

Desert Foothills Scenic Drive

Scenic Corridor & Trails Analysis
Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Study Area

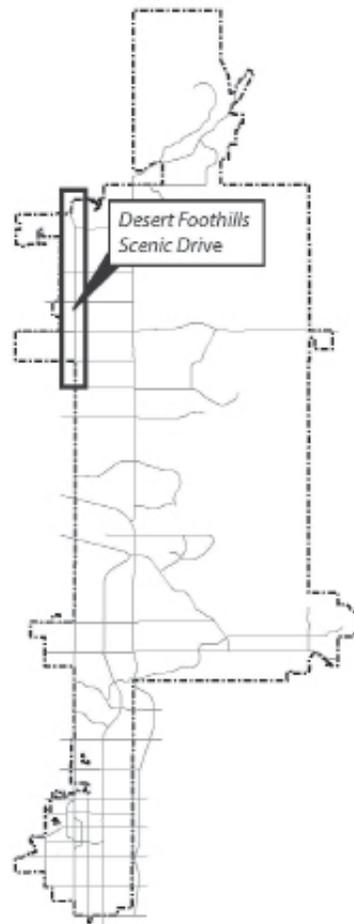
The Desert Foothills Scenic Drive is located in Scottsdale, Arizona on the northern six miles of Scottsdale Road. Situated between Happy Valley Road and the Carefree Highway, the Scenic Drive consists of approximately 11.5 miles of roadside frontage. Seen as a community landmark, preservation efforts have been made for over 45 years to maintain its natural desert character. Neighboring communities, volunteers, non-profit organizations, and the City of Scottsdale have made substantial contributions to preserve and restore the natural desert environment and enhance its character as a distinctive tourist destination.

The Desert Foothills Scenic Drive of Scottsdale Road is designated by Scottsdale's General Plan as a scenic corridor. Scenic corridors are major thoroughfares that require expanded scenic desert landscape setbacks to preserve a sense of openness for the community. The principle goal of scenic corridors is to achieve minimal visual impact of the built environment on the natural desert setting.

In September of 2000, Scottsdale voters approved the authorization to issue bonds in the amount of \$27,100,000 for "scenic corridor preservation, restoration and enhancement." This bond issue also provided for the development of a streetscape enhancement program for the entire 24.5 miles of Scottsdale Road. The planned bond funding for the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive is estimated at approximately \$6 million, with \$5.3 million allocated for construction improvements.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to develop a set of community driven recommendations to guide the use of bond funds for roadside improvements throughout the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive.



City of Scottsdale
boundary map

Study Process

A number of project scope alternatives were developed and analyzed based on priorities developed by community input. Each alternative was examined closely to determine the ones that best fit the community's needs with budget limitations in mind. As a result, five alternatives were identified for further study for the preservation and restoration of the desert buffered setbacks.

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- Establish a contiguous scenic corridor easement.
- Establish a comprehensive trail system as set forth in the Scottsdale Trails Master Plan.
- Re-establish native vegetation adjacent to the roadway.
- Underground the remaining overhead power lines.
- Install minimal streetscape elements that reinforce the rural desert/equestrian character of the Desert Foothills area.



Desert Foothills entry sign

Plan Goals

The goals developed are the starting blocks from which the study framework was designed. Responding to research and community input, the process to establish study priorities was adjusted through ongoing discussion. The study process was structured around these five goals:

- Goal 1:** Meet with local residents and stakeholders of the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive to gain direction and establish options for consideration.
- Goal 2:** Gain a comprehensive understanding through documentation of the existing conditions of the Desert Foothills Scenic Drive.
- Goal 3:** Analyze existing opportunities and constraints in order to develop strategies for scenic corridor enhancements.
- Goal 4:** Review findings for local stakeholders and prioritize options utilizing available bond funds.
- Goal 5:** Provide long term recommendations for completion of Scenic Drive enhancements.

Priorities

Understanding the needs of the Scenic Drive and the community, the following alternatives have been identified and prioritized through a public participation process. Options are ranked in order of importance and available funding.

