

## **Section Three—Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element provides guidance for future growth and any potential changes to land use patterns in unincorporated Yuma County. The Land Use Element can be divided into three major components.

The first component details existing and projected demographics and examines existing land use patterns in unincorporated Yuma County. A special emphasis is placed on agricultural and military activities because, in addition to being the two most important segments of the Yuma County economy, 47% of nonmilitary land in unincorporated Yuma County is being used for agricultural purposes, and a further 29% is being used as federal wildlife refuges, leaving 29% or 1,542 square miles (an area comparable in size to the state of Rhode Island) available for other types of land use.

The second component contains land use designations and a set of maps depicting how all land under the planning jurisdiction of Yuma County is designated. Each land use designation contains the allowed uses and densities that are desired on land with that designation. All lands under the planning jurisdiction of Yuma County have been assigned a land use designation.

The third component covers the amendment process and criteria. Changing circumstances can lead to a need and/or desire to make specific changes to a land use plan and the maps by which it is implemented. For this reason, the land use designation maps contained within the Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan can be altered through the major or minor amendment process. When an amendment to change a land use designation map is submitted, it is judged on criteria contained in *Section 3.3* to determine if the proposed change is an improvement to the land use pattern and will help achieve the goals and objectives of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

The Land Use Element is comprised of three sections:

### **Section 3.1: Demographics and Existing Land Use Patterns**

- Estimated year-by-year population change from 2001 to 2009
- Building permit trends from 2000 to 2010
- Population projections from 2011 to 2020
- Projected housing units needed from 2011 to 2020
- Land ownership patterns
- Military land use
- Agricultural land use
- Planning areas
- Profile of each planning area detailing its demographics and land use patterns

### **Section 3.2: Land Use Designations**

- Definition of twenty one land use designations containing the allowed uses and densities
- A detailed set of maps that show the land use designation of all land under the land use planning jurisdiction of Yuma County

**Section 3.3: Amendment Process and Criteria**

- Major/minor amendment definition
- Major amendment process
- Minor amendment process
- Criteria for amending the land use maps

**3.1 Demographics and Existing Land Use Patterns**

The past decade (2001 to 2010) has seen two distinct trends in the annual population growth rate. In the first half of the decade there were nearly uninterrupted increases in the annual population growth rate for both Yuma County as a whole and unincorporated Yuma County. The annual population growth rate peaked in 2005 at nearly 4%. The second half of the decade saw the real estate bubble burst, housing prices decline and a major recession. These were likely major factors in the population growth rate slowing every year after 2005. By 2009 the annual growth rate for unincorporated Yuma County had declined to 0.31% per year.

Population growth has two components. The first is natural increase, which is the rate at which the number of births to Yuma County residents exceeds the number of deaths of Yuma County residents. In Yuma County both numbers of births and deaths, as reported to the Arizona Department of Health Services, have held remarkably stable over the past decade with almost no variation between years. In a typical year between 2002 and 2009, the rate of natural increase for Yuma County is approximately 2,000 people.

The second component of population change is the net migration rate, or the number of people moving into and out of Yuma County. Unlike births and deaths for which comprehensive statistics are available, net migration has to be estimated. This is done by taking the overall estimate of population change calculated by the Arizona Department of Commerce and subtracting out portions which can be attributed to births and deaths. What is left over is the net migration rate. For all years 2002 through 2009, the net migration rate for Yuma County was positive, meaning for all years more people moved in than moved out. However, the annual net migration rate into Yuma County fluctuated greatly between 2002 and 2008. Between 2002 and 2005 it grew greatly, peaking in 2005 with about 5,000 more people moving into Yuma County than moving out. As economic conditions deteriorated in 2007, the net migration rate declined dramatically. In 2008 and 2009 only about 300 more people moved into Yuma County than moved out.

**Building Permit Trends**

Between 2000 and the end of 2010, Yuma County issued 7,964 housing unit building/placement permits. Of these, 4,861 were building permits for new site built single family homes. All of these represent additions to the housing stock of unincorporated Yuma County. Yuma County issued 2,824 placement permits for manufactured homes. It is unclear what percentage of these manufactured homes represent additional housing or were replacements for existing manufactured housing as Yuma County does not regulate or track the removal of manufactured or mobile homes. There were 279 placement permits issued for mobile homes which are defined as structures built on or prior to June 15, 1976 on a permanent chassis.

The Foothills Planning Area was the center of residential growth in unincorporated Yuma County. Approximately 77% of the permits issued for additional housing units were in the Foothills Planning Area. The next most active planning area in terms of growth was the Yuma Mesa Planning Area, accounting for about 10% of added housing units. The remaining 10% was split between the seven other planning areas with the Northwest Yuma Planning Area accounting for 4.2% of the total.

Unincorporated Yuma County saw three very different trends in the rate at which housing units were added between 2000 and 2010. From the beginning of 2000 through the third quarter of 2003, there was nearly steady growth in the number of housing units added. The rate at which housing units were added stayed relatively high and steady through the first quarter of 2006. From this point on the rate at which housing units were added declined steeply at first then leveled off some time around the third quarter of 2007 and remained the same for the rest of the decade. Between 2006 and 2010, 14 out of 16 quarters saw a decline in the number of housing units added. The initial decline was likely caused by an issue regarding sewer capacity in the areas of highest growth.

**Population Estimates**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
San Luis	16,846	17,688	18,838	20,158	21,488	22,351	23,680	24,654	25,682
City of Yuma	79,699	80,975	81,944	83,315	85,352	87,180	88,664	89,842	91,105
Somerton	7,973	8,225	8,660	9,110	9,944	10,600	11,057	12,146	12,754
Wellton	1,869	1,876	1,879	1,896	1,900	1,908	1,908	1,921	1,951
Unincorporated Yuma County	56,780	57,307	57,976	59,521	61,510	63,228	63,872	64,736	65,480
All of Yuma County	163,167	166,071	169,297	174,000	180,194	185,267	189,181	193,299	196,972

Table 1: Population by Year and Jurisdiction<sup>1</sup>

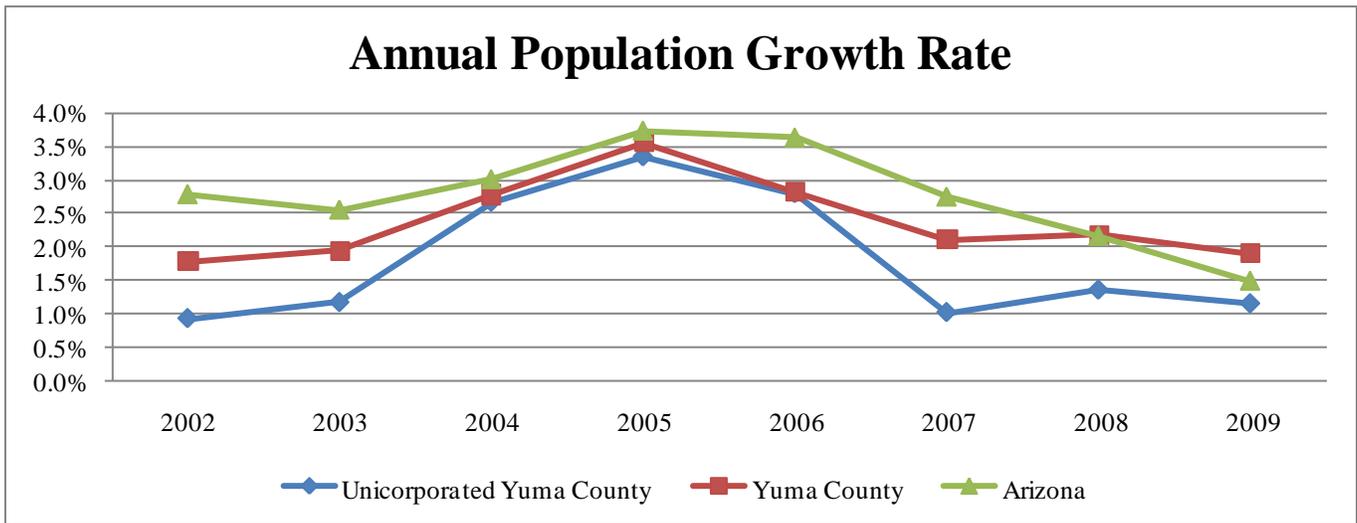


Figure 1: Annual Population Growth Rate<sup>1</sup>

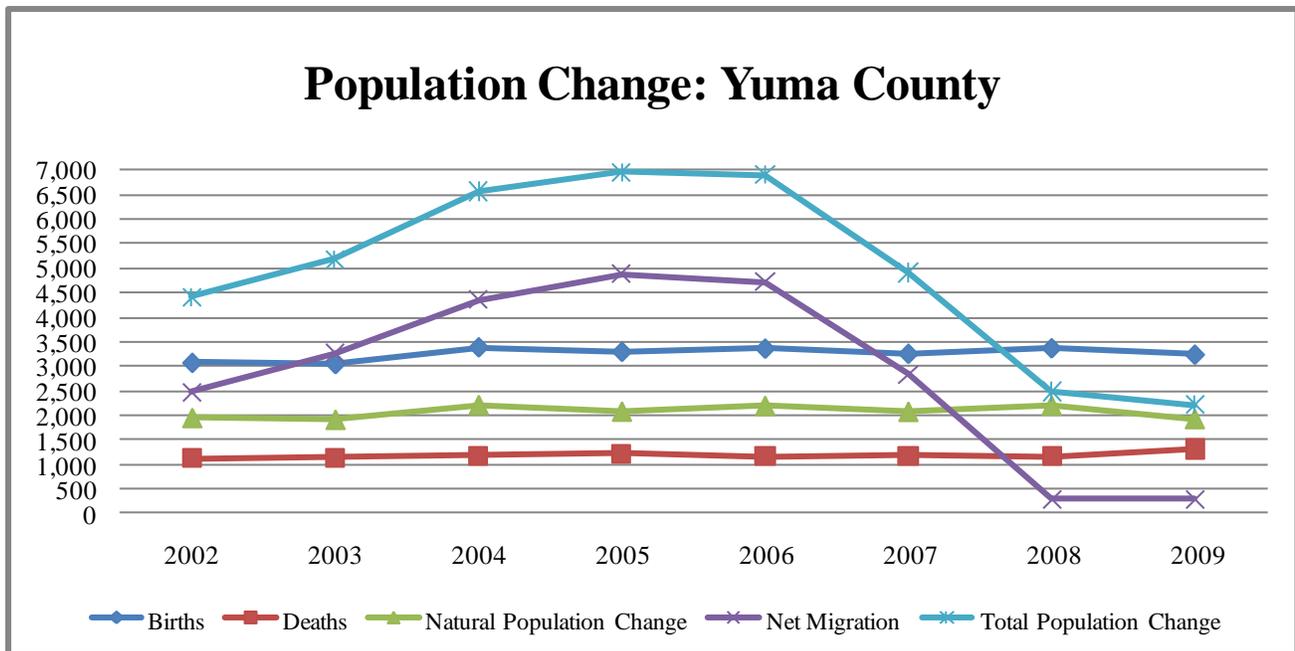


Figure 2: Population Change Factors 2002 through 2009<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S Census estimates

*Land Use Element*

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>Single Family Site Built</i>		<i>Manufactured Home</i>		<i>Mobile Home</i>		<i>Total Housing Units</i>	
Foothills	3,976	65.2%	2,056	33.7%	66	1.1%	6,098	76.6%
Dome Valley/Wellton	63	29.7%	124	58.5%	25	11.8%	212	2.7%
Dateland/East County	6	5.9%	70	68.6%	26	25.5%	102	1.3%
Yuma Mesa	620	75.6%	165	20.1%	35	4.3%	820	10.3%
Yuma Valley	56	47.1%	45	37.8%	18	15.1%	119	1.5%
North Gila	4	9.3%	36	83.7%	3	7.0%	43	0.5%
Gila Valley	14	6.9%	164	80.8%	25	12.3%	203	2.5%
Martinez Lake	24	80.0%	6	20.0%	0	0.0%	30	0.4%
Northwest Yuma	98	29.1%	158	46.9%	81	24.0%	337	4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,861</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>2,824</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>7,964</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2: Housing Units Added by Type and Planning Area from 2000 through 2010

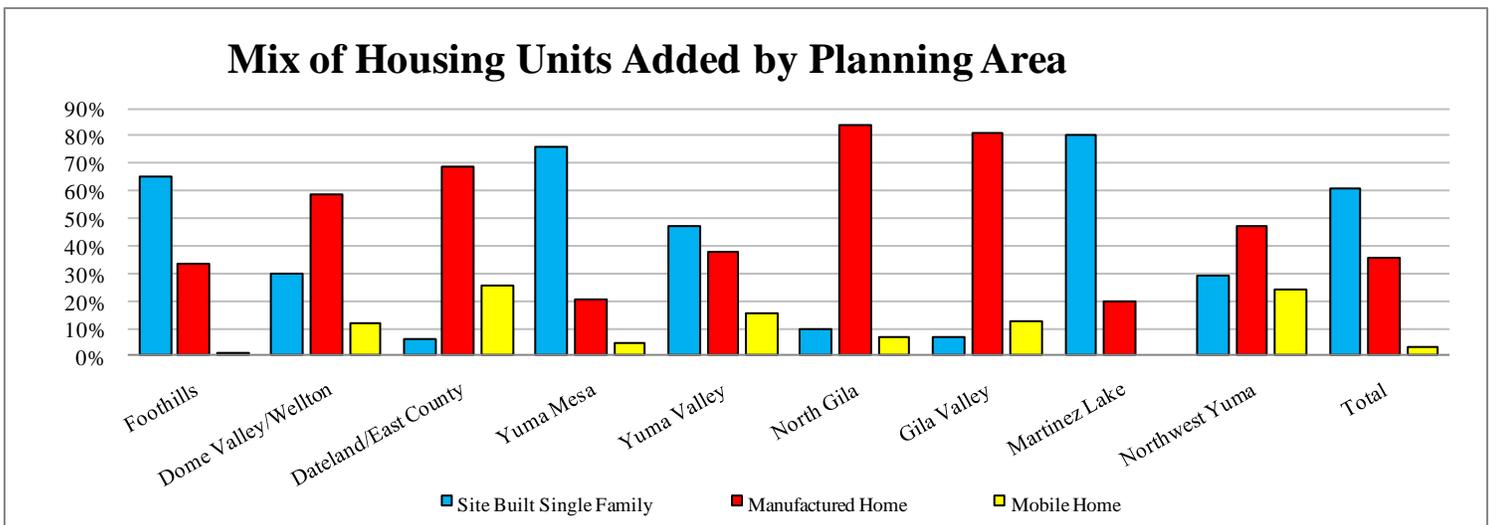


Figure 3: Mix of Housing Units Added by Planning Area from 2000 through 2010

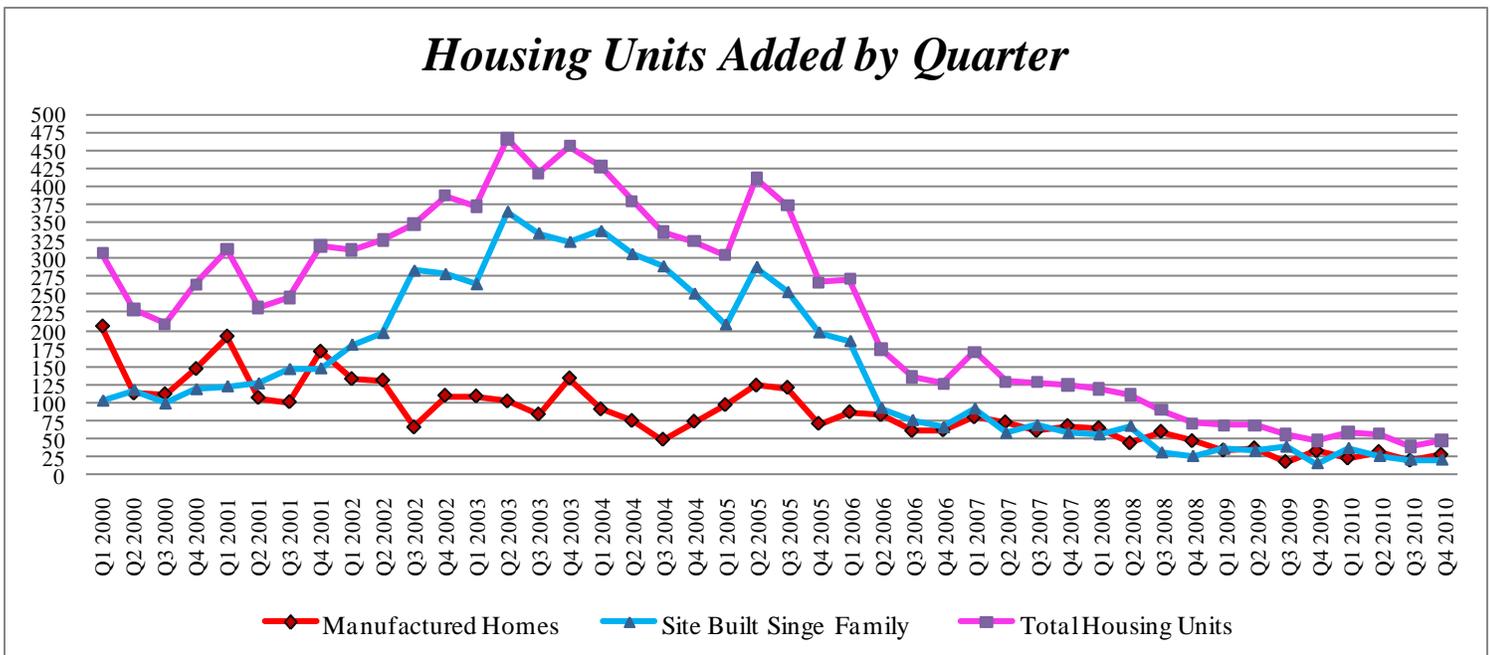


Figure 4: Mix of Housing Units Added by Quarter

Projected Change From 2010 Levels in Population and Housing								
Growth Scenario	2012		2015		2018		2020	
	People	Housing Units						
Matches 2007 through 2009, 0.3% Annual Growth Rate	421	240	1,058	603	1,700	969	2,131	1,215
Matches 2002 through 2006, 3.36% Annual Growth Rate	4,935	2,813	12,976	7,397	21,856	12,458	28,284	16,122
Matches 2001 through 2009, 2.24% Annual Growth Rate	3,236	1,845	8,368	4,770	13,852	7,896	17,716	10,098
Recovery Begins in 2010	4,330	2,468	11,324	6,455	18,966	10,811	24,451	13,937
Recovery Begins in 2011	3,366	1,918	10,177	5,801	17,619	10,043	22,960	13,087
Recovery Begins in 2012	1,440	821	8,073	4,601	15,320	8,732	20,521	11,697
Recovery Begins in 2013	421	240	6,024	3,434	13,081	7,456	18,146	10,343
Recovery Begins in 2014	421	240	4,029	2,296	10,901	6,214	15,833	9,025
Recovery Begins in 2015	421	240	2,086	1,189	8,778	5,004	13,581	7,741
Recovery Begins in 2016	421	240	1,058	603	6,711	3,825	11,388	6,491
Recovery Begins in 2017	421	240	1,058	603	4,698	2,678	9,252	5,274
Recovery Begins in 2018	421	240	1,058	603	2,738	1,560	7,172	4,088
Recovery Begins in 2019	421	240	1,058	603	1,700	969	5,147	2,934
Recovery Begins in 2020	421	240	1,058	603	1,700	969	3,175	1,810

Table 3: Projected Gains in Population and Housing Units in Unincorporated Yuma County Under Different Growth Scenarios

In order to better plan for future changes in land use patterns, it is important to understand what type of changes in population and resulting changes in the number of housing units are most likely to occur during the period of time covered by this plan. Table 3 provides projected changes in population from their 2010 levels for 2012, 2015, 2018 and 2020 based on various growth scenarios.

The bursting of the housing bubble and the beginning of the recession in 2007 has dramatically reduced population and housing unit growth. Historically, growth in both unincorporated Yuma County and Yuma County has been both robust and reasonably predictable. Between 1980 and 2000, the average annual growth rate for Yuma County was 3.84%.

Uncertainty in regard to when Yuma County will return to its historical growth patterns makes it very difficult to project population and housing unit growth for the years 2010 through 2020. To account for this, the above table projects population and housing growth for a number of different growth scenarios that vary based on what year historical growth patterns resume. Projecting growth in this manner allows for a range of expected growth under the most optimistic and most pessimistic conditions that can be established. An increase of about 24,000 people and 14,000 housing units would be expected by the end of 2020 were historical growth patterns to resume in 2010. If historical growth patterns do not resume until the year 2020, a population increase of about 3,000 people and 1,800 housing units would be expected by the end of 2020. If the assumption is made that the historical growth patterns return to a growth rate more in line with historical norms sometime between 2011 and 2015, the range of expected growth shrinks to an increase of about 23,000 to 13,000 people and 13,000 to 8,000 housing units by the end of 2020.

### Land Ownership Patterns

In unincorporated Yuma County there are approximately 472 square miles of privately owned land. This is the area under the direct land use planning jurisdiction of Yuma County and is home to approximately 70,000 people and nearly all of Yuma County’s agricultural industry. There is a perception that because only 8.88% of unincorporated Yuma County is privately owned that there is a shortage of developable land. The low percentage of privately owned land in unincorporated Yuma County is more a factor resulting from the presence of two large national wildlife refuges and two large military installations than of a lack of privately held land. The 472 square miles of privately owned land, while small when compared to the overall size of unincorporated Yuma County, is nonetheless a large area of land. It is exactly equal in size, for example, to the City of Los Angeles. This does not even take into account the significant amount of privately held land located within the incorporated areas of Yuma County.

