



Navajo County

2050

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1/14/2024*



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Chapter 1: Overview

The *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan* meets Arizona statutes and reflects the community’s vision and values. This chapter contains the following: a brief history of Navajo County, a description of the location and regional context of Navajo County, an explanation of the plan’s purpose and process, as well as information on the plan’s administration and structure.

Brief History of Navajo County

Navajo County holds a rich history dating back thousands of years when the area was inhabited by various Native American tribes, including the Navajo, Hopi, Apache, and Pueblo peoples. These indigenous communities established their settlements, practiced agriculture, and developed unique cultural traditions. The Hopi Pueblo of Oraibi is one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in the United States. On March 21, 1895, Navajo County was established after Apache County was divided vertically in half in the final act of the Territorial Assembly, with Navajo County as the western portion. Previously, the first Arizona legislature (1864) established four counties, and in 1879 the boundaries for Apache County were created from the eastern two-fifths of Yavapai County by the Tenth Territorial Legislature. Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Navajo County experienced rapid growth with the expansion of railroads, the development of mining and logging industries, and the establishment of North America’s third largest ranch, the Aztec Land and Cattle Company near Holbrook, the County seat which was founded in 1881. Navajo County has a current population of 107,110 and is ranked ninth in total population among Arizona counties.

As shown in **Figure 1**, Navajo County is located in northeastern Arizona flanked by Apache County and Coconino County to its east and west, the State of Utah to the north, and Gila County and Graham County to the south. Navajo County is Arizona’s fourth largest County by area and is mostly made up of reservation land.

Nearly two-thirds of Navajo County is Native American Reservation land, while the remaining land area is divided by individual and corporate ownership (18%); U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and U.S. Bureau of Land Management (9%); and the State of Arizona (5.9%). More information on land ownership can be found in the *Land Use* section of this report and as illustrated on **Figure 4**. All of Navajo County is designated an Enterprise Zone, a geographic area of government-granted special status to encourage economic growth.

Today, although shifting, Navajo County’s principal industries are tourism, coal-related industry, manufacturing, timber production, and ranching. Towns like Holbrook, Winslow, and Show Low emerged as important trading centers and transportation hubs. In the modern era, Navajo County continues to be characterized by its diverse population and stunning natural landscapes, including parts of the Painted Desert, Petrified Forest National Park, high desert prairies, and steep-walled canyons beneath the snowcapped peaks and deep forest of the White Mountains and Mogollon Rim. It remains an important center for Native American

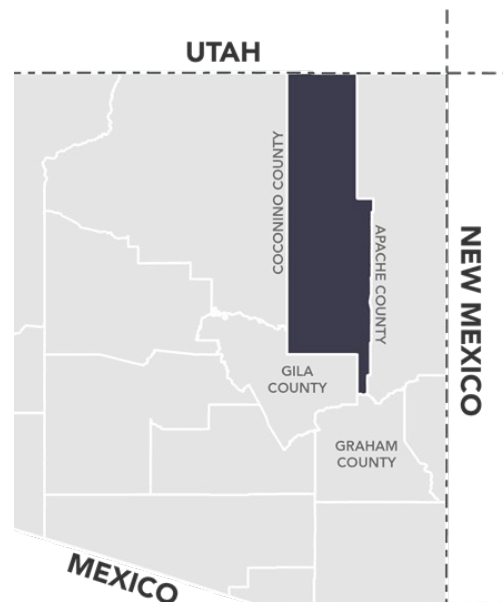


Figure 1: Navajo County Within State of Arizona



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culture and heritage, with the Navajo Nation exerting considerable influence over the region's economic and cultural life.

Regional Context

Navajo County is approximately 9,952 sq. miles in size and is in northeast Arizona. The County makes up approximately 8.7% of the State and is Arizona's fourth largest county by size. The County boundary was developed over a series of county subdivisions starting with 40% of eastern Yavapai County in 1879. Apache County was subsequently split in half, minting the new Navajo County in 1895, resulting in the boundaries depicted in **Figure 2** and in *Appendix D: High Resolution Maps*.

Figure 2: Navajo County Base Map





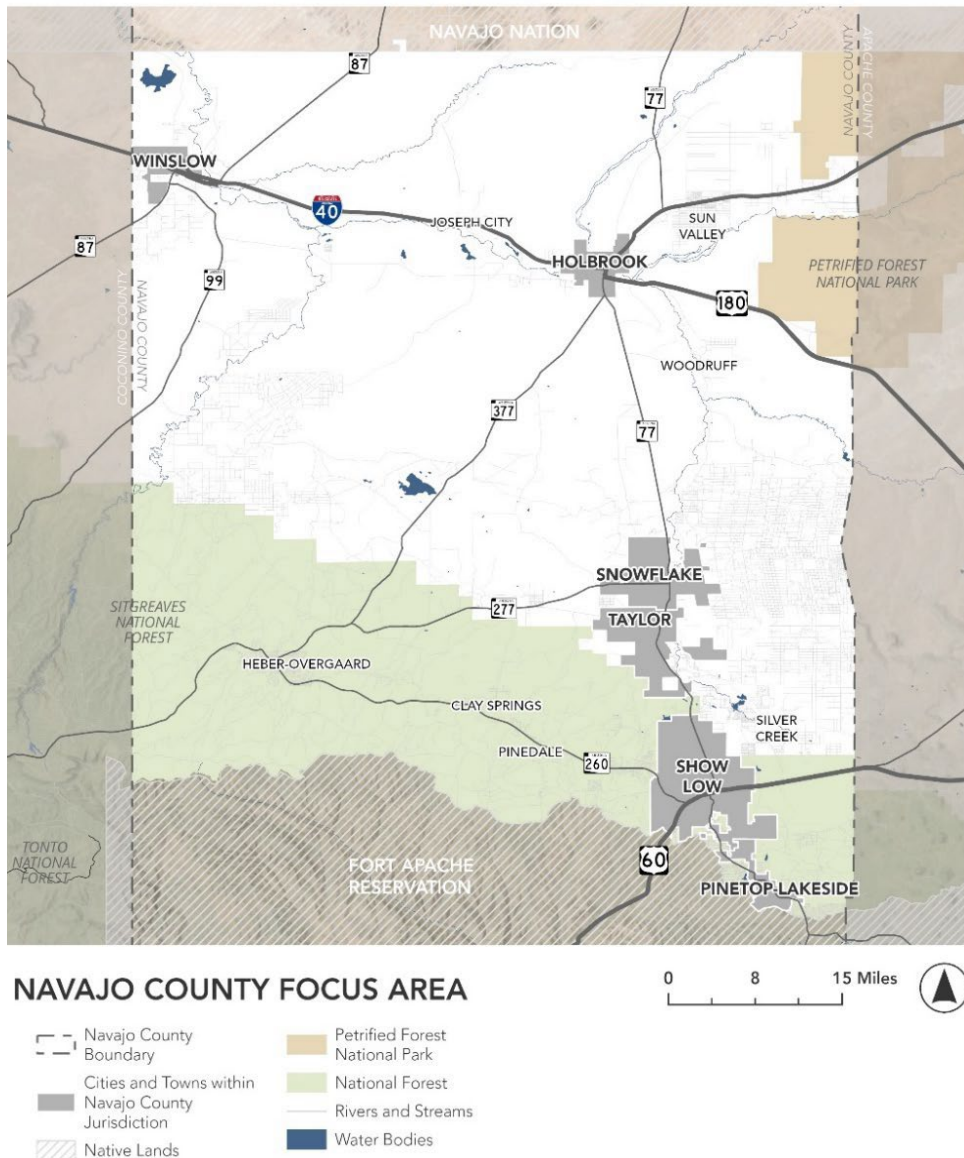
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Focus Area

The governance of the Comprehensive Plan applies only to unincorporated areas of Navajo County (approximately 3,309 sq. miles), and therefore does not apply to incorporated areas (174 sq. miles) or to land within the sovereign nation boundaries of Hopi, Navajo, or White Mountain Apache reservations (6,469 sq. miles). Thoughtful coordination has occurred to account for both the plans of tribal nations and municipalities and then integrating them at the interface of those boundaries as relevant. The maps within this report will represent both the base map shown on **Figure 2** to show connectivity of features such as roadways and open space, as well as the smaller inset or focus area shown on **Figure 3**. The boundary of the focus area (3,483 sq. miles) is along Interstate 40 (I-40), with upper bounds between the Navajo Nation and Holbrook, and the Sitgreaves National Forest and Fort Apache Reservation on the South.

Figure 3: Navajo County Focus Area Map





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Purpose & Process

A Comprehensive Plan is a planning policy document designed to serve as a County’s community-led roadmap for growth and development. Comprehensive Plans have three defining aspects:

- **GENERAL.** A Comprehensive Plan is a generalized 30,000-foot policy document with a future land use map and anticipated future action plan.
- **COMPREHENSIVE.** As the name suggests, a Comprehensive Plan covers a wide range of topics from land use and circulation to housing, energy, and open space.
- **LONG RANGE.** Comprehensive Plans are planned with a future horizon of 10 years to sometimes build-out of an area.

It is also important to note what a Comprehensive Plan is not. A Comprehensive Plan **is not**:

- A regulatory document like a zoning code or subdivision regulations.
- A tool to advance special interests.
- An unchangeable document.
- An area, master, or capital improvement plan.

Navajo County’s Comprehensive Plan was first adopted in May 2004, following the adoption of Growing Smarter legislation in Arizona, and most recently updated in May 2023. Navajo County’s Comprehensive Plan has not seen any major updates since its original adoption, although there have been changes in population and demographics over the past 20 years. Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) §11-804 requires the adoption or re-adoption of a long-term Comprehensive Plan every 10 years for each Arizona County. Plans are given purpose by multiple parties, fulfilling state and local requirements.

The comprehensive plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the area of jurisdiction pursuant to the present and future needs of the County.

The comprehensive plan shall be developed so as to conserve the natural resources of the County, to ensure efficient expenditure of public monies, and to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the public.

The 12-month process for the *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan* followed a logical sequence of six phases, starting with a project kick off at the beginning of 2024 to final plan adoption at the beginning of 2025.



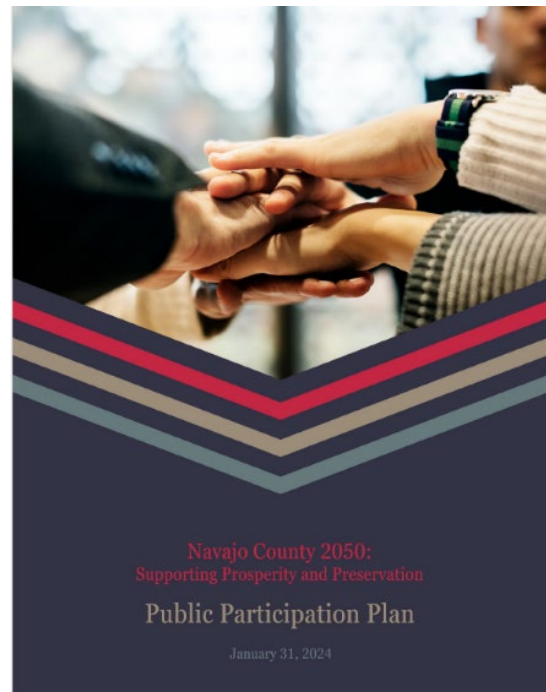
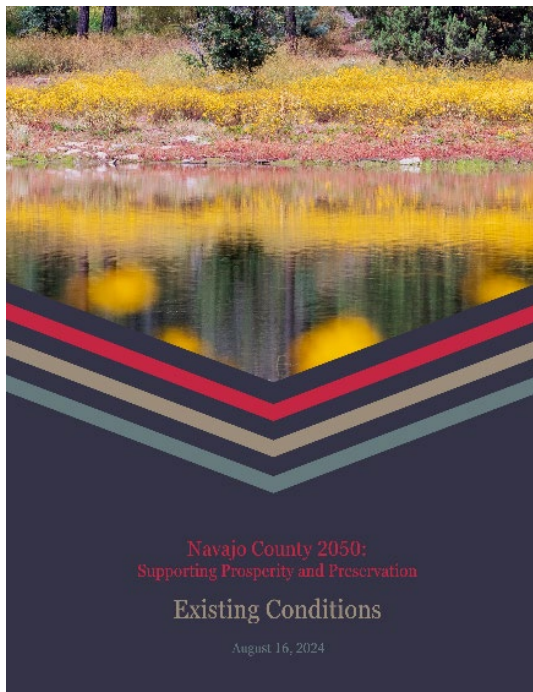


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The **six phases** are described in more detail below:

- **PROJECT KICK OFF.** This phase of the project established community engagement strategies and kicked off the Update. A separate *Public Participation Plan* was developed during this phase and was published on the project website.
- **EXISTING CONDITIONS.** Navajo County's Existing Conditions examined the County's history across a range of topics to establish a baseline for progress and project success. A separate *Existing Conditions Report* was developed during this phase, published on the project website, and used to inform the plan. *Appendix A: 2022 Demographics* contains the demographics used for this report.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.** The Community Engagement phase involved the community in the Update through both in-person and online opportunities. This phase is further illustrated in Chapter 2 and *Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials*.
- **DRAFTING THE PLAN.** Drafting the Update is where it all came together. Public feedback and County priorities were put together to create a plan that works for all of Navajo County, now and into the future. The draft plan was taken to the public for review and comment in two in-person open house-style meetings and distributed electronically.
- **ADOPTING THE PLAN.** Adoption of the Update through hearings and public buy-in was the final phase of the process and signified the beginning of implementing the community's vision for the County. During this phase, the plan was heard by the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission and the Board of Supervisors (BOS).
- **FINAL PLAN.** This phase culminated in a final BOS-adopted Comprehensive Plan effective immediately for implementing the community's vision.





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Plan Administration

The intent of this section is to provide direction for administering the Comprehensive Plan.

Calculation of Density

Residential land use densities are calculated using gross density; i.e., parcels per acre (total number of proposed residential parcels divided by the total gross land area proposed for residential development).

Relationship to Other Documents

The Comprehensive Plan is the community's vision and foundation to all other planning documents, as shown in the illustration to the right and defined in *Appendix C: Glossary*. These documents are, in turn, intended to implement the Comprehensive Plan, bringing the community's vision into reality. Area plans are not statutorily required and therefore are a creation of and included as part of the Navajo County Comprehensive Plan and should be administered and updated similarly. Active area plans include the *1997 Heber Overgaard Area Plan* and the *2011 Aztec Area Plan*. The boundaries of these area plans can be viewed in **Figure 5** on the *Future Land Use Map* in Chapter 3.



The Comprehensive Plan's relationship to other planning documents.

Amendment Process

A Comprehensive Plan is effective for up to 10 years from the date the plan is initially adopted or readopted. On or before the tenth anniversary of the Comprehensive Plan's most recent adoption, the BOS shall either readopt the existing plan for an additional term of up to 10 years or shall adopt a new plan. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or any area plan may be initiated by the County or be required by private individuals or entities in accordance with state law, this process, or County procedures. Amendments shall be classified as major or minor, and major amendments, per ARS, shall be presented at a public hearing within 12 months of when a proposal is made, and must be approved by an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of the members of the BOS.

- **MAJOR AMENDMENTS.** A major amendment to the comprehensive or any area plan is any proposal that would result in a substantial alternation of the County's land use mixture or balance as established in the County's existing Comprehensive Plan land use element for that area of the County. The following criteria are to be used to determine whether a major amendment is required:
 - Any request for any rezoning that results in a change to any future land use designation or character area of 640 acres or more
 - Any text change eliminating or changing the intent of a goal or policy
 - Modifying, adding, or deleting a freeway, highway, or arterial road alignment
- **MINOR AMENDMENTS.** A minor amendment is a change that does not meet the requirements of a major amendment.
- **NO AMENDMENT.** Changes to formatting, scrivener errors, photos, or updates to the *Implementation Chapter* do not require amendment.



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Plan Structure

The *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan* has the following six chapters:

- **CHAPTER 1** contains an overview of the plan, its purpose, and its contents.
- **CHAPTER 2** details the efforts made by the County to garner community engagement.
- **CHAPTER 3** lays out the first theme and related elements with goals and policies.
- **CHAPTER 4** lays out the second theme and related elements with goals and policies.
- **CHAPTER 5** lays out the third theme and related elements with goals and policies.
- **CHAPTER 6** contains a systematic and actionable implementation plan.

Though Navajo County does not meet the population threshold in ARS for required elements or topics, the Update will include elements related to land use, transportation, economic growth, housing, water and wastewater, public facilities, energy, environment, and open space and recreation. An element is a specific topic within the Comprehensive Plan that discusses a particular planning topic. All elements are interrelated and are intended to be considered collectively in the public and private decision-making process. For organization, the nine elements are categorized into three themes: *Progress, Quality of Life, and Stewardship*. Each theme corresponds to an overarching guiding principle that was gleaned from the public input process that guides the direction of the related element, as well as their goals and policies.

<h3>Progress</h3>	<h3>Quality of Life</h3>	<h3>Stewardship</h3>
 <p><i>Navajo County respects their heritage and rural culture while embracing an innovative and prosperous economy with a balance of residential, commercial, and industrial uses connected with a well-maintained, efficient transportation system.</i></p>	 <p><i>Navajo County strives for attainable housing choices and a safe, healthy community with robust, cost-effective public services and reliable infrastructure.</i></p>	 <p><i>Navajo County values the preservation of the natural and scenic environment with sustainable enhancements to support a rural and resilient atmosphere with diverse outdoor recreational opportunities</i></p>
 Land Use	 Housing	 Energy
 Transportation	 Water Wastewater	 Environment
 Economic Growth	 Public Facilities	 Open Space Recreation



Chapter 2: Community Engagement

Public participation is an important part of any inclusive and Comprehensive Planning process and is a value to Navajo County. In conformance with A.R.S. § 11-805.B., the Navajo County BOS adopted a public participation procedures ordinance in January 2000. These procedures mandate the robust involvement of the public as well as compliance with statutory requirements. In accordance with the approved procedures and with Arizona statutes, the project team identified and developed specifically tailored strategies to engage the community and to guide the public input process efficiently and effectively in the development of the *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan*. A variety of community engagement outreach materials utilized during the process can be found in *Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials*.

Community Engagement Experiences

Community engagement strategies evolved with guidance from the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC), P&Z Commission, and the BOS. The variety of engagement techniques and venues offered during the planning process is described below. These diverse community engagement experiences illustrate Navajo County's commitment to a process that encouraged community input throughout the project timeline, at different venues, and on various platforms. These seven important touchpoints include:

Project Website

A project website (www.publicinput.com/navajocounty2050) was developed and launched in March 2024. The website linked to the County's main website and enabled the public to sign up to be informed of events and complete the community questionnaire. The website also allowed viewing and downloading of educational materials and information about the process, including details of the community events and a repository for documents related to the project. The website was widely successful and received **9,207 views**. A screenshot of the project website can be found in *Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials*.

Digital Project Updates

Project updates were distributed via email and/or text message to **74 individuals**. The listserv included members of the community who signed up on the project website or attended an in-person engagement experience and opted to receive digital updates. Additionally, prior to the community and public meetings, social media postings occurred through the County's Public Information Office. Examples of these social media postings and eblasts can be found in *Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials*.

Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) Meetings

A CPC was established and participated at **three strategic times** in developing the plan. The Committee's leadership and insight ensured the direction of the plan resulted in the best Comprehensive Plan addressing the unique challenges and opportunities facing Navajo County and its unincorporated communities from both a functional and practical standpoint. The membership and makeup of this committee can be viewed on the *Acknowledgements* page.

Public Meetings and Hearings

The P&Z Commission and BOS also met or were briefed during **three strategic times** in the process. The first four meetings/briefings sought input and direction on details of the process and plan and the last two meetings accomplished the legislative approval process. All meetings were advertised per State law, adhered to open meeting laws, and noticed as legally required for public attendance. In addition, the public meetings and hearings were noticed on the County and project websites.



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Community Outreach Interviews

Through the plan development phase, over 40 people and entities were invited to community interviews, with **16 individual interviews** conducted. These interviews were held with key figures and entities in the County, including but not limited to County, State, and federal management offices, community organizations, local healthcare organizations and institutions, as well as local businesses and interested community members. The interviews were structured to elicit detailed information about the interviewee’s unique challenges, needs, and visions for the County’s future. By engaging directly with this diverse group, the planning team ensured that the Comprehensive Plan was informed by both expert opinions and sector-specific knowledge, as well as by residents and other community members, contributing to a well-rounded and inclusive strategy for Navajo County’s growth and development.

Arizona State Land Department	Arizona Public Service	Show Low Airport	Heber Overgaard Fire Department
NE AZ Workforce Dev Board	County Management	North Country Healthcare	Timber Mesa Fire & Med
Arizona Game & Fish Dept.	N. AZ Fire Chief’s Assoc.	Aztec Land and Cattle Co.	County Health Department
Show Low Planning Dept.	People’s Voice Committee	Bison Homes	Navopache Electric Coop

Community Events

Eight community events, shown in the table and graphic on the next page, and reaching **over 922 people**, were held across the County in each Supervisor District to facilitate face-to-face interactions with community members. The early events were designed to get feedback and confirmation on the plan’s guiding principles, promote the community questionnaire, and provide a platform for residents to share their ideas, concerns, and aspirations directly with the planning team in a fun and interactive environment. Two of the later events were held during the statutory 60-day review timeframe and were designed to get feedback on the goals and policies of each element and to promote the public review of the plan itself. The in-person format allowed for dynamic discussions and immediate feedback, fostering a sense of community

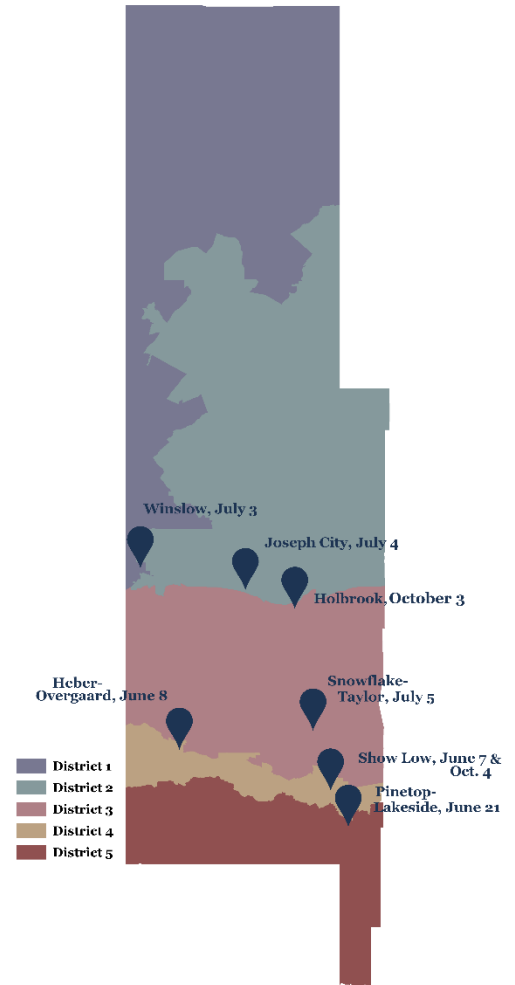


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involvement and ownership in the planning process. Across these events, engagement from the community was generally a positive confirmation of the plan's contents and the photos interspersed in the next few pages are a compilation and reflection of all the community events.

EVENT	DATE	COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED
Show Low Days	June 7 th , 2024	100
Heber-Overgaard Resource Networking Day	June 8 th , 2024	123
Pinetop-Lakeside White Mountain Balloon Festival	June 21 st , 2024	450
Winslow Public Library Drop-In	July 3 rd , 2024	30
Joseph City Independence Day Event	July 4 th , 2024	118
Taylor-Snowflake Independence Day Celebration	July 5 th , 2024	81
Holbrook Open House	October 3 rd , 2024	5
Show Low Open House	October 4 th , 2024	15



Winslow Public Library Drop In Event



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Show Low Days, Joseph City Independence Day Event, and Taylor-Snowflake Independence Day Celebration



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Holbrook and Show Low 60-day Open House Meetings





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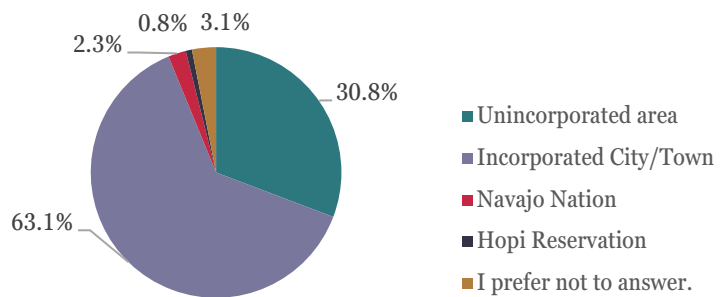
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Community Questionnaire

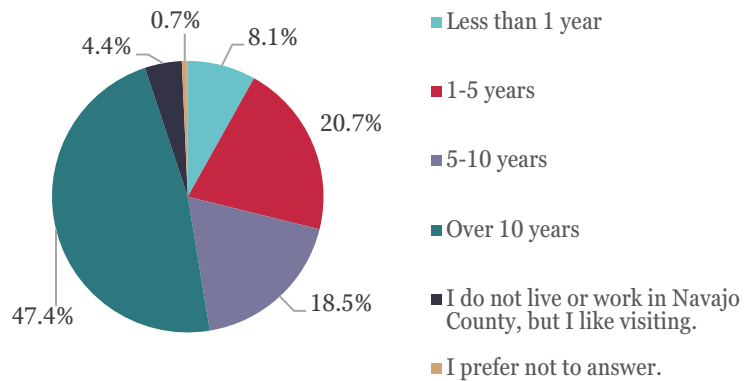
A Community Questionnaire for Navajo County was designed to be brief, taking approximately two minutes to complete. It was administered on paper at in-person events and available online through the duration of the engagement phase for easy access at the community’s convenience. It included questions to gather basic information about the respondents, such as their demographics and background. Additionally, the survey sought to capture the participants' views on important issues affecting the County. The questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous, encouraging honest and open participation. In total, the County received **135 responses**. By keeping the survey concise, the intention was to encourage higher participation and obtain a snapshot of the community's perspectives on key matters to guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

Over half of the respondents were from incorporated cities and towns in Navajo County. This is further reflected in the breakdown of questionnaires taken at engagement events, which took place in both unincorporated and incorporated areas. About 42% of all responses collected came from engagement events, with the highest number of responses coming from the Heber-Overgaard Event. Most of the questionnaire respondents have been residents of Navajo County for 10 years or more. This indicates that the responses may be skewed towards the interests and concerns of long-term residents rather than those of newer residents. The longevity of these respondents suggests a deep familiarity with the County's issues and a vested interest in its future. However, it also highlights a potential gap in understanding the perspectives and needs of newer community members, who may have different priorities and experiences.

Location Breakdown of Community Participation



Respondent Length of Residency

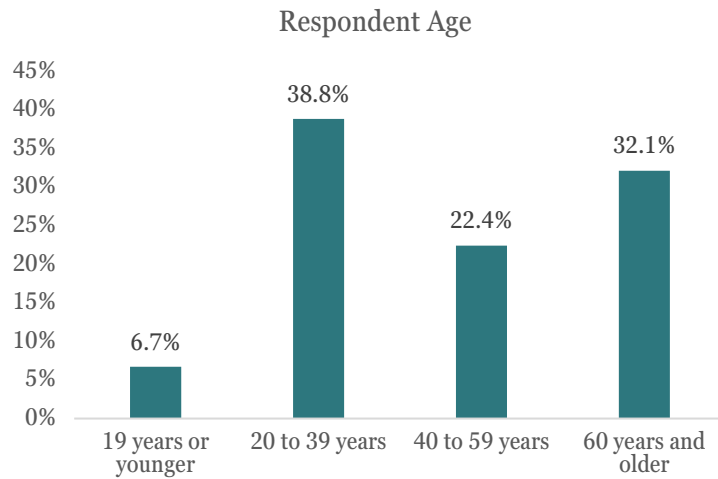




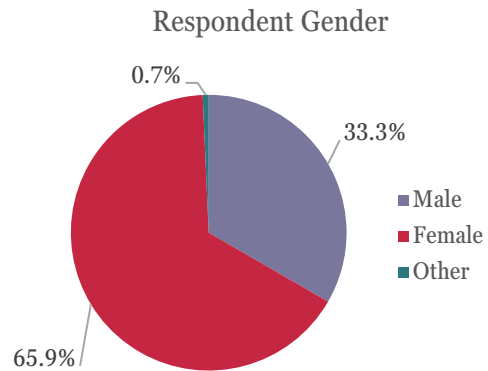
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The two largest age groups that responded to the questionnaire were individuals between the ages of 20 and 39, and those aged 60 years or older. This distribution suggests a significant engagement from both younger adults and senior residents. The participation of the 20-39 age group indicates an active interest from younger, possibly working-age individuals who may be concerned with issues like employment, education, and family services. On the other hand, the substantial representation of respondents aged 60 and above points to a strong involvement from the senior community, likely reflecting concerns different from the other majority of respondents. Further, by design and as reflected in many of the selected community event photos, a significant portion of the 19 years and younger age group participated in the in-person events. This diverse age representation provides a broad perspective on the key issues facing Navajo County.



Most respondents to the questionnaire were female and predominantly white, with a notable portion identifying as Hispanic or Latino. This demographic distribution largely reflects the incorporated parts of Navajo County and does not necessarily represent the sovereign nations or the unincorporated areas of Navajo County. Despite these populations not living in the portion of the County that the plan governs, it remains important to get input from residents in sovereign nations and incorporated areas, as these residents will still be accessing and impacted by the areas covered by the Comprehensive Plan, making their perspectives crucial for a well-rounded understanding of the County's needs.



Overall, the responses to the Community Questionnaire, which can be found in *Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials*, indicate a diverse sample of answers from different age groups in the County. However, the responses also indicate some overrepresentation of specific groups in the demographics of race, ethnicity, gender, and area of residence. Both the community interviews and the CPC complemented the questionnaire's demographics and answers by providing a more nuanced and diverse snapshot of the County's communities. These one-on-one and group conversations allowed for deeper insights and the inclusion of perspectives from underrepresented groups, ensuring a more comprehensive and representative understanding of the County's needs and priorities.



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Community Engagement Results

This section provides a summary of what we heard from the initial polling, through community events, interviews, and with the questionnaire. These results helped to inform and confirm the guiding principles as well as the goals, policies, and actions of the plan.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Initial polls from the project team, CPC, and P&Z Commission kick-off meetings resulted in the following SWOT analysis, which was used in creating the plan’s guiding or aspirational principles. The results below are the top recurring responses from the CPC and P&Z Commission meetings, which gave preliminary insights into the County and guided the development of the Community Questionnaire as well as the Community Engagement Materials for the early community events.




What do you love most about Navajo County?

-  Natural open spaces and a variety of landscapes
-  The community
-  The less populated and peaceful atmosphere



What does Navajo County do well?

-  Community support
-  Responsive and competent public services





If you could change one thing about Navajo County, what would it be?

-  More and better-paying employment opportunities
-  Improve electrical and telecommunications utilities
-  An adequate amount of affordable housing options

What needs to be improved in Navajo County?

-  New employment opportunities and new industries
-  Replace and enhance infrastructure

Are there any obstacles to the future prosperity of Navajo County?

-  A lack of higher-paying jobs and new industries
-  A lack of funding
-  Declining environmental health and climate change
-  The community is resistant to new ideas and change



Pinetop-Lakeside White Mountain Balloon Festival



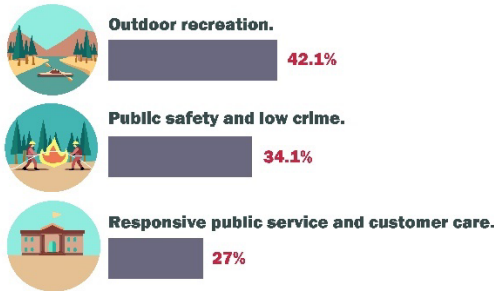
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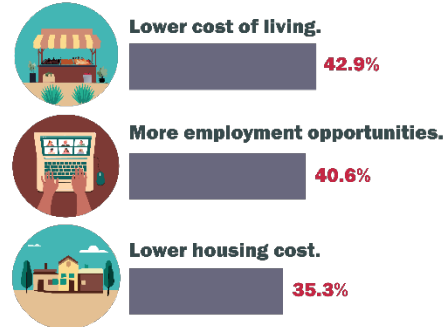
Community Questionnaire Results

Below is an overview of the top three responses to each question posed in the questionnaire and interviews, with a percentage denoting what portion of respondents voted for each choice. These results helped to inform and confirm the guiding principles as well as the goals, policies, and actions of the plan which were further commented on at both the early and later community events.

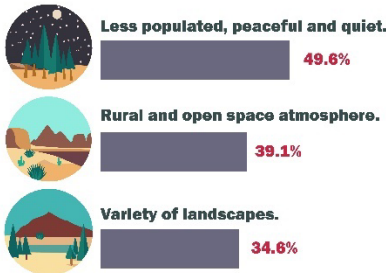
What do you love most about Navajo County?



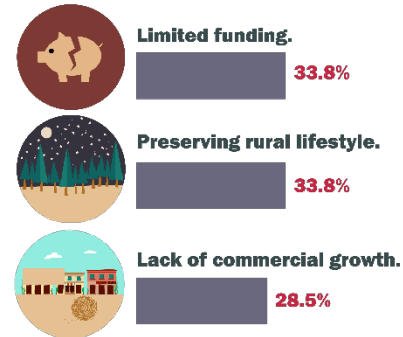
What needs to be improved in Navajo County?



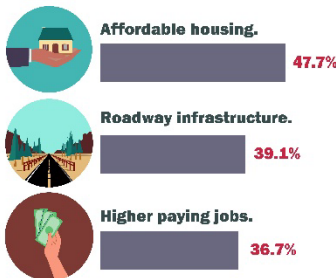
What does Navajo County do well?



Are there any obstacles to the future prosperity of Navajo County?



If you could change anything about Navajo County, what would it be?



