

The Future at Pinal

MAKING CHOICES | MAKING PLACES





Making Choices Making Places

For most of the past 50 years, Pinal County hasn't had to think much about its image, choices, or growth. But now, Pinal County is changing faster than anyone ever imagined.

Will Pinal become a distinguishable destination or simply a McMega drive through? If Pinal rises to the occasion, the result can be a vibrant, sustainable, and competitive place that takes advantage of its location. If Pinal fails to choose wisely, its bedroom community future is already visible in the East Valley and subdivisions north of Tucson.

Which will it be?

DON'T FORGET -
Renewable Energy Meeting
4pm TODAY!!



Interview at
Pinal Workways
Tomorrow



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On Behalf of the Pinal County Board of Supervisors | July 2007

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When Arizona's economy depended on the 4Cs – copper, cotton, citrus, and cattle – Pinal County was a leader in 2 of them. These historic sources of wealth and touchstones of heritage still play a role in the county's economy, but dramatic population growth and new economic drivers make this a different, distinctive time. This new era demands new vision, new ideas, and new ways of thinking, even as past strengths are kept in mind.

Big Ideas for Future-Oriented Thinking

SUSTAINABILITY

Meeting current needs without harming the future

SMART GROWTH

Intelligent, balanced development that preserves the best of the past

COMPETITIVENESS IS LIVABILITY AND VICE VERSA

Quality jobs and quality places go hand in hand

KEEPING SCORE TO STAY ON TRACK

Regularly answering "How are we doing?"

The Pinal County Board of Supervisors commissioned this report from Morrison Institute for Public Policy (School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University) to kick off a long-term visioning and planning process among residents, elected officials, business leaders, and community activists. The result will be a new county-wide comprehensive plan. **The Future at Pinal** was prepared for community activists and business leaders as well as elected officials and public administrators. The report provides information and ideas that are intended to inspire creative thinking about Pinal's future. The project included interviews with more than 50 public and private sector leaders, a public opinion survey, research on comparable counties and lessons from Maricopa and Pima counties, and compilation of demographic, development, and historical data.

From about 300,000 residents now, Pinal County will soon be as large as Pima County is today. Substantial development is already underway, and more than 650,000 units have been "entitled" by local governments. Pinal's trajectory easily could be assumed to be an extension of the patterns in Maricopa and Pima counties. Yet, many leaders and residents say they want something different, and yes, even something better. Clearly, it is time to choose.

Fundamental Characteristics Will Shape Pinal's Choices

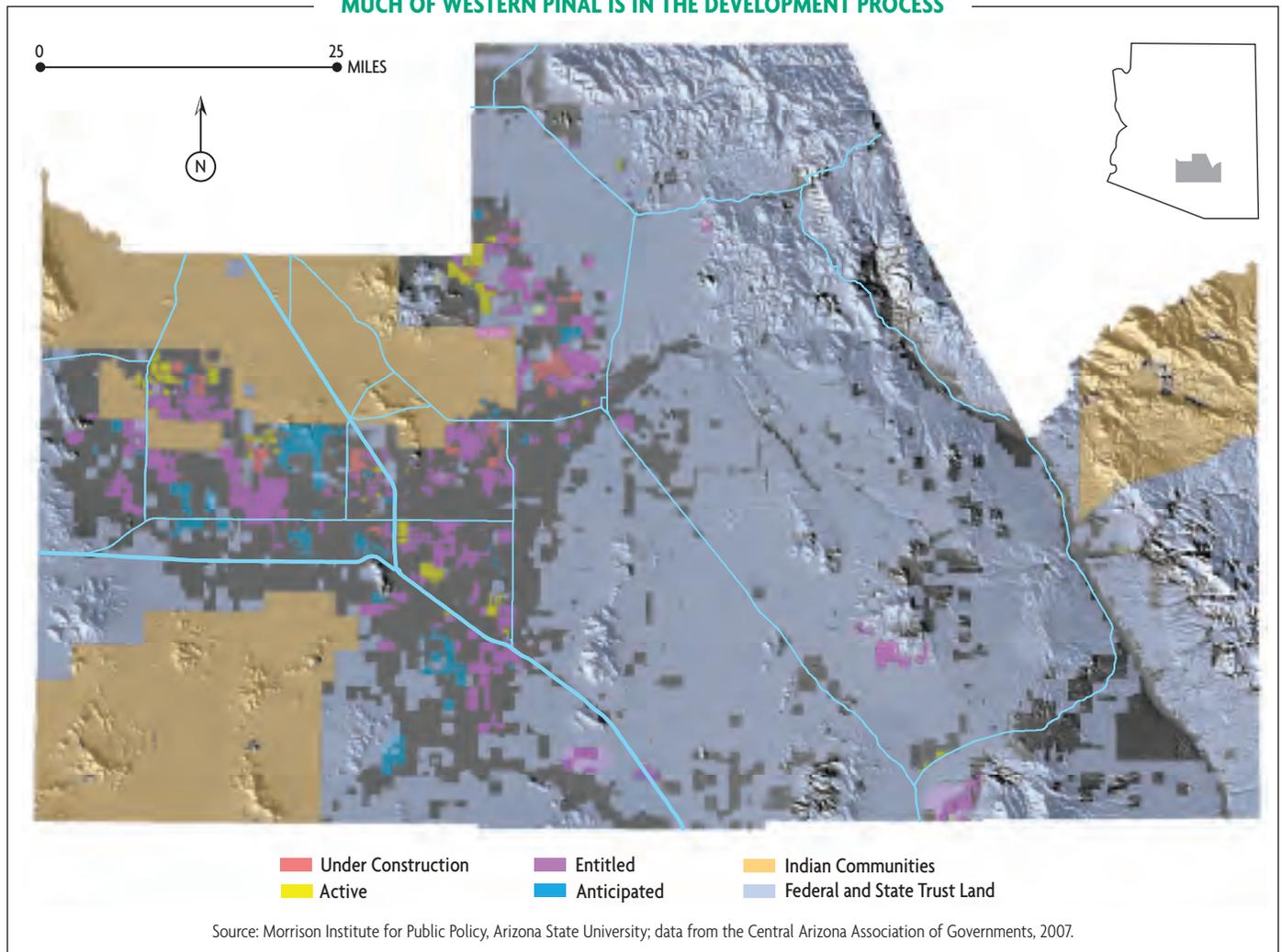
Four fundamental characteristics will play important parts in Pinal's next era. These include:

- **Tribes: Important Partners and Stakeholders:** The Ak-Chin Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, San Carlos Apache Nation, and the Tohono O'odham Nation have a significant presence and growing influence in Pinal. Many noted in this study that the tribal communities were not consulted enough about Pinal's future.
- **Pinal, Agriculture, Land, and Indian Communities:** Pinal, between Maricopa and Pima counties, is in the center of Arizona's dramatic growth. It is also ground zero for another critical future: the relationship of water and growth. The

connections among long-term agricultural use, urban growth, and the sustainable size of Arizona's "megapolitan" Sun Corridor should be debated, and that discussion can start in Pinal.

- **The Public: Pinal's Potentially Most Influential Landowners:** More than 3/4s of Pinal's land is owned by Indian communities and the federal and state governments. More than a third of Pinal is state trust land, which is managed by the Arizona State Land Department for the benefit primarily of Arizona's public schools. The State Land Department is arguably Pinal's most important landowner.
- **A Network of Changing Municipalities:** Pinal's 11 municipalities have rich histories, yet each is facing important changes and tricky transitions that require thought, leadership, and communication.

MUCH OF WESTERN PINAL IS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



“Placemaking” Goals for Pinal

From all of the research for **The Future at Pinal**, it was clear that leaders and residents agree on many items, such as good jobs for Pinal’s residents. Most important, many value cooperation, identity, and quality as foundations for Pinal’s future. The project highlighted 6 “placemaking” goals that would set Pinal apart and support the long-term success of its people and places.

17 Cool Tools for Pinal

How can Pinal achieve these placemaking goals? **The Future at Pinal** presents 17 “cool tools” that could be used as is or simply as inspiration for even better ways. Some of the 17 would be easy to use now, while others would take at the least negotiation and at most state legislation or authority.

A Stark Choice

Will Pinal become a distinguishable destination or simply a McMega drive through? If Pinal rises to the occasion, the result can be a vibrant, sustainable, and competitive place that takes advantage of its location. If Pinal fails to choose wisely, its bedroom community future is already visible in the East Valley and subdivisions north of Tucson. As **The Future at Pinal** shows, there is interest in large-scale choices for unique places. However, the outcomes Pinal wants will not become realities without a sense of urgency, as well as investments of time, energy, and dollars. In this case, good things will not come to those who wait. Good things will come to those who choose, plan, and act.

Cool Tools

PINAL’S LEADERS AND RESIDENTS FOCUSED ON 6 PLACEMAKING GOALS

PLACEMAKING GOALS

COOL TOOLS

Distinguish Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County.

1. Establish the **Pinal Consensus Council**.
2. Agree on a **Pinal tax treaty**.
3. Establish Pinal as a **regional service provider**.

Protect miles of desert and open land.

4. “**Greenprint**” the state trust land in Pinal.
5. Use a uniform county-wide **impact fee to buy open space**.
6. Make Pinal a leader in outdoor education with **Pinal’s Outdoor Kids**.

Provide choices for transportation and mobility.

7. Create the 3-county **Megapolitan Mobility Project** to move people and cargo efficiently through the heart of the Sun Corridor.

Support unique, “fair share” communities.

8. Celebrate agriculture with **community gardens** and co-op farms.
9. Use the **3Rs to fix it first**.
10. Carry out **smart growth principles** in all development and redevelopment.
11. Adopt a **uniform “green” building code** across Pinal.
12. **Prohibit landscape plants that are harmful** to the Sonoran Desert.

Create and attract “career pay – career path” jobs.

13. Integrate education, training, economic development, and employment services **with Pinal Workways**.
14. **Agree on locations for employment centers** and do not allow homes to be built there.

Develop Pinal’s talent pool.

15. Establish the **Pinal Scholars** fund.
16. Use **arts and culture as a major tool in quality education**, strong communities, and a robust economy.
17. Give every child in Pinal a **Super Start**.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

A PINAL INDEX

- 299,875: Number of Pinal residents in July 2006
Percent increase in population between 2000 and 2006: 66.9
- 6th: Rank of Pinal among the fastest-growing counties in the United States
Number of Pinal residents projected to live in Pinal by 2050: 1,302,950
- 2037: Year that Pinal will eclipse the 1 million residents mark
Number of people on average that move to Pinal every year: 23,500
- 1: Number of new families that move to Pinal every hour of every day
Percent of urban land currently planned for employment across Pinal: 9.4
- 22.8: Percent of urban land currently used for employment across Maricopa County
Number of jobs per 1000 residents in Pinal in 2004: 261
- 585: Number of jobs per 1000 residents in Maricopa County in 2004
Number of jobs per 1000 residents in Pima County in 2004: 514
- 15.2: Percent of Pinal residents in poverty in 2005
Percent of Arizona residents in poverty in 2005: 14.2
- 17.6: Percent of Pinal's children in poverty in 2005
Percent of Arizona's children in poverty in 2005: 19.9
- \$41,164: Median household income in Pinal in 2005
Median household income in Arizona in 2005: \$44,282
- 25: Percent of Pinal's residents that moved in 2005
Percent of Pinal's residents that moved to Pinal from another county in Arizona in 2005: 8.2
- 1.7: Percent of Arizona residents who moved from one county in Arizona to another in 2005
Percent of Pinal's residents with a college degree or higher in 2005: 16.7
- 25.6: Percent of Arizona's residents with a college degree or higher in 2005
Median age of Pinal's residents in 2005: 35
- 34.5: Median age of Arizona's residents in 2005
Average number of minutes it takes Pinal's workers to get to work in 2005: 27.9
- 24.8: Average number of minutes it takes Arizona's workers to get to work in 2005

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University;
data from Arizona Department of Economic Security, U.S. Census Bureau,
Central Arizona Association of Governments, 2007.

SAME PLACE, DIFFERENT TIME, NEW VISION

When Arizona’s economy depended on the 4Cs – copper, cotton, citrus, and cattle – Pinal County was a leader in 2 of them. Pinal produced nearly 40% of the state’s cotton in the 1950s and about a quarter of its copper. These historic sources of wealth and touchstones of heritage still play a role in the county’s economy, but dramatic population growth and new economic drivers make this a different, distinctive time.

This new era demands new vision, new ideas, and new ways of thinking, even as past strengths are kept in mind. The Pinal County Board of Supervisors commissioned this report from Morrison Institute for Public Policy (School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University) to kick off a long-term – some would say long overdue

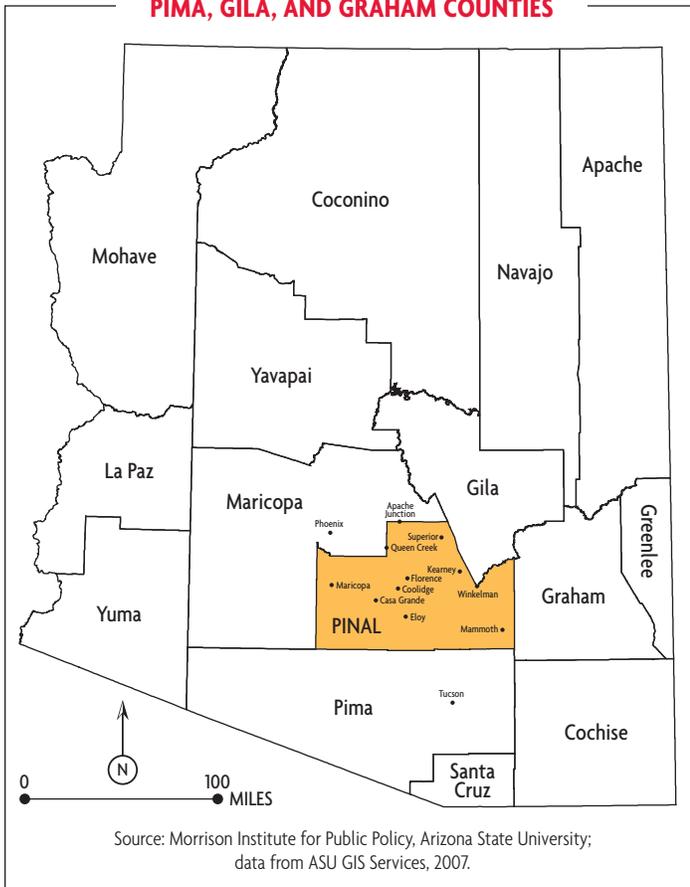
– visioning and planning process among residents, elected officials, business leaders, and community activists.

The supervisors asked Morrison Institute for Public Policy for ideas on answers to three questions:

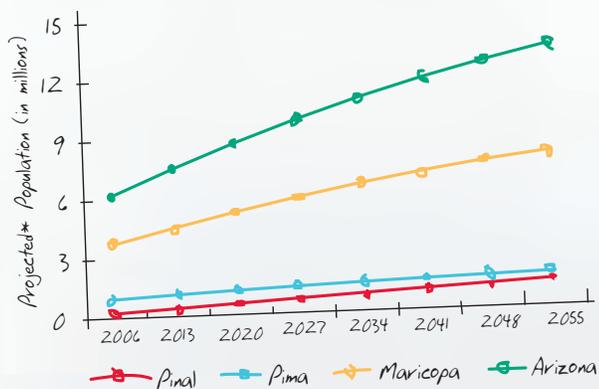
- ✓ What would differentiate Pinal from other places in Arizona and across the country?
- ✓ What would ensure the long-term livability and competitiveness of Pinal’s municipalities and the entire county?
- ✓ What would bring Pinal’s current and prospective residents together to ensure economically prosperous and livable communities?

An Arizona county has never done a future study as big and bold as this one. Following on the recent examination of state trust land in northern Pinal County in **The Treasure of the Superstitions: Scenarios of the Future for Superstition Vistas**, this report extends thinking about the years ahead to all of Pinal. The “treasure” in Superstition Vistas was the opportunity of state trust land. In **The Future at Pinal**, the goal is the 21st century “placemaking” innovations that will set Pinal apart and support the long-term success of its cities and towns. Over 6 months, Morrison Institute’s staff analyzed current and historic data; interviewed elected and appointed leaders in the county’s major municipalities; talked with county officials; held focus groups with leaders and managers from business, economic development, and community organizations; and conducted a public opinion survey among residents. Presented here, the results will provide a foundation for an extensive planning process that will include substantial dialogue among officials and the public. This effort will culminate in a new county-wide comprehensive plan by the end of 2008.

PINAL BORDERS MARICOPA, PIMA, GILA, AND GRAHAM COUNTIES



PINAL WILL SOON BE AS BIG AS PIMA COUNTY IS NOW.



* Projections for Pinal County, or any county with a rapid change in migration, are difficult to make accurately. The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) uses the cohort-component projection model, which relies on historical migration patterns. The quality will improve as Pinal's growth is recorded in historical data and applied to future projections. But caution is warranted in using projected figures as an exact prediction of what will happen in the future.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Arizona Department of Economic Security, 2007.

The growth is coming.
The growth is going to occur,
but how can we modify it
so that it produces a higher quality of life,
produces the jobs, and reserves the rights of way
well before the growth occurs.

Pinal Leader

of city residents and leaders. Pinal County's policies and programs serve everyone, while county actions can help or hinder municipal goals. Recent population growth and projections have forced leaders throughout Pinal County to acknowledge the necessity of the transition from a rural county government keeping the status quo to a dynamic multi-faceted regional service provider. Common concerns and goals have become clear to leaders at every level in Pinal County. **The Future at Pinal**, therefore, treats Pinal as a place with inter-dependent networks of stakeholders and stewards, rather than as a single government.

