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Correction: Published correction ran 3/16/06: "Survey: Maricopa is young, affluent," March 13, Valley & State, B1

The locations of the Translational Genomics Research Institute and the Biodesign Institute at Arizona State University were incorrect. TGen is in downtown Phoenix, and the Biodesign Institute is in Tempe.

SURVEY: MARICOPA IS YOUNG, AFFLUENT

Carl Holcombe, The Arizona Republic

The "new" Scottsdale could be just an hour away in Pinal County.

So there are no shopping malls, resorts or nightclubs yet. With carloads of new residents arriving every day, Maricopa city officials contend a new demographics survey shows their young city most closely resembles the Valley city with a national reputation for affluence.

Survey results reveal a combination of youth, smarts and higher incomes. Officials hope this will help them attract knowledge-based jobs to the bedroom community.

"We want a self-sustaining city 100 years into the future," Maricopa City Manager Rick Buss said. "Rooftops won't do it."

The unscientific survey was mailed to 4,030 Maricopa households and 650, or 16 percent, responded, city officials said.

More than half of responding households have a bachelor's degree or higher. Less than half of Scottsdale's population has a bachelor's degree or higher. Household incomes and median ages in the two cities are similar.

Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross said that for years her city has been seen as a benchmark type of community that other cities around the country compare themselves to.

"The Number 1 thing (industries) look at in this new economy is education and environment," Manross said. "It's all interconnected."

Maricopa hopes the survey results will attract jobs related to science, engineering, biotech, computers and information technology, said Economic Development Director Ioanna Morfessis. Right now, most Maricopa residents battle daily gridlocked commutes along Interstate 10 to jobs in the Valley.

"With great authority, we can say we have one of the highest-educated populations in the state and maybe higher than other markets on a national level," Morfessis said. "It gives us a case to make to employers that we have a small but talented workforce already in place. As our population grows, the increases will mirror this survey."

Other Valley cities have successfully used their demographics to attract knowledge-based businesses in recent years. Intel recently expanded chip-making facilities at its Chandler campus. Tempe now has the Translational Genomics Research Institute. Scottsdale is home to the Biodesign Institute at Arizona State University.

"We compare favorably, but it's not about competition with our neighbors," Buss said. "We want to show the state and the country we have a foundation for knowledge-based businesses. Economic development doesn't happen at points on a map, it happens regionally."

The survey is just part of Maricopa's push to attract new jobs.

Maricopa hired America West Airlines founder Ed Beauvais to develop a business airpark modeled after Scottsdale's.

http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=print&p_docid=1105B824A65E... 1/17/2007

Morfessis, who founded the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, was hired as a consultant to oversee economic development. An ethanol plant that officials say could generate \$100 million in annual revenue is under construction.

Maricopa's demographics

The city in Pinal County recently released the results of an unscientific household survey of its residents.

* 44 percent of the households include someone with a management or professional job.

* 15 percent include someone with a technical or trade job.

* 45 percent have lived in Arizona five years or less.

* 66 percent have a household income of at least \$50,000.

* 55 percent are between the ages of 24 and 44.

* 59 percent have no more than two people in their household.

City of Maricopa

How Maricopa measures up

Maricopa released an informal survey it sent to 4,030 of its approximately 17,000 residents. About 650, or 16 percent, responded.

Maricopa

Median age: 38

Median household income: \$57,500

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 52%

Median home price: \$213,073*

Scottsdale

Age: 41

Median household income: \$57,484

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 44%

Median home price: \$744,795*

Chandler

Median age: 32

Median household income: \$63,143

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 21%

Median home price: \$330,810*

Gilbert

Median age: 30

Median household income: \$68,032

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 36%

Median home price: \$285,585*

Tempe

Median age: 29

Median household income: \$42,361

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 24%

Median home price: \$237,000

Surprise

Median age: 46

Median household income: \$44,156

Bachelor's degree or better: 21%

Median home price: \$247,100*

Phoenix

Median age: 31

Median household income: \$41,207

Bachelor's degree or higher education: 23%

Median home price: \$245,020*

*Median home prices are as of the third quarter of 2005

Maricopa survey.

CAPTION: City of Maricopa

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