COCHISE COUNTY

Comprehensive Plan CP 2045



Adopted XX/XX/XXXX

COCHISE COUNTY Arizona

Thanks



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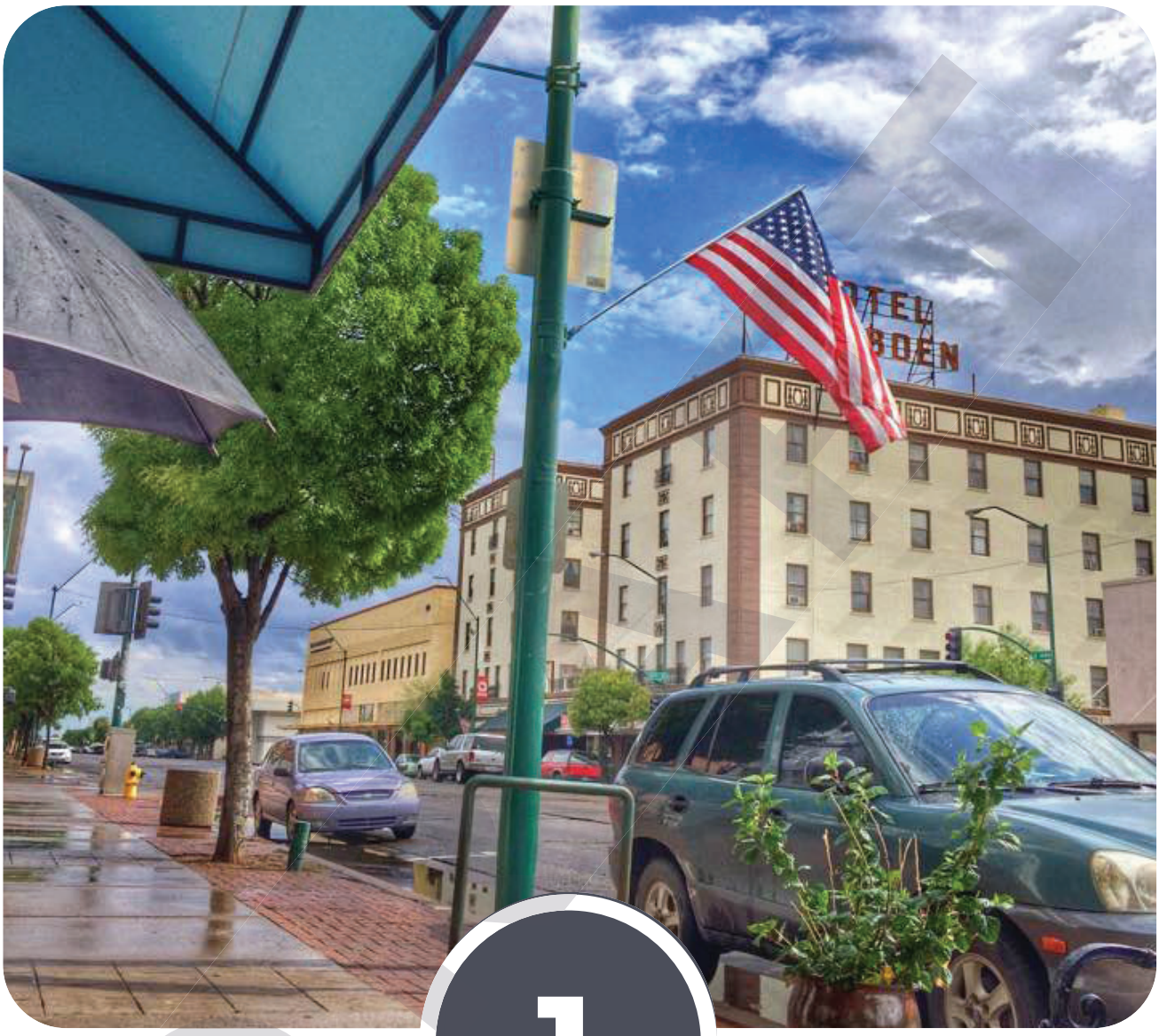
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INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

ABOUT COCHISE COUNTY

Cochise County encompasses the southeastern corner of Arizona. It is bordered on the east by New Mexico, on the west by Pima and Santa Cruz Counties, on the south by the Mexican state of Sonora, and on the north by Graham and Greenlee Counties. Municipalities include Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Sierra Vista, Tombstone, Willcox, and Huachuca City. The county also comprises the Sierra Vista–Douglas Metropolitan Statistical Area.



Cochise County covers approximately 6,219 square miles—roughly the size of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined—making it the eighth largest county in Arizona. Elevation ranges from 3,580 feet in the valleys to nearly 10,000 feet in the mountain ranges, producing a moderate climate with distinct seasons. With about 14 inches of annual rainfall, Cochise is one of the wetter areas in Arizona. Precipitation varies widely by location and year, and drought and climate variability influence long-term water availability and planning. Its diverse topography includes unique "sky islands," mountain ranges surrounded by desert basins that support extraordinary biodiversity. More than 335 species of birds, 82 species of mammals, and 47 species of amphibians and reptiles thrive in the county.

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OUR PAST

Early and Indigenous History: The history of Cochise County stretches back at least 13,000 years to the time of the Clovis people, hunters of extinct mega fauna. Indigenous peoples have lived in, traveled through, and maintained cultural and spiritual ties to this region from time immemorial and continue to do so today, including Apache groups. The San Pedro Valley contains one of the highest concentrations of Clovis archaeological sites in North America. Large portions of the county were homelands and use areas of Indigenous tribes and tribal nations, and some landscapes and natural resources (e.g., the San Pedro watershed) remain culturally and religiously significant under tribal and federal law.

Indigenous and Territorial History: Indigenous groups, including the Apache, have long maintained enduring cultural ties to the region. In the 19th century, conflicts between Apache tribes, settlers, and the U.S. Army culminated in the Apache Wars (1861–1886). Chief Cochise, from whom the county takes its name, and later Geronimo, led resistance until their eventual surrender. During this period, multiple army forts, including Fort Huachuca, were established.

Railroad History: The Southern Pacific Railroad, built in 1880, accelerated settlement and economic development by linking mining towns to regional and national markets.

Military History: In 1882, "post" Huachuca was officially re-designated as a "fort." In 1913, Fort Huachuca became the base for the 10th Cavalry Regiment, known as the "Buffalo Soldiers," an African American unit. After a brief closure post-World War II, the fort was reactivated during the Korean War and later became a center for electronic warfare and communications. In 1967, it became the headquarters of the U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command, now known as NETCOM. Fort Huachuca was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1976, recognizing its pivotal role in the Apache Wars and as the site of the Buffalo Soldiers. Fort Huachuca remains the largest military installation and economic engine in Arizona serving a prominent role in national defense missions.[1]

County Origins: Cochise County was officially created on February 1, 1881, when it was annexed out of the eastern portion of Pima County. The first county seat was Tombstone. Beginning in 1929, the county seat was moved to Bisbee, where it remains to this day.

Cochise County's location along the U.S.–Mexico border and proximity to New Mexico and other Arizona counties places it at the crossroads of trade, migration, and cultural exchange. It is an active participant in regional planning through the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO) and engages in cross-border collaborations related to water, environment, and economic development.

[1] U.S. Army Fort Huachuca. "History of Fort Huachuca." U.S. Army. Accessed January 3, 2025. https://home.army.mil/huachuca/about/history.

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HISTORICAL LAND USE DEVELOPMENT



BEFORE ~1500 CE
INDIGENOUS:

Indigenous peoples have lived in the region for millennia, with settlement and land use shaped by water availability (e.g., the San Pedro River corridor) and including hunting, gathering, trade, and localized agriculture.

1500–1854
SPANISH & MEXICAN PERIODS

The region was part of Spain's northern frontier (1500s–1821) and later Mexico (1821–1854), with travel routes and settlements influenced by the San Pedro Valley and ongoing interaction among Indigenous communities and settlers.

1854–1880
U.S. TERRITORIAL ERA:

After the 1854 Gadsden Purchase (Arizona Territory in 1863), ranching expanded and early mining and military activity shaped settlement and transportation routes.

1880–1910
RAILROAD & MINING GROWTH:

The Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in 1880, accelerating trade and settlement. Mining spurred growth in communities including Tombstone (silver) and Bisbee (copper), along with supporting infrastructure.

1910-1950
SMELTING, AGRICULTURE, AND PORTS

Douglas grew as a major copper smelting center, while irrigated agriculture expanded where groundwater was accessible (including the Sulphur Springs Valley). Border crossings formalized and expanded, including Naco (1900) and Douglas (1933).

1950-1980
MILITARY & SUBURBAN GROWTH:

Fort Huachuca's postwar reactivation supported growth in Sierra Vista and surrounding areas, while many rural areas remained low density.

1980S- PRESENT
DIVERSIFICATION:

The economy diversified beyond mining and ranching to include defense-related activity, tourism/outdoor recreation, retirement migration, viticulture, and small business development.

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OUR FUTURE

Cochise County's future is tied to strategic investments that strengthen the local economy, support residents, and enhance cross-border trade. A centerpiece of this growth is the development of a new, dedicated commercial Port of Entry in Douglas, paired with the modernization of the existing Raul H. Castro Port of Entry—originally built in 1933 and expanded in 1993. Together, these projects represent a major expansion of port capacity and are expected to:

- Improve safety, security, and efficiency for both commercial and non-commercial traffic.
- Reduce congestion in downtown Douglas and minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
- Generate millions of dollars in annual revenue and create hundreds of new local jobs.
- Boost demand for housing, education, and local services, strengthening the community's economic base.

Alongside this, Cochise County's economy continues to benefit from major employers such as Fort Huachuca, healthcare providers, agriculture, and mining, with emerging opportunities in critical minerals and renewable energy.

By leveraging its ports, military presence, natural resources, and infrastructure investments, Cochise County is positioning itself for responsible growth, enhanced quality of life, and stronger local employment, while maintaining its unique rural character.



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REGIONAL CONTEXT

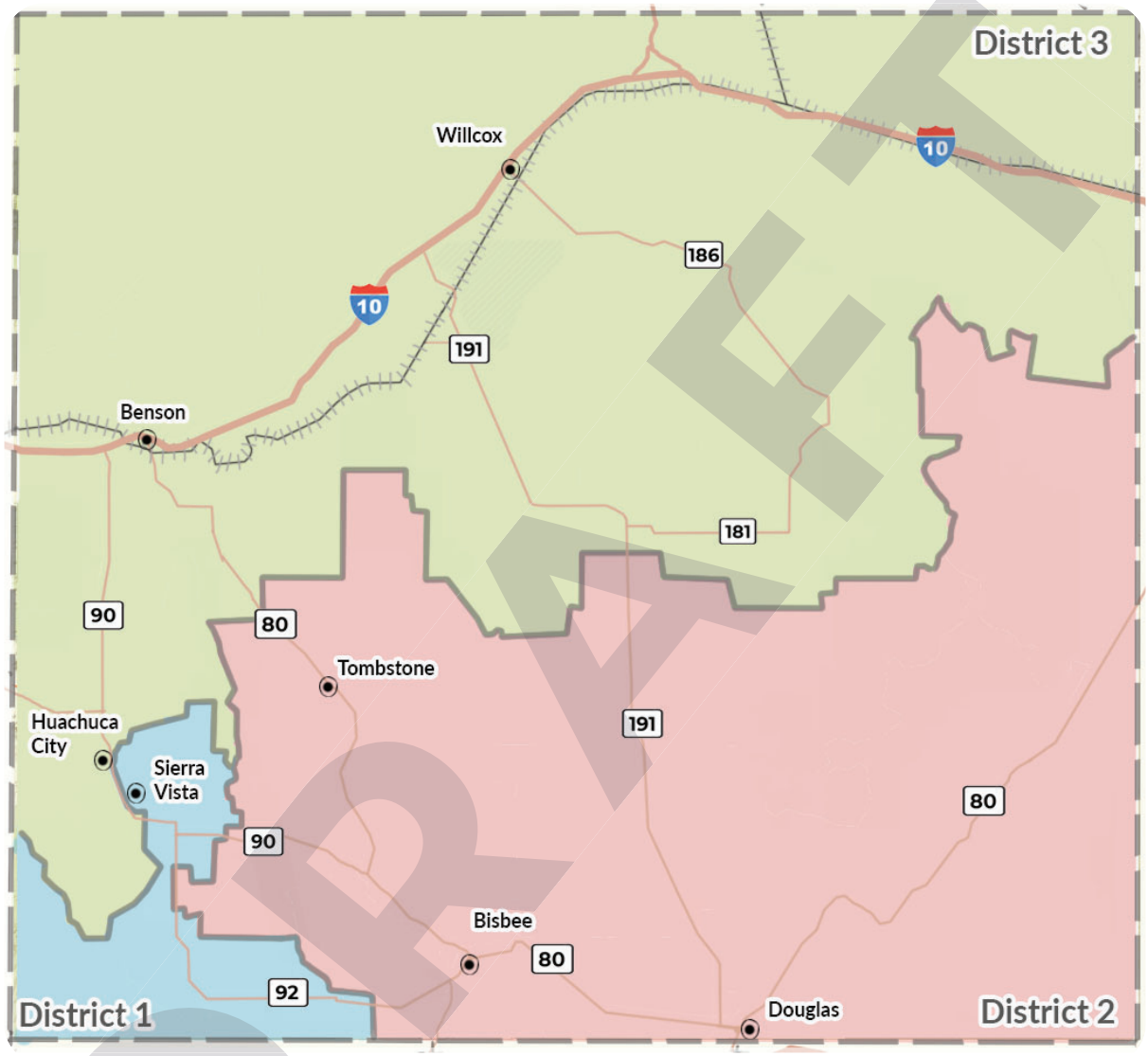


Cochise County borders the state of Sonora Mexico, New Mexico, as well as the Arizona counties of Santa Cruz, Pima, Graham, and Greenlee

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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MAP 1: SUPERVISOR DISTRICTS



District 1
District 2
District 3

In Arizona, county governments are run by a Board of Supervisors, which serves as the governing body. The Board oversees county operations, manages budgets, enacts policies, and ensures compliance with state and federal laws. The number of supervisors varies by county population, with most counties having five supervisors, except for counties with small populations like Cochise County, which has three.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

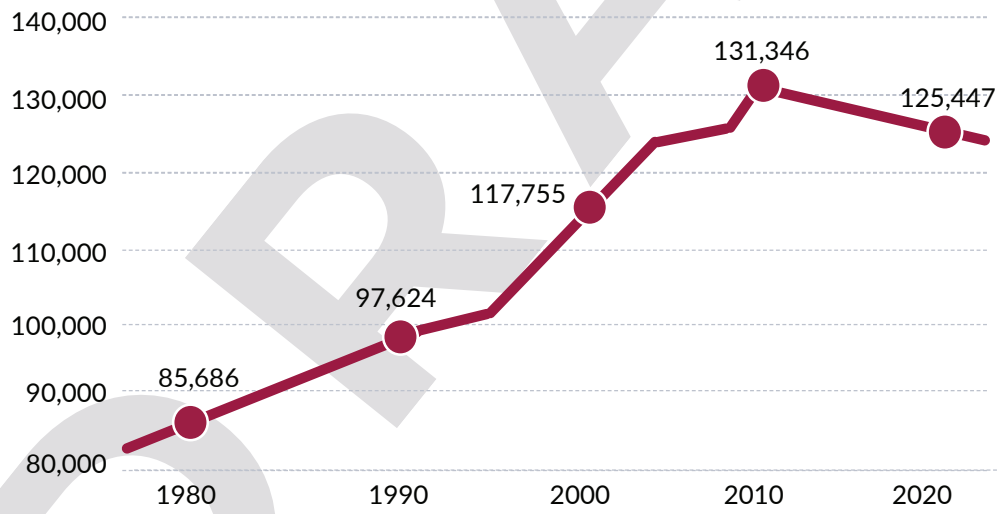
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COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Unless otherwise noted, information regarding demographics is taken from the American Community Survey (ACS). A decennial census is required by the U.S. Constitution. Consequently, every 10 years since 1790, Congress has authorized the government to conduct a national census of the U.S. population. The primary function of the decennial census is to provide counts of people for the purpose of congressional apportionment.

In every census between 1940 and 2000, two questionnaires were used to collect information: a "short form" with only basic questions such as age, sex, race, and ethnicity and a "long form" with the basic short-form questions plus additional questions on social, economic, and housing characteristics. Following the 2000 Census, the long form was replaced by the ACS. The ACS is a nationwide, continuous survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely social, economic, housing, and demographic data every year. While there is a margin of error of at least 10% of each total value, analyzing ACS information allows us to measure the changing social and economic characteristics of Cochise County.[2]

Figure 1: Population Growth Trends[3]



Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Cochise County, overall, declined by 4.49%.

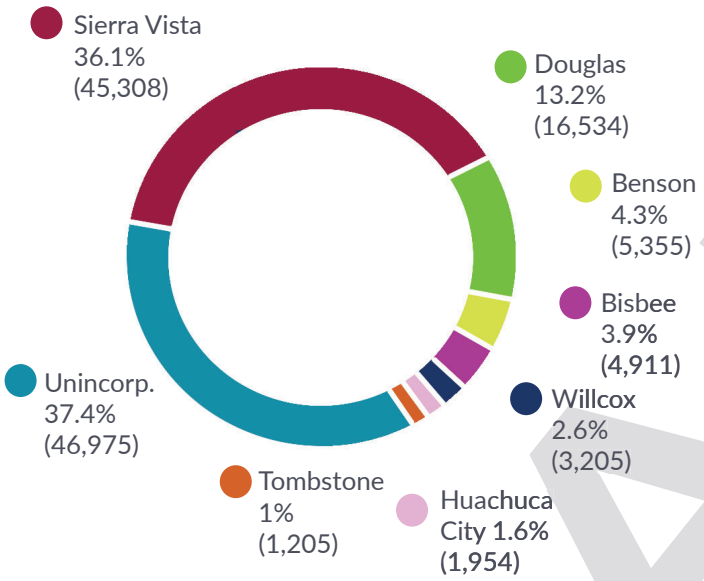
[2] (U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) 9. Differences between the ACS and the Decennial Census. Website: Census.Gov. https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/acs/acs_general_handbook_2020_ch09.pdf.)

[3] U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

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COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 2: Population by Municipality [3]



In terms of population, nearly three-quarters (73.2%) of Cochise County residents either live in unincorporated Cochise County or Sierra Vista. The remaining 26.5% of the population lives in one of the six other municipalities.

Figure 3: Gender of Residents [3]



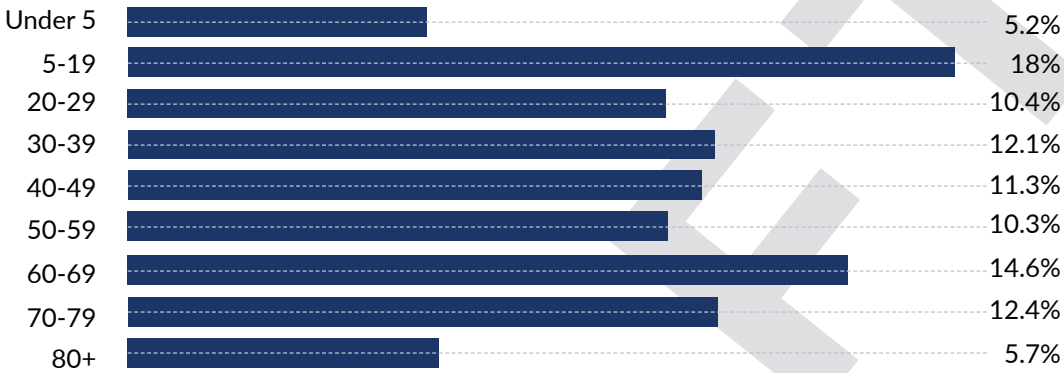
The proportion of males to females in Cochise County is comparable to statewide percentages. However, the number of males is a little higher in the County when compared to the nationwide average of 49%.

[3] Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

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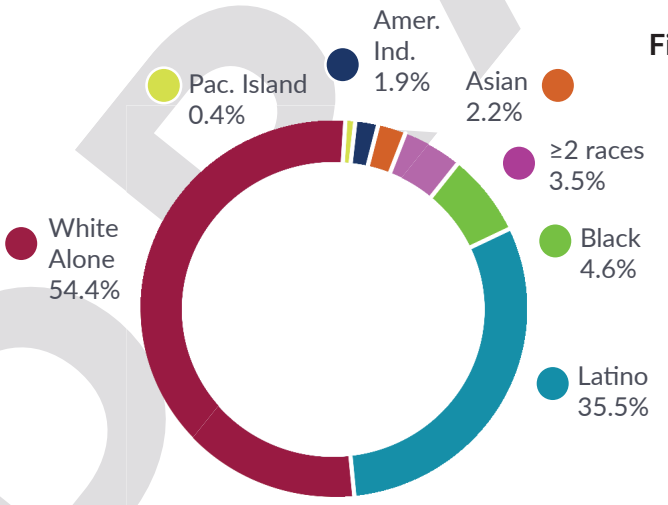
COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 4: Age of Residents [3]



The median age of Cochise County residents is 44. This is 10% higher than the statewide average of 39.3. Minors (individuals under the age of 18) make up 20% of the county population.

Figure 5: Race & Ethnicity [3]



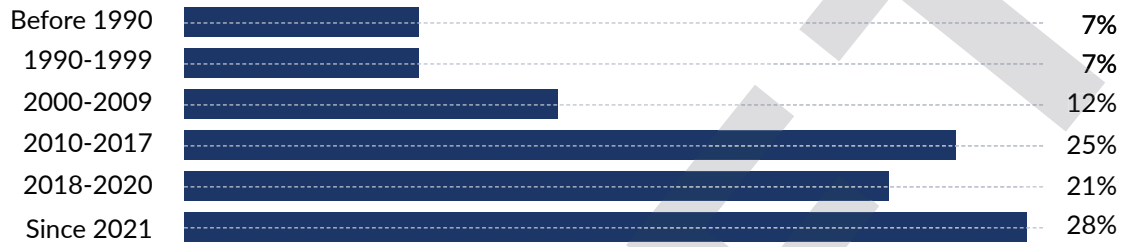
Cochise County's latino population is 10% higher than the state average and 1.5 times higher than the national average.

[3] Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

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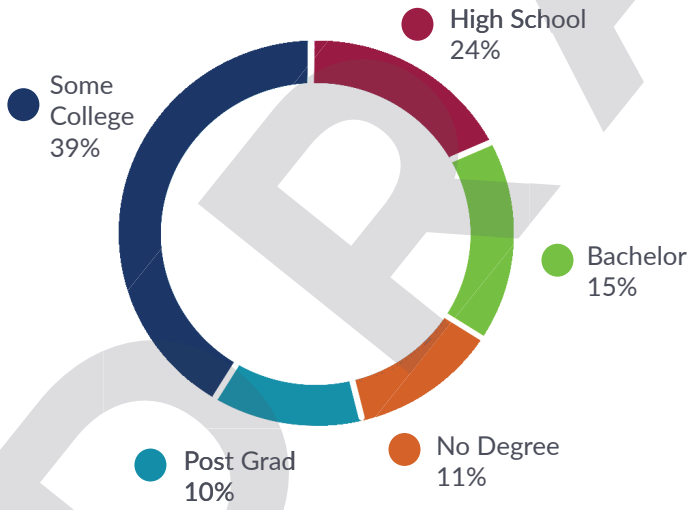
COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 6: Year Moved to Cochise County [3]



Cochise County shows a somewhat higher rate of recent residential mobility and a smaller share of long-term residents than state and national averages. This pattern may be influenced in part by relocations connected to Fort Huachuca.

Figure 7: Educational Attainment [3]



The percent of high school graduates or higher in Cochise County is 88.9%, which is similar to the statewide percentage.

[3] Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

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DEMOGRAPHIC STRENGTHS

Cochise County has many demographic strengths that can be leveraged for future economic development. Some of the more significant strengths are as follows:



- Racial and ethnic diversity: As shown in Figure 5: Race & Ethnicity, over one-third (35.8%) of county residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. This diversity can provide bilingual workforce advantages and contribute to our cultural richness.
- Educated workforce: Approximately one-quarter of the population has a bachelor's degree of higher. This is a healthy pool of skilled and well-educated workers for employers
- Veteran presence: Approximately 18.6% of county residents have veteran status. This is more than double the state or federal rate. Veterans bring leadership experience, specialized training, and teamwork skills to organizations.

DEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS

The demographic information presented in this chapter highlights several key implications for policy and planning, including:

- **Need for physically accessible housing units and additional healthcare facilities:** Cochise County's population is older than Arizona's average and our population is aging.
- **Need for economic diversification:** As shown in Figure 17: Employment by Sector, a large percent of Cochise County residents are employed, either directly or indirectly, by some level of government. In comparison, manufacturing and construction employment is low. This lack of economic diversification makes the county reliant on defense-related spending by the federal government, which can fluctuate significantly.
- **Need for affordable housing and economic**

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DEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS

development initiatives: Affordable housing and economic development remain pressing needs in Cochise County, where the median household income is $52,025—well below Arizona's $77,315—and the poverty rate (15.9%) exceeds the state average of 12.5%.

- **Need for infrastructure to support population growth:** In addition to traditional infrastructure, like roadways and water, access to broadband is also needed to attract remote workers, support businesses, and improve education access.
- **Need for strategies to attract and retain long-term households:** The county shows a somewhat higher rate of recent movers and a smaller proportion of long-term residents compared to state and national averages. This mobility—partly influenced by relocations associated with Fort Huachuca—may affect community cohesion, school enrollment stability, and workforce retention. To help strengthen stability, the county could support neighborhood-based programs, expand partnerships with schools and employers to better integrate new residents, and encourage housing and economic development strategies that attract and retain long-term households.
- **Need for youth retention programs and strategies to counter out-migration:** Like many rural counties, Cochise faces challenges in retaining younger residents. An aging population combined with limited opportunities for younger cohorts may result in future workforce shortages. Programs that strengthen career pathways and enhance quality-of-life amenities will be key to encouraging youth to remain in the county.
- **Need to address health disparities and improve healthcare access:** Higher poverty rates and an aging population increase the need for accessible healthcare services, mental health resources, and elder care—particularly in rural or under-served areas. Addressing these disparities will be vital to improving community well-being.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cultural & Strategic Assets: Cochise County's rich heritage and border location support opportunities in tourism, trade, and conservation.
- Demographic Shifts: An aging, diverse, and mobile population increases demand for affordable housing, healthcare, and workforce stability.
- Community Values: Residents prioritize rural character, water security, and balanced economic growth.

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PURPOSE & STATE LAW ALIGNMENT

Under Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. §11-804), counties are required to adopt a comprehensive plan to guide physical, social, and economic development. The plan provides a long-term policy framework that promotes orderly growth, balances resource management, and supports community well-being. Specific purposes include:

- Guide future land use, housing, transportation, and infrastructure.
- Balance growth with conservation of water, open space, and natural resources.
- Support economic diversification and resilience.
- Enhance community health, safety, and quality of life.
- Engage residents and stakeholders in shaping their shared future.

This plan includes all elements required by A.R.S. §11-804 for counties with more than 125,000 persons, specifically land use, circulation, water resources, and energy. It also incorporates optional elements such as open space and public participation to provide a more comprehensive framework. The plan supports regional and statewide objectives for economic development, sustainability, and housing and reflects current conditions—including drought and climate variability—that affect long-term water availability and resilience planning.

VISION

The vision for Cochise County 2045 is to secure a vibrant, resilient, and inclusive future by preserving the county's unique rural character, encouraging appropriate economic growth, and ensuring the efficient use of natural resources.



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

County staff initiated the drafting of this update in the fall of 2024, concurrently implementing a comprehensive public engagement process to ensure the plan reflected community values and priorities.

Key engagement activities included:

- Project Website: Served as a central hub for project information, schedules, maps, FAQs, and online surveys.
- Community Surveys: Multiple surveys collected input on housing, water, land use, transportation, and economic development. A detailed summary of survey responses, participation metrics, and public comments is provided in Appendix 2.
- Public Meetings and Workshops: A series of in-person meetings allowed residents to discuss priorities, ask questions, and provide direct feedback to staff. These meetings complemented the online engagement, reaching participants who preferred face-to-face interaction.
- Public Review of Draft Plan: The draft plan was placed on public inspection via the project website and at designated County locations, allowing residents to provide feedback prior to adoption.

ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

The community survey highlights resident priorities and concerns that inform this Comprehensive Plan. Overall, respondents value quality of life but see challenges regarding housing, infrastructure, water, and economic opportunity.

Quality of Life: Most respondents were satisfied with the quality of life but feel it has either declined or remained stagnant compared to ten years ago.

Land Use/Rural Character Preservation: There are concerns about urban sprawl and how to preserve the rural character.

Housing Preferences: There is high demand for affordable housing, single-family homes, and off-grid housing options. There are mixed opinions on incentivizing higher-density



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ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

developments.

Transportation: There are concerns about the condition of roads, with maintenance of paved and dirt roads ranked as top priorities. Most respondents depend on private vehicles to get around, but there is a desire for better bike paths, sidewalks, and public transit options.



Water: Significant concerns about water availability and quality, especially given the prevalence of private well reliance. There is strong interest in stricter water conservation measures for industrial users and water infrastructure improvements.

Economic Development: There is interest in small business development, though barriers like startup costs and lack of commercial space are significant. There are calls for modern amenities to support new business and economic diversification.

Environment: There is notable opposition to large-scale agriculture and industrial projects perceived as harmful to water resources and the environment. Conversely, there is strong support for smaller-scale energy projects, such as decentralized residential solar power, as well as for broader conservation efforts.

Recreation and Public Lands: Respondents report frequent use of public lands and trails but request improved access, amenities, and protection from overuse or commercial exploitation.

SURVEY BIAS: Surveys are a valuable tool for gathering insights, understanding community perspectives, and informing decision-making. However, it is important to acknowledge that survey results may be influenced by self-selection, status quo preferences, or socially desirable responses that align with perceived norms rather than their true feelings.

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LAND USE & GROWTH ELEMENT

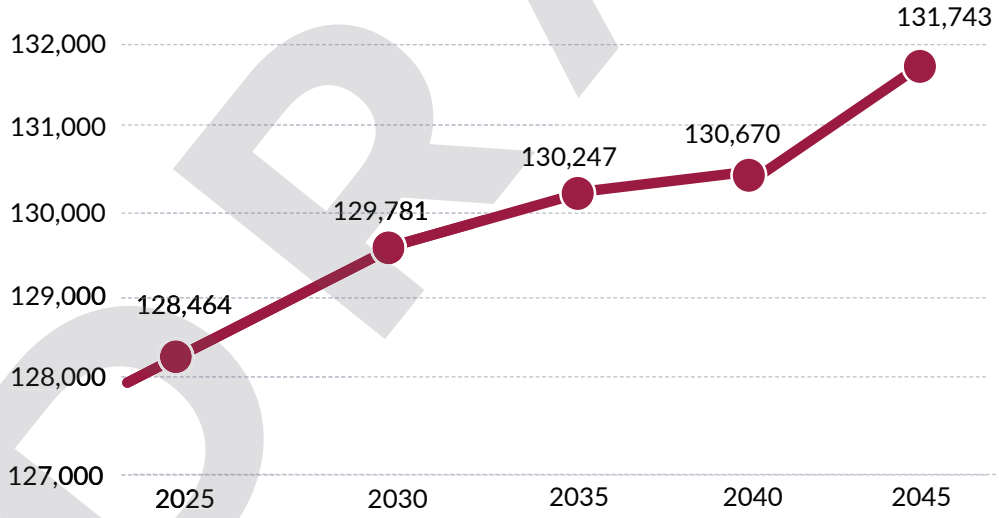
PURPOSE

The Land Use Element, required by A.R.S. § 11-804(A)(2), provides policies and guidelines for the location, type, and intensity of land uses in Cochise County. Its purpose is to promote orderly growth, protect natural and cultural resources, and support the community's general welfare. The element incorporates environmental and cultural considerations and, where applicable, accounts for military installation influence areas to ensure compatible development.

This element addresses all land use categories required by state law—including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, open space, and public/institutional uses—through the county's seven Land Use Designations: Developing, Enterprise, Enterprise Redevelopment, Neighborhood Conservation, Neighborhood Rehabilitation, Rural Residential, and Rural. Table 2: Density & Character defines the intended scale, pattern, and character of development within each designation, while Table 3: Land Use and Permitted Zoning links designations to compatible zoning districts, ensuring alignment between the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations.

GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Figure 8: Population Growth Projections [4]



Cochise County's population is expected to experience modest growth, averaging an annual growth rate of approximately 0.27%. In contrast, Arizona's overall population is projected to grow more rapidly, with an average annual growth rate of about 1.1%.

[4] Office of Economic Opportunity. Population projections. Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity website. Accessed February 13, 2025. https://oeo.az.gov/population/projections

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GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Based on projected population growth, Cochise County anticipates modest increases in residential and commercial land demand, which will be accommodated primarily within existing communities and designated Growth Areas. Detailed estimates of future housing and employment land needs are provided in the Housing and Economic Development Elements.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

In Cochise County, land use and growth are guided by Growth Area Categories and Land Use Designations. All unincorporated areas are classified into four Growth Area Categories—A, B, C, and D—based on development patterns, infrastructure, land use density, economic role, and growth potential. These categories indicate current and anticipated development intensity, helping to prioritize resources and guide planning. They are illustrated on the Growth Areas Categories Map, a key policy tool for steering development consistent with county goals and community values.

To provide more detailed guidance, the Comprehensive Plan includes seven Land Use Designations—Developing, Enterprise, Enterprise Redevelopment, Neighborhood Conservation, Neighborhood Rehabilitation, Rural Residential, and Rural—which describe the intended character of land areas, including residential, commercial, industrial, and open space uses. These designations are mapped countywide and aligned with zoning regulations to ensure consistency and enforceability. Proposed changes to land use



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LAND USE FRAMEWORK

or density require an amendment request demonstrating compatibility with current and future conditions.

Master Development Plans (MDPs) provide a site-specific, coordinated framework for large or complex developments. Once adopted by the Board of Supervisors, an MDP supersedes the existing Growth Area Category and Land Use Designations for the property, allowing a customized approach that reflects development needs and community priorities. Area Plans provide localized, advisory guidance for communities or regions, refining growth categories and land use designations to address community character, infrastructure, transportation, open space, and economic development.

Note: Land use policies are coordinated with the Circulation and Water Resources Elements to ensure that growth areas are supported by adequate roads, water, and public facilities, aligning land development with long-term capital investments.

GROWTH AREA CATEGORIES

The growth categories in Cochise County provide a framework for understanding how different areas function and evolve. By considering factors such as development patterns, infrastructure, land use, economic role, and growth potential, these categories help planners, the commission/board, and the community anticipate needs, prioritize investments, and ensure that development occurs in ways that support community character and long-term sustainability.

CATEGORY A

Purpose: Areas adjacent to or surrounding cities with full urban services, suitable for high-density development.

Criteria:

1. Located next to or surrounded by an incorporated city; potential for annexation exists.
2. Served by a combination of community sewer, water, and fire protection.
3. Average residential lot size < 1 acre.
4. Supports countywide commercial and other non-residential services.
5. Streets and development meet urban standards (e.g., paved roads, limited outdoor storage, asphalt parking).
6. Adequate drainage, transportation, schools (K–12), and recreational facilities exist or are planned.

CATEGORY B

Purpose: Transitional areas between urban and rural zones, experiencing moderate growth.

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GROWTH AREA CATEGORIES

Criteria:

1. Moderate residential or non-residential development.
2. Functions as a transition between urban and rural areas or has a distinct community identity.
3. Adequate water, sewage, drainage, and road access to support medium-density development.
4. Residential lot sizes generally ≤ 1 acre, increasing toward edges; smaller lots have sewer/water access.
5. Improved arterial or collector streets can accommodate limited non-residential uses.
6. Opportunities exist to preserve open space, washes, or recreational areas.

CATEGORY C

Purpose: Small, slower-growing communities that maintain rural character while accommodating modest growth.

Criteria:

1. Development is clustered in small settlements on varied lot sizes.
2. Roads are mostly unimproved; paving may be required as growth occurs.
3. Farming and ranching are common nearby.
4. Non-residential uses serve local agricultural needs or pass-through visitors.
5. Typically supports K–8 schools.

CATEGORY D

Purpose: Outlying rural lands with low-density development and extensive open space.

Criteria:

1. Low-density residential development on large lots.
2. Unimproved roads and minimal



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GROWTH AREA CATEGORIES

infrastructure.

3. Agricultural production or other rural land uses dominate.
4. Non-residential uses are limited to local services, tourism, or intensive uses unsuitable for urban areas that can be accomidated by existing or planned infrastructure capacity and reliable water availability (e.g., power plants, feedlots).
5. May accommodate future master-planned communities with proper infrastructure.

In areas adjacent to major public lands, wilderness areas, or national monuments, discretionary development review should consider gateway-community character, wildlife connectivity, watershed health, dark skies, and scenic resources.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Building on the framework provided by the growth categories, Cochise County uses Plan Designations to provide more detailed guidance for smaller areas within each growth category. While Growth Categories define the general function, character, and growth potential of broad areas, Plan Designations help guide zoning decisions, subdivision standards, and development approvals to ensure that land uses are compatible with the surrounding community and infrastructure. In practice, the Plan Designations work together with the Zoning/Land Use Compatibility Table to translate the intended character of an area into specific zoning districts and permitted uses, providing clarity and predictability for property owners, developers, and the community. By applying these designations, county planning staff and decision-makers can anticipate needs, prioritize investments, and manage development in ways that reinforce community character and long-term sustainability.

Cochise County recognizes the following seven Plan Designations:

1. **DEVELOPING (DEV)** – Areas in transition with a mix of residential, business, industrial, or agricultural uses.
   - Periodically reviewed for potential re-designation.
   - Found in Growth Categories A, B, or C not meeting other designation criteria.
2. **ENTERPRISE (ENT)** – Areas with established commercial or industrial uses where future development should follow the existing pattern.
   - Supported by adequate infrastructure and public access.
   - Limited residential growth is encouraged.
   - Found in Growth Categories A, B, or C.
3. **ENTERPRISE REDEVELOPMENT (ER)**

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LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

– Existing commercial or industrial areas undergoing redevelopment.

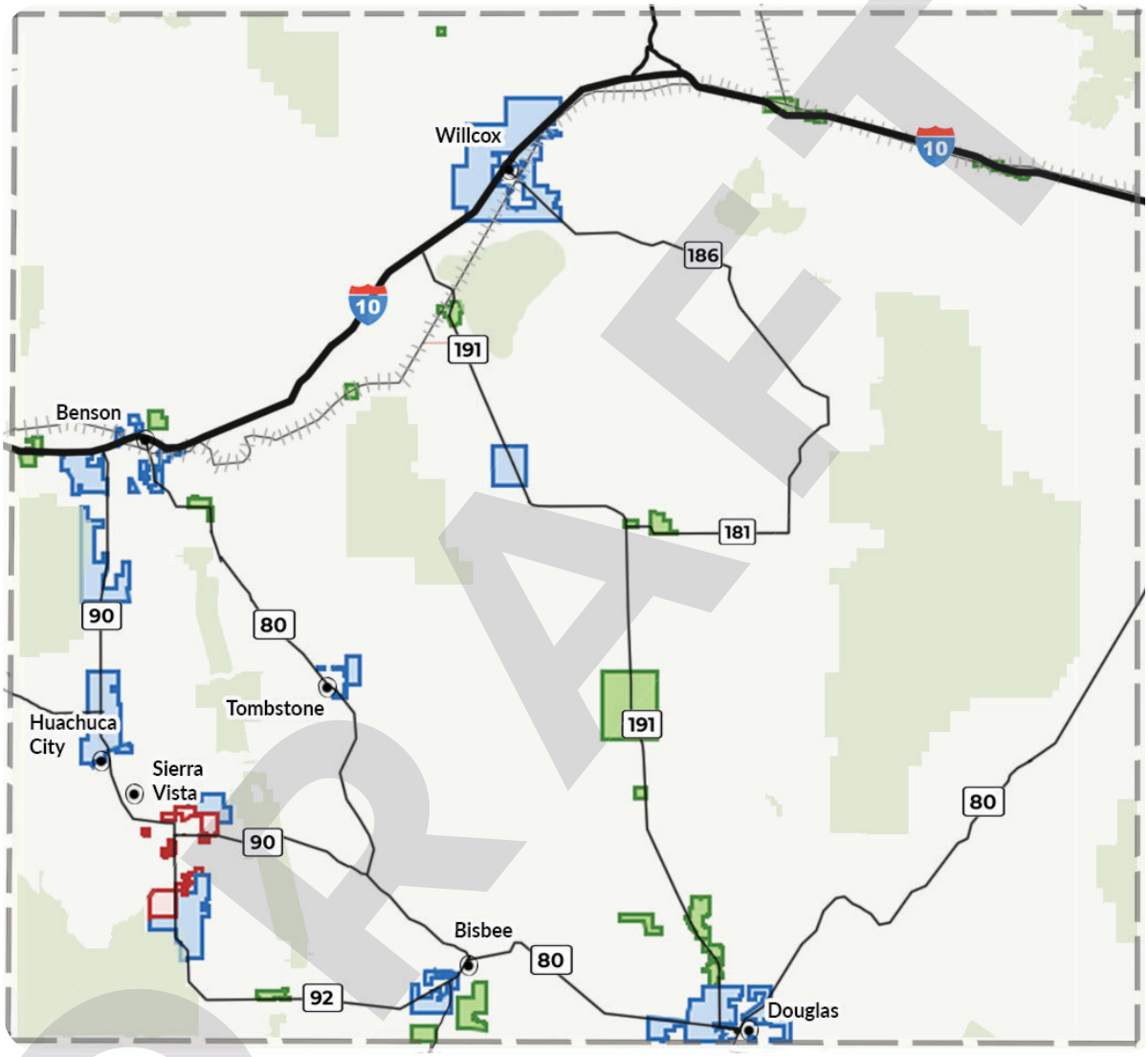
- May include deteriorated or incompatible uses.
- Flexible site or building standards may be applied to encourage investment.
- Found in Growth Categories A, B, or C.

4. **NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION (NC) –** Primarily residential neighborhoods protected from incompatible non-residential development.
   - Typically includes developed subdivisions with completed infrastructure.
   - Found in Growth Categories A, B, or C.
5. **NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION (NR) –** Residential neighborhoods showing decline but with potential for revitalization.
   - Criteria include deteriorated dwellings, inadequate infrastructure, and interest in improvements or industrial uses. Future development should continue that trend.
   - Criteria include sufficient infrastructure, public access, and limited residential growth.
   - Found in Growth Categories A, B, or C.
6. **RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR)**
   - Applies to Category D (Rural) areas with established residential development on larger lots (generally 2 acres or more).
   - High-density rezonings or non-residential uses not directly serving residents are generally not appropriate.
   - Limited, low-intensity businesses serving residents may be allowed.
7. **RURAL (R)**
   - Includes remaining lands in Category D not designated Rural Residential.
   - Characterized by sparse population, large lots, agricultural or grazing uses, large private/public lands, or recreational resources.
   - May accommodate intensive industrial uses that cannot be placed in other growth areas.



