The city of Phoenix continues its pursuit of excellence throughout the organization. Delivering quality, efficient, and cost-effective services to Phoenix residents is the cornerstone of the organization’s commitment to public service. Because of the lengthy economic recession, city employees have worked hard as individuals and on teams to deliver quality customer service with fewer resources. Nothing illustrates this point better than the innovative partnerships we have formed with community members to ensure that the city uses its resources wisely. As a result, we’ve received positive feedback from the 2010 Community Attitude Survey.

Because the economic recession has continued to negatively impact city revenue growth, the organization has been challenged with spending less and creating a smaller, more efficient government. Assistance and feedback from the community was encouraged, and as a result, two committees were established. The city manager created the Innovation and Efficiency Task Force, which consists of city of Phoenix executive management and volunteer community leaders. Also, the Mayor created the City Council Finance, Efficiency and Innovation Subcommittee. Together these committees helped develop strategies that have saved the city more than $25 million in 2010-11, and will save more than $125 million over the next five years.

According to the 2010 Community Attitude Survey, more than 95 percent of Phoenix residents indicated they were treated professionally and courteously by city employees, the highest ever for this measure. This occurred despite having the smallest workforce in nearly 40 years due to budget reductions and efficiencies. City employees are proud to be among the very best and they serve the community with pride.

In addition to the community’s recognition of a job well done, the city and its employees are continually recognized by a variety of professional organizations for its longstanding commitment to excellence. The following is a list of just a few of the awards and recognitions received by the city during the course of this fiscal year:

- The Finance Department received a distinguished Certificate of Achievement for its 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The city has earned the award continuously since 1976.
- The city of Phoenix received the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Certificate of Excellence for Performance Measurement for its commitment to continuous learning and improvement. Based on a criterion of effective, results-oriented management practices, Phoenix was one of 21 jurisdictions receiving such an honor this year. The ICMA is an organization that advances professional local government and supports nearly 9,000 city, town and county organizations and individuals worldwide.
- The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center, a Parks and Recreation Department facility, received top honors – the President’s Award – in the Annual Valley Forward Environmental Excellence Award Program. Other city projects received Crescordia awards, including the Tres Rios Constructed Wetlands, Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, Papago Regional Master Plan, the Zanjero’s Line art project, Paradise Village Solar Demonstration Project, McCarty on Monroe, Little Canyon Trail, Phoenix Tree and the Shade Master Plan. The Valley Forward Excellence Awards are Arizona’s oldest and most prestigious awards competition focusing on environmental initiatives.
- The Parks and Recreation Department’s Bret Tarver Learning Center received the 2010 Outstanding Facility Award from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association (APRA). The facility was recognized for excellence in the field of parks, recreation, cultural and community services. The center is named after Phoenix firefighter Bret Tarver, who lost his life in March 2001 while fighting a fire at the Southwest Supermarket that was formerly on the site.
- The European Centre for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies named the Arizona State University Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication in downtown Phoenix as one of the recipients of the 2010 International Architecture Awards. The award recognizes the most significant new architecture designed and built worldwide. The Cronkite School was built as a joint partnership with the city of Phoenix.
- The Sunshine Review, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting state and local government transparency, presented the city with the 2011 Sunny Award. The city was recognized for its commitment to exceed transparency standards and for the information provided to residents on the phoenix.gov website. This is the second year in a row the city has received this award.
The Community Contributes to Our Success

Volunteers also “make Phoenix better” and in 2011, a volunteer coordinator was hired in the city manager’s office to oversee the important roles that many residents serve as volunteers with city programs, boards, commissions, task forces and committees. The volunteer coordinator will expand volunteer opportunities, increase volunteer numbers, track citywide volunteer efforts and volunteer recognition, as volunteers are an integral component to the operation of city services and assist city employees, especially during these economic times.