The State of Arizona owns 5.98%<sup>2</sup> of the land in unincorporated Yuma County with the overwhelming majority of this being state trust land. State trust lands are managed by the Arizona State Land Department which is mandated to achieve the highest and best use of the land in order to maximize revenues to the trust’s beneficiaries. For state trust lands to be available an interested party must apply for a parcel to be put up for auction. If the State Land Department feels that an auction at that time is the best way to maximize revenue from that parcel, a public auction is then held. Historically, state trust lands have been an important source of developable lands. For example, Martinez Lake and much of the Foothills were originally state trust land. This trend is likely to continue as large areas of state trust land remain in the portions of Yuma County that have been experiencing the most development.

Type of Land Ownership or Management	Acres	Square Miles
State of Arizona	203,399	317.8
Indian Reservations	8,063	12.6
Bureau of Land Management	341,581	533.7
Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge	449,530	702.4
Kofa National Wildlife Refuge	527,316	823.9
Yuma Proving Ground	448,244	700.4
Barry M. Goldwater Range	928,263	1,450.4
Private Land	302,254	472.3
<i>Total Unincorporated Yuma County</i>	<i>3,403,938</i>	<i>5,318.7</i>

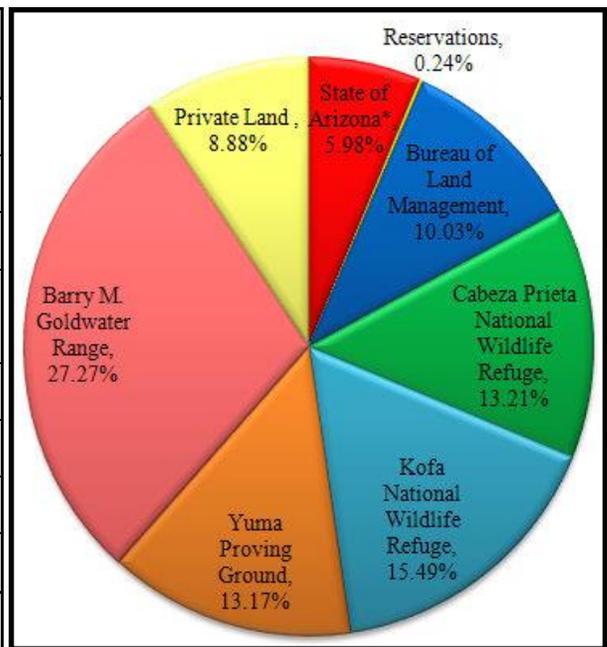


Table 4: Land Ownership in Unincorporated Yuma County

Figure 5: Land Ownership in Unincorporated Yuma County

<sup>2</sup> Does not include the approximately 305 square miles of land titled to the State of Arizona that are located within the boundaries of Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, Yuma Proving Ground and Barry M. Goldwater Ranges that are managed as part of these entities.

Having a greater effect on county development is the federal government, which owns approximately 80% of land in Yuma County. Most of this land is part of four entities with a specific mission and land use: Yuma Proving Ground, Barry M. Goldwater Range, Kofa and Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuges. Almost all of the remaining 341,581 acres are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM's plan on how this land is to be used is contained in the *Yuma Field Office Approved Resource Management Plan* which was approved in January 2010.

## **Industrial and Commercial**

It is important the county industrial and commercial needs are supported by appropriate land use designations. The existing industrial and commercial land uses reflect the county's strategic location in relation to the Interstate 8 (I-8) corridor, MCAS-Yuma, and Mexico. Over two-thirds of the land currently designated as Industrial is located in the western portion of the county, primarily along Highway 95, Area Service Highway, and the I-8 corridor. Immediately south of MCAS-Yuma, there is a large area designated Agriculture/Industrial primarily intended to allow continued agricultural uses, site built residences with noise attenuation, and aviation-compatible industrial uses subject to the demonstration and completion of the appropriate public infrastructure, public services and long term water allocation needed for development.

Existing commercial land uses reflect a combination of strip and cluster development. Most commercial establishments are located within the vicinity of residential areas and are adjacent to arterial roads and major intersections. An example is the large tracts of commercial land currently located along I-8 on the North and South Frontage Roads around Foothills Boulevard and Fortuna Road.

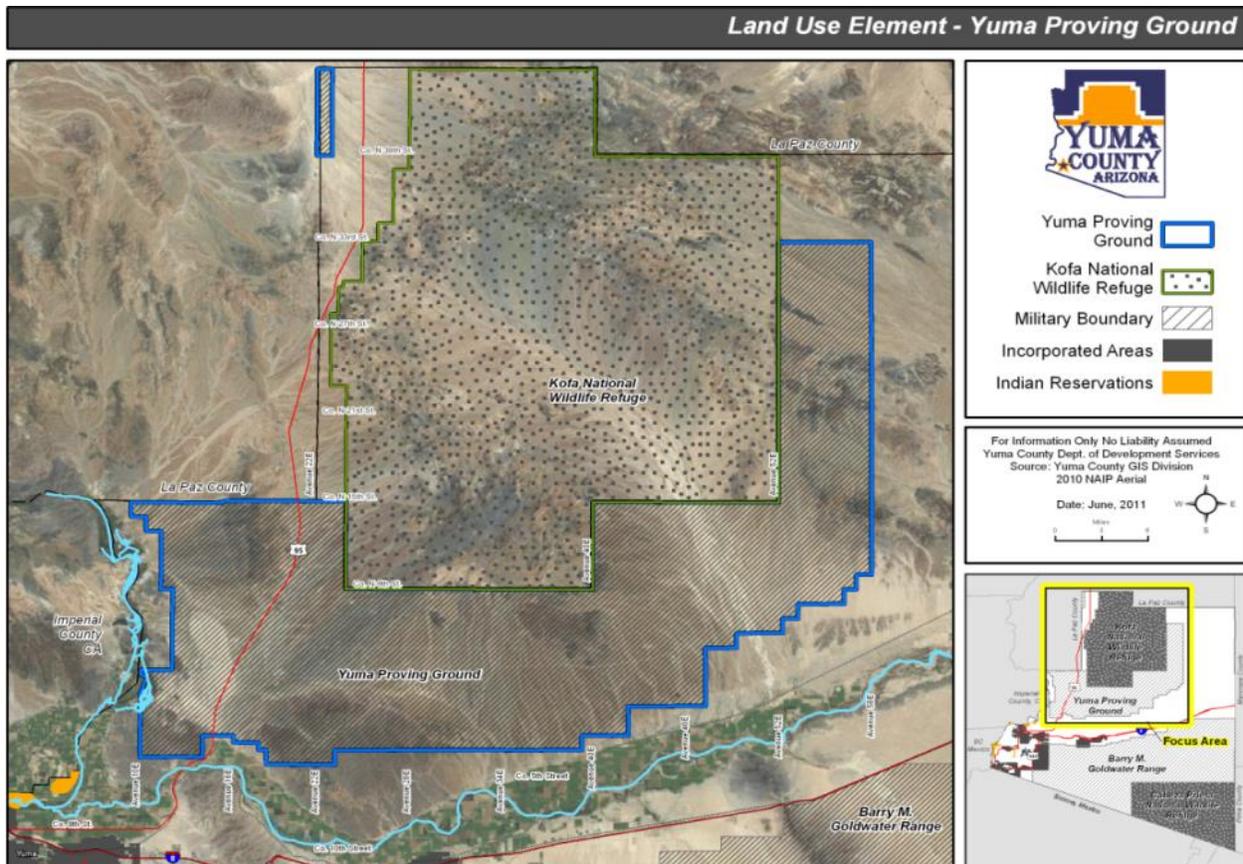
**Map 1—GOVERNMENT LAND MAP WILL  
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## Yuma Proving Ground

Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is a large test facility for the U.S. Army and is located in the northwest portion of Yuma County. YPG is one of the largest military installations in the world covering approximately 700 square miles of Yuma County as well as an additional 600 square miles in neighboring La Paz County. YPG provides a site for the Army to test things such as long range artillery, missile firing aircraft, cargo and personnel parachutes, direct fire weapons, unmanned aerial systems, and technologies to defeat roadside bombs. YPG also serves as a location for training with 9,000 to 10,000 soldiers and marines conducting training at YPG each year.

Yuma Proving Ground is a vital component of the Yuma County economy. YPG is the largest single employer in Yuma County employing approximately 3,000 civilian and military employees. Approximately 450 employees reside in housing located within YPG. Additionally, approximately 23,000 people visit YPG annually to conduct testing and training activities. The overall economic impact of YPG on the Yuma County economy is estimated to be about \$425 million annually.

In July 2009, General Motors opened a new \$120 million hot weather vehicle testing facility on a 2,400 acre site located within YPG as a replacement for a facility in Mesa, Arizona. In exchange for allowing General Motors to lease the site, the Army has gained access to the 40 miles of test track and roads that General Motors constructed at the site, enhancing the test capabilities of YPG. General Motors employs about 75 people at this site.



Map 2: Yuma Proving Ground

## **Marine Corps Air Station-Yuma**

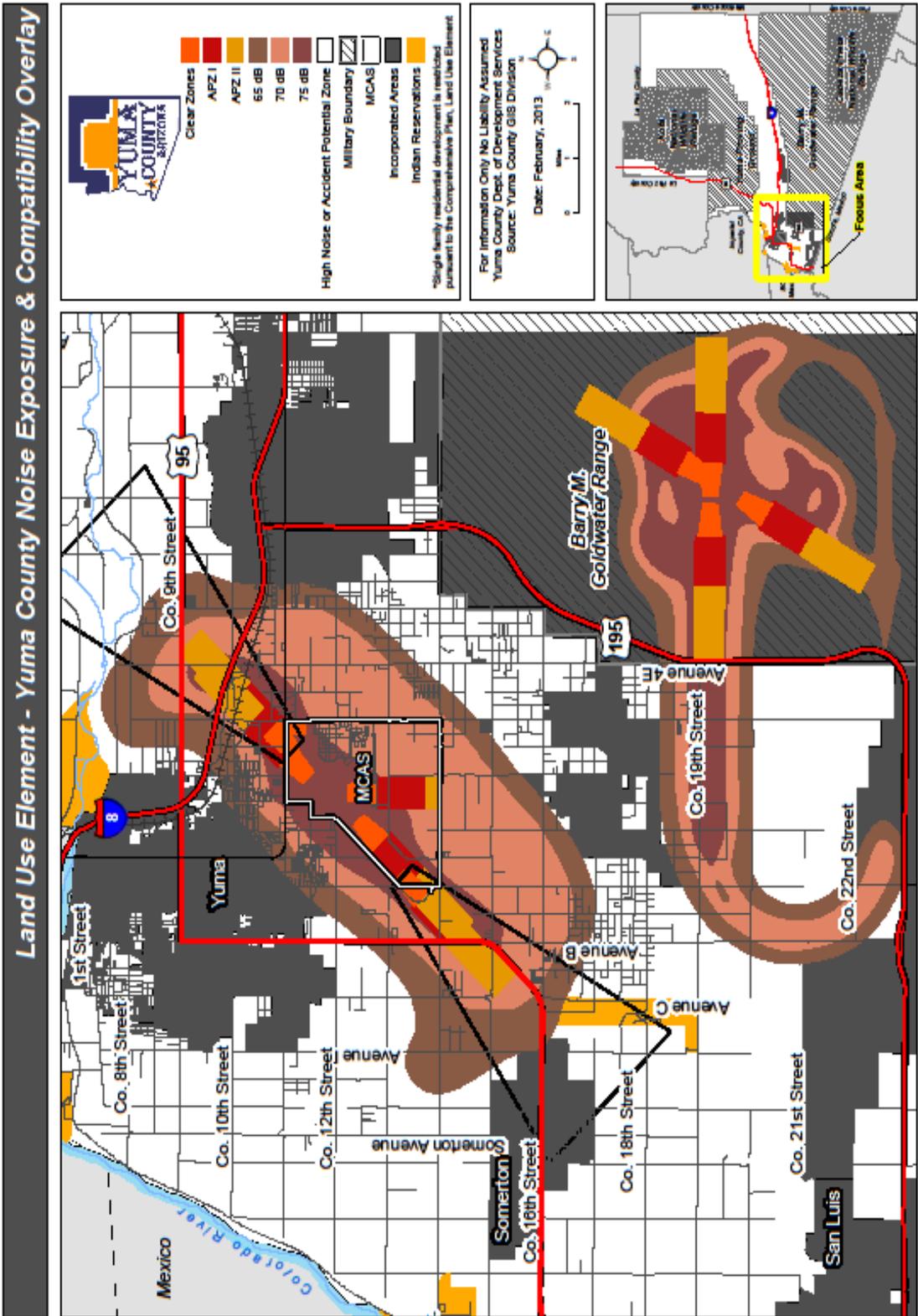
Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS)-Yuma covers 7.58 square miles within the City of Yuma. The site of MCAS was first used as an airfield in 1928. In 1943 it became an Army Air Base and after several more transfers of control it became a Marine Corps Air Station in 1959. The primary function of MCAS is to serve as home to Marine Aircraft Group-13 which is comprised of four squadrons of AV-8B Harriers, an aviation logistics squadron and is an aviation training installation for 80% of the Marine Corps aviation training. In 2010, 4,249 military personnel were stationed at MCAS, 6,777 family members of military personnel based at MCAS were present in Yuma County and 1,877 civilians were employed at MCAS. MCAS Yuma is the busiest airfield in the Marine Corps with approximately 211,000 airfield operations in 2010. The total economic impact of MCAS on the Yuma County economy was calculated to be \$485 million in 2010.<sup>3</sup>

The state legislature has adopted legislation governing land use in the vicinity of military installations because it recognizes the importance of military aviation to the state economy and how incompatible land uses in the vicinity of military airports endangers lives. The types of land uses allowed on land located within the defined noise zones and/or accident potential zones of MCAS and Auxiliary Field #2 (Aux-2), as referred to in A.R.S. §28-8461, have significant restrictions under A.R.S. §28-8481 in order to keep land uses in the vicinity of military airports compatible with the continued operations of these facilities. In these areas urban style residential development is prohibited and commercial and industrial development must be aviation compatible. These regulations are also designed to protect the safety of the public by keeping residences out of areas put at risk by airport operations. The June 15, 2005 crash of a bomb laden Marine AV-8B harrier jet into the backyard of a home located in Accident Potential Zone-1 illustrates the risk associated with these areas. These restrictions can be found in Article VII of the Yuma County Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, A.R.S. §28-8481 requires a major amendment for any change to the Comprehensive Plan that would increase residential density or allow for certain non-compatible land uses within any of the noise zones or accident potential zones.

It is the position of the Attorney General that pursuant to A.R.S. § 28-8481(F) and (P) and Attorney General Opinion No. I08-003, no new residential development within a high noise or accident potential zone is allowed unless the subject property had a building permit issued, had a residence constructed, or was approved for residential development under the terms and conditions of a development plan prior to December 31, 2004. Land that was zoned, but upon which one of the above criteria was not met prior to December 31, 2004, is not exempt from the requirements of A.R.S. § 28-8481 and thus Yuma County will not approve any new residential construction within these zones.

<sup>3</sup>Marine Corps Air Station Yuma 2010 Statistical Summary

Map 3—MCAS-YUMA REGULATORY AREAS  
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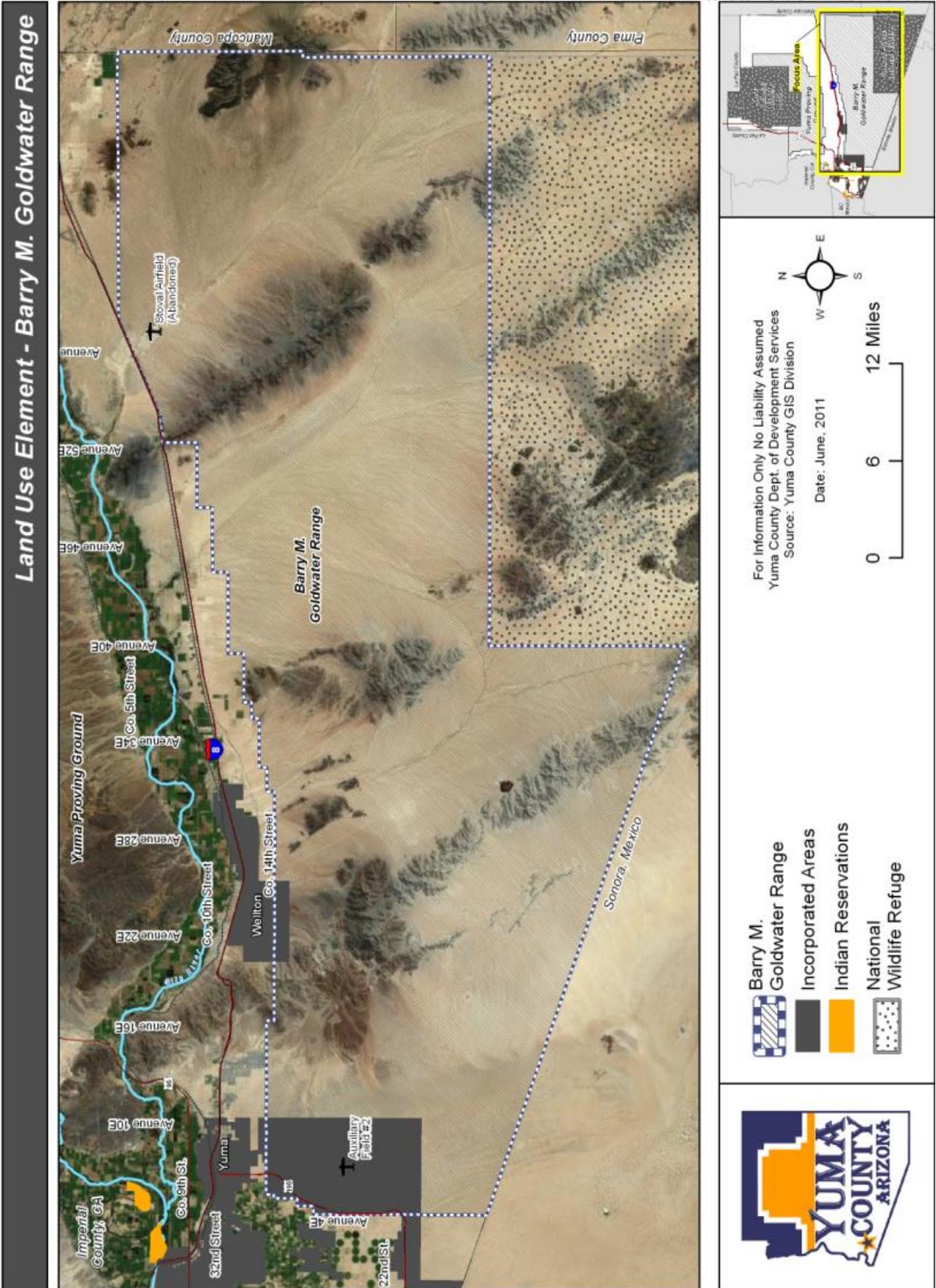
Map 3.1: Noise Exposure and Compatibility Overlay

## **Barry M. Goldwater Range**

The Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR), established in 1941 spans 184,242,423 acres in Yuma, Maricopa and Pima Counties. It is the nation's second largest military reservation with 928,263 acres of it located in unincorporated Yuma County. The BMGR is split between the Marine Corps (the portion west of the Mohawk Mountains) and the Air Force (the portion east of the Mohawk Mountains). The BMGR's primary function is to provide a training location for aerial gunnery, rocketry, electronic warfare, tactical maneuvering and air support and an armament and high hazard testing area for other defense related purposes. There are two auxiliary airfields located within the Yuma County portion of the BMGR. Auxiliary Field #2, which is regularly used as a forward airfield for AV-8B, C-130 and helicopter training and Stoval Airfield, which is used by both fixed wing aircraft and helicopters on an intermittent basis.

The BMGR is a vital, unique and beneficial asset to Yuma County, the State of Arizona and the U.S. Military. Proximity to supporting military air bases, range land and airspace size, availability of supporting military airspace and varied terrain creates an asset that cannot realistically be reproduced anywhere else in the nation. Without the training opportunities provided by the nearby BMGR, the need for MCAS Yuma would be minimized. The BMGR has a statewide impact as all military installations with a flying mission are dependent on it. In the Legislative Environmental Impact Statement that accompanied the Congressional Bill that extended the timeframe for withdrawal of the public lands that comprise the BMGR for another 25 years, the Department of Defense stated the following about the importance of the BMGR: "*The BMGR has been one of the nation's most productive military reservations for training tactical aircrews since World War II.*"

<sup>4</sup> Marine Corps Air Station Yuma 2010 Statistical Summary



Map 4: Barry M. Goldwater Range

**Barry M. Goldwater Range Buffer Area Land Use Limitation**

The Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field/Barry M. Goldwater Range Joint Land Use Study was completed in February 2005 as part of a statewide compatibility project. The study was prepared to provide tools to address land use conflicts that might affect the ability of the base to conduct its mission and to ensure land use compatibility around active military reservations, as required under Title 28, Chapter 25, Article 7, of the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS). In order to implement the findings of this study the following density and intensity guidelines are established:

- The applied use of land within ½ mile of the boundary of the BMGR that is east of the Gila Mountains will have residential density no greater than 5 acres per lot/parcel.
- The applied use of land within ½ mile of the boundary of the BMGR that is south of County 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the western boundary of the range will have residential density no greater than 5 acres per lot/parcel.
- The applied use of land from within ½ mile to 1 mile from the BMGR boundary that is east of the Gila Mountains will have residential density no greater than 2 acres per lot/parcel.
- The applied use of land from within ½ mile to 1 mile from the BMGR boundary that is south of County 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the western boundary of the range will have residential density no greater than 2 acres per lot/parcel.
- Properties being used for residential purposes up to 3 miles from the BMGR boundary that is east of the Gila Mountains will be required to file a Range/Military Ground Support Disclosure Statement.
- Properties being used for residential purposes up to 3 miles from the BMGR boundary that is south of County 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the western boundary of the range will be required to file a Range/Military Ground Support Disclosure Statement.
- The applied use of land within 1 mile of the BMGR along its western boundary beginning at County 14<sup>th</sup> running south to County 17<sup>th</sup> Street will have a residential density no greater than 2 acres per lot/parcel.
- The applied use of land within 1 mile of the BMGR along its northern boundary from Avenue 5¼ E to the Gila Mountains will have a residential density no greater than 2 acres per lot/parcel.
- Amendments to land use classifications up to 3 miles from the BMGR boundary will take into consideration the impacts of increasing density in regard to potential conflicts with the BMGR.
- Property access to roadways bordering the BMGR boundary (particularly County 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Yuma County) will be limited to reduce the opportunities for unauthorized access to the Range.
- Use of access roads to the BMGR will be restricted in order to discourage access to the BMGR by unauthorized personnel.

