

Land Use Element

Pinetop-Lakeside, with its distinctive "small town in the forest" image, presents the challenge of determining how new development can best be accommodated without degrading community character. Assessments must go well beyond Town limits. Trade areas, adjacent jurisdictions (including National Forest, reservation land, and unincorporated lands), seasonal activity locations and wildlife habitats are relevant to determining the most appropriate type, location and intensity of land use.

A summary of statutory requirements (A.R.S.§ 9-461.05) for the Land Use Element includes:

- a. proposed general distribution, location and extent of housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, open space and other public and private uses appropriate to the municipality.*
- b. standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan.*
- c. specific programs and policies used to promote infill or compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.*
- d. consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use; and*
- e. policies to maintain a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the municipality when the plan is adopted, readopted or amended.*

The Land Use Element provides a framework for achieving the Town's desired future form and community vision. The Future Land Use Map is a guide that focuses new growth and development intensity into specified areas while preserving open space and low-density character in others.

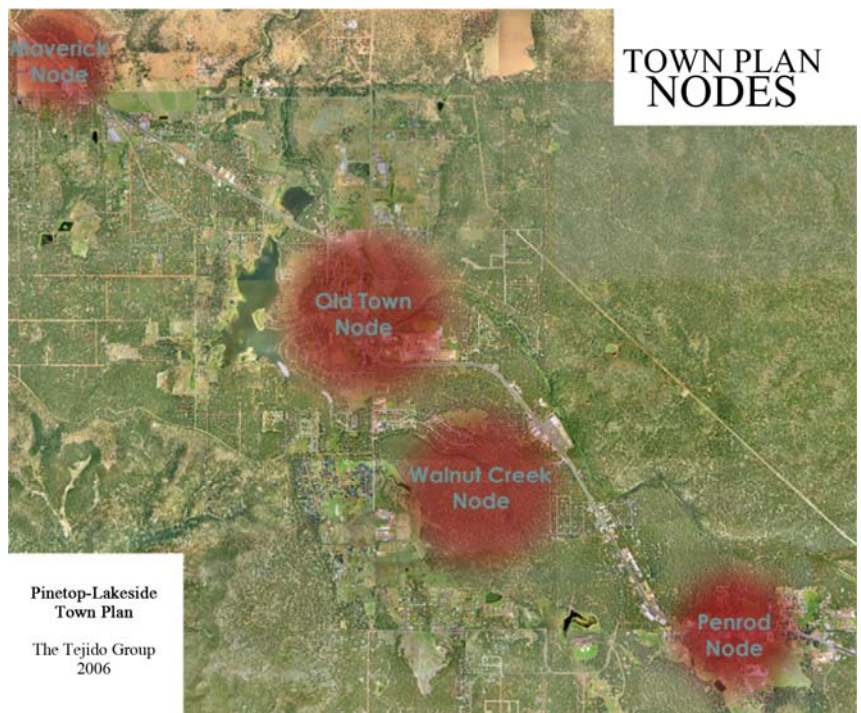
The General Plan Update also records trends in community demographics. New housing, tourism or jobs can influence factors such as the Town's median household income, age and housing values. Pinetop-Lakeside residents do not favor development simply for development's sake. Although development has been the primary economic engine for the Town, citizens have expressed a desire to hold high standards to encourage growth that makes a positive contribution to General Plan goals.

Evaluating the trend of development patterns past, present and future helps forecast land use. Here, growth-oriented land absorption has direct implications for the prized open space resource. There is a critical need for selectivity in making the choices necessary to preserve natural surroundings as well as land values and community economic stability. The Town should be provided with the regulations, plans, incentives, guidelines and other land use tools that reflect community values and will encourage growth that strengthens Pinetop-Lakeside's character, economy and quality of life.

I. EXISTING CONDITIONS

As the most basic part of the General Plan, the Land Use Element influences all other Plan Elements.

