

Apache Junction/Gold Canyon Road Show Summary Report

Date: July 9, 2007
Time: 7 pm – 8:30 pm
Location: Gold Canyon Elementary School Cafeteria
5810 S Alameda; Apache Junction, Arizona

Handouts

The Future at Pinal Executive Summary
Comprehensive Plan Fact Sheet
Road Show Questionnaire

Attendees: (41)

John Bozek, Mike Cooney, Larry England, John Enright, Maryann Erickson, Kathleen Esposito, Dixon Faucette, Richard Gammage, Sharron & Larry Gill, Dan Hjartarson, Mary Holland, Doug Holmes, Todd House, Sharon Keiser, Melissa Komen, David Kuhl, Maxine Leather, Wayne Leipold, Jeffrey Loehr, Maryanne Lucas, Hunter and Mattocks, Kent Renneke, Marina Renneke, Terri Rozzini, Charles Russell, Ed Sexton, Janine Solley, Brad Stewice, Tami Tack, Kim Van Nimweger, Willa Van Nimweger, Susan and Mike Van Trojen, Richard Wilson, Louis and Dolly Winkelmann

MEETING SUMMARY

The purpose of the Road Show event was threefold: introduce the public to the Comprehensive Plan process, discuss the results of the Morrison Institute *The Future at Pinal* report, and to begin a dialogue on the vision for Pinal

After a brief exercise which identified how long attendees had been residents of Pinal County, the year-long Comprehensive Plan process and current status were presented to the group. Additionally, results from the Morrison Institute were shared, including growth figures, land ownership percentages, and employment data.

Attendees were then asked to share how they answered Section 1 of the questionnaire. The following items were shared:

What ONE thing do you value most about Pinal County?

- Open space (overwhelmingly) (3)
- Superstition mountain views
- Night skies
- Not part of Phoenix mess
- Government officials are listening to public
- Rural flavor
 - Equestrian
 - Farms/agriculture
 - Outdoor activities
- Growing for families

What ONE thing do you not want to lose in Pinal County?

- Open space

- Dark skies
- Scenic vistas
- State Trust lands near Superstition Mountains
- Animals/wildlife
- Small town feel
 - Know people
 - Safe
 - Take animals with you
 - Kids play together
- Families
- Positive real estate values
- Diversity of people

What ONE major change have you seen in Pinal County?

- Rooftops, rooftops
- Traffic
- Roads are set up to get from one place to another
- Constant catering to developers at detriment to the County (e.g., writing PM10 zoning)
- Dirt, dust
- Overcrowding of schools
- Increase in poverty and social service needs
- Tax increases
- Property values have decreased in last 60 days
- Development community working together

Participants were then shown results of a peer county analysis. Polk County, Florida, Cobb County, Georgia and Arapahoe County, Colorado were chosen as “peer” counties for their rapid growth over the past 20 years, that they were impacted by rapid growth in neighboring metro areas, contained an urban/agricultural/open space interface, had preservation issues and served in some capacity as a “bedroom community.” After lessons learned were shared from these three counties, participants were asked what Pinal County should take away from the counties experiences:

- Listen to all of the lessons
- Roads planning, need infrastructure to serve jobs
- Long-range planning

Finally, a presentation of the Morrison Institute’s six “placemaking goals” was given to participants, after which attendees were asked what each placemaking goal meant to them:

#1: Distinguishing Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County

- Pinal is a destination; it paints a picture.
- A green county—skies, wildlife, conservation

#2: Protect miles of desert land and open space

- Avoid heat islands.
- Preserve for the future.
- Pinal takes over some State land—maintain them open.
- Preserve land around borders of landmarks, wilderness areas.
- Views, parks (empty)

#3: Provide choices for transportation and mobility

- Get to Phoenix—there are needs—not just around the county
- Can't walk anywhere—have to drive—autos not going to be viable
- Like Verrado
- 202 connection
- Need to plan now!
- Developers need to mast plan for major roads and transportation corridors.
- Can't build in transportation corridors

#4: Support unique, “fair share” communities

- Don't know what they are
- Services are so spread out now, you have to travel.

