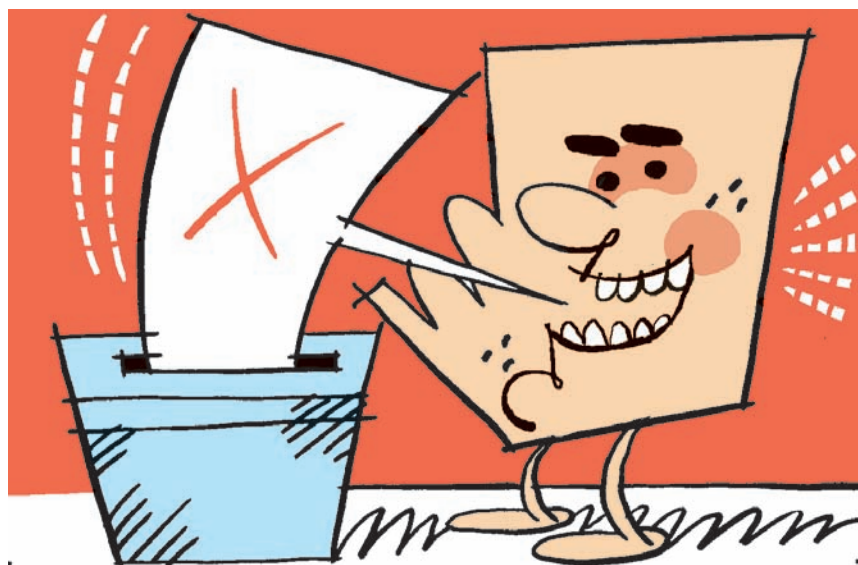


An Arizona for all

Gallup Arizona Poll reveals what state citizens want and what needs to be done to get there



By Ann Brown
 ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Arizonans love their state, but it can do better. Much better. That's the conclusion of "The Arizona We Want," a report by The Center for the Future of Arizona, based on a Gallup Organization public opinion research survey to find out what Arizonans are thinking.

"Most states don't tend to have a vision," said Lattie Coor, chairman and CEO of The Center for the Future of Arizona and Arizona State University president emeritus. "The Arizona We Want" report was released this month.

Arizona has a vision that was developed by the nonpartisan Center for the Future of Arizona, which Coor founded in 2002. The vision statement was developed from a review of major policy reports from 1989 through 2004.

The vision, according to Coor, was too abstract; it gives a view from 50,000 feet. And it was in planner-speak. A citizen's voice was needed.

To capture that citizen voice, to get inside Arizonans' heads, the center wanted a valid, high-quality poll. Enter Gallup, which Coor calls a "marquee organization."

Surprises

From the results of the 3,600 interviews with Arizonans, Coor said he was surprised by how attached Arizona citizens are to their state. The Gallup telephone survey indicated that 36 percent of Arizona citizens are loyal to and emotionally connected to their communities.

Interpretation of this statistic: Many Arizonans are proud of where they live and would recommend it to others.

The degree to which Arizonans agree was another surprise for Coor. Among ideas residents agree upon and favor:

- insurance programs for all Arizonans, with payment assistance for those who need it.
- school programs that ensure students are career or college ready.
- investment in technology and facilities for renewable energy resources.
- development of water-management plans.
- preservation of the natural environment.

Disturbing results

On the downside, only 10 percent of Arizona citizens trust elected officials to act in their best interest, Coor said.

On top of that, only 26.1 percent in Arizona's urbanized areas believe elected officials are capable of dealing with complex concepts and issues. Those dismal results indicate a clear lack of leadership.

The second disturbing result, in Coor's view: the breadth of belief that Arizona is not a good place for young people.

That validates something we all knew: Our state's greatest export is our educated young people, who leave Arizona for employment and lifestyle opportunities elsewhere.

Where do we go from here?

The Arizona We Want "has the power to be a call to arms," said Coor last week. He's encouraged by the results

because people love the state and it is not Balkanized. There is the ability to pull together to make and take advantage of opportunities for Arizona.

Among the most powerful, poignant parts of the report are five issues that must be resolved if The Arizona We Want will be achieved. Arizona needs:

- fully prepared leadership and governance structures appropriate to the 21st century.
- an investment strategy.
- a clear and sustained commitment to global competitiveness.
- to find and implement a constructive solution to illegal immigration
- a balanced and stable tax system.

The center is tackling leadership and government structure, education and job creation, all of which will require collaborative efforts. Coor said he's building "strategic alliances" around the state to help resolve the needs that are holding back our state.

For example, programs such as the O'Connor House project (www.oconnorhouse.org) and Governing Arizona (www.governingarizona.org) are bringing ideas for leadership and governance reform to our state, Coor said. Such efforts should use The Arizona We Want as a guideposts in their efforts.

The Arizona We Want Institute will shepherd the report and develop metrics and scorecards to measure progress toward these goals.

Policy, not politics

Among the values and benefits of the survey is its apolitical nature. It can be, and should be, a springboard for leaders and candidates to discuss what is important to Arizonans.

Ron Shoopman, president of the Southern Arizona Leadership Council, said last week that the survey cannot only help form public policy based on what people want, it can be a catalyst to engage community groups. Shoopman pointed to the Tucson Regional Town Hall held in May 2007 as a parallel. Literacy was identified as a community priority and the town hall spawned the Literacy for Life Coalition. Similar successes can evolve from The Arizona We Want report.

It's also encouraging to see a statewide visioning effort that may dovetail with our local Imagine Greater Tucson, which is in its infancy.

The political polarization of our state, especially surrounding the budget debacle, can be discouraging. The report is refreshing, encouraging and thought-provoking.

It shows a well-loved state packed with potential and a citizenry that can see The Arizona We Want.

