



**The Brookings Institution
Reimagine Rural podcast**

“Developing a resilient downtown in Globe, Arizona”

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Guests in Globe, Arizona:

ELIZABETH BERNAL, rural development specialist, RCAC

AL GAMEROS, mayor

LORIE LUIPOLD, owner, Splash of Copper

LINDA ODDONETTO, economic and community development director

Host:

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Episode Summary:

In this episode of “Reimagine Rural,” Tony Pipa speaks with homecomers who returned to a boom-and-bust copper mining town to revitalize its historic district. Despite pandemic-related setbacks, Globe, Arizona’s small business renaissance is expanding into new community infrastructure and collaboration with regional neighbors. As the town works to attract tourists to its beautiful Southwestern landscapes, it is also poised to contribute to the clean energy transition. The Inflation Reduction Act’s incentivizes domestic production for electric vehicle batteries, of which copper is a major component.

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LUIPOLD: So, I'm Lorie Luipold, and I actually grew up here in Globe, Arizona. I was born and raised here; just about a third-generation gal. And so, it was interesting because my family had a business here in town. My grandfather owned it first. And then my dad and mom took it over. Ran a printing business for over 40 years. And when my dad retired—he and my uncle had been copper miners at one point in their life—and so they decided to buy copper from the local copper mine and then melt it down, splash it out, and create art pieces that have become like a staple around the community and around the state. But it was ... it was just something that they thought was creative and fun and they like to play with rocks. And so that's how it kind of got started.

PIPA: That's Lorie Luipold, born and raised in Globe, Arizona, talking about the origins of the unique copper splash art that her father and uncle created through a process they developed and refined.

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This art reflects Globe's copper mining heritage, and it personifies the emerging resurgence of Globe's downtown, as it's at the center of Lorie's popular new art gallery and gift shop fittingly called Splash of Copper. We'll hear what led Lorie to launch her new venture and how it's indicative of what's happening in Globe, Arizona, in this second episode of "Reimagine Rural."

I'm Tony Pipa, a senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution, and your host for "Reimagine Rural," a podcast about different places across rural America that are making progress on their efforts to thrive and prosper amid economic and social change. Each episode features local people telling the story of their community and how their work and leadership are enacting positive change. As together we learn about the positive momentum they're creating, it will give us the chance to explore how policy decisions affect these towns and how federal policy can be more effective in meeting the needs and opportunities in these places.

Last episode we were in the Northeastern United States, visiting Shamokin, a former anthracite coal mining town in central Pennsylvania where I attended elementary school. Today, I'm visiting another town that grew out of mining, but this time it's copper. Globe, Arizona, is close to the same size as Shamokin, about 7,400 people. But it's a world away, in the very different terrain of the Southwest, about 90 miles due east of the sprawling metropolis of Phoenix.

Globe is 3,500 feet above sea level and serves as the county seat of Gila County, which is 10 times larger in geographic area than the Pennsylvania county where Shamokin is located. This gives you a sense of just how different rural America can be.

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The culture in Globe is influenced by the Latino and Native American populations that have lived here for centuries, plus the lore of the wild west, captured in stories told by the turn-of-the-century author Zane Grey, who wrote many of his novels while living in the county.

And while Lorie had grown up here, until a few years ago, she hadn't lived in Globe for decades. Being back here, and being the owner of an art gallery? All of this was a leap of faith for Lorie, as she explained to me during our discussion via Zoom.

LUIPOLD: Well, when my father passed away about seven years ago, my uncle said, you know, if you'd like to continue this business, you know, I'd I'd like to teach you how to do this. So, after moving away, after high school, I moved to the Phoenix area and lived down there for 38 years. I was a special ed teacher by trade and so, taught in the in one of the public schools districts down there.

And when my dad passed away, I decided to move back to Globe. So, my middle daughter and I came back. We learned the whole process of creating the art pieces with my uncle. And then she and I went on the road and we did art shows for about three and a half, four years, with a travel trailer every weekend in a new place setting up to do art shows.

And did that for quite a while. And then she moved back to Phoenix, and I knew I couldn't do art shows alone anymore. So, I permanently relocated back to Globe about four years ago and decided to open the store since my uncle was still creating art pieces.

