

A stylized landscape illustration enclosed in a grey, arched frame. The scene features a row of four tall, thin trees with green, feathery canopies. In front of these are four smaller trees with orange, dotted canopies. Behind the trees are four dark grey, jagged hills. The text "CITY OF LITCHFIELD PARK" and "GENERAL PLAN UPDATE" is centered over the top of the illustration.

CITY OF LITCHFIELD PARK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Adopted October 2001

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Acknowledgements

The Litchfield Park General Plan was prepared through continuous effort by the Planning and Zoning Commission (who acted as advisory committee for Update), input provided by its citizens at workshops, and the City Council, Cityscape Commission, Recreation, Arts and Parks Commission and City staff. The General Plan was officially adopted as Resolution No. 01-156 on October 3, 2001.

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vicinity map

FOREWORD

The City of Litchfield Park General Plan was developed under the Planning and Zoning Commission's guidance. There was extensive input by residents and stakeholders at numerous participatory events including workshops, briefings, a special Town Hall and public hearings. The resulting document retained the earlier General Plan (adopted 1992) emphasis on Litchfield Park's unique community character while adding "Growing Smarter" dimensions.

A General Plan states municipal policy for maintaining desired land uses, protecting the welfare of the public and guiding future development in accord with community vision. State legislative changes in 1998 and 2000 now require the City's planning to consider additional factors ranging from affordable housing and infill development to new Elements on Open Space, Environmental Planning, Water Resources, Growth Areas and Costs of Development.

This General Plan begins with a section on Goals and Objectives that articulates citizens' vision for Litchfield Park. Specific Element evaluations follow, including Community Character, Land Use and Circulation as well as the Growing Smarter topics. Each Element addresses stated Goals with recommended actions to accomplish them.

The concluding section consists of an Implementation Strategy. It calls for a continuing process of citizen involvement in Litchfield Park planning. Step-by-step milestones are noted. General Plan monitoring is meant to include annual review and, as necessary, amendments. Stated criteria set guidelines for making sure that development decisions are consistent with the Plan.

City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, other Boards and Commissions and City staff are grateful for participation by the many individuals and organizations that have helped Litchfield Park to achieve a truly citizen-driven General Plan.

INTRODUCTION / GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Litchfield Park General Plan is intended to express a community vision and how that vision is to be realized. It is a statement by all who have participated in its evolution -- the City Council, Boards and Commissions, City staff and the public -- of means to protect established local character and of standards for new development. As a refinement to the first adopted General Plan for the City of Litchfield Park, this document now represents continuing commitment to excellence for the benefit of Litchfield Park's residents, visitors, businesses and organizations.

The General Plan is meant to shape development which will help the greater community to achieve balanced growth while maintaining Litchfield Park's distinctive character. The progressive, long-term development of Litchfield Park depends upon creating opportunities for innovative solutions, addressing the future physical, business, social, cultural, environmental and healthcare needs of the community. A defined framework of goals and objectives has been set to meet these challenges within the distinctive context that has identified Litchfield Park as a special place.

The General Plan reflects the community's heritage as a village specifically designed for accommodating special quality of life. The emphasis of planning is on people, their families and daily activities. Today's goals follow Litchfield Park's founding principle: **to create a highly desirable physical and social living environment.**

VISION: VILLAGE CONCEPT

The village concept is fundamental to the vision for Litchfield Park. The desired image is that of the traditional small town with a complementary and harmonious blend of commercial and residential areas.

- * A village townsite, mostly residential in character, which is generally defined by arterial roads bounding its outer limits.
- * A village center convenient to the local residents, with a collection of community facilities such as churches, resort, elementary school, shopping and business services,

a library, a medical center, recreation facilities, which provides the focus of the City's activities.

- * A variety of housing choices: higher density townhouses and apartments clustered around the village center, with lower density, large lot homes located in peripheral areas.
- * A pathway system which connects residential areas with the village center, offering walking or biking as pleasant, convenient alternatives to the automobile.
- * A traffic circulation system designed to minimize through traffic from penetrating through the village.

CITYWIDE GOALS

This General Plan is a coordinating document that serves as a guide for municipal development policy. It is based on the goals and objectives identified by local citizens as means to accomplish the vision they have articulated for their community. Litchfield Park's general planning aims are organized into those goals with broad implications and others that address individual Plan Elements.

The following sets of goals are each supplemented by specific objectives or **policies** which will be observed as part of the General Plan's implementation strategy:

General Community Goals

Maintain a desirable village identity.

- Plan for neighborhood accessibility.
- Incorporate village themes in new developments.
- Blend resort growth with Village goals.

Encourage quality development for the City and surrounding areas.

- Support high standards for community improvements.
- Participate in regional planning initiatives.
- Interact with adjacent municipalities, the County and the Maricopa Association of Governments.

Project an orderly, attractive, well-kept appearance.

- Promote voluntary property maintenance activities through a Village Pride Program.
- Enforce local ordinances and development standards.
- Maintain City goals for consistently high community standards.

Land Use Goals

Develop neighborhoods in accord with the village concept's land use and intensity pattern.

- Permit higher densities and use mixes in and around the Village Center.
- Encourage graduations toward more spacious sites at peripheral locations.
- Integrate employment and shopping opportunities where appropriate.

Provide a variety of housing opportunities for a wide range of income and age levels.

- Encourage multi-generational neighborhoods.
- Express preference for neighborhoods with a mix of housing types and sizes.
- Promote good value in housing and community amenities.

Offer recreational resources, public facilities and amenities that meet the traditional standards of Litchfield Park.

- Adhere to established park and open space criteria.
- Include the pathway system as an integral part of all land use development.
- Emphasize education, art and culture.
- Encourage developer contributions to public amenities.

Respond to development proposals for an improved retail-employment balance.

- Consider opportunity sites for shop, offices or other employers.
- Encourage new or expanded local businesses to serve more of residents' shopping needs.
- Coordinate planning with commercial interests within the City.

Circulation Goals

Maintain a hierarchical network of roads and pathways.

- Emphasize pedestrian/bicycle pathways for local circulation.
- Develop adequate roadway capacity and access for auto circulation.
- Observe adopted standards for design, maintenance, signalization and signage.
- Coordinate pathway and road linkage within new neighborhoods and encourage connection with adjacent jurisdictions.

Reduce transportation costs and negative environmental impacts of vehicular emissions.

- Encourage alternative modes of transportation for commuting, intra-community trips as well as recreation.
- Cooperate with regional mass transit planning.
- Encourage use of alternative fuel vehicles, particularly electric carts.

Design circulation facilities to fit the community.

- Implement City-wide pathway connections.
- Scale right-of-way improvements to the neighborhoods or uses they serve.
- Implement traffic controls where necessary for safe transition between City streets and adjoining arterial roads.

Community Facilities & Services Goals

Aggressively pursue high-quality, but economical public services and facilities to local residences and businesses.

- Assure capacity and quality standards for water, sewer and drainage.
- Represent the public interest in coordinating with public utilities and contract service providers.
- Participate in annual Capital Improvement Program updating.

Assist in educational and other institutions' planning.

- Respond to requests for site planning advice in coordinating neighborhood planning.
- Accommodate needs for churches, schools and healthcare facilities.
- Conform institutional site selection with village concept principles.
- Encourage joint use of facilities.

Maintain excellence in recreation, culture and art for a growing municipality.

- Preserve the strong role of recreation in community life.
- Encourage the goals and programs of the City's Recreation, Arts and Parks Commission.
- Assist civic organizations in efforts to provide community enrichment.
- Develop broad scope cultural activities for community.
- Promote the creation of a multi-generational, multi-use facility.

Economic Development Goals

Strengthen the City's economic base, providing a self-sufficient and balanced community.

- Identify opportunity areas for economic development.
- Consider cost-benefit analyses for annexation or infill masterplanning.
- Diversify the local revenue base.

Position Litchfield Park to improve employment opportunities.

- Publicize quality of life, residential desirability and demographic advantages.
- Use zoning tools consistent with economic development goals.
- Provide appropriate sites for business and commercial uses.
- Stipulate high standards in terms of regulations, expectations and development guidelines.
- Plan to capture more residents', part-year residents' and visitors' expenditures.

Community Image Goals

Preserve a quality living environment which integrates community design with the area's natural resources.

- Maintain a well-landscaped appearance, consistent with water conservation targets.
- Within budget constraints and City priorities, implement goals and programs of the Cityscape Commission.
- Support excellence in architecture, sign design and public art.

Accomplish appropriate design scale -- community, neighborhood or site -- as project design considerations.

- Preserve spacious community appearance.
- Identify focal points, such as City entries, for special treatment.
- Encourage building design and arrangement to fit the individual site and its scale context.

Implement guidelines for public and private properties' appearance enhancement.

- Note consistent themes for color and building material selection, landscaping and signage.
- Monitor property maintenance practices and take action to enforce compliance with ordinances.

Environmental Planning Goals

Contribute to regional air quality solutions.

- Support County standards pertaining to outdoor burning.
- Continue to emphasize alternate travel modes, particularly with path facilities.
- Support transit options, such as park-and-ride, from the City to other metropolitan destinations.
- Develop dust control mitigation guidelines for developers of both residential and commercial properties.

Conserve the community's water supply and quality.

- Encourage the private water provider, Litchfield Park Service Company (LPSCo), to maintain high standards in potable water delivery and ample supply for serving City growth.
- Promote widespread consideration of water re-use programs, emphasizing re-use for new development.
- Observe Arizona Department of Water Resources guidelines in future public landscaping projects.
- Conserve water resources for both public and private uses.

Maintain a healthful living environment.

