



AJO COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Project:	Pima County Comprehensive Plan
Project Managers:	Carla Blackwell and Arlan Colton
Subject:	Ajo Community Conversation (Thursday, October 24, 2013)
Date Submitted:	November, 2013

Community Conversation Results

Background:

Pima County Comprehensive Plan representatives attended two separate meetings in Ajo, Arizona to gather information and hear from its citizens. The first meeting was on Thursday, October 24th, 2013 at the Ajo Ambulance Center. After a brief presentation by Pima County Development Services Director Arlan Colton, to the Ajo Business Roundtable group, County representatives spent the remainder of the meeting listening to the concerns of the citizens in attendance. Their concerns centered around various topics including:

- Planning and renovation efforts in the Plaza
- Trade training and journeymen
- The Sonoran Desert Symposium
- Small business loans and financing
- Abandoned buildings

The second meeting, a Community Conversation, was also conducted at the Ajo Ambulance Center on Thursday, October 24th, 2013 as part of the Pima County Comprehensive Plan Update *Pima Prospers*. 28 community representatives and residents were in attendance. This community is extremely knowledgeable about the planning process and has recently participated in several planning exercises as a part of the downtown Master Planning process. During this Community Conversation, Economic Development was a major topic of discussion.



This topic arose as participants were split into groups and asked: “What is important to your community?” and “What would you like to improve in the community regarding infrastructure, economic development, health or workforce services, land use, etc.”. The groups were then asked to prioritize their responses using different colored dots.

Analysis Methodology:

Results compiled at this community conversation were analyzed according to a predetermined point rating system to minimize analysis bias. The point system consisted in assigning a value to each dot. The value of each dot is provided as follows:

- Green dots = 5 points
- Yellow dots = 3 points
- Red dots = -2 points
- Comments not rated = 1 point

Based on this point system, each comment was translated to Excel tables for tabulation. Each comment was then categorized, and analyzed according to the number of points per entry.

Results:

Ajo representatives participating in this Community Conversation provided 114 comments related to the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update. When rated and categorized, the three most important issues were Economic Development and Jobs, Social Services, and Infrastructure. The chart below outlines the total number of comments, and the total number of points earned by each category.



Ajo Results			
Category	Number of Comments	Total Points	Percent
Social Services	15	144	16.7%
Parks / Recreation	8	62	7.2%
Government / Public Process	1	1	0.1%
Infrastructure	18	106	12.3%
Open Space / Wildlife Habitat	1	6	0.7%
Energy	1	9	1.0%
Water Resources	1	6	0.7%
Land Use	3	19	2.2%
Community Character / Design	17	95	11.0%
Green Building / Sustainable Development	4	24	2.8%
Cultural Resources	2	15	1.7%
Public Safety	2	2	0.2%
Economic Development / Jobs	36	347	40.3%
Communication	1	1	0.1%
Air Quality	0	0	0.0%
Arts /Entertainment	4	23	2.7%
Total	114	860	100%

Economic Development & Jobs

Economic Development and Jobs represented over 40% of the total points assigned by the Ajo participants. This category had a total of 36 comments. When rated, the highest value within this category was 37 points. The top five rated comments in this category include:

Comment	Points
Ongoing small business support	37
Workforce development (including employee training)	36
Economic Development	25
Need business, economic development and job training	24
Study of existing & potential industries	19



Social Services

Social Services represented 16.7% of the total points assigned by the Ajo participants. This category had a total of 16 comments. Within this category, 40% of the comments had to do with Education, while another 30% had to do with Aging. When rated, the highest value within this category was 29 points. The top five rated comments in this category include:

Comment	Points
Assisted living, care for the elderly, hospice	29
Education - devote time and energy to education system	18
Green education/Development/Food Production	16
School (grade D)	16
Need aging facilities for nursing and assisted living	12

Infrastructure

The Infrastructure category represented 12.3% of the total points assigned by the Ajo participants. This category had a total of 18 comments. Over 65% of the Infrastructure comments were related to transportation (53.6% having to do with circulation and access), while another 30% had to do with power delivery. When rated, the highest value within this category was 34 points. The top five rated comments in this category include:

Comment	Points
Trails & bicycle routes connected through the desert/Ajo through vacant parcels that connect neighborhoods	34
Improve electrical service	20
Dependable modern electrical service (including street lights)	11
Promote fly-ins to the airport and golf course	10
Pave streets	9

Summary:

The three most important issues to the participants in Ajo were Economic Development and Jobs, Social Services, and Infrastructure. Other important categories discussed at the meetings include: Community Character and Design, Parks and Recreation, as well as Arts and Entertainment. Please see below for a complete list of comments provided at the October 24th Community Conversation.



