

Meeting 1 Workshop Summary

Overview

The first Bear Valley Communities Workshop for the San Bernardino Community Plans Continuum took place on March 3, 2016, from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency. The meeting consisted of an informational PowerPoint presentation by San Bernardino County Land Use Services (LUS) and Michael Baker International, an interactive Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, and an interactive Values and Aspirations discussion.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Fair level of services
- Great restaurants for a small community
- Clean air
- Natural environment (beauty, animal habitats)
- Outdoor activities and recreation
- Darkness and quiet/privacy
- Small town atmosphere (Monday through Thursday)
- Arts and culture
- Giving community
- Great environment to raise children
- Safe community for families
- Weather (four seasons)
- Community involvement during emergencies
- National Forest
- Strong senior support
- Strong everyday civic groups
- Community relationships, strong supportive bonds
- North Shore Improvement Association (NSIA)
- Property owners group
- No better place to live May to December
- Simple mountain communities
- Sugarloaf - No businesses (quiet, no sirens, no traffic lights, few street lights)

- Free time because everyone is unemployed due to business-killing government regulations
- Less business-killing regulations than the City of Big Bear Lake
- Tourism draw from the Snow Summit and Bear Mountain Resort areas
- A large amount of community recreational space (five community parks)
- Big Bear Lake, Baldwin Lake, Erwin Lake, and Lake Williams
- Big Bear Discovery Center, Big Bear Solar Observatory, Moonridge Zoo
- A number of campgrounds, organization camps and hiking trails
- A large number of Community Development Organizations
- Transportation routes throughout the region including Rim of the World Highway (SR-18) and SR-38

Weaknesses

- Lack of job opportunities (16% unemployment)
- Not enough high paying jobs (poor job mix)
- Shrinking school system (lower population and homeschool/charter school)
- Lack of higher education opportunities

- Poor building conditions (dilapidated structures)
- Lack of communication with government (does not listen or respond to citizens)
- Tourist disrespect (leaving trash, trespassing, loud parties)
- Drug use
- Limited number of activities and services for families of small children
- Hostile environment for businesses
- Does not encourage new business (over regulation and lack of understanding)
- Lack of behavioral health services
- Lack of doctors/medical services
- Car dependent community
- Lack of transportation and mobility with sidewalks, etc.
- Traffic congestion (weekends, tourism, events)
- Narrow roads with way too much weekend traffic
- Limited water
- Lack of reliable utilities
- Weak snow plowing from road department
- Lack of return on taxes
- Infrastructure deficits (roads as opposed to State Highways)
- Distance to bigger venues, events, hospitals
- Overdevelopment – lack of integration with the forest
- Zoning to support needed infrastructure
- Little community involvement in crime prevention
- Weak County involvement in clean-up of commercial property
- Natural disasters (fire danger and drought)
- Missing Trader Joe's
- Lack of programs (outreach education)
- Fawnskin road closures during events
- A degree of apathy in residents (feeling they are being taken advantage of by Big Bear Lake)
- Lack of police enforcement
- Fawnskin Fire Department consists of two people (more staffing needed)
- Too many people crowding Big Bear City gas stations and post office
- Need better bus/transit stops
- Lack of careers
- Large low-income population with underpaying or no jobs
- Lack of resources for teens
- Lack of competitive education (no adult education)
- No recycling/salvage/resale facilities at County dump like Shasta County
- Cool Cabin Rentals
- Major facelift needed in downtown district of Fawnskin
- Walkscore.com ratings between 2 and 50, indicating the need for a car to perform most daily activities
- Few pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, signalized crosswalks) in some of the more remote areas
- Rates for diabetes, respiratory disease, and heart disease are all above the California state median for emergency room rates

Opportunities

- Understand the costs/benefits of tourist activities – true or perceived
- Externalities – how to educate and manage
- More tourism geared around natural surroundings
- Education about natural surroundings and potential impact
- Define snow play areas/other signage
- More green energy (solar, etc.)
- Sustainable design and building (less energy, more solar, less bldg. material waste, more recycling)
- Energy savings opportunities
- Ski resort developments for jobs

