

Draft Vision Statement as of March 12, 2008 from Paulden Community Plan; draft August 2007, p. 9-10

Paulden

Paulden residents have made a strong statement that the community they desire will be rural in character and lifestyle. But it is in the details of that statement that defines what “rural” and “character” mean. For Paulden, that means low density in all aspect of the community; housing, traffic, commercial uses, etc. They note that it is critical to maintain the historic two acre minimum lot zoning in all future development, planned or not. Commercial and residential development should always be of a small scale, even if that means residents must travel to other parts of the Prescott area for many commercial goods and services. There is no expressed feeling that Paulden needs a “downtown”. Although there is a concern for maintenance and reduction of trash and clutter, many citizens also appreciate the dirt roads that are characteristic through much of the area.

Paulden residents have already taken some steps to assure the character of their community. First, by deciding to remain unincorporated, the community will be working with Yavapai County officials, departments and zoning and development codes to guide its growth. Then by requesting a community plan be prepared, they will receive official recognition by county, state and federal agencies of the specifics of how Paulden is to grow.

But beyond density, the sense of openness is critical to the sense of remaining rural. Paulden is fortunate to be surrounded by State and Federal lands. They not only help set the character of the community, but offer close by recreational opportunities. Maintaining these lands and access to them thus is very important to this community. Also, open areas and the feeling of “space” distinguish Paulden from other, more built up communities. Access throughout the area for horseback riding, hiking, taking the dogs out for walks and rides allow residents to take advantage of the openness the community enjoys.

Rural communities come from an agricultural and ranching heritage and Paulden’s heritage stretches for more than a century. Paulden feels it is fortunate to have working ranches adjacent to it and has maintained the rural traditions of providing homes for horses and many animals as part of the daily life of residents. Preserving both the ranches and appreciation for animals is a goal almost universally stated by residents.

Finally, Paulden enjoys the benefits of pure environment, bountiful fresh water, clear skies and starry nights. These all contribute to the sense of a rural community and maintaining them is a priority to be met in the plan. Foremost among these is a protection of the community’s water supply. Minimizing night lights, protecting the water supply, and avoiding any sources of air pollution are critical to maintaining this environment.

Challenges: In its visioning process, the community recognized there are challenges to be met if it is to achieve its goals in a general plan. Within the community there are areas that will need special attention, notably old platted areas with substandard sized lots, old manufactured homes that need maintenance, potential groundwater pollution and trash and litter. The community recognizes that it will need to partner with County and State agencies to be successful in improving these locations. Whether it is area wide trash clean up needs or reducing dust on the roads by ATC drivers, the plan must address methods to maintain and improve the environment of Paulden.

Of equal concern is the ability to preserve the underground aquifer that supplies water to residents. Residents are aware of the desirability of using this resource and that there are challenges to ensuring the water supply remains available to residents living in the Big Chino basin. All efforts must be made to partner with groups working to accomplish this.

Finally, the Paulden plan needs to clearly state the unique vision for itself as a rural community and the elements that will maintain that vision. In order to maintain the character that many have found desirable here, residents accept several tradeoffs. The plan must express this balance so that as new residents consider Paulden as a home, they are aware of this character that has been chosen by Paulden residents and can accept it and help to reinforce and maintain it.