1. Underground the remaining overhead powerlines. With any remaining funds, continue with priorities two and three.
2. Provide native plant revegetation and install intersection improvements reflecting the rural desert/equestrian character of the area.
3. Improve the trail system as allowed by any remaining project funds.

Staff is also instructed by stakeholders and citizens to continue acquisition of scenic corridor and trail easements through the plan review process.

Recommendations for Implementation

The list of recommendations will continue to be refined. Public outreach will be an ongoing process throughout the entire project to ensure the community's vision is achieved. The next steps for implementation are proposed as:

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- Refine design concepts and cost estimates.
- Develop a scope of work and begin a consultant selection process.
 - Continued public outreach.
 - Engineering and Landscape design development.
 - Construction document preparation.
- Construction bid process.
- City Council authorization.
- Construction implementation

Plan update. The findings of this scenic corridor and trails analysis will be incorporated into the Tonto Foothills Community Area planning process planned for 2009-2010.

Ongoing Planning Efforts

This segment of Scottsdale Road is located within the newly adopted Tonto Foothills Community Area. As one of six community areas, the Tonto Foothills Community Area Plan will ultimately contribute to the 2011 General



Engelmann's Prickly Pear
Opuntia engelmannii



Developed & Undeveloped Parcels

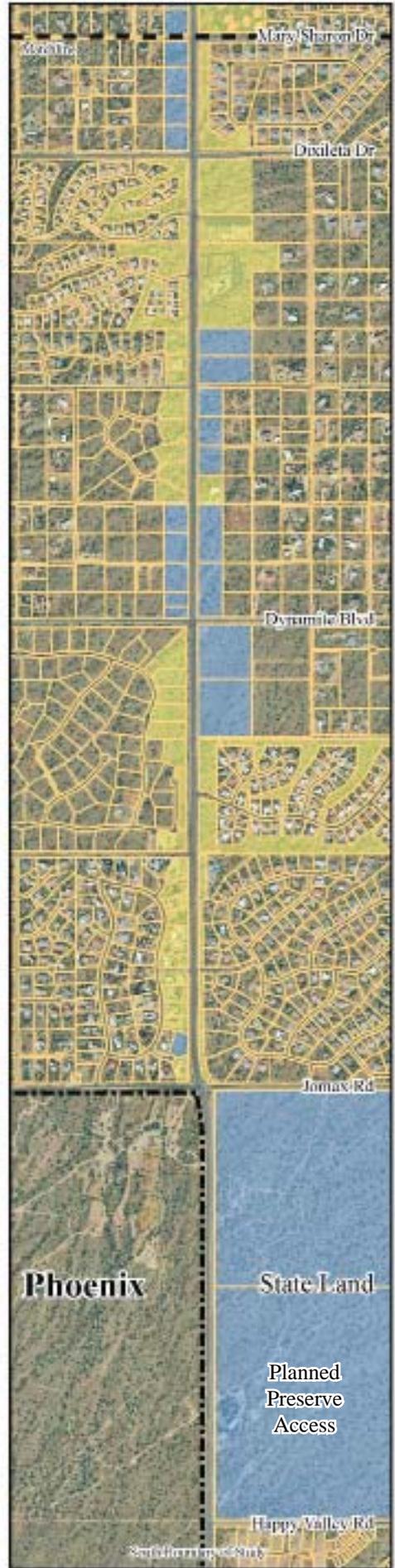
- Developed parcel
- Undeveloped parcel

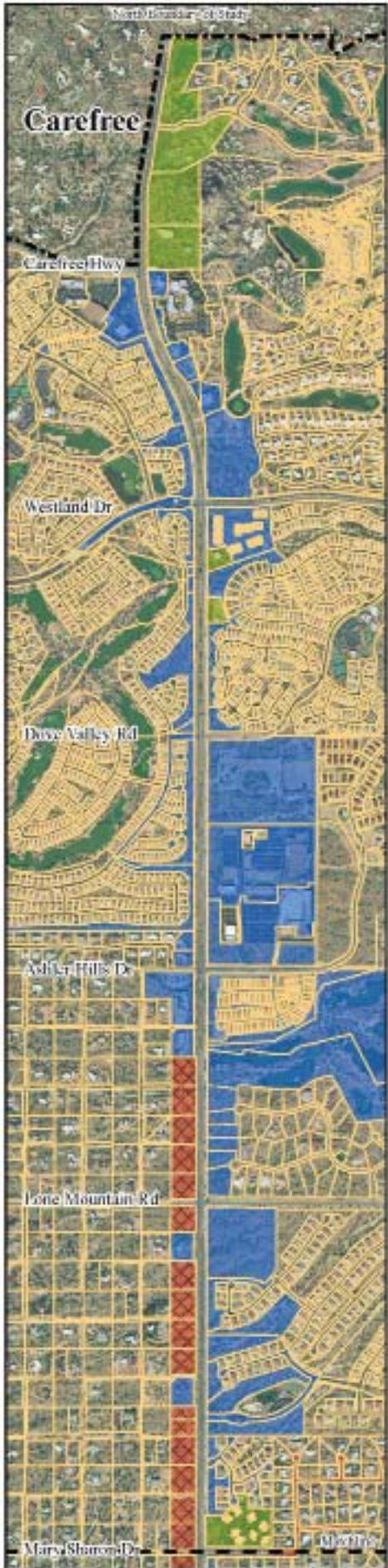
Developed

- 100 parcels/7.88 linear miles
- 72% of the corridor frontage

Undeveloped

- 37 parcels/3.14 linear miles
- 29% of corridor frontage





Right-of-Way Half-Widths

- 50' Existing 1/2 Width
- 55' Existing 1/2 Width
- 65' Existing 1/2 Width
- 75' Existing 1/2 Width
- Undeveloped Parcels

50ft Existing Half-Width

- 20% of corridor

55ft Existing Half-Width

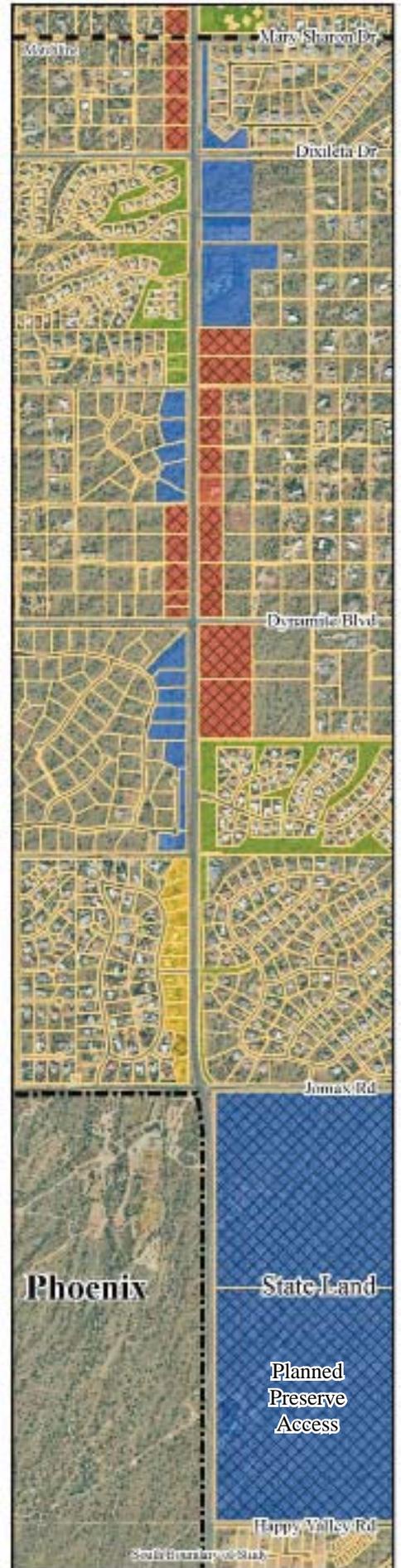
- 4% of corridor

65ft Existing Half-Width

- 18% of corridor

75ft Existing Half-Width

- 57% of corridor





Scenic Corridor Easement

-  Parcel With Scenic Corridor Easement
-  Developed Parcel With No Easement
-  Area of Dedicated Easement

