

HWY 30

SURVEY RESULTS

BENTON DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Many Communities. One Commitment.



70%

Unincorporated land in Benton County is NOT eligible for development under the current land-use policy.

BDG'S WHY?

From its inception the priority of BDG is economic development. BDG and our marketing partner followed by an informational letter do followed by a survey. All this was done with BDG Board approval. The letter and RFI were mailed to the landowners along Hwy 30. We wanted their interest, the landowners and their. We tried to be very thoughtful and objective. We were clear that the establishment of people feel and what they are thinking about making our position clear without taking a specific point of view. We wanted the landowners to be informed in the issue and make their own decision. In doing this we are fulfilling our mission statement.

Our mission is to increase the economic strength and growth of Benton County, Iowa; its communities; and its businesses.





BENTON
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP

811 D Ave., Ste #30
Vinton, IA 52349
P (319) 472.5545
www.bdgia.com

Many Communities. One Commitment.

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>
<<Address>>
<<Address 2>>
<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zipcode>>

August 12, 2019

Dear <<First Name>>,

We are writing to you because several companies have expressed a desire to build new facilities along Highway 30. We are concerned that you won't have the option of selling a portion of your land because our county's agricultural land-use policy is very strict.

Not only are we concerned that this is unfair to landowners, but the effect of the policy will also deprive our local governments of much-needed revenue from property and sales taxes. The policy indirectly affects nearby communities as well, because it reduces employment opportunities, which in turn has an impact on falling school enrollments.

Finally, we are concerned that Benton County will be trapped in a negative spiral of declining population and rising costs for maintenance of infrastructure and delivery of essential services like healthcare and education.

If you would like to learn more, please call me, Kate Robertson, at 319-472-5545 or send an email to kate@bdgia.org.

Sincerely yours,

Kate Robertson

Kate Robertson
Executive Director
Benton Economic Development Group



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<<FIRST NAME>> <<LAST NAME>>
<<ADDRESS>>
<<ADDRESS 2>>
<<CITY>>, <<STATE>> <<ZIPCODE>>

August 22, 2019

Benton County's land-use policy was last updated in 1986. It prohibits non-agricultural use of land with a CSR of 70 or higher, though through the years various boards of supervisors have granted exceptions in some circumstances.

As the agency responsible for the economic growth of Benton County, we are concerned that the current restrictions limit the ability of farmers to make choices about land use, deprives them of the opportunity to capitalize on opportunities, limits non-agricultural employment, and reduces property and sales tax revenue. We are also concerned with using occasional exceptions as a substitute for a clear policy because this arbitrary process also discourages economic development.

We would like to understand what landowners along Highway 30 think of the policy because you are among those who will be directly affected in the near term. Several companies are interested in development along Highway 30, but the current land-use policy will prevent them from offering to purchase land and from moving forward with their plans.

Please take a few minutes to help us better understand what you think of our current policy.

1. Were you aware of the land-use policy in Benton County before receiving information from BDG?

- Yes No

2. Please indicate what you think of the current land-use policy prohibiting the development of land with a CSR of 70 or higher.

- I think the policy is fine the way it is.
 I think the policy should be made more development-friendly.
 I don't think the county should keep landowners from using their land for whatever purpose they want.
 Other

3. Do you have land you would be interested in selling for non-agricultural use if an attractive offer was presented?

- Yes No

4. Would you be interested in helping update Benton County's land-use policy?

- Yes No I would like to learn more.

5. How would you prefer to be contacted in the future?

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Mail: _____

- I am not interested in further information about this issue.

