



**Greater Yuma**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP

# APRIL 2017 E-UPDATE

## GREATER YUMA EDC

### **Mission Statement:**

To expand economic activity within Yuma County by attracting commerce and industry to the region, and by assisting in developing the region's existing industry to its fullest potential.

### **Vision Statement:**

Greater Yuma will be recognized as a globally competitive region - one that embraces advancing technology, attracts and retains human capital and continues to develop & foster the amenities that make the Yuma Region a great place to live and work.



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## ***A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT***

**There have been many reasons to celebrate in the past 30 days and we are keeping the celebration alive!**

Congratulations to the 4FrontED Border Business Case for their national recognition in New York City.

The Arizona Association of Economic Development celebrated their highest achievement awards at their spring conference held in Lake Havasu City, April 26-28. GYEDC had a very

special opportunity at this event to showcase our community to the conference key note team of site selectors. Several GYEDC Board members and staff hosted four premier site selectors for dinner on Wednesday evening of the conference. We received rave reviews from the team and learned the areas needed for improvement by the region



The region celebrated a ground breaking in San Luis Arizona and a New Company Opening with Martech Medical in Yuma Arizona. We continue to tour potential opportunities for the region and have several projects that have specified this region as a priority. I want to personally thank all of those companies who have been involved as partners in selling this community. We are very blessed to have the people who truly care about Yuma County and want to see it prosper in a smart, healthy way.

The second meeting of our partner universities was held recently and there is much work to be done to address the skill gaps and opportunities that exist between the two states and multiple universities. When we can create more employees with desired skill sets to meet our current industries we are going to attract similar and supporting industries to this region. This is why the partnership with our Mexico Universities is so very important. They are already offering several of the technical skill certification programs our employers are demanding, we are producing certified teachers and health care practitioners, which is an area where Mexico is underserved. We have a very complimentary structure that will benefit both sides of the border.

With our partners we can accomplish great things!

Julie Engel

President/CEO

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## We Would Like To Welcome The New Investors Of GYEDC

**\*Riedel Construction Company**  
**\*Stewart & Stewart**

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# Donald E. Hunter Excellence In ED Planning Award

The 4FrontEd Bi-national border business case received national recognition as the honored recipient of the "Donald E. Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Planning Award" in New York City on May 8, 2017.

## 4Fronted Arizona-Mexico Border Business Case

Sharing a 300-mile border with Mexico, Arizona's economy is closely linked to and benefits from a strong relationship with Mexico. As gateways, Arizona border communities enable the flow of billions of dollars of trade and millions of cross-border traffic each year.

In 2013, the Border Communities Roadmap was the result of a collaborative effort of four state agencies (Arizona Department of Transportation, AZ Commerce Authority, Office of Tourism, and AZ-Mexico Commission) in partnership with border communities. The Roadmap examined best practices along the U.S./Mexico border and presented a strategic action plan with economic development priorities/policy direction.

The Roadmap identified 5 Game Changers and 5-Pronged Response; one was to "Build a Border Business Case" focused on an economically strong binational region. Four state agencies provided funding augmented with public and private funding from border entities, and Partners for Strategic Action, Inc. (PSA) was hired (firm completed the Border Communities Roadmap) to implement the process and develop the Business Case.

Ink wasn't dry on the Roadmap when the cities within Yuma County and San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, moved forward to develop the binational Border Business Case. The 4FRONTED initiative was a binational effort focused on consensus-building resulting in the Border Business Case and the creation of a regionally-funded binational organization that is successfully working on implementation.



The region's recruitment success has increased. Flextronics purchased a San Luis Rio Colorado building that provided opportunity to develop new product lines. City of San Luis,

Arizona, and Secretariat of Economic Development, Baja California, signed an agreement to collaboratively strengthen business development/entrepreneurism. A comprehensive supplier business recruitment strategy was developed. Another manufacturing company located in San Luis Rio Colorado (medical equipment) creating 150 jobs and another 300 projected jobs. Though new companies have expanded in Mexico, the binational economy impact is great in terms of new jobs, financial investment, and new U.S. supplier growth.

