

**Report of the
113th ARIZONA TOWN HALL
“Creating Vibrant Communities”
Online via Zoom
January 24-26, 2022**

Introduction

“People working together in a strong community with a shared goal and a common purpose can make the impossible possible.” - Tom Vilsack, Secretary, US Department of Agriculture

“Community is much more than belonging to something; it’s about doing something together that makes belonging matter.” - Brian Solis, Digital analyst, speaker, and author

Community vibrancy includes many aspects of community well-being and health, and its assessment requires a holistic perspective. Health and longevity present an excellent example. Medical care is only a small part – by most estimates, somewhere between 10 and 20 percent - of what determines a population’s health and longevity, which contributes to community vibrancy. The places we live, work, and play have much more impact on health and longevity. In Arizona, a child born in zip code 85256 has a life expectancy of 65.8 years; meanwhile, a child born in the adjacent zip code of 85251 has a dramatically longer life expectancy of 80.89 years. There are many factors that play into why this disparity exists including but not limited to structural racism, built into the systems that impact life expectancy.

We can view community vibrancy through Vitalyst Health Foundation’s Elements of a Healthy Community (Vitalyst Wheel) – a framework built by statewide community partners using data and science from national and international sources. Fourteen elements are identified that are present and robust in vibrant communities. When all these elements are intentionally cultivated, coordinated, and aligned, communities thrive and prosper.



Set against this backdrop, participants across the state convened virtually in the 113th Arizona Town Hall to consider ways in which community action and policy change can create a healthier Arizona for all.

Participants found that communities are vibrant for all only when they have fairly offered options for different kinds of development, mobility, and autonomy, such as: (1) supportive spaces for community and development including high quality air and water, (2) a diverse array of affordable, quality foods, (3) livable, supportive, and obtainable housing, (4) educational opportunity, and (5) economic opportunity. Additionally, crucial building blocks to a vibrant community include pivotal social elements like equity, civic engagement, social cohesion, and community safety. It is important to elect officials with the ability to listen, understand, and act upon the true needs of the community. When community infrastructure is planned for sustainability, social connections, and well-being, then all Arizonans will have the opportunity to thrive.

Participants also recognized that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to a vibrant community. Some of the most effective solutions have historically come through the voices of communities experiencing the largest vibrancy gaps.

Participants considered current disparities noted in the background report such as:

- 35.1% of people living in urban areas have low access to healthy food.
- Low-income individuals spend 58% of their income on transportation, on average, with higher percentages spent in rural areas.
- In Arizona, 45% of rented homes are rented at 30% or more of household income.
- Homelessness in Arizona increased almost 10% from 2017 to 2018.
- Only one in four adults in the state meet physical activity guidelines.
- Only 21.9% of Arizonans report conversing with their neighbors; such conversation is used as an indicator to measure social cohesion within communities.
- In Arizona, the poverty rate of American Indians/Alaska Natives is 34%, 19% for Hispanic or Latino individuals, and 19% for Black or African Americans. Meanwhile, the poverty rate for White (not Hispanic or Latino) individuals is 9%.
- The poverty rate in rural Arizona is 26.9%, compared with 13.4% in urban areas of the state.
- 48% of households on Indian reservations do not have access to reliable water sources, clean drinking water, or basic sanitation. This led to COVID-19 affecting Native Americans at a rate 3.5 times higher than their white counterparts.

The COVID-19 pandemic is deeply testing Arizona’s economic, housing, food, education, social, and health systems, exposing significant issues and disparities that can be transformed into key opportunities for more vibrant communities. The participants felt that the pandemic identified the potential for cross-sector, community-driven solutions to make our communities better and stronger going forward underscoring root causes that could lead to collaborative initiatives resulting in “an ounce of prevention” over a “pound of cure.”

