

MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - YUMA CITY HALL
ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA
October 1, 2024
5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nicholls called the Regular City Council Worksession to order at 5:31 p.m.

Councilmembers Present: Morales, Smith, McClendon, Morris, Shoop, Shelton, and Mayor Nicholls
Councilmembers Absent: None
Staffmembers Present: Acting City Administrator, John D. Simonton
Deputy City Administrator, Jennifer Reichelt
Director of Engineering, David Wostenberg
Various department heads or their representatives
City Attorney, Richard W. Files
City Clerk, Lynda L. Bushong

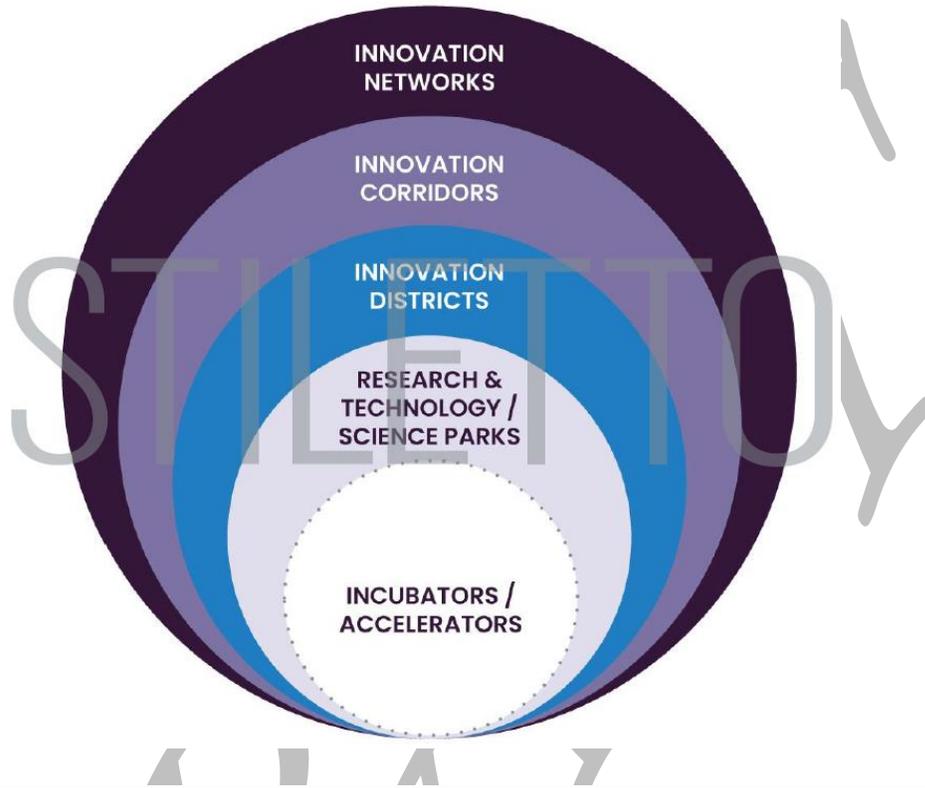
I. ELEVATE SOUTHWEST UPDATE

Jerry Cabrera, President and CEO of Elevate Southwest, introduced **Laura O’Blenis**, President and CEO of Stiletto, to provide an update on the economic impact of the future Innovation Hub in downtown Yuma.

O’Blenis presented the following:

- Stiletto
 - Marketing research and strategic planning firm specializing in high-impact projects for communities and institutions
 - Works at the intersection of industry, government, and academia to help with focus, resiliency, and building competitiveness
 - Uses a data driven approach to understand and build upon a community’s strengths
- Communities of Innovation
 - Research and Technology (R&T) Parks and Innovation Districts are real estate tools that are used as economic development drivers to build new clusters in communities
- Park and District Elements
 - A master development plan with available land for expansion
 - An incubation and/or acceleration center
 - A collaboration agreement with an affiliated university/college
 - A role in promoting technology-led economic development
- The Evolution of Communities of Innovation
 - The first R&T Park was developed in the 1950s
 - The Stanford Research Park was created to generate new revenue streams for Stanford University and the surrounding community

