

# E-LETTER

## Yuma Ranks 24th in Inc. Magazines 2008 Best Cities

In Inc.com's 2008 list of the Best Cities for Doing Business, Yuma, Arizona ranked 24<sup>th</sup> out of 335 small cities. Inc.com, in conjunction with Newgeography.com, uncovered some of the most dramatic changes since starting these rankings in 2004. Five major trends were immediately revealed; trends that are shaping the business environment right now across the country and will continue to over the next several years. The list focuses on short and long-term job growth. It tells not only where jobs are being created -- a sure sign of economic vitality -- but where the momentum is shifting.

This year's rankings continue the methodology used last year, which emphasizes the robustness of a region's growth and allows the rankings to include all of the metropolitan statistical areas for which the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports monthly employment data. They are derived from three-month rolling averages of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics "state and area" unadjusted employment data reported from November 1996 to January 2008. Inc. uses four measures of growth to rank all areas for which full data sets were available from the past 10 years -- 335 regions in total. This year's rankings can be directly compared to the 2007 rankings for MSAs for the large and midsize categories, but there are some adjustments needed for year-to-year comparisons in the small MSA category. In instances where the analysis refers to changes in ranking order, these adjustments have been taken into account. The rankings are calculated from a normalized, weighted summary of: 1) recent growth trend: the current and prior year's employment growth rates, with the current year emphasized 2) mid-term growth: the average annual 2002-2007 growth rate 3) long-term trend; and 4) current year growth.

## Yuma to Host Border Trade Alliance Community Event Series

The Border Trade Alliance (BTA) presents "Our Borders, Our Futures: BTA Community Event Series", a series geared towards all aspects of our nation's borders by adapting to each specific region, highlighting their differences and understanding their challenges. The goal is to facilitate discussion between policy makers and local stakeholders on issues affecting our borders with the overall goal of providing specific solutions. Several will be held each year in different communities throughout both borders in order to gather and relay information regarding current federal policies in motion.

The BTA's first community event series, "Our Borders, Our Futures" will be held on September 19, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Yuma. This unique event is intended to promote learning, understanding and positive action toward several policies in motion that affect not only Yuma, Arizona, but the region as a whole. It is essential to gather as many experiences as possible and generate one solid unified voice to bring to decision-makers and improve the quality of life of our border communities. This special event brings key decision-makers and experts to you in order to formulate a positive solution-based discussion to address specific themes, such as: the guest worker program, US-VISIT, social, economic and environmental issues and infrastructure. To register for this important event please go to [www.thebta.org](http://www.thebta.org). The cost is only \$15.00 per person.

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## Arizona T.I.M.E Initiative Loses Legal Battle

The Arizona Supreme Court announced that they would uphold a lower court ruling that effectively denied the Transportation & Infrastructure Moving AZ's Economy (TIME) campaign the opportunity to prove in court that thousands of TIME's signatures were erroneously counted as invalid by the Secretary of State and Maricopa County Recorder. In her initial review of the more than a quarter-million petition signatures submitted in support of Prop. 203, Secretary of State Jan Brewer discarded nearly 20,000 signatures. The TIME Campaign went through every petition sheet Secretary Brewer discarded to investigate why they were thrown out and to build a case for why a large number of those sheets should have been counted in Prop. 203's valid signature count. The campaign found that nearly 9,000 signatures were discarded due to technicalities.

Prop. 203 (\$42.6 billion transportation plan) was supported by a broad base of elected officials, chambers of commerce, economic development groups, businesses, environmental organizations and ordinary citizens who understand the need for a statewide, comprehensive transportation plan for Arizona. The projects that would have been funded under Prop. 203 were developed through years of planning with the state's leading transportation experts, local elected officials, and regional planning organizations.

The TIME coalition was founded to promote and advocate for the continued improvement and coordination of the transportation priorities for every city, town, Native American community, and county. Arizona's population growth is expected to double in the next 20-30 years. The state is just a few short years away from being in a maintenance only mode – meaning there will be no money for new roads, highways or transit – the state will only have the ability to maintain what already exists due to shortages in the ADOT funds and other budget deficit concerns.

## Forbes Releases Rankings for Best Places for Business and Careers

Companies in the U.S. are facing a myriad of challenges, from the credit crunch to soaring commodity prices to corporate tax rates. In Forbes 10th annual ranking of the Best Small Places for Business and Careers, Yuma ranked 116<sup>th</sup> out of 200 small metro areas. Common themes for the business-welcoming metros include solid job growth, an educated labor supply and low business costs.

Economy.com supplied data on five-year historical job and income growth as well as migration trends. They also incorporated their business cost index, which looks at labor, tax, energy, office space costs and the living cost index, which factors in housing, transportation, food and other household expenditures. The remainder of the data for the rankings was furnished by demographer Bertrand Sperling. He provided statistics on crime, educational attainment, presence of four-year colleges and an index on cultural and recreational opportunities.

Rankings cover the 200 metro areas as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and are based on nine factors:

**Colleges** – based on 4-year colleges in area with extra credit for highly rated schools

**Cost of Doing Business** – based on cost of labor, energy, taxes and office space

**Cost of Living** – based on cost of housing, utilities, transportation and other expenditures

**Crime Rate** – crimes per 100,000 residents

**Culture and Leisure** – based on museums, theaters, golf course, sports teams and other activities

**Educational Attainment** – share of population over age 25 with a bachelor's degree or higher

**Income Growth** – 5 year annualized figures

**Job Growth** – 5 year annualized figures

**Net Migration** – 5 year annualized figures

Yuma's rank in each of the factors:

**145<sup>th</sup> in Colleges**

**103<sup>rd</sup> in Cost of Doing Business**

**144<sup>th</sup> in Cost of Living**

**113<sup>th</sup> in Crime Rate**

**41<sup>st</sup> in Culture and Leisure**

**172<sup>nd</sup> in Educational Attainment**

**102<sup>nd</sup> in Income Growth**

**6<sup>th</sup> in Job Growth**

**15<sup>th</sup> in Net Migration**

## Monthly Stat Report

August 2008	Yuma	San Luis	Somerton	Wellton
<b>Residential Permits</b>	31 - \$5,732,538	49 - \$N/A	41 - \$3,561,329	1 - \$137,000
<b>Total Value of Permits</b>	144- \$10,481,415	73- \$5,364,,829	52 - \$3,729,149	7 - \$1,226,695
<b>Total City Tax Collections (6/08)</b>	\$2,700,505	\$444,991	\$88,589	34,420