One of the key opportunities for the 113th Arizona Town Hall topic was identifying and championing transformative, collaborative, and cost-effective strategies. With the right stakeholders at the table, effective solutions to challenges are not always about spending more money or government intervention. Participants explored and discussed the elements that create vibrant, resilient, and equitable communities, through data, emergent research and examples, and lived experience, resulting in consensus recommendations to ensure a healthier and more vibrant Arizona for all.

The 113th Arizona Town Hall invited a robust, respectful policy discussion and participants hope their recommendations will inspire and motivate our state’s leaders to respond to these challenges. The results of the discussions at the 113th Arizona Town Hall are included in this report. Though not all Town Hall participants agree with each of the conclusions and recommendations, this report reflects the overall consensus reached at the 113th Arizona Town Hall.

Cultivating and Coordinating Community Vibrancy

While communities may define themselves with descriptive names or have geographical boundaries, collaboration among communities is key to optimizing community health and vibrancy. The collaborative process should begin with identifying areas of need, assessing commonalities, identifying individuals and goal-aligned organizations to optimize the use of resources and create a strategic plan for achieving those goals. Personal safety, access to water, affordable housing, educational opportunities, access to food, medical care and social services, adequate transportation and opportunities for recreation and cultural activities are important for communities to thrive.

In planning for community needs, it is critical for community members, developers, and the business community to coordinate with state and local government, especially city and town councils and their staff. Some believe that smaller cities and towns tend to do a better job with the collaborative process, involving families and youth in the development and implementation of general community plans. It is a challenge for larger municipalities to engage in a meaningful collaborative process, and consequently their plans may be less impactful and sometimes unsustainable.

Access to health care, both treatment and prevention of disease, public safety, housing, and social services constitute “public health” issues. To improve public health in our communities, we must get beyond siloed services that do not take into account input from those needing these services. Community Health Needs Assessments, either facilitated by the Arizona Department of Health Services, county health departments, or non-profits are “bottom up” processes that include survey assessments, focus groups, and epidemiological studies and are useful in evaluating the health needs of urban, rural, and tribal communities.

It is critical to engage with communities at a grass roots level, including engagement with low-income communities, youth, and our aging population. The City of Yuma currently uses a robust community town hall process that has demonstrated effective broad spectrum community engagement, which includes a town hall process specific to Yuma’s youth. Yuma County engages with its residents and border communities on issues such as infrastructure, education, economic development, and tourism, all of which has enhanced the vibrancy of the communities within and surrounding the County. Oro Valley offers a community academy to familiarize its residents with community programs, services, activities, and their local government. In addition, Scottsdale offers free classes to the community on how its government works. Fire, water, police, and government 101 showcasing all the city departments.

In Yavapai County, different groups are working together to raise the tide and lift all boats, united by the Verde River. The Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization (VVREO) is a regional organization serving business and economic development leaders. VVREO looks at issues such as planning, development, and economic growth, and provides access to resources for regional business creation, attraction, and expansion. In addition, local communities and governments are partnering to address critical infrastructure needs such as lack of attainable and affordable housing and addressing the challenges brought about by short term rentals. For example, the cities of Cottonwood and Sedona combined resources to hire a full-time housing manager.

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) serves as a resource for those engaged in community planning and development. The ULI has developed innovative strategies to address housing, parks and recreation, streets and transportation and other land use needs.

It is critical to invest in our youth, from a very early age. First Things First is an example of an effective state agency that supports early childhood education through various initiatives. All In Education, which receives both public and private funding, and constitutes a public/private partnership, does a good job educating parents about how to advocate for their children through the Parent Educator Academy. We need to see youth as a valuable resource, providing them with life options and mentorships,

and creating educational and workforce opportunities through paid internships.

Arizonans can do a better job of holding elected officials and government agencies accountable for what they say they are going to do and what they actually do. Arizona's elected officials should reflect their constituent communities while ultimately working in the best interest of the State. Gaps remain between state and local efforts to determine who is in need, what services and resources are needed, who is at the greatest risk and how we can serve all members of our communities. We cannot forget that when we talk about community health, healthcare is only about 20%. The social determinants of health, as depicted on the Vitalyst Wheel, account for the rest. For example, lack of access to childcare has devastating, lifelong consequences on families, as is illustrated during this almost two-year COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of affordable transportation can also create pockets of hunger and poverty.

