

MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Pinal County Comprehensive Plan Development Forum

Date: Friday August 22, 2008
1:00 p.m.
Location: Central Arizona College
Signal Peak Campus; Coolidge
Purpose: Draft Plan Presentation

Handouts: None

Participants

Terri Ackland, CAC	Kevin Adam, RTAC
William Alkema, SRP	Maria Alvarez, Maricopa
Ferrell Anderson, AZ Solar Energy Society	Eduardo Borrromeao, Global Water
Linda Cheney, El Dorado Holdings, Inc.	Cynthia Collings, CAC
William Collings, DNA, Inc.	Wayne Dames, Sunbelt Holdings
Ryan Desmond, Vestar Development Company	Ken Frakes, Langley Holdings
Baird Fullerton, Brooks Strand Associates, Inc.	Kai Gerkey, Casa Grande Reg. Medical Ctr.
Steve Gonzales, CAC	Jackie Guthrie, Jackie Guthrie & Assoc.
Bohdan Hirniak, Walton Dev. & Mgmt., Inc.	Angie Kirschmann, Langley Properties
Troy Mortensen, Sunbelt Holdings, Inc.	Edward O'Brien, AZ. Horseman's Assoc.
Paul Popelka, Marana	Thomas Poulson, BOR
Brennan Ray, Burch & Cracchiolo, PA	Kenneth Raycroft, Land Advisors Org.
Jordan Rose, Rose Law Group	Jessica Sarkissian, CMX, Inc.
Susan Shaw, CAC	Fred Stevens, Jr., Tohono O'Odham Nation
John Thomas	Judy Thomas
Dr. George White, CAC	Mary Aguirre Vogler, PC Planning Com.
Ron Vogler	Steven Gozales, CAC
Ted Hawkins, Maricopa	Brad Schmitt, Vestar
David Ellis, PC Planning Com.	Steve Kellogg, CVL
Michelle Green, ASLD	Kazi Haque, Maricopa
Tom Tierney, Sun West	Jim Kenny, El Dorado Holdings
Mary Espinoza	Magill Weber, The Nature Conservancy
Beth Frazier	Anthony Smith, Maricopa



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Staff Present

Terry Doolittle, Pinal County Manager

Ken Buchanan, Pinal County Assistant Manager

Jerry Stabley, Pinal County Community Development Director

Curt Dunham, Project Consultant, Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.

Peggy Fiandaca, Project Consultant, Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.

Meeting was called to order at approximately 1:10 p.m.

Welcome and Project Overview

Terry Doolittle welcomed all attendees of the Development Forum and thanked them for participating in the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan process. He provided an overview of the planning process, 60-Day Review Plan, and the schedule moving forward.

60 Day Review Draft Plan Presentation

Jerry Stabley, Pinal County Project Manager, delivered a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key aspects of the 60 Day Review Draft Comprehensive Plan. The presentation stressed the key concepts of how land use, transportation, and economic development must all be equal considerations in future decisions.

After completion of the presentation, participants asked questions and made comments on the plan for Pinal County to consider.

Discussion Points

- Q. What was the rationale for the jobs/population compared to the Phoenix area?
A. 530 for Maricopa County and 500 for Pinal County
- Q. What is the ratio for the other counties? Don't see us to be like Pima County or Maricopa County.
A. The reason we chose those two counties is because Pinal County is a part of the Sun Corridor Megapolitan and we will be experiencing similar type of growth as those surrounding regions. The plan is pretty consistent about jobs to population ratio. We believe it is a prudent goal at this time.
- C. City of Maricopa - Thank the county for having the vision and producing the comprehensive plan. I congratulate the team. There are five areas for my general

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comments. The City of Maricopa will provide written comments for the summary matrix.

1. The plan states that the Comprehensive Plan will mirror the municipalities however, the language doesn't read as strongly as you have stated; the language should be strengthened. We like this concept so the developers would have one plan for the entire county that reflects all municipalities and updates would be added to the county plan.
 2. Densities within Maricopa as shown are a concern. We specifically are concerned with water use; we prefer to identify lower densities due to the uncertainty of water usage. It is our policy to be more conservative with density levels because it is a better way to start out due to water concerns.
 3. Circulation – it appears that not all the regional plans have been incorporated yet. For example the Hassayampa Valley Study has not been incorporated. There might be others.
 4. Open Space – the plan acknowledges that there is open space in Western Pinal County but in the East there doesn't appear there is a solution on how you will create those places.
 5. Air Quality – the plan is not so strong in this area.
- A. Jerry responded that the Comprehensive Plan will be a web based document so it can be linked to communities' websites where there plans are uploaded.
- C. Kazi Hague with the City of Maricopa said that we have submitted comments today and I would be glad to work with you to understand the comments.
- Q. How do you plan to address to all the comments?
- A. Jerry mentioned that a matrix of all comments will be posted on the project website and we are planning to hold another forum where a presentation on how comments have been addressed is being planned.
- C. Thomas Poulson (BOR) made the following comments -
Page 163 – minor comments; correct the language – (...reuse and underground storage of reclaimed water...); it should be "...reuse and recharge of reclaimed water..."