Heber-Overgaard Resource Networking Day



Chapter 3: Progress

This chapter captures the efforts of Navajo County to advance their community while respecting and retaining their historic and cultural elements with measured, balanced, and efficient growth for both existing and future residents and visitors. The theme of *Progress* contains the topics of *Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Growth*. Each of these elements work independently and together to guide the progression of Navajo County. Progress is also crucial to the community's quality of life and can be improved by stewardship of the environment. Through the public engagement process, the following guiding principle was confirmed:

Navajo County respects their heritage and rural culture while embracing an innovative and prosperous economy with a balance of residential, commercial, and industrial uses connected with a well-maintained, efficient transportation system.

Land Use

The *Land Use Element* designates the future general distribution, location, and extent of uses within the focus area of Navajo County. This future mix of uses was informed by collective community input during the planning process and is expected to be realized over time. Stable existing land uses are not expected to change and have commensurate future land use designations. Those areas that are expected to change have future land use designations that differ from the existing land uses but are illustrated to match existing County-level infrastructure and services. Potential growth areas which are illustrated on **Figure 5** and in *Appendix D: High Resolution Maps*, may either be annexed or may be appropriate areas in the County for existing infrastructure and service or future expansions. This section addresses existing land use, land ownership, and future land uses, outlook, and opportunities.

Existing Land Use and Ownership

Over 75% of existing land within Navajo County is classified by the Assessor's office as either exempt or agricultural. These broad definitions do not necessarily present a clear picture of what exists on the ground today. What translates to a better reflection of the landscape is that a significant portion of the County is currently undeveloped and used for grazing or ranching purposes. Further, derived from public input during this process, this open rural character is a common community love and is desired to be retained.

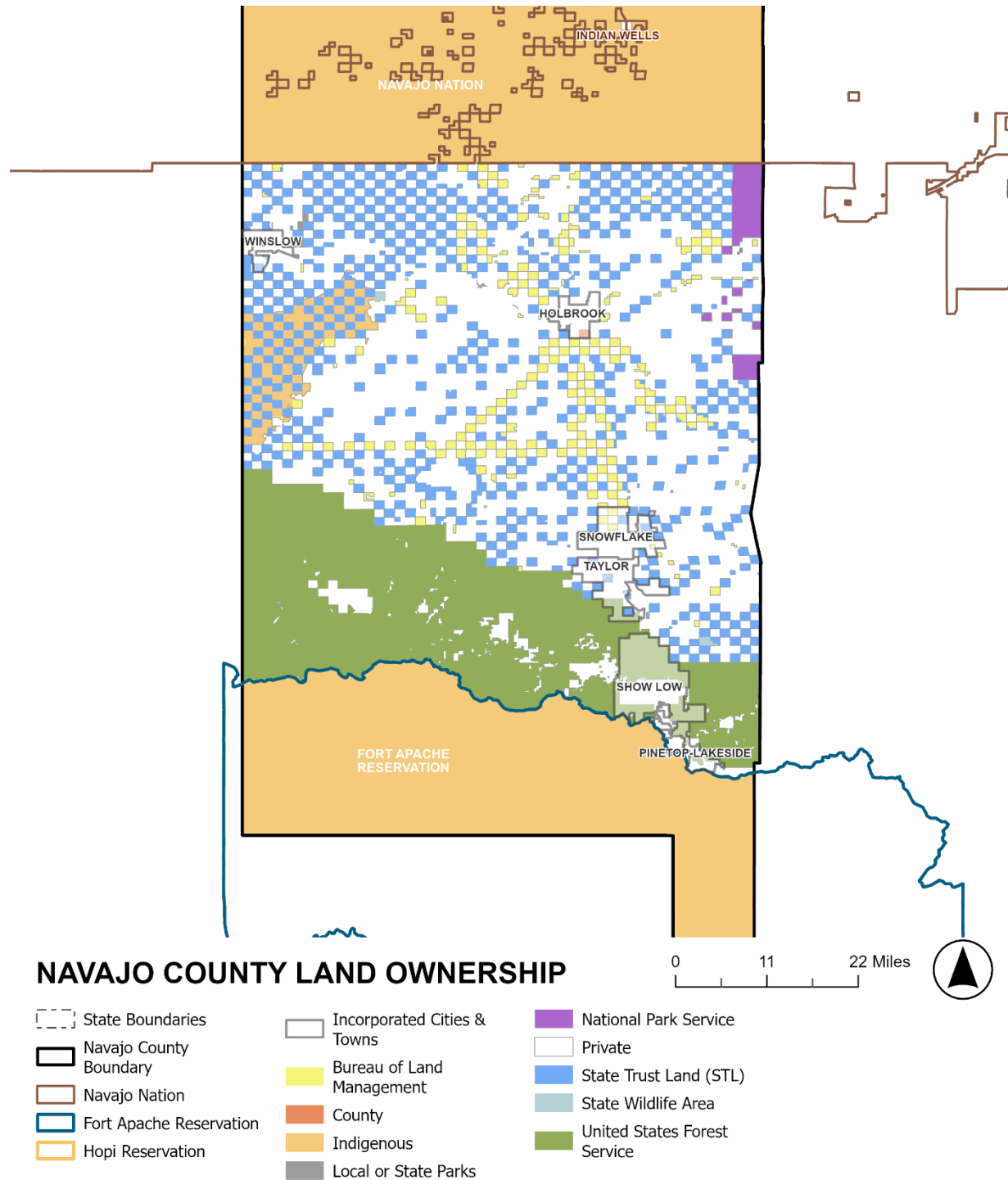
Additionally, existing land ownership, as shown on **Figure 4**, is an important factor when determining future land use. Almost 80% of land in Navajo County, mostly beyond the focus area, is owned by indigenous tribes and nations. The next highest category of land ownership is the USFS at 10% and used for the management of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Private and State holdings, representing 9% of land ownership, are checkerboarded across the central portion of Navajo County and are predominately considered developable. The remainder of land is held in miscellaneous public holdings.



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Figure 4: Navajo County Land Ownership





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Future Land Use

Future land uses are illustrated within the designated 3,309-sq.-mile focus area of Navajo County. This section includes a description of future land use designations below and the related Future Land Use Map (FLUM) on **Figure 5** and in *Appendix D: High Resolution Maps*. Taken together, the designations and the map serve as an illustration of the community's generalized vision for the developable area of the County. A notable change from the last plan update is that all the future land uses have been updated from the previously mapped character areas. Lands that are designated as Hopi Land Trust or municipalities are included for illustrative purposes only and are not governed by this Comprehensive Plan. The boundary of the *Aztec Area Plan* is shown, and this area plan contains both future land use as well as goals and policies that are meant to work in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan. The boundary of the *Heber-Overgaard Area Plan* is also shown as adopted but future land uses in this boundary are illustrated in the Comprehensive Plan. For the purposes of future rezonings, the descriptions below also recommend the County's current zoning districts that best conform to each designation. The following **seven future land use designations** are described below:

- **OPEN SPACE.** The Open Space designation denotes areas within parks that offer active recreational opportunities and natural areas that are intended for passive public recreation and resource conservation and contribute to the natural character and scenic beauty of the region. Appropriate zoning districts include A General or Rural. Open space within planned communities may reflect the primary zoning district.
- **RURAL RESIDENTIAL.** The Rural Residential designation denotes areas that have large lots or property with limited and appropriate rural-scale nonresidential uses such as ranching, agriculture, or commercial. Development in areas with this designation should retain the rural character of the areas and be relatively low in density with up to one dwelling unit per gross acre (du/ac). State Trust Lands have a minimum designation of Rural Residential. Rural Residential areas should also have schools, churches, parks, trails, and open spaces to maintain a rural lifestyle and quality of life. Appropriate zoning districts include A General, RU-1, RU-5, RU-10, RU-20, and R1-43.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL.** The Neighborhood Residential designation denotes areas that have a broader and more suburban range of existing residential development than do Rural Residential areas, with no fewer than 1 du/ac but not greater than 5 du/ac, limited neighborhood-scale commercial. Neighborhood Residential development includes single-family and manufactured or modular units as well as non-residential, integrated land uses such as churches, schools, neighborhood commercial, and parks that support neighborhood functionality and livability and residents' health and quality of life. Appropriate zoning districts include R1-10, R1-43, and C-R.
- **MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL.** The Multifamily Residential designation denotes areas primarily comprising multifamily units, such as apartments and condominiums at greater than 5 du/ac, as well as non-residential land uses that support multifamily functions and contribute to livability, such as churches, schools, open space, and parks. Appropriate zoning districts include R-2 and R-3.
- **MIXED USE.** The Mixed-Use designation denotes live, work, and play areas that include a vibrant array of uses with destination locations. These uses may include, but are not limited to,



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entertainment, research and development and school campuses, employment complexes, tourism uses, hotels and resorts, and commercial combined with residential that contribute to the overall livability of the region. Appropriate zoning districts include C-R and SD.

- BUSINESS COMMERCE.** The Business Commerce designation denotes areas that have commercial development. Uses should have access to arterials with connections to Neighborhood, Multifamily Residential, or Employment areas but also promote walkability where appropriate. The appropriate zoning district is C-R.
- EMPLOYMENT.** The Employment designation denotes areas of development dominated by employment opportunities that contribute to the overall local and regional economies. These may include industrial uses, such as warehouses and manufacturing facilities, as well as business parks. Industrial uses should be buffered and/or separated from Rural and Neighborhood Residential. Uses in Employment areas should have vehicular access to major arterials or highways. Appropriate zoning districts include IND-1 and IND-2

Not unexpected and as shown in the table below, the predominant future land use in Navajo County is Rural Residential at approximately 60% followed by Open Space at approximately 23%. A large portion of the County focus area defers future land use designations to the Aztec Area Plan, which is anticipated to be updated or readopted within the near future to align with ARS and to reconfirm the community’s vision for that area. The boundaries of **six potential growth areas** shown on **Figure 5** and in *Appendix D: High Resolution Maps* are anticipated to either be annexed by adjoining municipalities or developed in the County to more intense and dense land uses in the future. However, development will only be possible with the provision of commensurate infrastructure and services. Land within potential growth areas may request changes to more intense or dense land uses on a case-by-case basis and be deemed appropriate with the requisite public review and amendment process.

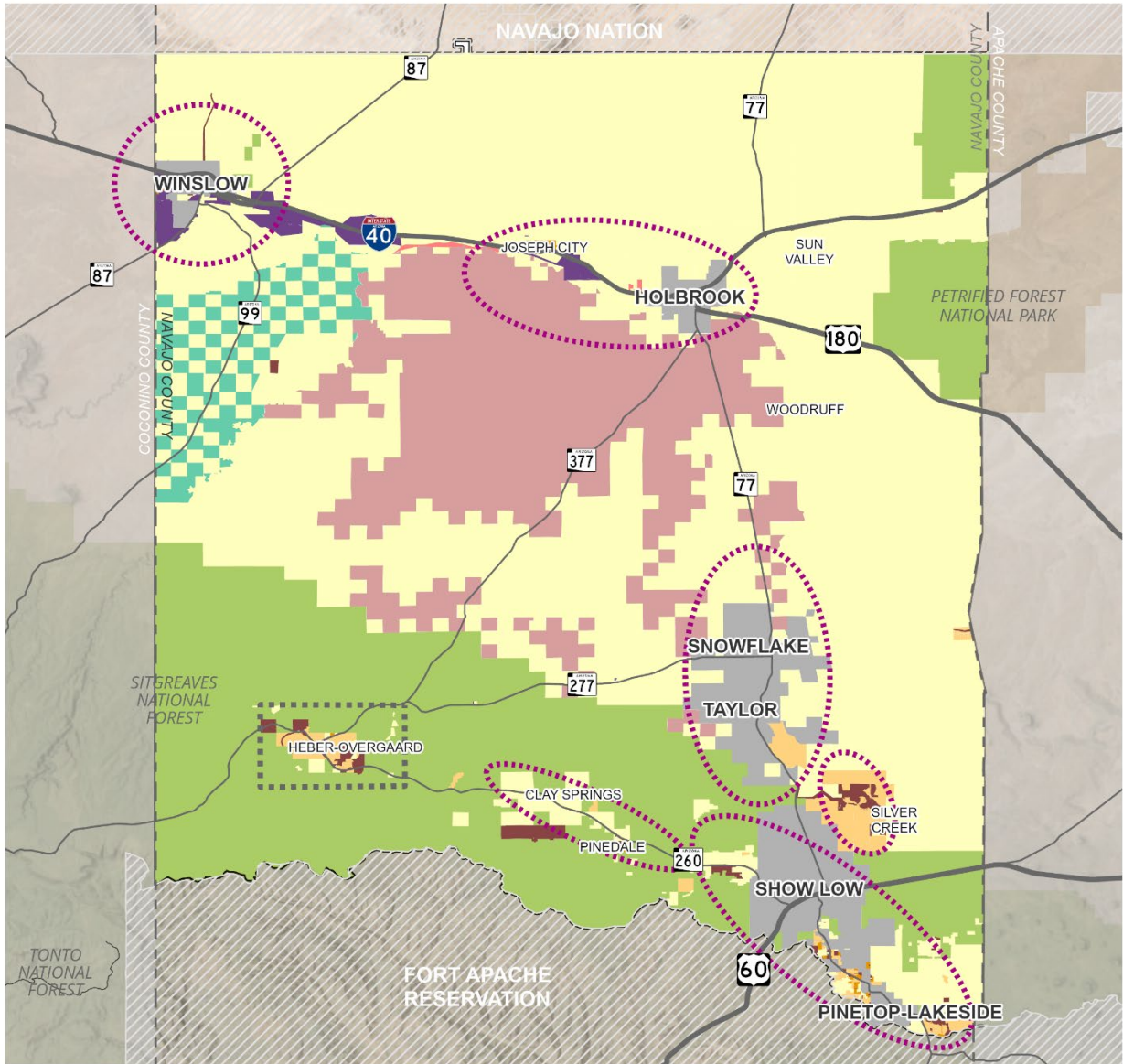
2024 FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS		
Designation	Acreage	Percent
Rural Residential (RR)	1,357,953	60.14%
Open Space (OS)	508,135	22.50%
Aztec Area Plan Boundary	288,528	12.78%
Hopi Land Trust	45,092	2.00%
Neighborhood Residential	25,040	1.11%
Mixed Use (MU)	16,456	0.73%
Employment	13,871	0.61%
Multifamily Residential (MR)	1,547	0.07%
Business Commerce	1,444	0.06%
Total:	2,258,066	100.00%



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Figure 5: Navajo County Future Land Use



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

0 8 15 Miles



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navajo County Boundary Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction Indigenous Communities | <p>Future Land Use Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Neighborhood Residential Multi-Family Mixed Use Business Commerce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Open Space Aztec Area Plan Boundary Hopi Land Trust Potential Growth Areas Heber Overgaard Planning Area |
|---|---|--|

Note: All State Trust Land is allowed development of at least one dwelling unit per acre of land, regardless of land use designation.



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Land Use Outlook and Opportunity

Land uses in Navajo County are expected to remain largely rural or retain rural character and reflect the expectations and vision of the community. There are, however, certain global factors and trends that may drive future changes within the County. Much of this narrative revolves around creating a vibrant and healthy County for a stable but aging population within the context of a rural region. The goals and policies following this outlook were created from the consideration of these driving factors and how they relate to the regional vision created in the plan drafting process.

- **LARGE DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS.** Navajo County's population is expected to decline between 4% to 7% in the next 30 years. Nevertheless, more compact and accessible urban development will become increasingly necessary to accommodate the existing and aging population. Compact urban development indirectly impacts social determinants of health and social cohesion by reducing travel times, expanding modal choice, improving air and water quality, and improving health. This type of development is expected to occur mostly in the existing municipalities but may also occur around the unincorporated County communities.
- **CONSUMER HOUSING CHOICE.** The retirement population will continue to grow in the next decade and their housing needs will evolve over that same period. Many retirees will choose to remain in place, creating challenges for emergency service response times. Combined with the growing threat of wildfire in Navajo County, it will be necessary to design, develop, and retrofit communities for both safety preparedness and aging populations.
- **EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.** An aging population will eventually age out of driving. Meanwhile, technological advancements continue in the automotive industry. Arizona is already home to driverless cars and ride hailing. This means land is going to be unlocked as parking is separated from other land uses, or parking demand decreases. Opportunities for new housing will surface. In the simplest way, multigenerational households in municipal and unincorporated centers will trade parking for new housing units to accommodate family members of multiple generations. New employment opportunities will be created for proactive businesses attendant to trends in automation.
- **LAND USE AND CLIMATE CHANGE.** Urban development patterns determine function and process in natural and human systems. Understanding urban landscape patterns is critical to the coherent distribution of land uses for the County's budget and economic prosperity, as well as understanding ecosystem processes at multiple scales. A land ethic that recognizes other plant and animal species for their intrinsic value, not simply their economic value, reflects Navajo County's traditional ecological knowledge, culture, and values.



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Land Use Goals and Policies

These goals and policies were identified through the lens of existing conditions and future trends analysis, an audit of existing goals and policies for continued relevance, and by the input gleaned from the community to guide future land use decisions within the focus area of Navajo County.

Land Use Goal #1:

Accommodate and promote a balanced, efficient, aesthetic, and compact land development pattern with the appropriate level of services for water, wastewater, education, and public safety that is compatible with adjacent land uses, is well integrated with the transportation system, and is sensitive to the natural environment.

Land Use Goal #2:

Encourage infill opportunities to capitalize on existing infrastructure and reduce growth-related costs.

Land Use Goal #3:

Preserve and protect open spaces and natural features, and archaeological and historic resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural value.

Land Use Goal #4:

Foster equal opportunity for safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for all residents of the County and provides a range of residential land uses that offer housing opportunities for all County residents.

Land Use Goal #5:

Encourage commercial and industrial development that considers existing land uses, including business and technology uses, where appropriate, to increase employment opportunities.

Land Use Policy #1:

Navajo County supports continued coordination with federal, state, and local agencies to ensure a balanced mix of land uses in the region.

Land Use Policy #2:

Navajo County does not support development with inadequate services or infrastructure or that exacerbates or negatively impacts surrounding lands or communities and will support urban development to annex into cities/towns where appropriate levels of service and infrastructure and more readily available.

Land Use Policy #3:

Navajo County supports efforts to preserve the major floodways as open space and/or keep them in a natural state.

Land Use Policy #4:

Navajo County supports increasing the supply and type of housing in areas that are supported by the appropriate levels of services and infrastructure.



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Land Use Policy #5:

Navajo County supports development in the Rural Residential land use area that preserves large lots and the overall rural character. Large, open space buffers should be utilized to separate the dwelling units from other residential or non-residential uses.

Land Use Policy #6:

Navajo County supports development within areas designated Neighborhood Residential that provides opportunities for complementary integrated community uses, such as schools, churches, and parks. Multimodal connectivity between neighborhoods and other uses, such as parks and commercial development, should be preserved and created.

Land Use Policy #7:

Navajo County supports residential densities in Neighborhood Residential areas of 1 to 2 du/ac in all locations and 2 to 5 du/ac where primary access from an arterial is available. Higher-density single-family residential should be used as a transition to more intense residential uses.

Land Use Policy #8:

Navajo County supports residential densities in Multifamily Residential areas of 5 du/ac or more. Such developments should have direct access to arterial collector roads and be used as a transition to commercial or mixed-use development.

Land Use Policy #9:

Navajo County will not support high-density or intense development in areas where fire protection and other emergency services are not readily available.

Land Use Policy #10:

Navajo County supports higher density and intensity development in those areas of the County where services, including water and sewer systems, paved rights-of-way, and schools, are available or can be expanded with new development.

Land Use Policy #11:

Navajo County supports high-quality commercial centers and well-designed office, business, and industrial parks that are properly located adjacent to existing or future Neighborhood and Multifamily Residential, if designed with appropriate buffers and setbacks.

Land Use Policy #12:

Navajo County supports protecting existing Employment uses from encroachment by incompatible development.

Land Use Policy #13:

Navajo County supports Employment uses that mitigate any potential negative operational impacts, including negative impacts to the natural environment.



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Land Use Policy #14:

Navajo County supports the development of non-resource specific Employment uses along major roadways, rail heads, and airports.

Land Use Policy #15:

Navajo County supports clear and objective development standards, special conditions, and procedures that do not discourage needed housing through unreasonable cost or delay.

Land Use Policy #16:

Navajo County supports development that provides buffers between different land uses, such as increased setbacks, walls, fences, and landscaping.

Land Use Policy #17:

Navajo County supports the provision of traffic studies for development to determine appropriate roadway surfaces for projects.

Land Use Policy #18:

Navajo County supports the provision of multiple access routes or alternative designs for all developments, regardless of size or area.

Land Use Policy #19:

Navajo County supports the use of fire-defensible building materials, such as metal roofs, alternative siding designed to resemble wood, and other alternative, fire-resistant materials.

Land Use Policy #20:

Navajo County supports the development of a coordinated review process with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the identification, inventory, and assessment of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources for responsible land use and planning.

Land Use Policy #21:

Navajo County continues to support consultation with Native American Tribes to identify land within the County as ancestral and may have concerns regarding natural and cultural resources that may be affected by land use decisions and potential development.

Land Use Policy #22:

Navajo County supports efforts to partner with SHPO in prioritizing historic preservation in future planning, including using historic designations and listing commercial and residential properties on the Arizona and National Register of Historic Places to receive financial incentives.



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Transportation

The *Transportation Element* is intended to support and be correlated with the *Land Use Element*, providing goals and policies to ensure that the transportation network is safe, efficient, and convenient for residents.

Primary Roadway System and Freight

The County maintains 1,027 of the 1,645 total miles of road in the County. The roadway network has several major state routes, including I-40, which connects Winslow and Holbrook; State Route (SR) 77, which connects Holbrook to Show Low; and SR 260, which connects Pinetop-Lakeside to Show Low and Heber-Overgaard. These major corridors are supported by a network of smaller roadways that connect local traffic to these long-distance roadways. The roadway network is illustrated in **Figure 6** and in *Appendix D: High Resolution Maps*.

I-40 carries approximately 23,300 vehicles per day through Winslow including 10,300 trucks. The presence of the freeway provides significant opportunities for transportation and logistics-related industries. Freight volumes on the roadway network run along major corridors, including I-40 and US 60 east of Show Low.

Traffic congestion is not a major concern on any County-maintained roadways as they generally serve low-density or rural areas. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has conducted Corridor Profile Studies (CPS) for I-40, US 60, and SR 260 in Navajo County that provide insight on roadway capacity. Only one segment was below Good/Above Average Performance for congestion within Navajo County. Segment 260-5, which stretches from the junction of SR 73 to US 60 in Show Low, was ranked Fair/Average.

There are two major railroad lines that run through the study area. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) runs parallel to I-40, traveling east-west through the County. This BNSF line provides frequent freight rail service between Navajo County and the rest of the country. The Apache Railway runs parallel to SR 77, connecting from Holbrook to McNary. Although the original Apache Railway service is inactive, the route and infrastructure are sometimes used by BNSF and are available to other freight rail providers as needed.

Public and Active Transportation

There are five public transportation providers in Navajo County operated by municipalities or Tribal nations. The City of Show Low and the City of Winslow operate local services. Show Low also provides commuter service to Pinetop-Lakeside, Show Low, Taylor, Snowflake, and Holbrook via the White Mountain Connection. The annual ridership in 2022 by service provider is shown in the table on the next page. Active transportation facilities are limited outside of incorporated jurisdictions and Tribal lands. County-maintained roadways do not have sidewalk infrastructure. Although bicycle infrastructure is present at the local level, regional connectivity of bicycle infrastructure is not present. There are two state parks and one national park in the County, Fool Hollow Lake Recreation Area, Homolovi State Park, and the Petrified Forest National Park. There are over 1,200 miles of trails within the state and national parks.

Aviation

There are 13 active airports within County limits; nine are publicly owned, and four are privately owned general aviation (GA) airports. The most notable airports in Navajo County include the Show Low Regional Airport, supporting 19,674 operations in 2022, and the Winslow-Lindbergh Regional Airport, supporting 24,210 operations in 2020.



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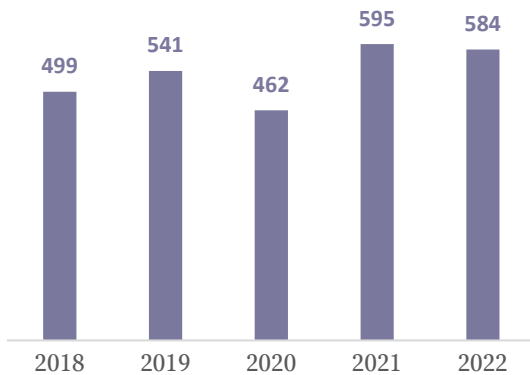
2022 RIDERSHIP BY SERVICE	
Agency	Ridership
City of Show Low	83,254
City of Winslow	1,731
White Mountain Apache Tribe	5,706
Hopi Senom	42,487
Navajo Nation	44,275

Transportation Safety

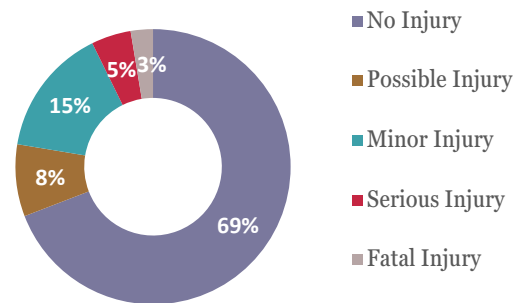
There were 2,681 crashes from 2018 to 2022 in unincorporated Navajo County and outside of Tribal lands. Annual crashes have been on a steady increase from 2018 to 2022, with a slight decrease in 2020, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most crashes resulted in no injury, as shown in the graphics below. While only 3% of total crashes resulted in a fatality, that is more than three times higher than the statewide average of less than 1%. High crash densities are typically located near incorporated jurisdictions, Heber-Overgaard, and White Mountain Lakes, as these are the most populated areas in the unincorporated portions of the County. Roadways with high crash density include Concho Highway, Bourdon Ranch Road, McLaws Road just outside of Holbrook, Black Canyon Road in Sitgreaves National Forest, and Pulp Mill Road near Clay Springs.

Of the crashes observed from 2018 to 2022, 19 involved pedestrians or cyclists. Although most crashes occurred in daylight conditions, 36% of crashes took place in dark unlighted conditions. Two of every three crashes involved only a single vehicle, which is typical of rural areas.

Annual Total Crashes (2018-2022)



Crash Severity (2018-2022)

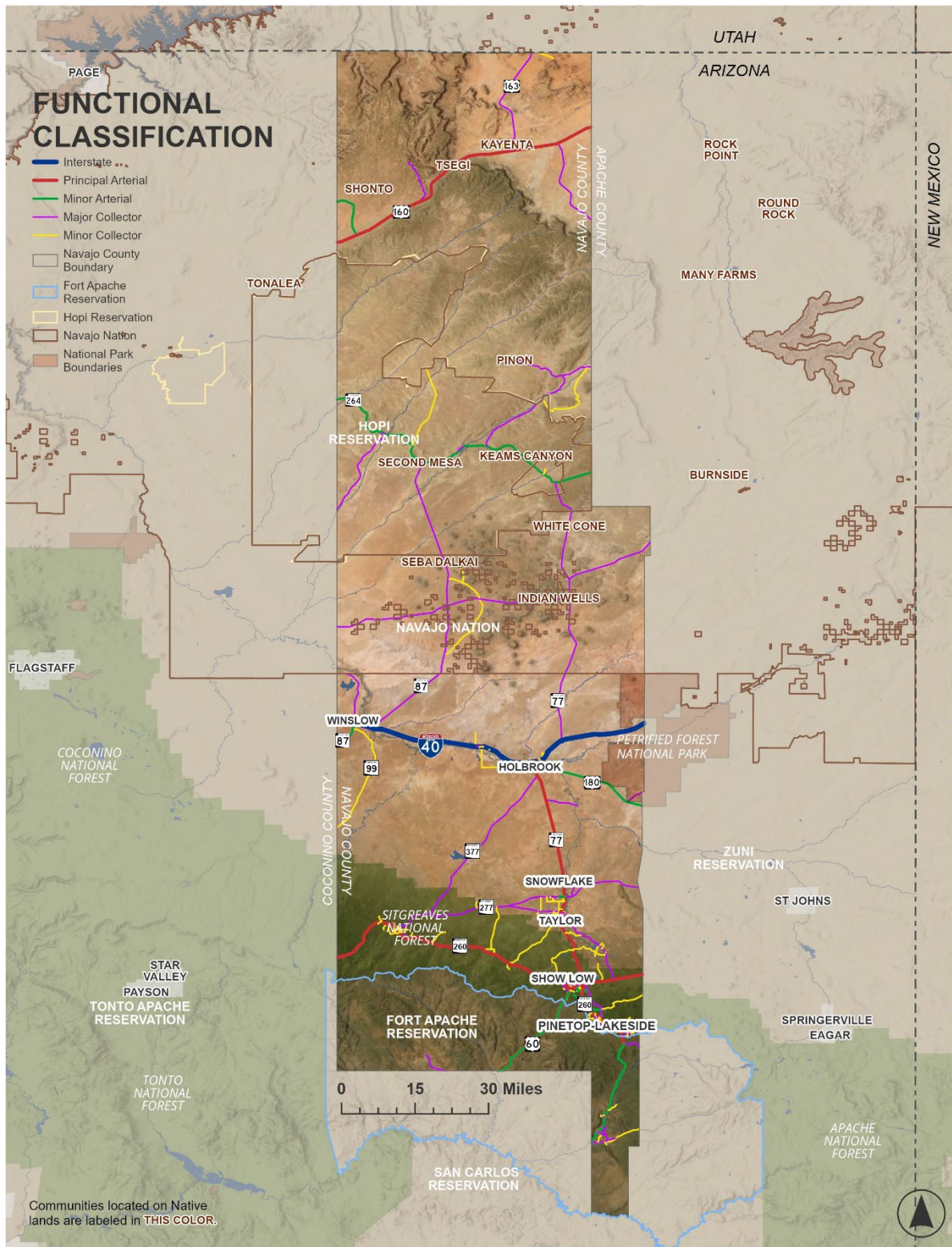




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Figure 6: Functional Classification





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Transportation Outlook and Opportunity

Navajo County’s 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has programmed over \$67 million in investments of the transportation system. Additional transportation projects have been recommended in previous CPS. The tables below and on the next page show programmed (funded for construction) and planned (unfunded) projects, respectively. **Figure 7** shows the County’s programmed and planned projects. Most of the planned and programmed projects are concentrated around Show Low and Joseph City. The Heber Sidewalk Project encompasses sidewalk improvements surrounding Mogollon High School and Capps Elementary School. Guardrail and end treatments identified in PR-16 is a County-wide project.

