



4. COMMUNITY VISION: STRIKING A BALANCE

A. "RESPECTING THE PAST, FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE"

The focus of this planning effort is to strike a balance between the desirable qualities of the past, so valued by the community, and the needs of the future. This section establishes a vision for the community while also identifying specific qualities about the community that should be preserved. It will be the mission of the General Plan's elements to attain, to the extent possible, the Community's vision while also retaining these highly valued "small town qualities."

B. VISION STATEMENT

The Focused Future Strategic Plan for Economic Development, adopted by the City Council and incorporated into the General Plan, established the following Vision Statement for the City of Cottonwood:

"Cottonwood, the heart of the Verde Valley, is a progressive community with unique natural and historic surroundings that offer a quality lifestyle with many of the amenities of metropolitan areas, yet is a quiet, safe and prosperous place to live and visit."

C. "SMALL TOWN QUALITIES"

The following basic objectives are offered as a means to define those specific feelings and qualities about the community that residents desire when talking about "Small town character."

1. BASIC QUALITIES

- a. **A Sense of Place and Identity:** Well defined neighborhoods like Old Town; Clemenceau; Smelter City; Verde Heights; Cottonwood Ranch, Sawmill Estates; Unit 8; Carroll Subdivision; Mingus Park.
- b. **Feeling of Community Safety and Friendliness.** A chance and place to casually interact with others. Human interaction encourages involvement in the community. Involved people are connected to the greater community and provide a base of volunteerism.

2. PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

- a. **Focused Development:** A physical layout which provides for an enhanced sense of place and community identity.



- b. **Human Scale and Walk-ability:** Pedestrian and bicycle oriented development which places neighborhoods within walking distance of recreation, parks, open space, jobs and convenience oriented services.
- c. **Traffic Calming:** Street development which results in better traffic control and conveniently located crosswalks.
- d. **The quality of the Public Realm, Parks, Neighborhoods and Streetscapes:** Desirable neighborhood aesthetics and streetscapes promote interaction by encouraging pedestrian use.
- e. **Diversity of Housing:** Housing types that meet all needs. A character of development that recognizes the importance of neighborhood interaction. Such development often encourages front porches, common front yard build-to lines, windows and entries as a means to place "eyes on the street," enhancing interaction and deterring crime.
- f. **Integrity of the Natural Environment:** The community's backdrop provides sense of place as well as opportunities for outdoor recreation and further community interaction.

3. SOCIAL COMPONENTS

- a. **Facilities and organizations:** Facilities such as parks, schools, churches, libraries and recreation help connect individuals and families to the larger community. Youth sports leagues like soccer, Little League and the Cottonwood Clipper Swim Team also help people (mainly younger families) connect.
- b. **Community events:** Community events also provide opportunities for recreation and interaction. Many favorite events include the Christmas parade; Farmers Market; Cinco de Mayo; Friday night concerts; 4th of July; Old Town Halloween event; Easter Egg Hunt; Christmas Tree Lighting; and the Verde Valley Fair.
- c. **Home Ownership and Affordability:** Home ownership encourages property upkeep and neighborhood involvement. Cottonwood has a high rate of renters and absentee property owners.
- d. **Neighborhood Associations:** Groups such as Block Watch and Block Parties encourage interaction and deter crime.
- e. **Open city government:** Helpful government services and assistance that are easily accessed.

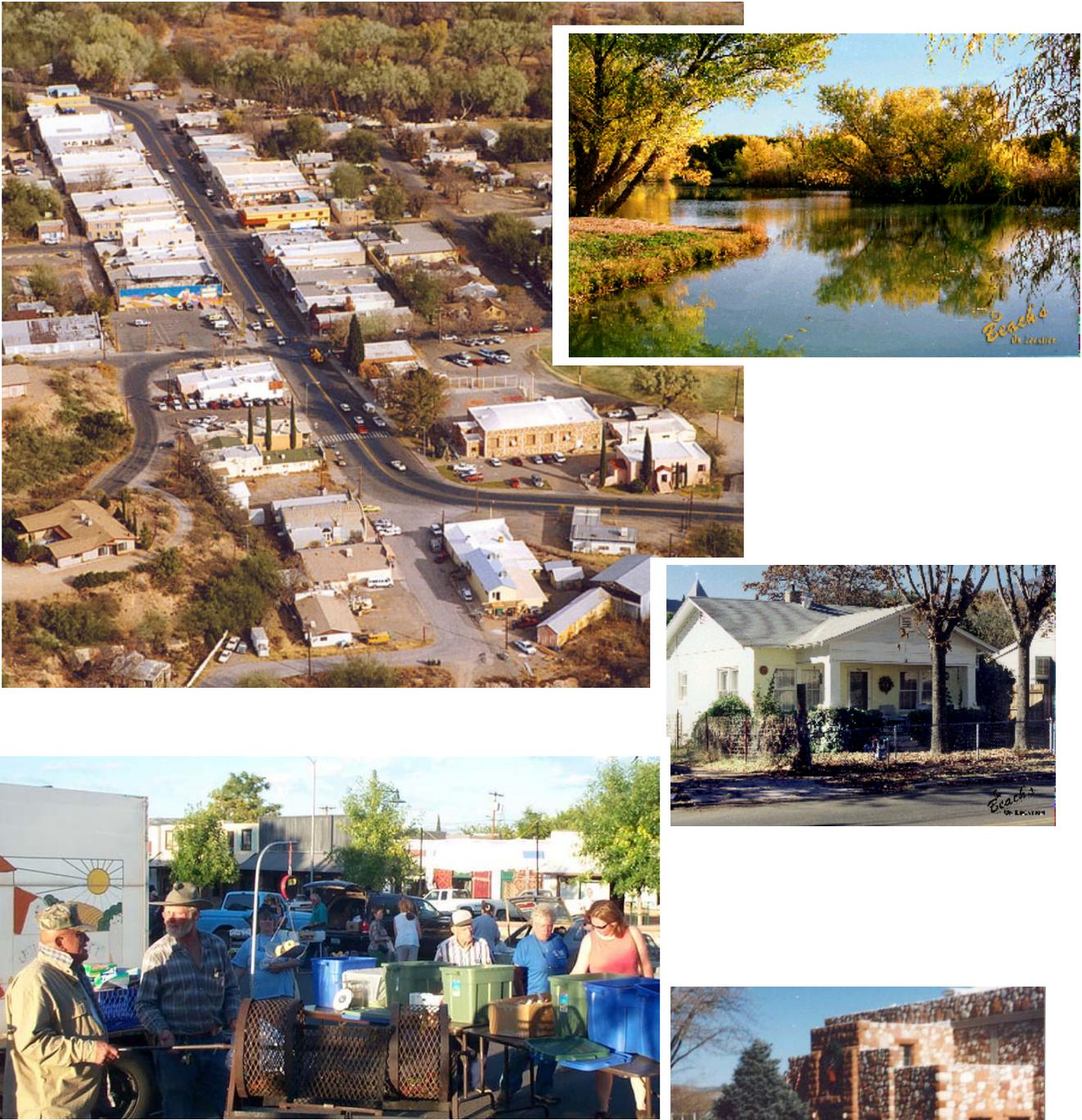


Fig. 4-1: A few of the scenes from around Cottonwood that may evoke some of the “small town qualities” the General Plan seeks to protect and enhance. ABOVE: An aerial depiction of Old Town and the adjacent Verde Greenway system, an older residential home on a pedestrian oriented tree lined street, the Farmers market and Christmas Parade in front of the historic Civic Center. NEXT PAGE: A variety of scenes from some favorite community events including the

