

## **ELEMENT 13: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**VISION** Successful economic development in the region will begin with the preservation and promotion of the area's special qualities, resources, and local businesses. Tourists and businesses alike will be attracted to a community which values its natural resources, appreciates the richness of its cultures and traditions, and reflects an image of pride and well-being. The region will continue to attract and retain a wide range of businesses which are compatible with regional resources, including a dependable water supply, clean air, and transportation facilities.

Through economic diversification, a broader tax base will position the area for long-term benefits and economic stability. In a spirit of cooperation, regional economic development activities will be coordinated and logical development strategies identified to address more intense economic development efforts.



*Resorts and tourist attractions provide a strong element of the economy.*

The region will enjoy benefits from new economic opportunities and improved business services. The *Vision* supports existing local businesses; the labor force; and entrepreneurs who will be assisted and encouraged in a variety of ways, including provision of improved business services. As new development occurs, local businesses will be improved and actively promoted in the region.

Special counseling and technical assistance will be provided to local businesses and developers to ensure their success through the practice of sound business principles.

The *Vision* foresees continued expansion of the trade and service activities that currently constitute the largest economic sector. As a global economy continues to evolve, new opportunities will be created through international markets, building on the existing trade base with Mexico. As the economic base expands, technical and scientific industries will be fostered. Development and recruitment of appropriate new industries will bring well-paid jobs utilizing local skills.



*Business and industrial parks offer a range of employment opportunities.*

The airports of the region will continue to be of primary importance in attracting new business and industry. Clustered work places and shopping developments with convenient access to residential communities will contribute to the quality of life and employment opportunities for the local workforce. Adequate public services and facilities will be provided to support current and future development.

For some jurisdictions, specific strategies will be pursued to maximize economic results, such as soliciting commercial development followed by residential redevelopment, transitioning from agriculture to an industrial/commercial economic base, and supporting efforts to revitalize the urban core. The investment of private capital will be encouraged, with public-private

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*Shopping centers and services add to the diverse and stable economy.*

partnerships created to leverage private investment.

The *Vision* recognizes the value of an excellent public education system at all levels to enhance the quality of life for area residents, as well as to attract new firms and provide for a well-trained, well-compensated labor force. Programs of private and public schools will be coordinated with economic development activities so that new jobs match local skills. The region will enjoy a per capita income above both national and state levels, while local governments will do all they can to maintain regional unemployment and underemployed rates at levels below both national and state levels.

### **Livable Tucson Goals**

#### **Engaged Community and Responsive Government**

Includes involvement of citizens in the community, volunteering, neighborhood participation, responsiveness of government organizations to citizen input, and the connection between government and the people.

#### **Respected Historic and Cultural Resources**

Includes the preservation and celebration of local landmarks, buildings, neighborhoods, archaeological treasures, open spaces, cultures, and traditions that make Tucson unique.

#### **Infill and Reinvestment, Not Urban Sprawl**

Includes well-planned growth, the management of sprawl, and development in the city's core, rather than on the periphery.

#### **Better Paying Jobs**

Includes wages, job quality, job diversity, and an improved standard of living.

#### **Quality Job Training**

Includes education, training, and skill development that lead to high quality, living wage jobs.

#### **Reduced Poverty and Greater Equality of Opportunity**

Includes the fair distribution of resources, creating opportunities to overcome poverty, and reducing social and economic inequality.

#### **Strong Local Businesses**

Includes the local economy, particularly small, Tucson-based businesses.

#### **Successful Downtown**

Includes the cultural and commercial aspects of the city center.

## Community Image

**Background** Community image can have a profound impact on economic development activities. Tourists and businesses alike are attracted to a community which values its surrounding natural beauty, appreciates its unique cultural heritage, and maintains its built environment. The image presented by a community can determine the location decision of a new or relocating business. Existing businesses are more likely to expand and reinvest in a community with a positive self-image and a strong sense of civic pride, confidence, and well-being.

