

# Town of Oro Valley

## General Plan

**TOWN OF ORO VALLEY  
PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT  
LIBRARY**

Adopted by the Town of Oro Valley  
Mayor and Council  
December 19, 1990

**TOWN OF ORO VALLEY**

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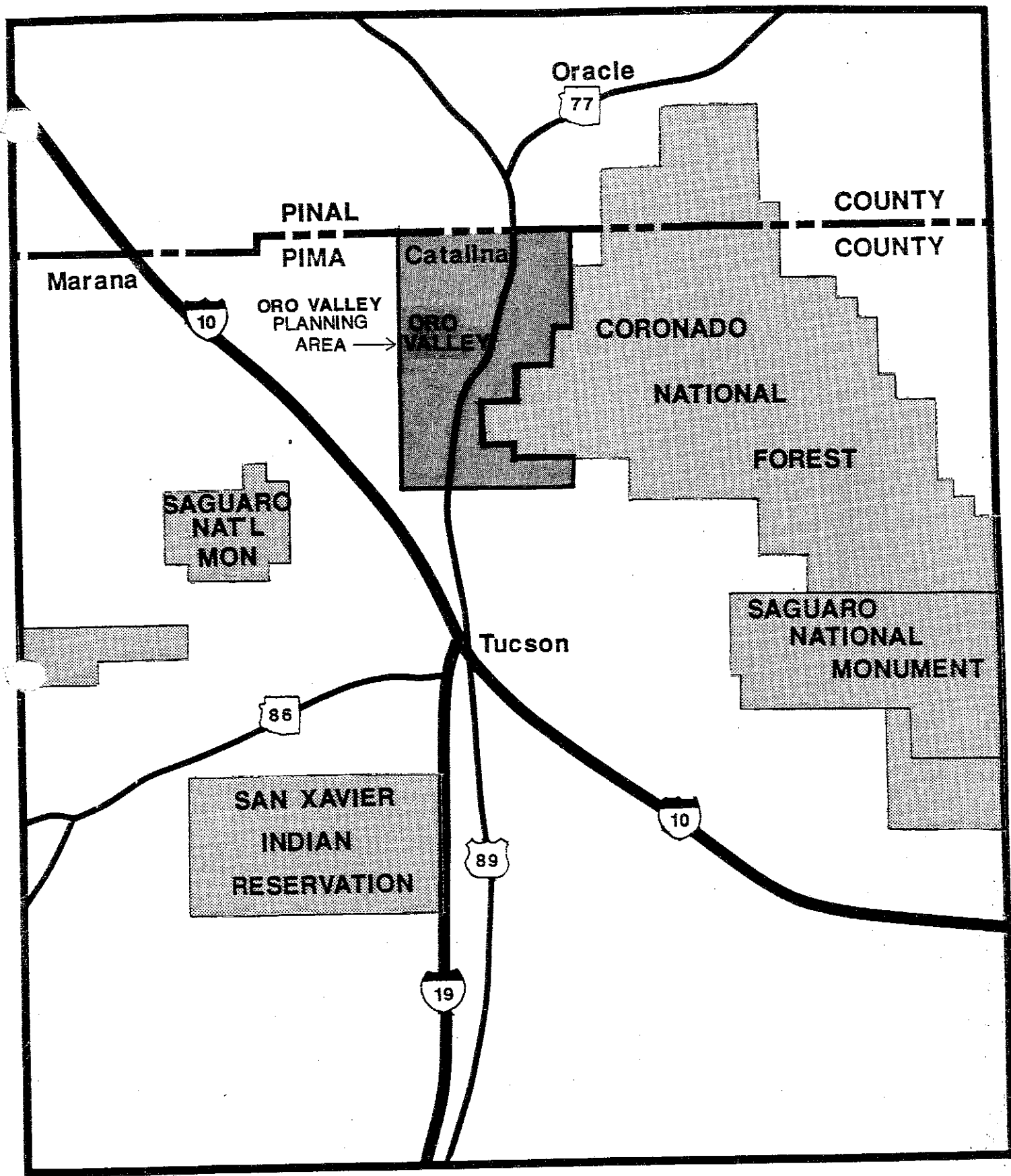
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Gruen Associates  
3900 E. Camelback Road, Suite 611  
Phoenix, AZ 85018

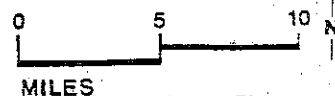
Parsons Brinckerhoff  
1501 W. Fountainhead Pkwy. #400  
Tempe, AZ 85282

Linda Mason-Frew, Admin. Ass't.

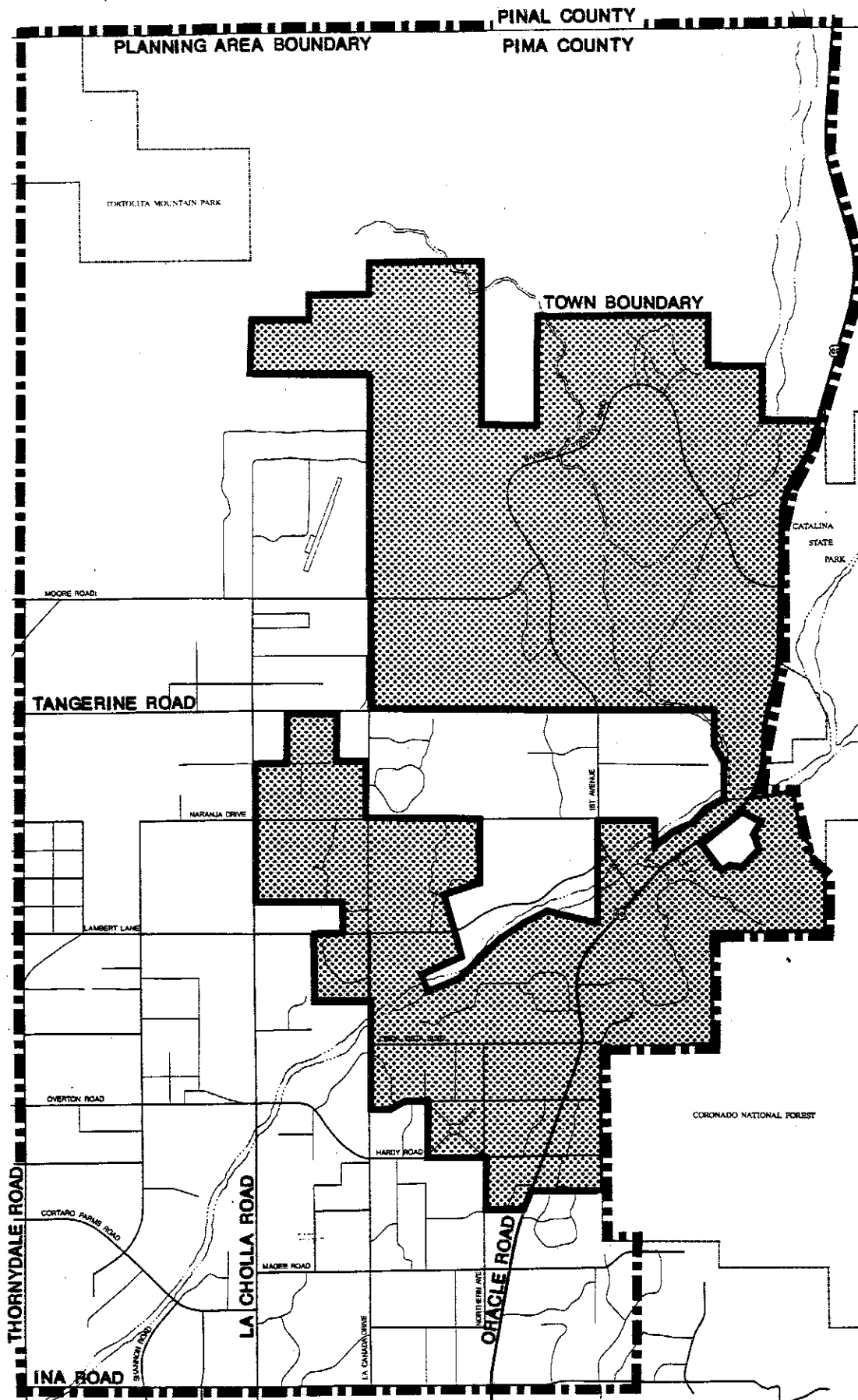




**TOWN OF ORO VALLEY**  
**Location Map**



**Figure 1**



**TOWN OF ORO VALLEY**  
**Planning Area Map**

Scale in Feet  
 0 1000 2000 3000  
 NORTH  
 GILLEN ASSOCIATES

**Figure 2**

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## Introduction:

### Goals for the General Plan

## **INTRODUCTION: GOALS FOR THE GENERAL PLAN**

This Town of Oro Valley General Plan incorporates a clear definition of existing community character with progressive vision for its future. The planning process began in a series of Vision Statements which established Oro Valley emphases for regional goals previously established by the Pima Association of Governments' constituent jurisdictions. These guiding principles became the basis of active citizen participation to develop and refine an Oro Valley General Plan.

This Plan document has been developed under the guidance of the appointed General Plan Advisory Committee, the Town Council, and the Planning Commission.

Each Plan Element, nine in all, had as its initiating thrust the following goal-oriented directions:

### **LAND USE**

REGIONAL GOAL: Encourage efficient, orderly land use pattern(s) through planning at regional, community and site specific levels.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Maintain natural community character through constant public attention to environmental values, use compatibility and restraint in the construction of built forms for human activity.

### **CIRCULATION/TRANSPORTATION**

REGIONAL GOAL: Create a safe, energy-efficient, cost-effective, multi-modal, environmentally sensitive and convenient transportation system to provide mobility for all citizens of the region.



ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Plan employment or activity centers with attention to ease of access from residential areas; provide a coordinated hierarchy of multi-modal transportation corridors which will reduce vehicular trips through neighborhoods; encourage expansion of public transportation and bicycle routes; encourage transportation efficiency and provide recreation as scenic linkages for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

REGIONAL GOAL: Diversify the region's economic base by attracting and retaining a wide range of businesses that are compatible with the community's resources.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Seek clustered workplaces and shopping developments which respect Town standards, contributes to a positive relationship between living quality and employment of local workforce and capitalizes on change so as to position the community and its residents for long term economic stability.

### **PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

REGIONAL GOAL: Plan and provide efficient, safe and timely public services and facilities to meet present and projected regional needs.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Protect public welfare and safety and provide for living convenience through management of services scaled to the community's character and resources. This includes proper, economical allocation of service/facility maintenance responsibility among levels of taxpayer-serving governments or private providers.

### **COMMUNITY DESIGN**

REGIONAL GOAL: Promote quality design that integrates the built environment with the region's natural environment.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Set standards which engender architectural, landscape and construction creativity within the Town's themes of openness, accentuation of vistas and natural vegetation, low-laying structural clusters and building material colors that blend with the environment.

### OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

REGIONAL GOAL: Provide a regional, distinctively Sonoran desert, system of open space, parks and recreation.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Promote the individual's opportunity to enjoy healthful outdoor activity with particular sensitivity to the community's scenic vistas and mountain backdrops. The establishment of equestrian and hiking trails is to be encouraged.

### NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

REGIONAL GOAL: Protect the natural environment and provide for resource conservation by stewarding the region's land, air and water resources, its flora, fauna and human habitats.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Maintain the delicate environmental balance for all living things in Catalina/Tortolita foothills; preserving natural openness of mountains, deserts and washes; preventing further degradation of, and restoring air, water and scenic attributes for future generations' benefit.

### SAFETY

REGIONAL GOAL: Establish secure communities which are designed or redesigned to protect life and property from human and natural hazards.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Strive to eliminate unsafe conditions. Improve emergency services and encourage public awareness of safety practices required by the desert foothill terrain and environment.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE/HISTORIC RESOURCES

REGIONAL GOAL: Protect archaeological, historic and cultural resources of the region while appropriately promoting their educational values to society.

ORO VALLEY EMPHASIS: Inventory existing reminders of the Town's past, protecting them, where possible, in an undisturbed state and providing exhibits, viewing areas or other modes for public appreciation of these assets.

The first in a series of citizen - participation workshops, held at the Sheraton El Conquistador Resort in September 1989 and attended by 160 Town residents addressed the Oro Valley Vision. As a result of extensive public comment, additional goals statements were added to the General Plan process direction.

From that initial, community - wide meeting four overriding planning goals were recorded as being fundamental precepts to guide future growth and development:

ORO VALLEY MUST PLAN TO PRESERVE ITS DISTINCTIVE RESIDENTIAL-RESORT CHARACTER.

THE TOWN SHOULD ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SOUND GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION QUALITY.

OPEN SPACE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCENIC VIEWS ARE TO BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION, VISUAL CLUTTER, AND ALL OTHER FORMS OF URBAN IMPACT WHICH COULD DEGRADE ORO VALLEY'S ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BE AVOIDED THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS AND THROUGH THE USE OF CREATIVE MASTER PLANNING TECHNIQUES BY BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS.

The essence of Oro Valley -- its openness, visual attractiveness and predilection for quality, family living -- was portrayed in four conceptual planning options, each of which responded to the Town's general planning goals. These Plan Alternatives, characterized as "Tangerine Nodes", "Oracle Corridor", "Annexation/Open Space" and "Resort/Arts" concepts, were presented for public discussion at a second workshop held at the Oro Valley Country Club during November 1989.

Citizen comments supported features from each of the alternative concepts. A composite Plan format, a "Preferred Alternate", was distilled from these positive citizen reactions and was exhibited at a third public gathering. Additional direction was gained from that April 1990 meeting at Rancho Vistoso, with subsequent input from the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board and the General Plan Advisory Committee.

Among the suggestions which were followed in producing a Draft General Plan were: the desire to give additional attention to the Oracle Road Corridor, greater specificity in Plan graphics and creating planning policies to implement General Plan Goals. The resulting draft document was submitted for review by other jurisdictions and agencies and, in final revision form, was presented at formal public hearings conducted by the Planning Commission and by the Town Council.

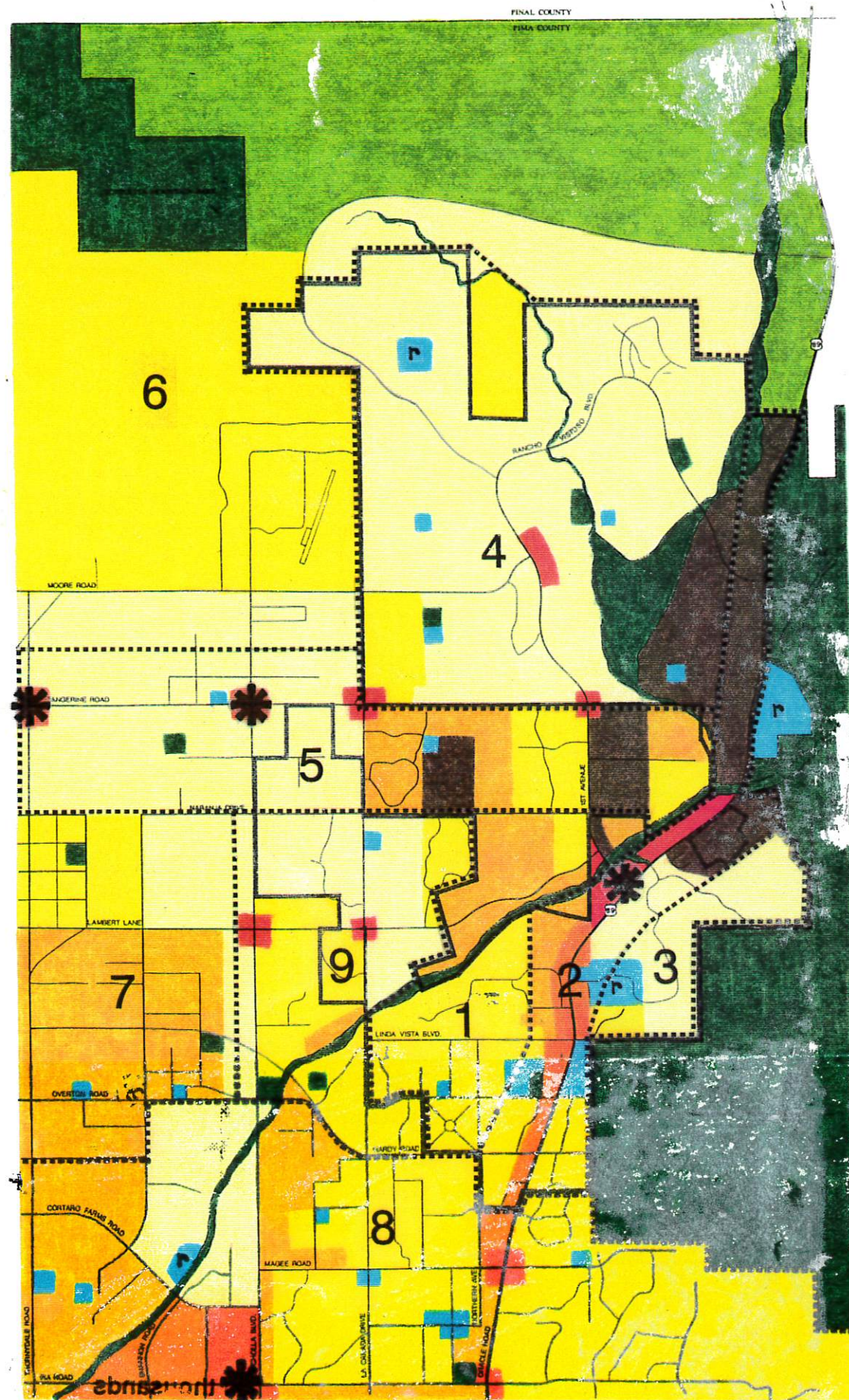
The General Plan Advisory Committee is pleased to forward this Town of Oro Valley General Plan for consideration of its adoption and use as the principal guide for the community's future vision.

Respectfully submitted,

The Oro Valley General Plan Advisory Committee







TOWN OF ORO VALLEY



## RESIDENTIAL

- PLANNED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

## SERVICE / EMPLOYMENT

- EMPLOYMENT CENTER
- COMMERCIAL / ACTIVITY CENTER
- QUASI PUBLIC

## OPEN SPACE

- OPEN SPACE / RECREATION
- HOLDING ZONE

— TOWN BOUNDARY

- - - SECTOR BOUNDARY

9 SECTOR NUMBER

\* REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER

r RESORT

FIGURE 3



## II. GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

The Town of Oro Valley General Plan is founded on an integrated collection of Plan Elements, each treating a significant aspect of the community's existing and future status. Two elements, Land Use and Circulation, are required by State statutes of all municipalities adopting a General Plan. Others have been selected by the Town to amplify its unique character.

In addition to the basic, state-mandated elements, Oro Valley has analyzed two related functions which pertain directly to future growth management. These are the Economic Development and Public Services and Facilities elements.

Taken together, these four subject areas present the physical manifestation of the Town's future vision including: development patterns, access, financial soundness and infrastructure capital improvements. They are augmented by five additional elements -- Community Design, Open Space/Recreation, Natural Resource Conservation, Safety and Cultural Heritage/Historic Resources -- which add dimension to the quality of living in Oro Valley.

Plan components do not stand alone. They interrelate so as to provide a comprehensive picture of the community's resources, its needs and its promise for the coming decade.





## LAND USE ELEMENT

The Oro Valley planning area will continue to project a residential/resort theme. The living environment--for residents and visitors--is emphasized. Varied types and intensities of residential development are being encouraged; however, the desired result will approximate 1990's average housing density: in the range of 1-4 dwellings per acre in developed portions of Oro Valley. The majority of places for working or shopping are currently designated along the Oracle Road corridor. This emphasis will shift with expected growth patterns. Future opportunity sites for non-residential uses will be largely understated, often woven into the Town's developing neighborhoods. The Town's land use changes are meant to be subtle ones.

### Land Development Patterns

Orderly growth, which is a basic urban planning premise, is especially important to this community. Fully a third of the area's terrain will remain open space due to constraints of unstable slopes, floodplains and low density-style development. Street, sewer and water systems require efficient engineering to work around the open spaces left in natural washes or foothills. Topographical and sight lines need to be defined to mitigate further, obtrusive hillside and hilltop construction.

Vacant land will be absorbed into the built environment with some rapidity, but with little change to community character. According to the estimates in Table 2, 420 to 756 acres will become "developed" on an annual basis in the planning area over the next two decades. Land use plans, therefore, accommodate more than ten square miles of additional development during this General Plan time horizon; still far short of total buildout. Utilization of real estate for homes, businesses, employment and industrial facilities should become relatively more compact with site planning which incorporates ample open space. Community design principles are intended to maintain the Town's open, natural environment by observing guidelines which encourage or require substantial reservations of open space within developments of all types. Land devoted to housing,

including associated open space reservations and residential streets, will represent up to 80 percent of the Town's developable land area (or approximately half of the total planning area) at buildout. Resorts, with golf courses and other recreational space, are integrated into the residential pattern.

By 2010, the community's continuing growth in population, jobs and facility needs are expected to absorb an additional 440 acres of commercial and employment use and 860 acres of public, institutional and right-of-way uses. Dedicated open space (parks and preserves, with commercial recreation and planned community common areas factored in) will likely comprise nearly 40 percent of the area's 94 square mile total land resource, about 24,000 acres (See Figure 3). Table 1 provides a general estimation of future land use acreage allocation within the planning area. Table 2 summarizes the estimated land absorption for those periods beginning in 1995. Land absorption is described as the conversion of undeveloped vacant land to specific uses. The total amount of land absorbed by development over the twenty year plan period is estimated at 8,550 acres.

**TABLE 1  
PLANNING AREA ACREAGE ALLOCATIONS (ACRES)**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Residential	11,000	12,500	14,500	17,500
Commercial (includes resort commercial)	400	480	560	640
Employment Center	160	200	260	360
Public/Institutional /Rights-of-Way	1,140	1,420	1,700	2,000
Undeveloped/Vacant /State Trust	33,500	31,400	28,730	24,950
Open Space (includes resort open space)	13,800	14,000	14,250	14,550
Total Planning Area	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000

**TABLE 2**  
**LAND CONVERSION**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Potentially Developable	25,800	23,700	21,030	17,250
Absorption For Period	-----	2,100	2,670	3,780

Built areas are to be established as distinct neighborhoods, separated by natural open space, logical boundaries and edges. Housing enclaves vary in size from small custom subdivisions or townhome clusters to full planned communities, each with its own recreational space and connections to regional trail networks. Some neighborhoods are laid out around a resort nucleus, others have a planned activity center core of shopping, employment and public/quasi-public institutions.

The Town's form is envisioned as organic, interconnected by the open space system of washes, ravines, parks, managed recreation facilities, public preserves and other open spaces. New developments will have reasonable access to the longer system through planned linkages such as the regional trail network and dedicated open spaces. A Town open space and recreation plan should be developed to guide future planning decisions.

Highway-related uses along Oracle Road (and in the future transportation corridors such as on Tangerine Road or La Cholla Boulevard) are arranged in specific settings, rather than commercial strips. Setbacks, landscaping, and spacing between commercial properties convey the same sense of careful placement evidenced in residential areas. Alternatives to existing commercial zoning need to be sought which will yield reasonable returns to landowners while encouraging other use types such as offices, condominiums or apartments. Multi-family complexes, with fully screened parking lots, are encouraged along major thoroughfares to provide relief from commercial frontages.

Planned communities, incorporating a mixture of uses, will, ideally, comprise a substantial proportion of the Town's future non-residential construction. Community cores are set well back from major streets (but easily accessible from residences in the surrounding and adjacent neighborhoods). True centers, these cores might include shopping, services, office or high-tech employment as well as public uses such as parks or libraries.

Campus-type developments are sought for large corporate installations, educational facilities and the like. Community convenience services such as banking, day care, health clubs and limited shopping should be considered as accessory uses for each campus. Employee housing opportunities can be provided around the grounds' periphery.

#### Development Constraints/Opportunities

→ The principal constraints to development, rough terrain and wide, natural washes, ought to be considered an asset in planning Oro Valley's context. Spaces where construction is difficult may qualify for density transfers in exchange for maintained scenic or access easements.

Ownership patterns, which can be a considerable restraint on orderly urbanization, may preclude master planning some areas in Oro Valley where fractionalized land holdings cannot readily be assembled. < Sections that have been subdivided into ranchettes will retain rural character, whereas larger parcels among them may be planned for more dense, clustered housing. > Although it is not likely that Oro Valley can project a totally master-planned character, the varied housing types and lot sizes can be steered toward an intelligent integration of differences with several unifying themes establishing strong visual relationships.

Another constraint is the Town's relative lack of accessibility. The planned solution to this problem is the improvement of Tangerine Road from Oracle to

the Interstate, which is not expected to be implemented in the near- or mid-terms of Oro Valley's future development. Development patterns must be planned well ahead of highway improvements, dealing realistically with development timing and construction impact issues. For these reasons, community "nodes" planned along Tangerine Road, for example, would be expected to occur first on tracts nearer the Town's Oracle Road spine and should be set well back from the future transportation corridors' planned 300-foot wide rights-of-way. The current right-of-way will have to be expanded to achieve the planned corridor development.

