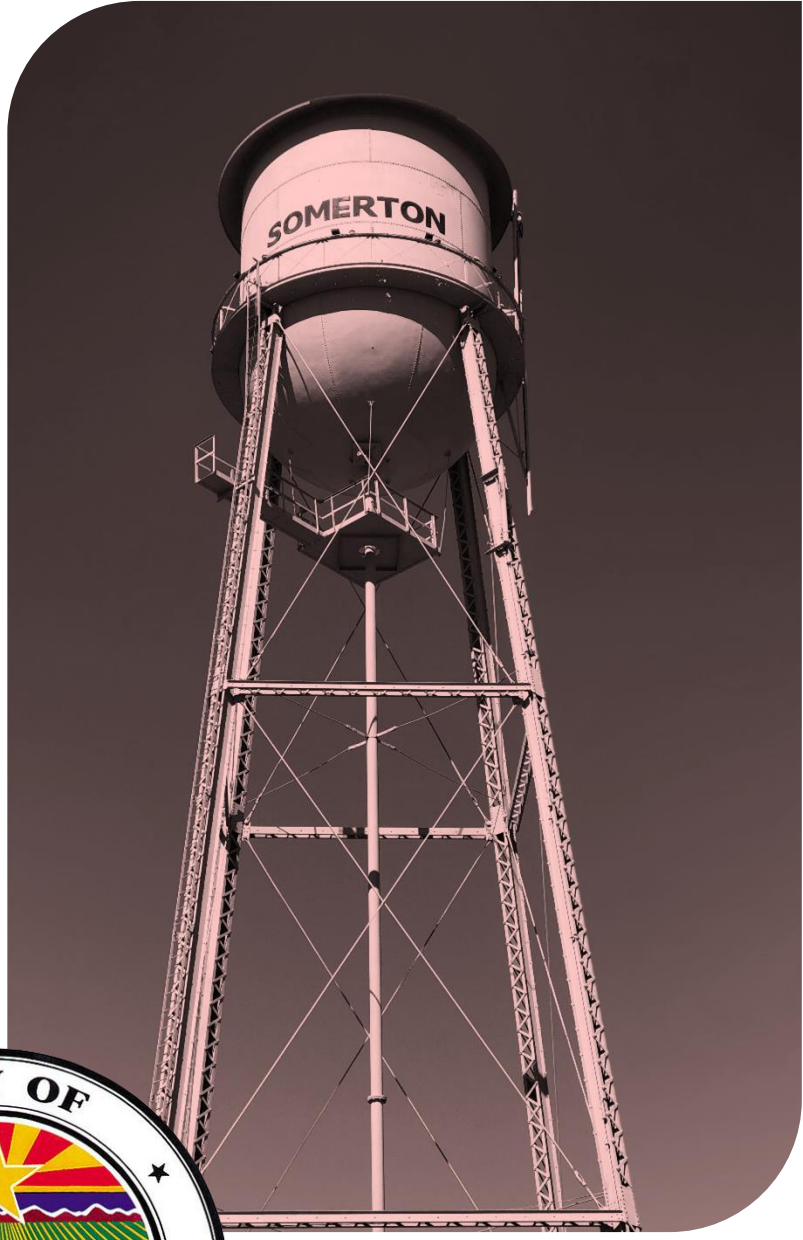
GENERAL PLAN 2020



CITY OF SOMERTON ARIZONA 1898

Ratified, November 2020

(This page intentionally left blank)

City of Somerton
General Plan 2020

Ratified: *November 2020*

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

1.1 What is the General Plan? 2

1.2 Community Vision 3

1.3 The Somerton Region 6

1.4 Public Input Process 9

1.5 General Plan Planning Area 11

1.6 Using the General Plan 14

1.7 General Plan Framework 14

1.8 Organization of the General Plan Document 15

Land Use 17

2.1 Introduction 18

2.2 Land Use Challenges 19

2.3 Existing Land Use Pattern 20

2.4 Land Use Framework 20

2.5 Land Use Classifications 21

2.6 Population Projections 27

2.7 Land Use Goals and Policies 28

Growth Area 32

3.1 Introduction 33

3.2 Growth Area Issue Identification 33

3.3 Growth Area Plan 34

3.4 Growth Area Goals and Policies 37

Transportation/ Circulation 40

4.1 Introduction 41

4.2 Transportation/ Circulation Issue Identification 41

4.3 Transportation/ Circulation Plan 42

4.4 Transportation/ Circulation Goals and Policies 55

Neighborhoods 56

5.1 Introduction 59

5.2 Existing Conditions 59

5.3 Historic Preservation 60
5.4 Neighborhood Planning Goals and Policies 63
Parks & Open Space 66
6.1 Introduction 67
6.2 Parks and Open Space Issue Identification 68
6.3 Parks and Open Space Plan 69
6.4 Parks and Open Space Goals and Policies 77
Environmental Planning 83
7.1 Introduction 82
7.2 Topography 82
7.3 Geology & Aggregates 82
7.4 Climate 85
7.5 Seismic Hazards 85
7.6 Air Quality 85
7.7 Noise 86
7.8 Surface Water and Flooding 89
7.9 Environmental Planning Goals and Policies 89
Water Resources 92
8.1 Introduction 93
8.2 Water Systems 93
8.3 Wastewater Systems 94
8.4 Water Resources Goals and Policies 95
Public Facilities & Services/Cost of Development 98
9.1 Introduction 99
9.2 Public Facilities & Services 99
9.3 Current Services in the Community 102
9.4 Cost of Development Philosophy 105
9.5 Cost of Development Financing Options 105
9.6 Public Facilities & Services/ Cost of Development Goals and Policies 108
Economic Development 112
10.1 Introduction 113
10.2 Educational Attainment 113
10.3 Work Force and Employment 114
10.4 Downtown Revitalization 117

10.5 Economic Development Opportunities 118
10.6 Economic Development Goals & Policies 119
Implementation 122
11.1 Implementation Introduction 123
11.2 Monitoring the General Plan 123
11.3 General Plan Amendment 123
11.4 General Plan Update 127
11.5 General Plan Action Program 127

List of Tables

Table 1: Somerton Land Use Plan Acreage By Category 27
Table 2: Population Projections 27
Table 3: Somerton Functional Roadway Classification Characteristics 44
Table 4: Minimum Intersection or Primary Driveway Spacing 54
Table 5: Service Providers 102
Table 8: Education Attainment 113
Table 9: Workforce Demographics 115
Table 10: Employment Clusters 115
Table 11: Top 10 Employers in Somerton 116
Table 12: Balance Matrix 126
Table 13: Implementation Matrix 128

List of Figures

Figure 1: Regional Context....7
Figure 2: Planning Area Map....12
Figure 3: Land Use Plan....25
Figure 4: Growth Area Map....35
Figure 5: Transportation/Circulation Plan....41
Figure 6: Somerton Neighborhood Map....61
Figure 7: Parks and Trails Map....75
Figure 8: Mining Aggregate Map....83
Figure 9: MCAS-YUMA / Yuma International Airport Noise Contour Map....87
Figure 10: Public Facilities and Services....103
Figure 11: Somerton Labor Force Distribution by Industry....117
Figure 12: Resident Occupations....118

General Plan 2020

Acknowledgments

Somerton City Council

Gerardo Anaya Mayor

Martha Garcia Vice-Mayor

Carlos Gonzalez Council Member

Miguel Villalpando Council Member

Jesus Roldan Council Member

Luis Galindo Council Member

Juan Castillo Council Member

Somerton Planning and Zoning Commission

Daniel Flores Chairman

Ron Rice Vice-Chairman

Arturo Magaña Commissioner

Candelario Rangel Commissioner

Lorena Zendejas Commissioner

Somerton Staff

Ian McGaughey City Manager

Carmen Juarez Community Development Director

Hector Tapia, AICP Economic Development

Paul De Anda Fire Chief

Araceli Juarez Police Chief

Jesus Meza Parks and Recreation Director

Samuel Palacios Public Works Director

Jorge Lozano City Attorney

Saul Albor Planner II

Consultant Project Team

Michael Baker International

Matt Klyszeiko, AICP Project Manager

Adam Pruett, AICP Principal Planner

Tristan Black, AICP Associate Planner

Matt Gomez, Associate Planner

Without the help of the above individuals and participation of the community at public meetings, this project would not have been accomplished. A debt of gratitude is owed to the City Council, the Planning & Zoning Commission, the General Plan Advisory Committee, and members of the community who participated in the process as well as their participation shaping the future of the Somerton for the betterment of its businesses and residents.

1 Introduction

1.1 What is the General Plan?

The Arizona Revised Statutes requires that each city adopt a comprehensive, long-range General Plan to guide the community's physical development.

The purpose of the General Plan is to:

- Express the community's vision,
- Identify the community's goals and development priorities,
- Serve as a policy guide for local decision-making, and
- Fulfill legal requirements created by state law.

The Somerton General Plan Update process began in September 2019. This General Plan Update process is a response to Growing Smarter/Growing Smarter Plus legislation that requires General Plans to be updated on a 10-year cycle. The process involved considerable public dialogue and input. The Somerton General Plan was closely coordinated with the City of Yuma and City of San Luis General Plans to ensure compatibility in development policies since both planning areas are connected. The General Plan was also coordinated with the Yuma County Comprehensive Plan, Cocopah Indian Tribe, Marine Corp Air Station – Yuma (MCAS)/Yuma International Airport, Arizona State Land Department and other key stakeholders.

The Somerton General Plan is a statement of the Community Vision for the future. The Plan is a tool to help guide and shape future decision making in Somerton. The General Plan's mission is to achieve a sustainable social, economic, and environmental future for the community through sound growth management.

The Somerton General Plan is more than a map depicting proposed land uses. The goals and policies are presented in a series of "elements." These elements provide the framework for the City's policy direction and are a requirement of state statute.

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 population estimate for Somerton was approximately 15,508 persons. For communities with a population between 10,000 and 50,000 (according to ARS 9-461.05 (C) and (D)), the following elements are required:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Water Resources
- Cost of Development
- Growth Area(s)
- Environmental Planning
- Open Space

Communities with a population below 50,000 persons (according to ARS 9-461.05 (E), may require that additional elements be included. Those elements may consist of:

- Conservation
- Recreation
- Transportation/Transit
- Public Services and Facilities
- Public Buildings
- Housing
- Redevelopment
- Safety
- Bicycling
- Energy
- Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization

The Somerton General Plan is intended to be a plan to guide development over the next 20 years. However, all cities and towns are required to update their General Plans and receive voter ratification at least once every 10 years. The plan is intended to be a usable, working document that is responsive to changes and unforeseen opportunities that are natural in a dynamic environment.

The General Plan is often confused with zoning regulations. It is important to recognize that the General Plan provides for a generalized, long-range policy direction related to physical development; whereas, zoning is a specific legal action related to land classification governed by the zoning ordinance adopted by elected officials. The Zoning Map depicts land classifications that must be in substantial conformance with the General Plan. However, the General Plan does not change any zoning until a formal request is made either by the landowner or initiated by the City. The Implementation chapter of this document outlines when an amendment to the General Plan is required prior to changing zoning.

1.2 Community Vision

A foundation for the Somerton General Plan is the Community Vision. The Community Vision was the product of considerable discussion by the residents, Planning Commission and the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). The Community Vision is the community's philosophy and unique image of the future that would be better in some ways than what now exists. It is a future statement; a description of a desired future state for the community. The 2020 General Plan Community Vision remains largely unchanged from the 2010 General Plan as the public feedback gathered during the planning process validated that the values and desires of the community still hold true today.

The City of Somerton is in a unique situation within the Yuma County area. Located in the “South West County”, between two much larger communities (Yuma, AZ with a population of nearly 100,000 and San Luis, AZ/San Luis Río Colorado, Mexico with a combined population of over 200,000) (2017), the City’s physical and economic growth is strongly impacted by these two adjacent communities. As both communities are only ten minutes away, and Somerton’s residents

(or visitors) primarily travel through these two communities to either leave or visit Somerton, this dynamic coupled with the City's limited access to high capacity transportation corridors, adjacency to prime agricultural lands and proximity to the Marine Corps Air Station Yuma present challenges that the City has historically worked to overcome.

Throughout the public involvement and visioning process conducted with the citizens of Somerton, a strategy to concentrate on opportunities within the community, accentuate and market to area residents the values of small-town life and strive to get the City to position itself as the "Quality over Quantity" community remained.

This strategy focuses on the numerous positive attributes that the City possesses, sets a clear and focused plan to improve various elements, and benefits from the significant improvements to community infrastructure, public service, public safety, education and sense of community achieved over the last decade. This strategy envisions the City of Somerton not trying to directly compete on all fronts against its larger and more (in terms of transportation linkages) connected neighbors, but rather to focus on its positive attributes and small-town sense of community to become the, "Best Little City in Arizona".

This Vision, which is further outlined in all elements in this General Plan, as well as the Goals and Policies contained herein is predicated on several key principles.

Vision Key Principles

- Somerton is a peaceful, well-planned city consisting of good neighborhoods with a great sense of community.
- Somerton is an inclusive community with strong values that honors its cultural diversity and heritage.
- Somerton is a safe community with a low crime rate and exceptional public safety services.
- Somerton is a community with excellent schools that prides itself on providing and sustaining strong educational values and academic excellence.
- Somerton will continue to stay true to its agricultural roots while diversifying economically and creating jobs so future generations may return home to raise their families.
- Somerton has a spirit of leadership, promotes entrepreneurship and is a place that residents love to call home.
- Somerton will focus on specific, quality growth in targeted areas that can be supported by existing infrastructure or currently on-going improvements.
- Somerton will strive to further enhance its excellent education status by working with the school district to locate a new high school in the City and support advanced education opportunities.
- Somerton will look to improve its recreational opportunities by co-locating a major (30+ acre) Community/Regional Park with the new high school.
- Somerton will focus on revitalizing its existing downtown district by filling vacant storefronts and increasing the uniqueness and economic diversity of its business community.

1.3 The Somerton Region

The City of Somerton lies in southwest Yuma County approximately 10 miles southwest of the urbanized area of the City of Yuma; however, the City limits of the two communities are within 1 mile of one another. Somerton is approximately 12 miles from the U.S./Mexican border and 180 miles east of San Diego, California. The City is located on both sides of U.S. Highway 95 (Main Street) and Somerton Avenue runs north and south through the city. The area is bounded by Cocopah Indian Reservations (East and West). The Somerton Regional Context Map, **Figure 1** depicts Somerton's place within the surrounding region.

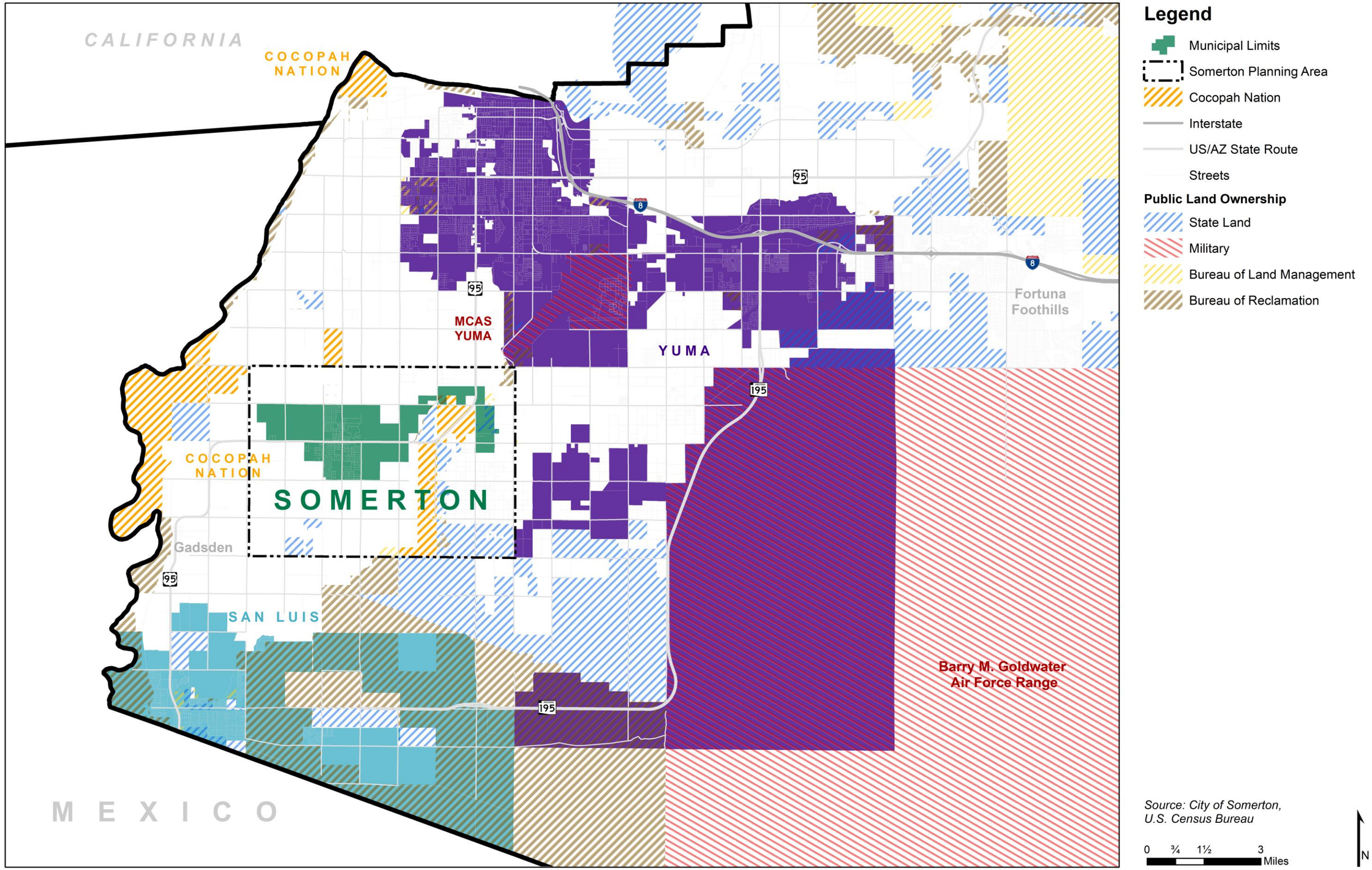
Somerton was established in 1898 and incorporated in 1918. Somerton is on land adjacent to the Colorado River and was therefore attractive to speculators. One of them, a citizen of the Mexican City of Hermosillo, petitioned authorities in Sonora, Mexico, for 21,692 acres between the Gila River to the north and the Algodones Pass to the south and was granted the land in 1838. Arizona historian Jay J. Wagoner said rights to the alleged grant passed to the Colorado Commercial and Land Company in 1873, and the U.S. Government withdrew the land from public entry in 1875.

An investigation revealed that the grant's original title papers had been forged. Despite this, the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims confirmed the Algodones grants in 1898. After the reversal, the U.S. Congress passed a law allowing settlers who were on the land before May 25, 1898, to buy up to 40 acres for $1.25 per acre.

Somerton has a long history of overcoming physical and economic adversity. Early settlers had to prevail over the Colorado River floods in order to realize the tremendous potential of the area's agricultural lands. This potential was the driving force for the establishment of the Somerton school district in 1902, and the paving of Main Street in 1917. The downtown business district survived a huge fire in 1926 and was able to continue to be a major economic influence in Yuma County until the early 1960s. The reduced need for manual labor caused by technological improvements in agriculture mirrored the decline of the local economy even as the surrounding communities of Yuma and San Luis began to grow. Census counts for Somerton never tallied the hundreds of temporary farm workers who lived outside the community during the Bracero Program from 1942 to 1964.

Vintage Somerton produce packaging labels

Figure 1: Regional Context

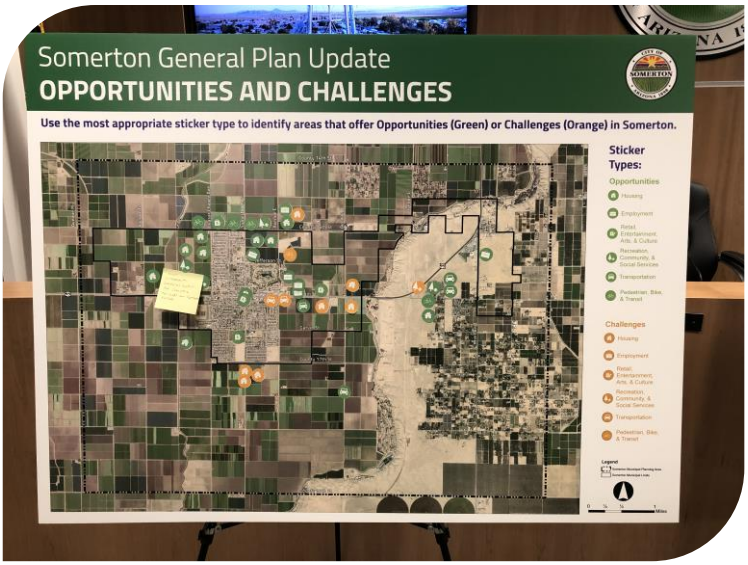


(This page intentionally left blank)

1.4 Public Input Process

The Somerton City Council formally launched the General Plan Update process in September 2019 with a goal to present the plan to voters during the November 2020 primary election. This condensed project timeline required a succinct planning process that effectively identified the community's hopes and aspirations for Somerton's future. Through an engaged public outreach process, various elected officials, public agencies, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, businesses and community members provided insight that was instrumental in crafting the General Plan to best reflect the community's preferred future.

The Public Involvement and General Plan Update process was carried out over three distinct phases: *Phase I- Recognize, Phase II- Enrich, and Phase III-Achieve*. Below is a description of each phase of the update process and a review of the committees and various public outreach forums that provided invaluable guidance to the project team. Throughout the public input process Spanish translation services were provided at each meeting and informational material was produced in both English and Spanish.



Phase I - Recognize

Phase I focused on developing the overall policy framework necessary to guide the update process. Initial efforts included conducting a project kickoff meeting with City staff to review the proposed scope of work, the preparation and approval of a Public Involvement Plan (PIP), the facilitation of an existing conditions analysis and the completion of a data inventory exercise.

To assist in identifying critical issues and opportunities, as well as capturing existing conditions within the community, the City established a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) for the General Plan Update. The Committee was comprised of stakeholders selected by the City to represent a variety of interests in the community (business owners, landowners, board members, and interested citizens). The GPAC was an essential component that provided vision, direction and insight throughout the planning process. The GPAC also revalidated existing goals, objectives, and policies as well as identified new key issues.

In order to maximize interaction and communication with the public the project team's Public Involvement Plan (PIP) process was utilized throughout each phase of the General Plan Update. The PIP portion of Phase I first involved conducting a series of stakeholder interviews. Following these, a GPAC meeting was held to gather further community data and gain a greater understanding of challenges and opportunities within Somerton. A community workshop was held to achieve a heightened understanding of critical issues in the City as seen from a wide variety of viewpoints. During the workshop two activities were conducted to gauge the community's views on Somerton's priorities, the Vision, and opportunities and challenges. The primary priorities

identified at the Community Workshop included; public safety; infrastructure improvements; arts, culture, and entertainment opportunities; open space, trails, and recreation options; housing options; and economic growth and diverse retail options.

The project team also provided opportunities for feedback by staging a booth at the City's Corn Fest on November 9th, 2019. In addition, an online engagement tool, Social Pinpoint, was utilized to allow opportunities for input from those community members unable to attend the community workshop, and a project webpage was created on the City's website to provide project updates and information. Community input and survey results identified housing, recreation, employment opportunities, as well as transportation challenges.

Phase I culminated in the comprehensive analysis of the existing conditions, data inventory, and community immersion results to develop an overall policy framework. These policy guidelines established the basis for decision making through the life of the project.

Phase II - Enrich

Predicated on the input collected from the GPAC and community meetings held in Phase I, Phase II centered on the analysis and development of the plan; its individual elements, goals, policies, and actions. A series of facilitated discussions were held, and project team members drafted each chapter of the plan, resulting in the preparation of the formal 60-day review document.

