

V. TRANSPORTATION

“... description of primary transportation routes within the Community ... significance to the Community ... connections to regional road systems; include the number of road intersections, driveways, signals, traffic counts and accident rates on primary routes; description of proposed or planned improvements.” (Yavapai County General Plan, p. 77)

A. Existing Conditions

For many community residents, resolution of Transportation issues comes first if the Community Plan goals are to be achieved. More than half of all the comments received on the proposed plan were opinions about road development, improvements, maintenance, and safety, as well as trail needs, uses and abuses. All are points to ponder as the community works with Yavapai County to achieve its Transportation goals and objectives.

1. Roadways. The main roads in the Cornville Planning Area are State Route 89A, Cornville Road (County Road 30), Page Springs Road (CR 50), and various other roadways under the jurisdiction of Yavapai County, Forest Service or State Lands Department, and private parties. Interstate 17, the major arterial linking Flagstaff to Phoenix, is approximately nine miles east of Cornville Center and 6.5 miles from the Planning Area boundary.

a. Primary Transportation Routes.

State Route 89A is a four-lane divided roadway linking Cottonwood with Sedona. Cornville Road (CR 30) is a major collector road that connects Route 89A with Interstate 17 at the McGuireville interchange. It has also become a link to the Village of Oak Creek by way of major collector Beaverhead Flat Road (Forest Road 120) and State Highway 179. Page Springs Road (CR 50), which is just seven miles long end to end, is a major collector road that links Cornville Road with State Route 89A.

Forest Service roads in the Planning Area include Bill Gray Road (Forest Road 761); and Willow Point Road (FR 796) with its low water crossings at Spring Creek and Oak Creek. The roads are maintained through an intergovernmental agreement with Yavapai County that addresses level of maintenance and proposed improvement projects. The Forest Service shares maintenance responsibility and has full responsibility for maintenance of signs, cattle guards and structures.

There are numerous local roadways that carry traffic over short distances and provide access to neighborhoods and rural residences.

b. Key Intersections. Following is a list of key intersections within or near the Cornville Planning Area. Major intersections are shown in bold print.

State Route 89A at Cornville Road/Mingus Avenue
State Route 89A at Bill Gray Road

State Route 89A at Oak Creek Valley Road
State Route 89A at Page Springs Road
Cornville Road at Amante Drive
Cornville Road at Verde Santa Fe Parkway
Cornville Road at Tissaw Road
Cornville Road at Loy Road
Cornville Road at North & South Aspaas Road
Cornville Road at Page Springs Road
Cornville Road at Mountain View Road
Cornville Road at Koch Ranch Road
Cornville Road at Beaverhead Flat Road
Page Springs Road & Lee Pasture Road
Page Springs Road & El Rancho Bonito Road
Page Springs Road & Purple Sage Drive
Oak Creek Valley Road & Willow Point Road
Willow Point Road & Swinging Bridge Lane

The nearest intersection with traffic signals is State Route 89A at Cornville Road, which is located in the City of Cottonwood, just outside the planning area. There are no other signalized intersections within or near the Planning Area.

c. Historic & Scenic Roads. In 1993, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) designated State Route 89A from Sedona to Cottonwood as a scenic road, except for a 10-mile segment between Mileposts 353.5 and 363.5, most of which falls within the Planning Area. Currently, ADOT is sponsoring an effort to develop a Corridor Management Plan for the entire State Route 89A from Sedona to Prescott. Planners will identify intrinsic qualities and develop a vision statement for the roadway. The Community Association is represented on the Citizen Advisory Committee appointed to provide input to the plan and to potentially recommend inclusion of the missing segment as a scenic road. Public interest has also been expressed in designating Page Springs Road (CR 50) as an historic road to preserve the corridor and control access. The entire road length of 7 miles is within the Planning Area.