Additional efforts, whether by local communities and government or the state, must start with a comprehensive needs assessment that includes extensive outreach to groups who are often left out of the deliberative process.

Cultivating and nurturing arts and cultural opportunities can help foster unity and understanding among groups and individuals.

Impediments Preventing Communities from Thriving

There are a number of impediments to coordination and cross-sector collaboration that prevent communities from thriving. Governmental entities are constrained by policy and budget considerations, legal issues, and political considerations about the consequences of their decisions. Smaller organizations and communities may have a lack of resources and capacity as well as facing scalability challenges. Sometimes elected bodies and organizations are disproportionately influenced by the “loudest voice in the room,” and well-organized groups that may not represent the majority of residents.

Another impediment is the many silos that exist in our communities. This leads to duplication of effort and other problems. One solution for non-profits may be for grantors to strongly encourage organizations to collaborate in both design and implementation of initiatives before receiving grants.

Vibrant communities are safe communities. Underlying conditions that already exist in communities can contribute and magnify unsafe conditions, including crime and interpersonal violence.

Communities could be more vibrant if residents better understood the local and state governance framework including state funding mechanisms. Voters are expected to understand and vote on complex issues, such as school funding and taxes, but few have been educated about these issues. A return to more robust civics education in our schools would certainly help. Arizona’s Medicaid, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), the Arizona chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Arizona) and the Arizona Peer and Family Coalition have developed a civic leadership initiative to address issues specific to healthcare.

We need to recognize the importance of elections and who is elected. We should consider changes to election processes such as open primaries, ranked choice voting or other voting models which could result in more diverse representation and better governance outcomes. We also need to limit the impact of money on our elections and increase the transparency of campaign contributions. Our elected leaders should continue to make data-driven decisions with cross sector collaboration to solve challenges including lack of healthcare workers, other labor shortages, burnout, trauma informed care, social services, the digital divide, access to trained employees and volunteers, use of social media, and lack of access to high quality childcare.

In some jurisdictions, such as Scottsdale, geographic differences have resulted in some

constituents feeling left out. Sometimes, local planning processes have not adequately reflected cultural competency, diversity, and equity.

COVID-19 has resulted in those who were already at risk being at even greater risk now. While the Internet has helped overcome some of the disparities, it has also exposed the digital divide and made participation even more difficult for those without online connectivity. Lower cost Internet and more widespread broadband access are needed. Students need access to no-cost or affordable devices. The pandemic has compelled us to think in new and creative ways. As we make changes in our communities and processes arising from the pandemic, we must ask how we maintain the momentum.

Rural areas often lack infrastructure, such as water and sewage, which can constrain growth. Further, there is a perception that the state allocates more per capita funds and resources to urban areas over rural communities impeding community vibrancy. While there has been a huge growth in Maricopa County's population, there needs to be more equity on how resources are distributed around the state.

As a society, we tend to focus more on what is wrong with our communities rather than solutions. Social media has made bullying easier and has adversely impacted public discourse. People have become afraid to speak publicly. Arizona Town Hall serves as an example of respectful dialogue and civic engagement.

Some of the challenges we face are national and extremely difficult to solve, such as the distribution of income, but we can focus on how such problems affect us and make appropriate decisions.

Access to care in rural communities is an impediment especially including access to specialists. Geography creates challenges because our rural communities are spread out. Rural communities need economic development to create livable wage jobs that promote families and sustain communities.

The very word community assumes cooperation, but fears can arise from people being different from each other, underlining the need to do more listening. There are counties in the state that do not want to work with other counties or communicate with each other. There are situations where there are limited resources and areas will end up fighting over pieces of the pie. An example of sharing resources is the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area sharing resources for providing educational activities for students.