Over the next year, the city manager’s major focus will be working with the Mayor, City Council and the community to carryout the updated strategic plan for the city and to implement Phase II of the Innovation and Efficiency Task Force. The strategic plan is discussed in greater detail in the strategic plan section of this document. Phase II of the Innovation and Efficiency Task Force will focus on seven key areas including communications; compensation and benefits; customer service; fines and fees; process improvement and technology; regulatory review; and right sourcing.

We are committed to Making Phoenix Better

The city’s Vision and Values statements continue to serve as a common source of motivation for city of Phoenix employees to do all that they can to make Phoenix better.

- We are dedicated to serving our customers
- We value and respect diversity
- We work as a team
- We each do all we can
- We learn, change and improve
- We focus on results
- We work with integrity
- We make Phoenix better!

Not only do city of Phoenix employees follow these guiding principles in their work, they show they care about the community they serve by contributing financially to the Valley of the Sun United Way through the City of Phoenix Community Service Fund Drive. This year, employees exceeded their goal by contributing more than $1.2 million to United Way agencies during the “Building our Community with Unity” campaign.

City of Phoenix employee organizations and departments coordinate various other fund raising events to assist communities in need both locally and globally. In addition, city employees volunteer countless hours in the community with many organizations serving a wide range of causes.

Resident volunteers working with the Neighborhood Services Department’s code enforcement program are some of the volunteers that work to “make Phoenix better.”
Following are a few additional examples of how city employees have demonstrated their commitment to the city’s Vision and Values by going above and beyond to improve the quality of life for Phoenix residents.

- The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) selected the Housing Department as the recipient of the 2010 Award of Excellence. The award was presented for the McCarty on Monroe senior housing development. The department is one of 23 programs nationwide to receive the 2010 award, which recognizes outstanding innovation and achievement in housing and community development programs throughout the country.

- The National League of Cities presented the Library Department with the 2010 Award for Municipal Excellence. The award was presented for College Depot, a college access center that has served more than 5,000 youth and their families, providing workshops and one-on-one assistance with college planning, financial aid, career exploration, college applications and more.

- The Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport’s Navigator Volunteer Program received the State of Arizona Spirit of Service Award at the 30th Annual Governor’s Conference on Tourism. The award is presented to the non-management tourism employee or volunteer (individual or group) who best exemplifies the Arizona tourism industry’s commitment to exceptional customer service.

- The Arizona Supreme Court Judicial Staff Education Committee (JSEC) presented Phoenix Municipal Court Judge Louis Frank Dominguez with a Trainer Excellence Award. Judge Dominguez was recognized by JSEC for his volunteer work and for demonstrating dedication and commitment to excellence in promoting and continuing judicial education in Arizona.

- Lifeguards James Campbell, Rachel Rodia, Alicia King, Elisa King and Charles Woodruff of the Parks Department’s Aquatic Division took honors at the American Red Cross 30th Annual Lifeguard Challenge. Staff won honors in the Top Overall Team, Coed Submerged Object Recovery, Coed Active Victim Rescue and Coed Rescue Tube Relay categories. The event showcases the commitment, dedication and pride staff takes in representing the city.
City of Phoenix Excellence Awards

Each year, the city honors its employees and teams for excellence. Their efforts help to make Phoenix a more livable city.

- Donnie Herold, a park ranger II in the Parks and Recreation Department Natural Resources Division, demonstrated his dedication to the Desert Awareness Program and his commitment to excellence was recognized for innovative and useful new ideas related to trails and educational programs for the public. Herold designed a unique trail marker for Phoenix Mountain Parks and Preserves, revegetated and revitalized an area near the Dreamy Draw parking lot to create an accessible bird sanctuary that attracts native species of the Sonoran Desert and created an educational display of Phoenix Parks and Preserves flora and fauna to encourage respect for nature from participants by heeding the Phoenix Parks and Mountain Preserve “Stay on the Trail” motto. Herold is a mentor and great resource to other park rangers, as the division reinvents and sculpts the Park Ranger Program.

