

Phelan Piñon Hills, San Bernardino County

Community Profile

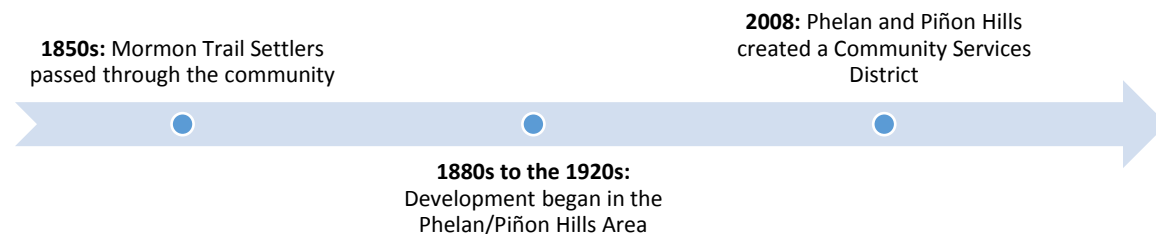
Purpose

The community profile is a summary of the social, cultural, economic, and historic dimensions of Phelan Piñon Hills. It presents data collected through secondary sources to inform future actions. The profile, together with future studies and information gathered from residents, highlights essential facets and “tells the story” of the Phelan Piñon Hills Community.

The initial objective research prepared for the community profile was provided to participants as a handout at each community workshop to provide a basis for discussion during the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), values, and aspirations exercises. Workshop participants were asked to review the information and provide comments as a way to infuse local knowledge into the community plans process. Their feedback was used to finalize the community profile, which includes objective research and issue identification by community workshop participants.

The objective information, community stories, and public’s participation in the community profile, SWOT, values, and aspirations exercises were all used when developing the framework for the focus and action statements that make up the community plan.

History



The Phelan community was named after Senator James D. Phelan and his brother John Thomas Phelan. As homesteaders moved to the area at the turn of the century, mining and lumbering became common practice. More recently, the areas at higher elevations have gained a reputation as a recreational playground. The community boasts recreational facilities, including trails for hiking and rock climbing at higher elevations. Phelan Piñon Hills are rural communities, offering the opportunity for certain rural recreational activities. In 2008, citizens of Phelan and Piñon Hills voted to create a Community Services District, which is now the largest of its kind in San Bernardino County.

Sources: Wikipedia.org, pphcsd.org, San Bernardino County General Plan

Location & Geography

Phelan and Piñon Hills are located directly adjacent to the western border of San Bernardino County in the southwest corner of the county. The communities are in the foothill desert areas to the north of Mount San Antonio (Mount Baldy).

Source(s): ESRI, San Bernardino County LUS



Figure 1: Area Map

Source(s): ESRI, San Bernardino County LUS

Key Census Data

Category	Phelan/Piñon Hills		San Bernardino County		California		United States	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Population								
Total Population	22,921		2,078,586		38,066,920		314,107,084	
2020 Population Forecast	23,373 (+1.0%)		2,227,066 (+7.1%)		40,619,346 (+6.7%)		334,503,000 (+6.5%)	
Total Households	7,566		607,604		12,617,280		116,211,092	
Average Household Size	2.99		3.34		2.95		2.63	
Median Age	39.6		32.2		35.6		37.4	
Education								
High School Diploma	4,906	32.1%	330,613	26.3%	5,153,257	20.7%	58,440,600	27.95%
Education Past High School	5,009	32.7%	417,953	33.3%	7,400,714	29.8%	60,821,634	29.1%
Bachelor Degree or Higher	1,309	8.6%	336,315	26.8%	7,708,909	31.0%	61,206,147	29.3%
Housing								
Total Dwelling Units	8,614	n/a	703,737	n/a	13,781,929	n/a	132,741,033	n/a
Homeowner Occupied Units	5,708	66.3%	370,032	52.58%	6,908,925	50.1%	74,787,460	56.3%
Renter Occupied Units	1,859	21.6%	237,572	33.76%	5,708,355	41.4%	41,423,632	32.2%
Vacancy*	1,048	12.2%	96,133	13.7%	1,164,649	8.5%	16,529,941	12.5%
Median Year Structure Built	1974	n/a	1976	n/a	1974	n/a	1976	n/a
Income								
Median Household Income	\$50,696	n/a	\$54,100	n/a	\$61,489	n/a	\$53,482	n/a
Persons Below Poverty Level	1,892	12.4%	199,451	12.7%	3,354,518	11.2%	26,235,361	10.6%
Employed	6,751	85.1%	812,707	86.1%	16,890,442	89.0%	143,435,233	90.2%
Unemployed	1,185	14.9%	131,293	13.9%	2,084,564	12.3%	14,504,781	9.2%
Note: N/A indicates that the data is not available; n/a indicates that the category is not applicable								
*This figure may include seasonal households								

