



# YUCCA VALLEY GENERAL PLAN

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

### Memorandum

Date December 13, 2011  
To Shane Stueckle, Town of Yucca Valley  
From Wendy Grant, The Planning Center | DC&E  
Subject November 15, 2011 Community Workshop Notes

### Outreach Overview

The Town of Yucca Valley celebrated its 20th anniversary with a day-long celebration and public facility open houses. The anniversary was an ideal platform for discussing the community's current strengths and weaknesses, and identify priorities for its future. Two General Plan workshops were held at the Community Center, a general session in the morning and a business-focused session at noon.

Some of the things the participants liked the most about the Town of Yucca Valley included the natural open spaces, small town character and neighborly feeling, relatively affordable cost of living and doing business, central location within the Morongo Basin and Southern California, and clear air and dark skies. Several issues of common concern were also raised by participants, including the lack of a sewer system/water contamination, lack of a central gathering space, having to travel down the hill for restaurants and shopping, and a need for more youth activities.

As the community reflects on the last 20 years it is time to plan for its future. Workshop participants were asked to envision the ideal Town of Yucca Valley in 2035. Participants wanted the Town to have the sewer issues resolved, a range of employment opportunities, clustered development, a variety of youth and senior programs, a central community gathering place/community core, and collaboration between all of the communities in the Morongo Basin.

Detailed notes from both workshops are provided below. Workshop photos and scans of participant comments are enclosed for your reference.

### Morning Workshop

The morning workshop was intended to draw an audience of the general public, including senior citizens. Approximately ten residents participated. The morning workshop included a powerpoint presentation explaining the General Plan process and engaging the group in a discussion on the things they like about living in Yucca Valley. After collecting comments from

the group each attendee received three stickers to vote for the “likes” that they felt were the most important. The same exercise for things they dislike about living in Yucca Valley followed. Then the group was asked to imagine the Town of Yucca Valley in 2035 and all of the great things they would want to see there in the future. Each person then voted for the aspects of the vision that they felt were priorities. In each portion of the workshop participants had the option of using all three dots to support one comment or to support multiple comments. The results show the group’s priorities for the future of Yucca Valley. Comments without any votes are issues that were discussed by participants, but were not identified as priorities during the voting process.

### Likes

- 6 Clean air and dark skies
- 3 Development that respects the natural setting
- 3 Proximity to Joshua Tree National Park
- 2 Low crime rate
- 2 Views
- 2 Activities and classes (community center)
- 2 Safe community (safe residential neighborhoods)
- 2 Small town or hometown feeling (connections to people, less stress, feeling of cohesion between people)
- 1 Natural wildlife
- 1 Vastness of the valley
- 1 Clean and beautiful
- 1 Yucca Valley is the jewel (hub of day and evening activity)
- 1 Hi-Desert Nature Museum
- Openness
- Senior Center (events and activities)
- Designed for all ages
- Dog-friendly
- Rural desert character

### Dislikes

- 7 Deteriorating water infrastructure and lack of sewer
- 4 Light pollution (need to update the outdoor lighting ordinance)
- 3 Not enough activities for young adults (need more sports and recreation, art, minigolf, gathering spaces/places to hangout)
- 3 Lack of safe bike lanes (too much conflict with cars, especially afterschool)
- 2 Development that is not integrated with the natural environment
- 2 Public transportation (need more stops, shorter headways, and longer hours of operation)
- 2 Lack of shade structures at bus stops
- 2 Barking dogs (need official quiet hours)
- 1 Not enough turf at Paradise Park
- 1 Owners that do not clean up after their dogs
- Relationship between the Town and MUSD could be stronger to increase safety, sports for special needs children, share goals, etc.
- Traffic flow (we only have one main street and where else can cars go?)

### Vision of Yucca Valley in 2035

- 4 Offers a spectrum of employment opportunities and does not experience a brain drain
- 4 Sewer issue resolved

- 3 Water quality problems resolved
- 3 Basic retail and services are met locally
- 2 Integrated walking, hiking, and biking trails (safe pedestrian access)
- 1 Housing meets low income senior needs
- 1 Strong mental health support and medical programs
- 1 Better restaurants, including national chains
- 1 We are all working together as one Basin
- 1 Public transit connects major transit centers and other destinations
- 1 Successful golf course
- 1 Shade structures at every bus stop
- 1 Plenty of entertainment including a movie theater and Boomers
- 1 Plenty of doctors and dentists in Town
- 1 Spay/neuter and barking dog laws are enforced
- More industry in the Town
- There are alternative ways (to SR-62) to get downhill
- Service industry and teachers will be able to afford to live and work here
- Yucca Valley is still the hub of the Morongo Basin
- Yucca Valley has an equestrian center

