Community Services

Introduction

Many entities provide community facilities and services in Coconino County including the County, State and federal agencies, special districts, and the private sector. Maintaining a high degree of coordination between these various providers helps ensure that adequate facilities are provided and that improvements keep pace with DEVELOPMENT. By proactively siting facilities and infrastructure, the County can help direct the future growth and development. Developing new infrastructure can have a negative effect on the environment if the County does not consider and mitigate potential impacts during planning. Major utility corridors containing high-voltage power lines and other infrastructure may cause HABITAT FRAGMENTATION and disrupt wildlife movement. Proactive planning can minimize such impacts.

This Chapter establishes policies that provide guidance on community services related to locating utilities and telecommunications infrastructure in a way that respects the community character, scenic resources, and ecological integrity. These policies also encourage environmentally compatible solid waste management and WASTEWATER treatment methods including reuse and recharge. It also covers the County's role in promoting infrastructure for quality public health, as well as effective, accessible educational opportunities. This Chapter encourages adequate public facilities to support desirable land use and development patterns while conserving natural resources. The goals and policies are designed to ensure the County plans for services and facilities either during the land development process or through appropriate government programs.

Utility Services & Corridors

Local utility services are critical to development. Public utility companies provide water, electricity, telephone, natural gas, cable television, and telecommunication services under the regulatory authority of the ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION (ACC). In some cases, utilities are also provided by special IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS. Unlike some municipalities, Coconino County generally does not provide utilities. However, the County considers the availability of utilities when reviewing SUBDIVISION proposals and locations for local utility generating plants, substations, reservoirs, and similar installations through the CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT process. It must also consider the effects of infrastructure and natural resource use on the environment.

Utilities are a consideration in determining appropriate development patterns. For example, in areas that lack public utilities, very low-density development is often considered most appropriate. Conversely, where utilities exist and installing infrastructure is efficient and cost effective, high-density development is generally more feasible. One way to reduce utility and infrastructure costs is to implement INTEGRATED CONSERVATION DESIGN planning methods in new developments. Another way is to reduce the need for utility infrastructure through long-term solutions such as: energy conservation, alternative energy sources, public transportation, WATER CONSERVATION and WASTE STREAM management.

Utility providers are included in the earliest stages of the subdivision review process. The County works with them to determine whether utilities are available, whether infrastructure upgrades are needed, and whether additional easements or other improvements are necessary. The *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance* requires that developers provide a certain level of utility infrastructure depending on the subdivision classification, which varies according to average lot size. Subdivisions with the smallest average lot size (and therefore the highest density) require the highest level of utility improvements. As average lot size increases (and density decreases), fewer utility improvements are required. On the other hand, lands developed through LOT SPLITS often lack planned utility and roadway infrastructure. In those situations, individual landowners or builders work directly with utility providers for line extensions. In remote areas, line extensions, transformers, and other equipment are often cost prohibitive for individual property owners. This has prompted many owners in the remote areas of the county to consider living off the grid especially as improved technology and government incentives have made renewable energy more feasible, allowing for onsite electrical generation.

Major utility corridors such as those carrying high-voltage power lines, natural gas or coal slurry pipelines, and underground fiber optic cables present challenges on a LANDSCAPE scale. These corridors cross tribal, federal, state and private land-management jurisdictions. Although the County typically has no regulatory authority in the siting and construction of these lines, it participates in the public review process and has historically requested they follow existing infrastructure routes. These corridors play an important role in development. Permanent structural improvements are usually impossible in utility corridors and easements, and they may limit development. In addition, because of their size and linear orientation, these corridors can cause habitat fragmentation, disrupt wildlife movement patterns, and change hydrologic patterns as well as impact viewsheds. However, through creative planning and management approaches, corridors can be designed to minimize impacts. They may even be incorporated into developments as amenity features for TRAILS, OPEN SPACES, or GREENWAYS.

Goal: Promote the installation of utilities in a manner compatible with community character, scenic resources, and ecological conditions.

Policies:

1. Approval of development projects shall be considered only if public utilities or alternative technologies necessary to serve the use are available or can be provided by the developer.

2. Utilities infrastructure shall be located in a manner sensitive to community character and environmental and scenic resources.

