



City of Litchfield Park

2010 General Plan Update

Adopted May 2010
Amended December 2011





CITY MISSION STATEMENT

Together, through responsible government and citizen involvement, we will enhance the City of Litchfield Park while preserving the City's unique beauty, heritage and community values fostered by our founder, Paul Litchfield.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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General Plan Organization

The General Plan for the City of Litchfield Park is presented in as concise a format as possible. We have attempted to present only the information needed to effectively administer the General Plan over the next five (5) to ten (10) year cycle.

Additional information that could add meaning, historical context, or general discussion – much of which was gleaned from the previous plan – is included in the appendices of this General Plan. However, due to printing costs and in an effort to save valuable resources, the appendices are not included as part of the principal document. Copies of the appendices may be obtained at City Hall or online at www.litchfield-park.org.

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The 2010 General Plan Appendices is provided within a separate document

GOAL

“The purpose of this General Plan is to identify community goals and designate the proposed general distribution, location and extent of such uses of land and other measures to satisfy the goals of this document. The goals shall be to maintain, improve and protect the highly desirable physical and social living environment of the City of Litchfield Park.” While Litchfield Park means different things to different people, there are underlying themes that form our community’s basic backbone and must be understood and captured in narrative to provide a base from which the elements of the General Plan emerge.

URBAN OASIS

Litchfield Park is a unique urban oasis providing a pleasant contrast to the typical housing developments that characterize the area’s explosive growth. It is graced with resort activities, such as specialty restaurants, spas, and golf courses. Generous green space, highlighted by mature landscapes and its signature alternating palm/orange tree motif, is the trademark of Litchfield Park. It is critical that we protect both our public and private open spaces.

EXCELLENT DESIGN / QUALITY OF LIFE

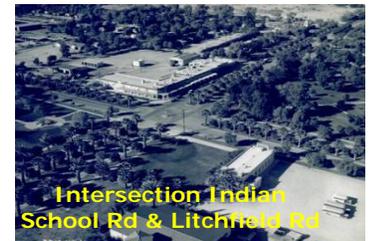
Litchfield Park was the first of a dozen villages which were to comprise a new City with a population of approximately 100,000 people. As one of the first planned communities in Arizona, Litchfield Park was designed by the renowned architecture and planning firm of Victor Gruen Associates and incorporated excellent design in landscaping, architecture, diversity of life-cycle oriented housing, and community/recreation planning. With The Wigwam Resort and Spa and its three golf courses as its centerpiece, the community is steeped in beauty and open space. Litchfield Park’s village plan encourages human interaction. It is a great place to raise a family; its pathway system is designed to facilitate traveling through the community by means other than by car, such as biking, walking and use of golf carts. Its many parks provide for local sports and family activities. It is a place where you know the person next door and down the street, and where the Mayor, Council Members, and City Manager are known by their first names. Because of the community’s closeness, it is a place where you feel an extra sense of security.

COMMUNITY PRIDE

Litchfield Park’s inherent beauty encourages a slower paced lifestyle than found in a big city environment. The community has a regional library, which is unusual for its small size. The library is operated by Maricopa County with assistance from volunteers from the Litchfield Park Library Association.

GOAL

URBAN OASIS



EXCELLENT DESIGN / QUALITY OF LIFE



COMMUNITY PRIDE



Historic Photo of Litchfield Motor Court

Attention to property maintenance demonstrates how residents enjoy and value the distinctive nature of their city and place a high priority on the appearance of their homes. The City provides meticulous maintenance of city-owned properties, including city buildings, streets, parks and pathways.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Despite Litchfield Park's small physical size, it is regionally competitive and a proactive partner in West Valley initiatives. Besides being the historic center of the Southwest Valley, it is also an energy center renowned for its talent base and diverse human resources. Litchfield Park ranks high in per capita income and in educational attainment. Litchfield Park's support for Luke Air Force Base (LAFB), its mission and personnel are strong points of pride. LAFB must be protected from the dangers of urban encroachment and other threats.

PUBLIC SAFETY/SECURE LIFESTYLE

Litchfield Park recognizes the importance of public safety and has enjoyed a long history of a secure lifestyle. The City is proud of its ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance public safety services and to preserve its safe "small town" environment.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

PUBLIC SAFETY/ SECURE LIFESTYLE

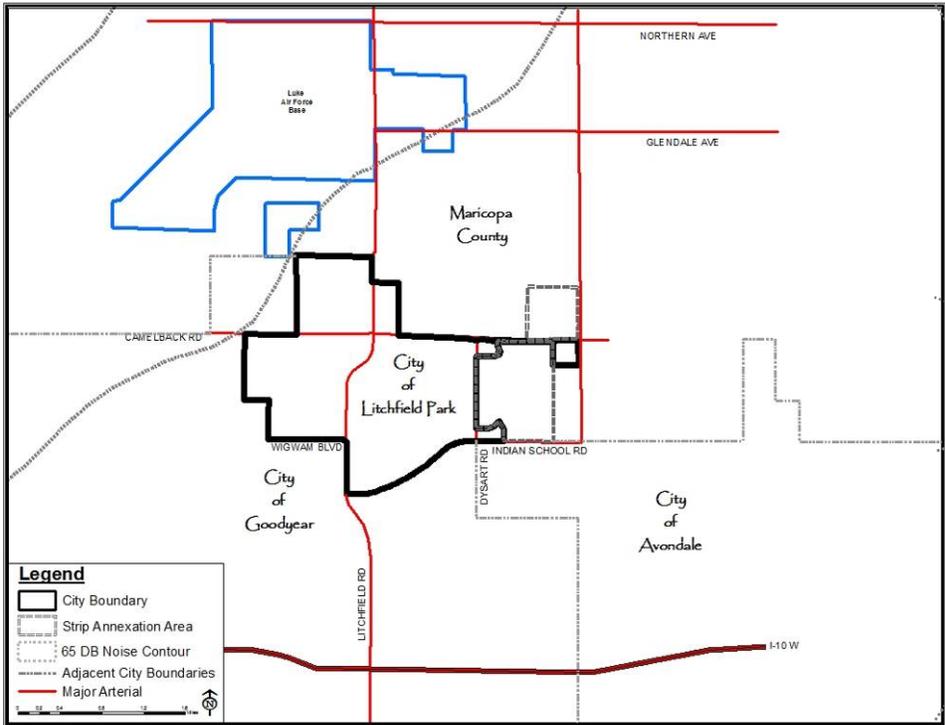


BACKGROUND

Much of Litchfield Park’s development was already shaped before the City incorporated. However, since its adoption, the City has seen residential growth to a point that it is currently approaching build-out, with the exception of several commercial parcels. The residential zoned properties have all been platted and are awaiting the construction of new homes. The City realizes that it must look toward the revitalization of older areas to preserve its desirable lifestyle. This 2010 General Plan Update modifies and improves the 2001 plan in text, language, style, and map exhibits.

