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## CHAPTER 2

### LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS



*Heritage District Street Scene*

#### **V**ision Statement

Deliver a mix of synergistic land uses that are appropriately located to promote employment opportunities while enhancing Gilbert's quality of life.



## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element of the Gilbert General Plan provides land use policies and the Land Use Map for the General Plan and is presented in the following sections:

- Existing Conditions
- Issues
- Growth Areas
- Goals and Policies
- Land Use Classifications
- Implementation Strategies

The Land Use Element provides the Town of Gilbert the necessary framework to locate land uses by type, density and intensity. This element presents the existing tools available to the Town and the development community and proposes additional means to insure quality development.



*Agritopia Streetscape*



## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS

### 2.1 Existing Conditions

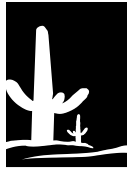
Gilbert has experienced a rapid transition from an agriculture-based community to a suburban community with development activity centers within the larger Phoenix Metropolitan Area. In the last two decades, Gilbert has grown at a pace unparalleled by most communities in the United States. Since 1980 Gilbert's population has doubled every five years to a population in 2012 of 217,000 residents.

Gilbert's growth has primarily been spurred by two factors: the greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area housing boom and the construction of the Loop 202 Santan Freeway through the geographic center of Gilbert. The freeway brought quick circulation options to all of Gilbert, stimulating growth in areas that previously had limited accessibility. As a result several very large master-planned communities developed in the south and east area of Town and a regional employment hub has grown along the freeway alignment.

The Town of Gilbert is continuously planning for the future in order to meet the needs of tomorrow. To proactively direct the growth and development of the community, the Town maximizes land uses, initiates expansion of services and implements capital improvement projects.



*Agritopia Neighborhood*



## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS

### 2.2 Issues

- Need for policies and implementation strategies regarding revitalization of existing rights-of-way, housing developments and commercial centers.
- Need for development flexibility in Employment Classifications that are located in Growth Areas and Employment Corridors.
- Desire to attract more mixed-use developments.
- Need to define a central business district.
- Supporting and encouraging infill development.
- Continued development of infrastructure to support density and increased vertical height.
- Maintaining and renewing the quality and character of neighborhood development.
- Coordination of land uses while defining Gilbert's boundaries to keep Gilbert special.
- Funding and scheduling for capital improvement projects.
- Address the strain of rapid population growth on Town service delivery demands.
- Maintenance of a rural lifestyle in the face of rapid growth.
- Need to focus on sustainable development and preservation of open space.
- Need to encourage green construction and renewable energy.



## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS

### 2.3 Growth Areas

For Arizona municipalities, Arizona Revised Statute 461.05 stipulates that communities larger than 2,500 must prepare “a growth area element, specifically identifying those areas, if any, that are particularly suitable for planned multi-modal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements designed to support a planned concentration of a variety of uses, such as residential, office, commercial, tourism and industrial uses.”

**This Element includes policies and implementation strategies that are designed to:**

- Make automobile, transit and other multi-modal circulation more efficient, make infrastructure expansion more economical and provide for a rational pattern of land development.
- Conserve natural resources and provide open space areas coordinated with similar areas outside the planning area boundaries
- Promote the public and private construction of timely and financially sound infrastructure expansion through the use of infrastructure funding and financial planning that is coordinated with development activity.

In Gilbert, Growth Areas are focused on economic sustainability and therefore concentrated in employment and commerce centers. The developments within the Growth Areas should integrate a variety of employment options supported by a mixture of land uses.

The Town of Gilbert strongly supports mixed-use developments. The mixed-use designation is defined as an efficient integration of non-residential and residential uses that cultivates a sense of community in a live, work, play environment. Destination mixed-use developments are encouraged within the Growth Areas, but may also be located in other areas that provide a multi-modal transportation network to support the intensity of development. The mixed-use environment can be developed horizontally, vertically or a

combination of both. If designed horizontally, the Town expects that the project be constructed so that all land uses are represented.

