



Making the Grade

The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card



The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card

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Making the Grade

MAKING THE GRADE: THE VALLEY'S 2008 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT CARD

Executive Summary

Introduction

Welcome to *Making the Grade: The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card*, Valley Forward Association's (VFA) fifth publication evaluating how local communities and government agencies are responding to growth issues in our region. The livability and sustainability of Valley municipalities has been at the core of VFA's mission since the founding of our non-profit business-based environmental organization in 1969. Our goal with this Report Card is to examine how communities across the Valley are individually and collectively addressing common issues that impact the quality of life for residents here and those who will choose to make this their home in the future.

Making the Grade: The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card is an analysis of how cities and towns are doing when viewed through Valley Forward's lens. Grades are based on specific criteria and principles that reflect the historic thinking of VFA's diverse membership of public and private entities, other non-profits and the education community. We offer our Report Card as a tool to educate us on what is being done well and what can be improved to sustain and enhance our livability. We hope Valley communities will review the success stories so that local governments have the opportunity to take advantage of the most creative and workable ideas.

In essence, *Making the Grade: The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card* reminds us that while we may each live or work in one particular part of the Valley, we share this special place together. Although we may act individually, our impact and legacy will be regional in scope.

Each of Valley Forward's prior Report Card issuances in 1993, 1996, 2000 and 2004 was reflective of its time, and this endeavor is no different. Of course, growth remains the dominant feature of our human landscape. Our 2004 Report Card reflected a population for Gilbert of 133,640; that figure has leapt to 203,656 today. The numbers on the west side of the Valley are similar; in the same period, Goodyear more than doubled in size from 26,715 to 55,954.

This Report Card comes at a unique time, with far more emphasis in the Valley being placed on green building and environmental concerns overall. Air quality and transportation choices are at the forefront of our region's agenda. With the pending completion of the light rail project this year, we will see alternative transportation choices come to fruition. We are encouraged by this and other efforts Valley municipalities and government agencies are undertaking to improve our air quality, ensure a sustainable water supply and implement creative land use planning strategies.

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The Process & Grading

This Report Card is the product of a year's worth of work by an array of dedicated volunteers who gave freely of their time. As with previous Report Cards, the overall Steering Committee decided to break into individual subject area subcommittees to handle most of the detailed work. Returning subject areas from prior Report Cards include **Air, Land, Transportation** and **Water**. Unlike our last Report Card, we did not separate Open Space/Recreation from Land Use but instead graded the topic as a whole.

This Report Card also differed from years past in one key regard – the first task assigned to each subcommittee was to synthesize 39 years worth of Valley Forward policies and thinking into a core set of principles related to each subject area. As a result of this effort, VFA core principles in each area were clearly articulated and served as the basis of a survey sent to Valley communities to gather data. These principles are also the prism through which community responses to the survey would be evaluated.

Valley Forward sent a letter of request to Valley mayors and County leaders asking them to identify a liaison within their organization to work with us on this project. The liaisons were informed of the forthcoming survey, which was ultimately distributed to each governmental entity for its response within a limited time frame. We also held two informational meetings for liaisons in an effort to answer questions and address specific concerns at the front end. Once responses were submitted, we reviewed all of the completed surveys and accompanying data to generate this publication. Our Report Card subcommittees evaluated and graded the responses by measuring answers against the core principles identified for each subject area.

This is a significant point – while made as objective as possible, the very nature of this process is a subjective one, based on the fact that this is Valley Forward's view of the successes and struggles of Valley communities in these subject areas. Nevertheless, it is important to state that Valley Forward is an organization made up of concerned and informed individuals so we bring our own subjective impressions to the process, as well. That is as it should be – we present this Report Card because we care about our communities. We strongly believe this is an important exercise for all of us to take stock of how we are fairing as individual municipalities and as a region. By examining our policies and how they are implemented, we can better understand where our efforts should be focused to improve the livability and sustainability of our rapidly expanding metropolis.

The grades are presented in the traditional A through F format. Thus, an A is Outstanding, a B is Above Average, a C is Average, a D is Below Average, and an F indicates Failure.

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The Participants

This Report Card is a voluntary process not only for the members of Valley Forward, but also for our local governments. Valley Forward cannot force them to participate in this beneficial learning process. Thus, Valley Forward salutes each of the local governments that had the courage and civic-mindedness to participate in this process. Regardless of their individual grades, each of the responding communities has earned an A for their participation.

As for those communities that chose not to participate, we only hope their silence in this particular regional dialogue is an exception, not a rule. The communities that did not report are the Cities of El Mirage and Litchfield Park, as well as the Towns of Buckeye, Paradise Valley, Wickenburg, Guadalupe, Cave Creek and Gila Bend. We also did not receive responses from the three Tribal Nations – the Fort McDowell Yavapai, the Gila River Indian and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa.

Particularly disappointing from Valley Forward's perspective is the Town of Buckeye's failure to respond to the Report Card Survey. Buckeye has more than tripled in size since the last Report Card, growing from a population of 11,955 in 2004 to approximately 40,467 today. The city's growth and the significant position it will occupy in the West Valley in years to come, make it vitally important that Buckeye implement plans to ensure the community's sustainability. The Report Card process is a chance for a community to assess its own successes and failures and to learn from the efforts of other municipalities and government agencies. As one of the fastest growing communities in Maricopa County, if not the country, Buckeye must make sound policy decisions in managing its resources – Air, Land, Transportation and Water – as these areas are fundamental to ongoing environmental quality.

Also disturbing is the explanation for not participating in the Report Card that was communicated by the former Town Manager of Paradise Valley, who indicated the community “is different than other Valley cities” because it has no commercial development within its boundaries. Such parochial thinking is in direct conflict with regional cooperation. Valley residents have a right to know how the community is dealing with growth issues, particularly in relation to the massive development occurring on and around Camelback Mountain.

We commend the city of Surprise for responding to this year's Report Card Survey, as the fast-growing community was not a respondent in 2004.

Conclusions

The good news is that despite significant increases in population across the board since our 2004 Report Card, Valley communities are still doing a better than average job of managing natural resources and responding to growth issues. Phoenix was the only municipality to receive straight A's. But Glendale, Gilbert, Scottsdale, Tempe and Peoria were not far behind with only a few A-minuses precluding a perfect score in those cities.

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The only community to receive an F – a failing mark – was Goodyear in the Transportation category. The poor grade was, in part, due to a lack of responsiveness to the questionnaire. However, from the information that was provided, it's evident that Goodyear has been focused on its rapid growth and currently does not have a transportation master plan in place. Although the city is working on a plan, its completion is not targeted until December 2008. Valley Forward sincerely hopes Goodyear will recognize that planning for record growth absolutely must encompass plans for meeting the transportation needs of the community. Without such coordinated efforts, growth can have a significantly negative impact on the community's quality of life and sustainability.

The Town of Carefree also received an unimpressive grade in Transportation – a D for placing minimal emphasis on transportation planning. The municipality noted that it “does not have critical mass to support transit.”

The community to most improve its grades from the last installment of our Report Card is the Town of Fountain Hills. The municipality went from a D+ to a B in the Air category; from a D to an A in Land Use; and from a D to a C+ in Water. We commend Fountain Hills for its strides in these areas.

Pinal County showed significant improvements in the areas of Transportation and Land Use, particularly relating to Open Space/Recreation, which was a separate category in our previous Report Card. The county received a D+ in those categories in 2004 and earned a B+ in Land Use and a B in Transportation this time around.