Table 1: Key Census Data

Source(s): 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and ESRI

Community Structure (Physical Characteristics)

Residences in Phelan Piñon Hills tend to be single-family, one-story homes on large lots; the properties often include farm animals and horses. Commercial buildings are generally large stores and restaurants with off-street parking.

A network of highways connects the communities to State Route (SR) 138, SR 395, and Interstate 15. The main roads are heavily traveled, with up to 23,500 average daily trips on a single roadway. The communities have few pedestrian facilities and no bicycle facilities.

Phelan Piñon Hills is served by Victor Valley Transit Authority Routes 20 and 21, which provide service to Wrightwood, Oak Hills, and the Mall of Victor Valley.

Water service is provided by the Sheep Creek Water Company and the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District. Septic tanks and leach fields are used for wastewater needs.

Sources: Google Earth, County of San Bernardino Zoning Map, Fehr & Peers, San Bernardino Countywide Plan Transportation Existing Conditions Report, County of San Bernardino General Plan Existing Conditions Report, Victor Valley Transit Authority

Community Existing Land Use

Combined, the Phelan and Piñon Hills Communities Plan area covers approximately 80,266 acres. The communities are primarily made up of residential uses with rural living accounting for 91% (73,349 acres), single family residential uses accounting for 4% (3,138 acres), and multiple family residential uses accounting for approximately 1% (442 acres) of the communities. The remaining uses are: special development (1,277 acres); community industrial (791 acres); rural, neighborhood, and general commercial (754 acres); institutional (327 acres); and office, service, and highway commercial, each account for 2% or less of zoned acreage in the communities.

Land Use Type	Acreage	% of Total Area
Community Industrial	791	1%
Institutional	327	<1%
Multiple Residential	442	1%
Office, Service, and Highway Commercial	187	<1%
Rural, Neighborhood, and General Commercial	754	1%
Rural Living	73,349	91%
Single Residential	3,138	4%
Special Development	1,277	2%
Phelan Piñon Hills Total	80,266	

Table 2: Land Uses by Acreage

Source(s): County of San Bernardino Land Use Services

Community Amenities

The rugged landscape surrounding Phelan Piñon Hills includes trails and open space that community members and visitors can enjoy.

Parks and Trails	San Bernardino County-maintained trails, Close to San Bernardino National Forest
Fire Protection	San Bernardino County Fire Station #10, response times are 8 to 10 minutes
Police	San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department - Victor Valley Station
Public Schools	Baldy Mesa Elementary School Heritage School (K-8) Phelan Elementary School Piñon Hills Elementary School Piñon Mesa Middle School Quail Valley Middle School Excelsior Charter Schools Phelan Chaparral High School Serrano High School

Table 3: Community Services

Source(s): Zillow.com, Phelan/Piñon Hills Community Plan 2007, Google Maps, California Department of Education, County of San Bernardino Sheriff's Department

Community Groups

Mustang Spirit (760) 807-7558, www.mustang-spirit.org
Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District (760) 868-1212, www.pphcsd.org
Friends of the Phelan Memorial Library (760)868-3053/ www.sbclib.org
Tri-Community Veterans of Foreign Wars – Post 9415 (760)868-1999, http://vfw9415.org/contact.html
Knights of Columbus (760)220-6508
Tri-Community Kiwanis Club http://www.tckiwanis.com/
Transition Habitat Conservancy (760)868-5136, http://www.transitionhabitat.org/
Phelan Chamber of Commerce (760)868-3291, http://phelanchamber.info/
Pinon Hills Chamber of Commerce (760)868-5801, http://www.pinonhillschamber.com/

Table 4: Community Groups

Source(s): Listed in Table

Quality of Life Concerns

The following list was compiled from observations and calls received by San Bernardino County Sheriff and Code Enforcement officers. Commonly submitted code enforcement requests include the following concerns:

Public nuisances: Junk/trash, vacant structures, illegal dumping, illegal land use, off-highway vehicles.

