

APACHE COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

PO Box 238, St. Johns, AZ 85936
(928) 337-7526 fax: (928) 337-2062

Milton Ollerton
Karen Day

Director
Planning Tech

Email: mollerton@co.apache.az.us
Email: kday@co.apache.az.us

APACHE COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

District #1

Elta Warner
Steve Delgai
Bill Lucas

District #2

James Watchman
Bruce Schertz
Anderson Tullie

District #3

Kay Hauser
Tom Tilford
Charles Copeland

VISION STATEMENT

Vision allows the opportunity to dream and look into the future; it offers a moment to reflect on what Apache County is at its best and what future it may choose for itself that is an expression of these qualities.

Apache County offers a rural character of natural beauty and abundance. This includes values such as independence, privacy and personal freedom that attract many seeking both permanent residence and seasonal refuge.

Apache County will continue to be a county that is primarily rural, made up of small communities with varying character and unique qualities. These communities offer places of peace and mutual tolerance, where citizens of differing backgrounds and beliefs respect each other's dignity, privacy, and freedoms. They communicate effectively and openly and work together toward common goals. They foster a sense of neighborliness, self-sufficiency and community pride that has long been a part of the County's character.

Apache County seeks to maintain its position as a balanced, family oriented community, recreationally and socially active, promoting a high quality of life for all age groups and income levels within a stable and secure environment. The County's intention is to create a framework, through which a spirit and unique character are promoted and preserved, thereby meeting the needs of the unincorporated communities. The County encourages positive interactions and promotes public interest to create a fiscally stable, economically progressive foundation. The County will develop and implement services and programs that are responsive to the needs of the people to insure the long-term viability of Apache County.

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1.0 Summary

1.1 Overview

Apache County is required by state law to prepare a comprehensive plan “to conserve the natural resources of the county, to insure efficient expenditure of public funds, and to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public” (A.R.S. §11-806).

The planning process is structured to emphasize public involvement and incorporate comments, ideas, and direction of the public into the plan. This plan strives to create strong and vibrant communities within Apache County by encouraging orderly development. The State of Arizona projects population growth in Apache County of 44,000 individuals, or 63 percent of the County’s population in the year 2000, in the next 50 years. Such growth, coupled with the increase in the number of second/vacation homes and the accompanying “phantom” population that is not reflected in census numbers or other official statistics, demands careful planning to accommodate new residents and industry and to maintain the character and quality of life of the County that are important to current residents.

1.2 How to Use the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Supervisors concerning growth and development, including serving as a basis for decisions regarding updates to the zoning map and in approval of subdivision plats. It provides an understanding of existing and proposed land use for decision-makers, the public, and developers.

This Plan is strictly advisory in nature; it is not a regulatory document. Rather, it establishes a long range vision for development in Apache County. Its goals and policies aim for an “ideal” scenario, meaning that occasionally one goal may be in conflict with another goal. Circumstances may also arise that are not directly addressed by the Plan. For example, the issues related to the geography of a particular site or the circumstances of a specific proposal are rarely straightforward. As such, the Plan provides guidance in the decision making process, but not the “final word”.

One primary concern must be fair resolution of conflicting interests. All institutions - political, social, economic, and educational need to work together to address their varied interests, values, desires, and the perception of what goals, objectives, and strategies are needed for growth and development in the county. Public involvement is essential in the development of these broadly stated goals.

These broad goals are the foundation on which land use policies and proposals have been constructed to help provide a means of addressing some of the specific and widely differing individual interests and for integrating them on a countrywide basis through the vehicle of the Comprehensive Plan.

Significant revisions to the Apache County Zoning Ordinance (the “Zoning Ordinance”) are necessary before many of the goals, policies and concepts in this Plan will be effective. This Plan is based on the premise that the County will proceed with a revision of the Ordinance that will include additional zoning districts to supplement the existing Agricultural-General and Reserve-Overlay districts. The character areas in the Land Use Element, discussed below, suggest possible regulations that the County could adopt to mitigate impacts between land uses, provide protection of existing land

uses, give land owners and investors some assurance of what development is possible on their land and adjoining properties, and continue, to the extent possible, flexibility in the potential use of property. Without such Ordinance changes, this Plan will not impact development in Apache County; the existing Ordinance regulations will remain in place and the development and zoning processes will continue as they exist on the date this Plan is approved.

1.3 Land Use

Given the vast area and primarily rural character of Apache County, the character areas in the plan represent generalized land use, development, or preservation concepts that recognize and promote existing development patterns. The character areas take the place of more traditional land use categories as this Comprehensive Plan is intended to set a general framework for development in the County rather than establish a more precise guide that mirrors a zoning district map. Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors of this Plan, the County will use this Plan to develop a revised Zoning Ordinance for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. As noted in Section 1.2, above, this Plan will not impact development in Apache County without such Ordinance changes.

1.4 Circulation

The circulation system will provide efficient and safe movement of persons and goods within and through Apache County. This system also is to be environmentally compatible with the surrounding conditions and supportive of economic development. Most of the development within the County has occurred, or will occur, along the major paved transportation corridors. As such, the circulation system is not only responsible for circulation but is also directing areas of growth within the County, with the intersections of well traveled transportation routes being the locations of greatest growth potential.

1.5 Applicability

This Comprehensive Plan applies only to unincorporated areas of Apache County. The Plan does not apply to incorporated areas, land that is currently part of a Native American Reservation or within the boundaries of a reservation, unincorporated property that is addressed in an adopted area or community plan, and unincorporated property that is in an area for which the County is currently completing an area or community plan. Given these exceptions, the Plan focuses primarily on the southern portion of the County, with the majority of the covered area lying south of Interstate 40.

The following area or community plans are being readopted and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan does not further address the land covered in the area plans; those plans are the controlling planning documents for their areas. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, discussed in Section 4.4, assigns no character areas to these areas but references the area plans.

Apache County Land Plan and Community Development Ordinance – Greer
Phase I
Alpine Community Plan
Nutrioso Community Plan
Concho Community Plan
White Mountain Regional Transportation Plan

The area included in the Vernon Community Plan also is not addressed in this Plan; the County will revise this Plan to include the Vernon Community Plan by reference after completing and adopting that Community Plan.

1.6 Previous Comprehensive Plans

This Comprehensive Plan shall replace all previous Comprehensive Plans

1.7 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan

An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan shall be necessary when a proposed land use for a property does not conform to land uses established in this Plan for that property's designated character area, discussed in the Land Use Element. The Board of Supervisors will establish a fee and a public hearing process for Comprehensive Plan amendments. The character areas included in this Plan allow a wide and extensive range of land uses; the most significant differences between the character areas are the permitted residential densities. Given this breadth of permissible uses in the character areas, few changes of land use will require a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

A Major Amendment is a substantial alteration of the County's land use mixture or balance as established in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element for the area of the County to which the Comprehensive Plan applies. For purposes of this Plan, a Major Amendment shall involve a proposal to change the character area for property totaling at least 1,000 acres. A proposed amendment will also be a Major Amendment if it proposes a change from the Recreation, Highway Service, or Environmentally Sensitive Development Area character areas to any other character area and encompasses more than 100 acres. The public hearing process for a Major Amendment must satisfy the requirements of A.R.S. § 11-824.C.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Role and Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

County government is required by state law to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the unincorporated areas (A.R.S. §11-806). This Plan shall address challenges facing the County and presents opportunities for the continuing success and diversity of the region by:

- Encouraging coordinated physical development in accordance with the present and future needs of the county.
- Promoting stewardship of and respect for the natural and cultural resources of the County.
- Guiding growth to achieve efficient expenditure of public funds.
- Protecting investments in private property.
- Promoting the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public.
- Encouraging economic growth and diversity.

The planning process is structured to emphasize public involvement and incorporate comments, ideas, and direction of the public into the plan.

The Statute requires counties to prepare a comprehensive plan to guide coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development within the County. Apache County has elected to include a Land Use Element and a Circulation Element. Apache County is incorporating planning for growth areas and covering the cost of development in its Land Use Element.