Dedicated Scenic Corridor Easements

- 84 parcels/7.10 linear miles
- 71% of corridor frontage

No Scenic Corridor Easement

- 53 parcels/3.92 linear miles
- 37 undeveloped parcels/3.14 linear miles
- 28% of corridor frontage
- 16 developed parcels/0.78 linear miles
- 7% of corridor frontage





Trail Easement

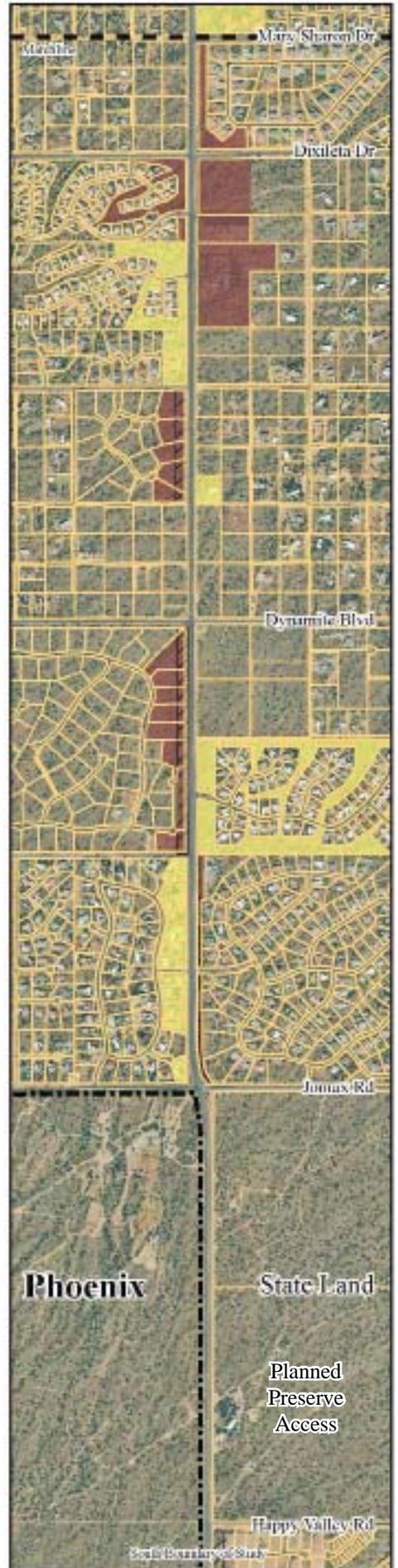
- Parcel With Trail Easement
- Developed Parcel With No Trail Easement

Dedicated Trail Easements

- 68 parcels/5.97 linear miles
- 54% of corridor frontage

No Trail Easement

- 69 parcels/5.05 linear miles
- 46% of corridor frontage
- 32 developed parcels/1.91 linear miles
- 17% of corridor frontage
- 37 undeveloped parcels/3.14 linear miles
- 28% of corridor frontage



