitive areas and the San Pedro River corridor.

11. During development review, recognize slopes, large washes and habitat areas and ensure that they are sensitively and creatively worked into residential and resort designs to the greatest degree possible or left in their natural state.

12. Minimize light trespass that would hinder night-sky quality and viewing by enforcing the City lighting ordinance.

Section II: The General Development Plan Implementation Program

The City of Benson General Development Plan is intended, in all respects, to guide change. Citizens' vision for their community translates into goals, objectives and then Action Steps for each of the Plan Elements. These statements of principle then need to be carried out in practice. In this section of the Plan, strategic approaches indicate methodical application of local resources and capabilities -- working toward civic aspirations.

Four interrelated components constitute the Implementation Program, they are:

A. General Development Plan Amendment Procedures.

B. Phased Action Program that outlines step-by-step achievements to accomplish the stated Goals.

C. Plan Monitoring for measuring performance.

D. Land Use Decision Keys to assist in evaluating proposed development projects and assure their consistency with General Development Plan principles.

A. General Development Plan Amendment Procedures

The State of Arizona, in 1998 and 2000, passed statutory revisions known as "Growing Smarter" and "Growing Smarter Plus" that, in addition to other directions for municipal planning, specified that General Development Plans should not be too easy to change. Major amendments to the General Development Plan may only be considered once each year. A major amendment is defined as any change that causes "substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in the municipality's existing general plan land use element." The State of Arizona does not define a quantitative measure for the term “substantial alteration;” the following narrative is presented to assist the City of Benson in determining whether an amendment is “major” or “minor.”

Criteria for Determining Major or Minor Amendment. Distinctions between Major and Minor General Development Plan Amendments are made on the basis of the statutory directive, as applied to Benson's distinctive community character.

Defining a Major Amendment to the General Development Plan. A Major Amendment to the Benson General Development Plan is any proposal that would result in a change of such significance as to impact substantial portions of the entire city and/or its Planning Area. The criteria for determining whether or not a prospective development that differs from the adopted General Development Plan text and map will require a Major Amendment are based upon the relative size, in land area, and extent of change proposed, in terms of development intensity (e.g., dwelling density), as well as its relationship with surrounding land uses and its impact upon

public infrastructure. Criteria for determining a Major Amendment to the City of Benson General Plan include:

- A change in the Land Use Plan designation on 40 or more acres inside the City's municipal boundaries or on 160 or more acres elsewhere in the Municipal Planning Area as a recommendation to the County; or

- An increase or decrease in density of dwelling units of 50 percent or more, measured in units per acre; or

- An increase or decrease of 10 acres or more for commercial or industrial types of uses; or

- An increase or decrease of 10 acres or more for open space uses; or

- Any change to uses specified in an approved, mixed-use master plan that affects an area greater than 10 acres and/or that changes the number of dwelling units by 25% or more.

Exception: An Amendment to the Land Use Plan initiated by the property owner that results in a decrease in land use intensity will not be considered to be a major amendment.

Scheduling Major Amendments. Major amendments may only be presented once each year. Therefore, it is imperative that any and all major amendment proposals submit applications and documentation in a timely fashion. It is hereby established that all major amendment proposals must submit an application no later than May 30 of the year they wish to present their proposal. The informational meetings and public hearings will be scheduled after May 30 to ensure all applicants and elected officials can attend the various public hearings.

Defining Minor Amendment to the General Development Plan. Minor Amendments to the General Development Plan are: minor text changes; map adjustments that neither impact the Land Use Plan's balance nor meet/exceed the acreage or density measures set forth in the definition of Major Amendments.

Basis for Consideration. The staff, Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council, in evaluating any General Development Plan amendment request, shall consider the following factors:

- Does the adopted General Development Plan land use map indicate alternative areas for the uses proposed in the amendment?

- Will the proposed amendment contribute positively to the General Development Plan's goals?

- Is the proposed amendment beneficial to the entire community or does it merely benefit a particular party or interest group?

- Have there been, or are there likely to be, changes in conditions or policy changes that justify the proposed amendment?

- Will there be negative impacts on the community as a whole as a result of:
  - Significantly altering land use patterns?
  - Requiring public infrastructure improvements?
  - Generating increased levels of traffic on area roadways?
  - Adjacent land uses as a result of non-compatibility?

- Is the requested revision consistent with the overall goals of the General Development Plan?

Scheduling Minor Amendments. There is no limit on how often minor amendments may be made to the General Development Plan. Applications for minor amendments may be submitted at any time during the year. Please note that applications submitted during the second half of the year may not be acted upon until the following calendar year.

The burden is on the applicant to show how a proposed amendment supports and implements the goals and intent of the General Development Plan.

B. Phased Action Plan

The City of Benson General Development Plan vision statement contemplates improvements in the City and its surrounding area for future generations over a period of ten years or more. State statutes, however, require the Plan to be readopted at least every ten years. The Phased Actions portion of the implementation strategy focuses on the next decade, specifying commitments that may be completed between 2015 and 2025 in order to be on the way toward fulfilling this General Development Plan before the next comprehensive revision.

Stages are coordinated for start-up through Short-Term actions anticipated for the years 2015-2018; achieving major objectives under each Element during Mid-Term, 2019-2021; and expanded, Longer-Term activities from 2022 through 2025 to meet or exceed the Plan's Goals. The program is meant to be flexible. Actions may be added, redefined or deleted as circumstances require.

Each Phase is described in narrative and tabular format. Charts identify specific implementation projects with the Element to which they respond. Page references cite the relevant Action Recommendation. The required activity is noted, as well as the group or groups primarily responsible for its initiation.

Short-Term Action Steps

General Development Plan implementation effectiveness will rely heavily upon first step preparations of a strong, directed foundation for accomplishing defined planning objectives and, ultimately, achieving the goals that Benson has set. Most activities are intended to set the stage for developing quality in future projects; however, they also can provide useful guidance to plans in progress. Landowners/developers with projects already underway will benefit from their voluntary compliance with evolving improvement criteria so that their properties can compete, in terms of appearance and functional efficiency, with future development.

The years 2015-2018 should provide clear evidence of General Development Plan progress. Ideally, all steps should be fully in practice by 2018. Plan monitoring, including the yearly amendment review, will allow for adjustments in schedules, ordinance provisions and administrative procedures that enable the City to take on larger, more aggressive improvement plans during the Mid- and Longer-Term implementation phases.

Short-term Actions.

Element	Project	Required Activity	Responsibility
Land Use	Adaptive Re-Use/Infill	Inventory, select sites	Public Works, Planning
Land Use	Downtown Historic Overlay	Define Overlay District, develop guidelines	Planning, property owners
Land Use	Downtown Image	Select demonstration properties	Property Owners
Circulation	Bus Stop Enhancements	Improve visibility and comfort of existing BAT bus stops	Public Works
Circulation	Depot Access	Promote AMTRAK stop	ADOT, Union Pacific, Historical society
Economic Development	Continued service sector development Leakage/retention study	Small business assistance Assess and distribute	Planning, Chamber of Commerce, Cochise College, Economic Development
Housing	Housing Needs strategy	Coordinate programs for affordability, variety, improving stock	Housing providers, financial institutions
Housing	Property maintenance	Establish standards, assistance	Building Dept, citizens
Cost of Development	Assess Impact Fees and Utility Rates	Evaluate sufficiency, fairness	Public Works, Finance
Growth Areas	Establish Scenic Areas	Improve access to San Pedro River, Whetstone Mountain	Planning staff, Property owners
Growth Areas	State Route 90	Develop commercial nodes	Private developers
Open Space	Parks and Trails Master Plan	Assess future demand, identify key locations and connections and standards for equipment	Outdoor organizations; Parks and Rec.
Open Space	Lions Park Master Plan	Assess future demand and	Parks and Rec

		equipment needs	
Open Space	Community Center Pool and Park	Develop existing land into a pool side park	Public Works, Parks and Rec
Water Resources	Conservation education	Develop pamphlet for water bill mailings	Public Works
Growth Areas	Municipal Utility Rate Update	Utility rate study	Public Works, Finance
Economic Development	Current state, capacity and coordination of utilities in Benson	Gas, Water, and Wastewater models	Planning, Public Works
Water Resources	Water Flow and Recharge Rates	Drainage studies and water modeling	Public Works

Mid-Term Action Steps

Implementation priorities in the mid-term (three to five years) focus on creative approaches for installing planned improvements. Economic development and employment opportunities gain momentum as direct outgrowths of short-term infrastructure investment.

The scale of these projects will depend on available financial resources. Revenues generated by successful economic development may enable the City of Benson to expedite capital investment, begin to subsidize incentive programs and undertake more aggressive open space/recreation improvements.

Evaluations of General Development Plan implementation effectiveness will enable public determination, possibly in a City Hall forum (held as the Mid-Term commences), whether adjustments are needed in the Action Steps priority. Essential programs, such as infrastructure improvements, are "givens." But other enhancements dealing with environment, open space preservation and outdoor enjoyment must also move forward, even if funding resources are limited.

Mid-term Actions.

Element	Project	Required Activity	Responsibility
Land Use	Fourth Street Redevelopment	Create renovation incentives	Planning, Chamber of Commerce, ADOT
Circulation	Ocotillo Street	Improved design and maintenance	ADOT, Public Works, Planning
Economic Development	Retain labor force	Skilled training	Cochise College, Private sector Economic Development
Economic Development	Attract non-traditional economic development	Promote tourism, cross-community specialization	City, Economic Development organizations,

			Chamber of Commerce
Housing	Affordable/Infill Incentive	Provide economies of scale, trade-offs	Planning, Building Dept developers, homebuilders
Growth Areas	Airport Access	Improve roadway surface	Public Works
Growth Areas	Airport Park	Market and Improve Airport area	Public/private joint venture
Open Space	Parks and Trails Master Plan	Install improvements	Outdoor organizations, Planning, Parks and Rec
Environmental Planning	View Shed Protection	Designate scenic corridors, signage limitations	Planning
Circulation	Commercial thoroughfares	Improve Ocotillo Street	Public Works
Water Resources	Provision of water to residents	Hydro-chemical studies and interlinking tanks	Public Works
Open Space	Park Improvements	Lions Park & Apache Parks improvements	Parks and Rec; civic groups
Open Space	Senior Center	Improved programs & services	Parks and Rec; private organizations

Longer Term Action Steps

From six to ten years after General Development Plan adoption, and beyond, major projects begun during the short- or mid-term Action Plan phases will likely take on new directions. Emphasis would be on completion so that the next Plan readoption, required by State statutes at least every ten years, can begin on a solid foundation of infrastructure and preserved open space: streets and water/wastewater improvements in place; open lands acquisition; Downtown infill; and quality of life enhancements.

Although a full General Development Plan revision may not be needed, the annual Plan Amendment process during 2019 or 2020, would focus on considering "mid-course" evaluations of each Plan Element. Findings may be added to the document as appendices or, as may be preferred, new or revised Elements could be adopted formally each year so that the GDP will be effectively revised in stages.

Additional Action Steps, derived from changes of conditions (including growth rate), should be considered for expanding 2022-2025 municipal planning priorities. Possible activities could include reconsidering annexation policies, further code revisions to encourage desired land uses, homebuilder-assisted residential rehabilitation or joint City-Private Sector projects.

Long-term Actions.

Element	Project	Required Activity	Responsibility
Circulation	Quiet railroad	Safety studies	Union Pacific, Public Works
Circulation	Regional Transportation	Determine need & feasibility of regional transit connection	Private sector, public subsidy
Economic Development	Industry attraction	Targeted marketing campaign	City, Economic Development organizations
Economic Development	Regional Partnering	Specifying and defining niche development	SEAGO, regional communities, Cochise Co.
Housing	Residential Rehabilitation Program	Establish housing rehabilitation grants	Grants, private sector
Environmental	Habitat Preserve	Acquire and establish San Pedro habitat preserve	Landowners, conservation groups
Water Resources	Expand available resources	Coordinate on a regional basis	Public Works, landowners
Water Resources	Expand water re-use	Recharge of groundwater resources	Public Works, landowners
Growth Areas	Utility Improvements	Line relocations and upgrades	Public Works
Growth Areas	Airport Industrial Park	Continuing site improvements to airport industrial complex	Public Works, private developers
Open Space	Western Heritage	Rodeo ground improvements	Parks and Rec; private owners

C. Plan Monitoring

Maintaining the General Development Plan is a vital function for the entire community. Leadership should use the Plan as a regular, primary, decision-making tool. City staff should apply the document's principles on a regular basis, keeping track of shortcomings to be remedied. Residents, property owners and developers need to rely on the General Development Plan and follow its directions. Together, all these stakeholders should get involved in the monitoring responsibility: oversight, updating and following Plan directions.

Plan Oversight. As the City's appointed advisors on planning matters, the Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for broad General Development Plan supervision. City staff, however, are in the best position to provide regular Plan upkeep services. Basic information about planning and development activity, especially changes in each of the Element's status, is a fundamental tool in Plan maintenance. It is essential to keep the document current.

Some practical ways for keeping the General Development Plan on track are suggested:

Map Revisions
Periodic revisions to the Land Use Plan map should be made to record: approved Major or Minor General Development Plan Amendments; annexation areas; overlay or target areas; and, where appropriate, cumulative street pattern extensions or closures, and additions or alterations to open space/pathways.

Preferably, maps would be updated on an annual basis, soon after the Amendment hearings. A continuing series of regular graphic refinements provides a valuable "time lapse" tool for observing the progress and transition (e.g., land use, housing, transportation) of implementation activities.

Text Revisions
Amendments to the narrative portions of the City's planning documents, also, should be inserted regularly into users' copies of the General Development Plan. It is not necessary to republish the document frequently. "Change pages," marked as current updates, may be prepared to replace older versions of sections that have been officially revised.

The City Clerk is charged with recording changes authorized by General Development Plan Amendments. Text revisions, as well as legal descriptions of properties involved in map amendments, should be conveyed for accurate insertion in regularly-updated Plan documents.

Record Keeping
Regular reports on Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment and other advisory bodies' activities are helpful in reflecting the City's development trends. Data on construction activities (e.g., permit valuations, housing starts, commercial square footage) are key to measuring the extent of community growth.

Plan Progress Assessment
The Planning and Zoning Commission (with staff support outlined, above, under Plan Oversight) serves as the repository for General Development Plan evaluations of success and/or shortfalls. Throughout the year, progress reviews may be conducted as discussion or decision items on the Commission's regular meeting agendas. Plan reviews should include topics such as:

Performance Measures
Changed Conditions
Annual Performance
General Plan Amendments
Quarterly Reviews.

Explanations for each review function are offered in the following sections.