2.2 Land Use Element

The Land Use Element includes the following:

- Planning for land use that describes the proposed character areas for uses of land appropriate to Apache County. The character areas reflect Apache County's vision for the area and discuss the types of development, such as residential, commercial, recreational, that are expected to help the County and its residents realize this vision. This planning includes:
 - A statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories.
 - Consideration of air quality and access to incident solar and wind energy for all character areas.
 - Strategies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the county at the time the plan is adopted, readopted, or amended.
- Planning for growth areas, specifically identifying those areas that are particularly suitable for infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a concentration of land uses, such as residential, commercial, and tourism uses. This planning includes:
 - A method to make infrastructure expansion more economical and to provide for a rational pattern of land development.
 - Promotion of public and private construction of timely and financially sound infrastructure expansion through the use of infrastructure funding and financing planning that is coordinated with development activity.
- Addressing the cost of development through identification of policies and strategies that Apache County could use to require development to pay its fair share toward the cost of additional public facility needs generated from new development. The information includes:
 - A component discussing the mechanisms allowed by law to fund and finance additional public services necessary to serve a new development, including special taxing districts, development fees, in lieu fees and facility construction, dedications, and privatization.
 - A component discussing policies that will ensure that any financing/funding mechanism will result in a beneficial use to the new development, bear a reasonable relationship to the burden imposed on Apache County to provide additional necessary public facilities to the new development, and be imposed in conformance to legal requirements.

2.3 Circulation Element

The Circulation Element includes the following:

- Planning for circulation consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed interstate highways, state highways, paved county highways, and non-paved but maintained county roadways, and other modes of transportation.
- Correlation of circulation planning with the land use element to direct growth in Apache County.

2.4 Planning Process

The Apache County Planning & Zoning Department prepared a Comprehensive Plan in 2001-2002, which was the result of over 100 public meetings. The Board of Supervisors approved that plan, with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission. After further review of that effort, the County decided to complete extensive revisions of the plan with assistance from a consultant team. The earlier effort was the starting point for preparation of this Plan.

P&Z staff, representatives of other County agencies, and several Planning & Zoning Commissioners met with the consultants to discuss this Plan on the following dates in 2003: March 20 and 27, April 4 and 11, May 16, and June 2. These meetings resulted in various drafts of the Plan, which staff and the consultants then discussed with Apache County residents and land owners. During all of these meetings, participants made numerous suggestions and revisions to the Plan, including both its maps and text. The P&Z staff provided the background information and data upon which the Plan is based.

The P&Z staff released a draft of the Plan in early August 2003 to solicit further comments in compliance with A.R.S. § 11-806.H. The staff held a workshop in St. Johns on September 3, 2003 and in Eagar on September 10, 2003. The staff also made presentations at the Apache County Fair at the fairground in St. Johns on September 11 through 13.

The public input process culminated in a Planning & Zoning Commission hearing on October 9, 2003, held in compliance with A.R.S. § 11-806. At that hearing, several additional revisions were suggested by the public and P&Z Commissioners. Following changes to reflect those suggestions, the P&Z Commission planned to hold a second hearing on the Plan on November 6, 2003.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 History

The Tenth Territorial Legislative Assembly carved Apache County from Yavapai County on February 24, 1879. Yavapai County was one of Arizona's four original counties. Leaders of St. Johns and Globe petitioned for their communities to be the county seat. That honor was awarded temporarily to Snowflake, with the provision that an election would determine the permanent county seat. In November 1879, on the strength of votes from the mining town of Clifton, which was later included in Greenlee County, St. Johns was designated the county seat. In 1880, Springerville superceded St. Johns as the county seat for two years. St. Johns has been the County seat since 1882.

Apache County originally encompassed all of Navajo County, part of Gila County, and part of Graham County. The original area, which covered 20,940 square miles, began to be divided in 1881 when the area between the Black and Gila Rivers was placed in Graham County. Apache County also lost a significant amount of territory when Navajo County was formed in 1895. By that time, Apache County's area had decreased to its current 11,216 square miles.

3.2 Physical Setting

Apache County is located in the extreme northeastern part of Arizona and extends from the state's border with Utah southward over half the distance to the Mexican border. The County is bordered on the north by San Juan County, Utah; on the east by San Juan, McKinley, Valencia, and Catron Counties, New Mexico; on the south by Graham and Greenlee Counties, Arizona; and on the west by Navajo County, Arizona. Apache County is over 220 miles long and averages approximately 50 miles wide. It is the third largest county in Arizona, covering an area of 11,216 square miles.

All of Apache County lies above 4,000 feet in elevation; some areas exceed 8,000 feet. The White Mountains, in the southern part of the county, have peaks that exceed 10,000 feet; Mt. Baldy approaches 12,000 feet. Coniferous forests cover the higher regions of Apache County; most of the remainder of the County is either pinion and juniper woodlands or short grass plains, all interspersed with low mountains.

Most of Apache County is in the watershed of the Little Colorado River. Some areas on the southern flank of the White Mountains drain into the Salt River watershed of Central Arizona; the northern tip of the County belongs to the watershed of the San Juan River that flows through New Mexico and Utah before emptying into the Colorado River in southern Utah.

3.3 Demographics

The following table provides detailed information for both Apache County and Arizona from the most recent decennial census. As noted, the total population in Apache County in 2000 was 69,423. The United States Census Bureau estimated the County's population in 2001 as declining to 68,610 and in 2002 as declining to 68,002. The Arizona Department of Economic Security projects population growth in the County to 113,227 by 2050. This growth is approximately 44,000 people or 63 percent of the 2000 population.

POPULATION – CENSUS 2000

Census Information	Apache County	State of Arizona
Population	69,423	5,130,632
Population, Percent Change, 1990-2000	12.70%	40%
Persons under 5 years old	9.10%	7.50%
Persons under 18 years old	38.5%	26.60%
Person 65 years old and over	8.30%	13.00%
White persons	19.50%	75.50%
Black or African American persons	0.20%	3.10%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	76.90%	5.00%
Asian persons	0.10%	1.80%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders	0.10%	0.10%

Census Information	Apache County	State of Arizona
Persons reporting some other race	1.80%	11.60%
Persons reporting two or more races	1.40%	2.90%
Female population	50.40%	50.10%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	4.50%	25.30%
White persons, not of Hispanic/Latino origin	17.70%	63.80%
High school graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	16,211	1,810,097
College graduates, persons 25 years and over, 1990	2,520	466,873
Housing units	31,621	2,189,18
Homeownership rate	74.30%	68.00%
Households	19,971	1,901,327
Persons per household	3.41	2.64
Households with persons under 18 years	52.40%	35.40%
Median household money income, 1997 model-based estimate	\$20,260	\$34,751
Persons below poverty, 1997 model-based estimate	39.70%	15.50%
Children below poverty, 1997 model-based estimate	45.40%	23.20%

3.4 Land Ownership/Governance

The vast majority of Apache County is not in private ownership. The White Mountain Apache, Navajo, and Zuni Indian Reservations cover more than 65 percent of the County; one-quarter of Arizona's Native Americans live in the County. Approximately 21 percent of the land has remained in public ownership; the remaining 13 percent is privately owned.

In areas outside the Reservations and the National Forest, much land is held in a "checkerboard" pattern of sections of land. The State of Arizona owns significant blocks of land just north of the National Forest; some sizable parcels of contiguous sections are in private ownership or have been subdivided. The checkerboard pattern of ownership involves, in different parts of the County as illustrated in Exhibit 1, State, Federal, Reservation, and private land holdings. Some private holdings exist within the National Forest and within the Reservations.

Apache County contains three incorporated communities – St. Johns, the County seat, Eagar, and Springerville. Several other communities that are not within Reservation boundaries are unincorporated, including Alpine, Nutrioso, Vernon, Northwoods, Greer, Richville, Concho, Salado, Woodridge Ranch, Hunt, Witch Wells, Pinta, Navajo, Chambers, Sanders, and Lupton. As noted in Section 1.5, Greer, Alpine, Nutrioso, and Concho have area plans, and the County is completing the area plan for Vernon; these areas are not covered further in this Plan.

3.5 Economy/Industry

The economy of southern Apache County has historically been heavily land based, with agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreation comprising the primary economic sectors. Two power plants – Salt River Project's Coronado Generating Station northeast of St. Johns and Tucson Electric Power's Springerville Power Plant northeast of Springerville-Eagar – were welcome additions to the County economy in the late 20th Century. Government, in its various Federal, State and local forms, is the largest employer in the County. Economic expansion will be a critical component of growth in the County and will also provide better opportunities for the County's youth to remain in the area.

3.6 Climate

Aside from the White Mountains and the Chuska Mountains with micro-thermal snow forest climates, most of Apache County is a region of middle latitude and some subtropical steppes. Major portions of the County have an average annual precipitation of less than ten inches; however, none of the County is classified as desert.

3.7 Soils and Mineral Resources

The general soil map, Exhibit 2, illustrates the soil associations in the southern portion of Apache County. A soil association is defined as a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils normally consisting of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil. The association is named for the major soil.

A soil map is useful only as a general guide in selecting land use suitability on a large scale. The soils in any one association commonly differ in slope, depth, stoniness, drainage, and other characteristics that impact management. More detailed field surveys to determine conditions at specific locations will be needed for planning purposes of a smaller nature.

Certain uses and activities are viewed as suitable and appropriate for each soil association. Generalized use lists are included below.