#5: Create and attract “career pay—career path” jobs

- Yes!
- Drives everything
- Industry, not all service jobs
- No property for industry
- Productivity creates industrial centers
- Need to keep dollars here
- Need higher education
- Need higher wages

#6: Develop Pinal's talent pool

- Needs to be a balance of retirees, young people, workers, etc

Participants were then asked, if we do everything right, how would they describe a successful Pinal County in the future:

- Scottsdale—everything is there
- Irvine—make it Pinal—we could create several
- Industrial center, jobs
- Code enforcement, clean neighborhoods
- Work, live, play, stay
- Different areas will have different types of success

Other issues identified:

- How do you stop the hodgepodge development?
- Moratorium to catch our breath

- Building fees to slow growth

Participants were encouraged to participate in future Comprehensive Plan events

QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

Section 1

Responses to the following questions:

What ONE thing do you value most about Pinal County?

- Beauty (2)
- Diversity in land, people, wildlife
- Family
- Great people
- Location away from Maricopa County
- Need to preserve the foothills—the land
- No lights in the area
- Not a metropolitan area
- Not part of Phoenix metro area
- Open space (9)
- Open space planning
- Open space, yet growing for families
- Proximity to unique natural resources
- Scenery (2)
- Semi-rural setting
- Small-town feel
- Superstition Mountain views
- The feel of the desert and mountains
- The mountains
- The Superstition Mountain wilderness
- Uncrowded—rural

What ONE thing do you **not** want to lose in Pinal County?

- Dark skies (3)
- Diversity in land, people, wildlife
- Los Hermance (?)
- Mountain views
- Natural beauty
- Open land—quiet life
- Open space (5)
- Planned and controlled growth
- Property value
- Residents (lots of homes for sale and lots of vacant homes)
- Rural atmosphere (2)
- Scenic vistas with open space

- Sense of natural desert environment Blend WAL (?) development
- Small-town feel
- State Trust land around Superstition Mountains
- Strategic open space
- Superstition Mountain wilderness
- The open foothills
- Views and rural flavor
- Views of mountains and wildlife areas

What ONE major change have you seen in Pinal County?

- Growth (11)
- Growth and negative impact it creates
- Growth in families
- Image of the county portrayed negatively by media: property values down, traffic up, development up, no services (library, commercial centers, parks)
- Increase in population
- Lack of planning
- More active communities
- More houses
- More single-family homes
- Old culture is changing
- Population
- Population without industry
- Rampant growth – last 10 years
- Rooftops, rooftops, rooftops
- State Trust land around Superstition Mountains
- Too much growth—residence, commercial
- Traffic (6)
- Traffic congestion—disproportionate number of residential units to commercial/industrial/job centers
- Transition from rural to suburban

If we do everything right, how would you describe a successful Pinal County in the future?

- A place where all the developers want to live and raise their families
- Well-planned communities with business close to where people live
- Planned growth, prepared, and friendly
- Scottsdale=job centers, housing (variety), urban (downtown), open spaces (Indian Bend Wash/McDowell Mountains), services (libraries, commercial centers, parks)
- Properly zoned with few future changes
- Adequate roads
- Building codes enforced, no overcrowding, good place to live, reasonable tax structure, sufficient water for population, clean air, medical facilities, university
- Blend with natural environment
- Jobs and housing—tie them together to create a sense of community

- Planned roads before development will bring industry.
- Looking to the Irvine model but making it Pinal. Keep some agriculture belts, 4-year college/university.
- Distinct communities with continued diversity of land, people, and wildlife
- Low taxes
- Planned growth, so we do not end up with all strip malls, etc.
- Appropriate balance of housing, jobs, recreation, institutional, and cultural activities, while protecting our unique heritage and natural resources
- Balanced community—density to allow for open space, connectivity, sustainability via economic development.
- Get property taxes in check!
- Great roads, balance between commercial and residential
- Adequate roads, schools, police, fire department, shopping, bring in businesses, airports
- Controlled growth and maximum preservation of preserved open space (natural desert)
- State-of-the-art and innovative public transportation system, lots of natural beauty, and a place people can work and live in
- Business growth, schools, family communities—having areas specific to each
- Roads and infrastructure before homes
- Good roads, public services, parks, open spaces
- “Balance” between residential, commercial, retail, and open spaces
- A blend of employment, recreation, and homes with adequate infrastructure to accommodate managed growth

Section 2

The average level of agreement for each of the six placemaking goals (1 strongly disagree, 5 strongly agree)

Distinguish Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County	3.82
Protect miles of desert land and open space	4.57
Provide choices for transportation and mobility	4.18
Support unique, “fair share” communities	3.88
Create and attract “career pay—career path” jobs	4.22
Develop Pinal’s talent pool	3.69

Responses to “what does each statement mean to you?”

