

Desert Foothills Character Plan



June 1999

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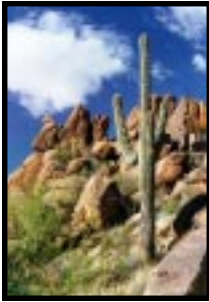


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Character

Planning

Overview

Character Planning

Character planning resulted from the citizen driven CityShape 2020 process. The CityShape 2020 Steering Committee's Comprehensive Report proposed changes to Scottsdale's

General Plan by recommending a three-level, character-based planning approach and Six Guiding Principles all which seek to define the form, function and quality of future development within the city. The three-level planning approach consisted of:

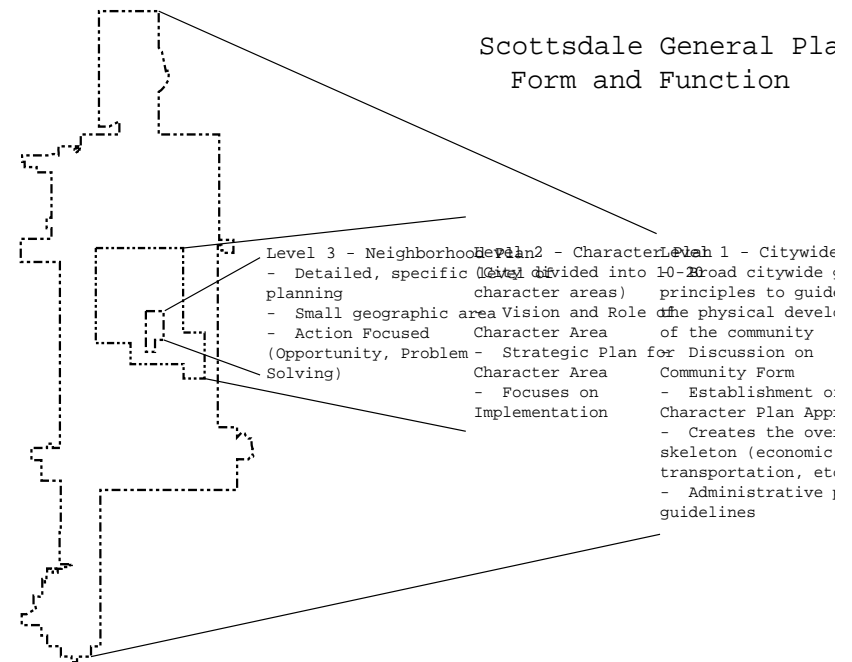
- a citywide focus,
- Character Areas, and
- neighborhoods.

Guiding Principles

- ▲ *Preserve Meaningful Open Space*
- ▲ *Enhance Neighborhoods*
- ▲ *Support Economic Vitality*
- ▲ *Seek Sustainability*
- ▲ *Advance Transportation*
- ▲ *Value Scottsdale's Unique Style and Character*

CityShape 2020 saw character planning as one way to maintain the quality of planning and development in Scottsdale. During CityShape 2020 deliberations, there was a significant awareness of the diversity across Scottsdale, and that the traditional citywide general planning did not recognize and celebrate the quality and value of these differences. Also, with much of the city already developed and maturing while other areas

emerging, there was a desire to focus planning on the special needs that different areas warranted. Character planning, together with the Six Guiding Principles from CityShape 2020, will help plan a future Scottsdale that is just as unique and special as the current Scottsdale.

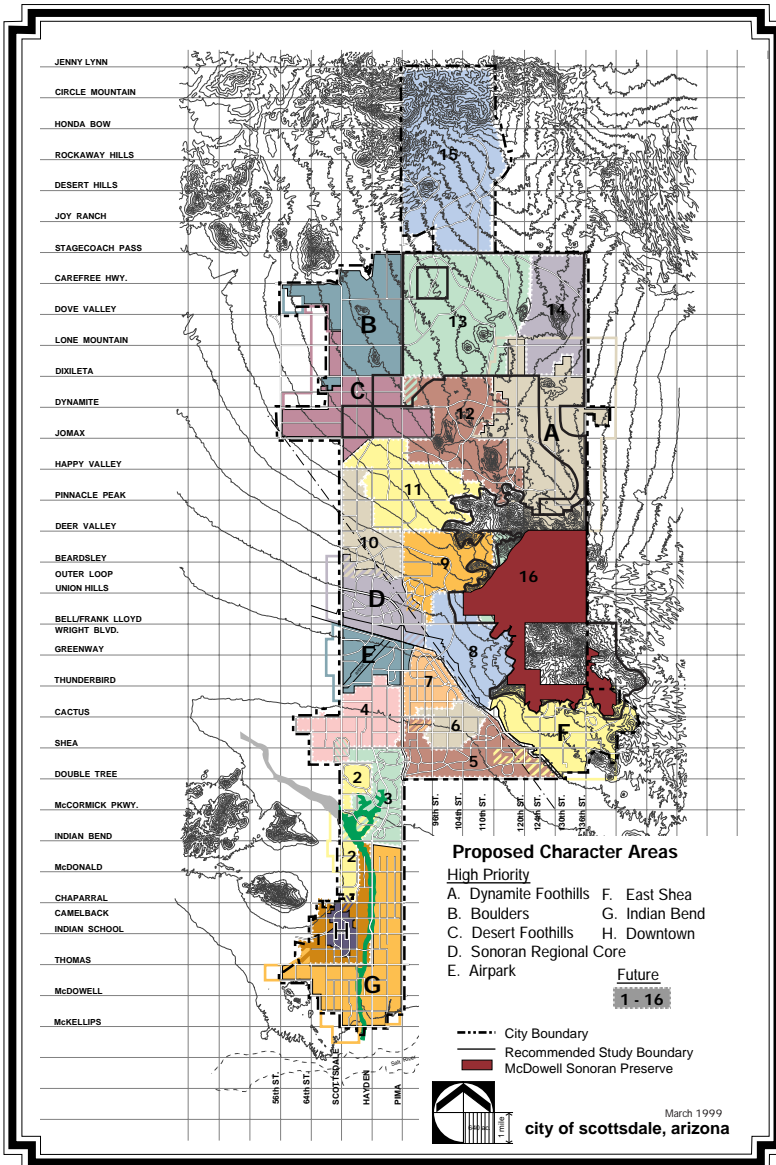


Character Plans

The Purpose of Character Plans is to define, maintain or enhance a desired “character” for an area. “Character” can be thought of as the look, feel and history of a place – those factors which set it apart from other areas. For planning purposes, the character of the area is first identified through a number of factors such as the topographic setting, the age and style of housing, street patterns, predominant landscaping patterns, land use patterns, dominant unifying open spaces, major barriers on the edges, and similar factors.

Twenty-four possible character areas have been identified and are illustrated on the adjacent map. These areas range from undeveloped to almost fully developed, open low density to urban, and mostly residential to mostly business types of areas. In some cases there will be overlap between character areas since some areas include strong traits from both adjacent areas. Also, in some cases, areas outside of the city, but adjacent to a character area, that influence the character and functioning of an area, will be included as part of the study.

Each character plan will most likely include a comprehensive set of policies (as part of the overall Scottsdale General Plan - level 2), goals for the character area, and strategies to promote the desired character for the area. The specific nature of the goals and strategies for each character plan will likely differ from plan to plan since the needs, desires, and character of each area will be relatively unique. Character plans involve more than looking at just the physical layout of development or the amount of open space to be provided. The emphasis on the physical character of an area sets character plans apart from



prior planning studies and will offer design and character concepts that have not really been a part of previous planning studies. Character plans will also include specific implementation measures to support the plan. In addition, during the implementation phase there will be ongoing monitoring and continual citizen involvement.

