

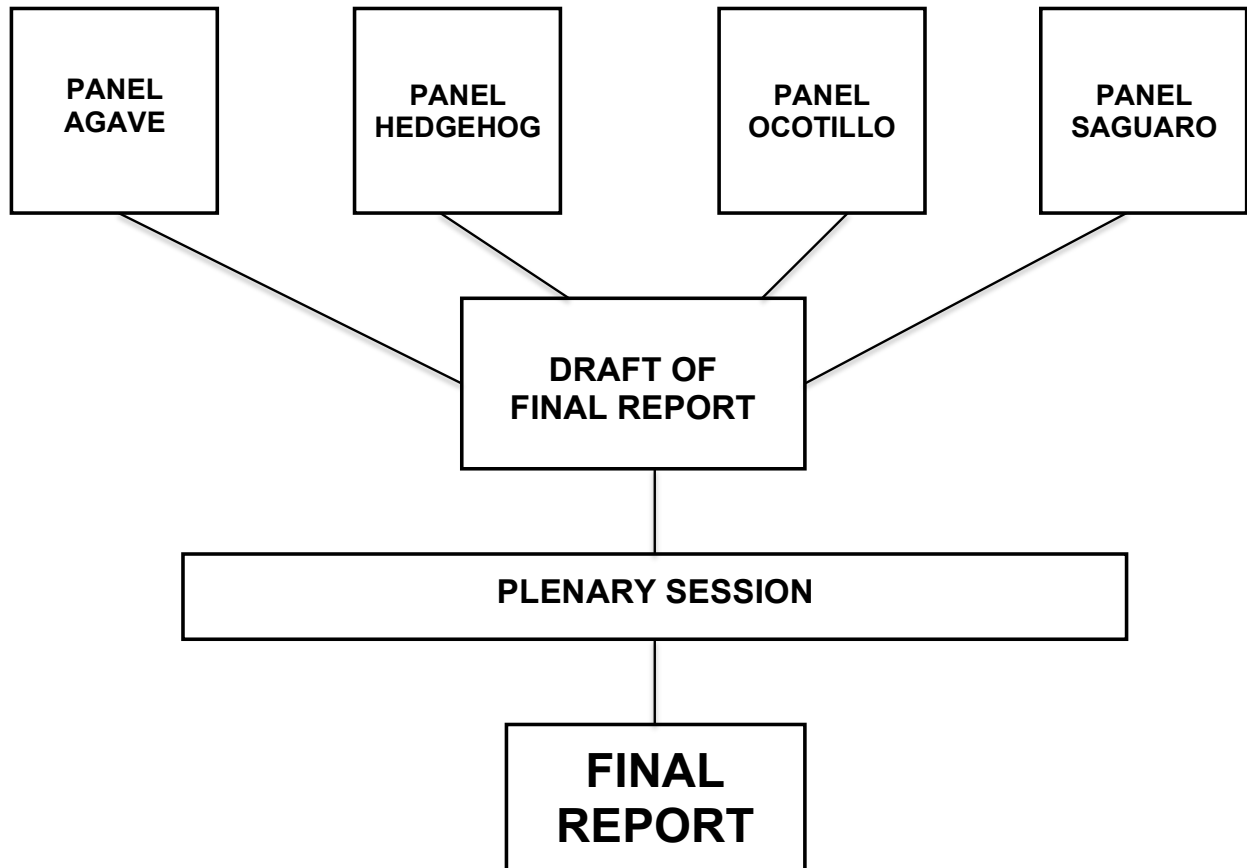
105th Arizona Town Hall
November 2-5, 2014
Grand Canyon, Arizona



ARIZONA'S ECONOMY

The Arizona Town Hall Process

From the Group Statement to the Final Report



*“Seek first to understand,
then to be understood.”*

Stephen Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People

OVERVIEW OF THE ARIZONA TOWN HALL PROCESS

Arizona Town Hall is a private nonprofit corporation founded in 1962 for the purpose of identifying and discussing critical policy issues facing Arizona and creating solutions. Much of the success of the Arizona Town Halls lies in the fact that the process incorporates the knowledge, thoughts and ideas of all the participants. The Town Hall process has been adapted and utilized by many other groups who strive to create solutions by drawing upon diverse views and building informed coalitions.