Map 5—BMGR Buffer Area MAP WILL BE INSERTED  
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**Agricultural Land Use**

Agriculture and related activities in terms of both employment and overall impact to the local economy are the largest sector of Yuma County’s economy. From the third quarter of 2009 to the second quarter of 2010, the agricultural sector of the economy was estimated to have employed 8,200 on a permanent basis and 20,200 at the seasonal peak in January of 2010 and has generated approximately \$3 billion dollars of economic activity. Agriculture in Yuma County also plays a unique and significant role nationally. Between October and April of every year over 90% of lettuce and other green vegetables consumed in the United States are grown in Yuma County.

Agriculture in Yuma County is made possible by water from the Colorado River with 154,870 acres being irrigated with water from the river. This water is delivered through a series of canals, siphons and pumping stations maintained and operated by six irrigations districts. All irrigation water is initially diverted from the Colorado River at Imperial Dam.

<i>Crop</i>	<i>Acres Harvested</i>
Fresh Market Vegetables	89,856
Lettuce	66,194
Hay	39,143
Spring Durum Wheat	34,852
Alfalfa	25,789
Cotton	18,197
Lemon	11,770
Broccoli	8,691
Sudan Grass	7,189
Cauliflower	3,887
Cantaloupe	2,913
Bermuda Grass Seed	2,555
Spinach	2,313
Watermelon	2,005
Alfalfa Seed	1,723
Tangelos	1,443
Winter Wheat	1,365
Sorghum	743
Oranges	492
Pima Cotton	351
Honeydew	298

Table 5: Acres Harvested in Yuma County<sup>6</sup>

Domestic water for the City of Yuma and farmland in Yuma County can be divided into general categories based on location, types of crops that can be grown on it, soil types, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) farmland classification and overall importance to the agricultural industry in the County. The most important of these is commonly know as “valley” farmland. Valley farmland is located in the historical flood plains of the Colorado and Gila Rivers, and as result, is some of the richest, most productive soil found in Arizona. Nearly all valley farmland has been rated by the USDA as prime farmland. Many of the most economical-ly important crops such as lettuce, other vegetables, cotton and wheat are almost exclusively grown on valley farmland. Valley farmland is irreplaceable as very nearly all land with these characteristics is either being irrigated and farmed or has been developed for urban uses. It is because of this irreplaceable nature and the fact it supports a huge portion of the Yuma County economy that maintaining agricultural uses on prime valley farmland is one of the most basic and central goals of the Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

The other type of farmland is commonly known as “the mesa”. The mesa is located on areas above the historical floodplains of the Colorado and Gila Rivers. Farmlands in these areas are typified by sandy soils that support a different set of crops than those found in the valley. The USDA classifies this farmland as “farmland of unique importance.” Some of the most commonly grown crops on the mesa include citrus, alfalfa and dates. While important, these crops tend to be of less economic value than those grown in the valley.

<sup>6</sup>US Department of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture

Map 6—Irrigation districts MAP WILL BE INSERTED  
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## **Designated Planning Areas**

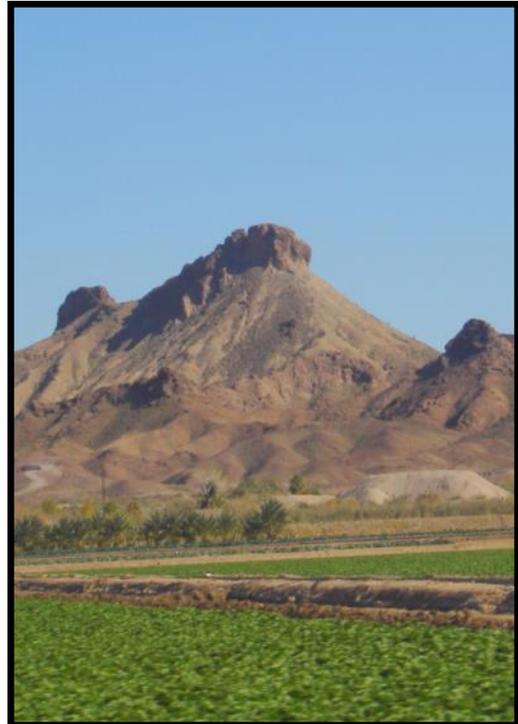
The county was divided into nine planning areas for analysis of county resources and growth trends. Additionally, as part of the Plan update, seven Citizen Advisory Group Studies were written to provide a base of information and an in-depth understanding of existing conditions and future development and infrastructure needs for each one of the planning areas.

These Planning Areas include the following:

- 1) North Gila
- 2) Yuma Mesa
- 3) Northwest Yuma
- 4) Gila Valley
- 5) Foothills
- 6) Yuma Valley
- 7) Martinez Lake
- 8) Dome Valley/Wellton
- 9) Dateland/East County

**Map 7—Planning Area MAP WILL BE INSERTED  
HERE..IT IS AN 11X17 MAP.**

**The North Gila Planning Area** is comprised of the area roughly bounded by California to the west, Yuma Proving Ground and the Gila Mountains to the east, Levee Road to the south and Imperial Dam to the north. The planning area is almost exclusively located in the Colorado and Gila River valleys. The confluence of the Colorado and Gila Rivers is located along the southern boundary of the planning area. The North Gila Planning Area is a rural area that is predominately used for agricultural purposes with nonagricultural land being mountainous or riparian areas owned by various government entities.



Farmland in the North Gila Planning Area

Land designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential makes up 47.8% of the planning area. This represents mostly the portion of the planning area that is irrigated and actively farmed. Land with an Open Space and Recreational Resources designation makes up 40.8% of the planning area. Almost all of this is mountainous land in the Laguna and Gila Mountain ranges owned by the federal government. The North Gila Planning Area contains all of the North Gila Irrigation District and a small portion of the Yuma Irrigation District.

Farmland within the North Gila Planning Area tends to be of the highest quality found in Yuma County, all of it located off the mesa in the fertile river bottoms. Some of the more common crops that are grown in the planning area include lettuce, cotton, melons, wheat, safflower and many others.

The total population of the North Gila Planning Area is 1,038. Approximately 75% of the planning area's population lives in a quarter mile area bounded by Canyon Road, Avenue 9E, County 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Buckshot Road. The planning area has a very low overall population density with 15 persons per square mile over the 60.5 square miles that comprise the planning area. Excluding the area around Buckshot Road, the population density of the planning area is 3.73 people per square mile.



Housing in the North Gila Planning Area

<b>North Gila Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>7</sup>	464
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>7</sup>	83.6%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>8</sup>	36
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>8</sup>	3
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>8</sup>	4

Table 6: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Average Household Size<sup>7</sup></b>	
North Gila Planning Area	2.24
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

Table 7: Average Household Size<sup>7</sup>

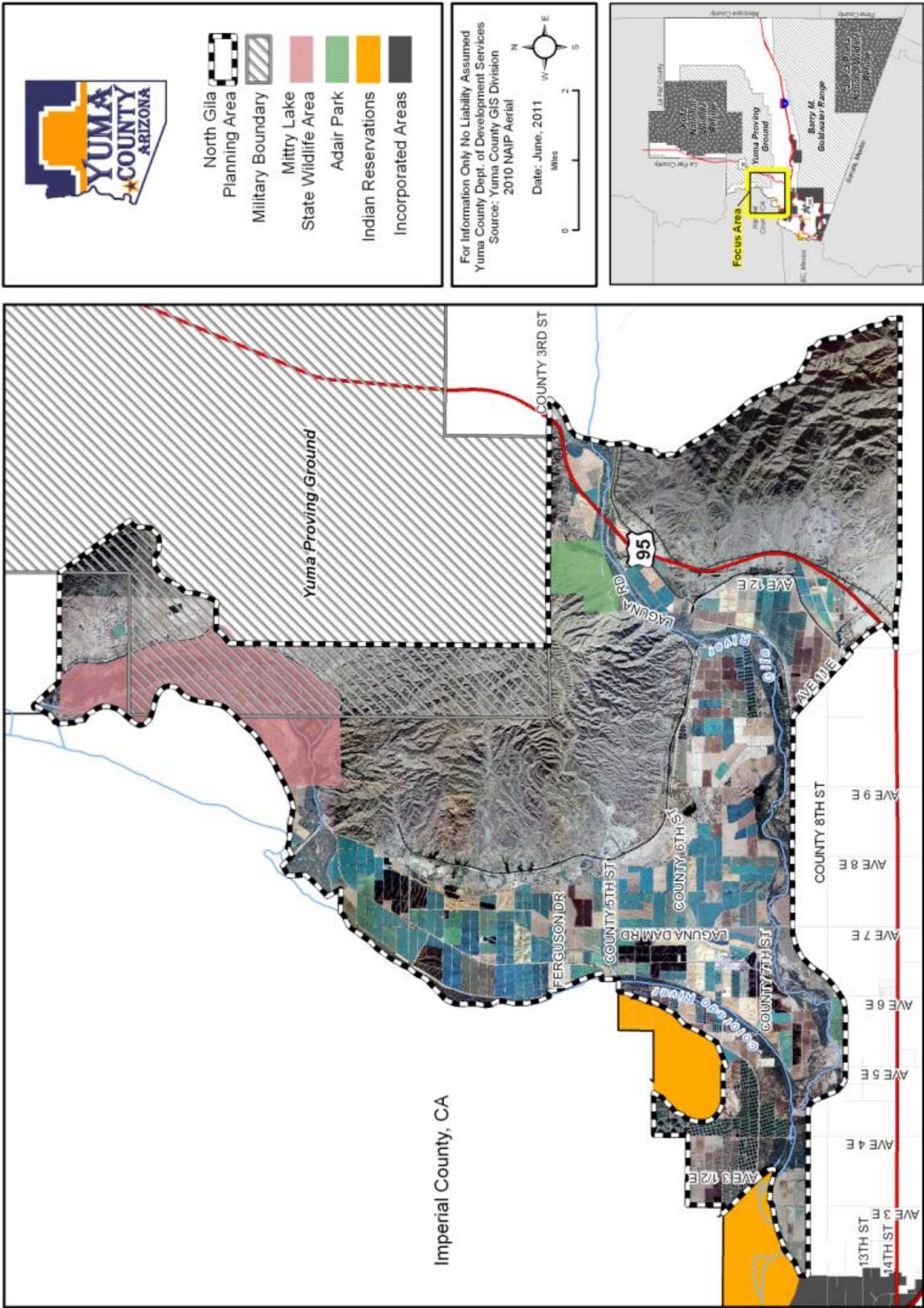
Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 43 housing units were constructed or placed in the Planning Area. Of these, 84% were manufactured homes, 9% were single family site built homes and 7% were mobile homes. Mobile homes are defined as structures built on or prior to June 15, 1976 on a permanent chassis, but do not include recreational vehicles and factory built buildings.

Nearly all building/placement permits were in two relatively concentrated areas, one bounded by Canyon Road, Avenue 9E, County 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Buckshot Road and the other in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and the Gila Gravity Main Canal.

<sup>7</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>8</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services

Land Use Element - North Gila Planning Area



Map 8: North Gila Planning Area

**The Yuma Mesa Planning Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by the East Main Canal and a small portion of the City of Somerton to the west, the Barry M. Goldwater Range and City of Yuma to the east, the City of San Luis and Mexico to the south and Interstate 8 and MCAS-Yuma to the north. A portion of the Cocopah Reservation is located within the planning area; however, it's part of a sovereign nation and not under the land use planning jurisdiction of Yuma County.

The portion of the planning area located north of County 18<sup>th</sup> Street is almost entirely privately held land. Land use in this area is a mixture of agricultural uses, primarily citrus and alfalfa fields, rural scale parcels between two and five acres in size and residential development. Land south of County 18<sup>th</sup> Street to a line running parallel to and five miles north of the Mexican border is largely owned by the State of Arizona and much of it is leased for agricultural purposes or is open desert. There are very few residences in this part of the planning area. Land within five miles of the Mexican border is mostly federally owned, aside from a mix of privately owned land around the State prison and the Hillander "C" Irrigation District. All federal land in this area is open desert.

The total population of the Yuma Mesa Planning Area is 7,411. The planning area has a low population density of approximately 79 persons per square mile. All but 16 of the 7,411 residents of the planning area reside north of County 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Excluding the nearly uninhabited southern half of the planning area, the population density is 185.5 person per square mile.

MCAS-Yuma is directly adjacent to the planning area. Auxiliary Airfield #2 is located in the Barry M. Goldwater Range three miles east of the planning area. Both these military airfields are covered by the provisions of A.R.S. §28-8481. The types of land uses allowed for land located within the defined noise zones of facilities listed in A.R.S. §28-8481 have significant restrictions. These restriction can be found in Article VII of the Yuma County Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, A.R.S. §28-8481 requires a major amendment for any change to the Comprehensive Plan that would increase residential density or allow for certain non-compatible land uses within any of the defined noise zones.

The Yuma Mesa Planning area covers all or part of three irrigation districts. The Yuma Mesa Irrigation District, Unit B Irrigation District and Hillander "C" Irrigation District. The most common crops in the planning area are citrus and alfalfa. All farmland within the planning area is classified by the United States Department of Agriculture as "farmland of unique importance," which under federal law is defined as: "*land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.*"



A Citrus Grove in the Yuma Mesa Planning Area

<b>Yuma Mesa Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>9</sup>	2,701
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>9</sup>	82.9%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>10</sup>	165
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>10</sup>	35
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>10</sup>	620

Table 8: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Average Household Size<sup>9</sup></b>	
Yuma Mesa Planning Area	2.74
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

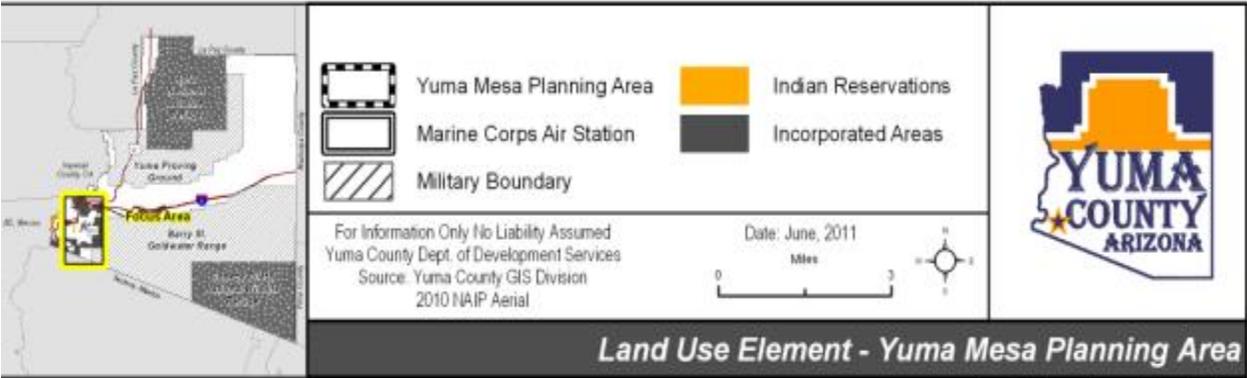
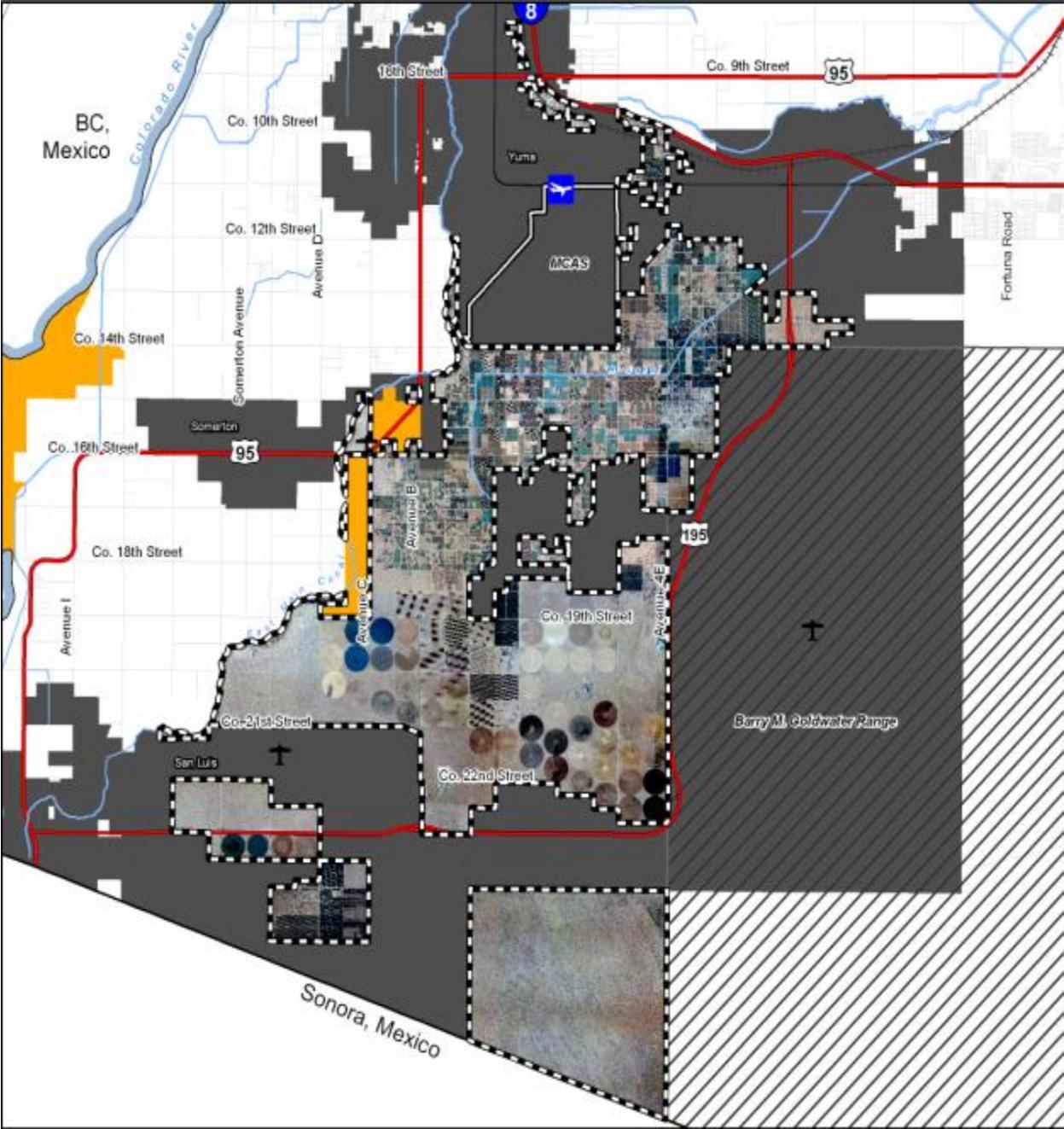
Table 9: Average Household Size<sup>9</sup>

Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 819 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 20% were manufactured homes, 76% were single family site built homes and 4% were mobile homes.

Residential development in the planning area has occurred almost exclusively at rural style densities. The majority of the housing units added to the planning area has been on parcels of at least two acres in size. There is a small number of older more dense subdivisions located in the planning area, but the character and development trend is clearly rural in nature.

<sup>9</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>10</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services



Map 9: Yuma Mesa Planning Area

**The Northwest Yuma Planning Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by Avenue D to the west, the City of Yuma to the south and east, and the West Main Canal and 1<sup>st</sup> Street to the north. The Northwest Yuma Planning Area is almost entirely composed of older residential neighborhoods. Because the area has been nearly built out for quite some time, development in the planning area tends to occur as redevelopment or infill development. The planning area is located in the Yuma Valley close to the Colorado River. As such, extensive drainage systems and pumping are necessitated due to the high ground water that is found in much of the planning area. In December 2008, the Bureau of Reclamation reported the depth to groundwater at 12 feet or less in the majority of the planning area.

There are two areas within the Northwest Yuma Planning Area federally recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a colonia. HUD defines colonias as *"rural communities and neighborhoods located within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexican border that lack adequate infrastructure and frequently lack other basic services."* The planning area contains two colonias: Avenue B & C Colonia with a population of 2,928 and Donovan Estates with a population of 979.

The total population of the planning area is 9,649. The planning area has a relatively high population density of approximately 5,517.12 persons per square mile. Within the two federally recognized colonias, that population density is higher at 8,537.14 persons per square mile.

Major wastewater treatment issues exist in the Avenue B & C Colonia, an area which makes up a significant portion of the planning area. Individual septic systems function at optimal levels when there is a separation of ten feet from ground to water table. Yuma County's Environmental Programs Section has noted a number of failing septic systems in the area. There are also an unknown number of illegal cesspools in the area. Although the Colonia is within close proximity to the City of Yuma sewer treatment facility, less than five percent of the area is connected to the city's sewer system.

