Rural Boundary Recommendations

The Regional Boundary Task Force identified three potential rural areas for boundary review during their October 25, 2012 meeting. There were three questions to be addressed directly in Arizona's rural regions through Task Force recommendations. These were:

- Would Arizona children 0-5 and families residing in the current La Paz/Mohave region be better served if the region were split along current county lines, creating two regions: La Paz and Mohave?
- Would the rural community of Winslow, currently included in the Coconino region, be better served by moving to the Navajo/Apache region, where the community is geographically located?
- Would Gila County children 0-5 and families residing in the current region be better served if the region were split?

The recommendations below are informed by the guiding principles for decision making adopted by the Task Force.

La Paz/Mohave

Data for La Paz/Mohave was gathered on a number of different fronts to ensure guiding principles were adhered to and that community feedback on the potential impact of a recommended boundary change was included. The key question facing regional partnership council members, community partners and ultimately the Task Force, was if the sheer geographic size of the current region was negatively impacting service delivery. If so, would a region split along county lines better serve families of children age 0-5?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the make-up of the current region, as well as the demographic and funding picture of a potentially split La Paz/Mohave region. This data was also provided to both regional council members and community partners as part of a survey process to ensure all participating individuals were working from the same base of factual information. Specifically:

- The La Paz/Mohave Regional Council funds 15 strategies that cover quality and access to early care and education including professional development, family support and health. Of the 15 strategies funded by the La Paz/Mohave Regional Council, only one is not available in La Paz County – the family support for children with special needs strategy. This is a new strategy for the regional council and started up in SFY13. Close to $550,000 in regional funding is provided to La Paz County through the funded strategies.
- La Paz/Mohave Regional Council also collaborates with the Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership/Council to ensure service provision across boundaries. Specific examples include partnering on community outreach activities and coordinating training and professional development through the Court Team strategy with focus on infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. The Colorado River Indian Tribes regional boundary includes the federally recognized tribal lands of the Colorado River Indian Tribes and the Town of Parker.

- The current La Paz/Mohave region includes 11,224 children age 0-5. If La Paz County became its own region, it would include approximately 412 children age 0-5.
- The SFY13 allocation for the La Paz/Mohave Regional Council is approximately $3.65 million dollars. A La Paz County regional allocation would be approximately $165,000.

Eighteen individuals in the La Paz/Mohave region – either current RPC members or community partners – were sent a survey to get their view on the impact, positive or negative, of a potential regional split. Ten individuals responded. Survey highlights, which served as guideposts for the Task Force's discussion included:

- **100%** agreed that the La Paz/Mohave RPC's funding plan works to address the needs of children and families across the entire region.
- **57%** agree the geographic size of the region impacts the RPC's ability to address the needs of children and families in the region.
- **2 of 4** agreed a La Paz County region would have capacity – infrastructure and providers – to carry out the work of an RPC.
- **2 of 3** believe a La Paz County region would have capacity to fill an eleven-member RPC.
- **7 of 9** recommend La Paz/Mohave remain as one region.

The 100% agreement that the current RPC's funding plan looks to address needs region-wide was of particular interest to the Task Force. Further, Task Force members highlighted that 7 of the 9 individuals who responded to the survey recommended the region remain as one.

First Things First also provided additional detail around the collaboration with and boundaries of the current La Paz/Mohave Region and the Colorado Indian River Tribes (CRIT) region. The discussion of CRIT provided clarification as to why a singular La Paz region would have such a small 0-5 population – the Town of Parker is actually part of the CRIT region, not La Paz.

The Task Force also discussed the fact that the current La Paz/Mohave RPC has no current vacancies, travels throughout the region for meetings to ensure public engagement, and even with its vast geographic stretch – from Littlefield to Quartzite – the council has never had to reschedule a meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Further providing context to the discussion was the feedback of a Task Force member who serves on the La Paz/Mohave regional council. He shared that while there is always a wish in small communities to increase that community's voice, the current RPC has made concerted efforts to provide the same level of services in La Paz County as are provided in the much larger Mohave County. As a result, he recommended the region remain as one.

La Paz/ Mohave boundary recommendation: Maintain the current boundaries for the La Paz/Mohave regions, maintaining a singular region encompassing both counties.

<u>Coconino & Navajo/Apache</u>

As with La Paz/Mohave, data for Coconino and Navajo/Apache was gathered on a number of different fronts to ensure guiding principles were adhered to and that community feedback was included on the potential impact of a recommended boundary change. The key question facing regional partnership council members, community partners and ultimately the Task Force, was if the community of Winslow-geographically located within the boundaries of the Navajo/Apache region but currently served by the Coconino Regional Partnership Council – should be moved out of Coconino and into the Navajo/Apache region?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the make-up of the current region, the demographic and funding picture of the current state of service provision as well as assessment of the impact – positive or negative – of moving Winslow from the Coconino Regional Partnership Council to the Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council.

This data was also provided to both regional council members and community partners as part of a survey process to ensure all participating individuals were working from the same base of factual information. Specifically:

- The current Coconino region includes 7,965 children age 0-5, 735 of whom reside in Winslow. Navajo/Apache has 5,166 children age 0-5.
- When the original boundaries were drawn in 2007, it was determined that Winslow should be part of the Coconino region due to its proximity to the county – Winslow is approximately 55 miles from Flagstaff – and its connection to Flagstaff services.
- There are 10 direct service strategies that are implemented in both the Coconino region and the Navajo/Apache region. These are: Quality First, Quality First Scholarships, Child Care Health Consultation, TEACH Scholarships as part of the Quality First package, FTF Professional REWARD$, Oral Health, Home Visitation/Newborn Follow-Up, Community Awareness, Community Outreach, and Media. Beginning in SFY14, the Care Coordination/Medical Home Strategy will also be provided in both regions as the Coconino Regional Council included the strategy as part of their SFY14 funding plan. The primary difference between the two regions is the inclusion of professional development strategies for early care and education providers. This is a much stronger focus for the Navajo/Apache Regional Council. Individuals who wish to utilize funding for professional development must reside within the boundaries of the Navajo/Apache Regional Council.
- Twelve of the 15 direct service strategies funded by the Coconino Regional Partnership Council are implemented in Winslow. These include Quality First, Quality First Scholarships, Child Care Health Consultation, TEACH Scholarships as part of the Quality First package, Summer Transition to Kindergarten, Service Coordination, Oral Health, FTF Professional REWARD$ (stipends for early care and education providers), Home Visitation, Community Awareness, Community Outreach, and Media.

Twenty-nine individuals in both the Coconino and Navajo/Apache regions were sent a survey to get their view on the impact of potentially moving Winslow into the Navajo/Apache region. Fifteen individuals responded. Survey highlights, which served as guideposts for the Task Force's discussion included:

- **57%** stated that Winslow families more readily access services in Flagstaff.
- **All but one respondent** agreed that the Coconino RPC understands the needs of Winslow families and children.
- **86%** agreed that the Coconino funding plan addresses the needs of Winslow families and children.
- **71%** believe Winslow should remain part of the Coconino Regional Partnership Council.

Regional Task Force members noted that all but one respondent expressed that the Coconino Regional Partnership Council understands the needs of Winslow families. Additionally, with clarification provided as to who the particular respondents were by role (RPC member by specific council, community partner) the Task Force also took note of the fact that 71% of those who responded to the survey believe Winslow should remain a part of the Coconino RPC.

Additionally, First Things First provided historical context regarding the reasoning used to place Winslow in the Coconino region. Much of the initial discussion focused on the frequency with which Winslow families accessed services in Flagstaff. Further, the two current regional councils have recently worked to collaborate on strategies as well as funding. The Task Force also noted that the majority of strategies are funded in both current regions, with the exception of professional development.

A Task Force member who also currently serves on the Coconino RPC provided his perspective, explaining that the Coconino RPC has divided the region into distinct "hubs" for service provision, with Winslow one of the identified "hubs". He shared that he does not personally see a compelling reason to move Winslow into the Navajo/Apache region.