Of particular note on individual subject areas, we offer the following:

- Overall, communities fared best in the Air category, which was the only topic to generate all A's and B's. There is some irony in this, as our region is experiencing a significant problem with particulate pollution. In fact, Maricopa County's recently released advertising campaign attempts to “shock” residents into realizing the air is full of dust with its new message, “Running Out of Air.” Although our region is in danger of failing to meet air quality regulations, Valley cities and towns are making an effort to combat air pollution. Government, business and residents need to do more. Meeting the challenge of cleaning the Valley's air will take more than regulation and publicity. It will take a committed mindset and action by all sectors to make real change happen.
- Several communities improved their grades in the Air category since the 2004 Report Card. Some of the strategies these communities implemented include: public awareness campaigns; specifying low VOC materials in the construction and renovation of municipal buildings; increasing alternative fuel vehicle fleets; monetary rewards and time off for employees who use alternative modes of transportation; a ban on all painting, as well as restrictions on leaf blowers and two-stroke engines, during summer months.
- New to this volume of the Report Card are two notable subjects that should be impacting each municipality's forward-looking actions. The first is the rapidly growing acceptance of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System as a benchmark to measure and recognize a

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facility's high-performance in environmental stewardship. The responding municipality's acceptance ranged from Scottsdale's status as first in the nation to adopt the Gold Standard to no recognition at all by some municipalities.

- Second is the realization that the Valley will in the next few decades be enveloped in what is popularly being described as the Sun Corridor megapolitan, with the Phoenix-Tucson area being its core. Through our survey we noticed that regional governments (Maricopa and Pinal Counties) are starting to look at this core area as a place requiring better planning and communication between jurisdictions.
- The majority of Valley municipalities address policies and regulations related to infill and economic development strategies quite well. Most communities are doing a good to excellent job in providing or planning for open space and recreation. Simply put, the key is to develop long-range goals well in advance of need.
- Our region has experienced significant progress in the area of Transportation since our 2004 Report Card. Voters reauthorized the countywide one-half cent transportation sales tax by approving Proposition 400, which provides more than \$15 billion to fund new freeways, roads and transit options, including the next phase of the Valley's light rail system. Yet as Valley Forward issues its 2008 Report Card, transportation continues to present major and often times vexing challenges that will require continued focus and regional cooperation.
- Grades in the Water category were above average with the exception of Fountain Hills, which received a C+ and is encouraged to become more involved in reducing violations of the Safe Water Drinking Act and to implement a long-term water management plan and drought response program. On a positive note, Fountain Hills improved its grade in the Water category over the last Report Card, in which it received a D.
- Valley communities are demonstrating a strong commitment to long-range planning in the area of water management, which includes diversified conservation programs, recharge and drought preparedness. However, almost without exception, cities and towns that rely on private water utilities either did not respond on this issue or do not have open communication with the utilities serving their citizens. This is a concern for Valley Forward because many of these areas are outlying and experiencing high rates of population growth.
- Larger Valley cities are not only protecting aquifers by participating in recharge programs, but many are also taking advantage of reclaimed supplies by using this supply to water public parks, golf courses and other public amenities that enhance the quality of life for Valley residents. Innovative solutions and infrastructure partnerships were common themes in the cities and towns with higher grades.

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AIR Introduction

The Valley's air quality needs much improvement, however, as evidenced by the grades given Valley cities related to their air quality efforts, cities are doing a good job adopting policies and taking action in areas within their control. Our air quality is an ongoing challenge so Valley cities and towns must continue to play a key role in reducing air emissions. The 2007 MAG PM-10 Plan includes dust control treatments for more than 600 miles of roads, shoulders and alleys, new local ordinances for parking, and off-road vehicle use and other sources of dust. The County has adopted more stringent dust control rules and committed more than \$24 million in new staff and other resources. In addition, Valley communities are implementing new air quality control measures as part of the MAG PM-10 Plan, focusing on dust control, roadway paving and stabilization, as well as other air quality efforts. Construction, mining and other industries are also trying to do their part with more aggressive dust control methods. The MAG Plan predicts that this tremendous effort will help the area meet federal health standards by 2010.

This year our survey added questions on climate change, and Valley cities and towns scored well. Many cities are constructing "green" city facilities that meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards and some have also adopted stringent energy efficient building codes for private construction. In addition, cities are developing greenhouse gas inventories and Climate Action Plans.

Solving the problem and meeting federal health standards is no easy task, and there is no one solution. As businesses and individuals, we all need to take action by driving less, choosing alternative modes of transportation, avoiding dust-generating activities, using electric lawn equipment and conserving energy to ensure cleaner air for today and tomorrow.

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VFA believes the following principles should be applied by Valley communities and government agencies to help improve air quality:

AIR Principles

1. Promote strategies to reduce harmful air emissions including particulate matter, ozone forming precursors, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxide (NOx), carbon monoxide, hazardous air pollutants and carbon dioxide (CO2);
2. Reduce airborne dust from all sources;
3. Reduce vehicle emissions through trip reduction programs, the promotion of alternative fuel vehicles, use of clean burning fuels and other strategies;
4. Promote effective energy efficiency strategies and the purchase or installation of renewable energy.

AIR (Populations Over 50,000)

AIR GRADES Communities > 50,000 Population and Counties

| Community | Population | Air |
|------------|------------|-----|
| Phoenix | 1,538,568 | A |
| Mesa | 456,344 | A- |
| Glendale | 246,076 | A- |
| Chandler | 241,205 | B |
| Scottsdale | 240,126 | A- |
| Gilbert | 203,656 | A- |
| Tempe | 167,871 | A- |
| Peoria | 151,541 | A- |
| Surprise | 104,895 | B |
| Avondale | 75,256 | B- |
| Goodyear | 55,954 | B+ |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|----|
| Maricopa County | 3,907,492 | A- |
| Pinal County | 327,670 | B |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Phoenix: A

Phoenix is aggressively pursuing efforts to reduce airborne dust from all sources. In addition to treating unpaved roads and arterial shoulders, the city is conducting a right of way inventory to identify places that are being used as cut-throughs or undesignated roads. These rights of way will then be scheduled for either stabilization or closure. Phoenix is also in the midst of a multi-year project to apply an asphalt treatment to all alleys, with 39 miles completed within the last two years and 45 more miles scheduled for 2007/08. The city's commitment to energy

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efficiency and renewable energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is evidenced by a policy adoption that all new buildings will be LEED certified and have solar facilities. Phoenix co-sponsors an annual Green Building Expo, and six city staffers have become LEED certified. In addition, seven municipal buildings that are either completed or under construction meet LEED standards, and the city has undertaken several solar projects. Other notable initiatives include: an interdepartmental Sustainability Task Force; a City Council Sustainability Subcommittee; an Environmental Quality Commission; and a unique targeted enforcement program for unpaved parking lots. All department directors are required to include one environmental indicator in their Performance Achievement Plan.

Mesa: A-

Mesa has a strong focus on energy conservation for municipal facilities, with 25 city buildings utilizing a remote energy management system. More efficient air conditioning units are replacing older units, programmable thermostats have been installed and the city completes ongoing energy audits. Recognizing the importance of reducing particulate pollution, Mesa is the only city in Maricopa County with a dedicated particulate pollution control ordinance.

Glendale: A-

Glendale has a strong focus on training employees in environmental awareness. Training includes information on air quality and dust permits, as well as an emphasis on utilizing propane as the primary fuel in vehicles that can operate on propane. The commitment to travel reduction strategies is evidenced in numerous ways, including a high percentage, 51%, of employees utilizing compressed workweek schedules. Glendale uses emissions free, solar panels to power lights in passenger shelters and at its regional park and ride facility. In addition, as host city for the 2008 Super Bowl, Glendale worked diligently with the NFL to lessen the environmental impact of the event, including reducing vehicle emissions during the event days by offering several options for alternative transportation.

