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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pinal County Developing Sustainable Smart Growth Strategy

The first of four provocative sessions focused on Multimodal Transportation related to the new Pinal County Comprehensive Plan was held last evening at Central Arizona College. According to John McNamara, Vice President of DMJM Harris, a leading international full-service engineering firm assisting in developing the Comprehensive Plan, explained “When you begin to analyze travel demand in 2005 and then at 2050, the capacity of the transportation network reaches capacity. This is why in a growing state like Arizona we need to be looking at new roadway investments as well as truly multimodal solutions.” Pinal County is the center of the Sun Corridor, one of 10 megapolitan areas in the U.S. where demographers project the largest population growth to occur in the next decades. Jerry Stabley, Pinal County Comprehensive Plan Manager, said “Ensuring that Pinal County remains sustainable and the region’s quality of life is enhanced is a key objective of the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan effort.”

Dr. Pete Lima, President of Lima & Associates, a Phoenix-based multi-disciplinary transportation firm who is responsible for developing the Pinal County Circulation Element outlined the various roadways and public transportation options. Dr. Lima stressed the importance of the Circulation Element to sustain quality of life by improving mobility and safety. “To address the long-term circulation needs within this fast-growing region, a variety of transportation investments must be made that link land use and economic development.” The Comprehensive Plan includes new freeways (e.g. North/South Freeway, Williams Gateway extension), new high capacity roadways (e.g. Val Vista Boulevard, Montgomery Road), enhanced parkways (e.g. State Route 79, Park Link Drive), parkways (e.g., Selma Highway, State Route 347), and a regional principal arterial network.” Additionally, Dr. Lima presented a comprehensive transit and rail network that includes a commuter rail, high capacity regional transit, and medium capacity regional transit similar to the bus system just starting in the City of Maricopa. Implementation of these facilities is critical to improve mobility as the county grows.

The discussion series with leading experts on topics related to growth and development in Arizona and Pinal County continues. Each Thursday evening, an important topic related to the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan will be discussed:

May 22: Economic Development

Ensuring quality employment opportunities so residents can live, work and play close to home is an important Pinal vision component. Join the discussion about the importance of creating appropriate mixed-use activity centers and employment areas that can position the region to attract future economic opportunities.

May 29: Water

How will the relationship between water and growth be addressed in Pinal County? This has been one of the most commonly asked questions during the year-long comprehensive planning effort. The expert panel will explore this relationship and offer opportunities to ensure Pinal’s future can be achieved.

June 5: Sustainability

Sustainability is simply defined as ensuring that the needs of existing residents are met while not compromising future generations’ ability to meet their needs: a simple concept with complex implications. A panel of experts will explore sustainability and its relationship to Pinal County planning.

All forums from 6-8 pm at:
Central Arizona College
Signal Peak Campus
Gloria R Sheldon University Center, Room T116

In order to expedite registration at the event, and to receive a confirmation packet including event information and a map, visit: www.PinalCountyPlan.com/WorkshopReg.html. These workshops are the sixth round of public involvement events for the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan. For more information visit the project website or contact Peggy Fiandaca (PSA) Consulting

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