The main contact for 4Fronted is Douglas Nicholls, City of Yuma Mayor. He can be reach at [\(928\) 373-5002](tel:(928)373-5002)

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## *2017 EDDE Award Winners*

Thursday, May 4, 2017

Posted by: Alex Rivera

### ***Arizona Association for Economic Development Presents the Annual EDDE Awards***

The Arizona Association for Economic Development (AAED) has announced the recipients of its annual Economic Development Distinguished by Excellence (EDDE) Awards.

The Prestigious EDDE Awards honor individuals and companies that have made significant contributions to the advancement of the organization and to economic growth within the state of Arizona. Recipients are selected from a pool of nominations made by members of AAED.

Overall, eight EDDEs were presented during an evening awards dinner at the AAED Spring Conference in Lake Havasu City. The winners are:

Tom Pitts, economic development consultant in Yavapai County, Member of the Year.

Mitchel Allen, vice president business development, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Economic Developer of the Year, Large Community.

Tim Kanavel, Pinal County Economic development manager, Economic Developer of the Year, Small Community.

Salt River Project, Large Organization of the Year.

Arizona Regional Economic Development Foundation, Sierra Vista, Small Organization of the Year.

Deedra Skipton of Goodwill Industries of Central and Northern Arizona, Workforce Practitioner of the Year.

Cori Garcia, economic development administrator for the Gilbert Office of Economic Development, New Member of the Year.

Bruce A. Wright, associate vice president for Tech Parks Arizona at the University of Arizona, AAED Best of Arizona Award.

AAED, founded in 1974, has a mission to serve as Arizona's unified voice advocating for responsible economic development through an effective program of professional education, public policy and collaboration.

Photo: (L-R: Cori Garcia, Dee Skipton, Bruce Wright, Tim Kanavel, Tom Pitts, Karla Moran, Laura Jones-Martinez, Mitchel Allen)



## *AMC Media Advisory*

For Immediate Release: April 28, 2017 Media contact:

Ruth Soberanes [rsoberanes@az.gov](mailto:rsoberanes@az.gov) -or- 602-323-4784

# Arizona And Sonora Border Mayors Meet In Phoenix

**PHOENIX, Ariz.** – The Arizona-Mexico Commission, together with sister organization Comisión Sonora-Arizona, hosted the Arizona and Sonora Border Mayors Forum today. Local leaders from cities located along the 300 mile Arizona-Mexico border gathered in Phoenix to discuss and identify synergies in their work supporting security and economic development in Arizona and Sonora.

“Through the work of the Arizona-Mexico Commission, Governor Ducey convened border mayors to encourage cooperation in strengthening Arizona’s commercial ties with our Sonoran neighbors,” said Juan Ciscomani, Governor Ducey’s Senior Advisor for Regional and International Affairs. “This meeting is another example of the Governor’s leadership and focus on this important relationship,” added Ciscomani.

The stakeholders heard updates from our state and federal leaders on border community enforcement initiatives and border infrastructure development opportunities, among others, including Arizona Commerce Authority President and CEO Sandra Watson, Sonoran Secretary of the Economy Jorge Vidal, Arizona Office of Tourism Director Debbie Johnson, Sonora State office of Tourism Interim Director Hector Platt, and Arizona Department of Transportation Director John Halikowski. Additionally, four Consul Generals representing the United States and Mexico in the region joined the discussion.

“We had a rich discussion on trade, tourism, and economic development efforts in Arizona and Sonora,” said Yamilett Martinez, Executive Director, Comisión Sonora-Arizona. “Our goal is to strengthen our partnership and learn how to be better ambassadors for our region.”

In 2016, for the first time Arizona's six ports of entry processed more than 400,000 northbound trucks in one year. Additionally, the ports of entry processed nearly 50 million people in two-way traffic. The average daily dollars spent in Arizona by Mexican companies and consumers is \$7.5MM. According to the University of Arizona, 70% of Arizona border cities' tax revenue is directly attributable to the Mexican visitor.

