

W. Valley housing boom to continue, economist says

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While people should expect to see slower growth in 2007, the West Valley's population and housing boom will continue through the coming decades, economist Elliott Pollack said.

Pollack pointed out that 44 percent of the Valley's population is expected to live in this region by 2020. Likewise, about 58 percent of the Valley's housing units built are expected to be located in the West Valley in the next decade, he said.

"You're not only growing, but you're now the major player in the game," Pollack told hundreds of business and civic leaders Wednesday during Westmarc's annual meeting and economic forecast breakfast.

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He broke down what stage each city is in, according to the Maricopa Association of Governments.

- Avondale and Goodyear: Growth is just starting and will continue for the next several decades.
- Buckeye and Surprise: Cities have lots of room to grow and will experience huge population surges.
- Glendale and El Mirage: Cities will continue to grow, but will reach build out sometime in the next decade.
- Peoria: Peoria's growth has been strong and will continue to grow very rapidly.

Pollack also touched on the Valley's housing market slowdown, saying that the worse things get this year, the quicker the market will recover.

"If this is a terrible year, that's actually good news," he said.