

REGINA ROMERO

Tucson City Council - Ward I

Westside : Southside : Downtown

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A MESSAGE FROM VICE MAYOR ROMERO

MARCH 21, 2013

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Spring is approaching and that means it's time to start this year's budget discussions. Being discussed alongside this year's budget are some smart and well researched proposals to change the civilian pension system, which will have big implications on our annual employee costs.

We will need to make some difficult decisions this year, but with the support of our great staff and the community, we will be certain to settle on common sense solutions that work for everyone. Read on to learn more about the budget schedule, and what's happening in Tucson:

- FY 14 Budget Calendar
- City of Tucson Pension System
- Plan Tucson
- Cesar Chavez Holiday Coalition
- Arizona Department of Transportation — 5 Year Plan
- Employee Spotlight: Women in Government!
- Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Reinvestment
- Honoring Henry "Hank" Oyama
- El Rio Neighborhood Center Health Fair
- Save the Date: Fiesta Grande
- City of Tucson Resource Directory



In Community,

Regina Romero

FY 14 BUDGET DISCUSSION CALENDAR

Many cities nationwide continue dealing with difficult budget decisions in the aftermath of the great recession. Look out for my note on the budget and my priorities for fiscal year 2014 which will be out to you soon. For now, here is a calendar of budget actions to be taken by Mayor and Council:

- March 19 — Study session discussion of special revenue funds
- March 27 — Study session discussion of public safety & parks and recreation
- April 9 — Study session discussion on capital improvements and deferred maintenance needs
- April 16 — Study session discussion of city manager's recommendations for FY14 budget
- April 23 — Public hearing on FY 14 budget
- May 7 — Adoption of tentative budget
- May 21 — Public hearing on FY 14 tentative budget & special meeting for M&C adoption
- June 11 — Adoption of FY 14 property tax levies

POLICY MATTERS — EVENTS — NEIGHBORHOODS

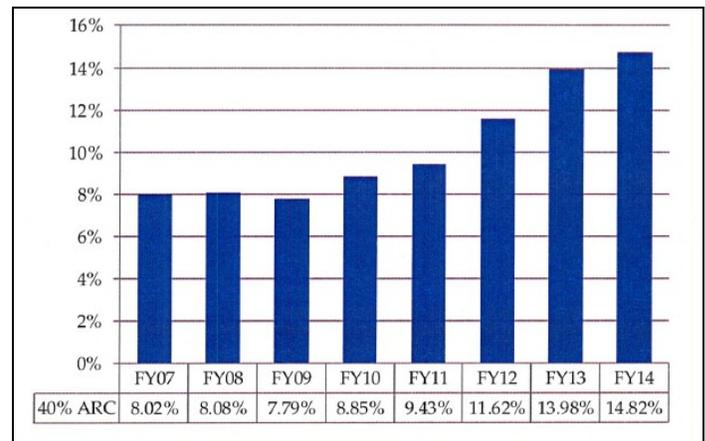
CITY OF TUCSON PENSION SYSTEM

On Wednesday, March 27th, Mayor & Council will consider recommended changes to the civilian pension system for city employees known as the Tucson Supplemental Retirement System (TSRS).

Since the recession of the early 2000's, public pensions have been hit hard, and costs to municipalities have been growing steadily every year to offset those market losses. The most recent economic downturn compounded these challenges, threatening the retirement benefits of millions of police officers, teachers, and public servants nationwide.

Here in Tucson, these rising costs led to changes in the TSRS plan in 2006 and again in 2011 (the TSRS fund is for civilian employees, public safety has a unique plan — PSPRS—which is governed by the state). These changes created several tiers of city employees with dramatically different contribution rates and benefits.

This means that employees hired before 2006 are paying **5%** of their salary to the fund, while employees hired after 2006 currently pay nearly **14%** of each paycheck toward the benefit. Newer employees — nearly 1/3 of our workforce — are essentially *subsidizing* the retirement benefits of past workers at nearly **triple** the rate of pre-2006 employees.



Increasing TSRS Member contribution rates at 40%

Not only is this arrangement unfair, but it is decreasing Tucson's competitive hiring edge.

I unequivocally support the recommended changes to the TSRS plan, which will immediately bring down annual costs for employees and the city. In 2011 I fought to maintain a higher benefit rate for new employees, which offset some plan cuts and ensured a stronger nest egg for workers. However, new hires are still effectively earning far less than their colleagues, and this is affecting our ability to attract the best and brightest employees.

