

## Ward 6 Staff



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# Ward 6 Newsletter

## TUCSON FIRST

January 22, 2015

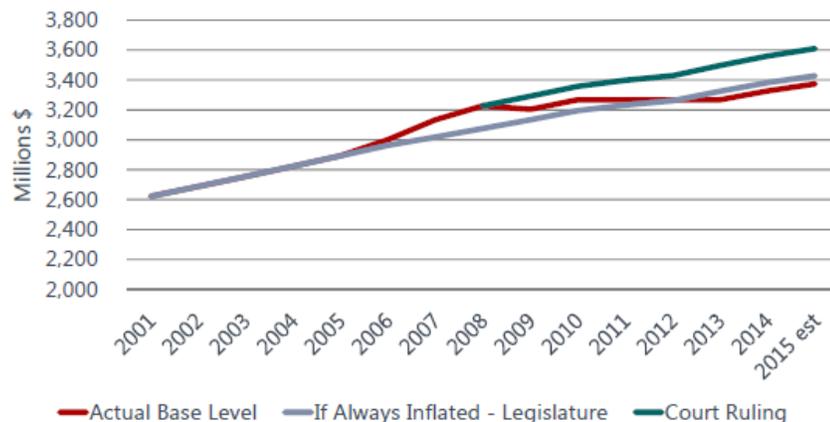
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### State Budget – Incarceration over Education

Governor Biggs, uh, Ducey, announced his budget proposal last Friday. In very general terms, it places incarceration above education, ignores court ordered payments to the K-12 education system, and shifts the burden of balancing the State budget onto Cities, Counties, and School Districts. Here's what the budget proposal has to say about the court ordered payment of over \$300M to the school system:

### K-12 Base Level Inflation Litigation



The Executive Recommendation includes \$74.4 million to adjust the base to the Legislatively-proposed level.



**Important Phone Numbers**

**Tucson Police Department**  
911 or nonemergency  
791-4444

**Water Issues**  
791-4133  
Emergency: 791-4133

**Street Maintenance**  
791-3154

**Graffiti Removal**  
792-2489

**Abandoned Shopping Carts**  
791-3171

**Neighborhood Resources**  
837-5013

**SunTran/SunLink**  
792-9222

**Environmental Services**  
791-3171

**Park Wise**  
791-5071

**Planning and Development Services** 791-5550

**Pima County Animal Control**  
243-5900

**Pima County Vector Control**  
Cockroach: 443-6501  
Mosquito: 740-2760

## Continued: A Message From Steve

Note Governor Biggs/Ducey simply accepts what the State Legislature offered the schools, not the Court ordered \$317M. Is that legal? I guess it is, until it isn't.

The University system is proposed to take a \$75M haircut. Here are those numbers:

### Universities

The Executive recommends university reductions of \$75M, distributed on an enrollment basis.

University	Amount (millions \$)	% Total Revenue
Arizona State University	40.3	1.7%
Northern Arizona University	13.1	2.4%
Arizona University	21.6	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75.0</b>	

It'd be nice if he even knew what UA's name was, but hey, we're south of Maricopa County, so that's not important. UA President Hart was very gracious in responding to the draft proposed budget. Here's text from a memo she issued the day the budget proposal came out:

*Governor Ducey has a difficult job before him. Given the slow pace of the economic recovery in Arizona and increased needs, Arizona faces more years of financial constraints.*

*The University of Arizona is part of the solution. We are educating our students for the next generation of jobs, some of which do not exist today, and our research is helping to build a varied and vital economy for Arizona.*

*We will be taking the next several days to determine what we would have to do to meet the governor's budget and what we would recommend. Whatever we do we will focus on decisions that advance the University of Arizona's core mission and qualities to maximize the benefit to the state of Arizona. We will reduce peripheral activities and protect our core, paying particular attention to academic quality and student services. We will move with even greater energy to develop partnerships like the pending Banner Health relationship, more activities under the auspices of Tech Launch Arizona, more business and industry partnerships, and increased philanthropy.*

*These tough decisions will not be easy, but it is not easy for anyone. We all understand and appreciate that these tough decisions cannot be without consequences. All Arizonans will need to have serious discussions about what the long-term structural solutions look like. This will alter our course and reduce the field of liberty in which we make decisions*



**Important Phone Numbers**

Senator John McCain (R)  
520-670-6334

Senator Jeff Flake (R)  
520-575-8633

Congresswoman Martha McSally (R)  
(2<sup>nd</sup> District)  
(202) 225-2542

Congressman Raul Grijalva (D)  
(3<sup>th</sup> District)  
520-622-6788

Governor Doug Ducey (R)  
602-542-4331  
Tucson office:  
628-6580

Mayor Jonathan Rothschild  
791-4201

ZoomTucson Map  
<http://maps.tucsonaz.gov/zoomTucson/>

about the future structure and operations of the University of Arizona. In short, we will be reshaping the future for outcomes — not just expenditures — as we will not conduct business as usual.

