# Land Use Element 2

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Land Use Element incorporates aspects and ideas from every other Element identified in the General Plan. Therefore, land use planning is an investment in a high quality of life for current and future generations.



Picture courtesy of S. Ries

The community should be involved when the City addresses current land use concerns and for making meaningful future land-use decisions. The *Dream Your City* public participation process allowed citizens from around the community to provide valuable input on land use issues; many of the goals and elements in this section are from this community

process—growth issues, infill and re-use development, density, open space, and annexations were prominent themes.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Land Use Element contains goals and policies that provide direction on how the community envisions its future development. Land use patterns, how land uses are arranged and the urban form (the spaces, places, and boundaries that define city life), are critical to the health and wellbeing of Sierra Vista residents. City plans accommodate a range of lifestyles, living, and working conditions. The City also strives to accommodate diverse community settings to create a solid foundation for growth throughout the next several years.

The Land Use Element divides the City into five land use categories: residential, commercial, industrial, public, and open space.

		Table 1	
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY DESIGNATIONS			
LOW-DENSITY LAND DESIGNATIONS			
Density	Zoning		
0 - 2.0	UR (Urban Ranch)		
Residences	SFR-36	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 36,000 sq. ft)	
per acre	SFR-18	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 18,000 sq. ft.)	
MEDIUM-DENSITY LAND DESIGNATIONS			
Density		Zoning	
2.01 – 4.5	SFR-12	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 12,000 sq. ft.)	
Residences	SFR-10	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 10,000 sq. ft.)	
per acre	SFR-8	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 8,000 sq. ft.)	
	SFR-6	(Single Family Residence – minimum lot size is 6,000 sq. ft.)	
HIGH-DENSITY LAND DESIGNATIONS			
Density		Zoning	
4.51+	MFR	(Multi-Family Residential or for Single-Family Lots,	
Residences		minimum lot size is 4,500 sq. ft.)	
per acre	MHR	(Manufactured Home Residential)	

As shown on Table 2-1, there is a correlation between the land use designations and the zoning districts. Residential land use designations offer a variety of densities as shown on the Table.

- A commercial land use designation indicates the areas where all types and intensities of commercial uses may be developed. In Sierra Vista, the commercial land use designation allows for the following zoning districts: General Commercial (GC), Limited Commercial (LC), Office Professional (OP), and Neighborhood Convenience (NC).
- The industrial land use designation includes the following zoning districts: Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), and Industrial Park (IP).
- The public land use designation provides areas for development by government agencies including city and county buildings and school sites. This category also permits developed recreation areas such as city parks.
- The open space land use designation identifies areas generally precluded from development.

It is important to understand past and current land use trends when determining future land use patterns. Since the year 2000, approximately 75 percent of the approved land use amendments were requests to change from a commercial land use designation to a residential land use designation and of this 75 percent, the majority of the amendments were to a high-density residential land use designation. The trend indicates that high-density residential developments have been the most popular type of development as evidenced by the construction of seven new apartment complexes and ten new multi-family residential subdivisions since 2000.

Table 2-2, below, indicates the current percentage of land use designations within the City:

TABLE 2 LAND USE BREAKDOWN			
Medium Density Residential	4,827 acres or 22.7%		
Low Density Residential	4,780 acres or 22.5%		
High Density Residential	2,669 or 12.6%		
Commercial	2,291 acres or 10.8%		
Specific Plan Area	2,239 or 10.5%		
Public	1,684 acres or 7.9%		
Industrial	1,506 acres or 7.1%		
Open Space	1,171 acres or 5.5%		
TOTAL	21, 167 acres		

## <u>Protection of Aggregate (Sand And</u> Gravel) Sites and Resources

Arizona Revised Statutes §9-461.05 was amended in 2012 and "requires jurisdiction maps to include sources of currently identified aggregates from maps that are available from state agencies, policies to preserve identified aggregates sufficient for future development, and



policies to avoid incompatible land uses." This law means that areas of aggregate (sand and gravel) must be protected from incompatible development so aggregate remains available to be extracted for use in local construction.

The City currently has one known area identified for aggregate removal. The area (as identified on the map) is approximately 20 acres and currently has an industrial land use designation, which allows for the removal of aggregates. The City will carefully evaluate any future land-use amendments that could interfere with the potential for future sand and gravel extractions.

