

**PINTURA - I-15 FREEWAY CORRIDOR
GENERAL PLAN
2010-2011**

Introduction:

The Pintura - I-15 Freeway Corridor is located in the central part of Washington County between the Anderson Junction / Toquerville freeway interchange, and the Black Ridge freeway interchange in the unincorporated area of the county. The area is about six miles long and varies between one to three miles wide. The freeway at this location runs essentially north to south in a south-westerly direction.

The town of Pintura is located in the center of the valley and contains fifteen homes, eight of which are secondary dwellings, and seven of the homes are being lived in on a year-around basis. There are three freeway interchanges along this stretch of freeway. They are Snowfield at the north end, Pintura in the central part, and Browse toward the southerly end of the valley.

Geography and Topography:

The Pintura valley is a long, narrow valley that extends from the Black Ridge freeway interchange on the north, to the Anderson Junction/Toquerville freeway interchange on the south. On the westerly side of the valley, most of the land is under the jurisdiction of the National Forest with some Bureau of Land Management land. One parcel of land is under the jurisdiction of the Washington County Water Conservancy District.

The westerly side of the valley consists of lower, sloping hills leading to the higher slopes of the Pine Valley Mountains. On the east side of the valley is a steep, generally barren slope, the top of which is a designated wilderness area

**TABLE I.
LAND OWNERSHIP IN THE
I-15 FREEWAY CORRIDOR**

Utah State Trust Land	1,800 acres
Private Land	1,520 acres
Water Conservancy District	140 acres
BLM Land	not calculated
National Forest	not calculated
Developable Land	3,460 acres (approximately)

The public land surrounding the I-15 corridor is not available for development and is part of a much larger area. Therefore, no effort is made to calculate this amount of land. Much of the Utah State Trust Land has the potential for development except for some steep land along the hillside areas. All of the privately owned land has development potential, and will be discussed further by the General Plan.

The elevation at the Browse freeway interchange is about 4,131 feet above sea level. This elevation increases to 4,141 feet at the Pintura interchange, and to 4,231 feet elevation at the Snowfield interchange. This is a very moderate increase over a distance of approximately four miles along the freeway. North of the Snowfield interchange, the grade of the freeway increases, and rises sharply to the Black Ridge interchange at the north end of the valley. The land between the Browse and Snowfield interchanges lends itself to various types of development although much of the valley is quite narrow.

North of this valley the elevation is much higher and is a part of the climate found in the balance of the State of Utah. The elevation continues to increase until it joins with the Great Basin. The Great Basin does not begin until the land reaches the town of Summit, north of Cedar City. However, the climate south of the Town of Summit to the Black Ridge, is a part of the four season climate of most of the State of Utah. South of the Harmony Valley the elevation continues to drop toward the mild climate of the Mojave Desert as identified by St. George City at an elevation of about 2,600 feet. This valley along the I-15 corridor is in a transition zone between severe climate change to the north, and the mild climate of the lower valleys of Washington County to the south.

Freeway Interchange Analysis:

There are sixteen freeway interchange locations between the Arizona border and the Iron County line north of the Harmony Valley. Most of the interchanges are located in incorporated cities. Over the years, most of these interchanges have been developed except for two of them that are relatively new. The three interchanges in the Pintura valley are mostly vacant. The following table identifies each interchange and their general degree of development.

**TABLE II.
FREEWAY INTERCHANGES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY**

Number	Mile Post	Location	Development
1.	2	Airport / Sun River / St. George	Undeveloped (new)
2.	4	Bloomington Drive / St. George	Developed
3.	6	Bluff Street / St. George	Developed
4.	8	St. George Blvd. / St. George	Developed
5.	10	Green Springs / Washington City	Developed
6.	13	Telegraph St. / Washington City	Undeveloped (new)
7.	16	S. R. 9 / Hurricane Valley	Mostly Developed
8 / 9.	22 / 24	Leeds - Partial Interchanges (2)	Partially Developed
10.	27	S. R. 17 / Toquerville	Mostly Undeveloped

11.	30	Browse / Ranch Exit	Undeveloped
12.	31	Pintura	Partially Developed
13.	33	Snowfield / Ranch Exit	Undeveloped
14.	36	Black Ridge / Ranch Exit	Undeveloped
15	38	Kolob Canyon / Black Ridge Ranch	Partially Developed
16	40	New Harmony / Iron Co. Line	Partially Developed

Up to this point, there are five developed or mostly developed interchanges. Five of the interchanges are partially developed. Six of the interchanges are undeveloped, or mostly undeveloped. Ten of the interchanges are located in the various incorporated cities in the county. Six of the interchanges are located in the unincorporated part of the county.

Of the six interchanges in the unincorporated area of the county, two of these are partially developed. The New Harmony interchange is 1/2 in Iron County. The portion in Washington County is partially developed. The Kolob Canyon interchange is one-half inside Zion National Park which precludes any other development on the eastern side of the freeway.

The Pintura interchange is partially developed with some homes located on either side of the interchange. The Black Ridge exit, while undeveloped, is very difficult to develop because the topography at that location does not lend itself to any significant development.