- Discourage land uses or activities that produce inordinate noise or glare.
- Discourage activities and uses which might result in unlawful contamination of the soil.
- Provide assistance or information for hazardous material disposal.

Adapt conservation technologies to community preferences.

- Sustain or support meaningful trash recycling programs.
- Consider constructed wetlands and recharge projects as community open spaces.
- Research alternatives to current marking procedures utilized by Blue Stake to mitigate “gang-graffiti appearance” on City streets and rights-of-way as well as commercial, private and City-owned properties.
- Adopt street noise mitigation measures.

Open Space and Recreation Goals

Preserve the strong role of recreation in community life.

- Meet the outdoor enjoyment needs of persons of all ages.
- Support RAPCOM and City staff efforts to improve recreational facilities.
- Expand parks and maintain safe, attractive facilities.
- Promote special sporting, recreational and festival events in character with the community.

Integrate multi-purpose pathways into neighborhoods throughout the City.

- Establish criteria for installing paths in all new development.
- Maintain, upgrade and connect paths, trails and underpasses for community-wide access as a continuous, internal circulation network.
- Place high emphasis on pathway convenience, security and safety.

Enhance Litchfield Park’s spacious, natural setting.

- Encourage Cityscape Commission recommendations for maintaining the City’s “oasis” appearance.
- Reserve natural habitats where appropriate.

- Maintain horticultural display excellence at Rancho La Loma, Kiwanis Park, City parks and elsewhere.
- Integrate open space areas into developing neighborhoods and mixed-use masterplans.

Community Appearance and Historic Preservation

Project an orderly, attractive, well-kept appearance.

- Promote voluntary property maintenance through a Village Pride Program.
- Enforce local ordinances and development standards.
- Maintain City-wide attention to aesthetic excellence.

Respect Litchfield Park's heritage as a balanced, planned community.

- Preserve historic structures through voluntary property owner maintenance and, as appropriate, with preservation ordinances.
- Identify specific places or districts for their importance to community continuity.
- Integrate non-residential uses in or adjacent to neighborhoods through landscaped buffers and pathway connections.

Support architectural excellence in both public and private development.

- Seek distinctive urban design, together with visual accents such as public art, graphics and landscaping.
- Focus on human scale, promoting building size and design compatible with the surroundings.
- Encourage creative re-use of early Village buildings.
- Maintain and replicate distinctive design features or motifs.

Aggressively protect the City's clean, well-landscaped image.

- Within budget constraints and City priorities, implement Cityscape Commission appearance initiatives.
- Combat eyesores on public, commercial and residential properties.
- List preferred plant materials consistent with community themes.

Growth Areas Goals

Evaluate development proposals in terms of their contribution to overall community balance.

- Cooperate, where appropriate, with private sector masterplanning initiatives.
- Determine whether proposed dwellings, jobs and revenue sources satisfy the community's goals.
- Encourage development scale that allows for creativity and economy.

Ascertain that both the City and property owners will benefit from growth.

- Support only annexation, redevelopment or infill plans that conform with the General Plan; and/or
- Adopt guidelines for General Plan Amendment that require justification for change.
- Consider development timing that meshes with City facilities and service availability.

Mitigate the impacts of growth on surrounding areas.

- Buffer more intense land uses from their neighbors.
- Provide adequate infrastructure to avoid congestion, shortages, overloads.
- Add to community amenities.

Costs of Development Goals

Prefer technologies that reduce operations and maintenance expenses.

- Protect citizens from excessive or escalating fees.
- Require installation of high-quality materials, equipment.
- Avoid service extensions that contribute to sprawl, “leapfrog” development.

Conduct cost-benefit assessments for proposed systems or facilities investment.

- Confirm that sufficient “customer” demand exists.
- Plan for economies-of-scale.
- Coordinate public works and utilities improvements
- Require new development to cover a proportionate share of municipal costs.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Citizens place highest priority on the community's unique quality as a special place in an urban environment. The quality of life experience constitutes an overriding preference above all other civic aspirations. For that reason, this Element provides direction for other General Plan components.

Litchfield Park enjoys a character that is different from its neighboring communities. It owes distinctiveness in appearance and function to a vision created by its founder, Paul Litchfield. Planning is responsible for the City's diversity that combines residential variety with outdoor enjoyment, values of living privacy with public activity.

Maintaining the Litchfield Park vision is, in many respects, more challenging now than was the establishment of the original "village" model. Urban growth is impacting the City on three sides and affecting the sustainability of its long-time neighbor, Luke Air Force Base. Preserving its attributes as an independent, free-standing community and buffering the metropolitan edge to expansive natural and Air Force base land masses are seen as the key municipal planning principles.

1. LITCHFIELD PARK IMAGE

Integrating urban land uses with outdoor space is fundamental to the City's development pattern. Interests in agriculture, recreation, outdoor enjoyment, scenery and well-maintained streetscapes all influenced the community's evolution.

a. Historical Perspective

Long before municipal incorporation, Litchfield Park acquired a special status as a planned community. In many respects, it was founded as an outpost of civility in a region that typified America's "wild west" through the first half of the Twentieth Century. Goodyear Tire and Rubber, based in Ohio, created a community to oversee the agricultural function of producing long staple cotton

for its products; and, at the same time, to establish a model village that also served as resort retreat for its executives.

Luke Air Force Base introduced thousands of persons who trained here to the opportunities and prospects for settling here in the post-World War II era. Litchfield Park contributed its masterplanned tradition by conceiving its on-going development as a series of interconnected, but largely independent, “urban villages”. The first, Tierra Verde, modeled a community unit containing homes, churches, school, professional offices and shops for residents’ daily needs. A very livable place, with distinctive landscaping and architecture, the village was meant to be replicated over thousands of acres. Delays in Interstate highway construction, interim masterplanning concepts and, finally, a court decision that prevented absorption of more than 12,000 acres into the City shortly after its incorporation, precluded replication of the original village theme.

Today, well-designed structures, convenient pathways, public places and events contribute to a sense of village that people here wish to preserve and extend to future development.

b. Unique Community Identity

The City inherited tradition, standards and administrative practices to augment Maricopa County requirements were in place long before incorporation. Neighborhood associations and a strong management entity supported privately-provided utilities, enforced Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and maintained streetscapes more effectively than most Arizona municipalities.

Litchfield Elementary School, the many churches, cultural and civic organizations all provide a strong framework for community life. The Recreation Center, parks and multi-purpose pathways -- together with the Wigwam’s world class golf and other resort amenities -- contribute to a lifestyle for residents and visitors that is unlike any other in the State.

Since becoming a City in 1987, the elected and appointed leadership have attempted to reinforce the Litchfield image. The continuing public involvement through City Council, citizen commissions on Cityscape, Recreation/ Arts/Parks, Planning and Zoning as well as Design Review and Board of Adjustment monitors proposals for developments beyond City borders as well as future masterplanning for the community's growth areas: Rancho La Loma, The Village at Litchfield Park, and others. (See: Growth Areas' Element)

c. Appearance Quality

City appearance receives a great deal of citizen attention. Neighborhood eyesores constitute a particular concern among homeowners. Improved code enforcement activities pertaining to appearance standards were advocated by a significant proportion of persons who participated in the General Plan update process.

The City's traditional "palm and citrus" landscape motif requires attention both in terms of continuing the image strategically where it is appropriate; and in encouraging a broader array of acceptable drought-resistant plant materials. Water conservation measures adopted by the Arizona Department of Water Resources prohibit installation of high water use vegetation on public property. Xeriscape and similar landscape approaches are encouraged on private lands.

Maintenance for both public and private properties is the paramount community character concern. City efforts in landscaping public park and rights-of-way upkeep are applauded. Needed street improvements have been noted in the Circulation Element. Residents compliment the Wigwam Resort's excellence in appearance maintenance. Some portions of the community, however, evidence a need for improved maintenance measures.

2. COMMUNITY IMAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Numerous General Plan goals and objectives relate to sustaining Litchfield Park's contrast from other municipalities. Specific suggestions acknowledge community planning intangibles ranging from construction quality to property upkeep. Action recommendations relate to citizen-articulated goals.

- a. **Goal:** Maintain a desirable village identity.

Compact, pedestrian-scale subcommunities or groups of neighborhoods typify the "village" character adopted by Litchfield Park's early planners. Changes in conditions have occurred over the past four or five decades which altered the community's originally-intended scale. Now, adapting the village concept to serve areas that may not be inside the municipal boundaries, the General Plan can consider "cores" that may be located so as to serve residents in other jurisdictions.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Include mixed-use activities (such as shopping, churches or schools) with neighborhood connectivity in approving future masterplans and annexation sites. Central place functions can serve residential neighborhoods beyond the City boundaries, as well, encouraging open space, paths and development criteria to blend with existing Litchfield Park.

- b. **Goal:** Project an orderly, attractive, well-kept appearance.

Evidence of property owner pride contributes to a community's socio-economic value. Concerns were expressed at public meetings that City appearance may be declining in some City neighborhoods.

Preferred approaches call for voluntary attention to appearance problems, Ordinance provisions may define basic health and welfare criteria for property maintenance, but the community wishes to establish positive incentives.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider property maintenance standards for prevention of neighborhood decline. In addition to code enforcement, however, emphasize voluntary efforts; neighborhood assistance programs (organized by the City or homeowners' groups) including donated materials, labor, equipment loans; and recognition programs.

- c. **Goal:** Assist in educational and other institutions' planning.

City leadership welcomes opportunities for cooperative improvement programming. Public service agencies in or affecting Litchfield Park are encouraged to suggest ways in which the City may share planning, installation or operation of mutually-beneficial programs/facilities.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Partner with the Litchfield Elementary School District, local churches and community organizations to coordinate facility expansion and/or site planning. Consider joint-venture maintenance programs and shared capital improvements such as landscaping, parking or pathways.