Source(s): County of San Bernardino Code Enforcement, County of San Bernardino Sheriff's Department

Community Economics

The 2016 ESRI Community Analyst Report showed that Phelan Piñon Hills is home to 3,560 jobs and 409 businesses. There are a variety of business types in Phelan Piñon Hills that provide services for community members and visitors alike; refer to Figure 3. The most common (by SIC code) are services, construction, eating and drinking establishments, real estate, and general retail. Approximately 51.8% of the Phelan labor force is employed within Phelan, while approximately 45% of the Piñon Hills labor force is employed in the community.

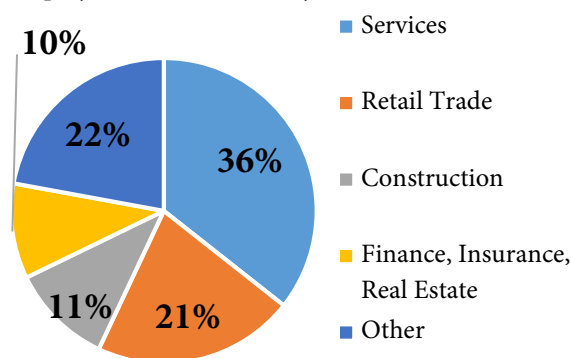


Figure 2: Top Industries

Source(s): ESRI Community Analyst, 2016 U.S. Census Bureau

Community Events

- **Phelan Certified Farmers Market:** every Monday from 2 to 5 p.m. (Phelan Community Center)
- **Toastmasters:** every other Wednesday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. (Phelan Senior Center)
- **Composting Workshop:** March 19, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (Phelan Senior Center)
- **Piñon Hills Senior Potluck:** first, second, and fourth Thursday of the month, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Piñon Hills Community Center)
- **High Desert Cheer:** every Tuesday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (Phelan Community Center)

Source(s): Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District

Public Health

Chronic Disease: The predominant health concerns for Phelan Piñon Hills include asthma and heart failure, though the area generally sees less hospital and emergency rooms visits due to chronic diseases than San Bernardino County as a whole. Phelan Piñon Hills experiences lower rates of hospitalization for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart failure in comparison to San Bernardino County. Additionally, Phelan Piñon Hills also experiences lower rates of E.R. visits for diabetes, COPD, asthma, and hypertension.

	Diabetes Hosp./E.R.	COPD Hosp./E.R.	Asthma Hosp./E.R.	Heart Failure Hosp./E.R.	Hypertension Hosp./E.R.
Phelan Piñon Hills	*/12.2	11.0/11.7	10.1/44.1	21.8/*	*/19.3
San Bernardino County	23.3/42.4	16.0/19.9	9.6/52.6	32.3/10.6	5.6/46.9

Table 5: Rate of Hospitalization/Emergency Room Visits per 10,000 People

Source(s): Healthy San Bernardino

* Indicates insufficient data

Air Quality: Table 6 below shows the air quality near Phelan Piñon Hills, measured at the Phelan-Beekley Road and Phelan Road monitoring site, in terms of the number of days that area exceeded the federal standards for pollutants (exceedance days). The table shows that the monitoring site near Phelan Piñon Hills had fewer exceedance days for ozone than that of the overall South Coast Air Basin, in which Phelan Piñon Hills is located.

Air pollution is one of the contributing factors linked to the development of chronic diseases such as stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases. By reducing levels of ambient pollution (outdoor air pollution), communities can lessen the impact that it has on resident's health.

	Phelan-Beekley Road and Phelan Road Monitoring Site			Mojave Air Basin		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Ozone Federal 8-hour standard	47	31	36	81	66	86
Course Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) Federal 24-hour standard	*	*	*	1	1	1
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) Federal 24-hour standard	*	*	*	2	6	2

Table 6: Air Quality Exceedance Days

Source: California Air Resources Board, 2016

* Indicates insufficient data

Modified Food Index: The Modified Food Index maps the availability of healthy food in a census tract. The lower the score, the less available healthy options are in the area.

