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# Ajo Community Profile

Developed by the CPPW Evaluation Team

University of Arizona

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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 mi<sup>2</sup>

**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.



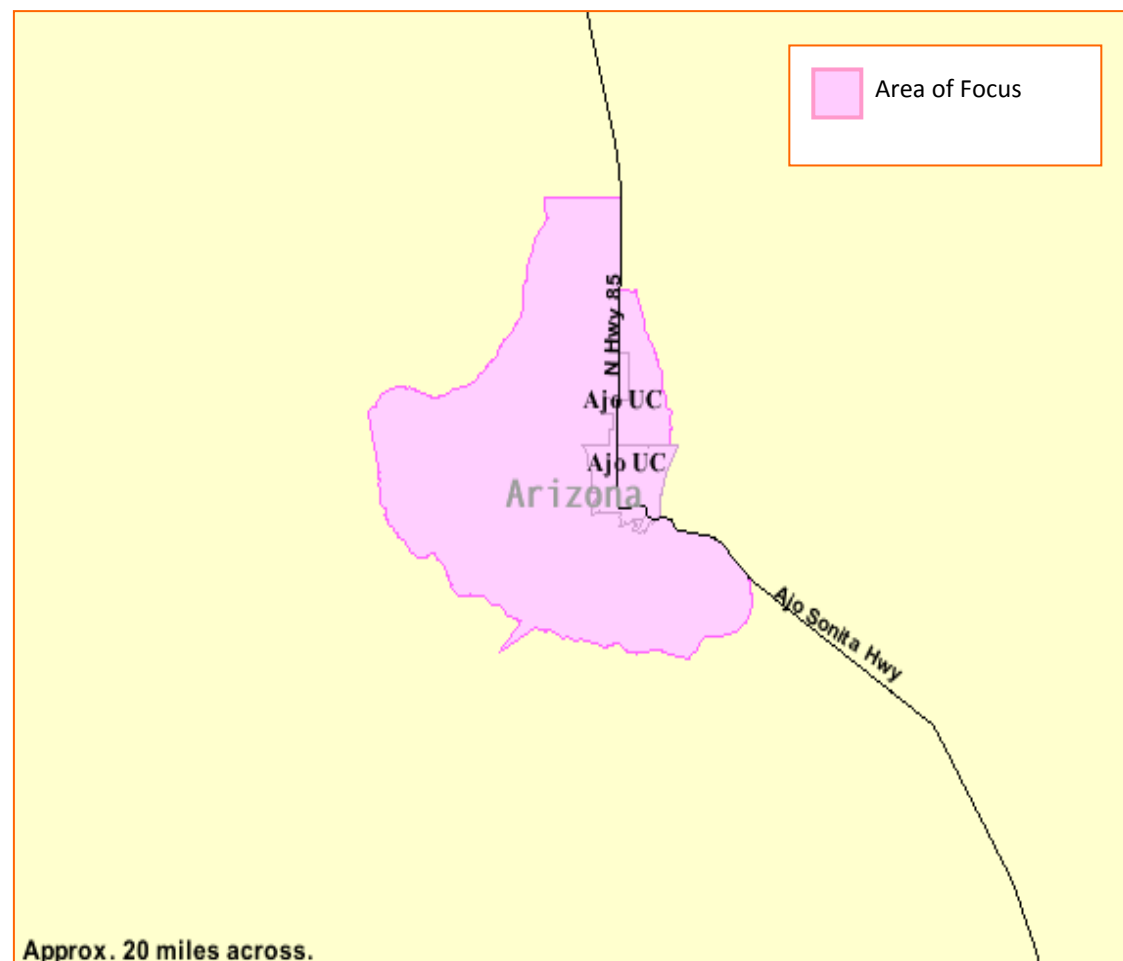
The magnifying glass symbol indicates that the information came from public sources like the U.S. Census Bureau or agency websites.



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.



**SOURCES:** Govtrack.us. Arizona's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District & Map. Available at: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/findyourreps.xpd?state=AZ&district=7>.  
 Pima County Board of Supervisors. District Map. Available at: <http://www.pima.gov/bos/distmap/images/bos17.pdf>.  
 Pima County Community Development. Census 2000 Pima County Community Development Target Areas. Available at: <http://www.pima.gov/ced/Data/documents/CDBG2000-PimaCountyTargetAreas.pdf>.  
 U.S. Census Bureau. 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov>.  
 U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Designated Colonias in Arizona. Available at: <http://www.hud.gov/local/az/groups/coloniasaz.cfm>.