Panel Discussions

The Town Hall begins with panel discussions. Each panel addresses the same Discussion Outline during the first portion of the Town Hall. The process and guiding principles for the panel discussions are as follows:

- The Panel Chair reads one question at a time and discussion follows.
- It is important to stick to the question at hand.
- The panel strives for consensus (votes are taken only if absolutely necessary).
- Consensus is reached when no one wants to add anything, and no one objects strongly to the wording offered.
- The recorder's role is to keep the panel on time, capture the consensus comments, read back consensus statements to the panel and make edits with participants.
- Viewpoints of all participants are considered equally valuable, regardless of title or position.
- Discussions are encouraged to be robust while maintaining a respect for different viewpoints. Participants are allowed to criticize concepts—not people.
- Minority viewpoints must be very strong to find their way into the final document (at least 1/3 of the total group).
- Media will be present at the Town Hall and may be in attendance during panel discussions. You should assume that your comments may be quoted at any time.
- Observers may attend the sessions but cannot participate or contribute to discussions.
- The process is as valuable as the recommendations.

Creation of the Draft Recommendations Report

Once complete, the consensus statements are taken from each panel to the Report Chairs. The Report Chairs review the statements from all panels and look for consensus across all of the groups. With assistance from the Panel Recorders, the Report Chairs create a draft report of what appears to be the consensus of the Town Hall participants.

The draft report is distributed early in the morning before the plenary session on the Wednesday of each Town Hall. Panels meet prior to the start of the plenary session to review the draft and outline any areas the panel wants to address at the plenary session.

The Plenary Session

At the plenary session, Arizona Town Hall's Board Chair all of the Town Hall participants, as a full body, in an organized review of the document. All participants work to approve, amend or reject each section of the report of recommendations.

AGENDA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Registration – Lobby, El Tovar Hotel

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Social Hour – Lobby, El Tovar Hotel

7:00 p.m.

Opening Dinner & Orientation – Main Dining Rm., El Tovar Hotel

Welcome: **Tara Jackson**, President, Arizona Town Hall

Invocation: **The Rev. Richard Morrison**, Executive Committee Member, Arizona Town Hall; Canon for Ecumenical & Community Relations for the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona; Attorney, Salmon, Lewis & Weldon, PLC, Gilbert

Dinner

Opening Comments & Overview: **Tara Jackson; Scott Rhodes**, Board Chair, Arizona Town Hall; Managing Attorney, Jennings, Strouss & Salmon, PLC, Phoenix

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Breakfast Buffet – Maswik Lodge

Sponsors Highlighted: **SRP** and **Arizona Commerce Authority**

Presiding: **Linda Elliott-Nelson**, Board Chair Elect, Arizona Town Hall; Dean of Instruction, Arizona Western College, Yuma

Panel Presentation:

Setting the Stage - Key Facts and Input from Distinct Arizona Communities

Panel members: **David Daugherty** on ASU's Background Report; **Alberto Olivas** on Future Leaders Town Hall, **Jim Dinkle** on Pinal County discussions, and **Wayne Benesch** on Yuma County discussions

8:30 a.m. – Noon

Panel Discussions – (Coffee break mid-morning)

Panel Saguaro – Community Building, Rm. 1

Wayne Benesch, Chair

Callie Parkinson, Recorder

Panel Agave – Community Building, Rm. 2

Pat Norris, Chair

Mike Minnaugh, Recorder

Panel Hedgehog – Thunderbird Lodge 1st Floor

Rebecca Timmer, Chair

Chris Payne, Recorder

Panel Ocotillo – Thunderbird Lodge 2nd Floor

George Miraben, Chair

Margaret Esler, Recorder

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3 (Cont.)

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Luncheon Session – Dining Room, El Tovar Hotel

Presiding: **Charlotte Harris**, Arizona Town Hall Board Member;
Community Volunteer, Tucson

Sponsors Highlighted: **Arizona Public Service** and **Arizona Lottery**

Speaker Introduction: **Tammy McLeod**, Vice President/Chief Customer
Officer, APS

Speaker: “How Arizona Can Capitalize on Global Economic Trends”
Dr. James A. Crupi, President and founder of Strategic Leadership
Solutions, Inc.

2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Continuation of panel discussions
(Coffee break mid-afternoon)

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Social Hour – Maswik Lodge

7:00 p.m.

Dinner – Santa Fe Dining Room, Maswik Lodge

Presiding: **Casey Rooney**, Arizona Town Hall Board Member; Director,
Economic Development, City of Cottonwood

Sponsors Highlighted: **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona** and
Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold Foundation

Speaker Introduction: **Sandra Bierman**, Arizona Town Hall Board
Member; Director of Legal Services, Blue Cross Blue Shield of
Arizona, Phoenix

Speaker: “Mapping Arizona’s Future: Possibilities, Realities, and Risks”
Mary Murphy, Senior Researcher, The Pew Charitable Trusts

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

8:30 a.m. – Noon

* Breakfast on your own

Continuation of panel discussions
(Coffee break mid-morning)

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Luncheon – Santa Fe Dining Room, Maswik Lodge