7.2.3 – Assured Water Supply for water providers – currently some water suppliers....
The rest of paragraph it appears that you state that it is bad for the developer to bring the water – The developers should bring the water to a project; Pinal County should not be dependent upon the water providers like it is currently reading; you mention future water needs = a new CAP; the water providers will not be able to provide that;

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revisit the paragraph and change to require the developers to bring the water in; rework this paragraph.

- C. Steve Kellogg made the following comments -
1. Language in plan that suggests that there should be no development in floodplains; there is a process that allows development in floodplains; you need to either color or shade the map in floodplains.
 2. The assured water at zoning is a concern; it would hinder development due to the cost.
 3. Implementation Section could be strengthened; it relies on zoning and planning; there should be more specific strategies that could be developed; more specific steps to be taken; such as potential changes to the county government structure that should occur such as a Parks Dept.
 4. Activity Centers - I am an advocate of the use of specific plans to bring the planning concepts down to a more detailed level allowing the county to zero in and provide guidance; it could help in the implementation of activity centers; specific planning may help particularly for those on private lands with multiple owners. There might be some incentives to assist these in the implementation; don't know if the new Zoning Ordinance allows for activity centers; there might be some use for overlay zones; would like to see some delineation for activity centers so they are not just floating; some sort of overlay; study area or boundary
 5. County is going to have to initiative some level of planning in areas that are threatened by development.
 6. Environmental protection – density transfers or transfer of development rights to preserve major open space
 7. Economic development modes or other means to encourage economic development to occur
 8. Not sure how SATS, RSRM or Hidden Valley or if other studies are needed
 9. Airport Study – the sooner that the county can zero in and refine the planning for the airport the better
 10. Land Use – there are some locations that concern me and I don't why they are there; some employment corridors are a concern; employment and activity centers need to be linked better; Example – Stanfield area
 11. Employment corridor in Superstition Vistas – they are along the railroad; the railroad is certainly an area where employment should occur but to make them so long might not make sense; a finer grain of planning can be done in this area; better integration of transportation and employment in the area;

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- A. Jerry explained that Superstition Vistas' planning process that is going on now will provide the finer level of planning.
- Q. Pinal County is using a corridor approach to some of the employment which is ok; but how do we interpret how big? Do we have enough to go by and is it feasible to make it happen?
- C. Page 37 – densities are they net or gross; there needs to be an agreement about how densities on project are calculated.
- C. Page 62 – regarding sewer plants to be located in remote area; that is not where they are needed; need to revisit; they should be closer
- C. Page 49 – statement says that all development must contribute to jobs; unrealistic that all planned communities have employment
- C. Page 62 – reclamation plant closer in so you can use it for green water usage better should be considered.
- Q. Jackie Guthrie asked about the 250,000 lots approved in the county. What level of planning are they? Are they lots that have final plat? If they are just zoned lots (paper lots) there should not be a concern as it relates to water use and future water demand.
- A. Jerry said that they will check on this to be sure.
- C. Jordan Rose said that they could provide the county the data.
- Q. Is the county going to review the plats that are not going to be built upon? As we look at the market today; there will be an under supply of lots; what is the county's long term direction about extending the two year policy?
- A. Ken Buchanan said that there is some flexibility built into the policy. The Board can take this under consideration.
- C. As we look at the supply in the ground we are behind the 8-ball. In the past we were not prepared when growth occurred. Concern we will be in the same position.
- C. Jackie Guthrie – what we have observed in other counties is that when we are experiencing this type of economy we have seen them loosen the guidelines.



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- Q. Does staff have a viewpoint?
- A. Ken Buchanan said that the county can look at it to see where we are. We can bring it up with the P&Z.
- C. There are existing PADs that have not filed tentative plats and the logical step is to move forward; if you want to make any changes to PADs would you have to start over and submit a major or minor amendment? This would leave a large gap in availability of product when growth turns around. This is a concern on how the plan is written. The plan states that any “change” to a PAD that would force us to an amendment and compliance with the comprehensive plan. Need to address this
- C. Jordan Rose – I don’t think legally they come back in to alter their PAD you have to come to compliance with the comprehensive plan; you have to do a comprehensive plan change; if you are rural or transitional – now you have a lot of flexibility such as doing industrial, commercial, higher density residential; etc. The way the plan is written with I-4 dwelling units per acre residential, this flexibility is no longer there. A concern of my clients is that their land is down graded.
- C. Anything over 20 acres there is no designation for commercial (large scale commercial users); suggest considering that designation.
- C. Designation of all the land in the county and not state land is I-4 to the acre; the activity centers are overlays over the land use; the land use under the activity centers is I-4; I don’t know what the use should be; this approach has thrown an uncertainty in the market; how that works is a concern.
- C. Implementation – what can I do on my property; it is unclear on how this is going to be implemented; the location criteria is difficult to measure; the guideline are very subjective; it is setting up everything going to a comprehensive plan amendment; many plans are more precise; size of acres, etc; no way to tell a client what they can do with their property until you go through the process; there is a lot of work to do in the implementation section.
- C. Jordan Rose - I read the plan to say that you have to comply with all goals in the document; don’t know how a development will comply.
- C. Everything functions toward a major amendment and compliance with the plan to get an amendment; from a commercial perspective – it makes it impossible to be improved;

