SALC
Southern Arizona Leadership Council

Major milestones and impact

Since 1997 the Southern Arizona Leadership Council has worked to increase economic vibrancy and quality of life in the region.

1997 — 35 MEMBERS

SALC Founded

Frustrated by the lack of cohesion in the business community, seven visionary leaders founded SALC to address and view community issues through a business lens.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Tucson, Sunday, July 13, 1997 — The Arizona Daily Star — Section E- Page

VIEWPOINTS

Tucson needs the leadership of good business people

By Jim Kiser

No single event better illustrates Tucson's lack of business leadership than the decision to locate the new spring-training baseball stadium on the city's southside along East Ajo Way.

It should have been built downtown, where it would have contributed to revitalizing the heart of the city.

But even as the county Board of Supervisors turned what should have been a rational decision into a political decision, the business community mostly kept silent.

Consequently, the stadium is being built on a large vacant lot, in a non-commercial section of Ajo Way, next to Kino Community Hospital. Across the street are the county probation offices, a Sheriff's department district office, a Sheriff's Department impound lot and the county's Juvenile Court Center.

The hospital has pulled off something of a public relations coup by signing on as the team hospital for the Chicago White Sox. But neither the probation offices, the sheriff's offices or the juvenile cen-

Maricopa County Attorney's Office and the Arizona Supreme Court — is developing a strategy to prevent violent crime.

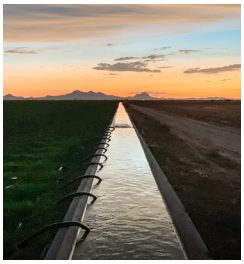
In Tucson, one benefit of an emphasis on bricks and mortar would be to avoid conflicts with the Tucson 30's broader social agenda. But because of membership overlap between the two organizations, another possible result, unfortunately, might be a diffusion of effort.

The council's success will depend, too, on its members' commitment. As several leaders have pointed out, creating a new organization does not equal commitment. Nor does writing a $10,000 corporate check yearly (those are the expected dues for large businesses) to hire an executive director and a staff. Not to put too sharp a point on the issue, but heads of large organizations frequently are seen as "big picture" people who leave the details to others. Commitment, however, requires rolling up your sleeves and doing the work yourself

1999

CAP water protected

Led campaign to defeat Prop 200, ensuring access to CAP water to support quality of life and growth in the region.



2000

Secured K–12 and university research funding

Championed the passage of Prop 301, providing $600m annually in new funding for Arizona's K–12 system and university research.

Anti-growth measure soundly defeated

Helped lead campaign to defeat Prop 202, seeking to limit growth in Arizona towns of more than 2,500 residents.

2003 — 60 MEMBERS

Business-based support for education

Formed the Business Education Roundtable, bringing together the region's K–12 superintendents with business leaders which impacted both state and local school policy.

2004

Established Friends of Downtown

Convened key leaders to advance progress in downtown, leading to creation of Downtown Tucson Partnership.

Regional Transportation Authority formed

After 20 years of failed attempts to pass regional transportation bonds, led community-wide effort to establish Regional Transit Authority (RTA) plan and tax, which passed by a wide margin.

Technical Education District created

Led campaign to allow Southern Arizona school districts to form Joint Technology Education District (JTED) to support workforce development.

2005

Medical Malpractice Reform signed

Assisted in passing SB 1036, a medical malpractice reform bill.

Reforms drove economic growth

Worked with the Governor and other business organizations to secure passage of major economic reform legislation:

- Reduced business property tax rate from 25% to 20% over 10 years
- Created tax credits for investors who commit funds for high-tech start-up companies
- Applied 80% sales factor benefit to businesses making $1 billion new investment in Arizona

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Biosciences Leadership Council drives economic growth
Driving force to launch Biosciences Leadership Council of Southern Arizona (BLCSA) focusing on region's components of Flinn Bioscience Roadmap.

