

Quality of Life Data for SCCC Labor Shed Communities

Prepared by:



APPLIED ECONOMICS

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Introduction

This document includes a series of tables describing the quality of life attributes of the communities within close commuting distance of the Santa Cruz Commerce Center. These are the primary communities from which existing employers in the Ak-Chin Community and in Maricopa draw their workforce, including Chandler, Mesa, Gilbert and Tempe within Maricopa County, and Casa Grande and Maricopa within Pinal County. Since each city offers different features that may appeal to workers of different ages and interests, data is presented separately for each community.

Quality of life is a concern to businesses that need skilled labor because it often impacts their ability to recruit workers from outside the local area. Ease of commuting, a range of housing options, reasonable cost of living, personal security, education quality and recreational and cultural amenities can all be critical to attracting and retaining a high quality workforce.

Population by Age

The size and age structure of a community is important because it usually influences a variety of other factors such as housing, amenities, etc., that appeal to a certain demographic. Mesa is the largest among the surrounding communities with over 460,000 residents. Although a city of this size usually contains a well-rounded mix of younger and older residents, both Mesa and Casa Grande have higher median ages and a significantly larger share of residents over 64. Gilbert, Chandler and Maricopa are family-oriented communities with the highest share of children under 18 and adults in the 35 to 54 (parent) age cohorts, although Gilbert has a slightly younger median age. Tempe is the youngest community, dominated by the presence of ASU students, with a median age of 28 and over 44 percent of its population in the 18 to 34 year age range.

FIGURE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - AGE

	Casa Grande		Chandler		Gilbert		Maricopa		Mesa		Tempe	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population by Age	51,744	100.0%	255,073	100.0%	242,857	100.0%	48,374	100.0%	460,950	100.0%	172,021	100.0%
Under 18	14,178	27.4%	69,635	27.3%	77,957	32.1%	14,270	29.5%	113,394	24.6%	29,072	16.9%
18 to 34 years	9,831	19.0%	59,687	23.4%	53,186	21.9%	11,368	23.5%	111,550	24.2%	76,549	44.5%
35 to 54 years	12,315	23.8%	78,307	30.7%	73,829	30.4%	13,254	27.4%	113,855	24.7%	35,092	20.4%
55 to 64 years	6,106	11.8%	25,252	9.9%	20,400	8.4%	5,611	11.6%	51,626	11.2%	16,170	9.4%
Over 64 years	9,314	18.0%	22,191	8.7%	17,486	7.2%	3,870	8.0%	70,525	15.3%	15,138	8.8%
Median Age	38.0		34.6		32.6		33.8		35.8		28.0	

Source: Arizona Department of Administration, Employment and Population Statistics, July 1, 2015 Population Estimates; Census Bureau American Community Survey 2014-5 Year Data.

Population by Race

Diversity is an appealing factor, particularly for younger workers seeking a more urban environment. Tempe is the most racially diverse community in general, largely due to the university, although Casa Grande has a significantly larger Hispanic population than the other communities.

FIGURE 2
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - RACE

	Casa Grande		Chandler		Gilbert		Maricopa		Mesa		Tempe	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population by Race	51,744	100.0%	255,073	100.0%	242,857	100.0%	48,374	100.0%	460,950	100.0%	172,021	100.0%
White Alone	39,895	77.1%	197,171	77.3%	203,757	83.9%	36,764	76.0%	389,503	84.5%	127,468	74.1%
Black or African American	2,639	5.1%	13,009	5.1%	8,014	3.3%	5,176	10.7%	16,133	3.5%	8,945	5.2%
American Indian	1,759	3.4%	3,316	1.3%	2,186	0.9%	919	1.9%	10,141	2.2%	4,645	2.7%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,501	2.9%	23,212	9.1%	15,543	6.4%	1,838	3.8%	10,602	2.3%	12,386	7.2%
Other Race or Multiple Races	5,951	11.5%	18,365	7.2%	13,357	5.5%	3,676	7.6%	34,571	7.5%	18,578	10.8%
Hispanic Origin	19,870	38.4%	60,197	23.6%	37,886	15.6%	10,255	21.2%	123,535	26.8%	38,189	22.2%

Source: Arizona Department of Administration, Employment and Population Statistics, July 1, 2015 Population Estimates; Census Bureau American Community Survey 2014-5 Year Data.

