

Mesa City Council Strategic Initiatives 10-29-09



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT that is innovative, development and business-friendly and that includes a variety of strategic tools, redevelopment of older and vacant areas, and a focus on high-value job creation and employment.

Samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions to respond to this strategic initiative:

- Update the **Zoning Code** by emphasizing form-based codes, encouraging sustainable development, allowing special character areas of the City, proactively planning for and pursuing land use opportunities as a result of light rail, focusing on infill and redevelopment, and seeking solutions or new internal procedures that help facilitate business success and development opportunities.
- Work regionally to retain the **Chicago Cubs** and take full advantage of revenue opportunities for Mesa and the State. (RL#2)
- Support the **H.E.A.T.** (Healthcare, Education, Aerospace and Tourism) initiative by engaging more **educational institutions** to help create 24/7 presence in downtown. For example, add liberal arts, medical education and high tech/polytechnic educational opportunities to support local industry. Also continue to build on the Power Road Knowledge Corridor to create a local, regional and national brand for this opportunity corridor and work regionally to continue building on the base of educational institutions located there. (QL #2)
- Revitalize **downtown** by promoting 24/7 uses (2,000 housing units, higher education, healthcare industry); focusing on the redevelopment of vacant parcels/property; supporting community special events; applying federal funding to encourage/jump start economic growth; facilitating an updated downtown Chamber presence; attracting more visitors to downtown; reviewing the way downtown is promoted, marketed and managed; and by celebrating all successes.
- Expand **Light Rail to Gilbert Road** by supporting existing businesses while also taking full advantage of redevelopment and land use opportunities that light rail corridors create.
- Work regionally to attract **Manufacturing Jobs** in the most appropriate locations in Mesa.
- Revitalize the **Fiesta District**; for example, by focusing on this as an employment or enterprise zone, creating public and private redevelopment opportunities, creating more consistency of the Fiesta brand and character, and by providing development on the right mix of uses in the right places.
- Create **Economic Opportunity Zones** citywide that allow for flexibility in zoning, which incentivize private redevelopment and create specific implementation plans for each 'zone.'
- Create a **business accelerator** by partnering with existing educational, regional institutions and the business community.
- Ensure **Economic Development Department resources** are sufficient; for example, to maximize outcome delivery for the Council's Economic Development Strategic Initiative efforts.
- Continue hosting more **sporting events** in order to bring visitors and tourists to shop and enjoy Mesa.
- Create plan to focus on seeking **high-value jobs** rather than chasing retail. (Moved from FS)

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QUALITY OF LIFE for citizens of Mesa that includes safe and clean neighborhoods and parks, transportation options, cultural and arts amenities, and excellent educational opportunities; all of which should be sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions to respond to this strategic initiative:

- Invest in Mesa's **parks and recreation**; for example, by creating regional or federal opportunities/partnerships, exploring opportunities for pocket parks, urban plazas and linear parks, and potentially creating added facilities and services through new funding sources or public-private partnerships.
- Support the **H.E.A.T.** (Healthcare, Education, Aerospace and Tourism) initiative by engaging more by engaging more **educational institutions**. For example, to build on the Power Road Corridor, create 24/7 presence in downtown and to add liberal arts, medical education and high tech/polytechnic educational opportunities to support local industry. (ED#3)
- Create opportunities to strengthen **library services** as budget allows, to seek new or maximize existing funding resources, and to ensure services are available geographically across the City.
- Pursue **public safety** priorities; for example, COPS grant implementation, opening new "Fiesta" substation and regional information and crime-fighting efforts. (RL#3)
- Continue to support **arts and culture** programs; for example, by hiring new department leader for arts and culture, seeking more public-private partnership activities, and finding ways to strengthen Mesa's historical museum through local partnerships, etc.
- Support the re-emergence of **community events** through the active involvement and partnership of community groups. Examples include Mesa Days, parades and other events to create excitement and community pride.
- Complete **2008 Bond Program** construction and consider future bonds that support service delivery to Mesa's residents.
- Expand "**Green**" **Initiatives**; for example, by supporting high-performance building designs or seeking LEED certification (or other similar certifications) for new public facilities, being a regional leader for sustainable development and codes, reducing City impact on finite resources, encouraging compact development, seeking sustainable alternatives for the City's energy use such as energy efficient street lighting and the City's Solar Photovoltaic Project.
- Work regionally to expand **broadband and Wi-Fi access** opportunities for residents and important anchor institutions. (RL#9)
- Open new **Justice Center** and ensure court operations have appropriate resources.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT to build pride in our City and to encourage a wide range of civic leadership. This includes the involvement of neighborhoods, non-profit and faith-based organizations and direct communication with citizens.

Samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions to respond to this strategic initiative:

- Develop a **village planning** model tailored to Mesa, and to help encourage proactive community discussion in the review of development proposals.
- Expand **Channel 11** programming.
- Continue to provide and/or expand variety of **community conversations**; such as “Top2Bottom” or “Service Day” events, Mayor’s Youth Committee, City Hall at the Mall, Pancake Breakfasts, collaboration with the faith-based and non-profit communities, and by involving Councilmembers in business outreach efforts.
- Continue programs to further **neighborhood leadership and stabilization**; for example Neighborhood Stabilization Program, Building Stronger Neighborhoods, code enforcement, and consider fostering more Community Development Leadership Corporations.
- Increase **Council-related Public Information & Outreach** services.
- Complete **Light Rail Stakeholder Advisory Committee** process.
- Update the **City’s Website** to be more community focused vs. government focused and continue to expand public outreach through new technology, such as use of **social media**.
- Seek ways to **encourage community attendance to Council meetings**; for example, consider conducting Council or Council Committee meetings in other areas of the City on occasion or on Saturday from time to time.
- Continue to support **faith-based and non-profit agencies**; for example, to help agencies secure grants and continue successful programs to serve the underserved. In addition, consider ways to increase efforts to market ABC Utility Donation Program and to enable residents to donate greater amounts, if desired.
- Create a centralized **volunteer online resource**; for example, one that allows all interested the ability to review and register for volunteer opportunities citywide in “**One Stop Shop**” fashion.
- Continue to conduct **citizen surveys** and other efforts geared toward gauging citizen satisfaction and evaluating existing services.

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FINANCIAL STABILITY that provides proactive leadership and that considers all financial factors in order to achieve stable revenues, responsible budgeting and organizational efficiencies.

Samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions to respond to this strategic initiative:

- Launch **new financial system**, also known as 'CityEdge,' to update the City's 30-year system and in order to create new organizational tools and efficiencies.
- Review the mission of the **Financing the Future Committee**; for example, create a role that also helps encourage community confidence in our efforts and to increase the public's understanding of City finances.
- Expand the "**Shop Mesa**" campaign to help the community understand why shopping local is important.
- Simplify the process for **doing business in Mesa**; for example, consider streamlining license/tax/permit applications into one, user-friendly form.
- Move forward with **2010 Home Rule election**.
- Take a conservative approach in considering a possible 2010 (or 2012) public safety and transportation and utility **capital bond election** -- for the most vital capital needs only.
- Consider conducting **Section 6-13 exemption** election to eliminate Charter Section 6-13 or increase \$1.5 million limit.
- Provide a **consistent 2010/11 budget message** that aligns with our recent financial/budget work.
- Create an **employee awards program**, for example, to celebrate or award employees for efficiency or sustainability efforts.
- Continue seeking **innovative service-delivery solutions**, some examples include: organizational **restructuring**, evaluating **market-driven and privatization** approaches, considering opportunities to sell electric and/or gas utilities, taking a fair look at privatizing Solid Waste and Fleet divisions.
- **Consider a variety of revenue-generating strategies**, some examples include: considering how the City might be able to capture sales tax from vehicles purchased out of state, ensuring City is well positioned to sell Pinal County lands when real estate market rebounds, using the business registration process to keep track of the businesses and assure revenue collections, and ensuring a consistent and thorough application of the Fleet Warranty Recovery Program.

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REGIONAL LEADERSHIP that acknowledges that Mesa's and the region's well being are intertwined and that recognizes Mesa's responsibility to be a leader of and an active participant in working with regional partners to find common solutions to regional challenges that are innovative and sustainable.

Samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions to respond to this strategic initiative:

- Work regionally to retain the **Chicago Cubs** and take full advantage of revenue opportunities for Mesa and the State. (ED #2)
- Pursue a truly **regional public transit plan** and prepare for Prop 500.
- Pursue **public safety priorities**, some examples include: COPS grant implementation, opening new "Fiesta" substation, and regional information and crime-fighting efforts. (QL #4)
- Create a **Mesa presence/impact in region**, for example, by continuing to get involved with national organizations to assure Mesa is on "the map," and being engaged in regional boards and committees, including but not limited to MAG, NLC, and Superstition Vistas Governance Board.
- Work with the **Regional Transit Authority**, for example, to pursue efforts to combine bus and Metro operations into one regional authority.
- Promote **regional agreement vs. competition** with other valley cities, meeting with other Valley City Councils, working with the legislature on behalf of all-city issues, not just Mesa issues. Another example is to look at collaboration with land-locked communities to use their marketing, ED money to attract businesses to adjacent areas in Mesa, or partnering on regional parks.
- Implement the **Regional Emergency Medical Service** contract.
- Increase **Mesa and Valley visibility**, for example, through regional and national advertising, and creating opportunities for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway.
- Work regionally to expand **broadband and Wi-Fi access** opportunities for residents and important anchor institutions. (QL#9)