

## **Introduction**

As we begin to emerge from the current recession and a new era of economic development begins, the need for the region to work smarter toward its economic goals is even more imperative.

The La Paz Economic Development Corporation and its strategic partners are working with Arizona Public Service Company (APS) to develop a five-year strategic economic development plan for the La Paz county area through the APS-sponsored Focused Future II program. This yearlong process began on November 8, 2011 with an Economic Development Overview meeting and the first Action Team meeting was held December 1<sup>st</sup>. The La Paz Focused Future Action Team of 24 community leaders and citizens will work with APS and consultants to develop the strategic plan over the next year.

At the first meeting the following definition of economic development was created.

### ***La Paz Focused Future II Economic Development Definition***

*Economic development is a process that improves the quality of life of the area while increasing prosperity and economic wealth in a balanced, sustainable manner.*

The Focused Future II process offers the community a forum to be proactive in and on the cutting edge of economic development.

## **Focused Future II Process**

- A thoughtful, grass-roots, cutting-edge planning process rich with opportunity and the need to work smarter toward future economic goals for the La Paz area.
- Utilizes a critical assessment and examination of successes and challenges, issues and trends.
- Consists of directed and guided conversations to help identify and direct what will work in region.
- A yearlong process, with the Action Team meeting once a month for three hours.
- Process will provide opportunities for broader community involvement at key points in the process.
- Outcome is an economic development plan that contains broad input and consensus. The final draft will be rolled out to the community through an open-to-the-public event for review and comments.
- Plan success will be measured through economic and “quality of life” indicators.