#### **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

#### Goal 2-1 Develop a well-planned City

#### **Strategies**

1. Encourage and incentivize the developer to provide a mixture of residential densities, pedestrian amenities, and various land uses.

The Sierra Vista City Council approved Architecture and Design Review Standards on April 11, 2019. The standards apply to commercial, industrial, and apartment developments. One of the design elements within the architectural standards is to integrate a number of pedestrian considerations such as covered walkways and canopies; courtyard and pedestrian gathering areas; pedestrian-scale light fixtures in areas of high pedestrian use such as patios, outdoor dining areas, connected pathways; and outdoor benches or other seating elements. The developer receives a design element credit should pedestrian amenities be provided.

The Tribute Specific Plan proposes to designate approximately 1,385 acres to residential development not to exceed 6,959 dwelling units. The dwelling units will be a mixture of low, medium, and high density residential to include townhomes, condominiums, and apartments. The Plan also proposed 174 acres of commercial development. The Ventana De Flores Specific Plan will consist of approximately 273 acres for residential development not to exceed 1,480 total residential units which will also include a mix of residential densities.

2. Encourage open space areas and recreational amenities for new developments.

The current development impact fee policy allows for an offset of development fees provided the cash contributions, land dedication, or construction of the public facility meets or exceeds the demand generated by the new development and the contribution is determined by the City to be a reasonable substitute for the cost of public facilities. In the past, the

City has accepted the construction and dedication of parks and amenities as an offset to the park development fee.

3. Avoid "leapfrog" development within City boundaries.

<u>Leapfrog development</u> means land development that occurs well beyond the existing limits of urban development and thus leaves intervening vacant land behind. This bypassing of the next-in-line lands at the urban fringe results in the haphazard shotgun pattern of urbanization known as "sprawl".

The City does encourage Infill development through the Infill Incentive District which allows for expedited reviews, reduced setbacks and reduced buffers in the West End. In addition, the Specific Plans and the growth areas will be required to connect to all municipal utilities and connect to existing public infrastructure. For example, The Tribute Specific Plan will be required to extend Buffalo Solider Trail, Greenbrier Road, and Avenida Del Sol as part of their overall circulation plan. Connections and extensions of multi-use paths will also be required.

4. Address issues of regional concern by coordinating with external entities, surrounding jurisdictions, and state and federal agencies. In 2015, the City collaborated with both the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Cochise County on the extension of Buffalo Soldier Trail, which was proposed to extend to Moson Road. After numerous public hearings and the voicing of neighbor concerns, it was decided to postpone discussion of the extension until sometime in the future.

The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) created an Adequate Water Supply Program to address the problem of limited groundwater supplies in Arizona. This program evaluates the availability of a 100-year water supply considering current and committed demand, as well as growth projections. In compliance with ADWR's requirement to consider the availability of water, the City included in the subdivision regulations, that adequacy of water supplies must be demonstrated prior to plat approval. A letter of water adequacy from ADWR is required and a note on the plat indicating the date of approval are required to be submitted prior to final plat approval.

5. Encourage mixed-use developments.

The Infill Incentive District Policy, which is a Policy that incentivizes investment in the West End by allowing for certain waivers to the Development Code, encourages the development of mixed uses by allowing such development to be approved through a Development Agreement. In addition, the Development Code currently permits mixed-use buildings within all the commercial zoning districts and through a Conditional Use Permit within the Multi-Family Residence (MFR) zoning district. The Development Code defines a mixed-use building as, "a building which contains one or more residential dwelling units located above the ground floor of a non-residential use(s) permitted in the zone.

### Goal 2-2 Coordinate with Fort Huachuca for all future City development

#### **Strategies**

- Continue to send public notification to Fort Huachuca.
   Per standard policy, the City sends notification to Fort Huachuca
   Encroachment Board on all new development within the City to ensure preservation of the Fort's missions. Any comments received are forwarded to the developer to ensure compliance. Projects are not approved until the Fort grants approval.
- Actively participate with Fort Huachuca regarding encroachment issues.
   The Community Development Department staff were previously active participants on the Fort Huachuca Encroachment Board. However, due to personnel changes, the Encroachment Board no longer includes City staff. However, this arrangement can be considered at some point moving forward.
- 3. Pursuant to A.R.S §§ 28-8481(E) and (P), no new residential development within the high noise and accident potential zones surrounding Fort Huachuca as depicted in Map 7 to this 2030 General Plan is allowed unless one of the following occurs:
- a. The subject property had a residence constructed, or was approved for residential development in a "development plan" prior to December 31, 2000.

b. The City of Sierra Vista and Fort Huachuca mutually agree in writing that an individual use is compatible and consistent with the high noise or accident potential zone.

