



Gila Bend developing into solar capital of the world

By Hayley Ringle

Excerpt from the *Phoenix Business Journal*,

Updated Mar 18, 2014



This excerpt is from an article that appeared in the *Phoenix Business Journal* on Tuesday, March 18th. Those who are interested can access and read the full article at http://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/morning_call/2014/03/gila-bend-developing-into-solar-capital-of-the.html?page=all

Gila Bend officials have embraced solar in their small desert town, turning its 71 square miles into the solar capital of the state, the nation and possibly even the world. This isn't completely unexpected. A White House energy blog back in 2011 cited Gila Bend's solar proclivities.

The 2,000-resident town will soon have 347 megawatts of solar-generated electricity after a new 32-megawatt utility project is up and running, said Town Manager Fredrick "Rick" Buss. To compare, an average rooftop system is 7 kilowatts.

The town adopted a "faster, cheaper" streamlined permitting process to bypass the typical year-and-a-half to sometimes two-year process. In Gila Bend, the adopted Solar Field Overlay Zone reduced the process down to only four to five weeks, Buss said. Big solar projects, like the 280-megawatt Solana Generating Station, which is just outside of Gila Bend on Maricopa County land, choose to build on flat, farmed land, which is plentiful in the area. Solana, owned by Abengoa Solar, covers 3 miles and is the world's largest parabolic trough plant. It's built on a former alfalfa field.

Kirk Busch, chairman of AZ4Solar, a solar trade organization and advocacy group, said Gila Bend should be lauded for its efforts, adding the town is "small enough to cut through all the red tape." "It's one thing to streamline your own process, but the county and the state has partnered with the developers and helped to push those bureaucratic organizations to get projects done faster," Busch said. "In doing so, Gila Bend should be an example of what county and states should do when it comes to solar projects. Everyone should continue to put a light on Gila Bend on what can be done."

Happy Easter



From Council, Management and Staff

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Papago Waterline and Main Street Construction Projects Information

February 15 & 16, 2014

Papago Waterline

Construction on the Papago Waterline began on Monday, March 10, 2014. The contractor, DPE Construction, will be allowed to work Monday through Thursday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The estimated completion date is May 9, 2014.

Main Street



Construction on Main Street began on Monday, March 17, 2014. The contractor, Cactus Asphalt, will be allowed to work Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Main Street will be restricted to Local Traffic Only during construction. When completed, Main Street will be signed as **Local Traffic Only**, with a speed limit of 30 MPH and a weight limit of 15 tons in order to limit cut through traffic of large vehicles. The estimated completion date is set for April 7, 2014.

Please observe all traffic control signs, posted speed limits and worker directions for everyone's safety.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

April 19, 2014



The Town of Gila Bend's Annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, April 19th, beginning at 10:00am at McMahan Field. Four age groups are planned for the hunt: ages 0 – 4 years, 5 – 7 years, 8 – 10 years, and 11 years and up.

April Community Calendar

- 04/03 & 04/04 – Farmers Market: Care 1st Resource Center
- 04/08 – Council Meeting: 6:00pm
- 04/15 – Special Council Meeting: 6:00pm (Home Rule Pub. Hear)
- 04/16 – Seniors Easter Picnic
- 04/18 – Good Friday
- 04/19 – **Annual Easter Egg Hunt – McMahan Field: 10:00am**
- 04/20 – **Happy Easter**
- 04/22 – Town of Gila Bend Open House: 4:00 – 6:00pm
- 04/22 – Council Meeting: 6:00pm



Clerks Corner: Elections

April 2014

Why a Fall Election?

In previous years, our local elections have been held in the Spring, so why are we holding our local election in the fall?



On May 14, 2012, Governor Brewer signed a Bill into law that consolidated elections across the state of Arizona. The law voided all local laws and ordinances that conflict with the new consolidated election schedule forcing all Arizona cities and towns to hold their elections at the same time as state and federal elections beginning in 2014. The Governor stated that having all Arizona counties, cities and towns elections on the same day will be more cost efficient and improve voter turn-out.

The League of Arizona Cities and Towns, twenty-seven county election officials and 40 of the 76 affected cities, towns and counties wrote the Governor asking the Bill be vetoed stating that though it might save the state money, additional costs would now be passed down to the cities/towns/counties. Another major concern, especially for smaller towns like Gila Bend, is that local issues will be put at the end of the ballot. There is some concern that voters may forget to or not vote on local issues due to their placement on the ballot.

Election Calendar

April 28th – Candidate Packets Available (4 open seats)

July 28th – Voter Registration Closes

August 26th – Primary Election

November 4th – General Election

Need information or have questions? **Call Town Clerk Beverly Turner, MMC at the Town Office at 928-683-2255, Monday through Thursday between 7:00am and 6:00pm.**



Planned Senior Celebrations

April 16, 2014



The **Seniors Easter Picnic** will be held at the Community Center on Wednesday, April 16th.

On Monday, May 5th the Seniors will have a **Cinco de Mayo Celebration** at the Community Center. For more information on planned celebrations, please contact the Community Center at 928-683-2244.

Charging Stations Come to Gila Bend

March 2014



Eight supercharging stations for all 85 kWh Tesla Model S electric vehicles and supercharging-enabled 60kWh cars have been installed (but are not yet ready for use) at Carls, Jr. According to the Tesla website, "Tesla Superchargers represent the most advanced charging technology in the world. A properly equipped Model S can charge for free at any Supercharger once enabled, unlike gas stations that require you to pay for each fill-up. Simply pull up and plug in, take a quick bathroom or food break, and get back on the road. Contact Tesla Service at (877) 798-3752 if you are unsure if your vehicle is able to Supercharge."

Retrieved March 27, 2014 from the worldwide web at <http://www.teslamotors.com>

Public Hearing / Town of Gila Bend Open House

April 2014



On Tuesday, April 15th, a Special Council Meeting will be held in the Council Chambers for a required Public Hearing regarding Home Rule. During the Public Hearing, residents will have an opportunity to ask questions and become more informed about Home Rule, what it means for the residents and town, the alternatives to Home Rule and what those alternatives mean to the residents and town. Home Rule will be a local issue in the **August 26th Primary Election.**

On Tuesday, April 22nd, the Town of Gila Bend will host an Open House in conjunction with the Small Area Transportation Study. The Open House will be held from 4:00 – 6:00pm, with a regular Council Meeting immediately following the Open House.