

RECOMMENDED LONG RANGE PLAN

The recommended long range plan for Northwest Cochise County includes projects to address future deficiencies on the state highway system, projects to provide better connectivity, projects to improve access to transit services, and strategies to improve travel conditions for non-motorized modes. Recommended projects include:

- Adding capacity on heavily used state highways
- Integrating bicycle and pedestrian features
- Implementing expanded transit services

Roadway

Roadway improvements identified as part of this Long Range Plan include:

- Widening I-10, SR 80, SR 90, Mescal Rd, and Ocotillo Rd
- Improvements to Post Ranch Rd between SR 80 and SR 90
- Constructing a new road connecting I-10 and SR 80 near St. David
- Replacing the Skyline Rd traffic interchange along I-10
- Constructing a new east/west corridor 2 lane road along I-10 connecting to a new TI and SR 90
- Improve B-10/4th St through the City of Benson



SR 90 looking South

Transit

The 2009 City of Benson Transit Feasibility Review and Implementation Plan showed a clear existing need for additional transit services within Northwest Cochise County. The recommendation for increased transit services from this plan include providing fixed route deviated service by 2020 and implementing a more regional service by 2040 to service the expected population growth in the area.

Non-motorized

Integrating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into roadway projects is a cost-effective way to add facilities. Non-motorized projects identified as part of this plan include:

- Wide paved shoulders on rural roadway projects
- Bike lanes and sidewalks within the City of Benson
- Implementation of a comprehensive trail plan and system
- Accommodate equestrian activity

The Natural and Physical Environment

Impacts to the natural and physical environment should be considered in the implementation of this plan including:

- Minimizing and mitigating impacts to the San Pedro River
- Minimizing and mitigating impacts to wildlife
- Implementing corridor research to help provide recommendations for wildlife crossing structures

Financial Constraints

Most of the recommended projects are on the state highway system, and would require state or federal funding. The total cost of the recommended plan for the Northwest Area is estimated to be \$161 to \$289 million. Local transportation projects rely on the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF). The local projects recommended as part of this plan are estimated to cost between \$19 and \$25 million total by 2040. In 2009 both Cochise County and the City of Benson received over \$8 million combined in HURF funds, with the majority allocated to the County.

Next Steps

- Adopt a Roads and Streets Map
- Incorporate recommendations into the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan
- Identify opportunities to implement high priority projects
- Incorporate recommendations into the City of Benson General Plan

Contact Information

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 Project Website – http://www.azdot.gov/mpd/systems_planning/nw_cochise_co.asp



Ocotillo Road looking North



Northwest Cochise County LONG RANGE Transportation Plan EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



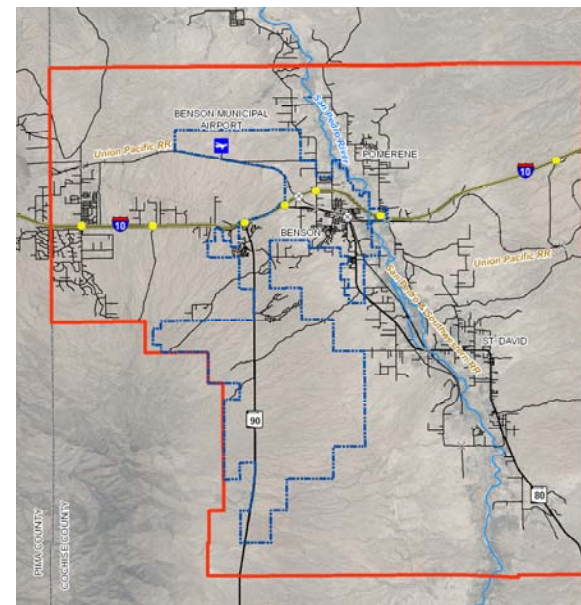
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Arizona Department of Transportation • Cochise County • City of Benson

STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

The Northwest Cochise County Long Range Transportation Plan Study Area encompasses 234 square miles, which includes the City of Benson and the unincorporated areas of St. David, J-Six/Mescal, and Pomerene.

The Study Area includes the junction of three State highway corridors which include I-10, SR 80, and SR 90. These highways provide access to the rest of Cochise County and the Tucson metropolitan area to the west. I-10 is a major interstate corridor and provides access to eastern and western portions of the State. I-10 runs parallel to the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Sunset Route which passes through Northwest Cochise County and the City of Benson as it connects the cities of Los Angeles, California, and El Paso, Texas.



