

# Maricopa Alternatives Workshop Summary Report

Date: February 26, 2008  
 Time: 6 – 8 pm  
 Location: Pima Butte Elementary School  
 42202 W Rancho El Dorado



## Handouts

Vision Alternative Handout  
 Alternative Maps

## Attendees (21):

Maria Alvarez; Leslie Burnett; Glendon Collins; Marion Collins; Gina D'Abella; John Falk; Adam Gaub; Shirley Ann Hartman; Burnie Hibbard; Bohdan Hirniak, John Lake; Mary Lopez; Rudy Lopez; Benjamin Maresca; Chuck Millar; H. Pike Oliver; Bev Patek; Jim Patek; Dallas Paulsen; Thomas Poulson; and David Snider

## MEETING SUMMARY

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

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

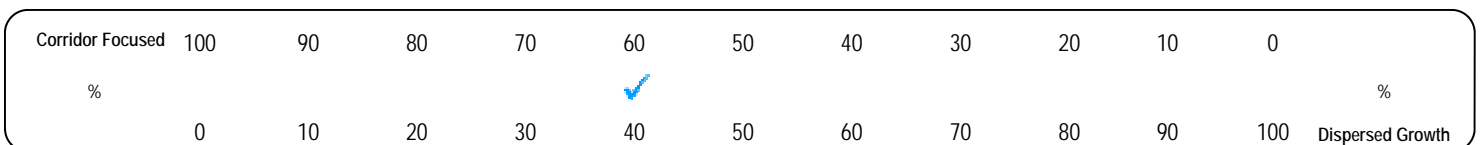
## FEEDBACK FORM SUMMARY

**Forms received: 14**

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

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

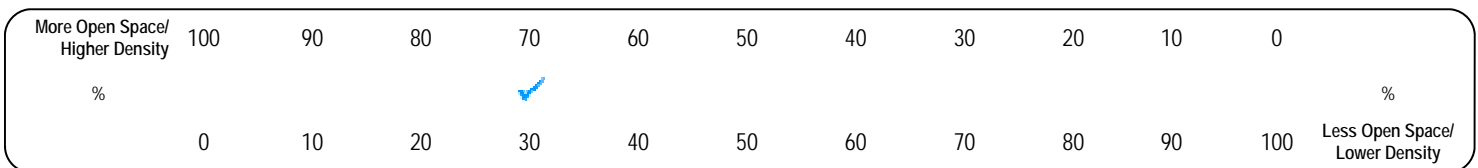
### Land Use:



**Comments on Land Use:**

- I really like the dispersed growth proposal with "some" corridor focused included.
- Dispersed growth is desirable but probably not practical. Businesses tend to gravitate to the transportation areas, freeways, railroads, etc.
- If jobs are concentrated, then mass transit can work really well. Most major cities of the world have good mass transit systems. Small communities do not have the amenities such as major hospitals, universities, etc., that attract businesses such as Globe, Superior and Casa Grande.
- I want to keep the eastern part of the county rural. Distribute activity centers along the corridor. It helps with transportation planning and facilitates public transportation systems. The small communities don't have the range of jobs, services, and amenities which workers want.
- I like the ideas of gateways and proposed undivided areas.
- I think that the corridor concept more than the dispersed concept. I think a better mix works better. I think that more employment in the perimeter area but focus on the corridor. I think the transportation corridor must be determined to carry out the rest of the area.
- When limited to pre-existing plans it is difficult to have productive input. It is approached that the idea that these plans are the basis and these comments will be used to support these two plans without any other input. This comment will be disregarded, and you will continue with your recommendation for a comprehensive plan.
- The "corridor" focus is ideal for preserving open space in our county, which I advocate. But, I feel that there may need to be at least one major "parkway" connecting the east side of the county. By incorporating an arterial "parkway", most likely there would be additional business development alongside it, unfortunately, but the benefits of a "parkway" would satisfy some of my public safety accessibility.
- Open land in the East County will be a tourist draw. Open land is necessary for a peaceful mind. Transportation is critical for "high-intensity" economic centers. Highways, railroad and mass transit.
- 70/30 blend. 2. Property rights are key.
- Dispersed growth = housing should be one home per acre. The cities in Pinal County have to get hold of approving so many permits to developers.
- Keeping rural areas is important. Over-congestion along corridor looks possible.