The TSRS board has put forward some solid proposals that would modify the plan and bring down employee and employer costs. They include **extending the amortization period of the pension fund from 15 - 20 years** and **having employees pay a portion of their normal costs.**

The board has recommended extending the amortization period of the fund from 15 to 20 years. Currently the City has a 15 year amortization period on our TSRS fund (most public agencies have a 20-30 year period). Shifting to a 20 year period (like a home mortgage, for example) will spread out and bring down annual costs, while still keeping the organization in a conservative fiscal position.

In addition, the board recommended having employees pay a portion of their normal costs. The normal costs are the costs of the actual retirement benefit employees accrue within their tier. This change shifts "legacy" costs away from new employees and is funded by savings in the extended amortization period.

The financial experts on the TSRS board have done a great job researching options for the pension fund and proposing a fair and equitable win / win for employees and the city. I have reviewed the scenarios presented and agree with their recommendation.

POLICY MATTERS — EVENTS — NEIGHBORHOODS

PLAN TUCSON PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Tucson is here! Check out the draft at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/plantucson/draft>

Arizona state law requires municipalities to adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan for the development of the municipality, and that this plan be re-adopted or re-drawn every ten years and approved by voters. Plan Tucson will serve as the City of Tucson's general plan and guiding document, and focuses on priorities for developing our physical, economic, and social environments.



Take a look at the Plan Tucson draft and share your feedback online, by phone, or at a public hearing. Check out the website for staff feedback to comments and inquiries that have already come in.

The next opportunity to attend a public hearing will be at the Planning Commission Meeting:

Wednesday, April 3, 2012 — at or after 6pm

Pima Community College District Office, Building C, Community Rm 105, 4905 E. Broadway

CESAR CHAVEZ HOLIDAY COALITION

It's Cesar Chavez Week! The **Cesar Chavez Holiday Coalition** has coordinated a conference of workshops within TUSD. Presenters will speak to students about the legacy and spirit of Cesar Chavez and his movement for social justice. Here's a picture of my chief of staff Diana Rhoades leading a workshop at White Elementary in Ward 1.



There will be a reception to celebrate Cesar Chavez featuring **Congressman Raul Grijalva** & attorney / activist

Isabel Garcia this Saturday, March 23rd from 6 - 9pm at Raices Taller - 218 E. 6th St.

Cesar's birthday is March 31st, we need a Cesar Chavez holiday to honor this Arizona born hero!

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION — FIVE YEAR PROGRAM

The Arizona Department of Transportation has put out its tentative five year program, which looks at major projects and capital improvements over the next five fiscal years. **The State Transportation Board will consider all public comments received by May 17th.**

In the larger jurisdictions of Phoenix and Tucson, the metropolitan planning organization works to prioritize funding allocations for projects within the region. I hope constituents will take some time to look over the plan and request that **improvements to Interstate - 19 be classified as a priority.** This heavily utilized corridor has seen low levels of investment over time, and the safety and congestion issues need to be made a priority. Suggestions made in the **PAG** comments section will go straight to our regional partners to address the improvements we need to see. Please make a comment today!

- Email: FiveYearProgram@azdot.gov
- Online comment form: <http://www.azdot.gov/fiveyearprogram/>
- Telephone: 855-712-8530
- Print and mail the [comment form](#): ADOT 5 Year Program, 1655 West Jackson, MD 126F, Phoenix, AZ 85007

POLICY MATTERS — EVENTS — NEIGHBORHOODS

CITY OF TUCSON EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: BECKY FLORES



Becky Flores - Housing & Community Development

This month, The Pima County / Tucson Women's Commission celebrated International Women's Day and honored Women in Government for the third year in a row. Many women were recognized for all their hard work and dedication towards the City of Tucson.

One stellar woman who won both a women in government award AND a women in labor award last month was a standout city employee, **Becky Flores**. Becky works in the Housing and Community Development department within Neighborhood Resources. She helps with neighborhood planning, cleanups, activities, newsletters, and more. She is an invaluable resource to the organization and all residents and was recently



With Pima County Supervisor Richard Elias and several of our amazing women in government!

honored with a "Women in Labor" award as well as the "Sisterhood" award" for her work supporting Plan Tucson within her department.

Congratulations Becky! Thank you for all your hard work, you have been a great asset to our community and to the City of Tucson!

DUNBAR SPRING NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT PROJECT

On Saturday, March 9th **Dunbar Spring** celebrated the completion of their neighborhood reinvestment project! With the support of Pima County and the City of Tucson, they worked extremely hard to put together an extensive water harvesting infrastructure, native vegetation, traffic circles, chicanes, neighborhood art, and more. Congratulations on the success of working hard for the betterment of your community! Take a walk through their neighborhood to see what great improvements can be done through getting organized!



THANK YOU MARY COLLINS!