Taking \$75M from the economic driver of the three major metro areas in the State doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me. And there's that pesky State Constitution provision that states:

*Section 6. The university and all other state educational institutions shall be open to students of both sexes, and the instruction furnished shall be as nearly free as possible.*

Reducing State support by that amount will fall to the students. Already tuition is over \$10K annually for an in-State kid (parents). That's not nearly free.

The localities area also downstream from the Governor's proposed budget. Here's the impact on us:

## Local Government Impacts

	FY 2016		FY 2017	
	Cities and Towns	Counties	Cities and Towns	Counties
TPT	6.5	10.1	6.5	10.1
DOR Appropriation Shift	(8.2)	(5.9)	(8.2)	(5.9)
Eliminate direct payments	0.0	(1.7)	0.0	(1.7)
25% DJC Contribution	0.0	(12.0)	0.0	(12.0)
Maintaining DPS Funding	0.0	0.0	(16.0)	(14.0)
TPT Implementation*	<u>(2.9)</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total (millions \$)	\$(4.6)	\$(9.5)	\$(17.7)	\$(23.5)

We're still sorting out how that \$4.6M reduction to Cities and Towns will affect our budget, but check out the hit to the County. Much of that is in the form of increased jail costs. Next fiscal year, they're going to have to find nearly \$25M in new dollars if the draft budget is approved. It's guaranteed that will impact the Cities and Towns even further – and your property taxes. It's even more of a reason we have to sort out the personality distractions that are keeping us from working well with Pima County.

I continue to suggest we should have quarterly joint City Council/Board of Supervisors meetings so we can work on these issues together.

Not everybody took a financial hit, though. Instead of discussing sentencing reform and reducing the number of inmates headed to jail (a huge cost to both the State and the County), the budget suggests a Request for Proposals from the Department of Corrections to fund an additional 3,000 medium security beds, an increase in the DOC healthcare budget of over

\$8M, and shifting \$12M in justice system costs for juveniles over to Counties. The private prison industry, made up of firms such as GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America, will benefit. They make a profit by cherry-picking the types of inmates they'll accept and make the State cover hidden costs such as processing release paperwork, training drug-sniffing dogs, and handling the high-risk prisoners. They also make huge campaign contributions. That's a whole other discussion, though.

Here large are the projected budget deficits he was trying to address:

## How Big is the Problem?

	FY 2015	FY 2016*	FY 2017	FY 2018
Shortfall (millions \$)	(\$159.6)	(\$533.7)	(\$929.0)	(\$1,133.3)

Some of the revenue the Governor is proposing comes in the form of a "fee" for auto registrations. That's supposed to increase by about \$7 per motorist with a net to the State of over \$35M. Note, it's a 'fee,' not a 'tax'. The fee charged to hospitals to help fund expanded medical costs under the Affordable Care Act is called by the Biggs Legislature a 'tax.' It's being challenged in court. The motorist cost increase though is a 'fee'. That's therefore legal – and you decide whether or not it's ideologically consistent.

Local School Districts are being asked to trim 5% in 'administrative costs.' Sounds pretty harmless until you understand that included in those costs are things such as Bond indebtedness, paying utility bills, paying for the operation and maintenance of the District transportation system, librarians, I.T. support, and counselors.

And tourism marketing dollars are being reduced by over \$4M.

Cut education, increase jail funding, cut tourism, and increase a 'fee' to motorists. Embedded in that sentence is how this administration prioritizes things in this State.

I gave this some space here because right now it's a draft budget. If you have issues with it, you need to contact your State legislators and let them know not just what you find objectionable about this, but ideas for some realistic alternatives. We will be dealing with the fallout in our own budget talks, in our relationships with the County, and the UA will have to find a way to avoid losing significant research dollars and related staff while absorbing a \$21M hit. Like I said, it's some peoples' priorities.

### **Infill Development**

Ok, onto some immediately Ward 6 stuff.

At Wednesday's M&C meeting, we were asked to approve the Plat for this parcel. The words 'better late than never' come to mind. As you can see, both structures are fully framed and they're working on electrical in the interiors. They're located at 2600 E. Lee –

both are over 2,000 sq/ft, and both have 4 bedrooms. A contributing historic structure was demolished to make way for these two houses, and our Planning Department indicated “triple expedite” on the permitting forms. That was to accommodate the developer wanting to get in the ground while we were still putting our Impact Fee rules into place.



