

The Southside Village Conservation District Narrative

The people of the neighborhood referred to as “Southside Village” are submitting this request to become a Historical Conservation District in Chandler. Southside Village encompasses the area south of Folley Street to Pecos Road and west side of Washington Street to the east side of Delaware Street beginning in the 400-block going south, with some exceptions such as including the Light and Life Church and excluding the 300 block of Washington and Delaware Streets. It includes the area that is labeled “Historical South Chandler Neighborhood” on City of Chandler maps. This neighborhood was formed more than a century ago. During this time, the residents have significantly contributed to the advancement of Chandler. The rich history of the neighborhood should be preserved for future generations. This narrative is but a summary of it.

Chandler Economy

The early economy of Chandler was based mainly on agriculture. The original residents of Southside Village provided much of the farm labor necessary for the cotton industry to flourish. In addition to being hard working and industrious individuals, the early residents formed a strong community that supported each other. When discussing possible names for this district, Southside Village was agreed upon because the neighborhood residents referred to the area as “Southside” and because “Village” has the connotation of being collaborative and supportive. People in the neighborhood looked out for each other and worked together to uplift one another. Residents of Southside Village became doctors, lawyers, authors, teachers, celebrities, politicians, entrepreneurs, social activists, and good-hearted, hard-working people.

The buildings in this community reflect historically significant architecture with properties dating back to 1920 and includes 67 residential properties that are at least fifty years old.

The Neighborhood

The Southside Village was not originally considered part of the City of Chandler. It was called the Winn Addition or Southside. In addition, it has been known as Mexican Town, The Barrio, South Chandler, and Historic South Chandler Neighborhood. The Winn Addition was initially established by Dr. A. J. Chandler in 1912. Because of strict zoning practices in Chandler, the area was set aside for people of color and those without sufficient resources to live elsewhere. It originally consisted of one hundred lots. Most of the lots were sold to Hispanic laborers.

The historical significance of the neighborhood is due to the industrious residents who built their lives on those one hundred lots. The community that rose from the desert south of the City of Chandler became key to the success of the entire region.

Southside Village Boundaries – Not including Frye Road, Steelyard Olympus Apartments, or Arizona Avenue. It includes the area specified on City of Chandler maps called South Chandler Historic Neighborhood.

Statistics by Historical Consideration – This designation has to do with analysis from Chandler4Change (C4C) based on city and county records.

Historical Consideration	Count
Single Family Home - Historical (1972 or older)	67
Single Family Home - Maybe historical - modifications in 1970s but > 1972	3
Single Family Home newer than 1972	49
Multiplex	4
Church	4
Park	2
Commercial – Church Property	1
Commercial – Salvation Army	1
Total	139

Of the 127 single family homes, 67 or 53% of the homes are 50 years old or older. There are also three homes that were built before 1972 with modification sometime during the 1970s and potentially could be considered historical. Although not all homes that are of the 50 years and older are architecturally significant, many would have that designation.

Of the 127 single family homes, 67 seem to be owner occupied. Thirty-six of these owner-occupied residences are in the potential historical home designation. The result is 54% of the potentially historical homes are expected to be owner-occupied. For some of the other potentially historical single-family homes, the owner lives in the neighborhood. All of the churches were built before 1972 but some have undergone architectural changes.

Historical Location

In 1910, Chandler was growing and needed more farm laborers. Although people came to Chandler for a variety of reasons, many people of Mexican descent moved to Chandler seeking a better life and to escape Mexico's violent revolution. Sharecroppers economically shackled throughout the South were encouraged to escape their economic slavery and come to Chandler. There were people from this neighborhood who would go to locations in Oklahoma and Texas to encourage people to move to Chandler. They would transport the families to Chandler in their truck. Many times, new arrivals would live in Eleven-Mile Corner area on farms in tents before later deciding to move to Chandler.