SOIL ASSOCIATION	PRIMARY USE
Rudd	Grazing
Thunderbird	Grazing; cinder cone extraction
Moenkopie-Sandstone Rock	Grazing; wildlife habitat
Tours-Jocity	Grazing; farming
Badland-Claysprings Clovis-Palma-Hubert	Limited grazing Grazing; small farming
Bush Valley-Cambern	Home sites; range; wildlife habitat; watershed; dry farming

Most of the mineral resources in Apache County are located within the Navajo Reservation. Three parts of the southern portion of the County are known to have mineral deposits. Helium fields are near the community of Navajo; bituminous and sub-bituminous coal have been identified southeast of Witch Wells and along the New Mexico border. Salt and potash deposits have been located between the Petrified Forest National Park and St. Johns. Carbon dioxide and helium deposits have been discovered between St. Johns and Springerville.

3.8 Natural Resources and Recreation

Apache County is rich with natural resources and recreational opportunities. Significant features include Canyon de Chelly National Monument, the Petrified Forest National Park, and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.

Canyon de Chelly and the Hubbell Trading Post are located on the Navajo Reservation and receive approximately 700,000 visitors annually. The Petrified Forest has over one million visitors annually.

Lyman Lake State Park, located south of St. Johns, offers picnicking, camping, and boating with launch ramp facilities. Native American petroglyphs are found on the surrounding lake canyon walls; nearly 150,000 people visit the Park during the summer months.

Both the Fort Apache Reservation and the Mt. Baldy Wilderness Area contribute to the recreational appeal of the County. The Mt. Baldy Wilderness Area is a natural habitat for animals. Hikers and equestrians enjoy the quiet atmosphere and unspoiled environment of both locations. Sunrise Lake, and its surroundings, have skiing facilities and lodging for winter recreation.

The presence of the National Forest, BLM property, and State land provides a variety of open space areas and recreational choices including lakes and streams, campgrounds, and hiking, and cross-country skiing areas. Many second homes have been built in the forested area, especially in and near Alpine, Greer, and Eagar.

4.0 Land Use Element

4.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element is, by far, the most important element of the Apache County Comprehensive Plan. Proper land use planning is critical to provide for an orderly and efficient transition of vacant, rural, or redevelopable land to more intense land use.

This Comprehensive Plan proposes expanded use of one planning/development tool, performance or development standards, and introduction of one new planning/development tool, community master plans, for the County. Both of these tools are discussed below. When new growth comes to an area, it often brings pressures that result from new residents having different attitudes or concepts of how development should occur or how it should look. Land planning and development tools can help address those pressures and concerns and protect individual property rights and property values. The tools can help ensure continued stewardship of the land so new development will respect the traditions and customs of long time residents.

One important concept or tool is the use of performance or development standards. Apache County has had some experience with such standards in its zoning ordinance. The standards can help to limit impacts between different uses of land, such as between commercial and residential development. Performance standards include items such as noise limits, building setback requirements from property lines or adjacent development, screening requirements using walls or landscape materials to provide a visual buffer between land uses, landscaping requirements to ensure provision of trees in parking lots and next to streets and highways, paving requirements for access from a highway to a lot or development, and standards for sizes of signs. The performance standards are intended to help neighboring land uses coexist with minimal intrusion on each other – again to preserve private property rights and property values. Performance standards may also include trade-offs or incentives that allow a land owner to have a use that could have impacts on the surrounding area so long as the owner will provide specified tools (such as additional landscaping, limited hours of operation) to address those impacts.

An important new concept is the use of community master plan to ensure that future development minimizes its impacts on the quality of life and character of the area. With a community master plan, a developer or owner of a large tract of land prepares a plan for the property discussing land uses, the number of dwelling units, the types and intensities of commercial and industrial development, parcel sizes, and provision of infrastructure (such as water, sewer and paved roads) and services (such as police and fire protection) to ensure that the new residents and businesses will be properly served without significantly impacting people already in the vicinity. The Board of Supervisors may establish a fee for processing or reviewing community master plans.

In particular, a community master plan would address in written or graphic format how/if the following elements would be provided for future residents or landowners and in what condition.

- Proposed land uses (i.e. Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural)
- Proposed densities, maximum number of dwelling units and or the maximum square feet of commercial/industrial uses
- The general size of the parcels intended for each use
- Automotive circulation including road condition (paved/unpaved), and general width of right-of-ways
- Pedestrian / equestrian circulation including width, facilities and paving condition
- Alternative circulation including width, facilities and paving condition (i.e. golf carts, quads, motorcross bikes, bicycles, buses)
- Method of dealing with natural watercourses through the community
- Method of dealing with mass grading of the community
- Defenses against fire (in forested areas) (i.e. firebreaks, active thinning areas)
- Sewer
- Water
- Natural Gas/Propane
- Electricity
- Phone / Communications
- Police coverage
- Fire coverage
- School coverage
- Postal delivery
- How the community will transition to or address its neighbors.

The Comprehensive Plan directs new growth and redevelopment to maximize the County's existing social and physical infrastructure. It does so primarily through proposing development of community master plans that outline the balance and mix of land uses intended for parcels of land and address provision of infrastructure to service those areas.

The character areas established in the Land Use Element are broad, allow a wide range of uses, and are tied to a suggested foundation for new zoning districts. The vision of the Element is the protection of existing community character that maximizes balanced economic development. The Plan suggests accomplishing this vision by mitigating potential impacts of mixed land uses with setbacks, screening, landscaping and other enhanced performance standards and clarifying how to be a good neighbor by establishing expectations up front. The character areas differ primarily in density and intensity of allowed uses, depending on the character of the land and community, such as being surrounded by national forest and pine trees, located along the interstate highway, or part of range land that has traditionally been used for ranching or agriculture.

As development and growth occur in Apache County, the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Element will evolve. With each update of the Comprehensive Plan, the land uses appropriate in each character area should be reviewed, with the intent of more clearly defining appropriate uses, services, and the aesthetic characteristics of each character area. A part of this review could be the elimination of some land uses from some character areas. The Land Use Element in the Comprehensive Plan is intended to set the stage for the initial development and growth that will establish a framework for future planning decisions that can be responsive to the diverse character of the landscape and communities within the County.

4.2 Zoning

Apache County has adopted the Zoning Ordinance to implement its Comprehensive Plan as authorized by Statute. (A.R.S. § 11-802) The Zoning Ordinance includes only one zoning district (Agriculture-General) and one overlay zone (Reserve Overlay), which limits the Ordinance's effectiveness. Zoning is intended to help separate, or reduce impacts between, different land uses. Unless strong private controls, such as deed restrictions, work to address land use compatibility, a single zoning district cannot easily reduce negative impacts and protect both property rights and property values. The Zoning Ordinance will be more effective if it includes zoning districts, for classes of residential, commercial, industrial, and planned community uses. Such districts can establish development standards, including required yards/setbacks, height limits, minimum lot area and dimension, and maximum lot coverage to ensure provision of light and air for all development in Apache County, reduce impacts between uses, and provide parking standards to expedite traffic flow.

Revisions of the Zoning Ordinance will be necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan. Chief among these changes will be addition of performance standards to mitigate impacts between land uses and a planned community district to allow use of community master plans, both of which are critical to the implementation of this Plan and are described above in Section 4.1. Other key changes will be addition of residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts.

4.3 Character Areas and Overlay

This Comprehensive Plan includes seven character areas and one overlay area for Apache County, discussed below. The character areas detail the types of land uses envisioned for different parts of the County. **As noted above, the Plan assigns no character area to the land currently covered in an adopted area plan or currently in a Native American Reservation.** Each of the character area descriptions lists the types of zoning districts that would be appropriate for the character area to help Apache County decision-makers implement the Plan. The zoning districts would list permitted land uses and other regulations, such as setbacks, lot coverage, noise and light restrictions, and other development standards; this Plan does not include that level of specific information. **The character areas discuss some possible regulations for zoning districts but are not to be read as regulatory.** A table in Section 4.3.9 compares residential densities and parcel sizes allowed in the character areas.

4.3.1 Rural Ranch

In general, the purpose of the Rural Ranch character area is to maintain the open character of land traditionally used for ranching in Apache County. A significant amount of the land designated as Rural Ranch has been divided into 36 or 40 acre parcels.

Development in Rural Ranch may not include lots smaller than nine acres without 1) compliance with Apache County's subdivision regulations and 2) approval of a community master plan, described in Section 4.1, that addresses roadways, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses. Community master plans should include a minimum of 36 acres; residential density in a community master plan should not be more than one dwelling unit per gross acre.