Performance Measurement
Overall attention to General Development Plan Goals can be rated for each Plan Element on a simple 1 to 10 scale; 1 being the lowest rating "no attention, seriously deficient"; 10 being "well

ahead of schedule". A cumulative average of 6 or better may be regarded as a satisfactory rating, although a target of 8 represents preferred superior Element performance.

Each Action Step on the current Phase chart (e.g., Short-, Mid-, Longer-Term) could also be evaluated. A maximum of 5 points may be awarded for any item. 0 = no attention; 1 = limited progress; 2 = preliminary or draft work transmitted; 3 = partial completion, preliminary results achieved; 4 = completed, ready for implementation; 5 = completed, implementation underway.

Changes of Conditions

Unforeseen circumstances, such as a major development proposal or a severe economic downturn, should be entered into the progress measurement equation. Critical needs -- infrastructure extensions or repairs, responses to flooding or other natural occurrences -- would require reallocation of planning and funding priorities.

When "brushfire" requirements alter the City's use of resources toward the General Development Plan implementation, the diversion of effort should be noted in ratings and reports of progress. Flexibility is a key concept in Plan implementation. When opportunities present themselves, the City will be prepared to take advantage of them. Mid-year briefing reports from staff or citizen groups could indicate possibilities for natural resource preservation, tourism attraction or economic development that might be enhanced by additional, special implementation initiatives. With City Council approval, any such prospect may merit a reevaluation of planning efforts to benefit from previously unforeseen options.

Annual Report

The Planning and Zoning Commission should issue a concise report each calendar year on General Development Plan progress. A record of recent accomplishments, including development activity and major municipal improvements, should be summarized. An overview of Action Recommendation progress, together with a statement of activities anticipated for the upcoming year, should be included. The report may also provide information on building permits, code enforcement and disposition of applications to boards, commissions and Council. Data regarding acreages and/or dwelling units rezoned or developed over the past year, according to use type, would be particularly relevant.

D. Land Use Guidelines and Decision Keys

General Development Plan implementation is an incremental process that includes all plans and improvements to property within the City of Benson. Each property, when it is built upon, redeveloped, or revitalized, can make a positive contribution to achieving the City’s goals. By observing simple principles in construction projects, property owners will be assured that their homes or businesses meet community standards -- and that other land uses in the neighborhood are, likewise, encouraged to maintain higher levels of quality.

Criteria for assessing various types of development may be applied as guides to decision-making by the City Council, its advisory boards and commissions (especially the Planning and Zoning Commission), and City staff. These guidelines may be incorporated, as appropriate, into

municipal codes or may be added to or refined in practice without requiring formal GDP Amendment.

Residential Keys. Quality, affordability and variety represent desirable objectives for upgrading the City's housing stock. Guidelines are to be adapted in economically-feasible ways, to apply to infill projects.

Street access – should be provided by an appropriately-surfaced dedicated public roadway or accepted private street for each dwelling unit, with paved areas for parking and maneuvering. Developments with multiple dwellings should have a minimum of two points of emergency ingress-egress.

Pedestrian connections – should include sidewalks in higher density neighborhoods; however, for most new, planned residential areas, multi-purpose pathways, improved to acceptable standards and designed to link with the community pathway system for pedestrian connection to schools, shopping or other activities, are preferred.

Useable open space – subdivisions or complexes planned for multiple dwellings should consider allocating recreational space (which may include pathway linkages) in proportions similar to those required in planned residential developments.

Appearance themes – where tract development occurs, residential designs should reflect variety in house plans and elevations with ample use of native landscaping to emulate Benson's desired "custom housing" image.

Commercial Keys. Retail, service and office establishments are highly visible. They also attract traffic. Appearance and safety considerations may be combined with creative site planning:

Gateway properties – reflect on Benson's image, should contribute to appearance themes through landscaping, signage and architectural character.

Street access – provides direct ingress/egress from a public arterial or collector roadway. Properties five acres or greater in area should have two or more access driveways.

Parking and maneuvering – retail, food service and other hospitality industry uses, especially, should design street-side setbacks, to separate entry points from parking areas. Handicapped facilities are required.

Pedestrian connections – are encouraged to link with community path or sidewalk systems. Centers including multiple or larger establishments should design walkways between stores/designated pedestrian ways in parking lots to separate customers on foot from vehicular traffic.

Screening and landscaping – low-water use landscape materials may be planted at the upper edges of drainage swales for appearance purposes, with more dense vegetation or block walls

along rear and side property lines that abut residential areas to screen portions of the property containing outdoor storage, loading or parking areas.

Signage – Signs should be well designed as part of the overall site décor and should be no larger than necessary to convey their message. Signs must be in compliance with all applicable code provisions. Business signs may be placed near entry driveways in landscaped setback areas.

Industrial/Employment Keys. Industrial and heavy commercial sites should be designed to accommodate current business purposes and employee convenience; but, also, to facilitate possible future expansion. Different appearance criteria could apply and would depend upon location such as highway frontage, the Airport Complex and, especially, adjacent to residential zoning***.***

Site planning – required on all projects, with general siting concepts shown for future construction phases.

Street access – may be by privately-maintained roadway or driveway directly served by public arterial or collector street frontage. Special paving considerations may be required for operations involving heavy vehicles.

Parking and maneuvering – dust-proofing and surfacing should be provided as appropriate to the industrial use and its surrounding area; designated parking, loading, storage and maneuvering areas should meet all zoning requirements with additional improvements if necessary for the number and types of vehicles required by the proposed use and its employees.

Water consumption – measured in terms of available municipal resources should relate positively with the contribution made by the industrial use to the local economy. Water-use processes should be encouraged to employ effective water recycling techniques.

Employee amenities – protecting health and safety of workers are regarded as necessary; facilities for work breaks or after-shift recreation are desirable, particularly in conjunction with City or civic organization joint use possibilities.

Public or Institutional Use Keys. ***The*** City of Benson projects should lead by example. Municipal uses, schools, churches, government agency or civic organization properties may be exempt from some code requirements; however, they should attempt to follow the Decision Keys. The public library is an excellent existing example in terms of building design, landscaping and pedestrian access.

Site planning – to present an orderly, attractive appearance; architectural and landscaping excellence are encouraged.

Street access – should be appropriate to the function and scale of the public or quasi-public use. High traffic generators should be expected to observe commercial location standards.

Parking and maneuvering – areas may be designed to facilitate periods of peak use at the facility, including the designation of temporary vehicular use areas and/or joint use with nearby properties for special events.

Community amenities – should be considered, particularly pathway connections. Useable open spaces should be scaled to the property: playground or tot lot, picnic ramadas, court games.

Mixed-Use Development Keys. Plans for larger developments that include non-residential uses should observe the keys for each type of use -- as well as taking the opportunity to design features that further enhance safety, marketability, convenience and distinctive appearance.

Street access – entry monumentation is recommended for development identification and for each separate residential neighborhood. A sign theme package is desirable.

Pedestrian connections – should include linkages to the pathway system especially from the development's residential areas to its open space, shopping, employment components and to nearby schools or churches.

Useable open space – preferably exceeds planned development standards, with added area to serve recreation and leisure needs of employment, shopping and institutional uses. There should be a centrally-located, joint-use park (or pathway access leading to the park) within 600 feet of each home or business.

Streetscape themes – may be used to identify individual neighborhoods and non-residential areas with varied landscaping, lighting or street furniture.

1. Existing Conditions Technical Appendix

A. Planning Area & Historical Summary

Planning area. The Planning Area covers approximately 105 square miles of land within and adjacent to the Benson City Limits. The majority of the land is privately owned, however, substantial areas outside the City Limits are in federal and state ownership.

Until 1988, the City of Benson corporate limits encompassed 6.3 square miles. In the years since 1988, the City has undertaken a series of annexations of adjacent lands in all four directions increasing the size of the incorporated area to its present size of 41.4 sq. mi (26,496 acres).

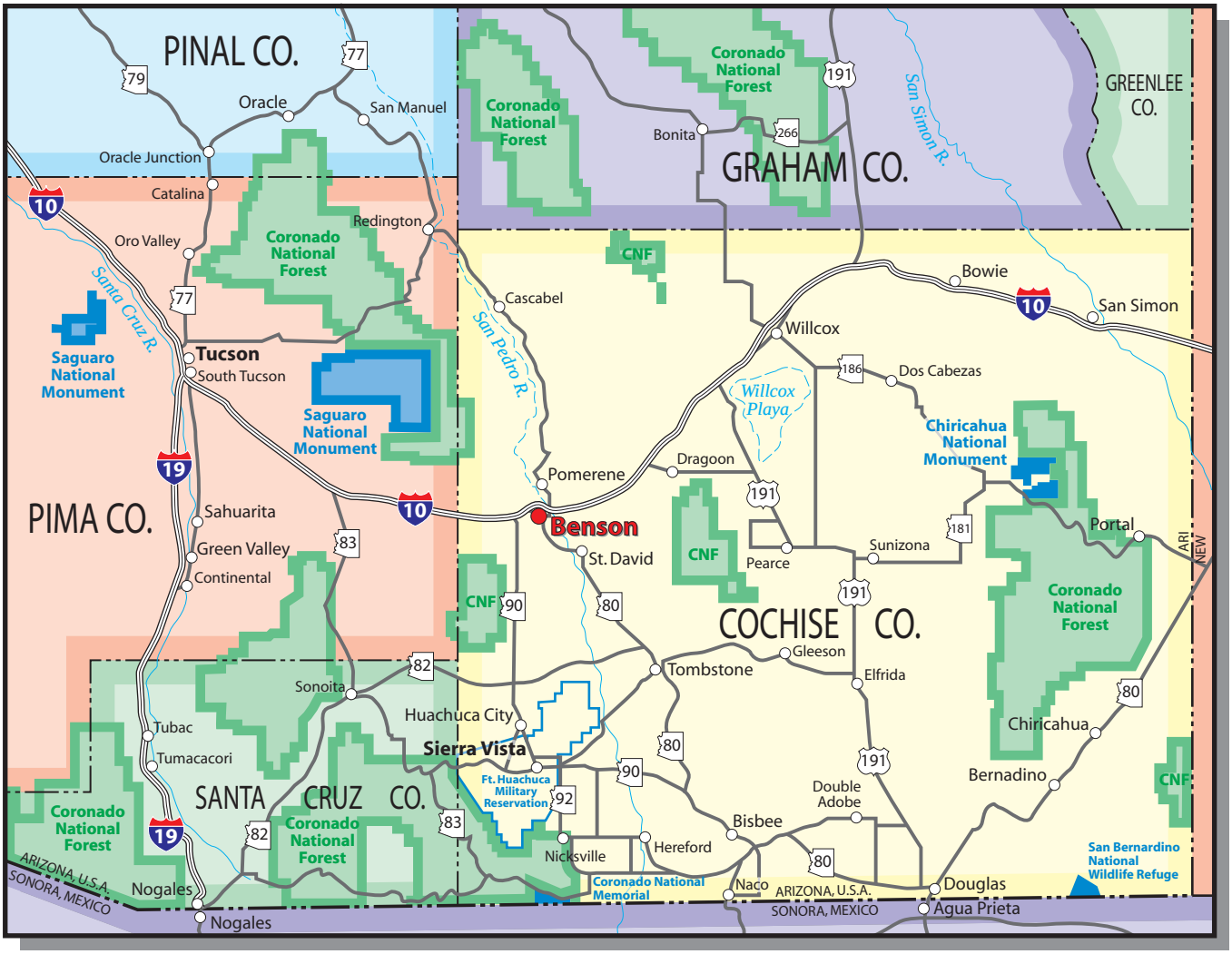
Regional setting. The City of Benson is located in the San Pedro Valley of the western portion of Cochise County, at an elevation of 3,585 feet above sea level. Cochise County is bordered by Graham County to the north, Pima County to the west, Santa Cruz County to the southwest, a small portion of Greenlee County to the northeast, the Mexican state of Sonora to the south and Hidalgo County, New Mexico to the east. The City of Benson serves as a major transportation point for southeastern Arizona. Interstate 10 (I-10) passes through the northern section of the City, and serves as a primary connector between the east and west coasts of the United States. I-10 links Los Angeles, California to Jacksonville Florida via the major metropolitan areas of Phoenix, Tucson, El Paso, Houston and New Orleans.

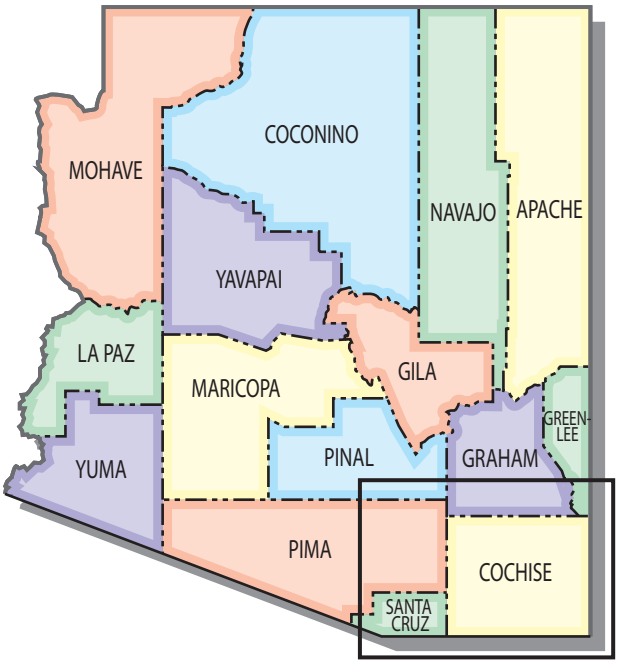
State Route 80/Fourth Street—which also serves as Benson's "Main" Street—connects Benson to Tombstone (19 miles to the southeast) and passes through St. David. State Route 90—originating on the west end of Benson at Exit 302—connects Benson to Sierra Vista and Fort Huachuca, 35 miles to the south. SR 90 also connects Benson to Kartchner Caverns State Park. Both SR 80 and SR 90 connect Benson to the southern communities of the county including Bisbee, Douglas, Sierra Vista and on to Mexico.

Table 1: Distance to Major Cities and International Border Crossings
Source: Arizona Department of Commerce

	Miles	Kilometers
Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico	88	141
Albuquerque, New Mexico	544	870
Dallas, Texas	894	1430
Denver, Colorado	840	1344
El Paso, Texas	268	429
Flagstaff, Arizona	301	482
Los Angeles, California	564	902
Naco, Sonora, Mexico	71	114
Phoenix, Arizona	156	250
Salt Lake City, Utah	980	1568
San Diego, California	458	733
San Francisco, California	945	1512
Tucson, Arizona	45	72
Yuma, Arizona	284	454

Figure 1: The City of Benson and its surrounding region





Area of main map above

Historical summary. Benson is located in the pristine San Pedro Valley and served as a regional gateway long before its incorporation as a city in 1924. Born of the union of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the mining regions of the San Pedro Valley, Benson became a rail-shipping hub for the majority of southern Arizona.