Careful local review of land use proposals, disciplined decision-making to enforce Plan implementation is the bridge between Oro Valley's constraints and positive opportunities. It is particularly important for the Town to consider annexations (or increased extraterritorial influence) for lands which are not presently within the corporate limits, but which will surely impact the community when urbanization begins. Planning and land use decisions of any municipality must incorporate the plans of adjacent and nearby communities. Cooperation between and among Oro Valley's neighbors in the development of this General Plan will strengthen its usefulness. The General Plan acknowledges the value in exchanging land use information or assistance with property owners and public planning agencies in other jurisdictions.

Oro Valley has extensive potential for high quality development. It is clear that the community has been, and will continue to be, "housing driven" in terms of its development. Capitalizing on this significant local opportunity, therefore, requires special attention and encouragement of exceptional residential value. Quality design, amenity and property maintenance standards in non-residential development will follow the examples set by Oro Valley's homeowners and those demanded by the Town's visitors and renters.

Residential land use policies combined with the Town's desire to preserve valuable open space and scenic resources will maintain the community's attraction. Anticipated annexations will include several older, already developed neighborhoods, possibly expanding the Town's housing stock.

Affordable housing for younger families, creating a "move-up" market and drawing major employers, is a related housing policy objective.

Citizen participants in the planning process selected a Resort/Arts image theme for future community development. Culture and leisure go together as do tourism and relaxed residential lifestyle. Responses to this theme are to be especially solicited in proposals for land development throughout the Town.

Tourism opportunities will continue to be promoted in Oro Valley. Not only do recreational and leisure-time facilities enhance the Town's land use themes, they also strengthen a significant component of the local revenue base. These uses are not wasted space, nor should they be considered as unprofitable development expense. Resorts, restaurants and shops that draw tourist dollars also serve Town residents' entertainment and purchasing needs with greater variety than normally found in communities of similar population size.

Planned developments represent the preferred method by which raw land is converted to daily human activity. Clustering buildings promote efficiencies in utility and street systems and also provide a proven method of preserving portions of the Town to protect wildlife habitats and open space resources. Extending open spaces from the larger open space network into the clustered groupings is encouraged as it contributes to a perception of greater openness and establishes physical linkages to exterior resources.

The Town intends to permit reasonable land use intensity for all types of use, commensurate with Plan goals. The Town reasonably wishes to be satisfied that sufficient demand exists before authorizing a higher land use intensity than present zoning permits. Regulatory provisions, accompanied by development review practices, are designed to favor compatible, master-planned construction in terms of residences per acre or site coverage as compared with piecemeal development.

Even tract residential, multi-family housing projects, or small commercial developments to which planned development guidelines do not apply may qualify for incentives (thereby increasing construction potential) by incorporating features that correspond to Town planning goals. A standard subdivision, for example, may contribute a pathway link, or a free-standing commercial building can provide outstanding artwork or landscaping for public enjoyment.

Commercial opportunities in Oro Valley are encouraged to make the most of their designated locations by constructing substantial, attractive buildings with full improvements, convenience and safety. The Town wants its shops, offices and centers to be planned, built and operated to house successful, stable businesses. Overbuilding, with excessive commercial unit vacancy, should be discouraged. Again, a master-planned development which creates its own market for retail and service uses exemplifies a preferred situation for new commerce opportunities.

Industrial uses will fit in master planned campus settings with users tending to include high tech testing and research labs with, perhaps, some light manufacturing or assembly. Aerospace, research and development, corporate headquarters, engineering and communications companies are among likely corporate installations for Oro Valley sites. Although heavy industry is neither encouraged nor likely, nonetheless, the Town should consider providing a centrally-located, hidden compound for outdoor-type uses such as equipment storage.

Reserves for institutions, particularly health care and higher education, will be incorporated into or adjacent to planned communities' activity center cores. Churches, corporate conference centers, child or adult day care facilities, professional office plazas, neighborhood schools--even hospitals, colleges or senior citizen complexes in large scale developments--may be appropriate additions to future neighborhood centers.

Sensitive uses must also be provided with siting opportunities. The Town does not anticipate accommodating junk yards, hazardous materials storage and other unsafe or unsightly uses. It is recognized, however, that utility corridors and substations, landfills, extractive industries, wastewater treatment plants, and the like constitute necessary support functions. The Town will work closely with providers, entrepreneurs and adjacent jurisdictions to identify sites for these uses in locations where they will not detract from the values of others' properties. Standards for covering, screening, access, separation and other mitigation requirements are established to assure that these uses will be operated as good neighbors to the community.

### **Future Urban Form**

Although growing consistently over the next two decades, Oro Valley's form will remain that of a Town, rather than the sprawl of unbroken urban development that characterizes most of Arizona's cities. Judicious retention of usable recreation space, view corridors and ample setbacks and buffers for planned communities blends with the openness of undevelopable land (natural wash corridors and unsafe, steep terrain) and permanently preserved government lands to establish significant breaks among residential communities and town activity centers.

**Plan Alternatives** were developed as optional responses to Town residents' goals. At a public workshop (and with subsequent, thorough critiques by the General Plan Advisory Committee) four alternate plans were carefully evaluated. These plans were titled: Oracle Corridor, Tangerine Nodes, Resort/Arts, and Annexation/Open Space.

A **Preferred Alternative** was selected, based on community input. The resulting concept plan focussed on the Resort/Arts Alternative, incorporating the Tangerine Nodes planned communities approach and positive aspects of the other alternates, as well. This composite of alternatives was presented to the public at yet another workshop, and has been further refined by public and Committee



suggestions. The Town of Oro Valley General Plan Map (Figure 3) is a broad, conceptual graphic statement of the community's vision toward a desired, future community form.

Land use, in the community's distinctive valley setting, is planned to utilize fully the mountain terrain and desert floor context. The natural spaciousness of the Town projects an image that appears to be distinctly non-urban although the Town's development is substantial and of high structural design quality.

Implementation strategies, considered in greater detail in Part IV of this General Plan update, have been geared to the anticipated, desired pace of development. Land absorption (that is, converting raw real estate to specific uses) has been envisioned to follow major capital improvements such as increased roadway capacities or utility service expansions.

An orderly Town buildout is projected, extending well beyond the Plan's 2010 vision threshold. However, it is recognized that Town policy should be flexible to allow for changes in conditions. Land use decisions can reasonably be used to manage growth rates in the community: providing incentives to encourage development where public investment is in place; acting as a brake when runaway development threatens to exceed systems' capacities or detract from Oro Valley's distinctive character.

Regulatory land use guidance mechanisms are essential tools for assuring orderly Land Use Element implementation. The Town's zoning, subdivision and other development ordinances should be attuned to the pattern and rate of growth that can be accommodated. These provisions, together with the prescribed functions of the Development Review Board, and Planning Commission, as major recommending bodies to the Town Council, are necessary to preserve value for existing land uses as well as to provide desired variety and balance in housing types, shopping and employment opportunities for new construction. Ordinances, in general, will be legislated so as to preclude unreasonable development intensities and to encourage the predominantly residential-resort use mix stipulated by this Plan's adoption. The Town staff

shares significant responsibility in meeting the community's land use objectives. They review development proposals for compliance with codes, ordinances, standards and guidelines and make recommendations to the elected and appointed bodies.

Establishing continually refined standards for development constitutes a significant responsibility for Town government. Oro Valley intends that all future land uses will contribute positively to, and not detract from, the established community character. From time to time, revised development criteria will be established to implement the goals and concepts outlined in the General Plan and any specific area plans.

Incentives, such as transferable development rights or "credits" granted in return for dedicated open space or other community amenities, can be employed as monitoring devices to promote the types and intensities of land use for which the Town capital improvement program has prepared. Recognizing that under-utilized real estate is not economic to the municipality, Oro Valley wishes to encourage profitable, permanent use of land where infrastructure to support it is already in place. Accordingly, land use implementation programs will pay particular attention to in-fill development, to maintaining planned residential/non-residential balance, and to inspiring creative, high-quality construction.

Specific plans may serve as another incentive to creative land development. The Planning and Zoning Commission, at Town Council's direction, should identify and recommend areas of particular development opportunity for Specific Plan designation under Arizona statutes. Examples of areas for which this particularized planning treatment might be appropriate are the State Trust lands to the north of Oro Valley's present corporate limits and commercially-zoned, but unused, tracts located in the Oracle Road Corridor. Nine planning sectors appear to be reasonable divisions of the larger planning area at this time. Each could be further subdivided into discrete neighborhood or planned area development units with increasing levels of specificity.

Development timing mechanisms will be especially worthwhile in Oro Valley where much of the anticipated growth will occur in master-planned developments.

Phasing schedules should be determined to allow developers reasonable expectations of retail-service site sales (as designated through zoning entitlements) when sufficient residential market areas have been created--but neither so far in advance of supporting neighborhoods, nor withheld from development so long to constitute a "skipped over" parcel as to create an imbalance in the Town's carefully-shaped fiscal planning. Similarly, different housing types (apartments, townhomes, single-family detached) may be phased to permit homebuilders an array of marketing choices and to insure the Town against an overbuilding of any one residential type.

#### Land Absorption: Phasing Projections

The Town's future growth implications are, in large part, guided by this Plan. Residential construction will mark the predominance of development activity in each of Oro Valley's General Plan stages. Already approved planned development, such as the Rancho Vistoso Master Plan will likely house a high percentage of the next decade's population increment and will include stipulated non-residential uses. Some absorption of previously-zoned land along Oracle will also occur, perhaps including strategic redesignation for other use types at landowners' request.

The policies and guidance provided in the general plan will be reflected and made more precise through the development of specific plans. Nine planning areas, representing particular qualifying characteristics identified in the general plan, are proposed. For instance, some sub-areas are essentially undeveloped and may be considered to promote specific growth policies while other already planned or developed parts of the community will reinforce planned patterns or provide mechanisms to redirect existing conditions.

In the second decade of this Plan's intended time span, a new generation of self-contained neighborhoods are anticipated along the Tangerine Road alignment, synchronous with major roadway improvements and the establishment of Oro Valley's western gateway.

The expected annual land absorption rate of the 1990s is expected to increase between the years 2000 and 2010. The overall pattern of development, accelerating with completion of Tangerine Road improvements, is seen as being principally fueled by peripheral new communities and the buildout of presently-established or -approved planned developments though each year will experience some infill development.

Population increments over the Plan's three stages are estimated as follows:

**TABLE 3 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

	<u>Town</u>	<u>Planning Area</u>
1990 Census	: 6,000 residents	31,975
1991-1995	: 9,500 residents	50,000
1996-2000	: 14,000 residents	70,000
2001-2010	: 29,000 residents	100,686

Before the year 2000 a majority of Oro Valley's citizens may be living in the Rancho Vistoso area. That portion of the community, as presently planned, will house up to 20,000 residents. It is, therefore, conceivable that two of every three persons in the Town will be living in Rancho Vistoso by 2010, representing an 85% buildout of that planned community. Likewise, State Trust Lands in the northernmost portion of the Planning Area, are expected to experience planning for development, and some early phase construction as a result of Rancho Vistoso's marketing attraction.

The Town's development, in cost-benefit terms, is planned on a pay-as-we-go basis. Future land use is not meant to be artificially constrained by a lack of municipal infrastructure; however, each new development, whether residential, commercial, employment or mixed use, is expected to contribute financially to service adequately all additional demands it places on Town facilities and services. Moreover, all development will similarly be required to "pay its dues" in terms of providing a positive increment to the community's valued image character and that development, planning and implementation costs may occur earlier in the approval process than has been customary.

## TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The overall goals for circulation in the Oro Valley planning area are to create a safe, energy efficient, cost effective, multi-modal, environmentally sensitive and convenient transportation system. Further, emphasis is placed on ease of access from residential areas to employment and activity centers, reducing vehicular trips through neighborhoods and expanding public transportation service and bicycle routes. Accommodating present and future travel demand, primarily by private automobile, will be a key concern during the horizon period (the next twenty years) of this General Plan.

This element will briefly review the circulation system in Oro Valley and the surrounding unincorporated areas. The discussion includes both the existing and proposed systems for vehicular traffic and alternative travel modes. As the Town continues to grow, a coordinated plan will identify the expected and desired use of various streets, transportation corridors, and related transportation facilities. This element will provide the direction and basis for assuring that a timely and efficient circulation system is created.

Based on considerable input through public workshops, a household survey and the General Plan Advisory Committee, the primary transportation corridors in the planning area, Oracle Road (U.S. 89) and Tangerine Road (State Route 989) were identified as exemplifying two distinct future development patterns. Oracle Road provides a tremendous scenic resource which is to be protected through careful planning and conscientious land use decisions. Conversely, Tangerine Road has been identified to accommodate a more intensive corridor of development. To implement these objectives, additional technical analyses, considering land use and transportation planning for Oracle and Tangerine Roads, has been prepared as an adjunct of this Plan.

Certain development entitlements may be shifted away from Oracle Road to the Tangerine Corridor as a means of achieving the community's goals, in harmony with ultimate circulation designs. This is consistent with the planned 300 foot right-of-way, high volume facility which has been planned by the Arizona

Department of Transportation. Over the next ten years, as the community directs the development patterns of these corridors, traffic volumes are going to increase and will need to be accommodated within the planning area.

Improving the efficiency of the roadway network, the primary component of the circulation system, is desirable. The types of roadways in the Planning Area include highways, arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets. Roles and standards for each roadway type must be established in order to plan an efficient and effective system. Highways and arterials carry through traffic and provide mobility for the community. Collector and local streets provide direct land access and carry local traffic to neighborhoods within the community.

A complete set of design standards needs to be established and implemented by the Town to accomplish the goals and policies stated in this Plan. The highways and arterials are continuous routes which should have limited access to adjacent properties. The collector and local streets are usually not continuous through the community and they permit direct access to individual sites, which ingress and egress may be limited by safety controls. In general, parking is prohibited along arterials and highways, is limited along collectors, and is permitted along local streets.

### Existing Conditions

An understanding of the existing circulation system is essential for the determination of future needs and improvements which further the Town's circulation goals. Important considerations include: the regional setting of the Town of Oro Valley and its connections to surrounding areas, the nature of the system within the Planning Area, and the identified deficiencies and problems. This identified system, together with projected future conditions based on regional population and employment growth scenarios adopted by Pima Association of Governments, and consideration of the long term welfare of the Town, will form the basis for the definition of needed improvements and additions.

## Regional Context and Arterial Network

The regional setting of the existing major road system is illustrated in Figure 1. A more detailed depiction of the Planning Area is shown in Figure 2.

Primary access to Oro Valley is provided by U.S. Highway 89 (Oracle Road). This facility serves a high percentage (about 35%) of through traffic, as shown on Figure 4. Interstate 10, a four-lane, divided highway that connects Tucson and Phoenix, lies approximately ten miles to the west. Access from the Planning Area to Interstate 10 is provided by Tangerine Road (State Route 989), Ina Road, and Cortaro Farms Road. Additional access is provided from the northeast via State Route 77, entering the northeast portion of the study area from the Town of Oracle.

In addition to these regional connections, the existing arterial streets within the Planning Area essentially follow a grid pattern, deviating in some areas because of the Canyon Del Oro Wash, the Catalina Mountains and existing developments. Also, several links in the grid have not been built because of a lack of immediate need or funding. Figure 4 illustrates the existing major streets with an indication of the road surface and the number of through lanes.

North-south arterials include Thornydale Road, Shannon Road, La Cholla Boulevard, La Cañada Drive, and First Avenue. Providing east-west arterial capacity are Moore Road, Naranja Drive, Lambert Lane, Overton/Hardy Road and Cortaro/Magee Road. Rancho Vistoso Boulevard provides arterial access to the Rancho Vistoso master-planned community and connects to First Avenue which accesses Oracle Road.





Within the arterial system, collector and local streets serve their adjoining areas. The Town limits contain approximately 32 miles of paved streets, fewer than five miles of unpaved roads, and a number of roadways that are owned and maintained privately. The majority of the paved local streets are constructed as rural roadways with no curb, gutter, and sidewalks.



The map displays the Oro Valley area with various land parcels outlined and labeled with their respective acreage. The parcels are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some larger tracts and many smaller ones. Key geographical features include the Tortolita Mountains to the north, Catalina State Park to the east, and the Coronado National Forest to the southeast. Major roads and highways are shown, including Camino de Oeste, Thornydale, Shannon, La Cholla, La Canada, Hardy, and Oracle. Other labels include Moore, Tangerine, Naranja, Lambert, Linda Vista, Overton, Cortaro, Ina, Magee, and Oro Valley Rancho Vistoso. The map also shows the Big Wash and 27 Wash areas. The acreage values range from 0.5 to 39.7 acres.

**FIGURE 4**

**LEGEND**

	6 lane paved
	4 lane paved
	2 lane paved
	2 lane unpaved



**PARSONS  
BRINCKERHOFF**

**Volumes in thousands**  
**Source: ADOT**  
**(August 1989)**



## **Traffic Volumes**

Daily traffic volumes on the street system within the Planning Area are also shown in Figure 4. These data were obtained from traffic counts conducted by ADOT in August, 1989. Volumes on Oracle Road vary from 39,700 average daily traffic (ADT) at Ina Road, 34,400 ADT at Magee Road, and 12,200 ADT north of the Town limits. The largest volume on Ina Road is 36,100 ADT between La Cholla Boulevard and La Cañada Drive. The highest volume on a two-lane road is 13,300 ADT on La Cañada Drive north of Ina Road.

## **System Deficiencies and Constraints**

Various deficiencies and constraints are presently acknowledged within the system. An identification of these problems is necessary in order to define the recommended improvements. These deficiencies were noted in detail in the Transportation/Circulation Element.

Primary deficiencies include the intersections of U.S. 89 and Ina Road, extreme delays that are experienced by traffic turning left onto U.S. 89 at unsignalized intersections, and congestion levels on portions of U.S. 89, La Cañada Drive, La Cholla Boulevard, Magee Road, and Ina Road.

In addition to these existing problems, other constraints are present that will influence the definition of the future circulation system. Physical barriers, such as mountains and washes, must be considered. The mountains on the north and east sides of the Planning Area will constrain future development and its associated circulation needs. In the developed area, the various drainage washes will affect the design and quality of the circulation system. Structural crossings of those washes may be prohibited by this cost. Dry-weather crossings may create hazardous conditions during runoff periods. Thus, the design of the circulation system will be constrained by these natural conditions.

Another issue to be considered relates to the existing roadways in potential annexation areas, which may not meet the Town's standards for roadway width, right-of-way, sub-base material, or pavement section. Future annexation policies should include a plan to upgrade and improve these roadways.

### **Other Transportation Modes**

Existing public transit service includes both regular and express bus service to the southern end from the Planning Area to other parts of the metropolitan area but does not penetrate the Oro Valley Town limits. Suntran express bus service operates along Oracle Road to Magee Road and from La Cholla Boulevard west across Ina Road to I-10. Regular bus service includes four buses leaving Oracle and Magee Road in the morning and two buses leaving in the evening.

Bicycles are another form of transportation used in the Oro Valley Planning Area. According to the Tucson Bikeways and Bikeable Streets map, there are four roadways with designated bike lanes, including portions of Oracle Road, Sage Street (between Overton and Magee roads, west of La Cañada Drive), Ina Road and Thornydale Road. In addition, a number of area roadways are identified as "bikeable" streets. Sidewalks are provided in some areas for pedestrians. In addition, trails are identified for recreational walkers and hikers in the 1988 Trail System Master Plan for Eastern Pima County, including Cañada del Oro, Linda Vista, Honey Bee, WAPA line, and Big Wash trails. Other trails are located in Catalina State Park and Coronado National Forest.

Carpooling and vanpooling provide additional opportunities to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. The Pima Association of Governments (PAG) provides coordination assistance to potential carpool participants. Small bus routes, private jitney service and demand transportation services between shopping/employment/recreation centers and residential developments offer another trip reduction method that is available.

Although Suntran bus Route 16 serves Oracle Road north to Ina Road throughout the day, it does not penetrate Oro Valley Town limits. Scheduled

bus service may be extended into the Town when conditions warrant. Several factors influencing the establishment of transit service are fuel costs, commuting time, degree of air quality enforcement, traffic congestion, availability of modal transfer points, fuel availability and the extent of public and private support (subsidy) of such services. The Town encourages the establishment of any transit service.

### **Future Conditions**

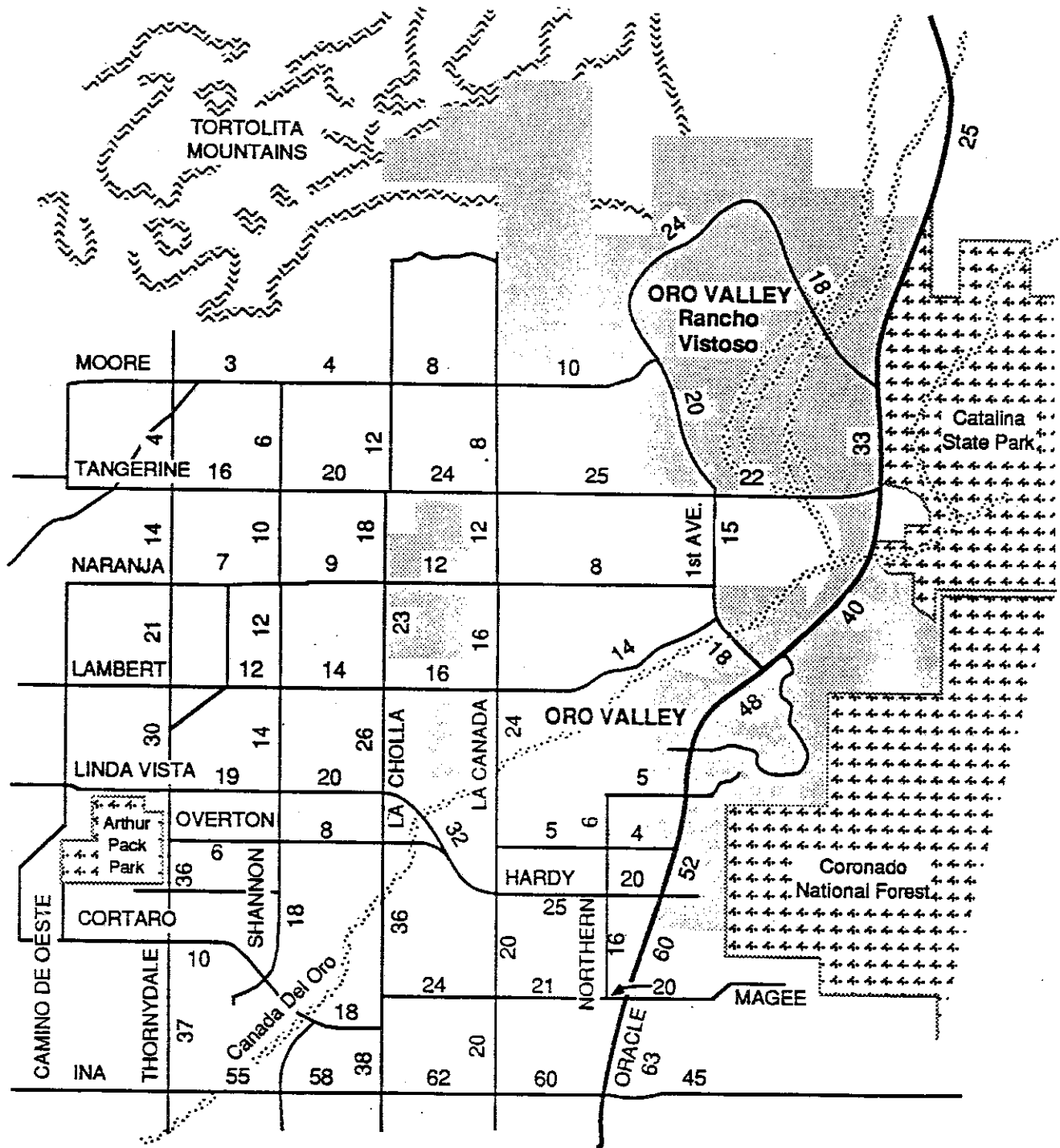
The definition of the needed circulation system is based on an assessment of future conditions in the Planning Area. A projection of population and employment was used as the primary measure of this expected growth. These projections were then employed to forecast future traffic conditions through the use of the computer model called TRANPLAN.

### **Population and Employment Forecasts**

Forecasts of growth in population and employment were developed by Gruen Associates, the General Plan consultant, Pima Association of Governments and Town staff for the year 2010. These forecasts were made for each of the traffic analysis zones, which provides a geographic distribution of the expected growth. A summary of the existing and projected conditions is provided in Table 4.

The projections for the year 2010 suggest that population in the Planning Area will triple and that the highest growth levels will occur in the northern half of the Planning Area. Major residential land use increases are expected in Rancho Vistoso and the area to the southwest of the Planning Area. In addition, areas along Tangerine Road are expected to experience significant residential development by 2010 consistent with the adopted goals and development scenarios, of this General Plan; the largest increases in employment are expected along Ina, Oracle, and Tangerine Roads. Employment should also increase adjacent to Overton Road between Thornydale Road and La Cholla Boulevard.

