



State of the Town Address 2012
Dr. Satish I. Hiremath, Mayor

Good afternoon everyone. On behalf of my colleagues and the staff of the Town of Oro Valley, welcome to the 11th Annual State of the Town Address.

Allow me to begin by recognizing my fellow Councilmembers who are with us today: Vice Mayor Lou Waters, Councilmembers Brendan Burns, Joe Hornat, Mary Snider and Mike Zinkin. Unfortunately, Councilmember Bill Garner could not be here.

One of my key points in last year's State of the Town Address was an expanded view of community. I stressed the idea that community is much more than just a line on a map; it is a group of people who have similar interests, know one another, look out for one another, belong to the same organizations, and support the same establishments. It extends across borders to our friends, family members and colleagues throughout the region, whether they reside in Marana, Tucson, Sahuarita, South Tucson, or unincorporated Pima County.

It is this definition of community which enables the mutual exchange of ideas and resources. It is this definition of community which brings us all to the table in a collaborative effort to solve problems and move our region forward. It is this definition of community which has resulted in overwhelming successes for the Town of Oro Valley and our partners.

Last year, I also emphasized the point that we must become strategic instead of reactive. Think outside of the box instead of being preoccupied with what's already in the box.

How can we provide better services with limited resources? How can we address long-running challenges from a new perspective? How can we help our regional friends and partners be successful?

The answer is simple: collaboration.

Regional collaboration is what happens when you think outside the box. And this year's theme, "Success through Collaboration," has been the Town of Oro Valley's focus for the past year. By creating and taking advantage of opportunities for partnership, we have learned to extend our resources while redefining success and financial stability.

The Town of Oro Valley has developed dozens of valuable partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions, businesses and organizations. But I'd like to take a moment to highlight two examples that made news headlines this year.

The first is our partnership with the City of Tucson for the delivery of Central Arizona Project water.

As a result, the Town of Oro Valley is now able to deliver CAP water from the Colorado River for the first time ever, and we're well on our way to delivering approximately 1,500 acre feet of CAP water into our potable water system each year, which significantly reduces our reliance on groundwater and helps preserve our aquifer.

The second example is our partnership with the Regional Transportation Authority.

In an effort to meet the transportation needs of our residents, while maintaining efficient and cost-effective services, the Town of Oro Valley entered into a partnership with the RTA to launch the Sun Shuttle Dial-A-Ride transit service.

This new, Town-operated service was an integration of the former Coyote Run senior transit, Handicar paratransit and the RTA Sun Shuttle circulator services into a single, expanded service that provides mobility to more residents in our community.

The success of Dial-A-Ride has been, in a word: impressive.

Previously, the Town's Coyote Run transit service provided an average of 53 trips per day. Daily ridership now averages more than 150 trips per day. In addition, this new service has reduced operating costs for both the Town and the RTA. Increased efficiency is projected to result in an annual savings of more than \$150,000 to the RTA and \$200,000 to the Town of Oro Valley.

The Town also continues to partner with ADOT and Pima County on the regional shared-use path system. In the next year we will begin construction on the last mile of the CDO path, eventually leading right into Catalina State Park.

I'd also like to recognize several other collaborative partnerships which have resulted in success not only for the Town of Oro Valley, but for the entire region.

Pima County Public Library

Through an intergovernmental agreement with the Pima County Library system, the Oro Valley Public Library will enjoy full branch status, resulting in expanded hours and services, and a savings to the Town's General Fund of approximately \$600,000 annually.

Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Town's partnership with the MTCVB has helped us identify our strengths and market them in other areas of the country. Most recently, the MTCVB marketing and advertising department, along with the Tucson Sports division, has partnered with Town staff to develop a national marketing strategy for the new Aquatic Center, which is currently under development. Tucson Sports has also been instrumental in retaining the Duathlon National Championships, which attracts more than 1,000 athletes to our community.

Speaking of endurance events, on March 24, 2013, the Arizona Distance Classic Valley of Gold Half Marathon will celebrate its 9th anniversary here in Oro Valley. I would like to acknowledge David Babner, Race Director of M3S Sports, who traveled from Columbus, Ohio to attend today's event. Thank you David for your partnership!