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

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.

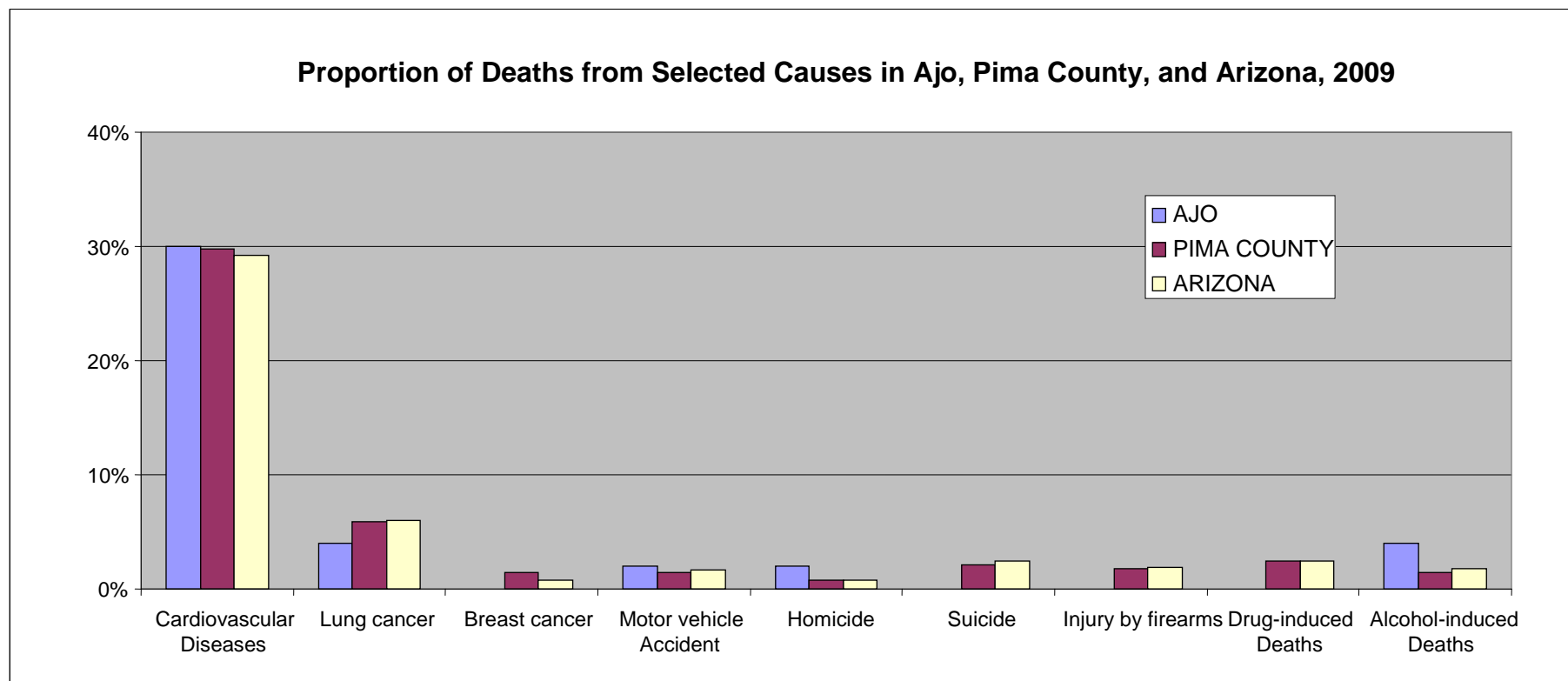
## Demographics (ACS 2005-2009)