CONTEXT

Litchfield Park was established in 1916 and incorporated in 1987. The City lies north of Interstate 10, and is centered on Litchfield Road and Wigwam Boulevard (see map below).



HISTORY

The City’s initial name was Litchfield. However, postal officials refused to acknowledge the name and only accepted mail labeled Lichton, since they thought there would be confusion between Litchfield and Littlefield, located in the northern part of Arizona. It wasn’t until 1926, due to the persistence of Goodyear Tire, that the final name of Litchfield Park was agreed upon.

BACKGROUND

CONTEXT

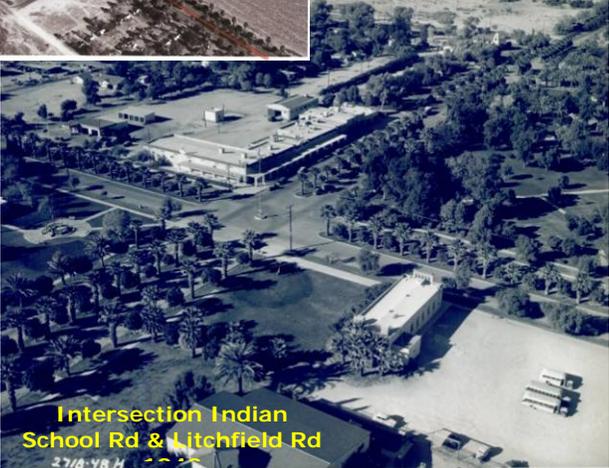
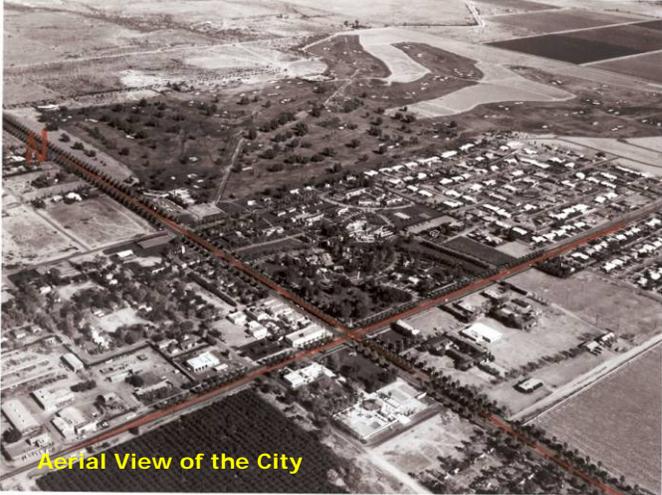


HISTORY

INTRODUCTION – Context

Litchfield Park is located within the greater Phoenix metropolis and shares boundaries with the City of Goodyear to the south, City of Avondale to the southeast, City of Phoenix to the east, and property to the north within the planning area of the City of Glendale, but still under the jurisdiction of Maricopa County.

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 typified as America’s “wild west” through the first half of the twentieth century.



CITY OF LITCHFIELD PARK'S STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Population*	White	Black	Asian	Native American
	90.97%	1.77%	3.41%	0.52%
	Hispanic	Other	‡ HH Size	Total
	6.99%	3.64%	2.50	5,593**

	‡COLP	U.S.
Median Age*	47.80	37.60
Married*	68.37%	58.89%
W/ Children*	22.15%	
Divorced*	7.60%	
Single*	31.63%	41.11%
W/ Children*	5.51%	
City Growth rate from '00 to '07*	44.72%	
Median Home Cost*	\$239,470	
2008 Values	-30.6%	
Renters	12.14%	
Owners	87.86%	
Vacancy Rate*	7.20% Houses and Apartments	

	‡COLP	U.S.	Achievement
Unemployment Rate* / **	6.70%*	8.5%**	
Job Growth*	-1.8%		
Public Schools***			
Litchfield Elementary School			Excelling
Western Sky Middle School			Excelling
Millennium High School			Excelling

‡ COLP - City of Litchfield Park
 ‡ HH - Household
 * Per Sperling 2009 (www.bestplaces.net/city/Litchfield_Park-Arizona.aspx)
 ** Per Arizona Department of Commerce 2009 (www.azcommerce.com)
 *** Per Arizona Department of Education 2009 (www.ade.state.az.gov)

Median Household Income*		COLP	U.S.
		\$77,915	\$44,684
Percentages Living in Poverty**			
Total Population		4.20%	
Families		2.70%	
Under 18		5.50%	
Over 65		1.80%	

Population Comparison**			
	<u>1990</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>	<u>2000</u>
Litchfield Park	3,303	1.53%	3,810
Maricopa County	2,122,101	4.48%	3,072,149
Arizona	3,665,228	4.00%	5,130,632
	<u>2000</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>	<u>2008</u>
Litchfield Park	3,810	3.86%	5,514
Maricopa County	3,072,149	2.67%	3,907,492
Arizona	5,130,632	2.63%	6,500,194

† COLP - City of Litchfield Park

‡ HH - Household

* Per Sperling 2009 (www.bestplaces.net/city/Litchfield_Park-Arizona.aspx)

** Per Arizona Department of Commerce 2009 (www.azcommerce.com)

*** Per Arizona Department of Education 2009 (www.ade.state.az.gov)

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

a. General Plan Amendments

As set forth in State Statutes, General Plan Amendments include:

1. Revisions of land use intensity;
2. Plans for limited access roadways; and
3. Deletion of a requirement to reserve or dedicate land for public purpose.

