

Gold Canyon Alternatives Workshop Summary Report

Date: February 20, 2008
Time: 6 – 8 pm
Location: Best Western Gold Canyon Inn
8333 E Sunrise Sky Drive



Handouts

Vision Alternative Handout
Alternative Maps

Attendees (35):

Suraj Bhakta; Ralph Cavan; Anne Coe; Joe Downey; Jeff Downing; John Enright; Richard Finch; Jerry Hill; Kay Karver; Wayne Karver; Jackie Kelly; Ron Kelly; Bonny Knowlton; Melissa Komen, Kiddy Korner; John Kraft; Connie Lane; Bryan Martyn; Sharon Merrill; Jeremiah Miller; James Mosier; Susan Prichard; Don Reish; John Rickus; Warren Safforath; Don Schaefer; Edwin Sexton; Rosemary Shearer; Tami Tack; Matt Truitt; Don Van Driel; Dolly Winkelmann; Louis Winkelmann; Mary Ellen Zettlemoyer and Rich Zettlemoyer

MEETING SUMMARY

The purpose of the Alternatives Workshop was to bring together residents and stakeholders from around Pinal County to receive input on three land use and transportation alternatives built through the input of previous public involvement activities, work group input, and Comprehensive Plan Team effort. Prior to the start of the event, participants browsed exhibits which depicted the land use and transportation alternatives: trends, dispersed growth, and corridor focused.

The event was guided by a detailed PowerPoint presentation that described the Comprehensive Plan process and project status, addressed some of the planning realities facing Pinal County, reviewed the Pinal County Vision, and described the land use and transportation alternatives in detail. The presentation guided participants through a dynamic feedback instrument that solicited input on several alternative aspects: land use pattern, open space, transit opportunities, and potential land use and transportation features. The Alternatives Workshop PowerPoint is available in the project website Library at: www.PinalCountyPlan.com.

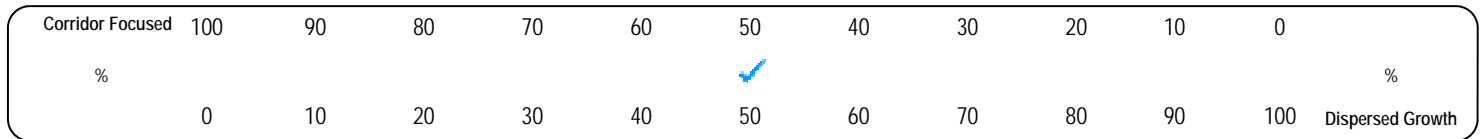
FEEDBACK FORM SUMMARY

Forms received: 26

Note: Feedback as found in this report is recorded as it was received and is not edited for content or grammar.

The average response of event participants to the philosophy questions, the approval totals for the land use and transportation features, and participant comments are provided below:

Land Use:



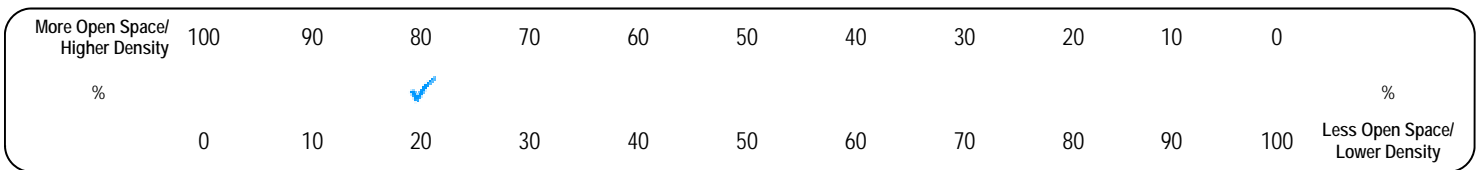
Comments on Land Use:

