

**Borrego Springs Community Sponsor Group  
 Desert Area Initiative Committee  
 Interim Report  
 Version 1.2 — April 20, 2007**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Position Statement – 3/1/2007**

In May 2006, The Borrego Springs Community Sponsor Group voted to support the concept of the feasibility of establishing Borrego Springs as a County-designated Desert Area and to move forward with its organization and development.

The Sponsor Group recruited The Desert Area Initiative Steering Committee as a study group to explore, research, and make recommendations about the concept. The Steering Committee is a volunteer group of respected and interested Borrego Springs' citizens, representing the Sponsor Group, the Chamber of Commerce, and the community at large. Committee members comprise long-term and newer residents, investors, business owners and managers, architects, builders, and historians.

The purpose of designation as a Desert Area is to ensure compatibility between the built environment and this natural desert setting unique to the County of San Diego. Our local characteristics – clean air, dark night skies, underground water supply, scenic mountain vistas, natural flora and fauna – are vital to the future wealth and vitality of Borrego Springs. A special designation by the County of San Diego as a Desert Area provides a mechanism for Borregans to have a greater voice in the direction of future growth.

Borrego Springs is growing. Our community has been discovered, real estate activity has escalated, and development – much of it planned by “outsiders” who have scant knowledge and don't care about our unique desert environment – is underway.

We believe that it is in Borrego Springs' best interest to move forward in being named a County-designated “special area.” As an example, our un-incorporated neighbor Julian has worked successfully with County agencies to gain a custom designation as a County Historic Area. We believe that a Desert Area designation would benefit our valley.

For example, such a designation would help us develop community-defined standards for the commercial and residential development that is well on its way right now. By one estimate, there are already at least 3,000 acres in planned development in Borrego Springs. That's a lot of growth! How is this development to occur? Will it fit into the overall character and uniqueness of Borrego Springs?

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The Desert Area Initiative Steering Committee encourages Borrego Springs' citizens to support the idea of gaining County designation as a Desert Area. We are absolutely well qualified for such designation, considering our unique status as San Diego County's only desert community, located in the heart of the Anza-Borrego Desert's 680,000 acres of pristine desert, literally a village in a park.

We are strongly committed to working with county and state government agencies to protect our resources and guide responsible development in Borrego Springs.

In three community input forums in early 2007, we received broad community input and support for this initiative. We have been in dialog with Supervisor Bill Horn's team and Dept. of Planning and Land Use senior staff about the best ways to implement a Desert Area strategy that will help leverage Borrego Springs' unique value propositions to the County. We have received favorable initial indications of support from the County, based on our ability to demonstrate broad-based community support for the Desert Area Initiative ideas.

## **1.2. Desert Area Initiative Steering Committee**

### **1.2.1. Process**

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The Committee has met weekly in 2-3 hour sessions beginning in May 2006. The first task was to establish a process to guide the development of the recommendations in this report. In phase one (June – July 2006), our focus was to identify specific land use "problems" or challenges. In phase two (August –September 2006), our focus was to use those problem statements to help develop specific objectives, identifying what we're trying to accomplish or mitigate. In phase three (October – November 2006), our focus was to brainstorm credible solutions that would meet objectives and create positive outcomes. In phase four (December 2006 – January 2007), our focus was to develop specific recommendations from the field of possible solutions. In phase five (January – March 2007), our focus was to design three Community Involvement Forums to inform the community about the work, present initial recommendations, and gather ideas and input. In phase six (March – April 2007), our focus has been to integrate community feedback and ideas, and edit and develop this interim report.

### **1.2.2. Members**

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Rich Caldwell, Facilitator; 4-year resident; President of the School Board; co-owner Borrego Valley Inn with wife Gwenn

Jim Engelke, long-term resident; architect and planner, initiated Desert Area concept with the Sponsor Group

Abby King, long-term resident; Honorary Mayor, Manager, Club Circle Resort Condominium, Sponsor Group Chair

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Betsy Knaak, long-term resident; Executive Director, Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association (ABDNHA), Chair of local history committee; Chamber Think Tank Member

Kurt Levens, 5-year resident; Sponsor Group Vice-President, architect and engineer, co-owner of Badlands Café with wife, Pamela

Gwenn Marie, 4-year resident; President, Chamber of Commerce; co-owner Borrego Valley Inn with husband Rich Caldwell

Dennis Nourse, 10-year resident; owner of Coldwell Banker Borrego Springs; Chamber Think Tank Member

Sam Webb, long-term resident; former Honorary Mayor, Sponsor Group Member, Chair of Park Archaeology Society

### **1.3. Strategy – 3/26/2007**

Our working strategy has been to prepare policy statements developed by the community and collaboratively reviewed by the County to support a united voice for residents to determine the future growth of the village of Borrego Springs.

**WHERE:** all lands in Borrego Springs within the state park boundary

**WHAT:** a special Desert Area in San Diego County

**WHY:** to protect the quality of life through coordinated planning and growth

**WHEN:** before the 2020 General Plan update is adopted and zoning revisions are initiated

**HOW:** establish a special Desert Area within applicable County ordinances, and adapt policies and regulations to local needs

**WHO:** those citizens of Borrego Springs committed to a collaborative process to implement a strategy for protecting the quality of life in the community

### **1.4. Introduction**

#### **1.4.1. Borrego Springs: A Village in a Park**

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This document makes the case for a San Diego County “special district” designator for the unincorporated east county village known as Borrego Springs, a geographical space surrounded and defined by one of the greatest natural resources in California, the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and San Diego’s only desert community.

Purely by circumstance, Borrego Springs has escaped the kind of suburban expansion seen in places like Phoenix, Las Vegas, San Diego, and Orange County. Our remote

location is not easy to get to, and other than tourism, there is no major industry or source of high-quality jobs.

However, technological and demographic changes are re-writing historic patterns of migration, making the Borrego Valley accessible and desirable by new populations seeking a lower cost of living and more human-scale, hospitable environment. Local and out-of-town developers are presenting plans to our Community Sponsor Group for significant housing and commercial development encompassing thousands of acres. One such example is the proposed 149-home development known as Borrego Country Club Estates planned for 172 acres situated in a location botanically rich with mature, native desert vegetation, including a major portion of the valley's ocotillo forest.

#### **1.4.2. The Call for A “Special Desert Area”**

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As such change is imminent, the motivating question for those of us who know and love Borrego Springs is how can we preserve what’s special and unique about our community while accommodating the inevitable change we see coming?

As this report outlines, in our view it is more than appropriate to designate “Special Desert Area” status to all private lands enclosed by the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park boundaries. Such a measure would ensure that residents and key stakeholders would have a greater voice in determining what our community will be like 10, 20, 30 years ahead.

Most Borregans share a common concern for our desert environment or we would not be here. We feel a huge responsibility to maintain unique, desert-specific, and very high standards on the way private lands inside the boundaries of the park are developed.

Thus, the role of the special district designation is to ensure that standards of growth within our community as a whole are compatible with the context of a sensitive desert environment with extremely rich cultural and historical resources.

#### **1.4.3. A Unique Historic Legacy**

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A million years ago, the Borrego Valley was part of a vast savanna/grassland covered with lakes and streams. Today, out in the Borrego badlands, fossil remains of ancient savanna animals (mammoths, mastodons, camels, horses, giant sloths, and saber tooth cats) can be found. The State Park maintains a large paleontology facility at its Stout Research Center in Borrego Springs to collect, study, and manage these resources.

