

Summer 2009 Newsletter

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Community Development Provides Framework for Economic Recovery

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act was signed into law on February 17th, 2009, and appropriated nearly \$800 billion for job preservation and creation, infrastructure investment, energy efficiency and science, assistance to the unemployed, and State and local fiscal stabilization. This sweeping initiative, aimed at getting the nation on the road to economic recovery, allocates a large amount of funds to community development programs, thereby recognizing the critical role that community development plays in local economies.

Contrasted with other types of economic development tools such as tax credits for businesses that concentrate public subsidies among a few organizations and individuals, community development programs provide direct investments in our communities; the benefits of which are widely distributed among community members and are more likely to stay in the local economy.

Through the many different programs administered by the department, CDNC has been consistently contributing to local economies

throughout Pima County. Examples of the positive effects these programs have had are listed below:

Job Creation: Construction jobs have been created through the *Affordable housing Bond Program*, the *Neighborhood Reinvestment Program*, the *Community Development Block Grant*, and the *Weatherization and Home Repair Program*. Additionally, the *Outside Agency Program* directly creates employment opportunities by paying the salaries of program staff.

Housing Market Stabilization: The *Down payment Assistance Program* has increased homes sales and sped up the rate of recovery for the housing market while helping low and moderate income families become homeowners allowing them to build equity and form a stable household economic base for the future. Further helping market stabilization are the *Foreclosure prevention and Homebuyer Education programs*; these programs help keep families out of foreclosure thereby preventing large declines in property values in

neighborhoods and keeps families out of bankruptcy.

Aid to low and Moderate Income Families: Programs such as *FEMA*, and *Homelessness Prevention* provide monetary and material assistance to families preventing them from succumbing to poverty and reducing the burden on low to moderate income families' budgets.

The benefits listed above are just a few of the more visible benefits the department produces, without mentioning the less tangible results that come out of the work done by CDNC. While it's difficult to quantify the economic value of relationships formed during community initiatives, or of crime reductions resulting from neighborhood revitalization, these actions do yield financial rewards.

The need for community development services will continue to increase while resources become increasingly scarce. This underscores the importance of having leadership that recognizes the values of direct, long term investments in our communities through activities such as community development.

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Pima County to Receive Over \$695,000 From Recovery Act*

Congressman Raul M. Grijalva recently welcomed the announcement that Pima County will benefit from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. The county will receive over \$695,000 to support community and economic development through the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.



Congressman Raul M. Grijalva

The CDBG program primarily benefits low-to moderate-income families, and allows state and local governments to undertake several programs and activities to create more suitable living environments, provide affordable housing, and expand economic

development opportunities.

Congressman Grijalva stated that the increased CDBG funding will "allow Pima County to make critical investments in the economic recovery of our community; by creating jobs and helping to revitalize hard hit neighborhoods. These CDBG funds will promote long-term sustainable community and economic development."

Since 1974, CDBG has provided more than \$127 billion to state and local governments to target their own community development priorities. The rehabilitation of affordable housing and the construction and improvement of public facilities have traditionally been the largest uses of CDBG funds, although the program is also an important catalyst for job growth and business opportunities. Annual CDBG Funds are distributed to communities through statutory formulas based on population, poverty, pre-1940 housing stock, growth lag and

housing overcrowding.

In Arizona, the following cities and counties will receive CDBG funding under the Recovery Act:

- **Chandler - \$376,240**
- **Flagstaff - \$165,677**
- **Mesa - \$918,932**
- **Peoria City - \$178,431**
- **Pima County - \$695,454**
- **Tempe - \$432,569**



ARRA Seal

*story provided by Congressman Grijalva's office

Santa Rita Skate Park Opens

The Santa Rita Neighborhood Association has finally realized its goal of opening a youth recreational facility for its residents. The facility, a skate park, was originally planned in 2001 after the neighborhood applied for Neighborhood Reinvestment funding - in collaboration with the Campfire Boys and Girls Club. During the planning process Campfire terminated its



Arial View of Skate Park

Tucson affiliation; however, this did not deter residents from achieving their goal.

