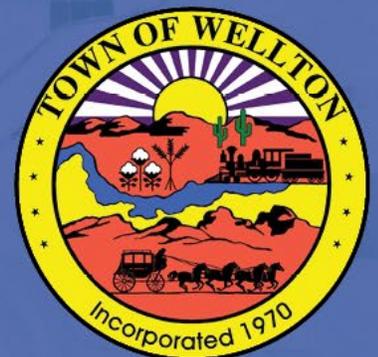


# 2023

# WELLTON GENERAL PLAN



Adopted by the  
Wellton Town Council on  
12/5/23



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# Acknowledgments



## **Wellton Town Council**

### **Mayor**

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### **Vice Mayor**

*Cecilia C. McCollough*

### **Council Members**

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*Sylvia Davidson*

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**A special thank you to everyone involved in creating the 2023 Wellton General Plan.**



# Chapter I: Introduction

The *Wellton 2023 General Plan* is introduced in this chapter with the following topics:

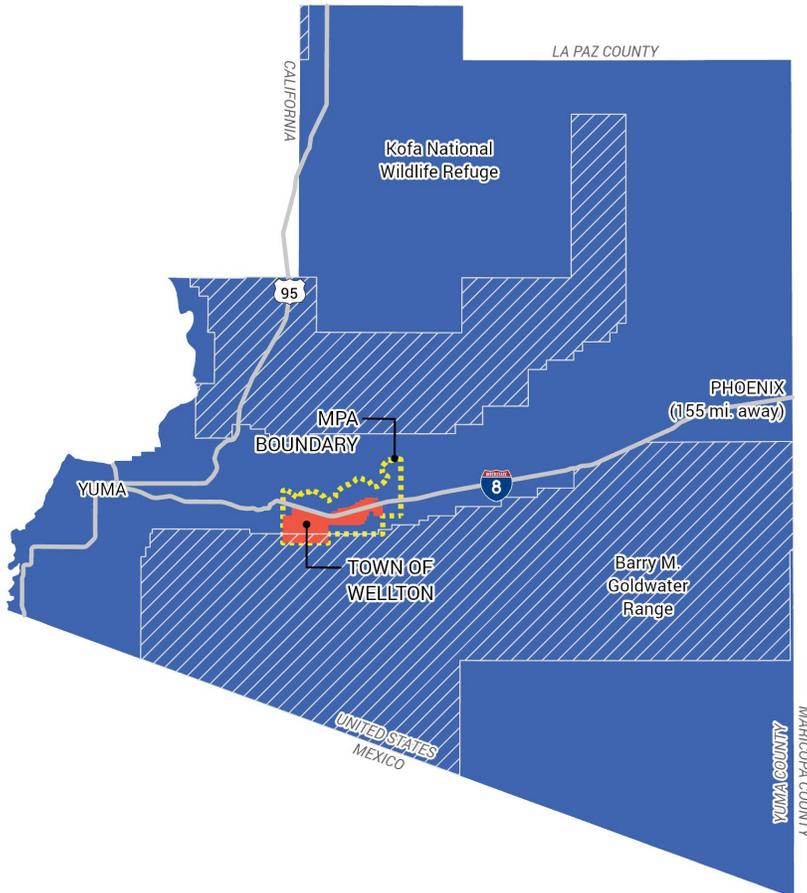
- *Overview of the Town of Wellton*
- *Purpose and Process of the General Plan*
- *Public Involvement*
- *Community Vision Statement*
- *Organization of the General Plan*
- *Amendments to the General Plan*

## Overview of the Town of Wellton

The Town of Wellton is located 29 miles east of Yuma, Arizona, along Interstate 8 (I-8). Founded in 1878 and incorporated in 1970, the area around Wellton was settled in the 1860s to serve the Butterfield Overland Mail stagecoaches. Wellton (*Well Town*) derives its name from the rise of steam-powered locomotives and the water wells that were drilled to provide necessary water to the Southern Pacific Railroad. Steam engines soon became antiquated, and Wellton’s economy shifted toward agriculture.

Today, Wellton’s economy also depends on the yearly doubling of its population with the arrival of winter visitors that move from colder northern climates to winter in the warm, dry climate of the Sonoran Desert. Wellton’s convenient location between Yuma and Phoenix, along with its proximity to California, Las Vegas, and Tucson, makes for an excellent and affordable retirement option for many in the community. Visitors and residents alike can find a recreational, beach-oriented reprieve with Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, Mexico, just over three hours’ drive away.

### Regional Context



As shown here, the Town of Wellton is located in Southwestern Arizona in Yuma County, 155 miles south-west of Phoenix. The Wellton MPA’s terrain is diverse, encompassing agricultural fields along the southern banks of the Gila River, I-8, and the dry-arid Sonoran Desert to the south of I-8.

### Municipal Planning Area

Wellton’s 2013 Municipal Planning Area (MPA) was 45 sq. miles and did not encompass all of the community’s 29 sq. miles of incorporated area. The proposed MPA boundary, as shown in *Figure 1*, now includes all the incorporated portions of Wellton as well as expansion into the unincorporated Yuma County to follow the contours of the Gila River to the north and eastward to Avenue 33E. This 26 sq. mile expansion does not equate to imminent annexation or the need to

provide infrastructure but will allow for the community of Wellton to have planning influence and vision over the area that is proximate to their Town. The **2023 MPA is 71 sq. miles.**

# TOWN OF WELLTON

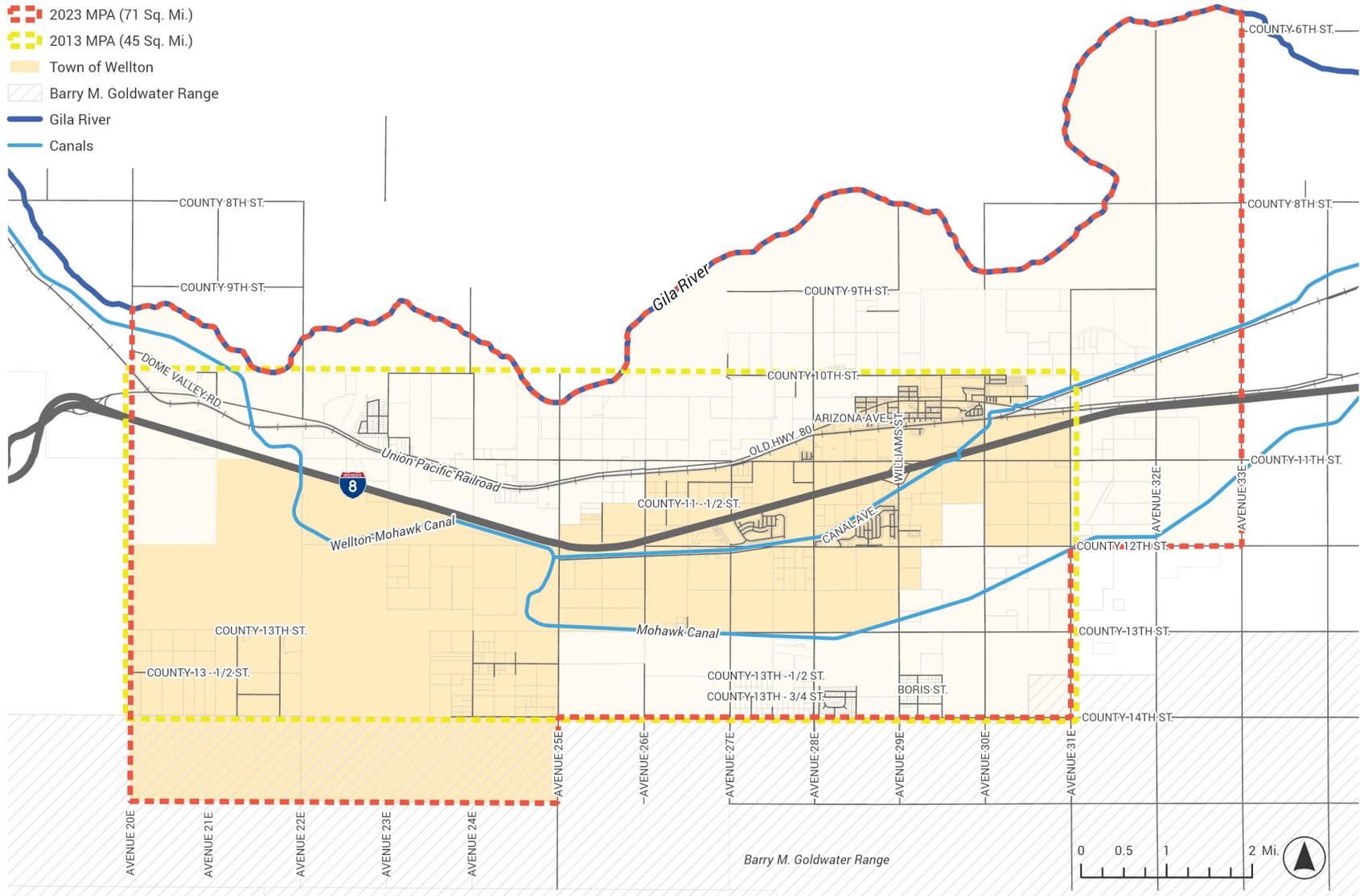


Figure 1: Town of Wellton Planning Area Boundaries

## Purpose and Process of the General Plan

The *2023 Wellton General Plan* (the Plan) provides guidance to the Town of Wellton, residents, and others doing business with Wellton to help achieve the community’s vision for future land use and development. The Plan serves as a pattern and guide for the orderly growth and development of Wellton and as a basis for the efficient expenditure of the Town of Wellton’s funds. In Arizona, all municipalities are required to have a General Plan and update it every ten years to help guide future land use and development in their community. General Plans are required by Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) §9-461.05, are prepared in conformance with A.R.S. §9-461.06 and contain the elements that are required by State Law. Required elements for the Town of Wellton are *Land Use* and *Circulation*, but the Town has also included the following elective elements in the Plan: *Growth Areas, Water/Wastewater, Parks/Open Space, Environmental Planning, and Cost of Development*.

### What are elements?

*Together, these elements provide guidance in the form of goals, policies, and actions to help Town of Wellton staff and appointed/elected officials make decisions about future growth and development in Wellton.*

General plans reflect the long-term development goals of the community and guide future growth. General plans are comprehensive because they aim to coordinate all the systems of a city or town. They usually contain maps, goals, and policies that help staff, elected officials, and citizens make decisions regarding future growth and the community’s physical form. Specifically, they are used to guide decisions about specific types and intensities of land uses desired by a community.

General plans do not change existing zoning. For example, if a property is currently zoned and is not in conformance with the adopted General Plan, the property may be developed according to its “by right” zoning. Any proposed zoning changes, however, must conform to the adopted general plan. This does not mean the general plan is static. There are provisions under A.R.S. §9-461.06 for amendments to the general plan and procedures for considering them. This process is described later in this chapter.

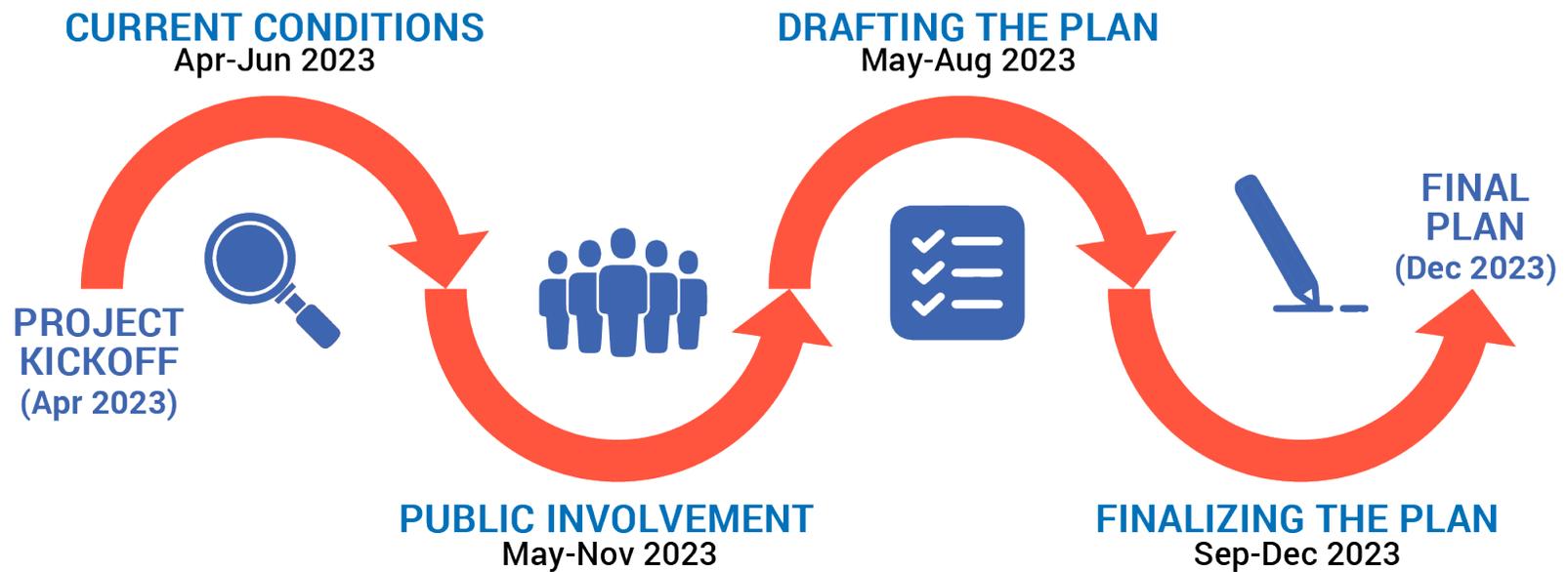


Figure 2: General Plan Process

The Plan followed a nine-month process from project kick off to adoption by the Wellton Town Council, as illustrated in *Figure 2* above. There were four main phases: 1) Current Conditions resulting in an *Existing Conditions Report* under separate cover, 2) Public Involvement in a Council-adopted *Public Participation Plan* under separate cover, 3) Drafting the Plan, and 4) Finalizing the Plan.

## Public Involvement

A.R.S. §9-461.06.C requires that governing body of the municipality adopt written procedures to provide effective, early, and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of General Plans from all geographic, ethnic, and economic areas of the municipality. The *Public Participation Plan* under separate cover was adopted by the Wellton Town Council on June 6, 2023. The *Public Participation Plan* identified three (3) pivotal strategies to both efficiently and cost-effectively guide the public input process for the Update. These strategies illustrate the Town of Wellton’s commitment to a process that encourages community input throughout the entire project timeframe. The strategies include 1) Public Hearings, 2) Outreach Interviews, and 3) Other Types of Outreach. *Figure 3* represents the engagement activities and the results of the public outreach for the Plan.