The Land Use Development Plan depicts generalized land use types. Land uses within planned developments may be mixed, such that residential areas may include multiple different residential classifications. Furthermore, areas within the planned developments designated for retail/employment or public/institutional uses may also include residential uses at the discretion of the City Council. All planned developments must be consistent with General Plan Goals.

The following criteria shall be used to determine if a proposed amendment shall be classified as a Major General Plan Amendment, requiring that all such amendments be heard at one public hearing in a calendar year and a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of City Council:

- Change of Use -- redesignation of land (1) from a residential land use designation to a commercial or industrial designation; or (2) from a commercial or industrial land use designation to a residential land use designation.
 - Change in Intensity -- redesignation of land from one residential land use designation to another residential land use designation resulting in any increase of density or a decrease of density of twenty percent (20%) or greater; or a change from resort land use designation; or to add residential to a resort designation.
 - Change in Open Space or Golf Course Designation -- redesignation of land from open space or golf course land use designation to any other land use designation.
- b. 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 and Zoning Commission and City Council hearings for any necessary rezoning, subdivision or site plan approval as required by the City's Codes or General Plan.

c. Rezoning Ordinances

Effective Plan implementation is obtained through, and State law requires, zoning amendments to be consistent with, and in conformity with, the General Plan. The Plan is a broad land use indicator. It is important to note that not every developed property within any given land use area will conform to the designation shown on the Land Use Map. Pre-existing uses or zoning classifications encourage a mix of activities that support the main use category. Small acreage deviations from the designated classification are normal due to pre-existing conditions and approvals.

“Contribution” defines the benefits to the community and should be the principal test. Reviews of rezoning applications should satisfy the following community needs:

1. All proposals are required to be consistent with, and conform to, the General Plan objectives.
2. Service or convenience uses are encouraged in or near residential areas -- where they support neighborhood livability.
3. Employment is welcomed if the proposed business benefits the local economy -- and does not create negative environmental impact.

“Conflicts” with the guiding principles and objectives raise concerns.

1. “In order to strive to be a good neighbor, the proposed use and its method of operation will be compatible with existing or planned developments in the vicinity.”
2. “Are there likely impacts -- traffic, noise, unsightliness -- that are contradictory to General Plan principles?”
3. Where potential conflicts are apparent, applicants should be required to demonstrate how General Plan consistency and conformity will be assured.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Litchfield Park is characterized by its unique village design to provide a quality family environment with all necessary services needed to serve its population. Its distinctive character is exemplified by its clean, safe, desirable, well-kept, attractive setting. Citizens' lifestyles and the community's livability as a whole have been enhanced over the years by the availability of recreational uses, an extensive pathway system, and a curved street pattern. All of these traits and amenities characterize the uniqueness of Litchfield Park. Protection of that identity is a fundamental guiding principle of this General Plan.

DISCUSSION

Over the years, citizen priorities, needs, and desires have created a special cityscape. Litchfield Park enjoys a character that is different from its neighboring communities and owes distinctiveness in appearance and function to a well-defined vision. The City's character is defined largely by the unique village concept upon which the Community's design was based. The City's vision encompasses urban growth, while preserving attributes of an independent, free-standing community.

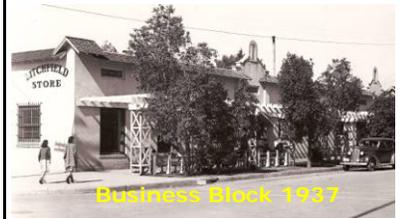
The City's character is defined through planning by including a variety of residential densities, recreational amenities for outdoor enjoyment, and upholding the citizens' values and desires for privacy within the community.

Expanded background information is contained within the appendices of this document.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop City policy that supports facilities and activities that preserve and enhance the Litchfield Park quality of life.
- Preserve the City's history by identifying, protecting and documenting the rich past with programs to share with future generations the City's unique and distinctive history.
- Maintain the small town, "park-like" community character through Council policies focusing on the unique character attributes of this community.
- Actively participate in and research viable methods to fund public art programs that enhance the livability and aesthetics of this community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE



DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Support community activities (concerts, festivals, and recreation and wellness programs for all ages) and not-for-profit organizations that contribute to the City's quality of life and sense of community.
- Actively pursue efforts that recognize and enhance the history and heritage of the City of Litchfield Park and research the potential for creating historic districts within the City.
- Encourage the design, implementation and construction of formal gateway entries into the City of Litchfield Park at the northwest and northeast corners of Wigwam Boulevard and Litchfield Road Bypass. (*Amendment 12/2011*)

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

As the City approaches build-out, land use decisions should embrace and enhance the original vision of the community. These decisions should focus on the preservation and revitalization of older neighborhoods, ensuring that new development (predominantly non-residential) complements the existing developed areas.

DISCUSSION

The City's development pattern over the last seven years has centered almost exclusively within residential areas. Nearly all residential areas within the City have been platted or built-out. The City has a shortfall of developed commercial and industrial property. In an effort to bolster City revenues, several commercial and industrial properties were annexed. However, the original intent of the "Village Plan" has remained intact.

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to evaluate past development trends within the City, look at the current land uses and their locations, and project where the City would like to be in the future. Evaluation of Growing Smarter legislation, economic development, public facilities, and services are also important factors to consider when projecting future development within the City.

Decisions pertaining to future development should center around existing land use patterns and provide for a compatible, balanced mix of community activities. Specific attention should be given to preserving property values, creating revenue sources, and adding higher-paying jobs to support the City's fiscal well-being.

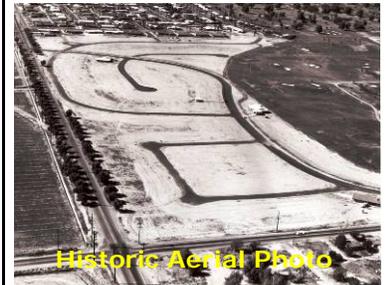
Expanded background information is contained within the appendices of this document.