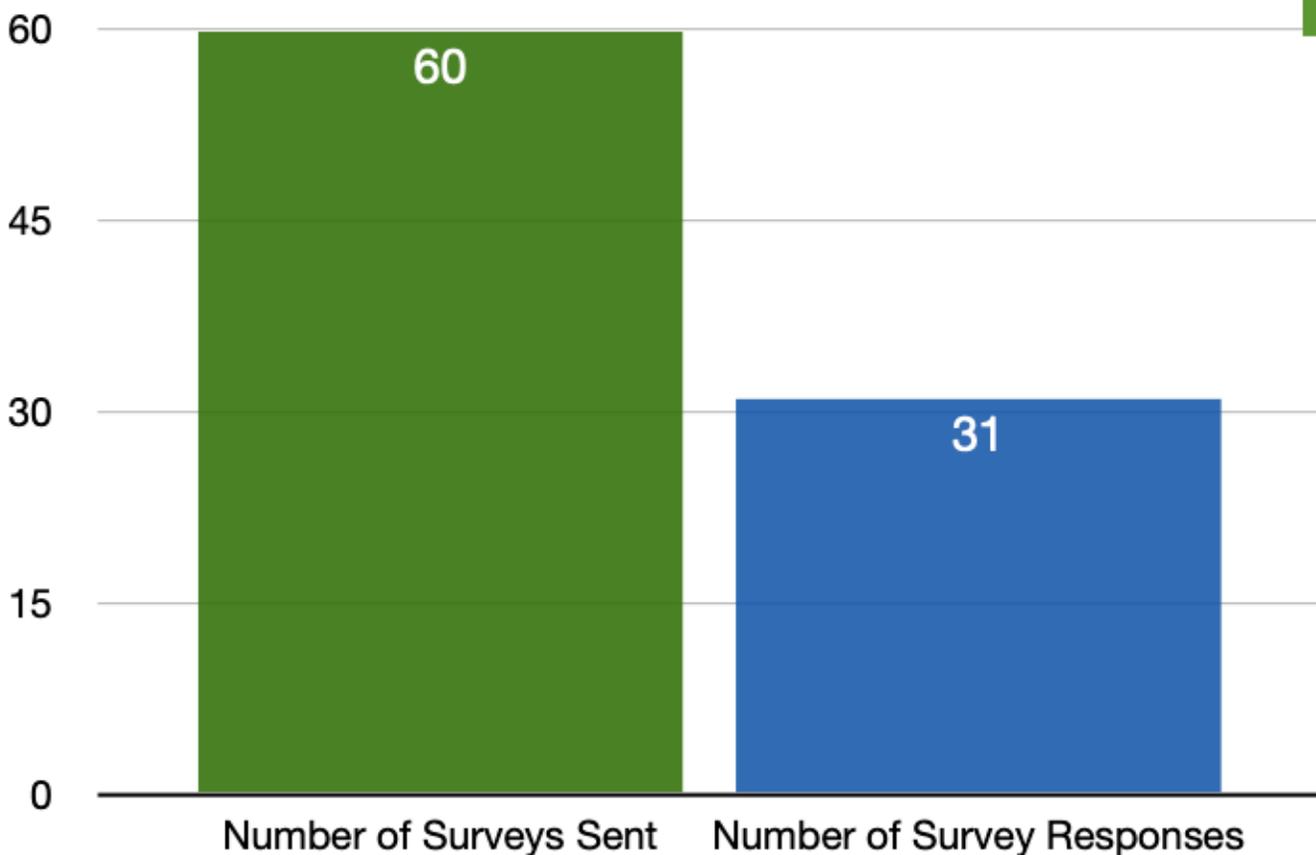
1986

Benton County adopted their Land-Use Policy. It has not been reviewed or revised in 34 years.

SURVEYS SENT OUT

In total 60 surveys were sent and BDG received 31 completed responses.

In August of 2019 the BDG Board of Directors sent a letters to landowners along the HWY 30 Corridor in Benton County to gauge their knowledge of the County's policy and determine if they had any development interest. In October a second letter was sent out as a follow up to those who did not respond.



NUMBERS TO CONSIDER

51.6%
Survey response rate

BDG asked landowners to indicate what they think of the current land use policy that prohibits development on land with a CSR of 70 or higher. The chart below shows the responses of the 31 surveys that were completed.

54.8% of the respondents stated that they should be able to do what they want with their land or the policy should be made more development friendly. 29% of the respondents state that the policy is fine the way it is.