In recognition of the problem, the City of Yuma and Yuma County jointly applied in 1999 to the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC) for technical assistance funding to perform a study to determine the feasibility of a community wastewater system. The resulting proposed project is to construct a wastewater collection and conveyance system that will connect all existing homes within the Avenue B & C Colonia. In order make this project a reality community leaders in the Colonia have secured the required signatures to form an improvement district. On March 12, 2007 the Avenue B & C Colonia Improvement District No.07-09 was established. Construction on the project began June 2010 and is scheduled to be completed by September 2011.



Homes in the Northwest Yuma Planning Area

<b>Northwest Yuma Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>11</sup>	4,044
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>12</sup>	75.9%
Multi Family Housing Unit Permits Issued <sup>12</sup>	4
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>12</sup>	158
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>12</sup>	81
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>12</sup>	98

Table 10: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Average Household Size<sup>11</sup></b>	
Northwest Yuma Planning Area	2.39
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

Table 11: Average Household Size<sup>11</sup>

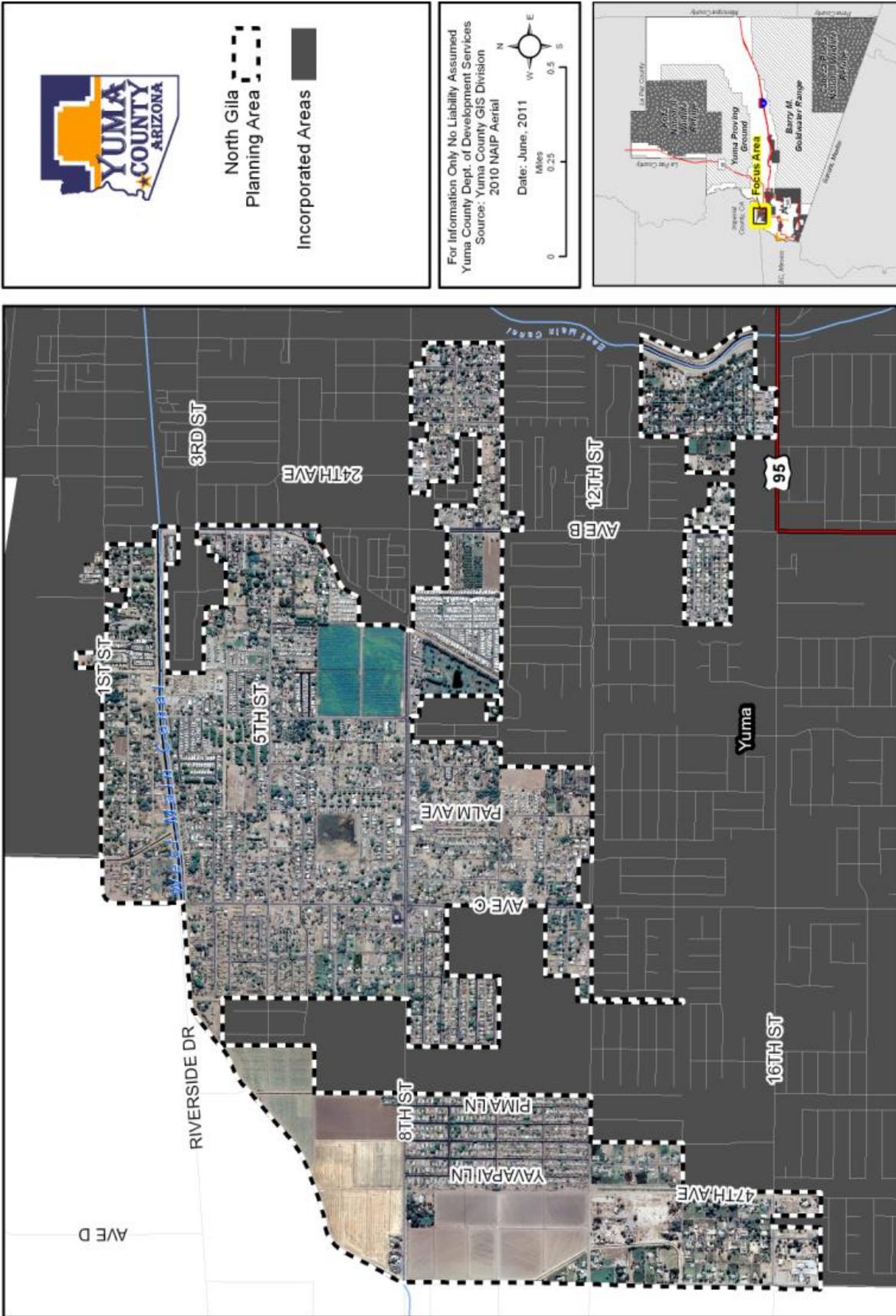
Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 341 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 46% were manufactured homes, 29% were single family site built homes, 24% were mobile homes and 1% were multi-family site built homes.

In the Northwest Yuma Planning Area 70% of housing units counted in the 2010 Census were non-site built units, meaning that they are manufactured homes and mobile homes. Residential development within the Northwest Yuma Planning Area has followed two distinct patterns between 2000 and 2010: Infill and replacement development on single scattered lots and the replacement of housing units within existing manufactured home parks.

<sup>11</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>12</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services

Land Use Element - Northwest Yuma Planning Area



Map 10: Northwest Yuma Planning Area

**The Gila Valley Planning Area** is comprised of the area roughly bounded by Pacific Avenue to the west, Fortuna Wash to the east, Levee Road to the north and the City of Yuma to the south. The planning area is almost exclusively located in the Colorado and Gila River valleys. The confluence of the Colorado and Gila Rivers is located along the northern boundary of the planning area. Urbanized areas within the City of Yuma are located directly adjacent to the planning area to the west and south.



South Gila Valley Canal

The total population of the planning area according to the 2010 U.S. Census was 2,833. Unlike the urbanized areas to the west and south of the planning area, the overwhelming majority of acreage within the planning area is used for agricultural production. Nearly all the population of the planning area is concentrated into five small distinct and noncontiguous areas. These five areas consist of manufactured home parks, platted subdivisions and wildcat subdivisions that all had their residential usage established decades ago.

Extensive drainage systems and pumping are utilized due to the high groundwater found in much of the planning area. In January 2009, the Bureau of Reclamation reported the depth to groundwater at eight feet or less in 1,509 acres of the planning area. Depth to groundwater fluctuates throughout the year as the amount of the irrigation water being applied changes with the different growing seasons. High ground water can complicate the installation of traditional septic systems and often necessitates the installation of alternative sewage disposal systems.



Urbanized Area Next to Farmland

Because MCAS-Yuma is located just south of the planning area it includes areas that are covered by the provisions of A.R.S. §28-8481. The types of land uses allowed for land located within the defined noise zones of facilities listed in A.R.S. §28-8481 have significant restrictions. In these areas, urban style residential development is prohibited and commercial and industrial development must be aviation compatible.

<b>Gila Valley Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>13</sup>	988
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>13</sup>	87.3%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>14</sup>	164
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>14</sup>	25
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>14</sup>	14

Table 12: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Average Household Size<sup>13</sup></b>	
Gila Valley Planning Area	2.87
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

Table 13: Average Household Size<sup>13</sup>

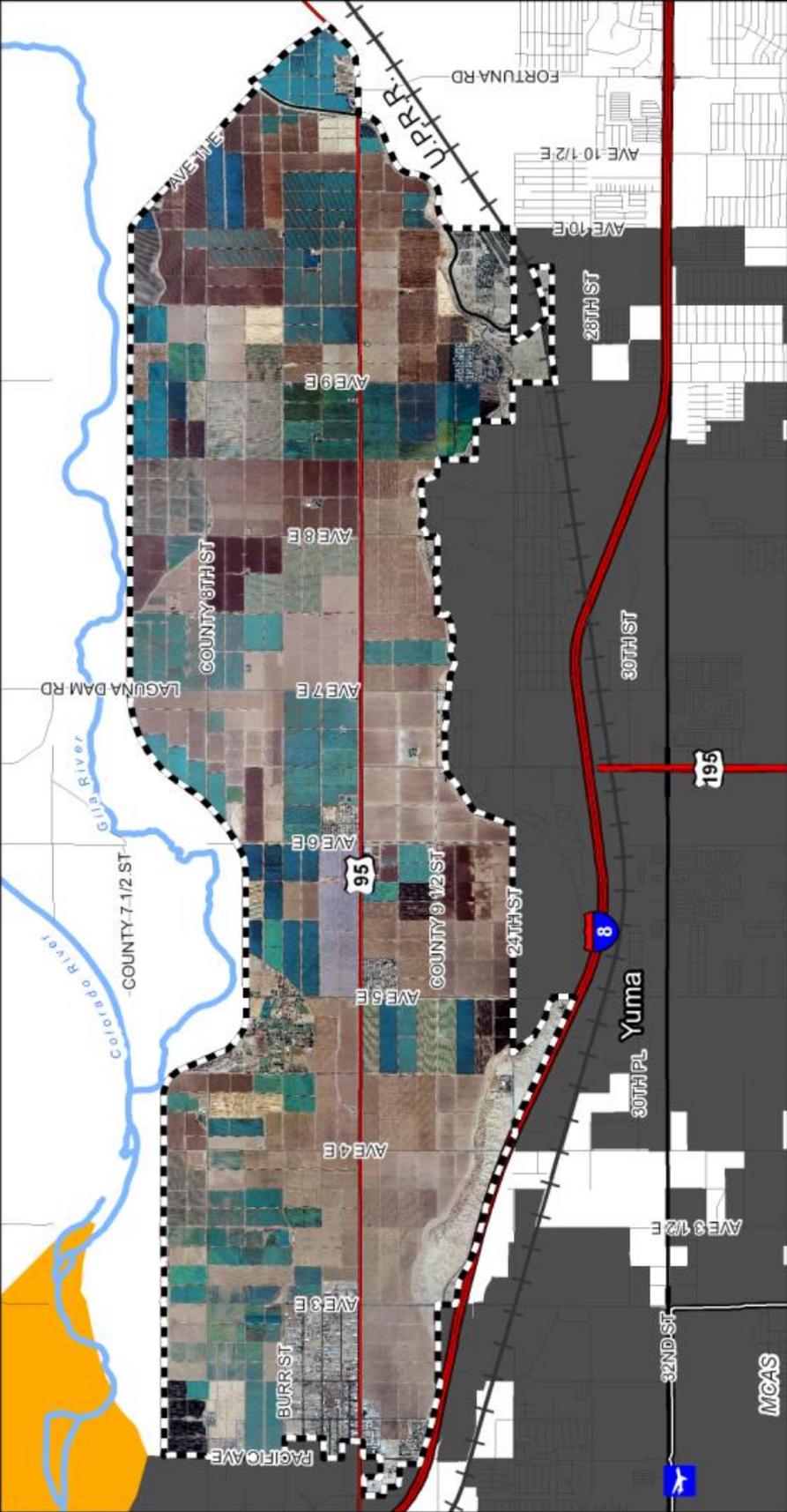
Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010 Yuma County issued 203 building permits for residential housing units in the Gila Valley Planning Area. Of these, 189 permits were issued as placement permits for manufactured homes or mobile home (units manufactured prior to 1976) in four existing manufactured home parks.

Typically, between ten and fifteen permits for construction or placement of a housing unit are issued in the planning area each year. Nearly all the housing units added in the planning area are located in areas already developed for residential use in manufactured home parks, platted subdivisions or (preexisting wildcat subdivisions). Very few housing units were constructed or placed on land that was previously being farmed.

<sup>13</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>14</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services

Land Use Element - Gila Valley Planning Area



Date: June, 2011  
0 1 Miles

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Yuma County Dept. of Development Services  
Source: Yuma County GIS Division  
2010 NAIP Aerial

Gila Valley Planning Area
  Marine Corps Air Station Yuma
  Indian Reservations
  Incorporated Areas

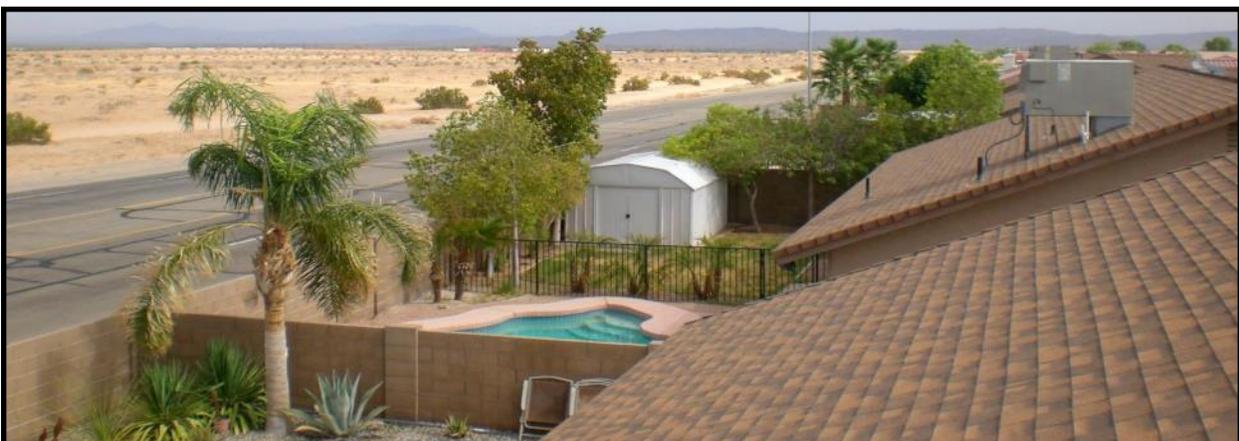
Map 11: Gila Valley Planning Area

**The Foothills Planning Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by the City of Yuma to the west, the crest of the Gila Mountains to the east, the Barry M. Goldwater Range to the south and the Gila Gravity Main Canal and County 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the north. Fortuna Wash, which runs in a northeasterly direction, more or less bisects the planning area. Nearly all development within the planning area is west of Fortuna Wash. Land east of Fortuna Wash tends to be more rugged and less developed.

The Foothills Planning Area is an unincorporated community of 28,867 people located directly east of the City of Yuma. The planning area is the most urbanized area in unincorporated Yuma County. The area can be characterized as a bedroom community and by a large number of retirees and seasonal residents. The planning area also serves as a bedroom community for MCAS and YPG, one of the largest employers in Yuma County. Despite the fact that it is over a seventeen mile drive from the Foothills Planning Area to the Yuma Proving Ground, the Foothills is the closest area of residential development to YPG.

The housing stock in the planning area tends to be newer than that found in Yuma County and Arizona as whole. The large majority of housing units in the Foothills Planning Area were constructed after 1990. The home ownership rate in the planning area greatly exceeds that found in Yuma County and Arizona as a whole. However, due to the seasonal residency of a great part of the planning area residents, only 56% of homes are considered occupied, compared with 73.7% and 83.7%, respectively in Yuma County and Arizona as whole.

The State of Arizona owns a significant portion of undeveloped land in the Foothills Planning Area. There are 115 non-federally owned parcels that are larger than ten acres in the planning area. Of these, 18 parcels comprising 6,737 acres (58.7% by acreage) are owned by the State of Arizona. State trust lands are managed by the Arizona State Land Department which is mandated to achieve the highest and best use of the land in order to maximize revenues for the trust's beneficiaries. For state lands to be available an interested party must apply for a parcel to be put up for auction. If the State Land Department feels that an auction at that time is the best way to maximize revenue from that parcel, a public auction is then held. The most recent auction of state trust land in the Foothills Planning Area occurred in the spring of 2006 when 160 acres of state land at the intersection of Scottsdale Drive and 36<sup>th</sup> Street was auctioned. With ownership of the majority of remaining developable land in the planning area, the Arizona State Land Department will play a major role in the future of the area.



Foothills streetscape

<b>Foothills Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>15</sup>	23,228
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>15</sup>	56%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issues <sup>16</sup>	2,056
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issues <sup>16</sup>	66
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>16</sup>	3,976

Table 14: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Average Household Size<sup>15</sup></b>	
Foothills Planning Area	1.24
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

Table 15: Average Household Size<sup>15</sup>

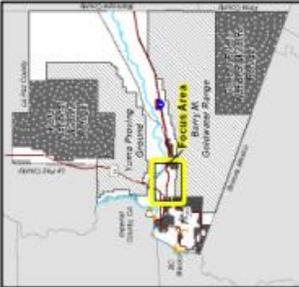
Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 6,098 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 34% were manufactured homes, 65% were single family site built homes and 1% were mobile homes.

The planning area is primarily a retirement and bedroom community. The planning area represents the center of residential growth in Yuma County. Since 2000, 78.5% of housing units that were constructed/placed in unincorporated Yuma County were done so in the Foothills Planning Area. The vast majority of this new development has occurred as new single family homes on small lots in newly platted subdivisions.

<sup>15</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>16</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services

Land Use Element - Foothills Planning Area



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 Yuma County Dept. of Development Services  
 Source: Yuma County GIS Division  
 2010 NAIP Aerial  
 Date: June, 2011

**Foothills Planning Area**

**Incorporated Areas**

**Barry M. Goldwater Range**



Map 12: Foothills Planning Area

**The Yuma Valley Planning Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by Mexico to the west, the City of Yuma, Avenue D, the City of Somerton and the East Main Canal to the east, the City of San Luis to the south and California to the north. The planning area is located in the Yuma Valley close to the Colorado River. As such, extensive drainage systems and pumping are required due to the high ground water that is found in much of the planning area. In December 2008 the Bureau of Reclamation reported the depth to groundwater at twelve feet or less in the majority of the planning area. During periods of heavy irrigation groundwater can raise to within two feet of the surface in some areas of the planning area.

There are four areas within the Yuma Valley Planning Area federally recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a colonia. HUD defines colonias as *"rural communities and neighborhoods located within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexican border that lack adequate infrastructure and frequently lack other basic services."* The planning area's four colonias are: Gadsden with a population of 651, Padre Ranchitos with a population of 171, Drysdale Lane with a population of 261 and Wall Lane with a population of 258. Thirty-seven percent of the population of the planning area lives in areas designated by the federal government as a colonia.

The overwhelming majority of the Yuma Valley Planning Area is comprised of large acreage parcels that are actively being used for agricultural purposes. The residential population of the planning area is concentrated in six relatively small areas. About 37% of the population resides in one of the four colonias: In the vicinity of where the West Main Canal crosses County 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the intersection of County 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue C or the intersection of County 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue C. Each of these residential clusters contains about 200 to 1,000 people, the remaining 30% of the population lives in smaller residential clusters or on agricultural home sites. With the exception of parcels in Gadsden, Wall Lane and Padre Ranchitos areas, nearly all residential parcels in the planning area are at least one acre in size.

The Yuma County Water User's Association serves the irrigation needs of the Yuma Valley Planning Area which contains approximately 53,000 acres of irrigated land. This represents 33% of the total irrigated land in Yuma County. Farmland within the planning area tends to be of the highest quality found in Yuma County, all of it located off the mesa in the fertile river bottoms. Some of the more common crops that are grown in the planning area include lettuce, cotton, melons, wheat and safflower. The Yuma Valley is often referred to as the best lettuce growing farmland in the United States.



A residential area adjacent to agricultural production

<b>Yuma Valley Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>17</sup>	1,504
Owner Occupancy Rate <sup>17</sup>	77%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>18</sup>	45
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>18</sup>	18
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>18</sup>	56

Table 16: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Household Size<sup>17</sup></b>	
Yuma Valley Planning Area	2.53
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

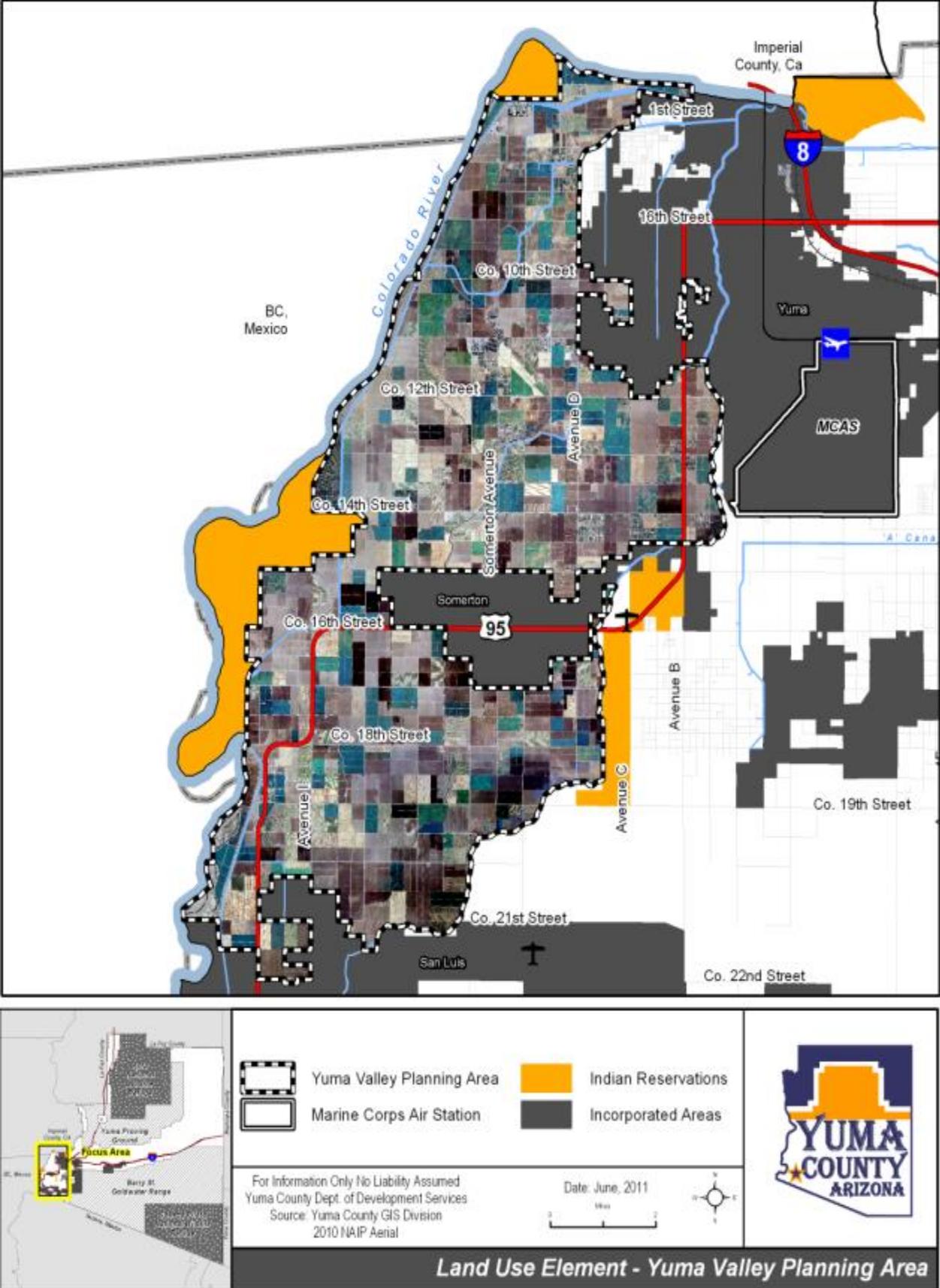
Table 17: Average Household Size<sup>17</sup>

Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 119 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 38% were manufactured homes, 47% were single family site built homes and 15% were mobile homes.