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Arizona-Sonora Border Mayors Forum Participants, April 28, 2017, Phoenix, AZ.  
Arizona-Sonora Border Mayors, April 28, 2017, Phoenix, AZ



# YMPO Takes A Closer Look At Highway 95



By Blake Herzog, @BlakeHerzog  
Yuma Sun  
Mar 30, 2017

The executive board of the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization discussed the importance of Highway 95 as the county's only direct link to Interstate 10, and is exploring the possibility of asking the state to declare it part of the Canamex network of north-south highways connecting Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

Guidelines call for all Canamex roads to be at least four lanes wide, so 95's inclusion would create additional pressure to widen the road from its current two lanes between Yuma and Quartzsite to four. This would create a faster, safer route for commercial and private traffic to reach Interstate 10, which connects Phoenix to the east to Los Angeles and the Pacific Coast on the west.

YMPO Board Chairman Gary Knight, deputy mayor of the city of Yuma, said such a designation, and the wider road to go with it, would be especially good for drawing truck traffic from Mexico through San Luis.

"We have the Highway 195 and the state-of-the-art commercial port of entry in San Luis, and it just seems that we're really missing something by only being able to connect that port to an east-west corridor (Interstate 8) when we do have 95 to connect at least initially, to Interstate 10, which is a very prominent commercial corridor, east-west to Long Beach and the shipping yards."

He said officials from the county and other YMPO cities have all agreed with him that widening Highway 95 would benefit the whole region.

YMPO Executive Director Paul Ward said he'd help gather more information about the idea from the city and the county, "so it doesn't come across, frankly, as just, isn't this a good idea? I think the whole idea is, this is the major corridor for the whole of Yuma County, and it's incumbent on the YMPO as a whole to support this particular effort," he said.

There will be presentations on the issue, and possibly a vote on a resolution to support the designation, at the next YMPO board meeting, to be held April 27 at Yuma City Hall.

The "high priority" Canamex corridor was established by Congress back in 1995, designating a route running from border to border through Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Idaho and Montana. The Arizona portion has from the beginning concentrated on connecting Las Vegas in the north to Phoenix and Tucson to the international crossing in Nogales, following Highway 93 to Interstates 10 and 19.

Arizona and Nevada have done several widening projects along Highway 93 to speed connections between Vegas and Arizona, according to an Arizona Department of Transportation report released in January. That section of road was designated as a future "I-11" connecting the two metro areas in 2012.

Since then the state has been studying and seeking funding for the "I-11 Intermountain West Corridor," again running through Phoenix, Tucson and Nogales. Yuma County leaders had hoped to have Highway 95 included in that study, providing a route which would bring Yuma and the border ports of San Luis into the corridor. It meets I-10 just 12 miles west of where Highway 93 begins, running to Wickenburg before heading north to Las Vegas.

But Highway 95 was not named as a Level 1 or 2 alternative for the corridor, according to the ADOT report.



## **Martech Medical Products Opens Twin Plant In Yuma**

By Mara Knaub, Yuma Sun staff writer

May 14, 2017

The City of Yuma welcomed another business, MarTech Medical Devices, to the community with a small event on Tuesday. MarTech, which assembles medical devices, will ship \$100 million worth of products across the globe from the its new plant in the Ramster Industrial Park, 3088 33rd Place, a building just east of Yuma International Airport.

MarTech supplies 99 percent of the world's medical device companies, according to President Timothy Schwiekert. And at least one of its customers is local, Yuma Regional Medical Center.

Mayor Douglas Nicholls welcomed Schwiekert, and Tracy Schultz, vice president of operations. He noted that Schwiekert is not new to Yuma. "He's been coming for eight years, but this is his first venture in Yuma."

Schultz said that the devices made by the company are "life-sustaining and life-saving," including ports and pics used in chemotherapy.

Schwiekert said he was impressed by the welcome he has gotten in Yuma and noted he is especially impressed by the "quality of people" they've been hiring.

Greg LaVann, senior vice president of the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corp., told me the company is scaling up its hiring. The first phase of operations is projected to hire 25-30 full-time employees. The second phase will start in 12 to 24 months.

Both GYDEC and the Mexicali-based PIMSA Industrial Development were instrumental in bringing MarTech to Yuma.



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## **Business Park Aims To Fill Niche Near Port Of Entry**



By Mara Knaub, @YSMaraKnaub  
Yuma Sun  
May 7, 2017

It started in 1937 when Earl D. Roberts was filling out insurance forms and someone asked for help with customs forms. He obliged, and then more people started asking for his help with customs documents.