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MAP 2: GROWTH AREA CATEGORIES



Growth Areas A

Growth Area B

Growth Area C

Growth Area D (all area outside Growth Area A-C)

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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TABLE 1: GROWTH AREA MATRIX

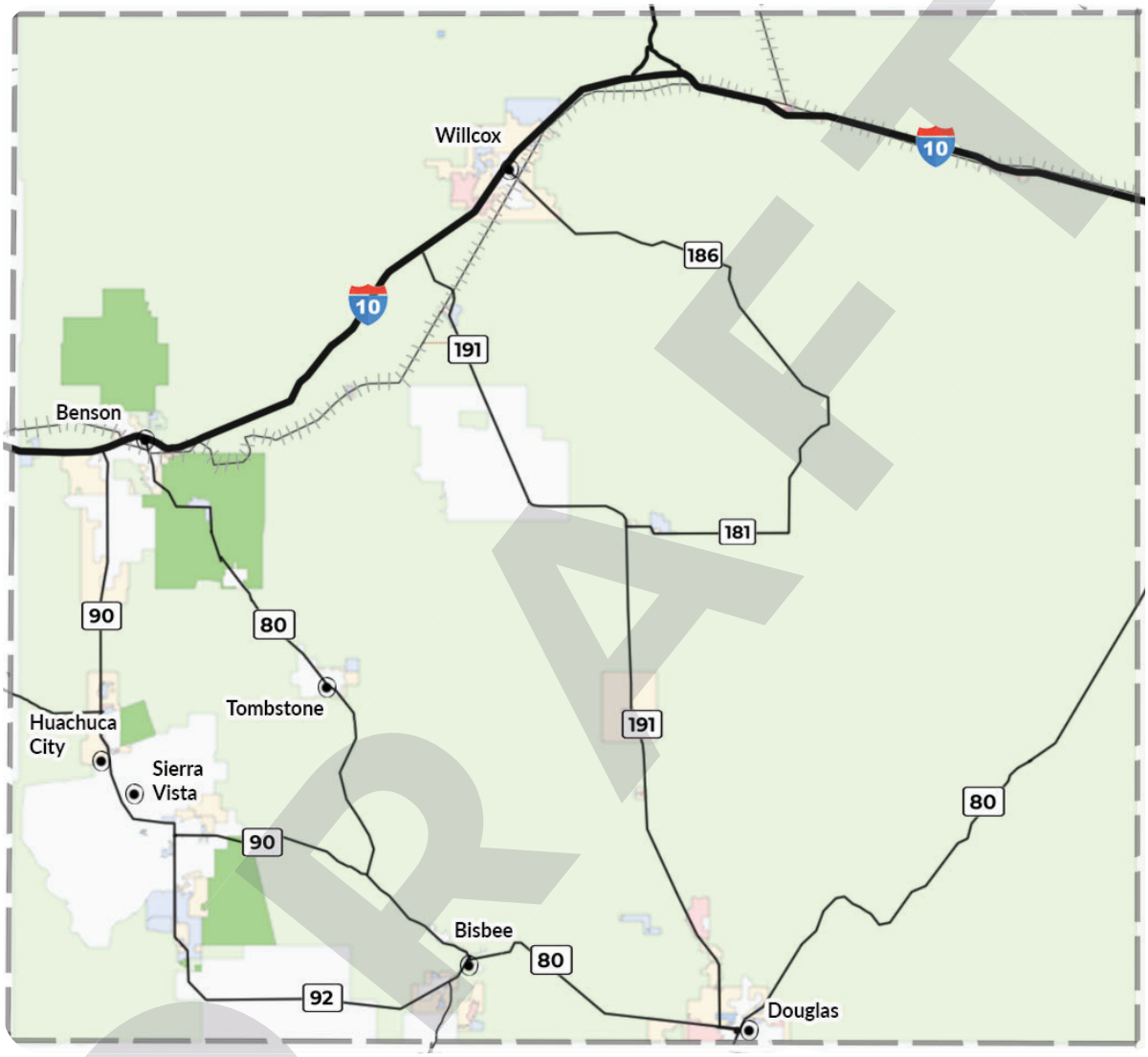
CRITERIA	GROWTH AREA A	GROWTH AREA B	GROWTH AREA C	GROWTH AREA D
DEVELOPMENT PATTERN	Established/planned development; potential annexation; infill and redevelopment	Transition zones; distinct identity	Small clusters of development	Large-lot rural; agriculture
INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES	Community water, fire district; adequate transportation, schools	Adequate utilities; arterials/collectors	Limited services; K–8 schools possible	Minimal services; private investment drives growth
LAND USE & DENSITY	Lots under 1 acre; regional commercial centers	Lots ~1 acre or less; smaller lots with water; larger lots at fringes	Mixed lot sizes; adjacent to farming/ranching	Very low density, large lots; agriculture and ranching dominant
ECONOMIC ROLE	Regional hub for employment, retail, and services	Mix of housing and neighborhood-scale businesses	Supports ag, ranching, tourism	Local ag/tourism services; intensive rural uses possible
CHARACTER & GROWTH POTENTIAL	Urban standards; steady growth	Supports growth while preserving open space and washes	Scenic, rural, gradual change	Sparsely populated; open landscapes; growth slow, preserves rural life

TABLE 2: DENSITY & CHARACTER

COMP PLAN DESIGNATION	DENSITY	INTENSITY/CHARACTER
DEVELOP. (DEV)	0.5–12.1 du/acre	Low to moderate; mix of residential and compatible non-residential uses
ENTER. (ENT)	N/A	Higher intensity non-residential; offices, industrial, employment centers
ENTER. REDEV. (ER)	N/A	Redevelopment of urban areas; medium density residential and mixed-use
NEIGH, CONSERV. OR REHAB (NB OR NR)	1–12.1 du/acre	Low to moderate; preserve neighborhood character, encourage infill
RURAL (R)	0.03–0.5 du/acre	Very low density; preserve open space, agricultural uses
RURAL RES (RR)	0.03–0.5 du/acre	Very low density residential; maintain rural character

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MAP 3: LAND USE



- Developing
- Enterprise
- Enterprise Redevelopment
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Neighborhood Rehabilitation
- Rural
- Rural Residential

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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TABLE 3: LAND USE AND PERMITTED ZONING

ZONING	DEVELOP. (DEV)	ENTER. (ENT)	ENTER. REDEV. (ER)	NEIGH, CONSERV. OR REHAB (NB OR NR)	RURAL (R)	RURAL RES. (RR)
RU-2	✓				✓	✓
RU-4, RU-10, RU-36					✓	✓
R-9, R-18, R-36	✓			✓		
SM-9, SM-18, SM-36	✓			✓		
SM- OR SR-87	✓				✓	✓
SM- OR SR-174					✓	✓
SM- OR SR-10 ACRES					✓	✓
SM- OR SR-18 ACRES					✓	✓
SM- OR SR-36 ACRES					✓	✓
SR-8, SR-12, SR-22, SR-43	✓			✓		
MR-1 OR MR-2	✓			✓		
NB	✓	✓	✓	✓		
GB, LI	✓	✓	✓			
HI	✓	✓	✓		✓	

MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLANS

A Master Development Plan (MDP) is a developer-initiated, Board-adopted amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that provides a detailed, long-term framework for the coordinated development of a specific property. MDPs ensure large or complex projects address land use, infrastructure, and community character in an integrated way.

PURPOSE

- Establishes a long-range, site-specific development framework consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Provides a basis for coordinated phasing of land use, infrastructure, transportation, and open space.
- May establish plan-specific land use designations and development standards tailored to the property.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Upon adoption by the Board of Supervisors, an MDP becomes an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Within the boundaries of an adopted MDP, the plan designations and standards contained in the MDP supersede existing Growth Categories, Plan Designations, and policies.
- Serves as a policy foundation for subsequent zoning, subdivision, and permit decisions.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

An MDP must include, at minimum:

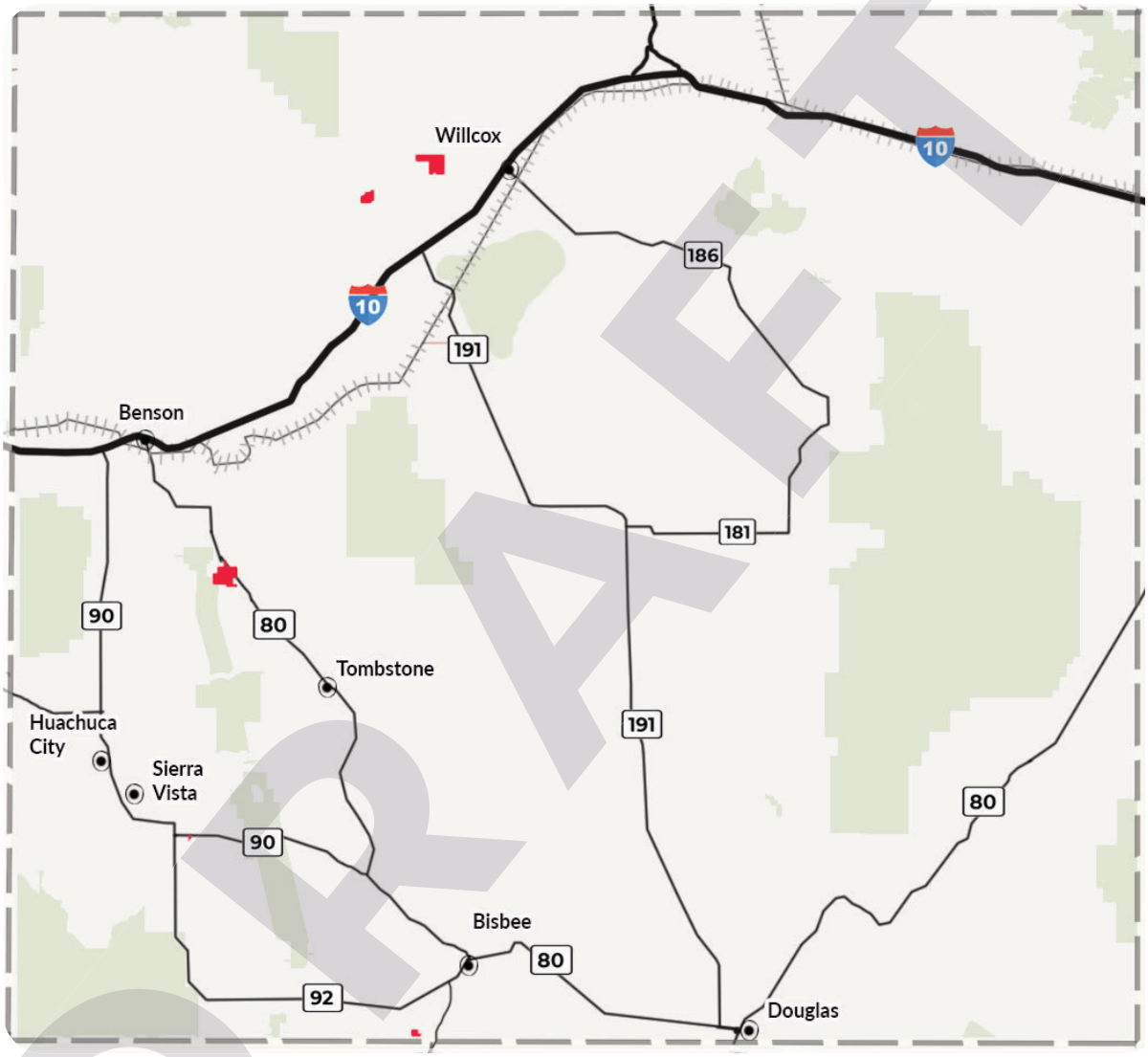
- A narrative describing the vision, objectives, and proposed development program.
- A land use plan showing proposed designations, general development patterns, and densities/intensities.
- A phasing plan, including anticipated timing and sequencing of development.
- A framework for infrastructure, utilities, transportation, drainage, and public services.
- Identification of open space, natural resource areas, and community amenities.
- Development standards or guidelines applicable within the MDP area.
- An analysis of consistency with Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and Growth Categories.
- Demonstration of how the MDP coordinates with adjacent land uses and infrastructure.

IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

- Adoption of an MDP by the Board of Supervisors amends the Comprehensive Plan.
- All subsequent zoning, subdivision, and development approvals must conform to the adopted MDP.
- Procedures for application, review, amendment, and enforcement of MDPs are established in the Zoning Regulations.

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MAP 4: MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLANS



Master Development Plan

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Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

AREA PLANS

The Comprehensive Plan allows for Area Plans to capture the vision, goals, and priorities of specific communities related to land use and development. Area Plans provide localized guidance and may include community-specific architectural, landscape, or design standards. Once approved by the Board of Supervisors, an Area Plan is adopted into the Comprehensive Plan through the amendment procedures in Chapter 9. The following Area Plans have been adopted:

- Babocomari Area Plan (Adopted 2005)
- Elfrida Community Plan (Adopted 2003)
- Mid-Sulphur Springs Valley Area Plan (Adopted 1999)
- Naco Community Plan (Adopted 1998)
- Saint David Area Plan (Adopted 2005)
- Sierra Vista Sub-Watershed Policy Plan (Adopted 2006)
- Southern San Pedro Valley Area Plan (Adopted 2001)
- Tres Alamos Community Plan (Adopted 2006)

STATUS & LIMITATIONS

All Area Plans listed above remain part of the Comprehensive Plan; however, none have been updated to reflect current best practices, emerging land use trends, or evolving community needs. They provide useful historical context but are non-binding guidance rather than enforceable policy. Their regulatory influence is limited, and they do not supersede countywide zoning, growth categories, or land use designations.

NEXT STEPS: TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY AREA PROFILES

To ensure fairness, consistency, and clarity, Cochise County intends to transition from Area Plans to Community Area Profiles. These profiles will not serve as binding policy but will provide contextual information for planning decisions. Community Area Profiles will inform staff analysis and findings for discretionary reviews (e.g., rezonings, special uses, and master development plans) by documenting community character, constraints, and locally important resources. Community Area Profiles will:

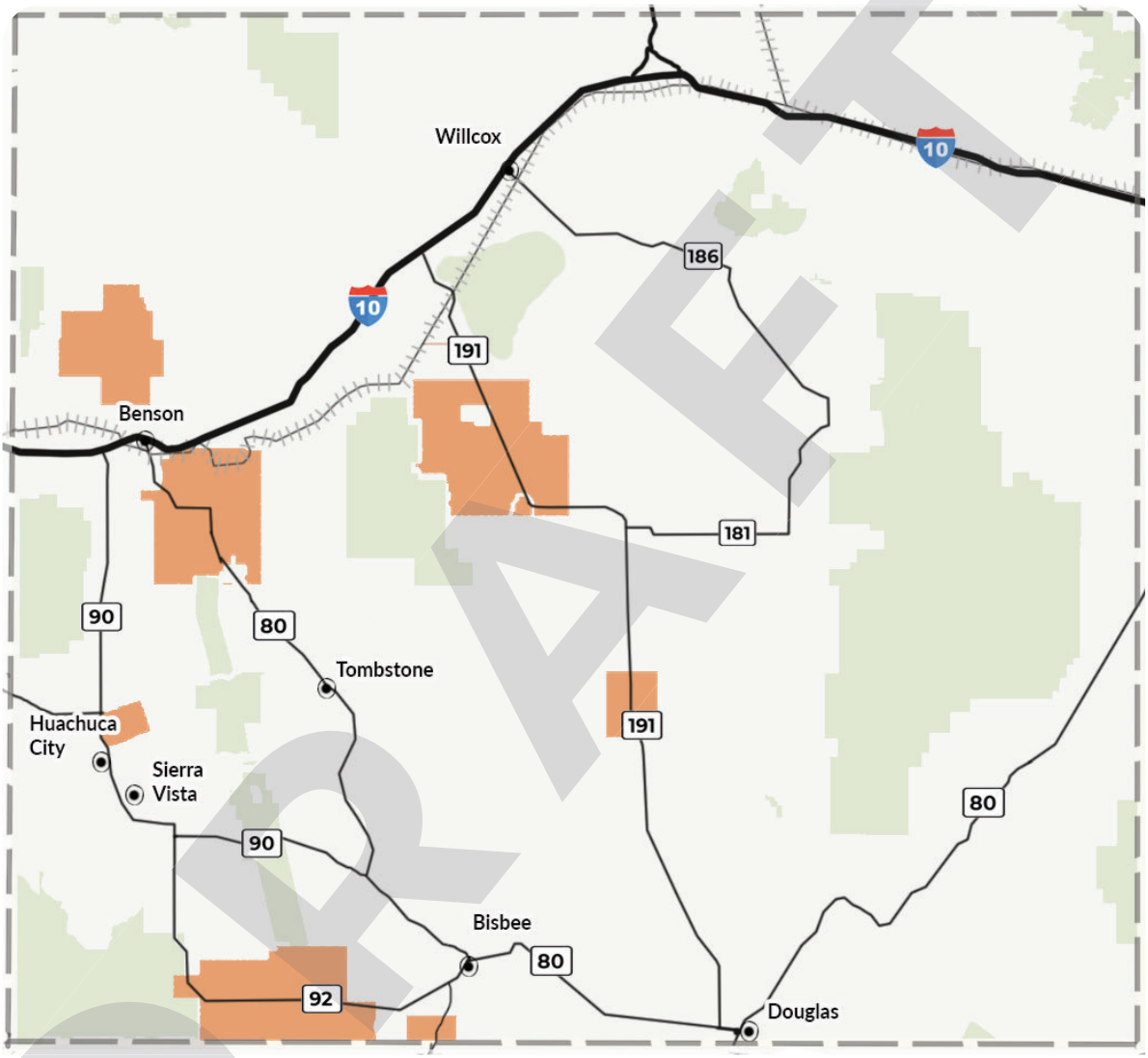
Summarize the historical, cultural, and community identity of each area.

- Highlight key land use, infrastructure, and environmental considerations.
- Serve as reference documents for planning staff, the Board of Supervisors, and the public.
- Provide a foundation for potential future policy updates or amendments if needed.

This transition will be implemented through a subsequent Comprehensive Plan amendment, with community input gathered through public meetings, surveys, and stakeholder engagement. This approach will preserve valuable community-specific information while ensuring the Comprehensive Plan remains current and user-friendly. By converting Area Plans to Community Area Profiles, the County avoids perpetuating outdated or inequitable guidance—where only certain areas had adopted Area Plans—and instead provides equal recognition and planning for all of Cochise County.

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MAP 5: AREA PLANS



Area Plan

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Please see https://experience.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

LANDS OUTSIDE OF COUNTY JURISDICTION

Within Cochise County's boundaries, significant areas are owned and managed by federal, state, military, and municipal authorities. While the County has no direct zoning or land use authority over these lands, their management strongly influences countywide growth, infrastructure needs, and community development. Coordination with these agencies or cities ensures that local land use planning aligns with broader goals for conservation, transportation, economic development, and public safety. The following sections describe the primary types of non-county lands, their managing authorities, and the County's role in collaborating on land use and service considerations.

ARIZONA STATE TRUST LANDS

Arizona state trust lands are parcels of land owned by the state of Arizona, granted by the federal government at statehood, and managed specifically to generate revenue for designated public institutions like K-12 schools, universities, and other state agencies. These lands are managed by the Arizona State Land Department, with the primary goal of maximizing revenue through leasing or selling portions of the land.

As stated on the Arizona State Land Department website, "Since ASLD's inception, its mission has been to manage the State's Land Trust and to generate maximum revenues, through prudent planning decisions for the Beneficiaries. All land uses must compensate the Beneficiaries, and be minimally invasive, a fact that distinguishes it from the way public land, such as parks or national forests, may be used. While public use of Trust land is not prohibited, it is regulated to ensure protection of the land and reimbursement to the beneficiaries for its use, as prescribed in the State's Constitution and supporting case law.[5]"

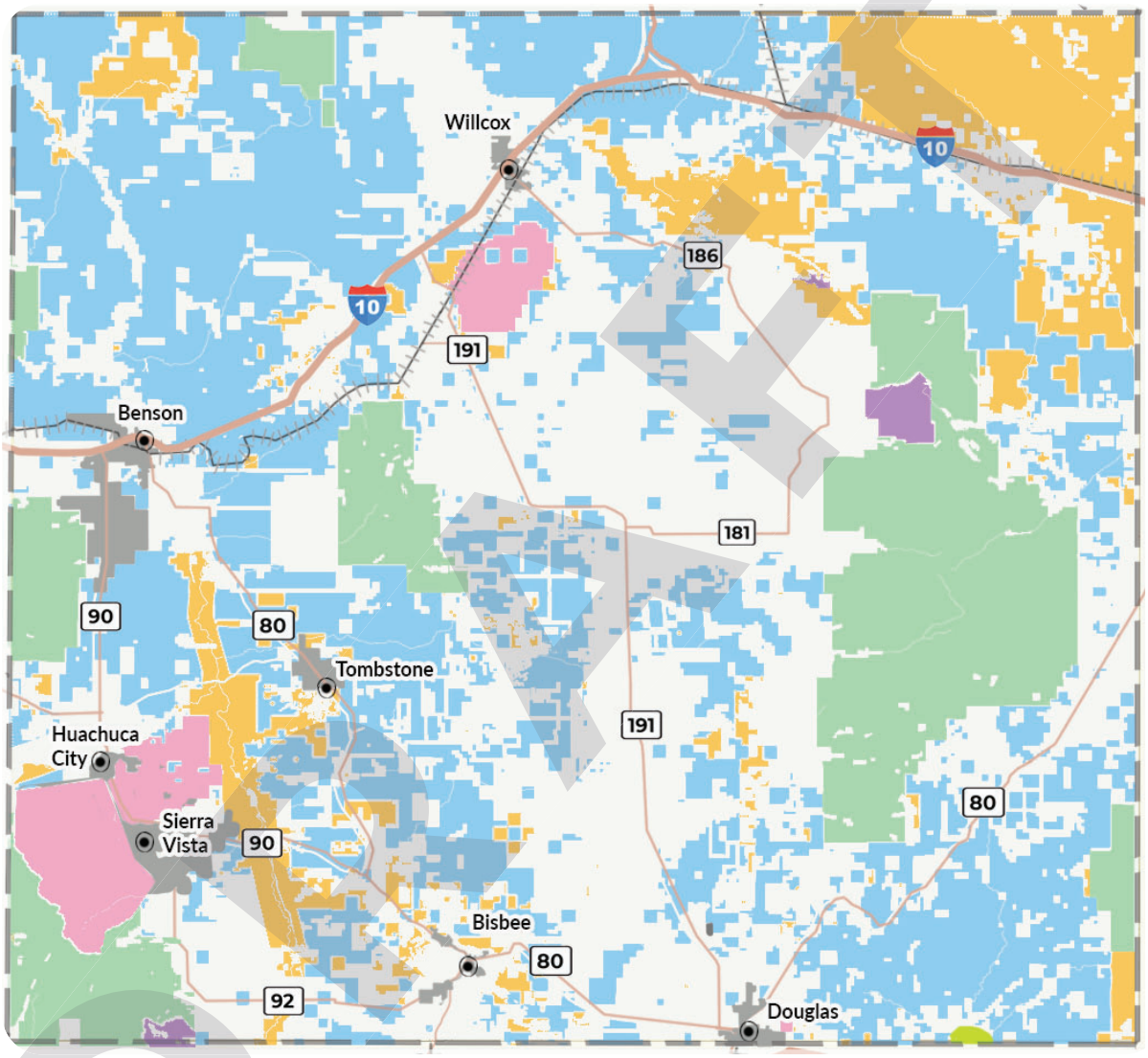
- Authority: Lands are managed by the



[5] Source: Arizona State Land Department. (n.d.). History of trust land. Retrieved January 23, 2025, from https://land.az.gov/our-agency-mission/history-trust-land

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MAP 6: LANDS OUTSIDE OF COUNTY JURISDICTION



- Arizona State Trust Lands
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish & Wildlife
- Military
- Incorporated

Approximately 43.7% of all land is Cochise County is directly under county jurisdiction.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

LANDS OUTSIDE OF COUNTY JURISDICTION

Arizona State Land Department.

- Use: Revenue generation for public institutions.
- Jurisdiction: The county has limited jurisdiction over land use and zoning on state trust lands. However, development proposals for state trust lands typically require coordination with the county for infrastructure, zoning compliance, and adherence to local planning ordinances.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LANDS

- Example: San Pedro National Conservation Area
- Authority: Lands are managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management.
- Use: Grazing, recreation, conservation.
- Jurisdiction: Cochise County has no direct authority over land management but may collaborate with the BLM for issues like road access, emergency services, or land use planning. The county can provide input during public comment periods for BLM management plans.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE LANDS (Example: Coronado National Forest)

- Example: Coronado National Forest
- Authority: Lands are managed by the U.S. Forest Service under the Department of Agriculture.
- Use: Conservation, recreation, and responsible resource use.

Photo credit: San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge landscape, Steve Hil/USFWS, Public Domain, https://www.fws.gov/media/san-bernardino-national-wildlife-refuge-landscape

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LANDS OUTSIDE OF COUNTY JURISDICTION

- Jurisdiction: Cochise County does not have direct regulatory authority over Forest Service lands. Management and land-use decisions are made by the U.S. Forest Service. The County may collaborate on issues such as road access, emergency services, and infrastructure affecting adjacent communities, and can provide input during public comment periods for Forest Service management plans.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LANDS

- Example: Chiricahua National Monument
- Authority: Administered by the National Park Service
- Use: Preservation of land for its cultural, historical, and natural significance.
- Jurisdiction: Cochise County has no direct authority but can participate in discussions about land use, environmental impacts, and public safety services. Local infrastructure or roads leading to forest areas may fall under county jurisdiction.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE LANDS

- Example: San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge
- Authority: Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Use: Habitat preservation and species conservation.
- Jurisdiction: The county has no regulatory authority but may collaborate on public access, local development impacts, and emergency services in nearby areas.

MILITARY

- Example: Fort Huachuca
- Authority: Military lands are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army.
- Use: Both Fort Huachuca and the Willcox Range are military property. The fort is a U.S. Army installation with a primary focus on military intelligence, cybersecurity, and electronic testing. The Willcox Range is a former Air Force Range that is now used by Fort Huachuca as an electronics proving ground.
- Jurisdiction: The county has no regulatory authority but may collaborate on public access, local development impacts, and emergency services in nearby areas.
- Other: Fort Huachuca has three overlays that influence land use outside of military property. This includes the Buffalo Soldier Electronic Testing Range, the Hubbard Encroachment Area, and the Fort Huachuca High Noise or Accident Potential Zone (HN/APZ). See “Fort Huachuca Overlays Section” for additional information.

INCORPORATED

- Example: City of Douglas
- Authority: Incorporated cities and towns within Cochise County (e.g., Sierra

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LANDS OUTSIDE OF COUNTY JURISDICTION



Vista, Douglas, Willcox) have their own governance and jurisdiction over local matters such as zoning, public safety, and utilities.

- Jurisdiction: Cochise County does not exercise authority within city or town limits except for countywide services, such as elections or health services, which extend across all jurisdictions.

WILDERNESS AREAS

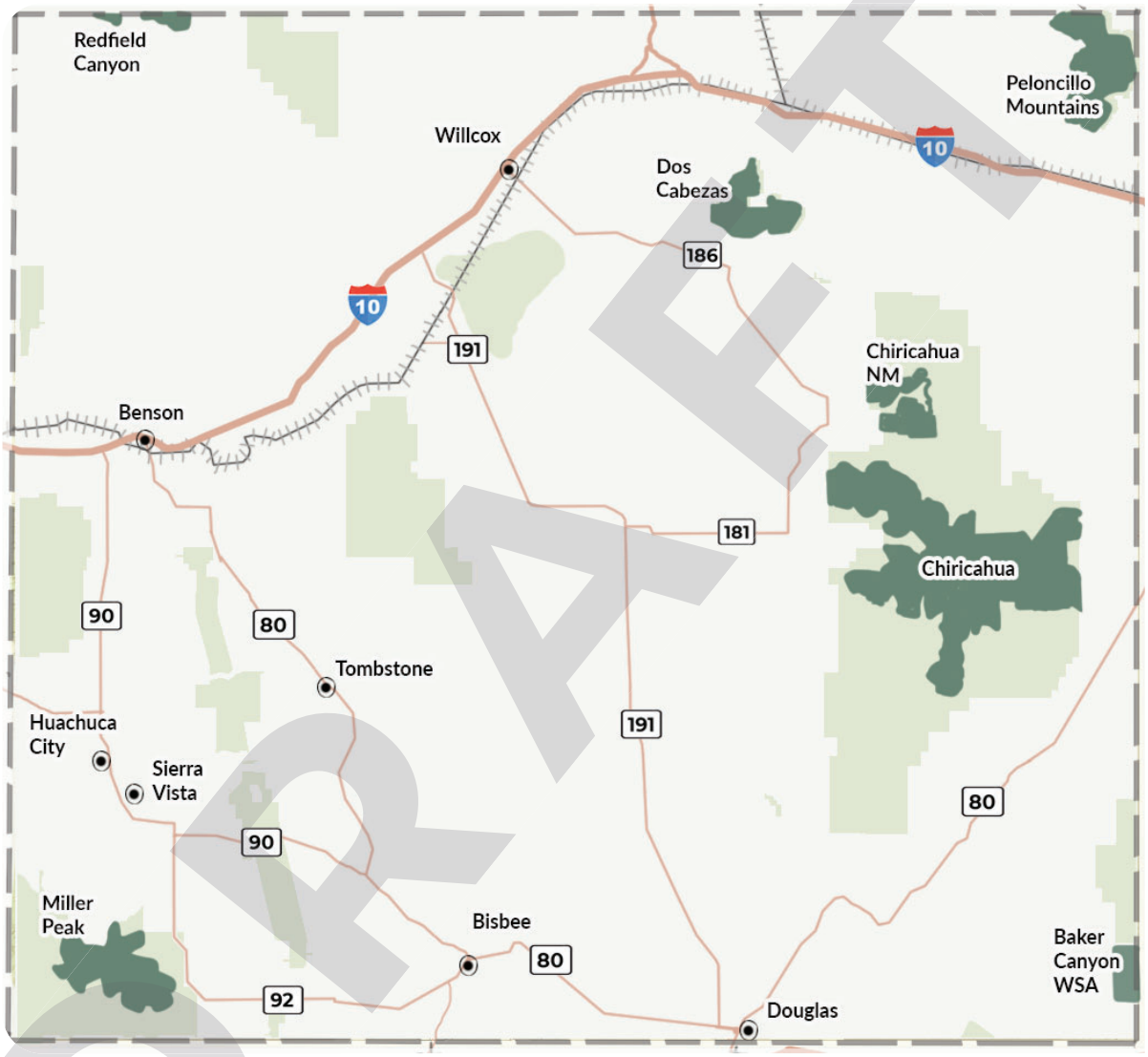
Wilderness Areas are part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, which includes over 109 million acres nationwide.

Arizona has more than 90 designated Wilderness Areas covering approximately 4.5 million acres, with roughly 155,600 acres located within Cochise County.

- Authority: Wilderness Areas are federally designated lands protected under the 1964 Wilderness Act. They are managed by federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service.
- Use: These lands are intended to remain in their natural condition, providing habitat for wildlife, protecting watersheds, and offering opportunities for primitive recreation such as hiking, horseback riding, and camping. Motorized and mechanized vehicles, including mountain bikes, are prohibited
- Jurisdiction: Cochise County has no regulatory authority over Wilderness Areas. However, the county may consider their presence in adjacent land use planning, environmental conservation efforts, and recreational access strategies.

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MAP 7: WILDERNESS AREAS



Wilderness Area

Source: University of Montana. (n.d.). Wilderness Areas of the United States. Retrieved January 31, 2025, from https://umontana.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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FORT HUACHUCA OVERLAYS

In addition to lands under direct military jurisdiction, several overlay areas extend into Cochise County that restrict or guide development near Fort Huachuca. These overlays are designed to protect military operations while also reducing potential conflicts with surrounding communities. Development within these areas requires careful coordination with the Department of Defense to ensure land uses remain compatible with military testing, training, and flight safety.

BUFFALO SOLDIER ELECTRONIC TESTING AND TRAINING RANGE (ETR)

- Development Restrictions: New development and modification to existing development must avoid interference with the fort's electronic testing operations. This may restrict activities like high-power transmission lines, communication towers, or industrial facilities generating electromagnetic emissions within the designated testing range, which is an area over 3,157-square miles and encompasses a large portion of western Cochise County, as well as portions of Santa Cruz, and Pima Counties. Certain types of infrastructure or technology-heavy developments, may face additional scrutiny and/or restrictions.
- Compatibility and Coordination: Permits for new development within the ETR are transmitted to Fort Huachuca's encroachment board to ensure that the proposed development aligns with Department of War (DoW) compatibility guidelines.

HUBBARD ENCROACHMENT AREA

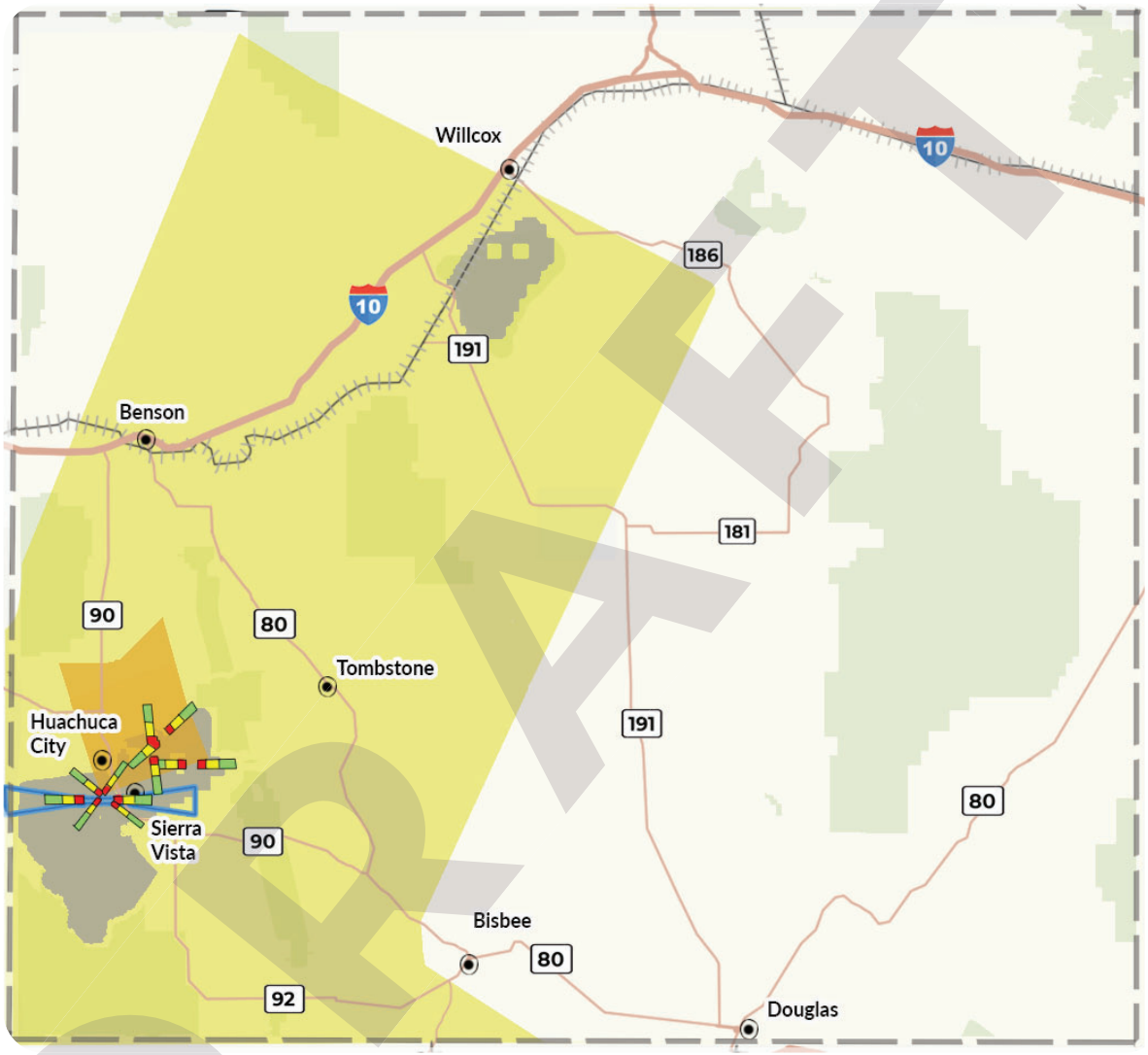
- Development Restrictions: Property in this area is subject to additional restrictions intended to prevent development that could conflict with Fort Huachuca's training and operational needs. High-density residential, commercial, or industrial developments are generally discouraged, while agriculture, conservation, or low-impact recreation uses are encouraged.
- Compatibility and Coordination: Development proposals may require transmittal to Fort Huachuca's encroachment board to ensure compatibility and proactively address potential conflicts.

HIGH NOISE AND ACCIDENT POTENTIAL ZONE

- Development Restrictions: Properties in these zones are subject to noise from military aircraft and operations. Development may require soundproofing measures or limitations on noise-sensitive uses like schools, hospitals, and residential. Areas within accident potential zones (APZs) are subject to restrictions based on DoW guidelines, which discourage or prohibit high-density uses (e.g., apartments, schools, large commercial centers) to reduce risks to life and property. Agriculture, conservation, or low-impact recreation uses are encouraged. The military typically defines three (3) safety zones that extend from each end of every

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MAP 8: MILITARY LAND AND OVERLAYS



High Noise or Accident Potential Zone

Clear Zone

Accident Protection Zone (APZ) 1

Accident Protection Zone (APZ) II

Military Property

Buffalo Soldier Electronic Testing and Training Range

Hubbard Encroachment Area

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

Source: Fort Huachuca Joint Resource Utilization Study. Accessed January 27, 2025. https://ago-item-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/e1b4bc47c379447bb613a972eeef2234/fort_huachuca_joint_resource_utilization_study.pdf.

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FORT HUACHUCA OVERLAYS

runway: the clear zone (CZ), accident potential zone (APZ) I, and APZ II.

- Compatibility and Coordination: Development proposals may require transmittal to Fort Huachuca's encroachment board to ensure compatibility and proactively address potential conflicts.

OTHER EXEMPTIONS

In Arizona, certain land uses, like agriculture and mining, are largely exempt from county authority and zoning regulations due to state law. Specifically, the county may not "Prevent, restrict or otherwise regulate the use or occupation of land or improvements for railroad, mining, metallurgical, grazing or general agricultural purposes, if the tract concerned is five or more contiguous commercial acres" (ARS 11-812.A.2.).



IMPLICATIONS:

- Mining, agricultural, and grazing activities can have significant impacts on natural resources, water usage, and infrastructure.
- Cochise County has little authority over the location or impact of exempt operations within its boundaries.
- Land use planning must account for the potential establishment or expansion of exempt activities without the ability to enforce zoning restrictions.
- While regulation is restricted, the county can work with landowners and operators to promote best practices, minimize environmental impacts, and proactively address potential conflicts with surrounding uses. Collaboration through voluntary agreements or incentives can encourage more responsible development.

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MINES IN COCHISE COUNTY



Arizona leads the United States in copper production, contributing nearly 70% of the nation's output.[6] Cochise County has a rich history in mining, particularly in copper extraction. The mining industry continues to play a significant role in the county's economy, with ongoing operations and potential future developments. This is largely because the county's geological formations are rich in mineral resources, making it a favorable location for mining activities.[6] The Arizona Geological Survey provides detailed maps and information on mining operations, which are accessible through their website. Map 9 illustrates all active mines in Cochise County as of 2024.

FLOODPLAINS

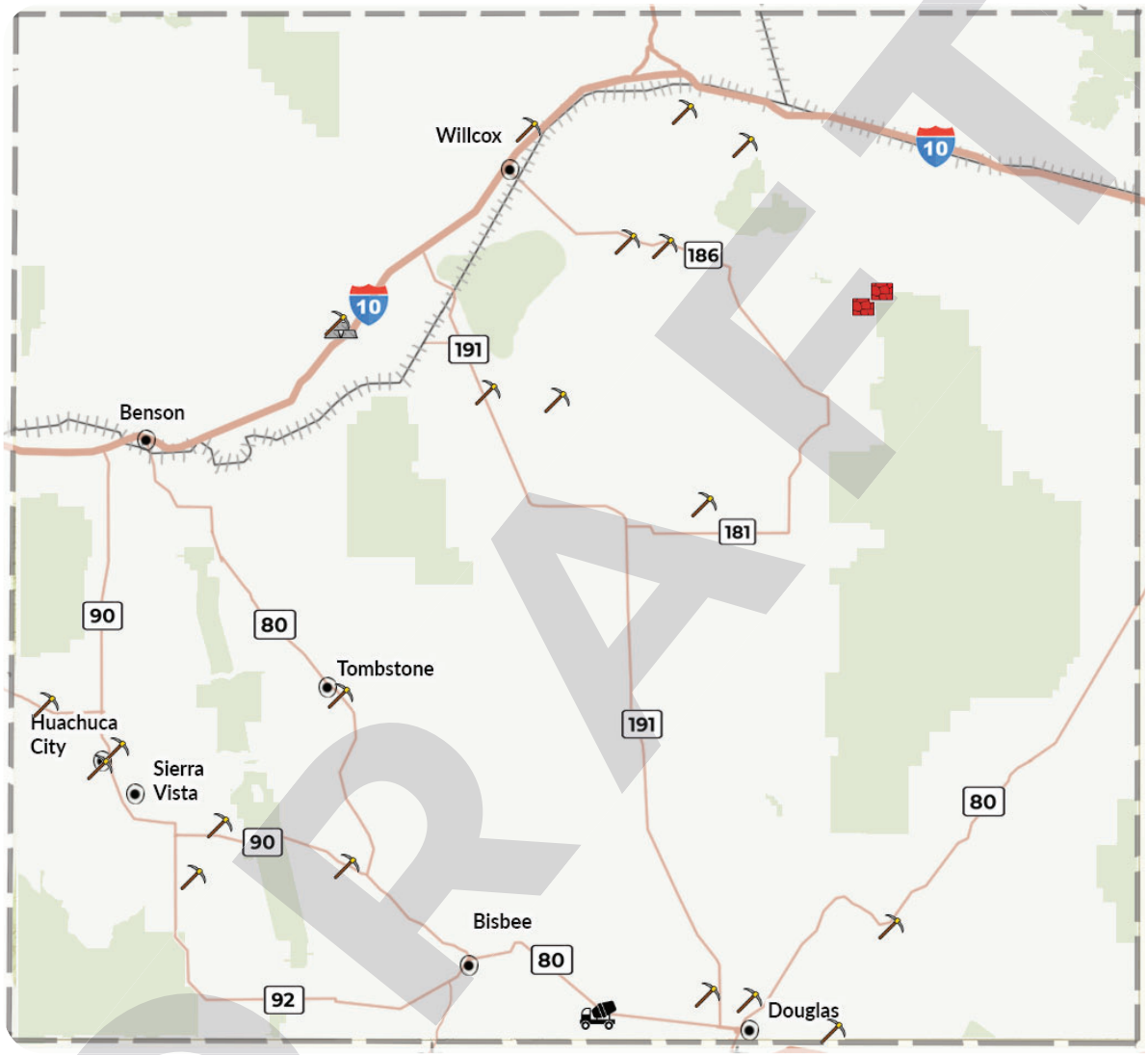
A Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is an official map created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that outlines flood hazard areas within a community. These maps are essential tools for understanding flood risks and are used for insurance, development planning, and floodplain management. FEMA floodplain designations significantly impact land use planning, property development, and infrastructure investments. While these floodplain regulations help reduce flood damage risks, they also increase development costs and can also restrict certain types of development.

It is important to note flood hazards can change over time. Updated flood maps provide a more accurate picture of a

[6] Source: Excelsior Mining Corp. (2014). Excelsior reaffirms positive economic impact of Gunnison project. Gunnison Copper. Retrieved January 24, 2025, from https://www.gunnisoncopper.com/news/news-2014/excelsior-reaffirms-positive-economic-impact-of-gunnison-project

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MAP 9: MINES & SOURCES OF AGGREGATE



Aggregates and Crushed Stones (2024)

Cement and Lime (2024)

Building Stone (2024)

Metals (2024)

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ or the Arizona Geological Survey website (link below) for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

Source: Arizona Geological Survey. (n.d.). Arizona active mines map. Retrieved November 19, 2025, from https://uagis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=9eceb192cd86497e8eed04113302db8b

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FLOODPLAINS

property's flood risk. How water flows and drains can change due to new construction and community development or natural forces such as changing weather patterns or terrain changes. Also, communities may build levees and dams, decreasing flood risk over time. Though the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 requires that FEMA assess the need to revise and update all flood maps every five years.

