

PINAL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted by

THE PINAL COUNTY BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

December 19, 2001



Amended 09/25/02

Amended 12/03/03

Amended 12/01/04

Amended 12/30/05

Amended 11/29/06

Amended 11/28/07

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Area 4A

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Yolanda Guzman
Ignacio Godinez

Area 4B

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Dawn Doubek
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Charlie Clark
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2002 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Area 1A

Rosemary Shearer	Chuck Hartin	Jim Tucker
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Area 1B

Gordon Brown	Alden Rosbrook	Bobbie Johnson
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Area 2

Charlie Weaver	Art Carlton	David Towle
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Area 3

Katie Montano	Arlene Kile	Peter Villaverde
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Area 4A

John Ycedo	Gina Lopez	Ignacio Godinez
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Area 4B

Dave Collingwood	Charlie Clark	Jo Buttery
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2003 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Area 1A

Rosemary Shearer	Jim Tucker	
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Area 1B

Gordon Brown	Alden Rosbrook	Bobbie Johnson
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Area 2

David Towle	Charlie Weaver	Art Carlton
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Area 3

Katie Montano	Arlene Kile	Peter Villaverde
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Area 4A

John Ycedo	Gina Lopez	Ignacio Godinez
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Area 4B

Jo Buttery	Charlie Clark	Dave Collingwood
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2004 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Area 1A

Rosemary Shearer Jim Tucker

Area 1B

Gordon Brown Alden Rosbrook Bobbie Johnson

Area 2

David Towle Charlie Weaver Art Carlton
Shirley Ann Hartman

Area 3

Katie Montano Arlene Kile Peter Villaverde

Area 4A

John Ycedo Gina Lopez Ignacio Godinez

Area 4B

Jo Buttery Dennis Mann

2005 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Area 1A

Rosemary Shearer John T. Enright

Area 1B

Gordon Brown Alden Rosbrook

Area 2

David Towle Charlie Weaver Shirley Ann Hartman

Area 3

John Trainor Shelly Martinez Richard Horton

Area 4A

Gina Lopez

Area 4B

Jo Buttery Gayle Carnes Karl Foster
Ed Snyder

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Area 1A

Rosemary Shearer John T. Enright

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Gordon Brown Alden Rosbrook Kathy Esposito

Area 2

David Towle Charlie Weaver Shirley Ann Hartman

Area 3

Richard Horton

Area 4A

Area 4B

Jo Buttery Gayle Carnes Karl Foster

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Rosemary Shearer John T. Enright Ed Braunger

Area 1B

Gordon Brown Alden Rosbrook Kathy Esposito

Area 2

David Towle Charlie Weaver Shirley Ann Hartman

Area 3

Richard Horton Paul Sabel Mary Jo Rideout

Area 4A

Gayle Carnes Pamela Rabago

Area 4B

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1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Overview

Pinal County is required by state law to prepare a Comprehensive Plan "to conserve the natural resources of the county, to insure efficient expenditure of public funds, and to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public. (A.R.S. §11-806)

The planning process is structured to emphasize public involvement and incorporate comments, ideas, and direction of the public into the plan. This plan strives to create strong and vibrant communities within Pinal County by encouraging orderly development. By accommodating new growth in areas that can sustain additional development, the plan endeavors to conserve scarce resources and to build strong communities based on well-protected environmental resources and to build a strong diversified economy. The plan's elements reflect the character of the County's population, while the goals, policies and implementation tools guide future land use and transportation decisions.

To address concerns specific to certain county regions, the County is divided into six planning areas: 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4A, and 4B as shown on map entitled "Pinal County Planning Areas." The planning jurisdiction is limited to the unincorporated areas of Pinal County.

1.2 How to Use the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Supervisors concerning growth and development. It provides an understanding of existing and proposed land use for the public and land developers.

This Plan is advisory in nature. Its goals and policies aim for an "ideal" scenario, meaning that occasionally one goal may be in conflict with another goal. Circumstances may arise that are not directly addressed by the Plan. For example, the issues related to the geography of a particular site or the circumstances of a specific proposal are rarely straightforward. As such, the Plan provides guidance in the decision making process, but not the "final word".