The Growth Areas within Gilbert each have their own economic focus, character and infrastructure. It is expected that mixed-use developments would be designed to utilize and amplify the Growth Area's attributes. If appropriate, the high density residential component of a mixed-use project should be designed as an integral element of the development concept and produce a unique living environment distinctive to the project.

To further encourage mixed-use growth and density within the Growth Areas, the Town may incentivize energy efficient projects and projects that utilize the Vertical Development Overlay Zoning District. The Growth Areas are specifically located in areas that already have adequate infrastructure constructed and multi-modal transportation options planned.

Each of these Growth Area's can be seen visually on the Growth Areas Map located in the exhibits.

### **Baseline Medical Growth Area**

Located between one-quarter mile west and one-quarter mile east of Higley Road and between US 60 and one-half mile south of Baseline Road the Baseline Medical Growth Area is evolving around the existing hospital and cancer treatment and research center. Medical offices, hotels and support amenities are all critical to the success of the vibrant growth of this area. With little vacant land remaining within this area, it is imperative that quality mixed-use projects be well designed to maximize land potential. The Town highly encourages the use of the Vertical Development Overlay Zoning District as a vehicle to achieve maximum density.

### **Power Road Growth Area**

The Power Road Growth Area is located one-half mile west of Power Road, one-half mile north of Elliot and one-quarter mile north of William's Field Road. The Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, directly to the east, is the catalyst for development within this area. With quick transportation access to the Santan Freeway and the Power Road Corridor, the focus of this Growth Area is industrial and business park employment supported by commercial shopping centers.

### **Gateway Village Center Growth Area**

The Gateway Village Center is generally one-third of a mile to the north of and one-third of a mile south of Williams Field Road, from the railroad to the west and Power Road to the east. This area is planned with a wide variety of land uses in a "Village Core", pedestrian-oriented design with close proximity to future multi-modal transportation nodes. The area is the "Gateway" into Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and the Arizona State University Polytechnic Campus. The village core focuses primarily on office and commercial employment opportunities supported by commercial and residential mixed-use projects. The Gateway Village Center, also known as Cooley Station, is part of the Gateway Character Area described in Chapter 10 of this General Plan.

### **Central 202 Core Growth Area**

The Central 202 Core Growth Area is generally bounded by the Loop 202 Santan Freeway to the south and east, Ray Road to the north and Val Vista Road to the west. The Central 202 Core Growth Area includes the Santan Village Regional Mall and several retail power centers. This area is capable of supporting concentrated development comprised of a variety of land uses including commercial, high rise office, tourism uses and business parks. The area may also accommodate high density residential development where residential uses are closely integrated with retail/office uses in a compact development containing urban amenities. The use of the Vertical Development Overlay Zoning District is highly encouraged within this centrally located business core.

### **Val Vista Medical Growth Area**

The Val Vista Medical Growth Area is located south of the Loop 202 Santan Freeway. It extends one-quarter mile west of Val Vista Road, east to Greenfield Road and Queen Creek Road to the south. The hospital is the economic catalyst within this growth area. The hospital, located southeast of the Val Vista Road and Loop 202 Santan Freeway interchange has spurred growth in the medical office, medical research and rehabilitation/care facilities. Support amenities to the above noted uses are quickly being developed. The Town anticipates that this area will continue to grow with medical office, general office and business park land uses supported by mixed-use, commercial and hospitality uses.

### **Gilbert 202 Growth Area**

The Gilbert 202 Growth Area is located east of Gilbert Road extending one-half mile past Lindsey Road between Pecos Road and one-quarter mile south of Germann Road. This Growth Area is on the western boundary of the Town of Gilbert, adjacent to the Chandler

Airpark. The Growth Area includes the existing commercial centers located at the Gilbert Road and Loop 202 Santan Freeway interchange. The primary focus of economic growth within this area is general office, business park and light industrial land uses that have a need for quick freeway access or proximity to the airpark.

