



Southern Arizona Home Builders Association

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Home Builders**

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Association**

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May 29, 2013

City of Tucson Planning Commission
Chairman Ladd Keith
255 W. Alameda Street
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Dear Chairman Keith:

The Southern Arizona Home Builders Association does not support the Final Draft of *Plan Tucson* in its current form. *Plan Tucson* is no longer a general plan but a restrictive and costly regulatory document which fails to recognize the economic reality of our community. Furthermore, the Final Plan directly conflicts with the City's publically stated goals of welcoming economic development, attracting and retaining a young workforce, promoting development in the urban core, and creating an 'open for business' economic environment.

The City's current budget reflects the need for a general plan which fosters economic development, expands the tax base, and reduces the regulatory barriers to workforce housing. Unfortunately, the current plan only further encumbers the city's land use policies, creates a document which further complicates and slows the development process, creates an arbitrary urban growth boundary through an 'opportunities map', and drastically increases the City's commitment beyond its core services.

A general plan should consist of broad guiding principles for the efficient, cost effective and realistic operation of our city for the next ten years. Currently, *Plan Tucson* mirrors both a planning document emphasizing the continued protection of our environment and a social contract intended to cure social ills rather than a plan focused on establishing, promoting and encouraging a healthy, diverse and sustainable economic environment.

Although *Plan Tucson* mentions improving housing affordability for working class families, there are numerous goals and objectives which will directly result in increased housing costs and reduced housing affordability. Too many of the goals and objectives will require substantial additional financing which the burden of funding will be borne by new development under the guise of paying its fair share.

The housing goals and objectives of *Plan Tucson* should focus on reducing the barriers to workforce housing, not further exacerbating the current problem. There is a general disconnect in understanding that housing affordability makes the goals of creating a vibrant economy, attracting business, retaining a young workforce, and reducing homelessness much more obtainable. Numerous goals and objectives look to reduce, limit or control further growth and economic development. By doing so, *Plan Tucson* leaves the burden of funding for many

of the other goals and objectives squarely on the backs of working class families and new development.

A general plan should be a broad statement of our community's long term goals and objectives. However, Plan Tucson fails to support SAHBA's belief that a high quality of life begins with affordable housing, employment and long-term economic viability. Rather than provide a framework demonstrating that our City is in fact open for business, Plan Tucson attempts to be all things to all people, and often at the expense of the broader economic well being of too many.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Cote". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a stylized 'C'.

Shawn Cote
Government Affairs Associate
Southern Arizona Home Builders Association