Rural Ranch may include both low density residential and limited commercial uses focused on adjacent highways. Commercial uses in Rural Ranch should be allowed only along paved or other appropriately surfaced access or rights-of-way and are encouraged at highway intersections. Any industrial or storage uses in Rural Ranch should be screened from views from rights-of-way.

Without a community master plan, the appropriate zoning in Rural Ranch should be limited to districts that meet the basic parameters of the designation. With a community master plan, any zoning district may be appropriate in Rural Ranch. Performance standards, described in section 4.1, in Rural Ranch would help mitigate impacts between land uses.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Rural Ranch character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Rural Ranch	1 du / 9 gross ac	1 du / gross ac	36 ac

4.3.2 Range Land

The purpose of the Range Land character area is to allow cattle ranching, farming, and other traditional Apache County agricultural uses. The character area is designated for lands that are large private tracts or other property that is, and likely will continue to be, used for ranching purposes.

Development in Range Land should not include lots or parcels smaller than 160 acres without 1) compliance with Apache County's subdivision regulations and 2) approval of a community master plan, described in Section 4.1, that addresses roadways, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses. Residential density in a community master plan in Range Land should not exceed one dwelling unit per five gross acres. Commercial and industrial development should be restricted to locations with paved or other appropriately surfaced access and is encouraged at highway intersections. Industrial or storage uses should be screened from views from rights-of-way.

Without a community master plan, the appropriate zoning districts in Range Land should include any zoning districts that satisfy the basic parameters of the designation. With a community master plan, all of Apache County's zoning districts would be permitted in Range Land except those that allow a density of

more than one dwelling unit per five acres. Performance standards, described in section 4.1, in Range Land would help mitigate impacts between land uses.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Range Land character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Range Land	1 du / 160 gross ac	1 du / 5 gross ac	160 ac

4.3.3 Rural Edge

The purpose of the Rural Edge character area is to provide lower density residential development adjacent to Community Village. This character area is typically designated for property adjacent to existing or planned areas of higher density and for property within two miles of a highway or other significant road.

Development in Rural Edge should not include lots smaller than nine acres without 1) compliance with Apache County's subdivision regulations and 2) approval of a community master plan, described in Section 4.1, that addresses roadways, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses. Community master plans should include a minimum of 36 acres; residential density in a community master plan should not be more than four dwelling units per gross acre.

Rural Edge may include both low density residential and limited commercial uses. Commercial uses in Rural Edge should be allowed only along paved or other appropriately surfaced access or rights-of-way and are encouraged at highway intersections. Any industrial or storage uses in Rural Edge should be screened from views from rights-of-way.

Without a community master plan, the appropriate zoning districts in Rural Edge should include any zoning districts that satisfy the basic parameters of the designation. With a community master plan, all of Apache County's zoning districts should be permitted in Rural Edge. Performance standards, described in section 4.1, in Rural Edge would help mitigate impacts between land uses.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Rural Edge character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Rural Edge	1 du / 9 gross ac	4 du / gross ac	36 ac

4.3.4 Community Village

The purpose of the Community Village character area is to provide large areas with higher density residential development with a mix of related commercial, industrial, and institutional uses extending from highway corridors and highway intersections. Community Village is an appropriate and encouraged location for uses such as community college campuses and hospitals or medical clinics.

All development in Community Village should have paved or other appropriately surfaced access. Residential development should have no maximum or minimum density requirement. Performance standards, described in Section 4.1, would mitigate impacts of the uses on established development and provide relief between residential and nonresidential uses. Industrial and storage uses should be screened from views from all rights-of-way and should have a setback of at least 100 feet from adjacent, non-industrial land uses. All uses in Community Village should provide landscaping along highway frontages with a minimum of one tree for every 60 feet of frontage.

Community Village is most appropriate adjacent to existing communities or as part of a community master plan. Community Village should either be 1) annexed to an incorporated municipality and developed in conformance with the municipality's regulations, or 2) developed subject to a County-approved community master plan, described in Section 4.1, that addresses roadways, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses.

The zoning for Community Village should be a new zoning district – planned community.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Community Village character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Community Village	Not allowed	Not limited	Not Limited

4.3.5 Highway Service

The purpose of the Highway Service character area is to provide small, transportation-oriented commercial development nodes along the interstate highway system and other highway-oriented development. Highway Service land uses will provide services to the travelling public, including long haul truckers and vacationers.

Access to Highway Service should be paved and should accommodate the turning radii of semi-tractor trailers for commercial development. The diameter of the commercial nodes should be between one and two miles, as indicated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, described in Section 4.4. Residential development in Highway Service should be mixed with commercial uses, if located closer than one-half mile to a freeway interchange. Residential uses

should have a density between four and 10 dwelling units per gross acre if located within one mile of a freeway interchange. Any stand alone residential development should be approved only with a community master plan, described in Section 4.1, that addresses how the development accommodates large trucks and roadways, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses.

The appropriate zoning in Highway Service should include residential, commercial, and light industrial/warehousing districts; stand alone residential development should require a community master plan with residential zoning. Performance standards, described in section 4.1, in Highway Service would help mitigate impacts between land uses. Apache County will work with the Arizona Department of Transportation to encourage that agency to improve the freeway interchanges along Interstate 40.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Highway Service character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Highway Service			
stand-alone residential within ½ of freeway interchange	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
stand-alone residential	Not allowed	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	Not Limited
residential integrated with commercial uses within 1 mile of freeway interchange	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	Not Limited

4.3.6 Recreation

The purpose of the Recreation character area is to provide for limited growth, particularly of vacation and recreation oriented uses, on properties surrounded by and adjacent to National Forest land. If National Forest land is transferred to private ownership, the Recreation character area is the most appropriate designation.

Uses in Recreation should include guest lodgings in resorts, hotels, or bed and breakfast facilities, restaurants, and other tourist-oriented commercial uses, and residential uses, especially second homes and staff-related housing. Use of performance standards, described in Section 4.1, that provide incentives for development that is sensitive to the forest would help soften impacts of the uses on the forest. All development should either 1) have or plant at least eight native trees per acre throughout the site as a visual buffer, or 2) provide and maintain natural meadows. However, all development in Recreation should be “fire-wise”. Development should limit the amount of contiguous pavement to blend with the forest. Colors and lighting should be muted and fit the context of the forest. Billboards should be prohibited. On-premise signage should be low scale and unobtrusive while delivering the intended message. Residential densities greater than 1 dwelling unit per ten gross acres should require paved or other

appropriately surfaced access from a highway to the lot. All commercial uses should require paved or other appropriately surfaced access from the highway. Logging and related uses should be allowed subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors and subject to provision of paved or other appropriately surfaced access for the use(s). No development in Recreation should exceed the height of the tree line or 80 feet, whichever is less, except mechanical towers, chimneys, smokestacks, communication towers, or observation towers. All development should use natural materials that blend with the colors and textures of the forest.

All Apache County zoning districts, except industrial districts, would be appropriate in Recreation.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the Recreation character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Recreation			
Unpaved access	1 du / 9 gross ac	1 du / 9 gross ac	9 ac
paved/approved surface access	1 du / gross ac	Not limited	9 ac

4.3.7 Environmentally Sensitive Development Area

The purpose of the Environmentally Sensitive Development Area (“ESDA”) character area is to provide for limited growth of a full range of development/land uses on environmentally sensitive lands, such as the property adjacent to the Petrified Forest National Park, the Petrified Forest National Park Overlay, and Lyman Lake State Park – the publicly owned and specially designated properties set aside for their scenic, historic, and/or recreational value. Appropriate land uses could include vacation and recreation oriented uses and other uses that are designed to have limited visual or other impacts on the scenic value of surrounding property. The character area does not address properties in or adjacent to the National Forest. Existing land uses adjacent to the parks are primarily ranching and scattered residential development, neither of which conflicts significantly with public enjoyment of the parks. However, additional safeguards are appropriate to ensure continued protection of the parks and their resources without placing unreasonable barriers on future adjacent development.

Permitted uses in ESDA should include guest lodgings in resorts, hotels, or bed and breakfast facilities, restaurants, and other tourist-oriented commercial uses, and residential uses, especially second homes and related staff housing. Low intensity uses could serve as protection against theft and abuse of the parks and their resources. Use of performance standards, described in Section 4.1, that provide incentives for development that is sensitive to the parks would help soften impacts of the uses on the parks.

