Ajo Community Profile

Developed by the CPPW Evaluation Team
University of Arizona
Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health

for the
Communities Putting Prevention to Work Program
Pima County Health Department

Made possible by funding from the Pima County Health Department via the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
AJO

Ajo is an incorporated community located in western Pima County (see map at top right)

Population: 3,253
Location: 131 miles west of Tucson and 35 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border.
Land area: 9 mi²
Colonia: Yes
Congressional District: 7
Board of Supervisors District: 3
Census Tract: Ajo CDP

Western Pima County Community Council (WPCCC) interacts with County and State government on behalf of Ajo residents.

Data Sources: This community profile contains information from multiple sources.

- The magnifying glass symbol indicates that the information came from public sources like the U.S. Census Bureau or agency websites.
- The camera symbol indicates that the information originated from an observational assessment of the community conducted by evaluators from the University Of Arizona College Of Public Health.
- The clipboard symbol indicates the data originated from the community assessments administered to neighborhood residents by the CPPW neighborhood Connector.

The population of Ajo differs from the population of Pima County and the overall U.S. population (see table at right). Compared to these two groups, residents in Ajo:

- **Are substantially older** – The median age of those in Ajo is 14 years greater than that for the country as a whole. There are fewer children under age 5 and more adults over age 65 than Pima County and the U.S.
- **Live in smaller households and have smaller families** - Average household size and family size are less than those for Pima County and the U.S.
- **Have lower incomes** - Median household income is $11,000 less and median family income is $21,000 less in Ajo than for the U.S., though both households and families are smaller in Ajo than in the country as a whole. Per capita income is $7,500 less in Ajo than the U.S.
- **Are more Hispanic** - The population of Ajo is more Hispanic than that of the U.S. (47% vs. 15%).
- **Are more likely to speak languages other than English** – Half of those in Ajo speak a language other than English at home, compared to one-fifth of those across the U.S.

### Employment by Industry

Of the Ajo population age 16 years and over, less than half (43%) is in the labor force, compared to 65% of the U.S. population.

- **Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services** account for the greatest proportion of labor in Ajo (20%). These industries account for only 11% of labor in Pima County.
- **Education services, and health care and social assistance**, which account for nearly one-quarter (24%) of labor in Pima County, account for 17% of labor in Ajo.

### Demographics (ACS 2005-2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AJO CDP</th>
<th>PIMA COUNTY</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>50.4 years</td>
<td>36.8 years</td>
<td>36.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years and over</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size</td>
<td>2.32 people</td>
<td>2.62 people</td>
<td>2.60 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average family size</td>
<td>2.97 people</td>
<td>3.30 people</td>
<td>3.19 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$34,496</td>
<td>$45,885</td>
<td>$51,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median family income</td>
<td>$35,083</td>
<td>$56,711</td>
<td>$62,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income</td>
<td>$19,472</td>
<td>$24,556</td>
<td>$27,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RACE AND ETHNICITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White alone</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American alone</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian alone</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race alone</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATIVITY / LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Causes of death differed between Ajo, Pima County, and the state of Arizona in 2009 (see chart below):

- Cardiovascular diseases were the leading cause of death in Ajo, Pima County, and Arizona.
- The proportion of deaths from breast and lung cancers in Ajo was less than for Pima County or Arizona.
- There were greater proportions of homicide and alcohol-induced deaths in Ajo than in Pima County or Arizona.
- There were no suicides or deaths resulting from injury by firearms or drug use.
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Residential Areas

Housing characteristics:
- Ajo has 2,089 housing units.
- 33% of housing units in Ajo are vacant, compared to about 12% in Pima County.
- There are more homeowners than renters: 68% of housing units in Ajo are owner-occupied and 32% are renter-occupied.

Occupied Housing Units by Year
Householder Moved Into Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969 or before</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1999</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2004</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 or later</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0.0% of housing units lack complete plumbing facilities
0.0% lack complete kitchen facilities
0.0% have no telephone services

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Most common things survey respondents say they like MOST about Ajo
N = 43

- 41% Beauty
- 14% The people/neighbors
- 14% Sense of community
- 7% Friendly
- 7% Quiet

Other things residents like: The Plaza; Quiet; Small space; Affordable; Privacy; Clean; Beautiful view of the desert.