### **Afternoon Workshop**

The afternoon workshop was designed to attract the local business community, including members of the Chamber of Commerce. Approximately 25 people participated. The workshop included a powerpoint presentation on the financial state of the Town, a powerpoint presentation explaining the General Plan process, and engaging the audience in small and large group discussions. First participants were asked to form small groups and create a list of the things they like about doing business in Yucca Valley. All of the members of a small group were then asked to prioritize their list of “likes” through the voting process (again with three stickers per participant). A representative of each small group shared their top three “likes” with everyone and those comments were added to a list. After each small group presented the participants were asked to vote again to prioritize the collective list of key “likes.” This process was repeated for what they disliked about doing business in Yucca Valley. Next each small group was asked to imagine what living and doing business in the Town of Yucca Valley should be like in 2035. Again, each small group voted and presented their priorities for this vision of the future. Then the large group voted on a refined list of vision comments. The results of the large group voting process show the local business community’s priorities for their professional endeavors as well as many priorities that relate to overall quality of life in Yucca Valley.

### Business Community Likes

- 10 Affordable cost of housing and living
- 8 Small town community feel
- 7 Attractive quality of life inspires people to start new businesses here (motivation to start a business in Yucca Valley)
- 6 Central location in Southern California (two hours to the beach or skiing)
- 3 Central location in the Morogno Basin
- 3 Stable community (not a transient community, people invest and live here for a long time)
- 3 Ability and opportunities to capture tourism
- 3 Open space and desert environment
- 2 Safe community, low crime rate, good policing
- 2 captive market (5 city trade area) and limited competition means repeat customers
- 1 opportunity to grow and realize dreams because Town is not built out

### Business Community Dislikes

- 13 No centralized gathering place or downtown core (do not like strip development)
- 11 Lack of sewer system
- 8 Have to travel downhill for more shopping and restaurant experiences
- 3 High cost of permits and fees to start a new business
- 2 Limited resources (homeless shelter, limited cultural resources, etc.)
- 2 Lack of a well-trained workforce (difficult to match workforce skill sets with jobs)
- 2 Off-street parking will be inadequate when 62 is widened to 6 lanes
- 1 Fast food demographic
- 1 Stagnant market (small businesses do not grow to medium ones)
- 1 Sign ordinance is too restrictive (not business friendly)
- Limited choices in spending power
- Shopping local can be more expensive
- Problems hiring
- Lack of jobs
- Too much drug and alcohol use

### Business Community Vision of Yucca Valley in 2035

- 5 Increased efforts in Basin wide political collaboration
- 5 More clustered development
- 4 More youth infrastructure and program funding (teen center, special needs, etc.)
- 4 Popular community meeting places, including outdoor plazas
- 3 Buffer zones between incompatible land uses
- 3 The kind of community that makes people say, "WOW! WHAT A GREAT PLACE!!"
- 3 Successful Town center with character (Town identity) at a major intersection of SR-62
- 2 Develop off-highway neighborhood commercial
- 2 Reduced pedophile population
- 2 Have attractions like a golf course, RV parks, condo timeshares, and other tourist destinations
- 1 Streamlined development regulations
- Attract higher income demographics while maintaining the small town feel
- Classy retirement housing opportunities and neighborhoods
- Implemented the Old Town Specific Plan
- Few welfare recipients (reduce from 25% to 10%)
- MUSD has enough schools to serve the population (no more overcrowded classrooms)
- Yucca Valley has a homeless shelter





## LIKES

- + Vastness of the valley ●
- + Openness
- + Small town feeling ●
  - + Connections to people
  - + less stress
  - + feeling of cohesion blw people
- + activities + classes ●●
  - + community center
- + Development respects natural setting ●●●
- + Clean + beautiful ●
- + Home town atmosphere ●
- + Clean air / Dark skies ●●●●●
- + Rural / desert character

- + Yucca Valley is the jewel ●
  - + Hub of activity
  - + explore evening activities
- + Safe community
  - + safe res. neighborhoods ●●
- + Proximity to Joshua Tree NP ●●●
- + Hi-Desert Nature Museum ●
- + Senior center
  - + events + activities
- + Design for all ages
- + Low crime rate ●●
- + Views ●●
- + dog friendly
- + natural wildlife ●



