

West Side STORY

A newsletter from Phoenix City Councilman Claude Mattox, District 5 . September 2008

A Message from Councilman Claude Mattox



Dear Residents,

With the summer break officially over, kids are back in school and your Phoenix City Council is now back in session and ready to work hard for residents!

I look forward to the future of District 5 and to updating you on our new projects.

Sincerely,

Councilman Claude Mattox



District 5 staff
L to R: Gracie Marquez, Renie Macias, Rebecca Woods
and Pat Severance

*Remember to always watch kids around water.
Have a wonderful and safe fall season!*

- Claude, Pat, Rebecca, Renie and Gracie

Phoenix Crime Down Sharply

Violent and property crimes in Phoenix saw their largest decline in more than 10 years during the first half of 2008.

Police say that reports of violent crimes in the city were down 6.4 percent from the January to June period in 2007, while reports of property crime fell by 8.4 percent during the same six-month period. These are the largest decreases recorded during a six-month reporting period in the past decade.

When the city's population is taken into account, the numbers represent a decline of 8.5 percent in violent crimes and 10.4 percent in property crimes per 100,000 residents.

"It's great to hear the numbers that this crime went down or that crime went down, but what it really means to the community is that there are fewer victims out there on the streets," noted Public Safety Manager Jack F. Harris.

He cited multiple factors for the decline, including programs involving crime suppression and targeted enforcement.

The Police Department's continuing efforts to zero in on the "worst of the worst" – felons wanted on warrants, repeat offenders, drug dealers and others involved in major violent and property crimes – also played a major role.

Mark Your Calendar

Community Breakfast

7:30 to 9 a.m.
Thursday, Sept. 25
Sizzler American Grill
5060 W. Indian School Road

Mobile Office Visit

10 a.m. to noon
Saturday, Oct. 11
Royal Palm Park
15th and Butler avenues

District 5 Community Forum

6:30 to 8 p.m.
Thursday, Nov. 20
Fire Station #54
9820 W. Campbell Ave.

New Fire Station in District 5

The Phoenix Fire Department serves the fifth-largest city in the nation – more than 516 square miles and 1.52 million people. This summer, the Phoenix Fire Department, city officials and residents in west Phoenix celebrated the grand opening of Fire Station #60, located at 19th and Dunlap avenues.

This newest fire station is a 9,000-square-foot facility that will accommodate a crew of eight members. Currently, one crew of four firefighters rotate 24-hour shifts and staff one engine.

The station is the second utilizing the “infill” concept to reduce response times by reducing call volumes to surrounding fire stations.

Superior energy efficient materials and methods were utilized in the construction of this facility. It is anticipated to operate with 50 percent less energy of other buildings its size and is expected to save the cost of its construction in reduced energy consumption within its life cycle.

Fire Station #60 is the 13th new station funded with 2001 and 2006 bonds within the last five years.



METRO's I-10 West Extension

While METRO light rail prepares to begin operations on its 20-mile starter line in December, plans are already underway on the I-10 West high capacity transit study to evaluate a potential connection to the West Valley. The study area for this extension is from 83rd Avenue on the west, Seventh Street on the east, McDowell Road on the north and Buckeye Road on the south.

METRO has identified the median of I-10 West as the preferred alignment between 83rd Avenue and the I-17 freeway. The alignment connecting from the I-17 to the existing downtown Phoenix light rail line as well as the various station locations/elements and type of transit mode (light rail or bus rapid transit) are still under evaluation.

To share your input and learn of future public meeting dates for the I-10 West study, visit the “Future Extensions” page at metrolightrail.org or contact Monica Hernandez at 602-322-4427 or mhernandez@metrolightrail.org.

Swimmers Make World Record Splash

Arizona swimmers swam into the Guinness Book of World Record beating a record held by England in the one-hour relay swim.

The event, called Kids Saving Kids Relay, attracted friends and family members of nearly 240 swimmers to the Paradise Valley Pool with a goal to get 205 swimmers to finish relays in an hour. That would surpass an existing 204 participant relay on record in the same time by England swimmers in 2007.

The event was kicked off by Councilman Claude Mattox, a former competitive swimmer and drowning prevention advocate. When the event ended, 234 swimmers swam laps in one hour, breaking the record by 30!



\$1 Water Bill Unfunded Mandate

You may have noticed a \$1 increase on your water bill beginning Aug. 1. Due to the state Legislature passing stiffer penalties for those caught driving under the influence, jail fees have been increased by 53 percent this year, to \$17.6 million. The city now must pay Maricopa County for each offender it arrests or jails on misdemeanor charges.

Since the city made significant budget cuts earlier this year, there was no source to cover the unplanned County's increase. To make up the difference, City Council voted unanimously to add \$1 to the jail excise fee to be added to the water bill. The only other alternative was to cut city services, which city staff and residents would not want to see this happen.

The city has created a special task force to discuss how to increase general fund revenues. If you or your neighbors have any suggestions, contact my office at 602-262-7446 or e-mail council.district.5@phoenix.gov. We'll be sure to share all ideas and feedback with the task force.

As your Councilman, it's my goal to eliminate this fee from your water bill.

METRO Northwest Extension and Royal Palm Neighborhood

METRO light rail will soon begin construction of the first three-mile extension from the initial light rail starter line. This new section of the METRO system, known as the Northwest Extension, will run along 19th Avenue from Bethany Home Road to Dunlap Avenue.

The alignment will require removal of the existing frontage road on the east side of 19th Avenue and the restriction of access to 19th Avenue from most neighborhood streets north of Butler Drive.