Chandler: B

Chandler participates in Maricopa County's Travel Reduction program and in fact, almost half of all city employees are on a compressed workweek schedule, which eliminates driving to the worksite one or more days per week. While the community has limited bus service, transit is promoted in various publications and the municipality offers bike rodeos to promote safe bicycling. Chandler is currently in the process of developing a green building program, which is scheduled for approval in the spring of 2008. City employees are encouraged to seek procurement of materials and products that offer post consumer content or that can be reused or recycled.

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Scottsdale: A-

Scottsdale sets the bar for efforts in green building. In 2005, the city became first in the nation to adopt a LEED Gold Policy for new municipal buildings, which also applies to renovation of those buildings in the future. The first building under this policy, the Granite Reef Senior Center, is actually the first LEED Gold senior center in the nation. Scottsdale has also developed its own green building program and guidelines. These guidelines provide an alternative green building program from the LEED program and include sensitive design guidelines that promote green and energy efficient building and renovation of buildings. For the past two years, more than 1/3 of the building permits in the city have been issued through the voluntary Green Building Program, which offers an expedited plan review. Scottsdale has tremendously expanded its Annual Green Building Expo over the past couple of years and other cities are now partnering with the city to broaden the audience and outreach. Another unique program is focused on reducing driving and eliminating vehicle emissions by allowing residents to drop off library books in multiple collection sites and also transfers books on request to the nearest library for their citizen borrower. Additionally, the library has made a great effort to upload the most used research to their website, which has greatly increased the number of virtual customers, saving citizens a drive to their local library.

Gilbert: A-

Gilbert has a robust travel reduction program to encourage alternate modes of transportation, which includes both monetary rewards and time off from work. Employees who bike or walk to work are given a \$5 daily incentive, and employees who use an alternate mode for more than 50 days during the year are eligible for time off. In addition, Gilbert has a high level of commitment to reducing ozone pollution in the summer months with a restriction on leaf blowers, the use of four-stroke motors instead of the more polluting two-stroke engines and a ban on all painting during these months. In addition, the town's focus on the urban heat island issue and air quality is evidenced by the installation of "cool pavement" materials at Zanjero Park. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Gilbert encourages homebuilders within their city to build to high-energy efficiency standards and has 18 subdivisions that are recognized for this within the community.

Tempe: A-

The Transportation Division encourages residents to get around the community in anything but a car as part of its Tempe in Motion program. Tempe also endorses and promotes bicycling as an alternative means of transportation both for their employees and residents. The city provides up to \$250 towards the purchase of a bicycle and free safety equipment for employees who bike to work and join the Bike Loan program. Tempe in Motion partners with other city departments as well as community organizations and the business community to encourage alternative modes. Yearly events held are: Bike to Work and School Day, Tour de Tempe and Walk to School Day. The city promotes and encourages energy efficiency buildings and has 15 LEED registered projects within its jurisdiction.

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Peoria: A-

Peoria actively educates its residents about the importance of air quality issues. An Air Quality Basics brochure was developed to communicate environmental information and helpful practices for the community. The brochure is mailed out annually and is also made available to the public at select locations (City Hall, Peoria Library and branches, Community Center, etc.). Clean air and trip reduction information is presented at two annual public awareness events hosted by the Police and Community Services Departments. Information is also distributed via utility bill inserts, the city's Web site and other city events. Peoria specifies low VOC materials in the construction and renovation of municipal buildings. These materials include carpet, paint and adhesives. The city will have on staff both LEED and LEED-Existing Building accredited professional staff members by the end of 2007. In addition, Peoria raises temperature settings by two degrees, turns off unneeded lighting and closes exterior blinds during high heat advisories. A "Tips for Improving Fuel Economy" course is being developed for drivers of city vehicles.

Surprise: B

The City of Surprise takes action when Maricopa County issues a High Pollution Advisory. City employees cease the use of leaf blowers, stop two-cycle engine use and halt most grading activities. The city has adopted the nation's most current energy conservation standard – the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code. A Green Neighborhoods program is also under development.

Avondale: B-

Travel reduction strategies to reduce employee commute trips is one way that Avondale works to improve air quality in their community – they pay employees \$1 per day for carpooling, bicycling or walking. As well, the city is committed to reducing energy costs and incorporating renewable energy. Expansion plans for its wastewater treatment plant will use methane gas to generate electricity. Data estimates that the plant will produce a 10.3% savings to utility costs. In addition, Avondale has begun to use solar panels to power flashing school crossings and is considering the incorporation of solar operated irrigation valves for medians and lights, as well as irrigation for park trails.

Goodyear: B+

The City has 92 center lane miles of arterial roadway – 100% of which are swept by PM-10 efficient sweepers. The arterial streets are swept 16 times per year. Goodyear recognizes the importance of flexing schedules for their employees to reduce congestion and air pollution during peak travel times. Approximately 54% of city employees participate in flex schedules, which staggers commute times to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

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Counties

Maricopa County: A-

Maricopa County's efforts to ensure compliance with dust control rules are many. Inspectors avoid driving on unpaved roads, but if necessary limit speed to 15 mph. The county holds training classes for those working in the regulated community and has developed a video called "Tailgate Talks," which educates the construction industry on dust control. Dust control brochures are delivered at nearly every construction site. Inspectors conduct pre-construction meetings to help educate the superintendent and construction workers. The county's Bring Back Blue dust prevention campaign, launched in January 2007, helped increase awareness of air quality issues with radio, print and outdoor advertising. Other Valley employers, including the State of Arizona, Intel and Valley Metro helped get the word out to employees. In addition, a bilingual DVD discussing dust control was developed. The county has a unique program through its air quality enforcement division when fines are levied, allowing companies to complete Supplement Environment Projects as part of the settlement process.

Pinal County: B

Pinal County has implemented a widespread effort to educate the community about air quality issues. A Clean Skies newsletter is published, and web postings are made daily on the Air Quality Index and forecasts including high pollution advisories. News releases are distributed on pollution impacts and fire danger associated with open burning. The Pinal County Board of Supervisors has also adopted a voluntary countywide trip reduction program, even though the bulk of the community does not fall subject to a non-attainment designation. A countywide vanpool program has been established with subsidies provided for 22 vanpools. Another effective component of the program encourages "off-hour" fueling with a cash award to employees that submit receipts showing vehicle fueling before 8 a.m. and after 4 p.m. Pinal County has implemented a policy that all future buildings will follow LEED guidelines and has implemented measures in recently constructed buildings that reduce energy and water consumption. The County encourages energy conservation and alternative construction by private developers through the adoption of the 2007 International Energy Code, allowing energy efficient alternative residential construction, including adobe, rammed earth and straw-bale construction and allows for separate gray-water systems in buildings.

AIR (Populations Under 50,000)

AIR GRADES Communities < 50,000 Population

| Community | Population | Air |
|-----------------|------------|-----|
| Apache Junction | 37,539 | B |
| Fountain Hills | 25,540 | B |
| Queen Creek | 21,363 | A |
| Tolleson | 6,680 | B |
| Carefree | 3,871 | B |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

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Apache Junction: B

Apache Junction is the only city in the Valley that purchases renewable energy. Twenty-eight percent of the electricity for the City Hall comes from SRP's renewable energy sources. A further commitment to improving air quality through energy conservation efforts is demonstrated by several recently completed energy conservation improvement projects. These included a conversion of all municipal building T-12 lighting to the more efficient T-8 lamps and electronic ballasts and a retrofit of all traffic signals in the City to LED lamp technology, replacing the less efficient incandescent lamps. Solar powered radar display speed sign and amber lighting has been installed at all the city's school zones. Apache Junction has implemented "Green Housekeeping" measures for all municipal building operations, which includes policies for energy conservation practices.