BUILDING RESTRICTIONS AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- Elevation Requirements: New construction within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) must be elevated above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) to minimize flood risk.
- Floodplain Use Permits: Property owners in designated flood zones must obtain permits from the county, ensuring compliance with FEMA and local floodplain management regulations.
- Limitations on Certain Structures: Some types of development (e.g., mobile homes, critical infrastructure) may be restricted or require additional flood-proofing measures to withstand potential flooding.



PROPERTY VALUE IMPACTS

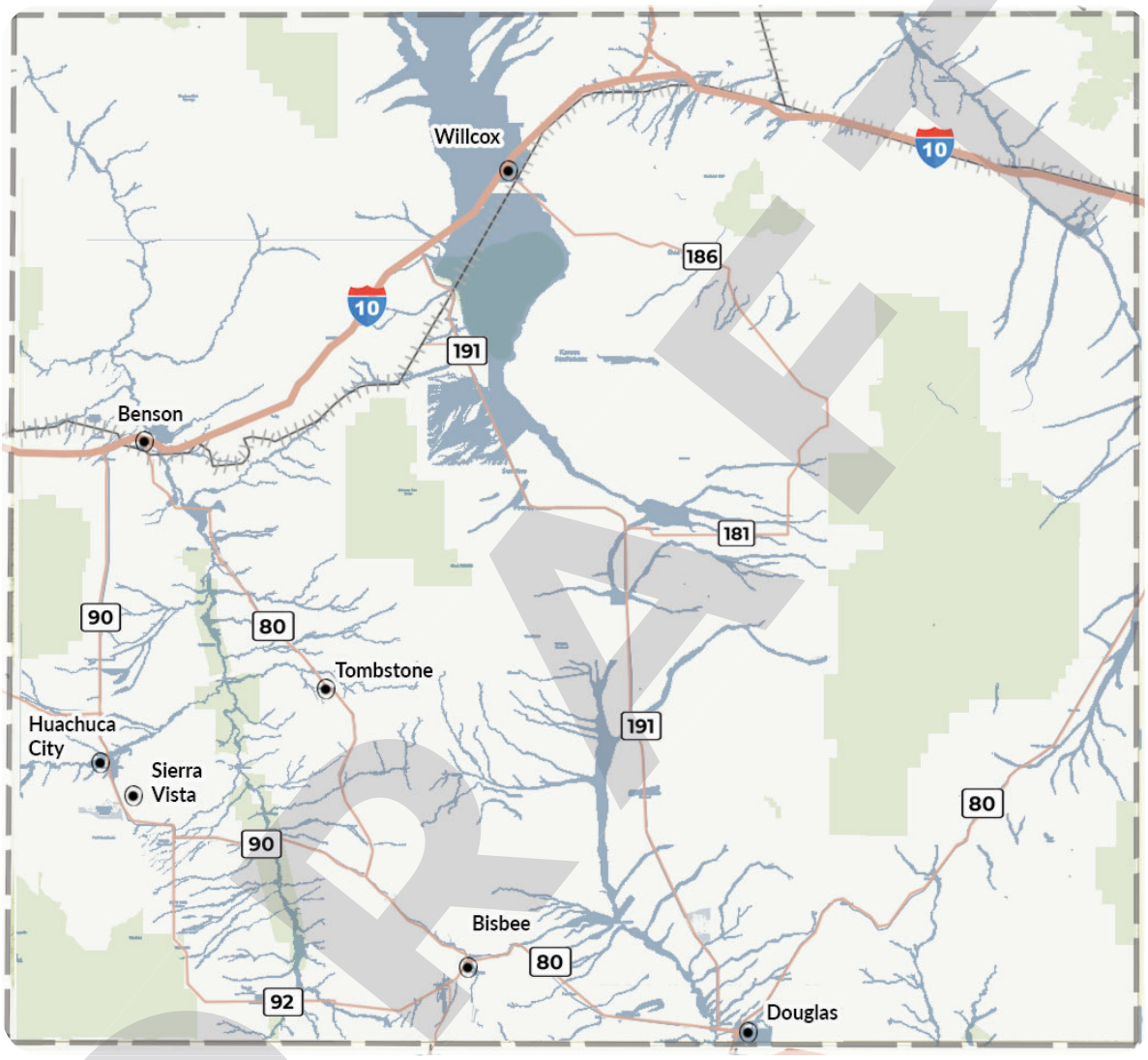
- Properties in flood-prone areas often have lower values due to the potential increased risk and insurance costs.
- Developers may face higher construction costs due to flood mitigation requirements, such as elevated foundations, drainage improvements, and flood-resistant materials.

FLOOD INSURANCE MANDATE

- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Compliance: If a property is within a FEMA flood zone and has a federally backed mortgage, flood insurance is mandatory.
- Higher Insurance Premiums: Homes and businesses in high-risk flood zones (e.g., 100-year floodplains) face significantly higher flood insurance premiums, making homeownership and commercial development more expensive.

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MAP 10: FLOODPLAINS



Special Flood Hazard Area*

*Map 10 "FEMA Floodplains in Cochise County" illustrates FEMA maps effective as of February 2025. FEMA is currently evaluating revisions within unincorporated Cochise County. Once finalized, the new floodplain maps will become effective in 2026.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ or the FEMA website (https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd) for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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FLOODPLAINS

LAND USE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- The county may limit high-density development in floodplains to reduce overall flood damage risks.
- Flood-prone areas are preferred for parks or agricultural use rather than area for residential or commercial development.
- Flood risk can increase after wildfire due to vegetation loss and debris flows; development review and infrastructure planning should account for post-fire flood hazards where applicable.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Flood Control Projects: The county may need to invest in levees, drainage systems, gabions, and flood control projects to protect existing developments.
- The County should ensure that areas within flood-prone areas have emergency response plans for potential flood events.

PM10 NON-ATTAINMENT



PM-10 consists of fine dust particles small enough to be inhaled, which can contribute to respiratory issues. Common sources include vehicle traffic, unpaved roads, construction, industrial activities, agriculture, and natural dust events. All of the city of Douglas —as well as the planned Port of Entry expansion—lies within a PM-10 Non-Attainment Area (see Map 11).

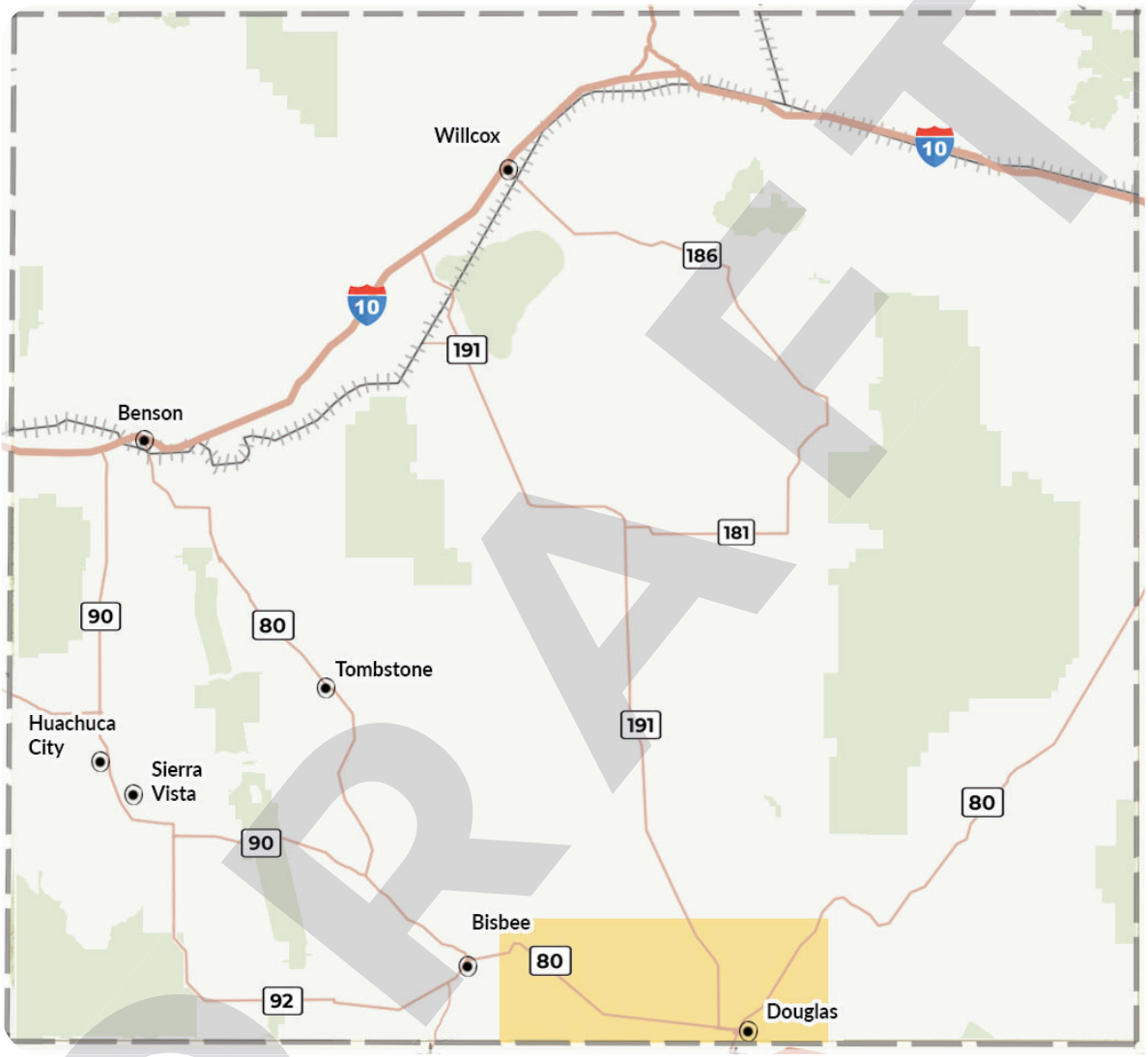
Although EPA issued a Clean Data Determination in 2013 confirming the area was meeting the PM-10 standard, the non-attainment designation remains until a full State Implementation Plan (SIP) and redesignation package are approved. As a result, new development may face additional permitting and analysis, such as quantitative PM-10 hot-spot modeling for projects that increase diesel traffic or disturb soil.

For land use planning, this means that major infrastructure projects—especially the Port of Entry—must incorporate dust control, traffic management, and mitigation measures to ensure they do not trigger air-quality violations while ADEQ continues it's SIP development and PM-10 control planning.

[7] Source: Paul Spur/Douglas PM10 Nonattainment Area Retrieved February 21, 2025, from https://azdeq.gov/paul-spurdouglas-pm-10-nonattainment-area

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MAP 11: PM-10 NON-ATTAINMENT



PM-10 Non-Attainment Zone

Source: Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. (n.d.). ADEQ ArcGIS Web Application. Retrieved from https://adeq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.

Please see the map source for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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LAND USE & GROWTH GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 1: Smart Growth, Right Places

- Policy 1: Prioritize infrastructure improvements in growth areas A–C to support economic development while preserving the rural character of surrounding areas.
- Policy 2: Continue pursuing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency brownfield assessment grants to transform underutilized properties into productive assets and maximize the use of existing land and infrastructure.
- Policy 3: Improve infrastructure—such as roads, parking, broadband, and signage—in tourism areas to enhance visitor access and experiences.
- Policy 4: High-intensity uses requiring County discretionary approval should be located where water and infrastructure capacity can support them without adverse impacts to domestic wells.

GOAL 2: Investing in People, Powering Industry

- Policy 1: Strengthen workforce development by partnering with Cochise College, local high schools, and workforce agencies to expand vocational training, apprenticeships, dual-credit opportunities, and programs aligned with emerging industries such as renewable energy, technology, and health services.
- Policy 2: Strengthen the countywide economy by collaborating with neighboring counties, SEAGO, and cross-border partners in Sonora to expand trade, logistics, and supply-chain opportunities.
- Policy 3: Target key industry sectors—including defense, aerospace, agriculture, viticulture, and healthcare—through land use planning, infrastructure investments, and marketing initiatives, prioritizing industries that can be accommodated by existing or planned infrastructure and water availability and that provide long-term community benefits.

GOAL 3: Showcase Cochise

- Policy 1: Support development of guidelines for adaptive reuse of historic properties, including visitor-serving uses such as boutique lodging, museums, and similar facilities, where compatible with community character and applicable regulations.
- Policy 2: Support development of visitor-serving infrastructure such as wayfinding signage, trail systems, and cultural/heritage centers.
- Policy 3: Encourage and support local events, festivals, and cultural celebrations that highlight Cochise County's unique history, arts, food traditions, agricultural heritage, and natural assets.
- Policy 4: Encourage dark sky tourism by pursuing Dark Sky Community and Dark Sky Park designations where feasible.

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LAND USE & GROWTH GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 4: Healthy Land, Healthy Life

- Policy 1: Encourage the donation of conservation and scenic easements by raising public awareness of their environmental and tax benefits.
- Policy 2: Encourage farmers to voluntarily adopt practices that enhance biodiversity, such as creating wildlife corridors, rotational grazing, and using integrated pest management through outreach and educational campaigns.
- Policy 3: Coordinate with state and federal wildlife agencies during development review and Special Use Permit evaluation to avoid, minimize, or offset impacts to wildlife habitats, riparian areas, and movement corridors.

GOAL 5: Power from the Sun

- Policy 1: Ensure new development maximizes access to solar energy to support renewable, affordable, and resilient energy options for all residents.
- Policy 2: Lead by example by installing solar panels or solar-ready infrastructure on county facilities, schools, and other public buildings to reduce long-term operating costs and demonstrate the benefits of solar to the community.
- Policy 3: Encourage solar-ready construction per IRC Appendix U by requiring only low-cost, no-equipment elements—such as roof space, conduit pathways, and documentation—while allowing flexibility for structural upgrades. This minimizes upfront costs for builders and enables future homeowners to install solar systems more affordably.
- Policy 4: Encourage solar, battery storage, and other renewable energy projects to support the local economy through voluntary local hiring and manufacturing within the county, when feasible. Projects that use locally produced materials or provide local workforce opportunities will be given favorable consideration during County review.

GOAL 6: Rocks, Resources, Resilience

- Policy 1: Maintain a comprehensive GIS inventory of aggregate resources, including existing mines and areas identified by the Arizona Geological Survey as having high geologic suitability.
- Policy 2: Evaluate the creation of "Aggregate Development Overlay Areas" in locations with high resource potential. Require development within these overlays to provide adequate buffers to minimize land use conflicts.
- Policy 3: Consider adding mining and mineral processing to the activities allowed under industrial zoning designations by right.

GOAL 7: High-Flying Safety, Grounded

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LAND USE & GROWTH GOALS & POLICIES

Planning

- Policy 1: Promote land use compatibility within high-noise and accident-potential zones by minimizing residential encroachment and prioritizing safe, resilient development patterns.
- Policy 2: Maintain low-density residential as the primary compatible use within high-noise and accident-potential zones. Rezoning or special use requests for higher-density residential or general business should generally not be supported.
- Policy 3: Industrial and agricultural uses are generally more compatible with military operations because they are less sensitive to noise and safety risks. High-noise or accident-prone areas are best suited for these uses, and rezoning or special use requests for industrial purposes in such zones should typically be supported.

GOAL 8: Every Community Counts

- Policy 1: Transition from outdated Area Plans to Community Areas Profiles that capture each community's historical, cultural, and environmental identity without creating conflicting or inequitable policy.
- Policy 2: Ensure all regions of Cochise County are represented through profiles, providing consistent recognition and documentation across the entire county.
- Policy 3: Use Community Area Profiles as reference tools for staff, the Commission/ Board of Supervisors, and the public, for evaluating planning decisions.
- Policy 4: Regularly update Community Area Profiles to correspond with changes in the Comprehensive Plan, reflecting emerging conditions and ensuring they remain relevant, accessible, and aligned with community values.

GOAL 9: Working Landscapes, Coordinated Land Use

- Policy 1: Protect agricultural and ranch lands as working landscapes that contribute to the county's economy, culture, and open space character.
- Policy 2: Direct new development away from areas at high risk of flooding, wildfire, or other natural hazards to promote long-term resilience.
- Policy 3: Coordinate land use decisions with incorporated cities, towns, military installations, and federal/state land managers to promote consistency, efficiency, and regional cooperation, including early coordination for discretionary projects proposed adjacent to public lands.

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3

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The Circulation Element guides the development and improvement of Cochise County's transportation network to accommodate growth, enhance mobility, ensure public safety, and support county goals for land use, economic development, and sustainability. It seeks a functional, efficient, and interconnected system that serves residents, businesses, and visitors, while coordinating with local, state, and federal transportation initiatives.

This element inventories all major transportation modes—including highways, local and county roads, railroads, public transit, airports, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities—and establishes policies to ensure a safe, resilient, and well-connected system through 2045.

ROADWAYS

Cochise County's roadway network is organized into a hierarchy based on function, ownership, and maintenance responsibility, providing a framework for improvements, funding allocation, and agency coordination.



1. Federal Highways

- Interstates such as I-10 are managed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and maintained by ADOT under federal guidelines.
- Highways provide major regional connections, supporting long-distance travel and freight movement.

2. State Highways

- State and U.S. routes are maintained by ADOT.
- State highways provide intercity connectivity and often form key corridors for economic activity and tourism.

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ROADWAYS

3. **Local Municipal Roads**
    - Roads within cities and towns are maintained by their respective municipalities.
    - Municipal roads provide local connectivity, linking neighborhoods, schools, commercial centers, and public facilities.

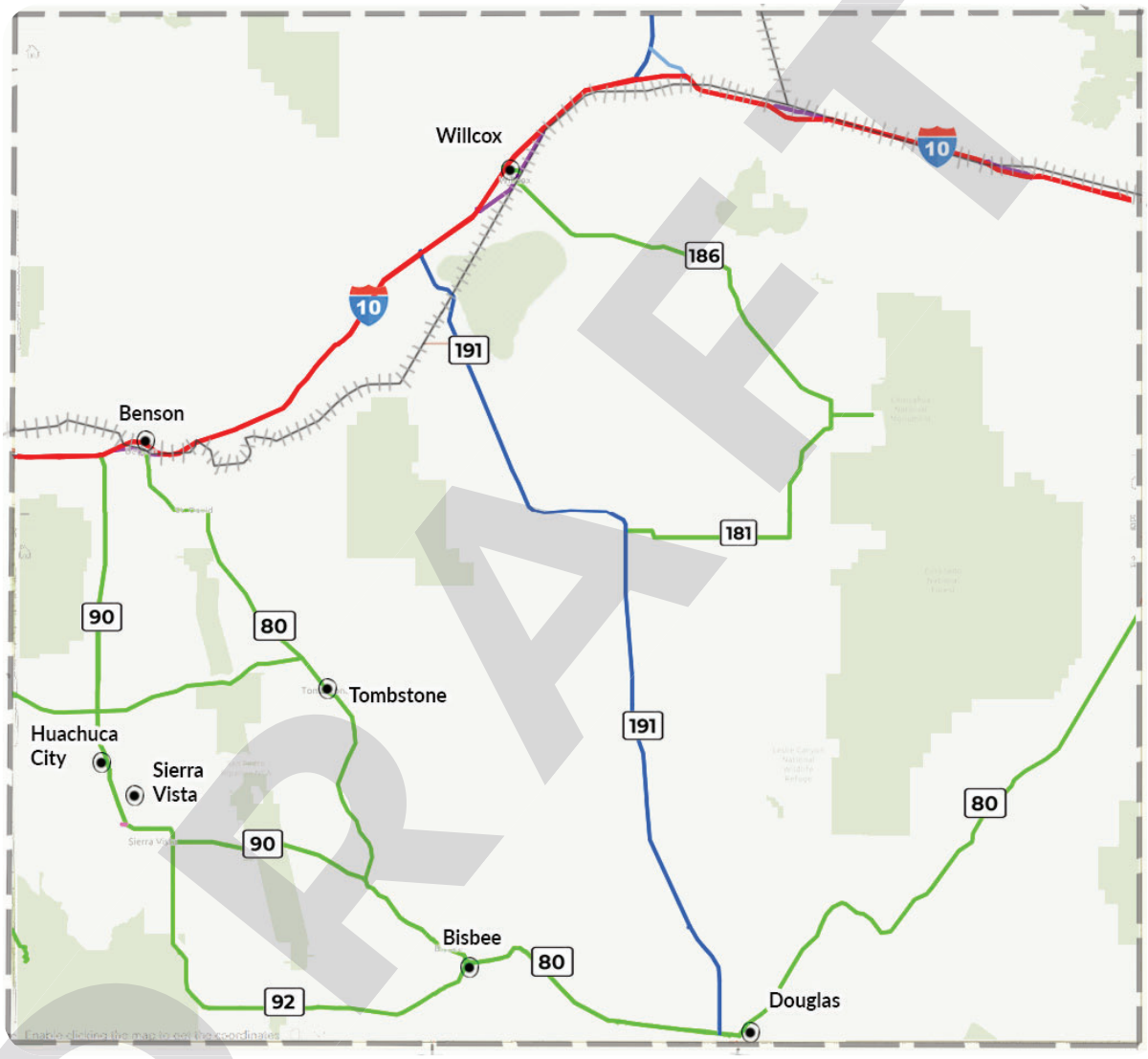
4. **County Roads:** Cochise County maintains a network of public roads outside incorporated areas. These can be divided into two categories:
    - County-maintained roads: The county performs routine maintenance, including pothole repairs, street cleaning, and minor improvements.
    - Public roads not accepted into the County system: These roads are legally public but ineligible for County maintenance unless and until they are formally accepted into the County roadway system. Unimproved roads in this category may remain unimproved until:
        - » They are formally accepted into the county maintenance system by the Board of Supervisors, or
        - » A Road Improvement District (RID) or Road Improvement and Maintenance District (RIMD) is established to assume responsibility over their maintenance.

5. **Private Roads and Access Easements**
    - Privately owned roads are maintained by the property owner or a private entity, such as a homeowner's association.
    - These roads primarily serve internal access needs and are not eligible for county maintenance unless they are officially added to the public road system.



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MAP 12: STATE (ADOT) AND FEDERAL (FHWA) ROADS

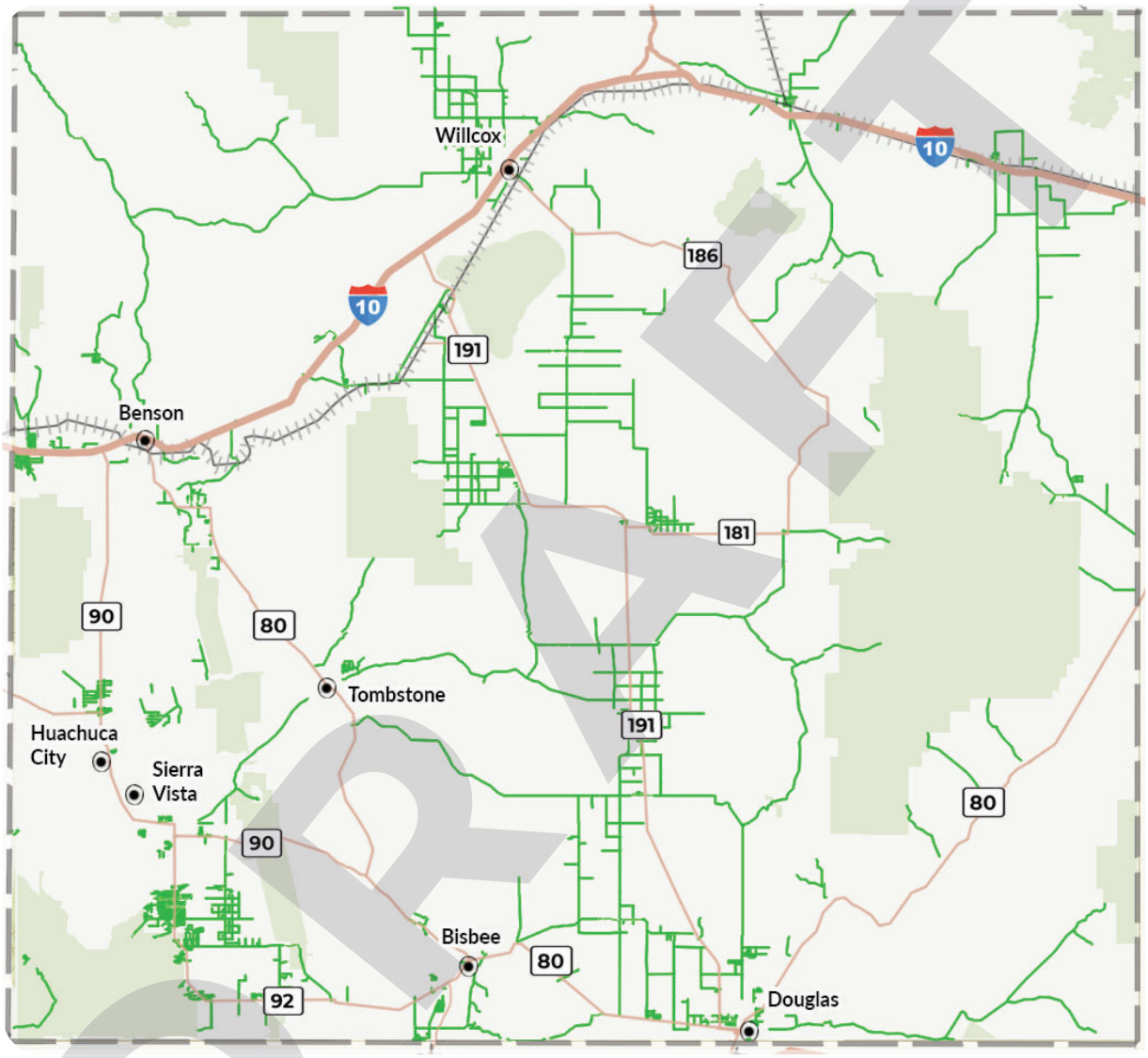


- Interstate (Federal Highway Administration)
- US Route (ADOT)
- US Alternate Route (ADOT)
- State Route (ADOT)
- Business Route (ADOT)

Please see https://azdot.gov/mapstion for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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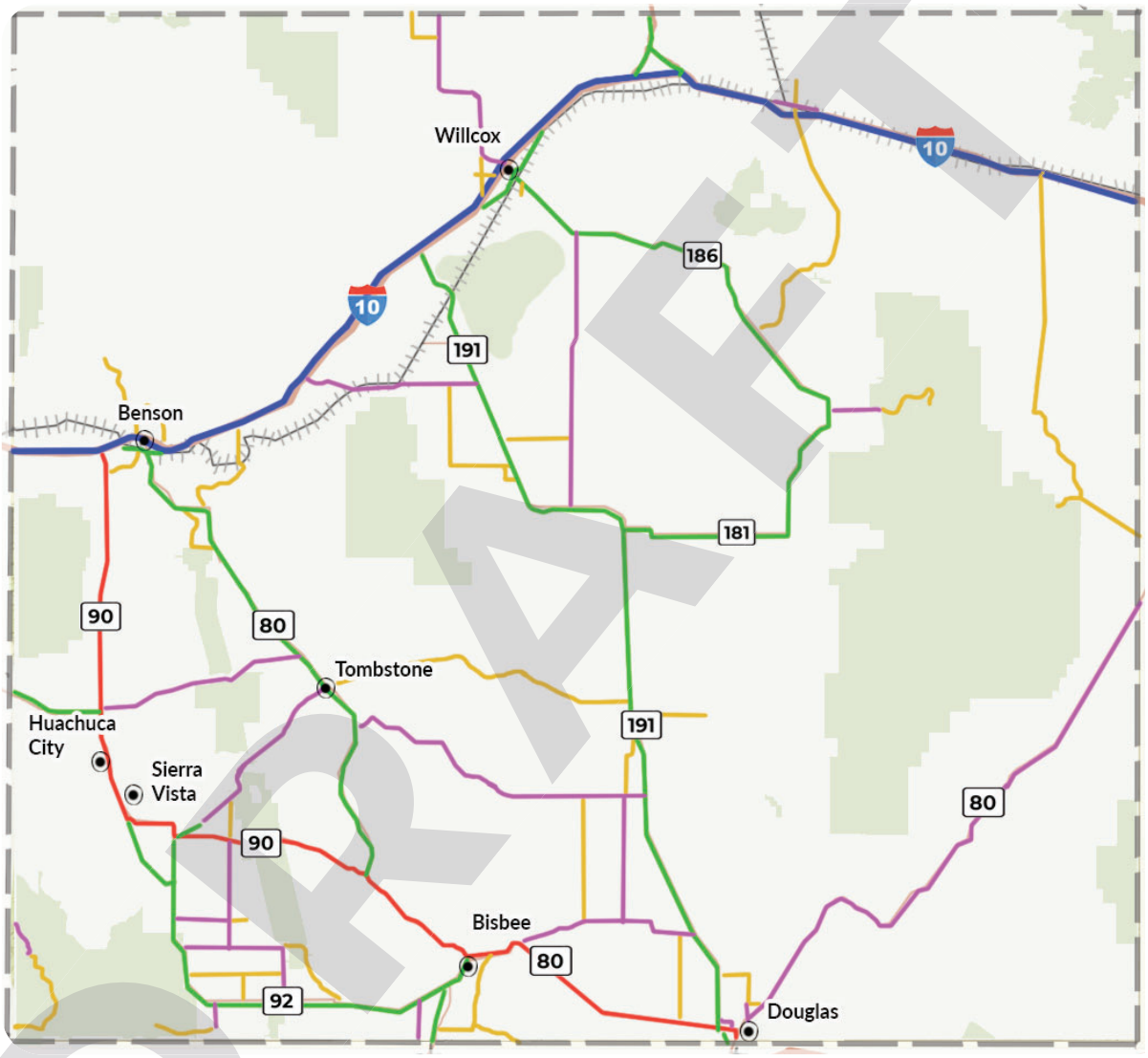
MAP 13: COUNTY MAINTAINED ROADS



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Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

MAP 14: ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS



- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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RAILROADS

Railroads have played a central role in Cochise County's settlement, commerce, and countywide connectivity. The Gadsden Purchase of 1853 provided a southern route for a transcontinental railroad, supporting the growth of communities such as Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, and Tombstone. While most corridors are inactive, preserving them through rail-banking or adaptive reuse offers long-term mobility and economic options.



SAN PEDRO & SOUTHWESTERN RAILROAD (SPSR)

The SPSR operated a line from Benson to Paul Spur (≈67 miles) and the Bisbee Branch (≈5.6 miles).

- In 2006, the Surface Transportation Board authorized abandonment of approximately 76.2 miles of the SPSR line due to limited freight demand.
- Following abandonment, tracks and infrastructure were removed, and the right-of-way largely returned to private ownership, though some portions remain under public or conservation ownership.

MEXICO–SONORA RAILROAD

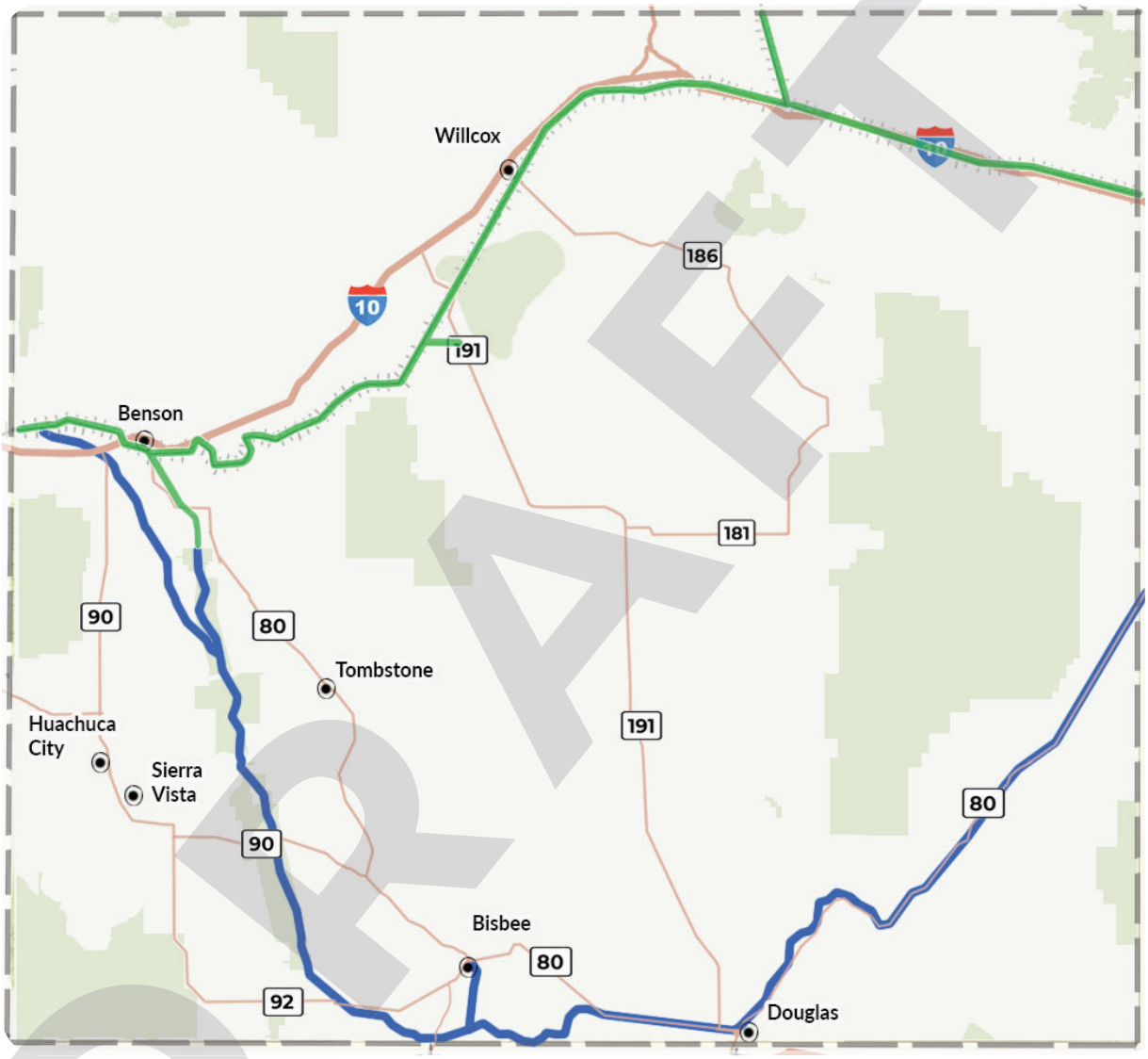
Cochise County historically connected to cross-border rail operations, notably the Mexico–Sonora Railroad, linking U.S. rail networks with Sonora, Mexico. While most of these connections are inactive, they remain part of the county's heritage and present future tourism potential.

PASSENGER RAIL AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Cochise County has passenger rail service only at Benson via Amtrak. Historically, lines like the San Pedro Valley Railroad, have primarily served freight. Looking forward, reinvigoration of freight rail lines could support the new Port of Entry by providing efficient, high-capacity connections for commercial goods, reducing reliance on highway transport, and enhancing cross-border economic competitiveness. Expanded freight service may also facilitate tourism and broader economic development. The County will continue to monitor state and federal rail planning to remain prepared for potential improvements in both freight and passenger rail connectivity.

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MAP 15: ACTIVE AND ABANDONED RAILROAD



Active Railroad

Abandoned Railroad

Source: Arizona State Transportation Board. (n.d.). Arizona State Transportation Board GIS Map Viewer. Retrieved from https://stb.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit in Cochise County is concentrated in urban areas, with a mix of fixed-route and demand-response services. Cities including Sierra Vista, Douglas, Benson, and Bisbee operate fixed-route systems, while Willcox and Huachuca City provide demand-response services.

COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT SERVICES

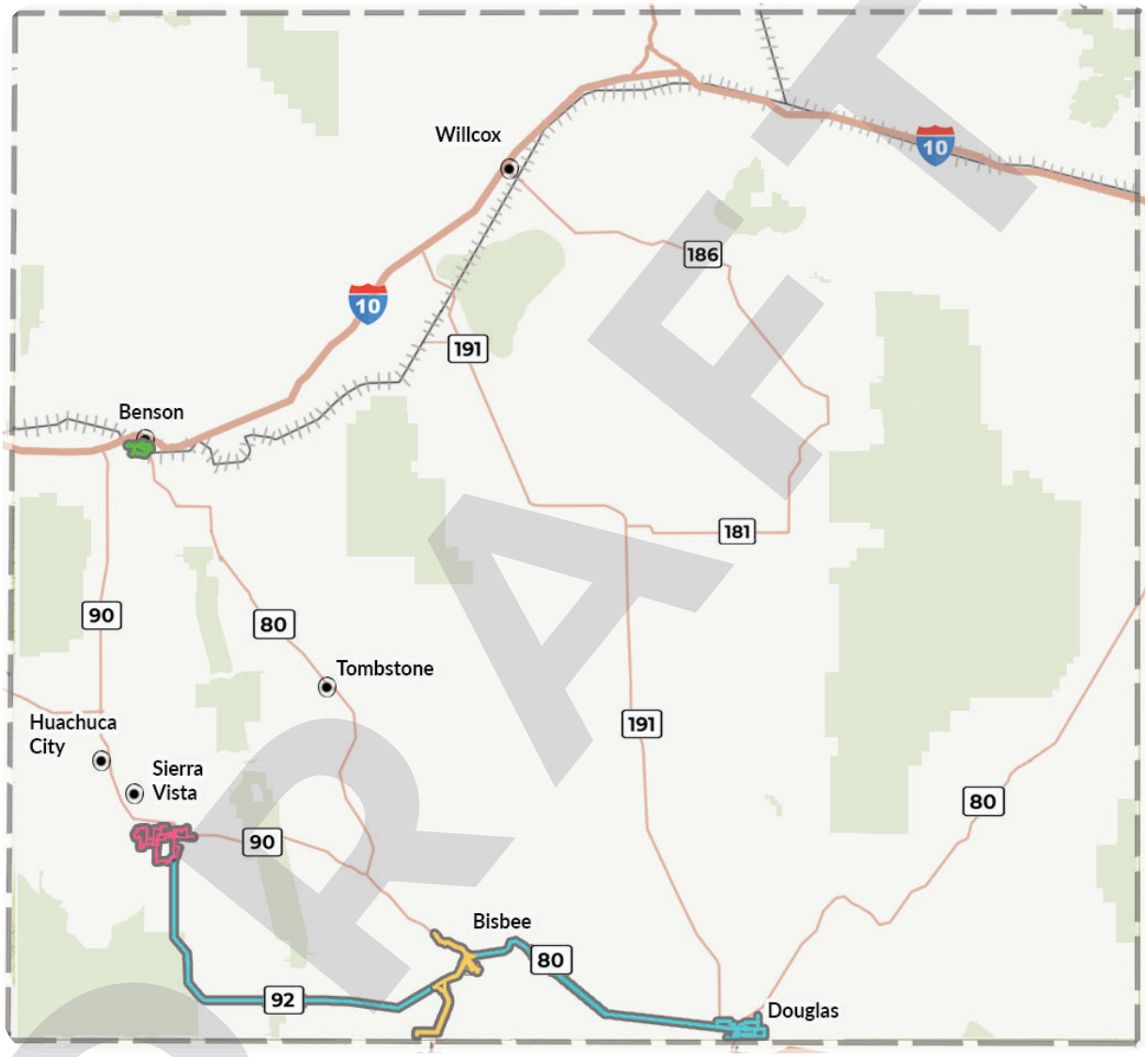
- **Cochise Connection:** Bus service linking Bisbee, Douglas, and Sierra Vista, connecting medical centers, shopping, downtown districts, and Cochise College. Buses have bike racks and Wi-Fi; seniors and riders with disabilities ride free.
- **Vista Transit (Sierra Vista):** Fixed-route and para transit service covering employment centers, Fort Huachuca, shopping, and medical facilities.
- **Douglas Rides (Douglas):** Fixed-route and para transit service connecting neighborhoods, downtown, schools, shopping, and the U.S.–Mexico Port of Entry.
- **Benson Area Transit (Benson):** Fixed-route and demand-response service, with county connections for trips outside the city.
- **Bisbee Bus (Bisbee):** Small fixed-route service linking neighborhoods, downtown, schools, and healthcare; demand-response available.
- **Willcox and Huachuca City:** Reservation-based demand-response services connecting residents to shopping, healthcare, and employment.

COORDINATION AND PLANNING

SEAGO supports transit planning, funding coordination, and compliance with federal regulations. County systems are funded through a mix of federal and state grants, municipal budgets, and user fares.

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MAP 16: TRANSIT ROUTES



- Benson Area Transit (BAT)
- City of Bisbee
- City of Douglas (Cochise Connection)
- City of Sierra Vista

Source: Arizona Geographic Information Council. (n.d.). Sun Cloud Data Hub. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from https://suncloud.azgeo.az.gov/

Please see https://suncloud.azgeo.az.gov/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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AIRPORTS



There are nine airports in Cochise County that serve various aviation needs, from general aviation to military operations. Below is a brief overview of these facilities:

1. Benson Municipal Airport – City-owned, general aviation facility with a full-service Fixed Base Operator (FBO).
2. Cochise County Airport – County-owned, general aviation; included in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.
3. Tombstone Municipal Airport – City-owned, general aviation serving visitors and private pilots.
4. Bisbee Municipal Airport – City-owned, general aviation managed by an Airport Advisory Committee.
5. Cochise College Airport – Operated by Cochise College, primarily for pilot training and aviation programs.
6. Bisbee-Douglas International Airport – County-owned, general aviation; built during WWII as a bomber training base, transferred to the County in 1949.
7. Tribal Air Airport – Privately owned near McNeal, used by New Tribes Mission for aviation operations.
8. Douglas Municipal Airport – City-owned, general aviation; historically the first U.S. "international" airport, currently partially offered for development while remaining public-use.
9. Libby Airfield / Sierra Vista Municipal Airport – Joint-use facility for general aviation and U.S. Army operations at Fort Huachuca.