Nearly all building/placement permits were issued in locations spread throughout the planning area, primarily in the Gadsden, Wall Lane, Drysdale, Padre Ranchitos areas and in the vicinity of the intersection of County 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue C. All these areas had been established as areas of residential development well before 2000. Between 2000 and 2010 no new areas of residential development were added in the Yuma Valley Planning Area.

<sup>17</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>18</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services



Map 13: Yuma Valley Planning Area

**The Martinez Lake Planning Area** is composed of two geographically separate areas that can be roughly defined as the portion of Yuma County that is located north of Imperial Dam and west of Yuma Proving Ground and the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. The topography of the southern portion of the planning area is dominated by the Colorado River and Martinez Lake which forms the western boundary of the planning area and the County. Development in this area centers around the Martinez Lake shoreline. The northern portion of the Martinez Lake Planning Area is a sliver of land located between the La Paz County line and the Kofa Mountains and the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. There is almost no development within this part of the planning area

Of the 253 square miles that comprise the Martinez Lake Planning Area only 0.6% of the total area is under private ownership. The 5.5% of the planning area that is owned by the State of Arizona has been very important to the development of the area. 512 housing units were reported in the 2010 Census despite there only being 160 privately owned parcels. The vast majority of housing was constructed on land leased from the State.

The Martinez Lake Planning Area is surrounded on multiple sides by Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). Because of this, activities on YPG have the potential to have a major impact on the planning area. Yuma Proving Ground is the largest employer in Yuma County, employing approximately 3,000 civilian and military employees. In 2009, General Motors relocated its hot weather testing center from Mesa, Arizona to the Yuma Proving Ground. The new test complex which will be shared by the Army and General Motors is in close proximity to the planning area.



Martinez Lake

<b>Martinez Lake Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>19</sup>	512
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>19</sup>	61.5%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>20</sup>	6
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>20</sup>	0
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>20</sup>	24

Table 18: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Household Size<sup>19</sup></b>	
Martinez Lake Planning Area	2.54
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

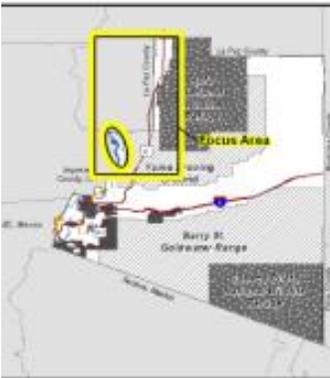
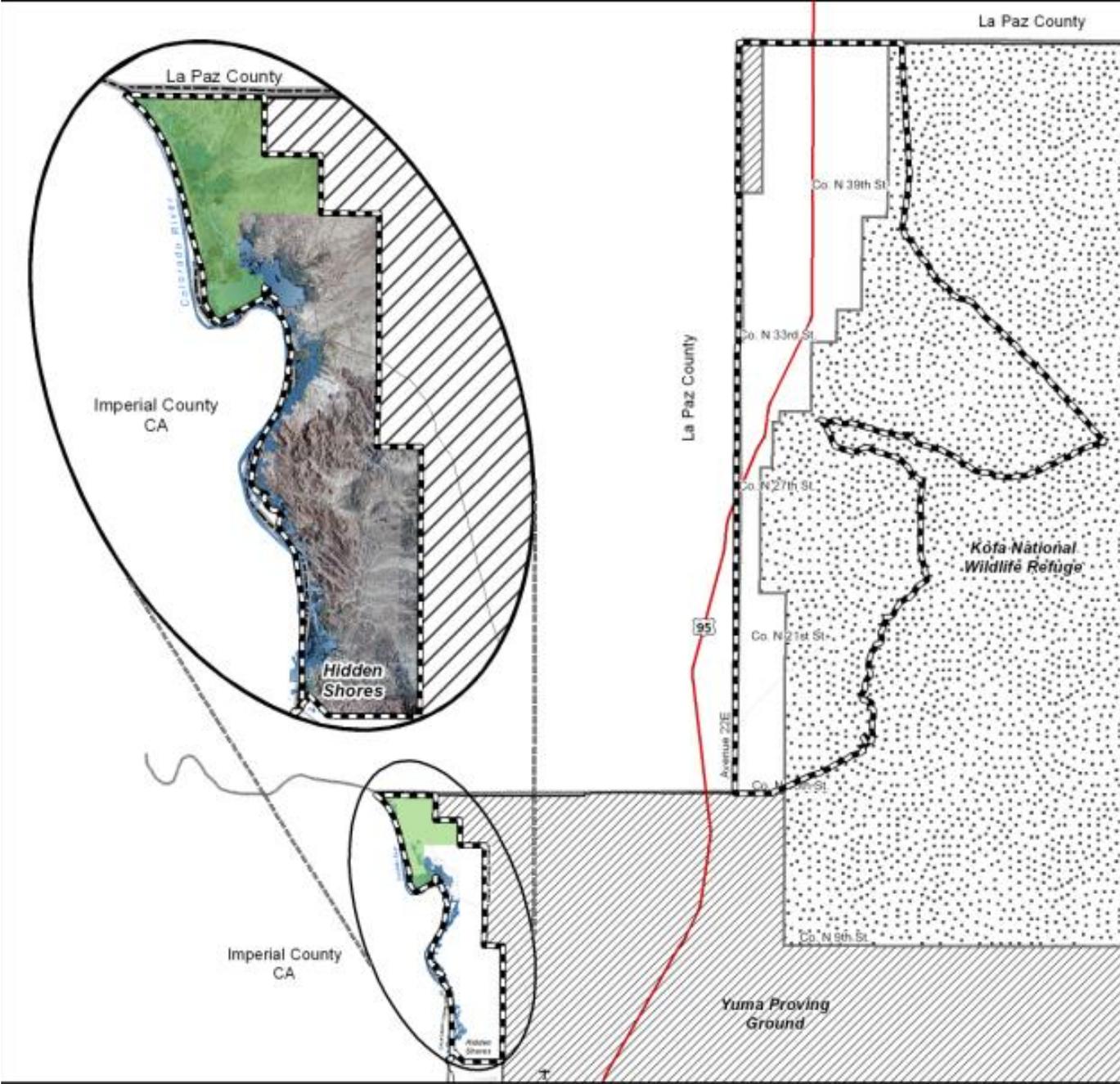
Table 19: Average Household Size<sup>19</sup>

Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 30 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 20% were manufactured homes and 80% were single family site built homes.

The nature of housing in the Martinez Lake Planning Area is clearly of a different nature than found elsewhere in the County. It is an area dominated by vacation homes. In the planning area 51.5% of all housing units are classified as vacation homes. This is a much higher rate than that in the County or State as whole where 15.7% and 6.5% of housing units are classified as vacation homes. Of the 161 privately owned parcels 61%, of them are owned by individuals reporting a California address to the Yuma County Assessor’s office.

<sup>19</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>20</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services



-  Martinez Lake Planning Area
-  Imperial Wildlife Refuge
-  Military Boundary
-  National Wildlife Refuge

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 Yuma County Dept. of Development Services  
 Source: Yuma County GIS Division  
 2010 NAIP Aerial

Date: June, 2011  
 Miles  
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Land Use Element - Martinez Lake Planning Area

Map 14: Martinez Lake Planning Area

**The Dome Valley/Wellton Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by the crest of the Gila Mountains to the west, the Barry M. Goldwater Range to the south, the crest of the Mohawk Mountains to the east and Yuma Proving Ground to the north. The Gila River runs from east to west bisecting the planning area. The valley through which the Gila River flows contains irrigated, prime farmland and is extensively used for agriculture. The mesa rises abruptly above the Gila River Valley and is a flat area drained by washes. The majority of residential development has occurred on the “mesa.” The Town of Wellton is located in the southwest corner of the planning area. Located in the northwest corner of the planning area, the Muggins Mountains Wilderness Area covers 12 square miles. This area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management in a manner that minimizes as much as possible human impact on the land.

Water supplied by Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District irrigates over 62,000 acres in the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area. The resulting agricultural activity is the dominant land use and economic activity of the area. In terms of acreage and value of the harvest, lettuce is the most significant crop in the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area. The production of lettuce, occurring between November and March, has become the dominant economic activity of the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area. Between November and March, 30% of the lettuce consumed in the United States is grown in the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area. Additionally, most of the nation's supply of registered Bermuda grass seed is grown in the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area.



Farmland in Dome Valley with the Muggins Mountains in the background

## *Land Use Element*

Approximately 62,000 acres of the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area is contained within the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District (WMIDD), a state chartered municipal corporation that is charged with operating irrigation and power infrastructure within its boundaries. In August 2002, the WMIDD was designated as a Rural Planning Area (RPA) by the Yuma County Board of Supervisors. The RPA is notified by the county of development project applications in the RPA boundaries or within one mile of the RPA boundary. Any recommendation then made by the RPA is forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. In 2008, the WMIDD completed acquiring 86 square miles of land (21.4% of the planning area) from the Bureau of Reclamation as authorized by the Wellton-Mohawk Title Transfer Act. Approximately 18,000 acres contain irrigation and drainage systems and rights-of-way. Approximately 10,600 acres are within the Gila River Flood Channel. A further 17,764 acres were acquired and comprised of land for rights-of-way, flood control or farm unit development. Much of this land is developable and is being marketed by the WMIDD. This represents a significant pool of developable land.

The Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area contains 31 platted subdivisions. Combined there are 2,222 lots contained within these subdivisions. The 2010 Census reported a combined population of 2,915. 26.4% of the total population of the planning area lives in platted subdivisions. Further, the Census reported 435 housing units within these subdivisions. Yuma County records show that an additional 388 housing units have been added since 2000, which means that of 2,222 lots contained within platted subdivision, 83% are vacant lots. Nearly all these subdivisions were platted several decades ago when County regulations did not require infrastructure improvements to be made prior to recording a final plat. As a result, many but not all of these subdivisions have little to no physical infrastructure for improved roads, water and sewer systems, etc. or, in a few cases clearly established legal access. These deficiencies cause these subdivisions to either not develop or develop at an extremely slow pace. However, some development in these deficient subdivisions does occur, creating pockets of residential development in areas that lack the necessary infrastructure. Finding a way to deal with these deficient subdivisions is one of the major challenges facing the planning area over the next decade.



Tacna, an unincorporated community within the Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area

<b>Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>21</sup>	1,498
Occupied Housing Rate <sup>21</sup>	74.4%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>22</sup>	124
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>22</sup>	25
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>22</sup>	63

Table 20: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Household Size<sup>21</sup></b>	
Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area	1.95
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

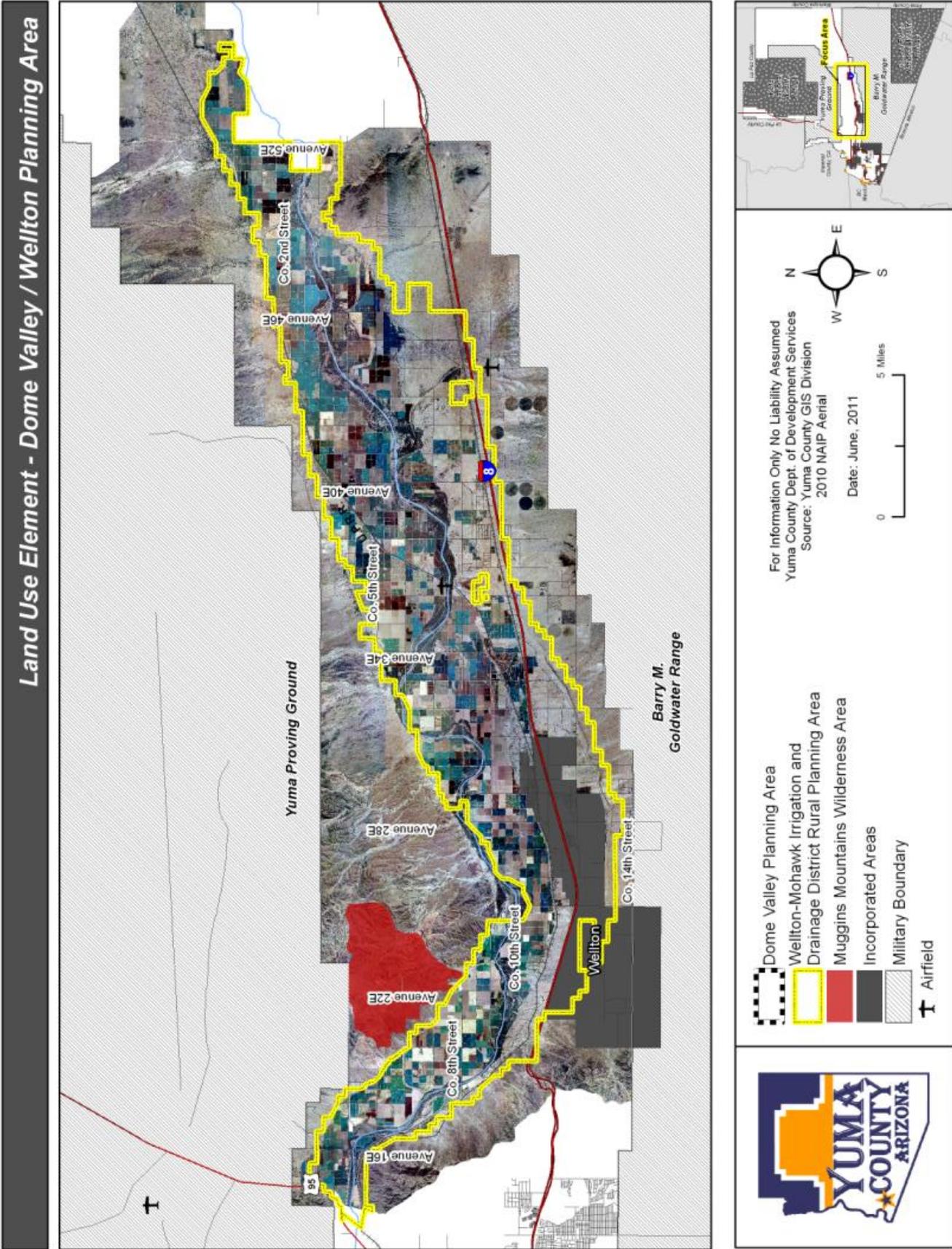
Table 21: Average Household Size<sup>21</sup>

Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 212 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 58% were manufactured homes, 30% were single family site built homes and 12% were mobile homes.

The population of the planning area is largely concentrated in the western two-thirds of the planning area. Only about 9% of the population lives east of Tacna. The Gila River Valley, in which nearly all agricultural activity is located, is home to 42% of the planning area’s population. However, new residential growth has been occurring almost exclusively in areas located outside the Gila River Valley. Of the 388 new housing units added to the planning area since 2000, only five have been located in the Gila River Valley.

<sup>21</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>22</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services



Map 15: Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area

**The Dateland/East County Planning Area** is comprised of the unincorporated portion of Yuma County that is roughly bounded by the crest of the Mohawk Mountains and Yuma Proving Ground to the west, the Barry M. Goldwater Range to the south, Maricopa County to the east and La Paz County to the north. The Gila River runs from east to west bisecting the planning area. The Eagle Tail Mountains Wilderness Area covers 12 square miles. This area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management in a manner that minimizes as much as possible human impact on the land.

The planning area contains the unincorporated communities of Dateland and Hyder. These communities are characterized as being rural. Dateland is the largest community in the planning area and is located at the intersection of Avenue 64E and Interstate 8 (I-8) on the south side of the planning area. Dateland was established as a result of the farming and railroad transportation activities in the area. Existing development includes services and commercial activities, school district facilities, a community center and a residential district located northeast of the intersection of I-8 and Avenue 64E. On the south side of this interchange is an active gas station, restaurant and gift shop at which Greyhound and tour buses stop. Directly north of this area are several unimproved subdivisions that are mostly vacant with only a scattering of lots being actually developed. Further north in the Gila River Valley are many acres of fallow farmland.

Hyder is located south of Palomas Road along the Maricopa County line. Hyder was a railroad stop for the Southern Pacific Railroad near the Agua Caliente Mountains. Hyder was established by the U.S. Army Training Center in World War II. North of the railroad tracks are several labor camps consisting of mobile homes.

The Dateland/East County Planning Area contains 26 platted subdivisions. Combined there are 5,157 lots contained within these subdivisions. The 2010 Census reported a combined population of 815, of which 35.7% of the total population of the planning area live in a platted subdivision. Further, the Census reported 118 housing units within in these subdivisions which means that of 5,157 lots contained within platted subdivision, 96.9% are vacant lots. Nearly all these subdivision were platted several decades ago when County regulations did not require infrastructure improvements to be made prior to the recording of a final plat. As a result, many but not all of these subdivisions have little to no physical infrastructure, improved roads, water, sewer, etc. or in a few cases clearly established legal access. These deficiencies caused these subdivisions to either not develop or develop at an extremely slow pace. However, some development in these deficient subdivisions does occur creating pockets of residential development in areas that lack the necessary infrastructure. Finding a way to deal with these deficient subdivisions is one of the major challenges facing the planning area over the next decade.



Dateland

<b>Dateland/East County Planning Area</b>	
Total Housing Units <sup>23</sup>	486
Owner Occupancy Rate <sup>23</sup>	56.1.%
Manufactured Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>24</sup>	70
Mobile Home Placement Permits Issued <sup>24</sup>	26
Single Family Site Built Home Building Permits Issued <sup>24</sup>	6

Table 22: Housing Units 2000 through 2010

<b>Household Size<sup>23</sup></b>	
Dateland/East County Planning Area	1.68
Yuma County	2.22
Arizona	2.24

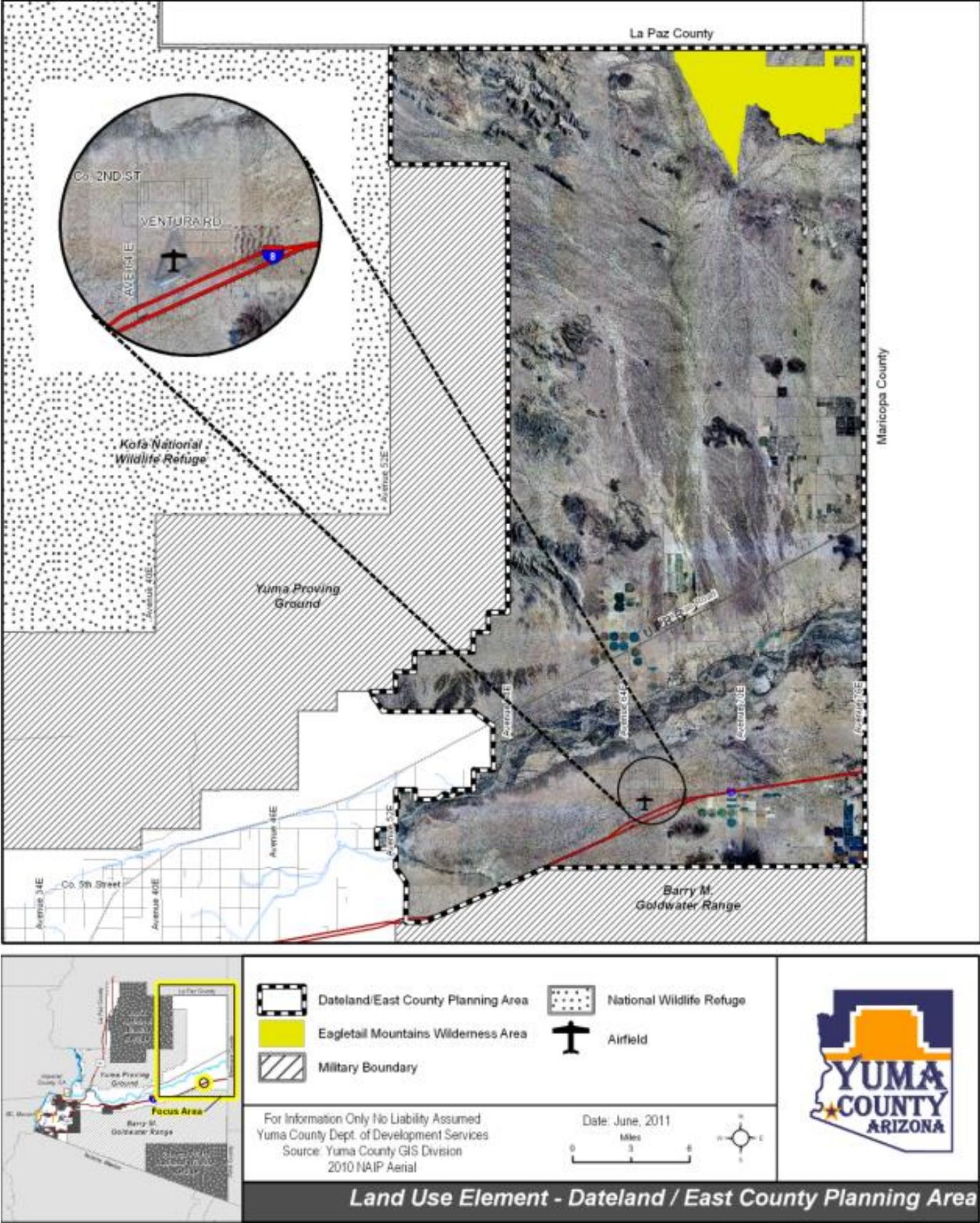
Table 23: Average Household Size<sup>1</sup>

Between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, 102 housing units were constructed or placed in the planning area. Of these, 69% were manufactured homes, 6% were single family site built homes and 25% were mobile homes.

