

## **CHAPTER 6 – STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Putting this plan into place will require an intensive and focused effort over the next several years and close cooperation between the City of Chandler and the private sector developers, owners and tenants who will create the projects that make up this plan. This chapter addresses an organized implementation program—a road map for public action over the next several years that will create momentum and visible results, encouraging further investment in the corridor.

### **Public and Private Roles**

A creative and dynamic relationship between the public and private sectors and the community of residents, property and business owners and tenants will be needed to fully implement the proposals in this plan. A summary of the responsibilities of the City and private entities is as follows:

#### ***City Responsibilities***

- Re-zoning and other regulatory actions
- Developer outreach for the Corridor and specific projects
- Purchase of properties needed for street improvements
- Relocation, where necessary, of residential and commercial owners and tenants
- Design review and approval of projects in the Corridor
- Street and other infrastructure improvements in the public rights-of-way (see recommendations in Chapter 5.)
- Street trees, streetscape improvements and sidewalk trellises
- Assistance through programs available to the City of Chandler, such as with residential development and neighborhood improvement
- Park and open space development
- City Hall relocation
- Community outreach and communication
- Museum and cultural center development
- Website to keep public updated on revitalization news
- Marketing and promoting South Arizona Avenue Corridor to the development community

#### ***Private Sector Responsibilities***

- Land Assembly for Development Projects
- Project Development
- Street trees and streetscape improvements adjacent to their own developments
- On-site infrastructure improvements

#### **Recommended Zoning Actions**

The first step after adoption of this plan is to prepare the regulatory framework that will encourage new development. Re-zoning that is recommended is based on a very few simple, flexible, mixed-use zone districts; zoning at present consists of several small single-use individual zone districts. It is not the purpose of this report to re-zone the corridor through drafting of new zone ordinances.

Instead, Figure 10 shows the recommended approach to re-zoning, with brief descriptions of the objectives for each broad district. Specific zoning language should be drafted by legal counsel and Planning staff, to address the objectives sought by the City in this report. Furthermore, the conceptual design standards discussed in later sections will provide a framework for more detailed design guidelines to be developed together with the new zoning district.

The CCD Zoning for the area immediately adjoining the Downtown Square is already in place and functioning together with project specific (PAD) zoning for Benton Robb and Desert Viking.