Sponsors Highlighted: **Jennings Strouss & Salmon** and **Wells Fargo**

What Happens Next: Presentation by Arizona Town Hall Board
Members

Special entertainment: Students from Northern Arizona University
School of Music conducted by Edith Copley and Troy Meeker

2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Continuation of panel discussions
(Coffee break mid-afternoon)

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Wine, Cheese and Buffet Reception – Maswik Lodge
Special recognition of student participants

Sponsors Highlighted: **Cox Communications**, **DMB Associates** and
GPEC

* Options for breakfast starting at 6:30 a.m.: Maswik, Bright Angel Dining Room, El Tovar Dining Room

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

6:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Individual panel caucuses
(Coffee & Danish will be available in panel caucuses)

Panel Saguaro – Community Building, Rm. 1

Panel Agave – Community Building, Rm. 2

Panel Hedgehog – Thunderbird Lodge 1st Floor

Panel Ocotillo – Thunderbird Lodge 2nd Floor

8:30 a.m. to approx. 12:30 p.m.

Plenary Session – Santa Fe Dining Room, Maswik

Presiding: **Scott Rhodes**, Board Chair, Arizona Town Hall

Adoption of Recommendations

(Coffee & Danish will be available during the session – there will be no formal break)

Adjournment at approximately 12:30 p.m.

105TH ARIZONA TOWN HALL

PROGRAM SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Monday, November 3, Breakfast

Panel Presentation: Setting the Stage - Key Facts and Input from Distinct Arizona Communities

David B. Daugherty, Associate Director, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University

As associate director, David Daugherty, Ph.D., oversees and manages ongoing and single-project research studies and projects conducted by Morrison Institute.

During his career, Dr. Daugherty spent 25 years as a senior research professional intimately involved in assessing the attitudes and behaviors of virtually every audience segment in small, medium and large markets throughout the United States.

Dr. Daugherty earned his doctoral degree from the University of Texas at Austin, a master's degree from North Dakota State University and a bachelor's degree from Minnesota State University.

Alberto Olivas, Director, Center for Civic Participation, Maricopa Community Colleges, Tempe

Mr. Olivas directs the Center for Civic Participation (CCP) for the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), which serves over 260,000 students a year. He manages the budget and staff for this office, and works with the ten MCCCD colleges to promote civic education and effective civic participation for students, faculty, staff and community members.

Originally from Sierra Vista, he has degrees from Arizona State University (B.A. Anthropology) and Northern Arizona University (M.Ed.)

Mr. Olivas is currently Chair of the board of directors for Kids Voting Arizona, and also serves on the boards of directors for Valley Leadership and Arizona Town Hall. He is a graduate of the inaugural class of the Flinn-Brown Arizona Civic Leadership Academy, and of the Valley Leadership, Tempe Leadership and Mesa Leadership programs. He is a past Vice President of the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and previously served as Director of the Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity; as Voter Outreach Director for Arizona Secretary of State Betsey Bayless; was appointed to the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs; and participated in the U.S. delegation to Moscow for the 2008 Dartmouth Conference on U.S.- Russia relations.

Jim Dinkle, Executive Director, Access Arizona

Access Arizona is a regional public-private partnership established in 1984 as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Access Arizona promotes community growth by connecting businesses with the regions economic resources and providing strategic solutions for development in the fields of manufacturing, distribution, agriculture, workforce development and many other related areas.

Mr. Dinkle received his B.A. from the University of Kentucky. Co-Chair: Central Arizona Governments Revolving Loan Fund, Pinal Partnership Economic Development Committee. Member: International City/County Management Assoc., International Economic Development Council, Arizona Assoc. of Economic Development, First American Credit Union Supervisory Committee, Casa Grande Rotary Club. Past Chair, Elmhurst, Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Past Board Member, University of Kentucky Board of Trustees. Past Member, Rotary International Group Study Exchange to South Africa.

Wayne Benesch, Attorney and Managing Director, Byrne, Benesch & Rice, P.C., Yuma

Wayne C. Benesch is the Managing Partner and President of Byrne & Benesch P.C. The primary focus of his practice is real estate law, business and corporate law, estate planning and probate.

Mr. Benesch is a third generation Arizonan who graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1964 and a Juris Doctorate Degree in 1967. Following a four year term as a Judge Advocate with the United States Air Force, Mr. Benesch settled in Yuma in 1971 where he worked as Chief Deputy for the Yuma County Attorney. In 1973, he entered private practice, and in 1976, co-founded Byrne, Bradshaw, Ellsworth, Benesch & Thode, the predecessor of the present firm. Mr. Benesch is a former Board Member of the Arizona Town Hall.

