

Trends Scenario Overview

In the coming decades, our region is expected to grow by approximately 1 million people. How this growth occurs will affect every aspect of our lives: where we live and work, our commuting patterns, where businesses locate and how many jobs are available, the air we breathe, and access to the outdoors. The Trends Scenario has been developed in order to better understand what our future might look like if we continue growing and changing in the same ways we have in the past. At the same time, Our Shared Regional Values paint a picture of what we want our region to be like now and into the future.

Where are we headed? Below are a few key aspects of the Trends Scenario and how and if they align with our Shared Values.

Scattered Development Patterns or ‘Sprawl’

Where we are headed....

Today’s trends point toward increasing sprawl and predominantly low-density, new development at the fringes of the region. New development continues to be primarily single-use, rather than mixed-use, and car-oriented. People continue to drive, sometimes great distances, to work, home, entertainment and recreation. The costs associated with these development patterns continue to rise and many households “stretch” their budgets in order to afford the combined costs of housing and transportation. The separation of where we live, work and play will negatively impact our overall quality of life.

In addition, these trends show the majority of new growth will be in areas where infrastructure is currently inadequate to support such development. With current funding serving only to “catch up” to current infrastructure needs, the ability to pay for this future scenario is unclear.

We value....

- Reduced sprawl and increased mixed-use, compact development in many key areas
- Appropriate infill development or redevelopment that is sensitive to protecting existing neighborhoods
- Easy connections between neighborhoods and vibrant and diverse activity centers
- Ease of cross-town and regional traffic movement
- Safe, affordable housing for all segments of the population
- A walkable community

Open Space and the Environment

Where we are headed....

Trends show that not only are most new developments at the fringes, but that most will occur on currently undeveloped land, some of which is vital to our region’s open space, recreational and ecological networks. Approximately 330 square miles are expected to be

developed, representing an increase of 72 percent. Additionally, our region is currently already close to falling short of new EPA standards for air quality (based on ozone levels). Increases in auto traffic and congestion based on existing trends will further decrease our air quality, negatively affecting our environment and our health.

We value....

- The region’s unique and beautiful natural environment
- Clean air
- Accessibility to outdoor recreational opportunities for everyone
- The region’s natural parks and preserves

Transportation and Accessibility

Where we are headed...

Today’s transportation trends are nothing if not alarming. We are already falling short of meeting even our current needs. Over the next long-range funding cycle for our region, we project \$32 billion in funding needs but only \$18.3 billion in expected revenues for projects. Trends indicate that this gap will continue widening. With a progressively more dispersed population living in areas that require driving, travel times and congestion will increase. Accessibility to services, work and recreation will become more difficult. We will continue to see more cars on our increasingly busy roads and a lack of alternative transportation options. No areas will have high enough densities to make high quality mass transit financially feasible.

We value...

- Less travel time
- Ease of cross-town and regional traffic movement
- A variety of convenient transportation options for everyone, including a high quality regional mass transit system
- Accessibility to desired destinations

Downtown

Where we are headed....

Perhaps the one positive story is the possibility that downtown may be headed in a direction that is more in line with our values. If trends of private sector investment continues and the financing allows, downtown may begin to embody some of the values we heard in Phase I.

What we value....

- A vibrant day-night downtown Tucson that attracts a diverse population
- Appropriate infill development or redevelopment that reduces sprawl while preserving existing neighborhoods
- A walkable community