



## **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Economic Development Commission Meeting  
September 28, 2011, 7:30 a.m.  
Santan Conference Room – Municipal Services Building  
22358 S. Ellsworth Road, Queen Creek**

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**1. Call to order**

**Present:**

Lee Ester, Chairman	SRP
Carson Brown, Vice Chairman	W Holdings
Warde Nichols	ASU Polytechnic
Jason Barney	Land Developer
Marquis Scott	Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce
Gordon Mortensen	Queen Creek Resident
Roseann Sweet	Queen Creek Resident
Randy Parish	Queen Creek Resident
Tom Lindsey	Queen Creek Unified School District
Doreen Cott	Town of Queen Creek

**Absent:**

Julia Wheatley	Town Council
Craig Barnes	Town Council
John Schroeder	CGCC, Williams Campus
David Valenzuela	Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport
Steve Sossaman	Queen Creek Resident
Mark Schnepf	Schnepf Farms

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Chairman Ester.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comment.

**3. Items for Discussion and Possible Action**

**A. Consideration and possible approval of the August 24, 2011 minutes.**

Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve the minutes of August 24, 2011 as modified. Commissioner Lindsey seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Update on the Marketing Partnership Agreements and RFP for 17-acres in the Town Center.**

Economic Development Director Doreen Cott provided an overview of the presentations made to Council at the 9/21/11 Town Council Meeting.

The one-year Marketing Partnership Agreements will allow the Town to proactively promote events at Schnepf Farms, The Queen Creek Olive Mill and the Barney Family Sports Complex. In return each of these venues will work to promote Town events and/or events at Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre.

Partnering with marketing efforts will allow all entities to cross-promote events and activities, making it easy for tourists and locals to explore all opportunities unique to Queen Creek. Each entity will be required to proactively provide marketing materials and information to the Town as outlined in the proposed agreements. These three businesses were proposed for the marketing partnerships due to the number of visitors they attract to the community each year and the unique agritourism/agritainment and experiences they offer. The Town Council unanimously approved this item.

Ms. Cott also provided an overview on the RFP for the design, development and management of a mixed use entertainment district on 17-acres in the Town Center. The Town would like to take a leadership role in the public/private partnership of the development of the parcel and recognizes there is a void in entertainment opportunities available in Queen Creek. Town Council approved the RFP and authorized staff to issue the RFP.

Staff issued the RFP on September 26, 2011. The developer selection will be done in two phases. Phase I includes a prequalification screening of all submitted qualifications by a Town appointed Review Team. Phase I submittals are due to the Town by October 31, 2011. The screening process will identify the developers that best meet the needs of the Town. After a short list of developers is determined, the Town will ask the most qualified to submit a detailed project proposal. The Review Team will identify the top candidates and ask them to make a formal presentation to the Town at the regularly scheduled Council meeting, December 21, 2011. A final candidate will be chosen and it is the intent of the Town to offer the most qualified developer a 90-day exclusive negotiation period.

**C. Discussion and possible approval of the “scope of work” for an economic impact study for destination drivers in the Town.**

Over the past several months staff has received requests from the Town Council for a more detailed analysis on the economic impacts from events held at Horseshoe Park & Equestrian

Centre. In addition to events at HPEC, the Town is interested in understanding the fiscal and economic impact other visitor destinations are having in Queen Creek. Economic Development Director Cott provided copies of the scope of work submitted by ESI Corp. for the economic impact study and economic interactive impact model to measure the economic impact of visitor destinations in the community. Staff outlined the two phases for this study. Phase I includes conducting primary research through the use of a survey instrument. Up to 500 surveys will be administered by volunteers at each location during a scheduled event or activity and will be designed to be no more than 10-15 minutes long. Once the survey data is collected, ESI will provide the Town with a summary for each of the destinations. An economic impact analysis will be conducted for each of the five destinations, which will be based on data gathered from the surveys and data from the Town. The analysis will include direct and secondary impacts resulting from visitor spending.