COUNTY OWNED AIRPORTS

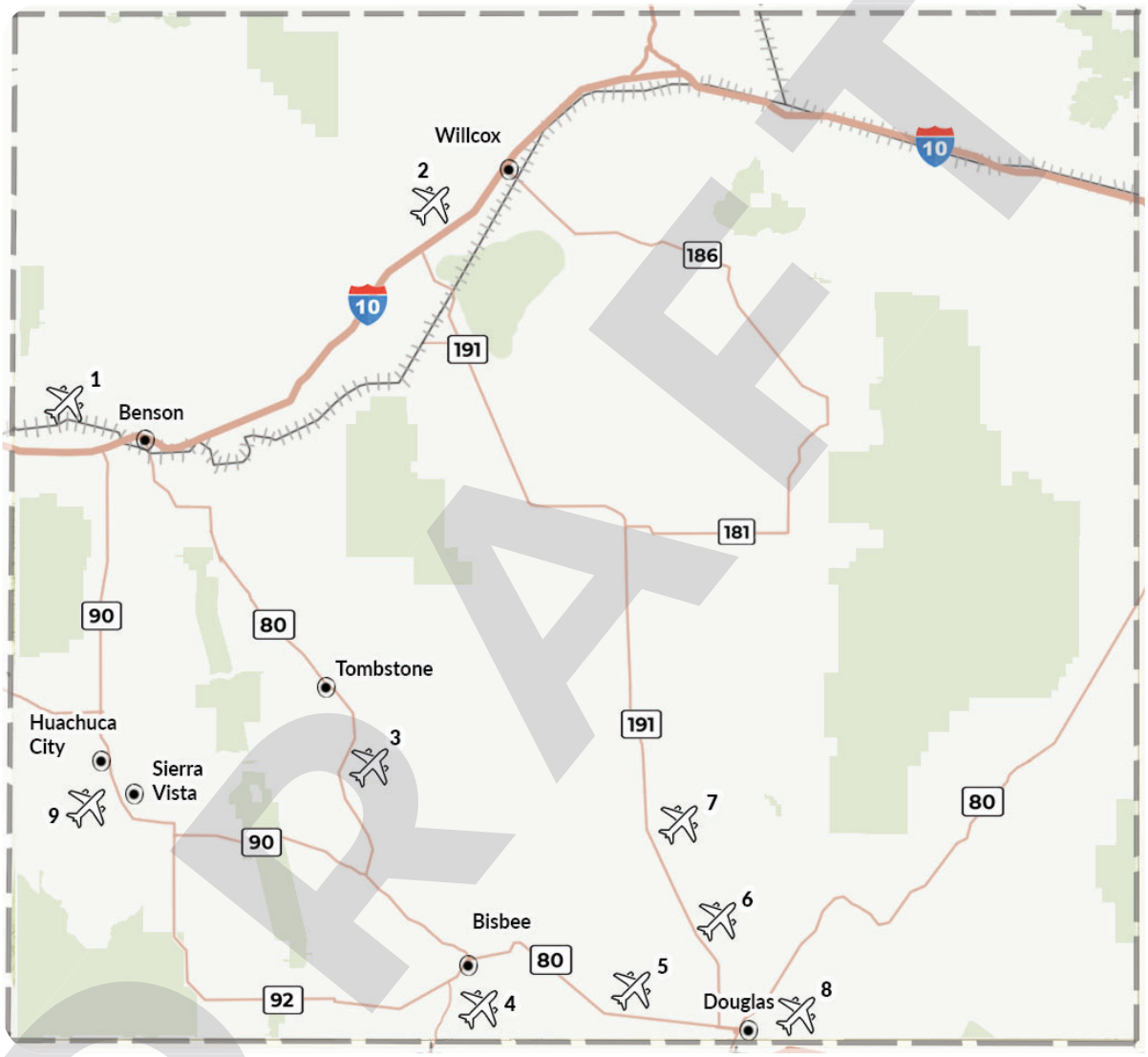
» **Cochise County Airport** – supports general aviation and flight training.
Importance: Drives local economy and builds aviation workforce.

» **Bisbee-Douglas International Airport** – WWII-era bomber training base.
Importance: Supports general aviation, emergency response, and business connectivity.

Both airports serve as critical hubs for commerce, public safety, and connectivity.

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MAP 17: AIRPORTS



1 - Benson Municipal Airport
2 - Cochise County Airport
3 - Tombstone Municipal Airport
4 - Bisbee Municipal Airport
5 - Cochise College Airport
6 - Bisbee-Douglas International Airport
7 - Tribal Air Airport
8 - Douglas Municipal Airport
9 - Libby Airfield/Sierra Vista Municipal Airport

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ROUTES



Cochise County supports a growing network of bicycle and pedestrian routes that enhance mobility, recreation, and multimodal transportation options. In Sierra Vista, dedicated bike lanes, shared-use paths, and multi-use trails connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, and commercial areas, including over 30 miles of multi-use paths for commuting and recreation.

In rural areas, bicycle infrastructure is limited but expanding. U.S. Bicycle Route 90 (USBR 90) runs east-west through Benson, Sierra Vista, Tombstone, and Bisbee, linking to state and national networks. County routes often use existing highways, offering long-distance cycling and access to scenic and historic sites.

Pedestrian facilities are most developed in urban centers, featuring sidewalks, crosswalks, stairways (such as Bisbee's iconic hillside stairs), and multi-use paths that link neighborhoods to schools, parks, commercial areas, and transit.

SUN CORRIDOR TRAIL

The Sun Corridor Trail is a long-range, multi-use corridor concept of approximately 1,500 miles, stretching from Douglas, Arizona (at the U.S.–Mexico border) to Las Vegas, Nevada. Within Cochise County, the trail is envisioned to pass through Douglas, Naco, Bisbee, Sierra Vista, Tombstone, and Benson, connecting to broader trail systems such as the Chuck Huckelberry Loop near Tucson.

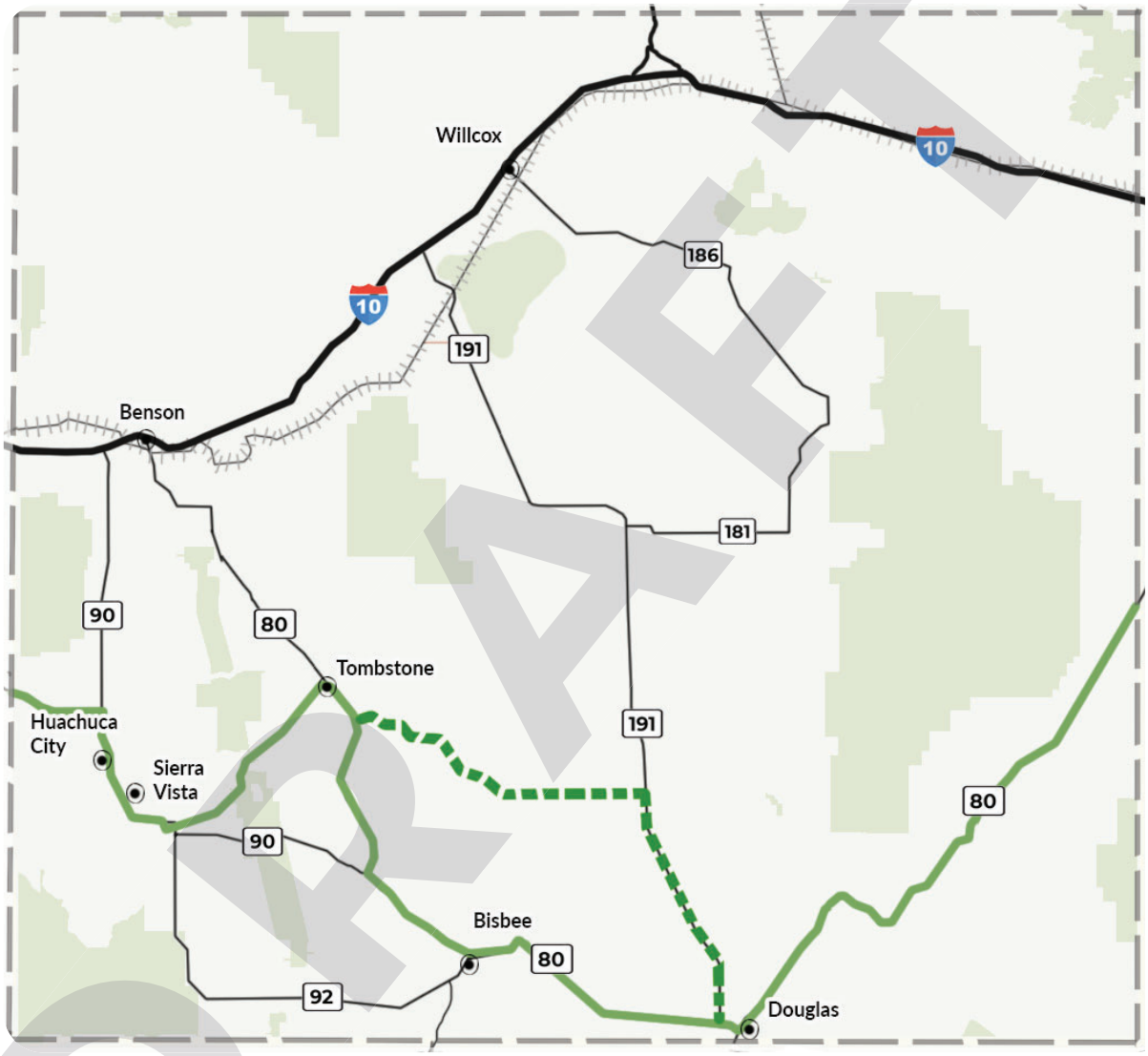
Designed for non-vehicular travel—bicycling, walking, and horseback riding—the trail combines existing and proposed alignments to create safe, separated pathways while celebrating Cochise County's heritage and natural landscapes. Conceptual alignments have been developed, and several segments are already funded or partially built, including a Bisbee segment supported by a public-private partnership that brought together city, county, state, and nonprofit stakeholders.

In the Bisbee–Naco area, implementation and local connectivity are supported by adopted plans including the Bisbee Area Mobility Master Plan and the Bisbee Community Connections Plan.

Beyond recreation, the Sun Corridor Trail functions as a multimodal transportation corridor and economic asset, supporting alternative mobility, tourism, and local business activity. Incorporating the trail into County land-use and transportation planning can enhance regional connectivity, public health, and the County's rural character.

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MAP 18: U.S. BICYCLE ROUTE 90



Designated Route

Planned Segment

Ride with GPS. (2025, September 25). https://ridewithgps.com/routes/26834345

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COUNTY ROAD MAINTENANCE

The Highway Division of Cochise County Public Works is responsible for constructing, maintaining, and repairing all county roads that have been formally accepted for county maintenance by the Board of Supervisors. As of the drafting of this document, this includes 680 miles of paved roads and 761 miles of dirt roads (see Map 13).

Funding for road maintenance in Cochise County relies heavily on the Arizona Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF). HURF distributes funds collected from fuel taxes, vehicle license fees, and other transportation-related sources to counties and municipalities. These funds are legally designated for the construction and maintenance of the county's surface transportation system.

Over the past ten years, road construction and maintenance have become increasingly expensive and challenging due to rising material costs, state-level funding reallocations, inflation, and increased road use associated with population growth. While the Board of Supervisors does not control the amount of HURF received each year, it does decide how these funds are spent within the County.

The current dirt road grading schedule is:

- Every four weeks: Cascabel Road and Geronimo Trail (up to Milepost 13.5).
- Every nine to twelve weeks: All other roads, excluding primitive roads.
- Once or twice per year: Primitive roads.

"Primitive roads" are substandard dirt roads established before June 13, 1975, prior to the creation of county road construction standards. Roads built after this date must meet publicly funded construction standards. Primitive roads are signed to warn the public of their substandard conditions. There are 255 miles of primitive roads in Cochise County.

PARTNERSHIPS & IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Property owners along eligible public roads may enter into a public-private partnership with the county to upgrade a road from a dirt surface to a chip-sealed surface. Eligible roads must be open and in active use and have direct access to a county-maintained road or another road maintained by a governmental entity. The maximum length for any single project generally shall not exceed one mile. This program facilitates a one-time improvement and does not obligate the county to assume ongoing maintenance unless the road is formally accepted into the county's maintenance system through established procedures.

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PARTNERSHIPS & IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

ROAD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
A Road Improvement District (RID) is a special tax district established to finance, construct, or maintain roads within a designated area. It is a community-driven process, enabling property owners to collaboratively fund and implement road enhancements in their neighborhood or community. To form an RID, at least 51% of property owners within the proposed district must agree to incur the necessary expenses. Once established, each parcel is assessed an equitable share of the improvement costs, which is reflected on the parcel's tax bill.

PLANNING & COORDINATION

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally mandated and funded transportation policy-making entities established for urbanized areas with populations that exceed 50,000. The primary purpose of MPOs is to ensure that federal transportation funds are allocated based on a comprehensive, continuous, and cooperative planning process.

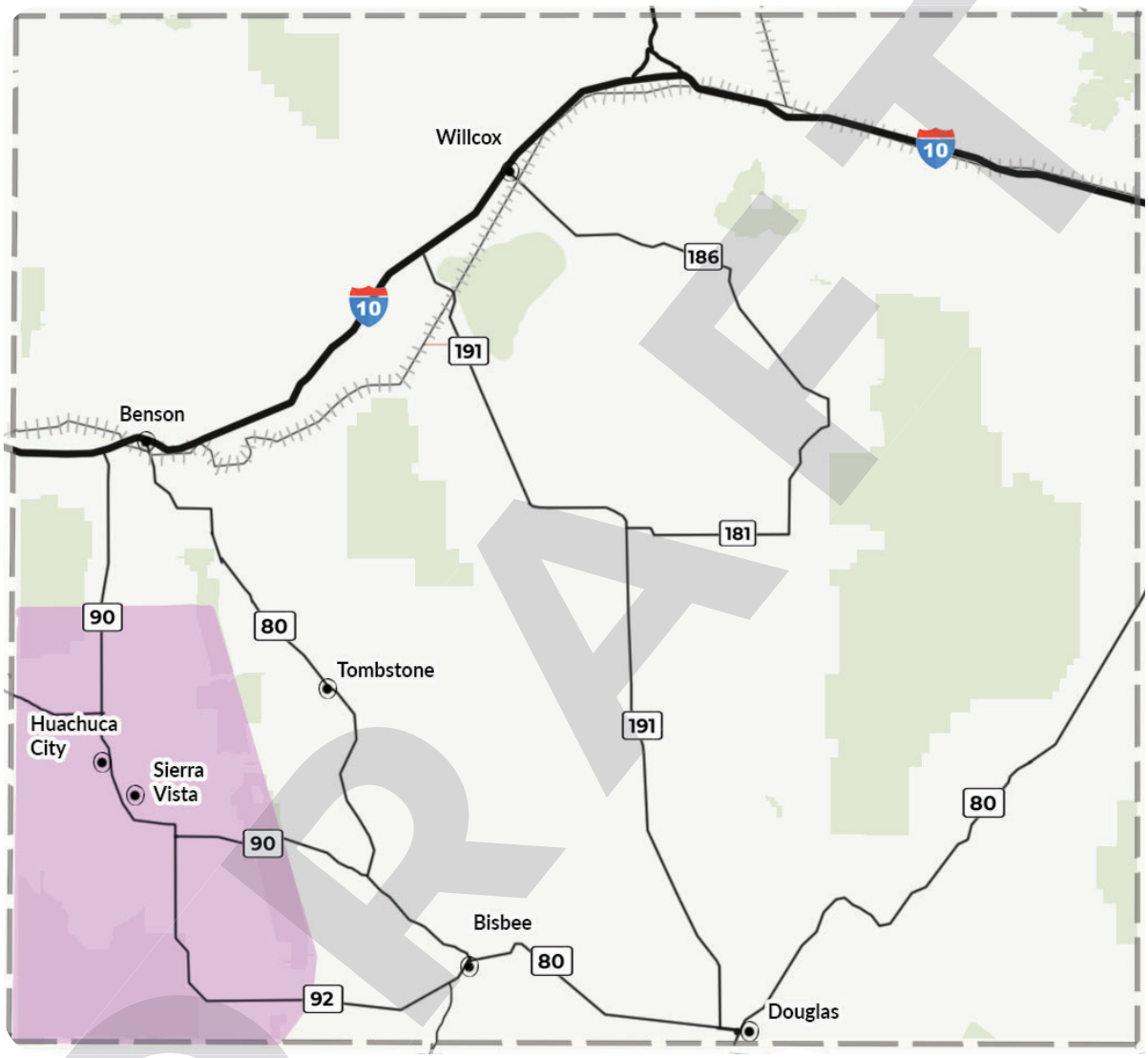
The Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO) is the designated transportation organization for the southwestern region of Cochise County. It is a policy and planning agency serving the a planning area that encompasses 614 square miles and includes the city of Sierra Vista, the town of Huachuca City and portions of urbanizing Cochise County, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Transportation (see Map 19).[8]

Both the Transportation Improvements Program (TIP), which is a 4-5 year program, and the Long-Range Transportation Plan, which spans a 20-year horizon, includes several transportation projects that benefit residents within the SVMPO service boundary.

[8] Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization. (n.d.). About SVMPO. https://www.svmpo.org/

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MAP 19: SVMPO BOUNDARIES



Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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CIRCULATION GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 1: Preserving Rails, Promoting Mobility

- Policy 1: Maintain an inventory of active, abandoned, and inactive rail corridors to support transportation planning decision-making.
- Policy 2: Evaluate abandoned rail corridors for rail-banking, trails, or utility uses while preserving the potential for future rail service.
- Policy 3: Coordinate with rail operators and relevant stakeholders to support freight connectivity and economic development.
- Policy 4: Preserve historic rail corridors and infrastructure to promote heritage tourism.
- Policy 5: Monitor passenger rail studies for potential future connections in Cochise County.

GOAL 2: Aviation for Growth and Access

These policies address civilian aviation facilities and services; military flight operations and training routes are under federal jurisdiction and are not regulated through this Comprehensive Plan.

- Policy 1: Maintain and enhance county-owned airports to support general aviation, emergency services, and economic development.
- Policy 2: Coordinate as appropriate with municipal, military, and educational airports to ensure safe, efficient, and integrated aviation services throughout Cochise County.
- Policy 3: Encourage airport improvements that support training, tourism, and business aviation while minimizing impacts on surrounding land uses.
- Policy 4: Work with federal, state, and agency partners, including the FAA, to secure funding for maintenance, upgrades, and expansions that meet county needs.
- Policy 5: Keep master plans for county-owned airports current to guide improvements, land use compatibility, and investment priorities.

GOAL 3: Move by Foot and Wheel

- Policy 1: Expand and maintain safe, connected bicycle and pedestrian routes throughout urban centers and rural areas to support commuting and recreation.
- Policy 2: Leverage countywide and statewide networks—including U.S. Bicycle Route 90 and the Sun Corridor Trail—to enhance connectivity, long-distance travel, and tourism opportunities.
- Policy 3: Coordinate with local municipalities, the SVMPO, community organizations/not-for-profits, and state and federal partners to secure funding, plan improvements, and integrate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure into the county's transportation system.

GOAL 4: Connect Through Transit

- Policy 1: Maintain and enhance existing

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CIRCULATION GOALS & POLICIES

fixed-route and demand-response services in cities and rural areas, including countywide connections like the Cochise Connection.

- Policy 2: Work with municipalities, SEAGO, and state/federal partners to plan, fund, and expand, as needed, transit services across the county.
- Policy 3: Focus efforts on enhancing transit access to better serve seniors, riders with disabilities, and low-income residents.
- Policy 4: Coordinate with municipal and international partners to increase transit connections between Cochise County and Sonora, Mexico, supporting commerce, tourism, and workforce travel.

GOAL 5: Paving the Way Forward

- Policy 1: Establish a regular schedule to comprehensively evaluate all roadways within county maintenance for safety, condition, and functional need.
- Policy 2: Prioritize maintenance and upgrades on county roads using a framework that weighs safety, condition, traffic, connectivity, and funding opportunities.
- Policy 3: Implement cost-effective improvements, including grading, resurfacing, and chip sealing, with funding from HURF, grants, and partnerships.
- Policy 4: Prioritize paving of unpaved roads in the urbanized area as well as designated growth areas (A-C) to improve safety, access, air quality, and compatibility with surrounding urban development.
- Policy 5: Develop and maintain a GIS-based inventory and ranking system for paving projects that evaluates factors such as land use intensity, emergency service access, school and transit bus routes, and connectivity to city roads. Use this system, in conjunction with existing pavement management services, to guide equitable and data-driven prioritization of paving investments.

GOAL 6: Driving Improvements Through Partnerships

- Policy 1: Support public-private partnerships that allow property owners to upgrade eligible roads, while ensuring long-term maintenance responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Policy 2: Facilitate the creation of Road Improvement Districts (RIDs) and Road Improvement and Maintenance Districts (RIMDs) to fund and implement local road projects collaboratively.

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WATER RESOURCE ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The water resource element plays a crucial role in managing and ensuring the responsible use of water resources. Its primary purposes include:

- Resource Management: It outlines strategies for managing water supply and demand to ensure a reliable and adequate supply for various uses, including residential drinking water, agriculture, and industrial.
- Conservation: It sets guidelines for conserving water resources by promoting efficient usage, reducing waste, and implementing practices that protect and preserve water quality.
- Quality Protection: It includes measures to protect water quality from pollutants and contaminants, ensuring that water sources remain safe and clean for all uses.
- Resilience and Adaptation: It helps the County prepare for and reduce the impacts of changing environmental conditions and other factors that may affect water availability and quality, supporting the County's ability to adapt to future challenges.

More specifically, the county is tasked with identifying the following:

(a) The known legally and physically available surface water, groundwater and effluent supplies.

(b) The demand for water that will result from future growth projected in the comprehensive plan, added to existing uses.

(c) An analysis of how the demand for water that will result from future growth projected in the comprehensive plan will be served by the water supplies identified by all legally and physically available water supply or a plan to obtain additional necessary water supplies, if needed.

Because water availability is a key constraint on long-term growth and economic stability in Cochise County, the policies in this element guide land use and infrastructure decisions toward sustainable supplies and reduced net groundwater overdraft.

REGULATORY & PLANNING CONTEXT

Arizona's statewide water-management framework guides how Cochise County evaluates water supply, water quality, and long-term reliability. The County coordinates with the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), which oversees groundwater regulation, surface water rights, well permitting, and the administration of Active Management Areas (AMAs).

In Cochise County, ADWR administers groundwater management through two Active Management Areas—the Willcox and Douglas AMAs—where regulatory oversight includes groundwater use reporting, conservation requirements, well permitting, and Assured Water Supply determinations for new subdivisions. The County also coordinates

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REGULATORY & PLANNING CONTEXT

with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), which oversees drinking water standards, wastewater treatment and reuse, and aquifer protection programs related to water quality. In addition, data from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Arizona Geological Survey (AZGS) support County water planning through groundwater monitoring, satellite-based estimates of agricultural irrigation water use, and tracking of land subsidence and earth fissuring associated with long-term groundwater declines. Under ARS 11-806.01 and Board of Supervisors Resolution 08-20, Cochise County must ensure that new subdivisions demonstrate an Adequate Water Supply. This can be achieved either through an ADWR determination or through a commitment from a designated water provider. For subdivisions within an Active Management Area, additional state requirements apply, including Assured Water Supply requirements administered by ADWR, which are more stringent than adequacy. These requirements govern where and how residential growth can occur and are central to ensuring reliable water availability for future development.

Portions of the county also lie within AMAs, where ADWR administers groundwater management requirements, including conservation programs and well permitting, and where additional management measures are implemented over time. These requirements can affect agricultural operations, new development, and other water uses, shaping growth and resource planning within AMA boundaries. Outside AMAs, groundwater pumping is generally subject to fewer state restrictions, underscoring the significance of AMA management in addressing long-term groundwater availability in those areas.

County water planning is also informed by multi-jurisdictional programs. The Sierra Vista Sub-Watershed Water Conservation and Management Plan, adopted in 2006, guides water conservation efforts within the sub-watershed through coordination among local partners. The Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network (CCRN), established in 2015, coordinates recharge and conservation projects across Cochise County, including stormwater capture, effluent reuse, and managed aquifer recharge. Since inception, CCRN projects have generated over 41,000 acre-feet of cumulative water benefits. At the same time, while this represents a significant contribution, groundwater withdrawals in some basins exceed recharge by a much larger margin, and these efforts alone do not fully offset long-term overdraft.

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY

Cochise County relies on a combination of surface water, groundwater, and effluent to meet residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial, and ecological needs. This inventory identifies current water sources, their uses, and ongoing management programs,

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY

providing a foundation for planning future water supply and conservation strategies. Managing these sources responsibly is essential to supporting growth, maintaining resource reliability, and enhancing resilience to drought and flooding.

SURFACE WATER

San Pedro River: The San Pedro River flows north from Sonora, Mexico, through Cochise County, forming one of the last major undammed riparian corridors in the Southwest. Its flow depends heavily on groundwater, which feeds the river and supports local agriculture, municipal water supplies, and the health of plants and wildlife. Historically, recharge and conservation projects have helped maintain both river flow and aquifer levels.

Parker Canyon Lake: Located in the Huachuca Mountains and managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Parker Canyon Lake is a man-made reservoir supporting recreation, fishing, wildlife habitat, and local aquifer recharge.

Willcox Playa: This large, seasonal dry lake bed in the Sulphur Springs Valley is a key hydrologic feature that can contribute to localized groundwater recharge under certain conditions and provides critical habitat for migratory birds, though it does not supply water directly.

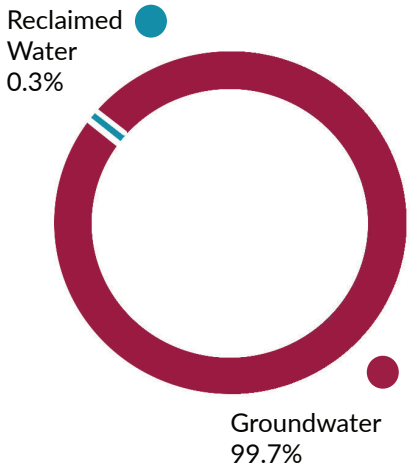
Whitewater Draw: Managed for habitat conservation and public recreation, the seasonal wetlands of Whitewater Draw contribute to aquifer recharge and provide important ecological benefits.

Other Surface Waters: Smaller reservoirs, stock ponds, and ephemeral streams—including minor tributaries from the Huachuca and Mule Mountains, upper Babocomari River, and southern Cienega Creek—support ranching, limited irrigation, and local wildlife, while contributing incrementally to groundwater recharge.

GROUNDWATER

Groundwater is the primary source for most residential, agriculture, commercial, and industrial uses in Cochise

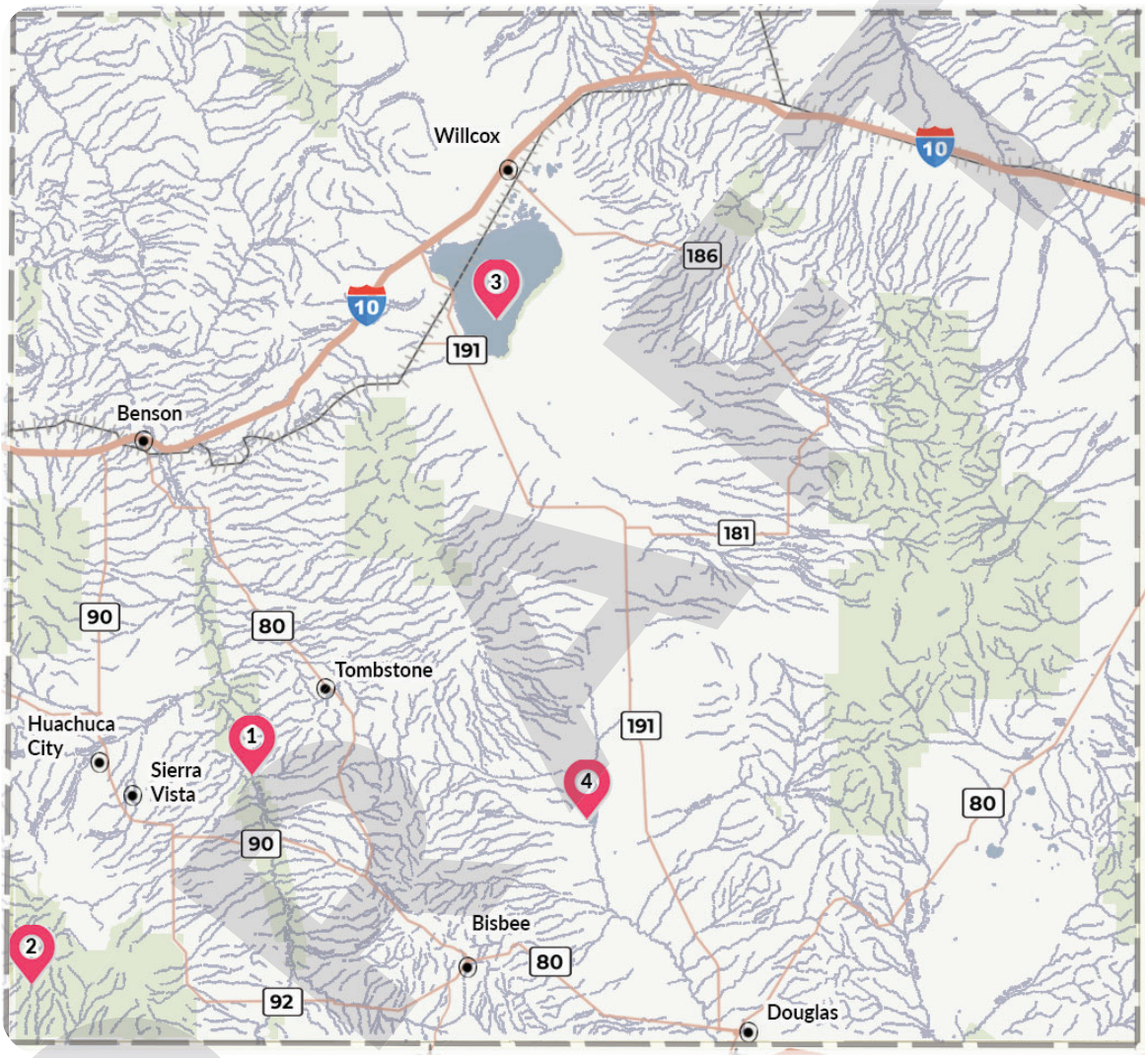
Figure 9: Sources of Water In Cochise County [8]



[8] Water Resources Research Center (WRRC), University of Arizona. (September 2022). Arizona Water Factsheet – Cochise County: Water in Cochise County. Retrieved from https://wrrc.arizona.edu/sites/wrrc.arizona.edu/files/attachment/Cochise-factsheet.pdf

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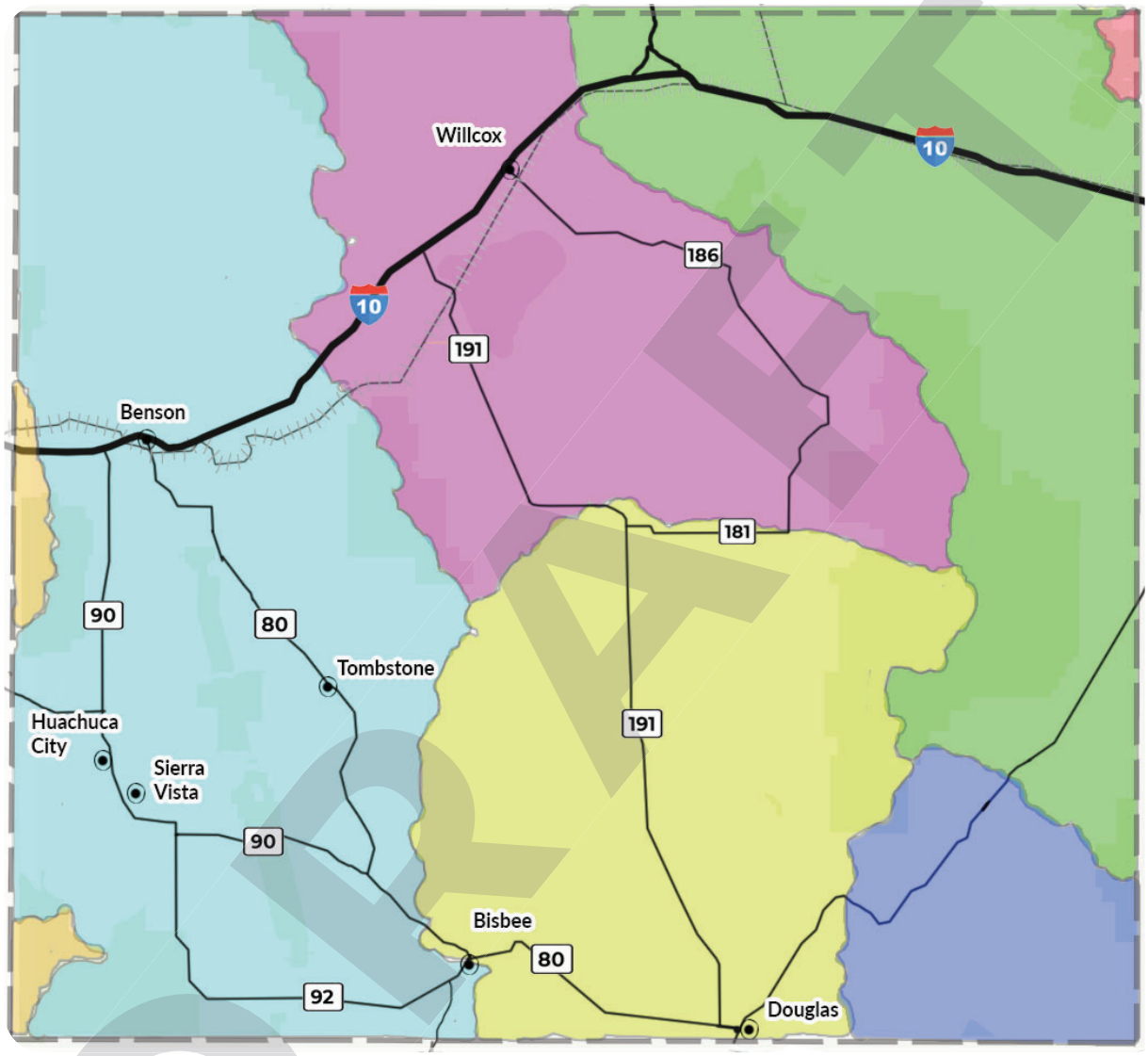
MAP 20: SURFACE WATER



1 - San Pedro River
2 - Parker Canyon Lake
3 - Willcox Playa
4 - Whitewater Draw

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

MAP 21: WATERSHED BOUNDARIES



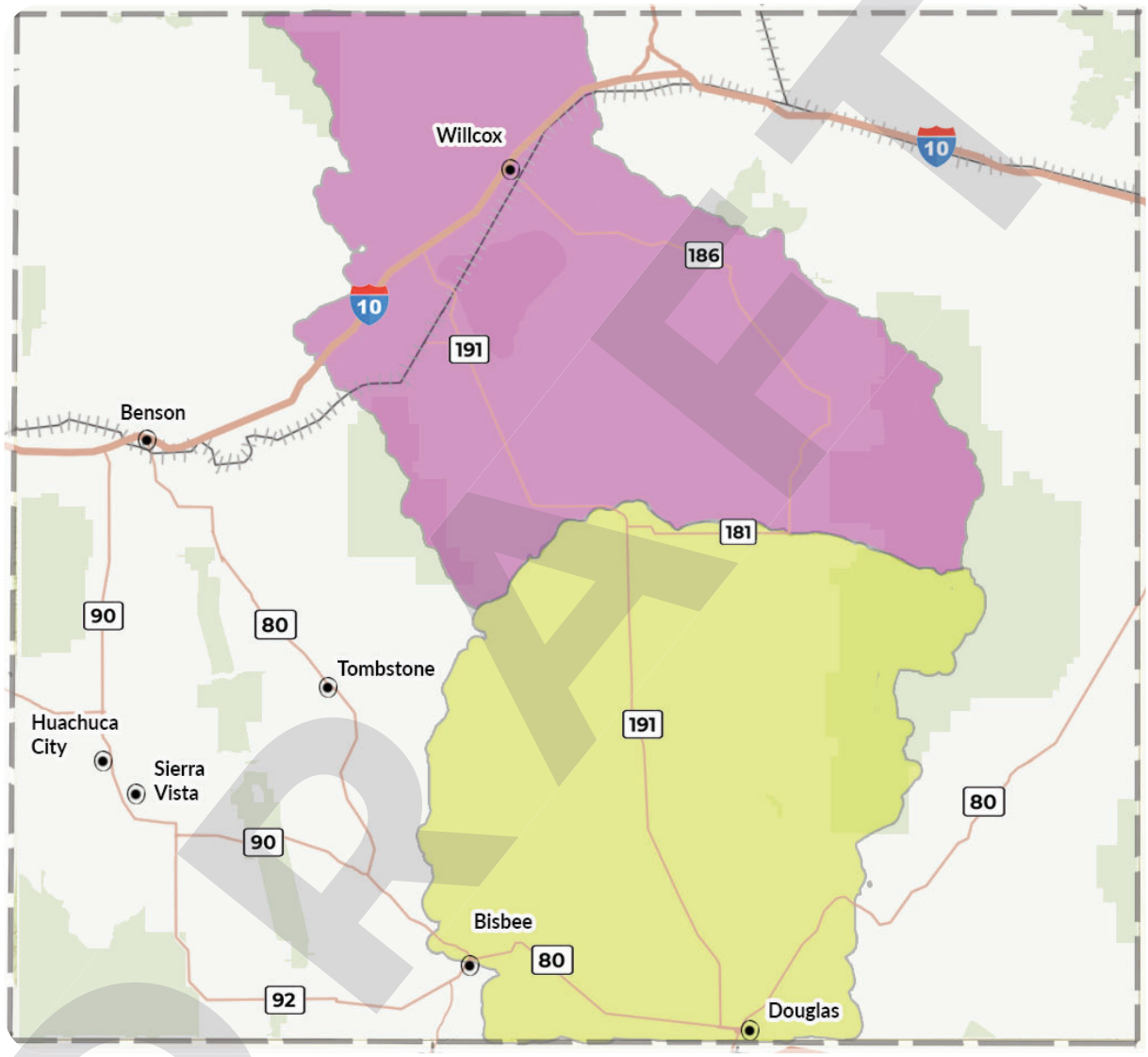
Safford
Duncan Valley
Willcox
Douglas
San Bernardino
San Pedro
San Raphael

Arizona Department of Water Resources. (n.d.). Assured and Adequate Water Supply Map. Retrieved January 29, 2025, from https://azwatermaps.azwater.gov/aaws/

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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MAP 22: ACTIVE WATER MANAGEMENT AREAS



Willcox AMA

Douglas AMA

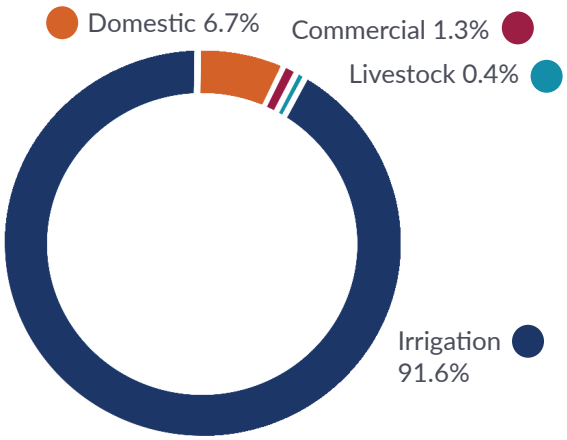
Arizona Department of Water Resources. (n.d.). Assured and Adequate Water Supply Map. Retrieved January 29, 2025, from https://azwatermaps.azwater.gov/aaws/

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY

Figure 10: Use of Water In Cochise County [9]



Approximately 92% of all water use in Cochise County is for agricultural irrigation, while municipal (domestic and commercial) uses account for about 8%. Of the municipal water used, more than half is applied outdoors for landscape irrigation.[9]

County. Approximately 99.7% of total water use comes from groundwater, with reclaimed water accounting for only 0.3%. Agriculture dominates withdrawals, using roughly 91.6% of total groundwater, highlighting the impact of crop irrigation in local demand.

Major aquifer systems include the Upper San Pedro Basin and the Willcox and Douglas basins in the Sulphur Springs Valley, with smaller aquifers serving outlying areas. Groundwater levels in parts of the county, particularly in the Willcox and Douglas Basins, have declined over time due to pumping exceeding natural recharge. Recharge projects help, but they do not fully offset sustained overdraft in areas with high withdrawal rates. In some areas, groundwater declines have also contributed to land subsidence and earth fissuring, which can permanently reduce aquifer storage and limit recharge potential.

Monitoring by ADWR and local conservation districts tracks these trends. Recharge occurs naturally through precipitation, streams, and flood events, and through managed projects using stormwater or treated effluent.

Because groundwater is so critical, its management is closely tied to future growth, agricultural needs, and long-term sustainability of county water supplies.

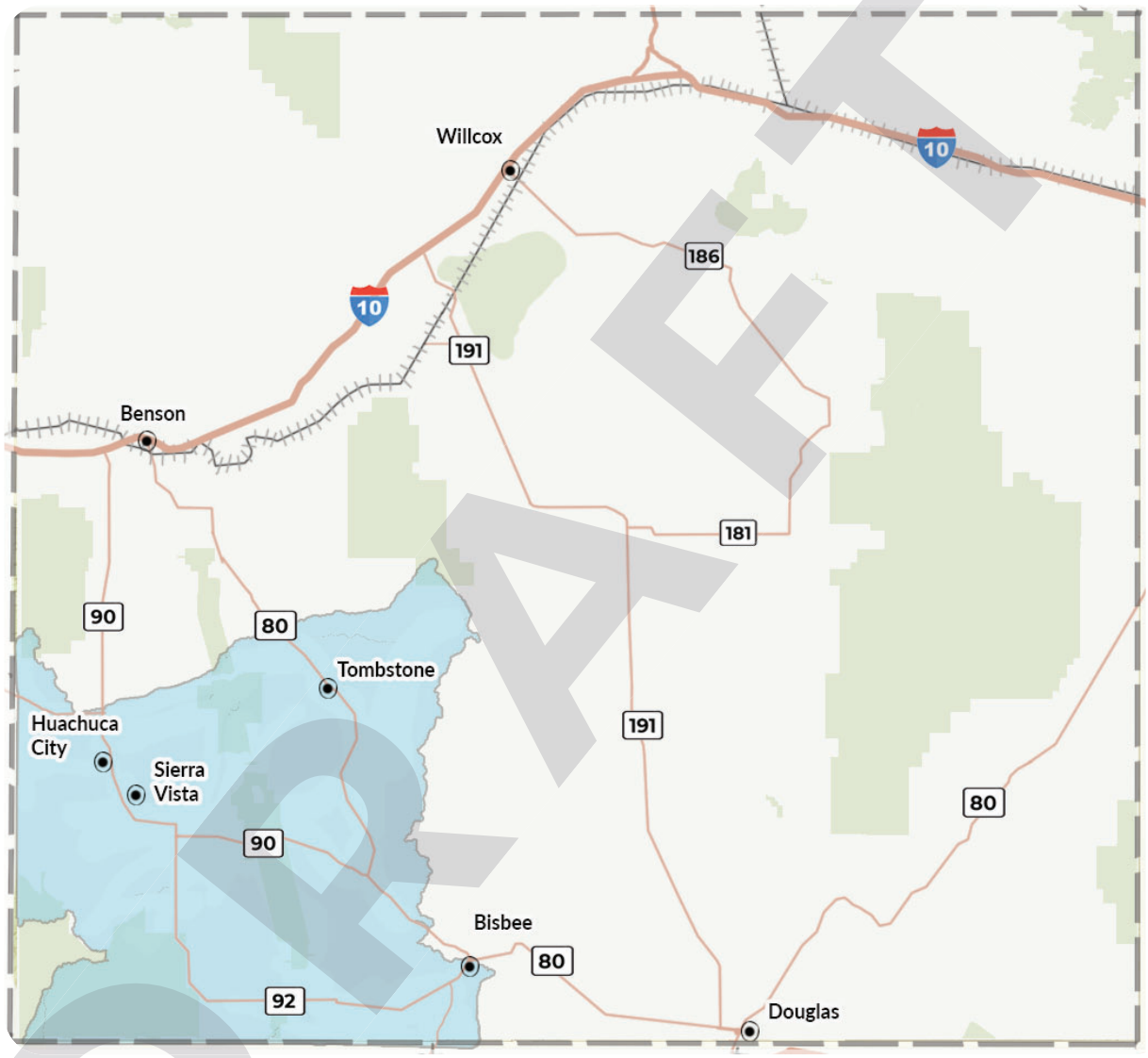
EFFLUENT / RECLAIMED WATER

Treated wastewater provides a supplemental water source. Municipal facilities in Sierra Vista, Benson, and other communities produce effluent reused for irrigation of parks, golf courses, industrial purposes, and managed recharge projects to replenish aquifers and support stream flow. While smaller in volume than groundwater, effluent is important for extending supplies, improving reliability, and reducing pressure on aquifers.