Monday, November 3, Lunch Program

Featured Speaker:

James A. (Jim) Crupi

Dr. Jim Crupi is President and founder of Strategic Leadership Solutions, Inc. Jim is a recognized authority in international business, future trends, and leadership development and is an internationally popular speaker. His leadership workshops are world renowned. Jim works with executives for the purpose of aligning strategy, enhancing productivity and competitiveness, and training of the management team. Jim has been featured on CNN, Fox Business Network with Neil Cavuto, National Public Radio, served as a TED speaker and quoted in many publications throughout the world.

He received his B.S. degree from North Georgia College, M.S. from the University of Southern California, and Ph.D. from the University of Florida. He has completed advanced work at the London Business School, Oxford University, and the International Management Institute in Geneva.

Jim has served as a consultant to the Office of the President of the United States and does work for many Fortune 1000 corporations, including Coca Cola, Turner Broadcasting Corporation, AT&T, HP, Siemens, Intel, and IBM among others. He served in the armed forces as a company commander and instructor at the elite Army Ranger School and founded the International Business Fellows [SIBF] and the Middle East Leadership Academy [MELA].

Jim serves on the following boards: Global Network Foundation, University of North Georgia Foundation; Triad - Dallas Foundation; and Middle East Leadership Academy [MELA].

Monday, November 3, Dinner Program

Featured Speaker:

Mary Murphy

Mary Murphy is an officer at Pew and serves as a principal analyst on its state and local fiscal health initiatives. She conducts in-depth research on state budget policies, local government finances, and other key fiscal and economic issues—such as debt affordability and state oversight of local government distress. She works directly with state and local budget leaders, providing customized research and technical assistance to develop and adopt solutions that can best guide states towards improved long-term fiscal health.

Murphy leads Pew’s research and analysis on the fiscal conditions in 30 key American cities—examining the recent performance of local government finances and how these significant cities weathered the effects of the Great Recession. She also has been a lead researcher on a number of studies examining and assessing how states manage revenue and economic volatility, an evaluation of budget stabilization policies, and building an “early warning system” to detect local fiscal distress. She has testified before state legislatures, directly informing ongoing policy discussions, and regularly briefs state and local policy makers on options to better manage fiscal pressures resulting from increasing economic and revenue volatility. Her work has also been widely cited by major news media including, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Bond Buyer, The Los Angeles Times, and other regional press outlets.

She holds a bachelor of arts in sociology from Reed College where she was awarded a Commendation for Excellence in Scholarship.

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

105TH ARIZONA TOWN HALL

ARIZONA'S ECONOMY

SESSION I - MONDAY MORNING – NOVEMBER 3

SETTING THE STAGE

1. What are the strengths of Arizona's current economy? Consider employment opportunities, geographic location, workforce, natural resources, infrastructure, ties to the global economy, and other factors. What are the strengths of local economies within the diverse areas of Arizona? Consider regional, rural, urban, and tribal communities.
2. What factors have had the most significant influence in shaping Arizona's current economy? What factors will have the greatest influence in shaping Arizona's future economy? Consider the influence of national and global economies, market forces, government, and attributes unique to Arizona (e.g., climate and location near Mexico and California).
3. What are the challenges for ensuring the optimal development and functioning of Arizona's economy? How do these challenges vary by region, community, and interest group? Consider the impact of the economy on individuals, families, distinct communities and sectors.

SESSION II - MONDAY AFTERNOON – NOVEMBER 3

GEOGRAPHY, NATURAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. What specific actions could Arizona take to maximize its unique geographic location? How can Arizona use its unique geographic location to best take advantage of national and international economic opportunities? Consider actions that do not require funding. Who could be responsible for those actions?
2. What are the specific opportunities and challenges in urban, rural and tribal communities created by Arizona's natural resources, including water, climate, minerals, and forests? What specific actions could make the most of the relationship between Arizona's economic interests and its natural resources? Consider actions that do not require funding. Who could be responsible for those actions?
3. How does infrastructure in urban, rural and tribal communities impact Arizona's economy? Consider road, air and rail transportation systems, Internet access, energy sources and other factors. What specific actions could optimize Arizona's infrastructure investments to maximize the benefit to the economy? Consider actions that do not require funding. Who could be responsible for those actions?

SESSION III - TUESDAY MORNING – NOVEMBER 4

GETTING THE JOBS WE WANT

1. Considering the diversity of Arizona’s communities and resources, what mix of employment opportunities is ideal? What specific types of jobs and industries are included in that mix? What strategies could be employed to attract, retain and grow these opportunities?
2. How effective are governmental incentives to the creation, retention, growth and recruitment of preferred jobs and industries in Arizona? Which incentives does Arizona use the best and how could we utilize them better? What is the best way to evaluate this? What are the best opportunities for improvement?
3. How effective are non-governmental incentives in the creation, retention, growth and recruitment of preferred jobs and industries in Arizona? What is the most effective mix between non-governmental and governmental investment in economic growth? What are the challenges in achieving the most effective mix? What changes would best help us reach that?
4. What is the relationship between Arizona’s education systems and its economy? How can Arizona’s investments in education best be used to enhance the economy?