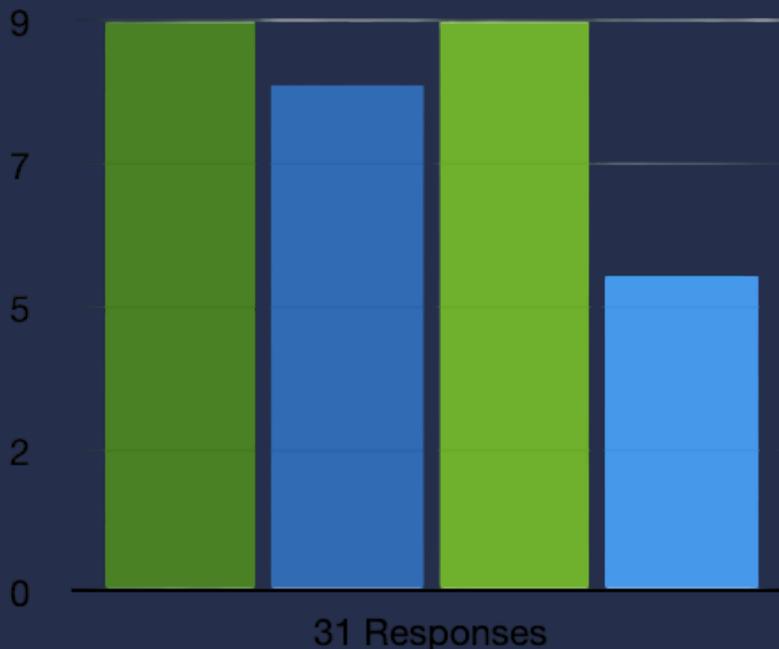
OTHER COMMENTS

"They should be allowed to sell but need to have zoning ordinances to regulate what types of businesses, signage & location."

"We need more information"

"We do not need fields of turbines."

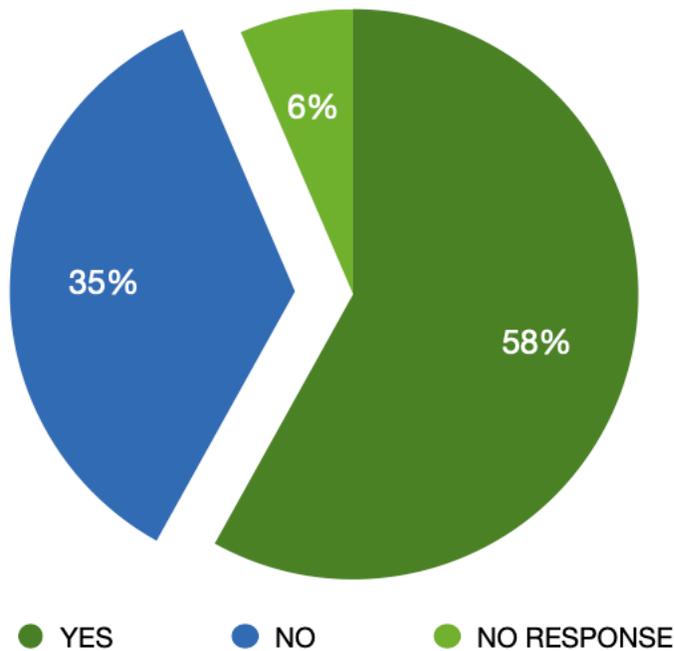
"Should be lower - CSR 60 or higher"



31 Responses

- Other
- I don't think the County should keep landowners from using their land for whatever purpose they want.
- I think the policy should be made more development friendly.
- I think the policy is fine the way it is.

WERE YOU AWARE?



Landowners were asked to respond to a short survey. One question they were asked to answer was, ***"Were you aware of the land-use policy in Benton County before receiving information from BDG?"***

42%

The survey asked landowners if they would be interested in, "selling their land for non-agricultural use." **Of the 31 responses 42% of the owners would have interest.**

