



## District 2 News

### COUNTY SUPERVISOR **Ramón Valadez**

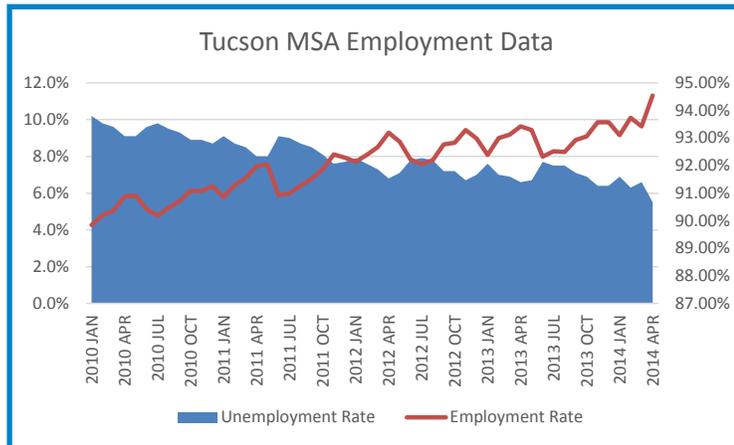
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Summer Edition



### Bringing Jobs to Pima County

As we can see in the chart above, we continue to emerge from the Great Recession and its subsequent slow recovery. Several years ago, Pima County recognized that it must play a much more active role in economic development in the region. Through numerous roundtable discussions with local business leaders, we came to realize that we needed to become better coordinated. After analysis of best and most successful practices and thorough community vetting, we released our economic development blueprint and white paper available at: [http://www.pima.gov/administration/documents/pdfs/PC\\_ED\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2012-10~17.pdf](http://www.pima.gov/administration/documents/pdfs/PC_ED_Action_Plan_2012-10~17.pdf). The basic principles of our plan have been the creation of the Aerospace and Defense Corridor, cooperation and partnership with local economic assets such as the University of Arizona, protecting and growing our local businesses and investing in transportation infrastructure.

We continue to work with Raytheon Missile Systems, the single largest private employer in our region, representing about 10,000 employees and a revenue of \$6,599,000,000. In discussions with Raytheon, we discovered that one of its most needed priorities was the relocation of the Old Hughes Access Road. This relocation not only ensures that Raytheon no longer has to rely on waivers to continue its operations, but additionally paves the way for an expansion to a second runway at Tucson International Airport (TIA). It also protects the Air National Guard unit, 162nd Fighter Wing located at TIA. The project has been authorized and funded by the Pima County Board Supervisors.

One of our greatest success stories is Accelerate Diagnostics. It was very interested in coming to Pima County from Colorado, but we lacked the space to meet its criteria anywhere in the region. So, in exchange for a three-year lease in the Herb Abrams Public Health Center, Accelerate agreed to hire at least 30 new employees at a minimum base salary of \$70,000 within 18 months of the initial lease. It met this goal within the first thirty days. Accelerate has been so successful,

that the leased space has been expanded twice at its own cost. Once the initial three-year reduced-rate lease is complete, it will have the option of a full market rate lease or locating elsewhere in our region leaving the space for another small to mid-size biotech company to lease and grow. Accelerate is a great example of how private companies can work with Pima County.

An area with great potential for economic growth in our region is trade. To ensure we can realize this potential, we must address access issues between the Tucson International Airport, Inland Port and the interstate system. In 2012, Pima County began having regional discussions and also with our Congressional delegation about the creation of the Sonoran Corridor, a trade corridor from I-19 to I-10 granting ease of access to our regional trade infrastructure centers like the TIA, Inland Port, the Aerospace and Defense parks and I-10. Additionally, I had been appointed to the I-11 Corridor Study Committee and we are having preliminary discussions about a trade corridor from Las Vegas to the International Border in Nogales, Arizona, through our region. In the future, I-11 will be an important part of the trade corridor from Canada to Mexico.

