

CHAPTER 1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

In one of his more famous malapropisms, Yogi Berra noted that, “The place is so popular, people hardly go there anymore.” Such is the dilemma confronting the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and other fast-growing communities around the State of Arizona. Their popularity, fueled by an outstanding quality of life and a beautiful natural setting, draws increasing numbers of new residents, which, in turn, threatens to undermine or destroy many of the qualities that brought them to the community in the first place. Situated at 6,900 feet in the beautiful ponderosa pine forest of Arizona’s White Mountains, the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and its surroundings are in an enviable position. Long inhabited by deer, elk, black bear and the occasional mountain lion, in recent years the land surrounding the verdant mountain lakes, streams and meadows has become home to an increasing number of people. Anxious to escape the oppressive summer heat of Phoenix and Tucson, hundreds of second homes and resort accommodations have been built in the area during the past decade.

Like many communities around the State of Arizona, as well as around the United States, the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and its surrounding unincorporated areas are at a crossroads. New growth is often accompanied by degradation of the environment, increased traffic congestion, crowded schools, and inadequate infrastructure. The critical issue confronting the community is how to accommodate reasonable growth while improving the quality of life and the physical attributes draw thousands of people to this idyllic location. As would be expected, population and retail growth have an impact on the provision and adequacy of essential public services, threaten the integrity of the ponderosa forest, and raise questions about the timing, location and financing of future development in the community. As growth continues, questions are raised about the density of new residential development, housing affordability, preservation of open space, the nature of the subdivision process and construction outside of that process, the location of manufactured housing, and the type and location of commercial development in the community.

Meanwhile, events in other communities, such as the construction of the Hon-Dah Casino on the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation or the development of a Super Wal-Mart just outside the Town’s boundaries in the City of Show Low, also pose opportunities or threats to the community and will have an impact on Pinetop-Lakeside’s future. In order to be effective, a plan for the community will need to understand the implications of these developments and propose policies and programs which complement, rather than compete with, the plans of adjacent communities.

It is in this complicated milieu that the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside, in conjunction with Navajo County, is updating its 1986 General Plan. While the challenges are formidable, as will be explained later in this section, one of the fundamental roles of the General Plan

is to prudently guide the growth and redevelopment of the Town and the adjacent unincorporated areas to ensure that the community maintains its high-quality of life.

1.2 STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS (AUTHORITY AND SCOPE)

The concern over how to grow has extended itself all the way to the Arizona Legislature, which recently, in the face of mounting citizen concern about the pace and quality of growth throughout Arizona, has tightened up planning regulations. Prior to the enactment of the “Growing Smarter” legislation adopted in 1998, communities the size of Pinetop-Lakeside, while being required to prepare a general plan, could prepare a plan containing only two elements – land use and circulation. Additionally, once the plan had been adopted, there were no provisions in state statutes requiring municipalities to update or maintain the plan. Requirements for county planning were even less stringent than those for municipalities. With the adoption of the Growing Smarter and now Growing Smarter Plus legislation passed at the 2000 special session, both county and municipal planning requirements have been strengthened and will provide the foundation for a new generation of plans in Arizona. These plans will provide for increased citizen involvement, reflect a greater sensitivity toward the environment and the provision of open space, be more difficult to amend, and have more authority than their predecessors.

The authority to prepare general plans for a municipality is provided in the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §9-461.05, which stipulates that “each planning agency shall prepare and the legislative body of each municipality shall adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan for the development of the municipality.” The authority to prepare comprehensive plans for a county is provided in ARS §11- 821, which require that “the commission shall formulate and the board of supervisors shall adopt....a comprehensive long-term county plan for the development of the area of jurisdiction...”

With the mandates under Growing Smarter, for municipalities with populations of more than 2,500* in the last decennial census, state statutes require the following seven elements be part of a general plan:

- Land Use Element
- Circulation Element
- Open Space Element
- Growth Area Element
- Environmental Planning Element
- Cost of Development Element
- Water Resources Element

*Cities and towns with a population of more than 2,500 persons, but less than 10,000 persons and whose population growth rate did not exceed an average 2 percent per year for the ten-year period before the most recent decennial Census are exempt from the above provisions.

Since the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside has an estimated population of more than 2,500 inhabitants and its growth rate has exceeded two percent per year, it will be required to meet the Growing Smarter requirements after the release of the Year 2000 population counts. Therefore, the community is complying with the mandatory requirements for communities larger than 2,500 residents.