Household Structure

Family and household structure is a strong indicator of the social makeup of a community and the potential fit for different types of workers. Families are defined as related individuals living together, whereas non-family households include singles living alone or multiple un-related individuals living together. Gilbert and Maricopa have the highest share of married couple households and the highest share of married households with children. Over 60 percent of all households in Gilbert and Maricopa are married, whereas about half of households in Casa Grande and Mesa are married households. Casa Grande, Tempe and Mesa have a slightly higher share of single parent households at 18 to 20 percent; and Casa Grande and Chandler have a higher share of single person households at about one quarter of total households. Mesa also has an above average share of single-person households, many of them retirees. Tempe has a different household structure all together with over half of households made up of singles or un-related individuals, and only 11 percent of households married with children.

**FIGURE 3
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURE**

	Casa Grande		Chandler		Gilbert		Maricopa		Mesa		Tempe	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Households	17,672	100%	86,853	100%	71,614	100%	14,481	100%	167,609	100%	63,523	100%
Married-couple family	9,002	51%	46,074	53%	44,822	63%	8,895	61%	78,316	47%	19,600	31%
With children under 18	3,110	18%	22,876	26%	24,643	34%	4,455	31%	29,794	18%	7,286	11%
No Children under 18	5,892	33%	23,198	27%	20,179	28%	4,440	31%	48,522	29%	12,314	19%
Single parent household	3,588	20%	14,623	17%	10,906	15%	2,138	15%	30,833	18%	11,195	18%
With children under 18	2,240	13%	8,616	10%	6,618	9%	1,254	9%	17,681	11%	9,095	14%
No Children under 18	1,348	8%	6,007	7%	4,288	6%	884	6%	13,152	8%	2,100	3%
Non-family households	5,082	29%	26,156	30%	15,886	22%	3,448	24%	58,460	35%	32,728	52%
Single person households	4,304	24%	20,088	23%	11,549	16%	2,531	17%	46,651	28%	21,110	33%
Average household size	2.83		2.82		3.11		3.13		2.68		2.47	

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey 2014-5 Year Data.

Housing

Housing is another important consideration for employees in terms of both prices and type of housing available in the community. Maricopa has the highest share of homeowners versus renters at 78 percent, and the highest share of single family housing at 97 percent. Gilbert is also more predominately single family housing at 86 percent of total inventory, and about 71 percent of households are homeowners rather than renters. Mesa, Chandler and Casa Grande offer a mix of single and multi-family housing, with about 30 to 40 percent of residents renting. Tempe is significantly different than the other communities with an almost equal inventory of single and multi-family housing and about 57 percent of all households renting their home.

Population churn is an interesting measure of the stability and character of a community. Although the recession reduced mobility rates nationwide, the improved economy has allowed people to buy new homes or relocate for employment and other reasons. Healthy growing communities tend to have a larger influx of in-migrants. The share of newcomers shown in Figure 4 is the percent of households that lived in a different house last year. Tempe has a higher level of population churn due to the university and the higher share of renters, with about a third of the population living in a different home than in the previous year. The rest of the communities are all relatively similar, with about 18 to 20 percent of residents having moved in the last year. Maricopa falls slightly below that with 16 percent newcomers.

Housing prices are significantly lower in Maricopa and Casa Grande and highest in Chandler and Gilbert. The Housing Affordability Index measures whether or not a typical household in each community earns enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on an average priced home. An index of less than 100 indicates that the typical household cannot afford an average priced home in that community. An index of more than 100 indicates that a household earning the

median income has more than enough to qualify for a mortgage on an average-priced home. All of the communities except Tempe offer housing that is affordable based on average income levels. Maricopa has the most affordable housing by a significant margin based on local prices and income levels. Casa Grande, Chandler and Gilbert offer housing that is affordable for the types of households in those communities, while Mesa is slightly less affordable due to lower average household incomes.

**FIGURE 4
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

	Casa Grande		Chandler		Gilbert		Maricopa		Mesa		Tempe	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Households	17,672		86,853		71,614		14,481		167,609		63,523	
Own	11,911	67%	54,196	62%	51,061	71%	11,295	78%	101,403	61%	27,061	43%
Rent	5,761	33%	32,657	38%	20,553	29%	3,186	22%	66,206	40%	36,462	57%
Newcomers (less than 1 year)	3,110	18%	16,763	19%	13,320	19%	2,245	16%	32,684	20%	20,073	32%
Housing Inventory												
Single family	14,619	67%	67,722	74%	66,459	86%	17,391	97%	106,066	53%	31,023	43%
Townhome and Duplex	676	3%	4,023	4%	2,229	3%	276	2%	13,925	7%	6,093	9%
Multi-family	2,918	13%	17,995	20%	8,141	11%	70	0%	51,503	26%	32,522	45%
Mobile home	3,549	16%	1,858	2%	409	1%	276	2%	28,664	14%	1,970	3%
Average Home Price	\$161,722		\$290,000		\$284,000		\$158,000		\$227,900		\$267,500	
Housing Affordability Index*	146		132		152		218		112		95	

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey 2014-5 Year Data; Homesnap Real Estate Statistics, August 2016; Swee Ng (realtor), Phoenix East Valley Housing Market Trends Report, June 2016.

