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SPOTLIGHT

TUCSON OPINION

Local opinion: Chamber supports Project Blue

Joe Snell Special to the Arizona Daily Star

Jul 29, 2025



***T**he following is the opinion and analysis of the writer:*

Representing nearly 1,500 investors, The Chamber of Southern Arizona's mission is to drive sustainable economic growth and job creation through business advocacy and economic development strategies that foster a thriving business ecosystem.

That mission is why Project Blue is an all-around win for our community. It benefits every one of us.

What's different about this data center?

We have approached this from a Tucson perspective, working closely with project partners, including



developer Beale Infrastructure. As data centers evolve, we have had the fortune to benefit from lessons learned

Joe Snell
The Chamber of Southern Arizona

and recent innovations to design a new type of sustainable development — together. Project Blue aligns well with Tucson’s energy and resiliency goals. The project will use just 1% of Tucson’s entire water portfolio, and Beale Infrastructure will invest more than \$100 million in reclaimed water infrastructure. In close alignment with Tucson’s OneWater2100 plan, Project Blue will upgrade Tucson’s water system in ways that go beyond its own use and move us toward our sustainability goals. Tucson Water has worked with Project Blue and can meet the needs of this project.

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Project Blue also supports Tucson Electric Power’s 2050 Net Zero Emissions commitment and aligns with the City of Tucson’s Climate Action Plan and general plan, Plan Tucson. Beale Infrastructure will fund all TEP grid upgrades necessary for the project, but TEP power grid upgrades contribute to overall reliability for the entire region. TEP has also conducted planning and can meet the demand from all its customers.

Do you work for one of the region’s major industries?

Data centers support all Tucson businesses, but having the infrastructure nearby enables both day-to-day operations and long-term innovation in our major industries, including aerospace and defense, bioscience and healthcare, advanced

manufacturing and mining operations, financial services, tourism and all levels of government.

Do you own or operate a small business, restaurant, real estate company, law firm or other service?

Employees, vendors, clients and suppliers of Project Blue mean more business for you. The project also means a stronger tax base that broadly boosts our local economy. Our governments will have flexibility to provide services that, in turn, work to increase the prosperity of all our residents.

Do you or your family members want to improve your job skills or train for a new career?

Project Blue will support career aspirations through apprenticeships for skilled trades, education and technical training and internship & certification opportunities. Our local institutions, such as Pima Community College and JTED, are committed to preparing skilled, job-ready talent to meet these demands and power our region's growth. The industries that data centers support rely on a steady pipeline of career-ready talent.

Do you work in construction, supply a construction company or are a skilled tradesperson?

As Josh DeSpain pointed out in his July 17 opinion piece, Project Blue means steady, high-wage local work for at least 3,000 people. Local construction firms and trade union members will be busy for the next 10 years as this project is built out.

Do you care about affordable housing, roads, public safety, early education, child care and other critical community needs?

Project Blue will create \$250 million in new tax revenue over 10 years – money that can be used to fund the services you care about, without raising taxes on you or your neighbors.

Do you support, work for or attend the University of Arizona?

Project Blue's emphasis on reclaimed water, renewable energy and advanced infrastructure creates fertile ground for research led by UA, one of the top research universities in the country. Project Blue's data-rich environment gives UA a living lab to integrate predictive analytics, explainable AI and smart systems in real-time as well as strengthens the UA's ability to train the next generation.

The Chamber Board of Directors has taken a strong stand in firm support of Project Blue. It isn't just about technology. Project Blue is about making Tucson a major player in the digital economy while staying true to our community's values: protecting natural resources, expanding economic opportunity and investing in a more sustainable future for everyone.

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Joe Snell is President and CEO of The Chamber of Southern Arizona.



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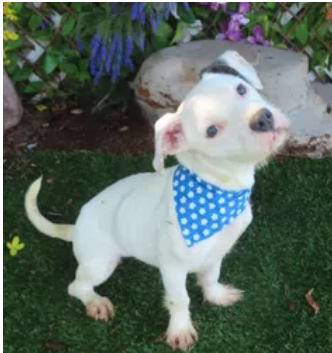
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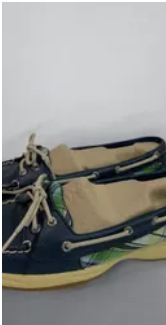
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