The City of Tucson will greatly miss Mary Collins, who was a trusted and valued employee at the Tucson Department of Transportation for 10 years and in the City for many more.

We wish you the best on your retirement in Michigan, Mary. Happy fishing!



POLICY MATTERS — EVENTS — NEIGHBORHOODS

HONORING A TUCSON LEGEND: MR. HENRY “HANK” OYAMA

It is with great sadness that I share with you the news that **Henry “Hank” Oyama** passed away yesterday. Hank was the first individual successfully challenged Arizona’s interracial marriage ban in 1959 after the state of Arizona told him he could not marry his high school sweetheart, Mary Ann Jordan. The law was designed to keep them apart because she was white and he was of Japanese descent.

Hank has built an amazing legacy in the Old Pueblo. He grew up speaking Spanish and English in the barrios of Tucson, and his family for a time was housed in the Japanese internment camps. Hank later went on to serve in the armed forces, and then as a powerful education advocate in our community. He will forever be remembered for his kind manner and his fierce advocacy and courage in fighting for love and against discriminatory anti-miscegenation laws of the era. My love and blessings go out to his family and loved ones... Hank, you will be missed!



FIESTA GRANDE: SAVE THE DATE

It's that time of year again... Save the date for Barrio Hollywood's Annual **Fiesta Grande** celebration! This year the event will be Saturday, April 13th & Sunday, April 14th and includes music, food, a car show, carnival rides, and vendors on Grande between St. Mary's & Speedway.

FREE HEALTH FAIR @ EL RIO NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER!

Join us for this annual tradition: The El Rio Neighborhood Center and the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy students are teaming up for the **FREE Health & Safety Fair!**

A promotional graphic for the Health & Safety Fair. It features logos for Tucson Parks and Recreation, The University of Arizona College of Pharmacy, and the El Rio Neighborhood Center. The text includes the event name, date (Saturday, March 23rd, 2013), time (10:00am to 1:00pm), location (El Rio Neighborhood Center, 1390 W. Speedway Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85745), and the fact that it is free to the public. There is also a small photo of a woman being examined by a student.

The event will be open to the public & held on **March 23, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.** and will focus on providing free health services and information to the community. There will be free screenings for asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, hearing, vision, and body fat. There will also be goody bags & raffle prizes with over 50 exhibitors providing health information. Spanish translators will be available. Don't miss out on a wonderful learning experience for the whole family!

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City

of

Tucson Resource Directory – 792-CITY (2489), www.tucsonaz.gov

Business Licenses and Information: 791-4566, www.tucsonaz.gov/business

City Manager's Office: 791-4204

City Attorney: 791-4221

City Clerk and City Council Agendas: 791-4213, <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>

City Prosecutor: 791-4104

Code Enforcement: (520) 791-5843, Report violations online <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/hcd/code-enforcement>

Community Services: 791-4742

Convention Center: 791-4101

Courts Administrator: 791-4189

Disability Transportation and Services: 791-5409

Downtown Tucson Partnership: 837-6504

Environmental Services (Trash, Household Hazardous Waste, Brush and Bulky), 791-3171

Elections: 884-8683

Event Equipment Rental: 791-5909

Fire Department: 791-4828

Graffiti, 792-2489 – Craffiti@tucsonaz.gov Graffiti on State Property? Call 388-4200

Housing and Community Development: 791-4171

Illegal Dumping: (520) 791-5843

Neighborhoods – Form one? Request a free rolloff? Call 791-4605

Neighborhood Watch - Police Department Community Services Officer – 837-7241

Parks and Recreation: 791-4225

Parking Tickets: 791-4216 103 E. Alameda St. Pay by phone: <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/cwp/>

Planning and Development Services Director: 791-5612

Police (Non-Emergency), 791-4444 – Police Emergency - 911

Pothole Reporting, 791-3154, tdotstreettraffimaint@tucsonaz.gov

Procurement: 791-4217

Recycling, 791-5000, <http://maps.tucsonaz.gov/zoomtucson/>

Senior Citizens Services: Pima Council on Aging – 790-7262

Sewer (Pima County), 740-6609

Small Business Enterprise Program: 791-4593

Street Lights (report outages - give pole number or address by the light pole)

791-3154 – tdotstreettraffimaint@tucsonaz.gov

Tucson Clean and Beautiful (adopt a park or street to cleanup), 791-3109 – B.J. Cordova

Transportation and Street Maintenance – 791-3154, report potholes, etc. tdotstreettraffimaint@tucsonaz.gov

Voting district? Find your elected officials by entering your address <http://maps.tucsonaz.gov/zoomtucson/>