

March 5, 2008

Judy Anderson, Director
Cochise County Planning Department
Building E
1415 Melody Lane
Benson, Arizona 85603

Re: Cochise County Envisioning 2020 Land Use Planning

Dear Ms Anderson,

I am a Cochise County property owner and I wish to share some of my thoughts with the Cochise County governing officials and my fellow Cochise County property owners.

Similar to the current, ongoing Cochise County Envisioning 2020 Land Use Planning process, in 2004, Governor Janet Napolitano requested of the Growing Smarter Oversight Council (Council) to initiate a statewide conversation toward a vision for Arizona, and to develop a set of Guiding Principles to help Arizona not just grow, but reach for the next level in developing quality growth. Hundreds and hundreds of people across the State of Arizona participated in the Listening Sessions which resulted in thousands of valuable ideas. Subsequently in August of 2006 the Council developed the “Arizona Growing Smarter Guiding Principles” (Principles). It is my belief that some of the more important highlights of the Principles are:

- 1) Responsibility and Accountability: Local government officials should embrace the responsibility for guiding local communities towards the “broadest possible community benefit.” In Planning, “...some citizens favor greater emphasis on mixed-use development and higher densities.” “It is the State’s responsibility to protect individual rights.” In Governance, “Arizonans would like their elected leaders to...provide vision, but feel that they often fail to exhibit sufficient leadership or courage.” Recommendations include: “...balancing land use, providing adequate and timely infrastructure...”
- 2) Preservation of Community Character: “...investments should conserve and maintain each local community’s sense of place and promote distinct community identities. Local plans and land use designs should reflect the character, diversity, interests, and expectations of current and ...future residents. Recommendations include: “...planning issues that should be considered during the development of all future local plans, such as...zoning and density choices...”
- 3) Stewardship: “...clean water and clean air are essential...” Mechanisms should be developed and implemented to compensate both public and private landowners for the value of the land that is to be preserved as open space.”
- 4) Opportunity: “...assure the availability of a range of choices in housing, employment, education, and other essential services.” Public input supports “An array of housing choices, including both affordable and workforce housing, within communities assures that people can live and work in the same community. Variety in housing types helps assure diversity in the residents and in the character of the new...communities...land use planning must balance the trade-off between small and larger lot sizes and ...density, afford-ability, and resource utilization issues. Recommendations: “...provide local residents a range of opportunities in housing, employment, education, and other essential services.”

- 5) Infrastructure: "...develop and use community infrastructure and develop methodologies that provide for the cost of this essential infrastructure to be borne equitably by all beneficiaries."
Recommendations: "Future local plans should recognize that efficient, effective, and reliable transportation for people and products is essential for economic vitality and quality of life."
- 6) Economic Development: "...promote a broad spectrum of business and employment ...and encourage the personal and financial growth and development of existing residents ...Economic development and vitality should be an integral goal of future local planning..." Public input includes "Communities should plan for and encourage development that accommodates the needs of senior citizens, including access to housing, health care, transportation, and community services. Future local development should encourage the development of employment, housing, and services for younger workers and families.
Recommendations include: "...general and comprehensive plans to include appropriate economic development components to reflect the importance of economic opportunities....availability of employment and housing within regional context...local communities reserving land designated for future employment sites and corridors."

Again, the aforementioned is my take on the Governor's Principles. But more important as we all assist in the future planning of Cochise County, I recommend that my fellow Cochise County property owners take this opportunity to review for themselves, the Principles. The Principles may be viewed and copied by internet, type: "Arizona Growing Smarter Guiding Principles." I believe that these Principles and the public comments from the Listening Sessions that support them, is an excellent tool that both the Cochise County officials and my fellow Cochise County property owners will find very useful.

Finally just as I am doing so by reference, I encourage my fellow Cochise County property owners to ask that the Cochise County officials include the State of Arizona Growing Smarter Guiding Principles in their Envisioning 2020 Land Use Planning, and to include these comments in the Public Record.

Thank you Ms Anderson for all of your past and future hard work!

Sincerely,

Howard Myers
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