

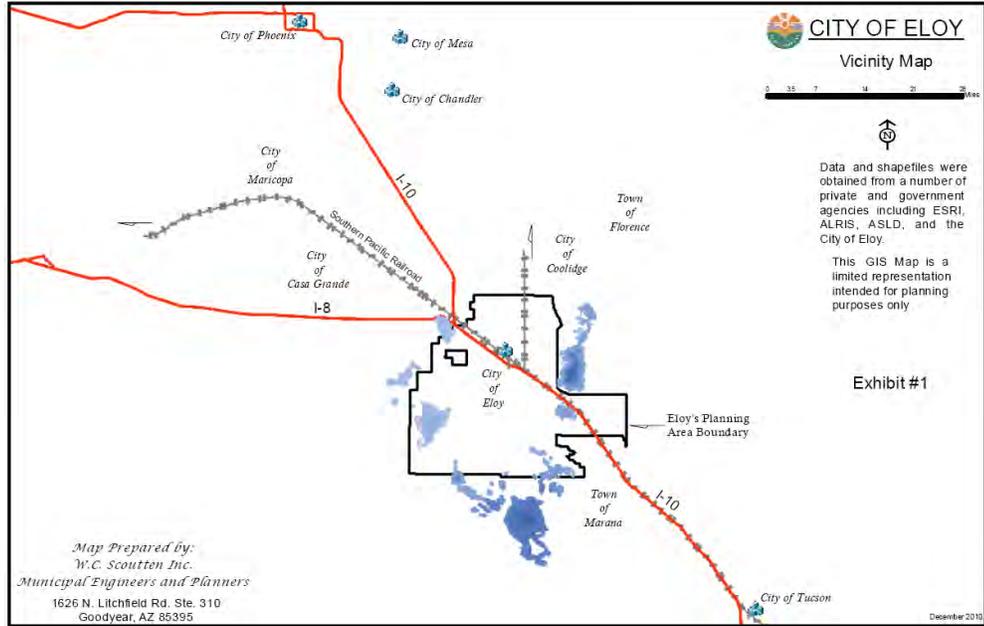
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Eloy has a bright and prosperous future that is being planned and directed by the goals, objectives and policies contained within this General Plan. The City's unique history, geography, and citizen's vision of the future were used in tandem with State requirements and public participation to update the General Plan.

All pertinent text from the previous General Plan was retained. This document includes new and updated information, new text, and modified structure and information from the previous plan adopted in 2001.

1.1 CONTEXT

The City of Eloy is located in central Pinal County along Interstate 10 (I-10) approximately halfway between the Cities of Phoenix and Tucson. The City's topography is relatively flat throughout the majority the Planning Area except in the south boundary (Picacho Peak and Indian Head Mountain), northwest corner (Casa Grande Mountains), and along the eastern boundary (Picacho Mountains) where Newman Peak is located. There are large expanses of desert land and open fields with sparse development used for agriculture and ranching scattered through the City and the Planning Area.



1.2 HISTORY

The area surrounding the City began to carry the name of Eloy when a railroad switchyard was constructed by the Southern Pacific Railroad to connect Tucson to Casa Grande in 1902. Sixteen years later (1918) during the period at the end of World War I three men, W.L. Bernard, J.E. Meyer and John Alsdorf purchased land with the idea to call the area Cotton City. After they purchased the land, they subdivided it and began growing

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT



1.2 HISTORY



cotton. An application was made in 1919 to establish a post office at which time the City founders favored the name 'Cotton City'. However, this name was rejected by the Postal Service and the name 'Eloy' was chosen instead.

Historically, the City's economy has been largely dependent upon agriculture. In fact, during harvest time, the City's population could temporarily swell to three times the year-round population. The City of Eloy is part of the Santa Cruz Basin which is one of Arizona's most fertile soil and agricultural areas with more than 100,000 irrigable acres.

More recently, the City's economy has diversified, with over three-quarters of its businesses and nearly half its employment now in the industrial, wholesale/retail trade, and service sectors.

The City of Eloy officially incorporated in 1949 and was home to approximately 4,700 residents. The Toltec area was annexed in 1965, increasing the City's incorporated area to 11 square miles. By 2000, the City had increased in size to 71 square miles and approximately 10,375 residents. This growth has continued and as of July 2009 the City of Eloy had a population of approximately 19,005 people, 109 incorporated square miles and 542 square miles within its Planning Area.

Eloy's Historic Battle

When the Civil War began in 1861, Union Troops were withdrawn from many of the western territories. Soldiers near Tucson opened up their supply depots prior to leaving and told the civilians to "take what you need, and get out." Many settlers and civilians did not follow this advice since they had staked their wealth and lives on the prosperity of the southwest.

The Confederate Army marched into the Rio Grande Valley, which was part of the New Mexico Territory. After securing the area, they sent a detachment to Tucson. The commander of the Confederate detachment was Captain Sherrod Hunter.

As the Confederate threat in California subsided, Brigadier General James H. Carleton led a detachment of approximately 1,400 Union soldiers, called the California Column from Fort Yuma to march on Tucson.

By early April 1862, the California Column had reached an area near present day Casa Grande. Detachments were dispatched to reconnoiter the area and the final route into Tucson.