d. Traffic Volume & Speed. The 1993 *Verde Valley Regional Transportation Study* accurately identified the Verde Santa Fe South development along Cornville Road as a traffic generator; however, the report did not foresee the impacts of improvements on State Route 89A and Beaverhead Flat Road. The 1999 *Verde Valley Regional Transportation Study Update* recommended paving of Beaverhead Flat, which was completed in 2001, just before the widening of State Highway 89A in 2002. A dramatic increase in traffic volume became apparent on Cornville Road between April 2001 and June 2003, as shown on Table 13. The 1993 Transportation Study estimated average daily traffic counts of 4,500 on Cornville Road; but counts on the section just east of SR 89A jumped from 3,886 cars a day in 1993 to 9140 cars a day in 2003. Traffic counts on Cornville Road east of Beaverhead Flat have remained steady. Counts on Page Springs Road show a moderate increase.

Speeding is a common problem, especially on Cornville Road, where the speed limit is 50 mph, until it approaches within a mile of Cornville Center, from both directions. Then, the limit drops to 45 mph, then 35 mph, and then 25 mph for about a mile through Cornville Center. Rumble strips

(grooves in the pavement) are intended to slow the traffic at each end of the business community. On South Loy Road, a speed hump has been installed as the only other traffic calming device in the community. It was installed after a fatal vehicle accident on the road. Accidents at intersections were summarized in the Transportation Study

Table 13. Traffic Counts - Cornville & Page Springs Roads

Cornville Road:

**0.099 mi. from SR 89A
(East of State Route 89A)**

3/23/93 — 3886
3/9/94 — 5517
7/24/95 — 4989
10/7/97 — 6654
4/21/98 — 6108
6/16/99 — 6770
12/20/99 — 6327
4/18/01 — 7287
1/28/03 — 9024
6/16/03 — 9140

**4.452 mi. from SR 89A
(West of Page Springs Road)**

3/23/93 — 3456
3/9/94 — 4134
7/26/97 — 4629
10/7/97 — 4702
11/4/98 — 3881
6/16/99 — 3751
12/20/99 — 5569
4/18/01 — 5957
7/30/01 — 6745
1/28/03 — 6611
6/16/03 — 7127

**4.708 mi. from SR 89A
(East of Page Springs Road)**

3/23/93 — 2597
12/19/95 — 2822
10/7/97 — 2227
4/21/98 — 3478
6/16/99 — 3994
1/19/00 — 5791
4/18/01 — 4175
7/30/01 — 5127

Cornville Road (continued):

**8.273 mi. from SR 89A
(East of Beaverhead Flat Road)**

3/23/93 — 1911
3/9/94 — 1535
7/26/95 — 2532
11/4/98 — 2607
6/16/99 — 3246
12/20/99 — 2148
4/18/01 — 3183
1/28/03 — 3439
6/16/03 — 2741

Page Springs Road:

**0.102 mi. from Cornville Road
(North of Cornville Road)**

3/17/93 — 1761
3/22/94 — 2919
8/15/95 — 3792
11/4/98 — 3262
6/23/99 — 3694
1/5/00 — 3468
5/14/01 — 3551
1/29/03 — 3661
6/17/03 — 3392

**4.296 mi. from Cornville Road
(Fish Hatchery)**

3/17/93 — 1099
3/22/94 — 2183
8/15/95 — 1061
11/4/98 — 1203
6/22/99 — 1265
1/5/00 — 1215
4/18/01 — 1378
1/29/03 — 1170
6/17/03 — 1198

Source: Lima & Associates, et al

e. Road Improvements & Maintenance. In 1995, Yavapai County hired a consultant to do a feasibility study to examine the need for improvements on Cornville Road. The 1993 study had recommended expansion from two to four lanes, but the expansion was met with strong opposition because it would increase traffic and interfere with the community's quality of life. Now, as predicted then, traffic has increased, and the need for improvements is a continuing concern of many residents. The 1999 Study Update calls for widening Cornville Road to four lanes between State Route 89A and Tissaw Road between 2008 and 2018 due to development of Verde Santa Fe. Based on public comments, the community generally favors maintaining the rest of Cornville Road as a two-lane corridor in such a way as to preserve the rural character of the area. From a

safety standpoint, however, wider shoulders, turn lanes at key intersections, pedestrian bridge and pathways, are among improvements residents would favor for the Cornville Road corridor. Safety improvements are planned on Cornville Road as part of Yavapai County's regional road 5-year Regional Road Capital Improvement Program.