Coordination requires and only moves at the speed of trust, transparency, empathy, and legitimacy.

Systems Impacting Community Vibrancy

Social, political, financial, environmental, racial, and justice systems impact the vibrancy of Arizona's communities. They are often the lens through which we see each other, come together, and see commonalities, as we tend to be more alike than different.

This is not to say we should minimize or downplay the compelling manifestation of inequities that have existed historically and continue to exist today. Inequities exist in the justice system, in environmental conditions and hazards, and as a result of systemic racism, poverty, and gentrification. Inequities also exist with access to resources, such as clean air and water, nutritious foods, healthcare, transportation, municipal services, and education. Inequities are reflected by the fact that individuals living in the same metro area, but in different zip codes, with vast differences in property value, have significantly different life expectancies.

Advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion is not only the morally and ethically right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do, from an economic growth and business development standpoint. A vibrant community is not based solely on monetary wealth. Individuals want and need more than financial security, especially the younger generations that value intellectual curiosity, energy, and creativity over money. And our senior populations need an enhanced social safety net.

A lack of financial resources negatively impacts marginalized communities, which has been on heightened display with the COVID-19 pandemic and provides a visualization of Arizona's blind and weak spots regarding vibrancy and communities. Some maintain that certain economic conditions and credit practices such as payday lending and tax breaks for the wealthy, have perpetuated cycles of community poverty. This can deter businesses and organizations from investing in these areas. Our leaders in both the public and private sectors must acknowledge this and encourage immediate change by promoting direct investment in low income and socio-economically disadvantaged communities to stimulate economies and close equity gaps.

Further, we must address disparities in how education is funded in Arizona. Public education funding in Arizona is ranked among the lowest in the nation and the funding structure in place is not conducive to ensuring vibrant communities. Rural, tribal, and low-income areas do not have the same monetary resources to spend on education. More affluent communities have significantly broader educational choices and more access to better funded schools. An example of an education resource for rural communities is the Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN). Grants from the National Science Foundation have also allowed STEM programs to flourish in some of our rural communities' public schools.

Governmental Actions to Encourage Community Vibrancy

Collaboration is the new currency. When communities and organizations work together to create vibrant communities, we maximize our ability to attract funding and solve problems.

Elected officials should rise above political polarization to represent all constituents and improve and maintain the vibrancy of Arizona communities by implementing nonpartisan and bipartisan public private partnerships under a community development framework that celebrates civility, humility, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the spirit of collaboration reflected by past Arizona Senators John McCain and Dennis DeConcini.

Among the many examples of effective collaboration, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) launched a regional council on homelessness. This process began in 2018 and involves non-profits, businesses, faith-based organizations, and local governments. In Portland, Oregon, an innovative zoning system was established due to collaboration among various entities that addressed several land use issues, and in the process institutionalized regional intergovernmental collaboration on a long-term basis.

We recognize that collaboration takes time and resources. Like many rivulets of water that flow into a stream and eventually create a river, we build a community one person at a time working together consistently. Cochise County is creating an action group to bring together a leadership multidisciplinary group including hospitals, schools, universities, and other community leaders. It addresses all areas of the social determinants of health. Public officials, non-profits and others are participating. Best practices learned include the need to set clear and measurable objectives.

To collaborate effectively, it is important to break down silos. Siloed programs tend to protect their funding sources and overlap their delivery of services. The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) has been working with many organizations around the state on breaking down silos in the community health and public health arenas to identify overlaps in funding and services. Likewise, the Arizona Department of Housing has been working together with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) on housing solutions.

Fire, police, libraries, and other public entities often interact with those experiencing homelessness. Local governments should launch interdisciplinary groups of those entities to address how to care for those experiencing homelessness, rather than each entity acting on its own.