One primary concern must be fair resolution of conflicting interests. All institutions, political, social, economic, and educational, need to work together to address their varied interests, values, desires, and the perception of what goals, objectives and policies are needed for growth and development in the County. Public involvement is essential in the development, of these broad stated goals.

These broad stated goals are the foundation on which land use policies and proposals have been constructed to help provide a means of addressing some of these specific and

widely differing individual interests and for integrating them on a countywide basis through the vehicle of the Comprehensive Plan.

1.3 Comprehensive Plan Elements

Each of the Comprehensive Plan elements contains a series of goals, objectives, and policies used to define development standards, guide investment of public resources, as well as guide public decision making.

1.4 Land Use

Land Use Areas

Given the vast area under the jurisdiction of Pinal County, the land use area designations in the plan represent generalized land use, development, or preservation concepts.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the land use element is to:

- Goal 1.** Carefully manage and guide urban growth in a manner that promotes economic development, integrates current and future transportation systems, maintains a rural southwestern lifestyle, and is sensitive to the natural environment.

Within this goal, the following objectives apply:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| <u>Objective LU1</u> | Promote diverse employment opportunities near population bases. |
| <u>Objective LU2</u> | Provide for the co-existence of urban and rural land uses. |
| <u>Objective LU3</u> | Promote Planned Area Developments and Cluster Development that provide a mix of housing types and land uses. |
| <u>Objective LU4</u> | Promote a balance between conservation of the natural environment and development. |

1.5 Natural Environment

Pinal County's natural environment ecosystems and land ownership patterns provide a complex natural setting and planning agenda. The natural environment element focuses on maintaining the physical environment, natural resource conservation, and other environmental considerations. The Natural Environment Element for the Comprehensive Plan summarizes existing conditions within the natural environment and identifies objectives that will encourage protection for the County's air, water, land, and cultural resources.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of the natural environment element are:

- Goal 1.** Protect Pinal County's natural beauty and environment quality.
- Goal 2.** Protect and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of Pinal County.

Within these goals, the following objectives apply:

- Objective NE1 Encourage development and recreation uses sensitive to the environment while minimizing negative impacts.
- Objective NE2 Maintain natural scenic qualities of the County.
- Objective NE3 Encourage preservation of significant mountainous areas.
- Objective NE4 Maintain and preserve existing drainage ways to minimize flood hazards.
- Objective NE5 Identify and protect cultural resources.
- Objective NE6 Protect wildlife habitat, natural plant communities, and riparian areas.

1.6 Transportation

The transportation system will provide an efficient and safe movement of persons and goods within and through Pinal County. This system also is to be environmentally compatible with the surrounding conditions and supportive of economic development.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the transportation element is to:

- Goal 1.** Provide an efficient, cost effective system for existing and future roadways while promoting transit and multi-use trails.

With this goal, the following objectives apply:

- Objective T1 Accommodate existing and projected transportation demand in Pinal County.
- Objective T2 Promote the use of design standards for road construction which promote vehicular safety and economy of construction.
- Objective T3 Reduce particulate emissions caused by vehicular traffic.
- Objective T4 Provide a balanced circulation system with opportunities for public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, equestrian trails and other alternatives to automobile travel.

1.7 Water

The Water Resources section of the comprehensive plan includes an inventory of water supplies in Pinal County, which includes surface water, groundwater, Central Arizona Project (CAP) water, reusable effluent and precipitation. This section will also include calculations of future demands based on historical data and projected development. Issues relevant to water use and available supplies for future growth in the county are also included as are sections describing practices for managing future water supplies and goals, objectives and policies relevant to water resources to help guide land use decisions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of the water element are:

- Goal 1.** Promote development that conserves water through type of landscaping, crop choice, provision of recharge and use of renewable water supplies including CAP, surface water and effluent wherever feasible.
- Goal 2.** Encourage development that minimizes the impacts on water quality and reduces future land subsidence and fissuring.

With these goals, the following objectives apply:

Objective W1 Promote use of renewable water supplies such as effluent, surface water and CAP water whenever feasible for all existing and future development.