Phase III - Achieve

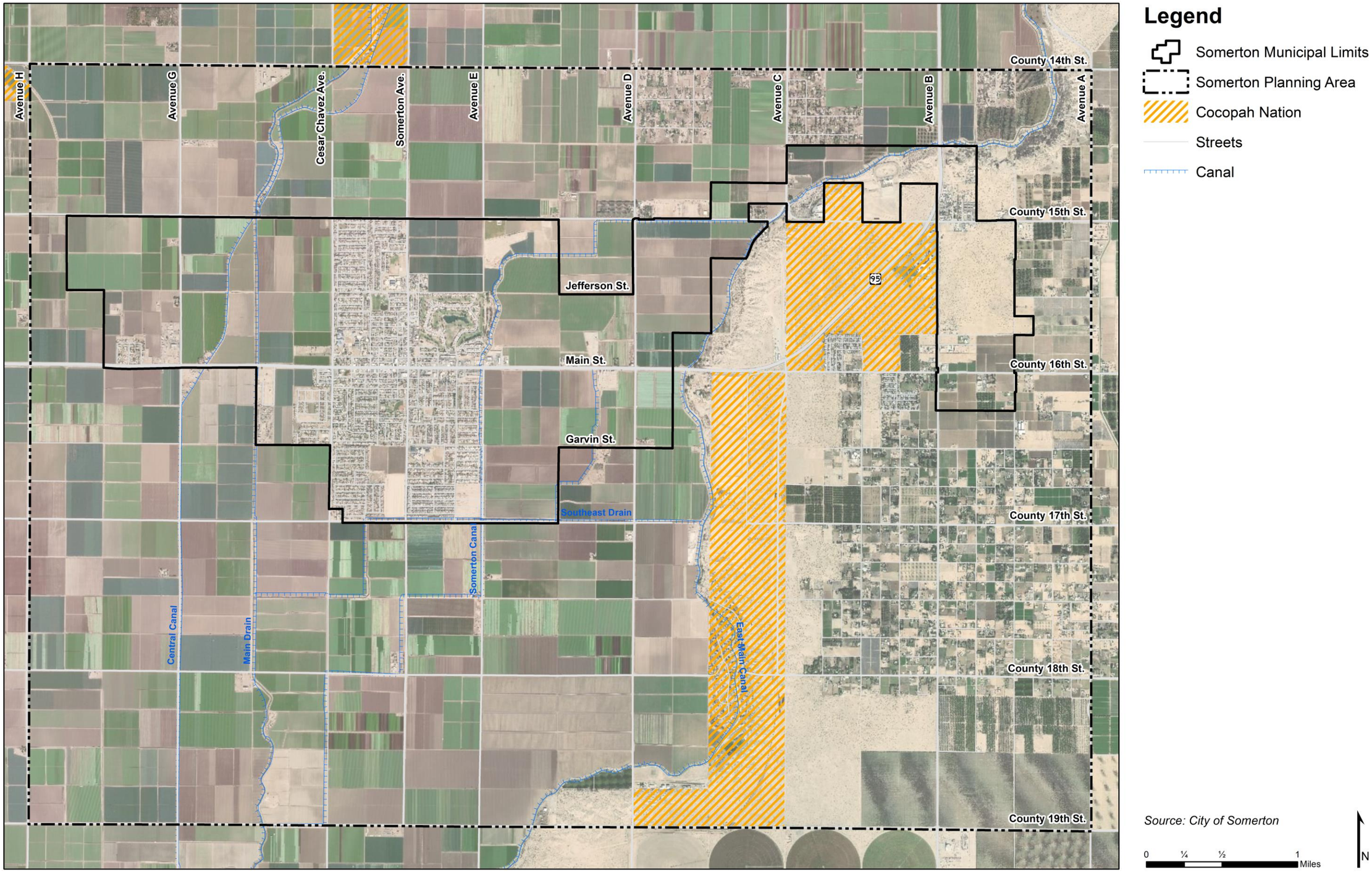
During the 60-day review period, the general plan was sent for agency review and also placed online for public review. A City Council work session and another community workshop were held to gain feedback on the draft document and general plan goals. Through the activities at the workshop, the public affirmed the majority of goals with only revisions requested to a few. The public seemed predominantly concerned with the wording of goals centered around agriculture land use preservation potentially impeding future growth. As a result, this goal was ultimately removed to better reflect the views of the community. As such, the feedback cumulatively collected from staff, GPAC Members, and the general public have been incorporated into the final draft.

1.5 General Plan Planning Area

The Growing Smarter legislation mandates that communities identify a Planning Area that serves as the maximum area for the purpose of long-term community planning. The Planning Area for the 2020 Somerton General Plan Update extends beyond the current incorporated boundaries and includes approximately 35 square miles (22,624 acres). The current developed or urbanized portion of Somerton is comprised of approximately 2.3 square miles (1,465 acres).

Within the Planning Area Boundary, there are two other identified boundaries on the Planning Area Boundary Map (**Figure 2**); the Somerton Municipal Limits and the Cocopah Nation.

Figure 2: Planning Area Map



(This page intentionally left blank)

1.6 Using the General Plan

The Somerton General Plan is a statement of policy regarding future growth and development within the planning area. While Somerton's incorporated area is managed by the City, the rest of Somerton's planning area is located within unincorporated Yuma County and is subject to the plans, policies and procedures adopted by the Yuma County Board of Supervisors.

The intent of the General Plan in evaluating such a large planning area is to understand and address the existing development status and future influences upon and within areas that someday may be located within the City of Somerton's incorporated municipal boundaries.

When considering a proposed development project within the City's incorporated area, the City staff, Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council will evaluate the proposal on how it relates to the General Plan's various elements. In addition, the City staff, Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council will monitor and provide comment on proposed projects that are located within the defined planning area but lie outside the municipal city limits for conformity with the General Plan's various elements. Ensuring plan continuity and linkages between the various components is critical to implementation.

1.7 General Plan Framework

A key component of the Somerton General Plan is the Community's Vision. The Vision is then supported by specific goals and policies. This framework provides the direction for how growth and development should occur within the planning area. The policy framework hierarchy is displayed in the following manner:

- **Community Vision:** The Community Vision contains the City's ideal future image. The statement describes a future state that can be achieved through implementation of the General Plan.
- **Goal:** A goal is the desired end state. Goals provide general direction for accomplishing the Community Vision.
- **Policy:** A policy is a means to attain the identified goals. Policies identify a course of action for the City.

1.8 Organization of the General Plan Document

The Somerton General Plan document is organized in a series of chapters that include the following:

Chapter 2 Land Use Element

Chapter 3 Growth Area Element

Chapter 4 Transportation/ Circulation Element

Chapter 5 Neighborhoods Element

Chapter 6 Parks and Open Space Element

Chapter 7 Environmental Planning Element

Chapter 8 Water Resources Element

Chapter 9 Public Facilities & Services/ Cost of Development Element

Chapter 10 Economic Development Element

Chapter 11 Implementation

(This page intentionally left blank)

2

Land Use

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element provides general guidance and direction for Somerton's future growth, development and redevelopment. It designates the distribution and general location of land uses, such as residential, commercial, employment, open space, recreation, and public uses within Somerton's "Planning Area" (see **Section 1.5** of this General Plan for a detailed discussion regarding the Planning Area).

The Land Use Element and its associated General Plan Land Use Plan are intended to capture and communicate Somerton's long-term vision for future development. The Element focuses on a project time frame of 20 years; however, regular review and update of the Plan is anticipated over this period of time. The General Plan Land Use Map graphically depicts proposed future land uses throughout the Planning Area while the text within the General Plan provides the necessary support that describes how the area should develop. Both the Land Use Map and text must be used simultaneously in making decisions about future development or redevelopment within the municipal City limits as well as growth in the unincorporated areas adjacent to the City limits that fall within the defined planning boundary.

The Somerton General Plan 2020 was coordinated with the planning efforts of the City of Yuma General Plan 2012, City of San Luis General Plan 2010, and Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan to ensure compatibility. The current City of Yuma/Yuma County Joint Land Use Plan reflects many of Somerton's proposed land planning principles within the Somerton Planning Area that is currently unincorporated. The unincorporated sections of Somerton's Planning Area are within the Yuma Valley and Yuma Mesa planning areas for Yuma County's land use plan. Dialogue with Yuma County and adjoining jurisdictions concerning land use designation compatibility both within the City's incorporated boundary and unincorporated areas adjacent to the City limits will continue.

The Somerton Land Use Element provides an opportunity to accommodate future growth in a well-managed and sustainable way. The Land Use Element strives to ensure long term sustainability by:

- Providing viable employment areas that expand the local economy.
- Creating an active Downtown that reflects Somerton's sense of community.
- Encouraging livable neighborhoods (both new and existing) that offer a wide variety of residential product types appealing to the broad spectrum of people who want to live in Somerton.
- Supporting public facilities (e.g., infrastructure, parks) that enhance future development or redevelopment opportunities.
- Preserving agricultural areas by concentrating development patterns.

2.2 Land Use Challenges

Population Growth: After the Great Recession, Somerton has experienced slower growth but at a steadier rate. While Somerton has identified and enhanced many of the most important infrastructure improvements necessary to meet the needs of the current estimated population of 15,508, the city is still in need of infrastructure improvements to support the needs of the expected population of 26,376 by the year 2040. As the growth rate continues to level out, there will also be a greater importance on Somerton to maintain the area's quality of life through prioritizing future community amenity and service needs.

Regional Positioning: Located between Yuma, the economic hub of the region, and the growing border city of San Luis, Somerton must define a future that complements these established communities yet allows Somerton to be a unique, one-of-a-kind community. Following the exponential growth and market downfall post-recession, Somerton has the opportunity to set the standard for intentional growth in the region and strategically target land use to best serve the City and region at large.

Agriculture: The City is surrounded by agricultural lands that are frequently defined as America's "salad bowl." Unlike the urban sprawl that affects other communities within Arizona, the productive agriculture lands that buffer Somerton create a compact development pattern and act as reminder to the economic importance they provide to the community. The City desires to balance its economic ties to agriculture and its importance in the area's quality of life with the need to diversify and expand the local economy.

Developable Land/Infrastructure: As the City approaches buildout of all shovel-ready land, development pressure warrants the extension of key infrastructure to open up more land for growth. The City's ability to grow is directly related to its ability to provide public infrastructure. Water and sewer planning and infrastructure development is critical to address and support expected growth. As lack of infrastructure is the greatest barrier to developing more land, the City will need to focus on key infrastructure improvements in the near future.

Commercial Development: U.S. 95/Main Street divides the community in two. The highway is lined with commercial establishments and has been historically the commercial center of town. Largely due to the development of regional commercial projects along U.S. 95 in Yuma and San Luis, Somerton is challenged in attracting competitive commercial services within the community.

Economic Diversification: The current economy of Somerton is highly connected to agriculture. Conversely, the economy of the region has diversified over the last 30 years. It is anticipated that Yuma County's economy will continue to diversify in the future. As Yuma County's economy expands, greater opportunities will emerge to service that expansion. Identifying those service opportunities will be key to the diversification of Somerton's economic base and thus develop long-term stability.

2.3 Existing Land Use Pattern

The Somerton Planning Area is comprised of mostly privately-owned lands. The Planning Area is primarily laid out on a grid and a compact urban form bounded on the north by County 14th Street, the south by County 19th Street, Avenue A on the east and Avenue H on the west. The community's present commercial center is well defined along U.S. 95 (Main Street). There are some scattered commercial uses but few other concentrations with the exception of a business center (commercial/industrial uses) located at the northeast corner of Avenue B and County 15th Street in proximity to the Cocopah Resort and Casino.

Agriculture uses dominate the periphery of the Planning Area. The community has limited employment uses other than farming, education, and government at this time. The majority of the community has a traditional small-lot single-family housing pattern.

While housing opportunities are overwhelmingly single-family detached structures, small areas of multi-family units and a few manufactured housing units are scattered throughout the area. Most recent residential development has seen a continuation of this development pattern with construction of predominantly traditional single-family subdivisions and limited alternative housing types such as single-family attached or multi-family projects. New business enterprises have initiated efforts to construct retail, office and food-service facilities in the past few years predominantly located along U.S. 95/Main Street.

2.4 Land Use Framework

While the City of Somerton's General Plan describes how the City and its residents envision the development of the community over time, the land use framework characterizes the components that make up the community and describes the arrangement of these components to establish an overarching development strategy for the city. This land use framework envisions a cohesive community that builds on the strengths of the City, its powerful sense of community, excellent public safety facilities, good schools and easy walkable layout. It includes two main "activity" corridors (Main Street and Somerton Avenue) with most of the higher intensity uses such as commercial, industrial and higher density residential adjacent to these corridors. These two corridors also include or are adjacent to the City's centrally located downtown, again improving both pedestrian and vehicular access to the higher intensity corridors. The downtown area is enhanced with a mixture of land uses while also maintaining the flexibility to accommodate more intensive development possibilities. Employment uses line Avenue D from Main Street all the way south to the edge of the Planning Area in anticipation of the future Avenue D improvements and connection to the San Luis Port of Entry II.

Residential development is evenly spaced around the primary activity corridors, allowing privacy for residents, coupled with easy access to centrally located facilities. In addition, the General Plan shows a planned community park and educational campus, that will include a high school and possibly higher educational facilities, located just north of Main Street along Cesar Chavez Avenue.

Local serving commercial nodes are provided in the west and south portions of the Planning Area to accommodate the expected residential growth in these areas. These service nodes provide conveniently located commercial alternatives to the expected residential growth in these areas and help to maintain the pedestrian friendly qualities currently experienced within the City.

Ultimate implementation of the General Plan and its associated land uses should further strengthen Somerton's identity as "The Best Small City in Arizona".

2.5 Land Use Classifications

Land use classifications assist in the use and interpretation of the Land Use Plan. These classifications guide decision-making about Somerton's growth and development.

The land use classifications and district boundaries represent generalized recommendations for future development. However, the precise location of the boundary may not always be critical. Variations within 500 feet, particularly where no significant natural or man-made features are present, may be acceptable. It will be the responsibility of the Somerton Community Development Department staff, based on the guidance provided by the Somerton General Plan, to establish classification or district boundaries if questions arise.

The General Plan's corresponding Land Use Plan (see **Figure 3**) graphically represents the planned distribution of land use citywide. The Land Use Plan depicts the preferred long-term land use development pattern for the entire Planning Area. However, it is important to interpret the Land Use Plan in conjunction with the goals and policies outlined in **Section 2.7** of this Chapter.

Land Use Classifications

- **Agriculture (1 du/20 acres – to 1 du/5 acres):** Lands that have been or are currently in agricultural production and the use continues to be economically viable. However, this classification allows a minimum of one (1) dwelling unit per acre on any privately held or State trust land parcel. Additionally, lands designated for agricultural use and are located outside the High Noise or Accident Potential Zone (HNAPZ) but are located within the "territory in the vicinity" of MCAS Yuma may develop in accordance with the City General Plan and Zoning Code requirements. Total acreage: **7,541**

- **Rural Density Residential (1 du/5 acres to 1 du/ac):** Lands that are intended to remain rural in nature where large-lot, single family residential development is desirable. Total acreage: **2,578**

- **Low Density Residential (1 - 6 du/ac):** Lands that are intended for single-family residential development where single-family neighborhoods are desirable including site-built residences, factory built and manufactured home subdivisions. Total Acreage: **2,568**

■ **Medium Density Residential (6 - 10 du/ac):** Lands that are intended for single family detached and attached development including townhouses, condominiums, cluster, manufactured homes, patio homes, manufactured home subdivisions, or recreational vehicle subdivisions. Limited high density residential (not exceeding 100 units) or neighborhood commercial uses (not exceeding 2 acres in area) may be acceptable in certain areas under conditions where the use(s) primarily serve(s)a planned residential development and is determined to be a compatible land use activity by the City for surrounding land uses. Total Acreage: **402**

■ **High Density Residential (10 - 20 du/ac):** Lands that are intended for multi-family housing such as apartments, condominiums, and townhouses. These areas should be located adjoining medium density residential areas and benefit from location on arterial or collector streets, adjacency to shopping and employment locations. High traffic volume impacts on local residential streets are discouraged. The project density depends on orientation, landscaping, amenities provided, and open space preserved within the development. Neighborhood commercial uses (not exceeding 2 acres in area) may be acceptable in certain areas under conditions where the use(s) primarily serve(s) a planned residential development and is determined to be a compatible land use activity by the City for surrounding land uses. Total Acreage: **156**

■ **Commercial:** Denotes an area for service, retail and other intensive types of commercial uses. Neighborhood commercial activity nodes (1-5 acres) and local commercial centers (3-15 acres) are intended to support residential neighborhoods and should be located on collector or higher street classification. Regional commercial and service activity areas (15 or more acres) are intended to serve a wider region and should be located on arterial streets. Commercial development sites shall be sited and designed such that proposed activities will not adversely impact adjacent residential neighborhoods. Total Acreage: **1,004**

■ **Downtown/Infill Incentive Overlay District:** The purpose of the Downtown/Infill Incentive Overlay District is to revitalize Downtown by improving existing conditions and targeting intentional development in the core of Somerton. The overlay unlocks key incentives for infill, façade improvements, as well as outlining other guidelines for aesthetic consistency and the establishment of an entertainment district. Permitting higher intensity mixed-use

development, this land use overlay encourages higher intensity mixed-use development with a combination of compatible uses that balances jobs and housing opportunities by including offices, commercial development, hotels, public/quasi-public, and residential uses.

- **Employment:** Denotes areas appropriate for employment centers and support uses. Proposed uses will be deemed appropriate based on the proposed use(s) potential impact on adjoining land uses and proposed development intensity. Light industrial parks/uses, where storage and operation is contained inside a building, and limited service oriented commercial uses that support employment uses shall be located along or with direct arterial street access where public visibility is likely. Heavy industrial uses, where outdoor storage and operations are allowed, should be directed to locations with indirect access to arterial streets buffered by areas having light industrial uses. Total acreage: **2,346**

- **Agriculture/Industrial Areas:** Denotes areas principally devoted to agricultural uses and may permit site-built residences with noise attenuation consistent with the underlying zoning designation. Minimum acreage for residential uses is 1 unit per 5 acres used for a caretaker at an established business, industrial use, agricultural use or agriculture-activity if located within the territory of an ancillary military facility. Also includes aviation compatible industrial uses subject to the demonstration and completion of appropriate public infrastructure, public services and long-term water allocation needed for development. Residential uses supporting established business or industrial uses, or new residential uses established with agricultural uses or activities may be permitted according to City code requirements and State law for lands located within the High Noise or Accident Potential Zone (HNAPZ). Total acreage: **3,654**

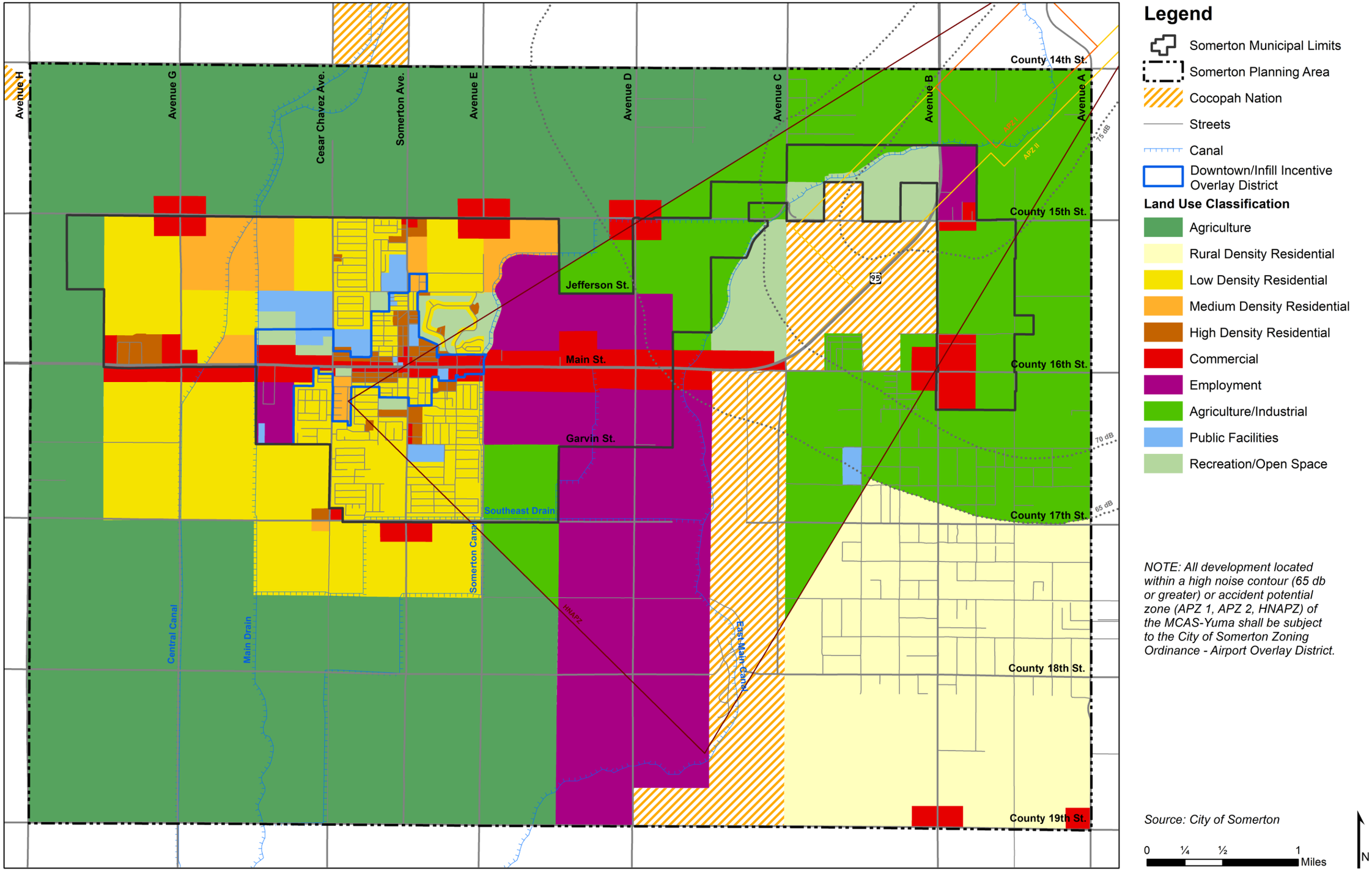
- **Public Facilities:** Denotes areas used for public purposes including publicly owned and operated facilities or those devoted to public use by governmental or non-profit entities, including schools, hospitals, military installations, public operations and maintenance facilities. Holdings by private non-profit organizations are not included in this land use category. Total acreage: **180**

■ **Recreation and Open Space:** Denotes areas that are to be precluded from development except for public or private recreation facilities and/or related support facilities. Examples of such activities may or may not include developed facilities and/or associated businesses such as dude ranches, horse riding stables or academies, resort commercial including hotels, recreational facilities or golf courses, exotic animal parks, zoos or amphitheaters, off-road vehicle parks or trails, botanical gardens, and campgrounds. Per State Statute, a minimum of one dwelling unit per acre is allotted for the Recreation/Open Space designation. Agricultural land uses may be permissible as well. Total acreage: **551**

Notes:

- The residential land use classifications are presented in dwelling units per acre (du/ac). These ranges represent "gross" land use densities.
- The Acreages shown are approximations to convey a general understanding of land use distribution

Figure 3: Land Use Plan



(This page intentionally left blank)

Table 1: Somerton Land Use Plan Acreage By Category

Designation	Planning Area in Acres	Percentage of Total	Growth Area in Acres	Percentage of Total
Agriculture	7,541	33.33%	--	--
Rural Density Residential	2,578	11.39%	--	--
Low Density Residential	2,568	11.35%	1,057	51.96%
Medium Density Residential	402	1.78%	251	12.33%
High Density Residential	156	0.69%	111	5.45%
Commercial	1,004	4.44%	242	11.89%
Employment	2,346	10.37%	61	3.01%
Public Facilities	180	0.80%	160	7.86%
Agriculture/Industrial	3,654	16.15%	--	--
Recreation & Open Space	551	2.44%	153	7.50%
Cocopah Indian Tribe (not subject to land use designation)	1,645	7.27%	--	--
TOTAL	22,624	100.00%	2,035	100.00%

2.6 Population Projections

Somerton experienced a 14.69% increase in population since 2010. This growth rate outpaced both the City of Yuma at 2.85% and the State of Arizona at 8.27%. However, while growth remains slower than what was experienced pre-2010 and the great recession, Somerton's growth is steadily on the rise. According to the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity, Somerton's population is projected to nearly double, reaching approximately 26,376 people by 2040.

Table 2: Population Projections

Population Projections						
Geography	**2010***	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**
Somerton	14,287	18,172	20,232	22,604	24,449	26,376
San Luis	25,505	39,390	46,913	54,123	61,063	67,580
Yuma	93,064	105,594	110,988	117,035	123,492	129,960
Yuma County	195,751	231,781	247,724	263,782	280,096	296,030

*Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity Population Projections, *U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census*

2.7 Land Use Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

2A: Encourage new development and redevelopment within the Planning Area that is compatible with the existing community.