3. The County encourages placing utility distribution lines underground whenever possible and when above ground, efforts should be made to minimize environmental, visual, and aesthetic impacts.

4. The County encourages utility providers to locate new transmission lines, pipelines, and other trans-county utilities in existing infrastructure corridors whenever possible.

5. The County encourages cooperation between developers and the owners of utility corridors to use such corridors for trails, open space, and greenway features.

6. The County's Public Information Office will work with utility providers on methods to provide notification to residents and land owners when utility work is being proposed.

Telecommunications Infrastructure

Efficient telecommunications infrastructure is necessary for public safety, convenience, economic development, and educational outreach through distance learning. Wireless communication may be the most feasible option for expanding phone and internet service to many areas of the county. Increasingly, access to and capacity of broadband connectivity are necessary to basic economic and social activity. This is particularly true in rural areas of the county. However, towers and related structures are often considered unsightly and impact the aesthetic qualities of surrounding landscapes. It is important to balance our need for the best available telecommunications services with the need to protect our valuable scenic resources and maintain neighborhood character.

Local governments must accommodate telecommunications infrastructure by federal law and also because of the recognized benefit access to service provides residents. However, local jurisdictions may regulate the siting of such facilities. Identifying appropriate sites requires collaboration between the County, providers, land management agencies, and the public. It involves identifying technical requirements and exploring ways to limit the number of structures to the minimum necessary for service, mitigate the visual impact of these structures, and minimize impacts to wildlife HABITAT.

The *Coconino County Zoning Ordinance* outlines the process, performance standards, and guidelines for siting and constructing wireless telecommunications facilities. These facilities, with a few exceptions, require a Conditional Use Permit. The ordinance specifies zoning classifications and indicates where such facilities are permitted. It also includes a prioritized list of preferred types of locations, as well as a list of sites which have higher conservation values. Performance standards and design requirements stipulate maximum height, setbacks, color, and materials.

Goal: Promote telecommunications service development while preserving the visual character of communities and landscapes.

Policies:

7. The County shall facilitate efforts to expand access and capacity of broadband and wireless telecommunications systems.

8. Telecommunication facilities shall be sited in a manner that is in harmony with neighborhood character, scenic resources, wildlife and their habitat, and the surrounding environment.

9. The County promotes the conservation of viewsheds through the efficient and effective development of telecommunication infrastructure.

Solid Waste

Managing solid waste is an important consideration in community planning. In Coconino County, solid waste is managed by recycling it or taking it to a landfill; primarily the City of Flagstaff's Cinder Lakes Landfill in Doney Park. One major private hauler has also constructed a transfer facility and hauls waste to a landfill in Joseph City in Navajo County. The City of Flagstaff offers curbside recycling services and transports recyclables to a materials recovery facility on Butler Avenue. The availability of recycling services has been greatly expanded over the last several years and is now available in many communities in the unincorporated areas of the county such as Kachina Village, Mountainaire and Doney Park. In many areas, recycling is available through private haulers that charge an extra fee for this service. Individuals can also haul their recyclables to the Flagstaff facility or to a transfer station. In more remote areas such as Fredonia, recycling is currently not available although efforts are underway to provide this service.

The *Coconino County Subdivision Ordinance* requires subdividers to indicate in their development proposal the distance between the new development and an approved sanitary landfill or solid-waste transfer station. If this distance exceeds 10 miles, the subdivider must form a sanitation district to construct, operate, and maintain a new facility. This requirement may be waived if the subdivision is served by adequate private collection.

Goal: Reduce solid waste, minimize the impact of its disposal, and support and encourage recycling.

Policies:

10. In coordination with waste hauling services, residents, and businesses, the County supports efforts to reduce the quantity of solid waste and to maximize the recovery of recyclable materials.

11. The County will work to educate residents about the benefits of waste reduction and recycling.

12. Proposed methods of solid waste disposal and recycling must be considered in the planning for major developments and subdivisions.

Wastewater

The goal of wastewater regulation is to protect GROUNDWATER, the environment, and public health. The ARIZONA DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (ADEQ) delegates the regulation of community wastewater systems up to 240,000 gallons per day to the Coconino

County Community Development Environmental Quality Division (CCCD-EQ). Additionally, CCCD-EQ regulates onsite wastewater systems as delegated by ADEQ.