- Opportunities for younger physicians to establish new practices
- Enhance transportation (trams, buses, shuttles, gondola, bike lanes, pedestrian trails)
- Create more walkability
- Expansion of trail system outside of forest system
- Increase in educational opportunities for adults
- Activities for younger/school aged children
- Attract more young families to the area
- Building renovation/repair services (replacing redevelopment funds)
- Aspirations for disadvantaged persons
- Jobs and families (school enrollment)
- Vast economic revival
- Independence
- Create special districts in Whispering Forest to bury power lines
- Home self-construction
- Rail system tie into Vegas speed rail – Antelope Valley
- Add a stop light (18th and Standford cutoff)
- Keep clean air
- Not over grown/developed and polluted
- Eco-tourism
- Environmental education center
- Open space enhancement
- San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust
- Recreation (fishing, boating, hiking)
- Fawnskin traffic flow redirected (Big Bear Mt. in N. Shore)
- Eyesore of large construction site in N. Shore (Marina Point)
- Improve conditions of Fawnskin buildings with outside investment
- Fawnskin downtown area needs big improvement
- More classes at Senior Center
- Permanent Community College
- Help for education from the County
- Welfare offices can be returned to help clients get off of welfare
- County Court and office in Big Bear
- Post offices added to Ewin Lake and Baldwin Lake would relieve congestion in Big Bear City
- A thrift store at the County landfill would increase our recycling ability and reduce landfill requirements
- A Chamber of Commerce at our airport would create an enterprise zone for Big Bear City
- Local government should allow business owners to operate freely
- Fawnskin has limited opportunities for employment – recreation employment opportunities
- Access to Lake from South shore
- No expansion outside current commercial zones
- Stronger secondhand smoking laws
- Increased revenue capture of tourist activities as Winter sports gain popularity and the southern California population grows.
- Take advantage of major access routes (SR – 18 and SR – 38)

Threats

- More help on County funding to improve educational opportunities for community
- Not enough education about unique environment to preserve plant and animals
- Poor escape routes during natural disasters (fire, earthquake)
- County allowing new construction below code
- Sustainable development regulations
- Constitutional rights eroded away
- Job killing business regulations from the County
- The Rotary Club runs Big Bear
- Trash in forest (sled, dirty diapers)
- Low lakes levels (lowers tourism)

- Drug use by locals and visitors – need far more enforcement of drug laws
- Underutilization of forestry logging to thin forest and reduce fire hazards
- Critical shortage of industrial/commercial/enterprise land use zones
- Speed limits not enforced
- Traffic congestion
- Opportunities limited by lack of resources and blight in “downtown” (virtually no employment opportunities)
- Buildings in poor conditions
- Day-trippers causing dangerous traffic conditions in N. Shore
- Commercial truck traffic encouraged to use Fawnskin as the truck route into the valley
- More tourists threaten our environment and peace
- Agenda 21
- Restrictions on number of solar and electric services
- Skyrocketing utility bills
- Box store and changes severely impact small businesses
- Aging facilities (school, hospitals, etc.)
- Unsustainable development
- Abuse or destruction of the natural surroundings
- Tourists ignore laws and are not really policed
- Lack of unified community support for good projects and needed improvements
- High drug use and low law enforcement
- Easy access to drugs
- Career welfare, drugs, crime lead to unsafe community
- Threats for young families – lack of jobs and opportunities to keep them
- Lack of decent affordable housing for young, growing families and young professionals
- Lack of funding for school programs outside of normal classes
- Government impediment to action
- Losing dark nights because of too much night lighting
- Medical emergencies
- Infrastructure limits like substandard roads and water shortage
- Shrinking National Forest budget (lack of forest management)
- Fresh water consumption
- Inconsistent snowfall year to year could negatively impact the tourism industry in the area

Values and Aspiration

Values

- Community integrity
- Sense of community
- Individual communities values and personality
- Beautiful scenery surrounding communities
- Natural beauty and recreation opportunities
- Community and neighbors
- Simplicity of life (slower pace)
- Close proximity to everything
- Outdoor sports and activities, like trails and bike paths
- Less crime and easy to get around safely

- Home
- Youth in the community (future)
- Jobs
- All four seasons
- Quiet and dark and uncrowded
- Privacy
- Fair Share Taxes
- Bang for your buck (cost of living)

Aspirations

- Keep small town feel
- Quality health care
- Free of second hand smoke

- Businesses in Big Bear City will receive more publicity
- An economic, productive, self-sustaining community
- Maintain the area for future generations
- Keeping the community clean, safe, and not over-populated
- Seeing improvement in construction of buildings
- More freedom, less regulations
- A balanced community (i.e. tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, young and old population)
- More integrity
- More enforcement of laws (trash control and parking)
- Complete infrastructure before growth
- Seeing the County revise their gold-plated pensions
- Celebrate and value the culture of outdoors and the activities that come with it
- Safe roads, use of many modes of transportation (public transit, bike, pedestrian)
- More opportunities for businesses and jobs
- Growth without losing culture
- More opportunities for Seniors
- Replace justice center
- Provide all essential services
- Self-government (community knowledge and involvement)
- Self-contained, self-sufficient
- Balance between forest and community
- More access to forest land
- Rail or tram transport from SB to Big Bear