SESSION IV – TUESDAY AFTERNOON – NOVEMBER 4

SETTING PRIORITIES AND TAKING ACTION

1. Considering the discussions from the previous sessions, what actions should be taken that would have the most beneficial impact on Arizona’s economy? How should they be prioritized? Consider which actions are realistically achievable, have the greatest “bang for the buck” and are most likely to be accomplished. Also consider how actions and priorities may vary for urban, rural and tribal communities. Be certain to include actions that do not require funding.

2. Who should lead the actions identified in Question 1? If the action requires funding, identify how the funding will be obtained, including sources.

3. What specific actions should individuals take, including each of us?

Individual actions might include supporting local chambers and other business organizations, volunteering, teaching classes, tutoring, communicating with elected leaders, writing letters to the editor using social media, partnering with government and other institutions and talking with neighbors and friends.

KEY POINTS FROM FUTURE LEADERS TOWN HALL ON ARIZONA'S ECONOMY

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY ON OUR COMMUNITY

- Small and family owned businesses were forced to close their doors during the recession.
- Tourism is a major source of income in Arizona, particularly winter visitors.
- The state of the economy affects the quality of life, especially for working families.
- A weak economy impacts housing development, job opportunities, and agricultural production.
- The vibrancy of the economy affects the availability of funds to invest in education and community services.



ARIZONA'S STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

- Our cost of living is lower than many other areas.
- Being located near the border and within easy access of large populated areas encourages tourism.
- The natural environment is attractive along with the milder climate.
- We need to increase the number of qualified people to do the jobs available.
- Our education system needs improvement to attract new corporations.

BEST WAYS TO SUPPORT A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

- Invest in our education system at all levels and make it more accessible.
- Encourage more trade and commerce across the border.
- Research more ways to utilize our natural resources, like solar energy.
- Improve Arizona's reputation through a state appreciation campaign.
- Support our local businesses through incentives and purchasing.



MESSAGES TO ARIZONA'S ELECTED LEADERS

- Focus on long-term education.
- Invest in our infrastructure to attract businesses and enhance mobility.
- Pay attention to the needs and aspirations of the middle class.
- Leaders at the community, state and tribal level all need to work together for the betterment of all.
- Create a receptive business climate with competitive pay.

COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

- Become engaged with our representatives in local and state government.
- Shop locally and support local businesses.
- Speak up for what we want to see changed and be part of advocacy groups.
- Educate ourselves and others on economic issues.
- Share what I have learned at the Future Leaders Town Hall at my school and in my community.



Future Leaders Town Hall locations throughout the state:

- Peoria - Rio Vista Recreation Center
- Prescott - Yavapai College
- Yuma - Arizona Western College
- San Luis - Arizona Western College
- Tucson - Pima Community College, Community Campus
- Flagstaff – NAU
- Sierra Vista - Cochise College
- Cottonwood – Yavapai College

"The Future Leaders Town Hall was an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about how they can get involved in the government and share their ideas."

Matthew, student participant at the Future Leaders Town Hall, Peoria.



Southwest Arizona Futures Forum

**FINAL REPORT
OF
“YUMA’S REGIONAL ECONOMY”**

September 19, 2014

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE YUMA REGION

Yuma County’s economy is currently based largely on agriculture, tourism and the military. These industries, however, are facing multiple challenges including changes to water policy, military industry consolidation to other states and the demographics of the winter visitors.

With the exception of the recent recession, Yuma County’s economy has historically been stable and consistent. Growth has seemingly stayed constant or level rather than dropping during cyclical recessionary periods. This recession, however, saw Yuma County getting caught up in the same housing phenomenon that impacted the rest of the nation which caused us all to suffer from the economic drop.

There are a number of misconceptions about the local economy in Yuma. Negative headlines about our economy can be self-fulfilling and cause people to feel as if the economic outlook is worse than it actually is. As a result, the Yuma region may struggle to attract outside industry due to a misperception about the quality of life offered here. This misperception needs to be changed and our significant resources (proximity to borders and existing and ready workforce) highlighted.

The misperception is not always limited to those outside of the Yuma region. Today, many young people in the Yuma area do not see educational opportunities in the community, whether it be traditional post-high school degree programs or advanced certificate programs. This can be improved through implementing programs like a Joint Technical Education District (JTED) which can expand opportunities for training of young residents in the community. Programs like this may also enhance the attraction recruitment and retention of other industries to the area, such as healthcare, while providing quality jobs and careers to young people. Many of these programs provide stepping stones to additional education and training. The absence of such opportunities could lead to an increase in social problems such as domestic violence, drug use and mental health disorders.