- Open spaces are important enough to concentrate and exchange densities to accomplish them by developing the focused corridor. Perhaps some attention should be paid to a selected eastern county region but NOT in a fully dispersed manner.
- Dispersed growth is better to prevent continued urban sprawl. This focuses on the development of vibrant regional centers.
- Utilize existing highways to the maximum with "feeder" surface roads to x-ways. Hold buildout until ingress/egress roads are in place.
- The cost of transportation. 2. Gives us more open space away from the corridor.
- Spread the traffic out and away from homes (expressways).
- Like development tourism opportunities throughout county. Better support service for outlying areas and will aide outlying areas with infusion of money into economics.
- I think dispersed growth plan is more realistic, easier to stick to. Economic forces (mining, land values) may make corridor focus harder to maintain. 2. Less congestion. 3. Fits buttermilk American culture. One disadvantage of corridor focus - major transit is more viable. Mass transit ONLY works when connecting high-population densities and high-intensity economic zones.
- I don't want all the economic centers to be clumped in one corridor.
- I believe a strong corridor focus will create transportation congestion and force more travel to employment. However, open space needs protection in East County. I think "corridor" focus will be less expensive and thus dollars and politics will drive in that direction, but I disagree with this approach.
- I'm not sure either really works. Your assumption assumes something is wrong and we need to fix it. We need to go with the understanding that things have been good until now. How can we make it better - not that planning has been poor until now?
- Pitfall of corridor is develop it first, then developers look to the east for more, then money changes "The Plan".
- Corridor focused growth is more economically viable and would be less infrastructure capital intensive while retaining attractive agglomerated economics for business. In other words, more bang for the buck!
- Corridor - Natural inclinations already exist. Need a limited number of distressed areas with eastern part of county. Desire eastern part of county to be open space destinations.
- Dispersed growth would eliminate traffic congestion. The existing towns could grow and new towns could develop.
- East to west is too limited.
- It seems more logical than spreading activity centers all over.
- I feel that the dispersed growth is a better way to proceed given your philosophy of buildout planning. Corridor focused creates excessive congestion.
- Transportation plan for NE Pinal County is very poor. Need bypass to extend to Florence Junction. Freeway tie-in to 202 needs to go to Florence Junction. You need to be able to disperse traffic from Superior and Globe. I believe the corridor idea will be cheaper and

more value for the dollar. Corridor approach will allow for more open space in NE Pinal County.

- The tourist development of dispersed is attractive. Ideal for dispersed retired communities with self-sustaining low key business areas. Corridor would provide best transportation opportunities.
- More people are moving out to the eastern communities. Families need economic centers near to their homes. Transportation would then be minimized.
- Pinal County needs to take leadership in Arizona by forming a regional (in this case Pinal County) planning with some power to plan in comprising incorporated and unincorporated development. Planning for unincorporated and implementing the plan separately from implementation of cities will create a nightmare of infrastructure.
- Wish we didn't have the problem. And if we go like Europe, our population may decrease.

Open Space:



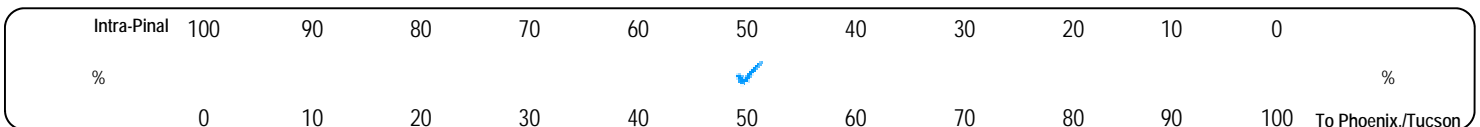
Comments on Open Space:

- See above. (Open spaces are important enough to concentrate and exchange densities to accomplish them by developing the focused corridor. Perhaps some attention should be paid to a selected eastern county region but NOT in a fully dispersed manner.) 1. Change state constitution to allow for set-asides of sensitive lands at no cost. 2. Allow land to be purchased for open space by reducing value through conservation easements.
- As "x" develops vibrant regional centers, need density to avoid car-dependent culture. Introduce townhouse/condo? Local shops, not major shopping malls. Need to keep too much residential or infrastructural development away from San Pedro.
- I am a "snow bird" homeowner. Lots of time on my hands. No tax dollars for open space without the assurance that the open space will not be violated in the future, i.e., the way the state trust lands are now violated.
- Heavy employment could be concentrated along this corridor. 2. We know that state trust land was given to the state to support education and mental health. The people would have to approve higher funding from the general fund to pay for these things.
- Stop building up mountains, small or large. Houses should be stopped at a certain height up the mountains. Yes, use tax money to do this. Keep high-density areas close to highways, not near mountains.
- Let's save some of our environment for future generations. Sci-Fi movies show barren, vast wastelands - we don't want to be that. Tax dollars to purchase - if this was spread across the state equally, that would be acceptable. Since the preserved space would be public for all to use, cost should not only be to Pinal residents. State legislation could set aside a portion of State Trust Land for open space without purchase requirements for the good of the public.
- I am in favor of using tax dollars to preserve open space. Ecotourism could be another way to save open space. Washes should be considered SACRED GROUND. Nothing

should be built within 100 ft. of them, because they are essential to wildlife and act as natural heat sinks, thereby keeping the area cooler. I have seen homes built into washes, and now they are having erosion problems.