- Many R&T Parks throughout the United States came into play in the late 1990s and early 2000s
- Over the last 10 years Innovation Districts emerged and have significantly evolved to create Innovation Corridors and Innovation Networks



Component	Incubator / Accelerator	Research & Technology / Science Park	Innovation District	Innovation Corridor	Innovation Network
Geographic Location	One building	A cluster of one to several buildings	A cluster of nodes within a few city blocks	Connecting nodes in a continuous geographic region	Connecting nodes; location agnostic (can be regional to international)
Typical Size	10K-20K sq. ft.	50K-2M sq. ft.	50K-25M sq. ft.	Conceptual; can include infrastructure from individual public / private / NFP members	
Infrastructure	Owned by organization, offered to tenants	Both park and tenant owned	Owned by individual organizations and coordinated by consortium lead. Can have sharing / usage agreements		
Programming	Offered to tenants		Includes housing, mixed-use. Coordinated by consortium lead. Offered to members by lead, and / or by member(s) to other members		

- Elevate Southwest Innovation Hub
 - The project purpose is to create a plan for how the Elevate Southwest Innovation Hub (Hub) would be put into action; the Hub is the start of an Innovation District that would revitalize Yuma's downtown
 - The Elevate Southwest Hub will transform Downtown Yuma into a thriving live-work-play community
 - The Hub will combine leading expertise, world-class spaces and equipment, and thriving partnerships with businesses, schools, and government.
 - A destination for great minds and ambitious entrepreneurs, the Hub will fuel lasting economic growth and community well-being in Yuma
 - Yuma is considered a “hidden gem” for start-ups; the Hub will showcase all that the community has to offer entrepreneurs and established businesses:
 - Affordable spaces
 - Access to national and international markets
 - Strong infrastructure
 - A community committed to growth and prosperity
- Why the Hub Matters to Yuma

Themes from Yuma County 2030 Comprehensive Plan	How the Project Can Support and Enhance
Agricultural lands	Strengthen the agricultural sector and develop technologies / solutions that promote conservation and preserve rural character
Transportation	Support investments in infrastructure in coordination with government agencies
Growth management	Promote efficient growth by co-locating industries with the facilities and resources they need
Open space	Provide spaces and resources that are available to the public
Environmental resources	Support research and commercialization projects that protect, enhance, and conserve environmental resources
Economic development	Support the development of lasting economic impact through strategic partnerships, resource-sharing, and business attraction
Financial resources	Maximize return on investment by creating in-demand programs, services, and facilities that promote lasting benefits for industry, academia, and government

- While land and facilities are vital components, these components alone do not make a Community of Innovation
 - Programming, networks, and collaboration are essential to bringing people and resources together
 - These relationships are essential to helping Communities of Innovation generate discoveries, marketable products, jobs, learning opportunities, and well-being that far exceed the value of land and buildings.

- What are Innovation Districts?
 - Innovation Districts bring industry, academia, and government together in shared geographic areas to create live-work-play environments. These neighborhoods promote collaboration, discovery, and community engagement with multi-use spaces that may include housing, retail, and offices
 - Generally larger in scale than Research Parks, Innovation Districts are more likely to be located in urban settings and more integrated with the surrounding community
 - Innovation Districts also focus more on lifestyle and community amenities than Research Parks do
 - Key Features of an Innovation District:
 - Programming (i.e., networking, accelerators, incubators)
 - Academic and industry partnership
 - Urban and rural development (mixed-use facilities such as housing, retail and office)
 - Quality of life enhancements
 - Focus on live-work-play offerings
- Why Communities of Innovation Matter
 - Communities of innovation help individuals and organizations across sectors with common challenges such as:
 - Accessing resources
 - Commercializing research discoveries
 - Building a thriving talent pipeline in emerging industries
 - Establishing pathways to economic revitalization
 - Creating jobs that support financial well-being
 - Strengthening social and professional networks
 - Providing space and opportunity for collaboration and partnership
- Activating the Hub
 - Six factors needed in every community to get off the ground:
 - Multi-level government and university support
 - A champion/ambassador
 - Defined market demand
 - Unique value proposition
 - Strategic sector(s) focus
 - Management dedication to supporting tenant growth
- Next Steps
 - June-August 2024
 - SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis
 - Community assets
 - Real estate review
 - Comparative matrices
 - August-October 2024
 - Focus groups
 - Interviews
 - Community session
 - October-November 2024
 - Financial model
 - Governance
 - Operations plan