Arizona Commerce Authority & Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities

The ACA and TREO fill a big gap that local jurisdictions can't fill when it comes to attracting corporate employers to Southern Arizona. TREO was instrumental in the expansion of Ventana Medical Systems in Oro Valley, which helped launch our reputation as a hot spot for bioscience. And most recently, the ACA and TREO were instrumental in bringing Accelr8 Technology Corporation to the Tucson-metro area.

I'd like to commend TREO on their recent restructure. This is a great example of collaboration and thinking outside the box. A big thank you to CEO Joe Snell.

Pima Regional SWAT

Improving the safety of all jurisdictions throughout Pima County, Pima Regional SWAT is a collaborative effort of local law enforcement agencies to provide unsurpassed service to our community.

Oro Valley Hospital

Recognizing the need to become a true community hospital, the Oro Valley Hospital has expanded its services and personnel to meet the diverse needs of our residents. Additionally, they stepped in and provided space and professional support for our recreation classes specifically designed for those with Parkinson's disease. I'd like to thank Oro Valley Hospital CEO Jae Dale for his ongoing partnership.

Southern Arizona Arts & Cultural Alliance

The Town of Oro Valley places great value on the role that arts and culture play in our community, and our partnership with the Southern Arizona Arts & Cultural Alliance has enabled us to continue providing free community events. Thank you to SAACA Executive Director Kate Marquez for all that you do.

Golder Ranch Fire District

Although Golder Ranch isn't technically part of Oro Valley town services, you'd never know that from the seamless service and support they provide the community. They go above and beyond to maintain the level of excellence to which our residents have become accustomed. I'd like to personally thank Fire Chief Randy Karrer for his commitment to our community.

Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce

Throughout the years, our Chamber of Commerce has continued to collaborate with Oro Valley on our Business Retention and Expansion Program and Shop Oro Valley Campaigns. More than just a partner, the Chamber has become an extension of the Town's Economic Development services, linking businesses with the community. Remember, nearly 50% of the Town's general fund comes from sales tax. When our businesses succeed, our entire community succeeds.

Metropolitan Pima Alliance and the Southern Arizona Home Builder's Association

Responsible planning and development are bedrock principles of our community. MPA and SAHBA have partnered with us to work toward those goals. The MPA is dedicated to improving policy that impacts the real estate development industry, and they have worked with the Town on significant land use issues. SAHBA has been an advocate for planning and implementing public policies that promote housing opportunities.

Pima Association of Governments and the Regional Transportation Authority

Focusing on regional, environmental and transportation planning, PAG and the RTA ensure that we have the infrastructure to support the growth and economic development of the community. Last year I served as the Chairman of PAG, which is the forum for local jurisdictions to cooperate in addressing regional issues. This year I have been proud to represent Oro Valley as the Chair of the RTA Board.

We are eagerly awaiting the completion of the Lambert Lane widening project, from La Canada to Pusch View. And next year, you will also see construction on Magee Road within the Town, complementing the improvements that Pima County and the RTA are making to Magee and La Cholla near the Foothills Mall. Although these roads are not within the current Town boundary, improvements in this area will clearly benefit Town residents.

Neighboring municipalities

Perhaps most important are our partnerships with neighboring municipalities. Marana, Tucson, South Tucson, Sahuarita and Oro Valley are all different spokes on the same county wheel. We have all shown a willingness to further each others' success. We understand that success in their back yard results in benefits for the entire region. Where we work, shop, live and play aren't dictated by lines on a map. The better we understand this concept, the more we can continue partnering with each other to move the entire region forward.

There is another valuable type of collaboration that is often overlooked—internal collaboration. The expertise and knowledge of daily operations make our staff an invaluable resource. They experience and understand our organizations in unique ways, and as a result, they have unique insight into the challenges we face and the creative solutions we should consider. Yet so often, we fail to tap into this resource. Not all problems can be solved "at the top." And sometimes, we don't even realize we have a problem until we have honest conversations with our employees.

This year, our Town Manager, Greg Caton, and his staff created a forum in which those honest conversations could take place. Through creative collaboration with our employees, we learned about areas in which we can improve. More importantly, the Town's leadership team is using that feedback to develop a plan of action and address those areas for improvement. Tapping into the resources within our own organization gives us a complete picture of who we are and where we want to be.