# TOWN OF ORO VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE and TRANSPORTATION STUDY



**FIGURE 5**  
**TRAFFIC FORECASTS**  
**YEAR 2010**  
Daily Volumes in Thousands



**PARSONS  
BRINCKERHOFF**

**TABLE 4**  
**POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES**  
**1990 and 2010 Comparison**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Population	31,975	100,686	+215%
Employment	7,515	21,287	+183%

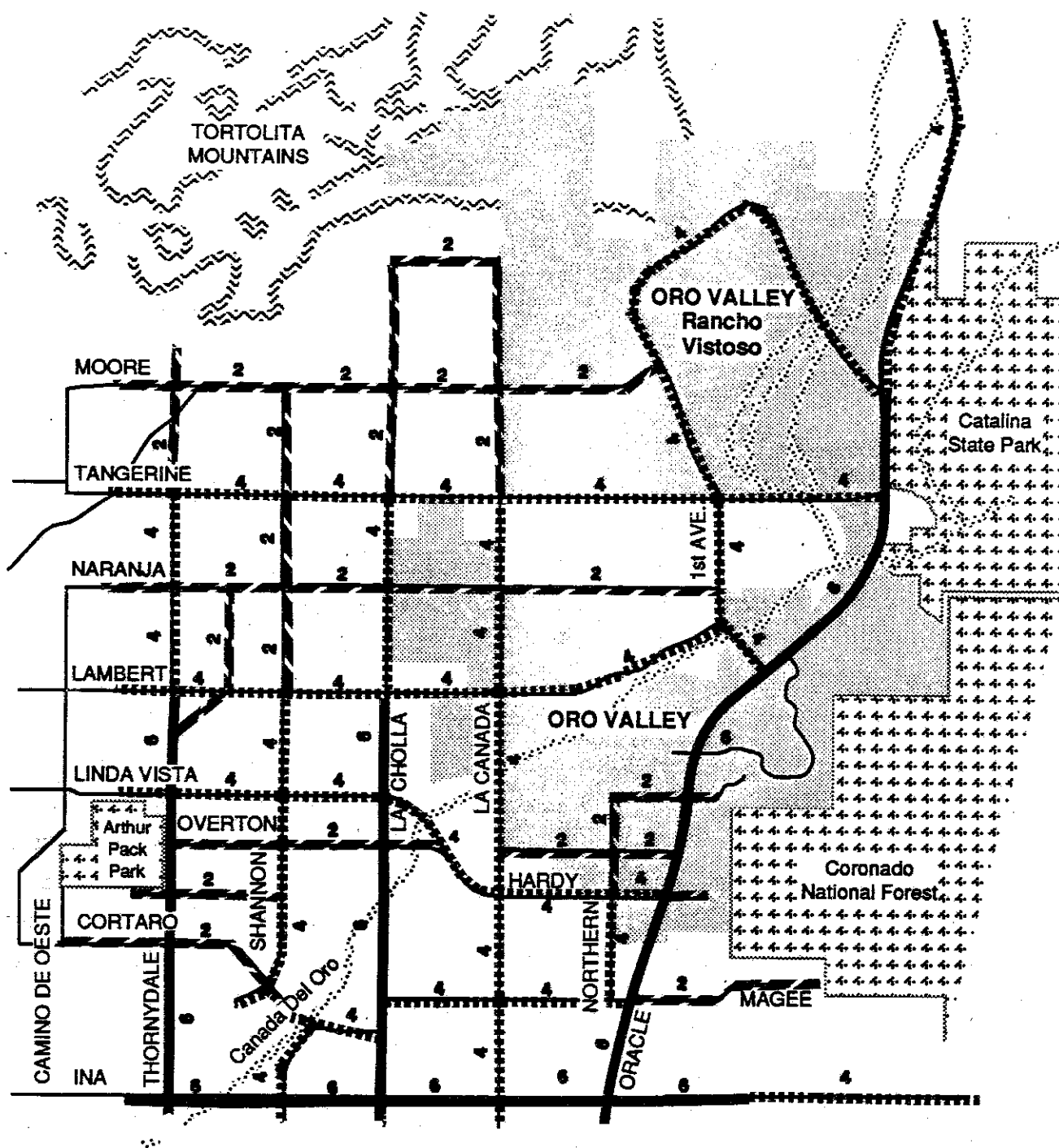
### **Traffic Forecasts**

Daily traffic volumes are projected to increase throughout the Planning Area as shown in Figure 5. The highest daily volumes are forecast for Oracle and Ina Roads. On Oracle Road, the 2010 daily traffic is estimated to be 63,000 north of Ina Road and 40,000 north of First Avenue. The forecasts range from 55,000 to 62,000 on Ina Road between Oracle Road and Thornydale Road. On Tangerine Road, the daily volumes are expected to increase from less than 2,000 in 1990 to 25,000 by 2010. Other roadways where the 2010 daily traffic is expected to exceed 10,000 include La Cholla Boulevard, Magee Road, First Avenue, Rancho Vistoso Boulevard, Lambert Lane, Linda Vista Boulevard, Hardy Road and, within the planning area (as shown in Figure 5), portions of La Cañada Drive, Thornydale Road, Cortaro Road, Shannon Road and Naranja Drive.

It should be recognized that public sector decision-making regarding roadway and transit improvements in Pima County and the Town of Oro Valley can affect the land uses determining travel patterns in the Planning Area.

Where possible, Oro Valley shall implement circulation improvements which conform to the intent of policy and direction contained in the General Plan and other adopted Town documents and policies.

# TOWN OF ORO VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE and TRANSPORTATION STUDY



**FIGURE 6**  
**LANE REQUIREMENTS**  
**YEAR 2010**



**PARSONS  
BRINCKERHOFF**

SEE FIGURE 4 FOR 1990 ROADWAY  
INVENTORY AND PAVEMENT SURFACE

LEGEND	
	6 lanes
	4 lanes
	2 lanes

## **Analysis of Future Traffic**

The traffic forecasts shown in Figure 5 were compared to intersection and roadway capacity in order to determine the anticipated areas of congestion. These determinations form the basis for the identification of recommended improvements to the system. It must be recognized that future traffic predictions are based on several assumptions, such as growth rates, land uses, construction of needed improvements and related issues discussed in other elements of this General Plan. As the Plan is implemented, choices may be made that affect the future traffic conditions.

## **Recommended System**

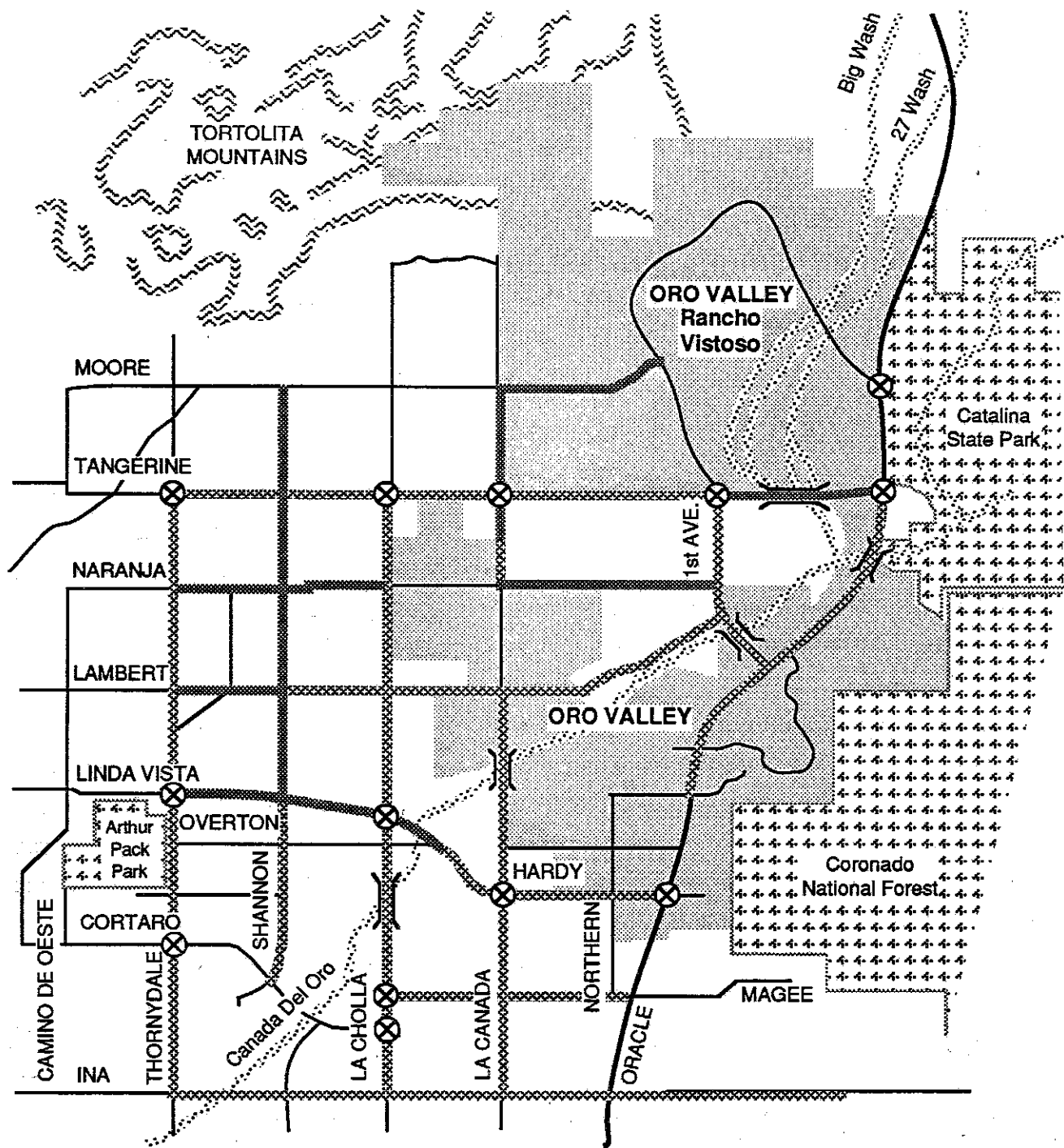
A number of improvements to the circulation system will be required in order to serve the traffic conditions that are currently expected to exist in 2010. These improvements should be timed to coincide with the growth rate, which is expected to be somewhat slow in the next five years, increase in the subsequent five years, and be at its peak in the ten years between 2000 and 2010.

To the greatest extent possible, the Town should direct growth with strategically located improvements including emphasizing improvement to Tangerine Road in accordance with land use policies. The recommended 2010 system is illustrated in Figure 6 and is intended to include improvements in conjunction with the Regional Transportation Plan. Additional emphasis on the north-south arterials of La Cañada Drive and La Cholla Boulevard will be required to alleviate traffic pressures on Oracle Road and provide adequate service to the Planning Area.

## **Roadway Improvements**

The projected traffic volumes of several street segments are expected to exceed their design capacity in 2010. One means of alleviating this congestion is to increase the capacity by widening the roadway. As used in these recommendations, road widening would result in either of the following actions:

# TOWN OF ORO VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE and TRANSPORTATION STUDY



- PAVING / EXTENSIONS
- WIDENINGS
- X POTENTIAL FUTURE SIGNAL
- )) DRAINAGE CROSSING STRUCTURE



**FIGURE 7  
FUTURE ROADWAY  
IMPROVEMENTS AND  
POTENTIAL SIGNAL  
LOCATIONS**



- o Increase an existing two-lane section to four lanes. The four-lane cross-section provides two through lanes in each direction and a median with a left turn lane at major intersections.
- o Increase an existing four- or five-lane section to six or seven lanes. The six-lane cross-section provides three through lanes in each direction. The seven-lane cross-section adds a continuous two-way left turn lane or a median with a left turn lane at major intersections.

The recommended road widenings and extensions are highlighted on Figure 7. In addition to roadway widenings, other transportation improvements will be necessary to accommodate the projected growth. Specifically, intersection improvements, consisting of left turn lanes and traffic signalization, must be planned and constructed in conjunction with future widenings. Intersection locations where traffic signals might be required are: Tangerine/Thornydale, Tangerine/La Cholla, Tangerine/La Cañada, Tangerine/First Avenue, Tangerine/Oracle, Rancho Vistoso/Oracle, Linda Vista/La Cholla, Hardy/La Cañada, Hardy/Oracle and Magee/La Cholla. These and other potential signal locations are also shown in Figure 7. In-depth traffic studies will have to be conducted to determine the extent of intersection improvements/complexity of signalization. The Town reserves the right to recommend alternative solutions, based on actual development and future roadway capacity demand. Oro Valley recognizes Pima County criteria for roadway widenings are further constrained by financing considerations and that specific projects will likely not be implemented within the horizon time (Year 2010) of this plan.

Several major drainage structures will be required to implement an effective, efficient transportation system and accommodate natural drainage. Locations where new or widened structures (bridges or box culverts) might be needed include Oracle Road to accommodate future widenings north of Calle Concordia, La Cañada Drive and First Avenue over the Cañada del Oro Wash for future lanes, Overton Road/Linda Vista for future widenings, and Tangerine Road between First Avenue and Oracle Road to complete the direct east-west link.

ADOT is planning double left turn lanes at the Ina Road/Oracle Road intersection. This improvement was designed after an intersection and traffic study was performed. As volumes continue to increase at this intersection, additional improvements will be necessary.

Other related improvements will also be incorporated into transportation projects. Utilities will be placed in transportation corridors and drainage facilities will also be designed to alleviate flooding and protect natural and man-made resources. All weather crossings are desirable and will be provided where transportation facilities are improved or extended. Table 5 identifies the major drainage improvements and the type of improvement needed and lists several other roads where minor drainage improvements are likely.

**TABLE 5**  
**ANTICIPATED DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS**

**TO BE INCORPORATED WITH YEAR 2010 FORECASTED IMPROVEMENTS**

**CROSSINGS OVER THE CDO WASH**

<u>Roadway</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
La Cholla Boulevard	new crossing - bridge structure
Overton Road/Linda Vista Boulevard	new crossing - bridge structure
La Cañada Drive	expansion/widening of existing structure
First Avenue	expansion/widening of existing structure
Oracle Road/Highway 89	expansion/widening of existing structure

**CROSSING OVER BIG WASH**

<u>Roadway</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
Tangerine Road	new crossing -bridge structure

**Table 5 (continued)**  
**ANTICIPATED MINOR DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS ARE LIKELY ON**  
**THE FOLLOWING ROADWAYS**

<u>Roadway</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
Moore Road	Oracle Road
Tangerine Road	La Cañada Drive
Naranja Road	La Cholla Drive
Lambert Lane	Shannon Road
Linda Vista Boulevard	Thornydale Road
Hardy Road	Cortaro Farms Road
Magee Road	

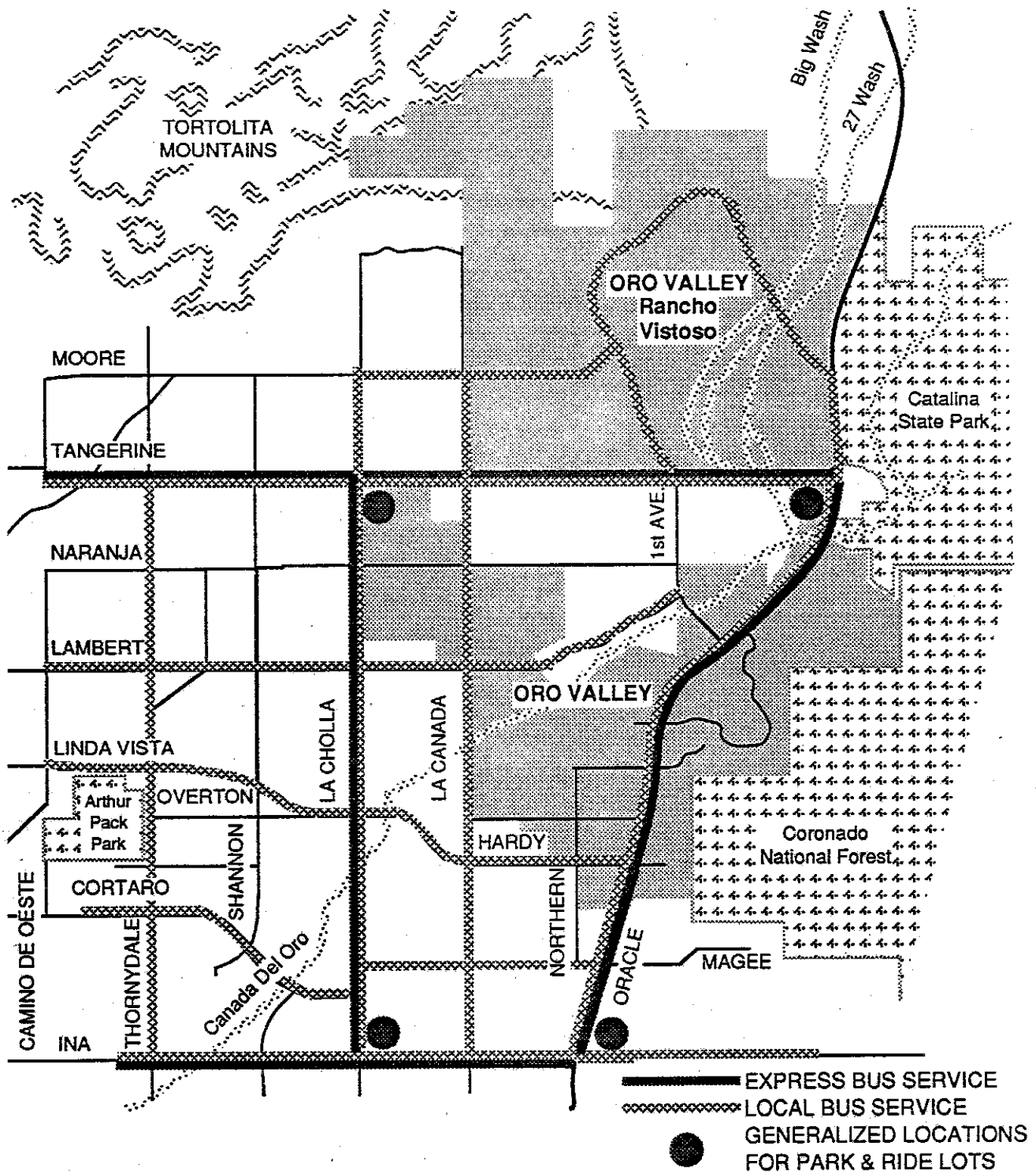
**Public Transit**

Frequency of service and route coverage are limited in the current system. With the anticipated growth for the Planning Area, transit service expansion within specific corridors may be justified and should be supported in the future. Relatively higher densities and corridor development will be required to bring population concentration levels closer to those needed to support mass transit. It is recognized that public transit will require large public subsidy well into the 21st Century. As the community grows, more frequent service and direct routing connecting new activity centers and population areas will increase access to the transit system and encourage ridership.

Transit service within the study area could be extended as the population densities increase, as regional activity nodes develop, with commitments of financial support of the private and public sectors and by employment centers subject to the Town's adopted trip reduction ordinance.

Potential transit route options are shown in Figure 8, based on the Regional Transportation Plan adopted by the Pima Association of Governments Regional Council. The corridors within which transit will be most feasible and should be encouraged include Oracle Road, La Cañada Drive and Ina Road in the short

# TOWN OF ORO VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE and TRANSPORTATION STUDY



## TRANSIT ROUTE OPTIONS

(based on future road system)

Figure 8



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BRINCKERHOFF

term. Tangerine Road, La Cholla Boulevard and Rancho Vistoso Boulevard are targeted as longer term transit corridors.

To facilitate use of transit opportunities and reduction in vehicular traffic, the following measures should be implemented by the Town - requiring park and ride lots in private and public activity centers and facilities, and encouraging ride-sharing programs for Oro Valley - Tucson commuters. Also included in the illustration are proposed locations for park and ride lots. As shown, the options include three types of service, shuttle/circulator, local bus, and express service.

Local buses are intended to provide service along the arterials to neighborhoods, commercial centers, and activity centers. Local bus service would operate on a fixed route, regular schedule throughout the day.

Regular transit service is currently provided along Ina Road, on the southern Planning Area boundary. Express bus service provides access from Magee and U.S. 89 to downtown Tucson. Transit routes extending north could be provided as route subsidies are obtained from communities or possibly from State or Federal programs, in support of improved air-quality.

An express bus route is proposed to extend service into Oro Valley along U.S. 89 providing access to Tucson. Express service has relatively few stops along its route and operates on an abbreviated schedule usually serving the morning and evening work trips. Local bus service acts as a feeder to express service. The Town supports expanding these services and may contribute to capital costs in partnership with private and public interests as Town resources permit.

The extent of the bus system should be evaluated periodically as development continues. Initially, certain routes may warrant only partial service along the entire length of the routes. Public transit service in Oro Valley will be considered by Suntran only when the Town assists in financial support of the service.

Public transit services currently provided by Suntran are partially subsidized by governmental entities with additional funding from Federal and State programs. Objectives within Federal and State transit assistance programs suggest higher proportionate assistance being provided by local governments in the future. Interest in transit service may grow as traffic patterns become established, private enterprise endorses and supports employee transit ridership and citizens express a strong need for local government assistance.

### **Bike Plan**

A bike plan is necessary for the Town to adequately Plan and provide routes for cyclists. A signed bike route informs motorists that bicycle traffic may be present. A bike plan should take into account the different types of cyclists such as school children, commuter, and recreational cyclists. Cyclists in the Oro Valley area include those who ride bicycles to places of work, schools and recreational destinations.

In Oro Valley, the bike routes include the trails system which provides access to much of the area's greenbelt and open space. It is important to consider these bike routes and open space areas in building the transportation system so they are accessible, well marked and easy to identify. Bikeable connections between schools, parks, open spaces, National Forest trailheads, the State Park and activity centers are to be established through developer participation and public sector planning. All future development should provide a method for students to have safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools and parks.

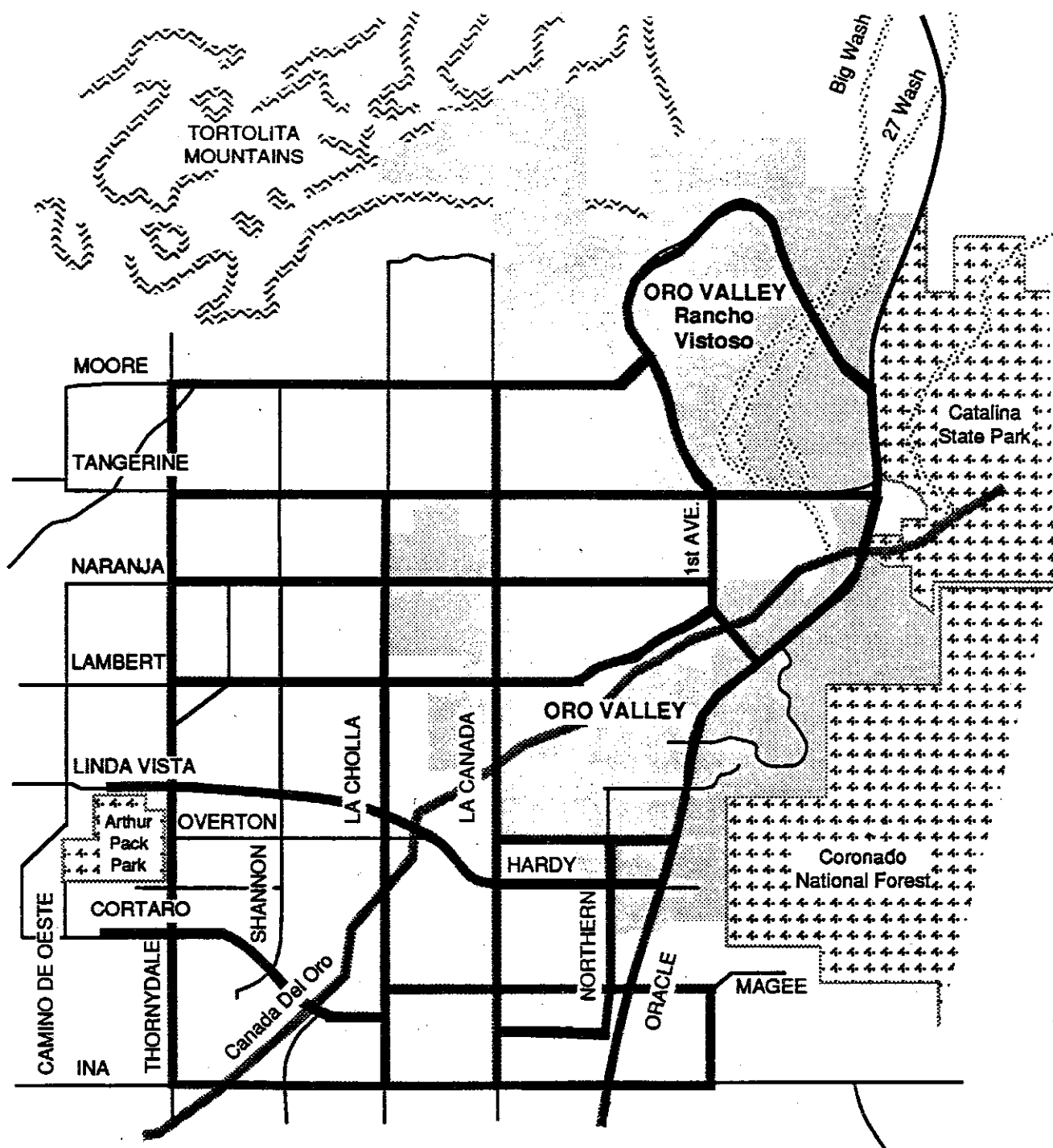
The Town of Oro Valley supports compliance with the Arizona Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Guidelines (Arizona Bicycle Task Force, 1988). This publication should be referenced for standards of bicycle facilities design in the Planning Area. The General Plan recommends adequate signage for all bike lanes, bike paths, bike routes and bikeable streets. A five-foot minimum bike lane, and/or an eight foot wide, off-street bike path, where appropriate and safe, shall be incorporated in all arterial roadway improvements over which the Town has jurisdiction.