The Town's historic, lineal development follows White Mountain Boulevard, State Route 260. Guidance from *Town Plan* and *Linking Our Landscape* emphasizes this focus. These two plans call for concentration of mixed-use and greater land use intensity in four designated cores along State Route 260. The nodes respond to State statute's directive to promote compact development opportunities (ARS 9-461.05-2).



Pinetop-Lakeside's residential areas, as well as open space/recreational assets, are predominantly located off SR260. Entry points to neighborhoods, including gated communities, the consolidated multi-level public school campus, as well as view corridors to lakes and forest lands, provide visual relief from SR260's predominant "strip commercial" appearance.

As pressures build to utilize more acreage for development, Pinetop-Lakeside's land resources need to be evaluated more carefully than ever before. Existing conditions are the benchmark against which development decisions are to be measured, responding to the question: "Will future, proposed changes in land use or development intensity designations be consistent with the adopted General Plan and contribute to the community?"

A. Community Growth

Although the Plan adopted in 2001 projected a significant slowing in community expansion to the Year 2010, actual development initially occurred at a somewhat faster rate than predicted. Only during the last third of this decade did development taper off dramatically. From the autumn of 2007 through 2010 building permit issuances fell significantly, paralleling the nation's economic downturn and Arizona's shrinking housing market. This decline may even be greater in Pinetop-Lakeside as it is still a largely second-home community.

Modest annexations have added only about twenty acres to the municipality's incorporated area from 2001 to the present. During the past decade other attempts to bring land into the Town's municipal boundaries, such as a proposed annexation of the Wagon Wheel area, were not approved.

Approximately _____ acres were absorbed by new development between 2000 and 2010. Most construction was devoted to residential development.

Commercial and industrial uses accounted for only about ___% of the real estate use.

MORE

PINETOP-LAKESIDE LAND USE INVENTORY COMPARISON 2000 TO 2010

<i>Types of Land Use</i>	<i>2000</i>		<i>2010</i>	
	<i>Acres</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>%</i>
Residential	1,117	15.7%		
Commercial	189	2.7%		
Industrial	10	.1%		
Agricultural	133	1.9%		
Public/Institutional	255	3.6%		
Parks/Recreation	54	.8%		
USFS	3,244	45.7%		
Total Active Use =	5,002	70.5%		
Undeveloped	2,101	29.6%		
Total =	7,103	100%		

Source: *Town Plan* December 2000

B. Population

In the 2000 Census, 3,582 residents were recorded for Pinetop-Lakeside. Arizona Department of Economic Security forecasts for 2010 envisioned a population of 4,090. DES estimates in 2006, however, showed a gain of 14%, to a total of 4,290 – more than had been projected for 2010 (4,090) or 2020 (4,193). The 2010 Census data acknowledge the expected tapering off, but confirm the Town's population as somewhat above the earlier forecast.

A related growth factor has been observed in portions of the Town and nearby areas where increasing numbers of seasonal home owners are spending more of the year in the community or becoming year-round residents. Country Club and Pinetop Lakes subdivisions exemplify the trend – where a greater number of homes (about 40% in Pinetop Lakes, a lower percentage in Pinetop Country Club and White Mountain Summer Homes) are now being occupied substantial

portions of the year – compared with the 1990 Census indicating a 60% housing vacancy rate (attributable to "second homes") Town-wide.

Equally important, the visitor population continues to increase. During the summer months., the actual "in-Town" number of persons may total four or five times the year-round resident count. Seasonal residents are a major component of this "multiplier effect" in people, revenues and traffic from May through well past Labor Day. Campground and motel guests, as well as tourists passing through and regional day trippers also swell the numbers of people shopping and enjoying outdoor activities.

In-state resident tourists also traveled to Pinetop-Lakeside in record numbers for economical vacations during the 2007-2010 (and continuing) downturn. Their exposure to the community, as has been the case historically, may tend to generate interest in acquiring a local residence for seasonal use or permanent retirement.