Arizona senator Carl Hayden famously advised his Congressional colleagues to act like "workhorses" rather than "show horses." This less glamorous, but more effective, role is an apt one for county governments, too. Counties across the country could be described as getting much of work of governing, but little of the glory. And because state and national policies typically favor cities and towns for a variety of good and not-so-good reasons, counties in Arizona and elsewhere have been left to fulfill big mandates with few powers and little flexibility. Yet as rapid rates of growth converge with more mobility and lifestyle choices, people are moving beyond city boundaries. Particularly in the wide-open spaces of the West, where often huge distances separate the few existing municipalities, counties are in the limelight as never before.

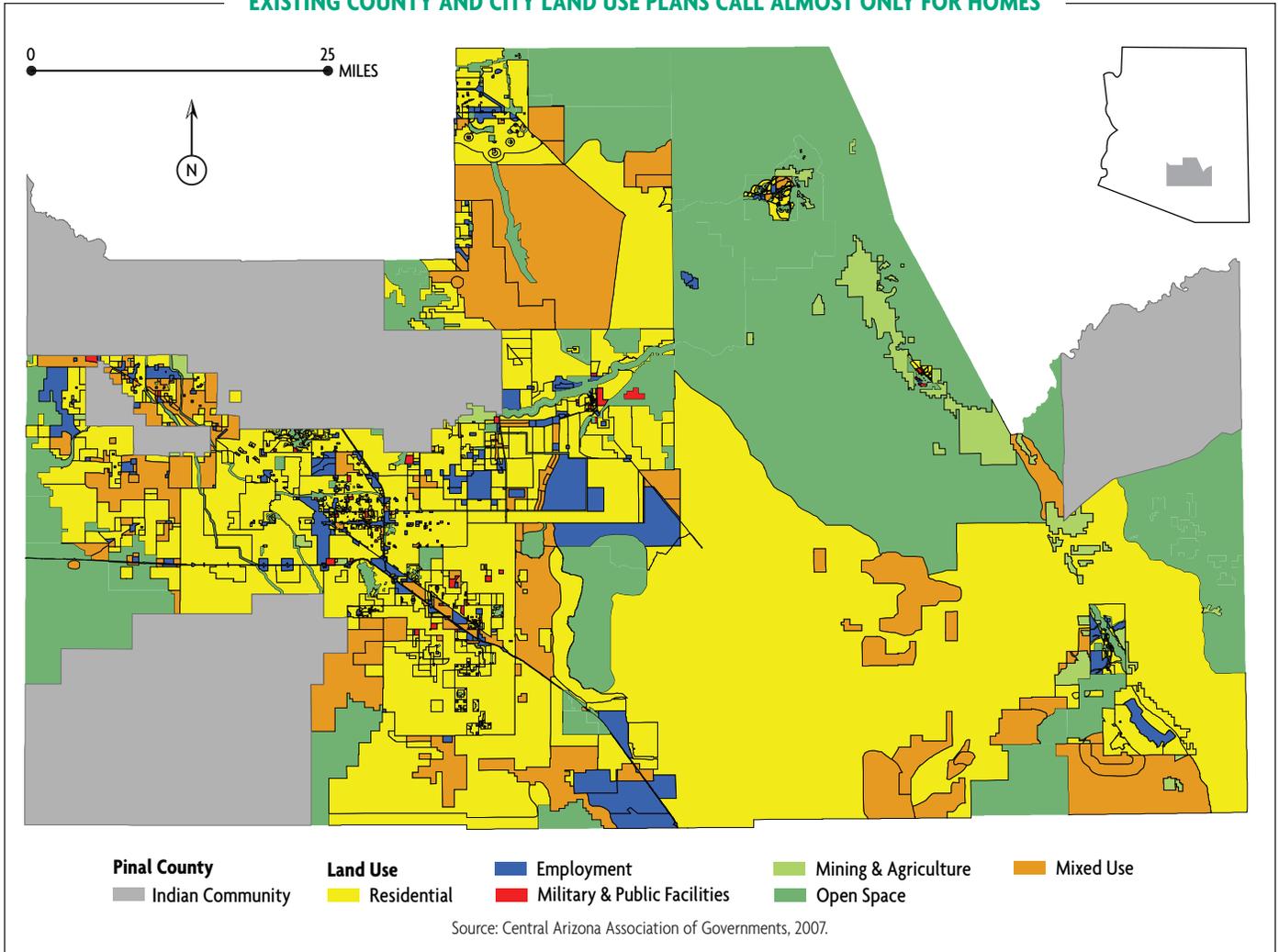
"County government today is often the mechanism by which geographically or socially pervasive challenges are met with strategies that are locally initiated and accountable,"¹ according to the National Association of Counties. However, the interests of county residents and leaders cannot be separated from those

Pinal – which currently counts some 300,000 people, 11 municipalities, 2,400 businesses, 19 school districts, 13 libraries, 4 hospitals, 3 higher learning institutions, and 3 formal economic development organizations, among many more agencies and organizations – is not the first place to deal with substantial growth and dramatic transitions, nor will it be the last. It is, however, the one Arizonans are watching most closely now. Of all the counties in Arizona that are currently evolving from a rural past to an urban future, Pinal's location between Maricopa and Pima counties raises its stakes higher than any other.

Pinal is in the spotlight as well because of the legendary strength of Arizona's real estate community and the difficulty governments have had in resisting pressure and matching developers' resources and expertise. Indeed, the private sector has gotten up to speed in Pinal well before the public sector, leaving officials and planners struggling to catch up. Pinal's choices and actions in the next few years will either confirm the often-assumed inevitability of control by the state's "growth machine" or they will provide new models of governance and adaptability for others to follow.

1 "The History of County Government," National Association of Counties, www.naco.org.

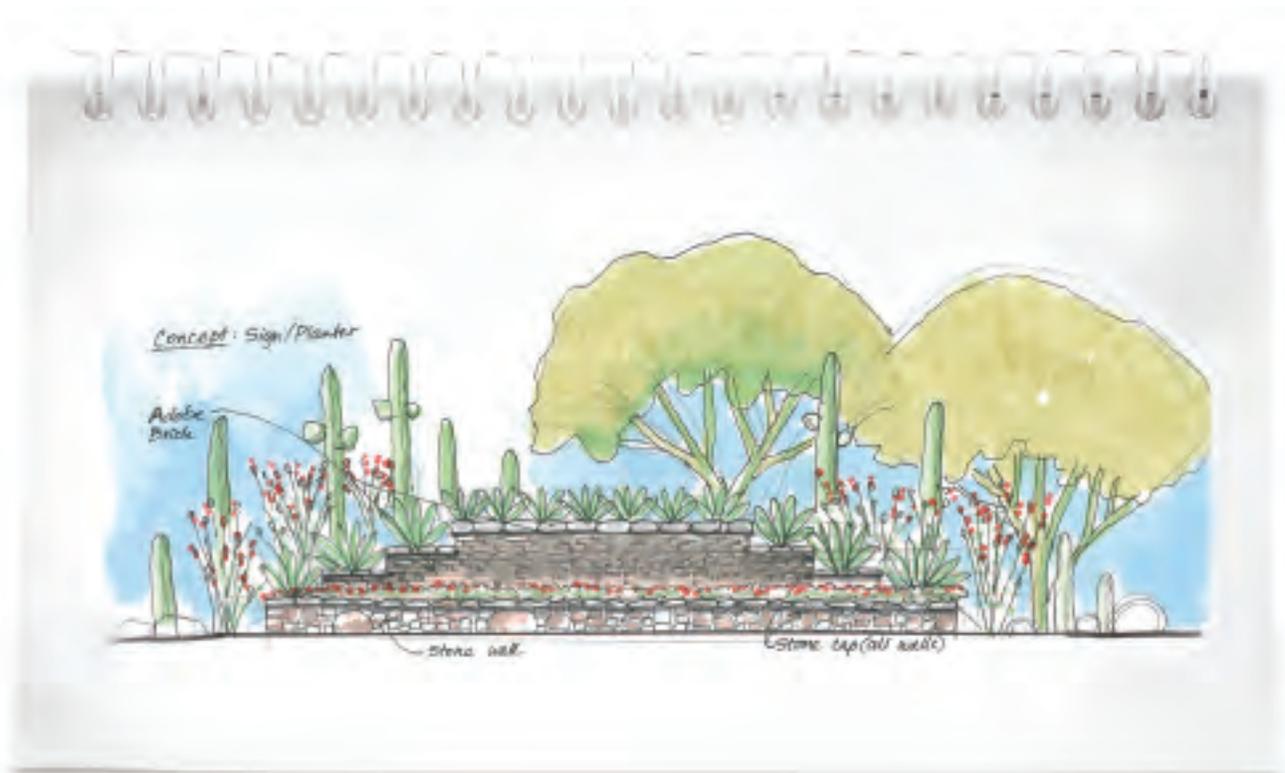
EXISTING COUNTY AND CITY LAND USE PLANS CALL ALMOST ONLY FOR HOMES



12

More than 130 years ago, Pinal County was created from pieces of Maricopa and Pima counties because local leaders wanted something different there. Over the decades, distance and lifestyle kept Pinal’s farming and mining communities separate both literally and figuratively. Today, Pinal still wants to decide its own future, but staying in charge has become more difficult in a connected, competitive era, and more complex when the county has hundreds of thousands of residents with more seeming to arrive every day.

Despite the challenges, Pinal, if it wants a livable, competitive future, must tackle the hard questions and take creative, sometimes even risky, steps to implement the best possible choices. As then-Senator John F. Kennedy noted in 1960 in a call for counties to step up to big-time issues: “City governments cannot always assume the sole responsibility for the solution of these pressing urban problems. I repeat, they cannot – our state governments will not – the federal government should not – and therefore you on the county level must.”



WHAT WILL THE FUTURE AT PINAL LOOK LIKE?

The Future at Pinal provides information and tools to answer “What if...?” Meant to inspire imagination as much as to provide information, this report should get people talking, thinking, and dreaming about how to make great places in Pinal now and for future generations. Hundreds of scenarios are possible.

To start, put yourself and scores of elected officials, residents, public administrators, and community activists at a planning meeting for Pinal. Armed with maps, facts and figures, and analyses of present situations, everyone is ready to contribute to charting the future. Countless sticky notes, flip charts, and colored cards are on hand to use to record where Pinal is today and where it is going.

You are asked to imagine that Pinal has a monumental gateway, like most master planned communities. The writing on the giant marker announces The Future at Pinal, but the space behind it is empty for as far as the eye can see. What will be there in 20-30 years? What will the communities and spaces look like? How will people live in The Future at Pinal? Will the results be models for others to follow or avoid? Only time and choices will tell.



LIVING IN THE IN BETWEEN: LESSONS FOR PINAL FROM MARICOPA AND PIMA COUNTIES

To the North lies the land of unconstrained growth, where developers rule. One hundred thousand newcomers a year are embraced, encouraged, and assimilated. Houses surrounded by lawns, trees, and golf courses spring up in place of plowed fields or creosote desert. Stone appliqué walls announce the latest master planned community with a name manufactured in Esperanto. Freeways clogged with cars and trucks, each with a single passenger, move people ever-greater distances at ever-slower speeds.

South is a different place: slower, smaller, where people try to live in the desert, rather than near it. Houses look plainer, with more flat roofs, and there isn't much grass to be seen. This place seems dustier and scruffier, in part because the sidewalks are missing. Here, arterial streets are clogged with cars and trucks, each with a single passenger, driving shorter distances than their northern counterparts.

In between, the place called Pinal tries to find its way.

The conceit is too simplistic. Maricopa County is not accurately portrayed as an unplanned hodgepodge of sprawl designed only to consume the desert; the area's quality of life is better than that, and its economy is growing and vital. Pima County is not really a collection of environmentally sensitive flower children living in harmony with their surroundings; its infrastructure is often overwhelmed and its economy is slow to create quality jobs. But the different attitudes and histories of the neighboring counties do provide dramatic contrasts with lessons for Pinal.

The stories of Pima and Maricopa counties are driven by the sagas of Tucson and Phoenix. As chronicled by Michael Logan in **Desert Cities**, the two cities grew somewhat in parallel from the 1890s through the 1920s. By the end of the 1920s, Roosevelt Dam had secured for Phoenix the unbeatable advantage of a secure water supply. Phoenix fared much better during the Great Depression, and thereafter the cities' attitudes toward growth and development began to diverge. The raw numbers tell this story.

TUCSON'S EXPANSION OUTPACED PHOENIX'S EARLY ON

	1890	1910	1930
Phoenix	3,152	11,134	48,118
Tucson	5,150	13,193	32,506

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

After World War II, the differences became even more pronounced. In the postwar era, the City of Phoenix proceeded to vigorously annex surrounding vacant areas in an effort to expand its boundaries so as to compete with booming suburbs. Phoenix was better connected than Tucson to the emerging dominant form of inter-urban transportation: air travel. That connection lured manufacturers like Motorola, which helped to move air conditioning into residential use more rapidly in Maricopa County. The cities' populations began to diverge further because of these dramatic developments.

PHOENIX WAS TWICE AS LARGE AS TUCSON BY 1960

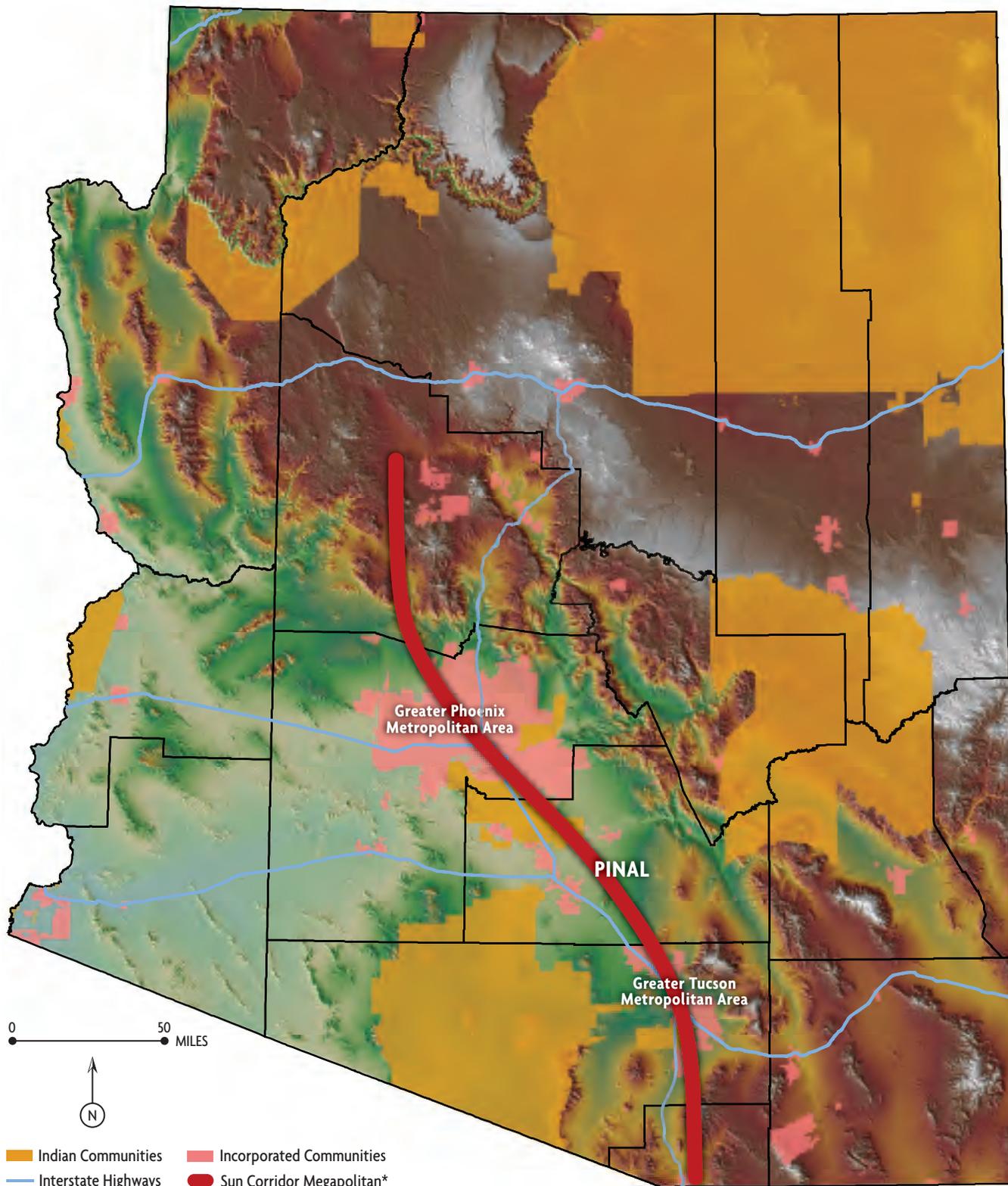
	1940	1960	1980
Phoenix	65,414	439,170	789,704
Tucson	36,818	212,892	330,537

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The roots of these differences lie in the geographic and cultural histories of the two regions. Pima County had more topography in the area of city growth, and a deeper, richer Hispanic heritage willing to accept an urban area that was designed to feel like the arid Southwest. Maricopa had a river system nearly 4 times as large. As a result at the height of farming, Maricopa County developed 10 times more farmland than Pima ever had. So much farming created a different attitude toward the land – desert was something to be used, rather than preserved. And with that water came grass and trees to make the landscape more comfortably Midwestern.