Distinguishing Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County

- Keep our differences—our rural flavor.
- Pinal is the center.
- Retain large blocks of undeveloped land.
- New exciting destination
- Unique identity
- Should blend in with both transitions at borders, not like now where civilization stops
- Keep non-metropolitan flavor.

- More open space, integrate with the desert
- Not a priority
- Environmental _____
- Not just a rubber stamp of Maricopa—Independent
- Keep the wide open spaces, dark skies.
- We must be different in order to be anything but a bedroom community.
- Create a unique brand and quality of life that is distinctive to Pinal County.
- Good, but will be market driven. Need to be competitive to draw more than just residential.
- Need a major city in Pinal with a downtown.
- Night skies, desert animals
- More open space—contiguous through county
- Maybe distinguish us as a “green city”
- When people hear Pinal County, they say, “Oh, you have _____ or you do _____”
“ (Respondent intended blanks)
- I would advocate less high-density than Maricopa.
- Keep Pinal more open/leader in solar use.
- “Open space” – Be unique and a “destination” place to be
- What uniqueness exists

Protect miles of desert land and open space

- Keep open spaces and trails a priority.
- Protect the wildlife with special corridors.
- Trails linked with parks
- State Trust land preserved
- Get State to pass a land reserve law to protect Superstition vistas.
- Preserve for the future.
- Preserve adequate (not excessive) amount.
- Yes, indeed preserve the desert.
- Don't _ave (?) over the desert and build on mountains - buffered areas.
- Wildlife corridors, parks, preserves, especially adjacent to major landmarks, i.e., Superstitions
- Will have to do it with zoning and charter (?) homes
- Equestrian trails, wildlife, tourist areas, bike & hiking trails
- Ownership (?) in key areas of county
- Stop selling State land.
- This is the one thing we have that can keep us vital.
- Preserve strategic vistas and open space corridors that reflect our desert history and sustain our environment.
- Have but one chance at this—invest in ourselves
- Only against mountains
- This is the most important—preserve desert space, desert animals, and mountain vistas
- Top priority!

- Especially the Superstition Mountain area
- Provide open spaces for people to enjoy and to sustain wildlife.
- We haven't destroyed it yet, but we're thinking about it.
- Avoid heat islands
- Quantity of open space around and in developments
- What expense and to what extent?

Provide choices for transportation and mobility

- Make sure Pinal County has light rail, bike paths, good/safe roads and highways, regional airports, buses, walking paths.
- Rail, surface street improvements, bike
- Roadway corridors
- Buses, light rail commuters
- Be successful at moving residents in and out of county.
- Provide alternate routes.
- Set aside land now.
- Force developers to build.
- Roads and mass transit don't work in the US, except major metropolitan areas.
- Need rapid transit for commuters, but also need facility planning so can easily access services without having to drive 50 miles
- The Superstition Freeways and light rail, commuter trains
- See little need for rail—not enough space to elaborate, but why finance something for 1—2% of population?
- Bike paths, connect communities
- Pathways, light rail, train, mass transit
- Rail, light rail within Pinal
- We must do this now; we cannot depend on the automobile.
- Provide alternative options to the car.
- Connectivity—transportation corridors critical at development time—not after—to costly to retrofit
- Rail transportation to shopping, airport, some major businesses
- The Hedgeways (?) need to be built NOW for growth
- No—too much money—taxes too high now, and it's too late
- We must be leaders here.
- Provide a way for people to get around in Pinal and into other counties.
- Definitely, we need good roads and will need some form of mass transit.
- 60 Bypass—need it now!
- More than autos—light rail and buses
- Necessary for any reasonable growth s_____

Support unique, “fair share” communities

- Different lifestyles provided—diversity in building
- Job centers
- Builders to pay for all infrastructure

- Everyone on level playing field
- We need libraries, community centers, parks, hospitals (trauma centers).
- Could work, but a big area to do that
- Need to have integrated community—all services available
- Developers should pay for growth.
- Higher education
- Undecided as to where I stand on this issue
- This is the only reasonable way to grow.
- Equalize the taxing and public service playing field.
- Non-resident versus resident fees—incentive to live in community
- We need libraries—more public services, activity centers.
- One plus-acre minimum lot size
- Not sure I understand what this is
- Communities that have needed resources for their residents
- Pad (?) with local retail within
- TANSTAAFL (?)