Objective W2 Conserve water use of both groundwater and renewable water supplies.

Objective W3 Promote protection of water quality of groundwater and surface water supplies.

Objective W4 Encourage development of adequate water supply for all existing and future development.

Objective W5 Encourage active recharge of groundwater.

1.8 Area Plans

The following area, community, village, neighborhood and special area plans are being readopted and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by this reference:

PZ-373-73	Lago Del Oro	9/17/73
PZ-C-02-90	Sierra Tucson	1/14/91
PZ-C-07-90	Space Biospheres Ventures	8/19/91
PZ-C-71-85	Red Rock	8/26/85
	LA Osa	8/26/85
PZ-C-14-86	Los Cordones	10/27/86

PZ-C-07-87	Los Cordones	9/14/87
PZ-C-03-87	Oracle	5/16/88
PZ-C-12-87	Falcon Valley	1/11/88
PZ-C-11-88	City of Mesa Water Farm	11/16/88

The following area, community, village, neighborhood and special area plans and any others that may not be part of the above referenced, approved list are deemed inconsistent with this Comprehensive Plan; and upon adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, these plans are declared null and void:

PZ-C-06-90	Naviska	1/20/92
PZ-263-71	AZ City	7/12/71
PZ-338-72	AZ City	10/16/72
PZ-324-72	Golden Corridor	7/24/72
PZ-325-72	Golden Corridor	7/24/72
PZ-359-72	Golden Corridor	3/19/73
PZ-324-72	Golden Corridor	7/24/72
PZ-324-72	Golden Corridor	7/14/72
PZ-327-72	Desert Carmel	8/28/72
PZ-06-63	Desert Carmel	1/26/70
PZ-327-72	Desert Carmel	
PZ-388-73	Villa Grande	3/18/74
PZ-400-73	Villa Grande	12/10/73
PZ-409-73	San Saguaro	2/19/74
PZ-469-76	Signal Peak	8/23/76
PZ-522-78A	Signal Peak	4/24/78
PZ-522-78B	Signal Peak	4/24/78
PZ-C-07-91	Aero Park America	5/18/92
PZ-C-08-69	Central AZ College	1/26/70
PZ-425-74	Dinosaur Mountain	10/21/74
PZ-C-15-86	Dinosaur Mountain	10/27/86
PZ-435-74	Sunland Estates	3/24/75
PZ-C-66-85	Signal Peak/I-10	7/1/85
PZ-C-78-85	Picacho Pecans	3/10/86
PZ-C-79-85	Maricopa Groves	5/05/86
PZ-C-07-86	Eagle Crest Ranch	5/05/86
PZ-C-08-87	Eagle Crest Ranch	8/31/87
PZ-C-08-86	I-10 Corridor	5/05/86
PZ-C-11-86	Cactus Forest	8/25/86
PZ-C-19-86	Queen Creek	7/27/87
PZ-C-05-87	Red River	1/11/88
PZ-C-06-87	Van Barneveld Farm	7/20/87
PZ-C-11-87	Stanmar Valley	2/1/88
PZ-C-13-87	Cimmaron Ranch	3/5/90
PZ-C-22-87	Desert Peak	6/06/88
PZ-C-23-87	Gold Canyon Ranch	8/01/88

PZ-C-24-87	Gold Canyon Ranch	8/01/88
PZ-C-04-88	SaddleBrooke Neighborhood	11/06/89
PZ-C-09-92	SanddleBrooke - Amended	4/15/93
PZ-C-03-89	Val Vista North	10/22/90
PZ-C-01-90	Val Vista North	12/17/90
PZ-C-03-93	Superstition Foothills	11/24/93

1.9 Previous Comprehensive Plans

This Comprehensive Plan will replace all previous comprehensive plans.

1.10 Major Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan

An amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan is necessary when the proposed land use does not conform to the existing County Comprehensive Plan.

Major Amendment Statutory Definition: Arizona Revised Statutes define Major Amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan to mean “A substantial alteration of the county’s land use mixture or balance as established in the county’s existing Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element for that area of the County.” However, it is left to each County to determine the criteria for determining if a proposed amendment meets this definition.