Agriculture and apparently abundant water gave Maricopa the opportunity to market a lifestyle of sunshine, citrus trees, and grass – a lower-budget alternative to Southern California that could intercept nomads from Ohio, who had intended to go to

PINAL IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SUN CORRIDOR



* Megapolitans are urban areas that combine at least 2 metropolitan areas and show substantial economic and other connections. The Sun Corridor is Arizona's emerging megapolitan as metro Phoenix and metro Tucson begin to merge and economic ties strengthen. The Sun Corridor includes all or part of 6 counties and 57 municipalities from the border with Mexico to the middle of Yavapai County. Pinal County is in the center of the megapolitan area, which is expected to have about 10 million people by 2040.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Central Arizona Association of Governments, 2007.

Placemaking is the way in which all human beings transform the places they find themselves into the places where they live.

Lynda H. Schneekloth and Robert G. Shibley, *Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Communities*

Los Angeles but ran out of gas. Pima was not on the same migratory path, and instead much more consciously sold an “Old West” lifestyle of self reliance and dusty streets. The cowboy image used more consciously in Tucson attracted new citizens with a libertarian bent who saw city governance more negatively than did new Maricopa residents.

The 1950s became the key decade for the diverging attitudes. A pattern had by that time emerged in Pima County that had most new development happening in unincorporated areas, often with minimal government regulation. After an area became built up, Tucson would seek to annex it – a policy of “lagging limits.” This meant that there were existing residents to oppose annexations, and a growing number started to do so. At one point, the mayor wore a suit of armor to an annexation meeting (tongue in cheek, but apparently a lot of angry citizens didn’t see the joke). In Maricopa, annexation almost always preceded development. Owners of large tracts saw annexation into Phoenix or another city as desirable because it brought water supplies and higher densities that meant higher land values. So Maricopa pursued a policy of “leading limits,” annexing vast areas of completely vacant land.

Aggressive annexation by all of the cities in Maricopa County meant that approximately 90% of housing development and growth in the county has taken place within city boundaries.

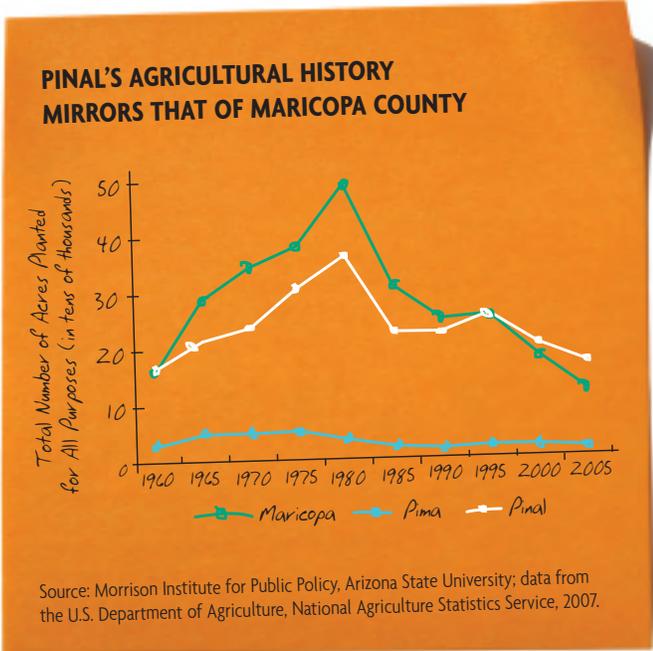
The cities have reaped the benefits of an increasing tax base – particularly sales tax – and used the revenues to further expand their hegemony through infrastructure building and approval of even more large-scale development.

Tucson, meanwhile, had a strong no-to-slow-growth movement emerge that had no real counterpart farther north. Logan cites, for example, a 1960s bumper sticker: “Leaving Tucson? Take a friend.” The city was reluctant to annex new territory during the 1970s and 1980s. Advocates of slower growth hoped this would keep development away from sensitive desert areas and preserve Tucson’s particular lifestyle. As a result, much of the development activity was driven into unincorporated county areas in the form of lower-density, less-improved “wildcat” subdivisions. As much as 40% of Pima County growth is routinely the result of county-issued building permits in unincorporated areas. Development was not stopped, but growth was dramatically slower as a result of these attitudinal differences. Pima County government found itself struggling with increasing “urban scale” development, and began behaving more like a city.

What are the lessons of these adjoining histories for Pinal as it follows its siblings in urbanizing?

Pinal shares with Maricopa a major agricultural heritage. In other parts of the U.S., agricultural counties have often been caught up in resisting growth in order to preserve farming as a significant part of the local economy. Much of the push for urban growth boundaries in Oregon, for example, was driven by a desire to protect the Willamette Valley from encroachment by sprawling subdivisions. This dynamic has been missing in Arizona. In part, this is because Arizona has plenty of arable land; the limiting factor is water. Arizona’s large, often corporate farms tend to lack the romance of the family farm, even though some have been passed on for generations.

Today, 170,000 acres of Pinal are under cultivation, down from a maximum of 360,000. This fact, coupled with the much greater growth pressures emanating from the north, is likely to mean that as Pinal urbanizes, its trajectory will emulate Maricopa’s – a more “development friendly” atmosphere with less concern about water conservation and slow growth.



Pinal also has more private land and less dramatic topography near its urban areas than does Pima, also likely contributing to a less desert-sensitive perspective. Pinal has more Indian land – much of it likely to remain agricultural – than Maricopa, but less than Pima. Pinal has by far the most state trust land of the 3 counties: 35% of the total area. This makes the State Land Department, with its mandate to realize value from its holdings, the most important landowner in the area’s future. Unfortunately, the history of state trust land development since the passage of the **Urban Lands Act** in the early 1980s has been one of relatively small-scale traditional planning and development, not markedly different than if the land had been held in fractured private ownership.

Maricopa County today does not see itself as a major player in the urban planning and development business. Only about 7% of the population of Maricopa lives in unincorporated areas. The county regards itself as only an interim jurisdiction in the performance of city-like functions. Sooner or later, population should be incorporated into new cities or annexed into existing ones. Maricopa County government’s self image is about healthcare, law enforcement, courts, roads in unincorporated areas, and the traditional roles of Arizona counties.

Pima, on the other hand, seems not just resigned to, but enthusiastic about, its role as a quasi-municipal government. Since such a high percentage of Pima’s growth is county approved and a third of the population lives in unincorporated areas, Pima County has embraced far-reaching planning mechanisms and fashioned itself as the regional open space authority. Pima County works to move quality of life and growth management agendas ahead, including archeological and historic preservation, far more than any other Arizona county.

Pinal currently has the highest proportion of its population in unincorporated areas of any of the 6 counties in the Sun Corridor – 50%. This number will begin to change as Pinal’s municipalities grow. But the county government itself needs to define its role compared to its 2 neighbors. Does Pinal County see itself settling back – like Maricopa – to be a traditional provider of operational services as the cities in Pinal grow and annex? Or, does the Board of Supervisors want – like Pima – to continue in the business of regulating development? There is a definite choice here, and the time for that choice is at hand.

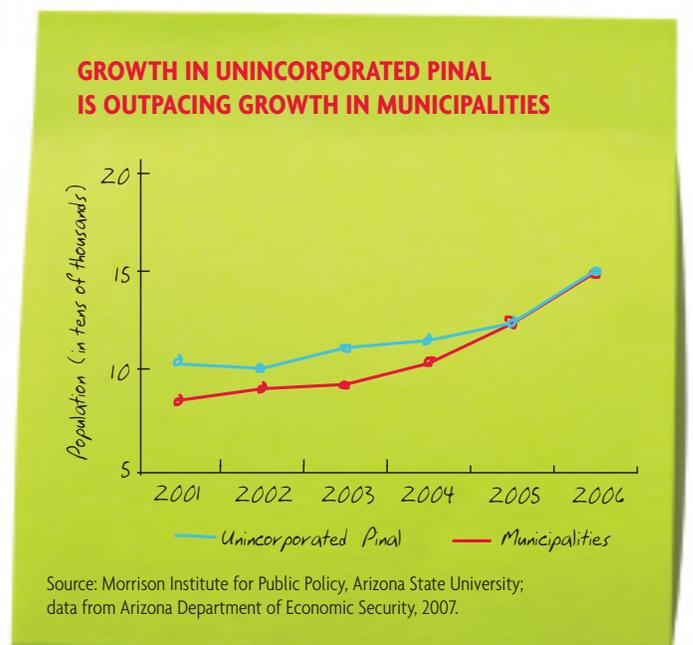
Pinal has one huge difference in relation to its neighbors: it has no Phoenix or Tucson. Because Pinal’s population is distributed among cities and towns spread throughout the county, it has

no dominant player. In Maricopa County, the pro-annexation, pro-growth attitudes of the Phoenix City Council in the 1960s and 1970s led other cities to adopt a similar stance from sheer self preservation. The result was sales tax, annexation, and development rivalries creating a hyper-growth attitude. Phoenix’s decisions drove what has become a county-wide attitude and pattern of behavior. In Pima County, the slower growth philosophy of the City of Tucson left a vacuum for regional decisions. The result was that Pima County emerged as an assertive government with significant planning, zoning, and open space preservation programs. Tucson’s attitude drove the county to become a significant – arguably the dominant – regional player.

In Pinal, the pivotal position played by Phoenix and Tucson is vacant. What institution will step forward to shape the future of Pinal? Will the county itself assume that role? Will some new institution of regional cooperation appear?

The single greatest risk for Pinal may be that no “decider” emerges. If no entity becomes the central focus of decisions, a myriad of little choices made by a multiplicity of local governments in limited contexts with relatively narrow views will form the future of Pinal. Making decisions in lots of small increments sometimes can be a good thing. It can be a great way of avoiding a big mistake. It can also be a great way of perpetuating the status quo for as long as possible.

That’s probably the future which is currently emerging for Pinal, but it doesn’t have to be.



ON-THE-GROUND CIRCUMSTANCES AND FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS EXPLAIN PINAL'S PRESENT SITUATION

Like other growing areas, Pinal is experiencing the positives and negatives of absorbing thousands of people quickly. Pinal's capacity to meet the needs of more and more residents will be shaped by its responses to current circumstances and how 4 fundamental characteristics are handled.

On-the-Ground Circumstances

Drive Till You Qualify is a Common Pinal Experience

The median price for a new Pinal home is approximately 20-25% less than in Maricopa County. As a result, the "drive till you qualify" phenomenon is well-known in Pinal, and reportedly describes how many residents chose their current homes. But with greater interest rates, higher gas prices, and significant road congestion now evident, the downsides of this pattern are being acknowledged. For example, Pinal's foreclosure rate is about 50% higher than the national average.² On the other hand, home-ownership, either for the first time or a newer, bigger house than could be afforded elsewhere, continues to be a powerful draw.

"Our Turn" to Grow

Many places in Arizona have taken their turn in the growth spotlight, creating fortunes for those in the right place at the right time. For numerous Pinal landowners and municipalities, their moment seems to be at hand. As one leader put it, "Our communities tend to go their own ways because they feel 'Now, it's our turn.'" This reportedly makes it tough to ensure quality projects

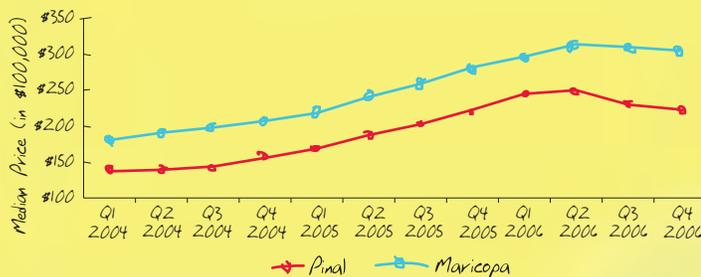
² "Phoenix Foreclosures Increase 35% in August," RealtyTrac, August 2006.

when owners are anxious to cash out. In addition, descriptions of the quality leaders say is wanted in their communities often fails to match what is coming out of the ground. Keeping up with neighboring areas is also a factor in quantity versus quality: "Nobody wants to be the backwater, but if you give up everything in the process then everybody becomes the backwater."

Transportation Becomes Everyone's Issue

Over time, rapid growth in Arizona's largest cities combined with rising home prices has pushed new development to the fringes of metropolitan areas where land and homes seem to be a better value. Several areas of Pinal closest to metro Phoenix and Tucson are now experiencing just such a growth push. As a result, con-

NEW HOME PRICES REMAIN AT 80% OF PRICES IN MARICOPA COUNTY



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from Arizona State University, Realty Studies, 2007.

PINAL HAS \$3.1 BILLION IN JUST A FEW SELECTED HIGH PRIORITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Roadway	Cost (in millions)
Construct North/South Freeway	\$1,640
Construct Williams Gateway Freeway	\$750
Improve S.R. 238 (Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway)	\$187
Construct U.S. 60 Reroute Project	\$117
Improve U.S. 60 (Ray Road to Florence Junction)	\$88
Improve Val Vista Road (I-10 to S.R. 238)	\$61
Improve S.R. 79 (Florence Junction to Florence)	\$60
Improve S.R. 287 (S.R. 87 to S.R. 79)	\$56
Improve Thorton Road (I-8 to S.R. 238)	\$51
Improve Park Link Drive (I-10 to S.R. 79)	\$42
Improve S.R. 87 (S.R. 387 to S.R. 287)	\$38
Improve Hunt Highway (County Line to Arizona Farms Road)	\$20

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Southeast Maricopa/Northern Pinal County Area Transportation Study and the Pinal County Small Area Transportation Study, 2007.

gestion has intensified on a transportation system not designed to handle so many new commuters so quickly. At the same time, public transit is nearly nonexistent. Among the trouble spots are I-10 north of Casa Grande to Phoenix, State Route 347 to the Maricopa County line, portions of U.S. 60 in Pinal, and surface streets such as Hunt Highway and Ironwood Drive that provide access to U.S. 60 or Loop 202 via Queen Creek and Gilbert. Going south to Pima County locations has its own challenges. The headliner bottlenecks will have to be opened up soon. While mobility is not a crisis everywhere in Pinal now, transportation will be everyone's issue at some time.

High Expectations + Fierce Competition = Big Challenges
 Councils, boards, planning departments, economic development organizations, utilities, businesses, nonprofits, and many other institutions are scrambling to keep up with the pace of growth in Pinal. One leader noted that, "It's been about the same since I've been here. Just a total 110 miles an hour." So much time is spent playing catch up that it is difficult to think beyond the "now" and into the future.

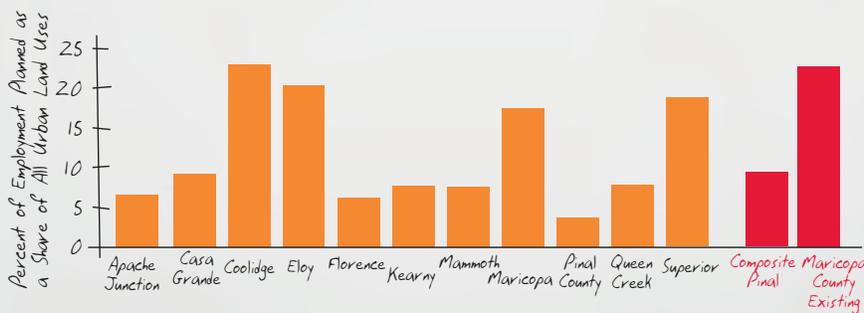
Residents' expectations do not wait, even though they may not always make sense. As one long-time professional summed it up: "The average idea of a transportation fix is to have a 6-lane divided interstate at the end of the mailbox that leads directly to their shaded parking space at work, but on their arrival it collapses into a bed of Spanish poppies only to reappear at 5:15." Besides transportation, new arrivals tend to expect roads, parks, law enforcement, schools, and other

services to be better than or the same as what they had before. Add these high expectations to strong competition for local tax revenue, natural resources, and state and federal funding, and it is easy to see why closing infrastructure gaps is an enormous challenge.

"Social" infrastructure, such as healthcare, K-12 education, higher education, and human services, is reportedly as strained as the physical infrastructure. Leaders face the double challenge of maintaining current levels of assistance for a growing population, while expanding to meet new, different needs. In addition, service providers must convince newcomers to give their time, commitment, and money to causes in Pinal, rather than to those "back home."

Half of Pinal's Brainpower Leaves the Region to Work
 In 2000, 39% of Pinal's workers left the region for work, but by 2005 that portion grew to 50%. One reason for the growth in cross border commuting is the limited quantity and quality of jobs in Pinal. Another is that Pinal is the only place in Arizona where workers can take advantage of jobs in metro areas both north and south of them. This gives residents the option of big-city jobs and small-town living. Traffic congestion, however, is reducing the desirability of such commutes. Moreover, Pinal cannot afford to lose talent to jobs outside if it wants to be competitive and keep dollars in the county. But it has a long way to go to catch up with its neighbors. Maricopa and Pima counties, on average, offer approximately 2.5 times more jobs per capita than Pinal.

PINAL AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES HAVE SO FAR NOT PLANNED ENOUGH LAND FOR EMPLOYMENT CENTERS



Information for Winkelman not available.
 Source: Central Arizona Association of Governments.

There is presently too much competition amongst the cities, and it's of concern. Basically, the leaders don't look outside their borders, so they don't see what they're creating regionally.

Pinal Leader

Pinal's Small-Town Rural Feel Could Change Soon

Young families and current and soon-to-be retirees are major demographic groups among Pinal's new residents. Meanwhile, some retiring Pinal residents have also relocated to new subdivisions within the county. As one developer put it, retirees are looking for "big-city living without big-city stress." Pinal's communities are popular because they often showcase a slower pace, dark night skies, working lands and wilderness, an animal-friendly culture, and the peacefulness of a rural environment. But as more people move in, concerns are mounting that the rural sensibility will be at risk. A sense of community could become a casualty of divides between new people in master planned development islands and deeply rooted residents in long-established neighborhoods. The urban/suburban islands tend to favor homogeneity over diversity, and have little to do with each other or with nearby historic communities. Without efforts to integrate new residents and maintain a sense of place and "smallness," Pinal's small-town appeal could disappear.

