

City of Bridgeport
Plan of Conservation and Development
Stakeholder Interview
Faith Based Organizations
July 26, 2018

Attendees:

- Dexter Upshaw – New Vision International
- Ahmed Ebrahim – Bridgeport Islamic Community Center
- Mostafa Hassan – Bridgeport Islamic Community Center
- Rabbi James Prosnit – B’nai Israel

The statements below are a summary of the opinions expressed by those interviewed. The statements do not necessarily reflect City policy or objective facts.

Bridgeport has key amenities such as hospitals and recreation opportunities, and a few great community organizations that support the city. However, it is challenged by high taxes, falling population counts, bureaucracy and a struggling school system. Many Jewish and Muslim people leave the city when they are able to and many millennials and young parents go elsewhere in the region for schooling and professional opportunities. The city needs to work on job creation, tax abatements for manufacturing businesses, creating youth opportunities through internships and summer programs, and capitalizing on its vision by creating tourist destinations to bring in foot traffic and contributors to the local economy.

Vision for Bridgeport:

- Jobs are needed throughout the city
- Create a manufacturing zone where people are tax exempt for 10 years while they establish manufacturing businesses
- Reuse the abandoned buildings
- Planning and zoning needs to be more proactive and have more of a vision
- Government needs to be more efficient and inviting to businesses.
- Private businesses should be encouraged to offer summer internship programs to teens
- Education system needs to be reformed
- Bridgeport needs to capitalize on tourism
 - Build a destination point like an aquarium, museum