The unincorporated community, which is roughly located at the intersection of Avenue 64E and Interstate 8, contains 41% of the planning area population and is the location of the area’s school and businesses. The balance of the planning area’s population is scattered through the southern two-thirds of the planning area. However, new residential growth has been mostly occurring in the immediate vicinity of Dateland. Of the 162 new housing units added to the planning area since 2000, the majority have been located in the immediate vicinity of Dateland.

<sup>23</sup> 2010 U.S. Census

<sup>24</sup> Yuma County Department of Development Services



Map 16: Dateland/East County Planning Area

## **3.2 Land Use Designations**

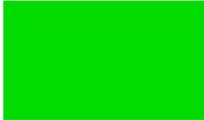
In order to implement the goals, objectives and polices of the *Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, 21 land use designations have been established. Each land use designation contains the allowed uses and densities that are desired on land with that designation. All lands under the planning jurisdiction of Yuma County have been assigned a land use designation. Any land coming under the land use planning jurisdiction subsequent to the adoption of the Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan will be assigned a land use designation of Agriculture/Rural Preservation.

A.R.S. § 11-829(A) requires that: “*All zoning and rezoning ordinances, regulations or specific plans adopted under this article shall be consistent with and conform to the adopted county plan.*” In order to comply with this provision of state law and to further implement the goals, objectives and polices of the *Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, all proposed rezonings will be checked against the Plan to determine if the proposed zoning district conforms with the land use designation of the parcel in question. A.R.S. § 11-829(A) states that: “*A rezoning ordinance conforms with the county plan if it proposes land uses, densities or intensities within the range of identified uses, densities and intensities of the county plan.*” In order for a rezoning to proceed and be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission and then Board of Supervisors it must be determined to be in conformance with the Plan. For proposed rezonings that do not conform to the Comprehensive Plan, an amendment to the land use map to change the land use designation must be approved before the rezoning can be heard.

A county island is an area of unincorporated land which is completely surrounded by a city or town. County islands are created when a city or town annexes land into their corporate boundaries but excludes certain areas. Those excluded areas that remain under county jurisdiction are referred to as county islands. In accordance with **A.R.S § 11-831. Additional requirements for certain lands**; A. The rezoning or subdivision plat of any unincorporated area completely surrounded by a city or town shall use as a guideline the adopted general plan and standards as set forth in the subdivision and zoning ordinances of such city or town after the effective date of this section. B. The board or commission, before taking any action on a rezoning or subdivision plat in an area as set forth in subsection A, may require the affected city or town to supply information to allow the county to meet the guideline. If an affected city or town objects to any such proposed action the board or commission shall set forth in the minutes of the meeting specific reasons why in its opinion the guideline is actually being followed or why it is not practicable to follow the guideline of the general plan.

A property’s land use designation does not impact existing uses of a property, the owner’s right to its continued use or repairs or alterations of said uses. These things are governed by the *Yuma County Zoning Ordinance*. A property may be used in any manner allowed by the Zoning Ordinance including approved Special Use Permits and non-conforming uses regardless of the use designation. There are numerous zoning districts that predate the first adopted Comprehensive Plan and as a result, have zoning districts that do not match their land use designation. Mandatory conformity to the Comprehensive Plan is only triggered when a property’s zoning district is changed.

The following pages describe the different land use designations that have countywide applicability. There are a total of 21 land use designations in Yuma County described by name, color schematic, allowed uses, densities and intensity of use.

<p><b><i>Land Use Designation</i></b> <i>(Abbreviation and Symbol)</i></p>	<p><b><i>Description, Allowed Uses and Densities</i></b></p>
<p>Agriculture/Rural Preservation (A-RP) </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports resource preservation districts with emphasis on protecting and preserving agricultural related resources and continued agricultural use and limiting development in rural areas that lack the basic infrastructure to support even limited low density residential development.</li> <li>• Land principally devoted to agricultural production.</li> <li>• Areas lacking access to the infrastructure necessary to support development.</li> <li>• Minimum parcel size of 40 acres.</li> </ul>
<p>Agriculture/Rural Residential (A-RR) </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports resource conservation districts and reserves with emphasis on preserving farm communities and character.</li> <li>• Recognizing land with potential to be divided into rural lots that are compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding parcels.</li> <li>• Acknowledge residential character and allow for division into rural lots.</li> <li>• Minimum parcel size of 10 acres.</li> </ul>
<p>Agriculture/Rural Development (A-RD) </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports resource conservation districts and reserves with emphasis on preserving farm communities and character and to allow for residential development in areas that are only compatible with a very low density style of residential development.</li> <li>• Recognizing land with potential to be divided into rural lots that are compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding parcels.</li> <li>• Acknowledge residential character and encourage division into rural lots.</li> <li>• Minimum parcel size of 5 acres.</li> </ul>

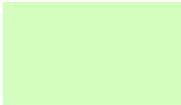
<p>Rural Density Residential (R-RD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that are rural in nature. This designation allows for residential development that is compatible with surrounding agricultural uses and other areas and uses that are incompatible with urban style residential development. Allows for residential development in conjunction with continued agricultural uses and the keeping of a limited number of horses and farm animals. Allows for residential development in areas that have insufficient infrastructure to support residential development at a greater density. The large parcel size required under the Rural Density Residential designation allows for a single parcel to contain both a septic tank and a well. Residential development can take the form of site-built homes or manufactured homes.</li> <li>• 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres (minimum 2 acre parcels).</li> </ul>
<p>Ranchette Residential (R-R)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that have a mix of both semi-urban and rural characteristics. The intent of this designation is to create a style of development that can serve as a transition between agricultural and rural residential uses and a more urban style of development. Allows for all zoning districts with a minimum size that allows for having both a well and on-site sewage treatment, and allows for the keeping of large farm animals. Residential development can take the form of site-built homes or manufactured homes.</li> <li>• 1 dwelling unit per acre to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres (minimum 1 acre parcels).</li> </ul>
<p>Estate Density Residential (R-ED)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that have a mix of both urban and rural characteristics. The intent of this designation is to create a style of development that can serve as a transition between agricultural and rural residential uses and a more urban style of development. Allows for the keeping of a limited number of horses and farm animals on appropriately sized parcels. Residential development can take the form of site-built homes or manufactured homes.</li> <li>• 2 dwelling units per acre to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres (minimum ½ acre parcels).</li> </ul>

<p>Suburban Density Residential (R-SD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that have a mix of both urban and rural characteristics. The intent of this designation is to create a style of development that can serve as a transition between agricultural and rural residential uses and a more urban style of development. Allows for the keeping of a limited number of horses and farm animals on appropriately sized parcels. Residential development can take the form of site-built homes or manufactured homes.</li> <li>• 3 dwelling units per acre to 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres (minimum 1/3 acre parcels).</li> </ul>
<p>Low Density Residential (R-LD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that are urban in nature. Low Density Residential allows the lowest residential density of urban style residential development. It is primarily characterized by neighborhoods of detached single family homes that can be either site-built or manufactured homes.</li> <li>• 1 to 6 dwelling units per acre.</li> </ul>
<p>Medium Density Residential (R-MD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that are urban in nature. Medium Density Residential allows a density that falls between that found in neighborhoods with detached single family homes and the most dense forms of residential developments such as apartment complexes. It is primarily characterized by neighborhoods of detached single family homes on small lots, attached single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, condos and/or manufactured home parks. Allows for dwelling units to be manufactured, site-built or recreational vehicles.</li> <li>• 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre.</li> </ul>
<p>Urban Density Residential (R-UD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports residential uses and densities that are urban in nature. Urban Density Residential allows the highest possible density of residential development. It is primarily characterized by multi-family dwelling units and recreational vehicle parks. Allows for dwelling units to be manufactured, site-built or recreational vehicles.</li> <li>• 10 to 18 dwelling units per acre.</li> </ul>

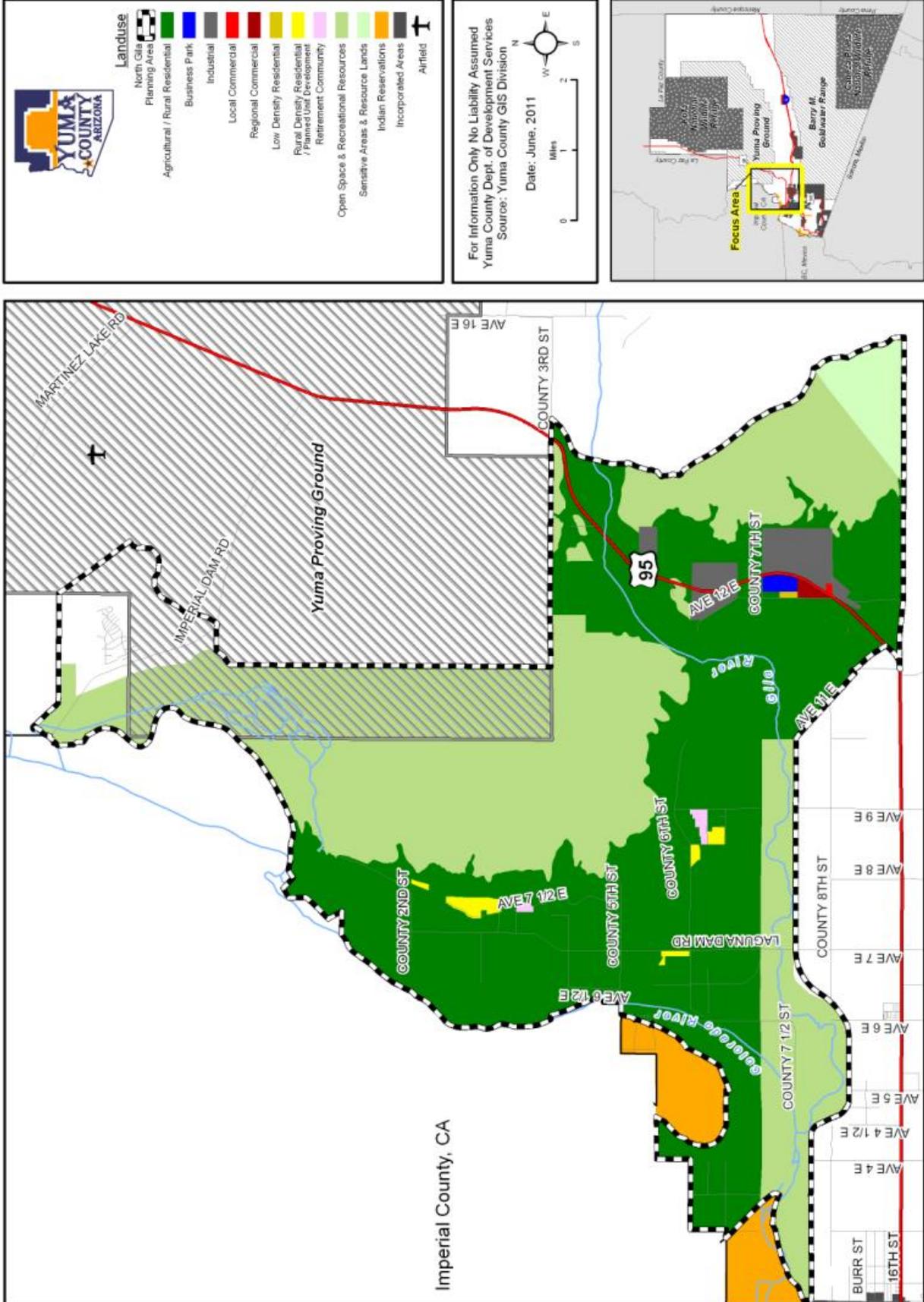
*Land Use Element*

<p>Mixed Use Residential (R-MU)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports mixed use areas: Recreational vehicles, manufactured homes, site built and local commercial:</li> <li>• Areas with more than one primary use category;</li> <li>• Encourages neighborhood oriented commercial;</li> <li>• Recognizes need for caretaker and institutional facilities.</li> <li>• Limited local commercial uses;</li> <li>• Mixed uses are those which rightfully fall into two or more classifications. By using mixed-use classifications, the aggregations of adjacent parcels have more flexibility.</li> </ul>
<p>Retirement Community/Planned Unit Development (R-RC)/(PUD)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports land, subdivision and facilities exclusively committed to providing the services associated with meeting the increasing demands oriented towards retirees or retirement communities:</li> <li>• Second dwelling units;</li> <li>• Mixed uses and nodes to support needed residential and light commercial services;</li> <li>• Assisted living;</li> <li>• Planned communities.</li> </ul>
<p>Agriculture/Industrial (A-I)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports continued agricultural uses.</li> <li>• Site-built residences with noise attenuation subject to the zoning densities in effect prior to September 12, 1996.</li> <li>• Aviation-compatible industrial uses subject to the demonstration and completion of the appropriate public infrastructure, public services and long term water allocation needed for development.</li> </ul>
<p>Industrial (I)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports industrial uses with related offices.</li> </ul>
<p>Business Park (BP)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that allows for developments that may mix light industrial, general commercial, retail and/or office uses, preferably in a high visual quality, business park or campus-type setting. Types of development allowed under this designation include:</li> <li>• Light industrial uses and related offices;</li> <li>• Commercial outlets or combination enterprises.</li> </ul>
<p>Local Commercial (C-LC)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that promotes and preserves convenient neighborhood commercial areas which contain retail, service and office establishments that meet the daily needs of nearby neighborhoods. Examples of this include the following:</li> <li>• Small retail stores;</li> <li>• Office uses;</li> <li>• Shopping and restaurant-type activities.</li> </ul>

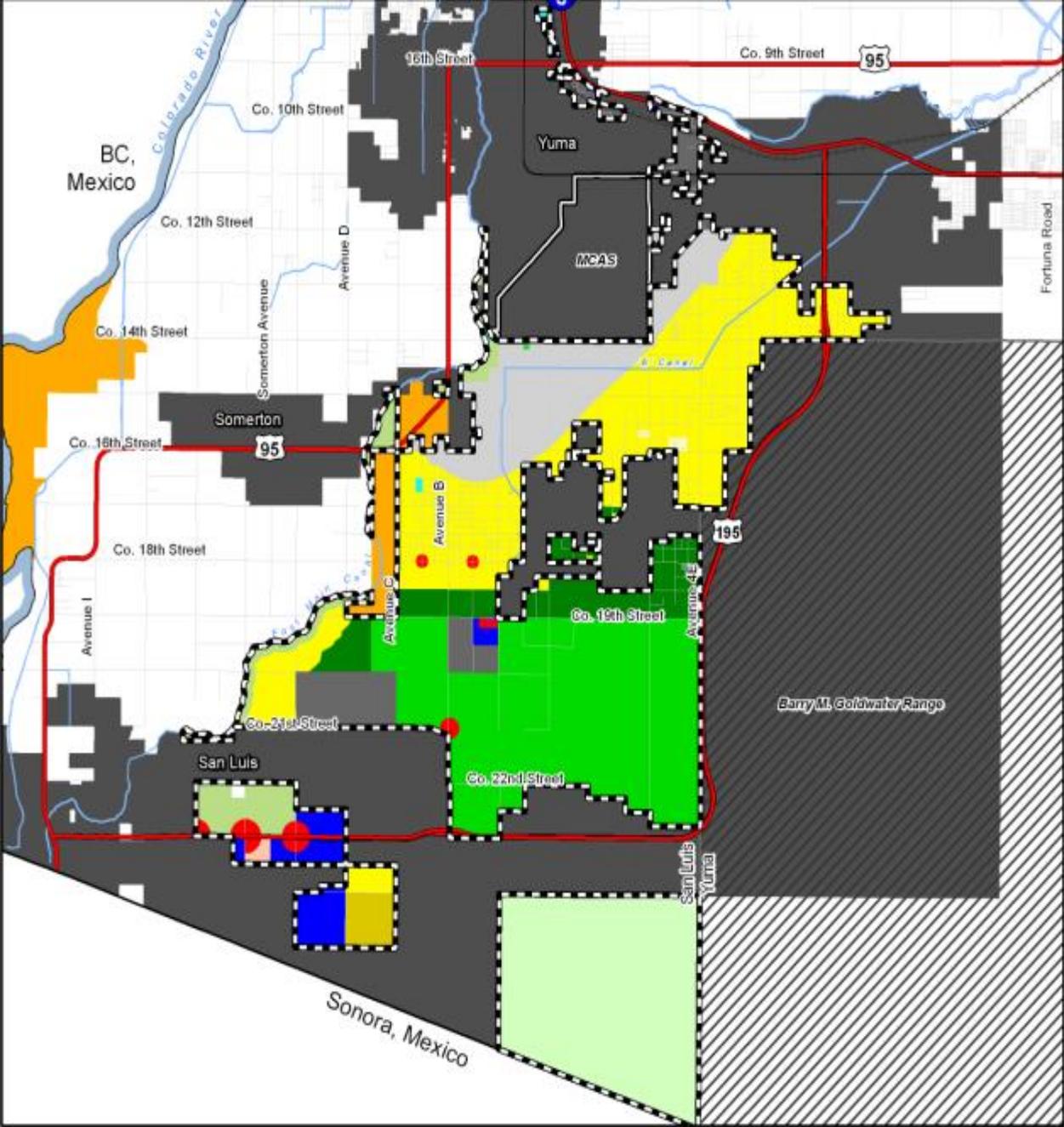
*Land Use Element*

<p>Regional Commercial (C-RC)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that allows for the full range of regional commercial activity. This designation is intended for large scale commercial enterprises that have region wide rather than a neighborhood customer base. Examples of this include the following:</li> <li>• Big box retail chains and other large retail stores;</li> <li>• High density business/office, wholesale trade, retail activities and commercial services;</li> <li>• Commercial building with a footprint larger than one acre.</li> </ul>
<p>Open Space &amp; Recreational Resources (OS/RR)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports undeveloped areas providing visual and psychological relief from man-made development.</li> <li>• Resort commercial development (such as but not necessarily limited to the following):</li> <li>• Resorts, hotels, theme parks, tennis or golf resorts or camps, water parks and slides, conference centers, golf courses, exotic animal parks, parks, zoos or amphitheatres;</li> <li>• Areas available for public visitation and recreation with or without developed facilities and associated businesses such as dude ranches, off-road vehicle parks or trails, horse riding academies, horse stables and campgrounds;</li> <li>• Very low density residential (5 acre homesites);</li> <li>• Continued agricultural use.</li> </ul>
<p>Sensitive Areas &amp; Resource Lands (SA-RL)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports areas that provide for opportunities for environmental conservation, maintenance and enhancement of ecological, aesthetic and/or cultural value:</li> <li>• Shall not be developed; Only publically owned land;</li> <li>• Wildlife, fishing and hunting areas;</li> <li>• Naturally hazardous areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Transportation, Communications, &amp; Utilities (TCU)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that allows utility administrative and operational sites which serve the community or public need, and to protect these sites from encroaching incompatible uses.</li> </ul>
<p>Public/Quasi-Public (P-QP)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designation that supports publicly owned and operated facilities or those devoted to public use by governmental and quasi-public or non-profit entities including schools, churches, hospitals, military installations, government buildings, etc.</li> </ul>

Land Use Element - North Gila Land Use Designations

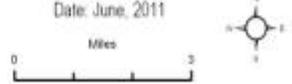


Map 16: Land Use Designation, North Gila Planning Area



Yuma Mesa Planning Area	Mixed Use Residential	Marine Corps Air Station Yuma
Agricultural / Rural Preservation	Low Density Residential	Indian Reservations
Agricultural / Rural Development	Rural Density Residential	Military Boundary
Agricultural / Rural Residential	Suburban Density Residential	Incorporated Areas
Agricultural/Industrial	Urban Density Residential	
Industrial	Open Space & Recreational Resources	
Business Park	Sensitive Areas & Resource Lands	
Local Commercial	Public/Quasi Public	