The entire community area of Phelan Piñon Hills ranks within the lowest category for food access (shown in red), meaning that there is access to less than 5 healthy food outlets within that area. Lower scores indicate that these areas contain many convenience stores and fast food restaurants compared to the number of healthy food markets.

Source(s): *Modified Retail Food Environment Index Score Map*

Public/Active Transportation: The community is served by Victor Valley Transit Authority, which serves Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Helendale/Silver Lakes, Hesperia/Oak Hills, Lucerne Valley, Phelan/Piñon Hills/Wrightwood, and Victorville. The routes that serve Phelan/Piñon Hills also connect to Wrightwood, Hesperia, and Victorville. There are no dedicated bike lanes, bike trails, or identified bike-friendly roads.

Community Engagement Summary

As a part of the Community Plans Continuum process, community members from Phelan Piñon Hills were invited to participate in three community workshops. The first workshop, titled “What We Value”, took place on March 3rd, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at Piñon Hills Elementary School. This workshop was attended by 56 community members. Workshop participants performed a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the community. Following that exercise, participants used that information to share what they valued about the community (Values) and what they want to see the community become in the future (Aspirations).

The second workshop, titled “Our Roadmap”, took place on March 31st, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Phelan Community Center. This workshop was attended by 45 community members. The purpose of this workshop was to develop preliminary focus and action statements. The project team provided word for word summaries of the SWOT and Values and Aspirations exercises to use during the goal setting process. Additionally, an existing land use map was provided for each of the Detailed Plan Communities for participants to comment on and recommend changes. Participants made comments on where they would and would not like to see certain uses in the future, as well as what they saw as the true boundary of their community.

The third workshop, titled “Making it Happen”, took place on July 21st, 2016 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Piñon Hills Community Center. This workshop was attended by 20 community members. The workshop was used to help prioritize the focus statements developed in the previous workshop while also identifying possible champions for each effort.

Information was also made available on project websites made specifically for each community. This information included:

- Background materials on the project
- Materials developed for each workshop
- Summaries of the information collected from past workshops
- Surveys developed to follow the process of each meeting and allow for further input

Community Identified Issues

SWOT Analysis

This section contains the results of the SWOT analysis conducted during the first workshop. A SWOT exercise stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is used to help gain insight into the community through local knowledge. In the first part, participants identify their communities’ biggest strengths, such as community assets like a library or community center, along with their biggest weaknesses, which could be a lack of open space or high rates of internal crime. Next, workshop participants looked at opportunities that the community could take advantage of as part of the community plans process. This builds off of what was identified in the strengths and weaknesses portion. Lastly, participants identify external threats to the community. These are

generally concerns that are outside of the control of community members, such as natural disasters or changes in economic conditions. This information was then compiled and used throughout the rest of the community plans process to inform the values and aspirations exercises conducted at workshop #1, as well as the focus and actions statements.

Strengths

- Rural living (open community/small town feel)
- Open space/natural environment
- Large lot sizes
- Quiet/peaceful due to larger land parcels
- Less government intervention
- Continued animal keeping (e.g., horses)
- Agricultural opportunities/gardens
- Night sky, stars, sunsets
- Location – mountain and scenery views
- Cleaner air to breathe (leads to healthier community)
- Community cleanliness/unity
- Small town mindset (friendliness, willingness to help people)
- School system
- Lower crime overall
- Water quality
- Local control
- Phelan/Piñon Hills Community Services District is the largest CSD in San Bernardino County
- Two truck routes and one rail line runs through the community
- Water service to homes by the local Community Service District and Sheep Creek Mutual Water Company
- Proximity to San Bernardino National Forest
- San Bernardino County Department of Regional Parks maintained trails
- Relatively low teacher to student ratios (20-24)
- Local Fire Station
- Two Victor Valley Transit Authority bus routes in the community
- 10 different schools to serve the community