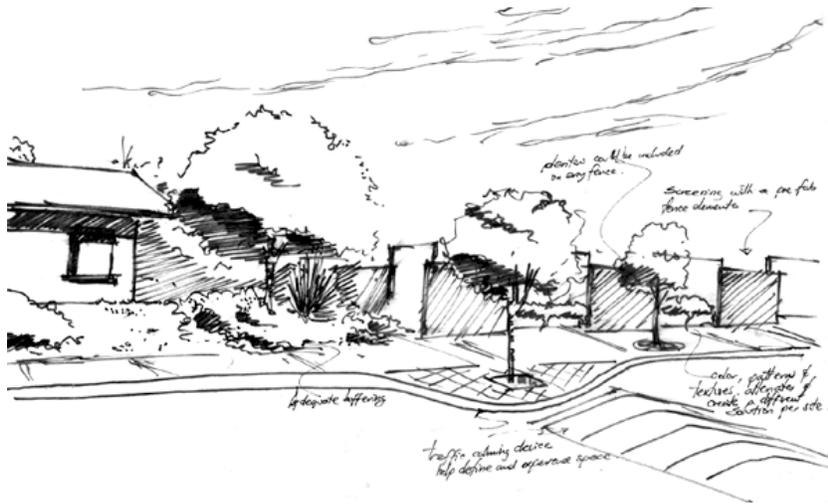


**Policy 1: Promote and preserve the special qualities and resources that contribute to Tucson's attractiveness and make the community unique.**

### Supporting Policies



- 1.1 Support and foster efforts to provide excellence in public education and life-long learning in Tucson in all areas, including scientific, technical, humanistic, cultural, the arts, and the social sciences, and by the continuing development of public libraries.
- 1.2 Emphasize air and water quality as essential to the economic health of the region.
- 1.3 Protect natural resources and support recreational amenities to strengthen Tucson's quality of life.
- 1.4 Promote and preserve Tucson's cultural heritage including its archaeology, architecture, and array of cultural traditions.
- 1.5 Promote safe, distinctive, and well-maintained neighborhoods.



**Traffic Calming and Street Trees**

**Policy 2: Maintain and enhance the beauty of Tucson's physical landscape.**

- Supporting Policies***
- 2.1 Support and encourage efforts to maintain and improve the visual attractiveness and maintenance of the community through public, private, and volunteer action.
  - 2.2 Plan and develop a well-designed and effective circulation system, including transit facilities, alternate modes, and improved roadways.
  - 2.3 Recognize the importance of streets and gateways in creating the initial impression or image of the community.
  - 2.4 Promote Downtown as the cultural and economic center of the city and encourage attractive development and infill to enhance its image.
  - 2.5 Target visually prominent areas of the community, such as the Downtown and major activity centers, as focal points that receive particular care and civic attention.

**Small Business Assistance and Development**

***Background***



Throughout the nation, communities are acknowledging that small business creation, expansion, and survival are critical to the overall vitality and resilience of their economies. The retention and expansion of Tucson's existing small businesses, as well as the development of new small businesses, are crucial since these enterprises are responsible for the great majority of new jobs. Small business is the lifeblood of the Tucson economy, providing diversification for economic stability, first job opportunities for community youth, and opportunities for innovation and research. Since small businesses also face greater risks, assistance and support can help to assure long-term success. Economic development will be supported by the public library in the provision of resources and information to entrepreneurs and the business community.

**Policy 3: Provide assistance and support for small business enterprises.**

- Supporting Policies***
- 3.1 Continue support for small business advocacy services and assistance programs, including marketing, venture capital, financing, and City procurement procedures.
  - 3.2 Provide assistance for entrepreneurial efforts and technological innovation in small businesses.
  - 3.3 Continue outreach programs to encourage and support local minority entrepreneurs.

***Policy 4:*** Review and revise existing and proposed City procedures, policies, and regulations to take into account small business enterprises.

- Supporting Policies***
- 4.1 Utilize the Small Business Commission to facilitate communication between the City and small businesses, to evaluate and streamline City procedures, and to evaluate City policies and regulations for their impacts on small businesses.
  - 4.2 Identify and consider business needs and potential economic impacts in policy decisions and proposed regulations.
  - 4.3 Determine methods to mitigate impacts of roadway improvements on small businesses.

