



News Release For Immediate Release

Contact: **Steff Koeneman**
Community Relations Manager
(520) 594-5610 / 419-2272
steffannie.koeneman@pima.gov

Nov. 29, 2011

Library seeks public help in selecting exhibit photos

The barrios. Before the 1970s, Tucson's downtown area barrios, or neighborhoods, were similar to extended families. Neighborhoods had their own personalities filled with families that knew one another, and merchants that catered to the particular needs of their customers.

Pima County Public Library, working in collaboration with the Arizona Historical Society, will create a photo exhibit depicting barrio life in Tucson. The Library invites former downtown dwellers or members of their families to view photographs taken in the barrios prior to the urban renewal projects that changed the landscape of the barrios forever.

A public photo viewing and voting event will be held Saturday, Dec. 3 at the Santa Rosa Public Library, 1075 S. 10th Ave, from 10 am. to 3 p.m. Visitors to the viewing will vote on the photos they think should be included in the Arizona Legacy Centennial Project Exhibit.

Once selected, the images will be on display at the Joel D. Valdez Main Library, 101 N. Stone, between Feb. 11 and March 11, 2012. A gala reception will open the exhibit.

"We hope to attract members of all the different groups that lived in the downtown barrios, so that we can create a truly inclusive and accurate exhibit for our Centennial project," said Christine Dykgraaf, librarian leading the project. "We feel that the people who lived in the barrios, those with cherished memories from that time, are the best suited to select the photos to tell the photographic story we hope to put on display."

The barrios – El Hoyo, Barrio Viejo, Barrio Anita, Barrio Libre, Dunbar-Spring, and parts of South Tucson – were part of an individual's identity. Each barrio carried its own attractions and diverse ethnic mix: Mexican-American, Chinese-American, Tohono O'odham, African-American and Jewish pioneers all clustered in their familiar settings.

Then, between roughly 1965 and 1971, the barrios were replaced by urban renewal projects. The Tucson Convention Center stands where Barrio El Hoyo once thrived. Other barrios were impacted too as projects seeking to enhance downtown raised the barrios and caused downtown dwellers to move into new neighborhoods.

#