Further, bike facility areas (as defined in the Arizona Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Guidelines) are as follows:

- 1) bike lane: a portion of a roadway which has been designated for the preferential or exclusive use of bicycles, with through travel by motorists and pedestrians prohibited, but with crossflows by pedestrians and motorists permitted. This designation includes striped bike lanes, paved shoulders, and lanes for joint use by disabled vehicles and bicycles.
- 2) bike path: a bikeway which is physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and which is either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. Crossflows with motorized traffic are minimized.
- 3) bike route: a segment of a system of bikeways designated by the jurisdiction having authority with appropriate directional and informational markers, with or without a specific bicycle route number.
- 4) bikeable streets/shared roadway: any roadway upon which a bicycle lane is not designated and which may be legally used by bicycles regardless of whether such facility is specifically designated as a bikeway.

A proposed bike plan for the Planning Area is shown in Figure 9 based on the year 2010 road system. The system includes a number of the roadways which are recommended for widening. When the facility is widened, bike lanes and/or bike paths shall be provided within the right-of-way. In the same manner, as roadways are paved, adequate width should be provided to accommodate bike lanes in the cross section. Consideration will be given to providing paved bike paths where appropriate. Improvements or widenings should not be made unless provisions to accommodate bicycle traffic within the right-of-way are included. Certain bike paths may be combined as shared facilities with golf cart paths.

# TOWN OF ORO VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE and TRANSPORTATION STUDY



**FIGURE 9**  
**BIKE PLAN**  
(based on 2010 road system)



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— FACILITIES FOR BIKE USE



Use of the bicycle as an alternative mode should be promoted through Town Ordinances and policies. Requiring the installation of bike parking facilities in all new developments, public and private, where appropriate, shall be implemented.

Other bike paths and bikeable streets should be designated through a more detailed inventory and plan for bikeways in the Planning Area.

### **Local Air Facilities**

A small, private air park, La Cholla Airpark, near La Cholla Boulevard and Moore Road services a low density subdivision within the Planning Area. The airpark is not expected to expand its resident-recreational function over the next 20 years. The potential aviation improvement would be a central siting for a heliport, located well away from wilderness areas, providing air taxi services for resort guests and Town residents to and from Tucson International Airport.



# General Plan Elements



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

Oro Valley's economic future is interwoven with its distinctive community character based on a residential/resort image and its proximity to the Pusch Ridge Wilderness, the Coronado National Forest and the Catalina State Park. Diversification in revenue base, encouraged through additions to employment and shopping opportunities, is a municipal planning goal, but not at the expense of the Town's carefully managed image of spaciousness, lack of visual clutter and family living quality.

Economic growth has been almost entirely residential and resort driven in the past. Like much of Arizona, however, future municipal expansion is expected to derive, increasingly, from the importation of jobs into the state, particularly from Southern California. The Town's General Plan establishes appropriate settings, public policies and implementation techniques to encourage corporate locations in Oro Valley that will benefit from, and coincide with, local character goals.

### **Economic Conditions**

Entering the 1990s, the Town of Oro Valley prospers from a solid fiscal base. The Town's revenues draw primarily from permits and licenses augmented by substantial resort/tourism tax revenues. There is no local real property tax. Apart from visitor-serving businesses, current sales tax revenues on shopping or services are comparatively low.

The Town's dependence on other income sources, such as State revenue sharing, is not as heavy as most Arizona communities. However, there is a need to match economic expansion with projected population growth so as to maintain local funding self-reliance. Capital improvement investment decisions should focus on future revenue sources such as long-term sales and hospitality tax revenue increases that will be encouraged by enhanced community quality standards.

Personal income levels in the Town are among the highest in the State. Comprehensive planning objectives include techniques to continue attracting households with high disposable incomes. These target strategies include: 1) housing construction quality; 2) continued value appreciation in the local real estate market; 3) active retirement marketing; and 4) job creation, especially in managerial, high tech and secondary employment.

Local workforce employment is, at the present time, overly oriented to commuting. More highly paid residents commute substantial distances into Tucson; lower income resort service employees, likewise, tend to generate lengthy work trips into the Town. A preferred employment-residential balance will be based on creation of more upper-end occupational choices in town for area residents and responsiveness to transportation economy and affordable housing opportunities within the Town for service workers.

The concept of affordable housing in Oro Valley includes a range of housing types and cost brackets to attract first time buyers who later may trade-up within the Town. Lower end housing stock may include a mix of apartments, town houses, condominiums and detached homes. Often the housing needs of first time buyers are similar to those of empty nesters, already a recognized target market in Oro Valley.

The community's ample reserve of developable land is being planned to accommodate a variety of employment centers, ranging in size from small office clusters to corporate regional headquarters with hundreds of jobs. As presently evidenced by the multi-tenant Foothills Business Park and the planning area's largest single employment installation, Allied Signal, there is an existing appeal to business locating in Oro Valley.

Economic development diversification objectives are addressed in orderly, master-planned fashion. That is, employment centers are being spread, decentralized in orderly development patterns to prevent peak hour traffic congestion and, concurrently, to establish and maintain good transportation access with acceptable levels of circulation service. Where possible, expansion

room has been built into plans for employment, retail and resort projects. Use mix is encouraged to provide jobs, shopping and recreational space within nodal developments which, in turn, are convenient to nearby residential neighborhoods.

### Development Opportunity

Preferred diversification will be oriented to attracting corporate relocations and professional office occupations, together with increased capture of local residents' or visitors' retail/service shopping expenditures. Master-planned non-residential development sites, primarily, should be reserved interior to new housing communities, rather than following more traditional commercial corridor patterns. Town policies indicate a strong preference for dispersed economic opportunities rather than a concentration of commercial development, such as along Oracle Road.

Land use, circulation, open space, public facilities and other plan elements combine to stress Oro Valley's living environment. These emphases, rather than preventing economic development, can significantly enhance the variety and number of sites that are available for corporate, commercial, tourism and professional business establishments. These locations derive special appeal because they are in Oro Valley, accessible from fine residential areas, conducive to quality corporate or business image.

Community character is a higher priority on site location specialists' lists than is land cost; a "signature" parcel for national companies depends more upon quality development standards than on concentration of land use intensity. Major firms are seeking stability in a community where their employees can find a wide choice of affordable housing, where they can raise their families, and where they will be less likely to want to move on to other employment elsewhere. In short, higher level job opportunities are gravitating to stable municipalities with clear-cut quality of living advantages.

Oro Valley will need to be flexible in keeping options open for a broad spectrum of potential economic development types. However, the Town should be extremely selective with regard to the manner in which different businesses seek to fit into the local context.

Certain types of economic development are more likely than others to choose Oro Valley sites. High tech research and development activities, service industries such as data processing for insurance or financial corporations, perhaps institutional or health care campus and commerce parks -- as well as additional community and specialty retail or resort facilities -- are prime candidates in the expanding Town.

Large warehousing, manufacturing and assembly installations are less likely -- and less desirable; at least until an improved highway connection is established to the Interstate along Tangerine Road. Uses involving heavy truck activity, open storage and industrial waste or pollution are unacceptable in the planning area, no matter how many jobs may be created, unless stringent environmental mitigation measures are observed.

Some planned, already zoned opportunity sites (Rancho Vistoso, Rooney Ranch) provide excellent opportunity for quality economic development in the community's growing northern tier. Land owner or developer proposals are likely in the near term (1990-95) in the vicinity of major arterial intersections westerly from Oracle Road and, later as plans for Tangerine improvements progress along that east - west corridor. In most instances, particularly in the case of resort or "single-user" corporate sites, adjacent residential entitlements will be processed simultaneously with total development tracts which may exceed a quarter section (160 acres) in area.

Community shopping centers, office parks or institutional uses typically will utilize tracts of 20 - 80 acres. These potential developments will generally be reserved in neighborhoods already undergoing "rooftop" construction. The Town's preference is to encourage uses serving new housing bases instead of intensifying existing non-residential and commercial areas.



Sites for master-planned, mixed use development are especially appropriate in the study area's northern and western sectors, where population growth is expected to occur. In particular, new community nodes set back from Tangerine Road, La Cholla Boulevard or La Cañada Drive (and, to some extent Linda Vista/Overton and First Avenue) are expected focal points for economic development.

Future State Land planning will establish additional opportunities. Although some absorption will occur along Oracle Road, Town Plan implementation strategies will not encourage additional commercial entitlements in the scenic corridor area.

As a rule of thumb, retail development should be scaled to serve its intended market area, taking into account the zoned commercial inventory at present. Employment uses (general office, professional, institutional or "single user") are encouraged to absorb the local employee base, but not to encourage an excess of new commuters into the Planning Area.

### **Planning Area Economic Profile**

Billions of dollars will be invested in Oro Valley housing, business and public works over the next 25 years. Although master-planned to retain community spaciousness, considerable absorption of urbanizing, infill development will have taken place. The Town will be a more residential community, but a more balanced economy, too.

The stabilizing changes, as they will affect the local economic base, will constitute Oro Valley becoming a maturing, self-contained community, melded into an expanding metro area and accommodating larger numbers of residents, workers and visitors.

Most significant to the Town's future economic base will be the combination of national demographic trends as well as the attractiveness of Sun City Vistoso and other active retirement neighborhoods which will increase local proportions of financially sound senior homeowners. A projected influx of professional/technical and secondary employment jobs (including significant increases in retail trade) in the Planning Area; however, will provide ample job opportunities for Oro Valley residents in proximity to their homes:

**TABLE 6**  
**ECONOMIC PROFILE TREND**

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>1990 Town*</u>	<u>2010 Planning Area</u>
Employed Population	717	21,287
Proportion of Population	14.7%	21.1%
Percent		
Agriculture/Mining	8.4%	3%
Construction	3.5%	5%
Manufacturing	9.8%	7%
Transportation/Communication/ Public Utilities	5.2%	5%
Wholesale Trade	5.2%	5%
Retail Trade	16.7%	26%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	8.2%	10%
Services	37.1%	34%
Public Administration	5.9%	5%
	-----	-----
	100%	100%

\*1989 Special Census

Fiscal planning to buttress Town revenues during periods of growth should rely heavily on development fees, private and public investment in capital improvements and users' fees. The types of development, maintaining a proportionately stable retail and service tax base, should be programmed to support the community's general fund during times of slower construction.

This general formula, with appropriate annual operating budget adjustments, should allow Town decision-makers to provide levels of service comparable to current municipal functions without enacting substantial new taxes. Fiscal year

budgets, near the \$8 million level in annual expenditures as this Plan is adopted, will increase markedly during the next two decades. Continuing contract services (rather than establishing significantly larger staffing overhead) increasing economy of scale, and emphasizing "pay as we go" financing for special projects will keep spending levels in line with population increase.

By about the year 2010 -- or when the Planning Area's population base has grown past 50,000 -- the community will have gained in economic stability. Although a slightly smaller proportion of Town residents will be working, household incomes will be relatively higher and more citizens will be employed in the Oro Valley vicinity. Tourism, service/retail sales tax revenues will still be the backbone of local government revenue. Development fees will sustain the community's continuing infrastructure buildout.



## PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

The purpose of the Public Services and Facilities element is to provide the Town of Oro Valley with development oversight strategies that ensure orderly, rational development of infrastructure to support projected growth. As communities grow and become more complex, they elicit greater needs for centralized governmental functions. The recent incorporation of the Town of Oro Valley, in 1974, was the result of citizens' desire to protect their public welfare and safety with service management scaled to the community's character and resources. In short, the residents of Oro Valley recognized a need to preserve a lifestyle and established a mechanism to accomplish it.

The incorporated Town constitutes about one third of the planning study area. Within the Planning Area, some governmental and public services are available to residents without regard to political boundaries. Examples may include: water and sewer services, school and fire districts and telephone communications. Other services, such as police protection, zoning regulations and town roads, are clearly affected by political boundaries and are municipal government responsibilities.

As Oro Valley matures, it is expected to grow in two major ways: 1) increased population and employment within the existing Town boundaries; and 2) annexation of new lands. These growth opportunities can have significant effect on, and create additional demands for Town public services and facilities. Attention must be directed to both to position the Town for the future, to reinforce established quality standards and to analyze the cost/benefit of potential growth. Town officials recognize these responsibilities and are managing both. (See Public Facilities/Services Map, Figure 10).

The Oro Valley Town Government serves the residents by providing public functions in four general categories: 1) Municipal Government Services; 2) Service Providers; 3) Community and Infrastructure Maintenance; and 4) Social, Cultural and Educational Services.

Municipal Government Services are the basic administrative and public safety responsibilities which may provide the only regular contact residents have with Town staff or officials. Municipal services in Oro Valley, such as administration, licensing, municipal courts, planning and zoning, police, engineering, streets and roads maintenance are provided through an elected Town Council and appointed staff members. Eight departments are responsible to the Town Council. As the Town grows, several program areas would also expand to meet the demand created by the growth. For instance, planning, zoning and engineering services will need to keep pace with projected development infrastructure improvements.

Likewise, the Town court system will continue to expand to meet the service needs of developing areas. The Oro Valley court system, widely recognized for having successful, innovative community service programs in lieu of fines or incarceration, provides a significant labor pool to assist the Town with community projects.

The Town is justifiably proud of its low crime rate, having recently been rated as "one of the safest places to live in the 1980s". Largely the responsibility of the Town Police Department, the safety of the residents of Oro Valley should be secure into the 1990s and beyond. In 1989, the Police Department achieved a ratio of four police officers per 1,000 residents. Although this ratio may change as the Town grows, all indicators point toward continuing a high level of commitment for public safety services. Nearly 40% of the Town's budget allocation is assigned to public safety, allowing the Police Department to provide an impressive range of services with state-of-the-art communications equipment and investigative services.

The Town Clerk's office provides an efficient public information service through locally networked computers and integrated accounting personnel systems, with future planned additions of annexation, sales tax, business licenses and related public information programs. Town Council meeting agendas and minutes are coordinated by the Town Clerk for posting at Town Hall and mailing to homeowner associations. Information exchange will become increasingly

important between the Town and its citizens. Through foresight and innovation, the Town Clerk will become a more vital link in the decentralized information chain.

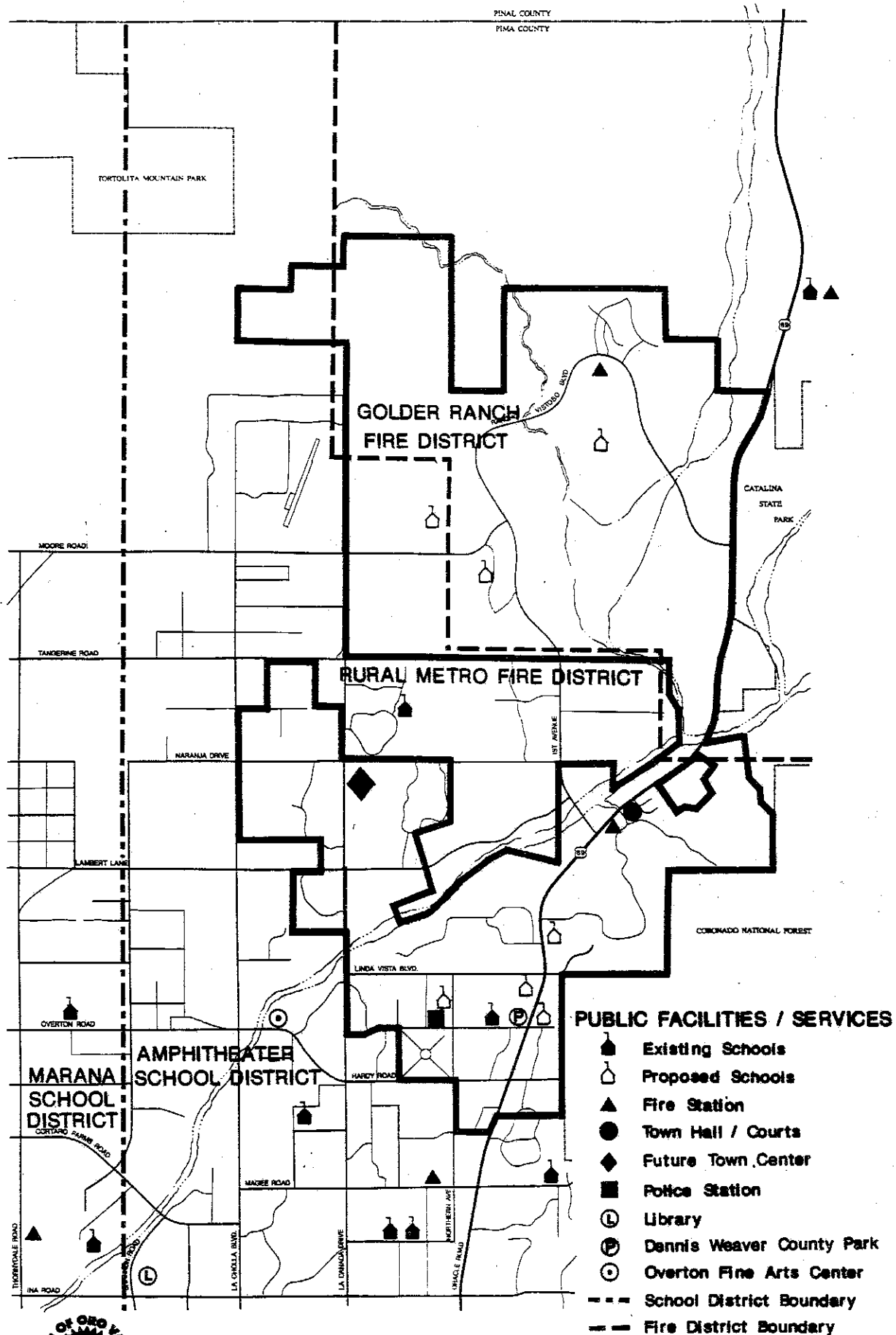
Service Providers in the Oro Valley Planning Area include utility companies and contract services companies. The Oro Valley Town government provides valuable mediation and coordination roles between service providers on behalf of Town residents.

The Town negotiates contracts and approves agreements with other service providers on behalf of the residents of Oro Valley. Fire protection and emergency medical response services are provided by Rural Metro and Golder Ranch Fire District. Refuse removal, electric service, natural gas, cable television are provided via private service companies.

Other contract service providers may include specialized shorter term projects such as planning or architectural design services commonly available through private enterprise.

Seven separate water companies serve residents and businesses in the planning area. The four largest, (in descending order) Tucson Water, Metropolitan Water, Cañada Hills Water and Rancho Vistoso Water Company, supply water service to nearly the entire planning area. The Tucson Water District, a subsidiary of the City of Tucson, encompasses 285 square miles in Pima County. The Metropolitan Water Company, the largest privately owned water company in Arizona, serves about 25 square miles and 11,000 accounts. Cañada Hills Water Company serves an area north of Lambert Road encompassing about 13 square miles, while Rancho Vistoso Water Company currently serves customers in Rancho Vistoso.

In the arid desert environment, potable water is considered a limited resource. However, Oro Valley is located in a water rich trough, between two mountain ranges and two major water basins. With appropriate conservation practices, adherence to State Department of Water Resources (DWR) guidelines and



TOWN OF **ORO VALLEY**



cooperation of the water companies, water supplies should be adequate to accommodate Oro Valley's projected growth. Nanofiltered, or equivalent treatment, should be used for reclaiming wastewater so it may be safely used to irrigate golf courses and parks.

Undeveloped and unserved lands in the planning area are within Tucson Water Company's (TWC) projected 50-year service area boundary. TWC anticipates sufficient water supplies to serve the entire area through the year 2037. Projections include continuation of water conservation practices as well as anticipated improvements in water treatment, delivery and recycling technologies.

Currently, the Town of Oro Valley has no control or input into the planning and operation of the Tucson Water Company. Oro Valley should obtain representation on the T.W.C. Citizen's Advisory Committee to help direct water supply development.

Pima County provides valuable community services within the planning area and to residents and businesses of the Town of Oro Valley. The Pima County Wastewater Management serves populated areas within the County. Pima County Flood Control District provides technical and financial assistance as well as managing County-wide programs such as floodplain mapping, and regulation of development within major drainageways.

Electric service throughout the planning area and the southerly adjacent City of Tucson is provided by Tucson Electric Power Company. Overhead electric service to the Town can be seen along the Tangerine Road and Oracle Road corridors. Within Oro Valley most electric distribution to Planned Area Developments (PAD) and other utilities is placed underground. Sufficient electric capacity exists to accommodate Oro Valley's growth, according to power company projections. As addressed in the Community Design Element, future utility lines will be largely placed underground.

Community Maintenance is a broad category of government responsibility with two distinct governmental aspects: enforcement and direct services. Enforcement deals with assuring that privately owned properties and facilities are operated and maintained in accordance with community standards. Zoning, planning, plan review, and similar ordinances define the Town's enforcement policies and procedures and establish community standards.

Certain community maintenance services are provided by the Town as owner or caretaker of the facility. Town streets, roads, trails, bike lanes and paths, walkways and related transportation facilities are maintained at public expense for the benefit of all Town and area residents. Similarly, the Town Hall and other government facilities, such as future Town parks and dedicated open space, are operated and maintained by the Town.

Park and open space maintenance in private developments is the responsibility of the respective homeowners associations and/or master homeowner groups. Planned developments are expected to be a significant vehicle of accommodating Oro Valley's growth. Future PADs will contain a variety of mixed land uses within the development area. Employment and shopping opportunities can be expected along with open space, parks/trails, recreation, and the generally dominant residential uses. The Town's General Plan encourages this type of growth as it emphasizes placement of amenities close to the residents/users. Oro Valley's successful resort developments establish high standards for facilities maintenance. The competitive resort markets rely heavily on visual quality and reputation to retain or capture market share; consequently, resorts, such as the El Conquistador, spend significant amounts on maintenance of the grounds and employee training programs.

Social, cultural and educational services within Oro Valley are expected to expand to meet the Town's growth patterns. In Rancho Vistoso, for instance, several school and park sites have been designated to accommodate future needs.

Telephone and cable television services are provided by private sector firms throughout most of the Planning Area and are available to residents of the Town. The Town Council is negotiating with the telephone company for removal of the long distance charges between the northern and southern areas of the Town.

### **Existing Facilities**

A permanent Town Hall site has been selected for Oro Valley. It is anticipated that the E. S. "Steve" Engle Town Hall, named after the former Mayor of Oro Valley, one of the Town's founding fathers, will be completed and occupied by March, 1991. The new Town Hall site is located at 11000 North La Cañada Drive.

The Town Court system will also be housed at the Town Hall with improved facilities and opportunities for greater efficiency and expanded programs. Other municipal government services will benefit from a centralized facility. Communications and information transfer between departments should be improved. The Town Hall will require building and grounds maintenance in addition to the maintenance programs currently provided for streets and park facilities.

Public safety facilities and programs are considered significant and are discussed in the Public Safety Element of this Plan.

More intensive, active recreation such as court games and team sport facilities requiring infrastructure improvements are best located near residential concentrations, school facilities and existing park developments. An example of this relationship is the Canyon Del Oro High School and adjacent Dennis Weaver County Park on Calle Concordia.

Private golf courses provide additional recreational resources within the Town. Existing golf courses are often blended with residential developments, such as El Conquistador Country Club, Oro Valley Country Club, and the Sun City Golf

Course or with resort development such as the El Conquistador Golf Course. Private sponsorship of golf course developments should be encouraged through Town policies to the extent they are consistent with water conservation and open space goals. For instance, new golf course developments should be required to use nanofiltered, or equivalently treated effluent, where available, for watering fairways and greens. Existing golf courses should be also considered for effluent use when being rehabilitated.

Neighborhood recreation facilities should continue to be required for all new developments and incorporated into future recreation plans. Linkages to and within neighborhoods in the form of paths, sidewalks and trails should follow a Town-wide policy but remain the property of the private developments with responsibility for maintenance resting on their respective homeowners associations.

Schools within the Town and planning area consist of elementary schools (Mesa Verde School, Copper Creek School, Coronado School, Harelson School), Cross Junior High, Canyon Del Oro High School and the Catalina Mountain School site located north of Catalina State Park, east of Oracle Road. Several sites are designated as future school locations in the Rancho Vistoso master plan. These will be developed as the need arises. As a rule of thumb, a new elementary school would be needed for each 400-600 new students entering the school system.