## **Business Retention and Expansion**

***Background*** Since existing companies in the community generate most new jobs, the prosperity of those businesses is of paramount importance to the future economic welfare of Tucson. It is important to focus retention and expansion efforts on industries providing high-quality jobs, such as manufacturing and targeted industry clusters. These export-based companies import capital by exporting products and also provide higher wages and better benefits than many other sectors. Tucson should proceed with proactive programs to foster the retention and expansion of existing enterprises in the community.

***Policy 5:*** Support continuing development of Southern Arizona's high technology industry clusters.

***Policy 6:*** Provide assistance and support for the retention and expansion of existing business.

- Supporting Policies***
- 6.1 Support a one-stop center to improve and clarify government requirements and to provide business assistance.
  - 6.2 Continue to support programs that finance the expansion of local firms.
  - 6.3 Support the use of technologies to assist companies to expand.

***Policy 7:*** Encourage the expansion and continued viability of trade and service activities.

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- Supporting Policies***
- 7.1 Establish a reliable information base about trade and service activities and their impacts on the local economy.
  - 7.2 Assist local firms in the trade and service sectors to expand their existing markets.

***Policy 8: Support the growth and development of local manufacturing companies.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 8.1 Support the continued use and expansion of the State Enterprise Zone Program.
  - 8.2 Expand supply chain development opportunities.
  - 8.3 Facilitate further development of the existing Foreign-Trade Zone project, designating subzones as necessary.

***Policy 9: Support tourism and convention development.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 9.1 Support plans and efforts to enhance Tucson as a tourist destination.
  - 9.2 Determine, protect, and promote such things as the natural, cultural, and historical features which attract resorts and tourists to the region.
  - 9.3 Continue to support facilities to enhance the competitiveness of the City to increase convention activities.
  - 9.4 Continue to support the expansion of Tucson's airport facilities as a focal point for both business and tourist travel.

### **Strategic Recruitment**

***Background*** Strategic recruitment of business is critical to Tucson's economic future. An expanded and diversified economic base will benefit the community by providing greater stability to the economy and a wider variety of jobs and will assist in the reduction of unemployment and underemployment. Efforts to attract and assist development of new businesses, including appropriate, clean industries, should be continued to ensure the economic welfare of the community.

***Policy 10: Support efforts to recruit new businesses and industries to Tucson.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 10.1 Focus recruitment efforts and resources on specific industries which will diversify the existing economic base.
  - 10.2 Identify and recruit new firms that supply or otherwise support businesses already located in the Tucson area.

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10.3 Target recruitment efforts and resources on small- to mid-sized corporate headquarters and regional office operations and on knowledge-intensive industries.

10.4 Pursue recruitment of industries that are nonpolluting and compatible with the environment.

10.5 Improve recruitment methods and strategies by analyzing results through established performance and evaluation criteria.

10.6 Promote Southern Arizona as a location for film activities, including motion pictures, television, and still photography.

### **Business Creation**

***Background*** The creation of new businesses is a critical component of a growing economy. New businesses provide opportunities for growth and expansion and for the creation of quality jobs.

***Policy 11: Provide assistance to encourage the development of new businesses.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 11.1 Continue to facilitate communication between small businesses and City government to encourage entrepreneurship and resolve problems.
- 11.2 Identify and support community resources which assist new businesses, such as marketing, venture capital, financing, and management.
- 11.3 Encourage and support entrepreneurial efforts and technological innovation in local businesses.
- 11.4 Foster the transfer of technology from the University of Arizona to local business ventures.
- 11.5 Continue the support of business incubation programs.

### **International Trade**



***Background*** Development of international markets has been shown nationally to be an efficient form of creating jobs for local companies. However, only a fraction of the firms that have international sales potential ever pursue those markets. An aggressive approach to international trade will promote a healthier economic context that enhances local business. The City can play an important role in this approach by creating a promising business environment through efforts ranging from facilitating trade opportunities to creating supportive physical and institutional improvements.

***Policy 12: Establish the necessary physical and institutional structures to support local exporting opportunities.***

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- Supporting Policies***
- 12.1 Support the activities of the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Center that foster export trade opportunities for Tucson.
  - 12.2 Pursue trading opportunities with Tucson's Sister Cities and through foreign trade offices.
  - 12.3 Promote the establishment of Tucson as a gateway to the Mexican and Latin American markets.