The other two interchanges in the county, Browse, and Snowfield, are virtually undeveloped, and because of their location, they are not adjacent to any other incorporated city, they would best be developed in the county. Near the Browse interchange there is a significant amount of State Trust land as well as private land close to the interchange which could be made available for various types of development. The Snowfield interchange is virtually undeveloped except for mineral development adjacent to the east hillside.

Future Land Use:

The future land use of this valley has been studied as a part of the General Plan. As a result of this study, the General Plan makes the following recommendations:

1. The Browse area:

Land in the Browse area is a combination of Utah State Trust Land and private land. It has remained mostly undeveloped at this time. There has been a proposal to develop a windmill farm on a portion of the State Trust Land. Preliminary plans have been approved by the county, but the project has not moved forward in recent months.

The General Plan recommends that this area be developed in a mixed use pattern of commercial and industrial development. Some residential development in the steeper hillside areas may also fit into this area. A certain number of windmills would fit into this classification if this project moves forward, but the General Plan does not recommend a pattern of windmills extending from Browse to the Black Ridge. Aesthetically, such a pattern of development along the Pintura / I-15 Freeway Corridor would not provide an attractive entrance into Washington County, and therefore should not be encouraged.

Other patterns of development including industry, housing, commercial business such as an outlet mall similar to the type of development found along this same freeway south the City of Barstow, California, would fit well into commercial business as a mixed use in this area. Such a facility was started at the north end of River Road in St. George City, but because it was located in the business area of the city, it has been largely absorbed as a general commercial area.

Such a facility needs to be located outside of the regular commercial center of a city in order to be successful as a true outlet mall. The same fate happened to the outlet mall in the Draper City area of northern Utah. The urban core grew around the mall, and the outlet mall has virtually disappeared. The Pintura / I-15 Corridor would be an ideal location for a large outlet mall. In this location a mall would not be absorbed into the commercial shopping area of an existing city.

2. The Pintura Area:

With the existing homes near the Pintura freeway interchange, the General Plan recommends the future development of this area should be along the lines identified in the Vision Dixie Plan as a mixed residential / commercial center. The location of the town of Pintura is close enough to the "Urban" core of Toquerville, LaVerkin, Hurricane, and Washington City, St. George, Santa Clara, and Ivins, that it could be developed with a mixture of housing types, and convenience commercial businesses, close to the urban core of the county, but not actually a part of this core. It would be similar to the community of Apple Valley to the east, and the communities along the State Highway 18 corridor north of St. George City. The Pintura center would be close to the urban area, but far enough away to maintain a rural character, which could be very attractively developed in the Pintura area.

3. Snowfield:

The Snowfield interchange also has some of the same potential for development as the Browse interchange to the south. The valley is not quite as wide, and has one other element that lends itself to Industrial development. The area on the easterly side of the Interstate Freeway abuts the base of the steep hillside, the top of which is a designated wilderness area. In Washington County, mineral development is where you find it and one of the major areas of the county

providing mineral products to the county is located along the base of this steep hillside. The area along the steep hills, through this area, coupled with the base of the Hurricane Cliffs running southward through Hurricane toward the Arizona border, is currently the major source of mineral development, meaning gravel, to support the growth and development of the remainder of the county. The land in the Snowfield area is mostly private property which does not require obtaining approval from the Federal Agencies before the resource can be developed.

The I-15 Freeway corridor is a major transportation corridor between the Los Angeles Basin, Northern Utah, Idaho and Wyoming, Colorado, and points east. Many of these loads need to be "broken" and re-loaded to go in one or another of these directions based on the I-70 Interchange further north. The corridor through the Pintura area would provide a great opportunity for warehousing in a snow free area where these loads could be stored, re-routed and sent north or eastward. The General Plan recommends that this valley is perfectly located for this type of business to take place at either the Snowfield or the Browse freeway interchange.

The General Plan recognizes this source of gravel as a major resource in the county that must be protected and allowed to develop. Even near the proposed mixed use area at the Pintura interchange, mineral development along the base of the hillside east of the freeway is a use that must be integrated into the mixed residential /commercial development of this potential community center.

The policy of Washington County has historically been to encourage development to annex into one of the communities in the county when it is close by rather than remaining in the county, and competing with the adjacent community to provide public services to developing areas. As a result, the commercial and industrial sales tax base of the county is largely included in one or another of the incorporated cities.

The I-15 Freeway Corridor provides the opportunity to develop the three freeway interchange locations along this corridor that have remained undeveloped since the construction of the freeway through Washington County. With most of the other interchanges already being developed, this area provides the county an opportunity to benefit from future development at three of the last undeveloped freeway interchange locations in the county. There are opportunities for development in a mixed use manner in this area that does not exist at either of the two other new interchanges in St. George City at mile post 2, and Washington City at mile post 13 respectively.

Public Services:

A section of the General Plan dealing with public services county-wide is located in Section VII of the General Plan. This section of the plan will be adopted in connection with the adoption of the various community plans and is not currently part of the General Plan. Some comments specific to this area of the county are discussed here as they relate specifically to this part of the county.