### **The Heritage District Growth Area**

The area is generally defined as one-third of a mile south of Guadalupe Road on the north, extends one-quarter mile to the east and west of Gilbert Road and one-eighth of a mile south of Elliot Road. The Heritage District Growth Area is the historic downtown center of Gilbert and is covered by a Redevelopment Plan. It is also designated as a Character Area within this General Plan. The adopted Redevelopment Plan covers land use, architectural character, streetscape and other issues specific to the downtown. It also sets forth a unique review process required for this area. The Heritage District is a prime location for infill development ranging from commercial, high density residential and tourism/hospitality uses.





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## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS

### 2.4 Goals and Policies

#### Goal 1.0

**Promote Gilbert as a community in which to live, work and play.**

**Policy 1.1** Maintain a balance of housing types and provide a variety of employment opportunities with easily accessible retail and service uses.

**Policy 1.2** Create neighborhoods with an identity that complement Gilbert's heritage and connect to the broader community.

**Policy 1.3** Encourage residential development that allows for a diversity of housing types for all age groups and is accessible to a range of income levels.

**Policy 1.4** Plan areas for community services, including sites for schools, public safety, utilities, parks, trails and open spaces within new development projects. Surrounding residential densities should be appropriate to these non-residential areas and their uses.

**Policy 1.5** Designate and protect sites for employment uses in appropriate locations to increase the Town's employment base.

**Policy 1.6** Encourage all new residential developments to provide pedestrian linkages to parks, schools and other appropriate public facilities.

**Policy 1.7** Encourage the construction of developer financed public parks in conjunction with high density residential developments by providing infrastructure, density bonuses, land exchanges, and/or joint development agreements.

**Policy 1.8** Promote revitalization of under-utilized industrial and commercial properties.

## **Goal 2.0**

### **Protect existing rural residential uses from the impacts of new suburban developments.**

**Policy 2.1** Encourage landscape buffers between existing developed areas and new development.

**Policy 2.2** Encourage new residential development adjacent to large lot (low density residential) uses to provide lot size and width transitions between the two types of uses so there is a gradual increase of residential densities. Where non-residential is adjacent to residential encourage an appropriate transition of open space.

**Policy 2.3** Promote the preservation of agricultural land or open space from encroachment by incompatible uses.

## **Goal 3.0**

### **Manage growth to achieve an efficient, orderly and sustainable community.**

**Policy 3.1** Promote development within Growth Areas where resources and infrastructure are in place or can reasonably be made available.

**Policy 3.2** Encourage master planned communities with an appropriate commercial, business park, industrial and mixed-use employment centers within large-scale residential areas that reduce automobile trips by encouraging walking, biking and other alternative means of transportation and thus improving air quality. Encourage site designs that minimize the number of conflict points (vehicular/pedestrian/bicycle).

**Policy 3.3** Classify land uses in a way that recognizes both the use of the property and the desired scale of the uses.

**Policy 3.4** Encourage densities appropriate for the Growth Areas by identifying locations for compact vertical intensity.

**Policy 3.5** Promote appropriate mixed-use development within existing land use classifications in identified growth areas that have multi-modal transportation options, including transit or high capacity transportation routes.

**Policy 3.6** Encourage new developments to incorporate green building techniques and renewable energy options.

#### **Goal 4.0**

##### **Provide a diversity of quality housing types for a variety of lifestyles.**

**Policy 4.1** Provide an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land to accommodate a variety of future housing needs.

**Policy 4.2** Encourage appropriate locations for multi-family residential uses that do not adversely impact lower density residential neighborhoods.

**Policy 4.3** Reserve appropriate locations for large lot development.

**Policy 4.4** High density housing is encouraged near large employment centers and/or transportation corridors.

**Policy 4.5** Establish a residential density bonus program for in-fill mixed-use projects.

**Policy 4.6** Reserve appropriate locations for large homes clustered around natural open space or community amenity nodes.