The San Pedro River contains traces of human activity dating back to 11, 000 A.D. including mammoth hunting sites and evidence of Hohokam culture habitation. The "modern" era of European contact and influence began with the arrival of the Spanish explorer Coronado, who led an expedition along the San Pedro in 1540. The Spanish presence through present-day southern Arizona increased gradually from the 1600s through the 1800s with the establishment of military posts, missions and ranches. The area was part of the Republic of Mexico from 1821 until 1853 when the United States assumed control of land south of the Gila River through the Gasden Purchase.

Following the Civil War (1861-1865) Benson began to grow. The Ohnesgorgen State Stage Depot was established in 1871, and William Ohnesgorgen erected a toll bridge over the San Pedro in 1878 helping to link the city to the developing mining camps to the south. By 1900, Benson emerged as a key regional transportation hub with an east-west rail line and the north-south overland trails.

Benson was named in honor of Judge William A. Benson, a friend of Charles Crocker, president of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The original 160-acre city was laid out in the traditional square street pattern which was bisected by the rail line. Six avenues, each named for the principal mountain ranges and rivers in the area were intersected by streets numbered one through eight. Fourth Street immediate south of the Southern Pacific rail line became the main commercial street of the young city.

The early 1900s were a period of transition for Benson and the entire vicinity. In 1910, the Santa Fe Railroad constructed a line from Nogales to Tucson moving their hub further to the north and west. In 1913, the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad merged with Southern Pacific and decreased their use of Benson as a hub, instead moving their activity to Tucson. Although Apache Powder, a former dynamite manufacturer for southwestern mines (now known as Apache Nitrogen Products and a manufacturer of nitric acid and ammonium nitrate products) began operations near Benson and never reduced its payroll, the city lost numerous businesses and subsequently saw its population drop during the years of the Great Depression.

This transitional period did, however, result in a renaissance of ranching and farming activity to the area as well as the introduction of industry. New civic activities evolved simultaneously with the emerging economic expansion and diversification. Benson's formal incorporation as a city in 1924 brought improvement such as a municipal water system, city-franchised electric power and a jail facility. In 1926, a new elementary school was constructed followed by a new high school in 1929.

Benson emerged after its loss of prominence as a railroad center with the development of ranching, farming, and industry. These activities remain important components of Benson's economy and of the surrounding region. The period of Benson serving as a local cattle town

drew to a close around the end of World War II with the emergence of post war development and extensive highway construction.

During the 1930s, the Sunset Trail was built from Lordsburg, New Mexico, running through Bowie, Willcox and Benson. This trail proved to be a revitalization of the "transportation hub" context of the city with the introduction and subsequent increase of vehicular traffic. Gas stations, restaurants, auto courts and garages arose on the main street. Highway improvements started during this time resulting in the overpass to the east of Benson in 1941 and contributed to Benson's revival as an important regional transportation hub. The transportation network remains a key feature for the City, as I-10, SR 80, SR 90, the Union Pacific Railroad and Amtrak service connects the City to the rest of the United States.

B. Physical Setting & Local Environment

Topography summary. Benson is located within the San Pedro River Valley, at 3,585 feet above sea level with the San Pedro River flowing along the eastern boundaries of the corporate limits. The river enters the city limits on the south side and exits on the northeast flowing northward toward its confluence with the Gila River in Pinal County. Benson lies between the Dragoon and Little Dragoon Mountains to the east and the Whetstone Mountains on the west. Alluvial fans extend from these mountains spreading out through the valley. Due to past erosion the river channel has been lowered and the alluvial deposits have eroded away leaving the valley varying from one to three miles in width. Within the valley, knolls and ridges composed of alluvial fan and ancient lake-bed sedimentary materials are also undergoing gradual erosion.

The edge of the San Pedro Valley is marked by a steep line of bluffs ranging 50 to 100 feet in height. This line is very irregular and deeply cut by both narrow and steep side-canyons and drainage channels extending back several miles toward the mountains.

Climatic data summary. Benson has the general climate conditions of a arid region. The City's elevation provides for cooler temperatures than are found in the Sonoran Desert environment to the west. The following table summarizes Benson's monthly and annual temperature and precipitation.

Table 2: Average Monthly Weather Characteristics
Source: Benson Economic Outlook 2013

Month	Avg. Daily Max. Temperature	Average Daily Min. Temperature	Average Total Precipitation in Inches
January	65°	30°	1.18”
February	68°	32°	1.20”
March	73°	35°	0.90”
April	81°	40°	0.36”
May	91°	47°	0.31”
June	100°	56°	0.30”
July	99°	65°	2.66”
August	96°	65°	2.66”
September	93°	58°	1.30”
October	84°	46°	0.99”
November	73°	35°	0.68”
December	64°	29°	1.18”

Archaeology. Due to the extent of human habitation in the vicinity (including indigenous, early European and resident American transient and settlement activities) there is a high probability of archaeologically significant sites in the area; particularly in the San Pedro River Corridor. The Arizona State Museum maintains a full inventory of known sites in the state and should be consulted as the primary source of information on archaeological resources in and adjacent to Benson.

Soils summary. Alluvial deposits, which consist of water-worn grade and finer soil material, overlay earlier lake-lain deposits. The depth of this material near the river is a few feet, but increases in depth toward the mountains.

The ridge to the south of the city was formed by the cutting of the San Pedro River and its tributaries and serves as the boundary of the Illonian alluvium fan and the Kansan valley-filled deposit. The valley is covered with material ranging in depth from 0 to 50 feet near the lower section of the ridge, while the depth ranges from 10 to 30 feet thick near the upper section.

There are 20 broadly defined soil groups within the City of Benson area, according to the soil survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. These soils are listed by type in the following table:

Table 3: City of Benson Soils

Group	Description	Texture	Character	Slope
1A	Silt loam	Fine textured sub-soil	Saline	0 to 2% slope
1B	Silty clay loam	Fine textured sub-soil	Saline	0 to 2% slope
1C	Silt loam	Fine textured sub-soil	Saline	2 to 5 % slope
1D	Silty clay loam	Fine textured sub-soil	Saline	2 to 5 % slope
2A	Gravelly loamy sand	--	Overflow	2 to 5 % slope
3A	Gravelly sandy loam	--	--	2 to 5 % slope
4A	Silt loam	Reddish brown fine textured sub-soil	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
4B	Silty clay loam	Reddish brown fine textured sub-soil	Saline-alkali	2 to 5 % slope
5A	Clay loam	Dark grayish brown fine textured sub-soil	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
5B	Clay loam	Dark grayish brown fine textured sub-soil	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
6A	Silt loam	Moderately deep over clay	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
6B	Loam	Moderately deep over clay	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
7A	Silt loam	--	Saline-alkali	0 to 2% slope
8A	Gravelly loamy sand	--	--	5 to 20% slope
9A	Gravelly sandy loam	Moderately fine textured sub-soil	--	2 to 5 % slope
10A	Gravelly loam	Moderately fine textured sub-soil	--	2 to 5 % slope
11A	Rough broken land	--	--	--
12A	Gullied land	--	--	--
RV	River wash	--	--	--

Table 4: City of Benson, Soil Group Development Constraints

Group(s)	Septic tank absorption field	Sanitary landfill suitability	Limitation for foundations	Corrosion potential
1A, 1B, 1C, 1D	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	High
2A	Slight to moderate	Slight to moderate	Severe	Slight
3A, 3B	Slight to moderate	Slight to moderate	Severe	Slight
4A, 4B	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Severe
5A, 5B	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Severe
6A, 6B	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Severe
7A	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Severe
8A	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Moderate to Severe	Slight
9A	Moderate	Suitable	Moderate	Light
10A	Moderate	Suitable	Slight	Slight
11A	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Slight
12A	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Slight
RV	Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Severe	Slight

Vegetation. The USDA Soil Conservation Service classifies this area under the broad description of "Southern Desert Scrub". The San Pedro Valley is included in this category, with the higher valley areas classified as "Grassland". The mountainous areas defining the San Pedro Valley are of the "Juniper-Pinyon or Oak-Woodland" category. Within the mountainous areas, pockets of "Northern Desert Scrub" are also present.

Southern Desert Scrub. The category includes species of mesquite *(Prosopis velutina)* and various grass species. Areas of grassland, specifically in the cooler, higher regions include sagebrush *(Artemisia filifolia, Artemisia tridentata)*, shadscale *(Atriplex confertifolla, Artiplex canescens)* and wild rye *(Leymus racemosa, Leymus triticoides).* Emory Oak *(Quercus emori)* and agave *(Agave)* plants can also be found.

***Juniper-Pinyon*.** This category includes the juniper *(Juniperus deppeana, Juniperus monosperma)*, pinyon *(Pinus edulis)*, scrub oak *(Quercus tubinella)*, and sumac *(Cercocarpus montanus).* "Northern Desert Scrub" areas are a broad mixture of scrub oak and other vegetation from the "Oak Woodland" and "Grassland" associations.

In addition to these specific vegetative associations, there are also multiple species within Benson and the San Pedro Valley area. Cottonwoods *(Arctostaphylos patula, Arctostaphylus pungens)* and other tree, bush and grass species flourish in areas receiving more water.

C. Population & Demographics

Analysis of current and future demographic trends is crucial to understanding the composition of the existing and developing housing market. Review of existing conditions and future trends aid in estimating the demand for varying types of housing at varying costs and conditions that may impact housing quality.

Population. The trend for the past 40 years in the City of Benson has been one of moderate growth, with the City experiencing a net growth of 2,266 inhabitants between 1970 and 2010. This growth, however, has not been continuous; the city lost population (a loss of 366 inhabitants) between 1980 and 1990. The city's population rose to 5,105 by Census 2010, and is projected to continue to increase.

Between Census 2000 and Census 2010, the City of Benson had a lower level of growth than that experienced by the State of Arizona and Cochise County. Between 2000 and 2010, the city's population increased by approximately 8.36% in comparison to the state's rate of 24.59% and Cochise County's 11.54% increase. Excepting Sierra Vista, all other local jurisdictions had a lower growth rate than Benson.

Table 5 illustrates the past population (1970 through 2010) and several future population projection scenarios through the year 2040. One projection was provided by the State of Arizona Department of Economic Security (2006) and the three scenarios (high, moderate and low) were generated internally. The **high** projection is based on the 40-year growth trend from 1970-2010 (approx. 20% per decade); the **moderate** projection is based on the most recent 2000-2010 growth rate of approximately 8% per decade; and the **low** projection is ½ of the 2000-2010

growth rate (4% per decade). Clearly, the City of Benson has already surpassed all the State's long-term projections as estimated in 2006.

Table 5: City of Benson: Population & Projections, 1970-2040

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040
AZ Dept. of Commerce (2006 projection)	2,839	4,190	3,824	4,711	4,769	4,795	4,818	4,838	4,856	4,883
High	2,839	4,190	3,824	4,711	5,105	5,618	6,130	6,745	7,360	8,840
Moderate	2,839	4,190	3,824	4,711	5,105	5,320	5,535	5,765	5,995	6,500
Low	2,839	4,190	3,824	4,711	5,105	5,208	5,310	5,418	5,525	5,750

Future trends. The high, medium and low projections are all significantly higher in absolute numbers than the State projection. One factor to bear in mind in reviewing these projections is that they are simply mathematical calculations based upon linear regression analysis. The figures presented in no way determine the fixed future population numbers for a given municipality, but are to serve as a guideline and indicator based on past trends and existing data availability.

The table below illustrates the past and projected growth of the City of Benson in comparison to other Cochise County communities, the counties of Cochise and Pima, and the State of Arizona in terms of net population change and percent population change from 1970 through 2040.

Table 6: Surrounding Communities & Counties, Population 1970-2040
Sources: US Census; 2013Arizona Department of Administration Population Projection Medium Series

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
State of Arizona	1775399	2716633	3665321	5130632	6392017	7485163	8853645	10218407
Pima County	351667	531443	666880	843776	980263	1100021	1243099	1379622
Cochise County	61918	85686	97625	117755	131346	142398	157693	173377
City of Bisbee	8328	7154	6288	6090	5575	5711	5973	6107
Town of Huachuca City	1241	1661	1782	1751	1853	1835	1858	1883
St. David CDP	---	---	1468	1744	1699	1836	2074	2318
City of Sierra Vista	6689	24937	32983	37775	43888	49399	54303	59333
City of Tombstone	1241	1632	1220	1504	1380	1350	1350	1350
City of Willcox	2568	3243	3122	3733	3757	3853	4081	4315
City of Benson	**2839**	**4190**	**3824**	**4711**	**5105**	**5742**	**6707**	**7766**

Table 7: Surrounding Communities & Counties, Net Population Change 1970-2040

	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	2020-2030	2030-2040
State of Arizona	+941,234	+948,688	+1,465,311	+1,261,385	+1,093,146	+1,368,482	+1,364,762
Pima County	+179,776	+135,437	+176,896	+136,487	+119,758	+143,078	+136,253
Cochise County	+23,768	+11,939	+20,136	+13,591	+11,052	+15,295	+15,684
City of Bisbee	-1,174	-866	-198	-515	+136	+262	+134
Town of Huachuca City	+420	+121	-31	+102	-18	+23	+25
St. David CDP	---	---	+276	-45	+137	+238	+244
City of Sierra Vista	+18,248	+8,046	+4,792	+6,113	+5,511	+4,904	+5,030
City of Tombstone	+391	-421	+284	-124	-30	0	0
City of Willcox	+675	-121	+611	+24	+96	+228	+234
City of Benson	+1351	-366	+887	+394	+636	+962	+1,059

Table 8: Surrounding Communities & Counties, Percent Population Change 1970-2040

	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	2020-2030	2030-2040
State of Arizona	+53.0%	+34.9%	+39.9%	+24.6%	+17.1%	+18.3%	+15.4%
Pima County	+51.1%	+25.5%	+26.5%	+16.2%	+12.2%	+13.0%	+10.9%
Cochise County	+38.4%	+13.9%	+20.6%	+11.5%	+8.4%	+10.7%	+9.9%
City of Bisbee	-14.1%	-12.1%	-3.1%	-9.2%	+2.4%	+4.6%	+2.2%
Town of Huachuca City	+33.8%	+7.3%	-1.7%	+5.8%	-.97%	+1.3%	+1.3%
St. David CDP	---	---	+18.8%	-2.6%	+8.1%	12.9%	11.8%
City of Sierra Vista	+272.8%	+32.3%	+14.5%	+16.2%	+12.6%	+9.9%	+9.3%
City of Tombstone	+31.5%	-2.5%	+23.5%	-8.9%	-2.2%	0%	0%
City of Willcox	+26.3%	-3.7%	+19.6%	+.64%	+2.6%	+5.9%	+5.7%
City of Benson	+47.6%	-8.7%	+23.	+8.4%	+12.5%	+16.8%	+15.8%

Comparison to regional trends. The decade from 1980 to 1990 saw growth at the state and county levels; however, the small and moderate sized cities in Cochise County (including Benson, Bisbee, Tombstone and Willcox) all experienced a downturn in population during this decade. An exception to this trend was the continued, pronounced growth of the City of Sierra Vista. The City of Sierra Vista's dramatic expansion is due primarily to its annexation of Fort Huachuca in 1971 and its continued growth. The following decade of 1990-2000 saw moderate growth for most communities in Cochise County, as well as for the State and Cochise County. Only Bisbee and Huachuca City lost population between 1990 and 2000. The most recent decade of 2000-2010 saw growth across the State and County while individual jurisdictions had highly varied growth and loss rates. Benson had the most growth, in terms of both absolute numbers and percentage, in Cochise County, excepting the City of Sierra Vista.