Fountain Hills: B

Fountain Hills is incorporating cleaner fuel vehicles into its fleet. Of the 46 total vehicles in its fleet, three use CNG, four are hybrids, 10 are diesel, and 29 use gasoline. In addition, all new '07 vehicles purchased have been hybrids. The town has explored the option of installing its own CNG station, but it has proven cost prohibitive at this time. However, the four hybrids currently in the municipal fleet have resulted in a 400-gallon savings in fuel consumption. This savings has spurred the community to order two additional hybrids, which will result in an estimated additional 100-gallon savings per vehicle.

Queen Creek: A

Queen Creek is serious about dust control in the community. They have installed a "Dust Control" hotline telephone number with a recorded message that takes dust control calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls requiring action are referred to Maricopa County Dust Control. On August 1, the Queen Creek Mayor and Town Council declared the first week of August "Dust Awareness Week" to promote clean-air awareness. This initiative was a follow up to Queen Creek becoming the first Valley municipality to pass a resolution to establish policy resulting in local commitments to benefit the area's problems regarding PM-10. Within this resolution, nine initiatives were adopted to address and improve air quality, including stabilizing over 50 miles of dirt shoulders over the next three years. The town is updating each permit with reminders of dust control, providing links on municipal Web sites to the Maricopa County "Bring Back Blue" program and providing information on its public-access channel. The *About Town* newsletter is a monthly publication mailed to residents that includes articles on this pertinent subject. The town of Queen Creek has also undertaken activities to reduce energy consumption in municipal buildings. Steps have been taken to renovate Queen Creek Town Hall, the oldest municipal building in the community, to make it more energy efficient. The town received a grant and converted all of the T-8 lighting in its Town Hall to new more efficient T-5 lighting. Thermo-pane windows were also installed to replace the older less energy efficient windows. A building automation system was installed with the construction of the new Development Services

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Building that reduced energy consumption by 20 percent. All new buildings in the community must include HVAC units that use the new 410 refrigerant.

Tolleson: B

Tolleson is committed to constructing all new public facilities to LEED standards. Its Adult Senior Day Care Center is operating and approaching LEED certification. Architectural design is currently underway for a new Police Public Safety building, as well as a new Fire Station, both of which will attempt to achieve at least a Silver LEED certification. Beginning in the spring 2004, the city enacted a proclamation endorsing the Municipal Green Building guidelines and Green Criteria Standards utilized for the design of LEED and Energy Star certified municipalities. Tolleson's General Plan describes the eight Sustainable Project Goals of the Building Guidelines and Green Criteria. PepsiCo recently received a Gold certification for its new facility. A LEED certified office building and hotel are scheduled for completion in 2008.

Carefree: B

Carefree reduces dust pollution by treating 100% of unpaved roads, alleys and arterial shoulders. The community sweeps its 47 miles of arterial streets weekly with a PM-10 efficient sweeper. While Carefree does not currently have any LEED buildings, the city supports and encourages alternative construction methods for private construction. Energy consumption is reduced by using the power/energy save mode on office equipment and turning off lights and monitors when not in use.

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LAND USE Introduction

It's not difficult to understand that land use and open space planning and the decisions governing these policies influence the quality of life of Valley residents. Pick up the newspaper and you will read about a neighborhood actively involved over the density of a proposed project, the height of another project, or a new trail to a mountain preserve.

Despite current conditions, our region – including the I-10 corridor between Tucson and Phoenix – will continue to grow. The Maricopa Association of Governments' draft socioeconomic projections of population and housing indicate that communities like Buckeye, Queen Creek, Goodyear, and Surprise will continue to experience both high population and economic growth rates as we approach 2010. The projected growth rate for communities like the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, El Mirage and Avondale are high employment relative to population growth. The more centrally located communities of Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe have relatively low projected population and employment growth rates.

The land use and open space questions were divided into seven topics, which are: growth management, vision and character, community design, long-range plan, community/regional involvement, open space/natural areas and economic development.

The following principles encapsulate core aspects of good land use and open space planning based on Valley Forward values:

LAND USE Principles

1. Promote and utilize strategies to promote infill and limit growth at the Valley's edge;
2. Develop vision and character that conserve and maintain the community's *sense of place*;
3. Preserve or conserve the Valley's natural environment through planning;
4. Facilitate planning and design that improves the sustainability and livability of the region;
5. Encourage regional planning and coordination;
6. Provide and increase open space and recreational opportunities;
7. Enhance environmental quality through smart growth strategies when focusing on economic development.

Making the Grade

LAND USE (Populations Over 50,000)

LAND USE GRADES

Communities > 50,000 Population and Counties

| Community | Population | Land Use |
|------------|------------|----------|
| Phoenix | 1,538,568 | A |
| Mesa | 456,344 | B+ |
| Glendale | 246,076 | A- |
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| Gilbert | 203,656 | A- |
| Tempe | 167,871 | A- |
| Peoria | 151,541 | A |
| Surprise | 104,895 | A- |
| Avondale | 75,256 | B |
| Goodyear | 55,954 | C+ |

| | | |
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| Maricopa County | 3,907,492 | A |
| Pinal County | 327,670 | B+ |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Phoenix: A

The largest city in the Valley, Phoenix is often used as a comparative example for other local municipalities. As in years past, this community's grade reflects its example as a standard bearer for managing the many facets of community planning well in the face of rapid growth. The city's growth management policies, such as infill, downtown revitalization, mixed use, and Brownfield redevelopment are among the most sophisticated and effective in the state. For its size, Phoenix uses its zoning code and other policies to create a better sense of place within the downtown and its various Villages. The community continues to create a sense of place by its strong presence in the number of designated historic neighborhoods. In addition, Phoenix offers great open space and natural preserves combined with innovative management policies through edge treatment guidelines, which are a part of the city's land use plan. However, these apply only to the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve; addressing only recreation and visual attributes with little mention to habitat needs. Phoenix is also a leader in the development and regional coordination of our light rail system. The city makes continued efforts to improve its customer interaction, including the newly formed Office of Customer Advocacy, which provides case management and development assistance for business customers. Phoenix offers a full range of economic development programs that help make it competitive in our global economy. In most every aspect of growth management, Phoenix is a municipality leading by example.

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Mesa: B+

Mesa is the largest city in the East Valley. It has good infill policies for encouraging development of passed-over land via a Development Incentive Permit process and a Bonus Intensity Zone, among others. It does an excellent job in its efforts and programs related to historic preservation and use of sub-area planning to foster its community character goals. It has a healthy mix of strategies to ensure housing affordability and economic development. Despite a slightly higher than national average for parks on a per capita basis, the city is only within the middle tier as compared to other Valley communities. Improvement can be made in the area of coordination with regional open space connections. Development and maintenance of parks and open space has been hindered by voter rejected bond and taxation issues.

Glendale: A-

Glendale has turned a regional amenity of the University of Phoenix Stadium into a mixed-use and pedestrian friendly district. It actively pursues Brownfield redevelopment. The community has a strong program for preservation and designation of historic buildings and sites, with focus on adaptive reuse in its downtown to encourage business activity. It has a full service business development department to manage multiple strategies in economic activity, with innovative pilot programs like the Visual Improvement Program and Dining District Interior Improvement Program. The community also participates and offers a range of affordable housing strategies, including Habitat for Humanity programs and the American Dream Down Payment Initiative. Glendale is in the top tier of Valley communities and exceeds national averages on parks per capita. For a community with limited mountain/desert resources, the amount of dedicated open space per capita is within the middle tier compared to other Valley communities. However, the city makes up for this in other ways, as through its Open Space and Trails Master Plan and regional recreation spots like the Thunderbird Conservation Park.

