



Pinal Airpark – Airport Master Plan – Public Meeting  
July 31, 2014 – 6:30 PM  
Pinal Airpark, Pinal County Offices

### **Project Overview**

---

Pinal County (County) is in the process of preparing a Master Plan for Pinal Airpark (Airport). A Master Plan is a planning study required to secure funding for development projects by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). The Master Plan will provide important data useful to the County in determining the future role the Airport will play in the community and the region. It will also serve as a funding tool to guide future Airport development. As part of the Master Plan process, the County has hosted two Public Meetings to gather community comments and input to potentially be incorporated into the development plan.

### **Public Meeting Overview**

---

The second Public Meeting was held on July 31, 2014, at Pinal Airpark within the Pinal County Offices with staff representatives from Pinal County, Pinal Airpark and the C&S consultant team. The meeting consisted of a presentation describing key findings of the Airport's existing conditions, forecast of aviation activity and selection of a design aircraft, facility requirements or necessary improvements/upgrades to accommodate existing and future demand along with the next steps of the Master Plan process. The Pinal Airpark Mater Plan Fact Sheet 2 was made available to meeting attendees.

### **Outreach and Advertising**

---

The Pinal Airpark – Airport Master Plan project team conducted a variety of outreach to the surrounding community in order to inform community members of the Airport Master Plan project and upcoming public meeting.

A press release summarizing the project objectives along with information regarding the upcoming public meeting was submitted to the County Communications Director for release. The Pinal Airpark Master Plan Draft Existing Conditions Needs Report and Fact Sheet 2 were also submitted to the County Communications Director and posted to the County website.

Postcards with the project overview and public meeting information were mailed to the landowners surrounding the Airport. Flyers were mailed to each county library to be set-out for public distribution.

The public meeting was posted to all Chamber of Commerce calendars within the County. Meeting information was also submitted to cities and towns surrounding the Airport to be posted to their individual websites to ensure widespread awareness.

The project team reached out to the Arizona Association of Community Managers to notify County Home Owners Associations and Community Managers of the upcoming public meeting.



Email notifications were also distributed to the Ak-Chin Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community and Tohono O’odham Nation representatives along with County-identified Regional Economic Development Organizations.

### **Comments and Questions Expressed by Meeting Attendees**

The Airport’s existing/future critical aircraft was presented to be the Boeing 747-400. A meeting attendee asked why this aircraft was selected as the Airport’s critical aircraft as there are larger aircraft operating there than the 747 such as a 777. *C&S Companies Representative* responded that the 747-400 aircraft was selected as the Airport’s Critical Aircraft because it was the most demanding aircraft frequently utilizing the Airport.

The Airport’s existing lighting, signage, markings and navigational aids were presented and it was noted that runway lighting should be upgraded to high-intensity airfield lighting. A meeting attendee asked if being a dark sky county impacts the lighting requirements identified for the Airport. *C&S Companies Representative* responded that lighting requirements for the Airport are determined to accommodate the critical aircraft the Airport serves.

Once the meeting was opened to attendee questions and comments meeting attendees asked if there was a specific goal in mind for the Airport. *C&S Companies Representative* explained that the main objective of the Master Plan process is to ensure the Airport is brought into compliance with the FAA as they are the main source of potential funding for airport improvements; this involves ensuring that the Airport is available for public use, which was completed in the initial steps via removal of the front entrance guard and installation of a perimeter fence. Additionally, the vision for the Airport should be crafted by the County, community and airport users. However, with the existing operations of Marana Aerospace Solutions (the current Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul [MRO] operator) and Silver Bell Army Heliport (SBAH), both of which add to the economic vitality of the County, there is a vision for the Airport in place. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, added that the County Board of Supervisors creates the vision and has tasked the airport personnel with creating an economic engine. A current focus of the Airport is to maintain current tenants and users while gaining new tenants and users and growing the Airport, making it a great asset to the County.

A meeting attendee asked if Marana Aerospace Solutions currently has a long-term contract with Pinal Airpark. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, answered that the contract currently extends to 2032.

In regards to the Airport’s goal, *County Board of Supervisors Chairman Anthony Smith* added once the best use of the Airport has been identified the County aims to maximize the revenue and achieve the highest job generation possible for this facility.

A meeting attendee inquired if the Town of Marana is interested in annexing the Airport. *County Board of Supervisors Chairman Anthony Smith* confirmed they are interested; however, a formal plan of how this would be implemented has not been proposed. *Jim Petty, Pinal*



*Airpark Director*, added that the Town of Marana is interested in partnering in the future. This addition would enhance the services the Airport provides to the tenants and the public.