#### **Goal 5.0**

##### **Promote commercial, retail, and employment land uses that are compatible with adjacent land uses and meet economic goals.**

**Policy 5.1** Locate campus style business parks at freeway interchanges in Gilbert.

**Policy 5.2** Locate business parks and light industrial uses near arterial/freeway intersections to reduce truck traffic in residential neighborhoods.

**Policy 5.3** Locate commercial and retail uses adjacent to residential uses in appropriate intensities to serve local, community and regional markets.

**Policy 5.4** Preserve/Reserve acreage for industrial employment uses where appropriate buffers between uses can be retained or created.

#### **Goal 6.0**

##### **Direct development into identified growths areas.**

**Policy 6.1** Provide incentives for new development and redevelopment projects in the Heritage District.

**Policy 6.2** Provide a mix of land uses within each growth area including varied housing types and densities, employment opportunities and access to retail and commercial centers.

**Policy 6.3** Develop guidelines to establish criteria for vertical mixed-use developments within the Growth Areas.

**Policy 6.4** Establish incentives to maximize vertical mixed-use developments within the Growth Areas.

**Policy 6.5** Promote the continued development of a central employment spine along the Loop 202 Santan Freeway.

#### **Goal 7.0**

**Reduce automobile dependency in growth areas by efficient organization of land uses and other methods.**

**Policy 7.1** Balance traffic circulation needs with the goal of creating pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and convenient employment/retail centers.

**Policy 7.2** Incorporate transit related improvements and connectivity in each Growth Area.

**Policy 7.3** Interconnect neighborhoods, retail and employment areas with a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes and trails.

**Policy 7.4** Promote mixed-use development in identified Growth Areas or along transit and high-capacity transportation routes.

#### **Goal 8.0**

**Promote cost efficient and logical expansion of infrastructure.**

**Policy 8.1** Provide priority funding for infrastructure and transportation/transit projects within Growth Areas to enhance the community's economic vitality.

**Policy 8.2** Coordinate infrastructure financing and capital improvements with existing and projected development activity.

**Policy 8.3** Insure that new growth provides public and private infrastructure expansion.

**Policy 8.4** Pursue reuse and redevelopment opportunities in existing industrial areas of Gilbert to reduce infrastructure requirements.



*Office/Retail Development*



*Master Planned Community*



*Heritage District*



## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREA

### 2.5 Land Use Classifications

The Land Use Map, located in the exhibits, graphically depicts designated land uses for all land within the Gilbert planning area. The densities in the Land Use Element are based on gross land area. Gross land area includes open space and recreation areas, street rights-of-way, drainage areas and schools, if dedicated, within the boundaries of the development.

Interpretation of Land Use Boundaries: The land use classification boundaries shown on the Land Use Map follow property lines, drainage corridors, canals, streets and Town limits. Where development exists, these demarcation lines are precise and variations are not allowed unless the Land Use Map is amended. Where development is proposed on vacant land, the Planning Commission may approve a reconfiguration of the boundaries of the various land use classifications to form a viable neighborhood design, as long as there is no net change in the amount of land in each classification.

#### Residential Uses

**Residential >0-1 Dwelling Units per Acre (DU/AC)** The Residential >0-1 DU/AC classification designates areas for very low-density single-family residential development of a semi-rural character. Non-commercial agricultural uses may be located in these areas. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-43, SF-35).

**Residential >1-2 DU/AC** The Residential >1-2 DU/AC classification designates areas for low-density single-family residential neighborhood development. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-35, SF-15).

**Residential >2-3.5 DU/AC** The Residential >2-3.5 DU/AC classification designates areas for suburban single-family residential neighborhood development. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-15, SF-10, SF-8, SF-7).

**Residential >3.5-5 DU/AC** The Residential >3.5-5 DU/AC classification designates areas for urban density single-family neighborhood residential development. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-10, SF-8, SF-7, SF-6).

**Residential >5-8 DU/AC** The Residential >5-8 DU/AC classification designates areas for higher density detached and attached residential uses. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-6, SF-D, SF-A).