Who answered the survey?
- Forty-three members of the Ajo Community
- Surveys were distributed at a community event, Sonoran Shin ding Day on Saturday, March 12th 2011.
- 100% were completed in English.

SOURCES:
- Pima County Transit System. Available at: [http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/Community_Grant_Services/PimaCnty.asp](http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/Community_Grant_Services/PimaCnty.asp).
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Bus Service 🚌

1. **Ajo Transportation**
   Connects Ajo and Tucson

2. **Valley Metro** (see photo below)
   Provides service between Ajo and Phoenix
   Monday-Saturday

*Both provide dial-a-ride service*

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**Most Common Bike/ Walk Destinations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Walk</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor's/ Friend's House</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Park</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk the Dog</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Thirty-six survey respondents (84%) say they walk or bike in the neighborhood.

**SOURCES:**
Pima County Transit System. Available at: [http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/Community_Grant_Services/PimaCnty.asp](http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/Community_Grant_Services/PimaCnty.asp).

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Ajo District Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce functions to promote economic programs to strengthen and expand the income potential of local businesses; to promote civic, social and cultural programs to increase the functional and aesthetic values of the community; and to correct abuses which prevent business expansion and community growth.

The International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA)

A tri-national nonprofit organization including representatives from the Tohono O’odham Nation, Mexico and the United States, ISDA operates community development, environmental education, and community action programming in Ajo, including revitalization of the historical Curley School complex and the town square.

Western Pima County Community Council (WPCCC)

WPCCC consists of elected representatives who interact with County and State government on behalf of Ajo residents.

Ajo also has a variety of active cultural/arts organizations and fraternal organizations that sponsor events throughout the year.

Faith-based Organizations

Nine faith-based organizations were identified in Ajo, all of which are churches:

- Ajo Calvary Baptist Church
  740 W. Rocalla Ave.
- Ajo Congregation of Jehovah’s
  1540 W. Wolsey St.
- Ajo Federated Church
  101 Lomita Ave.
- Ajo First Assembly
  950 N. Cameron Ave.
- Church of Christ Ajo
  530 W. Palo Verde Ave.
- Full Gospel Fellowship
  1900 N. 2nd Ave.
- Good Shepherd
  Presbyterian Church
  400 W. Palo Verde Ave.
- Immaculate Conception
  Catholic Church
  1500 N. Washington Ave.
- Roman Catholic Church
  Diocese
  101 W. Rocalla Ave.

SOURCES: Ajo District Chamber of Commerce. Available at: http://www.ajochamber.com/
Three recreational facilities were identified in the Ajo area. These include:

- **Ajo Schools Complex / Palo Verde II Neighborhood Park**
  111 N. Well Rd.

- **Ajo Community Center / Bud Walker Park**
  290 5th Street

- **Gibson Neighborhood Park**
  W. Childs St. between N. Thompson Ave. and N. Sartillion Ave.

### Activities offered at Ajo Community Center / Bud Walker Park:
- **KAPP: Kids And Parent Playtime**
- **Open Game Room**
- **Saguaro Girl Scouts**
- **Cheerleading/Requettes/Dance Program**
- **Organized Youth Sports (including soccer, basketball, volleyball and flag football)**
- **Teen Program (pool, foosball, games, movie nights) - Free**
- **Senior Exercise Program**
- **Low Impact Aerobics - $25 for 6-week program**
- **Open Weights/Fitness Equipment - $1/visit or $20 for 24 entries**

### Open to the public?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Open to the public?</th>
<th>Play equipment</th>
<th>Grass</th>
<th>Sports fields</th>
<th>Tennis courts</th>
<th>Benches</th>
<th>Picnic tables</th>
<th>Water fountains</th>
<th>Restrooms</th>
<th>Bike racks</th>
<th>Trash bins</th>
<th>Exercise stations</th>
<th>Walking trails</th>
<th>Lights</th>
<th>Pool</th>
<th>Vending machines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ajo Community Center / Bud Walker Park</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson Neighborhood Park</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-six (60%) of survey respondents say they are aware of available neighborhood or local school recreational facilities; 14% said they are not aware; and 19% do not know. (N = 43)
The majority of those surveyed (90%) purchase their groceries at Olsen’s Market and travel by car (70%).