Policies:

1. Ensure that new and existing developments can be adequately served by municipal services and facilities in accordance with City standards. New projects which require construction or expansion of public improvements shall pay their fair share of the costs necessary to improve or expand infrastructure to serve them, including street improvements, parks, water storage tanks, sewer and water service, and other public services.

2. Maintain the character and long-term viability of the City's residential areas and neighborhoods by ensuring that residential projects are well designed and consistent with site and area resources and constraints.

3. Support the target (baseline) density for each residential designation as the lowest level of the range within each category and allow density to be increased up to the maximum density within each residential designation by providing enhanced public facilities/amenities (i.e. enhanced landscaping, joint school/park locations, lot size variations, increased open space, trail extensions, environmental/energy conservation, extension of off-site infrastructure).

4. Ensure adequate transition measures are considered and provided between newer single family and non-residential (i.e., commercial, industrial, multi-family) areas.

Community Goal:

2B: Preserve agriculture land and expand opportunities for related business and infrastructure to ensure a strong local agricultural component in a diversifying economy

Policies:

1. Conserve, preserve and enhance the productivity of the agricultural lands in areas outside of the defined Growth Area.

2. Where possible, utilize natural features (canals, drains, roadways) to provide a level of separation from the impacts of residential development on the area's critical agricultural lands.

Community Goal:

2C: Strengthen the Downtown Area and provide neighborhood commercial services that support resident and visitor needs.

Policies:

1. Encourage commercial development which maintains and enhances the quality of the City's commercial areas, provides services for residents and broadens the tax base of the community to provide needed revenues for public services.

2. Encourage the location of clustered commercial development along major corridors and at key intersections for regional needs and accessibility as indicated in the Land Use Plan.

3. Encourage the location of neighborhood commercial development for local service needs in close proximity to residential land uses to promote increased pedestrian connectivity.

4. Implement the Downtown Redevelopment Plan to ensure that the Main Street (U.S. 95) commercial corridor is promoted and becomes an aesthetically pleasing, energetic public place.

5. Support higher density residential development in the downtown area and encourage a range of commercial, employment, civic, and cultural uses that promote a vibrant pedestrian focused City core.

6. Prioritize infill development of vacant land and the appropriate redevelopment of underutilized properties within the downtown area over the development of land at the edge of the Planning Area.

7. Encourage vacant lot infill development within the City's older central core which blends with the historic character of the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Community Goal:

2D: Balance residential development with employment growth.

Policies:

1. Promote and maintain the designation of adequate employment areas within the Land Use Plan for varieties of business and industry opportunities.

2. Encourage a diverse mix of housing types and styles to meet the needs of Somerton residents.

3. Encourage new residential development to be within walking distance of existing and/or proposed school facilities.

Community Goal:

2E: Ensure compatible land uses adjacent to and in the vicinity of military airports.

Policies:

1. Comply with Arizona legislation protecting military bases from encroachment of incompatible land uses.

2. Work closely with the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) to ensure compatible development takes place within the Planning Area lying in the territory within the vicinity of a military airport (MCAS) including the High Noise or Accident Potential Zone (HNAPZ) and auxiliary airfields consistent with State law.

3. Provide timely notification to MCAS of development proposals for projects in the territory within the vicinity of a military airport or auxiliary airfields and inclusion of those comments as part of and in consideration with the development review process.

4. Legislation and implementing ordinances shall identify limitations on residential development in accordance with the MCAS High Noise or Accident Potential Zone restrictions.

5. All development located within the high noise or accident potential zone of the MCAS-Yuma shall be subject to the City of Somerton Zoning Ordinance – Airport Overlay District.

(This page intentionally left blank)

3

Growth Area

3.1 Introduction

The Growth Area Element identifies those areas of the community that are most appropriate for development focus over the next ten to 20-year planning horizon. Defining a Growth Area for the community that will best accommodate projected growth within the General Plan twenty-year planning horizon will allow Somerton to control the expenditure of funds by prioritizing transportation systems and infrastructure improvements. In the Growth Area the city can focus on improvements that will support existing and viable planned land uses.

Growth areas are intended to discourage sprawl by focusing new development into targeted areas that are most appropriate for integrating open spaces, natural resources, accommodating a variety of land uses, and oriented to multi-modal (transit, pedestrian, bicycling, as well as autos, etc.) activity.

Growth areas are not "urban growth boundaries". Urban growth boundaries are typically specific geographic boundaries within an area that set down outer limits (boundaries) for new development or infrastructure. Growth areas are not prohibitive to new development but target it to identified areas.

3.2 Growth Area Issue Identification

How Somerton grows in the future is a concern for Somerton residents and officials. Public outreach efforts reflected that Somerton residents continue to prefer that the City remain a rural/agricultural community but diversify the economy as growth occurs.

Community Preservation: In community workshops and General Plan Advisory Committee meetings, the need to protect Somerton's small-town character while still accommodating growth was identified as a significant challenge. Balancing residents desire for economic diversity while maintaining the current sense of community requires a definitive approach to growth.

Growth Management: It is critical to maintain a compact urban form for the City of Somerton in order to maximize existing infrastructure, provide an efficient transportation system and cost affective public services. As South West Yuma County continues to grow, ensuring compatible growth around the City of Somerton will become increasingly important.

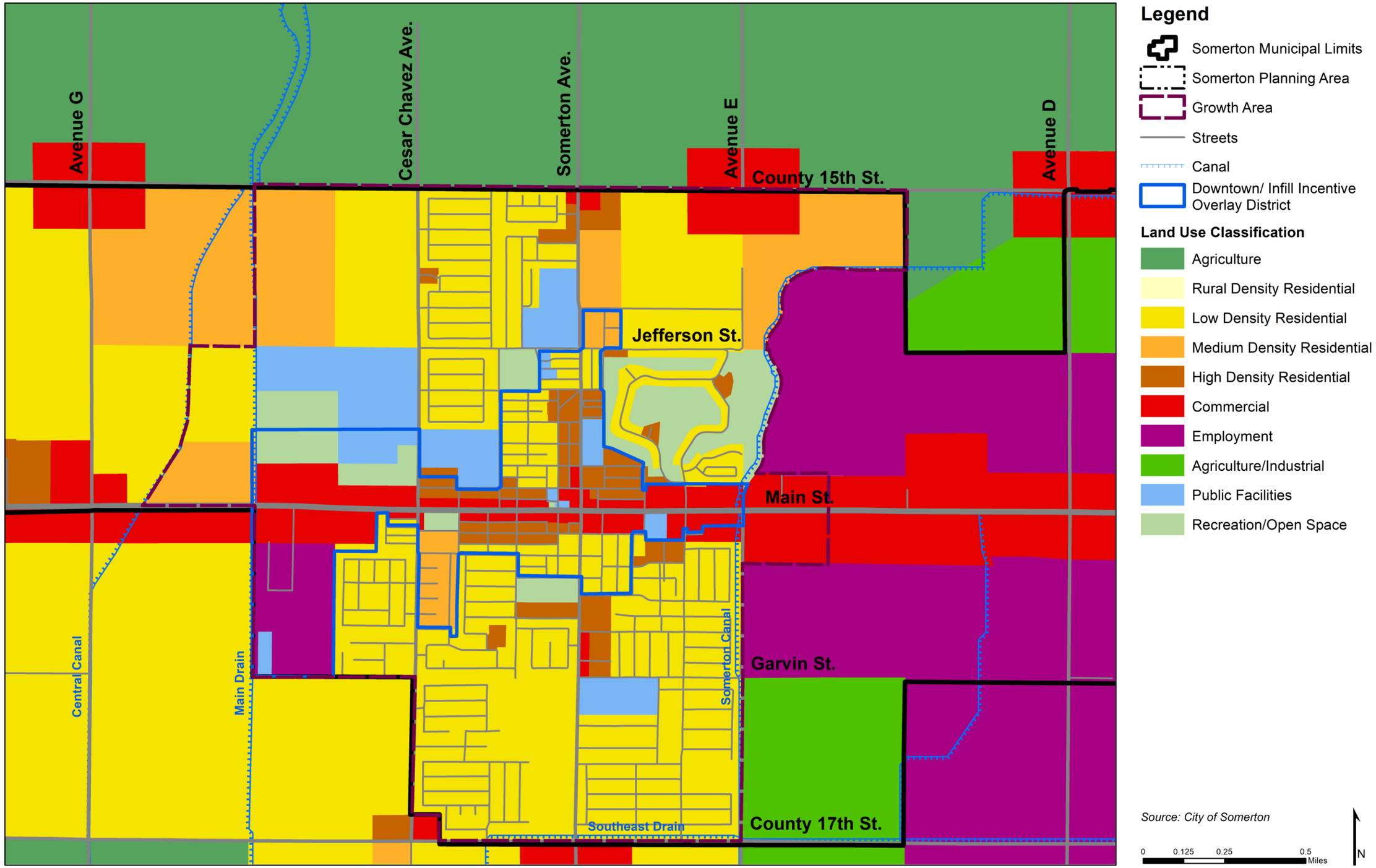
Regional Coordination: The City of Somerton is impacted by the decisions of surrounding entities including, but not limited to, Yuma County, City of Yuma, Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization, Yuma Marine Corps Air Station, Cocopah Indian Tribe and the City of San Luis. Cooperation and coordination among these entities is critical for development within South West Yuma County to be consistent with the Somerton General Plan.

3.3 Growth Area Plan

The Growth Area plan was identified based on the combination of information from several sources to address community issues and create a comprehensive approach to growth. It includes consideration of each element within the General Plan as well as infrastructure availability, natural and man-made features, and the planning efforts of surrounding communities.

The Growth Area is defined as the area shown on **Figure 4**, roughly from County 15th Street to County 17th Street and from Avenue E to the Central Canal. Over the next ten years, the Growth Area is defined to include the currently incorporated municipal area with development expansion anticipated primarily to the north and west. This Growth Area provides a more practical development pattern and outlines a cohesive vision for the area.

Figure 4: Growth Area Map



(This page intentionally left blank)

3.4 Growth Area Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

3A: Assure the City takes an active leadership role coordinating planning with neighboring jurisdictions and other public agencies.

Policies:

1. Annexation of areas outside the current city limits should be dependent on resident interest, the cost/revenue implications of specific annexation proposals and the ability to provide City services to the area.

2. Initiate and consider City adoption of a strategic annexation policy outlining procedures for the evaluation of potential annexation areas that would:

   - Encourage orderly growth and development through logical and timely boundary changes.
   - Promote long-term and efficient delivery of local services and the assignment of appropriate local political responsibility for those services.
   - Implement the adopted General Plan.
   - Ensure economically feasible provision of services with available revenues.

Community Goal:

3B: Encourage efficient planned development in the designated Growth Area which best serves the long range interests of the community.

Policies:

1. Promote a mix of land uses that can be managed within the fiscal abilities of the City and contribute to community sustainability.

2. Provide incentives for new development, infill and redevelopment projects in the Growth Area.

3. Discourage the designation of new urban development in places outside the growth area with one of the following characteristics. 1) Areas without adequate emergency services and utility capacity 2) Areas without a capital improvement plan to pay for and construct new facilities that can accommodate the proposed development 3) Areas not contiguous to existing development.

4. Prioritize funding for infrastructure and transportation projects within the Growth Area to enhance the community's economic vitality.

5. Continue to investigate and pursue grant opportunities and other funding strategies that support ongoing infrastructure improvements related to growth and development.

6. Coordinate development planning for adjacent unincorporated land to ensure City standards and access to City services are planned in accordance with the City General Plan policies.

7. Pursue an intergovernmental agreement with Yuma County regarding participation in project development review for lands within the Somerton Planning Area.

(This page intentionally left blank)

4 Transportation/Circulation

4.1 Introduction

The Transportation/Circulation Element of the Somerton General Plan is intended to support the Land Use Plan and provides guidelines for a transportation system that addresses changing conditions within the Planning Area. South West Yuma County continues to grow, which is expected to impact the Somerton Planning Area.

The product of this Element is a multimodal, long-range circulation plan that is closely tied to the land uses projected for Somerton. In the development of the Transportation/Circulation Element, existing transportation issues were addressed, and future conditions were analyzed to determine deficiencies and needs. Linkages between land use and supportive circulation needs were identified. Everything that happens regarding land use has transportation implications and every transportation action affects land use. The layout of the transportation network and the level of service it offers are intended to directly influence mobility.

4.2 Transportation/ Circulation Issue Identification

Partnerships to Improve Regional Mobility: The City of Somerton's circulation network is closely tied to mobility throughout South West Yuma County. US Highway 95/Main Street bisects the Somerton Planning Area connecting Yuma and I-10 with U.S. Mexican border. This major regional roadway has been turned over to the local jurisdictions as part of the program that allowed for the construction of the new SR-195 (Area Service Highway). Local governmental units now have both jurisdiction over the roadway (in terms of lanes, lane widths, traffic control, etc.) as well as responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of the roadway within their governmental boundaries. Other arterials throughout the Somerton area provide important sub-regional links.

Relationship Between Land Uses and Mobility: Land use and circulation are closely linked. Land use decisions made by the City of Somerton will impact the community's ability to move people and goods efficiently and safely throughout the Planning Area.

Need to Offer Mobility Choices: The City of Somerton has many residents who do not own automobiles nor have the ability to easily access needed services and employment. There is a need for the development of a multimodal system (e.g., bicycle paths, trails, and transit) to encourage alternative forms of transportation for both primary and recreational trips.

Strengthening Local Neighborhoods: Somerton is a community with strong neighborhoods. To ensure that the integrity and safety of the City of Somerton's neighborhoods are maintained, a transportation network must be designed to discourage traffic from using local streets as shortcut routes through neighborhoods to avoid congestion on US 95/Main Street.

Development of a Pedestrian-Oriented System: In order to encourage the use of multimodal transportation systems, it is imperative that pedestrian connections are identified. The pedestrian trail system should utilize existing canal and drainage corridors and provide critical links between residential development, recreation facilities, schools, commercial nodes, employment and other activity areas.

Cost Effective Circulation System: Prioritizing improvements and identifying the appropriate funding sources for the circulation system are critical. The City of Somerton should use the Capital Improvement Plan as a comprehensive tool to address needed transportation improvements outlined in the Somerton General Plan and in support of the 2010 Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) 2033 Regional Transportation Plan. Additionally, the City should enforce the findings of the Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee Report related to the City's transportation infrastructure.

Effective Transportation System Linked to Economic Development: The development of the City of Somerton's transportation system is an integral part of the community's ability to attract needed economic opportunities. Retail development along Main Street and new employment-generating uses throughout the Planning Area are dependent on the efficiency of the transportation system within Somerton and throughout Yuma County. As part of the implementation of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the Main Street Redesign Plan was completed in 2016. This plan focuses on streetscape and pedestrian improvements through the downtown creating a strong sense of place ripe for economic development.

4.3 Transportation/ Circulation Plan

In order to establish a transportation system for the future, it is important to understand the link between the proposed land uses and the demand on the transportation network. High-intensity land uses such as commercial, schools and higher density residential will generate a greater number of trips per land area, than lower-intensity land uses. Therefore, the transportation network must be coordinated extensively with the development of the land uses for the Planning Area and the future roadway network must accommodate the future increases in traffic volumes associated with development of the land uses.

For transportation planning and specific roadway design criteria, roadways are classified by function. Roadways are intended primarily to provide mobility from point to point, but also provide access to adjacent land uses. In the City of Somerton, there are five functional classifications that are used to classify roadways: *Principal Arterial*, *Minor Arterial*, *Major Collector*, *Minor Collector* and *Local Roadways.*

A road network is classified by function in order to identify the types of roads that have similar design and traffic characteristics. The functional classification categorizes roads by the function they perform regarding providing access and mobility. The City of Somerton's functional classification system is consistent with Federal Highway Administration classification terminology and works within the regional classification system. The City of Somerton's functional classification system is described below.

Somerton Roadway Classifications

- **Principal Arterial:** This roadway classification is intended only for US 95/Main Street. While ADOT no longer maintains jurisdiction of this roadway, it will continue to serve as a major transportation linkage throughout the South West Yuma County area and the San Luis I Port of Entry (POE) as identified in the YMPO 2033 Regional Transportation Plan. The number of lanes, lane widths, parking, medians and sidewalk width/locations along this roadway will be highly variable, however, Somerton recently changed Main Street from a five lane (four through lanes) street to a three lane (two through lanes) street with parking between Congress and Somerton Avenue. This is due to the extensive development that has occurred over the years along this roadway in Somerton, especially in the downtown area, and the particular economic and parking requirements various land uses demand to survive in the regional business climate.

- **Minor Arterial:** The arterial is capable of carrying large traffic volumes and forms the primary roadway network within and throughout the region. They provide a continuous road system that distributes traffic between neighborhoods and central business districts. They also handle significant levels of travel between urban centers and outlying residential areas along with suburban communities and major commercial/employment centers. Currently Somerton Avenue and CO 19th Street are defined as minor arterials.

- **Major Collector:** The major collector provides traffic circulation within lower density areas and can provide direct access to arterials. Major collectors can be longer in length and carry a higher traffic volume than minor collectors. Major collectors usually experience low side friction traffic and are striped for one lane in each direction. Developments may front directly onto a major collector, and traffic signal spacing is usually two miles or greater. This classification can be further defined as rural major collector. Currently Avenue G, Avenue B, Avenue A, 56th Street, CO 16th Street, and CO 15th Street are defined as collectors.

- **Minor Collector:** The minor collector is spaced consistent with lower population densities supporting traffic circulation, providing service to smaller neighborhoods as well as connection between local roadways, major collectors, and at time minor arterials. Minor collectors are shorter in length and carry a lower traffic volume than major collectors. Minor collectors are striped for one lane in each direction. Developments may front directly onto a minor collector, and traffic signal spacing is usually two miles or greater. This classification can be further defined as rural minor collector. While the minor collector designation is available, no roadways are currently identified as minor collectors.

- **Local Roadways:** The local roadways consist of traffic movements between collectors and adjacent lands involving relatively short travel distances.

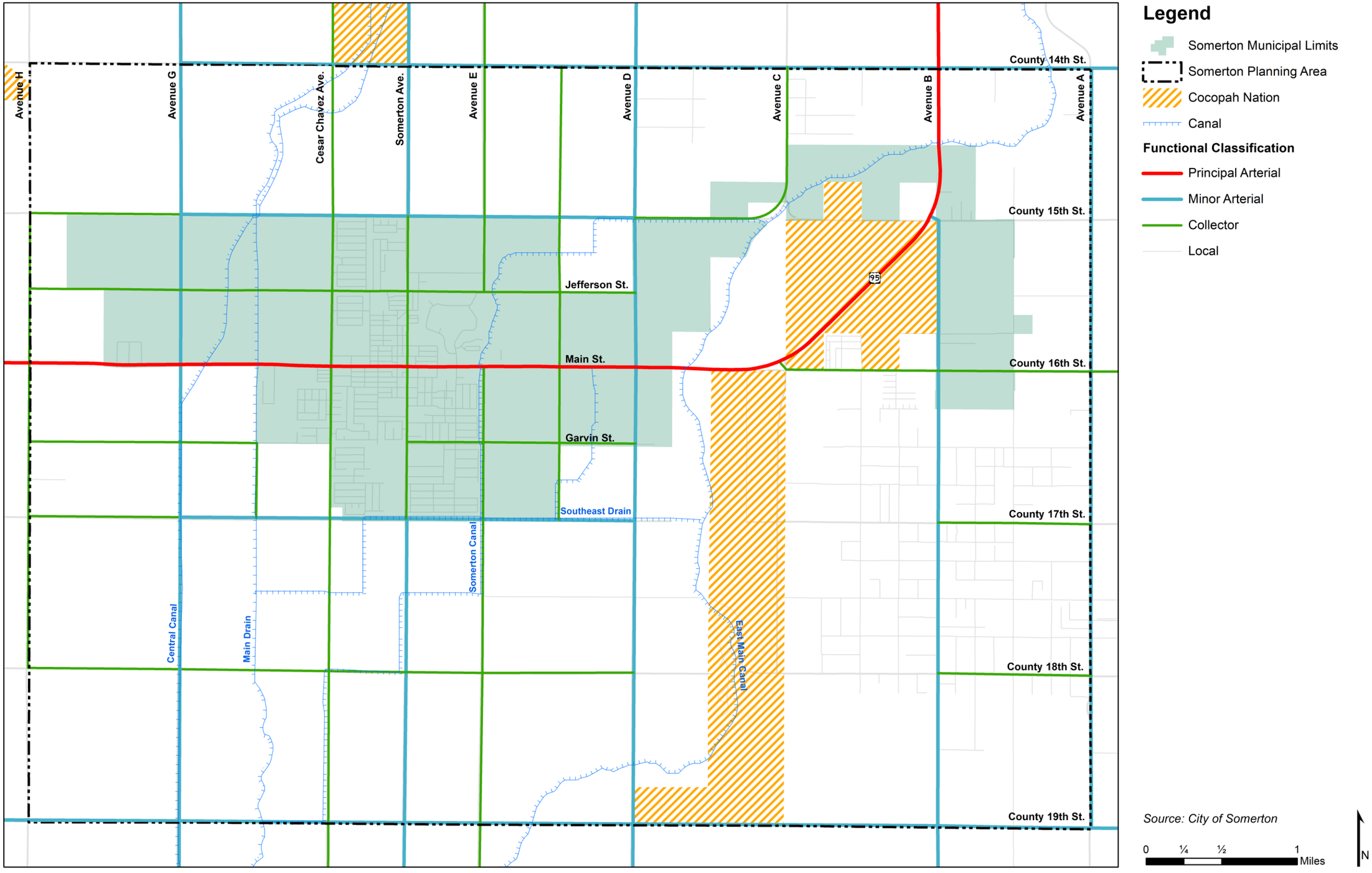
The following table summarizes the roadway functional classification designations for the City of Somerton and their corresponding cross-section characteristics. City approved cross-section information is available at the Somerton City Hall.

Table 3: Somerton Functional Roadway Classification Characteristics

Type of Roadway	Minimum ROW	Travel Path (each direction)	Median Width	Bike Lane	Sidewalks
Principal Arterial	100 feet	Varies (Min 11' Lanes, 4 lanes)	16' raised median/ dual turn lane	6.5' Both Sides	5' Both Sides, 6' landscape buffers
Minor Arterial	100 feet	412'/412' (4 lanes)	14' dual turn lane	6.5' Both Sides	5' Both Sides, 6' landscape buffers
Major Collector	80 feet	12'/12' (2 lane)	12' dual turn lane	6.5' Both Sides	5' Both Sides, 6' landscape buffers
Minor Collector	70 feet	Min 12' (2 lane)	12' dual turn lane	8' shoul ders	5' Both Sides
Local Roadways	50 feet	18'/18' (1 lane)	None	None	5' Both Sides

Note: City design standards shall be used for all streets, unless otherwise approved by the City. Yuma County Public Works Construction Standards shall be used for street infrastructure improvements. The Transportation/Circulation Plan for the City of Somerton is illustrated on Figure 6.1.

Figure 5: Transportation/Circulation Plan



(This page intentionally left blank)

Roadway Level of Service (LOS)

Level of service (LOS) is a measurement of how well a roadway operates, with LOS "A" being a free-flow condition and LOS "F" being forced flow or breakdown. Level of service on roadway segments is further defined as follows:

- **Level of Service A** - Free-flowing conditions. Vehicle operation is virtually unaffected by the presence of other vehicles, and operations are constrained only by the geometric features of the highway and driver preferences.
- **Level of Service B** - Indicative of free flow, but the presence of other vehicles begins to have a noticeable impact on speeds and freedom to maneuver.
- **Level of Service C**- Represents a range in which the influence of traffic density on operations becomes marked. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream, and to select an operating speed, is now clearly affected by the presence of other vehicles.
- **Level of Service D** - Borders on unstable flow. Speeds and ability to maneuver are severely restricted due to traffic congestion.
- **Level of Service E** - Operations at or near capacity, and quite unstable.
- **Level of Service F** - Represents forced or breakdown flow.

The City of Somerton's transportation network operates very well today. The City strives to maintain a LOS C or better on all roadways. Any roadway where the level of service falls to a LOS D, E or F is considered congested and requires review for improvements. Capacity improvements or other remedial actions are usually recommended if the level of service is worse than C.

Public Transportation

The Somerton Planning Area is served by a variety of public transportation services including paratransit and three fixed routes. In 2010 the Yuma County Board of Supervisors approved the formation the Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA). The YCIPTA manages the Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) and Greater Yuma Area Dial-A-Ride system (YCAT On-Call). The City contributes funds for transit service provided by the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO).