- d. **Goal:** Maintain excellence in recreation, culture and arts.

Although the City is not directly responsible for many of the enrichment opportunities available to local residents, it is recognized that those provider agencies or groups add to Litchfield Park character. Accordingly, citizens favor "in kind" assistance and encouragement to community arts, culture and education.

Where practical, this General Plan intends to include citizen-serving agencies within the spirit of General Plan implementation.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider the articulation of City policy to support organizations that contribute to Litchfield Park living quality. Enabling programs (such as coordination of capital improvements or encouraging developer participation) would be the focus of municipal assistance rather than direct financial aid.

- e. **Goal:** Integrate guidelines for design, scale and appearance in both the natural and built environment.

Creative design is evident in the community's early development. General Plan principles favor innovative responses to design for form and function. Broad principles may be articulated to invite excellent development and to prevent inconsistent or non-compatible construction.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Formulate design guidelines and architectural standards (e.g., colors, materials, landscape) pertaining to developments other than single-family homes which reflect community appearance expectations. These principles, although not mandatory, would direct project designers to architectural and site improvement criteria deemed generally acceptable for Design Review Board evaluations. Similar assessment factors (or "trade-offs") might be explored for single-family residential proposals in planned or clustered developments.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Litchfield Park's ultimate corporate limits have become circumscribed by neighboring jurisdiction boundaries. The municipality contains an area of slightly more than three square miles and a population of 3,739. With annexation potential, its area could increase to more than four square miles; and, at buildout, its population is projected in the 15-17,000 range. (See Implementation Strategies, pp. 57-64) Land use planning is necessary to implement the quality variety and extent of activities required for the support of a compact, well-balanced community.

The City of Litchfield Park is predominantly residential. It is unique among neighboring municipalities for the remarkably high proportion of land devoted to recreational purposes. Because most of the open lands are associated with the Wigwam Resort and its golf courses, the City is accurately characterized as a "residential-resort" community.

As originally envisioned in the village planning concept, there would be a variety of components in the land use equation, including shopping and jobs. These functions were intended, primarily, to be accommodated in the village core area. The City's existing state of development, however, exhibits a shortfall in attaining such a balance. And other sites, such as those recently annexed at Litchfield Park's edges, are considered important commercial areas in addition to core locations. Accordingly, this Land Use Element considers means for encouraging appropriate, new, nonresidential development as well as the preservation of Litchfield Park's residential and resort character.

This Land Use Element provides a new focus for future development in concert with Growing Smarter Plus initiatives. Economic development as well as Public Facilities and Services, are considered here, in the context of the City's land development guidance program.

As a result of changes in technology and living values, consideration is directed to reshaping community land use principles to fit present and future citizens' needs. For example, locations for commercial or employment uses may be integrated into sites other than the village core.

1. CURRENT LAND USE

Litchfield Park has a definite configuration, derived from its beginnings as a masterplanned new town. Urban sprawl is not a problem in the City; however, careful selection of land uses for infill, reuse or redevelopment and annexation expansion is especially critical to achieve a positive land use equilibrium. The community is, by design, heavily oriented to residential neighborhoods surrounding the Village Center, the Wigwam Resort and its golf courses. Other types of land use -- especially commercial and employment -- are minimal, requiring further development.

There is, for so compact an area, an impressive array of activity and housing types. Through the following analyses of contemporary land utilization, it is apparent that some fine tuning initiatives are necessary to extend quality housing and to enhance retail, service and professional convenience as well as revenue base diversification for the community's long term benefit.

a. Residential/Resort

The predominantly residential character of Litchfield Park is amplified by the intermingling of the Wigwam Resort and community open spaces. More than half of Litchfield Park's land area is devoted to homes. Many housing units are twenty to thirty years old, yet there is little evidence of neighborhood aging. Newer construction has begun in The Village at Litchfield Park developments west of Litchfield Road, with occasional custom building on the original townsite's few vacant lots as well as extensive remodelings of older homes.

The community has a full range of residential types: townhouses, patio homes, garden apartments, single-family detached homes ranging from smaller, starter houses to large residences on estate-sized lots. Most are owner-occupied dwelling units, but there is a reasonable selection of affordable rental housing in well-kept apartments, town-homes, patio-homes and single-family detached homes.

Developing neighborhoods west of Litchfield Road are being encouraged to emulate the village pattern, applying its concepts whenever possible. Litchfield Greens I, developed during the 1980s, is a private community, in which the few remaining lots are being developed with custom homes. Greens I is connected (via underpass) to the pathway system, offering non-vehicular access to the original townsite for shopping, churches and public recreation areas. The Village at Litchfield Park, completing the residential ring around the Wigwam Resort's West golf course, has been planned as an open community with a private neighborhood. The Village at Litchfield Park will have its own parks and paths, convenient to the middle school south of Indian School Road.

Existing planned community amenities are accessible to residents. Litchfield Park Recreation Center, sited at Old Litchfield Road and Wigwam Boulevard, is easily reached, via the pathway network, from all parts of the City. There is also shared vehicular parking for the Library, Recreation Center, Litchfield Elementary School, shopping and services located in the heart of the community.

Residential excellence was maintained, prior to municipal incorporation, by a privately-managed master home owners' association. As a city, Litchfield Park seeks to continue these standards through carefully drafted, enforceable ordinances. Where legally defensible, City government incorporates or supports the intent of its various subdivisions' and planned developments' covenants, conditions and restrictions.

b. Commercial (Retail and Service)

Litchfield Park was laid out, according to design, to contain shops, services and offices in the northeast quadrant of its Village Center. The mini-center served Litchfield Park residents for more than six decades; however, recently its shops and service establishments have been largely vacant. The Wigwam is staging a revival of business activity here -- with a coffee shop catering to residents and hotel guests. Along Wigwam Boulevard, City Hall administrative facilities and the local newspaper, housed in a former service station, maintain some employment in the village core.

There is a continuing scarcity of commercial development in the community. Less than two percent of the land area is ascribed to retail and service. Most residents shop in adjacent municipalities.

The largest single contributor to Litchfield Park's retail sales tax base is the Wigwam Resort. Facilities expansions there have included restaurants, lounges, meeting rooms, a ball room and guest-related specialty shops which are available to local residents as well as resort guests. Grounds associated with the hospitality use, itself, (exclusive of recreational space) add an estimated one hundred acres to Litchfield Park's business property inventory. By including the resort, the community's proportion of commerce-related land utilization rises to twelve percent of the developed area.

Existing zoning allows for relatively small, new commercial developments such as the pool supply store and dental office recently constructed at the southwest corner of Litchfield Road and Camelback. The active local housing market is expected to generate demand for additional commercial uses. Larger properties required for planned shopping plazas would be possible through specific opportunity area planning such as the joint venture ownership site at the intersection of Litchfield Road and Wigwam Boulevard (northwest corner) or site

reservations in future annexation areas to the west or north of the present City limits.

c. Business (Office)

Prospects for employment generating uses have increased in the Valley vicinity. Traffic accessibility on Interstate 10 has broadened the area's employment base and increased the appeal for business locations. Litchfield Park and its neighbors were once the center of Arizona's cotton industry, but now they are easily accessible to urban commerce. Agribusiness is still a major contributor to the area's economy; however, farming activity has ceased in Litchfield Park and is declining in adjacent communities as urban development occurs.

The community's workforce is well-educated and highly skilled. The preponderance of employed local residents commute to jobs outside Litchfield Park: to downtown Phoenix, nearby communities and Luke Air Force Base. Many own and operate businesses or hold professional and technical positions, contributing to the City's high average household income. Relatively few of the jobs available in Litchfield Park provide work for its residents. Apart from public sector employment -- schools, government -- most local opportunities are relatively low-paying sales and hospitality industry jobs.

The growing Estrella Mountain Community College Center, less than a mile south of Litchfield Park, has provided substantial employment as well as jobs skill training for the area. Through planned pathway links, employment at the college contributes to the village concept by offering jobs -- and education -- that can be reached by bicycle or on foot.

There are no industrial uses in Litchfield Park. Under existing conditions there is neither space nor compatibility for locating industrial or manufacturing operations within the City's corporate limits. Research campus development might be included in future, masterplanned neighborhoods; but present

opportunity sites for employment centers are small, appropriate to office-type uses in residentially-scaled buildings.

d. Public/Institutional Uses

Civic uses, not counting streets and utilities, comprise about two percent of the incorporated municipality. There are few municipally-owned properties (City Hall, its adjacent parking/maintenance yard facilities, the Library and Recreation Center building, with their joint parking, for example). Consideration is being given to constructing new facilities to include, at a minimum, City administrative, public safety and court offices, assembly rooms and customer service counters.

Litchfield Elementary School, sited in the original village core area at the southeast corner of Litchfield and Wigwam Boulevard, serves the surrounding neighborhoods. Its 2000-01 enrollment is 615 students with a capacity of 850 children from Kindergarten through Grade 5. Older youngsters attend public schools nearby in the City of Goodyear. Satellite facilities (located approximately 1.5 miles south in the Palm Valley Elementary School) serve 319 students in grades 6 and 7. The Western Sky Middle School, just across Wigwam Boulevard from The Village at Litchfield Park neighborhoods, has an enrollment of 895 students, mainly in grade 8. Students in Grades 9 through 12 attend either the Agua Fria High School in Avondale or Millennium High School, immediately adjacent to Litchfield Park's western boundary, which has a current enrollment of 853.