Customs officials caught wind and told Roberts he needed a license to do what he was doing. They gave him a book to study and then later asked him a few questions. He got them right, and they handed him a license.

In this way Roberts inadvertently started his customs brokerage, today called RL Jones Customs Brokers, named after his son-in-law who later took over the business.

On Wednesday, this family business took the next step: breaking ground for the RL Jones Business Park in San Luis, just east of the commercial port of entry. A whole array of officials and partners were on hand to dig in their shovels in the traditional ceremony.

Four occupants have so far announced plans to move into the new \$8 million park: RL Jones Customs Brokers, San Luis Warehouse and Transfer Co., San Luis International Freight Services and San Luis International Cold Storage Services.

The plan is to have fully functional facilities by November, just about when the winter season is kicking up.

Russ Jones, who joined his father's firm in 1974, believes the future 70-acre park will add substantially to the port of entry's "incredible potential." He noted it is already the only port that processes commercial vehicles on the U.S. side along with Mexican officials. Nogales does this but only for produce trucks, he said.

Also, the new facility will handle overweight cargo, which currently only the Calexico, Calif., port can do, Jones said.

So far 40 acres have been "bought and paid for" by San Luis Commercial Operations Management, a partnership that involves RL Jones Properties, Spindle Cooling and Rascon Trucking. RL Jones will use 20 acres. Rascon will build a facility on 10 acres, and Spindle cooling will take over the other 10 acres.

The remaining 30 acres have been developed and are ready to sell by the Greater Yuma Port Authority.

The project also includes a \$2 million joint venture with RL Jones Properties, which includes Russ Jones and his cousin, Earl Roberts (named after his grandfather), and Sana International, owned by

the Acedo family, which deals in beef production and frozen foods sold all over the world.

Hector Acedo said the project, San Luis International Cold Storage Services, will be built on one-third of the property and will allow the inspection of meat and poultry for both import and export. Currently the nearest place to do this is Los Angeles, he said.

Once the cold storage facility is built, it will have offices for a federal safety inspector, the only one in the region, who will work in San Luis for three days a week and roam the region the other two days.

The park is part of the Yuma County Foreign Trade Zone, commonly called a "free zone," which means it comes with very low property taxes as an incentive for development.

Russ Jones expressed appreciation to the members of 4FrontED, an economic development regional network that includes the Arizona cities of San Luis, Somerton, Yuma and Wellton and the Sonora city of San Luis Rio Colorado. Jones said members acted as "facilitators and cheerleaders."

The initial phase of the project also received assistance from a half-million dollar grant from the Arizona Commerce Authority. It required matching funds, and Yuma County, San Luis and the Cocopah Tribe stepped up to contribute.

This grant paid for improvements needed before the park could be built, such as a crossing over the canal and roads to the site.

San Luis Mayor Matias Rosales, also chairman of the Greater Yuma Port Authority, noted that federal and state governments have invested significantly in developing the region and the business park is part of the "synergy" that will benefit everyone in the region.

"Really, this is just the beginning," Supervisor Tony Reyes said, adding that he was proud of those who "kept the flame going even through the lean years."

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**JOIN US!**

**2017 AMC SUMMIT**  
***At The Crossroads of Opportunity***

June 1-2, 2017

Omni Scottsdale Resort and Spa at Montelucia  
4949 E Lincoln Dr. Scottsdale, AZ 85253

The Arizona-Mexico Commission (AMC) Summit is the AMC's bi-national premier annual event showcasing the best of Arizona and Mexico. Top level business leaders and policy makers from Arizona and Mexico will gather under the leadership of Arizona Governor Doug Ducey and Sonora Governor Claudia Pavlovich to promote a strong, cooperative binational relationship.

**Cost**

AMC Partner.....\$450  
Non-Member.....\$750

**Register Now**

**For special rate, use code: AMCPARTNER**

AMC Partner rate includes one year of membership (offer applies to new members only)

Questions? Contact us at [events@azmc.org](mailto:events@azmc.org) or (602) 542-1358.

Follow us @AzMxCom #AMCSummit17

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