Additional state law requirements for municipalities stipulate, “the general plan shall consist of a statement of community goals and development policies. It shall include maps, any necessary diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, standards and plan proposals” (ARS §9-461.05).

For all county areas, regardless of their size, ARS §11- 821 stipulates that the county plan shall:

- ❑ Show the zoning districts designated as appropriate for residential, business and industrial uses and provide for the establishment of setback lines and other plans providing for adequate light, air and parking facilities.
- ❑ Consider access to incident solar energy.

In addition, ARS §11- 821 notes the county plan may:

- ❑ Provide for retirement community zoning districts
- ❑ Establish the percentage of a lot or parcel which may be covered by buildings and the size of yards, courts and other open spaces.
- ❑ Provide for the regulation and use of business licenses, adult oriented business manager permits, and adult service provider permits in conjunction with the establishment of adult oriented businesses and facilities.

Section 11- 806 provides other possible functions of a county comprehensive plan, including, but not limited to:

Studies and recommendations relative to the location, character and extent of highways, railroads, bus and other transportation routes, bicycle facilities, bridges, public buildings, public services, schools, parks, open space, housing quality, variety and affordability, parkways, hiking and riding trails, airports, forests, wildlife areas, dams, projects affecting conservation of natural resources, air quality, water quality and floodplain zoning.

Those are the minimum standards for counties with less than 125,000 persons according to the most recent U.S. decennial census. During the last decennial census, in 1990, Navajo County had a population of less than that and, therefore, is not required to go beyond the standards listed above. This may remain the case, since population projections made by the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) indicate that

for the next decennial census, in 2000, the County will still have less than 125,000 residents and will be in compliance with Growing Smarter by following the requirements listed above. The population estimates made by the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that there were 96,997 persons residing in Navajo County on July 1, 1998. If that estimate is correct, and if the County rate of growth remains unchanged, the County will not exceed the 125,000 threshold in the 2000 census. If the County's population does exceed 125,000 in the next census, it will be required to meet the following additional requirements contained in ARS §11-821:

- Planning for land use that designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land appropriate to the county. The land use plan shall include:
 - A statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various land use categories covered by the plan.
 - Specific programs and policies that the county may use to promote compact form development activity and locations where those development patterns should be encouraged.
 - Consideration of air quality and access to incident solar energy for all general categories of land use.
 - Policies that address maintaining a broad variety of land uses including the range of uses existing in the county at the time the plan is adopted, readopted or amended.
 - Planning for circulation consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed freeways, arterial and collector streets, bicycle routes and any other modes of transportation as may be appropriate, all correlated with the land use plan.

In addition to the state mandates required of municipalities and counties in the preparation of general or comprehensive plans, the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and Navajo County have decided to prepare other plan elements. These include Public Facilities and Services, Housing, and Economic Development.

1.3 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

To be successful, one of the underlying principles of preparing a General Plan is that the plan must be prepared in conjunction with the citizens of the community. Ideally, the plan should mirror the aspirations of the community and its elected officials. Because of the importance of citizen involvement, Growing Smarter changes to the state planning legislation have beefed up the requirements to get the community involved in the planning process. Specifically, the new ARS requirements now mandate that the Town Council and the County Board of Supervisors shall:

- Adopt written procedures to provide effective, early and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of general plans from all geographic, ethnic and economic areas of the municipality. The procedures shall provide for:
 - The broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives
 - The opportunity for written comments
 - Public hearings after effective notice
 - Open discussions, communication programs and information services
 - Consideration of public comments

A comprehensive Citizen Participation Program to elicit community input was conducted for the *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan* to encourage involvement by a large and representative cross-section of the community. The major techniques utilized included:

- *Project Newsletters, Press Releases and the Town Newsletter*: Provided the community with information on the project's status and the schedule for upcoming community workshops or public meetings.
- *Meetings with Community Groups*: Both the Town staff and the Project Team met with various groups throughout the process to brief them about the planning process and the status of the General Plan. This includes meetings with the 2020 Vision Committee, the Pinetop-Lakeside Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Realtors.
- *Community Planning and Development Department Staff Coordination*: Included coordination between the Town staff and the Project Team to ensure that all community constituencies were properly involved in the planning process.
- *Public Meetings/Community Workshops*: Included the following public meetings/community workshops:
 - Public Meeting 1: Issue Identification, Visions, Goals; April 21, 1999
 - Public Meeting 2: Land Use Alternatives; June 16, 1999
 - Public Meeting 3: Review Draft Plan Format and Land Use Plan, September 22, 1999
 - Public Meeting 4: Draft Plan Review, November 10, 1999

Methods used to obtain community input during the workshops included question and answer sessions, formal presentations, administering questionnaires, and preparing and discussing land use maps and proposals with meeting attendees.