There are six churches serving Litchfield Park. These have ample sites and, generally, are located on collector streets with convenient access to residents. In addition to their religious services, local churches house a variety of social, cultural and community outreach programs.

e. Community Facilities and Services

Litchfield Park was developed with emphasis on service from private providers and Maricopa County. Since incorporation in 1987, the municipality has taken over management of various governmental functions and properties; however, attention to sound fiscal principles has dictated that the City approach operational and investment obligations on a methodical basis.

Municipal streets and parks (discussed in the Circulation and Open Space Elements, respectively) represent the majority of the local government's current maintenance operations responsibility. City crews keep landscaped areas well-manicured, streets in good repair and public recreation areas safe and serviceable for community residents. A modern street sweeper and other maintenance equipment are owned and operated by the City.

Although the municipality itself has limited infrastructure investments, Litchfield Park management coordinates a comprehensive array of services conducted by private or quasi-public entities to assure adequate, cost-effective response to citizens' needs. This assistance extends to promotion of high-quality programs for education, health care, art, culture and social-economic opportunities throughout the community.

Local government operates from the 4,000 square foot City Hall building which provides administrative, office, meeting and Justice Court space. A police sub-station office, located in the building at 214 West Wigwam Boulevard, is manned by City of Avondale officers under a joint services agreement. Parking and storage for City maintenance vehicles is located on the site, which was formerly used as the management headquarters of Goodyear Farms. Rural Metro fire and emergency medical service response is available to City residents and businesses on a subscription basis. The company mans a station located at 105 West Desert Avenue. Trash collection is also arranged on a property owner subscription basis, currently under agreement with private contractors.

Master developers of Litchfield Park's expansion areas are expected to install and maintain streets, paths, parks, landscaping and other urban improvements commensurate with the community's established standards. City acceptance of

dedication is contingent upon inspection, phasing of transition to municipal control and, where applicable, development agreement understandings.

Cost-effective wet utilities (water and sewer) is a high municipal priority. These functions are currently served by a private provider, Litchfield Park Service Company (LPSCo). (See: Water Resources Element)

Drainage is also a major concern to City residents. The Maricopa Flood Control District maintains trunkline storm sewers and flood water diversion structures with the Agua Fria River east of the City serving as the major collector for runoff, transporting excess water to detention basins to the south, along Interstate 10. County-sponsored drainage engineering improvements will facilitate drainage such as the Colter Channel, north of the City, into the Agua Fria.

Electricity and natural gas utilities are provided to Litchfield Park by Arizona Public Service and Southwest Gas, respectively.

2. LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Decisions pertaining to future development should respect the existing land use patterns and, where feasible, implement the City's intent for a compatible, balanced mix of community activities. Specific attention to economic sustainability considers, first, preservation of property values; second, infusion of revenue- and job-producing enterprises to support the City's fiscal well-being.

- a. **Goal:** Develop neighborhoods in accord with the village concept.

Masterplanned housing developments, as well as the proposed Rancho La Loma health care campus, provide a variety of dwelling types with recreation/open space amenities. Where practical, opportunities for working, obtaining personal services and shopping would be incorporated to serve neighborhood residents.

Adapting Litchfield Park’s traditional “core” functions to the changing development circumstances suggests that commercial functions may be sited so as to attract shoppers or employees from new neighborhoods beyond the City boundaries. That is, the City encourages residents of other, nearby jurisdictions to patronize Litchfield Park commercial facilities -- just as they utilize the community’s parks and library.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Promote development proposals that offer: variety in housing types, opportunities to work and shop within walking or bicycle distance, sufficient open space to accommodate their population and continuous pathway linkages to other neighborhoods. Preferably, higher density residential development would be clustered around activity centers with adequate buffering.

b. **Goal:** Provide a wide range of housing opportunities.

Rental apartments, townhomes and condominiums belong in well-rounded communities. The original Litchfield Plan carefully included affordable options for persons of diverse ages, incomes and household sizes. Rancho La Loma housing, in the health care context, can similarly provide multiple living arrangement options grouped near medical, professional offices and supporting businesses.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider adoption of guideline criteria to assure a mix of dwelling and lot sizes in larger planned developments. As a matter of community policy, encourage inclusionary residential areas as well as private communities.

c. **Goal:** Offer public facilities and amenities that meet the traditional standards of Litchfield Park.

Positive contributions to active outdoor enjoyment mark any project for integration into the Litchfield Park lifestyle. Amenities for the new homeowners or commercial areas should also provide community-wide benefits in spaciousness, appearance or public activities.

Landscaping, screening and infrastructure improvements should evidence any developer's commitment to Litchfield Park living quality. Attention to community appearance ranks high among citizens' acceptance of additions to the City.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Recreation space and pathway connections exemplify the City's expectation for new developments' integration into this unique community. Evaluations of proposed new construction or redevelopment focus on the dedication of land, improvements and/or funding for amenities which meet the goals of the General Plan as well as the needs of the planned homes and businesses.

d. **Goal:** Strengthen the City's balance for economic development.

Business diversification supports citizens' Growing Smarter vision for their City. The General Plan reserves sites and encourages proposals for economic development projects.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider annexation with development agreements or zoning entitlements that include businesses which will generate municipal revenues and/or provide well-paying jobs for the local workforce with minimal disruption to existing neighborhoods. Similar encouragement applies to appropriately-located infill development.

e. **Goal:** Encourage quality development for the City and surrounding area.

The City has interest in land improvements that are safe, visually appealing and which may be maintained in good condition at a reasonable cost. Community leadership and staff may coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions to support mutual efforts toward shared development standards.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: The City's codes and site plan review procedures need general design performance criteria that challenge developers, their planners, architects and engineers to provide attractive, functional and lasting developments. Flexible guidelines are recommended to foster creative design solutions.

f. *Goal:* Pursue high-quality, but economical public facilities and services.

Municipal or private-provider investment for services to residents of Litchfield Park must produce reliable, cost-effective infrastructure. Local government oversight regarding rates charged to homeowners and businesses is considered an appropriate planning function as indicated by the Costs of Development Element requirement.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Specifications for infrastructure should reflect approved quality-engineering practices. MAG standards should be met or exceeded for all public works projects in Litchfield Park.

Land Use Map

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Litchfield Park is concerned with improved transportation efficiency for its residents and visitors. The community's positioning in the metropolitan area is dependent upon the regional systems for freeways, highways and mass transit; however, it is the City's internal circulation planning that contributes most to local character.

The City of Litchfield Park's circulation pattern is derived from concepts fostered in the early Litchfield Plan. Through traffic does not penetrate neighborhoods; but, rather, is routed along community edges to protect residential area integrity. The City has not accepted the monotonous grid pattern of streets which is characteristic of most other municipalities in the metropolitan area. And, especially, the community has provided an accessible, safe, convenient alternative to automobile transportation in its distinguishing system of bicycle/pedestrian pathways.

1. EXISTING CIRCULATION

There have been changes in conditions over the past four decades which necessitate adjustments in circulation planning. As noted, Litchfield Park has not developed (as had been originally envisioned) into an extended series of villages. Instead, the City represents one complete village (the initial Tierra Verde development) and portions of additional sub-communities added through recent and proposed annexations as well as neighborhoods developing beyond the municipality's corporate limits. Major arterial roadways -- Wigwam Boulevard, Litchfield, Dysart, Camelback and Indian School Roads -- are in place. They border the first "village", as intended; however, they also separate it from adjacent neighborhoods. Developing areas inside Litchfield Park (such as Rancho La Loma and on-going Village at Litchfield Park build-out) as well as homes being constructed outside the municipal limits require planning for safe and convenient circulation.

In a regional context, City resident's travel times to other metropolitan destinations have been improved by Interstate 10 and widening major streets in neighboring jurisdictions.

a. Roadway System

The City's street system observes the roadway hierarchy that marks transportation facilities throughout Maricopa County: arterial, collector and local roads. Planned in the 1960s, the major streets (arterials) have undergone improvements for increased capacity to direct traffic around the City's perimeter. The collector street system disperses vehicles internally within the community; and local, residential streets are clear of unwanted, through traffic movements.

b. Arterials

Dysart Road has been identified by the Maricopa Association of Governments as a "road of regional significance". This designation recognized the increased traffic volumes along the corridor generated by Estrella Mountain Community College Center at Thomas Road and commercial development adjacent to I-10. Indian School, Litchfield, Camelback and Wigwam, Boulevard are also major arteries that have been improved to handle additional traffic and reduce flooding impediments to area transportation.

c. Collectors

Litchfield's successful attempt to avoid the sterile grid pattern of mile (arterial) and half-mile (collector) streets is most apparent in its curvilinear collector street layout. The extensions of Wigwam Boulevard and Old Litchfield Road become straight collectors with lesser speeds and traffic volumes as they penetrate the community.

Major collector streets in the community are Villa Nueva Drive in the developed portion of the City, and planned collector loops for The Village at Litchfield Park as well as the Rancho La Loma future development. Minor collectors, such as Greentree and Clearcreek in Litchfield Greens I and Bird Lane, Fairway Drive, Sagebrush, Desert and La Loma are primarily for distributing traffic within existing neighborhoods.

d. Local Streets

Residential neighborhoods are well-served with roadways scaled to the dwelling unit type and density. Housing areas are generally connected with local street-to-local street circulation across collectors which (with the exception of the Litchfield Greens I subcommunity which does have continuous pathway linkage

via underpass) permits intracommunity traffic movement. Residents can travel to schools, churches, shopping without requiring the use of arterial streets.