Today's land use inventory leans heavily toward residential, open space and public use. Available acreage for commercial use is relatively low considering the importance of tourism and other business to the community. Most notable, there is very little industrial or office development to provide a balance of job opportunities for the local population.

C. Development Pattern

The Town of Pinetop-Lakeside has an area of 7,123 acres, slightly more than eleven square miles. Its predominant, developed land use is residential with ____ single-family dwelling units on lots of various sizes together with ____ units in multi-family complexes and group living quarters. Industry, commerce and public/institutional activities occupy less than ten percent of the community's area.

Estimate of seasonal peak visitors?

Any info on how many residences by lot size?

Development lines most of the State Route 260 corridor between the National Forest and the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation. Open lands account for eighty percent of the Pinetop-Lakeside land area. In addition to a major Forest Service presence, vacant properties, park/recreation use and agriculture contribute to the Town's spacious character.

1. **U.S. Forest Service** holdings constitute nearly half of Pinetop-Lakeside's incorporated area. This approximately five square mile area does not represent permanent open space. As a Federal asset, these National Forest lands are subject to potential land exchanges which could open much of the Town's northeast side to future development. Since 2000, exchanges have been considered for portions of Woodland Lake Park's 583 acres. There are two Special Use permits for Woodland Lake Park Tract lands: 98 acres to the Town and 40 acres to the Blue Ridge Unified School District

Cooperative planning that involves the Forest Service, the Town and nearby property owners in the evaluation and scheduling of any future releases for development is critical to assuring that today's forests do not become tomorrow's infill development.

2. **Residential neighborhoods** access White Mountain Boulevard/State Route 260 via entry points along commercial strips. Older housing areas, as well as planned vacation and residential communities, typically spread out behind the more intense activities fronting the SR260. The residential areas, in a way, insulate forest and lakes from the noise, busy, fast-moving traffic and shopping/service establishments of SR260.
3. **Businesses** -- from hospitality-industry lodging and restaurants to offices and service establishments -- hug Highway 260. There are few shopping

plazas, no big box stores, mostly individual, free-standing commercial buildings or small clusters of shops and highway-related enterprises.

There is little industry in the current land use mix. A compact industrial park on Porter Mountain Road and individual "heavy commercial" lots on Woodland Road do not generate significant numbers of jobs for the local workforce.

Alternative future development scenarios for this General Plan Update were designed from citizen input at planning workshops.

D. Zoning/Entitlements

General Plans are not zoning documents. However, since the advent of Arizona's "Growing Smarter" legislation that has been in effect for more than a decade, the adopted Plan is recognized as policy guidance for jurisdictions' land use regulation. There is a requirement that zoning decisions must conform generally with the Plan.

Existing land use classifications do not have to be changed to match the broad land use classifications depicted on the Future Land Use Map. The Land Use map does not make current uses of property non-conforming nor automatically confer a different zoning status. A formal zoning change must be requested by the landowner. Requests for rezoning that significantly differ from planned types or activities require the approval of a General Plan Amendment before the proposed development entitlement can be come effective.

Pinetop-Lakeside permits a variety of land use types. There are areas allowing non-residential uses, a mix of uses, and several gradations of residential use (based on neighborhood character and maximum permitted density) as well as an open space/park designation. The Zoning Ordinance establishes development criteria with standards that are intended to promote compatible enjoyment and use

of land throughout the community. These specifications are meant both to protect property values and to assure that a full range of business and living opportunities can be pursued in the Town.

It should be noted that the General Plan's Future Land Use Map (page 9) is not intended to specify zoning on individual properties' however, as noted, major rezoning proposals are required to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map. (See also General Plan Amendments, in Introduction).

Insert chart
relative
residential
densities,
bulk, etc., to
comply with
statute?

Insert land use plan

II. ISSUES

Compatibility and context are always paramount land use issues. Here, the sensitivity to activities working together, instead of conflicting, is especially critical. A community that puts nature first, as Pinetop-Lakeside does, must indicate clear preferences for maintaining compatibility, with minimum adverse impact on the natural surroundings by all land uses -- public and private.

