



NEWS RELEASE

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Before the New Year's Weekend, I wanted to share a few predictions for the upcoming year. You can tape this to your refrigerator to see if my crystal ball's working:

First, in as much as the County Administrator has requested the email addresses for everybody who receives the newsletter, my prediction is that finally we will have in this community an open and honest mutual exchange of ideas related to how your money is spent. I'm honored that he reads the newsletters. I welcome the opportunity to engage with our colleagues at the County in a conversation about the Courthouse, and any other bond proposals that may be considered. For far too long decisions relative to how we spend your money have been addressed at the bureaucratic level - now, with the evident interest in reaching out to the City of Tucson constituents who receive what I send out, the County has seemingly agreed that sunlight is better than darkness. I think we'll see more transparency.

Next, with the recent Downtown Tucson Initiative that was clearly crafted by a combination of certain members of the Rio Nuevo Board and the State Legislature, I'll predict that at some point in the current mediation process, particular members of the State will advise the Rio Board to pull away from the negotiations and that a "solution" will be coming in the form of legislation from their handlers in Phoenix. This has some precedent. Back in December of 2010, six members of the Southern Arizona Delegation sent the Board just such a letter in relation to agreement on Term Sheets. I'm guessing that the DTI proposal will form the basis for similar pre-emptive legislative action aimed at the City of Tucson taxpayers in the not too distant future. The mediation is a tool being used towards that end, to give Rio a chance to yet again place blame on the City for what it will call its intransigence.

Finally, this Mayor and Council will continue to adopt measures that make it a more streamlined and less burdensome process in opening and conducting business with the City. We have been in the process of doing that (changes to permit fees, changes to CofO, changes in the Development Services Dept., changes in concurrent plan review, etc.) and we understand that a healthy private sector is key to our ability to provide you with key core services.

So, with those predictions, I, along with the Ward 6 staff wish each of you a wonderful New Year's celebration. And I'll take this moment to invite the County, the Rio Nuevo Board members (who also poached my newsletter addresses) and the Southern Arizona Legislative Delegation to join us in that wish - after all, you're their constituents, too.

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