### Engagement Highlights

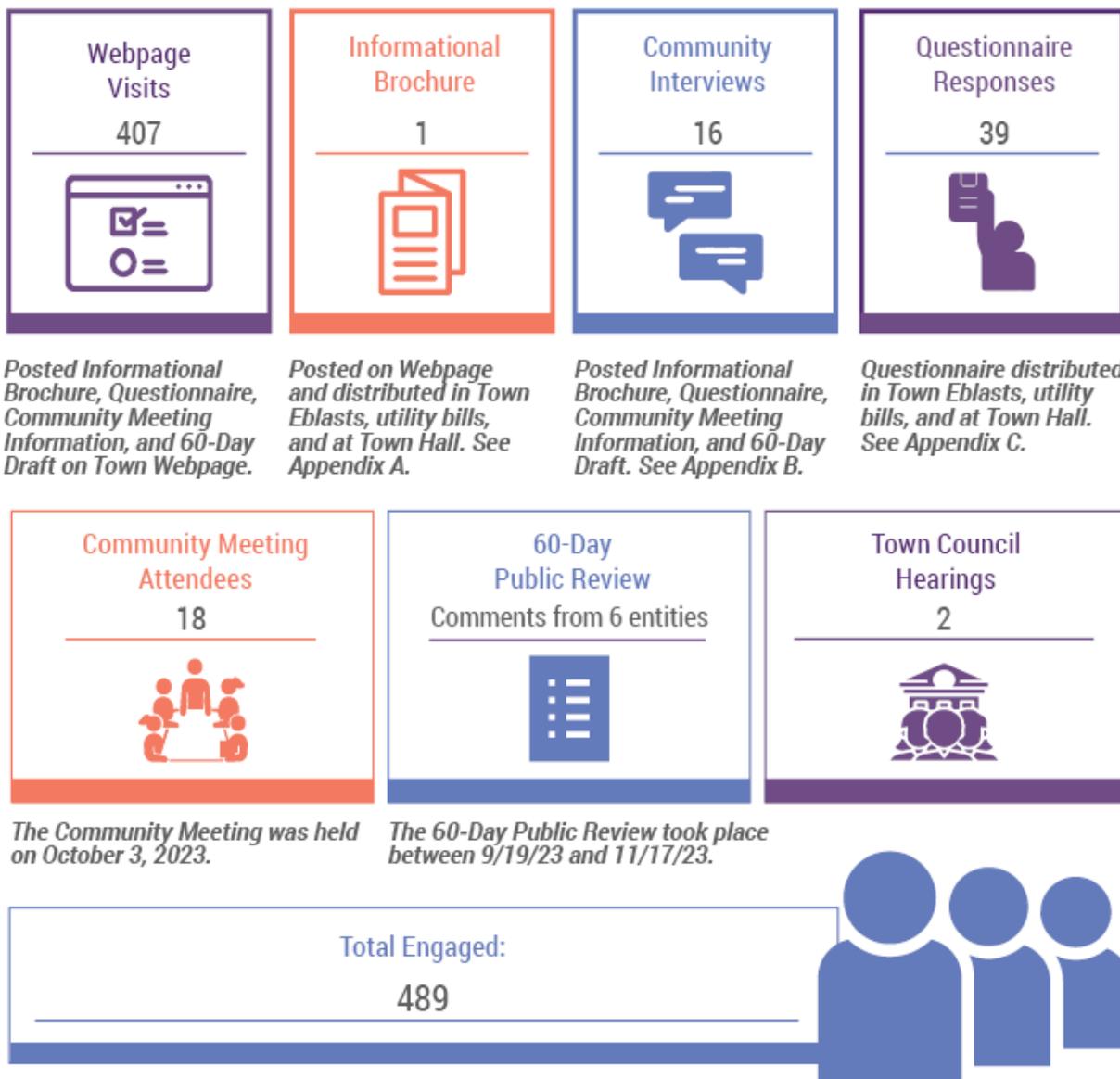


Figure 3: Public Engagement Activities

## Community Vision Statement

The foundation for the 2023 Wellton General Plan is the *Community Vision Statement\**, which is a collective representation and reflection of community values for what the Town of Wellton aspires to become in the future. Based on the public input process articulated in the previous section, the following community vision statement will guide the Plan for the next ten years:

The Town of Wellton is a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community. Wellton recognizing its agricultural heritage and rural charm while embracing residential and commercial opportunities. We strive to promote residential growth while maintaining ample, beautiful open spaces, as well as excellent educational and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

*\*This community-wide vision statement differs from the town-staff directed strategic plan vision statement.*

## Organization of the General Plan

The 2023 Wellton General Plan has eight chapters, as shown in *Figure 4*. Each element chapter contains an introductory statement, followed by a pertinent discussion of issues, opportunities, goals, and policies, and illustrated with appropriate maps, charts, tables, and graphs.



*Figure 4: Chapters of the General Plan*

# Amendments to the General Plan

## Major Amendments

A major amendment to the *2023 Wellton General Plan* is any proposal that would result in a change that would substantially alter the Town of Wellton’s planned mix or balance of land uses. Per ARS, Major Amendments shall be presented at a public hearing within 12 months of when a proposal is made and must be approved by affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of the members of Wellton’s Town Council. The following criteria are to be used to determine whether a proposed request for rezoning necessitating a change to the General Plan would be considered a major amendment:

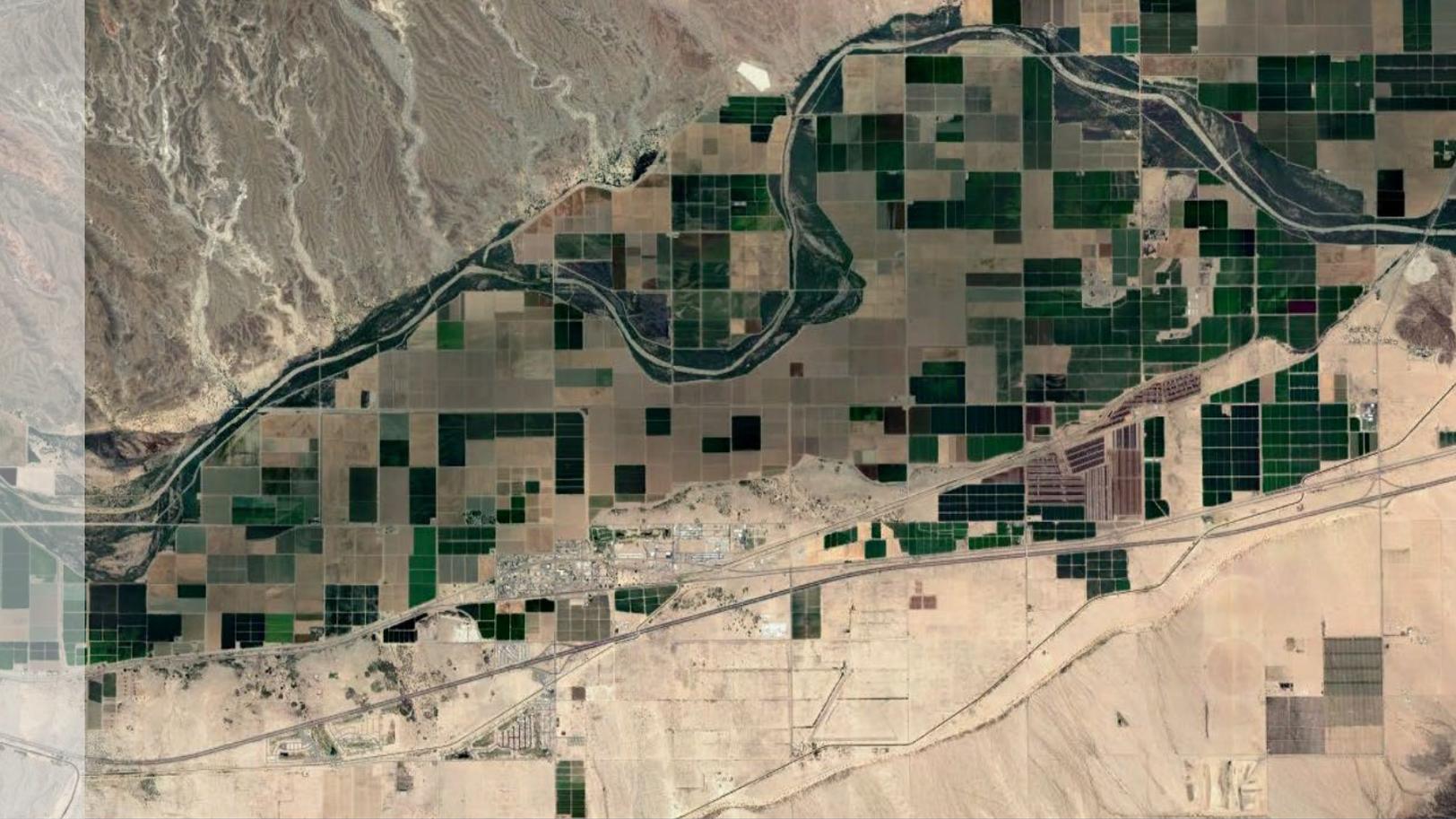
1. *Any request for rezoning for a development of more than forty (40) acres that is not in conformance with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).*
2. *Any text changes eliminating or changing the intent of a goal or policy.*
3. *Modification, addition, or deletion of a freeway, highway, arterial, or collector road alignment.*

## Minor Amendments

Any change that does not meet the above criteria defining “major” amendments shall be considered a minor amendment that can be considered by Wellton Town staff and Town Council in accordance with the regularly scheduled General Plan amendment process. Amendments to the Plan may be initiated by the Town of Wellton and/or may be requested by private individuals and/or agencies in accordance with the procedures set forth in ARS.

## No Amendments

No amendment is required for changes to formatting, scrivener errors, photos, or updates to the Implementation Chapter.



# Chapter 2: Land Use and Growth Areas Element

Chapter two provides an overview of Wellton’s existing land uses, growth trends, potential growth areas, and a variety of future land use designations designed to accommodate growth in concert with the community’s vision for the Town of Wellton. In addition, this chapter offers a menu of goals and policies to support future implementation of identified land uses to assist responsible and sustainable growth for the Town of Wellton.

## Element Statement

Statutorily, the Town of Wellton requires a land use element; however, it does not require a growth areas element. The *Land Use and Growth Areas Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* describes the location, types of land use, and land use intensities desired by the Town of Wellton. Additionally, this element identifies areas within the Wellton MPA that are particularly suitable for planned multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses.

## Existing Land Uses

The majority of developed areas within the MPA are located between Avenue 27E and Avenue 31E and between County 10<sup>th</sup> Street and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street, with some scattered larger lot development located north of County 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Downtown Wellton is located along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue on both sides of Avenue 29E. The predominant land uses within the developed parts of Wellton are residential, with commercial areas located along Avenue 29E (William Street) near I-8 and along Los Angeles Avenue/Old Highway 80. Industrial uses are located along the Union Pacific Railroad lines and on the eastern edge of the Town of Wellton. Coyote Wash and Rancho El Mirage are two master-planned communities within Wellton, both located south of I-8 and west of Avenue 29E. Rancho El Mirage, an RV Park, is a gated active adult community with amenities ranging from a golf course and swimming pool to an exercise and fitness center inclusive of many outdoor courts. Coyote Wash is a more traditional, site-built community with a magnificent golf resort.

The Wellton MPA contains large tracts of agricultural land, mostly north of Old Highway 80 and south of the Gila River. These agricultural lands are irrigated with water from the WMIDD canal network, which includes the Mohawk Canal, Wellton Canal, and Wellton-Mohawk Canal. The Gila River flows north of the Town of Wellton and dips into the MPA between Avenue 24E and Avenue 26E. No mining exists within the Gila River floodplain or at other locations within the Town of Wellton, although aggregate resource extraction, as identified by state agencies, is permitted. ARS requires that existing mining operations should be preserved for future development and policies should be in place to avoid incompatible land uses. Common sources of aggregate resources are mountains and washes or riverbeds. For more information on potential locations of aggregate resources, refer to the Arizona Geological Survey Document Repository for the current Geologic Map Database for Aggregate Resource Assessment.

The Wellton MPA also includes several square miles of undeveloped open space, most of which is located on the western side of the planning area. Within and immediately south of the MPA is the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR). Development of BMGR land for non-military uses is prohibited, and development of land near BMGR is restricted. Per the Yuma Regional Development Plan, land development within one-half mile of BMGR is restricted to no more than one dwelling per unit per five acres, while land within one mile of BMGR is restricted to no more than one dwelling unit per two acres.

The areas affected by the BMGR development restrictions are located along the southern edge of the MPA between County 13<sup>th</sup> Street and County 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Growth Trends and Areas

This section accounts for population and population projections for Wellton as well as transitioning to future land use by illustrating the most appropriate areas to accommodate this growth within the Town of Wellton or its immediate annexation areas.

### Growth Trends

Based on a 1.9% compound annual growth rate, the incorporated portion of the Town of Wellton is projected to grow from 2,375 to 3,460 people by 2040. The MPA’s total projected population in 2040 is 4,241. Across the County, the age group with the most significant growth is projected to be adults over 65. An aging population will increase the demand for accessible housing, public transportation options, and additional social services. Though the Town of Wellton desires appropriate non-residential uses, its emphasis during the horizon of this update will be to attract additional residents, which assists in increasing existing revenue sources. Areas adjacent to the Town of Wellton’s incorporated boundaries that are designated for residential uses will be prioritized and evaluated for annexation.

Table 1: Population Projections

Area	2020 Population	2040 Population
Population within Town of Wellton	2,375*	3,460**
Population within unincorporated land within MPA	536*	781**
Yuma County	231,781**	259,032***

\*2020 population is based on Decennial Census.

\*\*2040 projection is based on a 1.9% compound annual growth rate.

\*\*\*Yuma County 2020 population and 2040 projection is from Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity’s 2022 postcensal estimate.

### Growth Areas

There are two (2) designated growth areas within Wellton that provide the opportunity for high levels of access, build on existing infrastructure, and have relatively few natural development barriers, such as washes, mountains, or canals. The growth areas that are the focus of this General Plan are described below and shown in *Figure 5*.

- The **West Growth Area**, which is bounded by Avenue 26E, the Wellton Canal, Avenue 29E, and the Mohawk Canal, is slightly less than three square miles in size. The West Growth Area includes approximately one square mile designated for medium-density residential uses within the Coyote Wash development. The existing Arizona Western College Wellton Learning Center and planned multi-sport complex occupy the northeast corner of the West Growth Area. The remainder of the West Growth Area is designated for low density residential uses.
- The **East Growth Area**, which is bounded by Avenue 29E, I-8, Avenue 33E, and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street, is approximately 5.5 square miles in size. The East Growth Area includes approximately 160 acres of unincorporated land that is currently State Trust land. Existing land uses along Avenue 29E at the western edge of the East Growth Area include a small farm, Wellton Memorial Cemetery, First Southern Baptist church, condominiums, and a driving range that are part of the Coyote Wash development. Other existing land use in this growth area include the US Border Patrol, Wellton Towing, and scattered residential. Most of the East Growth Area is designated for low density residential uses, although there is a 40-acre parcel designated as open space that contains Coyote Wash (the drainageway) and was used at one time as a borrow pit for the construction of the Avenue 29E/I-8 traffic interchange as well as a significant amount of community commercial south of I-8.



## Future Land Uses

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in *Figure 5* is the pictorial representation of the community’s long-term vision for the Town of Wellton. This vision, in turn, considers both the growth trends projected for the Town of Wellton as well as the most appropriate location for each type of land use. It is important to understand, however, that the FLUM does not control existing zoning; rather, as land develops and is rezoned, it must statutorily conform to these designations. Accordingly, the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* includes eleven (11) land use designations, as described in *Table 2* below.

*Table 2: Land Use Designations*

Designation	Area (Acres)	Total (%)	Land Use Description
<b>Agriculture/ Rural Preservation</b>	11,527	27.4%	This land use designation with a minimum parcel size of 40 acres applies to small-scale farmland and agricultural uses, and transitions between valued natural resources and development areas. It is appropriate for resource conservation districts and has an emphasis on preserving farm communities and rural character.

