

## 2013 Town of Queen Creek Accomplishments

In addition to the many accomplishments cited in Mayor Gail Barney's State of the Town Address, each department's major milestones and achievements are documented below.

### Development Services

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#### Community Development Division:

- Hired budgeted personnel to maintain and strengthen Development Service's delivery of service.
- Updated the Town's building codes.
- Re-established internal construction plan review services.
- Re-established over-the-counter construction plan review services.
- Streamlined permitting procedures at the front counter to increase efficiency.
- Facilitated the processing of six major General Plan amendment requests.
- Facilitated permitting (as of 11/26/13) of:
  - 610 new homes
  - 20 new or revived subdivision projects
  - \$285,539,446 valuation
- Partnered with IT to execute a plan to significantly upgrade technology for the department; specifically, permitting and plan review.
- Update and modernization of the zoning development code is underway.
- Reviewed the state land annexation policy as a follow-up to council retreat item.
- Established a special events taskforce to promote and coordinate Town events.
- Supported the Economic Development Departments in efforts to revitalize Town Center.
- Supported development of Box Canyon as a project of regional significance.
- Began working on a plan to establish Hearing Officer for the Town.
- Supported development of Town-owned property.
- Completed a service fee study to recover more of our costs.
- Worked with SRP on Able-Moody sighting issues.
- Eliminated code language that hinders the General Plan amendment process.
- Transitioned the Planning & Zoning Commission packets to electronic format to save money and paper.
- Maintained a Building Inspection workload standard.
- Ensured compliance with SB1598 through 2013 for permitting and plan review services.

#### Public Works Division:

- Staff worked on executing the Town Council's \$10,000,000 capital improvement project programs that address Town-wide drainage and transportation needs.
- Completed a plan, in conjunction with Maricopa County Flood Control District, for East Mesa Drainage Area that provides maximum benefit to the Town.
- Updated Pavement Condition Index inspections for all Town roads using laser/video inspection technologies.
- Completed a security analysis of the town's key/badge/security camera system.

- Assembled and maintained a rain event response team.
- Began establishing procedures for municipal storm water permitting program.
- Established coordination of capital improvement project programs with the Utilities Department.

## **Economic Development Department**

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### Communications & Marketing Division

- Developed and implemented a new website for the Town at QueenCreek.org.
- Implemented the “Rediscover Your Community” marketing campaign encouraging residents to explore their community as though they were a tourist. The effort included a series of “inspiration itineraries” an interactive photo contest and social media engagement.
- Coordinated programs recognizing residents’ contributions to the community, including Star students and volunteer appreciation ceremonies.
- Continue to implement the Town’s branding efforts, including designing and placing advertisements, brochures, postcards and flyers.
- Expanded use of social media sites including Facebook and Twitter to provide daily news updates about the Town and inform residents about opportunities for participation in local government meetings, services and programs, traffic closures and special events as well as to provide emergency information.
- Launched Pinterest and Instagram sites for the Town.
- Graduated the 18th class of the annual Citizen Leadership Institute, a forum for fostering community leadership and educating residents about the Town government.
- Added the Old Town Queen Creek Alliance as an official marketing partner of the Town.
- Won two Silver Circle Awards from the City-County Communications & Marketing Association, one for the Experience QC video and another for the graphic design of the Rediscover Your Community campaign.
- The Town’s Chief Marketing/Public Information Officer assisted the State of Arizona, Yavapai County and other state and federal organization in the Incident Command Center that was created in response to the Yarnell Fire and firefighter memorial services in July.

### Economic Development Division

- Hosted an Economic Development Summit designed to share all of the opportunities in Queen Creek with the development community.
- The Communiversity at Queen Creek, a partnership between the Maricopa County Community College District, Rio Salado College and the Town, had their “soft” grand opening in early November and will open in early 2014.
- The Banner Health Medical Center opened on May 1, 2013 in the Town Center.
- Processed three applications for the Façade Improvement Program offered for commercial properties in the Town Center.
- Continued the Business Retention & Expansion program through the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Contracted with the Jack Camper Consulting Group (JCCG) to study the Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce and provide recommendations for financial and structural enhancements.