Short cul-de-sac and "eyebrow" half circles are utilized throughout the community to create safe internal traffic patterns. These design features, together with the gentle, planned curvature of many streets and occasional planted median "boulevard treatments", establish attractive neighborhood access without allowing automobiles to predominate the residential streetscape.

e. Village Alternative: Pathways

Circulation convenience is built into Litchfield Park's development pattern. Alternatives for walking, biking and allowing short trip use for the many personal golf carts owned by local residents are emphasized both in the community's physical layout and in its distinctive residential lifestyle.

The pathway network continues to be improved or extended as evidence of the community's diversified approach to local transportation. The City maintains more capital investment in multi-purpose paths per capita than any other municipality in the metropolitan region or State. As a guideline, Litchfield Park has striven to maintain an effective ratio of one mile of pathway for every four miles of local street system. As the City develops, it emphasizes the convenience of pathway systems through comprehensive Circulation Element implementation policies.

2. CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic placement of roadway improvements and pathway extensions are required to keep the City free from domination by automobile traffic. Circulation patterns direct vehicular flow around the community and facilitate shorter trips on foot, by bicycle or in carts.

Planned future development promotes convenient access by these alternate modes of transportation. Street layouts discourage use of neighborhood streets by other than local residents.

- a. **Goal:** Maintain the hierarchical network of roads and pathways.

Vehicular trips through Litchfield Park or to in-town destinations of one mile or more are routed along major roadways at the community's edges. Dysart Road and Litchfield Road channel north-south traffic; Indian School/Wigwam Boulevard and Camelback Road provide major east-west access. These are intended to meet trip generation demand for the City's growth areas, but increased use of path connections by residents and visitors is regarded as an important factor to combat congestion.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Design streets and large parking areas in new developments for direct access to arterial roadways. Interior circulation patterns include collector streets to channel traffic from residential areas to arterials without encouraging trips through neighborhoods. Peripheral centers should link, via pathways, to interior systems and to protected crossings of major streets.

- b. **Goal:** Reduce transportation costs and negative environmental impacts of vehicular emissions.

Public transportation provides an option for youth and older citizens who do not drive as well as families who prefer not to incur the cost of maintaining multiple vehicles. Litchfield Park supports increased transit ridership. Amenities and conveniences for alternate transportation use are expressly encouraged. Businesses that contribute to clean, safe transport -- from shuttle service to sale of non-polluting fuels -- should be welcomed in the City.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Promote public transit ridership on the City's established regional bus transit routes by considering park-and-ride facilities (including bicycle racks) and enlisting support from health campus, resort or employer van pools. Facilitate multi-modal transport with local sale and/or rental of bicycles and carts; especially encouraging reduction of automobile trips for shopping or commuting to work.

- c. **Goal:** Design circulation facilities to fit the community. New developments' integration into the City's path and street systems.

Growth areas, in particular, require adaptation to Litchfield Park conditions with attention to appearance and hazard mitigation. Landscaped setbacks provide separation, screening, areas in which to locate paths and street crossing improvements. Criteria should be developed for installation of curvilinear street designs, intersection rotaries and grade-separated path connections where warranted.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Establish traffic engineering standards to coordinate with MAG criteria for major roadways; adapting interior rights-of-way with traffic calming measures and pathway connectivity. Pedestrian safety and amenities are expected features in all site plan or platting proposals.

Circulation Map

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

An outdoor, resort atmosphere was a founding principle for Litchfield Park. Ample grounds of the Wigwam, with fairways abutting residential neighborhoods, reduce the density of development. Parks, pathways and private yards add to the City's open appearance.

Changes in State planning statutes place added emphasis on open space, particularly to encourage preservation of natural areas. Although this community does not contain large expanses of undeveloped, undisturbed land, the spirit of open space conservation is fully respected.

1. EXISTING OUTDOOR ENJOYMENT ASSETS

Maintained open space represents thirty percent of the developed community land area. The Wigwam Resort's five hundred acres of well-manicured golf courses, tennis courts, lawns, landscaping and other recreational uses is the major contributor to the City's spaciousness. Additional properties in both municipal and private ownership are available for public use and enjoyment.

a. Park Facilities

Since the original Tierra Verde village development a quarter of a century before municipal incorporation, the Goodyear Farms property management entity provided and maintained community parks. The City is now responsible for upkeep and improvements in these areas which have been dedicated to the public (except for Scout Park, still privately owned).

Parks, augmented by the public pathway network, constitute slightly more than 60 acres. They include active recreation and playing fields (Scout Park, 6 acres; Turtle Park, 8.5 acres, Staggs Park, 4 acres and the Town Center park area at the Library) as well as expanses suited to leisure (Lake Park, 8.5 acres; Camelback Park, 5 acres) and passive or scenic open spaces (Kiwanis Park, 2.5 acres). Eleven acres of new recreational land are dedicated to serve the developing Village at Litchfield Park sub-community.

At its Year 2000 population, Litchfield Park significantly exceeds national Open Space Recreational land use guidelines with more than 15 acres per thousand

residents. Reservations for open spaces in new annexation areas, as well as seeking park land and improvements as The Village at Litchfield Park and Rancho La Loma develop are necessary to maintain or increase the City's proportion of park and recreation land per capita. If no additional acreage were added, the City would fall well below accepted standards for park facilities.

Ideally, these should be increments of useable open space of about one acre for every additional sixty dwelling units. As a matter of policy, Litchfield Park advocates that newly-developing neighborhoods outside the municipal limits to contain a like proportion of useable open space to prevent overcrowding of the City's facilities.

b. Community Recreation

The City's Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of programs available to the residents and visitors. Presently the community offers recreational activities that include: swim lessons, aerobics, and tennis lessons. Events sponsored or assisted by the Department range from annual golf tournaments to Christmas in the Park, a pre-holiday celebration that draws over 5,000 attendees.

The Recreation Center structure, with adjacent public swimming pool and tennis courts, is located at 100 Old Litchfield Road. It contains meeting and game rooms, restrooms, office and storage areas. The Center is pathway accessible and shares a parking lot with a professional office building and the Florence Brinton Litchfield Memorial Library. Although the land is owned by the City, the library is owned by the Litchfield Park Library Association and operated by Maricopa County. It also has a community meeting room available for local events.

c. Pathway System

Nearly eight miles of recreational pathways are in place or are planned for the City's encouragement of alternate transportation modes. From the original village design to contemporary development planning, pathways are an essential -- and distinguishing -- ingredient of the community's General Plan.

Extended linkages for cyclists, pedestrians or golf cart users are checklist components in all private development plans as well as local government's coordinated planning with adjacent jurisdictions. Newly-developing areas, for example, are expected to address the necessary integration with the City's existing pathway system. Cooperating planning with the cities of Avondale and Goodyear is intended to facilitate path connections to schools, particularly the Estrella Mountain Community College Center, and shopping-service areas, such as the Litchfield Plaza south of Indian School Road.

2. OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

Proactive planning can prevent loss of community spaciousness and overcrowding of outdoor venues or recreational facilities. A comprehensive Parks/Recreation Master Plan is called for, focused on the goals and action recommendations outlined below.

Open space excellence depends on obtaining and strategically allocating funds. Partnerships among the City's local schools, private business and user groups are recommended to acquire and maintain recreational and open space assets.

- a. **Goal:** Preserve the strong role of recreation in community life.

Upgrades to existing facilities are necessary. Safety, cleanliness and capacity enhancements should be appropriately funded so as to maintain standards for local residents commensurate with the quality recreational experience provided by nearby communities and the Wigwam Resort for its guests.

As the City and its user base for recreational facilities grow, needs analyses should be conducted regularly. Multi-generational facilities designed for a variety of interests, activities and ages have been identified as being most responsive in terms of recreation economy, attraction and optimum use.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Respond to residents' and visitors' needs for recreational venues, programs and leisure activities for persons of all ages with adequate municipal funding. Encourage private citizens, organizations and businesses to contribute resources for safe, clean and well-supervised outdoor enjoyment throughout the City.

b. **Goal:** Integrate multi-purpose pathways throughout the City.

There is a widely-supported community commitment to promote pathway network extensions. Transportation, health and economic benefits are recognized from a comprehensive, safe system that joins all neighborhoods and activity centers.

This Plan recognizes the clear, definite relationships between the City's pathway asset and its community character that contributes to the value of local homes and businesses. It is longstanding policy to expect new developments to provide connections that facilitate pathway access.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Coordinate path integration with proposed land uses in and adjacent to the City, including suggested, conceptual links to neighborhoods in Goodyear, Avondale and unincorporated Maricopa County. Safety crossings of arterial roads are to be considered.

c. **Goal:** Enhance Litchfield Park's spacious, natural setting.

The undeveloped southern reaches of Luke Air Force Base, portions of Rancho La Loma and Lake Park are examples of places in and near the City where scenic views may be enjoyed. These and other sites may be protected from the incursion of development to preserve places for passive outdoor uses.

Access should be provided to nature walks and exhibits in accord with the Environmental Planning Element. Trail head amenities could include restrooms, drinking fountains, picnic ramadas, parking for vehicles and bicycles to accommodate family and small group outings.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Revisit municipal land development regulations to establish reasonable open space requirements for various types of development in the community. Allow open space credits or density bonuses as incentives for reservation of scenic lands, view corridors or open land buffers.

Establish an open space endowment (supported by municipal funds, users fees, and private donations) for acquiring, improving and maintaining natural open space areas.

environmental planning / open space map

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ELEMENT

Litchfield Park represents a conscious blending of natural and man-made components. Its spaciousness is planned. Vegetation and turf have been installed, as has its principal water feature, Lake Park. Horticultural displays and wildlife habitats, such as Rancho La Loma and Kiwanis Park were created specifically to assure that nature remains an integral part of the community.