The City has made it a priority to work with potential developers to ensure that the proposed project has minimal impacts in the High Noise/Accident Potential Zone. Since the adoption of the General Plan in 2014, the City has not received any requests for projects in these areas. However, the City will continue to ensure impacts are minimized in the future.

#### Goal 2-3 Economic development shall be considered when planning future sites

**Strategies** 

1. Continue to provide incentives per the Infill Incentive District for development on the West End and in Cloud 9 Mobile Home Park.

The West Sierra Vista Redevelopment Plan identifies properties offering a redevelopment or infill opportunity. Exhibit "E", Conceptual Master Redevelopment Framework, designates eight "high priority revitalization sites" where economic development efforts and grant support are being focused.

- 332 N. Garden Avenue (former Daisy Mae's Steakhouse). This property is
  in the process of being redeveloped into a new brewpub to be operated by
  Tombstone Brewery. The City provided grant support for the demolition
  of the blighted building and parking area on the site through the West
  Sierra Vista Partnership Program. Staff anticipates a site plan and building
  permit application to be submitted in August 2020 with construction
  starting by the end of this year.
- 556 W. Fry Boulevard (formerly Martin Cleaners). This property was purchased and is being renovated for use by Sierra Vista Glass. A building permit has been issued for the tenant improvement.
- 3. 268 W. Fry Boulevard (formerly Philadelphia Bakery). This unit was renovated for use by Julie and Sammy's 33 Flavors Ice Cream Parlor. The City provided grant support for the tenant improvement, signage, and landscaping through the West Sierra Vista Partnership Program. The owner is in the process of renovating another unit in the plaza to expand his business to include a game room.

- 4. 80 S. Carmichael (formerly Peacock Restaurant). This longstanding vacant building was renovated to accommodate 143 Street Taco which opened in June 2020. The City provided grant support for the tenant improvement through the West Sierra Vista Partnership Program.
- **5. 160 N. Canyon Drive.** This building was renovated to provide interior offices and accessibility improvements. Final inspection was approved in August 2020. The City provided grant support for the tenant improvement through the West Sierra Vista Partnership Program.
- 6. 185 E. Wilcox (former Blues Café). A building permit has been issued to renovate this longstanding vacant building into a new restaurant called the Copper Oven.

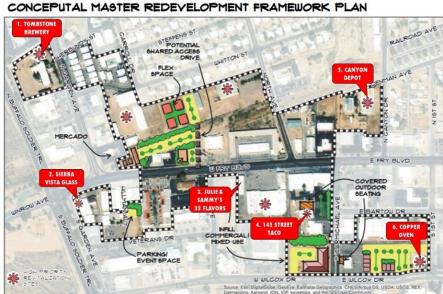


EXHIBIT "E" -

2. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings with a mixture of uses. The City amended the Development Code in 2016 to allow apartments as permitted uses with the General Commercial Zoning Districts. This Code amendment was reflective of trend of developers converting hotels to apartments because of the need for additional multi-family housing in the community. The amendment simplified the conversion process as additional public hearings are no longer required.

- 3. Designate sufficient amounts of land for industrial land use purposes. The current inventory of land zoned industrial does not provide for growth within the industrial sector. There is approximately 83 acres of undeveloped Industrially zoned property. The largest vacant parcel is a 190-acre parcel located on Fort Huachuca. The approximately 200 acre parcel was rezoned in 1987 with the understanding that Fort Huachuca would transfer title of the property to a private entity. However, the property is still owned by the federal government. Exempting this property from any viable development in the near future, the largest industrial zoned property is the former Young block site on State Highway 92 which is 17 acres. Clearly, there should be a greater expansion of the industrial sector to ensure its the economic viability. The City can consider annexation or land exchanges to acquire additional industrial land. Some incentive for development of these properties include overlay districts and opportunity zones.
- 4. Provide incentives to encourage the conversion of manufactured home parks to single family and multi-family developments.