Comment ID	Comment	Green Dots	Total Green	Yellow Dots	Total Yellow	Red Dots	Total Red	Total Rate	Category
1	Keeping young people in Ajo		0	1	3		0	4	Arts / Entertainment
2	Improve perception of Nothing to do		0	1	3		0	4	Arts / Entertainment
3	Formal movie theater	1	5		0		0	6	Arts / Entertainment
4	Entertainment opportunities	1	5	1	3		0	9	Arts / Entertainment
5	Better bandwidth - wifi for community		0		0		0	1	Communication
6	Well-rounded robust balanced life		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
7	Upgrade buildings/Infrastructure	2	10		0		0	11	Community Character / Design
8	Self sufficient, independent living, prosperous & healthy		0	1	3		0	4	Community Character / Design
9	Needs for isolated communities - distinct population	1	5		0		0	6	Community Character / Design
10	Vibrant Town Center	2	10	3	9		0	20	Community Character / Design
11	Implementation of planned community needs		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
12	Upkeep of properties/blight		0	2	6		0	7	Community Character / Design
13	Having private property maintained in a more efficient manner	1	5		0		0	6	Community Character / Design
14	Beautification of Main Street		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
15	Need cohesive community - bringing people together		0	1	3		0	4	Community Character / Design
16	Strong avenues for community self determination	1	5	1	3		0	9	Community Character / Design
17	Greening of the Plaza implemented (Need \$\$)		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
18	Remove, screen, restore problem properties	1	5	2	6		0	12	Community Character / Design
19	Housing -		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design



Comment ID	Comment	Green Dots	Total Green	Yellow Dots	Total Yellow	Red Dots	Total Red	Total Rate	Category
	improvement/construction								
20	Trees		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
21	Shade	1	5	1	3		0	9	Community Character / Design
22	Redevelopment of vacant buildings		0		0		0	1	Community Character / Design
23	Tri-cultural community - need to engage them in this plan	1	5	1	3		0	9	Cultural Resources
24	Respectful of native "Ajo-ite" population	2	10	1	3	4	-8	6	Cultural Resources
25	County is a roadblock to Commercial Development/Improvements	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
26	Sustainable jobs	1	5	2	6		0	12	Economic Development / Jobs
27	Study of existing & potential industries	3	15	1	3		0	19	Economic Development / Jobs
28	How to attract and maintain/retain younger population (35ish)	2	10	2	6		0	17	Economic Development / Jobs
29	Prosper business	2	10		0		0	11	Economic Development / Jobs
30	Workforce development (including employee training)	4	20	5	15		0	36	Economic Development / Jobs
31	Tourism (more people spend money)	1	5	2	6		0	12	Economic Development / Jobs
32	Moving past mine closure		0		0	1	-2	-1	Economic Development / Jobs
33	Economic Development	3	15	3	9		0	25	Economic Development / Jobs
34	Hard to recruit professionals/grow your own strategy	2	10		0		0	11	Economic Development / Jobs
35	Lack of quality repairmen		0		0		0	1	Economic Development / Jobs
36	Sustained industry	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
37	Jobs	3	15		0		0	16	Economic Development / Jobs



Comment ID	Comment	Green Dots	Total Green	Yellow Dots	Total Yellow	Red Dots	Total Red	Total Rate	Category
38	Full-service planned community - destination		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
39	Tourism - Ecotourism, with recreation opportunities taking advantage of the environment	1	5	4	12		0	18	Economic Development / Jobs
40	More vibrant & inclusive economy	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
41	Support self-employment		0		0		0	1	Economic Development / Jobs
42	More lodging	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
43	Promote ecotourism opportunities		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
44	Same as #1 and more job opportunities for youths		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
45	Transform Ajo into a tourism destination	2	10		0		0	11	Economic Development / Jobs
46	Marketing of local attractions		0	3	9		0	10	Economic Development / Jobs
47	Ongoing small business support	3	15	7	21		0	37	Economic Development / Jobs
48	Improvements to mine lookout		0		0	1	-2	-1	Economic Development / Jobs
49	Need business, economic development and job training	4	20	1	3		0	24	Economic Development / Jobs
50	Attract high paying (4-yr degree - professional) jobs to keep people in community		0		0		0	1	Economic Development / Jobs
51	Robust economic opportunities @livable wages		0		0		0	1	Economic Development / Jobs
52	Promote tourism and seasonable opportunities to bring income		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
53	Exports to bring in revenue/with good schools	3	15		0		0	16	Economic Development / Jobs
54	Improve the job opportunities &		0	2	6		0	7	Economic Development / Jobs