	AJO CDP	PIMA COUNTY	U.S.
<b>GENDER</b>			
Male	49.3%	49.0%	49.3%
Female	50.7%	51.0%	50.7%
<b>AGE</b>			
Median age	50.4 years	36.8 years	36.5 years
Under 5 years	4.4%	6.9%	6.9%
18 years and over	80.6%	76.3%	75.4%
65 years and over	32.7%	14.7%	12.6%
<b>HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES</b>			
Average household size	2.32 people	2.62 people	2.60 people
Average family size	2.97 people	3.30 people	3.19 people
Median household income	\$34,496	\$45,885	\$51,425
Median family income	\$35,083	\$56,711	\$62,363
Per capita income	\$19,472	\$24,556	\$27,041
<b>RACE AND ETHNICITY</b>			
Not Hispanic or Latino:			
White alone	45.7%	57.2%	65.8%
Black or African American alone	0.6%	3.1%	12.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.6%	2.5%	0.7%
Asian alone	2.7%	2.4%	4.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Some other race alone	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Two or more races	1.3%	1.6%	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	47.1%	32.8%	15.1%
<b>NATIVITY / LANGUAGE</b>			
Foreign born	17.1%	13.2%	12.4%
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)	49.5%	28.0%	19.6%

## HEALTH INDICATORS

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.



SOURCE: Arizona Department of Health Services. Number of deaths from selected causes by selected community, Arizona, 2009. Available at: <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/report/ahs/ahs2009/pdf/9c.pdf>.

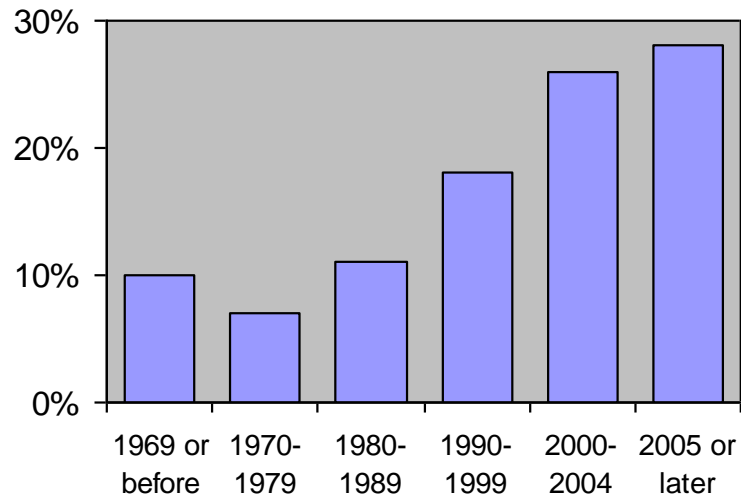
## COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

### 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



0.0% of housing units lack complete plumbing facilities

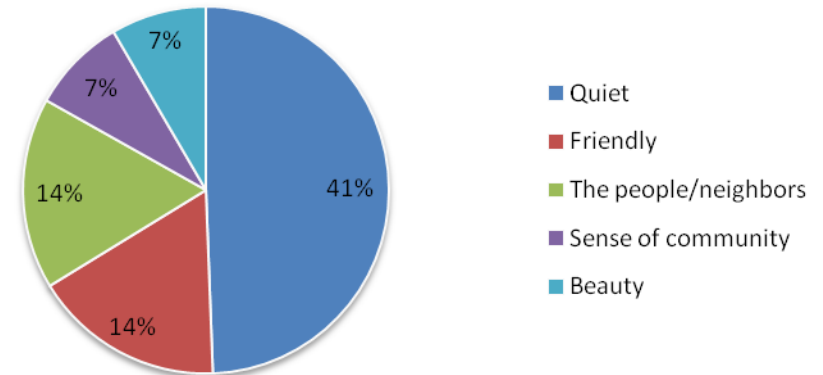
0.0% lack complete kitchen facilities

0.0% have no telephone services

## COMMUNITY ASSETS

### Most common things survey respondents say they like MOST about Ajo

N = 43



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.



*The Central Plaza in Ajo, Arizona  
Photographed at Shin ding Day community event*