Discussion

- The financial model has not been finalized yet, but will likely include private sector development of land contributed by the City, with revenues coming from the programming and rental space (**Shoop/O’Blenis**)
- Student interaction at the Innovation Hub is not envisioned at this time; however, partnerships will be developed with local universities to ensure alignment between degree programs and the skills required by the companies that we hope to attract (**Shoop/O’Blenis**)
- Governance has not been finalized; several models will be explored to determine the best fit (**Shoop/O’Blenis**)
- These types of initiatives are done in partnership with various levels of government (city, state, and federal) and collaborating with colleges and universities; there is often a work group or steering committee made up of community members (**Shoop/O’Blenis**)
- The financial model will most likely be approved by the Elevate Southwest Board of Directors by the end of the year (**Morales/O’Blenis**)
- The images provided are just conceptual drawings; the actual results will vary depending on the various property owners’ wishes and other considerations (**Morales/Cabrera**)
- Elevate Southwest does not intend to execute the whole plan; the hope is that private investment will join in and contribute to the development of the area (**Mayor Nicholls**)
- Creating a mixed-use, live-work-play community around the Hub is key to the success of this endeavor (**Mayor Nicholls/Morales/O’Blenis**)

II. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Reichelt presented an update on the City’s Strategic Plan as follows:

- The Strategic Plan (Plan)
 - Long-term roadmap for prioritizing objectives, initiatives, and resources
 - Living document – reviewed and updated regularly
 - Vision of where the City wants to be in the future and the steps it will take to get there
 - Five-year plan (increments)
- History of the Plan
 - The City began the strategic planning process in 2020
 - Hosted a series of community focus groups, surveys, etc.
 - City Council held Vision and Goal Setting Sessions in 2020 and 2021
 - Initial Plan was adopted in 2021
 - Developed a series of Statements, five Strategic Outcomes, and several priority initiatives
 - City Council regularly reviews and updates the Plan
 - Staff regularly updates the status of priority initiatives
- 2024 Plan Updates
 - City Council had the opportunity to review, discuss and update the Plan at their annual City Council Retreat in March 2024
 - Reaffirmed commitment to the existing Vision Statement and Strategic Outcomes
 - Revised the definitions of three Strategic Outcomes
 - Reviewed and discussed priority initiatives
 - Identified several new initiatives to incorporate into the Plan, and some fell off
 - The updated Plan reflects these changes and additions

- Vision Statement
 - Yuma is a thriving, safe and prosperous community with opportunities powered by innovation, partnerships, collaboration and robust education –a welcoming and unique place that all generations are proud to share
- Strategic Outcomes
 - Safe and Prosperous – Yuma is a prosperous city that supports thriving businesses, access to education, and multi-generational opportunities, with safety as its cornerstone
 - Active and Appealing – Yuma plans and leverages its natural resources, public spaces, and cultural amenities to support an active and appealing community
 - Connected and Engaged – Yuma is connected and engaged through cutting-edge technology, active communication, forward-looking partnerships, and ongoing public involvement
 - Unique and Creative – Yuma is a unique and creative community, built on our shared history, sense of place, and civic pride
 - Respected and Responsible – Yuma is a trusted steward of City resources; relied upon to provide regional leadership, premier services, and facilities
- Priority Initiatives
 - Priority Initiatives are organized into categories based on status
 - Completed
 - Underway
 - Ongoing
 - New Initiatives
 - During the retreat the Council participated in a ranking exercise
 - Those initiatives that ranked as “top” or “high” priority are included
 - All initiatives discussed, regardless of ranking, are included at the back of the plan for future reference
- Completed Initiatives
 - 2021
 - Transition to Invoice Cloud (Connected & Engaged)
 - Deploy intranet to improve internal communications (Unique & Creative)
 - Issued a bond to fix the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System shortfall (Respected & Responsible)
 - 2022
 - Update the General Plan (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Community Development Code Update of the 2018 Plumbing, Fuel, Gas, Mechanical and the 2020 National Electric Code (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Update the General Plan and identify where development will occur (Respected & Responsible)
 - 2023
 - Provide competitive benefit and compensation plans to be an employer of choice (Respected & Responsible)
 - 2024
 - Update City’s Investment Policy (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Update contractor self-inspection program for lath, drywall, roof nailing (Unique & Creative)