Until this got to us on Wednesday, there was no engagement with the Ward Office or the Blenman-Elm neighborhood leadership relative to this project. That, despite the fact that I brought to staff’s attention this owner has on-going issues with houses he’s renting right down the street. Resolving one set of problems before signing onto more would have been a nice touch. I understand that we cannot legally hold a Plat approval to compel action on another property, but we’ve had no response on either one, so the request that came to us on the Wednesday agenda felt out of bounds.

I went online and found on the PRO site (Property Research Online) the permitting forms that have been signed and processed between the City and the builder. What’s not online is a demolition permit or any documentation that addressed the lost contributing historic structure. One form that is online, signed by the owner, says “In Accordance with ARS Title 32” the structures are “NOT INTENDED FOR SALE OR RENT WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER COMPLETION.” (Caps on original form.) Here’s an excerpt from the original:

**EXEMPTION FROM LICENSING**

I am exempt from Arizona Contractors’ license laws on the basis of the licensing exemptions contained in A.R.S. 32-1121A.

I am the Owner/Builder of the property. I will follow in strict compliance with 32-1121A.5. The property is intended for sole occupancy by the owner, not intended for occupancy by members of the public, owner’s employees or business visitors. The structures are NOT INTENDED FOR SALE OR RENT WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER COMPLETION.

Curious as to how one person could be building two 2,000 sq/ft, 4 bedroom structures on a single lot and also sign such a statement, I stopped by and chatted with the workers. They confirmed that the goal is to get the houses done in time to rent them out for the fall 2015 UA semester. Evidently the form shown above relates to taxes. It’s not a zoning form. But again, some communication would be nice.

We voted to continue study of this item to ensure the proposed Plat meets all appropriate zoning rules.

This was not the way to build trust in the community. That this came during the same meeting in which we talked about a significant set of changes to how we manage infill only served to raise the issue of process to a much higher level of scrutiny than it might otherwise have been.

Oh, and in case there was any doubt as to what’s intended with the Plat we were asked to

approve, here's what this builder has constructed just two doors down from what's shown above:

Identical. What you can't see is the single family residence sandwiched in between these and the ones about to be finished. We have a similarly vague demolition going on in Palo Verde neighborhood where the demolition permits that are online don't match up to what's being seen on the ground. Input is being skipped.



Just last week we hosted a meeting with the Planning folks related to the PRO site and what information people would find valuable to have on it. Current information would be good, for starters.

### Infill Incentive District



On Wednesday we held both a study session discussion and a public hearing on the Infill Incentive District. For those not wholly familiar, that's the set of policies we're going to adopt that will govern what we incentivize when it comes to continued downtown development. In this case, the incentive district comprises much of the area between campus and downtown. The development is 'infill,' and we're providing 'incentives' for some things in that general area – thus the Infill Incentive District.

The area was divided into several sub-districts. I'm going to highlight areas where there appeared to be some significant disagreement and not outline the rest. The draft of the Ordinance is over 100 pages long, so you should thank me for this Reader's Digest version.

The areas I will speak to are building heights, how buildings are massed on their parcels, traffic/parking, and what uses are being allowed. But first, a bit about the process we followed to get to this point.

This whole process began back in 2013 when we initiated the IID amendment. It had a built in sunset date (this month) to allow us to make revisions based on what we learned along the way. A series of public meetings began late in '13, continued through last year, and now we're here with a draft of their recommended policy changes. There were Planning Commission hearings, subcommittee meetings, a citizen's task force which was formed to inform the process, and we've had M&C reviews.

The draft has been a moving target because staff has been doing their best to accommodate the many diverse viewpoints. I've spent countless hours trying to keep up with the changes, have met with dozens of people and groups, and quite honestly I was ready to move forward on Wednesday. The Mayor and Council wanted more time, so we'll bring this back in February and hopefully put new rules into place then.

The IID is an optional set of rules for development. If a project team prefers, they can build using the existing zoning and work within those regulations. In many cases, what's allowed with the existing zoning is incompatible with surrounding areas. That's why we began working to incentivize more appropriate projects by offering development trade-offs.

Since we weren't allowed to vote on final provisions on Wednesday, but will have to come back next month to do that, I made it clear that we cannot allow issuing permits for the demolition of any structures until the rules of the road are finally implemented. Just because there's no speed limit sign up and in force doesn't mean we can allow a free-for-all during this hiatus. Let's set the rules and then restart the development process. Staff committed to holding the line on a robust plan review while we're in this hiatus period.