Evidence indicates that Borrego's earliest human habitants (6,000 to 10,000 years ago) were nomadic Paleo-Indians, ancient ancestors of the Cahuilla and Kumeyaay peoples, who moved into this area approximately 2,000 years ago. These semi-nomadic tribes traveled from the desert lowlands to the mountains during winter and summer to harvest acorns, pine nuts, agaves, and mesquite beans. Thousands of sites marking their occupation have been recorded within the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

#### **1.4.4. Early Discovery: 1750 - 1900**

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Early explorers like Juan Bautista de Anza, a Spanish military captain, forged overland routes through the Borrego valley in the 1770s that become major transportation corridors and contributed to California's colonization. Today, the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail is designated a National Historic Trail by the National Park Service, and the Borrego desert area recognizes five historical locations where the de Anza expedition camped.<sup>1</sup> As they journeyed through Kumeyaay and Cahuilla lands 230 years ago, the event may have been documented as pictographs that exist today<sup>2</sup>.

The 1800s brought a flourish of activity, primarily the development of transportation and communication corridors across the Colorado Desert. The rush for gold increased immigration in the late 1840s and 50s, and the Butterfield Stage Route for mail delivery quickly followed the immigrants' path. The Butterfield Trail is recognized at several historical sites like the Vallecito Stage Station, where weary travelers stopped for rest, food, and fresh horses to pull the stagecoach.

The end of the Civil War ushered the cattle industry into the valley, supported by abundant feed and easily accessible water. The Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association's (ABDNHA) Local History Committee has identified 40 historic sites in the Borrego Valley, including cattle camps. This cattle era coincides with the first records of "tourists" journeying from the Warner Springs area to admire the Valley's great natural beauty, plant life, and scenic vistas.

The first homesteading in the Borrego Valley started in the early 1900s, and some structures and home site remains still exist. Increasingly, visitors and residents realized the great beauty and scenic value of the area, and in the early 1930s the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park was formed.

#### **1.4.5. Economic Enterprise: 1930 - 2007**

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Drawn by the sunny climate, cheap land, and seemingly endless water supply, family farms began operating, and by 1928, over 200 acres were under cultivation.

Agricultural entrepreneurs saw the potential to bring crops to market faster than competitors to the north, and the strategy worked. Following World War II, agriculture was the primary economic driver until the mid-1960s when efforts to unionize farm workers changed the landscape.

But even before the growth of commercial agriculture began to wane, innovative town planners and developers sought ways to develop Borrego Springs as a "complete community," including enterprise and commerce where none had existed. Due to their efforts, Borrego Springs can boast of having had the first franchised television cable

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<sup>1</sup> The National Park Service has verified this information pertaining to the Anza National Historic Trail.

<sup>2</sup> *The Forgotten Artist, Indians of Anza-Borrego and Their Rock Art*, by Manfred Knaak, 1988, Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association (ABDNHA), Borrego Springs.

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company in San Diego County when much of the rest of the county still relied on home antennae!

Much of this early planning was based on the appeal of leisure pursuits and the natural beauty of the valley, with the idea of luring a strong population base of retirees and seasonal residents. With that goal, planners established churches, schools, and water companies, dedicated to creating a full-service community surrounded by state parkland. They designed a community in tune with its natural surroundings, including wide streets, non-grid formulas for housing development, and plenty of open space.

As services grew and the State Park developed, visitors and new residents have slowly increased. Today, while County land use regulations would permit a potential full-time population of 35,000, we are far from the growth curve that would yield such demographics. To maintain and attract viable economic activity here, many valley entrepreneurs maintain that a full-time population of 8,000+ is required. Full-time residents currently number around 3000. Estimates are that the area draws anywhere from 600,00 to 800,000 visitors annually.

#### **1.4.6. Charting the Course: 2007 and Beyond**

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In an increasingly demanding world, Borrego Springs offers vanishing and valuable commodities – low stress, clear skies, natural environment, human-scale enterprise, and a strong sense of community. To the huge “first wave” of retiring baby boomers and the millions behind them, Borrego Springs has enormous appeal as a place to invest in something different, and use time, skills, and talents in new ways. An escape from the ordinary suburban sprawl, Borrego Springs encourages life at a slower pace, where most everybody knows most everybody else, where there is history and raw nature, and where there are new opportunities to grow and explore.

We are witnessing this influx of new arrivals, entrepreneurs and volunteers, ready to invest and become part of the established culture, all “contemporary visionaries” like those they follow. They are intrigued by Borrego Springs, not only because of our rich history, culture and beauty, but because the sense of place here is so strong, so compelling. Right now, our role as stewards of this precious ecosystem, environment, and culture cannot be over estimated.

That is why we have worked diligently and collaboratively to develop this initiative to be granted the “special district” designation that we believe would be the primary vehicle to protect and preserve this incredibly valuable resource – San Diego’s only desert community.

In the pages that follow, we have identified key issues facing us and crafted a synopsis of the problems and opportunities that influence this initiative.



## **2. PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES**

### **2.1. Synopsis of Issues & Challenges Identified**

The starting point was for the committee to compile a broad list of challenges and issues that Borregans have identified and spoken of. Some are well known, almost “obvious” ones, like those relating to water use. Others are more subtle, and have to do with long-term, often hard-to-imagine consequences of continuing uncoordinated and unplanned growth and development on our community values.

The group divided up into interest areas to identify issues identified as “problems” or challenges faced by the Desert Area. Each committee member has ties to different segments of the community, as well as different areas of interest. Members were tasked with canvassing their constituencies for items for the list.

### **2.2. Issues & Challenges by Area**

What follows is a summary of identified problems, by interest area. Not every “problem” identified here falls within the current or immediate responsibility of the County or Community Sponsor Group, yet all of them impact the community and are affected to a greater or lesser degree by existing County policy, ordinances, and regulations.

#### **2.2.1. Community Design**

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The Borrego valley suffers from a lack of personal identity in the built environment. As a result, we experience imported building techniques, materials and styles from wherever the new homeowner moved here from. We also experience design applications drawn from magazines of the Southwest not applicable to California. Community design includes everything we see around us including buildings, landscapes, roads, signs, fencing, etc.

In general, building design themes are not consistent with historical or natural desert elements. Much of the built environment at present is not what is typically considered to be desert imagery. The built environment reflects imported styles and building techniques, resulting in a lack of identity that bonds with the natural surroundings. New projects, walled communities and residential fencing are being build in a manner that impacts wildlife corridors, natural water flow, and connecting open space. Commercial area signage is largely non-compliant with county code. Signage also does not represent the desert character of Borrego. Community design includes buildings, landscapes, roads, signs, and fencing.

Increased outdoor lighting causes light pollution, interfering with the dark night sky, an important natural resource enjoyed by residents and visitors to the desert. Dark sky is also essential to the effective operations of the nearby Palomar and Mt. Laguna Observatories.

### **2.2.2. Cultural Resources**

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A significant problem is that developable land encroaches on cultural and historical sites and structures. Further, private land ownership makes it difficult to preserve our cultural history (both indigenous and modern) for the present and the future.

We have not identified and applied the Historic District Preservation Area (H) Special Area Designator to sites and structures that are historically significant. The local history committee has identified 40 such sites, including the mesquite forest in the Borrego Sink. The already-designated environmentally constrained Sink area is losing large amounts of native mesquite woodlands along with the wildlife dependent on the habitat and the historic value of the area.