Coconino and Navajo/ Apache boundary recommendation: Maintain Winslow as part of the Coconino region and keep both the Coconino and Navajo/Apache regional boundaries the same.

<u>Gila</u>

Data and information was gathered for Gila in a similar process to La Paz/ Mohave and Coconino & Navajo/Apache regions. The issue for the regional partnership council members, community partners and the Task Force was that the region has two main population centers; Payson area in the north and Globe area in the south. There is some geographic distance, mountains and canyons between Payson and Globe with few connections between them. This geographic distance between the two population centers within the region makes it somewhat hard to serve both northern and southern Gila County in a proficient manner. This raises the key question – should the region be split in two to align with the two population centers; split Payson and Globe?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the current make-up of the region, the demographic and funding picture of the current state of service provision as well as the assessment of the impact – positive and negative – of dividing the region according to the identified population centers.

This data was also provided to both regional council members and community partners as part of a survey process to ensure all participating individuals were working from the same base of factual information. Specifically:

- The current Gila region includes 2,240 children ages 0-5; of which, 526 are children living in poverty.
- The Gila Regional Partnership Council provides services to the communities of Gila County and the Tribal lands of the Tonto Apache Tribe. The Gila Region does not include the portion of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (lands of the White Mountain Apache Tribe) within Gila County, or the portion of the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation within Gila County.
- The Gila Region funds 11 different strategies to address 12 identified regional priorities, utilizing 10 grantee providers, which are serving fewer than 18 unique contracts, including those that are funded strategies that are directed centrally through FTF.
- Strategies are implemented throughout the region: Quality First, Scholarships and Child Care Health Consultation – Payson and Globe with most of the programs in Payson; Care Coordination – Payson and Globe/Miami (limited services may also be available in Young, Pine Strawberry Hayden/Winkelman and Tonto Basin through partnership with the County Immunization Clinic); TEACH – with most scholars from Payson with a few in Globe; Community Based Parent Education – Globe/Miami plus prenatal services in collaboration with New Beginnings in Payson and through rural school programs in Pine/Strawberry and Young; Parent Outreach and Awareness – serving Globe, Miami, Hayden/Winkelman, Tonto Basin, Young, Payson and Pine/Strawberry.

Seventeen individuals participated in a focus group on January 18, 2013, regarding the Gila regional boundary. The individuals represented the communities of Payson, Globe, Miami, Claypool, Hayden/Winkelman. FTF Regional Partnership Council members, grant partners and community members comprised the group. The focus group participants further identified themselves as being affiliated with non-profits, school districts and governmental entities.

To inform the Task Force's discussion on boundaries, consider the following information shared during the Gila focus group:

Regional Challenges:

- Need for more flexibility and out of the box thinking
- Northern area of the Region is not as aware of early childhood and services
- Infrastructure and capacity building needed to move a strategy to full implementation
- Finding experienced staff and the time it takes to hire them
- Difficulty to get some strategies off the ground
- Challenge to get services out to Hayden/Winkelman/Kearny

Regional Strengths:

- Library strategy extends across the entire county
- Teen pregnancy program works across the County and provides opportunity to collaborate with Care Coordination strategy
- Young & Pine/Strawberry are being reached
- Healthy Steps is getting up and running
- AZEIP referrals are up in Payson/Globe due to families spreading the word and CPS referrals
- Health Department as a partner
- Regional Council member's commitment
- Online parent survey

- Online ASQ availability
- Parents are seeing the presence of services and connections are being made

Examples of Collaboration:

- Grant partners initiating collaboration—it takes time and effort
- Cross regional collaboration
- Elected officials, school district leadership and nonprofits are partnering across the region
- Intentional outreach is occurring
- Home Visitation Federal funds are promoting collaboration and capacity building work
- Care Coordination strategy will promote collaboration across doctor's offices, hospitals, WIC and schools, etc.
- Possible central intake system to link families with services and allow for follow-up
- Build public awareness
- Making parents feel safe and viewed as a partner

Gila boundary focus group participants also indicated that the council's funding plan includes a level of service for the region that is responsive with the funds available. As funding plans are developed each year, participants expressed that it is important to note that the council's funding allocation requires significant effort to strategically prioritize and, as the funding plan is implemented, the level of funding necessitates a good deal of collaboration between grant partners. Overall, there was rich discussion by community and Regional Council members and there was not a desire or particular need(s) identified to change the boundary for Gila.

Gila boundary recommendation: Maintain the current boundaries for the Gila region, maintaining a singular region which encompasses the two population centers of Globe and Payson.

<u>Summary of Task Force Recommendations for Rural Regions</u>

The Task Force made three preliminary recommendations regarding potential changes to rural regions.

- Maintain the current boundaries for the La Paz/Mohave regions, maintaining a singular region encompassing both counties.
- Maintain Winslow as part of the Coconino region and keep both the Coconino and Navajo/Apache regional boundaries the same.
- Maintain the current boundaries for the Gila region, maintaining a singular region which encompasses the two population centers of Globe and Payson.

Maricopa County Consolidation Summary

The Regional Boundary Task discussed the potential for urban consolidation within Maricopa County initially at their October 25, 2012 meeting. This discussion included review of the five current county regions (Central Maricopa, Northeast Maricopa, Northwest Maricopa, Southeast Maricopa and Southwest Maricopa) and the three current regions in the City of Phoenix (Central, North, and South). Specifically, the Task Force asked the key question:

- Do the current eight regions provide for the most effective service delivery and positive impact for children 0-5 in Maricopa County?

At the January 7, 2013 meeting, the Task Force received demographic and fiscal data as well as community feedback that prompted further, more detailed discussion of this question.

This summary will provide information on both the current regional boundaries as well as address the preliminary recommendations of the Task Force to examine how a modified Maricopa County would look. There are three scenarios provided. Each is informed by the guiding principles adopted by the Task Force.

Maricopa County Today

Data for the current eight regions in Maricopa County was gathered on a number of different fronts to ensure guiding principles were adhered to and that community feedback on the potential impact of a recommended boundary change was included. The key question facing regional partnership council members, community partners and ultimately the Task Force was if the current eight regions were providing for the most effective service delivery and positive impact for children 0-5 in Maricopa County. If not, would potential consolidation in Maricopa County better address these needs?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the make-up of the current regions. Specifically:

- Central Maricopa has 31,001 children age 0 through 4; 5,300 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$6,100,534.**
- Northeast Maricopa has 13,997 children age 0 through 4; 954 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$2,622,512.**
- Northwest Maricopa has 45,644 children age 0 through 4; 9,903 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$10,288,819.**
- Southeast Maricopa has 56,981 children age 0 through 4; 8,399 of whom live in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$10,377,397.**
- Southwest Maricopa has 23,733 children age 0 through 4; 3,313 of whom live in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$4,206,967.**
- Central Phoenix has 28,502 children age 0-4; 12,210 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$10,175,357.**

- North Phoenix has 37,900 children age 0-4; 7,865 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$8,320,490.**
- South Phoenix has 43,982 children age 0-4; 17,759 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$15,028,067.**

Additional comparative demographic data reviewed by the Task Force in January included:

East Valley Regions (Northeast Maricopa, Central Maricopa, Southeast Maricopa)

- Southeast Maricopa saw a growth in its population of children birth to five; Northeast Maricopa had a decrease.
- Families in Northeast Maricopa have a higher median income and a greater proportion of adults with college degrees.
- Northeast Maricopa has a smaller proportion of: single-mother households; Hispanic residents; children living in the household of their grandparents; children living in poverty; and births paid for by AHCCCS or the IHS.
- Tempe (Central Maricopa) and Mesa (Southeast Maricopa) students tend to have lower passing rates on the 3rd grade AIMS reading test than those in other districts across the East Valley.

Phoenix Regions (Central Phoenix, North Phoenix, South Phoenix)

- Both North Phoenix and South Phoenix saw a growth in the young child population, with a decrease in Central Phoenix.
- South Phoenix has a higher proportion of Hispanic residents.
- The rate of poverty is nearly twice as high in Central and South Phoenix as it is in North Phoenix.
- WIC enrollment and free-lunch eligibility are much higher in South Phoenix.
- More adults in the North Phoenix region have college degrees than in the South Phoenix region.
- A greater proportion of births in the South Phoenix region are to teenaged mothers compared to the North Phoenix region.