A meeting attendee asked if the SBAH was on State of Arizona (State) land and not part of the Airport. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, confirmed the SBAH is on State land and there are potentials for synergies between the two entities to grow both facilities.

A meeting attendee commented that there is a stigma regarding the land use at the Airport and its unavailability to the public. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, agreed and added that the County is making efforts to communicate the availability of the Airport to the public. Once the master planning process is complete the County will work towards implementing a marketing campaign, which will continue the efforts to communicate the Airport's availability to the public.

Clarification was requested from a meeting attendee in regards to the purpose of the Master Plan as it was believed to be intended to gain grant funding so improvements would not require funding from County revenue and tax payer money. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, clarified that money expended at the Airport does not come from tax payers. Conversations are ongoing regarding the possibility of obtaining State funding beginning July 1, 2015, for rehabilitation and repair of the Airport's runway. The meeting attendee further expressed concern that the existing airport tenant who utilized the facility should assist with the maintenance of the existing pavement issues. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, explained that the Airport currently has three tenants (an increase since the last public meeting). The FAA requires that the Airport be available for other businesses to operate there so it is not exclusively utilized by one tenant. As long as the Airport follows FAA guidelines it will be eligible for FAA grant funding.

Meeting attendees further inquired if the existing tenant, Marana Aerospace Solutions, is required to assist with funding of the necessary airport improvements due to the perceived lack of historical maintenance of the facility. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, responded that Marana Aerospace Solutions is assisting through continuous payment of their lease. *C&S Companies Representatives* added that this tenant/Airport situation is typical for airports since tenants are obligated to pay the lease but are not required to maintain the property as that is the responsibility of the owner. A meeting attendee inquired if Marana Aerospace Solutions controls the airport property. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, clarified that Marana Aerospace Solutions is in control of only their leased space, which is identified in their agreement. Marana Aerospace Solutions is in control of the barracks and subleases the restaurant. The County will regain control of the hotel properties at the end of 2015.

*County Board of Supervisors Chairman Anthony Smith* requested *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, explain how the sources of grant money are split. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, explained that the FAA would provide 91 percent of funding for an improvement project. The balance of the project funding would be split between the State and the County. The State



funding is provided from the statewide airport fuel and property tax and the County funding is generated from airport revenue.

A meeting attendee asked where the rent for the planes being stored at the Airport is allotted to. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, explained that Marana Aerospace Solutions pays a per-plane-per-day charge to the County. *Louis Anderson, Pinal County Public Works Director*, further explained that Pinal Airpark is an enterprise operation and therefore must fund itself so the general fund and the tax payers are not paying for the Airport to operate. The Airport continues to strive to ensure that the rent offsets the operating expense with money remaining at the end of the year to contribute towards improvements.

A meeting attendee asked if the Airport would aim to develop into a commercial service airport. *Louis Anderson, Pinal County Public Works Director*, explained that the Airport's utilization will be aimed at industrial/job creation as it exists now.

A meeting attendee asked how the aircraft communicate to know it is safe to land at the Airport. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, explained that there is a common radio frequency (CTAF) pilots utilize to communicate to each other as the Airport is a non-Air Traffic Control Tower facility.

A meeting attendee asked how large aircraft can utilize the Airport if the runway is in poor condition. *C&S Companies Representative* explained that the Airport's runway is not unusable but will become unusable if not repaired and maintained correctly in the near future.

Various comments were received from meeting attendees in support of growth for the Airport.

A meeting attendee asked if the Airport will have an Air Traffic Control Tower in the future. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, responded that addition of an Air Traffic Control Tower to the Airport could be a possibility due to the helicopter traffic; however, the forecast of operations does not warrant the need for one.

A meeting attendee suggested that the Pinal Airpark Master Plan look at the addition of green technology utilization at the Airport. *Jim Petty, Pinal Airpark Director*, informed the group that the Airport submitted a requisition to Trico (Airport's electrical service provider) to perform a study to evaluate the cost to upgrade all electrical needs with solar power included. *Carly Shannon, C&S Companies*, added solar power would be a great option for the Airport.

*C&S Companies Representative* provided closing comments and the meeting was adjourned.

### **Public Meeting Follow-up**

---

These meeting minutes and a PDF of the presentation shown at the July 31, 2014, public meeting will be posted to the County's website. Attendees have also been added to the outreach contact list to directly receive future project information.