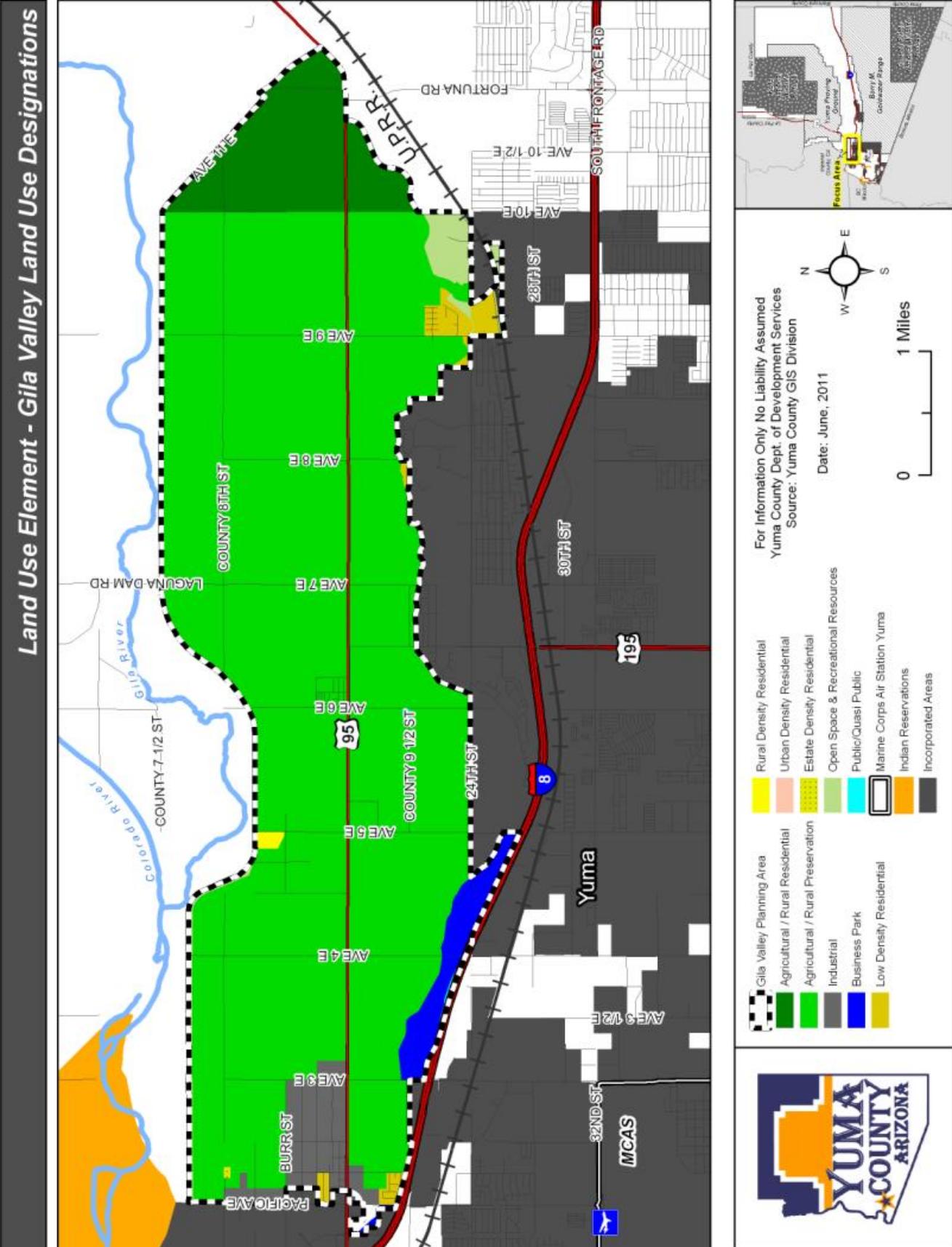
For Information Only No Liability Assumed  
 Yuma County Dept. of Development Services  
 Source: Yuma County GIS Division



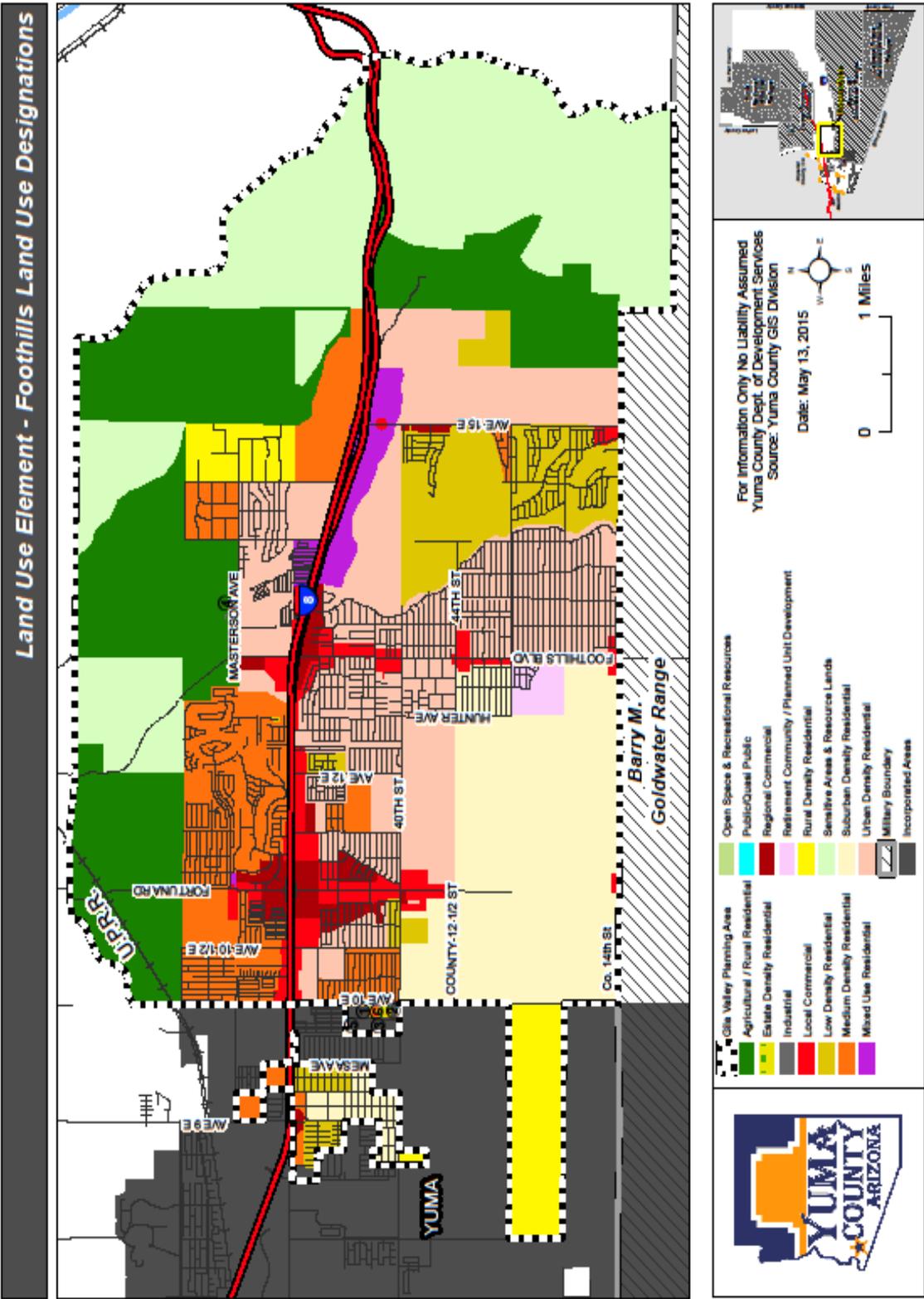
**Land Use Element - Yuma Mesa Land Use Designation**

Map 17: Yuma Mesa Planning Area Land Use Designations

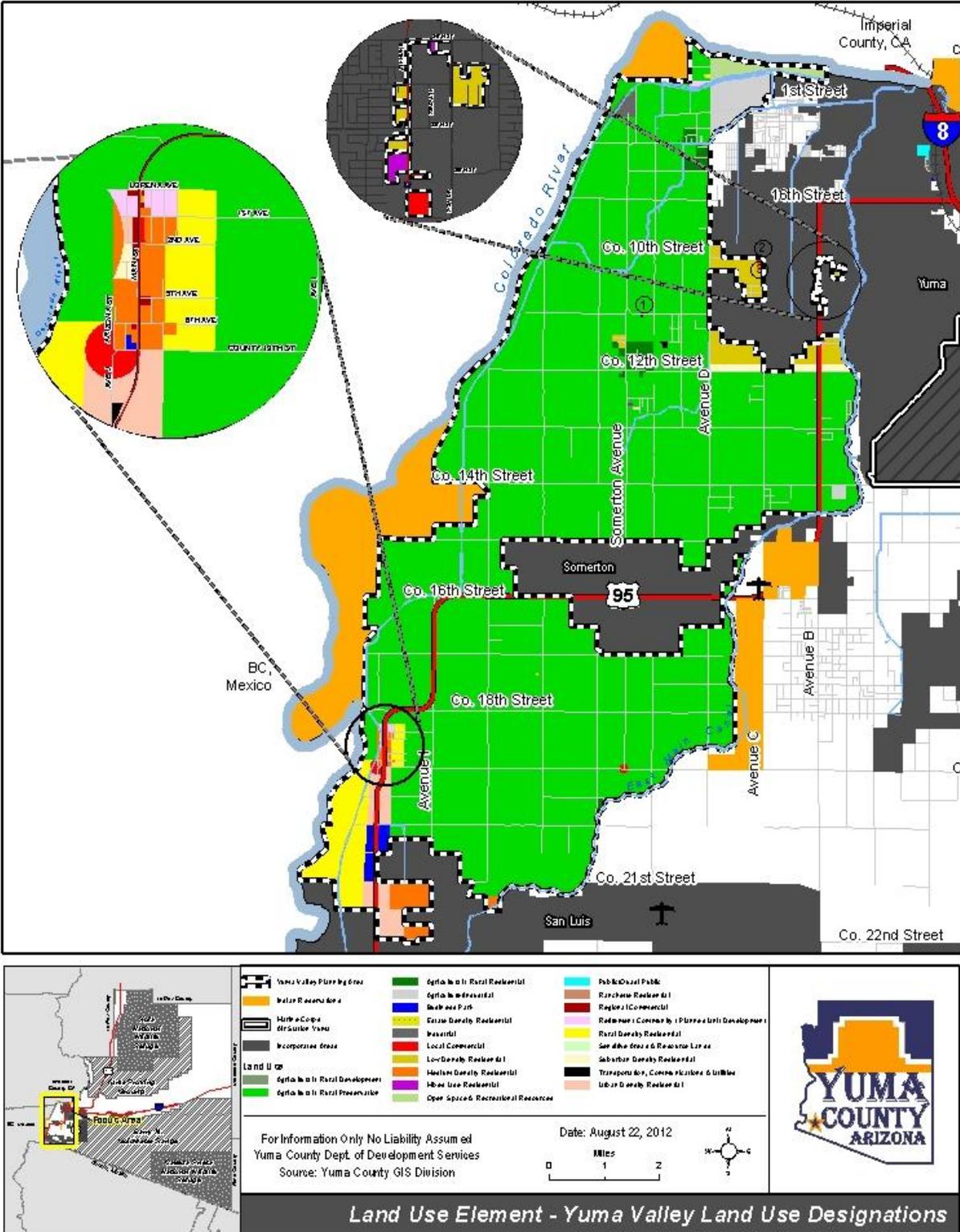




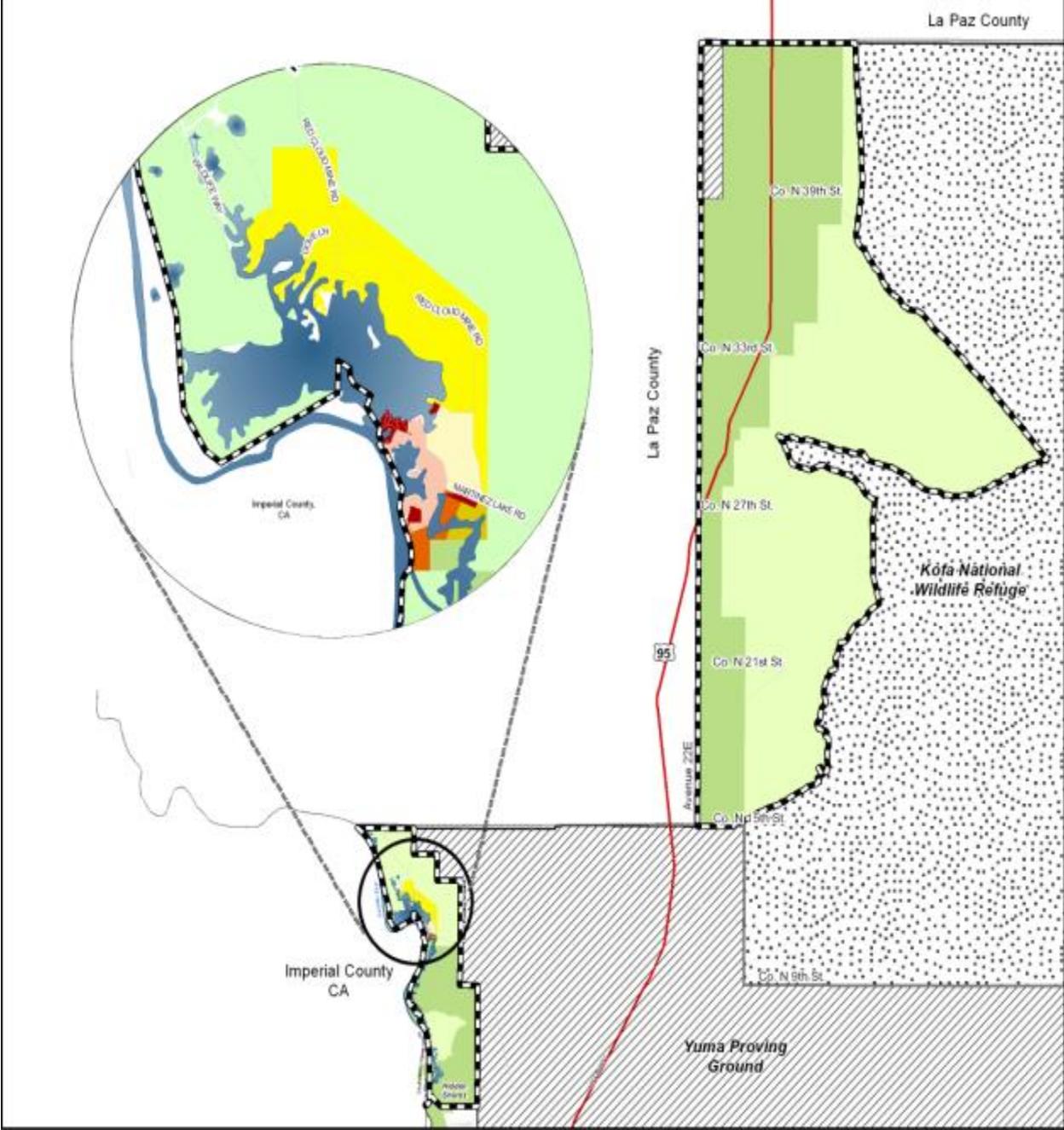
Map 19: Land Use Designation, Gila Valley Planning Area



Map 20: Land Use Designation, Foothills Planning Area



Map 21: Land Use Designation Yuma Valley Planning Area

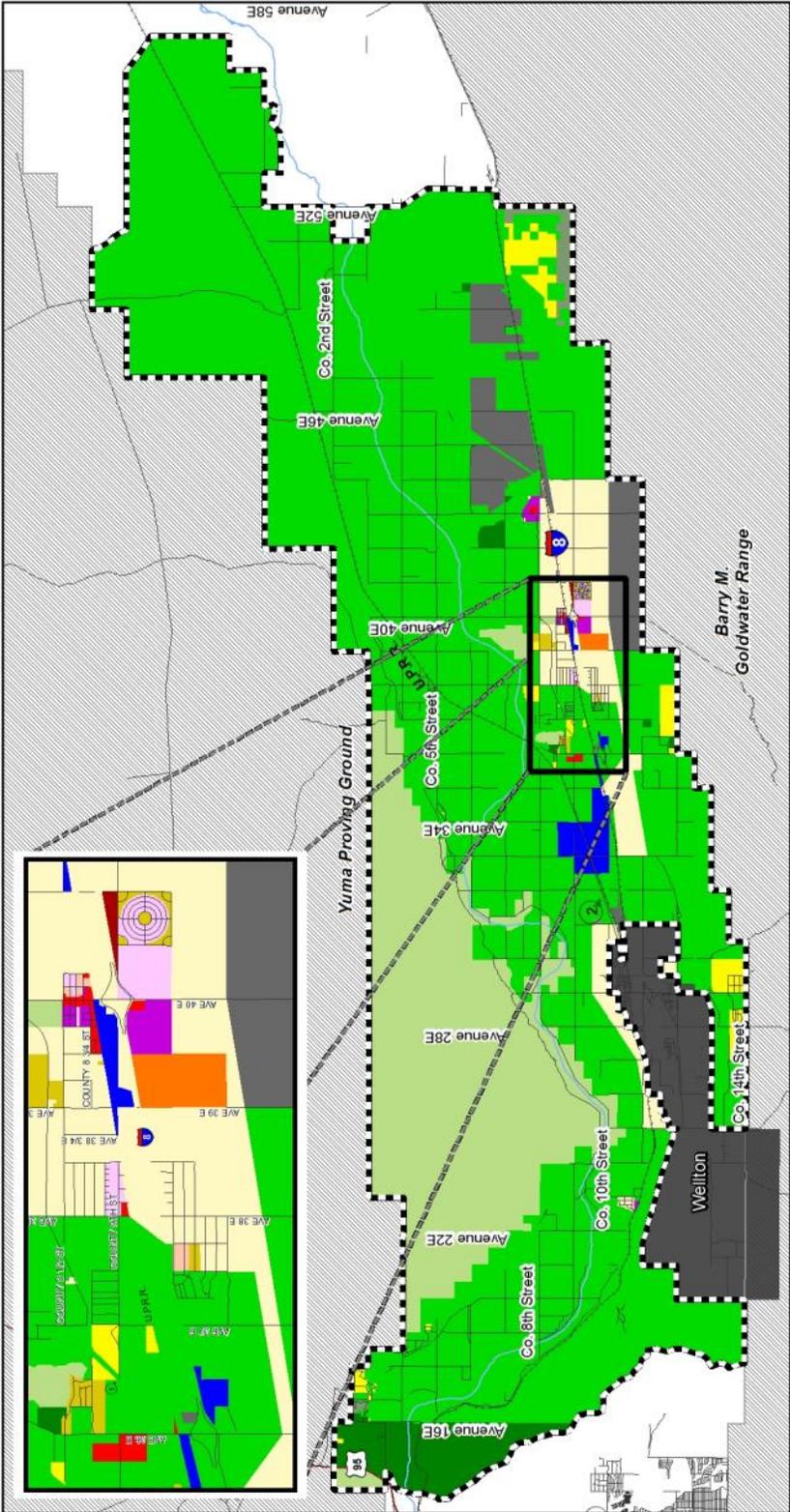


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Martinez Lake Planning Area</li> <li> Regional Commercial</li> <li> Low Density Residential</li> <li> Medium Density Residential</li> <li> Rural Density Residential</li> <li> Sensitive Areas &amp; Resource Lands</li> <li> Suburban Density Residential</li> <li> Urban Density Residential</li> <li> Open Space &amp; Recreational Resources</li> <li> Military Boundary</li> <li> National Wildlife Refuge</li> </ul>	
	<p>For Information Only No Liability Assumed              Yuma County Dept. of Development Services              Source: Yuma County GIS Division</p> <p>Date: June, 2011</p> <p>Miles              0 2 4</p>	

Land Use Element - Martinez Lake Land Use Designations

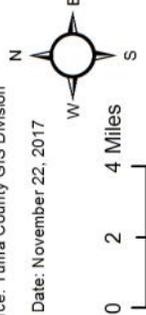
Map 22: Land Use Designation, Martinez Lake Planning Area

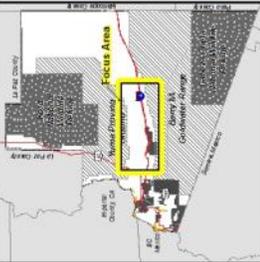
Land Use Element - Dome Valley/Wellton Land Use Designations





Date: November 22, 2017



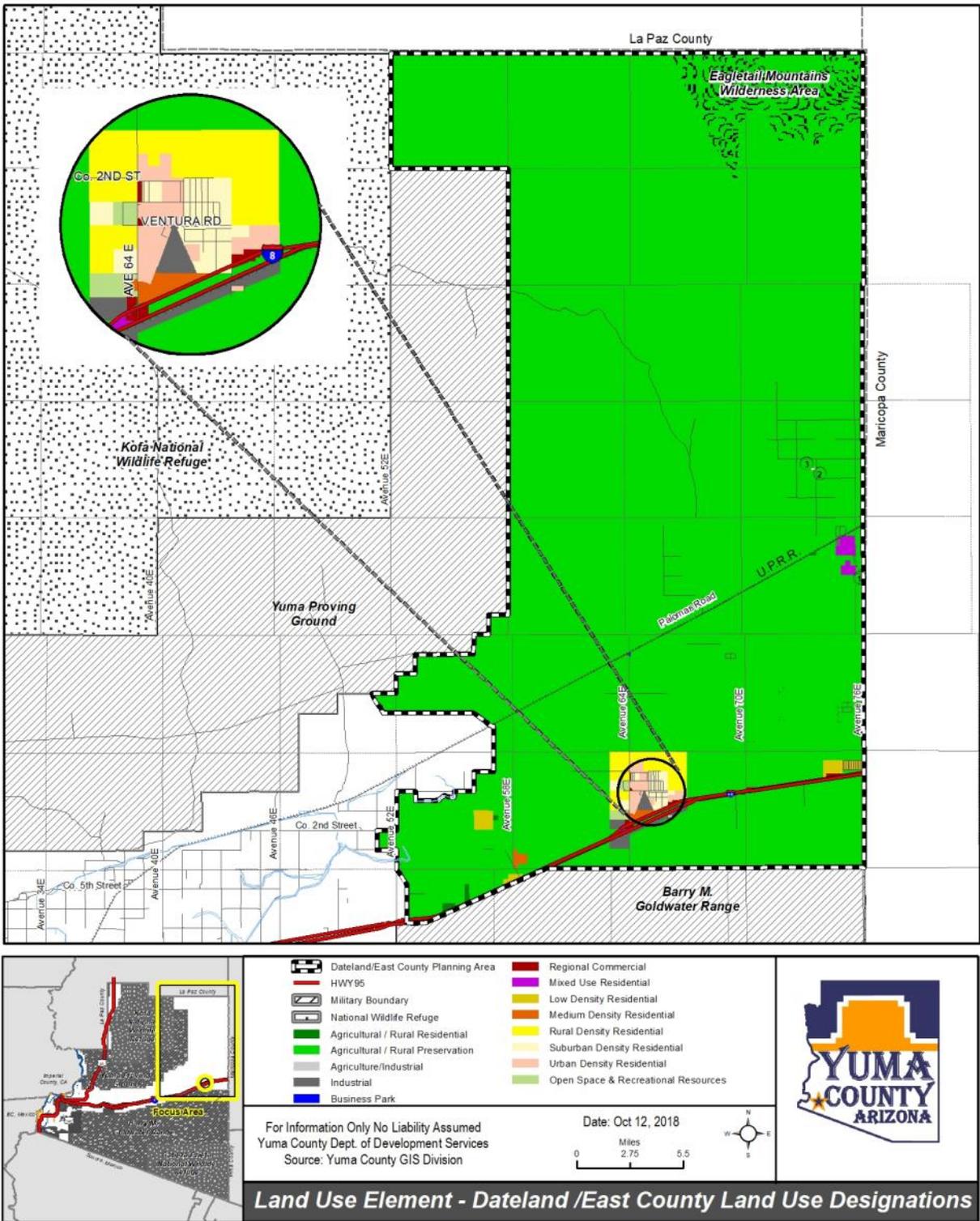


For information only No Liability Assumed  
 Yuma County Dept. of Development Services  
 Source: Yuma County GIS Division

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Dome Valley Planning Area</li> <li> Agricultural / Rural Development</li> <li> Agricultural / Rural Preservation</li> <li> Agricultural / Rural Residential</li> <li> Business Park</li> <li> Industrial</li> <li> Local Commercial</li> <li> Low Density Residential</li> <li> Medium Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Mixed Use Residential</li> <li> Open Space &amp; Recreational Resources</li> <li> Regional Commercial</li> <li> Retirement Community / Planned Unit Development</li> <li> Rural Density Residential</li> <li> Sensitive Areas &amp; Resource Lands</li> <li> Suburban Density Residential</li> <li> Transportation, Communications &amp; Utilities</li> <li> Urban Density Residential</li> <li> Military Boundary</li> <li> Incorporated Areas</li> </ul>
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Map 23: Land Use Designation, Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area

Map 23: Land Use Designation, Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area



Map 24: Land Use Designation, Dateland/East County Planning Area

Map 24 Land Use Designation, Dateland/East County Planning Area

### **3.3 Amendment Process and Criteria**

#### **Definition of a Major Amendment**

A major amendment is an amendment to the Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan that represents a substantial alteration of the county's land use mixture or balance as established in the Plan's land use element for that area of the county. A major amendment shall be required for any proposed project that is a substantial change to the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, the intent or direction of the Comprehensive Plan or represents a substantial alteration of the county's land use mixture and balance established by the Comprehensive Plan. The following criteria determines whether a proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is a major amendment.