The character plan is part of the city's General Plan and will be administered as City policy with associated guidelines and an implementation plan. Character plans are not zoning or master plans, particularly for specific parcels. They may recommend strategies such as area-wide "district overlays" which will provide guidelines that augment existing regulation, but character plans are not a means to control and regulate specific properties or proposals. They are not binding regulations, instead they will rely on a variety of other regulatory functions to achieve the plan and goals. They will not include guarantees or assurances that are not otherwise provided for in regulations and processes included in the City code.

Character Planning Process

The typical Character Area planning process will include the following major steps:

- Background research
- Goal setting; issue identification; strategy, and concept development
- Review of Draft Policy Plan
- Approval and adoption of Character Plan
- Implementation

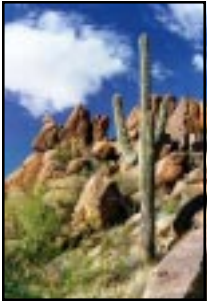
Background research includes collecting a wide range of information and existing plans for the area such as environmental conditions, land uses, ownership, demographics,

public facilities and services, and geographic context.

Determining goals and issues is another phase of gathering information. This phase may use the techniques of open houses, workshops, neighborhood discussions, questionnaires, discussions between city staff, discussion with City Boards and Commissions and City Council, one on one communication with interested citizens and property owners or other stakeholders, and public hearings, to gather the concerns, desires and perceptions of those interested in the particular character area. Each character area study will likely involve some of these methods at one time or another to best suit the area being studied.

Goals and strategies to achieve the area's "vision" will be included in a draft character plan. A companion document to the Character Area Plan will be an Implementation plan. The Implementation Plan will detail methods and actions to be taken to achieve the goals and strategies outlined in the Character Area Plan. The action items of the Implementation Plan may contain ordinance and guideline changes, integration with the city budget, ongoing education and information programs and updates. The draft plan will be reviewed and revised with the Planning Commission providing the ongoing direction of the process.

The final phase involves the formal public hearing process for a recommended plan. The Planning Commission will hold two public hearings (one hearing may be held during the review of the draft plan to provide further input) before forwarding a recommendation to the City Council. Then through the hearing process, City Council will review the Character Plan. If the recommended Character Plan is approved and adopted by the City Council, the implementation plan will get underway.



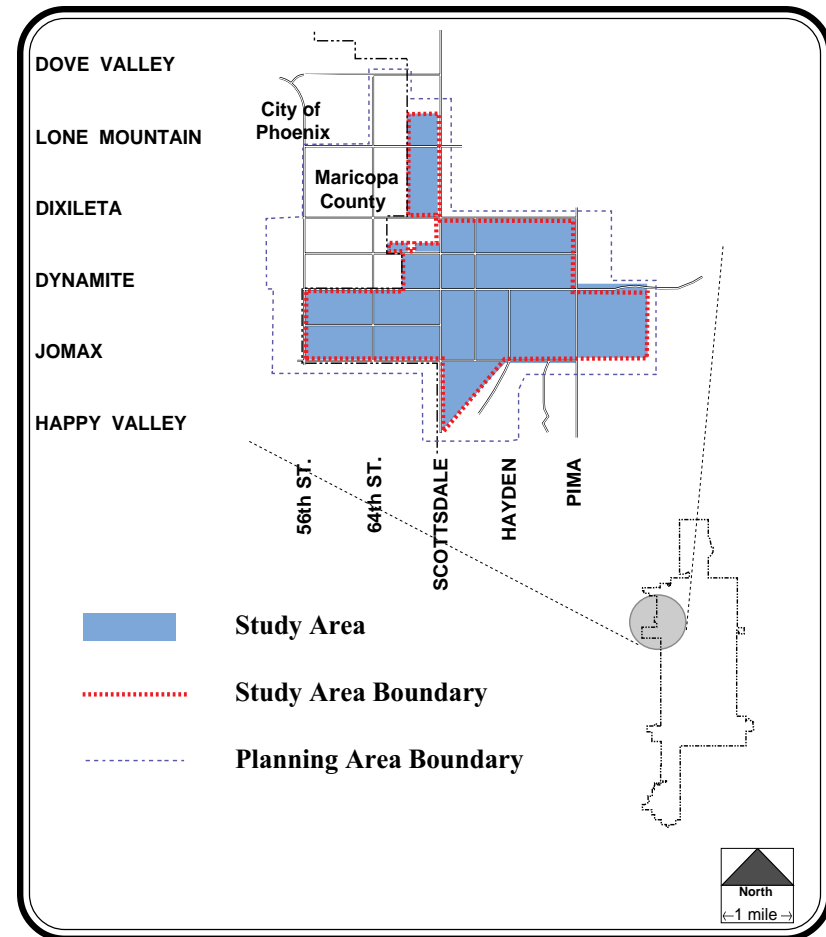
Introduction

Welcome to the Desert Foothills Character Plan!

This plan sets forth the long-range **vision** created for the Desert Foothills area through the character area planning process. The goals and strategies in this report lay out the intentions for this area. A separate companion document titled “Implementation,” includes methods that will illustrate how to attain this vision.

The Desert Foothills character area is approximately eight square miles, generally located between Dixileta Road to the north, Jomax Road to the south, the City’s western boundary and 96th Street to the east.

One of the prominent factors that has contributed a great deal to defining the character of this area is the fractured land ownership pattern, with parcel sizes ranging between one and five acres. This land ownership pattern contributes to random or what is also known as piecemeal development. Piecemeal development can be associated with minimal infrastructure, unpaved streets and diversity in housing styles and lifestyles. Residents have chosen to reside in this area due to many of these aforementioned characteristics. This character plan sets forth the vision to balance this rural lifestyle with the unique and fragile upper Sonoran desert experience in the study area.



Desert Foothills Character Area Study Process

Throughout the evolution of the Desert Foothills character study, there has been a tremendous amount of participation from the residents and property owners of the area. The initial contact between Community Planning, the residents and property owners was made in early June 1997. At this point in time, a newsletter that addressed many of the common

questions asked about character area plans was circulated to the Desert Foothills residents and property owners. In addition, several articles appeared in the local newspapers discussing the Desert Foothills character area and the long range planning process.

In early July 1997, a mail questionnaire was dispersed to approximately 800 residents, property owners and local interest of the Desert Foothills area. Thirty-three percent (33%) of these questionnaires were completed and returned. The intent of the questionnaire was to gauge the prevailing issues and trends and propagate some thoughts about the future of this area.

While the results of the questionnaire were being tabulated, a “Background Report” was prepared. This document essentially tells the story of how the Desert Foothills area has evolved to where it is today. It includes the environmental and physical determinants, City policies and regulations, and demographic projections specific to the Desert Foothills study area.

In late October 1997, both the “Background Report” and questionnaire results were shared with residents and property owners at a public open house. Approximately 70 participants browsed the questionnaire results, pictures, charts, maps and graphics. The “Background Report” and questionnaire results can be found in the appendices.