Well, it was quite scary, to be honest, very risky, you know, because it is nothing like it was when I grew up here. And, you know, back in the in the '60s and '70s, the copper mines here that's the staple of our community is the copper mines. And they were booming and thriving back then. And then late '70s, there were lots of layoffs and people moved away. And so, our population significantly dropped here. And so there there just wasn't a lot happening for a couple of decades. And so, coming back here was certainly a risk. But my dad and uncle had done well to, you know, establish themselves with the copper art.

PIPA: Attracting people like Lorie to take this leap of faith is something that Mayor Al Gameros has been working toward since he took office in 2016.

GAMEROS: I worked for the City of Globe for 30 years in the fire department. I was a fire chief for 18 years prior to retirement. I also served as the interim city manager and also city manager for three, three months prior to leaving for retirement. I did retire 2015. I decided to run for office in 2016. So, I'm on my sixth year, second term, right now as mayor. My my term is up in 2024.

PIPA: While there are still active mines around Globe, their size and number of employees have declined over time. As Lorie said, the town's downtown historic district had been hollowing out. This had effects across the board for its residents, almost half of whom are Latino in addition to a significant Native American population. The town was a hair away from being defined as "distressed" as measured by a well-known national index, which puts its economic and social health in the bottom 20% of towns across the nation. Bringing life back to downtown was one of the reasons Mayor Gameros decided to run for office.

GAMEROS: You know, I was born and raised here in the Miami-Globe area. I have a passion for it. This community has been amazing. The reason I decided to run was the support that was given to me as a fire ... in the fire department as a fire chief throughout my career. These people are, this community is amazing. And we have a lot of potential, and I felt that we needed to

elevate our game to get us to the next level in economic development and tourism and stuff like that. So, that was my main passion for running.

PIPA: Mayor Gameros felt as though Globe has many assets that it could be leveraging to better advantage.

GAMEROS: It's just a community where people are caring. I mean, you have people have an issue and they reach out and they help you. You know? And we're ... it's not congested, overwhelmed, like the big city, like Mesa, Phoenix area. But it's just the environment, the community here, that has kept me here as far as not really wanting to move out of this area.

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We kind of sit in the middle. I mean, we're kind of the the road to at least two different directions, you know. We have a lake that's only 30 minutes away. We have the Pinal Mountains, it's about a 30-minute drive that takes you to an elevation, about 8,000. We have Show Low north. To the east, we have the San Carlos reservation. I mean, we're kind of in the middle of everything where you can get to whatever you want to without a lot of problems.

PIPA: At the same time, copper mining can result in a boom and bust economy, and the ups and downs of the market had hit Globe's downtown hard. By 2016 the vacancy rates were high, and there were also a lot of absentee owners who were using their buildings for storage or not at all. Someone who was very familiar with the challenges downtown, who had her own personal experience with them, was Linda Oddonetto, a local business owner.

ODDONETTO: I as well was born and raised in Globe. I went to the University of Arizona, and I lived in Tucson and out of out of Globe for for about 15 years. But I moved back to to come and run our our family business. I was a third-generation small business owner, and we were open for almost a hundred years. And in '16, we had to make the hard decision to close our business. We were a furniture and floor coverings store right on our main street, which is Broad Street.

PIPA: As Linda says, it was a hard decision to close her family business. She knew it would also affect downtown, because they were one of the biggest property owners there. But she believed in the town and also thought she could be helpful in helping it thrive.

ODDONETTO: And I saw a position with the city, with with the city manager, to work as his admin. And I interviewed and when in my interview I asked the new city manager at that time—and he's still our city manager now—what is your vision for Globe? Because I also share that that with Mayor that I see the potential here and I wanted to be part of that, part of that that possibility.

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And when when our manager, Paul Jepson, said that he's here because he wants to help build this community to be what he knows it can be. And and I so I was offered the position and I hit the ground running.

PIPA: Around this time, an organization called the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, or RCAC, had started working with Globe. RCAC covers 13 states in the West as well as the

Pacific Islands, and it works directly with rural communities to help them prosper. The organization provides training, advice, technical assistance, and help with financing to address a wide range of issues, such as safe drinking water, decent housing, community facilities, and business development. This is Elizabeth Bernal, who works with RCAC as an economic development specialist, describing how the relationship with Globe began.