### Growing Recreational Opportunities

Having a place for our residents to take advantage of recreational opportunities has been one of my greatest priorities. I led the effort to invest \$6,990,659 in park improvements in District Two.



Santa Rita and Wakefield Skate Parks were funded through the Neighborhood Conservation Program. In both of these cases, parents and neighbors sought a way for youth to positively spend their time and energy in a safe and specifically designed skating venue. Both of these projects were developed and constructed in cooperation and partnership with the City of Tucson. The first – Santa Rita Skate Park – was dedicated in 2009 and the second – Wakefield State Park – was dedicated in 2013. These parks continue to be greatly enjoyed by youth and their families today.

Funds from this program also were used to improve two existing parks. Toumey Park received a variety of improvements including a new playground area, picnic tables, a new barbecue grill, new colored asphalt walking path around the park, and two new drinking fountains. Seventeen speed humps, five speed tables, three traffic circles and a new sidewalk on 16th Street were added to improve ease-of-use and safety around the park. The final product was a more user-friendly, enjoyable and safer park for everyone's enjoyment.



Also receiving funds from the program was Freedom Park. This project was part of the realization of a master plan developed for the 29th Street Coalition by the Drachman Institute. This effort included five neighborhoods; Myers, Naylor, Julia Keen, Alvernon Heights and Roberts. The project consisted of a 3,650 linear-foot lighted asphalt multi-use path, five ramadas with shaded seating area, five fitness stations with fitness equipment, ADA accessible concrete walkway to existing playground, ADA drinking fountain, shade sail structure over existing playground, landscaping and electrical improvements.



Benefiting from General Obligation Bonds, which are specifically dedicated to parks and recreational opportunities, were Thomas Jay Littletown Park and Lincoln Park. Thomas Jay Littletown Park improvements included a new senior league field, new bridge across the Julian Wash, irrigation, restrooms, parking and landscaping. These improvements were in response to demand both from the community for recreational facilities and by leagues for additional sports fields.



The Lincoln Park Softball Field Complex has doubled its capacity with installation of four new softball fields with all of the associated amenities including concessions, restrooms, shaded bleachers and new entry with parking, utilities, irrigation, landscaping, maintenance building and pathways to the existing portion of park. This project is part of the Eastside Sports Complex. At over 400 acres, Lincoln Park is a major regional park within the Tucson Parks and Recreation system.



### [Working to Protect Defense in Pima County](#)

The importance of defense in our community is substantial, particularly in terms of our local economy. Davis Monthan Air Force Base (DMAFB) employs almost 9,000 people and has an economic impact of about \$1.5 billion. The Air National Guard 162nd Fighter Wing also represents a significant economic impact and employs about 1,161 people. When added to the other defense related industries, they represent almost 14% of our community's employment base.

As many of us have heard, all military branches are under direction to reduce their budgets and still maintain combat readiness. DMAFB also faces the very real possibility of a diminishing fleet size and potential end of the A-10 in the Air Force fleet. The implication locally could be great as it directly affects the 355th Fighter Wing currently stationed at DMAFB.



It is also important to understand that there is no other aircraft in the fleet at present or in the near future that possesses the A-10's ability to protect and loiter above American combat troops. The A-10 continues to save countless American lives!

However, the decision is not yet final as Congress has yet to finish its work. At the time of this printing, the Defense Authorization Act has passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by a 2-1 margin with the amendment keeping the A-10, but the appropriations committee failed to include this funding. We are working with local leadership to make the strongest case possible for the continued life of the A-10.