- Continued the Shop Queen Creek program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. Ongoing implementation, including the Shop Queen Creek Back to School and Shop Queen Creek for the Holidays promotions.
- Issued a Request for Proposals for the Town-owned 20-acre site in the Town Center.
- Issued a Request for Proposals for the Town-owned one-acre site for a bistro style restaurant.
- Finalized a development agreement with Vestar for the development of a 14-screen Harkins Theater at the Queen Creek Marketplace.

#### Horseshoe Park and Equestrian Centre

- Continue the flat track racing and time-only barrel racing in the summer months.
- Hosted 260 event days, including a variety of events and shows including Arabian, reining cow horse, team roping, cutting, bull riding, cowboy mounted shooting and gymkhana.
- Two employees were selected to help install and maintain the footing with Bob Kiser at two major competitions. Kiser Arena Specialists are the leading authority on designing and maintaining arena footing for many of the largest and best-known horse shows in the U.S. and Europe.

#### **Management Services Department**

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##### Accounting:

- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting awarded by the Government Finance Officers Association for the Town's annual Comprehensive Annual Finance Report.
- Successful completion of the 2012-13 financial audit.
- The process for the Vestar/Westcor refund was streamlined from a process lasting for more than a week to a process of an hour.
- The sales tax breakdown calculations were also been streamlined and are now completed in 10 minutes as opposed to four hours.
- Restructured the general ledger to a true pooled cash reporting method.
- Created monthly reconciliation processes for investments in Cash Management Module.

##### Accounts Payable:

- The creation of recurring journal entries has made the process more efficient and saved staff time.
- All duplicate vendors have been purged in order to help staff in locating vendors more rapidly and without error.
- Staff implemented the Automated Clearing House (ACH) electronic payments process in order to lower operating costs, streamline the payable process, and reduce payment risk. The average processing cost per check is \$2, as opposed to the average cost of an ACH transaction, which is \$0.13. During this first year there were 718 ACH payments made, totaling \$93.34, where checks would have cost \$1,436. This is a significant cost savings of 93.5%.
- The utility reduction services that the Town has been part of, has resulted in a savings of \$9,716.13 this year for electricity and telephone usage.

##### Budget:

- The rating agencies continue to laud Queen Creek as a high investment grade and the Government Finance Officer's Association has recognized the Town ten years in a row with its Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, its highest recognition of Excellence.
- The Town Council adopted, and staff implemented, a \$117.4 million budget

#### Recreation Services:

- Produced the best-ever attended Trunk or Treat event, providing a fun and safe trick or treating experience for an estimated crowd of 8,000.
- Created and produced the Teen Zombie Yard through a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club; included teen-made zombie short films, zombie-ball, concessions and live entertainment as a separate "teen only" area at the Trunk or Treat event.
- Partnered with the Queen Creek Schools Education Foundation to produce the 2nd annual QC Running Dead 5k as part of the Trunk or Treat event; 99 runners participated.
- Completed the first year of partnership with Arizona Soccer Club, which had a 24% increase in participation.
- Offered a variety of recreational activities for Town residents including preschool classes, senior programming, adult sports, dance, tumbling, cheerleading, ceramics, health & fitness, music, drama, art and photography, with a goal of providing options for all ages and interests.
- New special interest classes included Boot Camp, Zumba Sentao, Kempo Karate, tennis, horseback riding lessons and mommy-baby sign language.
- Held the second annual Valentine's Day Love Bug Dance with a sold out audience.
- Opened a second preschool classroom due to demand, doubling participation and revenues.
- Installed a new wood floor in the dance room by obtaining pricing at cost and donated labor.
- Partnered with the non-profit Pan de Vida organization to produce events together (Pan de Vida's Community, Health, and Social Fair and our Day of Play); saving both organizations money and increasing the marketing reach.
- As part of the National Recreation and Park Association's "July is Park & Recreation Month" campaign, the division produced the first ever Splash Dance program – an opportunity to hold all our adult fitness classes in the sprinklers at Founders Park in the middle of the summer heat.
- Mexico was 2013's Honored Country at the Town's annual Passport to Discovery event.
- Working closely with Communications & Marketing, social media has become an effective (and extremely inexpensive) tool to communicate with the community.
- Received budget approval to add two exciting amenities to Queen Creek's park system in 2014 – Founders Park Splash Pad and the Pocket Park for Pups.
- Served as a partner to non-profit organizations for the production of four community special events: Kiwanis Family Fourth on the Farm, Pan de Vida Community, Health & Social Fair, Kiwanis Holiday Festival & Parade, and Friends of Horseshoe Park Roots N' Boots Queen Creek.
- Ensured continued recreation services for Town residents through administering partnership contracts with the Boys & Girls Club, Queen Creek Little League Baseball, Queen Creek Little League Heat Softball, Arizona Soccer Club and San Tan Youth Football League.