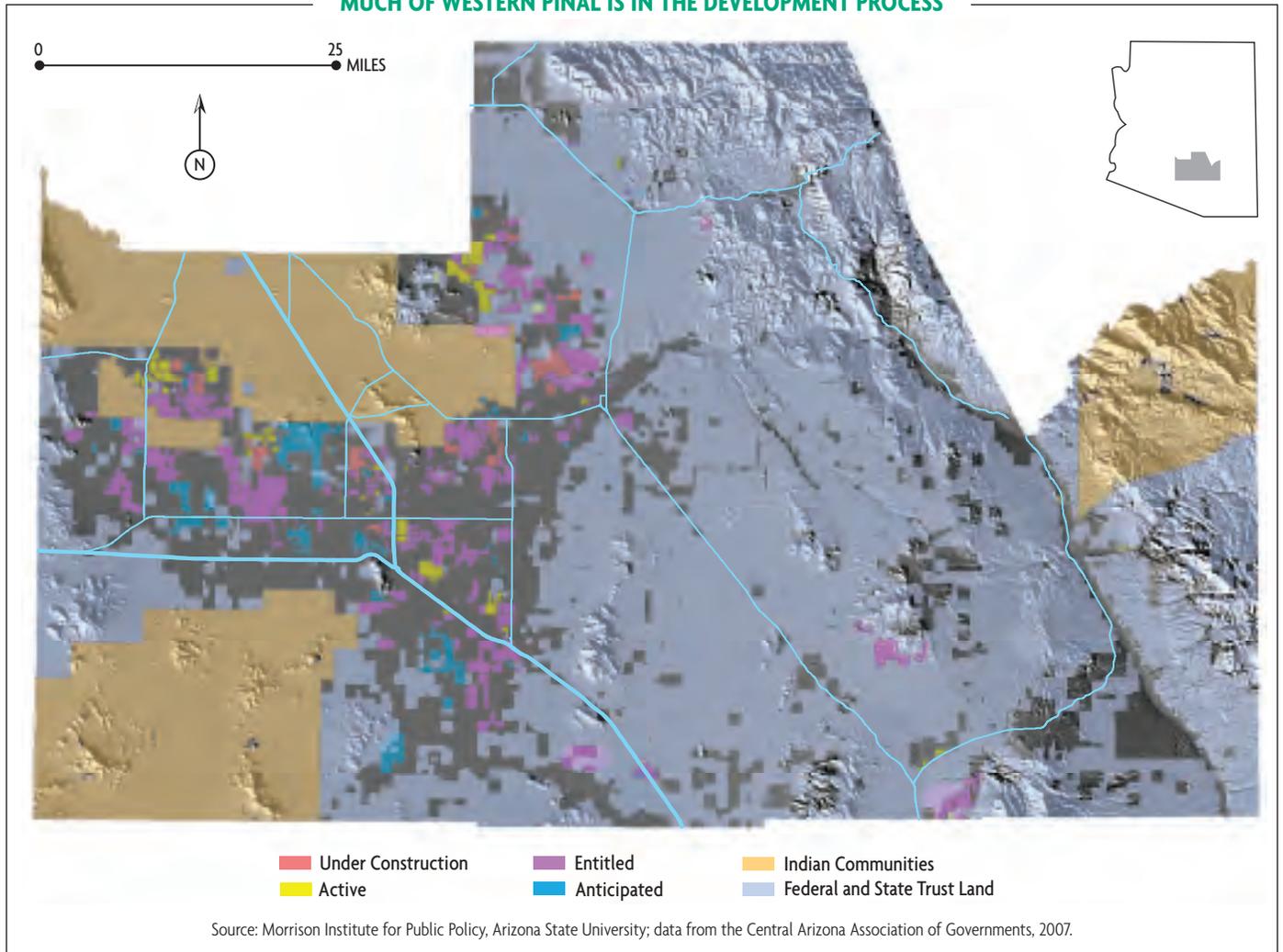
There are a lot of people moving to Pinal County who want to keep it rural. They like the small-town feel, but they want to close the door behind them and you can't do that.

Pinal Leader

Entitlements and State Trust Land Promise Future Waves of Growth

In the real estate development world, "entitlement" refers to the process which approves new projects. When a project is "entitled," through municipal or county plans, zoning, and development agreements, the maximum number and density of residential units are fixed, commercial and industrial parcels identified, and general road layouts approved. After the passage of Proposition 207 in 2006, it has become difficult for governments to reduce entitlements after they are granted. As a result of market forces, however, the number of units built is almost always less than the maximum entitled.

MUCH OF WESTERN PINAL IS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



**THOUSANDS OF UNITS ARE ENTITLED IN PINAL,
ESPECIALLY IN THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY**

Place	Active or Under Construction	Other Entitled	Total Entitled	Percent Entitled in Each Place
Apache Junction*	590	307	897	0.1%
Casa Grande	18,240	56,656	74,896	11.5%
Coolidge	10,738	39,102	49,840	7.6%
Eloy	18,739	92,907	111,646	17.1%
Florence	21,180	48,752	69,932	10.7%
Maricopa	23,019	22,784	45,803	7.0%
Queen Creek*	0	350	350	0.1%
Unincorporated Pinal	65,029	234,884	299,913	45.9%
TOTAL FOR PINAL	157,535	495,742	653,277	100.0%

* Apache Junction and Queen Creek straddle Pinal and Maricopa Counties. Relatively low numbers here reflect development more in Maricopa than Pinal.

Source: Central Arizona Association of Governments.



Across Pinal, approximately 650,000 units, mostly single-family homes, have already been entitled on private land. Potential development on state trust land could add thousands more. The 2007 sale of Lost Dutchman Heights, which was comprised of 1,800 acres of trust land in Apache Junction, demonstrated the Land Department’s desire to have developers plan bigger tracts in conjunction with local governments. This emerging trend may become the norm, but many unknowns remain. What is clear now is that the current emphasis on single-family residential development leaves few firms building complementary commercial and employment centers. Pinal now suffers from a significant imbalance between jobs and housing, leaving many to commute long distances.

Entities are Familiar with Competition

Arizona’s cities and towns have dealt with growth since the 1950s, and the stories of city beating city for sales tax and jobs are part of the state’s municipal lore. Such sagas make for interesting conversation, but they also over time can create an atmosphere of competition and expectations of conflict. In fact, some of those interviewed predicted that, without a new approach, Pinal’s municipal governments would continue to follow the example of cities in Maricopa County and compete against each other for commercial centers and employers, rather than find ways to benefit the entire region.

Growing Awareness and Citizen Action

Pinal County traditionally has been a rail hub, and many of those interviewed mentioned the railroads as important economic

development assets. Some residents might see them as significant for another reason. The Pinal Board of Supervisors in November 2006 approved a proposal to amend the county’s comprehensive plan and redesignate a piece of state trust land. The change to “urban, industrial, and rural community” paved the way for a major Union Pacific switching yard close to Picacho Peak. The contentious approval process spawned a citizen movement to “Save the Peak.” Opposed also by the Arizona State Parks Department because of the yard’s proximity to Picacho Peak State Park, this experience may be a touchstone for future actions and attitudes among leaders and residents.

Fundamental Characteristics

Pinal’s on-the-ground circumstances require thoughtful action, but they are issues common to many growing, transitioning areas. However, 4 fundamental characteristics differentiate Pinal from other places in Arizona and across the country.

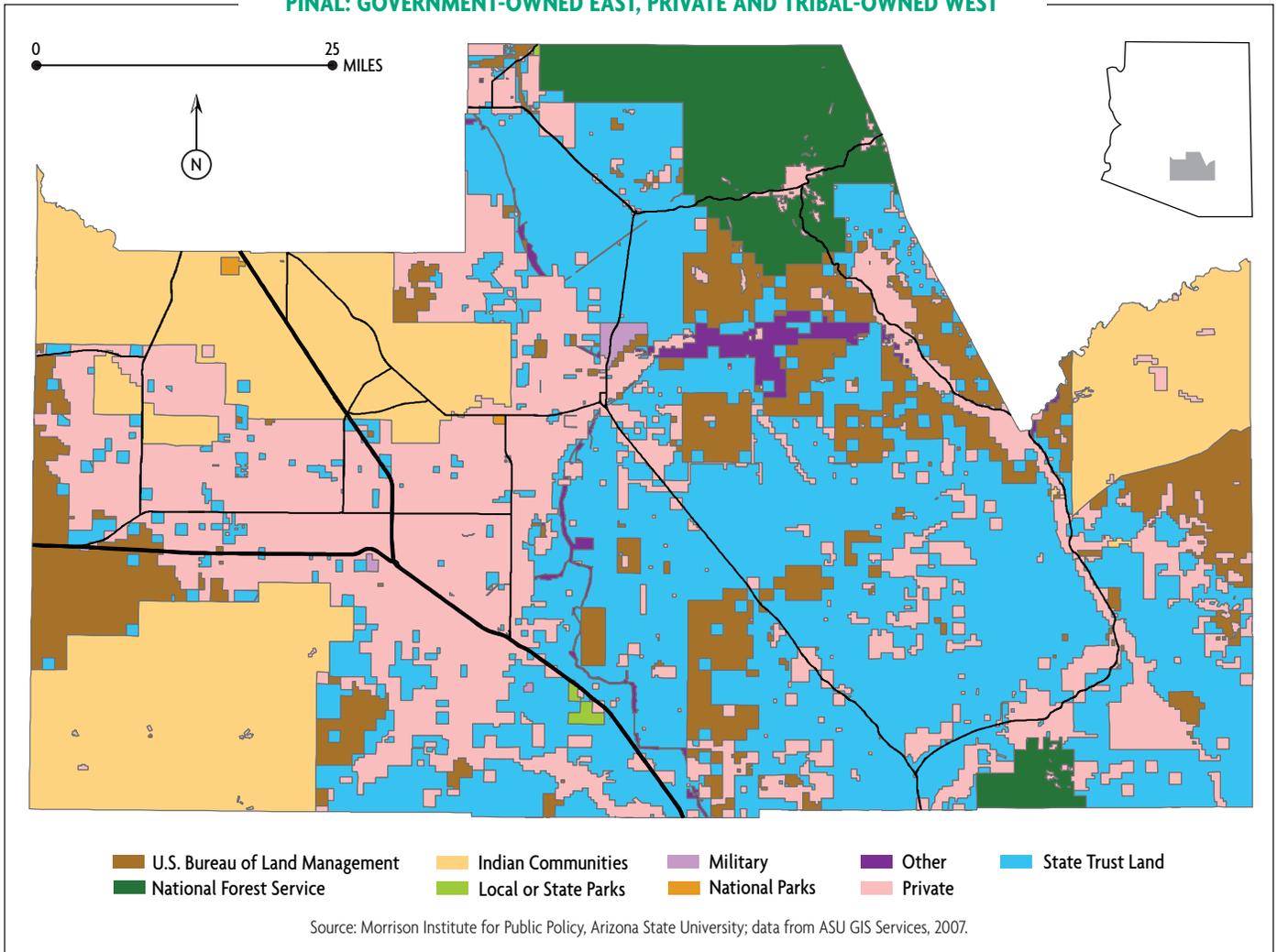
Tribes: Important Partners and Stakeholders for Pinal

Because of their locations, lands, and histories, the Gila River Indian Community, San Carlos Apache Nation, Ak-Chin Indian Community, and Tohono O’odham Nation have a significant presence and growing influence in Pinal. Throughout this study, many noted that the tribal communities were not well understood or consulted enough by other governments and organizations. In the future, Pinal, municipalities, and the tribes will need a new model of discussion and collaboration to accommodate mutually acceptable and beneficial means and ends. Similar issues may be found in each Indian community, but each also has its own circumstances.

It’s so slam-dunk easy to make lots of money off residential development. But it’s short-term profits and short-term cash flow. There’s no incentive on the private sector side to do anything except residential.

Pinal Leader

PINAL: GOVERNMENT-OWNED EAST, PRIVATE AND TRIBAL-OWNED WEST



22

Until recently – almost within living memory – the Gila and its tributaries formed the most important river system in the Southwestern heartland, draining an area of 250,000 square miles.... Without the river the great prehistoric civilizations of the Southwest would not have risen. Without it the histories of Spain, Mexico, and the United States would have been markedly different, and markedly poorer.

Gregory McNamee, *Gila: The Life and Death of an American River*.

• **Ak-Chin Indian Community**

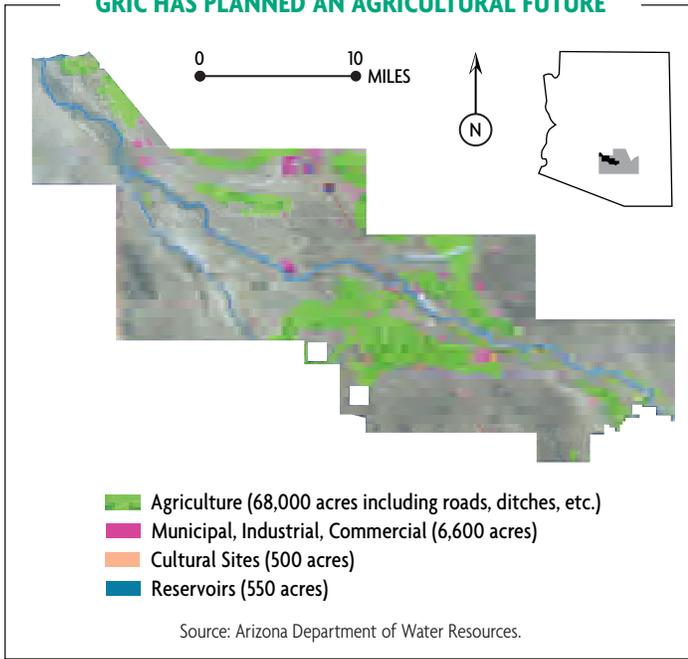
The Ak-Chin Indian Community lies in the northwest portion of Pinal, south of the City of Maricopa. When Maricopa was an unincorporated farming community next to the Ak-Chin lands, cooperation was reportedly the norm. Now, rapid growth has strained old ties. With nearly 22,000 acres of land (15,000 is designated for agriculture) and 762 members, Ak-Chin is a small, but growing, community in which gaming revenue is providing new resources for tribal development. However, Ak-Chin is surrounded by urban growth over which it has little or no control. Maricopa's population explosion has brought Ak-Chin such issues as: road construction on Ak-Chin to ease Maricopa's traffic,

wastewater discharge along Ak-Chin community borders, conflicts over agricultural spraying near new developments, and archeological sites uncovered by construction projects. These are just the first of many issues likely to come up between these communities where the leaders remember the "good old days," but now face a new time.

• **Gila River Indian Community**

The Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) encompasses roughly 373,000 acres in the center of the Sun Corridor. Long a farming culture, the GRIC plans to continue that agricultural tradition well into the future. The community is sandwiched between the growth in southeastern Maricopa

GRIC HAS PLANNED AN AGRICULTURAL FUTURE



County and the development in western Pinal. Spillover pressures are already clear in transportation and other issues. Many in Maricopa and Pinal counties would like to see roads and other infrastructure across the GRIC, but the Indian Community also has its own needs and goals in mind. GRIC's gaming proceeds and tribal initiatives in recent years are transforming communications, health-care, and opportunities for members.

- **San Carlos Apache Nation**

The San Carlos Apache Nation includes about 1.86 million acres, only a portion of which is in Pinal. The Nation's land nearest to Pinal is a wild, rugged landscape, and Pinal is currently planning to integrate its protected open spaces with the Nation's land. Opportunities exist for Pinal to partner with the San Carlos Apache Nation and Gila County on an open space plan of enormous scale.

- **Tohono O'odham Nation**

Like the San Carlos Apache Nation, The Tohono O'odham Nation is immense in area with almost 2.9 million acres, most of which are in Pima County. While only a small portion of this land is in Pinal, new development along the borders of the Tohono O'odham Nation could produce many of the same issues currently impacting the Ak-Chin and the GRIC.

Pinal, Agriculture, Water, Land, and Indian Communities

There is a simple truth about Pinal and water. The region is not just in the center of Arizona's emerging Sun Corridor, but at ground zero for another critical future: the relationship of water and growth.

Of the state's 5 Active Management Areas (a designation of the 1980 **Groundwater Management Act (GMA)** that is intended to reduce the state's reliance on mined groundwater), parts of Pinal are in 3 of them, while another portion of the county is not in any. When the GMA was developed more than 25 years ago, Pinal was viewed as an area that would remain agricultural, rather than become a mix of cities and farms.

In 1998, an estimated 1,026,373 acre feet of water was used in the Pinal Active Management Area (AMA), with more than 90% of the water going to agriculture. Those numbers paint a picture of the old Arizona, where water was moved great distances and managed to grow crops. Indeed, the Pinal AMA was designed around preserving the county's agricultural economy. For Phoenix and Tucson, the goal of the GMA was "safe yield." In Pinal, "planned depletion" was just fine.

Arizonans largely view agriculture as a holding zone. In part, farmers and city dwellers in Arizona get along well because crops and houses are grown in the same place. In California when urbanization takes place on the coast, developers must grab water from farmers in the central valleys. In Arizona, we convert farmland to urban land at the same time that we convert agricultural water to urban water. Left to the free market, agriculture ultimately will disappear as the urban population grows and water flows toward higher-value uses.

However, municipal and industrial water is fundamentally different than agricultural water. In times of shortage, farmers can be told that they cannot plant their crops. That water can then migrate to the higher-priced and less-interruptible urban uses. If the urban population increases to where it requires the entire available water supply, that safety valve is lost.

Pinal lies squarely in this trajectory. "Planned depletion" and the mechanism of the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District make urbanization relatively simple, with little focus required on the water management consequences. But there is still time, and need, to debate whether the conversion of fields

...other environmental stresses and economic dislocations will be felt long before growth reaches the theoretical limits of Arizona's water supply.