*October 30, 1997 Desert Foothills Open House
Participants review survey results.*

The open house was followed by a series of neighborhood discussions between the Desert Foothills residents, property owners, and city staff. These discussion groups provided the opportunity for participants to discuss with each other and city staff their ideas for preserving the rural identity of the Desert Foothills area.

In early April 1998, a workshop was conducted to summarize the neighborhood discussions and explore the rural desert vision collaboratively as a group of neighborhoods. Similar to previous phases in the outreach program, all residents, property owners and local interest were invited and encouraged to participate.

In late April 1998, at the direction of the Mayor and Council, the active character area plans were placed on hold pending the outcome of two very different growth initiatives - one proposed by the State legislature and the other by the Sierra Club.

During this hiatus, the number of inquiries from residents and property owners concerning the status of the Desert Foothills character area continued to escalate. Many of these inquiries focused on preserving the integrity of the scenic corridors; massing of buildings, scale and color; and enhancing the continuity of the trail system and natural open space.

In October 1998, due to these intensifying concerns,

Community Planning made a recommendation to City Council to reopen the Desert Foothills character area study to further examine these issues and establish a plan that preserves the character of the Desert Foothills area.

After the 1998 holiday season, a working group composed of



*January 29, 1998
Desert Foothills Property Owners Association
- discussion.*

the leadership within the Desert Foothills area began to meet. The intent of this working group was to look at techniques for implementing the Rural Desert vision and ensuring their constituents were kept informed through their outreach programs (newsletters or association meetings).

The working group focused on how the circulation system, on-site development and public facilities could better be integrated into the lush Sonoran desert and preserve and/or enhance the rural lifestyle.

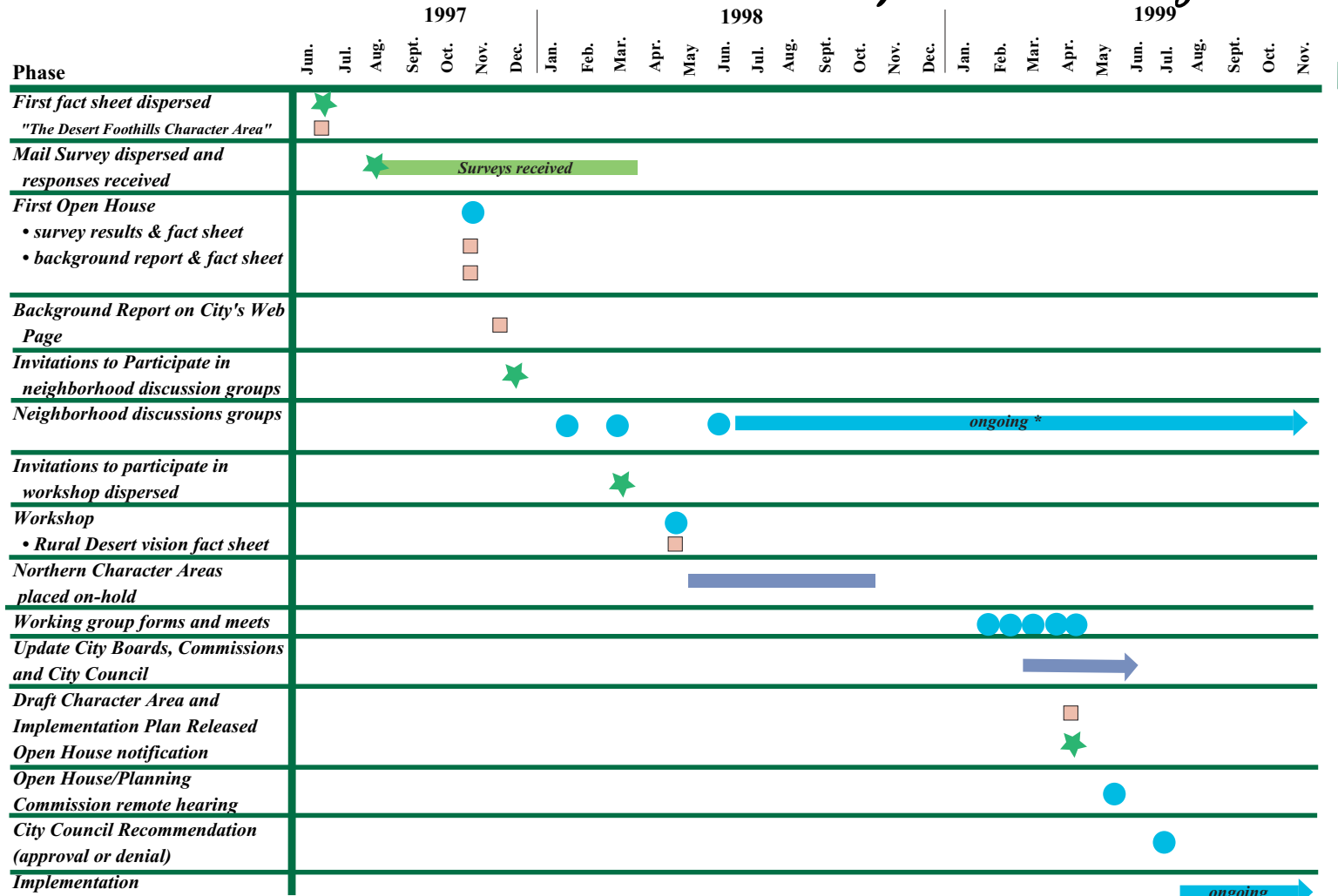
After the working group deliberations were concluded a draft of the Character Area and Implementation Plans were shared with the residents and property owners during an open house and remote Planning Commission hearing in May 1999. In addition, numerous City Boards and Commissions received updates of the character area and discussed the Plan's recommendations before the Plan was forwarded on to the City Council for adoption in the summer 1999.

The time line on the following page illustrates this extensive public outreach process. The public involvement was critical in the formulation of the vision, goals and strategies and will continue to be just as important during the implementation phase of this character area plan.



*January - March 1999
Desert Foothills Working Group - discussions.*

Desert Foothills Character Area Community Outreach Program



- ★ Notifications dispersed to residents, property owners and neighbors of study area
- Public meeting held
**Community Planning staff is committed to meet with any interested neighborhood or property owners organization during any phase of the study.*
- Information concerning progress of study released

Dynamics of the Desert Foothills - Past Planning Efforts

The Desert Foothills character area is located in the northeastern quadrant of Maricopa County, in the northwestern portion of Scottsdale. Up until the early 1980s, much of these lands were still under the jurisdiction of Maricopa County. The county developed and approved a long range plan to help guide the future growth anticipated in this region. This plan, the Desert Foothills Plan, outlined numerous broad policies and guidelines for the ultimate development of this area.

