

Council looks forward to 2024

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 05 January 2024 00:00



Bonaguidi, Molina, Schaaf list goals for the new year

A new year brings a chance for people to get a new start and set goals the upcoming year. The *Sun* recently sat down with city leaders to discuss their goals for 2024.

Mayor Louie Bonaguidi explained that 2024 is going to be the year a lot of the city's current projects are completed.

"We've got a number of projects basically started, so we're hoping to see the finality of those projects. Like we've got the police building going up, that should be finished sometime in June,"

Council looks forward to 2024

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 05 January 2024 00:00

he said. "Nizhoni Boulevard is all torn up, they'll probably finish that in the early spring. For the senior center, bids have been put out for the construction so hopefully construction and a finished project will come out of 2024."

One thing that Bonaguidi is very excited about is working on improving local parks and outdoor trails. Specifically, the trails out by Mentmore will be getting more greenery put in and getting better walking trails out there.

"That's a project I look forward to. [It will] get people outside enjoying fresh air and walking, doing things that are healthy. So we're looking forward to that," He said.

A problem Gallup continues to struggle with is their water. Before the pandemic the

Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project was projected to be finished by 2024, but now

Bonaguidi believes it will be closer to 2030.

While the wait for the NGSWP continues, the city remains reliant on well water. The city's team of engineers has told the council that they will need six wells, with each well costing about \$6 million. Bonaguidi said the city currently has enough money for four wells, and a second well has been drilled.

Bonaguidi predicted that at the beginning of 2025 the city will have four or five wells.

Both Bonaguidi and Councilor Michael Schaaf, Dist. 2, want to see what can be done about the Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital.

"Of course we need a hospital, we can't have a community without a hospital. That's something

Council looks forward to 2024

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 05 January 2024 00:00

I hope we can do something about, hopefully we can find a way to save the hospital. ...,” Bonaguidi said. “Nobody on the city council knows how to run a hospital, I don’t know if anyone on the county commission has a way of running the hospital, but whatever we do we’ve got to find the right avenue to take to save the hospital.”

Bonaguidi also highlighted the idea of economic growth and bringing more businesses to Gallup.

“We would like to see the city grow, we would like to an industry be brought in for sure because we lost Marathon Petroleum [in 2020], and that really hurt us. That’s 390 employees who are now either not working or they’re not here or retired or whatever,” Bonaguidi said.

In talking about bringing business to town, Bonaguidi mentioned that a lot of people have suggested bringing in a chain such as Red Lobster or Sam’s Club into town. He pointed out thar with Interstate 40 serves as a major asset, and Gallup can still attract big businesses.

“This is still a great business town, it’s just a matter of encouraging people to go into business,” he said.

PREPPING FOR HIS FIRST FULL YEAR

Ron Molina, the newest member of the city council, has set some goals of his own for 2024. In an interview with the *Sun* he said that he wants to see the community become more involved with the council.

Council looks forward to 2024

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Managing Editor
Friday, 05 January 2024 00:00

“One of the things I’m going to push is for everybody to attend the city hall meetings, either in person or on Facebook,” he said. “I think people really need to watch these meetings. Like I said, government is new to me, I never thought I’d be in government, but it’s really interesting and I’m really enjoying it and I’d like for everybody else to experience it.”

As a way to open up communication between himself and his constituents in District 2, Molina is planning on starting monthly Neighborhood Meetings beginning in February.

He hopes to discuss major issues with the community, such as keeping the community safe and improving the streets.

By Molly Ann Howell
Managing Editor