There were three of the sub-districts I felt needed some special scrutiny.

One was the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue District.

You're familiar with the Avenue. It's bordered by West University, some of Pie Allen, Ironhorse, and a bit of Dunbar Springs. My concerns were maintaining the character of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue while both offering incentives to some greater density and preserving a buffer to the neighborhoods. To achieve that, we're allowing two stories (30') along the Avenue, up to 60' mid-block to the east and west, and a step-down to 40' along the alleys behind. In addition, because some of the area is designated Historic, the height of the historic structures caps what's going to be allowed. With those protections, I felt we landed on a good balance between increased density and preservation. That one wasn't tough.

The next area was the El Presidio sub-district. This is a Ward 1 issue, but the challenges it presents point out how the underlying zoning is always a necessary part of any incentives being discussed. One parcel of the sub-district is across the street from El Charro and is right now a parking lot that's owned by the IDA (Industrial Development Authority). There are also three other parcels to the east and north of that lot. The El Presidio Historic District is immediately adjacent to these parcels.

The challenge here was to provide the incentives to build but to balance that against what would be allowed under the current zoning (which is much more intensive than is compatible with the adjacent neighborhood). The allowed uses run up to 160' in height on some of the parcels. The challenge was to reduce that massing, but offer other parts of the deal to entice builders to choose less height in exchange for other perks. Remember, the IID is optional, so we'll see in time whether or not we've found that balance.

I would support reducing allowable heights where we'd be able to use things such as reduced parking requirements and some new allowable uses to offset what the underlying zoning would allow. Not everybody will be happy with any compromise, and the dialogue

about this area will continue between now and February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Another concern, common to all of the sub-districts, related to traffic increases. In the draft of the IID, we had language that suggested developers consider things such as ride share programs, bike share programs, giving price incentives to residents who require parking in one of their garages, and shared parking arrangements between multiple uses. I asked that those criteria all be made something a developer has to address – not implement, but at least provide in their development plan a narrative that touches on those types of options.

The third sub-district I wanted to give special attention to was the Warehouse Triangle. That area is bordered by about Stone, 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, 6<sup>th</sup> St, and what will eventually be Downtown Links. Everybody with whom I spoke agreed this was the area in which we should ‘go for it’ with respect to increased density. The concerns were over allowable uses – specifically, student towers.



In our Land Use categories, student housing is called a Group Dwelling. In order to use the IID as an incentive to build a Group Dwelling, the project must include four or more unrelated people living together in a structure that’s over two stories tall. As drafted, unless the proposed development was within 300’ of a residential setting, student housing meeting that definition could be approved administratively.

Based on the experience we’ve had with large scale student housing, I wanted to see M&C be the final arbiter of approval. I have proposed that we eliminate the 300’ limit so any Group Dwelling wanting to develop using the IID standards will require our approval. That’s not what the development community specializing in student towers wanted, but it reflects the reality of life in the area after towers are built. It forces a more robust dialogue than an administrative approval process.

My concern with a few things drove me to ask for the elimination of the 300’ limit. One is that we are going to reach the saturation point for student towers. When we do, we’ll be faced with finding alternate uses for structures that were not built to be transformed into condos, apartments, or other residential applications. We don’t need any more vacant, tall housing structures around downtown than we already have. I was also concerned that the 300’ limit does not accurately reflect the fact that these towers create a negative impact on residential quality of life further removed from the building than that. The larger discussion will allow concerns to be addressed. And finally, it’s common for an out-of-State ownership group to be behind the student housing towers. They have no investment in our community at-large, other than the financial one they put into the project. We’re seeing the results of that in behavioral challenges that continue to exist at some of these towers.

One general item that I also felt needed to be addressed from an early draft was the make-up of the Design Review Committee (DRC). That’s a group formed to advise our planning people on design elements specific to the exterior of the buildings. An early draft limited the membership on the DRC to three people, selected by the City Manager. The appoint-

ments could include the City's Design Professional, an architect, a landscape architect, a contractor, and one member representing 'all neighborhood associations within the IID.' I asked for two changes to that. First, all five of those groups should be included, but with respect to the final member, that person should represent the neighborhood that's most directly affected by the proposed project. Let's have the people who have to live with the project at the table during design. We achieve those goals by including also some ad hoc members who will reflect stakeholder concerns on a project-specific basis.

As I noted above, I was ready to act on the draft with the changes I've described. Since others weren't, we'll reschedule this item for adoption for February. The process has been long, and it has been thorough. Staff deserves credit for working through the many issues this item presented. Thanks are due to the community members who have invested their time and effort in working for a compromise solution to how we keep the momentum going relative to development, but tweak what we had to reflect lessons learned. We set another sunset date so we can continue to review and revise the document as we see how it's working.

