

# Parks Area Plan



**An Amendment to the Coconino County Comprehensive Plan**

**Developed by the Residents of the Parks Community  
with assistance from the County Community Development Department**

**Approved by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors September 17, 2001**

## **PARKS AREA PLAN**

**Approved by**  
**Parks Area Plan Committee June 20, 2001**  
**Planning and Zoning Commission July 24, 2001**  
**Board of Supervisors September 17, 2001**

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**NOTE:** The Parks Area Plan study map and Appendix E are not included in this electronic document. These items may be obtained from the Coconino County Community Development Department.

## INTRODUCTION

On June 1, 1998, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors appointed a citizens committee to develop a special area plan for the community of Parks and surrounding areas situated generally between Bellemont on the east and Williams on the west. The appointment of the planning committee was the result of requests from property owners in the study area who were concerned about development proposals in their neighborhoods that they perceived as threatening their quality of life and the rural characteristics of the area. The committee held their first meeting on June 17, 1998, and met once a month for the following three years through June 20, 2001 when they approved a final draft plan to submit to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the *Parks Area Plan* is to ensure that future development in the area is in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare, that it is not detrimental to the established character of the community as a whole, as well as individual neighborhoods, and that it preserves or enhances the special characteristics that define the study area. The plan is adopted as an amendment to the *Coconino County Comprehensive Plan*, and guides the decision-making processes of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

The plan does not identify specific land uses for specific locations, but sets forth goals and policies designed to protect the special characteristics of the community, while allowing for orderly, well-planned, and appropriate development. The plan has no fixed time period, but is intended to be applicable for approximately ten years.

### **The Planning Area**

The geographic area covered by the plan extends well beyond the core community of Parks, and includes many outlying neighborhoods and sub-areas that have their own distinct identities. The area encompasses a total of approximately 265 square miles, of which approximately 30 square miles is privately owned, approximately one square mile is state trust land, and the remainder is national forest land. The area extends from Bellemont and Camp Navajo on the east, which are outside the study area, to just west of the Pittman Valley interchange, and from Garland Prairie on the south to Pumpkin Center on the north (see study area map).

County planning authority only extends to the private land, and ultimately to the state trust land if and when it is conveyed to private ownership for development. With respect to national forest land, planning and land management authority lies with the U. S. Forest Service. In the Parks study area, scattered blocks of private land are intermixed with the surrounding national forest land. The mixed land ownership pattern creates challenges in the planning processes for both the County and the Forest Service, but also creates opportunities for the two agencies to work together to accomplish common goals in the wildland/urban interface.

There is one anomaly within the study area boundaries that should be noted. Brannigan Park, at the east end of the study area, was originally included within the plan boundaries, but was subsequently deleted at the request of the property owners. Early in the planning process,

property owners submitted petitions asking to be excluded (Appendix E). The petitions contained the signatures of all of the property owners in Brannigan Park. After much discussion, the planning committee agreed to honor their request with a stipulation that if the residents request a plan amendment to be added to the study area within one year of adoption of the plan, the committee is on record as supporting that amendment. The stated reason for the request to be excluded was because the property owners feel they are adequately covered by the County Comprehensive Plan. There was also a concern that the area plan would result in new or different zoning regulations that would affect how people could use their property. However, the Parks Area Plan does not institute new or different zoning regulations, and, as noted above, it serves only as a guide to the decision-making process of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

### **The Planning Committee**

The original planning committee consisted of 14 regular members and one alternate, all of whom were property owners and residents of the area. During the three-year planning process, five of the original members resigned and were subsequently replaced with new appointments resulting in a final roster of 14 members. In making the appointments, the Board of Supervisors sought to include a wide range of representatives of the geographically separate neighborhoods and sub-areas, as well as a cross section of the community representing divergent viewpoints. There was also a conscious effort to include a mix of long-time residents along with more recent arrivals.

### **The Planning Process**

The planning process commenced with the appointment of the planning committee by the Board of Supervisors in June, 1998. The first tasks addressed by the committee involved identification of planning issues and determination of the study area boundaries. Issues that were initially identified included water, roads, land use, growth management, lot splits, fire protection, wildlife, natural resources, public safety, utilities, and services, among others. After much discussion regarding possible study area boundaries, the committee decided to follow the boundaries of the Maine Consolidated School District, more or less, with some minor deviations at the east and west ends to include some adjacent areas.

The next phase of the planning process was the gathering of information to document existing conditions and trends with respect to each of the planning issues. Representatives from various agencies including the Parks-Bellemont Fire District, County Sheriff's office, Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish, U. S. Geological Survey, County Health Department, Public Works, etc. addressed the committee during this stage of the process.

Concurrently with the information-gathering process, a community questionnaire was formulated by the committee and mailed out to every property owner in the study area to obtain additional public input. Additional copies of the questionnaire were made available at local businesses for residents who may not have received one directly in the mail. Results of the questionnaire were tabulated for the study area as a whole, as well as for the individual sub-areas, and were referred to for guidance throughout the rest of the process as the draft plan was formulated.

Approximately halfway through the planning process, a series of public meetings and a community open house were devoted to the development of a Vision Statement. The Vision Statement set the direction and tone for the drafting of the individual elements of the plan and related goals and policies. The final draft plan was approved by the Parks Planning Committee on June 20, 2001, and subsequently by the Planning and Zoning Commission at a public hearing on July 24, 2001, and, finally, by the Board of Supervisors on September 17, 2001.

## **Community Participation**

Community participation in the planning process included public attendance at planning committee meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month at Maine School, widespread response to the community questionnaire, and participation in a community visioning session. In addition, community open houses were held to receive additional comments and feedback on the draft Vision Statement and on the final draft Area Plan. Attendees at the planning committee meetings, visioning session, and open houses were placed on a mailing list, and received agendas and minutes for all subsequent meetings. Additional public input was received at public hearings held by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors prior to final approval.

A high rate of response was received from the community questionnaire, which was mailed out to all property owners in the study area. A total of 468 completed questionnaires were returned, which amounted to 28% of the 1,643 questionnaires mailed. The results of the questionnaire are contained in Appendix A of this plan.

The visioning session on November 17, 1999 attracted approximately 40 residents who participated directly in drafting statements that ultimately were incorporated into the “Parks Area Vision Statement.” A community open house on January 15, 2000 attracted an additional 30 residents to review and comment on the draft Vision Statement. The Vision Statement serves as the foundation upon which the goals and policies of the plan are based.

## **Implementation**

The *Coconino County Zoning Ordinance* and *Subdivision Ordinance* are the primary tools available for implementing County plans. Both ordinances include requirements that the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors must make certain findings of fact in order to approve zone changes, conditional use permits, and subdivisions. One finding of fact required for approval of all such development proposals is that the proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the *Coconino County Comprehensive Plan* and any specific plan for the area. The *Parks Area Plan* contains specific goals and policies related to future development in the study area, and serves as the official guide for future decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Most development approvals are accompanied by conditions of approval to address certain permit requirements, site improvements, and property development standards. The conditions of approval further serve as a mechanism to ensure compliance with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and Area Plan.



In addition to development proposals, the goals and policies of the Area Plan should be considered by the Board of Supervisors as they make other administrative decisions affecting the study area, and as they direct the various County departments in their respective administrative functions. Ideally, such departments as Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and others, will help implement relevant policies as opportunities arise.

Representatives of the Kaibab National Forest have also expressed an interest in developing partnerships and working collaboratively with the community to accomplish natural resource goals and objectives in the study area consistent with the policies of this plan. Future Forest Service planning and decision-making processes on forest lands in the study area will consider applicable policies in the Area Plan, as well as additional public input from the community and other affected parties.

### **Future Plan Amendments**

The plan may be amended periodically, as needed, whether due to changing conditions or unanticipated issues. During the life of the plan, anticipated to be approximately 10 years, any affected party may request amendments to the plan. Such amendments would be considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors through a public hearing process, and public input from the affected area would be strongly considered. Eventually, if conditions change sufficiently to warrant a major rewrite of the plan, the Board would most likely appoint another citizens' committee to accomplish that task.

**NOTE:** The following *Vision Statement* is an expression of the desired future of Parks and surrounding areas as expressed by the residents of the community. It is based on the results of a community visioning session held at the Maine School library on November 17, 1999. The final language was approved by the Parks Area Plan Committee at their meeting of January 19, 2000 after consideration of all comments received on the original draft. The *Parks Area Plan* will not solve all the problems of the community, but the goals and policies in the plan are intended to help preserve and enhance the special qualities of the area, and move toward the desired future expressed in the *Vision Statement*.

## **PARKS AREA VISION STATEMENT**

Parks and surrounding areas make up a rural, diverse, family-oriented community, where residents cherish their independence and freedom, and the opportunity to live an affordable, rural, country lifestyle. Residents place a high value on maintaining the rural character, open space, scenic views, peace and tranquility, privacy, and other characteristics that define their high quality of life. The community is an active partner with the County in land use planning and related decision-making.

In order to preserve such characteristics, residents accept the fact of traveling to the urban centers of Williams and Flagstaff for most of their commercial and employment needs. As residential growth occurs in the area, residents take comfort in the knowledge that such growth is compatible with existing neighborhoods, and consistent with existing low density development patterns. As low levels of commercial growth occur, it is extremely limited in scope, and is community-oriented in nature, serving only the basic needs of the residents of the area.

Surrounded by national forest lands, the natural environment is an extremely important quality valued by residents. The preservation of natural vegetation, forest health, water and air quality, watersheds, and other sensitive natural areas is a high priority. Access to adjacent national forest lands is an important amenity enjoyed by residents, and the community is an active partner with the Forest Service in identifying appropriate management strategies for nearby forest lands.

The human community supports and coexists with a healthy and thriving wildlife community of both game and nongame species. The conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat are a high priority in the community. The community is an active partner with the Arizona Game and Fish Department in identifying appropriate wildlife management strategies in the area.

## HISTORY

The following appeared in the *Williams-Grand Canyon News* as “Homesteaders Leave Legacy in Parks” (March 17, 1999) and “Rhoades and Maine, Former Names of Parks” (November 17, 1999). The articles were written by Phyllis Angliss-Rosso, the *News*’ Parks correspondent. They were edited for the Parks Area Plan and are reprinted here with the permission of the author and the publisher.

In territorial Arizona there were only trails, gradually widened for wagons. Prehistoric trails were frequently followed by early expeditions, which Congress sent to the Southwest after acquisition from Mexico in 1848. The searches were for resources and transportation routes.

Between 1857 and 1859, Lt. Edward Beale constructed a wagon road between Fort Smith, Arkansas and the Colorado River along the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel with the section near Parks built in 1859. The Beale Road was among the first federally funded roads in the western United States, becoming one of the major transcontinental transportation routes of the last century. “The 35<sup>th</sup> parallel featured a relatively mild climate, generally level terrain and few antagonistic natives. It was an excellent corridor for travel, especially compared with the barren canyonlands to the north and hostile desert to the south. Railroad engineers followed the path of the Beale Road when surveying for the 1883 transcontinental Atlantic and Pacific Railroad. Towns and settlements soon grew up along the railroad, and roads linked the towns’ main streets,” according to the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service form nominating the old road to the National Register of Historic Places.

On April 26, 1898 the area known today as Parks was given a name – Rhoades. According to old post office records and historical files and maps, John T. Dennis established a box-car depot and called it Rhodes (later changed to Rhoades). It was to serve the tiny settlement around his saw mill. The coming of the railroad, during August 1882, in the valley which was to become Parks and Bellemont gave the impetus to lumbering. Initially, railroad ties were needed, followed by convenient and inexpensive transportation for the milled lumber.

The demand for lumber from the Dennis saw mill continued. As the Maine settlement grew, the roads expanded and a new store and post office was begun two miles away from the railroad siding. On May 4, 1910, the United States granted land for the future new store to Grantee McMillan, and it was known as Old Maine.

From *Arizona Names (X Marks the Place)*, the name of Rhoades was officially changed to Maine shortly after the sinking of the *U.S.S. Maine* in 1898. However, locals continued using Rhoades until the post office was renamed. The Maine post office lasted from October 3, 1907 until August 31, 1911. A man by the name of Parks was the Old Maine storekeeper and mail handler. As is “typical of the evolution of place names...at the newer location, the name Maine gave way to Parks,” according to *Arizona Place Names*. The Postal History Foundation of Tucson lists James W. Evans as becoming postmaster of Parks on December 15, 1914 with “possession on January 15, 1915.”

At the turn of the last century in the tiny territorial settlement, there were children to be educated. On October 19, 1900 the original Maine School District was established at Rhoades, Arizona Territory, on what is now Forest Service Road 141, or Garland Prairie Road, about three-tenths of a mile south of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad tracks. An early, undated comment on the school in the Coconino County Superintendent’s Record Book Number 1, page 173 states that Maine No. 4 is an “abandoned residence” which the superintendent found “suitable for the needs of the school.”

There were several other one-room school houses in the vicinity. They sprang up not because of population density but poor or nonexistent roads as well as weather conditions. There was Pittman Valley No. 3 (1912), Garland Prairie No. 13 (1914), Spring Valley No. 19, and Government Prairie (1922).

Virginia M. Lockett was the county superintendent of schools in 1922. She advised the board of trustees of Spring Valley School District No. 19 that “during the school year from July 1, 1921 to June 30, 1922 the attendance has fallen below the required number of eight pupils.” The number of boys enrolled in May was two, and there were four girls.

In 1924 Maine School District was organized as a consolidated district (No. 10) since it included the former Spring Valley District. By 1925, it also included Government Prairie, Pittman Valley joined in the 1927-28 school year, and on June 16, 1934, Garland Prairie was merged with the Maine District. Approximately 18 acres of land was bought from the Forest Service on what is now Spring Valley Road and Route 66. The Government Prairie and Garland Prairie one-room school houses were moved to the new site. They remain in use to the present day.

In 1862 the United States Homestead Act was passed, which allowed 160 acres of public land to be developed as a farm. After five years, to be used for building a home, farming the land, and making improvements, that land belonged to the homesteader. Much of the land around Parks was available for homesteading in the early days, but northern Arizona has a short growing season, sometimes not enough rain in the summer, and frequent heavy snowfalls in the winter. So why did families like the Kirbys and the Crocketts come to farm in an area of harsh growing conditions? “They were looking for a better place to live,” said Anita Grace, Kit Carson Kirby’s granddaughter.

Kit Carson Kirby was born in 1859 in Cross County, Missouri. He was the second of the seven children born to his southern-born parents. Kirby married Rachel Scott in 1883 in Texas. She was one of 11 children. After serving in the Confederate Army, her father, Thomas “Cottonwood” Scott, became a Texas Ranger. Scott was described as a “pioneer-type of frontier west” upon his death at age 97.

By 1907, Kit and Rachel Kirby had their own 11 children. The large family lived in different parts of Texas and New Mexico. In 1917, along with some of their grown children, the Kirbys came to Government Prairie in what is now Parks in search of a new life. There were other Kirby homesteaders in Maine, the grown children of Kit and Rachel, most settling in Government Prairie. Today many descendants of the Kirby family in Government Prairie live on the 10-acre parcels which were subdivided from the original 160-acre parcels.

One of the many granddaughters of the Kit Carson Kirbys, Rowena Marion Dean, attended Maine School. She was one of the editors of “The Pine Tree,” Maine School’s newsletter in the ‘30s. There was frequent reporting of the struggles with the weather and the crops. “There was a hail storm which lasted two hours, and the gardens were severely damaged” (July 26, 1932 edition).

With their crop yield uncertain, other income was frequently sought. Kit Carson Kirby had a general store. Then the Great Depression hit, and by 1931 the store closed. “There was always enough to eat, even if it was just potatoes and gravy. We had good churned butter, cream and sausage and fryers,” remembers Rowena Marion Dean.

Recreation was family-oriented. “We had no electricity, we used kerosene and the Maine School was pretty much the center of community activities,” said Anita Grace, granddaughter of Kit and Rachel Kirby. “There were dances and potlucks and plays. Everyone came.”

Another early homesteader, Obie Crockett was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army in 1919. Shortly thereafter, he left Missouri for the West. He was granted homestead rights for 160 acres lying on both sides of the General Store in Maine. A year later he married Anna Dodge, a widow with a two-year old daughter. Originally from Williams, Dodge had been helping her ill brother, Postmaster James Evans, at the Old Maine General Store.

Obie Crockett dry-farmed lettuce, potatoes and wheat, and there was a large family garden, recalled Geraldine Olmstead, his stepdaughter, 50 years later. Crockett worked his homestead with a seeder, a harrow and a mower drawn by a pair of Missouri mules, “Kate and Jude.” Water was hauled in barrels from “Grandpa Wright’s” well across the road on the lower slope of the hill. In the winter, snow was brought in and melted for wash water. Produce, a cash crop, was brought to the Maine train station in a wagon. Family transportation was a buggy “with a top, a lot like a surrey with a fringe on the top, drawn by a pair of mules,” said Olmstead. Surplus produce, milk and eggs were also sold along the road next to the homestead. Crockett gave his homestead over to his brother Carl in

1925. Two years later after little rain and a poor crop, they too, left. Despite rumors, Davey Crockett never lived at Crockett homestead.

One of Rachel Kirby's sisters, Frances Scurlock, also moved here. When Frances' husband died in 1918, she and her son, Curtis, left Texas to become homesteaders in Maine. Although handicapped, Scurlock and her son began the initial, enormous effort of land cleaning plus house and barn building. In 1947, Frances Scurlock sold her homestead to Helmuth and June Hausmann.

In the 1940s, life for families was basically unchanged from the early part of the century. The families lived almost entirely off the land. Robert Hausmann remembers that, "Every night when we sat down for supper, all the food came from our farm." The Hausmanns named the homestead "Peaceful Valley Ranch." By 1979, most of it was subdivided and sold, but the original buildings are still in use.

## NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY

### Neighborhoods

The Parks study area is a large and diverse area encompassing approximately 265 square miles, and comprised of many geographically separate neighborhoods. Based on public input in the planning process, it is clear that many residents tend to identify more with their local neighborhoods than with the larger study area as a whole. Because of the neighborhood diversity that exists throughout the study area, it is important that the plan include goals and policies that recognize the distinct characteristics of different neighborhoods. It is also important for the plan to have the flexibility to selectively apply the goals and policies as necessary to preserve and enhance the special characteristics of each neighborhood. And furthermore, it is extremely important that public input from the residents of each local neighborhood be strongly considered in defining each neighborhood's special characteristics, and in the decision-making process regarding future development proposals.

Neighborhood character statements describing the unique qualities of each individual neighborhood in the study area appear in an appendix of this plan. The neighborhood character statements shall provide further guidance to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors in determining the appropriateness of development proposals in different portions of the study area.

### Community Facilities

Community facilities include a number of public and semi-public uses ranging from day care centers to libraries and museums, from medical clinics to community centers, from fire stations to public parks and recreation facilities, as well as many other uses. Such facilities are usually more prevalent in towns and cities compared to rural areas like Parks, but there are usually at least some sort of community facilities in all but the most remote rural districts. In many rural communities, the fire station or school functions as a community gathering place for a variety of community meetings or special events.

