

JANUARY 2021

# 2021 BUSINESS PRIORITIES

## THE BUSINESS OF A THRIVING COMMUNITY

Since 1978, the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce has proactively served as the business advocate to strengthen the business climate in Gilbert. The Chamber serves as a catalyst for growth within the local business community.

## GILBERT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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**Gilbert**   
**Chamber**  
OF COMMERCE

[WWW.GILBERTAZ.COM](http://WWW.GILBERTAZ.COM)

# BUSINESS GROWTH AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY

## Our Core Values



### **DEDICATED**

HARDWORKING,  
STEADFAST, INTENTIONAL



### **BOLD**

SOLVE, INSPIRE  
AND RAISE



### **INTEGRITY**

TRUSTWORTHY



### **CATALYST**

FOR BUSINESS  
GROWTH



### **CONVENER**

OF LEADERS AND  
INFLUENCERS



### **CHAMPION**

FOR A STRONGER  
GILBERT



### **RESOURCEFUL**

OVERCOME  
CHALLENGES

## Executive Summary

Over the past year, many members of our business community have suffered a negative economic impact as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. While we continue to focus on the regular and ongoing pillars of our policy areas, the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports the strategic and necessary emphasis on activities which contribute to the relief, recovery, and resiliency of Gilbert businesses. Such activities should include a renewed and strengthened concentration on shop- and dine-local initiatives.

The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce supports the following Policy Pillars:

- **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 using data and evidenced-based decision making**
- **Supporting and enhancing Gilbert's infrastructure**

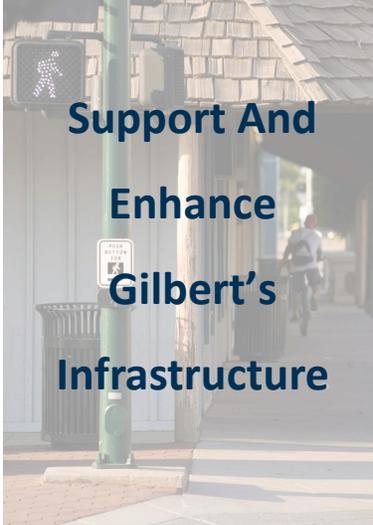
# Policy Pillars



**Provide An Environment For Business Growth**



**Produce A Well-educated Workforce**



**Support And Enhance Gilbert's Infrastructure**



**Engage In Long-term Planning**

## Provide 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.

Enhance the **visibility of businesses** through reasonable sign and promotional regulations.

Provide **local businesses** the opportunity to earn the Town's business, including education on how to engage in the bid process, and/or how to establish themselves as credible vendors.

Ensure patrons' access to businesses impacted by road construction and/or closures and provide timely notification in advance of such construction and/or closures.

Enhance the **Town's tourism and shop local initiatives** to support local businesses, increase market share, and generate tax revenues.

Support strategic infrastructure investment in the **Heritage District**; focusing priorities on connectivity, circulation, walkability and preservation of on-street parking and other public parking options.

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

## Produce A Well-Educated Workforce

Continue **partnerships** to identify and develop demand-driven career pathways, employment trends and forecasts, and support educational programming which develop the needed skill sets, with focus on filling the skills gap, retaining talent, and building talent pipelines in alignment with our businesses.

Continue the Gilbert **Chamber Foundation's workforce readiness** initiative as the Town, business, and education communities collaborate to prepare a strong talent pipeline for current and future Gilbert-area employers, especially in support of skills sought by businesses within the Town's emerging employment clusters.

Work with government, business, and education partners to proactively address the education support needed to achieve and/or surpass the **AZ Education Progress Meter** goals.

Support Arizona's goal, **Achieve60AZ**, that by 2030, 60% of Arizona adults will hold a postsecondary credential or degree, enhancing Gilbert's ability to attract and retain successful businesses and high paying jobs.

## Support & Enhance Gilbert's Infrastructure

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

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 and leaders to assist in prioritizing regional transportation needs and funding options.

Based on the Town's **infrastructure inventory**, prioritize the analysis of long-term maintenance/replacement costs and adopt reasonable financial options to support and enhance Town infrastructure.

Address **aging areas** within the community by seeking to attract new businesses and addressing infrastructure and other amenity needs, thereby ensuring that all sections of Gilbert remain vibrant and continue to promote quality employment opportunities. Designate the Northwest Employment Corridor as a redevelopment area.

## Engage In Long-Term Planning Focused On A Healthy, Vibrant And Well -Balanced Community

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

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

Safeguard **commercial and industrial zoning** throughout the Town, and evaluate commercial downzoning requests to ensure future business growth/expansion opportunities. Infill downzoning requests for redevelopment purposes should be evaluated and encouraged throughout the community on a case-by-case basis.

Encourage job growth by retaining and attracting businesses that will create jobs and increase employment opportunities for Gilbert's diverse workforce, especially in the Town's emerging employment clusters.

Strategic **investment in infrastructure** to stimulate growth within business corridors.

Areas classified by the General Plan as **commercial and employment land** should be given priority, especially in areas that lack necessary infrastructure. This investment is required to maximize their competitive position and prevent these areas from becoming undesirable and viably stagnant to development opportunities.

Maintain public safety and provide dependable services to ensure 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-profit organizations to serve the **most vulnerable populations** within our Town as identified in the community needs assessment survey.

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