Chandler: A-

Chandler has a solid economic development department with various tools and programs in place to address growth. It sets clear strategic goals for itself to accommodate growth and the needs of its population, including: a transition from a suburban to more central city like community; commitment to becoming the most connected city; and its role within the larger region of the Sun Corridor. Overall, the city has good infill programs and a variety of housing affordability strategies in place. It is below the national average and other Valley communities on parks per capita. However, its commitment to pedestrian linkages and numerous new recreational opportunities, including the Tumbleweed Recreation Center, Paseo Trail and Chandler Heights Recharge Project are good examples of how it is improving its recreational opportunities.

Scottsdale: A-

In 2005, Scottsdale became the first municipality in the nation to adopt the LEED Gold Standard for new municipal facilities, which is an indicator of its ability to lead by example. The city maintains strong policies for open space preservation and visual and aesthetic quality of the built environment, as can be witnessed by continuing efforts to protect the McDowell Sonoran

Making the Grade

Preserve. Scottsdale promotes innovative policies and procedures to preserve historic buildings, such as the Hotel Valley Ho. Maintaining affordable housing continues to be a challenge. Policies that lean toward neighborhood needs rather than individual needs can be positive but often leads to neighborhood exclusivity.

Gilbert: A-

Gilbert has four distinct character areas as a way to address their community vision. It has a full service business development department to manage multiple strategies in economic activity, with mechanisms on partnerships with education and private interests. The town includes policies for ensuring housing affordability, with emphasis on the aging population. It slightly exceeds the national average and ranks comparable with other Valley communities of its size for parks per capita. Lacking mountains and many desert areas, the town has good efforts on bicycle/pedestrian linkages. The community is a leader in creating new public open space experiences, such as riparian areas developed from reclaimed water recharge areas and the Gilbert Observatory project.

Tempe: A-

Tempe, which has been a landlocked municipality since the 1980s, is making an active effort to provide open space amenities to the fullest extent possible with its nearing built-out land use limitations. The city has a clear commitment to sustainability in its vision for the future and for land use planning policies, including sound public policy for historic preservation and creative reuse of historic structures. Tempe recently annexed the land encompassing the Tempe Marketplace, working with the developer to clean up and redevelop this EPA Superfund site.

Peoria: A

Peoria has seen significant growth in population in recent years. Good care and attention has been taken to create a meaningful vision for the community's future, which is embraced by the residents. In addition to a Planned Area Development District, the community increased its flexibility in promoting infill by adding a Mixed Use zoning district and adoption of area plans like the Downtown Peoria Redevelopment Plan. Peoria is applauded for exploring the adoption of new general plan criteria to measure the value of land use change to water usage. The city is also proactive in planning for wildlife corridors and habitat linkages on a regional scale. The city has a strong Desert Lands Conservation Ordinance and is good at adopting various plans to create a sense of place within the community. In particular, Peoria expanded its efforts for the Lake Pleasant/ North Peoria Area Specific Plan originally adopted in 1993 with the Lake Pleasant Parkway Design Theme Manual to create a visually coherent corridor. Also, the city offers a wide array of programs to address housing affordability and assisting residents in keeping up the appearance of their properties. A unique loan program is offered to enable residents in need to maintain their property.

Surprise: A-

Surprise is yet another community that has seen exponential growth over the past four years. Creative policies are in place for preserving and enhancing the community's character – specific and place based. The city has also implemented good housing affordability policies, including

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the preparation of a proactive inventory of housing affordability on which to base future efforts. Surprise has developed thoughtful connections between planning policies and goals and land use decisions, including great examples of character protection plans outside of historic preservation initiatives. The city should focus on setting aside more natural open space, as well as addressing wildlife corridors and habitat linkages versus open space linkages geared mainly toward public uses, such as trails and recreation.

Avondale: B

The city has done a good job in adopting both residential and commercial infill districts and incentives. In addition to the investment and other incentives for Old Town Avondale, the municipality is nearing completion on a City Center Specific Area Plan north of City Hall, which incorporates infill, mixed-use, pedestrian linkages and other elements. Also, it initiated a full service Healthy Avondale 2010 program that provides a range of efforts for realistic solutions to physical, environmental and community problems. Avondale has instituted many policies and plans for open space and trail linkages. However, it is near the bottom tier when compared to other jurisdictions in the Valley and on national benchmarks in the total area of parks and open space per capita.

Goodyear: C+

Goodyear has many positive plans and goals in place. Its efforts on infill include the creation of a Mixed Use land designation and use of area plans, as in the Litchfield Corridor Revitalization Area Plan. Also, in recognition of its heritage and proximity to Luke Air Force Base, it created an Agricultural Protection District. The city does not appear to have policies in place regarding housing affordability or the needs of an aging population. Despite projects like the Bullard Wash Recreation Corridor, the city is in the bottom tier on parks and dedicated open space per capita.

Counties

Maricopa County: A

Maricopa County continues to be a leader in open space thinking with its large regional park system and by beginning development of the monumental Maricopa Trail, which will interconnect the parks with a regional trails system running through most of the municipalities in the county. The county has been engaged in a strong visioning exercise to guide a comprehensive plan update and build consensus around a vision for what is being described as the fast approaching Sun Corridor megapolitan area. There is good coordination with the Valley's other jurisdictions on planning and land use. However, the county seems to punt on establishing solid growth management policies due to having jurisdiction over unincorporated areas only. These areas, making up three-quarters of the county, have a big impact on surrounding communities, neighboring counties and what will ultimately be the Phoenix-Tucson core of the Sun Corridor.

Making the Grade

Pinal County: B+

Pinal County has made a dramatic grade improvement in Land Use over the previous Report Card. Now facing urban development encroachment from both Maricopa and Pima counties, the aptly named Growth Planning Initiative is a strong visioning exercise to guide a comprehensive plan update and to build a consensus around a vision for the future. This is important to how the county will manage rapid growth as the central link of the Sun Corridor. Pinal County has also been actively involved in good coordination with the area's municipalities on planning and land use issues. Pinal County exhibits a strong commitment to regional open space preservation through its participation with Maricopa and Pima Counties on the planning of San Tan Mountain Regional Park and Tortolita Mountain Park respectively.

LAND USE (Populations Under 50,000)

LAND USE GRADES Communities < 50,000 Population

| Community | Population | Land Use |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Apache Junction | 37,539 | B+ |
| Fountain Hills | 25,540 | A- |
| Queen Creek | 21,363 | B+ |
| Tolleson | 6,680 | C+ |
| Carefree | 3,871 | C |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Apache Junction: B+

Apache Junction has a solid economic development department for its size, with a good use of redevelopment incentive districts. It is working toward infill strategies, as in the City Center Zoning District. The community is emerging as a leader for green/sustainability building design with public buildings like its City Hall. The completion of the first all solar Habitat for Humanity subdivision in Arizona demonstrates that this community is on the right path. The city also has a commitment to participate with other jurisdictions and agencies, as in the master planning and regional visioning process for development of State Trust land. The municipality is in the top tier of Valley communities and exceeds national averages on parks and dedicated open space per capita. It needs to continue efforts in comprehensive open space planning to include connectivity for wildlife purposes. Also, it may need to have more refinement of its vision to guide future development.

Fountain Hills: A-

Early in its incorporation, Fountain Hills adopted hillside development standards. It continues to be a leader in the Valley for mountain and wash protection regulations. It is well above the national average on parks and dedicated open space per capita, and by a wide margin in dedicated open space in the Valley. It has made good strides in pedestrian linkages, including

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implementation of its long-range sidewalk plan and use of development agreements in trail access. For its size, it incorporates many aspects found in a larger community for promoting economic development. This includes a dedicated staff and a proactive interview/needs assessment program. Its relatively small commercial district area provides opportunity for mixed-use, higher residential density and compact development standards. However, its predominant low-density character creates challenges for housing affordability.