Currently, in the Parks study area, the Maine School is the most prominent community facility, and has functioned as such for many years. Otherwise, the only other existing semi-public uses in the study area include the new Parks-Bellemont Fire District Station No. 1 on Spring Valley Road, and the Sherwood Forest Estates fire station. Based on comments at public meetings and responses to the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, it is clear that there are differing opinions among the residents of the area about the need for additional community facilities. On the one hand, there is some support for a multi-purpose community center, developed parks and recreation facilities, community gardens, and other public facilities that could provide productive and wholesome activities for youth and other members of the community. On the other hand, many feel strongly that such facilities are more appropriate in the city, and are not consistent with the rural lifestyle they moved to Parks to enjoy.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, approximately 34% (157 out of 462) of respondents say there is a need for a multi-purpose community center, while

approximately 57% (264) say there is not. Of those who are in favor of such a facility, the majority think it should be located near the school. Regarding developed parks and recreation facilities, approximately 26% (121) are in favor of such facilities, while 65% (298) are not. Furthermore, when asked if existing parks and recreation facilities are adequate to meet their needs, approximately 56% (259) said yes, and 17% (80) said no; 27% did not respond.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Neighborhood Preservation Goal**

Preserve and enhance the special characteristics of existing neighborhoods.

### **Neighborhood Preservation Policies**

1. Development proposals shall be considered in the context of existing neighborhood character, and shall only be approved if compatible with and not detrimental to such character.
2. Neighborhood-based public input shall be strongly relied upon to define existing neighborhood character and the appropriateness of development proposals.

### **Community Facilities Goal**

Community facilities are provided at a level that meets the needs of a broad cross section of the population.

### **Community Facilities Policies**

1. Public and semi-public uses shall be approved at locations convenient to the population being served provided that such locations are not detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Public input shall be strongly considered in the analysis of the appropriateness of development proposals for community facilities.
3. Community facilities that promote a greater sense of community identity and connectedness shall be encouraged.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Law Enforcement**

The Coconino County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) is the lead law enforcement agency in the Parks study area. The Parks community deputy's patrol area essentially corresponds to the study area, extending from Highway 180 to Garland Prairie, and from Bellemont to Pittman Valley. There are also two volunteers who help to increase the physical presence and visibility of the Sheriff's Department in the area.

Based on the low number of complaints received by the Sheriff's Department, it appears that criminal activity in the area is relatively low, and the general perception of residents is that crime is not a big problem. Based on Sheriff's Department reports, burglary was the number one complaint in 1997. By 1998, reports of burglaries had been reduced significantly by 44%. The reduction can be attributed to the fact that there are more full time residents in the area, as well as to the increased presence of the deputy and volunteers in the area, and a volunteer house watch program.

A recent survey by the Sheriff's Department indicated that traffic-related problems were the number one issue in the Parks area, especially with regard to speeding in some areas, and the improper use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). In response, the Department started a program to educate people, especially youth, about ATV safety, rules, and regulations.

As population and development pressure increases in the area, traffic-related violations may increase, and the potential for other law enforcement problems may increase, as well. For example, in most growing communities, the potential exists for youth-related law enforcement issues to increase. The Sheriff's Department can help organize youth programs to a limited extent, but other community youth programs may be needed to provide productive alternative activities.

Another public safety issue of concern in the study area is the discharge of firearms in or near residential areas. With the large amount of national forest land in the study area, virtually all private land and residential areas are either immediately adjacent to public land or within a very short distance. Firearms use obviously increases during hunting season, but also occurs at other times. Hunters may not shoot within one quarter mile of a residence. Prohibition on other discharge of firearms, such as for target shooting, for example, is not clearly defined. In some communities, homeowners' associations post firearms regulations, and if posted, they can serve as good deterrents. The Sheriff's deputy will respond to reports, and either cite or make arrests if the activity is unsafe or illegal. A regional shooting range is planned for national forest land near Bellemont, which could help by providing a safe and controlled place to shoot.

The Parks community deputy will have office space in the community upon completion of construction of the Parks-Bellemont fire station on Spring Valley Road. There is usually a strong cooperative relationship between rural fire districts and the Sheriff's Department. In addition, the Sheriff's Department can often serve as a facilitator to help address a wide range of



community issues by working with other County agencies and helping to coordinate community meetings.

According to the *Parks Area Community Questionnaire* in February, 1999, approximately 60% of respondents (276 out of 462) said law enforcement was adequate to meet their needs, while approximately 19% (89) said it was not. Approximately 57% (264) said traffic enforcement was adequate while approximately 20% (92) said it was not.

## **Fire Protection**

Although there are three fire districts in the Parks study area, they are limited in area, and much of the study area is not within any fire district. The Woods Fire District only encompasses the Woods subdivision, and the district contracts with the City of Williams to provide fire services. The Sherwood Forest Estates Fire District is also limited to the subdivision for which it is named, and they have a fire station and an all-volunteer organization with 12 volunteers. The Parks-Bellemont Fire District is the largest of the three, and the newest, having been established in 1997. The U. S. Forest Service fire management organization is primarily responsible for wildland fire on national forest land. The Forest Service typically will not respond to a fire on private property unless it is threatening to spread to national forest land. Fire crews from the State Land Department also respond to fires in cooperation with the Forest Service and local fire districts.

The Parks-Bellemont Fire District boundaries extend from Bellemont on the east to just west of Spitz Springs Road, and from I-40 on the south to approximately four miles north on Spring Valley Road. The fire department is an all-volunteer organization, currently with 20 volunteers registered, and governed by an elected five member board. The district is funded by a secondary property tax assessed on properties within the district, with additional funding from the Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT), which is paid by all property owners in the County. The current annual budget is \$120,000.

The district currently has about 20 registered volunteers, many of whom have completed basic wildland firefighting training. Some have also completed structural firefighting training, and the goal is to have all trained for structural as well. In addition to responding to fire calls, they respond to incidents on I-40 between Bellemont and Spitz Spring bridge. They have a mutual aid agreement in place with Williams, and hope to enter into similar agreements with Flagstaff and Camp Navajo. They have a good cooperative working relationship with the Forest Service on both the Kaibab and Coconino National Forests. District policy regarding response outside the district boundaries is that they may respond, and may bill the property owner for the related costs.

At the time of the writing of this report, the construction of the fire station on Spring Valley Road is nearing completion. There are plans for an additional station at Bellemont to be constructed within the next couple of years. The district's fire equipment includes a brush truck (with 250 gallons), a Type III pumper (250 gal.), two water tenders (1,500 and 4,000 gal.), and a crew cab truck with extra fuel hauling capabilities. When the fire station is complete, there will be an 8,000 gallon above ground water tank, and a 10,000 gallon underground tank.

The district responded to 20 calls in 1999, and 24 in 1998. Emergency 911 calls from the Parks area go directly to Williams for dispatch. Calls from Bellemont are routed to Flagstaff, then forwarded to Williams for dispatch.

It is expected that, as additional construction occurs in the Parks study area, and as the fire district becomes more established, there will be additional requests for annexation. In 1999, there were several homes valued in excess of \$1,000,000 constructed in the Parks area, most outside the fire district boundaries. As additional areas are annexed, the fire district's tax base will increase and allow improvements resulting in improved service and response capabilities. The district's current ISO rating, which affects fire insurance premiums, is 10. As development continues over the next few years resulting in improved fire service, the ISO rating may be reduced to a lower level thereby possibly resulting in lower fire insurance rates for property owners in the district.

According to the overall results of the *Parks Area Community Questionnaire*, 38% (176 out of 462) of respondents stated that fire protection is adequate, while slightly more (41% or 190 respondents) said it is not. These figures represent the total responses from the survey. However, on the question of fire protection, it should be noted that the responses vary greatly between sub-areas. "Yes" answers were generally high within fire districts. In areas outside fire districts, "no" answers were significantly in the majority. The complete survey results, including the results by sub-area, appear in the Appendix of this plan. Overall, approximately 35% (162) said emergency medical services meet their needs while 41% (188) said such services do not meet their needs.

### **Wildland/Urban Interface**

The wildland/urban interface can be defined as any area where human habitations and development occur adjacent to wildlands. While the Parks study area is clearly rural in character and far from urban by most accepted definitions, for the purposes of discussion of wildland/urban interface issues, the private lands of the study area can be considered "urban." With the large amount of national forest land in the study area, virtually every neighborhood is surrounded by forest or "wildlands."

Wildfire is a natural component of the ponderosa pine forest ecosystem. In a natural unmanaged condition, the ponderosa pine forest in this region experiences low intensity ground fires on a regular basis, which prevents excess fuel build-up, recycles nutrients into the soil, and results in open park-like stands of widely spaced pines. Since the early 1900s, wildfire has been actively suppressed in the national forests, resulting in unnaturally thick stands of trees and major fuel loadings of both live and dead fuels. As a result, according to Forest Service fire management officials, it is not a question of *if* a catastrophic wildfire will occur in the area, but only a question of *when*. The risk of catastrophic wildfire is clearly a major public safety issue in the Parks study area.

Living in a forested area is highly desirable by many people, as evidenced by the increased population in and around the national forests of Northern Arizona. Unfortunately, there is a lack

of understanding among most of the newer residents, and many long time residents as well, about the role of fire in the ecosystem and the danger to people's lives and properties due to the unnaturally high fire danger caused by past management actions. Professional foresters and fire management officials have only recently begun to recognize and address these issues as well.

The Forest Service is currently studying the need for appropriate forest management actions to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in urban interface areas. The Forest Service, however, can only perform such actions on national forest lands. To maximize the effectiveness of such actions, corresponding treatments are necessary on adjacent private lands. As new subdivisions are developed, the County can attach conditions of approval that require the developer to adopt and implement a fuels abatement and fire prevention plan in conjunction with development of the subdivision. The subdivision's covenants can also include provisions for future homeowners to maintain their property in accordance with the developer's fuels abatement/fire prevention plan. For existing subdivisions and unsubdivided lands, resources and expertise are available through the fire management office of the Arizona State Land Department to assist private land owners in fire prevention measures.

### **Coconino County Emergency Services**

Coconino County's Public Works Department includes the office of the County Emergency Services Coordinator. The Emergency Services Coordinator serves as a County-wide resource for information pertaining to potential public safety hazards. One of the primary functions is to develop emergency management plans for major emergency situations such as hazardous materials (hazmat) incidents, railroad derailments, community evacuations due to major fires, floods, snow storms, or other disasters. In the event of such incidents, the Emergency Services Coordinator helps to coordinate and notify the appropriate emergency response agencies, assists in evacuation activities, and assists in the aftermath in disaster recovery and mitigation.

In the Parks study area, with the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe rail line and I-40 corridors, the potential exists for railroad derailments and hazmat incidents that could quickly exceed the capabilities of local emergency response agencies, and require a more coordinated interagency response. In the event that such an incident or other major disaster occurs, the County Emergency Services Coordinator will help facilitate emergency response and recovery operations.

### **Rural Addressing**

There is no comprehensive rural addressing program in Coconino County in general, and none specifically in the Parks study area. Recognizing the lack of addressing as a public safety issue, some rural fire districts in the County have taken the lead in coordinating addressing programs by establishing an address grid system and assigning addresses to existing residences. Some areas where development has occurred in platted subdivisions, the subdivision lot numbers serve as the physical street address. As development and population increases in an area, physical addressing becomes more important, especially in facilitating emergency response. A coordinated addressing system is a critical component in establishing enhanced 911 service.

Enhanced 911 automatically displays the physical address of the caller on the computer screen of the 911 dispatcher, which can speed up emergency response in critical situations.

Although the County does not have an addressing program, Community Development can help coordinate the process and assist local groups with developing a program. If the fire district or other community group is willing to take on the project, the County Transportation Planner can offer technical assistance, and, once a system is established, will assist in road naming and assigning addresses to newly developed property. In addition, the County Public Works Department can provide technical assistance and information on proper road signing for private roads, and thereby help facilitate emergency response.

### **Other Public Health Issues**

There are a number of public health threats that residents of the Parks area may be exposed to through contact with insects, rodents, wildlife, or through household pets that may come in contact with such carriers. Some of the more common diseases include plague, rabies, hantavirus, and tick-borne diseases such as relapsing fever. Coconino County Environmental Health Division routinely issues public health advisories when outbreaks occur, and provides information to the public on how to recognize symptoms and prevent exposure. As population in rural areas like Parks continues to increase, the public education role of the County will increase in importance in informing residents about health risks associated with certain aspects of rural lifestyles. Also, residents of the area will need to accept the individual responsibility of recognizing such hazards and taking preventive actions to protect their homes, properties, and domestic animals from exposure to such disease-causing agents.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Safe Neighborhoods Goal**

Ensure safe crime-free neighborhoods.

### **Safe Neighborhoods Policies**

1. The County Sheriff's Department shall be encouraged to maintain a high level of visibility in the community.
2. Residents and homeowners associations shall be encouraged to participate in neighborhood watch programs in cooperation with the Sheriff's Department.
3. Organized youth activities and programs, including special events and ongoing programs, shall be encouraged.
4. Given the rural nature of the residential community, residents are encouraged to avail themselves of a means of self protection of their own preference.

## **Fire Protection and Emergency Response Goal**

Promote a high level of fire protection and emergency response.

## **Fire Protection and Emergency Response Policies**

1. New developments requiring Commission or Board approval shall include adequate fire protection measures, as determined by the fire districts and/or Board of Supervisors.
2. The County, in conjunction with the fire districts or other organized community group, shall help coordinate a rural addressing program for the Parks study area.
3. The County Public Works Department shall provide technical assistance and information to property owners on proper road signing for private roads.

## **Wildland/Urban Interface Goal**

Minimize potential for catastrophic wildfire in the wildland/urban interface.

## **Wildland/Urban Interface Policies**

1. A fuels abatement and fire prevention plan shall be required for all new developments in the wildland/urban interface.
2. New subdivisions in forested areas shall include covenants requiring property owners to maintain their property in accordance with any fuels abatement and fire prevention plans adopted by the developer, and shall include property maintenance requirements consistent with principles of defensible space.
3. The County shall participate with the U. S. Forest Service, other agencies, community groups, and homeowners associations in wildland/urban interface planning processes to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.
4. Private property owners shall be encouraged to seek technical assistance from the Arizona State Land Department for fuels abatement and fire prevention measures.
5. The community-at-large shall be strongly encouraged to participate in urban interface planning processes with the Forest Service, local fire districts, and other agencies to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire on both public and private land.

## **Public Health Goal**

Minimize the incidence of diseases associated with insect, rodent, and wildlife carriers.

## **Public Health Policies**

1. Coconino County shall continue to promote public education with respect to recognizing potential hazards, symptoms of infection, and methods of prevention of diseases associated with rural environments and lifestyles.
2. Residents of the Parks study area shall be encouraged to exercise individual responsibility for preventive actions to minimize exposure to disease-carrying insects, rodents, and wildlife.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Existing Road System**

The existing road system in the Parks study area includes a wide range of roadway classes and types including everything from a segment of interstate highway down to unimproved private road easements. Various levels of government are responsible for the publicly owned roadways, i.e. the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is responsible for Interstate 40, the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) is responsible for national forest roads, and Coconino County is responsible for County roads accepted by the Board of Supervisors. Private property owners are responsible for private road easements.

There are approximately 60 miles of County roads in the Parks area out of approximately 1,200 miles in the County system County-wide. County-maintained roads in the study area include a portion of Spring Valley Road, the subdivision streets in Sherwood Forest Park, Sherwood Forest Estates, Mountainview Acres, White Horse Lake Tree Farm, and several Forest Service roads through cooperative agreements with the Forest Service. Other roads maintained by the County include Garland Prairie Road to FR 13 (full maintenance) and limited maintenance to the Williams city limits; Thomas Loop Road to the scout camp; old Route 66; Spitz Springs Road; El Paso Pumpstation Road; Pittman Valley Road; Old Pittman Valley Road; FR 107 at Brannigan Park; Government Prairie Road; and Transwestern Road.

There are two interstate highway interchanges in the study area, one located at Parks, and the other at Pittman Valley Road.

### **Road Classifications**

The *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance* contains definitions and minimum design standards for a range of road classifications including primary arterial, secondary arterial, collector, local street, and alley. The County Public Works Department is in the process of developing a more detailed functional classification system for County roads that may be required for future development. The draft road standards currently under consideration include the following classifications: narrow residential local, residential local, connector, minor collector, major collector, and minor arterial.

The road classifications and design standards are mainly applicable to new developments, and do not have much bearing on existing County roads in the Parks study area. For the most part, existing County roads in the study area do not meet current standards, and are all classified as local streets. The draft road standards and classifications will apply to roads in new developments that are dedicated and accepted into the County road system.

### **Road Improvements**

The County maintains a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for scheduling necessary improvements of County roads. At the time of the writing of this report, there are four road improvement projects in the Parks study area included in the County's current CIP. They are listed below.

1. Garland Prairie Road - realignment of existing “S” curves south of Maine Townsite to approximately 2 miles south of railroad tracks; 32' wide base with 28' surface with asphalt millings if available; scheduled for FY 2000/2001.
2. Parks-Wagon Wheel - portion of old Route 66; pavement preservation project with historical significance; approximately 3 miles of rubberized asphalt overlay; preserve approximately 1,600' of original concrete pavement; Forest Service to do interpretive site at Garland Prairie overlook (interpretive site work not currently scheduled); County road work scheduled for FY 2002/2003.
3. Spring Valley Road - addresses safety concerns of horizontal alignment and drainage issues; grade and drain project only, no pavement included; 5 miles north of Parks at the end of existing pavement and extends for 7.5 miles; scheduled for FY 2004/2005.
4. Garland Prairie Road @ Raymond Pit - begins at Raymond Pit, ends at FR 13; grade, drain and surfacing with millings if available; 3 miles; scheduled for FY 2004/2005.

Generally, major road improvements such as paving, if not done originally by the developer, must be done through the formation of a road improvement district. The only notable exception would be where the County has assumed the responsibility for making improvements on collectors such as Spring Valley Road and Garland Prairie Road, for example. Otherwise, the formation of an improvement district requires a petition signed by a majority of property owners in the proposed district or by the owners of 51 percent or more of the property within the district. Upon approval of the district by the Board of Supervisors, the road improvement project is financed by assessing the properties within the district for the costs of the project. In other words, the property owners agree to tax themselves through the petition process to pay for the costs of bringing their roads up to County standards. Property owners have the option of paying the assessment in one lump sum initially, or the assessments can be financed as bonds over a 10 year debt retirement period with payments due twice a year for the duration of the debt retirement period.

According to the results of the *Parks Area Community Questionnaire* in February, 1999, approximately 35% of respondents (161 out of 462) answered yes that they feel that more of the roads in the Parks area should be paved, while 60% (275) answered no. When asked if they would be willing to pay a special district assessment to have their road paved, approximately 26% (120) responded yes, while 66% (305) responded no. While the community questionnaire was not designed as a scientific survey, it does provide a general sense of the community's attitudes, and with regard to the paving of roads, indicates that a solid majority is not in favor of additional roads being paved, and an even larger majority is not in favor of paying special district assessments.

## **Road Maintenance**

Funding for road maintenance is primarily derived from the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF), which is generated by gasoline taxes and vehicle license fees. Contrary to popular



belief, property taxes are not used for road maintenance. Another source of funding for road maintenance is U. S. Forest Service Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT).

PILT funds have decreased substantially in recent years due to the lack of timber sale activity on national forest land. However, the Forest Service has recently changed its allocation methods, and the amount is no longer tied to timber sale revenues. Nonetheless, the majority of PILT funds that are available are being allocated to schools rather than roads. For example, in years past, the County received up to \$1.5 million per year from the Forest Service, and only \$100,000 in 1998. The funds used to be split evenly between schools and roads, but more recently, schools typically get the majority. The County is reviewing the cooperative maintenance situation with respect to Forest Service roads, and may eliminate or decrease maintenance on those roads, because of major reductions in PILT funds.