Paratransit

While the buses in the YCAT system are wheelchair accessible and have bicycle racks on the front, complementary paratransit service is provided for those persons that are not able to use the regular fixed route buses. The Greater Yuma Area Dial-A-Ride system called YCAT On-Call provides door to door transportation for those with disabilities within three-quarters of a mile of any YCAT bus route during standard operation. Residents must apply to be eligible for ADA service and receive approval. Those who do not qualify may use the paratransit service provided by Saguaro Transportation in Yuma County via the Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG). The fee for this service is $4.00 one-way, however riders can receive discounts by prepaying for ten rides, riding in a group of 5 or more to the same destination, or upgrading to a YCAT pass.

Fixed Route

YCAT provides service Monday through Saturday for the one-way of $2.00 per trip, however discount fares are provided to Seniors over sixty-five, Medicare card holders, and ADA Certified Persons. Children under five years of age, Cocopah Tribal Members, and students and employees and/or faculty of the Universities and High Schools ride free. No YCAT service is provided on Sundays, nor on major holidays. Beginning in 2012, YCAT began three routes providing service to Somerton.

Yellow Route 95 provides service along US 95/Main Street through Somerton connecting Yuma to San Luis. Once in Yuma riders can transfer to four other routes; Turquoise Route 10 provides service to El Centro, California, Green Route 4/4A services Yuma proper and the Yuma International Airport, Blue Route 5 connects to the Quechan Casino Resort east of Yuma, and Orange Route 2 connects to the Arizona Western College (AWC)/ Northern Arizona University (NAU)/ University of Arizona (UA) college complex west of Yuma, which then provides yet another transfer option (Gold Route 8) servicing Fortuna Hills, Dome Valley and Welton. Riders can transfer from this complex to Brown Route 3 and directly access the Wal-Mart Supercenter. This route provides service in Somerton Monday through Friday (6:15 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.) and Saturday (9:30 a.m. to 6:20 p.m.).

Silver Route 9 connects Somerton south to San Luis, and northwest bypassing Yuma providing a direct connection to the AWC/NAU/UA college complex. This route operates Monday through Thursday only while school is in session (6:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. service provided in Somerton).

Purple Route 6A is partially funded by the Cocopah Indian Tribe and connects Somerton to Yuma providing connection between the West and East Cocopah Reservation, as well as the Cocopah Casino and neighboring services. This route extends to the North Cocopah Reservation northwest of Yuma as well. Purple Route 6A can flex off-route within the reservations up to three-quarters of a mile if scheduled one hour in advance for an additional fee of $2.00. Service in Somerton is provided from 8:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

National Passenger Bus Service

The only national charter bus line available is Greyhound, which has four charters currently available to the Yuma County area; two eastbound and two westbound trips between San Diego and Phoenix. The Greyhound bus terminals are located in the City of Yuma at the Yuma Palms Regional Center Daily departures occur early in the morning and evening. The routes allow residents to connect to destinations throughout the United States and provide connection to the YCAT system. Tickets can be purchase at the YCAT office. The City of Somerton must continue to work with regional stakeholders to improve and expand the transit system to ensure that it meets the growing local demands and provides sufficient connection to the regional transit system.

Railroads

Passenger Rail

Amtrak operates weekly service between Los Angeles, California, and Orlando, Florida on the UPRR tracks and provides a stop in Yuma at 281 Gila Street.

Commercial Rail

The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) supports all freight rail operations in Yuma County (up to 70 trains per day) as part of their primary east-west freight corridor known as the Sunset Route. The Sunset Route is an all-weather port to port freight corridor that connects the Port of Los Angeles in California to the Port of Houston in Texas; the two largest shipping volume ports in the United States.

There is an inactive and unmaintained rail spur from these facilities in Yuma that previously served agricultural interests on an occasional basis to the Gadsden area as well as a tourist attraction between Yuma and Gadsden.

Airports

There are three airports serving South Yuma County: Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) - Yuma/ Yuma International Airport, Somerton Airport and Rolle Airfield. Information contained herein is based on AirNav updated January, 2020.

Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma (MCAS) - Yuma/ Yuma International Airport

The Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma (MCAS) is located south of Interstate 8 and Business Route 8 in Yuma, Arizona. Main Street/Old Highway 95, 1-8 and County 3E easily access the Marine Corps Air Station/Yuma International Airport. This joint military airport/general aviation facility provides major employment for the region and supports agriculture and business needs for the entire County. MCAS and civilian operations presently provide significant air training and commercial aviation opportunities in Southwest Arizona.

MCAS is a major employer in the region as well as provides training programs for military pilots. Military airport operations have occurred since the facility's establishment in the 1940's; however, operations have changed with changing missions of the Marine Corps and military aviation development. MCAS is the busiest air station in the Marine Corps and the facility remains an important community and regional facility due to its location near major air space training ranges. The MCAS implements the Yuma Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Program to "protect the health, safety, and welfare of those living and working in the vicinity of the miltary installation while sustaining the operational missions". Under this program, the MCAS defines high noise zones (DoN), clear zones (CZs) and accident potential zones (APZs) surrounding the base and provides compatible land use guidance for these areas. The AICUZ includes the Yuma International Airport.

The Yuma International Airport serves residents of Yuma County and neighboring California residents. The airport provides connecting commercial flights to destinations in California and Arizona. The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) identifies the Yuma International Airport as a joint-use, primarily commercial service airport. The National Association of Foreign Trade Zones also identifies the Airport as a Foreign Trade Zone.

There were 517 average daily operations in 2018; 56% of those were military, 36% were general aviation, and 8% were commercial. The airfield operations information from the Marine Corps Air Station and the Yuma International Airport provides the basis for review of potential impacts on surrounding land uses. MCAS recommends that Somerton and local municipalities retain the current (1978) Van Houten noise contours rather than the 2019 AICUZ Noise Contours to reduce the potential for incompatible development in the future as operations may increase. These noise and accident potential zones are the basis for planning compatible land uses and development within the vicinity of the airport. With the 2004 annexation of lands east of the main Somerton city center, property use and development within the "territory in the vicinity" of a military airport requires compliance with State statutes around military airfields and adoption of such air space regulations for Somerton.

The Somerton Airport

The Somerton Airport is a privately-owned general aviation airfield located along US 95 approximately two miles east of downtown Somerton. Although privately owned and operated, Somerton Airport is open to all recreational and commuter flying as well as limited agricultural application needs. The airport maintains a Class D airspace associated with MCAS Yuma and is served by a gravel primary runway and two dirt secondary runways.

Services include aircraft rentals, aircraft parking, fueling, RV parking, aircraft mechanical services and avionics and aerial photography and scenic tours. The site contains an airport operation building, aircraft hangers and various airport support structures

While the Somerton Airport is not located within the Somerton municipal boundary, the airfield provides a beneficial amenity to the City of Somerton. The airport supports over 4,000 general aviation operations per year, bringing visitors and business travelers directly to the Somerton area.

Rolle Airfield

The Rolle Airfield is located within the City of San Luis and is maintained as a daytime-use only airport. The Rolle Airfield is in close proximity to the Somerton Planning Area (approximately Avenue E and County 20th Street) and as the area grows the significance of the airfield will change. Primarily, the Rolle Airfield is used as a "relief' facility for civilian general aviation aircraft in order to provide a safe site for pilots and students to practice standard flight maneuvers. The airport supports approximately 3,000 general aviation operations per year, and 3% of their operations include military flights. Currently Rolle Airfield provides no facilities and limited emergency assistance amenities. The Yuma County Airport Authority operates the airfield and has long-term plans to make improvements to the airfield.

Multimodal System

Somerton is taking a proactive approach to multimodal opportunities because of the numerous benefits they provide. The health, fitness and alternative transportation benefits are obvious, but alternative transportation options also support a clean environment and can promote economic development.

In 2013 the City adopted the Somerton Pathway Master Plan. This masterplan provides the framework to expand the functional multi-use trail system within the Somerton Planning Area. The shared use pathway and trails system in Somerton includes numerous facilities within the municipal limits as well as those that provide connections to the countywide, regional network.

The Somerton Pathway Master Plan ensures a comprehensive trail network that consists of integrated on-road and off-road walking, running, and bicycle routes. All new roadway classifications within the City of Somerton includes sidewalks, bicycle lanes and handicapped accessible ramps, except for the rural collector roadway classification which provides eight-foot shoulders in lieu of bicycle lanes and sidewalks. There are five funding sources identified in the Somerton Transportation Master Plan that could be used to ensure the addition of bike lanes and sidewalks on existing roadways.

Future development within the Planning Area should refer to the Somerton Pathway Master Plan in conjunction with this General Plan to identify trail routes, design standards, and development priority designations in order to maintain the integrity of the complete multimodal system.

Roadway Design

Access Management

Access management is defined as the regulation of vehicular access to public roadways from adjoining property. Access management regulates the level of access control on roadways and is needed to help retain the capacity of public roadways, maintain public safety and retain access to private land. The concept of "roadway functional classification" is frequently related to land access. On one extreme, arterial roadways are primarily intended for mobility and not for land access. At the other extreme, local roadways provide primary access to developed land with little emphasis on mobility. Frequent driveways and curb cuts increase points of conflict resulting in increased accidents, reduced traffic speed and flow reductions. The City of Somerton will maintain appropriate access restrictions that provide permanent protection for all arterial roadways as well as collector streets. The following table identifies the recommended street and driveway access points. This table does not apply to driveways for commercial properties within the Main Street Corridor District, existing commercially developed properties or single-family residential homes within subdivisions. Some roadway access limitations may apply depending on existing roadway conditions, redevelopment plans or physical limitations (i.e., canals, drains, etc.) or other similar situations.

Signal Locations

Traffic signal controls at intersections are intended to permit crossing streams of traffic to share the same intersection by means of time separation. They also reduce the conflict points by alternating the right-of-way with traffic signals. Traffic signals should be timed to allow progression in both directions of movement. Optimally, signal spacing should be located at consistent intervals along an arterial roadway to allow adequate two-way progression. All traffic signals should be consistent with new modular style traffic signals per Public Works plan details.

The City of Somerton will permit modification to signal spacing locations only upon review of traffic requirements and system impacts, and these modifications will be at the City Engineer's discretion. Shifts of up to 50 feet in either direction from the required spacing point are allowable. Semi-actuated signals for major traffic generators may be located in excess of this distance, but signals should be coordinated with adjacent signals within 2,000 feet in each direction along the arterial or collector street.

Street Alignment

The City of Somerton's street layout system is based on a very efficient grid system. Grid system street layouts are typically the most efficient pattern in areas where there are few or no topographic or other site issues to contend with. Grid systems also are extremely easy for pedestrians/bicyclists to navigate due to their inherent directional logic and, typically, good site lines. As such, the City should strive to maintain this grid system street layout on all new roadways.

Driveway Spacing

All driveways should be located to minimize the friction and conflicts with through traffic progression. Safe and consistent/predictable operation of the through street should be maintained. The distance between adjacent driveways must be adequate to allow driveway vehicles to safely queue, accelerate, decelerate, and cross/conflicting traffic streams without excessive interference with through traffic, or traffic using adjacent driveways. Planning of driveways considers the intended land uses, parcel arrangement and distribution, and peak loading periods. Access points should be consolidated wherever possible to reduce conflict points. The objectives of driveway control are to minimize side friction and conflicting movements.

Table 4.2, Minimum Intersection or Private Driveway Spacing presents minimum spacing requirements for arterial and collector roads. Where commercial streets/driveways are to be signalized, a minimum spacing of 1,200 to 1,500 feet to any other signalized intersection should be maintained. If the signalized street/driveway is a tee-intersection with a remote possibility of future extension of the fourth leg, a minimum spacing of 660 feet from the nearest signalized intersection may be acceptable, based on traffic signal warrants and local signal system capabilities. In any event, street/driveway signals are to be directly coordinated with any existing or planned signals within one-half mile of the signalized driveway. For traffic signal installations at commercial streets/driveways, it will be the responsibility of the property owner to dedicate sufficient right-of-way to cover all traffic signal equipment installations.

Basic principles of driveway/access include:

- Separate conflict areas
- Remove turning vehicle storage from through lanes
- Improve turn execution to avoid encroachment
- Minimize conflicts by restricting movements
- Provide appropriate sight distances
- Prevent driveway blockage
- Review driveway locations in plans to ensure compliance with standards

Intersection Spacing

General access to the arterial network is provided by intersections with collector and local roadways, and major driveways to developments. The spacing of general access intersections will vary between the arterial and collector functional classes, according to the level of land access that may be allowed.

Table 4: Minimum Intersection or Primary Driveway Spacing

Street/Roadway	Land Use and Activity Levels		Minimum Spacing (feet)*
Arterial	Commercial:	High Density/High Activity	200
	Industrial/Office Park:	Low to Moderate Density/Activity	275
	Residential: Multi- family/Town home, Manufactured Home/RV ≥10 du/ac	High Density/ High Activity	250
	Residential: Multi-family/Town home, Single family < 10 du/ac	Low to Moderate Density/Activity	230 or 185+
Collector	Commercial:	High Density/High Activity	200
	Industrial/Office Park:	Low to Moderate Density/Low Activity	230
	Residential: Multi- family/Town home, Manufactured Home/RV ≥10 du/ac	High Density/High Activity	230
	Residential: Multi-family/Town home, Single family < 10 du/ac	Low to Moderate Density/Activity	230 or 185+

Source: Adapted from "Guideline for Control of Direct Access to Arterial Highways" FHWA, 1990; and, Yuma County Construction Standards, Section 7.2.8 or as approved by the City Engineer.
*Intersection or primary driveway spacing shall be centerline to centerline, unless otherwise approved by the City of Somerton.

4.4 Transportation/ Circulation Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

4A: Improve safety, reliability and comfort for all transportation users.

Policies:

1. Provide enhanced safety for events along Main Street by ensuring effective bypass options.
2. Encourage school facility locations adjacent to collector roadways, avoiding arterial access (High School is an exception).
3. Support programming to prioritize and encourage children walking and bicycling to schools and parks while ensuring their safety.
4. Maintain and promote neighborhood safety by evaluating and prioritizing the use of traffic-calming techniques (i.e., reduced street widths, chicanes, speed humps, etc.) to redirect traffic around residential neighborhoods.

Community Goal:

4B: Provide and maintain a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system that is efficient and convenient for residents and visitors.

Policies:

1. Work with federal, state and regional agencies to ensure transportation improvements are planned, coordinated and completed in an orderly manner.
2. Analyze roadways functionally classified as a collector or above for connectivity throughout the entire planning area.
3. Ensure implementation of bike lanes and appropriate signage on all new roadways as development occurs where feasible, except for those classified as local roadways.
4. Ensure ADA compliant sidewalk construction on all new roadways as development occurs. Where bike lanes are not feasible, consider wider sidewalks to act as pathways, and consider separated sidewalks on higher volume and higher speed roadways.
5. Continue constructing ADA compliant features, and bicycle and sidewalk retrofits on all streets within the study area.
6. Implement the Pathway Master Plan to ensure a citywide pedestrian/bicycle connectivity system that provides neighborhood inter-connections with schools, parks/open space, churches and other public uses supporting an active lifestyle.

Community Goal:

4C: Provide a transportation system that supports the economic vitality and prosperity of the City.

Policies:

1. Work closely with and support Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization YMPO and Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA) efforts to continue and improve transit services throughout Somerton and the South West Yuma County area.

2. Use emerging transportation technologies and services to increase transportation system efficiency such as advanced fueling stations and cooperate with public-private transportation partnerships.

3. Create a northern and southern by-pass route of arterial level roadways around the City to prevent impediments to business operations and support economic-boosting events.

(This page intentionally left blank)

5

Neighborhoods

5.1 Introduction

Neighborhoods are the basic social units and physical building blocks of a community. Each neighborhood is comprised of a unique combination of homes, shops, churches, schools and parks that together create the distinct character of the overall city. The Neighborhood Element is provided to build upon the unique qualities of Somerton's existing neighborhoods as well as encourage the development of healthy new neighborhoods.

The goals and policies presented in this Element are established to create a safer community, better schools, diverse and aesthetically pleasing streets, and enhanced connectivity to goods and services.

5.2 Existing Conditions

Sustaining and enhancing the quality of life in Somerton will depend on the strength of the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods in Somerton vary in age from those built soon after the city was founded to those neighborhoods built during the most recent growth period of the first and second decades of the 21st Century. The neighborhoods help identify Somerton as a special place to live for current residents and help attract future residents looking for a special community to call home.

Somerton is a community of neighborhoods surrounded by a productive agricultural area. Since its founding, Somerton has served the housing needs of the agricultural community as a center for commerce and a home for agricultural workers and their families. This gives Somerton a unique character unlike any other community in Yuma County; a character that makes Somerton a desirable community in which to live and raise a family.

Somerton has evolved from a community of neighborhoods for agricultural workers into a community that provides a broad range of housing opportunities in its neighborhoods. The General Plan Vision for Somerton builds on this neighborhood character and becomes a primary housing opportunity for a broad cross section of Yuma County residents. With the growth of Yuma approaching from the north, Somerton has the potential to provide housing in a community with a "small town feel" for people who work in the greater Yuma area.

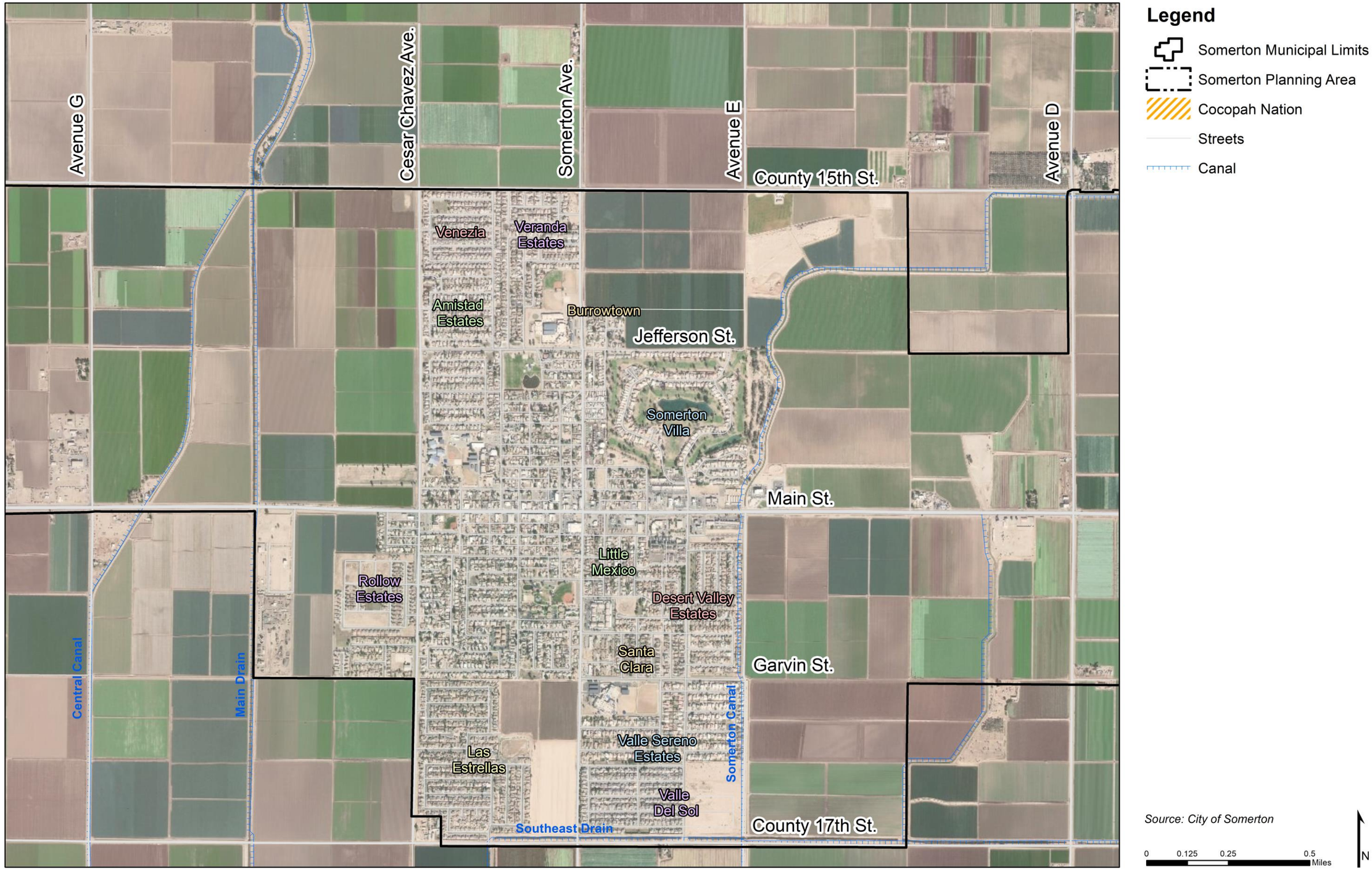
Somerton has a variety of neighborhoods. Neighborhoods near Main Street are older and reflect the character of the early families who lived in Somerton. Today, many of those same families still call Somerton their home. They may live in the house in which they grew up or in one of the newer neighborhoods that have developed over the past few years. The newer neighborhoods, generally in the north, south and west portions of the community, maintain the same level of commitment and pride as the older neighborhoods.

Neighborhood residents identify with the neighborhood in which they live. There is significant neighborhood pride reflected in the many neighborhoods that are specifically identified by name below. Each of Somerton's neighborhoods is unique in its character and physical amenities, and each contributes to the diversity and vitality of the city. This uniqueness should be celebrated and preserved, but opportunities should also be taken to enhance these qualities when possible.

5.3 Historic Preservation

Archaeological studies conducted within the planning area, have not identified significant sites. Sites have been identified with areas of scattered shards, but no religious or cultural sites have been designated. Though Somerton has a long and rich history, there are no historic sites or structures on a local or national historic register. However, because of the long history of the community, it may be appropriate to initiate a study to identify properties suitable for inclusion on a local, state of national register.

Figure 6: Somerton Neighborhood Map



(This page intentionally left blank)

5.4 Neighborhood Planning Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

5A: Maintain and preserve Somerton's community of sustainable neighborhoods that contribute to the quality of life and a strong sense of community.

Policies:

1. Enhance existing neighborhoods through beautification projects such as adopt-a-facility programming, arborist programming, community gardens support and city clean up programming.
2. Continue to address necessary infrastructure improvements such as curbs, gutters and sidewalks in older neighborhoods.
3. Continue retrofitting older neighborhoods where amenities such as parks and pathways were not included when the neighborhood was originally developed.
4. Ensure sustainability of future neighborhoods by enforcing development standards related to long term neighborhood viability such as parks/open space and "walkability" infrastructure.
5. Prioritize historic preservation to protect the neighborhood character and cultural resources.
6. Implement the Pathway Master Plan to ensure a citywide pedestrian/bicycle connectivity system that provides neighborhood inter-connections with schools, parks/open space, churches and other public uses supporting an active lifestyle.
7. Restrict the introduction of incompatible land uses into the neighborhoods unless said uses can be adapted to be compatible with existing neighborhoods through the implementation of a form based code or other land use tools.
8. Facilitate opportunities for social interaction among neighborhood residents.
9. Support efforts of residents, schools, social service organizations and the police to minimize criminal activity in the neighborhoods.
10. Provide transition areas between newer residential neighborhoods and non-residential land uses (i.e., commercial, industrial).
11. Continue to address special needs of individuals and families in the neighborhoods to identify and refer assistance resources.

Community Goal:

5B: Ensure quality housing options for all income levels and lifestyle preferences.

Policies:

1. Encourage housing diversity in future neighborhoods by providing a mix of type, density and cost to address the needs of a broad range of the local housing market.
2. Identify and encourage investment in neighborhoods that are aging, at risk or in general need of preservation, rehabilitation or restoration.
3. Responsibly maintain relationships with regional and local non-profit organizations to ensure that affordable housing is available to low-income individuals and seasonal workers without compromising the City's fiscal integrity.
4. Encourage the development of quality multi-family housing where appropriate to address local housing needs.

Community Goal:

5C: Preserve Somerton's historic character.

Policies:

1. Support the character of existing, older neighborhoods by encouraging preservation of cultural qualities that make each neighborhood unique.
2. Establish and promote a working relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in preserving and promoting the community's historic character.
3. Support efforts of the Somerton Historical Society to highlight the historic attributes of the community.
4. Pursue designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the SHPO office.