Communication is critical for collaboration. In diverse communities it can be difficult to reach all residents. Newsletters can be an effective way to reach residents, but to be impactful they need to do more than just report on what is being done. They should solicit input from residents about needs and programs. Another strategy is to encourage residents to form interest groups that represent their unique region or perspective and to work with staff. Arizona State University (ASU) has been performing town hall style events to collect data on behalf of local communities and develop actionable items. Yuma County has a regional communication system that includes federal, tribes, and state agencies.

Government needs to take time to go beyond pro forma hearings to really listen to the community before taking action. Government must be transparent and open to receive comments from the public and the public needs to participate and talk back in constructive ways.

Government agencies provide training for their employees, and they could leverage those programs to help their staffs expand their awareness about how government works. This could include developing a better understanding of underserved communities as well as the impact of the social determinants of health to enhance connections with and service to those communities. An example of such training is the Bridges Out of Poverty program instituted by the RE:center in Navajo County, which is a national training program available to individuals, institutions, and the community.

We strongly encourage local, county, state, tribal, and federal leaders to hold Arizona Town Hall-style meetings, inviting participation from all voters and political parties and everyone they represent. Diverse public engagement in public meetings could also be greatly advanced by government or philanthropy funding childcare, meals, and transportation to facilitate and encourage participation.

Government should do more to communicate and provide economic development opportunities to small businesses. Government needs to understand small business needs, help them with technology and social media issues, and provide training that meets their needs.

Much of government is carried out by trained, experienced professionals. All governmental organizations should improve the public awareness about what they do. This can be achieved in many ways including social media and websites. These communications should include information about diversity, equity, and inclusion. For example, in the City of Yuma, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area obtained federal funding from several different sources and has communicated information about that to stakeholders and the public. This has contributed to the expansion of Yuma's tourism industry.

To educate all Arizonans, we need to look expansively and consider how we communicate information. Although information can be provided in face-to-face conversations at coffee shops and public meetings, in order to reach younger people it must be digitally accessible and provided via social media platforms they use.

Regulations need to be revised when they do not promote community vitality. For example, US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules currently limit benefits to members of the same family. Government should expand those benefits beyond family relationships to include neighbors and friends. This would give people an expanded sense of family and make better use of funds.

Government and communities should partner to address all of the elements of community vibrancy through optimized funding achieved through cross-sector collaboration. This includes public transportation, schools, libraries, childcare, early education, education, teachers, low-income housing tax credits, housing stock, State Housing Trust Fund, jobs, leadership training, eldercare, water, climate change, social safety nets, social determinants of health, healthcare, and mental health care. Mobile restrooms and improved access to emergency services should be available to those who are experiencing homelessness.

Loss of funding is a common issue for programs, especially for nonprofits, underscoring the importance of sustainable funding. For example, a dementia alliance in Arizona developed with funding from Vitalyst Health Foundation has produced some amazing results but is now running out of funding. It is unclear whether it can continue. Sustained funding is vital to all of these initiatives.

Non-Government Organization Actions to Encourage Community Vibrancy

Educational institutions, businesses, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and other community stakeholders must utilize coordination and cross-sector collaboration to improve and maintain community vibrancy. One way of doing so is to hold Arizona Town Hall-style events that increase community awareness and provide networking and leadership opportunities. Encouraging dialogue between public and private sectors can break down organizational silos.

Information needs to be shared more freely. Agencies and institutions could share information identified in the Vitalyst Wheel or its equivalent among stakeholders, creating an information hub in which community accomplishments could be shared, and new partnerships formed.

Leadership academies, similar to ones held by the Show Low Chamber of Commerce, should be encouraged to provide opportunities for stakeholders to learn about their community as a whole, share information, and promote education and awareness in the community.

Nonprofits must be encouraged to become “coopeteers” - finding new ways to collaborate with other nonprofits and overcoming the challenge of often competing for the same funding as well as duplicating some services. The Yuma Area Nonprofit Institute is a good example of an association encouraging collaboration, not competition, and providing networking opportunities. Public and private sector collaboration is also critical.