  The City does not currently provide incentives to developers to convert manufactured home parks to single family and multi-family developments. The most recent emphasis has been to rehabilitate the existing manufactured home parks into viable affordable housing developments that include new manufactured homes and site and visually aesthetic improvements. The Mountain View manufactured home park is one such example. The City Council approved a Development Agreement on January 23, 2020 to provide some relief and flexibility to the building setbacks and require aesthetic improvements such as sidewalks and landscaping along Carmichael Avenue.

#### Goal 2-4 Consider environmental impacts when planning future sites

**Strategies** 

1. Gradually transition to lower residential densities as development moves east toward the San Pedro River.

Many of the larger tracts of land located along the eastern city limit boundary are zoned Urban Ranch which has a density of one dwelling per acre. Staff will ensure that any rezonings that are located within the proximity of the eastern City limit boundary, will be to a low to medium density. The Tribute Specific Plan, which extends to Schrader Road,

includes predominately Low to Medium residential development in the easternmost phases of the development.

- 2. Encourage all new developments to use low-impact development techniques and standards (see Element 9, Conservation). The Development Code was amended in 2018 to include low-impact/water harvesting techniques for commercial developments. One of the first amendments allowed roof and foundation drains to be discharged to a rain storage tank, or depressed landscape areas with sufficient buffer from building foundation. Another amendment in this Section allows landscaped areas that receive stormwater runoff to provide only a temporary irrigation system if the areas receive stormwater runoff. In addition, Section 151.08.008.(E)(15) states that storage capacity of a detention basin can be reduced if rooftop and parking lot runoff are either captured in a water harvesting tank or are directed to landscape areas.
- 3. Design sites to provide access and connections to alternative transportation routes such as multi-use paths, sidewalks, and bus routes. (Also see the Sierra Vista Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes Plan.)
  The Public Parks & Multi-Use Path Map located in the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan, Element 10, and the Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes Plan Map indicate existing and proposed bicycle lanes and multi-use paths in the City. Any new development constructed along one of the proposed bicycle routes or multi-use paths will be required to construct their portion of the route.

Development Code Section 151.08.0045.(N), Pedestrian Access Standards requires all residential subdivisions to incorporate pedestrian connections that connect to adjacent subdivisions, multi-use paths, or parks. Residential subdivisions currently under construction that were required to construct such connections include The Retreat, Summit Heights and Canada Vista.

The bus routes are located where they are projected to generate the most ridership, which does not necessarily correlate to new residential or commercial developments. However, there have been instances in the past where pull-ins have been required for existing bus stops such as Cimarron

Estates and Walmart which helps to decrease the disruption of through traffic.

Per the Development Code, all new developments require the construction of a sidewalk adjacent to the property.

(For additional environmental considerations, please reference Element 9, Conservation Element)

# Goal 2-5 Develop and implement aesthetic standards along all major roadways and gateways into the City

#### **Strategies**

1. Require commercial sites along the major roadways to meet and maintain aesthetic standards to include landscaping.

The City is in the final construction phase for the W. Fry Boulevard improvements and in the design phase for N. Garden Avenue. The plans for N. Garden Avenue and W. Fry Boulevard include a road diet, enhanced landscaping, bike lanes, and pedestrian amenities. There are currently no improvements or aesthetic streetscapes proposed along the eastern and southern gateways into the City. However, the City can continue to include the planning for these gateways in the updated General Plan.

No additional aesthetic standards are required of commercial sites along the major roadways other than meeting the Architectural and Design Standards. This could be included in the next General Plan update.

2. Require enhanced screening of mechanical equipment and outdoor storage areas.

The Development Code does not require enhanced screening of mechanical equipment or outdoor storage areas along major roadways. All commercial development need to comply with Section 151.15.005, Walls and Screening Devices, which requires all ground mounted mechanical equipment and garbage dumpsters to be screened by a 6-foot block wall if viewed from a public roadway.

3. Require improved entry signage and landscaping.

A Sierra Vista entryway sign was installed at the intersection of State Route 90 and Buffalo Soldier Trail in 2017. The sign includes the new City brand and logo. No additional signs are proposed at the east and south entryway into the City.

4. Create a regional gateway overlay district in coordination with Cochise County.

An overlay has not been created at this time. The City will look at the need and necessity of an overlay district in the update to the General Plan.

# Goal 2-6 Plan appropriate development of vacant State Trust Land located within the City

### **Strategies**

1. Encourage infill development of the master planned State Trust Land. (State Land Master Plans for Section 2 and Section 36.)