- This allows us to have less travel time to needed businesses and more open space to enjoy for our families. We should use some tax money to buy space so that natural areas are preserved.
- Arizona needs to preserve some of its original identity; Pinal can set aside that space. Tax dollars will have to be used to accomplish land preservation.
- Cities and counties already are on top of this. The County may actually have more open space requirements. Let it be built in with development with exception of large parks and MOUNTAINS!
- Keep the "good" land for open spaces, as opposed to leaving the wastelands that have no views, vegetation, etc.
- Preserve habitat areas for higher density building. Would be willing to use my tax dollars toward preservation.
- People need the ability to retreat and recover from urban centers and influences. Open space provides this option.
- Have strong feelings on this issue - IT CAN BE DONE! Yes, tax dollars may/should be used. Continue to empower SALT and other organizations the ability to meet these needs and spearhead community involvement.
- Higher density growth areas will keep some of Arizona - THE REAL ARIZONA. Tax dollars should be used in certain areas to preserve the most sacred, beautiful desert and mountains.
- Ultra density produces and influences crime.
- All cities love open spaces. People need parks.
- More open space in the north western Pinal area is essential. Higher density trade off can be an effective and desirable trade off. Lower income housing needs this higher density. Arizona is not known as a high wage base area, which is restricting younger people from relocating here.
- Want more open space. Do not need one house on every acre of land. We need State Land Trust reform.
- Higher concentrated density makes sense for working people. Commute time has always appeared to be a waste of time that interferes with family and personal relationships. Viewscapes are as important as low density.
- I want more open spaces, and if that means denser areas, then it's a great payoff. I am willing to pay higher taxes if it helps to preserve those open spaces. I feel we need to think out the plan for future generations, and space is a breath of fresh air - a necessity.
- We can purchase open space by selling density rights for higher density. "Transfer of development rights."
- Prices will force people to apartments, condos from single-family homes. Keep motorized vehicles from most open space to control dust.

Transit (public transportation) Opportunities:



Transit Opportunities Comments:

- Except for east/west on 60, most high transit should go through 60 corridor bypass to Florence Junction.
- Note: The Magma Railroad will be an active rail line for the next 70 -80 years from the up-rail to Superior. Can parallel this with a commuter rail route.
- Pinal County needs new accountable flood (supervisors) in Florence.
- We definitely think the re-route on 60 should go all the way to Florence Junction. The present 60 corridor will do nothing but grow.
- Mixed transit.
- We definitely need planned roadway for current and future growth. Reasons - overcrowded roads - safety. I would like to use public transportation if it was broad enough to cover my needs.
- 60 bypass should go to Florence Junction. I would not use public transit. It's too hot in Arizona to stand at bus stops and train stations (I live here year round). Transit plan must be realistic - the automobile will always be the primary means of transportation in Arizona, and plans should be made accordingly.
- We need to have better ways and more options to get to Phoenix and the airport as well as Tucson. I would use public transportation to get to other meccas. The 60 bypass needs to be closer to Florence Junction. The proposal is too close to a highly populated area and will create a bottleneck.
- Pinal needs to develop transit systems throughout the county to prevent disasters such as the Hunt Highway area - Anthem, Johnson Ranch, Queen Creek, etc. Route 60 reroute must be done NOW and extend to Florence Junction. Next should be 202 connection to reroute.
- Need a little bit of both.
- Both are needed to: 1. get across a "state" size area, and 2. to get around WITHIN the area, i.e., 1. I-10/117, 2. 101, 202, 303 in Maricopa County. Bypass needs to go to Florence Junction or further south as originally proposed by ADOT 7 years ago. Makes NO sense to tie it back into US60 as now conceived. And ADOT was told this repeatedly in this very room about a year ago.
- Important to be able to travel within the county easily to the proposed city centers.
- This is a difficult subject - perhaps a mix of both options that economically and efficiently serve Pinal's citizens and visitors.
- US60 must connect to Williams Gateway. 60 bypass should reconnect at Florence Junction to accommodate Superior, Globe, and Gila County. Would focus/use transportation primarily to Phoenix.
- Transit should be mixed - inter-city and transit to the other major cities. US60 relocation does not make sense!
- Roads cannot continue to satisfy trans for daily communication (commuting?)!
- We need our bypass through Gold Canyon to Florence Junction.
- Both need consideration, but inter-Pinal is a must. The 60 bypass needs to go to Florence Junction and Route 79 area. The Renaissance Fair is temporary. We need east/west and north/south routes.
- You need high-speed transportation between Phoenix and Tucson. BUT you also need local transportation to move people out of the corridor to jobs, i.e., move people by rail to Red Rock for job center there. Have a bus to take people to jobs at Red Rock or Coolidge, etc. Have to get people from home to job, then have transportation there to

eliminate the need for auto. Intra-Pinal transportation will not work if you have to drive to railhead or cannot get to job after you get off train.