Queen Creek: B+

As with other outlying Valley municipalities, Queen Creek's growth has been among the fastest in the nation. In the face of this, the community has been able to develop a vision for preserving its natural and scenic resources and rural character with policies to implement the vision, which is laudable. An impressive trails and open space plan has been developed with actionable items identified to achieve the plan. However, currently minimal open space and desert preserves have been set aside, given the town's population and land area. An annual review of impact fees is a positive policy, ensuring that the fees are assessed fairly and reflect current market conditions, as well as town costs for providing services.

Tolleson: C+

Compared with the Valley's other small municipalities of a decade ago, Tolleson's population growth has been flat. Once dependent on agriculture, Tolleson has one of the highest employment to resident ratios in the area, if not the highest, with a strong industrial and commercial base. Despite its size, parks and recreation planning is done with regional context in mind, emphasizing connections between adjacent municipalities via open space and trails. While actively engaged in a broad range of economic development strategies, Tolleson could focus on improving the character, look and function of the community, as a tool. The city has a large area of commercial and industrial potential and should consider creating redevelopment districts and better promoting existing programs. Tolleson updated its General Plan in 2005 and should now look to update portions of its zoning code, which dates back almost 10 years. As an example, Tolleson's General Plan supports mixed-use development but the current zoning code lacks mixed-use regulation options available in other similar Valley communities.

Carefree: C

Carefree has the smallest population of the communities reviewed in this Report Card. The town center is compact and affords opportunity for higher density around the periphery via the recent mixed-use option in the zoning ordinance. It should improve its focus on affordability of housing options and the needs of an aging population. The town does a good job in preserving natural washes and hillside through code requirements and voluntary conservation easements. This is good, as the community has a lot of surrounding natural open space. However, it provides the lowest amount of public park area compared to the other Valley communities with a population fewer than 50,000. Also, it may want to begin to focus on codes and policies that address historic preservation to ensure it does not lose its sense of place.

Making the Grade



TRANSPORTATION Introduction

Since the 2004 Report Card was issued, transportation has received much attention and has been handsomely rewarded with additional funding. Voters reauthorized the countywide one-half cent transportation sales tax by approving Proposition 400, which provides more than \$15 billion to fund new freeways, roads and transit options, including the next phase of the Valley's light rail system. These initiatives and others have paved the way (no pun intended) for the addition of new freeways, such as the Loop 202 and widening of existing freeways, as well as significant improvements to major arterials, new infrastructure and expanded bus service, all of which has helped to address traffic congestion caused by the Valley's burgeoning population.

Each community was requested to respond to twelve questions divided into three major categories – Transportation Planning, Alternative Transportation Options and Traffic Engineering and Safety. Within each category questions were posed to determine how well each city's programs aligned with Valley Forward's principles. An extra credit question was also provided to give respondents an opportunity to provide additional information about unique aspects of their programs.

The following Valley Forward transportation principles represent our historic approach to enhancing mobility in our region:

TRANSPORTATION Principles

1. Transportation systems should be balanced, providing for the diverse needs and safety of the community by including multi-modal elements such as freeways, rail, transit, pedestrian, bicycle and other alternatives to the automobile;
2. Transportation planning processes should be regional in scope and encourage cooperation between neighboring communities;
3. Coordination of transportation and land use planning processes should be a priority and encourage multi-modal oriented design;
4. Dedicated funding and/or programs to support multi-modal transportation systems must be made available;
5. Transportation spending should be determined on performance-based criteria.

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TRANSPORTATION (Populations Over 50,000)

TRANSPORTATION GRADES

Communities > 50,000 Population and Counties

| Community | Population | Transportation |
|------------|------------|----------------|
| Phoenix | 1,538,568 | A |
| Mesa | 456,344 | A- |
| Glendale | 246,076 | A |
| Chandler | 241,205 | A |
| Scottsdale | 240,126 | A- |
| Gilbert | 203,656 | A- |
| Tempe | 167,871 | A |
| Peoria | 151,541 | A- |
| Surprise | 104,895 | B |
| Avondale | 75,256 | C+ |
| Goodyear | 55,954 | F |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|----|
| Maricopa County | 3,907,492 | C+ |
| Pinal County | 327,670 | B |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Phoenix: A

Phoenix has numerous programs that promote multi-modal transportation types and multiple sources of dedicated funding including a dedicated sales tax, impact fees and bonds. In addition to funding, the city also has a significant and committed transportation staff. Phoenix has a wide range of transportation related programs that improve mobility in the city. A few of these include: "Big Splash," which will invest nearly \$70 million on more bus service, new routes, new busses and more jobs; transit public safety is now being handled by the Police Department instead of a contractor; and contracting with Easter Seals of Arizona to provide transportation assistance to employed persons with disabilities.

Mesa: A-

Mesa has integrated Valley Forward's transportation principles into its transportation plan. The city's multi-modal planning process is very well linked to land use planning and economic development efforts. The community has several dedicated funding sources for transportation that includes a voter approved "Quality of Life Tax." Along with the funding sources, Mesa also has several dedicated staff resources.

Making the Grade

Glendale: A

Glendale takes a very multi-modal approach in its transportation and land use planning process. From its solid performance based metrics, to dedicated local funding, to a robust and actively promoted alternative transportation program, the city's transportation efforts are right in sync with Valley Forward's principles. Glendale's school-based education programs facilitate outreach on bike and pedestrian safety, and its "Bus Buddies" program for senior citizens are commendable, representing icing on the cake.

Chandler: A

Chandler has integrated Valley Forward's transportation principles into its transportation plan. The city has as a priority an integrated multi-modal transportation system that facilitates the use of alternative modes of travel for different types of trips. Chandler is the first city in Arizona to introduce and expand the use of transit "queue jumper" lanes that allow busses to get in front of traffic at signals to improve travel times.

Scottsdale: A-

Once again Scottsdale has shown that it takes transportation seriously. The city applies a well-coordinated multi-modal approach to its transportation and land use planning process. Its performance-based metrics are linked to funding decisions and there are several sources of local dedicated funding to support programs. Scottsdale has a robust alternative transportation program, including the well-known "Scottsdale Trolley." As a result, transit ridership has increased 25% since the 2004 Valley Forward Report Card. The city also has an innovative Art and Public Transportation Program designed to make public transportation more enjoyable by incorporating art in public transit projects.

Gilbert: A-

Gilbert has integrated Valley Forward's transportation principles into its transportation plan. Multi-modal elements include super-grid bus routes, Dial-A-Ride, bicycle lanes, vanpools, pedestrian walkways, equestrian trails and recreational/multi-purpose trails. Dedicated local revenues, Prop. 400 funds and state and federal funding are utilized to implement Gilbert's Transportation Plan.

Tempe: A

"Tempe in Motion" describes the city's multi-modal approach to transportation. Its transportation and land use planning processes are well coordinated and the community provides about \$36 million in funding to its transportation programs annually through a dedicated sales tax. "Tempe in Motion" is a robust alternative transportation program that includes a free neighborhood circulator called "Orbit." The City also has several unique programs to encourage more of its citizens to use transit, including a Youth Free bus program, the ASU U-Pass program, and new and low-income resident programs. Tempe's efforts have resulted in a 17% increase in transit ridership since the last report card.

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Peoria: A-

Peoria's transportation program has made definite improvements since the last Report Card. Although its current planning process is somewhat limited, its main focus being to "keep up with growth," the city does have a robust alternative transportation program and dedicated local funding in place. Its Circulation System Assessment (CSA) model is somewhat unique and is used by the city in conjunction with impact fees to preserve right-of-ways for future transportation corridors. The city also has solid programs addressing efficient flow of traffic and traffic safety, although not all of its traffic lights are synchronized.