West Valley Regions (Northwest Maricopa, Southwest Maricopa)

- The regions have seen the highest rates of growth in the county in their population of children birth to five (300% in Southwest Maricopa since 2000).
- Southwest Maricopa has a greater proportion of Hispanic and Black residents than the Northwest region.
- The rate of childhood poverty is lower in Southwest Maricopa compared to Northwest Maricopa.
- Median family incomes and unemployment rates in both regions vary greatly town to town.
- There are a somewhat higher proportion of AHCCCS and IHS-covered births in Northwest Maricopa.

In addition to demographic data, Task Force members reviewed and discussed the differences and synergies of strategy across the three regions.

- There are a total of 35 strategies that are implemented between all eight regions. Specifically:
    - 5 (15%) of those strategies are implemented across all eight regions;
    - 4 (11%) are implemented across seven of the eight regions;
    - 2 (6%) are implemented across six of the eight regions;
    - 3 (9%) are implemented across five regions;
    - 2 (6%) are implemented across four regions;
    - 2 (6%) are implemented across three regions;
    - 11 (31%) are implemented across two regions;
- Of the nine strategies funded across at least seven regions (26% of all strategies), the total funds allotted for these is $58,190,897. This is 47% of the total allocation across all eight regions.
- The five Maricopa regions (Central Maricopa, Northeast Maricopa, Northwest Maricopa, Southeast Maricopa, Southwest Maricopa) issued 11 Request for Grant Applications, with five being multi-regional.
- The three Phoenix regions (Central Phoenix, North Phoenix, South Phoenix) issued 20 Request for Grant Applications with two issued as multi-regional.
- Of the nine strategies funded across at least seven regions, six are statewide and multi-regional strategies and thus have the same grant partner.

Community Feedback

To ensure the Task Force understood the potential impact of any regional boundary changes in Maricopa County, RPC members were surveyed and community partners were invited to provide feedback on the efficacy of the current regional boundaries.

RPC members were asked to respond to an online survey soliciting feedback to close-ended questions and as well as to provide explanatory comments and suggestions regarding potential consolidation scenarios.

The survey was sent to 79 individual RPC members across all eight regions, with 37 individuals responding – a 47% return rate. Specific feedback included:

- **81%** agreed or strongly agreed that having eight Maricopa County regions advances the early childhood system.
- **67%** agreed or strongly agreed that intentional collaboration and coordination is occurring across the regions.
- **54%** agreed or strongly agreed eight regions eliminated duplication.
- **77%** agreed or strongly agreed that eight regions promoted creativity and resource maximization.
- **66%** agreed or strongly agreed eight regions effectively utilized public resources.
- **72%** agreed or strongly agreed that eight regions promoted cross-regional collaboration.
- **57%** agreed or strongly agreed that multiple regions make communication and participation difficult.
- **66%** disagreed or strongly disagreed that eight regions limits service availability.

- **55%** agreed or strongly agreed that eight regions create barriers to the RFGA process.
- **58%** agreed that the current regions align with where providers typically provide service.

In addition to the survey, community partners were invited to one of two focus groups to discuss the current regional relationships, the potential issues for improvement and successes. They were also asked to provide feedback regarding modified regional boundaries. Twenty-nine individuals participated and provided the following information:

Current Regional Boundary "Positives"

- The current regions provide for responsiveness to local needs and "grassroots" work is easier.
- It is easier to build relationships: with council members, providers and families.
- Multiple regions allows smaller agencies to work as providers

Current Regional Boundary "Challenges"

- The focus seems to be on eliminating barriers for organizations, it should be barrier elimination for families.
- Current boundaries do not account for school districts.
- When families move, they cannot continue to work with trusted providers.
- Funding for particular programs is impacted because designated service areas don't align with regional boundaries.
- Current boundaries create geographical challenges and encompass needs that are too diverse.
- Multiple grant processes are burdensome, especially for smaller organizations.
- Consolidated boundaries could impact the ability to serve people locally; impact smaller communities; and force families to receive services in areas they are not familiar or comfortable.

Feedback on the Extent and Success of Collaboration across Eight Regions

- FTF doesn't promote collaboration and it is the largest challenge. When it occurs it is because of established relationships or it is service-specific within a region.
- Councils do not formally collaborate and modified boundaries will not solve the issue.
- There is no strategic way for grantees to be informed about what is occurring across regions.
- A more defined framework for collaboration is needed. This could include meetings or regional "one-pagers".

Criteria to Consider When Examining Potential Consolidation

- Maintain client focus.
- Alignment with school district or possibly zip code boundaries.
- Use realignment experiences of the Department of Economic Security and Behavioral Health Services as a reference.
- Provide flexibility for service provision to contiguous communities.
- Create a "pooled" fund for collaborative efforts.

- Allow families that move a transitional "grace" period for service provision.
- Regardless of final boundary decisions, the system needs more flexibility, which could address current concerns.

Task Force Discussion

Using all of this information as the foundation, the Task Force discussed scenarios as well as potential impacts of recommended boundary changes.

One issue noted by the Task Force when discussing the eight regions in Maricopa County was the desire to mirror school district boundaries as well as the frustration that is felt when this cannot occur.

The Task Force also discussed the diversity of services across the eight regions. It was noted this could be perceived as either a positive or a challenge. First Things First staff advised that this is most often a challenge when looking at the mobility of families and the loss of services that can occur when families move regions. First Things First staff provided information on the statutory restrictions in place regarding provision of services in one region using dollars from another region. The discussion also noted that the diversity of services could potentially be driven by the diversity of allocation amounts.

One clear theme identified by the Task Force as a result of the survey and focus group feedback was a perception that there was limited collaboration occurring across the Maricopa County regions. Task Force members noted by nature of having eight regions, complexity is added to any attempt at collaboration. Simply providing guidance from the statewide Board that cooperation is expected is not enough due to the complexity of strategies, the large amount of funding and the variance of need.

The Task Force also discussed the value of potentially utilizing advisory councils to assist the Regional Partnership Councils if current regions were consolidated and became geographically larger. With a structure like this, the decision-making authority would still rest with the Regional Partnership Council, but decisions could be informed by individual communities within the region.

The potential benefit of a larger region was also discussed in light of the fact that some councils have a number of members with conflicts of interest that lead to those councils' inability to meet quorum, or can lead to a very small number of members making funding decisions.

A Potentially Consolidated Maricopa County

The Task Force is considering preliminary recommendations to consolidate some regions in Maricopa County. Three scenarios with attached maps are considered. Two specific scenarios for consolidation have been put forward as potential recommendations in addition to maintaining the current eight boundaries. Details of each scenario are provided below.

Maricopa County –Option 1

Maintain eight regions in Maricopa County.

Maricopa County—Option 2

This scenario would condense Maricopa County from eight to six regions. Specifically, it would maintain the Northwest and Southwest regional boundaries as well as the current Southeast Maricopa Region. Additionally, the three current City of Phoenix regions would be condensed into two (North Phoenix and South Phoenix). Finally, a new East Maricopa region would be created that includes both the current Northeast and Central Maricopa region and Cave Creek. These regions would largely adhere to school district boundaries.

These six regions would have the following demographic profiles:

- East Maricopa (including Cave Creek): 44,998 children age 0 through four; 6,254 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$8,723,046.**
- North Phoenix: 55,659 children age 0 through four; 16,935 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$15,679,241.**
- Northwest Maricopa: 45,644 children age 0 through 4; 9,903 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$10,288,819.**
- South Phoenix: 54,725 children age 0 through 4; 20,899 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$17,844,673.**
- Southeast Maricopa: 56,981 children age 0 through 4; 8,399 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$10,377,397.**
- Southwest Maricopa: 23,733 children age 0 through 4; 3,313 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$4,206,967.**

Maricopa County – Option 3

This scenario would condense Maricopa County's eight current regions into four. A new West region would be created that would include the current Northwest and Southwest regions. Phoenix would be condensed from three to two regions – North Phoenix and South Phoenix. Finally, a new East region would be established that includes the current Northeast Maricopa, Central Maricopa and Southeast Maricopa regions. These regions would largely adhere to school district boundaries.

