



Gila Bend 2040 General Plan

December 10, 2024

Approved by Town Council, Resolution #24-12



Gila Bend Town Council

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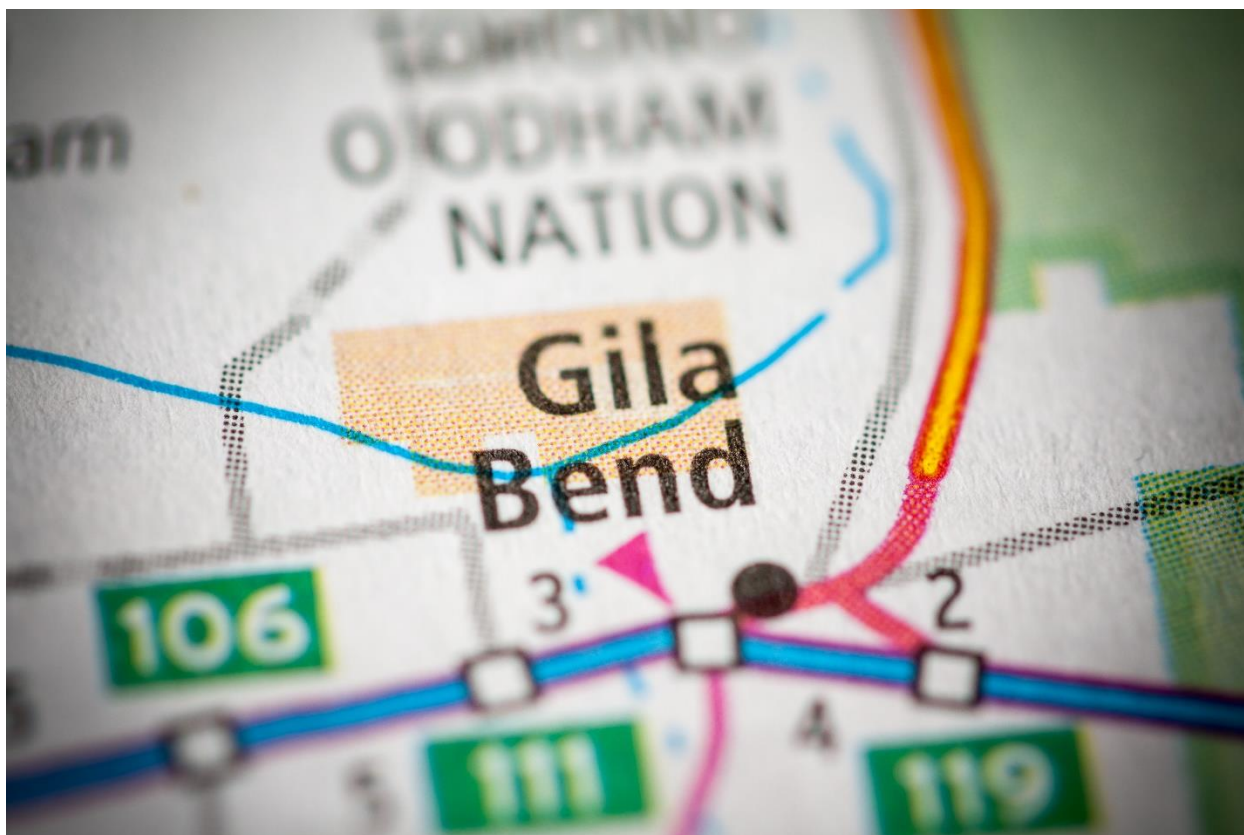
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

**A special thank you to everyone involved in creating
the 2024 Gila Bend 2040 General Plan.**

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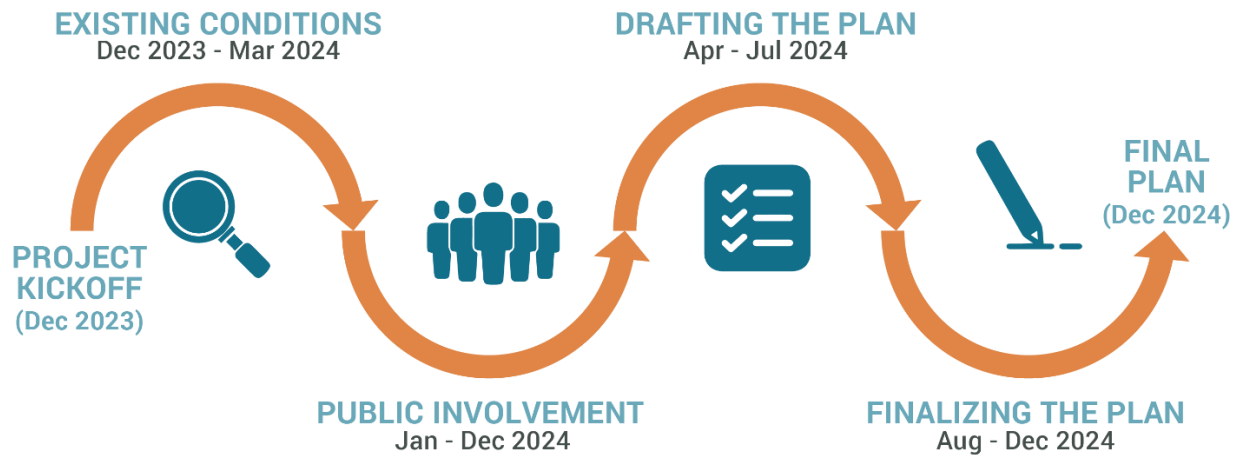
Town of Gila Bend on the map

Chapter 1 Overview

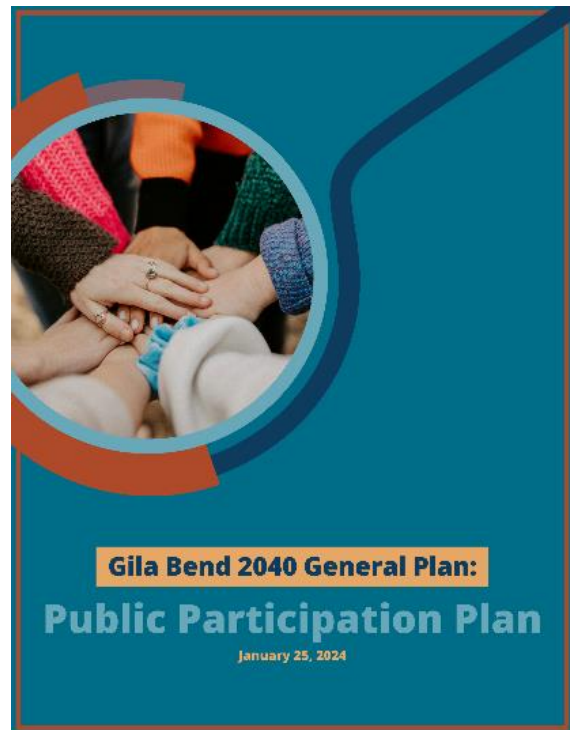
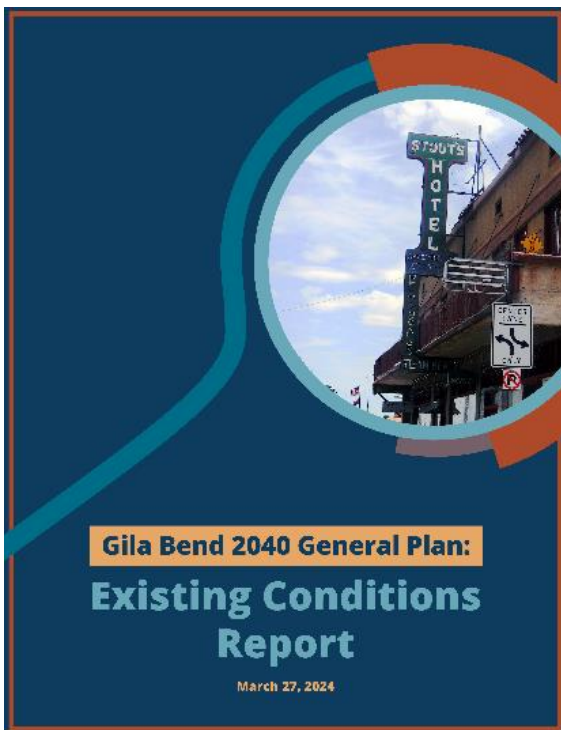
PURPOSE AND PROCESS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* will provide a comprehensive framework that steers future growth to support the vitality of the community. The purpose of the general plan is to guide the physical, economic, and social development decisions of community leaders, residents, and businesses over a horizon of 10 years or longer. Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 9-461.06 requires that a municipality readopt or update its general plan every 10 years. The *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* meets the requirements of ARS and provides guidance that aligns with the community's vision and values. The process followed a logical six-step sequence over a 12-month period, as shown on the next page, from orientation with a project kickoff, an existing conditions report, and thorough public involvement to decision-making through the draft of the plan and eventually finalizing the plan before new action is taken to guide Gila Bend's future growth.

PROJECT TIMELINE



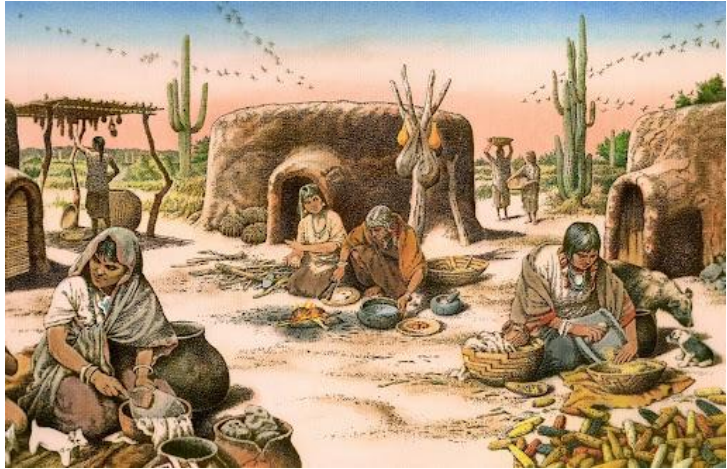
The *Existing Conditions* phase resulted in a snapshot report of information about the Town, which was, in turn, used as a springboard for the plan itself. Likewise, the Public Involvement phase resulted in a *Public Participation Plan* which was adopted by the Town Council on February 27, 2024, outlining strategies and direction for effective and efficient public outreach and engagement.



HISTORIC AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

History of the Town of Gila Bend

The Town of Gila Bend was founded in 1872 and is referred to as the “Crossroads of the Southwest,” given its strategic location in the southern portion of Maricopa County. Before the arrival of European settlers, the region was inhabited by various Native American groups, including the Hohokam and Tohono O’odham peoples. The Town is near a pre-Columbian Hohokam village first visited in 1699 by Father Eusebio Kino. In addition, the Tohono O’odham Nation extends across multiple districts, including the San Lucy District, located one mile north of Gila Bend, with a population of around 300 residents. In the 17th century, Spanish explorers and missionaries ventured into the area, leaving a mark on the local culture.



Source: S’edav-vaaki-museum

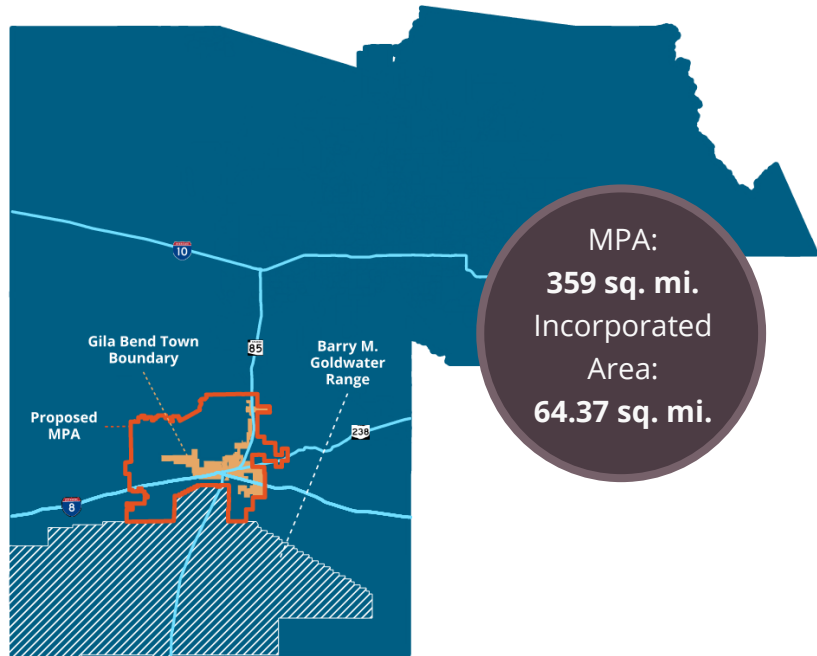
Gila Bend became a vital crossroads for explorers and traders during the 19th century, serving as a stop along the Butterfield Overland Mail route, which connected St. Louis to San Francisco. Today, many travelers heading to San Diego, Tucson, the Phoenix Metropolitan area, and Mexico come through the Town. In August 2023, the Town of Gila Bend and the Mexican Consulate classified the nearby town of Puerto Peñasco, Mexico, as a Sister City. Oquitoa in Mexico will soon be classified as another Sister City, further strengthening the relationship between the three communities while supporting tourism and commerce. The Town is named for a 90-degree bend in the nearby Gila River, and its history is closely tied to the development of transportation routes in the American Southwest. The Southern Pacific Railroad reached Gila Bend in the late 19th century, further enhancing its strategic importance. Gila Bend’s growth continued in the 20th century with the construction of U.S. Route 85, solidifying its position as a transportation hub.



Source: Dawn Kish Photo and Film, respectgreatbend.org

Regional Context

Gila Bend is situated in the Sonoran Desert and boasts a terrain dominated by vast desert landscapes, the Gila River, and surrounding mountain ranges, including the Gila Bend Mountains and Maricopa Mountains. The Town's flat plains have historically facilitated agriculture and transportation development. It is strategically located near major transport routes like U.S. Route 85, Interstate 8, and the Southern Pacific Railroad. In 1941, the Gila Bend Army Airfield was established to provide a training ground for pilots. In the 1940s, the land was converted to the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, a tactical training area for pilots and ground troops.



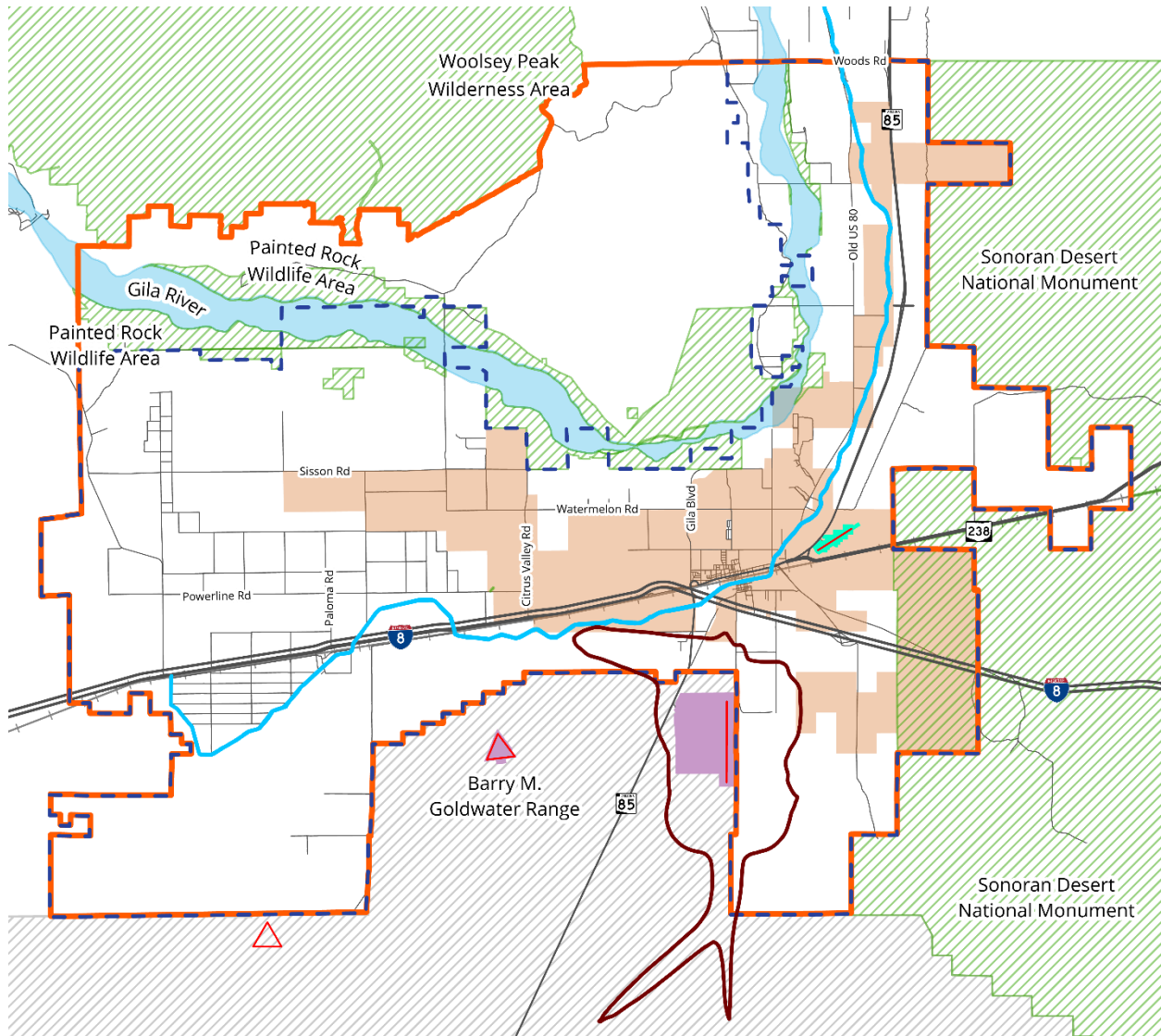
MUNICIPAL PLANNING AREA

The Municipal Planning Area (MPA) is the geographical area of influence or impact, including the incorporated area of the Town of Gila Bend and beyond. While the Town may currently only have jurisdiction over the land within its incorporated boundaries, its relationship with the surrounding area is important in land use planning. The 2017 MPA was 273.3 square miles. The 2024 MPA shown in **Figure 1** includes 359 square miles, expanding the previous MPA by almost 86 square miles, and will encompass additional natural spaces, such as a portion of the Gila River and the Painted Rock Wildlife Area up to the Woolsey Peak mountain range.

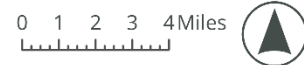


Town of Gila Bend Welcome Sign

Figure 1. Municipal Planning Area (MPA)



Gila Bend Base Map



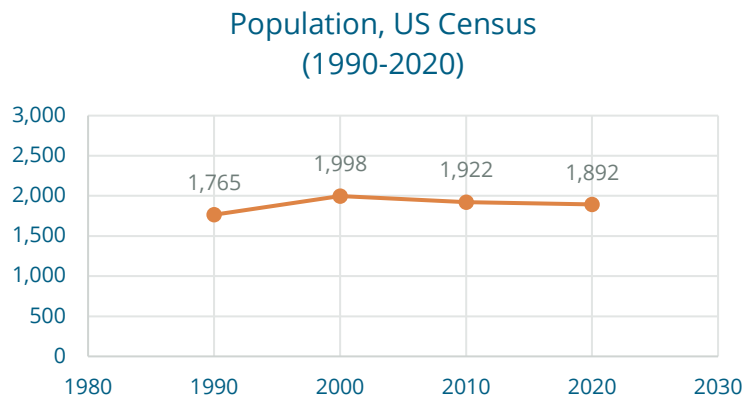
- | | |
|--|---|
| Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.) | Railroads |
| 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.) | Interstate 8 |
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | Highway 85 |
| Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range | Highway 238 |
| Natural Area | Runways |
| Gila River | Military Auxiliary Airfield |
| Gila Bend Canal | Gila Bend Airport |
| Roads | 65db Noise Contour |

BASELINE DEMOGRAPHICS

Historic and Current Population

The Town of Gila Bend currently has an estimated population of 1,783 residents according to 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 10-Year Estimates as shown in **Figure 2**. This represents a 5.8% decrease from 2020. While there was some growth between 1990 and 2000, the Town has experienced population loss since then, equivalent to a 5.3% decrease between 2000 and 2020.

Figure 2. Town of Gila Bend Historical Population



Population, Employment, and Housing Projections

The Town of Gila Bend is projected to grow to 2,662 residents (a 40% increase) by 2040, according to projections calculated by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) in 2023. This represents an increase of 879 residents, which indicates significant growth after decades of population decline. When including the entire proposed MPA, MAG estimates a population of 2,816 in 2040. MAG population projections are driven by proposed and potential developments and the land uses identified in the General Plan. To accommodate this growth, site-based jobs across the MPA are expected to grow from 1,127 to 1,384, and housing units are expected to increase from 937 to 1,115 by 2040.

Educational Attainment

Of Gila Bend residents 25 years old or older, 61% hold a high school diploma, while 8% hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent. 31% do not hold a high school diploma. Educational attainment trends in Gila Bend diverge from Maricopa County trends, with significantly fewer Gila Bend residents holding a bachelor's degree and a higher percentage of Gila Bend residents having less than a high school education. Gila Bend has a slightly higher percentage of residents with a high school diploma than Maricopa County.

Race, Ethnicity, and Languages

The racial makeup of Gila Bend is primarily White at 44%. The ethnic composition of the Town reveals 57% of all residents having an ethnicity of Hispanic or Latino origin. This is much higher than Maricopa County in which 32% of all residents have Hispanic or Latino origin. Outside of English, residents of Gila Bend largely speak Spanish, with 85% of residents over the age of five speaking Spanish. Comparatively, 76% of residents in Maricopa County speak Spanish.

