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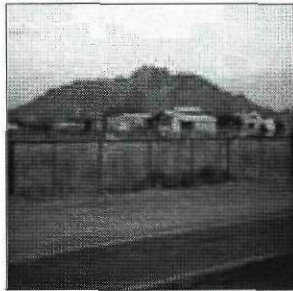
Appendix VIII — Economic Development Analysis





# Appendices: Southeast Chandler Area Plan

## APPENDIX VIII - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS



*"Adopt an area plan for the Southeast Chandler Character Area that preserves the agricultural atmosphere of the community and creates open spaces, community gardens, and a feeling of openness."*

— City of Chandler Land Use Element

### Section A — Economic Development

The views and analysis provided in this report have been prepared by Sunregion Associates, Inc. (Sunregion). Based on public input during the 4-day charrette process, extensive interviewing, the results of a census survey of residents and landowners in the 14½-square-mile planning area, and Sunregion's research and professional judgment, this analysis has been developed.

As a general observation, Sunregion has concluded that the views of the area's residents on economic development could be generally characterized as not enthusiastic concerning economic development in the Southeast Chandler planning area. Nevertheless, this report contains two elements that relate to economic development issues in the planning area.

The first is a strengths and weaknesses (opportunities and threats/constraints) analysis of Southeast Chandler's economic (commercial) development potential; sometimes referred to as a SWOT analysis. The second element of this report is a presentation of proposed goals and objectives that relate to economic (commercial) development in the planning area. These proposed goals and objectives are based on the same public input process described above.

### Subsection A<sub>1</sub> — Strengths & Weaknesses Analysis

#### Economic Development Strengths

Economic development strengths of the area include the following:

##### A. Alternative low-density lifestyle

Our survey research clearly shows a strong preference on the part of area residents for low density development; achieved primarily through residential development with larger lots, the use of continuous open space and trails, and the establishment of design standards. These characteristics will create a very appealing environment for residential growth and development, and the attendant commercial growth that can follow.

##### B. A growing population base

Estimated at ±45,000 residents at build-out. Sunregion's recent survey research in the planning area suggests that there may be a market for small farmers market and roadside produce commercial ventures; sustained by small demonstration and commercial farming operations in the area. Our survey research found that flavor, price, appearance, and convenience ranked in that order when residents were asked what their most important criteria were when purchasing produce.

With just 3-4 square miles of the planning area yet unplanned, a policy should be developed quickly to help assure that these opportunities will be sustained as the area's build-out moves ahead at a dramatic pace.





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### C. Large tracts of vacant and agricultural land

With an estimated build-out population of  $\pm 45,000$  residents (assuming 3.5 d.u. per acre and an average household size of 2.35 persons), the Southeast Chandler planning area could absorb approximately 280 acres of new commercial retail/office development (237 commercial retail and 43 commercial office), plus an additional 160 acres of industrial land at build-out; with the jobs and tax base that go along with it. (Refer to Appendix II for data assumptions underlying these figures.) In addition to retail trade, many of these jobs will be in the higher-paying, office-related medical and financial services because of the area's demographics.

Market-driven commercial development, especially on the east side of the planning area, will be successful and should help assure that there is no significant retail trade and sales tax leakage to Gilbert, Queen Creek, and possibly even the Gila River Indian Community on Gilbert Road.

### D. Residents support the availability of conventional shopping facilities if planned to minimize commercial incursion in the area

When asked about the type of shopping facilities that would best serve Southeast Chandler, area residents supported neighborhood and community shopping centers with grocery stores and major retailers respectively, in addition to other special features like quality restaurants.

An approach that may be worth considering is that found in the commercial nodes designed as part of 5,500-acre planned Desert Ridge development on State land in north Phoenix.

### E. A large existing population base to the south and west in the Sunbird, Springfield and Sun Lakes developments

This represents considerable disposable income and demand potential for commercial development along the Arizona Avenue corridor in the planning area.

### F. A variety of home builders with projects planned or under development offering a variety of housing styles and prices

Hopefully, from an economic development perspective, this will help assure the availability of some affordable housing.

### G. Future development within the context of coordinated master planning

This feature should significantly enhance the area's desirability as a residential alternative for many people employed in Pinal County who desire a residential setting closer to the Phoenix metro area. Additionally, present metro area residents should be attracted to the low-density lifestyle.

### H. Future San Tan Freeway accessibility as well as access to Interstate-10

While completion of the San Tan Freeway to I-10 is several years off, a more immediate improvement of Riggs Road to I-10 could effect an acceleration of market growth and help attract more interest in industrial/business park potential offered along the Arizona Avenue/SPRR corridor. Access to I-10 would be significantly improved in this far south Chandler area for employment-based uses.