OBJECTIVES

- As appropriate, pursue the concept of mixed use development in the remaining undeveloped parcels within the City. This could include a residential component in the form of live-work opportunities as part of master development plans.
- Formulate, administer and enforce design, development and architectural standards that assure a consistent and attractive character for new and existing development.
- Develop viable methods to revitalize older areas of the City.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The City's small size provides a unique opportunity to free residents from dependence on another automobile in the household and to walk, bike or use an electric cart for the short trips that constitute approximately half of the trips from the typical household. For local travel, the pathway system design should be given priority in providing a convenient and safe local access between home, neighborhood shopping, and public facilities.

DISCUSSION

Geographically, Litchfield Park is small. Some 3.3 square miles in area, its center is within easy access from most of its residential areas. Even the farthest homes are less than one mile from the village center.

Litchfield Park is concerned with improved transportation efficiency for its residents and visitors. Visitors' ease of access to the community from the metropolitan area is dependent upon the regional systems for freeways and highways. The City's internal circulation planning contributes to the local character and helps draw visitors to the City.

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

Local collector streets, those that provide for auto access to residential and other properties in the City, are largely set. The arterial roads have already been relocated to divert heavy traffic around the village center and to preserve its residential tranquility.

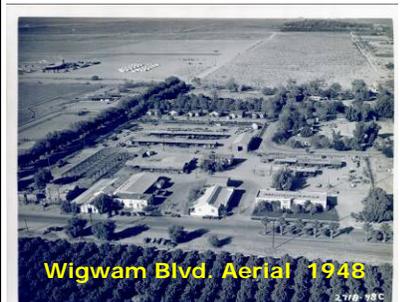
Strategic placement of new roadway improvements and pathway extensions are required to keep the City free from domination by automobile traffic. Circulation patterns direct vehicular flow around the community and facilitate shorter trips on foot, by bicycle or in carts.

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

Expanded background information is contained within the appendices of this document.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION

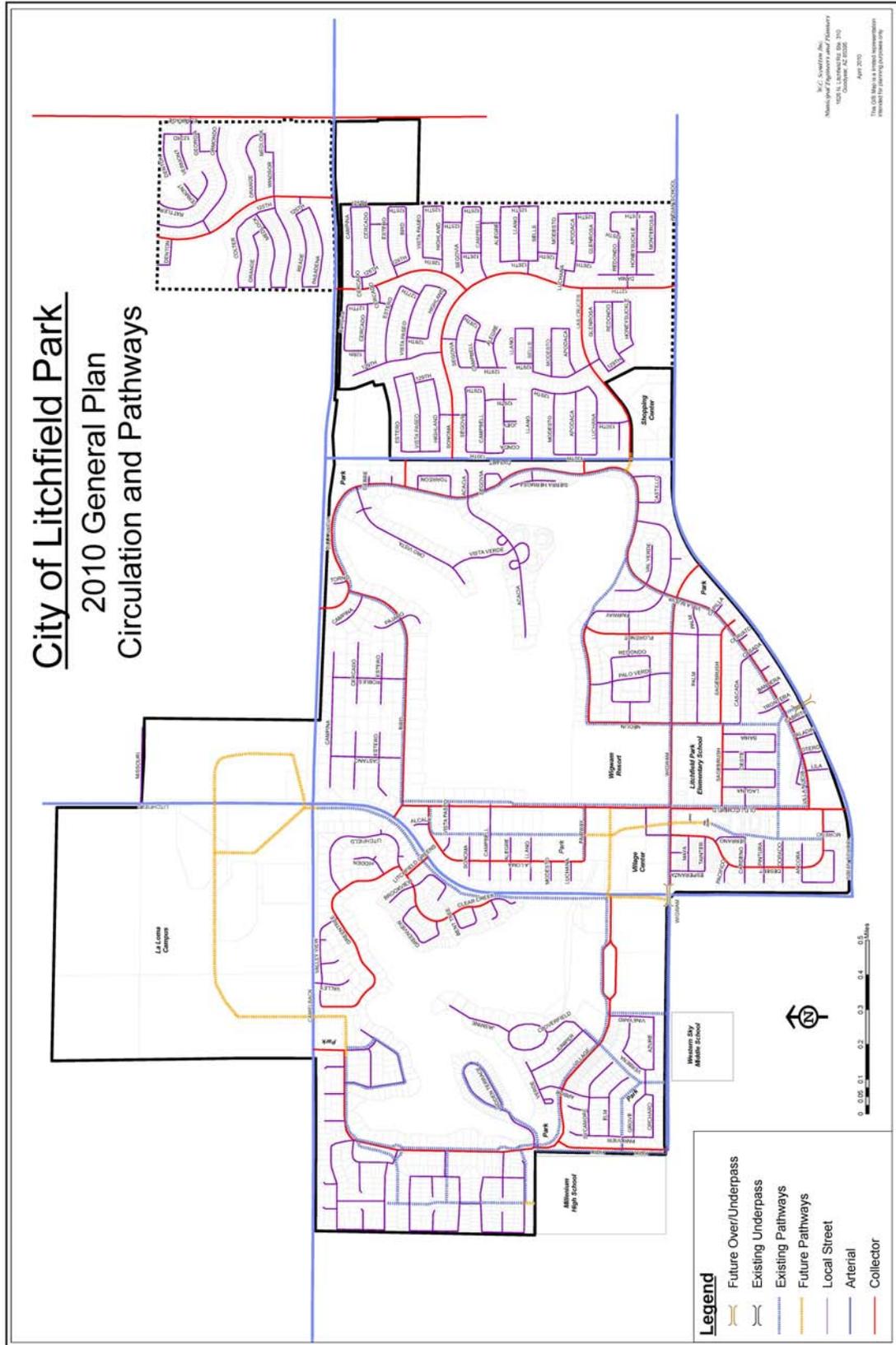


OBJECTIVES

- Continue to require internal pathway system connectivity throughout the City and require new development to interface with this system.
- Provide additional landscaping along pathway system to provide shade and rest stops.
- Interact and work cooperatively with neighboring communities, Maricopa Association of Governments, and other public agencies in promoting carpool, park-and-ride, public transit and other multi-modal transportation opportunities.
- Provide for safe, protected crossings of public streets for use by pedestrians. Promote grade separated crossings of major streets (Underpass or Overpass).
- Research the areas within the City most in need of new sidewalks, or the repair of existing sidewalks, in order to provide an accessible, safe and convenient transportation alternative, and incorporate these sidewalk upgrades into a Capital Improvement Program.