Resource expertise: ABDNHA Local History Committee

### **2.2.3. Energy**

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Extremely high electric bills for residents and businesses affecting the ability to conduct year round commerce. Small businesses suffer with lower profit margins and the inability to attract and keep employees. The year-round cost of electricity results in fewer services and lessens the ability to market the community to year-round tourism. Residents experiencing higher living expenses travel to other communities for lower cost services. The service reliability from SDG&E is poor, especially during the summer monsoonal season. Above-ground utility poles are an eyesore and interrupt our panoramic views. They are susceptible to damage in high winds, often disrupting service during storms.

### **2.2.4. Facilities**

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Schools, fire stations, community centers and other structures support the fabric of the community creating a viable sense of place. They are now governed by separate public and private groups and agencies, hindering coordination of planning and development. These facilities need to be assessed for their effectiveness in the production of community support services.

### **2.2.5. Farming And Industry**

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Citrus farming may have a limited life span in the Borrego valley due to its high rate of water consumption. Conversion of citrus farming to low water use crops would diversify the farming economy making it less dependent on water and on an imported work force. Consideration should also be afforded to the development of year round economies less dependent on seasonal visitation and farming.

### **2.2.6. Landscape And Habitat**

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Natural habitats are regularly converted to manufactured landscapes using plant materials that are foreign to the desert ecosystem and are highly consumptive of valuable resources. Landscape irrigation on the whole accounts for the vast majority of

water loss in the Borrego valley used in farming, golf courses and residential landscaping.

We as a community have not identified and applied the Environmentally Constrained Area (ECA) Regional Category to areas containing rare and endangered plant and animal species, archaeological sites, agricultural preserves, and other environmentally sensitive areas that will experience adverse impacts from development.

#### **2.2.7. Parks and Recreation**

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Borrego Springs is an isolated desert community surrounded by state park. Compatibility with that natural ecosystem should be fundamental to developments in the valley. Excess use of foreign plant materials and irrigation systems - including grass - stand out in sharp contrast to the park experience that is vital to the valley economy.

Development threatens the natural open space needed to preserve environmental and economic aspects of the community. Development threatens public access needed for the health and enjoyment of residents. Without a plan to ensure a transition between access to open space and private developable land, we lose the opportunity for a connected integrated system of trails and open space. There is a community need for a memorial park and cemetery. In addition, there are no buildings designed specifically for the needs of seniors, children, or large community groups.

#### **2.2.8. Transportation**

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Transportation systems including state highways, city streets, horse trails and foot paths throughout the community need to be monitored and cared for as linkages for all types of movement thru the Borrego valley. The system needs a complete re-assessment and evaluation for its usefulness.

#### **2.2.9. Utilities**

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A close look at the facilities and distribution systems associated with utilities in the valley show an emphasis on low-cost engineering and technology over compatibility with the natural ecosystems they exist in.

#### **2.2.10. Visual Graphics / Signage**

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Signage in the Borrego valley consists of a broad variety of materials, colors, styles and size of components. These elements produce confusion and visual chaos primarily to visitors who find wayfinding a confusing experience. The size of economic loss likely due to poor / absent signage is unknown.

#### **2.2.11. Water, Soils, Air**

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The significant impact of the overdraft of the single-source aquifer will ultimately destroy from the economic viability of the community and, in turn, directly impact the quality of life for the residents of the community. Future costs of water and uncertainty of supply make planning difficult. High septic tank usage further degrades soils and water supply.

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Currently there is limited use of treated effluent to water golf courses and other high water use areas. Loss of native mesquite woodland habitat due to overdraft of the aquifer.

Increasing poor air quality from the from the east, including Salton Sea, Imperial Valley, and Mexico, as these areas develop. Degradation of air quality in the Borrego Valley from agricultural burns. Large scale clearing prior to building creates dust. O.W.S.V.R.A. park is a possible E.P.A. air-quality standards violator.

Resource expertise: Borrego Water District; County hydrologist; Air Quality Control Board; Imperial Irrigation District

### **3. POSSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1. Community Values**

After examining the problems and challenges identified, the group determined that the following community values underlay them. These values then drove group deliberations as it began to create possible solutions and develop its recommendations.

- 3.1.1.1. accessible water**
- 3.1.1.2. clean air**
- 3.1.1.3. quietness**
- 3.1.1.4. dark skies, dark environment**
- 3.1.1.5. protected viewsheds**
- 3.1.1.6. open space**
- 3.1.1.7. wide expanses of native Colorado Desert vegetation**
- 3.1.1.8. the natural character of the valley**
- 3.1.1.9. abundant wildlife and habitat**
- 3.1.1.10. desert eco-system intact, maintain natural biodiversity**
- 3.1.1.11. native soils and rocks**
- 3.1.1.12. uncrowded**
- 3.1.1.13. low-key desert community**
- 3.1.1.14. friendly small town atmosphere**
- 3.1.1.15. State Park and wilderness surrounding the town**
- 3.1.1.16. variety of outdoor recreational opportunities**
- 3.1.1.17. variety of desert-related educational opportunities**
- 3.1.1.18. variety of cultural opportunities for size of town**
- 3.1.1.19. opportunities for personal growth**
- 3.1.1.20. opportunity for a healthy lifestyle**

- 3.1.1.21. choice of residential lot sizes...many larger lots with native plants, privacy**
- 3.1.1.22. major industry (tourism) is compatible with natural character of community**
- 3.1.1.23. natural habitat important, harmony: human needs only one of the considerations in design and planning**
- 3.1.1.24. the opportunity to live with and observe nature (wildflowers, migrating birds, flash floods, drought, sunsets, clouds, storms, etc.)**
- 3.1.1.25. a place of significant and unique history, with roots**

## **3.2. Creative Possibilities**

After reviewing the problems identified, and consistent with the community values, the DAI Steering committee used brainstorming techniques (all ideas welcome) to formulate creative possibilities to address or mitigate the problems identified. These are not our recommendations, but are a list of possible strategies that can be used to inform thoughtful recommendations.

### **3.2.1. Agriculture**

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- 3.2.1.1.1. Ensure the continued access to water from the Borrego aquifer thru the reduction of water use in farming.
- 3.2.1.1.2. Encourage farmers to convert farms from citrus to crops that rely on low to moderate water use.
- 3.2.1.1.3. Develop methods of conversion that will allow farmers to change farmlands to other sources of income including subdivision.
- 3.2.1.1.4. Reduce the use of potable water on farms and golf courses via the use of grey water or treated effluent for irrigation.
- 3.2.1.1.5. Limit use of potable water for all plant materials.
- 3.2.1.1.6. Capitalize on the capture of storm water from annual and semi annual flooding for aquifer recharge of irrigation water.
- 3.2.1.1.7. Create a system that will allow farmers to sell water rights at market rate in exchange for no-grow easements.
- 3.2.1.1.8. Replace vacated farm fields with restored habitat.
- 3.2.1.1.9. Investigate methodologies that will make it feasible for farmers to donate lands to conservancies or others who will fallow and restore desert lands to the original habitat.
- 3.2.1.1.10. Regulate the use of fertilizers in agriculture and on golf courses.

### **3.2.2. Air**

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- 3.2.2.1.1. Allow agricultural burning only during appropriate atmospheric conditions.
- 3.2.2.1.2. Reduce wind-blown sand pollution by more effective grading ordinances.
- 3.2.2.1.3. Keep the community informed of the Salton Sea Authority's Restoration Plan, which addresses potential air pollution from the Salton Sea.
- 3.2.2.1.4. Develop methods to restore fallowed farm land to prevent wind-blown sand.
- 3.2.2.1.5. Encourage alternative, smog-free, methods of commuting.