To that point ('how it's working'), I want to thank Bill DuPont for passing along some valuable links to 'defensible space design guidelines.' Those are standards by which communities promote development in the built environment that incorporate amenities meant to enhance the safety of the public. The guidelines are based on research that indicates the decision to engage criminal behavior is influenced by cues as to perceived risk. You've heard about keeping the landscaping in front of your house trimmed low so people can't hide behind it. That's just one simple example. Building with the thought in mind of improving the ability of the public to watch the street, and encouraging the presence of people on the street, are examples of what they call 'natural guardianship.' I'm hopeful that the development we're incentivizing with the standards included in this new IID will be done with a mind to creating an urban environment that builds safety by design. At the very least, we should keep the principles inherent in that research front and center when the DRC looks at proposed projects.

### **TUSD Schools**

A final area we addressed that impacts trust out in the community is how we participate in managing the development of schools that are shut down. While I support expediting permitting processes, that cannot happen at the expense of allowing legitimate stakeholder voices to be heard early in the conversation.

In the past year, I've worked hard to establish a dialogue between the Ward Office, TUSD, and our planning people when it comes to repurposing schools that have been shut down. We've had meetings to ease concerns over proposed uses for Dodge, Townsend, Duffy, Ft Lowell, and over the location of solar arrays at Blenman and other non-Ward 6 sites. In each case, the issue was a failure to communicate intentions, plans, and timelines. Each of those is now in the heads of planning for both the City and the District. Any incentives we offer for development of schools that are shut down will include respecting that as a part of the process.

It was mentioned in the Star that we'd like to see affordable single family residential development on the school sites. What wasn't mentioned though is that some of the sites' under-

lying zoning allows for more intensive uses. Identifying the intentions of developers early in the process so residents can share concerns over height, massing, traffic, and other issues is what cannot be lost in any incentive package.

Also, why would we not offer the expedited review to anybody wanting to engage in infill development? Why limit it to just school sites? As long as we're involving stakeholders in the use and design discussions at an appropriately early time in the process, there's no reason plan review should drag out the process.

I applaud the goal of moving more quickly on repurposing school sites. Remember, though, that the City doesn't own the buildings. When the District decides to move on a site, I'm going to require the involvement of groups who are impacted by the proposals, and I will support shortening the plan review timelines as a way to fill vacant buildings with appropriate uses.

The work of rebuilding trust is too hard to allow it to be lost over our desire to speed up processes.

### **Transit and Eclipse**



Take a breather for a minute.

I had a lab story last week – need to share another one this time.

I used to have a couple of pups who I trained to play on playground equipment with the kids. They'd run up the stairs of slides and slide down, hop those cement tubes you see on playgrounds, and generally act like humans.

Eclipse is a black lab who lives, works, and plays up in Seattle, Washington. He plays in a dog park that's about four bus stops away from his house. He knows that. In fact, he knows which stop to get off the bus at in order to arrive at the park.

Eclipse's owner sometimes gets busy on his phone or smoking a cigarette when the bus arrives. So, at times like that, Eclipse boards the bus alone, hops off at the correct stop, and his owner catches up with him later.

What does that have to do with Ward 6? Nothing. I just liked the story and wanted to share it.

### **Graffiti Protective Coatings / TEP**

A while back, I brought representatives from Graffiti Protective Coatings (GPC) together with TEP administration and some leaders from Ward 6 neighborhoods. The purpose was to try to kick off some collaboration between TEP and GPC that would speed up the reaction time to abating graffiti tags. Last week I spoke with the head of GPC, Lupe Mercado, about progress they were making.

I'm pleased to report that the two companies have almost finalized the terms for a 30-day pilot project during which GPC will be doing graffiti clean-up on TEP equipment. It

won't be on power boxes, for legitimate safety reasons, but power poles will certainly be a part of the mix.

GPC was good enough to extend some favorable rates to TEP. That was the tipping point in moving the idea forward. Thanks to both of those groups for keeping at it. As we heard on Wednesday, graffiti continues to be a significant blight on the City and anything we can do to foster partnerships such as this will be positive steps. I'll share more of the details once they've dotted all the 'i's' in the agreement.

In the meantime, I've reached out to Century Link to see if they'll also engage on a pilot project similar in nature to what TEP has done.

# FEATSAZ

## Festivals and Events Association of Tucson and Southern Arizona

### **International Festival and Events Association (IFEA)**

This is a big deal - Tucson has been selected for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary national convention of the IFEA. It will be a six day affair and bring in over 800 room-nights of visitors.