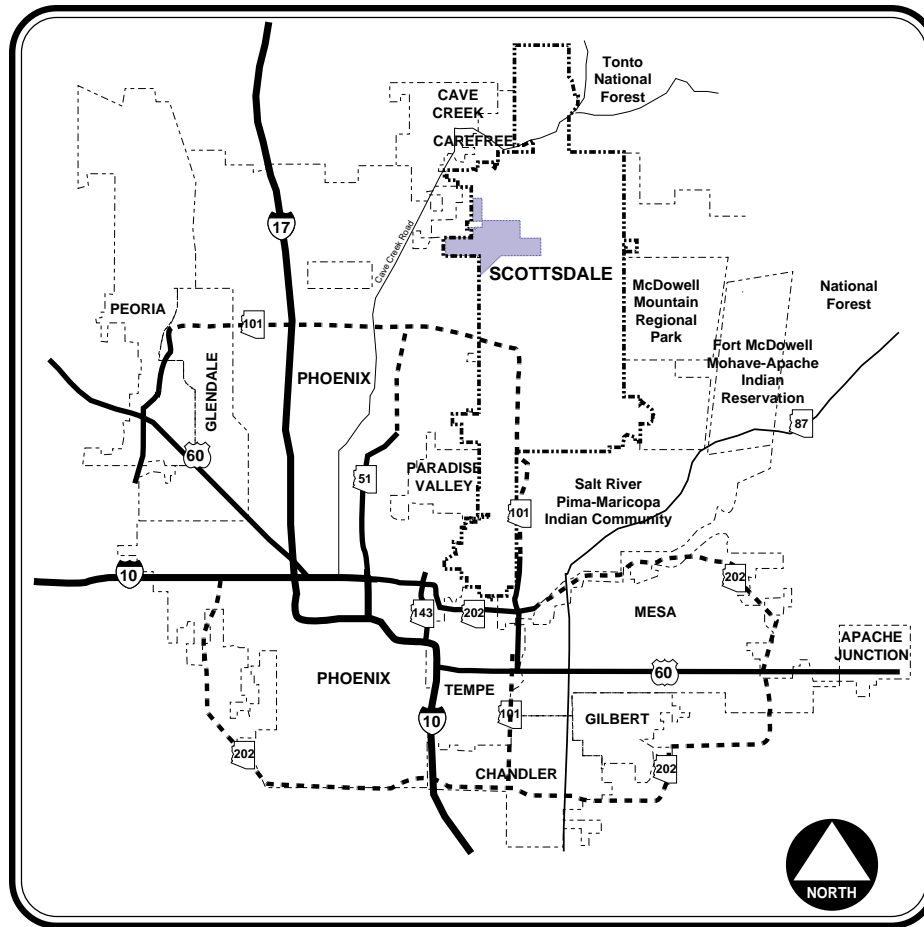
Much of these lands were further studied after they were annexed into Scottsdale and Phoenix in the early 1980s. In 1985, Phoenix adopted the Peripheral Area C & D Plan for a 110 square mile area from 67th Avenue to the City of Scottsdale's western boundary and Carefree Highway to the Central Arizona Project Canal. This plan established specific goals and

policies for the future development of the area. This area is now known as Phoenix's Desert View Village. This Village includes the master planned communities of Tatum Ranch, Tatum Highlands, Dove Valley Ranch, Desert Ridge and numerous subdivisions between these planned communities.

Meanwhile, in 1986, Scottsdale developed and adopted the Tonto Foothills General Plan for the area generally north of Deer Valley Road. This plan incorporated policies that dealt with balancing the anticipated future development with the environmentally sensitive lands such as hillsides, boulder outcroppings and washes. Many of the policies established in the Tonto Foothills plan are reflected in today's General Plan.

After the adoption of the Tonto Foothills plan, a down zoning occurred in a portion of the Desert Foothills area.

This down zoning changed the County zoning from one home per one acre to one home per two acres over much of this area.

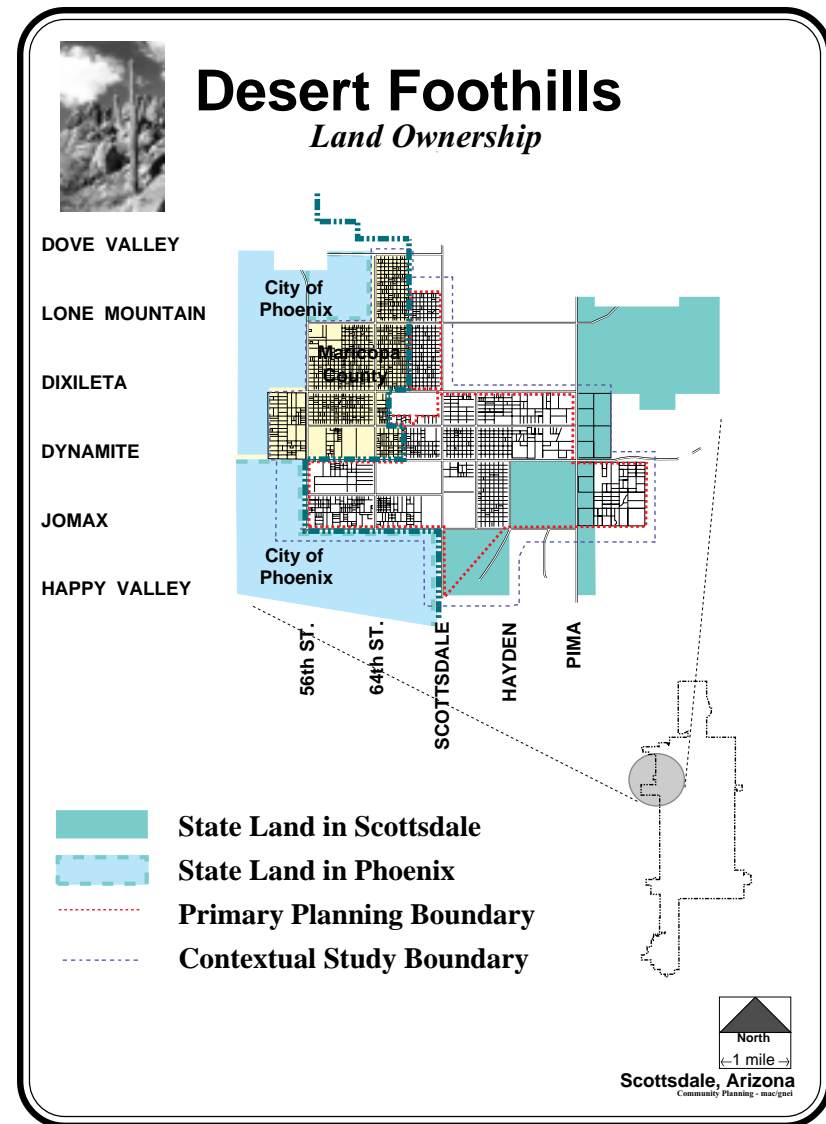


This in effect stopped the Government Land Office (G.L.O.) parcel lot splitting activity in the area and helped to preserve the desert and washes. As a result of this down zoning, the developer of Bent Tree Estates sued the city. As part of an out of court settlement, the developer was allowed to revert back to the original county zoning of one home per one acre. In latter years, the developer of Monterra was also granted one acre zoning due to the precedence established in the Bent Tree suit.

Today, nestled between Phoenix and Scottsdale remains approximately four square miles of a county island. This general area north of Dynamite, south of Lone Mountain, east of 56th Street and west of the current City of Scottsdale boundary was studied in the Black Mountain Area Plan, 1989. This plan mainly serves as an advisory document for those residing and/or developing in this county island and desiring to be considered for future annexation.

Whether Scottsdale and/or Phoenix annex this land remains questionable. The decision ultimately rests in the hands of the residents and property owners of these lands and the acceptance from City Council. Presently, Scottsdale provides both water and waster water services to the majority of this area, while Rural Metro provides fire protection. The County provides all other services.

Today, the Desert Foothills area is approximately one-third built out, however, the number of real estate transactions and building permits are steadily escalating. This growing interest is based in individuals and families who desire a relatively remote area and the lush upper Sonoran desert. This common thread of experiencing and living in the desert is what attracts



many families to the area. However, more desert is being transformed into homes as more people choose to reside in the area.