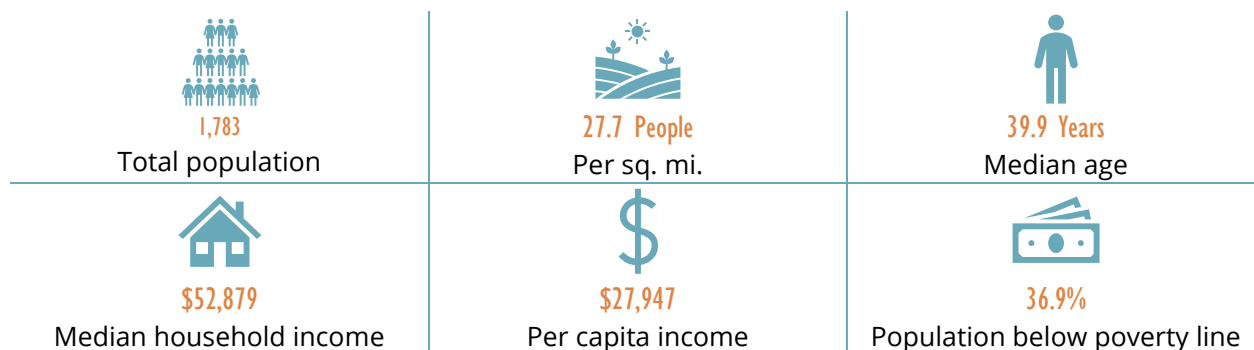
Age

The two largest age groups in Gila Bend are 0-18 (30%) and 25-44 (28%). Gila Bend's *median* age is 39.9, which is slightly higher than the median age of 37.4 in Maricopa County, according to the 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Income

The majority of households in Gila Bend earn less than \$50K annually, with 55% of all households in the Town at or below this income level. This is considerably higher than Maricopa County, where the distribution of households earning less than \$50K annually is 33%, and households earning between \$50K and \$99,999 annually closely follow at 32%. The median household income in Gila Bend is \$42,996 compared to \$72,944 for Maricopa County.

Figure 3. Baseline Demographics by the Numbers



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

The Town of Gila Bend adopted three strategies for the *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* to guide the public input process in an efficient and cost-effective manner. These pivotal strategies illustrated the Town's commitment to a process that encouraged community input throughout the entire project timeframe, increasing the value and public support of the plan while broadening representation among the public and stakeholders.

Public Meetings

The Town of Gila Bend is a small community of just under 2,000 residents. Public meetings at the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council are both a consistent and regular fabric of the community and a required statutory component of updating a community's general plan in Arizona. The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Town Council, and the Council is the legislative body that adopts the general plan. Since the ARS also require the adoption of a community Public Participation Plan, the Town opted to have 3 *in-person public meetings* during the process. In addition to required open meeting law notification and as an enhanced way of notifying the public of these meetings, the Town also used various social media and e-lists to notify the public of these meetings.

Community Interviews

The Town conducted 15 *virtual one-on-one outreach interviews* with community members and stakeholder groups as shown in **Table 1**. These conversations aimed to hear from a broad cross-section of residents, glean the community members' aspirations for the future, and learn their perspectives on challenges and opportunities for the Town of Gila Bend. The goal was to set a foundation for the plan.

Table 1. Community Interviewees

Interviewees		
Luke Air Force Base (LAFB)	National Park Service (NPS)	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Gila Bend Unified School District	Paloma Irrigation District (PID)	Arizona Public Service (APS)
Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD)	Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)	Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)
Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)	Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC)	GB Ranch
Paloma Ranch	Planning and Zoning Commissioner representative	Adelante Healthcare

Other Types of Outreach

The Town of Gila Bend determined that in addition to public meetings and community interviews, there were other ways to get the word out about the *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan*, including via Town e-blasts, the Town website, and social media outlets with electronic comment cards/educational and process flyers, and with hard copy comment cards/educational and process flyers at local businesses and Town facilities.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

Building on the look and feel of the Town's logo and style guide, a project webpage was created and made accessible through the Town's website. This webpage was updated regularly and included pertinent document resources such as the 2017 General Plan, a project Information sheet (see APPENDIX A), the adopted *Public Participation Plan*, and the *Existing Conditions Report* as well as a project timeline and a community questionnaire.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become one of the most prevalent and efficient ways for governments to notify their residents of important information and events in the community. Therefore, the Town utilized social media postings to help promote and solicit input throughout the planning process. Social media postings (see APPENDIX B) were utilized for the distribution of the community questionnaire and for enhanced notification of all public meetings.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

As another means of collecting input, the Town created a community questionnaire (See APPENDIX C) that was distributed in Spanish and English, electronically, and in person at Town Hall. The Community Questionnaire was documented with 107 responses with collective results illustrated on the infographics on the next page.

What is most unique about Gila Bend?



Less populated, small-town feel



Growth potential



Variety of landscapes and scenic open spaces



People, communities, and families



Recreational opportunities

What does Gila Bend do well?



Supportive to local and existing businesses



Responsive public service and customer care



Water and air quality

If you could change anything about Gila Bend, what would it be?



Housing (more housing choices, lower cost)



More retail, entertainment, and restaurants



Better maintained infrastructure, housing, and commercial businesses

Are there any obstacles to Gila Bend's future prosperity?



Unwillingness to change or accept new ideas/technologies/development



Limited funding



Lack of infrastructure or maintenance

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Resident and stakeholder input, received through public meetings, community meetings, and a questionnaire, as well as takeaways from the existing conditions analysis, provided the basis for the *Guiding Principles* shown below. These 6 aspirations will, in turn, guide the direction of goals and policies of each of the topic chapters.

Land Use Guiding Principle: *Enhance the Town's small-town feel and mitigate military encroachment while encouraging strategic and sustainable growth to ensure a balanced mix of land uses.*

Circulation Guiding Principle: *Provide an efficient, safe, and connected multimodal roadway system that supports the desired growth of the Town.*

Public Facilities and Services Guiding Principle: *Ensure that existing and new development in the Town has the appropriate services for water, wastewater, electricity, education, health care, and public safety.*

Environment and Open Space Guiding Principle: *Protect the resiliency of the environment, scenic views, as well as access to open spaces and outdoor recreation.*

Housing and Neighborhoods Guiding Principle: *Encourage affordable options in housing stock and vitality in neighborhoods.*

Economic Growth Guiding Principle: *Value the Town's heritage and cultural diversity while embracing innovation and a prosperous economy.*

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

Major Amendments

1. A major amendment to the Gila Bend 2040 Plan is any proposal that would result in a change that would substantially alter the Town's planned mix or balance of land uses. Per ARS 9-461.06.G and H, major amendments shall be presented at a public hearing within 12 months of when a proposal complete General Plan Amendment application is submitted is made and must be approved by an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of the members of the Town Council. The following criteria are to be used to determine whether a proposed request for rezoning, necessitating a change to the general plan, would be considered a major amendment: Any request for rezoning for development of more than 40 acres that does not conform with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).
2. Any text changes eliminating or changing the intent of a goal or policy.
3. Modifying, adding, or deleting a freeway, highway, or arterial road alignment.

All major General Plan amendments within the high noise or accident potential zone of a military airport or ancillary military facility as defined in ARS Section 28-8461 must follow the process in ARS 9-461.06.H.

Minor Amendments

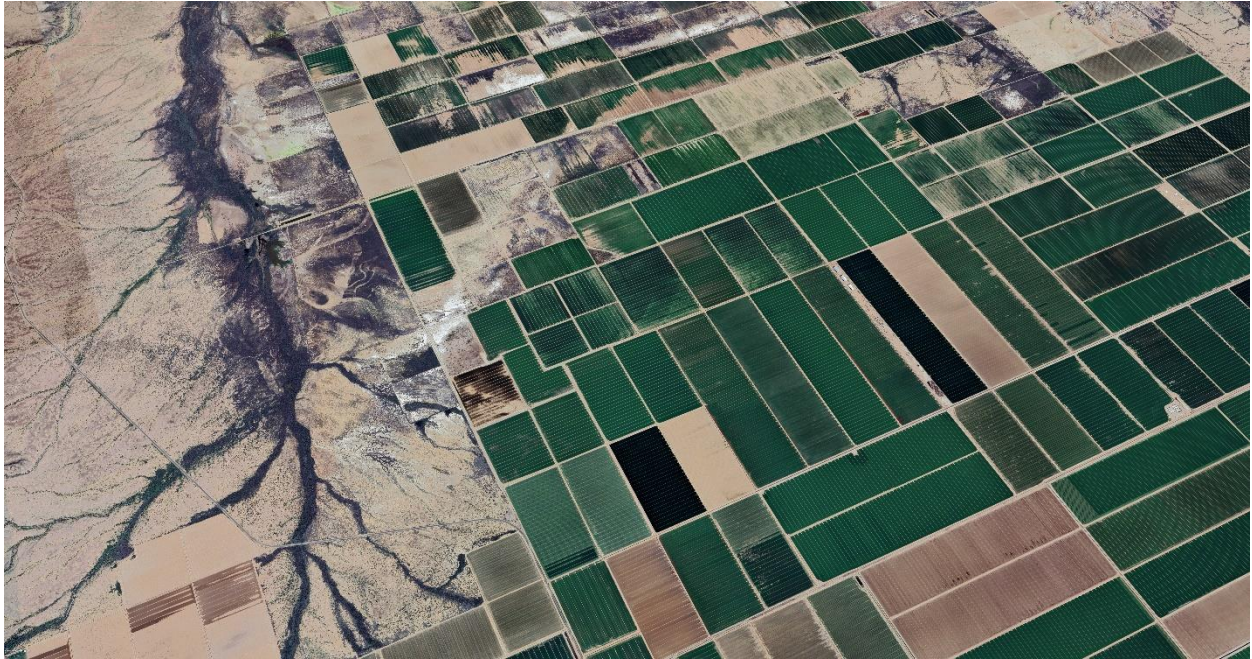
Any change that does not meet the above criteria defining "major" amendments shall be considered a minor amendment that can be considered by the Town staff and Town Council in accordance with the regularly scheduled General Plan amendment process. Amendments to the Plan may be initiated by the Town and/or may be requested by private individuals and/or agencies in accordance with the procedures outlined in ARS.

No Amendments

Changes to formatting, scrivener errors, photos, or updates to the Implementation Chapter do not require amendment.

GENERAL PLAN STRUCTURE

The *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* has 8 chapters. Chapter 1 contains an overview of the plan, its purpose, and its contents, and Chapter 8 contains an action-based implementation plan. Chapters 2 through 7 are topic chapters and include a general overview discussion of existing conditions and an analysis of future needs followed by applicable goals and policies. Required statutory topics or elements are land use and circulation, but the Town has elected to include elements related to public facilities/services, environment and open space, housing and neighborhoods, and economic growth. Goals, policies, and actions, defined in each chapter, stem from the topic guiding principles which are derived from community input. An appendix with community engagement materials, glossary, and focus area maps follows the chapters.



Satellite Image of Gila Bend Crop Land Northwest of Town

Chapter 2 Land Use

LAND USE OVERVIEW

The *Land Use Element* is required per ARS and accordingly addresses: 1) Appropriately designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of such uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space, and other categories of public and private uses of land; 2) Includes a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan; 3) Identifies specific programs and policies that the municipality may use to promote infill or compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged; 4) Includes consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use; 5) Includes policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses; 6) Includes consideration of military airport or ancillary military facility operations and identifies the boundaries of the high noise or accident potential zone; and 7) Includes sources of aggregates from maps that are available from state agencies, information from the Arizona geological survey on how to locate existing mines, consideration of existing mining operations and suitable geologic resources, policies to preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development and policies to avoid incompatible land uses.

LAND USE ANALYSIS

This section will review prominent existing land uses and land ownership in the MPA as well as present future land use designations and mapping based on the community input.

Existing Land Uses

A variety of land uses currently exist within the Town of Gila Bend. The central portion of the Town contains most of the existing residential and commercial development. Outside of this developed area, uses are dispersed and include large lot residential, energy generation facilities, agriculture, and sand and gravel extraction. The Town of Gila Bend has a long agricultural history that dates back centuries. Today, there are over 90,000 acres of land growing alfalfa, cotton, and grain, as well as six dairies. Irrigation canals provide water for agricultural use and bisect the Town. Much of the agricultural land is located along the Gila River alignment. Gila Bend has been noted as the nation's solar capital, setting records for utility solar plant construction. Much of its success in solar plant construction is due to the Town's "Solar Field Overlay Zone," which has reduced barriers to development. The Town also has the nation's second-largest natural gas power plant, a \$1.2 billion installation, a \$50 million paper mill, and Calgon Carbon, a global leader in making water and air safer and cleaner for industry.



Abengoa's Solana



Calgon Carbon

The Barry M. Goldwater Range is located south of the Town and is a crucial military facility for the United States Air Force and Marine Corps, offering vast expanses of airspace and terrain for various training exercises, including air-to-air combat, air-to-ground bombing, and tactical maneuvers. The Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field is located within the MPA adjacent to the Barry M. Goldwater Range and exists to support the Barry M. Goldwater Range Complex. The Auxiliary Field includes an 8,500-foot runway for fixed-wing aircraft and a heliport. LAFB personnel review all proposed projects that may impact the Barry M. Goldwater Range and Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field. LAFB encourages the reduction of residential concentrations within 10 miles of the base following their Graduated Density Concept. The Graduated Density Concept identifies a maximum of 2 dwelling units (DU) per acre from the 65 day/night noise level (DNL) to ½ mile, a maximum of 4 DU per acre from ½ mile to 1 mile; a maximum of 6 DU per acre from 1 to 3 miles; and graduated density beyond 3 miles. The "high noise or accident potential zone," is commonly referred to as the 65 DNL line. Industrial, commercial, utility, and agricultural uses are most likely the ones that will be harmonious with military operations.



LAFB F-35s



Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field

There are also multiple active mines located within the Gila Bend MPA. Most are located along the Gila River and resources mainly include sand and gravel, crushed stone, and salt. While aggregate mining is an important and necessary part of the economy, the noise, light, dust, and traffic from mines can impact the quality of life of nearby residents. To protect aggregate mining and safeguard residents' enjoyment of their property, Gila Bend supports open space buffers, land use transitions, and other techniques that appropriately separate existing and future aggregate mining operations from residential land uses. For more information on potential locations of aggregate resources, refer to the Arizona Geological Survey Document Repository for the current Geologic Map Database for Aggregate Resource Assessment for the Phoenix-Metropolitan Area and surrounding regions.

Existing Land Ownership

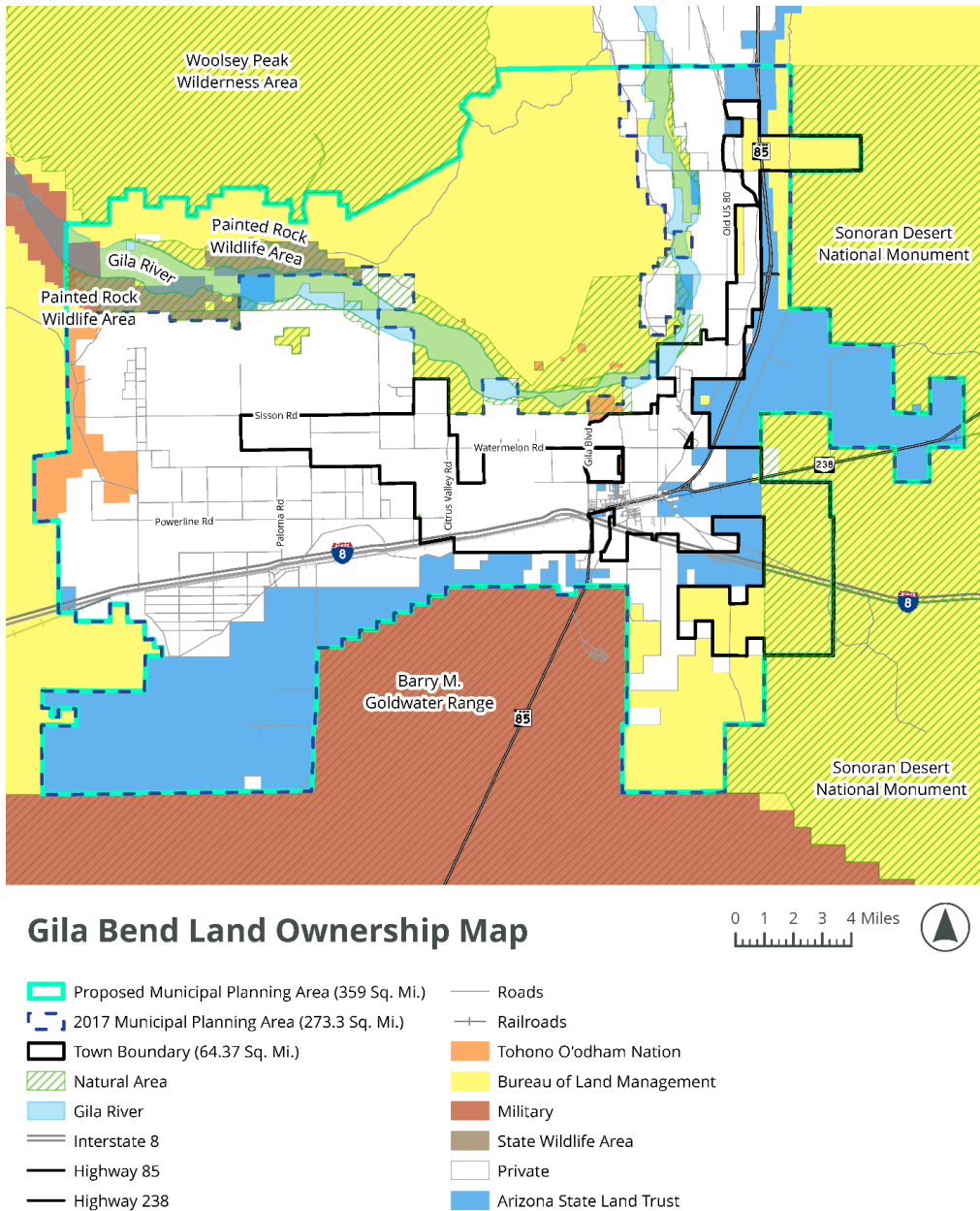
Table 2 and **Figure 4** depict the land ownership in and surrounding the MPA. The two major landowners within the MPA include the BLM and ASLD. The Tohono O'odham Nation (TON) land is also within MPA boundaries. The table below provides a breakdown of land ownership within the MPA. The ASLD manages the state trust lands for the benefit of the Trust Beneficiaries. It is important and statutorily required to provide a minimum of 1 DU per acre for the ASLD property and support a variety of development types and densities.



Table 2. Existing Land Ownership

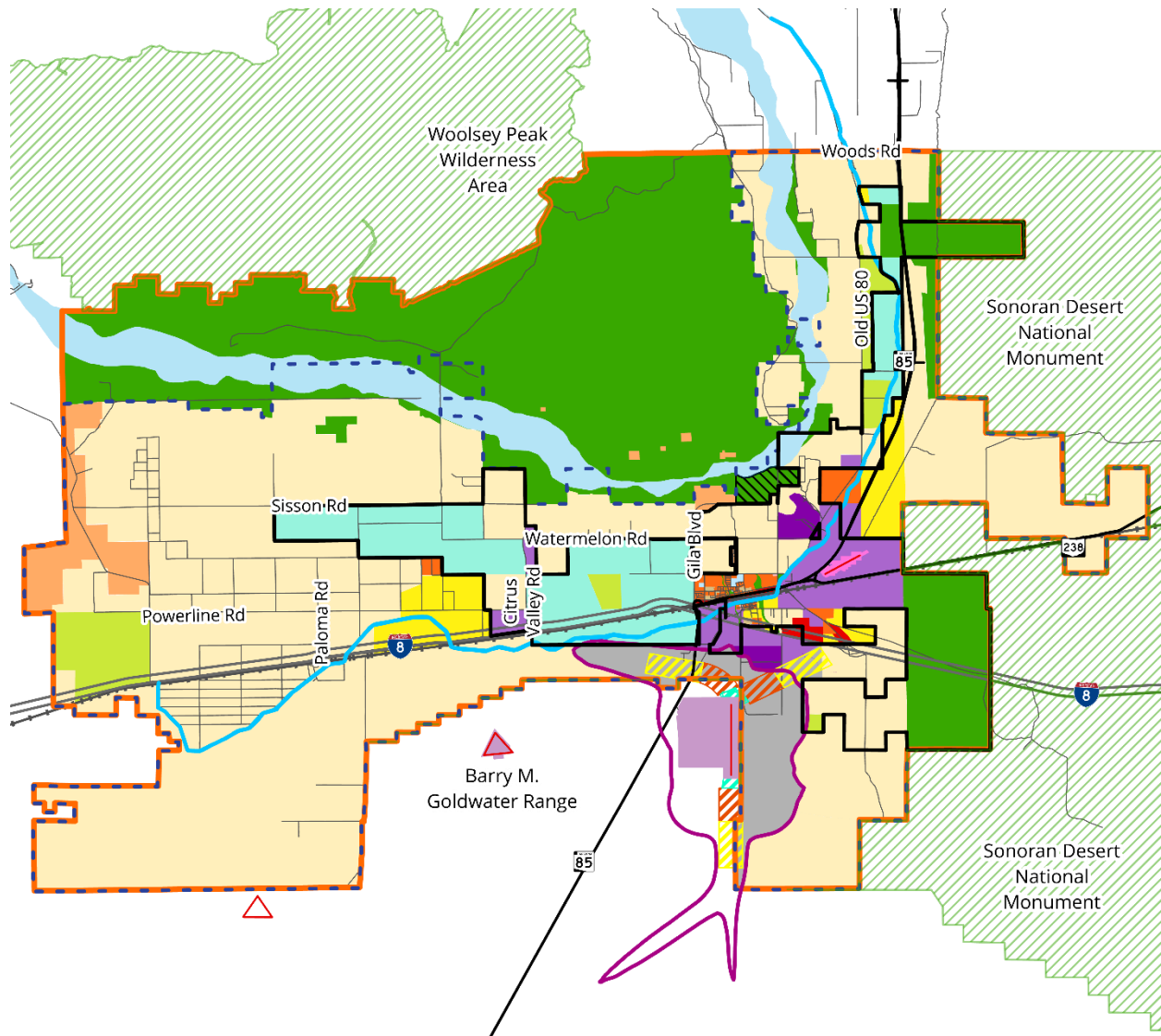
Land Ownership	Area (Acres)	% of MPA
Private	99,244	43.1%
BLM	74,148	32.3%
ASLD	45,981	20.0%
Other	10,517	4.6%

Figure 4. Land Ownership



Future Land Uses

The *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* expands the existing land uses to utilize the following fifteen (15) future land use designations with their respective descriptions and characteristics. The FLUM illustrates these designations in **Figure 5. Future Land Use Map**



Gila Bend 2024 Future Land Use Map

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.) | 65db Noise Contour | Medium-Density Residential |
| 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.) | APZ-I | Neighborhood Business |
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | APZ-II | Parks and Open Space |
| Natural Area | Clear Zone | Public/Semi Public |
| Gila River | Mining | Rural Residential |
| Roads | General Business | Military Compatible |
| Railroads | Heavy Industrial Business Park | Utilities |
| Runways | High-Density Residential | Master Planned Community |
| Military Auxiliary Airfield | Industrial Business Park | Tohono O'odham Nation |
| Gila Bend Airport | Low-Density Residential | Gila Bend Canal |

* All State Trust Land is allowed development of at least one dwelling unit per acre of land, regardless of land use designation.