Population summary. Even without the presence of master planned communities, the City of Benson is projected to experience continued population growth in the coming years. Though there are no master planned communities currently proposed, Benson certainly has the land area to develop multiple master planned areas. Any development of master planned areas will certainly serve to change Benson from its present position as a traditional small-southwestern town to a key regional center for northern Cochise County and will certainly set the stage for the development of new retail, commercial, industrial and recreational growth.

Demographic trends. Another factor in examining population is the composition and demographic structure of the population. Anticipated changes in the age structure often require increased need or demand for different types of housing, school and municipal facilities, day care/child care, elderly care facilities and related programs

The table below reveals the absolute number, net change and percent change of five age groups for the City of Benson from the 2000 and 2010 Census.

Table 9: City of Benson, Demographic Structure 2000-2010
Source: US Census

	2000	2010	Net Change	Percent Change
Age 24 and under	1235	1233	-2	-0.2%
Age 25 to 34	347	483	+136	+39.2%
Age 35 to 54	1083	1007	-76	-7.0%
Age 55 to 64	665	785	+120	+18.0%
Age 65 and older	1381	1597	+216	+15.6%
Total Population	4711	5105	+394	+8.4%

Despite the overall growth in population, inhabitants aged 35 to 54 experienced a net decline. All other age brackets either increased or remained very stable. The following trends—common to many areas of rural Arizona—may be inferred about the City of Benson from this data. .

The City of Benson is experiencing a **net gain of inhabitants between ages 25 and 34:**
Young adults may be having difficulties obtaining employment and so may be remaining in the family home longer, either while searching for work or obtaining education. There may be more entry-level opportunities locally, where potential employers may personally know an individual applicant. The current economic situation may be limiting young adults' financial ability to move out on their own and the boomerang phenomenon may also be at play, moving young adults back into their parents' home. Young adults may also be starting their own families and deciding to remain in Benson rather than move to the "big city."

The City of Benson is experiencing a **net loss of inhabitants between ages 35 and 54:**
This age bracket is during the prime working years and implies adults may be leaving to follow mid-level and higher employment opportunities elsewhere.

The City of Benson is experiencing a **net gain of inhabitants ages 55 and older:**
Older adults, nearer to or in retirement, may be attracted Benson's warm climate and lower cost

of living. Multi-generational families are also becoming more common, with older adults moving in with their adult children and grandchildren.

Demographic impact of master planned communities. As is well known in Arizona, master planned communities tend to attract upper-middle to high-income couples and families. Additionally, substantial numbers of people seeking master planned community properties are retirees. While the development of master planned communities along State Route 90 would serve to be a tremendous benefit to the city in economic terms, it must also be understood that the city needs to retain the viability of the existing city core. As identified above, the city has experienced a net loss of 35 to 54 year olds—one of the prime working age and family age categories. Concurrently, there has been a pronounced increase in residents 55 and over. The development of the master planned communities may serve to accelerate these trends if the communities focus on residential, rather than job creating master plans, and could potentially leave Benson drained of a working-age population. In terms of housing, master planned communities infrequently offer low income homes, as elite homes command larger prices. This may hinder the younger, entry level 25-34 year old demographic who often have a lower income working-family's ability to secure housing within their price range and cause them to seek residency elsewhere.

Race and ethnicity. The following table delineates the racial breakdown of the City from the past two Census counts.

Table 10: City of Benson, Racial Composition, 2000-2010
Source: US Census

	2000	**2010**
White (incl. Hispanics)	4,208	4,481
African-American	34	51
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	61	49
Other Asian	22	9
Chinese	1	0
Filipino	12	14
Japanese	3	3
Korean	5	9
Vietnamese	0	2
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1	8
Other	268	296
Two or more races	112	183

D. Municipal Facilities & Services

Public services and facilities for the City of Benson include public safety, city administration, education, parks and recreation and municipal utility service. Existing facilities and services are discussed below.

Municipal water system. Domestic water is presently provided throughout the developed portions of the City of Benson. Twelve (12) storage tanks are distributed throughout the city with a total storage capacity of 3,746,000 gallons. Current pumping capacity is 4,100 gallons per

minute from 8 active wells (five potable water wells 3400gpm, one irrigation wells 200gpm, two transient non-public wells 500gmp). The average well depth is approximately 1,000 feet. Trunk lines range between 6" to 18" diameter. New lines are continually being added to the system. In March 2009, the City of Benson acquired the Sue Juan distribution system which served 76 customers in the San Pedro Addition subdivision in Benson. The City improved the Sue Juan infrastructure during the year 2009.

Gas and electricity. Among others, electricity is presently generated and supplied by Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. which is headquartered in Benson. Distribution services are provided by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., which maintains a branch office in Benson.

Natural gas is provided to the City of Benson by Shell Corporation via KinderMorgan with prices locked in for a set duration.

Police protection. The City of Benson Police Department is headquartered with the Fire Department in central Benson. The department employs 14 sworn officers including the police chief, three detectives, two sergeants, two corporals and one canine unit. Non-sworn personnel include 5 full-time dispatchers, 2 administrative personnel and 2 animal control officers. The Department maintains a fleet of 21 vehicles, including 3 off-road vehicles. The Benson Police Department maintains two temporary holding facilities. Jail facilities are located at the county seat in Bisbee.

Fire protection. The City of Benson Fire Department operates as a combination fulltime/volunteer department with 1 paid Fire Chief and 26 volunteers. The department maintains nine emergency apparatus: 2 structure engines, ladder company, rescue vehicle, 2 brush engines, tender, support vehicle and command vehicle. The department responds to all fire related emergencies in the City of Benson including emergency medical calls, structure fires, brush fires and hazardous materials calls. The department also responds to road emergencies surrounding the community. The Fire Department participates in the Cochise County mutual aid program, which includes all the fire departments within the county. The City of Benson holds an ISO 5 Fire Protection rating.

Hospital service and medical facilities. Benson is currently serviced by a 22-bed, 24-hour service hospital. Three primary care physicians are on rotation at the hospital, of which two also maintain private practice hours. Hospital affiliated specialists in cardiology, podiatry, orthopedics and renal care provide service on a weekly or as-needed basis. Additionally, specialists in audiology, vision, chiropractic care, and laboratory work in private practice. Two dentists provide care for city residents. Cenpatico and Community Bridages operate mental health clinics in Benson.
Benson is served by Healthcare Innovations for ambulance service. Lifeline Air Ambulance is dispatched from St. David as needed.

Library. The Benson Public Library began its existence in 1928, serving Benson and the surrounding communities. The library currently has 18 public computers with Internet connectivity and wi-fi available for personal computers. The library offers story hours for

children ages 18 months to preteens. Current circulation includes over 34,000 items including books, audios and movies. The circulation count for fiscal year 2013-2014 was 77,422 items to over 65,800 registered patrons. The library offers interlibrary loans from libraries around the county. With an expansion in 1998, total library square footage stands at 8,175.

Education facilities. The Benson Unified School District oversees the traditional K-12 primary, middle and high schools, one charter school and an online academy with total enrollment of approximately 1,300 students as of August 2014. There is one charter school in Benson that is not affiliated with the school district offering grades K-8. The neighboring communities of St. David and Pomerene offer K-12 and K-8 education respectively. Vocational courses are available from Benson High school, often in conjunction with Cochise College. Cochise College opened their 13,000 sq. ft. Benson Campus in 2000 and holds many classes and special courses throughout the calendar year.

Community center. The Benson Community Center is owned and operated by the City of Benson. It serves as a recreational outlet for residents, particularly for seniors and school age children during the summer. The facility is approximately 2,000 sq. ft. and provides space for activities, seminars and provides food service. The community pool was constructed next door to the Community Center in 2007 and is available for adult swim, swimming lessons and open community swim during the summer months. The Community Center is staffed by two full-time employees who coordinate activities between the various groups using the Center.

Wastewater treatment. The City of Benson has two wastewater treatment plants. The primary plant has a capacity of 1,200,000 gallons per day with about 700,000 gallons per day in growth capacity. The City also has a developer financed percolation plant with a capacity of 250,000 gallons per day with about 245,000 gallons per day growth capacity. The primary treatment plant effluent is used to irrigate the City's golf course.

E. Recreation and Tourism

Recreation summary. The City of Benson hosts a range of community facilities including parks, an 18-hole golf course, a community swimming pool and community center, a bowling alley, several baseball and football fields, a running track and a soccer field. Currently there are three parks within the city limits: Apache Park is approximately 2 acres in size and is a traditional neighborhood park, while Lion's Park, covering nearly forty acres, is a community park just north of downtown. Facilities located within Lion's Park include little league baseball/softball fields, multi-use fields, volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, playground area and restrooms. Future plans call for Lion's park expansion. The third park, Veterans Park, is a linear park along the railroad tracks with monuments honoring veterans.

The City of Benson has an active recreation program for children, particularly during the summer months. The City maintains a 3 person park maintenance department and one Parks and Recreation Coordinator and an Assistant.

An intergovernmental agreement with the school district provides facilities for many of these activities, such as access to the running track and weight room, as well as fun summer classes held on

campus.

Tourism summary. Tourism is a key element in the economy of Benson, the San Pedro Valley and all of Cochise County. Tourism activity in Cochise County has slowed considerably recently due to national economic events. Much of the tourism is based on old West history, with Benson acting as the gateway to much of Cochise County. Kartchner Caverns State Park, a living cave hidden by its discoverers for 14 years, opened in 1999 and continues to act as a draw for Benson.

As of August 2014 a combination of 8 motels and hotels provided 312 rooms within the city limits. There are 16 recreational vehicle (RV) parks with 1,100 spaces available for long-term and short-term rental in Benson. During calendar year 2013, the Benson Visitor Center received an average of 770 walk-ins, 120 phone calls and 250 mail requests (usually related to the state-wide Official Visitors Guide), as well as hundreds of emailed requests for information per month.

Kartchner Caverns State Park. Discovered approximately nine miles south of the city in 1974, the Kartchner Family sold the site to the State of Arizona for designation and protection as a state park. In 1988, the Arizona Legislature approved the creation of Kartchner Caverns State Park. The 550-acre park site features the wet "live" cave where water percolates from the surface and calcium carbonate features are still growing. The cave includes one of the world's largest "soda straw" formations at 21.16 feet in length. Additionally, the park features the development of 5 miles of hiking trails, a handicapped accessible loop trail, picnic facilities, access to Coronado National Forest trail networks, camping facilities, on-site interpretive programs and exhibit area. The cave system also provides natural refuge and roosting area for between 1,000 to 2,000 *Myotis velifer* bats which roost from late April to mid-September. Kartchner Caverns averages 145,000 visitors annually, all of whom must pass through Benson.

Local Festivals and activities. In addition to the national and state parks and other tourism sites in the vicinity, Benson and the surrounding region is also host to numerous events and festivities throughout the year. These include Territorial Days (February), July Fourth (July), and Butterfield Stage Days (October) in Benson. Most nearby communities also have festivals such as Rex Allen Days (Willcox), Cascabel Christmas Fair (Cascabel), and Fiesta de la Primavera (St. David Monastery), and Helldorado (Tombstone).

2. Land Use Technical Appendix

Existing land use. In January 2012 an inventory of existing land use conditions was conducted in the City of Benson. The survey involved the mapping of existing land use activity on parcels of land within the City Limits. The purpose of the survey is to provide a "snapshot" of existing conditions as of early 2012 and to establish a base line of measurement for future land use studies so changes and trends can be better understood. Each of the categories was then mapped to illustrate their concentration and distribution within the City as is shown on the map on the following page.

All land use activities in the City were designated within one of the following five categories: commercial, residential, institutional, industrial and uncommitted/undeveloped.

Table 1: City of Benson, Existing Land Use

Land Use Category	Acreage	Square miles	Percentage
Commercial	656.5 ac.	1.0 sq. mi.	2.42%
Industrial	0.0 ac.	0.0 sq. mi.	0.0%
Residential	2,406.0 ac.	3.8 sq. mi.	9.18%
Institutional	1546.6 ac.	2.4 sq. mi.	5.79%
Uncommitted / Undeveloped	21,145.8 ac.	33.0 sq. mi.	79.71%
Major right of way	741.1 ac.	1.2 sq. mi.	2.90%
Total	**26,496 ac.**	**41.4 sq. mi.**	**100.0%**

Commercial. Commercial land was designated as any area or parcel containing mercantile, retail or other business activity, including associated parking and ancillary structures. Areas designated as "Commercial" are highlighted in red on the City of Benson Existing Land Use Map.
Commercial land use activity in Benson can be categorized into five main areas:

A. The traditional "Main Street-style" commercial core. This area extends along Fourth Street. Fifth street is also available for commercial uses, though there are few existing commercial entities at this time. The western end of Fourth Street is characterized by several strip mall type shopping centers, two of them anchored by large grocery or discount stores. East Fourth Street contains the historic downtown and is more easily accessible to pedestrians from both the northern and southern residential areas.

B. The Ocotillo Avenue commercial area. Extending from just north of Exit 304 southward toward Union Street. This area is characterized by "highway commercial" stores, national franchise operations, gas stations and retail concerns. Benson's medical facilities are located at the southern end of Ocotillo Avenue.

C. ***The Exit 302 nodal area.*** The area at the junction of I-10 and SR 90 has emerged as another "highway commercial" site with franchise stores, motels and gas stations. This site has

additional space and considerable potential for new commercial development.
D. SR 80 Corridor /Fourth Street. Nearly the entire length of SR 80—especially Fourth Street—through the corporate limits contains some type of commercial activity with the exception of the final 1.5 mile stretch that exits the City to the southeast.