PROGRAMMED PROJECTS						
#	Project Name	Type	\$	Location	To/From	Yr
1	Five Mountain Estates - Cold Recycled	Modernization	455,000	Winslow	N/A	2025
2	Greasewood Bridge	Partnership	150,000	Greasewood	N/A	2026
3	Joseph City Sidewalk Improvements	Modernization	1,713,633	Joseph City	3 rd North Ave to 1 st North Ave	2025
4	Old Woodruff Road - Cold Recycled	Modernization	560,000	Snowflake	Kasias Trail to Cupples Trail	2025
5	McLaws Road	Roadway	20,110,000	Joseph City	Obed Rd. to Willow Way	2028
6	Obed Road - BNSF Railroad Grade	Structure	26,460,000	Joseph City	Obed Rd. and BNSF Railroad	2029
7	Obed Road; McLaws Rd to Obed Bridge	Roadway	3,050,000	Joseph City	McLaws Rd to Obed Bridge	2029
8	Bourdon Ranch Rd & Roundup Drive Turn	Traffic	1,032,838	Silver Creek	Bourdon Ranch Rd & Roundup Drive	2025
9	Concho Highway; Golden Horse	Modernization	8,100,640	Snowflake	Golden Horse Ln - White	2025-29
10	Shumway Road	Modernization	350,000	Shumway	Burbon Ranch to Northern Cedar Rd	2025
11	Silver Creek Bridge at Shumway Rd	Bridge	180,000	Shumway	Shumway Rd just east of Old School House Rd	NA
12	Heber Sidewalk & Bicycle Path	Modernization	170,000	Heber	N/A	NA
13	Scott Ranch Road Infrastructure Expansion	Partnership	800,000	Show Low	Scott Ranch Road	2026-29
14	Webb Drive & Starlight Ridge Road	Rehabilitation	1,342,315	Show Low	Webb Drive & Starlight Ridge Road	2026



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PROGRAMMED PROJECTS						
#	Project Name	Type	\$	Location	To/From	Yr
15	Buck Springs Road Equestrian Crossing	Traffic	137,570	Pinetop	Buck Springs Road Equestrian Crossing	2025
16	Roadway Safety Improvement	Modernization	731,200	Countywide	NA	2025-29
17	Bourdon Ranch Rd - Millet Swale	Drainage	1,296,371	Show Low	Bourdon Ranch Rd	2025
18	Porter Creek Culvert Replacement	Drainage	846,755	Lakeside	Porter Creek	2025-26
19	Shilo Trail & Arrowhead Pass	Drainage	490,000	Show Low	Shilo Trail & Arrowhead Pass	2026

PLANNED PROJECTS				
#	Project Description	Associated Plan	Route	Location Mile Post
1	Intersection signal	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-3	MP 335
2	Widened roadway to four lanes	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-4	MP 309.4 – 340.1
3	Grade-separated traffic interchange (TI)	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-4	MP 337 – 345
4	Intersection signal	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-4	MP 337 – 345
5	Exclusive westbound turn lane	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-4	MP 342.5
6	Exclusive eastbound right-turn lane	SR 260/US 60 CPS	260-4	MP 343.3
7	Eastbound/westbound passing lane	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-6	MP 345 – 348
8	Proposed westbound dynamic message sign (DMS)	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-6	MP 345
9	Eastbound/westbound shoulder improvement	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-6	MP 346 – 352
10	Intersection signal	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-6	MP 347
11	Eastbound/westbound shoulder improvement	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-7	MP 352 – 353
12	Eastbound passing lane	SR 260/US 60 CPS	60-7	MP 357 – 360



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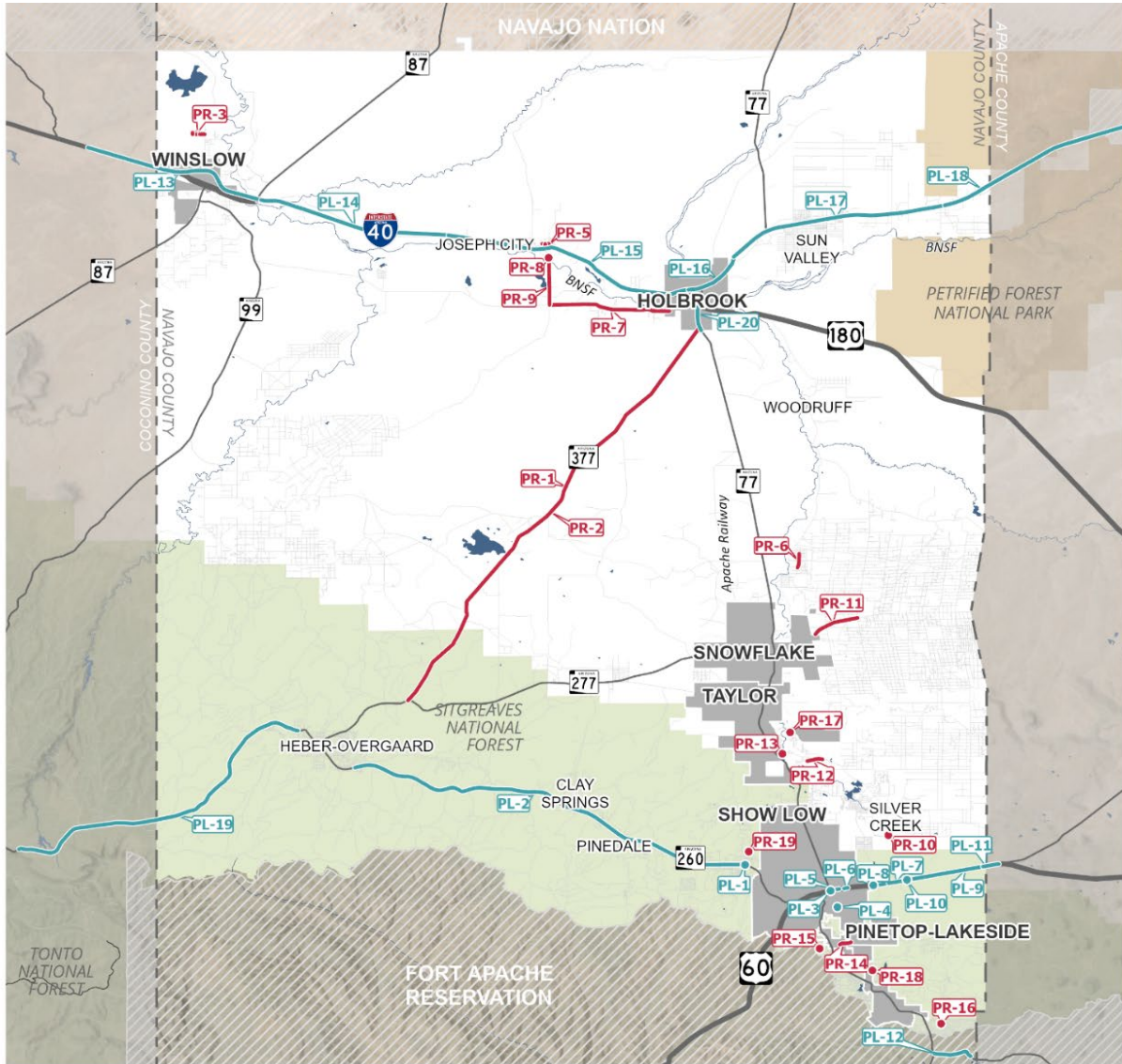
PLANNED PROJECTS				
#	Project Description	Associated Plan	Route	Location Mile Post
13	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-5	MP 246 – 258
14	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-6	MP 258 – 270
15	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-7	MP 270 – 286
16	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-8	MP 268 – 290
17	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-9	MP 290 – 304
18	Widen roadway to six lanes	I-40 East CPS	40-10	MP 304 – 326
19	Shoulder widening	SR 87/260/377 CPS	260-12	MP 282 – 304
20	Widen roadway	SR 87/260/377 CPS	77-16	MP 386 – 389



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Figure 7: Planned and Programmed Projects



PLANNED & PROGRAMMED PROJECTS

0 8 15 Miles



- Planned
- Programmed
- Navajo County Boundary
- Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction
- Native Lands
- Petrified Forest National Park
- National Forest
- Rivers and Streams
- Water Bodies



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Transportation Goals and Policies

The following are transportation goals and policies that were derived from community input.

Transportation Goal #1:

Promote safety through the Safe System Approach to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes in Navajo County.

Transportation Goal #2:

Improve the efficiency of the freight network in Navajo County to reduce travel times for goods on trucks and rail.

Transportation Goal #3:

Maintain a high-quality network of roadways and transit services in Navajo County.

Transportation Goal #4:

Ensure Navajo County's transportation network is accessible for all residents regardless of age or ability.

Transportation Policy #1:

Navajo County supports tracking crash data to identify high-crash locations and implement countermeasures to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

Transportation Policy #2:

Navajo County supports pursuing state and federal funding opportunities to implement countermeasures, such as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

Transportation Policy #3:

Navajo County supports establishing truck routes and identifying infrastructure projects to improve truck operations, truck parking, and driver amenities.

Transportation Policy #4:

Navajo County supports evaluating the need for additional intermodal facilities or reactivating the Apache Railway.

Transportation Policy #5:

Navajo County supports working with BNSF to improve or remove at-grade crossings.

Transportation Policy #6:

Navajo County supports implementing the pavement condition study and exploring options for pavement management software.

Transportation Policy #7:

Navajo County supports working with transit providers in the County to ensure services are sustainable and vehicles meet safety standards.



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Transportation Policy #8:

Navajo County supports investing in an integrated network of off-street bicycle and hiking trails to improve access between recreation areas and population centers.

Transportation Policy #9:

Navajo County supports following Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) for all transportation facilities.

Transportation Policy #10:

Navajo County supports evaluating the need for additional rural transit services or connections to urban areas, such as Flagstaff or Phoenix.



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Economic Growth

The topic of economic growth is of great importance to Navajo County and, though it certainly contributes to the region’s progress, it is also integral to its quality of life and stewardship of resources. As stated previously, all of Navajo County is designated an Enterprise Zone, a geographic area of government-granted special status to encourage economic growth. The *Economic Growth Element* will cover strengths and weakness of the economy and labor force, costs, and commuting patterns as they exist today in the County followed by a brief discourse on the economic outlook and opportunities for the County as well as achievable goals and policies.

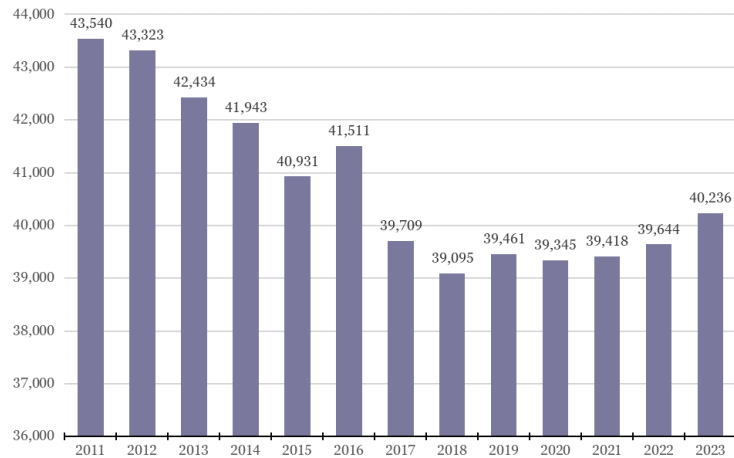
Strengths and Weakness of the Economy

The strengths and weaknesses of an economy can be illustrated by a very simple metric known as the “Location Quotient” or LQ which compares the percentage of jobs in each industry in a community to the larger economy of the State. An LQ over 1.0 indicates that a particular industry has a greater presence in the local economy compared to the state—hence a strength of the local area. An LQ of less than 1.0 means an industry is less concentrated in the local economy and, hence, is a potential weakness of an economy. The key to a thriving economy is finding the appropriate mix of industry that matches the needs and resources of the area. The County has several strengths in its local economy compared to the State that benefits the community, including private education and health services, leisure and hospitality, and government. Business services, finance, and manufacturing are some of the weaknesses in the economies of both communities, but not unexpected for a non-urban region of the state. Trade, transportation, and utilities have an LQ of 0.97 near the statewide average. Not surprisingly, Navajo County’s current major employers are heavily weighted toward healthcare, retail, and government which includes local school districts.

Labor Force and Costs

While the County’s unemployment rate exceeds the State average, the labor force participation rate for Navajo County is estimated at 45.7%, well below the Arizona average of 60.5%. A low labor force participation rate creates some uncertainty as to where the County’s service sector employment comes from to serve the local population as well as the seasonal population that expands during the summer months. For an economy to operate efficiently, it must have employees to provide the daily needs of its residents without forcing those

Civilian Labor Force 2011 - 2023
Navajo County
Source: AZ OEO



employees to commute long distances to work. The Navajo County labor force declined dramatically by more than 10% between 2011 and 2018 following the Great Recession. Since 2018, the labor force has grown by another 3% but is still below its high in 2011.

Labor costs can reflect both the skill levels of employees as well as the cost-of-living differences. Wages are also an important component in business expansion or relocation decisions. Navajo County wages are, on average, 14% lower than the typical Arizona wage with exceptions for farming, fishing, and forestry occupations and healthcare support occupations.



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Labor Commuting Patterns

The U.S. Census Bureau model estimates that 7,136 workers commute into Navajo County every day for work. Alternatively, 11,422 residents of the County or 40.1% of all employed persons commute out each day for work in other counties. The model suggests that 7.3% of these workers commute to metro Phoenix for work. The validity of this estimate has not been verified but may suggest there are not enough high-paying jobs in the region to support certain occupations. An estimated 70.5% of the people who are employed in Navajo County also live in the County. Most workers reside in the largest communities in the County such as Show Low, Winslow, and Holbrook. However, the model also suggests more than 600 people are estimated to commute to Navajo County from Phoenix to work.

Economic Outlook and Opportunity

The key to economic growth in Navajo County is the continued efforts of the County, cities, and towns in the County to foster and promote the economic assets of the Northeast Arizona region. Most of the employment growth of the County will occur within its cities since they largely control the services, infrastructure, and utilities that are required to attract new industries and businesses. The County needs to support those communities and use its resources to improve wages, business climate, and other quality-of-life factors.

Navajo County has favorable demographic characteristics, primarily in its younger population and its economy is built on several service industries that include tourism, healthcare, retail, and government. In particular, summer visitors to the White Mountains provide significant benefits to the economy of the County. One of the strengths of Navajo County is its transportation infrastructure. The presence of I-40 provides significant opportunities for transportation- and logistics-related industries. BNSF Railroad's Southern Transcon route extending through the central part of the County is also one of the most important rail routes in the country, connecting the Los Angeles area with the central and eastern U.S. Additionally, as shown in the Energy section of the report, Navajo County has renewable energy potential of both solar and wind resources.

Despite these positive attributes, the County is forecasted to lose population over the next 35 years and has a low labor force participation rate which can result in a shortage of available employees to provide services to the local population. The closure of coal power plants in northeastern Arizona has had and will have a significant impact on employment and high-paying jobs. The County's median income is also lower than Arizona's and it lags well behind the statewide average in completed bachelor's degrees, reflecting a lower level of knowledge workers available to potential employers. Exacerbating the lower income issue, housing costs have risen over the past few years resulting in a disparity between incomes and affordability. Interviews with stakeholders and survey results confirm that housing affordability is a significant issue for the workforce and a key factor when attracting and retaining businesses in the County. Additionally expanded educational opportunities at the County's educational institution can assist with business recruitment efforts and more choices and services in healthcare can help retain and attract residents to the area.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

The key to economic growth for Navajo County is retention and creation of its labor force which can be encouraged by diversification of the employment base across the County, creating more and higher paying jobs. As well as through the enhancement services in housing, health, and education choices and the capitalization of natural resources



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Economic Growth Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies were identified to aid in continuing to support progress in the economy of Navajo County by retaining and diversifying employment and providing for the lifestyle desired by the workforce.

Economic Growth Goal #1:

Contribute to an effective regional economy by attracting and appropriately siting transportation, logistics, utility-related industries and the workers they need by achieving an enhanced quality of life.

Economic Growth Goal #2:

Foster the presence of higher education and vocational facilities in the County to enhance the workforce development pipeline.

Economic Growth Goal #3:

Cooperate with regional and local partners to support a diverse, balanced economy and locally unique business ecosystems that promote long-term economic resiliency, and nurture locally based employment, opportunities, and economic development within Navajo County.

Economic Growth Goal #4:

Continue to publicly fund the development and maintenance of new and existing facilities and services such as roads, public safety, parks, and other community needs and the maintenance of infrastructure that will promote economic development efforts. Implement policies and procedures that require new development to pay its fair share of public infrastructure needs generated by the development.

Economic Growth Goal #5:

Promote the development of affordable workforce housing to support economic growth.

Economic Growth Policy #1:

Navajo County continues to support Northland Pioneer College (NPC) in maintaining and expanding its degree programs, certificates, and workforce training programs across a wide range of disciplines.

Economic Growth Policy #2:

Navajo County supports the development of vocational education programs at the high school level to help encourage younger generations to remain in the County as they mature and enter the workforce.

Economic Growth Policy #3:

Navajo County supports the development of apprenticeship programs among the business community to enhance workforce skills.

Economic Growth Policy #4:

Navajo County supports public-private partnerships to increase business success and address community needs.



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Economic Growth Policy #5:

Navajo County supports coordination with the Arizona Commerce Authority and local chambers of commerce to aid industry clusters that will provide long-term, stable growth.

Economic Growth Policy #6:

Navajo County continues to support cooperation with REAL AZ and the Northeast Arizona Local Workforce Development Board in regional economic and workforce development efforts to promote Northeastern Arizona's economic assets.

Economic Growth Policy #7:

Navajo County supports the consideration of programs designating areas for special customs procedures abating tariffs, duties, and quotas to encourage international commerce near Navajo County's transportation assets.

Economic Growth Policy #8:

Navajo County supports the continued expansion of broadband access and speed throughout the County to foster remote work and access to local businesses.

Economic Growth Policy #9:

Navajo County supports the adoption of long-term CIPs by municipalities and private utility companies for the expansion of facilities and to bolster employment growth.

Economic Growth Policy #10:

Navajo County supports promoting the availability of tax-exempt financing from the Arizona Industrial Development Authority (IDA) for affordable housing, manufacturing facilities, infrastructure projects, and non-profit facilities.



Chapter 4: Quality of Life

This chapter encompasses the retention and enhancement of the community’s quality of life through affordable housing, safe infrastructure, and abundant services and was determined to be of upmost importance to Navajo County. The theme of *Quality of Life* contains the topics of *Housing, Water and Wastewater, and Public Facilities*. Each of these elements work independently and together to guide the quality of life for residents and visitors in Navajo County. Quality of life both drives the region’s progress as well as is enhanced by the stewardship of the natural environment. Through the public engagement process, the following guiding principle was confirmed:

Navajo County strives for attainable housing choices and a safe, healthy community with robust, cost-effective public services and reliable infrastructure.

Housing

A critical aspect of the quality of life in a community is the provision of safe, affordable, and attainable housing for households across all income levels. Housing is also a key factor in a community’s economic development efforts and job creation. The housing stock and affordability are major hurdles for Navajo County residents to navigate and these factors are disproportionately affecting the workforce. The *Housing Element* includes a summary of housing market conditions in Navajo County, a brief housing needs assessment as well as related goals and polices.

The Housing Market

Affordable or attainable housing generally refers to households earning less than 80% of the area’s median income. Workforce housing refers to households who typically earn more than 80% of median income and cannot qualify for government assistance. These households are considered “critical service employees” such as police, firemen, nurses, schoolteachers, and others who provide important community services.

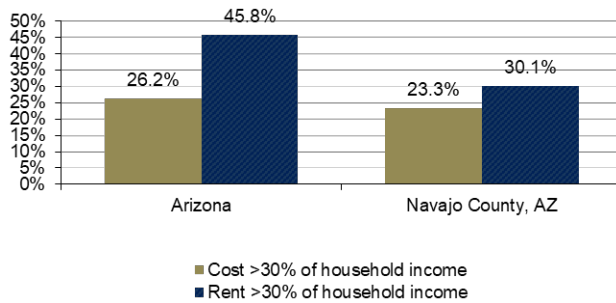
According to the U.S. Census, 16% of all homeowners (4,203 households) in Navajo County spend more than 30% of their income on housing. For reference, lenders use the ratio of *gross monthly income to total monthly housing cost* to assess the risk of lending to a borrower. Lenders generally prefer a ratio no higher than 28%, ensuring borrowers can afford their mortgage. Of all renter households, 30% (3,130 households) spend more than 30% of their gross monthly income on rent and 37% (1,153) of those renter households are considered extremely burdened by housing costs, *spending more than 50% of their income on housing*. This issue is compounded by the County’s low apartment inventory and low availability, creating an unusual amount of competition for the few available units. The County has considerably more single-family housing units than multifamily units relative to its geographic size of nearly 10,000 sq. miles.



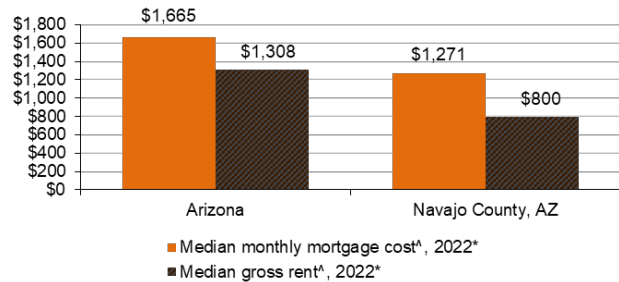
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Housing Costs as a Percent of Household Income, 2022*



Median Monthly Mortgage Costs and Gross Rent, 2022*



THE HOUSING MARKET

The need for affordable housing at all income levels is considerable, particularly in the southern portion of the County where home prices have skyrocketed.

Construction activity has been consistent. However, many newly built homes are being utilized as seasonal residences or vacation rentals. Overall, new homes are priced higher than the average gross monthly income in the County can support and are often not attainable for year-round residents. The construction of affordable housing, whether in the form of apartments, duplexes, site-built homes, or manufactured units, is needed for local employees at all income levels to continue to provide services to the growing seasonal and permanent population.

During the planning process for the *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan*, the community was asked a range of questions seeking insight into life in Navajo County and residents' priorities. Responses to the inquiry: *What can be improved in Navajo County?* clearly demonstrate that affordable housing is one of the most important issues facing the County. The most common results:

- A lower cost of living (43%)
- Lower housing cost (35%)
- More employment opportunities (41%)
- More diverse housing options (30%)

Limited attainable housing for workers in the service industry (hospitality and food service) is indicative of a potential economic issue that could affect the viability of the County's economy over the long term. The availability of affordable housing may most significantly affect the 25- to 35-year-old segment of the population who are attempting to enter the housing market for the first time. Low-income seniors may also be disproportionately affected.

Housing Outlook and Opportunity

The Arizona Department of Housing and Arizona State University's (ASU) Morrison Institute estimates that the State of Arizona is short nearly 270,000 affordable housing units, demonstrating that this is not an issue unique to Navajo County. There are opportunities for the County to enter partnerships with various government and non-government agencies to spearhead the development of additional affordable housing. Community and County land trusts, as well as state and federal development and tax incentive programs such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) are all available although the programs are competitive. More direct action can be taken in the form of zoning code and development standard amendments that would minimize barriers to affordable home projects. While the population of Navajo County has been increasing at a slow but steady pace, the future projections reflect a leveling and eventual decline in population growth. While the current demand for housing is considerable, a leveling of the population could indicate an opportunity for housing supply to meet demand in the near future.



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Housing Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies derived from community input are aimed at addressing housing needs in Navajo County.

Housing Goal #1:

Encourage the development of affordable and workforce housing units.

Housing Goal #2:

Encourage a diversity of housing types necessary to meet the needs of the County population.

Housing Goal #3:

Support housing programs with financial resources available at the state, County, and municipal levels.

Housing Policy #1:

Navajo County supports coordination with other governmental entities, housing agencies, community/County land trusts, non-profits, and developer/builders to provide affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income households through programs such as the LIHTC or U.S. Department of Agriculture housing programs.

Housing Policy #2:

Navajo County supports the development of workforce housing units through incentive programs such as fee waivers, density incentives, expedited processing of plans, and similar enticements.

Housing Policy #3:

Navajo County supports updates to land use codes promoting zoning flexibility and opportunities for more unique and higher-density housing types.

Housing Policy #4:

Navajo County supports long-term housing and neighborhood vitality through preservation and revitalization of mature neighborhoods.

Housing Policy #5:

Navajo County supports the preservation of identified neighborhoods that exhibit unique cultural or architectural attributes.

Housing Policy #6:

Navajo County supports partnerships with non-profit housing advocacy groups for outreach and education on the housing needs of the County and to assist with the implementation of housing programs.

Housing Policy #7:

Navajo County supports infill development opportunities to capitalize on existing infrastructure and reduce the cost of development.



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Housing Policy #8:

Navajo County supports efforts to attract development of 'Missing Middle' housing options including townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and live-work configurations.

Housing Policy #9:

Navajo County supports the development of new policies for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to increase economic opportunities for current residents.

Housing Policy #10:

Navajo County supports creating housing rehabilitation programs that will improve and preserve the existing housing stock.

Housing Policy #11:

Navajo County supports the exploration of a Community (County) Land Trust to facilitate the development of affordable and workforce housing by leasing developable land to interested parties.

Housing Policy #12:

Navajo County supports initiation of an inventory of publicly owned land that could be leased or sold for affordable or workforce housing.

Housing Policy #13:

Navajo County supports an evaluation of methods to expand financial support for affordable and workforce housing at the County level.

Housing Policy #14:

Navajo County supports higher density housing developments in those areas where infrastructure and services can support proposed density.



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Water and Wastewater

The *Water and Wastewater Element* reviews current water/wastewater infrastructure and the anticipated future water availability in Navajo County, developing goals and policies to ensure healthy water resources are available for the County in both the near term and into the future.

Water and Sewer Providers

There are two primary water service providers that provide potable water to customers within Navajo County. The two largest water service providers are the Arizona Water Company and Navajo Water Company. Arizona Water Company and Navajo Water Company both own and operate several water systems that provide service to residential and commercial customers across the County. The remaining unincorporated areas of the County are currently provided water service by a host of ten water companies and nine water districts, shown in the table below. Each of the water companies and water districts listed own and operate water systems that are registered with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The water systems are supplied with water from wells that draw from the Upper Salt watershed. It is important to note that ownership of the water companies and water districts listed below change frequently and is based on the best available information at the time of this Comprehensive Plan. Navajo County does not currently provide wastewater collection services. Residents in the Pinetop-Lakeside area are provided wastewater collection services by the Pinetop-Lakeside Sanitary District; other unincorporated areas rely on private wastewater collection services or septic.

WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Water Companies	Water Improvement Districts
High Country Pines Water Company	Heber Domestic Water Improvement District
Arizona Water Company	Clay Springs Water Improvement District
Buckskin Artists Community	Pinedale Domestic Water Improvement District
White Mountain Water Company	Timberland Acres Domestic Water Improvement District
Mountain Glen Water Service	Ponderosa Domestic Water Improvement District
Navajo Water Company	Sky Hi Domestic Water Improvement District
Watco Water Company	Misty Mountain Domestic Water Improvement District
Voyager at White Mountain Lakes Water Company	Porter Mountain Domestic Water Improvement District
A. Petersen Water Company	Joseph City Domestic Water Improvement District
Sun Valley Utilities	



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Legally and Physically Available

Navajo County is located within two groundwater basins, the Little Colorado River Plateau and the Salt River groundwater basins. The Salt River groundwater basin comprises six smaller groundwater subbasins: Black River, White River, Carrizo Creek, Tonto Creek, Lower Salt River, and Upper Salt River. The Coconino aquifer along with other regional aquifers are part of the groundwater network supplying Navajo County. Groundwater is the primary source for drinking water in the County. The primary water provider (to private customers), Navajo Water Company, relies on the Upper Salt River groundwater subbasin as its water source.

Water Conservation

Navajo County does not own or operate its own sanitary sewer collection system or wastewater treatment plant for domestic wastewater customers. The County requires all new developments at a density greater than 1 du/ac to have a readily available sanitary sewer system in place or financially assured prior to construction. Residential and commercial users in Navajo County largely rely on on-site septic systems to treat wastewater prior to discharge. The use of on-site septic systems and alternative systems allow for residential and commercial development in areas that do not have access to municipal or private wastewater collection systems. However, these systems can cause environmental issues if they are not properly maintained, including leakage of sewage and treatment chemicals into nearby groundwater sources.

Water Outlook and Opportunity

While Navajo County is not anticipated to experience major population growth and is in a healthy position now with water availability, there are specific areas at the fringes of urbanized areas or where major employment opportunities may emerge that available water resources will need to be identified and protected. Additionally, septic and other alternative wastewater systems will need to be evaluated to ensure that they are not contaminating groundwater sources that are essential to supporting the existing and future residents of Navajo County.

Considerations for future growth should include evaluating the potential for connecting unincorporated areas near municipal water or sewer systems to those systems to reduce the reliance on private wells and individual septic systems. A focus on maintaining water quality and increasing conservation efforts should be a higher priority than identifying new sources of water since the County's population is anticipated to remain relatively consistent.

Water and Wastewater Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies derived through community input address the future needs of water in Navajo County.

Water and Wastewater Goal #1:

Support water demand management best practices for sustainable water use.

Water and Wastewater Goal #2:

Ensure adequate water supplies are identified and secured to support future growth and economic development.

Water and Wastewater Goal #3:

Evaluate and protect groundwater quality.



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Water and Wastewater Goal #4:

Protect the natural environment through effective wastewater conveyance and treatment practices.

Water and Wastewater Policy #1:

Navajo County supports requiring developers to install water conserving plumbing fixtures and encourage implementation of low-water-use landscaping practices in all future developments.

Water and Wastewater Policy #2:

Navajo County supports promoting water conservation best practices to the public through brochures and educational programs.

Water and Wastewater Policy #3:

Navajo County supports developing a plan for the use of reclaimed water for agricultural, industrial, and landscaping to reduce overall potable water demand where possible.

Water and Wastewater Policy #4:

Navajo County supports the development of future water demand projections to establish potable water needs to support planned growth.

Water and Wastewater Policy #5:

Navajo County supports continual water use monitoring to identify trends and ensure adequate water supply in locations where growth is anticipated to occur.

Water and Wastewater Policy #6:

Navajo County supports the development of a groundwater quality testing framework to ensure safe and healthy water is available for all residents.

Water and Wastewater Policy #7:

Navajo County supports working with water service providers and ADEQ to monitor groundwater quality.

Water and Wastewater Policy #8:

Navajo County supports partnering with water service providers to improve water quality in areas of concern.

Water and Wastewater Policy #9:

Navajo County supports encouraging existing development that cannot be served by gravity sanitary sewer or septic systems to utilize alternative sewer systems, such as mounds and other similar systems that provide an alternative to traditional gravity sanitary sewer and septic systems.

Water and Wastewater Policy #10:

Navajo County supports identifying and pursuing grants and other funding sources to mitigate environmental contamination due to aging wastewater infrastructure.



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Water and Wastewater Policy #11:

Navajo County supports exploring the extension of municipal sanitary sewer systems to nearby unincorporated population centers.

Public Facilities

The *Public Facilities Element* reviews the types and coverage of existing public facilities across Navajo County, providing goals and policies to ensure that the necessary public facilities are serving communities as Navajo County develops.

Solid Waste

Residents of unincorporated Navajo County are responsible for disposing of their own solid waste. There is currently one landfill site, Painted Desert Landfill, located in Joseph City, near I-40 and Porter Road. There are 10 waste transfer facilities in the County, five of which are located in unincorporated areas: the Lone Pine Transfer Station, Heber-Overgaard Transfer Station, Joseph City Waste Transfer Station, Wagon Wheel Rolloffs, and the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside Transfer Station. **Figure 8** shows landfills and waste transfer stations.

Sherriff's Office

The Navajo County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) provides patrol, communications, criminal investigation, evidence, administration, adult detention, training, and search and rescue services to unincorporated Navajo County. The NCSO operates from six stations. NCSO's main two stations are in Show Low and Holbrook. **Figure 8** shows the main locations of the NCSO stations in the County.

Fire Protection

There are 23 fire stations in Navajo County, 10 of which are located outside of incorporated jurisdictions and Tribal lands. Fire service in unincorporated areas is served by Clay Springs Pinedale Fire Department, Heber-Overgaard Fire District, Joseph City Fire District, Linden Fire Department, Pinetop Fire Department, Sun Valley Fire and Rescue, and Timber Mesa Fire and Medical. **Figure 8** shows the locations of fire stations across the County.

Educational Facilities

Navajo County has 68 educational facilities spread across 11 school districts. The average enrollment by school type is 270 students per elementary school, 344 students per middle school, and 324 students per high school. In addition to K-12 schools, Navajo County is home to seven satellite locations of Northland Pioneer College, a community college, four of which are located in the focus area. These campuses are in Show Low, Snowflake, Holbrook, and Winslow. NPC offers associate's degrees and vocational education services in a variety of fields. All school locations in the focus area are shown in **Figure 8**. There are 29 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, and 20 high schools, along with five community schools (K-8 or K-12). School districts include:

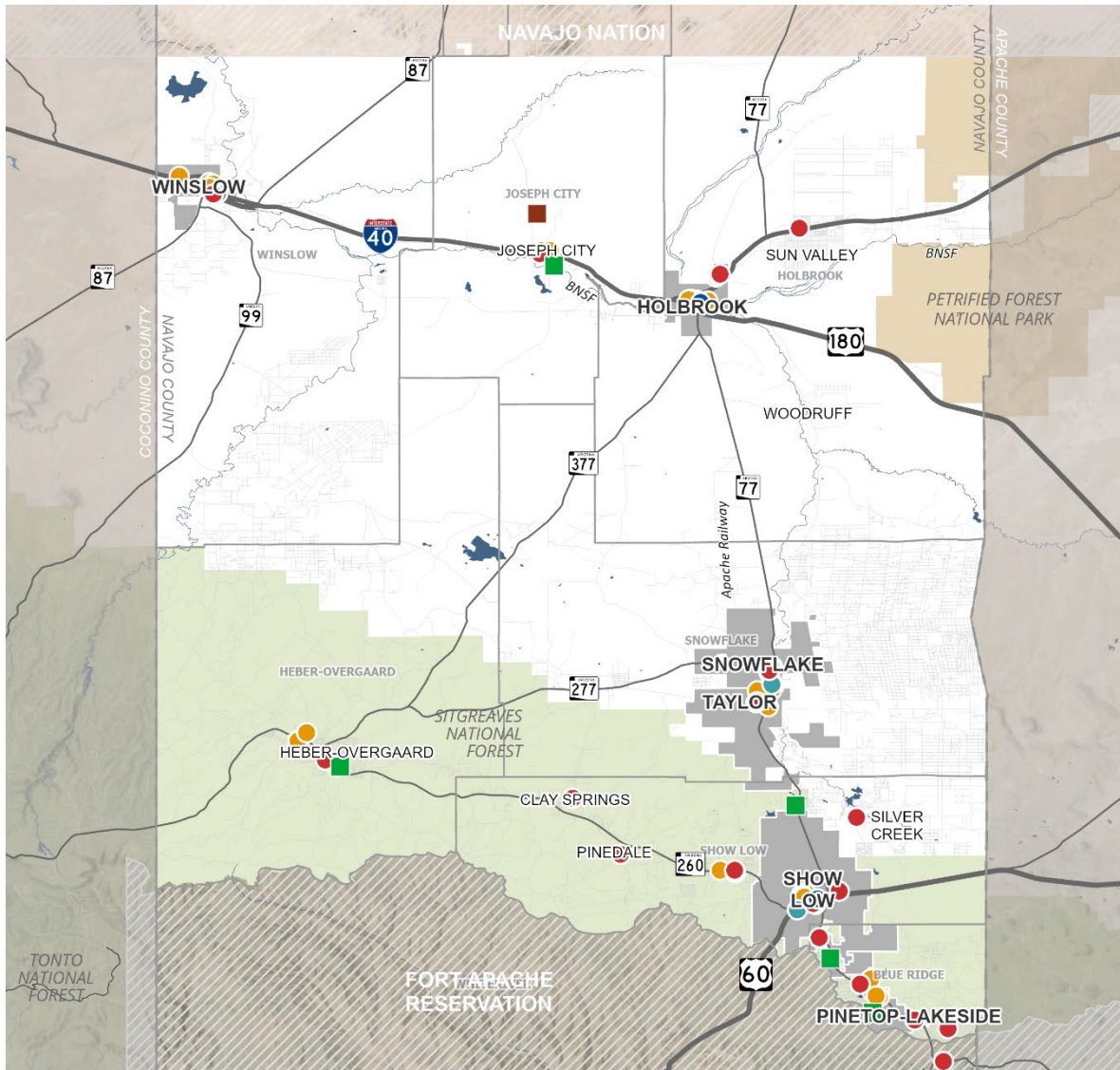
- Pinon Unified
- Heber-Overgaard Unified
- Cedar Unified
- Holbrook Unified
- Joseph City Unified
- Kayenta Unified
- Blue Ridge Unified
- Show Low Unified
- Snowflake Unified
- Whiteriver Unified
- Winslow Unified



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Figure 8: Public Facilities



PUBLIC FACILITIES



- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| ■ Waste Transfer Facilities | ● Northland Pioneer College | Native Lands |
| ■ Painted Desert Landfill | School District Boundary | Petrified Forest National Park |
| ● Fire Station | Navajo County Boundary | National Forest |
| ● Sheriff's Office | Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction | Rivers and Streams |
| ● K-12 Schools | | Water Bodies |



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Public Facilities Outlook and Opportunity

Ensuring public services maintain their current high level of service and adequate response times is an important and often life-saving goal of Navajo County residents and stakeholders. Potential future growth areas have been identified in the future land use map in Chapter 3 and are shown again in Error! Reference source not found.. As development expands into currently vacant land, additional fire, police, educational, and waste facilities may be needed to support the increased demand. The public facilities found within the six potential growth areas are shown in the table below.

- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 1:** May need a waste transfer facility as growth pushes into unincorporated areas.
- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 2:** Likely to have sufficient public services available.
- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 3:** May need a sheriff’s office and a waste transfer facility.
- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 4:** Currently lacking all public facilities except for fire stations.
- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 5:** Likely has sufficient public services available.
- **POTENTIAL GROWTH AREA 6:** Currently lacking all public facilities except for fire stations.

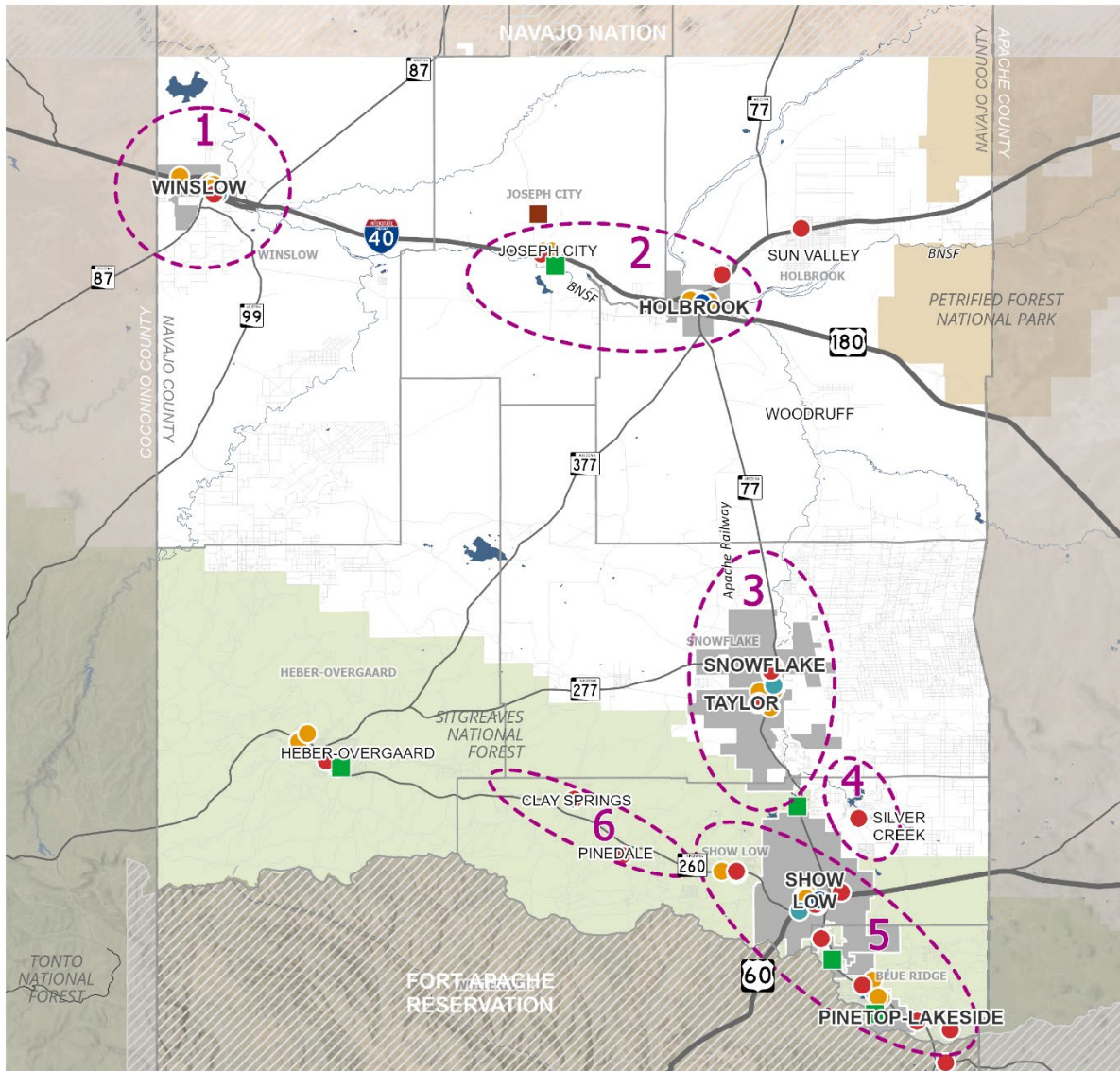
GROWTH AREA PUBLIC FACILITIES						
	K-12 School	Post-Secondary School	Sheriff’s Office	Fire Station	Waste Transfer Station	Landfill
Potential Growth Area 1	5	1	0	1	0	0
Potential Growth Area 2	7	1	1	3	1	0
Potential Growth Area 3	9	1	0	2	0	0
Potential Growth Area 4	0	0	0	1	0	0
Potential Growth Area 5	12	1	1	7	2	0
Potential Growth Area 6	0	0	0	2	0	0



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Figure 9: Potential Growth Area Public Facilities



GROWTH AREA PUBLIC FACILITIES



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ■ Waste Transfer Facilities | Potential Growth Area | Petrified Forest National Park |
| Painted Desert Landfill | School District Boundary | National Forest |
| ● Fire Station | Navajo County Boundary | Rivers and Streams |
| ● Sheriff's Office | Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction | Water Bodies |
| ● K-12 Schools | Native Lands | |
| ● Northland Pioneer College | | |



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Public Facilities Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies derived through community input address the future needs of public facilities and services in Navajo County.

Public Facilities Goal #1:

Promote robust access to emergency services, including police, fire, and medical services, to residents in Navajo County.

Public Facilities Goal #2:

Support a high-quality primary, secondary, and post-secondary education system.

Public Facilities Goal #3:

Encourage access to affordable solid waste disposal services for all residents.

Public Facilities Policy #1:

Navajo County supports encouraging local fire districts to regularly assess the levels of service provided by their departments and the continued tracking emergency response times to identify gaps in service and evaluate impacts of future growth.

Public Facilities Policy #2:

Navajo County supports working with local jurisdictions and the NCSO to promote coordinated facility placement, where appropriate, and to maintain optimal staffing to encourage quality law enforcement.

Public Facilities Policy #3:

Navajo County supports tracking school enrollment to ensure alignment between school capacity and enrollment as future development occurs and collaboration between school districts and NPC to retain post-secondary students in the County.

Public Facilities Policy #4:

Navajo County supports working with solid waste collection services to promote affordable collection service availability for residents and businesses in unincorporated communities.

Public Facilities Policy #5:

Navajo County supports responsible disposal of solid and hazardous waste, so it does not negatively impact the County's environment and water sources.

Public Facilities Policy #6:

Navajo County supports the development of a robust recycling program that reduces the amount of waste that is stored in landfills.

Public Facilities Policy #7:

Navajo County supports periodically evaluating the capacity and quality of waste disposal facilities as future development occurs.



Chapter 5: Stewardship

This chapter reflects Navajo County’s world-famous natural attractions, outdoor recreation, and spacious scenic open spaces and aims for this region to retain and enhance this stunning environment for both existing and future generations. The theme of *Stewardship* contains the topics of *Energy, Environment, and Open Space and Recreation*. Each of these elements work independently and together to guide the stewardship of the natural environment for residents and visitors in Navajo County. Stewardship of the natural environment can assist with the progress of the region as well as add to the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Through the public engagement process, the following guiding principle was confirmed:

Navajo County values the preservation of the natural and scenic environment with sustainable enhancements to support a rural and resilient atmosphere with diverse outdoor recreational opportunities.

Energy

Renewable energy is energy from sources that are naturally replenishing but flow-limited; renewable resources are virtually inexhaustible in duration but limited in the amount of energy that is available per unit of time. The major types of renewable energy sources are biomass including wood and wood waste, municipal solid waste, landfill gas and biogas, biofuels, hydropower, geothermal, wind, and solar. Navajo County has the potential to be a global leader in renewable energy research and development, especially with respect to solar, wind, and biomass. Many companies have already discovered this potential, evidenced by the growing number of utility-scale plants being planned in the County. Solar energy is also available to businesses and homeowners through custom solar systems for buildings and homes. The economic and environmental benefits provided by renewable energy are strong. With the cost of producing a unit of renewable energy continually declining, power companies are increasingly investing in these energy resources to expand their portfolio. Wind and solar conditions and land ownership in Navajo County make it an attractive place for power companies and renewable energy developers.

Closure of the Kayenta surface coal mine and pending closure of the Cholla power plant have left a vacuum in energy production and resulted in job displacement and a loss of tax revenue to support local services. Transitioning to renewable energy production in Navajo County is a considerable opportunity given the existing utility infrastructure, wind and solar energy potential, available land, market incentives, and statutory power granted by the State to create renewable energy incentive districts. Siting of these plants may also come at a potential cost to the environment so must be considered carefully in the context with all stewardship elements on a case-by-case basis with early and transparent community engagement and participation. The *Energy Element* reviews the various energy resources as well as the outlook and opportunity for energy resources in Navajo County.





Energy Resources

Navajo County receives electricity service from the two providers, Arizona Public Service (APS) and Navopache Electric Cooperative (NEC). Electricity utility providers are witnessing record-breaking peak demand loads during summer, including APS who provides power to the Phoenix metropolitan area as well as parts of Navajo County. As global and local temperatures rise, as there are higher and more frequent high heat days, increasingly stressed electricity capacity will rely on a diversified energy portfolio and accommodating additional renewable energy production in the County will contribute to its ability to provide sufficient power, rain or shine.

Natural gas service in Navajo County is provided by Unisource Energy Services (UES) which is the parent company of UNS Electric, Inc. and, though it is a non-renewable energy resource, it is an important utility infrastructure and mitigation item to consider with new development.

Independent power producers that do not make use of heat (IPP Non-CHP) are the only type of renewable energy producer located in Navajo County. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, renewable energy power facilities in Navajo County currently include:

- **NOVO BIOWATER PLANT.**

The Novo Plant located in Snowflake has two long-term power purchase agreements in place with APS and Salt River Project (SRP) and counts 20,000 homes powered.

- **POSEIDON WIND, LLC AND DRY LAKE WIND, LLC.**

These are utility-scale, independent power producers also located in Snowflake wind turbine farms. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, each 1,000 megawatts of wind-generated power capacity installed in Arizona will save 818 million gallons of water per year and eliminate 2 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions. Therefore, 128.1 megawatts of wind power capacity from these two projects are capable of eliminating 256,200 tons of carbon dioxide and saving 104,785,800 gallons of water annually.

- **KAYENTA SOLAR.**

This two-phase utility-scale plant solar farm sits on 365 acres and is the largest solar plant on any tribal land. Kayenta Solar is located in the Navajo Nation near Monument Valley in the County. Partnering with the SRP in 2015, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) sited this 55.3 megawatts of solar-generated power capable of powering 36,000 homes. What solar photovoltaic (PV) energy is not used by the Navajo people is exported electricity sold to major cities to generate revenues.

ENERGY

An opportunity exists in Navajo County for power utility providers to leverage the existing power grid network. After developing and operating power on the grid since 1962, the Cholla coal power generator is phasing out plant operations by 2025 and vacating multiple high-voltage transmission and distribution lines that offer further opportunities for renewable energy.





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- **CHEVELON BUTTE WIND FARM.** The Chevelon Butte Wind Farm is a 454-megawatt wind energy facility shared with Coconino County, 20 miles south of Winslow. According to the project website, the Chevelon Butte wind facility “will be compatible with existing livestock ranching and hunting land uses, enabling the landowner family and Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) who own the land to continue the more than century-long tradition of raising livestock and stewardship of this property.” This project has the potential to eliminate 908,000 tons of carbon dioxide and save 371,372,000 gallons of water annually.
- **WEST CAMP WIND FARM.** Currently under construction, this wind farm includes 104 wind turbines and will provide up to 500 megawatts of wind-generated power, provide over 500 construction jobs and 20 to 30 full-time positions, power over 368,000 homes, and save 409,000,000 gallons of water and 1 to 2 million tons of carbon dioxide, annually.

Energy Outlook and Opportunity

Based on the renewable energy potential of both solar and wind resources, Navajo County has an abundance of opportunity to be harnessed. Data from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory estimates the greatest potential for solar energy to be in the north of the unincorporated County, between the Navajo Nation and Show Low, while the greatest potential for wind energy is in the southwestern unincorporated area near the Sitgreaves National Forest. In terms of annual average daily solar power, there is no less than 7 kilowatt hours per square meter per year according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) National Solar Radiation Database (NSRDB). For wind power, areas just north of the Sitgreaves National Forest show the best opportunity for wind power generation, meeting or exceeding average annual wind speeds of 6.5m/s or greater at 80m, which are generally considered commercially viable.

The energy-related applications of the NSRDB include, but are not limited to, site and building design, facility integration, transmission and distribution planning, and strategic analysis. (Sengupta, M., Y. Xie, A. Lopez, A. Habte, G. Maclaurin, and J. Shelby. 2018. "The National Solar Radiation Data Base (NSRDB)." *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 89 (June): 51-60.) Production cost models used in grid integration studies to evaluate and optimize power plant dispatch utilize NSRDB data. Models, coupled with capacity expansion and production cost models, are used to characterize and quantify solar supply. Those models use data based on the NSRDB to evaluate land-use impacts, barriers, and scenarios of development futures. Solar energy facility developers use models with long-term NSRDB data to estimate power output and assess specific cost and feasibility. **Figure 10** shows solar potential in the focus area.



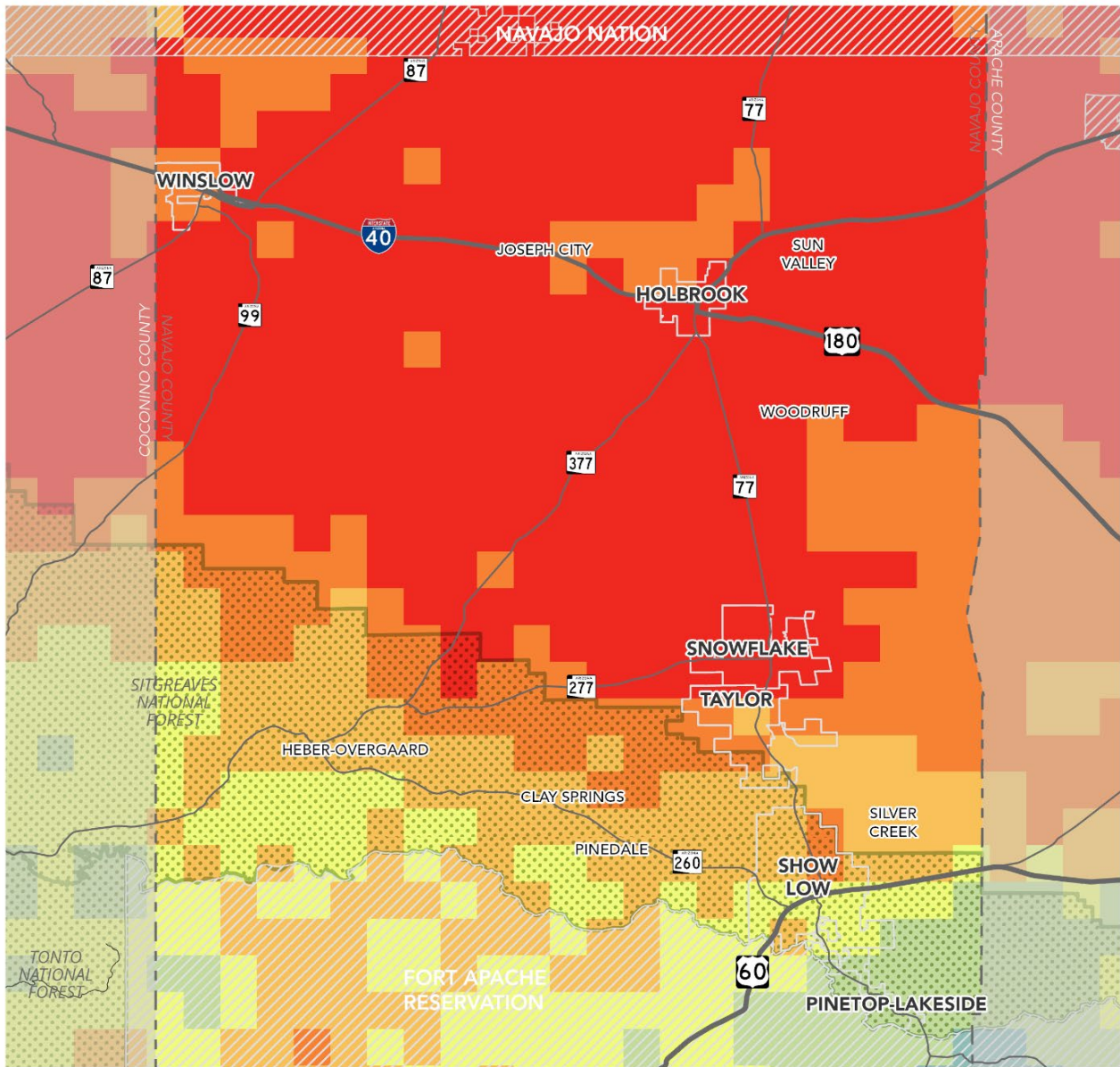
The wind speed analysis map in **Figure 11** illustrates multiyear average wind speeds at various heights derived from NREL's Wind Integration National Dataset (WIND) Toolkit. The WIND Toolkit is the largest and most complete grid integration data set publicly available to date and fulfills the necessary requirements of realistically reflecting ramping characteristics, spatial and temporal correlations, and capacity factors of the simulated wind plants, as well as being time synchronized with available load profiles. Average annual wind speeds of 6.5m/s or greater at 80m are generally considered commercially viable. Therefore, there is some potential commercial viability for areas on the northern boundary of the Sitgreaves National Forest, and surrounding Snowflake Taylor on the east and west.



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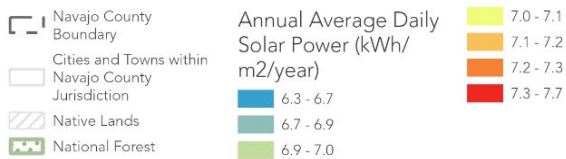
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Figure 10: Solar Power Analysis



SOLAR POWER ANALYSIS

0 8 15 Miles

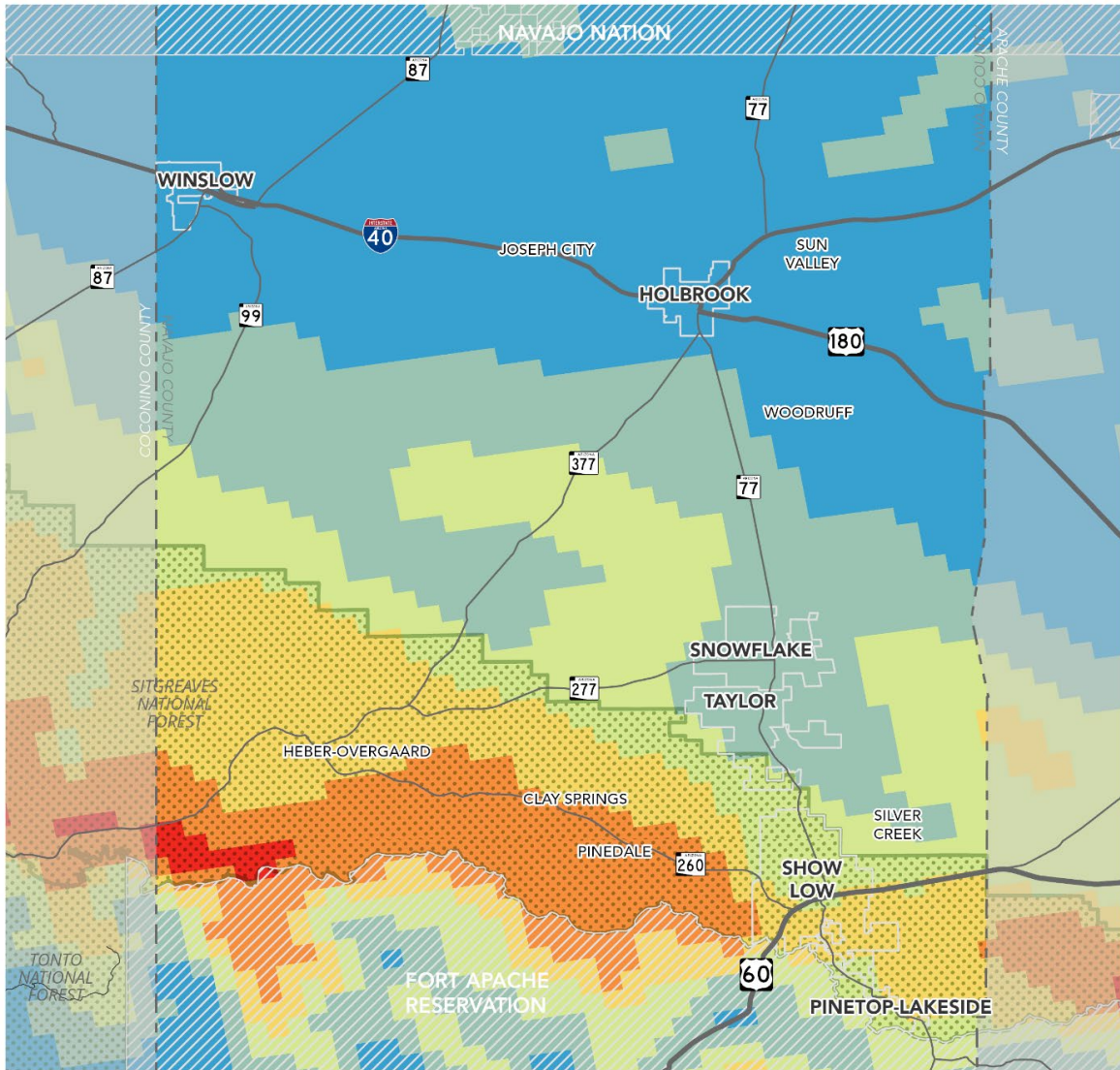




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Figure 11: Wind Speed Analysis



WIND SPEED ANALYSIS

- Navajo County Boundary
- Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction
- Native Lands
- National Forest

Wind Speed at 100m (m/s)

- 1.3 - 5.7
- 5.7 - 6.4
- 6.4 - 6.9
- 6.9 - 7.4
- 7.4 - 8.2
- 8.2 - 14.2

0 8 15 Miles





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As shown in **Figure 12**, the Navajo County focus area sits squarely within a designated priority “energy community” area eligible for the Advanced Energy Project Credit Program (48C) (available on a recurring basis), aimed at investing in advanced energy projects within communities with closed coal plants. Direct pay eligibility applies to counties and tribal governments, and rural electricity co-ops. Eligible projects are those that: 1) re-equip, expand, or establish an industrial or manufacturing facility for the production or recycling of a range of clean energy equipment and vehicles; 2) re-equip an industrial or manufacturing facility with equipment designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20 percent; or 3) re-equip, expand, or establish an industrial facility for the processing, refining, or recycling of critical materials. Further, energy tax credits established and amended by the Inflation Reduction Act provide extra financial incentives for investment in communities with relatively high levels of fossil fuel-related employment (among other communities). Additionally, the State Legislature grants counties the power to create renewable energy incentive districts given they satisfy the necessary requirements of: 1) sufficient vacant or other suitable land; 2) construction and operations are located in an area free from incompatible uses, with adequate buffers; 3) low noise levels where the district perimeter meets adjacent land; 4) proximity to existing transportation and electrical transmission corridors; 5) commercial and military air space compatibility; and 6) energy district consistency with Comprehensive Plan.

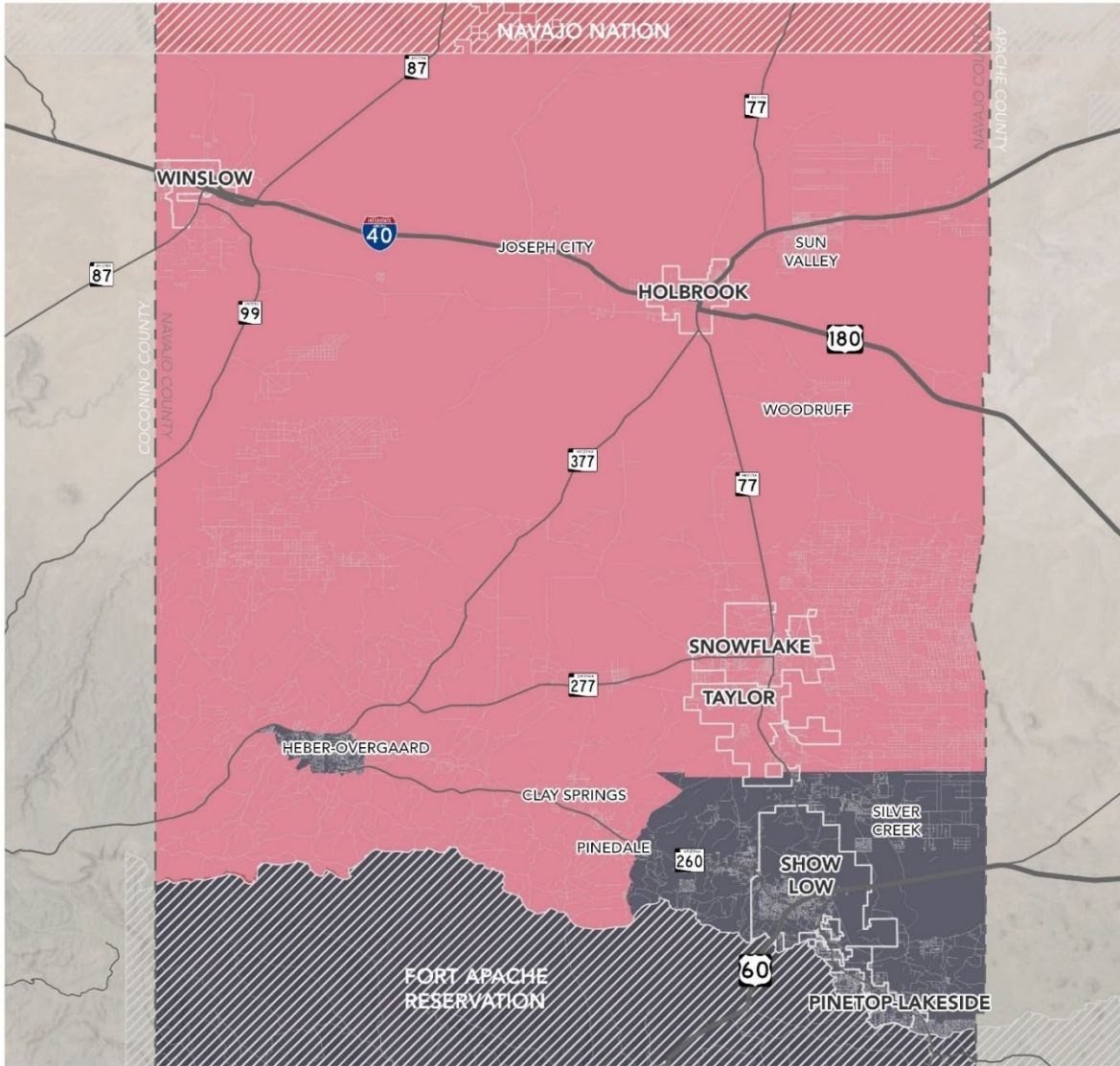
Clearly, there is both significant wind and solar potential in Navajo County, but these opportunities must be considered first through the lens of the community’s vision and values. Consideration should be given to impacts on wildlife and other potential environmental effects. Arizona Game and Fish Department has developed several resources to aid in measuring and mitigating impacts on wildlife. Any kind of development on the land can have a lasting consequence on the visual or natural environment and character of the area. In particular, structures such as PV panels in solar farms that cover large expanses of area can have impact on wildlife habitats as well as the aesthetics of an area and structures that are tall in nature such as wind turbines can also have impacts to people, military operations, and viewsheds. Development applications must be processed in a careful, case-by-case manner with open, transparent, and broad-based community participation so that the community that is most affected can have a meaningful input into the changes to their landscape and environment.



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Figure 12: Advanced Energy Tax Credit Program



ADVANCED ENERGY TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

0 8 15 Miles



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navajo County Boundary Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction Native Lands | <p>Advanced Energy Tax Credit Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48C Tax Credit Eligible + Energy Community 48C Tax Credit Eligible |
|---|---|



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Energy Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies were identified and steered by the input gleaned from the community to aid in stewardship of energy in Navajo County.

Energy Goal #1:

Make Navajo County a leader in renewable energy research and development and environmental quality.

Energy Goal #2:

Have balanced and efficient development patterns to reduce potential for land use conflicts between utility operations and non-compatible uses.

Energy Goal #3:

Ensure that development adjacent to electrical, gas, and other utility corridors is context appropriate and environmentally responsible.

Energy Goal #4:

Increase energy efficiency in new development and in County facilities.

Energy Goal #5:

Develop efficient and appropriate energy generation while avoiding and minimizing impacts to the natural environment, wildlife, human health, and community character.

Energy Policy #1:

Navajo County supports intergovernmental coordination for the development and implementation of strategic energy planning with Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG), municipalities in the County, and other neighboring counties.

Energy Policy #2:

Navajo County supports planning for mixes of residential, commercial, and employment land uses in potential growth areas that are proximate to each other rather than separated to reduce fuel usage, energy consumption, and unnecessary impacts to paved roadway surfaces.

Energy Policy #3:

To limit energy consumption, the County supports having new intense and dense development located in cities and towns and in the appropriate growth areas where infrastructure and services are existing or planned.

Energy Policy #4:

Navajo County supports opportunities for coordination with developers to integrate small and medium retail, and public and joint facilities, such as civic buildings and playgrounds, into neighborhoods to reduce fuel consumption and promote active transportation modes.

Energy Policy #5:

Navajo County supports energy efficient design and construction of new development.



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Energy Policy #6:

Navajo County supports adoption of building efficiency programs and energy standards (including national programs such as ENERGY STAR and LEED) that reduce per-capita consumption.

Energy Policy #7:

Navajo County supports the siting of utility-scale projects and transmission lines that consider the protection of viewsheds; the potential for noise disturbances to adjacent residential areas; the conservation of species, habitats, and water resources; and the preservation of prehistoric, historic, and cultural sites.

Energy Policy #8:

Navajo County supports jurisdictional coordination when utility corridors, such as powerlines and pipelines, cross municipal boundaries. Where feasible and effective, jurisdictions should work with utility providers to use easements and utility corridors as open space, trails, or other compatible passive recreational uses.

Energy Policy #9:

Navajo County supports the development of utility-scale projects on areas that are close to existing transmission interconnections.

Energy Policy #10:

To balance the impacts to residents and the natural environment, the County supports projects that can demonstrate significant energy benefits on a local and regional scale and that involve the community and area stakeholders in the process in early and in meaningful ways.



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Environment

The natural environment is the jewel in the crown of Navajo County and the diverse ecosystems and unique landscapes are a clear value to the residents. Steps must continue to be taken to ensure the preservation of these assets and provide opportunities for future generations to appreciate them. The *Environment Element* covers physiography and climate, ecological diversity, and environmental hazards as well as a discussion on the environmental outlook and opportunity that exists that will assist in the stewardship of the environment in the County.

Physiography and Climate

Navajo County contains a wide-ranging variety of physiography and terrain, primarily divided by the Mogollon Rim. The Winslow region marks the lowest elevation from 4,850 feet, and the highest elevation is up to 7,575 feet at the Mogollon Rim. North of the rim, there are vast stretches of desert, speckled with flat-topped mesas, lonely buttes, small plateaus, and valleys. This region is adorned primarily by short grasses, sagebrush, juniper, and pinon. Below the rim, the terrain is mainly mountainous, with dense forests of pinon-juniper and ponderosa pine trees. The southern portion of the County has many lakes, rivers, and streams. The Little Colorado River, flowing from the west to the northwest of the County, is a key geographic feature, supporting multiple native wildlife and plant species.



Petrified Forest National Park, Alexander Hatley

This region experiences a semi-arid or sub-humid climate with an abundance of sunshine. Precipitation happens primarily between July and September, during monsoon season. In 2023, the County received just over 15 inches of rainfall in total throughout the year. The County also experiences scattered days of snowfall between the months of October and May, averaging a total of 22 inches of snow annually. The region is famous for several regional natural attractions shown on **Figure 13** destinations, including the Monument Valley, Navajo National Monument, Canyon de Chelly National Monument (in Apache County), Painted Desert, Petrified Forest National Park, and the Sitgreaves National Forest.



