

The Bright Future of Apache Junction

We are at an exciting turning point in Apache Junction. We can choose to stay the course and continue simply getting by, operating at the mercy of the economy, state and federal governments and unelected people making rules to keep their jobs. Or we can take our future in our own hands and move in a positive and forward striving path.

I have proposed and the city council has approved that we go through the process of developing a vision statement for our community. This would include developing a mission statement and a set of short and long term goals. These would be used to help us accomplish the following objectives; economic development, proper land use and zoning, marketing our community, improving citizen and staff morale, and finally enable us to build sustainable current and long term operating and capital budgets.

I would like to define what a vision statement is so that we are all on the same page. A vision is a description of a future: not the future, but a possible future into which we want to drive our city. A vision is a description of the quest of our city. It provides focus, involvement and motivation and is also a guide for making decisions about allocation of resources. A great example of this is from Martin Luther King, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

The mission clarifies the initial direction we are going to take in moving toward our vision. If the vision is beyond the horizon, the mission is the point on the horizon we pick out in belief that arriving there will bring us closer to where we ultimately want to be. Mission answers the question, "in what area(s) are we going to focus our time and energy in the coming months and years?" John Kennedy said, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth." This is a great example of a mission statement.

We, the city council, through a town hall meeting, will seek and listen to the ideas and input of the citizens and staff of our city. That is what we are elected to do. Ultimately it is our duty to gather the information and come to an agreed upon course for the community. As leaders we have three tasks to perform: to develop a vision for the community, communicate that vision, and provide the opportunities and resources for the staff and citizens to go out and pursue the vision and accomplish the mission.

I appreciate the opportunity to lay out my idea and to ask the citizens of our community to begin thinking about where you want Apache Junction to be in the next year, five years, ten years and beyond. It will only be through a combined and cooperative collaboration that we will move Apache Junction into our bright future. You may read more of my ideas at www.letsbuildourfuture.com. So let's plan together, work together and succeed together as we build our future together.

Jeff Struble
Apache Junction City Council Member