1. **RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR) (0-1 DU/AC)** – denotes areas to conserve and protect farms and other open land uses, foster orderly growth in rural and agricultural areas, allow for large-lot residential development, and limit incompatibility between developed and agricultural land uses. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are: Rural Zone (AG).

Table 3: Future Land Use Designations

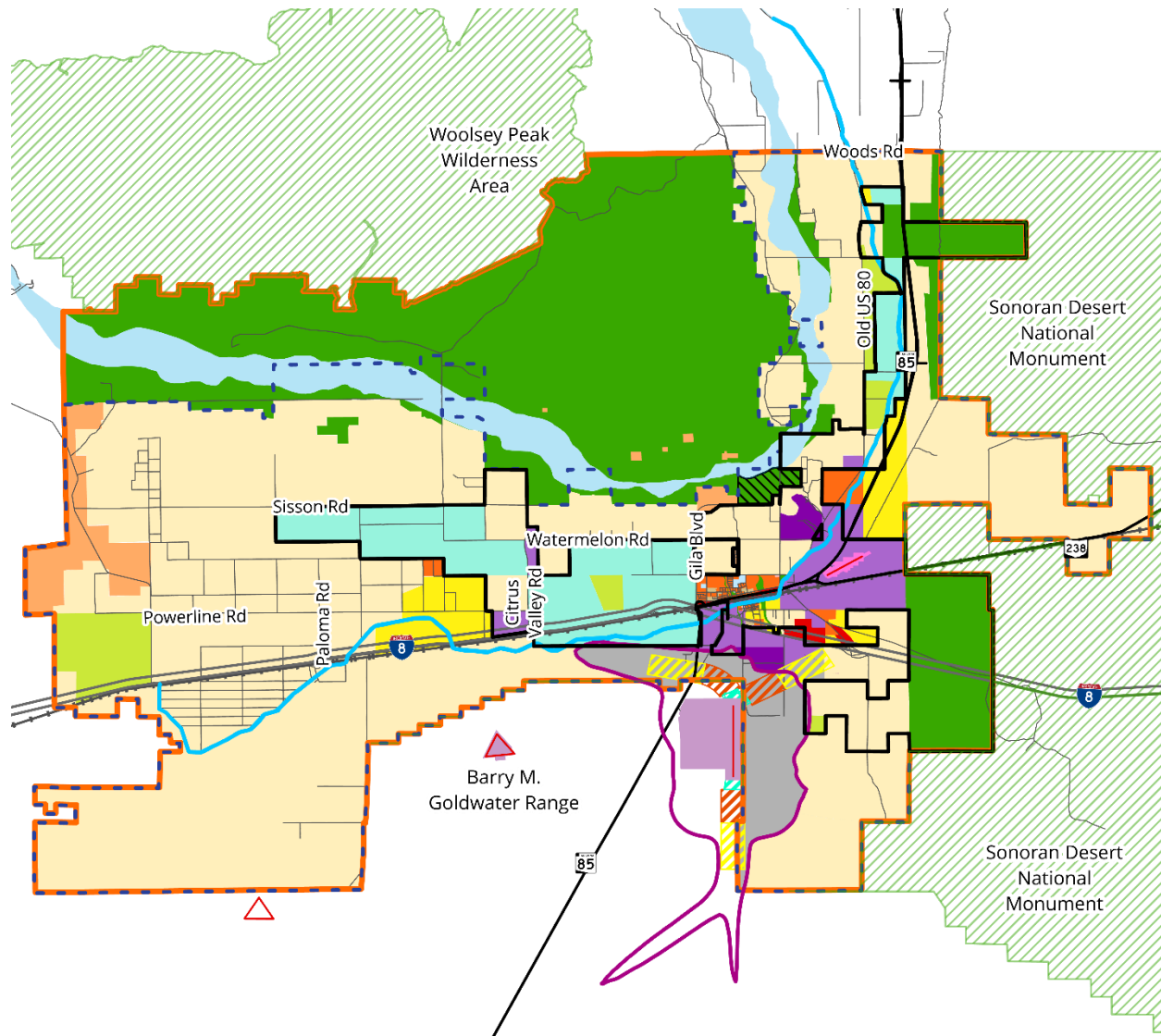
2. **LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR) (1-5 DU/AC)** – denotes areas where single-family detached housing is desired and modular and manufactured homes are accommodated. This residential category allows residences in the LDR category to be generally characterized by one- to two-story structures on large- and medium-sized lots. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are Single-Family Residential (R-1).

2024 Future Land Use Designations	MPA	
	Acreage	Percent
Rural Residential	109,359	47.4%
Parks and Open Space	74,842	32.4%
Master Planned Community	13,610	5.9%
Military Compatible	7,085	3.1%
Industrial Business Park	6,518	2.8%
Low Density Residential	5,418	2.3%
Utilities	5,036	2.2%
Tohono O'Odham	4,493	1.9%
Medium Density Residential	1,600	0.7%
Heavy Industrial Business Park	1,002	0.4%
Mining	689	0.3%
General Business	550	0.2%
Gila Bend Canal	333	0.1%
High Density Residential	88	0.04%
Public/Semi Public	56	0.02%
Neighborhood Business	14	0.01%
Total	230,695	100%
3. **MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR) (5-10 DU/AC)** – denotes areas where higher residential densities are desired. Housing types in this category could include detached and attached single-family residential in product types of townhouses, condominiums, patio homes, court homes, and two- and four-unit buildings. This category also allows for the location of recreational vehicle parks and mobile home parks. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are: Duplex Residential Zone (R-2) and Manufactured Home Residential Zone (R-3).
4. **HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (HDR) (10+ DU/AC)** – denotes areas where multi-family residential development is appropriate. This category is characterized by apartments and condominiums. Zoning districts consistent with this designation include: Four-Plex Residential Zone (R-4) and Multi-Family Residential Zone (R-5).
5. **NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (NB)** – denotes areas where the development of smaller-scale commercial uses can serve adjacent neighborhoods. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are Neighborhood Business Zone (B-1).
6. **GENERAL BUSINESS (GB)** – denotes areas that accommodate a wide variety of businesses in the Town of Gila Bend. The General Business category encompasses the entire range of retail and

service commercial activities including motels, auto dealerships, grocery stores, restaurants, offices, service stations that will serve the region, immediate community, and the tourist/traveler trade. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are Community Business Zone (B-2).

7. **INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS PARK (IBP)** – denotes areas for the development of a mix of warehouse/distribution, assembly (indoor) and storage (indoor), office showrooms, retail sales, and offices. It is also the designation of energy generation sites. The Industrial Business Park area will allow the assembly of components manufactured off site and the sale of these products after they are assembled on site. Offices specifically related to the business are permitted on site. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are: Light Industry Zone (I-1) and Medium Industry Zone (I-2).
8. **HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (HI)** – denotes areas for development where businesses, because of the nature of their manufacturing/storage operations, appearance, noise, odor, glare, traffic generation, or other conditions, may not be compatible with business or industrial business park uses, or do not require visibility from arterial streets. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are: Heavy Industry Zone (I-3).
9. **MASTER PLANNING COMMUNITY (MPC)** – denotes areas that are guided by separate development approvals (i.e., GB Ranch, Merrill Paloma Ranch, etc.) establishing the land use, density, and intensity of development and the character of the area. Zoning districts consistent with this designation are: Planned Community (PC) and Planned Area Development (PAD). Zoning districts identified in MPC areas (PC and PAD) may be modified as to orientation and location of zoning entitlements, but the intensity of allowed zoning districts and standards must not exceed the originally approved zoning for the area, or the changes must be reviewed in relation to the general plan.
10. **PUBLIC/SEMI PUBLIC (PSP)** – denotes areas for facilities for government, military (non-ARS Title 28 areas) education, religious worship, cemeteries, social gathering, public safety, residential care, and large-scale medical care which serves the general public.
11. **UTILITIES (U)** – denotes areas for electric generating plants, solar fields, water and wastewater treatment facilities, and associated offices and accessory equipment.
12. **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (POS)** – denotes dedicated active and passive recreational facilities and natural area open space facilities.
13. **MILITARY COMPATIBLE (MC)** – Applicable only within ARS Title 28 defined High Noise or Accident Potential Zone (HNAPZ). It allows only those uses determined to be compatible and consistent with the HNAPZ of a military airport or ancillary military facility.
14. **TOHONO O'ODHAM (TON)** – Applicable only to land held by the Tohono O'odham sovereign nation.

Figure 5. Future Land Use Map



Gila Bend 2024 Future Land Use Map

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.) | 65db Noise Contour | Medium-Density Residential |
| 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.) | APZ-I | Neighborhood Business |
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | APZ-II | Parks and Open Space |
| Natural Area | Clear Zone | Public/Semi Public |
| Gila River | Mining | Rural Residential |
| Roads | General Business | Military Compatible |
| Railroads | Heavy Industrial Business Park | Utilities |
| Runways | High-Density Residential | Master Planned Community |
| Military Auxiliary Airfield | Industrial Business Park | Tohono O'odham Nation |
| Gila Bend Airport | Low-Density Residential | Gila Bend Canal |

* All State Trust Land is allowed development of at least on dwelling unit per acre of land, regardless of land use designation.

LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

Land Use Guiding Principle: *Enhance the Town's small-town feel and support military operations while encouraging strategic and sustainable growth to ensure a balanced mix of land uses.*

Land Use Goal 1: Promote and maintain a balanced, sustainable, and high-quality land use mix within Gila Bend with the appropriate level of services for water, wastewater, education, and public safety that is compatible with adjacent land uses, well integrated with the transportation system, and sensitive to the natural environment.

Land Use Goal 2: Improve the community's image and revitalize existing buildings while nurturing and enhancing small-town character.

Land Use Goal 3: Protect the mission of LAFB as well as the public health, safety, and welfare in areas around Barry M. Goldwater Range and Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field.

Land Use Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports development that enhances the existing community by providing the appropriate "small rural town" scale and character.

Land Use Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports continued coordination with federal, state, and county agencies to ensure a balanced mix of land uses in the MPA.

Land Use Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports efforts to preserve major floodways as open space and/or in a natural state.

Land Use Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend supports minimizing the impacts of development on significant natural features.

Land Use Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports land use density and intensity that corresponds to existing and/or planned infrastructure capacity and natural resource capacity.

Land Use Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports land use development that mitigates impacts to air quality and that is oriented to promote renewable energy and sustainable development.

Land Use Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports new and existing aggregate resource extraction that is well buffered and encourages new proximate development compatible with the continuing operation of aggregate resource extraction. The Town will require mitigation and remediation plans for new aggregate resource extraction.

Land Use Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend supports and will only approve development that meets the statutory requirements within the HNAPZ and the graduated density concept around the HNAPZ of Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field. The Town will require coordination between developers and LAFB within and proximate to these areas. Additionally, the areas surrounding the HNAPZ are supported to

be in concert with LAFB's Graduated Density Concept with densities from the 65 Ldn (noise contours) at 0-2 du/ac to ½ mile, 0-4 du/ac from ½ to 1 mile, and 0-6 du/ac from 1 to 3 miles.



Gila Bend Municipal Airport

Land Use Policy 9: The Town of Gila Bend supports protecting operations at the Gila Bend Municipal Airport from land uses that are incompatible with airport operations.

Land Use Policy 10: The Town of Gila Bend supports compact and infill development, where possible, to more efficiently manage the resulting cost expansion of infrastructure to minimize cost of operations and maintenance.

Land Use Policy 11: The Town of Gila Bend supports the location of higher-density residential and recreational vehicle parks near business and light industrial land uses.

Land Use Policy 12: The Town of Gila Bend supports buffering residential uses from business and industrial land uses that have intense noise or other impacts that would degrade the quality of adjacent residential use.

Land Use Policy 13: The Town of Gila Bend supports aesthetically designed developments that will be attractive and meet community needs.

Land Use Policy 14: Through regulatory codes, community programs, and other techniques, the Town of Gila Bend supports a built environment that enhances the health, safety and welfare of the residents, business owners, and visitors.

Land Use Policy 15: The Town of Gila Bend supports the preservation of historic buildings.



Historic Stout's Hotel



Old Highway 80 Art Sign in Gila Bend

Chapter 3 Circulation

The *Circulation Element* is required per ARS, and accordingly, this chapter illustrates the general location and extent of existing and proposed freeways, arterial and collector streets, bicycle routes, and any other modes of transportation, as appropriate. Additionally, the Circulation Element is intended to support and correlate with the Land Use Element, providing goals and policies to ensure that the transportation network is safe, efficient, and convenient for residents.

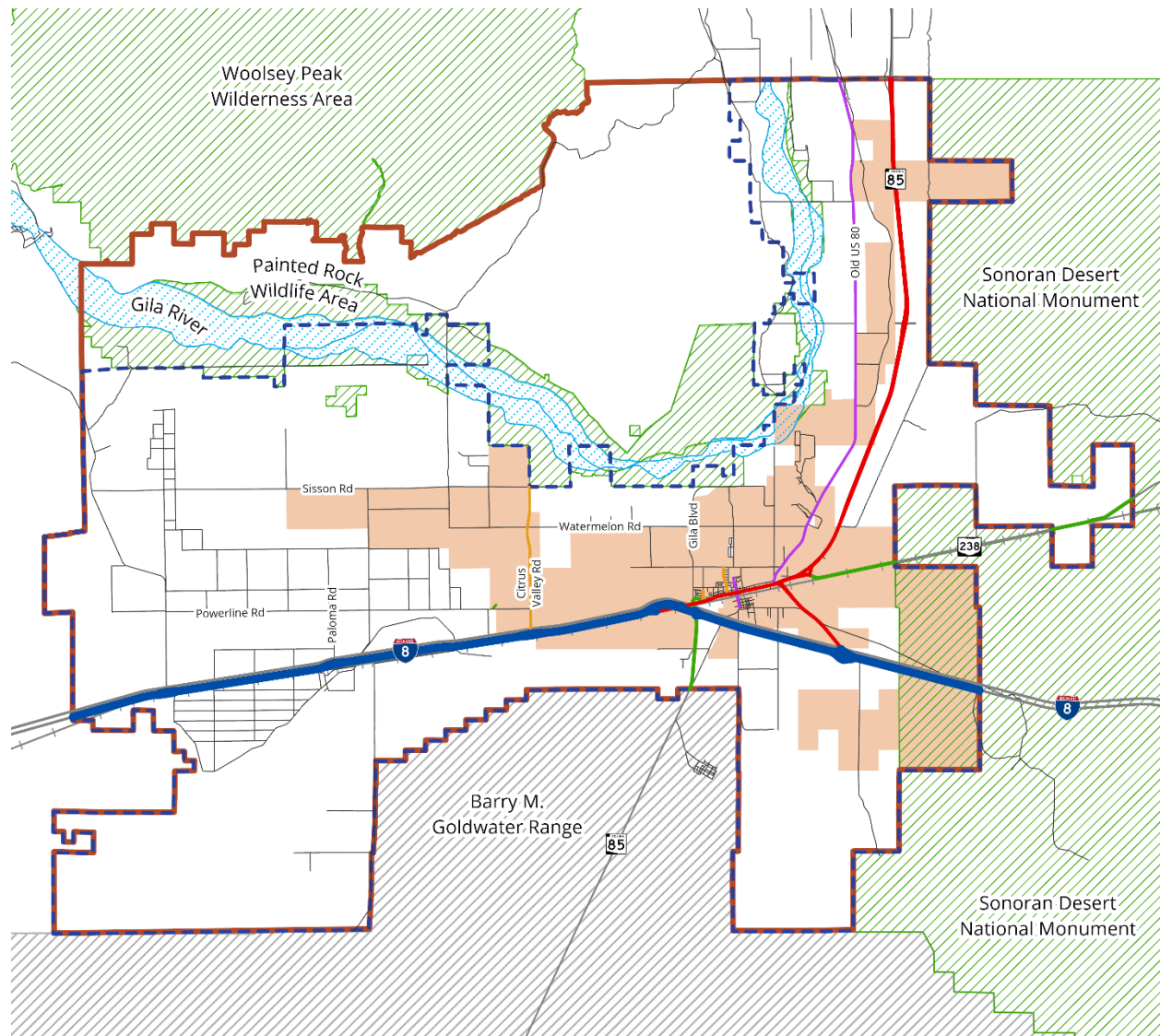
CIRCULATION ANALYSIS

This section covers the existing roadway network, freight, and multimodal transportation as well as strategies for circulation.

Roadway Network and Freight

The existing roadway network ranges from interstate highways to small, local roadways. Interstate 8 (I-8) runs east-west through Gila Bend, providing long-distance access. Pima Street (also known as Business Route 8 or B-8) is the main east-west thoroughfare for Gila Bend, connecting to State Route (SR) 85 and Maricopa Road to the east toward Maricopa. SR 85 connects south toward Ajo and north toward Buckeye. The existing roadway network and its corresponding functional classification is shown in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6. Functional Classification



Functional Classification

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local
- 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.)
- Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.)
- Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.)

Roadway ownership in Gila Bend is heavily influenced by the Town's history with the ASLD. A significant portion of the Town's incorporated limits are located on former State Trust land, and the right-of-way for many roads are still within State Trust land, including portions of I-8, Pima Street, and Gila Boulevard.

There are two railroads in the Town limits. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Sunset Route runs adjacent to I-8, and the Tucson, Cornelia, and Gila Bend Railroad (TCGBR) runs parallel to SR 85. UPRR provides both freight services and passenger rail services, via Amtrak. The TCGBR is not currently operational. There is one airport, the Gila Bend Municipal Airport, located in eastern Gila Bend, near the intersection of SR 85 and Maricopa Road. The airport is owned by the Town and is classified as a general aviation airport.

Multimodal Transportation

The existing multimodal network is shown in **Figure 8**. Active transportation infrastructure contains limited pedestrian infrastructure and no bicycle infrastructure. Sidewalks are inconsistent along roadway segments, presenting significant accessibility barriers to those with disabilities. Paved shoulders are present along SR 85, although it provides very little protection for cyclists along a high-speed corridor.

Valley Metro operates one commuter route, Route 685, providing service between Ajo, Gila Bend, and Phoenix. The route serves three bus stops in Gila Bend. The service provides five runs daily on weekdays and two runs on Saturday. The Town operates the Solar Express, a demand-response service for registered riders who are disabled or elderly for trips within town limits. It provides service to the Senior Center, Gila Bend Resource Center, and medical/social service appointments, as well as monthly pre-scheduled shopping trips to Buckeye and Avondale.

Amtrak passenger rail does not have a station in Gila Bend. There are two routes that use the UPRR through the Town, the Sunset Limited route, and Texas Eagle Route. There is an opportunity for a future connection to regional passenger rail in the future.

Figure 7. Circulation by the Numbers







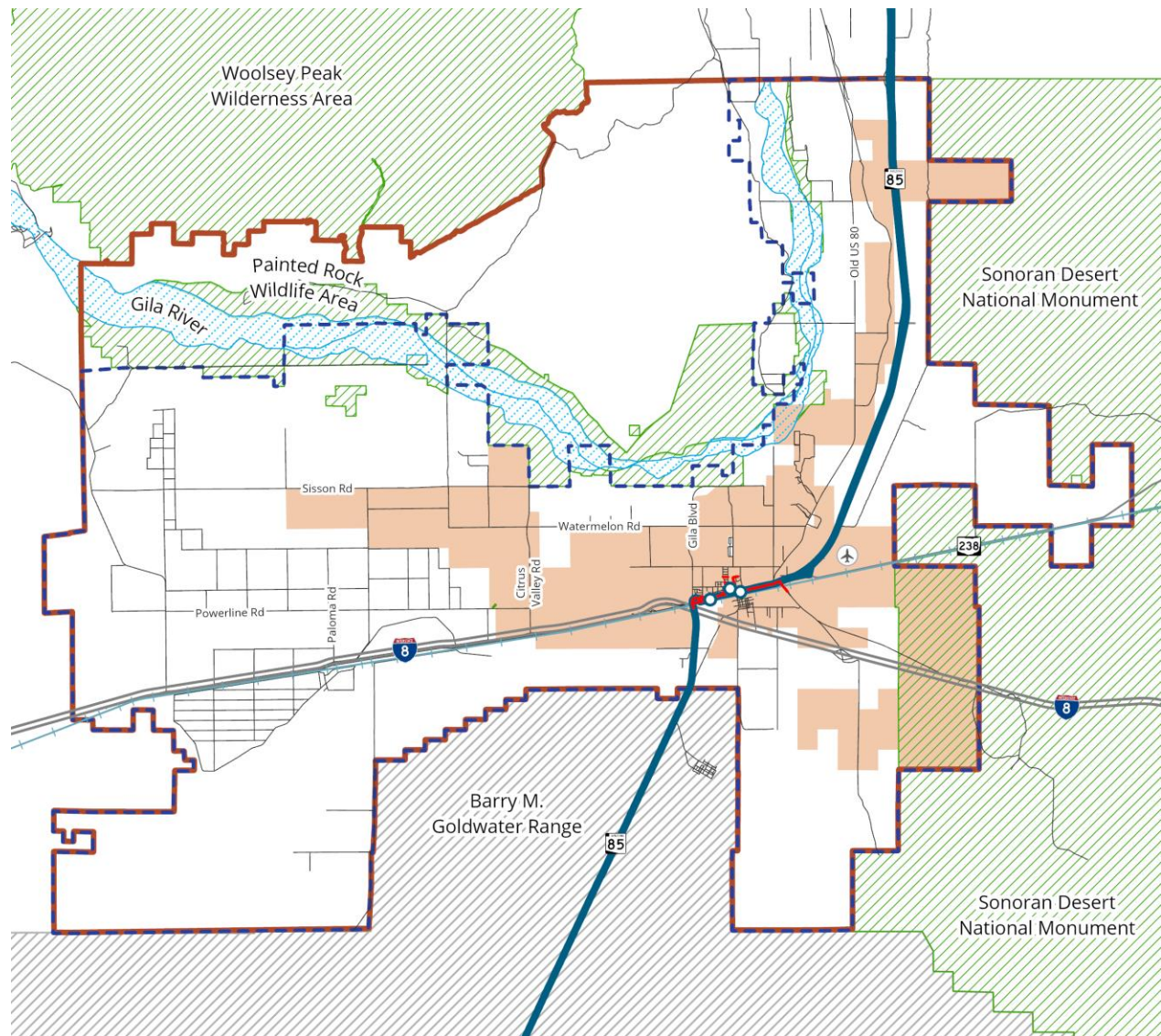
 35+ miles of ASLD-owned roadway	 4.5 miles of sidewalk	 1 at-grade railroad crossing
 1 demand-response service for seniors and the disabled	 3 bus stops for Route 685 in the MPA	 1 airport in the MPA

Figure 8. Existing Multimodal Network



Active Transportation, Transit, Rail, and Aviation



- Bus Stop
- Bus Route
- Sidewalk
- ✈ Gila Bend Municipal Airport
- Railroads
- 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.)
- Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.)
- Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.)
- Natural Area
- Wash
- Roads

STRATEGIES FOR CIRCULATION

Through analysis of existing conditions of community input, the Town has the following six strategies aimed at maintaining and enhancing circulation within the Town.

