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For Immediate Release

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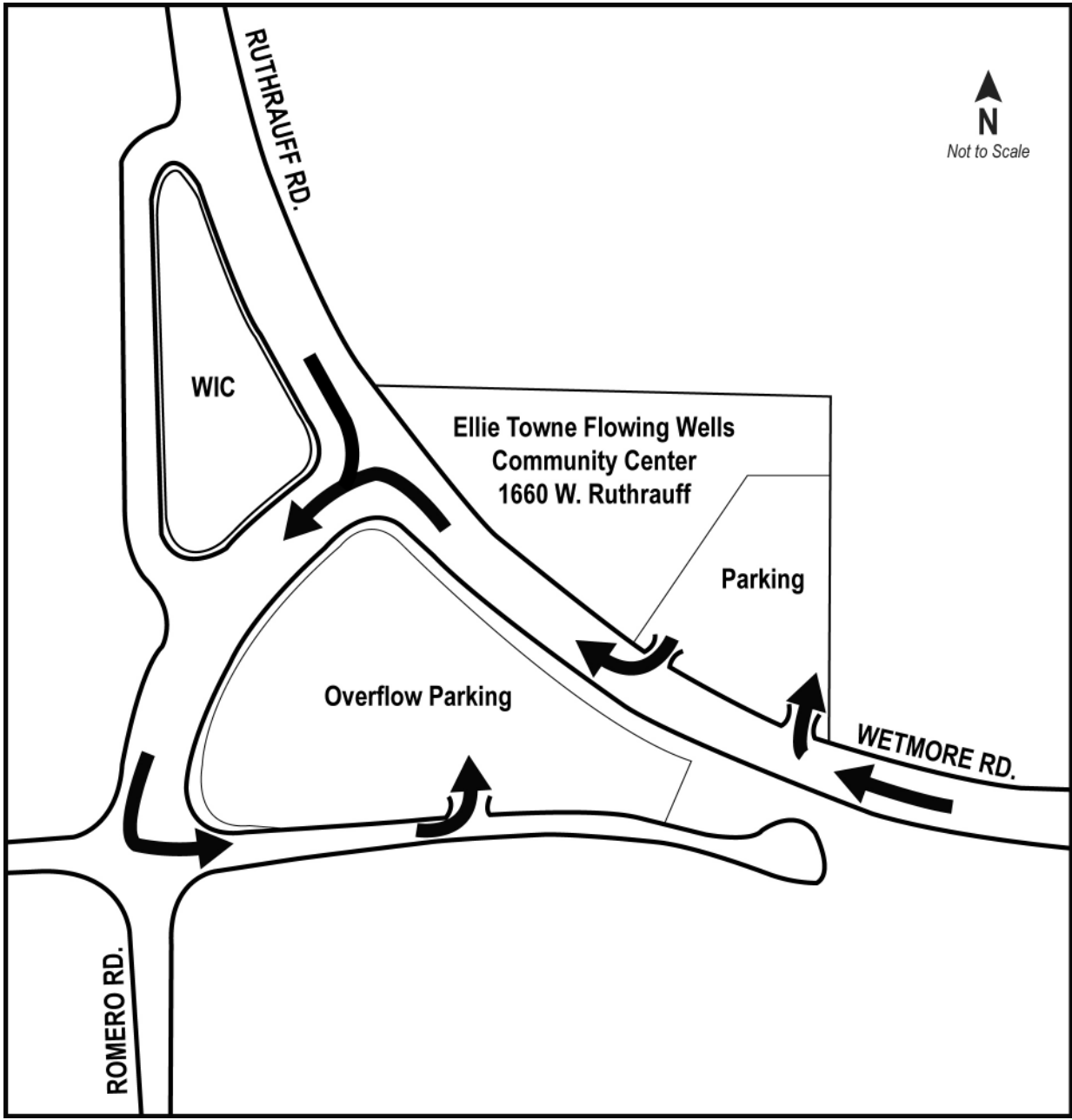
Parks Department to dedicate new community center

Pima County, Arizona....On Saturday, September 15, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. the Ellie Towne/Flowing Wells Community Center will be dedicated, according to Pima County Board of Supervisors member, Sharon Bronson, District 3. The new community center is located at 1660 West Ruthrauff Road.