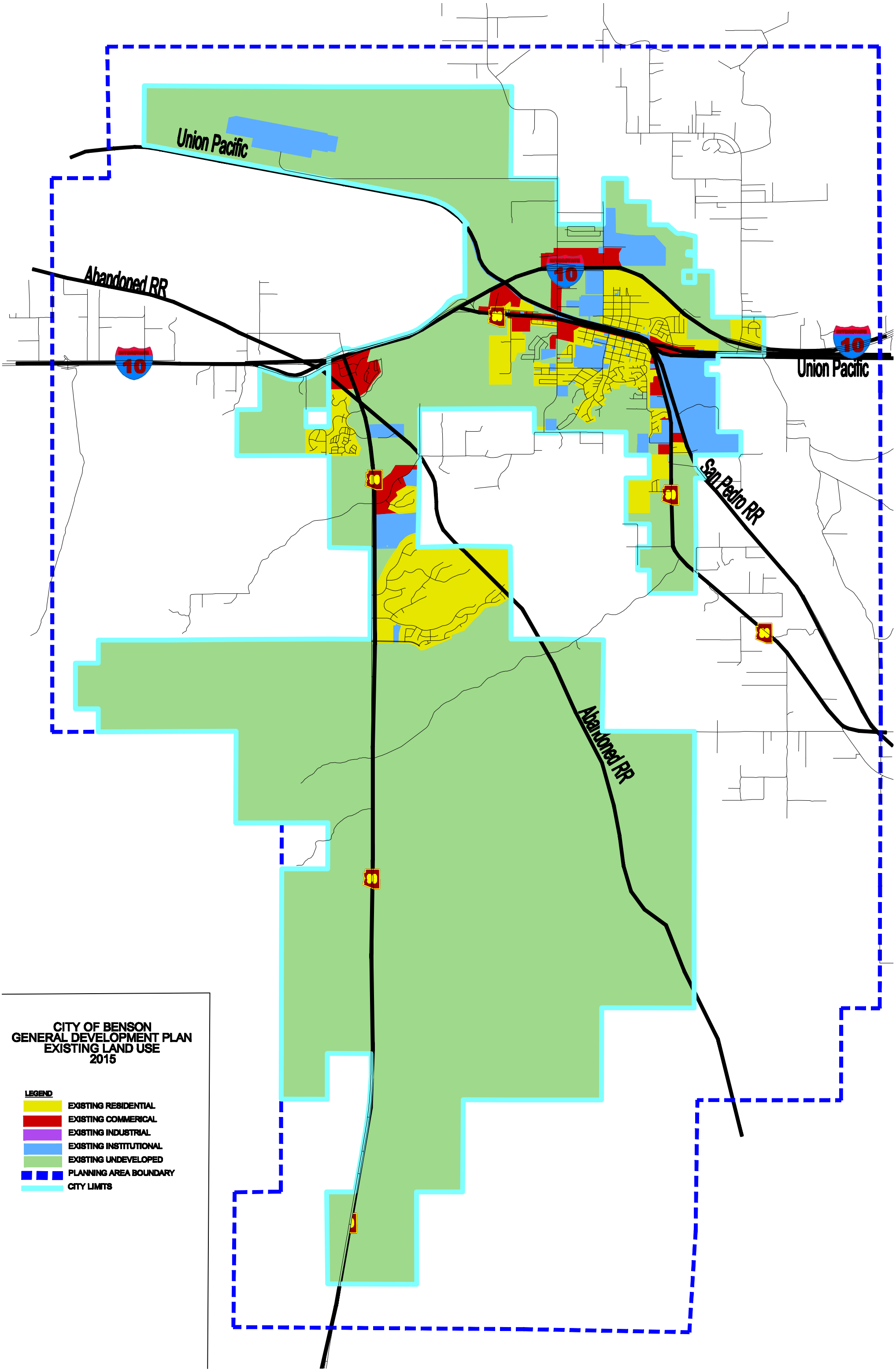
E. East End Corridor. Leading eastward out of the city on Fourth Street, this district contains numerous businesses including vehicle sales and auto repair businesses.

Undeveloped. These areas were categorized as any area or parcel presently designated undeveloped. Areas designated as "Undeveloped" are highlighted in green on the City of Benson Existing Land Use Map. As is clearly illustrated in the table, Uncommitted/Undeveloped land is by far the largest category within the City Limits. This is due to the substantial annexations undertaken by the City.

Residential. These areas were designated as any area or parcel containing single-family and multi-family dwellings, manufactured homes and their adjacent lands and ancillary uses and structures. Areas designated as "Residential" are highlighted in gold on the City of Benson Existing Land Use Map. In general, the City's residential areas are centered around and radiate from the traditional city center and Fourth Street thoroughfare. A traditional Pre-War "grid pattern" of streets and avenues radiates out from the main thoroughfare of Fourth Street (SR 80) to the north and south. Post-War (after 1945) residential development has extended from the grid into a series of curving streets and cul-de-sacs. Entirely new residential neighborhoods are visible on SR 90.

Institutional. These areas were designated as any area or parcel containing municipal and/or utility structures (natural gas fixtures, electric power substations, water tanks, wastewater facilities, etc.), municipal buildings, libraries, government structures, municipal garages, churches, schools, medical facilities and their ancillary uses and structures. Areas designated as "Institutional" are highlighted in blue on the City of Benson Existing Land Use Map. Institutional lands include areas in use by the City, the school district and related government agencies as well as lands designated for utility fixtures, municipal infrastructure, medical facilities, churches and miscellaneous land holdings which do not fit into conventional definitions of residential, commercial or industrial use. The largest contiguous institutional lands are those associated with the Benson School District (Union and Patagonia Avenue), the City's municipal wastewater treatment plant, the golf course and the railroad land holdings. Additional lands in the institutional category include the City's cemeteries, the land holdings of various church groups and governmental agencies within the city and land owned by Southern Pacific Railroad.

Industrial. At this time, there are no areas or parcels currently performing industrial activities.


Union Pacific
Abandoned RR
10
10
Union Pacific
San Pedro RR
Abandoned RR
CITY OF BENSON
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
EXISTING LAND USE
2015
LEGEND
EXISTING RESIDENTIAL
EXISTING COMMERICAL
EXISTING INDUSTRIAL
EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL
EXISTING UNDEVELOPED
PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
CITY LIMITS

3. Circulation Technical Appendix

The following table details the traffic counts taken by the Arizona Department of Transportation for major traffic areas within and around the City of Benson. Of note, these counts are an average of two-way traffic taken within discrete 24-hour periods.

Table 1: Average Daily Traffic Counts in the Benson vicinity, 2004-2008.
Source: Cochise College Center for Economic Research Benson Outlook 2013, State Highway Traffic Logs

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
I-10 Recording Sites						
1: Between Exits 302 & 303	25,400	26,088	27,631	25,221	25,500	28,000
2: Between Exits 303 & 304	16,800	17,440	16,871	16,601	17,500	18,000
3: Between Exits 304 & 306	14,900	17,000	17,831	17,546	17,000	17,500
SR 90 Recording Sites						
5: Near Kartchner Caverns entry	9,400	9,670	9,660	9,515	10,000	10,500
SR 80 Recording Sites						
6: Between Business I-10 & Country Club Rd.	9,100	10,095	10,448	10,291	10,000	10,500
7: Between Country Club Rd. & Apache Powder Rd.	6,400	7,351	7,585	7,471	7,400	7,100
8: Between Apache Powder Rd. and Sibyl Dr.	6,100	6,584	6,972	6,867	6,800	--

Table 2: Net and Percentage Change in Average Daily Traffic Count, 2005-2010.

	Net Traffic Change	Percent Traffic Change
I-10 Recording Sites		
1: Between Exits 302 & 303	2,600	9.28%
2: Between Exits 303 & 304	1,200	6.66%
3: Between Exits 304 & 306	2,600	14.86%
SR 90 Recording Sites		
5: Near Kartchner Caverns entry	1,100	10.48%
SR 80 Recording Sites		
6: Between Business I-10 & Country Club Rd.	1,400	13.33%
7: Between Country Club Rd. & Apache Powder Rd.	700	9.86%
8: Between Apache Powder Rd. and Sibyl Dr.	--	--

4. Economic Development Technical Appendix

Table 1: Employment by Category: Cochise County & City of Benson, Non-Farm Payroll

Source: Cochise College Center for Economic Research Benson Outlook 2013

Sector	Cochise County	Percentage	Percentage
Government	12,500	34.67%	9.3%
Other Services	950	2.64%	43.4%
Trade , Transportation, Utilities	6,100	16.92%	11.3%
Construction	1,350	3.74%	--
Professional, Health, Education, and Leisure Services	13,150	36.48%	25.6%
Manufacturing	625	1.73%	--
Finance, Information	1,375	3.81%	10.4%
Total Non-Agricultural Employment	36,050	100%	100%

Table 2: Number of Business Establishments, City of Benson and Vicinity

Source: Cochise College Center for Economic Research Benson Outlook 2013

Sector	Number of Firms
Services	
Educational Services	4
Health & Social Services	24
Hotels, Lodging and Food Services	32
Recreation & Amusement	7
Business Services: Management, Information , Prof/Tech	16
Other	29
Retail	
Retail Trade	35
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	
Real Estate / Rental/Leasing	13
Finance & Insurance	7
Transportation, Warehousing & Public Utilities	14
Construction	22
Government	--
Manufacturing	5
Wholesale Trade	2
Agriculture & Forestry	2
Total	212

Table 3: Estimated Households by Income in Benson
Source: 2012 American Community Survey

Household Income	Number of Households
Total Households	2,312
>$200,000	20
$150,000 to $199,999	30
$100,000 to $149,999	118
$75,000 to $99,999	165
$50,000 to $74,999	402
$35,000 to $49,999	339
$25,000 to $34,999	464
$15,000 to $24,999	377
$10,000 to $14,999	197
<$10,000	200

5. Housing Technical Appendix

The following information is provided as supplemental resource material to the Housing Element of the plan.

A. Housing Overview

As of Census 2010, the City of Benson had 2,941 housing units, reflecting an increase of 119 units from 2000. Of this total, 1,646 are owner-occupied, 723 are renter-occupied with an additional 572 listed as vacant. The relatively high rate of vacancies is attributed to the Census being conducted after many of the winter visitors to Benson had already departed.

Housing projections to 2030. As illustrated in Table 1, low, moderate and high housing unit projections for the City of Benson all indicate various rates of growth over the coming 30-year period. The **high** projection is based on the 2000-2010 housing unit growth rate of approximately 4%; this rate measures the number of housing units constructed and is irrespective of the population rate. The **moderate** projection is based on the average historical population growth of 20% per decade as occurred between 1970-2010 (Table 5 Population & Projections, high rate). The population figures were divided by the 2010 Census value of 2.18 average household size. The **low** projection is based on the projected population growth of 8% per decade as occurred during the 2000-2010 decade (Table 5, Population & Projections moderate rate). The population figures were divided by the 2010 Census value of 2.18 average household size.

Table 1: City of Benson: Housing Projections for Benson, 1990-2040
Source: US Census

	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
Total Housing Units (high model)	1,872	2,822	2,941	3,065	3,190	3,325
Total Housing Units (moderate model)	1,872	2,822	2,941	2,812	3,376	4,055
Total Housing Units (low model)	1,872	2,822	2,941	2,539	2,750	2,982

Clearly, the high projection model based strictly on housing unit construction shows consistent growth; this model does **not** rely on any population projections to determine how many persons may require housing. The moderate model, based on the 1970-2010 historical population growth rate of 20% per decade shows dramatic increase in housing units toward the end of the projection period (2040) to house the large projected population. The low model, based on the most recent measure of population growth at 8% per decade estimates the lowest number of housing units as neither the population nor the construction rate increases significantly over time.

In very broad terms, there are four types of "housing group" categories in Benson and its outlying area, these include:

- Established home-owners who are maintaining their permanent residence in the area. These residents generally work in Benson or commute to Sierra Vista, Tucson or

elsewhere for their primary employment.

- Young, low- to middle-income individuals/families in rental units who may be working toward the purchase of their first home.
- Young, low- to middle-income individuals/families purchasing starter homes.
- Seniors/retirees of middle-income purchasing a seasonal/recreational or retirement home; this is part of a larger trend of seniors/retirees moving to Arizona from outside the state. This group is seeking not only middle- to high-end quality housing units, but housing with immediate access to recreational amenities (golf courses, recreational sites) and with scenic attributes (panoramic views, mountain/open space views, access to acreage).

The development of any master planned communities will dramatically increase the housing stock in Benson; however, at this time, no master planned communities have been proposed.

B. Housing Occupancy

Housing occupancy. As is illustrated in Table 2 below, owner-occupied housing units comprise the largest percentage of total housing units in the City of Benson. Compared to 2000 data, owner occupied housing increased dramatically, perhaps in response to the subdivisions--particularly Kartchner Vista, Cottonwood Bluffs, and Cottonwood Canyon--that were built between 2000 and 2010. At the same time, renter occupied units also increased in both absolute numbers and percentage of occupied housing. The rental occupation may also be in response to the increased number of housing units available due to the new subdivisions and due to the decrease in vacancies.

Table 2: City of Benson, Housing Occupancy
Source: US Census

	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total
Total-occupied housing units	2,084	73.8%	2,369	80.6%
Owner-occupied	1,570	55.6%	1,646	69.5%
Renter-occupied	514	18.2%	723	30.5%
Vacant housing units	738*	26.2%	572*	19.4%
Total	**2,822**	**100.0%**	**2,941**	**100.0%**

** The rate of vacancies is partially attributed to the Census being conducted after many of the winter visitors to the area had already departed*.

C. Housing Unit Characteristics

Unit characteristics. Tables 3 and 4 below illustrate the number of units per structure and the number of rooms per structure respectively. The most common type of dwelling unit in Benson is a single-unit detached structure—the traditional single family home—which comprised just under one-half of the city's units in 2010 (46%), despite the percentage decrease of single family dwelling units between 200 and 2010. The second most common dwelling unit is a mobile/manufactured home, which also decreased as a percentage of total housing.