These four regions would have the following demographic profiles:

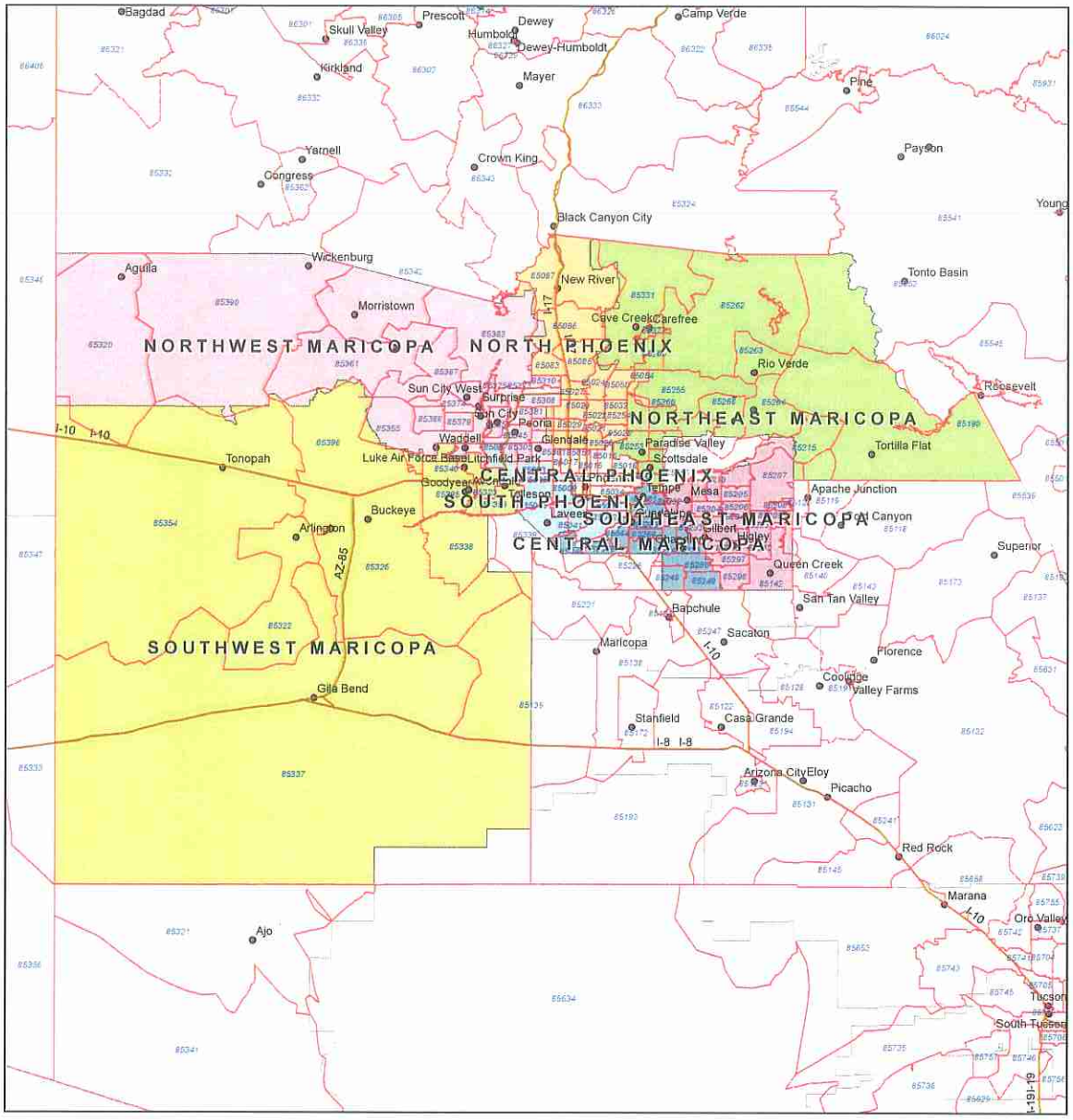
- East Maricopa: 101,979 children age zero through 4; 14,653 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$19,100,443.**
- North Phoenix: 55,659 children age zero through 4; 16,935 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$15,679,241.**
- South Phoenix: 54,725 children age zero through 4; 20,899 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$17,844,673.**
- West Maricopa: 69,377 children age zero through 4; 13,216 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$14,495,785.**

Preliminary Task Force Recommendations: Two Potential Maricopa County Scenarios

- Maintain eight Maricopa Regions.
- Pursue a potential consolidation of Maricopa's eight regions into six. The six regions would be:
    - East Maricopa (including Cave Creek)
    - North Phoenix
    - Northwest Maricopa
    - South Phoenix
    - Southeast Maricopa
    - Southwest Maricopa

- Pursue a potential consolidation of Maricopa's eight regions into four. The four regions would be:
    - East Maricopa
    - North Phoenix
    - South Phoenix
    - West Maricopa