[9] Water Resources Research Center (WRRC), University of Arizona. (September 2022). Arizona Water Factsheet – Cochise County: Water in Cochise County. Retrieved from https://wrrc.arizona.edu/sites/wrrc.arizona.edu/files/attachment/Cochise-factsheet.pdf

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MAP 23: SIERRA VISTA SUB-WATERSHED



Sierra Vista Subwatershed Boundaries

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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WATER DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Although Cochise County is projected to experience very minimal population growth within the ten years, demand for residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial water uses will still increase incrementally. Even modest growth will require additional water to support housing, economic activity, and associated public services.

Water demand is influenced not only by population change, but also by land use patterns, water-use efficiency, and economic activity, underscoring the importance of conservation and demand-management strategies in addition to supply planning.

To meet this demand, the County relies on:

- Groundwater as the primary and most reliable source.
- Surface water where legally and physically available.
- Effluent / reclaimed water to supplement supplies and offset groundwater use.

The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) provides records on legally and physically available supplies, which serve as a foundation for assessing long-term water adequacy.

SUBDIVISION WATER ADEQUACY REQUIREMENTS

In 2008, Cochise County adopted the State's mandatory water adequacy requirements under ARS 11-806.01 and Board Resolution 08-20. As part of subdivision plat approval, the County must ensure that water is legally and physically available to serve new lots. This includes obtaining an Adequate Water Supply determination from ADWR or a commitment from a designated Adequate Water Supply provider. For proposed subdivisions within an Active Management Area, additional state requirements apply, including Assured Water Supply requirements administered by ADWR, which are more stringent than adequacy. Currently, there are four designated providers in Cochise County: the cities of Benson, Douglas, and Willcox, and Pueblo del Sol Water Company.[10] These requirements guide how and where future residential development can occur and ensure long-term reliability of water resources.

MANAGING FUTURE WATER DEMAND

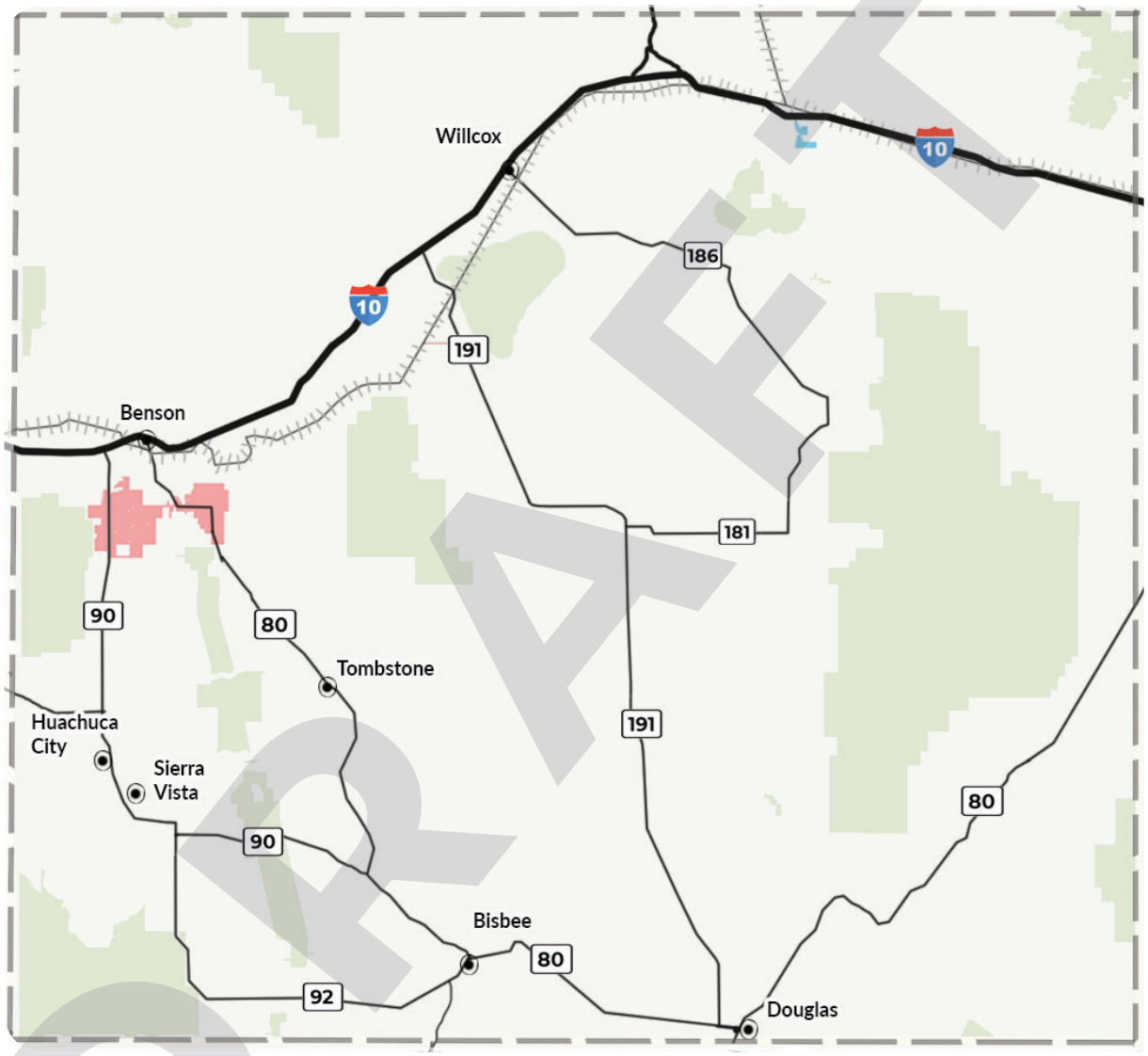
In addition to identifying supplemental water sources, the County recognizes the importance of strategies that reduce net groundwater overdraft over time through conservation, efficiency, reuse, and watershed-based approaches. Future water demand will be addressed through a combination of:

- Maximizing efficient use of existing supplies through conservation and reuse.
- Supporting recharge and watershed management projects to sustain aquifers and surface water systems.

[10] Arizona Department of Water Resources. (2025, August 26). List of designated adequate water supply providers. https://www.azwater.gov/sites/default/files/2025-08/List_of_Designated_Providers_20250826.pdf

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MAP 24: IRRIGATION DISTRICTS



St. David

Pistacio Pass

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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WATER DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

- Coordinating with ADWR, municipalities, irrigation districts, and private providers to identify additional water resources if needed.
- Collaborative Recharge and Conservation. To help offset projected increases in groundwater demand, Cochise County will continue to participate in collaborative initiatives such as the Cochise Conservation & Recharge Network (CCRN). CCRN's recharge projects directly support aquifer replenishment, reduce long-term groundwater overdraft, and provide protection against drought, flooding, and population growth. Integration of CCRN outcomes into County water planning ensures that recharge activities are aligned with projected needs for residential, agricultural, and commercial uses, while also supporting ecological health.

LOCAL IRRIGATION DISTRICTS

Irrigation districts are legally recognized local governmental entities established to manage water delivery, maintain infrastructure, and collect assessments for agricultural and municipal use. In Cochise County, districts such as St. David (established 1920s) and Pistachio Pass (established 1940s) have historically played a central role in managing groundwater resources for farming and local communities. Operating under state law, these districts coordinate with County and state agencies to ensure responsible water use. Their operations support agricultural and residential needs, contribute to water reliability, maintain water quality, and provide a framework for local governance. Incorporating irrigation districts into County water planning reinforces coordinated management and acknowledges their ongoing role in meeting current and future water demands.

WATER SERVICE OVERVIEW

Cochise County is served by a mix of municipal water systems, public water improvement districts, private water companies, other regulated water systems, and private wells. Together, these systems provide water service to cities, towns, neighborhoods, rural communities, and special-use facilities throughout the county.

Municipal Water Systems: Operated by city or town governments, these systems provide long-term, ongoing water service to residents and businesses within municipal boundaries. Examples include the City of Benson and City of Douglas. Sierra Vista's water service is not provided by a municipal system; instead, it is served primarily by the Pueblo Del Sol Water Company and Arizona Water Company, which are private utilities.

Public Water Improvement Districts/Domestic Water Improvement Districts (WIDs / DWIDs): Legally established special districts with authority to manage water supply and infrastructure within a defined service area. These districts operate long-term systems for residents of unincorporated areas or smaller communities. Examples include Bowie WID and St. David DWID.

Private Water Companies: Privately owned

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WATER DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

utilities regulated by the Arizona Corporation Commission and ADEQ, providing community water service over defined service areas. These include larger providers such as Pueblo Del Sol Water Company and Liberty Utilities, which operate multiple systems across the county.

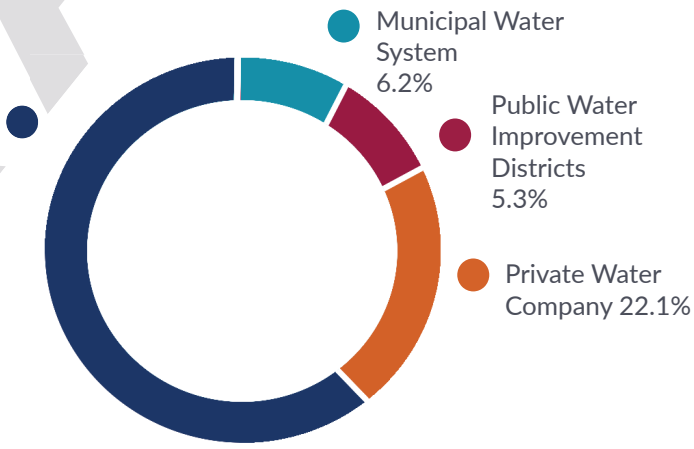
Other Regulated Systems: ADEQ also oversees non-community water systems that serve transient or specialized populations, such as schools, rest areas, campgrounds, and federal facilities. These systems may be community or non-community systems, depending on the number of connections and type of service, and are subject to state and federal drinking water standards. Examples include ADOT San Simon Port of Entry and Chiricahua National Monument Campground.

Private Wells (Unregulated): Widespread in rural and unincorporated areas, private wells rely on groundwater, with ADEQ guidance for maintenance, source protection, and water quality testing. The ADWR Well Registry lists over 23,000 wells in the county, highlighting the dispersed nature of rural water access and the need to carefully manage groundwater resources.[11]

Collectively, this network provides safe, reliable drinking water while meeting regulatory standards for water quality and public health. It also underscores the need for continued monitoring, coordinated planning, and infrastructure support to maintain long-term reliability Countywide.

Figure 11: Regulated Water Systems[12]

Most water systems in Cochise County are small or specialized, highlighting the need for coordinated planning, infrastructure support, and regulatory oversight to ensure reliable service.



[11] Arizona Department of Water Resources. (n.d.). Well registry. https://new.azwater.gov/well-registry

[12] Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. (2025). Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS) — Drinking Water Watch: Public Water Systems Database for Cochise County. https://azsdwis.azdeq.gov/DWW_EXT/

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WATER DEMAND AND SUPPLY ANALYSIS

	Municipal Water System	Public Water Improvement District	Private Water Company	Other Regulated Systems
Population Served	Residents and business in city or town	Residents in defined district boundaries	Residents within a utility service area	Non-residential or transient population
Governance	Municipal government	Special district	Private corp. regulated by ACC and ADEQ	Varies (private owner, school district...)
Long Term Service?	Yes - for a city or town	Yes - for a specific area	Yes - for an water utility	Varies - may not be permanent
Example	City of Douglas	Whetstone WWID	Pueblo del Sol	Chiricahua NM Campground

Cochise County's mix of municipal, district, private, and specialized water systems creates a complex regulatory landscape,

POTENTIAL FUTURE SOURCES

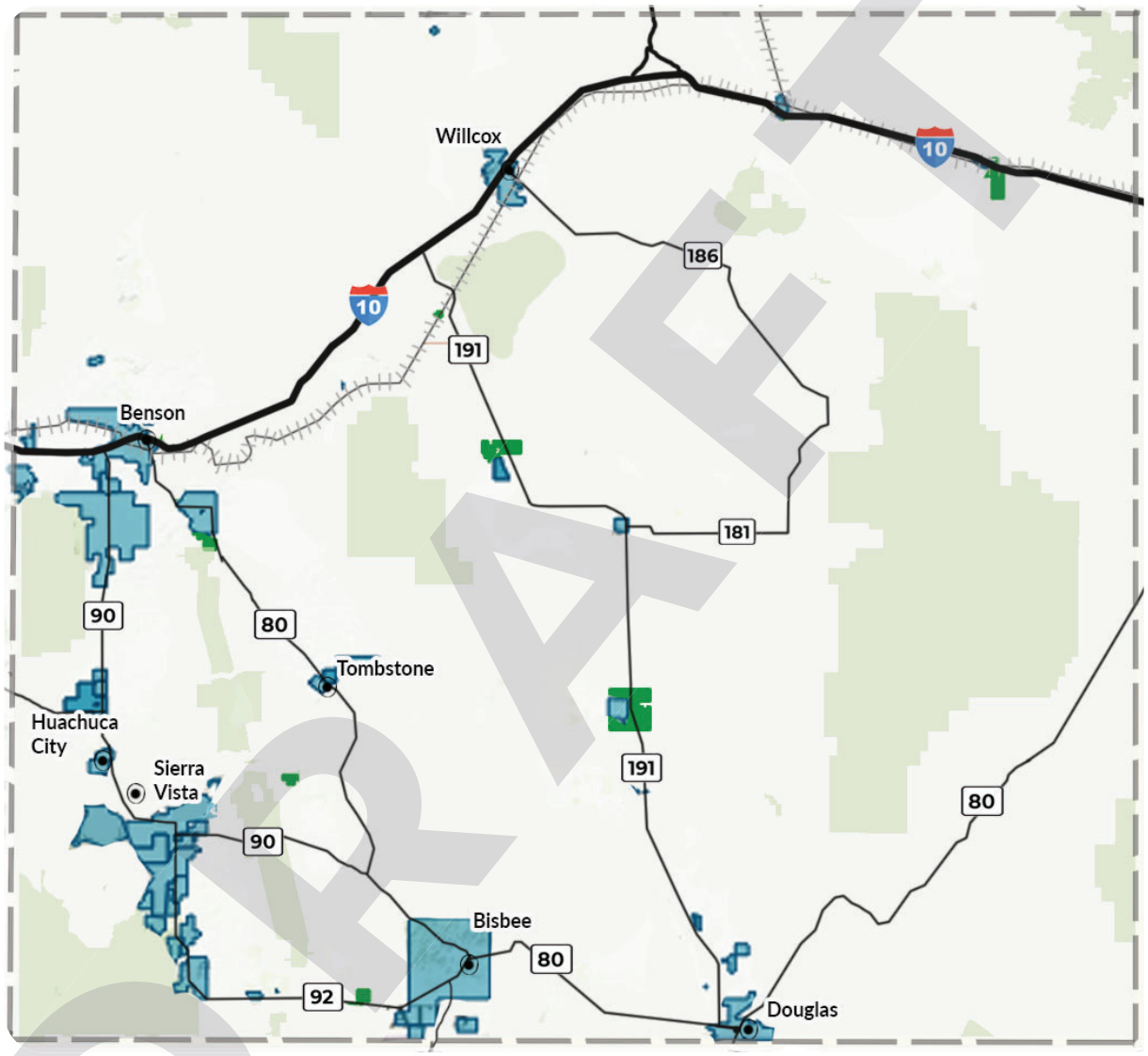
In addition to maximizing the use of current supplies, Cochise County may need to explore new sources of water to meet long-term needs. Potential options include:

- Bi-national desalination projects in Sonora, Mexico, with water conveyed north through cross-border partnerships.
- Inter-basin transfers from other Arizona watersheds, subject to legal and physical feasibility.
- Expanded water reuse and recycling, including advanced treatment for potable or industrial applications.
- Stormwater capture and storage projects that go beyond existing recharge efforts, including structural measures such as gabions to slow runoff, reduce erosion, and enhance infiltration.

Evaluating these options will require coordination with state, federal, and international partners, as well as careful consideration of costs, infrastructure requirements, environmental impacts, and long-term viability.

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MAP 25: COMMUNITY WATER DISTRICTS & SYSTEMS



Community Water System

Community Water District

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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WATER RESOURCE GOALS & POLICIES



GOAL 1: Keep the Water Flowing – Reliable Water for All

- Policy 1: Coordinate with ADWR, municipalities, irrigation districts, community water districts, community water systems, and private providers to support monitoring and responsible management of groundwater, surface water, and effluent supplies to meet current and projected demands for all users.
- Policy 2: Support collaborative, basin-scale planning and data-sharing with state and multi-jurisdictional partners toidentify additional water sources, optimize existing supplies, and improve long-term groundwater sustainability..
- Policy 3: Promote investments in County-supported infrastructure and technologies, such as stormwater capture, effluent reuse, gabions, and water delivery improvements, to enhance reliability and extend available supply.
- Policy 4: Incorporate water availability and provider capacity into capital infrastructure and public facilities decisions to ensure growth aligns with the projected supply.
- Policy 5: Evaluate and plan for potential new water sources, including bi-national desalination, inter-basin transfers, and advanced water reuse, ensuring feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and long-term reliability before integration into County water planning.

GOAL 2: Pure and Protected – Safeguarding Water Quality

- Policy 1: Implement best management practices, such as monitoring, runoff control, treatment systems, and operator guidance for water quality protection in municipal, agricultural, and industrial settings to protect water quality.
- Policy 2: Encourage partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit organizations to reduce pollution and maintain safe water supplies.
- Policy 3: Integrate water quality considerations into public infrastructure and facilities projects, including collaboration with water districts and systems.

GOAL 3: Use it Wisely – Water Conservation

- Policy 1: Encourage water conservation

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WATER RESOURCE GOALS & POLICIES

measures for residents, businesses, and agricultural operations, including incentives, education, and technical support.

- Policy 2: Promote the adoption of water-efficient technologies, including irrigation systems, low-flow fixtures, and xeriscaping
- Policy 3: Support reuse of treated effluent for irrigation, industrial uses, and managed recharge to reduce reliance on groundwater,



riparian resilience.

GOAL 4: Recharge and Restore – Protecting Aquifers and Watersheds

- Policy 1: Identify and implement projects to recharge aquifers, recognizing that recharge is one component of a broader strategy needed to address long-term groundwater overdraft.
- Policy 2: Protect riparian corridors, playas, and other natural recharge areas through conservation programs and land management strategies.
- Policy 3: Coordinate with state and federal agencies to align recharge projects with watershed-scale water resource planning.
- Policy 4: Support collaborative, basin-scale watershed planning and restoration efforts that align recharge, conservation, and groundwater sustainability goals across jurisdictions.
- Policy 4: Support strategies that, over time, reduce net groundwater overdraft and improve long-term aquifer and

GOAL 5: Plan Ahead for Water

- Policy 1: Evaluate the potential impacts of drought, prolonged aridity, extreme weather, and other changing environmental conditions on water availability, and plan for adaptive management strategies.
- Policy 2: Develop emergency water supply plans for communities and critical infrastructure in coordination with Emergency Management.
- Policy 3: Promote flexible policies that allow the County to respond to changing water demands and regulatory requirements over time.
- Policy 4: Incorporate assessments of emerging water supply strategies into long-term planning to strengthen resilience to population growth, drought, and changing environmental conditions.

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ENERGY ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The Energy Element of the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for managing, conserving, and developing energy resources. Its purpose is to promote a resilient energy system that supports economic growth, protects the environment, and enhances the well-being of residents. The element identifies strategies for efficient energy use, encourages renewable energy development, and guides policies to ensure reliable and resilient energy services throughout the county.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is the primary energy source for residential, commercial, and public facilities in Cochise County. The county is served by several electric providers, each with distinct roles in generation, transmission, and distribution. The primary distribution entities within the county are Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC), Arizona Public Service (APS), and Columbus Electric Cooperative (CEC), while Arizona Electric Power Cooperative (AEPCO) provides wholesale generation and transmission services. This section summarizes each provider, their service areas, energy sources, and recent trends.



ARIZONA ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE (AEPCO)

AEPCO is a generation and transmission cooperative that provides wholesale power to distribution cooperatives, including SSVEC and CEC. It owns and operates the Apache Generating Station in Cochise County, with a total generating capacity of 625 MW, and approximately 852 miles of transmission lines.

- Historically, the Apache Generating Station relied on coal and natural gas, but AEPCO has been transitioning toward cleaner

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ELECTRICITY

energy. Coal production in Arizona ceased in 2019, and AEPCO now imports coal, for its remaining plants, from New Mexico, Wyoming, and Montana. In addition, rising maintenance expenses and federal emissions compliance costs have further reduced coal's economic competitiveness. The cooperative is expanding renewable energy, with projections showing that renewables will account for over 60% of AEPCO's generation by 2031.[12]

SULPHUR SPRINGS VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (SSVEC)

SSVEC is a member-owned distribution cooperative serving over 60,000 customers across Cochise, Graham, Pima, and Santa Cruz counties. In Cochise County, SSVEC covers approximately 87.5% of the land area. SSVEC primarily sources electricity from AEPCO but has also invested in renewable energy:

- Coal reduction: From 80% in 2016 to 26% in 2024.
- Natural gas increase: From 3% in 2016 to over 43% in 2024.
- Renewable energy expansion: Solar grew to over 12% by 2024, supported by a second large SSVEC solar farm with battery storage.

ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE (APS)

APS provides electricity to select areas of Cochise County, including Douglas. The utility is pursuing a clean energy portfolio, targeting:

- 65% clean energy by 2030, with nearly half from renewables
- Coal phase-out by 2031
- 100% clean, carbon-free electricity by 2050.

COLUMBUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (CEC)

CEC is a nonprofit, consumer-owned utility serving approximately 3,198 customers in rural southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, including parts of Cochise County. While detailed information on CEC's energy mix is not publicly available, it is likely following similar trends as other local cooperatives, increasing renewable energy use and reducing reliance on coal.

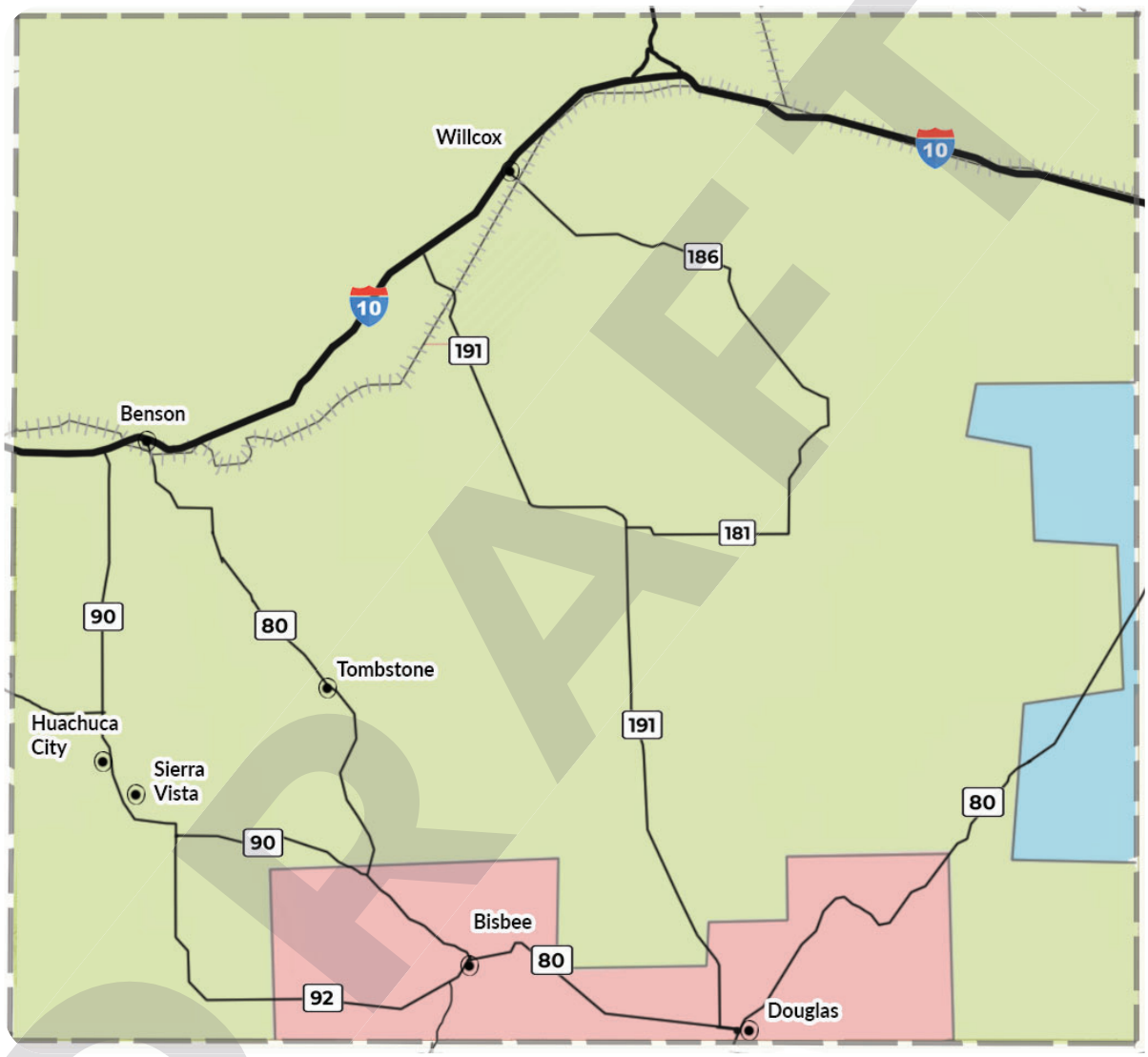
KEY TRENDS

- Shift from coal to cleaner sources: AEPCO and SSVEC are reducing coal and increasing natural gas and renewable energy.
- Renewable energy growth: Solar and other renewables are expanding, with battery storage supporting reliability.

[12] Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Arizona State Energy Profile." Accessed February 7, 2025.

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MAP 26: ELECTRICITY PROVIDERS



Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative

Arizona Public Service

Columbus Electric Cooperative.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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GAS, PROPANE & HAZARDOUS LIQUIDS

Energy in Cochise County relies on a mix of sources to meet residential, commercial, and industrial needs. Natural gas is mainly used for heating, cooking, and industrial purposes, while electricity serves as the primary source of power. In areas not served by pipelines, propane provides an important alternative for homes, farms, and businesses. Additionally, hazardous liquid pipelines, which transport crude oil and refined petroleum products, support the county's energy infrastructure and supply to local and broader markets. Together, these energy sources provide reliable, efficient, and flexible options that support local economic activity, public services, and the county's goal of a resilient and diversified energy supply.

NATURAL GAS PROVIDERS

- **Southwest Gas Corporation (SWG)**
  Southwest Gas is the primary provider of natural gas within incorporated areas, including Sierra Vista, Benson, and Douglas. It delivers gas through regional pipeline networks and wholesale markets, ensuring reliable service to homes, businesses, and public facilities.
- **El Paso Natural Gas (EPNG)**
  El Paso Natural Gas is a major southwestern transporter of natural gas, operating a 10,140-mile pipeline system supplying the Southwest from production areas such as the Permian Basin in Texas and the San Juan Basin in New Mexico. In Cochise County, the Dragoon Compressor Station near Benson is a critical facility that maintains pipeline flow, enabling gas delivery to local utilities and broader markets. The South Mainline Expansion Project, which included a 17-mile pipeline loop and additional compression, was completed on July 8, 2020, enhancing capacity and reliability.

PROPANE SUPPLIERS

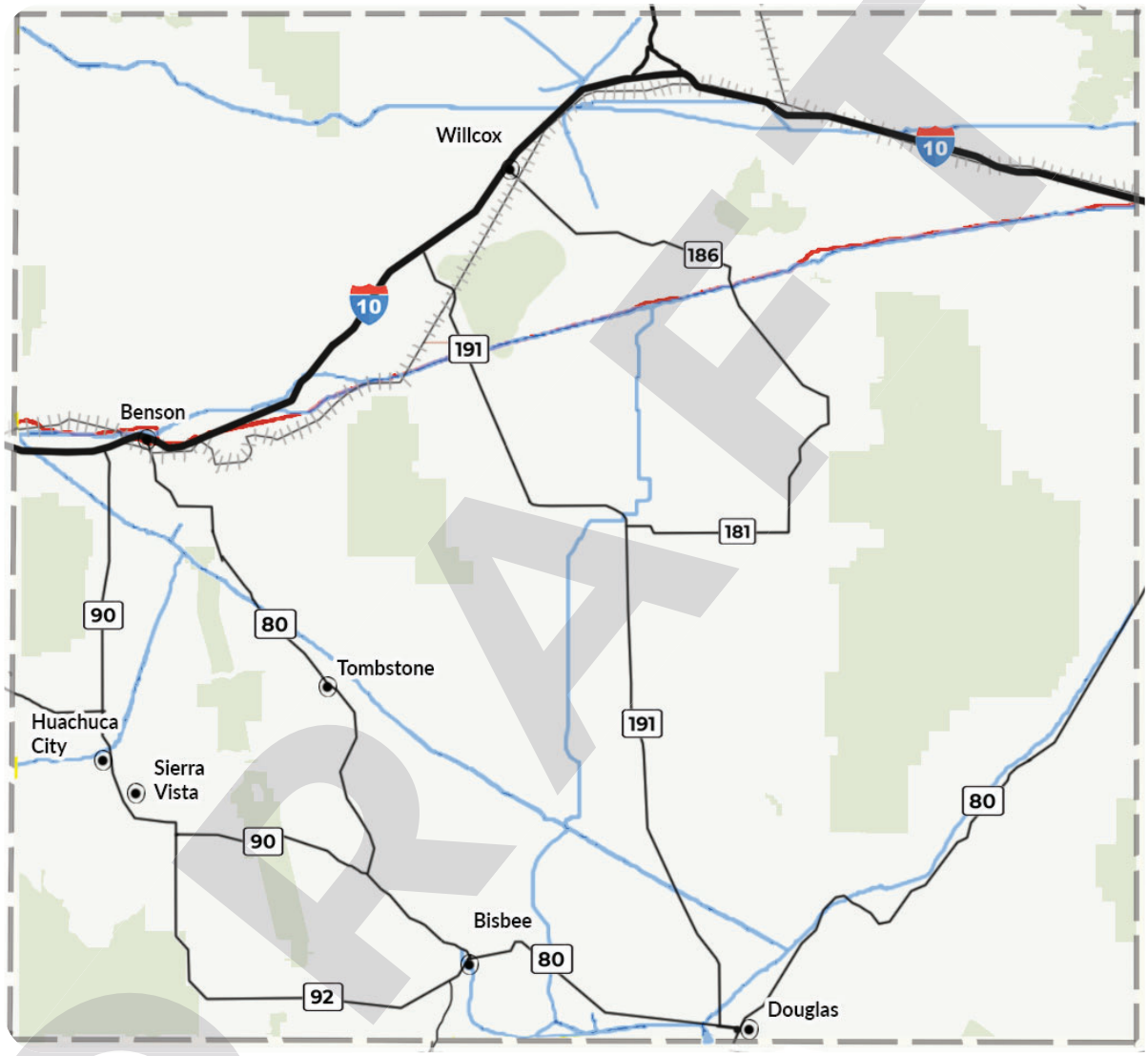
In rural areas where pipeline gas is unavailable, propane serves as a flexible energy alternative. Local distributors deliver propane to residences, farms, and businesses throughout the county.

HAZARDOUS LIQUID PIPELINES

Hazardous liquid pipelines, primarily transporting crude oil and refined petroleum products, cross parts of Cochise County and are part of the broader energy infrastructure. These pipelines are operated by area midstream companies such as Plains All American Pipeline and Magellan Midstream Partners. Supporting facilities, including pump stations and terminal connections, help move these liquids safely and efficiently to local markets and interstate destinations.

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MAP 27: GAS & HAZARDOUS LIQUID PIPELINES



Natural Gas Pipeline

Hazardous Liquid Pipeline

U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. (n.d.). NPMS Public Viewer. Retrieved September 26, 2025, from https://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov/PublicViewer/

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NUCLEAR POWER

While nuclear energy is a significant source of low-carbon electricity for Arizona, Cochise County does not currently have nuclear generation facilities and is unlikely to host a traditional large-scale plant given water constraints, high capital costs, long development timelines, and extensive state and federal regulatory requirements. However, electricity from the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station and other regional resources contributes to the statewide grid, providing approximately 27% of Arizona's electricity and 61% of the state's carbon-free generation.[12] Local providers, including Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) and Arizona Public Service (APS), purchase power from the regional grid, supplying Cochise County homes, businesses, and public facilities with reliable, low-carbon electricity.

Looking ahead, emerging technologies such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are being advanced nationally as potential low-carbon options that can improve grid reliability and support economic development. Cochise County will remain open to evaluating future nuclear-related opportunities and, where appropriate, can position itself to respond to proposals through early planning for infrastructure needs, land use compatibility, and coordination with state and federal regulatory requirements. Potential outcomes could include participation in regional demonstration efforts, attraction of energy-related research partnerships, or other nuclear-adjacent industrial investment, provided water availability and environmental constraints are addressed through all applicable review processes. By planning for a range of low-carbon energy options—including renewables, storage, and emerging technologies—the County supports resilience, diversification, and long-term economic competitiveness.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Cochise County has strong potential for renewable energy development, particularly solar and wind, which can contribute to a diversified, low-carbon energy portfolio supporting local economic development, sustainability, and resilience goals.

SOLAR ENERGY

Arizona ranks among the top five states nationally for total solar capacity, with more than 6,100 megawatts generated from both utility-scale and small-scale installations. About 60% of this generation comes from

[12] Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Arizona State Energy Profile." Accessed February 12, 2025.

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RENEWABLE ENERGY

large photovoltaic (PV) facilities, while 40% comes from smaller systems such as rooftop solar. Thanks to high solar radiance levels, Cochise County's solar resources—averaging 5 to 6 kilowatt-hours per square meter (kWh/m^2) daily—are among the best in the state. These conditions make the county well-suited for residential, commercial, and utility-scale solar development.[13]



Individual Rooftop or Ground Mount Solar

Residential and commercial rooftop or ground mount solar allows homeowners, businesses, and public facilities to generate electricity on-site, reduce utility bills, and increase energy independence. Distributed solar supports the county's resilience by diversifying the energy supply and can complement grid-scale projects by reducing peak electricity demand.

Community Solar

Community solar projects provide access to solar energy for households, renters, and businesses that cannot install rooftop systems. Participants typically subscribe to or co-own a portion of the energy produced, receiving credits on their utility bills. These projects improve energy equity, expand access to renewable energy in rural or urban areas, and provide local economic and educational benefits, while complementing larger-scale utility projects.

WIND ENERGY

While wind currently provides less than 2% of Arizona's electricity, the state ranks among the top 10 in the nation for wind energy potential. Cochise County hosts one operating wind farm, Red Horse 2, which has produced 30 MW of renewable energy since its commissioning in 2015 (see Map 28). Another utility-scale wind project, with a proposed capacity of 175 MW, is in very early planning stages. If ultimately approved and developed, it could generate enough electricity to power more than 30,000 Arizona homes annually, further contributing to the

[13] Source: Sengupta, M., Xie, Y., Lopez, A., Habte, A., Maclaurin, G., & Shelby, J. (2018). The National Solar Radiation Data Base (NSRDB). Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews, 89, 51-60. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2018.01.032

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RENEWABLE ENERGY



county's renewable energy portfolio.

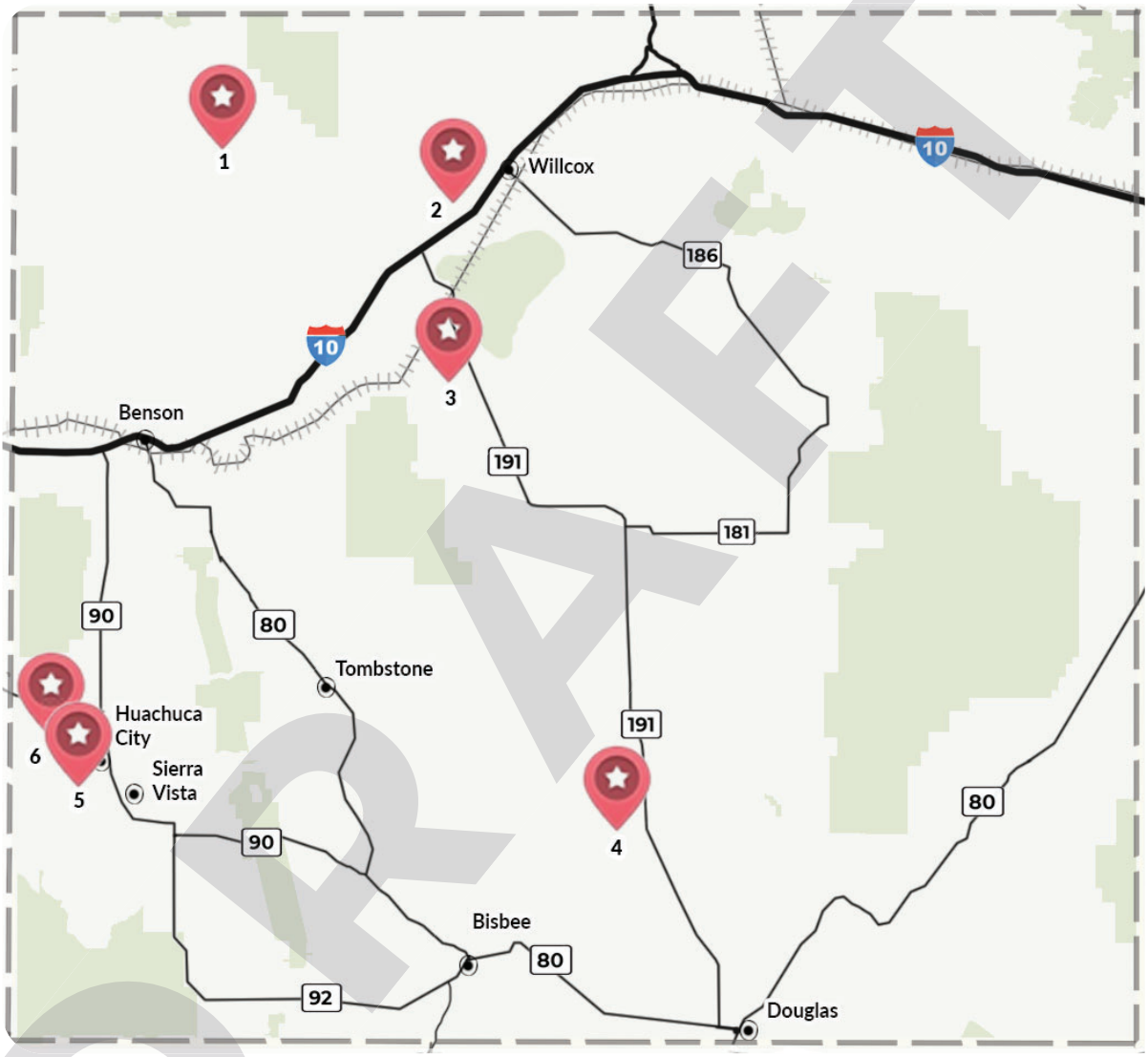
PLANNING & POLICY CONTEXT

Development of solar and wind energy resources, including utility-scale, community, and distributed systems, offers opportunities to strengthen Cochise County's energy infrastructure and ensure a reliable electricity supply. While the County does not generate power directly, it plays a key role in guiding the siting, permitting, and integration of renewable facilities in ways that balance energy development with environmental protection, land use compatibility, community participation, and local economic benefits. Distributed solar (individual rooftop) supports the county's resilience by diversifying the energy supply and can complement grid-scale projects by reducing peak electricity demand.

The County may consider establishing a zoning overlay for large-scale renewable energy as a next step in guiding development. If pursued, the overlay would prioritize sites with existing or planned infrastructure, previously disturbed land, or low-sensitivity uses, while avoiding or buffering established neighborhoods, critical habitats, and other environmentally sensitive areas. This approach could support efficient, coordinated development while protecting natural and community resources and balancing economic, environmental, and public interests.

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MAP 28: CURRENT SOLAR ENERGY POWER PLANTS

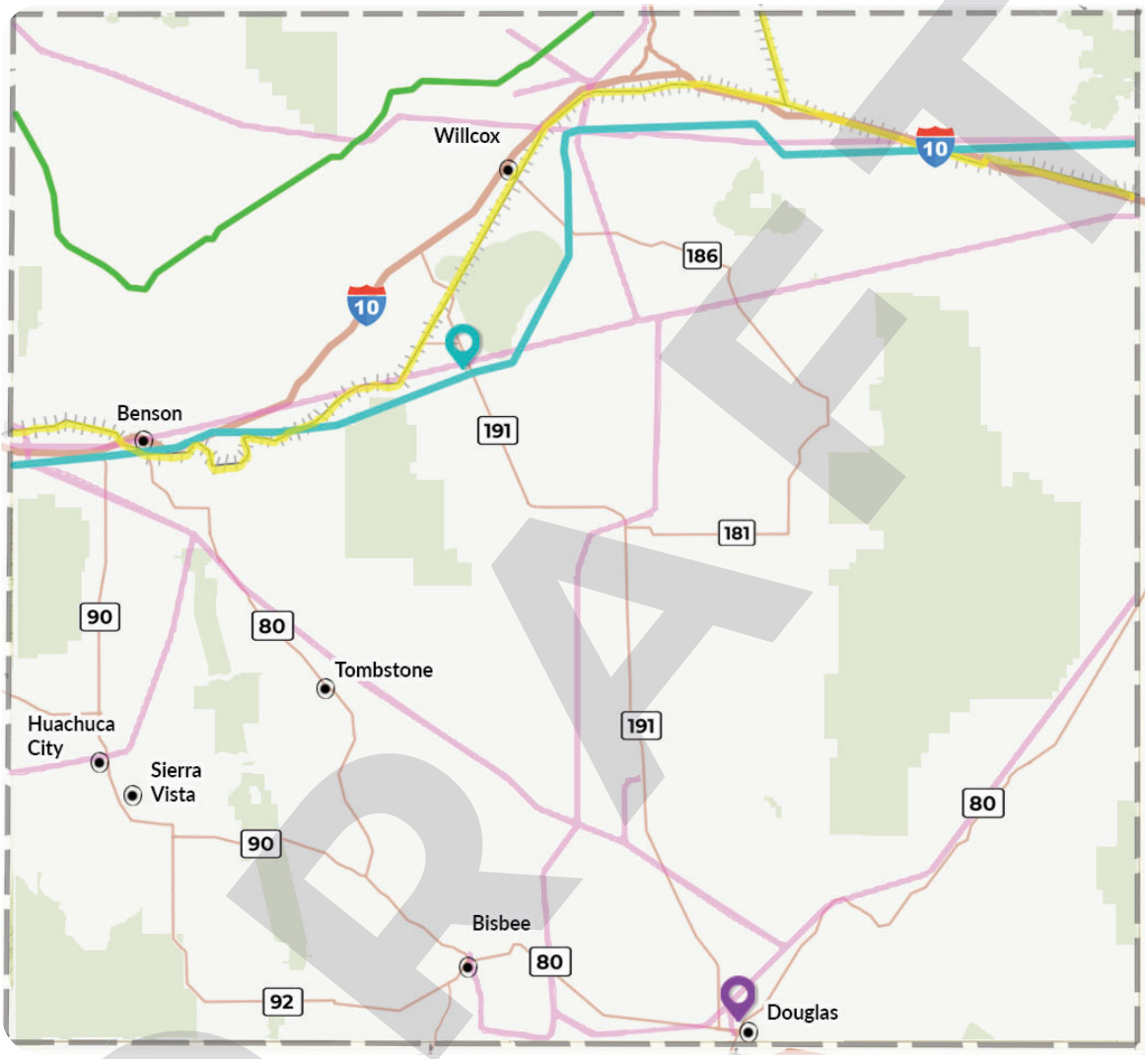


1 - Red Horse 2, Solar PV & Wind Turbine
2 - Winchester, Solar and BESS
3 - AEPCO, SEPP and BESS
4 - SR McNeal, Solar PV & BESS
5 - Tucson Electric Power (TEP), Solar
6 - Babacomari, SEPP

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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MAP 29: ENERGY & TRANSMISSION LINES



- Natural Gas Pipeline
- SunZia Transmission Line
- Southline Transmission
- Active US Railroad
- AEPCO, Conventional Steam Coal; Natural Gas Fired Combustion Turbine; Natural Gas Steam Turbine, 548 MW
- Arizona Public Service (APS), Petroleum, 15 MW

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. "All Energy Infrastructure and Resources." U.S. Energy Atlas. Accessed February 6, 2025

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ENERGY GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 1: Harness the Wind, Capture the Sun

- Policy 1: Prioritize solar and wind renewable energy development in areas with low agricultural, ecological, and scenic sensitivity, on rooftops, parking lots, brownfields, and other previously disturbed sites before considering undeveloped land.
- Policy 2: For utility-scale solar or wind facilities, give preference to sites with access to existing roads, transmission lines, and substations to reduce costs and minimize impacts.
- Policy 3: Align County review with appstate and federal processes to ensure protection of wildlife, sensitive habitats, and cultural resources.
- Policy 4: Promote early and ongoing community engagement to ensure transparency and public support.
- Policy 5: Maximize local economic benefits through workforce training, contracting, and procurement opportunities.
- Policy 6: Ensure utility-scale energy facilities coordinate with County emergency management and applicable response agencies as part of project planning and review.

