

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 29, 2008 – 10 AM
CAAG Administrative Offices
1075 S. Idaho Rd., Suite 300
Apache Junction, AZ 85219

Attendees:

Jim Nelson, Salt River Project
Scott Powell, Town of Florence
Rayna Palmer, Apache Jct. Chamber of Commerce & North East Pinal Economic Partnership
Doreen Cott, Town of Queen Creek
Steve Filipowicz, City of Apache Junction
Chris Martin, Southern Gila County Economic Development Corporation & Copper Corridor Economic Development Coalition
Alton Bruce, City of Coolidge
Ken Volz, Payson Regional Economic Development Corporation
Debra Galbraith, Town of Payson
Jim Rhodes, Small Business Development Center, Central Arizona College
Sandie Smith, Pinal County Supervisor

CAAG Staff:

Craig Ringer
Drew Ardary

MINUTES

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Jim Nelson called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. All provided self-introductions.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Mr. Nelson noted new challenges to economic development due to the country's current economic situation. He suggested that federal action on the fiscal impact program may occur after the elections and that it would be good to have projects ready to go should there be a quick turn-around on requests for projects. A group discussion ensued.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 7, 2008

Alton Bruce made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 7, 2008 meeting. Steve Filipowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. ELECTIONS OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR FOR 2009

Chris Martin, Southern Gila County Economic Development Corporation, volunteered his services as Chair. He was unanimously approved by the committee.

Barry Albrecht, Central Arizona Regional Economic Development Foundation, was nominated for Vice-chair by Jim Nelson who had spoken with Barry regarding the position. Mr. Albrecht was approved unanimously.

Their terms will begin January 1, 2009.

V. EDA PERFORMANCE AWARD

Mr. Ringer informed the group that CAAG had received an EDA Performance Award for the work done on CAAG's last tourism project which included a military history insert as well as the addition of the information to the agency's website. He stated that the award was accompanied by the monetary amount of about \$2,100.

VI. ONE-TIME INCREASE IN PLANNING GRANT FUNDING

Craig stated that CAAG was also fortunate to have received a one-time increase in its Planning Grant in the amount of \$3,000. He said that Bettye Atkinson of EDA's Seattle Regional Office had informed the agency by email stating that she had several Economic Development Districts in the Western Region on a list to receive additional funds should they become available and that CAAG was one of those districts.

Mr. Ringer said that CAAG felt very fortunate to have received these unexpected additional finds.

VII. EDA WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Mr. Ringer distributed the brochure for EDA's upcoming Western Regional Conference that will be held in Sacramento, California from December 9th through the 13th. He noted that this would be a great opportunity for members of the CEDS Committee to meet our EDA representatives. He noted that there were a number of sessions that might be of interest to the committee members. Several members of the CEDS Committee suggested that EDA be contacted about the possibility of having a future Western Region Conference somewhere within the CAAG Region.

VIII. EMPLOYMENT CENTER STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Nelson gave an overview of the EDA-funded Employment Center Study explaining the original purpose and what has been accomplished thus far. He stated that the Asset Inventory portion of the study was requiring a major effort and would probably be best to re-visit this task and, perhaps, re-format the data collection grid. He suggested that a task group be formed that would meet just once or twice to

provide ideas and guidance for this portion of the study. Several members volunteered to participate on the task group: Jim Nelson, Doreen Cott, and Jim Rhodes.

Drew Ardary of CAAG's Planning Department updated the committee on what has transpired thus far regarding the Employment Center surveys. He stated that, for the most part, Pinal County communities have been completed and that staff will be meeting with Pinal County staff to iron out a few discrepancies that currently exist between the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan and local community general plans. He added that work on the Gila County Employment Centers would be initiated in the near future.

It was announced that the advisory group overseeing this project under the CEDS Committee will meet next on November 18th at 10:30 AM at the CAAG offices in Apache Junction.

IX. GILA/PINAL TOURISM SUMMIT

Mr. Ringer explained to the committee members that CAAG staff felt that the money that accompanied the EDA Performance Award should go back in to a tourism-related project since that award had been given for the agency's tourism marketing efforts. He said that Pinal County Supervisor, Lionel Ruiz, had approached CAAG about hosting a Pinal/Gila Tourism Summit. He said staff was in support of the idea but uncertain as to how to fund it. Craig stated that the decision was made to utilize the Performance Award money for this project.

Current plans are to hold the summit in late March- near the end of the tourist season. A number of suggestions were made by the Committee as to potential content and contacts for the summit. Assistance to organize the event was also offered.

X. COMMUNITY PROJECT/PROGRAM UPDATES

Brief updates of projects were provided by several members of the Committee.

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE

Craig suggested that, since it is nearly November, the next meeting should be held in January. He said that he would eventually poll the members to ascertain the best date for the meeting.

XII. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.