In 2010, just over one-half (53.4%) of all housing units have between four and six rooms, nearly one-third (31.2%) have one to three rooms while only 15% have seven or more rooms. The number (and percentage) of dwellings with 2 rooms grew most dramatically in the decade

Table 3: City of Benson, Units in Structure
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

	2000	% of total	2012	% of total
1, detached	1292	48.4%	1271	42.55%
1, attached	35	1.3%	39	1.3%
2	53	2.0%	15	0.50%
3 or 4	51	1.9%	106	3.5%
5 to 9	20	0.7%	55	1.8%
10 to 19	12	0.4%	100	3.3%
20 or more	55	2.1%	272	9.1%
Other	309	11.6%	241	8.1%
Mobile/Manufactured home or trailer	843	31.6%	888	29.7%
Total	**2670**	**100.0%**	**2987**	**100.0%**

Table 4: City of Benson, Housing Units, Number of Rooms
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

	2000	% of total	2012	% of total
1 room	64	2.4%	19	0.64%
2 rooms	178	6.7%	401	13.4%
3 rooms	462	17.3%	386	12.9%
4 rooms	539	20.2%	636	21.3%
5 rooms	587	22.0%	542	18.1%
6 rooms	425	15.9%	568	19.0%
7 rooms	256	9.6%	280	9.4%
8 rooms	93	3.5%	58	1.9%
9 or more rooms	66	2.5%	97	3.2%
Total	**2670**	**100.0%**	**2987**	**100%**

Age of structure. Table 5 below illustrates the eras in which the housing stock of the City of Benson were built. By 2010, more than one quarter (29.4%) of the housing stock was built in 1959 or earlier. Just over one-third of all homes (35.7%) were built between 1960 and 1989, and the remaining homes (35%) have been constructed since 1990.

Table 5: City of Benson, Year Structure Built
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

Year Structure Built	2000	% of total	2012	% of total
2000 and later	91	3.4%	768	25.7%
1990-1999	636	23.9%	514	17.2%
1980-1989	571	21.4%	244	8.2%
1970-1979	540	20.2%	598	20.0%
1960-1969	304	11.4%	165	5.5%
1950-1959	--	--	170	5.7%
1940-1949	385	14.4%	296	9.9%
1939 or earlier	143	5.4%	232	7.8%
Total	**2670**	**100.0%**	**2987**	**100.0%**

Building permits. Table 6 below shows the number of building permits issued by the City of Benson from 2009 through the year 2013. Assuming all residential permits were built and manufactured home permits were installed, on average, only 17 new residences per year were constructed in Benson from 2009 to 2013. Table 7 details the number of demolition permits issued by the City of Benson.

Table 6: City of Benson, Building Permits Issued 2009-2013
Source: City of Benson records

Permit Year	Commercial (New building)	Residential (New building)	Manufactured Home
2009	4	38	10
2010	0	29	10
2011	1	16	3
2012	0	1	0
2013	0	2	3
Total	**5**	**86**	**26**

Table 7: City of Benson, Demolition Permits Issued, 2009-2013
Source: City of Benson records

Permit Year	Commercial	Residential
2009	3	6
2010	0	3
2011	1	5
2012	1	0
2013	0	1
Total	**5**	**15**

D. Vacancy Characteristics

Vacancy summary. From 2000 to 2010, the City of Benson reported a decrease of 166 units defined as vacant. The number of units for sale or rent increased as did the number of housing units which are abandoned. The only subcategory of vacant housing units to have decreasing numbers was seasonal, recreational or occasional uses, which decreased dramatically. This decrease may partially account for the increase in housing units for sale, for rent or abandoned.

Table 8: City of Benson, Vacancy Status, 2000 and 2010
Source: US Census

	2000	2010
Vacant housing units	**738**	**572**
For sale	51	104
For rent	137	138
Rented or sold; not occupied	27	11
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	433	196
For migrant workers	1	1
Other vacant / boarded up / abandoned	89	122

E. Household Characteristics

Households. Presently, the City of Benson has 2,369 households, representing an increase of 285 from Census 2000. Despite having more households, the average household size decreased slightly from 2.22 in 2000 to 2.12 in 2010. The increase in households reflects the increase in total population. The national trend of new intergenerational households as well as non-related individuals living together for economic purposes help explain the increase in the number of households. Additionally, the new subdivisions along SR90 may be attracting households from the traditional military housing.

Reasons for the decrease in average household size may include fewer children in households, smaller household size due to an increase in single-parent households, and the general on-going trend of smaller households. Another possibility is that larger families with children are choosing to live on larger, rural properties outside the city limits.

Family households comprise over one-half of all households in the city at 59.3 percent. While family households comprise the largest share of households, non-family/single person households and households containing individuals aged 65 and older have all reported increases since 2000. As the City's population ages, the needs and demand for housing may change away from traditional 4, 5, and 6 room single-family homes to smaller housing units such as townhouses, apartments and other compact dwelling units. Note that Table 4 Housing Units, Number of Rooms shows two room units have increased dramatically between 2000 and 2010.

Table 9: City of Benson Households, 2000 & 2010
Source: US Census

	2000	% of total	2010	% of total
Number of households	2,084	--	2,369	--
Persons per household	2.22	--	2.12	--
Family households	1,374	64.6%	1,404	59.3%
With own children under 18	394	18.9%	401	16.9%
Married-couple family	1073	51.5%	1071	45.2%
With own children under 18	249	11.9%	240	10.1%
Female householder; no husband present	191	9.2%	230	9.7%
With own children under 18	94	4.5%	102	4.3%
Male householder; no wife present	110	5.3%	103	4.3%
With own children under 18	--	--	59	2.5%
Non-family households	737	35.4%	965	40.7%
Householder living alone	625	30.0%	830	35.0%
Householder 65 years and older	363	17.4%	479	20.2%
Households containing individuals aged 65 and over	944	45.3%	1118	47.2%

Table 10: City of Benson Households by Age of Householder, 2000 & 2010
Source: US Census

	2000	% of total	2010	% of total
Total population	4,711	100.0%	5,105	100.0%
Persons in households	4,620	98.1%	5,031	98.6%
Persons in group quarters (non-household)	91	1.9%	74	1.4%
Householders (owner-occupied units)	1,570	---	1,646	---
15 to 24 years	11	0.1%	20	1.2%
25 to 34 years	66	4.2%	98	6.0%
35 to 44 years	151	9.6%	122	7.4%
45 to 54 years	255	16.2%	194	11.8%
55 to 64 years	309	19.7%	343	20.8%
65 to 74 years	431	27.5%	443	26.9%
75 to 84 years	279	17.8%	316	19.2%
85 years and older	68	4.3%	110	6.7%

Table 11: City of Benson, Household Type and Relationship
Source: US Census

	2000	2010
Family householder	**1347**	**1404**
Male	1054	1174
Female	293	230
Non-family householder	**737**	**965**
Male, Living alone	274	372
Female, Living alone	351	458
Total Households	**2084**	**2369**
In group quarters	**91**	**74**

Table 12: City of Benson, Family Type by Presence of Children
Source: US Census

	2000	2010
Total Families	1347	1404
With own children under 18 total	394	401
Married-couple families	1073	1071
With own children under 18 years	249	240
Female householder families, no husband present	191	230
With own children under 18 years	94	102
Male householder families, no wife present	93	103
With own children under 18 years	51	59

F. Housing Value

Housing value. Table 13 lists the median home value of owner-occupied housing units. The median value of home prices across the city, county and state all rose between 2000 and 2010. The median value of a home in Benson in 2010 nearly reached the median value of a 2000 Cochise County home and 2010 Cochise County median values surpassed the 2000 median state value.

Table 13: Average Housing Value
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

	Median Value of Home (2000)	Median Value of Home (2012)
City of Benson	$72,800	$94,000
Cochise County, Arizona	$88,200	$151,800
State of Arizona	$121,300	$175,900

The majority of homes sold between July 2013 and July 2014 in the City of Benson averaged a sale price of $86,412 *(flexMLS).* The median sale price of a home in the City of Benson during the same period was $87,750 *(flexMLS).*

Table 14: City of Benson, Housing Values
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

	2000	2012
Owner-occupied housing units	**778**	**1665**
Less than $50,000	161	527
$50,000 to $99,999	471	402
$100,000 to $149,999	140	189
$150,000 to $199,999	6	338
$200,000 to $299,999	0	133
$300,000 to $499,999	0	0
$500,000 to $999,999	0	76
$1,000,000 or more	0	0
Median	$72,800	$94,000

Table 14 shows that the vast majority of housing in Benson is valued at under $99,999 (1002 units versus 614 units valued at $100,000 or above). That makes 2/3 (67%) of the owner occupied housing values affordable to the families having an income at or above the Cochise County mean family income of $61,380.

Table 15: Home Sales by Price in Benson Area
Source: flexMLS

Price Range	2000	2010	7/13-7/14
$29,999 and below	14	1	10
$30,000 to $39,999	13	1	2
$40,000 to $49,999	16	0	3
$50,000 to $59,999	12	1	3
$60,000 to $69,999	12	1	2
$70,000 to $79,999	15	4	0
$80,000 to $89,999	16	1	1
$90,000 to $99,999	11	2	3
$100,000 to $119,999	16	5	3
$120,000 to $139,999	7	3	6
$140,000 to $159,999	6	4	5
$160,000 to $179,999	2	8	2
$180,000 to $199,999	2	3	1
$200,000 to $249,999	2	1	1
$250,000 to $299,999	0	1	0
$300,000 to $399,999	0	0	0
$400,000 and over	1	0	0

Table 16: City of Benson, Gross Rent
Source: US Census and 2012 American Community Survey

	2000	2012
Specified renter occupied units (cash)	**515**	**621**
Less than $200	85	0
$200 to $299	78	76
$300 to $499	205	103
$500 to $749	102	288
$750 to $999	12	70
$1,000 and over	0	84
Median (dollars)	$351	$653

Table 17 below summarizes sales data from the MLS, indicating that in the past several years, an increasing percentage of homes sold in Benson were sold less than $100,000.

Table 17: Number and Percentage of Houses Sold under $100,000
Source: flexMLS

	2010	2014
Total houses sold	36	42
Houses sold sales price below $100,000	11	24
Percent of total homes sales price below $100,000	30.6%	57%

G. Real Estate Survey

The City of Benson conducted a real estate survey in August 2014. In the survey, thirteen real estate firms/agents actively selling property in the City of Benson were polled on the demand they were seeing for purchase of homes, house rental and apartment rental as well as how well they can meet the needs of their customers based on the existing housing stock of the City of Benson. The following tables illustrate the results of this survey:

Table 18: Real Estate Survey: Home Value Demand
In the City of Benson, people are looking to buy a home for:

Rank	
1	**$50,000 to $100,000**
2	Under $50,000
3	$100,001 to $150,000
4	$150,001 to $200,000
5	Over $200,000

Table 19: Real Estate Survey: House Rental Demand
In the City of Benson, people are looking to rent a home for:

Rank	
1	*$500 to $1,000 per month*
2	*Less than $500 per month*
3	*Over $1,000 per month*

Table 20: Real Estate Survey: Apartment Rental Demand
In the City of Benson, people are seeking to rent an apartment for:

Rank	
1	***Less than $500 per month***
2	*$500 to $1,000 per month*
3	*Over $1,000 per month*

6. Water Resources Technical Appendix

Based upon Arizona Department of Water Resources Data, water use categories in the San Pedro River Basin (inclusive of all tributaries and washes flowing into the San Pedro in the United States and Mexico) are as follows:

Table 1: Annual Groundwater Budget in the Benson Sub-area
Source: Upper San Pedro Basin AMA Review Report 2005-AZ. Dept of Water Resources

Outflow from Groundwater	Acre-Feet
Riparian use	9,650
Agricultural use	5,000
Stock Demand	160
Industrial	800
Municipal	3,300
Underflow and baseflow out	200

Water supply. Fluid Solutions of Phoenix completed a groundwater study for the City of Benson in October 2000, *Groundwater and the City of Benson*. The following narrative summarizes the findings of this report.

Estimates indicate that the existing water service area will require up to 3,000 acre-feet of water (977,553,000 gallons) per year, with an additional 12,000 acre-feet per year (3,910,212,000 gallons) required to serve the annexed lands if they were developed as residential communities.

The Arizona Department of Water Resources administers the Assured and Adequate Water Supply Program. In areas outside of existing active management areas, new subdivisions must conduct hydrologic investigations to demonstrate that there is a 100 year supply of water for planned developments. Should these demonstrations either fail or not be performed, prospective purchasers of the real estate must be informed that inadequate water resources exist to serve the development.

The *Groundwater and the City of Benson* report also indicates studies conducted on behalf of local landowners have demonstrated to the Arizona Department of Water Resources satisfaction that in addition to the water currently being served to the City core there is a 100-year supply totaling at least 15,000 acre-feet (4,887,765,000 gallons) per year.

Future basin-wide water usage. According to the Climate and Social Vulnerability Study (Liverman, Merideth, Holdsworth, *University of Arizona*) there are approximately 40 private water companies and municipal systems using water in the entire San Pedro Basin. The City of Sierra Vista is the major water user as it is the largest incorporated area.

Sierra Vista, including Fort Huachuca, are identified as the most important influence on water in the San Pedro Basin-having increased in population by 16 percent from 2000 to 2010. Much of the growth in and around Sierra Vista is due to Fort Huachuca personnel and related industries. However, Branch Realignment and Closure restructuring expected to occurred in 2013 and 2015

that will likely affect the Fort. It is unknown if the Fort would close, have a reduction of missions or be assigned new units. It is well understood that water supply is a major issue for Fort Huachuca and the Sierra Vista area.

The San Pedro River System. The San Pedro River Valley consists of alluvial deposits eroded from the surrounding mountain ranges. The upper (most recent) alluvium deposits form the current San Pedro River floodplain. Older alluvial materials—deposited under different tectonic and climatic conditions—lie beneath this younger alluvium and are exposed as eroded hills between the San Pedro River floodplain and the adjacent mountain fronts. The older alluvial material is believed to be in excess of 2,000 feet thick in the center of the valley.

All existing and currently planned future wells for the City of Benson will draw water from underground reserves found in the alluvial sediments eroded from the mountain fronts. Groundwater in this portion of the basin flows generally to the northeast.

The City of Benson currently maintains six wells for its potable water supply. Wells within Benson produce water from a confined basin fill aquifer found beneath a thick clay layer. This aquifer unit contains both sand and boulders. The confining clay layer varies from 400 feet to 800 feet thick. To the west, decomposed granite, sand and boulders are deposited on top of the confining clay. Along the San Pedro River, an unconfined floodplain aquifer likely exists, but is difficult to accurately define based upon existing descriptions.

Additionally, there are two wells at the Benson airport which serve the airport facilities.

There is one well in the Whetstone Ranch area, which serves existing residences. As the area continues to develop, more wells may be necessary within the Whetstone Ranch. At this time, the existing Whetstone Ranch well is not connected to the water system in Benson proper and is therefore considered a separate water system from the City of Benson, though city personnel operate and maintain the Whetstone Ranch facilities.

The San Pedro River, in the vicinity of the City of Benson, is identified as an “intermittent” stream; flowing seasonally in response to extended periods of precipitation and drying up during the dry seasons of the year. Intermittent streams go dry when withdrawals made from the river system (including the subsurface floodplain aquifer) are greater than the in-flows to the river system.