GOAL 2: Power Smart, Power Efficient

- Policy 1: Encourage high-efficiency building standards (e.g., Energy Star, LEED, or similar) for new development.
- Policy 2: Support and promote weatherization, retrofits, and energy audits to reduce energy costs for households and businesses.
- Policy 3: Partner with utilities and local programs to expand incentives for energy efficiency countywide.

GOAL 3: Solar Together – Expanding Local Access

- Policy 1: Support community solar programs that provide renewable energy access for renters, low-income households, and under-served communities.
- Policy 2: Partner with utilities to expand net metering and distributed energy generation in the county.
- Policy 3: Promote outreach and technical assistance for small businesses and homeowners interested in rooftop solar or small wind systems.

GOAL 4: Shovel-Ready for a Reliable, Low-Carbon Energy Future

- Policy 1: Identify potential future energy projects, including Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), renewable generation, and energy storage facilities, in coordination with state and federal agencies and subject to water availability, infrastructure capacity, and environmental constraints.
- Policy 2: Coordinate with state and federal agencies, energy developers, and research

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ENERGY GOALS & POLICIES

institutions to attract demonstration projects, pilot programs, and advanced energy technologies.

- Policy 3: Ensure site selection and planning consider water availability, grid access, environmental constraints, and land use compatibility.

GOAL 5: Protecting What Matters

- Policy 1: Encourage energy projects that avoid ecologically sensitive areas, high-value agricultural land, and significant scenic or tourism-related viewsheds.
- Policy 2: Protect water resources, wildlife habitats, and culturally significant areas during planning and permitting.
- Policy 3: Encourage and promote dual-use opportunities, such as solar on parking lots, agricultural land, or flood control infrastructure, to maximize benefits.

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6

PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The Public Services & Facilities Element of the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for planning, coordinating, and managing the county's essential facilities and services. Its purpose is to ensure that county-provided and coordinated public facilities support responsible growth, maintain public safety, and enhance the quality of life for residents. The element identifies strategies to provide equitable, efficient, and compatible services, including county law enforcement, detention, health-related services, community facilities, administrative offices, and emergency management.

This element is closely linked to the Land Use Element, which designates broad areas for public buildings and grounds, and to other mandatory elements such as Circulation, Water, and Energy, which provide critical infrastructure support. The guiding principle of this element is to ensure that public facilities are sited and managed in a manner that is accessible, compatible with surrounding land uses, and capable of adapting to the county's changing needs over time.

SAFETY SERVICES & FACILITIES

COUNTY JAIL & DETENTION CENTERS

Cochise County's detention facilities are key components of the broader criminal justice system, providing secure housing for individuals awaiting trial or serving sentences. The primary facility, Cochise County Jail in Bisbee at 203 N Judd Drive, offers central access to judicial and administrative services, while temporary holding substations in Sierra Vista and Willcox support law enforcement operations and public safety. Recognizing limitations of the existing jail, a Jail District Public Outreach Committee formed in 2022 reviewed county needs—including safety, infrastructure, and operational challenges—and recommended constructing a new facility. In July 2025, the Board of Supervisors selected the existing jail site in Bisbee for redevelopment. Following voter approval of the Jail District tax on November 4, 2025, the County will move forward with planning and development of a modern, secure detention center to serve countywide needs.



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SAFETY SERVICES & FACILITIES

LAW ENFORCEMENT FACILITIES/ SUBSTATIONS

Function and County Role
Law enforcement facilities provide the physical infrastructure needed to deliver policing, investigations, and community safety services throughout Cochise County. The Cochise County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) operates substations across the county in addition to its main office. These facilities serve as bases for deputies, administrative staff, and specialized units, ensuring that law enforcement services are accessible and responsive to both incorporated and unincorporated communities.



Location Considerations:
The CCSO maintains substations in Bisbee, Benson, Douglas, Sierra Vista, Willcox, and Elfrida. These facilities are strategically located to provide countywide coverage across Cochise's large and diverse geography. Proximity to major transportation routes and population centers enhances response times and operational efficiency. When siting or upgrading facilities, considerations include security, accessibility for the public, and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Cochise County's Emergency Management Department coordinates preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for large-scale emergencies. Its mission is to help residents, businesses, and government entities prepare for and recover from disasters, recognizing that resilience begins locally and requires participation from the whole community.

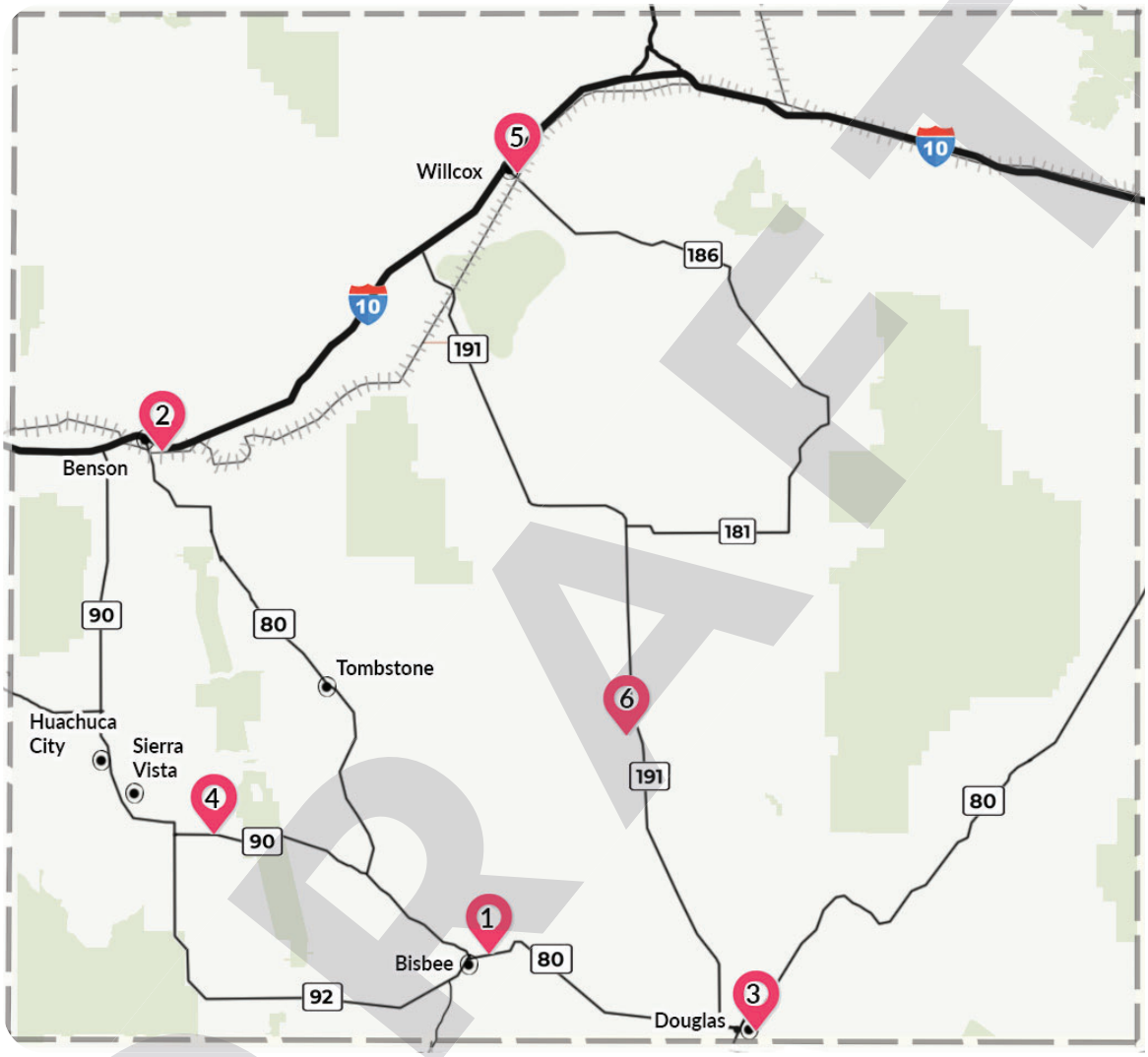
Through planning, training, and outreach, the Emergency Management Department enhances emergency preparedness for all parts of the community, including public agencies, businesses, and residents. Preparedness, however, is a shared responsibility—families, businesses, and organizations must develop their own plans, maintain supplies, and protect property from hazards to support countywide resilience.

Existing Emergency Plans & Programs:
Cochise County maintains several plans to guide hazard mitigation and response, including the following:

- Community Wildfire Protection Plan

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MAP 30: SUBSTATIONS & DETENTION FACILITIES



1 - Main Jail & Bisbee Substation
2 - Benson Substation
3 - Douglas Substation
4 - Temporary Holding Facility & Sierra Vista Substation
5 - Temporary Holding Facility & Willcox Substation
6 - Elfrida Substation

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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SAFETY SERVICES & FACILITIES

(2014, currently being updated) – Wildland-urban interface risk reduction; in 2025, county partners launched the kickoff of an updated CWPP to address current wildfire risks and enhance community engagement.

- Hazardous Materials Plan / LEPC – Response to hazardous materials incidents.
- Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022) – Identifies risks and prioritizes mitigation.
- Public Health Preparedness Program – Plans for outbreaks, mass care, and medical surge.
- Community Evacuation Plans – Area-specific evacuation strategies, such as Ramsey Canyon. Together, these provide a coordinated framework for disaster preparedness and response across the county.

FIRE DISTRICTS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES (EMS) COORDINATION

Fire protection and emergency medical services in Cochise County are provided primarily by independent fire districts. While the County does not directly operate these services, it plays a key role in coordination and support to ensure effective coverage and public safety.

County responsibilities include:

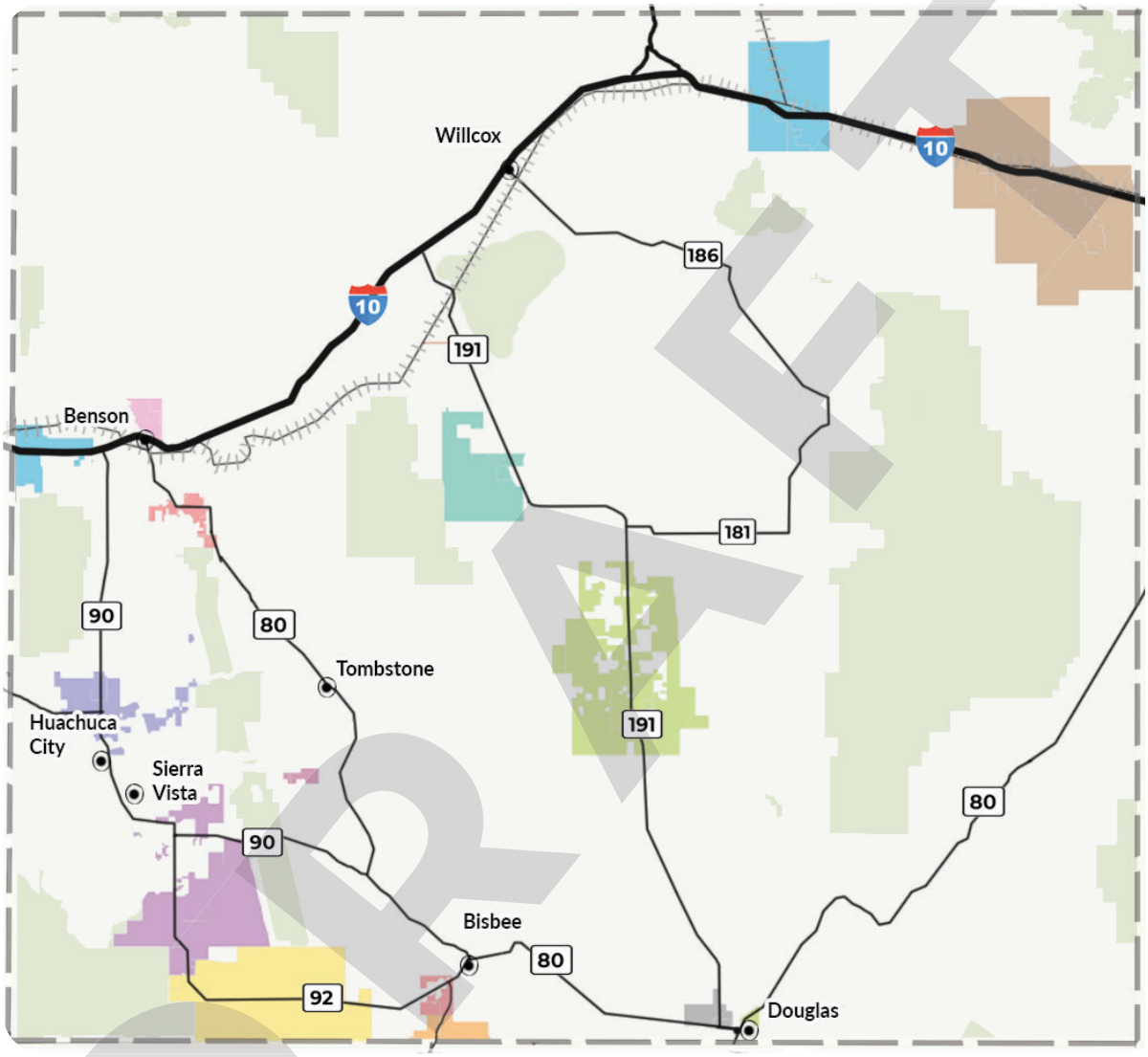


- Development Review & Referral – Providing input on new development proposals to help fire districts maintain adequate response times and access
- Intergovernmental Agreements – Supporting mutual aid, resource sharing, and formal coordination between fire districts, law enforcement, and County departments.
- Disaster Planning & Preparedness – Integrating fire district capabilities into County emergency management and hazard mitigation plans.
- Public Safety Coordination – Promoting joint training exercises, communications interoperability, and planning for large-scale emergencies that require multi-agency response.

The County periodically evaluates fire and EMS coverage across the county, identifying gaps in rural and unserved areas, and works with fire districts, volunteer departments, and mutual aid partners to improve service.

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MAP 31: FIRE DISTRICTS



- Bowie
- Naco
- 7X(17)
- Pomerene
- San Simone
- San Jose
- Whetstone
- Sunsite Pearce
- Sunnyside
- Palominas
- St. David
- Elfrida
- Pirtleville
- Fry
- Mescal- J6

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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COUNTY OWNED AIRPORTS

Cochise County owns and operates two general aviation airports: Bisbee–Douglas International Airport and the Cochise County Airport in Willcox. Both facilities support aviation services, emergency operations, regional employers, agricultural flights, and cross-border coordination.



Bisbee–Douglas International Airport
The Bisbee-Douglas Airport contains legacy military infrastructure and aging utility systems. To ensure long-term safety and operational viability, the County may pursue an EPA grants to conduct environmental assessments and cleanup planning to address potential historical contamination or other environmental risks. Findings from these efforts will guide remediation and inform updates to the airport master plan, capital improvements, and land-use planning, while supporting infrastructure modernization and environmental protection.

Cochise County Airport (Willcox Airport
CWC serves pilots, emergency medical flights, crop-dusting operations, and regional visitors. Like the Bisbee-Douglas airport, its master plan is outdated. Updating the plan will help identify needed capital improvements, evaluate land uses on airport property, and strengthen the airport's role in regional economic and public-service functions.

County Role & Planning Priorities
Through environmental review, community engagement, and infrastructure planning, Cochise County ensures that both airports remain safe, environmentally responsible, and capable of supporting current and future aviation, emergency, and economic development needs.

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HEATH FACILITIES IN COCHISE COUNTY
Hospitals and health clinics are essential community facilities that provide primary care, specialty services, and emergency treatment. Cochise County does not operate any county-run hospitals or clinics; most healthcare services are provided by private or nonprofit organizations. Major facilities include:

- Canyon Vista Medical Center (Sierra Vista) – Offers emergency care, cardiology, orthopedics, and labor and delivery services.
- Copper Queen Community Hospital (Bisbee) – Provides 24/7 emergency care and operates rural clinics in Bisbee, Palominas, Douglas, Hereford, and Tombstone.
- Northern Cochise Community Hospital (Willcox) – Rural primary care hospital offering emergency, inpatient, outpatient, and primary care services.
- Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. – Federally Qualified Health Center serving under-served communities across southeastern Arizona.
- Cochise County Health & Social Services Clinics – Clinics in Bisbee, Benson, Douglas, Sierra Vista, and Willcox providing immunizations, reproductive health, STD testing, and vital records

These facilities are concentrated near population centers to ensure reasonable travel distances, especially in a county with large rural areas. The County's role is to coordinate and support these providers, ensuring integration into broader emergency planning, infrastructure, and land use considerations.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
Behavioral health and social services in Cochise County are primarily provided by private and nonprofit organizations, with facilities concentrated near population centers such as Sierra Vista, Douglas, Benson, Bisbee, and Willcox. This ensures access for residents in the county's rural areas.

Key Providers and Services

- Southeastern Arizona Behavioral Health Services (SEABHS) – Outpatient treatment, trauma therapy, dual diagnosis, vocational rehab; locations in Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Douglas, Benson, Willcox, Hereford, Palominas, and Tombstone.
- Chiricahua Community Health Centers (CCHCI) – Integrated primary care and mental health services via fixed clinics and mobile units.
- Cochise County Health & Social Services Clinics – Health and social services in Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Douglas, Benson, and Willcox.
- Other nonprofit providers – Community Bridges (Benson), Easterseals Blake Foundation (Sierra Vista), CPIH (Sierra Vista), and Mary's Mission (Hereford) offer outpatient and residential mental health services.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANIMAL SHELTERS

Cochise County provides animal control services through its Animal Control Division of the Sheriff's Office, enforcing state laws and county ordinances primarily concerning dogs and cats. The County does not operate its own shelters; instead, it contracts with three shelters to house stray or surrendered animals:

- City of Douglas Animal Shelter – Serves county residents and provides shelter services to the Sheriff's Office under contract with the County.
- Willcox Animal Control – Provides shelter services under contract with the County.
- Benson Animal Shelter - Provides shelter services under contract with the County.

Other Shelters in Cochise County
Several other shelters operate independently of the County:

- Bisbee Animal Shelter – Non-profit operated shelter provides services under contract to City of Bisbee.
- Nancy J. Brua Animal Care Center – Provides shelter and adoption services (located in Sierra Vista).
- Tombstone Small Animal Shelter – Serves Tombstone and surrounding areas.

Partnerships and Programs

The County collaborates with organizations such as the Cochise County Humane Society, which provides low-cost spay/neuter programs, foster services, and adoption support. While not a shelter, it plays a key role in animal welfare and population control.

Current Initiative

Cochise County is working to establish an animal shelter to serve unincorporated areas of the county surrounding Sierra Vista. Federal funds were obtained in 2022 to support a county shelter project, and several properties have been investigated for this purpose. Even with an additional county shelter, the County will continue contracted services with municipal shelters to appropriately serve the entire county.

LIBRARY SERVICES

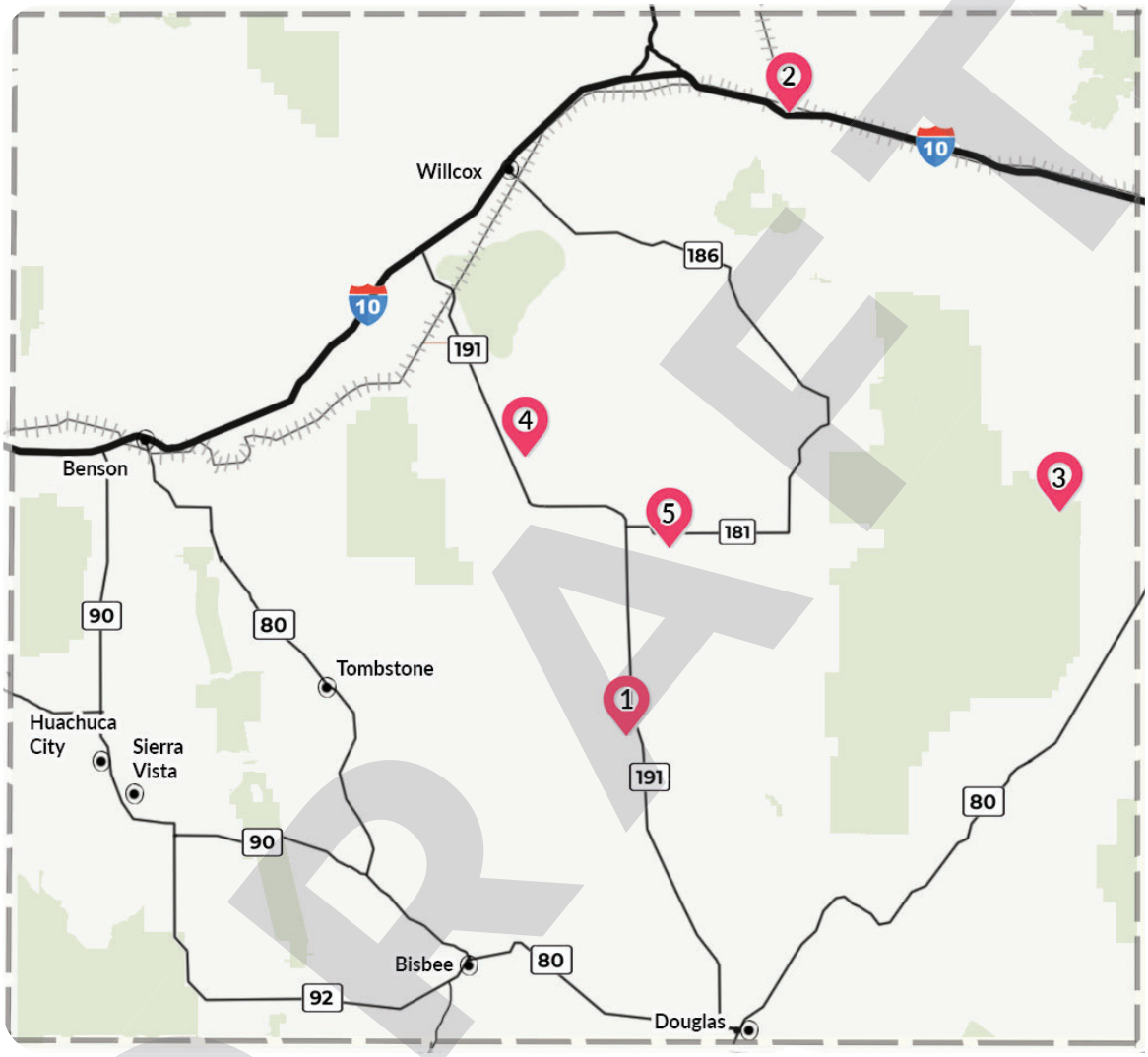
Cochise County provides residents with access to learning, technology, and community connections through its network of public libraries and partnerships with city-operated facilities. The Cochise County Library District manages five branch libraries that serve as vital community hubs—offering books, internet access, and programs for all ages in rural and unincorporated areas. The County also works with municipal libraries to expand outreach, share resources, and ensure residents across the county have access to educational and social opportunities.

Library Locations

Libraries across Cochise County support education, digital access, and community

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MAP 32: COUNTY LIBRARIES



1 - Elfrida Library
2 - Jimmie Libhart Branch Library – Bowie
3 - Myrtle Kraft Library – Portal
4 - Sunsites Community Library
5 - Sunizona Library

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES

engagement. Key facilities across the county include:

Cochise County Library District Branches

- Elfrida Library – Elfrida
- Jimmie Libhart Branch Library – Bowie
- Myrtle Kraft Library – Portal
- Sunsites Community Library – Sunsites
- Sunizona Library – Sunizona

Municipal Libraries

- Benson Public Library
- Copper Queen Library (Bisbee)
- Douglas Public Library
- Huachuca City Public Library
- Sierra Vista Public Library

Specialized Library

- Cochise County Law Library – 100 Quality Hill Rd., Bisbee

Notes: The County coordinates book access through the One County One Card program, allowing residents to borrow from all participating libraries.

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PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 1: Safe, Secure, and Ready Law Enforcement

- Policy 1: Plan for future expansion of the county jail, guided by community input and funding opportunities.
- Policy 2: Modernize the county jail to ensure public safety and operational efficiency.

GOAL 2: Strong Fire & EMS Services for Every Community

- Policy 1: Strengthen collaboration with independent fire districts and EMS providers through resource sharing and coordinated planning.
- Policy 2: Conduct a countywide fire and EMS coverage analysis to identify gaps, particularly in rural areas, and develop strategies to expand service through additional stations, satellite facilities, or volunteer departments.
- Policy 3: Integrate emergency management review into new development proposals to evaluate available fire and EMS resources, road access, water supply, and other safety measures. In areas without established fire districts, encourage alternative strategies such as on-site water storage, private fire suppression systems, defensible space, and coordination with nearby districts or mutual aid providers.
- Policy 4: Help fire districts identify and apply for federal, state, and private grants for equipment, station improvements, and apparatus purchases to enhance capabilities.

GOAL 3: Healthy Communities, Connected Care

- Policy 1: Support hospitals, rural clinics, and Federally Qualified Health Centers to ensure residents have reasonable access to primary, specialty, and emergency care.
- Policy 2: Ensure transportation planning considers routes to health facilities for ambulances, first responders, and patient access, particularly in rural areas.
- Policy 3: Coordinate land use and infrastructure decisions (e.g., zoning, utilities, road access) to support the siting, expansion, or relocation of healthcare facilities in under-served areas.
- Policy 4: Encourage telehealth, mobile clinics, and community outreach programs to improve healthcare access in remote areas.

GOAL 4: Modern, Humane Animal Services

- Policy 1: Maintain and enforce animal control services, ensuring compliance with state laws and county ordinances.
- Policy 2: Support contracted shelters in

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PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES GOALS & POLICIES

Douglas and Willcox while advancing plans for a centralized county animal shelter.

- Policy 3: Partner with nonprofits, including the Cochise County Humane Society, for spay/neuter programs, foster care, and adoption initiatives.

GOAL 5: Libraries & Community Centers for All

- Policy 1: Encourage co-location and multi-use opportunities for community centers and senior centers within libraries.
- Policy 2: Expand programming and outreach to serve all residents, with attention to rural and under-served communities.

GOAL 6: Smart, Connected Community Facilities

- Policy 1: Coordinate planning across law enforcement, fire, EMS, and healthcare to optimize coverage, reduce duplication, and improve operational efficiency.
- Policy 2: Incorporate GIS mapping analysis, hazard risk analysis, and service performance metrics into facility siting and capital improvement decisions.
- Policy 3: Maintain and update county-owned airports, including Bisbee–Douglas International and Cochise County (Willcox) airports, to ensure safe operations, environmental compliance, and promote economic development.
- Policy 4: Pursue grant opportunities and funding programs, including but not limited to the EPA multipurpose and FAA Airport Improvement Program grants, to support environmental assessment, cleanup, and infrastructure modernization.

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7

HOUSING ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The housing element serves as a blueprint for addressing housing issues and guiding new residential development. By focusing on housing needs, affordability, quality, sustainability, and inclusivity, this element helps ensure that the housing market supports the well-being of all residents and contributes to the overall health and vitality of the community.

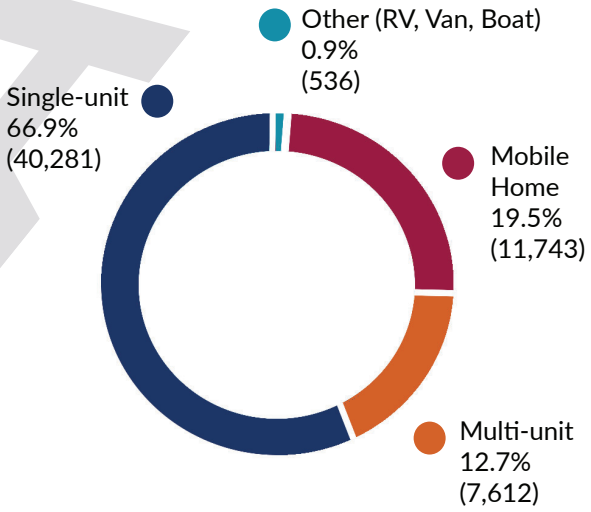
Cochise County faces several housing challenges. This includes a limited supply of quality housing, infrastructure challenges, substandard housing conditions, and external market pressures which increase home purchase and home rental prices.

EXISTING HOUSING SUPPLY

KEY TAKEAWAYS*

- Single-Unit Structures: In Cochise County, 66.9% of housing units are single-unit structures, closely aligning with the national average of 67.4%.
- Multi-Unit Structures: The county has 12.7% multi-unit housing, significantly lower than Arizona's 21.1% and the national average of 26.9%.
- Mobile Homes: At 19.5%, Cochise County has a higher proportion of mobile homes compared to Arizona (8.9%) and the national average (5.5%).
- Other Structures: Boat, RV, van, etc., account for 0.9% in the county, slightly above Arizona's 0.4% and national average of 0.1%.

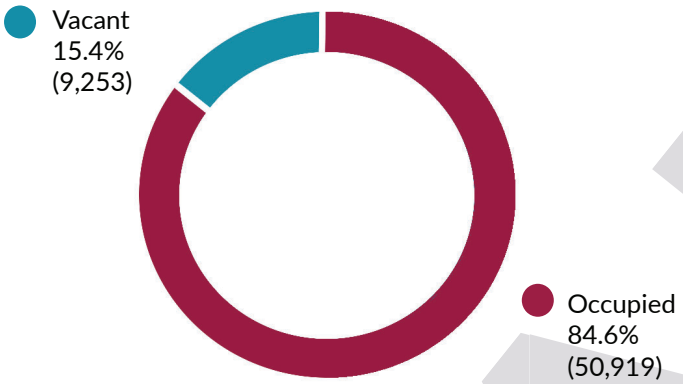
Figure 12: Housing Type [14]



[14] Source: United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts: Arizona; Cochise County, Arizona. United States Census Bureau website. Accessed February 26, 2025. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/AZ,cochisecountyarizona/

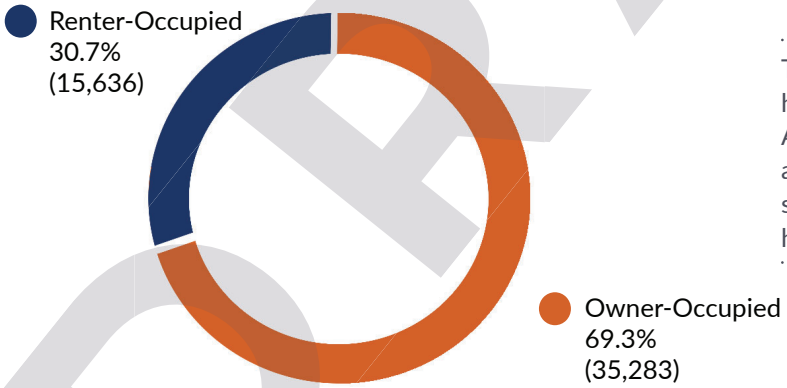
EXISTING HOUSE SUPPLY

Figure 13: Occupied Vs. Vacant Housing [15]



Approximately 15.4% of housing units are vacant, which is 5% higher than the statewide average of 10.3%. A housing shortage is typically indicated by a vacancy rate below 5%.

Figure 14: Renter Vs. Owner-Occupied Housing [15]



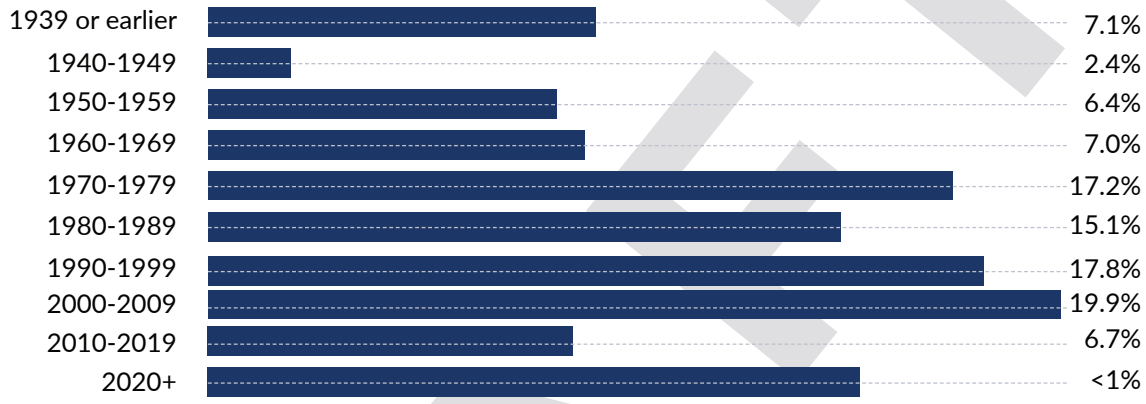
The proportion of owner-occupied housing is 1.6% higher than that of Arizona and 4.1% than the national average. This suggests there is stability in the Cochise County housing market.

[15] Source: Census Reporter. Cochise County, AZ. Accessed February 26, 2025. http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/

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EXISTING HOUSE SUPPLY

Figure 15: Year of Home Construction[17]



The median year of construction of existing homes in Cochise County is 1986. This is similar to the average age of homes in the United States but approximately nine years older that median age of housing stock in Arizona. Older homes, especially those built before 1970, may have unique architectural features and historical value, potentially enhancing their appeal and value, but they often lack energy-efficient features and may have higher maintenance costs.

Overall, while Cochise County has a diverse housing stock, single-family homes constitute a significant majority of the housing stock (66.9%), followed by manufactured homes (19.5%). This distribution suggests a preference for traditional, detached housing units, which is likely influenced by the rural nature of the county.

Moreover, between 1990 and 2000 manufactured home installation increased by 56.9%.[16] The substantial rise in manufactured homes suggests a trend toward more affordable and flexible housing options during that period.

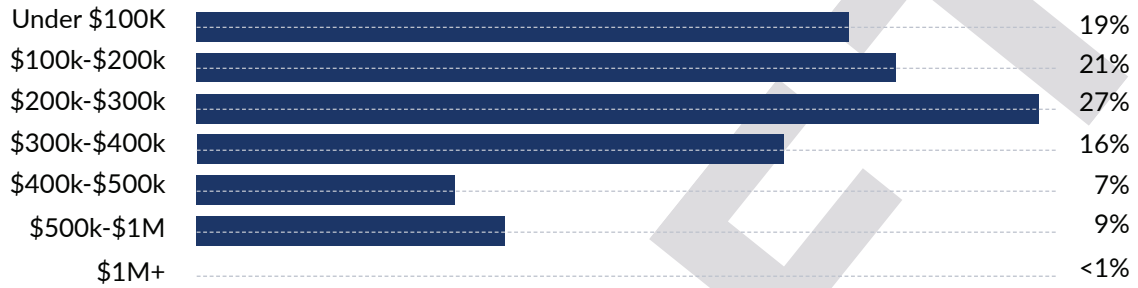
[16] Source: Point2Homes. Cochise County, AZ Household Income, Population & Demographics. Accessed February 26, 2025. https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/AZ/Cochise-County-Demographics

[17] Source: Arizona Department of Housing. (n.d.). Cochise County housing profile. Retrieved February 26, 2025, from https://housing.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/hpCOCHISE%2520COUNTY.pdf

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HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Figure 16: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing [18]



The median owner-occupied housing value in Cochise County of $207,400 is significantly lower than both the statewide average of $411,200 and nationwide average of $340,200.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines "affordable housing" as housing in which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of gross income for housing costs, including utilities. Exceeding that threshold may classify a household as "cost-burdened," potentially limiting the occupant's ability to afford other necessities. As indicated by Table X: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing, Cochise County has a relatively low median home value cost.

However, more recent housing market trends indicate that as of January 2025, the median listing home price in Cochise County was $315,000, reflecting a 6.4% increase from the previous year. Despite rising prices, the county is considered a buyer's market, with homes typically selling below the asking price and remaining on the market longer.[19]

[18] Source: United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts: Arizona; Cochise County, Arizona. United States Census Bureau website. Accessed February 26, 2025. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/AZ,cochisecountyarizona/

[19] Source: Realtor.com. Cochise County, AZ Real Estate Market Overview. Realtor.com website. Accessed February 26, 2025. https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-search/Cochise-County_AZ/overview

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HOUSING SUBMARKETS

RENTAL MARKET

Renters are significantly more cost-burdened than homeowners in Cochise County. Regardless of the apartment size, renters that are paid an average wage are likely to experience housing insecurity and difficulties paying for basic necessities when compared with non-renters.

While the Housing Authority of Cochise County (HACC) administers several programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher Section 8 Program, Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), it does not own any public housing. Consequently, HACC must rely on private landlords to accept housing vouchers, which can limit the availability of affordable housing options for low-income residents. Rental units are also subject to market conditions. In tight housing markets, voucher holders may struggle to find suitable accommodations.

FORT HUACHUCA

Fort Huachuca offers on-post and off-post housing options for military personnel and their families. The installation's housing is managed through a partnership with Mountain Vista Communities (MVC), which oversees on-post family housing.

QUICK FACTS

- Median household income in Cochise County is $52,025 (2019-2023)
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units is $235,200, with median monthly owner costs (with a mortgage) at $1,343.
- 24.1% of homeowners with a mortgage spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- 31% of households in Cochise County are renters. For renters, the median gross rent is $939 per month.
- 46% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing. [21]

On-Post housing: Fort Huachuca provides 1,954 family housing units, with 218 designated for officers and 1,736 for enlisted personnel. Active duty military members with dependents from all service branches assigned to Fort Huachuca are eligible for these housing units.[20]

Off-post housing: Military members and their family may also chose to live off-post. The Fort's Housing Services Office provides resources and assistance for personnel seeking off-post accommodations.

[20] Source: Military Installations. Fort Huachuca Housing Info & Resources. U.S. Department of Defense. https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/military-installation/fort-huachuca/housing/housing. Accessed March 10, 2025.

[21] Source: United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts: Arizona; Cochise County, Arizona. United States Census Bureau website. Accessed February 26, 2025. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/AZ,cochisecountyarizona/

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FEDERAL, STATE, & LOCAL HOUSING FUNDS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federal initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support community development projects that benefit low- and moderate-income individuals. In Arizona, the program is administered by the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH).

The CDBG Regional Account (RA) comprises 85% of Arizona's allocation from HUD. These funds are distributed non-competitively to rural cities, towns, and counties in Arizona. Each regional Council of Governments (COG) develops a Method of Distribution (MOD) to determine fund distribution within its region. The regional COG in Cochise County is the SouthEastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO). SEAGO's region encompasses Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, and Santa Cruz Counties.

Within SEAGO's jurisdiction, CDBG funds are allocated based on a rotation system among sub-regions, pursuant to the MOD. This system ensures that each sub-region receives funding in a structured sequence over the specified fiscal years. [22]

In Cochise County, CDBG funds are currently dedicated towards county-administered programs, like owner-occupied housing rehabilitation and emergency home repairs. Specifically, the county's Emergency Home Repair Program offers financial assistance to eligible homeowners facing urgent repair needs to ensure their homes' safety and livability.

In the future, the county could consider allocation of CDBG funds towards a wider array of options, such as development associated with new affordable housing and infrastructure improvements.

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME)

Administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the HOME program offers grants to states and localities to fund activities such as building, buying, and rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership.

RURAL HOUSING SERVICE (RHS)

The Rural Housing Service (RHS), a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development, offers various programs aimed at improving housing conditions and fostering economic growth in rural areas.

LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT (LIHTC)

The low-income housing tax credit program is a federal program, administered at a state level, that incentivizes private investment in affordable rental housing by providing tax credits to developers. These credits are typically claimed over a 10-year period.

[22] Source: SouthEastern Arizona Governments Organization. What is CDBG? https://www.seago.org/what-is-cdbg. Accessed March 12, 2025.

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FEDERAL, STATE, & LOCAL HOUSING FUNDS

However, recent legislative initiatives, such as Governor's proposal to extend the state's LIHTC, aim to enhance the effectiveness of this program in addressing Arizona's housing.

ARIZONA HOUSING TRUST FUND

This state-established fund allocates resources for affordable housing projects, including new construction, rehabilitation, and emergency repairs.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING (ADOH)

ADOH administers various programs to promote affordable housing, including the State Housing Fund (SHF), which combines federal HOME funds with state resources to support housing projects, the Arizona Housing Trust Fund (HTF), and the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

ARIZONA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IDA)

The Arizona Industrial Development Authority (Arizona IDA) is a state-established entity dedicated to enhancing Arizona's economic development through the issuance of taxable and tax-exempt bonds. By acting as a conduit between private borrowers and investors, the Arizona IDA helps reduce financing costs for various projects, including affordable housing, Specifically, this entity administers the Arizona is Home Mortgage Assistance Program, Mortgage Revenue Bond Program, and Home Plus Program.

SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Housing Authority of Cochise County (HACC) administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to assist very low-income families, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities in obtaining affordable, safe, and sanitary housing within Cochise County, Arizona. Participants receive subsidies that cover the difference between 30% of their monthly adjusted income and the payment standard, directly paid to the landlord.

THE COUNTY'S ROLE

Cochise County plays a pivotal role in administering and distributing various federal, state, and local housing funds to enhance affordable housing and community development. Specifically, as previously mentioned, the Housing Authority of Cochise County directly administers several key programs including the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. The County also collaborates with the Arizona Department of Housing to administer their various programs and coordinates with the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO), on rotation, for CDBG funds.

In addition, the county is currently developing an Affordable Housing Plan. This will serve as a strategic framework guiding access to

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FEDERAL, STATE, & LOCAL HOUSING FUNDS

safe and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. It will assess current and future housing needs, set clear goals, guide future policy development, recommend allocation of resources, and promote partnerships.