A. Image

The Town's character reflects its outdoor living amenities and natural environment: forests, lakes, open spaces that celebrate the four seasons. These attributes are the foundation for its strong sense of community. The potential Image problem is allowing overdevelopment -- bigger, sprawling, more intense uses -- to diminish, remove and replace the pervading sense of forests and lakes. Land use policy is meant to assure that open space assets are respected through stewardship -- not unduly taken advantage of or used.

Choices relating to the types, locations, distribution, siting and intensities of land developments should place first priority on promoting the Town's image. This is the primary means for preserving its unique identity, special attraction for human enjoyment and property values. Regulations, plans and policies should promote blending residential, commercial, employment and institutional uses harmoniously in the context of Pinetop-Lakeside's mountain landscape and heritage.

Town residents understand that forests, meadows, lakes, streams, wildlife and scenic vistas are fragile resources that, once destroyed, are gone forever. For this reason, there is growing support for land management practices that protect vegetation, storm water, wildlife habitat, other scenic corridors and natural resources as part of an environment in which quality development can be accommodated.

Guidelines for development in scenic and environmentally sensitive areas should reflect the need for long-term protection of these resources and may involve such tools as clustering, density transfers, open space conservation easements and special property development standards ranging from protection against wildfire to promoting the use of solar energy and "green building" practices.

Extensive planning work that drives this General Plan Update relates directly to affirming the Pinetop-Lakeside image. The community's overall form, as envisioned in the 2006 *Town Plan* -- strategically connecting the four development nodes -- is intended to focus more intense new development mixes into the nodes and allow lower intensity uses elsewhere, with preservation of open space a desired result.

B. Economy

Bolstering the local economy is a compelling interest in making land use decisions. Pinetop-Lakeside has emphasized the need for efficient use of taxpayer funds since incorporation. Residents and Pinetop-Lakeside leadership run a compact, creative organization that coordinates basic services with other public and private entities, preventing duplication and unnecessary costs. The Town's objective is to enable or support rather than take on added responsibility.

Strengthening the local business economy a high land use priority. The downturn at national, state and regional levels has impacted municipal revenues, local business receipts and household incomes. More than ever, the General Plan needs to address ways to support commerce. Private investment -- in the right places for the right reasons -- will have to be counted on as the driving force of the updated Plan's implementation strategy.

Long-term economic success will depend on improving the land use balance. Although continuing to promote the Town's attraction of vacationers and retirees is important, it is also essential to build a more solid job base. Diversification will

be necessary, because Arizonans, all over the State, are learning that the construction and hospitality industries can no longer be the sole support of employment, incomes and local buying power. Workforce training is seen as a growing future need.

Again, future land use planning must be selective. Land that is absorbed into the built environment in the form of new homes, shops, hotels, offices and other uses should be evaluated on their sustaining benefits and other impacts, not just to take advantage of short-term gain. But we also need to balance the rights of the property owners.

C. Neighborhoods

Pinetop-Lakeside is a great place to live. With its friendly spirit and outdoor attractions, the Town provides superior opportunities for raising families and active retirement. Residents' quality of life centers on their homes and the natural environment around them. Each and every Plan Element should contribute to the security and livability of neighborhoods -- old and new. Protection is vital. Neighborhoods have to be safe, secure and free from negative impacts on residential privacy.

Neighborhood design that takes into account buffering, reduction of cut-through traffic, access to trails and parks can make a significant contribution to preserving and enhancing residential enclaves. Existing natural features – forest, lakes, streams, changes in terrain -- provide buffers and amenities that may be enhanced with additional vegetation, berms, or the trail system that is an essential part of *Linking Our Landscape* implementation. Creative site planning, street design and property development standards should be encouraged in designing new developments.

Residents favor the access by all persons to the region's wooded, recreational areas. However, access points for outdoor recreational areas and trails should be

located where they do not generate neighborhood internal traffic and be designed to minimize other neighborhood impacts.