Suzanna Eden and Sharon B. Megdal, *Arizona's Rapid Growth and Development*, Arizona Town Hall, 2006.

to houses is inevitable and acceptable. Two factors make Pinal different than other places in Arizona.

Pinal's first difference is that it functions physically as Arizona's principal water bank. Some 2.3 million acre feet of renewable surface water supplies have been "banked" in Pinal County through direct and indirect recharge. In addition, a new rule in the Pinal AMA – in which much of Pinal's future growth will occur – will require water users to recharge 90% of water pumped out of the ground.

Second, and even more significantly, the Gila River Indian Community has settled its claims in exchange for the right to 328,000 acre feet of Central Arizona Project (CAP) water. The GRIC's stated intention is to use the CAP water as well as other sources for agriculture, their historical industry. The GRIC expects to prepare thousands more acres for cultivation with its 653,500 acre feet of water. The future of agriculture in central Arizona belongs to the Native Americans of Pinal County.

The relationships between long-term agricultural use, urban growth, and the ultimate sustainable size of the Sun Corridor still have not been debated seriously. The Arizona Department of Water Resources assumes that 750,000-1.4 million people can live sustainably in Pinal with available renewable water supplies. However, this assumes that such supplies remain available. Many who participated in this research stressed that Pinal should consider its water resources to be limited and start a strong conservation program now. Clearly, the debate must start in Pinal.

Pinal's Potentially Most Influential Landowners

One of the most striking of Pinal's characteristics is how much land is tribally and publicly owned. The Indian Communities, the holdings of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the Arizona State Land Department together account for the majority of Pinal. Private land comprises less than a quarter of Pinal's territory, although that is still hundreds of square miles.

- **Federal Land**

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Guard are the biggest of the federal land management agencies with holdings in Pinal, but they are not the only ones. This multi-agency ownership is complicated not just by federal bureaucracy, but by the dual missions these agencies often carry out. For example, BLM is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior and manages 261 million acres across the U.S. and approximately 300,000 in Pinal. BLM's mission embraces both "land-based uses" and "conservation." The National Forest Service oversees 6% of Pinal and again must manage a "land of many uses." At the

same time, recreation has been a traditional focus, and federal agencies have been significant partners in such activities as the Middle Gila Conservation Area plan, a combination of private recreational interests and public agencies. Depending on the goal, federal ownership can be an asset, a drawback, or neither, but it is always of consequence.

- **Arizona State Land Department**

The Arizona State Land Department manages roughly 9 million acres of state trust land across Arizona, and about 35% of the land in Pinal. The Land Department's constitutional charge is to maximize the revenue from these lands for the Trust beneficiaries – mainly Arizona's public schools. Superstition Vistas in northern Pinal and other large, continuous stretches of state trust land dominate the central part of the county from Apache Junction to Oracle. High hopes for state trust land reform in recent years, which would have allowed conservation, more planning, and greater local government participation, have not been realized. This puts Pinal on an interesting tightrope between what the Land Department must do and what Pinal and its municipalities would like it to do. In the eyes of many interviewed for **The Future at Pinal**, the Arizona State Land Department too often plans its tracts in isolation. The feeling was strong that the attention paid by Pinal's stakeholders to the state was rarely reciprocated by the Land Department. Many voiced a desire for a bigger role in Land Department decisions.

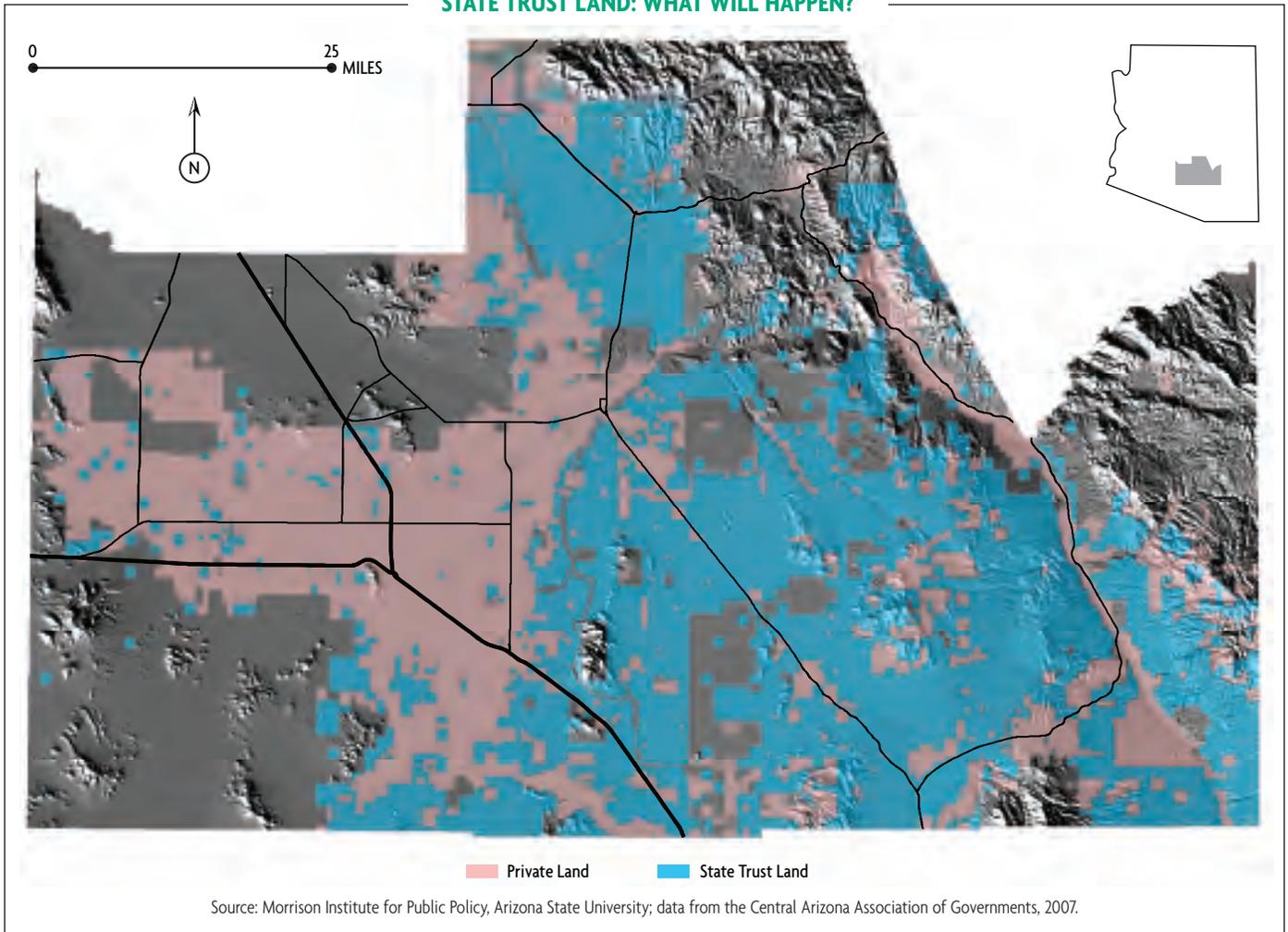
- **Arizona State Parks**

Pinal benefits from 4 state parks, Lost Dutchman, McFarland, Picacho Peak, and Oracle. While these long-term properties are relatively small and of a different nature than the miles managed by the State Land Department and BLM, they could still play meaningful parts in Pinal's future. In the northern part of Pinal, Lost Dutchman offers an experience of the Superstition Mountains. Florence's historic McFarland Park anchors one end of Main Street. Picacho Peak features nature and history. Oracle's Center for Environmental Education is in the Santa Catalina Mountains in the very southern part of Pinal. The state parks deserve attention as contributors to meaningful open space and the use of history and heritage to differentiate communities.

Cities have a tendency to think that the world is flat – that everyone falls off at their corporate limits. They don't realize that they're sitting in a region. They need to start thinking regionally.

Pinal Leader

STATE TRUST LAND: WHAT WILL HAPPEN?



A Network of Changing Municipalities

- Florence was one of the earliest settlements in Pinal County.
- Oracle was first a gold mine and then a community.
- Coolidge took its name from the Coolidge Dam.
- Casa Grande was once called Terminus because the railroad stopped there.
- Eloy was almost known as Cotton City.
- Superior and Mammoth were named for the quality of the resources to be mined.
- Apache Junction marks the intersection of Route 60 and Highway 88, but also a long history of American Indian settlement.

Pinal's cities and towns are indeed rich with history. Their backgrounds provide insights about why places are like they are today and why Pinal has not had one dominant place.

The current reality, however, is that much of the county is changing by design and by happenstance from farming and mining towns

to something else. This fundamental characteristic does not have to mean that the "ruralness" will be lost forever everywhere. But a renewed commitment will be needed for public and private sector officials to meet the challenge of leading Pinal through some potentially tricky transitions.

The transitions will be different across Pinal because of the different histories, assets, and desires of various communities. But all will have some similar issues, including:

- What does smart growth mean in places that have experienced density as something to be avoided?
- How can a new "rurban" outlook bring together the best of rural and urban together?
- What do residents need to know about the past to participate fully in planning Pinal's future?

When Florence, Casa Grande, Oracle, Superior, and other cities and towns began, each developed the civic and commercial cores they needed. Today, the next step will take more thought, leadership, and communication.

THE FUTURE PINAL'S LEADERS AND RESIDENTS HAVE IN MIND

A recent overview of small-town trends noted, “areas with significant natural amenities, recreational opportunities or quality of life advantages have new prospects for growth and development. Many non-metropolitan areas that are seeing significant population growth benefit from scenic landscapes, mild climates, proximity to rapidly growing metropolitan areas, or a combination of these elements.”³ Much of that description from the University of New Hampshire’s Carsey Institute explains why Pinal and its cities are growing, but it does not explore how people feel about their places now. To understand residents’ feelings about Pinal’s quality of life was the major purpose behind a representative telephone survey with 600 residents from throughout Pinal. In addition, interviews with more than 50 of Pinal’s public, private, and nonprofit leaders⁴ focused on what leaders want to see – and to avoid – in the next 20-30 years. This effort revealed similarities and differences in outlooks among leaders and residents.

MOST PINAL RESIDENTS SAY THE REGION'S QUALITY OF LIFE IS "EXCELLENT" OR "GOOD"

Excellent..17% | Fair19%
 Good63% | Poor.....1%

Source: Pinal Public Opinion Survey, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

QUALITY OF LIFE COMPONENTS BREAK INTO TWO TIERS,* BUT ALL ARE "VERY IMPORTANT" TO MANY

Primary

1. Healthcare
2. Public safety
3. Economy
4. Education
5. Environment
6. Transportation

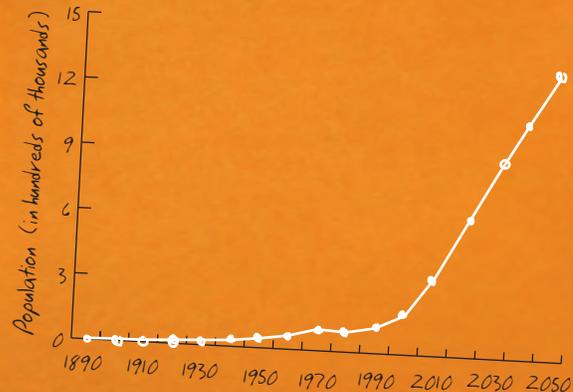
Secondary

7. Family friendly communities
8. Sense of community
9. Arts, culture, and recreation

* Ranked from high to low "very important" responses.

Source: Pinal Public Opinion Survey, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

PINAL HAS HAD A FEW RESIDENTS UNTIL VERY RECENTLY



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Arizona Department of Economic Security, 2007.

3 Demographic Trends in Rural and Small Town America, 2006.

4 Interviews and focus groups were held in Florence, Apache Junction, Coolidge, Casa Grande, Oracle, Superior, Eloy and other places throughout Pinal County from November 2006 through March 2007. A total of 600 full-time adult residents (18+ years old) of Pinal County were interviewed by telephone from January 31 through February 15, 2007. The random sample representative survey included each portion of the region and has a margin of error of ± 3%.

Good Feelings about Pinal's Quality of Life Contrast with Warning Signs

The vast majority of survey respondents expressed satisfaction with their communities. This feeling stemmed chiefly from an appreciation for Pinal's "quiet", "friendly", "safe" small towns. People often said they chose Pinal for its smaller places and the opportunity to "be away from the big city." However, affordable housing was mentioned as often as small towns. Satisfaction with their communities was also related to high levels of agreement with such statements as:

- I have quality medical care and emergency services nearby.
- I live in a community where I can walk or bike to neighborhood shops, parks, and other services.
- Schools are as good as in Phoenix and Tucson.

Ratings of quality of life in the region complement the feelings of personal satisfaction. Eight out of 10 respondents said quality of life in Pinal is "excellent" or "good." When asked to rate the importance of 9 areas to the region's quality of life, residents

were reluctant to say anything was not "very important." For example, essentially 9 out of 10 respondents said healthcare, public safety, economy, education, environment, and transportation are "very important" to quality of life. The second tier of issues had lower ratings, but still 7 out of 10 said family friendly communities and sense of community are "very important;" 6 out of 10 felt that arts, culture, and recreation are "very important." In Pinal, the consistently high ratings for contributors to quality of life suggest that residents understand the many factors that affect a place's quality and livability.

However, warning signs for Pinal are as evident as satisfaction in the survey responses. For example, 9 out of 10 agreed that "if growth is not properly managed, the quality of life in Pinal County will get worse quickly." Current dissatisfaction came chiefly from growth pressures, including perceptions of increasing crime, desert loss, and inadequate shopping, healthcare, entertainment, and jobs. Three quarters of respondents agreed that "communities are losing their rural character" and 6 out of 10 thought "traffic in Pinal County is a major problem." In their interviews, Pinal's leaders readily acknowledged the challenges the region faces in

PINAL'S RESIDENTS VALUE THE CLIMATE AND THE SMALL-TOWN SENSIBILITY

Value Most About Living in Pinal*

- Weather and climate
- Away from the city, small-town feeling, rural
- Relaxing, quiet, peaceful, nobody bothers us
- Nice neighbors, everybody gets along
- Value the land, open spaces, scenery, clean air, desert
- Friends and family live here
- Kids are safer here, town is safe, crime rate is low
- Like my home, property
- Convenience, things are close by
- Like that the area is growing
- Town is clean, nice, new, in good shape
- Less traffic and congestion
- Lot of activities, parks, recreation
- Cost of living is low/housing is affordable
- Good soil, can grow crops
- Close to Phoenix and Tucson

Dislike Most About Living in Pinal*

- Area is growing too much, too many people
- Lack of stores, shopping
- Not many things to do here
- Roads are in bad shape
- Crime and drugs
- Lack of jobs
- Dirt and dust
- Too much traffic
- Weather, too hot, too dry
- Town is too small, too far from the big cities
- Too much construction
- Schools are poor, not well funded
- Shortage of police/poor police protection
- Lack of healthcare facilities
- Poor government services, county is ignored by the state
- Too far from family
- Taxes are high
- Politicians
- "Snowbirds"
- Lack of street lights
- Lack of services for senior citizens
- Lack of transportation services

*Coded responses to open-ended questions are presented in order from most to least responses.

Source: Pinal Public Opinion Survey, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

STRONG POINTS AND WARNING SIGNS ARE TWO SIDES OF THE COIN



STRONG POINTS⁵ ← → WARNING SIGNS

- It's what I was looking for in my retirement. ← → It's becoming noisy and population is growing.
- We could afford the house that we bought. ← → They are building a lot of houses and they are not planning it very well.
- It's a nice place to live and all of my family is living here. ← → There is presently too much competition amongst the cities...Basically, the leaders don't look outside their borders, so they don't see what they're creating regionally.
- It is a safe and peaceful place to live. ← → It was a peaceful place to live but now there are too many people.
→ The county is getting a lot of violence...a lot of crime issues.
- Nice little town...great friendly community... good place to watch kids to grow up. ← → My older kids always whine how boring this town is.
→ I don't like that there are not enough good jobs.
- The soil...I can grow my crops. ← → There are too many farmers and too much pollution.
- I love the desert, the weather, and the stars at night. ← → People don't protect the desert anymore. They don't care. They just want big houses everywhere.
- The traffic is not a problem in this town. ← → They need to have more public transportation available.
- The traffic in big towns drives me crazy, but not in this town. ← → I really hate the morning traffic, it drives me crazy.
- I like living in an isolated desert to see the sunrise and sunset and have the best views. ← → Rural areas are disappearing because a lot of people are moving in.
- I value the desert – the feeling of being here and working in this area makes me feel young again. ← → The desert is disappearing.

5 Verbatim comments are taken from the Pinal County Public Opinion Survey and interviews with leaders. Comments have been edited for clarity.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

coping with rapid changes. From roads and infrastructure to social needs and quickly paving over farmland and desert, leaders conveyed their concerns about many of the same warning signs residents noted. Nearly every leader expressed concerns about water supplies. At the same time, approximately 7 out of 10 residents supported increasing water conservation programs.

Transportation was a more top-of-mind issue among leaders than among residents, although it was considered “very important” by residents as a quality of life component and residents expressed willingness to pay for improvements. With population straining highway capacity and transit all but nonexistent, leaders want to see solutions put in place quickly. Major components of leaders’ vision for greater mobility include planning where roads and highways will go, acquiring rights-of-way early on, and constructing the appropriate roadway sections as development

occurs. It also includes development of an efficient, multi-modal public transit system with such items as extensions of the Valley Metro light rail system, commuter rail across Pinal, and local and express bus services similar to the Phoenix “Rapid” lines. Transportation solutions also highlight walkable communities to provide everyone with access to jobs, amenities, and services independent of car ownership. As one person noted, “A high-speed rail line through Florence could completely redefine growth in Pinal County.”