OBJECTIVES





GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The City of Litchfield Park prides itself as an example of livability that is the envy of many cities and towns in Arizona. A primary element of that livability is the open and green space throughout the City in the form of golf courses, parks, green belts, pathways, entry monumentation, and the landscaping of private properties. It is the City's intent to provide exemplary efforts to continue providing its residents with this sense of pride and quality of life.

DISCUSSION

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 through the use and combination of park facilities, community recreation and an extensive pathway system.

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

Proactive planning can prevent loss of community spaciousness and overcrowding of outdoor venues or recreational facilities. A comprehensive plan for parks and recreation is needed and should focus on the objectives outlined below.

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

Expanded background information is contained within the appendices of this document.

OBJECTIVES

- Investigate and pursue additional passive and active open space opportunities within the community while also supporting regional open space efforts.
- Preserve and protect the integrity of large-scale open space such as the Wigwam Golf Courses.

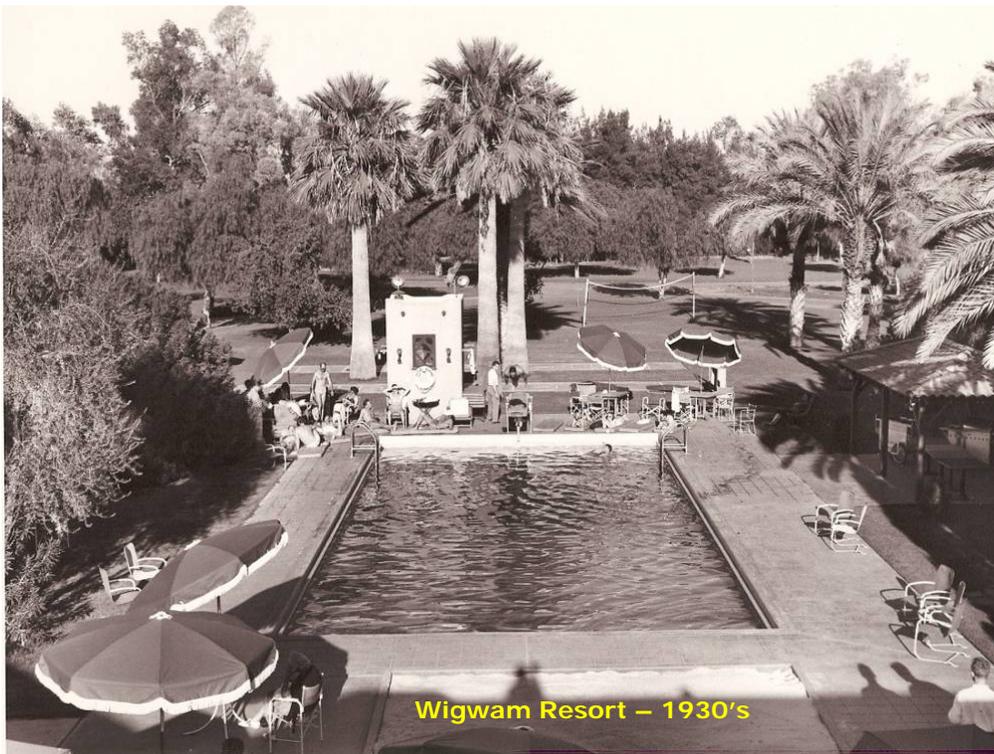
GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES

- Continue to integrate multi-purpose city-wide pathways into new development proposals. This would include providing safe crossing of public streets. Where feasible, pedestrian overpasses and underpasses of major arterial streets should be considered.
- For Open Space to have value, the City will continue to create, update, and enhance recreational venues and opportunities through the City's Capital Improvement Program, volunteer organizations, private contributions and other means. Consider establishing an open space endowment program - supported by private donations and enhanced by public matching funds - for acquisition, thus improving public open space, both natural and man-made.
- Pursue partnership opportunities presented by the development of the Sun Health La Loma Campus and the Rancho La Loma Homestead to create a community focal point for open space, demonstration gardens, community use facilities, and a historic venue for the City of Litchfield Park.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The City is conscious of its environment and will take the necessary actions to improve and maintain its highly desirable physical living environment. Water, air, land, and noise are the key elements for maintaining the City's highly desirable physical living environment.

DISCUSSION

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 ensure that nature remains an integral part of the community.

Environmental impacts do not respect municipal boundaries. Nevertheless, local policy should support efforts to improve and achieve a wholesome, healthful environment. Maintaining efforts to protect the City's water supply is paramount to keeping a safe living environment.

Clean water, air and land are high priorities for maintaining the community's healthful, outdoor lifestyle. Citizens appreciate serenity, and expect protection from negative impacts on well-being caused by non-compatible land uses, nuisances, hazardous activity, overly bright unshielded lighting, and vehicular noise and congestion.

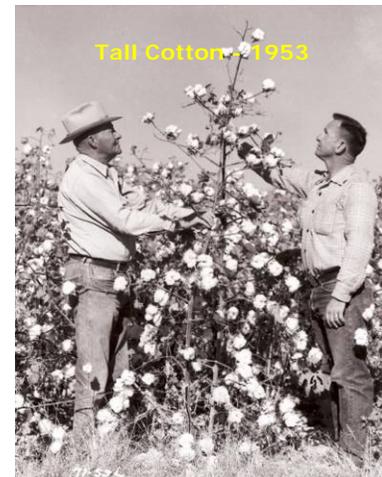
Compact and essentially landlocked by other jurisdictions' development, Litchfield Park's General Plan should continue to follow a selective, yet strategic approach to conserving and enhancing its environment.