With the assistance of Pima County Supervisor Ramon Valadez, City of Tucson Councilmember Steve Leal, and the Neighborhood Reinvestment staff, the project was able to gain additional funding from Pima County and the City of Tucson.

Construction Commenced in late

2008 and the skate park opened its gates to the public on April 25, 2009. Since then utilization of the facility has been at full capacity. In fact skating



Skateboarder utilizing Facilities

websites have described the Santa Rita Skate Park as the best in Tucson. Due to the resolve of the neighborhood association and the commitment of the Neighborhood Reinvestment program, Supervisor Valadez, and Councilmember Leal, the Santa Rita Skate Park is one of the most successful Neighborhood Reinvestment projects ever constructed in Pima County.

Robles Responds Promotes Community Involvement

Robles Responds, a community based group of residents established in 1994, promotes community involvement to solve image problems and plan future development for the Robles Junction/ Three Points area of Pima County.

The Robles Responds group has been successful in getting support for a number of community development projects, including receiving a \$500,000 Neighborhood Reinvestment grant through the Pima County Community Development and Neighborhood Conservation Department to build a soccer field, establishing a website, and holding an annual Robles Pride day.

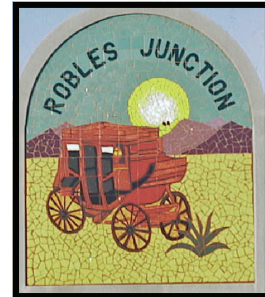
This year CDBG funds have been

awarded to construct and install shade structures over existing playground areas, and install fire hydrants in the community. Other past projects include fire hydrants, and improvements to the Food Bank and Community Center.

In only five years Robles Responds has accomplished a great deal for their community and continues to meet monthly to review progress on projects currently in process. The group will continue to explore and establish new projects, goals, and community development for the future.

The success of the Robles Responds group has caught the attention of Pima County officials who now seek

out the group to collaborate on planning and development for the Robles Junction/Three points area.



Robles Junction Logo

Food Bank Installs New Walk in Freezer in Sahuarita

In March 2009 installation of Green Valley's walk in freezer was completed. The walk in unit was funded by a CDBG grant and allowed the food bank to accommodate a much larger amount of donations. Shortly after the freezer was up and running two unexpected donations occurred.

In March, the Sahuarita Fry's began donating frozen meats and supplementing the bread, produce and miscellaneous items that they had already

been donating on a regular basis. Their meat donations went from zero in February, to 2442 pounds in March, 1915 pounds in April, and 3375 pounds in May.

Additionally, An unexpected donation of frozen chicken became available through the Tucson

Community Food Bank. They were able to acquire, properly store, and distribute 6000 pounds of frozen chicken in March, April and May. Without the new freezer the food bank would have been forced to accept a much smaller amount of the donated fowl.



Interior View of Walk in Freezer

Meet Picture Rocks

Picture Rocks is a rural, mostly low-income community populated by young families, working individuals

Citizens For Pictures Rock, -A Community Involvement Group- Has Worked Since 1999 to Forge Alliances with County Agencies to Combat Crime, Drug Activity, and Community Apathy

and retired folks in Pima County's fast

growing North West corner. Picture Rocks is approximately 25 miles from downtown Tucson, encompasses approximately 33 square miles, and has over 12,000 residents. Picture Rocks is bounded by Avra Valley Road on the North, Manville on the South, Avra Road on the West, and the Saguaro National Park on the East.

The citizens of Picture Rocks has formed a community improvement and advocacy group entitled "Citizens for Picture Rocks (C4PR). This group is a 501 (c)(4) non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the issues of crime, drug activity and community involvement.

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Community of Rillito Embarks on Path to Recovery

Rillito, a small rural community, is located on the outskirts of Pima County approximately 12 miles northwest of Tucson. It was originally established by railroad companies as a place for steam locomotives to take on water. In 1908 the community got its first postmaster.