In 1912, there were strict zoning and segregation laws forcing poor and minority residents to live in the cheaper neighborhoods south of Chandler's downtown. The Winn Addition neighborhood was specifically set aside by Dr. A.J. Chandler for poor people and people of color. This resulted in one hundred residential lots which were originally inhabited by people of Mexican descent, but they were joined by African Americans during the 1920s as part of the Great Migration. In addition, the Great Dust Bowl in the 1930s drove even more people of color to Chandler.

The Winn Addition was established without any water rights. The lots were sold for \$25 each. The original streets were Hidalgo, Saragosa, and Morelos. Hidalgo Street is east of the petition neighborhood. In 1940 the Kesler Addition added Kesler Lane, up to Pecos Road. In 1946, the Dobson Addition added the land north of Fairview Road and south of Frye Road. Street names were changed over time. For example, Frye Road was originally called Denver Street and unofficially, Ice House Road. Streets were dirt and were not maintained as part of Chandler until 1953, when the area officially became part of the city of Chandler. At that time, the

neighborhood residents petitioned to be included in the City of Chandler due to unsanitary conditions. The Chandler Town Superintendent reported that the lack of City services could cause an epidemic, and therefore, recommended annexing this area.

Because the neighborhood didn't have any water rights, local residents had three options to obtain water. They could buy water from the Bosewell Cotton Gin or Arizona Edison Company Ice Plant, or collect water from the irrigation canal. After the successful efforts of Pluarco Garcia to petition the City of Chandler in 1934 to lay water and sewer pipes, the community was able to purchase clean water from the Pecos Valley. In order to make a compelling proposal, Mr. Garcia, President of the Latin American Club, Chandler Chapter, offered to provide four hundred workers to do the job, if the city would approve the sewer and water project, thereby significantly reducing the cost of the project to the city.

Many laborers were employed by local farms such as Goodyear, Goodson, Bogle, Dobson, and Boswell. Other employers included San Marcos Hotel, Sante Fe Railroad, Spreckels Sugar Company (1964), and Harry Winston Minerals of Arizona, United Mobile Homes, Pima Valve, and Rogers Corporation (1967).

The Southside Village founding families included the Arbuckle, Benites, Cardenas, Duenas, Escandon, Folley, Harris, Jones, Navarrete, Payne, Rodriguez, Rubio, Soto, Turner, Woods and other families. Descendants of these founding families still live in the area today. Many of these families have been recognized for their contributions to Chandler with their names attached to City landmarks. Some examples are Folley Park, Folley Street, N. J. Harris Park, Emma Arbuckle Park, and the Coy Payne Gymnasium at Chandler High School.

The historical significance of Southside Village is fundamentally due to the people who lived in the area. In addition to the important impact their labor had on the success and growth of Chandler, the community they built despite racial, economic, and educational obstacles contributed to the wider Chandler community. Residents living in Southside Village submitted a petition to the Chandler School Board in June 1929 requesting a school be built for their children in their neighborhood. Unfortunately, the African American students were not allowed to attend this neighborhood school because of segregation until 1949. Prior to that time, the African American students were bussed to Goodyear (also known as Ocotillo School) many miles to the south. Desegregation was accomplished through the efforts of Carlanthe Turner and Emma Arbuckle. Over the years, people in this neighborhood petitioned for more sanitary conditions on several occasions when health conditions warranted improvement, such as the efforts of Glen LaVon Woods relocating a cow pen that was too close to the neighborhood and causing significant issues with flies and diseases.

Many neighborhood locations contributed to the strength of the community. These places provided necessities and entertainment. Since the people of this neighborhood were not allowed to be respected patrons of other establishments in Chandler, the community developed their own resources, providing grocery stores, restaurants, taverns, and other forms of entertainment. Some of these locations may not have been intended for enjoyment but became an important part of the community life, such as the Ice House. Saragosa and Morelos Streets evolved to be the hub of the community commerce. Although not all the following locations may be historically significant to the city, many were culturally significant to the lives of the people at the time.