1. **DIVERSIFY ROADWAY OWNERSHIP.** The roadway ownership in Gila Bend will bring challenges in improving and expanding roadway infrastructure in the future, especially for roadway segments owned by ASLD. The Town should investigate funding to purchase right-of-way in the areas where the surrounding land has been sold to private property owners.
2. **ENHANCE RAILROAD CROSSINGS.** At-grade crossings present safety and quality of life impacts, due to the hazard of collisions with trains, impacts to emergency response from blocked crossings, noise from train horns, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The Town should work to upgrade the existing at-grade crossings to grade-separated crossings.
3. **IMPROVE SIDEWALK CONNECTIVITY.** Many sidewalks in Gila Bend have gaps or are in poor condition, causing significant accessibility barriers to those with disabilities. The Town should pursue grant funding to build out the sidewalk network to current Maricopa Association of Government (MAG) standards.
4. **REDUCE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS.** The lack of active transportation facilities, paired with barriers such as I-8, UPRR, and the canal system, makes it difficult for residents to walk or bicycle to and from many destinations. Identifying safe crossings of these features should be prioritized to make more trips by foot or on a bicycle possible.
5. **ACCESS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.** Due to the presence of Amtrak service on the UPRR, there is an opportunity for future connection to the national passenger rail network in Gila Bend, which could provide access to Los Angeles to the west and Tucson to the east.
6. **CONTINUED COORDINATION WITH STATE AND COUNTY AGENCIES.** Due to the unknown nature of the re-alignment of SR-85, the Town should continue to collaborate with ADOT and MAG for the timing and location of this future freeway.

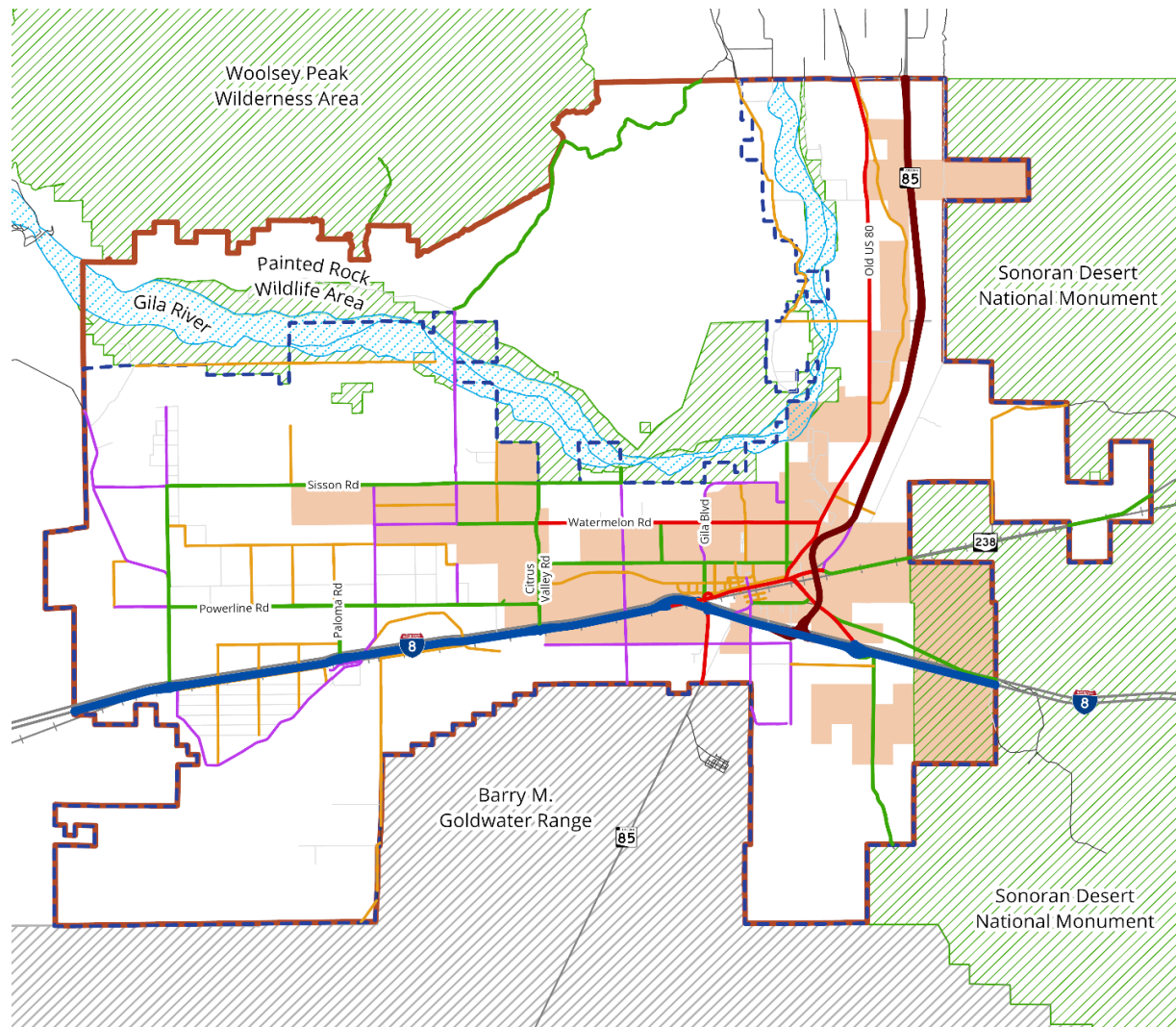


Entering Gila Bend Sign South of Interstate 8

FUTURE CIRCULATION NETWORK

The potential built-out roadway network, shown in **Figure 9**, was developed to identify transportation needs in Gila Bend. The network is intended to accommodate future ultimate traffic conditions and shows additional roadways that will serve the area within the MPA boundaries. Roadway alignments are flexible and subject to change based on future development as well as State and County funding priorities. In particular, the re-alignment of SR-85 is shown with the preferred alternative, but this alignment remains conceptual and the timing unknown; therefore, it has not been reflected on the Future Land Use Map. If at such a time, ADOT moves forward with more definitive plans, then the Town can opt to amend their general plan either in or outside the 10-year update cycle.

Figure 9. Buildout Transportation Network



Built-Out Network

- Interstate
- Other Freeway
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local
- - - 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.)
- - - Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.)
- Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.)



CIRCULATION GOALS AND POLICIES

Circulation Guiding Principle: *Maintain a safe, convenient, and efficient system for all road uses.*

Circulation Goal 1: Promote safety through the Safe System Approach to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes in Gila Bend.

Circulation Goal 2: Improve the efficiency and quality of Gila Bend's roadway network to accommodate existing needs and future growth.

Circulation Goal 3: Develop connected networks of alternative transportation modes, including walking, bicycling, and transit.

Circulation Goal 4: Reduce the negative impacts of freight movement through Gila Bend while continuing to serve truck, rail, and aviation needs.

Circulation Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports tracking crash data to identify high-crash locations and implement countermeasures to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

Circulation Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports pursuing state and federal funding opportunities to implement safety countermeasures, such as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

Circulation Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports preserving and protecting roadway rights-of-way to implement the built-out network of functionally classified roadways, which will improve the efficiency of movement between residential areas and activity centers.

Circulation Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend supports requiring developers to construct transportation improvements in accordance with the built-out network and to implement capacity improvements identified by traffic impact analyses.

Circulation Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports establishing a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that identifies street improvement projects, estimated costs, implementation timing, and revenue sources.

Circulation Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports developing a complete streets policy that ensures all modes of travel are considered when building new roadways or while improving existing roadways.

Circulation Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports expansion of regional transit services to the Phoenix-Metropolitan Area and to improve access to existing transit stops with park-and-ride facilities.

Circulation Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend supports the evaluation of the need for additional local transit circulation in Gila Bend to improve access to activity centers and public services.

Circulation Policy 9: The Town of Gila Bend supports establishing an integrated network of off-street bicycle and hiking trails to improve access to recreation and to require new development to implement their portion of the planned trail system.

Circulation Policy 10: The Town of Gila Bend supports developing a well-connected sidewalk network and require Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility for all curb ramps and transit facilities.

Circulation Policy 11: The Town of Gila Bend supports the establishment of new railroad lines along the SR 85 corridor to the Phoenix-Metropolitan Area and Mexico.

Circulation Policy 12: The Town of Gila Bend supports development of intermodal facilities and designated truck routes connecting them to the state highway system.

Circulation Policy 13: The Town of Gila Bend supports mitigation of the congestion, noise, and safety impacts of at-grade railroad crossings through grade separation or enhanced safety infrastructure.

Circulation Policy 14: The Town of Gila Bend supports utilizing available state and federal resources to implement capital improvements identified in the Gila Bend Airport Master Plan



Paloma Elementary School

Chapter 4 Public Facilities and Services

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW

The *Public Facilities and Services Element* is not required per ARS but is an important focus of Gila Bend and reviews the coverage of existing utilities and public facilities in the Town and provides related goals and policies to ensure that the necessary public facilities and utilities are serving the community adequately as it grows. Public facilities are shown on **Figure 12** and a snapshot of public services is shown below.

Figure 10. Public Facilities and Services by the Numbers



Schools

Two school districts serve the community: Gila Bend Unified School District (GBUSD) #24 and the Paloma School District #94. GBUSD consists of Bend Elementary School (Kindergarten through 8th grade) and Gila Bend High School (9th through 12th grades). The Paloma School District has Kiser Elementary School (Kindergarten through 8th grade), and enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year, as reported by the Arizona Department of Education, is shown in **Table 4**. There are no post-secondary or vocational facilities within the MPA. The closest community colleges to Gila Bend are in the Phoenix-Metropolitan Area.

Table 4. School Enrollment

School	Enrollment
Gila Bend Elementary School	313
Gila Bend High School	156
Kiser Elementary School	112
Total	581

Public Safety Services

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) provides police protection in Gila Bend and the surrounding area. MCSO maintains one sheriff's station in Gila Bend, located along Pima Street. The Gila Bend Fire Department (GFPD) is a volunteer fire department that provides fire protection and emergency medical services to Town and the surrounding area. The GFPD has one fire station, located on Papago Street.

Utility Services

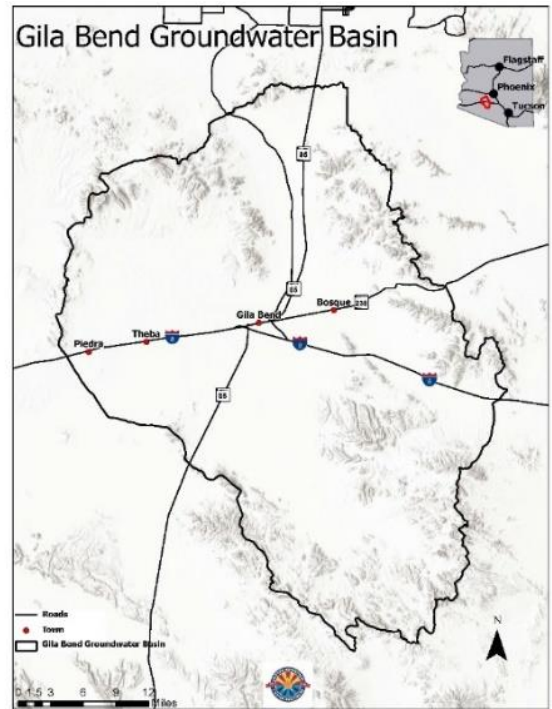
Electric services are provided by Arizona Public Service (APS) for the entirety of the MPA. Gila Bend has become a major source of solar power due to large amounts of flat, suitable land in the MPA. Major solar generating stations are located along I-8 in the western reaches of the MPA and between SR 85 and the Gila River in the northern reaches of the MPA.

The Town of Gila Bend owns and operates its own community water system. Water is supplied via groundwater from four wells located 3 miles south of central Gila Bend. Gila Bend has a water treatment facility that utilizes reverse osmosis to treat the groundwater prior to being sent to the water distribution system. Existing municipal water demands are divided predominantly between residential and commercial customers. Irrigation water demands for agricultural use are typically provided by one of two canals: the Enterprise Canal to the west and the Gila Bend Canal to the east, and they are generally not supplied by groundwater. The Town of Gila Bend owns and operates its own sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The Gila Bend WWTP receives domestic wastewater from residential and commercial customers. The WWTP is permitted to discharge up to 0.7 million gallons per day (MGD) of treated wastewater to a nearby wash that is a tributary of the Gila River.

As future growth and development occurs in the MPA, special consideration must be taken to properly manage existing water resources and plan for future water resources well into the future. To prevent excessive withdrawal of groundwater sources, the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)

has identified areas in the state with population centers that heavily rely on groundwater, known as Active Management Areas (AMAs). AMAs are the highest level of groundwater management designated by ADWR to protect the finite groundwater supplies across Arizona. There are currently six AMAs across the state, and ADWR is considering designating the Gila Bend groundwater basin as the seventh, as shown in **Figure 11**. The Gila Bend Basin has Arizona's most severe projected water shortages, with groundwater levels dropping between 40 feet and over 100 feet. Along with this water level drop, significant land subsidence is expected in the northern and western portions of the MPA (roughly where current agricultural operations are located). If an AMA is established for the Gila Bend groundwater basin, a management plan specific to the Gila Bend AMA will be established.

Figure 11. Gila Bend Groundwater Basin



Community Facilities

Gila Bend hosts four community facilities that provide family, educational, and informational services and critical free amenities such as internet, public restrooms, and meeting rooms as shown in **Table 5**.

The Gila Bend Family Resource Center is an integral community asset in supporting the families of the Town. The Center prioritizes parent education, early childhood literacy, nutrition, health, and youth activity. The Center stocks several physical resources, such as baby and hygiene bags. In addition to the family services provided, broader services include behavioral and counseling services, transportation services, and suicide prevention. The Gila Bend Community Center also offers two vital sub-facilities: the recreation room and the senior center. The senior center offers nutritious meals at noon Monday through Friday for an optional low-cost suggested contribution of \$2. Non-seniors and guests are allowed to eat with seniors for \$3. The senior center also hosts several activities before lunch to keep residents mentally and physically engaged at every stage of life. The community facilities listed below are interspersed with other community assets, such as local parks and recreational facilities, allowing residents to have well-rounded lives. These facilities are generally concentrated on the west side of the Town.

Table 5. Community Facilities

Facility	Amenities
Gila Bend Community Center	Kitchen facilities, meeting rooms, pavilion, picnic areas, restrooms
Gila Bend Library	Internet, computers, restrooms
Gila Bend Family Resource Center	Internet, meeting rooms, restrooms, tables, seating
Gila Bend Visitor Center and Museum	Information, restrooms



Gila Bend Library



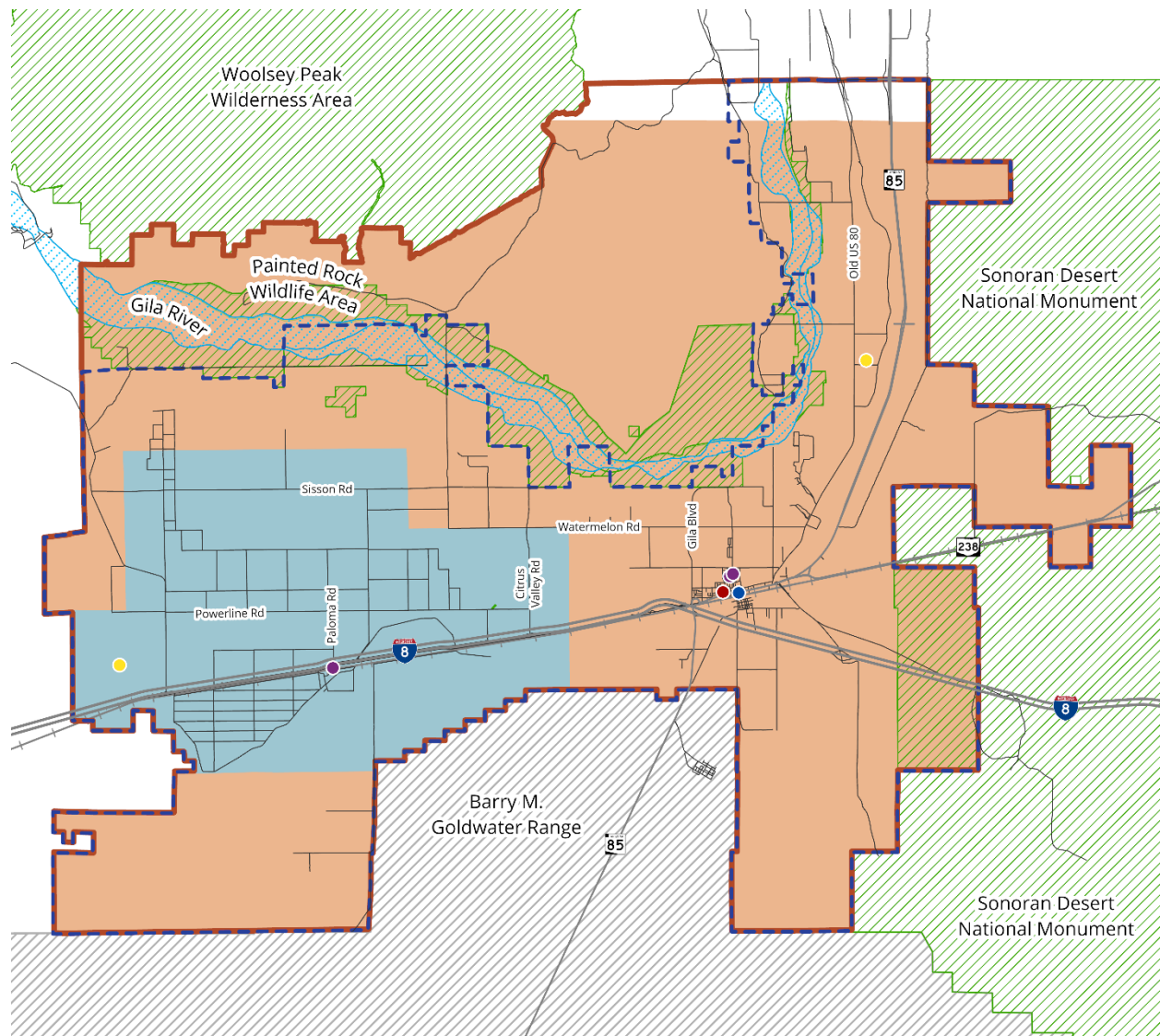
Gila Bend Community Center

STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Through analysis of existing conditions of community input, the Town has the following six strategies aimed at providing exceptional public facilities and services for existing and new residents.

1. **ENSURE PUBLIC SERVICES.** The MCSO and Gila Bend Fire Department (GBFD) each have one station in Gila Bend. Although this may meet current demand, Gila Bend should ensure that public services expand congruently with development to ensure public safety is accessible to all residents.
2. **EXPAND PRIMARY EDUCATION.** As the Town grows, the number of educational facilities may need to be expanded. Additional primary education facilities may need to be developed to meet the needs of the community.
3. **DESIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLING.** The Town has no post-secondary schooling options, with the closest college being in the Phoenix-Metropolitan Area. A lack of secondary education can result in a loss of college-age residents and limit the growth and quality of life of the community.
4. **CAPITALIZE ON SOLAR POWER.** Gila Bend has established itself as a capital for solar power due to the availability of flat land. This has brought significant industrial development to the Town.
5. **PRIORITIZE WATER AVAILABILITY.** The Town sources its water from the Gila Bend Basin. This basin has been identified as the most severe projected water shortage in the state. The Town should partner with ADWR to ensure groundwater resilience.
6. **ENHANCE AND MAINTAIN COMMUNITY FACILITIES.** The Town should continue to maintain high services levels within their community facilities and seek to enhance services based on community needs.

Figure 12. Public Facilities



Public Facilities

- Gila Bend Fire Department Station
- Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Station
- School
- Solar Facility
- Gila Bend Unified School District
- Paloma School District
- 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.)
- Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.)
- Natural Area
- Wash

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOALS AND POLICIES

Public Facilities and Services Guiding Principle: *Grow a functional, sustainable, and cost-effective system of public facilities and services.*

Public Facilities and Services Goal 1: Provide sufficient emergency services, including police, fire, and medical access to Gila Bend residents.

Public Facilities and Services Goal 2: Support a high-quality primary, secondary, and post-secondary education system and community facilities.

Public Facilities and Services Goal 3: Responsibly manage existing water resources and diversify water portfolio to meet current and future demands.

Public Facilities and Services Goal 4: Identify and protect sufficient water resources to meet current and future demands.

Public Facilities and Services Goal 5: Maintain existing water and wastewater treatment infrastructure to support growth and explore future water reuse opportunities.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports involving the MCSO and GBFD in rezoning, site plans, and building permit requests to evaluate impacts on emergency response times, fire protection, and prevention.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports tracking emergency response times to evaluate the impact of future developments or proposed annexations.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports meeting applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards, as well as providing education and prevention programming, inspections, and fire code enforcement.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend supports exploring, with the Gila Bend Unified School District and Paloma Elementary School District, the development of educational and recreational facilities.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports working with Maricopa County Community Colleges and local high schools to promote college-level classes and access to college campuses from Gila Bend.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports tracking student enrollment by grade level and facility to ensure sufficient classroom capacity as the Town grows.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports enhancing community facilities by maintaining and adding services needed by the community.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend supports development in areas where public services and facilities exist or can be extended in an efficient manner.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 9: The Town of Gila Bend supports requiring developers to install all public utilities and facilities to support the needs generated by their development to state and municipal standards and participate in cost recovery for oversizing facilities where mutually agreeable.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 10: The Town of Gila Bend supports providing resiliency and redundancy in the water system to ensure adequate water pressure and fire flows.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 11: The Town of Gila Bend supports promoting water conservation through rainwater harvesting, xeriscaping, irrigation system best practices, and water-conserving plumbing fixtures.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 12: The Town of Gila Bend supports collaborating with ADWR to give input to address projected water shortages and minimize the impacts of land subsidence.