In the 1940's and '50's, Black families migrated from Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas to tend the area cotton fields. In 1963, Interstate 10 reached Rillito, and by 1967 the area had running water. Residents

no longer had to haul water from the railroad to their homes. In 1976 a federal grant brought a sewer system and paved roads to the community.

Beginning in 1978, Rillito became one of Pima County's first target areas that received CDBG funding. That same year marked the opening of the Rillito Recreation Center. Through the years,

CDBG funds have been used for a myriad of purposes –including the construction of a community center, a childcare center, parks, children's playgrounds, street lights, improvements to the sewage, drainage, and water systems, and housing rehabilitation.

In late March, 2009, a community clean-up was staged with the assistance of a new collaborative effort involving the Pima County Supervisor Sharon Bronson's office, the County's Community Development and Neighborhood

Conservation Department (CDNC), Pima County One Stop Career and Employment Center's Faith-Based Initiative, U.S. Postal Service, Arizona Portland Cement/CTI, D & H Sanitation, and volunteers from various church organizations. The clean-up was such a huge success, and the residents were so proud of their accom-

plishments, that their effort continues on an ongoing basis. Additionally, residents are working with CDNC to demolish dilapidated structures and reduce criminal activity in their community.

Rillito is an aging community that, like many other communities, has fewer youth to assume a leadership role in the community's revitalization effort. Nonetheless, community members have begun meeting to assess and prioritize community needs. And, the community applied for and was awarded CDBG grant funds for fiscal year 2009-2010 to further improve their water system and install additional street lights.

As a result of all these activities, the community of Rillito is coming together once again and is embarking upon the path to recovery and revitalization.



Community Residents Participate in Community Clean Up



Community Members Meet to Discuss Goals

Outside Agency Program Deals with Shifting Funding Landscape

The CDNC Outside Agency Program disburses County funds which support 108 programs operated by 62 agencies meeting a variety of social service needs. This relationship provides an opportunity to see economic challenges through the eyes of agencies who meet the growing community needs.

An agency survey was conducted in March, 2009 to ascertain how the

current economic crisis is impacting agencies and programs. The agencies reported a decrease in funds at mid year; which is a difficult time to alter operating plans. The agencies responded by reducing staff hours and increasing volunteer recruitment, however, the demand for services are yet greater.

Personnel cost account for the largest line item in an agency's budget. Of

the over \$4 million allocated though the Outside Agency Program, personnel costs account for 73% of the total funds. Any fund reductions will have a direct result in the full time professional positions employed with these service providers. The reduction of hours and resulting loss of income finds unemployed, social service professional seeking services to maintain their lifestyles, including keeping their homes.

(Continued on pg. 6)

Meet Picture Rocks (Continued)

(Continued from Page 3) C4PR has worked since 1999 to build alliances between neighbors and community agencies to make positive changes in their community. Citizens for Picture Rocks works closely with the Picture Rocks Community Center, local schools and businesses, and all interested citizens to promote pride in Picture Rocks and convene monthly meetings with guest speakers, local elected officials and community activists to educate and inform citizens about local issues and concerns.

C4PR has worked tirelessly to bring good things to the people of Picture Rocks, including the Picture Rocks Community Center (PRCC) which has become the hub of the community. PRCC provides a meeting place for the whole community by offering congregate meals, senior activities and arts programs, youth activities including Scouting and 4H, physical fitness classes, weekly evenings with local musicians, and a lending library.

Through the dedicated efforts of Citi-

zens For Picture Rocks volunteers, they have obtained a Pima County Sheriff Substation with staff protecting and serving the area, a community swimming pool that provides recreation for families and therapeutic opportunities for seniors, and, thanks to a community Development Block Grant, shade covering for the children's play yard.

Other CDBG projects include improvements to the park water system and the Picture Rocks/Avra Water Coop, fire hydrants, basketball court lighting, playground fencing, community center storage and improvements, clinic improvements, residential gas hook-ups, hot meals program, refrigerator and stove for the senior meals program, and construction of the Community Center.