### **3.2.3. Community Design**

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#### **3.2.3.1. Grading**

- 3.2.3.1.1. Minimizing destruction of surface soil layer for controlling dust
- 3.2.3.1.2. Minimizing destruction of habitat
- 3.2.3.1.3. Minimize water use for re-vegetation on residential lots

#### **3.2.3.2. Native Materials**

- 3.2.3.2.1. Landscaping that employs microclimate strategy as a way to reduce energy consumption in buildings
- 3.2.3.2.2. Positioning landscape close to constructions to reduce noise and light trespass
- 3.2.3.2.3. Placement of deciduous and non-deciduous trees in consideration of environmental and energy consumption reduction potential
- 3.2.3.2.4. Reuse / recycling of potable water as gray water for irrigation

#### **3.2.3.3. Building Form and Technology**

- 3.2.3.3.1. Attaining passive energy efficiency in new construction
- 3.2.3.3.2. Improving longevity of new construction under intense solar, seismic, and wind conditions
- 3.2.3.3.3. Using natural convective air flow for three or four season reduction in cooling / heating loads
- 3.2.3.3.4. Orienting new construction such that adverse affects of environmental conditions are minimized, and positive attributes are maximized.

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- 3.2.3.3.5. Facilitate the use of overhangs and shade structures into construction as a means for making building forms more responsive to local energy conditions
- 3.2.3.3.6. Facilitate the use of thermal mass in building design as a strategy for energy savings
- 3.2.3.3.7. Using rooftop solar electric panels for local energy production
- 3.2.3.3.8. Using solar hot water panels to reduce energy consumption for heating pools
- 3.2.3.3.9. Using High SEER HVAC to reduce energy consumption in new construction
- 3.2.3.3.10. Use of rebate programs for improving the feasibility of energy efficiency items addressed above
- 3.2.3.3.11. Use of high efficacy interior / exterior lighting, including use of dimmability of lighting and exterior downlighting
- 3.2.3.3.12. Facilitate implementation desert-relevant insulation strategies that may not be appropriate elsewhere within San Diego County - High R-value roof insulation in conjunction with light colored roofs and convective flow.

**3.2.3.4. Infrastructural Considerations for Community Building**

- 3.2.3.4.1. Preserving natural site conditions / view sheds when infrastructure to new construction is installed.
- 3.2.3.4.2. Placement of HVAC, pool equipment, propane equipment, electrical power lines to reduce visual clutter and noise trespass to adjoining properties.
- 3.2.3.4.3. Limited use of perimeter fencing that does not detract from community character, impede animal migrations, or impede flood water flow.
- 3.2.3.4.4. Protection of the dark sky resource (exterior downlighting)
- 3.2.3.4.5. New constructions tie-in to trail easements (e.g. do not interfere with...)

**3.2.4. Community Parks**

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- 3.2.4.1.1. Create a single organization for maintenance of existing and new community parks.
- 3.2.4.1.2. Create community park venues that encourage mixed culture use by the community.
- 3.2.4.1.3. Ensure that community parks are part of a master plan developed in support of pedestrian friendly objectives.



### **3.2.5. Cultural Resources**

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- 3.2.5.1.1. Identify and catalog cultural resources within the Borrego Valley, including historical sites and structures, both ancient and modern.
- 3.2.5.1.2. Maintain access to historical trails such as the Federal De Anza trail as it intersects with private land holdings.
- 3.2.5.1.3. Recognize the value of preservation and protection of the original town site at Old Borego, and write zoning and other guidelines that are appropriate to an historical area.
- 3.2.5.1.4. Recognize the value of preservation of our core downtown business area and its mid-century architecture and character.
- 3.2.5.1.5. Ensure that historical buildings and sites are properly zones for their modern day potential uses. (Example: The Desert Club)
- 3.2.5.1.6. Work to set up guidelines that will preserve and protect the small town feel and aesthetics of Borrego Springs, including dark sky, habitat protection, traffic considerations, and non-grid housing tracts.
- 3.2.5.1.7. Recognize the lands abutting Parklands may need special zoning requirements.
- 3.2.5.1.8. Recognize the value and importance of preserving the native mesquite forest in the Borrego Sink.

### **3.2.6. Dark Night Sky**

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- 3.2.6.1.1. Preserve dark night sky at or below existing light levels.
- 3.2.6.1.2. Develop a Dark Sky Awareness Program for the residents of Borrego Springs.
- 3.2.6.1.3. Seek vigorous enforcement of existing light pollution ordinances.
- 3.2.6.1.4. Develop standards to reduce the intensity/glare and spillage of outdoors lights.
- 3.2.6.1.5. Encourage residents to reduce or eliminate unnecessary outdoor lighting.
- 3.2.6.1.6. Encourage the use of motion-detector switches for outdoor security lights.

### **3.2.7. Energy Objectives**

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- 3.2.7.1.1. Develop methods of mitigating the heat of the summer sun to assist in the development of year around economies.
- 3.2.7.1.2. Investigate alternative methods of intervention between the summer sun in our homes and in our daily activities.
- 3.2.7.1.3. Require that landscapes developed in conjunction with new developments be compatible with hot and dry climates.
- 3.2.7.1.4. Generate energy for use via photovoltaic systems and export excess energy over existing transmission lines as an income support for the local economy.
- 3.2.7.1.5. Promote the use of the sun as a 100% renewable resource for local summer cooling as well as for daily energy consumption.
- 3.2.7.1.6. Require the use of effective energy conservation and appropriate management systems in homes and businesses.
- 3.2.7.1.7. Understand the use of traditional vernacular energy systems that reduce reliance on modern technologies and high energy use.
- 3.2.7.1.8. Promote use of electric cars in and around the Borrego Valley to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to reduce noise.
- 3.2.7.1.9. Reduce the amount of black asphalt in order to reduce the 'heat island' affect generated from radiant energy.

### **3.2.8. Facilities**

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- 3.2.8.1.1. Require a collaborative platform for future planning that encourages participation by key elements of the community – public safety, healthcare, and education.
- 3.2.8.1.2. Redefine community development within the Desert Area through master planning & zoning
- 3.2.8.1.3. Encourage citizens to come forward with “closeted” plans that could impact community development – gated healthcare facilities and cemetery space, for example
- 3.2.8.1.4. Promote the concept of clustering public facilities such as public safety, healthcare, education, senior living and the arts
- 3.2.8.1.5. Create and support master plan components that avoid the creation of congestive traffic flow
- 3.2.8.1.6. Require connectivity of key community public safety elements – police and fire protection.
- 3.2.8.1.7. Evaluate, define and/or redefine the minimum public safety requirements of the community

- 3.2.8.1.8. Identify and create alternative uses for abandoned infrastructure created by changes to the master plan

### **3.2.9. Habitat & Landscape**

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- 3.2.9.1.1. Keep wide expanses and variety of native plant community in order to retain the sense of place and natural character of the valley, and to preserve biodiversity of native flora and fauna.
- 3.2.9.1.2. Retain native plants in place, which require no additional water, hold down the soil, and which prevent erosion, flooding, and wind-borne dust and sand.
- 3.2.9.1.3. Promote the use of native plants in landscaping, to conserve water and provide habitat for wildlife.
- 3.2.9.1.4. Address the issue of clear-scraping property for home construction to ensure that a certain percentage of the property, depending on the size of the lot, is left in its natural state (after the footprint of the house is included).
- 3.2.9.1.5. Retain the natural desert appearance of neighborhoods through curbside use of native plants.
- 3.2.9.1.6. Preserve existing wildlife and vegetation corridors through neighborhoods and establish corridors into plans for new neighborhoods.
- 3.2.9.1.7. Evaluate impact of extensive fencing as it relates to wildlife corridors, developing limits on the use of fencing and respecting some sort of setbacks from property lines.
- 3.2.9.1.8. Ensure the community's continued water supply by reducing water use on golf courses and imported green grass lawns.
- 3.2.9.1.9. Maintain area's low rate of humidity by retaining native vegetation; by limiting green grass and imported plants; and by retaining our light colored, porous substrate rather than dark asphalt.
- 3.2.9.1.10. Limit use of exotic plants known to be invasive.
- 3.2.9.1.11. Develop methods to deal with invasive plants that threaten native species (i.e., mustard vs. wildflowers).
- 3.2.9.1.12. Encourage Borrego Water District to address issues related to restoring fallowed agricultural lands to reduce wind-blown sand and the establishment of non-native exotic plants.
- 3.2.9.1.13. Promote use of native plants in the core commercial district of Borrego Springs to reinforce our community's desert ambiance and complement the surrounding park environment.
- 3.2.9.1.14. Identify areas of particular vegetative significance; investigate linking these areas to a future valley-wide foot trail system.

