



## Chapter Three: Community Issues, Visions, and Goals

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**Purpose and Intent**  
**Community Issues**  
**Community Visions**  
**Community Goals**

### **Purpose and Intent**

The intent of this Chapter is to identify the issues facing the City of Airway Heights today and in the future. Identifying these issues helps establish a 20-year community vision. This vision can be used to establish goals, policies, and strategies needed to implement this plan. The purpose of this Chapter is to establish the relationship between the identified issues and the overriding visions and goals developed to address them.

Within the following elements of this plan, specific issues, goals, and policies have also been identified respective to that particular comprehensive plan element. Specific goals, policies, and implementing strategies, reflecting the overriding issues and visions identified in this Chapter, are used to further the intent of this Chapter and serve as the basis for this plan's successful implementation. Essentially, the comprehensive plan acts as a roadmap, helping to guide the City into the future.

### **Community Issues**

In 2001, the planning department assembled a group of citizens to help identify those issues facing the City and evaluate the existing community vision and goals to realize it. Known as the visioning focus group, these volunteers, in addition to public hearings and a series of workshops, identified the issues as listed in Table 3.1 on the following page.

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**Table 3.1**  
*Issues Facing the City of Airway Heights*

<b>CP Element</b>	<b>Description of Issues</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	Availability of land for growth and expansion on all sides of the City
	Multiple jurisdiction annexation issues
	Limitations of the AICUZ overlay zone and its restrictions on certain development
	Increasing residential, commercial, and industrial land uses
<b>Transportation</b>	Best use of land in ways appropriate and compatible with existing land uses
	U.S. Highway 2 safety improvements
	Vehicles – couplet alignment, speed zone reductions, better signing, and road widening/narrowing possibilities
	Pedestrians – safety improvements both along and across, beautification through trees and other such amenities
	Overall street improvements needed within the City, especially pertaining to dirt roads
	Possibility of railroad spur removal and/or incorporation into the light rail proposal
<b>Capital Facilities</b>	Redeveloping STA service, including development of a transit center
	Infrastructure availability, especially with sewer, water, wastewater treatment, and roads
<b>Essential Public Facilities</b>	Police, fire, and City staff need adequate building space to accommodate growth
	Buffering of the DOC facility to minimize its visual impact on the community
<b>Utilities</b>	Better competition between utility providers is desired for greater choices in services
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	Increased parks and recreational opportunities
	A sports complex incorporating the raceway, outdoor recreation vehicles, equestrian, athletic fields, and other such recreational facilities
	More places and activities for the youth of the City
	Creating a City civic area incorporating an amphitheater and water features
	Better linkages between park and recreational facilities
<b>Housing</b>	Better housing choices and quality
	Need for replacing and/or rehabilitating existing housing stock; Associated with this is an interest in improving and/or relocating mobile home parks
<b>Economic Development</b>	Provide more opportunity and better quality jobs, encouraging owners and workers to also be residents
	Diversify the job market to eliminate future uncertainties in current market, such as FAFB closure
	Provide a better mix of blue and white collar jobs
	Partner with local businesses to improve the economic opportunities within the City
	Creative ways to expand the tax base
	Desire to see businesses with an ownership in the overall image of Airway Heights
	Storefront improvements and property beautification, especially along U.S. Highway 2
Commercial and industrial expansion on the edges of the City	
<b>Community Design</b>	Better linkages for pedestrians, especially along and across U.S. Highway 2, connecting the various areas of the City
	Desire for City beautification – greenbelts, entry statements into the City, lighting, etc.
	Limitations of the AICUZ overlay zone and its influence on shaping development
<b>Natural Environment</b>	The community has a number of acres of open space that supports various types of small birds and small non-domestic animals.
	Maintain the current high level of air quality and scenic vistas

These issues serve as an initial framework for addressing how the City will grow and develop into the future. These identified issues set the stage for development of the community vision, which in turn helps establish the overriding goals needed to implement and fulfill that community vision.

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## Community Visions

Table 3.2 represents the future vision of the City of Airway Heights over the next 20 years of development, as initially identified by the visioning focus group and refined through a series of public workshops and hearings. These reflect the identified issues above, and were developed to mirror the defining elements of this plan.