COLONIAS

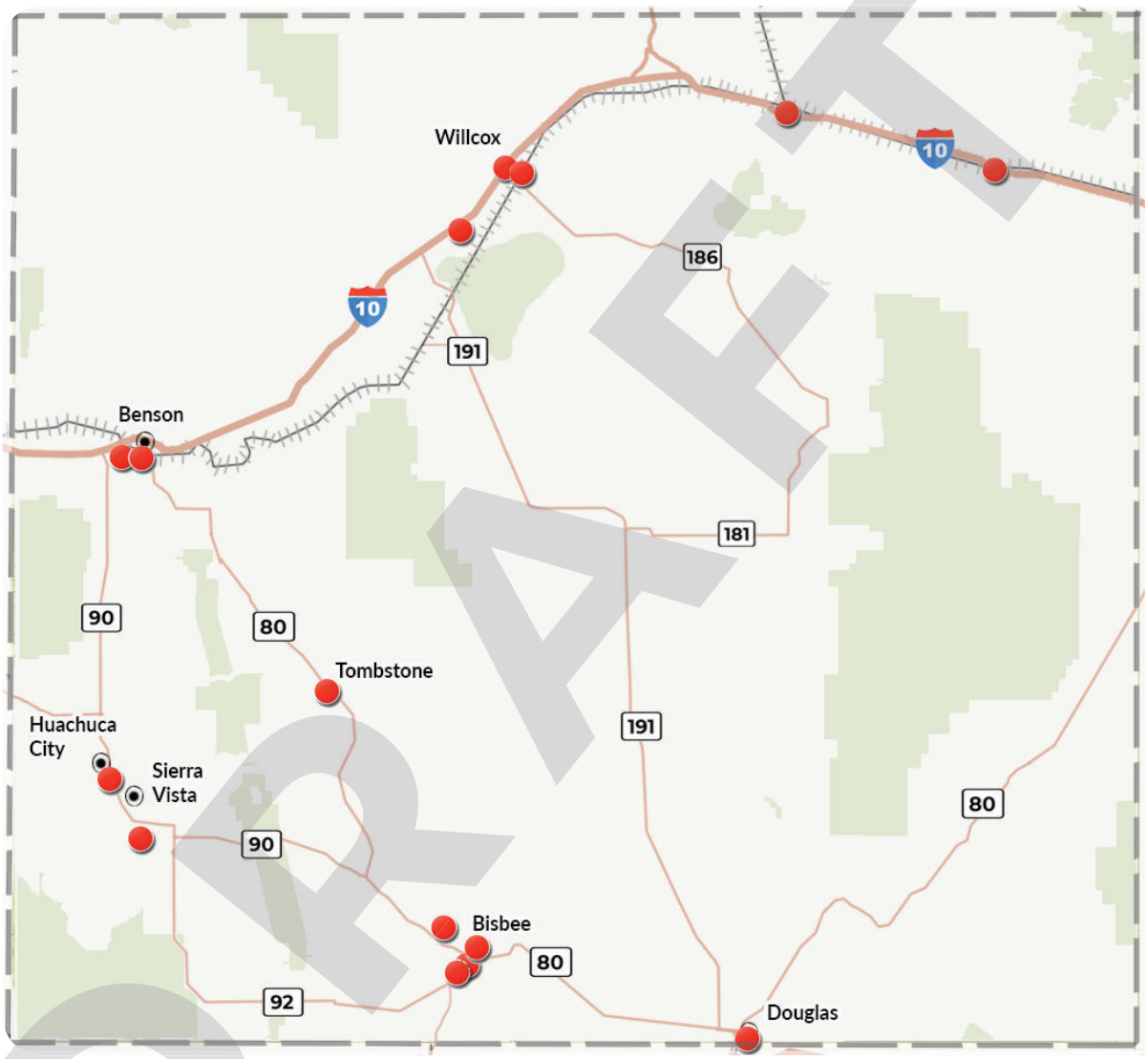
In Arizona, a colonia refers to a specific type of community designated by the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) based on criteria established under federal legislation, particularly Section 916 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. Colonias are located within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border and are characterized by certain deficiencies in infrastructure and housing quality. The community must have existed as a colonia before November 28, 1990. The colonia designation enables these communities to access specific federal and state resources aimed at improving living conditions. For example, Arizona is required to allocate 10% of its annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to benefit colonias, focusing on enhancing infrastructure and housing quality.

Cochise County currently has 15 colonias. Their general location is indicated on Map 32.

COLONIA[23]	LOCATION
Patrick Dr./Valley View	Benson
Prickly Pear/Cactus Neighborhood	Benson
Bakerville Neighborhood	Bisbee
Saginaw Neighborhood	Bisbee
Tintown Neighborhood	Bisbee
Zacatecas Neighborhood	Bisbee
Douglas Original Townsite	Douglas
Tombstone (City Limits)	Tombstone
Willcox Original Townsite	Willcox
Railview Neighborhood	Willcox
Bowie	Unincorporated
Fry Townsite	Unincorporated
Lower Huachuca City	Unincorporated
San Simon	Unincorporated
Winchester Heights	Unincorporated

[23] Source: Arizona Department of Housing. Arizona Designated Colonias as of May 16, 2024. Published May 16, 2024. Accessed March 11, 2025. https://housing.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/ArizonaDesignatedColonias_%205.16.2024.

MAP 33: COLONIAS



Colonia

Source: Arizona Department of Housing. Arizona Designated Colonias as of May 16, 2024. Published May 16, 2024. Accessed March 11, 2025. https://housing.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/ArizonaDesignatedColonias_%205.16.2024.

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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GOALS & POLICIES



GOAL 1: Safe, Healthy, and Energy-Efficient Homes

- Policy 1: Support owner-occupied housing rehabilitation for low- and moderate-income homeowners to address essential repairs and safety needs, using SEAGO's rotating CDBG resources as available.
- Policy 2: Promote programs and rebates that help income-eligible households reduce energy bills through home efficiency improvements, including online outreach and application support.
- Policy 3: Partner with nonprofit organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, to provide painting, landscaping, weatherization, and minor repairs for eligible property owners.
- Policy 4: Provide targeted administrative support to colonia residents to help navigate grant applications and access available resources.

GOAL 2: Build Smart, Live Green

- Policy 1: Lead by example by retrofitting county-owned buildings with energy-efficient upgrades.
- Policy 2: Pursue targeted building code updates that encourage cost-effective energy efficiency and optional renewable energy features, balancing upfront affordability with long-term savings for residents.

GOAL 3: Homes for Every Budget

- Policy 1: Periodically monitor housing costs to ensure affordability remains stable and to anticipate long-term trends.
- Policy 2: Review zoning and development regulations periodically to remove unnecessary barriers and maintain flexibility for a variety of housing types.

GOAL 4: Revitalize Our Neighborhoods

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GOALS & POLICIES

- Policy 1: Direct CDBG funds, as available, to infrastructure improvements—such as street paving, enhanced lighting, or pocket parks—in eligible areas.
- Policy 2: Focus code compliance efforts on rehabilitating or removing dilapidated and unsafe structures in distressed areas.
- Policy 3: Provide additional free access to solid waste transfer stations to residents in economically distressed areas.
- Policy 4: Apply proactive code enforcement in revitalization areas while supporting neighborhood cleanups and community engagement.
- Policy 5: Explore the creation of a Solid Waste District or similar program to provide consistent curbside pickup, recycling, and bulk waste services in under-served and economically distressed areas, improving public health, safety, and neighborhood quality of life.

GOAL 5: Affordable Homes for Renters

- Policy 1: Promote the availability of rental assistance programs and community support services through online outreach.
- Policy 2: Implement strategies from the Cochise County Affordable Housing Plan to reduce renter cost burdens and housing insecurity.
- Policy 3: Update county regulations and policies as needed to align with ongoing state legislation supporting affordable housing.
- Policy 4: Monitor rental market conditions and renter needs to determine the need for programs, and policy updates.

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8

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the economic development element is to establish policies and strategies that foster a robust and diversified economy. Although optional, this element specifically aims to:

- Attract and retain businesses: Implement initiatives to draw new businesses and support the retention and expansion of existing ones.
- Enhance employment opportunities: Develop programs that create jobs and improve workforce skills to meet market demands.
- Improve quality of life: Invest in infrastructure, education, and community services to enhance living standards, making the area more appealing to residents and businesses alike.

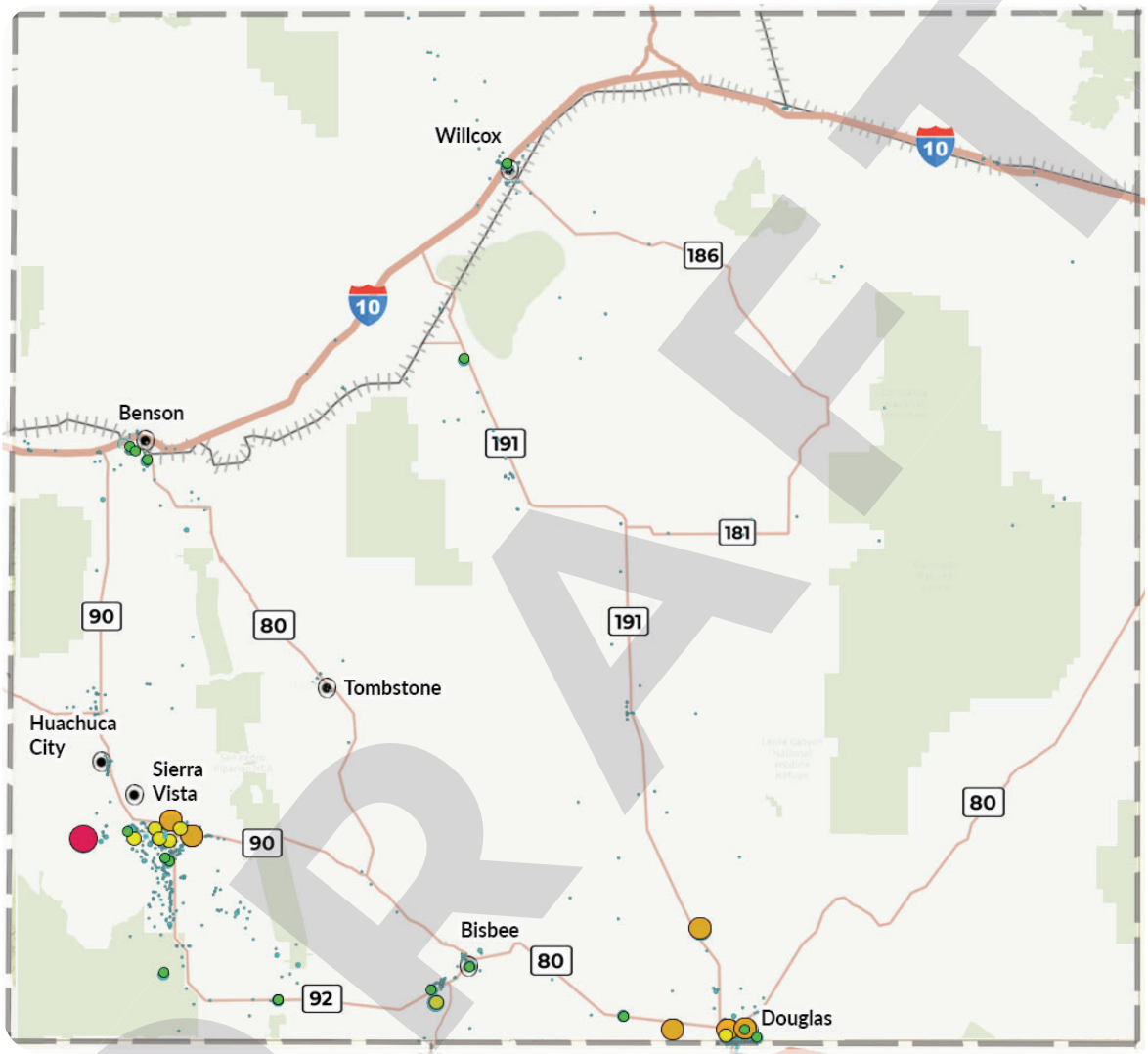
MAJOR EMPLOYERS

EMPLOYER [24]	INDUSTRY TYPE	# EMPLOYEES
Fort Huachuca	Government	7,956
Cochise County	Government	816
Sierra Vista Unified School District	Education	707
Walmart	Retail	643
Canyon Vista Medical Center	Healthcare	623
Arizona Department of Corrections	Government	615
Cochise College	Education	521
Chiricahua Community Health Centers	Healthcare	500
Douglas Unified School District	Education	492
Copper Queen Community Hospital	Healthcare	430
City of Sierra Vista	Government	407
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	Government	245
Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative	Government	174

[24] Source: Cochise County Economic Development. Major Employers. Cochise County Economic Development. https://choosecochise.com/our-county/major-employers. Accessed March 10, 2025.

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MAP 34: MAJOR EMPLOYERS



Cochise County's employment landscape reflects its rural character, with significant reliance on government and healthcare sectors. In addition, the prominence of Fort Huachuca means that a substantial portion of Cochise County's workforce is concentrated in public administration and defense-related roles.

Please see https://geo.azmag.gov/maps/azemployer for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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MAJOR INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYERS

FORT HUACHUCA

Fort Huachuca, established in 1877, is an Army installation located within Sierra Vista city limits and the largest employer in Cochise County. It currently houses the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and the Network Enterprise Technology Command, serving as a hub for military intelligence and communications. It is also the primary location for developmental testing of all the Army's communication electronics systems and the operational testing of all intelligence electronic warfare systems.

Fort Huachuca also encompasses 946 square miles of restricted airspace and 3,157 square miles of protected electronic ranges.

QUICK FACTS*

- Fort Huachuca supports a combined workforce and retiree community of 19,644 individuals.
- In the fiscal year 2022, Fort Huachuca's payroll amounted to approximately $1.66 billion.
- The fort's operations contributed an estimated $4.3 billion to Arizona's economy in 2022.
- Approximately 3,188 military retirees reside within a 50-mile radius of Fort Huachuca.

MINING

The mining industry significantly contributes to Cochise County's economy. A 2014 Economic Impact of the Excelsior Mining Corporation on Cochise County and the State of Arizona, found that $319.9 million in State revenue was generated directly from the project, and $756.8 million in economic activity was generated in Cochise Country alone. [25] Statewide, the mining industry remains a major economic driver. In 2020, mining activities in Arizona generated close to 48,000 direct and indirect jobs, with mining positions being among the highest-paying in the state. [26]

Future Outlook: Although the agricultural and military sectors are more significant contributors to the local economy, the future of mining in Cochise County appears promising. This is helped by the increasing demand for copper driven by advancements in technology and renewable energy. Copper's essential role in electrical applications positions the county to benefit from this growing demand. Projects like the Gunnison Copper mine could see expansion

[25] Source: The Maguire Company and Elliott D. Pollack & Company. Economic Impact of Arizona's Principal Military Operations. Prepared for the State of Arizona Military Affairs Commission, 2023. Accessed March 14, 2025. https://dema.az.gov/sites/default/files/2023-11/2023_AZPrincipalMilitaryOperationsEconImpactStudy__.pdf.

[26] Source: Excelsior Mining Corp. (2014). Excelsior reaffirms positive economic impact of Gunnison project. Gunnison Copper. Retrieved January 24, 2025, from https://www.gunnisoncopper.com/news/news-2014/excelsior-reaffirms-positive-economic-impact-of-gunnison-project

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MAJOR INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYERS

if market demand remains strong. Arizona is increasingly exploring critical minerals like lithium, rare earth elements, and cobalt, which are essential for high-tech and green energy applications. In 2024, MAX Power Mining Corp. announced the discovery of near-surface lithium-rich clays over a broad area of state-leased ground near the Willcox Playa. As of the drafting of this plan, the ongoing drilling and analysis, aimed at assessing the area's potential for large-scale lithium extraction was still underway.[27]

Excelsior Mining is actively developing copper mining projects in Cochise County, notably the Johnson Camp Mine and the forthcoming Gunnison Copper project. These initiatives are expected to generate substantial economic benefits for the region. According to a 2014 economic impact report, the production phase of the mine could contribute approximately $35.9 million annually to Cochise County's Gross State Product (GSP).

QUICK FACTS

- Market Value: In 2022, the total market value of agricultural products sold in Cochise County reached $340.5 million, marking a 135% increase from 2017
- Farm Size: In 2022, the average farm size expanded to 1,034 acres, up 15% from 899 acres in 2017
- Product Sales: Crops accounted for 66% of agricultural sales, while livestock contributed 34%.
- Cochise County's top crop items in 2022, by acreage, were corn for grain; forage (hay/haylage); pecans; and pistachios. Top livestock inventory were cattle and calves, layers, horses and ponies, and goats. [28]



AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has always been a cornerstone of the Cochise County economy. In 2022, there were 1,002 farms in Cochise County.

Cochise County ranks in the top 10% of all U.S. counties for total

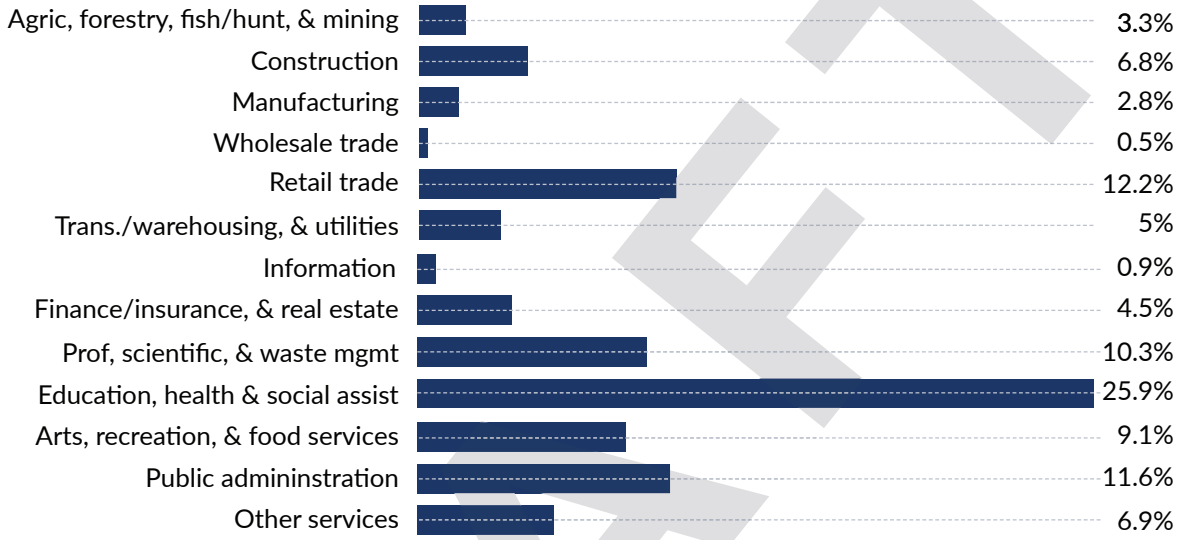
[27] Source: MAX Power Mining Corp. (n.d.). MAX Power makes high-grade lithium discovery at Arizona's Willcox Playa. Retrieved January 24, 2025, from https://www.maxpowermining.com/max-power-makes-high-grade-lithium-discovery-at-arizonas-willcox-playa/

[28] Source: Cochise Economy. Agriculture. Cochise Economy. Accessed March 14, 2025. https://cochiseeconomy.com/agriculture

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MAJOR INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYERS

Figure 17: Employment by Sector [30]



A significant share of jobs in Cochise County are associated with government employment, much of which is reflected across multiple sectors in Figure 17, largely due to Fort Huachuca's presence.

crop sales and in the top 8% for vegetable sales.[29] Agriculture faces several challenges. Agriculture in Cochise County relies heavily on groundwater. Over-extraction, particularly by large-scale farming operations, has led to declining water tables. Proposed regulations to manage groundwater use have raised concerns among farmers. While aiming to prevent resource depletion, these regulations may limit water availability for irrigation, challenging traditional farming practices.

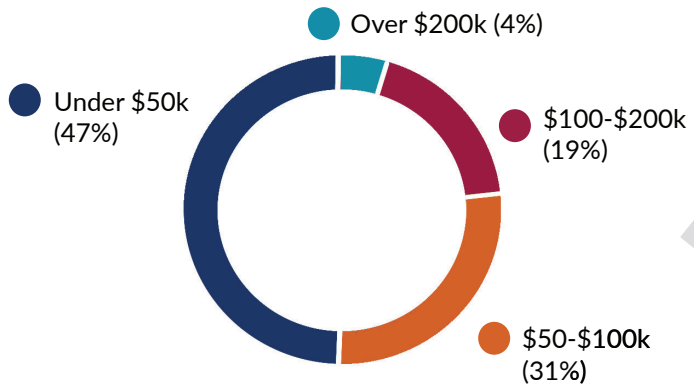
[29] Source: Murphree, Julie. "Beyond Arizona Agriculture's $31 Billion Number." Arizona Farm Bureau, January 13, 2025. https://www.azfb.org/Article/Beyond-Arizona-Agricultures-31-Billion-Number.

[30] Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

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INCOME & COST OF LIVING

Figure 18: Median Household Income [31]



The median household income for Cochise County is $52,025. This is two-thirds of the average for Arizona ($77,315). The median per capita income is $29,608, which is three-quarters of the average for Arizona ($41,290). Moreover, approximately 15.9% of the county population live below the poverty line. This is 25% higher than the statewide level of 12.5%.

Although median household earnings are lower in Cochise County when compared to state and national levels, the county offers a notably affordable living environment. Key aspects of affordability include:

Overall Cost of Living:

- Typical expenses of Cochise County residents are 15.2% lower than the U.S. average and 20.3% lower than Arizona's average.

Income Requirements:

- Single Person: Recommended annual income of $31,200 to cover basic expenses comfortably.
- Family: Suggested annual income of $42,840 for a similar standard of living.[32]

[31] Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Cochise County, AZ <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US04003-cochise-county-az/>

[32] Source: Cochise County, AZ Cost of Living. https://www.bestplaces.net/cost_of_living/county/arizona/cochise. Accessed March 10, 2025.

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MAJOR PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: NEW PORT

A NEW PORT OF ENTRY

One of the most significant infrastructure projects currently underway in Cochise County is the construction of a new commercial Port of Entry west of Douglas. Ports of entry provide controlled access into and out of the United States for people, vehicles, and goods, and house the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and other federal inspection agencies responsible for enforcing trade, immigration, and security laws.

Arizona has six ports of entry along its border with Mexico, and the Douglas Port of Entry is the second-largest commercial port in the state. It is also the only Port of Entry between Douglas and Agua Prieta, Mexico. Unlike other ports such as Nogales or San Luis, commercial and passenger traffic currently compete for the same lanes at Douglas, creating congestion, operational inefficiencies, and safety risks in downtown Douglas.

Raul Hector Castro Port Of Entry: The existing port, constructed in 1933 and expanded in 1993, is insufficient to handle current trade and traffic volumes. Overcrowding, long wait times, and conflicts between commercial trucks and passenger vehicles have made operations less efficient and less safe. Federal funding has been allocated to modernize inspection capacity, but additional infrastructure is needed to meet growing demand.



A Two-Port Solution: The construction of a second commercial Port of Entry in the Douglas area is designed to resolve these challenges by:

- Increasing operational capacity: Faster processing of commercial and passenger vehicles.
- Enhancing safety and security: Dedicated lanes for trucks, reducing vehicle conflicts and improving pedestrian safety.
- Reducing congestion: Alleviating downtown traffic and improving travel reliability for all border users.

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MAJOR PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: NEW PORT

- Supporting future trade growth: Scalable infrastructure that accommodates increasing commercial activity.

Countywide Economic Impact: The Douglas Port of Entry will have far-reaching benefits for Cochise County as a whole:

Trade and Logistics

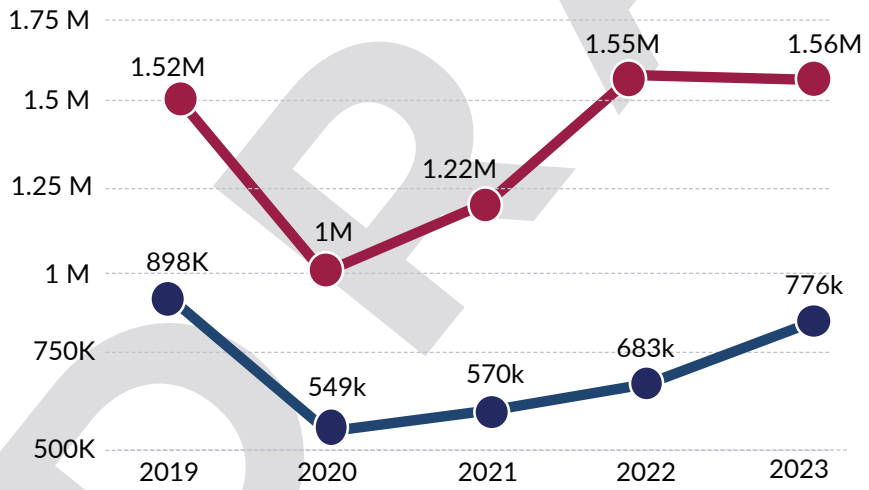
- A modernized, two-port system increases the efficiency of cross-border trade, supporting local businesses and attracting new logistics and distribution operations
- Improved trade corridors encourage private investment in warehouses, industrial parks, and transportation networks countywide.

Employment and Workforce Development

- Approximately 110 new jobs will be created initially, with potential for growth as commercial activity expands.
- Jobs range from port operations and logistics to administrative and support services, strengthening workforce opportunities for county residents.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Figure 19: Northbound Crossings at Douglas Port of Entry (2019-2023)[33]



Pedestrian crossings are up 41% since 2020 and grew steadily every year after the pandemic low, reaching 776,065 in 2023.

Vehicle crossings have returned to pre-pandemic levels, with 2023 slightly exceeding 2022 and nearly matching 2019 pre-covid volumes.

Pedestrians

Personal Vehicles

[33] Economic and Business Research Center, Eller College of Management, University of Arizona. "Pedestrian Crossings." Arizona-Mexico Economic Indicators, AZMEX, 2025, https://azmex.eller.arizona.edu/border-crossings/pedestrian-crossings

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MAJOR PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: NEW PORT

- Increased port activity supports complementary investments in roads, utilities, and the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport, improving access and reliability for the broader region.
- These infrastructure upgrades facilitate agricultural exports, mining shipments, and industrial operations across the county.

Education and Community Growth

- Higher economic activity may increase the student population at Cochise College and demand for local educational and vocational programs.
- Growth in trade-related jobs and residential demand supports housing development, retail, and community services.

Revenue and Investment

- Combined with renovations to the existing port, the project is expected to generate $10.8–$20 million annually in area revenue.
- Enhanced border capacity and efficiency make Cochise County a more attractive location for investment in trade-dependent businesses, logistics hubs, and supporting industries.

INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

Cochise County's economic growth and quality of life depend on robust infrastructure and connectivity. Investments in transportation and broadband are critical to supporting trade, commerce, education, healthcare, and community engagement throughout the county.

Transportation: The construction of a second commercial Port of Entry in the Douglas area will increase trade capacity, enhance safety, reduce congestion, and support future economic growth. Complementary investments in roads, highways, and rail infrastructure are needed to ensure that commercial traffic can efficiently move goods in and out of the county. Upgrading these corridors not only facilitates port operations but also improves broader access for agriculture, mining, and industrial operations, while attracting private investment in logistics, warehousing, and distribution.

Broadband: Reliable high-speed internet is essential for economic development, education, healthcare, and community engagement. Cochise County is expanding broadband access through federal and state initiatives, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program,

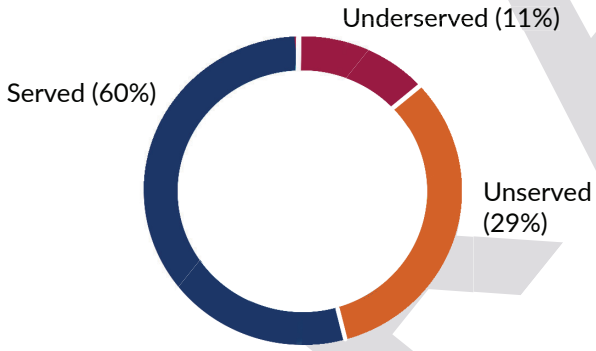
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INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and the Arizona Broadband Development Grant (ABDG) Program. In areas not eligible for BEAD funding, the county partners with Internet Service Providers to enhance connectivity through targeted infrastructure improvements. These efforts aim to close the digital divide, foster business growth, attract investment, and ensure equitable access to education, telemedicine, and online services countywide.

By strategically investing in both transportation and broadband infrastructure, Cochise County can support existing economic activity, accommodate future growth, and enhance the overall competitiveness and resilience of the region.

Figure 20: Current Broadband Coverage [34]

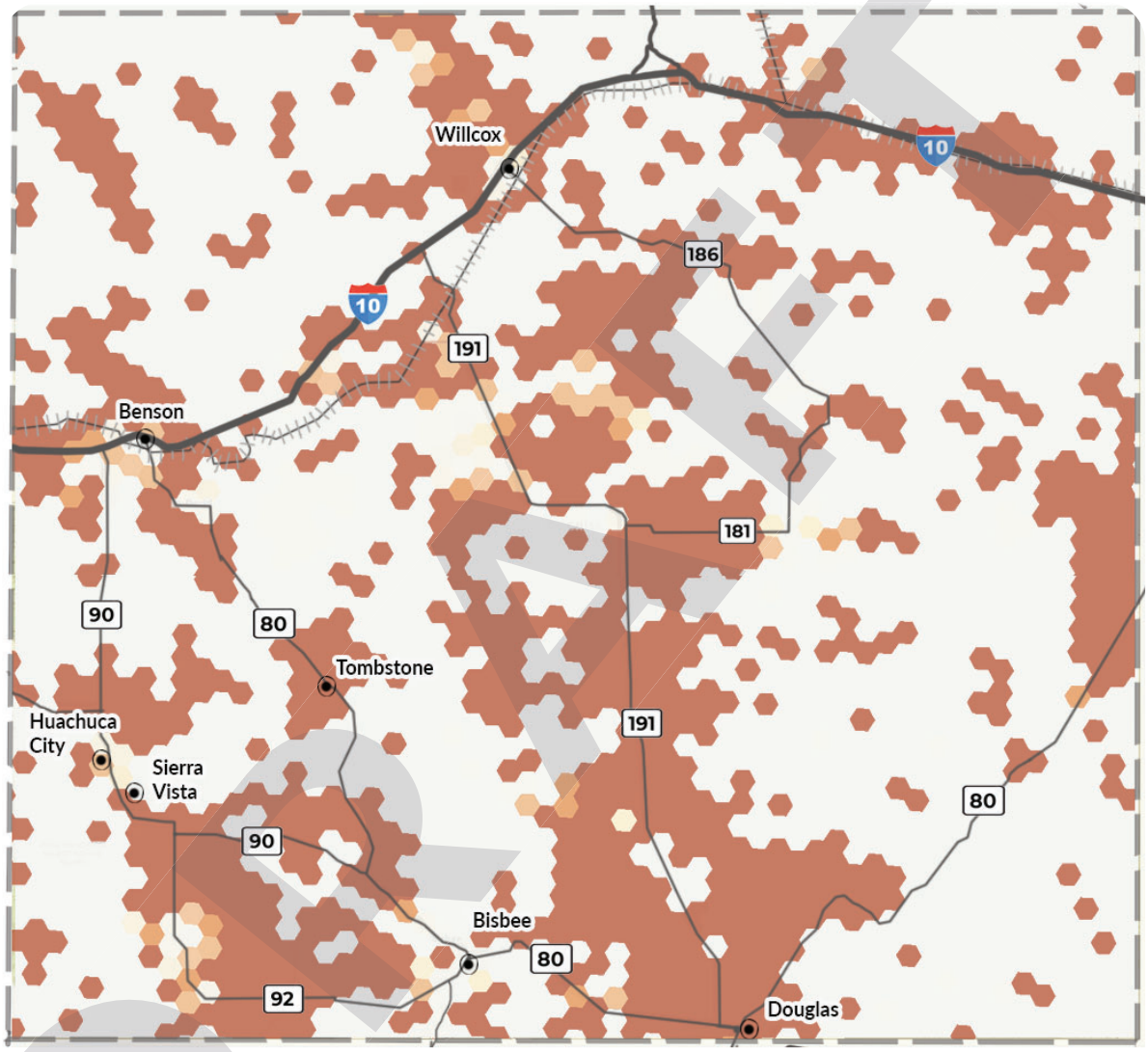


- Served: Access to access to broadband speeds of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download, 20 Mbps upload, or higher
- Under-served: Broadband is available but no facilities-based provider offers service at speeds of at least 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload
- Unserved: Either no broadband connectivity at all or internet service with speeds less than 25Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload

[34] Source: Cochise County Information Technology Department. Cochise County Broadband. Cochise County, Arizona. https://www.cochise.az.gov/844/Cochise-County-Broadband. Accessed March 10, 2025.

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MAP 35: BROADBAND IMPROVEMENT AREAS



75-100% underserved
50-75% underserved
25-50% underserved
0-25% underserved

As of February 2025, Cochise County was the second-most under-served county in Arizona

Source: Arizona Commerce Authority. (n.d.). Connect All AZ Broadband Map. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from https://experience.arcgis.com/

Please see https://experience.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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TAX CREDITS & INCENTIVES

FILM PRODUCTION

Arizona's Motion Picture Production Program (MPPP) is a refundable tax credit program that allows production companies the opportunity to recapture a percentage of qualified production expenses spent in Arizona to produce more than 50% of their movie, television show, commercial, or music video at a Qualified Production Facility and/or at a Practical Location beginning January 1, 2023.[35]



OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Cochise County contains four federally designated Opportunity Zones, encompassing approximately 14,000 residents, or about 11% of the county's population. These zones are part of a national program established under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-97), designed to spur economic development and job creation in low-income communities by offering tax incentives to investors.

Investments in these zones are made through Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs), which allow investors to defer, reduce, or potentially eliminate capital gains taxes depending on the length and type of investment. The zones' boundaries are defined by IRS-certified census tracts, which remain valid regardless of 2020 Census changes, providing a clear framework for development. By leveraging Opportunity Zone incentives, Cochise County can encourage private investment in housing, commercial facilities, and infrastructure in economically distressed areas, supporting broader countywide economic growth.[36]

BROWNFIELD PROGRAMS

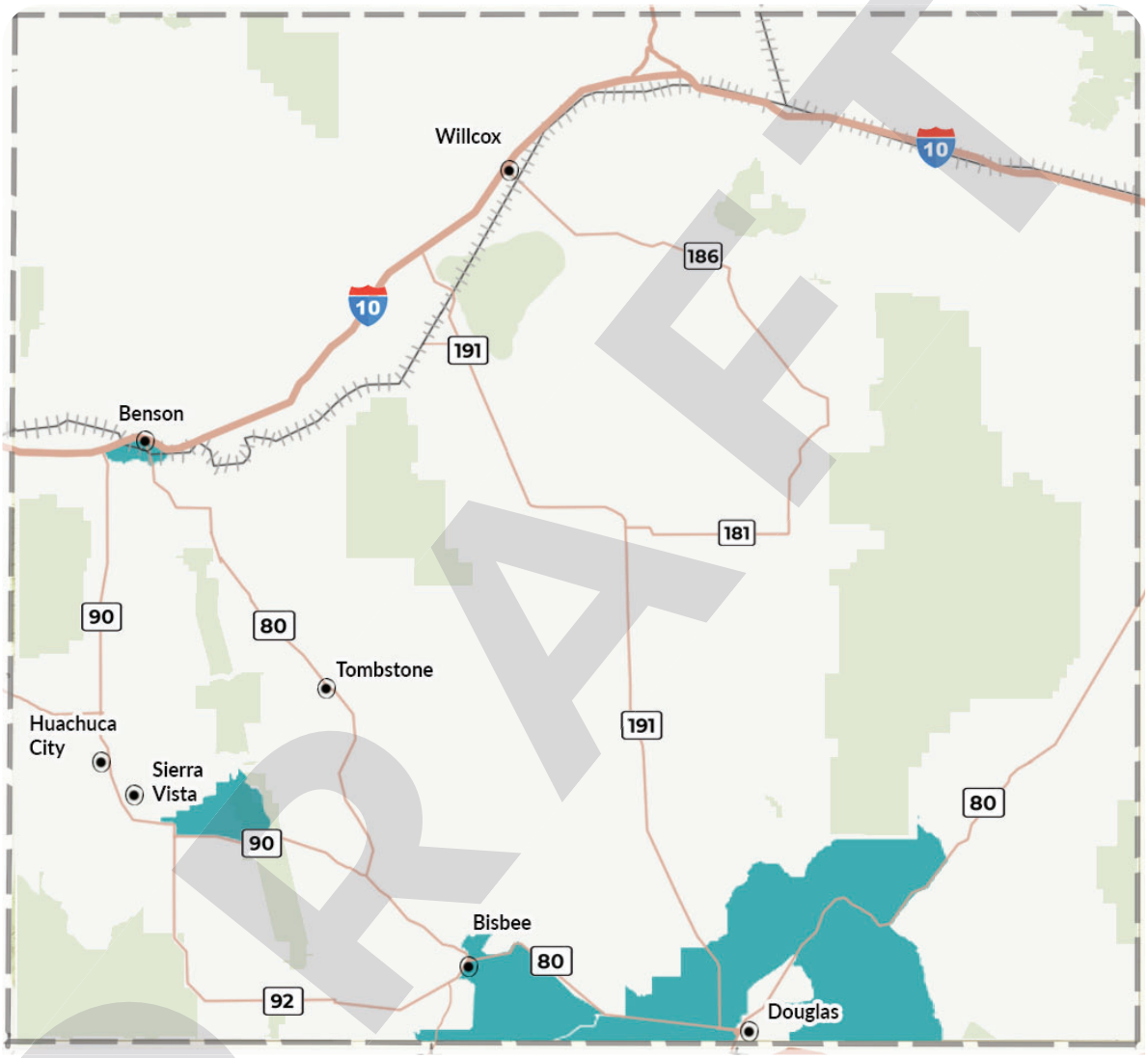
A brownfield is a site which has remained unused or underused due to real or perceived environmental contamination; often a site of previous industrial use. In Cochise County, Arizona, the EPA's Brownfields Program has been instrumental in supporting local redevelopment efforts. Since 2019, the county has secured multiple grants, including two Brownfields Assessment Grants and Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (BRLF) Grants, totaling $2.1 million.

[35] Source: Arizona Commerce Authority. Motion Picture Production Program Incentive. Arizona Commerce Authority. Accessed March 17, 2025. https://www.azcommerce.com/film-media/incentive/

[36] Source: Internal Revenue Service. (n.d.). Opportunity zones. U.S. Department of the Treasury. https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/businesses/opportunity-zones

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MAP 36: OPPORTUNITY ZONES



Opportunity Zone

Please see https://cochise.maps.arcgis.com/ for the most detailed and up-to-date information.

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TAX CREDITS & INCENTIVES

Brownfields Assessment Grants provide funding to identify contaminated or potentially contaminated sites and support environmental site assessments, cleanup planning, and community engagement. Cochise County received a $600,000 Assessment Grant in 2019 and an additional $500,000 in 2022.

Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (BRLF) supports the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties by establishing low- or no-interest loans and sub-grants for remediation.

Together, these programs have allowed Cochise County to identify environmental risks, plan remediation, and finance cleanup, transforming underutilized brownfield sites into productive properties and supporting economic growth.

Airport Connection: Bisbee–Douglas International Airport includes legacy infrastructure and shared utility systems. To support future investment and ensure sites are development-ready, the County should focus on environmental due diligence and planning to clarify site conditions, reduce uncertainty for prospective users, and streamline infrastructure and redevelopment decisions. This proactive approach will make airport-adjacent properties shovel-ready while supporting safe, resilient airport operations.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic properties can support community revitalization, small business growth, and heritage tourism. Property owners may be eligible for state and federal historic preservation incentives and grant programs, as applicable. The County will coordinate with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other partners to help improve awareness of available programs. The County may also evaluate the potential benefits of pursuing Certified Local Government (CLG) status in the future to support access to preservation resources, technical assistance, and grant opportunities.

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GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 1: Power Up the Economy – Leverage Defense Assets within a Diversified Economy

- Policy 1: Strengthen collaboration with Fort Huachuca and related federal partners to support workforce development and innovation that benefit both defense-related and civilian industries.
- Policy 2: Encourage local business partnerships and service providers to leverage Fort Huachuca's economic impact in ways that expand local employment opportunities
- Policy 3: Promote programs that retain and attract military-related contractors and other high-technology businesses that contribute to innovation, workforce skills development, and long-term economic resilience.

GOAL 2: Digging for Success – Expand Mining & Resource Opportunities

- Policy 1: Support environmentally responsible development of existing and new mining operations, including copper and critical minerals.
- Policy 2: Coordinate with state and federal agencies to streamline permitting, environmental review, and workforce readiness for mining projects.
- Policy 3: Promote local supply chain participation and community benefits from mining activities, including job creation and training.

GOAL 3: Grow Our Fields – Strengthen Agriculture & Rural Enterprise

- Policy 1: Support responsible water use and irrigation practices to maintain productive farmland while conserving aquifers.
- Policy 2: Promote local food production, agribusiness, and value-added processing to enhance economic diversification.
- Policy 3: Provide technical assistance, education, and grant opportunities to small and family-owned farms to improve competitiveness and resilience.

GOAL 4: Border Opportunities – Maximize Ports of Entry & Trade

- Policy 1: Facilitate the development of the new Douglas Port of Entry and modernization of existing facilities to increase trade efficiency.
- Policy 2: Support infrastructure improvements, including roads, utilities, and connectivity, to accommodate increased commercial activity.
- Policy 3: Leverage border trade to create local employment opportunities and stimulate business growth in adjacent communities.

GOAL 5: Connect & Compete – Expand Broadband Access Countywide

- Policy 1: Coordinate public and private investments to improve broadband coverage in unserved and under-served

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GOALS & POLICIES

areas.

- Policy 2: Promote digital literacy programs and workforce training to enable residents and businesses to benefit from broadband expansion.
- Policy 3: Integrate broadband planning into economic development strategies, supporting education, healthcare, and entrepreneurship.

GOAL 6: Film & Fame – Grow the Creative Economy

- Policy 1: Promote the Arizona Motion Picture Production Program and Cochise County locations to attract film, TV, and commercial production.
- Policy 2: Develop local support services, workforce training, and incentives for film production in the county.
- Policy 3: Encourage collaboration with municipalities, tourism agencies, and educational institutions to maximize economic benefits from creative industries.

GOAL 7: Build Skills, Build Jobs – Workforce Development & Training

- Policy 1: Support partnerships between schools, colleges, employers, and trade programs to align workforce skills with industry needs.
- Policy 2: Encourage apprenticeships, internships, and workforce training programs in emerging sectors, including technology, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing.
- Policy 3: Focus on retention strategies that keep skilled workers in Cochise County to support local economic growth.

GOAL 8: Cultural Heritage as an Economic Asset

Policy 1: Encourage adaptive reuse of historic properties for compatible economic uses, including heritage tourism, small businesses, museums, lodging, and cultural venues.

Policy 2: Promote awareness and use of state and federal incentives, grants, and tax credits that support rehabilitation and reuse of historic properties.

Policy 3: Coordinate with local partners and state agencies to support heritage-based tourism, downtown revitalization, and reinvestment in historic areas.

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AMENDMENTS & IMPLEMENTATION

PURPOSE

The Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Supervisors, and any other County department, commission, official, or employee acting in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors shall consult, consider, and generally be guided by this Comprehensive Plan. All zoning, subdivision, building, and other land use decisions shall be in substantial conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, consistent with ARS §11-805.

This chapter outlines the process for modifying the Comprehensive Plan to ensure adaptability to changing property owner needs, growth patterns, and public policy, while maintaining compliance with state law. Specifically, it:

- Defines major and minor amendments;
- Provides amendment procedures for staff- and applicant-initiated requests;
- Lists criteria for amendment evaluation; and
- Establishes record-keeping, periodic review, and implementation tracking.