Consensus among leaders on transportation was evident, as was the need to unite and work together to make progress. Otherwise, the competition for state and federal transportation resources might be too stiff. “We’re realizing that we need to join forces and become a united player if we’re going to get noticed within the state and beyond the state.”

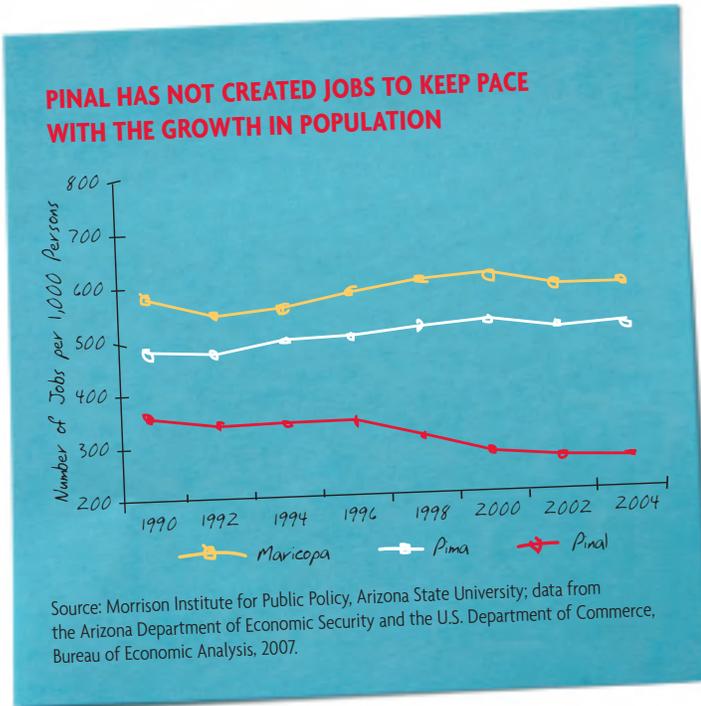
Everyone Wants Good Jobs for Pinal

Pinal's leaders repeatedly said that more career pay – career path jobs are critical to Pinal's future, and residents certainly appear to agree. Leaders urged their colleagues to adopt a regional, collaborative approach to attracting and developing new employers, while residents supported the public and private

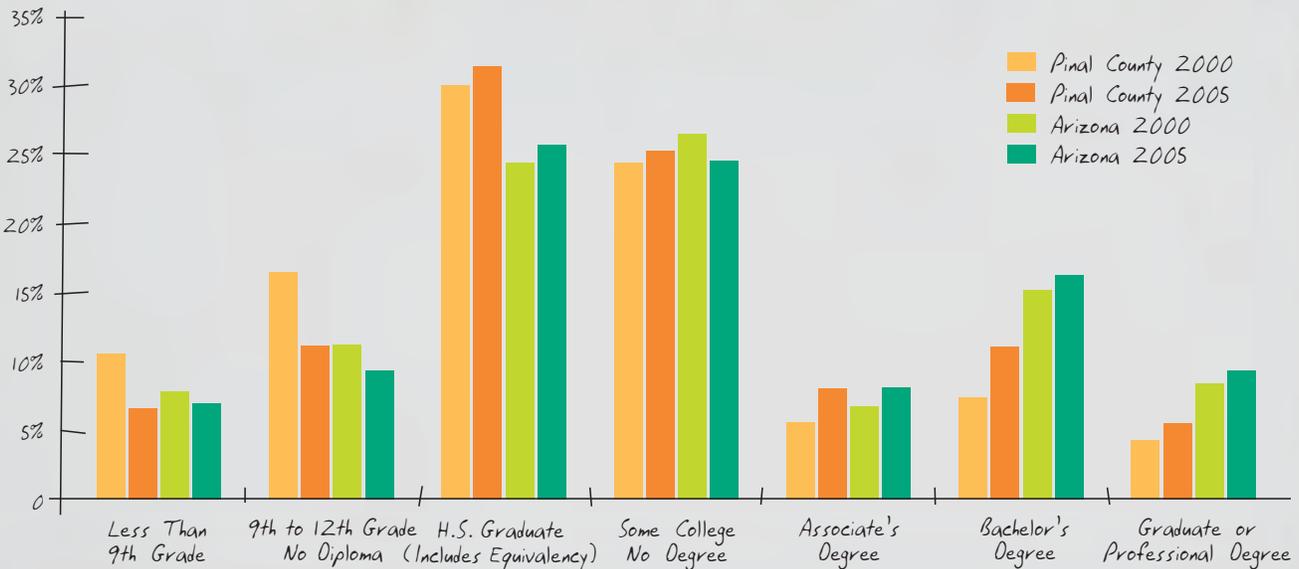
sectors working together to attract high-quality jobs to all parts of the county. The regional cooperative approach, according to those interviewed, would help funnel desired jobs to the most appropriate locations, and it could prevent communities from fighting needless tax incentive battles by presenting a unified front to businesses. While leaders felt that collaborative economic development is essential, they said it can only be accomplished if suitable land is permanently set aside for job centers.

Among 5 scenarios, nearly 70% of the survey respondents wanted Pinal to be known nationally in 20 years for “helping everyone to make a good living” or “having good jobs close to home.” Prosperity is perceived to have been out of reach for many. Almost 7 out of 10 respondents agreed that “families in Pinal have a hard time making ends meet,” and “Pinal doesn't have enough good jobs.” To underscore the desire for quality employment, the “economy” and “education” ranked in the top tier of items “very important” to quality of life. In addition, again 9 out of 10 respondents agreed “Pinal County should help every person who needs it with education and training for a good job.”

Pinal's population – and thus this representative set of survey respondents – is weighted to those with high school diplomas or some college. These groups view education as “very important.” They also see Pinal as having quality higher education available.



PINAL'S EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IS IMPROVING, BUT STILL FALLS SHORT OF THE ARIZONA AVERAGE



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.



Basically, the best hope for Pinal County is a dependence for a while on jobs located in Maricopa and Pima, but then as the residential labor market develops, you'll need creation of jobs so you have jobs-housing balance in the county. And that creation of jobs to jobs-housing balance, that's going to take many, many years, maybe 25 plus, but the county ought to have that as a goal.

Pinal Leader

However, according to most of the leaders interviewed, higher education is an area where Pinal has a start, but numerous gaps. The region, to their minds, will have to expand its capacity, offerings, and quality to meet the demands of employers and to be competitive with other regions.

In fact, leaders (and numerous residents) expressed substantial concerns for the state of education at all levels. To attract quality employers and retain talented newcomers, according to leaders, the region must improve K-12 education, expand its community college system, increase options for training, and offer more higher education choices. Those interviewed also recognized that many already in Pinal's education system, as well as current workers wanting better jobs, need additional family supports such as child care, flexible work schedules, transportation assistance, and access to health insurance to support more training and better jobs.

Agreement is Strong on Unique, "Fair Share" Communities

Residents reported selecting their current communities most often for such items as the small-town sensibility, affordability, family, safety, health, and climate. Residents strongly supported the kinds of policies and programs that would deal with the downsides of growth and improve their communities. Their support also showed that every constituency should do its "fair

share" to have quality communities and opportunities. For example, the vast majority supported charging developers higher fees to build and maintain good infrastructure and a citizens' group to keep track of how Pinal County is doing on its plans and goals. In addition, support was significant for a range of housing affordability in all developments, neighborhood centers where residents can walk to shops, libraries, and other services, and looking to builders for help in keeping desert and open land available for recreation. As many people wanted Pinal to be known for "protecting the desert better than any other place in Arizona" as "having good jobs close to home."

Leaders took the future of Pinal's cities and communities seriously as well. Pinal's leaders want their communities to be distinguishable from one another as well as from places in Maricopa and Pima counties. "They should not try to be like Maricopa or Pima counties. That would be a real mistake; that's why they need to brand themselves and capture the fact that they are in the heart of the megaplex." In addition, "County leaders must look at themselves and say, 'How can we develop within our own boundaries?' They must have the attitude that we are confined and must make best use of our lands to maintain quality of life. If they approach it this way, they will become better managers of the area."

To that end, leaders felt Pinal's development should:

- **FOCUS ON LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY.** As communities are planned, attention should be given to balancing the needs of the environment, economy, and community, ensuring that resources and services are in place, including water, affordable housing, and health services. In addition, quality jobs, commercial services, a conservation ethic, and expanded human services to support new populations must be part of communities from the start rather than trying to add them later.
- **DEVELOP INDEPENDENTLY FROM MARICOPA AND PIMA COUNTIES.** The feeling was "connections yes – dependence no" in terms of the economy and influence of Pinal and its municipalities in relation to the bigger counties north and south.
- **ACKNOWLEDGE AND LEVERAGE THE UNIQUENESS OF EVERY CITY, TOWN, AND PLACE.** The majority of those interviewed noted that most Pinal places, such as downtown Florence, the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, and historic mining communities simply have lacked the resources to polish their assets into true gems. To leverage Pinal's quite different communities, specific place-based strategies were suggested. For example, an eco-tourism strategy is realistic for eastern Pinal.

ACCORDING TO RESIDENTS, EVERYONE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A BETTER PINAL

STATEMENT	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	NO OPINION
Pinal County should charge developers higher fees to build and maintain good infrastructure, like roads and parks.	96%	3%	1%
Cities and Pinal County should share some of their tax revenue with each other so all places benefit from growth.	96%	3%	1%
Governments and businesses in Pinal County should make a formal agreement to work together to attract high-paying jobs to all parts of the county.	95%	4%	1%
I'm willing to pay more to have more public transportation choices, such as buses, trains and park and ride.	95%	4%	1%
I'm willing to pay a toll to make commuting faster.	95%	5%	0%
Pinal County should give farmers incentives to keep agricultural land for farming.	95%	5%	0%
Developers should be required to include jobs and shopping in new neighborhoods.	95%	4%	1%
Builders should pay to keep much of the desert and open land available for recreation.	94%	5%	1%
Sufficient highways, parks, and schools should be built in neighborhoods before people move in.	94%	5%	1%
A citizens' group should keep track of how Pinal County is doing on its plans and goals.	94%	5%	1%
County plans should help create small neighborhood centers where residents can walk to shops, libraries, and other services.	94%	6%	0%
Pinal County should help every person who needs it with education and training for a good job.	93%	5%	2%
Pinal County should require new neighborhoods to have some housing that almost any family can afford.	90%	9%	1%
Pinal County should require more water conservation in homes and businesses.	70%	28%	2%
Pinal County and other agencies should have a formal agreement to work together to keep land for conservation and recreation.	61%	37%	2%

Source: Pinal Public Opinion Survey, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

If nothing is done regarding transportation or economic development, residential (development) will occur until the capacity of the existing road system is built, at which point it will slow down and shut off. I think Johnson Ranch is pretty well shut down right now. There's no way in and out. And without solutions to either creating jobs internally in the county or improving the transportation system, that's inevitably going to slow down.

Pinal Leader

“Fair share” also refers to a substantial interest in cooperation and collaboration among leaders. However, while many recognize the need to work together, a number acknowledged that it would not be an easy task. There reportedly is much to learn about finding consensus and functioning as one. As a leader noted, “There are a lot of issues that are shared, but we don’t necessarily agree on how to get that done and who is going to do the work.”

Respondents definitely favored cooperation among the public and private sectors to get things done in Pinal. In addition, the great majority of residents acknowledge their responsibilities

to issues, such as transportation. Taken together, their outlooks reflect a feeling that government, developers, businesses, and residents each must contribute. For example, residents said they were willing to pay more for transportation improvements and choices. On the other hand, developers should help with schools and parks, while Pinal’s governments should work together to attract high-paying jobs and share tax revenue. While these questions tested broad concepts rather than detailed proposals, the ideas open the way for dialogue on potentially far-reaching collaborative policies and programs and balanced solutions to problems.

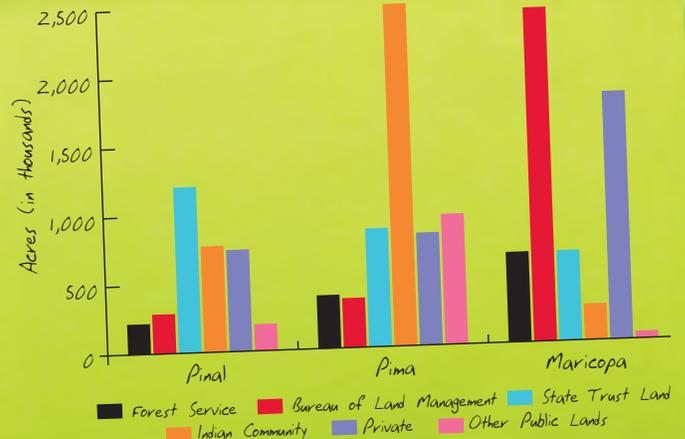
Land and Open Spaces are a Passion and a Concern

Pinal's residents were surprisingly likeminded in most areas, but that doesn't mean there was agreement on everything. For example, half of respondents agreed and half disagreed with "new homes and businesses should be able to be built on any land without restrictions." This outlook potentially conflicts with the substantial weight given to land conservation and open space preservation.

"Environment" was in the top tier of quality of life components, and farmland, open desert, and recreational spaces are a major issue for many, particularly new residents from outside Arizona. While open spaces and land conservation place second to good jobs, there is no question that open spaces are important to Pinal's residents. For example, support again was high for Pinal helping farmers to keep agricultural land in production. Six out of 10 respondents supported Pinal and other agencies having a "formal agreement to work together to keep land for conservation and recreation." This is somewhat less than support for other policies, yet approval remains substantial, and it is a concept that was newer and, perhaps, harder to understand than some others. The support is strong enough for all questions related to open space that these issues could easily become more visible and critical as residents watch open land, farms, and traditional recreational spots disappear.

A passion for protecting Pinal's land certainly stood out among leaders, whether they were from an environmental organization, a business, or a public agency. Leaders, perhaps, see a bigger picture when it comes to open land differentiating Pinal from other places. Or, they may be more knowledgeable of how much new housing and development are in the pipeline. In any event, leaders, almost to a person, conveyed that they want Pinal to be known as a place that not only protected huge sections of land for preservation and recreation, but also connected open spaces for wildlife and recreation and preserved a variety of land types and ecosystems. Many noted that preserving just the mountains in eastern Pinal would be insufficient. Protection should extend to large swaths of the western "flatlands," including agricultural and desert lands.

MUCH OF PINAL IS STATE TRUST LAND



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Arizona Statistical Abstract, The University of Arizona, 2007.

Pinal Must Stand Out from Maricopa and Pima Counties

Leaders expressed a strong desire for Pinal to create its own identity and avoid becoming merely an extension of, or bedroom community for, Maricopa and Pima counties. Nearly all of the leaders remarked on the shortcomings of Maricopa and Pima, while admiring their many assets and political clout. Pinal's leaders clearly said their hope is to maintain and capitalize on their region's uniqueness and create quality places, even in the face of growth.

Life in Pinal Isn't for Everyone, But Most Residents Expect to Stay

A common assumption is that, because Pinal is so big and diverse, location will account for differences in public opinion. However in this survey, time seems to trump place. In other words, how long residents have been in Pinal and the length they expect to stay appear to affect their feelings about their communities more than where they live. Where people came from also played a part in their outlooks. For example:

What we're hearing more and more is the need for authenticity. The real thing. People want places where they're comfortable, where they feel like they can connect with other people. Those are precious communities and we don't have enough, even though everyone wants them.

Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces, Urbanite Magazine, August 2006.

- A quarter of the respondents are not expecting to make a long-term commitment (more than 4 years) to Pinal, although others expect to stay for long periods.
- A sizeable proportion of those from outside Arizona are “footloose.” Many of these respondents are more apt to disagree with such items as “schools are as good in Pinal as in Phoenix and Tucson.” They are also most attuned to economic issues such as good jobs.
- Those who moved from another place in Pinal are more likely to want Pinal to be known for a good living for all and protecting the desert.
- Former metro Phoenix residents are more likely to want jobs close to home. Those from outside Arizona and Pinal’s established residents are more likely to want protect the desert.
- This survey shows Pinal residents as savvy consumers who generally have chosen to be where they are. Thus, they represent an asset in planning Pinal’s future. Research has shown that people are predisposed to think of their choices positively and to want to maintain and improve their special places. Those who have the deepest roots are most satisfied, while those with the shortest time in the region are the most dissatisfied. Knowledge of the region may make for good feelings, but it may also lead residents to settle for less or be less likely to question the status quo.

Once you start making a public investment [for rehabilitation of run-down buildings], you all of a sudden see private investment coming along with individuals saying “I need to do that, too.”

Pinal Leader

Pinal’s Shared Interests: Cooperation, Identity, and Quality

Leaders and residents share concerns about jobs, open land, and the pressures of adapting to rapid growth. Residents appear to be open to ideas that are popular with leaders, such as an emphasis on high-wage jobs, employment centers, and public/private cooperation. With substantial consensus on the top-line level, Pinal’s residents and leaders appear to be ready to consider tools that would help to address the concerns they share. They also seem to share a vision for the region that is built on shared responsibility for cooperation, identity, and quality.

RESPONDENTS FOCUSED ON JOBS AND THE DESERT FOR THE FUTURE

Respondents were asked to imagine Pinal County in the next 20 years and select what they wanted Pinal to be known for throughout the U.S.

Scenario	%
Helping residents to make a good living	48%
Having many good jobs close to home	21%
Protecting the desert better than any other place in Arizona	21%
A vibrant downtown and distinct identity in every city	5%
Solving transportation problems better than anyone else	4%
No opinion	1%

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.