Option 1
Maintain 8 Maricopa & Phoenix Regions

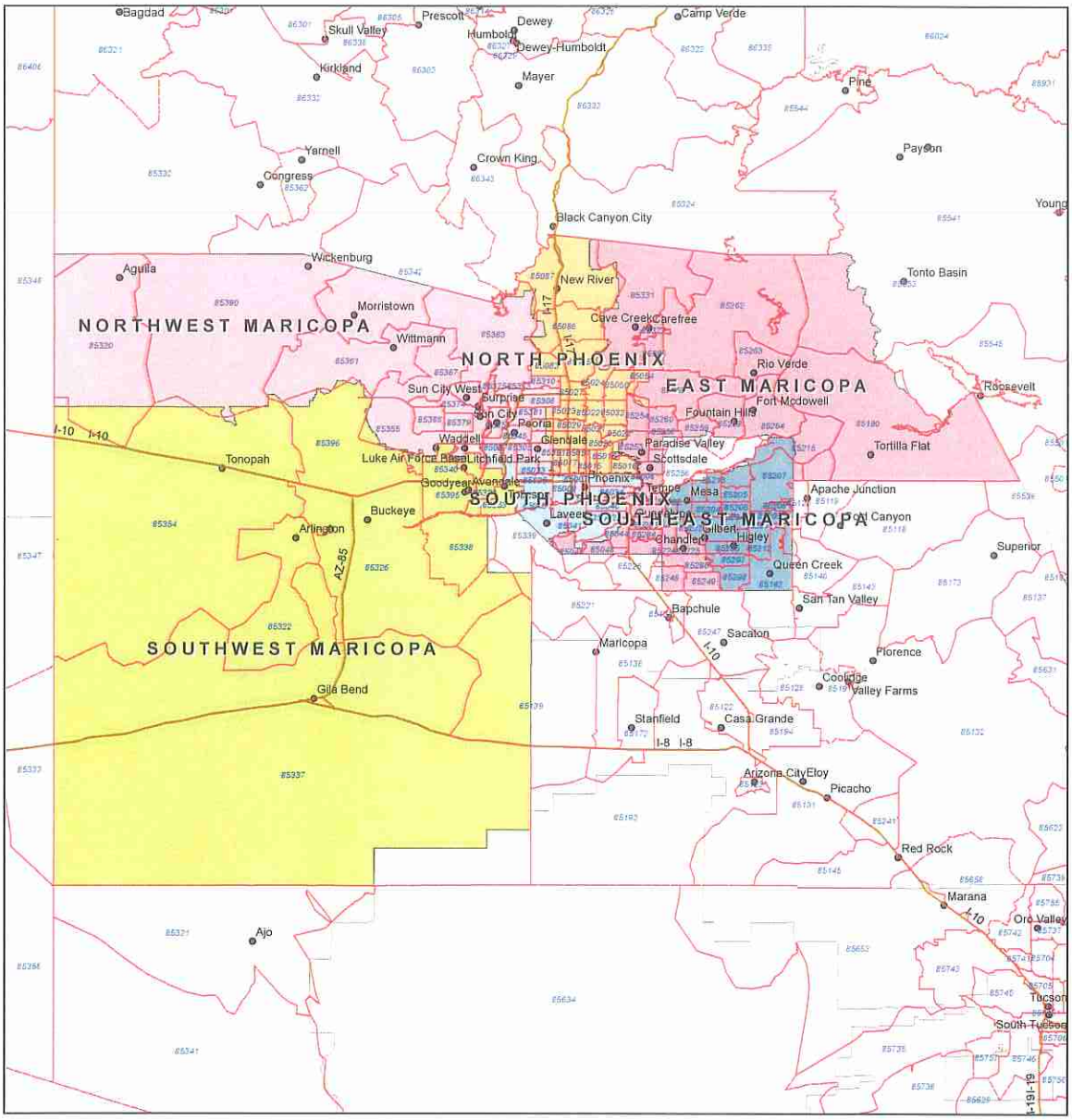


A - Current Maricopa and Phoenix	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
Central Maricopa	31,001	5,300	$ 6,100,534
Central Phoenix	28,502	12,210	$ 10,175,357
North Phoenix	37,900	7,865	$ 8,320,490
Northeast Maricopa	13,997	954	$ 2,622,512
Northwest Maricopa	45,644	9,903	$ 10,288,819
South Phoenix	43,982	17,759	$ 15,028,067
Southeast Maricopa	56,981	8,399	$ 10,377,397
Southwest Maricopa	23,733	3,313	$ 4,206,967
Total	281,740	65,703	$ 67,120,142

- Cities
- Interstates
- ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

Option 2
Move to 6 Regions in Maricopa



B - 8 to 6 regions (Scenario A)	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
East Maricopa (Cave Creek)	44,998	6,254	$ 8,723,046
North Phoenix	55,659	16,935	$ 15,679,241
Northwest Maricopa	45,644	9,903	$ 10,288,819
South Phoenix	54,725	20,899	$ 17,844,673
Southeast Maricopa	56,981	8,399	$ 10,377,397
Southwest Maricopa	23,733	3,313	$ 4,206,967
Total	**281,740**	**65,703**	**$ 67,120,142**

- Cities
- Interstates
- ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

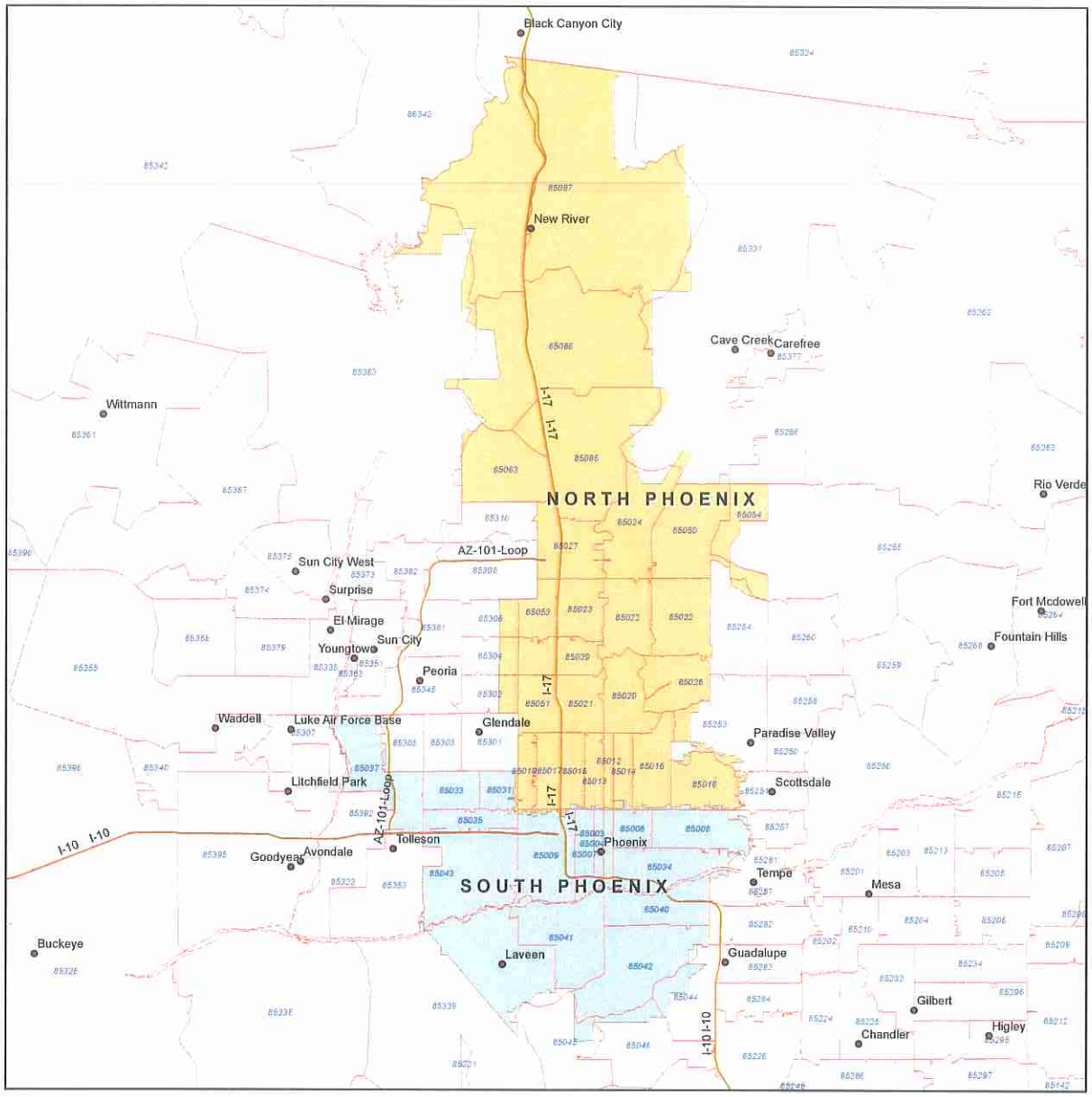
Option 3
Move to 4 Regions in Maricopa

C - 8 to 4 regions	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
East Maricopa	101,979	14,653	19,100,443
North Phoenix	55,659	16,935	15,679,241
South Phoenix	54,725	20,899	17,844,673
West Maricopa	69,377	13,216	14,495,785
Total	**281,740**	**65,703**	**$ 67,120,142**

- Cities
- Interstates
- ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

View of Phoenix Regions
(options 2 & 3)

