

**Chuck Huckelberry**

**From:** Denise Hund [dhund@salc.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 25, 2008 10:53 AM  
**To:** Chuck Huckelberry  
**Subject:** Response to March 18 memo

March 25, 2008

Mr. Chuck Huckelberry  
 Pima County Administrator  
 130 West Congress, 10th Floor  
 Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Mr. Huckelberry:

We have reviewed your March 18 Board of Supervisors Memorandum in which you discuss the joint city-county water infrastructure supply and planning study, and recommend several positive actions that could be taken by the business organizations that recently sent two letters to the Pima County Supervisors and Tucson City Council members.

We want to be clear that we applaud any and all efforts to better plan for the Tucson region's water needs and to better manage its water resources. Specifically, we are pleased that you addressed in your memo the need "to establish and strengthen City and County internal communications, facts and collaborations." We are aware that many times over the years, the newspapers and others have described city and county relations as being dysfunctional. To the degree the city and county can work together to make this description less accurate, the entire region benefits.

We would like to respond to some of the ideas in your memo, but first, we'd like to step back and put the issue of a city-county water study in context.

The current planning effort was initiated Nov. 9 in a joint memo by Richard Elias, Sharon Bronson and Karin Uhlich. They asked you and Mike Hein to draft a scope of work for a "comprehensive water study." They added that they support "a collaborative effort to better plan our area's water future."

From the very beginning, then, this joint city-county water study was positioned as a comprehensive, regional study. At their Nov. 13 meeting, the Board of Supervisors approved the request 5-to-0 after a wide-ranging discussion in which the supervisors expressed a variety of goals for the study. As an example of the wide territory covered by the discussion, one supervisor argued that the outcome needed to be a map showing where people could or could not live.

Five days later, an op-ed by Supervisor Ann Day appeared in the Arizona Daily Star. She argued, among other things, that Tucson Water "is more than a municipal water utility; it is a regional water provider." She contended that "the other towns, the tribes and small water utilities must be involved as well."

When the Tucson City Council unanimously approved the study on December 11, the council members, too, expressed a variety of views of what the study would entail. It is safe to say that between the supervisors and council members, there were perhaps 12 somewhat different interpretations of what the study would entail.

In response, SALC and other business leaders met with you, Mike Hein and several individual supervisors and council members in order to better understand just what sort of a study was being planned.

To summarize where we're going with this letter, our first point is that from the beginning, there has been no clear, consistent explanation of what the city and county would be studying, other than that this would be some sort of a comprehensive, regional

*To: Nicole —  
 forward this to  
 the joint committee  
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plan. That is why in all our meetings, we emphasized one theme: Any regional water study must be open, transparent, and inclusive, with all water providers and interested groups involved. Specifically, we called for the environmental community to be involved along with business and other groups.

Our second point is that because the city and county so dominate water provision in the Tucson region, as you explained in your March 18 memorandum, we believe that the city and county bear a greater responsibility than the other municipalities and water providers for convening the effort to create a regional plan. It only makes sense that the largest and most powerful water utilities bear the greatest amount of responsibility for ensuring the regional well-being.

With this as background, we'd like to respond to your recommendations for the business organizations. Referring to our Feb. 19 letter, you offered four recommendations:

1. That the letter signers develop and suggest a policy and values forum so that Phase IV could occur concurrently with Phase II.
2. That the other water providers and jurisdictions inventory their infrastructure at the same time the county and city inventory and assess their infrastructure.
3. That SALC propose a public involvement plan.
4. That SALC and the other signers suggest "what they would like to see in a Phase V study regarding governance and organizational development for regional water management." You added, "Ultimately, it will be important to answer the question of governance and how the region's water resources are shared among the various users and beneficiaries."

We read these recommendations as saying the county is ready and willing to incorporate the business community and others into the water planning process. If that is accurate, we are prepared to start work on all four recommendations and to enlist the environmental and conservation communities in the effort. But we stress such efforts will succeed only if all interested parties, including the city and county, are fully engaged.

Very truly yours,



Ron Shoopman, President, Southern Arizona Leadership Council  
Jack Camper, President, Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce  
Rick Hodges, Chief Executive Officer, Tucson Association of Realtors  
Ed Taczanowsky, President, Southern Arizona Home Builders Association  
Ramon Gaanderse, Executive Director, Metropolitan Pima Alliance  
Chuck Freitas, Chairman, Safe and Sensible Water Committee  
Jim Kuliesh, Executive Director, Alliance of Construction Trades  
David Pittman, Director, Arizona Builders Alliance  
Fred Ronstadt, Executive Director, Tucson Utility Contractors Association  
Ed Stolmaker, Executive Director, Marana Chamber of Commerce

cc: Tucson City Mayor and Council  
Pima County Board of Supervisors  
Mike Hein, City Manager, City of Tucson