Public Facilities and Utilities Policy 13: The Town of Gila Bend supports developing a plan to reuse treated water for agricultural, industrial, and landscaping purposes to reduce overall potable water demand.



Sonoran Desert National Monument

Chapter 5 Environment and Open Space

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE OVERVIEW

The *Environment and Open Space Element* is not required per ARS but is important to the Town of Gila Bend to ensure that their community is capitalizing on their abundant natural resources while promoting stewardship and resiliency, providing access to the scenic viewsheds, parks, and recreation in and around the Town.

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

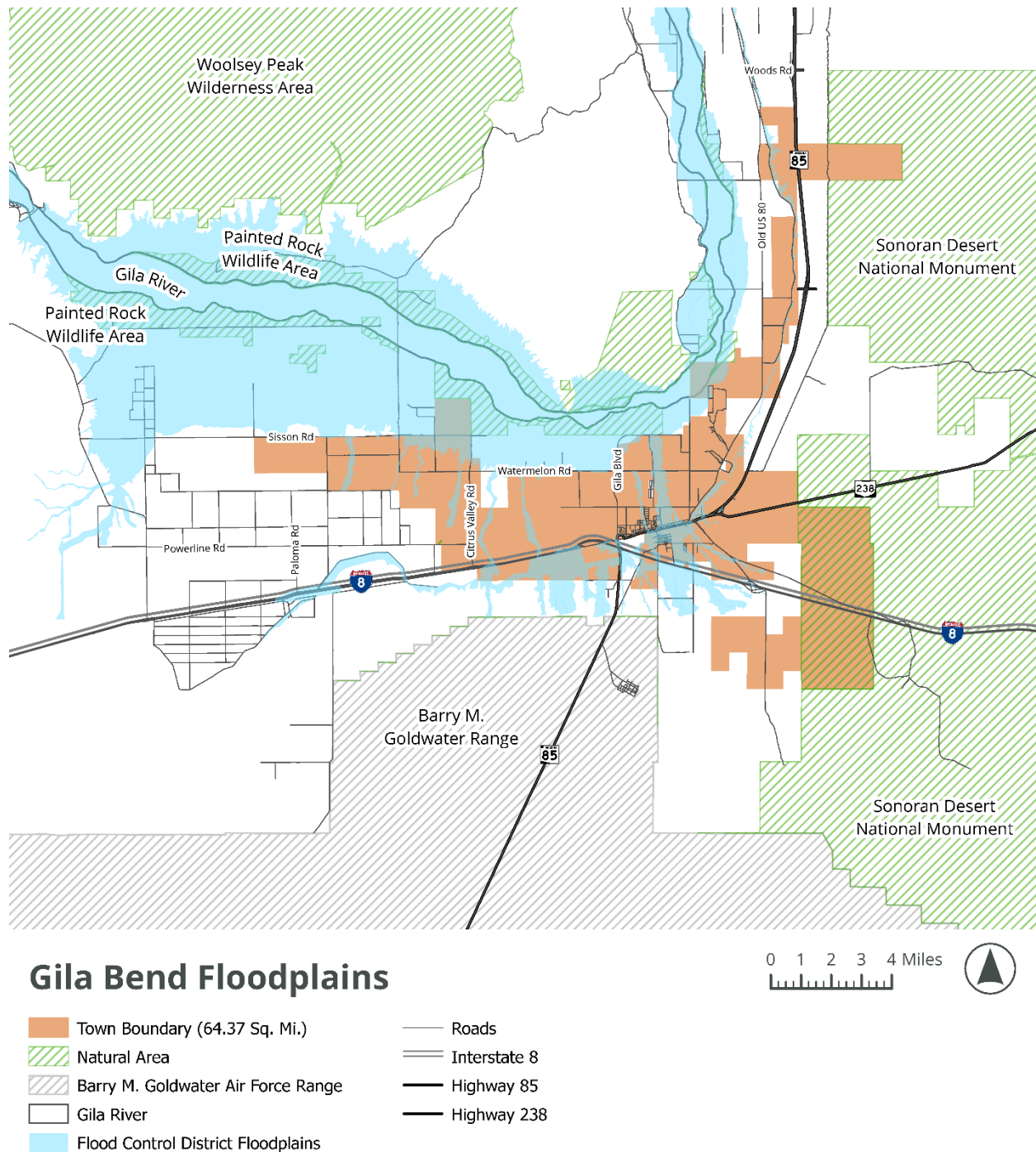
This section focuses on illustrating existing floodplains and energy generation resources to assist in integrating disaster mitigation, resilience, and renewable energy into future development, as well as an inventory of natural open space features, wildlife corridors, parks, and recreation facilities with an emphasis on conservation and preservation, as well as maintenance and enhancement.

Floodplains

In August of 2021, extreme seasonal monsoons resulted in devastating flooding in the Town. More than 100 homes and businesses were damaged by floodwaters, and 30 community members were rescued in response efforts. The damage displaced over 100 residents and claimed the lives of two. In December of 2023, 2 years following the disaster, the Gila Bend United Softball Field renovations were completed, marking a milestone in the Town's rebuilding initiative. Awareness of the location of floodplains and floodways and cooperation with Maricopa County Flood Control District (FCDMC) is

critical for the prevention of flooding disasters in the Town. The following map, **Figure 13**, depicts the location of floodplains and floodways throughout the MPA.

Figure 13. Floodplains



Energy Generation Resources

Gila Bend is a leading energy source due to its solar power plants and gas-fired generation station. Gila Bend has five solar power plants, and renewable energy companies are very interested in moving forward with solar energy endeavors in the Town. The Solana Generating Station is one of the largest solar power plants in the world. It uses long mirrored troughs to focus the sun's energy on a fluid that turns into gas and spins a turbine, which can power 70,000 Arizona homes. Gila Bend also has a 367-megawatt (MW) utility-scale solar system. Electrical energy sources within the Town are provided by a variety of natural gas-generated, concentrating, and photovoltaic (PV) solar generation facilities, and these solar facilities have been constructed to provide the State's regulated utilities with alternative sources. These energy generation sources create nearly 2,600 MW of power and higher capacities can be expected given the Town's Solar Field Overlay Zone (SFOZ), which is allowed as a "temporary use" throughout the Town through a public hearing process. The location of existing solar facilities can be viewed on **Figure 12** in Chapter 4.



Solana Solar Field West of Town

Natural Attractions

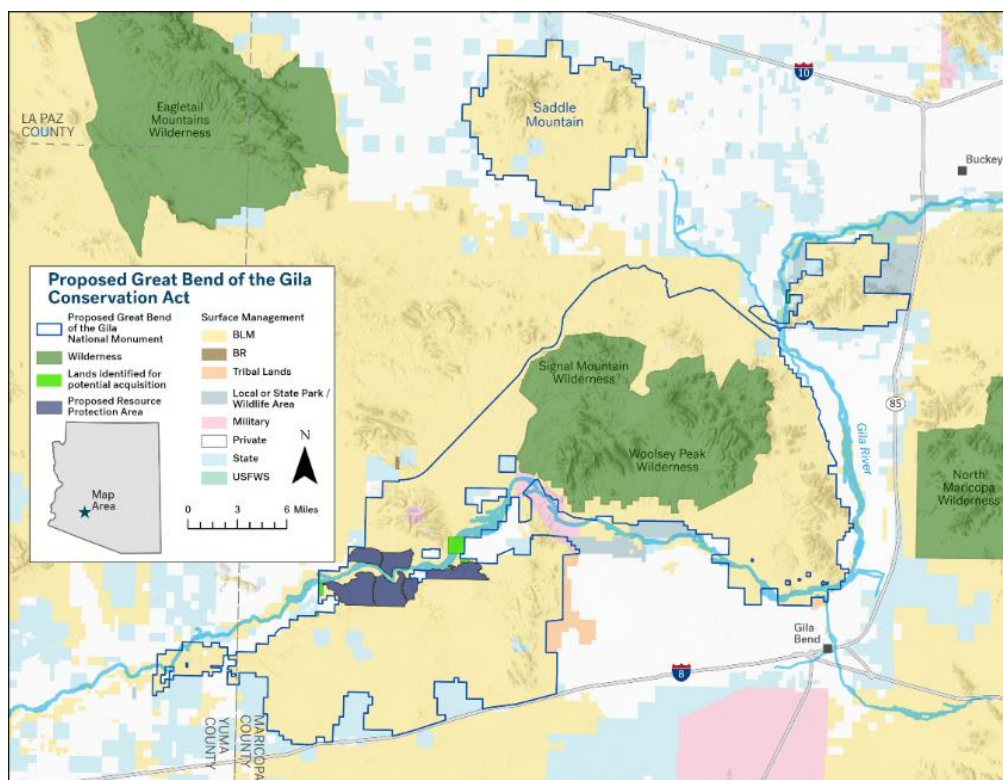
The Town of Gila Bend offers major natural attractions, as shown in **Table 6**. The Painted Rock Petroglyphs and the Woolsey Peak Mountain and wilderness area are both northeast of the Town. The largest natural attraction, the Sonoran Desert National Monument, hugs the eastern border of the MPA. The Gila River runs along the northern border of the Town and only fills after upstream dams release excess water, usually during periods of heavy rainfall.

Table 6. Natural Attractions

Natural Attraction	Location
Barry M. Goldwater Range	South of Town
Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail	North of Town
Gila River	Northwest of Town
Great Bend of the Gila National Monument*	Northwest of Town
Jaun Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail	North of Town
Painted Rock Petroglyphs	Northwest of Town
Sonoran Desert National Monument	East of Town
Woolsey Peak Mountain Range	North of Town

Although access-restricted, Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR) abuts the MPA to the south and encompasses about 1.7 million acres of withdrawn public land and Department of Defense-owned land. F-35 and F-16 aircraft transit primarily between LAFB and BMGR, but various military aircraft also use BMGR for training purposes.

Still pending federal approval is 370,000 acres of open space, which would be the area located within the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument. The legislation pending would protect one of the most culturally significant and ecologically fragile landscapes in the southwestern United States. Numerous cultural and archaeological resources and petroglyphs exist in



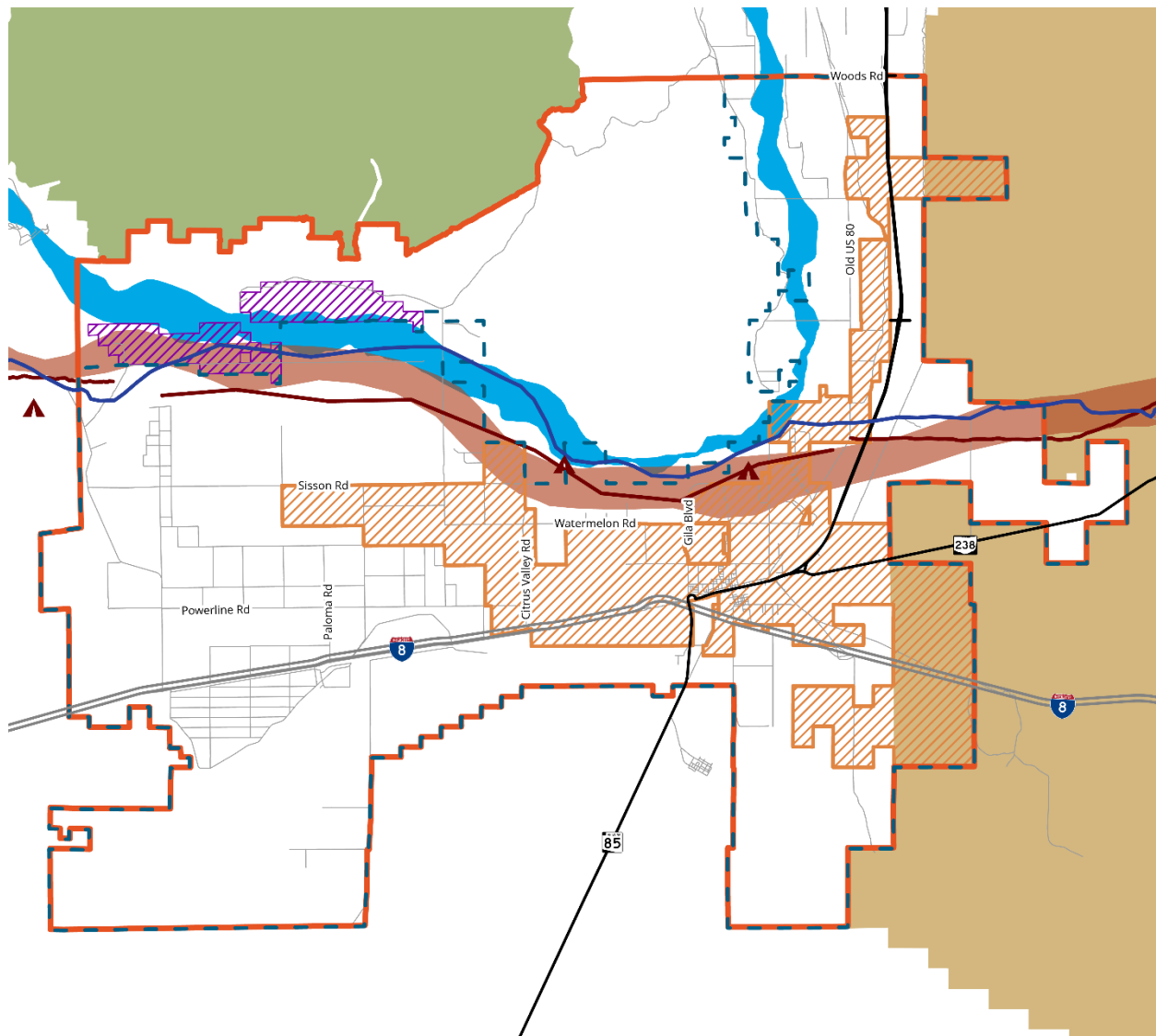
the area, and as such, is an area considered sacred by several Arizona Native American communities. The Great Bend is also a place where residents and visitors can explore and enjoy abundant recreational opportunities, including bird and wildlife watching, hiking, camping, and hunting. While not a popular idea with all OHV enthusiasts, designating the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument would safeguard outdoor recreation opportunities as well as create economic opportunities for local and regional gateway businesses.

Shown on the Natural Attractions Map, **Figure 14**, the Jaun Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, a 1,200-mile linkage commemorating, protecting, marking, and interpreting the route travel by the Anza, traverses through the Gila Bend MPA just north of the incorporated boundary of the Town. In addition to the trail are designated Expedition home sites related to the San Lucy District of the Tohono O'odham. Additionally, the Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail, spanning 3,292 miles across seven states and commemorating the impact of the Butterfield Overland Mail Services, traverses the Gila Bend MPA.



Painted Rock Petroglyphs

Figure 14. Natural Attractions



Gila Bend Natural Attractions

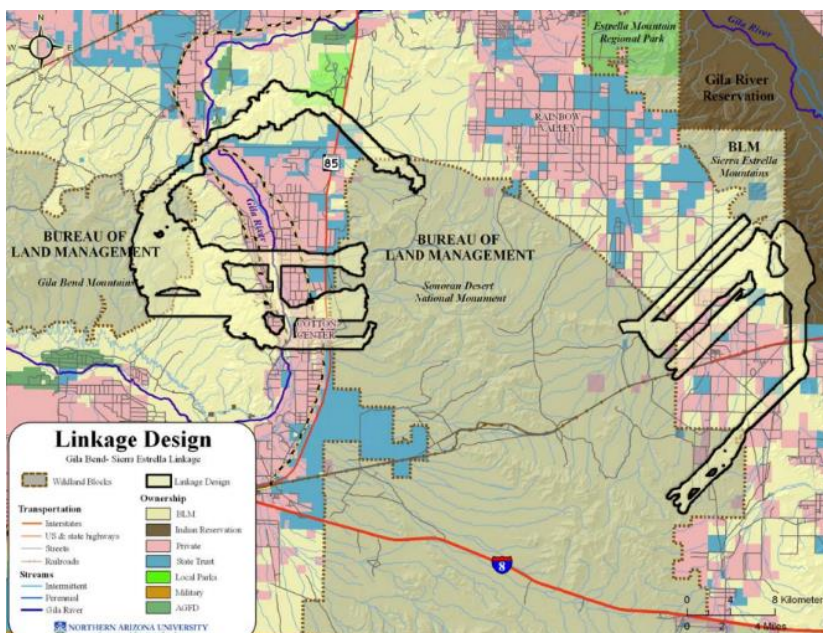
0 1 2 3 4 Miles



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.) | Painted Rock Petroglyphs | Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail |
| 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.) | Woolsey Peak Mountain and Wilderness | Existing Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Trails |
| Roads | Sonoran Desert National Monument | Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition Campsites |
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Corridor | |
| Gila River | | |

Wildlife Corridors

An indirect effect of roads, urbanization, canals, railways, energy corridors, all-terrain vehicle riders, and border security operations is the removal of natural vegetation. The presence of discontinuous habitat creates barriers that isolate wildlife populations and disrupt key ecological functions, gene flow, predator-prey interactions, and migration. Wildlife roadkill is a direct result of habitat fragmentation, which has far-reaching effects. Wildlife-vehicle collisions can result in human deaths and injuries, extensive property damage, loss of game and non-game animals, and increased liability exposure. Federal, state, county, and private stakeholders can work together to minimize these social and financial costs while enhancing wildlife movement opportunities between Gila Bend's habitat areas. These factors must be addressed concurrently to successfully maintain or restore linkages between habitats and conserve important wildlife and natural ecosystems. In response, as shown below, AZGFD identified a wildlife corridor, Gila Bend – Sierra Estrella Linkage Design, in 2008. This linkage traverses the Gila River and SR 85 and attempts to connect wildlife habitats from the wilderness areas of Sierra Mountain, Woolsey Peak, and North Maricopa. For more information prior to any development, AZGFD should be consulted during the due diligence stages of development. The AZGFD has developed guidelines for wildlife-friendly fencing that should be referenced for new developments to follow.



Parks & Recreation

Gila Bend has four local parks, all located central to Town. Burleson Park and the Community Center Park are north of Highway 85 and the UPRR. In contrast, the 9/11 Memorial Park and Unity Park are located south of Highway 85 and the railroad. Gila Bend also has several community facilities and unique recreational sites offering a variety of physical recreation and historic tourism. The Town hosts a total of eight recreation sites with several amenities, providing residents with a variety of choices for outdoor activity. The locations of the parks and recreation facilities are shown in **Table 7** and **Figure 16**.

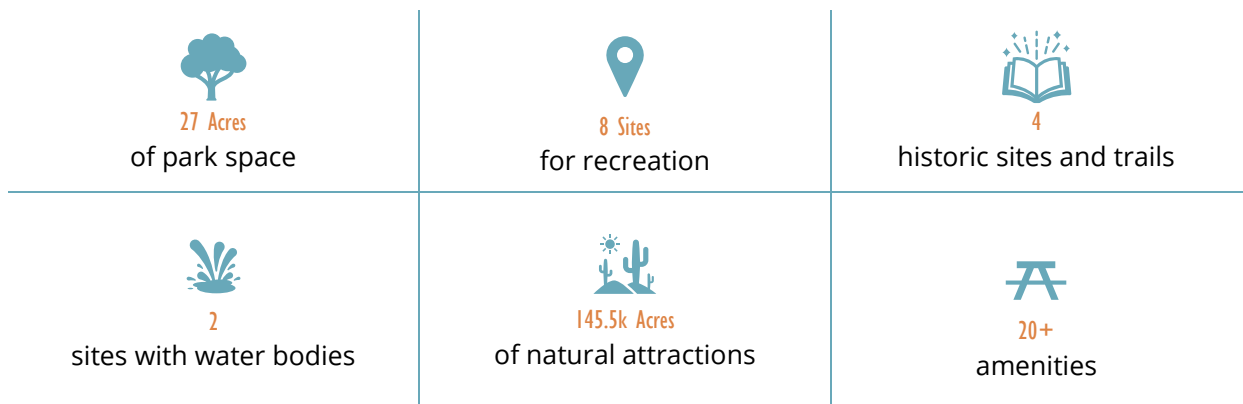


Gila Bend Community Pool

Table 7. Parks & Recreation Facilities

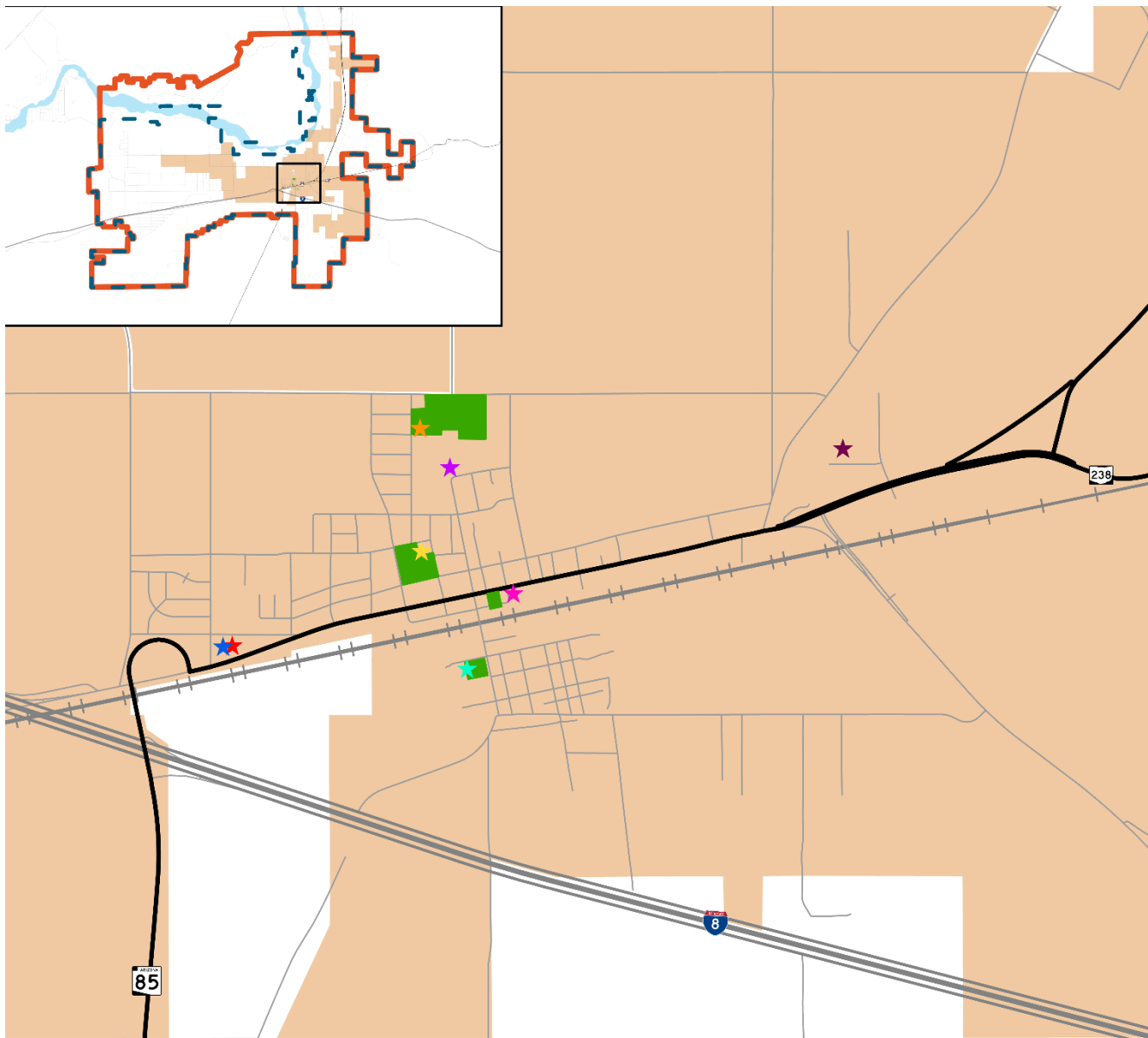
Parks & Recreation Facility	Amenities
9/11 Memorial Park	Picnic areas, seating, tables
Burleson Park	Grill, pavilion, picnic areas, pool, tables
Unity Park	Neighborhood open space
Bender Pond	Stocked fishing pond
Gatlin Site	Historic Hohokam trade route
Gila Bend Community Pool	Restrooms, seating, showers, swimming
Gila Bend Public Shooting Range	Target stands, dirt berms, steel Gong, and wood frame targets
Gila Bend Rodeo Arena	Arena, seating, lighting

Figure 15. Parks & Recreation by the Numbers



Burleson Park

Figure 16. Parks & Recreation Facilities



Gila Bend Parks and Recreation



- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Proposed Municipal Planning Area (359 Sq. Mi.) | Gila Bend Visitor Center and Museum |
| 2017 Municipal Planning Area (273.3 Sq. Mi.) | Bender Pond |
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | Gila Bend Community Pool |
| Parks | Gila Bend Library |
| Roads | Gatlin Site Visitor Center |
| Railroads | Gila Bend Community Center |
| Interstate 8 | Gila Bend Family Resource Center |
| Highway 85 | Gila Bend Rodeo Arena |
| Highway 238 | |

STRATEGIES FOR ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE

Through analysis of existing conditions of community input, the Town has the following six strategies aimed at protecting their environmental and natural resources.