- Underway Initiatives
 - Desert Dunes expansion (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Update of zoning regulations (Safe & Prosperous)
 - 10 text amendments have been completed as of June 2024
 - Build East Mesa Park (Active & Appealing)
 - Revitalize Kennedy Skate Park (Active & Appealing)
 - Support Spaceport as a hub for science and regional attraction (Unique & Creative)
 - Complete Parks Master Plan and determine priority implementation strategy (Active & Appealing)
- Ongoing Initiatives
 - Increase Downtown use and visibility (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Pursue widening of US 95 to Yuma Proving Ground (Safe & Prosperous)
 - Prioritize public-private partnerships (Respected & Responsible)
 - Keep taxes low and relevant to residents' desire for services (Respected & Responsible)
 - Actively support the protection of the region's Colorado River Water Rights (Respected & Responsible)
 - Expansion of the Police Academy (Respected & Responsible)
- New Initiatives
 - Safe & Prosperous
 - Expand efforts related to economic development
 - Encourage and attract new industry (zone ready, plan ready)
 - Identify adequate staffing for public safety
 - Seek voter approval for base adjustment to annual expenditure limitation
 - Install directional signage on 4th Avenue connecting to Downtown
 - Expand public safety infrastructure out east
 - Update regulations and processes to increase housing opportunities for all
 - Respected & Responsible
 - Participate in 2027 Colorado River Operations Plan
 - Advocate for local control by proposing our own bills –be proactive, not reactive
 - Unique & Creative
 - Develop Innovation District
 - Connected & Engaged
 - Hold joint City/County meetings twice per year
 - Establish private-public partnership for Hotel del Sol
 - Joint K-20 education opportunities –Elevate Southwest
 - Establish Innovation Hub
 - Active & Appealing
 - Care for existing infrastructure –improve road conditions, park revitalization program
 - Beautify the community's overall curb appeal –landscape rights-of-way
 - Develop a partnership for trail connections –establish a trail/bike path connection (irrigation districts) establish equitable maintenance partnerships BOR/ADOT/schools

- Potential Initiatives

POTENTIAL INITIATIVES

These initiatives were presented at the 2024 Council Retreat but did not rise to the top of the list when the Council ranked items.

SAFE & PROSPEROUS

- Enhance collaboration between City and County development departments
- Focus on acquiring land for innovation district and industrial development
- Implement an Intelligent Transportation System

ACTIVE & APPEALING

- Develop a plan for and support Riverfront development
- I-8 visual improvements
- Bring drive-in movie theater to Yuma
- Plant native trees
- Integrated Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan update

CONNECTED & ENGAGED

- Youth Government Day
- Establish a Youth Council or Youth Involvement Forums
- Expand partnerships with military
- Expand online public document offerings/access
- Recruit a trade school to Yuma (advocate)
- Research and develop AI uses and City applications
- Hold City meetings – geographic areas
- Enhance and improve City website (department ownership)
- Explore resident notification tools (SMS, apps, etc.)
- Parcel file access (online)
- Provide tools for businesses to expand in foreign markets

UNIQUE & CREATIVE

- Documentation/history of City of Yuma
- Create a simplified process for murals and public art
- Underground overhead utilities
- Use drone technology to enhance City operations
- Use of public-private partnership to restore/repair facilities
- Honor and preserve the history of Pioneer Cemetery
- Find unique way to fund historic City Hall restoration
- Use of North End Redevelopment Fund to enhance or improve historic downtown
- Create partnership with Yuma County Historical Society to sustain Molina Block and Sanguinetti House Museum