Surprise: B

Surprise has focused its transportation planning on freeways, expanded bus service and studying commuter rail. Its multi-modal options are limited to bike lanes and regional multi-purpose trails. Local funding for transportation comes from the general fund and developer impact fees. Surprise has developed an innovative Parkway Concept that utilizes "Median U-turn Intersection Treatment." This concept does not allow left turns in the intersection, but at designated areas in the medians instead; it is designed for u-turns to reduce delays at intersections.

Avondale: C+

The critical areas of Avondale's Transportation Plan are limited when it comes to multi-modal elements. Its focus is on roadway improvements for growth. The city has received a grant for a "Safe Routes to School Project" that will provide consistent education across school district boundaries.

Goodyear: F

Based on the lack of responses to questions in the 2008 Report Card Survey, it was not possible to determine if Goodyear is seriously considering transportation alternatives that integrate VFA's transportation principles. Goodyear has been focused on its rapid growth and currently does not have a transportation master plan in place. The city is working on a plan; however, it will not be completed until December 2008. Valley Forward sincerely hopes that Goodyear will recognize that planning for rapid growth absolutely must include planning for meeting the transportation needs of the community. Without such coordinated planning, rapid growth can have a significant negative impact on a community's quality of life and sustainability.

Counties

Maricopa County: C+

Maricopa County's transportation and land use planning processes are well coordinated, and the linkage between its performance based metrics and funding decisions is commendable. The county continues on an effort noted in the 2004 Report Card to use technology to manage and coordinate traffic. The innovative REACT program is designed to improve traffic safety, traffic

Making the Grade

flow and coordination with other agencies. Maricopa County falls somewhat short on its alternative transportation program, which does not have dedicated funding.

Pinal County: B

Pinal County has awakened and taken on a leadership role in regional transportation planning efforts. The county seems to have a good understanding of the impacts of the growth coming its way and is currently focused on significant regional issues, such as creating transportation corridors and freeways. As a consequence, it is less focused on developing alternative modes of transportation. Valley Forward understands the need to provide adequate traffic infrastructure, but at the same time strongly recommends that Pinal County place more emphasis on a multi-modal approach in its planning process. Being proactive now will help the county avoid mistakes made in other Valley communities in the past. A more multi-modal approach will put Pinal County in a very good position to handle future growth.

TRANSPORTATION (Populations Under 50,000)

TRANSPORTATION GRADES Communities < 50,000 Population

| Community | Population | Transportation |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Apache Junction | 37,539 | B |
| Fountain Hills | 25,540 | B- |
| Queen Creek | 21,363 | B- |
| Tolleson | 6,680 | C |
| Carefree | 3,871 | D |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Apache Junction: B

Apache Junction has increased efforts to improve its transportation program since Valley Forward's 2004 Report Card. Although transit options are still limited, the city's transportation and land use planning processes are now well coordinated, and some staff support and funding are assigned to the transportation efforts. Funding comes from the general fund and developer fees. While Apache Junction may long for the days when it was a small, relatively rural community with hitching posts for horses, it now recognizes that it is no longer on the fringe and must begin to implement a more aggressive, multi-modal approach to transportation.

Fountain Hills: B-

Fountain Hills takes a somewhat limited multi-modal approach to its transportation planning process, although there seems to be good coordination between transportation and land use planning. The city offers citizens a few alternative transportation options, but does not actively promote the program. Funding for transportation programs comes from the general fund and is

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not dedicated. Fountain Hills does take a very proactive approach to traffic safety, particularly in consideration of the increased age demographics of its drivers.

Queen Creek: B-

Due to Queen Creek's rapid growth, its main transportation focus has been on roadway improvements. Therefore, there has been limited planning for multi-modal transportation. Currently funding for transportation planning is through a 5-year Capital Drainage and Transportation Fund, along with developer impact fees. One aspect of the town's transportation program that is unique is the way it coordinates capital improvement projects with private development to gain the most cost effective benefits while minimizing congestion and disruption. A good example of this is the Ellsworth Loop Road Improvement District project.

Tolleson: C

Due to Tolleson's location in the West Valley, the community has been focused on increasing traffic flow through the municipality. Local funding for multi-modal transportation is limited to the general fund. The city is integrating a pedestrian friendly atmosphere by adding sidewalks, traffic signals and completion of 70 speed humps located throughout its boundaries. Improvements to 91st Avenue include the addition of sidewalks, new bike lanes, new traffic lights and light synchronization.

Carefree: D

Carefree seems to place minimal emphasis on transportation planning. As noted in their response, the city believes they "do not have critical mass to support transit." Although Carefree indicates it is developing a plan to "explore" transportation options, there is currently no plan in place and very limited choices available to citizens. Funding for its program comes from the general fund. Given the growth in the Northeast Valley, Carefree needs to step up, be more proactive in its approach to transportation and be a participant rather than a bystander.

Making the Grade



WATER Introduction

As part of its Report Card process this year, Valley Forward articulated its core set of principles relating to all facets of water management, including long-range planning, infrastructure financing, conservation, drought preparedness and public education.

Overall, the grades are high. Cities and towns in the Valley are serving a safe, reliable and high quality supply of water to residents. Grades reflect a generally strong commitment to long-range planning, which includes diversified conservation programs, recharge and drought preparedness.

Residents and visitors to the Valley can rest assured that the water supply here is well managed and that water providers are planning aggressively to protect the region's water future. The following Valley Forward principles focus on water for the long-term sustainability of our life in the desert:

WATER Principles

1. Long-range water planning should be an integral part of the municipal planning effort and routinely updated to increase Valley livability and sustainability;
2. Valley water providers should preferentially utilize renewable water supplies and minimize groundwater overdraft;
3. Valley water providers should ensure that Valley water users are consistently delivered quality water;
4. Valley water providers should develop sound policy and adequately fund efforts such as drought management, water conservation, aesthetics, habitat and recreational opportunities;
5. Valley water providers should promote/fund water education programs in the communities they serve;
6. Valley cities and towns served by a private or public water utility have a responsibility to their residents to work closely with the utility to fully understand the water system, policy and future water management issues.

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WATER (Populations Over 50,000)

WATER GRADES

Communities > 50,000 Population and Counties

| Community | Population | Water |
|------------|------------|-------|
| Phoenix | 1,538,568 | A |
| Mesa | 456,344 | A |
| Glendale | 246,076 | A |
| Chandler | 241,205 | A+ |
| Scottsdale | 240,126 | A |
| Gilbert | 203,656 | A |
| Tempe | 167,871 | A |
| Peoria | 151,541 | A |
| Surprise | 104,895 | B |
| Avondale | 75,256 | A- |
| Goodyear | 55,954 | B+ |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|
| Maricopa County | 3,907,492 | N/A |
| Pinal County | 327,670 | N/A |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Phoenix: A

Phoenix has a diverse water supply portfolio that principally relies on renewable supplies. The city's long-range management program incorporates various growth scenarios and has appropriate drought planning. Phoenix should continue efforts to utilize more reclaimed water. The municipality also needs to maintain a focus on showing better compliance with safe drinking water regulations.

Mesa: A

Mesa has an active and diverse water conservation program. Long-range planning extends beyond population build out with scheduled updates and incorporation of water utility that serves part of the city. The municipality has developed a strong working relationship with neighboring Indian tribes, including the Gila River Indian Community and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

Glendale: A

Glendale is actively working to achieve aquifer sustainability through its diversified water sources and commitment to recharge. The city is maintaining a multi-pronged approach to funding infrastructure. Glendale's award-winning conservation program includes public education, as well as penalties for wasting water and a conservation rate schedule.

Making the Grade

Chandler: A+

Chandler shows a dedication to water resource planning that is a role model for other Valley water providers. The community has a robust conservation program that is showing measurable results in per capita water use reductions. A number of unique and creative programs are in place that demonstrate a strong level of commitment to engage other water users in regional management and enhance the sustainability of this precious resource.