Schools will be encouraged to use nanofiltered, or equivalently treated, effluent for irrigation of school grounds.

#### **Future Service/Facility Needs**

Infrastructure will be required to support new growth and expansion beyond existing limits. Governmental responsibility for infrastructure improvements and expansions focus on two areas: 1) design and construction of specified infrastructure; and 2) assurance of quality standards for infrastructure provided by others. Oro Valley is responsible for improving existing public

Town roads, but developers will be responsible for building new roads to Town standards.

Development Impact Fees are the most likely source for exacting private-sector contributions to extended municipal systems or land dedications in lieu of payments. Typically, these exactions provide funding for streets, water/sewer lines, drainage structures and parks. Improvements installed by developers are credited against their cumulative impact fee charges.

Formulas are derived for each functional category to determine appropriate assessments per housing unit or non-residential floor area. Periodic adjustments to impact fee schedules are required to account for cost increases or savings achieved through economies of scale.

The Town's bonding authority may be used to spread the costs of major projects over longer periods, to avoid severe fluctuations in expenditures, and to expedite projects to be reimbursed by development fee collections.

Creating a Community Facilities District (CFD) is an alternative means for installation of improvements made possible by recent state enabling legislation.

Capital Improvements Programs and methods for keeping operating expenses manageable are discussed in Section IV, as Plan Implementation Strategy recommendations.



## QUALITY ELEMENTS - INTRODUCTION

Oro Valley desires a General Plan that goes beyond a description of the area's physical growth. Accordingly, the planning process has emphasized additional aspects that contribute to human enjoyment of this place, beginning with the Community Design Element. Community appearance features are intended by the GPAC, framers of this Plan, to serve as an umbrella for the planning goals that particularly distinguish the Town from others. These remaining Plan components are those which have been selected to identify Oro Valley's special qualitative measures.

Open Space and Recreation, as an element, contributes perhaps more than any other to the resort/residential image the Town wishes to maintain. Recognizing that it is the setting rather than structures which contributes most to Oro Valley's character, spatial relationships derived from community design principles underscore the importance of natural and recreational open areas in framing the community's character. Likewise, the appeal of both the area's outdoor activities and its scenic views are fundamental reasons for residents' and tourists' enjoyment of the area.

The Natural Resource Conservation Element responds to local citizens' highest priorities: clean air, plentiful water, a hazard-free environment. Concern for ecological issues ranked highest among survey respondents in public opinion testing which preceded GPAC's Vision Statement drafting.

A safe environment is important, too. Therefore, Oro Valley's Plan addresses safety issues ranging from transportation system improvements to public education on coping with conditions in the Sonoran desert.

Cultural heritage and notable historical features are incorporated, also, into the General Plan as an acknowledgement that the Town's past is significant to its present and helps to shape its future.

The following "quality" elements represent the extra attention Oro Valley planners have given to sharpening the planning area's definition of place.





## COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

The Town of Oro Valley is fortunate to have a physical setting that is both beautiful and unique. The Town has as its eastern boundary the Santa Catalina Mountains that have been protected by incorporating them into the Coronado National Forest and Catalina State Park. To the northwest lie the Tortolita Mountains. The City of Tucson is located directly south of the Town of Oro Valley. Scenic views of the mountains are available from most sites within the planning area. In addition, due to the higher elevation of Oro Valley, many portions of the planning area enjoy impressive views of Tucson, and in particular, its downtown area.

Three major riparian washes, Cañada del Oro Wash, Honey Bee Wash and Big Wash, have significant lengths of their natural courses located within the Oro Valley Planning Area. Therefore, the washes are major elements that will have a large effect on the urban form of the town and their integration into that form must be carefully addressed.

Oro Valley is situated in the upland division of the Sonoran Desert of the southwestern United States. Although technically a desert area, the high Sonoran has an incredible diversity of plant and animal life contained in several biotic communities. The flora and fauna communities of the planning area are fragile in addition to being beautiful. They can be severely damaged by intrusive and negative impacts of poorly considered human activities.

### Urban Form

The citizens of Oro Valley have expressed that their desire is that the continued development of the Town should, to the greatest extent possible, integrate the man-made built elements into the natural environment with great sensitivity and with minimal disruption to existing topographic forms and ecosystems. In order to foster the realization of these goals of sensitive development and minimal disruption to the existing natural environment, it is critical that future development be clustered and that large areas of the natural

desert be left in an undisturbed state for the enjoyment of all residents and the continued viability of existing biotic communities.

At the large scale, or macro-environmental level, the urban form of Oro Valley can derive additional benefits from clustering development into those areas which municipal services can most reasonably be provided. In addition to minimizing negative impacts on the environment and reducing unsightly sprawl, the Town will realize savings in the development of infrastructure elements and the provision of city services compared to a traditional grid system.

Major existing physical features such as transportation corridors (e.g., Oracle and Tangerine Roads) and the wash systems should be utilized as armatures from which the clustered developments can grow. The building of stable, vital neighborhoods with minimal penetration by or impact from high capacity through streets is stressed. Within newly developing neighborhoods, the provision of retail and commercial uses serving the neighborhood can be integrated into a safe, multi-modal intra-neighborhood circulation system in a manner most residents deem appropriate.

At the small scale, or micro-environmental level, the urban form of the Town should reflect further clustering so that natural desert vest pocket parks bring the environment into the neighborhood. The neighborhood plans are to incorporate pathway systems for pedestrians and bicyclists. These pathways should be separated where possible from the alignments of streets and roads used for automotive vehicles.

### Community Image

Many elements comprise any community's image. Oro Valley has, due to its relative youth as a town, large areas of land -- ranging from vacant frontages on Oracle Road to the vast, master-planned Rancho Vistoso -- in its natural, undeveloped state. It also has very few negative or pejorative elements that would detract from a positive community image. Although just beginning to mature into a community with a defined community character, Oro Valley already

enjoys several types of natural and man-made focal points, such as its mountain backdrop framing the Town, accented by resort and recreation improvements on the lower slopes, that help the Town in achieving a reputation for environmental quality and excellence in the development it encourages or allows. There is also abundant potential for developing new image emphases in locations, such as entry points that are not as prominent as they might be.

The existing natural foci that contribute to a positive community image are the scenic mountain vistas and the large, desert wash systems with their associated riparian biotic communities. Components of the man-made environment that, at present, illustrate the desired Oro Valley image are its larger, master-planned resorts and high quality planned residential communities. Image can be maintained and improved by investing resources in development that blends, rather than contrasts, with existing natural resources.

Suggested visual enhancements might begin with further attention to the washes. Intensified plantings of natural, riparian landscaping, perhaps highlighted with small, strategically-placed water features or arranged in areas where runoff water naturally collects on occasion, would create "oasis" areas, ideal for developing recreation and picnic facilities. The overall recreational theme, however, would continue to be recognized as a low water use, desert environment. Likewise, interpretive centers at significant historical or archaeological sites and further development of pathway systems along the wash network edges (but well removed from flow channels) will also help integrate these natural features into the desired community image.

The Town of Oro Valley should consider developing visually attractive gateways along major transportation corridors as a means of denoting, both physically and psychologically, that the traveler is entering or returning to a special place. These gateways should contain variegated, concentrated landscaping together with built features, such as decorative walls or sculptural elements, to form a clear focus. Streetscape accents (including benches, bollards, bus shelters, lighting and signalization structures) should be deployed throughout the Town on major thoroughfares and in public plazas. These should be

standardized and reflect simplicity of line and functional economy. The gateway sizes and street furniture clusters could also be scaled according to the prominence of the location.

Citizen initiatives to establish new facilities devoted to the arts and/or sciences will increase Oro Valley's renown as a place where cultural pursuits are an integral part of the community. The Town's great physical beauty should be reflected in the architectural excellence of its public, built environment which should set the tone for design standards being encouraged for private development.

Town officials have demonstrated serious commitment to preserving the mountains, their foothills and resulting views which are so precious to Oro Valley. More can be done. The hillside development ordinance should be strengthened to limit development and to provide guidance to reduce visual impact by the development that is allowed. The Town should consider adopting open space and scenic easement ordinances, such as the existing Oracle Road District, to protect the open vistas that characterize the Oro Valley lifestyle and cannot be regained once they are lost.

### Design Standards

For the Town of Oro Valley to realize its desire for a distinctive community image, an array of design standards or guidelines should be adopted. Principles basic to all design guides should include: consistency, continuity, relationship to natural colors and textures, and reduction of visual clutter. These precepts apply to all major design emphases: site planning, landscaping and architecture. Site planning standards should be adopted to specify where development occurs and how it relates to topographical features. Landscaping standards allow the Town and its residents flexibility in the use of plant materials while maintaining a predominantly natural desert image and conserving water resources. Architectural design criteria should be adopted so that the Town of Oro Valley begins to develop an architectural "feel" without being so rigid as to hamper creative architectural expression.

In a Town like Oro Valley a major goal of site planning standards is to preserve the existing natural beauty to the greatest extent possible for the enjoyment of all residents. One means of accomplishing this task is to delineate view corridors and limit all development within them to uses of small scale and intensity that do not obstruct views. The corridors, themselves, should be maintained and improved with the possible end of including them in a municipal pathway system.

Another aspect of Oro Valley's aspirations that should be clearly expressed in the Town's site planning standards is respect for the land. Flora and fauna in existing biotic communities should be left undisturbed whenever and wherever possible. Therefore, the site planning standards should offer incentives which foster the clustering of development which will not only leave a greater percentage of the undeveloped area undisturbed but will increase the efficiency of the allocation of infrastructure elements. In most areas of Town, development should be, in addition to being clustered, low-lying - hugging the contours of the natural topography.

The site planning standards adopted by Oro Valley must also address those publicly maintained areas of high visibility. These would include public easements such as the areas adjacent to roadways and civic gateways. In these areas the main role of site planning standards is to help orient persons as to where they are in the Town, facilitate the smooth functioning of the circulation system and to serve as an interstitial network of natural topography linking the larger areas of undeveloped land.

These site standards also have an important role to play in minimizing negative impacts of development and furthering the Town's image goals. Placing of all utilities underground and the screening of large parking areas from roads and/or adjacent properties would be examples of site planning standards that minimize negative impacts and further the Town's image. The site planning standards must take into consideration the need to allow for the free and efficient movement of emergency services (police, fire and medical) throughout the Town of Oro Valley.

Landscaping standards for the Town of Oro Valley should emphasize and encourage the use of vegetation native to the Sonoran Desert. Other plant materials that are compatible with the climate and topography may also be used to add interest and variety. Plant materials, whose use is encouraged by the standards developed by Oro Valley, should be classified by color, texture, size and form so that specific, appropriate applications can be derived to serve as a model for Oro Valley residents and businesses.

A crucial determinant in whether a particular plant is appropriate for a particular application in Oro Valley will be its water use and need for maintenance. The landscaping standards should include a plant list with water needs, maintenance requirements and possible applications to serve as a guide for residents and businesses unfamiliar with native vegetation. Landscaping used in public rights of way should be plants with minimal water and maintenance needs.

The landscaping standards should address, critically, the use of turf and non-native deciduous and evergreen trees. Focus plantings of these materials might be allowed in certain situations such as at golf courses, at resorts and in a future business district. In no application, however, should these planting materials be allowed to predominate. Such a situation, if allowed to spread, could begin the degradation of the image desired by Oro Valley.

→ Architectural design standards are sometimes difficult to formulate because it is not easy to get a consensus on an issue which tends to be extremely subjective in its interpretation. The means by which Oro Valley can develop building design standards is to set a framework of standards within which there is sufficient latitude for individual expression while maintaining the Town's desired architectural character. Buildings should be low and clustered, with varied setbacks, leaving large areas of open space between developments. Within a large project or planned area development, peripheral open space setbacks should be extensive, with tighter setbacks within the building cluster to afford shelter from the sun. Standard residential subdivisions and commercial developments require larger setbacks to foster the open, natural feel that Oro Valley desires.

Buildings should seem to be a part of, or in, the landscape rather than appearing to be an imposition on the site. The buildings should hug and follow the natural contours of the existing topography. Building heights should be limited, in most areas of Town, to two floors. However, the entire structure should not be two stories tall. There should be relief and interest in the building elevations, and a reflection of the topography, by stepping buildings up and down hillsides. There should also be relief and interest in the massing of the elevations themselves. This massing scheme will create interesting shadows which are not possible on large, unbroken expanses of wall. Flat undistinguished elevations should be discouraged.

Architectural standards should address appropriate materials for buildings in Oro Valley. While the Town should not dictate materials, certain basic rules should be formulated. Colors should relate to one another, and the natural environment, on the basis of pigment, color value and/or intensity. For the most part, the Town should encourage the use of earth tones and pastels in areas of high visibility, avoiding jarring juxtapositions with primary colors. In more private areas, a homeowner or business owner should be allowed more freedom in color selections.

The predominant materials used in Oro Valley buildings should be masonry and/or wood frame with a masonry or stucco exterior finish. This is due to the heavy Spanish influence in the area coupled with the ability of masonry to tie buildings to the topography in pleasing ways as in Mediterranean hill towns. These materials can be made very energy efficient and low maintenance. The use of large expanses of glass, particularly highly reflective glass, should be discouraged in Oro Valley's design standards. The glare is obtrusive to neighbors and such large expanses waste energy particularly in the summer.

In order to protect the visual serenity of the Town, the standards for signage in Oro Valley should be based on trying to get the information across with the least signage necessary. Large illuminated business signs should not be allowed. Illumination, where allowed, should be discreet back-lighting or

indirect lighting shining downward. Oro Valley should respect the dark sky needs of the region's astronomers as well as the wishes of its own residents.

Exceptions may be necessary in areas where security is a major, demonstrated concern such as schools and large shopping center parking lots. Even in these instances much light pollution can be avoided by recommending certain fixture placements and lamp types in the design standards.



## OPEN SPACE/RECREATION ELEMENT

Recreational opportunities and their availability to the general public form a major component of the quality of life in Oro Valley. Individuals and families alike share the need for well-planned, continuously-maintained parks and natural open spaces. Nearly three quarters of the planning area is currently in dedicated open space or vacant lands. The inventory of parks and other open spaces is limited within the Town; vast outside Town limits, particularly to the north and east.

The Oro Valley setting has been described as a natural amphitheater, created by the ring of mountain ranges encircling two thirds of the Town. The grand scale of the natural terrain creates a sense of enclosure, but projects an overall feeling of openness and undeveloped open space. Within this setting, Oro Valley's man-made development is dwarfed, intentionally blended into the landscape. Large scale drainage features, (Cañada del Oro Wash, Honey Bee Wash and Big Wash) form dominant landscapes on the flatland and are devoid of manmade structures and most large plant material. Frequent flooding within these washes makes development unwise, but plant life flourishes. Passive park developments in the washes, respecting the natural constraints, are considered compatible with the Town's existing and future development.

Established preserves and dedicated parklands in the Planning area encompass significant natural resources. Most notable is the Coronado National Forest, located immediately east of the Town. Established in 1908, the National Forest contains Pusch Ridge, a dominant feature of the Santa Catalina Mountains, within the Pusch Ridge Wilderness Area. The 56,430-acre Pusch Ridge Wilderness Area supports a wide range of outdoor recreational activities and interests available to Town residents. Among these are backpacking, horseback riding, day hiking, hunting, rock climbing, fishing, photography and nature study.

Pusch Ridge Wilderness Area is managed by the U.S. Forest Service as a resource capable of providing primitive recreation opportunities. Major

recreational development within the National Forest is not permitted. Instead, in the several areas where utilization is highest, such as in parts of Bear Canyon, Sabino Canyon, Finger Rock Canyon, Pima Canyon, Marshall Gulch and the Wilderness of the Rocks, trails are maintained and trailhead access is available. Additionally, overnight camping generally occurs where terrain is relatively flat and where there is water. These areas include Bridal Veil Falls, the Wilderness of the Rocks, Hutch's Pool, Sycamore Spring and Upper Pima Canyon Basin. At the present time there are no developed campsite facilities, and less than 25% of the park patrons enter beyond 3 miles into the Wilderness. The Wilderness area has 105 miles of trails, Sycamore Reservoir and Dam, man-made water catchments for wildlife water purposes, about 4 miles of barbed wire fencing and a few other minor improvements that existed prior to 1978, with the enactment of the area's Wilderness Status.

All indications are that the current use patterns will be continued since existing and projected utilization is not in conflict with adopted wilderness resource values. For the foreseeable future, the residents of Oro Valley are assured availability of primitive outdoor recreation opportunities as well as preservation of its recognized scenic values created in part by the Santa Catalina Mountains.

Catalina State Park dovetails with a portion of the Coronado National Forest and is also located along the eastern edge of the planning area. Established in 1983, Catalina State Park contains about 5,500 acres and provides expanded recreational opportunities beyond those offered in the Pusch Ridge Wilderness Area.

The park provides campsites with tables and grills, picnic areas, rest facilities (including RV dump stations) and group use areas. Drinking water is available throughout the picnic and camping areas. Paved access to trailheads with parking allows visitors to use the hiking and equestrian trails within the park or connect with Coronado National Forest trails. Catalina State Park is managed by Arizona State Parks. A ranger station near the entrance, off Oracle Road, also serves as a contact station for park patrons.

The park contains a diverse range of topography. Near Oracle Road, the land is relatively flat as the park road system parallels the Cañada del Oro and Sutherland washes before rising up into the Catalina foothills to elevations of 4,000 feet.

The third major publicly owned/protected recreational open space resource is Tortolita Mountain Park, in the Northwest corner of the planning area. This desert Mountain Park was established in 1987 and, in Pima County, is under the control of Pima County Parks. Straddling the Pima-Pinal County line, the park had been established as a cooperative recreation management effort between both counties. An additional 7,500 acres of State land and 1,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management-owned land are expected to become part of the Park.

With these additions, as well as recommended prospects for new community-scale parks, come many opportunities for public recreation. Such possibilities may include an expanded use by citizens. Businesses and non-profit organizations can sponsor a series of festivals that may become an integral element of the Town's recreational programming. Seasonal themes such as crafts fairs, "Taste of Tucson" type food festivals, and a family-oriented "Day in the Park" can provide increased revenues which may be used for maintenance and improvements.

Two county parks (one outside the Town but accessible to Town residents) provide active recreational opportunities. Arthur Pack Regional Park provides playing fields and a desert golf course for public use just west of the Town along Thornydale Road between Linda Vista Boulevard and Hardy Roads. Dennis Weaver County Park, abutting the Canyon del Oro High School off Calle Concordia offers paved courts, children's play areas and swimming. Other neighborhood scale recreation needs should be incorporated into new developments as they are designed and constructed.

Private resorts and golf courses in the area account for several hundred additional acres of open space. The El Conquistador Resort, the Oro Valley Country Club, and El Conquistador Country Club and Sun City Vistoso Country Club account for much of the existing managed open space. As the Town expands, other private open space/recreational facilities are planned to meet future demand.

For reasons of rugged topography, many areas in the Town and its surrounds cannot be developed. These areas provide numerous opportunities for recreational uses. Such uses may include hiking trails, horseback riding areas which may be connected to the regional trail network, and nature observation areas. It is also in the best interest of the Town to maintain areas with unique scenic characteristics.

Because these areas are frequently compromised by existing or impending development, the resulting scenic benefits of such lands are reduced. To mitigate these situations, Scenic Preservation Districts may be employed. This would prevent the unfavorable use of these lands by property owners and eliminate or reduce the amount of development of sensitive areas, such as peaks, ridges, foothills and washes.

Additional restrictions should be placed on particularly sensitive areas, protecting them from off-road vehicles, "wild-cat dumping", and other destructive elements. On privately held land, view easements may be used to accomplish scenic preservation, permitting the ownership to remain private, while protecting the public interest.

The natural constraints have limited development within the flood zones of the washes and drainageways. Over the years, some encroachment has occurred but today most washes remain as natural open space. Regulations limiting excavation and filling of major washes are generally administered by the Pima County Flood Control District. Regulation of smaller drainage channels and creek beds are the responsibility of municipalities or are unregulated. The Town of Oro Valley has incorporated the review of site drainage and grading into its project review process.

The washes offer additional recreational opportunities beyond their value as natural open space or drainage channels. As recommended in the Eastern Pima County Trail System Plan, water courses, washes and flood channels could contain trails for non-motorized uses and made part of an area wide and statewide trail system. Other concerns such as provisions for public access to trails location of trailhead parking, amount of allowable development within open space areas and the like are being discussed and resolved as the trail system develops. For instance, the La Cholla/Honey Bee Loop, an important connector trail from Cañada del Oro Wash to the Tortolita Foothills is designated as an equestrian/hiking trail in the Rancho Vistoso Development Plan. The trail connects to an old jeep trail at the base of the Tortolitas.

The wealth of natural resources and diversity of plant and animal communities in these parks and forests provide additional educational opportunities for students and local citizens alike. Joint ecological and educational programs can be used to heighten awareness of these sensitive lands.

### Vegetation

Several major plant communities occur in the Oro Valley area. The desert saltbush community is generally found in the valley floor supported by the fine grained alluvium soils. Mesquite trees are also found in this range. On the sloping plains and lower bajadas near the foothills the creosote-bush predominates, often interspersed with white bursage.

At higher elevations, the Palo Verde-Saguaro community can be found. Other trees, shrubs, cacti and herbs are intermixed and characteristic of the community. Examples are the foothill palo verde, jojoba, brittle bush, saguaro, barrel cactus, several species of prickly-pear and cholla. Where soils and climate conditions are suitable, ironwood trees are dominant and in association with saguaros and palo verde trees.

Over 5,000 feet in elevation, the grassland communities are dominant and may be interspersed with shrubs. Plants in this community include gamma grasses,

sacaton grass, mesquite, catclaw and desert hackberry. Between 4,000 and 6,000 feet, evergreen woodlands can be found with oak woodland, juniper, pinyon and chaparral. Above 6,000 feet, evergreen conifer forests, primarily ponderosa pine stands, with some white pine and Chihuahua pine and occasional oak species, are found.

Where water tables are shallow and along stream channels and terraces, deciduous riparian forests consisting of sycamores, Arizona ash, hackberry and cottonwood occur.

The presence of mesquite bosques are characteristic of river channel confluences (where two or more washes or water courses merge). The mesquite trees form a canopy with interspersed deep rooted shrubs and grass or perennial herb understory species. Both the deciduous riparian forests and mesquite bosques have been reduced to a small fraction of their former expanse. Apparent minor changes in the water regime, sometimes caused by nearby development, have drastic and long lasting effects on these communities.

### Wildlife

Open space is also characterized by the presence of a variety of animal species. The planning area supports an abundance of birds and animals that are closely associated with the plant communities. Over 400 species and subspecies of terrestrial vertebrates have been identified. This includes 252 bird species, 92 species of mammals, and 89 species of reptiles and amphibians. This plan promotes the protection and improvement of these species' habitat, particularly the Bighorn Sheep.

Open space and natural resource attributes are highly prized parts of Oro Valley's heritage. Once considered distant from downtown Tucson, Oro Valley now supports a bedroom/commuter community and is easily accessible due to the improved roadway system. All of these factors bring desired growth to Oro Valley but can also threaten the highly prized resources if not managed.

## Open Space and Recreation Standards

Open space is a general term covering many classifications of land use. The common denominator is space characterized as landscape, whether it is natural or man made. Open space can be used to integrate or separate urban activities, functions or areas.

Depending upon several factors, open space can serve one or more purposes. It may be used for: 1) resource production; 2) scenic protection; 3) conservation; 4) outdoor recreation; 5) public health and safety; or 6) development control. Most successfully conceived open spaces serve several purposes simultaneously.

The functions of open spaces are often tied to guidelines or standards. For instance, a "standard neighborhood park" is between 5 and 20 acres, serves 2,000 to 10,000 population within a 1/2 mile radius of the park. A suggested standard of three acres of community or neighborhood parks for each 1000 residents will require reservation and improvement of up to 160 acres in organized parks by the year 2010. Approximately half the increment might be deployed in 8-10 acre neighborhood parks adjacent to elementary or junior high schools, the remainder in two larger, 15-25 acre community parks located in residential expansion areas.

While standards are convenient benchmarks, they should be evaluated in comparison to the Town's goals and policies. (Perhaps the protection of the scenic vistas is a more important use of open space than the development of trailhead parking, for instance.)

## Open Space/Recreation Facilities Planning Factors

Opportunities to expand or enhance the open space/recreational resources in Oro Valley will be closely tied to the Town's vision and goals. With many of the significant open space resources protected and committed to long term conservation, such as the Pusch Ridge and Foothills sections of Catalina State

Park, Oro Valley is assured the continuing preservation of the open space by regular monitoring and coordinating with the Park management agencies.

Some existing open space is privately owned but dedicated or reserved for open space/recreation purposes. Examples in this category are the resort developments, private country clubs, designated open space within planned area developments (PAD) and several privately-held parks. These open spaces are presumed to be permanent open space and will require periodic monitoring by the Town.