**Open Space:**



**Comments on Open Space:**

- Keep more open space. Maintain the natural environment: wildlife, indigenous plants.
- Would prefer space surrounding homes. Keep home density down. 3.5 du/ac is TOO high! We need definite Land Use Definitions with specific density guidelines that the "powers that be" follow.
- We need open space; it feeds the soul.

- Keep the eastern part of the county in rural character. Keep the Middle Gila Canyons area (Middle Gila Conservation Partnership) in open space. Use density transfers on State Trust Lands. Use political pressures and concerns of local governments and local people to postpone/prevent the selling of State Land Trusts. The State Land Department under law must dispose of Trust Land at public auction BUT the SLD can hold and lease the Trust Land. It is not required to sell now! Issue bonds to get funds to buy private lands needed for open space.
- I am sickened to see the plan west of Ak-Chin, Ralston Road, to the mountain. Most of the population is horse people, and that land should be considered open space.
- Here I looked at, think the proposed Tourism/Hospitality might be a good idea.
- This works if there are good controls on what products are constructed and the open space (a certain) portion is usable the majority of the time. Also the governmental regulations require large percentages of open space. The government MUST be able to maintain these areas.
- Open space is confined to undevelopable lands, i.e., washes. Fifteen percent lands and other less desirable lands. It would be preferred that changes to State Lands should be traded for more desirable open space lands. What is to be gained by creating open space and then plan for higher density surrounding it? Plan to keep low density adjacent to open space. Keep sardine housing clustered and let low density provide a view of open space. Abandon the concept of land fills at open space.
- I advocate more open space in our county NOW, so that we don't regret development decisions later. I realize that there needs to be a balance. I like the county's open space, trail and master plan, but it does show over 20 acres of one of my parcels as a trail and open space. I would love to preserve that land as open space for the plan but land owners, like myself, would need fair compensation. I would vote on bonds or taxes to preserve our open space.
- Sounds good. High-density areas are conducive to mass transit. Open areas for people to escape on the weekends.
- Property tax to buy open space. 2. Secure state land.
- Need more open space with LOWER density.
- Higher density works better with a more corridor focused plan and obviously helps preserve open space.
- The county has to be prepared for the future population while still maintaining the desert, i.e., Tempe and Scottsdale.

**Transit (public transportation) Opportunities:**

Intra-Pinal	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0	
%						✓						%
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	To Phoenix./Tucson

**Transit Opportunities Comments:**

- Mix of the two. I have no idea how to go about Pinal. There will be too many people on the highway in the future. It will be safer.
- We will need it all as seen by the congestion we are experiencing already.
- You need both intra- and inter-county systems.
- This looks like a plan.

- Locally would be helpful, in intra-Pinal transit. Parkways would be good.
- I would use if meets my schedule and locations. Need both. Basically need internal transit later in development years. Need the major routes first. I think the routes need to reconnect to all areas and planned for early. Also to and from county.
- Does not consider existing traffic congestion. Little in this plan addresses existing problems. Planning for more freeways has benefits that must be traded off NOW with existing. It has to justify itself. Enough people need to have a need to determine any form of public transportation. You have to meet needs, not create and alternative after the fact, as so much has been done so far.
- The two "plan" options show distinct growth corridors (even in the dispersed focus), therefore I feel that inter-Pinal transit would be more utilized. However, some intra-transit is needed to our major cities (Maricopa, Florence, Casa Grande, etc.)
- Better roads, mass transit, rail system, bullet train and feeder trains.
- 50/50 blend of public transit. 2. Public transit is usable if it meets the user needs. Ease of access.
- I think most people would use public transportation if it were available and affordable.
- First, it opens up the job markets. Also, it will make commuting much easier. I may use public transit in rare instances.
- Both. Other areas have inner-county transit and cross-county transit.