- Need intra for daily living. Need connection to metro areas for arts and social life.
- Transportation is essential for a well developed plan. Pinal County needs to put its first priority in making this happen to before development occurs. Build highways first. Buckeye has made the I-10 West an atrocity. The developers certainly don't care that people have to use I-10 to get anywhere and they continue to build in the west. It's a traffic nightmare and no plans to do anything for about 10 years.
- We need to connect highways to existing metro highways around the southeast side of the Phoenix area.
- To let the whole county benefit from it.

Commercial Airport: 12 of 26 approved (46%)

Commercial Airport Comments:

- Good idea to disperse air transport. Will act as a huge magnet for development. Will need to keep residential development away from the area.
- By 2050, without a doubt, if the growth is factual, i.e., jobs, jobs, jobs.
- Good idea to set aside now while the space is available.
- Need to set land aside now! Just ask people around O'Hare airport in Chicago.
- Land locked Sky Harbor and Gateway now - how else can we handle growth - let west side of Phoenix get it - maybe Glendale.
- A regional airport modeled after Dallas/Ft. Worth could be located about 20 miles north of the major rail hub that is planned. This could attract cargo operators. If you do this, corridor should be focused along Interstate 10. Airlines might also be interested, no matter what Phoenix thinks.
- Will definitely be needed as population grows.
- Should be centrally located between Phoenix/Tucson to attract more dollars from those areas.
- Been talking about this for 10 years and 1st year (the County) puts the land aside - otherwise just more talk.
- Pursue. Good idea. Hard to sell now with Gateway not yet utilized at all.
- I agree that a new airport would be needed.
- Good idea to start planning for this A.S.A.P.
- Yes, need exists - if Pinal doesn't do it, Pima County will.
- The airport future development is a must.
- Phoenix must begin to see the overall need for better overall Regional Field.
- Yes, we're 40 miles from Sky Harbor.
- A must for buildout and future transportation uses. Use State Trust Land. State to donate. We won't always be in 2008 cars and planes - this will change.
- Yes, Coolidge.
- Yes, brings in jobs and will be necessary due to growth. Start planning now!
- Make a decision where now so housing development is aware of potential flight corridor. Legislation to purchase over time to own when it is needed.
- Only regional, not commercial.

Commuter Rail: 10 of 26 (approved 38%)

Commuter Rail Comments:

- Yes.

- Needs to focus on getting people away from autos. Needs to service high-economic activity centers. Current focus is to Phoenix to Tucson. Be more aggressive with public transport.
- Forget Tucson!
- Great idea.
- Good for environment and safety. Would relieve some congestion.
- I like the idea to use existing rail to connect with Phoenix. If it stopped at Sky Harbor, I might use it.
- I came from a NW suburb of Chicago, and we have a rail system that has 5 lines that run out to the suburbs. It was wonderful to get downtown!
- Not sure there is a need for "commuter" train until there are reasons to commute. Maybe more viable 10-15 years out.
- Down I-10
- Pursue. Already partially proposed Phoenix to Tucson by government.
- Would be needed and eliminate some of the traffic congestion.
- If can be done economically feasible, this would be a terrific idea. I believe people would use it if it is planned well.
- Not impressed with most light rail systems. The only one which really works is in Arapahoe County, CO.
- The growth of Arizona would welcome a commuter rail.
- This can only be done with multiple county interest and planning!
- No, we need better roadways.
- Connect to Williams Gateway Airport and new regional airport, then to Maricopa County line.
- Yes, opens both areas up for tourism. Must have structure in place to move people from rail head to final destination.
- Why? Seems to be self-depleting for the goal of creating jobs by making commute easier to metro area.
- Yes, a rail system is the transportation of the future. People need to get to other major cities for business and pleasure. Also enhances tourism. Need more rail systems.
- Good idea as alternative to the auto.
- Will need it.

Tourist Train: 7 of 26 approved (27%)

Tourist Train Comments:

- Has been discussed - could be developed.
- Magma railroad will be active. Rail good idea, although some other railroads still active and will be for some time.
- Even better idea. Just need to convince railroad owners that this would pay - it's being done in Verde Valley. 2. Could be used for general transportation as well.
- This is good in the east side to tour old western still of life. We need to promote tourism of the Old West.
- Would make more sense with dispersed growth - can double-dip with tourism and transportation.
- Good idea, and would work well with proposed growth plan. Tourist train could also connect areas of economic activity to make it more viable.
- It will bring money to county and future towns and existing cities.