1. **PREVENT FUTURE FLOODING DISASTERS.** Knowing the location and severity of existing floodplains will be critical for the Town's resilience to and prevention of flooding disasters. The Town should continue to partner with the Flood Control District of Maricopa County, who regulates and mitigates flooding in Gila Bend to identify options to minimize flooding from upstream activities.
2. **BUILD ON THE SOLAR POTENTIAL.** The Town has accomplished many goals in paving the way with its solar focus, including its strategic position as a solar site for many different energy generation entities. Much of this has occurred through its SFOZ, which has expedited the review and approval process for energy generation. It can also continue to leverage solar lighting and other green forms of energy generation not only to meet its community needs but also to sell and send energy to the grid where it can be wheeled to other areas of the state and California.
3. **INCREASE THE LOCAL STOCK OF RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION TECHNOLOGIES.** The Town has successfully located many PV solar generation facilities within its incorporated area. It has the potential to add more of these sites and explore other renewable energy technologies to diversify its generation capabilities. For example, these other technologies could range from energy generation to algae growth.
4. **PROMOTE EASY STEPS TO SAVE ON HEATING AND COOLING COSTS.** Communicate that regular air filter changes, annual heating/cooling tune-ups, heating/cooling duct sealing, and retrofit to a programmable thermostat will save money and natural resources. When new building construction and existing building renovation projects are proposed, recommend Energy Star appliances whenever possible.
5. **PROMOTE AND PRESERVE OUTDOOR RECREATION AND WILDLIFE LINKAGES.** Outdoor recreation should be promoted to highlight the opportunities around the Town of Gila Bend. Collaboration and partnership with neighboring communities to promote outdoor recreation within the region should be encouraged. Awareness of wildlife corridors within the MPA and coordination of development activities with AZGFD should be encouraged.
6. **MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES.** The Town has an abundance of parks and recreation facilities that give important amenities to residents and visitors alike. As the Town grows, funds should be allocated by both public and private entities to both maintain and enhance existing facilities and to continue to build new amenity-rich parks with new development.

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE GOALS AND POLICIES

Environment and Open Space Guiding Principle: *Protect the resiliency of the environment, scenic views, as well as access to open spaces and outdoor recreation.*

Environment and Open Space Goal 1: Continue to collaborate with FCDMC and encourage development practices that minimize negative impacts to and improve the natural environments and mitigate flooding hazards.

Environment and Open Space Goal 2: Continue to promote and conserve natural resources and transition to renewable energy sources that create minimal impact to the viewsheds and the environment.

Environment and Open Space Goal 3: Ensure that development adjacent to electrical, gas, solar, wind, and other utility areas are context-appropriate and environmentally responsible.

Environment and Open Space Goal 4: Protect and enhance the natural open space attractions within and around the Town of Gila Bend and protect accessibility and scenic views by providing open space buffers around established parks and natural attractions.

Environment and Open Space Goal 5: Enhance existing and build new parks and recreation facilities through development and coordination with other governmental entities and nonprofits.

Environment and Open Space Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports new development utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in site design to reduce flooding, control dust, and improve water quality, including minimizing the clearing of native vegetation and mature trees, and retention of stormwater onsite and for fire prevention.

Environment and Open Space Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports and encourages the natural preservation of floodplains and washes and the protection of scenic viewsheds.

Environment and Open Space Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports development projects that integrate native plants for landscaping and shading, regional flood control, and minimal emissions.

Environment and Open Space Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend encourages the preservation of open space, natural beauty, and critical environment areas, particularly around the Gila River and riparian areas.

Environment and Open Space Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports jurisdictional coordination when utility corridors, such as powerlines and pipelines, cross municipal boundaries. Where feasible and effective, the Town encourages developers to work with utility providers to use easements and utility corridors as open space, trails, or other compatible passive recreational uses.

Environment and Open Space Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports improving access to natural open spaces.

Environment and Open Space Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports development that considers adverse environmental impacts on the natural and cultural environment, preserving the natural attractions as well as cultural heritage sites, artifacts, and traditions within and around the Town.

Environment and Open Space Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend supports continuing to build relationships and collaborations to preserve ecosystems and natural attractions by including entities such as BLM, National Parks Service (NPS), AZGFD, and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), along with Maricopa County's Environmental Services (MCESD) and FCDMC in the development process.

Environment and Open Space Policy 9: The Town of Gila Bend supports biological and cultural surveys in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the AZGFD for new developments, solar farms, or trail projects prior to any new construction.

Environment and Open Space Policy 10: The Town of Gila Bend supports utilization of solar lighting whenever possible for landscaping, building security lighting, etc.

Environment and Open Space Policy 11: The Town of Gila Bend supports the utilization of the trees, shrubs, and groundcover from the ADWR Low Water Use Plant List for street trees (to reduce the heat island effect), shade buildings (reducing cooling needs) and remove carbon dioxide from the air.

Environment and Open Space Policy 12: The Town of Gila Bend supports maintaining existing parks to be safe, clean, and functional, while exceeding minimum level of service standards.

Environment and Open Space Policy 13: The Town of Gila Bend supports enhancing security and enforcement in all park and recreation spaces.

Environment and Open Space Policy 14: The Town of Gila Bend supports the provision of ADA accessibility in all park spaces as required by law.

Environment and Open Space Policy 15: As the community grows, the Town of Gila Bend supports building additional parks and creating additional recreation programs and events for residents.

Environment and Open Space Policy 16: The Town of Gila Bend supports partnerships with members of the public, schools, agencies, and private entities for recreational programs, events, and other opportunities.



413 N Porter Street, Gila Bend via EstateLy

Chapter 6 Housing and Neighborhoods

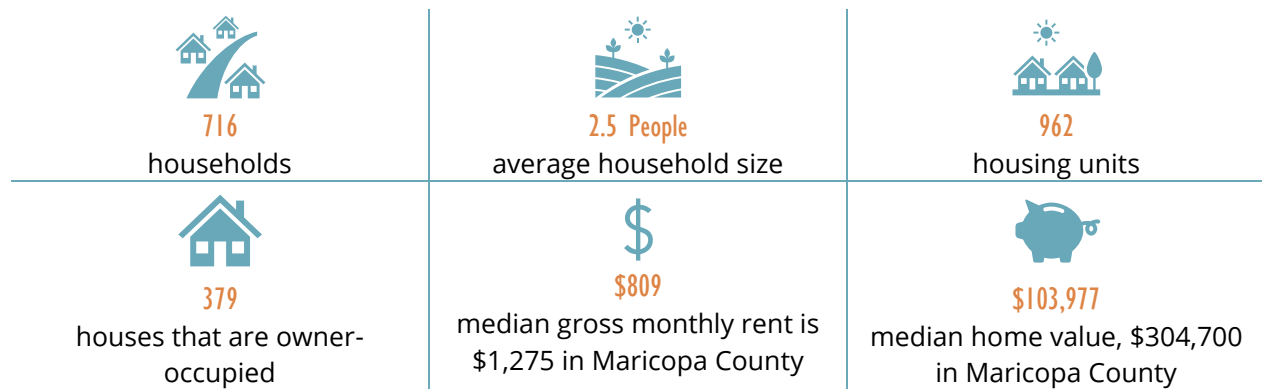
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS OVERVIEW

The *Housing and Neighborhood Element* is not required per ARS but is an important focus of the Town of Gila Bend to ensure that the Town's residents have ample and affordable housing options and vibrant and attractive neighborhoods.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS ANALYSIS

The housing in Gila Bend primarily consists of single-family homes, with some apartment complexes and mobile homes scattered throughout the Town. Manufactured housing products are also used to provide housing. Between 2010 and 2020, Gila Bend's housing stock declined by nearly 300 units. Since most of the Town's housing stock predates 1978, many homes had potentially harmful housing conditions, such as exposure to lead paint. Updates to housing to mitigate these conditions were deferred, eventually leading to demolition. Another event that impacted housing stock is the flooding within the Town in August 2021, which damaged homes and other structures. While Maricopa County has seen a 10.6% increase in the number of housing units between 2010 and 2020, Gila Bend has had a 25% decrease. An increase in housing stock, especially multifamily housing, should be prioritized for the Town in order to meet the needs of Gila Bend's projected population growth over the next few decades.

Figure 17. Housing and Neighborhoods by the Numbers



Home Types

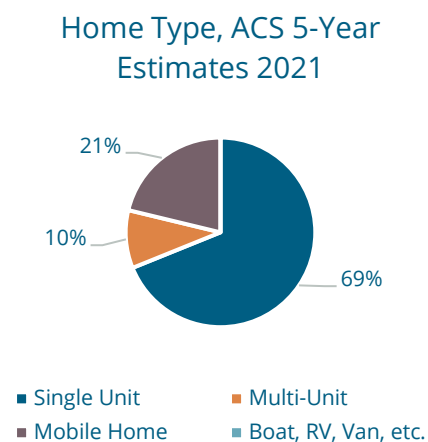
Most homes for residents in Gila Bend are classified as single-unit homes or mobile homes placed on individual lots as shown in **Figure 18**. Multi-unit homes only account for 10% of the housing stock. Gila Bend also has a prominent seasonal presence in communities like the Sonoran Desert RV park. However, the American Community Survey data does not reflect this as these seasonal visitors are not permanent residents.

Notably, Gila Bend has a larger portion of mobile homes and fewer multi-unit homes than Maricopa County. The County's housing stock is 30% multi-unit homes and only 5% mobile homes. Given Gila Bend's projected population growth, it may be beneficial to consider increasing its stock of multi-unit housing to accommodate future population growth. Another option is to support manufactured housing in more developments and zoning districts to offer a product that takes less time to construct and is typically cheaper than site-built homes. Currently Gila Bend does not have many Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), unless it's a mobile home being added to an existing lot. Consideration should be given to allowing more ADUs for larger size lots to provide another alternative for housing. To provide a wide range of housing options, Gila Bend should consider allowing work/live developments that allow a business on the first floor and a residence above.



101 E Fremont Street, Gila Bend via Zillow

Figure 18. Home Type in Gila Bend



Home Values

The value of owner-occupied homes is generally lower than the County, with Gila Bend's median home value being \$103,977 compared to Maricopa County's median home value of \$304,700. Most Gila Bend homes are valued at \$200K or below. As noted at the beginning of this section, most of the Town's housing stock was developed at least 30 years ago. The significant impact of the Great Recession on Gila Bend, delaying critical housing updates and reflecting lower home values, is a crucial historical context to consider.



New Single-Family Home Construction

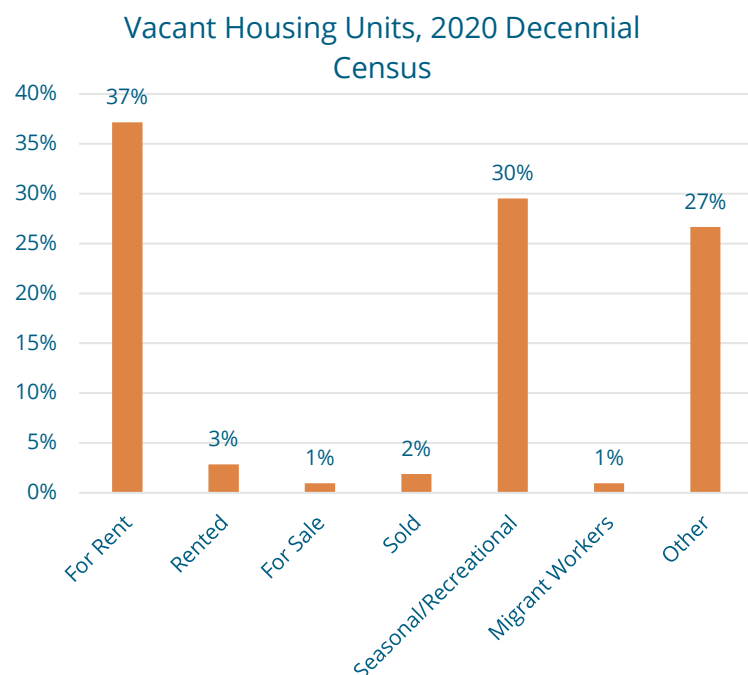
Affordable Housing Resources

Housing affordability continues to be a challenge across the Nation, and the Town of Gila Bend is no exception. The roles of the federal, state, and local government in the affordable housing arena are extensive, making it critical for housing planning to integrate at the local level with these efforts and objectives. While the Town administers a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, it has typically been utilized for infrastructure improvements. CDBG funds can also be used for rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures which is a potential opportunity for Gila Bend to consider. Another source of affordable housing could be done through non-profits that obtain grant funds to do developments within the Town of Gila Bend. One potential project plans to build manufactured housing product on single-family lots and will “sell” the homes to people that qualify, with the understanding that they must sell the product back to the nonprofit when they decide to move, with the “owner” receiving a portion of the increased valuation.

The Town is also a member of the Maricopa HOME Consortium (as a component of the Maricopa Urban County). Funds allocated to the Maricopa Urban County can be used in the municipalities of Buckeye, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Goodyear, Guadalupe, Litchfield Park, Queen Creek, Tolleson, Wickenburg, Youngtown, and the unincorporated areas of the County. The HOME Investment

Partnerships Program (HOME) is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program that strengthens public-private partnerships and expands the supply of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing. Each member of the Consortium receives a pro rata share of the HOME funds annually on July 1, with primary attention to rental housing for very low-income and low-income families.

Figure 19. Vacant Housing Units



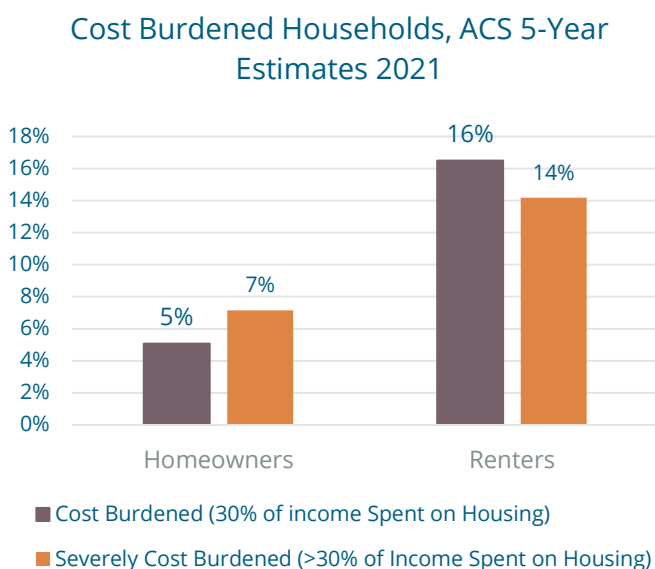
Housing Occupancy

Gila Bend's housing is mostly occupied, with an 11% vacancy rate. When analyzing occupancy type as shown in **Figure 19**, nearly half of all housing is renter occupied. This is higher than the County, which has about 36% of renter-occupied housing. Demolition that has taken place among older housing stock that posed potentially harmful living conditions may have contributed to this higher percentage of renter-occupied housing in the Town. Among vacant units, the largest portion is 'For Rent' units, making up 37% of all vacant units. 'Seasonal/Recreational' units and 'Other' units similarly make up 30% and 27% of vacant units, respectively.

Cost Burden

Both mortgage payments and rental rates for a resident's housing cost that is over 30% of an individual's income are considered unaffordable and burdensome to a resident. Housing costs over 50% of an individual's income would classify them as severely cost-burdened. Cost-burdened households are shown in **Figure 20**. Compared to Maricopa County, Gila Bend only has 21% of its residents who are burdened by housing costs. Whereas 37% of County residents are cost-burdened, Of those who are severely cost-burdened, 31% of Maricopa County residents are categorized as such, while only 21% of Gila Bend residents are.

Figure 20. Cost Burdened Households



STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The housing and neighborhood information collected from community input and existing conditions analysis are integrated within the five strategies below.

1. **PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING STOCK.** The existing economic base of the MPA and its supportive wage structure will continue to require the development of a diversity of affordable dwelling unit types including manufactured housing, townhouses, and multifamily units.



Townhouses



Multifamily units

2. **CREATING COMPACT NEIGHBORHOODS.** The areas north of Pima Street as well as south of S. Euclid Avenue contain many vacant lots and parcels that are zoned for residential uses and create opportunities for infill. Many of these lots and parcels are served by infrastructure (streets, electricity, gas, water, and wastewater) and are close to schools and recreation facilities.
3. **FOCUS ON NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION.** Most of the Town's housing stock was developed at least 30 years ago. The results of the Great Recession, lack of population growth, and slight erosion of existing residents has created an environment where structural and aesthetic maintenance of homes has been significantly deferred, leading to more expensive improvements and in some cases, recognition that the structure is not habitable, leading to its demolition. Supporting ADUs and duplex homes by right could help increase the housing stock.
4. **LEVERAGE HOUSING RESOURCES.** The Town should investigate the possibility of utilizing grant or other funding to assist in making such properties appealing (i.e., buy land, extend utilities and pay closing or down payment costs) to the private sector as well as weatherizing and improving facades and facilities within low-income areas.
5. **ASSESS HOUSING NEEDS.** Beginning on January 1, 2005, ARS requires all municipalities to publish a housing needs assessment annually and submit an annual report to the Arizona Department of Housing accounting for the total number of proposed residential housing units submitted to the municipality, the total number of net new residential housing units submitted to the municipality, and the total number of new residential housing units that are entitled, have been platted, have been issued a building permit, and have received a certificate of occupancy by the municipality.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS GOALS AND POLICIES

Housing and Neighborhoods Guiding Principle: *Encourage affordable options in housing stock and vitality in neighborhoods.*

Housing and Neighborhoods Goal 1: Foster a diverse stock of housing types, styles, and options for all incomes and needs.

Housing and Neighborhoods Goal 2: Encourage attractive, high-quality, and healthy neighborhoods.

Housing and Neighborhoods Goal 3: Preserve and enhance the safety and quality of existing neighborhoods.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports a variety of housing types that meet the demands and needs of existing and future residents.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports promotion of diversity in size, design, and density in new residential development.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports mixed-use development to include live/work units. Creation of an adaptive reuse program could be beneficial to streamline the ability to create live/work units.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend supports interconnectivity between new residential development to existing residential and access to parks, schools, recreation facilities, and other public facilities and shopping areas via multi-use trails and pathways.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports maintaining a level of housing code enforcement sufficient to correct unsafe, unsanitary, or illegal conditions as well as for property maintenance and aesthetics.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports the provision of high-quality multifamily and manufactured housing to increase the stock of affordable housing choices.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports construction of affordable, energy star-rated housing.

Housing and Neighborhoods Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend support providing incentives, such as density bonuses for master planned communities and residential developments that set aside at least 20% of the total single-family residential units for affordable housing.



Photo of [M & J Artesanias](#)

Chapter 7 Economic Growth

ECONOMIC GROWTH OVERVIEW

The *Economic Growth Element* is not required per ARS, but it is an important focus of the Town of Gila Bend to ensure that the Town's growth aligns with community heritage and cultural diversity while progressively moving towards an innovative and prosperous economy.

ECONOMIC GROWTH ANALYSIS

This section reviews existing employment sectors, review sources, and finance mechanisms as well as strategies for economic growth.

Employment Sectors

The existing job base revolves around the retail uses that serve the tourism economy, industrial uses that support the manufacturing sector, farm jobs that serve the agribusiness sector, and aviation support jobs that serve the military sector. The immense amount of surrounding open space also attracts recreation and tourism visitation to the area.

TOURISM. Tourism contributes to the local economy as the heavy traffic on SR 85 and I-8 make Gila Bend a popular refueling and overnight stop for travelers to and from California and Mexico. There are also several nearby natural attractions and the Town Museum.

MANUFACTURING. The Town of Gila Bend is home to two manufacturing plants: Doubletree Paper Mill and the Calgon Carbon Reactivation Facility. These two plants represent \$60,000,000 of direct investment and have a yearly impact of over \$2,000,000 on the local economy.