(This page intentionally left blank)

6 Parks & Open Space

6.1 Introduction

The Parks and Open Space Element provides an overall framework for translating community needs and desires into a specific strategy for parks and recreation development. The allocation of land and the development of facilities are crucial to Somerton's overall wellbeing. Parks and recreation facilities work in conjunction to provide recreational opportunities for all citizens and visitors, regardless of age, ability or wealth. An effective park system contributes to the community's physical and aesthetic qualities. A productive and well-planned recreation system will serve the needs of residents, enhance the community's wellbeing and pride, and offer a variety of opportunities for both active and passive forms of recreation. The Parks and Open Space Element provides the general guidelines to enhance the provision of parks, recreation, and open space within the Somerton planning area. The element identifies the City's philosophy relative to the desired level of facilities and their interrelationship with land use, transportation, and public facilities programming.

6.2 Parks and Open Space Issue Identification

Level of Service: In order to maintain the City's current park level of service (based on the 18,000 population) over the next fifteen years while meeting demand with projected population growth (projecting a 25,000 population), the city will need additional ramadas, multi-use fields, little league/softball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and a community amphitheater. According to the Parks and Recreation Facility and Open Space Master Plan, this comes at a total cost of $5,243,000 over the next ten years in two action plan phases.

Ongoing Maintenance: As the City relies on maintenance districts in lieu of HOA's to maintain the various parks, open space, retention basins and landscaped areas throughout the community and operation and maintenance costs continue to increase, lack of funding is a concern. The community expressed the desire for more shade, however trees add a significant cost to the already challenging maintenance expenses. As the community continues to grow, park improvements, as well as more park facilities and space for facilities are needed.

Quality Over Quantity: Overwhelmingly the community prefers quality over quantity when it comes to parks, open space, and recreational programming and amenities. This highlights the importance of focusing on few multi-use facilities versus numerous specific-use facilities.

Recreation Programming: The Parks and Recreation Department oversees a variety of special events and community programming as well as larger annual community events some of which are highly attended. The pending high school and regional park present ample new opportunities for recreation, however further needs have been identified on the Mesa by community members.

Zoning for Open Space/Recreation: According to Growing Smarter Plus (Arizona law) "a municipality shall not designate private land or State Trust land as open space without written consent or providing an alternative that is an economically viable designation (i.e.: at least 1 du/ac) in the general plan or zoning ordinance." The Somerton General Plan recognizes and complies with this state statute.

Regional Coordination: Within the planning area, there are opportunities to link recreational amenities (e.g., trails and parks) with surrounding communities (e.g., Yuma and San Luis) via existing canals managed by the Yuma County Water Users' Association (YCWUA) and the Colorado River. However, agreements do not currently exist between the City of Somerton and other entities for operation and maintenance. Future communications with South County public agencies or entities will facilitate development of appropriate regional recreation facilities/amenities.

Acquisition of Preservation Areas: The existence of sensitive land areas provides an opportunity for preservation of passive open space, but mechanisms and financial resources to acquire land are presently limited. The City should pursue opportunities; including agreements with developers, private land owners and the school districts, to improve its ability to create regional open space areas that will promote quality of life.

6.3 Parks and Open Space Plan

The Parks and Open Space Plan defines the parks and open space needed to serve the City's existing and future residents. The analysis of existing parks and recreation facilities included in this section, is based on application of the recently completed Somerton Parks, Recreation Facility and Open Space Master Plan. As the City's population grows, increasing the need and demand for recreation facilities in Somerton, it is important that recreational areas and facilities become a higher priority and those capital improvements be initiated within the next several years.

The following 7 parks (totaling 37.23 acres) (see **Figure 7**) are presently owned, maintained and operated by the City of Somerton Parks and Recreation Department: Centennial Park, Council Avenue Park, Joe Muñoz Park, Los Perritos Dog Park, Main Street Park (Joe C. Cardenas Memorial Baseball Field)/Community/Recreation Center/Heritage Pool), Perricone Park, and Sanguinetti Park. While only one basin site (Columbia Ave. and 12th St.) is included in the existing park inventory, Somerton has ownership of 38 basins totaling 27.03 acres, for a total area of 64.26 acres requiring City maintenance

The Somerton Parks and Recreation Department also boasts shared use agreements with the school district to operate park and recreation activities on the following 3 sites: Desert Sonora Elementary/VDE Learning Center, Somerton Middle School and Tierra Del Sol Elementary School, with the expectation of an additional shared use agreement upon the completion of the new high school construction.

Summary

A Level of Service (LOS) review of the existing parks and recreational facilities was recently completed as part of the Somerton Parks, Recreation Facility, and Open Space Master Plan to help identify any deficiencies the City may have. The findings suggest that Somerton is performing well for the current population, but for the projected population Somerton is lacking ramada's, a little league field, a multi- use field, basketball courts and tennis courts, and an amphitheater or stage. It is anticipated that the expect joint-use agreement with the impending high school will fulfill many of these needs. Impact fees collected from new developments may assist the City in developing a comprehensive parks and recreation program, fulfilling the remaining needs. Where new development occurs, park or facility construction may facilitate developing entirely new future facilities.

Somerton Park Classifications

Neighborhood Parks

These small park facilities typically serve a concentrated and limited population or specific groups, such as tots or senior citizens. The area of service for this park is a ¼-mile radius (walking) and the size of this park is less than one acre. Neighborhood parks should be located close to neighborhoods or to multifamily residential development and should have access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Stormwater basins offer opportunities for development of neighborhood parks. These basins, if developed with limited facilities, offer significant recreational opportunities within neighborhoods. Nearly every residence within Somerton can access a park within ¼-mile radius (walking).

Community Parks

This type of park provides space for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, playground apparatus, picnicking, etc. The service area of this park is a 1-mile radius (walk or drive) and serves a population of up to 5,000 people in a neighborhood. The desirable size is from 5 to 10 acres. Desirable characteristics should include: (1) suitability for active and passive activities; (2) ADA compliant accessibility to neighborhood population; and (3) geographically protected within the neighborhood, not adjacent to arterial streets yet within safe walking and bicycling distance. A community park may be developed in conjunction with a school facility, lessening the need to establish separate facilities.

Regional Parks

These large parks may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools. These parks may also include areas of outdoor recreation, such as walking, picnicking, sitting, and other passive activities. Regional parks may also include features such as bodies of water. These parks should be easily accessible to residents within the service area, as well as connected to ADA compliant pedestrian facilities and bicycle facilities. A regional park can also be considered a community park in a City the size of Somerton.

Recreational Facilities

Recreation is an important component of Somerton's quality of life. It is important to note that the popularity, and therefore, need for various recreational options varies widely over time. While it is difficult, if not impossible to predict the changing recreational demands of residents, facilities that can easily be converted to alternative uses relatively inexpensively (baseball, to soccer, to free play) should be considered to obtain maximum options for residents at a minimum cost. Each facility is described below and the level of service indicated for the current population. In addition, the need for future facilities is projected based upon the projected 15-year target population (25,000).

The Somerton Parks, Recreation Facility and Open Space Master Plan utilized a benchmarking effort comparing the City to 21 other cities based on similar traits. These benchmark communities included: (Arizona) Gilbert, Scottsdale, Tempe, Queen Creek, Prescott Valley, and Glendale; (Western/ Sunbelt Cities) Henderson, NV, Plano, TX, Aurora, CO, Santa Clarita, CA, Peublo, CO and Bellingham, WA. The City is encouraged to obtain input from the public (both adults and children) on a regular basis to better gauge the actual needs and desires of its residents, ensuring a more context sensitive approach to programming and the expenditure of community resources on new recreational opportunities.

Recreational Facility Types

- **Baseball Diamonds:**
  - *Regulation Fields* - Regulation baseball fields (high school and above competition) require flat turf area with skinned infields, backstop and dugouts for each team. These fields typically are about 3 acres in size with bases being 90 feet apart. Outfield dimensions vary with the venue as no precise standard exists. Outfield sizes range from 300 feet to 320 feet in left and right field and 400 feet to 435 feet to center field. Each park however maintains the strict standards of 90 feet between the bases, 60' 6" from the pitcher's mound to Home Plate and 127' 3 3/8" from Home to Second Base. Grandstands should be maintained a minimum of 60 from the foul lines and have enough spectator space for 100-200 people. Benchmarking standards suggest one regulation or little league field for every 25,000 people. Regulation fields can often be used for little league play by erecting portable, temporary fencing at reduced outfield fence lengths.
  - *Little League Fields* - Little league fields require a relatively flat turf area with skinned infields, backstop and dugouts for each team. These fields typically are about 1.5 to 2 acres in size with bases being 60 feet apart. Outfield fence length is recommended at 180 feet in left and right field. The measurement from the pitcher's mound to home plate is 46 feet. This square then makes the distance from home plate to second base to equal 84' 10 1/4". Grandstands should be maintained a minimum of 40 from the foul lines and have enough spectator space for 75-100 people. Benchmarking standards suggest one regulation or little league field for every 5,000 people.
- **Softball Diamonds:** These fields require a relatively flat turf area with skinned infield, backstop and protected team benches, a minimum foul line distance of 230 feet, spectator space for 75 to 100 people, and convenient parking for participants and spectators. Benchmarking standards are one field for every 12,000 people. The City of Somerton has two softball fields with the school system and two softball/baseball combination diamonds with the school system available for public use.
- **Soccer Fields:** The requirements for these fields are a relatively level turf area from 330 to 360 feet long and between 210 to 240 feet wide, depending on the level of play and age of participants. Benchmarking standards are one field for every 5,000 people. The City of Somerton has one youth soccer field with the school system and an official-sized soccer field at Council Avenue Park.

Recreational Facility Types (cont'd)

- **Basketball Courts:** These courts occupy a minimum of 85 by 50 feet. In addition, it may include bleachers and a scoring area. They may be indoor or outdoor. Benchmarking standards for outdoor courts are one court for every 5,000 people. The City has one indoor basketball court with several baskets.

- **Volleyball Courts:** Volleyball can be played on hard surfaces or in sand. Sand is preferred to reduce potential injuries. The minimum area defined for a volleyball court is 50 by 60 feet. Benchmarking standards for volleyball courts require one court for every 10,000 people. The City has two sand volleyball courts and one indoor court.

- **Community Recreation Center:** A community recreation center provides a variety of types and sizes of activities concurrently. It may accommodate 100 to 200 people for social assemblies, and usually includes two additional rooms for 20 to 35 people to hold meetings or craft classes. Also, contained in the center would be restrooms, kitchen facilities, storage areas, and offices. The building size can vary from 4,000 square feet to 8,000 square feet. The City currently has a 7,000 - square-foot gymnasium that doubles as a dance hall, with no kitchen facilities. The City needs additional space for meeting and additional activities at this facility. There are no benchmarking standards provided for this facility type.

- **Gymnasiums:** Gymnasiums supply indoor sports facilities for sports such as basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer, including rest rooms and locker rooms. Adequate floor space should be provided to allow for two volleyball courts and a large tournament basketball court with spectator space for 150 people. The City currently has this type of facility minus the locker room area. There are no benchmarking standards provided for this facility type.

- **Community Pool:** The standard for pool construction is 25 meters by 25 yards and sometimes requires a separate diving area. Benchmarking standards for pools are one for every 30,000 people. Somerton currently has one community pool.

- **Schools:** Many school playgrounds and athletic facilities serve the community's educational needs and are available to the general public for recreational programs. Generally, school facilities can be used for community recreation programs on a pre-arranged basis. However, the City has no decision-making control of the school system and the availability of its facilities. The City offers programs to the community utilizing the Somerton Middle School Athletic Fields.

Specialized Facility Types

- **Cultural Center:** The general purpose of a Cultural Center is to provide accommodations for social and cultural activities. It may vary in size from 15,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet, depending on types of activity areas and services provided. Facilities may include a large (5,000 to 7,000 square feet) social hall that could accommodate banquets, social dances, assemblies, arts and crafts shows and exhibits, and other large gatherings. In addition, restrooms, a warming kitchen, storage, maintenance and circulation space may be included as necessary. Somerton has one social hall; the Somerton Community Center/Parks and Recreation Gymnasium located at Heritage Park.

- **Performing Arts Facility:** A performing arts facility provides a center for theater and musical performances. The building may vary in size from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet. In addition to a theater complete with stage and dressing room, there will be foyer providing gallery space for artists' work; and restrooms, maintenance, storage, and office space as necessary. The City of Somerton does not have a performing arts facility; however, the School District has a stage and dressing room capability as an option for city programs and the new high school will have the potential for further expanded facilities.

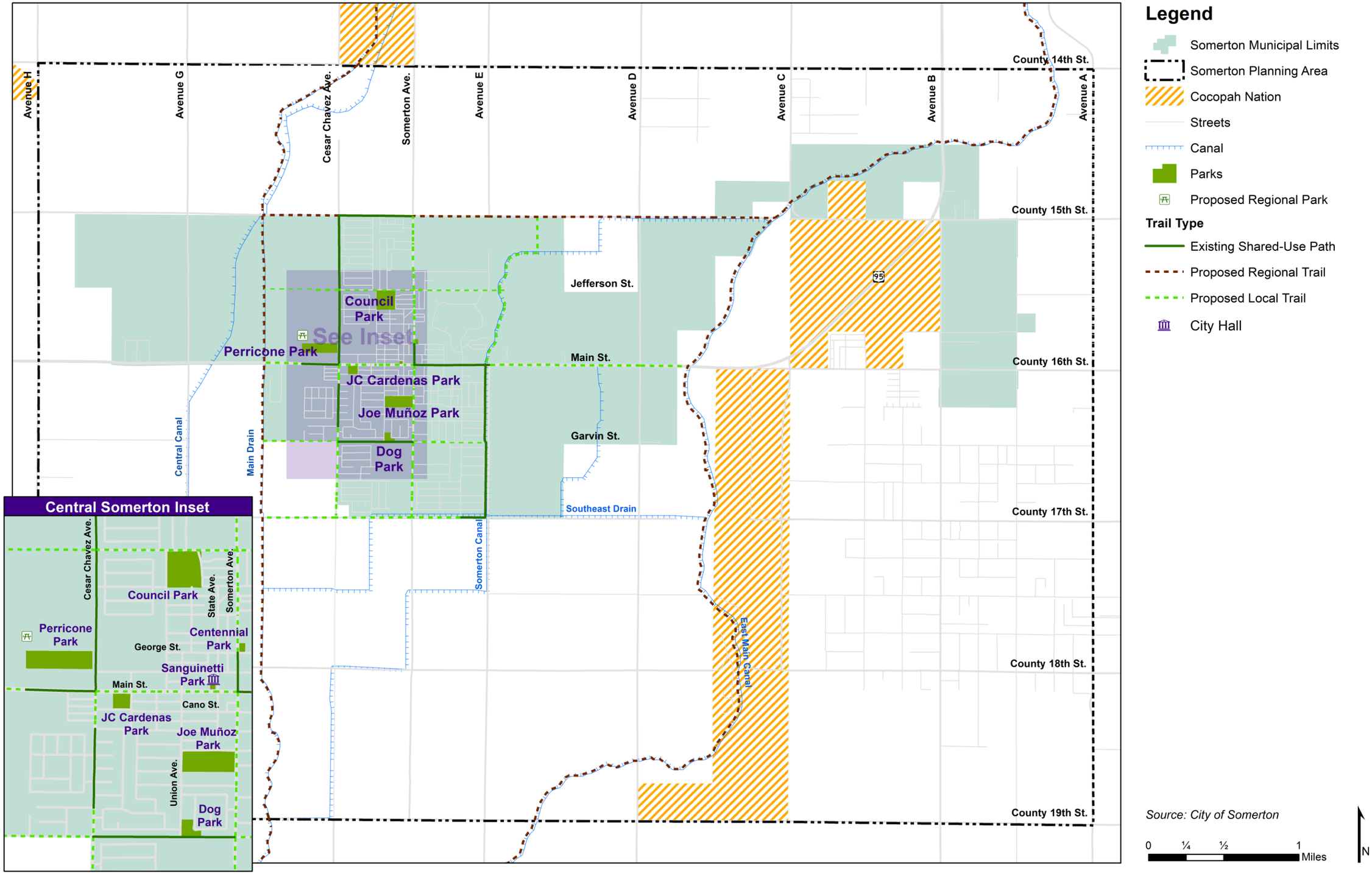
- **Visual Arts Facility:** A visual arts facility may provide a variety of room sizes; all equipment with special facilities to house advanced classes in crafts or special hobbies (i.e., photography, audio-visual) and several small studios for painting and sculpturing. Somerton currently lacks a visual arts facility.

- **Off-road Highway Vehicle Facility:** There are several off-road recreational vehicle areas within an hour's drive of Somerton. There may be a potential location for Arizona State Trust Land located north of Highway 95 just east of the East Main Canal as well as areas along the east side of the East Cocopah Reservation located on the Yuma Mesa south of County 16th Street. No discussions have taken place between local and state officials about the possibilities of such facilities. Some of these properties are located within the Marine Corps Air Station/Yuma International Airport High Noise and Accident Potential Zone (HNAPZ) and adjacent to a privately-owned airport (Somerton Airport) and would require support and approval from Federal, State and local officials to establish such a facility. It should also be noted that such areas are not inclusive of YCWUA operation and maintenance roads, in United State Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) ROW, which are closed to the public.

Specialized Facilities

Specialized facilities detailed above have unique recreational characteristics or qualities that are not usually associated with active or passive recreation needs. Types of specialized facility activities will include social and cultural events; assemblages or large gatherings; the performing arts; garden walks or grounds; historical living museums or other regionally significant portrayals of historic events or circumstances; historic trails; education or advanced training classes in studio environments for the arts, crafts, or special hobbies; or other unique opportunities for recreation. Facilities for such activities may be developed in cooperative or joint agreements with other public agencies.

Figure 7: Parks and Trails Map



(This page intentionally left blank)

6.4 Parks and Open Space Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

6A: Support recreation and community service programs that promote wellness, fun, lifelong learning, skill development, personal enrichment, and positive relationships.

Policies:

1. Continue to meet with Somerton youth and seniors to coordinate program schedules, facility needs and grant applications that support City youth and aging adult activities.
2. Provide recreation programming, special events and educational opportunities that celebrate the diversity, history, cultural heritage, and traditions of Somerton.
3. Continue to support local organizations that help to benefit the city by hosting community/regional events, recreational activities, and/or assistance programs (i.e. festivals, concerts, tournaments, etc).

Community Goal:

6B: Prioritize funding for parks and open space development into the long term future.

Policies:

1. Consider appropriate impact fees or in-lieu land dedications for park design and development. Periodic review or update of impact fees should also be considered.
2. Ensure parks and open space projects are included in the annual Somerton Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
3. Aggressively pursue available grants and/or donations to achieve appropriate recreational facility needs.
4. Continue coordination of joint-use park development and maintenance with the Somerton School District.
5. Ensure adequate maintenance of City open space, parks and facilities.

Community Goal:

6C: Preserve existing agriculture land uses and protect growth needs.

Policies:

1. Explore and identify ways to develop "value-added" agricultural activities within the General Plan and surrounding areas such as agritainment and agritourism.
2. Support urban agriculture and encourage local farmers to sell products locally.
3. Establish buffers and encourage compatible land uses adjacent to productive agriculture operations minimizing encroachment and negative impacts wherever possible.

Community Goal:

6D: Ensure that the community has quality parks, open space and recreational opportunities meeting Somerton's growth needs.

Policies:

1. Continue expanding park and recreational opportunities within the plan area.
2. Utilize the park classifications (e.g., neighborhood park) identified in the Parks, Recreation Facility and Open Space Master Plan to expand and enhance recreational opportunities and experiences within the City.
3. Provide a diverse range of park types, functions and recreational opportunities to meet the physical and social needs of the community, especially residents across different age groups and abilities.
4. The City shall strive to provide accessible public park or recreational open space within a quarter-mile of all residences.
5. Ensure the adoption of the Parks, Recreation Facility, and Open Space Master Plan, consistent with the Somerton General Plan and Pathway Master Plan.
6. Preserve future park space by identifying the first reuse of any public facility land to be recreation/open space.
7. Neighborhood or school park facilities proposed in conjunction with new subdivisions shall be constructed prior to completion of the development's first phase, or pursuant to a development agreement indicating the specific time frame for the park facility improvements.
8. The City shall encourage the development of private commercial recreational facilities to help meet recreational interests of Somerton’s residents, workforce, and visitors.

9. Ensure property owner cooperation and written approval prior to rezoning lands for open space consistent with Arizona Revised Statutes.

10. Coordinate with the Yuma County Water Users' Association for approval of trails in USBR right of way along canal and drainage alignments

11. Utilize irrigation canals, drainage area, alleyways and roadways as part of a comprehensive trail system throughout the General Plan area. This system should link open space, activity areas, schools, and public facilities to public services, restaurants, retail, employment centers and residential neighborhoods wherever possible.

12. Establish sufficient tree cover and shade throughout the community, primarily near schools, parks, activity centers and pedestrian facilities.

(This page intentionally left blank)

7 Environmental Planning

7.1 Introduction

The Environmental Planning Element is intended to analyze the existing environmental conditions in order to determine implications of future development on the local environment. The element describes the current situation regarding environmental issues and includes goals and policies to ensure growth and development do not negatively impact Somerton.

7.2 Topography

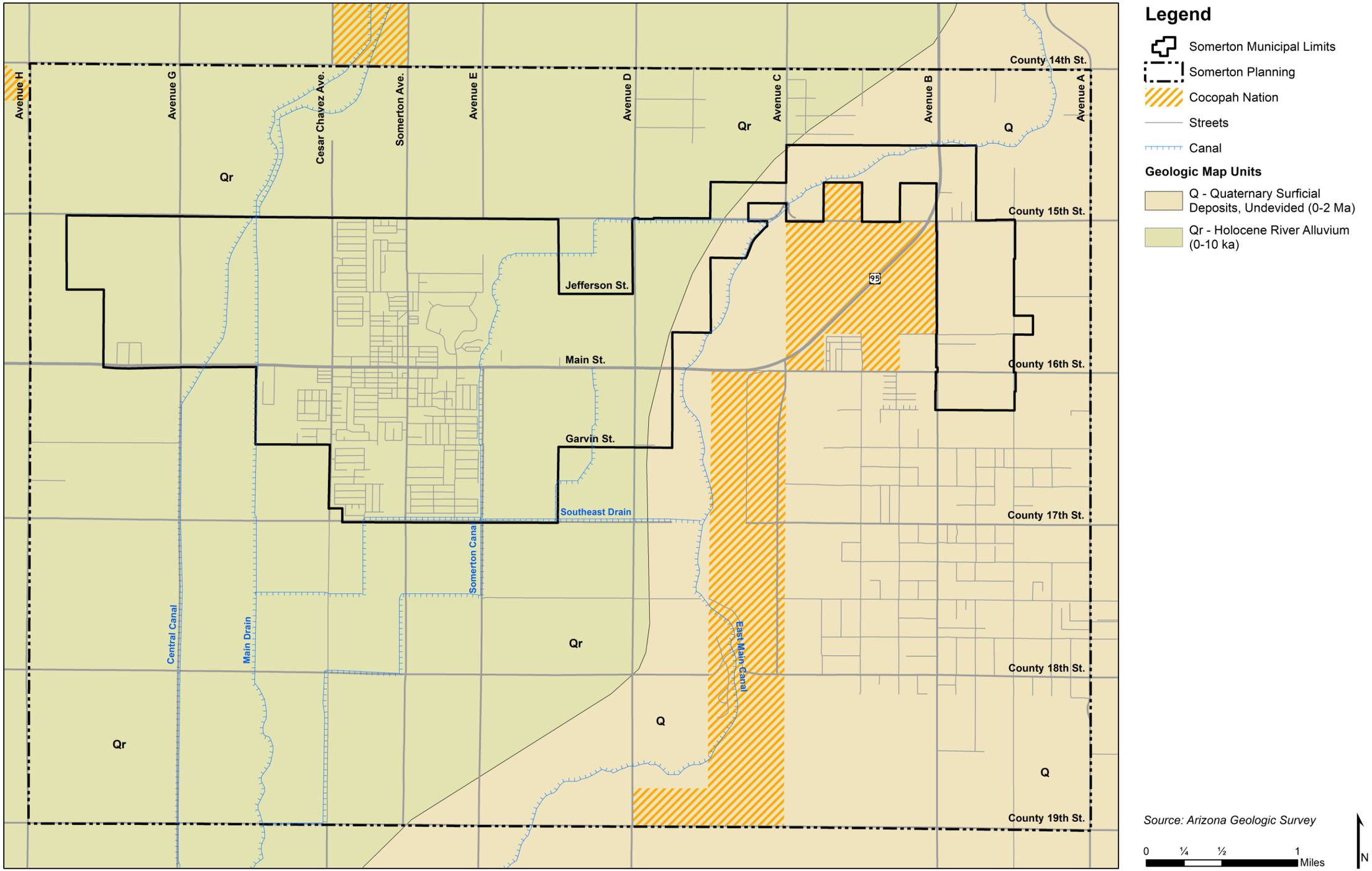
The Somerton planning area is flat with a gentle slope to the southwest toward the Colorado River with the exception of the Yuma Mesa. The original town site is approximately five (5) miles due east of the Colorado River. Mean elevation for the Town Center is 105 feet above sea level. The Yuma Mesa lands, portions of which are in the Planning Area and the corporate boundary, are approximately 150 feet above sea level. The community is centrally located in the Yuma Valley, a broad fertile plain of highly productive agricultural lands surrounding the City.