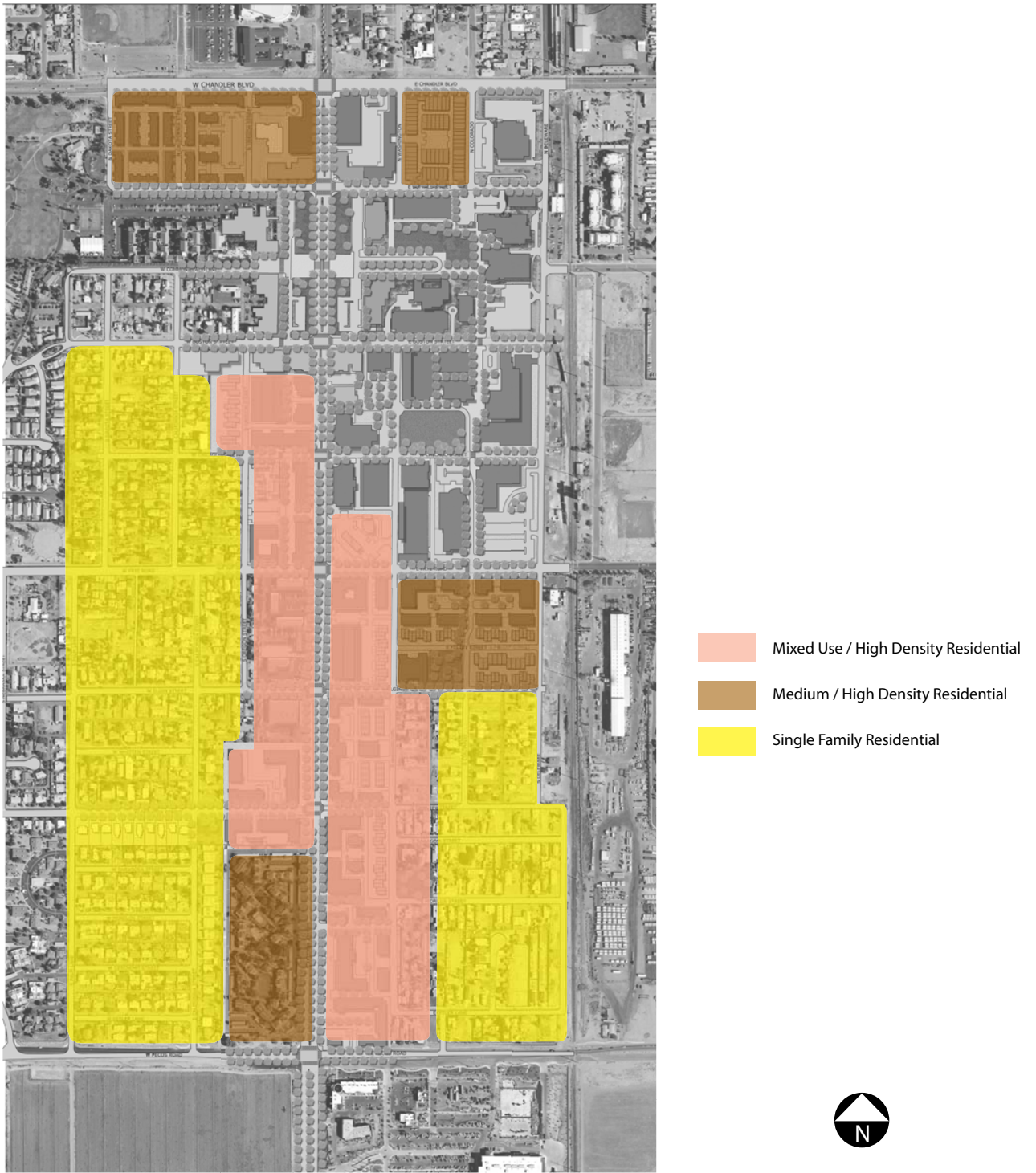
High density mixed uses

- **High Density Mixed-Use Along Arizona Avenue:** This is the most critical zoning declaration of the entire Corridor. On one hand, the plan recommends high density residential development along Arizona Avenue to support retail in the Corridor; that is a clear objective. On the other hand, a developer may perceive that market demand exists for some service or other retail as part of the mixed-use development—that market demand should be acknowledged and permitted in the zoning. The common denominator in the area should be new residential development.

At the south end of the Corridor, the properties at the northeast corner of Pecos and Arizona Avenue should be permitted to go all retail because of their proximity to the centers, and the district should reflect that distinction. On the other end of the corridor in the Steelyard site, medium to high density residential development is the objective. The only non-residential use that might find a place along Frye Road is small scale office space—related to the Civic Center—and that should be limited, relative to the residential units.

The Design Standards for this district should orient commercial uses, whether retail or office, to Arizona Avenue or Frye Road. Where commercial uses contact the residential neighborhood, as along Washington, their access and orientation should be toward Arizona Avenue or Frye Road.

- **Single Family Residential Neighborhoods:** Certain portions of the neighborhoods are currently zoned for multi-family uses, thus requiring a separate zoning action such as a permit, in order to build a single family home. Zoning in the neighborhoods should preserve and enhance the single family character of these districts as well as encourage infill development of new single family residential units, along with renovation and rehabilitation of existing single family homes. All that should be permitted in the neighborhoods are single family and, in special cases, duplex units of a scale and density compatible with the existing development. There are many vacant properties—especially on the east side of South Arizona Avenue—to present opportunities for this type of infill development.