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	make it a livable community for employees families								
55	Attract franchises and companies to serve population		0	1	3	5	-10	-6	Economic Development / Jobs
56	Training for jobs		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
57	Strong community-wide economic development plan that involves all groups	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
58	Jobs for everyone	1	5	1	3		0	9	Economic Development / Jobs
59	Need more commercial around the Plaza to concentrate	1	5		0		0	6	Economic Development / Jobs
60	Access to small business capital		0	1	3		0	4	Economic Development / Jobs
61	Encourage solar development/tax breaks	1	5	1	3		0	9	Energy
62	Online government services		0		0		0	1	Government / Public Process
63	Flood control	1	5		0	1	-2	4	Infrastructure
64	Infrastructure and redevelopment		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
65	Roads, plumbing, utilities need to be improved		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
66	Dependable modern electrical service (including street lights)	2	10		0		0	11	Infrastructure
67	Improve electrical service	2	10	3	9		0	20	Infrastructure
68	Accessibility to urban areas - seniors, events, health	1	5		0		0	6	Infrastructure
69	Street furniture		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
70	Airport Development (promote)		0	2	6	1	-2	5	Infrastructure
71	Open the railroad		0	1	3		0	4	Infrastructure
72	Promote fly-ins to the airport and		0	3	9		0	10	Infrastructure

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	golf course								
73	Enforce parking regulations @ intersections		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
74	Reduction of right-of-way width at Ajo Highway		0		0	3	-6	-5	Infrastructure
75	Pave streets	1	5	1	3		0	9	Infrastructure
76	Good roads		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
77	Sidewalks		0		0		0	1	Infrastructure
78	In-town public transit system	1	5		0	4	-8	-2	Infrastructure
79	Trails & bicycle routes connected through the desert/Ajo through vacant parcels that connect neighborhoods	3	15	6	18		0	34	Infrastructure
80	Safe walking/bike paths		0	1	3		0	4	Infrastructure
81	Downtown development	1	5		0		0	6	Land Use
82	Environmental Justice as applied to Minority Groups & Environmental Resources	1	5	2	6		0	12	Land Use
83	Meaningful planned development		0		0		0	1	Land Use
84	Protect washes from channeling and rip-rap/concrete	1	5		0		0	6	Open Space Preservation / Wildlife Habitat
85	Recreation (resort, golf course)	2	10	2	6		0	17	Parks / Recreation
86	Outdoor activities & education/Heart Lake (man-made)	2	10	1	3	1	-2	12	Parks / Recreation
87	Year-round recreation (swimming pool should be open year-round)		0	1	3		0	4	Parks / Recreation
88	Develop the community golf course as a sports complex/destination	1	5		0		0	6	Parks / Recreation

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89	Swimming pools, public, open year-round (seek funding)		0	3	9		0	10	Parks / Recreation
90	Splash pad		0		0		0	1	Parks / Recreation
91	Attractive, accessible public lands & access	2	10		0		0	11	Parks / Recreation
92	Good parks/recreation facilities for all ages		0		0		0	1	Parks / Recreation
93	Street lights		0		0		0	1	Public Safety
94	Public Safety - Safe place to live (drug-related crimes - sheriff)		0		0		0	1	Public Safety
95	Permeable pavement		0		0		0	1	Green Building / Sustainable Development
96	Green Building (LEED)		0		0		0	1	Green Building / Sustainable Development
97	Responsible, sustainable environment	3	15		0		0	16	Green Building / Sustainable Development
98	Protect dark skies through education & mitigate construction techniques	1	5		0		0	6	Green Building / Sustainable Development
99	Adult daycare in Town		0		0		0	1	Social Services
100	Assisted living, care for the elderly, hospice	2	10	6	18		0	29	Social Services
101	Need aging facilities for nursing and assisted living	1	5	2	6		0	12	Social Services
102	School (grade D)	3	15		0		0	16	Social Services
103	Improvement in schools	1	5	2	6		0	12	Social Services
104	Improve public schools	1	5	2	6		0	12	Social Services
105	Education - devote time and energy	1	5	4	12		0	18	Social Services



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	to education system								
106	Health accessible food		0		0		0	1	Social Services
107	Green education/Development/Food Production	3	15		0		0	16	Social Services
108	Services for 15-45 age group	2	10	1	3	1	-2	12	Social Services
109	Local One-Stop	1	5		0		0	6	Social Services
110	Access to One Stop & WIB funds		0		0		0	1	Social Services
111	Improve healthy activities for citizens		0		0		0	1	Social Services
112	Health Services		0		0		0	1	Social Services
113	Being close to medical care	1	5		0		0	6	Social Services
114	Protect water resources for local use	1	5		0		0	6	Water Resources