



THE BUSINESS OF A THRIVING COMMUNITY

CATALYST FOR
Business Growth

CONVENER OF
Leaders & Influencers

CHAMPION FOR
Stronger Communities

2019 Business Priorities

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Business growth and long-term sustainability for our community

Executive Summary

Moving forward, Gilbert's long-term commitment to accelerating job creation and business growth along with redevelopment emphasis in the northwest corridor of the community are essential to ensure sustainability into the future. Strategic financial decisions that keep taxes fair and reasonable is an important ingredient in planning for the future. Working collaboratively with the business, education, and non-profit organizations within the community will strengthen the community for years to come. The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce believes emphasis on the following policy areas will create a Town with unlimited potential:

- **Providing an environment for business growth**
- **Producing a well-educated workforce**
- **Engaging in long-term planning focused on a healthy, vibrant, and well-balanced community**
- **Supporting and enhancing Gilbert's infrastructure**

PRIORITY POLICY AREAS

PROVIDING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Preserve a business's ability to **manage its workplace and workforce** without excessive local government intrusion.

Ensure **fees and regulations** are predictable, fair, reasonable and do not place an unreasonable burden on the business owner. Differentiate cost recovery ratios between support requested by business and those mandated by the Town.

Continue **streamlining the entitlement and/or tenant improvement processes** like the "Taking Care of Small Business" program. Consider instituting a one person/contact number for business-only inquiries.

Enhance **visibility for businesses** through reasonable sign and promotional regulations. Provide **local businesses** the opportunity to earn the Town's business, to include education on how to do business with the town, how to respond correctly to a bid situation or to establish themselves as a credible vendor.

Provide **business access** during road construction/closures along with timely communications to the affected businesses of future closures.

Enhance the **Town's tourism promotion** activities in order to support local businesses, increase market share and generate tax revenues.

Support continued strategic infrastructure investment in the **Heritage District**; focusing priorities on connectivity, circulation, and preserving on-street parking and enhancing parking availability.

Enhance the Town's **Open Data platform** to ensure interactive and transparent opportunities for feedback from businesses and residents.

PRODUCING A WELL-EDUCATED WORKFORCE

Continue **partnerships** to identify workforce trends, future jobs, and needed skill sets.

Expand the successful *Partners In Progress* programs to further connect the Town, businesses and education communities together in order to pro-actively prepare a highly skilled employee base for businesses as they continue to expand and for those businesses considering locating in Gilbert.

Work collaboratively to ensure **immediate and long-term jobs** are filled for current businesses with the delicate balance of attracting new businesses needing a similar workforce.

Participate with the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance and other East Valley Mayors to proactively address the education support needed to achieve and/or surpass the **AZ Education Progress Meter** goals.

ENGAGING IN LONG-TERM PLANNING FOCUSED ON A HEALTHY, VIBRANT AND WELL-BALANCED COMMUNITY

Maintain Gilbert's tradition of **low taxes**, efficient Town operating expenses per capita, and innovation aligned to necessary services. Finalize long-term financing policies that balance bonding and general fund expenditures.

Ensure **Taxes** are predictable, fair, reasonable, efficiently used and expenditures are well-managed.

Safeguard **commercial and industrial zoning** within dedicated business corridors through the General Plan Update process. Evaluate commercial downzoning requests to ensure future business growth/expansion opportunities within the Town. Individual evaluation of infill downzoning requests for redevelopment purposes should be encouraged throughout the community on a case by case basis.

Strategic **investment in infrastructure** will stimulate business growth within business corridors and should be given priority consideration to take advantage of the current economic cycle, especially with bordering community's competition.

Areas designated by the General Plan as industrial and/or commercial corridors, which lack the necessary infrastructure to be competitive with like corridors, should be given priority for such strategic investments in infrastructure. This investment is required in order to maximize their competitive position and prevent these areas from becoming undesirable and viably stagnant to development opportunities resulting from their General Plan designation.

Maintain a **safe community** for businesses, their employees and families.

Promote and maintain **Character Areas** within Gilbert to showcase its uniqueness and support of local businesses.

Provide appropriate **economic development tools** and regulatory flexibility to attract and expand high-wage jobs within the community. Use historic preservation, arts, and culture to support economic drivers and growth strategy.

Continue to invest in **Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport** as an East Valley economic driver.

Collaborate with non-profits to serve the **most vulnerable population** within our Town as identified in the community needs assessment survey.

Work with the Gilbert Chamber to educate businesses on complying with **Federal ADA physical and digital regulations**.

Protect and preserve **natural resources** to ensure long-term community resiliency.

SUPPORTING AND ENHANCING GILBERT'S INFRASTRUCTURE

Invest in **state-of-the art technology** to ensure streamlined business processes and internal efficiencies.

Strategically invest in **transportation models** that efficiently move goods, customers and services throughout the community and that provide connectivity to other communities. Work with the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance and other East Valley Mayors to assist in prioritizing East Valley transportation needs and funding options.

Finalize an **infrastructure inventory** including long-term maintenance/replacement costs analysis and adopt reasonable financial options to support and enhance Town infrastructure.

Address **aging areas** within the community, including the Northwest Employment Corridor's proposed redevelopment area designation, regarding attracting of new businesses, infrastructure needs, and other amenities to ensure all sections of Gilbert remain vibrant and continue to promote quality employment opportunities job generators.