



04/14/2009

Arizona community leaders to focus on transportation

Approximately 150 Arizonans, including two Navajo County residents, will gather in Tucson on April 19-22 to address Arizona's transportation needs.

The 94th Arizona Town Hall, titled "From Here to There: Transportation Opportunities for Arizona," will develop consensus-based solutions to Arizona's transportation challenges.

Among other topics, participants will consider funding (including the impact of federal stimulus funds); transportation within and among Arizona's diverse communities; and how best to establish priorities.

The Town Hall will take place at the Doubletree Hotel Tucson at Reid Park.

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer will welcome participants to the opening Sunday dinner by video.

Monday's 7 a.m. breakfast will feature a panel presentation by authors of a comprehensive background report prepared just for this Town Hall. The report, created under the direction of ASU Professors Michael Kuby and Aaron Golub, can be downloaded from the Arizona Town Hall Web site at www.aztownhall.org.

Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters will address Arizona Town Hall participants at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, April 20.

Monday evening will feature a panel discussion on the CANAMEX corridor, the trade corridor that connects Canada, the United States and Mexico.

Panel members include former Congressman Jim Kolbe who currently serves as chair of CANAMEX, CANAMEX Executive Director Marisa Walker and the chairman of the Nogales-Santa Cruz Port Authority, James (J.B.) Manson. The program will take place at 7 p.m.

Tuesday's lunch program will feature James Charlier, an expert on sustainable transportation systems.

After the Town Hall concludes, the participants' recommendations will be available on the Town Hall's Web site by May 15. The recommendations also will be combined with the background report into a final report and formally published in August.

Participants from Navajo County include:

* Greg Tock, publisher and editor of the White Mountain Independent in Show Low

* Homero Vela, Navajo County public works director

For more than 46 years, Arizona Town Hall has served as a "think tank" for Arizona leaders. Town Hall recommendations serve as a valuable resource for policymakers because they do not represent the agenda of a particular group or political perspective.

Instead, Arizona Town Hall reports contain the informed consensus of Arizonans from different political parties, professions and geographic areas of the state.

Due to limited space and the balancing of perspectives required by the Town Hall process, participation in discussion is by invitation only.

However, attendance at the meal programs is open to the public (subject to preregistration and availability). For more information about the Arizona Town Hall, visit www.aztownhall.org or call (602) 252-9600.

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