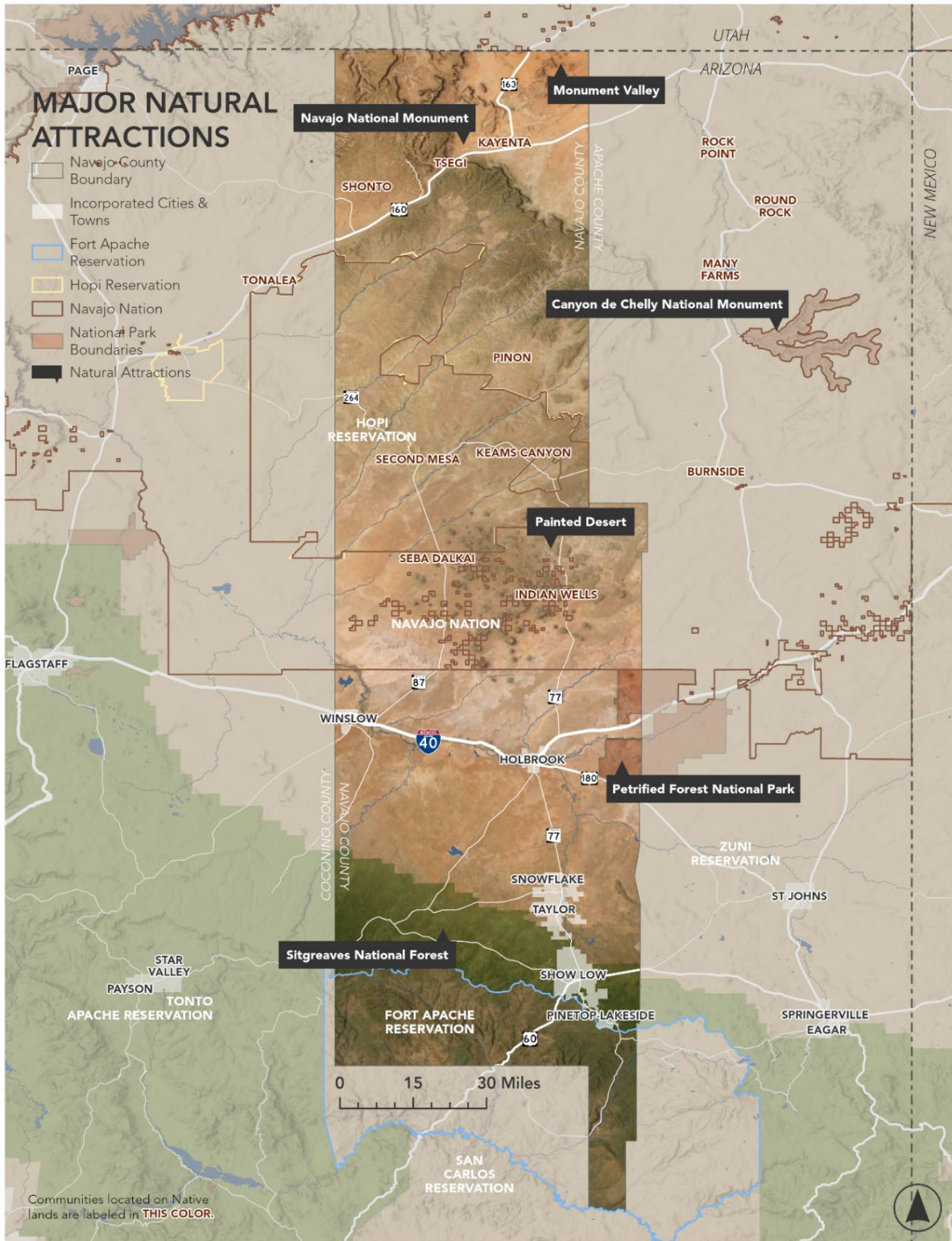
Hopi Buttes



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Figure 13: Major Natural Attractions





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Ecological Diversity

Navajo County contains a rich variety of physiography and terrain across 15 ecoregions, with iconic natural attractions as well as flat-topped mesas, lonely buttes, small plateaus, and valleys. Vegetative cover includes short grasses, sagebrush, juniper, and pinon above the rim, and dense forests of pinon-juniper. The Sitgreaves is also home to a portion of the world's largest contiguous stand of ponderosa pine trees. The Little Colorado River and the many lakes, rivers, and streams of the southern portion of the County support several native wildlife and plant species.

The flora and fauna of Navajo County's wildlife species also contribute to the region's diversity and natural beauty. Important species, some of which are endangered or threatened, include the Northern Leopard Frog residing in aquatic habitats along the mountainous areas along the Rim, the Little Colorado Spinedace, the Mexican Spotted Owl in the steep slopes and rocky cliffs of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, the Mexican Wolf in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona, the Monarch Butterfly, and the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Yellow-billed Cuckoo in riparian habitats. There is a significant amount of federal land ownership within the County where critical habitats are designated and species like the Mexican Spotted Owl and Mexican Wolf receive special legal protection under the Endangered Species Act by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Species and habitat conservation are challenged by human and natural drivers of change including agriculture, climate change, development, disease, pathogens, parasites, energy production and mining, human intrusion and disturbance, invasive species, pollution, transportation and service corridors, and more. While aggregate resource land use protections may limit the potential for development encroachment into wildlife habitat areas, the development and extraction of the aggregate resources themselves disturb riparian habitat where fish and bird species occur. Human development and fencing limit the migration of American Pronghorn.



American Pronghorn

To assist in identifying wildlife impacts related to development on undisturbed land, speculators can utilize the Arizona Online Environmental Review Tool (ERT) prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts to wildlife. This free tool provides a special status species list for Phase I Environmental Compliance and NEPA documents, as well as interactive access to various map data representing conservation values in Arizona. The ERT can aid in project planning.



Navajo Pebbles Cactus

Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Areas

According to the Arizona Game and Fish Department, "Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) represent specific areas on the landscape where actions will most likely lead to substantial improvements for wildlife and their habitats." While the COAs provide voluntary guidance, they are areas identified to maximize conservation effort efficacy. COAs include two complementary categories, terrestrial and aquatic. COAs identify areas of conservation potential and



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value. Terrestrial COAs were identified based on species and habitat expertise, as well as wildlife and spatial data. Aquatic COAs are focused strictly on aquatic resources, mostly native fish species. There are a total of 308,655 acres of Terrestrial COAs and 63,533 acres of Aquatic COAs shown in **Figure 14**. Each COA has listed conservation goals, primary threats, potential conservation actions, habitats, strategy species, protected areas and other areas of conservation value, plans, and potential partners listed on the Arizona Wildlife Conservation Strategy website. Layers from the COAs and connectivity zones are available for viewing on the Online Environmental Review tool. No interpretation of the data layers be made without consultation of the Arizona Game & Fish Department.

Wildlife Connectivity Zones

Arizona's wildlife faces challenges due to expanding infrastructure, leading to increased encounters between wildlife and humans. Arizona Game and Fish Department collaborates with various stakeholders to understand wildlife movement patterns and habitats, promoting planned connectivity to mitigate negative interactions. Preserving unfragmented habitat is crucial, with the department offering development guidelines to minimize wildlife disturbance. Corridors are established to facilitate animal movement between habitat blocks, ensuring access to resources and enabling migration and re-colonization. This coordinated approach not only benefits wildlife but also enhances public safety, reduces crashes, and promotes recreational opportunities in both rural and urban areas. There are approximately 533,371 acres of Important Connectivity Zones in the focus area (1,277,321 acres County-wide) shown in **Figure 15**.

Wildlife Stakeholder Corridors

Arizona Game & Fish and The Arizona Wildlife Linkages Workgroup held stakeholder workshops to develop information on wildlife movement corridors and areas of habitat connectivity so that planners and developers could incorporate information about wildlife linkages and strategies for their conservation into land-use decisions. **Figure 16** depicts this Wildlife Stakeholder Corridors. The information that was developed during the stakeholder meetings was then summarized in The Apache and Navajo Counties Wildlife Connectivity Assessment: Report on Stakeholder Input (Arizona Game & Fish Department 2013). The report does not represent an exhaustive mapping of all important wildlife linkages across Apache and Navajo counties but should instead be considered an initial assessment of wildlife movement patterns to be supplemented in the future by further analysis and refinement that includes additional expert input, Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based linkage modeling, and research studies of wildlife movement patterns.

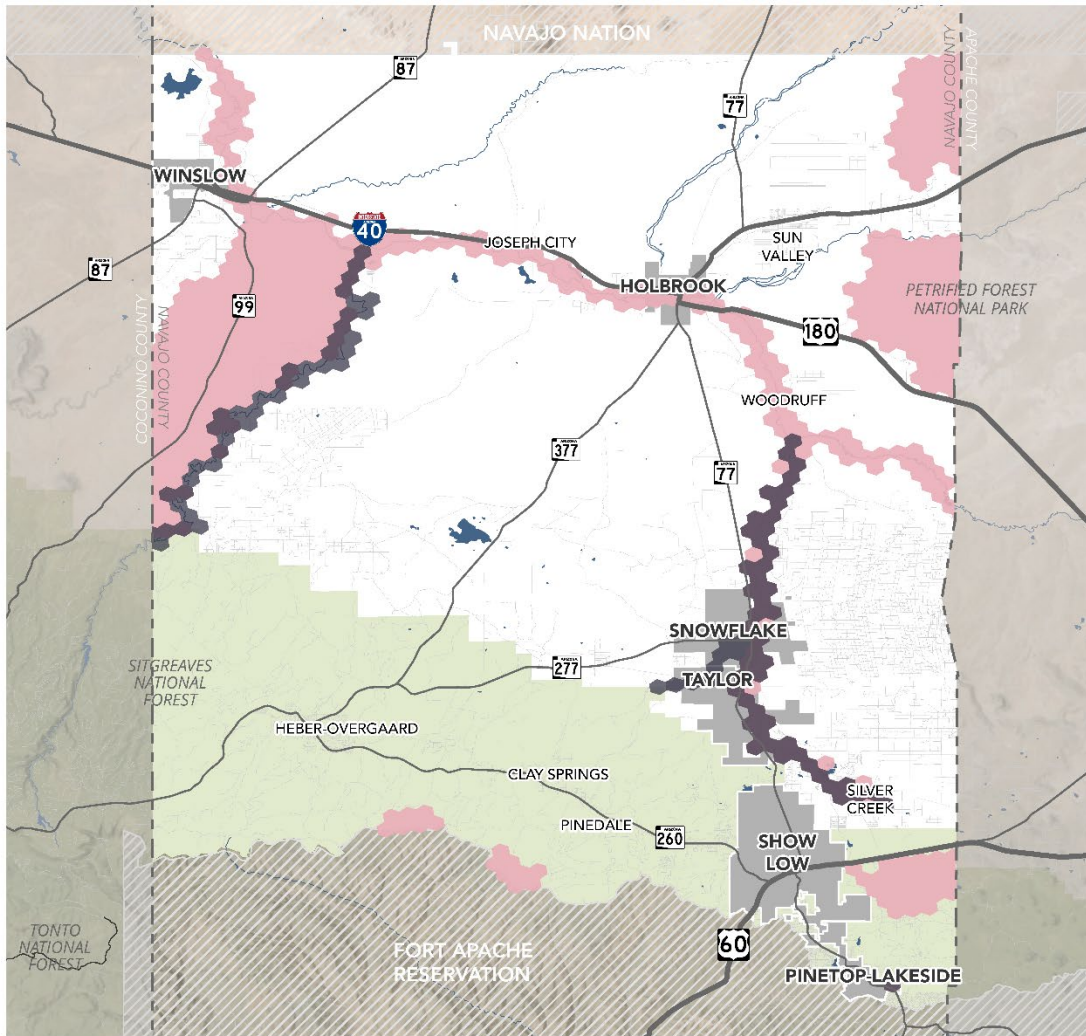
Additional information regarding species of concern and current threats/barriers to movement are included in the report. As noted by Arizona Game & Fish, "Wildlife linkage planning should include conservation of wildlife linkages and the habitat blocks they connect, and, in most cases, require the implementation of multiple strategies such as land acquisition, community planning for developments, open space conservation, and habitat restoration. Installation of roadway mitigation features including wildlife crossing structures and fencing to funnel wildlife to crossing structures are important considerations that are best incorporated into the early planning stages of transportation and development projects."



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Figure 14: Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Areas



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS



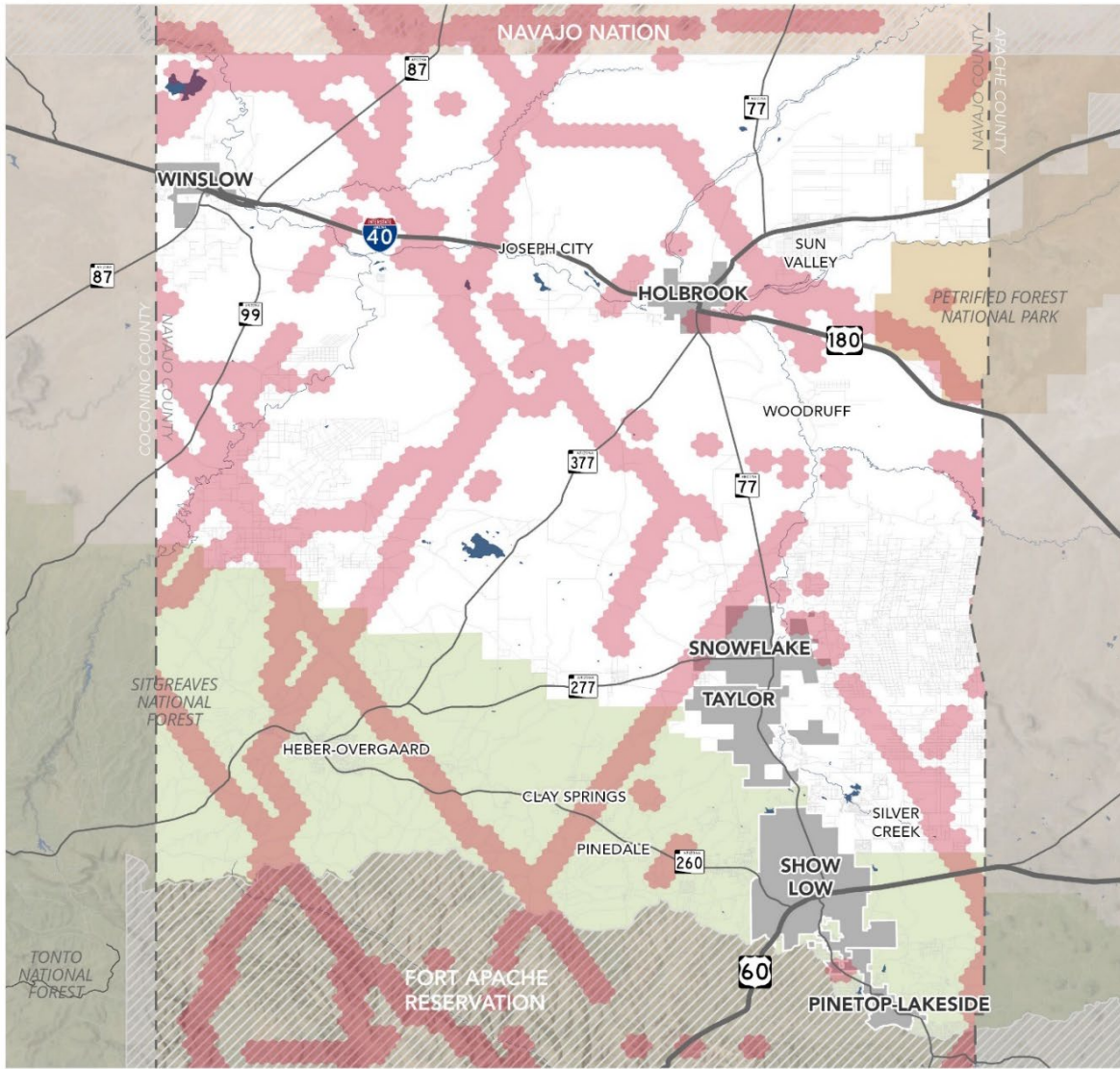
- | | | |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Navajo County Boundary | Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Areas | Ramp |
| Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction | Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Areas | Unincorporated Areas |
| Native Lands | Limited Access | AZ_All_Roads_Network |
| National Forest | Highway | Masc |
| Rivers and Streams | Major Road | Union |
| Water Bodies | Local Road | Navajo_Nation_Bounda |
| | Minor Road | |



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Figure 15: Wildlife Connectivity Zones



WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY ZONES

0 8 15 Miles



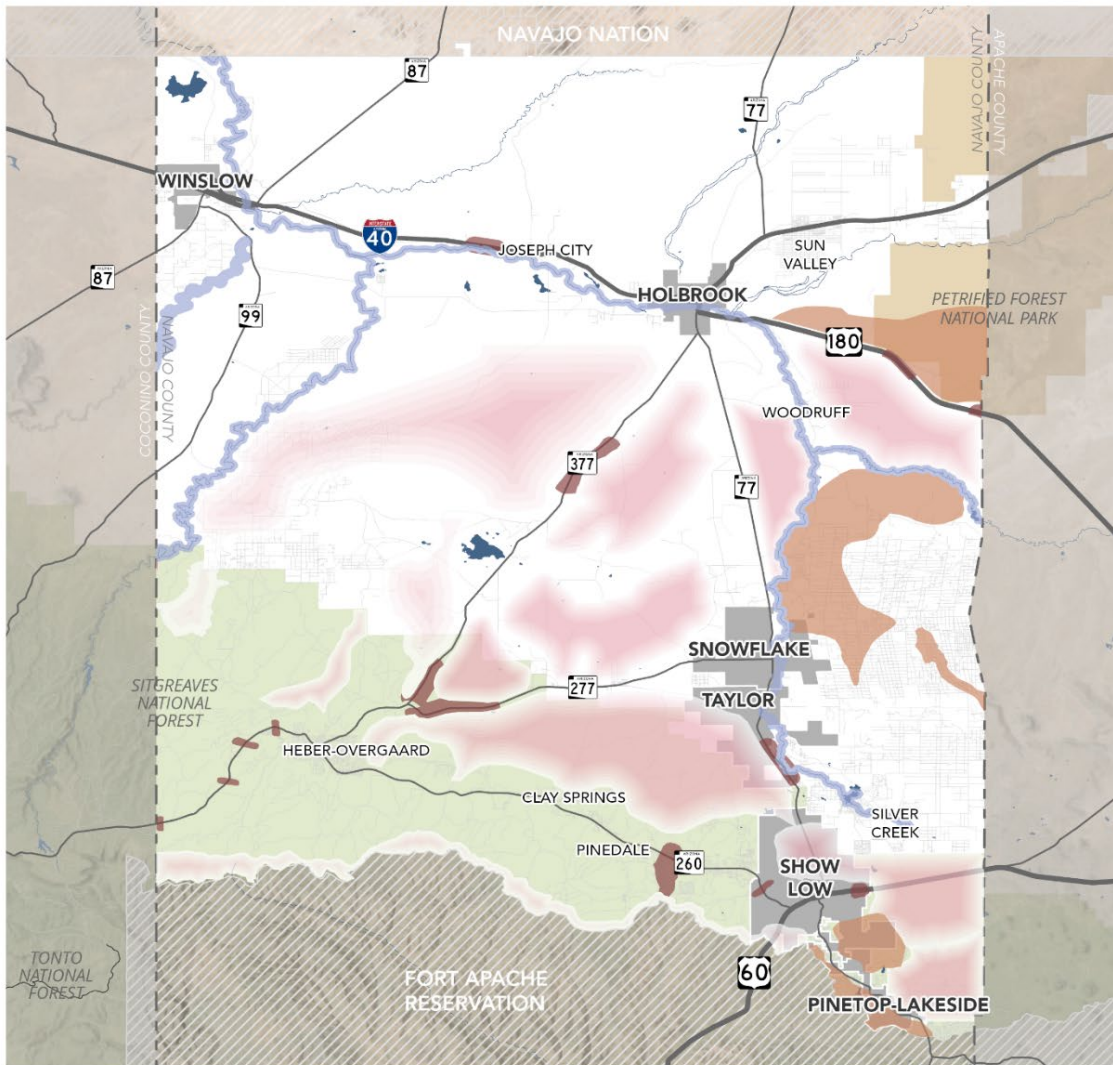
- Navajo County Boundary
- Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction
- Native Lands
- Petrified Forest National Park
- National Forest
- Rivers and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Important Wildlife Connectivity Zones



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Figure 16: Wildlife Stakeholder Corridors



WILDLIFE STAKEHOLDER CORRIDORS

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Navajo County Boundary | National Forest | Wildlife Movement Area - Diffuse |
| Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction | Rivers and Streams | Wildlife Movement Area - Landscape |
| Native Lands | Water Bodies | Wildlife Movement Area - Riparian/Wash |
| Petrified Forest National Park | Wildlife Stakeholder Corridors | Wildlife Crossing Area |





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Environmental Hazards

This section focuses on four environmental hazards that are most pertinent to Navajo County that must be managed and mitigated to protect and enhance the environment.

- **WILDFIRE.** Fire is a natural and critical component of the forest environment that restores soil and manages undergrowth. Traditional ecology demonstrates that the growing human populations must coexist with fire to maintain the resilience of fire-prone landscapes, further necessitating restoration that will prevent cataclysmic fire events. However, in the midst of a changing climate, increased risk has driven insurance companies to pull out of entire markets because their risk profiles are apparently uninsurable. Human activity, including land use and forest and fire management since the mid-19th century, has drastically altered the landscape of forests and fires. Management practices, like fire suppression, have resulted in increased surface fuel (biomass), tree densities, and ladder fuels, and has subsequently led to larger and more intense fires and increased tree mortality. Just after the turn of the millennia, Navajo County suffered a devastating and defining event in the Rodeo-Chediski Fire which burned 468,638 acres in 2002. The cost to fight and contain the Rodeo-Chediski Fire was over \$43 million. At present, Navajo County is at greater risk of wildfire than more than half of Arizona counties and 89% of U.S. counties.
- **AGGREGATE RESOURCES.** Aggregate resources are mineral deposits that occur naturally by earth geological conditions. As highly valuable and finite construction materials, they are critical to the future viability of residential, commercial, and industrial development and, therefore, must be accounted for and protected. According to the Arizona Geological Survey “Active Mines in Arizona” web mapping tool, and as of 2022, there are a total of 22 active mines in Navajo County, grouped into three “commodity families” including Aggregates and Crushed Stone, Building Stone, and Cinders. Mining of these materials is also potentially hazardous to surrounding residents and should be a consideration in the development process.
- **FLOODWAYS.** Navajo County contains crucial channels as shown in **Figure 17** that serve as natural pathways for floodwaters. These pathways, vital for efficiently guiding floodwaters away from populated areas, must remain unobstructed. Buildings, structures, or debris blocking these channels can cause flooding to worsen upstream. These floodways are prominently snaking around bodies of water and following the natural valleys throughout the County. This alignment with the landscape highlights the importance of recognizing and preserving these natural conduits to minimize the risk of flooding in the area.
- **MILITARY TRAINING ROUTES AND OPERATION AREAS.** There are several Department of Defense (DoD) related Military Training Routes (MTRs) and Military Operations Areas (MOAs) that traverse the airspace above Navajo County. The ASLD is the repository of these maps. Some of these routes and areas can have low-level military operations occurring as low as 100 feet above ground level (AGL). It is important for developers and future residents to be aware that there are military operations being conducted overhead. Future renewable energy development actions within the unincorporated County should be referred to several agencies for review and comment.



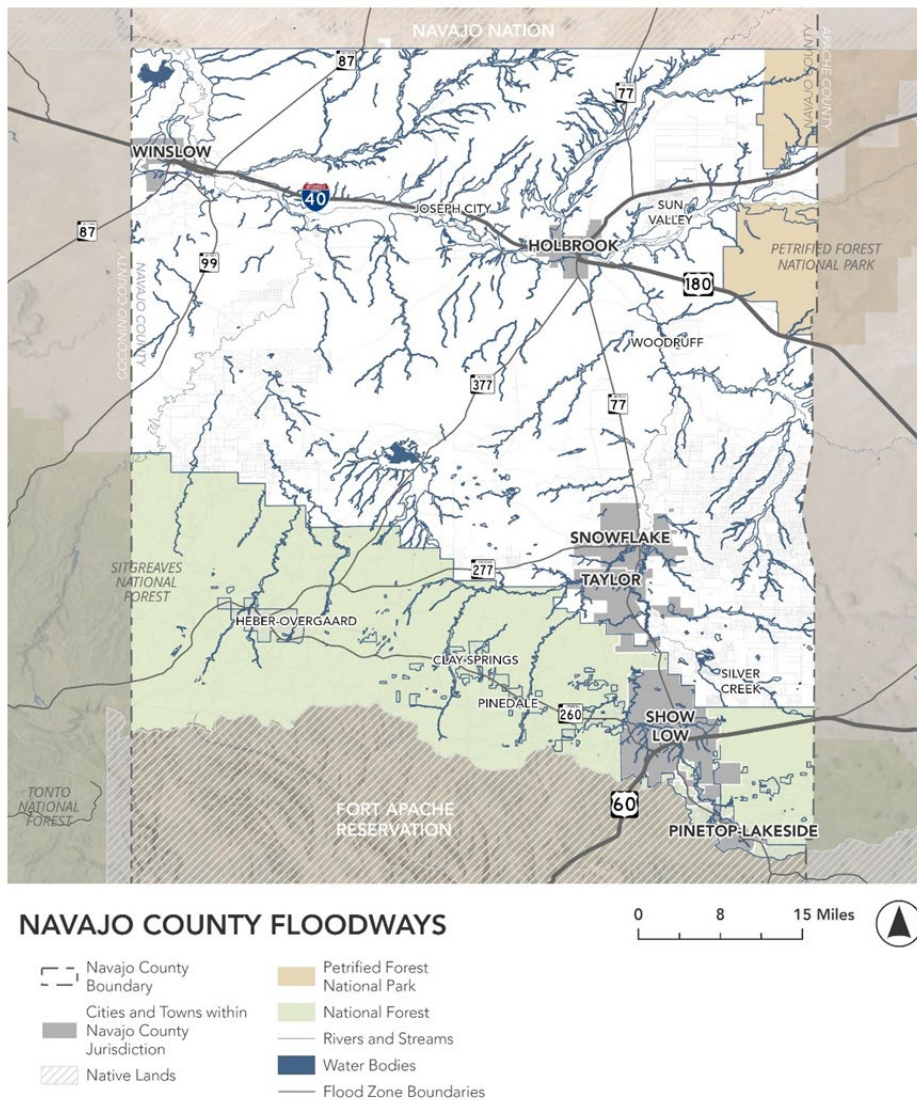
Rodeo-Chediski Fire



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Figure 17: Navajo County Floodways



Environment Outlook and Opportunity

This section acknowledges the positive abundance and outlook of environmental features in Navajo County and offers strategies for their protection and preservation as well as mitigation for potential hazards. This commentary is, then, carried forward to the goals and policies as well as to action items.

- CONSERVATION:** The Arizona Game & Fish Department has identified various COAs, Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Areas, and Wildlife Connectivity Zones, each with their own listed conservation goals; primary threats; potential conservation actions; habitats; strategy species; protected areas; and other areas of conservation value, plans, and potential partners. As development occurs, coordination with Arizona Game and Fish Department and surrounding jurisdictions is key in helping protect wildlife connectivity and efforts to identify, conserve, and enhance wildlife corridors; as well as efforts to reduce potential adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat adjacent to incorporated towns and other development.



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- **PROTECTION:** The policies to protect the County’s native vegetation and wildlife resources within this plan were developed following identification of native habitats, migration routes, and natural flood channels. Continued coordination with SHPO is critical for identifying and protecting historic and archaeological resources as new development occurs. Infill and compact development can also help create areas for protection of both the natural and cultural environments.
- **RESTORATION:** Efforts in recent years to restore the health of the Navajo County forests located in the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest through restoration projects spearheaded by County leadership and key partnerships with electric companies, the U.S. Forest Service, Eastern Arizona Counties Association (ECO) and Novo BioPower. Techniques are employed to restore the balance of the delicate forest ecosystem, such as reforestation, control of invasive species, biomass reduction, and application of thinning, and in some cases, control burn treatments to return forest composition to a natural and historically accurate state. Nearly 16,000 acres have been treated with these restoration tools in Navajo County with more projects planned as funding becomes available.
- **SEPARATION:** Ensuring the sustainable growth of communities requires preventing conflicts between mining operations and other land uses that would otherwise prevent mining development. The Aggregate Protection Act (SB 1598), passed in 2011, requires planning diligence to protect the availability of these mineral resources for the benefit of both existing and future generations. Mining exemptions granted in ARS limit the regulation of aggregate mining operations in unincorporated areas of the state. Surrounding development needs to be aware of locations of mining operations and plan adequate buffering and separation for protection of both their residents and of the important mining operations.
- **MITIGATION:** To minimize wildfire impact and improve outcomes in and near the wildland urban interface (WUI), programs such as Firewise have been developed. Firewise is a national program providing education and toolkits to homeowners to prepare homes and property for wildfire and inform of best practices to prevent loss. Communities can band together to obtain a Firewise Community designation, which may protect homeowners and lower property insurance premiums. In May of 2024, Navajo County received \$760,000 in forest fees from Congress, which will be allocated to schools, road projects, and Firewise Community initiatives. These funds will enhance educational resources, improve transportation infrastructure, and support wildfire prevention measures and are awarded due to the extent of forest in the County and the lack of private property owners as compared to other Arizona counties. Additionally, with the development of new technologies, third-party businesses are using satellites and other tools to monitor landscapes for wildfires. Navajo County can employ these services for the benefit of early fire detection and response.
- **COORDINATION:** To ensure local renewable energy projects do not create compatibility issues for low-level military training routes, coordination with the DoD Siting Clearinghouse for Military Aviation and Installation Assurance is paramount for all renewable energy projects such as solar and wind. An informal review by the Clearinghouse ensures potential impacts as well as mitigating options can preserve the military mission. <https://www.dodclearinghouse.osd.mil/>. Luke Air Force Base requests copies of development reviews as well:

56fw.cit.communityinitiative@us.af.mil.



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Environment Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies were derived from input and priorities gleaned from the community.

Environment Goal #1:

Encourage development practices that conserve, protect, and restore the natural and cultural environments and mitigate natural hazards and avoid land use conflicts.

Environment Goal #2:

Protect and support the military and defense missions and operations within, around, and under the training routes in Navajo County by coordinating with the appropriate entity during the development process to ensure compatible land uses and operations.

Environment Goal #3:

Reduce the danger from fire for residents in higher risk areas such as wildland urban interfaces or near National Forest boundaries.

Environment Goal #4:

Improve and maintain circulation infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and to protect the natural environment.

Environment Goal #5:

Make Navajo County attractive to asset insurance companies by not losing insurance within Navajo County due to environmental liability.

Environment Policy #1:

Navajo County supports maintaining the natural scenic qualities of the County by identifying and protecting cultural resources, protecting wildlife habitat, natural plant communities, and riparian areas, and encouraging protection of scenic vistas and viewshed corridors by coordinating with Arizona Game & Fish and SHPO during the development process.

Environment Policy #2:

Navajo County supports the commitment to become a Firewise Community in partnership with the National Fire Protection Association. Becoming a Firewise Community will encourage developers and property owners to incorporate fire safe development standards, including defensible spaces and construction materials satisfying WUI standards.

Environment Policy #3:

Navajo County supports, where feasible and effective, new development utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in site design and best management practices to help reduce flooding while controlling dust and improving water quality.



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Environment Policy #4:

Navajo County supports establishing working groups to address environmental concerns and establish best practices with coordinating agencies and stakeholders, including the Arizona Game & Fish Department, Northern Arizona University, ADEQ, and Navajo County Flood Control. Outputs from the working groups should provide new guidance on the entitlement and plan review process.

Environment Policy #5:

Navajo County supports coordination with the DoD Siting Clearinghouse for Energy, Installations, and Environment for all renewable energy projects and with the community initiatives offices of Luke Air Force Base for all development projects.

Environment Policy #6:

In as much as practical and feasible, Navajo County supports efforts to explore limitations to excessive nighttime light.

Environment Policy #7:

Navajo County supports incorporating compatible land uses or site development techniques when buffering for noise or hazardous activities from other sensitive areas and land uses, such as residential and wildlife habitat.

Environment Policy #8:

Navajo County supports the preservation of floodplains and washes in a natural state to reduce flood damage and provide corridors for wildlife migration.

Environment Policy #9:

Navajo County supports the research of emerging technologies for solutions to reducing hazard mitigation and monitoring threats to wildfires.

Environment Policy #10:

Navajo County supports minimizing air, water, and noise pollution as well as disruption of surface water drainage in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations when designing, constructing, and operating circulation infrastructure.

Environment Policy #11:

Navajo County supports minimizing the introduction, movement, and proliferation of nonnative, invasive plants through visual inspection, washing, and use of staging areas for construction equipment during infrastructure construction and maintenance.

Environment Policy #12:

Navajo County supports maintaining safe, adequate, and convenient access through infrastructure improvement work sites for all travelers.



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Environmental Policy #13:

Navajo County supports the use of maintenance techniques, such as snow and ice removal, which are consistent with conservation and ecosystem protection.

Environmental Policy #14:

Navajo County supports the use of improvement districts to improve circulation infrastructure through County provision of all appropriate administrative assistance.

Environmental Policy #15:

Navajo County supports requiring that new roads conform to the natural topography as closely as possible while balancing aesthetics with safety concerns.

Environment Policy #16:

Eliminate or reduce the potential for land uses conflicting with aggregate resources using separation and buffers.



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Open Space and Recreation

In addition to the magnificent natural attractions illustrated in the *Environmental Element*, Navajo County is home to an abundance of outdoor active open spaces and outdoor recreation venues such as hiking trails, lakes, and camping and otherwise improved land attractions. A commonly expressed love from the community is the abundance of outdoor recreation in the County and the desire to maintain and enhance these amenities. These destinations foster connections between people in the community and the land on which they live, work, and play and they are also important assets that draw visitors and seasonal residents to the region adding to opportunity to for stewardship but also adding in the progress of and quality of life for Navajo County. The *Open Space and Recreation Element* covers both the abundance of open space and amenities and their benefits as well as outlook and opportunities for Navajo County.

Open Space and Recreation Amenities

Navajo County contains **57 open space and outdoor recreation amenities** including state and national parks, national monuments, and scenic and recreational areas. Twenty-three of these amenities are located within the focus area of Navajo County, serving the local populations and the broader regional community. These amenities, although not owned or maintained by Navajo County, provide valuable outdoor recreational and wildlife-related recreation opportunities (hunting, fishing, etc.) and open spaces that benefit both residents and tourists alike. The focus area amenities listed below and are owned and maintained by the United States National Parks Service (NPS), Arizona State Parks (AZSP), or USFS. In addition to these regional-scale open space and outdoor recreation amenities, there are also a range of local parks and recreation amenities within the incorporated municipalities.

- **HIKING TRAILS:** Agate House Trail, Giant Logs Trail, Long Logs Trail, Homol’ovi State Park Trails, and White Mountain Trail System.
- **CAMPING AND IMPROVED FACILITIES:** Chevelon Creek Wildlife Area, Fool Hollow Lake Recreation Area, Homol’ovi State Park, and Petrified Forest National Park.
- **LAKES:** Cholla Lake, Clear Creek Reservoir, Dry Lake, Fool Hollow Lake, Little Mormon Lake, Long Lake, Ned Lake, Pintail Lake, Rainbow Lake, Show Low Lake, Telephone Lake, Whipple Lake, White Lake, and Woodland Lake.