RESPECTED & RESPONSIBLE

- Increased Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for recruitment and retention
- Expansion of the Municipal Court and Prosecutor's Office

- Next Steps

- Updated Plan is on the October 16th City Council agenda for adoption
- Continue to complete priority initiatives
- Continue to review and update the Plan
 - Ensures that the Plan evolves with the City's needs

Discussion

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance needs to be kept in mind as the City moves forward with various projects; ADA can be added as a new initiative at the next City Council Retreat (**McClendon/Reichelt**)
- Youth Government Day and the establishment of a Youth Council or Youth Involvement Forums are included under potential initiatives; these ideas were mentioned at the 2024 City Council Retreat but were not ranked as high priority and will not necessarily be pursued at this time (**Shelton/Reichelt**)
- Development of the Colorado River for recreation and tourism is included in the City's economic development initiatives, and is also a part of the reason that the downtown area was selected for the future Innovation District (**Mayor Nicholls/Shoop/Reichelt**)

III. REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA OF OCTOBER 1, 2024

Motion Consent Agenda Item C.7 – Sole Source: Advanced Traffic Management System (purchase web-based software and communication equipment for an initial expenditure of \$321,942 and an annual expenditure of \$35,820 for years two through five) (SS-25-117) (Eng)

Motion Consent Agenda Item C.8 – Cooperative Purchase Agreement: Intelligent Transportation System/Traffic Signal Equipment (purchase of traffic signal equipment needed for a functioning Intelligent Transportation System for an expenditure of \$501,670.64) (Eng)

Mayor Nicholls declared a conflict of interest on Motion Consent Agenda Items C.7 and C.8 as his firm is involved in some of the Intelligent Transportation System Work, turned the meeting over to Deputy Mayor Morris, and left the dais.

Discussion

- The software is an annual license good for up to 99 signals; the plan is to update four corridors, which includes: 16th Street (from Pacific Ave to Avenue C), 4th Ave (from 1st Street to 32nd Street), Avenue B (from 8th Street to 32nd Street), and 24th Street (from Arizona Avenue to Avenue B) (**Morris/Wostenberg**)
- The traffic signal equipment will utilize cellular modems on the FirstNet wireless communications network; equipment for monitoring and controlling the Intelligent Transportation System will be purchased and installed in an existing City facility (**Morris/Wostenberg**)

Mayor Nicholls returned to the dais.

Motion Consent Agenda Item C.10 – Authorize Settlement: Aguilera Notice of Claim (authorize settlement in the amount of \$25,000 for the claim stemming from an injury to a minor child at Carver Park)

Discussion

- This settlement arises from an incident where a minor was injured on a slide; Parks and Recreation staff had blocked off the slide with a piece of plywood and screws and an unknown party removed the plywood, leaving the screws exposed (**Mayor Nicholls/Files**)
- Based on the scheduling of Parks and Recreation staff inspections, it is believed the plywood was removed at night, and the child was injured the following day (**Mayor Nicholls/Files**)

Resolution R2024-053 – Resolution: Amend City of Yuma American Rescue Plan Act Project List (authorize project budget amendments to obligate and expend the City’s Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds allocation of \$23,071,661 before the grant expires) (City Admin)

Discussion

- The recommendation to allocate the residual savings to the East Mesa Community Park is based in part on the park being identified as high priority in the Parks, Arts, Recreation and Trails Master Plan; other projects are in the works to rehabilitate the City’s existing parks (**Morales/Simonton**)

Ordinance O2024-032 – Amendment: Ordinance O2022-032 (extend the time to comply with the rezoning conditions for the property at the northwest corner of 37th Street and Avenue 10E from the Low Density Residential (R-1-40) District to Medium Density Residential (R-2-5) District) (ZONE-39444-2022) (Plng & Nbhd Svcs/Cmty Plng)

Mayor Nicholls declared a conflict of interest on Ordinance O2024-032 as his firm represents the applicant.

EXECUTIVE SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

Motion (Morales/Smith): To adjourn the meeting to Executive Session. Voice vote: **adopted** 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor

Approved at the City Council Meeting of: _____ City Clerk: _____
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