Historical Location	Address	Owned by	Significance
Winn School	85 Saragosa Street	Currently Salvation Army	Was the first school in the Winn Addition. It was built in 1930
Harris' Barbeque Pit	198 E. Saragosa Street	N. J. Harris (Currently Asaad Woods)	Has water tower and BBQ Pit still standing
Miss B's Hamburgers	372 S. Delaware St	Beatrice	It was a place for African Americans to eat.
El Costeno Bar	217 E. Saragosa Street	Baltazar Rodriguez (Currently Estate of Angie Saavedra)	An entertainment center for the community; brought in celebrities (Escondon's have the sign from the bar)
Rodriguez Dance Hall	Just east of 198 E Saragosa	Baltazar Rodriguez	They would show movies on Saturday night
Arizona Edison Company's Ice Plant	Frye Road and Railroad tracks at Delaware Street		A place for older people to hang out to get cool.
Blue Front Café	184 E Saragosa	Ethel Lee Jones	Restaurant that African American people could go to
Joaquin's Grocery Store	249 E Saragosa Street	Joaquin Escandon	Place to get groceries without having to cross Chandler Blvd. He would also extend credit to the farm workers so they wouldn't have to pay him until Friday, when they got paid.
Roller Rink aka Youth Club	464 S Delaware Street	Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church	Place for kids to go skating. The unusual thing about this location was that the roller rink was located on the second floor. This building is an apartment house today.
Dolly's Filling Station	15 E Saragosa Street	Dolly Hardwick	When there were problems in the neighborhood, the police would come to Mr. Hardwick and he would talk to

Historical Location	Address	Owned by	Significance
			whomever was causing problems. People respected him.
Movie Theater	Was in downtown Chandler	Alice Woods	When the black movie theater burned down, Mrs. Woods would allow the black children to attend her theater, although no misbehaving was allowed.
Southside Tavern	405 S Delaware Street		Rec center for community with pool, TV, and other games. It later became the Diamond J Bar and was notorious.
Texaco Service Station	35 E Elgin Street (about Arizona Ave and Frye Road)		The building has tried to maintain its original façade.
Peacock Chinese Restaurant	North of Frye Rd on Arizona Ave – current location of part of Serranos		It was a place for Chinese food where minorities could eat.
Grocery Store	Hidalgo Street	Baltazar Rodriguez	
Cozy Cafe	~455 S Arizona Ave		Only white people could go into the restaurant but people of color were served food to go. Later they added pine tables and benches in the back for minority people to sit. They were open all night.

Southside Village Culture

Southside Village community was made up of business leaders, community leaders, and positive mentors who encouraged the virtues of honesty and hard work. Initially, many people came to Eleven Mile Corner to work on farms and were housed on the farms in tents. As people became more affluent, they were able to move to Chandler. People also saw business opportunities in Chandler to start businesses that supported the local farms. Some people also decided that working in construction, working on the San Marcos Hotel was a desirable employment choices or supporting the grounds maintenance.

Southside Village Churches

The churches were a considerable influence in the neighborhood and helped to build and strengthen the community. Many of the churches started with tents before building more permanent structures. The churches were pivotal spiritual and social entities. They were a source of strength for many people who suffered terrible hardships. The churches that were significant to the people of Southside Village are listed below, some with historical significance in the neighborhood.

Church	Address	Built
Light and Life Church Free Methodist Church	501 S. Arizona Ave	1928 from adobe
Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church	Original location: between 264 and 296 E. Saragosa St Current location: 475 S Colorado Street	Started as a Tent in 1938, was built out of adobe in 1941, was moved on a wagon in March 1949 and started Fellowship Hall in 1950. Completed hall in 1954
Pentecost Church of Jesus Christ	465 S Delaware Street	1936
Grace Memorial Church of God in Christ	233 Morelos Street	1930s
St. Mary's Church of Chandler	Galveston and Arizona Ave	The Parish was first founded in 1917 and priests traveled by train from Phoenix to the Cook family farm house to hold Mass in 1917. The Church was originally was built Circa 1939 at the southern corner of Chandler Blvd and Colorado Street and made of adobe. People in this neighborhood built this church. The St Mary elementary school later built at 300 E Chandler Blvd. In the early 1960s, the school was converted to Seton High School after the church and the elementary school were moved to 200-230 W Galveston St.