BERNAL: In reference to how we got connected with the city, how we started our working relationship, it actually started through one of our departments. You know, RCAC has several initiatives: enviro, economic development. They have a CDFI. So, the enviro side of it, they have wastewater water technical assistance, and the city of Globe had requested some assistance with their wastewater plant and what they were doing and their plant expanded and so forth.

So, during that time, one of the RCAC staffers that was working there was talking to, I think it was the mayor at the time. And he was expressing the need to expand economic development in their community. And with that said, she suggested that they call us through the Building Rural Economies Division, which is the economic development arm of RCAC.

PIPA: RCAC was able to do this work with Globe with support from the Rural Capacity Building program at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD. So, the pieces were falling into place: a new mayor, an experienced business owner now working for the city manager, a city council that was interested in downtown revitalization, and now an organization—RCAC—that could help them do it.

To be successful over the long-term, however, RCAC knew that they would have to involve the entire community. Liz Bernal explains how RCAC approaches it.

BERNAL: Linda wanted us to help them build their economic development capacity in that community, how to work with the community and how to build the capacity of their departments to address economic growth and other issues. And so with that said, we did the assessment. And then we do what they call “recharge our community economy” module, which is involving the community itself—not just the elected officials, not just the administration, but the community itself, every walk of life you can think of—to come in and participate in some sessions where we strategize how to meet the needs and what is it they would like to see in the community and see how that meshes.

And we develop these like four committees, or three committees, I think it was during that time, and they addressed like recreation, the workforce, housing, every everything you can think of almost that makes the community healthy and sustainable. Right?

PIPA: From Linda Oddonetto’s point of view, this process helped bring the community together and created a shared vision, and that created a lot of forward momentum.

ODDONETTO: So, in those those first few months working with RCAC, we we held monthly stakeholder meetings. We invited leadership, community leaders, nonprofit leaders to to meet for two full days each month, four months in a row. And and out of those meetings came what were called value chains. And those are economic development opportunities that that we identified together with with our our stakeholders. And one of those was downtown revitalization.

And so, in that value chain, we had, of course, city staff participating, downtown property owners, downtown business owners. And we we focused on bringing back into inventory housing that was lost and and second stories of storefronts.

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You know, 50 years ago, so many of our our business owners were also living upstairs. And I think that's really what created that that vibrant and thriving downtown. You truly lived, worked, and played in in the downtown area, which is now our historic district.

PIPA: The strategy for Globe's future that Mayor Gameros, Linda Oddonetto, and others produced with RCAC's help had multiple pillars. Economic development was a central priority, with a particular focus on growing small businesses. There was also a focus on creating more housing and improving the quality of life.

As a former small business owner, Linda was enthusiastic about the priority to grow business activity downtown.

ODDONETTO: As Mayor mentioned, we didn't have an economic development department, but I with my business background, my my business degrees, that's that's what I set out to do. I started working with the small businesses, seeing what resources were available that they may not be aware of or tapping into, working with our Chamber, our other bed tax organizations to really develop an action plan.

And this all happened organically. It's not like day one we sat down and to develop our our game plan. It's really to understand what was going on and who was doing what. And from there, we we really moved forward well together as a as a city staff, but also as as community partners. And so in 2018, when we established our our department, we really had a good foundation to to move forward from.

And so since then, we've really been focused on small business development, retaining the businesses we have, helping them to scale up.

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We had many vacancies in our downtown, beautiful historic downtown corridor. And so, we've we've really worked to to fill those vacancies with new startup businesses.

PIPA: The city of Globe quickly created an economic development department, and Linda moved over to head it up! All of this was happening around the time that Lorie Luipold was trying to figure out her next steps with the copper splash art and the business that her father and uncle had created. Linda's encouragement was one of the things that convinced Lorie to come back to Globe full-time and open her shop.

LUIPOLD: I had actually met Linda at a small art show in northern Arizona, and she said, Oh, you really should come back to Globe. And so, that was kind of encouraging. So, I thought, well, okay, maybe I can do this. And so I I did. And so she was one of my biggest fans and supporters when I got ready to open the store. So, we had a grand opening. It was it was right before Christmas in in '19. And so, we had quite a few people in for the grand opening and things kind of got off to a good start.