- 3.2.9.1.15. Evaluate the impact of horses on native wildlife and vegetation and residential neighborhoods.
- 3.2.9.1.16. Develop a trail system compatible with the natural and built environments.

### **3.2.10. Industry Development**

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- 3.2.10.1.1. Create a community “Tag Line” that suggests the highest community priority should be given to the promotion of tourism and all of its support elements – lodging, food service, retail sales, and leisure activities.
- 3.2.10.1.2. Investigate the impact of mixed use zoning on efforts by the retail and food service sectors to remain open for business all months of the year.
- 3.2.10.1.3. Create public awareness of existing industry and its economic impact on the community through analysis of annual tourism dollars spent in the Desert area.
- 3.2.10.1.4. Raise community understanding of the important role of the State Park in sustaining community elements to a higher level.
- 3.2.10.1.5. Create a very visible and user friendly walking and biking corridor from the State Park Visitor and Camping Center to the heart of the Desert areas business core.
- 3.2.10.1.6. Promote the potential economic benefits of bilingual competency, especially in the Hispanic community.
- 3.2.10.1.7. Create community compatible and integrated mid and low income housing to support the growing service sector.
- 3.2.10.1.8. Promote equestrian habitat and service in the community’s outer parameters now occupied by agricultural interests.
- 3.2.10.1.9. Encourage the land acquisitions necessary to promote clustered growth of the healthcare industry in Borrego Springs.

### **3.2.11. Soils**

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- 3.2.11.1.1. Grading protocols should be developed to ensure protection of a percentage of the desert's natural soil crust and native vegetation on each lot.
- 3.2.11.1.2. Builders should preserve key desert vegetation, such as: creosotes, cacti, and ocotillos, which are removed during the grading process and re-utilize them in the home's landscaping.
- 3.2.11.1.3. Soil and native plant restoration plans should be developed for fallowed farm land.

- 3.2.11.1.4. Large development projects should be designed to preserve the native desert landscape by leaving portions of the property untouched and in its natural state.

### **3.2.12. State Park**

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- 3.2.12.1.1. Include significantly improved State Park connectivity to the community, integrating Park and community trail systems in a new Desert area Master Plan.
- 3.2.12.1.2. Promote the State Park's habitat strategy in on-going community development.
- 3.2.12.1.3. Identify opportunities to leverage State Park assets.

### **3.2.13. Technology**

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- 3.2.13.1.1. Balance pedestrian circulation in Borrego with vehicular traffic requirements to ensure pedestrian safety and convenience.
- 3.2.13.1.2. Evaluate traffic management in and around Christmas Circle to facilitate appropriate use of the park, to include parking.
- 3.2.13.1.3. Create a systematic methodology for extending wet utilities throughout Borrego for water, sewer and fire protection.
- 3.2.13.1.4. Underground dry utilities including telephone, cable tv and electric lines to preserve views.
- 3.2.13.1.5. Evaluate road and utility systems in and around Borrego for compatibility with essential services such as fire, police and medical services.
- 3.2.13.1.6. Encourage the expansion of municipal sewer systems to reduce reliance on individual septic systems and for groundwater protection.
- 3.2.13.1.7. Convert the existing evaporative/perc sewage plant to reclamation to provide for reclaimed water for use on golf courses.
- 3.2.13.1.8. Review the methodologies associated with flood water management as it relates to the built environment including floor elevations and building separation.
- 3.2.13.1.9. Reconcile flood management systems with fire protection as it relates to elevated structures for hydrology and flooding issues.
- 3.2.13.1.10. Establish a useable Borrego Valley flood control program.
- 3.2.13.1.11. Build and maintain a system of storm water retention basins in and around the valley for water retention and safety.

- 3.2.13.1.12. Develop a system of replenishment basins and ground water injection to replace waters taken from the aquifer for domestic use.

#### **3.2.14. Visual Graphics / Signage**

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- 3.2.14.1.1. Use visual graphics and signage as a significant messenger about our values and standards, creating an experience of Borrego Springs' character and image
- 3.2.14.1.2. Define entry points to Borrego Springs and the extent and boundaries of town
- 3.2.14.1.3. Provide valuable way-finding and orientation aids to newcomers and visitors
- 3.2.14.1.4. Eliminate visual blight and protect surrounding view corridors and dark night skies
- 3.2.14.1.5. Integrate and promote Park attractions in relation to town
- 3.2.14.1.6. Provide well-defined identification of merchant locations in the core business district

#### **3.2.15. Water**

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- 3.2.15.1.1. Stop the overdraft of our Borrego Valley aquifer.
- 3.2.15.1.2. Ensure adequate ongoing water supply for all Borrego stakeholders.
- 3.2.15.1.3. Develop incentives for water users to upgrade to more water-efficient irrigation systems.
- 3.2.15.1.4. Encourage the use of gray-water home irrigation systems.
- 3.2.15.1.5. Utilize reclaimed water for golf course irrigation.
- 3.2.15.1.6. Encourage the use of drought-resistant plants for landscaping.
- 3.2.15.1.7. Educate the public on ways to reduce everyday water usage in their homes and businesses.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Once the committee had a set of values, problems, and creative possibilities, it again broke up into interest areas to formulate a set of recommendations. These recommendations are wide-ranging in nature. They are intended to use existing technology and be practical, economically feasible, and politically realistic. Some of them can be clearly addressed to San Diego County for hopeful implementation. Others may be best addressed at the state level, or by local public and private bodies.

Rather than limit its recommendations to only those areas that might be addressed by San Diego County, the committee decided that a complete set of recommendations (addressing all of the problems identified) could serve as a useful set of decision-making guidelines for all Desert Area bodies. In one sense, these recommendations could be considered a partial master plan for private and public policy making in the Desert Area.

Our objective is to put forward a set of recommendations that is broadly representative of the desires of all citizens of the Desert Area. We followed a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal. First, only those recommendations that are supported by the entire committee have been included in this report. There is no “minority report”.

Further, the recommendations have been presented and reviewed in two community involvement forums, as well as an informational coffee hour for local organizations, and been available for public input and comment since January, 2007. The committee met after each public forum to review comments and input, and to revise the recommendations to incorporate those comments and input. In some cases this led to clarifying the language or organization of the recommendations. In other cases, it led to the deletion of recommendations deemed by the committee to be lacking in broad-based community support. It also led to the addition of recommendations originating from outside the committee membership.