Study Area

STUDY OBJECTIVES

Based on previously identified key issues for Northwest Cochise County and discussions with both ADOT and the Technical Advisory Committee, the following objectives were developed for this Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Prepare a plan that considers the recommendations of the four existing transportation plans
- Identify solutions to current and projected congestion and system access problems
- Identify potential alternative transportation facilities
- Evaluate alternative transportation scenarios, and prepare a transportation improvement plan

EXISTING AND FUTURE CONDITIONS

A review of the physical, natural, socioeconomic, transportation system and travel conditions provided an understanding of existing conditions within Northwest Cochise County. Future population and employment projections as well as future land use plans provided an overview of inputs for the long-range travel forecasting to support the development of future year transportation improvements.

Existing Conditions

- The majority of private and public lands within the study area are undeveloped
- Commercial development is primarily located along B-10/4th Street while residential development is mostly located in Benson, Pomerene, and St. David
- 2007 population for the study area was just over 12,000 people
- 2007 employment for the study area was nearly 4,000 jobs
- Most of the roadways in the study are functioning at a Level of Service of B or better
- In 2007, there were a total of 233 crashes on study area roadways

Future Conditions

- More intense land uses are expected along SR 90 including a commercial core
- The Benson General Plan identifies areas to the south of the city for development with a mixture of medium density residential and commercial uses
- Riparian areas, drainage, flood zones, and water quality are anticipated to be constraints to high density development

Population projections for 2020 and 2040 utilized an annual growth rate of 2 percent based on historical growth trends.

Future Year Growth Projections

Year	Households	Employment	Population*
2007	5,236	3,917	12,043
2020	7,133	5,376	16,406
2040	10,600	9,691	24,380

*Population projection assumes 2.3 people per household

2020 State Projects

Improvement: Widen SR 80 to 4 lanes, with bicycle and pedestrian improvements integrated

Location: B-10/SR 80 split in Benson to Judd Road
10 miles – \$30m - \$50m

Improvement: Widen SR 90 to 6 lanes, with bicycle and pedestrian improvements integrated

Location: I-10/SR 90 TI to Post Ranch Road
4 miles – \$8m - \$12m

Improvement: Implement access management improvements to B-10/4th Street and reconstruct roadway with 4 lanes

Location: I-10 to the SR 80 split
2 miles – \$1.5m - \$2m

2020 Local Projects

Improvement: Widen Mescal Road to 4 lanes

Location: North of the J-Six/Mescal I-10 traffic interchange
1 mile – \$3m - \$5m

Improvement: Fixed Transit Service

Location: Serving City of Benson
N/A – \$275k

2040 State Projects

Improvement: New I-10 service interchange to replace the existing Skyline Road TI

Location: Remove existing Skyline TI and replace
N/A – \$20m - \$30m

Improvement: New east/west corridor 2 lane road north of I-10, with bicycle improvements

Location: J-Six/Mescal to SR 90 (two way road)
5 miles – \$10m - \$25m

Improvement: Widen I-10 to 6 lanes

Location: Cochise/Pinal County line to B-10/ 4th Street Exit
7 miles – \$70m - \$140m

2040 Local Projects

Improvement: New 2 lane road connecting to I-10 and UPRR crossing

Location: From SR 80 near Dagoon Vista north to I-10 at the Sibyl Road TI
7 miles – \$9m - \$11m

Improvement: Improve Post Ranch Road to paved 2 lane road

Location: Connection between SR 90 and SR 80
4 miles – \$2.5m - \$3.5m

Improvement: Widen Ocotillo Road to 4 lanes, with integrated bicycle and pedestrian improvements