D. Growth/Renewal

Economical construction can be a land use issue. High quality development is expected in Pinetop-Lakeside, but care should be taken not to place undue burdens on developers to the point where it becomes too expensive to build and they go elsewhere. The Town does not want to discourage growth. Ordinances, plans, fees, regulations and development processing should reflect the Town's philosophy that well-designed, creative additions to the community are welcomed and are essential to progress.

Positive policy attitudes toward appearance, availability of services, functionality and increasing property values may help to influence property owners outside the municipal limits -- if not to annex into Town -- at least to follow the Town's lead of upgraded quality.

Reducing the number of non-conforming, substandard and outdated structures throughout the region, encourages "self-help" redevelopment by property owners. Providing incentives may be mutually beneficial to both the public and private sectors. Available loans or grant programs, such as for weatherization/energy efficiency projects, can increase the value of older homes and businesses -- helping to reduce the gaps in housing and commercial space prices.

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Land Use goals respond to Town residents' vision for their community, as reflected in recent planning initiatives as well as long-standing values favoring private enterprises, preservation of natural surroundings and an excellent living environment. Maintaining and enhancing the unique character of Pinetop-Lakeside is the central Land Use theme.

Goal 1. Promote quality growth.

- Objective a:* Create a balanced Land Use Plan that preserves natural and historic assets as well as guides sound economic development.
- Objective b:* Provide adequate transitions from residential neighborhoods to commercial uses or traffic impacts.
- Objective c:* Evaluate major development and annexation proposals to assure positive fiscal contributions.

Goal 2. Preserve and enhance community character.

- Objective a:* Focus efforts to attain, protect and manage Woodland Lake Park recreation and open space amenities.
- Objective b:* Maintain residential neighborhoods' stability through improved circulation linkages, community appearance initiatives, code enforcement and other measures to sustain property values.
- Objective c:* Enhance opportunities for Town residents and visitors to participate in the arts and cultural activities.
- Objective d:* Relate the built environment directly to the community's open space, trails and other outdoor assets.

Goal 3. Assure that proposed developments respond positively to General Plan Goals as well as principles reflected in the *Town Plan* and *Linking Our Landscape*.

- Objective a:* Stress the importance of relating development plans with community-wide land use.
- Objective b:* Clarify the expectations and/or requirements necessary to utilize Planned Development options.
- Objective c:* Establish mutually beneficial guidelines from both private and public perspectives for densities and use mixes in designated Growth Area nodes.

IV. ELEMENT FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Pinetop-Lakeside's planning process revealed strong, widespread support for land use policies that prevent development from overwhelming the natural surroundings. The Mountain's environment is sacrosanct. It is not to be exploited for profit.

The other General Plan Elements -- Open Space, Growth Areas and Economic Vitality Elements, especially -- strongly relate to the General Plan's Land Use goals and objectives. Together, all Plan Elements support sustaining Pinetop-Lakeside's outdoor living quality at a desirable, small-town scale .

A. Future Development Scenarios

Citizen participants at General Plan Update workshops suggested features that should be emphasized in achieving Pinetop-Lakeside's future Vision. Initial public input underscored several basic priorities: preserving open space, woodlands and lakes; implementing principles of the *Town Plan* and *Linking Our Landscape* -- nodal development and connectivity; maintaining the small town atmosphere while encouraging local business but resisting growth for growth's sake.

Planners designed variations on these themes depicted in schematic future development scenarios to obtain reactions from residents, business people and other local stakeholders. Preferred features, such as containing mixed, more intensive uses in the planned cores and continuing lower density development elsewhere, have been incorporated into the graphic representation of a Future Land Use map.

Priority status, in land use terms, was directed to: improving a community-wide trails plan, buffering residential neighborhoods from activity centers, promoting economic development in the targeted node locations, and striving for a more extensive job base supported by educational opportunities.

Land use planning conclusions focus on incremental progress. Economic stability is fundamental to maintaining well-managed growth through quality development.

