



City of Apache Junction
Development Services Department




**CITY COUNCIL
STAFF MEMORANDUM**

DATE: April 10, 2017

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Bryant Powell, City Manager
Matt Busby, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Larry Kirch, Director of Development Services 

SUBJECT: Presentation and Discussion on the city and Arizona State University's
"Project Cities" program.

BACKGROUND:

Throughout the nation, local governments are partnering with local universities to undertake studies and projects for the benefit of the communities. Six years ago, the University of Oregon, Eugene created a city/university program called Sustainable City Year (SCY) to assist communities with projects they wanted completed. The program is very competitive and the university invites communities via an RFP process. The program has expanded across the nation to include 27 universities of all sizes and Arizona State University (ASU) has also launched a similar program called "Project Cities." The University of Arizona (UofA) is also exploring creating a program. Universities have created an umbrella organization called EPIC-N (Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities - Network).

As you recall, the City of Apache Junction worked with Arizona State University's School of Urban Planning and Geographical Sciences to complete a three part visioning and planning document as part of the Master's Program class known as the Capstone Class. The city also is in the process of completing a Solid Waste "White Paper" that examines our current approach to solid waste and recycling and presents information on the Town of Queen Creek, the City of Buckeye and the Town of Fountain Hills. These two project examples were completed in an informal agreement with the university and the professors. The city of Apache Junction, because of our involvement in the Capstone

class and the Solid Waste report were asked to be the pilot city for the Project Cities program.

The Project Cities program is a little more formal with the execution of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and a project agreement for each project that would have a more detailed scope of services that a professor and a city department head would sign that includes a project statement, tasks and deliverables. There is a small cost for each project that is intended to off-set some student costs for travel, meals, etc. The city, since we are assisting in piloting the program is only being asked for a minimal financial commitment for each project. The arrangement with ASU is expected to last three or four semesters (two years). As ASU expands the Project Cities program in the future to other communities, ASU will be recovering more costs and provide some stipends to the professor.

DISCUSSION:

With hundreds of projects being completed around the country each year through 27 universities as examples, the ASU Project Cities program is a mutually beneficial arrangement between the city and ASU to assist the city with a number of important community projects and research activities. The program is specifically designed to assist the city with projects that are our priority and that offer the students a realistic learning opportunity.



Lawrence Kirch, AICP
Director of Development Services