OBJECTIVES

- Sponsor and/or participate in regional and multi-jurisdictional partnerships and activities to improve the quality of our environment through efforts to reduce noise, dust, vehicle emissions and the glare of artificial lighting.
- Continue local efforts to maximize opportunities for recycling, hazardous materials disposal, community cleanup events, enhanced property maintenance and dust control. Consider and initiate partnerships with neighboring communities as opportunities are presented.
- Monitor external environmental impacts on the community, such as water table contamination and air quality.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES

- Reduce the City's energy usage by encouraging the use of energy-efficient technologies (i.e. lighting, air-conditioning, insulation) and by encouraging electric carts, bicycles, and walking as alternatives to automobile use for short trips.
- The City shall continue to support County restrictions on particulate matter (PM-10).
- The City will research and govern the possible use of solar and wind-driven power sources, recognizing their impact on aesthetics, tranquility, and property values.
- Research and adopt a City-wide shielding of outdoor light fixtures ordinance, and adopt regulations for commercial lighting.
- The City government will endeavor to employ energy efficient technologies.
- Promote the planting of desert shade trees along pathways and in parking lots to help reduce heat islands.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Litchfield Park acknowledges the importance of using its water resources wisely in the desert environment. It also recognizes that all available water resources must be properly managed and utilized in order to sustain the quality of life residents have come to enjoy. The City Council will provide guidance and leadership in the control and management of water resources within the City.

DISCUSSION

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, acting on the Growing Smarter Commission's recommendation, adopted "Growing Smarter Plus."

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

Municipal water management policy should seek a balance between sustaining the City's well-kept appearance and cost-effective watering and landscaping practices.

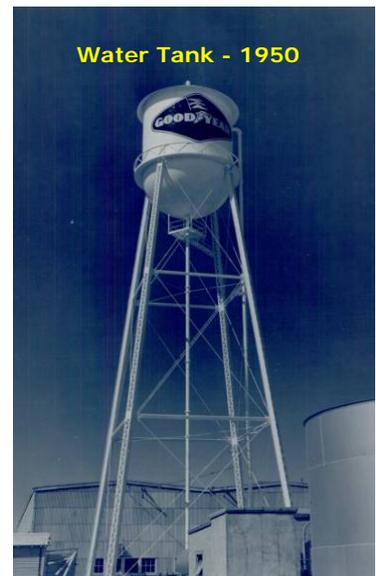
OBJECTIVES

- Develop water saving programs and/or landscaping practices for public property that are intended to minimize water usage but will not diminish the ambiance of Litchfield Park.
- Investigate and research opportunities to provide infrastructure for alternative water delivery systems, such as effluent and grey water for agricultural and other non-potable uses.
- Promote landscape material palettes that support water conservation measures, but continue to contribute to the 'green' image of Litchfield Park.
- Continue to support monitoring and management of the City's ground water quality.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION

OBJECTIVES



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The likely City Limits of Litchfield Park have been predetermined for many years by the City's Planning Area and annexation strip. The City should continue to consider annexations that are beneficial to the well-being of the community.

DISCUSSION

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

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

By adhering to these land use guidelines, the City will continue to project a relaxed, casual, roomy image. 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.

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

OBJECTIVES

- Analyze the fiscal and physical benefits and other impacts of any future annexations.
- Adopt policy to improve the quality of new and existing developments. Set the example by emphasizing care and maintenance of public assets, such as roads, rights-of-way, parks, open space, and public buildings.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Routinely initiate discussion with owners of vacant retail/commercial properties to determine development potential and timing. As these discussions take place, examine development incentive possibilities.

- Identify residents who have established experience and contacts to support an economic development plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

In order to attract quality development, the City of Litchfield Park must identify objectives that will help developers focus on Litchfield Park's benefits, amenities, and incentives. Although the City does not own a number of essential services, including electricity, natural gas, water, wastewater, and emergency services, the absence of impact fees is an attractive incentive for a developer.

DISCUSSION

Residents and businesses want assurances that local infrastructure and government services provide value to their investments, including property, infrastructure, services, etc. Value 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 provide site layouts and construction methods that meet and compliment City standards. However, the lower cost incurred by private water and sewer and the lack of development impact fees should serve as an incentive to private development.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify and evaluate all means of financing to recover costs for facilities and services generated by new development.
- Work with essential service providers to help minimize fiscal impacts new developments will have on the City and future developments.
- New development shall be required to construct all necessary infrastructure and services to offset the burden imposed by the new developments, to the extent permitted by law.
- Investigate improved methods of promoting cost-effective police, fire and emergency services by utilizing joint ventures and "automatic aid" agreements with adjacent municipalities.
- Developers are expected to reimburse the City for contracted service expenses (e.g. legal fees, engineering fees, plan review fees) incurred during the preliminary planning, design, and construction phases of any development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

DISCUSSION



OBJECTIVES

DISCUSSION

The General Plan’s Action Summary section establishes ways and means to achieve City/community goals. It should be viewed 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, are generally meant to be consistent with Plan principles. General 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 objectives, it is essential to have a plan. For Litchfield Park, Plan implementation consists of: establishing a step-by-step Program, and regularly monitoring progress toward the community’s future living quality aspirations.

ONGOING 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 a construction proposal need to be carefully evaluated to minimize impact on adjoining properties, make best use of local service resources, and 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 objectives. Mid-course corrections should be expected because many variables affect local growth rates.

DISCUSSION

**ONGOING PLANNING
PROCESS**

IMPLEMENTATION PHASING

The backbone of General Plan implementation is a step-by-step action program. With specific planning 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 more 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 (0-3 years)
Implementation is already beginning with public works projects in preparation for 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 (4-6 years)
Once early actions are in place, the City is positioned to continue key programs (such as park and open space acquisition and combining pathway connections).
- c. Long-Range Planning (7+ years)
Value-added public facilities, planned years earlier, allow for cost-effective municipal expansion. High standards for quality engineering will help to ensure that roads, drainage, parks, wet utilities, public safety and other local government functions can serve an expanded community with economy.