AMENDMENTS

The Comprehensive Plan may be amended periodically to respond to changes in growth patterns, development needs, or public policy. Amendments to Growth Area Categories and Plan Designations are intended to:

1. Protect the existing character of an area.
2. Ensure that amendments are justified by specific evidence showing that the current land use category no longer reflects the actual or projected growth patterns.

Presumption: Unless such evidence is provided, the existing category should be retained.

AMENDMENT CONSIDERATIONS

When considering a change to a land use category, the following factors shall be evaluated:

1. Infrastructure and Services: Availability of roads, water, sewer, and utilities to serve the proposed development.
2. Land Use Patterns: Existing zoning, land use, and density compared to the surrounding area.
3. Compatibility with Surrounding Areas: How well the proposed land use fits with nearby uses, including buffers and transitions.
4. Development Plans: Completeness and adequacy of submitted plans, including master or detailed development plans.

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5. Tribal Coordination: Although no tribal governmental are located in the County, as applicable, coordination with potentially affiliated Tribes regarding cultural or natural resource concerns.
6. Community Input: Input from property owners, neighbors, and local organizations, including written comments and endorsements.

MAJOR AMENDMENT DEFINITION

Consistent with ARS §11-805, a major amendment is any change resulting in a substantial alteration of the county's land use mixture or balance in the affected area. A "substantial alteration" is an amendment that increases potential densities or intensities of use across 2,000 acres or more.

Major amendments may be initiated by Development Services staff, the Planning Commission on its own motion, or by application from interested parties. Staff typically identifies and recommends amendments based on technical analysis, policy updates, or emerging development trends.

MINOR AMENDMENT DEFINITION

County-Defined Minor Amendments are amendments that do not meet the thresholds for a major amendment. Notification requirements are scaled based on the current growth area designation:

- Growth Area A or B notify property owners within 1,500 feet of the subject property boundary.
- Growth Area C or D: notify property owners within 1,000 feet of the subject property boundary.

APPLICATION TIMELINE & REVIEW

Development Services staff receive and process Comprehensive Plan amendment applications, conduct technical review, and compile comments from relevant agencies, stakeholders, and the public. Staff prepare a report and recommendation for the Planning Commission's consideration

- Amendments or new plan elements may be initiated by either staff or the Planning Commission. Applications from property owners or other interested parties may be submitted year-round.
- Following staff review, staff schedules the public hearing before the Planning Commission and prepares the required public notice, published at least 15 days in advance in a newspaper of general circulation or by other methods as required by law.
- The Planning Commission reviews applications, evaluates amendment criteria, and provides a formal recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Staff supports the Commission by compiling relevant information and materials.
- The Board holds at least one public

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AMENDMENTS

hearing to consider the Commission's recommendation, agency feedback, public comments, and any protests or objections. If the Board proposes modifications, the affected portion may be remanded to the Planning Commission for further review and recommendation prior to final adoption.

Public Comment Period: Major amendments include a minimum 30-day public comment period prior to the Planning Commission's recommendation.

MAJOR AMENDMENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must notify, and if requested, meet with:

- All municipalities in Cochise County
- Contiguous counties
- Regional planning agency (SEAGO)
- Arizona Commerce Authority or designated state planning agency.
- Department of Water Resources (for water element amendments).
- Military airports or ancillary facilities if the amendment affects their vicinity.
- Attorney General for areas in high-noise or accident potential zones near military airports.
- Any person or entity requesting a review copy in writing.

Notices must include the amendment application, supporting documentation, and instructions for submitting comments.

MINOR AMENDMENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must notify adjacent and potentially impacted property owners:

- Within the subject property area.
- Within 1,500 feet (Growth Area C or D) or 1,000 feet (Growth Area A or B) of the subject property boundary.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- After review of agency and public comments, the Planning Commission shall hold at least one public hearing, with notice published at least 15 days in advance in newspapers of general circulation.
- The Commission submits its recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
- The Board shall hold at least one public hearing, considering the Commission's recommendation, agency feedback, and public input.
- Protests or objections may be considered

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IMPLEMENTATION

- Adoption: Adoption or re-adoption of the Comprehensive Plan or any amendment shall be by resolution of the Board with an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members.

RECORD-KEEPING & IMPLEMENTATION TRACKING

- The Planning and Zoning Commission, in coordination with County staff, shall maintain a record of all amendments, notifications, public comments, and final decisions.
- The Comprehensive Plan and its amendments shall be reviewed at least every five years to evaluate effectiveness, track implementation, and identify the need for updates.
- Reports on major and minor amendments, including protest counts and community input, shall be compiled to ensure transparency and accountability.

Public Comment Period: Major amendments include a minimum 30-day public comment period prior to the Planning Commission's recommendation.

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APPENDIX
KEY TERMS

KEY TERMS

Access: The means for pedestrians, vehicles, and other travel modes to enter or leave a property.

Access Management: A set of policies and standards that manage the number and location of access points on the public road system.

Acre: A measure of land containing 43,560 square feet.

Adaptive Reuse: Rehabilitation or renovation of existing buildings or structures for any use other than the present use.

Affordable Housing: Housing that has a sale price or rental amount that is within the means of a household that may occupy middle-, moderate-, or low-income housing.

Aggregate Material: A category of raw material such as sand, gravel and stone that is used for construction purposes

Agricultural Lands: Lands used primarily for raising crops, forage and livestock.

Agritourism: Tourism that focuses on the enjoyment of, or education about, agricultural and ranching activities.

Airport: Any area of land or water designed and set aside for the landing and take-off of aircraft, including all necessary facilities for the housing and maintenance of aircraft.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): Any motorized, off-road vehicle 50 inches or less in overall width, having a dry weight of 600 pounds or less, designed to travel on three or more low pressure tires, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handle bars for steering control.

Amendment: A formal revision, addition or suggested change made to an existing plan or statute.

Annexation: The process by which cities extend their municipal services, regulations, voting privileges, and taxing authority to new territory.

Aquifer: An underground geologic formation that contains sufficient saturated, permeable material to yield significant quantities of groundwater to wells and springs.

Area Plan: A plan that covers specific subareas of the county.

Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC): The state agency with regulatory responsibility for incorporation, securities, railroad and pipeline safety, and utilities.

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ): The agency with regulatory responsibility for air and water quality, as well as for the storage, treatment, and disposal of solid and hazardous waste.

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT): The agency responsible for developing, operating, and maintaining the state and federal highway infrastructure.

Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR): The agency with regulatory responsibility for managing surface water and groundwater resources in Arizona.

Arizona Game & Fish Department (AGFD): The agency charged with conserving,

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KEY TERMS

Arterial Roadway: Roadways designed to carry longer trips across the region and to other regions.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT): The average number of vehicles passing a fixed point during a 24-hour timeframe used for measuring traffic volume.

Bike Lane: A linear corridor expressly reserved for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles.

Blight: The process whereby a previously functioning city, or part of a city, falls into disrepair and decrepitude

Board of Supervisors (BOS): The three elected officials, each representing a geographic district, that govern Cochise County.

Brownfields: A site which has remained unused or underused due to real or perceived environmental contamination; often a site of previous industrial use.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): The federal agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior that administers 262 million acres of America's public lands, located primarily in 12 western states.

Collector Roadway: Typically, a rural route of primarily intra-county importance that funnels traffic between local streets and the arterial roadway system.

Comprehensive Plan: An adopted, official statement of the county's desired future, intended to serve as the primary decision-making guide for growth and development in the form of text and maps, regarding the long-term development of the county.

Conservation: The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or degradation.

Conservation Easement: An easement intended to protect, preserve, and conserve a natural feature, which shall prohibit the construction of any buildings or structures within the easement and shall prohibit the removal of all vegetation, except that which is necessary for protecting the public health and safety and/or according to an approved forest management plan, where required.

County Island: Unincorporated area completely surrounded by land under the county's jurisdiction.

Dedication: The turning over by an owner or developer of private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used.

Deed Restriction: A private legal restriction on the use of land, attached in the deed to a property.

Density: The number of dwelling units within a given area, usually expressed in dwelling units, population, or employment per acre or square mile.

Development: The physical extension and/or construction of urban land uses.

Development Services Department: The County department responsible for planning

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and zoning as well as building permits and inspections.

Development Standards: Regulations that limit the size, bulk, or siting conditions of particular types of buildings or uses located within any designated district zoning pertaining to heights, lot area, fences, walls, landscaping area, access, parking, signs, setbacks, and other physical requirements.

Disturbed Area: An area of land subjected to erosion due to the removal of vegetative cover and/or earthmoving activities, including filling.

Downzone: A change in the zoning classification of land to a classification permitting development that is less intensive or dense

Drought: A sustained, natural reduction in precipitation that results in negative impacts to the environment and human activities.

Dwelling Unit: A single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

Earth Fissures: Open ground fractures that form in unconsolidated sediments as the result of tensional stresses associated with land subsidence.

Easement: A legal interest in land, granted by the owner to another person, which allows the use of all or a portion of the owner's land, generally for a stated purpose including but not limited to access or placement of utilities.

Ecotourism: Tourism that focuses on enjoyment of the environment or natural resources.

Effluent: Liquid waste or sewage, treated or untreated, discharged to the environment.

ENERGY STAR: A joint program of the EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy helping to save Americans money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices.

Environmental Assessment: The procedure for analyzing the impacts of some proposed action on a given environment and the documentation of the analysis.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): A statement on the effect of development proposals and other major actions that significantly affect the environment.

Environmentally Sensitive Area: Any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments

Erosion: The general process by which soils are removed by flowing surface or subsurface water or by wind.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): The federal agency charged with primary responsibility for the safety of civil aviation.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): The federal agency responsible for reducing the loss of life and property and

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protecting the nation's critical infrastructure from hazards.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): The federal agency responsible for developing, maintaining, and funding the federal roadway system.

Floodplain/100-Year Flood: A standard adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to identify areas where there exists a 1% annual chance of a flood occurring.

Floodproofing: Any combination of structural and non-structural additions, changes or adjustments to structures which reduce or eliminate flood damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitary facilities, structures and their contents by means other than elevation.

Floodway: The area of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation. Also referred to as "Regulatory Floodway."

Fossil Fuels: Fuels formed by natural processes such as anaerobic decomposition of buried dead organisms.

General Plan: An adopted statement of an incorporated community's desired future, intended to serve as the primary decision-making guide for growth and development for the jurisdiction.

Goal: The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general and broad in nature and immeasurable.

Grade: The average level of the finished surface of the ground adjacent to the exterior walls of the building

Gray Water: Wastewater, collected separately from sewage flow, that originates from a clothes washer, bathtub, shower, or sink, but not from the kitchen sink, dishwasher, or toilet.

Grazing: The consumption of standing forage (edible plants) by wildlife and livestock on rangelands or fenced pasture. Livestock grazing is usually associated with commercial uses related to ranching.

Green Building: Structures that incorporate the principles of sustainable design— design in which the impact of a building on the environment will be minimal over the lifetime of that building.

Groundwater: Water that occurs beneath the land surface, also called subsurface water or subterranean water.

Growth Boundary: A line denoting the limit of areas where growth is to be encouraged or accommodated using growth management techniques.

Growth Management: The use of a wide range of techniques to influence the location, timing, type, character and rate of development desired by a community and to channel that growth into designated areas.

Habitat: The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or

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biological population lives or occurs.

Hauled Water: Water transported by tank from its source to an area where it is otherwise unavailable.

Hardship: A restriction on property so unreasonable that it results in an arbitrary and capricious interference with basic property rights.

Hazardous Materials: Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: Plan that identifies natural hazards, assesses vulnerability and risks to people and structures, and identifies and implements strategies for mitigating the identified natural hazards.

Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF): A fund consisting of fees and charges relating to the registration and operation of motor vehicles on Arizona highways which are distributed to cities, towns, counties and the State Highway Fund for highway construction, improvements and related expenses.

Historic Preservation: The adaptive use, conservation, protection, reconstruction, rehabilitation, restoration, or stabilization of an historic resource.

Historic Property: A district, site, building, structure, or object that is listed in, or eligible for listing in, the Arizona Register of Historic Places and/or the National Register of Historic Places (A/NRHP). This term is used to distinguish register-eligible historic resources from other cultural resources that may have community or cultural significance but are not eligible for inclusion in the A/NRHP.

Impervious Surface: A surface consisting of asphalt, concrete, roofing material, brick, paving block, plastic, or other similar material which does not readily absorb water.

Infill: The development of new housing or other structures on scattered vacant sites within built-up areas.

Infrastructure: Any and all of the public facilities and services needed for development of a lot or parcel of land.

Intergovernmental Agreement: A contractual agreement between Cochise County and another governmental entity.

International Building Code (IBC): International standards for protecting life and property by regulating the design, construction, quality of materials, use, and occupancy of structures.

Invasive Species: A plant species not historically found in the local area. When introduced into an area, these species proliferate, replacing native species and reducing biodiversity.

Irrigation: A permanent, artificial watering system designed to transport and distribute water to plants.

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Land Use: A description of how land is occupied or utilized.

Land Use Map: A map that graphically depicts existing or future land uses and densities.

Landscape: The unique patterns, structures, and features such as landforms, vegetation, soil, and waterways that distinguish one part of the earth's surface from another.

Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED): A building rating system based on the amount of energy savings achieved through efficient siting and use of building materials.

Legal Access: A public right of vehicular ingress and egress between the lots, parcels or fractional interests being created.

Level of Service Standards (LOS): A measure of the relationship between service capacity and service demand for public facilities.

Local Roadway: A street that provides access to land parcels (primarily residential) adjacent to the collector network and serves travel over relatively short distances.

Low-Impact Development (LID): A land planning and engineering design approach to manage stormwater runoff; a set of tools such as swales, detention basins, and impervious pavement that retain storm water on site.

Major Collector: A type of roadway that links major areas of development, including rural activity centers and residential, commercial, and industrial land uses and connects minor arterials, minor collectors, and local roads.

Manufactured Home: A structure built in accordance with the National Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 and Title VI of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and as amended. Does not include mobile homes, factory-built buildings, or recreational vehicles.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An agreement of cooperation that defines the roles and responsibilities related to an issue over which several organizations or agencies have concurrent jurisdiction.

Mining: The development or extraction of a mineral from its natural occurrences on affected land.

Minor Arterial: A type of roadway or transportation corridor that links cities, towns, and other traffic generators. Minor arterials attract travel over long distances, provide intercounty and some intracounty service, and generally connect to other arterial roadways or collector roadways.

Minor Collector: A type of roadway that primarily routes traffic from local roads to major collectors or minor arterials.

Minor Land Division: A division of land into five or fewer separate parcels.

Mitigation: Compensatory action to restore natural functions and values lost through development and human alterations.

Mobile Home: A structure built prior to June 15, 1976, on a permanent chassis, capable of being transported in one or more sections and designed to be used with or without a

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permanent foundation as a dwelling when connected to on-site utilities. Does not include recreational vehicles, factory-built buildings, or manufactured homes.

Modular Home: A residential or nonresidential building, including a dwelling unit or habitable room that is either wholly or in substantial part manufactured at an off-site location to be assembled on-site and placed on a permanent foundation. Factory-Built Buildings are constructed to Building Code standards and are regulated by the Arizona Department of Housing. Factory-Built Buildings do not include manufactured homes, recreational vehicles, or mobile homes. A factory-built building used for residential purposes shall be considered a single-household dwelling unit.

Multiple-Family Housing: Multiple and separate residential units that are contained within a single building. Such housing typically includes duplexes, condominiums, townhouses and apartment buildings.

Municipality: An incorporated city or town.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): The legislation passed in 1969 to serve as the country's "national charter" for protecting the environment. NEPA requires environmental impact statements for all major federal actions that significantly affect the environment.

National Park Service (NPS): The federal agency within the Department of the Interior charged with preserving the natural and cultural resources and the values of the national park system.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES): A provision of the Clean Water Act that prohibits the discharge of pollutants into waters without a special permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state, or tribal government.

Nonconformance: A condition that occurs when, on the effective date of adoption of this code or a previous ordinance or on the effective date of an ordinance text amendment or rezoning, an existing lot, structure, building, sign, development, or use of an existing lot or structure does not conform to one or more of the regulations currently applicable to the district in which the lot, structure, building, sign, development, or use is located

Nonpoint-Source Pollution: Sources for pollution that are less definable and usually cover broad areas of land,

Objectives: Broad statements of intent to implement the goals and provide framework for the policies.

Open Space: An open space area not occupied by any structure or impervious surface.

Ordinance: A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority.

Overlay Zone: An area where certain additional requirements are superimposed upon a base zoning district or underlying district and where the requirements of the

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base or underlying district may or may not be altered.

Para-Transit: Transportation services that operate vehicles, such as buses, jitneys, taxis, and vans for senior citizens, and/or mobility impaired.

Parcel: A legally recognized, continuous plot of land usually resulting from the division of a larger land area.

Park: An open space with natural vegetation and landscaping; may include recreational facilities.

Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z): A 9-member volunteer citizen's board in Cochise County that is responsible for reviewing applications for special use permits, subdivisions, rezoning, and public right-of-way abandonment requests. Three members are appointed by each County Supervisor.

Point Source Pollution: Pollution that originates from an identifiable point.

Policy: A general rule for action focused on a specific issue, derived from more general goals.

Pollution: The presence of contaminants in concentrations that degrade the natural environment or impact people's health, safety, and comfort.

Potable Water: Water suitable for drinking and cooking purposes.

Reclaimed Water: Tertiary treated effluent, suitable for use in landscaping or water features as determined by the presiding water district.

Renewable Energy: As defined by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, an energy source that is regenerative or virtually inexhaustible, including sunlight, wind, rain, tides and waves and geothermal heat.

Rezoning: An amendment to the zoning map which changes the zoning district applied to a site or area to another zoning district.

Right-of-Way: An area of land that is dedicated for public or private use to accommodate a transportation system and/or necessary public utility infrastructure (including but not imited to waterlines, sewer lines, power lines, and gas lines).

Runoff: The rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation water flowing that has not evaporated or infiltrated into the soil, but flows over the ground surface.

Rural: A sparsely developed area where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, resource extraction, very low-density residential uses or open space uses. These areas typically receive limited public services.

Scenic Road: A highway, road, drive, or street that, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for the enjoyment of natural and man-made scenic resources and access or direct views to areas or scenes of exceptional beauty or historical cultural interest.

Section: One of 36 units of land within a

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given township, usually about one square mile (640 acres) in area.

Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO): the designated transportation organization for the southeastern Cochise County region. The planning area encompasses the City of Sierra Vista, the Town of Huachuca City and portions of urbanizing Cochise County,

Single-Family Housing: Separate or free-standing dwelling intended for occupancy by just one household or family.

Site-Built Home: A home that is primarily constructed on the site in which it is located.

Smart Growth: Development that enhances existing communities, that is compatible with the natural environment, and that uses tax dollars efficiently while attracting private investment.

Solid Waste: Any garbage, refuse, rubbish, or other discarded materials, that may be in solid, liquid, or gaseous form.

Special Use Permit: A specific approval for a use that has been determined to be more intense or to have a potentially greater impact than a permitted use within the same zoning district

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): A division of Arizona State Parks that is responsible for identifying and protecting Arizona's prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

State Trust Lands: Lands in Arizona that are held in trust and managed for the sole purpose of generating revenues for the 13 beneficiaries, the largest of which is Arizona's K–12 education. These lands were granted to the state under the provisions of the federal Enabling Act that provided for Arizona's statehood in 1912.

Stormwater: The flow of water which results from a rainfall event.

Subdivision: The division of land into six or more lots, parcels, or fractional interests under 36 acres, for sale or lease.

Subdivision Regulations: The set of regulations adopted by the BOS specifying the rules and standards for dividing land.

Surface Water: Water on the earth's surface exposed to the atmosphere such as rivers, lakes, and creeks.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): A transfer of the right to develop or build from one portion of a property to another portion, or from one property to another property.

Transit: A transportation mode that moves larger numbers of people than an automobile; generally refers to passenger service provided to the public along established routes with fixed or variable schedules at published fares.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): The federal agency established in 1970 to consolidate a variety of federal research, monitoring, standard-setting, and enforcement activities related to protecting the natural environment.

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KEY TERMS

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS): The federal agency whose mission is to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants, along with their habitats.

U.S. Forest Service (USFS): The federal agency charged with managing public lands in designated national forests and grasslands for multiple uses.

User Fee: A charge for the use of a product, facility, or service.

Utility-Scale Energy Systems: The production of energy with the intent of producing power for on-site consumption.

Variance: Permission to depart from this development code when, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, strict application of the provisions of this development code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity that is under identical zoning.

Wastewater: Water carrying wastes from homes, businesses, and industries that is a mixture of water and dissolved or suspended solids, or excess irrigation water that is runoff to adjacent land.

Watershed: The land area that contributes runoff to a given stream, river, or reservoir.

Water Table: The upper limit of the portion of the soil that is completely saturated with water.

Well: A hole or shaft sunk into the earth to tap an underground supply of water.

Wind Turbine: An alternate energy device which converts wind energy by means of a rotor to mechanical or electrical energy. A wind generator may also be deemed a windmill.

Xeriscape: Landscaping characterized by the use of vegetation that is drought-tolerant or of low water use in character.

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APPENDIX
PUBLIC OUTREACH

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Cochise County placed community participation at the center of the CP2045 planning process. From mid-2024 through 2025, the County conducted an extensive public outreach campaign to ensure that residents, businesses, and stakeholders across all regions had opportunities to help shape the county's long-term vision.

Engagement combined traditional meetings, open houses, and workshops with a modern online platform that enabled broad, ongoing participation. The goal was to gather input that reflected local priorities, values, and ideas for future growth and development.

Online Engagement: The CP2045 Platform

The County launched CP2045.cochise.az.gov as the central hub for information and participation. The site, built on the EngagementHQ platform, provided a transparent, interactive space where the public could learn about the Comprehensive Plan, participate in surveys, post questions, and follow project updates. Specifically, through the website, residents could:

- Access background materials and event announcements
- Take topic-specific surveys (e.g., Growth Areas, Housing, Economic Development)
- Contribute comments, ideas, or questions directly to planners
- Track plan progress

This approach expanded access for residents in rural and remote areas, allowing for broad, equitable participation in the plan's development.

Community Survey

The CP2045 Community Survey served as the primary tool for collecting broad-based input from the public. The survey invited residents to share perspectives on quality of life, growth, land use, housing, economic development, transportation, and environmental priorities.

A subsequent Growth Areas Survey built upon these findings, allowing participants to identify locations most suitable for development or conservation. Together, the surveys provided data that directly informed the Land Use, Growth Management, and Economic Development elements of the plan.

The following pages report survey findings at a glance.

OUTREACH METRICS

Website Visits: 4,218

Contributions (comments, survey responses): 407

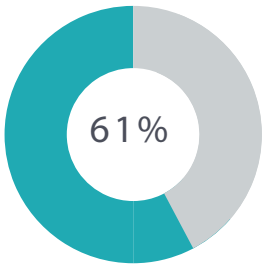
Registrations: 361

Engagement Rate (percent of website visitors that contributed): 10 %

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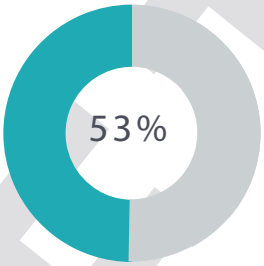
CP2045 SURVEY

A quick look at the most typical responses:



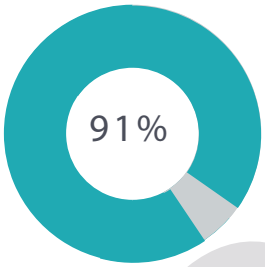
Where in Cochise County do you live?

UNINCORPORATED



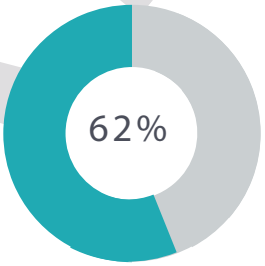
How long have you lived in Cochise

11+ YEARS



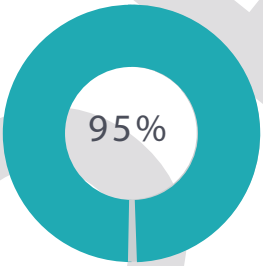
Do you own or rent your current residence in Cochise County?

OWN RESIDENCE



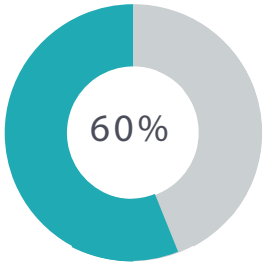
How satisfied are you with the overall quality of life in Cochise County?

SATISFIED



How many months of the year do you live in Cochise County?

YEAR-ROUND



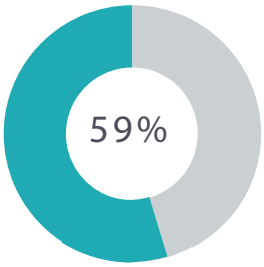
How does the quality of life in Cochise County today compare to ten years ago, or since you moved to the community if less than ten years?

ABOUT THE SAME

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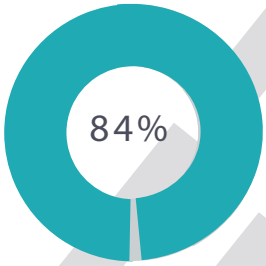
CP2045 SURVEY

A quick look at the most typical responses:



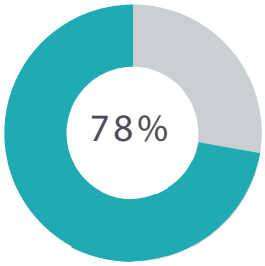
How would you describe the predominant land use near your home?

RURAL



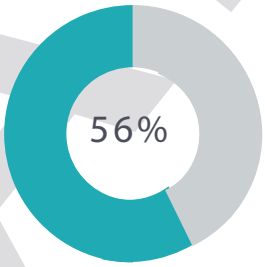
Do you own a ranch/farm or work in agriculture ?

NOT AG. EMPLOYED



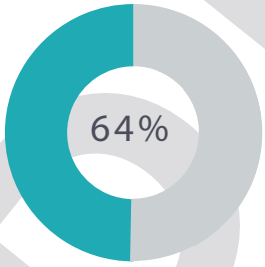
Do you own a business in Cochise County and/or are you self-employed?

EMPLOYED BY OTHERS



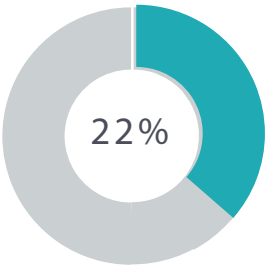
Should the county offer incentives to encourage developers to build at a higher density?

NO INCENTIVES



Have you experienced any negative impacts (e.g., noise, traffic, pollution) from nearby property?

NO NEARBY IMPACTS



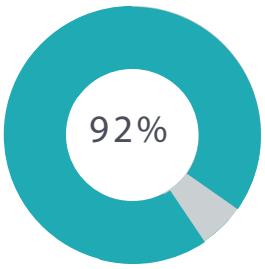
Are you interested in starting a business in Cochise County?

BUSINESS START INTEREST

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CP2045 SURVEY

A quick look at the most typical responses:



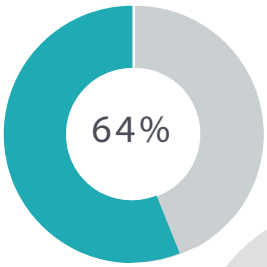
Do you have access to a safe and reliable water source for your home?

RELIABLE WATER



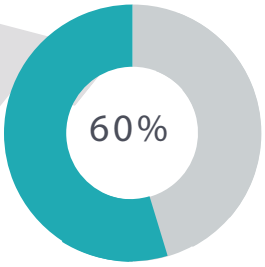
What is the primary water source for your home?

WATER COMPANY



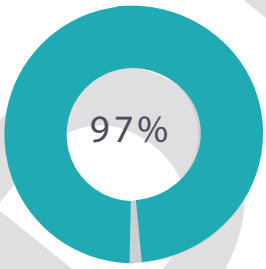
How do you treat the wastewater generated in your home?

SEPTIC SYSTEM



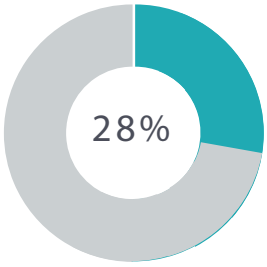
Do you have any plumbing fixtures in your home that intended to save water?

EFFICIENT PLUMBING FEATURES



What is your primary mode of transportation?

CAR OR MOTORCYCLE



Is your home powered by on-site solar panels?

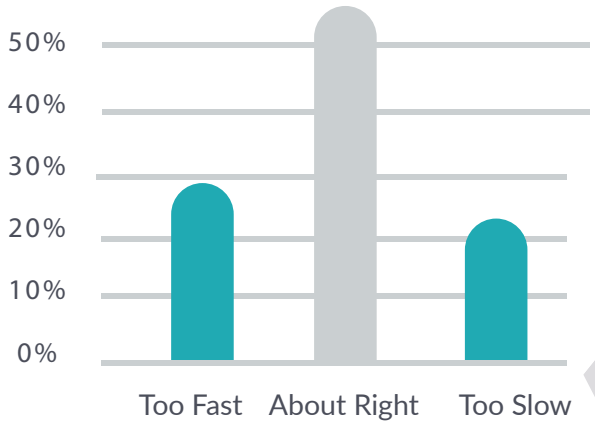
SOLAR POWER HOME

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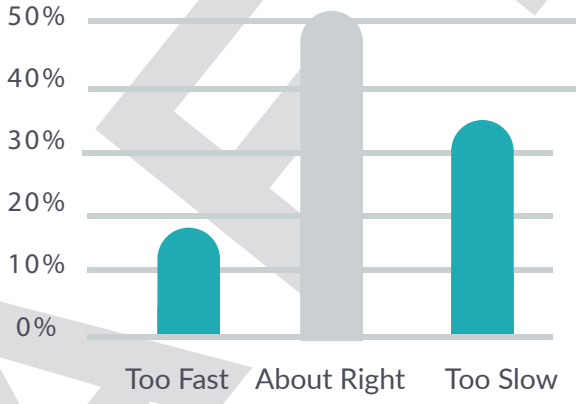
CP2045 SURVEY

A quick look at the most typical responses:

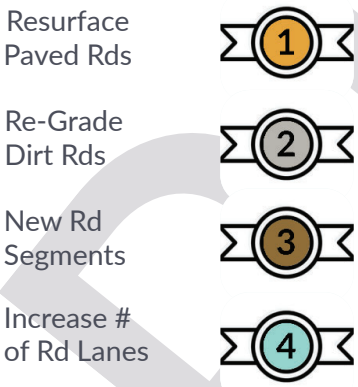
Pace of Residential Construction



Pace of Commercial Construction



Prioritization for Vehicular Improvements on County-Maintained Roads



Prioritization for Non-Vehicular Transportation Funding

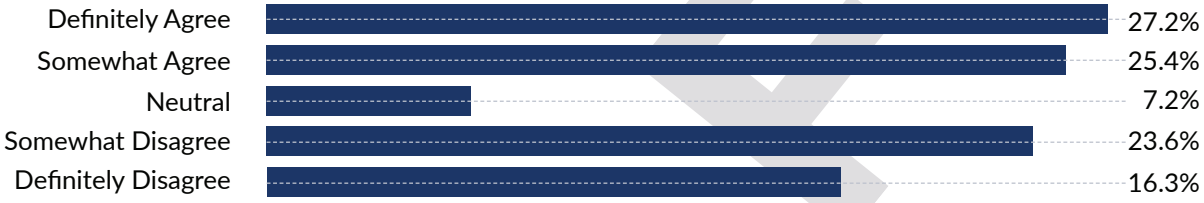


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CP2045 SURVEY

When considering Cochise County's existing transportation networks, state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

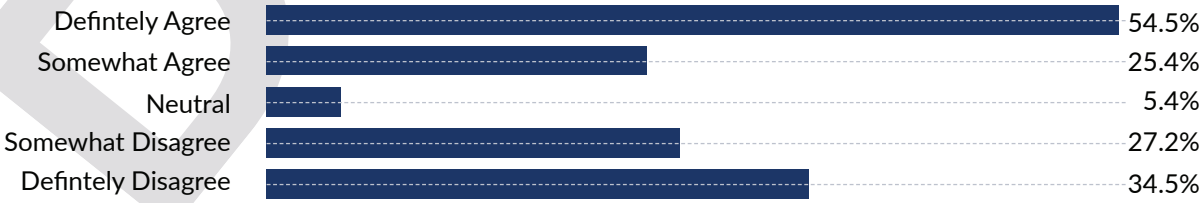
THE ROADS NEAR ME ARE ABLE TO HANDLE CURRENT TRAFFIC



THE ROADS NEAR ME ARE IN GOOD CONDITION



I AM ABLE TO EASILY ACCESS MY PROPERTY REGARDLESS OF THE WEATHER

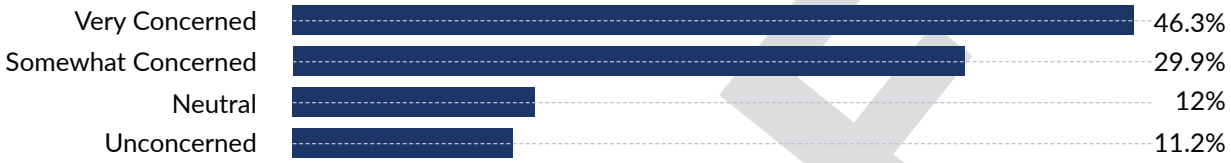


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CP2045 SURVEY

Rate your level of concern regarding water availability and water quality below.

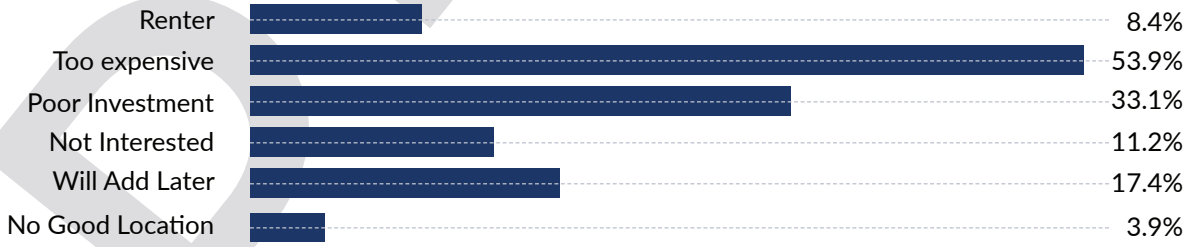
WATER AVAILABILITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY



WATER QUALITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY



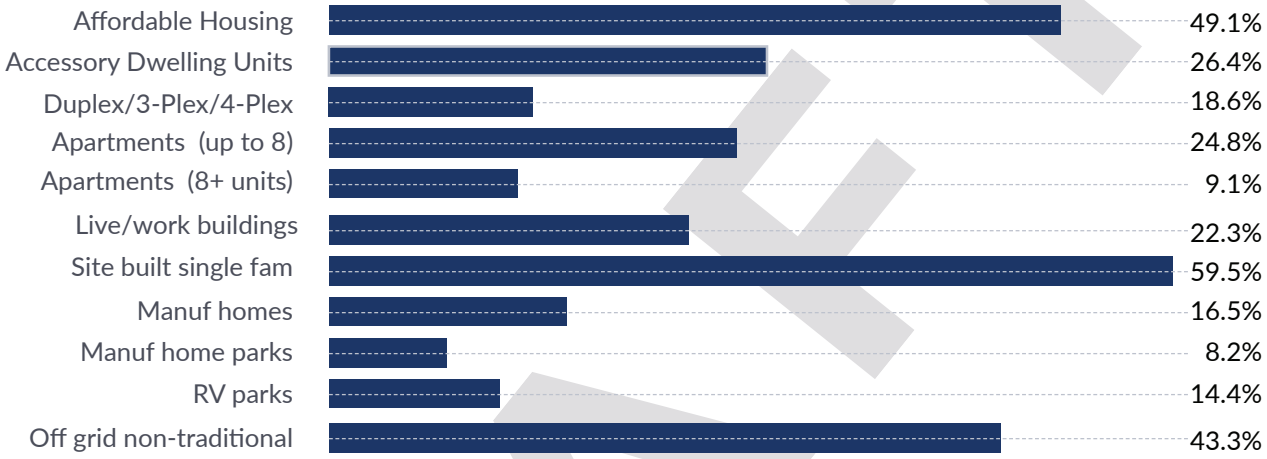
If your home is not currently powered by solar panels, what are the primary reasons? (select any that apply)



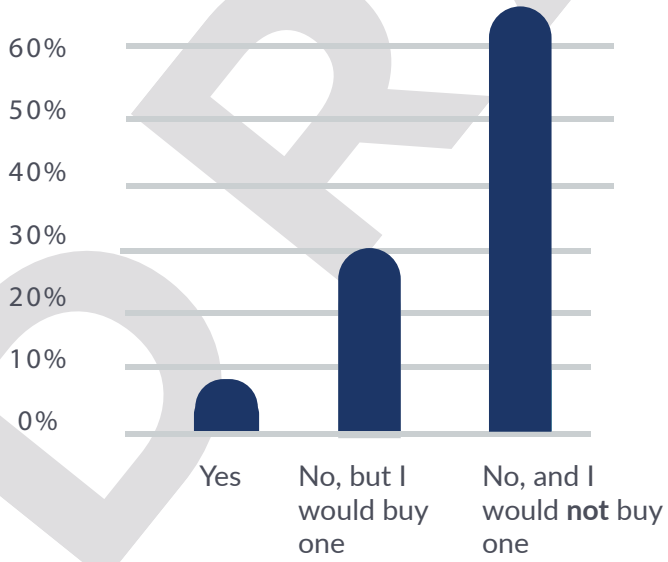
DRAFT

CP2045 SURVEY

What types of housing would you like to see more of in Cochise County? Select all that apply.

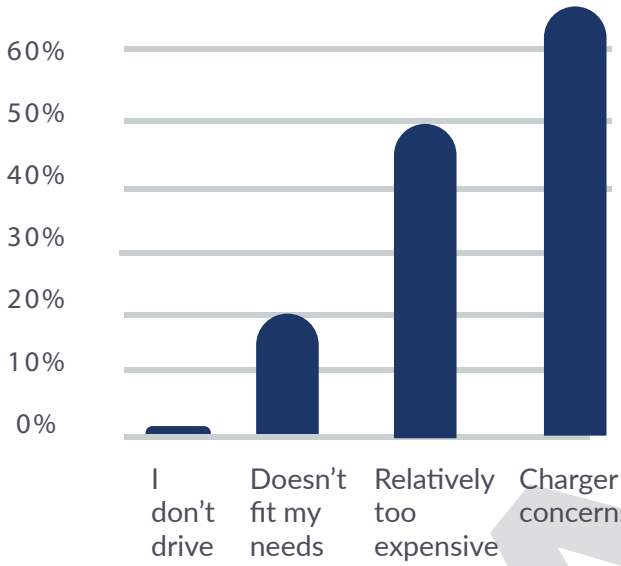


Do you own an electric vehicle?



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CP2045 SURVEY



If do not own an electric vehicle, what is the primary reason you do not have or plan to purchase and electric

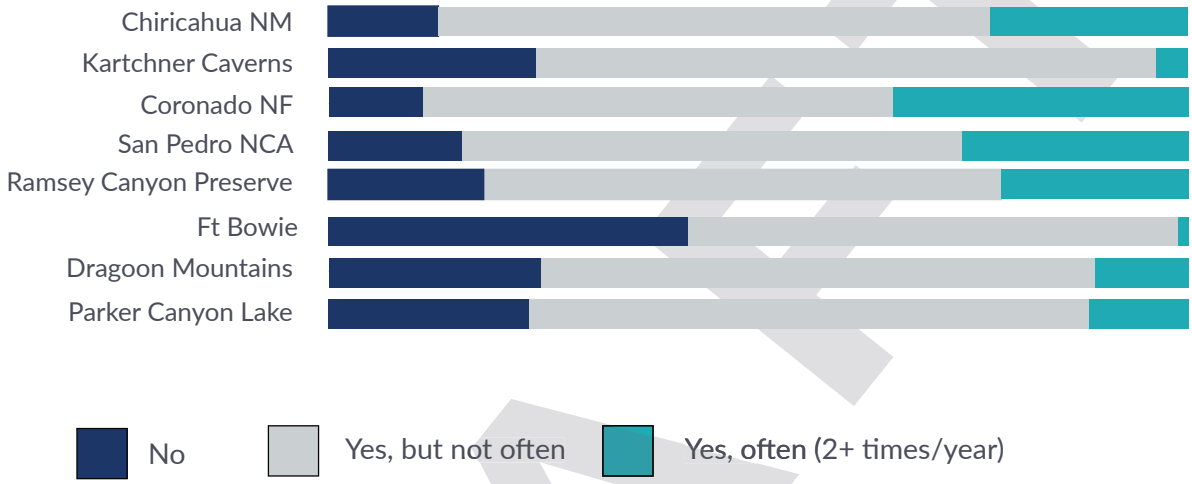
Do you feel there is enough access to public lands in the county?



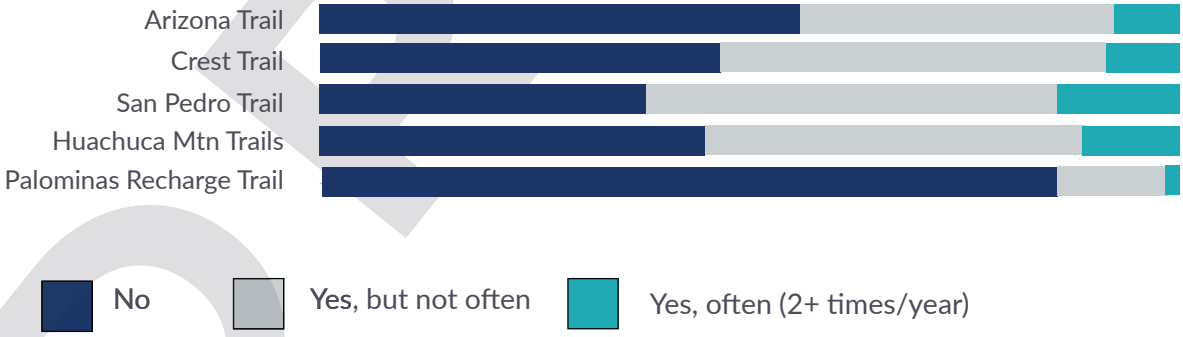
DRAFT

CP2045 SURVEY

Have you visited any of the following recreational facilities within Cochise County?



Have you hiked/biked any of the following recreational trails within Cochise County?



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ADOPTION RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. [INSERT)
A RESOLUTION OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING THE COCHISE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, under the authority of Arizona Revised Statutes §11-804, the Cochise County Board of Supervisors is empowered to adopt a Comprehensive Plan to guide the future physical development of unincorporated areas of the County; and

WHEREAS, County staff prepared an updated Comprehensive Plan reflecting the County's long-term vision, goals, and policies for land use, growth, conservation, and community development; and

WHEREAS, the Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on (INSERT DATE) and recommended adoption of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a duly noticed public hearing on (INSERT DATE), received public input, and determined that adoption of the Comprehensive Plan promotes the public health, safety, and general welfare of the County's residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cochise County Board of Supervisors hereby adopts the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan, dated (INSERT DATE) as the official comprehensive planning document for the unincorporated areas of Cochise County, Arizona.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Cochise County Board of Supervisors this (INSERT) day of (INSERT), 2026

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA

_____
Chair, Board of Supervisors

_____
ATTEST: Clerk of the Board

_____
APPROVED AS TO FORM: County Attorney

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