Constructed Trails

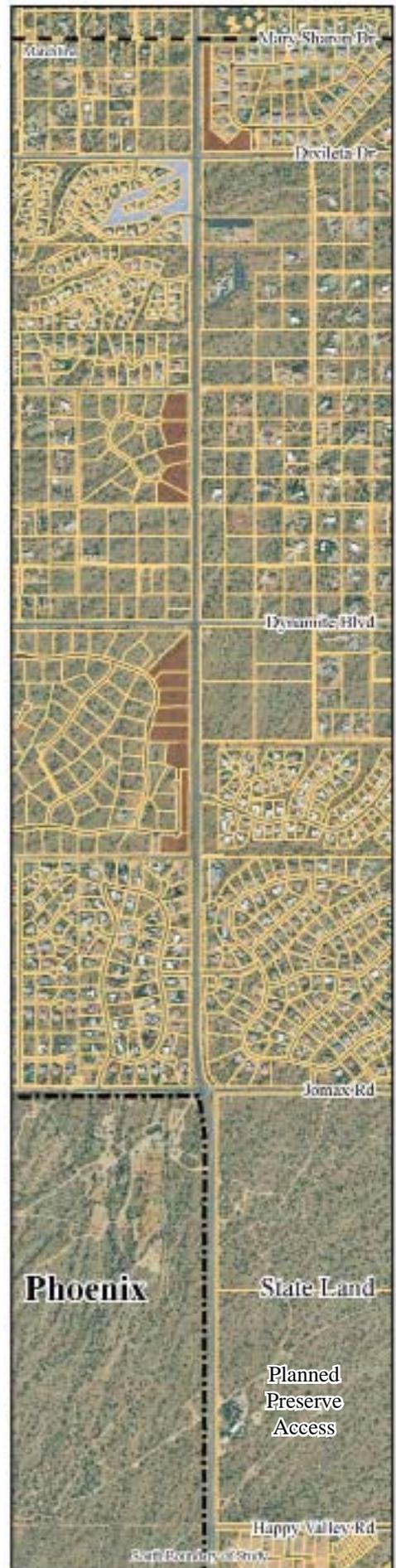
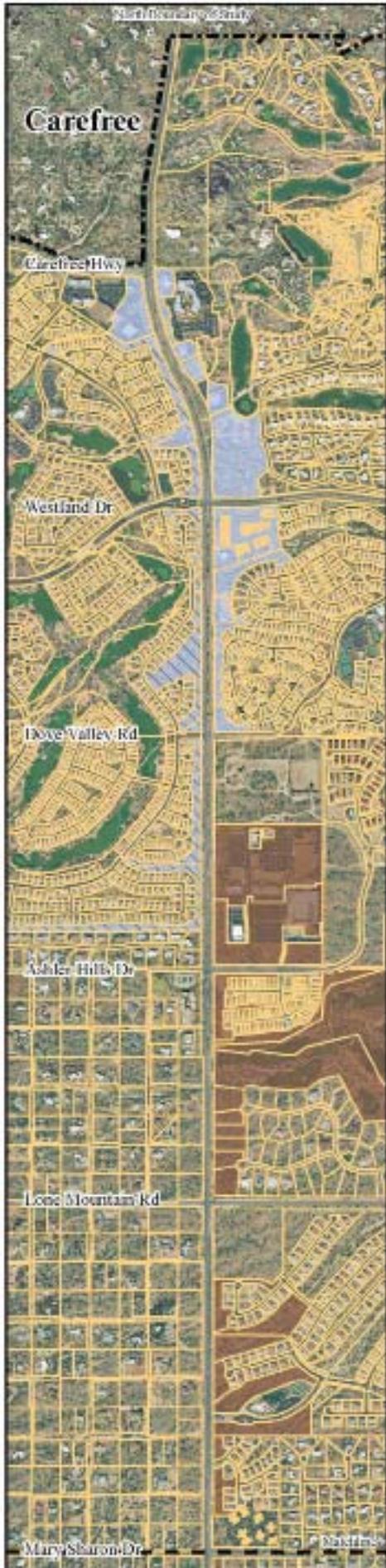
-  Unpaved Trail
-  Multi-Use Path