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Example – no project requires additional infrastructure; the way the procedures for amendment make it difficult for commercial to go through project; no project can impact traffic; any commercial development will increase traffic and you have to mitigate it; TIA would be required at the amendment phase – that is something we would not do at the amendment process – we typically do it later in the process; it would make it impossible for a commercial developments to go forward.

- C. Suggestion – activity centers – overlay of a specific area with specific road guidelines, etc. Anything inside that area for example would be allowed higher densities and it would require a minor amendment; this could be a draw or incent them to the area.
- C. Steve Kellogg – I like the concept but I don't think there should be any amendment in this area to provide an incentive for the development to occur. Maybe you need to show a boundary if that was the case.
- C. Jordan Rose - The specificity of the activity centers is a concern to some; when you put those things in a plan a neighbor is going to show up at a hearing and say that they were expecting a hospital in the area because that is what it shows in that particular activity center in the plan; I think you are setting yourself up and this is a concern.
- A. Jerry explained the purpose of including the information for illustration of the activity centers; not designed to be interpreted as being specific; he suggested maybe we use percentages; the county does not want a situation where people interpret the activity centers that specifically
- Q. Linda Cheney – You mentioned that ADOT does not have funding for major roads; there will be a financial void for circulation; Hidden Valley, RSRM, and this amount of circulation is a concern; what is the county's policy to get these financed?
- A. Ken Buchanan explained – transportation financing is an issue; we need to look at options such as road impact fees, improvement districts, community facilities districts, and other financing mechanisms. How we fund needed freeways in Arizona is a major concern for all of us.
- Q. Linda Cheney - what about ROW corridors? Not addressed in the document; how do we move forward with a development – how do you acquire the ROW?
- A. Jerry explained that it is important for further discussion. The goal is not to have to purchase ROW.

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- Q. Parkways – if your project is all residential and your traffic for your project only requires a certain level of street, are we required to provide the entire ROW for the parkway?
- A. Ken Buchanan explained – it would be a combination.
- C. Regarding the Western Pinal County area – MAG is doing their analysis and there seems to be an excessive amount of parkways and roadways in the area; there is a lot of traffic movement east and west in the county; I don't know if the traffic numbers are there to justify this much transportation facilities; particular concern is if you are looking for developers to provide these roadways; there seems not to be a lot of justification.
- C. Ken Buchanan stated that MAG through the Hidden Valley Study is going back to re-examine Pinal County numbers; to date MAG is not addressing any new corridors through GRIC.
- C. It just seems a lot of roadways going east-west without the traffic numbers being justified; the development doesn't seem to be there.
- C. The numbers we are running do not meet the MAG traffic numbers; concerned they do not justify the recommended improvements.
- C. Concerned that the plan is going to be adopted before these numbers (i.e. traffic projections) are checked.
- Q. Zoning ordinance – does your ordinance address the issue?
- A. Jerry stated that the zoning ordinance was last adopted in 1964; the goal is to go back and update the ordinance after the plan is complete; this plan will guide the Zoning Ordinance update
- Q. How did you determine the size of the airport?
- A. The team included an airport expert that did a high level analysis of needs for a commercial airport and surrounding supportive employment uses. The amount of land is a reduction from the existing plan. It will be important to fine-tune the size once further airport studies are complete.

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- C. Jordan Rose - It puts a lot of land in “Jell-O” and uncertainty about the area (i.e. commercial airport); seems like it can be reduced.
- C. Does the airport designated land include encroachment areas?
- C. Jordan Rose – I suggest sizing the airport down. It is larger than Tempe
- C. I-8 – seems that these long “bowling alleys” of employment areas are a concern; need to fine-tune these locations; for example there is a spur that comes off the 303 to Maricopa; each of the section lines are where the employment area could be shown as bubbles instead of long strips

Next Steps

Jerry thanked everyone for attending. Everyone was encouraged to review and submit their specific comments on the Draft Comprehensive Plan. September 5th is the end of the formal 60-day review process. At that time all comments received will be documented and recommendations on how to move forward with the comments will be made. It is anticipated that the plan will be approved in late 2008.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

These meeting summary notes reflect the notes taken by Partners for Strategic Action, Inc. during the meeting. If corrections are needed, please provide those recommendations as soon as possible by contacting PSA, Inc. at 480.816.1811 or psainc@cox.net.