- Good idea, but tourist attractions need to be developed to assure ridership - park in Eloy, etc.
- Globe has been doing this!! Could Pinal connect and support? The train could run both ways.
- "Copper Corridor" tourist train through Eastern County.
- No tourist trains. It would/might develop into the same clutter between Rapid City and Mt. Rushmore, SD.
- Great idea! Could tie in the activities centers.
- Another good idea - potential money with low infrastructure requirements.
- Ok idea, has been talked about for years with no money to get it going.
- Yes - lets promote the history of the County. Indians and mining!
- No interest.
- Yes, super. Look at Cottonwood, Williams, Benson.
- Doesn't turn me on.
- Very attractive for the tourist market - as long as environmental impact is closely studied and kept to a minimum.
- Great idea.
- No.

Ecotourism: 10 of 26 approved (38%)

Ecotourism Comments:

- Would be one way to ensure open spaces.
- Keep too much development away from San Pedro (last undammed river). Need sufficient population that they have a vested interest in conservation in San Pedro. Comment: rental of ATVs.
- Need to control this so environment is not degraded.
- Could work, but hotels must comply with lighting codes - no lighting up the outside of the building.
- Definitely an economic plus. Once people come, the money will be spent in our area, and the money could pay for the open space perhaps.
- Must be tied to tourism train development. The two can't be individualized - the "Zone" should be pursued and friendly to environment.
- Grows out from the incorporated areas.
- Tourists cause pollution - NO!
- Good idea to combine tourist transit with the ecotourism in the east county. To protect sensitive areas, only allow limited stops (in non-sensitive areas). It would be important to protect these areas from overuse and environmental impact.
- Another "clean" industry that can be potentially very profitable if it is done well, good for local businesses too.
- Great idea! Need to pursue and support financially. Do not feel this would need to conflict with economic development.
- Tourism is a great tool for the economy.
- Yes, we should protect the environment.
- Low scale. No major effort. No Sedona-like development.
- Have to find way to open land without ruining it. Tourist transportation: train to top of Superstition Mountains.
- Auto tourism and recreation areas are a nice concept.

- Keep development at a level where the community is not overwhelmed, but benefits from this.
- Regional parks will be valuable. Need to identify and purchase early to develop later.
- Keep the east side open for tourism.

Gateways: 5 of 26 approved (19%)

Gateway Comments:

- Way down on my list.
- Neutral.
- No Pinal - Pinal/Maricopa should join hands. Tucson has its East and West friends (counties) to work with. Cow manure odorification, if any, might work.
- The A.J./Superstition GW local.
- The mountains and open spaces.
- Love entrances to Apache Junction on Apache Trail at Meridian and on 88 entering A.J. from the North - beats a 1'x3' road sign. I see people stopping for photo opportunities at these landmarks very often.
- Gateway to the Stars
- Not sure if it is necessary??
- Sounds good, but not sure what they would accomplish and what they might cost.
- Several!
- Bigger green sign at County Line?
- Natural, unlandscaped areas as with signage.
- No ideas on this subject at this time.
- Signage is fine. Does not need to be extravagant. Let the land and communities speak for Pinal County.
- Mountains, mining, and farming - integrated sign.
- Commercial 80%
- No.
- Like concept but don't have any ideas.
- None.
- With a significant tourism goal, why?
- The open space attracts visitors from all over the world. We need to continue this attraction. Also, balancing out places to eat, sleep and have entertainment facilities so they want to return. Right now we don't have enough places for the tourists.
- Smart Growth Communities.
- No.

Other Comments:

- Location, location, location.
- Most concerned in getting the 60 reroute in place as SOON as possible. The truck transport now is getting almost unmanageable.
- I'm not happy as to where US60 bypass ends and where the road from the west joins up to the bypass that is a big bottleneck and too close to homes.
- The US60 projected route should not reconnect with existing 60 east of Peralta Trails, because it will cause a bottleneck which is already happening now.
- ADOT needs to take US60 from the 202 to Florence Junction. Many have been asking them for this to too long.
- Thank you!

- The US60 alternative needs to be corrected - dropping back to present US60 east of Peralta Rd. does not make sense and builds another bottleneck. Be smart!!
- Thanks for including us!
- Mass transit will need to play some part in moving all the people. Incorporate enough space to put cars that get people to mass transit and provide dispersion methods for the other end. Walking in summer is not a viable option to induce people to leave the car behind.
- Keep up the great work. Wish there were more people here. Keep pushing the word, however; that needs to be done. Better advertising - shocking ads bring out the public. Mention airports and mega power centers and people will come out.