

## Chapter 5

# ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Existing Conditions

Rockville is favored with one of the most beautiful physical settings in the region. Detrimental impacts on the physical environment within the limits of Rockville have been minimal. In general, a harmonious relationship between the human and the natural environments exists.

Rockville has varied terrain which includes rugged cliffs, steep hillsides, benchlands, canyons and washes, river plain, and riparian zone. The relatively unmarred nature of these features is an integral part of the character of Rockville.

The human environment also offers special features which are meaningful to the residents of Rockville. These include Grafton, the Old Church and Recreation Hall, the bridge, the trees and irrigation ditch along Highway 9, and the street lights over the highway.

### 2. Assumptions for the Future

Pressures for development within Rockville could have negative impacts on the quality of the environment if not controlled. Experience in other communities has shown the propensity of new development to encroach on river plains and hillsides, often at the expense of natural systems and to the detriment of the community as a whole. In some cases potential and real natural hazards are disregarded in the siting of developments. For these reasons it is necessary to identify and protect the areas which have environmental and community significance and the features which pose potential natural hazards.

### 3. Community Goals

The following natural areas and features should be afforded a high degree of protection, and should be subject to sensitive lands ordinances and control:

In general, all elevated areas such as hillsides, hilltops, benches, mesas, and mountains should be protected. Specifically, the following areas should be afforded special protection:

- Rockville Bench
- Rockville Mesa
- Rockville Water Shed

In general, all drainage areas such as floodplains, riparian zones, watercourses, and washes should be protected. Specifically, the following areas should be afforded special protection:

- Virgin River floodplain and riparian zone
- Horse Valley Wash
- Huber Wash
- Wire Valley Wash
- South Wash
- Grafton Wash
- Coal Pits Wash

The following historical and cultural features should be protected to the extent that their character is preserved:

- Grafton area
- Old Church and Recreation Hall
- Rock irrigation ditch and the trees along State Route 9
- Bridge over the Virgin River
- Existing street lighting system
- Structures and buildings with historical and cultural significance

Other areas which should be protected and subject to strict development controls are noted, as follows:

- Scenic vistas (benches and mesas)
- Water supply/aquifer recharge areas
- Unstable soils

#### **4. Planning Policies**

The following policies will guide the community goals regarding features of natural and cultural significance:

Establish a comprehensive sensitive lands ordinance. The ordinance shall contain provisions for the protection of scenic vistas (e.g. establishing appropriate setbacks from crests and limiting building heights, etc.)

Proposed development projects may be required to include a geotechnical soils report prepared by a qualified professional. In addition, the Town retains the right to require additional studies as it may deem necessary.

Riparian zones, floodplains, and washes should be for flood control, agricultural and recreation purposes.

The Town shall encourage the protection and enhancement of significant historical features through the establishment of an historical preservation ordinance.

Maintain a nuisance ordinance for the preservation of a safe, clean, quiet town environment.