

Envision 2020 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

BENSON MEETING SUMMARY November 17, 2007

Number of Participants: 108

What changes are expected to impact the area?

Local themes

- Population growth
- Infrastructure stresses
 - Roads/traffic
 - Services—fire, police, healthcare, waste, sewage
 - Schools
- Negative impact on natural resources
 - Water usage/availability
 - Air quality
 - Dark night skies
 - Wildlife
- Property tax increases
- Change in economy
 - Increased commercial development
 - More outside investment
 - Movement away ranching
 - Bedroom communities

Also mentioned

- More undocumented immigrants
- Less space for wind generators
- Larger flood plain
- Growth in Vail
- Increase in ground heat levels
- Impractical solutions to simple problems
- Lack of economic development
- Lack of County enforcement of rules & regs
- Wildcat sub-divisions
- Loss of local control

County-wide perspective

- Population growth
- Water

What characteristics of the area should NOT be changed?

Local themes

- Preservation of natural areas:
 - San Pedro River
 - Kartchner Caverns
 - Wildlife corridors/habitats

- Open space
- Dark night skies
- Native vegetation—less clearing
- Vistas
- Individual property rights
- Preservation of historic and archeological sites
- Water supply

Also mentioned

- Rural roads should not become highways
- Individual community feel—you can know your neighbor's lifestyle
- No skyscrapers
- Clean environment—air & water
- Recreational opportunities on public lands
- Mixed aged communities
- Positive environment for youth
- Neighborhood traffic patterns—no bypass
- Conservation policies
- Preserve working ranches
- Water rights
- Locally owned businesses
- Enforcement of existing restrictions (i.e. night sky enhancement)

County-wide perspectives

- Affordable housing (not government)
- Public access to public property
- Fort Huachuca to remain
- Open space & vistas (with regard to property owners)

What do we fear or hope for as the community changes or grows?

Hopes

Local themes

- Managed growth
- Infill growth
- Strong communication between local community, county, developers in planning process
- Economic development—clean industry
- Improved services—healthcare, wastewater treatment, recycling, etc.
- Positive community atmosphere—communication, cohesiveness
- Water conservation

Also mentioned

- Won't resemble Tucson, Phoenix, Vegas
- Quality education
- Private property rights respected
- Frontage road from J6/Mescal to Benson
- Post office in J6/Mescal

- Impact fees
- Conservation sub-divisions
- Source of renewable energy
- Increase in property value
- Dark night skies
- Maintain rural atmosphere
- Broadband communication lines
- Control the border
- Control commercial box stores
- Tourism development
- County takes over water control
- Improved small business environment
- No new regional highway through the San Pedro
- Improved community amenities—youth programs

County-wide perspective

- Well planned growth
- Sustainable growth
- Varied living (zoning)

Fears

Local themes

- Depletion of water resources—quantity & quality
- High density development
- Wildcat development with lack of infrastructure
- Influence of outside special interest groups—losing local voice
- Traffic—overused highways, improper road planning
- Increased crime, pollution, urban type problems

County-wide perspective

- Loss of property rights
- Uncontrolled criminal activity
- Big government intervention
- Increased property taxes

What are your ideas for how the community should change or grow?

Local ideas

- Economic development
 - Encourage small businesses
 - Small retail in city
 - Commercial development in Benson (clean industry)
 - Recruit high tech jobs using high speed fiber optic
 - Consolidate industrial areas
 - Industrial growth east of the old airport
 - Commercial & Industrial near existing airport
 - Light industry off of I-10, east of Benson
 - Industrial/commercial development north of 4th St.
 - Retail in the city center along 4th St. and near the intersection of I-10/90

- Box stores—I-10 & 90, or Pomerene off ramp, or Ocotillo Rd & I-10
 - Tax incentives for commercial buildings
- Residential
 - Keep county RU4
 - Control leap frog development
 - Keep higher density near municipalities
 - Annex open land between the City and the southern block of the City limits
 - Limit residential development around the airport
 - Development sensitive to water & soil retention in the southern portion of Benson
 - Smart growth in southern Benson
 - Low density in unincorporated and county areas
 - Well planned development
 - Cluster development—open space, water companies
 - Combination of lot sizes based upon management area plans
 - Infill where infrastructure is available
 - Conservation sub-divisions to preserve rural lifestyles
- Roads
 - Connect 80 & 90
 - I-10 access East & West of town
 - Pave Post Road 90 to 80 for use by Southern Benson & St. David Residents
 - Keep J6 community closed--no bypass
 - Allow bypass J6 to 90
 - Bypass from I-10 to St. David east of the river
 - Need road from Benson to 302
 - Access road along I-10 all the way to Mescal
 - No freeway on San Pedro River—upper or lower
- Zoning
 - Keep zoning as is
 - Historic regulations on existing property
 - Section (640 acres) designed as mixed use “nodes”
- Environment
 - Preserve wildlife corridors—major washes with public access to National forest west of 90, south of J6
 - Preserve wildlife corridors near San Pedro River
 - Protect Kartchner Caverns—low development
 - Preserve open spaces north of Benson
 - Encourage alternative energy sources
- Other ideas
 - Change school district lines
 - Limit air traffic from Benson Airport to prop planes only, no jets
 - Leave outlying communities unincorporated—St. David, J6, Pomerene
 - Equestrian center N. Ocotillo Road
 - More family recreation
 - County fairgrounds north of freeway, west of Benson
 - County parks south of freeway, west of 90
 - Clean up vacant lots

- Rails to trails along the San Pedro River
- Water conservation encouraged/water conservation education programs
- RR switching yard NW Benson
- Use intelligent technology to reclaim most water
- Better services—fire, emergency, law enforcement
- Enforceable CCR in new communities
- Expand St. David community plan westward up to Benson
- Maintain/respect St. David community visioning plan

County-wide ideas

- Local area autonomy
- Density housing in town, other outside