

HEALTHY PEOPLE



HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT



Comprehensive Plan Update

Pima Prospers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adopted by
The Pima County Board of Supervisors
May 19, 2015

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HEALTHY ECONOMY



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



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Executive Summary



Pima Prospers, Pima County’s second update of its 1992 comprehensive plan, was unanimously passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 19, 2015 as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission with only four amendments affecting land use in the unincorporated county. There were no changes to the Commission’s recommendations on the policy document or appendices. The full plan can be found on line at www.pimaprospers.com

The plan meets and exceeds all State of Arizona requirements for a comprehensive plan, and also meets all requirements of the Pima County Zoning Code covering Comprehensive Plans. It was created in accordance with a Public Participation Plan adopted for the plan by the Board of Supervisors. It includes an implementation plan in the form of a matrix (a living work program) and process overseen by an Interagency Monitoring Team operating under the auspices of the County Administrator.

Previous comprehensive plans focused primarily on land use (development and conservation) with the 2001 update of the plan expanding the conservation aspect markedly with the inclusion of the principles and policy guidance from the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP). The SDCP is Pima County’s award winning plan for balancing the conservation and protection of the County’s cultural and natural resources heritage with furthering an economically vigorous and fiscally responsible community.

Pima Prospers expands greatly on this effort, and it is now truly comprehensive in nature. It covers most aspects of county services, establishes a vision and overarching principles (notably healthy communities), and focuses on people and the economy in general. It is the product of the realization that most of the development pattern of the unincorporated county is now set and the time to more fully address physical and human services delivery is now. It is the product of a slow recovery to a difficult international recession combined with a projected significant change in the county’s demographics. It is the product of a citizenry and stakeholders who raised critical concerns and issues.

It is the product of the recognition of continued fiscal realities and the efficiencies that must be in place for successful implementation.



Citizens provided ideas and priorities at public events, workshops, and on-line. Representative groups and associations who either invited or allowed staff to meet with them; state, regional and local agencies and jurisdictions who commented on the plan while in process; the County's staff from many different departments; the Planning and Zoning Commissioners and Board of Supervisors themselves; and many others contributed policy and implementation items. Pima Prospers reflects ideas generated from urban, suburban and rural parts of our county, and from a wide cross section of people, some of whom are often involved in public planning processes and some who made a comment for the first time ever. Combined, the County received approximately 2000 or more letters, emails, on-line comments, public event cards, public meeting comment forms, and ideas at facilitated public meetings. All that written commentary, public event and public meeting input is summarized in Appendix C of the plan.

Pima Prospers charts a course for the next twenty years, recognizing that in Arizona, county plans are required to be updated every ten years. Like all comprehensive plans, it will not be a static document but change as will be necessary over the ten years of its life.

This plan will be the County's first that will be viewed primarily on-line: there is no shelf for it to sit on and gather dust. Pima County has actually always made good use of its comprehensive plan over time, but has primarily done so to guide land use changes and specifically rezoning. With a focus on healthy communities, Pima Prospers marries work on economic growth and development, human service infrastructure, physical infrastructure, and the county's continuing conservation interests. Pima Prospers focuses more intimately on our people and our communities, but also takes a broad view of the County's role in the region and the Sun Corridor, both in partnerships with others and in leadership roles in the services we provide. Pima Prospers is action oriented with a work program that will be administered, monitored and updated annually.

With Pima Prospers, Pima County intends to align, to the maximum extent possible, its annual budget, capital improvement program, and future bonding programs with its comprehensive plan. County actions are taken in full consideration of the plans vision, goals and themes. Over time, implementing policy documents of county agencies such as facilities expansion plans and development review manuals will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary to ensure they are on the same universally shared

path. Pima Prospers is understood to be a Living Document, one that allows for amendment as it becomes necessary due to changing circumstances, extraordinary opportunities, or critical needs.

What do We Mean by “Pima Prospers”?

Why the title Pima Prospers? Moving forward, the county must advance on multiple fronts. Our economy must assuredly prosper and grow. Our natural and built environment must be nurtured to prosper. Our people must have the tools to allow them to individually prosper as well. We must create opportunities in which our people can prosper: as individuals and families, together in our communities and in our region. We want to celebrate and capitalize on what we love about our county....our diversity, our culture, our arts and our natural beauty. We must seek to improve our overall quality of life and standard of living, find solutions that raise all boats and build the communities that meet our needs and also those of the coming generations whose wants and needs will be, in some ways, different than those who live here today.



Jurisdictions and Planning Areas

Pima Prospers, consistent with a Pima County Infrastructure Study that informed the comprehensive planning effort, breaks the county down into thirteen distinct planning areas which cross jurisdictional boundaries as many county services are not limited to the unincorporated area. . Pima County consists of several jurisdictions, of which the City of Tucson is the largest and is the county-seat. The vast majority of the county population lies in and around Tucson, filling much of the eastern part of the county. The other jurisdictions are the Town of Oro Valley, the Town of Marana, the Town of Sahuarita, and the City of South Tucson.