### **Commercial Airport: 12 of 14 approved**

#### Commercial Airport Comments:

- We're going to need one.
- We need it now!
- This has been envisioned for several decades, and it is becoming more necessary.
- With increases of "expected population," might be good to maybe eliminate traffic on roads. With that will come noise.
- Need to start now. Will be needed.
- Eliminate small town airports, and concentrate such facilities within commuter lines. I was involved in a similar project with George Twetzberry 30 years ago slated for Eloy. Got some funding. Never got off the drawing board. Too much politics.
- Better to plan now than get grief from the public later. Plus, a regional airport would help sustain local employment.
- Ok. But air traffic is a pain.
- Another one is needed due to population.
- If growth continues, eventually you will need more ways in and out of our state.
- Yes, because we need transportation sustainability.

### **Commuter Rail: 12 of 14 approved**

#### Commuter Rail Comments:

- Yes, I like the idea.
- Rail system in place already. Let's use it.
- It's the thing of the future.
- You need to have one for energy saving reasons as well as for congestion on the freeways.
- This would also eliminate some traffic on roads. Should be expected.
- If the destinations make sense. Like, to large commercial areas. Medical areas, airports, etc., and to connect to other mass transit systems.

- With proper planning and connects, this could be a beneficial project. Just building it and hoping someone will use it. Does not constitute good planning.
- Again, we should plan this method of transit now, while we have the time and the land to be proactive.
- Yes, bullet trains are cool. I stop in Casa Grande. Commuter trains out of Phoenix, Tucson, and Casa Grande to take people to bullet train.
- Less driving and congestion. It's a great idea!
- Any way to free up the freeway is a good start.
- Yes, because we need to find ways off congested roads.

### **Tourist Train: 6 of 14 approved**

#### Tourist Train Comments:

- I'm not sure.
- Something like Verde Canyon and Grand Canyon Railroad.
- I don't know.
- Low priority. It might be an attraction that would be developed at some time in the future.
- As long as it doesn't take tax payers' money.
- No. Do not have enough sites for a tourist train. Grand Canyon train has trouble surviving.
- I am mixed on both ideas of tourist trains and ecotourism for environmental reasons, but both would help the economy.
- Combine with ecotourism. See attached map for lots of mines(?) railroad.
- If it's within budget.
- Good idea, what are people going to see though? Ok, you answered my question.
- Yes, because it's part of economic sustainability.

### **Ecotourism: 7 of 14 approved**

#### Ecotourism Comments:

- I'm not sure. Maybe a combination of the two.
- Definitely in the future.
- I don't know.
- It fits with my desires to keep eastern Pinal County in a rural landscape. Need to be coordinated with the recreation attractions on the Forest Services and BLM lands.
- Definitely preserve area. Once developed, the beauty of nature is lost along with various species of animals.
- I think it can develop on its own.
- I would recommend encouraging the "ECO" approach to tourist attractions for both ecotourism and tourist trains.
- See above. (Combine with tourist trains. See attached map for lots of mines (?) railroad.)
- Yes.

### **Gateways: 9 of 14 approved**

#### Gateway Comments:

- "Welcome to Pinal County! Land of Open Spaces!" Well lit and must include an authentic feel of culture, history, etc.
- Identify county with local history. Maricopa: Cotton Bowl/Stagecoach.
- Not necessary.
- You need to develop an "image" for Pinal County before you create gateways.
- Large stone structure shape of county on stone base with "Welcome to Pinal County!"

- This is a great way to greet people as they cross into the area. Also, I wonder if one would be put up on south area into "Boundary of Nation." Should be symbolic to areas.
- Not too expensive but needed. Set up for each separate area for that area only.
- Bad idea. A gateway is also an exit from another entity into two megalopolis. Creates too much competition on the edge where money and energy would be better spent on the interior.
- We can promote our county's environmental stewardship in the planning process.
- Made with red flowers which must be replaced weekly. Also incorporate flashing smoke bombs to create a "smoky" look.
- Traffic.
- We would have to pick a common theme and make it universal for us.
- Large amount of desert vegetation.

**Other Comments:**

- Would like to see more participants!
- Phoenix is not all bad. You can learn from their mistakes. Transportation is their worst problem, because they let it spread. Now they are trying to build a "mass transit" on a very small scale. They didn't have a vision.
- I am here because of my participation on the Middle Gila Conservation Partnership.
- Thank you for all the options and I look forward to more presentations.
- Good meeting!
- I work in the City of Maricopa. "Gateways" welcoming people into Pinal County does not belong on any one vision. Any future could have them.
- Good job.