SURVEY RESPONDENTS CAME FROM ARIZONA AND OTHER STATES*

- 33% from metro Phoenix or metro Tucson
- 30% from outside of Arizona
- 21% said they had moved from another place in Pinal
- 11% from elsewhere in Arizona

* Among residents who have been in their current Pinal places for less than 10 years 46% of the total had lived in Pinal for 10 years or more. Figures may not total 100 due to the “no response” category.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

There’s lots of room at the table for folks to become engaged, we just need to set the table.

Pinal Leader

BIG IDEAS FOR FUTURE-ORIENTED THINKING

Pinal cannot escape the strains common to growing regions, but Pinal's leaders and residents can apply the best ideas to their situation. People and places known for innovation are implementing 4 big concepts.

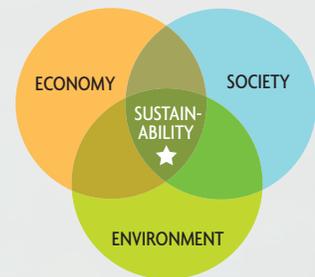
Sustainability: Meeting Current Needs Without Harming the Future

Many urban experts have embraced sustainability because the concept focuses in part on creating balance among competing interests and issues. Sustainability is often defined as “meeting the needs of present generations, while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”⁶ Increasingly, governments, businesses, and organizations everywhere are putting sustainability into practice as:

- An overarching value that requires using the best practices at every level of every organization every day
- A policy framework for creating and monitoring strong economies, healthy environments, and equitable opportunities
- A flexible planning model for local, state, and national programs

- A new mantra that reinforces the part everyone plays in ensuring a quality future

Because of the desire for balance among the economy, environment, and society and improvement in each simultaneously, sustainability places as much importance on redevelopment as development. A sustainable community is likely to have the ability to adapt to new circumstances and bounce back from problems.



6 Our Common Future, United Nations, 1987.



Competitiveness is Livability and Vice Versa

From economic development expert Michael Porter to creative class guru Richard Florida, nearly everyone concerned with economic growth confirms that quality jobs and quality places go hand in hand. Thus, “livability” is an increasingly prominent topic because it acknowledges the many tangible and intangible inputs that shape residents’ daily existence. Livability takes into account what gives a place distinction, what is worth protecting, and what needs improving. Most important, perhaps, is that it acknowledges the many decisions and public policies required to create, maintain, and increase livability. Competitiveness – the capacity to meet expectations, determine advantages, and build on both in a changing environment – depends on the quality of people and places, and that requires a focus on livability.



Smart Growth: Intelligent, Balanced Development That Preserves the Best of the Past

The question is not whether Pinal will grow, but how it will grow. The phrase “smart growth” covers a wide range of issues and options that relate directly to the opinions and desires of Pinal’s leaders and residents. The national Smart Growth Network⁷ lists 10 “placemaking” principles:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Take advantage of compact building design

7 Smart Growth Online www.smartgrowth.org.



Keeping Score to Stay on Track

Regional leaders are often asked “How are we doing?” or “How competitive are we?” This need to know reflects a need to keep score, whether through benchmarks, indexes, or some other method. Among sustainability experts, keeping score means watching trajectories. Is a place on the “right” or “wrong” path in critical areas? For Pinal, in other words, do measurable indicators show the county is:

- Maintaining and improving the policies and conditions that are helping it move ahead?
- Changing the policies and conditions that are moving it away from balance?

Many places have created indicators for quality of life and competitiveness. Since 1997, Morrison Institute has collected and published data for its series on quality of life, **What Matters in Greater Phoenix**. The San Diego region charts its trajectories toward sustainable competitiveness using indicators such as standard of living, air quality, income distribution, housing affordability, early childhood education, and investments in waste management, water supply, and transportation. San Diego’s leaders also compare their region to 18 competitor metros including Seattle, Denver, and Phoenix.

COUNTY STRATEGIES FOR MAKING STRONG PLACES

Pinal faces huge, but not unprecedented, growth challenges. Other counties in the U.S. have dealt with comparable conditions. Their experiences offer a number of insights for Pinal. Rapid growth in unincorporated places creates new demand for “urban style” services. Counties have sometimes sought to limit this impact by directing growth toward cities and towns – a policy that also promotes higher density and the preservation of farmland and open spaces. Counties have also adapted in other ways.

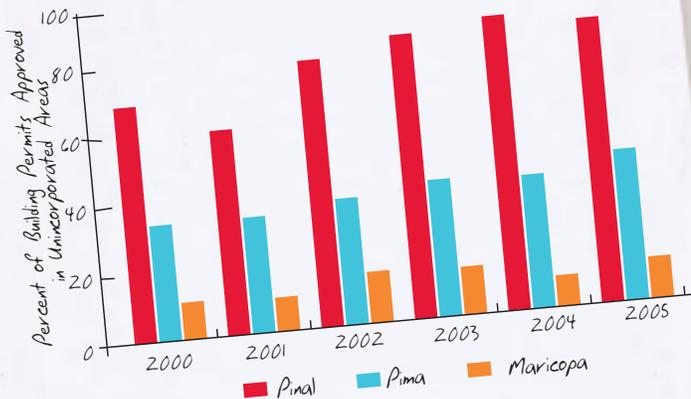
Counties Learned to Cooperate

36 Increased urbanization has sometimes led to sweeping structural changes. Dramatic changes, however, are not the norm. Most counties keep the system they have, working to increase sophistication rather than to change governance models.

Jurisdictional cooperation is a path that many governments have taken when facing regional challenges. Cooperative activities built around contracts and agreements, participation in regional bodies, and closer informal contacts are widespread, although they may be slow to develop. Unfortunately, cooperation can be undercut by intense competition among municipalities for tax revenue, land, and businesses. It may take a crisis to galvanize public attention and official action. But over time, counties and municipalities have worked together to:

- restrict where homes and businesses can locate
- require builders to pay for schools and roads
- encourage infill
- draw rural buffers around towns
- create boundaries beyond which services will not be expanded
- purchase open space
- implement rural density transfer zoning to save agricultural land
- ration building permits and phase-in development
- impose adequate facilities ordinances
- encourage developer donations of land for schools, parks, or other amenities
- impose impact fees

IN PINAL MORE AND MORE RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS ARE APPROVED OUTSIDE OF CITIES



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

Counties Changed to Reduce Duplication and Increase Efficiency

In recent decades, regions seeking to cope with growth-related problems have looked first to county governments because they are multi-purpose, politically accountable entities with broad jurisdictions. Across the U.S., counties and other entities have changed to make the most of resources, including:

Transferred Functions from Municipalities to Counties

To end duplication and make use of economies of scale, many entities have transferred functions to counties. For example, many counties have assumed responsibilities from municipalities for libraries or street repairs. Increasingly, they have also become the logical choice for such services as transit, waste management, and healthcare.

Combined City and County Departments

City and county governments also have found it effective to combine their common departments. This “functional consolidation” has worked for police, health, and human services departments, among others. Municipalities have also combined such services among themselves to reduce costs.

Provided Services by Contract

Los Angeles County provides many services to municipalities under contract. Each city or town purchases the services it needs from the county, rather than operate its own departments for such things as police and health services. Incorporating within the county remains worthwhile, however, because municipalities can maintain control over planning and zoning, receive state aid, and protect themselves against annexation.

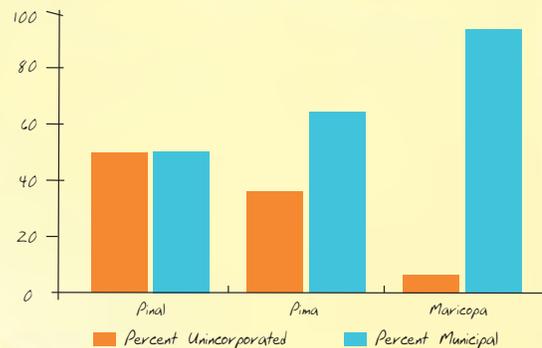
Elected County Chief Executive

This system separates county legislative and executive authority between a council and an elected executive. Its strength is that the executive provides an obvious political leader who can communicate with other elected officials and bring a sharper public focus to county problems. Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee currently mandate elected executives for their counties.

Secured County Home Rule

To ease the restrictions of state mandates, some counties have established home rule, usually with voter and/or state legislative approval. Home rule gives counties greater discretion in choosing management structures, more power to initiate actions, and less state interference overall. In 1992, Arizona voters

HALF OF PINAL'S POPULATION LIVES IN AN UNINCORPORATED AREA



Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University; data from the Arizona Department of Economic Security, 2007.

approved a constitutional amendment authorizing home rule in counties with more than 500,000 people, but efforts to adopt home rule have failed in Pima and Maricopa counties thus far.

Federated, Consolidated, and Districted

Some county governments have turned to unique governing systems to regionalize. Dade County, Florida, adopted a federated system in 1957 when it created “Metro,” a union of 26 municipalities. Metro provides regional services, sets standards for any city-provided service within its boundaries, and takes over when municipalities fail to meet standards. Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee, uses a city-county consolidation structure, one of about 30 across the country. It is governed by a county mayor and a council of 40 members, and provides nearly all rural and urban services. Portland, Oregon’s Metropolitan Service District is a regional multi-purpose government with the ability to raise revenue. Minnesota’s Metropolitan Council plans and coordinates development for Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and 7 counties. It also operates the regional transit system and raises revenues through property taxes. The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority addresses regional problems, operates a transit system, and controls highway construction in a 13-county area.

Some Counties Looked Ahead, While Others Revealed Trial-and-Error Lessons

Leaders of Pinal and its municipal governments are likely to become increasingly involved in the governance of a broader urban complex known as the Arizona Sun Corridor, a megapolitan region, which encompasses portions of 6 Arizona counties and includes 57 municipalities. The Sun Corridor is also home to hundreds of other governmental units, but no entity is concerned with the welfare of the entire Sun Corridor, nor is one equipped to tackle planning, transportation, or other matters on such a huge scale. What type of governing arrangements will develop for the Sun Corridor is currently unclear. Pinal's ability to play a part in determining that will depend on its capacity to provide services at home and work with others on issues beyond its boundaries.

Counties across the country have provided many models of adaptation and innovation. Will Pinal follow along and represent the best in 21st century placemaking or be known only for the opportunities lost?



Montgomery County currently has a population of nearly 1 million. Created in 1776, Montgomery County was a rural farming area governed by a county commission for its first 150 years. With better transportation systems after the Civil War, the area soon became a Washington, D.C. suburb and population continued to grow rapidly. In 1941, The Brookings Institution recommended changes in county governance. Voters approved home rule in 1942, but the charter, creating a council-manager government, was not approved until 1948 after three rejections at the polls. The population continued growing explosively. In 1968, voters adopted a new charter that gave legislative power to an elected

council and executive power to an elected county executive. In the 1970s, suburbanization gave way to more dense urbanization. The county also took on police/fire, libraries, economic development, and environmental protection. In 1980, a 93,000 acre agricultural reserve was created on a third of the county's land to save farmland and push growth to areas "down county" with more infrastructure. In 2005, the county approved a new "planning paradigm" that would foster greater density while addressing quality of life problems.



Los Angeles used to be the place no one wanted to be from. That was when Orange County became the favored address. Of course, it also has Mickey Mouse and an ocean, but Orange County has long been the "anti-L.A." The California Legislature carved Orange County out of Los Angeles County in 1889. In mid-century, the area began shifting from rural to urban as its population doubled between 1960 and 1970 and again by 2000. Currently, over 3 million people reside in Orange County, one of California's densest counties. California counties possess only those powers delegated by the Legislature and may be organized by general law or a charter. For over 100 years, Orange County functioned under general law, and in 1994, filed the largest local government bankruptcy thus far in U.S. history. The county came out of bankruptcy in 1996, and in 1997, developed its first long-range plan. Voters adopted the first county charter in 2002 to complement the existing Board of Supervisors. Orange County includes 34 incorporated cities, including Irvine, which is located in Irvine Ranch. Originally privately owned, Irvine Ranch since 1960 has been one of the largest and most enduring master-planned developments in the country.

Adams County,
Colorado Has
Chosen Tools
for Conservation

Adams County has experienced significant growth recently and is expected to have the highest growth rate in Colorado between 2000 and 2025. Most of the growth is expected to be within municipal boundaries. Outside city lines, the county has worked to direct growth into the most appropriate locations. Among its tools are funding from an open space tax that it uses to purchase lands for preservation, and a Transfer of Development Rights policy through which private developers can purchase and preserve agricultural lands in exchange for increased density along existing infrastructure corridors. With 60% of its residents working outside of the county, Adams is definitely a bedroom community now, but county planners are trying to create a better balance between jobs and housing. County officials also have attempted, though with limited success, to work with cities on creation of a comprehensive plan that phases in urban-level development. The goals are to improve infrastructure compatibility and better integrate municipal and county planning.

Wake County,
North Carolina
Agreed with
Cities on
Annexation

Wake County offers a mix of rural, small town, and urban lifestyles in North Carolina's Research Triangle. Home to the state capital, Raleigh, the county is expected to hold over 1 million people by about 2030. Wake County adopted a comprehensive land use plan in 1997 and does more planning than it used to. In recent years, the county initiated regional projects to protect environmentally sensitive areas and combine some municipal water and sewer utilities. It has helped local leaders to recognize the regional nature of such problems as traffic,

overcrowded schools, and loss of natural areas. Anticipating growth, the county helped prevent annexation battles by getting its 12 municipalities to agree on future boundaries. Overall, however, developing regional solutions has been slow going. Several blue-ribbon task forces have examined growth problems, but few recommendations have gotten traction. Political resistance, for example, has prevented implementation of impact fees and affordable housing requirements.

Sonoma County,
California Focused
on Communication,
the Biggest Issue

E-mail correspondence from Sonoma County's manager discussed city-county cooperation. "The biggest issue in a high-growth county is maintaining open lines of communication between city and county governments. The approach I use is to meet monthly with city managers to share information and problem-solving. Our county General Plan calls for most growth to occur within cities so we can protect farmland and open space. To coordinate regional services, we push for countywide solutions through use of 'joint power authorities' and intergovernmental agreements. These have worked to manage our regional landfill and solid waste programs, endangered species compliance, and federal transportation funding. The county created an open space district and dedicated sales tax to protect land through purchase or conservation easements, and create buffers between cities. To increase collaboration, we are completing a strategic plan that highlights regional challenges and opportunities. One problem is that cities are competing for the same sales tax dollars and need more coordination to go to voters with bond issues. Another problem is gangs – cities need county assistance because individually they don't have enough human service and criminal justice capacity."

THE FUTURE AT PINAL: 17 COOL TOOLS TO GET IT DONE

The moniker “fastest-growing” should be coupled with “fastest-adapting.” And this is possible, considering that Pinal’s leaders and residents seem to share the values of cooperation, identity, and quality for the foundations of their communities and identified 6 outcomes they would like to see happen in Pinal. If done well, these placemaking attributes could make Pinal a familiar name and place like “O.C.” But good intentions are not sufficient to create change: public policy is a concrete, step-by-step endeavor. How could cooperation, identity, and quality guide every decision and the achievement of the 6 placemaking goals? What tools could make a difference on the same grand scale as the growth that is projected?

The Future at Pinal offers 17 “Cool Tools” that could revolutionize development in Pinal and throughout Arizona or could inspire different ideas that would be even better. Of course, these are not exclusive. They can be mixed and matched. The point is to realize that public policy is steered in increments. Sometimes the pace at which the future comes at us – particularly in Arizona – seems overwhelming and unmanageable. Inventing a new tool or using one from “off the shelf” identifies a discrete problem and focuses on how to better handle that issue. Some of these tools could be adopted and implemented quickly, while others would require efforts ranging from detailed negotiations to state legislation. The 17 are intended to spark imaginative thinking about how to achieve Pinal’s placemaking goals.

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Placemaking Goal: Distinguish Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County.

Many Pinal leaders realize that time is short to develop the cooperative culture and spirit so many discussed. If Pinal can work together on such items as those below, the rest of Arizona will see that Pinal is, indeed, more than the sum of its parts.

1. Establish the Pinal Consensus Council.

Many talk about collaborative decision making and public policy based on consensus. The Montana Consensus Council has been turning those ideals into reality for more than a decade. A public-private center serving tribal, local, state, and federal governments, as well as residents and business interests, the project brings together stakeholders to develop fair, effective agreements on tough public policy issues. A **Pinal Consensus Council** could do the same for Pinal’s municipalities, tribes, federal and county governments, business interests, and community organizations. A Pinal Consensus Council represents a different way for various factions to come not just to a meeting of the minds, but the best mutually beneficial decisions for all of Pinal. Different from a council of governments and more willing

to work together than any existing body in Arizona, this recognized program and loosely organized group, would meet regularly and have specific processes for learning about all sides of issues, giving every side a voice, and coming to a compromise that all would agree to live by. The Pinal Consensus Council could be the key to creating such items as a tax treaty, an annexation agreement, or regional service contracts.

2. Agree on a Pinal tax treaty.

Pinal – the county, the towns, and the cities – could declare a sales tax treaty and place a moratorium on all incentives intended solely to lure businesses to one town in Pinal over another. A good idea even after 2007 legislation, a portion of all sales taxes received could be pooled and divided by a formula based partly by population, and partly by the source of taxes generated. Car dealers, big boxes, and regional malls would benefit not only the place where they are located, but all of Pinal. Chandler, Tempe, and Guadalupe did something akin to this when the cities shared the proceeds from Arizona Mills. On a county-wide scale, the benefits could reinforce Pinal’s cooperative value and provide a model for other Arizona places.

Cool Tools

PINAL'S LEADERS AND RESIDENTS FOCUSED ON 6 PLACEMAKING GOALS

PLACEMAKING GOALS

COOL TOOLS

Distinguish Pinal from Maricopa County and Pima County.