Create and attract “career pay—career path” jobs

- Good paying jobs with benefits
- Small employers growing into large employers
- Tax incentives
- Software giants
- Bioscience
- Create urban centers with jobs
- Zone properly and don’t change it.
- Need manufacturing, as well as service sector jobs
- Industrial technology parks, business parks
- Number one priority—create jobs to keep people working and buying in Pinal County
- Higher education
- Not just jobs—respectable, professional jobs
- We cannot live on retirees; we need the complete spectrum.
- Better jobs, higher disposable income, higher quality of life
- We need to have industry to attract higher incomes. We need areas set aside for industry—then court them.
- Yes.
- Yes, the sooner the better.
- Jobs for everyone leave less poverty
- What businesses thrive in dry climates?
- Woo companies to Pinal County.
- You can live, work, and play in Pinal County.
- Put in the infrastructure and commerce, and industry will come.

Develop Pinal’s talent pool

- Keep good jobs in Pinal County so talent does not have to commute outside of county.
- It needs it!
- Better education
- University—one that promotes the type of industry that is in the county, so graduates stay and work in the county
- Yes, through emphasizing science, math, reading, and civics—NOT the arts crafts stuff. Hold students accountable for their part of their education
- Education, training
- Higher education standards
- Need incentive to overcome apathy
- High number of retirees with significant life experience are available for input.
- Higher education facilities, keep talent here—invest in ourselves
- Work—live—play—stay.
- OK.
- This begins with schools that are supported and not crowded. We need a university.
- Attract educated people
- Need to provide higher education facilities
- Higher education—masters degrees
- Put in the infrastructure, and commerce and industry will come.

Responses to “what five key words do you think should be part of the Pinal County Vision Statement?”

- “Circle” communities
- “The West”
- An example of excellent stewardship of the land
- Beautiful (2)
- Beautiful vistas
- Building fees to slow growth
- Careers
- Clean air
- Comfortable
- Count the stars
- Conservation (2)
- Creative
- Dark skies (2)
- Desert vistas
- Desirable
- Destination (2)
- Distinct
- Diverse
- Down home
- Economy
- Education
- Employment Centers
- Energy

- Enjoyable
- Family
- Green
- Industry
- Infrastructure
- Innovative
- Jobs
- Life
- Like Scottsdale
- Live
- Liveability
- Liveable
- Nature
- Open space (3)
- Opportunity
- Plan early and maintain plan discipline.
- Planned communities with schools, libraries
- Planned industry and education
- Planned parks, open areas
- Planning
- Play (2)
- Proportion
- Quality (2)
- Quality jobs
- Recreation
- Resources
- Roads
- Rural Honesty
- Rustic
- Scenery
- See the stars at night.
- Southwestern
- Stay
- Superstition Mountains
- Trails
- Transportation
- Unique scenery
- Universities
- Vegetation
- Views (4)
- Wildlife (2)
- Work

Other Comments:

- As one progresses toward the Superstition Mountains, State lands to be sold should be designated “less dense” the closer you get to the national lands. 1/4 ac 1/3 lots, to 1/2 ac to 1 ac lots to 2 1/2 ac to 5 ac lots to 10 ac and larger lots.

Demographic Information

Attendees from:

- Apache Junction 2
- Gold Canyon 17
- Queen Valley 1
- Pinal County 1
- Scottsdale 1

I've lived in Pinal County for:

< 2 years:	5
2-5 years:	5
5-10 years:	9
10-20 years:	5
> 20 years:	2

I am:

18 or under:	0
19-29:	0
30-39:	2
40-49:	3
50-64:	15
Over 65:	5