

January 21, 2009 |  
**BUSINESS**



---

Type Size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

[Print](#)

[Email](#)

[Most Popular](#)



[Buzz up!](#)

## Valley set to pursue stimulus funding

---

by [J. Craig Anderson](#) - Jan. 10, 2009 12:00 AM  
*The Arizona Republic*

---

Government officials in the Valley want to make sure their own bureaucracies don't restrict the flow of federal money for Arizona.

County and municipal leaders said they were planning to apply for billions of dollars in funding promised for public-works projects such as roads and schools, bridges and buildings, and public services such as light

Most civic leaders appeared to agree that bringing jobs and economic stability to the area should be their top priority in the worst year in recent decades for employment.

Some of them lamented the lengthy process for acquiring private land, assessing the environmental impact and the requirements that accompany federal money.

Hundreds of government and construction-industry representatives met Thursday in Phoenix for discussion on how the Valley receives its full share of the stimulus dole.

The public-private summit was sponsored by Arizona State University's Alliance for Construction Excellence. Attendees included Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon, Metro light rail CEO Rick Simonetta and state Department of Transportation

Construction-industry experts expect as many as 30 percent of the workers in their industry could be laid off if there are no projects.

Likewise, local-government officials say there is a chance municipalities would have to stop providing essential services without an infusion of cash.

Gordon appealed to both government and industry to cooperate like never before, and help develop a "brighter" economy.

He said Phoenix would seek economic-stimulus funding of \$2.1 billion for capital-improvement projects that would be of all types, from laborers to lawyers.

Without those projects, there's a good chance Phoenix would have to continue cutting jobs and services, he said.

"We simply cannot continue to cut and still have the kind of community we want to live in," Gordon said.

Janet Palacino, Maricopa County facilities-management director, agreed that securing Arizona's share of some shortcuts. She said the county is seeking about \$1.5 billion in funding.

"We need to break from tradition of how we normally do things," Palacino said. "If we take four months to going to help us very much."

Several leaders said they want to streamline the bureaucratic process for planning and executing large go capitalize on the feds' limited-time offer.

But a few said they were troubled by suggestions that Arizona leaders relax their standards to fast-track p

"To believe that the Obama administration would favor or even look favorably upon a project because it has environmental regulations . . . misunderstands where that administration is trying to go," said Randy Serra Diversity.

But several environmental and property-rights advocates who did not attend the meeting agreed with the a

Tempe environmental lawyer Howard Shanker said he understood why local leaders were inclined to put j

"If you wake up in the morning and you can't feed your family, you're not going to be worrying about globa

Still, Shanker said there was no reason why following environmental laws would put Arizona at a disadvan for funds.

"Everyone else will have to do the same thing," he said.

Tim Keller, of the libertarian-leaning Institute for Justice, said there was already a process for fast-tracking eminent domain.

Keller said he supported the idea of making government leaner and faster as long as it didn't try to seize p

"There's no question that government can take the land if they're dealing with a genuine public use, and th said.

John Yoder of Star Roofing in Phoenix, a summit participant, said he hoped stimulus funds would keep the

Still, Yoder said he didn't favor fast-tracking the eminent-domain process unless the people whose proper

"That's kind of a two-edged sword," he said. "I'm not a real proponent of eminent domain."

Type Size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

[Print](#)

[Email](#)

[Most Popular](#)



[Buzz up!](#)



LATEST BUSINESS HEADLINES

[GM official says cash could run out by March 31](#)

[Solid performance for collector car auctions](#)

[General Mills, Kroger pull peanut butter items](#)

[Ex-Home Depot employee admits fraud](#)

[Inauguration brings hope for jobless](#)

[Slimmer times for 2 restaurant chains](#)

[Recent Valley promotions and hires](#)

[Black Angus Steakhouse chain files bankruptcy](#)

[Biotech startup aims to advance Arizona research](#)

[Phoenix area home prices down 30% in 1 year](#)

The advertisement features a dark background with a fireworks explosion in the upper right corner. In the top left, the 'SPENCERS' logo is displayed in a blue box with 'TV & APPLIANCE' and the website 'WWW.SPENCERSSTORE.COM' below it. To the right of the logo, the text 'Start the NEW YEAR with a BANG!' is written in yellow and white. A red banner across the middle reads '12 Month NO INTEREST on GE Appliances\*'. Below this, a blue box contains the price '\$499' in large yellow font, followed by 'Hotpoint by GE Smooth Top Range' and the model number 'FB7878HBB'. To the right of the text is a photograph of the stainless steel range.