<b>Rural Density Residential</b>	3,170	7.5%	This land use designation with a minimum parcel size of 5 acres per dwelling unit applies to agricultural/rural business and residential. It is also appropriate for resource conservation districts. Development characteristics include small scale agriculture-related businesses, hobby/small farms, no perimeter screen walls or fencing (except fencing for livestock and privacy areas), unpaved driveways, outbuildings, outdoor commercial uses permitted by code. Commercial non-farm development that supports agricultural operations and rural lifestyles, such as feed shops, equipment repair, hardware and farm supply stores are appropriate within this land use category on parcels up to ten acres. Commercial uses within this land use category shall screen the perimeter of all outdoor storage and work areas and provide designated, on-site parking areas.
<b>Suburban Rural Density Residential</b>	2,046	4.9%	This land use designation applies to large lot housing with a minimum parcel size of 2 acres per dwelling unit. Development characteristics within this land use category includes no perimeter screen walls (except for livestock fencing and privacy areas), unpaved driveways, some unpaved streets, unpaved pedestrian areas/pedestrian equestrian paths along streets, separate garages, and outbuildings.
<b>Low Density Residential</b>	6,863	16.3%	<p>This land use designation with a maximum of 4 dwelling units per acre includes residential subdivisions, master-planned communities, commercial development serving the immediate area and, in some circumstances, freeway-oriented uses. Residential development appropriate to this land use category includes a variety of development types including low density subdivisions and large lot housing developments. Characteristics of development in this land use category include paved driveways, landscaped sidewalk areas and common areas maintained by HOAs (required within this land use category for all developments more than 2 dwelling units per acre).</p> <p>Development characteristics for subdivisions of less than 2 dwelling units per acre may include unpaved sidewalk areas/pedestrian equestrian paths, separate garages, and equestrian facilities. No outdoor uses (except for equestrian facilities) are permitted within residential developments in this land use category. Neighborhood commercial uses that serve the immediate area, such as restaurants, doctor's offices, and small convenience stores on sites less than ten acres, are appropriate within this land use category. Neighborhood commercial activities within this land use category shall occur within enclosed buildings and paved parking areas. These developments shall be separated from residential developments by a minimum 50-foot landscaped area. Public uses, including schools, parks, community centers, and town offices on parcels less than ten acres, are appropriate within this land use category.</p>

<b>Medium Density Residential</b>	2,571	6.1%	This land use designation allows for 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre and provides a location for higher density residential developments and assisted living facilities. All residential development within this land use category shall be within a subdivision in accordance with an approved land use plan. Characteristics of development within this land use category include paved and landscaped sidewalks along all streets within the development, paved driveways, landscaped common areas maintained by a Homeowners Association, optional privacy fencing, no outdoor uses, and no outbuildings. Manufactured housing is permitted within this land use category. Public uses, including schools, parks, community centers, and town offices on parcels less than ten acres, are appropriate within this land use category.
<b>Interstate Commercial</b>	703	1.7%	This land use category is designed to accommodate high-volume vehicular-oriented commercial, and employment uses. Development within this land use category includes commercial uses on sites greater than ten (10) acres that are separated from residential uses by landscaped areas that are at least 75' wide and have paved parking areas and egress/access from the site onto an Arterial or freeway access road. Along Avenue 29E and between the canal and I-8, development in this land use category is envisioned to complement downtown and provide a transition to the community commercial and elementary school north of the canal. Development at Avenue 25E is envisioned to provide a gateway to the Town of Wellton's western entrance.
<b>Community Commercial</b>	1,363	3.2%	This land use designation is intended to encourage retail and commercial developments of all types that serve the Town of Wellton and surrounding areas. If the development is for a single use, it should occur on a site less than five (5) acres. Developments that include more than one commercial use should occur on sites of five (5) acres or more and be unified through design and consistent signing and include sidewalks and landscaped parking areas.
<b>Industrial</b>	706	1.7%	This land use designation is intended to provide locations for railroad related development and high intensity land uses serving the surrounding agricultural communities. Developments in this category should be separated from residential, school, community activity, and park areas by landscaped areas that are at least 100' wide and screen the development from view.
<b>Industrial/Employment</b>	3,210	7.6%	This land use designation is intended to provide locations for moderate to high intensity land uses, such as business parks and other industrial employment centers, serving the surrounding agricultural communities and the broader workforce. Developments in this category should be separated from residential, school, community activity, and park areas by landscaped areas that are at least 100' wide and screen the development from view.

<b><i>Parks and Open Space</i></b>	9,723	23.2%	This land use designation applies to publicly owned parks, non-developable floodplain, and publicly owned areas with significant natural resources. Land owned and managed by the Arizona State Land Department is not included in this land use category.
<b><i>Public</i></b>	115	.3%	This land use designation includes public used lands (except BMGR) such as but not limited to town offices, maintenance yards, public parks, schools, and community centers.

# FUTURE LAND USES

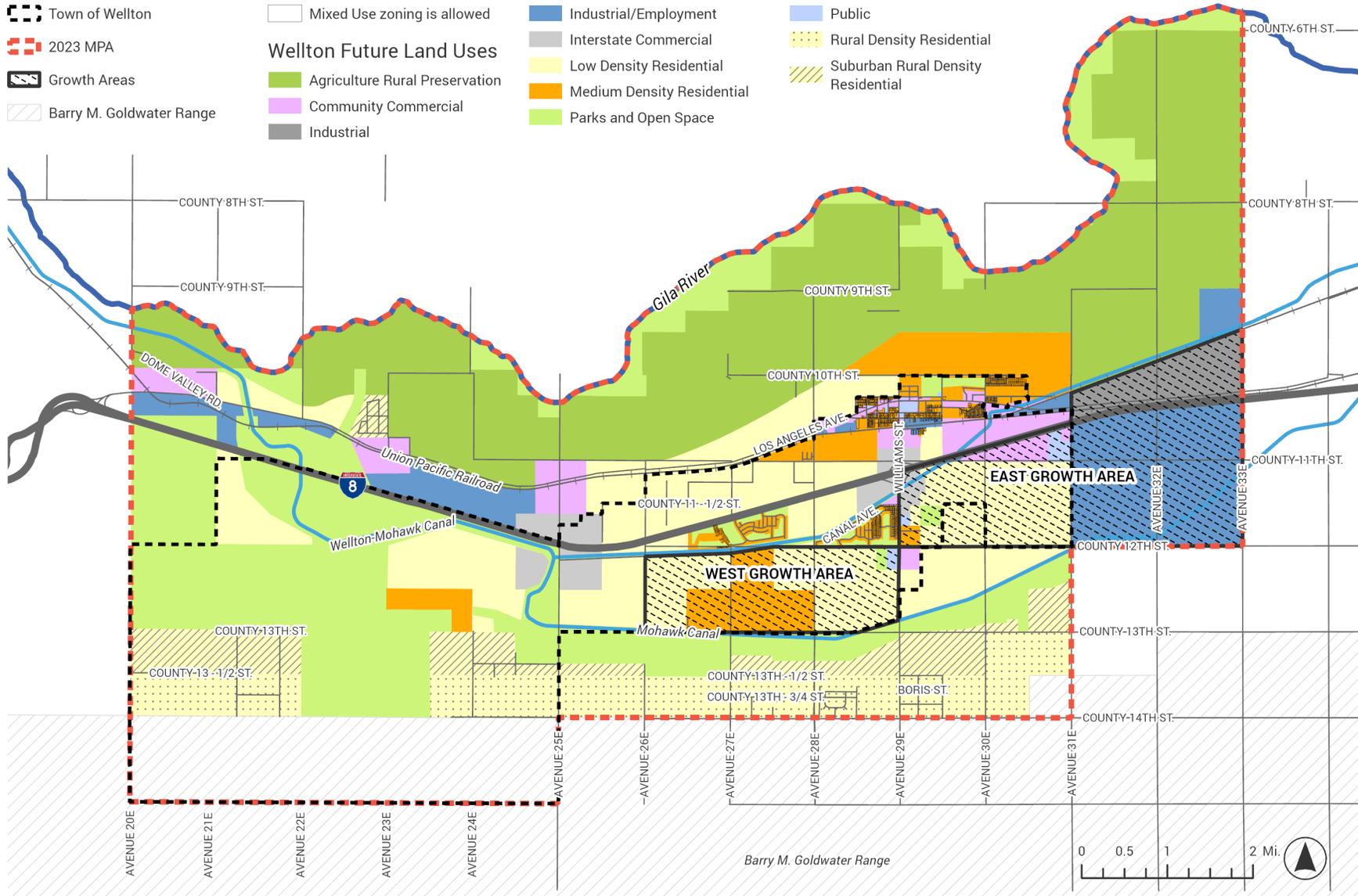


Figure 5: Wellton Future Land Use Map, Note: All parcels owned by ASLD that have future land uses below 1 dwelling unit per acre can be built to a minimum of one dwelling unit per acre.

## Land Use and Growth Areas Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are updated from the *Wellton 2013 General Plan* and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.

- The projected population of Wellton MPA is anticipated to increase from 2,911 (2020 Decennial census) to 4,241 in 2040. Based on a 2021 household size of 2.09 persons per housing unit, approximately 893 new housing units would be required to accommodate anticipated growth through 2040. At densities as low as one unit per acre, less than one and a half square miles of residential development would be needed to accommodate future growth through 2040. As the Town of Wellton approves new development to accommodate this growth, it should discourage leapfrog-type projects that extend new infrastructure through vacant areas with a long development horizon.
- Wellton has experienced the slowest growth of housing units in Yuma County. Yuma County's housing stock, in comparison to Wellton, has grown by eight percent (8%) (6,800 units) since 2010. While Wellton's housing stock has grown little, Wellton currently has the highest homeownership rate in Yuma County at 76%. Since 2010, however, homeownership has declined in Wellton and Yuma County. As the population recovers and increases, there will be a need to provide commensurate housing, both with diversity in type and affordability.
- New development provides an opportunity to diversify the Town of Wellton's population. A majority of housing types in Wellton are single unit and premanufactured Homes. Single unit homes account for approximately 47% of unit types, and premanufactured homes account for approximately 39%. Approximately six percent (6%) of units are boat, RV, van, which accounts for non-permanent season visitors. In addition, multi-unit homes account for an approximately six percent (6%) of housing types. As new development occurs, a range of housing types should be provided so that current Town of Wellton infrastructure, such as schools, parks, and community services, continue to stay relevant.
- Much of the area planned for residential development that is anticipated to develop in the near future is currently zoned for agricultural uses. This provides the Town of Wellton with an excellent opportunity to ensure that new development provides amenities, including trails, common areas, and parks, which will enhance the development and Wellton.
- Planned residential development located south of I-8 and west of Avenue 28E is separated from the Town of Wellton's amenities and services by I-8. Future and current development on the south side of I-8 should be connected to the Town of Wellton via infrastructure, roads, paths, and trails. As new development occurs on the south side of I-8, Wellton will need to continue to ensure that this area is served by parks, emergency response, and other Town of Wellton services.
- Downtown Wellton is located approximately 2/3 mile north of I-8 along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue and Avenue 29E. The area between downtown Wellton and I-8 is currently used

for agriculture. As the Town of Wellton grows, a rural main street feel should be promoted along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue, and a gateway “feel” should be considered along Avenue 29E/William Street that connects the existing Coyote Wash development and other planned developments south of I-8 to downtown Wellton and other planned developments north of I-8. The Town of Wellton has expressed interest in creating a mixed-use zoning district in the Downtown area where residential and commercial uses are allowed together on the same lot.

- As Wellton continues to develop, older and outdated platted subdivisions may become active. Many of these subdivisions were platted in the early 1990s and do not include landscaped common areas, sidewalks, or other improvements. When these older subdivisions within the Town of Wellton limits become active, the Town of Wellton should work with property owners to bring the design and infrastructure planned for these areas up to date so it is compatible with new development and enhances quality of life within Wellton. As development occurs adjacent to or near the Town limits, the Town of Wellton should work with Yuma County to ensure that these projects contribute to the quality of the Town of Wellton and its environs.
- Both Growth Areas are adjacent to existing infrastructure. As these areas develop, growth should proceed from existing infrastructure and not extend infrastructure through undeveloped areas.
- Both Growth Areas abut Avenue 29E. As these areas develop, development should front onto and have primary access and egress onto Avenue 29E and include landscaping along Avenue 29E in keeping with the planned gateway character of Avenue 29E.
- Both Growth Areas are bordered by canals. As these areas develop, trails and community parks with trailheads that provide access to the planned trails along the canals should be included within the development. If separate developments are located within each growth area, the trail systems within developments should be linked to one another.
- The only paved roadways in the West Growth Area are Avenue 29E and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue 27E and Avenue 29E. Additional development in the area will increase traffic volumes on the unpaved roadways (particularly County 12<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue 25E and Avenue 27E) to the point that paving will likely be needed to maintain a drivable surface and to minimize air pollution.
- In the West Growth Area, the existing Coyote Wash development along County 12<sup>th</sup> Street includes a 50’ setback and views of the golf course. Additionally, a golf cart path extends in a landscape area along the north side of County 12<sup>th</sup> Street. This amenity and setback create a park-like feeling that could be enhanced through the installation of linear parks at least 50’ wide on the south side of County 12<sup>th</sup> Street as development occurs.

- The planned multi-sports facility is located in the northeast corner of the West Growth Area. When constructed, this facility will serve Wellton as well as the surrounding county areas. Evening events will require lights that may also illuminate surrounding areas, parking for teams and fans, and may include amplified sound that, without vegetation or other natural barriers, could carry up to one-half mile away.
- In the West Growth Area, the area east of 27E includes a large area planned for medium density residential that is separated from Avenue 29E. As a result, traffic from the higher density area may impact lower density residential planned between this area and Avenue 29E. Consideration of higher density uses that still conform to the low density residential requirements between the existing planned medium density residential and Avenue 29E could address this issue.
- The only paved roadways in East Growth Area are Avenue 29E and Avenue 31E. Additional development in the area will increase traffic volumes on the unpaved roadways (particularly County 11<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue 29E and Avenue 31E) to the point that paving will likely be needed to maintain a drivable surface and to minimize air pollution.
- In the East Growth Area north of County 12<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue 31E and Avenue 33E, the area is designated for low density residential and should be evaluated for annexation.
- In the East Growth Area, an existing Town of Wellton-owned water line already exists along County 11<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue 29E and Avenue 31E that could be accessed by development along County 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- An opportunity exists to encourage connectivity within the West Growth Area by providing access from the east side of commercial developments planned along Avenue 29E to the planned residential areas within this growth area.
- The northern edge of the west of the growth area is adjacent to the existing Border Patrol station and planned commercial development adjacent to I-8, which will likely be auto-oriented uses that are potentially non-service commercial.

## Land Use and Growth Areas Goals and Policies

### **GOAL 2.1: RETAIN WELLTON'S "SMALL RURAL TOWN" AMBIANCE**

**Policy 2.1.1** The Town of Wellton encourages development that enhances the existing community by providing the appropriate "small rural town" scale and character.

**Policy 2.1.2** The Town of Wellton discourages the construction of gated communities, walled subdivisions, and other developments that are physically enclosed

such that they are intended to be isolated from the community rather than part of the community.

- Policy 2.1.3** The Town of Wellton will promote aesthetically designed developments.
- Policy 2.1.4** The Town of Wellton will promote a rural main street feel along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue.
- Policy 2.1.5** The Town of Wellton will encourage low-intensity retail and commercial uses along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue between Avenue 28E and Avenue 30E.
- Policy 2.1.6** The Town of Wellton will promote a gateway feel along Avenue 29E/William Street.
- Policy 2.1.7** The Town of Wellton will encourage high-intensity retail and commercial uses and aesthetic treatments that provide a gateway feel along Avenue 29E/William Street between Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Policy 2.1.8** The Town of Wellton will plan the vacant, developable land.
- Policy 2.1.8** The Town of Wellton will support mixed use developments and zoning giving allowance for both commercial and residential uses on the same parcel in the downtown area, a quarter mile on either side of Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue from Avenue 28E to Avenue 30E.

**GOAL 2.2: MINIMIZE CONFLICTS BETWEEN LAND USES**

- Policy 2.2.1** The Town of Wellton will encourage a compatible mix of land uses throughout the MPA.
- Policy 2.2.2** The Town of Wellton will locate higher density residential and recreational vehicle parks near commercial and employment land uses.
- Policy 2.2.3** The Town of Wellton will locate recreational vehicle (RV) parks in areas with convenient access to I-8, Avenue 29E/William Street, or Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue.
- Policy 2.2.4** The Town of Wellton will buffer residential uses from industrial land uses or commercial development that have intense noise or other impacts that would degrade the quality of adjacent residential use.
- Policy 2.2.5** The Town of Wellton will continue to permit development at densities of no more than one (1) dwelling unit per five (5) acres within one-half mile of BMGR and no more than one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) acres within one mile of BMGR.

**Policy 2.2.6** The Town of Wellton will buffer or screen residential uses from adjacent incompatible uses and adjacent utility corridors.

**Policy 2.2.7** The Town of Wellton will support minimizing the impacts of development on significant natural features.

**Policy 2.2.8** The Town of Wellton will continue to support low density agricultural uses around important natural features.

