

B. LAND USE GOALS

As one of the basic General Plan Elements required of all municipalities (along with Circulation) by the Arizona planning statutes, Land Use is the primary focus of citizens' vision for the Marana of the future. Creative land development patterns are regarded as the fundamental definition for Marana's more urban areas that are sited in a context of open, non-urban space.

Facing unprecedented development pressures, the Town is concerned, first and foremost, with orderly growth. The General Plan is meant to establish a framework for more detailed planning on a subcommunity or individual site basis. The Future Development Plan, depicting desired land use in conjunction with the other Plan Elements, is designed as a guide that allows Marana to lead, rather than react to, the improvement of its land resources.

Goal 1. Practice Environmental Sensitivity.

A proactive stance toward protecting the natural environment is regarded as one of the Plan's most essential aspects. Marana citizens are committed to principles of clustering land use so as to preserve significant open spaces; providing recreational opportunities to meet future population demand; recognizing agricultural activity as an on-going, desirable contributor to the local economy; and the proposition that recommending where not to develop is as important as designating areas where development should occur.

- a. *Objective:* *Commit to community sustainability,*
 - 1) Policy: Designate non-development areas.
 - 2) Policy: Protect air and water resources.
 - 3) Policy: Preserve rich agricultural land, native plants and habitats.

- b. *Objective:* *Consider parks and open spaces as key land uses.*
 - 1) Policy: Set open space standards for a growing population.
 - 2) Policy: Enact mountain and view preservation measures.

Action: Policies for preserving farmland, scenic vistas and open areas may be translated into development guidelines or codes. Likewise, provisions to improve community appearance should be considered -- including more detailed sign regulations, landscaping and maintenance standards. Hillside development criteria, density transfer credits and, possibly, an environmentally sensitive lands ordinance are additional Plan implementation studies that may be undertaken.

Goal 2. Conform to Existing Neighborhoods.

Future construction is expected to blend with both the natural and built environments. This Plan acknowledges established uses of land and seeks, generally, to sustain them with enhancements to existing neighborhoods as well as standards which will assure that future developments "pay their dues" with respect to community quality. Each project proposal is to be measured as to its overall contribution to Marana as well as its reasonable use of the particular site.

- a. *Objective:* Observe compatibility planning techniques.
 - 1) *Policy:* Establish appropriate development density/intensity.
 - 2) *Policy:* Encourage joint-use amenities and public facilities.

- b. *Objective:* Integrate new development with existing community features and uses.
 - 1) *Policy:* Protect against forcing out traditional agricultural uses.
 - 2) *Policy:* Avoid leapfrog or sprawl development.

Action: General site/subdivision guidelines ought to be established for assuring that new developments do not detract from, but, instead, are consistent with existing residential or commercial area themes, densities and functions. A Development Review Board, with the charge to assist proposed, future uses fit into the community, might be considered. Sound, affordable housing plans should be regarded as acceptable in any Marana neighborhood, especially if contributions to Plan goals, such as open space or trails, are included.

Goal 3. *Identify and Solicit Highest and Best Uses based on Public Needs.*

Tactical allocation of land for housing, business and amenities in a maturing community requires that the Plan address foreseeable demand for shelter, goods and services. Large, segregated tracts representing highly speculative future development should be discouraged -- such as earmarking an industrial preserve that may take generations to utilize fully; rather, well-served "opportunity areas" might be designated to accommodate multiple uses with appropriate buffering, transition or spacing methods. Preserving significant areas for non-urban use, on the other hand, protects such key community attributes as productive agribusiness and natural open space. Landowners should be provided with reasonable options for their holdings (a resort, for example, in conservation areas) that are consistent with public purposes.

- a. *Objective:* Encourage mixed use developments.
 - 1) *Policy:* Provide guidelines for mitigating land use impacts.
 - 2) *Policy:* Review site development plans from a broad neighborhood perspective.

- b. *Objective:* Develop distinctive community attractions.
 - 1) *Policy:* Consider an "Old West" theme for the Town's Heritage Center businesses.
 - 2) *Policy:* Promote tourism in ways that do not overwhelm local living quality.

Action: Land use variety -- housing, jobs, shopping, recreational/cultural facilities -- is planned into several portions of the community so residents and visitors have convenient access to all Marana has to offer. Transition techniques are specified to mitigate traffic and intensive use impacts. Development codes should be adopted to permit flexibility without necessitating ad hoc standards with no continuity among planned developments.

Recent building activity has been heavily focussed on residential development. However, the approved specific plans, include a significant industrial use component in five of the fourteen sites. The following table displays construction permit revenues from approximately 700 applications over a recent period in Marana. As the Town's development pattern indicates, residential and commercial building activity represent the greatest amount of new building today, but land absorption projections (See: Economic Development Element, pp. 31-32) indicate prospects for major manufacturing, fabrication, warehousing, office, and research facility construction in Marana over the next two decades.

