Framing a future
Our stand: A 'do tank' has etched a

vision for Arizona and a path to get there

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he first step in any journey is pick-
ing the destination.
But as Arizona roars into the fu-
ture, we lack a clear idea of just where
we want to go.
Not that the Grand Canyon state hasn't pondered the question.
Over the years, countless
conferences, workshops
and town-hall meetings
have come up with their
own answers. But there
was never a consensus

broad enough to weave
those solutions into a road
map.
The Center for the Fu-
ture of Arizona has sifted
through 15 years of policy
recommendations and
boiled them down into a
single vision. The vision
has an overarching theme:
for Arizona to be one of
the best places in the na-
tion to live a rewarding
and productive life.
Then it sets out goals,
grouped under five head-
ings: opportunities for all,
quality of life, knowledge-
based economy, leadership
and investment.

At first glance, the goals
may all seem to fall in a
single, uncontroversial
category: "motherhood
and apple pie." But there
is plenty of meat here if
we actually try to reach the goals.
An adequate supply of affordable hous-ing, for instance, used to be a given in the Valley. The latest run-up in home prices, however, demonstrates that we can't count on it in the future.
With Arizona's booming population, it
will take planning and effort to keep up with our needs, such as ensuring that the state has sustainable supplies of water and energy.
The center has lined up an impressive list of more than six dozen endorsements

The Arizona Republic

The sky should be the limit,
says the Center for the Fu-
ture of Arizona of its vision
for the state.

for its latest venture, including support from local governments, business organi-zations and education groups.
The list represents a cross section of interests, from Phoenix to Clifton, from the State Board of Education to the Yuma Rural/Metro Fire Depart-
ment. Business interests
across the Valley have
signed on, including Great-
er Phoenix Leadership,
Greater Phoenix Economic
Council, Westmarc and the
East Valley Partnership.
The non-profit Center
for the Future of Arizona
calls itself a "do tank," in
contrast to the traditional
"think tank." The term
may strike some as too
cute by half. But it under-
scores a point: What really
counts about a vision is
the way it's put to use.
The center, based in
Phoenix, plans to help co-
alitions of groups and indi-
viduals around the state
use the vision as a spring-
board for launching a
limited number of ambi-
tious initiatives.

That may include put-
ting Arizona in the top 10
states for public education
or the top five for innova-
tion and entrepreneurship
by 2020, suggest the cen-
ter's Chief Executive Lat-
tie F. Coor and Executive Director Sybil Francis.
Those initiatives, then, must be broken down into a series of achievable, measur-able targets. We have to see concrete progress before we can say that a vision is truly serving as a road map.
But the opportunity is there. We have a potential destination.
Now we need to begin taking steps to get there.

For more information on the Center for the Future of Arizona, go to www.ArizonaFuture.org. s \