Scottsdale: A

Scottsdale has a comprehensive drought plan that includes augmentation of supplies and reducing use. The city is finalizing its Integrated Water Master Plan that evaluates water system needs through estimated build out in 2035. While Scottsdale has a well-funded and active conservation program, it needs to focus on reducing gallons per capita per day among residents.

Gilbert: A

Gilbert is maximizing use of reclaimed water supplies while creating habitat and recreational opportunities. The city demonstrates a commitment to long-range planning to ensure a sustainable resource. Its diverse conservation program is lowering per capita water consumption. The community should explore a more comprehensive financing program for infrastructure that is less reliant on growth.

Tempe: A

Tempe excelled in many areas, including its long range planning and coordination with other cities and water suppliers, as well as use of 100 percent of its reclaimed water in riparian and recreational areas. Tempe has a robust water conservation program and well defined long-term drought response plan. Its commitment to recharge is realized through participation in four such projects. The city is also credited with incorporating renewable energy in its water treatment plants, which shows an understanding of sustainability in all aspects of water operations. As well, the city is considering solar for its water facilities.

Peoria: A

Peoria's development of the Principle for Sound Water Management is an excellent tool for long-term planning. The community has implemented a diversified conservation program that includes a public education component, rebates for installing low flow devices and inverted block rate water pricing. The city's recharge program further demonstrates a commitment to sustainable water management.

Surprise: B

Surprise has implemented a proactive water conservation program that includes a dedicated staff, education, ordinances and rate schedule. Surprise is appropriately utilizing 100 percent of its reclaimed water. The city has a high reliance on groundwater and should explore additional opportunities to directly deliver treated surface water supplies. Surprise should also concentrate efforts to manage and control the multiple water suppliers providing water to the city. The

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community should work to develop sustainable infrastructure financing that has less reliance on growth.

Avondale: A-

Avondale demonstrates a good understanding of the importance of sustainable water management. The city has a program for sustainable water sources being obtained to serve population through build out. The Crystal Gardens wetlands promote livability by attracting wildlife and enhancing recreational opportunities for residents.

Goodyear: B+

Goodyear has been consistently delivering water that meets all of safe drinking water requirements. Goodyear maximizes use of reclaimed water and has a decreasing per capita water use. The city should look to gain more control over water supplies. Goodyear has relatively high per capita water use that could be assisted by a more substantial water conservation program.

Counties

Maricopa County: N/A

Pinal County: N/A

WATER (Populations Under 50,000)

WATER GRADES Communities < 50,000 Population

| Community | Population | Water |
|-----------------|------------|-------|
| Apache Junction | 37,539 | B |
| Fountain Hills | 25,540 | C+ |
| Queen Creek | 21,363 | B- |
| Tolleson | 6,680 | B |
| Carefree | 3,871 | B- |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

Apache Junction: B

Apache Junction has a strong commitment to long-range planning with consideration of other water providers. Generally low overall per capita water use is declining over time. The city has efficient utilization of renewable supplies to minimize groundwater overdraft. The city should explore developing sustainable infrastructure funding mechanisms and needs to be more

Making the Grade

proactively involved to ensure compliance with Safe Drinking Water requirements. The city should develop a plan to address potential long-term drought issues.

Fountain Hills: C+

It is commendable for Fountain Hills that 100% of its wastewater is reclaimed and reused. The town did not indicate its level of involvement in its water utility's decision-making; it should become involved. The community should also become more involved in reducing violations of the Safe Water Drinking Act. In addition, Fountain Hills' staff should be more knowledgeable about residential water use, and the community should develop and implement a long-term water management plan and drought response program.

Queen Creek: B-

Queen Creek is currently reclaiming 100% of reclaimed water. The community is also developing a sound plan to acquire private water companies and financial mechanisms to pay for infrastructure. It would be beneficial for Queen Creek to be less reliant on groundwater supplies and make more use of reclaimed water. Queen Creek should also develop a more comprehensive program to address long-term drought.

Tolleson: B

Tolleson is highly dependent on a water supply from Phoenix and should become more actively involved in long-range water supply planning with Phoenix. Tolleson is consistently supplying water that meets safe drinking water requirements. The community should look for opportunities to develop a recharge project within its service area.

Carefree: B-

Carefree's response to our survey did not indicate a level of involvement with two water utilities serving citizens. The town demonstrates the ability to provide a safe and reliable supply to residents, however, the community should develop a long-term water resource management plan and promote water conservation programs.

The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card

Valley Forward Association

Making the Grade: The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card

GRADE SUMMARY

| Community | Population | Air | Land Use | Transportation | Water |
|-----------------|------------|-----|----------|----------------|-------|
| Phoenix | 1,538,568 | A | A | A | A |
| Mesa | 456,344 | A- | B+ | A- | A |
| Glendale | 246,076 | A- | A- | A | A |
| Chandler | 241,205 | B | A- | A | A+ |
| Scottsdale | 240,126 | A- | A- | A- | A |
| Gilbert | 203,656 | A- | A- | A- | A |
| Tempe | 167,871 | A- | A- | A | A |
| Peoria | 151,541 | A- | A | A- | A |
| Surprise | 104,895 | B | A- | B | B |
| Avondale | 75,256 | B- | B | C+ | A- |
| Goodyear | 55,954 | B+ | C+ | F | B+ |
| Buckeye | 40,467 | I * | I | I | I |
| Apache Junction | 37,539 | B | B+ | B | B |
| El Mirage | 33,583 | I | I | I | I |
| Fountain Hills | 25,540 | B | A- | B- | C+ |
| Queen Creek | 21,363 | A | B+ | B- | B- |
| Paradise Valley | 14,215 | I | I | I | I |
| Tolleson | 6,680 | B | C+ | C | B |
| Wickenburg | 6,380 | I | I | I | I |
| Guadalupe | 5,606 | I | I | I | I |
| Litchfield Park | 5,055 | I | I | I | I |
| Cave Creek | 5,028 | I | I | I | I |
| Carefree | 3,871 | B | C | D | B- |
| Gila Bend | 1,891 | I | I | I | I |
| Maricopa County | 3,907,492 | A- | A | C+ | N/A |
| Pinal County | 327,670 | B | B+ | B | N/A |

Source: July 2007 Population Estimates; Department of Economic Security

* I – Incomplete (In addition to the communities listed above, we did not receive responses to our Report Card Survey from the three Tribal Nations – the Fort McDowell Yavapai, the Gila River Indian and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa.

Making the Grade

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The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Sustainability is the new buzzword these days. But the fundamental and most important point from Valley Forward's perspective is not the label. It's whether the idea at the core galvanizes communities and people to action.

Valley communities must continue to undertake efforts that facilitate healthy living in the desert. Sustainability is about the human interaction with the landscape in which we live, work and play. Our policymakers and residents know, at the gut level, what is working and not working in our region. We all know that as more and more people move to the Valley, the very things that drew them here in the first place become threatened – desert mountain vistas, clean air, an abundant supply of quality water and congestion-free transportation corridors. This is the reality of growth.

But we cannot and should not discourage growth – we should embrace it. The question is how do we incorporate these newcomers into an already challenged landscape? How do we create and maintain sustainable, livable communities?

Valley Forward looks to Valley communities to take on this challenge, keeping residents – the people who have made this place their home – at the forefront of their sustainability agenda. The planning and development choices in all areas that affect a community's future – air quality, land use, open space, transportation and water – have a profound impact on our personal lives.

Making the Grade



MISSION:

Valley Forward Association brings business and civic leaders together to convene thoughtful public dialogue on regional issues and to promote cooperative efforts to improve the environment and livability of Valley communities.

VISION:

Our metropolitan region will be among the best places in America to live, work, learn and recreate. Valley Forward will dedicate its resources to enhancing our Valley communities.

The Valley's 2008 Environmental Report Card



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