Clean water, air and land are high priorities for maintaining the community's healthful, outdoor lifestyle. Citizens appreciate serenity. They expect protection from negative impacts on well-being caused by non-compatible land uses, hazardous activity, traffic congestion or nuisance.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Litchfield Park has evolved, according to its founders' plan, into a spacious, orderly civic environment. To the extent possible, the community has adapted form and function with physical surroundings and climate. Urbanization occurring around the City causes its citizens to seek solutions for mitigating the impacts of regional growth.

a. Land Resource

Terrain in the community is generally level as a result of earlier agricultural usage. There is little undisturbed, natural area although two parks (Lake and Kiwanis) exhibit maintained wetlands and desert vegetation, respectively. A notable exception to the flat, urbanized topography is Rancho La Loma where thousands of horticultural specimens flourish on rising ground separating the City from Luke Air Force Base.

Soil contaminants, from past crop dusting operations, were identified and remediated at a site in the western portion of the City. No other hazardous conditions are known to exist.

b. Air Quality

Airborne particulates arising from farming operations no longer constitute a significant air quality factor, although occasional over-seeding and maintenance on the Wigwam Golf Courses can create temporary dust conditions. Maricopa County encourages ordinances prohibiting open burning on a compliant basis.

As the West Valley population expands, vehicular emissions are expected to become an increasing air pollution problem. Litchfield Park addresses this concern on a local basis by transportation planning that avoids traffic congestion and by promoting non-automobile trips via the extensive pathway system.

c. Water Management

Supply and quality of water is not a municipal responsibility. LPSCo, a private provider, is franchised by the State to serve Litchfield Park and its vicinity. (See: Water Resources Element). The City does, however, actively encourage conservation programs. For example, citizens advocate consideration for recycling treated effluent for irrigation to landscaping and the golf courses.

Stormwater runoff has presented localized problems over the years which have been remedied on a case-by-case basis. Recent drainage masterplan improvements undertaken by the Maricopa County Flood Control District, especially the Coulter Channel north of the City, have alleviated spot flooding occurrence. Excess stormwater now drains into the Agua Fria River bed or other managed courses for collection and retention to the south in large basins adjacent to the Interstate 10 right-of-way.

d. Natural Attributes

Litchfield Park's outdoor environment is a "maintained" one. Residential yards, public rights-of-way, the resort properties, pathways and parks require continuing upkeep attention. Even Kiwanis Park's native desert plant materials are regularly tended.

There is wildlife here. Numerous species of birds can be observed in the City, including waterfowl at Lake Park. Small desert mammals live in the more lush habitats located on the Homestead portions of Rancho La Loma.

Scenic views of nearby mountains -- the White Tanks and Estrellas -- are appreciated. Areas that have not been subjected to urban development, especially to the northwest with Luke Air Force Base and Rancho La Loma, serve as breaks in metropolitan sprawl. City residents strongly support the retention of Luke's military function, considering aircraft noise a small price for the many

advantages derived from the Base as a good neighbor to Litchfield Park. And, as Rancho La Loma evolves into a masterplanned health care campus, there is a shared intent between the property owner and the community to retain much of the vegetation and habitat established three decades ago by Paul Litchfield on the Homestead portion of Rancho La Loma.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Compact, soon to be landlocked by other jurisdictions' development, Litchfield Park chooses a selective, strategic approach to conserving its environment. Goals with specific Action Recommendations indicate distinct, pro-active steps the City may take.

- a. **Goal:** Maintain a healthful living environment.

Metropolitan densities heighten the necessity for mandating acceptable criteria pertaining to the use of land within the City. In the interests of individuals' well-being, residential privacy, maintaining property values and continuing enjoyment of the outdoors to which local residents have become accustomed, performance standards should be articulated to preserve citizens' health, safety and welfare.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Enforce against all types of environmental pollution, including measures to reduce noise, dust and the glare of artificial lighting to the extent that actions are within the jurisdiction of the City.

- b. **Goal:** Participate in regional air quality solutions.

Fresh air is a concern that cannot be resolved within municipal boundaries. As evidenced in the Circulation Element, there are cogent policies to reduce vehicular trips and counteract traffic congestion. However, Litchfield Park acknowledges the need to influence its neighboring communities for collective, cooperative responses to prevent air degradation.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Sponsor or assist in establishing a multi-jurisdictional organization for air resource enhancement. Specifically, the City advocates shared solutions for multi-modal transportation (including pathways and bike lanes); use of alternate fuels; abatement of polluting activities (industrial, construction , traffic congestion or residential sources); and accurate air quality monitoring.

c. **Goal:** Celebrate the City's natural resources.

Preserving clear skies, appreciating park land and water, and appropriately retaining the Rancho La Loma Homestead's arboretum quality constitute some community environmental objectives. As buildout approaches and adjacent lands develop to Litchfield Park's boundaries, reserving natural areas becomes critical. Community schools would be invited to participate actively in natural science activities.

In conjunction with the Water Resources and Open Space Elements, there may be opportunities to develop habitats -- from riparian to desert ecologies -- that may be viewed, but not disturbed. A wildlife preserve could be appropriate in locations, such as at the edge of Luke Air Force Base, where a non-access buffer is designated.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Recognize achievements in environmental excellence. Consider establishing a Nature Center facility on the Homestead portion of Rancho La Loma as well as outdoor educational displays elsewhere in the City.

WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT

Municipal growth potential in Arizona is frequently limited by the availability -- and cost -- of water. The Water Resources Element became an additional General Plan requirement in 2000, when the State Legislature acted on the Growing Smarter Commission's recommendation, adopting "Growing Smarter Plus".

The City of Litchfield Park does not own the water system that serves homes and businesses in the community. Litchfield Park Service Company, LPSCo, is the area's certified provider of water and wastewater services.

1. LITCHFIELD PARK WATER SUPPLY

Ample water was supplied for crop irrigation by both the Roosevelt Irrigation District and the Airline Canal in the vicinity of Litchfield Park. Potable water to serve domestic demand had historically been obtained by pumping groundwater.

a. Provider Resources

LPSCo owns and operates four active wells. Three additional wells are under development. None of the wells is within the Litchfield Park city limits. Current annual production is 1.325 billion gallons for treatment and distribution to customers.

Water consumption billed to customers (allowing for leakage and unmetered deliveries) is 312 gallons per person per day on the overall system. Estimates provided to the Arizona Department of Water Resources list daily per capita consumption in Litchfield Park at 350 gallons. Higher use in the City is ascribed principally to lush landscaping and turf recreation areas, although the golf courses do not draw on the LPSCo system. Water used for golf course maintenance is provided by the Wigwam Resort's separate wells.

b. Projected Demand

The Arizona Department of Water Resources requires developers (and providers such as LPSCo) to demonstrate the availability of an assured water supply. A forecast population of 15-17,000 persons would be expected to require the system to double its production to serve the City alone. Accordingly, LPSCo plans to

add 1-2 new wells each year for the foreseeable future. Acquiring water rights by purchase, such as subscribing for Central Arizona Project allocations, may add significant costs for the system's rate payers.

c. Water Management

Litchfield Park is an active participant in water management. The City has installed low water use plant materials in public rights-of-way. Recycling measures and installation of water-efficient plumbing fixtures are encouraged.

LPSCo is developing a state-of-the-art water reclamation facility south of the City, near McDowell and Litchfield Roads, which ultimately will be able to process 8.2 million gallons per day. This capacity (along with a second, future facility expansion) will be sufficient (14-15 million gallons per day at buildout) to sustain growth projections for Litchfield Park and vicinity. Treated effluent may be reclaimed for landscaping irrigation, golf courses and decorative lakes.

2. WATER CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Citizens have a keen awareness of water resources' importance to the community's future. Sustaining the City's lush, well-kept appearance, as well as maintaining adequate delivery pressure at reasonable prices, depends on cooperative stewardship among service provider, the City and individual customers. Municipal policy asserts definite policies and expectations for intelligent water use.

a. *Goal:* Conserve the community water supply and quality.

Local water consumption by homes and businesses should be monitored closely to identify and mitigate wasteful practices. Public education programs are advocated.

Recycling treated water to irrigate plant material is seen as a future imperative.

Litchfield Park intends potable water supplies to be used primarily (in time, exclusively) for domestic purposes. Acquisition of water rights and evaluation of groundwater recharge potential are high municipal priorities notwithstanding private water system ownership.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Strengthen code requirements pertaining to water use. Address demand-reduction measures through specific, controlling stipulations in development agreements or zoning entitlements for major projects.

b. *Goal:* Participate more directly in local water service administration.

City government recognizes its responsibility as a stakeholder in safety, health and economic issues associated with the local water system. If acquisition of wet utility (water and wastewater) is not a feasible option, the community may otherwise invest in providing investment and governance for water resource management.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider long-term commitments and partnerships, to assure adequate service pressure, affordable rates and sufficient water supply to support projected Litchfield Park growth.

GROWTH AREAS ELEMENT

The City anticipates strategic growth in two existing master planned sectors, intensification of central core properties and prospective annexations in several locations. Proposed land uses require careful evaluation to assure that they not only contribute to Litchfield Park character but, also, will help to sustain the local economy.

As the Village concept is adapted to contemporary development realities, the City's planning for residential areas seeks to retain the advantage of nearby amenities and easy access to the full range of community facilities. Newly developing neighborhoods, particularly those added to Litchfield Park by annexation, must continue to provide: housing variety; where possible, subcore convenience shopping and services; recreational facilities and pathway system connections.

Future neighborhoods are unlikely to become fully self-sustaining villages by themselves because of overall area restrictions. Commercial development may occur at arterial road intersections for accommodating employment or shopping needs; but path connections and mixed land uses can still be planned into these sites. Moreover, each new residential enclave should in some fashion have its own activity center in the form of parks, schools, recreational facilities and/or retail clusters.