Through leadership training and grants provided by PRO Neighborhoods, C4PR has been able to sustain a program called Picture Rocks Pride which provides twice yearly community clean-ups, a Resource Directory for access to information about ser-

vices and businesses in the area, and, most recently, the Picture Rocks Pride Community Fair which provided a free day of family fun, food, education, and community cohesiveness for over 500 citizens of Picture Rocks. Picture

Rocks has broken ground on a new Skate and BMX Park for their youth. The park is scheduled to open in the winter of 2009.



C4PR inspects Newly Installed playground Equipment

Old Arivaca School Soon to be Nominated to National Register of Historic Places

The Arivaca School, located at 17180 W. 4th St. in Arivaca, is part of what was once the Arivaca federal town-site. Now used as a community center, the building ceased to be used as a school in 1954 and is thought to be the oldest standing school building in Arizona.



Old Arivaca School

Originally constructed in 1879 of stucco and mud adobe the school is currently maintained by the Arivaca Family and Community Education

Association (AFCE) under the trusteeship of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Courts of Pima County.

Community Development Block Grants awarded in 1994, 2004, and 2009 have allowed for several renovations including a roof replacement, the addition of a restroom, cooler, furnace, a fence for the perimeter of the school, and the replacement of the wood flooring and ceiling in the front room with historic

replica materials. AFCE has also replaced the front door and blackboard (with replicas) this year.

The Arivaca School is eligible for listing in the National and Arizona Registers of Historic Places for its association with the early period of education in the State of Arizona and as a representative of a vernacular adobe school building constructed by local masons. This year the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office approved the preliminary statement of eligibility and Pima County's Cultural Resources Management Office will soon be nominating the Old School to the National Register of Historic Places.

Outside Agency Program Deals with Shifting Funding Landscape (Continued)

(Continued from Pg. 4) The Outside Agency Advisory Committee chose to target FY 2008-2009 funds on the basic needs Food and Shelter Service categories. The resulting changes to funding categories were as follows:

The Emergency Food & Clothing Category received the most significant increase, 32%. A great deal of those funds went to support the Community Food Bank, which reported a 36% increase in demand this fiscal year.

During the FY 2008-2009 funding deliberations (held in April 2008), the advisory Committee increased funding aimed at reducing the rising number of foreclosures in our community. The Support Services category received an increase of 18%, or \$139,300, for mortgage default counseling. Agencies awarded funds had certified mortgage counselors who could offer budgeting classes and outreach. This fiscal year 383 households received counseling, and 474 hours of budget classes were provided. All these services were aimed at preventing home loss.

Service Category	07-08 Award	08-09 Award	% Change
Community Service	\$191,313	\$152,000	(21%)
Emergency Food & Clothing	\$423,234	\$561,286	32%
Parenting & Family Support	\$182,521	\$178,600	(2%)
Senior Support	\$250,969	\$290,300	15%
Support Services, Shelter, DV including Mortgage Default Prevention Support (\$139,300)	\$592,169	\$697,300	18%
Youth & Young Adult	\$853,623	\$710,000	(17%)
General Services	\$1,346,642	\$1,435,545	6%
Total	\$3,782,671	\$4,025,031	

Sunset Villa Dedication

On Saturday, June 27, 2009, the residents of Sunset Villa Neighborhood celebrated the dedication of their Neighborhood Reinvestment project. Pedestrian safety was the primary concern of residents, therefore improvements included

American Disability Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks on highly used pedestrian corridors in addition to landscaping and neighborhood entry monument mosaic walls.

Artist Gail Roberts was commissioned through the Tucson Pima Arts Council to design and construct public art on 4 monument walls at entrances to the

neighborhood. She met with residents who told her the stories and traditions of the neighborhood, many of them passed down through generations of Sunset Villa families. From these stories, Ms. Roberts created beautiful mosaic visuals for the enjoyment and edification of residents and visitors alike. Community traditions have come to life in the mosaics and will be preserved for future generations to come.

The project was a collaboration of Pima County Neighborhood Reinvestment Program, Pima County Department of Transportation, and Arizona

Department of Transportation.