This success is largely attributable to the work of both Visit Tucson and Tucson's own Festival and Events Association of Tucson and Southern Arizona (FEATSAZ). They did the meet and greet thing with the selection committee and were able to demonstrate that Tucson is a huge civic event community. Here's a comment I submitted for their Press Release announcing the event:

*What a feather in the cap of FEATSAZ and Visit Tucson to be selected by the International Festival and Events Association for their 60th anniversary national convention. Civic events bring families, friends and entire communities together to share the important things that bond us. Tucson Meet Yourself, the All Soul's Procession, 2nd Saturdays, and many more speak to the unifying, as well as the economic benefits civic events bring to the table. Tucson will be the focal point for this important convention. The message of needing to step up our game in support of events can't be missed by Regional policymakers.*

The JW Marriott Starr Pass will host the educational portion of the convention from September 18<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup>, and the convention and expo will follow on September 21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup>. Visit Tucson and FEATSAZ staff will make sure there's a road show included in the event so downtown gets plenty of attention during the week.

I opened this newsletter with some commentary on the Ducey budget proposal. One portion of that is reducing our tourism funding. Down here in Pima County, we have groups who recognize the folly in that penny-wise/dollar-foolish decision. Thanks to those who have continued to bring the message that civic events are part of our local economic strength. If you're involved at all with a community event, or would like to be, you can by going to [featsaz.com](http://featsaz.com). There are plenty of ways to connect.

### Transit Items

Last week, our Independent Audit and Performance Commission (IAPC) finished their report on our 5-year transit plan. Here's a table that shows what they project to be costs our General Fund will be facing if we make no changes:

REVISED FORECAST OF GENERAL FUND CONTRIBUTION/INVESTMENT IN TRANSIT SYSTEM					
\$\$s in Millions					
	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
General Fund Contribution/Investment Per Five Year Forecast Presented to Mayor and Council in June 2014	\$ 45.2	\$ 44.4	\$ 43.8	\$ 44.8	\$ 48.8
IAPC Recommended Adjustments - NET	4.0	4.8	4.8	5.2	5.2
<b>Adjusted General Fund Contrib/Investment</b>	<b>\$ 49.2</b>	<b>\$ 49.2</b>	<b>\$ 48.6</b>	<b>\$ 50.0</b>	<b>\$ 54.0</b>

In arriving at those figures, they made some adjustments in our current method of forecasting costs. Those included adding the debt service we're paying on the COPs for the streetcars to transit costs (fair – that debt service comes from the General Fund), fare revenue assumptions were reduced since the M&C did not implement any fare increases, and any savings we could have achieved through implementing the Comprehensive Operational Analysis recommendations were removed since M&C didn't vote to do them.

Another reason the IAPC reduced projected farebox revenues was they didn't accept the 2% growth estimates. While all of this is necessarily speculation, this is one where we might gain back some of what the Commission is pulling out from their analysis. All of us on the M&C have urged a more aggressive marketing plan for the system, including expanding the options for buying access to it. Here's an example that we're rolling out right now.

On a trial basis through May, you can buy a 7-day bus/streetcar pass for \$13 if you load it onto your SunGo card. If you're starting a new card, it'll cost \$15. The 7-day meter doesn't begin until you use it for the first time, and you'll have unlimited rides for that full week, including transfers. Here's where you can get the pass:

- Tucson Visitor Center, 100 S. Church Ave., (520) 770-2142
- Hotel Congress, 311 East Congress St., (520) 622-8848
- Marriott University Park's gift shop, 880 E. 2nd St., (520) 792-1176
- Sun Tran Special Services Office, 35 W. Alameda St., (520) 791-4100
- Sun Tran Administrative Office, 3910 N. Sun Tran Blvd., (520) 206-8840
- Arizona Riverpark Inn, 777 W Cushing St., (520) 239-2300
- Tucson Convention Center, 100 S Church Ave., (520) 770-2142
- At Ticket vending machines at all three City of Tucson transit centers: Ronstadt, Laos, and Tohono

You can also get it online at <https://www.suntran.com/sungo/welcome.html>.

That's just one example of how we can improve our marketing of the transit system. The Transit Task Force is working with staff right now to come up with others.

We do not have \$50M in our General Fund to allocate to transit. I'm hoping that between our own efforts to get increased ridership and some creative regional thinking, we can come up with ways to mitigate the projections we see in the IAPC modeling.