The event is sponsored by the Honorable Sharon Bronson, Board of Supervisors, District 3; Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation and the Flowing Wells Neighborhood Association and Community Coalition. The Flowing Wells Neighborhood Association and Community Coalition were the recipients of an All-America City award for 2007. A biographical sketch for Ellie Towne, president of the neighborhood association, is attached.

Staff will be at the event to direct traffic. Please use caution as you approach the event site and follow directions to parking.

(end)



ELLIE TOWNE

Ellie retired in 1996 and soon after started the Palmdale Area Neighborhood Watch. She then became involved with the Flowing Well Neighborhood Association and Community Coalition (Coalition) in February 1997. She went from Vice-President to President in 2003 and is still in that position. Since that time she has brought about dynamic change in the HUD Flowing Wells Neighborhood Revitalization Area. Under her tutelage, the Coalition has brought in \$15,438,112 in goods and services into this medium stress area since 1999. This is a culmination of federal, state and local money via grant and bond funding. Private sources have also contributed. Many more projects are in the works. She has brought great synergy into the neighborhood and has worked hard to initiate a "model community revitalization" effort by including all factions of the community. She is actively involved in the Flowing Wells School District, the business community, government, social service agencies, the faith-based entities and the individual members to bring about positive change for the Flowing Wells area.

Ellie is President of one of the largest neighborhood associations in the county with membership just under 30,000 individuals. Because of the great progress that has been made in the area, HUD officials have graciously extended the Neighborhood Revitalization Area Strategic Plan for another five years. Good neighborhoods do not just happen; planning and hard work is needed to make them occur. Ellie has made this commitment and has successfully modeled a community that can be replicated in other areas.

Ellie was instrumental in the development of the strategic plan for neighborhood revitalization. This 48-page bound and published document has worked as a blue print for the work that has been accomplished.

Ellie has participated in the concept design committee for the Flowing Wells District Park, the Curtis Neighborhood Park (opening Summer 2007), the Flowing Wells Library (opening June 2008), the Ellie Towne/Flowing Wells Community Center (opening September 2007), and the Flowing Wells Health Center. She is a member of the Northwest Area Transportation Coalition, the Advisory Committee for the Flowing Wells Family Resource Center, various public art committees, and is the Safe Routes to School Liaison for Laguna Elementary School.

Ellie assisted in the development of the Homeless Protocol utilized by the Sheriff's Department throughout the county, the Vacant and Abandoned Property Task Force, as well as the Home Auto Repair Committee. These events have countywide significance.

Her participation on these various committees has brought a single message to other committee members. The Flowing Wells community wishes to design and build their own destiny. The community will not be comprised of what government officials think that it should look and feel like. Ellie has a consensus vision of the area and is working hard to make it happen.

Ellie has worked hard to develop the work force in the area and to build the economic opportunities. She has worked with Wal-Mart representatives to bring affordable groceries and prescriptions to the area. She participated in the groundbreaking ceremony with Hughes Federal Credit Union who is building their corporate office in the Revitalization Area.

Ellie has been the only neighborhood association representative in the history of the Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities (TREO) to identify vacant property that has potential for business development. Ellie is adamant that good paying jobs lead to self-sufficiency. It is incumbent upon the neighborhood to seek out these economic opportunities and foster this relationship so that the community will have economic prosperity.