The project, completed in June of this year, now offers safe and beautiful pedestrian amenities to the Sunset Villa community.



Sunset Villa Mosaic Entrance Ribbon Cutting



Dedication of Neighborhood Reinvestment project

Cardinal Community Begins Development Initiative

Located just outside of the City of Tucson's southwestern boundary, the Cardinal/Valencia community faces a number of issues that are threatening residents' quality of life. This area has been hit particularly hard by the foreclosure crisis, with clusters of foreclosed homes appearing in some of the newer neighborhoods, and the community is also dealing with traffic safety problems, a high number of home invasions, and clusters of old mobile homes in need of repairs in certain areas. In light of the challenges confronting this area, CDNC has identified the Cardinal/Valencia community as a



Cardinal/Valencia Area Residents

target area for federal Stimulus funds and is working with local community organizations to engage residents in a community dialogue.

The first step of the County's involvement in this collaboration was to complete an organizational asset assessment, which identified available

resources within the community, and provided a snapshot of its existing

conditions. This assessment was completed in June of 2009, and will be used by CDNC to allocate resources to the area, and was also given to the Cardinal Neighborhood Association to target neighborhood organizing activities.

Formed in January of 2004 in response to the traffic death of a young girl, the Cardinal Neighborhood Association (CNA) is the neighborhood association in unincorporated Pima County. The neighborhood association first campaigned for the installation of traffic safety improvements and is in ongoing negotiations with Tucson Unified School District over the location of a bus depot within the neighborhood.

As this initiative continues, the Pima County Community Development and Neighborhood Conservation Department (CDNC) will continue to work with community leaders to target its investment in the community, and also to support community-based activities aimed at empowering local communities.

Pima County's FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program Bolstered by Stimulus Dollars

Pima County's FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program was bolstered by funding from the Federal Stimulus Package. The local program was awarded \$246,599 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Pima County's Local Board reconvened June 23rd and 24th –having met in early March for the Phase 27 allocation process which disbursed \$514,488 to twenty local

organizations (as reported in the CDNC Newsletter; Spring 2009 Edition), to allocate Phase AR (Stimulus Package) funding to thirteen local county area organizations.

Pima County's FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program was bolstered by funding from the Federal Stimulus Package and was awarded \$246,599 through ARRA

The Phase AR monies, coming from the Federal Stimulus Package, is designed to specifically target recently unemployed persons and families di-

rectly impacted by recent unemployment. It is anticipated that these funds will assist some 3,700 such individuals and families with emergency food and shelter needs.



ARRA Seal

New CDNC Employee



Joseph Silins

Joe recently joined the Home Repair and Weatherization Programs team, and is currently coordinating outreach efforts to let the residents of rural Pima County know about the new Weatherization funding made available by the Federal Economic Stimulus Package. Before joining the ranks of CDNC staff, Joe interned with the department, and graduated with a Masters Degree from the Planning Program at the University of Arizona. Joe's professional interests include community-based development initiatives, sustainability, and affordable housing, all of which he has been able to integrate into his position with the Home Repair Programs and in his capacity as the department's Sustainability Coordinator. Outside of work, Joe enjoys spending his time camping, running, salsa dancing, and volunteering with a local non-profit. Eventually, Joe would like to work in Latin America, but for now he's enjoying the cool Tucson climate (relative to his hometown of Phoenix), practicing his Spanish, and eating great Mexican food.

Pima County Board of Supervisors

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County Administrator
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Contact Information

**Community Development and Neighborhood Conservation
Department**

Margaret Kish, Director - (520)-243-6777

Affordable Housing and Community Planning
Betty Villegas, Program Manager - (520)-243-6744

Community and Rural Development
Allen Kulwin, Program Manager - (520)-243-6754

Neighborhood Reinvestment Program
Leslie Nixon, Program Manager - (520)-243-6769

Outside Agency Program
Jane Kroesen, Program Coordinator - (520)-243-6763

FEMA and Emergency Food and Shelter Program
John Hudson, Program Coordinator - (520)-
243-6681

www.pima.gov/ced/CDNC