**GOAL 2.3: PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

**Policy 2.3.1:** The Town will continue to support residents in keeping their neighborhoods safe.

**Policy 2.3.2:** The Town of Wellton will continue to promote a high level of property maintenance.

**GOAL 2.4: SUPPORT A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES, INTENSITIES, AND DENSITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO WELLTON'S RESIDENTIAL DIVERSITY AND STABILITY**

**Policy 2.4.1** The Town of Wellton encourages the development of a range of housing densities and intensities.

**Policy 2.4.2** The Town of Wellton encourages a variety of housing types to accommodate all income levels and lifestyles.

**Policy 2.4.3** The Town of Wellton encourages the development of age-restricted RV projects in locations that have access to major streets and I-8.

**Policy 2.4.4** Within RV developments, the Town of Wellton encourages amenities that may include, but are not limited to a community center, common area landscaping along roads, swimming pool, leisure/park areas, and walking trails.

**GOAL 2.5: CONTINUE WORKING WITH OTHER ENTITIES AND JURISDICTIONS TO ACHIEVE COMMON GOALS AND BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

**GOAL 2.6: ENSURE THAT TOWN OF WELLTON PLANNING DOCUMENTS (EXISTING AND NEWLY CREATED) ARE CURRENT AND CAN EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVE THE DESIRED TYPE OF GROWTH**

**GOAL 2.7: MAXIMIZE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS**

**Policy 2.7.1** The Town of Wellton encourages development in areas with existing infrastructure and within growth areas, including locations near Avenue 29E, County 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Policy 2.7.2** The Town of Wellton supports new development, providing trails that will provide non-motorized connections to the multi-sports facility and in the

West Growth Area by providing open space and community areas adjacent to the multi-sports facility.

**GOAL 2.8: PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN PLANNED AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Policy 2.8.1** The Town of Wellton supports developments paving existing unpaved roadways in place of constructing new paved roads on parallel alignments.

**Policy 2.8.2** The Town of Wellton supports connecting new planned roadways to existing roadways across intersecting arterial, collector, and/or local roadways.

**GOAL 2.9: ANTICIPATE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TRENDS**

**Policy 2.9.1** The Town of Wellton supports consistency between developments within Growth Areas.

**Policy 2.9.2** In reviewing developments, the Town of Wellton will consider compatibility adjacent planned and existing uses when approving developments within Growth Areas.

**Policy 2.9.3** The Town of Wellton supports new developments to connecting to roadways, trails, and open spaces to other planned and existing developments.

**Policy 2.9.4** The Town of Wellton will enhance access and increase separation between the planned multi-sports facility and planned residential development.



# Chapter 3: Circulation Element

Chapter three focuses on the transportation network in the Town of Wellton combined with issues and opportunities for the roadway and active transportation network to support the current and future population of Wellton. The end of this chapter contains goals and policies designed to address the transportation network in Wellton.

## Element Statement

As a statutorily required element, the *Circulation Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* is meant to support and strengthen the Land Use Element provided in Chapter 2. This element promotes a safe and functional transportation network, which includes roadway, multimodal, rail, and air facilities and infrastructure, for all travelers within Wellton.

## Transportation Network

The following section articulates the Town of Wellton’s existing roadway, build-out roadway, and active transportation networks such as public transit, rail, and air.

### Existing Roadway Network

The existing roadway network is composed of regional and local roadways. Interstate 8 (I-8) runs east-west through Wellton, providing regional access to the Town of Wellton via traffic interchanges at Avenue 29E and Old Highway 80 (Dome Valley exit). While there is little traffic congestion, roadway network connectivity is limited due to natural and manmade barriers, including I-8, the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), canals, and washes.

### Build-Out Roadway Network

The *2013 Wellton General Plan* identified a build-out roadway network intended to accommodate future ultimate traffic conditions. The build-out network, shown in *Figure 6*, has been updated to include additional roadways that will serve the area within the expanded MPA boundaries. Roadway alignments are approximate and subject to refinement.

### Active Transportation Network

The existing active transportation network, shown in *Figure 7*, contains limited bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure due to barriers such as I-8, the UPRR, canals, and washes. There is a paved shared-use path on the north side of Old Highway 80, sidewalks in the downtown area and along County 12th Street, and paved shoulders on Old Highway 80 outside of the downtown area. The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and the El Camino del Diablo Trail are within the MPA. Unpaved service roadways also line the canals and are commonly used as unofficial shared-use paths. These unpaved trails provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

### Public Transit

Access to public transit is important in Wellton, as seven percent of residents do not have access to a personal vehicle. Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) provides regional transit to Wellton via Gold Route 8, shown in *Figure 7*. Gold Route 8 connects Wellton, Dome Valley, Fortuna Foothills, and Yuma using I-8. The route also serves Arizona Western College, which is also affiliated with the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and Northern Arizona University. Gold Route 8 serves 13 bus stops in the planning area. The route operates only on weekdays, with two westbound runs and one eastbound run

per day. YCAT offers the “Gold Route Flex Zone,” a last-mile demand-response service that includes the entire Town of Wellton limits.

## **Rail**

The UPRR runs east-west through Wellton’s planning area. The main tracks provide freight services via the Sunset Route that connects Los Angeles, CA, to Houston, TX. The Wellton Branch splits off from the main tracks just east of Avenue 30E. There are four at-grade rail crossings and three grade-separated rail crossings in the planning area, as shown in *Figure 7*. A railroad quiet zone has been established at Avenue 29E/William Street at-grade crossing to eliminate noise from train horns in Wellton’s developed area.

## **Air**

The Yuma International Airport serves the region for commercial air travel. The airport is located in Yuma, approximately 30 miles west of the planning area. Wellton borders the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR) - West, a bombing range used by the United States Marine Corps and Air Force.

# BUILD-OUT ROADWAY NETWORK

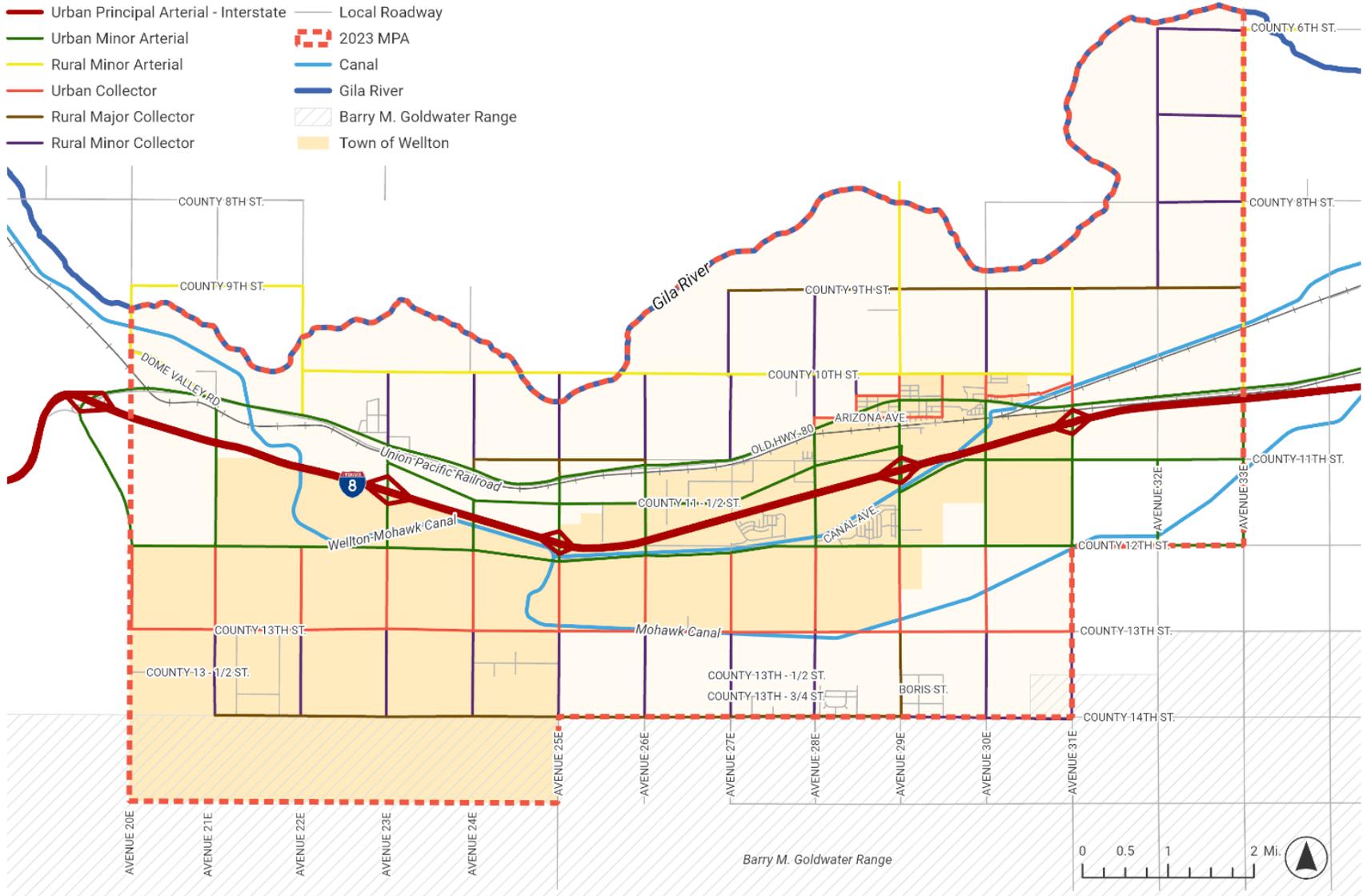


Figure 6: Build-Out Roadway Network

# ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND RAILROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

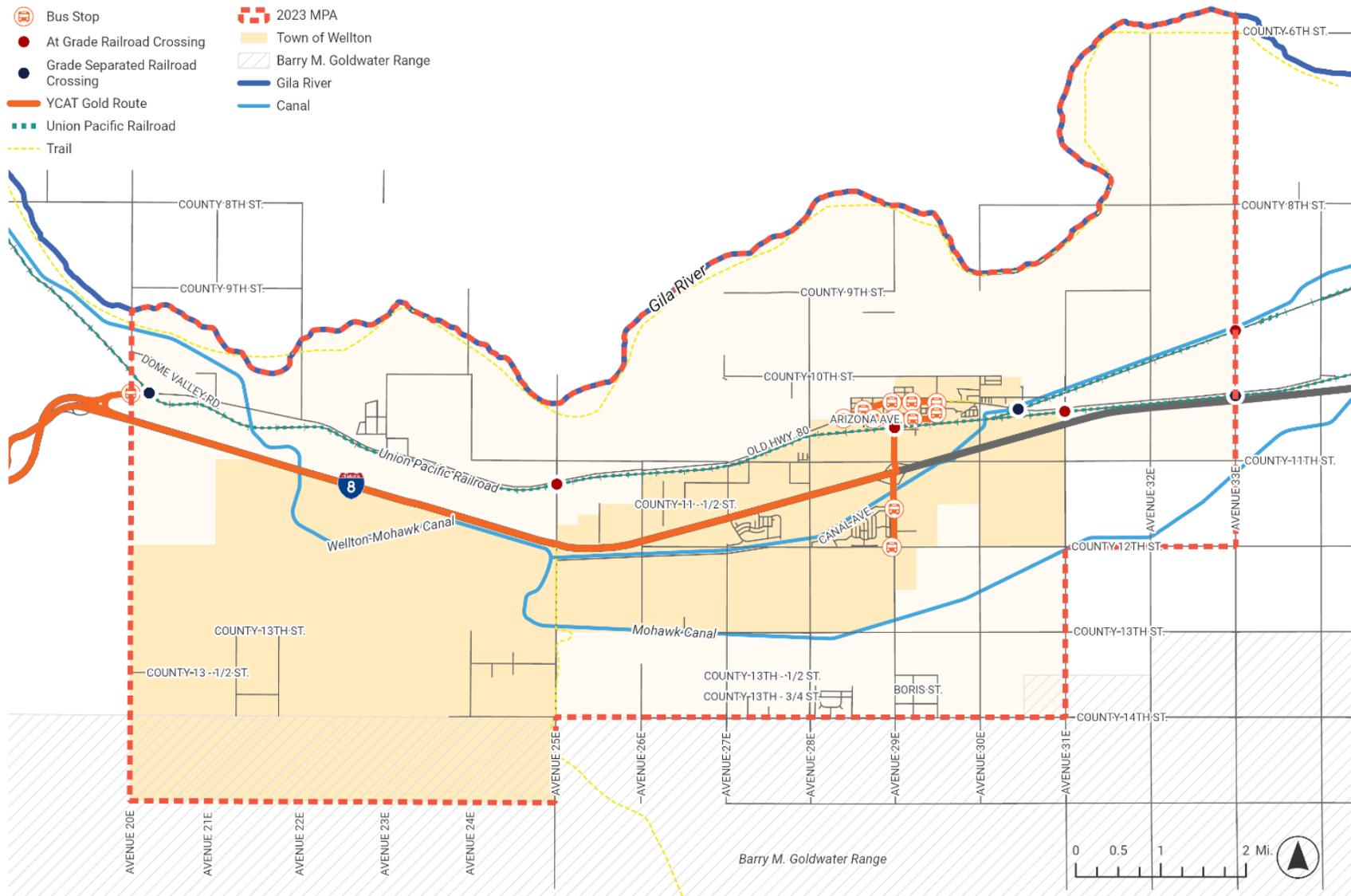


Figure 7: Active Transportation, Transit, and Railroad Infrastructure

## Circulation Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are updated from the Wellton 2013 General Plan and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.

- Paving existing unpaved roadways is needed to improve mobility, emergency response service times, and air quality.
- A comprehensive grid network of paved collector and arterial roadways, particularly across existing barriers and additional privately funded interchanges, will be needed to accommodate the MPA's build-out network.
- Increased focus on maintenance of existing facilities would improve the current roadway network's service life.
- Expanding the roadway network to build-out conditions would improve local connectivity to existing and future developments within Wellton, as well as improve regional access.
- Additional crossings of I-8, the railroad, and the canals are needed to improve mobility and emergency response service.
- Upgrading at-grade railroad crossings to grade-separated crossings would improve circulation, travel time reliability, and safety.
- Increased frequency of the fixed route and demand-response services in Wellton will make transit more accessible and convenient to existing and potential riders.
- There is a need for bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the collector and arterial roadway network, particularly near activity centers.
- Paved shared-use paths, if implemented along the canals, would improve connectivity.
- Roadways are planned to be built along the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR), outside of the facilities right-of-way.
- Current transportation funding levels are not adequate to fund existing operations and maintenance activities nor provide sufficient funding for capital improvements to the transportation network. Additional funding sources should be explored.

## Circulation Goals and Policies

### **GOAL 3.1: MAINTAIN A CONVENIENT AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**Policy 3.1.1** The Town of Wellton will identify and prioritize roadway improvement projects.

**Policy 3.1.2** The Town of Wellton will ensure adequate funding to address long-term transportation needs.

**Policy 3.1.3** The Town of Wellton will identify funding sources for continued development of the transportation network.

**Policy 3.1.4** The Town of Wellton will reduce or eliminate bottlenecks or barriers to efficient travel on the transportation network.

**GOAL 3.2: PROMOTE REGIONAL COOPERATION ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

**Policy 3.2.1** The Town of Wellton will work with regional, state, and federal agencies and other entities to enhance transportation options to, from, and within Wellton.

**Policy 3.2.2** The Town of Wellton will participate in regional, state, and federal planning processes.

**GOAL 3.3: ENSURE THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK MEETS CURRENT AND FUTURE CIRCULATION DEMANDS**

**Policy 3.3.1** The Town of Wellton will assess the impacts of proposed developments on existing and planned roadways.

**Policy 3.3.2** The Town of Wellton will accept only those private roads as public rights-of-way that meet the Town of Wellton's adopted standards for local, collector, and arterial roadways.