**Table 3.2**  
*Community Visions*

<b>CP Element</b>	<b>Vision Statement</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	The City strives to be a community balancing the needs of job availability, accommodating new growth, and housing opportunities; emphasizing what currently exists and how to build upon and improve the City, yet still recognizing a need to expand its boundaries to balance its investments in the residential, commercial, industrial, and public sectors. The City hopes to balance land use, compatible with Fairchild Air Force Base and its surroundings while offering a full range of services without compromising the small town character.
<b>Transportation</b>	The City strives to be a community providing an efficient, effective transportation system catering to motor vehicles, encouraging public transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians by overcoming pedestrian safety challenges and the negative image of U.S. Highway 2. This is accomplished through increased vehicular and pedestrian safety design improvements and beautification, as well as improvements to its local street network with paving improvements and overall linkages within the City itself.
<b>Capital Facilities</b>	The City strives to be a community providing adequate services to meet the challenges consistent with and in accordance with the comprehensive water and sewer plan needs of its citizens by having infrastructure (sewers, water, roads, storm water collection system) in place and available to meet increasing growth challenges.
<b>Essential Public Facilities</b>	The City has placed its appropriated fair-share of facilities within its boundaries in a manner non-disruptive to the character or livelihood of the City.
<b>Utilities</b>	The City strives to be a community with utility service providers, such as electricity, natural gas, telephone, cable television, Internet, and other such services, where healthy competition exists.
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	The City strives to be a community dedicated to maintaining and enhancing its existing park spaces and recreational programs while providing opportunities for park and recreational options to meet the needs and demands of an ever-expanding population.
<b>Housing</b>	The City recognizes the different needs of people between home ownership and renting by providing affordable housing options to its citizens. The City promotes quality and choice through styles, materials, and colors; encourages housing variety, through single-family units, duplex or two-family units, and multiple-family units (such as apartments and four-plexes); and redeveloping and replacing dilapidated housing units.
<b>Economic Development</b>	The City strives to be a community with a well-defined, attractive central business district reflective of the community characteristics of Airway Heights allowing residents the opportunity “to get what they want, when they want it” through increased competition among enterprises offering opportunities and choices in employment, retail, entertainment, and medical/dental services; and encouraging business owners and employees to be permanent residents of the community.
<b>Community Design</b>	The City strives to be a community promoting harmonious design and development standards ensuring new development is compatible and appropriate for the character and image. The City encourages development as a place of visual quality and aesthetic beauty, both within its built environment and the natural places.
<b>Natural Environment</b>	Residents recognize the importance of maintaining open spaces within its boundaries as networks of open spaces provide services such as, but not limited to, recreational opportunities, storm water management capabilities and wildlife habitat corridors. The city is dedicated to preserving those resource lands and open space areas adjacent to its boundaries through appropriate buffering mechanisms.

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## Community Goals

The goals created by the visioning focus group were subject to a series of workshops open to the public where further refinements took place. Table 3.3 detail community goals which led to the specific policies and implementing strategies contained in each element of this comprehensive plan. If not otherwise established, the lack of overriding goals would hinder the successful fulfillment of the community's future vision.

**Table 3.3**  
*Overall Community Goals*

<b>CP Element</b>	<b>Goal Statement</b>
<i>Land Use</i>	Preserve, protect, and promote the small town character of Airway Heights by effectively managing future development in designated areas consistent with sound land use planning policies, and encourage development where adequate public services and facilities exist to reduce conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
<i>Transportation</i>	Plan, develop, and maintain a balanced transportation system of automobiles, public transit, and non-motorized modes (pedestrian, bicycles, etc.) to provide efficient mobility and access of people, goods, and services within the community.
<i>Capital Facilities</i>	Ensure the necessary facilities and services are available and adequate at the time of development without producing negative impacts to existing performance standards.
<i>Essential Public Facilities</i>	Provide for the establishment of essential public facilities to locate within the City in a manner compatible with its surroundings and non-intrusive to the character and activities of the community.
<i>Utilities</i>	Provide a full range of services to the community, having adequate service levels, in an efficient, timely, and cost-effective manner.
<i>Parks and Recreation</i>	Develop and maintain an attractive, safe, and functional parks and recreation system available to all people within the community.
<i>Housing</i>	Ensure all housing is healthy, safe and environmentally sensitive while providing affordable housing opportunities, incorporating different housing types and styles, for all people of the City.
<i>Economic Development</i>	Actively support the retention of existing commerce and industry, the development of new business, and the diversification of the economy providing a variety and balance of employment, businesses, and housing opportunities for all people of the community.
<i>Community Design</i>	Provide a safe, healthy environment for residents and promote a clean, attractive City image of well-kept, well-maintained residences, businesses, and properties, thereby fostering a sense of community pride and ownership through community events and citizen involvement.
<i>Natural Environment</i>	Protect and preserve critical areas, resource lands, and other environmentally sensitive lands by making land use decisions reflective of land limitations specific to each area thereby preventing negative impacts to the natural environment ensuring preservation of human health, safety, welfare and general quality of life for the community.