Ellie was a leading partner in the formation of the Flowing Wells Health Clinic that is a newly opened clinic operated by St. Elizabeth of Hungary (Catholic Social Services) and is located at the Victory Assembly of God Church campus. She was instrumental in bringing these two faith-based organizations to the table for the good of the community. The Clinic will be opening its additional phase within the next several months with the addition of the dental care facility

Ellie coordinates with the various social service programs that supplement the needs of the community. When these agencies work together they can maximize their capacity. Ellie has worked closely with the Pima Council on Aging, Interfaith Community Services, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, as well as the Flowing Wells School District and the various faith-based community.

Ellie orchestrated the Neighborhood Cleanup of the 3.1 square mile Revitalization Area. This is the first community effort of this size in the county. Ellie worked with 291 volunteers for a total of 1715 volunteer hours to remove 216 tons of trash from the community. This project took a total of 13 months to complete and involved 19 partners. Ellie has worked with other neighborhoods to replicate this program.

Ellie has worked with the Drachman Institute, Pima County Development Services, and Department of Environmental Quality to identify and communicate with the small businesses in the Business Corridor. The initial Brownfield Report has now been completed. Ellie is striving to bring economic prosperity to the business community and is starting with cleaning up the contamination and building infrastructure such as sidewalks, landscaping, and drainage.

Ellie initiated the Get in the Zone Project that identifies zoning violations of abandoned vehicles and open storage and works with the homeowner to rectify the situation without the involvement of the Pima County Department of Developmental Services interference. Ellie has worked with the others to try to replicate the program.

Ellie has also worked with individual homeowner associations to initiate Neighborhood Watch Programs. Ellie worked with Pima Community College to secure a federal grant for Education for Economic Empowerment Grant. The class is free to those who qualify (single parent head of household) and provides the keys to self-sufficiency to participants. Comprised in the program is a "giving back" module. The students will volunteer their services within their community to help others.

Ellie has worked hard to get the word out about the great opportunities available in the Flowing Wells area. The web site for the entity is constantly being updated to celebrate our successes. The web site is advertised on pens, emery board and mugs that are freely distributed. Last year the web site had a total of 2291 hits.

Word of mouth has been such a powerful tool. Ellie recently had the opportunity to share the Flowing Wells Revitalization experience in the first of a six part TV series entitled *Tucson Voices* by the Pima County Department of Economic Security Breakthrough Series Collaborative Team and available for viewing on Access Tucson.

Ellie is the recognized community leader at many city and county functions. Many of the programs implemented have been used as "best practices" and implemented in other areas. Ellie dedicates about 30 hours a week to this endeavor.

Not only has Ellie's tireless effort been an inspiration to those in our area. She is constantly being asked to assist other neighborhood to share the success. Her knowledge about all subject matter from housing, health care, etc. makes her invaluable when connecting community member who need services with the correct government entity or social service. She is someone who truly leads by example.

Ellie documented 643 volunteer hours in 2006. The Coalition is incorporated and a non-profit entity and has been since 2003. Ellie was instrumental in incorporation process and has remained President since the incorporation.

Because of her dedication to the community, the new community center will be named in her honor. The largest community center in the county to date will open its doors this September and carry the moniker of "Ellie Towne/Flowing Wells Community Center."

Ellie was asked by Supervisor Bronson to participate in the filming of the 2007 State of County Address because of her contribution to the Revitalization efforts in the Flowing Wells Community. Her success serves as a model for other communities to "pull themselves up by the boot-straps" and make a difference in the lives of their neighbors.

Ellie's vision for the future is the same as the Coalition: *"Strong families living in a safe community"*

Ellie is 70 years old, married to her husband for 46 years, and has two children, 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

Ellie was diagnosed with ovarian cancer (Stage 3) in December 1993. Her triumph over her disease has served as an inspiration to those going through similar events in their lives.

Prior to retirement, Ellie worked in the medical/surgical field as a purchasing agent for 18 years. The last 6 years as Director of Purchasing, over the warehouse and distribution for Thomas-Davis Medical Centers in Tucson. She had no community service work experience before joining the Coalition in 1997.