Residential roadways in some areas have been paved as part of initial development, while others have not. Paving of local roads is guided by a 5-year Road Maintenance Plan. The Board of Supervisors approves the first year of the 5-year plan as part of their annual budget process. The remaining years are subject to change in response to available funding, community issues, right-of-way acquisition needs and development issues (i.e. utility locations). Private owners along unpaved roads are obliged to maintain private roads and bring them up to County standards before Yavapai County can accept maintenance responsibilities. County paved maintained and unpaved maintained roads are shown on Map 5. Forest Service roads such as Bill Gray Road and Willow Point Road are maintained through intergovernmental agreements. Based on community surveys, there is some public concern about dust and the need to improve Mormon Crossing on Willow Point Road (FR 796).

2. Trails: There are numerous informal trails and old roads within the planning area that are used for both motorized and non-motorized recreation. There are very few designated trails. Trails identified by the Yavapai County Trails Committee are shown on Map 5.

In the northern part of the planning area, the State Parks Department purchased a trail corridor across a portion of the State Trust Land for the Lime Kiln Trail, which retraces a historic route used by produce farmers to supply the mines at Jerome. To date, 1.5 miles of the trail are completed from Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the National Forest boundary. Ultimately, the trail system will extend to Red Rock State Park, on to Fort Verde State Park, and back to Cottonwood.

A Trails Committee has been established by the Community Association with a mission to “provide and/or create...multi-use and non-vehicular trails in the Cornville area” that will ultimately “connect with existing trails in Cottonwood and Sedona...completing a loop of recreational trails throughout the Verde Valley.” The first phase of the committee's proposal includes creation of a trail from Zalesky Road, across National Forest south of Verde Santa Fe, to Chick Road. In Phase 2, the trail would extend to Windmill Park, through Casey's Corner and on to the Baptist Church on Circle Drive. The trail would continue to Beaverhead Flat Road in Phase 3. No trails across National Forest can be designated without Forest Service approval. Other issues involve the need for pedestrian access across Oak Creek and acquisition of easements along the trail route.

In 2003 and 2004, Yavapai County applied for Transportation Enhancement Grant funds to construct another multi-use trail along Cornville Road between SR 89A and Windmill Park. The trail would provide a safe route for bicycles, pedestrians and equestrians. The applications were unsuccessful, but may be resubmitted. One issue is whether or not the trail should accommodate motorized vehicles.

3. Public Transit: Currently, there is no public transit service in Cornville. To make use of nearby services, Cornville residents must travel several miles to Cottonwood. The Cottonwood Area Transit System (CATS) provides fixed and deviated route service within Cottonwood and into Clarkdale, Verde Villages and Bridgeport—but not to Cornville. “Dial-A-Ride” provides door-to-door

service and “Catch-a-Ride” is available between schools, apartments, senior centers, shopping centers and medical centers in Cottonwood. Cornville is served by private shuttle services that provide door-to-door service to and from the Phoenix area.

B. Issues:

- Improving traffic and pedestrian safety
- Improving Cornville Road
- Developing pedestrian access across Oak Creek at Cornville Road
- Managing increased traffic, speeding, traffic violations and noise
- Maintaining or upgrading secondary roads.
- Encouraging cooperative neighborhood road maintenance arrangements, e.g. improvement districts
- Developing a non-motorized community trail system for pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists
- Identifying appropriate motorized trail routes and encouraging responsible use of off-highway vehicles
- Managing underage and unlicensed ATV uses on public roads

C. Goals & Objectives

As stated in the *Yavapai County General Plan, April 2003*, a balance of safe, convenient, economical roadways and public transit is essential to the well-being of County residents and businesses. Restraint in road building may be possible by providing alternate means of transportation.