\*Areas are general, not specific parcels.

FIGURE 12

Zoning Recommendation

### **Phasing**

Public action will create the environment for private investment in the South Arizona Avenue Corridor. The most critical actions will take place over the next three to five years, as the stage is set and the first visible projects come on line. With a coordinated program targeted to high priority projects, the City of Chandler can create a setting for the right kind of development that will re-create the corridor, making it a much stronger front door for the city.

Public sector and private sector projects are illustrated in the Implementation Schedule at the end of this chapter. There is a great deal of flexibility in this schedule. Each project should be broken down into its components and related to the totality of the corridor and its future. Beyond the three year span of this schedule, additional residential, commercial and public works projects are envisioned. Some projects such as neighborhood residential infill and improvement may be ongoing over a period of several years.

This schedule prioritizes projects that will set up the environment for subsequent projects. Each project is discussed individually, but should be viewed in terms of its relationships to all other activities in the Corridor.

#### **• The Area Plan**

The first logical step that is a pre-requisite to everything else is approval of this Area Plan and amending the General Plan to accommodate it. This step will enable the City to re-zone the corridor as recommended above, creating the regulatory climate that will encourage developers to create new projects. Assuming the Area Plan is adopted in Fall 2006, re-zoning should be able to be put in place during 2007.

### **Public Improvements**

#### **• South Arizona Avenue R.O.W.**

The City is now studying the feasibility of altering the configuration of South Arizona Avenue to create a more attractive and safe pedestrian-oriented main street leading to Chandler's downtown. There will likely be many discussions of the findings with the stakeholders up and down the street, and discussion about the possibilities of funding the project, possibly in phases. Getting widespread agreement and then designing the new street, curb and gutter and the urban streetscape that will make it an attractive front door to Chandler will consume most if not all of 2007.

By 2008, the City could be prepared to undertake an orderly process of street improvement. Rebuilding the street can proceed without completion of all the streetscape on each block. Developers could be made responsible for building the streetscape as they complete their projects.

#### **• Washington Avenue and Morelos Improvements**

Completion of these streets is needed to create the residential and commercial projects along South Arizona Avenue. Since these projects depend on acquisition of property to create rights-of-way, some time will be spent discussing land acquisition with the property owners and arranging relocation assistance as needed through the City. Design and bidding may go into late 2007. Construction of these streets could extend through most of 2008. The abandonment of the segments of Saragosa, Morelos, and Kessler Streets located between Arizona Avenue and the extended Washington Street will not occur as long as there are properties that require those segments for access.

- **City Hall Relocation**

The City Council has determined that the new City Hall location will be at Chicago and South Arizona Avenue. This public investment is a very significant boost for the Corridor. The implementation schedule envisions site remediation and land acquisition projecting into mid-2007. Design of the new City Hall is scheduled for mid-2007 into early 2008, with construction of City Hall beginning in mid-2008 and move-in projected for the end of 2009.

**Private Development**

- **High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Development**

While no-one knows which of the blocks along South Arizona Avenue will be developed first, the Implementation Schedule illustrates a typical development schedule that can be anticipated for a first project. A developer identification and outreach program should be underway at the very beginning. Since the City does not control the properties along South Arizona Avenue, an interested developer could be involved with discussions with property owners possibly into mid-2007, with property acquisition and relocation projected to about mid-2008. Meanwhile, design can proceed, and construction could result in occupancy of the first project (probably residential) in mid-2009. Meanwhile, other projects can proceed and follow the first project.

- **Neighborhood Infill and Improvements**

This program consists of a multitude of small infill residential projects, coupled with City actions to implement neighborhood programs and services. This will likely be an ongoing project over several years, or until sufficient interest in the neighborhood makes its improvement self-sustaining. Individual building projects can be relatively short term, so several may be running simultaneously. The City will need to set up the overall program and make an effort to contact developers who can work on sites identified by the City. Developers will need to work, with the City's help, with individual property owners, Habitat, small builders, and other non-profit builders to work out agreements for sales of properties—especially vacant and neglected lots—which then become the sites for new infill homes.