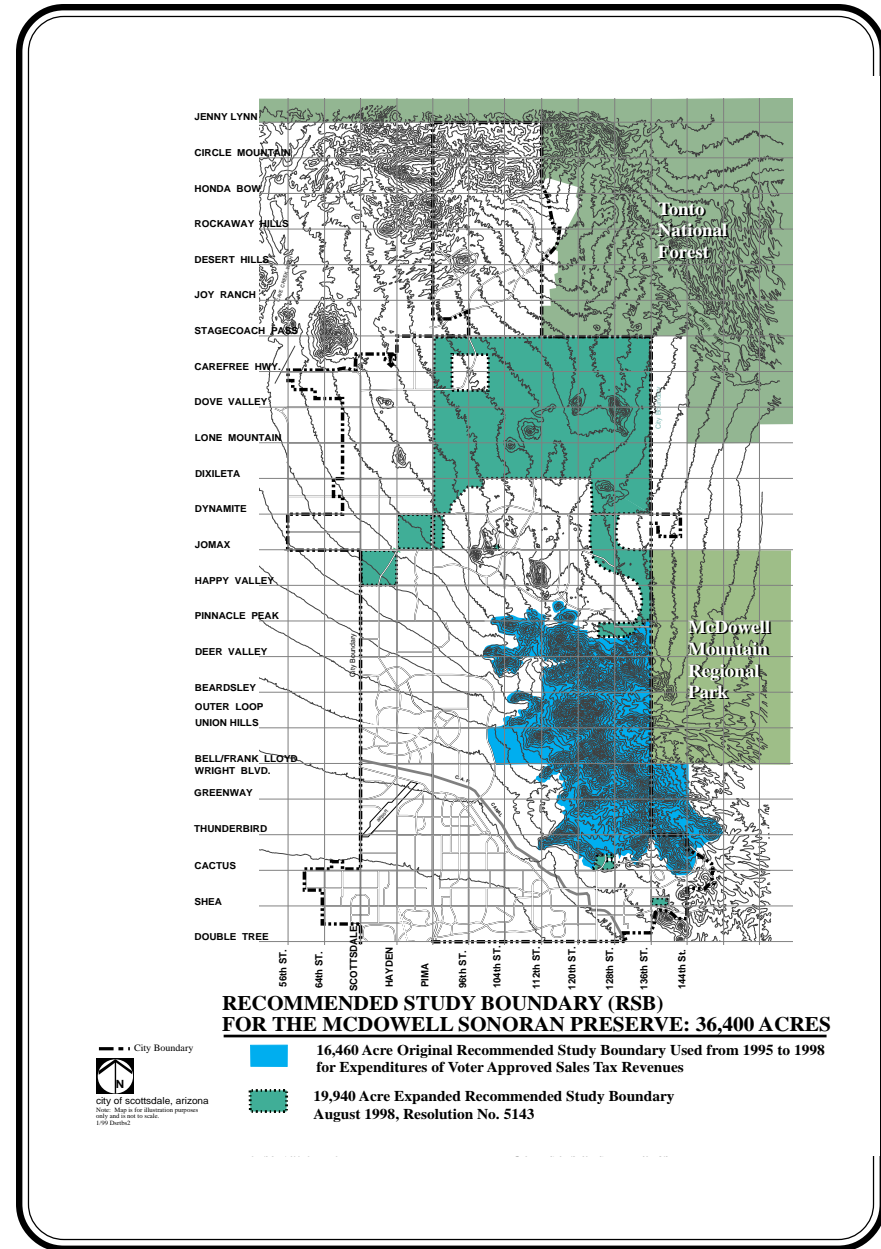
In 1996, in response to the rapid growth being experienced in north Scottsdale, the City Council appointed the Desert Preservation Task Force to develop a plan to preserve the Sonoran Desert. The mission of the Task Force was:

“Recommend implementation of a strategic plan to preserve the Sonoran Desert and retain and enhance the unique character of our community.”

In April 1997, the Task Force’s Strategic Plan was presented to City Council. This plan included definitions of meaningful desert open space, open space standards, trail recommendations, and a desert open space system as shown on the map to the right. This desert open space system will link to scenic corridors such as the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive along Scottsdale Road.

The majority of this land in the desert open space system is under the jurisdiction of the State Land Trust. A relatively new program within the State Land department, the Arizona Preserve Initiative (A.P.I.) allows local governments to request portions of State lands within their jurisdiction to be reclassified for conservation purposes. This request if approved would give the city the opportunity to purchase the land for conservation purposes and remove any potential for future development.

Scottsdale submitted their request for this land in late 1998. It



is anticipated that the State’s review process will take at least one year. In the meantime, the citizens of Scottsdale have chosen to extend the .2% sales tax to purchase preserve land in the McDowell Mountains to the lands outlined in the adjacent map. Whether all or a portion of these lands are preserved in the future is uncertain. The success is dependent on the State Land Trust reclassification of the state lands, additional funding sources and priority of land acquisitions. However, if Scottsdale is successful in preserving these lands, the total desert and mountain preserve would equal 35 square miles or the approximate size of the city of Chandler.



The Desert Foothills Scenic Drive is one of three designated scenic corridors bisecting the area. The Scenic Drive has been a unique landmark of the area for more than three decades and has helped preserve the desert character of the area.

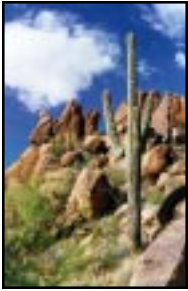
Beginning in 1963, the county worked with the local residents to designate the “Desert Foothills Scenic Drive” north of Happy Valley Road to the Carefree Highway and Cave Creek Road to Deer Valley Road. In 1968, the County established a small park for the Scenic Drive just south of Jomax on Scottsdale Road.

In recent years, the City of Scottsdale Tourism Development Commission and the Neighborhood Enhancement Commission have dedicated funds to the Scenic Drive to enhance Scenic Drive identification signs and construct an exhibit at the

Monument site (*shown above*).

In addition to the desert open space system, the Preservation Commission forwarded a series of recommendations for scenic corridors in late 1998. These recommendations set forth an ambitious vision to preserve the integrity of scenic corridors by banning temporary signs, limiting lights, maintaining views of distant mountains, blending infrastructure into the natural desert setting and widening the scenic setbacks.

The aforementioned plans, studies and recommendations outline a rich history of planning efforts in and around the Desert Foothills area. From the County’s Desert Foothills plans to Scottsdale’s preservation initiatives a tremendous amount of work has been done to help build a better community - a community that seeks to balance one’s lifestyle with the sensitive Sonoran desert environment.



Rural

Desert

Character

Desert Foothills - Rural Desert Character

Through an extensive citizen participation process, the residents and property owners of the Desert Foothills area have consistently stated their desire to be “caretakers” of the Sonoran desert and maintain a Rural Desert character in the Desert Foothills area. The lush upper Sonoran desert vegetation and the rural lifestyle already existing in the area are key elements which have attracted many of the residents and property owners to this unique region of the city. Maintaining undisturbed desert open space while balancing the qualities of the rural lifestyle is crucial to achieving this Rural Desert character.