60% of respondents say it takes them 5 minutes or less to travel to their grocery store; while it takes 30% of people 10 minutes or more. Overall, travel time ranges from 2 minutes to 30 minutes.

Top three things that will help families eat more fresh vegetables and fruits (N = 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affordability/ Money</th>
<th>28%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardens/ Farmers markets</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of fresh produce</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44% of those surveyed say it is possible for them to grow fruits, vegetables or eggs.

Main reasons for NOT being able to grow fruits, vegetables or eggs:
1. Environment (Soil, Water) (45%)
2. Unsure How (15%)
3. Resources (Time/Money) (10%)

Other reasons: Live in a trailer park; I don’t have chickens; hard; and why do it?
FOOD SYSTEMS RESOURCES

Farmers’ Markets

1 OUTSIDE TARGET AREA:
- Ajo Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
  - Produce from Crooked Sky Farms (South Phoenix)
  - 4 annual sessions ($20/week)
  - 20-40 subscribers seasonally

Food Assistance

- Ajo Community Food Bank
  - Branch bank of Tucson Community Food Bank
  - Serves Ajo, Lukeville, and Why
  - Offers food boxes, commodities, and gleaning services
  - Administers summer meals program for children
- Ajo Community Center Senior Nutrition Program
  (funded by Pima Council on Aging)

Gardening

1. Community garden, greenhouse, and planned pomegranate orchard at Curley School (see photos at right)
2. School garden plot at Ajo Elementary / High School complex (see photo at top left)
3. WIC garden and dental garden at Desert Senita Community Health Center (see photo at bottom left)

The Ajo Food Partnership, a collaborative effort led by ISDA, has received Community Foundation for Southern Arizona funding to address local food system issues. Goals include: Building a more sustainable local food system; new community awareness and engagement in making healthy food choices; and development of new food-based economic opportunities for community residents.

SOURCES:
**SCHOOLS & CHILD CARE**

### Schools
- Ajo Elementary School
- Ajo Middle School
- Ajo High School

Children and youth who reside in the Ajo area attend schools in Ajo Unified School District (AUSD). The district also draws students from the western districts of the Tohono O'odham Reservation and from Lukeville and Why, Arizona. There are three AUSD public schools: Ajo Elementary, Ajo Middle, and Ajo High (see map at right). 66% of students at Ajo Elementary qualified for free or reduced lunch status in March 2010.

### Child Care
- Ajo Head Start
  111 Well Road

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**SOURCES:**
HEALTH SERVICES

Closest hospital (located 100 miles northeast of Ajo):

Casa Grande Regional Medical Center
1800 E. Florence Blvd., Casa Grande, AZ
Services: Base hospital/emergency services, infection control, wound center, case management, imaging, therapy and rehabilitation services, and more.

Health care providers in Ajo:

Pima County Health Department - Ajo Office
Services: Public health nursing, family planning

Desert Senita Community Health Center
Services: Medical, dental, and behavioral health services, education and outreach programs (diabetes education, WIC, service eligibility assistance), laboratory, x-ray, and immunization services.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Top 4 Concerns (N = 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Healthy Food</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMUNITY STRESS INDICATORS

Crime
In 2005, Ajo office handled 672 cases of misdemeanor offenses.

Poverty
In Ajo, proportions of individuals and families living below the poverty level are substantially greater than in Pima County.

Percent whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ajo CDP</th>
<th>Pima County</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years and over</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children under 18 years</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children 5 to 17 years</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With related children under 18 years</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with female householder, no husband present</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With related children under 18 years</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Community Concerns (N = 43)
- Abandoned properties (6%)
- Health issues (obesity, diabetes, depression) (5%)
- Lighting (5%)
- Unsupervised kids (3%)
- Taxes (2%)
COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Three most popular ways to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables for the community: (N=43)

- Start a farmers market in the community (72%)
- Provide technical assistance for vegetable growing and water-harvesting (60%)
- Provide education and information on urban farming and chickens so we can produce our own food (49%)

Top 5 Desired Community Improvements (N = 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Night Lighting</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Gardens</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Trees</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Paths / Sidewalks</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you want to grow fruit, vegetables, or eggs? (N = 43)

- Yes: 56%
- No: 19%
- Did Not Respond: 16%
- Other: 9%