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Benefits of Recreation

Parks, recreation, and open spaces play a vital role in improving community health outcomes. Having access to parks and open space is especially critical in Navajo County which, according to information gathered from the County Public Health Department, faces several public health challenges as of 2023, including substance abuse, mental health challenges, and chronic diseases. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that physical activity is essential for preventing chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions. Parks and recreational facilities provide accessible spaces for exercise, helping to reduce the prevalence of these conditions. The CDC reports that regular physical activity can lower the risk of chronic diseases, improve mental health, and increase life expectancy. Further, spending time in parks and outdoors has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) emphasizes that parks foster social interaction and community cohesion, which are crucial for mental well-being. These spaces offer a place for relaxation and physical activity, contributing to overall health and quality of life. The National Environmental Education Foundation also reports that greater amounts of green spaces are associated with fewer violent crimes and property theft. Open space and outdoor recreation amenities are positioned to be powerful for the County as they seek to improve community health and the overall quality of life which will, in turn, help to retain and bolster the workforce population.

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Open Space and Recreation Outlook and Opportunity

While many residents and visitors enjoy the opportunities to recreate, their passion for the natural environment was made evident in the community questionnaire responses which ranked recreation, open space, and the natural environment as the County’s premier assets. Navajo County should certainly continue to promote and support the various state and federal parks within the region; however, the following factors corroborates a growing need for a progressive look at funding more parks and outdoor recreation at the County level that can be used to enhance existing parks and outdoor recreation amenities.

- **CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS.** Navajo County is growing older and more diverse, specifically an increased Hispanic/Latino population. By 2034, there will be a significant shift from a youth-dependent to an old-age dependent population, necessitating adjustments in infrastructure to accommodate aging citizens, including universal design principles. This demographic shift will bring increasing pension and healthcare costs due to age and chronic diseases, disparities in health outcomes, and the influence of social determinants of health (education access, health care access and quality, social cohesion, air and water quality, cultural and traditional practice, and policy and governance). Navajo County also has a significantly large population of Native Americans, relative to the State. Many recreational activities can

Parks and open spaces function to....





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incorporate traditional knowledge and practice to reflect the community makeup and provide meaning, while also updating or adding new suitable facilities, amenities, and programs.

- SEASONAL ECONOMY.** One-third of houses in Navajo County (18,991 units) are vacant, and almost three-quarters, or 13,850, of those vacant units are used for seasonal purposes. The seasonal housing inventory on a percentage basis is four times higher than the state average, and assuming two persons per unit, the seasonal population adds 27,700 people to the economy, increasing the total population of the County 27% in those seasonal months. These population fluxes can determine the nature of operations for facilities, staffing, and what activities to invest in.
- AVAILABLE LAND.** Only about 18% of the land in Navajo County’s 10,000 sq. miles is privately owned. Two-thirds of the land is part of indigenous reservations. The USFS and Bureau of Land Management own 9% and Arizona State Land Department’s State Trust Land which is available for development accounts for 6% or about 384,000 acres (600 sq. miles). There are 1,382 acres of Local and State Park land and Navajo County owns 652 acres of land, some of which may have the potential for new parks or trails development adjacent to or connecting existing amenities.
- FUTURE LAND USE.** Significant areas designated as Open Space in the future land use map include the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest and the Petrified Forest National Park. Other land uses within the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest should be concentrated inward to prevent outward expansion and the decline of open space.

The table below shows revenue from cultural and recreation-related sources and the numbers suggest both a need for additional funding and potential future avenues to optimize revenue-generating opportunities for recreation. In 2023, Navajo County generated about \$215,520 from Recreation and Culture and levied just over \$175K in property taxes from the White Mountain Lakes Recreation District. This district is one of the County's only recreational districts generating tax revenue. Additionally, Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs) are available from NACOG and can be used for the construction or remodeling of community centers, senior centers, parks, and playground equipment.

CULTURAL AND RECREATION RELATED REVENUE			
Cultural and Recreation	2022 Est Revenue	2022 Actual Revenue	2023 Est Revenue
White Mount Lake Recreation District Operation	\$184,520	\$1,290	\$180,520
State Grants and Aid	\$25,000	\$25,050	\$25,000
Private Grants	\$19,810	\$0	\$10,000
LSTA Cares Act	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
ARPA 2021 Library	\$0	\$21,060	\$0



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Open Space and Recreation Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies gleaned through community input provide guidance to meet the current and future needs of Navajo County residents for open space and outdoor recreation.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #1:

Provide regional leadership to promote, preserve, and provide access to lands for open space and outdoor recreation.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #2:

Prioritize opportunities to monetize outdoor recreation more effectively and pursue available grant funding.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #3:

Coordinate with municipal, state, and federal jurisdictions; indigenous community; and private property owners within the County to conserve, expand and provide access to open space and outdoor recreation amenities for residents and visitors while protecting the natural environment.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #4:

Protect viewsheds and provide open space buffers around established natural attractions, open space, and outdoor recreation amenities.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #5:

Encourage quality neighborhood parks and open space with adequate and appropriate outdoor recreation amenities in neighborhood and multifamily residential areas.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #1:

Navajo County supports trails, open spaces, and parks with amenities in residential and multifamily neighborhoods.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #2:

Navajo County supports new trail segments connecting to existing trails and along appropriate roadway segments under construction or improvement.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #3:

Navajo County supports the construction of new parks and dedication and improvement of trail right-of-way within new development.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #4:

Navajo County supports continued promotion for the region's open spaces, parks, and trails as assets to the community's quality of life.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #5:

Navajo County supports soft edge treatments along the perimeter of state or federal parks, lakes, or regional trails.



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Open Space and Recreation Policy #6:

Navajo County supports the conservation of natural attractions and habitat through collaboration in managing and promoting natural areas.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #7:

Navajo County supports the creation of scenic corridors to protect important viewsheds within the region.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #8:

Navajo County supports connecting open spaces and places of outdoor recreation with trails and pathways.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #9:

Navajo County supports regional partnerships to focus on expanding, enhancing, and connecting open spaces and outdoor recreation amenities.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #10:

Navajo County supports planning for and funding open spaces and outdoor recreation amenities and exploring the creation of a parks and recreation division or department.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #11:

As new development occurs, Navajo County supports the natural treatment of drainageways and the preservation of floodways.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #12:

Navajo County supports protecting, promoting, and expanding access to regional open spaces and outdoor recreation amenities.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #13:

Navajo County supports preserving washes and drainageways for open space and wildlife connectivity.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #14:

Navajo County supports provision of open space in residential development such as a minimum of 15% open space with 5% of the open space provided as outdoor recreation amenities.

Open Space and Recreation Policy #15:

Navajo County supports utilizing natural open space as transition and buffers between established rural communities as well as in utility corridors and easements.



Chapter 6: Implementation

The *Implementation Chapter* of the *Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan* is designed to be a systematic plan to assist in achieving the vision of the community beyond the development process of rezoning. This chapter organizes all actions into their respective elements and relates each to a relevant element goal or goals. The timeframe for each of the **87 Actions** items is then denoted as 1 to 3 years - Short Term, 3 to 6 years - Mid Term, 6+ years - Long Term, and/or Ongoing, meaning that the task is performed on a routine or regular basis. During the County’s required annual reporting on the progress of the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning and Development Services Director or other designee can then easily report to the BOS and the community at large on the completion or status of actions. It is important to understand that changes and delays in these actions could occur due to staffing or fiscal constraints or other circumstances beyond immediate knowledge.

ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
LAND USE							
LU1	Update the GIS Zoning Map to ensure that all unincorporated land reflects the correct zoning district.	LU1	X				
LU2	Review and update the 2000 BOS-Adopted Citizen Participation Procedure.	LU1	X				
LU3	Update or readopt the 2011 BOS-Adopted Aztec Area Plan.	LU1, EG2, EG3, T3	X				
LU4	Update the Zoning Ordinance for renewable energy standards and create a Zoning District Overlay to ensure appropriate community-led locations for renewable energy facilities.	LU1, EG1, EG2, EG3, EG4	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
LU5	Update Zoning Ordinance to 1) provide flexibility tools for alternative housing types and patterns, planned developments, mixed uses, and other innovations that reduce development costs; 2) standards and zoning districts for differing development density and intensity that reflect the needs and goals of existing communities; and 3) buffers or separation distances for uses such as billboards, group homes, aggregate resources, etc.	LU1, LU2, LU4, H1, H2	X				
LU6	Explore the option of becoming a certified local government (CLG) to become eligible for specialized assistance and federal funds for developing local preservation programs.	LU3, ENV1	X				
LU7	Revise and update building codes to allow for new construction methods and housing types in order to increase the housing supply for all socioeconomic groups.	LU4, EG5, H1, H2	X			X	
LU8	Update or extinguish the 1997 BOS-Adopted Heber-Overgaard Area Plan.	LU1		X			



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
LU9	Propose a review process for the Petrified Forest National Park and the Homol'ovi State Park to comment on development proposed for property adjacent to the parks.	LU1		X			
LU10	Develop a program to educate Navajo County residents and property owners regarding property maintenance requirements and increase enforcement to encourage residents and owners to maintain their properties in a manner that meets code requirements and is aesthetically pleasing.	LU1, OSR7		X		X	
LU11	Explore and create programs and/or regulations for incentives for developments that conserve open space through density transfers.	LU3, ENV1, OSR2, OSR4			X		
LU12	Coordinate planning efforts with all adjoining counties and all municipalities indigenous communities within Navajo County, to improve the mix regional development and uses in the County.	LU1, OSR7				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
LU13	Conduct desktop background research for projects involving ground disturbance using records available on AZSITE and submit information to SHPO and tribal partners for voluntary review.	LU3, E5, ENV1				X	
TRANSPORTATION							
TI	Implement policies requiring circulation infrastructure to accommodate current and future public safety and emergency vehicle needs and requiring approved subdivision/zone changes to occur only if existing street facilities are adequate or paid for by the developer.	T3	X				
T2	Implement policies requiring complete streets to ensure transportation infrastructure plans for pedestrian, bicyclist, and accessibility improvements and connecting existing neighborhoods and communities with multimodal facilities.	T4	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
T3	Implement policies requiring developers to install or pay for necessary transportation infrastructure improvements to support access to and within developments and developers of private transportation infrastructure to meet or exceed minimum County standards.	T3	X				
T4	Define dedicated truck routes.	T2, LU1, LU3	X				
T5	Implement the pavement condition study.	T3	X				
T6	Coordinate with municipalities, USFS, ADOT, and other land stakeholders and stewards of alternative transportation modes to inventory existing pedestrian and bike networks, facilities, and gaps.	T3, T4	X			X	
T7	Assess the need for additional intermodal facilities or expanding operations of the Apache Railway.	T2			X		
T8	Apply for available regional, state, and federal funding for safety planning and countermeasure implementation.	T1, EG4				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
T9	Require new roadways to be designed and constructed to requirements set in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), ADA standards, and PROWAG.	T1, T4				X	
T10	Annually assess safety conditions in Navajo County to determine safety improvement needs.	T1				X	
ECONOMIC GROWTH							
EG1	Explore and execute a development fee study in consideration of adopting a fee to cover costs associated with new development.	EG1, LU1	X				
EG2	Create high-quality, in-depth marketing materials for distribution to targeted industry businesses.	EG3	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
EG3	Identify workforce needs and the qualifications and type of education/training required to expand skills among the workforce. Coordinate with Northland Pioneer College and local high schools and private industry to provide technical and vocational training with access to regional campuses. Promote apprenticeship programs among local businesses.	EG2	X			X	
EG4	Establish a low-interest Revolving Loan Fund for local small businesses.	EG3		X			
EG5	Explore the creation of programs that abate tariffs, duties, and quotas to promote international trade.	EG1, EG3			X		
EG6	Continue to fund and support REAL AZ and the Northeast Arizona Local Workforce.	EG2				X	
EG7	Continue to coordination with Arizona Commerce Authority, REALAZ, and LocalFirstAZ in the Northern Arizona Good Jobs Network and on the Talent Pipeline Management system.	EG1, EG3				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
EG8	Coordinate with adjoining municipalities and encourage more dense developments where there is commensurate existing or planned infrastructure and services.	EG1, EG5, LU1, T2, T3, H4				X	
EG9	Use financing from the Arizona IDA for housing, infrastructure, and economic development projects.	EG3				X	
EG10	Acquire grants from state agencies to improve broadband access across the County.	EG1, EG4				X	
HOUSING							
H1	Update zoning ordinance to: 1) comply with new Arizona statewide housing standards; 2) update lot development standards, reduce setbacks and minimum lot size; and increase lot coverage, where appropriate to allow flexibility in housing development; 3) allow the conversion of garages into housing units; and 4) promote the development of ADUs.	H1, H2, LU1, LU2, LU4, EG5	X				
H2	Actively solicit developers for the development of low-income housing through LIHTC & USDA programs.	H1	X				
H3	Provide incentives for the development of workforce housing.	H1	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
H4	Implement code enforcement and housing rehabilitation programs to preserve existing neighborhoods.	H1	X			X	
H5	Adopt preapproved architectural housing plans for missing middle housing types and provide engineering approval. Create a materials takeoff list for each plan with construction materials suppliers to support small-scale housing development.	H2, H2		X			
H6	Create a housing market digital dashboard with a housing needs assessment and target market analysis.	H1, EG5			X		
H7	Explore the establishment of a community land trust.	H2			X		
H8	Conduct an inventory of publicly owned land that could be used for affordable or workforce housing.	H2			X		
H9	Coordinate with Rural LISC and other non-profits to assist with implementation of housing programs for affordable housing.	H2					
WATER & WASTEWATER							
WW1	Develop landscape plan standards for treatment and disposal of gray water systems.	WW4	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
WW2	Adopt the Light Imprint approach, require for all new commercial and residential development and subdivisions.	WW1	X				
WW3	Draft and adopt a One Water policy - One Water master plan, planning for supplies of ground water, stormwater, surface water, and reclaimed water.	WW2		X			
WW4	Develop a green stormwater infrastructure design manual for installation, maintenance, and inspection.	WW1		X			
WW5	Create a comprehensive water demand model for Navajo County and coordinate with ASU Decision Center for a Desert City, using WaterSim.	WW2			X		
WW6	Explore the ability to collect reports from water service companies and DWIDs.	WW1, WW2				X	
WW7	Include stormwater capture infrastructure in new transportation construction and maintenance projects.	WW1, WW2				X	
WW8	Require constructed wetland tertiary water treatment in growth areas.	WW4				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
PUBLIC FACILITIES							
PF1	Coordinate and invest with business, industry, and school districts to establish a career and technical education district to provide career and technical education (CTE) programs to high school students.	PF2, EG2				X	
PF2	Conduct facilities assessments as new development occurs, collecting capacity reports from sheriff, fire stations, and schools.	PF1, PF2				X	
PF3	Track emergency response times to identify gaps in service. Track and monitor emergency calls by demographics.	PF1				X	
PF4	Coordinate with school districts to ensure schools are not over capacity as development occurs.	PF2				X	
PF5	Explore the ability to annually evaluate the capacity and quality of waste disposal facilities to account for new development.	PF3				X	
PF6	Provide recyclable materials collection at all County-owned sites.	PF3				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
ENERGY							
E1	Explore adoption of the International Code Council (ICC) green construction code and include traditional and alternative materials and construction knowledge.	E1, E4	X				
E2	Review zoning ordinance and establish standards for renewable energy projects i.e. sufficient distance buffers to scale with operations of power generation utilities, distancing requirements between battery energy storage systems (BESS) and residents.	E2, E3, LU1, ENV1	X				
E3	Consider establishment of a consumer co-op for energy efficient fixture and material purchasing.	E1, E4		X			
E4	Coordinate with REALAZ, energy generation companies, utility providers, NACOG, and the Navigator representatives of the <u>Interagency Working Group on Coal & Power Plan Communities & Economic Revitalization</u> on mapping out investments in community energy revitalization, capitalizing on the Federal tax credit.	E1, E5	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
E5	Consider a green government initiative for Navajo County facilities and fleet.	E1, E4, ENV1			X		
E6	Coordinate with community-based organizations (CBOs), educational institutions, tribal government and NGOs, special districts, municipalities to pursue grant opportunities similar to the U.S. Department of Energy Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) <u>Resilient and Efficient Codes Implementation (RECI)</u> .	ENV1, EG1				X	
E7	Conduct regular coordination meetings with electric and natural gas utilities to understand and support expansion plans.	E1				X	
ENVIRONMENT							
ENV1	Establish working groups to address environmental concerns and establish best practices with coordinating agencies and stakeholders, including the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Northern Arizona University, ADEQ, and Navajo County Flood Control. Outputs from the working groups should provide new guidance on the entitlement and plan review process.	ENV1, LU1	X				



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
ENV2	Create a zoning overlay limiting building and infrastructure height, land uses and buffer boundaries to protect military operational integrity.	ENV2, LU1	X				
ENV3	Integrate Firewise practices into County land use planning, zoning regulations, and building codes to reduce wildfire risks in new developments.	ENV3, ENV5, LU1	X			X	
ENV4	Conduct an industrial ecology assessment modeling material flow and lifecycle of County goods and services.	PF3, LU5, EG1		X			
ENV5	Adopt a WUI Code to strengthen enforcement and support fire districts, and create defensible spaces, by local fire districts.	ENV3		X			
ENV6	Collaborate with local stakeholders to develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) outlining strategies for reducing wildfire risks.	ENV3, ENV5		X			
ENV7	Develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan.	ENV1, ENV5		X			
ENV8	Coordinate with Municipalities and organize to create Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) for each growth area.	ENV3, ENV5		X			



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
ENV9	Consider offering incentives, such as tax breaks or cost-sharing programs, to encourage property owners to undertake Firewise improvements.	ENV3, ENV5			X	X	
ENV10	Create and update a digital dashboard for reporting wildfires and extreme weather, incorporating tools like <u>MyRadar</u> .	ENV3, ENV5			X	X	
ENV11	Work with local fire agencies, landowners, and community groups to plan and implement fuel reduction projects, such as controlled burns or mechanical thinning.	ENV3, ENV5			X	X	
ENV12	Consult with Arizona Game and Fish and SHPO on biological and cultural resource surveys.	ENV1				X	
ENV13	Consult and coordinate with, and procure training from, tribal partners on traditional ecological knowledge, particularly fire ecology.	ENV3, ENV5				X	
ENV14	Observe National Emergency Preparedness Month in September, collect and distribute relevant emergency management materials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).	ENV3, ENV5				X	
ENV15	Offer technical assistance from County fire or emergency management experts to assess	ENV3, ENV5				X	



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
	risks and recommend mitigation strategies.						
ENV16	Organize community events or promotional materials focused on removing flammable vegetation and other fire hazards.	ENV3, ENV5				X	
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION							
OSR1	Market parks, trails, and open spaces on the County website, in economic development, and other information and materials to recruit new employers and residents to the community.	OSR6	X			X	
OSR2	Identify citizens from the community with an interest or experience in parks or trails operations, establish a Parks & Recreation committee.	OSR3	X				
OSR3	Research consumer discretionary spending habits on recreation from populations both within and outside of the County.	OSR6		X			
OSR4	Conduct a suitability analysis of available land, including links to existing park space and transportation connections.	OSR4		X			
OSR5	Explore the need for and create scenic corridor plans	OSR9		X			



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ACTION NUMBER	IMPLEMENTATION ACTION	RELEVANT GOAL	TIMEFRAME				STATUS (Mark when Complete)
			Short Term (1-3 years)	Mid Term (3-6)	Long Term (6+)	Ongoing	
OSR6	Explore the creation of a Parks & Recreation Master Plan.	OSR2		X			
OSR7	Develop intergovernmental agreements with school districts to offer access to facilities outside of school operations.	OSR5			X		
OSR8	Coordinate with State Land Department to ensure parks and recreation facilities during State Land planning exercises.	OSR7				X	









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Appendix A: 2022 Demographics

Appendix A covers historic, current, and total population; population by age, race, and ethnicity; educational attainment; and household income. These demographics were utilized in the *Existing Conditions Report* and to inform the plan itself. The chart below illustrates a quick snapshot of 2022 Demographics in Navajo County.

By the Numbers, Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

 <p>107,110</p> <p>Total population</p>	 <p>10.75 People</p> <p>Per sq. mi.</p>	 <p>38.7 Years</p> <p>Median age</p>
 <p>\$50,335</p> <p>Median household income</p>	 <p>\$22,826</p> <p>Per capita income</p>	 <p>24.8%</p> <p>Population below the poverty line</p>

Historic, Current, and Projected Population

Navajo County’s current population is 107,110 according to the latest estimates from American Community Survey 5-year data (2022). The population has remained virtually unchanged since the 2010 Census. The 2020 Census, however, had data collection and integrity issues due to realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and reported a population of 110,271. Since the pandemic started in 2020, the population has decreased 2.9%.

The Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) estimates three scenarios of projected populations for Navajo County for each year between 2022 and 2060. In addition to the “medium” projection series OEO deems as the most likely scenario to bare, they also provide a low and a high series. In all three scenarios, total population projections are expected to decline by 4% in 2030 and 2040, and by 7% in 2050 and 2060. Declining population translates to reduced demand and slows economic growth. Growth, however, may continue within incorporated cities and towns. See the section on Economic Growth for more information.

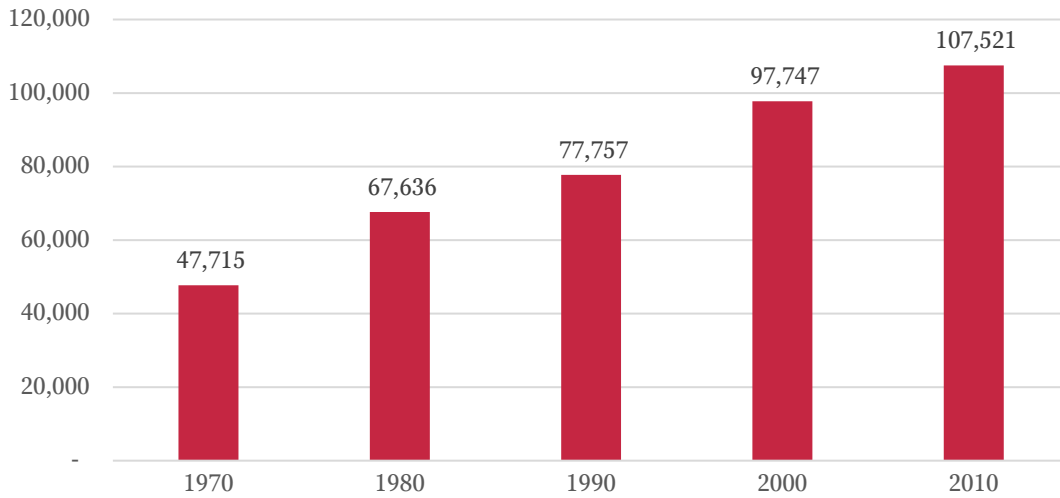
Historically, the population of the County has shown consistent growth starting in 1970. The largest historical growth period was from 1970 to 1980 when the population grew by 29% in that decade, followed by a 20% growth period between 1990 and 2000.



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Historic Population, US Census



40-Year Population Projections, Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity



Source: Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024

A notable difference between each of the projected population scenarios is the rate of decline. The “low” scenario represents an accelerated decline over the next 40-year period. Due to the record of building permit activity, using the “high” population forecast would be suitable for planning activities.

Population by Age

The largest single age group in the County is people aged nineteen and younger. Those aged between 55 and 69 years old are the next largest age cohort (21,243 persons). The distribution of other ages is fairly even until those aged over 70 years old, where populations tail off.



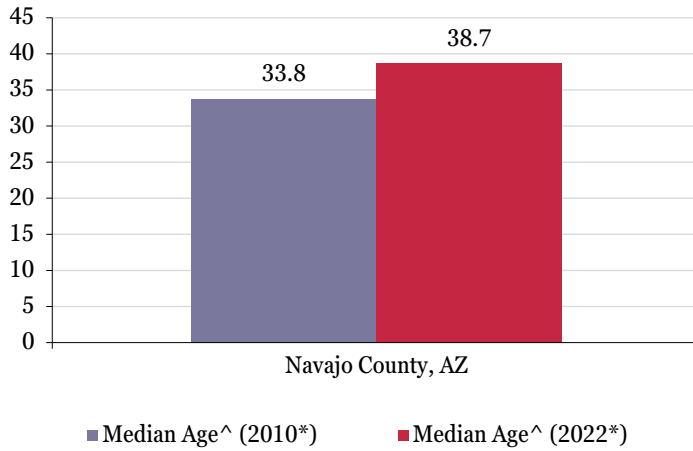
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Median Age

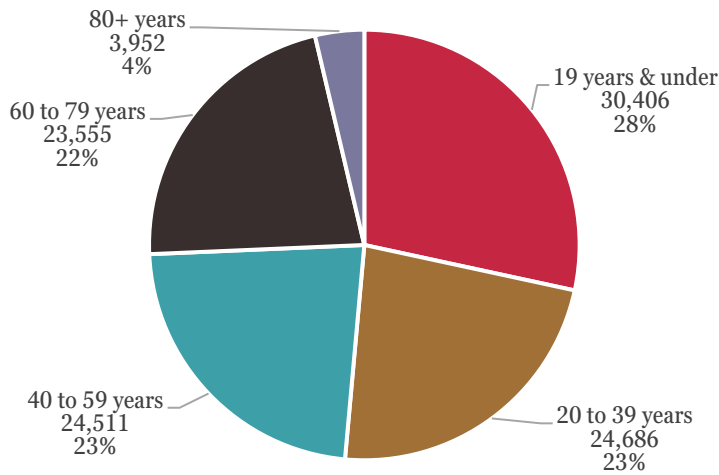
Median age divides a population into two numerically equal groups, one half of the population are younger than this age and the other half are older. The median age in the County is currently 38.7 years old (2022), which has risen from 33.8 years old 12 years ago (2010). The percentage of people earning a retirement income in the County is slightly larger than those with retirement earnings as a whole in the State, and therefore may be a contributing factor to the increase in median age. Also, the largest generation, the Baby Boom generation, will all be 65 years old by the year 2030. The implications of this increase in median age are discussed further in the Development Impacting Trends & Opportunities section.

Median Age, 2010 & 2022



Source: Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024. ACS 5-year estimates used. 2022 represents average characteristics from 2018-2022; 2010 represents 2006-2010.

Age Distribution, 2022



Source: Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024



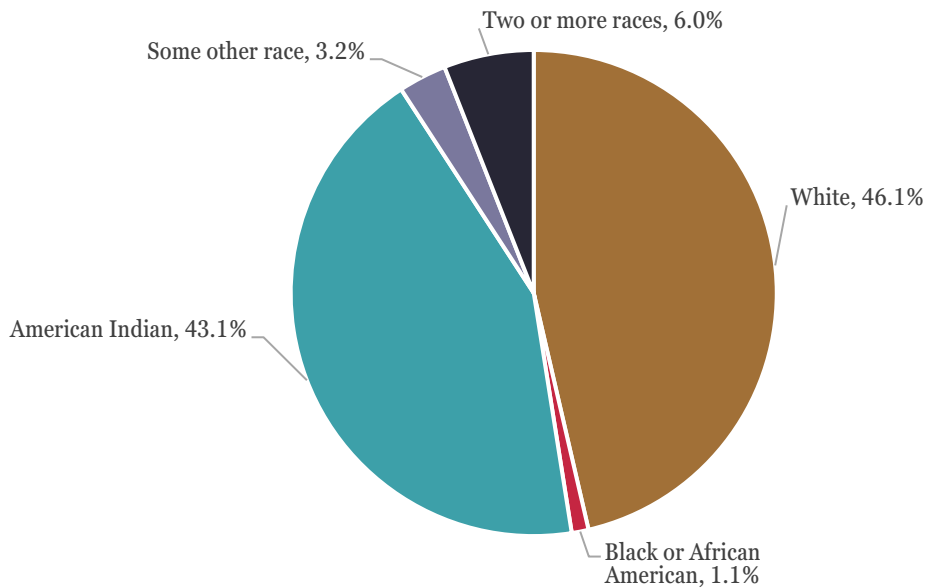
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Population by Race and Ethnicity

The two largest populations by race in the County are White at 46% and Native American at 43%. There is little representation by other races in the County. The pie chart depicting percentage shares of race excludes representation for Asian and Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander populations. These populations were not reported here because the counts that are so low the data is unreliable. Together, Asian and Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander populations represent 0.5% of the population of the County, at most.

Population by Race, Percent of Total, Arizona, 2022



Source: Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024. ACS 5-year estimates used. 2022 represents average characteristics from 2018-2022.

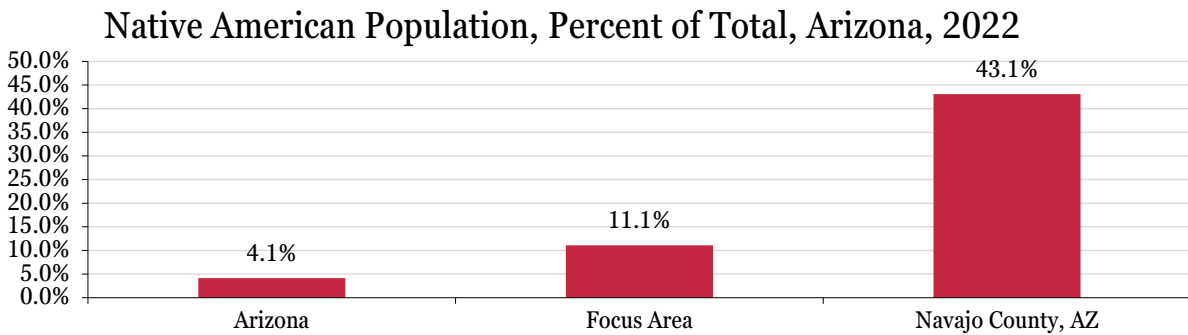
The Hispanic population in Navajo County is 11.9 percent. One of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. population, Hispanics made up 17.3 percent of the U.S. population in 2016, and by 2060, the Census Bureau predicts that 28.6 percent of the population in the U.S. will be Hispanic. The Census Bureau notes that data on ethnic groups are important for putting into effect several federal statutes, to meet or otherwise reflect the needs, values, and attitudes that vary by ethnic group. Federal statutes include the Voting Rights Act, which enforces bilingual election rules, and the Civil Rights Act, created for monitoring and enforcing equal employment opportunities. Local governments also rely on data for ethnicity to run programs and meet legislative requirements like identifying medical service gaps under the Public Health Act and evaluating whether financial institutions are meeting the credit needs of minority populations under the Community Reinvestment Act.



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The people of the Navajo, Apache, Hopi, and other native tribes have unique ties to the land in the County dating back centuries as well as legal rights to certain activities, such as hunting, fishing, and plant-gathering. Plans and policies may have disproportionately high and adverse effects on tribes, and it is helpful to know whether native peoples live in a particular area. With large portions of land within the County boundary being reservation land, a very large portion of the population in Navajo County is Native American, a number dwarfing relative comparisons to the State. As the Navajo Nation, Hopi Reservation, and Fort Apache Reservation lands intersect the County, so do Federal/State route highways and roads, bringing people and business into both the unincorporated areas and to cities and towns where they take advantage of services provided by each of these jurisdictions.



Sources: *Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024, ACS 5-year estimates used. 2022 represents average characteristics from 2018-2022; and ESRI Business Analyst, 2017-2021 Estimates used for focus area.*

The largest population by tribe in the County is Navajo, followed by Apache, and then Hopi.

POPULATION BY TRIBE IN NAVAJO COUNTY	
Total Population, 2022	107,110
Total Native American	46,154
American Indian Tribes; Specified	44,788
Apache	10,017
Hopi	5,957
Navajo	27,432

Source: *Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, March 14, 2024, ACS 5-year estimates used. 2022 represents average characteristics from 2018-2022*



Navajo County 2050

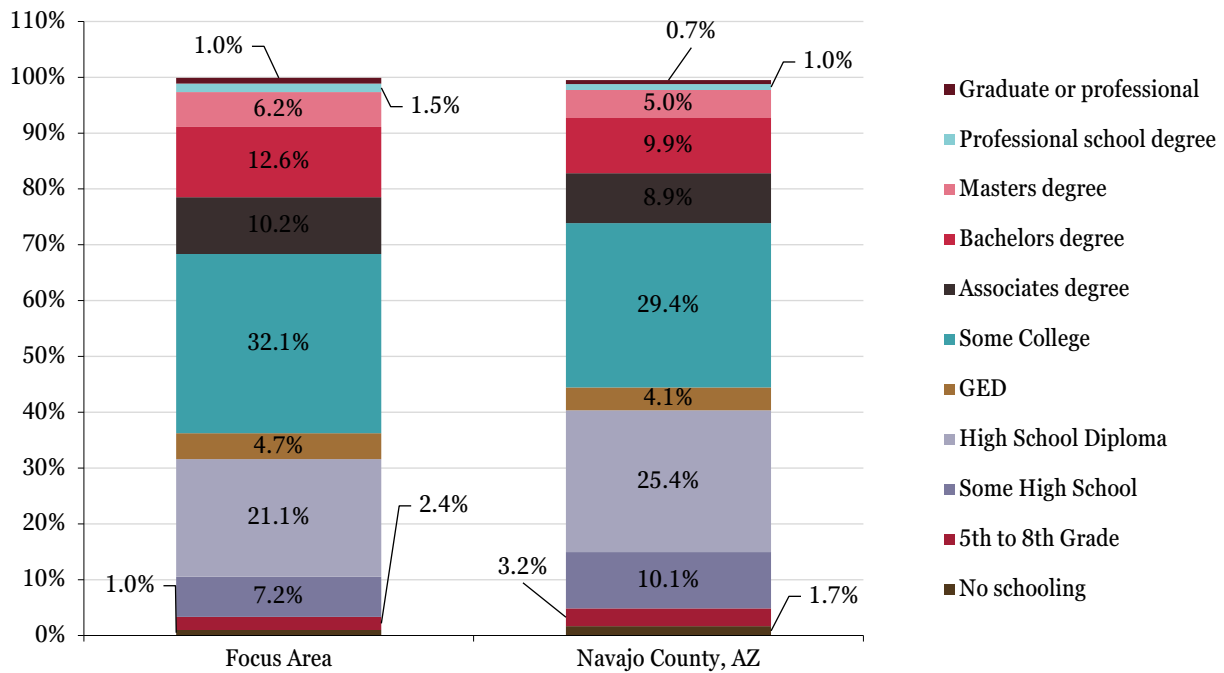
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Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is a significant factor and metric correlated to economic success, poverty, workforce growth, income, and resiliency in economic downturns. Policies and plans may disproportionately impact populations of differing education levels. Understanding these metrics is relevant to conducting outreach as well as funding.