AGRIBUSINESS. The MPA contains approximately 43,000 acres under cultivation and six dairies. Agriculture continues to be a major component of Gila Bend's local economy. The land typically produces cotton, alfalfa, and grain crops.

MILITARY. The Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field is located four miles south of Gila Bend. Its primary purpose is to serve all military base aircraft that surround and use the BMGR for normal pattern/emergency practice and recovery in real situations. The Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field also allows for aircraft diversions during inclement weather and provides forward operating base (FOB) location training. It also serves as a hub in support of range operations and maintenance. The BMGR abuts the Gila Bend planning area to the south and operates with restricted public access. It totals approximately 1.7 million acres of withdrawn public land and Department of Defense-owned land. Based on its unique training value, the range supports a variety of military aircraft. Between LAFB and the BMGR F-35 and F-16 aircraft transit north and south. Davis Monthan Air Force Base aircraft (A-10 and F-16, respectively) transit east and west. Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma-based aircraft transit west to east.

Revenues Sources & Financing Mechanisms

The Town is committed to providing appropriate levels of service for existing and future residents by ensuring that roadways, water, sewer, parks, and recreation are available across the incorporated area. These services are essential to providing a high quality of life for all residents, and the Town utilizes a variety of revenue sources and financing mechanisms for funding and construction:

- **General Fund:** Monies collected by the Town from local sales taxes, state shared revenues (i.e., vehicle tax, state income tax, highway funds), investment revenues, municipal fees and fines, and utility revenues. Such revenue could be pledged to pay the debt service on other mechanisms below.
- **Permit Fees:** The revenues the Town generates from the collection of building permits, plan review, zoning, and other fees.
- **Sales Tax:** This tax is collected from the gross receipts for all business activities in the Town. The current Town sales tax is 3.5%, which, when added to the County (0.70%) and State base (5.6%), results in a total of 9.3%. The Town could impose additional taxes (specialty industry tax) to generate revenue, including a lodging tax, food tax, etc.
- **Property Tax:** The Town's primary property tax levy generates nearly \$450,000 (2024) to support the General Fund, which funds a wide range of essential daily and long-term operations.
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** CDBG provides funds for qualifying projects ranging from infrastructure improvements to public facility upgrades. Maricopa County

administers these grants to the Town (as one of 10 urban county areas). Potential projects should meet a demonstrated community need and benefit low- to moderate-income individuals, families, and communities.

- *Development Impact Fees:* These are one-time fees imposed on new development to provide the incremental increase in public infrastructure and services needed to maintain the demonstrated community's level of service (as identified in the Community's adopted Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP) for necessary public services. Such fees may be used for infrastructure improvements or debt service for water, wastewater, stormwater, drainage, flood control, library, streets, fire and police, and neighborhood parks and recreation. Such fees may not be used for operations, maintenance, replacement, or correcting existing levels of service deficiencies.
- *General Obligation Bonds:* Funds borrowed to finance capital improvement projects such as streets, parks, town facilities, and equipment. Such funding must be approved by a vote of the public, and the total bonding capacity of the Town is limited to 20% of its primary assessed valuation. In addition, the Town could borrow funds for any other capital expenditure not identified above but limited to 6% of the Town's primary assessed valuation.
- *Grants:* The ability to submit a grant exists at the federal, state, regional, and private levels. Such submittals can be made for transportation, water, and sewer services, police, and fire (not currently in the Town's purview). However, it should be noted that each grant is different and typically requires a hard (cash) match, but soft (in-kind services) may be allowed to match grant awards.
- *Improvement Districts/Community Facility Districts:* Such areas of the Town may be identified where improvements (i.e., water, sewer, streets, etc.) will benefit specific property owners, who must agree (more than 51% of the owners) to charge or tax themselves accordingly. The parcel assessment is determined based on an equitable formula of the benefit derived. Depending on the extent of improvements, assessments can be paid upfront or financed through the sale of bonds.
- *Municipal Property Corporation Bonds:* These bonds are typically used to finance municipal facilities such as police, fire, or administrative activities. They require a pledge of the entire Town's excise tax revenue yet do not require a public vote to implement it.
- *Revenue Bonds:* The Town issues these bonds on revenue (i.e., sewer or water), where users will create a dedicated revenue stream to pay the debt service. These bonds do not require voter approval, and towns like Gila Bend could use them to fund utilities, parks, golf courses, etc.

STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Building off existing industries and resources, the Town of Gila Bend has an excellent opportunity to support the following six strategies.

1. **CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTHCARE ENTITIES.** The Town should continue to promote and partner with education and healthcare entities in and around Gila Bend. By providing accessibility to education and training and healthcare, it is possible to capture and retain a skilled workforce.



2. **SUPPORT EXPANSION OF MILITARY OPERATIONS IN GILA BEND.** The training involved with the F-35 and resulting needs at the Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field should continue to be supported by the community to expand military and related civilian employment opportunities. Protecting the military missions and flight corridors is paramount to the continued use and safety of all military personnel accessing the BMGR to the south and the civilian population of Gila Bend.



F-35 Lightning II at LFAB

4. **SUPPORT CONTINUED MANUFACTURING AND AGRICULTURAL PRESENCE IN GILA BEND.** The Town should consider supporting additional manufacturing facilities as appropriate. The Town's excellent location, at the juncture of SR 85 and Interstate 8, along with the presence of the UPRR, provides positive site location attributes and ready access to the Southern California and potentially the Mexico market. The area surrounding the Town continues to be cultivated for a variety of crops, and it also has several production dairies. The Town may be interested in other types of agricultural operations (i.e., chickens, seafood, etc.) that benefit from the sparse surrounding development, land under cultivation, and a viable supply of water resources in the region.



Oatman Farms in Gila Bend

5. **CONTINUE LEVERAGING TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES.** The Town is in the direct path of Phoenix commuters to and from San Diego, (California), and Rocky Point (Puerto Peñasco) in Mexico. The ability to capture and attract tourists to spend additional time in the Town will enhance its collection of retail sales tax. To that end, the presence of a well-managed and sited museum, historical sites, local natural attractions, and trail systems will provide a variety of substantial inducements to entice the pass-through traffic to stop and “take in” by indulging in the local history and cultural resources. The Sister Cities program with Puerto Peñasco and Oquitoa, both in Mexico, should be highlighted and be a catalyst to encourage trade between Mexico and the United States, with truck and rail carrying goods between the two countries.



Space Age Restaurant in Gila Bend

6. **CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH THE GREATER PHOENIX ECONOMIC COUNCIL (GPEC).** Due to the small size of the Town, it utilizes a multi-tiered approach relative to economic development. The Town is a member of GPEC, which includes Maricopa County, 22 communities, and more than 170 private investors that promote economic development in the Greater Phoenix Area. For Gila Bend, the industries that match their demographic and socioeconomic profile include manufacturing, logistics, aerospace, and aviation.



ECONOMIC GROWTH GOALS AND POLICIES

Economic Growth Guiding Principle: Value the Town's heritage and cultural diversity while embracing innovation and a prosperous economy.

Economic Growth Goal 1: Nurture a growing job base in Gila Bend that provides quality employment and economic diversity.

Economic Growth Goal 2: Support an economic environment that nurtures locally based employment, encourages small business formation, and adequately trains and educates the local workforce.

Economic Growth Goal 3: Protect the mission for LAFB within and around the Town.

Economic Growth Goal 4: Grow tourism and capitalize attracting through traffic via expansion of events, hotels, and restaurants.

Economic Growth Policy 1: The Town of Gila Bend supports appropriately placed and environmentally sensitive industrial and employment uses within the Town and will encourage properties to annex as appropriate.

Economic Growth Policy 2: The Town of Gila Bend supports the continued presence of agriculture operations.

Economic Growth Policy 3: The Town of Gila Bend supports expansion of military operations within and around the Town and will continue to encourage compatible industrial uses adjacent to, and within proximity of, the Gila Bend Auxiliary Field, to protect the military mission of LAFB.

Economic Growth Policy 4: The Town of Gila Bend supports business retention and expansion efforts.

Economic Growth Policy 5: The Town of Gila Bend supports the development and expansion of vocational and technical schools such as WestMEC in the Town to provide technology training at the high school level and above.

Economic Growth Policy 6: The Town of Gila Bend supports the provision of electric charging stations in appropriate new developments.

Economic Growth Policy 7: The Town of Gila Bend supports collaboration efforts with nonprofits and developers to increase eco-tourism in the region.

Economic Growth Policy 8: The Town of Gila Bend supports the retention and promotion of the Sister Cities program with the cities of Puerto Penasco and Oquitoa in Mexico.

Chapter 8 Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

The *Implementation Chapter* of the *Gila Bend 2040 General Plan* is designed to be a systematic plan to achieve the vision of the community. This chapter organizes all actions into their respective elements and relates each to a specific and relevant goal with the element. The timeframe for each of the **74 Actions** items is then denoted as **1 to 3 years - Short Term**, **3 to 7 years Mid Term**, **7+ years Long Term**, or **Ongoing**, meaning that the task is performed on a routine or regular basis. During the Town's required annual reporting on the progress of the General Plan, the Town Manager or designee can then easily report to the Town Council and the community at large on the completion or status of actions.

IMPLEMENT ACTION BY ELEMENT

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short -Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
LAND USE							
L1	Review and update administrative procedures and guidelines to expedite and promote desired development.	L1	X				
L2	Enhance code compliance efforts to maintain a safe, clean, and well-maintained community.	L1	X			X	
L3	Update website services and FAQs.	L1	X				
L4	Update official zoning map to include adopted zoning overlays including solar overlay.	L1	X				
L5	Update and adopt the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to maintain consistency with the General Plan.	L1	X				
L6	Update and adopt the Town Code to maintain consistency with the General Plan.	L1	X				
L7	Evaluate adopting the most current International Building Code used by the majority of the jurisdictions in the Phoenix	L1	X			X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
	region and any local addendum to ensure that structures and building improvements expansions are constructed in a safe and high-quality manner.						
L8	Prepare and adopt design guidelines to address vehicular/transit access, buffering, screening, lighting, landscaping, signage, and building setback and orientation.	L2		X			
L9	Pursue funding sources through CDBG for qualifying areas.	L2		X			
L10	Pursue an aesthetic façade funding program.	L2			X		
L11	Inventory Historic buildings and nationally register as appropriate.	L2			X		
L12	Coordinate with LAFB for any new development in the HNAPZ or within the proximity of BMGR and Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field.	L3				X	
L13	Coordinate with ASLD for land development.	L1				X	
L14	Coordinate with TON and BLM, for any new development in or within the lands of their ownership.	L1				X	
CIRCULATION							
C1	Apply for available regional, state, and federal funding for safety planning and countermeasure implementation.	C1	X			X	
C2	Implement policy requiring developers to construct transportation improvements in accordance with the roadway	C2	X				

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
	build-out network and improvements recommended by traffic impact analyses.						
C3	Establish a capital improvement program (CIP) to identify street improvement projects and appropriate funding.	C2	X				
C4	Implement a complete streets policy to require all new and improved roadways to consider facilities for all road users.	C3	X				
C5	Define dedicated truck routes.	C4	X				
C6	Require proposed new development to conduct a traffic impact analysis to ascertain what transportation network improvements will be needed to accommodate the traffic generated by the new development.	C2	X			X	
C7	Require new development to dedicate right-of-way for public roadways consistent with the Town's build-out roadway network.	C2	X			X	
C8	Pursue funding to develop an Active Transportation Plan to establish build-out pedestrian, bicycle, and trail networks in Gila Bend.	C3		X			
C9	Apply for available state and federal funding to implement capital improvements identified in the Gila Bend Airport Master Plan.	C2			X		
C10	Coordinate with ASLD, MAG, and ADOT for rights-of-way plans and/or maintenance.	C2				X	
C11	Annually assess safety conditions in Gila Bend to	C1				X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
	determine safety improvement needs.						
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES							
PFS1	Develop a drought management plan to establish voluntary and mandatory protocols to aid in water conservation.	PFS3	X				
PFS2	Provide educational resources to water users regarding groundwater management and actionable steps all users can implement.	PFS3	X				
PFS3	Require proposed new development to identify the anticipated water demand the development will generate.	PFS4	X			X	
PFS4	Poll community on community facilities needs and seek funding to provide enhanced services.	PFS1	X			X	
PFS5	Investigate available opportunities to bolster the Town's water portfolio through storage of treated effluent, groundwater recharge, and water credits.	PFS4		X			
PFS6	Investigate available technologies to transition homes on septic systems to gravity sewer lines, such as prepackaged grinder pumps and small-diameter pressure sewer lines.	PFS5		X			
PFS7	Identify state and federal funding sources for future water and wastewater projects.	PFS5		X		X	
PFS8	Partner with ADWR and other state agencies.	PFS4				X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
PFS9	Inform the public about best practices and programs to encourage water conservation.	PFS3				X	
PFS10	Work to fund needed water and wastewater projects to ensure existing water resources are not depleted as new developments are built.	PFS5				X	
PFS11	Continue to fund maintenance of public facilities and plan for needed expansions through Capital Improvement Planning.	PFS1				X	
ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE							
EOS1	Promote outdoor recreation and natural attraction in and around Gila Bend through website and social media.	EOS5	X				
EOS2	Incorporate standards for green renovations of buildings in Development Code design guidelines and Town Code.	EOS1	X				
EOS3	Sign the support the proposal for the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument.	EOS4	X				
EOS4	Prioritize developing a Dark Sky Ordinance in the Zoning code.	EOS1	X				
EOS5	Update the Zoning Ordinance to include requirements for electric charging stations in new restaurants and hotels.	EOS1	X				
EOS6	Explore creating a nonprofit organization that supports open space and recreation within the Town. Solicit donations that could be used for recreation programs, signing, and maintenance of open space and recreation areas within the Town.	EOS5		X			

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
EOS7	Coordinate with AZGFD to identify wildlife corridors in the Gila Bend MPA.	EOS4		X			
EOS8	Conduct energy audits in all municipal buildings and retrofit accordingly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce energy consumption.	EOS2			X		
EOS9	Educate public on air and water quality issues.	EOS2		X			
EOS10	Transition to Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting for streetlights.	EOS2			X		
EOS11	Replace fleet of vehicles with hybrid/electrical vehicles as vehicles are replaced over time.	EOS2			X		
EOS12	Evaluate existing and future municipal buildings and parks for quality, safe solar PV generation sites.	EOS2			X		
EOS13	Coordinate regular meetings with BLM, NPS, TON, AZGFD, ADOT, and ADEQ, along with MCESD, and FCDMC.	EOS4				X	
EOS14	Work with BLM, NPS, and other agencies to identify funding sources and development of trail amenities for making trail connections.	EOS5				X	
EOS15	Identify opportunities to obtain funding for parks and open space resources through regional, state, and federal sources, such as the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Federal Recreation Trails Program.	EOS5				X	
EOS16	Identify a non-motorized public recreation trail on or near the historic Juan Bautista de Anza						

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
	National Historic Trail corridor in association with the USDA National Park Service						
EOS17	Explore coordination with private entities such as the Sonoran Institute, Nature Conservancy, and Audubon Society to develop programs that enhance resident and visitor appreciation of open space and identify grant opportunities.	EOS5				X	
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS							
HN1	Explore revising Zoning and Official Zoning Map to allow mixed use zoning districts.	HN1	X				
HN2	Complete housing needs assessment and report.	HN1	X				
HN3	Evaluate revising building codes to include provisions for adaptive reuse of commercial or industrial structures for residential purposes.	HN2	X				
HN4	Evaluate the provision of incentives to encourage the development of diverse housing types, such as affordable workforce housing.	HN1		X			
HN5	Evaluate adopting a neighborhood maintenance ordinance for mobile/manufactured homes and other housing.	HN3		X			
HN6	Seek and secure funds to assist with housing renovation and neighborhood improvements. Work with regional, state, federal, and nonprofit entities to secure housing rehabilitation	HN3		X		X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
	and community revitalization funds, such as CDBG funds.						
HN7	Seek out federal, state, local, and private programs that provide resources for those in need of safe, affordable housing.	HN1		X		X	
ECONOMIC GROWTH							
EG1	Regularly review and update rates and fee schedules to ensure they adequately reflect the public infrastructure improvement costs incurred from new development.	EG2	X			X	
EG2	Pursue annexation of viable commercial and industrial properties in the Town's MPA to increase tax revenue.	EG2	X			X	
EG3	Promote existing lodging and restaurant uses to maintain and enhance their facilities to capture tourism revenue.	EG4	X			X	
EG4	Update the 2017 Community & Economic Development Town Profile.	EG1	X				
EG5	Update appealing marketing materials for distribution to visitors/tourists and targeted industries.	EG4	X				
EG6	Adopt and implement a Downtown revitalization master plan.	EG2		X			
EG7	Adopt impact fee schedules based on the recommendations of the Town of Gila Bend Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee study.	EG2		X			

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short -Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-7)	Long-Term (7+)	Ongoing	
EG8	Identify workforce needs and the qualifications and type of education/training required to fill available jobs and coordinate with the Maricopa County Community College District and the Gila Bend Unified School District and private industry to determine when educational, technical and vocational training can be provided locally and if access can be provided to regional campuses.	EG1		X			
EG9	Coordinate with federal and state governments to discuss available funding sources.	EG2				X	
EG10	As needed, complete Special Census to official increase population and State Shared Revenue.	EG2				X	
EG11	Coordinate with GPEC and the Arizona Commerce Authority to attract housing and business development to the Town.	EG1				X	
EG12	Coordinate with Maricopa Small Business Development Center, Local First Arizona, Society of Corporate Retired Executives to gather, update, and publicize their most recent information.	EG2				X	
EG13	Coordinate with school district and healthcare entities to promote and enhanced services and expedite review and approval for all related expansions.	EG1				X	
EG14	Coordinate with UPRR to expedite review and approvals for rail spur access for industrial users.	EG1				X	

APPENDIX A: Info Sheet

GILA BEND 2040 GENERAL PLAN



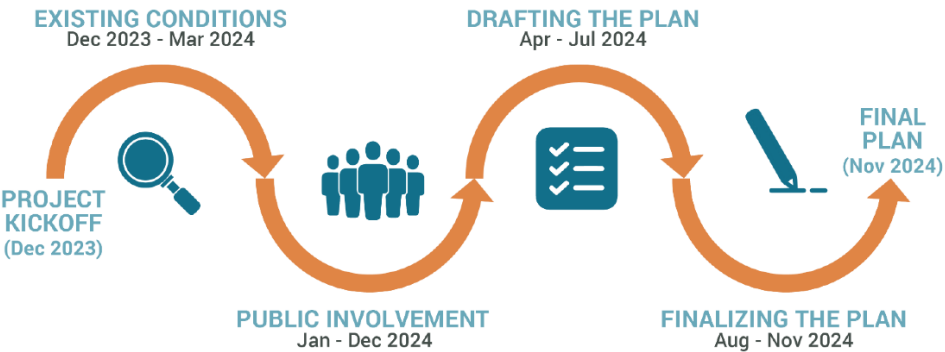
OVERVIEW

The Town of Gila Bend is currently in the process of updating its *General Plan 2026: Developing a Brighter Future*. This informational sheet provides an overview of the project along with ways to engage and obtain updates through the process.

WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

A general plan is an overarching policy document that helps guide a community’s growth into the future, lays out the long-term aspirations for a community, and articulates its vision. A community’s general plan guides the physical, economic, and social development decisions of community leaders, residents, and businesses over a horizon of ten years or longer. Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 9-461.06 requires that a municipality readopt or update its general plan every ten years. Gila Bend’s current general plan was adopted by the Gila Bend Town Council on February 28, 2017. This Update offers an opportunity to revisit and update the Town’s vision as well as its goals and policies for the community’s future growth. This update ensures that the Town’s general plan aligns with the community’s vision and values.

TIMELINE



STAY UPDATED

To learn more about the general plan update, please contact Sandra Hoffman via email at Shoffman@logansimpson.com.

APPENDIX B: Social Media Posts



This graphic features a stylized background with blue and brown geometric shapes. On the left, there is an illustration of a smartphone displaying a checklist with four red checkmarks, surrounded by speech bubbles containing question marks, a small potted succulent, and a cow skull. In the center is a large QR code. To the right of the QR code is the Gila Bend General Plan 2040 logo, followed by the title 'Help Shape the Future of Gila Bend' and a paragraph of text.

Help Shape the Future of Gila Bend

We need your help planning for the future! The results of these questions will assist in creating guiding principles, goals, policies, and priorities for the plan. Thank you in advance for sharing your input by taking this **5-minute questionnaire**.



This graphic is identical to the English version, featuring the same background, illustrations, QR code, and logo. The text is in Spanish.

Ayude a dar forma a la El futuro de Gila Bend

¡Necesitamos su ayuda para planificar el futuro! Los resultados de estas preguntas ayudarán a crear principios rectores, metas, políticas y prioridades para el plan. Gracias de antemano por compartir sus comentarios al responder este cuestionario de **5 minutos**.

APPENDIX C: Questionnaire



Gila Bend General Plan Update Questionnaire #1 - English

About

The Town of Gila Bend is in the process of updating its General Plan, a long-range visioning policy document, and we need your help planning for the future. The results of these questions will assist in creating guiding principles, goals, policies, and priorities for the plan. Thank you in advance for sharing your input by taking this **5-minute questionnaire**.

For more information, please visit

[General Plan](#) | [Gila Bend, AZ - Official Website \(gilabendaz.org\)](#)

Introductory Questions

1.

How long have you lived or worked in Gila Bend?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ Over 10 years
- ☐ I do not live or work in Gila Bend, but I like visiting.
- ☐ I prefer not to answer.

2.

What is your age?

- ☐ 19 years or younger
- ☐ 20 to 39 years
- ☐ 40 to 59 years
- ☐ 60 years and older
- ☐ I prefer not to answer.

3.

What is your gender?

- ☐ a. Male
- ☐ b. Female
- ☐ c. Other
- ☐ d. I prefer to self-identify.
- ☐ e. I prefer not to answer.

- 4.
- What is your race and ethnicity? (select all that apply)**
- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native
 - ☐ Asian/Asian American
 - ☐ Black or African American
 - ☐ Hispanic or Latino
 - ☐ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
 - ☐ White
 - ☐ Other
 - ☐ I prefer to self-identify.
 - ☐ I prefer not to answer.