Criteria for Major Amendment: A proposed amendment will be a major amendment, except in the Transitional Area, if it meets at least ONE of the following criteria, and except for errors in land use designation based upon ownership rather than use.

I. Residential Land Uses

A. The proposed change in the land use category of the subject property is from one residential use to another residential use AND the subject property consists of three hundred twenty (320) acres or more that increases the maximum dwelling units by two hundred fifty-six (256) or more.

B. The proposed change in the land use category of the subject property is from a residential land use to a non-residential land use AND the subject property consists of one hundred sixty (160) acres or more.

II. Non-Residential Land Uses

A. Any proposed change in the land use category from a non-residential land use to another land use AND the subject property consists of one hundred sixty acres (160) or more.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Role and Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

Pinal County is currently experiencing rapid growth. Based on economic opportunity, beneficial climate, and an active lifestyle, growth is transforming the region from an agricultural center to a vibrant commercial, industrial, and recreational hub. As the County proceeds into the twenty-first century, its citizens have the opportunity to shape the process of growth to sustain economic prosperity, enhance the quality of life, and shape sustainable communities. The Comprehensive Plan addresses challenges facing the County, and presents opportunities for the continuing success and diversity of the region.

County government is required by state law to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the unincorporated areas (A.R.S. §11-806).

- to bring about coordinated physical development in accordance with the present and future needs of the county.
- to conserve the natural resources of the county.
- to insure efficient expenditure of public funds.
- to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public.

The planning process is structured to emphasize public involvement and incorporate comments, ideas, and direction of the public into the plan.

Creation of this plan is authorized under Title 11, Section 806 of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The statute requires counties to prepare a comprehensive plan to guide coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development within the County. According to Title 11, Section 821 the Comprehensive Plan shall include:

2.2 Land Use Element

- Planning for land use that designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land appropriate to the county.
- A statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories.
- Specific programs and policies that the county may use to promote compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.
- Consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use.

- Policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the county at the time the plan is adopted, readopted, or amended.

2.3 Transportation/Circulation Element

- Planning for circulation consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed freeways, arterial and collector streets, bicycle routes and other modes of transportation and all correlated with the land use plan.

2.4 Water Resources Element

- The currently available surface water, groundwater, and effluent supplies.
- An analysis of how the future growth projected in the county plan will be adequately served by the legally and physically available water supply or a plan to obtain additional necessary water supplies.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Historical Perspective

Pinal County was founded in 1875 from parts of Maricopa and Pima Counties. The County's present area of 3,441,920 acres includes part of the Gila River, Ak-Chin, Tohono O'Odham, and San Carlos Native American Communities. The economic activities of ranching, agriculture, and mining once dominating the County's economy have given way to urban, commercial, and industrial developments as well as retirement communities addressing the needs and lifestyles of active adults. Tourism is now a major contributor to the County's economy.

On February 14, 1912, President William Howard Taft signed the proclamation admitting Arizona to the union as the 48th state. The following incorporated towns and cities are located in Pinal County.

City/Town	Incorporated	Population 2000
Apache Junction County	1978	31,541 Pinal County/273 Maricopa
Casa Grande	1915	25,224
Coolidge	1945	7,786
Eloy	1949	10,375
Florence	1908	17,054
Queen Creek County	1989	119 Pinal County/4,197 Maricopa
Kearny	1959	2,249
Mammoth	1958	1,762
Superior	1976	3,254

Nonincorporated communities include: Arizona City, Dudleyville, Gold Canyon, Maricopa, Oracle, Picacho, Queen Valley, Red Rock, San Manuel, and Stanfield.

PINAL COUNTY POPULATION 1910 - 2010

YEAR	POPULATION
1910	9,045
1920	16,130
1930	22,081
1940	28,841
1950	43,191
1960	62,673
1970	68,579
1980	90,918
1990	116,379
2000	179,727
2010	287,563

3.2 Natural Features

Retaining the views of the Mountains is vital to the County. The prominent views should be retained through encouraging clustered development, low density development, architectural controls, and development standards. Transportation corridors should also preserve the panoramas and vistas of the mountains.