And so, I invited artists that I had met along the way that used copper in their art pieces to join me. And I took those pieces in on consignment. And originally started about, well, December of '19, I opened the business, which was the most inopportune time because it was right before COVID hit. And, but I had ten artists in here with me when I first opened and things, you know, kind of got ... it was exciting because it was something new in town.

PIPA: But this was also December 2019. In just a few months, the COVID pandemic shut things down. Lorie's store was closed for a couple of months.

LUIPOLD: Things have really started picking up, but then COVID hit. And so it was like, you know, that that just created a whole 'nother set of problems for our community because everything shut down for a while. And so, then you didn't have people coming to the community, you didn't even have local shopping. You know, it was, there, nobody was going to a restaurant, nobody was shopping, nobody was doing anything but, you know, staying home. And so, it was it was very difficult and not knowing if we were going to be able to stay open, if it was going to be successful at all, or if everything that I had risked was just for nothing, you know. So, that that was a big challenge.

PIPA: Lorie was stymied and trying to figure out her next move. She even started looking for another teaching position. But RCAC, the organization that helped the city with the economic development strategy, also had a program in place to help individual entrepreneurs. This ended up being a lifeline for Lorie.

LUIPOLD: Linda actually connected me with them. And the first thing they did was they offered me, you know, assistance with a PPP loan. And that was much needed at the time because I had been closed for two months without another source of income, basically. And so, I'm just kind of struggling to keep the doors open, pay the electricity, and be able to pay my own personal bills. And so, that that was ... that was a huge blessing to me. So, they walked me through that entire process, got that rolling, was able to get the PPP loan and at least get some funding and pay the bills for the months that I was closed.

PIPA: Lorie is describing the loan she received through the Paycheck Protection Program, or the PPP. These loans were designed to help small businesses keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 crisis. The program was administered by the federal government's Small Business Administration.

The assistance helped Lorie keep her shop open and weather the pandemic. Ultimately, RCAC not only helped her keep her business, they also helped her think through expansion plans, and found additional financing to make that happen.

LUIPOLD: One of the things that I wanted to do when I first came back to Globe was my vision was to have the art store, but I wanted to add a coffee shop, at least a small coffee cart in the back of my business, because we don't really offer that here. And one of the things I'd been hearing from customers was, is there a good coffee shop in town? Is there a place to get coffee?

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Well, you know, while we're looking around the community shopping and many small towns, you know, their their downtown area is filled with retail, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, places

that they, you know, people like to frequent. Well, we don't necessarily have that. We've got storefronts that are closed up that people use for storage. And so, it's ... there's not a lot of things to offer people.

So, I knew that a coffee shop would probably be something that was profitable and it would bring people in. So, I really wanted to expand. But financially that was not really something that I had the ability to take on at the moment. And so, they offered me a secondary loan and then connected me with a, I guess he's kind of like a business adviser kind of. I don't really know what his title was, but he he was a young man that I could actually talk to, walk through the business. He helped me create a business plan for the coffee shop. He helped me analyze what that would look like, what, the cost effectiveness of that.

So, that was very, very helpful for me because in my mind, I kind of already knew what I wanted to do and thought I knew how to go about doing that. But he really solidified that for me and he really kind of brought it all together and said, Well, have you thought about this? And, you know, I can connect you with resources to do this and this and this and this.

And so, that was extremely helpful. And so, I took advantage of that. It's it's been just about a probably a year ago now. I think it was last, I want to say October of last year, where we sat down and really worked through all of that.

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And then I was able to get the secondary loan. And so, we're actually in the process now of expanding and opening a coffee shop.

PIPA: That kind of entrepreneurial energy is starting to bring life back to downtown Globe. Linda Oddonetto told me that the vacancy rate has been cut almost in half since 2017. There's still a lot of work to be done, especially since there are many buildings that aren't vacant but are being used for storage or other purposes. But they are working to attract investment and interest and bring those storefronts back into service. They have big plans for a business incubator to add to the growing energy downtown.