7.3 Geology & Aggregates

The Somerton planning area consists primarily of Colorado River alluvial deposits of silt, sand, and gravel. Beds of clay and salty clay, which are rarely more than a few feet thick, are locally extensive immediately north of Somerton. In the Somerton area, the alluvium deposits can reach 2,500 feet and, if the underlying transition zone is included, the maximum thickness is about 3,400 feet. It is comprised of a variety of granular materials ranging from clay to cobble and boulder gravel. Bedrock in the Somerton planning area is deep beneath the alluvial deposits at a depth of more than 3,200 feet. A transition zone exists between the older alluvium and bedrock. The bedrock consists of granite, schist and conglomerate. There are two soil classifications within the Somerton Planning Area. Neither cause substantial constraints to development.

A.R.S.§9-461.05.C.1(g) requires cities and towns to identify existing aggregate sources (e.g. sand and gravel) within their planning area and preserve areas for future aggregate development using maps made available by state agencies. The Arizona Geological Survey (AZGS) has yet to complete the necessary mapping of aggregates in the greater Yuma region. The aggregate map provided is for reference only until AZGS has developed official aggregate maps that cover the Somerton Planning Area and this General Plan is updated. There are currently no existing aggregate operations within the Somerton Planning Area.

Figure 8: Mining Aggregate Map



(This page intentionally left blank)

7.4 Climate

Somerton experiences a very hot and arid climate with the average highest-maximum temperature of 106 degrees (41.3 degrees C) occurring during the month of July. The lowest average-minimum temperature of 38.1 degrees (3.3 degrees C) occurs during the month of January. Somerton has an average-annual precipitation of only 2.77 inches (70 mm) with the driest months in May and June. Occasional thunderstorms are common during July, August, and September while the fall and winter months experience gentle rains. Hard frosts are uncommon in Somerton.

7.5 Seismic Hazards

The Yuma Region is located within the area of greatest risk of earthquake ground shaking within Arizona. Seismic waves propagating through the earth's crust are responsible for ground vibrations normally felt during an earthquake. Somerton is in a transition zone relative to the active seismic zones situated to the west and south. The potentially active Algodones fault lies to the northeast. The Imperial and Cerro Prieto faults pose major seismic risk to the study area.

The Somerton area is extremely susceptible to earthquake damage due to the high water table and the loose, potentially thixotropic, soils that exist within the Yuma Valley. Thixotropic soils are those with properties, exhibited by certain gels, becoming fluid-like when stirred or shaken and returning to the semi-solid state upon standing. These conditions can lead to liquefaction. Yuma County experienced damage from major seismic events in 1940 and 1979.

The Yuma Region has experienced significant liquefaction-induced ground failure during historic earthquakes (e.g., 1940 Imperial Valley), and should experience liquefaction damage in the future. Liquefaction occurs primarily in saturated, loose, and fine to medium-grained soils in areas where groundwater is 50 feet or less below the ground surface. Ground failure caused by liquefaction is a major result of earthquakes.

7.6 Air Quality

Air quality monitoring in Yuma County is the responsibility of the Yuma County Development Services Air Quality Division. Somerton is located within the Yuma PM10 Non-attainment area. The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) coordinates a regional response to achieving conformity in the non-attainment area. Somerton is a member agency of YMPO and continues to work with other jurisdictions in addressing this regional issue.

Due to Somerton's desert location and the effects of wind storms disturbing desert soils, the attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulates in the area are problematic. The County Air Quality Division does, however, inspect possible point-source contributors of Total Suspended Particulates (TSP) pollutants, such as sand and gravel or other manufacturing operations on an annual basis.

The City of Somerton is surrounded by agriculture lands that contribute to particulate air pollution. Particulates are fine solid particles that make up dust, smoke, and fumes. Particulates may cause eye, nose, and throat irritation and other health problems, and they contribute to the haze that cuts visibility. Arizona requires agricultural operations larger than 10-acres in PM10 nonattainment areas to follow specific "best management practices" (BMPs) to reduce dust pollution from farming. Somerton continues to support County-wide efforts to educate agricultural operators about BMPs.

The city also continues to promote multi-modal transportation through the incremental expansion of trails and bike facilities in the community to reduce particulates and improve air quality.

7.7 Noise

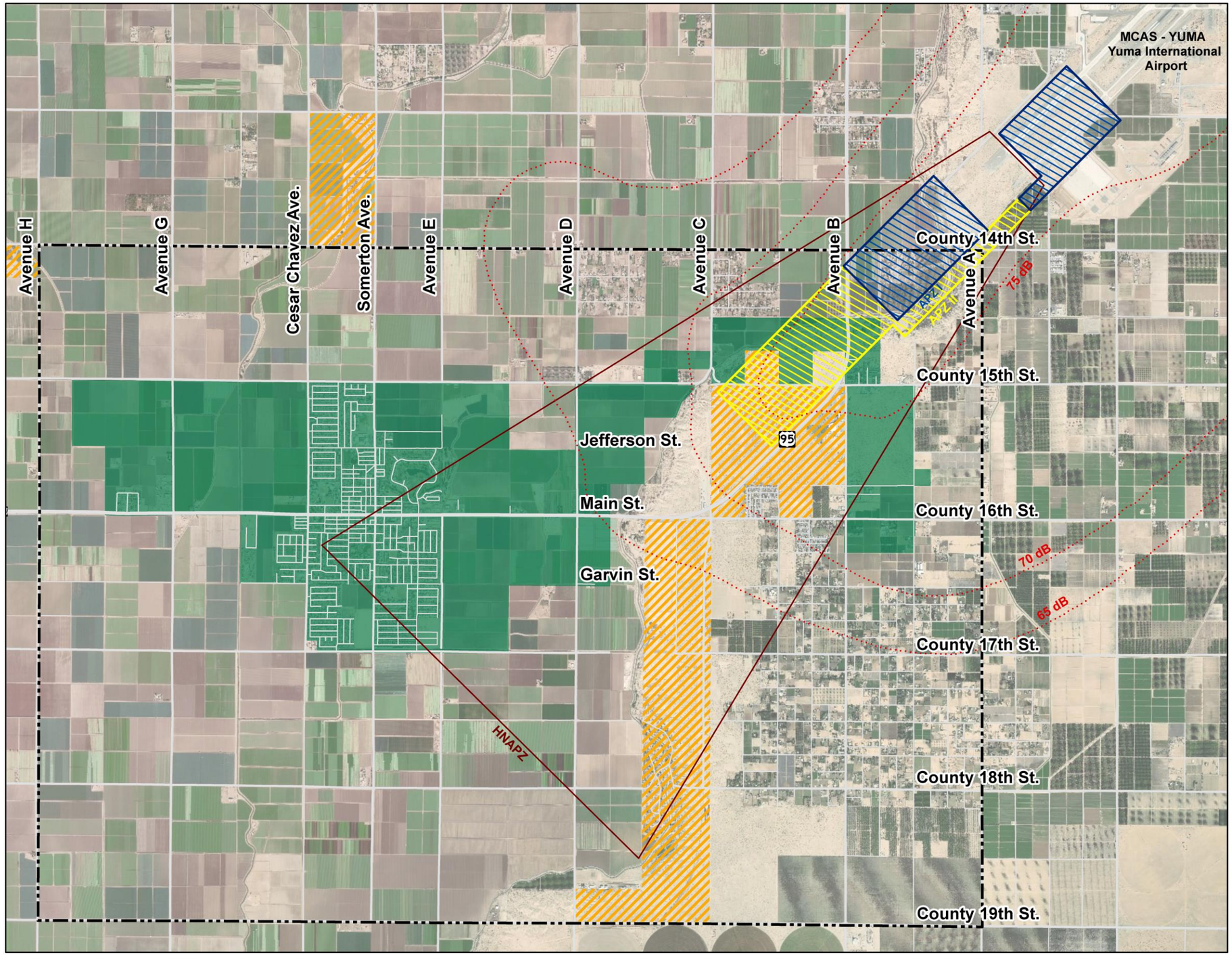
Noise is not typically a major issue within Somerton. Developed areas adjacent to agriculture experience the normal noise levels associated with agricultural activities. The northeast portion of the planning area may experience significant noise impacts associated with the Yuma Marine Corps Air Station High Noise or Accident Potential Zones (HNAPZ) located in Yuma.

The annexation of lands east of Avenue E to approximately Avenue A established Somerton as a community subject to State of Arizona legislation regarding development within HNAPZ's and subject to compatible land use and noise mitigation requirements within the State's statutes. The Land Use Plan map identifies the HNAPZ for MCAS-Yuma (**Figure 9**) based on the 1978 Van Houten Noise Contours and the areas subject to development limitations per Arizona Revised Statutes § 28-8481 et seq. These requirements necessitate updates to the Somerton Zoning Ordinance to include use and density limitations as well as building interior noise mitigation requirements for uses allowed within the HNAPZ. According to the Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Update for MCAS Yuma, the 2019 AICUZ Noise Contours have a significantly smaller footprint than the Van Houten Noise Contours, potentially opening up much of that previously restricted land to new uses. However, MCAS Yuma has adopted the Van Houten noise contours for evaluating land use compatibility in order to prevent a potential "accordion effect" with new development and potential changes to the noise contours in the future.

Historically, U.S. Highway 95 has been a major thoroughfare carrying significant traffic volumes from Interstate 8 in Yuma south to San Luis, Arizona/San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora. This includes international commerce with a high volume of truck traffic transporting goods between Mexico and the United States. As a historical agricultural center in the South Yuma Valley, agricultural field traffic contributes to roadway congestion during the year-round agricultural seasons.

As Somerton grows, roadway development plans should include appropriate designations for truck routes taking field products to packing and shipping locations within the region. Arizona State Route 195 was completed in 2010, connecting the new San Luis II Commercial Port of Entry with Interstate 8 to relieve some of the truck traffic in the Yuma Valley from the existing road network. As new routes are developed throughout south west Yuma County, truck traffic through Somerton may diminish in some locations while becoming more concentrated in transportation corridors connecting to SR-195. Noise generated from these new routes may affect surrounding land use activities identified in the Land Use Plan.

Figure 9: MCAS-YUMA / Yuma International Airport Noise Contour Map



Legend

- Somerton Municipal Limits
- Somerton Planning Area
- Cocopah Nation
- Streets

MCAS - YUMA / Yuma International Airport

- Van Houten Noise Contours
- APZ1
- APZ2
- HNAPZ

NOTE: All development located within a high noise contour (65 db or greater) or accident potential zone (APZ 1, APZ 2, HNAPZ) of the MCAS-Yuma shall be subject to the City of Somerton Zoning Ordinance - Airport Overlay District.

Source: City of Somerton

0 ¼ ½ 1 Miles

N

(This page intentionally left blank)

7.8 Surface Water and Flooding

Because of the shallow water table, many topographically low areas in the Yuma Valley experience groundwater flooding. Windblown sand and agricultural activities generally erode any natural stormwater conveyances that may form. The municipal limits of the City of Somerton lie outside of the 100-year floodplain of the Colorado River, as shown on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM).

Heavy rains cause flooding in the older, central portion of the City of Somerton due to a lack of adequate retention basins or storm drains. Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are needed to improve and reduce flood conditions. The City of Somerton requires all new developments to provide stormwater retention facilities for the 100 year, 24-hour event runoff event.

7.9 Environmental Planning Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

7A: Promote local and regional efforts to improve noise and air quality.

Policies:

1. Improve air quality and diversify the local economy by reducing commuting distances through promoting the location of more employment opportunities in Somerton.
2. Ensure that all roadways are paved and maintained to help reduce particulates (dust) in the air. (Requirement of the PM-10 Maintenance Plan)
3. Protect air quality through the development and enforcement of dust control measures on agricultural uses, where applicable, and development-related activities. (County has control of agricultural uses.)
4. Actively support the expansion and development of Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) aimed at reducing vehicle trips with South Yuma County
5. Work with Yuma County, YMPO, and the State of Arizona to ensure that regional air quality attainment goals are met.
6. Ensure noise mitigation measures are appropriately considered and implemented where necessary.
7. Ensure compatible development and building standards are applied in the planning area located within the High Noise or Accident Potential of the Marine Corps Air Station - Yuma.

Community Goal:

7B: Maintain Somerton's quality of life by managing natural resources and supporting sustainable development practices.

Policies:

1. Protect drainage corridors and floodplains by designating them as open space or agriculture to minimize flood hazards.

2. Identify potential sites for development of a riparian area. These will be low areas that require ongoing de-watering and/or areas that serve as destinations for stormwater flow from surface drainage channels.

3. Minimize the pooling water in retention basins at the surface for long periods of time, especially in shallow water table areas within the planning area.

4. Minimize wind and water erosion of disturbed non-agricultural land.

5. Encourage integration of high aggregate potential areas once mapping becomes available from AZGS, promote placement of aggregate mining operations near compatible non-residential land uses, and develop mutually-beneficial remediation and restoration plans for mining locations prior to becoming active.

6. Amend the zoning ordinance to remove obstacles to and provide incentives for renewable energy and green building development in all districts.

7. Explore options to add renewable energy facilities to public buildings.

8. Provide incentives (density, etc.) to encourage developers to make new residential subdivisions more energy efficient and provide renewable energy options as part of the development.

9. Require that areas disturbed by grading activities be replaced with appropriate vegetative groundcover, returned to the natural state or covered with non-vegetative ground cover.

10. Avoid development impacts on sensitive natural features, such as wetlands, riparian areas, sensitive plant and animal sites and migration corridors.

11. Enforce the protection of threatened and/or endangered species that may use the area as a migratory corridor. New development in low depth to ground water areas should include land uses that will not negatively impact ground water quality.

12. Ensure that all development complies with building requirements for areas subject to seismic activity and/or subsidence.

(This page intentionally left blank)

8 Water Resources

8.1 Introduction

Somerton is located within the Colorado River's alluvial deposits of silt, sand, and gravel. The hydrogeologic conditions of the area make groundwater a reliable (abundant) and renewable source of potable water with a high amount of total dissolved solids (TDS). A major portion of the City limits fall within the Yuma County Water Users' Association (YCWUA) irrigation service area. Major water facilities inclusive of the Somerton Canal, Central Canal, East Main Canal, Main Drain, and Southeast Drain that deliver and manage water for agricultural uses are operated and maintained by YCWUA. The City of Somerton's 2014 Water Master Plan Update and 2019 Waste Water Master Plan was completed by PACE Engineering. Both plans set forth how the City should plan to meet the needs of the community as Somerton continues to grow over the next 20 years. The Water Resources Element addresses water quality, availability, stormwater, water treatment and conservation for the City's current and future needs.

8.2 Water Systems

Per the 2014 Somerton Water Master Plan, the Somerton water system currently serves approximately 3,148 customers. Groundwater is the sole source of potable water for the City. There are four groundwater wells, three of which are in service and located at the Public Works Complex. Two of the wells, 3 and 4, provide the primary water source to meet the demands of current and near-term development. However, to meet the build-out system demands, the Water Master Plan identifies the ultimate need for two additional wells, 1,000 gpm and 1,500 gpm, in order to have redundancy in case the largest is out of service.

Potable water is stored in two above-grade, one-million-gallon storage tanks located at the Public Works Complex. The 2014 Water Master Plan Update identifies that a population of 19,093 would trigger the need for the development of a third water storage tank at a cost of $800,000. With current population estimates and plans for water service to La Mesa, this trigger population is imminent. Groundwater from the wells flows through two parallel 1,000 gpm (gallons per minute) capacity water treatment plants that discharge into the storage tanks. There is one booster station that supplies the entire city. The booster station has a capacity of 4,000 gpm.

Water is transmitted from the booster pump station through over 181,000 feet of pipes of varying diameters and materials. A water main replacement program has been underway since 2003 to replace the asbestos cement (AC) pipes within the system. As of the 2014 Water Master Plan Update, the majority of the City's water distribution system is comprised of PVC pipes with the exception of two neighborhoods south of Main Street, along Cesar Chavez Avenue. The timing for replacement of these water mains are unknown at this time.

The 2014 Master Plan Update includes two proposed phases for extending water services to La Mesa on the eastern part of the city. Phase I extends down Main Street/US-95 and County 16th Street to service Orange Grove Manor and Rancho Mesa Verde. This phase includes the construction of an additional pump and 180,000-gallon storage tank to be constructed in the

Orange Grove Manor Community at a total estimated project cost of $2.57 Million. The Phase II Smith Extension continues down County 16th Street before heading north on Avenue B until turning east on County 15th Street until Smith Way.

Without connecting to the Cocopah Casino water system, Phase II has a projected cost of $4.45 Million. Connecting to the Cocopah water system is estimated to add an additional $.25 million to the total project cost. Due to the existing smaller piping in the current Orange Grove Manor water system, it is recommended to build an additional 180,000-gallon storage tank next to the one proposed in Phase I to make up a projected capacity deficit with the Phase II line extension.

As the population of Somerton grows, alternative water supply scenarios that focus on managing the regional water supply in collaboration with City of Yuma, City of San Luis and/or the Cocopah Indian Tribe should continue to be explored. As pressure on groundwater use and Colorado River allotments increases due to statewide development, Somerton will benefit from collectively exploring opportunities to manage water supply sources and reduce water consumption to ensure the needs of future growth will be extended years into the future.

8.3 Wastewater Systems

The City of Somerton's wastewater treatment plant consists of a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) system, this process involves a single complete-mix reactor in which all steps of treatment occur, the SBR is a fill and draw activated sludge treatment process. Sequencing batch reactors can achieve combined carbon and nitrogen oxidation, nitrogen removal and phosphorous removal. The plant sits on 18 acres lying adjacent to the Yuma Main Drain at the southwest corner of the present incorporated area and approximately 3/8 of a mile from the nearest residences. The plant is surrounded by agricultural land.

Gravity Collection

The gravity collection system of 218,000 feet of sewer lines transports sewage from individual residences, businesses, and public facilities to the sewage lift stations. In general, the pipe slopes in the Somerton system are minimal because of the local topography and the high groundwater table, thus necessitating the use of a lift station - forcemain collection system.

Lift Stations

The lift stations and forcemains transport sewage that arrives from the gravity collection system. The lift stations pump into several forcemains that interconnect and eventually combine into a single forcemain prior to discharge into the headworks at the wastewater treatment facility. There are twelve lift stations in the wastewater system.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) has served the community since the 1950s but was upgraded and expanded two times, one in the early 1980s with the installation of an aeration system and chlorine tank and the second in 2006 with a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) system.

The Somerton wastewater treatment plant will handle all wastewater generated in the greater Somerton area, which can be economically conveyed to the centralized facility. The treatment works must be sized to handle projected wastewater flows over the 20-year planning period and be modular in design in order to be economically expanded if aggressive population growth occurs throughout the Somerton planning area.

The construction of the wastewater treatment plant phase III was completed in 2012.The expansion changed the treatment process from Sequential Batch Reactors (SBRs) to a continuous flow Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) process. The Somerton Wastewater Treatment Plant Phase III Expansion increased the treatment capacity of the plant from 0.8 MGD to 1.8 MGD Average Annual Day Flow and increased the Maximum Month Day Flow from 0.9 MGD to 2.5 MGD. The City of Somerton established a construction budget for this Phase III Expansion of approximately $6.5 million but the project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget. According to the 2019 Wastewater Master Plan, the city's existing WWTP has capacity to meet both existing and future demand up to 2029. The current system is estimated to reach 80% capacity in 2026, which would trigger the need to start an additional expansion phase according to Arizona Department of Environmental Quality guidelines.

The larger challenge is in replacement and upgrading of key collection system components outside of the treatment plant such as forcemains, lift stations, and the existing gravity sewer system. All lift station pumps are recommended to be replaced incrementally based on priority with a total cost of $2.36 Million. The 2019 Wastewater Master Plan categorizes the City's growth area into four regions: Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast. While development timing of these individual areas is unknown, the Master Plan does identify the projected system demands and improvements each of these areas require to support planned land uses.

8.4 Water Resources Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

8A: Promote long term growth and development in Somerton that is assured with a sustainable water resources system focusing on supply, treatment, quality, and conservation.

Policies:

1. Pursue opportunities to acquire additional water supplies supporting the City's long-term interests.

2. Continue to obtain groundwater rights through water conversions from discontinued agricultural lands.

3. Utilize the Somerton Water Master Plan to evaluate each development proposal to determine short, mid, and long-term impacts on water resources and the water system.

4. Promote water system management efforts that support and encourage economic growth for the community

5. Protect local groundwater to ensure long-term water quality and availability.

6. Inform the public about practices and programs to minimize water pollution and provide educational and technical assistance to agriculture users regarding groundwater quality issues.

7. Regularly monitor and inventory the condition of the existing water delivery system ensuring water quality.

8. Develop and implement an aggressive water conservation program to delay or minimize major water system expenditures.

9. Encourage water conservation for new development through the utilization of drought-tolerant plants, efficient irrigation systems (drip and low flow types) and water-conserving fixtures in all new residential and commercial construction.

Community Goal:

8B: Ensure adequate wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal.

Policies:

1. Utilize the Somerton Wastewater Master Plan to evaluate each development proposal to determine short, mid, and long-term impacts on wastewater treatment

2. Ensure reasonable and adequate wastewater capacity is available to serve current and future demand and pursue opportunities to utilize reclaimed and recycled water,

3. Promote wastewater system management efforts that support and encourage economic growth for the community.

(This page intentionally left blank)

9 Public Facilities & Services/ Cost of Development

9.1 Introduction

Since the development of public facilities and provision of services are so interrelated to the cost of development, these two elements have been combined. The Public Facilities and Services/Cost of Development Element of the Somerton General Plan provides an overview of the various public facilities and services provided by the City, outlines the role that the City will play in the development of facilities and services, and provides options to ensure that the City is able to provide for the community as it develops. It is critical that the City of Somerton has the necessary public facilities and services to support new growth and existing development as well as having adequate policies in place to determine what role the private sector plays in financing public services and facilities. The Public Facilities and Services/Cost of Development Element strives to maintain a functional, efficient, cost-effective, and financially equitable system of public facilities and community services to serve an expanding population and employment base in a sustainable manner.

9.2 Public Facilities & Services

Infrastructure Maintenance and Expansion

The City has recognized that the majority of the infrastructure in the community is reaching the point where major upgrades or replacement are imminent, and has begun, over the past decade, to move forward with major upgrades/ renovations to the existing infrastructure. The water and wastewater systems, which were both initially installed in the 1950's, have been upgraded multiple times as the city has grown. The most recent expansion of the wastewater treatment plant gave the City of Somerton a total of 1.8 MGD of wastewater treatment capacity. In the near future, water capacity demand will warrant additional storage tanks per the 2014 Water Master Plan and all wastewater lift stations will need to be replaced per the 2019 Wastewater Master Plan. This is in addition to extension of both water and sewer lines needed for initiating new development. While identified as a need, these future water and wastewater infrastructure improvements are large capital investments that are not funded at this time. See **Chapter 8 Water Resources** for more about the Water and Waste Water Master Plans.

Upgrades and improvements to the roadway infrastructure have also been completed and more are planned and/or scheduled. Main Street was renovated by ADOT as part of the transfer of jurisdiction for the roadway to local control/management, and the City completed the Main Street Redesign Plan in 2016 outlining additional pedestrian and streetscape improvements. More roadway improvements have been identified and are planned as part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

Public Safety Facilities and Services

Current facilities for police and fire protection were significantly upgraded as part of the 2006 construction of the new Public Safety Facility. This expansion of public safety facilities not only included the new building, but additional equipment as well, including a new fire engine and training facilities. This expansion allows the City's public safety personnel to be housed in a facility that is specifically designed to promote and enhance their already high level of service.