In situations where roadway improvements are desired by residents, but improving the roadway to full County standards is either not desired or not cost effective, another option is an improvement district for the purpose of maintenance, also known as a road maintenance district. A road maintenance district is initiated by petition of the property owners similar to a road improvement district, but the roads are not brought up to full County standards, and do not become part of the County road system. Instead, they are brought up to a minimum condition that meets the access requirements of the Uniform Fire Code, and then receive regular maintenance by contracted providers. This usually means that they remain in an unpaved condition, but with a compacted all-weather surface sufficient to support a vehicle of 42,000 lb. gross vehicle weight. Like any improvement district, the improvement and maintenance costs are borne by the property owners. The one time improvement cost is an assessment payable by the property owner in cash or financed over a 10 year period. The annual maintenance costs appear on property owners' tax bills as long as the maintenance district is in existence.

According to the results of the *Parks Area Community Questionnaire*, approximately 27% of respondents (124 out of 462) said yes, they would be willing to pay a special district assessment to have maintenance and snow removal while keeping their road in an unpaved condition. Approximately 39% (180) responded no. The other 34% did not respond to this question.

### **Private Road Easements**

Private road easements are often the only means of access to unsubdivided lands and/or lands split through minor land divisions. The *County Zoning Ordinance* requires a minimum 30 foot wide easement to any building site. A private road standards ordinance was adopted by the County in 1995 as an amendment to the Uniform Building Code (UBC). It requires that each parcel have an all-weather road capable of supporting a 42,000 pound vehicle. The required width of the improved surface of the road varies depending on the size of the parcels being accessed, i.e. 20 feet wide for parcels of 2.5 acres or smaller, 16 feet wide for parcels larger than 2.5 and less than 10 acres, and an unimproved two lane roadway for parcels of 10 acres or more. The ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 3, 1995, and only applies to parcels created since that date. Prior to that, a 20 foot easement was required with no specific improvements.

The maintenance of private roads, as well as the posting of speed limits or other traffic control signage or devices, is the responsibility of the property owners.

## **Traffic Safety**

Speeding and the potential for traffic accidents are the most obvious traffic safety concerns in the Parks study area. There are also several at-grade crossings of the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe rail line in the study area, which presents an additional traffic safety concern. The enforcement of speed limits and moving violations on County roads is handled by the County Sheriff's Department. One Sheriff's deputy is assigned to the area, and two volunteers. The volunteers increase the visibility of the Sheriff's Department in the area, but are not authorized to issue citations. Deputies respond to traffic accidents in the area, and the Parks-Bellemont Fire District also responds, if necessary, depending on the type of incident. The Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) is the lead enforcement agency on Interstate 40.

The County Public Works Department is responsible for traffic control signage and road striping on County roads through their Sign and Striping Division. Traffic control signage includes speed limit signs, stop and yield signs, weight limit and snow removal ordinance signs, school bus stop signs, and school zone signs at Maine School. Requests for additional speed limit or other traffic control signs are reviewed by County staff on a case-by-case basis. Centerline striping is applied on paved roads where staff analysis indicates a need for it.

## **Other Transportation Modes**

There is no public transit system in the study area, and therefore residents rely almost entirely on private automobiles for their transportation needs. The current low-density zoning and low population in the study area would not justify the cost of public transit, and it is not anticipated that the situation will change dramatically in the foreseeable future. Likewise, pedestrian and equestrian pathways, and other trails do not play a significant role in the transportation system in the area. The recreational use of such trails and pathways will be discussed in more detail in the *Open Space, Recreation Areas and Trails* element of this plan.

The study area is traversed by the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe rail line roughly paralleling and on the south side of I-40. The railroad is primarily used for the interstate transportation of freight, and approximately 80 to 100 trains per day pass through the study area. Amtrak provides interstate passenger service with stations located in Williams and Flagstaff. The presence of a busy cross-country rail line, and particularly the at-grade crossings in the study area, could have implications for land use in the vicinity, which will be discussed in more detail in the *Land Use* element of this plan.

## **TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Roadway System Goal**

Provide a safe, efficient, and environmentally sensitive roadway system that provides convenient access to existing and future residential properties, commercial developments, recreation areas, and public lands.

### **Roadway System Policies**

1. Developers shall be responsible for the cost of road improvements necessary to provide safe and adequate access to the proposed development as determined by the Board of Supervisors, provided that required improvements are directly related to and proportional with the impacts of the proposed development.
2. Road alignments in new developments shall be designed and dedicated for appropriate connections with existing roadways and continuation to future developable lands.
3. Proposed developments adjacent to national forest land shall provide for public access where appropriate subject to approval of the Forest Service.
4. The County shall help facilitate the formation of road improvement districts and/or road maintenance districts to upgrade existing roads when there are interested property owners.
5. Road design, construction, and maintenance programs shall utilize best management practices to protect riparian areas, slopes, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Roadway Standards Goal**

Adopt and implement roadway design standards that provide adequate safety while maintaining the rural character of the area.

### **Roadway Standards Policies**

1. Road improvements necessary to support new development, as determined by the Board of Supervisors, shall conform to current County standards.
2. The Board of Supervisors may grant paving waivers for low density subdivisions (minimum lot size of 2.5 acres or greater) if the roads are to remain privately owned and maintained.
3. The County shall implement minimum road standards for road maintenance districts consistent with access requirements of the Uniform Fire Code.

### **Impact Mitigation Goal**

Mitigate negative impacts caused by the transportation system such as noise, dust, odor, and visual impacts.

### **Impact Mitigation Policies**

1. The impacts of proposed developments on the existing road system shall be evaluated prior to approval, and appropriate mitigation measures shall be included in conditions of approval. Developers shall be responsible for improvements necessary to mitigate impacts on existing roads.
2. Roadway design for new developments shall be sensitive to natural topography and physical site conditions in order to minimize environmental impacts, as well as visual impacts from nearby properties and existing roadways.
3. The County shall explore options for dust abatement through the road maintenance district process or other methods if practical and economically feasible.
4. The County's road maintenance programs shall utilize best management practices to protect riparian and other environmentally sensitive areas.
5. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) shall be required for major development projects prior to consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### **Land Use/Transportation Goal**

Encourage land use planning that accommodates and promotes a safe and effective transportation system for all modes of travel.

### **Land Use/Transportation Policies**

1. Future land uses shall be coordinated with existing and proposed roadways of the appropriate functional classification (i.e. arterial, major collector, minor collector, local street, etc.).
2. Proposed developments shall not result in substantial increases in through traffic on local streets in existing neighborhoods.

### **Pedestrian Safety Goal**

Enhance and promote pedestrian safety throughout the study area.

## **Pedestrian Safety Policies**

1. Pedestrian pathways and pathway easements shall be considered in the conditions of approval, if appropriate, for new developments requiring Commission or Board approval.
2. The County should work cooperatively with Maine Consolidated School District to address safety issues at school bus turnouts, student waiting areas, and loading and unloading zones along area roadways.

## UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

### Overview

Like many sparsely populated rural areas, the Parks study area contains limited public utility infrastructure. There are no community water or sewer systems in the area. The majority of residents either haul water or have it delivered by a commercial water hauling company; some have private wells. Wastewater disposal is handled by individual on-site systems. Electric service is provided by Arizona Public Service (APS), and telephone is provided by Qwest. In some of the more remote areas, electric and telephone service are not currently available. A limited portion of the study area, including the J Diamond Bell Ranch and Forrest Ranches, is served with natural gas. Public utility companies are regulated by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). The County has very limited control over the provision of public utilities except through the subdivision review and approval process.

Development in the study area, most of which occurs outside of subdivisions, such as land divisions of five lots or less, is not subject to the *Subdivision Ordinance* requirements, and builders in those areas have to work individually with utility providers for line extensions if possible. In some remote areas, line extensions and the related transformers or other special equipment may be cost prohibitive for individual property owners. In such areas where there is a lack of public utilities, only very low density development is appropriate. Conversely, where water supply is abundant and other utilities are readily available, development pressure is usually greater, and the demand for higher density development increases.

The *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance* requires that developers provide a certain level of utility infrastructure to each lot depending on the average lot size and how the subdivision is classified under the *Subdivision Ordinance*. For example, a Schedule “A” subdivision is defined as a subdivision with an average lot size of one acre or less, and requires underground electric and telephone lines, a community water system, fire hydrants and minimum fire flow requirements, and a centralized community sewage treatment system. As the density of the development decreases (and the average lot size increases) utility requirements are lessened. A Schedule “B” subdivision, which has an average lot size of greater than one acre and up to five acres, electric and telephone lines are required, but may be above ground, individual on-site wastewater systems are permitted, and a community water system is required unless the subdivider can demonstrate that each lot can obtain water through an on-site well, and that the underlying aquifer is sufficient in volume to serve all lots. A Schedule “C” subdivision, which has an average lot size of greater than five acres and up to 36 acres, requires electric and telephone stubbed to each lot, no water system is required, and individual wastewater systems are permitted.

The current *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance* was adopted in 1982. Most of the subdivision activity in the Parks study area, which includes 17 platted subdivisions, occurred before the current Ordinance was adopted, and therefore, most of the existing subdivisions do not meet current requirements. Any new development, however, would be subject to the requirements described above.

## **Water Supply**

[NOTE: Water supply issues are addressed in the *Water Resources* element of this plan.]

## **Wastewater**

Under the existing low density development patterns in the Parks study area, all wastewater disposal is handled by individual on-site systems, which include standard septic systems and other alternate systems. The Coconino County Environmental Health Division is the agency that regulates on-site wastewater systems as delegated by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The main goal of regulating wastewater systems is to protect ground water and prevent contamination. There are some seasonal high water table situations and varying soil conditions in some portions of the Parks study area where alternate systems may be required. Examples include Sherwood Forest Park and the proposed San Francisco Peaks Estates. Because of widely varied soil conditions, a technical advisory citizens committee has been formed for an appeal process of Environmental Health's decisions on septic system requirements. In general, the low density of development is conducive to maintaining ground water quality. Usually, the greatest potential for contamination exists where standard septic systems are discharging directly into perched aquifers where wells are located.

At the time of this writing, changes in state laws governing gray water are being reviewed, and may, in the future, allow changes to the County's gray water policies.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, the current wastewater disposal situation, i.e. individual on-site systems, is adequate to meet the needs of approximately 52% (240 out of 462) of respondents. Approximately 19% (86) said it is not adequate. Approximately 29% (136) of respondents did not reply to this question. When asked to rate the level of importance of wastewater disposal as very important, important or not important, approximately 42% (194) rated it as very important, 27% (123) rated it as important, and 17% (80) rated it as not important. Approximately 14% (65) did not respond to this question.

## **UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Efficient Utility Infrastructure Goal**

Promote sustainable and efficient energy usage.

### **Efficient Utility Infrastructure Policy**

1. Solar, wind-powered, and other alternative energy systems and "green" building techniques shall be encouraged in new development proposals if appropriate and feasible subject to approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

### **Impact Mitigation Goal**

Minimize impacts of future installations of utility infrastructure.

### **Impact Mitigation Policy**

1. Any new above ground utility infrastructure shall include mitigation of visual and aesthetic impacts by the use of appropriate color schemes, building materials, setbacks, landscaping, site planning, and/or other methods of visual screening or buffering.

### **Wastewater Disposal Goal**

Promote environmentally compatible wastewater disposal methods.

### **Wastewater Disposal Policies**

1. Proposed developments shall provide a preliminary wastewater report prepared by a sanitary engineer detailing the proposed method of wastewater disposal and its effect on surface and ground water, and shall conduct preliminary soil tests sufficient for the County Environmental Health Division to determine the adequacy of the proposed method of disposal. Such requirements shall be met prior to consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
2. The County Environmental Health Division may consider approval of alternate or experimental disposal systems where appropriate and consistent with ADEQ requirements.



## **WATER RESOURCES**

### **Regulatory Authority**

Several different state agencies have regulatory jurisdiction over water-related issues. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Water Quality Division is responsible for enforcing EPA regulations with respect to public water systems under the federal Clean Water Act. The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) regulates the pumping of ground water through the issuance of well permits, and regulates the collection of surface water in ponds and other impoundments. The Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) regulates water companies and other utilities with regard to rate structures and franchise areas. The County has limited authority in water-related matters regulated by these agencies. Therefore, the protection of water resources requires a high degree of coordination between the state agencies in conjunction with the land use regulatory functions of the County.

### **Water Availability**

Water supply is obviously a crucial element in any community's development potential. It is necessary for domestic use, as well as fire protection. There are no community water systems in the Parks study area. The majority of residents either haul water or have it delivered by a commercial water hauling company; some have private wells. Coconino County in general is characterized by very limited sources of potable water. This is also true of the Parks study area, with the exception of a few areas where perched aquifers provide water supply through relatively shallow wells. However, perched aquifers are usually very localized in area and limited in volume, and are, therefore, only sufficient to supply small numbers of users, as opposed to the community-at-large. Furthermore, perched aquifers are usually dependent on annual recharge by snow melt, which may not be forthcoming in dry years, and, therefore, such sources may not be dependable or may dry up entirely during a drought. The deeper regional aquifer would generally be a more dependable source, but at an average depth of approximately 2,500 feet, the expense of drilling deep wells is cost prohibitive for most individuals or small communities.

The *Parks Community Questionnaire* in February, 1999 asked several questions related to water supply. It asked if the respondent has a well, hauls water or has it delivered; well depth and approximate monthly usage; if the current water situation is adequate to meet the needs of the respondent; and if there is a need for a community well or water district. According to the results, approximately 24% of respondents (109 out of 462) have a well, and 73% (335) do not. Approximately 44% (203) said the current water situation is adequate to meet their needs, while 39% (182) said it is not. Approximately 58% (266) said there is a need for a community well or water district, while 33% (152) said there is not. [NOTE: *See Appendix A for the complete results of the community questionnaire. The total responses for each question do not always add up to 100%, because every respondent did not always answer every question.*]

For those residents who haul water, the Bellemont Water Company's well is one of the main sources. According to the draft *Flagstaff Area Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan*, the Bellemont Water Company supplies water to about 500 people through water haulers, both commercial and private, as well as several service connections to industrial properties at

Bellemont. About 98.5% of the 100,000 gallons supplied per day goes to commercial haulers or residents of the Parks/Bellemont area. Hauled water is also usually available from the City of Williams. However, those sources do not represent an assured supply for residents of the Parks study area, and could disappear or be diverted to other uses. The City of Williams curtails sales to commercial haulers in times of drought or diminished supply, and as future development occurs at Bellemont, that source may not be available to haulers either. As a result, there is some interest, as reflected in the results of the community questionnaire, in developing a community well or establishing a water district.

The implications of obtaining an assured water supply for the Parks study area need to be carefully evaluated and understood. It has been said that an assured water supply could be a double-edged sword. For example, the ready availability of water could result in increased development pressure, especially for higher density development where community water systems are required. According to almost all of the public input obtained in this planning process, the majority of residents in the Parks study area want to maintain the rural low density character of the area. The lack of water, while being an inconvenience to residents, is a serious constraint on future development, and could help maintain the existing low density development pattern. Conversely, an abundant water supply would quite likely result in enormous pressure for higher density development, especially as the nearby urban areas of Williams and Flagstaff continue to grow and buildable private land becomes scarcer. In other words, obtaining an abundant water supply and maintaining very low density development can be a difficult balancing act.

## **Water Districts**

The County improvement district process can be used for a variety of purposes, including the establishment of a community water system. The formation of an improvement district requires petitions signed by a majority of property owners in the proposed district or the owners of the majority of the property within the district. Normally, the County Board of Supervisors acts as the board of directors of the improvement district, but a separate elected board could also serve as the governing body of the district. The costs of the improvements are levied against the property owners in the district, and become a lien on the property. Property owners then pay semi-annual assessments until the debt is retired, usually a 10 year time period.

Theoretically, a water district could be formed for the purpose of drilling a well for the use of the property owners within the district without providing a water distribution system. However, a domestic water improvement district is more commonly formed for the purpose of purchasing an existing water system. The problem with forming a district to drill a well is that there is no guarantee that the well would be successful, and drilling a deep well is very expensive. If the well came up dry, the property owners in the district would still have to pay assessments to repay any costs incurred. Another problem is that the assessed value of the property within the district has to be about three to five times the value of the improvements. The final costs of drilling a well could be estimated, but not known exactly until the well was completed. It would probably be more realistic for a water district to be formed to purchase an existing well with a known capacity and yield. Other options for developing a community well or water system could

include the formation of a private entity, such as a cooperative, that could seek grants or other funding to develop a system.

### **Northern Arizona Regional Water Study**

At the time of the writing of this plan, the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) is facilitating a study known as the *Northern Arizona Regional Water Study*, which is looking into future water supplies for the region. One possible alternative under consideration is the construction of a pipeline from Lake Powell to serve the communities and Indian Tribes of the region. If such a project ever becomes a reality, the water would only be available to governmental agencies, and not individual property owners. A domestic water improvement district would qualify as a quasi-governmental agency that could obtain water from the pipeline.

### **Water Quality**

Since there are no public water systems in the study area, there is no documentation on the quality of ground water resources. In general, however, water supplies in other communities in the region that come from the deep regional aquifer are of excellent quality. Perched aquifers, which are located closer to the ground surface, are more susceptible to contamination from septic systems, livestock and other sources of pollutants.

## **WATER RESOURCES GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Sustainable and Reliable Water Supply Goal**

Promote sustainable and reliable neighborhood water supplies for domestic use and fire protection.

### **Sustainable and Reliable Water Supply Policies**

1. The County shall provide technical assistance in the formation of a domestic water improvement district if a majority of property owners in the proposed district express support through the required petition process.
2. Proposed subdivision developments shall include the minimum water system and fire protection requirements specified by the *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance*.
3. For proposed low density subdivision developments for which the *Subdivision Ordinance* does not contain specific fire protection requirements, such improvements shall be those deemed by the Board of Supervisors and the local fire district as necessary to adequately serve the proposed development.
4. Proposed water development projects, i.e. commercial wells, etc., that serve the local community shall receive favorable consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission if compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and not detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare.

5. For proposed Schedule “B” subdivisions where no community water system is provided, the developer shall provide a subsurface hydrology study that demonstrates that each of the proposed lots can obtain water by an on-site well, and that the underlying aquifer is sufficient in volume to serve all lots. The required hydrology report shall be submitted prior to consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and shall include sufficient information to identify potential impacts on existing wells in the vicinity.

### **Water Conservation Goal**

Promote water conservation measures.

### **Water Conservation Policies**

1. Water conservation measures shall be included in all development proposals requiring Commission or Board approval. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, the use of reclaimed water for nonpotable uses, low flow water fixtures, and xeriscape landscaping.

### **Water Quality Goal**

Preserve the high quality of all water sources in the study area, including springs, wetlands, and subsurface aquifers.

### **Water Quality Policies**

1. The protection of ground and surface water resources and water quality shall be a high priority consideration in the evaluation and approval of all development proposals requiring Commission or Board approval.