There are numerous unincorporated communities in Pima County such as Ajo, Why, Green Valley, Catalina, Robles Junction, Arivaca, and Picture Rocks. The County also includes two sovereign nations: The Tohono O’odham Nation and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. The Tohono O’odham Nation comprises the largest land mass for Central Pima County and also includes the physically separate San Xavier District in the Tucson Metro Area. The Pascua Yaqui Tribe has a growing land ownership in the southwest part of the Tucson Metro Area. The rest of the county is rural in nature. Over one third of the County’s population lives in the unincorporated area.

The planning areas include:

Avra Valley	Central
Tucson Mountains	Catalina Foothills
Southwest	Rincon Valley
Altar Valley	Tortolita
Upper Santa Cruz	San Pedro
Mountain View	Western Pima County
Southeast	

For purposes of land use analysis, only the unincorporated portions of these planning areas were considered.

Capturing the Regional Vision and Identifying the Core Plan Principle



Building off past and current work begins with the shared values and the Regional Vision developed through extensive public process by the non-profit organization Imagine Greater Tucson and accepted by Pima County in 2012. That vision is briefly outlined in Chapter 1 of the plan with a link provided to the Vision in its entirety. From a land use perspective, most of the County's developable land mass will continue to grow in a rural manner, and while individual communities may be touched by the Regional Vision, local vision to be developed later with communities such as Ajo will be more important. However, since over one-third of the county's population does live in the unincorporated area, primarily in the suburban Tucson metropolitan area, the shared Vision's full principles apply.

While there are a number of key themes and principles outlined in the introductory chapter of Pima Prospers, first and foremost is that of creating healthy communities. Healthy communities mean for each community in the county and the county has a whole: healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. Pima Prospers works to try to move the County closer to that reality, understanding full well there are not unlimited resources, and that it does not fall completely to the County or any one government to bring this about.



Using the Pima Prospers Document

Pima Prospers with its goals and policies and strategic actions can be found on line at www.pimaprospers.com.

- ❖ Chapter 1 contains the basic plan premise, Vision and organizing Themes and Principles.
- ❖ Chapter 2 provides the Comprehensive Plan structure and explains how the Plan is organized.
- ❖ Chapter 3-5 are organized by element within that overall topic area, and in order address the Use of land, Physical Infrastructure Connectivity, and Human Infrastructure Connectivity Within each element are goals, which tie back to the Vision as expressed in Chapter 1. Chapter 6 and 7 address Economic Development and Cost of Development respectively and are organized exactly the same but each is a specific element of the plan by itself.
- ❖ Chapter 8 includes the land use legend for the land use maps and the land use maps themselves. Other critical maps can be found in Chapter 3 in the Environmental Element the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System, and Chapter 4 in the Flood Control and Drainage Element (the 13 Regional Hydrology Maps), all of which are to be used in conjunction with the land use maps. Maps are considered plan policy in addition to the written word.
- ❖ Chapter 9 contains the Special Area Policies (policies that apply to a subsection of the county, most of which are carried over from previous plans) and Rezoning Policies, which are more site specific and result primarily from guidance being placed on previous individual comprehensive plan amendments.
- ❖ Chapter 10 includes the implementation instructions for the plan, and they are more extensive and complete than in past plans, accounting for more situations to ensure greater consistency and reliance on the plan over time.

The five appendices to Pima Prospers contain:

- A. **The Background Document.** This document provides the background data, history and maps used to create the plan including most of work done during the Infrastructure Study and all the demographic and fiscal data.
- B. **Implementation Matrix.** The matrix is intended to be used, monitored and continuously updated on an ongoing basis for the life of the plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission will receive an annual report on Plan implementation progress.

- C. **Public Participation Plan and Report.** This document includes the plan and the summation of public participation activities, in meetings and on-line.
- D. **Fiscal Impact Analysis.** This report is performed on a level commensurate with a general comprehensive plan, and while it notes there are limitations to this approach, it gives a sense of the potential impact of the planned land use. As there were relatively few land use changes in Pima Prospers, and none were very large in nature, the impact was limited.
- E. **Glossary of Terms.** This is the repository for all definitions in Pima Prospers. Defined terms used in Pima Prospers are to be linked to the definition in the electronic/on-line Glossary.



Plan Highlights

Key chapters of the plan include Use of Land, Physical Infrastructure Connectivity, Human Infrastructure Connectivity, Economic Development, Cost of Development and the typical land use maps and legends. Appendices include Background information, Implementation Matrix, Public Participation Plan, Fiscal Impact Analysis, and Glossary.



The **Use of Land** chapter addresses floodplain transfers of densities, golf course reuse, and multiple housing issues including affordability, fair housing, and stock. The Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (CLS) from the award winning Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan anchors the plan with the added ability to mitigate with offsite lands. Focused Development Investment areas were identified in the Southwest, along the Loop, in all municipalities, and in mapped redevelopment and revitalization areas. Community design goals and policies were created to emphasize a sense of place, incorporate active design techniques, assure compatibility and scale appropriateness and promote efficient use of land outside of the CLS. Climate impact mitigation

measures were created to address impacts on our unique desert environment and population.