## 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

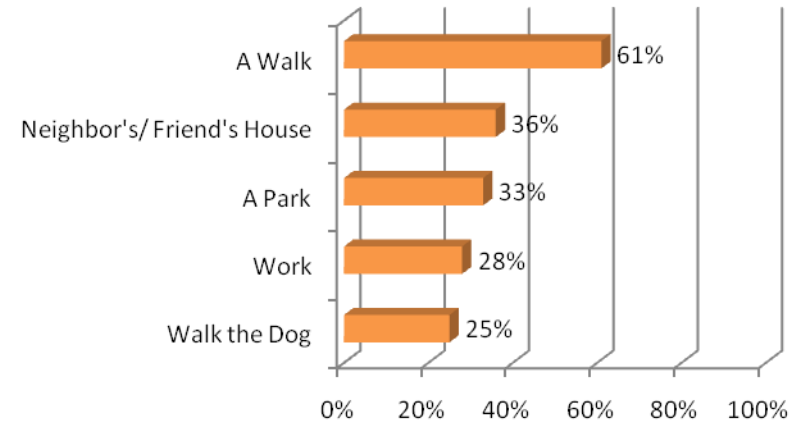
*\* Both provide dial-a-ride service*



Valley metro bus service to Phoenix from Ajo



### Most Common Bike/ Walk Destinations (N = 43)



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



## 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. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.



Healthy community signage in Ajo

SOURCES: Ajo District Chamber of Commerce. Available at: <http://www.ajochamber.com/>.  
Pima County Community Development. Census 2000 Pima County Community Development Target Areas. Available at:  
<http://www.pima.gov/ced/Data/documents/CDBG2000-PimaCountyTargetAreas.pdf>.

## COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



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?	Play equipment	Grass	Sports fields	Tennis courts	Benches	Picnic tables	Water fountains	Restrooms	Bike racks	Trash bins	Exercise stations	Walking trails	Lights	Pool	Vending machines
Ajo Schools Complex / Palo Verde II Neighborhood Park																
Ajo Community Center / Bud Walker Park																
Gibson Neighborhood Park																



Playground and shaded area at Bud Walker Park

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)



Bike rack and shaded bench at Ajo Community Center



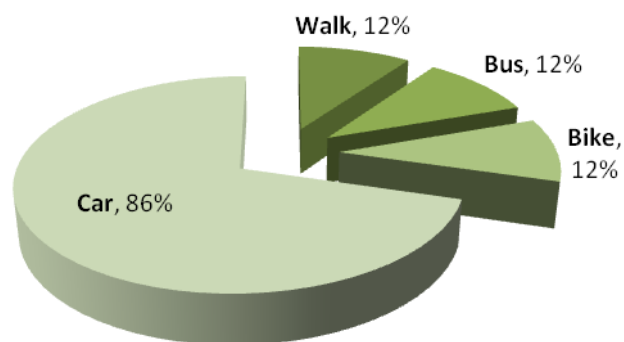
## FOOD ACCESSIBILITY



### Grocery Stores / Small Markets

- **Circle K**  
560 N. State Route 85
- **Dollar General Discount**  
802 N. State Route 85
- **Olsen's Market**  
601 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. #5
- **Olsen's Market Place**  
1961 N. Ajo Gila Bend Hwy.
- **Plaza Super Market Modern**  
5 N. Plaza St.

### How do you get to the grocery store? (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)

Affordability/ Money	28%
Gardens/ Farmers markets	22%
Availability of fresh produce	14%

### Restaurants

- **Bamboo Village**  
1810 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave
- **Barranca Del Cobre LLC**  
23 N. Plaza St.
- **Café at the Mocambo**  
1800 N. Ajo Gila Bend Hwy.
- **Dairy Queen**  
1304 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
- **Don Juan's**  
100 W. Estrella Ave.
- **Gringo Pass Cafe**  
175 W. Solana Ave.
- **Marcela's Care & Bakery**  
1117 W. Dorsey St.
- **Oasis Cafe**  
28 N. Plaza St.
- **Pizza Hut**  
627 State Route 85
- **XY Cafe**  
110 Ajo Well Rd. #1
- **100 Estrella Restaurant**  
100 W. Estrella Ave.

**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: Ajo Community Food Bank. Available at <http://communityfoodbank.com/get-involved/ajo/>.  
 Ajo Community Supported Agriculture. Available at: <http://ajocsa.com/>.  
 Community Foundation for Southern Arizona. Planning Grant Descriptions. Available at <http://www.cfsoaz.org/cfsa/Nonprofits/Grants/CommunityInvestmentGrants/PlanningGrants/tabid/312/Default.aspx>.  
 LocalHarvest. Map-based search engine. Available at: <http://www.localharvest.org/>.