## HOUSING

### Overview

The majority of the Parks study area is zoned for low density single family residential uses which include provisions for site-built, modular and manufactured housing. There are three areas where the zoning limits housing to site-built and modular, and disallows manufactured housing. There is one small legal nonconforming trailer park, which was established prior to the adoption of the first *Coconino County Zoning Ordinance*. There is no portion of the study area zoned for multiple family or high density housing.

### Single Family Housing

There are three portions of the study area that are zoned exclusively for site-built single family residential construction or modular housing meeting Uniform Building Code (UBC) requirements. They include Sherwood Forest Estates, consisting of 282 lots in the RS-40,000 (Residential Single Family, 40,000 square foot minimum lot size) Zone; Forrest Ranch, consisting of 10 five acre lots in the RS-5 (Residential Single Family, five acre minimum) Zone; and the proposed San Francisco Peaks Estates, which has preliminary plat approval for 49 five acre lots in the RR-5 (Rural Residential, five acre minimum) Zone. An additional 265 acres of unsubdivided tracts known as Forrest Meadows adjacent to Forrest Ranches subdivision is also in the RS-5 Zone. The rest of the study area allows manufactured housing built to HUD standards in addition to site-built homes and UBC modulars, and zoning classifications include G (General, 10 acre minimum), and AR, AR-2, AR-2.5 and AR-4 (Agricultural Residential, one, two, two and a half, and four acre minimum lot sizes respectively).

The quality and style of existing housing varies greatly throughout the study area, and ranges from nonconforming travel trailers set up on a long term or semi-permanent basis, to very large and substantial estate-type homes valued in excess of \$1,000,000. Much of the development in years past consisted of relatively modest and inexpensive vacation homes or cabins of a rustic nature. More recently, trends indicate a noticeable increase in the very large substantial estate homes at the high end of the real estate market. Such homes, often referred to as “trophy homes” or “starter castles,” are often built by property owners who own one or more residences elsewhere, and are only occupied occasionally. As such development occurs, it can have the effect of radically changing the character of residential areas that were once affordable and rustic in nature to highly valued exclusive enclaves. The resulting increase in land values has the effect of raising property taxes, and makes the area less affordable for other residents who originally bought property in the area based on its affordability. Another effect of the increased activity at the high end of the real estate market, is that conflicts often arise between new and existing residents based on differing aesthetics and perceptions of appropriate property maintenance.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire* regarding residential development patterns, the highest level of approval was for low density single family development defined as minimum lot size of one to five acres. There was slightly less, but still high approval levels for very low density, defined as minimum lot sizes greater than five acres. High density single family development with lot sizes less than one acre received the lowest

approval rating of the majority of respondents. Specifically, the results are as follows. Low density single family: 68% (312 out of 462) approve, 20% (92) disapprove, and 7% (32) don't care. Very low density single family: 52% (239) approve, 23% (105) disapprove, and 18% (84) don't care. High density single family: 8% (37) approve, 83% (382) disapprove, and 5% (21) don't care.

## **Gated Communities**

Gated subdivisions are an increasing trend in many communities throughout the state and region. With the booming vacation home and second home market, some buyers perceive an increased level of security in a private, gated community. Others feel that gated communities do not foster a greater sense of community, and result in a separateness between those within and those without. Furthermore, gated communities are typically designed for the high end of the real estate market, and as scarce private land is devoted to that type of development, less is available for housing developments designed to accommodate moderate and middle income households, thereby negatively affecting housing affordability for the middle class.

A significant number of residents of the Parks study area feel that gated communities are not consistent with the rural character of the area that they are trying to preserve. According to the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, the majority of respondents are not in favor of gated communities. Approximately 55% (253 out of 462) disapprove of gated communities, approximately 17% (79) approve, and approximately 22% (101) don't care.

## **Modular and Manufactured Housing**

As mentioned above, UBC modular homes are permitted in any residential zoning district as long as they meet certain standards specified by the *County Zoning Ordinance*. Manufactured homes, on the other hand, are defined as being built to HUD standards, and are disallowed in certain zoning districts. Manufactured and modular homes are typically more affordable than site-built homes, and represent viable options for many residents for whom affordability is a primary concern.

In addition to being built to UBC standards, modular homes must also meet certain criteria stipulated in the *Zoning Ordinance* in order to be placed in a zone that otherwise only allows site-built homes. They must be built with exterior materials that are customarily used in conventional construction such as wood siding and composite shingles; the roof pitch must be at least 3 in 12; the roof must have a minimum one foot overhang on all sides; the home must be a minimum of 20 feet wide; and it must be set on a permanent foundation in compliance with the UBC.

Manufactured homes are defined as being constructed since June 15, 1976, and built to HUD standards with a HUD seal affixed. Units built prior to that date are defined as mobile homes. A recent amendment to the *County Zoning Ordinance* prohibits pre-HUD mobile homes unless rehabilitated to HUD standards. As mentioned previously, manufactured homes are permitted in most of the study area, with the exception of Sherwood Forest Estates, Forrest Ranches and Forrest Meadows, and the proposed San Francisco Peaks Estates. There are a few legal

nonconforming units in Sherwood Forest Estates, meaning that they were established prior to the current zoning. Legal nonconforming manufactured homes may remain indefinitely, but there are limitations on the amount of improvements that may be made, and any replacement with another manufactured home would be subject to approval of a conditional use permit by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

There is one small legal nonconforming trailer park in the study area. It is known as Whispering Pines, and is located just north of the Parks Store at the corner of Route 66 and Spring Valley Road. The trailer park consists of five spaces, and according to information in a zoning file from 1980 (Case No. Z-80-11) related to the property, it appears that the park has been in existence for at least 50 years. As a legal nonconforming trailer park, it may remain indefinitely under certain conditions. Individual units within the park may be replaced with the appropriate permits, but the park may not be expanded; a minimum 10 foot front setback and 10 foot separation between units must be maintained; and setbacks around the perimeter of the park may not be reduced from the pre-existing setbacks. The property where the park is located is currently in the CG-10,000 (Commercial General, 10,000 square foot minimum lot size) Zone.

According to the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, there is not much support for mobile home parks or manufactured home communities. Regarding mobile home parks, 9% (42) approve, 76% (351) disapprove, and 10% (44) don't care. Regarding manufactured home communities, 21% (96) approve, 57% (262) disapprove, and 16% (76) don't care.

### **Multiple Family Housing**

Multiple family housing is defined as more than one dwelling unit on a single parcel of land. There is no multiple family zoning in the study area, and no documented legal nonconforming multiple family situations that County staff is aware of. In order to be considered a legal nonconforming multiple family situation, a property owner would have to produce adequate documentation to show that it was legally established prior to the adoption of the current zoning. Essentially, that would mean that the multiple dwelling units would have to have been constructed prior to the adoption of the first *Coconino County Zoning Ordinance* in 1964, and occupied continuously since that time.

There has been no apparent demand for multiple family housing in the study area, and no zoning applications for such use. Generally, such use is more appropriate in the city or in high density developments where an adequate level of infrastructure and services such as paved roads, public utilities, and fire protection are readily available. According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, the overwhelming majority of respondents are not in favor of multiple family development. Approximately 81% (375 out of 462) disapprove of such development, compared to 8% (38) who approve, and 6% (26) who don't care.

### **Housing Affordability**

In response to an open-ended question in the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, a notable number of respondents cited affordability as a reason that they chose to live or own property in the Parks

area (40 out of 462 or approximately 9%). From this, it can be inferred that maintaining housing affordability is probably an important issue for a significant portion of the population.

There is no single, universally-accepted definition of affordable housing. Individuals and various agencies, depending on their purposes, define the term differently. As a rule of thumb, however, affordable housing is usually defined as housing, including utilities, costing no more than 35% of gross income. The term, “affordable housing,” however, often has a negative connotation being used interchangeably with the term “low income housing,” and calling up images of urban housing projects and housing authorities. Such housing projects designed to accommodate low and moderate income households are usually more appropriately located in the city where adequate public facilities and services are available. The broader issue of housing affordability, however, affects the entire middle class, both rural and urban. For example, as rural land and housing costs rise, housing affordability is negatively affected for all but the highest income levels. Furthermore, rising values are reflected by rising property taxes, which negatively affects existing residents. Maintaining housing affordability for moderate and middle income households is a serious challenge, and becomes all the more difficult when there is a scarcity of private developable land.

Opportunities for maintaining housing affordability in the study area include the fact that the zoning in most of the area allows manufactured and modular homes in addition to site-built. Also, several subdivisions developed with one acre lots and allowing a mix of site-built and manufactured homes have traditionally offered opportunities for relatively affordable housing. Until very recently, there was also more opportunity for undeveloped acreage to be obtained at relatively low cost. That has been changing noticeably in recent years as land values have increased dramatically in response to market demand. As population and development in the surrounding region increases, real estate values in the Parks study area will continue to increase as more people realize they can live a country lifestyle in a beautiful rural setting, and yet be located in relatively close proximity to the more urbanized cities of Flagstaff and Williams. Given the limited private land in the area, and the fundamental economics of supply and demand, as available land becomes more scarce, property values will continue to increase, and affordability will become more elusive for low, moderate, and even middle-income households.

The *County Zoning Ordinance* includes provisions for detached guest houses and attached accessory living quarters under certain conditions, which represent additional flexibility in single family zoning districts, and provide another opportunity for maintaining housing affordability. To summarize, guest houses and accessory living quarters are limited to 50 % of the size of the primary residence, and are allowed up to a maximum size of 1,000 square feet for attached accessory living quarters, and 800 square feet for a detached guest house. Detached guest houses require a minimum of two acres. Other stipulations allow a maximum separation of 60 feet from the primary residence, separate utility meters are not allowed, mobile and manufactured homes are not allowed, and the guest quarters may not be rented as a separate unit; they are intended for nonpaying guests or family members only.

The current guest house regulations were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1992, and were intended to respond to a public need for greater flexibility in single family living arrangements without compromising the single family residential character of such neighborhoods. In other



words, the intent of the regulations is to allow homeowners the ability to provide housing for parents, in-laws or children to live separately on the same property. Such arrangements allow independent living quarters without the typical expense of purchasing or building a separate primary residence, and allow greater flexibility for families with special needs. The guest house regulations also allow occupancy by unrelated, nonpaying guests, but are not intended to allow separate rental units, which would require multiple family zoning.

Another approach to maintaining housing affordability is to utilize nonconventional construction techniques such as straw bale, earthship, adobe, rammed-earth, and similar methods. However, reduced building materials costs for such construction are sometimes offset by increased engineering costs required for construction methods that are not addressed by the Uniform Building Code. Kit homes, which are partially constructed in the factory, and then transported to the site for final assembly, represent another option for maintaining affordability in housing.

Land development patterns, and the type of development that occurs, can have direct effects on maintaining housing affordability. At least one of the considerations with regards to future zone changes and development proposals in the study area should be the anticipated effects on housing affordability in existing neighborhoods. Also, consideration should be given to proposals that are designed to maintain housing affordability to the extent that such proposals are consistent with existing development patterns and neighborhood character.

## **HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Residential Development Goal**

Residential development patterns maintain the rural character of the area.

### **Residential Development Policies**

1. Low density and very low density single family residential development shall be strongly encouraged.
2. High density single family and multiple family residential development shall not be approved.
3. Mobile home parks and manufactured home communities shall not be approved.
4. Gated communities shall not be approved.

### **Housing Opportunities Goal**

A wide range of housing opportunities and options is available for a diverse population.

### **Housing Opportunities Policies**

1. The County shall continue to explore alternative approaches which allow or facilitate flexibility in single family living arrangements without compromising the single family residential character of existing neighborhoods.
2. Alternative housing construction methods and techniques shall be encouraged to the extent that they are consistent with the minimum requirements of the Uniform Building Code (UBC) and Coconino County amendments.

### **Housing Affordability Goal**

Housing affordability is maintained for a broad cross section of the community consistent with existing neighborhood characteristics.

### **Housing Affordability Policies**

1. Future development proposals shall be considered in terms of anticipated effects on housing affordability in existing neighborhoods.
2. Development proposals that are designed to preserve housing affordability shall be encouraged to the extent that they are compatible with existing neighborhoods and development patterns.

## **OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AREAS AND TRAILS**

### **Open Space**

Open space is a highly valued quality of the Parks study area, and often cited by residents as one of the main reasons they choose to live in the Parks area. Open space serves many functions and plays an important role in enhancing a community's quality of life. It provides recreation areas, wildlife habitat and migration corridors, transportation corridors, watersheds, timber and other resources, grazing, scenic views, and, perhaps most importantly, open space is a key determinant of land development patterns.

The existence of large amounts of open space in the study area is the result of land ownership patterns with the majority of the land being publicly-owned national forest managed by the U. S. Forest Service. The overall size of the study area is approximately 265 square miles with only about 30 square miles being privately-owned. In addition, there are a couple of tracts of State Trust Land that may be available for development at some point, but the large amount of national forest land virtually guarantees the continued existence of large tracts of open space. It is important to note, however, that national forest boundaries are not carved in stone, and are subject to change.

The Kaibab National Forest Plan identifies national forest land available for exchange to private ownership under the Forest Service's land exchange authority. The Forest Plan also identifies private lands that the Forest Service deems desirable for acquisition. There are a number of tracts in the Parks study area identified as available for disposal, as well as several identified as desirable for acquisition. The Kaibab National Forest Plan, however, was adopted in the mid-1980s, and their policies regarding land exchanges have undergone some revisions since then. The Forest Service would be obligated to review any proposed land exchange and seek public input in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). At the time of the writing of this report, the Forest Service is not actively pursuing or promoting land exchanges in the Parks study area, but they are in the early stages of looking at a proposed exchange involving some of the J Diamond Bell property on Sping Valley Road and some national forest land adjacent to Maine School. It should also be noted that Forest Service policy with respect to land exchanges is subject to change at a moments notice due to changes in administration and direction from Congress.

### **Recreation Areas**

While there are no County parks or County-owned recreation sites in the Parks study area, the large amount of national forest land provides a wide variety of dispersed recreation opportunities. In addition, there are a number of developed national forest recreation sites in the study area. Some of the Forest Service recreation sites include White Horse Lake, the Spring Valley cross country ski trail, a snow play area on old Route 66, and a picnic area at the Garland Prairie Overlook. In addition, the Kendrick Mountain and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Areas are partially located in the study area, and numerous other recreation sites and points of interest are located in and around the study area.

## **Trails**

There are several existing recreational trails, both motorized and non-motorized, on national forest land in the study area, and at least one proposed trail in the planning stages. Historic trails include the Beale Wagon Road passing east to west through the north end of the study area, and the Overland Road passing through Garland Prairie. In addition, Historic Route 66 passes through Parks along the north side of I-40. Trailheads provide access to the Kendrick Mountain and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Areas.

The Great Western Trail (GWT) is a proposed motorized route intended for off-highway vehicle (OHV) users. The GWT is proposed to extend from south to north through the western United States from Mexico to Canada. The local segment has been designated on a route just west of the study area. The trail will follow existing public roads, and will not result in any new road construction, but there is strong public concern about increased traffic on forest roads and possible impacts on residential areas and wildlife habitat.

## **County Trails Plan**

Coconino County Parks and Recreation Department has recently created a County-wide trails program, and is in the process of developing a *Coconino County Trails and Greenways Plan*. The plan is intended to be a cooperative effort between the County and local, state and federal agencies, and will identify trails and greenway corridors, interagency trail linkages, and trail user education and volunteer programs. The County is currently inventorying existing trails in the Parks area, and will be identifying potential trail connections.

## **OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AREAS AND TRAILS GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Open Space Goal**

Maintain a balanced land use system of multiple-use open lands, natural areas, wildlife habitat and migration corridors, and greenways.

### **Open Space Policies**

1. Open space shall be maintained as a means of preserving rural character and protecting significant environmental, scenic, and wildlife areas.
2. The County shall coordinate with the appropriate land management agencies to assure preservation of publicly-owned open lands identified as desirable for preservation.
3. Open space design elements such as clustered or dispersed building lots shall be incorporated into proposed subdivisions, where appropriate, in order to preserve scenic views and protect wildlife areas or other environmentally sensitive lands.
4. Citizen input shall be strongly considered in the identification of public open lands designated as high priority for preservation.

5. The Forest Service shall be strongly encouraged to provide opportunities for public input into any decision-making processes regarding land exchanges in the study area.

### **Recreation Areas and Trails Goal**

Encourage recreation areas and trail networks that meet the needs of citizens throughout the study area.

### **Recreation Areas and Trails Policies**

1. Proposed developments shall include provisions to ensure continued access to public lands.
2. The *Coconino County Trails and Greenways Plan* shall identify existing and proposed trails and greenways desirable for preservation.
3. The County shall coordinate with the U. S. Forest Service and other applicable land management agencies to provide non-motorized transportation corridors to connect neighborhoods and open spaces.
4. Citizen input shall be strongly considered in the planning and identification of trail connections between neighborhoods and throughout the study area.

## NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### Overview

The results of the 1999 *Parks Community Questionnaire* indicate that residents have a high level of concern about the environment and management of natural areas throughout the study area. The *Coconino County Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the importance of the natural environment to County residents, and emphasizes the protection of such resources in the interest of fostering economic development, maintaining property values, and providing for a high quality of life. Accordingly, this element of the *Parks Area Plan* addresses the issues of air quality, floodplains, riparian areas, and wetlands, tree preservation, forest management issues, wildlife, and aesthetic issues such as scenic views, and noise and light pollution. Related natural resource issues of water quality and quantity are addressed in a separate *Water Resources* element.

### National Forest Issues

The Parks study area encompasses approximately 265 square miles, most of which is national forest land. Approximately 30 square miles is private, and approximately one square mile State Trust Land. County Planning and Zoning authority only extends to the private land, and ultimately to the State Trust Land if and when it is conveyed to private ownership for development. With respect to national forest land, planning and land management authority lies with the U. S. Forest Service, an agency of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In the Parks study area, relatively small blocks of private land are intermixed with national forest land, and are referred to by the Forest Service as “inholdings.” The land ownership pattern creates challenges in the planning processes for both the County and the Forest Service, but also creates opportunities for the two agencies to work together to accomplish goals that may not be possible otherwise.

In response to the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, a significant number of respondents cited a variety of forest-related reasons why they chose to live in the Parks area. Such reasons include scenic beauty and views, rural country setting, wildlife, remote, secluded area, peace and quiet, solitude, and open space. Many of these characteristics are the result of the large amount of national forest land in the study area. Respondents also generally placed very high importance on other forest-related issues such as wildfire and watersheds.

### Wildlife

With the large amount of forest lands and a wide variety of wildlife habitat in the study area, wildlife has a large presence, and is highly valued by residents. Some common small mammals that inhabit the area include prairie dogs, squirrels, skunks, and foxes. Large mammals include coyotes, mule deer, pronghorn, and elk. Bobcats, black bear, and mountain lions are also present. Numerous bird species are common both as year round and seasonal residents. Living in close proximity to wildlife is rated as important or very important by a large majority (87% of the respondents to the *Parks Community Questionnaire* (68% very important plus 19% important). Only 5% rated wildlife as not important.

Conflicts often arise between humans and wildlife, because of the many ways in which the human community interfaces with the wildlife community. Examples include free-ranging dogs and cats that harass or injure or kill wildlife; improper use of vehicles, including OHVs; improper location of trails that cause erosion and destroy habitat; high concentrations of people and human activities that disturb wildlife; and trails or corridors that dead end into neighborhoods leading nuisance animals into human-inhabited areas with no way out. In this context, examples of “nuisance” animals can include skunks, foxes, bears or others that get into garbage or pet and livestock feed or get into outbuildings or other structures. Preventing such conflicts is important for the health and safety of both human inhabitants and wildlife. Sensitivity to the needs of wildlife for security and habitat will help ensure the continued coexistence of humans and a wide variety of wildlife.