Methods for handling wastewater depend on the nature of the site and the density of development. In most unincorporated county areas, individuals have onsite systems. In low-density areas with good soils and deep groundwater, these systems generally work well. However, some areas have poor soil conditions or high seasonal groundwater levels, which can make onsite systems difficult and expensive to develop.

A wastewater treatment system may be one of the biggest investments individual homeowners and developers make. The available space needed to accommodate a wastewater system can be significant. Knowing that your options could include a combination of systems including cluster systems, centralized systems, and onsite systems will allow for better incorporation into greenbelt areas. Federal and state aquifer protection rules allow "cluster systems" to serve several adjacent properties. In addition, cluster systems can provide benefits in areas where individual on-site systems are difficult or impractical.

A few unincorporated communities are served by centralized wastewater treatment systems, most of which are privately owned and operated. Centralized systems are beneficial for many reasons, especially for high-density development where lot sizes are too small to accommodate individual onsite systems. Reusing this treated wastewater, or RECLAIMED WATER, benefits water conservation and AQUIFER recharge.

Using reclaimed water can serve several conservation goals. Reclaimed water can be used to create community amenities or open space features. It can also be used to irrigate golf courses, playing fields, and landscaping; to create or enhance WETLANDS habitat; to augment or maintain water flow in streams; and to recharge groundwater. For example, the Kachina Village Wetlands benefits wildlife SPECIES and presents an opportunity to create amenities such as walking trails. It also provides educational and research opportunities and facilitates a cooperative partnership between the Kachina Village Improvement District (KVID), NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY (NAU), Arizona Game and Fish, Ducks Unlimited, and the Northern Arizona Audubon Society, among others.

Goal: Implement best practices associated with wastewater technologies or management.

Policies:

13. Development projects should consult with the Coconino County Environmental Quality Division to determine the most appropriate type of wastewater treatment system for the development.

14. The County encourages the use of environmentally sensitive onsite wastewater treatment systems or centralized community wastewater systems.

15. Development projects that include centralized community wastewater systems are encouraged to incorporate treated effluent disposal areas into greenbelts as part of an integrated conservation design or reuse treated wastewater for environmentally beneficial uses.

Public Health

Coconino County provides a broad range of health services to the public, focusing on lower socio-economic groups and at-risk populations. Research demonstrates that an individual's income, occupation, educational level and where they live are major determinants of his or her health. Low social and economic status individuals and families tend to have less access to the health care and as a result have worse health outcomes. Toward this end, the Coconino County Public Health Service District (PHSD) was created in 2009 and offers health services to enhance every county resident's ability to achieve their fullest health potential. PHSD works to prevent disease and promote wellness by educating the public, connecting people to health-related resources, developing health policy, enforcing public health code and providing safety-net services.

The services that the PHSD offers are varied and evolve as new threats to population health are monitored, identified and addressed. The PHSD is currently divided into four units: Child, Family and Community Health; Public Health Surveillance, Response and Vital Records; Population Health & Primary Care Services; and, Public Health Policy and Planning.

These four units provide the totality of services offered, which may vary over time but currently include: animal management, breastfeeding promotion, communicable disease monitoring and prevention, child fatality review, emergency preparedness, environmental health, guardianship investigations, HIV case management, home visitation for child abuse prevention, injury prevention, immunizations, juvenile health services, involuntary commitments (behavioral health), medical examiner, nutrition education, oral health, reproductive health, supplemental food assistance, tobacco use cessation, vital records and the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) services.

The PHSD has also been involved in developing a Coconino Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) that evaluates the public health consequences of an under-developed relationship with land use proposals and suggests actions that could be taken to minimize adverse health impacts and optimize beneficial ones. This idea is relatively new to the County; however, recent and continued training is expected to greatly increase the use of such plans in the near future. Such reports focus on:

- Access to affordable healthcare
- Access to healthy food
- Access to community services and recreational opportunities
- Enhanced quality of life for underserved and vulnerable populations
- Decreased risk for chronic diseases, such as obesity and asthma

The County encourages other agencies and the private sector to coordinate with the PHSD to ensure that services are appropriately integrated into the communities where they are needed most. As such, the PHSD coordinates with a variety of other local, state, and federal agencies to provide health services. Many other informal agreements and partnerships exist, and the PHSD plays a role in coordinating these groups to ensure resources are not duplicated in the public health system.