#### **Ronstadt Transit Center RFP**

Another quick transit and budget related note – on Friday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, there will be a stakeholder meeting related to the issuance of the RTC development process. The meeting will be held down at City Hall in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor meeting room. Our Office of Integrated Planning will lead the presentation.

The purpose of the meeting will be to review the steps that will be included in this phase of the process, as well as to discuss the contents of the RFP. The meeting will largely be informational, but as with any of these meetings, I'd encourage you to go and participate in case you've got items that you want to at least be considered as the project process continues to unfold.

The meeting will begin at 11:30 am and is scheduled to run until 1pm. If you'd like to get more information on this, you can contact Rebecca at [Rebecca.Ruopp@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Ruopp@tucsonaz.gov).

#### **Pima County Bond Advisory Committee Meeting**

Another development-related item is the upcoming Bond Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting. On Friday at 8am over at the Riverpark Inn (777 W Cushing St.), the BAC will be meeting to talk about a bunch of possible bond items. I'll mention three of them here.

The Pedestrian Safety/Walkability item will be back for another presentation. This is the one the County Administrator wants to shift into the Neighborhood Reinvestment proposal, which is appropriate for neighborhood-scale walkability improvements, but not the kind of collecting and connecting projects that the Ped Safety item contemplates. He's also taking the position that some RTA money could help to fund portions of what's included in the Bond item scope. RTA funding is intended for arterials – generally not projects on collectors – and neither bikeways nor important pedestrian amenities such as shade, landscaping or beautification would qualify. Many of us believe this should be a stand-alone item for voters to decide on, not conflated with others.

The Performing Arts Center item will also be back for discussion. We've got more than a few parties who have expressed an interest in managing the site if Bond dollars can be used to bring it up to code. I've mentioned the Bob Shelton Old Tucson museum artifacts and Picture Arizona. Mr. Huckelberry added the Arizona Theater Company to the list of interested parties. I hear we've had expressions of interest from several others, as well. This is a prime piece of property that has a good future as an economic development driver if we can get the code issues resolved.

Finally, they'll be discussing the I-10/I-19 connection. This is a big deal for our continued promotion of the region as a hub for logistics and transportation. The upcoming Home-Goods development also plays into that discussion. I'm hearing wide support for this Bond item and am glad it's apparently not going to meet resistance.

The issue now will simply be getting Board of Supervisors approval to send a list to the bal-

lot. If they don't have the heart to move this to you for a vote, we might as well stop wasting peoples' time on putting a list together and let individual jurisdictions begin to think about how they might want to address their own project funding needs.

### **Alitas House and Kaimas Foundation**

In last Sunday's Star, Perla Trevizo penned an article about the work being done for migrant families at the Alitas House. It's a midtown residence at which migrant families are being housed overnight while passing through Tucson on their way to a new home. The House is funded by Catholic Community Services and is staffed by a combination of AmeriCorps and the many volunteers who have been working to keep Project Mariposa up and running since we were inundated with families at the bus depot last summer. The work is still going on. There's never a night when the house is sitting empty.

With a grant from the Kaimas Foundation, Alitas House is about to get a bit of a make-over. With \$5,000, I'm working with the Alliance of Construction Trades to get some upgrades made to the place. The sub-contractors can use the work, the families can use the amenities, and Kaimas has stepped up to fund the project.

The Alitas Program is still looking for volunteers to help out at the house. The work is in support of families, mostly women and kids who have been released from Border Patrol detention and are awaiting further status hearings. The work at the house is aimed at assisting them to their next destination. You don't have to be bilingual, but it helps. You'd be doing things such as preparing food, assembling travel bags for cross-country bus trips, helping with local ground transportation, and those sorts of things. You'll also be in a position to listen to many stories these families bring about their trips from south of here.

If you'd like to get involved, contact Galen Hunt @ 591.6390, or send an email to [alitas@ccs-soaz.org](mailto:alitas@ccs-soaz.org). They're doing good work. You'd find it rewarding.

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik  
Council Member, Ward 6  
[Ward6@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:Ward6@tucsonaz.gov)

## **Events and Entertainment**

### **Beat Back Buffelgrass Day**

**Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>**

Buffelgrass invasion is threatening to transform the mostly fireproof and diverse Sonoran Desert into a flammable and impoverished savanna, affecting both natural and urban areas. On Saturday, Jan. 24, hundreds of volunteers will join the fight against this growing environmental problem for the Annual Beat Back Buffelgrass Day. North, South, East or West we have a location near you! Free. Individuals and groups can volunteer at more

than two dozen locations in and around Tucson by registering at <http://www.buffelgrass.org/beat-back-buffelgrass-day-sites>