Attendance at the meetings can be estimated by reviewing sign-up sheets, which were available for each meeting. At the first meeting, 75 people signed the sign-in sheet. It was followed up by 55 sign-ins and 50 at the second and third meetings, respectively. The fourth and final community workshop was attended by 40 people who signed in. These actual attendance figures for each meeting will be higher than this because not every person attending a community meeting will sign in.

- *Regional Steering Committee Meetings*: Included the following meetings:
 - Public Meeting 1: Project Start Up, Overview, etc.; March 16, 1999
 - Public Meeting 2: Issue Identification, Visions, Goals; April 21, 1999
 - Public Meeting 3: Land Use Alternatives; June 16, 1999
 - Public Meeting 4: Review Draft Plan Format & Land Use Map; September 22, 1999
 - Public Meeting 5: Review Draft Plan Format & Land Use Map; October 27, 1999
 - Public Meeting 6: Review Final Draft Plan; December 8, 1999

The Regional Steering Committee was comprised of representatives from a number of agencies who will be potential affected by the preparation and adoption of the *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan*. Invited participants of the Committee included the individuals below. In some instances, alternative representatives attended meetings.

- Dave Ashton, Navajo County
- Dave Burks, Pinetop Water
- Ed Collins, U.S. Forest Service
- Don Corum, Arizona Department of Transportation
- Paul Ferris, Navajo County
- Keith Jones, White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Dallas Massey, White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Ted Millsbaugh, Arizona Water
- Conner Murphy, White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Roger Mineer, Lakeside Fire Department
- Ed Muder, City of Show Low
- Rick Powers, Arizona Department of Transportation
- Wayne Retzlaff, Navopache Electric Cooperative
- Walt Scott, U.S. Forest Service

- Larry Vicario, Navajo County
 - Paul Watson, Town of Pinetop-Lakeside
 - Mayor Ginny Handorf
 - Paul Watson, Pinetop Fire Department
 - Carl Wibel, White Mountain Regional Development Corporation
 - John Wolan, Pinetop-Lakeside Sanitary District
- *Community Survey:* More than 300 responses were received from both Town and County residents who answered questions relating to public services, important issues confronting the community, and preferred land use types.
 - *Town Council/Town Planning and Zoning Commission & Navajo County Board of Supervisors/County Planning Commission Workshops:* Included the following meetings:
 - Meeting 1: Issue Identification, Visions and Goals; April 21, 1999
 - Meeting 2/3: Land Use Alternatives; July 15, 1999 and August 2, 1999
 - Meeting 4: Draft Plan Review; September 22, 1999
 - Meeting 5: Project Status Overview, October 20, 1999
 - *Town Council/Town Planning Commission & Navajo County Board of Supervisors/County Planning Commission Public Hearings:* Included the following meetings:
 - Town Planning Commission Public Hearing
 - Town Council Public Hearing
 - County Planning Commission Public Hearing
 - County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing

In addition to the meetings listed above, the citizen outreach program also included formal and information presentations throughout the planning process to a number of citizen and community groups. A partial listing of these groups includes the Pinetop-Lakeside Chamber of Commerce, the Home Builder's Association, and the Vision 2020 Committee.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan* has been organized into the following sections:

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION:** Provides background information on the existing planning context, an overview of the planning process used to prepare the 2001 General

Plan, including the citizen participation program, and contains a brief summary of the contents of the Plan.

2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE PINETOP-LAKESIDE/NAVAJO COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN: Provides information about the planning horizon, plan implementation, and purposes, characteristics, administration, and themes of the General Plan.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION: This section will provide an overview of the planning context or environment in which the *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan* is being prepared. This will include an examination of existing or previous plans, which might impact the growth and development expected to occur in the Study Area.