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that an individual has completed. For populations over the age of 25, attainment is broken down into eleven levels from populations with no schooling up to those with a graduate degree. Navajo County and the focus area are close in distributions of educational attainment. The focus area has a higher population with higher post-secondary educational attainment, while Navajo County as a whole has a higher population with a lower level of educational attainment from no schooling to a high school diploma.

Educational Attainment, 2021



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2017-2021

Household Income

The median household income in Navajo County is \$50,335. Incomes between the County and the non-tribal focus area follow similar distributions in incomes; 51.7% (focus areas) and 46.5% (Navajo County) earn over \$50,000, and the remaining income groups earn less than \$50,000. There is a conspicuous disparity between the focus area and Navajo County in each area’s largest single income group; while the focus area’s largest single largest income group, at 12.1% of the focus area population, earns \$75,000–\$90,000, the single largest income group in Navajo County, 12.2% of the population, earn less than \$10,000, which is nearly double the population of the focus area earning less than \$10,000 (7%). Finally, the focus area leads in higher earning income groups while the entire County area leads in the lower earning income groups. This points to the economic disparity between tribal and non-tribal areas within the County boundary.



Navajo County 2050

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Household Income



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2017-2021

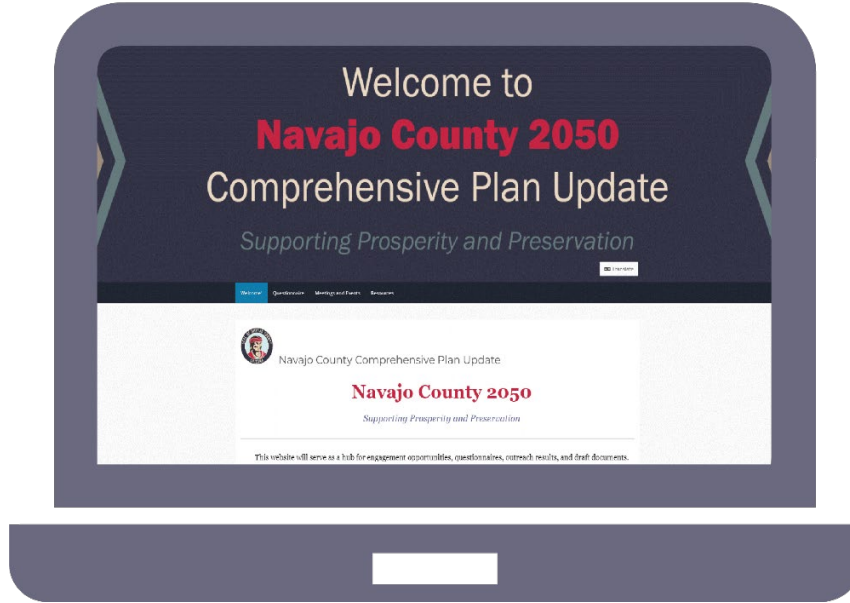


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Appendix B: Community Engagement Materials

Project Website Homepage



Informational Sheet



Navajo County 2050

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Overview

Navajo County is updating its Comprehensive Plan. This informational sheet provides an overview of the project and ways to engage with and obtain updates during the process.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is an overarching policy document that helps guide a community's growth into the future, lays out the long-term aspirations for a community, and articulates its vision. A community's comprehensive plan guides the physical, economic, and social development decisions of community leaders, residents, and businesses over a horizon of ten years or longer. Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 11-805 requires that a county readopt or update its comprehensive plan every ten years. Navajo County's current comprehensive plan was adopted by the Navajo County Board of Supervisors on May 23rd, 2023. The Plan assists the Board of Supervisors, Planning and Zoning Commission, and County Staff in making land-use decisions, and this update offers an opportunity to revisit and update the County's vision, goals, and policies for the community's future growth. This update ensures that the County's comprehensive plan aligns with the community's vision and values.



Stay Updated

To learn more about the plan update, please visit <https://publicinput.com/navajocounty2050>.



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Invitations, eBlasts, and Social Media Posts for Community Outreach Events, Community Questionnaire, and 60-day Draft review.

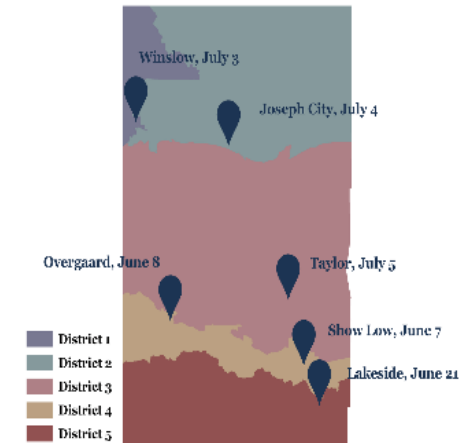


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Stop by and share your input at an upcoming event near you!

- Showlow Days: June 7th, 12 – 5pm (District 4)
- Heber Overgaard Resource Networking Event: June 8th, 10am - 2pm (District 4)
- Pinetop/Lakeside Balloon Festival: June 21st, 5pm - 9pm (District 5)
- Winslow Public Library Drop-In: July 3rd, 10am - 2pm (District 1)
- Joseph City Independence Day: July 4th, Time: 9am - 1pm (District 2)
- Taylor Independence Day Celebration: July 5th, 12pm - 5pm (District 3)



Learn more about the County's Comprehensive Plan Update at publicinput.com/navajocounty2050



Navajo County 2050

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We want to hear from you!



Scan the QR code to take our online questionnaire and help shape Navajo County!

Learn more about the County's Comprehensive Plan Update at publicinput.com/navajocounty2050



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Navajo County 2050

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We want to hear from you!

Join us at our upcoming public engagement events and give us your input on Navajo County. Help shape the future of the County by visiting us on:

October 3rd @ Holbrook Board of Supervisors Chambers, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

October 4th @ Show Low City Hall, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

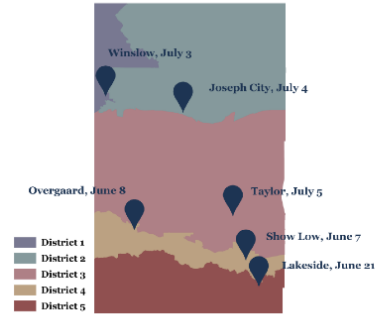
Event Details



Sent on behalf of Navajo County by Publiphint
2409 Creative Blvd, Suite 107, Raleigh, NC 27604
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View this email in a browser | Translate



Visit us at an event near you!



Show Low Days: June 7th, 12 – 5pm (District 4)

Heber Overgard Resource Networking Event: June 8th, 10am - 2pm (District 4)

Pinetop/Lakeside Balloon Festival: June 21st, 5pm - 9pm (District 5)

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Navajo County 2050

Supporting Prosperity and Preservation

We want to hear from you!

Join us at our upcoming public engagement events and give us your input on Navajo County. Help shape the future of the County by visiting us on:

July 3rd @ Winslow Public Library, 10:00 AM

July 5th @ Taylor Independence Day, 12:00 PM

Event Details



Can't make it? Share your input online!

Take Me to the Questionnaire





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Stop by and share your input at an upcoming event near you!

Holbrook Open House: October 3rd, 6pm - 8pm (Districts 2 & 3) @ Board of Supervisors Chambers at 100 E. Code Talkers Drive

Show Low Open House: October 4th, 11am - 1pm (District 4) @ Deuce of Clubs Room, Show Low City Hall, 180 N. 9th St.

Thank you to those who joined us at:

Showlow Days: June 7th, 12 - 5pm (District 4)

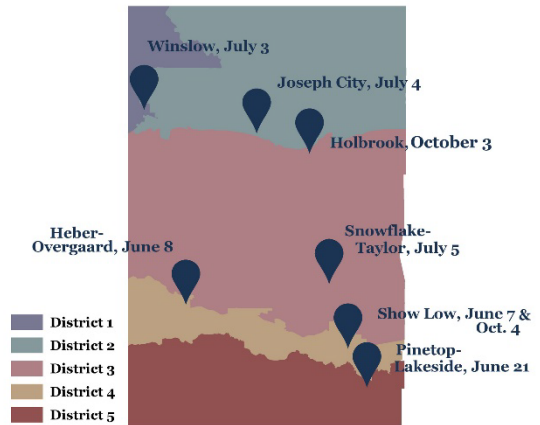
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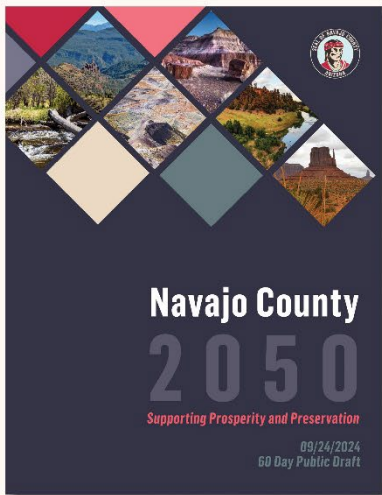


Learn more about the County's Comprehensive Plan Update at publicinput.com/navajocounty2050



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Navajo County 2050 in Public Review!



Scan the QR code to comment on the 60 Day Draft and help shape Navajo County!

Learn more about the County's Comprehensive Plan Update at publicinput.com/navajocounty2050



Navajo County 2050

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Community Questionnaire

Navajo County CP: Questionnaire #1

About

Navajo County is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan and we need your help with planning for the future. The results of these questions will assist in driving future outreach locations as well as creating guiding principles and priorities for the project. Thank you in advance for sharing your input by taking this **5-minute questionnaire**.

For more information, please visit NavajoCounty2050.com.

1. How long have you lived or worked in Navajo County?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- Over 10 years
- I do not live or work in Navajo County, but I like visiting.
- I prefer not to answer.

2. If you live in Navajo County, where do you live?

- Unincorporated area
- Incorporated City / Town
- Fort Apache Reservation
- Navajo Nation
- Hopi Reservation
- I prefer not to answer.



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3. What is your age?

- 19 years or younger
- 20 to 39 years
- 40 to 59 years
- 60 years and older
- I prefer not to answer.

4. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- I prefer to self-identify.
- I prefer not to answer.

5. What is your race and ethnicity?

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian/Asian American
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- I prefer to self-identify.
- I prefer not to answer.



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6. What do you love most about Navajo County? (Select 3 choices)

- Variety of landscapes
- Rural and open space atmosphere
- Less populated, peaceful, and quiet
- Scenic and forested environment
- Recreational opportunities
- Clean air and water
- People, community, and families
- Cultural diversity
- Traditional values
- Connected infrastructure
- Lifestyle – freedom and flexibility
- Other - Write In

7. What does Navajo County do well? (Select 3 choices)

- Responsive public service and customer care
- Future planning
- Community information and engagement
- Environmental protection
- Roads – connectivity, maintenance
- Housing options
- Service jobs
- Cultural events
- Pro-business
- Outdoor recreation
- Public Safety - Low crime
- Strong water supplies
- Other - Write In



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8. If you could change anything about Navajo County, what would it be?
(Select 3 choices)

- More housing choices
- Lower housing cost
- More industries, adaptive reuse of coal plant
- More employment opportunities
- Less publicly owned land
- Lower cost of living
- Better electrical distribution
- More recreation
- More innovation
- Cleaner environment
- More telecommunications
- Greater equity
- Other - Write In

9. What needs to be improved in Navajo County? (Select 3 choices)

- Higher paying jobs
- More housing types
- Affordable housing
- Public safety
- Water Infrastructure
- Roadway Infrastructure
- Electrical Infrastructure
- More healthcare providers
- Maintenance of sidewalks and other public facilities
- More funding for public services
- Other - Write In



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10. Are there any obstacles to the future prosperity of Navajo County (Select 3 choices)

- Limited funding
- Lack of commercial growth
- Preserving rural lifestyle
- Lack of infrastructure
- Neglecting forest health
- Lack of industry
- Imbalance of competing resources
- Lack of electric distribution
- Unwillingness to change or accept new ideas/technologies
- Avoiding climate change or not prepared for natural disasters
- Too much public land
- Other - Write In

11. Is there anything else that you would like to share about Navajo County or what comes to mind when you think about Navajo County in the year 2050?

Thank You!



Navajo County 2050

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Community Engagement Display Boards

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COUNTY?

Summary of Existing Conditions

What is a Comprehensive Plan? A comprehensive plan is a guiding policy document intended to promote coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of an area.

Population Change & Projections
Navajo County's population is projected to grow from 107,110 in 2015 to 140,000 in 2050. This is a projected increase of 32,890 people, or 30.7%.

Land Use
Navajo County's land use is primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Transportation
Navajo County's transportation infrastructure is primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Housing
Navajo County's housing market is primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Economic Growth
Navajo County's economy is primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Water/Wastewater Resources & Public Facilities
Navajo County's water and wastewater resources are primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Environmental & Energy Resources
Navajo County's environmental and energy resources are primarily rural and agricultural. The county has a large amount of undeveloped land, and the population is spread out over a large area.

Navajo County 2050

WHERE DO YOU LIVE, WORK, & PLAY?

Add your dots to the map!

Navajo County 2050

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Share your input!

What are guiding principles?
Guiding Principles are intended to be aspirational statements that will guide the direction of the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies, which will be organized into the themes and elements listed below. Use dots and sticky notes to share input.

Theme #1: Progress (Land Use, Transportation, & Economic Growth)
Guiding Principle: Navajo County respects heritage and rural culture while embracing an innovative and prosperous economy with a balance of residential, commercial, and industrial uses connected with a well-maintained, efficient transportation system.

Theme #2: Quality of Life (Housing, Water/Wastewater, and Public Facilities)
Guiding Principle: Navajo County strives for attainable housing choices and a safe, healthy community with robust, cost-effective public services and reliable infrastructure.

Theme #3: Stewardship (Energy, Environment, and Open Space)
Guiding Principle: Navajo County values the preservation of the natural and scenic environment with sustainable enhancements to support a rural and resilient atmosphere with diverse recreational opportunities.

Navajo County 2050

Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update

WELCOME TO THE WORKSHOP!

What is a Comprehensive Plan?
A comprehensive plan is a guiding policy document intended to promote coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of an area.

What is the Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan?
The Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan is the County's primary planning document.

- It is a long-term, strategic plan with a guiding vision and strategies.
- It shapes decisions related to new developments, policy decisions, programs, and services.
- It focuses on enhancing the County's long-term vitality.

Why are we Updating the Comprehensive Plan?

- To more accurately address current standards, goals, and future needs.
- To engage with the public and collaboratively define the community's vision.
- To identify measurable and realistic implementation strategies to achieve the community's vision.

What is the Goal for this Event?

LEARN About the Draft Comprehensive Plan for Navajo County.

DISCUSS Discuss opportunities with planning staff and neighbors to help refine proposed goals and priority actions.

SHARE Share your input on proposed future priorities and land use.

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Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Land Use Goals

Land Use Goal #1: Accommodate and promote balanced, efficient, aesthetic, and compact land development patterns with the appropriate level of services for water, waste water, education, and public safety that is compatible with adjacent land uses, is well integrated with the transportation system, and is sensitive to the natural environment.

Land Use Goal #2: Encourage infill opportunities to capitalize on existing infrastructure and reduce growth-related costs.

Land Use Goal #3: Preserve and protect open spaces and natural features, archaeological, and historic resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural value.

Land Use Goal #4: Foster equal opportunity for safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for all residents of the County and provide a range of residential land uses that offer housing opportunities for all County residents.

Land Use Goal #5: Encourage commercial and industrial development that considers existing land uses, including business and technology uses, where appropriate, to increase employment opportunities.



Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?

Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Transportation Goals

Transportation Goal #1: Promote safety through the use of the Safe System Approach to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes in Navajo County.

Transportation Goal #2: Improve the efficiency of the freight network in Navajo County to reduce travel times for goods on trucks and rail.

Transportation Goal #3: Maintain a high-quality network of roadways and transit services in Navajo County.

Transportation Goal #4: Ensure Navajo County's transportation network is accessible for all residents regardless of age or ability.

Public Facilities Goals

Public Facilities Goal #1: Promote robust access to emergency services, including police, fire, and medical services, to residents in Navajo County.

Public Facilities Goal #2: Support a high-quality primary, secondary, and post-secondary education system.

Public Facilities Goal #3: Encourage access to a affordable solid waste disposal services for all residents.

Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?



Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Economic Growth Goals

Economic Growth Goal #1: Contribute to an effective regional economy by attracting and appropriately siting transportation, logistics, utility-related industries and the workers they need by achieving an enhanced quality of life.

Economic Growth Goal #2: Foster the presence of higher education and vocational facilities in the County to enhance the workforce development pipeline.

Economic Growth Goal #3: Cooperate with regional and local partners to support a diverse, balanced economy and locally unique business ecosystems that promote long-term economic resiliency and ensure locally based employment, opportunities, and economic development within Navajo County.

Economic Growth Goal #4: Continue to publicly fund the development and maintenance of new and existing facilities and services such as roads, public safety, parks, and other community needs and the maintenance of infrastructure that will promote economic development efforts. Implement policies and procedures that require new development to pay its fair share of public infrastructure needs generated by the development.

Economic Growth Goal #5: Promote the development of affordable workforce housing to support economic growth.



Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?

Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Housing Goals

Housing Goal #1: Encourage the development of affordable and workforce housing units.

Housing Goal #2: Encourage a diversity of housing types necessary to meet the needs of the County population.

Housing Goal #3: Support housing programs with financial resources available at the state, County, and municipal levels.

Water and Wastewater Goals

Water and Wastewater Goal #1: Support water demand management best practices for sustainable water use.

Water and Wastewater Goal #2: Ensure adequate water supplies are identified and secured to support future growth and economic development.

Water and Wastewater Goal #3: Evaluate and protect ground water quality.

Water and Wastewater Goal #4: Protect the natural environment through effective wastewater conveyance and treatment practices.

Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?





Navajo County 2050

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Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Energy Goals

Energy Goal #1: Make Navajo County a leader in renewable energy research and development and environmental quality.

Energy Goal #2: Have balanced and efficient development patterns to reduce potential for land use conflicts between utility operations and non-compatible uses.

Energy Goal #3: Ensure that development adjacent to electrical, gas, and other utility corridors is context appropriate and environmentally responsible.

Energy Goal #4: Increase energy efficiency in new development and in County facilities.

Energy Goal #5: Develop efficient and appropriate energy generation while avoiding and minimizing impacts to the natural environment, wildlife, human health, and community character.



Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?



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Navajo County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update



Environment Goals

Environment Goal #1: Encourage development practices that conserve, protect, and restore the natural and cultural environments and mitigate natural hazards and avoid land use conflicts.

Environment Goal #2: Protect and support the military and defense missions and operations within, around, and under the training routes in Navajo County by coordinating with the appropriate entity during the development process to ensure compatible land uses and operations.

Environment Goal #3: Reduce the danger from fires for residents in higher risk areas such as wildland urban interfaces or near National Forest boundaries.

Environment Goal #4: Improve and maintain circulation infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and to protect the natural environment.

Environment Goal #5: Make Navajo County attractive to asset insurance companies by not losing insurance within Navajo County due to environmental liability.



Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?



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Open Space and Recreation Goals

Open Space and Recreation Goal #1: Provide regional leadership to promote, preserve, and provide access to lands for open space and outdoor recreation.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #2: Prioritize opportunities to monetize outdoor recreation more effectively and pursue available grant funding.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #3: Coordinate with municipal, state, and federal jurisdictions; indigenous community; and private property owners within the County to expand and provide access to open space and outdoor recreation amenities for residents and visitors.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #4: Protect viewsheds and provide open space buffers around established natural attractions, open space, and outdoor recreation amenities.

Open Space and Recreation Goal #5: Encourage quality neighborhood parks and open space with adequate and appropriate outdoor recreation amenities in neighborhood and multi-family residential areas.



Are there any refinements you would make to these goals?



Navajo County 2050



Navajo County 2050 Supporting Prosperity & Preservation



What's your vision for the future of Navajo County?

Draw or write about your vision for the future below.

NavajoCounty2050.com



Appendix C: Glossary

AASHTO: American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials

Active Transportation:

Active transportation is any form of transportation that is not in a motor vehicle. It primarily refers to pedestrians and bicyclists, but can also include those on scooters, e-bikes, skateboards, roller skates, or roller blades.

ADU: Accessory Dwelling Units

Affordable Housing:

Affordable housing is property, whether owned or rented, plus the cost of utilities that, combined, cost no more than 28 to 30 percent of gross household income.

AGL: Above Ground Level

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The ADA is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, primarily means that infrastructure accommodates those with a multitude of disabilities and public transportation services are provided according to federal regulations.

Annexation:

Annexation is the incorporation of a land area into an existing district or municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction.

Area Plan:

Plans adopted by Navajo County for specific subareas of the unincorporated county. These plans provide basic information on the natural features, resources and physical constraints that affect the development of the planning area. They also specify detailed land use designations that are used to review specific development proposals and plan services and facilities.

Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA): Arizona's economic development organization

Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA):

AZDA supports farming, ranching, and agribusiness in Arizona by protecting plants and animals, issuing agriculture and environmental licenses, inspecting farming practices, and overseeing commerce standards and measurement devices.

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ):

ADEQ is a state agency charged with protecting and enhancing public health and the environment through science-based environmental regulation.

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT):

ADOT is a state agency responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining the State's transportation system.

Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR):

ADWR is a state agency charged with securing long-term water supplies for Arizona communities.

Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD):

AZGFD is the state agency charged with managing the conservation of Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and managing safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

Arizona Public Service (APS): The largest electric utility company in Arizona.



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Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS): The ARS are state laws passed by the Arizona Legislature.

Arizona State Land Department (ASLD): ASLD is the state agency charged with responsibly managing the assets of A multi-generational perpetual Trust with the interests of the Beneficiaries and Arizona's future.

ASU: Arizona State University

Attainable Housing: Attainable housing is housing that is affordable to those earning the area median income, meaning they need to spend no more than 30% on their home.

AZSP: Arizona State Parks

BESS: Battery Energy Storage Systems

Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors (BOS) is the elected governing board of Navajo County who appoints a county manager, sets the agenda and approves a budget that allocates money to all departments and elected offices.

Buffer: A buffer is a method of separating incompatible uses (ex. opaque fencing, vegetated berms and dense landscaping) or a method of separating uses on a sliding scale of intensity (i.e. rural followed by large lot residential) so as to shield a significantly lesser intensity use from a higher intensity use. A buffer may also be an area alongside protected or conserved natural open spaces in which human activity is restricted to research and maintenance of the protected or conserved open space to mitigate the negative impacts of human activity on the land or wildlife.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): A federal agency tasked with overseeing 247.3 million acres of public land nationwide that is open to livestock grazing, energy production, outdoor recreation, and mining operations.

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR): A federal agency tasked with overseeing water resource management.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF): BNSF is a private, Class I, railroad company that has a long-distance east-west rail corridor traversing Navajo County.

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CIP: Capital Improvement Project

Capital Improvement: A capital improvement is the addition of a permanent structural change or the restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value, prolong its useful life, or adapt it to new uses. Individuals, businesses, and cities can make capital improvements to the property they own. Some capital improvements are given favorable tax treatment and may be exempted from sales tax in certain jurisdictions.

CLG: Certified Local Government

COA: Conservation Opportunity Area

Community Facilities District (CFD): A CFD is a financing mechanism for the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of public infrastructure.

Community Improvement District (CID): Similar to a CFD, public-private partnerships that fund public infrastructure improvements.

Community Water System (CWS): A water system that serves 15 or more connections used year-round by residents for drinking, cooking, bathing, and cleaning.

Compatibility: Compatibility occurs when the characteristics of different uses or activities are harmonious or capable of existing or working together without conflict.

Comprehensive Plan: A statutorily required plan containing general policies and future land use designations for growth and development of the unincorporated land within Navajo County.

CPC: Comprehensive Plan Committee



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CPS: Corridor Profile Studie

CTE: Career and Technical Education

CWPP: Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Demographics: Statistical data relating to the characteristics of the population and subgroups within a population.

Density: A numeric average of families, individuals, dwelling units or housing structures per unit of land; usually refers to dwelling units per acre in the comprehensive plan.

Developer: Any person or group of persons or legal entity which builds improvements on land, including buildings, streets, parking lots, drainage structures and utilities to serve buildings.

DMS: Dynamic Message Sign

DoD: Department of Defense

du/ac: Dwelling Units per Acre

Dwelling Unit (DU): A room or group of rooms (including sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation facilities) that constitutes an independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household on a long-term basis.

ECO: Eastern Arizona Counties Association

Ecological Connectivity: Ecological connectivity or landscape connectivity is the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes species movement between habitat blocks.

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is a community of living organisms dynamically interacting with each other and with the non-living components of the community, such as weather, sun, climate, and atmosphere.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): FEMA's duties include the development and administration of the nation's Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP develops and adopts flood maps, which illustrate flood zones that are used by participating communities in regulating the location and design of buildings, utilities, and other man-made improvements.

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration

Flood Hazard Areas: Areas in identified floodplain.

Floodplain: The channel and the relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river which has been or may be covered by floodwater. Land immediately adjoining a stream which is inundated when the discharge exceeds the conveyance of the normal channel.

Future Land Use Map (FLUM): A Future Land Use Map is a diagram that designates the type, distribution, and intensity/density of land uses.

General Aviation (GA) Airports: GA airports are those that do not have commercial air service, but instead serve private aircraft. GA airports can be publicly or privately owned.

GIS: Geographic Information System

Goal: A concise statement derived from guiding principles describing the condition to be achieved.

Groundwater: Water that is underground, beneath the land surface.

Growth Area: A growth area describes the location, types of land use, and land use intensities desired for Navajo County. Additionally, this identifies areas that are particularly suitable for planned multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses.

Guiding Principle: An aspiration steaming from community input describing a future ideal state.

Habitat: The sum of environmental conditions of a specific place that is occupied by an organism, a population or a community.



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Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP): HSIP is a federal safety-focused discretionary grant program, administered through the Arizona Department of Transportation, which provides funding for safety-focused projects in locations that have a demonstrated history of fatal or severe injury crashes.

Household: A single unit of one or more related or unrelated person(s) occupying a dwelling unit, with a living arrangement by which one or more persons are responsible for decision-making regarding their dwelling unit and potentially other household members.

Housing Unit: A house, apartment, mobile home or trailer, group of rooms, or single room occupied as a separate living quarter or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as a separate living quarter. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building, and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall.

ICC: International Code Council

IDA: Arizona Industrial Development Authority

Incorporated Area: An incorporated area is a geographic area that has legally defined municipal boundaries.

Infrastructure: Facilities and services needed to sustain any type of development – residential, commercial or industrial activities. Includes water and sewer lines, streets, electrical power, fire and police stations, etc.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS): A system that analyses data, and utilizes sensing and analysis to improve efficiency, and safety of ground transportation.

Intergovernmental Agreement: An intergovernmental agreement is an agreement between units of government to combine their resources to provide governmental services and perform activities for the benefit of their constituents.

IPP Non-CHP: Independent Power Producers that do not make use of Heat

Land Use: Land use is the occupation or use of a land or water area for any human activity, or any purpose defined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Level of Service (LOS): A measure used to calculate the quality of motor vehicle traffic service.

Local First Arizona: An Arizona nonprofit organization with a focus on community and economic development.

Low Impact Development (LID): A planning and engineering practice that mimics natural processes in order to manage stormwater.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC): A tax credit program designed to encourage private investment in affordable housing, administered by states and regulated by the Internal Revenue Service, where private investors contribute capital to development projects so that developers reduce the ratio of debt in the project, at least 20% of the units must be rented to households earning 50% or less of the area median income (AMI), or 40% of the units to households earning 60% or less of the AMI for at least 30 years, and investors are able to reduce their federal income tax liability over a 10-year period.

LQ: Location Quotient

MOA: Military Operations Area

MR: Multifamily Residential

MTR: Military Training Routes

MU: Mixed Use

Municipality: An administrative area that can include a city, town, or group of towns.

Natural Open Space: Natural open spaces are swaths of land that are undeveloped.

Natural Resources: Elements relating to land, water, air, plant and animal life, and the interrelationship of those elements. Natural resources include soils, geology, topography, floodplains, vegetation, wildlife, surface and groundwater, and aquifer recharge zones.



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Navajo County Department of Transportation (NDOT): NDOT plans, designs, constructs, and maintains roadways primarily within the unincorporated areas of the County.

Navajo County Flood Control District (NCFCD): A department that focuses on protecting citizens from the risk of injury and property damage due to flooding.

Navajo County Sheriff's Office (NCSO): The NCSO provides law enforcement services for any areas in Navajo County that are not within the jurisdiction of other law enforcement agencies provided by incorporated jurisdictions in the County.

NEC: Navopache Electric Cooperative

Neighborhood: An area of a community with characteristics that distinguish it from other community areas, and which may include distinct ethnic or economic characteristics, schools, or social clubs, or boundaries defined by physical barriers such as major highways and railroads or natural features such as rivers.

Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG): Is a nonprofit corporation representing local governments in Northern Arizona. Member counties include Apache, Coconino, Navajo and Yavapai. Services include planning, Head Start, Human and Community Services, and Economic and Workforce Development.

Northland Pioneer College (NPC): NPC provides post-secondary education programs for a variety of associate's degrees. NPC has seven campuses across Navajo County.

NPS: United States National Parks Service

NREL: National Renewable Energy Laboratory

NRPA: National Recreation and Park Association

NSRDB: National Solar Radiation Database

NTUA: Navajo Tribal Utility Authority

OEO: Office of Economic Opportunity

OS: Open Space

Particulate Matter: Microscopic liquid or solid droplets that when inhaled or ingested can cause serious health problems.

Petroglyphs: Images created on rock surfaces by prehistoric people.

Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z): An appointed body in Navajo County that makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on development related applications.

Policy: A specific statement derived from the guiding principles and goals to guide public and private decision making.

Population Density: The number of people in a given area. The number may be obtained by multiplying the number of dwellings per acre by the number of residents per dwelling.

Potable Water: Water suitable for drinking.

Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG): PROWAG provides guidance to public agencies that construct or maintain transportation infrastructure on accessibility features to ensure those with disabilities can properly utilize that infrastructure.

Public Transportation: Motorized, shared transportation services typically provided by either local governments or non-profits focused on serving transportation needs of the elderly or disabled.

PV: Solar Photovoltaic

Reclamation: In context of wastewater, converting the wastewater (sewage) into water that can be reused.

Renewable Energy Resource: A renewable energy resource is a resource of economic value that can be readily replaced. Renewable Energy Resources are either not depleted or can be regenerated when used, such as biomass or wind, hydroelectric, solar, or tidal power.



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Right-of-way: A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roadways, railroads and utility lines.

RR: Rural Residential

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A): SS4A is a federal discretionary grant program that provides safety planning, demonstration projects, and implementation funds for safety-focused projects directly to local, regional, or tribal governments.

Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA): A geographic area deemed hazardous due to potential for flooding, mudflow, or erosion related to flooding.

SRP: Salt River Project

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): A division of Arizona State Parks charged with the identification, evaluation, protection, and enhancement of historic artifacts and architecture that are significant to the State of Arizona and the United States.

State Route (SR): A roadway on the State Highway System maintained by the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Strategic Energy Plan: Strategic energy planning is a long-term roadmap for a community or region to achieve its energy goals.

Subdivision: Improved or unimproved land or lands divided or proposed to be divided for the purpose of sale or lease, whether immediate or future, into six or more lots, parcels or fractional interests.

Subsidence: The gradual settling or sinking of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal motion. Subsidence is usually the result of water extraction from underground supplies and not the result of a landslide or slope failure.

Surface water: Water that collects on top of landforms, creating terrestrial waterbodies.

Sustainability: Sustainability is the property of biological systems to remain diverse and productive indefinitely. Sustainability encompasses human systems, including economy and development and biological systems. Sustainability manifests in policies, programs, and initiatives that support sustaining biodiversity and long-term ecological health necessary for the indefinite survival of humans and other organisms.

Sustainable Development: Sustainable development is development acknowledging sustainability in four interconnected domains: ecology, economics, politics, and culture. Sustainable development can be viewed as a holistic approach and process to achieve sustainability.

SWOT: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats

Threatened Species: Any species or subspecies which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future because serious threats have been identified and populations are (a) lower than they are historically or (b) extremely local and small.

Tl: Traffic Interchange

UES: Unisource Energy Services

Unincorporated Area: An unincorporated area is a geographic area that does not have legally defined municipal boundaries.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): The USDA is the US agency providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, and nutrition. Rural development includes several affordable housing programs for rural areas.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): The EPA is a US agency charged with protecting human and environmental health.



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United States Forest Service (USFS): The USFS is a US agency within the US Department of Agriculture that administers sustainability, forest health and recreation on the nation's 154 national forests and 20 national grasslands covering 193 million acres of land.

Wastewater: Includes sewage and all other liquid waste substances associated with human habitation, or of human or animal origin, or from any producing, manufacturing or processing operation of whatever nature.

Water Treatment Plant: A water treatment plant is a facility that processes (or treats) water to make it potable.

WIND: Wind Integration National Dataset

Workforce housing: Housing units at a price point affordable to households that earn between 80% and 120% AMI, or more than those that qualify for low-income housing.

WUI: Wildland Urban Interface

Zoning: Zoning describes the regulatory control of the use of land and buildings within a jurisdictional boundary. Areas of land are divided by appropriate authorities into zones within which various uses are permitted and regulated. The Comprehensive Plan does not create zoning districts, but zoning ultimately implements the comprehensive plan and rezonings statutorily must comply with the comprehensive plan.