ODDONETTO: Another exciting project that that's come out of this is our downtown business incubator. We've partnered with Gila County, who is the owner of the Michelson Building, and we are working to develop that as a center of innovation. So, a co-work space, a ... and Workforce Development Support Center. That's a two story building, about 8,000 square feet. Upstairs it's it's still built out as individual offices. And and they're they haven't changed in almost 100 years.

And so, those those will be rented out to to various businesses and to corporate stakeholders in the area who would like to have a downtown presence and be part of that that hub of of activity that we hope this building, we know this building, will be.

We're ... we'll bring in the SBDC from our local community college. Our regional EDC will have a space there, as well as our our local community foundation, the United Fund of Globe-Miami. And then my department will will be running all of the programing to come out of out of the Michaelson Building. And also it will be the downtown visitor center.

PIPA: Remember, business development was just one pillar of the town's strategy. They've been making progress on the other parts as well, which includes adding housing and ensuring services that protect the quality of life. Here's Mayor Gameros describing a major project that will add new housing units by refurbishing an old school:

GAMEROS: You know, I'm thinking with the momentum we're seeing right now, I think we are going to see some growth, and basically, we're banking on a couple of housing developments that will bring housing to our community, which is much needed. We know that we actively have a couple of those in place.

We just recently ... the Gorman project was passed. It's a Hill Street School project that's going to open a 64-unit, affordable senior housing for the first time in Globe.

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It's a 20, 20, \$22 million project. They were just approved through the federal government on a 9% tax credit. So, that is moving forward. And we're hoping to break ... or we're hoping to see that completion in 2024.

PIPA: The school building stands out for its shape and architecture, as well as its heritage, but it has sat vacant and been deteriorating for years. Refurbishing it means adding new housing units in town for the first time in many years. Linda is excited about what the change could mean for Globe.

ODDONETTO: And as Mayor had mentioned, the the Hill Street School Project is so exciting for our community. This is a 107-year-old school. Most of our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents went went to this school. It's it's truly an iconic landmark. And it's our gateway to our historic downtown and it's on our our highway. So, having this this very visible landmark revitalized, I think is is really going to excite our community and and people who may not have considered Globe an option.

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They're going to see that that there there's something stirring Globe and it's becoming more visible.

PIPA: Globe is investing in its future in other ways. As the former fire chief, Mayor Gameros knows the importance of the town's protection being up to date, especially in an area that experienced a major wildfire last year five miles away that covered more than 180,000 acres and shut down four of the five access roads into town.

GAMEROS: We're currently going through the process with USDA financing to apply for an \$8 million loan to build a new fire station. Our fire station is over a hundred years old. And now we're able to look look to the future and have a new modernized fire station. We also need to replace our ladder truck that is about 30 years old, and that's about a \$2 million project without a loan.

PIPA: And they've also focused on improving recreation options, including a brand new community pool. As Linda describes it, it went from being a repair job to a state-of-the-art facility after an assessment supported by Freeport McMoRan, a local mining company.

ODDONETTO: So, in 2014, our our community pool was closed due to structural issues that that caused tremendous leakage. We as the city needed to figure out what are we going to do with this shuttered venue? We can't just leave it. It invites vandalism, crime. It was found that it could be fixed. City Council was was very committed to to moving forward with with fixing this, our community pool.

And then COVID hit. So, there was a huge pause. We, we knew it was going to be a community priority. In fact, COVID proved that it's even more of a community priority. Everyone wanted to be outside taking advantage of our beautiful parks and trails.

And so, in in 2021, we we picked up where we left off and we we worked to write half a dozen grants. We received donations from our local mines. So, right now we're looking at a just under \$5 million—it's not a rebuild, it truly is is a new facility. We've just taken the footprint of what was there and and made it into truly a beautiful aquatic center.

PIPA: This kind of holistic approach to economic development is paying dividends for Globe. But as you will hear, such projects require public investment. For a town such as Globe, public investment can be hard to come by.

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It can be daunting to identify opportunities, put in a successful application, and manage the investment. Their partnership with RCAC has been helpful. But Globe has taken another big step for a rural community: they've hired a lobbyist in Washington, D.C. Here's Mayor Gameros.