Goal 1: Design roadways to complement Yavapai County and Cornville Community vision.

- a. Give priority to preserve scenic routes over major highway proliferation.
- b. Stress collector loops around congested areas; and for safe secondary access.
- c. Consider impacts of Mingus Extension and potential State Route 260 improvements.
- d. Actively participate in regional transportation planning.
- e. Discourage secondary access (alternate routes) involving National Forest lands.
- f. Actively participate in planning if/when a bypass connecting SR 260 with SR 89A via a Tissaw Road is proposed to avoid and/or mitigate impacts to property and habitat.

Goal 2: Work with the County to improve Cornville Road, addressing safety, capacity, environmental and multi-modal issues.

- a. Preserve rural character of the road corridor through Cornville Center.
- b. Widen shoulders, improve curves; consider medians, add turn lanes.
- c. Develop pedestrian access across Oak Creek.
- d. Consider traffic control devices other than stoplights.
- e. Establish and enforce ordinances on traffic noise.

Goal 3: Work with the County to maintain and improve all roads for safety.

- a. Vigorously enforce existing speed limits & traffic laws.
- b. Provide input for Yavapai County 5-Year Road Improvement and Maintenance Plans.

- c. Consider application of safe dust abatement product to unpaved roads.
- d. Explain/encourage use of processes (such as forming improvement districts or commercial user agreements to mitigate use impacts) to bring private roads up to standard for County maintenance, e.g. road widths, emergency access capability.
- e. Establish consistent speed limits on local roads.
- f. Improve level of maintenance and/or improvements on Willow Point Road.
- g. To raise public awareness of speed concerns, install Burma Shave-type signs with safety messages at strategic location(s) along Page Springs and/or Cornville Roads

Goal 4: Develop a non-motorized community trail system for pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists.

- a. Promote a walkable and bicycle-friendly community.
- b. Accommodate the needs of cyclists, equestrians, and pedestrians as part of future road improvement projects.
- c. Develop a trail in phases from Zalesky Road to Circle Drive, including pedestrian access across Oak Creek.
- d. Connect with adjoining community systems.
- e. Participate and coordinate with Yavapai County Trails Committee, Deadhorse Ranch Trail Coalition, and other groups.
- f. Urge developers to provide for existing trails and/or access to trails.

Goal 5: Identify motorized trails and encourage responsible use of OHV vehicles.

- a. Identify trails suitable for motorized use, working with Forest Service, State Land Department and local OHV enthusiasts.
- b. Inform the public about available trails, rules and courtesy.

Goal 6: Support public transportation systems.

- a. Promote alternative modes of transportation and increase public transit opportunities to reduce dependence on automobiles and to decrease traffic and air pollution.
- b. Encourage public transit opportunities, especially for youth, disabled and elderly.

Goal 7: Explore possibilities and benefits of seeking designation of scenic & historic roads for corridor preservation, access control and safety.

- a. Scenic: State Route 89A – 10 miles between MP 353.5 & 363.5.
- b. Historic: Page Springs Road (CR 50) – all 7 miles.

D. Implementation Policies & Strategies

Leadership and policies for implementing these goals and objectives can come from the Community Association, in cooperation with Yavapai County, neighboring communities and organizations. The Association has already named a Trails Committee, which works cooperatively with the Forest Service, Yavapai County and neighboring organizations to coordinate planning and development of trails. A process for participation by the Association in regional transportation planning and maintenance activities might include (1) naming an Association representative to attend the Verde Valley Transportation Planning Committee meetings and/or (2) establishing a Transportation Committee (perhaps on an ad hoc basis according to needs) within the Association to work with the Yavapai County Public Works Department on transportation issues, in much the same way as the Planning & Zoning Committee works with the County's Development Services Department.