

Ward V Newsletter

Councilmember Richard Fimbres, 4300 S. Park. (520) 791-4231 Vol 1. / Edit. 5 - August

The Work So Far - By Richard Fimbres

More than eight months have passed since being sworn into office as your Councilmember.

Many events and issues have occurred but as I have said, "when times are tough, Tucsonans roll up their sleeves and come together to solve the problems."

The work has begun and many positive things have happened, some of which includes:

- Balancing the city's \$33.5 million dollar budget shortfall just eight days into office.
- Not laying off any police and fire fighters during the budgetary shortfall discussions.
- Tabling a proposal, during the budgetary shortfall discussions, for a rental tax, which would have put the burden on those who could least afford it.
- Launching of the modern street car construction project to revitalize downtown, providing hundreds of jobs for the work to build the lines.
- Adopting of a comprehensive water policy for Tucson Water.
- Opening of two Quik Trips and four Goodwill locations in the Ward 5 area, providing more than a 100 good paying jobs.
- Groundbreaking of the U of A Bioscience Park project (Kino/36th), with multiple parcels for biotech projects, a hotel, student housing and retail.
- Adopting changes to the Land Use Code dealing with parking space requirements and development overlays, allowing flexibility for people wanting to open new businesses.

Thanks to the efforts of my staff and your Councilmember, the following was accomplished so far:

- Holding Town Hall meetings on:
 1. The budgetary process,
 2. Proposed changes to Tucson's City Charter and,
 3. Proposition 400, the core tax measure on the ballot.
- Encouraging the growth of new businesses by streamlining the Certificate of Occupancy process.
- Helping the City save more money through the adoption of the P-Card purchasing program Bringing in more than \$1-million in revenue and saving the City more than \$2-million by going paperless.
- Preserving the mental health court program.
- Working with the developers and surrounding neighborhoods to get construction going on the Bridges Project at Kino and 36th, starting with the building of a Costco Store, bringing in good paying jobs with great benefits to Ward 5 residents.
- Construction is ongoing, with 50 to 100 Tucsonans working and the groundbreaking for the construction of Costco is on schedule.
- Communicating with constituents of Ward 5, through this newsletter, E-mail and Facebook Page.

Congratulations to Barbara Carino, owner of Garcia's Cleaners, who was just selected by the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as their 2010, Businesswoman of the Year.

She is so deserving of this recognition as she has done so much for our Community. Hope to see you all in November when she receives her award at the Desert Diamond Casino.



Also congratulations to Rudy Molina of LeCave's Bakery, who was nominated for the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Businessman of the Year.

CITY REVIEWING OPTIONS TO ADDRESS PROJECTED FY 2012 BUDGET DEFICIT

At the August 5th meeting of the Core Tax and Permanent Override Review Committee, City directors presented options for implementing additional 15% reductions in their departments. Though the current fiscal year budget is balanced, the City of Tucson is working to address a potential \$51 million deficit for Fiscal Year 2012, which begins July 1, 2011.

Little or no growth in local sales and business tax revenues and a continued decline in the City's portion of state-shared income taxes mean that the General Fund cannot sustain existing service levels. From Fiscal Year 2008 to the Fiscal Year 2011 end projection, these revenues decreased by \$64 million. For the past three fiscal years, the City has used temporary measures to address deficits. One-time measures and restructuring debt are not available options for balancing the Fiscal Year 2012 budget.

The Core Tax Committee, a citizens committee appointed by Mayor and Council, has recommended a five-year, half-cent sales tax for core services that will go before city voters in the November general election. The tax could generate an estimated \$40 million annually. The Committee is also developing a "Plan B," which is recommended alternative options to address the General Fund structural deficit. All City and Committee proposals would go before the Mayor and Council for consideration and approval.

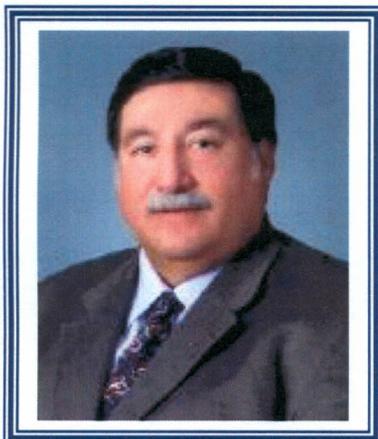
Core services - public safety, transportation, and parks and recreation - are 78% of General Fund expenditures. "Residents have expressed disapproval of any cuts being made with respect to police, fire, roads and parks," said City Manager Mike Letcher. "We are preparing now for a worst-case scenario and asking residents to understand what may happen if the sales tax for core services is not approved."

As an organization, the City has reduced the number of employees to 1988 levels, while Tucson has grown significantly in population and square miles. Current employees are also required to take nine furlough days per year. "There is no alternative other than to cut services and lay off staff in departments that provide core services and in those that support their work," added Letcher. "Hundreds of layoffs in our organization will have a drastic impact to our community for many years to come."

The Core Tax and Permanent Override Review Committee continues to meet and advise the Mayor and Council on options to address continuing City budget deficits. Up-to-date information on its recommendations, members, meeting schedule, minutes, questions and more is online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/coretax>.



Help those who are in need. Give to the Community Food Bank. For more information, call 520-622-0525.



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