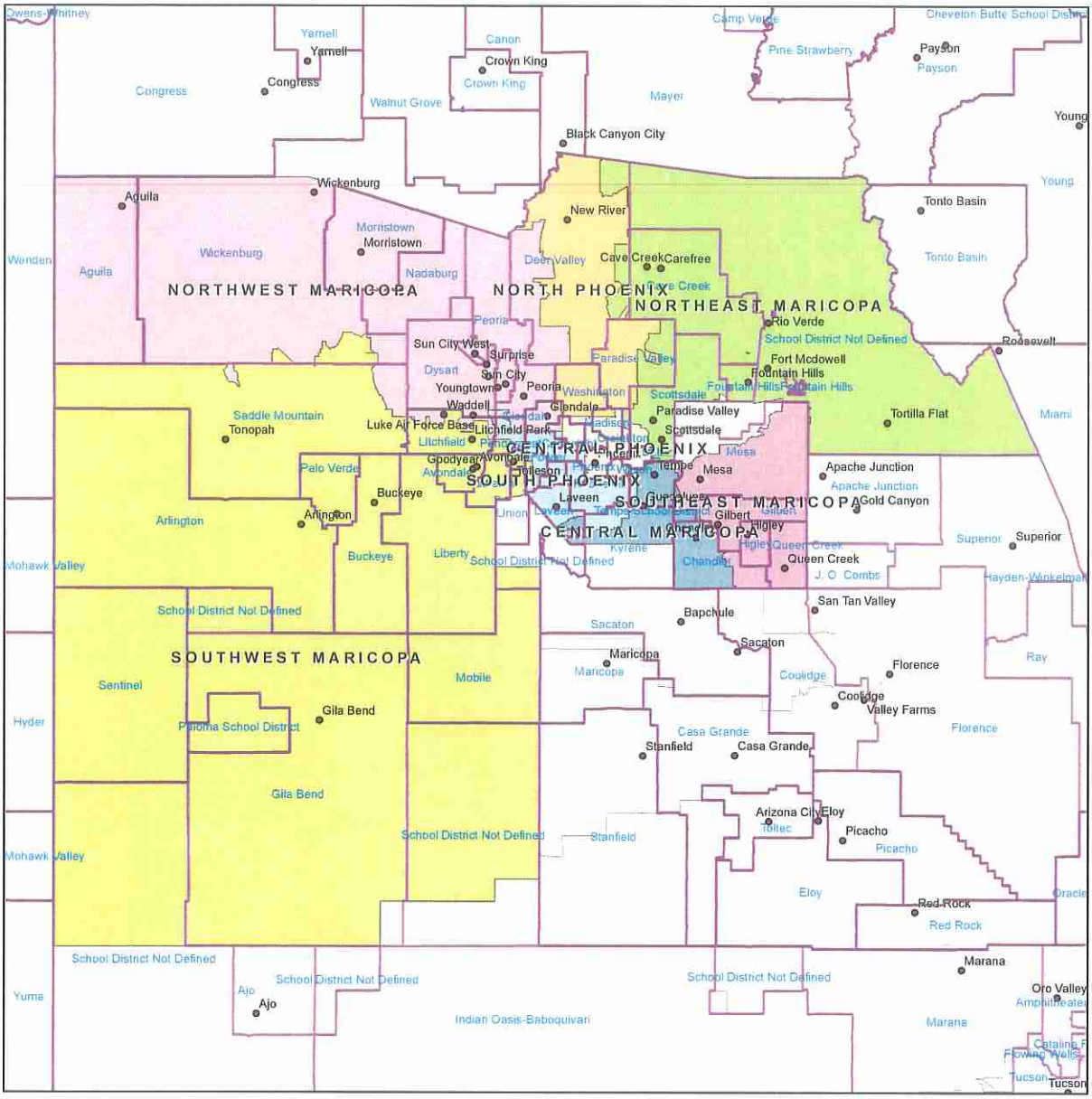


New North & South Phoenix	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
North Phoenix	55,659	16,935	15,679,241
South Phoenix	54,725	20,899	17,844,673
Total	110,384	37,834	$ 33,523,914

- Cities
- Interstates
- ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

Overlay of School Districts in Phoenix



Date: 2/11/2013

Pima County Consolidation Summary

The Regional Boundary Task discussed the potential for urban consolidation within Pima County initially at their October 25, 2012 meeting. This discussion included review of the three current Pima regions (Central, North, South). Specifically, the Task Force asked the key question:

- Do three regions in Pima County present the most effective service delivery and positive impact for children 0-5 in Pima County?

At the January 7, 2013 meeting, the Task Force received demographic and fiscal data as well as community feedback that prompted further, more detailed discussion of this question.

This summary will provide information on both the current regional boundaries as well as address the preliminary recommendations of the Task Force to examine how a modified Pima County – with two regions instead of three – would look. Recommendations are based on the guiding principles adopted by the Task Force.

Pima County Today

Data for the current three regions in Pima County was gathered on a number of different fronts to ensure guiding principles were adhered to and that community feedback on the potential impact of a recommended boundary change was included. The key question facing regional partnership council members, community partners and ultimately the Task Force was if the current three regions were providing for the most effective service delivery and positive impact for children 0-5 in Pima County. If not, would potential consolidation in Pima County better address these needs?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the make-up of the current regions. Specifically:

- Central Pima has 29,645 children age 0 through 4; 10,174 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$9,147,281.**
- North Pima has 12,287 children age 0 through 4; 1,770 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$2,886,735.**
- South Pima has 19,252 children age 0 through 4; 3,805 of whom are living in poverty; and has a current allocation of **$5,149,138.**

Additional comparative demographic data reviewed by the Task Force in January included:

- South Pima has seen greater growth in the number of young children from 2000 to 2010 than North Pima or Central Pima.
- The young children in the Central Pima region are somewhat more likely to live in a household headed by a single woman.
- The proportion of Hispanic residents is larger in Central Pima than in South Pima. North Pima has the smallest proportion of Hispanic residents.
- North Pima has higher median family incomes and a lower poverty rate for young children.

- SNAP and WIC enrollments are highest in Central Pima and lowest (roughly half the rate) in North Pima.
- On the third-grade AIMS reading test, the children in North Pima have higher passing rates than the other children in the county.
- Mothers giving birth in North Pima are less likely to be unmarried and are less likely to have an AHCCCS or IHS-covered birth.

In addition to demographic data, Task Force members reviewed and discussed the differences and synergies of strategy across the three regions.

- Central Pima implements 24 different program strategies; North Pima implements 18 program strategies; South Pima has 20 program strategies.
- 45% (10) of those strategies are implemented in all three regions with an investment of more than $18 million; 32% (7) of strategies cross two regions with a total investment of nearly $2.3 million; and five strategies are implemented in only one of the regions for a total investment of approximately $722,000.
- A total of 13 Request for Grant Applications (RFGAs) were released; of these three were multi-regional (two are more regions collaborated).
- There is also quite a bit of synergy around service providers across the three regions. For the 10 strategies funded across the entire county, six are statewide strategies and therefore have the same service providers.
- All regions are required to articulate specific key priorities. In Pima, there were a total of seven priorities identified between the three regions, four of which were noted in all three.

Community Feedback

To ensure the Task Force understood the potential impact of any regional boundary changes in Pima County, RPC members were surveyed and community partners were invited to provide feedback on the efficacy of the current regional boundaries.

RPC members were asked to respond to an online survey soliciting feedback to close-ended questions and as well as to provide explanatory comments and suggestions regarding potential consolidation scenarios.

The survey was sent to 28 individual RPC members across all three regions, with 16 individuals responding – a 57% return rate. Specific feedback included:

- **81%** agreed or strongly agreed that having three Pima County regions advances the early childhood system.
- **94%** agreed or strongly agreed that intentional collaboration and coordination is occurring across the regions.
- **57%** agreed three regions eliminated duplication.
- **69%** agreed or strongly agreed that three regions promoted creativity and resource maximization.

- **73%** agreed or strongly agreed three regions effectively utilized public resources.
- **88%** agreed or strongly agreed that three regions promoted cross-regional collaboration.
- **62%** disagreed or strongly disagreed that multiple regions make communication and participation difficult.
- **73%** disagreed or strongly disagreed that three regions limits service availability.
- **60%** disagreed or strongly disagreed that three regions creates barriers to the RFGA process.
- **60%** agreed that the current regions align with where providers typically provide service.

In addition to the survey, community partners were invited to a focus group to discuss the current regional relationships, the potential issues for improvement and successes. They were also asked to provide feedback regarding modified regional boundaries. Seven individuals participated and provided the following information:

Current Regional Boundary "Positives"

- RPCs have stakeholders "sitting at the table" allowing them to focus attention on areas of the county that might not otherwise be served.
- Having smaller regions allows for meeting more specific needs and grantees are able to engage rural communities.
- Smaller regions allow grantees with less capacity to serve as providers.
- Zip codes that cross county boundaries allows for serving families at those boundaries.
- Boundaries that cross school districts allows for educating districts about possible services.
- Well-functioning, cross-regional collaboration has allowed grantees to serve families across urban boundaries.