There are also two hospital districts in Coconino County that help improve access to healthcare for people living in rural areas. These are the Williams Hospital District that covers a large area around Williams, and the Page Hospital District, which provides services to the Page area including Marble Canyon *(see Coconino County Health and Medical Clinics map at the end of the Chapter).*

Goal: Prioritize the health and wellness of residents and visitors.

Policies:

16. The County will monitor indicators of population health and report significant trends or events.
17. The County will improve maternal and child health outcomes, including early childhood development.
18. The County will proactively address the leading health issues of residents such as chronic disease, vector borne illness, reproductive health, food borne illness, and injury prevention.
19. The County will prepare for and react to public health emergencies in conjunction with public safety organizations.
20. The County will encourage the planning and establishment of safe and accessible public spaces for residents to be active and socialize and establish community ties. Walkability and bike-ability are valued.
21. The County will evaluate the public health impact of projects involving development, transit, public services, tourism, public parks, and any other subjects relevant to the health of county residents. Projects having an adverse health impact will integrate steps to mitigate negative impacts.

Education

Coconino County offers a wide array of educational opportunities. COCONINO COMMUNITY COLLEGE (CCC) has two campuses in Flagstaff and an Instructional Site in Page. CCC offers associate degrees within transfer-oriented programs as well as professional/technical certificates and degrees. CCC offers distance learning at other locations throughout Coconino County with students taking in-person classes in Page at the CCC Instructional Site. Northern Arizona University **(**NAU) offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. NAU's main campus is located in Flagstaff. Other distance learning opportunities in Coconino County at CCC and NAU include classes delivered via instructional television or through the Internet.

There are nine school districts within Coconino County that provide services to almost 16,000 school-aged children, a reduction of about 20% since 2002. There are also fourteen (14) charter schools to which about 3,000 students attend, an almost 100% increase since 2002. The majority of charter schools are in Flagstaff while others are in Leupp and Page. Home schooling has also

been a popular alternative for about 800 students although about 20% fewer students are homeschooled now than in 2002. Other schools located within county boundaries are operated by tribal governments and the BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS *(see Coconino County School Districts map at the end of the Chapter).*

A major issue in a county as large as Coconino is providing adequate transportation to schools. The County works with the BIA to maintain school bus routes on reservations. Additionally, Chevelon Butte School District was established to support transportation of students to other areas but does not offer classes itself. Residents should be aware that public transportation to schools may not be available in all areas. As technology improves, the use of distance learning opportunities can increase access to education in the rural areas of the county.

The Coconino County Career Center provides training, off the tribal lands, for youth and adults who want to enter or re-enter the workforce and are eligible for programs. The Comprehensive One-Stop in Flagstaff offers job listings, computers and phones for job seekers wishing to develop applications or resumes. Assistance for low income customers includes basic education and vocational training through One-Stop partners.

The County Superintendent of Schools is elected to provide fiscal processing and educational programming support to schools. Mandated responsibilities include: maintaining certification records; recording school district expenditures; providing assistance on the use of student data, curriculum alignment, and technology; maintaining affidavits of home schooling among other duties. Although not mandated, the County Superintendent also operates two accommodation schools for at-risk and detained students and serves as a fiscal/project administrator for several specialized education programs.

While the Northern Arizona Council of Governments is the primary facilitator of early childhood education through Head Start and other programs, the County recognizes the vital importance of early childhood development and education in determining future well-being.

Goal: Advocate, coordinate, and collaborate to create and increase access to effective and affordable educational opportunities.

Policies:

22. Considerations should be made so that all areas of the county have adequate access to education, especially large growth areas with high populations of school-aged children.