The Arizona State Land Department created and recorded the original Canada Vista subdivision plat in 1990 which covered 284 acres. Sixty acres of this original state subdivision was sold to a private developer and has been subdivided as the Canada Vista subdivision. No additional development of the original state plat has been developed to this point.

The Arizona State Land Department owns 230 acres within Section 36. The City updated and approved the State Master Plan for this area, known as the Sierra Vista Town Center, through a General Plan Amendment in 2009. The City acquired a 28-acre parcel from the State Land Department in 2013 which is now being used for additional soccer fields. The City is proposing a Civic Center Concept Plan for this area which will include improved sports fields and additional amenities such as walking paths, exercise stations, and multi-use paths.

2. Plan for and purchase, when financially feasible, State Trust Land that provides the greatest public benefit to the community. The Civic Center Concept Plan, which encompasses the athletic fields and additional amenities east of City Hall, includes additional parking areas for the improved sports field. The space needed for the parking areas may require purchasing a portion of the State Trust Land property directly south of the athletic fields. The City has no additional plans to purchase State Trust Land.

# Goal 2-7 Annex areas that provide the most benefit to the City as stated in the City's Annexation policy

**Strategies** 1. Provide incentives to property owners to annex into the City.

The incentives annexation provides includes lower property taxes, a vote in local City government, greater enforcement of property maintenance codes, and Vista Transit and Paratransit Services.

### **STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS**

Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 9-461.05-C 1

"A land use element that:

- (a) Designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of such uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land as may be appropriate to the municipality.
- (b) Includes a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan.
- (c) Identifies specific programs and policies that the municipality may use to promote infill or compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.
- (d) Includes consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use.
- (e) Includes policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the municipality when the plan is adopted, readopted or amended.
- (f) For cities and towns with territory in the vicinity of the military airport or ancillary military facility as defined in section 28-8461, includes consideration of military airport or ancillary military facility operations."