**GOAL 3.4: PROVIDE TRAVEL OPTIONS TO RESIDENTS**

**Policy 3.4.1** The Town of Wellton will provide non-motorized transportation facilities to all areas of Wellton, particularly to access shopping, schools, and other activity centers.

**Policy 3.4.2** The Town of Wellton will encourage the expansion of transit services between Yuma, Wellton, and other regional destinations.

**Policy 3.4.3** The Town of Wellton will encourage increases in the frequency of the YCAT Gold Route.

**Policy 3.4.4** The Town of Wellton will promote compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**GOAL 3.5: ENSURE SAFE MOTORIZED AND NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

**Policy 3.5.1** The Town of Wellton will support the implementation of measures that promote safety in the transportation network.



# Chapter 4: Water and Wastewater Resources Element

Chapter four focuses on the limited water and wastewater resources in the Town of Wellton. The current issues and opportunities, coupled with a review of existing and future conditions of water demand in Wellton, provides an outlook for water resources for the Town of Wellton. The end of this chapter contains goals and policies designed to address water and wastewater resources in the Town of Wellton.

## Element Statement

Although the Town of Wellton does not statutorily require a water and wastewater resources element, the Town of Wellton has elected to provide one. The *Water and Wastewater Resources Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* provides background on the surface water, groundwater, and treated effluent water supplied for Wellton. This element reviews the anticipated future demand of water to accommodate growth projected in the Plan and how the demand will be served by existing water supplies and infrastructure.

## Existing Water and Wastewater Resources

### Water and Irrigation Systems

The Town of Wellton operates a community water system that partners with the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District (WMIDD) to obtain surface water from the Colorado River through a network of canals. Wellton has one water treatment plant and an associated distribution system. WMIDD provides Wellton with 2,100 acre-feet (ac-ft) of annual surface water. Existing demand for surface water is limited to residential and commercial customer use. Large-scale non-potable water use, including golf courses and parks, are supplied directly by WMIDD. Irrigation water is not typically groundwater and is delivered by canal.

### Wastewater System

The Town of Wellton does not have an existing wastewater or sewer system. Individual properties utilize personal septic systems. Yuma County currently regulates septic systems, requiring an application to construct or upgrade a septic system. The Coyote Wash area has a wastewater treatment plant that exclusively serves that development.

### Water Conservation

The Town of Wellton has previously identified goals and objectives to promote water conservation efforts.

## Future Water and Wastewater Demand

Existing and future water demand is shown in *Table 3*. Calculated demand is based on an assumed current household size of 2.1 people per household, per the 2020 Census, and an annual water usage of 0.423 ac-ft per housing unit. The build-out conditions are anticipated to require 21,322 ac-ft to meet the planning area's water needs. The current Town of Wellton's water allotment through WMIDD is only approximately 10% of the anticipated build-out water needs. The Town of Wellton's existing water treatment plant is only currently set up to treat water from the WMIDD canal system. Additional treatment capacity will be needed to support build-out conditions.

Table 3: Future Water Demand

Year	Population	Water Demand (ac-ft)
2020	2,375	478
Build-Out	105,856	21,211

## Water and Wastewater Resources Issues and Opportunities

- The following issues and opportunities are updated from the *Wellton 2013 General Plan* and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.
- Wellton’s water treatment plant was built in 1967 and will need to be replaced or upgraded to current best practices in the future.
- Investment in wastewater infrastructure would allow residents to replace aging septic systems and allow wastewater to potentially be treated for irrigation reuse. WMIDD water allowance that is currently utilized for irrigation could then be freed for municipal use.
- Build-out water demand will require additional surface water allotment from WMIDD and additional water treatment capacity. Groundwater and reclaimed water are additional potential sources of water.
- Pumped groundwater is a viable water supply option for future growth; however, the number and locations of new wells needed to meet future demands are uncertain as specific aquifer information is limited.
- The ability of MWIDD to increase water supply to Wellton is restricted by capacity in the canal system and obligations to other water users.
- Implementing water conservation requirements and practices, such as the use of drought-tolerant plants, efficient irrigation systems, and water-conserving fixtures, will help conserve water. Wastewater treatment and reuse for irrigation would also reduce demand for water from the Colorado River.
- There is some land potentially suitable for a wastewater treatment plant and associated gravity feed system, with many nearby opportunities for reuse of the effluent.

## Water and Wastewater Resources Goals and Policies

**GOAL 4.1: ENSURE THAT NO NEW DEVELOPMENT DEGRADES THE WATER RESOURCES OF EXISTING WATER USERS AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Policy 4.1.1** The Town of Wellton will determine the impact of the proposed new development on water resources and the water system.

**Policy 4.1.2** The Town of Wellton will ensure that all Wellton residents have access to high-quality and reliable drinking water.

**Policy 4.1.3** The Town of Wellton will prevent land uses from negatively impacting the canal quality of water if they are adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of major canals that supply irrigation and drinking water.

**GOAL 4.2: EXPLORE DEVELOPING A CENTRALIZED SEWER SYSTEM IN WELLTON**

**Policy 4.2.1** The Town of Wellton will explore the feasibility of a centralized sewer collection and wastewater treatment system.

**Policy 4.2.2** The Town of Wellton will discourage the use of septic systems for new residential mixed-use development where centralized sewer systems are feasible.

**GOAL 4.3: PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE AND CLEAN WATER SUPPLY**

**Policy 4.3.1** The Town of Wellton will continue to plan and manage water supply, quality, and infrastructure for long-term reliability and efficiency.

**Policy 4.3.2** The Town of Wellton will encourage the use of water conservation to minimize water pollution.

**Policy 4.3.3** The Town of Wellton will encourage the public to utilize water conservation practices through education on the benefits of water conservation.



# Chapter 5: Parks & Open Space Element

Chapter five focuses on Wellton's natural beauty and rural character that offers residents scenic recreation, serene hiking trails, and ample outdoor attractions. This element provides an inventory of existing and proposed open spaces in the Town of Wellton, including parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, and trails. This chapter also identifies existing issues and opportunities identified with parks and open spaces, proposed parks, and trails, and offers a variety of goals and policies to both enhance and maintain this vital element of Wellton's character.

## Element Statement

Although the Town of Wellton does not statutorily require a *Parks and Open Space Element*, the Town of Wellton has elected to provide one. The *Parks and Open Space Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* outlines a comprehensive vision for developing, enhancing, and preserving parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, and natural areas within the Town of Wellton. This element underscores the Town of Wellton’s commitment to providing its residents with access to quality outdoor and indoor spaces that promote physical activity, environmental stewardship, and overall well-being. Incorporating this elective element ensures that the community’s parks and open spaces will continue to play a vital role in promoting a high quality of life, fostering a strong sense of community, and preserving the natural beauty that makes Wellton a remarkable place to live, work, and recreate.

## Parks and Open Space Inventory

The parks and open space documented in this section includes parks and recreation facilities, open space, and trails, and these are illustrated in *Figure 8*.

### Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Town of Wellton provides several parks and other recreation facilities. Town of Wellton parks include Butterfield Town Park and the Westside Common Area. Recreation facilities in Wellton include the Wellton Community Center, the Butterfield Golf Course, the N.D. and Katie Kline Pool, and the Links at Coyote Wash Golf Course. These parks and recreation facilities are described below:

- ***Butterfield Park*** – This 8.8-acre park has a variety of opportunities for the Town of Wellton’s community, including two jungle gyms, four basketball courts, a volleyball court, six picnic ramadas, barbecue grills, and a walking path.
- ***Westside Common Area***– This 1.1-acre, passive neighborhood park/common area is located on the southwest corner of Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue and Hindman Street. The park is the location of the Christmas Tree lighting and the starting point of the Pioneer Days Parade, which terminates at Butterfield Park.
- ***Wellton Community Center*** – The 7,569 square-foot community center is located at 10234 Dome Street at Butterfield Park. The community center includes a meeting space for community events.
- ***Butterfield Golf Course*** – Surrounded by the Gila Mountains, the Butterfield Golf Course has 18 holes, a driving range, a putting green, and a Pro Shop that rents handcarts, bags, clubs, and golf carts. The course is open to the public.
- ***N.D. and Katie Kline Pool*** - located at 29318 Bakersfield Avenue, the N.D., and Katie Kline Pool is open seasonally from May until September each year.
- ***The Links at Coyote Wash Golf Course*** – Surrounded by the Coyote Wash development, this golf course has 18 holes as well as a driving range, a putting green, a restaurant, and a Pro Shop that rents handcarts, bags and clubs, and golf carts. The course is open to the public.

The Town of Wellton currently provides 3.15 acres of developed park per 1,000 residents. To maintain this standard as the Town of Wellton continues to grow, an additional 5.83 acres of developed park will be needed by 2033. This demand can be met through the development of an additional park. The Town of Wellton already has preliminary plans for a multi-sport complex on land just south of County 12<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Avenue 29E. This facility is planned to include lit sports fields, bleachers, and a snack bar.



Source: Coyote Wash Golf Course and Pond

### Open Space and Trails

Wellton is located in the Dome Valley, with the Gila River and Muggins Mountains on the north side of the MPA, the Gila Mountains on the west and south sides of the MPA, and BMGR on the south side of the MPA. The Muggins Mountains Wilderness Area's southern boundary is approximately two miles north of the MPA near Avenue 23E. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) either maintains or owns significant amounts of undeveloped land in the western and southern parts of the Wellton MPA which are all designated for recreational purposes by BLM and parks and recreation on the FLUM.

The Town of Wellton is connected to these open space areas by two historic trails: the El Camino del Diablo trail that extends south from Avenue 25E through BMGR to the Gila Mountains and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail that follows the Gila River, which is shown on *Figure 8*. Other informal connections, such as irrigation canals and unpaved roadways, also provide access to open spaces and natural resources within and near the MPA.

# WELLTON PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (Including Land Ownership)

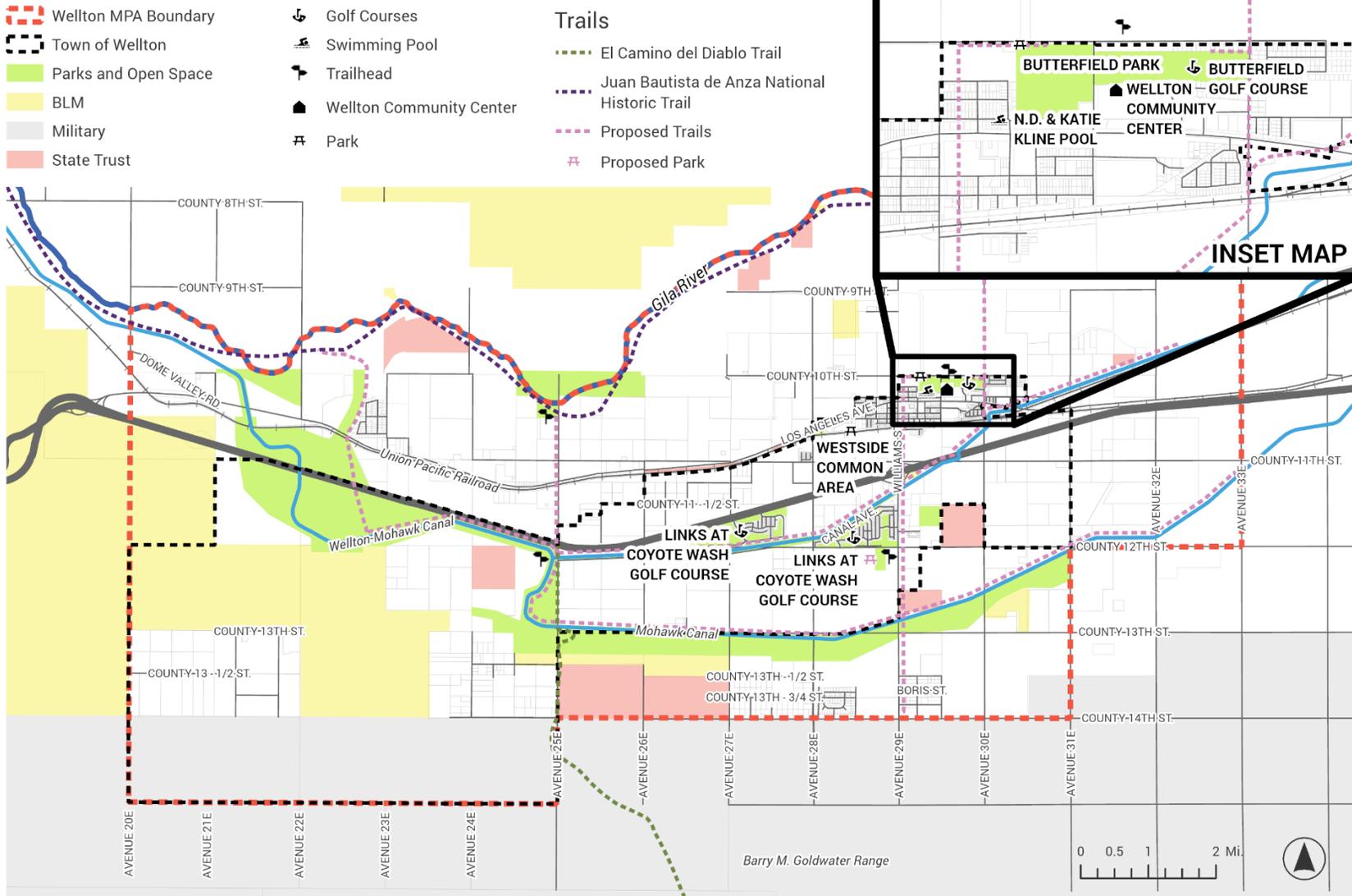


Figure 8: Wellton Parks and Open Space Map. Note: In addition to parks and open spaces, this map identified several public landowners within the MPA. Land uses for all parcels can be found on page 20.

## Parks and Open Space Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are updated from the *Wellton 2013 General Plan* and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.

- The planned multi-sport complex should meet future needs for recreation facilities such as fields but also include a large indoor component. This facility should also be designed to include other facilities that are typically located in parks, such as children’s play areas with play structures, other lit sports courts such as volleyball and basketball, restrooms, picnic ramadas, and barbeques.
- Residents have expressed a desire for additional recreational, cultural, and entertainment events at the parks and golf courses.
- As the Town of Wellton develops, additional community recreation facilities, including a community center, may be appropriate on the south side of I-8.
- The Town of Wellton is surrounded by substantial open space resources that can attract visitors and tourists and support economic development. These resources should be considered as the Town of Wellton develops.
- The open space within and around the MPA is discontinuous. Existing wildlife movement corridors should be preserved when undeveloped land is ultimately developed, particularly near the northern, western, and southern boundaries of the MPA, to enable continued wildlife movement.
- The Gila River is an important riparian resource that provides opportunities for birding and other activities. Opportunities exist to provide interpretation, trails, and other amenities within the designated open space area that could encourage visitors and provide education and recreation opportunities for the Town of Wellton.
- Residents have expressed a desire for more designated walking paths and trails in Wellton.
- The Muggins Mountains Wilderness is located just north of the designated open space near the Gila River. Opportunities to connect the open space near the Gila River to the Muggins Mountain Wilderness should be explored.
- The El Camino del Diablo Trail along Avenue 25E currently terminates at I-8. Opportunities to extend the trail to the north to the Juan Bautista de Anza trail and the Gila River open space should be explored.
- The Town of Wellton benefits from several east-west canals owned by WMIDD. The canal banks provide opportunities for trails that could link many of the open spaces in the MPA.

## Parks and Open Space Goals and Policies

### **GOAL 5.1 PROVIDE AND EXPAND A RANGE OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE TOWN OF WELLTON**

**Policy 5.1.1** As population increases, the Town of Wellton support continues to maintain existing facilities and levels of service, including the provision of active parks at a ratio of 3.15 acres per 1,000 residents.

**Policy 5.1.2** The Town of Wellton supports the expansion and promotion of special events and festivals, such as the Pioneer Day Parade and Fiesta and the Wellton-Mohawk Tractor Rodeo that are focused around unique interests and that support tourism opportunities as well as events such as movie nights and concerts at the parks.