Somerton was ranked as the third safest city in Arizona in 2018 by the National Council for Home Safety and Security, and Securitybaron.com rated the City of Somerton as the third safest city in Arizona of 2019. The Somerton Police Department is currently seeking to fill open positions. Other long-term safety needs include an expanded evidence room, additional training and administrative staff, as well as community-based resources such as school resource officers and a citizen's academy.

The Somerton-Cocopah Fire Department currently maintains a response time of less than six minutes for fire and under four minutes for medical emergencies. A second fire station is not expected to be needed within the next ten years. As additional future facilities are warranted, these facilities should be planned and designed to be Fire facilities (sub-stations) shared with accommodations for Police officer report writing and/or holding cell facilities, where appropriate. These shared facilities will provide better response times to Somerton residents and maintain and improve the City's Insurance Services Offices (ISO) rating and improved insurance costs for Somerton residents. Future facilities and training programs should strive toward improved ISO ratings. The sub-stations would be developed when growth needs warrant their construction.

Community Facilities and Services

The YMCA Youth center provides safe programming and recreational opportunities for younger residents in the community. The Parks and Recreation Department also coordinates Ballet Folklorico Quetzalcoatl II, Hip Hop, and Power House Boxing activities at the youth center. Yuma County Library District operates the Somerton Library branch offering various self-help classes, community events, and educational workshops open to all ages. Valle del Desierto Senior Center offers a multitude of physical and social activities for seniors in Somerton. The Senior Center also provides breakfast and lunch served daily. The Somerton Community Center, Gym, and Pool provide additional fitness recreation opportunities for the community at JC Cardenas Park. The Somerton Cultural Center acts as a community gathering place for Boys and Girl Scouts, local

community organizing, and regular programming. Somerton upholds a high standard for community facilities and services that will need to be maintained and expanded in order to sustain current levels of service and quality of life as the city continues to grow.

Regional Partnerships

Somerton is also a member agency of the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO), actively contributing to regional plans and initiatives ranging from transportation to environmental planning. This regional cooperation must continue to provide financing and efficient provision of public facilities and services. Partnering with other utility providers (e.g., CenturyLink, APS) will also be critical to ensure that the community has advanced telecommunications capabilities and reliable power.

Somerton works very closely with MCAS Yuma to ensure land use compatibility in relation to the noise contours and accident potential zones of the base. Somerton's partnership with the Cocopah Nation has resulted in improved community services and infrastructure and various donations in park improvements. The City is also exploring other opportunities to collaborate with the Cocopah Nation including a multi-jurisdictional animal control program.

Solid Waste and Recycling Services

Collecting from approximately 3,000 residences and 100 businesses city wide, the City's Public Works Sanitation Division provides solid waste services for the community. Somerton was the first city to implement a curbside recycling program in Yuma County back in 2010. With the intent of diverting reusable materials from the landfill to reduce cost impacts, it is estimated that the City's recycling services have been saving the landfill around 30 tons or approximately $800 a month. The City's collection cycle is broken up around two service areas: the North (including the Rollow Subdivision, areas north of Main Street and La Mesa) and the South (including the areas south of Main Street). Solid waste and Recycling are collected on a weekly schedule for both areas. Bulk and hazardous waste collection is available through the Public Works Annual Cleanup Schedule program.

Infrastructure Development Policy

The City must maintain and examine future policies and procedures to ensure that future growth pays for its fair share of needed or required infrastructure. In addition, since compact, contiguous development is the most efficient in terms of infrastructure and public services, the City should explore policies to create incentives for contiguous development in order to be maximally efficient with public infrastructure spending. Additional policies or programs, as needed, should be considered to assure the community and new development pay their responsible shares.

9.3 Current Services in the Community

The following table identifies the major services that are provided in Somerton and the service provider.

Table 5: Service Providers

Water	Somerton Water, Sewer, Sanitation Department
Waste Water	Somerton Water, Sewer, Sanitation Department
Police/Public Safety	Somerton Police Department
Fire Protection/EMS	Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department
Ambulance	Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department
Street Maintenance	Somerton Public Works Department
Solid Waste Collection	Somerton Water, Sewer, Sanitation Department
Electricity	Arizona Public Service Company
Telecommunications	CenturyLink Communications
Natural Gas	Southwest Gas Corporation
Parks and Recreation	Somerton Parks and Recreation Department

Figure 10: Public Facilities and Services

(This page intentionally left blank)

9.4 Cost of Development Philosophy

It is the desire of the City of Somerton to first encourage development that requires little or no extension of services. Development that occurs within or directly adjacent to existing infrastructure or service areas is the most cost-effective since much of the investment in providing those services has already been made. Building outside of existing service areas promotes sprawl that is very expensive to the community unless the vast majority of costs are borne by the developer. These costs are not just for the basic infrastructure but also for public safety, recreation and other City services that must extend service areas to accommodate the new development.

9.5 Cost of Development Financing Options

Development fees are needed in order to maintain level of service with projected growth over ten years and helps the city to achieve development that pays for itself. The City has implemented the "cost of service" program through the recommendations from an impact fee study, adjusted utility rates, and other fee increases since the General Plan's original adoption in 2001. Since then, the city has updated impact fee studies in 2014 and most recently in 2019. Cost calculation for the fees introduced in these reports were focused on the following methodologies based on the timing of service improvements: cost recovery (past), incremental expansion (present), and plan-based (future). The fee structures of both reports are broken down by development type in order to better translate the actual costs of “sprawl-type” development and insure that existing residents are not bearing the higher cost imposed by non-contiguous development over more compact contiguous development.

The completed 2014 Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee Report evaluated Parks, Public Safety, Streets, and Wastewater services for development fees. The cost calculation for the 2014 impact fees utilized cost recovery methods for public safety services in relation to paying for the Public Safety Building and a new fire truck. Cost recovery methods were also applied to wastewater services in paying for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Incremental expansion cost calculation methods were used for the development of fees for park improvements, arterial street improvements, and major line extensions for wastewater.

The 2019 Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee Report updated fees for Water Services and Parks & Recreation Services. While only focusing on these two public services, the 2019 report contains a more detailed analysis and diverse cost calculation breakdown. In

generating the cost for the 2019 fees, incremental expansion calculation methods were applied to park improvements and water distribution lines. Plan-based cost calculation methods were utilized based off the previous development fee report for both services as well as for storage, treatment, well, and pump improvements for water services, specifically. The cost recovery methodology was utilized to create fees to pay for the park land the city purchased in 2017.

When the City determines that it is responsible for making capital expenditures, there are several mechanisms that can be utilized. Paying for improvements out of current revenues is almost always desirable but often not feasible. It is critical that the City explore all options when determining the appropriate financing vehicle or combination of methods.

Financing Mechanisms Available for Public Service Expansion

Pay-As-You-Go out of Current Revenues: This is the optimum way to pay service expansion. Current revenues consist mostly of local sales and property taxes, state-shared revenues, and grants. Unfortunately, revenues usually follow development while most service expansions must occur prior to or simultaneously with development.

Grants and Low-Interest Loan Programs: There are numerous grants and low interest loan programs available to Somerton from federal, state, and regional agencies. Somerton has actively pursued and received funding, from among others, the Rural Development programs from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the State of Arizona Heritage Fund as funded, State Water Infrastructure Financing Authority (WIFA), State Special Projects (SSP) funding, State Colonias Set Aside Funds, and the Governor's Office.

Revenue Bonds: Revenue bonds are a method of borrowing to finance service expansions. The bonds are paid back through future revenues that are legally pledged to the bond issuer. Revenues generally utilized for debt service are privilege taxes (sales tax), Highway User Revenues Funds (HURF) (payments made to municipalities from state fuel taxes), and user fees. Bonding must be approved by a public vote. Revenue bonds are typically more costly to the municipality since future revenues, which can be uncertain are the method of security and repayment.

General Obligation Bonds: General Obligation (G.O.) bonds are a method of borrowing to finance service expansion. These bonds are based on the full taxing authority of the municipality and are generally paid back through property taxes. The municipality may bond for up to 20 percent of its secondary assessed valuation with an additional 6 percent available for special projects. Bonding must be approved by a public vote. G.O. bonds are the most cost-effective for the municipality since their security and repayment are based on property and the municipality's ability to levy against it to meet obligations.

Certificates of Participation/Municipal Property Corporations: These are methods of borrowing that are paid back by municipal revenues. They are usually not legally tied to a specific revenue stream, such as revenue bonds. These methods can be utilized by action of the City Council and are not subject to public vote.

Development Impact Fees: These are fees that are established by the municipality based on the cost of expanding services to accommodate new development. These fees are then paid by the project developer as part of the development's cost. Development impact fees can be fairly narrow in scope (impact of development on the wastewater treatment facility) to very broad in scope (covering all utilities, public safety, municipal operations, parks/recreation/open space, library services, etc.). The City may impose (if studies provide justification) "Zonal" impact fees that provide for different levels of fees based on the costs of providing infrastructure/services to geographically different developments.

User Fees: User fees are those charged for services such as water and sewer fees or park and recreation venue admissions. The fee structure can be developed to not only cover operating costs but also service the debt for financing expanded services.

Community Facilities or Improvement Districts: These special funding districts allow all the property owners within the district to borrow funds (typically at the City's more favorable rate) for major infrastructure and public service improvements that benefit all property owners. These funds are then repaid by annual assessments on all owners of the property (until the borrowed funds are repaid) and may be structured in a way as to make the repayments tax deductible. Furthermore, it is allowable to add a small additional assessment onto the repayment to cover annual operations and maintenance (O & M) costs.

Lease Excise: The Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET) is a redevelopment tool offered by the State of Arizona. By replacing property tax with an excise tax, a project's operating cost is reduced to initiate development. The land and improvements are given to the city and leased back for private use. Applications across the state focus predominantly on affordable housing and larger scale development.

Opportunity Zones: Established by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed in December 2017, designated Opportunity Zone Census Tracts are eligible for various tax incentives for development. The Somerton Census Tract 04027011501 is designated as an opportunity zone and it includes the northwest and east portions of the General Plan's Growth Area.

9.6 Public Facilities & Services/ Cost of Development Goals and Policies

Community Goal:

9A: Balance impacts of development that apply to regional agencies.

Policies:

1. Work with CenturyLink Communications, or other responsible communications entity, to implement upgrades in telecommunications capabilities.
2. Work with Arizona Public Service to maintain reliable electric service that has expansion capabilities and utilizes renewable energy options.
3. Coordinate and meet with local educational institutions to ensure adequate locations for new or expanded educational facilities, as well as looking for other cost sharing or cost reducing opportunities for both entities.
4. Coordinate development activity between the City and the school districts to establish a clear methodology for determining the impacts of development within the City on school facilities.
5. Coordinate and meet regularly with the Cocopah Nation to make sure various land use options and strategic plans are optimized for both entities, as well as looking for other cost sharing or cost reducing opportunities.
6. Work closely with local and regional agencies on issues of regional nature (e.g., law enforcement, public safety, solid waste disposal, sewage treatment, water treatment and delivery, air quality, etc.)
7. Support Somerton's growing population by encouraging the expansion of health care services and facilities.
8. Continue to educate residents about proper disposal of recycling, solid waste, and hazardous waste to reduce impact on the regional environment and landfills.
9. Continue to foster the expansion of waste diversion programs (recycling, composting, etc.) and reincorporate recycled materials back into the local economy.

Community Goal:

9B: Provide reliable public facilities and services to residents and visitors.

Policies:

1. Annually adopt a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to be used as part of the City budgeting process.
2. Develop and maintain a five-year financial plan for the City of Somerton.
3. Develop, maintain and update, where necessary, master plans for all major facilities and services every 3 to 5 years.
4. Master planning public facilities shall include evaluation of opportunities for 'Joint use" facilities with local or regional agencies (e.g. regional water/wastewater studies).
5. Work cooperatively with Yuma County to define issues and strategies related to infrastructure planning and funding in geographic areas that may become part of the City of Somerton.

Community Goal:

9C: Create a safe and welcoming environment in all areas of the city.

Policies:

1. Pursue and commit to achieving and maintaining a 4 ½ minute police response time for emergency calls, a 5 ½ minute response time for urgent calls, and a 10-minute response time for service calls.
2. Continue exploring opportunities for intergovernmental agreements and regional partnerships for the provision of public services (i.e., agreement with Cocopah Reservation for public safety) with local and regional entities, investigating opportunities to increase service levels and efficiencies of fire, emergency medical services and other public services.
3. Implement community programs to prevent crime (i.e., services for at risk youth and neighborhood watch programs) and maintain community safety throughout the planning area.
4. Create public safety master plan and update as service demands warrant
5. Continue work to lower the City's Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating.
6. Utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies in new and existing development to improve public safety. Continue to ensure that new development satisfactorily addresses stormwater issues within the planning area.

Community Goal:

9D: Ensure that new development pays its fair share and does not place an undue burden on existing residents.

Policies:

1. Utilize the Capital Improvement Plan to efficiently plan and phase public/private infrastructure development projects.
2. Ensure financing mechanisms utilized by the City result in a net improvement to the development and not place a long-term financial impact on the entire community.
3. Ensure financing mechanisms should not be of a term that exceeds the useful life of the project developed through the mechanism.
4. Ensure as new development occurs within the Planning Area, the cost of infrastructure improvements to support the project should be borne by the developer.
5. Perform periodic rate/fee studies to ensure that charges for services are adequate so general fund revenues do not subsidize the enterprise programs.
6. Implement appropriate development fees prior to the initiation of major new development within the Planning Area.
7. Continually research and determine the viability of additional funding sources. This includes additional development fees, creative utilization of municipal bonding, creation of improvement districts and grants.
8. Maximize public/private partnerships in infrastructure development.
9. Annually audit utility fees and development fees to determine if their levels are meeting needs.
10. Periodically update development fees to ensure their legal basis and compliance with Arizona Revised Statutes.

(This page intentionally left blank)

10 Economic Development

10.1 Introduction

The Economic Development Element is intended to coordinate strategic components of the Land Use, Transportation/Circulation, Growth, and Public Facilities Elements into guiding economic growth, workforce development, and job creation. Located in the fertile Yuma Valley along the lower Colorado River, Somerton has a strong agrarian heritage that continues to this day and plays a key part in the city's economy. While originally specializing in produce packaging and distribution, the city saw a shift to predominately growing produce following the construction of Interstate Eight. Today, Somerton still retains a strong agricultural influence in its local economy. As the city looks towards the future, there are many opportunities to strengthen the local economy and encourage local entrepreneurship that will help to support the City's agricultural industry as well as promote a more diversified business environment.

10.2 Educational Attainment

23.7% of people in Somerton have a high school degree, 13.9% have some college experience and 18.3% have an associate degree or higher. The City has a higher secondary and post-secondary education attainment percentage than San Luis as well as a higher associate degree attainment percentage than the State but still falls short of the City of Yuma and the overall county percentages.

Table 6: Education Attainment

Education Level	Somerton	San Luis	Yuma	Yuma County	Arizona
Less than a High School Diploma	44%	54.60%	22.40%	28.30%	13.50%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	23.70%	16.30%	26%	26%	24.20%
Some college, no degree	13.90%	18.90%	25.80%	24.20%	25.30%
Associate degree	9.30%	2.90%	8.30%	7.20%	8.60%
Bachelor's degree	6.30%	5.70%	10.60%	9.20%	17.80%
Graduate or professional degree	2.80%	1.60%	6.80%	5.10%	10.70%

Source: *US Census Bureau 2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates*

Somerton School District No.11 provides public education to the City of Somerton from Preschool through 8th grade through five schools district wide: Tierra Del Sol Elementary, Orange Grove Elementary, Desert Sonora Elementary, Valle Del Encanto Learning Center, and Somerton Middle School. In coordination with Arizona@Work and the American Job Center, Somerton School District also provides GED and ESL education for adults through the South Yuma County Consortium Somerton Adult Education Program. Falling under Yuma Union High School District, residents of Somerton are in the enrollment boundary of Kofa High School in neighboring Yuma and leave Somerton for secondary education. This will change in the near future as the City has been working with YUHSD on the development of a local high school in Somerton.

As for post-secondary education, Arizona Western College (AWC) Somerton Center, located at Somerton Middle School, provides direct access to college advising, transfer services, testing, and financial aid services. AWC has a second satellite classroom at Somerton City Hall that provides regular classes later in the evening including ESL learning opportunities. Beyond Somerton, AWC offers a variety of online and on-site courses as well as workforce education courses and workshops at 12 locations throughout Yuma and La Paz Counties.

In partnership with the University of Arizona's Health Sciences Center and Western Arizona Health Education Center, the Regional Center for Border Health Inc. College of Health Careers is located in Somerton and provides Allied Health Vocational Training and Certificate Programs for entry-level healthcare occupations. Following the need for qualified medical assistants in 2007, the Regional Center for Border Health has been working to empower the local community to fulfill the workforce gaps through training, education, and certification.

Just north of Somerton in Yuma, Arizona Western College's main campus is also home to the University of Arizona (UA) and Northern Arizona University's (NAU) Yuma locations. The University of Arizona College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension and Yuma Agricultural Center conduct comprehensive research in vegetable and citrus production. UA-Yuma also provides degree programs in Agricultural Systems Management and Agronomy (Sustainable Plant Systems). NAU-Yuma provides 16 bachelor's degree programs, 8 minors, and 2 certifications across the departments of arts and sciences, biological and natural sciences, business, education, and nursing.

10.3 Work Force and Employment

Somerton's median household income is $37,252, higher than San Luis at $33,767 but lower than the overall county median at $43,253. The median age in Somerton is 27.5, younger than both the county and state median age. With such a young median age, Somerton has a unique opportunity to capture and retain more local entrepreneurial talent into the city's workforce. Nearly half (47%) of Somerton's Population is age 24 or younger. With a large population of young people, Somerton will need to meet the need of this emerging demographic with diversified services, employment, and housing options.

The construction of the new high school will provide additional jobs and contribute to the diversification of Somerton's economy. With intentional Career Technical Education and other potential opportunities for workforce development, the new high school will be an incredible asset to the community beyond standard secondary education.

Table 7: Workforce Demographics

Work Force Demographics	Somerton	San Luis	Yuma	Yuma County	Arizona
Median age (years)	27.5	27.9	31.5	34.1	37.2
Unemployment Rate	11.50%	15.90%	10.10%	10.90%	7.10%
Median household income (dollars)	$37,252	$33,767	$46,151	$43,253	$53,510
Families below the Poverty Level	27.2%	24.8%	14.9%	16.9%	12.3%
Poverty Level	29.2%	27.5%	16.9%	19.7%	17%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	24.1	28.6	15.7	19.6	25.1

Source: *US Census Bureau 2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates*

According to the MAG 2017-2018 Arizona COG/MPO Employer Database Somerton has the following employment clusters for businesses with five or more employees:

Table 8: Employment Clusters

Employment Clusters	# of Employers	# of Employees
Resource-Dependent Activities (Agriculture)	2	810
Education	9	760
Government, Social, & Advocacy Services	11	230
Business Services	4	120
Consumer Services	6	90
Retail	10	80
Transportation & Distribution	5	70
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate (FIRE)	2	60
Health Care	1	40
Construction	1	10
Telecommunications	1	10

Source: *2017-2018 AZ COG/MPO Employer Database*

Somerton's prime positioning for agriculture plays a large part in the local economy. This is followed by other large employment blocks such as the Somerton School District and State and City Government that employ a significant amount of people. By number of employers, the city has a significant amount of Government, Social, & Advocacy Services (11), Retail (10), and Education (9) businesses. There are also many non-profits within the city which provides many opportunities for interagency coordination.

The 2017-2018 Arizona COG/MPO Employer Database also states that the top 10 employers in the city are as follows:

Table 9: Top 10 Employers in Somerton

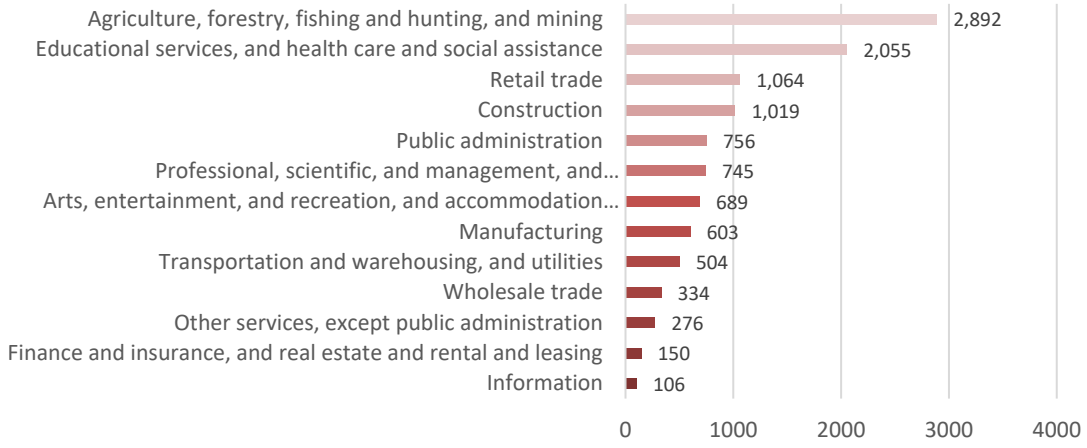
Rank	Employer	Number of Employees
1	The Growers Company Inc.	800
2	Somerton School District 11	740
3	City of Somerton	111
4	Foothill Packing Inc.	100
5	State of Arizona	100
6	Yuma County Water Users' Association	65
7	Chicanos Por La CaUSA Inc.	40
8	Fresh Innovations LLC	40
9	Sunset Community Health Center	40
10	Orchid Street Apartments	30
Source: 2017-2018 AZ COG/MPO Employer Database, City of Somerton, & YCWUA		

The Growers Company Inc. accounts for nearly all of the Resource-Dependent (Agriculture) Jobs in the city. This is similarly true for the top 5 firms employing the vast majority of employees within the city's employment clusters meaning the city's employment clusters are very specialized and centered within a small number of firms.

The largest Industry sector for Somerton residents is the agriculture industry, followed by education and healthcare and retail trade. This is congruent with the major employers and labor distribution among employers in the city. Although heavily specialized in agriculture, more than two-thirds of Somerton residents are well distributed in Service, Natural Resources/Construction/Maintenance, and Sales and Office job positions within the industry. The city has an opportunity to further expand into these areas.

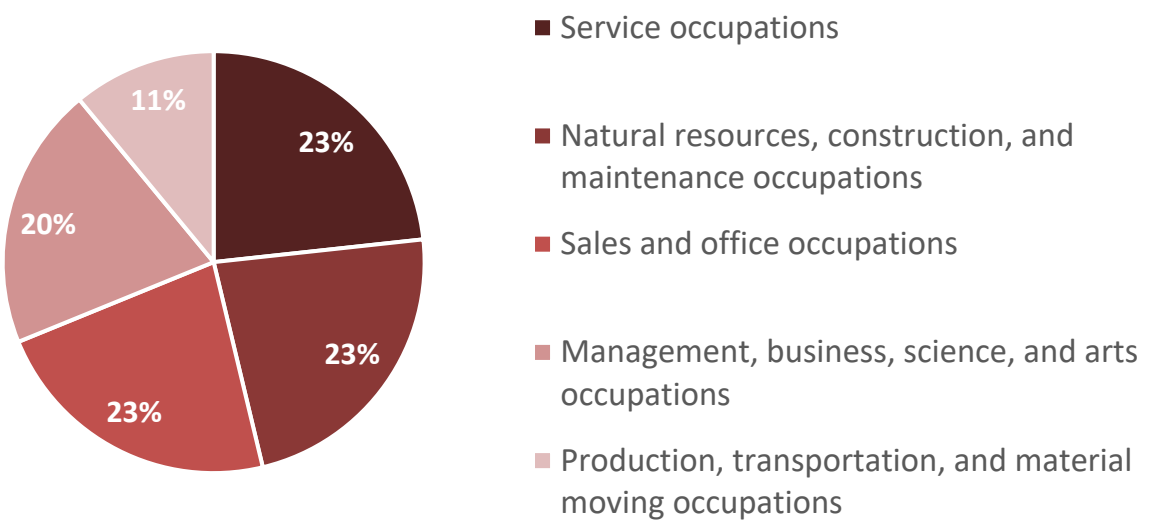
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

Figure 11: Somerton Labor Force Distribution by Industry



Somerton's unique regional location between two larger municipalities makes it challenging to attract and retain larger box retail to the town. As a result, residents usually shop outside of city limits for many household grocery needs. In terms of business expansion, Somerton's Del Sol Market, a locally owned grocery chain in southwest Arizona, moved into a larger location in 2018, presenting a greater opportunity to capture more local sales tax revenue. The City also has a strong local business community. According to the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation, half (51.43%) of the businesses in Somerton have 1-4 employees.