A third category of open space includes privately-owned properties that are not now master-planned. Several large undeveloped parcels, particularly in the Tangerine Road Corridor, are outside current Town boundaries and not subject to Town ordinances. Future annexation may bring some undeveloped open space lands into the Town. For these properties, more conscientious monitoring and coordination with Pima County is required.

The valuable open space resources of the Cañada Del Oro, La Cholla and Honey Bee Washes are protected, in part, by Pima County. Special attention has been given to these resources in this and other sections of the Plan. In addition to potential trail uses, the washes offer opportunities for other non-motorized recreational uses that retain the recognized scenic and open space values. Where washes meet, recreational facilities may be developed allowing limited family or group picnicking, nature interpretation, arboretums and educational programs.

Increased population will invite increased interest in and use of available open space resources. The long term maintenance and stewardship of the wash system should consider the carrying capacity of the resource. At some time in the future, many open space resources will be threatened by overuse beyond their carrying capacity. Buffer zones, use limitations (restrictions on motorized vehicles) and citizen patrols (adopt-a-park) have been successful in providing maintenance as well as reducing vandalism. The Town's support of a Pima County Trails/Open Space Coordinator within the County Parks Department would also provide Oro Valley with technical assistance.

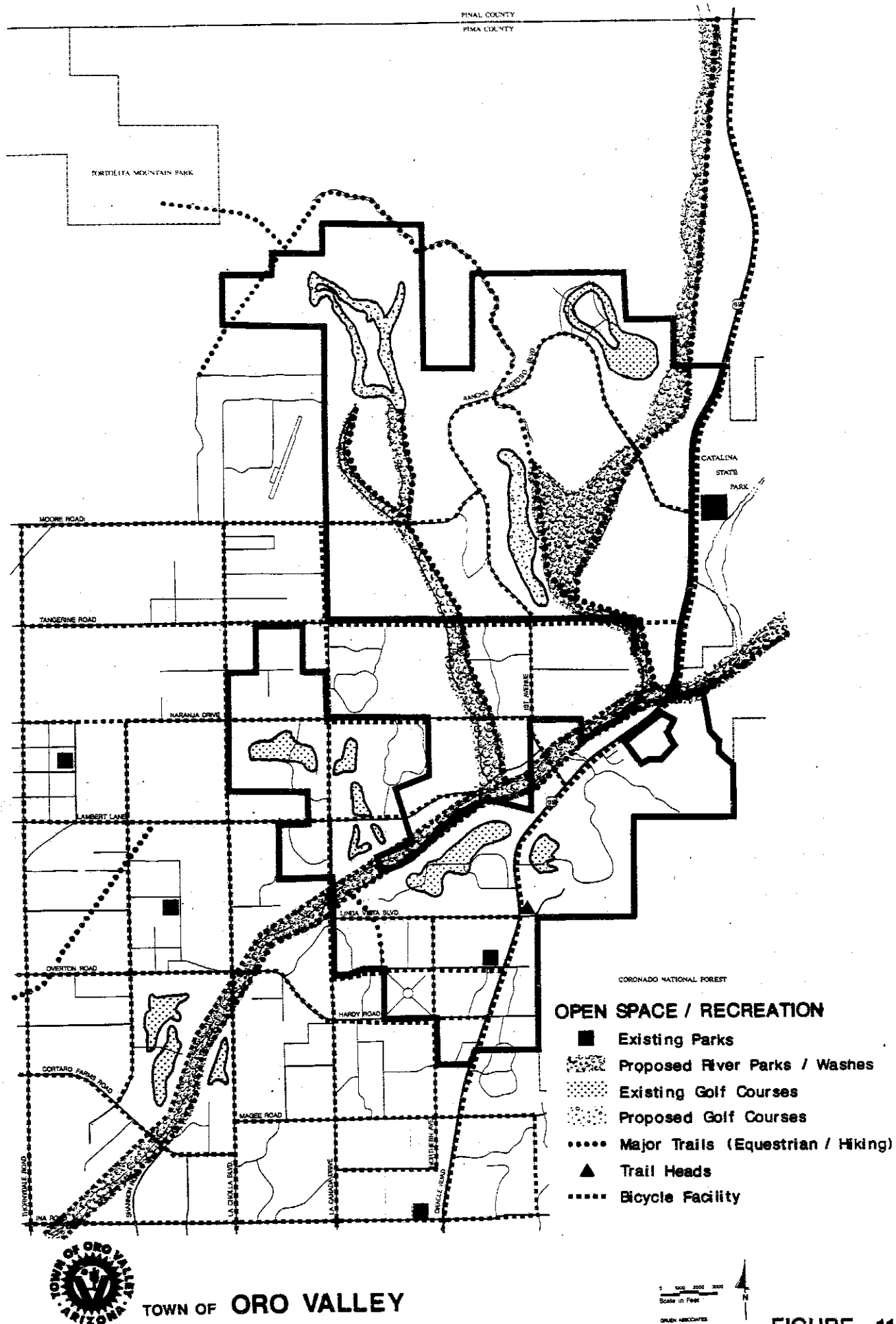


The future park system requires long range planning for proper siting, improvement and maintenance. An Open Space and Recreation Trust might be established to solicit developer dedications, initial establishment of park facilities and on-going operating finance. User fee collections and proceed from special events should be utilized to prevent the Town's commitment to recreation from becoming an undue burden on the community General Fund revenue.

Infrastructure for active recreation, such as organized sports, golf and swimming, generally are costly to develop and to maintain. Private developers should be encouraged to provide these facilities in conjunction with planned area developments and resort developments. The Town should continue to derive open space benefits as well as available active recreation from these improvements.

Joint use opportunities should continue to be pursued by the Town. For instance, the proximity of Dennis Weaver Park to Canyon Del Oro High School offers an opportunity to share open space and recreational resources. Intergovernmental agreements with school districts are to be encouraged and pursued. The benefits from shared facilities, especially athletic fields, are: less cost; and retention of more natural desert ecosystem.

The long-term forecasts for Oro Valley's open space and recreational resources are good; in quantity and quality. Active involvement with park managers, County planners and flood control, developers, citizen groups, transportation agencies, recreation and trail users, homeowner associations and area employers will be needed to assure the resources are protected and enhanced in accordance with the Town's goals.



## NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Protecting the area's natural attributes has been designated by the citizens and Town officials to a high priority among Oro Valley's planning objectives. All other Plan elements, as they are implemented, must be sensitive to the overriding desire to conserve the quality of these resources.

### Natural Resource Heritage

Strategically positioned in the complex Upland Sonoran Desert ecosystem, Oro Valley's residents are responsible for the stewardship of unique natural resources. The varied mix of flora and fauna that comprise the biological community represent a naturally occurring harmony that is easily disrupted by human activities. The "delicate setting" also can be drastically affected by relatively small developments in the foothills, mountain ranges and washes.

The Town, by applying appropriate community design considerations, has the opportunity to achieve an integration of desirable residential and employment growth while protecting its environmental assets.

Climatic variations, especially temperature extremes, and rainfall intensities, are natural conditions that have shaped Oro Valley's environment. Sonoran Desert communities have adapted to, and in fact thrive in, these harsh conditions; however, removal and destruction of habitat can occur through unwise or uncontrolled building and excavation practices.

The planning area is framed by spectacular mountain backdrops of the Catalinas and Tortolitas. Oro Valley enjoys the scenic attractiveness of unspoiled mountain views and vistas. Largely contained in Federally and State owned or protected mountain preserves, the Town is assured continued mountain views, under current Federal and State policies.

Foothills, forming an undulating and less rugged apron of landforms, can be more easily developed and are a greater conservation concern. Developments

on erodible steep foothill slopes, highly visible from within the Town, can appear as unhealed scars for many years. It is essential that any hillside developments are undertaken with sensitivity to the vistas they present, screening cuts, setting structures into the landscape and, where appropriate, restoring vegetation through hydromulching or other techniques. Terraced foothill building sites, often requiring extensive grading and retaining walls, are attractive building locations for residences, resorts and other similar facilities, with commanding valley-wide views. However, such developments often trigger public reaction concerning the adverse visual impacts.

Occupying the majority of the Town, the desert "flatlands" interspersed with washes and usually dry river beds, form the groundplain where most activity occurs. The valley floor supports several unique plant communities, such as the Ironwood Plant Community (west of La Cholla and North of Magee Road) and Mesquite bosques along the edges of floodplain and washes with associated animal communities. These biotic associations encourage a high species diversity and food chain interdependence which should be better understood and then protected through regulations.

The Town encourages environmental education for residents and guests of all ages and intends to promote and protect its desert heritage. The present and future residents of Oro Valley have inherited this rich natural resource blend that has endured and prospered through the years and share a concomitant responsibility to protect these resources for future generations. Groups such as the Sonoran Institute and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum may act as a vehicle to increase resident and visitor understanding of the Sonoran Desert.

### Existing Conditions

The Town of Oro Valley owes much of its attractiveness and development appeal to the abundance of its natural resources. These resources, however, must be thoughtfully managed by the Town to achieve its maximum long term potential and retain its well known character.

Located in the heart of the Sonoran Desert, Oro Valley must cope with a somewhat limited water supply. Within the planning service area of Tucson Water, the town is part of the Northwest Area Water Plan. Other, private water companies also provide water services within the Town including: Rancho Vistoso Water Company, Cañada Hills Water Company, and Metropolitan Water Company. Several smaller water companies within the planning area but outside the Town are: Depoblando Water Company, Mesaland Water Company, and Dateland Water Company. Relatively low precipitation, 15.48 inches (average) per year, and high dissolved mineral content in the water are contributing factors to water quality and supply issues.

Even with these limitations, Oro Valley is fortunate to be located in the special water service area of the Central Arizona Project, thereby virtually assuring the Town of adequate water supplies to support expected residential growth with some employment opportunities, as well. Development of high water consumptive uses such as manufacturing facilities and golf courses currently requires observation of strict State and County standards for conservation and use of innovative water practices. The Town's water-related policies are intended to support water resource stewardship.

Recent residential developments, in addition to being served by municipal water supplies, are connected to sewage treatment facilities. The sewage treatment plants provide an opportunity to conserve valuable water supplies through reuse of treated effluent. Properly designed recycling systems should be allowed for individual residences and Planned Area Developments (PAD's) to reduce water usage. The Town may also encourage economic, regulatory or voluntary water conservation practices.

Unless higher standards for reclaimed water are adopted, the use of private septic systems should not be discouraged. Presently, the costs of pumping effluent to Oro Valley from the Ina Road plant may be prohibitive. New reclamation plants in the study area should be considered.

Clean, clear air has always been a hallmark of Oro Valley and has attracted thousands of residents seeking freedom from health related allergies. However, with increased urbanization; reliance on private automobiles for transportation and increased planting of non-native species for landscaping, higher amounts of suspended particulates and higher pollen counts have become a reality. Residents are also experiencing more discomfort as a result of air quality changes.

Air quality concerns are most effectively addressed at the local level through Town-adopted design standards that can limit undesirable species of plant materials or restrict fossil fuel burning, and through transportation/circulation policies that encourage reduced emissions through conservation practices and emphasize mass transit services. Regional air quality solutions are encouraged that would also benefit Oro Valley.

The air quality may also affect the unique plant and animal communities that are found in Oro Valley and the surrounding area. These effects may not be evident for several years, perhaps after considerable damage has occurred. Area residents favor sound air quality management -- ranging from reduction of vehicular trips to participation in County-wide monitoring programs.

#### **Resource Conservation and Enhancement**

It is estimated that we interpret 90 percent of our information through our eyes! Oro Valley's natural resource amenities are particularly attractive, explaining the popularity of Oro Valley as a place to live, work, and enjoy a unique quality of life.

Implementing measures to protect and preserve natural and visual resources within the Town are further discussed in the Implementation Strategies Section of the Plan. Approaches available to the Town would first focus attention on the more significant visual resources located in the most vulnerable positions. Foremost among the vulnerabilities are the results of unrestricted Foothill/Hillside development. Limits on the type, size and number of hillside

developments will preserve the more sensitive scenic vistas. Of course, integration of allowable built elements with the natural terrain will reduce the impact even further.

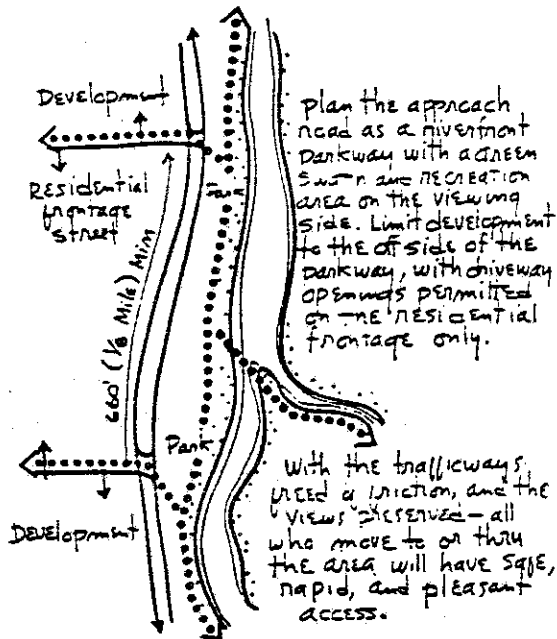
Identification of important scenic vistas and views, overlain by land use restrictions, easements and the like, can protect and improve view corridors. Lighting and signage standards directed at improving the existing visual environment provide additional means of maintaining, and enhancing the Town's image.

When visible air pollution is combined with water vapor (relative humidity) visibility can be dramatically reduced. When pollution and relative humidity are highest, visibility is lowest. The two components, although not totally within the Town's control, can be reduced through Town initiatives. Ride-sharing, consideration of limits on wood-burning fireplaces and adherence to desert landscaping preferences can be effective, local policies to prevent unattractive, unhealthful haze. The significance of "visibility" to Oro Valley lies in the characteristics of Oro Valley's visual environment; the long range mountain views are necessary to feel the sense of enclosure created by the mountain ranges.

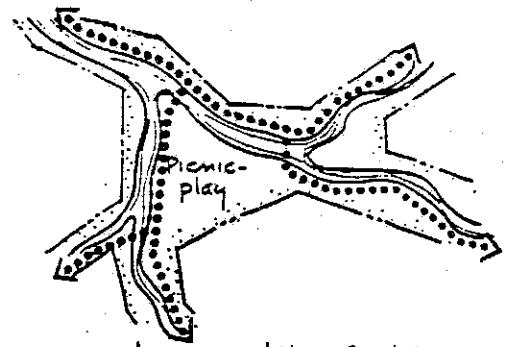
Biotic communities require similar protection and enhancement. Inventories of plant and animal communities can be compared with the more desirable development locations. Points of conflict will yield opportunities for the development community and Town government to establish fauna and flora protection strategies and also encourage desirable development schemes. These strategies can be achieved through regulatory practices as well as through working partnerships between developers and the Town. On-site water detention basins, average density designs, land trusts, scenic easements, and similar practices should be explored in sufficient depth to protect the plants and animals and still achieve reasonable land development objectives.

Certain water detention basins could be operated as recreational water harvesting systems that will conserve more water than consumed. Developers

should be encouraged to go beyond simply protecting natural resources. Enhancing and improving existing plant and animal ecosystems, erosion control practices, native species revegetation, and contributions for environmental education are examples of physical and non-physical enhancement practices which add to the long-term value of developed land.



MAKE THE STREAM OR RIVER  
A COMMUNITY FEATURE



ACQUIRE THE RIVERS AND FLOODPLAINS

Figure 12 - Adapted from Earthscape - A Manual of Environmental Planning page 64, by John Ormsbee Simonds, McGraw Hill Publishing Co. New York, 1978



## **SAFETY ELEMENT**

The Safety Element is intended to discourage hazards, both environmental and man-made, and to promote healthful secure enjoyment of the Town and its natural surroundings. Plan components, particularly those relating to the Transportation/Circulation Element, address multi-modal traffic safety and efficient emergency response.

With a projected population of about 29,000 people by the year 2010, the Town must take precautions both to ensure the public's safety in the immediate time frame and plan for the demands on its safety features by this fast-paced growth.

### **Safety Issues**

Various considerations are assessed to improve the protection afforded Oro Valley's residents and guests, including: life safety issues, elimination of traffic hazards, prevention of loss of life and property due to wildfire and human adaptability to frequently harsh conditions occurring in the Sonoran desert environment.

### **Public Safety Services**

The Town of Oro Valley provides twenty-four hour, full-time local police service to all portions of the incorporated municipality. The Oro Valley Police Department, currently located at 680 West Calle Concordia, has expanded in size in direct relationship to the Town's growth. The Department is considered to be well managed and adequately staffed to provide the Town's current public safety needs. Commitment to the protection of its community is evidenced by the 40% allocation of the 1988-89 budget toward public safety.

Fire protection is provided by the Rural Metro Fire Department and Golder Ranch Fire District. The majority of the Oro Valley area is served by the Rural Metro Fire Department with three stations located within the planning area. Another fire station is planned near the location of First Avenue and Chula Vista Drive.

The northeastern section of the planning area is served by the Golder Ranch Fire District. A new Golder Ranch Fire Station is currently under construction at the intersection of Rancho Vistoso Blvd. and Sun City Blvd. The northwestern portion of the planning area is covered by the Marana Volunteer Fire Department, working closely with the Rural Metro Fire Department.

Presently, the planning area's paramedic/emergency medical treatment needs are served by the Northwest Emergency Center (Tucson Memorial Hospital) at Ina and Pomona Roads. As the Town continues to grow, the possibility of a health care campus, either public or private, should be considered.

The Rancho Vistoso Planned Area Development plan identifies a future hospital site. With the projected long term population growth of Rancho Vistoso and the surrounding areas, such a hospital/health care/emergency services facility could be supported.

#### **Facility Locations/Service Areas**

The community's long-range planning must address the need for providing more facilities strategically located throughout the planning area to adequately respond in a timely manner to emergency calls.

The Town Hall site is geographically located for consideration as a central public safety response center. More dispersed satellite response units should be considered in close proximity to residential and employment concentrations. For instance, Rancho Vistoso future school sites may also accommodate safety center uses. As the Oracle and Tangerine Corridors develop, strategically located response sites can be designated and incorporated into development plans for these areas.

Conveniently located bicycle parking facilities, in both public and private developments, will encourage bicycle use. Appropriate lighting and security concerns should be included in all projects.

Employment centers, like Town Hall and Allied Signal offer opportunities for future air-vac heliport sites if needed for patient transfer to area hospitals. Resorts, like the Sheraton El Conquistador, may also be used in similar emergencies.

Community and neighborhood centers, within the larger developments and clubhouses, serving area golf courses, should be considered for educational safety displays and presentations. This information could identify the central and satellite locations and explain functions of each.

### Transportation Corridor Implications

Projected population increases indicate that emphasis should be made on providing safe, efficient transportation corridors to minimize the traffic problems which contribute significantly to accidents, such as congested, poorly designed roadways incapable of handling commuter traffic in/out of Tucson to the south, and access to the interstate highway system.

A transportation maintenance program should be implemented which assures corridors with reduced hazards, through such measures as deicing, street cleaning, routine repair and replacement, striping, signage.

Traffic characteristics within the Town and planning area will change as the population increases and with planned improvements to the transportation system. For instance, following the installation of Tangerine Road's extension to Oracle Road, changes to the existing First Avenue/Oracle Road signalization may be warranted.

Bike routes have been planned in the Transportation/Circulation Element to include a comprehensive, designated bicycle lane system in major street widening plans. Additionally, separate bike path linkages will be designed into the Town's lineal open space network. Certain linkages may allow golf cart traffic where appropriate. All future development should provide a set method for students to have safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools and parks.

### Safety Implementation/Education

The Town should consider ordinance provisions which will foster safety goals, such as restrictions on on-street parking, designated parking areas, and driveway sight clearances. With the continued increase in child drownings, fencing requirements could be enhanced for home swimming pools. These ordinances could be enforced through Building Code/Zoning inspectors, Police and/or Fire Department personnel.

### Public Education Contributions

Expanded emergency training programs, such as CPR, could be offered at a minimal charge or publicly funded through the Town's Police or Fire Departments. Public awareness programs could be given at the schools or public facilities for desert survival, flash-flooding, dust storms, water safety, and other related subjects. These could be presented at the elementary schools, also.

The detrimental effect humans have on the fragile Sonoran desert environment should be communicated to all residents of the planning area. The ecosystems which are being disturbed -- ultimately destroyed -- contribute to the elimination of the physical features around Oro Valley. Unless used by an educated public and protected by a responsible Town government, the beauty of the surrounding desert, the untouched mountain vistas, entire animal communities will be lost forever. The terrain, without proper husbandry of natural resources and an understanding of the landforms and the interrelationship between the elements and man's intervention, will erode away or otherwise be damaged beyond repair. Hiking trails, bike paths, and other amenities should be routinely patrolled, not only for the safety of the public but for the protection of the Town's natural resources.

Bicycle safety courses should be required for all pre-teens in the planning area. Town licensing for such vehicles in use within its limits could be

implemented with a certificate for course completion one of the licensing requirements.

Block watch programs could be continued for protection not only of school children but of temporarily-vacant homes. The police might patrol and check homes of vacationing residents.



## CULTURAL HERITAGE/HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT

The concept of historic preservation is not new, but efforts promoting it have increased in recent years as communities have discovered that preservation policies can contribute to neighborhood pride, investment and development.

Likewise, historic preservation is not restricted to establishment of museums. It goes beyond to include community conservation, restoration, rehabilitation, protection of archaeological resources and includes the preservation of "sense of place" and recognition of important community values. The relative newness of most of Oro Valley's development, characterized by attractive southwest residential styles in planned developments, should not be seen as invalidating historic preservation as a significant force in Oro Valley. In fact, older buildings and settlements take on a greater importance in documenting the Town's history. New residents are also eager to learn more about the events that shaped the land, images and cultures of Oro Valley and seek to preserve, protect and enhance the heritage resources of the Town.

From a more practical standpoint, the retention and reuse of older features may provide options for ways of living and working that will seem increasingly desirable as the Town continues to grow.

Oro Valley, may have archaeological resources that date from approximately 11,500 years ago to historic times. Included in that long span of time are remains of the Paleo-Indian big game hunters (ca. 11,500 to 9,500 years before present), the Archaic tradition (ca. 9,500 years before present to ca. A.D. 300), and the Hohokam tradition (ca. A.D. 300 to 1450), as well as evidence of Protohistoric peoples (the immediate predecessors of the Piman groups encountered by the Spanish), historic Indian groups, and European settlers -- Spanish colonists, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans.

Evidence of the Paleo-Indian big game hunters is sparse in the Planning Area. A few spear points, called Clovis points, have been found, often in association with later sites. Sites where the Paleo-Indians killed and butchered mammoth

and other large animals have been found southeast of the Planning Area, however, none have been documented within the Town of Oro Valley.

Remains of the Archaic tradition are more plentiful. Chipped stone and ground stone tools and debris are scattered on the surfaces of the bajadas and slopes of the Santa Catalina Mountains. Some of these surface sites have buried components. Buried Archaic sites can be found in the alluvium of floodplains such as Tanque Verde Wash, the Rillito, and the Santa Cruz River (all located south of Ina Road, the southern boundary of the Planning Area). The buried sites include camp sites and villages with buried hearths, storage pits, and pit houses.

Archaeological remains found in the area including several Rancho Vistoso sites support evidence of nearby continuous habitation and nomadic visitation. Analyzing these archaeological resources and interpreting the historic record can be a joint education effort among the Town officials, its interested citizens, educational institutions like Pima County Community Colleges and the University of Arizona, and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Oro Valley's rich cultural heritage is only partly known today. Yet unidentified archaeological resources provide a vast information source worthy of protection and preservation.

The Hohokams were known to occupy various sites throughout the Tucson Basin and adjacent areas. Remains of Hohokam sites include village sites, farmsteads or seasonal use habitation sites, irrigation canals and reservoirs, areas where the Hohokam practiced dry farming, sites where desert resources were obtained, rock art sites, and enigmatic trincheras sites -- rock alignments and circles or rectangles of stone found with artifact scatters on hillsides and hill tops. The features that together make up a trincheras site also have been found in isolated context, making their interpretation even more difficult.

Little is known about the Protohistoric period between AD 1450 and the time of Spanish exploration and settlement (AD 1690 to 1821). These Protohistoric peoples were probably related to the Piman groups.



From AD 1690 to 1821 Piman groups and Spanish colonizers occupied the area surrounding present day Tucson. Because of periodic Apache raids of Indian and Spanish settlements, unprotected encampments were unlikely. Presidios of Tubac and Tucson were established in 1753 and 1776 respectively to protect Spanish settlers as well as Pima and Papago (Tohono O'odham) Villagers.

In 1821 southern Arizona became part of the independent country of Mexico. From this time until 1854, with the Gadsden Purchase, most settlement occurred within the walled town of Tucson. Sites from this period have been found along the Santa Cruz River, south and west of the Town of Oro Valley. The sites indicate ranching and farming were practiced.

Anglo-American settlement followed the Mexican occupation. Actual settlement began about 1850 although fur trappers, traders and travellers on their way to California gold fields passed through the area. However, it was not until the 1880s, when the Apaches were finally defeated, that settlement outside protected Tucson and Santa Cruz Valley was considered safe.