## 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

Map of AUSD Schools



SOURCES: Ajo Unified School District. Available at: <http://ajoschools.org/>.  
 Ajo Unified School District. Ajo Schools Aerial View & Virtual Tour. Available at: [http://ajoschools.org/ajo\\_schools\\_aerial\\_photo.php](http://ajoschools.org/ajo_schools_aerial_photo.php).  
 Arizona Department of Education. Child Nutrition Programs. Tables SY2009, SY2010. Available at: <http://www.ade.state.az.us/health-safety/cnp/frpercentages/>.  
 ChildcareCenter.us. Childcare Centers in Ajo, Arizona. Available at: [http://childcarecenter.us/arizona/ajo\\_az\\_childcare](http://childcarecenter.us/arizona/ajo_az_childcare).

## 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.

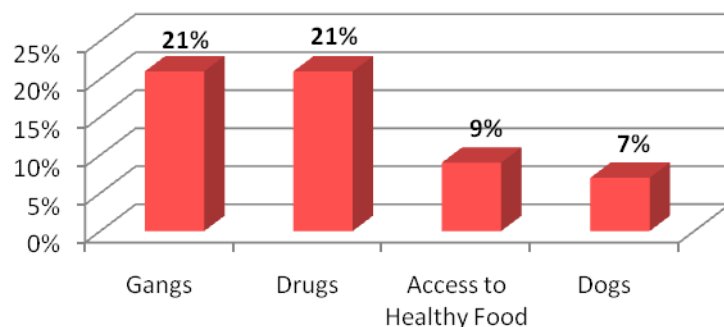
**Health care providers in Ajo:**

**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)



SOURCES: Casa Grande Regional Medical Center. Available at: <http://www.casagrandehospital.com/>.  
Desert Senita Community Health Center. Services. Available at: <http://www.ajochc.org/>.  
Pima County Attorney's Office 10 Year Report (1996-2006). Available at: <http://www.pcao.pima.gov/Docs/10%20Year%20Report.pdf>.  
Pima County Health Department Clinics and Neighborhood Services. Available at: [http://www.pimahealth.org/clinics\\_locations.asp](http://www.pimahealth.org/clinics_locations.asp).  
TMC Healthcare. Tucson Medical Center. Available at: <https://www.tmc.org/TucsonMedicalCenter>.  
U.S. Census Bureau. 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Available at: <http://factfinder.census.gov>.

## 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**

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

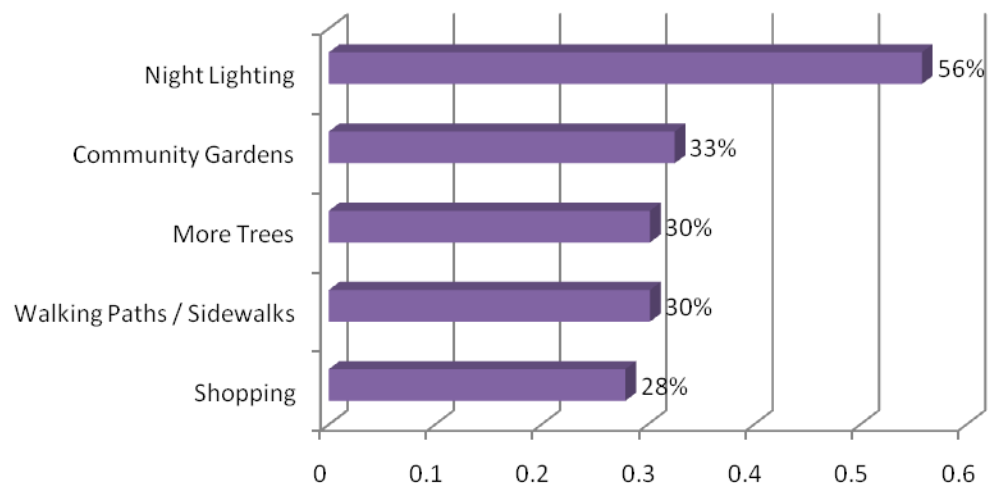
### Other Community Concerns (N = 43)

- ★ Abandoned properties (6%)
- ★ Health issues (obesity, diabetes, depression) (5%)
- ★ Lighting (5%)
- ★ Unsupervised kids (3%)
- ★ Taxes (2%)

## COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES



### Top 5 Desired Community Improvements (N = 43)



Photographed  
at Ajo Shin  
ding Day  
community

### 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%)

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