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

Map 4

Map 5

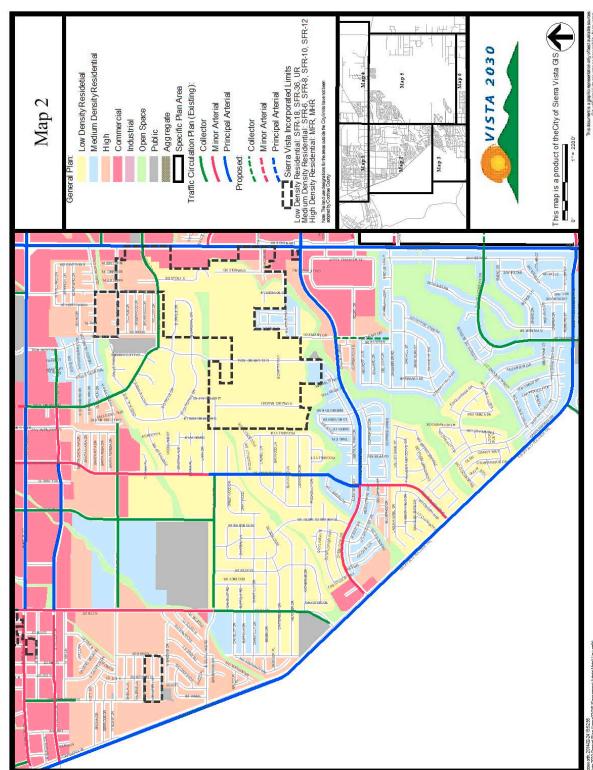
Map 6

Map 7

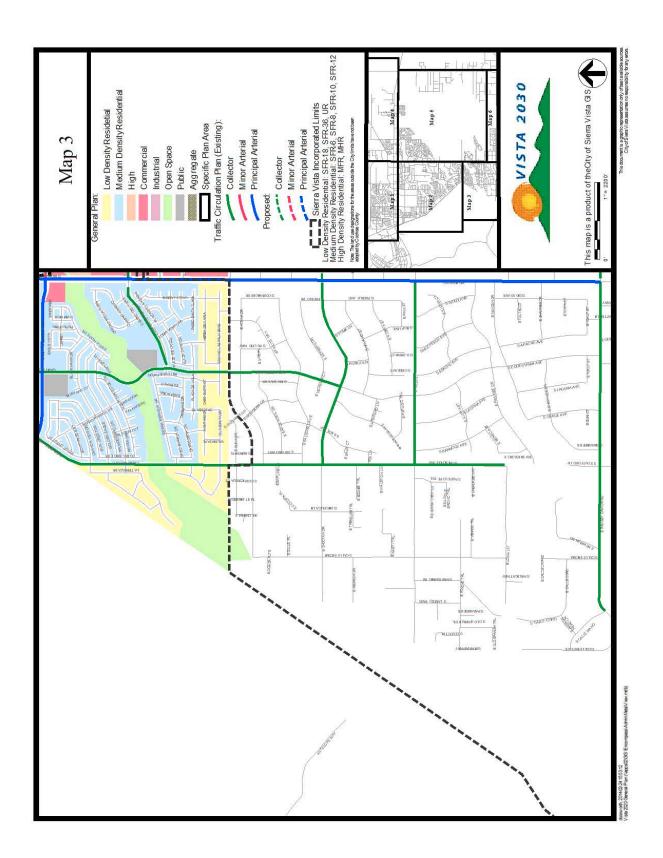
#### **REFERENCES**

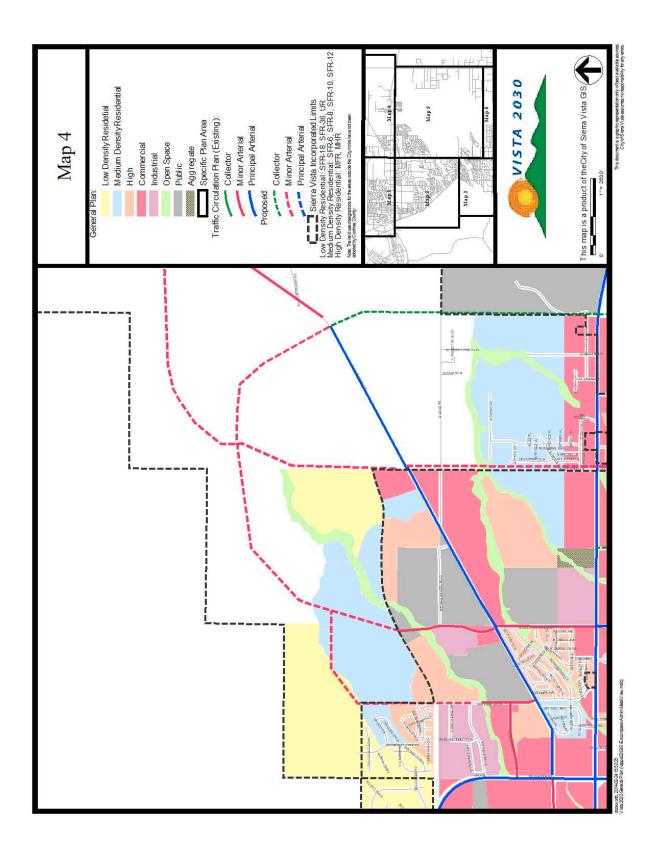
The following references used in this element are City approved documents.

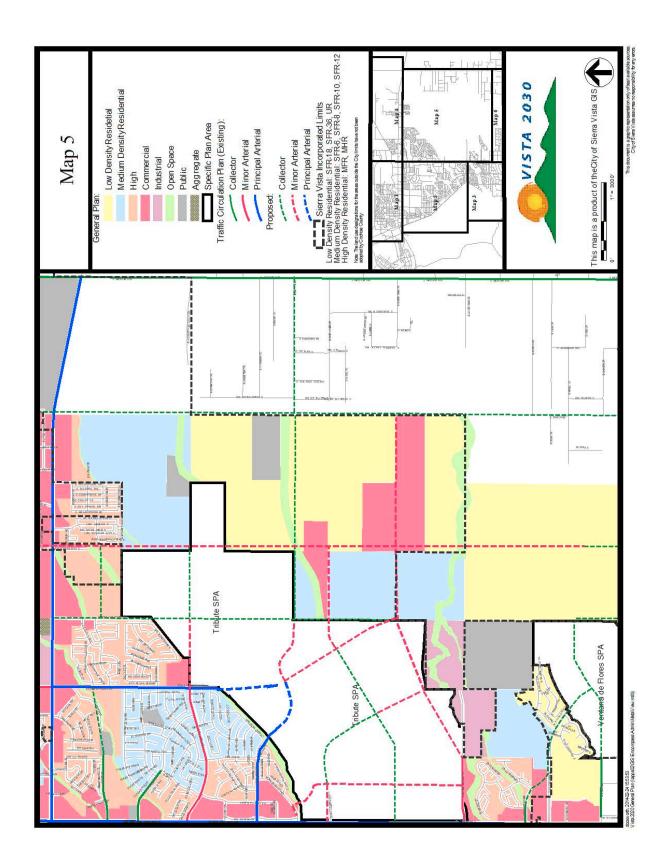
- City of Sierra Vista Annexation Policy
- Tribute Master Plan
- Ventana De Flores Master Plan
- Bella Vista Ranches Master Plan
- Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes Plan