Main Questions

5. What is most unique about Gila Bend? (select a maximum of 3 choices)

- ☐ Variety of landscapes and scenic open spaces
- ☐ Less populated, small-town feel
- ☐ Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Clean air and water
- ☐ People, community, and families
- ☐ Traditional values
- ☐ Cultural diversity
- ☐ Connected infrastructure (roads, rail)
- ☐ Growth potential
- ☐ Significant role in Nation's defense (LAFB Aux and Goldwater Range)
- ☐ Other:

6. What does Gila Bend do well? (select a maximum of 5 choices)

- ☐ Responsive public service and customer care
- ☐ Supportive to local and existing businesses
- ☐ Protective of agriculture
- ☐ Roads (connectivity, maintenance, safety)
- ☐ Housing affordability
- ☐ Water and air quality
- ☐ Well-attended school events
- ☐ Great Emergency Medical System (EMS)
- ☐ Solar energy focused
- ☐ Other:

7. If you could change anything about Gila Bend, what would it be? (select a maximum of 5 choices)

- ☐ Housing (more housing choices, lower cost)
- ☐ More job opportunities
- ☐ Better maintained infrastructure, housing, and commercial businesses
- ☐ Less traffic congestion, safer roads
- ☐ More industrial, rail line, and warehouse development
- ☐ More retail, entertainment, and restaurants
- ☐ More water conservation
- ☐ More law enforcement
- ☐ More community events and tourism
- ☐ More healthcare options
- ☐ Other:

8. Are there any obstacles to the future prosperity of Gila Bend? (select a maximum of 5 choices)

- ☐ Aging and declining population
- ☐ Flooding
- ☐ Water supply and management
- ☐ Limited funding
- ☐ Loss of small-town feel
- ☐ Lack of infrastructure or maintenance
- ☐ Lack of industry
- ☐ Unwillingness to change or accept new ideas/technologies/development
- ☐ Military facility encroachment
- ☐ Other:

9. Is there anything else that you would like to share about Gila Bend or what comes to mind when you think about Gila Bend in the future?

Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.



Gila Bend General Plan Update Questionnaire #1 - Spanish

Acerca de

La ciudad de Gila Bend está actualizando su Plan General, un documento político de visión a largo plazo, y necesitamos su ayuda para planificar el futuro. Los resultados de estas preguntas ayudarán a crear principios rectores, objetivos, políticas y prioridades para el plan. Gracias de antemano por compartir su opinión respondiendo a este **cuestionario de 5 minutos**.

Para más información, visite

[Plan General | Gila Bend, AZ - Página web oficial \(gilabendaz.org\)](#)

Preguntas Introductorias

1.

¿Cuánto tiempo hace que vive o trabaja en Gila Bend?

- ☐ Menos de 1 año
- ☐ 1-5 años
- ☐ 5-10 años
- ☐ Más de 10 años No vivo ni trabajo en Gila Bend, pero me gusta visitarla.
- ☐ Prefiero no contestar.

2.

¿Cuál es tu edad?

- ☐ 19 años o menos
- ☐ De 20 a 39 años
- ☐ De 40 a 59 años
- ☐ 60 años o más
- ☐ Prefiero no contestar.

3.

¿Cuál es su género?

- ☐ a. Hombre
- ☐ b. Mujer
- ☐ c. Otro
- ☐ d. Prefiero mi propia identificación
- ☐ e. Prefiero no contestar.

4.

¿Cuál es su raza y etnia? (seleccione todo lo que corresponda)

- ☐ Indio Americano/Nativo de Alaska
- ☐ Asiático/Asiático Americano
- ☐ Negro o Afroamericano
- ☐ Hispano o Latino
- ☐ Nativo de Hawái o otras islas del Pacífico
- ☐ Blanco
- ☐ Otro
- ☐ Prefiero mi propia identificación
- ☐ Prefiero no contestar.

Preguntas Principales

5. ¿Qué es lo más singular de Gila Bend? (Seleccione un máximo de 3 opciones)

- ☐ Variedad de paisajes y espacios abiertos escénicos
- ☐ Menos poblado, sensación de pueblo pequeño
- ☐ Oportunidades recreativas
- ☐ Aire y agua limpios
- ☐ Gente, comunidad y familias
- ☐ Valores tradicionales
- ☐ Diversidad cultural
- ☐ Infraestructuras conectadas (carreteras, ferrocarril)
- ☐ Potencial de crecimiento
- ☐ Papel significativo en la defensa de la nación (LAFB Aux y Goldwater Range)
- ☐ Otro:

6. ¿Qué es lo que Gila Bend hace bien? (Seleccione un máximo de 5 opciones)

- ☐ Receptivo servicio público y atención al cliente
- ☐ Apoyo a las empresas locales y existentes
- ☐ Protección de la agricultura
- ☐ Carreteras (conectividad, mantenimiento, seguridad)
- ☐ Vivienda asequible
- ☐ Calidad del agua y del aire
- ☐ Eventos escolares bien atendidos
- ☐ Buen sistema de emergencias médicas
- ☐ Centrado en la energía solar
- ☐ Otro:

7. Si pudieras cambiar algo de Gila Bend, ¿qué sería? (Seleccione un máximo de 5 opciones)

- ☐ Vivienda (más opciones de vivienda, menor costo)
- ☐ Más oportunidades de empleo
- ☐ Infraestructuras, viviendas y comercios mejor mantenidos
- ☐ Menos congestión de tráfico, carreteras más seguras
- ☐ Más desarrollo industrial, ferroviario y de almacenes
- ☐ Más comercios, entretenimientos, y restaurantes
- ☐ Más conservación del agua
- ☐ Más aplicación de la ley
- ☐ Más eventos comunitarios y turismo
- ☐ Más opciones sanitarias
- ☐ Otro:

**8. ¿Existen obstáculos para la prosperidad futura de Gila Bend?
(Seleccione un máximo de 5 opciones)**

- ☐ Envejecimiento y disminución de la población
- ☐ Inundaciones
- ☐ Suministro y gestión del agua
- ☐ Financiamiento limitado
- ☐ Pérdida de la sensación de un pueblo pequeño
- ☐ Falta de infraestructuras o mantenimiento
- ☐ Falta de industria
- ☐ Falta de voluntad para cambiar o aceptar nuevas ideas/tecnologías/desarrollo
- ☐ Usurpación de instalaciones militares
- ☐ Otro:

9. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría compartir sobre Gila Bend o qué le viene a la mente cuando piensa en Gila Bend en el futuro?

¡Gracias!

Gracias por tomar nuestra encuesta. Tu respuesta es muy importante para nosotros.

APPENDIX D: Glossary

Affordable Housing. Affordable housing is property, whether owned or rented, that costs no more than 28 to 30 percent of gross household income.

American Community Survey (ACS). Source for detailed population and housing information about our nation.

Annexation. Annexation is the incorporation of a land area into an existing district or municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction.

Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA). AZDA supports farming, ranching, and agribusiness in Arizona by protecting plants and animals, issuing agriculture and environmental licenses, inspecting farming practices, and overseeing commerce standards and measurement devices.

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). ADOT is a State multimodal transportation agency.

Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). ADWR is a State agency charged with securing long-term water supplies for Arizona communities.

Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD). AGFD is the state agency charged with managing the conservation of Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and managing safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

Arizona Multihousing Association (AMA). The AMA provides services, products, educational programs and networking opportunities to promote ethical, quality rental housing throughout Arizona.

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.). The A.R.S. are state laws passed by the Arizona Legislature.

Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). Responsibly manages the assets of a multi-generational perpetual land Trust of more than 9 million surface acres in alignment with the interests of the 13 Trust Beneficiaries and Arizona's future

Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR). The Barry M. Goldwater is a vast training range for U.S. and allied pilots. The range consists of 1.9 million acres of relatively undisturbed Sonoran Desert southwest of Luke Air Force Base between Yuma and Tucson south of Interstate 8. Overhead are 57,000 cubic miles of airspace where pilots practice air-to-air maneuvers and engage simulated battlefield targets on the ground.

Buffer. A buffer is an area alongside protected or conserved natural open spaces in which human activity is restricted to research and maintenance of the protected or conserved open space in order to mitigate the negative impacts of human activity on the land or wildlife.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM is an agency within the United States Department of the Interior responsible for administering stewardship and land leases of U.S. federal lands. The BLM oversees more than 247.3 million acres of land, or one-eighth of the United States's total landmass.

Capital Improvement. A capital improvement is the addition of a permanent structural change or the restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value, prolong

its useful life, or adapt it to new uses. Individuals, businesses, and cities can make capital improvements to the property they own. Some capital improvements are given favorable tax treatment and may be exempted from sales tax in certain jurisdictions.

Community Facilities District (CFD). A CFD is a financing mechanism for the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of public infrastructure.

Compatibility. Compatibility occurs when the characteristics of different uses or activities are harmonious or capable of existing or working together without conflict.

Day/night Noise Level (DNL). Noise metric is used to reflect a person's cumulative exposure to sound over a 24-hour period. DNL takes into account both the amount of noise from each aircraft operation as well as the total number of operations flying throughout the day and applies an additional 10dB weighting for nighttime flights between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Demographics. Statistical data relating to the characteristics of the population and subgroups within a population.

Dwelling Unit (DU). A dwelling unit is a house or apartment that is a separate and independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household.

Ecological Connectivity. Ecological connectivity or landscape connectivity is the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes species movement between habitat blocks.

Ecosystem. An ecosystem is a community of living organisms dynamically interacting with each other and with the non-living components of the community, such as weather, sun, climate, and atmosphere.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA's duties include the development and administration of the nation's Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP develops and adopts flood maps, which illustrate flood zones that are used by participating communities in regulating the location and design of buildings, utilities, and other man-made improvements.

Floodplain. An area that is low-lying ground and adjacent to a river, composed primarily of river sediments, making it prone to flooding.

Floodplain, 100-year. The area that is predicted to flood during a 100-year storm, which has a 1% chance of occurring any given year.

Future Land Use Map (FLUM). A FLUM is a diagram that designates the type, distribution, and intensity/density of land uses allowed in the MPA.

Homeowner Association (HOA). HOAs are organizations in a subdivision or planned community that create and enforce rules for the properties within the community.

Guiding Principle. An aspirational statement describing and guiding a future ideal state.

Goal. The end toward which effort is directed.

Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC). GPEC is globally recognized as a top economic development organization (EDO) and works to attract and grow quality businesses and advocate for

the economic competitiveness of communities in the Greater Phoenix, Maricopa County and Pima County.

Growth Area. A growth area describes the location, types of land use, and land use intensities desired by the Town of Gila Bend. Additionally, this element identifies areas within the Gila Bend MPA that are particularly suitable for planned multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses.

High Noise and Accident Potential Zones (HNAPZ). The area beginning two hundred (200) feet from the end points of the main military runways and at a width of three-thousand (3,000) feet and symmetrical about a centerline between the runways extending outward to a point of thirty-thousand (30,000) feet from the point of beginning. The outer width is seventeen thousand five hundred (17,500) feet.

Improvement District (ID). An ID is a district comprised of property owners who desire improvement to their properties, such as water, sewer, or roadway infrastructure, which are financed through bonds, ad valorem, or equally apportioned secondary taxes pursuant to Title 48 of the A.R.S.

Incorporated Area. An incorporated area is a geographic area that has legally defined municipal boundaries.

Infrastructure. Infrastructure is all types of non-building, man-made structures and systems, such as utility pipes, electrical power generation and transmission systems, roads, bridges, water and sewer treatment facilities, and other similar systems and structures.

Intergovernmental Agreement. An intergovernmental agreement is an agreement between units of government to combine their resources to provide governmental services and perform activities for the benefit of their constituents.

Land Use. Land use is the occupation or use of a land or water area for any human activity, or any purpose defined in the general plan.

Luke Air Force Base (LAFB). LAFB is a United States Air Force base in Maricopa County located within the planning area.

Maintenance Improvement District (MID). A MID is a district where residents are charged through property taxes to cover maintenance costs for landscaping, irrigation, and drainage should an HOA be disbanded.

Maricopa Associations of Government (MAG). MAG provides a forum for local governments to work together on issues that affect the lives of everyone in the greater Phoenix region. Member Agencies include 27 cities and towns, 3 Native nations, Maricopa County, portions of Pinal County, and the Arizona Department of Transportation. Our planning area encompasses about 10,600 square miles.

Master Planned Community (MPC). A MPC is a planned community with its own land uses, intensities and densities, and design standards.

Multimodal Transport. Multimodal transport refers to planning for a variety of options when traversing an urban area, including but not limited to; walking, driving, biking and public transit.

Municipal Planning Area (MPA). An MPA is an area of planning influence that includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Natural Open Space. Natural open spaces are swaths of land that are undeveloped.

Natural Resources. Natural resources are environmental and ecological assets: the land, water, plants, and animals that sustain us and enhance our quality of life.

Neighborhood. A neighborhood is a localized geographic area used to describe a sub-area of a community that has a common character, such as natural or historic character, or is tied to a common local landmark, such as a church, school, or other asset.

Neighborhood Revitalization. A long-term effort that seeks to holistically improve the quality of life for residents, specifically in under-resourced communities.

Paloma Dairy & Sunset Farms. This dairy farm is family owned and operated by a 4th generation dairy farm family in Gila Bend, Arizona.

Paloma Irrigation & Drainage District (PIDD). PIDD lies in the vicinity of Gila Bend, Arizona, and diverts water from the Gila River, starting at about 25 miles south of the confluence of the Gila River and Hassayampa River. The PIDD has claimed water rights on the Gila River since the late 1800s and diverts an average of 185,000 Acre-Feet/Year for 27,000 acres.

Policy. A definite course or method of action to guide and determine present and future decisions.

Population Density. Population density is the number of people living per unit of area, which, in the General Plan, is per square mile.

Quality of Life. Quality of life is the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as able to function physically, emotionally, and socially. Quality of life includes all aspects of community life that have a direct influence on the physical and mental health of its members.

Renewable Energy Resource. A renewable energy resource is a resource of economic value that can be readily replaced. Renewable Energy Resources are either not depleted or can be regenerated when used, such as biomass or wind, hydroelectric, solar, or tidal power.

Run-Off. Run-off is stormwater that is held up on the land surface instead of seeping into the ground. This water either evaporates or “runs off” across the land to nearby rivers, streams, or human-made diversion structures.

Sustainability. Sustainability is the property of biological systems to remain diverse and productive indefinitely. Sustainability encompasses human systems, including economy and development and biological systems. Sustainability manifests in policies, programs, and initiatives that support sustaining biodiversity and long-term ecological health necessary for the indefinite survival of humans and other organisms.

Sustainable Development. Sustainable development is development acknowledging sustainability in four interconnected domains: ecology, economics, politics, and culture. Sustainable development can be viewed as a holistic approach and process to achieve sustainability.

Tohono O'odham (TON).

Transit. Transit is a system of regularly scheduled buses and/or rail available to the public on a fee-per-ride-basis.

Unincorporated Area. An unincorporated area is a geographic area that does not have legally defined municipal boundaries.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA is the US agency providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, and nutrition.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is a US agency charged with protecting human and environmental health.

Wastewater. Wastewater is spent or used water with dissolved or suspended solids discharged from homes, commercial establishments, farms, and industries.

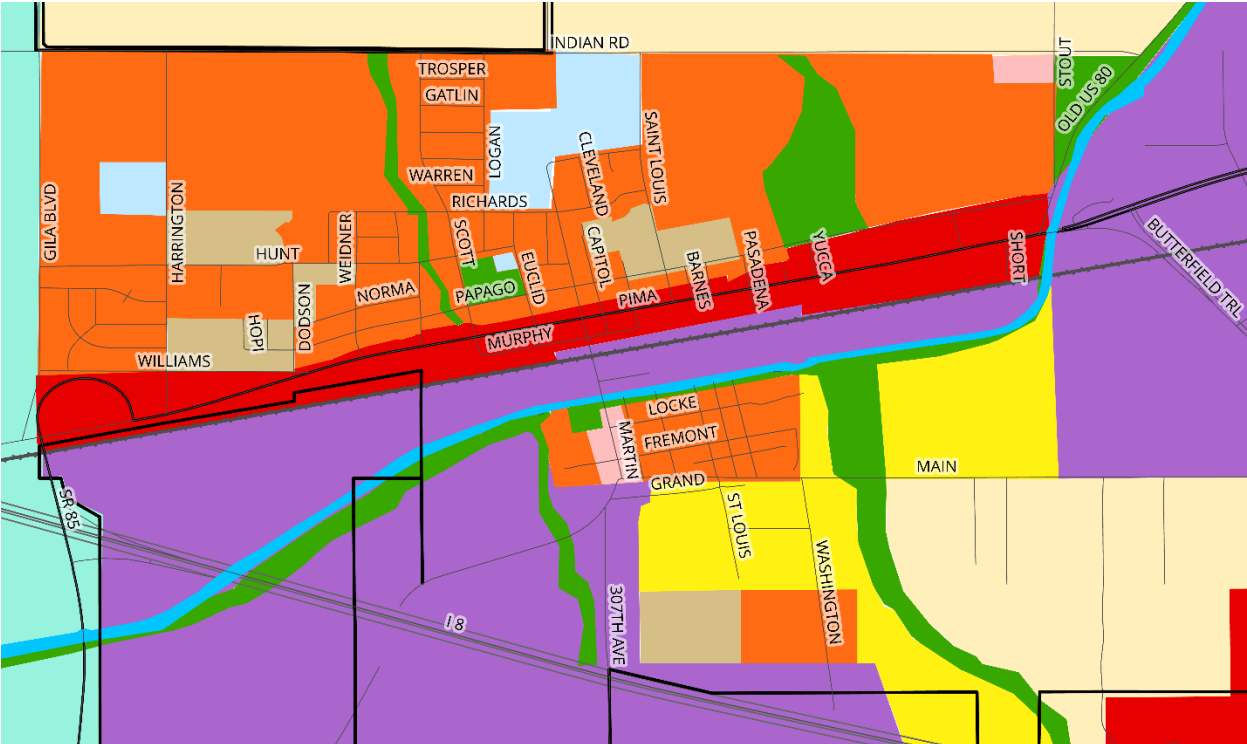
Watershed. A watershed is an area of land that drains rainfall and snow melts to a common outlet, such as a reservoir or stream channel. The watershed consists of surface water as well as groundwater.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). A wastewater treatment plant is a facility that processes (or treats) wastewater to make it potable.

Wildlife Corridor. Pathways and crossings intended to correct areas that have severed natural wildlife migration and movement patterns, impacting ecological functions. These corridors help protect wildlife and reduce the risk of wildlife-vehicle collisions.

Zoning. Zoning describes the regulatory control of the use of land and buildings within a jurisdictional boundary. Areas of land are divided by appropriate authorities into zones within which various uses are permitted and regulated. The general plan does not create or speak to zoning districts, but zoning ultimately implements the general plan.

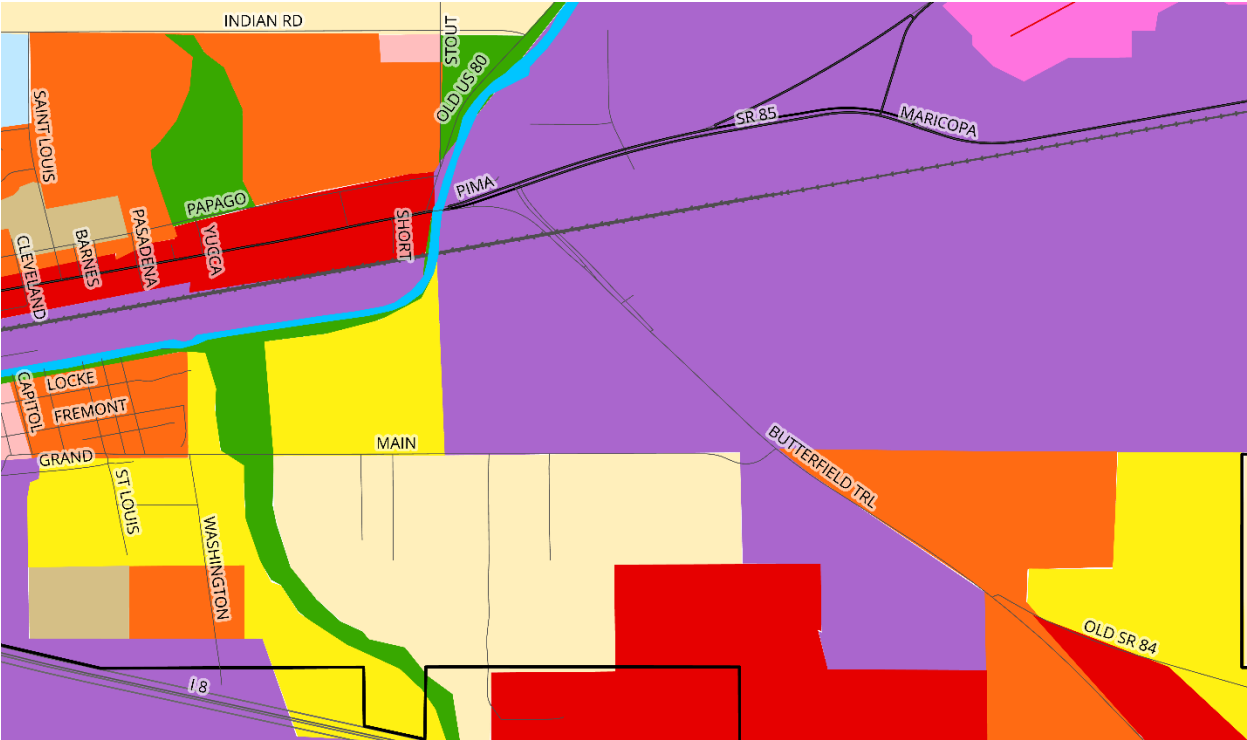
APPENDIX E: Focus Area Future Land Use Maps



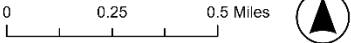
Central Gila Bend Future Land Use Map



- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | Heavy Industrial Business Park | Low-Density Residential | Parks and Open Space | Utilities |
| Mining | High-Density Residential | Medium-Density Residential | Public/Semi Public | Master Planned Community |
| General Business | Industrial Business Park | Neighborhood Business | Rural Residential | Gila Bend Canal |
| | | Military Compatible | | |



Southeast Gila Bend Future Land Use



- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Town Boundary (64.37 Sq. Mi.) | APZ-I | Heavy Industrial Business Park | Medium-Density Residential | Rural Residential |
| Runways | APZ-II | High-Density Residential | Neighborhood Business | Military Compatible |
| Military Auxiliary Airfield | Clear Zone | Industrial Business Park | Parks and Open Space | Utilities |
| Gila Bend Airport | Mining | Low-Density Residential | Public/Semi Public | Master Planned Community |
| | General Business | | | |