Changing perceptions and creating opportunities for success are part of the solution, but it is important that the Yuma region attract and retain businesses or industries that are compatible to those that are already here. Individuals and families need jobs to survive, but there is a need to ensure that those jobs are the correct ones for the region. An economy is more than just the income that it produces; it affects the culture and impacts the quality of life for everyone in the community.

THE UNIQUE ECONOMIC STRENGTHS OF THE YUMA REGION

Yuma has a variety of unique strengths or traits relating to a vibrant and sustainable economy. One of Yuma's greatest strengths is that in spite of our recent growth it has retained a great small town, collaborative spirit and community feel. Our small town atmosphere also allows for more opportunities to be involved in leadership positions and community groups that effect positive change.

Yuma is centrally located between several metropolitan areas and Mexico with millions of consumers. We have a distinct logistical advantage because we can be in other areas of the country faster than other communities. This also means that tourism is an important part of the Yuma community. Yuma has the ability to draw a lot of people that other communities would love to have. Winter visitors feel very comfortable and at home in the Yuma area and consistently return due to our relatively low cost of living, lack of significant traffic problems and lower crime rates than in larger cities.

The Yuma region is fortunate to have a positive image and many natural resources such as the Colorado River and its senior water rights. Water is the key to our future. Yuma currently has senior rights to Colorado River water; however, other communities are continually seeking to alter that position. We also need to recognize our opportunities to sustain renewable energy, such as solar, and need to take better advantage of our resources to improve our community. The Yuma region has a reputation for working together with its regional neighbors to protect both its natural resources and the jobs that they create.

The Yuma area has had challenges in recruiting and retaining industries. Some of that may be related to misconceptions about the region and a belief that Yuma cannot compete with the Phoenix metropolitan area. A broader brand discussion, focusing on Yuma being a regional player, can mitigate the misperception of Yuma being "too hot" and suffering from an abnormally high unemployment rate. We can alter the dialogue about this market by talking about labor supply, cross-border transactions, available distribution logistics through our airport, rail, and other transportation modalities and manufacturing opportunities to strengthen the "brand" of Yuma and its image. We also have a workforce that is diverse, eager and ready for technical or industrial training in order to retain and strengthen this asset.

There are tremendous potential synergies between Yuma, the lower Colorado region, and Mexico. Other communities, such as Mexicali's view to be the Silicon Valley of Mexico, have a clearly defined vision. The Yuma region needs to become a part of a collaborative vision to experience true regional growth. We need to change the mindset in our view of Mexico, especially for those residents in the Yuma area that have never even been to Mexico.

IMPORTANT TOOLS NEEDED TO SUPPORT A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY FOR OUR REGION

Improving the education and training opportunities for our workforce is vital in order for us to compete for high paying jobs and create a vibrant economy. A focus should be on technology and engineering programs that will increase the number of individuals completing Bachelor Degrees. Other specific training should also be offered as needed by industries. We currently have a number of existing educational assets in our community, including our local

colleges (Arizona Western College, Northern Arizona University - Yuma), however, we are short of teachers in our educational system. The pipeline nationwide is thin, and it is difficult to attract teachers nationally due to the lower wages received in Yuma County. Also, Yuma currently doesn't have the ability to educate and certify new teachers, but we are beginning a tradition of "Growing our own" with initiatives such as the Yuma Regional Medical Center residency program and the NAU elementary education program. Finally, Yuma Schools need to offer life skills classes that teach business knowledge, work ethic and technical skills so that students have an opportunity to gain practical experience even before they reach graduation.

Attracting desired employers is important to grow our economy. As such, our presentation to outside industry needs to be refined in order to do this better. One tool that could use improvement is our branding. We do a poor job at "telling our story" and lack a cohesive message that resonates. We do not educate people outside the community of our wonderful attributes. This has to be a collaborative effort, where all local communities (Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, Mexicali, Imperial Valley, etc.) create an image for our region. Additionally we need to create better infrastructure (power, gas, rail, etc.) as well as fully understand our market and what it has to offer. We should also consider reducing regulations in order to mitigate the hurdles that are required to open and operate a business.

We have a wonderful Downtown area in Yuma that has been showing great improvement over the years. However, we can capitalize on that more by providing more special events and by improving access to this area through increased means of transportation.

Finally, state government needs to participate in changing the image of Arizona in regard to highly charged issues, such as immigration and unaccountable tax reductions. With this change in perception, benefits to the local government and a better business environment would follow.