By adhering to these land utilization guidelines, the City projects an exurban, roomy image. In fact, however, the community's prevailing residential density average -- about four dwellings per acre -- demonstrates an economical allocation of lot sizes. Masterplanning principles contribute to the City's relative housing affordability even in competition with other nearby areas where land prices are substantially less.

1. CURRENT MASTER PLANS

More than a square mile of additional development is planned on the City's west side. Growth from within could occur with planned enlargements and diversification at the Wigwam Resort.

a. The Village at Litchfield Park

The Village at Litchfield Park has been in planning stages for more than a decade. Nearby schools and residential developments in the City of Goodyear are in place. Boundary adjustments north of Millennium High School added

acreage, by annexation, to the Village's projected masterplanned residential areas.

Masterplans for The Village at Litchfield Park have been revised better to reflect housing variety, collector streets geared to projected internal circulation needs and pathway linkages to schools, parks and the community-wide alternative circulation network. Sites along the Litchfield arterial, north of the Indian School intersection, are reserved for future, more intense, commercial development or multi-family residential.

More than 1,000 new dwelling units are proposed, including time share ownership to take advantage of the City's resort attraction. The population increase and attraction of higher income households would be expected to improve prospects for retail, service and restaurants as well as professional employment on sites reserved for commercial use.

b. Rancho La Loma Healthcare Campus

The Denny family property, since its annexation into Litchfield Park in the early 1990s, introduces a new, specialized component to community living quality. Rancho La Loma is an especially unique challenge for creative community extension: development of a healthcare campus by Sun Health. The Campus is intended as a masterplanned subcommunity dedicated to health care. The Homestead portion of the Campus contains historic structures and an extensive collection of mature horticulture which are being retained as focal point amenities for future, high-quality development. The use of the Campus is intended for health related services, including continuum of care living, all on a single coordinated campus. Open, health campus development proposed here is intended to provide a balance for more compact neighborhoods planned elsewhere -- consistent with the village theme of peripheral spaciousness.

Consideration for future hospital construction, perhaps providing regional-scale medical services, is underway. Although major institutional facilities will likely be deferred until later stages of Rancho La Loma's evolution, the campus is already beginning to serve as a significant employment base for Litchfield Park with the planned, near-term opening of medical offices along the Camelback Road frontage.

Denny family restrictions on the land's use require all development to be health care-related. There will be a need, therefore, for employee housing and commercial support elsewhere in the near vicinity of Rancho La Loma.

c. Resort Expansion/Infill Development

Wigwam Resort plans to expand guest facilities. Also, village core retail space re-use is underway. Goods, services and eating establishments attracting both local residents and hotel guests characterize potential infill improvements.

Vacant lands north of City Hall offer potential for future private development or, if acquired by the City, public use. Retail, multi-family residential and public assembly functions may be appropriate.

2. PLANNED PERIPHERAL DEVELOPMENTS

Desired economic diversification to add sales tax or other revenues is being accommodated through recent annexations of prospective business sites.

a. Dysart Road Corners

Landowners of the northeast corner of Indian School and Dysart and the southeast corner of Dysart and Camelback are planning retail and related development in the City of Litchfield Park.

Masterplanned approaches for these areas allow Litchfield Park the opportunity to integrate them into transportation and pathway systems as well as to benefit from sales tax revenues. Development agreements establish mutual expectations between the City and developers.

b. Camelback and Litchfield

This site of approximately eighty acres at the northeast corner, across from Rancho La Loma, was recently annexed. The site's size and major arterial crossroads location offer the opportunity to provide retail commercial and office uses, to integrate multiple businesses and a mix of supporting uses, to support the development of the Rancho La Loma Healthcare Campus to the west, and to implement community economic development goals.

3. GROWTH AREAS RECOMMENDATIONS

Litchfield Park approaches for managed growth are flexible, to allow masterplan creativity, while at the same time insisting that developing areas conform with the City's general planning principles and its traditional character. Recommendations are meant to assure these policies.

a. **Goal:** Evaluate developments for their positive contribution to Litchfield Park.

Litchfield Park expects growth area developers to incorporate community character themes into their projects. Pathway linkages are especially preferred, including grade-separated crossings where necessary for safety.

Economic development leading to a positive revenue stream is a fundamental measurement for growth areas. Other cost-benefit considerations include creation of well-paying jobs; or providing affordable housing; or contributing to community amenities such as improved parks and pathway installation.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Prepare Zoning Ordinances or revisions with more detailed guidance, performance standards and guideline expectations for master plan projects. Planned development, mixed-use and design/site plan review provisions would be improved.

b. **Goal:** Ascertain that the City benefits from proposed growth.

As part of the entitlement processes (rezoning, subdivision plat or site plan approvals) practical tests for use compatibility and economic feasibility should be applied. Municipal policy favors development proposals that are consistent with this General Plan; therefore, staff and officials are committed to helping projects conform with City planning goals. Economic assessments are part of the development proposal review.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Develop a simple, straightforward formula for calculating developments' potential cost-benefits. The City would provide forms for applicants' use in submitting these evaluations.

c. **Goal:** Mitigate growth impacts.

Future community growth is intended to make Litchfield Park better, not just bigger. Planning techniques help to avoid traffic congestion, reduce intrusions on residential privacy and introduce amenities, such as recreational facilities, that may be accomplished through the economies of scale from growth.

Transition techniques need to cushion residential properties from more intense land uses. Joint-use amenities, such as recreational open space or landscaped parking facilities, often constitute a mutually beneficial separation space.

Where City commercial expansion abuts existing development in other jurisdictions, Litchfield Park planning principles should be applied to benefit those neighbors. For example, proposed annexation of commercial corners could include open space, setback buffers and pathway connections to draw residents from adjacent neighborhoods to the center's shopping and jobs.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Incorporate suggested standards from Environmental, Open Space and Circulation Elements into Zoning Ordinance or revisions. Performance standards for air and water quality and to protect residential privacy from noise, glare, dust and odor should be reviewed and updated as necessary. Landscaped buffers and screening require specification.

Growth Areas map

COST OF DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Economy is recognized as one of the advantages in masterplanning new growth areas. Expenses associated with new infrastructure should not be borne by existing taxpayers; therefore, developers should prefer site layouts and construction methods that reduce length of streets, water/sewer lines and other utility service.

1. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT COST ASSESSMENT

Litchfield Park has adopted a Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The process is intended to include annual updates for purposes of reconsidering project priorities as well as re-estimating their costs.

Creative financing mechanisms are available for infrastructure investment. Community Facilities District (CFD) funding is one technique for paying to meet new facilities' demands. Accurate cost-estimating is essential to determine whether new homes will be affordable.

Municipal engineers are responsible for monitoring costs (labor, materials, land) for infrastructure and other public facilities. These components, in current dollars, should be applied in calculating CIP estimates and order-of-magnitude capital investment required of land developers.

Below is a table listing major cost components associated with extending municipal systems and private-provider utilities. Respective costs are listed both as a function of linear feet and, cumulatively, on a per mile basis.

INFRASTRUCTURE	YEAR 2000 DOLLARS	
	ESTIMATED COST (dollars)	ESTIMATED COST/MILE (dollars)
Waterline (12")	45	237,000
Sewer (8" gravity, fixtures)	45	237,000
Roadway (28' paved)	250	1,320,000
Drainage works	25% of roadway project costs	330,000
Curb/gutter/sidewalk	25	132,000
Electric Utilities	15	79,200
Natural Gas	18	95,040
Telephone	10	52,800
Cable TV	5	26,400
Common Trenching	9	47,520

Given the above costs associated with services delivery, the cumulative investment can be quite considerable. The cost to install one mile of roadway with associated wet utilities (not including others such as electric, gas, telephone) is estimated in the range of \$2,250,000. The logic favoring planned infrastructure phasing, instead of leapfrog development, is obvious.

2. COST CONTAINMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Residents and businesses want assurances that local infrastructure and government services represent a good value. During periods of municipal growth it is especially important to provide accurate accounting and to explore ways to prevent escalating service charges to homes and businesses.

- a. **Goal:** Adopt technologies that reduce operations and maintenance expenses.

City responsibilities, such as street maintenance and landscape, may become more cost-effective by utilizing different materials or methods. For instance, road resurfacing schedules may be prolonged by several years if superior paving is installed, thereby justifying any added expense. Vegetation that requires less water and/or pruning may be selected for public property landscaping.

Private utility providers, likewise, should seek ways to reduce charges to customers. Water Resources and Environmental Planning Elements suggest that conservation measures could reduce the need for expensive acquisition of additional water resources. A parallel distribution system for “gray water” (treated effluent) use for irrigation, for example, might represent a long-term cost savings.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Require that all proposals for municipal capital expenditure contain cost evaluations which include anticipated operations and maintenance expense and which forecast prospective return on investment. Options for alternate materials, phasing of installation, privatization of administration and similar variables are encouraged for decision-makers’ information.

- b. **Goal:** Conduct cost-benefit assessments for proposed facilities or systems investment.

It is intended that new growth development should pay its own way. Estimated municipal or private provider (services, utilities) system expansion budgets ought to factor in the “fair share” allocation attributable to future customers. Replacement or upgrading of existing facilities, on the other hand, requires all businesses and homes to participate in their financing.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Consider adoption of Development Fees, with credits to developers for expenditures or public-serving improvements. Coordinate private construction schedules with CIP projects to prevent installation conflicts and encourage full utilization of new facilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The General Plan's implementation section establishes ways and means to achieve community goals. It should be observed as the City's guiding statement of policy. Statutes direct the municipality to establish criteria for considering amendments to the General Plan on an annual basis. Unless and until revisions are officially confirmed, City government is committed to follow the General Plan principles.