OBJECTIVES

- Adoption of reasonable property maintenance standards designed for the prevention of neighborhood decline, and enforcement of those standards.
- Emphasize City/resident partnerships and programs that assist residents in maintaining their properties.
- Create a small, focused economic development task force that, with City Council direction, could advise and assist the City Manager in economic development issues. This task force should be comprised of resident professionals with backgrounds in land development and financing alternatives, but who have no direct financial interests in the City.
- Utilize City resources such as the “City Line,” the City website and Channel 11 as resources for distributing information regarding City sponsored programs.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASING

OBJECTIVES

ACTION SUMMARY

CITY OF LITCHFIELD PARK						
Table for Objective Implementation and Timeline						
ELEMENT FOCUS		TIMING				IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
<u>COMMUNITY CHARACTER</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid-Term	Long Term	On-Going	
1	Develop City policy that supports facilities and activities that preserve and enhance the Litchfield Park quality of life.				X	Update existing codes and adopt new codes and policies that include standards and requirements for developments to help maintain a high quality of life and maintain public facilities, such as parks and community centers. Consider developing a "Property Conditions" survey that establishes an annual conditions assessment of the community.
2	Preserve the City's history by identifying, protecting and documenting the rich past with programs to share the City's unique and distinctive history with future generations.				X	Evaluate the creation of a historic overlay within the City, adopt policies to incentivize the maintenance of historic structures and evaluate the creation of a historic designation for qualified structures. Cooperate with the Litchfield Park Historical Society to protect and document the rich past of the City.
3	Maintain the small town, "park-like" community character through Council policies focusing on the unique character attributes of this community.				X	Adopt policies that protect open space areas, increase landscaping requirements, preserve small town architecture, and enhance the original Village Center.
4	Actively participate in public art programs that will enhance the livability and aesthetics of community.				X	Encourage the development and maintenance of public art for all future (both public and private) developments.
5	Support community activities (concerts, festivals, and recreation and wellness programs for all ages) and not-for-profit organizations that contribute to the City's quality of life and sense of community.				X	Evaluate opportunities to provide support for community activities.
6	Actively pursue efforts that recognize and enhance the history and heritage of the City of Litchfield Park and research the potential for creating historic districts within the City.				X	Examine options and opportunities to preserve and enhance the history and heritage of Litchfield Park.
7	Encourage the design, implementation and construction of formal gateway entries into the City of Litchfield Park at the northwest and northeast corners of Wigwam Boulevard and Litchfield Road Bypass.	X				Adopt design criteria and requirements necessary to ensure that formal gateway entries will be constructed. <i>(Amendment 12/2011)</i>

ACTION SUMMARY

<u>LAND USE</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	As appropriate, pursue the concept of mixed-use development in the remaining undeveloped parcels within the City. This could include a residential component in the form of live-work opportunities as part of master development plans.		X			Research and update existing Zoning Ordinance and City Codes to include new land use designations and criteria for Mixed Use and Live-Work Units (Neo-Traditional Development) as part of master development plans.
2	Formulate, administer and enforce design, development and architectural standards that ensure a consistent and attractive character for new and existing development.	X				Adopt design review guidelines and standards for non-residential developments to include architectural styles, materials, colors, design features and useable open space.
3	Develop viable methods to revitalize older areas of the City.	X				Research viable methods of preserving older areas of town, and create incentives for rehabilitation and maintenance of structures and properties.

ACTION SUMMARY

<u>CIRCULATION</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Continue to require internal pathway system connectivity throughout the City and require new development to interface with this system.				X	Evaluate, and modify as needed, pathway system requirements for public access, width, materials, landscaping, etc. Pursue funding resources for infrastructure improvements.
2	Provide additional landscaping along the pathway system to provide shade and rest-stops.		X			Update and modify existing landscaping standards to require additional landscaping along pathways and at shade and rest-stops. Pursue landscaping enhancement funding opportunities. Highlight programs that allow for participation for maintenance and new facilities.
3	Interact and work cooperatively with neighboring communities, Maricopa Association of Governments, and other public agencies in promoting carpool, park-and-ride, public transit and other transportation opportunities.				X	Seek cooperation from MAG and adjacent communities to promote/create carpool, park-and-ride, public transit, and other transportation systems.
4	Provide for safe, protected crossings of public streets for use by pedestrians. Promote grade-separated crossing of major streets (Underpass / Overpass).				X	Provide enhanced signage, and potentially a change in materials at crosswalks, to help increase visibility of crosswalks to provide for the safety of pedestrians. Consider participation by private development as part of Development Agreement negotiations.
5	Research the areas within the City most in need of new sidewalks, or the repair of existing sidewalks, in order to provide an accessible, safe and convenient transportation alternative, and incorporate these sidewalk upgrades into a Capital Improvement Program.				X	Compile a list of sidewalks within the City in need of repair, and create a plan of action for repair and upgrading as it relates to the Capital Improvement Program.

ACTION SUMMARY

<u>OPEN SPACE</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Investigate and pursue additional passive and active open space opportunities within the community while also supporting regional open space efforts				X	Pursue development proposals that provide for open space enhancements.
2	Preserve and protect the integrity of large scale open space, such as the Wigwam Golf Courses.				X	Maintain policies that protect existing public and private open space and park areas within the community.
3	Continue to integrate multi-purpose, city-wide pathways into new development proposals. This would include providing safe crossing of public streets. Where feasible, pedestrian overpasses and underpasses of major arterial streets should be considered.				X	Evaluate existing pathway and trail system and modify through the Capital Improvement Program as needed to incorporate additional trails and crossing points around the City for the convenience and safety of residents and pedestrians.
4	For Open Space to have value, the City will continue to create, update, and enhance recreational venues and opportunities through the City's Capital Improvement Program, volunteer organizations, private contributions and other means. Consider establishing an open space endowment program, supported by private donations and enhanced by public matching funds, for acquisition, thus improving public open space, both natural and man-made.				X	Routinely evaluate recreational facilities and venues in order to determine if all segments of the population are adequately served. Consider establishing an open space endowment program, supported by private donations and enhanced by public matching funds, for acquisition, improving public open space, natural and man-made.
5	Pursue partnership opportunities presented by the development of the Sun Health La Loma Campus and the Rancho La Loma Homestead to create a community focal point for open space, demonstration gardens, community use facilities and a historic venue for the City of Litchfield Park.	X				Adopt a Master Plan for the stabilization, rehabilitation and on-going maintenance of the Litchfield Homestead (La Loma).