GAMEROS: We've been very in touch with our senators, our representative, our congressmen. And for the first time in our city's history, we also hired a lobbyist in Washington to help us with the, you know, funding that we may never hear about for rural communities. But that lobbyist has been a big plus to our community.

They're also helping us with USDA in our application process and, you know, just maneuvering through all the obstacles that we have to, but really keeping us alert of funding that, like I said, we would have never heard of if we didn't have somebody advocating for our rural community.

PIPA: In addition to working with a D.C.-based representative, Globe is also collaborating with counterparts nearby to build a regional approach, as Linda Oddonetto explains.

ODDONOTTO: We really are focused on on regionalism. We we work very closely with with the town of Miami, with our neighboring San Carlos Apache tribe, as well as our local corporate stakeholders. And I think that's why we're seeing the momentum that we have right now, is is because we are working well with our partners and all trying to pull in the same direction.

PIPA: At the same time, as important as these large-scale physical projects and collaborations are, Globe's community identity and sense of itself is also integral to the positive momentum. Liz Bernal from RCAC has noticed the change.

BERNAL: In fact, one of the things that have happened out of this process is besides bringing in the swimming pool they're hoping to bring in, is that the city is getting prettier. It's becoming a prettier city.

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A lot of people were complaining about the debris on the main road coming into the city. A lot of different things. So, the city has been cleaning up, making it a lot more visually beautiful to look at. It really is a pretty city as it is. And they're even improving the downtown area with painting—sorry, I can't think of the word—yes, it's a mural. Yes, they're painting several murals and and it's looking just extremely beautiful, besides being one ... a beautiful old downtown downtown area.

PIPA: Just as we heard in the last episode with Shamokin, cultivating that beauty is important. As a businesswoman and investor in downtown, Lorie Luipold sees the same thing:

LUIPOLD: One of the things that they're doing now is we have a lot of old staircases in the community because back in the day when the the copper mines were ... in the early 1900s, when they were first opening up these copper mines, people came from across the country to work in the mines, probably looking for gold and instead found copper. But they they came to our community and they started building homes.

Well, most of them were built way up on top of hills. And in order to get there, they had to build these rickety old staircases to get up the hill to their homes. Well, a lot of those have been replaced by cement, you know, staircases over the years, but they've fallen in disrepair.

And so, one of the things that we, our arts committee, has done is they've gone in there and they've offered artists opportunities to clean up and decorate all of these staircases. So, I think they're they're done with about five of them now. And so, we have this walk around the community basically to find all these restored staircases.

PIPA: Both Shamokin and Globe refurbished staircases unique to their towns as part of their beautification. Linda Oddonetto says that when you put all these pieces together, you can feel the energy. Globe seems to be on the move.

ODDONETTO: And we do have interested buyers that are more than investors. They they are wanting to come in and be part of that revitalization, that momentum that they see in Globe. They're they're seeing the the focus of Council, the the business community is is ramping up, our downtown is really becoming vibrant again.

We we began an event, and it was a COVID response event, called First Friday, getting people out and about to mingle and shop safely. And this has really been pivotal in in bringing back our downtown. So, every first Friday you'll you'll see Mayor leading a classic car cruise down Broad Street. We have live bands. We have a kids' corner at City Hall with carnival games and karaoke. We have a a makers street—all of are are creative makers, bakers, homemakers come and set up a vendor booth at no charge.

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And so, during Christmas, we bring in a portable ice skating rink. We always have try to have something fun, a good feature for the kids. And we we see about a thousand, 1,500 people on a slow first Friday, and with some of our busier first Fridays, we see 2 to 3,000 people. It's been really exciting to see families downtown. That's what was surprising about this event is that

we're seeing the youth come out in numbers that we've never seen them come out before in our downtown. We've had businesses tell us that this is the best day of the month for them. We've had a small business owner, Cindy Phillips,

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that turned the page—that the January First Friday event was her best day of business ever.

So, this is really exciting to hear from our business community because it really was brought out to help bring traffic to them. But also it's become such a wonderful community builder as well.