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For more information:

- Read "Conversation starter" about the relocated Sandra Day O'Connor house as a center for civil talk that leads to civic action at tiny.azstarnet.com/1210
- Find the Star editorial, "Civil talk can lead to a better Arizona," on the O'Connor House Project at tiny.azstarnet.com/1211
- Imagine Greater Tucson will have a Web site available in the next few weeks. For information or to become involved, e-mail imaginegreater@tucson@gmail.com

HOW DO YOUR VIEWS COMPARE?

Participate in the Arizona We Want survey online and compare your results to those of the Gallup Poll. The online version of this story includes a source code for participating in the poll. Go to www.azstarnet.com/opinion for more information on the survey.

The poll takes about 20 minutes. We'll report what Star readers have to say.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID FITZSIMMONS

THE VISION

In 2005, the Center for the Future of Arizona gleaned from 50 major Arizona policy reports a one-page vision for our state. The vision was refined in statewide community forums and has been endorsed by more than 70 Arizona public and private organizations.

The Vision for the Future of Arizona:

To be one of the best places in the nation to live a rewarding and productive life.

To fulfill that promise, Arizonans must commit to these interrelated goals:

Opportunities for all

Provide substantial and sustained support for talent of all ages and backgrounds through a top-quality educational system. Enhance opportunities for Arizonans who work but remain poor.

Quality of life

Preserve and enhance all aspects of Arizona's physical and cultural environment by maintaining significant open space, improving air quality, enhancing



arts and culture, and establishing recreational spaces throughout the state and especially within the built environment. Provide adequate infrastructure to support our growing population. Improve our quality of life as the state grows.

Knowledge-based economy

Vigorously pursue a competitive knowl-

edge-based economy that is among the strongest and most successful in the nation. Become a sustainable, internationally competitive "innovation" economy, supported by a world-class education system and an entrepreneurial environment.

Source: The Center for the Future of Arizona



THE BIG PICTURE FROM THE GALLUP ARIZONA POLL

- Arizona citizens agree on more than they disagree.
- Arizonans are surprisingly attached to their communities.
- The state's natural beauty and open spaces are seen by citizens as our greatest asset.
- Citizens are not at all satisfied with their elected leaders.
- Arizona residents want jobs.
- Arizona is not a great place for young college graduates.



ISSUES THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED

- Arizona needs fully prepared leadership and governance structures appropriate to the 21st century.
- Arizona needs an investment strategy.
- Arizona needs a clear and sustained commitment to global competitiveness.
- A constructive solution to illegal immigration must be found and implemented.
- Arizona needs a balanced and stable tax system.

DID YOU KNOW

Lattie F. Coor, president of Arizona State University from 1990 to 2002, founded The Center for the Future of Arizona when he stepped down from the ASU post.

Coor calls the center a "do-tank" — not a think tank. During his 25 years as a university president (he was also president of the University of Vermont from 1976 to 1989), Coor said he saw great ideas that never went anywhere.

The center's goal is a state with opportunities and quality of life for everyone, now and in the future. In this effort, Coor said, the center focuses on initiatives involving collaboration. It tackles no more than three important-to-Arizona issues at a time for up to five years each. At the end of five years, the initiative is either merged into another group or is spun off into a separate entity.

Coor points to the Beat the Odds Institute as one of the center's successes. The center's research study "Why Some Schools with Latino Children Beat the Odds... and Others Don't,"



Lattie Coor
 Former president of Arizona State University (1990-2002) and head of The Center for the Future of Arizona.

published in 2006, revealed keys to success in 12 schools where student achievement was better than expected when compared with more than 330 similar schools.

In 2007, the Beat the Odds Institute was created to put the research findings

into action. Its Beat the Odds School Partners program trains Arizona K-12 principals to apply the lessons learned for success on their campuses. The program has been extended into the Marana and Sunnyside school districts, Coor said last week.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE GALLUP ARIZONA WEB SURVEY

- Citizens favor school programs that ensure students are career/college ready, and they want academic preparation to be competitive with the rest of the world.
- Citizens favor insurance programs for all Arizonans, with payment assistance for those who need it.
- Citizens favor two ideas — job-training programs and lower business taxes.
- Citizens favor adopting water-management plans statewide and they want the natural environment preserved.
- Citizens favor investing in technology and facilities for solar, wind and other renewable energy sources.
- Citizens are most willing to support an increase in taxes if the revenues are used to increase access to health care.
- Citizens believe that elected officials must understand complex issues to govern effectively in the 21st century.

8 GOALS OF THE CITIZENS' AGENDA

Based on the results of the Gallup Poll Arizona by The Arizona We Want.

Caring for the economy

1. Create quality jobs for all Arizonans.
2. Prepare Arizonans of all ages for the 21st-century work force.

Caring for People

3. Make Arizona "the place to be" for talented young people.
4. Provide health insurance for all, with payment assistance for those who need it.

Caring for Communities

5. Protect Arizona's natural environment, wa-



6. Build a modern, effective transportation system and infrastructure.
7. Empower citizens and increase civic involvement.
8. Foster citizen well-being and sense of connection to one another.

HOW THE GALLUP ARIZONA POLL WAS CONDUCTED

The Center for the Future of Arizona commissioned the Gallup Organization to conduct a comprehensive public opinion research survey about what Arizonans are thinking.

A telephone poll of 3,606 Arizonans included about 500 "cell-phone only" for representation from younger people. Calls were made from mid-November 2008 through late January. Randomly selected participants represent the state's population.

Of the telephone-poll respondents, 831 participated in an additional Web survey.

The poll's price tag was \$525,000 and was paid for by a varied "constellation" of funding sources, according to Lattie F. Coor, head of the Center for the Future of Arizona.

The report with the funding sources is available online at thearizonawewant.org