April 22, 2025

Re: Critical Funding Necessary for Pinal County Transportation Projects

Honorable Members of the Arizona Legislature,

On behalf of Pinal Partnership, I would like to thank you for your continued service to Pinal County and its 500,000+ residents. As you’re keenly aware, transportation infrastructure in a rapidly growing county, such as Pinal, continues to be our largest challenge- not only for the ease of reducing congestion but also to spur economic development, especially from the advanced manufacturing sector. Pinal County is leading the way with the location of companies such as LG Energy Solution, Lucid Motors, Procter & Gamble and Kohler. Building a strong transportation system is critical to the continued expansion of these facilities and prospective companies who will follow suit.

As you continue to craft the Fiscal Year 2025/26 State Budget, we ask that you consider the inclusion of funding the following priority needs:

* The extension of the State Route 24 and HB 2519, east of Ironwood to the CAP canal and ultimately the U.S. 60. This portion of the freeway would extend through 4,150 acres of State Trust Land located in Queen Creek, which is largely zoned industrial and commercial and is adjacent to LG Energy Solution’s $5.5B battery manufacturing plant. The extension of the freeway only furthers the value of the State Trust Land for the Trust’s 13 beneficiaries, including K-12 education. *($39 million request for the Ironwood Interchange, right-of-way and earthwork which includes restoration of FY 2025’s State Budget cut of $27.7 million)*
* The pre-construction and construction funding for the intersection of SR-347/Riggs Road and SB 1617 and HB 2557. This intersection is currently the fourth most dangerous controlled intersection on the state highway system and was the site of 306 accidents in a recent five-year period. Unfortunately, 40% of those accidents resulted in a suspected, minor, or serious injury and five resulted in at least one fatality. The project is in final design and will be ready to go to bid in early 2026. *($12.3 million in FY 2026, $29.1 million in FY 2027 and $49 million in FY 2028)*
* Support appropriations funding for a Pinal County Transportation study and plan HB 2234, a Countywide study and ultimate plan with collaboration from the State of Arizona, ASU and Pinal County.

The completion of these projects not only enhances the movement of people and goods, it also plays a critical role in creating a regionally connected system, linking Pinal County with Maricopa County. These connections will be crucial as our State and Pinal County continue to grow at 5.6% annually, as well as market demand for residential housing. Again, please consider funding these key transportation projects for the State. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Craig McFarland

President & CEO