

## Buckeye stresses importance of Watson Road

by **Rebekah L. Sanders** - Jul. 15, 2008 09:14 AM  
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Major streets are essential for big businesses to attract the customers they need to thrive.

So Buckeye is working to complete the remaining mile of Watson Road, banking on a commercial boom near the center of town once it is finished.

"In order to keep the downtown area vibrant, it's going to take really good access from I-10," town engineer Woody Scoutten said.

The six-lane Watson Road runs south about four miles from Interstate 10. But the street dead ends at Southern Avenue, not far from downtown, forcing drivers to go out of their way to get there.

The Town Council recently agreed to spend up to \$45,000 on a basic design and cost estimate to build the last section of Watson Road.

"This is our problem child," Councilman David Hardesty said. "We need to do this research."

The project will be challenging, Scoutten said. The road likely will have to bridge a Buckeye Irrigation Co. canal and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. It also may need to bend around the Wal-Mart distribution center.

"As soon as you start building up the road," Scoutten said, "costs start to go up."

The Watson Road study will provide the

council with several route and cost options. It could take four years to finish the whole project, from researching the street to building it, Scoutten said.

Already a few companies are interested in building office complexes or other businesses where Watson Road and Maricopa County 85 would cross.

But Scoutten said: "Nobody's going to be willing to develop commercially there without access."

When Buckeye finishes the project, the town will have five major north-south arterials below Interstate 10: Oglesby Road/Arizona 85, Miller Road, Watson Road, Airport Road and Jackrabbit Trail.

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