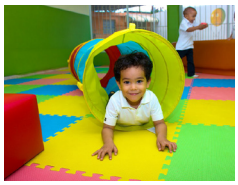
Mentoring young professionals
Guided effort to found Tucson Young Professionals. SALC and TYP have ongoing joint events, TYP's board president sits on SALC's Board and SALC provides complimentary meeting space to TYP.

tucson young professionals

2006

Science Foundation Arizona launched
Partnered to launch Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz). SALC members collectively invested more than $1 million, creating 589 jobs, 10 companies, and leveraging $56 million from industry.

All-day K funded
Worked with Governor Napolitano and others to achieve second year funding for All-Day Kindergarten (later cut during budget crisis of the Great Recession).



Expect More Arizona founded
Helped to create a statewide education initiative, Expect More Arizona, a public-private partnership as a shared voice of business and education leaders for P-20 continuum.

Financial crises averted
Engaged with Governor Brewer to develop a plan to borrow $1 billion, cut $1 billion and raise $1 billion via a temporary tax.

2007

Second water war won
Staunchly opposed another Prop 200 that would have limited water connections and new home construction. To ensure a coordinated response to future water threats, SALC founded Tucson Regional Water Coalition (TRWC) and hosts its meetings.

Championed Pima County JTED
Played a pivotal role in the campaign to convince voters to pass JTED initiative which allows school districts to offer CTE programs that prepare students for jobs in the region

Convened the Regional Town Hall
Organized first-ever Tucson Regional Town Hall that identified 10 key challenges facing the region. Outcomes included First Things First, Tucson Values Teachers, consolidation of literacy nonprofits into Literacy Connects, and creation of Imagine Greater Tucson

IMAGINE GREATER TUCSON
Shaping our future together

Tucson Values Teachers

2008

Tucson Values Teachers launched
SALC created TVT and spun it off into its own 501(c)(3) organization as the foremost voice on recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in the region.

Addressed a critical nursing shortage
Helped ameliorate nursing shortage by founding Hospital Council of Southern Arizona (HCSA) and developing a plan to produce 150 new registered nurses for our community.

95 MEMBERS

2009

2010

Statewide health information exchange created
In partnership with HCSA, led conversation to create Southern Arizona Health Information Exchange (SAHIE), which ultimately merged with a state-level initiative.

2011

Supporting future civic leaders
SALC board voted to extend a one-year associate membership to Flinn-Brown Leadership Academy Fellows.

Corporate income tax cut
Led charge in Southern Arizona to pass business tax and regulatory reform bill resulting in a 30% reduction of corporate income tax rate.

2012

Business groups join forces
Co-founded Tucson Business Alliance (TBA) to collaborate and increase regional economic vibrancy. Members: SALC, Sun Corridor, Tucson Metro Chamber, Southern Arizona Home Builders Association, Tucson Association of Realtors, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Visit Tucson.

Showcased need for increased risk capital
Created **Arizona Bioscience Board** (ABB) to address lack of available risk capital, recruited CEOs statewide and produced comprehensive report spurring the establishment of new risk capital funds.

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2013

Medicaid expansion triggered federal funding

Actively supported Governor Brewer's proposal to expand Medicaid funding in Arizona, resulting in billions of new federal dollars for Medicaid-eligible citizens and preventing closure of rural hospitals.

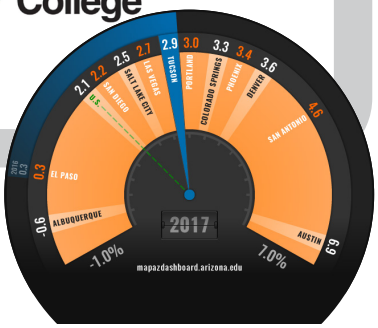
2014

120 MEMBERS

Advocated for changes to Pima Community College board

Partnered with Tucson community to address governance problems plaguing Pima Community College (PCC) and help elect new board members better representing merits of the college.

Pima Community College



Instrument to measure progress created

In partnership with U of A and Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, developed the Making Action Possible (MAP) Dashboard, a progress-measuring tool, a set of trusted facts comparing region's key indicators with those of western metro peers.

Regional support for military mobilized

In partnership with TBA, created Southern Arizona Defense Alliance (SADA) to showcase economic impact of the region's military and Southern Arizona as the best place in the nation to train warfighters.