ACTIONS THAT WOULD HAVE A BENEFICIAL IMPACT

Overall, we need to alter the perception that people have of our region. We don't do a great job of telling our own story. A process should be developed to collectively deal with the issue of branding and focus on removing negative perceptions. All of our non-governmental entities can work together toward the creation of common goals along with a comprehensive plan to collectively finance the marketing of our brand and then move that message to front line businesses such as hotels, supermarkets, etc. so that the message is apparent everywhere. We can further reach out to targeted companies and potential individual talent to convey the welcoming nature of the community.

We also need to invest in the community by cleaning up areas that have fallen into disrepair so that we can be more attractive and marketable. Industry partnerships should be created to address "bigger goals" that can be shared by stakeholder industries. Assets unique to industry partners will strengthen our market by demonstrating a positive relationship among existing businesses. Further utilization of existing business venues for community or similar events would also contribute to a positive perception that local businesses are enjoyed and supported.

The community needs to take more of an interest in our success by becoming involved. Our youth should be aware of what industries thrive in our area, such as agriculture, and they should be encouraged to learn about other industries so that they can be engaged when opportunities arise. Expanding opportunities for work experience (such as JTED) will provide practical experience. A partnership between high achieving students and school administrators to develop relevant programs would have a positive impact on our educational systems and would be seen as an asset by those outside of our community. We should support what we have but also identify what is next for our community. Our existing assets can then be used to align with the next big expansion to industry.

We focus on winter visitors and tend to underestimate the benefit of providing opportunities for students. Putting a college campus downtown would allow for partnerships between Industry and businesses that could provide jobs, training and other opportunities to connect with students to keep them interested and involved in the community. The common thread in all of this seems to be education.

Rules, regulations and barriers that restrict people from getting into business should be reviewed so that we can make it easier for people to start a business, thus creating jobs. There are a number of industries throughout Yuma County, that have an aging workforce population and there is nobody to replace them. Opportunities will be available that we need to make sure the youth of this community are aware of. One way to do this is integrating this with already existing programs. Some industries, such as field workers, are not pushing their children to do the same thing or the children do not want to follow in their parents' footsteps, like it was in past generations. The purpose of technology is to improve our quality of life, but what would happen to the actual workforce that cannot afford the education? If we can identify opportunities, and the future of that opportunity, to young people, they would be interested and motivated. One way this should be done is by bringing businesses into the classroom and have them engage with students. There is a business-school barrier that should be broken. Students do not have the opportunity for job fairs or to learn about the local businesses and the opportunities they have.

WHAT ELECTED LEADERS NEED TO KNOW

Elected leaders should make more of an effort to go into the community and actually speak to the people. Government officials need to be more visible and recognizable. They need to focus on the future for our community and let go of obstacles from the past. The community should feel welcomed to participate in government at public meetings without feeling intimidated.

Streamlining processes and removing bureaucratic obstacles will make it easier for businesses to come to Yuma County. Officials should also understand that the economy is not as bad as they are being told in comparison to other areas. They control the tax base and an increase in government income means less money in the communities' pocket.

Many of the elected leaders at the state level are more idealistic than pragmatic. Solutions do not readily come out of the state legislature. The region needs to come up with a solution on its own, put together the resources, and implement it.

Elected leaders have done a very good job in regard to economic development but would still benefit in being more business friendly by streamlining the process related to starting up a business, providing start up incentives and being flexible with regulations related to development and expansion of existing businesses. Perhaps by spending more “hands on” time with actual businesses, this practical experience may enhance their leadership abilities.

Our leaders should focus on education, not only university, but also K-12. They must be good stewards of our tax money. Some infrastructure improvements have occurred, but we also need to make sure we are spending education money wisely. We need to get our critical program funding back from the State and adopt tax increment financing.

THE ROLES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The government’s purpose and function needs to be reevaluated. The role of economic development should stay, whenever possible, in the private sector. Government support is needed, but it can be too intrusive and its growth needs to be controlled, as opposed to the individual or private sector.

Government should recognize that small business is the backbone of our community, paying wages and healthcare for employees. Regulatory programs should be limited to necessity and administered in ways that do not harm businesses. Private industry are the risk takers and will play on the field that the public sector creates and maintains.

Both public and private sectors should be unified, working in tandem to look for ways to benefit the people. It is a partnership and they need to work together in getting the proper message out to others about our community. They need to promote economic development through testimonials, advocacy and evangelism and need to coach them on how to do this. However, we should also respect experts and real information rather than just anecdotal opinion or experiences. We want good “customer service” and a positive brand, but should communicate the reasons behind our processes so that there is better understanding by constituents. Saying what is needed to be done and actually doing it needs to be emphasized by identifying what it is we are really good at and back it up, through marketing and the utilization of those services by the members of the local private and public sectors. If areas of the region are lacking, both sectors can react to help fill that void through the use of partnerships and resources.