* Based on ratio of qualifying income for average priced home with a 20% down payment and 4.25% interest rate versus average household income.

Secondary Education

Education quality is another important factor for workers with children. Most Arizona communities offer a variety of district, charter and private school options. Access to high quality local schools is essential to attracting and retaining a quality work force. Figure 5 includes class sizes, graduation rates, share of students enrolling in higher education and ranked schools.

Average class sizes tend to be lower in Gilbert Schools at only 16, versus 18 to 20 in most other locations, which is comparable to the state average. Tempe Union and Maricopa Unified have larger average class sizes at about 22 students. Graduation rates are highest in the Chandler, Higley and Gilbert districts, at 89 to 93 percent, and well above the state average of 76 percent. These districts also have a higher share of students enrolling in post-secondary education within 16 months of graduation, although none of the districts in the region are significantly below average in this measure.

Another way to assess school quality compared to other schools across the country is to look at rankings. U.S. News and World report provides an annual ranking of best high schools in the country based on how well they prepare students for college. The rankings include both district schools and charter schools. Arizona College Prep in Chandler and Gilbert Classical Academy

both ranked in the top 10 for Arizona. The Chandler Unified District has 3 schools in the top 25 in Arizona, and Gilbert and Mesa Unified each have one. In addition, Tempe and Mesa have the highest concentrations of postsecondary education institutions with 10 two and four-year colleges in Tempe and nine in Mesa.

**FIGURE 5
SECONDARY EDUCATION QUALITY**

District	Class Size	Graduation Rate	% Graduates Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education	U.S. News and World Report Best High Schools
Casa Grande Unified High School District	20.4	71%	66%	Casa Verde HS
Florence Unified School District	18.7	81%	57%	Florence HS; Poston Butte HS
Maricopa Unified School District	21.8	71%	59%	
Chandler Unified School District	18.9	92%	68%	AZ College Prep- Erie Campus*; Hamilton HS; Basha HS; Chandler HS; Perry HS; BASIS Chandler*; Great Hearts-Chandler Prep*; Paragon Science Academy*
Gilbert Unified School District	16.1	89%	67%	Gilbert Classical Academy; Campo Verde HS; Highland HS; Gilbert Early College*
Higley Unified School District	19.8	93%	60%	Higley HS; Williams Field HS
Mesa Unified School District	19.1	76%	62%	Mesa HS; Mountain View HS; Red Mountain HS; Dobson HS; Skyline HS; AZ Agribusiness & Equine Center Red-M*; Great Hearts-Mesa Prep.*
Tempe Union High School District	22.0	81%	69%	Desert Vista HS; McClintock HS; Tempe HS; James Madison Prep; Grand Canyon College Prep*; New School for the Arts*; Tempe Prep.*
Queen Creek Unified School District	20.6	89%	59%	Queen Creek HS
State Average	18.6	76%	58%	

Source: AZ Office of the Auditor General, "Arizona School District Spending - Fiscal Year 2015"; AZ Department of Education, "High School Graduates College Enrollment, State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Postsecondary Indicator (c) (11)", 2010-2011; US News and World Report, "2016 Best High Schools Rankings".

* Denotes non-district charter school.

Crime Rates

A sense of physical security affects both residents and businesses. All of the communities, except for Tempe and Casa Grande, are below the metro area average in terms of crime rates. Maricopa and Gilbert have the lowest overall crime rates at less than half the metro area average. Chandler is also well below average, while Mesa is about the same as the metro area property average, but with a significantly higher rate of violent crime.

**FIGURE 6
CRIME RATES**

	Rate per 100,000 Population		
	Violent	Property	Total
Metro Phoenix Total	392	2,906	3,298
Casa Grande	478	3,575	4,053
Chandler	185	2,236	2,421
Gilbert	89	1,475	1,564
Maricopa	172	1,240	1,412
Mesa	459	2,800	3,259
Tempe	471	4,737	5,208

Source: FBI 2014 Uniform Crime Report; Arizona Department of Public Safety, Crime in Arizona 2015.