### **4.1. Values-Related**

These recommendations relate directly to the community values previously identified in section 3.1. They originate with the community's desire to ensure compatibility between the built environment and this natural desert setting unique to the County of San Diego. Borrego Springs' local characteristics of clean air, dark night skies, underground water supply, scenic mountain vistas, natural flora and fauna are part and parcel of the reasons people decide to live here, and therefore are vital to its future wealth and vitality.

#### **4.1.1. Accessible Water**

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- 4.1.1.1. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions on current and future groundwater quality and quantity (water table).**
- 4.1.1.2. Reduce the water used for farming and golf courses through efficiencies, design, crop replacements, reductions, incentives, technological, economic, political, and / or legal means.**
- 4.1.1.3. Develop a task force of sufficient independence and expertise to make recommendations. Develop a paid position at BWD to oversee the implementation of the accepted recommendations.**
- 4.1.1.4. Appoint a BWD Water Educator to inform the public on methods and technologies to reduce everyday water use in homes and businesses.**
- 4.1.1.5. Expand the Town Sewer system and phase out septic systems to protect groundwater resources and maximize water re-use.**
- 4.1.1.6. Require the use of plant materials native to the Colorado / Sonoran Desert for new subdivisions and commercial development. Require a percentage of native plants be left in place in new residential and commercial construction.**

#### **4.1.2. Clean Air**

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- 4.1.2.1. That Borrego Springs Fire Dept. factor air-quality, in addition to fire safety, into the issuing of burn permits.**
- 4.1.2.2. Link Salton Sea Authority web site to sites of local organizations. Ask for community volunteer to be our local representative on this issue, who would attend meetings, stay current, and write articles.**
- 4.1.2.3. Design pedestrian-friendly community with connecting paths, shade, benches, water fountains, crosswalks, bike parking racks, small local [solar-powered] bus transportation.**
- 4.1.2.4. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions (grading, clearing, burning, vehicle choice, landscaping, etc.) on current and future air quality.**



#### **4.1.3. Dark Night Sky**

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- 4.1.3.1. Promote our dark sky as a distinguishing community resource for residents and visitors.**
- 4.1.3.2. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions (light fixture and bulb selection / location / orientation, timer settings, motion detectors, etc.) on current and future dark sky and dark environment.**

#### **4.1.4. Quietness**

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- 4.1.4.1. Promote our unusual quietness as a distinguishing community resource for residents and visitors.**
- 4.1.4.2. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions (equipment location / shielding, hours of operation, etc.) on current and future quietness.**

#### **4.1.5. Friendly, Historic Small-town Desert Community Surrounded by Open Space and Panoramic Views Afforded by the State Park**

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- 4.1.5.1. Develop, with extensive community input and involvement, a “Borrego Springs” look and style guide for voluntary use in future design, construction, and landscaping.**
- 4.1.5.2. Develop and implement a consistent, area-wide system of public informational and directional signs, with an associated “style guide” for private signage. Use visual graphics and signage as a significant messenger about our values and standards**
- 4.1.5.3. Develop methods to fund and maintain public signs and landmarks.**
- 4.1.5.4. Promote use of native plants in the core commercial district of Borrego Springs to reinforce our community’s desert ambiance and complement the surrounding park environment.**
- 4.1.5.5. Recognize and document our mid-century history of architecture and community development.**
- 4.1.5.6. Inventory historic buildings and sites and ensure they are zoned for their preservation and adaptive re-use.**
- 4.1.5.7. Include all major visitor service facilities in orientation signage. Inventory what aids already exist. Gather community input and ideas.**

- 4.1.5.8. Develop policies regarding street lights consistent with the community needs for both safety and continued dark sky / dark environment.**

#### **4.1.6. Viewsheds**

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- 4.1.6.1. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions (grading / clearing, landscaping / hardscaping, etc.) on current and future viewsheds and view corridors.**

#### **4.1.7. Desert Recreational & Educational Opportunities**

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- 4.1.7.1. Create visible and user-friendly walking and biking corridors along public right-of-ways.**
- 4.1.7.2. Explore the desirability, feasibility, and advisability of creating a system of connected walking paths throughout the valley with easy access from the business center to the state park and to scenic, natural, and cultural sites. Identify areas of particular vegetative significance, such as the mesquite forest in the Borrego Sink and the ocotillo forest on the valley's west side; investigate linking these areas to a future valley-wide foot trail system.**
- 4.1.7.3. Tie-in new construction to existing trail easements.**
- 4.1.7.4. Maintain and improve access to historical trails, such as the federal Anza Trail as it intersects with private land holdings.**
- 4.1.7.5. Evaluate the impact of horses and horse traffic on native wildlife and vegetation and residential neighborhoods.**
- 4.1.7.6. Work with the State Park to coordinate protection of local historical sites and landmarks located on state property. Consider integration of these cultural sites into the community through trails, signage, and activities.**

#### **4.1.8. Abundant Wildlife, Habitat, Biodiversity**

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- 4.1.8.1. Limit green grass and non-native plants.**
- 4.1.8.2. Remove invasive plants to the greatest extent possible.**
- 4.1.8.3. Preserve and protect native plants and wildlife in their associated habitats to the greatest extent possible.**
- 4.1.8.4. Encourage Borrego Water District to address issues related to restoring fallowed agricultural lands to reduce wind-blown sand and the establishment of non-native exotic plants.**

- 4.1.8.5. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions on the current and future well-being of native plants, wildlife, habitats, and biodiversity.**

#### **4.1.9. Native Soils**

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- 4.1.9.1. Preserve and protect native soils and soil crusts (desert “topsoil”) in their natural state to the greatest extent possible.**
- 4.1.9.2. Educate individuals and organizations and create ways to encourage them, to ensure that they fully consider the effects of their plans and actions on native soils and soil crusts.**

## **4.2. Community Building**

As a community, Borrego Springs continues to reflect the strong vision and influence of our 20<sup>th</sup> century “town fathers” - DiGiorgio, Kuhrts, and Burnand. Their tendency toward spacious development of the entire Borrego valley floor suggests a lack of emphasis and focus on the building of a more traditional community core. Today’s leadership must assess and consider the current need for a further defined community structure in the context of growth, demographic change, and the persistent influence of a developing low desert culture.

- 4.2.1.1. Thoughtfully minimize the use of electronic traffic control devices**
- 4.2.1.2. Install pedestrian crosswalks and walkways, and selectively lower speed limits to increase pedestrian access, mobility, and safety**
- 4.2.1.3. Consider replacing parallel parking around Christmas Circle with diagonal parking, and reconfigure traffic flow with traffic-calming strategies.**
- 4.2.1.4. Create a Master Plan that defines key elements of community, transportation corridors, and critical entry ways.**
- 4.2.1.5. Establish the location of “way finding” and “orientation aids” in the Master Plan.**
- 4.2.1.6. Establish a Business District Sign Committee in affiliation with the Chamber of Commerce to review signage and make recommendations on a voluntary basis.**
- 4.2.1.7. Create a “New or Renewable Energy” task force for the exploration and implementation of new local energy sources.**

