



## ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

### Issue History

This section summarizes both past and current planning issues that were identified by Rainbow Valley residents.

### Issue Identification Workshops

On February 5, 1986, Little Rainbow Valley Issue Identification Workshops were held at Liberty Elementary School. Residents, business people, property owners, Maricopa County Planning and Zoning Commission members and the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors were invited to attend the workshops.

As a result of the 1986 workshop, 29 total issues were identified in the areas of environment, land use, transportation, and public utilities. Residents prioritized these issues in terms of relative importance. Issues rated as “high” in importance from the 1986 workshop are listed in **Table 23**. On November 5, 1991, a public workshop was held at Liberty Elementary School to present the updated Little Rainbow Valley Land Use Plan. Issues expressed at the 1991 meeting are included in the table as well as public input on issues received during 2001-2002 for the most recent Rainbow Valley Area Plan update. Issues listed in the 2001 column primarily reflect input received during workshops held in September and October of 2001, plus comments received through phone conversations, emails, and meetings with residents and stakeholders during 2002. Stakeholders include resident and non-resident landowners, developers, municipalities, interest groups, and service providers.

### Issue Analysis

Many of the issues, concerns, and attitudes expressed in the 1986 issue identification workshop remain the same today. Residents and stakeholders are still concerned about the potential impacts of growth on the environment and land use, and the rate of growth today is significantly more rapid than 15 years ago. As more residents move into and around the planning area, issues associated with increased traffic, legal access, deteriorating housing quality, and protection of the environment have become more critical. Overall, residents enjoy the mountain views, open spaces, dark night skies, and remoteness of their community and would like to retain a rural lifestyle. A summary of these general community attitudes and concerns follows.

#### *Land Use*

Planning area residents would like to maintain the existing rural lifestyle found in Rainbow Valley. This may partially be achieved by promoting low-density residential development. Existing farmland located north of the Gila River is seen as a positive



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**Table 23  
Issue Identification**

	Year		
	1986	1991	2001
<b>Environment</b>	Eliminate wood cutting	Same as 1986	Protect wildlife
	Preserve natural environment		Water supply (use/quality)
	Use of public landfill by residents only		Damage to desert by off road vehicles
			Illegal dumping in desert and along Gila River
			Air quality (dust/noise from ATVs)
<b>Land Use</b>	No industrial development	Limit encroachment from Estrella Mtn. Ranch	Maintain rural lifestyle
	No commercial development (5 ac on master plan only)	No landfills	Consistently enforce county standards
	Maintain rural lifestyle	Maintain rural lifestyle	Eliminate lot splits/"wildcat" subdivisions
	No annexation	Limit industrial and commercial development to 5 ac. Maximum	Consider Sonoran Desert Natl. Monument in future planning
	Only allow mobile homes on 5 ac. minimum lots		Coordinate state, county, and local planning efforts
	Preserve agriculture land north of Gila River		Extend planning area boundary to Patterson Road
	No hazardous waste or landfills		



**Table 23, Cont.**

	<b>1986</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	Pave dirt roads	Same as 1986	Address projected Estrella Mtn. Ranch traffic impacts on Rainbow Valley
	Keep Airport Road open (bridge)		Dirt roads need grading
	Construct bridge for Narramore Road		Finish paving Estrella Dells
			Construct bridge over Waterman Wash at Narramore Road
			Don't add bridges over Gila River. Improve existing bridge
<b>Public Utilities and Facilities</b>	Improve water quality	Don't close Arlington Park	Improve law enforcement in the planning area
	Keep allowing septic tanks	Relocate new park in planning area	Need more recreational opportunities
	Need better, less expensive utilities	Improve existing public utilities and services, but decrease their cost	Need better coordination between developers and school districts
	Improve law enforcement in the area	Keep allowing septic tanks	

resource that contributes to the rural image of the planning area. Dairies, although sometimes a source of odor and/or dust, are generally accepted as part of the country lifestyle and in some areas are buffered by publicly owned lands. Dairies also contribute to employment of local residents. There is some concern regarding expansion of existing dairies mostly due to increased truck traffic creating dust problems.

Residents are concerned about continued lot splits, which have created access problems. Some areas have deteriorated due to aggressive lot splitting and poor quality manufactured homes, either existing or being placed on the new lots. Interest is in maintaining private property rights, while ensuring legal land subdivision, adequate access, and quality housing that is affordable.



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Most residents feel that commercial uses are not needed and they do not mind having to travel five miles or farther for services. Some residents and stakeholders are interested in a very small amount of neighborhood commercial uses that would not disrupt existing residential areas.

### *Transportation*

Residents and stakeholders are primarily concerned about issues regarding access across the Gila River and Waterman Wash, paving of heavily used dirt roads, and the affect of growth in Estrella Mountain Ranch on future traffic flow in the planning area. Some residents are worried that future widening and extension of Rainbow Valley Road may lead to heavy truck traffic through the area. Most residents do not believe an additional crossing is needed over the Gila River within the planning area, but do feel that the existing bridge needs to be improved. Some stakeholders and residents believe an additional crossing or crossings over the Gila River will be needed in the future to accommodate future growth in and around the planning area. Future updates to the Rainbow Valley Area Plan will include information on MCDOT's Loop 303 Corridor Improvement Study from Riggs Road to MC-85. As part of the Loop 303 study, a final recommendation for a future alignment of the freeway south of MC-85 will be made, including a recommended bridge location over the Gila River.

### *Environment*

Residents appreciate the abundant wildlife and Sonoran desert environment surrounding them and want these natural resources protected from potential disruption. Many citizens feel that low density development that is sensitive to the environment is acceptable. Proper management of water resources, and protection/improvement of water quality are also considered very important to the existing lifestyle and for future growth.

Nearby foothills and the Gila River corridor provide residents with areas for horseback riding, hiking, and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding. Residents would like recreational use opportunities preserved. Stakeholders express that residential and open space planning should consider the Sonoran Desert National Monument, as well as trail and open space planning in Goodyear and Buckeye. Coordinating land planning efforts between long-range planning, transportation planning, El Rio planning, and other state and local planning efforts is also viewed as important. Illegal dumping along the Gila River and in desert areas has increased, although a recent County-led clean up of large items was helpful.

Area residents are concerned about off-road and on road use of ATVs. On weekends and evenings, the increasing use of ATVs creates dust, noise, and safety problems in residential areas. Residents are disturbed by excessive speeding, damage to desert areas, and danger to young riders and other cars.



### *Public Utilities and Facilities*

School administrators expressed the desire for better coordination between developers and school districts for future school site planning. Many citizens see the need for improved law enforcement by increased Sheriff's Office coverage, mainly to prevent uncontrolled ATV activities. Some residents are willing to consider forming Volunteer Posses to handle smaller incidences.



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