B. Build-Out Projections

The previous General Plan projected an ultimate regional population in excess of 50,000 persons and nearly 30,000 jobs. The increments in people and positions since that Plan was adopted has been relatively minor.

POPULATION VS. JOBS

	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Est 2010</i>
Population	2,422	3,582	4,765	
Occupied Housing Units	928	1,430		
Jobs	1,175	1,684	1,987	

Source: U.S. Census; Arizona Department of Commerce Community Profile, 2009

The 2000-2010 decade experienced more rapid construction rates than has been forecast. Growth occurred principally in housing, tapering off from late 2007 into 2010 inline with the State-wide homebuilding slowdown. Recent Town building permit issuances reflect reductions in housing demand and speculative investment in the production of second homes.

BUILDING PERMIT ISSUANCES

Additional sub-categories useful: M-F, hotel, etc.

	<i>2000 to 2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>Est 2010</i>
Residential							
Commercial							
TOTAL							

Source: Town of Pinetop-Lakeside,

In Town, there was, as of mid-2010, an extensive inventory of about ____ platted, undeveloped homesites. No plans for building new subdivisions or planned communities are in the near-term projection. Prospective sites for apartments, townhomes or condominiums likely will be delayed 3-5 years until an economic turnaround is experienced. The Navopache Electric site, recently vacated when the utility facilities were relocated, could represent an opportunity for locating new office or service employment in the community.

Redevelopment, particularly in and around the conceptual *Town Plan* nodes, may represent a substantial "start up" contribution to short- and mid-term construction. Marketing strategies aimed at expansion or intensification in the vicinity of Old Town, Maverick and Walnut Creek cores call for mixed-use including shops, workplaces and multi-family or compact housing.

Unless large scale land releases by the Forest Service or sizeable annexations occur, neither of which appears to be imminent, progress toward build-out will continue at a methodical pace. In the coming decade, growth will focus on nodal development and relatively slow, continued absorption by lower density housing of vacant lands lying outside the 260 Corridor and cores. The following chart suggests possible increments in land utilization, by use type, from 2011-2020:

C. Land Use Recommendations

The Town, together with its greater planning area, makes best use of its land by tactically scaling development to existing physical conditions. Careful placement can fit high quality development into the White Mountains' context. Overbuilding will ruin the community's character. Some basic precepts are:

1. **Nodal development** requires special implementation tools. Incentives could include allowance of mixed use and intensity bonuses, infrastructure cooperation, credits for public amenities such as trails connections. Masterplanning each core area, integrating with adjacent properties should be mandatory to take advantage of full development potential. Piecemeal projects, with no regard to adjacent parcels, are discouraged.
2. **Open Space protection** considerations constitute a priority in evaluating all land use proposals -- public or private. Trail linkages, as well as vehicular accessibility, are expected to be included as project site planning requirements. Likewise, preserving scenic views, vegetation and water courses should be regarded as factors in protecting community property rights.
3. **Neighborhood Preservation** policies need to be articulated so as to prevent intrusions on residential privacy. Buffering, traffic calming, alternative means of ingress/egress, noise and glare attenuation and similar techniques should be utilized in planning for compatibility among different types and intensities of land use. Particular attention might be directed to establishing procedures and guidelines to be observed between developers of Nodes (or other potentially more intense) sites and adjacent residents/landowners.
4. **Cohesive Economic Vitality** efforts recognize the appropriate scale of businesses in the community. Big box stores, major manufacturing operations and enterprises generating negative environmental impacts are inappropriate to

Pinetop-Lakeside. Smaller establishments catering to local residents and visitors can best be supported by the Town's infrastructure.

5. **Job Creation** is seen as necessary to long-term sustainability. A wider variety of well-paying jobs in technical, artistic, information and consulting pursuits might be developed to attract workforce that would appreciate living in the Mountain environment. Opportunities for higher education, technical training and artisanship can become an asset to the community.

The General Plan Implementation Program includes these and related recommendations as part of the Action Plan.