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- 4.2.1.8. Lobby for the establishment of BWD Board staff & committees responsible for conservation in the three key water use categories – residential, golf, and agriculture.**
- 4.2.1.9. Create a Task Force charged with the responsibility to lobby support with San Diego County and utility companies for the implementation of under-grounding utilities and the creation of storm water retention systems.**
- 4.2.1.10. Encourage the Anza Borrego Foundation to give priority to acquiring Borrego Springs agriculture properties contiguous to park land, consistent with State Park objectives.**
- 4.2.1.11. Encourage the Sponsor Group to include public safety, healthcare, and education representatives on its Board.**
- 4.2.1.12. Create a Borrego Village Association and encourage the Sponsor Group to collaborate with it and obtain its input and recommendations on all community development matters.**
- 4.2.1.13. Create a Sponsor Group initiative in support of collaborative efforts by land owners, developers, planners, and community leadership for the creation of community-compatible and well-integrated mid- and low-income housing.**
- 4.2.1.14. Solicit the support of the Borrego Springs Fire District Board in planning for the future space requirements for a community public safety facility that will accommodate fire, police, and rescue elements.**
- 4.2.1.15. Form an elected local planning group to develop and work with the County of San Diego on development issues in Borrego Springs.**
- 4.2.1.16. Collaborate with the State Park in the creation of a “partnership” publication highlighting the elements of cooperation between the Park and the community.**
- 4.2.1.17. Initiate a joint park-public effort to create a thoughtful, planned buffer / transition zone along boundaries from parklands into private lands throughout the Desert Area.**
- 4.2.1.18. Identify leadership and launch once-monthly meetings attended by representatives of all local non-profits for the purpose of improving communication and identifying “best practices”.**
- 4.2.1.19. Revisit the idea of creating one or more area-wide flood-control mechanisms within the Desert Area.**
- 4.2.1.20. Create an Environmental committee of the Sponsor Group to work with concerns related to dark sky, noise, air pollution (smoke), and other environmental-management issues.**

**4.2.1.21. Establish a land trust and/or work with existing institutions to:**

- 4.2.1.21.1. obtain lands within the boundaries of the district which contain biologically- or ecologically-sensitive habitats and/or species, as well as culturally, archaeologically, or otherwise important sites;
- 4.2.1.21.2. record conservation easements (or other appropriate restrictions) on those lands; and
- 4.2.1.21.3. make a fair, open, and liquid market in interests in the easements for the purposes of both permanent preservation and facilitating required habitat mitigation.

**4.2.1.22. Encourage the creation of landscape easements (conservation easements) to establish and preserve the continuity of desert character and existing wildlife and vegetation corridors throughout the Desert Area.**

### **4.3. Community Design**

#### **4.3.1. Ordinance & Code Enforcement**

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- 4.3.1.1. **Incorporate any new requirements for building or other permit approval into the Sponsor Group Residential Building Guide.**
- 4.3.1.2. **Review county administration and enforcement of existing zoning, grading, and lighting ordinances and building codes within the Desert Area, and put in place strategies to ensure prompt, consistent, and effective enforcement to prevent difficult-to-reverse damage to:**
  - 4.3.1.2.1. fragile, non-regenerating desert lands;
  - 4.3.1.2.2. dark skies and dark environment; and
  - 4.3.1.2.3. viewsheds and neighborhoods

#### **4.3.2. Grading & Site Plans**

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- 4.3.2.1. **Implement a Borrego Springs Addendum to the S.D. County Grading Ordinance that establishes criteria for expanded review and approval of grading, site, and landscape plans both: 1.) prior to the issuance of grading and building permits for residential and commercial construction; and 2.) prior to significant subsequent landscaping or hardscaping, specifically including measures for –**
  - 4.3.2.1.1. substantially modifying the threshold at which the county requires a grading permit;
  - 4.3.2.1.2. controlling perpetual wind-borne dust and sand;
  - 4.3.2.1.3. limiting unnecessary and/or discretionary destruction of native plant / animal species and habitat;

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- 4.3.2.1.4. maximizing and maintaining wide expanses of integral native plant communities, both within and across legal parcel boundaries;
- 4.3.2.1.5. preventing unnecessary disruption or disturbance of established soil crust and native vegetation;
- 4.3.2.1.6. preventing grading in rights-of-way adjacent to building sites, preserving key desert vegetation, and providing that when specified varieties of native vegetation are removed during any sitework, that they be conserved and re-planted prior to any final inspection(s);
- 4.3.2.1.7. limiting, both during construction and afterward, total grading disturbance area as a function of the building footprint and/or net-square-area lot size;
- 4.3.2.1.8. strongly encouraging the use of porous, reflective substrates rather than asphalt in all walkways, driveways, and hardscaping;
- 4.3.2.1.9. enforcing strong economic disincentives for un-approved grading and habitat disturbance or destruction by requiring both re-planting and restoration to specific prior conditions plus a 100% mitigation penalty for the disturbed area.
- 4.3.2.1.10. locating pool equipment, HVAC equipment, propane equipment, satellite dishes, electrical power lines, etc. to prevent visual blight and noise trespass;
- 4.3.2.1.11. observing and accommodating existing trail easements, and
- 4.3.2.1.12. limiting impediments to animal migrations or flood water flow.

**4.3.3. Landscaping**

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**4.3.3.1. Implement a Landscaping Ordinance that establishes a process and criteria for review and approval of planting selections and their layout, particularly outside the immediate proximity of a proposed building's disturbed area, and including measures for:**

- 4.3.3.1.1. preserving desert / mountain view corridors through legal parcels;
- 4.3.3.1.2. controlling the use of invasive, non-native plants;
- 4.3.3.1.3. encouraging the use of drought-resistant plants;
- 4.3.3.1.4. limiting total water use permitted for landscape irrigation as a function of legal parcel area and use type;
- 4.3.3.1.5. encouraging the use of native plants at streetside;
- 4.3.3.1.6. locating deciduous and non-deciduous trees in relation to building orientation and prevailing climatic conditions in order to restrict light and noise trespass;

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- 4.3.3.1.7. siting plantings to reduce energy consumption in buildings by adopting a microclimate strategy;
- 4.3.3.1.8. specifying fence / hardscape setbacks and maximum heights above grade as a function of distance between structure(s) and nearest lot boundary; and
- 4.3.3.1.9. prohibiting perimeter fencing, and specifically chain-link fencing, along the public faces (street- and non-street-facing borders) of legal parcels.

**4.3.3.2. Monitor and influence residential and commercial groundwater use via clear and meaningful tiered rates by:**

- 4.3.3.2.1. defining an approved Landscape Plan as an Approved Base Level of plantings for the purpose of calculating water customers' approved base irrigation water use; and
- 4.3.3.2.2. providing for supplemental, tiered charges for all plantings in excess of the Approved Base Level.

**4.3.3.3. Create a Borrego Springs Approved Plantings list for the appropriate application of non-invasive, desert-appropriate, low-water-use and drought-resistant plants as a part of the Landscape Ordinance.**

**4.3.4. Buildings — Energy Efficiency**

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**4.3.4.1. Require that all residential and commercial construction (both new and significant renovation) within the Desert Area meet passive energy efficiency conservation goals by accumulating a minimum number of “efficiency points” in the following (and other, suitable) alternative ways:**

- 4.3.4.1.1. orienting building forms to maximize positive and minimize negative climatic and environmental effects;
- 4.3.4.1.2. incorporating overhangs and permanent shade structures over non-north-facing windows, doors, and exposed exterior walls;
- 4.3.4.1.3. using thermal massing to reduce temperature fluctuations in interior spaces;
- 4.3.4.1.4. using higher R-value roof insulation than is currently required in California, along with light-colored roof surfaces to reduce HVAC loads;
- 4.3.4.1.5. limiting overall height of building structures to limit solar exposures; and
- 4.3.4.1.6. including passive energy efficiency elements in the Landscaping Plan

**4.3.4.2. Require that all residential and commercial construction (both new and significant renovation) within the Desert Area meet active energy efficiency conservation goals by accumulating a minimum number of “efficiency points” in the following (and other suitable) alternative ways:**

- 4.3.4.2.1. using higher efficiency (S.E.E.R.) heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems than specified by California or Federal regulations;
- 4.3.4.2.2. using light dimming;
- 4.3.4.2.3. installing solar hot-water panels for swimming pools;
- 4.3.4.2.4. incorporating solar-electric panels systems.