- Diversity of business stock
- Diversity of community events
- Low chronic disease rates as compared to the County
- Air quality (based on measure of ozone) in the community is generally better than that of the Mojave Air Basin
- A higher percentage of individuals with a High School Diploma/equivalent and Education Past High School than the County
- A lower percentage of individuals living below the poverty level than the County
- A higher percentage of residents in the community own their homes than in the County as a whole

Weaknesses

- Low law enforcement coverage
- Phelan elementary pick up behind school (safety issue)
- County interference (does not allow a MAC, limits voice of the people)
- County grading of roads and erosion control
- Lots are too small (below 2.5-acre average)
- Detailed designation for CPC
- No nice restaurants
- Trash dumping on the roads/highways (need more services to clean)
- Communication (better notification of meetings)
- Limited on financial resources
- Not enough family opportunities (youth activities)
- Poor internet and telephone service
- Postal unit theft
- Neighbors too involved in others' personal lives

Weaknesses (continued)

- Too far from higher education (college, university, trade school)
- Bad detours for highways thru residential
- Loud semi-trucks and jake breaks
- Wild or loose dogs (animal abandonment)
- Lack of off-road vehicle recreational areas
- High costs to subdivide and build
- Overregulation
- Lack of street signs
- More east to west roads and
- turn lanes
- No after school technology center
- Poor emergency response times
- Reliance on septic tank and leachfields
- Five points/intersections with unacceptable roadway level of service
- Lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Limited access to hospitals (Desert Valley Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital)
- Below average CASHEE test passing rates at Chaparral High School
- Closest Sheriff station serves 10 different communities
- No deputy
- Many submitted Code Enforcement requests about public nuisances (junk/trash, vacant structures, illegal dumping); illegal land use; the Community Services District; demo/rehab issues; CBE Issues (illegal structures); and community leader – Brent Speers (CR&R Disposal Company)
- Lack of access to fresh, nutritious food due to distance between the community and grocery stores and community gardens
- Improve transit areas
- Take advantage of rural living as a unique and diminishing lifestyle
- Market the community as large lots (2.5+ acres)
- Services for Senior citizens (transportation and medical services)
- Community programs to pick up trash or enforce law
- Improve the County permit process (building/rehab/remodel fees for permits lowered and streamlined)
- Waive fees for community events (Phelan Phun Days)
- Restaurants that stay open later (not bars)
- Steakhouse
- Use “Thunderbird” property for restaurants/shops/eating area
- Downtown village area with rural theme
- Better postal service
- Enforce ordinances already in place
- More law enforcement (full-time)
- Wildlife viewing
- Free dump days for trash/tires
- Park construction bond (lower costs on permits for parks)
- More sheriffs to increase response times
- Make livable RV's permissible
- Prevent solar farms
- Bring in high-speed internet
- Military recognition signs on light posts
- Art in public places
- Health food stores
- Move toxic or hazardous waste dump
- Additional County services (flood control, roads)
- Community beautification program
- Water supply from the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District

Opportunities

- Public swimming pool
- Local trails for biking, hiking, horseback riding that start close to town
- Community garden
- Help fun parks and recreation
- Equine arena

Opportunities (continued)

- The San Bernardino County Trails and Greenways Committee is working with the Regional Parks Advisory Commission and the Regional Parks Division to develop and maintain a system of public trails
- The County Sheriff has a state granted fund OHV team to combat Off Highway Vehicle Use in prohibited areas

- Drones

Threats

- Low-income housing (Section 8 housing)
- State fees (fire fee) and mandates (water reduction)
- Voter apathy (lack of voter input)
- Gang influence and graffiti
- City living destroying rural living
- Uncontrolled and too much development of small lots (tract homes)
- Lot sizes less than two acres destroying community character
- Slum lords buying up small houses
- Sex offenders and Isis detainees located/placed here
- Bad drivers
- Government overreach
- Annexation by other cities
- Re-zoning of land
- County micro-management of local control
- Natural disasters (earthquake and wildfire)
- State control over community's water
- Group homes for law breakers (halfway houses)
- Developers
- Permit costs to PPHCSD
- High costs to build (houses upside down before finished)
- Land use services costs too high
- High property taxes
- State and Federal Government
- Industry development/overbuilding
- Bus fees for kids to take school bus
- Big box stores