Unpaved

- 34 parcels/2.2 linear miles
- 20% of corridor frontage

Multi-Use Path/Sidewalk

- 27 parcels/2.55 linear miles
- 23% of corridor frontage





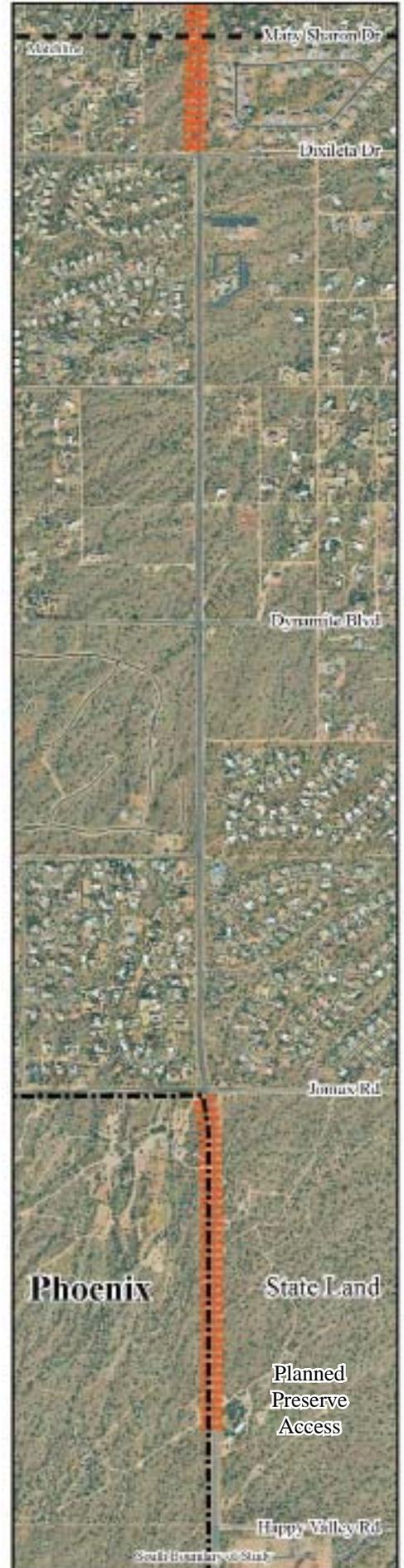
Above Ground Power Lines

Existing 12kV Power Lines

Existing Overhead 12kV Power Lines

- Happy Valley Rd. to Jomax = .75 miles
- Dixileta to Ashler Hills = 1.5 miles

Total = 2.25 miles



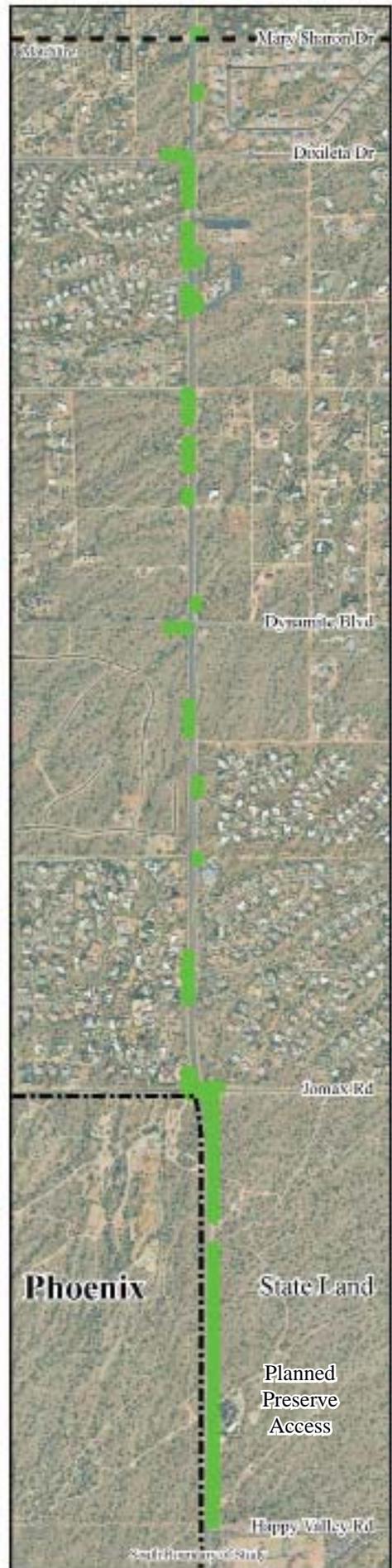


Disturbed Vegetation

Landscape Improvement Areas

Disturbed Vegetation

- Approximately 144,295 sf of City owned landscaped edge is in need of revegetation.



Urban Design Analysis



**Photo simulation of
enhanced intersection**

Urban Design Analysis



Photo simulation of landscape enhancement



Urban Design Analysis



Photo simulation of above and below ground utility lines