Ranches and farms of the Territorial period between 1880-1912, are evident in the Town. The most notable example is Steam Pump Ranch located in the Oracle Road corridor. This and other ranches served as critical water and rest stops for travellers making their way between Tucson, to the south, and points north. Other sites dating between 1856 (Anglo-American) and the present day include prospect pits, mines and markers, individual dwellings and other structures.

Archaeological resources are a "diary" of past occurrences, occupations, practices, and cultures. The unfortunate result of reading this archaeological diary is that the resource is destroyed in the process. Current thinking suggests that potential archaeological resources be identified and located but not unearthed unless the resource can not be protected. Development of nondestructive analysis and interpretive techniques are in their infancy. Preserving archaeological resources now may allow us to interpret them later

without adversely affecting them. Oro Valley's heritage is likely tied directly to historical events of today's greater Tucson area. Regional cultural resource protection, preservation and enhancement efforts may assist the Town in this area.

Early land use and settlement patterns were directly tied to the basic human needs: food and water, shelter, and protection. Capable historians can predict with reasonable reliability where archaeological sites may be found in Oro Valley and vicinity. A Town-wide archaeological survey would provide the Town with an indication of potential archaeological sites that could be incorporated into a development review process including review of the Site Survey file at the Arizona State Museum.

Although archaeological "digs" can destroy important historic resources, valuable information is usually obtained in the process. However, this is preferable to uncontrolled or indiscriminate grading and excavation that also destroys the resources but leaves no information behind. Developers can be required to investigate archaeological/heritage resources prior to Town project approvals. Construction and development projects undertaken by the Town should be used to establish standards of resource analysis and protection. Town highway projects (widening and extensions) and the new Town Hall development are examples of where Oro Valley can set the standards.

Most Federal, State or County funding programs available to the Town prescribe resource protection requirements as conditions of funding. These government programs can be used as models for Oro Valley development standards. In lieu of individual heritage resource surveys, the Town may elect to establish impact development fee schedules for new and expanded developments. The developers would be required to contribute to a development impact fund. The Town, in turn, could fund environmental investigations, purchases of land for preservation or development, interpretive and educational programs or resource enhancement and improvement projects.

Preservation and protection of valuable heritage resources represent an important first step in helping us understand our past. A second step involves the enhancement of these resources. Enhancement can mean several things and can be experienced in many ways. Viewing areas along the major washes and trails in the Town could be developed with interpretive signage and displays in conjunction with planned recreational development. Large numbers of people can then be introduced to the resources while the resources are protected from unwarranted disruption. Other "passive" enhancement measures take advantage of school facilities and resorts to display interpretive material and institute educational programs. The new E. S. "Steve" Engle Town Hall offers additional display areas for interpretive materials.

Town-sponsored programs featuring cultural expression through the arts is a more active enhancement technique.

Tour-guided and self-guided tours (audio tapes) have become popular in Federal and State parks. Similar programs combining video, closed circuit/ community access television can bring cultural experiences to more Oro Valley residents. Combining appreciation of Oro Valley's rich natural and cultural resources offers the Town the widest range of opportunities, such as concerts, outdoor sound and light shows, taking advantage of the natural amphitheater setting and immense scale of the surrounding mountains.

Enhancement of cultural resources are not restricted to preservation and interpretation of historic resources. The encouragement of cultural events and activities will enhance both the lifestyle of the residents of Oro Valley as well as create additional attractions for tourists. Opportunities exist to combine cultural activities and displays with meeting, convention and resort facilities.

Events sponsored by the major builders, PAD associations and neighborhood groups obviously increase opportunities for interaction among residents.



## PLAN SECTORS

During the General Plan up-dating process certain planning components, policies and implementation strategies have come to be identified with the distinctive character or development potential of various sub-communities within the Oro Valley Planning Area. These nine Plan Sectors (indicated on Figure 3) are described in terms of their particular emphases, with specific, guiding principles indicated. As more specific sector plans are developed and adopted, these guiding principles should be replaced by more detailed policies, standards, and guidelines. Where a conflict arises between the General Plan and any subsequently adopted sector plan, the more specific sector plan shall govern (Rev. 2-2-94).

### SECTOR 1. TOWN CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Oro Valley's original residential enclaves are represented in the Town Central Neighborhoods Sector. Distinctive housing patterns have been formed by construction of homes by a variety of homebuilders, over two generations. Eclectic aggregations of housing styles and types are recognized in such neighborhoods as the Citrus Tracts, the Country Club, mobile home subdivisions, custom residential design and tract developments.

Schools, churches, neighborhood open spaces dot the area. The Sector's principal natural feature, Cañada del Oro Wash, is planned for cumulative evolution into a linear open space feature which ties Sector neighborhoods together. Planning decision-makers will look, especially, to opportunities for enhancing public access to and through this linear feature with particular attention to preserving the privacy of nearby residents. Small, unobtrusive "trail head" entry points, with limited auto parking, should be integrated into the system to allow enjoyment by picnickers, hikers and cyclists.

Major transportation improvements will include, over time, widening of La Cañada Drive and completion of the Overton/Linda Vista east-west link at the western and southern boundaries of the Sector, respectively.

Town Central Neighborhoods form a conservation sector, with growth accommodation anticipated entirely as a result of compatible, infill development:

- o Development proposals will be expected to conform with existing and planned residential densities, as depicted, in the low to moderate range. Commercial zoning is to be very limited, confined to internal neighborhood support uses.
- o Neighborhood conservation policies, including redevelopment standards derived from existing residential character, will direct all land use decision-making.
- o Land divisions within existing neighborhoods should be limited to pre-determined, supervised homesite engineering based on stated design and density principles.
- o Major wash recreational development is planned, with public and private sector support.
- o Transportation amenities for the sector will require attention to commuter parking facilities convenient to arterial corridors in and near the Sector.

Town Central Neighborhoods represent Oro Valley's traditional residential character. These areas, and their ambience, are to be preserved and maintained.

## **SECTOR 2. ORACLE ROAD SCENIC CORRIDOR**

The Oracle Road Scenic Corridor Specific Plan and Overlay District (under separate cover) have been developed and adopted for the purposes of providing more detailed policy and regulatory guidance for the development of this critical sector. Please refer to these documents, available at the Oro Valley Town Hall (Rev. 2-2-94).

regulations have particular effect regarding structures and properties visible from the Corridor.

Employment, shopping and recreational opportunity sites are to be designed and improved with primary attention to the service needs of Town residents and resort guests. Ubiquitous, highway-related uses to serve the through travelling public should be understated and, where possible, combined with Town-serving uses.

High automobile trip generators are constrained by roadway capacity and the desire to move through traffic. Limited access driveways, frontage road treatments and deep entry necks are to be designed into major generators' circulation plans. Parking areas are to be screened with approved vegetation or sculpted berms and walls. Special signage criteria pertain.

Oracle Road is considered a conservation sector, with the following, explicit guidelines:

- o Specific Plan guidelines direct future zoning entitlements, commercial zoning occurs only where designated, with strict adherence to Convenience Use criteria. Conditionally-zoned commercial uses to convert to multi-family or mixed developments. Only resort/residential areas are allowed east of Oracle.
- o Noise and light pollution associated with relatively high traffic volumes on Oracle Road shall be abated through the appropriate use of setbacks and landscaped berming.
- o View Corridor guidelines, 150' setbacks for commercial, 100' for residential, are established.
- o Only monument signs are required, no billboards are permitted.
- o Transfers of development rights are encouraged to growth sectors.

- o Park-and-ride or other transit, multi-modal transportation amenities are required for all non-residential developments 20 acres or over with Oracle frontage. Roadway improvements planning will be undertaken in conjunction with ADOT and the Regional Transportation plan.
- o Consistent landscaping, street furniture, architectural and massing standards are to be observed.

This Sector, with intended Specific Plan status, is regarded as one of the Town's most sensitive areas. Its visual excellence and maintenance of property value is regarded as an overall priority through development timing and regulatory policies.

### **SECTOR 3. CORONADO FOOTHILLS**

- o Future development is to be consistent with current, residential character and development limits imposed by the natural terrain.
- o Natural, recreational and cultural resources in the area are preserved.
- o Planning and zoning decisions for this Sector will be limited to extensions of existing use and intensity patterns.
- o Open space and recreational needs will be supplied on individual lots and internal to planned residential developments as common areas.

Coronado Foothills is a General Plan conservation area:

- o Preservation of neighborhood character and maintenance of residential lifestyle is paramount.
- o Commercial or employment development proposals will be permitted only for well-buffered sites of limited acreages on collector.



- o Bicycle and pedestrian circulation is planned with attention to users' convenience and safety. No through automobile traffic will be planned.

The Coronado Foothills portion of Oro Valley's Planning Area is not expected to undergo extensive growth or change.

#### **SECTOR 4. VISTOSO**

A master-planned community, the Vistoso Sector is the Planning Area's predominant population growth receptor for the period 1990-2010.

Employment, recreation and retail uses have been programmed into Vistoso neighborhoods at appropriate land absorption ratios. Improvement of Tangerine Road, planned by ADOT, will provide significant assistance in marketing and balancing development patterns for this sector:

- o As a largely planned community, Vistoso has established substantial property owner reliance on established uses and intensities. Deviations from planned development patterns will be minimal ones.
- o Maintain and enforce Planned Development design guidelines as set forth in approved master plans and enforce Rancho Vistoso and Sun City Vistoso plan documents.
- o The Vistoso Sector is intended for planned growth. In general, its master-planned portions are not to be used. Envisioned as development transfer receptors; rather, the uses and densities originally set forth will guide.

#### **SECTOR 5. TANGERINE CORRIDOR**

This Sector offers greatest potential for planning innovation and development quality. State transportation funds will help to open the area for economic development and future residential expansion.

- o Transfer of development rights to this Sector is considered as a means for ameliorating intensity and congestion elsewhere in the Planning Area, particularly in the Oracle Corridor.
- o Mixed use developments with shopping, institutional development and employment centers located interior to master-planned housing neighborhoods will be permitted.
- o Non-residential and high density uses are to be convenient to Tangerine Road and intersection arterials, but set well back from the roadways.
- o Nodal development, in planned residential communities of approximately 40-160 acres and more or approximately 20-80 acre employment campuses is encouraged.
- o The intersection of Tangerine Road with La Cholla Boulevard and with Thornydale Road are designated as regional activity centers within the planning area. High intensity land uses and appropriate transportation facilities are anticipated in connection with the regional activity centers.
- o Commercial, business, institutional, and high density development may be anticipated at or near Tangerine Road's major intersections. It is not intended that all intersection corners have commercial development; rather, one or several quadrants of the four (if appropriately designed and buffered) will be permitted to develop commercially.
- o Resort-residential themes are maintained by broad setback areas along arterials. Tangerine Road will be planned with limited access points.
- o Transit amenities are encouraged for this growth area; park and ride, bus etc.

## **SECTOR 6. TORTOLITA FOOTHILLS**

The Tortolita Foothills Sector will remain open rangeland, with scattered homesteads, for a number of years into the future.

Surrounding the Planning Area's northwest corner and abutting Tortolita Mountain Park, this Sector represents longer term, exurban development potential.

- o Development planning for State Trust Lands beyond Oro Valley's far northern boundaries will require extensive environmental and infrastructure demand research.
- o Long-term, low to moderate density development is anticipated.
- o Resort-related uses are appropriate in large portions of this sector where terrain poses construction problems.
- o Only neighborhood-serving commercial uses are envisioned.
- o Roadways will be generally rural in nature.
- o Low to very low density is appropriate for those lands in the approach and high noise areas of La Cholla Airpark.

## **SECTOR 7. VALLEY WEST**

Given the Town of Oro Valley's present annexation posture, Valley West should be considered as extraterritorial.

Development in this Planning Area sector may have an influence on Town neighborhoods, regarding housing densities and traffic generation.

- o Valley West should be encouraged to develop with similar principles of self-containment so as not to transfer demands for municipal services and open space onto Town facilities.
- o Transportation improvements, including transit/park-and-ride facilities, should be coordinated among jurisdictions (e.g. La Cholla Boulevard, La Cañada Drive, Overton/Linda Vista) for Arterial and transit. Extension of bus service into this sector is desirable as future development occurs.
- o Linear open space (wash) and park development programs will correspond with recreation acreage standards.
- o Commercial zoning requests at selected locations along Shannon Road (or unincorporated frontages of other arterials) is to be balanced with built-up market areas.
- o Both jurisdictions, along with Pima County, should exercise joint planning oversight to prevent "county island", piecemeal development.

#### **SECTOR 8. SOUTH TIER/INA**

South Tier/Ina is an urbanizing buffer between the Town and the City of Tucson, including the Ina Road corridor and the Regional Mall.

Particular attention should be addressed to residential housing type mix in the area immediately south of Hardy Road. Hardy Road should exhibit minimal retail/employment development, being retained as essentially a residential edge.

- o Extra-territorial monitoring (similar to Valley West cooperation) is especially appropriate, given potential density requests.
- o The sector may be regarded as more urban than Oro Valley proper.

- o Visual sensitivities, such as entry points to the Town and, especially, lower development densities with little or no additional commercial, are to be observed along Oracle Road.

The Town and County should cooperate to spread traffic demand and to encourage continued quality of development between Ina Road and the Town's southern limits.

#### **SECTOR 9. CAÑADA HILLS/LAMBERT**

The Cañada Hills/Lambert sector represents existing low density traditional character and newer medium density neighborhoods on conjunction with resort style development.

- o Master planned commercial, non-residential uses limited to La Cholla Boulevard and La Cañada Drive between (in the vicinity of Naranja Drive to Lambert Lane).
- o Major civic activity center and supporting uses are encouraged along La Cañada Drive south of Naranja Drive.
- o Resort, open space are encouraged in this sector.
- o Neighborhood conservation policies should direct decision-making when development proposals impact existing neighborhoods.
- o Commuter parking facilities are encouraged in developed areas and required for public and private commercial projects which have convenient access to arterial corridors.
- o When relatively higher density developments abut existing low density areas, buffering shall be located on the higher density areas which substantially mitigates any negative impacts.



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# General Plan Policies

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III. GENERAL PLAN POLICIES (Amended July 7, 1993 - Ord. (O)93-11)

General Plan goals have been translated into concise policy statements, each of which represents existing or intended Town posture for improving the local environment's quality. As guidelines, these statements express desired direction; however, they are not mandatory upon the Town which must consider appropriate priorities, timing and budget constraints. These policies include general ones which extend over several Plan components as well as those which are specific to the nine, individual Plan elements.

Policies, which will serve to implement Town goals, are as follows:

**Community-wide Planning Policies**

Broad policy considerations, accompanied by general implementing actions, demonstrate the degree of commitment by Town Council, appointed boards, commissions and residents to maintain planning strength.

1. Maintain and enhance Oro Valley's residential/resort/recreation character.
  - a. Encourage master-planned or coordinated development, while maintaining a local market for smaller, custom builders.
  - b. Encourage public and private image improvements through site plan design, entry treatments and the like.
  - c. Encourage planned commercial clusters and discourage strip commercial development.
2. Assess the long term costs and benefits of annexation verses short term gains.
  - a. Encourage annexation of county islands and peninsulas to facilitate infrastructure expansion and improve operational efficiencies of municipal services, and standardize design criteria.
  - b. Encourage compatible, quality development in potential annexation areas.



- c. Prepare fiscal impact analyses for response to annexation and significant development proposals.
- 3. Develop community facilities and services in conjunction with growth areas which are reflective of community character.
  - a. Schools, postal buildings, fire stations, and police/public safety facilities should be designed to maximize service to neighborhood units.
  - b. Combine decentralized services where operational efficiencies, will be achieved.
- 4. Plan to guide, rather than react to, future population growth.
  - a. Direct land use patterns with municipal capital improvements.
  - b. Establish development timing controls applicable to major projects.
  - c. Provide input to Pima County regarding sector plan content and development proposals to assure compatibility with the Town of Oro Valley and the Oro Valley General Plan.
  - d. Monitor development proposals on State Trust Lands.
- 5. Continue strong emphasis on fiscal responsibility.
- 6. Utilize all available mechanisms to support General Plan implementation.
  - a. Adopt municipal ordinances, specific plans, capital improvements/ operational funding strategies.
  - b. Continue to work with, and strengthen, relationships with adjacent land management agencies.

## Plan Element Policies

Community-derived Vision Statements have been assessed to address Plan element goals. Each of the nine Plan elements are addressed separately. Due to the close relationships between some Plan elements, policies may overlap or interconnect.

### A. Land Use Element

1. Utilize site analysis in determining appropriateness of development proposals for specific sites.
  - a. Require detailed site analyses for plan submittals.
  - b. Site analysis information shall be used as a criterion in deciding the approval or denial of land use proposals.
  - c. Site tours or inspections should be performed by the Planning Commission and Design Review Board when appropriate.
2. Oro Valley's principal land use is single-family residential development.
  - a. A mix of housing types, such as single family attached and detached, single family cluster homes, patio homes, townhouses and apartments, is desired.
  - b. Promote clustering (average density) developments to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
  - c. Cluster development may be appropriate to the preservation of significant, usable open space within residential neighborhoods.
  - d. Encourage integration of open space within clustered structures to promote openness within housing developments.

- e. When relatively higher density developments abut existing low density areas, buffering shall be located on the higher density areas and shall substantially mitigate any negative impacts.
- 3. Protect the integrity and aesthetic context of existing neighborhoods through the use of appropriate buffers.
    - a. Buffers shall be designed to mitigate adverse impacts of sound, visibility and traffic.
    - b. Buffers shall provide a transition area adjacent to existing residential areas, where the first tier of new development is limited to similar densities and height.
    - c. Buffers shall establish and enhance natural landscaping along exterior edges of new development.
    - d. Buffers shall consist of but not limited to landscaping, screening, pathways, and natural features.
  - 4. Encourage location of residential neighborhoods close to activity centers to minimize travel times.
    - a. Locate higher density land uses and transportation dependent uses near transportation corridors.
    - b. Encourage placement of shopping and employment centers nearby neighborhood developments to facilitate ride sharing and transit opportunities.
    - c. Provide a wide range of appropriate services, including grocery, dry cleaning, postal, entertainment and auto-related, etc. within activity centers. This shall also include retail, business and professional office and other service providers.

5. Preserve the Open Space character of the Town by applying innovative land use strategies.
  - a. Encourage the protection of natural features through transfer of development densities and similar strategies.
    - o At the time of rezoning, residential densities as recommended by the general plan, may be transferred out of natural areas to other residential areas included in the rezoning petition.
  - b. Share use of municipal and educational facilities where feasible.
  - c. Encourage school districts to set aside portions of school sites for parks or park-like settings.
  - d. Open space preservation shall be used as a criterion in deciding the approval or denial of land use proposals.
  - e. Consider the impacts of proposed land uses on the needs of adjacent public reserves.
6. Promote quality resort developments reflective of Oro Valley's land use character.
  - a. Adopt land use categories and zones that facilitate attraction and development of quality resorts.
  - b. Encourage the inclusion of appropriate or ancillary commercial enterprises within resorts, accessible to Town residents.
  - c. Develop a Town-wide network of open space, parks, bicycle and pedestrian linkages between resort developments, tying resorts with the broader open space system.

- d. Require developer support and participation in the establishment of these linkages and facilities.
7. Commercial uses should seek to locate near new population centers rather than adding intensity to or extending current retail sites.
- a. Discourage strip commercial development, favor integration of businesses into new activity nodes, closely associated with neighborhood developments.
  - b. Observe a general guide of two acres of commercial development for each additional one thousand residents, given the existing overabundance of commercial zoning.
  - c. Encourage planned, clustered shopping areas adhering to strict aesthetic and design guidelines with free-standing pads discouraged (except as expressly permitted in relation to overall gross leasable area and center design).
  - d. The General Plan recommends no additional commercial zoning be approved on the east side of Oracle Road. Further, conditionally zoned commercial properties in the Oracle Road Corridor should, when appropriate, be considered for reclassification to other uses.
8. Employment-related uses are encouraged to provide work places for a growing employment base.
- a. Office, technical and corporate employment facilities shall be scaled to the surrounding area.
  - b. Campus-type employment is encouraged. Campus-type employment places an emphasis on siting buildings with a unified architectural style within a landscaped garden and pedestrian-oriented setting. Campus-type development does not include high rise structures or heavy industrial

activity.

- c. Heavy industrial and outdoor commercial uses which require significant infrastructure, introduce greater truck traffic and are visually and environmentally incompatible with the Town's image are generally unacceptable.
9. Multi-family residential development, at moderate to higher unit densities, should have access to arterial or collector roadways.
- a. Apartment or condominium development shall have planned-in recreational facilities and other amenities.
  - b. Adequate, screened parking for residents and guests is required.
  - c. Market studies regarding present demands for multifamily housing shall be required as supporting information for evaluating the need for building while minimizing vacancy rates.
  - d. Recreational facilities and appropriate links to open space amenities shall be provided.
10. Institutional uses, such as colleges or health care campuses, are desired and will receive positive Town support when offered in appropriate settings.

**B. Circulation/Transportation Element**

1. Staged arterial upgrades are intended in conjunction with the Regional Transportation Plan.
- a. Improvements to Tangerine Road have advanced priority. Regional ties to I-10 and arterials should be encouraged.

- b. The Oracle Road Corridor, although continuing as a main north/south arterial, will be de-emphasized for high intensity development and be the subject of specific planning in the immediate future.
  - c. Apply for Federal, State and County funding assistance for roadway improvements.
  - d. Establish priorities for future interchange sites.
2. Bicycle facilities and standards should be developed in accord with the Town-wide Bike Plan (Figure 9) included in the Oro Valley Transportation Element of this General Plan.
- a. Bike lanes are to be included in all planned arterial improvements and on collectors deemed appropriate in the development review process. Bike lanes shall be developed in accordance with the Oro Valley Subdivision Street Standards.
  - b. Provide pavement width on all principal streets adequate for the safe and convenient coexistence of automotive and bicycle travel.
  - c. Require homeowners associations to maintain pedestrian-bicycle paths, within approved master-planned communities.
  - d. Require bicycle parking facilities in new developments and in public projects with automobile parking.
  - e. All future development shall provide safe pedestrian/bicycle access to schools and parks.
3. Develop local street improvements standards.
- a. Improve air quality by sealing/paving unimproved streets and through the addition of curbing.

- b. Establish right-of-way landscaping policy with emphasis on low water-use plant material.
  - c. Encourage curvilinear residential streets patterns.
  - d. Require sidewalks or related pedestrian facilities within neighborhoods.
  - e. Require all new roadway and future pedestrian-bicycle improvements, where appropriate, to meet public design standards.
4. Transit and Trip reduction options shall be developed and supported.
- a. Develop realistic costs, usage figures and transit needs, within the framework of a future Oro Valley Transit study.
  - b. Express bus service with park-and-ride lots is encouraged.
  - c. Employer shuttle services should be developed to and from work place nodes.
  - d. Incorporate park-and-ride lots with planned facilities.
5. Require projects larger than 100 acres in size to provide direct access to an arterial.
6. Establish standard rights-of-way widths for all street classifications and transportation modes.
- a. Place utilities in transportation corridors to minimize disturbance to existing neighborhoods, facilitate access to utilities and minimize costs.
  - b. Encourage recreational uses of transportation corridors that are compatible with transportation and recreation



objectives. Trails and other similar linear recreational facilities are most appropriate.

7. Major transportation system wash crossings (collector streets and larger) shall be by bridge or box culvert, designed to be hydraulically efficient and environmentally sensitive with minimum disturbance to riparian habitat.

**C. Economic Development Element**

1. A diverse economic base is desired.
  - a. Resort/arts enterprises are especially encouraged to employ Town residents at all levels and support local business establishments.
  - b. Hospital and health service campus locations shall be promoted.
  - c. Selective retail/service expansion will be closely monitored to prevent over-commercialization.
  - d. Public investments, such as capital improvements, shall support appropriate, desirable economic development.
2. Prepare an economic development and maintenance strategy.
3. Investigate methods to create additional jobs for Town residents and promote new and expanded business opportunities in the Town of Oro Valley and Planning Area.
  - a. Support the concept of "economic gateways", that reinforce the Town's economic objectives concurrently with its visual/land use objectives.
  - b. Actively pursue cooperative employment agreements between the Town and major employers such as internships and joint

projects.

- c. Participate in Chambers of Commerce programs that promote Town employment consistent with economic development and land use objectives.

4. Require cost/benefit analysis that measures compliance with Town goals.

5. Develop action plans to implement land use objectives for commercial, industrial and employment goals.

**D. Public Facilities**

1. Extend municipal services ahead of development.

- a. Implement the adoption of development impact fees to finance infrastructure investment.

- b. Reassess Community Facilities District advantages for major, master-planned new community development.

2. Public buildings should incorporate community design themes.

- a. Town Hall grounds are to exemplify low-water use (xeriscape) landscaping and other appropriate landscape treatments.

- b. Encourage shared use facilities at municipal sites.

- c. Public buildings should incorporate compatible materials and architectural styles as determined by the Development Review Board.