All development in ESDA should be approved with a community master plan, discussed in Section 4.1, that addresses paving of roads, open space,

preservation of natural features, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses. Performance standards should provide incentives for development that is sensitive to the Park to help soften impacts of the uses on the parks. All development on properties in ESDA should provide visual buffers from the parks. Colors and lighting should be muted and fit the context of the parks. Massing of buildings should fit the context of the area. Billboards should be prohibited. On-premise signage should be low scale and unobtrusive while delivering the intended message. Residential densities greater than 1 dwelling unit per ten gross acres should require paved or other appropriately surfaced access from a highway to the lot. All commercial uses should require paved or other appropriately surfaced access from the highway. Mining/mineral extraction and its customary associated uses should be allowed subject to 1) approval by the Board of Supervisors of a restoration plan for the mined area, 2) paving of access to the site, 3) screening from view from all neighboring properties and uses, and 4) any mining not being visible above the surface of the land. No development in ESDA should exceed the height of 30 feet above natural grade, except 1) mechanical towers, chimneys, smokestacks, communication towers, or similar unoccupied towers, 2) observation towers, or 3) development for which the design accents or complements a natural slope with a greater overall height, such as a building that is designed to follow such slope. All development should use natural materials that blend with the colors and textures of the parks.

All Apache County zoning districts, except industrial districts, would be appropriate in ESDA.

The following chart summarizes the maximum density and minimum parcel size for the ESDA character area:

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Environmentally Sensitive Development Area (ESDA)			
Unpaved access	Not allowed	1 du / 9 gross ac	36 ac
paved/approved surface access	Not allowed	Not limited	36 ac

4.3.8 Petrified Forest National Park Overlay

The purpose of the Petrified Forest National Park Overlay (“PFNPO”) is to recognize the area into which the Petrified Forest National Park may expand and the sensitivity that development in this area, which is on the fringe of the Park, should have to the Park. The National Park and the Painted Desert cover approximately 94,189 acres; a portion of the Park extends into Navajo County. In order to protect the resources of the Park, it is possible that the Park will be extended into the PFNPO area.

The PFNPO is not a character area; the overlay is to be used in combination with the Comprehensive Plan’s character areas. An overlay would allow everything permitted in the area with which is it combined, except as modified in the overlay;

if an overlay specifically prohibits something allowed in the underlying, or combined, character area, the overlay should take precedence and control the land. The PFNPO should allow most of the range of uses from the character area with which it is combined so long as specified performance standards, generally described in Section 4.1, are satisfied. The encouraged uses in the designation should include tourist-oriented uses, such as motels and other temporary lodging, shops, and restaurants. Industrial and more intense commercial uses should be prohibited. The minimum parcel size for development in PFNPO should be 40 acres unless the underlying character area specifies a larger parcel, in which case the character area should control.

All development in the PFNPO should be approved with a community master plan, discussed in Section 4.1, that addresses paving of roads, open space, preservation of natural features, provision of water, sewer, sanitation, and other public services, and location of residential and nonresidential uses. Performance standards should provide incentives for development that is sensitive to the Park to help soften impacts of the uses on the Park. All development on properties in the PFNPO should provide visual buffers from the Park. Colors and lighting should be muted and fit the context of the Park. Billboards should be prohibited. On-premise signage should be low scale and unobtrusive while delivering the intended message. All commercial uses should require paved or other appropriately surfaced access from the highway. No development in the PFNPO should exceed 30 feet in height, except mechanical towers, chimneys, smokestacks, communication towers, or similar unoccupied towers, or observation towers. All development should use natural materials that blend with the colors and textures of the Park. Mining/mineral extraction and its customary associated uses would be allowed subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors of a restoration plan for the mined area in most locations and subject to provision of paved access and screening from view from all adjacent properties and uses; the Board of Supervisors may establish regulations or guidelines that determine which mining/mineral extraction does not require its approval of a restoration plan.

All Apache County zoning districts, except industrial districts and intense commercial districts, would be appropriate in the PFNPO. This overlay is depicted on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map as a hatched area over the character area with which it is being combined. Although uses from the other designation should be allowed, the Overlay performance standards should control. The County will work with the Park to design an informal review process to provide the Park an opportunity to comment on development plans for property adjacent to its boundaries.

4.3.9 Character Area Comparison

The following table compares the residential density and parcels sizes of the character areas for development with and without a community master plan.

<u>CHARACTER AREA</u>	MAXIMUM DENSITY		MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE REQUIRED FOR A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
	DEVELOPMENT NOT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN	
Range Land	1 du / 160 gross ac	1 du / 5 gross ac	160 ac
Rural Ranch	1 du / 9 gross ac	1 du / gross ac	36 ac
Rural Edge	1 du / 9 gross ac	4 du / gross ac	36 ac
Recreation			
unpaved access	1 du / 9 gross ac	1 du / 9 gross ac	9 ac
paved/approved surface access	1 du / gross ac	Not limited	9 ac
Environmentally Sensitive Development Area (ESDA)			
unpaved access	Not allowed	1 du / 9 gross ac	36 ac
paved/approved surface access	Not allowed	Not limited	36 ac
Highway Service			
stand-alone residential within ½ of freeway interchange	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
stand-alone residential	Not allowed	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	Not Limited
residential integrated with commercial uses within 1 mile of freeway interchange	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	10 du / gross ac (4du /ac min density)	Not Limited
Community Village	Not allowed	Not limited	Not Limited

4.4 Land Use Map

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use (“CPLU”) Map graphically represents proposed character areas for Apache County. A small version of the CPLU Map is shown on Exhibit 3. The official CPLU Map is maintained in a larger format and is incorporated into this Plan by reference.

To properly administer the CPLU Map, several things must be kept in mind. The first is that the CPLU Map is dynamic. The current projections for land needs are based on past and present trends, and assumptions about the future. However, community needs and priorities tend to change over time, so amendments to the CPLU Map must be possible.

The second is that the CPLU Map is “general”. **The character areas on the CPLU Map are not intended to follow property lines and are not intended to represent zoning districts.** Interfaces between different designations are purposefully non-site-specific so as to discourage using CPLU Map designations as the sole basis for making decisions on zone change applications. Although having the appropriate CPLU Map designation is a prerequisite for a zone change, all applicable Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies must be considered as well.

As noted above, the Plan assigns no character area to the land currently covered in an adopted area plan or to property currently in a Native American Reservation.

The area plans address development in their boundaries and are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan by reference.

4.5 Growth Areas

Arizona Growing Smarter legislation requires counties with a population over 200,000 persons to include in their comprehensive plans a section on planning for growth areas. The growth section is to identify the areas, if any, that are particularly suitable for planned multi-modal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses. Apache County's population is less than 200,000. However, planning for growth is important for Apache County to ensure economical expansion of infrastructure, improve transportation circulation, conserve significant natural resources and open spaces, and provide a rational pattern of land development.

Infill development will probably accommodate most growth in Apache County in the near term. Such development involves developing vacant land in or adjacent to established neighborhoods and communities. In Apache County, this growth could occur adjacent to incorporated communities. Development is expected on private property before it is necessary to develop state or federal lands.

Over time, growth is also expected extending from transportation corridors and on blocks of private land that have not been divided with the Minor Land Division rules.

Approximately 19 percent of the land in Apache County is publicly owned – approximately nine percent by the federal government and approximately 10 percent by the state government. Approximately two-thirds of the County is in Indian Reservations. The balance of the land is privately owned. This Comprehensive Plan addresses possible growth on private property and on federal or state land. Issues with publicly held land are discussed below.

4.5.1 State Land

The state holds land in trust for disposition or lease to generate revenue for its beneficiaries, including the public school system. The majority of state lands in Apache County are used for grazing, state parks, and recreation. The state has an active program of disposition through sale or lease for development in urban areas; the program is less active in rural areas.

The Growing Smarter legislation requires that counties confer with the Arizona State Land Department (“ASLD”) to ensure coordinated planning in the county. (A.R.S. § 11-806.G) ASLD is required to develop draft conceptual land use plans for all state trust lands. However, ASLD does not intend to develop conceptual plans for rural areas in the near term and does not plan to begin an active disposition program in such areas. Apache County encourages such planning in or adjacent to the Community Village and Recreation character areas to ensure appropriate use and development of those lands.

Some state lands in Apache County are likely locations for growth in the long term, due to their proximity to transportation corridors. A portion of this land is in checkerboard ownership. Disposition of this land would be critical to long term growth, especially for the Highway Service and Community Village character areas. It will be necessary to work with ASLD at the appropriate time for the disposition.

The Growing Smarter legislation established a program to conserve some of the state trust land. (A.R.S. § 37-312) Under this program, a county may nominate state trust land for classification as “suitable for conservation” if it has significant environmental or open space value. While the land has this temporary classification, a municipality, county, or other group must raise funds to purchase the land for conservation purposes. Such classification could be appropriate for some state trust land in Apache County, such as that in the Petrified Forest National Park Overlay, and could impact growth.