I think that that Globe will become the the rural city of choice in Arizona. I think we have a beautiful climate, access to recreation that sits unparalleled. We're an hour and 40 minutes away from Phoenix International Airport. We're just over an hour away from Mesa Gateway Airport that's seeing a huge redevelopment.

So, I really see tourism increasing in our immediate future. And in the next five years, I see us seeing new housing built for the first time in probably around 20 years. And that's that's housing across all spectrums, because we do want to be a community for all. Yes, we absolutely need single family homes, full market rate, affordable workforce, housing. We we need transitional housing. And we're we're committed to increasing stock across all all market spectrums. We don't want to price out our community for our community members. We we want to offer them the highest quality of life opportunity in our hometown, in their hometown.

PIPA: As Globe's efforts to improve its quality of life and breathe new energy into its downtown start to pay dividends, the town may also find itself benefiting from increased copper mining. The passage of the Inflation Reduction Act provides incentives for green technology that require battery storage of energy. Copper is an indispensable element for those batteries, which may bode well for Globe.

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For Lorie Luipold, it's been a journey: returning to Globe after almost four decades away, starting a brand new venture downtown, managing to stay solvent through the pandemic, and now on the cusp of expanding. Her gallery now showcases almost 60 artists, and she hopes to have the coffee shop open for the rush of customers she's expecting during the winter season.

She thinks the city government can do even better in helping businesses like hers get started, and she sees the community still having to shift its mindset to make the most of what it has to offer. Some of her fellow business owners, for example, aren't open several days a week, which makes it hard to create sustained interest in the downtown area.

But Lorie feels the benefits of the community's vision, the planning, the partnership with RCAC, the increased vitality in the town. The copper splash pieces, which have a foot in Globe's past and its future, have brought her back home. She's glad to be here.

LUIPOLD: Well, I'm grateful to be back. And I'm I'm really hoping that other businesses will be able to come into the community. I frequently get people in that say, you know, This is such a nice little place, this would be a great place to start a business.

And so, my hope is that the city, along with, you know, other businesses, will be encouraging and supportive to those people that want to come in and start their businesses here, and that this entire downtown area can be thriving like it was in the '70s. Every every storefront open. Everybody busy.

[music]

You know, people coming in, shopping, eating, dining, and that our community really understands what tourism looks like. You know, how to invite people here, how to get people here, how to get them to stay here. You know, that that's really my hope is that we figure that out.

PIPA: One more thing: It's unfortunate, but the airwaves don't let you experience the town's Mexican cuisine, which—according to Mayor Gameros—is the best in all of Arizona. To be fair, I think we have to admit that he's probably a little biased. But it's that type of spirit that has Globe on the move. I hope that we have given you a taste of the town's story, the future it's charting for itself, and the ingredients that are coming together to make it happen. Thanks for listening.

In our next episode, we'll hear from senior policymakers in Washington, D.C. about how the federal government is trying to support rural communities like Shamokin and Globe on their path to resilience and prosperity. I look forward to you joining me then.

ODDONETTO: And we didn't even mention our Mexican food, Mayor.

GAMEROS: Oh, yeah, we have ... Yeah, our Mexican food is the best in in Arizona, we have 11 different Mexican restaurants.

PIPA: Oh, wow!

[music]

GAMEROS: Yeah. And they're all family grown restaurants. I mean, they're from generation to generation and they're, it's been stated we got the best Mexican food in Arizona.

ODDONETTO: All of the restaurants, the recipes came from the same *abuelita*.

PIPA: “Reimagine Rural” is a production of the Brookings Podcast Network. My sincere thanks to all the people who shared their time with me for this episode. Also, thanks to the team at Brookings who make this podcast possible, including Fred Dews, producer; Gastón Reboredo, audio engineer; Matt Murphy, audio intern; Zoe Swarzenski, project manager and policy analyst; Andrew Wallace, Heinz Policy Fellow; and Emma Uebelhor, former research and project coordination intern, all at the Center for Sustainable Development at Brookings; Ian McAllister and Colin Cruickshank, who traveled with me to some of these places, captured the audio and took great pictures and videos; Chris McKenna, who helped get the show off the ground; and the great promotions teams in the Brookings Office of Communications and the Brookings Global Economy and Development program.

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I’m Tony Pipa, and this is “Reimagine Rural.”