Additionally, this chapter incorporates the county’s commitment to Davis Monthan Air Force Base, the County’s longstanding policy on conservation of our cultural resources, and green building.

Land Use maps were modified for several reasons: either to reflect the already developed land uses, mirror the surrounding land use or respond to a property owners’ request. The Land Use legends were simplified to eliminate most zoning district restrictions, unify land uses in large planned communities, and deleted rarely used categories. Added were two categories for Medium Intensity Urban, a high and a low, with a demarcation mark at 5 homes per acre differentiating transit opportunity from lower suburban neighborhood densities.



The **Physical Infrastructure Connectivity** Chapter includes a transportation element for roads, rail, air and freight. At the cornerstone of the element is policy to provide a safe comprehensive system, well maintained, that serves trade and economic development industries. Road maintenance was the most frequently mentioned topic during public participation phases. Coupled with the plan update, Pima County updated the Major Streets and Routes Plan to dovetail into key corridors and right-size road right of ways (ROW). Nearly 107 roads were reduced in ROW width, 11 new routes were added, and 53 routes were deleted (most did not exist).

Some of the other focus points in this chapter include:

- ❖ Water resources, including policy and implementation related to the Action Plan for Water Sustainability, water supply including for economic development and conservation, demand management, and groundwater quality;
- ❖ Wastewater treatment, critical as Pima is the only Arizona county that serves as a regional service entity for wastewater;
- ❖ Energy, including renewable energy and energy sources for economic development;
- ❖ Air Quality and solid waste;
- ❖ Communications networks, which is critical infrastructure and notably strikes a note of flexibility for what may come in the future;
- ❖ Public facilities, building on the County’s internal Sustainability Action Plan and creating an Integrated Facilities Planning System, going forward;
- ❖ Trails, continuing the County’s work on implementing the Regional Trails System Master Plan and “the Loop” ; and
- ❖ Flood control, including policy language toward reducing the cost of flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program, saving lives and property, and shaping healthy development patterns.



Human Infrastructure Connectivity and its elements are not state requirements, nor is Economic Development but in order to have a sustainable plan, these elements can’t be ignored. These are either services where the County is a provider or supports those who do provide the service. Strategies for access to healthy lifestyle components especially for the aging population, disease prevention, and health impact assessments are part of the plan. Sustaining healthy communities means addressing climate resiliency both in this chapter and in other key areas of the plan. Workforce training, education, libraries and the arts, contribute to our economic base and are supported county programs.

In addition to the robust element on Health Services which pulls together many aspects of Pima Prospers core principle of healthy communities, the following elements are noted:

- ❖ Public Safety and Emergency Services;
- ❖ Parks and Recreation, including policy that calls for a parks and recreation master plan, recognizing the critical importance to both healthy lifestyles, and economic development;
- ❖ Workforce Training and Education, working in many ways to connect people and quality jobs toward a healthy economy and healthy people;
- ❖ Library Services, with 27 branches, the Library District provides traditional and creative services connecting people with information, technology and opportunity;

- ❖ Animal care, a service of the County that seeks to decrease the number of homeless animals, provide quality care, and helping to create a more pet-friendly community;
- ❖ Food access, recognizing that while the County’s Zoning Code is generally supportive, more work needs to be done holistically toward local production, processing, and affordable distribution of healthy food; and
- ❖ Arts and Entertainment, critical given the rich and diverse cultural history of Pima County, and especially in terms of identifying and removing barriers to public art and entertainment venues, as well as ensuring ongoing maintenance of art installations.



The **Economic Development** chapter of the plan pulls the key principles from the county’s Economic Development Plan adopted in 2012 into long term policy. It protects our defense and aerospace economic base, builds on the trade corridors through the Port of Tucson and leverages partnerships with the University of Arizona, State of Arizona, TREO (now Sun Corridor, Inc.) and others to attract new industries. However the plan also recognizes the importance of providing a positive business

climate, meeting the needs of small business, and reinvesting in revitalizing commerce areas with street maintenance. Tourism showcases our natural assets giving a chance to create a lasting good first impression. To jump start implementation, several parcels were identified in the industrial corridor for staff initiated pre-zoning to industrial. Upon owner concurrence, staff will seek to rezone the parcels at no burden to the owners.

Lastly, all of these policies are backed with implementation items that will be the backbone of a county work plan for years to come. To make Pima Prosper, the interdisciplinary monitoring team will track and regularly report out on the progress and the outcomes of the county’s work for the ten year life of the plan.

This summary only highlights key aspects of the comprehensive plan. The challenge is great and the recognition that there will always be scarce resources is daunting. Pima Prospers both represents a vision for the future and pathways to successful implementation. It will take much work by many over its ten year life, but Pima County has a good start.

Pima Prospers was created by a large team of people in many county departments and the consultant team, informed by many citizens and stakeholders. **Grateful thanks from the Project Management Team** for much dedication, creativity and hard work.