**Residential >8-14 DU/AC** The Residential >8-14 DU/AC classification designates areas for higher density, often multifamily, residential uses. (Typical corresponding zoning districts with this land use classification: SF-D, SF-A, MF/L).

**Residential >14-25 DU/AC** The Residential >14-25 DU/AC classification designates areas for higher density multifamily residential uses such as condominiums, multi-story apartments and specialty residential uses. (Typical corresponding zoning district with this land use classification: MF-M).

**Residential >25-50 DU/AC** The Residential >25-50 DU/AC classification designates areas for very high density, multifamily residential uses including multi-story apartments, condominium, townhouse, loft apartment and congregate care/senior living product types. (This density may be permitted in the Heritage Village Center (HVC) and the Gateway Village Center (GVC) zoning districts).

For site development regulations and purpose, refer to the Land Development Code (LDC). The LDC also notes non-residential land uses permitted in residential zoning districts. A Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay zoning district may permit zoning districts other than noted above upon finding that the overall density is consistent with the General Plan land use classification, and per the provisions of a PAD established in the Land Development Code.

## **Commercial Classifications**

**Neighborhood Commercial (NC)** The Neighborhood Commercial classification designates areas for limited shopping and basic services for the immediate area and are generally no larger than five (5) acres in size. Neighborhood Commercial uses are typically, but not always, located along major collectors or arterials. Small scale retail and service uses under 25,000 square feet per user or stand-alone building are permitted.

**Community Commercial (CC)** Community Commercial areas provide the commercial and service needs of residents in the surrounding area. These parcels are typically located along arterials, range in size between five (5) and fifteen (15) acres and a single user or stand-alone building under 50,000 square feet is permitted. Loft residential and mixed-used development is allowed within this zoning category.

**Shopping Center (SC)** The Shopping Center classification designates areas for many of the commercial needs of residents in the surrounding area and within the site if designed as a mixed-use project. Shopping Centers are typically located at arterial intersections. Shopping Center designations are anchored by a grocery store or other medium scale uses under 75,000 square feet per user or stand-alone building and are developed under unified control with a common architectural theme and shared parking. Shopping Centers are typically located on a parcel between fifteen (15) and forty (40) acres and may be developed as a mixed-use project.

**Village Center (VC)** The Village Center classification designates areas for classical mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented core activities which consist of retail shops, restaurants, offices, lodging, entertainment, public plazas and very high density residential units. Village Center offers the opportunity for diverse patronage served by all modes of transportation. The pedestrian oriented core will initially be served by shared parking lots and ultimately by shared parking structures. Residential uses within the Village Center area will range up to 50 du/acre, often with commercial or office uses on the ground floor.

**General Commercial (GC)** The General Commercial classification designates areas for freestanding retail, office and commercial uses that may be developed as individual projects or as a mixed-use development with loft residential as an option. General Commercial provides locations for uses of any scale, including large-scale uses over 75,000 square feet such as home improvement stores, large specialty retail, auto dealers and retail nurseries. Properties of any size may be designated as General Commercial. General Commercial parcels are located along arterial streets.

**Regional Commercial (RC)** The Regional Commercial classification designates areas for a broad range of high intensity uses emphasizing retail commercial uses. There is no maximum size for any use. The designation includes uses permitted in all other commercial categories plus regional shopping centers, hospital/medical centers, hotels/motels and mixed-use developments. The Regional Commercial classification may also accommodate high density residential development where



residential uses are closely integrated with retail/office uses in a compact development containing urban amenities. Regional Commercial serves a broad market area larger than the Town. Regional Commercial designations are thirty or more acres and are located at freeway/arterial intersections or at intersections of arterials with Roads of Regional Significance.

## **Employment Classifications**

**Neighborhood Office (NO)** The Neighborhood Office classification designates areas for small-scale, single story office uses and complexes adjacent to existing or planned neighborhoods. It is a transitional classification between residential and more intense commercial uses and can buffer residential uses from arterial streets.