## **CHAPTER 7 - PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND RELOCATION PROGRAM**

Should the City Council direct staff to proceed with implementing the plan for this area, it is likely that property will need to be acquired for public rights-of-way to accommodate desired changes in traffic patterns for interior neighborhoods and/or to create certain redevelopment areas as described in Chapter 5.

Should this be necessary, the City has established procedures for acquiring property and for assisting in relocating occupants of the property—whether commercial or residential, owner occupied or tenant occupied. Following is an overview of some of the activities that would occur should staff be directed to acquire property for public use.

### **Overview**

When the City acquires property, there are two major components that occur in the process:

1) acquisition of the real estate and 2) assistance related to relocation of the occupants, whether business or residential property.

Acquisition addresses ownership and valuation determination as well as steps to reach an agreement to acquire the property. At times—only after all other avenues have been exhausted—the City's power of eminent domain can be used to acquire the property.

Relocation is the way the qualified owners, businesses and tenants are reimbursed for eligible expenses related to moving their belongings and in establishing benefits that might be paid in finding and occupying a new place to live or operate their business. Generally, the City uses Federal guidelines in implementing relocation benefits.

### **Acquisition Process**

Whether property is being acquired for a road or other type of project, a primary goal of the City of Chandler is to involve businesses and residents in the project development process, keep them informed, and assist them through a transition process that might be difficult.

The City's Real Estate Division, or consultants working for the Real Estate Division, would establish a dialogue with the owners and tenants of the affected properties, meet with them individually to apprise them of the project overall, give them information about how the project would affect their property, business or continued residence, and request information from the property owners and tenants that might be needed or help in valuing the property or planning the project. An assessment would also be performed regarding the businesses and residents occupying the properties in order to develop a relocation plan.

The Real Estate Division would also provide owners and tenants with information about the process by which the City acquires property and what the businesses and residents can expect in the relocation process.

Real Estate would then obtain title, appraisal, and environmental reports for the property that is needed for the project. This also is the time property owners can let the City and the appraiser know any information that should be considered in the appraisal.

Based on these reports, Real Estate prepares documentation to make a formal offer—at fair market value—to the property owners. Since, by this time, there has been substantial interaction between the Real Estate Division and the owner of the property, this phase concentrates primarily on reaching an agreement between the City and the owners. There are times that the owners submit other information that is analyzed by the appraiser and the City. A reasonable amount of time is allowed to negotiate with the property owners, and when an agreement is reached; an escrow is opened to handle the transaction. In the event the City is unable to reach an agreement with an owner, it may be necessary to use eminent domain to acquire the property. Although there are times that this is related to value issues, more frequently, it is related to schedule or title issues.

### **Relocation Process**

Shortly after making the initial offer to the property owner, relocation assistance for the owners and tenants is addressed. This is a very interactive process that includes establishing details about the current occupant, business or residential, researching the current market for new locations and comparing those to the occupant's current situation. Resources are made available to assist the occupant in moving their personal property, in finding another property, and in certain special circumstances, in establishing eligibility to receive financial assistance to obtain a new place to live or conduct business, whichever is applicable. To the extent possible, the City will work to accommodate those who wish to remain in the same neighborhood or vicinity.

### **Property Assembly by Developers**

The city will rely on developers to assemble properties along the South Arizona Avenue Corridor for redevelopment purposes. The city will create the following incentives to encourage property assembly:

- Properties will be zoned thus giving developers one less public hearing step.
- Off-site improvements will be done by the city.
- Some of the re-zoning will allow 30/40 dwelling units/acre - something that will not be enjoyed by any other property or area in the city.