**4.3.5. Lights & Lighting**

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**4.3.5.1. Create a Borrego Springs Lighting Standards Addendum to the San Diego County Lighting Ordinance to protect and enhance the dark sky and dark environment resource by establishing standards on the installation of all new light fixtures within the Desert Area to limit intensity, glare, light trespass, and degradation of dark sky and dark surroundings from exterior and landscape lighting, specifically providing that:**

- 4.3.5.1.1. all properties are to be protected from future trespass by exterior lighting on adjoining properties;
- 4.3.5.1.2. all private and public street- and parking area-lighting use shielded fixtures to substantially confine lighting to the lighted area;
- 4.3.5.1.3. all exterior fixtures (with certain exceptions for low-wattage and decorative fixtures) be shielded and emit light in such a way as to confine substantially all light rays emerging from the fixture to fall within the boundaries of the legal parcel on which the fixture is installed;
- 4.3.5.1.4. establish maximum surface light intensity levels to limit dark sky and dark environment degradation through reflection;
- 4.3.5.1.5. require frosted lamps wherever unshielded fixtures may be permitted;
- 4.3.5.1.6. all unnecessary commercial, agricultural, and residential outdoor illumination is reduced or eliminated; and
- 4.3.5.1.7. commercial uses for nighttime lighting are defined and limited in intensity, hours of use, and size of lighted areas.

**4.3.5.2. Institute a Desert-Area-wide program to eliminate existing instances of light trespass, with the exception of emergency lighting.**



#### **4.3.6. Subdivisions / Developments**

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- 4.3.6.1. Allow decomposed granite surfaces as an alternative to Public / Private Road Standards within Desert Area boundaries so that private and lightly trafficked public roads can avoid asphalt paving requirements.**
- 4.3.6.2. Amend county Parking Guidelines to make explicitly clear that decomposed granite is an acceptable finish surface for parking areas in the Desert Area.**
- 4.3.6.3. Review and revise existing building height and story regulations in the Desert Area to emphasize single-story structures outside community centers.**
- 4.3.6.4. Limit development and/or construction on slopes, ridgelines, mesas, and peaks to sites where pre-existing natural grades are less than 10% in any direction.**

#### **4.4. Cultural**

Research, and preservation of the historical and cultural sites, and structures of the Borrego Valley will continue to establish the Desert Areas unique value to the San Diego County back country. Working to create a built environment compatible with the pristine Anza Borrego State Park while also capturing the small town aesthetics will make our community a true “Village in a Park”. These efforts will strengthen and grow our local economy and community.

- 4.4.1.1. Create a list of sites and structures to be investigated for historical significance.**
- 4.4.1.2. Map the Borrego Valley showing sites and structures deemed historically significant.**
- 4.4.1.3. Gather input from preservation groups as to how to best protect these sights and structures.**
- 4.4.1.4. Map all existing equestrian trails and intersections with private land holders. Look at incorporating possible new trails and equestrian areas to connect with the Federal and County trails systems.**
- 4.4.1.5. Develop a list of standards to qualify for designation as “mid-century” architecture.**
- 4.4.1.6. Establish guidelines for improvements to the down town area built environment that will honor the original architecture.**
- 4.4.1.7. Ask that the County designate the old Borego town site as an official historical site.**

- 4.4.1.8. Secure the property of old Borego and surrounding land in the Borrego Sink as a community historic park.**
- 4.4.1.9. Preserve and protect the original town site at Old Borego, and write zoning and other guidelines that are appropriate to a historical area.**
- 4.4.1.10. Allow spot zoning to permit commercial uses, consistent with current owner consent, for Old Borego, the Desert Club, etc, subject to review and approval by the Sponsor Group.**
- 4.4.1.11. Establish guidelines that will preserve and protect the small town feel and aesthetics of Borrego Springs, including dark sky, habitat protection, wildlife corridors , maximum levels of native vegetation, traffic considerations, and non-grid housing development.**
- 4.4.1.12. Reduce water usage in the Desert Area through development of crop reduction or replacement allowing for incentives for farmers to participate.**
- 4.4.1.13. Develop guidelines for zoning that more fully use the county of San Diego existing designator of “environmentally sensitive” area.**

## **4.5. Technology**

Significant technological improvements in environmental controls and applications may provide the Borrego Springs community with a new set of opportunities to mitigate the issues associated with the sun and water use in the desert. An interactive program amongst community leaders focusing on appropriate technologies should yield results in the actual development of new programs specifically appropriate to the desert area.

### **4.5.1. The Sun**

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- 4.5.1.1. A landscape plan should be developed for the commercial areas of the community using desert native canopy trees, shade cloth, and overhead trellises for shading to induce pedestrianization.**
- 4.5.1.2. An energy utility should be formed to harvest solar energy and wind power on a community wide basis for local use and to export excess energy onto the regional grid as a community benefit.**

### **4.5.2. Water Use**

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- 4.5.2.1. Actively support the implementation of the Groundwater Management Plan as developed by the Borrego Water District.**
- 4.5.2.2. Evaluate the feasibility and advisability of establishing a Replenishment District to fund aquifer recharge programs and conjunctive use cooperatively with the BWD.**

- 4.5.2.3. Modify the design of the existing sewage-treatment plant to allow for the re-use of treated effluent for use in irrigation, especially for agriculture and golf courses.**
- 4.5.2.4. Evaluate the feasibility and advisability of requiring storm water retention/detention basins in subdivisions throughout the Desert Area to prevent run-off and induce percolation of water into the soils.**
- 4.5.2.5. Require grey water irrigation on all new multi-family and mobile home parks and strongly encourage it for residential uses.**

#### **4.5.3. Soils**

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- 4.5.3.1. Create a viewshed plan for the Desert Area and restrict grading to defined limits in those areas.**
- 4.5.3.2. Institute a program with County of San Diego Agricultural Dept. to restore farmlands to native desert habitat in State Park-adjacent lands.**

#### **4.5.4. Noise**

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- 4.5.4.1. Develop a coordinated setback program for development along roads with the potential for excessive noise generation by cars and trucks.**
- 4.5.4.2. Review and modify the aerial aerobatic box criteria in the vicinity of the airport.**

#### **4.5.5. Circulation**

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- 4.5.5.1. Conduct a traffic analysis of downtown Borrego Springs to determine patterns of local and thru traffic including noise generation.**
- 4.5.5.2. Implement a program of traffic management and calming devices along major traffic routes.**
- 4.5.5.3. Develop a policy regarding the relationship between horse or pedestrian trails with the road system.**

#### **4.5.6. Utilities**

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- 4.5.6.1. Coordinate a system of water and sewer line extensions that will direct appropriate growth patterns in the community.**
- 4.5.6.2. Coordinate a program of the undergrounding of overhead utilities throughout Borrego Springs to include electric, telephone and tv / cable.**
- 4.5.6.3. Implement techniques to increase efficiencies in response times for emergency services vehicles, including local medical and fire services.**

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- 4.5.6.4. Encourage the connection to community sewerage systems where available and the phased abandonment of septic systems by adoption of the Uniform Plumbing Code.**
- 4.5.6.5. Design an understandable storm management program that protects homes and business from flood waters by the use of elevated floor elevations and separation between buildings.**

## **5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

[TO BE INCLUDED AT A LATER DATE]

[END DOCUMENT]