To help ease the traffic impact to the neighborhood, METRO will be installing either a series of cul-de-sacs (dead-ends) or frontage roads connecting local streets north of Butler Drive with Lawrence Lane or 19th Avenue.

The options have been presented to residents of Townley Avenue between 19th Avenue and Dunlap. They were asked to select which of these options they prefer. Although the selection deadline has passed, you may contact Kerry Wilcoxon, the city's Street Transportation Department, at 602-262-4613 or kerry.wilcoxon.gov if you have any questions about the options or the balloting process.

City Hails First 'Gold' Green Building

Phoenix recently celebrated its first city building to be awarded a gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. The designation went to the Glenrosa Service Center, which houses about 100 city employees from four departments on a site at Glenrosa and 43rd avenues.

The building, which opened in 2005, was designed to be more energy efficient and to use fewer resources than traditional buildings. The

use of indigenous plants and water-efficient fixtures reduces water use by an estimated 340,000 gallons annually. City employees there use a fleet of 49 alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles. And half the building's electricity comes from renewable power sources.

The center is the third public building in Arizona to receive the designation under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, rating system.



Dimitrios Laloudakis from the city's Public Works Department highlights the recycled carpet and under floor air distribution systems featured at the Glenrosa Service Center, which increase efficiency of HVAC system by supplying air closer to users.

Metal Thefts Continue

As the cost of living continues to rise, along with the price for scrap metal, thieves are becoming more desperate. Phoenix Police metal-theft investigators report that incidents of stolen copper wire, copper tubing and other material are on the rise. The number of copper thefts spiked more than 430 percent from 2003 to 2007, according to statistics police issued this August. Last year, Phoenix police reported more than 2,700 cases of stolen copper that led to \$7.2 million in losses for owners.

The city of Phoenix reported more than \$1.4 million in losses related to copper wire and other metal that thieves stripped from city buildings in the past two years. In addition, Phoenix's Street Maintenance staff has found hundreds of manhole covers and catch basin grates missing throughout the city. Aside from the substantial cost involved in replacing these items, there also is a tremendous safety concern for vehicles and pedestrians.

Street Transportation staff is working with the Phoenix Police Department detectives assigned to work with scrap metal yards to find a solution to this growing and costly problem. If anyone notices manhole covers or catch basin grates missing, call the Street Transportation Department at 602-262-6441. If you see any suspicious activity, please call 9-1-1 immediately.

Always Watch Kids Around Water

Billboards featuring a water safety message have been on display throughout the city. Councilman Mattox recently re-launched a new water safety campaign to remind parents or guardians to watch children around water. With the number of water-related deaths this past summer, it's important to continue safety efforts into the fall and winter seasons.

The campaign is a collaborative effort between District 5, the Molina Media Group and Clear Channel Communications.

Water-related accidents can happen anywhere and any time. Be watchful for pools, bath tubs or anywhere where there is standing water. It only takes a second for a tragedy to occur, so keep your eyes open and educate yourself on safety tips by visiting phoenix.gov/fire/watersafe. *Remember to always watch kids around water!*



An outdoor campaign features billboards to educate residents on the importance of water safety. The billboards can be found at various locations in Phoenix.



Update: METRO Light Rail

Expect a train any time, from either direction as METRO light rail vehicle testing is underway on Valley roadways.

Trains are currently being tested on the tracks in east Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. Testing will gradually expand throughout the 20-mile system during the rest of the summer and fall. Testing will run right up until METRO's grand opening weekend of Dec. 27 – 28, 2008; official passenger service begins Dec. 29.

METRO wants to remind you to stay aware and stay safe. So as you drive, bike or walk around the METRO system, please follow these simple guidelines:

- Light rail is quiet; look and listen for the train.
- Obey the traffic signals; turn only with a green arrow.
- Pedestrians: use the crosswalk and obey all signals.
- Never drive, bike, walk or skateboard in the trackway.
- Stay clear of the overhead wires; they are energized.

METRO light rail is a 20-mile system that connects the cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. The in-road system will have 28 stations, eight park-and-ride facilities and 50 trains. Trains will operate 20 hours a day, every day of the week, stopping at stations every 10 minutes during daytime hours. Sharing the same fare structure as the Valley's bus service, fares are very reasonable beginning at \$1.25 for a single ride or \$2.50 for an all day pass.

For more information on how to ride and ways to be safe around METRO light rail, visit metrolightrail.org.

Fire Department Investigators Get New Mobile Office

In the past, Phoenix fire investigators would spend hours at the scene of a suspicious blaze, shifting between the remains of a charred building and the cab of a pickup truck. Phoenix Fire Department recently announced its 16 investigators now have a fully loaded, 35-foot mobile activity center from which to file search warrants, document evidence and conduct other business.

The donated RV, worth \$120,000, is wrapped in an artistic tribute to Phoenix law enforcement. The vehicle and equipment

were donated through the efforts of the 100 Club of Arizona, a local non-profit group that raises money to support

law enforcement officers and their families.

The interior includes a flat-screen TV, refrigerator, computer, fax machine, phone, video camera and other amenities to keep investigators or witnesses comfortable.

Temperatures can reach 1,400 degrees inside a burning building and the site remains hot afterward. The office atmosphere of the mobile activity center will give investigators the opportunity to cool off and continue their work.



"West Side Story" is posted on the city's Web site at phoenix.gov/district5. For information, disability accommodations or materials in alternate formats, call 602-262-7446 or 602-495-5810/TTY.

Your comments, suggestions and story ideas are welcome by calling Councilman Mattox at 602-262-7446, e-mail council.district.5@phoenix.gov or mail to City of Phoenix, 200 W. Washington St., 11th Floor, Phoenix, AZ 85003.

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