### **Air Quality**

Although there are no air quality monitors in the study area, and therefore, no scientific data available, air quality in the study area is generally perceived to be excellent. Exceptions would include areas near unpaved roads, which are the major source of airborne particulates in the study area. Other sources include natural wind-blown dust, construction activity, seasonal woodstove smoke, livestock, Forest Service prescribed burns and wildfires, and the mining of cinders or other rock materials. Also, air quality can vary throughout the study area based on physical characteristics and land forms. For example, low-lying areas subject to thermal inversions are affected more by woodstove smoke than higher or more open locations where smoke is dispersed more readily.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality’s (ADEQ) Air Quality Division is responsible for monitoring and enforcing air quality standards set by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the federal Clean Air Act. The Air Quality Division’s monitoring section determines where to install air quality monitors, and they are usually located on public buildings at locations typical of the surrounding area for long term monitoring. Monitors are usually not located in rural areas like Parks where there is a relatively small and dispersed population with no imminent threat to air quality.

Air quality was rated as very important to a large majority (75%) of respondents to the *Community Questionnaire* with an additional 13% rating it as important, and less than 5% rating it as not important.

Smoke from prescribed burns on national forest land periodically affects air quality in the study area for short durations. The ponderosa pine forest, however, is a fire-dependent ecosystem, and fire is necessary for maintaining healthy stands of timber, eliminating excess fuels, and recycling nutrients back into the soil. The Forest Service monitors weather conditions, relative humidity, fuel moisture, air quality, and other variables when conducting prescribed burns. As the Forest Service attempts to restore forest health and reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, prescribed fire will continue to play an important role in national forest management.

## **Floodplains, Riparian Areas and Wetlands**

Floodplains, riparian areas and wetlands are environmentally important and ecologically sensitive areas that can be seriously affected by the impacts of development. Such areas serve as natural storm runoff channels, provide corridors for migratory wildlife, provide seasonal habitat for numerous bird species, and are extremely popular for human recreational activities. While there are a number of intermittent streams and ephemeral springs and wetlands in the study area, as well as a few perennial water sources, most such areas are on national forest lands, and therefore, not subject to private development and the associated impacts that can result. The Forest Service has implemented vehicle travel restrictions, as well as seasonal closures in some cases, around the most sensitive wetland habitat areas in order to limit impacts from forest recreational activities. The County has adopted floodplain management regulations to prevent or reduce damages to life and property as the result of flooding on private lands. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is charged with administering federal wetlands regulations under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

There are very few parcels of private land in the Parks study area that are designated as Special Flood Hazard Areas (Flood Zone A) by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The only private lands affected by the 100-year floodplain designation are located in Garland Prairie along a tributary of Frenchy Canyon, which forms the headwaters of Sycamore Creek. Those parcels are located in the General Zone, which requires a 10-acre minimum parcel size, and therefore, development under the current zoning should have no significant impact on the floodplain areas. Higher densities of development, however, could result in increased erosion, degradation of water quality in the Sycamore Canyon watershed, and diminished wildlife habitat.

There are few obvious wetlands on private land in the study area that would be subject to a 404 permit under the Clean Water Act. A Section 404 permit is required by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for any project that results in the discharge of dredged or fill material into a designated wetlands. If a suspected wetlands area was proposed for development, the County could request a wetlands delineation by the Corps prior to development or prior to approval of a development plan.

Floodplains and riparian areas were rated as important or very important by approximately 71% of respondents to the *Parks Community Questionnaire* (327 out of 462). Approximately 18% (81) rated such issues as not important, and 11% (54) did not respond.

## **Tree Preservation**

According to the results of the 1999 *Parks Community Questionnaire*, it is clear that residents place a high value on the preservation of trees and natural vegetation. Home builders typically cut as few trees as possible when constructing new residences and other structures. While this helps to preserve the forest character of the area, which makes it attractive to people in the first place, in some cases it also results in dangerous fire potential and forest health problems related to the unnaturally high density of trees in some areas and their proximity to residences and other structures.



Trees growing through decks or eaves or too close to a residence can be targets for lightning, can be ignited by sparks or embers from nearby chimneys, and increase the likelihood of damage or loss of the structure in the event a wildfire sweeps through the community. Fire organizations refer to the concept of “defensible space” when looking at vegetation and other fuel sources in close proximity to structures. During the year 2000 fire season, hundreds of homes have burned throughout the western United States as the result of wildland/urban interface wildfires. Often, homes that were not burned were the ones with less dense vegetation immediately adjacent to the house and more defensible space. The same scenario could easily occur in the Parks study area.

The definition of defensible space can vary depending on topography, vegetation, building materials, and other fuel sources, but does not necessarily mean an area entirely devoid of vegetation. In this area, the Forest Service considers a 30-foot wide fuel break to be the minimum recommended defensible space around all structures. Wider fuel breaks may be necessary around buildings located on steep slopes or in areas of dense, highly flammable fuels. The fuel break may contain trees and shrubs adequately spaced so that they will not rapidly transmit fire from the vegetation to the structure. Trees and shrubs should be spaced at least 15 feet apart, and branches removed to a height of 15 feet above the ground to prevent ground fire from spreading to the tops of trees. Trees should be at least 10 feet from chimneys or stove pipes. Foundation plantings should be of non-resinous vegetation, and kept free of dead plant material. In addition, highly flammable building materials such as wood shake shingles should be avoided.

Coconino County has no ordinances or regulations that address the cutting of trees on residential property. For commercial developments that require a conditional use permit, conditions of approval can be applied by the Planning and Zoning Commission to address such site development considerations as tree preservation or tree thinning, whichever may be appropriate. In the interests of public safety and the protection of life and property, tree preservation should be balanced with the provision of adequate defensible space for residential and commercial construction. More public education is needed in this area, because although awareness is increasing, many residents still do not recognize the danger associated with heavy vegetation in close proximity to their residences. Increased cooperation between the various affected agencies and the public could help this situation.

Conditions of approval can also be attached to the development of new residential subdivisions that require the developer to adopt a fuels reduction and fire prevention plan in conjunction with development of the subdivision, which may include the thinning of overly dense stands of trees before lots are offered for sale. The subdivision’s covenants can also include provisions that encourage the concept of defensible space.

Other considerations related to tree preservation include forest health issues, as well as energy conservation and air quality. Thinning trees that are spaced too closely makes the remaining trees healthier and more resistant to bark beetles and other diseases. Also, thinning trees on the south aspect of the home allows more sun to heat the home in winter, thereby requiring less heating fuel. Less fuel consumption equals energy conservation and cleaner air, especially if wood is the primary heating fuel.

## **Aesthetics**

Aesthetic qualities such as natural vegetation, scenic views, dark night skies, and natural quiet are important characteristics of the Parks study area, and are highly valued by residents. Development can negatively affect such aesthetic qualities by the inappropriate location of buildings and other structures, overhead utility lines, power poles, and communication facilities, poor grading and excavation practices, and the unnecessary or inappropriate removal of vegetation. Degradation of aesthetic qualities can be avoided or mitigated through public education and appropriate conditions of approval attached to new developments. Preservation of these qualities can help maintain the rural character of the study area, and can preserve and enhance property values and quality of life.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Forest Preservation and Restoration Goal**

The forest environment that defines the rural character of the study area is preserved, and native vegetation is restored to a more natural condition.

### **Forest Preservation and Restoration Policies**

1. Existing trees and native vegetation shall be preserved on private land to the extent that such preservation is consistent with forest health and fire prevention concerns for all developments requiring Commission or Board approval.
2. The U. S. Forest Service shall be encouraged to emphasize forest health and restoration and wildland/urban interface fire prevention as primary objectives of forest management activities on national forest lands in the study area.
3. Developers of subdivisions in forested areas shall be required to develop a fuels reduction/fire prevention plan prior to final plat approval, and the provisions of the plan shall be implemented during construction of the subdivision improvements.
4. Subdivisions in forested areas shall include covenants that encourage the concept of defensible space and require future home builders to maintain their property in accordance with the provisions of the subdivision's fuels reduction/fire prevention plan.
5. Landscape plans for non-residential developments shall incorporate existing native vegetation where possible, and shall emphasize the use of native plant species for new plantings.

### **Air Quality Goal**

Air quality is preserved or improved throughout the study area.

## **Air Quality Policies**

1. Dust control mitigation measures shall be required where appropriate for developments requiring Commission or Board approval.
2. The County shall help facilitate the formation of road maintenance districts for the purpose of dust control in areas with unpaved roads if a majority of property owners agree to pay the required assessments.
3. The Department of Community Development, in cooperation with local fire districts, shall help promote the proper use of woodstoves to minimize smoke emissions.

## **Wildlife Goal**

Wildlife and wildlife habitat coexist in a healthy condition with the human community.

## **Wildlife Policies**

1. New subdivision developments shall include accommodations for known wildlife habitat and/or migration corridors such as wildlife-friendly fencing, bufferyards, open space, or other appropriate mitigation measures. Protective measures for threatened or endangered species shall be vigorously employed.
2. Development proposals that include wildlife habitat enhancement features, such as constructed wetlands, shall be encouraged.
3. The County shall help promote the healthy coexistence with wildlife through the distribution of related literature and other information.

## **Interagency Cooperation Goal**

The County cooperates with the U. S. Forest Service, the State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish, and other agencies to accomplish natural resource goals that may not be accomplished otherwise.

## **Interagency Cooperation Policies**

1. The County shall seek input from the appropriate land management agencies with regard to future development proposals in the study area, and apply appropriate mitigation measures as necessary.
2. The County shall actively participate in the public planning and review processes of land management agencies with regard to proposed actions on public land in the study area.
3. The County shall cooperate with the Forest Service in maintaining appropriate access to national forest land with regard to new development proposals on private land.

## **Sensitive Natural Areas Goal**

Sensitive natural areas such as floodplains, riparian areas and wetlands are protected and/or restored to a biologically healthy condition.

## **Sensitive Natural Areas Policies**

1. The County shall rigorously enforce the Grading and Excavation Ordinance in order to prevent excess runoff, sedimentation, erosion, and channel modification of natural watercourses and riparian areas.
2. Development proposals affecting wetlands shall require a wetlands delineation by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to consideration by the Commission and Board in order to allow the County the benefit of complete information in the development review process.
3. The County shall encourage and participate in the protection and restoration of riparian areas as opportunities arise and resources are available.
4. The County Floodplain Management Ordinance shall be rigorously enforced, and development that includes grading, filling, channelization, or vegetative modification in designated floodplains shall be strongly discouraged.
5. Impacts on Sycamore Canyon shall be strongly considered in the review of any development proposals within the Sycamore watershed.

## **Aesthetics Goal**

Aesthetic qualities such as scenic views, dark night skies and natural quiet are preserved as defining characteristics of the study area.

## **Aesthetics Policies**

1. In order to mitigate visual impacts, all utilities for new developments shall be placed underground where feasible.
2. In order to prevent light pollution and light trespass, and to protect the aesthetic quality of the night skies, the County Lighting Ordinance shall be rigorously enforced.
3. Residential property owners shall be encouraged to install only the minimum outdoor lighting necessary for security purposes in order to prevent light trespass on neighboring properties.
4. Noise impacts and mitigation measures shall be a consideration in the approval process for new developments requiring Commission or Board approval.

5. Site planning and architectural design of non-residential projects shall include visually sensitive design and placement of structures and/or appropriate mitigation measures in order to minimize visual impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.
6. Residents are expected to minimize the environmental effects of property use to control dust, light, and noise pollution through their actions and behaviors.

## **LAND USE**

### **Overview**

Early land use and settlement of the study area was primarily related to agricultural pursuits including ranching, farming, and logging. While such uses are still pursued to varying degrees and still contribute to the rural character of the study area, the predominant land use is currently very low density residential. Also, while the keeping of horses, livestock and other farm animals is still widespread, relatively few residents actually make their living from ranching or other agricultural activities today. Most permanent residents commute to jobs in Flagstaff or Williams, and choose to live in the Parks area for the peace and quiet, scenic beauty, and other qualities associated with a rural lifestyle. There is also a significant number of vacation homes in the area.

Coconino County adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1964. Prior to that time, there was no minimum lot size requirement. With the adoption of the first Zoning Ordinance, most of the County was initially classified in the A-General Zone, which required one acre minimum. The Zoning Ordinance currently in effect was adopted in 1981, and includes the G-General classification, which requires a 10 acre minimum lot size. With the adoption of the 1981 Ordinance, there was a County-wide rezoning in order to apply the new classifications to all private property throughout the County. Most outlying, rural areas, and areas not specifically designated in any other zone classifications, were classified in the G-General Zone.

### **Existing Land Use Patterns**

Land use patterns in the Parks study area are largely the result of land ownership patterns. Land ownership primarily consists of widely scattered sections of private land intermixed with publicly-owned national forest land. The County's land use regulatory authority, applied through zoning and subdivision administration, only extends to the private lands. National forests are managed by the U. S. Forest Service for multiple uses including timber, grazing, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and recreation.

The scattered sections of private land in the study area add up to a total area of approximately 30 square miles. The majority of that area is devoted to low density residential use, with minimum lot sizes ranging from one acre to ten acres, depending on the zoning in different areas. While there continues to be some ranching activity, recent trends show ranch properties increasingly being sold and split to smaller parcels for homesites or "ranchettes." There are 17 platted subdivisions in the area, and numerous miscellaneous parcels of various acreages. There are only a few commercial enterprises, and most are located within approximately one half mile of the Parks interchange.

### **Residential Uses**

As mentioned above, there are 17 platted subdivisions in the study area. There is one additional subdivision that has received preliminary plat approval, but as of the writing of this plan, has not been constructed or received final plat approval. A table listing all of the subdivisions, the

number of lots in each, the year it was platted, and its current zoning is included in Appendix D of this plan. As shown in the table, almost all of the subdivision activity occurred during a 15-year time period from 1959 through 1974. The only exceptions being Maine Townsite, which was platted in 1933, Forrest Ranch, platted in 1987, and the proposed San Francisco Peaks Estates, which received preliminary plat approval in 1996.

The majority of the subdivisions include one acre lots. The exceptions include Maine Townsite (50' x 120' lots), Brannigan Park Subdivision (four acre lots), Kaibab Forest Acres (2.5 acre lots), White Horse Lake Tree Farm (two acre lots), Forrest Ranch (five acre lots), and San Francisco Peaks Estates (five acre lots). Most of the unsubdivided land outside of these subdivisions is in the G-General Zone, which requires a 10 acre minimum lot size. The one exception is 265 acres of unsubdivided tracts known as Forrest Meadows, which is in the RS-5 Zone requiring a five acre minimum lot size.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire* in 1999, in response to a question about preferences for a variety of development patterns, there was most support for low density single family residential use defined as one to five acre minimum lot size. Out of 462 respondents, 68% (312) approve, 20% (92) disapprove, and 7% (32) don't care. Very low density, defined as greater than five acre minimum, also received a lot of support: 52% (239) approve, 23% (105) disapprove, and 18% (84) don't care. When specifically asked about land splits to allow for higher density than the established zoning, only 9% (43) approved, 79% (364) disapproved, and 6% (27) said they don't care. There was very little support for multiple family or higher density development with lot sizes less than one acre.

## **Commercial Uses**

There is currently very limited commercial activity in the Parks study area. A few businesses are located on Parks Road north of the Parks interchange, including Parks Feed and Mercantile, the Ponderosa Forest RV Park (29 spaces), Cool Country Realty and Schmid and Sons Construction, and the Whistle Stop Café. The Parks General Store, which dates back to the 1920s, is located approximately one half mile to the west on old Route 66 at Spring Valley Road. There is also a small legal nonconforming trailer park behind the General Store known as Whispering Pines; it has five spaces, and dates back to the 1930s. In addition, there is a home-based game meat processing business located east of the General Store that was established in 1995 under a conditional use permit. There are probably a number of other undocumented home-based businesses.

Historically, there were a few businesses such as small motels and other services located along the old Route 66 corridor where it passes through the study area prior to construction of the interstate in the 1960s. After the interstate was constructed, those businesses closed, and the properties reverted to residential use.

There are two interstate interchanges in the study area, the Parks interchange already mentioned, and the Pittman Valley interchange at the west end of the study area. There are currently no commercial uses located at the Pittman Valley interchange that are within the study area boundaries, but the Mountain Ranch Quality Inn, which is accessed from that interchange, is

located just outside the western boundary of the study area. In addition, a log building known as the Wagon Wheel, located on the north side of the interchange on old 66, was historically occupied by a roadside service business of some sort prior to construction of the interstate.

Properties surrounding interstate interchanges, like other major street intersections, often attract commercial development, because of a number of factors, including convenient access, high visibility, and potentially large volumes of drive-by traffic. Highway-oriented services such as gas stations, convenience stores, truck stops, motels, restaurants, and RV parks are particularly attracted to interstate interchanges.

Because of topography, the Parks interchange does not have the visibility usually required for highway-oriented businesses, and the character of the commercial enterprises that have developed there is more local community-oriented. Properties around the Pittman Valley interchange have much more visibility from the interstate, and could be more attractive to highway-oriented service businesses. The Bellemont interchange, just east of the Parks study area, includes approximately 300 acres of land zoned for heavy commercial uses, most of which is currently undeveloped. Future re-zonings for heavy commercial development at either of the interchanges in the study area would be subject to the goals and policies of this plan, but it could be argued that the existing commercially-zoned land at Bellemont should be substantially built-out before additional land is zoned for such use.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, approximately 29% (132 out of 462) said yes, there is a need for additional commercial development in the Parks area. Approximately 61% (284) said there is no such need. Of those who do support commercial development, the types of businesses mentioned as desirable include a restaurant (22), low impact retail (17), grocery (12), gasoline sales (12), laundromat (4), hardware (4), and storage (4). Eight respondents suggested such uses would be appropriate at the I-40 interchanges or along old 66. Thirteen respondents suggested such development should simply go elsewhere outside the study area.

## **Industrial Uses**

There is currently no industrially-zoned land in the study area. The only existing uses that may be considered industrial in nature include a couple of materials pits, a water hauling operation at Pittman Valley that serves the Mountain Ranch Quality Inn, and a small sawmill operation. Industrial uses are generally not compatible with rural, low density residential development, especially where public infrastructure and support services are unavailable. There is approximately 180 acres of industrially-zoned land at Bellemont, and much of it is currently undeveloped. Industrial uses are generally discouraged in the Parks study area, and should be directed to the areas at Bellemont already zoned for such use.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, there is not much support for industrial development in the Parks area. Out of 462 respondents, approximately 5% (25) said there is a need for industrial development, and approximately 88% (405) said there is no need for such development; approximately 7% (32) did not respond to this question. Of those who do



support industrial development, a few of them specified that it should be light industry (6), and should be located along I-40 (3).