Defining “rural” can be quite subjective, in part this may be a result of the independent and diverse lifestyles of individuals living in and owning land in these rural areas. One common thread does exist which binds these diverse lifestyles together, the preservation and continuity of desert open space. The Palo Verde-Saguaro plant community, one of the most scenic and lush plant communities in the Sonoran



Scenery looking east from Lone Mountain & Scottsdale Roads

desert, can be found throughout the majority of the study area. The dominance and continuity of the Sonoran desert in concert with the diverse and open pattern of homes are the predominant elements that help define the Rural Desert character in the Desert Foothills area.

Maintaining both functional and visual linkages through connecting undisturbed desert open space is a key component in achieving the Rural Desert vision. Functional linkages exist through shared-use trails that provide access to a multitude of non-motorized user groups. These linkages would connect local neighborhoods to a regional shared-use trail system and other designations such as desert preserves, vista corridors and other jurisdictions. Visual linkages provide important vista and scenic corridors that help to preserve the sense of openness experienced in rural areas. These linkages also provide important migration, feeding and habitat for the indigenous wildlife.

Equestrian activity is one of the dominant lifestyles found within the Desert Foothills area. The area is comprised of a variety of equestrian facilities, both in residential and commercial scales. The sensitive integration of these facilities into the natural desert setting and adjacent neighborhoods are



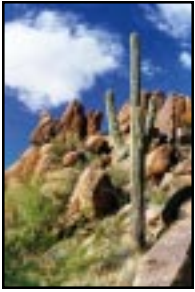
crucial in maintaining the visual dominance of the Sonoran desert.

The study area is predominantly comprised of low residential densities, typically one home for each one to five acres.

Residents currently living in the Desert Foothills area are generally willing to travel longer distances for services and employment. This remote lifestyle is what attracted many of the residents and property owners to this region of the city. However, this lifestyle must be balanced with air quality issues, infrastructure requirements and sustainable development patterns which are important to the future of the valley. Given these important considerations there needs to be an overall balance within the city where basic services can be provided close to residential areas in order to reduce travel distances and to provide a better sense of community.

The delicate balance between one's lifestyle and the fragile Sonoran desert is the underlining theme that defines Rural Desert character in this area. At the present time, Desert Foothills is approximately one-third developed. In the future, there will be other property owners who will one day decide to develop on their property. Blending this future development into the sensitive Sonoran desert context is crucial to achieving the Rural Desert vision for the study area.

Rural Desert
Character



Goals and Strategies

Three common goals have been identified and refined through the Desert Foothills public outreach process outlined on pages 2-4 of this plan. The essence of these goals is to balance the anticipated physical development in the area and the rural lifestyle of the residents with the sensitive lush upper Sonoran desert.

Presently, approximately one-third of the study area is built-out. There continues to be an escalating number of real estate transactions occurring through out the area. This growth is based in individuals who desire to live in a relatively remote area within the upper Sonoran desert. However, as more privately owned parcels are developed and families move into the area, there will be many challenges to maintain the existing character without infringing on one's private property rights. The vision, goals and strategies set forth in this plan detail a logical direction to preserve the character of this unique region of the city.

- **Preserve the natural, visual qualities of the lush upper Sonoran Desert by using desert-sensitive building techniques that retain and blend with the natural desert character of the area.**
- **Promote connected areas of desert open space and trails through visual and functional linkages within and between local neighborhoods and a regional open space network.**
- **Identify and celebrate the Rural Desert character experienced in the Desert Foothills study area that will result in or maintain a unique desert community distinguished from other parts of Scottsdale and the metropolitan area.**

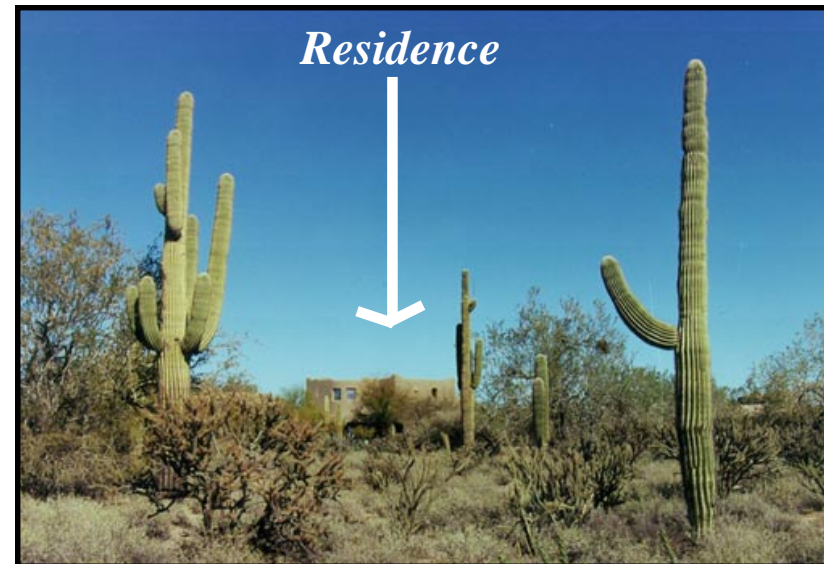
The following strategies have been identified to help achieve each of the plan’s three goals, and thus, promote the Rural Desert character of the Desert Foothills area. The mechanisms to implement these goals and strategies are outlined in the implementation plan.

Goal 1: Preserve the natural, visual qualities of the lush upper Sonoran Desert by using desert-sensitive building techniques that retain and blend with the natural desert character of the area.

Strategies:

1. Blend all types of buildings and structures into the natural desert setting by using principles of minimal visual impact set forth by the Great Sonoran.
 - Development should blend with the land and reinforce its natural form. Discourage development which forces the land into a shape that places the development in a dominant, overpowering position.
 - Encourage the use of colors and non-reflective building materials that blend into the background hues and textures of the natural desert setting.
 - Consider all sides of buildings as part of the whole visual setting of the neighborhood and natural environment.
 - Natural desert landscaping should be retained and used to the greatest extent possible.

- Promote “dark skies” through minimizing outdoor lighting so it is virtually invisible from adjacent properties.
- Discourage buildings and structures which exceed one story or are visibly taller than the maximum mature canopy of the native trees.



Using the principles of minimal visual impact - desert tone colors, minimal height of buildings and maintaining natural desert landscaping help to better integrate the built form and maintain the dominance of the Sonoran desert setting.

Goals and Strategies

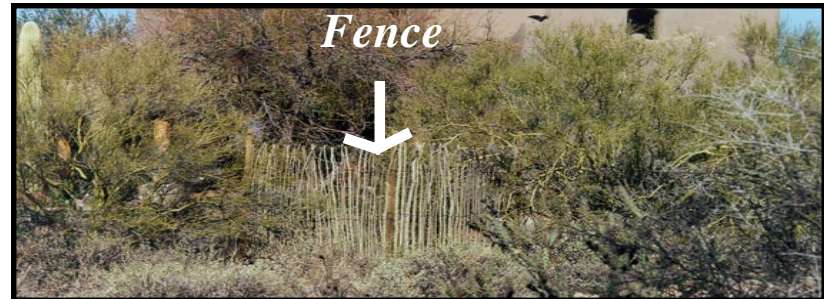
Goal 1, Strategy 2

2. Promote the use of site planning techniques which minimize the visual impact of development and promote a Rural Desert character.
 - To maintain the dominance of the desert vegetation, encourage the use of native landscaping. Discourage turf in areas visible from surrounding properties or streets. Turf in limited quantities may be appropriate in schools and associated recreation facilities.
 - Encourage alternatives to solid walls such as vegetation screens, earth berming that fits the nature of the local terrain, split rail fencing and the like.
 - To maintain a sense of wide open space, discourage the use of perimeter walls.
 - Where walls are used (i.e. yard enclosures) they should undulate with the natural terrain, use desert tone colors to blend into adjacent natural desert and should provide breaks or gaps for indigenous wildlife migration routes and maintain open vista corridors.
 - Promote building envelopes and construction envelopes to minimize disturbance of the natural site, to create a sense of openness, and to provide meaningful open space.
 - Connect natural areas on adjacent parcels to create more viable desert open space.
 - Designate grading/construction envelopes during the development of a site to protect the surrounding natural desert areas from construction encroachment.
 - Promote building designs that work with the natural environmental terrain. ESLO design guidelines are appropriate benchmarks.