Attractions and Events

The communities within the Santa Cruz Commerce Center primary laborshed offer a variety of recreational and cultural amenities, many of which attract visitors as well as residents. These include museums and historical sites, performance venues, recreational facilities and attractions, and a variety of annual events.

**FIGURE 7
AREA ATTRACTIONS AND EVENTS**

Casa Grande	Chandler	Gilbert	Maricopa/Ak-Chin	Mesa	Tempe
Museums & Historical Sites					
Casa Grande Valley Historical Museum	Huhugam Heritage Center	Gilbert Historical Museum	Dwarf Car Museum	AZ Museum of Natural History	AZ Heritage Center
Casa Grande Art Museum	AZ Railway Museum	Gilbert 911 Memorial	Him-Dak Eco-Museum	AZ Museum for Youth	Salt River Project Museum
Casa Grande Ruins National Monument	Chandler Museum		California Zephyr Silver Horizon	Mesa Historical Museum	Tempe History Museum
Heritage Hall Museum				Commemorative Air Force Aviation Museum	ASU Art Museum, Lunar Exploration Museum & Gallery of Scientific Exploration
				IDEA Museum	Hall of Flame Fire Museum
Performance Venues					
Paramount Theatre	Chandler Center for the Arts	Higley Center for the Performing Arts	Maricopa Community Theatre	Mesa Amphitheatre	Tempe Center for the Arts
	Wild Horse Pass Festival Park & Ovations Showroom	Hale Centre Theatre		Mesa Arts Center	Gammage Auditorium
		Tuscany Theatre		Barleens Arizona Opry Dinner Show	Marquee Theater
					Tempe Improv Childsplay
Recreational Facilities					
Faldo Golf Academy	Rawhide Western Town & Events Center	Gilbert Riparian Preserve & Observatory	Ak-Chin Southern Dunes & The Duke Golf Courses	Hohokam Park (Oakland A's)	Tempe Town Lake
Grande Sports World	Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park	Greenfield Lakes & Kokopelli Golf Courses	Copper Sky Recreational Complex	Sloan Park (Chicago Cubs)	ASU Sun Devil Stadium & Wells Fargo Arena
	Bear Creek Golf Complex	Big League Dream Complex	Pacana Park	Dobson Ranch Golf Course	Diablo Stadium (LA Angels)
	Consolidated Canal Multi-Use Trail	Consolidated Canal Multi-Use Trail	UltraStar Multi-tainment Center	Consolidated Canal Multi-Use Trail	ASU Marston Exploration Theater (3-D planetarium)
		Cosmo Dog Park	Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino	Park of the Canals	ASU Karsten Golf Course
		Water Tower Plaza			Papago Park Kiwanis Park
Events					
AZ Open Chili Championship	Tumbleweed Festival & Parade of Lights	Art Walk & Downtown Concert Series	Stagecoach Days	Phoenix Marathon	IRONMAN Arizona
Art in the Alley	Ostrich Festival	Global Village Festival	Fishing Derby	Tough Mudder	Tour de Fat
Cactus Fly-In	Jazz Festival	Riparian After Dark	Mud Run	El Tour de Mesa	Fall Festival of the Arts
Cowboy & Indian Days	Cinco de Mayo Chihuahua Races	KA-POW! Superhero Adventure Run	Concert Series in the Park	AZ Celebration of Freedom	Annual Healing Field
Viva Casa Grande	Indian Art Market	Outdoors Expo	Salsa Festival	Festival Forest	AZ Dragon Boat Festival
Party in the Park Concert Series	Chuckwagon Cook-Off	Gilbert Days Events & Rodeo	Mysterious Mansion Mayhem	Celebrate Mesa	PF Chang's Rock N' Roll Marathon
Trunk'R Treat & Family Fright Night	Chandler Golf Challenge		Merry Copa Holiday Festival	Mesa Adventure Challenge	Oktoberfest
Desert Grand Triathlon & Duathlon	Multicultural Festival		Copa Color Fun Run and Food Truck Festival	Copperstate Fly-In	Fantasy of Lights Parade
Downtown Winter Wonderland & Electric Light Parade	Great American BBQ & Beer Festival		Pecan Pride Celebration	Mesa Music Festival	Spring Festival of the Arts
	Downtown Block Party & Art Walk		Maricopa Music Circle Winter Serenade & Spring Musicale	Merry Main Street	

Source: Various community websites, 2016.