While this has certainly been a benchmark year for collaboration, the Town of Oro Valley has also seen major success in other areas.

The foundation for all of our success has been fiscal responsibility, as demonstrated by our balanced budget. And as a result, for the first time in many years, we were able to re-instate a 2.5% cost of living adjustment for all employees as a way to express our gratitude for their perseverance and loyalty. I can say with great confidence that this is only the beginning. We will continue to make good on that promise, by implementing Police Department step increases and employee merit raises for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

I want to thank each of our employees for having faith in me, my fellow Councilmembers, our Town Manager and leadership staff to fulfill our promise. You hung in there during the years when we were unable to provide additional compensation, yet we were asking you to do more with fewer resources. I realize many of you could have jumped ship, but you didn't. You stuck with us, demonstrating the depth

of your commitment not only to this organization, but to the residents of Oro Valley. For that, I am eternally grateful.

Could I please ask our Town employees to stand and be recognized?

Thank you for all that you do.

Please be seated.

I'd like to share a few other highlights from this past year.

Steam Pump Ranch has been opened for public use. We've built a parking lot, restrooms and renovated buildings, bringing this historical site back to life. And on October 13, we'll host the first-ever Steam Pump Ranch Fall Festival.

The Parks and Recreation Department is working to complete an archery facility at Naranja Park.

At James D. Kriegh Park, a partnership with the Dodgers Dream Foundation and Diamondbacks resulted in the renovation of Green Field. And a grant from The Keg Steakhouse enabled the construction of an accessible playground.

Most notable, however, is the \$5 million aquatic center enhancement project, which will transform our municipal pool into one of Arizona's premier aquatics facilities. The Aquatic Center, which is slated for completion in March 2013, will feature a 50-meter competition pool, a 25-yard community pool, splash pad, water slide, family changing rooms, community multi-use room, concessions and much more. In addition to providing Oro Valley families a place to spend the entire afternoon, this new competition-level facility will draw state and regional events, ultimately contributing to the economic health of our town.

This has been an extraordinary year. The state of the Town is strong.

As we move forward into 2012-2013, I'm excited about what lies ahead. We will continue to focus on fiscal responsibility, annexation efforts, recruiting primary employers, supporting local businesses, continued investment in Town infrastructure, and for the first time ever, the creation of a Youth Advisory Council to engage Oro Valley students in local government.

Speaking of students, I'd like to give a shout-out to some recent Oro Valley graduates: Jake Fischer of Ironwood Ridge, and Jared Tevis and Ka'deem Carey of Canyon del Oro. Their herculean efforts helped the Wildcat football team defeat Oklahoma State last week!

Life's good in OV, and we're committed to keeping it that way.

But when life is good, we have to remind ourselves to stop taking things for granted.

Not long ago, my son Mason and I went to a late-night movie at the Oro Valley Marketplace Theater. When the movie got out around midnight, we saw a patrol car cruising the parking lot. Behind us we heard some voices, and I turned around to see two teenage girls walking out of a different movie. I realized at that moment in time, how awesome it is to be Mayor of a town where our kids feel safe enough to walk around after midnight. I turned to Mason and I asked him, "How many other

communities in the country do you think you would see this happen?” He replied that he couldn’t think of one. I told him, “Never take what we have here for granted.”

We have something truly special here. We’re blessed to live in one of the safest communities in the nation, surrounded by gorgeous mountains and enviable amenities. But as we look to attract new employers, families and special events, we need to do a better job telling our story.

To that end, the Oro Valley Economic Development and Communications divisions have been working to identify the Town’s brand to better reflect who we are and what we have to offer. With the aid of the community, they have crafted a new tagline to guide that effort.

Today, I’m excited to unveil this new concept for the first time!

There’s a lot of work that goes into developing a tagline, including workshops with Town staff, focus groups with community leaders and business owners, and surveys to solicit community input.

The feedback that emerged was surprisingly consistent:

- We take pride in our natural environment and beautiful views, and appreciate outdoor recreation.
- We are a town of engaged citizens who view community as family.
- We value public safety, quality roads and infrastructure.

And here is the tagline that captures who we are: **It’s in our nature.**

Outdoor recreation – It’s in our nature.

Engaged citizens – It’s in our nature.

Public safety – It’s in our nature.

Collaboration – It’s in our nature.