Locally, our community recognized the importance of the

Air Force Base in 2004 when Pima County voters decisively approved the purchase of open space to provide a buffer to reduce the threat of encroachment and protect the longevity of the base here. On several occasions, the Board of Supervisors has adopted resolutions in support of Davis Monthan Air Force Base (DMAFB) and its present and future missions. As an Honorary Squadron Commander at DMAFB, it has been an honor to get to know the men and women serving here. More importantly, I have seen firsthand the countless contributions they make to our community in time, money and effort. I am particularly proud of their willingness, especially in emergency situations where lives are at stake, to lend a hand. One example is when 8 airmen from the 48th Rescue Squadron landed at Picacho Peak on their way back from training exercises after a horrible accident caused by a haboob on October 29, 2013, and rendered first aid when no one else at the scene had the training.

Davis Monthan Air Force Base as well as the Air National Guard have natural advantages that no other base can equal. In addition to the natural synergy of having Davis Mountain Air Force Base and the Air National Guard in the same community and great flying weather, our location provides unparalleled access to the Barry M. Goldwater Range, a critical training complex with air to ground bombing and gunnery ranges. Its vast isolation and great flying weather allows pilots to safely practice maneuvers and engage in simulated battlefield exercises.

### Ensuring Quality Healthcare

Pima County has had a long-standing commitment to the health and welfare of its residents. We have strengthened that commitment over the past 35 years with the development and expansion of the Kino Health Campus. In 1974, voters approved bond funds to replace the County General Hospital on 6th Avenue with a new hospital on Ajo Way, which opened its doors in 1977. Even today, it still is the only hospital south of Broadway in Tucson.

As the healthcare industry evolved and changed, Pima County began recording significant losses – in 2004 in excess of \$30 million – and provided little more than 50 level one acute psychiatric patient beds. In high school, I had done several internships at Kino Hospital and when I was appointed to Board in 2003, I toured the hospital and saw what it had become. It saddened me greatly because it reminded me of a ghost town and no longer provided much service.

It was increasingly clear that the best financial option for the County was to lease the property to a third party that had extensive experience in the healthcare industry. In 2004, the Hospital was leased to University Physicians Inc. (UPI), what is now the University of Arizona Health Network, and represents a two-hospital academic medical system. These changes have gone a long way toward improving both the image and quality of the patient experience.

The following table illustrates the expanded utilization of UAMC-South Campus since fiscal year 2005:

Category	FY2005	FY2013	% Change
ICU*	2	8	300%
Medical/Surgical*	13	43	231%
Clinic Visits	48,830	162,821	233%
ED/Urgent Care	30,356	42,017	233%
Surgical Procedures	662	3350	406%

\*Average on a daily basis where others are yearly average.

### Fixing Our Roads

This year, it is again my honor to serve as Chair of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), a position I first held in 2006 when the RTA plan and funding was approved by voters in Pima County. I remember clearly when every member of the RTA board publicly signed a pledge ensuring that projects in the plan would be built as promised to the voters. A promise that we are keeping. Construction on RTA projects has not only been important for our future, but it has made a significant difference in jobs during the recession and recovery period amounting to 2,100 jobs and a \$612,000,000 investment.

Today, we are now in Phase 2 of the Twenty Year RTA plan. In District Two, we continue to see progress from the RTA plan:

Projects	No. of Projects	Total Investment
Roadway Improvements	5	\$123,800,000
Intersection Improvements	16	\$6,315,000
Elderly & Pedestrian Improvements	19	\$6,469,000
Transit Corridor Bus Pullouts	78	\$10,756,000
Railroad Safety/ Bridge Deficiencies	3	\$1,740,000
Signal Technology	13	\$3,439,000
Greenways, Pathways, Bikeways and Sidewalks	48	\$27,376,000



Recently, I had the pleasure of presenting the Town of Sahuarita the 1st Annual Timothy Ahrens Partnering Award from the Pima Association of Governments and the Regional Transportation Authority for its efforts on the Sahuarita Road Project located in District Two. The Town partnered with Pima County, Sahuarita Unified School District and local businesses on this important project.

### Pima County Budget

At the time of printing of this newsletter, Pima County is still going through the budgetary process. Please refer to: <http://www.pima.gov>, then select County Budget under Quicklinks for up-to-date information on the budget.

