

CHAPTER 10

CHARACTER AREAS



Heritage District

Vision Statement

Gilbert desires to create and protect unique areas of Town by identifying and providing guidance through the use of Character Areas and guidelines.



Morrison Ranch



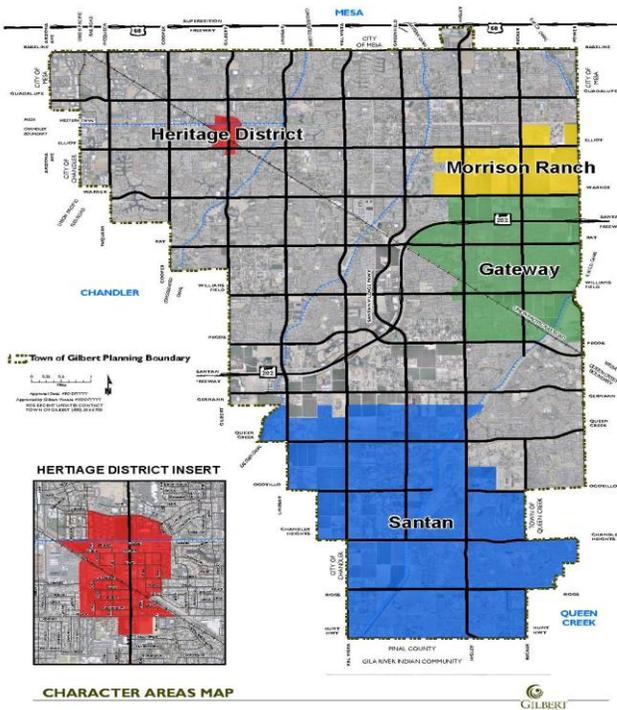
INTRODUCTION

Character Areas are specific geographic areas that possess unique or special characteristics or have the potential to evolve into a unique area, unlike any other in the Town. The areas may also have certain development issues which make the area unique, for example, ASU Polytechnic and the original downtown area.

The following Character Areas are intended to define unique areas of the Gilbert Planning Area. Each of the following Character Areas has been previously adopted as a General Plan Amendment or specific area plan. The areas were done separately from each other and contain different goals and policies. Additionally, since these were not created as one document, the formatting and layout for each Area is slightly different.

Guidelines for each Character Area are specific to each area. These do not replace the land use policies or map designations in other parts of the General Plan, but merely provide definition and detail.

A larger version of the Character Areas Map is located in the exhibits.



- Heritage District Character Area
- Gateway Character Area
- Morrison Ranch Character Area
- Santan Character Area



CHARACTER AREAS

10.1 Heritage District

The Gilbert Heritage District is the historic and symbolic center of the community. It offers opportunity for the adaptation of significant properties to uses that will have a positive impact on the adjacent residential and commercial sectors. By maintaining appropriate uses, design and architecture in the District, the area will remain the community's link with the past and future.

Guided by the Redevelopment Plan and the Heritage District Design Guidelines, development and reinvestment is highly encouraged in the Heritage District in order to maximize the economic potential of properties, rehabilitate substandard buildings, eliminate blighting influences, improve parking, beautify streetscapes and allow the assembly of land for new development. As new construction and rehabilitation activities occur, the Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines will serve as a catalyst for the improvement of other properties. Together, this will help to attract more businesses and customers, thereby increasing the economic vitality of the area. Both documents should be referenced for comprehensive information regarding the Heritage District Character Area.

The Gilbert Redevelopment Plan was first adopted in 1991 and updated in 2001 and 2008. The plan builds upon the foundation that was established during the original visioning process and provides new insights that will enhance the initial goals and guidelines. Through the coordinated efforts of both the public and private sectors, the continued redevelopment of the Heritage District will be a major contributing factor in Gilbert's continuing quest to be a *Community of Excellence*.

The Heritage District Design Guidelines were adopted in 2010. The purpose of the guidelines is to:

- Communicate to the development community in advance the design expectations for projects within Gilbert's Heritage District to facilitate the review process. Heritage District projects are those proposed within the Heritage Village Center, Single and Multi-Family Residential and Public Facility/Institutional zoning districts.
- Facilitate the fair and consistent application of design objectives.

- Protect investment in the community by encouraging consistently high quality development.
- Foster a sense of place and pride in visiting, working and living in the district.
- Facilitate safe, comfortable, functional and attractive development.
- Encourage projects that are adaptable to the desert environment.
- Provide residents with a connection to the community's roots and history.
- Encourage development of shaded outdoor spaces for the use and benefit of residents, employees and visitors.
- Encourage sustainable site and building design to reduce negative impacts and conserve energy.

Heritage District Character Area Goals

- Promote quality urban design with emphasis on small town historical character.
- Improve the economic viability of downtown.
- Promote reinvestment and attract new development.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation to ensure a pedestrian friendly and safe environment.
- Promote downtown as the symbolic and cultural center of the Community.

Heritage District Boundary

The district contains approximately 0.3 square miles (192 acres) and includes the original town site core, the commercial areas on both sides of Gilbert Road from Juniper Avenue to 600 feet south of Elliot Road and the residential neighborhoods one quarter mile east and west of Gilbert Road between the Western Canal and Elliot Road.

The northern boundary is Juniper Avenue, extending approximately 1,000 feet east and west of Gilbert Road. The southern boundary follows an imaginary line south of the Gilbert Historical Society facility, 600 feet south of Elliot Road. The eastern boundary follows a north-south alignment at approximately 250 feet east of Palm Street, shifts west along Cullumber Avenue and then south along the east side of Palm Street. The remainder of the east boundary lies along the Railroad tracks to Elliot Road and then shifts 700 feet to the west. Finally, the district boundary turns south to meet the southern boundary. The western boundary aligns with Catalina Road from Elliot Road north to the RR tracks, west 1,400 feet to the Western Canal and then north to Juniper Avenue.