### LESS THAN LIKES

- + Lack of sewer
  - + Deferment of improvements
  - + Water contamination
- + Traffic flow
  - + Where should cars go? We only have one main st (SR-62)
- + Public transportation
  - + # of stops + headways
  - + # hours of operation
- + Young adult activities (need more of)
  - + Sports and rec
  - + art
  - + mini golf
  - + places to hangout gathering spaces  
~~restaurants~~
- + Development that is not integrated with the nat'l environment
- + Light pollution - need to update LO
- + Lack of safe bike lanes
  - + conflict w/ cars
  - + Especially after school
- + Lack of shade structures at bus stops
- + Barking dogs (need quiet hours)
- + Infrastructure deterioration
  - + Drainage
  - + HDWD
  - + Wasting water
- + More turf area Paradise Park
  - + lacks some typical park amenities
- + Dog litter waste
- + Relationship b/w TVU + MUSD could be stronger
  - + safety + sports + need to share goals



### WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

Shade Structure @ EVERY bus stop!!

- + Sewer issue resolved ●●●●
- + Water quality resolved ●●●
- + Public transportation established ●
  - + Connects major transit centers and destination
- + Meaningful employment opportunities ●●●●●
  - + spectrum of jobs
  - + No brain drain
- + Golf course is back ●
- + Boomer/movies = more entertainment ●
- + Doctors/dentists in town ●
- + Basic retail and services are met locally ●●●
- + Enforced spay/neuter laws ●
- + Enforcement of barking + other dog rules
- + More industry ●

- + Alternates to the hwy
  - + Alternate way down the hill
- + Housing to meet senior + low income needs ●
- + strong mental health support ●
  - (+ medical)
- + Integrated walking + hiking trails + bike path ●
  - + safe pedestrian access

Bike Lanes
- + Service industry + teachers will be able to live and work here
- + Working together as one Basin ●
- + Yucca Valley is still hub of MB
- + Better restaurants (ex: Souplantation El Torito) ●
- + Equestrian Center



**BUSINESS LIKES**

- 3 ● Central location in basin
- 3 ● Not a transient community (stable community)

Quality of life = investment in community  
 1 ● motivation to start business

NEED TO START A BUSINESS AS A WAY TO STAY AND ENJOY QUALITY OF LIFE

- 1 ● opportunity - room to grow
  - realize dreams
  - not built out

6 ● Central location in So California (2 hrs. water/land/sk)

- 3 ● ability/opp to capture tourism
- 3 ● open space/desert environment
- 2 ● Affordability

**LIKES**

8 ● Small town community feel

- 1 - ● cost of living for employees is low
- 2 - ● safe community / low crime rates / good police presence

1 - ● captured market (5 city trade area)

7 ● housing affordability / cost of living

- 1 ● limited competition - have repeat customers (in comparison to larger cities)



## DISLIKES

- <sup>not having</sup> impact ~~cost~~ of water treatment plant (limits ability to bring in business)
- 3 • No downtown core
- 8 • Do have to travel downhill for shopping + restaurant experience
- Lack of jobs
- Sign ordinance too restrictive / not business friendly
- 10 • lack of sewer system
- 2 • lack of well trained workforce (match workforce w/ jobs skills sets)
- 2 • limited resources (homeless shelter, cultural res.)
- 3 • cost of starting business high (permits/fees)
- Drug/alcohol use

## DISLIKES

- Fast food demographic
- limited choices in spending power
- Stagnant market (small business growth)
- shopping local can be more expensive
- problems hiring
- 10 • no centralized gathering place (don't like strip development)
- 2 • off street parking will be inadequate when 62 widened to 6 lanes



# YUCCA VALLEY 2035

- - successful shopping core not corridors
- - buffer zones between land uses
- 3 - community meeting places (outdoors/plazas)
- 4 - higher income demographics & keep small town feel
- 3 - WOW! WHAT A GREAT PLACE!!
- - classy retirement opps & neighborhoods
- - Develop Old Town SP
- 5 - Increased efforts in basin wide <sup>political</sup> collaboration
- 2 - TOWN center w/ town identity @ Hwy intersect.

# YUCCA VALLEY 2035

- 2 - Develop "off highway" neighborhood commercial
- 5 - More cluster development
- - fewer welfare recipients <sup>reduce from 25% to 10%</sup>
- 4 - More <sup>youth</sup> infrastructure (+funding) <sub>↳ teen center, special needs</sub>
- Streamlined development regulations
- - More schools
- - Attractions - Golf course, PV Parks, condos
  - • timeshares, tourism destinations
- - Homeless shelter
- 2 - Pedophile reduction