Existing withdrawals from the San Pedro River system include:

- The St. David and Pomerene diversions
- Groundwater pumping from the floodplain aquifer
- Natural water loss such as evaporation and evapo-transpiration of riparian vegetation

Inflows to the San Pedro River system include:

- Surface flow from upstream areas
- Run-off from local precipitation
- Underground flow (from the upstream floodplain aquifer)
- Groundwater flow (from the basin fill aquifer into the floodplain aquifer)

After the withdrawals of surface flow by the St. David and Pomerene diversions, there is commonly not enough water left to support the river flow north of the existing service area except during the times of the year receiving the most precipitation.

Impact of City of Benson pumping on the intermittent nature of the San Pedro River. As mentioned above, the San Pedro is an intermittent stream flowing only after extended periods of precipitation. The presence of the St. David clay isolates the groundwater in the basin from the San Pedro River. Leakage of groundwater from beneath the clay layer may be present; however, it is not substantial enough to support flow in the San Pedro River. The existing city wells draw water from beneath this clay layer and it is therefore possible that the City may generate increase inflow to the San Pedro via leakage from water and wastewater pipes, percolation from irrigation (of lawns, golf courses, gardens, parks, etc.) and through percolation from irrigation with reclaimed wastewater near the treatment plant. In brief, the presence of this clay layer—which serves to isolate the city's wells from the San Pedro River—current and future pumping by the city is presumed to not alter the existing intermittent flow patterns of the river.

7. Public Participation Summary

Comments from Public Workshops. Throughout the duration of the General Plan's development, numerous opportunities were offered for the public to contribute their ideas, critique and commentary to the Plan's development process. The comments of the public serve as a prime mover of the General Plan, as they form the direction of the plans goals, objectives and ultimately policies and implementation. The following list represents the comments fielded at the public input sessions held during calendar years 2011, 2012 and 2014.

City of Benson Vision Statement Comments
remove the word "progressive"
encourage people to want to live in Benson

Cost of Development Related Comments
Have developments pay for parks, pools, trails or set aside open land.
Create a teen hangout

Growth Area Related comments
Do not pursue additional annexations
Encourage community revitalization
Develop historic overlay zoning
Water conserving landscaping
Coordination between city, utilities and developers

Economic Developed Related Comments
Acknowledge railroad next to airport
Create overlay district for downtown
Coordinate with utilities
Rails to Trails

Open Space Related Comments
Develop parks master plan
Pedestrian access to recreation areas
Rails to Trails and work with landowners for access

Water Resources Related Comments
Encourage water conservation in new developments-goal of "x" gallons
Perform water testing

Environmental Planning Related Comments
Monitor ground water sources
Encourage alternative energy
Encourage gray water use
Enhance city pool so people don't need private pools

Housing Related Comments
Encourage people to clean up/maintain their houses and yard via community-wide coordination and volunteer clean up days
Try to preserve historic properties, but be able to remove them if necessary
Encourage rational housing ordinances
Try to secure grant funding for city and residents

Circulation Related Comments
Instead of promoting public transportation, encourage walking or bicycling
When considering walking connectivity, connect Lions Park to school
Consider a truck bypass around city
Keep truck traffic within city, but make safer
Consider turning 4th and 5th streets into one-way streets with diagonal parking

Land Use Related Comments
Don't limit city-wide design to southwestern look
Consistently update and enforce codes and regulations
Pursue grant funding for historic structures
Relax regulations for historic buildings/districts

Comments from Survey Questionnaires. The following public commentary was collected via Survey Questionnaires distributed at the public work sessions.

What are the greatest challenges facing the City of Benson?
stray dogs, vacant homes, junky yards, trailers w/out skirting

What are your proposed solutions?
Enforce laws to clean up town

How can the City strive to reach those solutions?
have City employees make lists of problem areas/places

How do you conceptualize Benson?
Prefer rural
Rural-spread out

What needs to change in Benson to create that ideal concept?
Force homeowners to follow laws

What are some concrete steps to implement those changes?
Letter to owners and fines

Best things about Benson
Bedroom community to Tucson and SV
Friendly

Worst things about Benson
Run down homes near park
Dirty

Key Words to describe ideal vision and goals
Old Benson as nice as new Benson

B. Plan Elements with Goals & Objectives

Land Use

One of the primary functions of planning is to understand and accommodate various types of land use activities. Land use activities need to be properly situated to ensure the health, well-being, aesthetics, protection of property values and overall quality of life in the community.

I. Existing Land Use Conditions

General Development Pattern. The City of Benson maintains a traditional "small-town" urban form containing a commercial corridor (Fourth Street) intersected by a secondary commercial corridor (Ocotillo Avenue) flanked by pre-WWII residential neighborhoods to the north and south. Development continued through the mid to late 1900s to the south of original neighborhoods from Huachuca Street and San Pedro Street. These areas have evolved into the curvilinear and cul-de-sac development style that emerged in the post World War II era. Undeveloped land occupies the majority of the City's incorporated area, specifically areas to the south along both sides of State Route 90, and land to the northwest surrounding the airport, all of which have been added in a series of annexations since 1988.

I would delete municipal.As long as any utility is there, there is potential.

Planning Considerations. Broad planning considerations for land use in the City of include:

- The re-use and in-fill of vacant areas and under-utilized areas presently served by municipal utilities.
- The new and potential developments into undeveloped areas of the city, particularly along the State Route 90 corridor.
- Development of an Airport Complex in the City's north end.
- Expansion of commercial frontage southward from Exit 302 down the State Route 90 corridor.
- Development of City-wide recreational trails and access points connecting pedestrian destinations, natural areas and providing access to the San Pedro River corridor and Coronado National Forest.
- Citizen input.

The City of Benson has a rich historical legacy to influence its future growth and development. The re-development of Fourth Street (also known as Business I-10 and State Route 80) as a "historic downtown" district, including historic building façades, signage, color scheme and design has potential to better define and enhance the downtown. At present there are practical obstacles to this, among them resistance to changing existing building features and the cost of assuming control from ADOT of the Fourth Street right-of-way; however, the potential remains for the City. On a larger scale, a wider "historic district" could be developed to encompass not only Fourth Street but the adjacent residential areas to the south along Fifth and Sixth Streets featuring the recognized historic residences (Apache Powder and Barrio District homes) and the museum. The Historic Preservation Commission should encourage a historic district overlay with the development of design guidelines for signage, color, style, landscaping and overall character for sites and buildings, both public and private.

The City of Benson's physical situation in the San Pedro Valley is visually stunning to the traveler from all directions, as the gradual slope downward provides spectacular views of the Dragoon and Whetstone Mountains and the wide, sweeping San Pedro Basin. The transition from the open rural areas into the heart of the City should maintain this aesthetic appeal. The City has constructed several "welcome signs" on its east and west approaches potentially build upon these sites with landscaping, mini-oasis areas containin markers or public art. Definitive points of entry make travel to and through the City for visitors and serve as a point of pride for residents.

I would say "development costs are feasible." It's not just utilties but also City requirements such as street lights, etc. Utilities are always available-they may not be what someone wants to pay.

Although the City of Benson certainly has ample land resources, the re-use of e vacant sites and buildings within the developed area is desirable. Benefits include new road construction and future maintenance, infrastructure extensions and efficiency of compact development. As the City continues to grow, additional development will emerge both within the outlying areas and within the traditional should be taken to extend existing roads for continued neighborhood connectivity a traffic flow.

The City of Benson's growth to the west has enabled the development of the Exit 302 commercial node, and signals the potential for increased development activity southward along the State Route 90 corridor. With ADOT's realignment of Interstate 10 and slight northward extension of State Route 90, it is feasible to open the land north of Interstate 10 to development, assuming utilities will be available.

With the potential for development to stretch south down the SR 90 corridor, the City of Benson would be well served by examining select "village" sites or "node" sites at major intersections and areas where the topography and conditions are satisfactory for construction. These "villages" sites would serve to lessen the negative visual impacts and traffic impacts of conventional "strip developments."

The City of Benson is blessed with the natural beauty and wildlife of the San Pedro Valley and surrounding mountain ranges. A key challenge for the City is how to better connect itself with these resources and to keep them intact for the future. Development of trail networks, bird-watching areas, preserved sites and interpretive programs are among the many ways the City can

Economic Development

I. Existing Economic Development Conditions

Site and situation. The City of Benson is located on the western edge of Cochise County in the San Pedro River valley. With an elevation of 3,585 feet, it enjoys mild winters and summers that are cooler than those found in the lower Sonoran desert to the west. the City's climate and other natural amenities contribute to the perception that Benson is a pleasant and livable community. To date, quality of life based on natural amenities has not driven significant growth. In the future, this variable together with the City's physical location at a transportation cross roads can be expected to be a major force driving substantial population growth and associated growth in demand for consumer goods.

The City of Benson's strategic situation has been, and will continue to be, a major asset. The City's location on Interstate 10 assures it exceptional access to points west and east. In the winter especially, I-10 is a favored east-west transcontinental route. Whereas the City doe airport with scheduled service, I-10 puts it only 45 minutes from Tucson Internation The City is also the northern terminus of State Highways 80 and 90. In other words, intervening opportunity for almost all traffic to or from Tucson, Southern Arizon center.

routes for railroad, pipeline, and electric transmission.

Additionally, the City of Benson is situated on a key east-west rail route and on pipeline and electric transmission corridors. Whereas the potential benefits of the City's situation from an economic development standpoint are understood, it appears that only a small portion of the economic significance of Benson's situation has been realized. The City's location may be its greatest asset.

Employment Structure. Whereas definitive data is hard to come by, data and estimates from Census 2000, Census 2010 and the Arizona Department of Economic Security allow for general comparisons. Both Cochise County and Benson are driven by the service economy.

Government. Approximately 1/3 of Cochise County's non-farm payroll employees are involved in government, including the Federal government in Sierra Vista and along the U.S.-Mexico Border and state and local agencies *(Cochise College Center for Economic Research Local Statistics)* Benson has approximately 9.3% of its work force in public administration *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)*

Services. This sector is important throughout Cochise County; near 95% of non-farm payroll employment is in the service-providing sector. Locally, just over 15% of employment in the City of Benson is in the service sector. *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)* The City's role as service center for travelers on the I-10 corridor together with its role as a service center for northwestern Cochise County account for its role in this sector.

Household Income. The median Cochise County income is $43,304 in 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars.(*US Census)* The median household income in the City of Benson is approximately $36,278 with a per capita income of $21,481 *(Benson Economic Outlook 2013)*

Growth Areas

In accord with Arizona's Growing Smarter legislation, the City of Benson designates general locations that are considered to have significant development potential. Growth Areas constitute sectors where significant infrastructure investment and absorption of new or replacement land use may be expected over the ten-year vision span of this General Development Plan document. Only those sites with development probability during the 2015-2025 period receive explicit attention; however, it is acknowledged that Growth Areas may be expanded, or new ones added, by General Development Plan Amendment (see: Implementation Program) as a result of changed conditions in the City.

These factors point toward an accelerated growth rate for Benson: 1) Arizona's continuing attraction; 2) changing demographics pertaining to job mobility and retirement; and 3) the popularity of master-planned communities. Much of the projected population gain is earmarked for designated Growth Areas—both in new developments and adding/infilling where municipal systems are already in place. There are opportunities for local builders and businesses as well as for large-scale outside investment.

I. Existing Growth Areas Conditions

Transportation system improvements continue to provide access for expanding City development. Freeway and interchange design, together with State Routes 80 and 90, open up developable property along the tourist-attracting Kartchner Caverns as well as at major intersections where there is demand for traveler services and other highway-related uses. Continued development of the municipal airport increases prospects for employment growth in the airport vicinity.

remove wet.

Established infrastructure, services and institutions provide a head start for future development. Plans for greater capacity in wet utilities, airport facilities, schools and community parks provide the foundation for infill growth that can utilize these in-place facilities and for larger-scale, new communities that can build upon them.

Kartchner Caverns brings a steady flow of visitors into the community. Not only tourism dollars, but also as an introduction to the City of Benson as a prospective place for returning to live, contribute to growth potential. Downtown revitalization, golf course development and accessibility to the San Pedro River contribute to the municipal goals for increasing the City’s stature as a tourist destination.

Public and private sector cooperation is an essential precondition for aggressive marketing of the City's growth potential.

II. Growth Areas Goals & Objectives

Additional population and new businesses will increase the City of Benson's scale, will enlarge the local economy and, as a result, will help to finance quality of life improvements. Focus on Growth Areas is intended to maximize the community's return on investment.

add municipal

	Plan	equipment needs	
Open Space	Community Center Pool and Park	Develop existing land into a pool side park	Public Works, Parks and Rec
Water Resources	Conservation education	Develop pamphlet for water bill mailings	Public Works
Growth Areas	Utility Rate Update	Utility rate study	Public Works, Finance
Economic Development	Current state and capacity of municipal utilities	Gas, Water, and Wastewater models	Planning, Public Works
Water Resources	Water Flow and Recharge Rates	Drainage studies and water modeling	Public Works

delete municipal.add coordinate utilties to actibvities, add utilities to responsible

Mid-Term Action Steps

Implementation priorities in the mid-term (three to five years) focus on creative installing planned improvements. Economic development and employment opp momentum as direct outgrowths of short-term infrastructure investment.

The scale of these projects will depend on available financial resources. Revenues generated by successful economic development may enable the City of Benson to expedite capital investment, begin to subsidize incentive programs and undertake more aggressive open space/recreation improvements.

Evaluations of General Development Plan implementation effectiveness will enable public determination, possibly in a City Hall forum (held as the Mid-Term commences), whether adjustments are needed in the Action Steps priority. Essential programs, such as infrastructure improvements, are "givens." But other enhancements dealing with environment, open space preservation and outdoor enjoyment must also move forward, even if funding resources are limited.

Mid-term Actions.

Element	Project	Required Activity	Responsibility
Land Use	Fourth Street Redevelopment	Create renovation incentives	Planning, Chamber of Commerce, ADOT
Circulation	Ocotillo Street	Improved design and maintenance	ADOT, Public Works, Planning
Economic Development	Retain labor force	Skilled training	Cochise College, Private sector Economic Development
Economic Development	Attract non-traditional economic development	Promote tourism, cross-community specialization	City, Economic Development organizations,

actually.... SSVEC provides electricity to Benson. AEPCO is 1 of several power suppliers to SSVEC.

minute from 8 active wells (five potable water wells 3400gpm, one irrigation wells transient non-public wells 500gmp). The average well depth is approximately 1,0 lines range between 6" to 18" diameter. New lines are continually being added to March 2009, the City of Benson acquired the Sue Juan distribution system wh customers in the San Pedro Addition subdivision in Benson. The City improved infrastructure during the year 2009.