4.5.2 Federal Land

Federal lands owned by the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management can be exchanged for private lands. Many private inholdings within the national forests have been exchanged for federal forest land in or near developing communities to allow private development near such communities and to improve the integrity of the forest through consolidation of federal holdings. The land exchange process can be an effective growth management tool as it can 1) facilitate development near existing communities with infrastructure that is available or can be extended and 2) discourage development in remote or environmentally sensitive areas. This process makes available for development land in appropriate locations while adding protection to important habitat. An owner of private inholdings in a national forest initiates the exchange process. The federal agency with which land would be exchanged must complete an environmental assessment of the land. If an exchange occurs, it must be based on equal fair market value.

4.6 **Cost of Development**

Planning to address the cost of development is important in Apache County given its limited resources; it is critical that new development pay for its fair share of necessary public improvements. As noted above, Arizona’s Growing Smarter legislation requires counties with a population over 200,000 persons to include in their comprehensive plans a section on the cost of growth. Although Apache County’s population is under 200,000, the County determined that including a framework for programs to help cover the cost of development is advisable. This cost of development section identifies policies and strategies that the County could use to require that development pay its fair share toward the cost of additional public facility needs generated by new development.

To date, development in Apache County has been responsible for the cost of on-site infrastructure and some off-site improvements necessary for the project, such as roadway improvements and water lines. The County has not required development to pay for other public facility needs, such as new parks and trails, new sheriff’s facilities, new fire facilities, new public safety communications systems, highway widening, new traffic signals, and upgraded utilities. Several funding mechanisms are available to fund such improvements, including special districts for roadway improvements.

Arizona gives counties the ability to assess development fees on new development. (A.R.S. § 11-1102) To implement a development fee program, a county must adopt a capital improvements plan and may then assess development fees within the covered planning area to offset capital costs for water, sewer, streets, parks, and public safety facilities that the plan indicates are necessary for county public services for development in the area. Development fees must: result in a beneficial use to the development that is being assessed; be placed in a segregated account to be used only for authorized purposes; be credited for facilities covered by the development fee if the developer dedicates such facilities; bear a reasonable relationship to the burden of capital costs

resulting from the need for public services for the development; and be assessed in a nondiscriminatory manner. The fees are typically assessed at the time a building permit is issued; for residential development, the Statute requires the payment to be made when a building permit is issued.

In rural areas with very low density development, administration of a development fee program is difficult. Given the small number of permits issued in such an area, little money is collected and the contribution to capital projects is also small; a fee that is proportionate to the benefit of the improvement to the area would often be exorbitant. It is possible that assessment of development fees would be practical in growth areas or planned communities.

4.7 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: To maintain and update the Land Use Element of the Apache County Comprehensive Plan

Policy 1-A: Review the Land Use Element of the Apache County Comprehensive Plan at least every ten years, and amend the plan whenever it is determined that a change is warranted.

Policy 1-B: As growth occurs in Apache County, revise the Land Use Element, considering addition of greater definition and precision to guide development in the County.

Policy 1-C: Develop a program for amendments, including Major Amendments, of the Comprehensive Plan. Amendments filed by the private sector should be subject to payment of a processing fee.

Goal 2: To administer the Land Use Element of the Apache County Comprehensive Plan so as to further the purposes of the Plan.

Policy 2-A: Approve zone changes that are consistent with the Land Use Element's character areas, as shown on the Land Use Map, after revision of the Zoning Ordinance. However, the Land Use Element and Map shall not be used as the sole justification for making decisions on zone changes.

Policy 2-B: When interpreting character area boundaries, due to the general and non-site specific nature of the Land Use Map, the Planning & Zoning Commission shall consider the character of surrounding uses, past interpretations, and applicable goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal 3: To improve and maintain the quality of life in Apache County by using land use planning strategies that have positive effects on the natural, cultural, and built environments.

Policy 3-A: Plan and approve growth and development with consideration to energy efficient patterns of development, including access to incident solar and wind energy, utilizing existing capital infrastructure, whenever possible.

Policy 3-B: Provide adequate facilities and services to support needs for diverse educational, cultural, and social opportunities.

Policy 3-C: Revise the Apache County Zoning Ordinance to implement this Comprehensive Plan, including addition of residential, commercial, and industrial districts, a new planned community district, performance standards and design guidelines to mitigate impacts between uses in different zoning districts, and a requirement that all mining/mineral extraction is subject to Board of Supervisor approval of a restoration plan for the mined area. Apply the new Zoning Ordinance with case-by-case rezoning approvals/applications as property owners propose new development rather than the County proactively placing the new districts on unincorporated land.

Policy 3-D: When approving development adjacent to incorporated and unincorporated communities, consider uses that are compatible with existing uses in intensity or density.

Policy 3-E: Complete the community plans for Greer and Vernon and update the community plans for Alpine, Concho, and Nutrioso to include land use maps and other tools to help implement the goals of the communities' residents and property owners.

Policy 3-F: Coordinate planning efforts with Navajo County and the Native American Reservations in Apache County to improve regional competitiveness for development and uses in the County.

Policy 3-G: Plan for economic development to improve the business environment in the County and encourage young residents to remain in the County as they mature and enter the workforce.

Goal 4: To preserve and protect archaeological and historic resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural value.

Policy 4-A: Where probable cause for discovery of cultural or archaeological resources exists, encourage property owner(s) to contact the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office.

Goal 5: To provide equal opportunity for safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for all residents of the County, regardless of race, color, religion, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or national origin, in conformance with the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1988 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and to provide a range of residential uses that offer housing opportunities for all County residents.

Policy 5-A: The County's approval standards, special conditions and procedures regulating the development of needed housing shall be clear and objective and shall not have the effect of discouraging needed housing through unreasonable cost or delay.

Policy 5-B: To promote greater flexibility and economy of land use, provide opportunities in the Zoning Ordinance for alternative housing types and patterns, planned developments, mixed uses, and other innovations that reduce development costs.

Policy 5-C: Adopt and implement growth and development policies which do not result in the distortion of regional housing markets and/or artificial land price escalations, and which are not used as mechanisms to otherwise exclude low and moderate cost housing.

Policy 5-D: Encourage new construction methods and housing types in order to increase the housing supply for all socioeconomic groups.

Policy 5-E: Develop standards for development density that reflect the needs and goals of existing communities, whether incorporated or unincorporated, such as establishing medium to high density residential zoning for Community Villages and Rural Edge areas and low to medium density for developing rural areas.

Goal 6: Improve the overall appearance of the County.

Policy 6-A: Maintain natural scenic qualities of the County by identifying and protecting cultural resources, protecting wildlife habitat, natural plant communities and riparian areas, and encouraging protection of scenic vistas.

Policy 6-B: Consider adoption of a minor land division ordinance in accordance with Arizona Statutes (A.R.S. § 11-809).

Policy 6-C: Consider adoption of a nuisance abatement or property maintenance ordinance.

Policy 6-D: Consider adoption of an ordinance that prohibits installation or storage of travel trailers, mobile homes or manufactured housing in certain areas.

Goal 7: Maintain compatible land use patterns while encouraging free market development.

Policy 7-A: Encourage the use of and provide incentives (such as density bonuses) for implementation of community master plans.

Policy 7-B: Provide for buffers between different land uses including, but not limited to, setbacks, walls or fences, and landscaping.

Policy 7-C: Consider adoption of a new Planned Community zoning district to encourage and assist with implementation of community master plans.

Policy 7-D: Require appropriate and adequate access to commercial and industrial uses.

Goal 8: Increase the amount of commercially and industrially developable land.

Policy 8-A: Place commercial development strategically so as to attract and locate appropriate shopping and employment uses to have appropriate and adequate access and are easily accessible, particularly in or near established communities and cities, and in communities with air and/or rail access.

Policy 8-B: Encourage the development of non-resource specific industrial uses along major transportation corridors, rail heads, and airports and the development of resource specific industrial uses in appropriate remote locations.

Policy 8-C: Encourage small, specialty enterprises that support recreation and tourist activities near the National Forest, the Petrified Forest National Park, and the Native American Reservations.

Goal 9: Reduce the danger from fire for all residents living in a wildland urban interface or near a National Forest boundary.

Policy 9-A: Require developers and owners to incorporate fire safe development standards including defensible spaces and construction materials.

Policy 9-B: Investigate to appropriateness of adopting of the Urban Wildland Interface Code (2000 Edition), which addresses creation of defensible spaces, by local Fire Districts.

Policy 9-C: Review and consider adoption of a fire code, such as the Uniform Fire Code, for Apache County.

Policy 9-D: Discourage high density development in areas where fire protection and other emergency services are not readily available.

Policy 9-E: Multiple access routes shall be required into new large subdivisions and other major developments for emergency purposes.

Policy 9-F: Propose and encourage involvement of the Fire Districts in the review and approval of subdivisions and development projects within their respective jurisdictions.