#### Payroll:

- All of the Town staff has converted from paper check vouchers to electronic vouchers, which are password protected. Ninety four percent of Town staff is now receiving direct deposit payments, which results in a savings of more than \$8,000 per year.
- All payroll taxes are now filed electronically.

- The Employee Self Service (ESS) system for payroll and timekeeping was implemented and Town staff were trained to use it, entering information online. Because it is web-based, the system may be accessed from anywhere, providing employees with the ability to review pay history and W2 information and submit timesheets.
- W-4 Tax Withholding forms may be accessed, changed and submitted online.
- Public Safety Retirement information is now reported online.
- The Town's salary tables have been updated with the new Fiscal Year rate changes.
- All benefit deductions for both employee and employer have been updated to be reflected in the 2013 W2 reports.

Purchasing:

- Received the 2013 UPPCC Agency Certification Award for the 6th running year. This program recognizes organizations that have made a concerted effort to achieve procurement excellence.
- Successful migration from JP Morgan Chase to Bank of America for the purchase card program. The main draw for the change was a higher rebate that the Town could receive for annual purchase card spend.
- Successful implementation for data imports from purchase card charges daily, resulting in near real time data.
- Preparation of 14 solicitations for goods/services.
- Purchase orders are now processed and distributed electronically to each department, allowing the departments to get POs to vendors more efficiently and quickly.
- Creation and/or processing of 70 contracts for a variety of goods and services.
- Work orders were streamlined so time is not lost due to delays.
- Staff has started using the insurance information function in Munis to ensure that contractors' insurance is up to date and the Town is protected.

**Queen Creek Fire Department**

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- The department began providing emergency medical and fire services to the unincorporated area of Queen Creek. The formation of the Queen Creek County Island Fire District was approved by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and this service began in May 2013. This non-contiguous area is approximately six square miles within the Queen Creek town limits and serves approximately 4000 residents.
- Mesa Fire & Medical Department applied for and was awarded an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Queen Creek Fire Department and Apache Junction Fire Department were part of this application process. The grant provided Firefighter Survival Ground Training to all participating departments. This specialty survival training was conducting at the Mesa Fire and Medical training facility. Queen Creek had two Fire Captains that were part of the trainers for the region.
- The Fire Department and Emergency Manager participated in a regional aviation disaster drill at Phoenix Gateway Airport. This included many of our regional fire and police departments, as well as the Airport Authority in alignment with FAA requirements.
- The department participated in a regional Active Shooter Drill at Poston Butte High School. This multi-agency training included the Pinal County Sheriff and emergency planners as well as fire and rescue units from Pinal County.

- The Town continued its agreement with the State of Arizona Land Division and provided wildland fire support in the form of our brush truck and or water tender. The department supported five different wildland fires, including the tragic Yarnell Hill Fire.
- In the spring, the Fire Department provided CPR and Automatic External Defibrillator training to 57 town employees.
- The Fire Department and Emergency Manager conducted six CERT Basic Training classes and five continuing education (CE) classes. The Basic Training was delivered to 72 residents. CE training was delivered to 71 residents.
- The department provided public education outreach at more than 80 events during the year. The events include fire station tours, fire apparatus displays, block watch and school safety events.

## Utilities Department

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### Water Conservation:

- Created materials for and operated booths at the Town's Earth Day event on April 22 and Educators' Day on Nov. 5, providing education about water conservation.
- Education residents about various water conservation techniques at the Town's Pancake Breakfast and Ice Cream Social.
- Created a new leak detection educational flyer to be included in letters notifying customers about high water usage.
- Created a flyer for new residents to provide information about low water use plants, landscape watering tips and Xeriscape ideas. The flip side of the flyer provides information about the Do More Blue campaign for the Solid Waste Division.