An additional component of the scope of work includes an interactive model for future use by the Town to calculate the fiscal and economic impacts a particular event could have on the local economy based on projected attendance and other key variables.

Chairman Ester asked if the impact study will be done prior to the completion of the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Ms. Cott explained that the impact study, if approved, will be started in the next few weeks.

Commissioner Mortensen explained that the impact of the residents bringing family and friends to these local destinations is significant. Is there a way we can measure this impact?

Commissioner Barney stated the study will help us determine where we are, where we want to go and how to engage visitors even more when they visit the community. Commissioner Scott agreed and said that the study will help us understand what we don't have and what people would like to see.

Commissioner Ester asked if the Commission could provide input on the survey questions. Staff will provide the Commission an opportunity to review and provide comments on the survey instrument.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Lindsey, seconded by Commissioner Brown to recommend approval of the scope of work for the economic impact study. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **D. Presentation and discussion on real estate trends.**

Ryan Duncan with Nathan and Associates was introduced to the Commission.

Mr. Duncan provided an overview of single family residential permits issued in the Phoenix Metro region, both from a historical perspective and estimates for future residential growth.

Mr. Duncan explained that based on the research of Nathan and Associates it appears that approximately 7,000 single family permits will be issued in 2011. The region is seeing positive job growth this year and residential growth should return to normal by 2014-2015.

Phoenix's affordability has made it more attractive to people looking to relocate. Chandler and Gilbert are seeing land prices increase and additional higher density residential projects being developed.

With the foreclosures in Pinal County homes can be purchased in the \$25-\$30 per square foot range; this is less expensive than the price to build new homes. The West Valley is behind the East Valley as far as growth and growth projections.

Based on price and density issues growth may hopscotch Queen Creek and go to Santan Valley and then backfill later. Queen Creek will be asked to consider increasing densities in certain areas by residential builders.

### **Presentation and discussion on "crowd sourcing"**

Marnie Schubert, Chief Marketing Officer for the Town provided an overview of "crowd sourcing" and how the City of Mesa is currently utilizing this social media tool.

Ms. Schubert provided an example of the web page and how the tool works. Staff would like the Commission's input on implementing this idea on a smaller scale for Queen Creek.

Commissioner Sweet asked what the "accepted" tab looks like. Ms. Schubert explained that Mesa promotes an accomplishment when an idea is presented and accepted by the committee for implementation.

Commissioner Barney expressed a concern about the number of participants in Queen Creek and how it seems that the same people respond all the time. He asked how we can cast the net wider to truly capture ideas from all areas of the community.

Commissioner Mortensen asked how we will drive residents to the page. Ms. Schubert explained that the Town will do a full marketing campaign and will create on-going reminders.

Commissioner Mortensen asked what the cost of the program is. Ms. Schubert explained that the program is free but there will be time involved in getting the program implemented.

Ms. Cott explained that the tool will not only capture new ideas but will also allow an opportunity to educate residents on certain topics.

Ms. Schubert explained that the tool could be centralized through the Economic Development Commission, similar to how Mesa has coordinated their program using committees assigned to each village. The intent is to limit staff time.

Commissioner Scott asked if there is a blog component. Ms. Schubert responded that there is a comment section.

Commissioner Mortensen thought it was another opportunity to give residents a voice.  
Commissioner Barney agreed.

The Commission agreed that the idea was worth researching and asked staff to come back with information on the cost, staff time involved with implementing this type of social media tool.

**E. Summary of current events – Reports from Chair, Commission Members and Economic Development staff.**

Commission Scott commented that the Barney Family Sports Complex hosted a local business expo as part of the unveiling of the largest map in Arizona on September 22.

Commissioner Lindsey asked for the opportunity to provide an educational update at one of the future Commission meetings.

**4. Announcements**

None

**5. Adjournment**

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Motion carried unanimously.