One of the reasons that development has not taken place along this part of the interstate system in Washington County prior to this time has been the lack of public services which Washington County has not provided to this or any other area of the county prior to this time.

This area of the county can now be developed with a minimum of county involvement which was not previously available. Following is a list of some of the public services that would be required in this area to provide for the development suggested by the General Plan.

Electricity:

Electric service to this part of the county is provided by the Rocky Mountain Power Company. "Rocky Mountain" has been working very hard in the past few years to update and expand their ability to provide service to Washington County. With the addition of another major transmission line to the county, and the expansion of other service lines to parts of the county, the Rocky Mountain Power Company is in a position to provide power for significant growth and development in the future in all parts of the county where they have a service area.

Water

The availability of water has been one of the major drawbacks to development along this freeway corridor since the freeway was originally constructed. This was the first section of the interstate freeway to be completed in the county. Water could now be brought to this area by the Washington County Water Conservancy District from wells located in the Anderson Junction area, which already provide water to Virgin Town and LaVerkin City. The construction of a new reservoir in this area, along with the additional wells being added, could provide a stable source of culinary water to this part of the county at any time the demand justifies extension of development lines.

Sewage Disposal:

The small amount of development that has previously taken place in this valley has utilized septic tanks for development. Depending upon the exact type of development in the industrial / commercial mixed use areas of the valley, septic tanks might still be an adequate method of sewage disposal. However, other means of disposal are now approved by the State Department of Environmental Quality which could provide service to the mixed use commercial / residential area that the General Plan suggests for the Pintura area.

Because the county now has an agreement with the Ash Creek Special Service District to oversee sewage disposal in this part of the county, a future connection to the existing Sewer District could also be an option sometime in the future.

Roads:

In the Pintura valley of the county, the only road of any consequence is the Interstate Freeway. Most other existing roads are unimproved roads that serve various developments or residences along the freeway corridor. Additional roads will be needed to serve the development that could come in the future. These roads can be planned and developed in conjunction with developments that are proposed to take place.

The General Plan would also recommend that when development takes place near the existing freeway, that sufficient right of way for widening of the interstate be reserved as a part of development near the current freeway right-of way. Frontage road widths should also be required so that local traffic can travel up and down the valley without the need to travel on the freeway.

Fire Protection:

The Pintura I-15 Corridor is presently not a part of any fire district in Washington County. Leeds would be the most likely department to respond to fires in the Pintura area because they cover the I-15 Corridor. It might also be possible that the Hurricane Valley Fire District would respond to a fire in this area inasmuch as each of the fire districts work together to protect the county. There is currently discussion about dissolving the Hurricane Valley District. Should this should happen, the closest service would actually be from Toquerville, or perhaps from the Fire district servicing the Harmony Valley above the Black Ridge. The General plan suggests that it would be necessary for the county to work out a service agreement with one of these three districts to cover the Pintura valley. In time, the Pintura / I-15 Corridor valley would be able to support its own fire department as development takes place, and could then be a part of one of these districts. .

Public Safety:

Public safety to the valley is provided by the Washington County Sheriff's Office. This method of law enforcement and police protection will continue to be provided and expanded as necessary to meet the needs of the area. The Utah Highway Patrol will continue to provide an additional police presence along the freeway right-of-way.

Solid Waste:

The Washington County Solid Waste Board is made up of one representative from each city and town along with one member from the county. This committee oversees the collection of solid waste in the county.

There is a central landfill location which is owned by Washington County and managed by the solid waste collection company. This site is expected to be sufficient for many

years to come. The system of management and oversight is also expected to continue. The solid waste program in the county is supported by the General Plan and currently works very well. The Plan recommends that this system continue to be used for development in this part of the county.

Building Inspection:

Building inspection for all types of construction is provided by the County Building Department. This Department is prepared to inspect commercial and industrial development as well as residential development. The cost of building permits is established to defray the cost of inspection during the period of construction. Building permit fees in the unincorporated areas of the county are generally lower than those found in the incorporated cities and towns in the county.

Communication:

Most of Washington County is served by the Century Link communication company. In addition to Century Link services, there are a number of private cellular companies providing service in the county. Because of the proximity of any development to the Interstate Freeway, it can be expected that most cellular systems will be available in this area. One cellular tower does exist near the Browse Interchange, and two other towers have been approved south of the Black Ridge interchange on the hillside above the freeway.

Flood Control:

Flood control has not been identified as a major problem along the freeway through this part of the county. Proper drainage will need to be a consideration in the approval of any construction plans for buildings in the valley, especially for large box storage or industrial buildings that may be constructed.

Incorporation:

This is currently an unincorporated part of the county. It is the one area of the county where annexation or incorporation is not expected in the future, and should be opposed by the county should it be proposed. Toquerville, with City limits including the Anderson Junction freeway interchange, could possibly propose to annex up through the Snowfield Interchange. The General Plan recommends that this area of the county remain unincorporated to provide the county with a commercial and industrial sales tax base that has not already been brought into one of the other incorporated areas of the county.