### Water Division:

- Completed the acquisition of H2O, Inc on Nov. 1, 2013.
- Installed high speed radio backbone for the H2O SCADA system allowing for the relocation of the server to the Town's secure server room.
- Hired an additional 16 employees to department.
- Completed relocations of water lines for the Hunt Highway Road Widening Stage III with Queen Creek Domestic Water Improvement District of Pinal County and Pinal County. Relocated five areas of waterline and the Town was reimbursed for expenses of \$118,870.50 from the District.
- Worked with the Fire Department to install fire hydrants in the Queen Creek County Island Fire District.
- Installed more than 15 of 63 new fire hydrants throughout the Town area to meet fire protection requirements.
- Completed construction of a new block fence around the Victoria well and storage facility.
- Finished the revising the Water and Sewer Departments Design and Standards Manual for 2013.
- An agreement was finalized with the Roosevelt Water Conservation District for the exchange of the Town portion of reclaimed water from the Greenfield Water Reclamation Facility. This allows the Water Division to recharge water in the near future, reducing homeowner association costs with regards to Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGR) water replenishment fees.

- Finished 890 new installs of 520-M MXU's to complete the system to entirely be on radio read capability.

#### Wastewater Division:

- Completed construction of the Victoria odor control dosing station at the Victoria well site on Ocotillo Road to help reduce hydrogen sulfide vapors that cause odor and corrosion issues within the waste water collection system. System treatment to begin late in the first quarter of 2014.
- 101,238 feet of sewer lines were jetted and cleaned, in addition to hot spots and commercial facilities throughout the year.
- Manhole collars for manholes that are out of pavement were installed using in-house labor to save thousands of dollars versus the cost of contracting out the work.
- Larger diameter sewer mains were cleaned using in-house labor to save money, as well as providing a more thorough cleaning over contracting with outside vendors.
- Working with outside engineering firms, completed the design to extend a 24" sewer line from the corner of Rittenhouse and Sossaman Roads southeast, crossing under the Union Pacific Railroad, and continuing east to Hawes Road. This extension will allow Queen Creek Station access to the sewer collection system, as well as laying the groundwork to allow future developers to further extend sewer to service the north central and northeast portions of Queen Creek.

### **Workforce Technology Accomplishments**

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#### Human Resources:

- Transitioned medical benefits from fully-insured to self-funded to assist in controlling costs.
- Conducted approximately 45 recruitments, resulting in 40 new hires and five transfers/promotions, including two large new hire orientations.
- Completed a comprehensive market survey of more than 75 classifications.
- Instituted the Town safety committee and introduced quarterly inspections of Town buildings.
- Facilitated a four-part performance training series for supervisors.
- The Town continued to maintain a low turnover at 6.6% for the calendar year.
- Human Resources fully moved to a paperless recruitment process by leveraging technology with online applications, online self-scheduling, online supervisory review, Skype interviews for out-of-town candidates and using iPads during panel interviews in lieu of paper copies.
- Early completion of the new compliance statutes of the Arizona Noncriminal Justice Fingerprint Compliance Program governing the use of criminal history information and the training of authorized personnel involved in the review and use of that information.

#### Information Technology:

- Replaced the Core Switch to add redundancy and security for the Town's network.
- Replaced the Granicus Server to upgrade viewing of the Town Council meetings and recordings.
- Replaced the traffic video wall server to enhance traffic control monitoring throughout the Town.

- Facilitated the Electronic Patient Care Records (EPCR) system for field paramedic reporting for real time patient record-keeping.
- Created a new fire payroll system that works in conjunction with the Town's finance system, MUNIS.
- Replaced all of the printers and copiers to more effective and cost efficient equipment.
- Replaced the Enhance server for improved utility billing and customer service.
- Installed wireless access points at the fire stations to ensure redundancy and better connectivity for emergency response.
- Assisted in the revamp of the Town's website.
- Created new, public-facing GIS interactive maps for resident use to provide additional information about programs, services and facilities via the Town website and mobile applications.
- Created a map gallery for internal and external use.
- Assisted in the Council Chambers beautification project.
- Assigned 2,100 new addresses, added 10,946 addresses as part of the H2O transition.