Decisions for development, public works and local improvements, generally, are meant to be consistent with Plan principles. Development Plan designations are not a zoning map; however, the land use codes -- zoning, subdivision and related standards -- are revised to serve as the City's main tool for implementing the General Plan.

To accomplish Goals, it is essential to have an action plan. For Litchfield Park, Plan implementation consists of: establishing decision-making momentum, outlining a step-by-step Action Program, and regularly monitoring progress toward the community's future living quality aspirations.

1. ON-GOING PLANNING PROCESS

Citizens and community leadership, alike, must recognize that good plans are never finished. Adoption of a document is just the first step in an on-going process of refinement. Local government, land owners and builders are called upon to supply greater detail for specific projects so those improvements may be evaluated for their contributions to the Plan. Because the City's approach to the future is flexible, it is open to creative solutions or innovative designs in development proposals. Litchfield Park is small and compact; therefore, the potential effects of every construction proposal need to be evaluated to minimize impact on adjoining properties, to make best use of local service resources and to fit the desired community character.

General Plans take on new importance (as a result of stronger planning laws) in directing local government policy. Consistency between the Plan and the tools that make it work, such as development ordinances, is required. The City should adopt a

strategic process to coordinate Plan implementation. Step-by-step actions identify logical progressions for accomplishing Goals. Mid-course corrections should be expected because many variables affect local growth rates.

2. IMPLEMENTATION PHASING

The backbone of General Plan implementation is a step-by-step action program. With specific planning goals and objectives in mind, this section suggests some incremental activities to mark progress from where the City is today toward where citizens want to be ten or twenty years from now.

The Action schedule is not intended to dictate decisions that must be carefully evaluated by elected representatives, but it does offer some probable choices that may be considered as City resources permit.

a. Short-Term Actions (2001-02)

Implementation is already beginning with public works projects in preparedness of future growth. Efforts that can be initiated -- or completed -- within a year or two of Plan adoption are specified. The City may wish to include other projects, as they are proposed, to expedite General Plan Implementation. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) updating is a logical corollary to Action Program adjustments.

b. Mid-Term Actions (2003-2005)

Once early actions are in place, the City is positioned to continue key programs (such as park acquisition and combining pathway connections).

c. Long-Range Planning (2006 and beyond)

Value-added public facilities, planned years earlier allow for cost-effective municipal expansion. High standards for quality engineering will help to assure that roads, drainage, parks, wet utilities, public safety and other local government functions can serve an expanded community with economy.

Municipal timing considerations coordinate with private sector plans to achieve economy and efficiency. Short-, mid- and longer-term commitments can be articulated (as indicated on the chart, below) to establish reasonable, mutual expectations for staging the City's preparedness for growth.

ACTION PROGRAMS	2001-2002	2003-2005	2006-2010
State Compliance	General Plan Update Submit for voter approval	Annual General Plan amendment	Prepare for comprehensive General Plan revision
Growth Management	Annexation Land use decision keys CIP updates Financial resource planning	Parkland acquisition Continuing CIP	Municipal service expansion? Continuing CIP
Development Guidance	Zoning/Subdivision Code revisions Growth Areas masterplans cooperation Preservation/Design criteria	Conduct Elements' needs assessments	Goal/Objective achievement incentives

3. GENERAL PLAN MONITORING

Plans should be used. Procedures are outlined to encourage respect for General Plan precepts on a daily basis. Tracking systems for implementation progress are explained in the document. Because the General Plan is meant to be responsive to change, methods for its upkeep are provided.

a. Status Reporting

Data on development activity, population change, municipal revenues and other indicators of local consideration should be maintained by City staff and reported to decision-makers on a regular basis. This information allows intelligent, mid-course corrections in General Plan administration.

b. Success Measurement

Calibrations for assessing success may be established to alert community leadership of situations that require attention. Business opportunities should be promoted, for example, to allow the community's revenue capture to keep pace with residential expansion. Effective planning management considers supply and demand for maintaining affordable housing, community character and fiscal soundness.

c. Amendment/Updating

Specific guidelines should be set to evaluate requests for General Plan Amendments. A major amendment to the General Plan is defined as substantial alteration of the City's land use mixture or balance as established in the existing General Plan Land Use Element. (See Land Use Keys, pp. 62-64) Annual review and adjustments, overseen by the Planning and Zoning Commission, are necessary monitoring steps. Periodically, as required by Statute, the General Plan would undergo revision, ranging from tactical fine-tuning to comprehensive restructuring depending on changes of conditions.

4. LAND USE DECISION KEYS

The General Plan, though not a land use regulation document, nonetheless acts as the foundation for local zoning decisions. Decision Keys are suggested as points for consideration by property owners, City staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council when requests for rezoning are made. These evaluation factors are not intended to dictate official actions, the circumstances of each case will be judged at public hearings. However, listing common benchmarks for weighing a development's compliance with Litchfield Park planning principles may be helpful in assuring conformance with the adopted Plan.

Appropriate pre-conditions for rezoning are determined before the fact so that proposals may be judged objectively. Typical conditions or stipulations to assure quality growth in conformance with the General Plan are listed for the City Council and Planning and

Zoning Commission consideration as means to mitigate possible negative impacts and to maintain consistency with community character.

The following guides provide a framework for applying local land use policy. With experience in using the Land Use Decision Keys, adjustments or additions will be likely. The City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as staff, may suggest new evaluation criteria for use in assessing compatibility between development proposals and the adopted General Plan.

a. General Plan Amendments

As set forth in State statutes, General Plan Amendments include revisions of land use intensity, plans for limited access roadways and deletion of a requirement to reserve or dedicate land for public purpose. The Development Plan depicts generalized land use types. It is intended that uses may be mixed within planned developments, that residential areas may include any residential zoning classification consistent with General Plan goals, and that areas depicted as Retail/Employment or Public/Institutional may include residential uses at the discretion of the zoning authority.

The following criteria are considered as grounds for a Major General Plan Amendment, requiring a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of City Council:

- *Change of Use* -- redesignation of land, ten acres or more in area and not a part of a larger, mixed-use planned development, from a residential classification to commercial or industrial use.
- *Change in Intensity* -- redesignation of land from one residential use classification to another residential classification of fifty percent or greater additional density or to resort residential classification.
- *Change in Open Space or Golf Course designation* -- redesignation of land from Open Space or Golf Course use to another land use classification.

Any property contained within a previously-approved master plan of development may be designated by City Council, in its discretion, as a Special Study Area. Recommended adjustments to land use or development intensity in the Special Study Area shall be processed through the full Planning Commission and City Council hearings for any necessary rezoning, subdivision or site plan approval as required by the City's Codes or General Plan.

b. General Plan Consistency

Effective Plan implementation, and State law, require zoning amendments to be in conformity with the General Plan. The Plan is a broad land use indicator. It is not required that every property conform with the predominant use color code indicated on the map. Pre-existing uses or zoning classifications, encouragement of mixed activities to support the main use category or small acreage deviations from the designated classification may be justified for individual sites.

“Contribution” is the principal test. Reviews of planning proposals should ask, “Does this addition to the community bring us closer to delivering General Plan Goals?” Service or convenience uses are encouraged in or near residential areas -- where they support neighborhood livability. Employment is welcomed if the proposed business benefits the local economy -- and does not create negative environmental impact.

“Conflict” raises the red flag. “Will the proposed use and its method of operation be a good neighbor to existing or planned development in the vicinity?” Also: “Are there likely impacts -- traffic, noise, unsightliness -- that are contradictory to General Plan principles?” Where potential conflicts are apparent, applicants should be required to demonstrate how General Plan compatibility would be assured.

c. Uses/Intensities of Use

As the City grows and diversifies, a wider spectrum of land uses is anticipated. Creative development proposals are welcome. Trade-offs, such as clustering structures in a more compact configuration to allow for open space preservation, may be appropriate.

Residential

Housing variety, including a range of dwelling types and sizes, can be achieved both in masterplanned communities and on infill parcels. Appearance and neighborhood compatibility are stressed.

- *Comparable lot sizes*, or appropriate transition buffers, are expected for new housing adjacent to existing neighborhoods.
- *Affordability* is a factor to be considered in permitting the construction of smaller homes on compact sites. Planned residential developments may include reduced setbacks in exchange for shared, common open space, such as landscaped perimeter paths that serve as transition to lower density housing.
- *Larger-scale residential developments*, encompassing forty acres or more, are expected to include at least three different lot size ranges and a target of at least ten percent common open space.
- Open space amenities, are expected in plans for new housing developments, including proposed community pathway system connections.

Commercial

In aggressively promoting economic development, Litchfield Park emphasizes selective, highest and best use for the community's most visible and accessible opportunity areas.

- *Hospitality and health care services* are preferred to locate in the Rancho La Loma masterplan area.

- *Planned shopping centers*, combining multiple business uses are preferred over strip commercial developments. Shared access points, parking, signage and landscaping are encouraged.
- *Core revitalization* proposals may incorporate mixed commercial/residential redevelopment with built-in enhancement such as joint-use parking, pedestrian amenities, transit stops, government services and tourist information.
- *Masterplanned developments* are expected to provide shopping and services in or near their residential areas and may include retail/hospitality nodes at appropriate locations accessible to a community-wide clientele.
- *Office employment*, including shared facilities for home business entrepreneurs, may be included in master planned communities' activity cores or as transition uses between residential neighborhoods and other commercial uses with greater traffic generation.