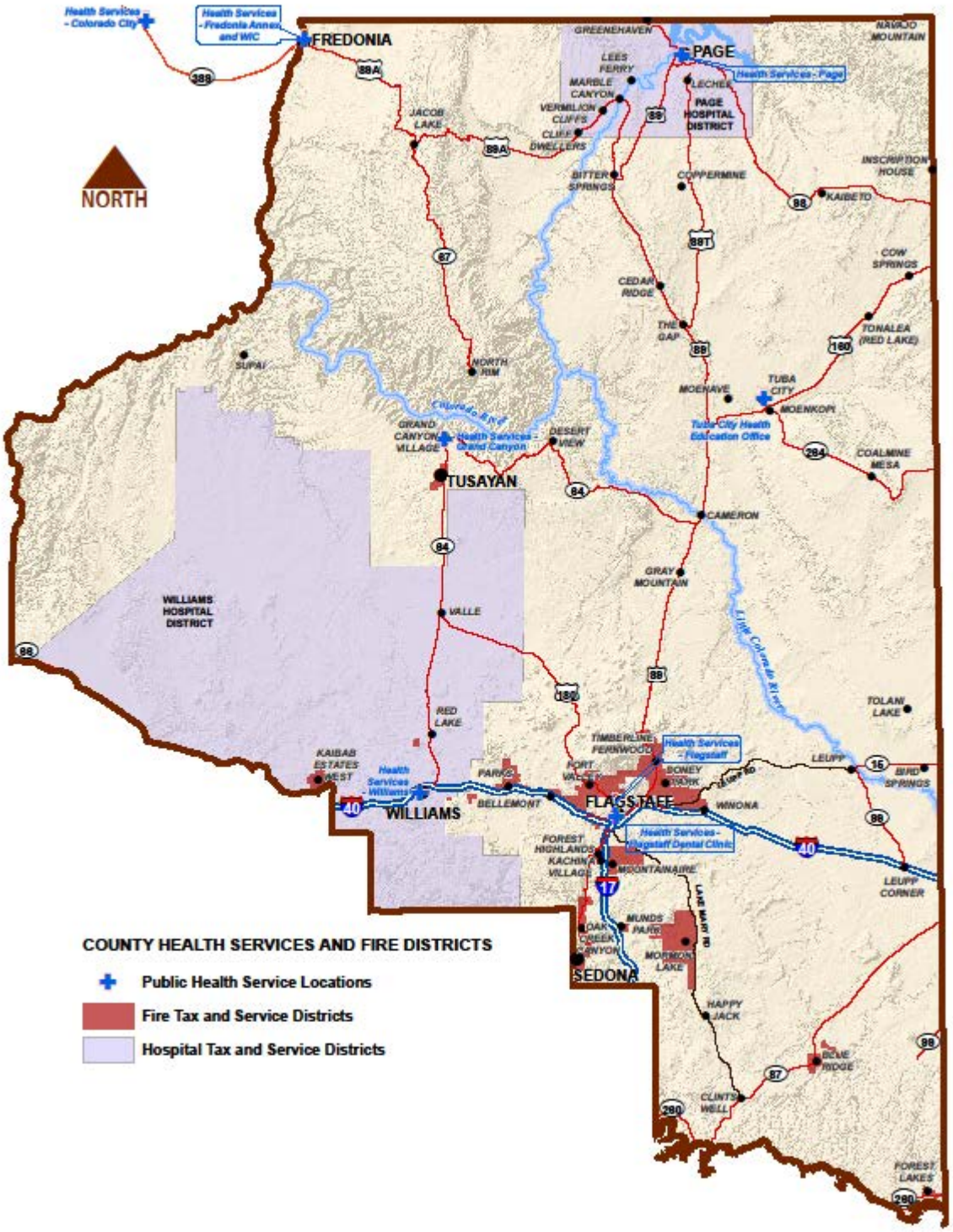
23. In areas where the County has jurisdiction, increase infrastructure and champion all facets of education from early childhood through continuing education.

24. In areas where the County does not have jurisdiction, coordinate with educational providers to provide all levels of educational opportunities.