- Phoenix Police Department Sgt. Troy Hillman, under the supervision of Lt. Joe Knott, and the Cold Case Homicide Project team of seven detectives (M. Armistead, B. Giesemann, T. Kamp, M. Ramirez, J. Rosenthal, W. Schira and W. Stuebe) worked to solve 11 open homicide cases. Hillman guided the team through the many trying experiences related to investigating cold case murders and his team of investigators had positive attitudes and proven skills to investigate complex cases. Utilizing an innovative and strategic approach to evaluating murders for solvability, and then utilizing skilled follow-up to resolve each unique case, Cold Case Team members brought closure to murders that remained unsolved for as long as 29 years. Hillman’s leadership, organizational skills and compelling drive led this team to greater success than imagined possible. In fact, work done here also helped drive the homicide clearance rate in Phoenix to heights not seen in decades.
**Employee Suggestion Awards**

The Employee Suggestion Program (ESP), which began in the mid-1950s, has saved millions of dollars through direct cost savings and other productivity and cost-avoidance improvements. Employees can make improvement suggestions for any city operation, not just for their own department. Some examples of employee suggestions implemented in the 2010-11 fiscal year:

- Many of the city of Phoenix's park facilities have barbecue grills for patrons to enjoy. Over time, these grills deteriorate from rust damage due to exposure to outdoor elements. Joseph Mendez, a building maintenance worker with the Parks Department, discovered that in most cases, it was only the bottom of the grills that were rusting out. Mendez developed a method to fabricate steel mesh reinforcement and refurbish the grills at a lower cost than replacing them. Mr. Mendez's suggestion to refurbish the grills has been implemented so far on 21 grills, for a cost savings of $6,365, and is expected to be utilized citywide for even greater savings.

- Kerr Henley, a solid waste equipment operator in the Public Works Department, suggested enhancing a heavy-duty semi-truck/trailer combination with a system that lifts recyclable material barrels, deposits the contents and packs the materials into the trailer. The enhancement enabled additional recyclable material to be packed into the trailer making it more cost effective and reduced the amount of material that often fell to the street. This change also reduced the likelihood of injury to equipment operators who often needed to climb onto the trailer body to unclog the packing system or remove loose or spilled material.

- Cristina Wilfong, an environmental quality specialist in the Public Works Department, suggested recycling propane gas cylinders, saving the city nearly $2,500 each year.
Kelly Bucey in the Public Works Department realized that an energy savings could be achieved by turning off the lighting that illuminates vending machines in city facilities. Most of the vending machines are illuminated with fluorescent lighting, but many are in plenty of light and could be disconnected. The estimated savings by implementing this idea was $5,200 per year.

Robert Martinez, a solid waste foreman in the Public Works Department, realized that several city landfills were in need of “house-cleaning.” Martinez began collecting all the scrap metal material from the various yards and compiled a “bid” process for the sale of the recyclable materials collected to a local metal recycler. Through his ingenuity, Martinez was able to obtain the highest cost per ton for the materials, generating one-time revenue to the city of more than $25,000.

The city’s 91st Avenue Waste Water Treatment Plant must analyze three separate water samples with different parameters for quality control. Roger Vail, a senior water quality inspector in the Water Services Department, suggested combining the three samples into one sample, with group parameters, which would yield the same results. After obtaining the necessary approvals, this suggestion was implemented and saved the city nearly $100,000 in the first year of implementation.

The city offers free household hazardous waste disposal events each month. Residents may drop off items such as antifreeze, car batteries, pool chemicals, and propane gas cylinders. Cristina Wilfong, an environmental quality specialist in the Public Works Solid Waste Division, suggested recycling propane gas cylinders through a local vendor that provides tank recycling services at no charge. Her idea will save the city nearly $2,500 each year.

As you can see, we work very hard to earn our reputation as a well-run city. We strive to be leaders in our professions. Each day the core values of our organization – what we call our “Vision and Values” – are at the root of everything we do.