**Policy 5.1.3** The Town of Wellton will continue to expand the types of special events to capitalize on the Town of Wellton’s access to natural resources and wildlife areas. These could include seasonal events focused on wildlife attracted to the Gila River and the surrounding mountains or running events along canals within the Town of Wellton.

### **GOAL 5.2 CONNECT PARKS AND OPEN SPACES TO ONE ANOTHER AND PROVIDE CONNECTIVITY FOR ALL LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL TRAILS**

**Policy 5.2.1** For all new development, the Town of Wellton encourages the provision of trail access to and between recreation facilities and open spaces.

**Policy 5.2.2** The Town of Wellton will coordinate with the AZGFD to ensure that new development preserves existing wildlife corridors through wide roadway setbacks or along natural washes within developments.

**Policy 5.2.3** The Town of Wellton supports provision of access to trails via creating new trailheads at parks, open space areas, and other locations within the Town of Wellton.

### **GOAL 5.3 ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES THROUGH DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES**

**Policy 5.3.1** As new development occurs, the Town of Wellton supports the identification and conservation of open space, significant natural resources, and connections within them.

**Policy 5.3.2** As new development occurs, the Town of Wellton encourages the preservation of major washes within development areas.

**Policy 5.3.3** As new development occurs, the Town of Wellton encourages internal development trails to connect to public trails at the periphery of the development if public trails exist in the vicinity.

- Policy 5.3.4** As new development occurs, the Town of Wellton encourages public access and discourages the gating or locking of trails internal to development.
- Policy 5.3.5** As new development occurs, the Town of Wellton supports trails that connect to planned and existing public trails and planned and existing open space resources as a component of new development.
- Policy 5.3.6** The Town of Wellton will encourage all new development over 80 acres to provide neighborhood parks that are a minimum of five contiguous acres, with a minimum of three on-street parking spaces and at least one acre that is out of retention/detention areas, and that includes at least two of the following: sports court, shaded play area with play structure, Parkour-style fitness trail, ramada with a picnic table, or multi-use playfield (minimum size of 250' x 150').



# Chapter 6: Environmental Planning Element

Chapter six inventories Wellton’s rich natural resources, including stunning mountain views, unique ecology, and an unperturbed night sky. This element provides a catalog of Wellton’s present environmental conditions, including its biological resources, physiography, and cultural resources. Environmental features are mapped to contextualize the environmental challenges Wellton faces. Offered at the end of this chapter are goals and policies designed to address these challenges.

## Environmental Planning Element Statement

Although the Town of Wellton does not statutorily require an environmental planning element, the Town of Wellton has elected to provide one. The *Environmental Planning Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* aims to systematically document and assess the existing environmental conditions, natural resources, and ecological systems within the geographic area. By conducting a thorough analysis, local governments and stakeholders can make informed decisions to ensure sustainable development, management and conservation of natural resources, and the enhancement of overall environmental, water, and air quality.

## Environment Conditions Inventory

The environmental conditions documented in this section include biological resources, physiography, and cultural resources. Some of the Environmental Features below are illustrated in *Figure 9*.

### Biological Resources

While Wellton may be in one of the harshest deserts in the United States, its proximity to the Gila River allows the Town of Wellton to have a small but thriving agriculture economy. Within the greater Sonoran Desert, creosote bushes and saguaro cactus thrive, western burrowing owls can be found throughout the desert, and saguaros can be found in the Muggins Mountain Wilderness and Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, both located to the north of the Town of Wellton. The desert to the south of Wellton is home to a unique species, the extremely rare Sonoran Pronghorn, that is a carryover from the Ice Ages. Sonoran pronghorns have been reintroduced to BGMR and were also reintroduced to a subunit of the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge in 2013.



*Sonoran Pronghorn: AZ Game and Fish, 2015*

The Arizona Game and Fish Department's (AGFD) Heritage Data Management System provided a list of special status species that have been documented as occurring in the MPA vicinity (five-mile buffer). The following species are special status species for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), AGFD, and/or the Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA):

- Sonoran Pronghorn
- Western Burrowing Owl
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Clustered Barrel Cactus
- Least Bittern
- California Leaf-nosed Bat
- Yuma Ridgeway's Rail
- Yuman Desert Fringe-toed Lizard
- Sonoran Desert Tortoise

## Physiography

Located in the Yuma Desert section of the Sonoran Desert, Wellton is within the lowest-elevation section of the Sonoran Desert. Wellton is at the base of a gently sloping bajada that flows from the Gila Mountains to the southwest, the Wellton Hills to the south, and the Copper Mountains to the southeast. Topographically, the Town of Wellton consists of flood plains, low terraces, alluvial fans, and drainageways. Surrounding the area are rugged mountain ranges that rise abruptly from the flat desert. Surrounding peaks include Sheep Mountain (3,155'), Klothos Temple (1,666'), Muggins Mountains (1,424'), and Castle Dome Mountains (3,788').



*Example of a sloping bajada in the Mojave Desert, Source: Wikipedia,*

Wellton is located in the Lower Colorado River Valley subdivision of the Sonoran Desertscrub biotic community. Typical plants along the drainageways within this subdivision are blue palo verde, catclaw acacia, mesquite, desert broom, and smoketree. In the open areas, foothills palo verde, ironwood, creosote, ocotillo, and brittlebush are typical. Saguaro and cholla are found in sparse amounts within this subdivision. The desert around Wellton, however, has little vegetation comprised of mostly creosote bush. Wellton also lies within the Lower Gila River basin and watershed. Water is occasionally present in low lying areas of the Gila River due to groundwater discharge and/or agricultural runoff. Releases from the Painted Rock Dam can also cause the river to flow. Other area drainageways flow intermittently, subject to the Southwest's ephemeral rains. Wellton is also in the Lower Gila Groundwater Basin. Most groundwater development occurs in the Gila River floodplain, which is at a shallow depth and unconfined. The water quality is generally saline and unsuitable for most uses. The average rainfall is 3.78 inches. The highs can range from 115° in the summer to 70° in the winter.

## Cultural Resources

Yuma County was inhabited by several Native American tribes for hundreds of years. The Yuman language speaking people, including Maricopa, Quechan, and Yavapai, all occupied areas around Wellton. In 1775, Juan Bautista De Anza, a Spanish explorer and governor, led an expedition of 240 men and women from Sonora, Mexico, to San Francisco, California. On his expedition, he traveled north into Arizona, eventually turning west into the area south of modern-day Phoenix. Following the Gila River, De Anza and his expedition made camp just west and east of Wellton. The sites are designated as follows: Site 35, Cerrito de Santa Cecilia del Metate, Site 36, and Laguna Salobre. These sites are now preserved along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. The Town of Wellton MPA and Yuma County is also home to the Ligurta Area Special Cultural Resource Management Area (SCRMA). According to the BLM Yuma Field Office Approved Resource Management Plan, the cultural resources within the Ligurta Area SCRMA are considered to primarily be for scientific use, while the cultural resources within the Muggins Mountains Terraces SCRMA are considered to be for traditional viewing and future conservation use.

# WELLTON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

-  Wellton MPA Boundary
-  Town of Wellton
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Special Cultural Resource Management Areas
-  Streams/Washes

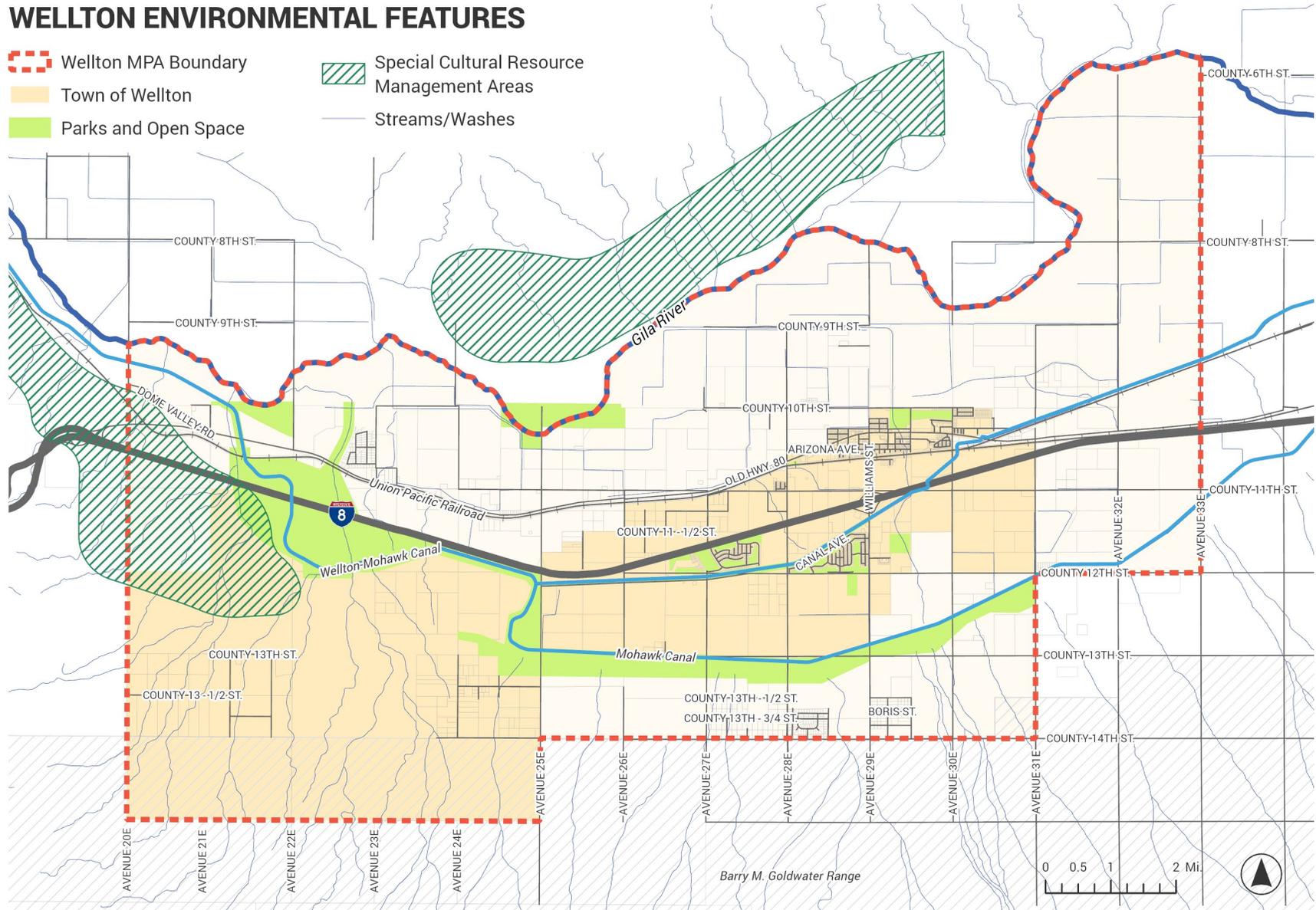


Figure 9: Wellton Environmental Features

## Environmental Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are updated from the *Wellton 2013 General Plan* and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.

- Although Wellton is in attainment for all major National Ambient Air Quality Standards criteria pollutants, dust control is an issue, especially on County 11<sup>th</sup> Street and County 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Dust pollution along County 11<sup>th</sup> Street has increased since the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Border Patrol opened the Border Patrol facility north of County 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Residents have cited a concern about water quality. The concentration of nitrates in the groundwater is at an elevated level in Wellton. The elevated level of nitrates is related to irrigated agricultural practices and concentrated animal feeding operations. Septic systems also contribute to the elevated level of nitrates in the groundwater. Conventional septic systems only remove approximately 10%-30% of nitrogen, allowing the remainder to seep into the ground. The Wellton area is included in the Yuma 208 Plan, which was put in place to establish strategies and processes to provide regional coordination in developing wastewater treatment facilities and for efforts to protect water quality.
- Residents have expressed concerns about the increase in light pollution as development occurs.
- The Gila River has primarily been dry since 1993. Flows that do occur in the Gila River are generally from agricultural runoff. In certain areas of the Gila River, there is suitable habitat for several bird species that are considered special status species by the USFWS and/or the AGFD. Suitable habitat for other special status species is present in the MPA.
- Named and unnamed washes in the MPA may be considered waters of the U.S.; therefore, impacts to these washes could require permitting through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## Environmental Goals and Policies

- GOAL 6.1      PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS WITHIN AND AROUND THE TOWN OF WELLTON**
- Policy 6.1.1:** The Town of Wellton will promote the implementation of wildlife-friendly planning where appropriate and coordinate with the AZGFD to help conserve local bird and wildlife populations, habitats, and associated recreational opportunities.
- Policy 6.1.2** The Town of Wellton encourages the preservation of open space, natural beauty, and critical environment areas, particularly around the Gila River area.
- Policy 6.1.3** The Town of Wellton supports buffering farmland from encroachment.

**Policy 6.1.4** The Town of Wellton supports renewable energy and other industrial developments that are located and designed to minimize the impact on wildlife populations, their habitats, and associated recreation opportunities.

**Policy 6.1.5** The Town of Wellton supports the management of invasive species per recommendations by the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the Arizona Native Plant Society.

**GOAL 6.2: PROMOTE AND EDUCATE RESIDENTS ON TOPICS RELATED TO CLEAN AIR AND DARK SKY INITIATIVES**

**Policy 6.2.1** The Town of Wellton supports the paving and maintenance of dirt roads to reduce levels of dust as opportunities become available.

**Policy 6.2.2** The Town of Wellton supports continued efforts to improve water quality and increase water supplies.

**Policy 6.2.3** All new development shall meet Dark Sky Initiatives to reduce light pollution.



# Chapter 7: Cost of Development Element

Chapter seven focuses on the limited revenue sources of the Town of Wellton combined with issues and opportunities for funding needed for infrastructure associated with the current and future population of Wellton. A potential list of funding mechanisms is also included. The end of this chapter contains goals and policies designed to address Cost of Development in the Town of Wellton.

## Element Statement

Although the Town of Wellton does not statutorily require a Cost of Development element, the Town of Wellton has elected to provide one. The *Cost of Development Element* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* identifies policies and strategies that the Town of Wellton will use to require development to pay its fair share toward the cost of additional public service needs generated by new development, with appropriate exceptions when in the public interest.

## Revenue for Current Services

The Town of Wellton's main sources of revenue are State Shared Revenues based on the following: Census population figures; a share of the State of Arizona sales tax income and gasoline tax (County in-lieu tax); franchise fees from utilities; permit fees; and 3.5% Town of Wellton sales tax. The Town of Wellton collects no property taxes from residents. The Town of Wellton also collects revenue by charging for Water and Trash pickup.

## Cost of Development Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are updated from the *Wellton 2013 General Plan* and include information gleaned from the existing conditions analysis and during the public engagement activities of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan*.

- Maintenance and improvement of existing Town of Wellton's roadways and the construction of new roadways is a continuing issue. Many of the roadways in the MPA are undeveloped, private, and unpaved. There may be availability of federal transportation grant programs and the ADOT-administered Transportation Alternatives program to assist with funding bike/pedestrian infrastructure projects.
- The Town of Wellton has purchased a water clarifier but seeks funds for installation and maintenance.
- Public Safety response times are adequate, but residents are concerned about keeping this level of service as the Town of Wellton grows.
- The Train shuts down Avenue 29E/Williams Street when it stops, blocking the aging population in Coyote Wash from emergency services. Another RR crossing, overpass, or adding an off ramp to Avenue 33E or 31E to allow for easier access may be warranted.
- There exists adjacent land to the east of the Town of Wellton's incorporated area that may be ready for annexation, adding to the available housing stock and shared state revenue for the Town of Wellton.
- A study was conducted by Stantec Engineering recently, which indicated that a Wastewater Treatment facility for the North Side of Wellton would cost \$57 million. Currently, one does not exist.