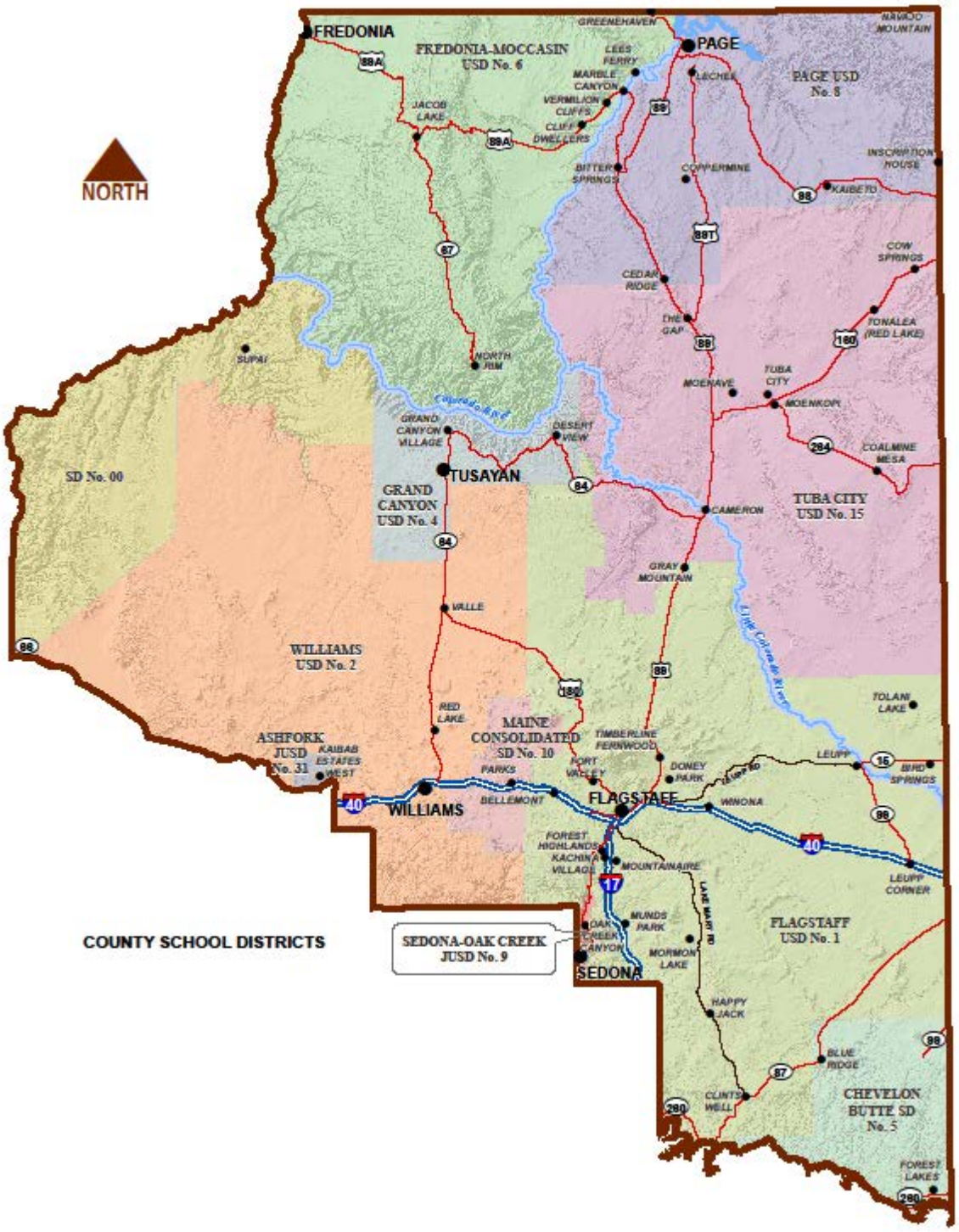
25. The County supports sharing of infrastructure and infrastructure costs between different educational institutions.

26. The County supports the development and implementation of distance-learning capacity into educational programs.

27. The County will assist K-12 education providers in the establishment of safe and efficient school bus routes.



Maps in this Comprehensive Plan are for reference and general planning purposes only. Coconino County does not provide any warranty of accuracy nor is any given or implied. Data sources are listed in the Appendix.



Maps in this Comprehensive Plan are for reference and general planning purposes only. Coconino County does not provide any warranty of accuracy nor is any given or implied. Data sources are listed in the Appendix.

318