Southside Village Housing

Many people built their own homes by the sweat of their own labor. Some homes started as very simple and were later enhanced to include more rooms and more modern conveniences. Some people purchased homes from the Gila River Internment Camp after it was no longer

used to keep Japanese detainees. The houses from the internment camp were sold cheaply, but the cost of moving them to Southside Village was much more significant.

The neighborhood community was one that fostered cooperation and friendship. People looked out for each other's children and helped each other in time of need. There are numerous stories of people cooking for others during time of loss. There were stories of people being nursed to health by Dr. Buckle or Dr. Arbuckle. Emma Arbuckle did not have a doctor's license but was always ready to help those in need. She had a lot of home remedies and knew how to help others. There were stories from those growing up about neighbors who would report to parents when children misbehaved because they believed in the old adage of "it takes a village to raise a child." There were long-lasting close friendships between families from all ethnic backgrounds.

People and Their Contributions to Chandler

This neighborhood has fostered lawyers, authors, social activists, politicians, doctors, entrepreneurs, and celebrities, along with a host of good, industrious individuals. There were many firsts that originated in the neighborhood which propelled Chandler forward to be a better place to live for everyone. The conditions of segregation meant that people of color were not allowed in a variety of locations including restaurants, grocery stores, entertainment locations such movie theaters, roller-skating rinks, dance halls, and swimming pools. In some places even if they were allowed to go, the indignation was so extreme that it was not worth the effort. The community had to develop its own entertainment and in doing so, developed a sense of pride.

People of Mexican descent originally settled the neighborhood. Some of the first residents were Miguel Fernando and Rita Echevarria Benites. They relocated to the area in 1912. In 1928, the adobe Light and Life Church was built for the local LatinX people. It still stands today. The first and only LatinX mayor, Raul Navarrete, came from this neighborhood. There is also immense pride in those that helped build the adobe St. Mary's Catholic Church on Chandler Blvd, which is now located on Galveston.

The first documented African American to come to Chandler was N.J. Harris. He came to Chandler to be Dr. A.J. Chandler's chauffeur. After he retired, Mr. Harris converted the decommissioned first water tower in the area into the BBQ Pit/Harris' Barbeque which his daughter, Alberta Harris Jacko, ran as the longest running Black Female-owned business in Chandler. She also provided lodging for farm workers and food for those down on their luck. The BBQ Pit still stands.