Marana Construction Permit Revenues September 1995 - September 1996						
	Residential	Manufactured Homes	Swimming Pools	Signs	Commercial Buildings	Miscellaneous
1995	(amounts in dollars)					
September	48494	90	1124	148	14367	993
October	31501	270	832	3035	691	1301
November	10031	0	747	706	747	3809
December	44529	450	0	1199	2844	195
1996						
January	29975	0	1500	2700	22815	620
February	41268	0	22182	598	39563	240
March	58014	0	234	1330	10570	2542
April	51460	0	1170	808	1871	1742
May	72095	0	2460	1607	7255	4222
June	51649	90	1034	1365	15647	3770
July	43926	90	771	300	2295	2701
August	63184	450	866	1458	26517	3399
September	50782	0	1233	415	8349	2253
TOTALS	\$596,908	\$1,440	\$34,153	\$15,669	\$153,531	\$27,787

Large sites in Marana's northern reaches, including options on farms and ranches and expected releases of State Trust Lands, are being marked for future masterplanning.

Re-use plans for restoring extractive industry pits, although many years from implementation, should be factored into the Town's long-range planning. These extensive acreages in key locations (e.g., near the I-10/Tangerine intersection and the Continental Ranch community) may add to the community's open space planning or serve as groundwater recharge sites as well as providing some developable land inventory.

C. Dynamics

Local leadership recognizes that Marana will grow and that efficient allocation of development entitlements is necessary to make civic expansion both orderly and affordable. Commerce and industry are desirable to establish a stable economic base for

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Sound fiscal management is a principal Town of Marana attribute. In order to afford the many civic improvements required to accomplish citizens' vision for the future, economic growth is the Town's number one necessity. This General Plan recognizes that residential construction, by itself, cannot provide a sufficient fiscal base; that business development is essential to the local economy's well-being.

Locational advantage on the Interstate 10 Corridor, connecting to Arizona's two largest metropolitan areas with trade in Mexico, is Marana's greatest economic asset. Population gains provide expanding workforce potential. Natural resources, ranging from arable and alluvial soils to remarkably scenic mountain backdrops add further dimension for economic growth.

Anticipating a continuing demand for housing opportunities in Marana, citizens express a strong desire for increasing the local economic base. Diversification -- and, especially job creation -- are seen as objectives for accomplishing the community's long-term fiscal sustainability. New business is necessary to help pay for needed infrastructure as well as serving as the foundation for the Town's future operating expenditures.

A. Goals Response

Marana is looking for additions to its tax base to finance infrastructure expenditures; but, also, to attain an economic stability which will allow the community to sustain itself over the long term. Economic advantage should be planned with family incomes, affordable services and living quality in mind.

1. *Jobs/Housing Balance.* Ideally, more Marana residents will be working here five, ten and twenty years from now. Reversing the trend from bedroom/retirement community to become a well-rounded local economy will bring benefits ranging from shorter trips to work, thus improving air quality, to providing more leisure time with which to enjoy the quality of life improvements that are planned.

Providing a wider variety of well-paying jobs for local residents is one of the Town's principal economic objectives. In addition to retail, hospitality industry and warehousing expansion -- all of which assist the tax base, technical and managerial positions can contribute significantly to local household income. Corporate or professional offices, for example, draw persons with increased buying power into the community.

Action: The Marana Future Development Plan calls for reservation of sites for all types of industry and commerce easily accessible from residential neighborhoods. Growth guidance policies are meant to strengthen the local workforce -- encouraging start-up and expansion of small business, skill-training programs, full utilization of "people resources", including retired persons.

2. *Tourism.* Thousands of I-10 travelers pass through the community each day. Economic objectives include vacationer amenities such as easy-off, easy-on food and automobile services as well as overnight accommodations, shopping opportunities, recreational/cultural attractions and increased appeal to seasonal visitors. The community should promote its location as the "Gateway to Saguaro National Park". Tourist-serving uses are expected to enhance Marana's appearance -- not to project an unattractive jumble of franchise signage. Upper end resorts and well-designed vehicle parks will encourage longer stays in Marana, with highly cost-beneficial per capita visitor expenditures.

Construction of hotels, beginning in the mid-1990s, improves Marana's positioning for visitors' dollars. Major league baseball's expanded Spring Training facilities just a few miles south on I-10 and the Tucson area's increased attraction of convention business, should swell guest room occupancies in Marana. Development of in-Town meeting facilities and, ultimately a Convention Center, are projected.

Action: Incentives are considered for expanding Marana's hospitality industry share and development of tourist attractions such as events or displays highlighting archaeological/historical heritage, theme parks and recreational activities for all ages.

3. *Natural Resource Conservation.* Mountains, open space and enjoyment of the invigorating Sonoran desert environment are among the qualities which Marana possesses -- and must preserve -- in order to project a positive image for corporate locations, housing choice and vacationing. Investment in scenic drives, controls on signage, encouraging Western-style recreation -- all will contribute to Marana's highly-marketable community character.