Policy 9-G: Encourage the implementation of fire prevention education programs.

Policy 9-H: Review the Apache County Zoning Ordinance and propose amendments for consideration by the Board of Supervisors where necessary to address the issue of fire safety and forest health.

Goal 10: Actively plan to accommodate growth in Apache County in an appropriate manner.

Policy 10-A: Consider adoption of development fees to cover costs associated with new development as allowed by statute.

Policy 10-B: Encourage higher density and intensity development in those areas of the County where services, including but not limited to water and sewer systems, paved rights-of-way, and schools, are available or can be created with new development.

Policy 10-C: Conserve agricultural land and open space through density transfers or other programs.

Policy 10-D: Identify infill opportunities in the County to capitalize on existing infrastructure and reduce some growth related costs.

Policy 10-E: Encourage municipalities, sewer companies, water companies, telephone companies, and electricity companies to adopt five and ten year phasing plans for the expansion of public facilities and development in their service areas.

Policy 10-F: Encourage development/installation of technology improvements including, but not limited to, high speed Internet connections and other communications improvements in Apache County.

5.0 Circulation Element

5.1 Introduction

As growth and development occur in Apache County, enhancements to its circulation system will be necessary. With time, more roads will be paved and air and rail service will improve. The changes to the system will provide better connections from the southern end of the County to Interstate 40 and the communities along the Interstate.

New roadways will also improve access from the eastern portions of the County, and Arizona, to Phoenix. Expansion of air and rail service will improve connections of the County to the region and the nation. Some purposes of the Circulation Element are to respond to the new growth and to: 1) provide safe, adequate roadway capacity to meet circulation and access needs; 2) maintain and improve the airport and rail services as viable inter-regional transportation linkages; and 3) direct growth to areas with existing or proposed roadways. The Element also is based in part on the relationship between land use and circulation to direct both land use development and circulation infrastructure improvements.

This Element includes a brief description of existing circulation infrastructure and goals and policies to help guide improvements to the system as growth and development occur in Apache County. To date, roadways in the County have been constructed where needs have arisen rather than being installed in anticipation of growth. This approach will probably remain, given limited resources to make improvements. Although this Comprehensive Plan proposes locations for new elements of the circulation system, the timing of making these improvements will be determined largely by needs from new development.

The Northern Arizona Council of Governments ("NACOG"), a nonprofit membership corporation that represents local governments including Apache County with a variety of services, helps plan and improve the circulation system in the County. NACOG distributes federal transportation planning and construction funds to local agencies in the County and examines circulation planning from a regional perspective. Contact and work with NACOG will be critical to ensure implementation of this Element.

5.2 Existing Circulation Issues

Circulation planning in Apache County is challenging given the size of the area, its limited population, and the presence of large ranching tracts, extensive forest lands, large parcels of publicly owned property, and large Native American Reservations. The dominant mode of travel in the County is vehicular; the trips occur on both paved and unpaved roadways. Rail and airport facilities exist in the County to connect the area to the region and nation. All of these methods of transportation serve residents, tourists, and industry.

The circulation system in the County is inadequate to accommodate long term growth. Although some roads carry vehicular traffic east-west and north-south, large portions of the County are not easily accessible and are, at best, served by privately owned and maintained roads; the County cannot improve or maintain private roads. Many of the existing paved roads are narrow and two-lane, which limits their carrying capacity. Some of the roads that appear to be paved are only chip seal with or without a roadway bed or foundation needed for long term stability. Additional and/or improved roads will be needed to serve safely and adequately the land uses proposed in this Comprehensive Plan. The road system and the land uses depend on each other - as development occurs, more roads will be necessary and as more roads are provided, growth will occur along them.

Apache County contains several airports that can provide the framework for enhanced opportunities for air connections to and from the County. The Burlington Northern Sante Fe railroad lines near Interstate 40 connect the County to the region and nation for east-west traffic; a spur line allows limited rail service from the Burlington Northern Sante Fe line to the power plants near St. Johns and Springerville. Although not extensive, these rail lines can also assist in expansion of rail service in the County.

The existing circulation system, which is illustrated in Exhibit 4, includes the elements listed below. The roadways depicted on the Exhibit are those that the County and its residents deem to be of major importance for current circulation; it does not include all roadways in the County.

- Federal Interstate 40.
- U.S. Highways 60, 160, 180, and 191.
- State Highways, including State Routes 61, 180A, 260, 261, 264, and 273.
- County Paved Roadways and Highways, which are paved and maintained.
- County Maintained Roadways, which are non-paved and maintained.
- Non-maintained Roadways, which are non-paved and non-maintained but which are of importance for carrying traffic to County residents.
- Public airports in Springerville, St. John, and Window Rock and a helistop in Springerville. Private airstrips are not shown on the map.
- The Burlington Northern-Sante Fe rail lines, which serves both freight and passenger traffic – the latter with twice daily stops of Amtrak’s Southwest Chief west of Apache County in Winslow.
- Railroad spurs from the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe tracks from the community of Navajo south to the Salt River Project’s Coronado Generating Station northeast of St. Johns and to the Tucson Electric Power Generating Station northeast of Springerville-Eagar/southeast of St. Johns. These lines carry coal to the power plants.

The many miles of private roads that are in Apache County are shown on Exhibit 4 as minor roads for reference only. Although the roads are an important part of the circulation system for limited portions of the County’s population, the County has not attempted to map them.

5.3 Proposed Circulation System Improvements

To address the deficiencies in the existing circulation system, this Comprehensive Plan proposes several additions or expansions to the system. These changes are shown on Exhibit 5 and include the elements discussed below. All existing roads are not shown on Exhibit 5 as its focus is on the roads for which a major role in the circulation system is anticipated as development and growth occur in Apache County.

The roadway designations (Federal Interstate, Federal/State Highway, Major Transportation Corridor, Major Community Connector) constitute the road classification/hierarchy addressed with these proposed improvements. The Major Transportation Corridors, which run primarily east-west, and Major Community Connectors, which run primarily north-south, are anticipated to be Federal or State Highways, County Paved Roadways and Highways, or County Maintained Roadways, which will be paved over time as development occurs, use of the roads increases, and funds become available. The Corridors and Connectors will carry most traffic through the County. Minor and non-paved/non-maintained roads will continue to be used in Apache County but are not stressed in the proposed improvements given the relatively limited

traffic they carry. Roadway improvements will need to satisfy any requirements of the Apache County Subdivision Ordinance, which the County plans to revise following adoption of a new Zoning Ordinance. The County should allocate Highway User Revenue Funds to roadway improvement and maintenance projects, in accordance with Arizona Constitution, Article IX, § 14.

- New roads to increase routes for north-south and east-west vehicular traffic. The roads include improved access: to the Petrified Forest National Park; between the southern portion of the County and the communities along Interstate 40; and along the Mogollon Rim. The roads can provide alternative connections between Interstate 40 and the Phoenix metropolitan region and serve as a better east-west alternative to Interstate 40 than the current roads provide. The roads will also be stronger links to neighboring counties. Some of the roads will serve areas that have been or will be divided into 36 or 40 acre parcels; other roads will serve the new community centers and existing incorporated and unincorporated communities. Some of the County roads will, over time, be paved. This Plan does not suggest which of the County roads will be paved as that will be a function of the timing of land development. The State Highways will be paved. A new Major Transportation Corridor and new Major Community Connectors will improve circulation between the pinons and pines areas in the southern portion of the County.
- Potential improvements to or expansions of the existing airports may be appropriate or necessary as the population in the County grows and the area develops and for recreational access to the County.
- New spur railroad lines to assist industry in Apache County through delivery and pick up of goods or products and by serving as an alternate method for workers to commute between their homes and job sites. There are two potential alignments for rail spurs St. Johns to Eagar and Springerville. One of these alignments follows an existing non-paved but maintained roadway west of U.S. Highway 180/191; the other alignment runs southwest from the Tucson Electric Power Generating Station. Another potential railroad spur runs east from St. Johns to New Mexico. Another spur railroad line could run along the proposed Major Transportation Corridor that would at the base of Potter's Mesa along the Milky Wash southwest of the Navajo-St. Johns spur to the proposed Community Village south of the Petrified Forest National Park.

5.4 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Provide a range of circulation options that are safe and efficient and that complement local communities and the natural environment.

Policy 1-A: Use available statutory authority to plan for, construct, maintain, and improve circulation facilities and infrastructure.

Policy 1-B: Coordinate land use and circulation planning to encourage comprehensive and efficient development and growth patterns that support adjacent land uses, complement the character of adjacent communities and neighborhoods, and mitigate impacts on the natural environment.