2015

Passed charter change

Led campaign to change City of Tucson charter by passing Props 403 and 404 giving City Manager exclusive ability to hire/fire direct reports and the Mayor a voting position on City Council.

Developed a Leadership Fund

Established new Leadership Fund to provide nimble response to, and funding of, key legislative campaign efforts.

Supported billions more for education

Provided substantial backing to pass Prop 123, providing $3.5 billion over 10 years for Arizona's education system through distribution from the State Land Trust.

Joint Technical Education District funding restored

Successfully lobbied to restore $29 million in funding for JTED, supporting a stronger future workforce.

2016

Unfair marijuana law defeated

Delivered vocal opposition to defeat Prop 205, which would have legalized marijuana. The flawed proposition was anti-business and would have had unintended consequences.

Statewide CEO Summit convened to tackle Arizona issues

Partnered with Greater Phoenix Leadership and Northern Arizona Leadership Alliance to launch annual statewide CEO Summit to encourage strategic collaboration on statewide issues.

2017

Defeated Rural Tax Credit for out-of-state companies

Influenced legislature to defeat misleading Rural Tax Credit bill that would have provided credits to out-of-state companies investing in Arizona, whose profits would not have remained here.

Supported billion-dollar university bonding capacity

Strategically advocated to pass bonding package for R&D and infrastructure for Arizona's universities.

Angel Tax Credit funded

Prominent advocacy resulted in legislature reauthorizing and funding Angel Tax Credit for investing in small, rural or bioscience companies.

Defeated flawed early childhood law

Provided staunch opposition to defeat Prop 204, Strong Start Tucson, by a two-to-one margin. The poorly crafted initiative was too narrow in geographic focus and too aggressive in raising the sales tax rate.

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2018

Accelerated funding for Highway 189
Convened 30+ trade groups that comprise Business Partners for Trade and Transportation (BPTT) to successfully advance funding cycle for Highway 189.

Supported school funding extension
SALC was first business organization to publicly back 20-year extension of Prop 301, providing $444 million in new revenues annually for schools.

Rio Nuevo extension
Successfully advocated for 10-year extension to Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District, the driving force for revitalization in downtown Tucson.

140 MEMBERS

2019

GME funding expansion
Advocated to secure new funding for Graduate Medical Education, helping ensure an adequate pipeline of medical professionals for our growing region and state and serving as an economic driver.

Strategic leadership for RTA's future
Successfully led engagement with legislature to give Pima County voters the authority to increase sales tax to fund future infrastructure.

Defeated harmful proposition
Convened campaign to defeat a 'sanctuary city' proposition that would have caused Tucson to forfeit more than $138 million in state-shared revenue and federal grants, and would have prevented federal partners like FBI and DEA from assisting local police in solving crimes.

NO ON 205

2021

YES on Prop 481 for Pima College

Expanded PCC's expenditure limitation
Led a campaign, passed by voters, which allows PCC to provide more funding for programs that directly help students.

VOTE YES on TUSD Bond Prop 496

Championed TUSD bond
Provided campaign funding and strategic messaging to pass the first bond in 20 years for our region's largest school district to complete safety and technology improvements.

2022

Focused on fiscal priorities first
United a range of business, civic and community groups to defeat a flawed City initiative that missed the mark in prioritizing the fiscal mandates within the City of Tucson budget.

NO PROP 414 YES

2023

Secured funding for infrastructure
Crafted legislation and successfully appropriated $54M for environmental studies to include the Sonoran Corridor; Successfully advocated for appropriation of $400M to widen I-10, potentially leveraging a federal match.

2024

Pima Community College

Flipped PCC board seats
Led and funded the campaign to flip the three open seats on the five-seat governing board. All SALC-supported candidates won their races decisively, two defeating incumbents.

2025

160 MEMBERS

Supported TUSD funding
Supported raising teacher salaries to attract and retain high quality educators, support career-focused programs, fully staff PE and fine arts at all elementary schools, and expand early childhood education like pre-K as well as before- and after-school programs.