- Discourage the placement of accessory buildings in visually prominent areas (i.e. adjacent to major streets).



The use of building and construction envelopes preserve the integrity of natural area open spaces which maintains the sense of openness experienced in the area.



Perimeter walls are discouraged throughout the study area. To create privacy and maintain sense of security vegetation screens or walls that undulate with terrain and use desert sensitive colors and building materials are preferred.

Goal 1, Strategy 3

- 3. Sensitive integrate infrastructure into the natural desert setting and rural lifestyle.

Local Residential and Collector Streets:

- Preserve the Rural Desert character of local streets by minimizing the street widths, following the natural topography and minimize bridging of washes.
- Preserve the Rural Desert character while fulfilling the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) PM10 mandate, by exploring and using alternative(s) to asphalt that meet EPA requirements.
- Maintain the “dark skies” in the rural desert neighborhoods by discouraging street lights on local and collector streets. Street lights may placed at signalized intersections to meet national safety standards.
- Maintain quiet, slower vehicular speeds by discouraging long through routes, minimizing the widths of streets and minimizing connections to major multi-lane roads.

Preserve the character of the local streets if and when they are improved by minimizing street widths, following natural topography, minimizing bridging of washes and exploring alternatives to asphalt that are equestrian friendly and blend into natural desert.



Goal 1, Strategy 3 continued

Scenic Corridors:

- Preserve the natural desert character of the Scenic Corridors by encouraging wider scenic setbacks, maintaining a vertical undulation in the roadway, limiting the number of driveways bisecting the scenic corridors, limiting the number of signalized intersections, using native vegetation within the medians and minimizing continuous and taller walls.
- Minimize visually obstructive infrastructure by using a consistent color palette and special designs that blend into the natural desert environment and creates an identity compatible with the rural desert neighborhoods.
- Encourage and promote the revegetation of disturbed areas along scenic corridors. Revegetation should consist of similar native plant species and densities in surrounding natural desert.
- Encourage efforts to preserve the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive, Scottsdale's first Scenic Corridor, which links neighborhoods in and around the Desert Foothills study area.

When road profile is improved with median, native plant material should be used within median. Natural undulation should be maintained where it does not pose a safety hazard.



Encourage wider scenic setbacks and revegetation of disturbed areas.



Goal 1, Strategy 3 continued

Drainage Infrastructure

- Blend all drainage structures such as box culverts into the natural desert by using colors, textures and materials which reflect the adjacent natural conditions.
- Encourage the use of undulating, revegetated banks of detention/retention basins. Revegetation of detention/retention basins should use native plant species appropriate to riparian areas.

Water/Wastewater

- Blend or camouflage reservoir sites and pump stations into the surrounding environment by screening infrastructure using desert-sensitive colors and textures and planting appropriate densities and mixtures of native vegetation.
- Avoid, where possible, the disturbance of sensitive desert environments with the placement of water and wastewater infrastructure. Place infrastructure within disturbed areas such as existing street alignments. If desert is disturbed through construction of infrastructure, all disturbed areas should be revegetated with plant material consistent with natural preconstruction conditions.

Utilities

- Encourage underground placement of electric utility lines, where feasible, to preserve the visual qualities of the area.
- Encourage utility providers to blend all above-ground cabinets and structures with the surrounding natural environment. If equipment is located along

major streets with a defined color palette, keep consistent colors and textures and screen with native vegetation.

- Encourage the co-location of cellular pads on existing signal and light poles. The cellular equipment should be consistent with the existing color and diameter of the existing poles.



Drainage basins should use undulating banks with native riparian vegetation. Washes should be maintained in their natural state. Disturbed washes should be revegetated to blend back into natural desert.

Goals and Strategies

Goal 2: Promote connected areas of desert open space and trails through visual and functional linkages within and between local neighborhoods and a regional open space network.

Strategies:

1. Promote a continuous trail system which connects the local neighborhoods to each other and a regional trail system leading into the preserves.
 - To create a better and safer desert experience encourage wider trail and street separation.
 - To preserve the natural vegetation meander the trail around existing plants, cacti and trees.
 - Transition the width of trails from higher use areas such as regional linkages to lower use areas such as neighborhood loops.
 - Encourage a trail system which connects to large continuous open spaces. This trail system should not bisect environmentally sensitive habitats.
 - Provide a multitude of access points from local neighborhoods, scenic and vista corridors to desert and mountain preserves.
 - Encourage public and neighborhood access along the Scenic Corridors by incorporating trails, locations for interpretive demonstrations and linkages to open spaces internal to neighborhoods.



Trails should transition in width from areas of more intense use along scenic corridors and other continuous areas of open space to local neighborhoods.

Goal 2, Strategy 2

2. Encourage the development of an open space system which links open space throughout the Desert Foothills area to the scenic and vista corridors and preserves.
 - Encourage wider scenic setbacks along major streets to minimize impact of adjacent development and maintain existing viewsheds.
 - Sustain natural flora and fauna resources and systems through the provision of connected open spaces.
 - Encourage the integration of open spaces to ensure open space connections and maintain a feeling of openness throughout the area.
 - Preserve and protect unique open spaces, and archaeological and historical sites.
- Encourage large continuous areas of open space (wash corridors, NAOS, COS) rather than small fragmented pieces of natural area.
- Seek an open space connection between Phoenix, the Tonto National Forest and the McDowell Mountains to provide for wildlife migration and large desert vistas.



Protect natural flora and fauna while providing opportunities for visual and functional linkages throughout and around the Desert Foothills area.

Goal 2, Strategy 3

3. Promote recreation opportunities to enhance and preserve a Rural Desert character through the following strategies:

- Seek opportunities to accommodate low-impact equestrian oriented parks, trailheads and other recreational amenities that respond to the needs and demands of the citizens.
- Park design should emphasize the unique Sonoran Desert environment through minimal disturbance to the site, desert sensitive architecture and construction detailing.
- Specialty parks should be encouraged along scenic corridors to allow residents and tourists

alike to view and experience the desert and mountain vistas.

- Limit turf to active recreation areas in association with schools and specific picnic/open play spaces, and in areas of high public use.
- Use drought tolerant plant material in landscaped

areas.

- Use sensitivity in providing lighting systems for outdoor recreational facilities to ensure participant safety and minimize trespass light into adjacent neighborhoods and streets while maintaining the “dark skies”.



Maintain regional trail and open space linkages from the Tonto National Forest, the McDowell Mountains and the City of Phoenix.



Promote trailheads and equestrian oriented parks that have direct access to a regional trail system.

Goal 3: Identify and celebrate the Rural Desert character experienced in the Desert Foothills study area that will result in or maintain a unique desert community distinguished from other parts of Scottsdale and the metropolitan area.