## Financing Mechanisms

As stated, the Town of Wellton revenues are primarily limited to census population-shared revenue and sales tax revenue. That said, the Town of Wellton has a wide array of options available for financing development, from utilizing federal and state grants, establishing taxing districts, issuing bonds, and creating impact fee programs. It should be noted that matching fund requirements for small rural communities have been and will continue to be an impediment to obtaining grant funds and future growth. A list of financing mechanisms is provided below, along with a more detailed description of mechanisms that are currently used or may be used by the Town of Wellton.

- **Taxes** – Taxes are levied by a government entity on people or property for public purposes. Typical taxes include income, sales, property, and gasoline tax.
- **Development Fees** – Development fees are dedicated to specific capital infrastructure for public services needed to support new development.
- **Bonds** – Bonds are a means by which the Town of Wellton borrows money by selling a bond for the construction of needed projects. The bond is repaid over a number of years with interest.
- **Lease Agreements** – Lease purchase agreements allow for the cost of items to be spread over many years.
- **Special Taxing Districts** – Taxing districts can be set up to fund construction or maintenance within a defined area, with the cost of improvements being shared among the property owners in that area.
- **In-Lieu Payments** – In-lieu payments are collected when development pays fees to a government entity for future needed improvements in a specific area that are the responsibility of the development rather than constructing the needed improvements due to the timing of when construction of those improvements will occur.
- **Construction of Improvements** – The developer constructs the future needed improvements in a specific area (typically on-site or adjacent to the development site) that are the responsibility of the development. Construction of improvements must still follow applicable agency standards and permit approval processes.
- **Right-of-way Dedications** – Right-of-way dedication consists of the conveyance of property to a government agency for public use, such as right-of-way for a public roadway.
- **Service Privatizations** – Service privatization occurs when a public service previously provided by a public entity is transferred over to a private entity.
- **Joint Use Agreements** – Joint use agreements allow two or more public agencies to share in the construction, operations, or maintenance of infrastructure improvements, reducing the cost each agency has to bear.
- **Public-Private Partnerships** – Public-private partnerships allow public and private entities to share in the construction, operations, or maintenance of infrastructure improvements. Typically, private entities provide up-front funding for public improvement capital expenses and then are reimbursed over time from revenues generated from the public improvement.

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The term “block grant” refers to grant programs that provide federal assistance for broadly defined functions, such as community development or social services. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) State Program award grants to smaller units of local government that develop affordable housing, provide services, and create jobs. Although not CDBG entitlement community, the Town of

Wellton can continue to receive and utilize small amounts of CDBG funding from the Department of Housing & Urban Development to fund various eligible projects that meet the goals and objectives of the 5-year Consolidated Plan.

The five main project types that the Town of Wellton could use CDBG funds towards are:

- Housing Rehabilitation
- Housing Services
- Public Facility Improvements
- Public Services
- Planning & Administration
- Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET)

### **Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET)**

The GPLET has been established by the State and is a redevelopment tool to initiate development by reducing a project's operating costs by replacing the real property with an excise tax.

### **Community Facilities Districts (CFDs)**

Community Facilities Districts (CFD) are special taxing districts created within municipalities to finance the cost of certain public facilities that serve or benefit land within district boundaries. Debt associated with a CFD is the responsibility of landowners benefitting from the public improvements and are generally repaid through either ad valorem taxes levied upon each landowner's property or special assessments placed upon each landowner's property Arizona Revised Statute 48-701.

### **Improvement District**

In addition to the purposes for which an improvement district may be formed under the provisions of ARS §48-572, an improvement district may be formed within a designated area to provide public service within the district at a higher level or greater degree than provided in the remainder of the community, including such services as public safety, fire protection, refuse collection, street or sidewalk cleaning or landscape maintenance in public areas, planning, promotion, transportation, and public parking.

### **Blighted Area**

ARS § 36-1471 defines "Blighted area" as an area, other than a slum area, where sound municipal growth and the provision of housing accommodations are substantially arrested in a predominance of the properties. A city or town may abate the tax provided under this article for a limited period beginning when the certificate of occupancy is issued and ending eight years after the certificate of occupancy is issued on a government property improvement that is constructed either before or after July 20, 1996, and that meets the following requirements: The improvement is located in a single central business district in the city or town and is subject to a lease or development agreement entered into on or after April 1, 1985. For the purposes of this section:

- (a) A city or town shall not designate more than one central business district within its corporate boundaries.
- (b) A city or town shall not approve or enter into a development agreement or lease for a government property improvement within one year after the designation of the central business district in which the improvement is located.
- (c) "Central business district" means a single and contiguous geographical area that is designated by resolution of the governing body of the city or town and that is geographically compact and not larger than the greatest of the existing total land area of the central business district of the city or town as of January 1, 2018, two and one-half.

### Issue Bonds for Irrigation and Agricultural Improvement Districts

Per Article 4 of the AZ Statutes, 48-141 through 48-155. Must be within a federal reclamation project.

### Impact Fee Program

Arizona State Statutes (per ARS § 9-463.05) authorize municipalities to collect development impact fees to fund infrastructure necessitated by growth. The Roadway Development Impact Fee is assessed for new or proposed developments to help pay for the arterial roadway capacity needs created by new development.

Impact Fees are charged to contribute to costs associated with infrastructure and public services that need to be expanded as a direct result of new development in the growth areas of the city, as defined in the General Plan. These growth areas still require substantial investment and construction of capital facilities before or in conjunction with future development. Since not all areas have the same capital facility requirements, the growth areas are divided into separate fee areas so that the fees charged in any one fee area pay only for infrastructure, which provides a direct benefit to that particular fee area. In addition, fees vary by use and size of development.

## Cost of Development Goals and Policies

### **GOAL 7.1: REQUIRE NEW DEVELOPMENT TO PAY ITS FAIR SHARE AND NOT UNDULY BURDEN EXISTING RESIDENTS**

**Policy 7.1.1** The Town of Wellton supports development in areas with existing infrastructure and services or where extensions to infrastructure and services can readily be made.

**Policy 7.1.2** The Town of Wellton will encourage development in areas with excess capacity in existing infrastructure.

**Policy 7.1.3** The Town of Wellton will support development that can be served with the appropriate services and infrastructure and/or will not be an excessive burden on services and infrastructure.

**GOAL 7.2: CONTINUE TO FUND NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS WITH NEW AND EXISTING FUNDING MECHANISMS**

**Policy 7.2.1** The Town of Wellton will use staff resources to continue looking for available grants and other funding sources.

**Policy 7.2.2** The Town of Wellton will look for ways to expand the State Share Revenue by increasing the population.

**Policy 7.2.3** The Town of Wellton supports making matching fund requirements for small rural communities less onerous.

A photograph of a sunset over a row of palm trees. The sky is filled with vibrant orange, yellow, and blue hues. The palm trees are silhouetted against the bright sun, which is low on the horizon. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

# Chapter 8: Implementation

Chapter eight focuses on transitioning the Wellton 2023 General Plan from policy guidance to action. For the horizon of this plan, the Town of Wellton has identified a set of actions that it will carry out in the next 10 years to accomplish the goals and policies and, ultimately, the vision of the community.

*Plans are of little value unless they lead to action.*

## Implementation Statement

The *Implementation Chapter* of the *Wellton 2023 General Plan* is designed to be a systematic plan to achieve the vision of the community. This chapter organizes all actions into their respective elements and relates each to a specific and relevant goal with the element. The timeframe for each of the *51 Actions* is then denoted as *1-3 years - Short Term, 3-7 years Mid Term, 7+ years Long Term, or On Going*, meaning that the task is performed on a routine or regular basis. During the Town of Wellton’s required annual reporting on the progress of the General Plan, the Town Manager or designee can then easily report to the Wellton Town Council and the community at large on the completion or status of actions. These are suggested timeframes that are subject to staffing resources and funding and can be adjusted administratively by the Town Manager as needed.

## Implementation Actions by Element

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
<b>LAND USE &amp; GROWTH AREAS</b>							
L1	Revise the zoning ordinance to: 1) address issues of beautification, including landscape, parking, and site planning standards, 2) provide a range of residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts as well as mixed use zoning districts, 3) require appropriate space and/or buffering between low density, 4) to add residential and RV parks or medium-density residential development, 5) to require appropriate space and/or buffering between residential land uses and interstate transportation and utility corridors, 6) requiring a minimum of three lot sizes in all new subdivisions of 40 acres or larger, 7) that use landscape setbacks to buffer RV developments from lower density residential uses, and 8) to include residential, employment, and commercial zone standards that implement the General Plan.	2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6	X				
L2	Develop design guidelines 1) that define the elements of Wellton’s	2.1, 2.2, 2.6	X				

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
	“small rural town” character, such as roadway width, architectural character, building size, common areas, and elevations and 2) for all types of new and renovated developments (residential, commercial, and employment).						
L3	Revise and update the zoning ordinance 1) creating a zoning overlay for the West and East Growth Areas 2) creating a zoning overlay requiring new development within Growth Areas to provide connections to planned and existing trails, and 3) creating a zoning overlay to require the provision of access from the east side of commercial developments planned along Avenue 29E to the residential areas within the East Growth Area, 4) creating a zoning overlay requiring buffering residential development on the north edge of the East Growth Area boundary from commercial development with wide landscape setbacks (minimum 150’) along County 11 <sup>th</sup> Street, 5) creating a zoning overlay requiring a buffer of 150’ on industrial sites between any industrial and residential developments. If outdoor uses are permitted on industrial sites, increase the buffer to up to 300’ to mitigate the potential of impacts from noise and light on residential areas, and 6) creating a zoning overlay requiring the provision of a 50’ vegetated buffer between planned residential development and the existing borrow pit in the East Growth Area	2.2, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9		X			

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
L4	Create a Specific Area / Corridor Plan for the Downtown Area and identify visual resources along Old Highway 80/Los Angeles Avenue and encourage their conservation through design, setbacks, building placement, rehabilitation, and other means.	2.1, 2.2, 2.6		X			
L5	Pursue annexation of appropriate unincorporated land within growth areas to ensure consistent zoning and development requirements.	2.3, 2.4, 2.9		X			
L6	Secure funds to assist with housing renovation and neighborhood improvements.	2.3			X		
L7	Work with regional, state, federal, and not-for-profit entities to secure housing rehabilitation and community revitalization funds, such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.	2.3, 2.5				X	
L8	Cooperate with YMPO, Yuma County, City of Yuma, ASLD, and WMIDD on issues of regional and inter-jurisdictional importance.	2.5				X	
L9	Coordinate with Yuma County and WMIDD regarding land uses along shared borders with Dome Valley, Ligurta, Pratt Acres, and Wellton Hills on issues such as buffering, screening, and compatible land uses.	2.2, 2.5				X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
<b>CIRCULATION</b>							
C1	Pursue opportunities to pave heavily traveled roadways that are currently unpaved.	3.1, 3.5	X				
C2	Apply for available regional, state, and federal funding set aside for safety improvements.	3.1, 3.2, 3.5	X				
C3	Promote the development of emergency response services on the south side of the railroad tracks and I-8.	3.1, 3.5		X			
C4	Annually assess and prioritize needed roadway operations and maintenance improvements.	3.1, 3.3, 3.5				X	
C5	Annually assess and prioritize needed roadway capital improvements.	3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5				X	
<b>WATER AND WASTEWATER RESOURCES</b>							
W1	Monitor and inventory the condition of the existing water delivery system to ensure water quality.	4.1, 4.3				X	
W2	Investigate available technologies to transition homes on septic systems to gravity sewer lines, such as prepackaged grinder pumps and small diameter pressure sewer lines.	4.2	X				
W3	Inform the public about practices and programs to minimize water pollution.	4.1, 4.3	X				
W4	Provide educational and technical assistance to agriculture users regarding groundwater quality issues.	4.1, 4.3	X				
W5	Partner with WMIDD to continue to identify water system capital improvement needs to improve water quality in Wellton.	4.1, 4.3		X			

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
W6	Develop a feasibility study to identify the location of a wastewater treatment plant site and the amount of land needed for plant development.	4.2			X		
W7	Identify possible sewer system layouts and lift station locations to support development.	4.2			X		
W8	Work to fund needed water and wastewater projects to ensure existing water resources are not depleted as new developments are built.	4.1, 4.2				X	
W9	Require proposed new development to identify the anticipated water demand the development will generate.	4.1				X	
<b>PARKS AND OPEN SPACE</b>							
P1	Development a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to help access the demand and priority for the following improvements: 1) Add a ramada and picnic area to the Westside Common Area, 2) Provide a trail connecting Butterfield Park to the Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail, 3) Provide a trail along Avenue 29E between County 10 <sup>th</sup> Street and County 14 <sup>th</sup> Street to provide connectivity between many of the Town of Wellton's parks and open space resources, 4) Provide a trailhead with parking near Avenue 29E and County 12 <sup>th</sup> Street through development or at the planned multi-sports facility, 5) Provide a trailhead for the El Camino del Diablo Trail and the proposed canal trails as part of the commercial development planned at I-8 and Avenue 25E, 6) Provide a trailhead near where the Juan	5.1, 5.2, 5.3	X				

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
	Bautista de Anza Trail intersects Avenue 25E, 7) Provide a trailhead at Butterfield Park for the proposed trails in the area, 8) Extend the El Camino del Diablo Trail across I-8 to connect to the Gila River open space and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail, and 9) Provide a trail along the north side of County 14 <sup>th</sup> Street along the BMGR boundary that connects to the El Camino del Diablo trail and the Gila Mountains to the west of the MPA.						
P2	Coordinate with Arizona Game and Fish to identify wildlife corridors in the Wellton MPA and include these study areas within the parks and recreation master plan.	5.2, 5.3	X				
P3	Pursue the development of a multi-sports facility west of Avenue 29E and south of County 12 <sup>th</sup> Street.	5.1		X			
P4	Ensure prioritized parks improvements are delineated in a Capital Improvement Plan	5.1, 5.2		X			
P5	Undertake a Healthy Community Initiative, explore creating a not-for-profit organization that supports open space and recreation within the Town of Wellton. Solicit donations that could be used for recreation programs, signing, and maintenance of open space and recreation areas within the Town of Wellton.	5.1, 5.2, 5.3			X		
P6	Support grant applications that seek to improve parks or open spaces.	5.1, 5.3				X	
P7	Work with ADOT to provide trails when constructing interchanges, bridges, and other structures across I-8.	5.1, 5.3				X	

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
P8	Work with BLM and other federal agencies to identify funding sources for making trail connections and improvements to the Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail and the El Camino del Diablo trail.	5.1, 5.2,5.3				X	
P9	Identify opportunities to obtain funding for parks and open space resources through regional, state, and federal sources, such as the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Federal Recreation Trails Program.	5.1, 5.2,5.3				X	
P10	Work with WMIDD to provide trails along its canals.	5.2, 5.3				X	
P11	Work with Yuma County, BMGR, BLM, and other interested public agencies to manage and conserve existing and planned open space resources.	5.1, 5.3				X	
P12	Explore coordination with private entities such as the Sonoran Institute, Nature Conservancy, and Audubon Society to develop programs that enhance resident and visitor appreciation of open space and identify grant opportunities.	5.1, 5.3				X	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING</b>							
E1	Explore need and funding source efforts to install 2 <sup>nd</sup> Water Clarifier.	6.1	X				
E2	Educate the public on air and water quality issues.	6.1, 6.2	X				
E3	In the next Zoning Code Update, implement a Dark Sky Ordinance.	6.1, 6.2	X				

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
E4	Coordinate with Yuma County, BMGR, BLM, and other interested public agencies to manage and conserve existing and planned open space resources.	6.1, 6.2				X	
E5	Coordinate with WMIDD and other entities to determine the infrastructure needed and/or other steps to take to prevent adverse effects on water quality and quantity.	6.1, 6.2				X	
E6	Coordinate with AZGFD during development proposals to mitigate adverse impacts to wildlife.	6.1				X	
<b>COST OF DEVELOPMENT</b>							
COD1	Coordinate with Federal and State Governments to discuss available funding sources.	7.2	X				
COD2	Complete Special Census to official increase population and State Shared Revenue.	7.2	X				
COD3	Adopt impact fee schedules based on the recommendations of the Town of Wellton Infrastructure Improvements Plan and Development Fee study.	7.1,7.2		X			
COD4	Pursue Annexation of viable residential properties in the Town of Wellton's MPA to increase population and State Shared Revenue.	7.2		X			
COD5	Consider alternate financing methods and potential new revenue sources if current and projected revenues are not anticipated to cover anticipated infrastructure improvement costs incurred because of new development.	7.2			X		

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-7)	Long Term (7+)	On-Going	
COD6	Regularly review and update rates and fee schedules to ensure they adequately reflect the public infrastructure improvement costs incurred because of new development.	7.1, 7.2				X	
COD7	Require proposed new development to conduct a traffic impact analysis to ascertain what transportation network improvements will be needed to accommodate the traffic generated by the new development.	7.1				X	
COD8	Require new development to dedicate right-of-way for public roadways consistent with the Town of Wellton's build-out roadway network.	7.1				X	
COD9	Continue to address issues with matching fund requirements for small rural communities with policy makers on the state and federal levels.	7.2				X	

# Appendices

**Appendix A:** Informational Brochure

**Appendix B:** Community Interview List

**Appendix C:** Community Questionnaire

**Appendix D:** Glossary

# APPENDIX A: Informational Brochure

The following brochure was posted on the Town of Wellton’s website early in the process and distributed in Town of Wellton Eblasts, utility bills, and at Town Hall. It outlines an overview and timeline General Plan update and how parties can get involved and stay updated.



