

## THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Founded in 1890 ■ A Gannett newspaper ■ Incorporating The Phoenix Gazette

EUGENE C. PULLIAM  
1889-1975 ■ Publisher, 1946-1975

JOHN ZIDICH  
President and Publisher

**EDITORIALS REPRESENT** the opinion of the newspaper, whose Editorial Board consists of: John Zidich, Joanna Allhands, Monica Alonzo-Dunsmoor, Steve Benson, Phil Boas, Jennifer Dokes, Cindy Hernandez, Kathleen Ingley, Robert Leger, Randy Lovely, Doug MacEachern, Robert Robb, Bob Schuster, Linda Valdez and Ken Western

### THE ISSUE: CHARTING OUR FUTURE



DAVE SEIBERT/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

What's striking in the poll is how parochial differences disappear when Arizonans focus on what matters most.

## ARIZONANS OFFER A WORKABLE VISION FOR WHAT'S NEXT

**W**hat do Arizonans want? In these tough times, it isn't an academic question but an essential guidepost.

When state and local budget are gushing red ink, we must have a firm sense of our goals — or risk making choices that leave Arizona adrift and strategically unprepared for the future.

The new Gallup Arizona Poll, developed in conjunction with the Center for the Future of Arizona, gives fresh insight into how Arizonans feel about their communities and what they want going forward.

What's striking in the report on the poll, "The Arizona We Want," is how parochial differences disappear when Arizonans focus on what matters most.



Lattie Coor

The rural-urban tug of war, the fierce competition among cities, suburban rivalries and regional friction evaporate when we look at core values. Natural beauty and open spaces are our greatest assets.

We want high-quality jobs and the educational tools to create a 21st-century workforce and sharpen our own skills to be part of it. We realize that Arizona falls short as a magnet to keep and attract young college graduates.

This overarching perspective should help shape the state and local responses to this economic crisis.

The challenge is enormous. Arizona is still at the bottom of the economic cycle, and every signal indicates that recovery will be slow. Tax revenues are weak for most local governments and even worse for the state.

Cuts are unavoidable. But they



must be made in ways that position Arizona for growth and keep us pointed toward an Arizona that fits our values.

"The Arizona We Want" is one of several planning initiatives that are gathering steam right now.

They all recognize that Arizonans must examine the fundamental ways the state operates — or risk losing the qualities we value most. The ways we raise revenue, where we spend it, how we set priorities, the structure of basic functions and the election process are all due for a fresh look.

Former Arizona State University President Lattie Coor, who heads the Center for the Future of Arizona, has pledged to help act as "keeper of the vision." It's a welcome and important role.

But Arizonans have done a lot of "visioning" over the years. Cynics are already predicting that here's another report that will sit on a shelf gathering dust.

What do Arizonans want? The answers are meaningless unless they trigger a new question: How do we put those ideas into action?

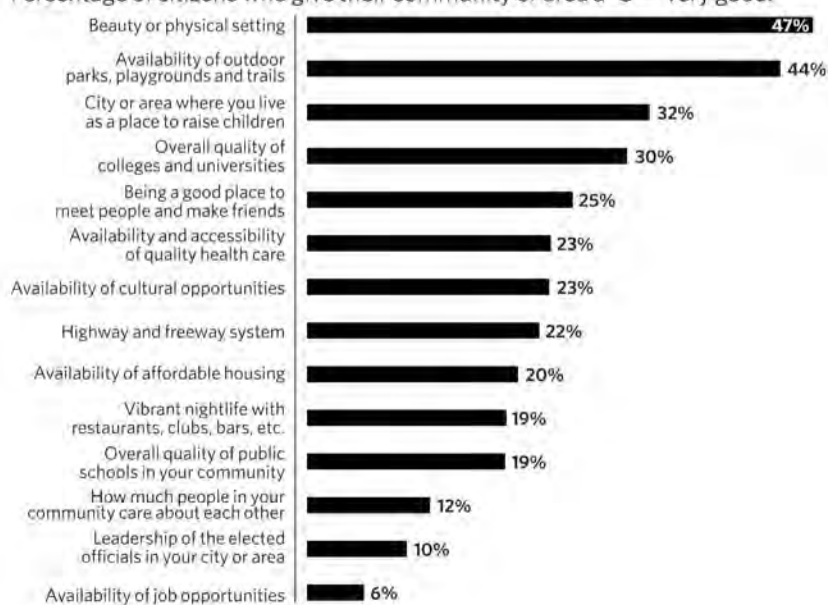
The current planning efforts are an encouraging sign of potential progress.

The biggest point of agreement in the Gallup Arizona Poll was over leadership. Just 10 percent of those surveyed said that elected officials represent their interest. An equally paltry percentage rated the performance of those officials as "very good."

Arizona needs leaders. Those who are in place should be more effective. And new ones should step forward.

### Arizonans rate their own communities

Percentage of citizens who give their community or area a "5 — very good."



Source: Center for the Future of Arizona