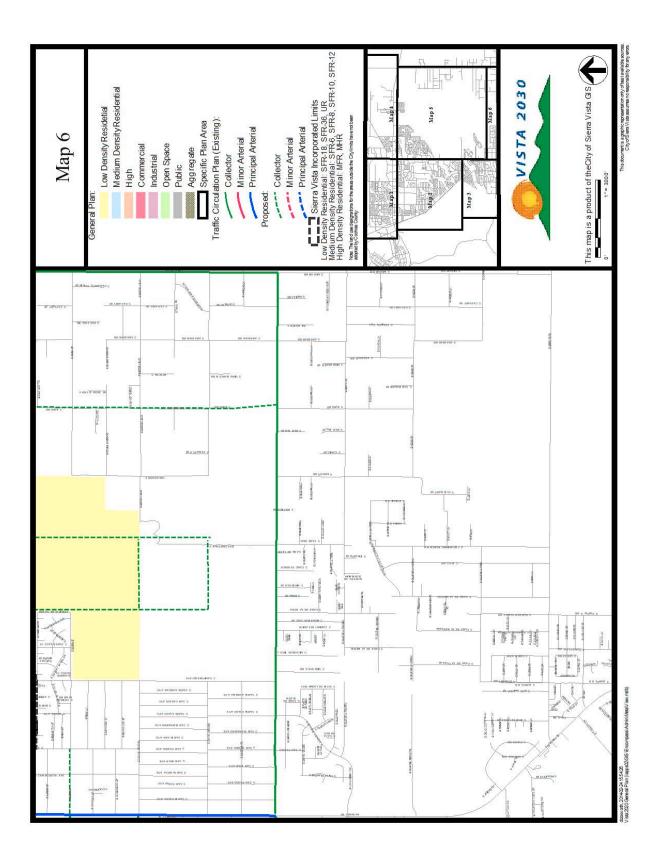


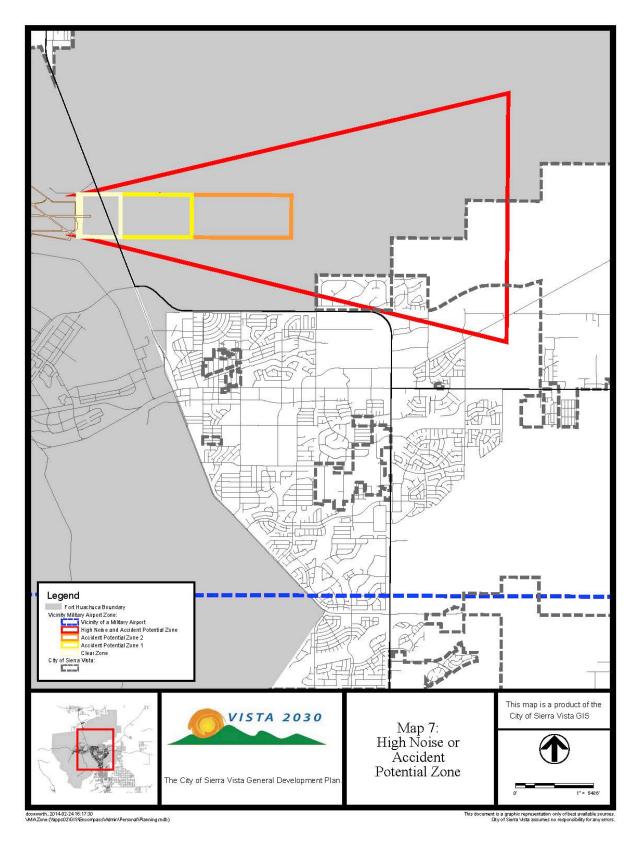
City of Sierra Vista assumes no responsibility for a











Refer to Goal 2-2, Strategy 3