



Editor's Insights

Lucinda Smedley • published in the May 2019 issue

We are excited to publish the annual Economic Development issue! With the City of Tucson Mayoral election coming up later this year, this issue includes editorial contributors from the three frontrunner Mayoral candidates, Randi Dorman, Regina Romero and Steve Farley, who are all Democrats. Requests were made of the three other primary election candidates, Frank Konarski (R), Sam Nagy (R) and Denny Crafton (D), however, no contributions were received. As evidenced by the three articles, each candidate has an understanding of economic development and its implications to the region.

An exciting feature of this issue is the cover story contributed by Kathy Prather of Pima JTED. JTED is creating a unique and transformational model of delivering premier Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in Arizona through a partnership with Tucson Unified School District. Through a joint venture between BFL Construction and the Bourn Companies, JTED is breaking ground on a 50,000 SF building in the Innovative Learning Campus at The Bridges. The 2-story building is the first of three buildings in the Campus and will be completed in mid 2020.

A big thanks to all the contributors to this issue including first time contributors and economic development experts Barbra Coffee with the City of Tucson and JJ Johnston with the Town of Oro Valley. We are looking forward to their accomplishments that will greatly contribute to the prosperity of the region. Other fantastic contributors to the issue include Pima County's John Moffatt, the Town of Sahuarita's Victor Gonzalez, Tucson Metro Chamber's Amber Smith, and UA Tech Park's Jessa Turner.

We also wanted to give kudos to the Rio Nuevo Board who continue to leverage the TIF District funds to support transformative projects in Downtown and along Broadway Boulevard. At a recent meeting, the Rio Nuevo Board unanimously voted to restructure its incentives for the Hilton Hotel at Cathedral Square project that will bring nearly 200 more hotel rooms to downtown. At Fayth Hospitality Group's request, the board reduced the tax rebate cap in the agreement in exchange for funds to help pay to move utilities that are near the project. The project will include a 75-room Hampton Inn and a 123-room extended-stay Home2.

Upcoming Event

May 30, 2019, 7–8:30am, Loews Ventana Canyon Resort: Breakfast with the Economist, featuring Dr. George Hammond, Eller's Economic and Business Research Center's Director and Research Professor and Sylvain Leduc, EVP and Director of Research for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Register at www.eller.arizona.edu/breakfast/2019.

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