And the list goes on.

What I really appreciate about this tagline is that as Oro Valley continues to grow, and we add more attributes to our identity, this tagline will grow with us.

Arts & Culture – It’s in our nature.

Aquatics – It’s in our nature.

Bioscience – It’s in our nature.

This simple tagline will unify the many facets of who we are and help us tell our story of success.

This community is the result of a THOUSAND success stories, borne out of hard work, collaboration, innovation, compromise and mutual respect.

Oro Valley’s success didn’t just happen on its own, and it didn’t happen overnight. It happened because we were deliberate in the partnerships we formed, and in the goals we set for ourselves and for the entire region. The Town of Oro Valley has experienced overwhelming success this year because of our dedicated management team and outstanding staff. I’d like to ask our Town Manager, Mr. Greg Caton to please stand and be recognized.

Thank you, Mr. Caton.

At this time, I'd like to issue a couple messages.

A message to the Oro Valley Town Council:

Thank you. Our Town's success is a direct result of your leadership. But let's never forget that our job is to set policy and provide direction. We have a talented Town Manager and staff who will carry out our vision and goals, so aside from the first and third Wednesday of each month when we meet in Council Chambers, let's take the time to enjoy our Town and engage the community. That's how easy our job should be.

A message to our residents:

My view on what local government should do for our residents is three fold: 1) provide basic services at an affordable cost; 2) partner with other entities, private or public, for profit or not for profit, to better our community; and 3) assist residents who truly need help in this uncertain economic time.

What is my expectation from you? Only two things...

First, I ask that you focus on the Town's positive aspects. Talk about the great things we're doing and be proud of where you live. Write letters, e-mails, Facebook updates and Tweets about our successes, not only to your friends and neighbors, but to your Councilmembers as well. We work very hard to provide you with a place you can be proud to call your home.

And secondly, please shop locally. When you support Oro Valley businesses, you're supporting the services and infrastructure that the Town provides for you.

We all have a social contract—a commitment to one another that we will work together to move this community forward. Let's be the community that reintroduces the idea of respect back into each other's lives!

There are many thank yous that need to be said today:

Thank you to the Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce board of directors, President/CEO Dave Perry, and each of the sponsors who made today's event possible. The Chamber has been and will continue to be an important partner in Oro Valley's success.

Another long-time partner and collaborator is the Hilton El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort. Thank you to Lynn Ericksen and his staff, who always put on a spectacular event.

To my family: my better half, Stacy, her mom Kathy, and my children Mason, Mahra, Macallan and Jordan. Thank you for your patience and support. I do this as much for you as I do for the entire community.

And to my parents who are here today:

Mom, thank you for teaching me compassion and caring and that's it's my responsibility, as well as my obligation, to help as many people as I can and to show people that it's ok to be respectful and kind to each other.

Dad, thank you for instilling in me that there is no shortcut to success and that success doesn't happen by accident or luck. Rather, success happens when we set out intentional systems and protocols to achieve the desired end result.

To all of you in the audience, I commit to you that Oro Valley's success will NOT rely on luck or accident but rather, our success will rely on the intentional collaboration and respect among the people in this room.

You've heard the old saying, "Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are." And when I look around this room, it's clear that the Town of Oro Valley keeps good company! I can wholeheartedly say that we are just as invested in you as you are in us. The talents and resources you contribute will move the entire region forward together. And when one of us is successful, we all share a part in that success.

In that spirit, I'd like to once again recognize the friends and partners I've mentioned today. As you hear the name of your group, please stand and remain standing.

Business owners
City of Tucson
City of South Tucson
Town of Marana
Town of Sahuarita
Pima County
Pima County Public Library
Regional Transportation Authority
Pima Association of Governments
Arizona Commerce Authority
TREC
MTCVB
Pima County SWAT
Golder Ranch Fire District
Oro Valley Hospital
Southern Arizona Arts & Culture Alliance
Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce
SAHBA
MPA
Town of Oro Valley staff
Town of Oro Valley residents

This is just a sample of the people who have helped Oro Valley become a community of excellence.

From this day forward, let's commit ourselves to engaging in partnerships and collaborations that will result in the success of the entire region. Your support is invaluable.

Thank you for being part of Oro Valley's success story, and thank you for joining me today!