

Is the community willing to do its part for economic development?

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 28 October 2016 04:55



To the Citizens of Gallup and McKinley County:

I attended the announcement by Gallup Land Partners on Oct. 17 regarding the groundbreaking ceremony for the Gallup Energy Logistics Park. The event was hosted by Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation. It was exciting to hear about the \$4,000,000 investment to construct the rail terminal for the Park.

It is critical for the community to pursue economic development in a proactive way so that we can expand our tax base and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Gallup and McKinley County. The expansion of the tax base should help us improve the infrastructure in the community, and enable us to recruit more professionals to our area. If we have more professionals moving into the community, that will enhance the property values related to residential and commercial properties.

The expansion of the tax base should increase the resources available to the Gallup McKinley County Schools and UNM-Gallup. It is critical that the local schools educate and train the students so that they can compete for the jobs created from the economic development. Too many of the students must leave the local area to find employment in other communities.

There was a question from the audience that asked GLP what they were going to do to help the citizens in the community. It is my understanding that GLP is funding scholarships at UNM-Gallup for vocational education. Based on the GLP investment in scholarships and the Energy Logistics Park, they are doing their part to improve the community. It is time for the citizens and businesses in Gallup and McKinley County to make the same investment locally.

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Many people in the community communicate to me that they want change in Gallup and McKinley County. Unfortunately, their actions do not support the change that is so desperately needed here. To have change, people and businesses must take risk to drive the change. Based on my experience in the community, too many of our citizens want someone else to take the risk to drive the change. This approach allows them to “sit on the fence” and continue to benefit from the status quo.

Ultimately, the status quo means that the community is not growing. If you are not growing, then you are dying. It is time that Gallup and McKinley County embrace the change necessary to support economic development. GLP and GGEDC are doing their part. Are you willing to do your part?

Brett Newberry, CFE, CPA

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