- Significant city entry points and/or mile streets should be used as opportunities to create gateways that identify this unique area of the city.

Strategies:

1. Use physical elements within the improvement/expansion of local infrastructure to create thematic elements.
 - Colors, textures and materials used on infrastructure improvements should blend into the natural desert environment and reflect the rustic rural identity of the area.
 - The design of street signage, signalized intersections and street lights should be used to reflect the rustic, rural identity of the area.
 - Public facilities should reflect the color and material palette used in the improved local infrastructure and adjacent structures.
2. Create gateways that reflect the area’s identity and highly visible focal points within the study area.
 - City gateways should reflect the area’s identity.



3. Scenic corridors should be designed to reflect an identity for the entire length of the corridor and respond to the unique character the road bisects.
 - Public improvements should consist of consistent colors and materials.
 - Identification signs should use a consistent palette throughout corridor.
 - Utility cabinets which cannot be buried should be painted a consistent color with other street signs and signal poles along the corridor which use colors that blend with natural desert tones.

4. The design of all nonresidential structures should respect the existing rustic, rural character and scale of buildings across the area.

Public infrastructure can be used to celebrate and reflect the unique identity of an area. These elements should blend into natural desert and respond to the rustic rural character of the area.



Glossary

Boulder Features

Exposed bedrock clusters produced by the weathering of granite or other bedrock in places which have at least one dimension of 15 feet or more across, a height at one point above the surrounding terrain of 10 feet or more, and includes a minimum setback of 20 feet around the entire feature. The locations of boulder features are designated on maps by the City.

Building Envelope Technique

The area of a site where the building will be located. A technique for building which disturbs a minimal area of the buildable part of a parcel.

City Charter

A document which outlines the structure and processes of a city's government and identifies the powers and limitations.

Construction Envelope

One or more specified areas on a lot or parcel within which all structures, driveways, parking, decks, walks, and improved facilities are located. Underground utilities may be located outside the construction envelope.

Cubic Feet per Second (c.f.s.)

Measure of flowing water in a watercourse (a river, creek, stream, wash, arroyo, or other channel over which water flows at least periodically).

Density

Usually: the number of dwelling units per acre in residential districts. Gross density is defined as the total number of dwelling units divided by the total land area of the site, excluding nothing. Net density is the total number of dwelling units divided by the net area of the lot or site (excluding roads, public open space, utility rights-of-way, and community facilities).

Development Project

Any development resulting from the approval of a building permit, lot split, preliminary or final plat, rezoning application, grading permit, public or private infrastructure improvement, variance requests, development review, master plans, native plant removal, relocation or revegetation, or use permit.

Development Review Board

A process along with criteria to consider the site and

architectural design character and features of development, excluding single family houses. This process is intended to provide for a basic standard of design quality throughout the community, establish character themes, seek durability in physical development and seek the desired identity of the community.

Development Site

A specific area within a development project which is proposed for a specified zone, use, or density, and may be developed separately from the balance of the development project by a person other than the master development plan applicant.

Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ESLO)

is a set of zoning regulations adopted by the City of Scottsdale to guide future development in the desert and mountain areas of north Scottsdale. The ordinance has a variety of standards that are applied to ensure that new construction will be compatible with the natural beauty of the area. The ESLO took effect on March 21, 1991 and applies to approximately 134 square miles of Scottsdale north of the Central Arizona Project and APS transmission lines.

General Plan

A collection of policies and plans which provide a guide and baseline for decisions regarding the physical growth and evolution of the city. The General Plan provides a comprehensive, coordinated set of intents and directions for the physical development of the city including but not limited to land use, transportation, economic conditions, environment, infrastructure, public facilities and physical character.

Government Land Office lots (GLO)

The federal government established a program for veterans after World War II to purchase approximately 2.5 acres of federally owned land at a discounted price. Several hundred of these parcels can be found within the Desert Foothills study area.

Land Slope

The ratio of the vertical rise in the land elevation over the horizontal dimension of the rise.

Natural Landmarks

Prominent, unique terrain features which due to their character and location are considered landmarks for the city or for a local region within the city. Such landmarks may or may not be named features. These features are indicated on maps of record at the City and have been designated by the City Council. Historical and archaeological sites shall also be considered as landmarks. Natural landmarks are included on the environmental constraints composite map.

Open Space

Meaningful Open Space: Open space which due to its size, function, visibility, accessibility and/or strategic location is a community amenity or resource. Open space which can be accessed or can be viewed by the public. Open space which serves to protect a significant ecological area. Meaningful Open Space is divided into three categories: *accessible desert open space* consisting of public use areas and public access areas; *visual desert open space* consisting of mountain and desert conservation areas, wash corridors and street setbacks, and *desert*

character open space consisting of restored areas such as detention basins and drainage channels and improved areas such as parks and golf courses that have a desert character. (Desert Preservation Task Force definition - see Appendix for further explanation)

Natural Area Open Space: Areas of undisturbed natural desert with no man-made improvements and approved revegetated areas.

Developed Open Space: landscape areas, turf areas, parks, golf courses and other recreational facilities excluding any associated buildings.

Parcel

A legally defined lot, or contiguous group of lots in single ownership or under single control, and considered a unit for purposes of development and open space calculation.

Paths

A shared-use pedestrian, non-motorized, cyclist route or system which is paved.

Preliminary Plat

A conceptual plan for a proposed layout of lots, tracts, rights-of-way and easements in a proposed subdivision.

Revegetation

Replacing vegetation in an area where vegetation has been removed for construction, or due to natural causes. The effort is made to revegetate to surrounding plant densities and specie.

RSB

The Recommended Study Boundary of the McDowell Sonoran

Preserve, indicative of the land area the city desires to ultimately acquire through the Preservation Program.

Scenic Corridor

A major roadway which has been so designated on the General Plan in order to minimize the visual intrusion of adjacent development and maximize the unique character of different areas of the city.

Special Flood Hazard Areas

Are defined by Section 37-17 of Chapter 37 of the Scottsdale Revised Code (Floodways and Floodplains) are areas having flood and/or flood related erosion hazards as shown on a Flood Hazard Boundary Map or Flood Insurance Rate Map as zone A, AO, A1-30, AE, A99, AH or E, and those areas identified as such by the Floodplain Administrator, delineated in accordance with Section 37-18(b) and adopted by the Floodplain Board.

Trails

A shared-use pedestrian, non-motorized, equestrian, cyclist route or system which is not paved.

Use Permits

A process with general criteria to consider uses which may be compatible within a district but which may need special limitations in order to be considered appropriate for the area. Commercial equestrian ranches use the use permit process.

Viewsheds

The major segments of the natural terrain which are visible above the natural vegetation from designated scenic viewpoints which are shown on the ESLO Special Features maps and are

contained on the environmental constraints composite map.

Vista Corridor

A major open space corridor which follows major watercourses or other features as identified on the General Plan and which protect major wildlife habitat, protect distant views, separate land uses, and provide links for trails and paths.

Wash

Usually a watercourse which flows during/after rainfall events, or intermittently. Washes contain a riparian environment and are used by wildlife.

Watercourse

A lake, river, creek, stream, wash, arroyo, or other channel over which water flows at least periodically. “Watercourse” includes specifically designated areas in which substantial flood damage may occur.

Zoning

policies regulating the use of land and the physical parameters of development of the land along with procedures for changing the status of land use and the physical development standards.