1. Establish the **Pinal Consensus Council**.
2. Agree on a **Pinal tax treaty**.
3. Establish Pinal as a **regional service provider**.

Protect miles of desert and open land.

4. **"Greenprint"** the state trust land in Pinal.
5. Use a uniform county-wide **impact fee to buy open space**.
6. Make Pinal a leader in outdoor education with **Pinal's Outdoor Kids**.

Provide choices for transportation and mobility.

7. Create the 3-county **Megapolitan Mobility Project** to move people and cargo efficiently through the heart of the Sun Corridor.

Support unique, "fair share" communities.

8. Celebrate agriculture with **community gardens** and co-op farms.
9. Use the **3Rs to fix it first**.
10. Carry out **smart growth principles** in all development and redevelopment.
11. Adopt a **uniform "green" building code** across Pinal.
12. **Prohibit landscape plants that are harmful** to the Sonoran Desert.

Create and attract "career pay – career path" jobs.

13. Integrate education, training, economic development, and employment services **with Pinal Workways**.
14. **Agree on locations for employment centers** and do not allow homes to be built there.

Develop Pinal's talent pool.

15. Establish the **Pinal Scholars** fund.
16. Use **arts and culture as a major tool in quality education**, strong communities, and a robust economy.
17. Give every child in Pinal a **Super Start**.

Source: Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, 2007.

3. Establish Pinal as a regional service provider.

As in Los Angeles County, Pinal could establish a system of regional services whereby municipalities, the Indian Communities, and even the private and nonprofit sectors would enter into contract agreements with the county to receive services that otherwise might be too expensive or inefficient. Typical contracts are for law enforcement, fire protection, and road maintenance. But the county could also provide services that aid livability and competitiveness, including a wide collection of social programs often hard for small communities to provide. Contracting with Pinal could free up resources for programs that would foster identity or quality in other ways.

Placemaking Goal: Protect miles of desert and open land.

Pinal aspires to be known across Arizona and nationally for connected open spaces that serve both people and wildlife. From the Middle Gila Conservation group to the Pinal Open

Space Master Plan, private and public efforts are underway to designate more than a quarter of Pinal's land for conservation and recreation. The recently completed master plan focuses on preserving substantial amounts of the eastern mountains, washes across the western flatlands, and open space corridors that will connect some of the largest proposed regional parks in Arizona. While this plan is responsive, expansive, and comprehensive, it risks being only a dream without sufficient resources.

4. "Greenprint" the state trust land in Pinal County.

"Greenprinting" is a term and widely used process invented by the Trust for Public Land, a national conservation organization, for using geographic information software (GIS) to comprehensively identify land for permanent conservation. Criteria for land identification are agreed upon, and then areas suitable for conservation and areas for development can be mapped over a wide area. Pinal County could propose to the State Land Department that a county-wide greenprint of all of the trust

land in the county should be undertaken immediately. The result would become part of the county's comprehensive plan. The Land Department's subsequent planning efforts could be targeted at packaging open space with development for disposition whenever possible, using development "trade offs" such as density increases. The county, a city, or an open space authority could also purchase identified open space parcels. If neither purchase nor development trade off worked out in a reasonable time, the Land Department could move forward with dispositions for development. Because a third of Pinal County is owned by the State Land Department, dealing with this resource on a comprehensive basis might be Pinal's most important step in placemaking.

5. Use a uniform county-wide impact fee to buy open space.

Pinal could fund its open space plan in part through a county-wide development impact fee on every new single family residential unit. A uniform fee would be charged by every city, town, and the county itself – no units could "escape." San Diego County has used impact fees to help fund the protection of more than 170,000 acres of vital habitat. Pinal's fee would support land purchases, acquisition of development rights, and conservation easements, among other options. Based on current housing estimates, a \$1,000 fee would raise nearly \$12 million annually. This revenue would be used to leverage federal, state, and non-profit investments. An Open Space Citizens' Panel would prioritize lands and identify the appropriate method for protection based on the best science and understanding of public outlooks. Though this source of revenue is expected to decline over time as growth slows, it would jump-start activity now. The upside for developers would be certainty about conservation areas.

6. Make Pinal a national leader in outdoor education with Pinal's Outdoor Kids.

Pinal's **Outdoor Kids** would ensure that all K-12 students learn about and through nature as students have done in San Mateo County, California for 35 years. Pinal's program could be delivered through schools, but paid for and staffed by governments, community organizations, and volunteers. Using hands-on techniques, Pinal's **Outdoor Kids** would give every student first-hand knowledge about nature and enables each young person to understand the academic and life lessons it can provide. This approach to outdoor appreciation and education would create a model for other states to follow in fostering a long-term sense of place and a conservation ethic among the next generation.

Placemaking Goal: Provide choices for transportation and mobility.

Because of the region's traditional "ruralness," Pinal residents have been accustomed to driving relatively long distances for work, shopping, or other amenities. But with rapid growth, driving has quickly become a traffic nightmare. Pinal is not alone in its predicament. Nearly every growing community is considering more density and better location of employment centers. However, people still want, and need, to get where they want when they want. Building and expanding roads is not enough. Pinal needs different ways to move people and goods.

7. Create the 3-county Megapolitan Mobility Project to move people and cargo efficiently through the Sun Corridor.

Looking beyond cars prompts thinking about a big multi-county transportation solution. Like the Central Arizona Project that moves Colorado River water to 3 counties, the **Megapolitan Mobility Project (MMP)** would plan, finance, and implement long-term solutions to mega-scale transportation needs. The MMP could cover Pinal, Pima, and Maricopa counties and lead regional planning and funding efforts on such strategies as:

- congestion pricing
- commuter and light rail lines
- subsidized ride-sharing options
- express and regular bus service
- mixed-use park and rides
- limited access arterial roads
- highways and toll roads
- efficient traffic controls and road status information
- incentives for telecommuting
- connections among various travel modes

Funded through a special district or other dedicated funding sources, the MMP could be overseen by an elected and appointed board that determines how to work and contract with existing councils of governments and their transportation planning functions. Tribal governments could have a permanent seat on the MMP board. By design, the MMP would be guided by such principles as:

- Transportation options for everyone
- Smart growth
- Sustainability
- Limited energy and environmental impacts

The MMP also would strive for connectivity between transportation modes, plan with other governments for increased commercial and employment intensity around major connector hubs, and promote trip reduction strategies. Portland’s “Metro” is a similar multi-county transit provider, but the MMP would go farther to be a single comprehensive transportation entity.

Placemaking Goal: Support unique, “fair share” communities.

Pinal municipalities and communities react to growth bit by bit and often residents are left out of the decisions. This piecemeal reality poses a potentially huge problem – the multiplicity of small decisions. Taken together, these single acts tend to create a “place of no place.” Pinal’s leaders and residents want municipalities to take on authentic identities, and fortunately, they already contain some of Arizona’s most important landmark buildings and spaces. Florence, Casa Grande, Coolidge, Oracle, Superior, other communities, and Pinal can develop the best 21st century version of small-town living – even as those towns grow.

8. Celebrate agriculture with community gardens and co-op farms.

Pinal’s agricultural heritage and the current interest in gardening and local foods could be combined to celebrate the region’s agricultural heritage and offer activities for newcomers and established residents alike. Community gardens and co-op farms, particularly close to community cores, would provide opportunities for people to engage in a common activity. This is not the type of farming Pinal has been known for, but the idea would use agriculture to create bonds between residents. A public history learning program in conjunction with the gardens would educate the public. Sarasota County, a mainstay of Florida’s agricultural economy, is protecting agriculture land from housing developments and starting community gardens to showcase the importance of farming to the county’s history.

9. Use the 3Rs to fix it first.

The watchword in Pinal could be “3Rs to fix it first.” Investments in city centers using the best techniques in historic preservation and redevelopment would come before dollars being spent on fringe areas or new developments. The 3Rs component – rehabilitate, renovate, and restore – would bring Pinal’s municipalities and communities the resources and expertise they need to make sure places have healthy cores and unique identities, plus the best

in civic spaces and architecture. Not every center city project will be able to use the 3Rs. New construction would emphasize architecture to continue to emphasize the differences and authenticity of each place. Austin has used such a multi-faceted approach with both its iconic downtown buildings and surrounding neighborhoods.

10. Carry out smart growth principles in all development and redevelopment.

Zoning, guidelines, and incentives could all be used to encourage smart growth and the integration of new developments with existing communities. The pay offs would be better connections between newcomers and established residents, good jobs close to home, and walkable welcoming communities. From Envision Utah to Washington’s Smart Growth Alliance to Denver and Oakland, many places are adopting smart growth principles to increase livability.

11. Adopt a uniform “green” building code across Pinal.

Increasingly, consumers want their buildings to be environmentally friendly. Pinal and municipal leaders could work with the U.S. Green Building Council to develop new LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards specifically for buildings in hot, arid climates and then adopt a uniform, county-wide code. More than 15 projects in Arizona, often with multiple buildings, now have some level of LEED certification, but there is no specific desert climate standard. LEED buildings with the special arid certification would take up a fraction of the water and energy required by traditional structures and use materials, landscaping, and pavement that reduce the urban heat island effect.

12. Prohibit landscape plants that are harmful to the Sonoran Desert.

Everyone can value the Sonoran Desert location by choosing landscape plants that are not “invasive” in the desert. The Arizona Wildland Invasive Plant Working Group, a combination of more than 20 organizations, has identified non-native plants that are established in Arizona’s wildlands and represent a threat to native eco-systems. For example, exotic grasses are now well established in natural areas. Plants such as these increase the danger and severity of wild fires and crowd out native plants. Pinal’s **Desert Harmony** program would educate residents about invasive plants and why they are not permitted in residential and commercial landscapes and provide incentives to replace non-native plants.

Placemaking Goal: Create and attract career pay – career path jobs.

Skill gaps and long commutes signal a need for workforce and economic development. Various programs exist throughout Pinal to help employers, workers, and families, and economic development efforts have attracted some quality companies. Unfortunately, K-12 and community college institutions are still trying to catch up with 21st-century standards, while public and private workforce and family-support efforts are insufficient to meet even current demands. While all are doing what they can with what they have, frustration is too often the primary result. Ideas consistent with today's trends have been percolating for some time and could offer Pinal the chance to become a model for other regions in Arizona.

13. Integrate education, training, economic development, and employment services with Pinal Workways.

Instead of a piecemeal approach to workforce and economic development, Pinal could establish an umbrella public-private competitiveness organization that works to improve Pinal's workforce and align Pinal's economic development goals with education and the best in employment services. In addition, it could advocate for the infrastructure – from transportation to telecommunications – that would make the region more competitive. **Pinal Workways** would take responsibility for such areas as:

- Competitiveness policy, planning and coordination with the major economic development organizations in adjoining regions, such as Greater Phoenix Economic Council and Tucson's TREO, Inc.
- Business attraction and retention to identified job centers
- Livability goals and partnerships
- Learning standards aligned with the requirements of work and higher education
- Job matching for employers and workers
- Work-related learning for youth and adults (English, adult education, and literacy)
- Training and retraining for youth and adults (in targeted fields for Pinal as a whole and for specific job centers)
- School to work transition
- Workforce skill credentials
- Entrepreneurship

Seed money for **Pinal Workways** could come from existing economic development efforts, pooling of all federal and community workforce dollars, and leveraging of all of these sources.

14. Agree on locations for employment centers and do not allow homes to be built there.

In collaboration with the State Land Department and the Indian communities, the Pinal Consensus Council could identify the most favorable locations for job centers and create a Job Centers Trust to “bank” the land through general plan and zoning designations. These sites would be selected to support Pinal's long-term economic development plans. The Job Centers Trust also could work with transportation and workforce entities to plan for flexible, expandable transport options to accommodate workers, the best in global connections, and the latest in technology, training, and entrepreneurship. These sites would be designated as employment reserves within a broad-based understanding that the zoning could not be changed to residential without serious detrimental consequences to Pinal.

Placemaking Goal: Develop Pinal's talent pool.

Nearly everyone has learned that “talent” has become a critical factor in competitiveness, often representing the differentiator for companies deciding between Location A and Location B. Pinal has been a relative latecomer to strong education and workforce policies and programs. Many noted that family support, human services, and quality education have been left behind. Pinal's residents want their leaders to ensure that everyone has a chance to make a good living. Actions that support all ages can do just that.

15. Establish the Pinal Scholars fund.

Pinal would build on the current Promise for the Future to provide more and bigger scholarships for high school graduates and adults to encourage them to attend college and postsecondary training. These benefits could be coupled with incentives and requirements to stay in or return to the region. Previously, educational attainment was relatively low in Pinal, while youth may not have seen enough opportunity to stay in the region. Providing significant support for college, as has been done in the Kalamazoo Promise, and postsecondary training would fill short- and long-term workforce needs and keep Pinal's homegrown talent at home. In addition, scholarships would attract residents who are willing to make a long-term commitment to the region.

16. Use arts and culture as a major tool in quality education, strong communities, and robust economic growth.

Competitiveness requires innovation and creativity, and many studies have shown how arts and culture – writ large, not just the performing arts – have a major part to play in education,

revitalization, and placemaking. Tucson Unified School District's Opening Minds through the Arts shows how quality arts education can help close achievement gaps among children. From Ashland, Oregon to Asheville, North Carolina, cities, towns, and tribes of all sizes have been revitalized by artists and public and private investments in arts and culture. Pinal could foster creativity at all ages: children, youth, and adults. Putting a priority on arts education and such complementary activities as comprehensive library services and family literacy programs could help Pinal be first in creativity.

17. Give every child in Pinal a Super Start.

Studies and experience in Arizona and across the country have shown the benefits of early childhood education and family support. With **Super Start**, Pinal could leverage federally funded

Head Start efforts, Arizona's voluntary all-day kindergarten, and other local programs as so many locales have done. **Super Start** could bring together many complementary, evidence-based ways to support children and families. Investments in early childhood education are a priority for United Way of Pinal County and the State School Readiness Board. Pinal has the chance to show how to accomplish widely shared goals on a big scale. The benefits for Pinal would be long-term savings on future interventions, crime, and economic support in addition to productivity gains among parents who are less worried about their children. With preschool for all youngsters, early literacy programs, and market-rate child care subsidies, Pinal could be on its way to becoming a truly family-friendly and employment-friendly location.

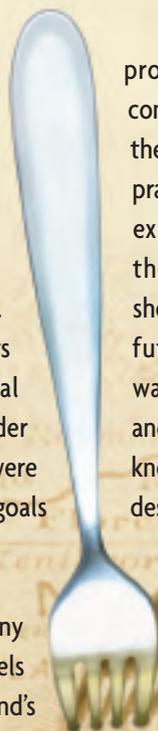
CONCLUDING WITH THE ORIGINAL QUESTION:

McMEGA DRIVE THROUGH OR VIBRANT, SUSTAINABLE, COMPETITIVE PLACE?

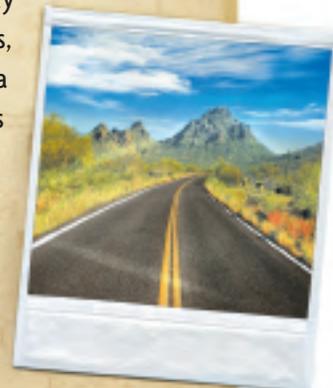


That was the choice at the beginning of **The Future at Pinal**. The challenge now is to move from the desire for great places to making action plans and setting priorities that start from cooperation, identity, and quality. Then, Pinal must keep track of its progress. Future generations of Pinal residents will look back in appreciation and wonder that leaders and residents in the early 21st century were able to make choices that achieved fundamental goals and delivered on the promise of working together.

Some may still doubt this is possible. However, many cultures have stories that tell of a searcher who travels the globe looking for a prize critical to the homeland's



prosperous future. After many trials, the realization comes that the treasure is already at hand. The searcher then returns home and puts the journey's lessons into practice. These time-honored stories about recognizing existing strengths resonate today in Pinal as much as they do around the world. As **The Future at Pinal** shows, the building blocks for a distinct and prosperous future are already there. Pinal clearly wants large-scale placemaking choices, and there is a sense of urgency and a knowledge that Pinal will not achieve its desired outcomes without investments of time, energy, and dollars. In this case, good things will not come to those who wait. Good things will come to those who choose, plan, and act.



Study Participants

The following people were generous with their time and insights.

Bill Alkema, Plant Manager, Desert Basin Generating Station, Salt River Project
Adeline M. Allen, Director, Pinal County Housing Department
The Honorable Kelly Anderson, Mayor, City of Maricopa
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Roc Arnett, President & CEO, East Valley Partnership
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The Honorable Michael Hing, Mayor, Town of Superior
Dan Hjartarson, President, Association for the Development of a Better Environment
George Hoffman, City Manager, City of Apache Junction
The Honorable Byron Jackson, Mayor, City of Eloy
The Honorable Boyd Johnson, Superior Court Judge, Pinal County
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The Honorable Thomas Shope, Mayor, City of Coolidge
The Honorable Sandie Smith, Pinal County Supervisor, District 2
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The Honorable David Snider, Pinal County Supervisor, District 3
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Jack Tomasik, Planning Director, Central Arizona Association of Governments
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Jim Walsh, Chairman, Oracle Land Trust
The Honorable Charles "Chuck" Walton, Mayor, City of Casa Grande
Darlene M. White, Ph.D. Superintendent, Coolidge Unified School District #21
Stephanie Wilbanks, Director of Marketing, Sunbelt Holdings
The Honorable James "Craig" Williams, Mayor, Town of Mammoth
Mark Winkleman, Commissioner, Arizona State Land Department
Paul Worthington, Director of Marketing, Evergreen Air Center, Inc.



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