Figure 12: Resident Occupations



10.4 Downtown Revitalization

At the core of the City of Somerton is the Downtown Area along Main Street. In 2010, the City of Somerton created its Infill Incentive District aimed at opening up Main Street to incentives for development. Shortly thereafter in 2013, Downtown Redevelopment Plan was created in order to incrementally strengthen economic vitality and revitalize the central core of Somerton. Building upon the incentives from the Infill District, the redevelopment plan focuses on mixed-used development with intentional improvements of public areas, streetscape, multi-modal transportation, and existing buildings. A key component of the redevelopment plan implementation was completed in 2016, the Main Street Redesign Plan. This plan focuses on the infrastructure and streetscape design of Main Street from Somerton Avenue to Cesar Chavez Avenue.

The city is currently in the process of updating the Infill Incentive Plan which builds upon the successes of the past decade as a foundation for the future. The updated 2020 Infill Incentive Plan extends the boundaries of the original Incentive Overlay District to capture residential redevelopment opportunities in the neighborhoods adjacent to Main Street and outlines three subdistricts each with a unique character. The Entertainment District focuses on the retail core of Main Street while the Heritage and Pioneer Districts focus on residential

neighborhoods. Collectively, all of these plans work together to provide the necessary framework to guide downtown redevelopment. Since 2010, there has been six new development projects along Main Street including the new City Hall, Del Sol Market, and an Arizona Department of Economic Security Call Center.

10.5 Economic Development Opportunities

The Council Adopted 2020 Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee Report states that over the next 15 years, assuming growth rates are equal to housing unit growth and employment share by type remains consistent, Somerton is expected to add an additional 3,094 jobs requiring an approximate 558,000 square feet of nonresidential development. Outside of the Main Street core area, the City of Somerton is focusing on encouraging further economic development on two specific areas. On the east side of Somerton, there is 64 acres of commercial land and 210 acres of industrial land available for sale by owner. This land is primed for Main Street and employment development opportunities. As the land is developed, the city has the opportunity to focus on expanding the trail system and enacting portions of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, as well as the Infill Incentive Overlay Plan. The City owns and is focusing on promoting development of 55 acres on the west side of town along Main Street, west of Cesar Chavez Street and adjacent to the planned High School. Twenty acres of the property is preliminarily planned for commercial development, with the remaining dedicated to a joint use recreational facility with the planned High School. Developing these two areas in the city will be paramount to reaching the projected need of employment growth.

10.6 Economic Development Goals & Policies

Community Goal:

10A: Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses to ensure they remain a vital part of the City's economic base.

Policies:

1. Assist local businesses in their efforts to expand locally and provide individualized site selection assistance to ensure they have adequate space to grow their operations in suitably zoned areas that will accommodate future expansion.
2. Support businesses by sharing resources, creating networking opportunities, and encouraging business-to-business transactions.
3. Encourage and facilitate public-private partnerships and resources to assist business retention, growth, and workforce training/development.

Community Goal:

10B: Strengthen Downtown as a center of commerce and culture.

Policies:

1. Continue to support implementation of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and the Infill Development Incentive Plan
2. Encourage infill mixed-use development, commercial development, neighborhood retail, and professional offices and services of the appropriate scale and business types along Main Street.
3. Provide a safe and comfortable walking environment in the Downtown
4. Increase capture of local retail sales tax revenues and promote tourism by supporting attractions and events for residents, workers, and regional visitors year-round.
5. Support Downtown as the local focal point for art installations that promote the City's history and culture.

Community Goal:

10C: Attract businesses that diversify the local economy, provide high-paying jobs, and increase City revenues.

Policies:

1. Utilize regional, state, and federal incentive opportunities to attract new businesses
2. Ensure that adequate and appropriate sites are available, and "shovel ready", to attract and accommodate projected business growth.
3. Proactively work to attract businesses that help generate business-to-business transactions.
4. Develop relationships, partnerships, and programs to attract international investors and businesses to locate in Somerton and increase opportunities for trade.
5. Attract business and manufacturing by providing a wide range of urban amenities and services throughout the city.
6. Support activities that foster home-grown businesses through entrepreneurship opportunities and partnerships that provide for targeted business sector growth and expansion for demand services (e.g. retail, entertainment) and industries (e.g., technology; healthcare).
7. Through cooperation and support, encourage development of a labor force with skills to meet the needs of the area's current and future businesses and industries.
8. Support the development of home-based businesses, provided the businesses do not adversely impact the surrounding residential neighborhood.
9. Ensure a timely, fair, and predictable permit process.

Community Goal:

10D: Support and coordinate efforts to classify Avenue D as an Industrial corridor in Somerton – from US 95 (Main Street) along Avenue D to County 19th Street.

Policies:

1. Work with Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO), Yuma County Transportation, and San Luis on the Avenue E / Avenue D new highway alignment that will connect directly to San Luis' Port of Entry II.
2. Coordinate the land use and zoning changes along this corridor that will support light industrial employment.

(This page intentionally left blank)

11 Implementation

11.1 Implementation Introduction

Measuring the success of any plan or planning effort is dependent upon the success of the implementation. The Somerton General Plan serves as the blueprint or guide for the City's future development. However, it is critical that the Plan be put into action through a comprehensive, strategic implementation program. The City's role in implementing the plan is to provide direction to private and public sector development and investment. This Chapter identifies the specific strategies for implementing, reviewing and updating the Somerton General Plan.

11.2 Monitoring the General Plan

The Somerton staff will be responsible for the regular monitoring of the General Plan implementation. Staff will provide an annual status report to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council on development activity and the status of the General Plan Implementation Program.

11.3 General Plan Amendment

In 1998, the State of Arizona passed revisions to the section of law that defined general plan "major amendments" specifying conditions, which characterize increases or decreases in land use intensity or in changes to major streets classifications. This legislation also included a requirement for a two-thirds-majority vote for approvals by city councils. In February 2000, the statutes for General Plans were again modified. The new requirements took effect in May 2000. The new wording eliminated any reference to streets as well as land use intensity. The new major amendment language refers to a "substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in the municipality's existing general plan land use element."

General Plan Amendment Definitions

- **Major Amendments to the General Plan:** A major amendment to the Somerton General Plan is any development proposal that would substantially alter the City's planned mixture or balance of uses. To be consistent regionally (i.e., San Luis, Yuma, Yuma County), the City of Somerton has created a compatible decision-making matrix to determine major and minor amendments to the general plan.

  Major amendments will involve an expanded public review process. Local government agencies are limited by state law to one time per calendar year to review major amendments to the general plan. The deadline to submit major amendments is June 15th, in order to meet the City of Somerton's noticing requirements.

- **Minor Amendments to the General Plan:** "Minor amendments" to the Somerton General Plan are considered as minor text changes, minor land use adjustments, corrections/updates and City sponsored changes up to 160 acres in area. Minor amendments will involve a standard public review period with adoption by the City of Somerton Council. This process involves public hearing by the City of Somerton Planning and Zoning Commission and one public hearing by the City Council. Minor amendments can be requested and heard at any time during the calendar year.

At the time of adoption, the Somerton General Plan provided a vision of development into the future based on the development in place, the community's needs and the desire of property owners. It has been found that over time, visions change, and new opportunities arise. Amendments have and will need to occur. Amendments to the Somerton General Plan are required in any situation where a proposed rezoning ordinance is not in general conformance with the adopted general plan. Arizona State Law requires zoning conformance with the general plan, which is to harmoniously align with the Plan's elements, goals, objectives and policies.

- The Arizona Revised Statutes define conformance as (Section 9-462.01 Sub Section F):

  "A rezoning ordinance conforms with the land use element of the general plan if it proposes land uses, densities or intensities within the range of identified uses, densities and intensities of the land use element of the general plan..."

Due to additional state mandated requirements for public review of types of amendments, it is necessary to determine the level of impact; major versus minor, the amendment will or may cause.

- The Arizona Revised Statues define major amendments as (Section 9-461.06 Subsection L):

  "A substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in the agency's general plan land use element. The municipality's general plan shall define the criteria to determine if a proposed amendment to the general plan effects a substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in the municipality's existing general plan land use element."

Amendments to the Somerton General Plan will be reviewed to determine the effect on the City's ability to provide: 1) a balance of land uses to meet the community's needs; and 2) the effect on the mix of land uses in relation to each other; and, 3) to their location within the geographic area. In situations where numerous minor amendments are proposed in a manner that impacts common adjacent geographic areas, staff will determine if a singular major amendment would be more appropriate. An effect on the balance of land uses will be measured by the proposal's impact on each land use and the loss or increase of acreage or developable dwelling units.

Table 10 below outlines potential impacts to each land use with a determination as to the type of amendment that may or may not be necessary. This matrix applies when the proposed use is not in conformance with the Somerton General Plan. For example, a proposed gas station in the low-density residential land uses designation.

Table 10: Balance Matrix

Where Proposed Use is Allowed in Current General Plan Land Use Designation*				
Current Land Use	**Result of Proposed Amendment**	**Amendment Not Needed**	**Minor Amendment**	**Major Amendment**
Agriculture	Loss of less than 1 acre.	X		
	Loss of 1 acre or more but less than 20 acres of farm land.		X	
	Loss of 20 acres or more of farm land.			X
Residential (RDR, LDR, MDR, HDR)	Loss or increase of less than 7 units and proposal is for a residential land use that is adjacent to a residential land use category that is identical to or one residential land use classification lower than proposed land	X		
	Loss or increase of 7 or more but less than 200 dwelling units. Also, any proposal that does not meet adjacency requirements above.		X	
	Loss or increase of 200 or more dwelling units.			X
Commercial	Loss of less than 2 acres and proposal is for an HDR or non-residential land use that is adjacent to an identical land use.	X		
	Loss of 2 acres or more but less than 40 acres of commercial area. Also, any proposal that does not meet adjacency requirements above.		X	
	Loss of 40 acres or more of commercial space.			X
Employment or Agriculture/Industrial	Loss of less than 5 acres and proposal is for a non-residential land use that is adjacent to agriculture or non-residential land uses.	X		
	Loss of 5 acres or more but less than 80 acres of employment area. Also, any proposal that does not meet adjacency requirements above.		X	
	Loss of 80 acres or more of employment area			X
Public Facilities	Loss of less than 5 acres.	X		
	Loss of 5 acres or more but less than 75 acres of public facilities.		X	
	Loss of 75 acres or more of public facilities.			X
Recreation/Open Space	Loss of less than 5 acres.	X		
	Loss of 5 acres or more but less than 15 acres of recreation/open space.		X	
	Loss of 15 acres or more of recreation/open space.			X

*City sponsored changes of 160 acres or less are always considered a Minor Amendment.

Procedure for General Plan Amendments is as follows:

Per Arizona Revised Statutes, the City of Somerton will consider major amendments to the general plan once each year. June 15th of every year will be the deadline to receive amendments to the general plan. This will allow adequate time for review and public hearings to consider major amendments to the general plan. The major amendment applications must be submitted within the same year they are heard and a two-thirds -majority vote of the City Council is needed to approve them. In addition, all major amendments must meet the public involvement criteria outlined in the state statutes that read "effective, early, and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of the general plan from all geographic, ethnic, and economic areas of the municipality."

11.4 General Plan Update

State law requires that a comprehensive update of the General Plan be conducted and ratified by the citizens once every ten years if a community population is over 10,000 or if it is between 2,500 and 10,000 and has two percent per year growth rate for a ten-year period. The Somerton General Plan was ratified by the citizens on May 17, 2011 by an 63.33 percent approval rate.

The City initiated this 2020 General Plan Update to maintain compliance with State law. Following this Update process, the Community Development Department, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council will regularly monitor the General Plan to determine when comprehensive updates will be needed. Substantial population shifts, socio-economic changes, technological changes, and expansion of the planning area might indicate a need to update the plan sooner than the ten-year period.

11.5 General Plan Action Program

The following Implementation Program provides the framework for ensuring that the Somerton General Plan is successful. The Implementation Program is presented under the following headings:

- **Implementation Strategy:** Provides a brief description of the action strategy.
- **Responsibility:** Identifies the responsible party or parties for initiating or overseeing that the strategy is accomplished.

Additionally, the Action Program is organized by the targeted timeframe for the strategy to be completed.

- **On-going** (Continuous)
- **Short-Term** (Year 0-3 Timeframe)
- **Mid-Term** (Year 3-6 Timeframe)
- **Long-Term** (Year 6+ Timeframe)

Table 11: Implementation Matrix

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Land Use and Growth					
Prioritize infrastructure expansion in the northwest portion of Somerton to open developable land to new housing and economic development opportunities.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development
Implement the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and the associated Downtown Somerton Redevelopment Project – Preliminary Alignment Plan.	☑				• **Community Development** • Parks and Recreation • Planning Commission • City Council • Economic Development
Work with the Yuma Union High School District to develop the proposed Somerton High School and shared use facilities.		☑			• **City Manager** • Community Development • City Council
Develop strategies or programs to enhance the public realm, such as establishing a Public Art Committee to identify areas for revitalization and create plans for murals, shade structures, artistic bike racks, or mobile art installations to heighten community pride.	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Safety • Parks and Recreation • Planning Commission • City Council
Update the existing Somerton Zoning Ordinance as needed to be compliant with the General Plan.	☑				• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • City Council
Update the existing Subdivision Ordinance, as necessary, to be consistent with community objectives and needs in compliance with State law.	☑		☑		• **Community Development** • Public Works • Parks and Recreation

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Work with the local School Districts to begin an annual Joint City Council/School District Strategic Planning Session.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council
Work with the Cocopah Tribe to continue annual Joint City Council/Tribal Council Strategic Planning Sessions.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council
Implement, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Somerton Development Fee Report to ensure that targeted growth is focused where it is least costly to service, and that existing residents do not have to support the cost of new growth.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development • Planning Commission • City Council
Preserve and encourage neighborhood stores that enable shoppers to walk or bike for everyday needs and provide access to healthy foods.	☑				• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • City Manager • City Council
Encourage the development of quality multi-family housing in appropriate locations to meet the needs of Somerton's young professionals and active adult residents.			☑		• **Community Development** • Public Works • Parks and Recreation
Transportation/ Circulation					
Update the Transportation Master Plan and address roadway cross section standard details so that no new roadways are constructed without sidewalks.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development • City Manager
Identify ADA non-compliance in the community and establish a plan to retrofit pedestrian areas to comply.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development
Continue to construct pathways closing gaps throughout the community.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation
Prioritize completing incomplete sidewalks within a half-mile radius of existing commercial development or park facilities.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation
Establish a Safe Routes to School and Parks Program and work with the schools to increase student's and children walking and bicycling safely in the community.	☑				• **Parks and Recreation** • Community Development • Public Works

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Develop a Plan to create an Arterial Level bypass loop around the City as shown in the Somerton Transportation Master Plan.			☑		• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation
Encourage Bike Lane improvements/retrofits and establish priority routes to be implemented based on available funds.			☑		• **Parks and Recreation** • Community Development • Public Works
Continue to program roadway improvements and repairs and include in CIP.	☑				• **Public Works** • City Finance
Neighborhoods					
Encourage the development of quality multi-family housing in appropriate locations to address local housing needs.	☑				• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • City Manager • City Council
Continue to work closely with regional and local non-profit organizations (i.e., Housing America Corporation, Campesinos Sin Fronteras, Inc. or any other non-profits) to ensure that affordable housing is available to low-income individuals and seasonal workers.	☑				• **Community Development** • City Manager
Establish a housing loan program for improvement and rehabilitation of Somerton's housing stock.				☑	• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • City Manager • City Council
Develop incentives for green building practices in new development (adaptive reuse, permeable surfaces, passive solar design, recycling construction materials, xeriscaping).	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Works • City Council • Economic Development
Develop a "Housing Plan" with criteria targeting a balanced housing stock.		☑			• **Community Development** • Public Works • City Council • Economic Development
Establish Neighborhood Committees to partner with City Departments (Police, Fire, Code Enforcement, Recreation) to address local neighborhood issues (i.e. neighborhood watch groups, neighborhood associations).		☑			• **Community Development** • Public Safety • Public Works • Parks and Recreation • City Manager • City Council

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Adopt the current International Energy Conservation Code (IECC).			☑		• **Community Development** • Public Works • Planning Commission • City Manager • City Council
Identify properties that do, or will in the near future, qualify to be added to the national register of historic places.	☑	☑			• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • City Manager • City Council
Work with the Somerton Historical Society to develop an inventory plan to identify eligible historic properties.		☑			• **City Manager** • Community Development • Planning Commission • City Council
Establish a working relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in preserving and promoting the community's historic character.		☑			• **Community Development** • Planning Commission • Parks and Recreation
Apply for designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the SHPO office.			☑		• **Community Development** • Planning Commission
Establish guidelines and incentives for appropriate adaptive reuse of buildings, especially historic structures.	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Works
Parks & Open Space					
Continue to implement and update the Parks Master Plan.	☑				• **Parks and Recreation** • Community Development • Public Works • City Manager
Continue developing the planned Community/Regional Park with the new high school and develop programming to meet facility needs as defined in the Parks Master Plan.	☑				• **Parks and Recreation** • Community Development • Public Works • City Manager
Develop a long-term plan for the maintenance of open space/retention areas held by the City which may include improvement districts, non-profit associations, public-private partnerships, and volunteer organizations.			☑		• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Develop an adopt-a-park, path, trail, and/or alley program to help support recreational maintenance needs.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation
Seek partnerships with school districts for joint-use facility agreements.	☑				• **Parks and Recreation**
Provide a community garden space highlighting significant agricultural heritage.		☑			• **Community Development** • Public Works • Parks and Recreation
Create a shade tree program for homeowners that provides assistance and education on tree planting and maintenance.			☑		• **Public Works** • Community Development • Parks and Recreation
Initiate community outreach to identify needs of special user groups, such as the disabled and elderly, low-income and at-risk youth regarding recreational programming needs and develop strategies to meet those needs.	☑				• **Community Development** • Parks and Recreation
Encourage businesses or non-profit organizations to offer indoor recreational facilities and programs that can help provide alternatives during times of extreme heat.		☑			• **Community Development** • Parks and Recreation
Continue to seek any available State and federal grant assistance in implementing the General Plan, Parks Master Plan and Pathway Master Plan recommendations.	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Works • Parks and Recreation
Environmental Planning					
Collaborate with regional entities to support programs and activities that reduce the amount of solid waste that must be taken to a landfill.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development
Collaborate with regional entities to assure the availability of a landfill that will meet Somerton's long-term needs.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Continue to work with Yuma Co. and the State of AZ to ensure that all commercial/ industrial activities are monitored relative to the use, production and disposal of hazardous materials and, that all hazardous materials handling is routed away from residential neighborhoods.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development • Public Safety
Refer new development proposals within identified habitat areas to the Arizona Department of Game and Fish for comments regarding effects of urbanization on special status flora and fauna species.	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Works • Planning Commission
Continue participation in regional planning efforts to protect habitat and environmentally sensitive species.	☑				• **Community Development** • Public Works • Planning Commission
Incorporate aggregate mapping data into City GIS and Land Use Maps upon availability/ completion from the Arizona Geological Survey.		☑			• **Community Development** • Public Works
Address stormwater flooding issues in the older, central portion of Somerton.		☑			• **Public Works**
Ensure that all roadways are paved and maintained in compliance with the Yuma County PM10 Maintenance Plan.	☑				• **Public Works** • Community Development
Continue to Work with Yuma County, the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the State of Arizona to ensure that all regional air quality attainment goals are met.		☑			• **Public Works** • Community Development
Water Resources					
Keep the City's Water and Wastewater Master Plans up to date.	☑				• **Public Works**
Implement the recommendations in the City's 2014 Water Master Plan.			☑		• **Public Works** • City Finance
Require the transfer of water rights to the City of Somerton when agricultural land is converted to an urban use.		☑			• **Community Development** • Public Works
Develop a surface water treatment plant to satisfy long term potable water needs.				☑	• **Public Works** • Community Development • City Finance

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Create and adopt a Stormwater Master Plan that addresses flooding issues particularly in the older central portion of the City.				☑	• **Public Works** • Community Development • City Manager • City Council
Implement the recommendation in the City's 2019 Wastewater Master Plan.				☑	• **Public Works** • City Finance • Community Development
Public Facilities & Services/ Cost of Development					
Maintain and Update the City's Capital Improvement Plan as new Master Studies are completed or updated.	☑				• **City Finance** • Community Development • Public Works • Parks and Recreation • City Manager • City Council
Develop criteria for the use of Community Facilities District (CFD) financing.		☑			• **City Manager** • City Council • Community Development
Continue exploring opportunities for intergovernmental agreements and regional partnerships for the provision of public services (i.e., agreement with Cocopah Reservation for public safety) with local and regional entities, investigating opportunities. to increase service levels and efficiencies of fire, emergency medical services and other public services	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council • Economic Development
Commit to achieving and maintaining a 4 ½ minute police response time for emergency calls, a 5 ½ minute response time for urgent calls, and a 10-minute response time for service calls.	☑				• **Public Safety** • City Manager • City Finance • City Council
Include Police and Fire departments in the review of new developments to provide feedback on building and site design safety.	☑				• **Public Safety** • City Manager • City Finance • City Council
Coordinate and meet with local educational institutions to ensure adequate locations for new or expanded educational facilities, as well as looking for other cost sharing or cost reducing opportunities for both entities.	☑				• **City Manager** • Community Development • Public Works • Parks and Recreation

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Encourage joint use of school facilities for neighborhood recreation.	☑				• **City Manager** • Community Development • Public Works • Parks and Recreation
Continue to coordinate and meet regularly with the Cocopah Indian Community to ensure various land use options and strategic plans are optimized for both entities, as well as looking for other cost sharing or cost reducing opportunities.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council • Community Development • Public Works • Parks and Recreation • City Finance • Public Safety
Continue to perform periodic rate/fee studies to ensure that charges for services are adequate so general fund revenues do not subsidize the enterprise funds.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council • Public Works
Secure a comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for all City Departments that will unify departments and provide timely financial reporting to staff and residents.		☑			• **City Manager** • City Council • City Finance
Continue to seek grant funding through the North American Development Bank to finance infrastructure improvement projects.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council • Public Works
Economic Development					
Prepare a Somerton "Best Small City in Arizona" Marketing Plan and Approach.	☑				• **City Manager** • Community Development • Public Safety • Parks and Recreation • Planning Commission • City Council
Prepare a "Best Business" recruitment strategy aimed at filling the storefronts in the Downtown with businesses/ entrepreneurs that can attract clientele from outside of the immediate Somerton Area.		☑			• **City Manager** • Community Development • Planning Commission • City Council • Economic Development

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Continue to coordinate with Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation and the Arizona Commerce Authority to promote business attraction in Somerton.	☑				• **Economic Development** • Community Development • Public Works • Parks and Recreation • City Manager • City Council
Develop a long-term economic development strategy plan.			☑		• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council
Capitalize on local, state and federal incentives to foster business attraction.	☑				• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council • Community Development
Continue working with the Somerton Chamber of Commerce and Local First Arizona to Promote local business.	☑				• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council
Promote interagency programs targeting higher education related to local industries of agribusiness, public administration, healthcare, and non-profit management.	☑				• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council
Explore the development of a community small business incubator with shared retail space.				☑	• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council • Community Development
Develop a community "Mercado" to support local small businesses and migrant workers.			☑		• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council • Community Development
Promote "agri-tourism", farm-to-table promotions, and farmers markets to connect the cultural and economic viability of farming in Somerton.	☑				• **Economic Development** • Parks and Recreation
Create a local resource package for small businesses in the community with opportunities/resources/ business assistance.	☑				• **Economic Development**
Continue to foster relationship with AWC, Somerton School District, Arizona@Work, and the Regional Center for Border Health to promote workforce education and development.	☑				• **Economic Development** • City Manager • City Council • Community Development

General Plan Implementation Strategy	On-going	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Responsibility (Leadership in bold)
Conduct a Neighborhood Retail Survey to identify key retail needs and desires to more strategically target business attraction.		☑			• **Economic Development**
Continue promoting events and programing that bring the community together and support tourism, such as the Somerton Tamale Festival.	☑				• **Parks and Recreation**
Continue to implement and update the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for efficient infrastructure construction to meet the needs of current/future residents, workforce, and employers and make more land development ready.	☑				• **City Manager** • City Council • Economic Development • Community Development • Public Works
Strive to streamline the development review process for employers who meet identified target industries (i.e., health care, retail, manufacturing, food processing, and high technology).	☑				• **Community Development** • Economic Development

(This page intentionally left blank)