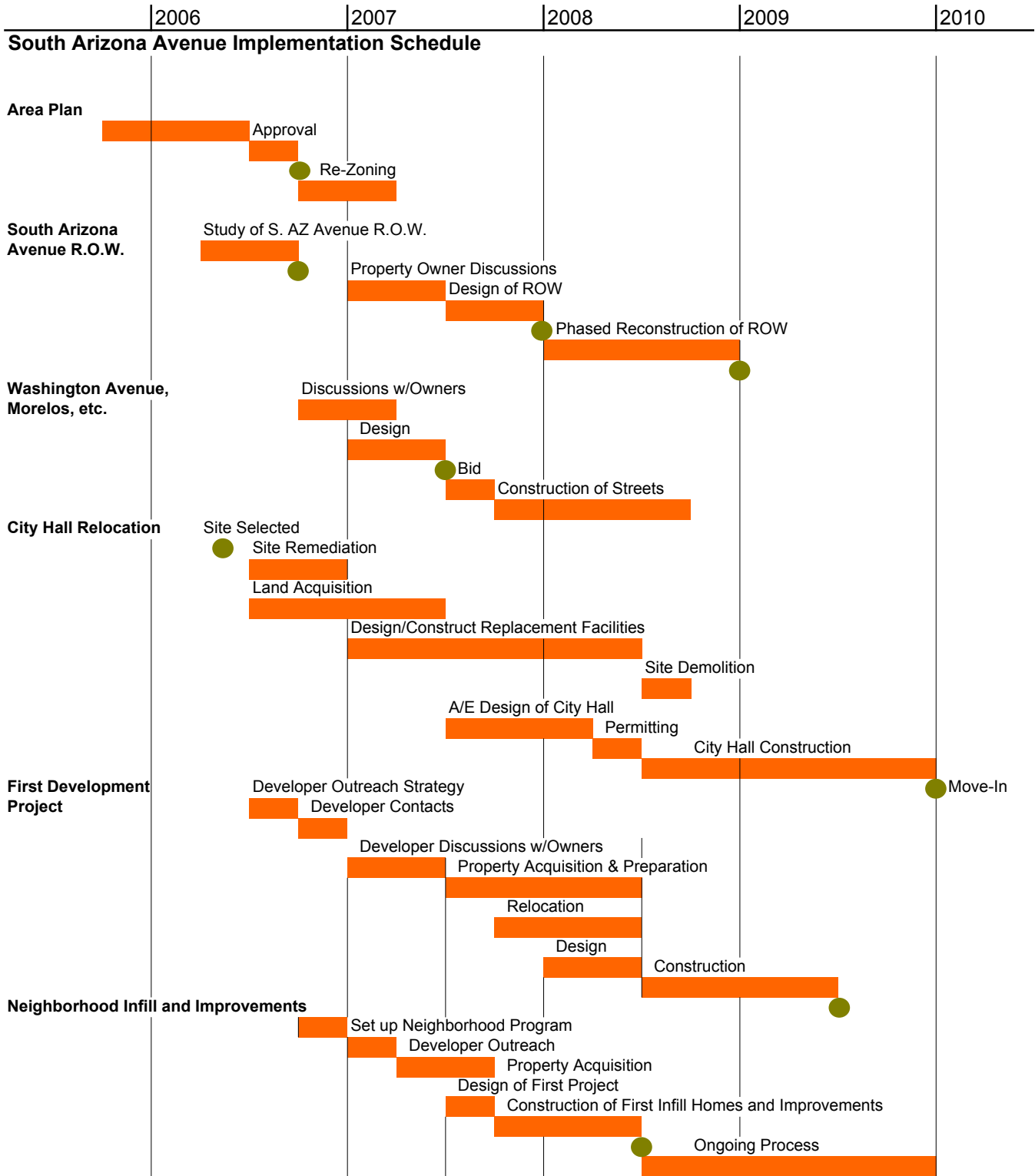


FIGURE 13

Implementation Schedule