### **Public and Semi-Public Uses**

Examples of public and semi-public uses include schools, religious institutions, libraries and museums, public parks and recreational facilities, public utility installations, community service agency camps, cemeteries, airports, landfills, and similar uses. Such uses are subject to approval of a conditional use permit by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Existing public and semi-public uses in the study area include the Maine Consolidated School campus on Spring Valley Road, the Parks-Bellemont Fire Station, also on Spring Valley Road, and the Sherwood Forest Estates Fire Station. In addition, there is a Boy Scout camp located at Garland Prairie, and a 4-H camp off Good Lane in Pittman Valley, both of which would be classified as semi-public uses. There are also a number of developed public recreation sites on national forest land in the study area, but since such uses are under Forest Service jurisdiction, they are not addressed in any detail in this plan. The primary concern of this plan is that the future expansion of existing facilities or the development of new public or semi-public uses should be designed to be compatible with the character of existing neighborhoods, and should include reasonable mitigation measures, if necessary, to minimize negative impacts.

### **Historic Route 66**

Old Route 66 is a designated historic highway listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A portion of it passes through the Parks study area on the north side of Interstate 40. From the 1920s until the mid-1960s when the interstate was built, Route 66 was the main cross-country highway between Chicago and southern California. At the time, numerous roadside businesses such as restaurants, motels, gas stations, and curio shops catered to travelers on the two-lane highway. After construction of the interstate, most of those businesses closed, and the properties reverted to residential use. The only surviving example of a commercial enterprise from the Route 66 era in the study area is the Parks General Store at Spring Valley Road, which dates back to the 1920s.

The portion of Route 66 that passes through the study area can be divided into two segments with somewhat different characteristics. The pavement has been removed from the eastern segment in the vicinity of Brannigan Park, and that portion is now a graded gravel road that receives limited maintenance by the County. The western segment from the Parks vicinity to Pittman Valley is still paved, and in some stretches the old concrete surface is still in good shape; other portions have been overlaid by asphalt. There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the Forest Service to maintain and preserve the original concrete pavement as much as possible.

The Brannigan Park area is generally comprised of large parcels of land, and is distinctly rural in character. There has been no commercial activity in the area for many years, although an interpretive sign west of Bellemont describes the area as a "...paved hubbub of activity..." between 1921 and 1941. The paved western segment is also largely rural in nature, but includes

existing commercial enterprises at Parks Road and Spring Valley Road, as well as several subdivisions comprised of one acre lots.

## **Open Space**

Open space is highly valued by residents of the study area. The large amount of national forest land, together with the low density zoning of the private lands, results in open space being one of the most obvious and definitive characteristics of the study area. This issue is addressed in more detail in the *Open Space, Recreation Areas and Trails* element of this plan.

## **State Trust Land**

There are two parcels of State Trust Land in the study area. One is approximately one half section (320 acres more or less) immediately south of and adjacent to Sherwood Forest Estates. The other is approximately 160 acres in the Government Prairie area south of Government Mountain. Both parcels are currently in the OS (Open Space) Zone.

State Trust Land is held in trust for the benefit of public schools in the state, and is potentially available for development if the State Land Department deems it to be in the best financial interests of the trust to auction the land to the highest bidder. An auction is usually initiated as the result of a request from a developer to acquire a parcel of State land. Once conveyed to private ownership, the land would be subject to the zoning jurisdiction of Coconino County, and would be subject to a zone change request in order to develop the property. Constitutionally-protected private property rights mandate that some reasonable use of the land must be approved. However, approval of a development proposal would have to be consistent with the goals and policies set forth in this plan, and would have to be compatible with the established character of the surrounding neighborhood.

## **National Forest Land Exchanges**

National forest boundaries are not permanently fixed, and are subject to change. The Forest Service is authorized by federal law to enter into land exchanges and property ownership adjustments when it is deemed to be in the best interests of the public and the forest resources. While major wholesale changes in forest boundaries are not anticipated, the Forest Service sometimes acquires private holdings, and sometimes disposes of federal land either through land exchanges, small tracts claims, or Townsite Act requests. Such changes in national forest boundaries would probably not have widespread impacts on the study area as a whole, but could have significant impacts on individual adjacent properties. This plan recognizes the potential for future changes in forest boundaries, and includes goals and policies that would be applicable to future development of any forest lands conveyed to private ownership.

## **Development Constraints**

The potential for land development can be limited by physical conditions such as steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and other natural features that make development difficult or environmentally undesirable. While all of those conditions exist in the Parks study area to a

certain extent, they occur more on public land, and generally do not affect the private lands where development is more likely to occur. Other constraints such as lack of water supply, inadequate utility infrastructure, and substandard roads represent real limitations on future development. In addition, public safety services such as law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency medical services are limited in the study area, and not adequate to serve significantly increased levels of development.

In order to approve a zone change, which would be necessary for increased development, the Board of Supervisors must make certain findings of fact. One of the required findings is that the change is in the interest of or will further the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, and welfare. Given the current limitations of water supply, infrastructure, and roads, as well as the limited provision of basic public safety services in the study area, especially the more outlying, rural areas, increased levels of development beyond very low density residential would generally not be in the interests of public health, safety and welfare.

### **Home Occupations and Cottage Industries**

The Coconino County Zoning Ordinance, like most zoning ordinances throughout the country, contains a variety of different zoning classifications for different land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, etc. Historically, the separation of different uses into different zones was intended to prevent conflicts and negative impacts of incompatible uses in a designated area, for example, to prevent industrial development in a residential neighborhood. However, for a variety of reasons, many residents of the County choose to work at home in home-based businesses. In response to that need, the Zoning Ordinance contains provisions to allow home occupations and cottage industries in residential zones under certain conditions while protecting the residential character of neighborhoods.

Home occupations are permitted in all residential zones upon issuance of a home occupation permit. As defined by the Zoning Ordinance, home occupations are conducted entirely within the home, do not involve any outside employees, and do not change the residential character of the property. Home occupations may not cause any situation that would be hazardous to neighboring properties or result in any noxious emissions or outdoor storage of materials. Examples of home-based businesses in this category could include a wide variety of activities where a resident conducts business via telephone, fax, computer or postal service without requiring customer traffic at the home. The only example of a home-based business that does not require a home occupation permit, because it is listed as a permitted use in all residential zones, is day care for six or fewer children.

A cottage industry is a more intensive type of home-based business that may be approved at the discretion of the Planning and Zoning Commission under a conditional use permit in the G, AR and RR Zones. The intent of the cottage industry provisions is to help facilitate the creation of small-scale “mom-and-pop” commercial enterprises in a residential setting initially. Eventually, if the business is successful, and outgrows the home-based location, it would relocate to a more appropriate commercial or industrial location. Unlike home occupations, a cottage industry may employ up to three outside employees, and may be conducted in a separate accessory building. A limited amount of customer traffic may be permitted, but the basic residential character of the

property must be preserved. Other criteria are designed to prevent negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, and the review process involves a public hearing with direct notification provided to all property owners within 300 feet. Initial approval is limited to three years, with subsequent renewals possible for five years at a time.

One cottage industry has been approved in the study area for the manufacture of journeyman tile saws. It was originally approved in 1991, subsequently renewed twice, and is a good example that reflects the intent of the cottage industry regulations. It has since relocated to a commercial location in Williams. During the time that it operated as a home-based cottage industry, there were no complaints lodged with the County.

The Zoning Ordinance also contains provisions for bed and breakfast establishments as a conditional use in certain residential zones. In the Parks study area, such use would be possible with Planning and Zoning Commission approval. The intent of the Ordinance is that the bed and breakfast use would be incidental to the primary use of the structure as a single family residence. The Ordinance limits the number of guests at any one time to five, and the number of bedrooms available for rental to two. Any larger operation than that would require commercial zoning, and would be subject to the same requirements as hotels and motels.

There have been no applications for bed and breakfasts in the Parks study area so far, but such applications have sometimes generated neighborhood opposition in other areas of the County. Although the provisions of the Ordinance limit the use to a low-key activity, some residents fear the “commercialization” of their residential neighborhoods and associated impacts such as increased traffic. In the few cases where they have been approved, they have usually operated in a low-key manner with few complaints.

### **Zoning Enforcement**

The Coconino County Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary tools used to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the County Comprehensive Plan. The Ordinance establishes zoning classifications and land use regulations within the various zones to promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare. It is unlawful to conduct or establish any land use in violation of the provisions of the Ordinance. County zoning enforcement staff are responsible for investigating alleged zoning violations, and administering the enforcement provisions of the Ordinance. Since there are only two enforcement officers for the entire County, zoning enforcement is usually pursued as a response to complaints. However, the enforcement officers may also take the initiative to pursue obvious violations, particularly if they entail serious threats to public health and safety.

In the Parks study area, the most common complaints include excessive or unscreened outdoor storage of miscellaneous materials and inoperable vehicles. In some situations, the solution can be to screen the materials from view with a fence, but in situations involving excessive amounts of materials or vehicles, they must be removed from the property. Also, home occupations that would otherwise be legitimate, are often technically in violation of the Ordinance simply because no home occupation permit has been obtained.

The enforcement process usually begins with a complaint, followed by a field investigation by the enforcement officer to confirm the violation. A letter is sent to the property owners informing them of the violation, identifying possible options for correcting it, and stating a deadline for compliance. If voluntary compliance is not achieved, a hearing is scheduled before the zoning hearing officer. The hearing officer renders a decision after hearing all sides of the case, and is authorized to levy fines up to \$750.00 per day for each day the violation exists.

According to the results of the *Parks Community Questionnaire*, the majority of respondents favor more active zoning enforcement. In response to a question asking if the County should be more active or less active in zoning enforcement, approximately 56% (259 out of 462) said more active, while approximately 24% (110) said less active. Approximately 3% (12) said the level of enforcement is adequate as it is now, and approximately 18% (81) did not respond to this question.

## **Animal Control**

The keeping of animals such as dogs, horses, livestock, and other domestic animals is generally accepted as a typical part of the rural lifestyle. Regulations pertaining to the keeping of such animals are intended to allow such use while protecting the public health, safety and welfare and preventing undue impacts on neighboring properties. Applicable regulations are contained in the County Zoning Ordinance, as well as a separate Barking Dog Ordinance, a County-wide leash law, and other regulations administered by the Animal Control Division of the County Health Department. In addition, there are a number of state statutes applicable to livestock such as an open range law.

The Zoning Ordinance is mainly concerned with the number of animals allowed on the property, and their location relative to neighboring residences. The Barking Dog Ordinance is obviously intended to address excessive barking. The leash law requires that dogs be restrained at all times, whether on the property or while out walking. Related Health Department rules are mainly concerned with the proper disposal of feces, and the prevention of disease. The State-wide open range law essentially allows livestock to roam the range at will, and requires property owners to fence their property to exclude livestock if they don't want them on the property.

The most commonly reported animal control problems in the Parks study area include dogs running at large. Barking dogs, and other domestic animals and livestock roaming at large are also typical complaints. There have been occasional incidents in recent years of neglect of livestock and dogs.

The *Parks Community Questionnaire* asked if there is a domestic animal control problem in the area. Approximately 28% (128 out of 462) said yes, and 58% (269) said no; 14% (65) did not respond to the question. Of those who said there is a problem, 77 cited loose, aggressive, and barking dogs; 14 said existing laws need better enforcement; 8 cited dogs, cats, and horses roaming at large; 10 cited cattle as a problem; and 7 specifically mentioned cats running wild.

## **PREFERRED LAND USE SCENARIO**

The preferred land use scenario is best described as the “Rural Community” alternative. Definitive characteristics include the existing very low density residential development pattern, and very limited community-oriented commercial development. Some minor increase in residential density may be permitted in the central core area centered around Parks and Route 66 (as defined in the following policies), but the outlying portions of the study area will remain at existing densities, primarily 10 acre minimum parcel size. The limited commercial development will be confined to specific commercial nodes, and will be restricted to community-oriented uses compatible with existing neighborhood character. High density residential development, and heavy commercial and industrial uses are not compatible with the rural character of the area, and shall not be permitted.

The alternative land use scenarios that were considered during the planning process are outlined in Appendix C.

### **Rationale**

The existing zoning classifications and allowable densities for most of the study area were established approximately 20 years ago. At the time, the rationale for the establishment of the very low density zoning (mostly 10 acre minimum), was based on the lack of utilities, roads, water, and other public facilities and services necessary to support a higher level of development. Not much has changed in the last two decades with respect to the availability of public infrastructure or services.

Nevertheless, longtime residents, as well as new people moving into the area, recognize that the area’s “limitations” also offer an opportunity to live a more rural lifestyle compared to the more urbanized cities and towns of the region. They accept the lack of services as a fair trade-off for the peace and quiet, the scenic beauty, the starry nighttime skies, the abundant wildlife, and the natural environment that characterizes the study area. They also have a strong expectation that they should be able to maintain the characteristics of the rural lifestyle that they have chosen, and that they should not be forced to accept encroaching urbanization into their neighborhoods.

The preservation of the low density rural character of the Parks study area is compatible with the land use goals of the County Comprehensive Plan, which includes, in part, to provide for growth that has positive benefits for County residents, and which is compatible with protection of the natural environment; to maintain open space in order to protect natural resources, and preserve scenic beauty; and to provide a range of residential land uses providing housing opportunities for all County residents. The Parks study area provides the opportunity for a rural lifestyle in a very low density development pattern that is often not found in other more heavily populated portions of the County, and therefore, contributes to the full range of opportunities provided County-wide. Furthermore, and perhaps most fundamentally, it is not in the interest of the public health, safety, and general welfare to allow higher density urban or suburban development patterns to expand into areas with substandard roads, minimal water sources, inadequate utility infrastructure, little or no fire protection, and a minimal level of other basic public safety services.

## **LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES**

The following *Land Use Goals* are intended to provide a direction for the actions and decision-making of the Coconino County Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The related *Land Use Policies* are specific statements of intent designed to help accomplish the goals, and to guide future development toward the *Preferred Land Use Scenario* in a manner compatible with the established character of the area and consistent with the desires of the community.

### **Rural Character and Land Use Goal**

A mix of rural land uses, beneficial to the residents of the Parks study area, will be consistent with preservation of existing rural character.

### **Rural Character and Land Use Policies**

1. Very low density residential development is generally the preferred land use pattern for the study area.
2. Zone changes to allow a five acre minimum lot size may be acceptable in some cases within the core area around Parks and Route 66. The “core area” is defined as Sections 26, 27, 28, the northeast quarter of 32, and that portion of the north half of 33 north of the railroad right-of-way, Township 22 North, Range 4 East. The existing zoning density shall be maintained for all other outlying areas.
3. Open space development techniques, such as clustered or dispersed building lots, conservation easements, and other methods are encouraged as an alternative development pattern where appropriate in order to preserve sensitive natural areas (e.g. floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, etc.) and wildlife habitat and migration corridors. Overall density of such developments may not exceed the density allowed under the existing zoning of the subject property or as provided for under other provisions of this plan. In no case shall minimum lot size be less than one acre in such developments, and open space tracts shall be maintained as open space in perpetuity.
4. Any tracts of National Forest and State Trust land that are conveyed into private ownership shall be designated for General Zoning (10 acre minimum parcel size) or otherwise consistent with all applicable policies contained in this plan.
5. Multiple family and high density residential zoning shall not be permitted.
6. Manufactured home parks and manufactured home communities shall not be permitted.
7. New commercial development shall be limited to low water using, neighborhood-oriented uses that are primarily intended to serve local needs, and deemed to be beneficial to residents of the area. Highway-oriented or regional commercial uses shall not be

permitted in the study area, and shall be encouraged to locate in Williams, Bellemont or Flagstaff.

8. New neighborhood commercial development shall be limited to commercial nodes in the general vicinities of the two interstate interchanges and the junction of Spring Valley Road and Route 66. Spot commercial zoning and strip commercial development shall not be permitted. Future commercial development shall meet the following criteria:
  - a. Future commercial development in the vicinity of the Pittman Valley interchange shall be limited to the existing commercially-zoned property (Quality Inn) at the southwest quadrant of the interchange. No commercial uses shall be permitted in the General Zone at the Pittman Valley interchange under the “500-foot rule” described below.
  - b. Future commercial development and/or redevelopment at the Parks interchange shall be limited to the existing commercially-zoned land (approximately 2.5 acres) on the north side of the interchange; no additional commercial zoning shall be approved at this commercial node. Other commercial uses permitted with approval of a conditional use permit within 500 feet of an interstate interchange (Section 9.2, “Special Uses,” Coconino County Zoning Ordinance, aka the “500 foot rule”) shall be limited to neighborhood-oriented uses intended to serve the local community. Highway-oriented or heavy commercial uses shall not be permitted under the provisions of the “500 foot rule.”
  - c. Future commercial development and/or redevelopment at the junction of Spring Valley Road and Route 66 shall be limited to the existing five acres of commercially-zoned land at the northeast corner of the junction; no additional commercial zoning shall be approved at this commercial node.
9. Industrial zoning shall not be permitted.
10. Agricultural and ranching-related uses are encouraged to the extent that they are compatible with the surrounding environment.
11. Large-scale feed lot operations, slaughter houses, fertilizer yards, and other animal processing plants, particularly those that generate objectionable levels of noise, odors, dust, or other emissions or waste, shall not be permitted.
12. Large-scale commercial game farm facilities that include the keeping of exotic species of deer and elk for the commercial production of animal parts and/or on-site hunting, shall not be permitted.

### **Neighborhood Character Goal**

Established neighborhood character is preserved and enhanced.



## **Neighborhood Character Policies**

1. Proposed developments (i.e. zone changes, subdivisions, conditional use permits) may only be approved if consistent with and not detrimental to the established character of the surrounding neighborhood as defined by the applicable *Neighborhood Character Statement* (see Appendix B).
2. Cottage industries may only be approved if compatible with established neighborhood character, and if they do not place an undue burden on roads, utilities, and emergency services.
3. Residence-based bed and breakfast establishments shall be approved only if compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
4. The Neighborhood Character Statements included in Appendix B of this plan, as well as public input on specific cases, shall be strongly considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors in determining compatibility of development proposals with established neighborhood character.

## **Visual Appearance and Aesthetics Goal**

The visual appearance and aesthetics of the community within the surrounding natural environment is preserved and enhanced.

## **Visual Appearance and Aesthetics Policies**

1. New development shall be integrated into the natural landforms, vegetation, and other physical characteristics of the area in the least obtrusive manner possible in order to preserve the rural and scenic visual appearance of the area.
2. New commercial development shall incorporate architectural design features that reflect the rural context of the community. Such design elements can be characterized as “western” or “rustic” features, which include the generous use of natural building materials such as logs, wood, and native rock, muted, natural earth-tone colors, low-key lighting, non-reflective surfaces, and landscaping with native vegetation.
3. Large accessory structures requiring Planning and Zoning Commission approval (structures >3,000 sf) shall incorporate appropriate rustic architectural design features, and shall avoid the use of highly reflective or brightly colored materials, and industrial-style metal buildings. The size of the subject property and visibility of the proposed structure(s) from adjacent properties, public land, and roadways shall be an important consideration in final approved design stipulations.