Gas and electricity. Electricity is presently generated by Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. which is headquartered in Benson. Distribution is provided by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., which maintains a branch office in Benson.

Natural gas is provided to the City of Benson by Shell Corporation via KinderMorgan with prices locked in for a set duration.

Police protection. The City of Benson Police Department is headquartered with the Fire Department in central Benson. The department employs 14 sworn officers including the police chief, three detectives, two sergeants, two corporals and one canine unit. Non-sworn personnel include 5 full-time dispatchers, 2 administrative personnel and 2 animal control officers. The Department maintains a fleet of 21 vehicles, including 3 off-road vehicles. The Benson Police Department maintains two temporary holding facilities. Jail facilities are located at the county seat in Bisbee.

Fire protection. The City of Benson Fire Department operates as a combination fulltime/volunteer department with 1 paid Fire Chief and 26 volunteers. The department maintains nine emergency apparatus: 2 structure engines, ladder company, rescue vehicle, 2 brush engines, tender, support vehicle and command vehicle. The department responds to all fire related emergencies in the City of Benson including emergency medical calls, structure fires, brush fires and hazardous materials calls. The department also responds to road emergencies surrounding the community. The Fire Department participates in the Cochise County mutual aid program, which includes all the fire departments within the county. The City of Benson holds an ISO 5 Fire Protection rating.

Hospital service and medical facilities. Benson is currently serviced by a 22-bed, 24-hour service hospital. Three primary care physicians are on rotation at the hospital, of which two also maintain private practice hours. Hospital affiliated specialists in cardiology, podiatry, orthopedics and renal care provide service on a weekly or as-needed basis. Additionally, specialists in audiology, vision, chiropractic care, and laboratory work in private practice. Two dentists provide care for city residents. Cenpatico and Community Bridages operate mental health clinics in Benson.

Benson is served by Healthcare Innovations for ambulance service. Lifeline Air Ambulance is dispatched from St. David as needed.

Library. The Benson Public Library began its existence in 1928, serving Benson and the surrounding communities. The library currently has 18 public computers with Internet connectivity and wi-fi available for personal computers. The library offers story hours for

Benson Hospital

October 8, 2014

Michelle Johnson, AICP
120 West Sixth Street
Benson, AZ 85602

Dear Mrs. Johnson,

I regret that I will be out of town on October 21, 2014 and will not be in attendance at the workshop regarding the Benson City General Development plan. I do expect to attend both public hearings on December 9 and February 23, 2015. In the interim, I would like to offer a few comments on the plan.

The major focus of our hospital's interest relates to the health and wellbeing of our community. At a recent retreat of our Board, Medical Staff, Management Team and invited guests, the major topic of focus was on the role of Benson Hospital in helping to make the region healthier. In general, there does not seem to be enough emphasis on building the infrastructure of our community with bike lanes, bike paths, walking trails and expansion of facilities to support youth activities. Perhaps the abandoned golf course could be made into a significant community park. Also, the specific reference to an abandoned railroad suggests the need to find federal funds to acquire and build a walking/bike trail (see www.railstotrails.org/ourwork/trailbuilding/toolbox/index.html). Many communities around the country have taken such steps, consistent with page 10, IV.11. Perhaps the references on page 10, item IV.10 needs to have more emphasis on the development of a plan.

I am concerned by the reference on page 30, Goal 2.1. I am not sure why there is a reference to **acquire** a major medical facility to meet emergency service needs, etc. I believe Benson Hospital is growing and represents well the need in servicing the healthcare needs of this size population.

Finally, many communities recognize in their vision statement that the best communities focus on a safe community, a strong education system and a quality healthcare system. I hope the vision can include concern for the wellbeing of the citizens.

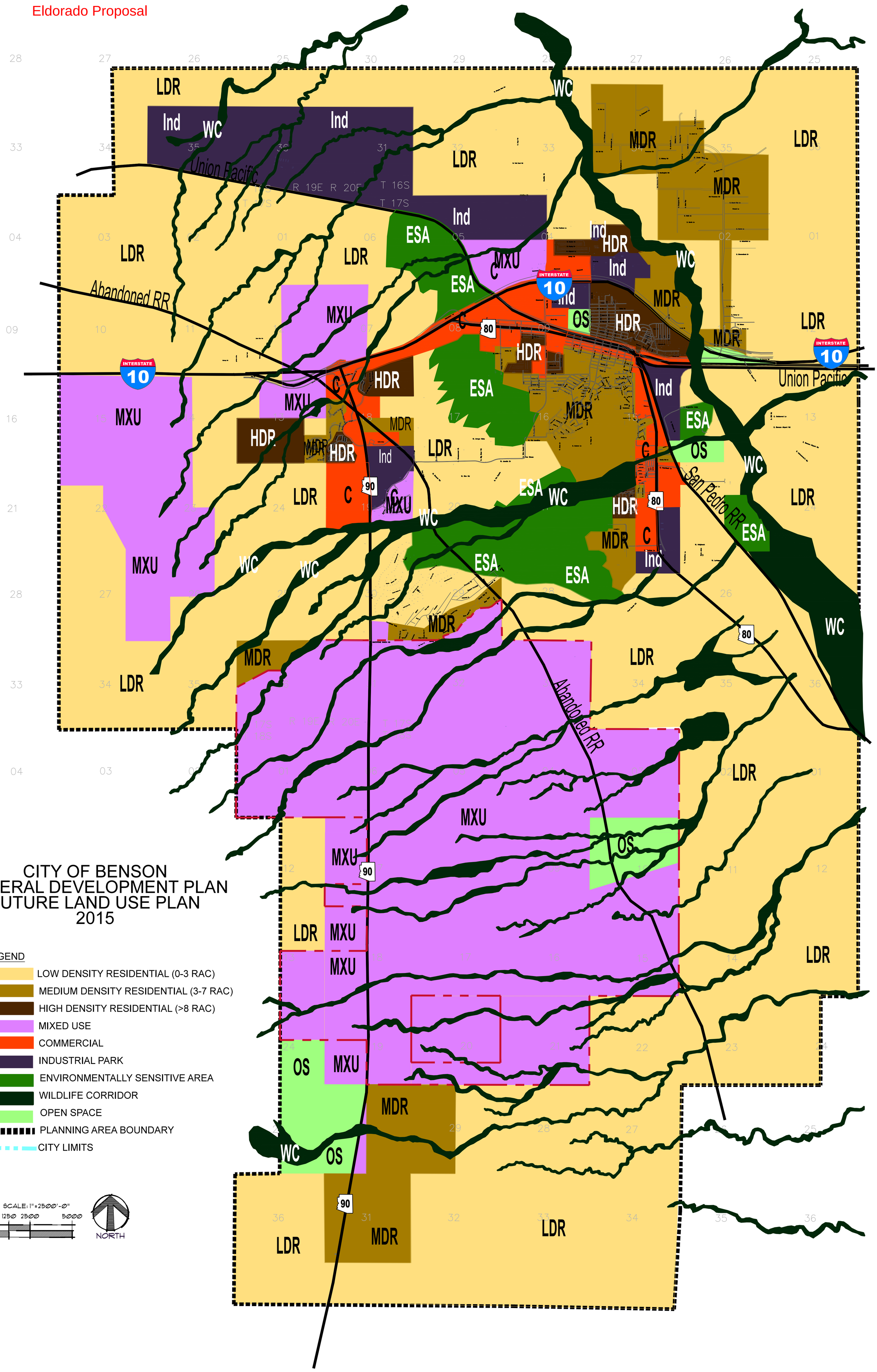
I look forward to continued participation in the development of what is emerging as a thoughtful view of developing a bright future for Benson.

Cordially,

Richard Polheber
CEO, Benson Hospital

450 SOUTH OCOTILLO/P.O. BOX 2290/BENSON ARIZONA 85602
520/586-2261

Eldorado Proposal



November 10, 2014

Ms. Michelle Johnson
City of Benson
120 W. 6th Street
Benson, Arizona 85602

Project: City of Benson - 2015 General Plan
Subject: Review Comments

Hello Michelle,

Whetstone Ranch was purchased by Eldorado Benson LLC earlier this year. Collaborative V Design Studio was hired by Eldorado Benson LLC to review the proposed General Plan and offers the following comments:

We would like to request that the Land Use Designation within the Whetstone Ranch boundary be changed from the currently proposed Mixed Use, Medium Density Residential and Industrial land use to the Mixed Use (MXU) category. We do not request any changes be made to the existing Open Space classification on the eastern side of the property or to the Wildlife Corridors crossing the property.

Back in 2006, the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers issued a Section 404 Permit which allows the federal government to claim jurisdiction over navigable waterways. The permit claimed jurisdiction over 475 acres, but allows 51 acres to be disturbed, resulting in 424 acres of undistributed waterways. Please note that specifically WHICH waterways (washes) should or should not be disturbed depends on engineering practices and development needs, but a minimum of 424 acres must remain undisturbed. The specific undisturbed acreage will be determined at a future date, but are likely to include some of the wildlife corridors already delineated on the map. Therefore, at this time, Eldorado Benson LLC does not request any changes to the Wildlife Corridor classification crossing the property. Changes to the washes designed Wildlife Corridors may be requested in the future as the specific washes to remain undisturbed are determined.

Additionally, under the Section 404 Permit, 1,056 acres were required be dedicated as open space—this is the acreage on the east side of the property that is already classified as Open Space and shall remain as such. Thus, the 424 acres of undisturbed waterways plus 1,056 acres of open space equals 1,480 acres of the 8,200 acres on the east side of the Highway 90.

Lastly, the Section 404 Permit required that another 144 acres, located outside Whetstone Ranch, be preserved as an off-site mitigation parcel. This acreage has been purchased and is located adjacent to the San Pedro River. (See attached map.) Because this land

cannot be disturbed, Eldorado Benson LLC requests that this parcel be noted under Environmental Sensitive Area classification.

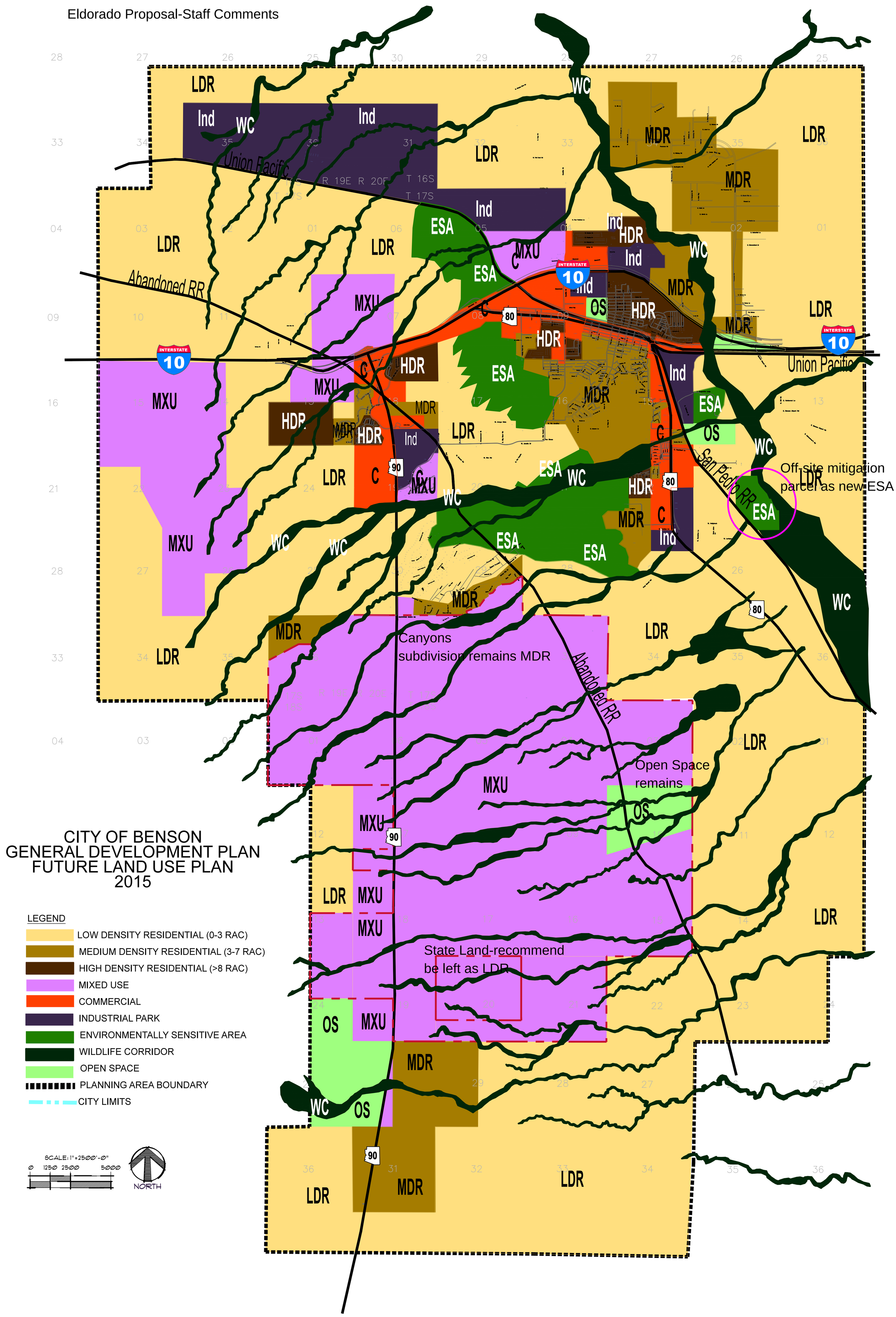
Together, the 1,480 acres of land inside Whetstone Ranch and the 144 acres outside Whetstone Ranch will function as open space and wildlife corridors for both animal movement and human recreation.

Our comments for areas outside of the Whetstone Ranch include:

- Proposing that the Industrial land use that was removed from Whetstone Ranch be shifted north of Interstate 10, between the abandoned rail road and current Union Pacific railroad to provide for future multi-modal and complimentary land development in the adjacent area including the airport and directly off the future State Route 90 expansion.
- Provide additional Mixed Use development opportunities along Interstate 10 West of State Route 90 for visibility and connecting future development to Interstate 10 and alleviate congestion on the State Route 90 interchange.
- Connect Smith Ranch and Whetstone Ranch with Mixed Use to allow for future development connections and relieve congestion on State Route 90.

Finally, thank you for the time to discuss these review comments with the Project Team and taking our comments into consideration as we move forward with the City of Benson for future progress and development.

Thank you,

Matt Drager
Collaborative V Design Studio

Eldorado Proposal-Staff Comments