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The strength of the near-term market, 5-10 years, appears to be for small-lot industrial subdivisions for small feeder industries; with lots of .5 to 10 acres for multi-tenant light manufacturing and distribution users.

### I. Planned 27-hole public golf/recreational facility

This public course west of McQueen Road is planned for completion within two years. While its completion is more likely to attract residential developers to the area, it also has the potential to attract a high-quality business park/office environment.

### J. The scenic beauty of the area

The area has strong appeal due to dramatic views of mountains to the southeast, southwest and northwest.

### K. Adequate water supply to serve the expanding population base

### L. Availability of electrical service

SRP has assured that there is more than adequate electrical power to serve the area as it grows. Additionally, SRP has assured that no new power plants will be built in and adjacent to the planning area; as the need arises, they will be built in outlying areas (the Coolidge, Casa Grande region).

### M. Specific areas along Arizona Avenue should be well-suited for industrial and commercial development if adequate infrastructure were put in place

This would provide the opportunity to establish an employment node in the area and help reduce some of the job commuting that is bound to create serious traffic congestion at build-out if not addressed. Significant job development at the Chandler Airport would also be very helpful in this regard.

### Economic Development Weaknesses

The Southeast Chandler planning area's economic development weaknesses include the following:

- A. Absence of job opportunities in immediate area
- B. Absence of adequate infrastructure along the Arizona Avenue/SPRR corridor to support industrial/business park development
- C. Poor transportation access generally

The existing road network in the planning area and its environs is wholly inadequate to serve the area's projected population and commercial growth.

### D. Lack of consumer support services in the area

This includes financial institutions and related firms, personal service providers (cleaners, doctors, lawyers, accountants, etc.), and repair services. In the longer term this weakness could also be viewed as a road map for business investment opportunity.



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- E. Few retail services in the area, most are now in Sun Lakes or north and northwest of the planning area

The newest services are west along Alma School Road from Germann to Chandler Heights Road.

- F. Absence of commercial office and industrial employment centers

- G. Lack of improved industrial land

The absence of basic infrastructure along the Arizona Avenue/SPRR rail corridor on the west side of the planning area will significantly slow the pace at which the area attracts a market for industrial/business park (employment) uses. Unlike residential land developers, industrial developers are disinclined to want to carry major front-end costs for infrastructure; especially in areas that are some distance from the edge of the market; in this case at least 3-4 miles northwest of the planning area.

The market could be at least 10 years away for industrial uses along the Arizona Avenue/SPRR corridor.

- H. Limited freeway access

At the present time, access to I-10 and U.S. 60 is inconvenient or economically unfeasible for industrial sites south of Ocotillo Road along the Arizona Avenue/SPRR corridor.

- I. There is a need for strong multi-jurisdictional planning and zoning cooperation

This is especially true in this planning area, which is largely under Maricopa County's jurisdiction.

### Subsection A<sub>2</sub> — Economic Development

The following goals and objectives were prepared for Southeast Chandler to assist the City and other stakeholders in implementing economic development as appropriate.

- A. **Goal:** Assure that the desired low-density development in the planning area does not result in inadequate commercial development and retail trade leakage.

**Objective:** Thoroughly investigate the potential use of density transfers at appropriate locations throughout the planning area to help achieve an overall target density of 2.5 d.u. per acre for the Southeast Chandler planning area.

- B. **Goal:** Provide a broad range of consumer services to local residents.

**Objective:** Ensure that adequate land in strategic, accessible locations will be made available for retail and services industries.

- C. **Goal:** Help assure that adequate revenue will be available to the City for the provision of services and infrastructure.

**Objective:** Develop a variety of affordable family as well as professional housing opportunities to achieve a good balance.

**Objective:** Encourage sales tax-generating retail services.





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D. **Goal:** Encourage strong job development in the planning area, including the Chandler Airport.

Objective: Reduce commute times and minimize traffic congestion.

Objective: Provide employment opportunities for area residents.

Objective: Designate target areas (nodes) for commercial office and industrial development.

Objective: Designate strategic areas for retail/services industries.

E. **Goal:** Where feasible, annex unincorporated County-island areas.

Objective: Develop the area within the context of one master area plan.

Objective: Manage development within one jurisdiction.

F. **Goal:** Plan for improved roadways to serve the expanding population base.

Objective: Eliminate congestion and allow for safe movement of traffic.

Objective: Allow for the efficient movement of commerce.

Objective: Improve east-west traffic flows to I-10