**Cirque D'Or**, Fox Theatre, 17 W Congress St

**Saturday & Sunday, January 30th-31<sup>st</sup>**

Cirque D'Or is a thrill-a-minute spectacular event that is both electrifying and mesmerizing. Featuring a cast of world champion acrobats, contortionists, and aerial artists – this award-winning spectacle will leave you breathless throughout the action-packed evening. For more information and for tickets, visit [www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org](http://www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org)



**Healthy Heart Day 2015**,

**Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am**

Join the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center for an interactive day of heart-healthy information, screenings and activities. The event includes screenings for blood pressure, glucose, breathing assessment and medication consults with UA College of Pharmacy students. Browse heart-health information tables. Cost: \$35 per person. Register with a friend and receive a \$5 per person discount - \$60 for 2 people. Special student rate: \$15. Includes a light breakfast and healthy lunch. For information, registration, or to view the event schedule, visit <http://heart.arizona.edu/events/2015-02-07/healthy-heart-day-2015>

**Luvia Flemenca**, Rialto Theatre, 318 E Congress St

**Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Featuring La Juerga Flamenco (Spain, Argentina, France, New Mexico) and La Caja Tablao (Arizona, Spain). For more information, visit <http://www.rialtotheatre.com/>

 A composite image for the Tucson Mural Arts Program. The top part features three small photos: a person painting a yellow wall, a woman painting a red wall, and a person painting a green wall. In the center is a red box with the text "TUCSON MURAL ARTS PROGRAM". Below this is a larger photo of many hands holding paint cans. To the right is a grey box with text about the Mural Club.
 

**TUCSON MURAL ARTS PROGRAM**

**Mural Club**  
**Saturday 3 - 6pm**

**Ages: 8 - 18**  
**Dates: January 24 - May 16**  
**Cost: \$20. per session all materials included**

**Location: Citizens Artist Collective, 44 W 6th St,  
Tucson, Arizona 85705**  
**Studio #13 (enter from 9th Ave, near railroad  
tracks, around the corner from the bike shop)**

**520-791-9359 [TMAP@TucsonArtsBrigade.org](mailto:TMAP@TucsonArtsBrigade.org)**

## Ongoing . . . .

**Meet Me at Maynards**, 311 E Congress St (north entrance on Toole)

A social walk/run through the Downtown area

Every Monday, rain or shine, holidays too!

Hotel Congress Check-in begins at 5:15pm.

[www.MeetMeatMaynards.com](http://www.MeetMeatMaynards.com)

**Tucson Botanical Gardens**, 2150 N Alvernon Way

<http://www.tucsonbotanical.org>

**Loft Cinema**, 3233 E Speedway Blvd

[www.loftcinema.com](http://www.loftcinema.com)

**Tucson Museum of Art**, 140 N Main Ave

[www.TucsonMusuemofArt.org](http://www.TucsonMusuemofArt.org)

**Children's Museum Tucson**, 200 S 6<sup>th</sup> Ave

Tuesday - Friday: 9:00am - 5:00pm; Saturdays & Sundays: 10:00am - 5:00pm

[www.childrensmuseumtucson.org](http://www.childrensmuseumtucson.org)

**Arizona State Museum**, 1013 E University Blvd

[www.statemuseum.arizona.edu](http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu)

**Arizona Friends of Chamber Music** Leo Rick Theatre, 260 S Church St

<http://www.arizonachambermusic.org/>

**Arizona Theater Company**, 330 S Scott Ave

<http://www.arizonatheatre.org/>

**Tucson Symphony Orchestra** 260 S. Church Ave

<http://www.tucsonsymphony.org/>

**The Rogue Theatre** at The Historic Y, 300 E University Blvd

<http://www.theroguetheatre.org/main.htm>

**Fox Theatre**, 17 W Congress St

[www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org](http://www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org)

**Rialto Theatre**, 318 E Congress St

<http://www.rialtotheatre.com/>

**Hotel Congress**, 311 E Congress St

<http://hotelcongress.com>

**Jewish History Museum**, 564 S Stone Ave

[www.jewishhistorymuseum.org](http://www.jewishhistorymuseum.org)

**UA Mineral Museum**, 1601 E University Blvd

<http://www.uamineralmuseum.org/>

**Southern Arizona Transportation Museum**, 414 N Toole Ave.

Explore regional transportation history, and see a freight trains passing by, or ring the locomotive bell at the Southern Arizona Transportation Museum every Saturday, year round.

Tuesday – Thursday, Sunday: 1100am - 3:00pm; Friday & Saturdays: 10:00am - 4:00pm

<http://www.tucsonhistoricdepot.org>