ACTION SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Sponsor and/or participate in regional and multi-jurisdictional partnerships and activities to improve the quality of our environment through efforts to reduce noise, dust, vehicle emissions and the glare of artificial lighting.				X	Seek out opportunities to participate with neighboring communities, Maricopa County, and the State of Arizona in efforts, programs, and policies to minimize environmental impacts
2	Continue local efforts to maximize opportunities for recycling, hazardous materials disposal, community cleanup events, enhanced property maintenance and dust control. Consider and initiate partnerships with neighboring communities as opportunities are presented.				X	Investigate cost effective and environmentally friendly methods of recycling. Regularly assess effectiveness of community cleanups and property maintenance efforts and measures. Be pro-active and take a leadership role with surrounding communities for these programs and measures.
3	Monitor external environmental impacts on the community, such as water table contamination and air quality.				X	Be proactive and take a leadership role with Maricopa Association of Governments in maintaining programs for assessment of water and air quality. Consider forming an environmental advisory committee to the City Council that would provide suggested measures and/or programs to accommodate the same. Actively monitor the mitigation efforts of the Phoenix-Goodyear Airport plume.
4	Reduce the City's energy usage by encouraging the use of energy efficient technologies, (i.e. lighting, air conditioning, insulation) by encouraging electric carts, bicycles, and walking as alternatives to automobile use for short trips.				X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue construction, enhancement, and maintenance of the City's internal trail system. Provide for electric re-charge station and parking for electric carts and bicycles. • Adopt strategies and incentives to provide the impetus for residents and developers to use energy efficient technologies, green building and encouraging partnership with APS.
5	The City shall continue to support County restrictions on particulate matter (PM-10).				X	Support enforcement policies annually for particulate matter (PM-10).

ACTION SUMMARY

6	The City will research and govern the possible use of solar and wind driven power sources, recognizing their impact on aesthetics, tranquility, and property values.	X				Adopt policies and design guidelines for the installation and use of solar and wind driven power sources in residential neighborhoods.
7	Research and adopt a City-wide shielding of outdoor light fixtures ordinance and adopt regulations for commercial lighting.	X				Review and expand the existing lighting standards in the Zoning Ordinance.
8	The City government will endeavor to employ energy efficient technologies.				X	Evaluate alternatives and policies regarding energy efficient technologies for use in public facilities.
9	Promote the planting of desert shade trees along pathways and in parking lots to help reduce heat islands.	X				Update and expand landscaping requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.

ACTION SUMMARY

<u>WATER RESOURCES</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Develop water saving programs and/or landscaping practices for public property that are intended to minimize water usage for landscaping, but will not diminish the ambiance of Litchfield Park.				X	Research and develop viable programs to save water by diminishing usage while preserving the ambiance of Litchfield Park.
2	Investigate and research opportunities to provide infrastructure for alternative water delivery systems such as effluent, grey water, artificial turf and other options.				X	Research infrastructure technologies and implementation costs for effluent and grey water systems, and artificial turf options. Maintain discussions with Liberty Water for acquisition of effluent for parks.
3	Promote landscape material palettes that support water conservation measures, but continue to contribute to the 'green' image of Litchfield Park.				X	Adopt policy and update codes that acknowledge Arizona Department of Water resources (Phoenix AMA) recommended species on the required landscaping list. Use this list for public street infrastructure projects as well.

ACTION SUMMARY

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Analyze the fiscal and physical benefits and impacts of any future annexations.				X	<p>Develop a cost/benefit analysis program for assessing benefits and liabilities for future annexations. This evaluation would be for fact-finding only and would not be considered the sole deciding factor for future annexations. Impacts to be considered should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical Litchfield Park amenities (parks, pathways) • Potential tax revenues • Revenue sharing based on population • Ongoing operation and maintenance costs • Would the annexation contribute to the preservation of Litchfield Park's quality of life?
2	Adopt policy to improve the quality of new and existing developments. Set the example by emphasizing care and maintenance of public assets such as: roads, rights-of-way, parks, open space, and public buildings.	X				Adopt policies and ordinances to provide the means to require developments to adhere to a set of guidelines and requirements to improve developments and to care and maintain parks and other City assets.
3	Routinely initiate discussion with owners of vacant retail/commercial properties to determine development potential and timing. As these discussions take place, examine development incentive possibilities.	X	X			Pursue pre-development meetings with owners of vacant retail/commercial properties with discussion for land uses compatible with the character of Litchfield Park.
4	Identify residents who have established experience and contacts to support an economic development plan.	X	X			Query interests from City residents to find those individuals with experience and contacts to help create and move forward a community economic plan. Create an advisory group or board that would assist the City Manager in the Economic Development efforts of the City.

ACTION SUMMARY

<u>COST OF DEVELOPMENT</u>						
OBJECTIVES		Short Term	Mid- Term	Long Term	On- Going	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1	Identify and evaluate all means of financing to recover costs for facilities and services generated by new development.				X	Continue to use development agreements to affect costs of public facilities, buildings and parks; adopt policies implementing findings.
2	Work with essential service providers to help minimize fiscal impacts new developments will have on the City and future developments.				X	Research viable methods to reduce costs paid by the City for basic essential services.
3	New development shall be required to construct all necessary infrastructure and services to offset the burden imposed by the new developments, to the extent permitted by law.				X	Develop policies and requirements that assess infrastructure impacts of new development and use development agreements that require new development to finance their costs.
4	Investigate improved methods of promoting cost effective fire and police protection, such as joint ventures and "automatic aid" agreements with adjacent municipalities and emergency service providers.	X				Adopt new or update existing Intergovernmental Agreements with adjacent jurisdictions, as appropriate, for continued cost effective fire and police protection.
5	Developers are expected to reimburse the City for contracted service expenses (e.g. legal fees, engineering fees, plan review fees) incurred during the preliminary planning, design, and construction phases of any development.	X				Create a policy by which new development proposals reimburse the City for outside consultant fees.

The 2010 General Plan Appendices are provided within a separate document that can viewed at the Litchfield Park City Hall, 214 W. Wigwam Boulevard, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340, during normal business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The appendices may also be viewed on the City of Litchfield Park web site: www.litchfield-park.org.

Most of the information covered in the Appendices was gleaned from the 2001 Litchfield Park General Plan. Topics covered in the Appendices include an Introductory Statement; History and Land Use Decision information; and additional information regarding the following Elements: Community Character, Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Environmental, Growth Area, Cost of Development, and Water Resources.