Individual	Address	First Contribution
Miguel Fernando and Rita Echevarria Benites		First known LatinX family who moved to Chandler in 1912
Nathan Johnson Harris	143 E Saragosa 198 E Saragosa	First African American who moved to Chandler in 1919. He came to work as Dr. A. J. Chandler's chauffeur. When he retired, he acquired the decommissioned 100,000-gallon water tank and converted it to Harris' Barbeque Pit, attracting people from all over the East Valley.
Raul Navarrete		First and only LatinX mayor (1972-1976)
Pluarco Garcia		President of the Latin American Club, Chandler Chapter, petitioned for better sanitation in the neighborhood in 1934. He offered the City of Chandler labor for laying the sewage and water pipes. It was at this time this neighborhood had water and sewage.
Coy Payne	445 S Washington Street	First African American mayor in the state of Arizona (1990-1994)
Zora Folley	373 S Colorado Street	Heavyweight champion who fought Muhammed Ali First African American man to serve on City Council
Valerie Sturgeon Weaver	80 E Fairview Street	City of Chandler's first Tenant Specialist in the Housing Urban Redevelopment Dept, providing cooking and nutrition classes to single mothers
Carlanthe Turner	60 E Saragosa Street	She, along with Emma Arbuckle, successfully petitioned Governor Sidney P. Osborn to end segregated schools in Chandler, resulting in integrated schools in 1949
Emma Arbuckle	24 E. Saragosa Street	Community activist who brought the first public housing project to Chandler, inspecting tenants and mediating with the City of Chandler on the tenants' behalf. She was a friend to all, was known as Dr. Buckle for helping sick people in need, brought amity to people of all background. She, along with Carlanthe Turner, petitioned Governor Sidney P. Osborn to end segregation in schools. This resulted in Willie and Joella Arbuckle and Robert and Artie Mae Turner being able to attend Chandler High School. She successfully convinced young people and other residents of Southside Village to peacefully march through downtown Chandler after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Glen Lavon Woods	265 E Saragosa Street	First Black Council Coordinator for Maricopa County, bringing Head Start to Chandler First Black woman to sit on the Planning and Zoning Committee in Chandler In 1957 when the neighborhood was thick with flies from the neighboring cow pen, she wrote a persuasive letter to the Attorney General and the newspaper highlighting the health hazards that this condition posed and was able to influence the owner to move the cow pen.
Phillip Duenas	296 E Saragosa Street	Served on Chandler City Council 1972-1979
Eulogio "Lefty" Soto		First United States Hispanic Mail Carrier in Chandler, (circa 1943)
Phillip Westbrooks	401 S Washington Street	Served on Chandler City Council 1998-2006
Robert Turner and Willie Arbuckle	60 E Saragosa Street 24 E Saragosa Street	First African American Chandler High School graduates in 1951
Severiano Rodarte		First attorney to graduate from Seton High School and attend Loyola University and Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at ASU.
Jeanette Woods-Decker	265 E Saragosa Street	First Black Female Judge from Southside Village
Rev. Jose Gonzalez	501 W Arizona Ave	There was a problem in Chandler with hundreds of day laborers looking for work. Rev. Gonzalez opened a Day Labor Center at no cost to either the laborers or those looking to hire. It was the first of its kind and assisted about 200 people a day. It helped many people to get full-time employment. It operated from 2003-2021.
Debra Arbuckle-Childers		Published "My Personal Angel" in 2012 and "Sweet Inspirations Poetry from the Heart" in 2014

Many of these leaders' contribution was much more involved that what they did on the above list. People talked about how Billy Woods and Lefty Soto were so influential in their efforts of guiding the young people. Billy would teach the young men skills that would help them to get jobs. Billy would sometimes take the boys to the fields to work, paying them for their efforts. In doing so they learned the skills to work in the field, but they also learned the value of hard work. Billy would also spare with Zora Folley on Sunday. Children would complain that another neighbor would see them doing something they shouldn't be doing and report to their parents. All these factors helped this neighborhood be a real community, a village.

Architecturally Distinct

The original houses were built by the owners in the 1910s and 1920s, as well as later. The early homes definitely didn't have indoor plumbing and frequently had dirt floors. The larger part of the growth of this area took place between 1930s to 1950s. This was when Chandler was thriving and growing and needed more farm workers. However, as farm equipment became more automated in the late 1950s and 1960s, fewer workers were needed on the farms, so people turned to other jobs. Many of the older homes have maintained the Mid-century architecture, especially on Saragosa and Morelas Streets. Some of the homes in this area were buildings used in the Japanese internment camps. Most, if not all, of the internment camp housing has been replaced with newer and better built homes.

Summary

In summary, Southside Village has provided leadership and support to the successful history of the City of Chandler. This neighborhood has contributed to the development of Chandler and was essential to its growth. It is a distinctive community full of not only remarkable people and places, but has shown a culture that supports a very positive, warm, and inviting nature. The architecture in the neighborhood, obviously, displays elements of Chandler's heritage and are significant parts of Chandler's history. The neighborhood would like to be recognized for its important contributions and its distinctive nature that it would like to retain. The Southside Village should be designated a City of Chandler Historical Conservation District.