#### **Slope**

Any proposed amendment on lands with 2/3 or more of the parcel net land area on a 12% slope is a major amendment.

#### **Traffic Capacity**

A proposed amendment is a major amendment if it would create a Level of Service (see below) of D, E or F on existing road or roads that will service the proposed amendment area. If such road is already rated at a D, E or F Level of Service, that proposed amendment is a major amendment if it further decreases the Level of Service (i.e. from D to E, D to F or from E to F)

#### **A. Level of Service:**

Level of Service (LOS) is the term used to describe the degree of traffic congestion on a roadway. The various Levels of Service which range from A to F are generally defined as follows:

- Level of Service A represents free flow.
- Level of Service B is in the range of stable flow but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable.
- Level of Service C is in the range of stable flow but marks the beginning of the range in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by others.
- Level of Service D represents high density but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted and the driver or pedestrian experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience.
- Level of Service E represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. All speeds are reduced to a low but relatively uniform value.
- Level of Service F is used to define forced or breakdown of flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount which can traverse the point.

**B. Deriving Level of Service:**

The proposed Level of Service is derived by applying traffic count and capacity data into the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{24 Hour Quarterly Traffic Count Report + Proposed Traffic Count Increase}}{\text{Road Segment Capacities (Vehicles per Day)}} \times 100\%$$

The resultant figure will fall within one of the following Level of Service categories:

- LOS A:** 0.0 to 0.5
- LOS B:** 0.51 to .63
- LOS C:** 0.64 to 0.76
- LOS D:** 0.77 to .88
- LOS E:** 0.89 to 1.0
- LOS F:** Greater than 1.0

**C. Road Segment Capacities:**

Road Type	2 Lane	4 Lane	6 Lane
Interstate		80,000	120,000
Principal Arterial		36,000	54,000
Minor Arterial		32,400	
Rural Major Collector		29,160	
Rural Minor Collector	13,120		
Urban Collector	14,580		
Local	10,800		

**Infrastructure Service Area Boundaries**

Any proposed amendment that would trigger a change in infrastructure service area boundaries pursuant to A.R.S. §11-826 is a major amendment. Permissive until a plan is prepared and regulations determined for said boundaries by the Planning and Zoning Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors through resolution.

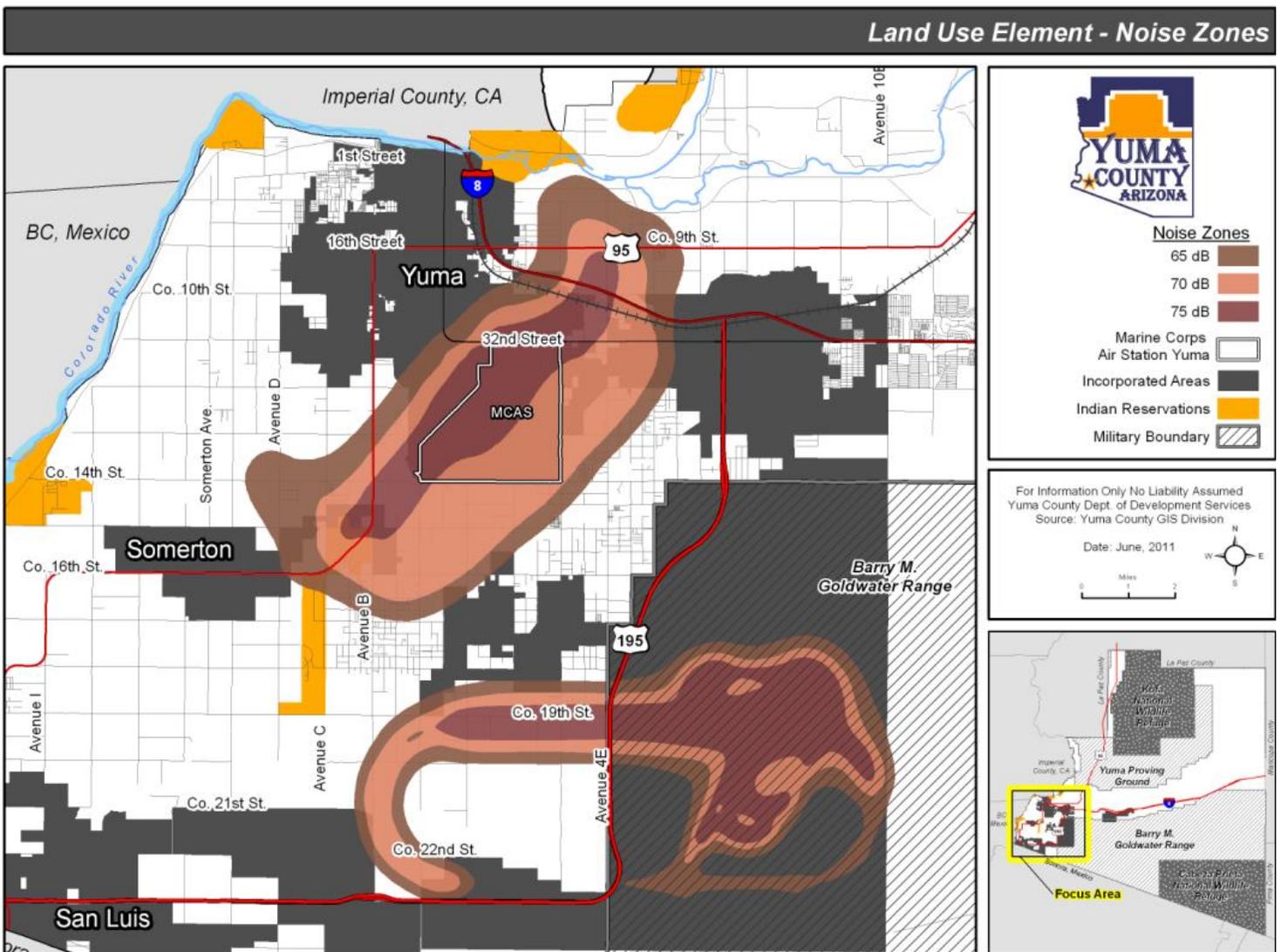
**Water Resources**

Any proposed amendment that would trigger inconsistency with the Yuma County 208 Water Quality Management Plan (Yuma County 208 Plan). The following actions are required to be consistent with the Yuma County 208 Plan:

- Build or expand a wastewater facility that discharges to surface water.
- Provide a grant or loan through the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA).
- Build or expand a wastewater treatment facility or disposal system with combined flows over 24,000 gallons per day (gpd) or some facilities with flows between 3,000–24,000 gpd.

### Yuma County Noise Exposure and Compatibility Overlay

Any proposed amendment that would trigger an increase in residential density or any other incompatible land uses and/or densities within the designated 65, 70 or 75 DNL (Day Night Level - average sound level over a 24 hour period) noise contours, as demonstrated in the Yuma County Noise Exposure and Compatibility Overlay Map. In accordance with A.R.S §28-8481, a proposed amendment that is located adjacent to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma/Yuma International Airport (MCAS-Yuma/YIA) or Auxiliary Airfield No. 2 (AUX-2) is a major amendment.



Map 25: Yuma County Noise Exposure and Compatibility Overlay Map

### **Major Change in Land Use Designation**

A major amendment is required if a proposed amendment meets any of the following additional criteria:

- Loss of more than 10 acres of agricultural land
- Potential increase of 157 or more dwellings than would be permitted under the existing land use designation
- Increase of more than 8 acres of commercial space
- Increase of more than 20 acres of industrial space
- Loss of any land designated as Sensitive Areas and Resource Lands
- Loss of any land designated Open Space and Recreational Resource Lands

**Major Amendment Process and Timeline**

<p><b>Application Intake</b> <i>January 1 to June 15</i></p>	<p>The deadline for submitting major amendment applications will be June 15<sup>th</sup>. Initial staff review will take place, maps will be generated and analysis will begin.</p>
<p><b>Planning and Zoning Commission Releases For Comment - July</b></p>	<p>The Commission will officially release the major amendments for a 60 day period for public comment. (Any change to the amendment after this date restarts the process the following year.)</p>
<p><b>Public Information and Participation Process</b> <i>60 Days</i></p>	<p>The public release by Commission action of the major amendments is the beginning of the Public Information and Participation Process (PIPP). As part of the PIPP at least one neighborhood meeting will be held for each major amendment. The PIPP will last for a minimum of 60 days.</p>
<p><b>Staff Report</b></p>	<p>A staff report is prepared by incorporating feedback which is gathered during the PIPP.</p>
<p><b>Legal Notice</b> <i>15 to 30 days prior to P&amp;Z Meeting</i></p>	<p>This requirement will be met by placing a display ad in the <i>Yuma Sun</i> newspaper. This ad will represent legal notice.</p>
<p><b>Special Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting</b> <i>Must occur at least 75 days after the P&amp;Z commission releases the amendments for comment)</i></p>	<p>A special session of the Planning and Zoning Commission will be held at which all major amendment applications will be heard.</p>
<p><b>Legal Notice</b> <i>15 to 30 days prior to Board of Supervisors Meeting</i></p>	<p>This requirement will be met by placing a display ad in the <i>Yuma Sun</i> newspaper. This ad will represent legal notice.</p>
<p><b>Special Board of Supervisors Hearing</b> <i>Prior to December 31 of the year the application was submitted</i></p>	<p>A special session of the Board of Supervisors will be held at which all major amendments will be heard. The meeting will take place no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year in which the applications were submitted. As per A.R.S.§11-824(C) passage of a major amendment requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the board.</p>
<p><b>Effective Date</b> <i>30 days after Board of Supervisors Approval</i></p>	<p>An approved major amendment does not take effect until 30 days after its approval. During this 30 day period it may be subject to a referendum as provided for in A.R.S. §11-824(C).</p>

**Definition of Minor Amendment**

A minor amendment is any amendment that does not meet the criteria to be defined as a major amendment. A minor amendment may be heard in conjunction with a concurrent rezoning application.

**Minor Amendment Process and Timeline**

<p><b>Application Intake</b> <i>Continuously</i></p>	<p>Applications for minor amendments are accepted on a continuous basis. An application for a rezoning that is dependent on approval of a minor amendment may be filed and heard jointly with a minor amendment.</p>
<p><b>Staff Report</b></p>	<p>A staff report containing analysis of the case and a staff recommendation will be prepared.</p>
<p><b>Legal Notice</b> <i>15 to 30 days prior to P&amp;Z Meeting</i></p>	<p>This requirement will be met by placing an ad in the <i>Yuma Sun</i> newspaper.</p>
<p><b>Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting</b> <i>6 to 8 weeks after application acceptance</i></p>	<p>A minor amendment will be scheduled for the earliest regularly scheduled Planning and Zoning Commission meeting that has available space on the agenda, allows for all required notification requirements to be met and completion of a staff report. A minor amendment will be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission approximately 6 to 8 weeks after it is accepted.</p>
<p><b>Legal Notice</b> <i>15 to 30 days prior to Board of Supervisors' Meeting</i></p>	<p>This requirement will be met by placing an ad in the <i>Yuma Sun</i> newspaper.</p>
<p><b>Board of Supervisors' Hearing</b> <i>6 to 8 weeks after the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting</i></p>	<p>A minor amendment will be scheduled for a Board of Supervisors hearing after the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. A minor amendment takes effect immediately upon approval by the Board of Supervisors.</p>

## **Criteria for Amending the Land Use Designation Maps**

Changing circumstances can lead to a need and/or desire to make changes to the land use element and the maps which are associated with it. For this reason the land use designation maps contained within the Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan can be altered through the major or minor amendment process.

When an amendment to change a land use designation map is submitted, it is judged on criteria contained in the *Yuma County 2020 Comprehensive Plan* to determine if the proposed change is an improvement to the land use pattern of the planning area and helps achieve or not run contrary to the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. In order for a proposed amendment to be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission with a staff recommendation of approval a proposed amendment must comply with all established criteria.

The following criteria are countywide criteria and apply to all portions of unincorporated Yuma County. They represent six overall policies on which consensus has been reached at a regional level.

- Coordinated and Compatible Planning
- Concentrated and Urban Development
- Military and General Aviation Preservation
- Valley Agricultural Preservation
- Industrial and Commercial Development
- Rural Development and Lifestyle Preservation
- Conservation of fish and wildlife populations, habitats, and associated recreation opportunities.

These six overall policies are shared by the cities of San Luis, Somerton, Yuma, the Town of Wellton and Yuma County and are reflected in the jointly developed and adopted *Yuma Regional Development Plan*.

The nine planning areas that comprise unincorporated Yuma County are extremely diverse. They range from an urbanized area that is comparable in size and scope to a mid-sized city, areas of intense and bountiful agricultural production, remote desert outposts, areas of two to five acre ranchettes, retirement communities and a community that is mostly composed of vacation homes. No single set of criteria could cover all land use needs, issues and desires of such a diverse group of areas. It is for this reason that the unincorporated portions of Yuma County are divided into nine planning areas. Each planning area represents a portion of unincorporated Yuma County that has common land use patterns and issues.

For each planning area a Citizen Advisory Group composed of planning area residents came to a consensus on what the land use pattern of the planning area should be established for, in addition to the countywide criteria, for future land use changes in that planning area. These planning area specific criteria will be used in conjunction with the countywide criteria in developing recommendations for proposed changes in land use designations. They are contained in the following subsection of this element.

**North Gila Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- NG.1:** Any future residential development needs to occur in a manner that is compatible with existing agricultural land use in the planning area and is consistent with the rural nature of existing residential development.
- NG.2:** No additional development should be allowed that would use County 6<sup>th</sup> Street east of Laguna Dam Road until County 6<sup>th</sup> Street is upgraded to provide safe and adequate access for both current and future uses.
- NG.3:** Prevent residential encroachment on existing industrial uses, particularly sand and gravel mining operations and provide for the expansion of such uses (sand and gravel mining operations) in the future.
- NG.4:** The Gila Gravity Main Canal which runs through the planning area is of vital importance to Yuma County as it provides water for agricultural and residential use for a large portion of the County. In order to protect this vital resource an adequate buffer should be established between the Gila Gravity Main Canal and any future development.
- NG.5:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- NG.6:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- NG.7:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Yuma Mesa Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- YM.1:** Retention of the planning area’s rural character and agriculture activity.
- YM.2:** In order to maintain the current agricultural compatible rural style of development and provide protection for military, land use designations that support lots two to five acres in size should be maintained.
- YM.3:** Commercial or industrial development should be limited in scope and compatible with the rural residential nature of the planning area.
- YM.4:** Consider water resource availability in all land use decisions and development proposals.
- YM.5:** Coordinate availability of irrigation water for residential and agriculture parcels with more than one acre in size.
- YM.6:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- YM.7:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- YM.8:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Northwest Yuma Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- NWY.1:** All new development should be consistent with the existing character of the planning area.
- NWY.2:** Expansion of commercial and mixed use activities along 8<sup>th</sup> Street between Avenue C and the Thacker Lateral Canal is desirable.
- NWY.3:** Economic development should be a key consideration when any decision regarding land use is made.
- NWY.4:** Restrict development along 5<sup>th</sup> Street to no more than one dwelling unit per acre.
- NWY.5:** Areas in the Avenue B&C Colonia that are currently designated Medium Density Residential would be more appropriately designated Low Density Residential.
- NWY.6:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- NWY.7:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- NWY.8:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Gila Valley Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- GV.1:** Properties along 8<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Pacific Avenue, should be kept agriculture or semi-rural so that future land uses are compatible with the surrounding environment.
- GV.2:** Limit commercial development to the Pacific Avenue commercial corridor between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Interstate 8. The transition of some land currently designated as industrial to commercial is acceptable.
- GV.3:** Land use designations should support existing residential densities, but not encourage expansion into areas and/or land currently being used for agricultural purposes.
- GV.4:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- GV.5:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- GV.6:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Foothills Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- F.1:** Expansion of commercial development beyond Fortuna Road, Foothills Boulevard and Frontage Road corridors.
- F.2:** Encourage the development of small business by providing an adequate supply of land classified for small scale commercial usage.
- F.3:** New residential development should be of a density that is compatible with the existing density of development in the Foothills area.
- F.4:** New residential development should occur in a manner that enhances park and recreation opportunities.
- F.5:** Future residential development should not cause the quality of life of Foothills residents to decline.
- F.6:** Residential development should not outpace the development of infrastructure to support it.
- F.7:** A lower density of residential development in the Foothills is desired.
- F.8:** The impact on water supply and sewage treatment systems will be specifically analyzed and taken into account when considering any future land use designation change.
- F.9:** Certain state and federal lands, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the Gila Mountains, should be preserved as open space.
- F.10:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- F.11:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- F.12:** Consideration given to the preservation of the BMGR.
- F.13:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

### **Yuma Valley Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- YV.1:** Areas in which rural style residential development has already occurred, such as in the Drysdale or Wall Lane areas, will be supported by land use designations that do not significantly expand or intensify existing residential usages.
- YV.2:** No change in land use designation shall be supported unless it is demonstrated that the infrastructure needed to support any future development that would result for the new land use designation will be in place.
- YV.3:** Commercial and/or industrial corridors along transportation corridors are supported with particular emphases on Highway 95 running through Gadsden.
- YV.4:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- YV.5:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- YV.6:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

### **Martinez Lake Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- ML.1:** During the process to approve new development in the Martinez Lake area, Yuma County will require developers to assure that adequate sewer service or another acceptable alternative means of wastewater treatment is provided, will ensure that there is sufficient capacity to adequately serve the new development and the additional load will not degrade service to existing residents.
- ML.2:** Low-lying marshy areas along Martinez Lake should be left in a natural state.
- ML.3:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- ML.4:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- ML.5:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Dome Valley/Wellton Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- DVW.1:** Limited, planned residential growth and development in the area is supported. However, the preservation of the traditional local agricultural industry and feed lots, as well as the enhancement of its productivity, is critical. New residential and Industrial growth should not encroach on existing agricultural activities in a manner to create a detrimental impact to either use.
- DVW.2:** Industrial growth should be encouraged to take place in a manner that is complimentary with surrounding land use and infrastructure.
- DVW.3:** Clustering of industrial development will be encouraged in order to take advantage of economies of scale and reduce the demand for new infrastructure improvements.
- DVW.4:** Lands contiguous to the Gila, Mohawk or Muggins Mountains shall be considered for preservation of open space if the land in question is owned by a government agency or the private land owner consents to such a designation.
- DVW.5:** Encourage appropriate buffers to mitigate conflicting land uses, including between aggregate mining and residential land use.
- DVW.6:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.
- DVW.7:** Provide protection along the BMGR boundary with limited residential development.
- DVW.8:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wildlife habitats.

**Dateland/East County Planning Area Policies and Priorities**

- DEC.1:** Economic development will be a key consideration when considering any future change in land use designations.
- DEC.2:** Promote the construction of solar or wind power plants.
- DEC.3:** New residential development should occur in proximity to existing residential development.
- DEC.4:** Land use designation should promote viable levels of agricultural production and encourage the development of an aquaculture industry.

**DEC.6:** Pursuant to state law, preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development.

**DEC.7:** Encourage the conservation and enhancement of open space and sensitive wild-life habitats.