## Wellton General Plan

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### Overview

The Town of Wellton is currently in the process of updating its General Plan. This sheet provides background on the project along with ways to engage and obtain updates through the process.

### What is a General Plan?

A General Plan is an overarching policy document that helps guide a community into the future. The document expresses a community’s vision and sets goals and policies, as well as short, mid, and long-term implementation tasks related to key topics including growth and land use, transportation, water, parks and open space, and the environment. The current General Plan, which was adopted in 2013, can be found on the Town’s website at [www.welltonaz.gov](http://www.welltonaz.gov).

### Timeline

The General Plan Update will occur over a nine-month period and the final version is planned for adoption in November 2023 with the final plan being available in December 2023. Outreach interviews and public hearings will take place throughout the process in order to solicit feedback and incorporate response and direction from the public. The first public hearing is anticipated to take place at the June 6, 2023 Town Council meeting located at: 28634 Oakland Avenue, Wellton, AZ 85356.



The diagram illustrates the project timeline with four main stages connected by red curved arrows. Stage 1: PROJECT KICKOFF (Apr 2023) with a magnifying glass icon. Stage 2: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (May-Nov 2023) with a group of people icon. Stage 3: DRAFTING THE PLAN (May-Aug 2023) with a checklist icon. Stage 4: FINALIZING THE PLAN (Sep-Dec 2023) with a pen icon. The final output is the FINAL PLAN (Dec 2023).

### Stay Updated

To learn more about the General Plan update, please contact Yolanda Galindo at [YGalindo@welltonaz.gov](mailto:YGalindo@welltonaz.gov).

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Wellton General Plan

## APPENDIX B: Community Interview List

16 interviews with Town of Wellton leadership, community members, and other stakeholders took place to provide diverse insight into what would serve the community best. Interviews were semi structured, utilizing the questionnaire as a guide found in Appendix C. The table provided outlines when and with whom community interviews occurred.

8/10/2023	Councilmember
8/10/2023	Community Member
8/11/2023	Councilmember
8/14/2023	Deputy Town Clerk
8/14/2023	Mayor
8/16/2023	Vice Mayor
8/21/2023	Councilmember
8/21/2023	Yuma County
8/21/2023	Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation & Drainage District
8/21/2023	United States Marine Corp – Barry M. Goldwater Range
8/22/2023	Town Manager
8/22/2023	Community Member
8/22/2023	Arizona Department of Transportation
9/5/2023	JW Water
9/6/2023	Bureau of Land Management
9/7/2023	Arizona State Land Department

## **APPENDIX C: Community Questionnaire**

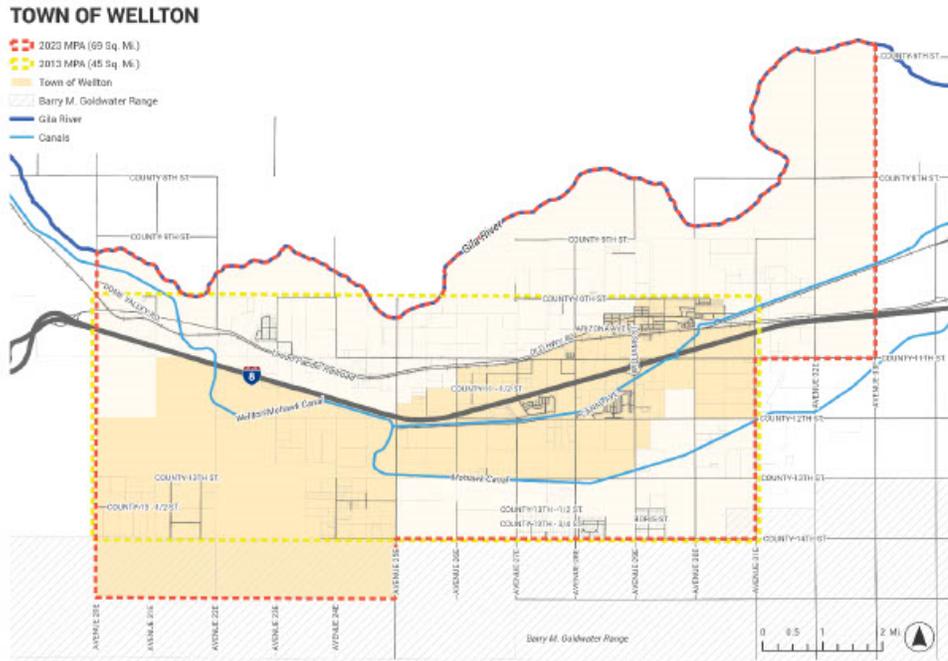
The questionnaire on the next page was drafted to gauge what the community in Wellton sees as issues and opportunities as well as what they aspire Wellton to be in the future. This questionnaire was posted on the Town of Wellton’s website and distributed via Town of Wellton’s Eblasts, utility bills, and at Town Hall as well as to Town of Wellton leadership, community members, and other stakeholders. There were 39 responses in total to the questionnaire.



## Wellton General Plan Community Questionnaire

### Wellton General Plan Background

The Town of Wellton is in the process of updating its General Plan, and we need your help planning for the future! Thanks in advance for sharing your input by taking this 5-minute questionnaire. Below is a map of the new Municipal Planning Area (MPA) compared to the 2013 MPA.



### Introductory Questions

1. How long have you lived or worked in Wellton area?
  - a. Less than 1 year
  - b. 1-5 years
  - c. 5-10 years
  - d. Over 10 years
  - e. I do not live or work in Wellton area, but I like visiting.
  - f. None
2. What is your association with Wellton area? (check all that apply)
  - a. Permanent Resident
  - b. Part-Time Resident
  - c. Employee
  - d. Visitor
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Wellton General Plan

General Questions

3. What are the top reasons you choose to live/work/do business/recreate in the Wellton area?

(Select top 3)

- Open space, parks, and recreation opportunities
- Events and cultural opportunities
- Close to family
- County/Town services
- Easy to travel by car
- Transit service options
- Housing affordability
- Housing types
- Safety
- Traffic safety
- Employment close to home
- Rural Lifestyle
- Weather
- Other (write in) \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you rate the quality of life in Wellton area?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- No Opinion

5. What are the top issues or challenges facing the area today? What needs to be improved?

(Select top 3)

- Open space, parks, and recreation opportunities
- Cultural and event opportunities
- Water supply
- Access to bus service
- Traffic congestion on roadways
- Walking and bicycling amenities
- Safety on our roadways
- Housing affordability
- Housing availability
- Variety of housing
- Public safety
- Access to quality employment and stable wages
- Diversity in employment opportunities
- Distance to grocery stores and neighborhood commercial needs
- Educational system
- Access to healthcare and medical facilities
- Other (write-in) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What makes the Wellton area unique?

7. Is there anything else that you would like to share about this area?

### Vision Statement Exercise

The Town of Wellton's 2013 General Plan Vision is:

*We envision that our Town will continue to be safe, affordable, and surrounded by farms and desert, continue to offer excellent educational opportunities to its residents, and continue striving to enhance our already satisfying quality of life.*

The Town of Wellton's 2022 – 2024 Strategic Plan's Vision is:

*We will create a community where sustainability and a better quality of life exist by promoting economic development and affordability.*

8. Based on the above vision statements, do you agree with the below composite Vision Statement for the 2023 General Plan?

**Wellton is a safe, affordable, thriving, and sustainable community with abundant and diverse open spaces, excellent educational opportunities, and a superior quality of life.**

- Yes
- No
- If you do not agree, what is missing or how would you change it?

## APPENDIX D: Glossary

**Affordable Housing.** Affordable housing is property, whether owned or rented, that costs no more than 28 to 30 percent of gross household income.

**Annexation.** Annexation is the incorporation of a land area into an existing district or municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction.

**Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA).** AZDA supports farming, ranching, and agribusiness in Arizona by protecting plants and animals, issuing agriculture and environmental licenses, inspecting farming practices, and overseeing commerce standards and measurement devices.

**Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).** ADOT is a State multimodal transportation agency.

**Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR).** ADWR is a State agency charged with securing long-term water supplies for Arizona communities.

**Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD).** AGFD is the state agency charged with managing the conservation of Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and managing safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

**Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.).** The A.R.S. are state laws passed by the Arizona Legislature.

**Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR).** The Barry M. Goldwater is a vast training range for U.S. and allied pilots. The range consists of 1.9 million acres of relatively undisturbed Sonoran Desert southwest of Luke Air Force Base between Yuma and Tucson south of Interstate 8. Overhead are 57,000 cubic miles of airspace where pilots practice air-to-air maneuvers and engage simulated battlefield targets on the ground.

**Buffer.** A buffer is an area alongside protected or conserved natural open spaces in which human activity is restricted to research and maintenance of the protected or conserved open space in order to mitigate the negative impacts of human activity on the land or wildlife.

**Capital Improvement.** A capital improvement is the addition of a permanent structural change or the restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value, prolong its useful life, or adapt it to new uses. Individuals, businesses, and cities can make capital improvements to the property they own. Some capital improvements are given favorable tax treatment and may be exempted from sales tax in certain jurisdictions.

**Community Facilities District (CFD).** A CFD is a financing mechanism for the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of public infrastructure.

**Compatibility.** Compatibility occurs when the characteristics of different uses or activities are harmonious or capable of existing or working together without conflict.

**Coyote Wash.** Coyote Wash is a master planned community in Wellton, Arizona, thirty miles east of Yuma.

**Demographics.** Statistical data relating to the characteristics of the population and subgroups within a population.

**Dwelling Unit (DU).** A dwelling unit is a house or apartment that is a separate and independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household.

**Ecological Connectivity.** Ecological connectivity or landscape connectivity is the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes species movement between habitat blocks.

**Ecosystem.** An ecosystem is a community of living organisms dynamically interacting with each other and with the non-living components of the community, such as weather, sun, climate, and atmosphere.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).** FEMA's duties include the development and administration of the nation's Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP develops and adopts flood maps, which illustrate flood zones that are used by participating communities in regulating the location and design of buildings, utilities, and other man-made improvements.

**Future Land Use Map (FLUM).** A FLUM is a diagram that designates the type, distribution, and intensity/density of land uses allowed in the MPA.

**Homeowner Association (HOA).** HOAs are organizations in a subdivision or planned community that create and enforce rules for the properties within the community.

**Goal.** The end toward which effort is directed.

**Growth Area.** A growth area describes the location, types of land use, and land use intensities desired by the Town of Wellton. Additionally, this element identifies areas within the Wellton MPA that are particularly suitable for planned multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses.

**Improvement District (ID).** An ID is a district comprised of property owners who desire improvement to their properties, such as water, sewer, or roadway infrastructure, which are financed through bonds, ad valorem, or equally apportioned secondary taxes pursuant to Title 48 of the A.R.S.

**Incorporated Area.** An incorporated area is a geographic area that has legally defined municipal boundaries.

**Infrastructure.** Infrastructure is all types of non-building, man-made structures and systems, such as utility pipes, electrical power generation and transmission systems, roads, bridges, water and sewer treatment facilities, and other similar systems and structures.

**Intergovernmental Agreement.** An intergovernmental agreement is an agreement between units of government to combine their resources to provide governmental services and perform activities for the benefit of their constituents.

**Land Use.** Land use is the occupation or use of a land or water area for any human activity, or any purpose defined in the general plan.

**Maintenance Improvement District (MID).** A MID is a district where residents are charged through property taxes to cover maintenance costs for landscaping, irrigation, and drainage should an HOA be disbanded.

**Master Planned Community (MPC).** A MPC is a planned community with its own land uses, intensities and densities, and design standards.

**Municipal Planning Area (MPA).** An MPA is an area of planning influence that includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

**Natural Open Space.** Natural open spaces are swaths of land that are undeveloped.

**Natural Resources.** Natural resources are environmental and ecological assets: the land, water, plants, and animals that sustain us and enhance our quality of life.

**Neighborhood.** A neighborhood is a localized geographic area used to describe a sub-area of a community that has a common character, such as natural or historic character, or is tied to a common local landmark, such as a church, school, or other asset.

**Policy.** A definite course or method of action to guide and determine present and future decisions.

**Population Density.** Population density is the number of people living per unit of area, which, in the General Plan, is per square mile.

**Quality of Life.** Quality of life is the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as able to function physically, emotionally, and socially. Quality of life includes all aspects of community life that have a direct influence on the physical and mental health of its members.

**Renewable Energy Resource.** A renewable energy resource is a resource of economic value that can be readily replaced. Renewable Energy Resources are either not depleted or can be regenerated when used, such as biomass or wind, hydroelectric, solar, or tidal power.

**Run-Off.** Run-off is stormwater that is held up on the land surface instead of seeping into the ground. This water either evaporates or “runs off” across the land to nearby rivers, streams, or human-made diversion structures.

**Sustainability.** Sustainability is the property of biological systems to remain diverse and productive indefinitely. Sustainability encompasses human systems, including economy and development and biological systems. Sustainability manifests in policies, programs, and initiatives that support

sustaining biodiversity and long-term ecological health necessary for the indefinite survival of humans and other organisms.

**Sustainable Development.** Sustainable development is development acknowledging sustainability in four interconnected domains: ecology, economics, politics, and culture. Sustainable development can be viewed as a holistic approach and process to achieve sustainability.

**Transit.** Transit is a system of regularly scheduled buses and/or rail available to the public on a fee-per-ride-basis.

**Unincorporated Area.** An unincorporated area is a geographic area that does not have legally defined municipal boundaries.

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).** The USDA is the US agency providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, and nutrition.

**United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).** The EPA is a US agency charged with protecting human and environmental health.

**Vision Statement.** A vision statement describes a future ideal state.

**Wastewater.** Wastewater is spent or used water with dissolved or suspended solids discharged from homes, commercial establishments, farms, and industries.

**Watershed.** A watershed is an area of land that drains rainfall and snow melts to a common outlet, such as a reservoir or stream channel. The watershed consists of surface water as well as groundwater.

**Water Treatment Plant.** A water treatment plant is a facility that processes (or treats) water to make it potable.

**Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation & Drainage District (WMIDD).** WMIDD is an irrigation district that was created by an act of the Arizona State Legislature on July 23, 1951. It was organized to provide a legal entity that could enter into a contract with the United States to repay the cost of this irrigation and power project and to operate and maintain the project facilities.

**Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT).** YCAT is a fixed route, vanpool and on call demand responsive bus service to cities, towns, the Cocopah Indian Reservation and unincorporated communities throughout southwestern Yuma County.

**Zoning.** Zoning describes the regulatory control of the use of land and buildings within a jurisdictional boundary. Areas of land are divided by appropriate authorities into zones within which various uses are permitted and regulated. The general plan does not create or speak to zoning districts but zoning ultimately implements the general plan.