Current Regional Boundary "Challenges"

- Urban Tucson is served by all three regions causing family and provider confusion; potentially misleading the public about what services are provided; and can especially become a problem when families move.
- North and South Pima serve urban and rural areas – each with their own unique sets of issues. This can lead to North and South Pima focusing more on rural communities and creates challenges for grantee budgeting.
- The extreme western portion of South Pima is a challenge to serve.
- Zip codes that cross county boundaries can make it difficult for providers whose specific service area is the county.
- North Pima funding is such that the region is limited in what they can provide.
- The boundaries do not consider school districts.
- There is an administrative burden when responding to multiple RFGAs.

Criteria to Consider When Examining Potential Consolidation

- Rural areas must have a voice.

Task Force Discussion

Using all of this information as the foundation, the Task Force discussed scenarios as well as the potential impact of recommended boundary changes.

Task Force members noted that a number of the data elements provided caught their attention. One member stated the income differences between regions was notable and that the Task Force needs to be mindful that there are a handful of zip codes in the current North Pima region that have high median income and since there are also zip codes in that same region with low income, the high income figures can end up skewing the data. First Things First clarified that in North Pima there are a smaller number of children in poverty, but those children tend to reside in rural communities.

First Things First then highlighted that with the exception of the area of health, there is quite a large amount of synergy across Pima County's three regions. Staff also shared that the three current regions have been working collaboratively, including with issuing RFGAs. For example, all three use the same vendor for their Needs and Assets report to allow data to be combined and compared across the county.

Task Force members also discussed the mix of urban and rural communities in each region and the rationale for that decision. Examples of leveraging urban funds to benefit rural communities were mentioned and the success of a robust county-wide home visiting program was also cited.

A member who also serves on a Pima regional council advised the concept of the "donut hole" region (North and South combined) was not the best approach and she was pleased to hear from First Things First staff that community input indicated that wouldn't be impactful. She also advised the Task Force that the North region's limited funding has positively driven their collaboration with other regions. She further shared that collaboration in Pima County has been very intentional and thoughtful. She finally advised Task Force members to be mindful of ensuring recommendations do not lead to the loss of the "rural voice" in regions.

First Things First staff confirmed it is their belief the statewide Board would be receptive to recommendations around consolidation in Pima County, and advised based on funding allocations and service delivery, it could potentially be difficult to include South Pima in any consolidated region; however, there could be potential benefit for the North Pima region. Further, it was confirmed that from the First Things First staff perspective, there were not any large service gaps currently in Pima due to strategy alignment.

Finally, the Task Force acknowledged the potential difficulty in how best to incorporate Pinal County families.

Preliminary Task Force Recommendations

Two considerations are presented for the Task Force's consideration:

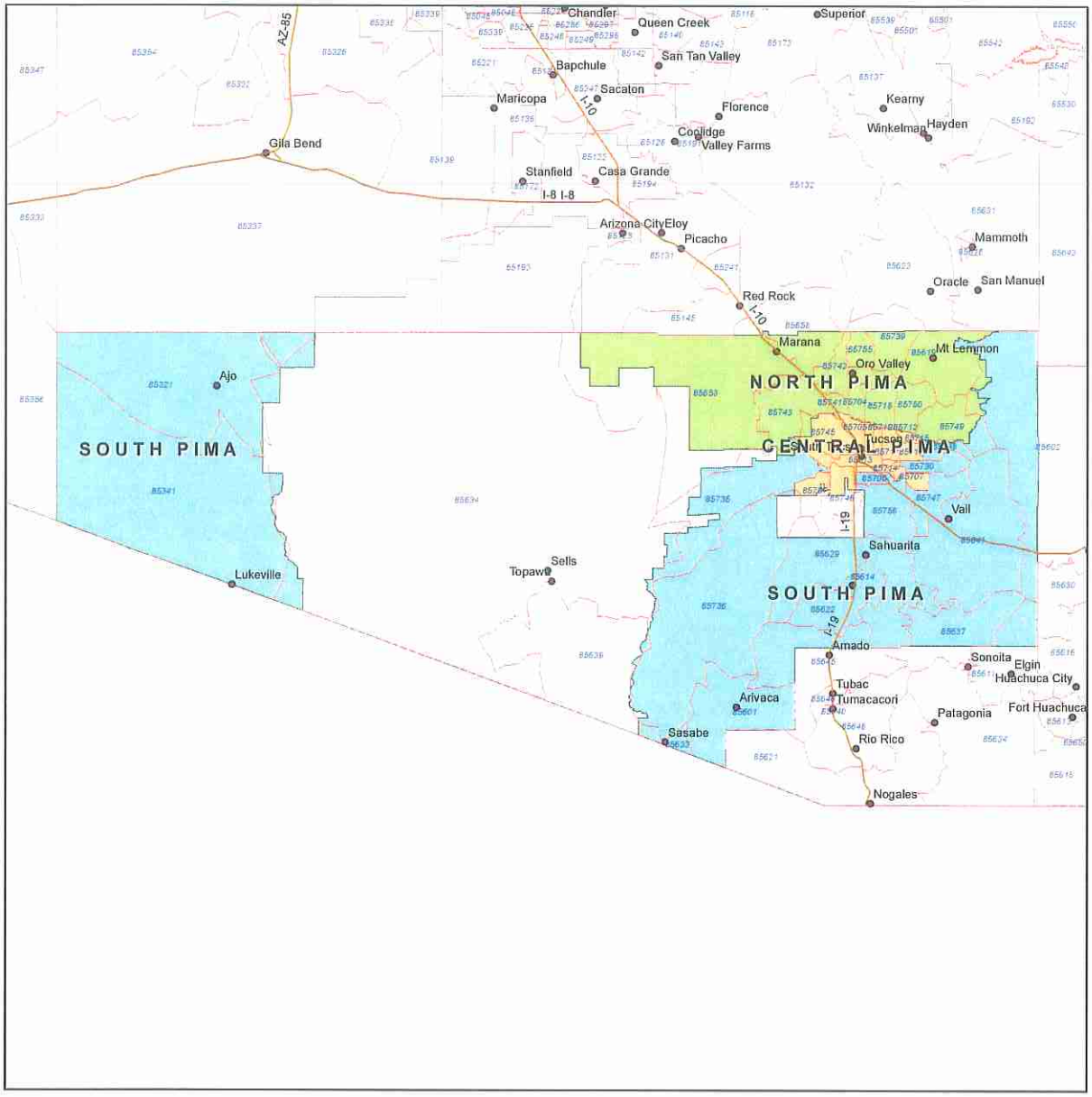
- Maintain the current three Pima Regions—Option 1
- Pursue a potential consolidation of the current North and Central regions to create two Pima County Regions: North Pima and South Pima—Option 2

In this scenario it is recommended that two zip codes currently included in the existing Central Pima region (85757, 85746) and two zip codes currently in the South Pima region (85748, 85730) are exchanged. Zip codes 85748 and 85730 would become part of the newly proposed North Pima region (Option 2) and zip codes 85757 and 85746 would become part of the existing South Pima region. This recommendation is based upon data and information gathered as part of annual strategic planning, ongoing grant partner feedback and the recent boundary survey which essentially identified that young children and families who reside in these zip codes tend to access services more in alignment with this proposed exchange.