Sensing an ambush, the Union Cavalry were split into two groups, one of which circled the base of the Picacho Mountain as a precaution.

FACT OR LEGEND?

Legend has it that the name Eloy came from a railroad employee who glanced out the window and said "Eloi" which is a Spanish reference to the biblical phrase "Eloi, Eloi,, Lama Sabachthani?" meaning "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

-Barnes, Will C.;
Granger, Byrd (ed.)
Arizona's names:
X marks the place,
c1983 (pg.226)

Eloy's Historic Battle

Hunter's men had set up an ambush near Picacho Peak.

The Confederates opened fire immediately wounding two Union troops. At this time, the second Union force flanked Hunter's men and captured three of the Confederate soldiers. Emboldened by this minor victory, Union Lieutenant James Barrett ordered the Union soldiers to advance forward. The remaining Confederate Cavalry fired a heavy barrage which killed and wounded four more Union soldiers. Lieutenant Barrett was among those killed.

The battle lasted approximately ninety minutes at which point the remaining Union soldiers withdrew and returned to the main column.

The Confederate detachment in Tucson withdrew shortly after and returned to the Rio Grande Valley as they continued to be outnumbered and were too far from the main army to receive regular supplies and reinforcements.

This battle has been reenacted annually and has been an exciting event for the City. While the battle's original participants only numbered about two dozen, the event has typically drawn approximately 200 reenactment participants.

Local Attractions

Fifteen miles north of Eloy, in the City of Coolidge, is the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument. This monument is the largest and tallest Hohokam structure known to exist. The structure was constructed in 1350 A.D., is four stories in height and covers approximately 427-acres.

Other attractions and recreational areas include the Picacho Reservoir which provides fishing and bird watching opportunities, Picacho Peak State Park, Pinal County Fairgrounds, the Ocotillo Raceway motocross racetrack and Skydive Arizona, the largest skydiving drop zone in the world.

1.3 CITY GOVERNMENT

The City of Eloy was created by the local citizens, primarily for the purposes of self-determination, representation, and improvement to their quality of life. Local government was tasked with providing a wide range of services to meet the needs of the citizens and businesses located within the community. Typically, these services are not provided by the private sector, underscoring the need for local government. Services currently provided by the City of Eloy include police protection, water/sewer, trash/landfill, roadways, court, library, planning and development, parks and recreation and general administration, among others.



Local Attractions

1.3 CITY GOVERNMENT



The City of Eloy has, and continues to, improve the quality of life and the sustainability of the community by developing and enforcing policies related to economic development, land use and transportation planning, open space, environmental preservation, and other important and sensitive issues. City leaders and staff listen and report the ideas, comments and opinions of the public to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council to ensure that the community's health, safety, and welfare is protected without infringing on the rights of individuals. The City of Eloy has an elected mayor and six elected council members, as well as, a City Manager appointed by the City Council.

In order to provide services to the City's residents and businesses, the City uses revenues from a variety of sources including taxes, user fees, and licenses. There are several other revenue sources that are provided to the City through external sources, such as state and federal transfers. Similar to private businesses, it is critical that the local government's revenues and expenditures are effectively managed to maintain a long-term balance. In fiscal year 2008-2009, the City of Eloy's total budget included approximately \$95 million (most of which was a "pass-through" from Immigration and Customs Enforcement to Corrections Corporation of America).

1.4 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this 2009 General Plan Update is to provide the local community with a comprehensive approach to guide future development in the community. It applies to all land within the City's incorporated boundary and the surrounding Planning Area, includes all subjects related to the community's development, and extends over a maximum 10-year timeframe. The General Plan identifies the community's goals, as well as, the policies and implementation measures necessary to achieve these goals.

Over the past 26 years, the City has grown significantly in terms of population and economic activity. Approximately twenty years have now passed since the first General Plan was drafted and adopted by the City Council. During the last several years, numerous issues have signaled the need for another update to the Eloy General Plan. The City's most recent General Plan dates from 2001. In addition, numerous other plans, focusing on specific subjects or areas, have been prepared subsequent to the General Plan. The State of Arizona adopted legislation, known as Growing Smarter and Growing Smarter Plus, requiring all growing cities to adopt or substantially revise their General Plans. In the case of Eloy, the most recent update to the General Plan was adopted by the City Council in December, 2001. The General Plan Update was then voted on and ratified by a majority of its citizens in May 2002.

1.4 BACKGROUND

At the end of 2009, the City of Eloy was approximately 111 square miles in size. At full buildout Eloy has the potential to exceed a population of 1.2 million people.

1.5 USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is intended to be used by all members of the community, as well as, others interested in the City’s future. The key to using the General Plan is the understanding that while some of the objectives within the Plan may not be achievable in the near term, they are intended to guide the community’s future development.

The remainder of the General Plan is divided into 12 functional sections, or “elements.” Each element shares a common format, beginning with general overarching Goals, followed by the Purpose of the Element, the City's Existing Character and Discussion sections, with the Objectives section as the final section within each Element and establishes the City’s recommended direction. A map (if appropriate to that element) is attached following each Element. The maps graphically depict the intent of the Objectives. Finally, a matrix is provided after all Element chapters that combines both the objectives and action recommendations which will support the elements' near-term implementation.

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