

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD OF THE CITY OF CHANDLER, ARIZONA, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025, HELD IN-PERSON AT CHANDLER CITY HALL, 175 S. ARIZONA AVE., CHANDLER, ARIZONA.

Board Present:

Julie Graham, Chair
Jennifer Hewitt, Vice Chair
Micah Miranda, Secretary
Lana Berry, Board Member
Anthony Deard, Board Member
Chris Dobson, Board Member
Ron Hardin, Board Member
Ryan Smith, Board Member
Marc Valenzuela, Board Member
Terri Kimble, Ex-Officio
John Pombier, Ex-Officio

Board Absent:

Neil Calfee, Board Member
Raj Chakraborty, Board Member
Jacob Knudsen, Board Member
Mike Mobley, Board Member
Rommie Mojahed, Board Member
Kari Zurn, Board Member

Others Present:

Kevin Hartke, Mayor
Councilwoman Jennifer Hawkins
Joe Abeita, Economic Development
Chandler Escalante, Economic Development
Chelsey Faggiano, Economic Development
Kimberly Janes, Economic Development
Edyie McCall, Economic Development
Caly Strickler, Economic Development
Michael Winer, Economic Development
Karla Moran, Salt River Project
Lisa Ciolli, First Things First
Dylan Frye, First Things First
Anthony Evans, ASU Seidman Research Institute

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Julie Graham called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Jennifer Hewitt made a motion to approve the minutes from Wednesday, September 10, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan Smith. Minutes approved unanimously.

3. Action Items
None

4. Briefing Items

A. Uptown Chandler Business District Signs Update

Mr. Michael Winer, Economic Development Project Manager for the City of Chandler, provided the board with an update on place branding initiatives for the Uptown Chandler business district.

He reminded the board of how the city and a group of local stakeholders worked together to develop the Uptown Chandler name, logo, tagline, and key messaging. He also discussed initial efforts to implement the brand, such as a t-shirt collaboration with State Forty Eight, window decals, bus shelter ads, and a brand launch video.

Mr. Winer continued with other initiatives, such as hanging banners on light poles and commissioning Arizona-based artists to install unique artwork on traffic control boxes. He then discussed the next phase of Uptown Chandler place branding, which is to install monument signs at eight locations within the area. He showed the proposed sign locations and said next steps include taking a purchase agreement to City Council for approval.

B. Economic Impact: Early Childhood Update

Ms. Lisa Ciolli, Engagement Coordinator, and Mr. Dylan Frye, Legislative Specialist, from First Things First (FTF) provided an update on how their organization supports early childhood education in Arizona.

They said FTF was created in 2006 funded by a voter-enacted tax on tobacco products. They then outlined the East Maricopa region's service territory:

- 58,033 children under age 6
- \$8.1M in local investments made
- 46 Chandler Centers engaged with the Quality First program
- \$3.1M distributed for Quality First Scholarships in FY25
- Nearly 1,000 early childhood professionals employed

They then discussed childcare challenges and impacts on working families and Arizona's economy. Mr. Frye concluded the presentation by sharing FTF's plan to reintroduce HB278, which would seek to stabilize funding for the organization by taxing vaping and nicotine products. It would offset budget shortfalls caused by a decline in traditional tobacco tax revenue.

C. SRP Power Grid Update

Ms. Karla Moran, Senior Manager of Economic Development for Salt River Project (SRP), provided an overview of SRP's power grid and system growth in Chandler.

Ms. Moran began by discussing how SRP was established, its status as a not-for-profit water and energy company, and who it serves:

- Delivers more than 325 billion gallons of water annually
- Provides power to more than 1 million customers in 15 cities
- Maintains one of Arizona's largest fiber-optic networks

She continued by providing an overview of SRP's electric distribution system, key terminology, and power demand tiers. She discussed large load requests and how they are managed by SRP: application process, load impact study and conceptual scope, contractual requirements, scope of construction and operations, and final conditions to receive service. She concluded by saying SRP is facing capacity challenges due to a recent influx of these large load requests from data center and other industrial users.

D. Economic Development Vitality Study Update

Dr. Anthony Evans, Center Director at Arizona State University's Seidman Research Institute, provided an update on the 20-year economic vitality study his team was commissioned to prepare for the city.

Dr. Evans began by outlining research/data analysis undertaken by his team and then shared preliminary findings, which include:

- Economic Performance:
 - Chandler has a strong employment base that is centered on advanced manufacturing and semiconductors, and per-capita and household incomes significantly exceed county averages.
 - The city has a high concentration of employers in the Arizona Commerce Authority's (ACA) targeted industries for the state, particularly technology and innovation.
 - Chandler Unified School District (CUSD) outperforms other school districts in the state academically and has innovative programs, such as a high school semiconductor course.
- Key Challenges:
 - Urban Planning: 94% of the city is developed, future growth requires increased densities, and current zoning rules favor single-family housing over "missing middle" options.
 - Finance: The general fund is heavily dependent on sales tax, posing a risk if population growth slows or state tax laws change.
 - Market Threats: High housing prices and regional/national competition for business activity and workers.
- Strategic Opportunities:
 - Development of Chandler Municipal Airport to support future economic growth.
 - Leverage Planned Area Development zoning to encourage higher-density projects.

- Further deepen the city's technology cluster and pursue Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

He ended his presentation with next steps, which includes identifying five big ideas with recommended actions to help maintain the city's economic vitality over the next 20 years.

5. Advisory Boardmember Comments

None

6. Next Meeting

Ms. Graham announced the next Economic Development Advisory Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2026. A calendar invite will be sent to all board members in advance.

7. Adjournment

Ms. Graham adjourned the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Graham, Chairwoman

Micah Miranda, Board Secretary