***Policy 13: Create mechanisms which encourage local businesses to pursue international markets.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 13.1 Expand efforts to provide firms with the information to market their products and services overseas, including sources of export/import financing.
  - 13.2 Organize and sponsor trade fairs, missions, and shows, recruiting the participation of local firms in these events.

### **Jobs, Education, and Training**

***Background***



Jobs, education, and training form a critical component of Tucson's economic development strategy. This component emphasizes the coordination of jobs with local skills and the provision of appropriate training and retraining programs. A well-trained, well-compensated, and diversified labor force contributes to a healthy local economy and positive community image which, in turn, attracts additional new job opportunities. High quality educational opportunities at all levels are essential to attract new business and sustain a healthy, diverse economy, as well as to enhance the quality of life.

***Policy 14: Support efforts to provide employment opportunities for the local work force.***

- Supporting Policies***
- 14.1 Aid efforts to achieve full employment for Tucson's residents.
  - 14.2 Assist efforts to attract and retain a broad base of businesses and industries providing well-compensated jobs with career growth potential.
  - 14.3 Improve access for the community's economically disadvantaged to job training or retraining opportunities to provide them with skills for career development.
  - 14.4 Support demand-based training programs.
  - 14.5 Continue to reduce barriers to employment by increasing accessibility of mass transit and child care.

**Policy 15: Support and encourage an excellent educational system and job training programs at all levels.**

- Supporting Policies***
- 15.1 Encourage efforts to provide a full range of high quality educational opportunities for all residents and for life-long learning through library resources and programs.
- 15.2 A literate, informed community enhances the quality of life and job opportunities for all. Abundant library resources will be available to foster and sustain reading skills and interests.
- 15.3 Promote coordination of the personnel needs of new and existing business with skills training programs to ensure a stable, productive labor force.
- 15.4 Support the expansion of workforce development training funds from the state of Arizona.
- 15.5 Implement the appropriate policies as contained in the Regional Workforce Development Plan as presented by the Workforce Investment Board.

**Regional Coordination**

***Background*** Tucson will need to become increasingly competitive to achieve its economic development objectives in the context of the global economy. The variety of private and public economic development agencies and organizations in the region will need to improve coordination of efforts to ensure the best utilization of each entity and to address any shortcomings that may currently exist. Additional economic development tools, including state legislative changes, may be necessary to recruit and create business opportunities.

**Policy 16: Improve coordination of regional economic development activities.**

- Supporting Policies***
- 16.1 Promote networking, information sharing, and coordination among the local public and private economic development agencies and organizations, educational and job training organizations, and business groups.
- 16.2 Implement the appropriate policies of the regional economic development plan as amended from time to time.
- 16.3 Lead the effort to establish a Regional Authority for the licensing of cable TV operators and telecommunications providers, reaching consensus with neighboring jurisdictions.

**Policy 17: Pursue legislative changes that would allow greater local flexibility and assist in achieving economic development objectives.**

**Supporting Policy** 17.1 Encourage legislation that acknowledges the right of municipalities to control their rights-of-way and receive fair compensation for their value.

## **Community Conservation and Redevelopment**

**Background** Community conservation and redevelopment are key elements in achieving economic stability; expanding the city's tax base; and assuring an overall sense of pride, diversity, and identity within the urban area. Major redevelopment projects can restore economic viability to vacant and underutilized areas of the community. Conservation and rehabilitation of existing neighborhoods and commercial districts will maintain their economic viability while enhancing the city's richness and diversity.

**Policy 18: Promote the continued physical and economic viability of the city's neighborhoods and commercial districts.**

**Supporting Policies** 18.1 Preserve and strengthen the distinctive physical character and identity of individual neighborhoods and commercial districts in the community.



18.2 Revitalize older neighborhoods and commercial areas which exhibit stress in the form of transitioning land uses, changing ownership patterns, and physical deterioration.

18.3 Foster the continued economic viability of existing neighborhoods and commercial districts by promoting safety and maintenance programs and by encouraging appropriate new development.