4.0 REGIONAL PLAN ELEMENTS: Establishes an updated planning framework within the plan elements to accommodate the Town and County Planning area's future growth and revitalization to the Year 2020. The General Plan contains the following elements:

- The *Land Use Element* designates the general location and intensity of land uses for residential, commercial, industrial, parks, open space, recreation, and public facilities in the Study Area. General guidelines for residential densities and non-residential development are also included.
- The *Circulation Element* identifies the general location and function of existing and future streets and describes the need for transportation facilities (e.g., bicycle paths and trails), which will enhance the use of alternative modes of transportation.
- The *Economic Development Element* recommends strategies to enhance the economy of the Study Area, retain and expand existing businesses, and identifies specific industries that may be targeted by the Town in its economic development efforts.
- The *Public Facilities and Services Element* establishes general guidelines for the location of public facilities and services including: water supply and distribution; sewage collection and treatment; public utilities; and other related infrastructure systems.
- The *Environmental Planning Element* contains analysis, policies and strategies to address the anticipated impacts, if any, of the plan elements on air quality, water quality and natural resources associated with the proposed development under the general plan.
- The *Housing Element* consisting of standards and programs for the elimination of substandard dwelling conditions, the improvement of housing quality, variety and affordability and for provision of adequate sites for housing. This element shall contain an identification and analysis of existing and forecasted housing needs. This element shall be designed

to make equal provision for the housing needs of all segments of the community regardless of race, color, creed or economic level.

- The *Growth Area Element* that identifies areas, if applicable, that are particularly suitable for planned multi-modal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses, such as residential, office, commercial, tourism, and industrial uses. This element shall include policies and implementation strategies designed to: (a) make automobile, transit and other multi-modal circulation more efficient, make infrastructure expansion more economical and provide for a rational pattern of land development; (b) conserve significant natural resources and open space areas in the growth area and coordinate their location to similar areas outside the growth area's boundaries; and (c) promote the public and private construction of timely and financially sound infrastructure expansion through the use of infrastructure funding and financing planning that is coordinated with development activity.
- The *Cost of Development Element* that identifies policies and strategies that the municipality will use to require development to pay its fair share toward the cost of additional public service needs generated by the new development, with appropriate exceptions when in the public interest. This element shall include (a) a component that identifies various mechanisms allowed by law that can be used to fund and finance additional public services necessary to serve the development; and (b) a component that identifies policies to ensure that any mechanism adopted result in a beneficial use to the development, bear a reasonable relationship to the burden imposed on the municipality to provide additional necessary public services to the development.
- The *Open Space/Recreation Element* that includes a comprehensive inventory of open space areas, recreational resources and designations of access points to open space areas and resources. An analysis of forecasted needs, policies for managing and protecting open space areas and resources and implementation strategies to acquire additional open space areas and further establish recreational resources. Policies and implementation strategies designed to promote a regional system of integrated open space and recreational resources and a consideration of any existing regional open space plans.

Implementation and Administration of the Plan are addressed within each of the elements.

Implementation Plans: Provide a detailed outline of the programs recommended for each element of the *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan*. The outline includes the specific program, the agency or entity responsible for initiating and monitoring the program, the time frame to complete the program, and the funding and staff resources available to implement the program.

General Plan Administration: Provides the framework for administering the plans, policies, and amendments to the Regional Plan. Also provides a framework for updating future plans.

1.5 STUDY AREA

The Study Area included in the *Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan* encompasses all of the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and a significant area of unincorporated land under the jurisdiction of Navajo County adjacent to the Town's boundary. Of particular note is the unincorporated area just north of the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside's boundary. This area was also included in the recently completed City of Show Low General Plan. The Study Area is depicted in Exhibit 1-1, *Study Area Location*.

1.6 REGIONAL COORDINATION: WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE RESERVATION AND USFS

Although the town and county governing bodies initiated the Pinetop-Lakeside/Navajo County Regional Plan, the participation of other regional authorities not under the direct authority of the State of Arizona is crucial for its execution. This includes the White Mountain Apache Reservation, which controls the land to the West and South of the Plan Study Area, and the US Forest Service, the primary owner and steward of undeveloped federal land within the Plan Study Area. Since 1996, Town staff has maintained communication with the tribal planning office in order to apprise them on planning issues that may impact the reservation, including the regional plan. In addition, USFS have been included in Development Review Committee (DRC) meetings since 1996, to review projects or planning issues within the town limits that may potentially impact federal land. However, because most actions of the tribe and the USFS will not be affected by local planning and zoning regulations, these parties have elected to not vote on any recommendations of the plan. Representatives have continued to attend meetings, review materials, and provide commentary when appropriate.