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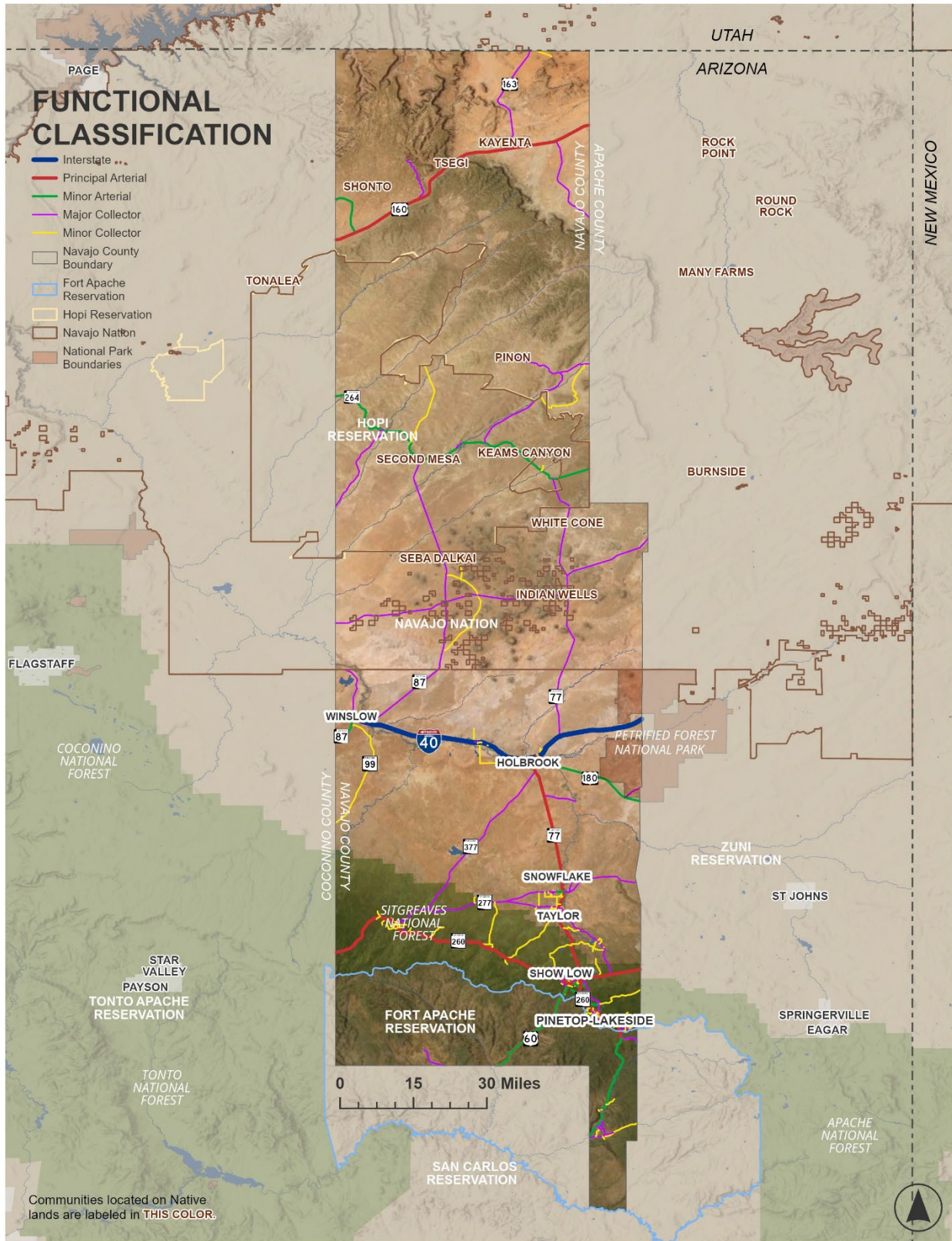
Appendix D: High Resolution Maps





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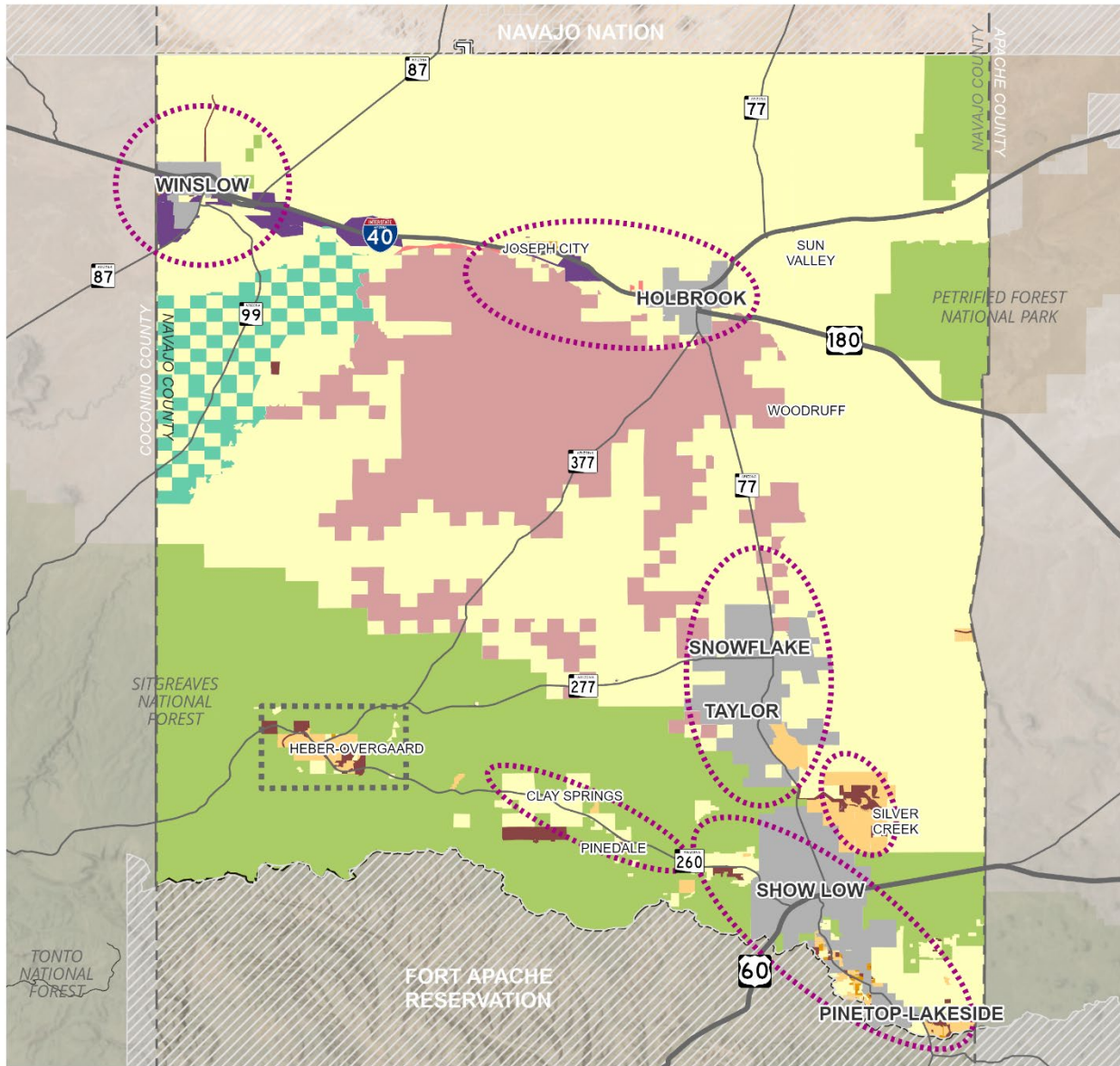
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FUTURE LAND USE MAP

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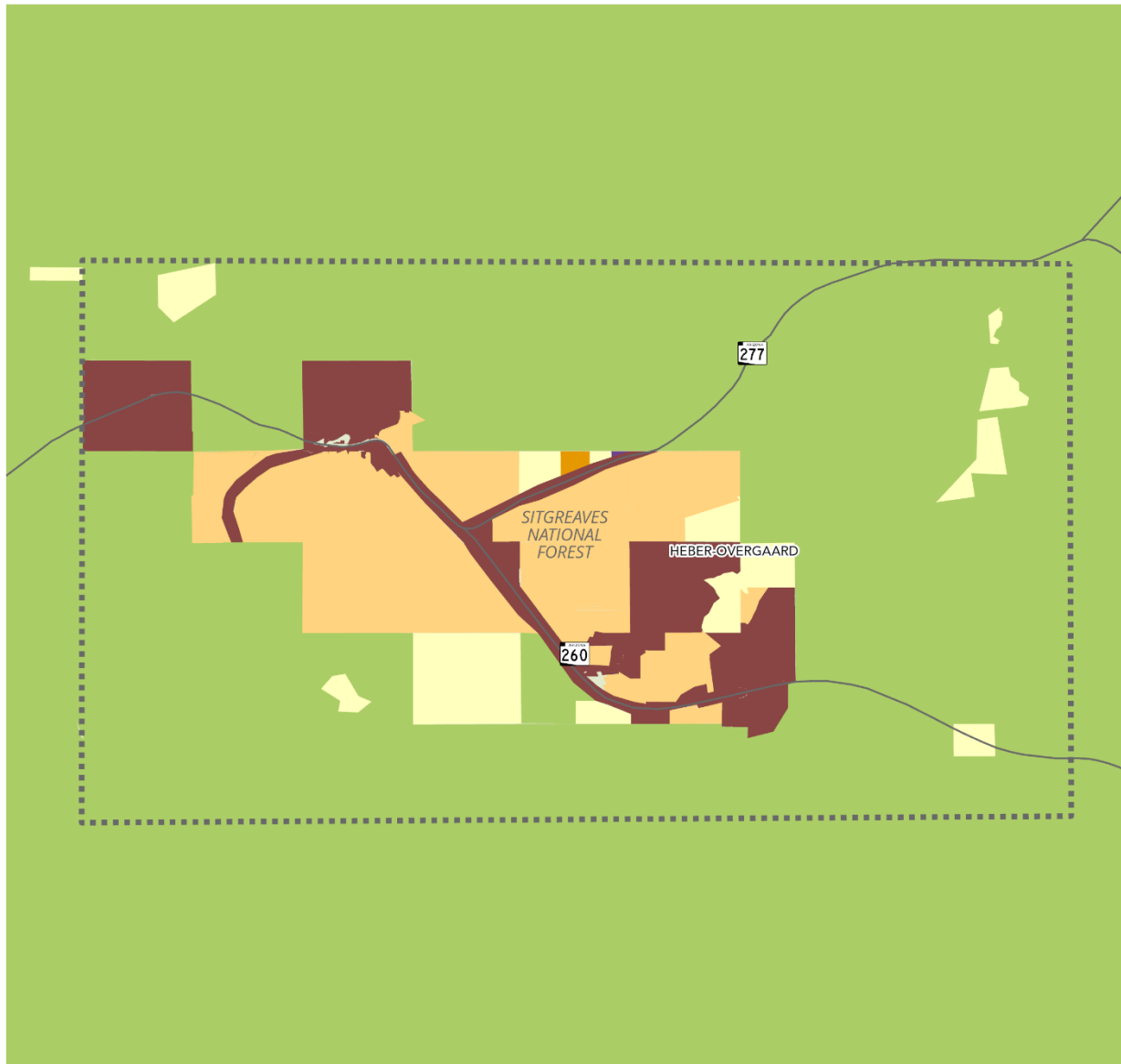
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Note: All State Trust Land is allowed development of at least one dwelling unit per acre of land, regardless of land use designation.

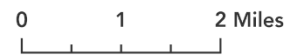


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HEBER OVERGAARD PLANNING AREA

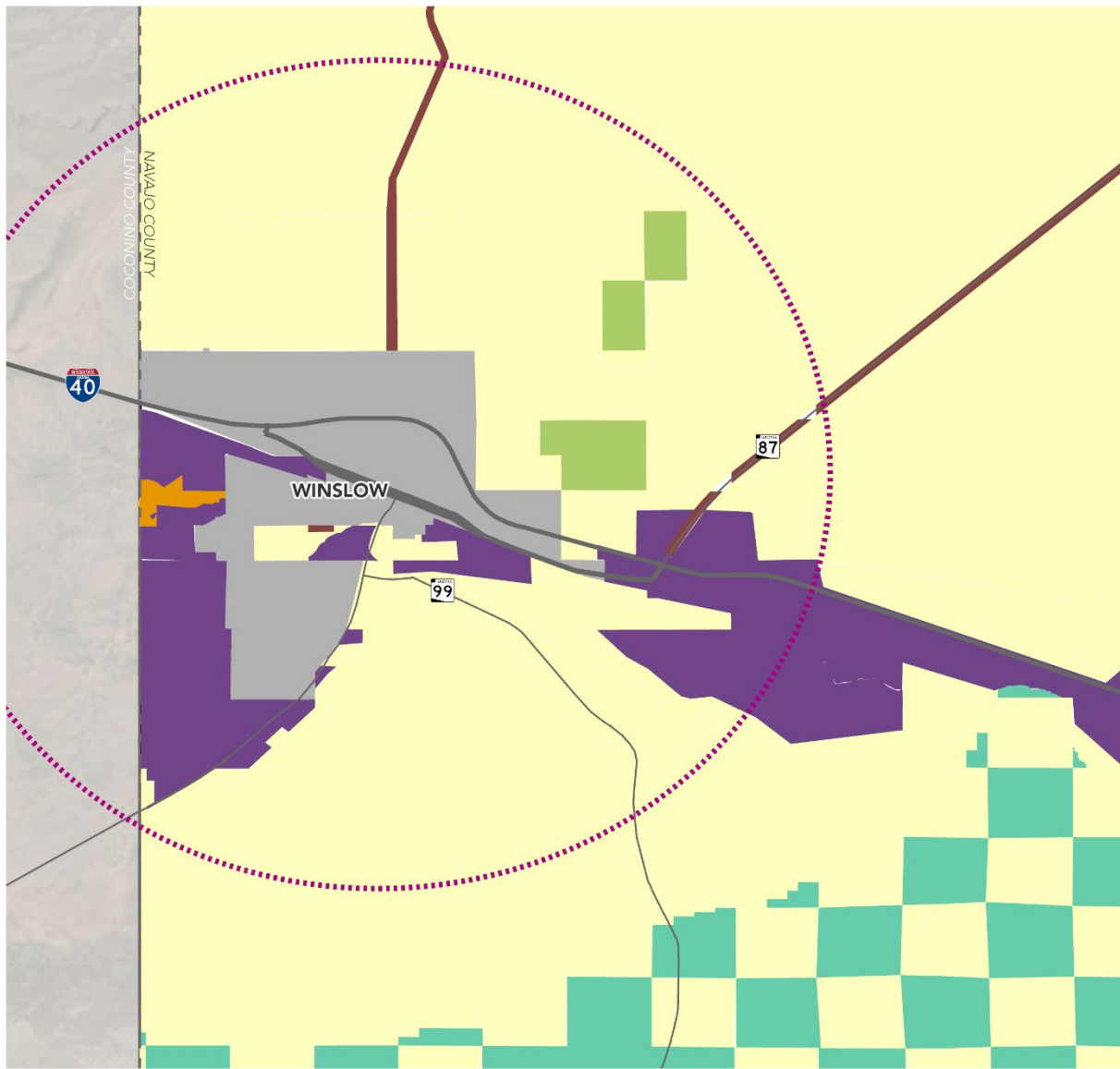


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GROWTH AREA #1: WINSLOW

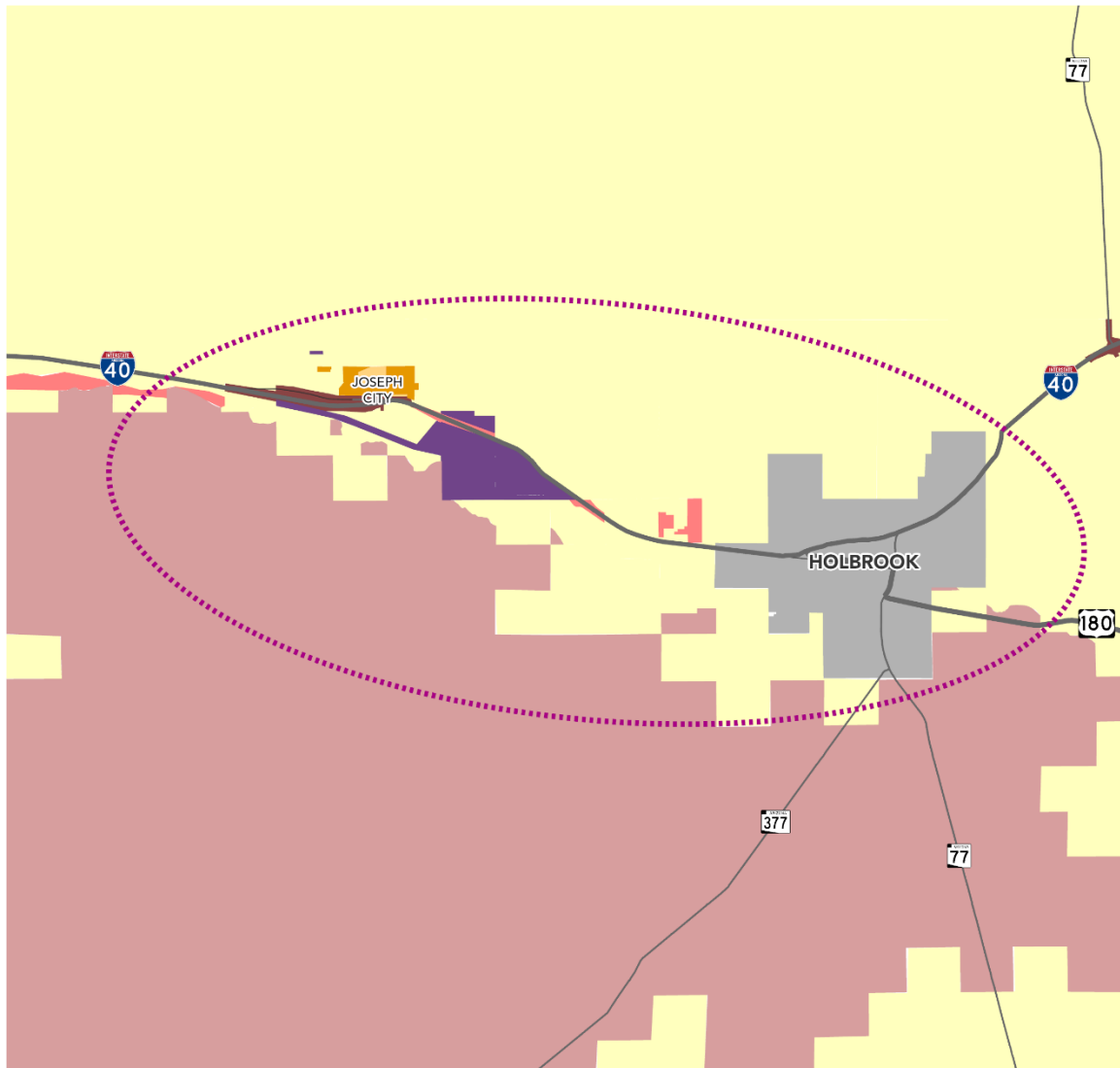


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| Navajo County Boundary | Future Land Use Categories | Employment |
| Cities and Towns within Navajo County Jurisdiction | | Open Space |
| Indigenous Communities | Rural | Aztec Area Plan Boundary |
| | Neighborhood Residential | Hopi Land Trust |
| | Multi-Family | Potential Growth Areas |
| | Mixed Use | Heber Overgaard Planning Area |
| | Business Commerce | |



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GROWTH AREA #2: JOSEPH CITY / HOLBROOK

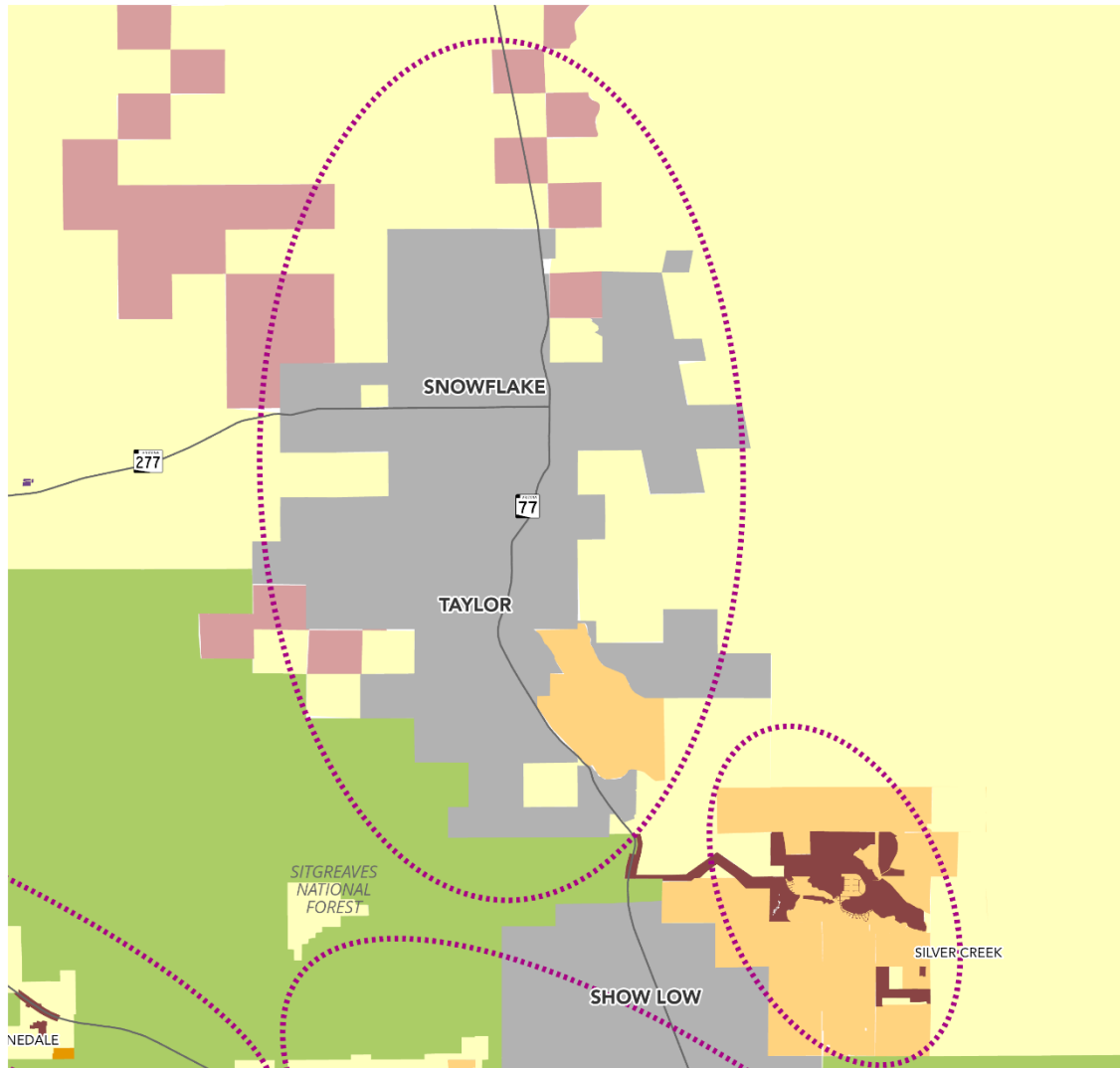


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GROWTH AREA #3: SNOWFLAKE / TAYLOR

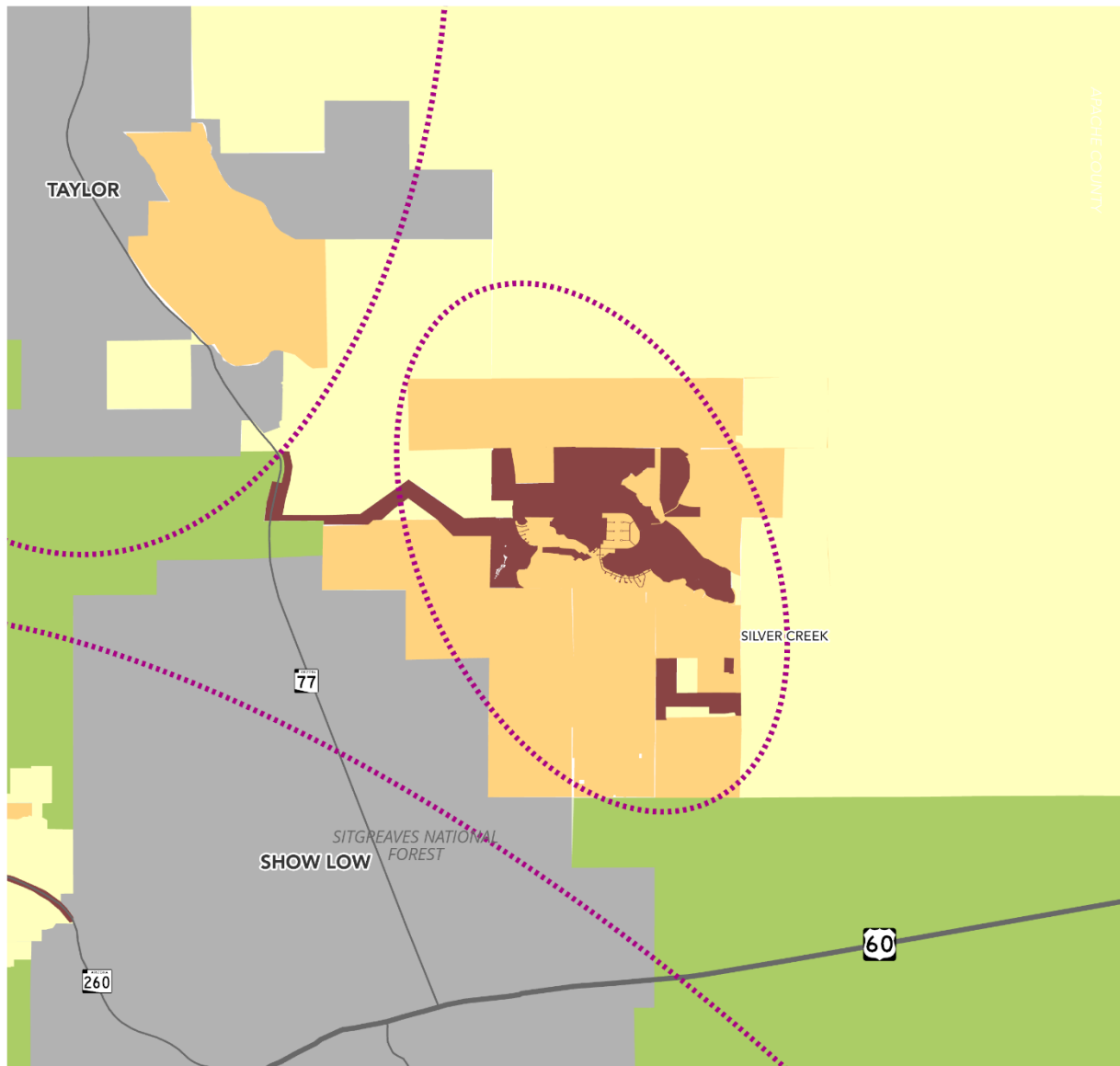


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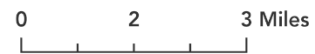


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GROWTH AREA #4: SILVER CREEK

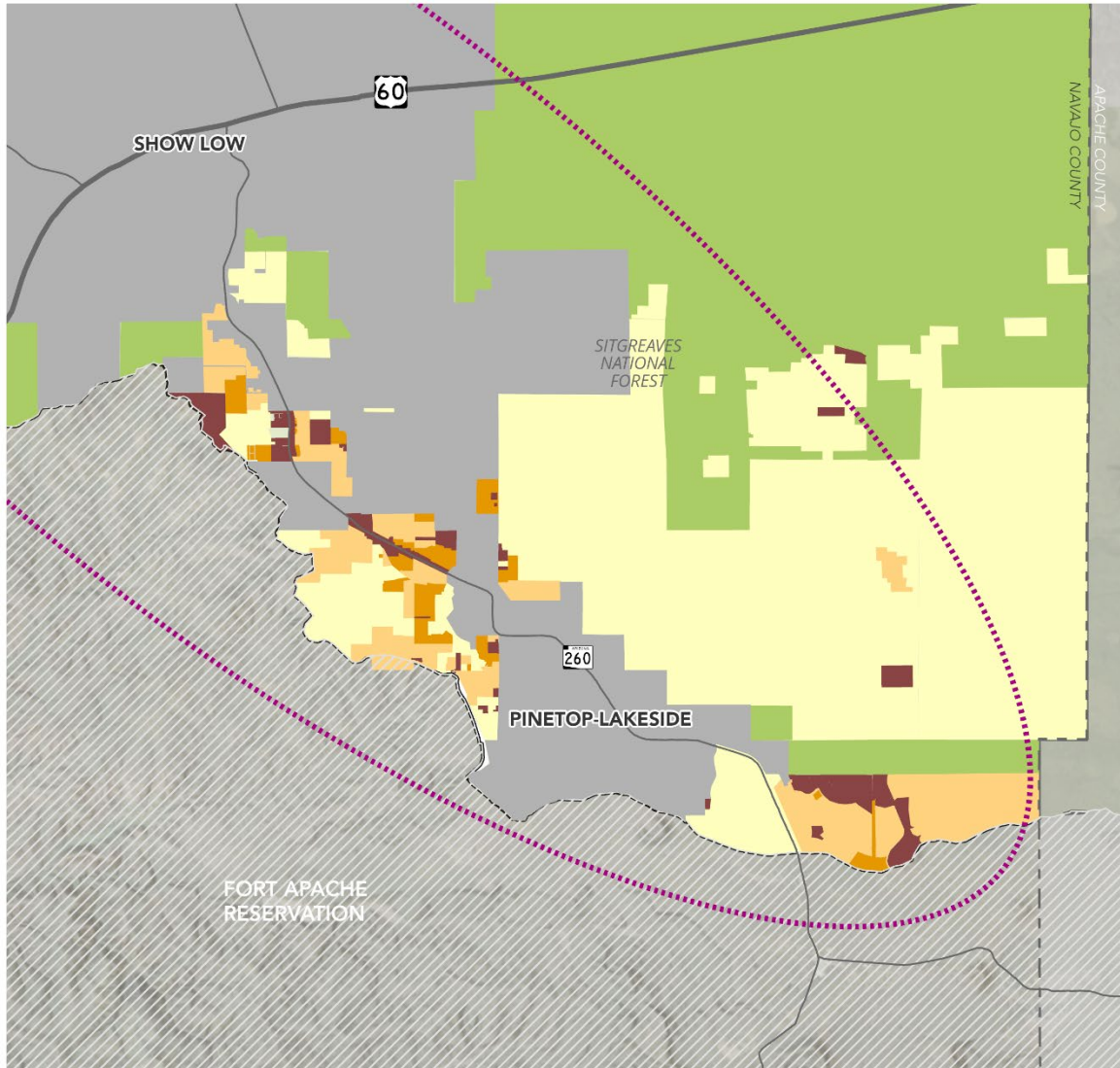


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GROWTH AREA #5: PINETOP-LAKESIDE

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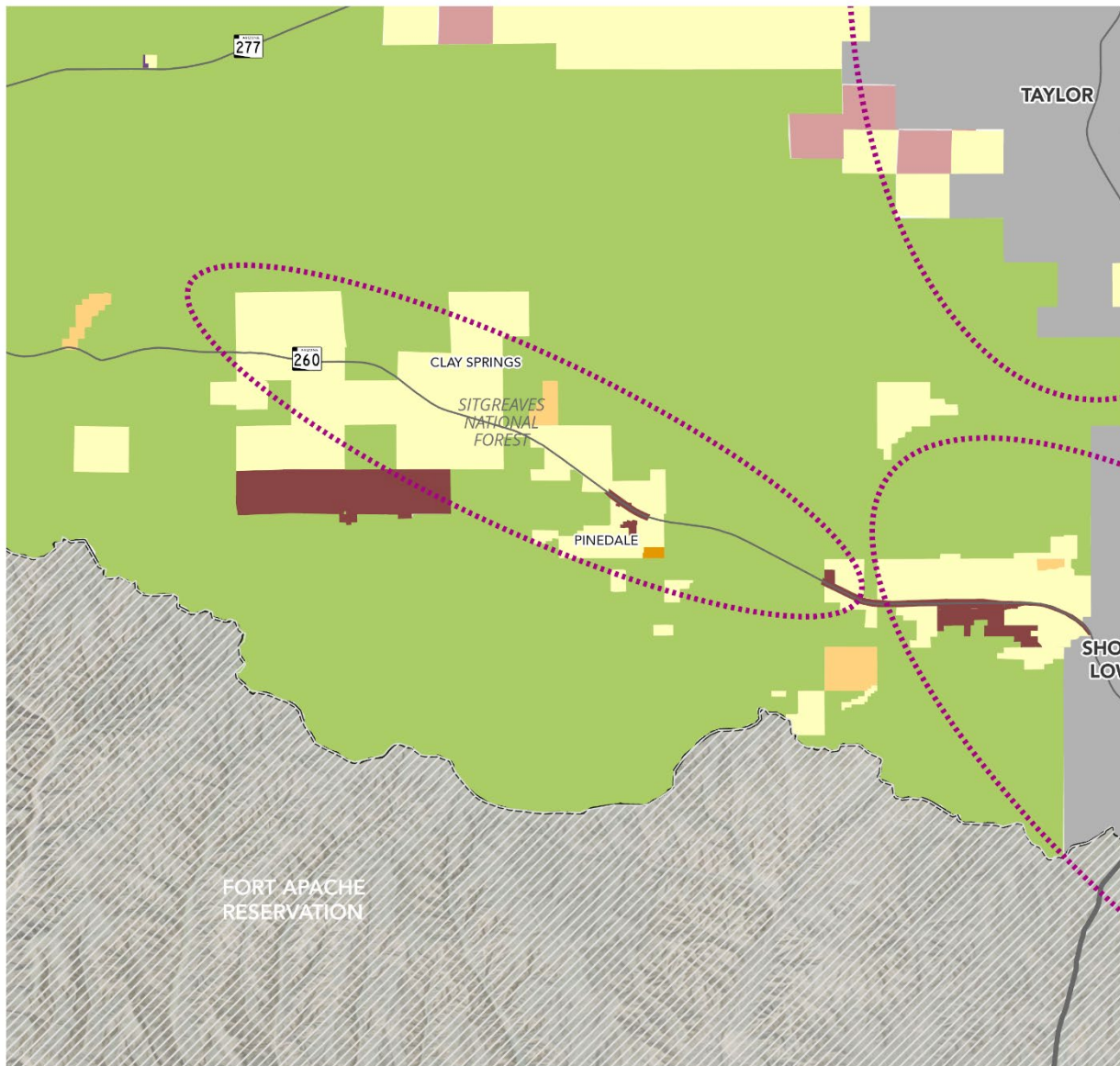


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