## APPENDIX A

### Community Questionnaire Results, February, 1999

1. Full time resident: 191 Part Time or seasonal: 183 Home Owner: 260 Renter: 5  
Owner of undeveloped property: 136
- 
2. How long have you been in the Parks area? Less than 2 yrs.: 23 2 to 5 yrs.: 70 5 to 10 yrs.: 70  
10 to 15 yrs.: 42 more than 15 yrs.: 92
- 
3. How many parcels do you own? One: 355 Two: 55 Three: 12 Four: 3  
Total acreage: Less than one: 12 One: 207 Two: 66 Three to five: 63  
Five to ten: 24 More than 10: 53
- 
4. Have a well: Yes: 109 No: 335  
Well depth: Less than 100 ft.: 33 100 to 200 ft.: 22 200 to 300 ft.: 8  
Approximate monthly gallons of well water used: Under 1000 gal.: 15 1000 gal.: 14  
2000 gal.: 19 3000 gal.: 11 4000 gal.: 9 5000 gal.: 3 6000 gal. and up: 5  
-----  
Haul or have delivered? Yes: 284 No: 140  
Estimated monthly consumption: Under 1000 gal.: 230 1000 gal.: 53  
2000 gal.: 41 3000 gal.: 18 4000 gal.: 14 5000 gal.: 6 6000 gal. and up: 5
- 
5. Why did you choose to live/own property in the Parks area? *Summation of most often given reasons:*  
Beauty and views: 92 Rural/country/remote: 118 Peace/quiet/solitude: 95  
Summers/climate: 54 Trees/vegetation/nature: 63 Low density: 46  
Affordable: 40 Secluded/isolated/private: 52 Non-city yet close: 22  
Wildlife: 33 Low crime/traffic: 21 Open space: 31  
Retirement/investment: 25 Limited government control: 10 Clean air/water, etc: 20  
Inherited: 10 Good neighbors/friendly: 12 Relatives/friends: 7  
Outdoor activities/horses: 20 Love/like area: 32

6. Children in school? *Full time residents only:* Yes: 38 No: 147

Grades: K 3 1<sup>st</sup>: 4 2<sup>nd</sup>: 3 3<sup>rd</sup>: 6 4<sup>th</sup>: 8 5<sup>th</sup>: 7 6<sup>th</sup>: 6 7<sup>th</sup>: 1

8<sup>th</sup>: 3 9<sup>th</sup>: 4 10<sup>th</sup>: 2 11<sup>th</sup>: 4 12<sup>th</sup>: 0

Maine: 26 Flagstaff: 26 Williams: 5 Home schooling: 5

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7. Receive your mail: Parks full-time: 158 Parks seasonal: 41

Other full-time: 202 Other seasonal: 18 Home delivery: 41

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8. Do you feel the following public services are adequate to meet your needs?

	YES	NO		YES	NO
Water	203	182	Trash collection	238	109
Wastewater disposal	240	86	School district	263	35
Fire protection	176	190	Parks and rec. facilities	259	80
Emergency medical	162	188	Road maintenance	262	130
Law enforcement	276	89	Traffic enforcement	264	92
Phone	360	36	Natural gas	118	194
Electric	320	14			

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9. Which of the following issues are of importance to you either now or would be in the future. Please indicate the amount of importance you place on them by placing a number next to them.

	1 Very important	2 Important	3 Not important
Wildlife	318	86	24
Wildfire	357	50	16
Vegetation	293	109	25
Livestock/grazing	110	141	169
Watershed	296	89	31
Open space	310	97	21
Water quality	375	41	11
Scenic views	328	80	26
Floodplain/riparian	198	129	81
Light pollution	227	118	66

9. Issues of importance (cont'd)

	1 Very important	2 Important	3 Not important
Wetlands	183	130	94
Noise pollution	288	104	39
Air quality	356	62	21
Dust	223	127	66
Litter/trash/recycle	254	123	80
Junk cars	273	86	66
Wastewater disposal	194	123	80
Property maintenance (for public health and prevention)	262	106	52

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10. Do you feel that more of the roads in the Parks area should be paved? Yes: 161 No: 275

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11. Property on an *unpaved* road – willing to pay a special district assessment to have it paved?  
Yes: 120 No: 305

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12. If you own property on an *unmaintained and unpaved* road, would you be willing to pay a special district assessment to have maintenance and snow removal while keeping it in an unpaved condition?  
Yes: 124 No: 180

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13. Is there a need for additional commercial development in the Parks area: Yes: 132 No: 284  
*Summary of responses:* Restaurant: 22 Low impact retail: 17 Grocery: 12 Gas: 12  
Laundromat: 4 Hardware: 4 Storage: 4  
Areas of I-40 and Old 66: 8 No – Go elsewhere: 18

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14. Is there a need for industrial development in the Parks area: Yes: 25 No: 405  
Light industry: 6 Along I-40: 3 No-Go elsewhere: 18

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15. Are you in favor of specific design guidelines to control architectural style, height, color of buildings, and other site improvements for commercial, multiple, family, public, and semi-public uses?  
Yes: 289 No: 144

16. How do you feel about the following residential development patterns for the Parks area: Please indicate your feeling by placing a number next to them.

	1 Approve	2 Disapprove	3 Don't care
Multiple family (2 or more unite per lot)	38	375	26
High density single family (minimum lot size less than one acre)	37	382	21
Low density single family (one acre to 5.0 acre minimum lot size)	312	92	32
Very low density single family (+5.0 acre minimum lot size)	239	105	84
Gated communities	79	253	101
Mobile Home parks	42	351	44
Manufactured home communities	96	262	76
Land splits to allow for higher density Than the established zoning	43	364	27
Other: <i>Summary of responses:</i>	Maintain 10 acre minimum: <u>4</u> No developers: <u>4</u> Concern about water availability: <u>4</u> No high density: <u>3</u>		

17. Is there a need for a community well or water district:      Yes: 266      No: 152

18. Is thee a need for a multi-purpose community center:      Yes: 157      No: 264
- Where? Near general store/school: 82      Use/improve school: 27      In/near Fire Dept.: 8
- Near Post Office: 6      E/W Route 66: 4

19. Is there a need for any developed parks or recreation facilities: Yes: 121      No: 298
- What? Ball fields: 17      Picnic area: 10      Playground: 8      Park: 7
- Basketball: 5      Racquetball/tennis: 4      Snow play area: 3
- Where: Near school: 12      At school: 5      Pond across from store: 4

20. Should the County be more active or less active in enforcing zoning regulations:
- More: 259      Less: 110      Comment: Adequate now: 12

21. Is there a domestic animal control problem in your area? Yes: 128 No: 269

Comments: Loose/barking/aggressive dogs: 77 Need to enforce laws: 14

Dogs/cats/horses roaming free: 8 Cattle: 10 Cats running wild: 7

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22. Should there be an ordinance for preservation of natural vegetation and trees or a landscaping ordinance?

Yes: 221 No: 197 Comment: Keep/use natural vegetation: 14 Save trees: 8

Leave along: 12 Yes to preserve – no to landscape: 10 Within reason: 7

Managed trees/controlled burns: 4

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23. Are there any special characteristics of the Parks area that should be preserved or enhanced?

*Summation of most often given responses:*

Rural nature: 84 Vegetation/trees/prairies/ponds: 61 Low density: 42

Open space: 35 Historic sites/66/general store: 27 Quietness: 17

Keep it as is: 33 Preserve wildlife habitat/corridors: 15 Friendliness: 5

Clean air/water/dark night skies: 7

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24. Are there any other community issues or concerns that have not been addressed in this questionnaire?

The responses to this question were mainly covered elsewhere in the survey. A few questionnaires had attachments. Since they represent the feelings expressed by a large share of the respondents, copies are attached to this report.

### COMMENTS RECEIVED

Area K – This is a plea for folks who were born country and cannot adjust to congested environments and loss of rural habitat. Many of us were flushed from our native lands by overzealous developers and the failure of governing powers to take us into consideration.

Many folks have to, or want to, live in cities where their accommodations can be met. Their choices are many. We chose to forego city accommodations for the qualities of country living. It isn't that we like driving over roads that shake our teeth loose along with the nuts and bolts from our autos and water trailers. It is what we have at the end of the road that makes it worthwhile.

Please consider our endangered status, and preserve our habitat to the extent that you can. Keep the rural flavor that drew us all here, and do not allow the Parks area to be pawns of greed and lack of foresight.

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Area B – Regarding water – when we moved to Parks, we came here with the knowledge that we would be hauling our water, therefore, the water situation meets our needs. If the object of the County is to provide us with a water district for an abominable tax...forget it.

Regarding fire protection and emergency medical services – again, when we moved to Parks we were aware that none of these services would be provided to us. Now that we have a fire district we do not feel that the amount we are being taxed for this service is fair for the type of service they will be able to provide us. Considering that the majority of the volunteers work in the Flagstaff area, if there is a fire, what will their response time be? We would be better off contracting with the Williams Fire Dept.

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Area D – I worry that in the formation of a Parks Area Plan that low density areas such as Government Prairie and Brannigan Park will be forced to adhere to ordinances and regulations that were primarily designed for high density areas such as Peaceful Valley and Sherwood Forest Park. While I do sympathize with residents of high density areas and their desire to keep development from getting out of control, I do not want to be forced to adhere to regulations that were adopted to fit other areas. I hope that the Parks Area Plan Committee will take this into consideration if and when they develop formal statements on future growth. I do not want to see blanket ordinances and regulations developed that all residents must adhere to do but were really only designed to target a specific area or areas.

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Other comments:

My husband and I moved to Parks for certain reasons. We wanted to own some acreage and have open space around us. We wanted to live in an area that did not have a tight list of restrictions on what we could do and could not do with our property. We didn't want to live in an area with street lights and red lights. We didn't want to live in an area where we were told what size, color and shape our house had to be. In obtaining these desires we realized that we had to make certain sacrifices, and we make them willingly. We plow and maintain our roads, we haul our water, we pick up our mail at the post office, we live in a mixed community of mobile homes and beautiful houses. We drive the main dirt roads and don't care that they are not paved. We don't care that we don't have cable and we don't care that there isn't a supermarket down the road. And what do we get for the sacrifices we make? We have a deep sense of community where we live. We celebrate good times and help each other out in bad times. But I fear this will not be the same if we are forced into regulations that oversee housing, road maintenance, animal laws, landscaping, water districts and the like. I fear that we will become a community where we suddenly are watching (and snitching) on neighbors who aren't adhering to the "rules." I fear that we will no longer greet our neighbors with an open mind but instead greet our neighbors with a mind focused on whether or not they are bringing down our property values.

I understand that there has to be some rules but there is a fine line between regulation and over regulation. I certainly don't want the parcel next to me to become a pig farm but I also don't want to be told that I can't keep a trailer on my property without having to build an expensive garage to house it. I implore the Committee to recognize where that fine line is and that in the process of developing regulations they don't destroy the sense of community that the Parks area has. Thank you.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Neighborhood Character Statements**

- Pine Aire Estates – Shirley Strong
- Pittman Valley – Phyllis Johnson
- Sherwood Forest Estates – Rodger Anderson
- Garland Prairie – Bill Fry
- Elk Springs – George Squyres
- Eastern Government Prairie – Bruce Maxwell
- Spring Valley – Linda Gerard
- Sherwood Forest Park-East – Dave Duggan
- Peaceful Valley Ranches/Crispair Estates – Steve Schmid
- Spitz Spring – Beth Goforth
- Ponderosa Acres – Zane Morris
- Maine Townsite – Ellsworth Vieregge



## **Pine-Aire Estates**

**by Shirley Strong**

Pine-Aire Estates was subdivided into 76 lots in 1970. Lot sizes are from one to 10 acres. Full time residents occupy more than two thirds of the homes with the remainder being used as vacation or summer homes.

The community is nestled in the northwest portion of Garland Prairie where the prairie meets the forest. Among its qualities are unique views, quietness, its people, and abundant wildlife.

All of the major mountains as well as Garland Prairie and the surrounding hills are within view. The view of the San Francisco Peaks is unsurpassed.

Lying at the end of a four-mile dirt road, the community lacks through-traffic, and along with its remote setting, remains very quiet and peaceful.

The people are special, as well. Many of the residents, both part time and full time, have owned their properties since the early 1970s. Many others have arrived in the last five years or less. Drawn to such an area are those who enjoy remote, open country and personal privacy. Yet, it is a friendly community. While privacy is respected, neighbors know they are welcome to drop by for a chat or to call on one another for assistance.

Because it straddles the prairie/forest border, and is very near a small lake, Pine-Aire is blessed with birds and wildlife of all three environments. The prairie is home to a sizable herd of pronghorn, and significant varieties of migratory birds are seen in the area including wintering bald eagles.

Very recently, land has been divided and large homes built along FR 62 leading into Pine-Aire Estates. While this area shares many of the attributes and is included with Pine-Aire for purposes of the Parks Area Plan, it is developing its own character.

Pine-Aire and FR 62 share similarities with other areas of Parks. Most of all, each is a community within the larger community.

NOTE: Garland Prairie is a very important habitat for many species, and for pronghorn in particular. Radio telemetry studies begun in 2000 by the Arizona Game and Fish Department are bringing to light new information on their migratory patterns, and it is critical that these routes be maintained. Use should be made of this information when considering land subdivisions in the area. New land divisions of less than 10 acres would severely impact wildlife, roads and the general character of the area.

## **Pittman Valley**

**by Phyllis Johnson**

Pittman Valley is located on the western boundary of the study area at interchange 171 of Interstate 40. The west boundary is Compressor Station Road and Beacon Hill. The south boundary is the BN/SF railroad tracks. Route 66 and Sherwood Forest Access Road also cut through the valley.

The oldest existing structure in the valley is "The Wagon Wheel," a two-story log structure located on Route 66 near the interstate interchange. It has housed various commercial enterprises. At present it is a private residence. The valley used to be home to Chalender, a "jerk water town" for a railroad that used to run through the valley. A small adobe and the worn down bed of the railroad are all that are left of Chalender. In the center of the valley is a concrete foundation; it was the Chalender office for the Forest Service. A potato farm was another enterprise that used to be in the valley.

The valley is also the home of the Pinal County 4-H camp. It is a primitive camp that is used seasonally by 4-H clubs.

Currently, most of the residents are “empty-nesters” that occupy their homes year round. There are a few weekend, seasonal residents. Some residents have recreational livestock and gardens. Most residents have shallow ground water wells, and some have stock tanks. The availability of water sets Pittman Valley apart from most of the study area.

The parcel size tends to be 10 acres and greater. The majority of residents responding to the 1999 survey opposed land splits to allow for higher density than the minimum established zoning. Pittman Valley’s zoning is General, 10 acre minimum lot size. The majority of homes in the neighborhood are site-built, with a few manufactured homes. The valley has a very sparse density, and therefore is a favorite area for elk, antelope, and deer, as well as bald and golden eagles, redtail and goshawks, and many smaller birds. Prairie dogs have also invaded the valley in the last few years.

The most commonly cited characteristic that drew people to this neighborhood is “Rural”, followed by “Remote”, and “Quiet.” “Rural” is also the characteristic most commonly cited as needing to be preserved and enhanced according to the 1999 area survey.

### **Sherwood Forest Estates**

**by Rodger Anderson**

Sherwood Forest Estates is located 20 miles west of Flagstaff, and 13 miles east of Williams, three miles south of Exit 171 at the end of County road 102. Sherwood Forest Estates was developed in the 1960s, and contains 282 one-acre lots on a half section of land. Of the 282 lots, 174 have been developed, and there are 30 year round resident homes. Sherwood Forest Estates has an active property owners association and a set of CCRs that is particular to the Estates. Sherwood Forest Estates is protected by a volunteer fire department, which is only responsible for the Estates. The volunteer fire department currently has five vehicles and 16 volunteer firefighters. The mailing addresses of the residents are listed as Williams, AZ, and residents receive mail deliveries to individual homes. The Estates are bounded by national forest land on two sides, state land on one side, and a privately owned parcel on the other. There are approximately 5.25 miles of unpaved roads within the development. Year round access is provided by County Road 102 that is maintained along with the roads within the development by the County. Sherwood Forest Estates is located within the boundaries of Maine Consolidated School District. Maine School is located in Parks, and is a kindergarten through sixth grade school. Middle school and high school students are bused to other school districts. Bus service is provided to all students who live within our Estates. Telephone and electric service are available. There are no natural gas or water lines reaching to the development. There are very few wells in the area, and residents either haul water or have contract with water delivery companies. Many residents utilize propane company services. The variety of people who reside in Sherwood Forest Estates enjoy the rural atmosphere and the beautiful, scenic surroundings.

### **Garland Prairie**

**by Bill Fry**

The Garland Prairie we know today began with the 23 miles of Overland Trail that was blazed by a military expedition in October, 1863 from Antelope Springs to Fort Whipple to support the gold strike on Lynx Creek. Homesteaders began to settle the region, and remains of unsuccessful farms, interspersed homesteads, and a school dot the landscape. Homesteaders grew potatoes, hay, oats, and beans. Life on the prairie was difficult with harsh winters, little water, and a short growing season. Little has changed over the years; farms turned into ranching, and the homesteads have turned into ranchettes. There are approximately 24 families, three ranches, and a Boy Scout camp in the area. The pioneer attitude still exists on the prairie. People moved to the prairie for individual freedom to live their lives as they see fit without government interference. Government, subdivisions, and corporate America are not welcome on the prairie.

## **Elk Springs**

**by George Squyres**

Elk Springs is a very rural community hallmarked by extreme low-density residential development and a complete lack of commercial and industrial development. These levels of development are very strongly favored by the residents who oppose almost any commercial development and unanimously oppose any industrial development, the only exception to these being businesses based out of the home. Residential development involving density other than very low single family is strongly opposed by a super-majority, with over 81% opposing a minimum lot size of less than 10 acres. The very rural lifestyle, characterized by some as ranch or farm life, is very distinctive of the area and indicated by most residents as the reason that they choose to live here.

The residents do not mind the long drive on unpaved roads as it provides the separation from the urban environment that is an essential component of the special character of this neighborhood. Indeed the vast majority opposes any paving of the roads, both for the separation that it provides as well as a statement of what expenditures they consider worthwhile. One resident characterized leaving the paved road on the way home from work as the point at which he leaves it all behind him at the end of the day.

The remoteness and relative lack of amenities is considered a small and worthwhile price to pay for a lifestyle comprised of Kaibab National Forest, tall ponderosas, large tracts of open space, abundant native wildlife and dark skies. A majority favors a landscape ordinance on all new development that would preserve these assets. Since only a few residents have productive wells, most are required to haul water for their domestic usage. More than half recognizes the long-term need of a community well in Parks, given the eventuality of water not being available to the Parks community from Bellemont or Williams. Mail requires a drive to Parks at a minimum, and for some a trip to Flagstaff. All residents are outside of the fire district and would have to rely on their own measures and the help of their neighbors in the event of a fire. Yet these inconveniences are borne willingly for the enjoyment and beauty that the remoteness provides, and the majority favor neither a water improvement district beyond the need of a community well, nor expansion of the Parks-Bellemont Fire District nor a rural mail delivery system. "What's at the end of the road is what it's all about," was the description of another resident.

The extreme low density is appreciated by the residents as that which allows them to enjoy each other as neighbors, yet have the breathing and elbow room that is necessary for that enjoyment. While there is a diverse community in terms of backgrounds, individual lifestyles and livelihoods, there is a strong commonality of political and social values. The residents are extremely independent individuals who treasure their freedom, privacy and property, and prefer to minimize the presence of regulatory interference in their lives. Self-reliance and mutual respect are the qualities that make most residents prefer local control and local solutions to problems. Even though the rural nature of the area makes self-reliance for protection not simply a choice but a necessity, most residents consider self-protection a preferable alternative to increased presence of law enforcement. This preference for self-reliance is true even in the education of their children. While supportive of the unique character of the Main School District a majority of parents with children in school feel that home schooling is still a viable alternative to the public school system.