The State Legislature should invest in people and concentrate on bigger issues. They need to spend time in Yuma to see what is actually going on in our schools and community. Also, we need to keep our non-profits robust and not let them suffer or fail in the face of a constricting economy. These programs can help to improve our economy by providing support for those populations that need help preparing for future economic challenges.

Summary Report of the 27th Annual Pinal County Town Hall

October 2 – 3, 2014

Economics of a Healthy Community

Delegates to the 27th Annual Pinal County Town Hall developed recommendations for enhancing local area and countywide good health measures to improve the overall health of county residents. More than 120 attendees heard six speakers on varying topics related to health in Pinal County and Arizona. Topics ranged from: statistics taken from a recent health assessment of Pinal County residents; to the impact of infrastructure on a healthy county; to current, successful programs that can be replicated in other parts of the county. The delegates then divided into five breakout groups to discuss strategic recommendations and personal commitments to form a healthier county.

All groups agreed good paying jobs with good benefits were critical to a healthy economy. A healthy workforce plays a major role in creating a sound foundation for economic development.

What makes a healthy community?

- Interaction within the community/knowing your neighbors/communication
- Healthy workers and good jobs with good benefits - creating a good economy
- Access to services, healthcare
- Infrastructure: water, sidewalks, parks, connectivity, places to recreate (opens spaces and trails)
- Having an active lifestyle/prevention of obesity
- Education on health issues/role models/ leadership in health issues

Do you and your family have healthcare insurance or access to healthcare?

- All delegates had healthcare insurance and access to healthcare. Some delegates had all services available within Pinal County, however, many had to use specialists and medical facilities in either Pima or Maricopa counties.
- Transportation was listed as an issue in many locations

Specific health concerns in Pinal County were:

- Mental health/Substance abuse/Smoking/Alcohol
- Obesity
- Mental health with lack of local resources/Homelessness
- Access to healthy food choices (popularity of fast food was seen as an issue)

- Lack of indoor/outdoor workout facilities
- Lack of local resources for veterans and seniors

What types of programs do you want to see implemented in your community to improve health?

- Employers promoting fitness programs/access to fitness facilities
- Centralized community resources focused on health
- Programs to reduce isolation
- Increased preventative healthcare/access to health education
- Peer to peer programs
- Start drug education programs earlier (elementary school)
- Support farmer's markets, local growing of foods, community gardens
- Community investment in open spaces and trails for active lifestyles
- Programs on nutrition/access to good nutrition
- Need for grassroots movement to affect a behavioral change
- School facilities opened longer/after school hours for activities

What are you willing to do?

Personal Commitments:

- Talk to my Town Council and let them know about what we learned at Town Hall about healthy choices!
- Educate and promote local, available services (HOA, as a member of local clubs, associates at work).
- Volunteer my time as a person knowledgeable in health insurance to help build a wellness model for the county identifying insurance benefits tied to good health to be deployed through local chambers of commerce, city/town governments, United Way, non-profits.
- Play the game show that was part of the Town Hall called "Eat This or That", (a game identifying the best food choice between two items) at school during the Central Arizona College Health Fair held each year.
- Help connect Pinal County law enforcement agencies with training programs on mental health/domestic violence issues.
- Join with neighbors in exercising before going to work.
- Professionally collaborate with industry to promote wellness programs.
- Re-educate myself on minimal walking exercise to keep healthy and share with people in my family, friends and work group.
- Be a role model for healthy practices.

- Get local community group to keep Arizona Trail in good condition and use it for regular hiking.
- Disseminate information on social media
- Take charge of my wellness!
- Have healthy behaviors (buckle up, stop smoking, no texting while driving)
- Work on getting a mobile unit for veterans implemented
- Start safe driving.
- Motivate other youth to assume leadership roles/inspire others to better health and healthier life styles
- Communicate what was learned during Town Hall to my community.
- Change my attitude toward health.
- Start a leadership for young women's group.
- Get sports teams to do volunteer projects regarding healthier lifestyles
- Follow up on outreach to Child Protective Services
- Open a Veterans One-Stop Center
- Bring non-profits together to work more efficiently
- Create a healthcare directory for the City of Maricopa
- Engage with organizations across the county to work together
- Continue to advocate for children and families.

Premier Partner



Catalyst Partner



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Consensus Partner



Collaborator Partners



Civic Leader Partners



One East Camelback, Suite 530, Phoenix, Arizona 85012
Phone 602-252-9600 Fax: 602-252-6189
Website: www.aztownhall.org