Policy 1-C: Plan and improve the circulation system to facilitate the movement of goods, services, and people throughout Apache County to support existing businesses and economic investment and reinvestment.

Policy 1-D: Coordinate circulation planning with jurisdictions, including public lands, both within and outside of Apache County, especially Navajo County and the Native American Reservations, and with any involved federal or state agency to improve connections to those jurisdictions and to provide a continuous and integrated circulation system.

Goal 2: Ensure quality design and development of the circulation system.

Policy 2-A: Plan and develop the circulation system in a consistent, high-quality manner in accordance with the road classification/hierarchy and facility design guidelines.

Policy 2-B: Review existing circulation infrastructure when considering capacity improvements to encourage preservation, improvement, and redevelopment of that infrastructure, where appropriate.

Policy 2-C: Promote the development of multi-modal and public or private transit facilities as an alternative to new roadway improvements along high-traffic corridors, especially along routes to and from the Forest recreation areas and for commuter use to carry workers to their work sites.

Policy 2-D: Develop circulation infrastructure to promote energy efficiency, protect air quality, and preserve historic, scenic, cultural, and environmental resources.

Policy 2-E: Work with involved entities or public agencies to include special design considerations for circulation improvements that provide access to major tourist destinations, including but not limited to interpretive signs, traffic turnouts, landscape treatment, protection of view corridors, and preservation of natural and cultural resources.

Policy 2-F: Require developers of private circulation infrastructure to meet County standards.

Policy 2-G: Include identification of methods to obtain rights-of-way for future circulation improvements in the Capital Improvements Plan.

Policy 2-H: Require dedication of rights-of-way through the subdivision process, community master plan, or other review and approval processes.

Policy 2-I: Develop a paved/dustproofed road standard for the County that includes alternatives to standard asphalt paving.

Policy 2-J: Consider revision of the Apache County Subdivision Ordinance to conform to any revisions to the Apache County Zoning Ordinance.

Goal 3: Improve and maintain circulation infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and to protect the natural environment.

Policy 3-A: Minimize air, water, and noise pollution and disruption of surface water drainage in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations when designing, constructing, and operating circulation infrastructure.

Policy 3-B: Minimize the introduction, movement and proliferation of nonnative, invasive plants through visual inspection, washing, and use of staging areas for construction equipment during infrastructure construction and maintenance.

Policy 3-C: Maintain safe, adequate, and convenient access through infrastructure improvement work sites for all travelers.

Policy 3-D: Use maintenance techniques, such as snow and ice removal, that are consistent with conservation and ecosystem protection.

Policy 3-E: Encourage the use of improvement districts to improve circulation infrastructure through County provision of all appropriate administrative and financial assistance.

Policy 3-F: Assist with efforts to establish dust control measures through provision of technical assistance and resource information.

Policy 3-G: Require new roads to conform to the natural topography as closely as possible while balancing aesthetics with safety concerns.

Goal 4: Provide for safe travel and access to property.

Policy 4-A: Use the Capital Improvement Plan to direct circulation infrastructure improvement funds to improve safety of high-accident locations.

Policy 4-B: Require developers and property owners to achieve safe and legal access for all properties.

Policy 4-C: Require developers to install or pay for necessary circulation infrastructure improvements to support access to and within major developments or subdivisions.

Policy 4-D: Design circulation infrastructure to accommodate current and future public safety/emergency vehicle needs through provision in new development of connections to existing or potential infrastructure.

Policy 4-E: Include consideration of and planning for pedestrian, equestrian, bicycle, and all terrain vehicle use when designing circulation infrastructure improvements through addition of trails, sidewalks, signage, pavement markings, or other treatments.

Policy 4-F: Make paving of primary circulation corridors and access to developed areas a high priority in the County.

Policy 4-G: Approve subdivisions or rezonings only where existing street facilities are adequate or where the developer agrees to pay for off-site improvements necessitated by the proposed development and consider adoption of either a development fee program that will provide credits for such off-site improvements or another financing mechanism to reimburse a developer for a portion of its expenses when later development occurs that benefits from the improvements.

Goal 5: Improve non-motorized circulation networks and provide more opportunities for alternative modes of travel.

Policy 5-A: Encourage planning for non-motorized circulation infrastructure in new development projects.

Policy 5-B: Work with relevant state and federal agencies and property owners to connect existing neighborhoods and communities with trails, non-motorized circulation infrastructure, and multi-modal facilities.

Policy 5-C: Require major developments and subdivisions to install pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian connections to continue the development of a cohesive system of non-motorized circulation infrastructure when such facilities exist on adjacent developments or subdivisions.

Policy 5-D: Encourage consideration of including non-motorized circulation infrastructure in highway development or redevelopment projects.

Goal 6: Improve transit service opportunities in unincorporated portions of Apache County.

Policy 6-A: Consider opportunities to add/expand public and/or private transit services, including use of railroad spurs, as population grows in the County.

Policy 6-B: Support tribal efforts to establish and maintain inter-city transit between Native American Reservations and surrounding communities.

Policy 6-C: Work with public and private agencies to provide transit services to transit-dependent people.

Goal 7: Support airport facilities and air travel with limited impacts on the surrounding environment.

Goal 7-A: Review proposals for airport facilities to ensure compatibility with local land use patterns, this Comprehensive Plan, and County Area Plans.

Goal 7-B: Support improved service at existing airports to move passengers and goods between Apache County and the region and nation.

Goal 7-C: Work with expanding, renovating, or new airport facilities, including private facilities, to mitigate impacts from aircraft noise on surrounding properties.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Introduction

Adoption of the Apache County Comprehensive Plan is not the final step in the planning process. In order for the Plan to have meaning and to impact the County's future, it must be implemented through adherence to the goals set forth in the Plan and work to achieve the policies established for each goal. Realizing the vision of the Plan will require continued input and assistance from many stakeholders, including Apache County's property owners, residents, businesses, and public agencies. The County will use its Public Participation Plan to gather this input.

This section establishes a timetable for those actions that are most critical to the initial success of this planning effort and for ongoing review of this Plan to keep it current and meaningful. The success of implementation of the Plan is subject to political, fiscal, economic, and social conditions; mid-course corrections of the Plan likely will be necessary. The Planning and Zoning Department will take the lead role in this implementation effort.

6.2 Timetable

The following action items are most critical to the initial success of the Plan and should be accomplished by the listed dates. Although fiscal constraints will probably impact this schedule, an aggressive schedule is set to highlight the importance of these tasks to Plan implementation.

- Address fire safety issues. Completion date: April 2004.
- Major amendment of the Apache County Zoning Ordinance. Completion date: December 2004.
- Prepare a landscaping standard to require planting or maintaining of native trees in the foreground/landscaped setback adjacent to rights-of-way. Completion date: December 2004.
- Prepare informal review process for Petrified Forest National Park to comment on development proposals adjacent to the Park. Completion date: December 2004.
- Completion of Greer Community Plan and Vernon Community Plan. Completion date: December 2004.
- Adoption of a Minor Land Division ordinance. Completion date: December 2004.
- Prepare methods to address installation of trails/non-motorized circulation in new development throughout Apache County, including planning for trails to accommodate motorized recreational vehicles, such as all terrain vehicles. Completion date: March 2005.
- Update of the Alpine Community Plan, Nutrioso Community Plan, and Concho Community Plan to include land use/character area maps. Completion date: July 2005.
- Adoption of a nuisance abatement/property maintenance ordinance. Completion date: July 2005.
- Prepare a paved/dustproofed road standard that includes alternatives to standard asphalt paving. Completion date: July 2005.
- Revise the Apache County Subdivision Ordinance to conform to the new zoning regulations. Completion date: July 2005.

The County will expand this list as items are completed during its review of the Plan. Many of the Plan's policies will require ongoing work and monitoring and may begin immediately, such as requiring dedication of right-of-way as part of the subdivision process and encouraging all utilities to adopt five and ten year phasing plans to accommodate growth in the County.

6.3 Plan Review

Arizona Statutes restrict the effective period for a comprehensive plan to 10 years from the date of adoption (A.R.S. § 11-824.B). The Board of Supervisors must readopt the comprehensive plan for up to another 10 years or adopt a new plan on or before the 10th

anniversary of the adoption. The public review for this readoption shall include a full public participation process with meetings in different County locations to solicit input regarding the Plan and any desired or necessary changes. These reviews will help keep the Plan current and meaningful as conditions change in the County.

On an annual basis, the Planning and Zoning Director and the Planning and Zoning Commission will review the Plan at a Commission meeting to adjust the Implementation Timetable, add items to the list of implementation actions, and determine whether to suggest Plan revisions to the Board of Supervisors. Although less formal than the reviews discussed above, an annual assessment of the Plan will underscore the importance of the Plan and keep its implementation as a high priority for the County.