Land resources include maintenance of farms, grazing range and scenic vistas. Longstanding local mining operations, though continuing, should include re-use plans (possibly including recreational lakes or water features) for scarred areas once profitable extraction has been completed. In particular, the Town's archaeological treasures, such as within the Tortolita Fan area, should be recognized for their value (both economic and intrinsic) as preserved assets.

Action: Positive steps, including possible Development Code provisions, need to be taken in concert with local agribusiness entrepreneurs to sustain Marana's prime lands for farming and ranching. Likewise, joint planning efforts shall be undertaken with extractive industry representatives for the future restoration of sand and gravel pits.

improved, current structure for public safety headquarters, a senior center, or the like.

Growth management, in short, is preparedness as well as efficient resource allocation.

B. Rural Preservation

Town citizens actively seek ways to sustain the historic role of agribusiness in the community. Marana and the Avra Valley have long been providers of fiber and food to the region and the world. Although farms are fewer, larger, more likely to be run by conglomerates, many are still people-operated in this community.

There are concerns that flood engineering improvements, lucrative options from homebuilders anxious to convert acreage into lots and, generally, the urbanizing nature of Marana will mean the end of meaningful agribusiness in the community. The General Plan seeks to provide both reasonable development and continued farming opportunities.

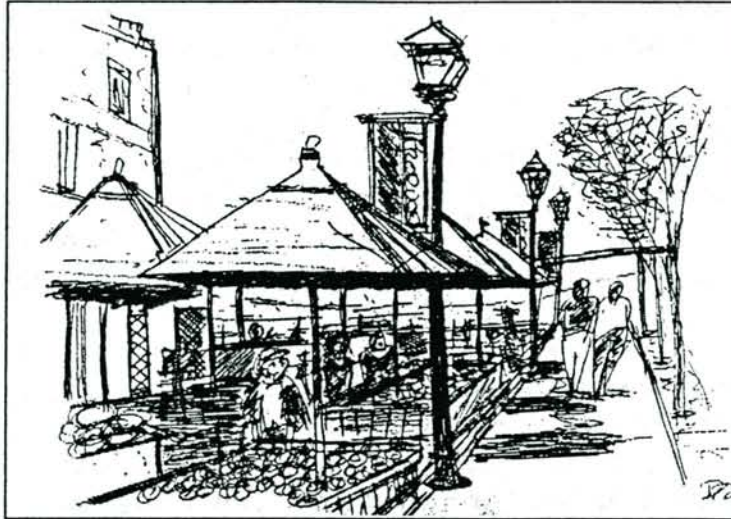
1. *Commitment to Productivity.* Marana, at least in parts, is becoming more urban. Yet, many area residents, non-farmers and farmers alike, believe in the importance of retaining agricultural productivity inside the Town. There are various reasons for the attitude: good land supplying human needs, country atmosphere, local history, openness and all of the above.

Farming, particularly cotton, has been fundamental to the local economy since the railroad was built and permanent settlement occurred. The gin has been closed, but the University of Arizona experimental farm in Town and miles of cultivated acres attest to the continued profitability of cotton and other crops. Rangeland, too, contributes to local agribusiness revenues. An auction center in Town draws bidders from all over the southwest to purchase prime cattle.

Fertile, irrigated land may continue to supply food for the region and specialty products for wider distribution. Small, "boutique" crop farms can be financially successful as the families who work them enjoy the wholesome, rural atmosphere. With co-op sales organization and festival weekend marketing events, Marana's part-time farmers can supplement their incomes, attract produce buyers to the community and, most important, continue the farming tradition.

2. *Community Pride Attraction.* Marana's wholesome, agrarian appearance -- along with mountain vistas -- is its most compelling visual attribute. As travelers pass the community or visit, irrigated fields create true greenbelts as relief from miles of desert or expanses of billboards and sometimes unsightly industry.

Working farm experiences, from "u-pick" to beds-and-breakfasts, are fun introductions to the Town for children and adults. Even residents in more urban parts of the Town will enjoy bringing guests to see and sample their own farming community. Founders' Day, Rodeo and many other civic events join all local citizens in heritage celebrations.



Agrarian uses provide ideal transitions for other local points of pride. Grazing lands maintain openness for view corridors and for trailrides or hikes along the Santa Cruz River and in the foothills. Aviation operators appreciate buffers created by expansive fields. Planned transitions such as these can be perpetuated through local land use policy and granting agricultural or scenic easements.

3. *Crescent Concept for Northwest Marana.* Farm tradition is seen as being maintained, rather than preserved. There can be reuse of some agricultural lands for new neighborhoods without detracting from community character. Melding residences, shops and gathering places into the Town's northwest sector can accomplish an orderly redevelopment or a contemporary settlement with traditional farming themes.