Another example of this cross-collaboration is the Community Action Human Resources Agency, otherwise known as “CG Helps,” a public private partnership between the City of Casa Grande and community nonprofits throughout Pinal County. CG Helps has been identified as the lead agency in the operation of a Homeless Resource Center. The Center is a place where homeless or those on the brink of experiencing homelessness will be able to speak with representatives and obtain services. The Resource Center is a part of one of the initial goals identified in the strategic plan of the Casa Grande Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness. The CG Helps website also provides residents with volunteer opportunities based upon geographic location.

The Gather and Grow program at The Farm at South Mountain also demonstrates successful cross-collaboration involving small business and schools. The vision for this program is to be a model of sustainability for the South Mountain and Phoenix community through farming, gardening, composting and aquaponics. Gather and Grow provides out-of-classroom education for hundreds of students and teachers both in public and private schools by partnering with Phoenix’s sustainability and urban agricultural leaders to offer hands-on garden experience for students, fostering an appreciation of sustainability.

Grand Canyon University has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to engage student and employee volunteers and homeowners in performing home repairs primarily funded by state tax credits as part of a neighborhood revitalization initiative for residents living in the 85017-zip code in the City of Phoenix. This initiative has empowered residents and increased the curb appeal of the homes in the area, which has resulted in property values rising dramatically.

The Spaces of Opportunity Gardens (Spaces) is a collaboration between the Desert Botanical Gardens, the Orchard Community Learning Center, the Roosevelt School District, and others to enable South Phoenix families to have affordable access to healthy food. Spaces is transforming a food desert to

a food oasis through the coordination of a 10-acre incubator farm, family gardens, and an on-site farmers market.

Individuals need to get involved on a personal level with existing community collaborations as well as volunteer to mentor youth and assist in connecting youth to pathways that lead to enhanced opportunities for education, work-force training and development, and employment. Arizona@Work is an example of an organization that provides these individualized opportunities.

Prioritizing Actions

The following actions should be prioritized to utilize coordination and cross-sector collaboration to improve and maintain the vibrancy of Arizona communities:

- With substantial funding currently available from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and other sources there is a time sensitive need to find ways to interweave funds across silos. Cities and towns can be the best place for funds to be applied since constituents are more directly affected by government at a local level. Unincorporated and tribal communities need to be included in this as well. A cross-section of communities and organizations should approach the governor with a plan on how these funds should be expended and insist on transparency in how the funds are actually utilized. This should include processes and opportunities for meaningful consultation with community members on how to use these funds.
- Education is viewed by most Arizonans as a top priority, and we need increased civil dialogue between legislators, governmental agencies, and citizens to find and implement solutions that will improve and maintain the vibrancy of Arizona communities. Current funding for public education is not sufficient and a new way to fund this system needs to be found. Educational opportunity is a basic element of the Vitalist Wheel upon which everything else is built. Programs such as First Things First and Junior Achievement, which involve partnerships between government, non-profits, and the private sector, target these areas. The COVID-19 pandemic cast a glaring light on the gaps between government, home, school, and community. Schools, particularly grade K-8 schools, and public libraries are community hubs where students and their families receive information, food distribution, social services, and social connection. Schools are community and life centers where health and safety issues are first identified.
- Affordable, high-speed Internet, as defined by ARPA regulations, must be expanded across the state, particularly in low income, rural, and tribal communities. Rural areas need this infrastructure expansion to improve communication, make education and healthcare more accessible and promote the overall vibrancy of their communities. We should also leverage institutions that already have infrastructure available, such as schools, public libraries, and faith-based organizations, to provide information and connections for people who need them. Arizona Telecommunications and Information Council (ATIC) through its Arizona Broadband Stakeholder Network (AZBSN, <https://www.arizonatele.org/about-stakeholder-network.html>) in partnership with Greater Arizona Educational Leadership (GAZEL, <https://gazelaz.weebly.com>) continues its efforts with the AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force where government, industry, and stakeholders are regularly meeting to share information and developing specific initiatives to address unmet broadband connectivity needs in education and the workforce as part of the disaster response. Industry, such as utilities, can also be a resource in expanding broadband across the state. For example, Arizona Public Service (APS) is currently expanding its broadband infrastructure to serve its business needs but is overbuilding the system to bring more dark fiber capacity in rural Arizona.

- Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) should be prioritized and acted on. They are comprehensive appraisals that can be used to reduce barriers and streamline services, help with formation of partnerships, encourage culture change, and produce cross-organizational plans to improve social determinants of health.
- A central clearinghouse should be created to share information across the state. For example, employment is a priority for general well-being in communities. Chambers of commerce, representing business and services industries, could step forward with accurate information to share with the community. Clearinghouses could be modeled as a cross-sector collaborative that includes government and business and provides a space for Arizonans to give input.
- Vibrant communities require more than money. Participation from constituents should be a priority with their input on what needs to happen to create and maintain community vibrancy. We should continue to hold local and statewide town halls on the social determinants of health that are supportive of civil engagement, inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible to everyone in the community, including business, nonprofits, and government. In addition to traditional communication channels, we should use social media, with corporate and philanthropic funding, to increase participation in community collaboratives. Getting people involved and participating is important. Participation will introduce new ideas and develop new sources of funding.
- We need to promote cross-sector collaboration by identifying issues where an intersectional problem exists. Then, we should align resources in a manner that will allow us to provide a one-stop shop solution for those affected by the intersectional problem. Homelessness is a good example of an intersectional problem. For example, Project Connect, a convening of nonprofit organizations serving homeless individuals and families, brought together by the Human Services Campus and funded by the Valley of the Sun United Way, has been very successful in connecting the homeless with the resources they need in one place.
- Effectively engaging community leaders into our political discourse should reduce, and possibly eliminate, the many myriad partisan distractions and divisions.

We should not rely solely on government to implement and fund all of these initiatives. Private and business funders should be encouraged to support innovative and effective collaborative efforts and to leverage existing resources with greater impact.

What One Action Will You Take Because Of Your Participation in This Town Hall?

Recognizing that the power to change the future begins with each individual, participants committed to take personal actions based on their experience and discussions during the 113th statewide Arizona Town Hall. Below are individual actions that were shared and have been categorized based on impact.

Identify and Engage Cross Sector Connections and Collaborations for Systems Change and Healthy Communities

- I will continue to make connections and collaborate with communities impacted by transition away from coal economies - specifically I will support what the communities see as their future.
- I will continue to build my network of collaborative partners, build my knowledge and work toward solutions that build community vibrancy, health, and sustainability.
- I will continue to participate and serve with nonprofits that provide significant results in building community resiliency, in terms of demonstrative health, education and economic development benefits, and well as nurturing and providing access to arts and culture.

- I will work to recognize unconscious silos around me, and those of which I may be part, to build consensus and intentional collaboration.
- I will continue to look at community issues as something that must be achieved through collaboratives, as the more groups are involved to solve an issue, the more expertise and capital can be leveraged.
- I will continue to engage in collaborative actions and model that behavior for others, with specific focus on the Historic Yuma Experience.
- I will continue to insist that diversity, equity, and inclusion is a central part of any solution to achieving a vibrant community.
- I will look for opportunities to collaborate with other individuals and organizations to further our community, local, state, and federal resources for the betterment of the entire community.
- I will continue to be engaged in my community and ask the question, “Is what we are doing now still serving us?” and seek to find collaborative partnerships.
- I will continue to work with the Maricopa Association of Governments to encourage cross-community collaboration on issues of homelessness.
- I will compile a community connections reference document with individual contact information to promote collaboration.
- I will work to coalesce the business community to amplify the impact of JPMorgan's commitment to equity in Arizona (< \$30B).
- I will promote civil discourse and cultivate coordination and cross-sector collaboration in all my work.
- I will ask the Arizona Partnership for Healthy Communities to share this report with its members.
- I will continue my work on SDOH and EDIA.
- I will continue to seek out opportunities to collaborate with community groups and individuals in order to create a more vibrant community.
- I will work to broaden commonly held definitions of housing and healthcare communities by incorporating more social impact communities of interest.