**General Office (GO)** The General Office classification designates areas for large scale, single or multi-story medical, professional, general or service-type office uses. The only residential land uses allowed within the General Office classification are loft units above non-residential within a mixed-use project.

**Business Park (BP)** The Business Park classification designates areas for office and light industrial uses, including high technology and research and development firms. This classification encourages an attractive campus-style environment. Developments within this classification may include employee-oriented, on-site amenities, loft residential and accessory uses allowing for a mixed-use environment.

**Light Industrial (LI)** The Light Industrial classification designates areas for a variety of light industrial uses, including assembly, light manufacturing, warehousing, offices, contractors' yards, laboratories, and research and development firms. Outside storage fully screened from public view is permitted.

**General Industrial (GI)** The General Industrial classification designates areas for general industrial uses, including but not limited to heavy utility, truck terminals and manufacturing facilities, in which outdoor storage of materials, equipment and vehicles is permitted.

## **Municipal/Institutional Classifications**

**Public Facility/Institutional (PF/I)** The Public Facility/Institutional classification designates areas for public and quasi-public ownership, including administrative offices, corporation yards, police and fire stations, public and private

schools, colleges, hospitals, libraries, post office facilities, cultural centers and similar uses. This category also includes traditional utility service uses such as wastewater treatment plants, water treatment plants, storage reservoirs and tanks, well sites, telephone company sites, electric substation sites, electric generating/receiving stations, etc.

**Parks/Retention (P/R)** The Parks/Retention classification designates areas for parks, riparian areas, and drainage corridor/wash areas that will remain in public or open space use whether publicly or privately owned.

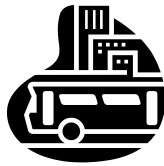
**Utility/Transportation Corridor (U/TC)** The Utility/Transportation Corridor classification designates areas for canals, railroads, light rail, power lines, utility easements and the Loop 202 Santan Freeway corridor. These areas may include multi-modal trails systems, open spaces and green belts.

**Golf Course (GC)** The Golf Course classification designates areas for public and private golf courses, including ancillary functions such as maintenance facilities, clubhouses, driving ranges and pro-shops.

### **Sources of Aggregates**

Arizona Revised Statutes Section 9-461.05,c.1(g) requires the land use element to include sources of currently identified aggregates from maps that are available from state agencies, policies to preserve currently identified aggregates sufficient for future development and policies to avoid incompatible land uses.

Maps obtained from the Arizona Department of Mines and Mineral Resources that identify the location of aggregate mining operations and the associated geographic index indicate there are no currently identified sources of aggregate within the town of Gilbert's municipal planning area as of June 2012. Only fine sediments are known in the surface within Gilbert's planning area. Most aggregate is trucked in from the Gila River to the south or the Salt River to the north. Crushed stone comes from a variety of areas but mainly areas to the east of Gilbert.



## LAND USE AND GROWTH AREA

### 2.6 Implementation Strategies

Land Use and Growth Area	Responsible Entity	Complete By
1. Develop a residential density bonus program for mixed-use projects that includes specific performance criteria. These criteria should include provisions for any of the following: housing, multi-modal or transit-oriented development, dedicated infrastructure improvements and park/open space dedication.	Planning	Ongoing
2. Coordinate with Town of Gilbert Business Development to locate new business opportunities in Gilbert especially focusing on properties within the Growth Areas.	All Departments	Ongoing
3. Create incentives for new employment and commercial development that is located within Growth Areas.	Planning	Ongoing, Review Periodically
4. Establish standards for green design and energy efficient developments.	Planning	2012-2013, Review Periodically
5. Coordinate infrastructure financing and improvements with existing and projected development activity.	Development Services Public Works	Ongoing
6. Develop mixed-use guidelines consistent with the land use designation framework.	Planning	2013-2014

7. Develop alternatives to allow agriculture-related or other small businesses in residential districts.	Planning	Ongoing
8. Examine adding additional flexibility within Employment Use classifications.	Planning Business Development	Ongoing



*Growth Area Development*