

RR Republican Club – Eloy Update

By Conrad Tolson

Eloy Mayor Andy Sutton visited our club in February, accompanied by Mackenzie Letcher, Assistant City Manager, and Dan Symer, Community Development Director.

Eloy's growth potential is about where Casa Grande was 5 years ago. Eloy has its own utilities, and its close proximity to the Interstate and railroad are a business magnet. However, utilities are somewhat of a mixed blessing for the city due to the high cost of extending service to areas not presently being served (Eloy city limits cover about 115 square miles). The cost of running water and sewer to new areas runs approximately \$1.0-\$1.5 million/mile.

Casa Grande got caught behind the curve when new employers came there, and now they are trying to play "catch up" with employee housing, mostly high density. Eloy city leaders are working on bringing in housing and retail to support the employees that new businesses may bring. Fortunately, Casa Grande has ample housing that can help house new workers and their families coming to our city.

Eloy is competing with Scottsdale and Phoenix for new businesses. In addition to freeway and railroad access, Eloy will also have a new Emergency Hospital coming online soon, and we have Central Arizona College to help train new workers.

The Community Development Department is currently working to update the General Plan (the primary document for future development and growth). They are also working on an update for the airport Master Plan, including development of an air park. The plans will be forecasting and planning for growth 10-50 years in the future and will be open for public comment probably later this year.

Only about 6% of Eloy is currently commercial and that is concentrated mostly in one general area.

The Planning Department would like to get better distribution of commerce with the primary focus on locating employers in areas around Sunland Gin and Sunshine Blvd.

The city is working on downtown core revitalization, cleaning up trash and improving Frontier Street appearance, and making Main Street more pedestrian-friendly.

The new Police Chief is making changes to make officers more visible by getting them out in the field more. Our ratio of police to citizens is comparable with other communities. "Flock cameras" are being installed on major travel routes to monitor traffic in and out of town. In conjunction with other local law enforcement agencies, these will help track and locate offenders who flee the scene of a crime in one community and travel to or through other areas.

The new local hospital is on track to open in late spring or early summer. It will be a full-service emergency hospital. A small surgical unit will probably be in the next phase.

The RR Republican Club meets monthly, usually at 9 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month. If you would like to visit our club to learn more about what's going on in our community and state, contact the Republican Club at RRAZRC@gmail.com or watch the Mid-Week Scoop for meeting times and locations.