Leverage the Arizona Town Hall Experience and Processes for Greater Impact

- I will reach out to other Town Hall participants to identify potential community members interested in working with the nine NAMI Arizona Affiliate boards, steering committees, and no-fee signature programming.
- I will leverage my position at Arizona Town Hall to invite the voices of interdisciplinary organizations to encourage rigorous discourse and create robust solutions.
- I will add this Arizona Town Hall experience to my city planning toolbox to create vibrant communities.
- I will reach out to my fellow Arizona Town Hall participants to plan events and use a large conference space.
- I will post and blog about the 113th Arizona Town Hall on creating vibrant communities, as well as speak to elected officials.
- I will share the work Arizona Town Hall brings to nonprofits and business improvement districts.

- I will continue volunteering with Arizona Town Hall to promote civil discourse and community dialogue on important issues.
- I will propose bringing community town halls to West Valley elected and civic leaders.
- I will take steps to bring a community town hall to Flagstaff.
- I will share the resources provided through this Arizona Town Hall with my staff and community through coalitions I am currently working with.
- I will support and participate in local town hall meetings as well as invite local stakeholders that have not previously participated.
- I will ask in my local Tucson neighborhood and my statewide rural network if there is interest in helping to roll out the next Arizona Town Hall Report.
- I will communicate with elected officials at local, state, and national levels to provide highlights of the experience and key findings from the final report (113th Arizona Town Hall on Creating Vibrant Communities) and periodically share actions that are happening in my community and region.
- I will take steps to bring a community town hall to Flagstaff through the FH Foundation and/or the Arizona Community Foundation in late spring when the FHGC season starts up again.
- I will encourage our local town hall committee to present the results of our local report to ALL city council members and county supervisors and encourage elected officials to participate in local and state town halls.
- I will continue to collaborate with regional leaders to ensure expansion of AZTH Future Leaders Town Halls for high school students in the Verde Valley and Flagstaff.

Gain Insights Through Civil Discourse with Individuals with Different Life Experiences and Perspectives

- I will work harder to promote cross sector discourse among the groups of which I am a member, and specifically work with the Vail Chamber of Commerce.
- I will explore the "one-small-step" StoryCorps podcasts.
- I will listen more respectfully to people who hold differing political viewpoints to build bridges and encourage bi-partisan efforts.
- I will work to promote civil discourse through community town hall meetings, the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission and the Scottsdale City Council and Public Relations Department.
- I will talk with someone who has very different perspectives than me at least once a month.
- I will look for and volunteer with organizations in Arizona that have the ability to effectively reach across political/social perspective divides.
- I will host an online panel discussion on civic belonging and health to continue these important conversations.
- I will be curious about others lived experience and views.

Promote and Support Civic Engagement

- I will take more personal responsibility in making my community more vibrant and healthier for those who live, work, and recreate there.
- I will bring back leadership academies in rural communities.
- I will be a good constituent and attend public meetings.

- I will expand my support and involvement with Voter Choice AZ and other groups working for open primaries and ranked choice voting.
- I will continue my efforts at expanding the engagement of Native American communities on water policy and providing scholarships, internships, and mentoring opportunities for Native American college students to build water management capacity.
- I will continue supporting the philanthropic sector in its journey to fund policy and advocacy, and to widen its lens to the constellation of factors that drive vibrant communities.
- I will work to provide civic engagement opportunities to our patients and the communities we serve to help magnify their voice and express their needs to our elected officials.