Mountain ranges in the County breaking up the relatively flat valley floors include the San Tans, Superstitions, Sierra Estrella, Santa Catalina, Table Top, Palo Verde, Casa Grande, Sacaton, Picacho Peak, Sawtooth, Tortolita, Black, and Samaniego Hills.

Retaining the natural washes, vegetation, wildlife habitats, geological features and landmarks is essential for the identity of the County. As development occurs within the County, it needs to be integrated through design with the natural environment to protect the natural resources, create a unique sense of place, and to provide for the delicate environmental balance of the area.

Fissures have been determined to exist in the central to western central portions of Planning Area 3 and in the southeast portion of Planning Area 1B. Fissuring can present a possible detrimental impact on infrastructure.

3.3 Pinal County Planning and Development Department

The Pinal County Planning and Development Services Department provides services mandated by Arizona Revised Statutes to help bring about coordinated physical development in accordance with the present and future needs of the County. Pinal County

has comprehensive planning and zoning authority for over 4,000 square miles of land in the County. These services strive to conserve the natural resources of the County, ensure efficient expenditure of public funds, and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the unincorporated areas. Services of the Planning and Development Services Department include the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The Planning and Development Services Department personnel also act as staff liaison to various boards and commissions.

The services provided by the department create a foundation upon which planning and development is based. The department's coordination of services provides guidance for decisions which affect the character and quality of life in the region.

3.3.1 Public Participation Process

The Public Participation Program was approved by the Board of Supervisors on July 11, 2001.

The public participation program followed the following principles helping to ensure planning efforts identified and responded to public issues and concerns.

- A. Create opportunities for meaningful citizen participation early in the process of formulating County goals and objectives and in the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Provide techniques for sharing information and create lines of communication among interested parties for sound public involvement in the planning process. Participation opportunities would occur through informational meetings, surveys, or other means.
- C. Disseminate information to a broad range of interested parties in various geographic, ethnic, and economic areas of the County. This dissemination could be through public notices, newsletters, flyers, newspaper articles, the Internet, or other methods or events.
- D. Collaborate in long range planning efforts with representatives from appropriate agencies and incorporated jurisdictions within the County.

A forty-three member Citizens Advisory Committee was appointed by the Board of Supervisors with members from each of the six planning areas 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4A, and 4B. The committee members attended the thirty-eight plus community meetings with staff, first gathering information to be included in the plan, and again to present the plan to the communities.

In addition, a twenty-two member Technical Advisory Team (a complete list of members is included in the Appendix) was involved in the process. Along with the Citizens Advisory Committee, they met with Staff several times providing input on the plan.

A Comprehensive Plan website was made available listing all the community meetings. Two different questionnaires were prepared and distributed widely giving all citizens the opportunity to provide input. The questionnaires were available on the website for answering and submitting the completed questionnaire via e-mail as well as for printing and mailing. All respondents who submitted a questionnaire via e-mail received a response thanking them for participating. The complete plan was available on the website for the 60-day review period. The website was continually updated with information.

Numerous press releases were distributed to all newspapers in the County resulting in many articles about the plan as well as community meetings.

3.4 Conclusions

This Plan demonstrates Pinal County's commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all its citizens. High efficient growth, in balance with the environment and property rights, can be achieved when supported by the requisite legislation, ordinances, policies, and procedures. The Plan is intended to be a balance between private property rights and the welfare of the general public. The Plan will also serve as a catalyst for further enhancements to guide growth in cooperative, regional settings.

The development of the Comprehensive Plan has occurred during a period of transition and rapid growth in Pinal County. The effect of this growth needs to be addressed in order to provide sustainable communities and protect the region's quality of life.

Present planning methods must be examined for sustainability. New and innovative methods are needed that can preserve a high quality of life as Pinal County welcomes a projected 60 percent increase in population in the next decade. By being able to adapt to changing conditions, Pinal County will face the challenge of maintaining this high quality of life, while accommodating substantial growth.