18.4 Encourage the location of employment centers proximate to neighborhoods in order to improve access to jobs.

**Policy 19: Improve vacant land parcels, designated for redevelopment through formal procedures, to promote the economic enhancement of the city, as well as the health, safety, and welfare of its residents.**

**Supporting Policies** 19.1 Develop and utilize redevelopment plans to promote careful redevelopment of areas in the community that are vacant and underutilized.

19.2 Address the special needs of areas that are experiencing blight or potentially hazardous conditions to assure the health, safety, and welfare of local residents.

19.3 Promote sensitive redevelopment of areas within the community that are in a process of transition and reflect a need for reinvestment, particularly along arterial streets.

## **Downtown Development**

### ***Background***



The revitalization of the city core is critical to the City's economic development efforts. The Downtown is the City's cultural, economic, and civic center, providing opportunities for social encounters and personal and business interactions. A diversity of services and entertainment, cultural, business, and civic activities are essential to create a vibrant Downtown. Public investments and redevelopment plans are already in place to support new projects and businesses. Attractive streetscapes, urban spaces, public plazas, and opportunities for day and evening activities all combine to enhance the image and economy of the city's center.

### ***Policy 20: Provide incentives to encourage a diversity of integrated land uses in the Downtown.***

#### ***Supporting Policies***



20.1 Assist efforts to develop Downtown as a major, mixed-use activity center that includes a variety of housing choices and retail, office, government, arts and culture, entertainment, and other services.

20.2 Promote the preservation of historically significant structures and identify various means of protection.

20.3 Support existing businesses and encourage opportunities for infill and expansion of a variety of retail enterprises, including galleries, restaurants, and specialty retail.

### ***Policy 21: Support plans, programs, and capital expenditures to stimulate the investment of private capital in the Downtown.***

#### ***Supporting Policies***



21.1 Encourage efforts to enhance and upgrade the physical appearance and infrastructure.

21.2 Continue to utilize capital expenditures to leverage private investment.

21.3 Promote opportunities to redevelop underutilized central city areas through implementation of existing redevelopment plans.

**Policy 22: Enhance the tourism and convention industry Downtown.**

- Supporting Policies**
- 22.1 Support the Tucson Convention Center expansion to attract major, new convention activities.
  - 22.2 Attract new convention-grade hotels to support and benefit from the expanded convention facility.
  - 22.3 Continue to encourage complementary retail, cultural, and entertainment activities to assist in convention attraction.

**Policy 23: Promote the Downtown as the city's cultural center.**

- Supporting Policies**
- 23.1 Promote cultural events and activities, especially those that attract evening and weekend participation.
  - 23.2 Encourage the location of complementary land uses, such as restaurants and entertainment, within and adjacent to the Arts District.



**Responsive Government**

**Background** A significant factor in any community's economic development is the ability of its government to respond quickly and appropriately to the needs and desires of its citizens. With the use of the Internet and the City's government fiber optic network in conjunction with emerging new technologies, the City has the increased potential to respond to individual citizens, neighborhood associations, businesses, schools, universities, and others in a timely and effective manner. A highly responsive government helps to make a city attractive to various entities, thus increasing its ability to promote increased investment in the community. Tangible results include increased infrastructure and access to high-tech telecom services, new jobs, increased educational opportunities, better planned new development, less traffic, and better air quality.

**Policy 24: Continue the effort toward a robust e-government that promotes efficient and effective municipal government operations and enhances the City's ability to communicate with its citizens.**

- Supporting Policies**
- 24.1 Promote a user-friendly system that allows the citizen to interact easily with City government through a variety of mechanisms emphasizing the best practices for telephone, Internet, and e-mail and

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methods to provide one-stop shopping into a citizen's search for answers so that citizens obtain information on the first attempt.

24.2 Expand e-government to automate processes, such as bill payments, permits, and plan reviews.

24.3 Continue expanding the GIS (Geographical Information System) so that citizens can access the Internet to obtain a variety of information about their communities in a visual mapping format.

24.4 Improve public access to information by providing personal computers with Internet access at libraries and neighborhood centers and kiosks at key locations scattered throughout the city.

24.5 Support and encourage the nonprofit users of the City's government fiber optic network to organize and make the best use of the network for their needs.