## **Eastern Government Prairie – FR 107**

**by Bruce Maxwell**

Government Prairie is a large high altitude prairie, generally circular in nature, surrounded by volcanoes and ponderosa pines, with a western sloping drainage, bounded by Spring Valley Road on the west and FR 107 on the east. Forest Road (FR) 107 is a County-maintained dirt road which begins at Route 66 just east of the Parks exit on Interstate 40. It winds uphill through Forest Service lands leveling out at 7,300 feet at the southern edge of Government Prairie. At that point the road is perfectly straight bearing due north for the first two miles until it enters Forest Service lands. Two miles later after circling west around the northern edge of Government Prairie, it connects with Spring Valley Road.

The neighborhood consists of 23 homes of both year-round and vacation homes on five and 10 acre parcels consisting of anything from small trailers to elaborate two story log homes. Several families have children who

attend local schools, and therefore FR 107 is plowed by the County in the winter. Most year-round residents raise animals of one type or another, from llamas and horses to chicken and geese. A friendly atmosphere between the residents encourages calling on neighbors for help in the winter, and turning to neighbors for expertise and labor in property development. Most weekends, and especially on the Fourth of July, one family or another volunteers their home for a pot-luck barbecue for relaxing at the end of the work week.

### Historical Background

Government Prairie is located near the historic Beale wagon road as well as Route 66. Homesteaders were recorded on Government Prairie as early as 1914. WWI veterans were given land to homestead in the area, and during the Depression, homesteaders tried to farm root crops like potatoes. During the 1930s, many of the homesteads were recalled by the government because they were not longer inhabited. Since 1968, there has been a noticeable growth increase in population. In the early 1970s only seven people lived on the Prairie; today there are over 40.

### Fire Danger

Fire danger can be extreme during much of the year. Minimal winter moistures and an unproductive monsoon season, combined with steady June winds from the Southwest, create a fire potential that could easily wipe out all the homes on the Prairie. In the summer of 2000, fire burned much of Kendrick Mountain, and from our doorstep three miles away, we all watched the 100 foot flames leap into the sky while the north side of the mountain turned black. Completely surrounded by Forest Service land, when the forest is closed due to fire danger, entry permits are required to drive on FR 107.

### Water

Lack of water is the most common problem we all share with early residents. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were three main springs in the area: the north side of Klostermeyer Hill, one close to the current Parks Store, and another in Brannigan Park to the Southeast. People hauled water in barrels by wagon to meet their water needs in much the same way they do today. Most homeowners own water haulers, either on trailers or in the back of their truck, and haul their own water from two sources in Bellemont. 1000 gallons of water costs approximately \$3.50. 1000 gallons of water purchased from a commercial hauler costs approximately \$75.00. On the western edge of the Prairie, successful wells of less than 100 feet can be found. On the eastern side, wells are few and at random depths. The few successful wells were drilled to about 400 feet, but yield less than 50 gallons per minute. In two cases, home owners drilled to over 1400 feet without hitting water. At a drilling cost averaging \$25 per foot, you could purchase water from a commercial hauler for over 20 years, and not equal the cost of those dry wells.

### Weather and Rainfall

The forests above the Mogollon Rim exist because of the mid-summer monsoons. The areas with thicker forests have heavier rainfall. By comparison, Government Prairie has relatively few trees and correspondingly, when Flagstaff and Williams are experiencing torrential rainfall, the Prairie is often dry. The daily monsoon rainfall typically arrives in Flagstaff on July 4<sup>th</sup>. It doesn't come regularly to the Prairie until late July or August. The same is true for snowfalls. While other areas may experience heavy snows, snowfall on the Prairie is often quite less.

What we do have on the Prairie is an over abundance of wind. In late May and most of June strong winds blow from the southwest. Often the force of the wind is so great it literally forces you to stay inside. While we appreciate that it is these winds which create the monsoons, and we need the rain, if there was one thing we could change it would be these winds. They are probably the single most frustrating aspect of living on the Prairie.

## **Spring Valley**

**by Linda Gerard**

The Spring Valley area extends from Sanderson Pass (FR 785) on the south to FR 97 to the north, FR 76 to the west to FR 107 to the east ending at FR 100. There are approximately 57 homes and outbuildings (barns) at this time with both full and part time residents. In 1960, Ski Village (Sanderson Pass) plat plan was approved for 31 lots. A

small portion of these lots are currently developed. Lot sizes in the Spring Valley area range from one acre sites in Sanderson Pass to 20 acre ranchettes. There are a number of ten acre parcels and two ranches with over 100 acres. Home styles range from manufactured homes to custom designed site-built houses. At the time of this writing, the entire area is outside the local fire district (Parks-Bellefont F.D.). Residents have the option of paying the fire district is their services are used.

Roads off Spring Valley Road (FR 141) are posted "Primitive," and are not regularly maintained by the County, although they are plowed where the school bus picks up children for the Maine School and Flagstaff middle and high schools. Homeowners maintain private roads off County and Forest Service roads. Residents range in ages from young couples with children to retired individuals. Many residents have domestic animals and livestock. The larger ranches have horses, sheep, and cattle grazing on national forest land. A minority of residents have wells, but most haul their water. Trash hauling service is available, but many residents use the Williams dump for their large loads. There are few telephone or power poles as most of the power lines have been buried. This aids in keeping the skies uncluttered and the views uninterrupted. Neighbors cooperate with the "Dark Skies" rule and enjoy clear, star-filled nights.

Like most of Parks, the Spring Valley area is made up of clusters of houses separated by large expanses of unoccupied land. Each cluster could be considered a micro-neighborhood. The privacy and seclusion that draw residents to Spring Valley are highly prized, but neighbors readily help each other when need arises.

The Spring Valley area is very wooded with some open meadows providing beautiful views of the San Francisco and Kendrick Peaks. This area is a natural migration route for elk, deer, and antelope moving north and south seasonally to winter and summer ranges. Forest Service land leaves open areas for their route and residents feel strongly about retaining these open spaces. Residents would fight any development or additional roads that would interfere with the existing lifestyle of man or animal in the Spring Valley area.

### **Sherwood Forest Park-East**

**by Dave Duggan**

Sherwood Forest Park-East (SFPE) is located one mile north of Old Route 66 on the east side of Spring Valley Road (FR 141). SFPE enjoys four access roads, and is surrounded by Forest Service property. Our area has 122 lots, and it is bordered on the south by the fire station, on the north by the prairie, and on the east by the Forest Service. This is a rural area that allows one to "get back with nature."

- ☐ Homeowners in SFPE enjoy abundant wildlife such as antelope, deer, elk, fox, skunks, badgers, mountain lions, rabbits, wild turkey, and more, along with numerous species of birds.
- ☐ There are few paved roads, no streetlights, and the area is protected by the Coconino County Sheriff, and two local volunteer sheriffs.
- ☐ The area includes a mixture of permanent residents, as well as second homes for those who enjoy a cooler climate in the summer and a chance to be back with nature at any time of the year.
- ☐ Several properties have wells, and the rest of the residents haul their water or have it delivered.
- ☐ Most residents have built their homes, or have had them custom designed so no two homes look alike.
- ☐ The school bus picks up students in grades K-6 and takes them to the Maine School in Parks, and transports older students to high schools in Flagstaff.
- ☐ Mail is delivered to the Parks Feed and Mercantile Store for all residents desiring to receive their mail in Parks. There is no home delivery of mail.

- ❑ Basic and convenience foods, sandwiches, videos, animal care products, and other items are available between the two respective “stores”, the Parks in the Pines General Store, and Parks Feed and Mercantile.
- ❑ Go no further than Parks for a massage, and also a hair cut, conveniently located at I-40 and Parks Road.
- ❑ The property acreage runs from one to five or more acres with a few folks having horses and a variety of other animals.
- ❑ All property in SFPE is included in the Parks-Bellefont Fire District.

### **Peaceful Valley Ranches/Crispair Estates**

**by Steve Schmid**

The plat map for Peaceful Valley shows the south section as called Crispair Estates, however, the entire subdivision is generally called Peaceful Valley.

There are 22 parcels in the Crispair portion, and 52 parcels in the Peaceful Valley portion. In addition, there is a 40 acre ranch located at the back (west) end of the subdivision, and four parcels north of Peaceful Valley that are indicated as part of Peaceful Valley on the plat map. This would amount to approximately 89 land owners.

Most of the parcels are one acre, however, in addition to the 40 acre ranch, there are four five acre parcels and a 9 acre parcel situated in the center of the subdivision. The four parcels located just north of Peaceful Valley, which are accessed directly off Spring Valley Road, are approximately 13 acres, nine acres, four acres and two acres in size.

Peaceful Valley is located off Spring Valley Road, three miles north of Route 66 on the west side. A big wooden sign saying Peaceful Valley Ranches indicates the entrance to the area, and is a piece of history in itself, having been resurrected from the original ranch owners and restored by some of the area residents. It was the Hausmann family that owned and farmed the entire valley ranch. Many local Hausmann family members, their children and grandchildren, are still living in Parks.

The neighborhood is a mix of custom homes and manufactured homes. Many lots are densely treed. The entire subdivision is surrounded by national forest land and has several good access roads into the woods. The roads are privately owned, and landowners generally coordinate a couple of times a year to work on them. The area is included in the Parks-Bellefont Fire District, and the school bus stops at the corner. There are many horse owners in the area, and the 40 acre ranch is an active breeding ranch.

There are also several very good wells in Peaceful Valley, and a few ponds. Some are spring-fed. These are all on the west side of the area. The rest of the subdivision has several wells, but most are “seasonal.” The majority of residents, however, are hauling or having water delivered.

About 50% of the subdivision are summer residents. Being surrounded by Forest Service, the area residents see a lot of elk and deer. Also, in the summer the area is surrounded by a cattle allotment. Summer mornings are filled with mooing cows, bugling elk, howling dogs, singing birds, and whinnying horses! Those who live here feel safe, enjoy nature, and are happy to be part of Peaceful Valley.

### **Spitz Spring**

**by Beth Goforth**

The character of Spitz Spring has a lot to do with the natural setting. The area contains a variety of landscapes and habitats, including a natural artesian spring. Around the spring are wetlands and a seasonal creek, which flows south into Sycamore Wilderness Area, supplying a number of wildlife tanks along the way. The wetlands are home to

many plants and animals not readily found in the high and dry desert and forests of northern Arizona. From the wetlands south are meadows, which are grazing grounds for elk each year. The very top of Garland Prairie reaches into the center of Spitz Spring, and is surrounded with wooded hills. The beauty and bounty of this area has attracted not only wild plants and animals of all kinds, but also people who appreciate such beauty.

There are over a dozen long term (over 20 years) residents on these 160 acres, some having lived here for 40 or more years. This fact alone speaks of a great personal investment in the area. The original homestead still stands, and most residents prefer building homes to bringing in mobile homes. Because there is no direct freeway access to Spitz Spring Road, the traffic is limited to locals, allowing for a cleaner, safer neighborhood. Some of the residents work together to pick up trash along the roadway.

The residents value the rural nature of the community. This is evident from the number of pets and livestock. The average parcel size ranges from one to 10 acres, and there are horses, goats, dogs and cats, chickens, geese, guineas, and peacocks. There are several wells in the area, making domestic animals and gardens easier for some. Though the original potato farm was parceled out 40 years ago, there is a steady increase in the number of residents today. Because Spitz Spring is only three miles from “downtown” Parks, more commuters are moving in from Flagstaff. Others from California are looking for a quieter life. Some of the seasonal residents have become full time residents, though there are still quite a few who come up from the heat for a weekend or for the summer. As long as the wildness and beauty of this community remains, there will be people drawn to it.

### **Ponderosa Acres**

**by Zane Morris**

One of the older subdivisions in Parks, started in 1959, Ponderosa Acres has a mix of owner built homes. Some were made with ammo boxes, logs, rock, brick, block, wood, and metal. The lot size is just over one acre for most homes in the area. All the roads in Ponderosa Acres are dirt and maintained by the people that live there.

The view of most residents here on future development in our area ranges from limited to none at all. Most have lived here for years and have paid a high price in commuting, hauling water, and all the other extra expenses that go along with this rural lifestyle. We worry about what will happen to the value of our homes when the water supply is depleted. The dust that will be raised on our dirt roads with further development in our area will affect our health. Many other problems will occur such as: affecting the amount of traffic, crime, adding to more fire hazards, and taking away the quality of life that we have worked hard to preserve in Parks.

In the future we will ask the Board of Supervisors to consider the rights of the people that live in the community as much as they do the rights of large landowners and developers, who in most cases do not live in Parks, and will not have to live with the results and problems of their developments.

### **Maine Townsite**

**by Ellsworth Vieregge**

The land occupied by the Maine Townsite Subdivision was owned by the railroad originally, and was part of Yavapai County before Coconino separated from Yavapai and became Coconino County. The land was changed from railroad property to private ownership in a series of transactions and ended up in the ownership of John E. Erickson who subdivided it in 1933.

The north boundary is old Highway 66. The west boundary is FR 141. The east boundary is N. 0° 17 E. 2752. The south boundary that is included in the County’s Regional Plan study extends several miles south into Garland Prairie, but is not part of the Maine Townsite Subdivision.

The subdivision is divided in the middle by the railroad and highway I-40. The northwest corner is the intersection of FR 141 and Highway 66 with the real estate office and construction company the only commercial establishments in the subdivision north of I-40. A river rafting company located at the corner of FR 141 and the railroad moved out and the warehouse and residential house and gas pumps were demolished and cleared away. Now a factory-built

house has been moved onto the property. Across the street to the south four septic systems are being installed. Road 141 has been realigned through this area to remove a dangerous curve after several years of planning.

The Maine Townsite Subdivision was laid out in typical city style with 50 foot by 120 foot lots with 14 foot alleys at the rear between lots for utilities, the kind of sardine can density that we see in east Flagstaff. This kind of density can't work here without a city sewer disposal system. This is not the kind of housing density we should have here. One acre is livable.

The streets in the Maine Townsite are not maintained by the County. The residents have to do their own maintenance. Bob Holt has a Bobcat loader, and does what repair he can a couple times a year, and I with my wheelbarrow fill the potholes when they get bad. That's the only road maintenance we have. Don Clyton comes over with his snow plow to dig us out after a major storm. When the County blade plows 141, it leaves a large pile of snow at our street entrance, which raises the anger of the neighborhood residents.

The full time residents in this neighborhood bought land and live here because it was affordable. In spite of the ever present danger and noise, we have a home, be it ever so humble. I take a terrible beating from the railroad noise. There was a major derailment about 200 yards from my property several years ago. If the cars had gone off the track on the south side of the track they would have been in a lady's front yard. There have been many railroad accidents between Bellemont and Williams, at least four within one mile of here. It is my opinion that the land closest to the railroad is not fit for full time residents. This is not a good place to live. Much of the land in this subdivision is owned by people who live in the Phoenix area and use it for a rest retreat, some for real estate investment.

While some of the property owners are not happy with the fact that some of the properties have an accumulation of what they call junk, most accept the fact that the junk was here before some of them came here, and it is the individual's right to keep what they consider their property, whatever it may be. They knew the kind of neighborhood they were moving into. Anyone who moves into a neighborhood they don't like, and tries to change it to suit themselves, will not be welcome. It is true, some of the junk has no value, and can be cleaned up. Each property owner has to get the best use of their property. One size does not fit all members of the community; what some can afford, others can't.

It is a common feeling among property owners that everything the County has done in the last 30 years has made it harder for the middle and lower income people to own their own place to live, and I agree. With more restrictions and building regulations, and higher building costs, and rising land prices, it is indeed a struggle. It is, and always has been my opinion that having to spend a major part of your earnings to pay rent your entire life to have a place to live, but can never own, is "cruel but not unusual punishment." The worst living conditions may be acceptable if you can own and use the property to your best interest.

With the railroad, the freeway, and Highway 66, Maine Townsite is not the best living space the community of Parks has to offer. The land here is beautiful with dense pine and oak growth, but the ever present danger of fire. The water table lies between 60 and 100+ feet. The septic leach capabilities is good in my area. From about four feet down, I have a mix of cinders and soil. You can't dig a leach field a given length by a given depth by so many feet wide, because of rocks; you dig where the rocks aren't. In some places, it takes a lot of digging to get enough room for septic tank and leach field.

I guess the final word is, "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." Be a good neighbor.



## APPENDIX C

### Alternative Land Use Scenarios

The following *Alternative Land Use Scenarios*, representing three different development patterns that could occur in the study area, were considered during the planning process. *Scenario 2 – Rural Community* was determined to have the most public support, was considered to be the most compatible with the character and conditions of the study area, and was adopted as the preferred scenario as described in the *Land Use* element of the plan.

#### **Scenario 1 – Current Trends**

- No changes to existing zoning.
- No increased residential densities.
- No additional commercial or industrial uses.
- Conditional Use Permits, Public/Semi-Public uses, Cottage Industries strongly discouraged.

#### **Scenario 2 – Rural Community**

- Minor increase in residential densities in some areas consistent with existing neighborhood character.
- Some commercial allowed – limited to specific areas, community-oriented uses emphasized.
- Conditional Use Permits, Public/Semi-Public uses, Cottage Industries possible – compatible with existing neighborhood, and community-oriented given highest consideration.
- No industrial development.

#### **Scenario 3 – Suburban Pattern**

- Significant increase in residential densities possible, i.e. one acre lots OK anywhere if developed as a platted subdivision.
- Commercial development OK along the frontage of any paved, publicly-maintained road.
- Intensive, highway-oriented commercial OK at interstate interchanges.
- Some light industrial possible at appropriate locations.

## APPENDIX D

### Existing Subdivisions in the Parks Study Area

<u>SUBDIVISION</u>	<u>LOTS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ZONING*</u>
Maine Townsite	114	1933	G
Kaibab Park	32	1959	AR
Ponderosa Acres	10	1959	AR
Kaibab Acres	29	1960	AR
Ski Village Estates	31 + 2 Tracts	1960	AR
Brannigan Park	16	1961	AR-4
Sherwood Forest Estates	282	1962	RS-40,000
Crispair Estates	9	1964	AR
Peaceful Valley Ranches	68	1964	AR
Sherwood Forest Park	112	1970	AR
Sherwood Forest Park Unit 2	111 + 1 Tract	1970	AR
Pine-Aire Estates	76	1971	AR
The Woods	94	1971	AR
Kaibab Forest Acres	30	1972	AR-2.5
White Horse Lake Tree Farm	15	1973	AR-2
Parks Pines	27	1974	AR
Forrest Ranch	10	1987	RS-5

**Total:** 1,069 lots (Note: total does not include numerous miscellaneous parcels of various acreages)

#### \*ZONING KEY

G	General, 10 acre minimum lot size, site-built and manufactured homes permitted.
AR	Agricultural Residential, one acre minimum lot size, site-built and manufactured homes permitted.
AR-2	Agricultural Residential, two acre minimum lot size.
AR-2.5	Agricultural Residential, 2.5 acre minimum lot size.
AR-4	Agricultural Residential, four acre minimum lot size.
RS-40,000	Residential Single Family, 40,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size, site-built or UBC (Uniform Building Code) modular homes only.
RS-5	Residential Single Family, five acre minimum lot size, site-built or UBC modular homes only.
RR-5	Rural Residential, five acre minimum lot size, site-built or UBC modular homes only.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Brannigan Park Petition**

**NOTE:** The Brannigan Park Petition (four pages) signed by 24 residents is NOT included in this electronic version of the Parks Area Plan. Copies of the signed petition may be obtained from the Coconino County Community Development Department.