Two Pima regions would have the following demographic profile:

- North Pima (a combination of the current North and Central Region): 40,214 children age 0 through four; 10,409 of those living in poverty. A new North Pima region would have a **$10,647,857** allocation.
- South Pima: 20,970 children age 0 through four; 5,340 living in poverty. The region's allocation would be **$6,535,298.**

Option 1
Maintain 3 Regions in Pima

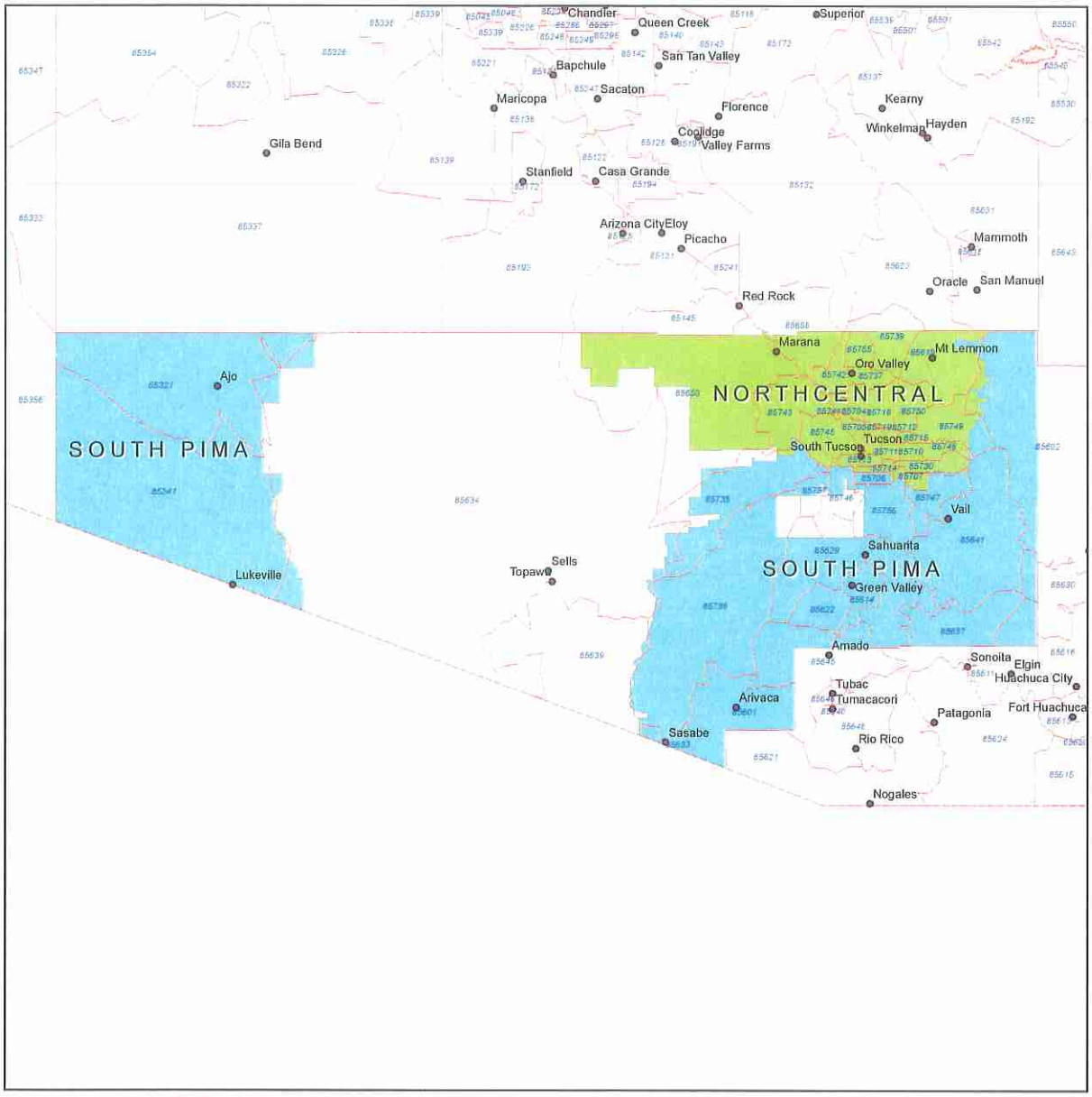


A - Original Pima	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
Central Pima	29,645	10,174	$ 9,147,281
North Pima	12,287	1,770	$ 2,886,735
South Pima	19,252	3,805	$ 5,149,138
Total	**61,184**	**15,749**	**$ 17,183,155**

- Cities
- Interstates
- ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

Option 2
Move to 2 Regions in Pima

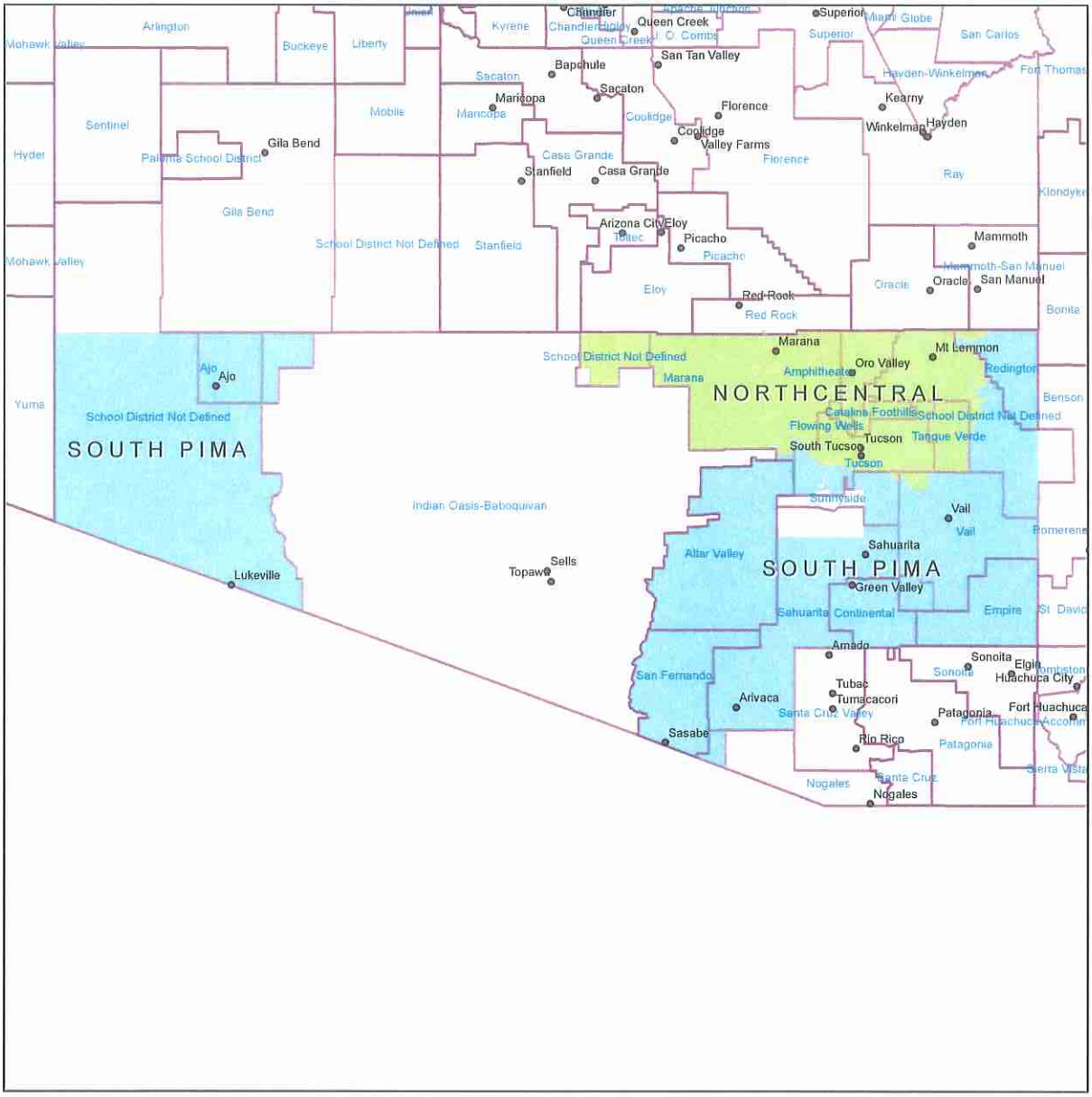


C - 3 to 2 regions (ZIP Code)	Children Zero through Four	Poverty Zero through Four	Allocation
North Pima	40,214	10,409	$ 10,647,857
South Pima	20,970	5,340	$ 6,535,298
Total	61,184	15,749	$17,183,155

Cities
ZIP Code

Date: 2/11/2013

Overlay of School Districts in Pima
(option 2)



Legend

- Cities

Date: 2/11/2013