Location: North of I-10 to B-10/4th Street
1.3 miles – \$6.5m - \$9m

Improvement: Fixed Transit Service

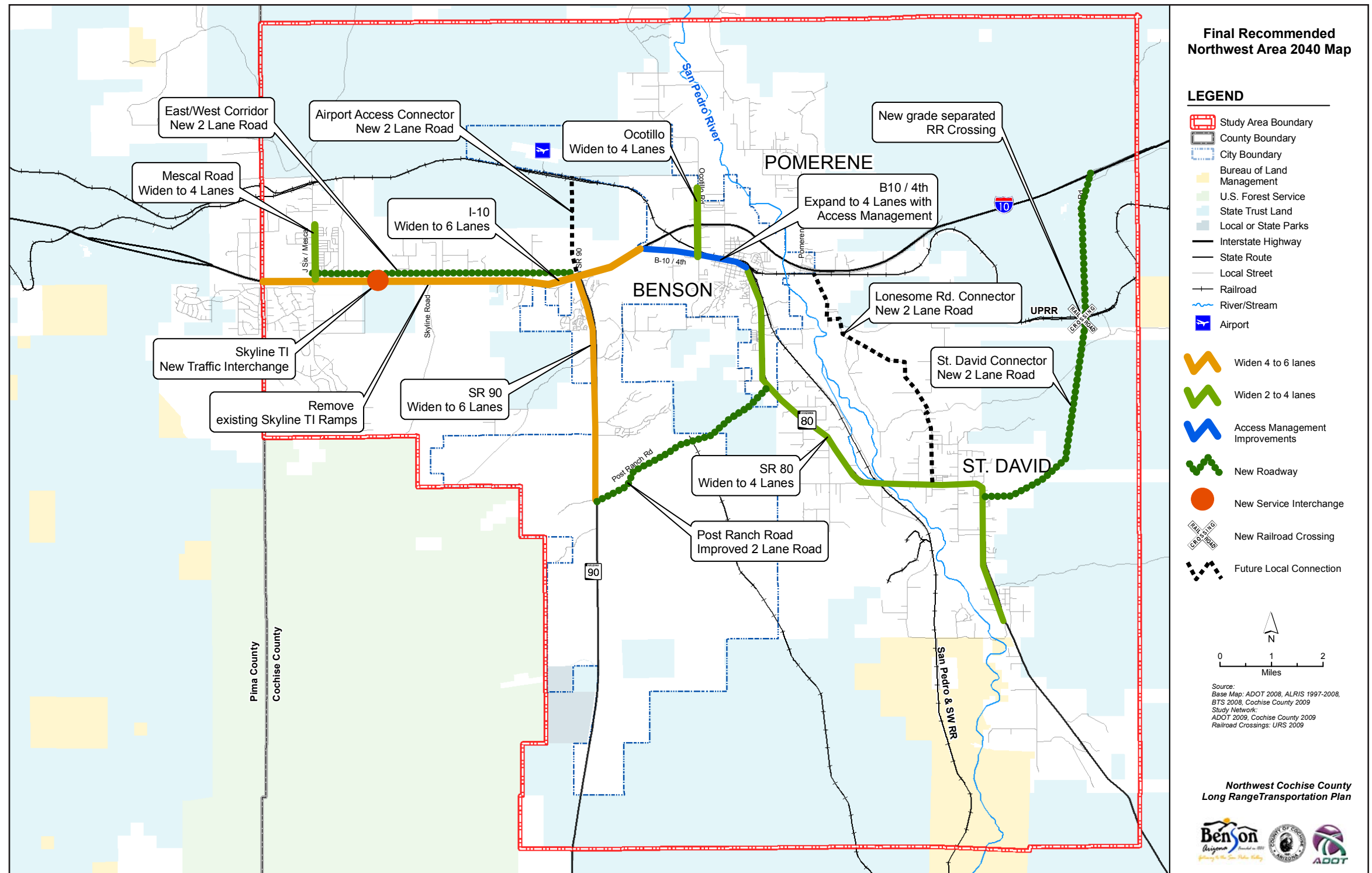
Location: Expanded regional service
N/A – \$250k

Improvement: Expanded bicycle system

Location: Yearly program to add facilities
3-5 miles/year – \$250k - \$500k

TOTAL \$161m - \$289m

FINAL RECOMMENDED NORTHWEST AREA 2040 MAP



SHORT TERM IMPROVEMENTS

The final recommended 2020 and 2040 long-range plan focuses on the major capacity projects identified to meet needs into the future. Roadway improvements in the Northwest Area will also include near-term improvements already funded, such as the SR90 interchange and Dark Star re-alignment as well as safety and enhancement projects, such as improving the J-Six/Mescal Traffic Interchange intersection and reconstructing B-10/4th through Benson. As growth occurs over time, local connections to serve new commercial and residential areas are likely to be developed. On-going maintenance as well as roadway surface treatments will also continue to play a significant role in meeting the current as well as the future transportation needs of the Northwest Area.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input was a key element in determining issues and both opportunities and constraints for future growth in the Northwest Area. Two formal public meetings were held over the course of the study where progress was presented and public input was solicited. Several additional presentations were hosted by the J-Six/Mescal CDO and the St. David School. Stakeholder input was also sought from specific interests within the study area through a series of one-on-one interviews. Issues identified included:

- Improve B-10 (4th Street) to better manage traffic in the area, and spur economic growth

- Address safety issues related to the current practice of routing St. David school buses onto I-10 and through Benson
- Develop an east/west connection between SR90 and SR80 through the center of the study area. An alignment using Post Ranch Road was most often referenced.
- Locate an alternative route which parallels I-10 from SR90/I-10 interchange west to the J-Six/Mescal interchange
- Consider wildlife crossings for deer, antelope and other big game animals, as well as equestrian access, as future improvements are planned