3. School site planning shall be addressed in large-scale planned communities.

- a. One elementary school site of at least 10 acres should be reserved within developments for every 500 elementary school level students forecasted to live within the development.
- b. Park/school combination site dedications are encouraged.

#### **E. Community Design Element**

- 1. View protection is an essential aspect of Oro Valley community design.
  - a. Hillside development will be carefully controlled through the establishment of grading limit standards and criteria.
  - b. Where possible, permanent protection of scenic vistas, is to be encouraged, especially from the Oracle Road Scenic Corridor.
  - c. Evaluate slopes greater than 15% for development compatibility, safety and preservation as natural open space.
- 2. Architectural themes are intended to blend the built environment with natural surroundings.
  - a. Building height and bulk should be moderate to low intensity, in harmony with individual site attributes.
  - b. Earth tone colors and masonry/tile materials are strongly preferred.
  - c. Parking lots with greater than 20 car capacity shall be screened from adjacent uses and public thoroughfares.
  - d. Require residential development calling for building height in excess of 18 feet to show a variety of roof lines.

- e. Require new developments to be compatible through the use of naturally appearing landscaping, materials, and colors predominant in the surrounding landscape.
- 3. Gateway treatments are developed at major entries to establish community image.
  - a. Develop guidelines and themes for gateway treatments.
  - b. Establish funding mechanisms for development and upkeep.

**F. Open Space/Recreation Element**

- 1. Create an Open Space Network Plan for public/private implementation.
  - a. Designate pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trails with picnic/rest areas.
  - b. At the time of initial construction, trails are to be installed by the developer in natural open space areas. A residential density bonus may be granted in other residential areas included in the rezoning petition.
  - c. Provide handicapped accessible facilities to users.
  - d. Obtain agency funding and solicit organization or business sponsorship for system improvements.
  - e. All developments shall link their recreation and open space facilities to the community open space network where appropriate.
  - f. Gateway treatments are developed at appropriate locations along the Open Space Network.
  - g. Trails shall ultimately connect to public preserves and the regional trail network, where possible.



- o continue to enforce sign placement and height regulations through the Town's Sign Ordinance.
- c. Closely regulate new development in foothills and visually significant areas.
- d. Monitor development plans of County, State and Federal Park agencies.
- 4. Encourage Town residents' utilization of existing parks, recreation programs and open spaces.
  - a. Establish cooperative partnerships with area employers to develop recreational facilities and share in operational costs.
  - b. Determine and prioritize long range recreational needs of the Town.

**G. Natural Resources Element**

- 1. Major natural washes and floodplains are to be kept free from development to minimize further flood hazards.
  - a. Washes are included as integral portions of the Town's Open Space Network and, as such, function to improve public safety. Washes with a discharge greater than 1000 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the 100 year flood event and associated riparian habitats shall be preserved as natural open space except as noted in Policy c.
  - b. Development standards for smaller washes and floodplains shall be established and monitored.
    - o washes with a discharge greater than 100 cfs during the 100 year flood event and associated riparian habitats should be preserved if vegetation and

habitat quality are found to be unique by the Planning Commission and approved by the Town Council.

- o Structural channelization of such washes may occur if approved by the Town Engineer, for sound engineering design, and the Planning and Zoning Director, for aesthetics.
  - o Require that hydrologic studies of washes greater than 100 cfs discharge during the 100 year flood event include effects on riparian habitats.
- c. Wash encroachment may be permitted where floodplains are broad and shallow in order to permit a reasonable utilization of property. Further, certain bank protection improvements may be permitted to enhance public safety and to protect riparian vegetation.
- d. Groundwater recharge potential should be preserved.
  - o establish an inventory of favorable groundwater recharge sites.
  - o retard runoff to encourage groundwater recharge and/or direct use for irrigation through water harvesting systems.
- e. Encourage use of nanofiltered, or equivalently treated, effluent to water parks, schools and golf courses at the earliest possible date.
- f. Oro Valley should obtain representation on the T.W.C. Citizen's Advisory Committee to help direct water supply development.

2. Create a balance between the natural environment and man made influences.
  - a. Limit the use of non-native plant materials in new developments.
  - b. Avoid development in flood prone areas and limit grading practices that contribute to flooding.
  - c. For drainage basins designated as "balanced basins" and any future basins designated as such, Pima County Floodplain Management policies and regulations shall be adhered to.
  - d. Allow only floodplain compatible uses in flood prone areas.
  - e. Explore solutions that employ natural materials and prohibit projects that channelize water courses except where extreme threats to public safety would exist.
  - f. Require use of geotextiles or gunite containing integral desert colors for erosion protection as opposed to concrete lining of water courses except where extreme threats to public safety would exist.
  - g. Use the plan review and land use planning functions as opportunities to educate the development community and to establish or modify development standards.
  - h. Indigenous (native desert) vegetation and riparian habitats should be maintained and enhanced where possible.
  - i. Require the protection and/or transplanting of healthy native vegetation within a development or to approved sites outside the project limits.



- o identify public/open space sites for transplanting.
  - o develop a list of select native plants.
  - o establish a list of preferred sites.
- j. Require the use of drought tolerant vegetation and water-efficient irrigation systems where landscaping and revegetation are implemented.
- k. Discourage mass grading techniques for project development.
3. Limit commercial extraction of natural resources within the Town.
- a. Protect air quality through enforcement of dust control measures.
  - b. Restrict removal of gravel and other natural resources from washes and flood prone areas for commercial and development uses.
  - c. Monitor requests for commercial excavation permits on State Trust Lands.
  - d. Limit the area of excavation exposed to the elements.
  - e. Require phased restoration/redevelopment plans to be coordinated with an annual Town permit renewal process.
    - o establish an annual permit for land extraction, grading or borrow sites.
    - o incorporate restoration plans with the proposed annual permit process.
  - f. Establish allowable noise levels and hours of operation for extraction and construction activities.

4. Limit light pollution.

- a. Identify light sensitive uses and locations, i.e. Kitt Peak, Mount Lemmon, Mt. Bigelow and the Pusch Ridge Wilderness.
- b. Establish and enforce light pollution regulations.
- c. Adopt illumination standards.

5. Control drainage, and utilize drainage areas as multiple use amenities.

- a. Inventory and classify existing surface and subsurface natural resources from existing library information, encourage institutional research on Oro Valley's geotechnical base.
- b. Determine the influence of other jurisdictions and extraterritorial land uses on the quality and quantity of the Town's natural resources.
- c. Establish standardized techniques and reliable indicators to evaluate environmental effects of development proposals.

6. Support educational programs that promote environmental awareness and natural resource conservation.

H. Safety Element

1. Existing and potential traffic hazards are to be eliminated.

- a. Signalization warrants will be monitored on an as needed basis.
- b. Bike lanes and/or paths are to be integrated with arterial improvements.

- c. All new or reconstructed roadways included as a portion of the Oro Valley Roadway Network Map will have sufficient outside lane width and other specific design provisions for safe convenient use by bicyclists.
  - d. Bike, vehicle and pedestrian conflicts are to be minimized through appropriate design and standards. Bike paths are to be constructed, where feasible, to separate pedestrian and bike traffic from motorized vehicles in order to provide safe access to schools and parks.
2. Public Safety education programs are strongly supported.
- a. Shared information resources and programs among the Town, school districts, developers and major land owners are encouraged.
  - b. Support implementation of a feasible program to increase awareness of, and adherences to, laws and regulations regarding bicycle use.
  - c. Cooperative programs with State and Federal Parks are encouraged.
  - d. Safety and survival courses should be made available to Town residents.
  - e. Identify and inform police of flash flood zones.
3. Support neighborhood watch programs for new and existing developments.
- a. Establish cooperative watch programs through neighborhood associations.
  - b. Encourage participation of local businesses.

4. Structures intended for human occupancy shall be prohibited in all 100 year floodways.
5. The Town encourages adherence to the "Suggested Policies for Fire Management in the Wildland Urban Interface", published by the National Forest Service, May, 1990.

I. Cultural Heritage/Historic Resources Element

1. An archaeological resource inventory should be maintained.
  - a. Resource enhancement activities may be invited through University and State Museum.
  - b. Archaeological sites should be left generally undisturbed, not identified to the public.
2. Require cultural resource surveys for all new developments where cultural/archeological resources are determined likely to occur according to the Arizona State Museum.
3. Encourage the protection of cultural resources discovered during construction.
  - a. Train inspectors to recognize resources.
  - b. Develop a procedure to follow if cultural resources are unearthed.

7/19/93

WP\GPU\POLICY.FIN

## Plan Implementation Strategies

#### **IV. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

Plans are intended both to preserve existing neighborhoods and to guide future development. This dual purpose is particularly critical to the Town of Oro Valley where there is so remarkable a scenic environment. The Town is committed to the enhancement of its resources and the lives of residents and visitors alike. The General Plan, therefore, is to be the principal guide for insuring the community's quality future.

This General Plan is designed to be responsive to development proposals which fit its spatial pattern and timing expectations. Zoning requests for economic developments that have been prepared for immediate construction, which have adequate infrastructure or the means to provide it, which have provided background market feasibility and environmental compatibility data will be encouraged. Speculative zoning applications will not.

##### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Facing unprecedented development pressures resulting from the Town's desirability as a place to live, work and play, Oro Valley citizens are determined to enforce the basic precepts of this adopted General Plan. Population growth can and will be accommodated, but on the Town's terms.

This Implementation Strategies component is intended to describe some of the techniques and processes by which Oro Valley, over time, will facilitate, refine and realize municipal planning goals. The community will need to exceed the norm observed by other municipalities through traditional land use controls. Creative solutions will be required throughout the General Plan's extended time horizon to continue accomplishing its objectives. Several strategies are outlined here for applying plan Policies, and beginning Plan implementation. Other measures are recommended as further steps to be taken when population thresholds or levels of development command additional action programs as a result of future policy decisions.

It is understood that these policies and implementing tools should be reviewed and revised periodically just as the Plan, itself, will be: long before the year 2010. General Plan updates are required by statute every five years. New technology, building practices, State planning and zoning legislation, regional issues, local economy and citizen attitudes can be expected to bring change in the ways the General Plan can best be facilitated. Of greatest importance is that on-going effort is expended by the Town in attempting to achieve, or amend, the Plan.

## **B. LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES**

Community leaders (elected, appointed, staff) are essential to General Plan implementation. To the extent that they, in their official capacities, weigh community decisions in terms of stated Plan policies its precepts will be fulfilled.

The Oro Valley General Plan is flexible enough to encourage innovation; within stated limits, it allows for a variety of creative future development scenarios. But its implementation depends on the Plan policies and guidelines being upheld, not controverted.

Preserving community assets requires an understanding of the cost-benefits involved in every land use decision, the trade-offs inherent in economic development proposals and the environmental impacts created by construction projects. Development proponents should be required to submit, and staff to analyze, responses to a General Plan compatibility checklist. The filing should not be viewed as an onerous, expensive burden; but, rather, as an opportunity for applicant and Town to present the proposal in its true light.

**Background documentation for Oro Valley decision - making should contain analyses as to each proposal's conformance to the General Plan; environmental impact or enhancement; and cost-benefit in terms of revenue demand/attraction for services.**

Maintaining quality standards is an essential adjunct to the Town's growth guidance function. Data maintenance (including chronological, visual and revenue/expenditure records) will provide a basis for assessing Plan implementation performance. Special attention should be directed to areas adjacent to Town boundaries, particularly with regard to potential annexations.

**Continual monitoring of General Plan progress, in qualitative terms as well as quantitative, should become a regular reporting charge of the Planning Commission and Development Review Board, with staff assistance.**

Functional specialization frequently occurs among representatives of public bodies where individuals have particular expertise or interest. An informal oversight role in Plan furtherance may be encouraged for Council, Commission or Design Review Board members who may have professional experience in urban design, engineering or finance; or simply a personal interest in cultural, recreational or planning activities. Teamed with appropriate Town staff, these "sponsors" can accept responsibility for furthering Plan Element goals.

Within her or his area(s) of specialization, Town leadership would seek information, creative techniques employed elsewhere and performance measures for enhancing Plan progress.

**The Town should support (and provide assistance in the form of memberships, conference attendance, publications) for leaders' active pursuit of Plan monitoring capabilities.**

Detailed planning initiatives, in the form of adopted Specific Plans or municipal function plans, provide additional plan implementation direction for policy-makers, citizen appointees and staff. On at least an annual basis (such as in conjunction with budget process goal-setting) Town management and Council should establish priorities for planning refinements. Thorough analyses would be scheduled and reviewed prior to including action items in annual budgets, capital improvement programs, bond referenda or General Plan amendments.



Whenever practical, Specific Plans or other community facilities plans (such as trails, drainage and open space plans) accepted by the Town should contain implementation strategies, including timing and capital improvement schedules, in accord with General Plan goals.

Inter-Agency Coordination, in the form of regular communication with adjacent jurisdictions and land management agencies is recognized as a significant factor in plan implementation.

As a matter of zoning and development review, immediately adjacent jurisdictions and land management agencies (National Forest Service, State Parks Department and State Land Department) shall be given an opportunity to provide input to the appropriate Town body.

### C. REGULATORY/LEGAL STRATEGIES

Effective growth guidance enforcement depends heavily on the defensibility of provisions in development ordinances. Legally sound codes for construction, subdivision, site planning and land use reduce the Town's financial liability. Similarly, well-drafted, easily administered regulations inspire confidence in property owners who wish to conform to General Plan principles.

The Town of Oro Valley has historically utilized creative land use control techniques as a means to carry out local governance policies in accord with preserving community character. Updated General Plan objectives establish the context in which future revisions to the Town's zoning ordinance and related codes will be evaluated.

General Plan consistency is, in itself, a form of regulatory control for implementing Oro Valley's vision. Arizona statutes require zoning to be in conformance with the adopted General Plan. Proper administration requires attention to each development proposal's responsiveness, in its own context, to Plan principles. Flexible interpretation is intended, understanding that a General Plan is not meant to be site specific.

Plan graphics are neither intended to express precise area measurements nor exclusivity of land use. It is assumed that residential areas, for example, will include some non-residential development such as schools, churches, neighborhood retail and small employment uses compatible with surrounding living character. Likewise, variations from the illustrated density ranges are expected: the future development concept should be interpreted as depicting only an attainable, overall average for the area.

Commercial and employment center designations are locational. They, too, will vary as to land area, use mix and building volume. Substantially greater acreage than shown on the Plan may be included in the Town's development entitlement for a particular project if it is particularly well-designed and otherwise subscribes to Plan policies. Concomitantly, where a proposal does not fit General Plan goals or where monitoring information indicates an overabundance of developed or zoned commitments to the uses being sought, Town decision-makers may choose to reject it, notwithstanding Plan graphics.

General Plan Amendments will not be required for slight variations in use mix, location or project area; however, (observing general compatibility guidelines) Council, Commission or staff may call for formal amendment prior to the acceptance of development proposals which constitute a material change to the adopted Plan. An annual up-dating Plan Amendment process will be scheduled to consider any such revisions. Special provision to accommodate expedited amendment requests may be made at proponents' expense.

Zoning is the backbone of the Town's land use regulation system. Oro Valley's on-going efforts to maintain an effective, efficient zoning process will need to be employed with especially critical focus upon the General Plan. Inasmuch as zoning is meant to follow adopted planning principles, the existing Oro Valley Zoning Ordinance must be scrutinized to delete any contradictions between this legislated planning document and its supporting regulatory provisions. The General Plan implies, also, a need for additional legal mechanisms as innovative responses to accomplish its objectives.

Examples of future land use regulations might include: designation of view corridors and scenic easements; strengthening standards for hillside construction, Development Review Board criteria, acceptable grading/drainage practices. The Ordinance may also incorporate trail or pathway system criteria; updated signage provisions and the like. Special attention will be required in promulgating regulatory mechanisms for specific plan or zoning overlay districts.

The deliberations of the Town's special standing committee on land use regulation, the Zoning Ordinance Coordinating Committee, are intended to be guided by the precepts of this General Plan. A broadly-based review into the definitions, classifications, standards and procedural aspects of Oro Valley's zoning-related practices should be conducted on a regular basis, under the direction and guidance of the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Incentive programs may be undertaken to encourage desired types and quality of development that are worth taking extra steps to attract. Town financial initiatives, such as capital improvement programs, are not the only development incentives open to Oro Valley. "Premium" packages, which allow added density or intensity/use mix benefits in return for the private sector providing project amenities, should be considered as "sales" devices for obtaining desired uses (energy or resource conservation) and economic development.

Also, the Town may consider providing such incentives as transfer of development rights, allowing trade-offs for scenic easements or establishing conservation districts as means to preserve natural resources. Properties located in the Oracle Road Corridor with expiring, conditional commercial zoning provide a particularly good opportunity for transferring retail development potential elsewhere in the community and retaining reasonable site use through redesignation to high or medium density residential. These and other implementation methods are especially suitable for achieving the State-designated scenic route standard for Oracle Road. Preventing premature urban sprawl and maintaining the community's open space character are sound reasons for encouraging clustered, planned development even though building bulk per net acre may be increased.

Water resource availability has become a significant factor in Arizona municipal development strategies. Oro Valley might consider devising an allocation system whereby builders who incorporate special conservation measures (both inside buildings and in open, outdoor areas) or who contribute financially to Town-wide water resource management may qualify for additional development entitlements.

Bonus arrangements should be directly tied to Plan goals. Further, all incentives are intended to accommodate development timing concerns so that economies of scale can be achieved in the provision of municipal facilities and services.

Specific Plan augmentation of General Plan principles is permitted for Arizona municipalities under State enabling legislation. The Town's on-going planning efforts will benefit from increasing particularity, fine-tuning down to neighborhood scale. Strategic planning encourages quality growth in two ways: 1) deploying Town resources to opportunity areas; and 2) indicating preferred uses, development timing and land utilization intensity through Specific Plans for select geographical areas that provide incentive and guidance for private investment. As an example, the Oracle Corridor Specific Plan is intended to preserve the community's scenic resources by restricting further commercial incursions, providing attractive use alternatives for undeveloped commercially-zoned sites, adapting planned uses to development quality criteria and encouraging open space and view corridors.

More precise, area-specific land use regulations and design guidelines may be adopted from time-to-time for more detailed Plan implementation. Areas of greatest sensitivity and potential should be designated for Specific Plan treatment. When adopted by the Oro Valley Town Council, these Specific Plans are intended to become integral to this General Plan, overriding and amplifying broad goals and policies with their greater particularity.

#### **D. ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES**

**The Town of Oro Valley needs to be more involved with water supply issues.**

#### **E. FINANCING STRATEGIES**

As with proposed incentive programs, funded Plan implementing projects are designed to serve the aspirations of existing local residents and business people as well as to attract newcomers.

Reservation of future public facility sites or even more extensive land banking can become effective leveraging devices, allowing Oro Valley to recapture some of the real estate value appreciation its sound planning and management policies help to create.

Public-private partnerships offer a likely source of joint financial strength to meet the future's public service challenges. Sale and leaseback possibilities, for example, could encourage private developers' construction of offices and employment centers on public land with Town agencies as lessees. Such arrangements, like the Town's utilization of incubator space in the Foothills Business Center, may be mutually profitable; guaranteeing tenancy on the one hand, deferring the necessity for expensive public construction on the other.

Industrial Development Authority (IDA) financing would allow the Town to float bond issues for the purpose of extending loans at attractive rates to developers interested in constructing employment-generating facilities. This fully collateralized device, (the Town retains title to the buildings) may be used to generate economic development, to encourage balanced local employment and (as payments are received in excess of bond obligations) to fund Town projects.

Privatization is another mechanism gaining favor among many municipalities. Reduced operational overhead frequently can result from putting additional service programs out to bid. In addition to the current, contract-service approach to fire safety and emergency services, future needs for social,

cultural, recreational and transportation/communication services, among others, may be contracted out so as to reduce Town overhead expense. Fair rental or franchising charges may be assessed, under the operating contract, to finance necessary capital improvements.

Capital programs in the Oro Valley Planning Area must be directed so as to shape desired growth. Bonding for municipal facilities should take into account future service demands, incorporating economy of scale into initial construction and providing for expansion over time.

Development agreements and, of course, Community Facilities Districts should include pay-as-you-go provisions to reduce the Town's debt service. Development impact fees also may be utilized as a means to underwrite major public facilities programs. Improvement district approaches may be considered for redevelopment or added service to the Town's already developed neighborhoods.

The General Plan assumes continuation of the Town's preference for compact local government which concentrates on providing essential services. Accordingly, capital expenditures are anticipated to stress public safety and protection of property without extensive additional funding for government buildings, social programs or aesthetic enhancements. Streets, water and sewer, waste disposal, necessary safety equipment and the like will continue as the emphasis of Town facilities investment, relying on State and County contributions for improvements, such as highways and parks, that serve a regional clientele.

Private sector financing, in the form of development impact fees, will constitute a significant element of the Town's longer range systems planning. Payment schedules would be developed to coincide with the community's capital improvement programming. In some instances, where developers wish to expedite construction and are able to install streets, water, sewer or other systems at their expense, "pay back" arrangements for future reimbursement by other, benefitted developers may be undertaken.

A detailed Oro Valley Capital Improvement Program, organized into functional areas that compare with General Plan Elements, should be adopted for a period of at least five years, with expenditures prioritized from year one through year five. Town management proposes an annual up-date, projecting the CIP out an additional year.

Operating Expense must be calculated accurately in the Town's fiscal planning strategies. Privatization and earmarked endowments, together with realistic user fees, are likely techniques for maintaining manageable municipal overhead expenses.

Because the Town of Oro Valley is so heavily reliant on open space and recreation to maintain its quality, a local Open Space Trust might be considered to fund perpetual maintenance of the community's scenic, open attributes. Development fees, annual percentage assessments from individual property owner associations, contributions and revenue bonds may be considered as funding sources to establish and maintain beautification and outdoor use areas.

Whenever possible, specific capital projects should be matched with Town enterprise accounting. That is, a revenue stream for carrying out facility function should be identified, adopted and adjusted from time-to-time to recapture operating, maintenance and debt service costs. Creative "enterprise" programs may include fees for data retrieval or computerized maps produced by Town development services departments, space rental for private functions or storage, cost-plus inspection or service fees, publication subscriptions and the like.

Operations and maintenance funding is a major factor in the Town's finance strategy. Cost-benefit analyses for all implementation or governance actions which will require on-going support or periodic maintenance should include adjusted allocations for these purposes. Sources of funding, ranging from general fund to phasing programs to be taken over by private entities, should, likewise, be indicated among financing strategies.

## F. IMPLEMENTATION TIMING

As initial steps, the Town's ordinances and administrative procedures should be adjusted, as necessary, to give full force to planning directions. "Leadership" and "regulatory" techniques are more adaptable to short-term success; financing strategies tend to orient toward longer range Plan implementation.

Regional improvements, such as Arizona Department of Transportation investment for new and improved transportation corridors, should be encouraged sooner rather than later so as to provide necessary accessibility to future development areas. Definitive timetables for Oracle and Tangerine Corridors are critical, in turn, to the Town's preparedness for anticipated growth in the late 1990s.

Initial actions, to begin immediately and intended to be in place within the first year or two after General Plan adoption, are listed below. The Town Council may wish to encourage functional oversight roles and require all requests for Council action to include statements pertaining to the proposal's consistency with General Plan objectives in addition to the following:

- o General Plan Compatibility Checklist established for assessing development proposals in terms of adopted goals, policies.
- o Monitoring system for Plan implementation, derived from performance assessment data.
- o Planning Commission General Plan Refinements through coordination with County sector planning, ongoing ZOCC ordinance revisions, specific plans and preparing next phase development code organization to accommodate anticipated, mid-90s population growth.
- o Oracle Corridor Specific Plan adopted as a pilot project or model for future detailed planning initiatives.



Mid-term strategies, to be applied beginning in the third to fifth years after General Plan adoption, include the following tools. By the end of this period (circa 1995) a comprehensive General Plan update will be required. Any of these steps may be initiated earlier, but should have become full, functional parts of the Town's planning process by 1993-1995:

- o Development Code organization of Town development ordinances into a single Plan-implementing document.
- o Incentive/Performance Standard zoning becoming part of the Development Code's emphasis, as valid numerical benchmarks are established and tested.
- o Specific Plan detailing, adding sectors of special sensitivity to the Oracle Corridor Specific Plan model developed during the initial implementation phase.
- o Capital Improvements Program addressing the full-range of General Plan Elements and growth areas within the incorporated municipality.

Beyond the year 1995, updated strategies should be devised to accompany the Town's omnibus General Plan Amendment package and new forecasts for population growth. The following mechanisms are projected to be applicable when the Planning Area population approaches the 80,000 level. Therefore, some techniques may be invoked as demonstration projects by 1995 or sooner; others, to 2005 or beyond. If the Town, itself, annexes substantial territory (or municipal population exceeds 40,000 residents) at earlier threshold dates, these longer-term implementation measures may be expedited.

- o Operating Funds Plan to determine the long-term overhead costs associated the Capital Improvements Plan, including enterprise fund management.
- o Land Banking as a means to recapture real estate value enhancement associated with public projects.
- o Open space reserves, adopting a comprehensive program of recreation space and scenic easements to be underwritten by an Open Space Trust.

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