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# Economic Reporter

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY THE CITY OF MESA OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THIRD QUARTER 2012

## Wilkes University to open in Mesa's Center for Higher Education

Mesa City Council, at its July 9 meeting, approved and authorized City Manager Chris Brady to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to bring Wilkes University, based in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and its undergraduate and graduate programs to downtown Mesa. The goal of the MOU is to negotiate a five-year lease to have Wilkes University take occupancy in the Mesa Center for Higher Education no later than the fall of 2013. Wilkes is the fourth institution of higher learning in 2012 to announce plans to locate in Mesa.

“Mesa is very fortunate to add Wilkes to our growing list of higher education choices in the City. The university has an outstanding reputation and we are pleased they will be offering a variety of academic programs for residents of Mesa and the entire Valley,” Mayor Scott Smith said.

Wilkes University proposes to offer master's degrees in business administration, engineering management, creative writing, teaching English as a second language and classroom technology beginning in January 2013 at a temporary location still to be identified. The university is proposing to offer bachelor's degrees in engineering, accounting, and entrepreneurship, plus a master's degree in mechanical engineering beginning in the fall of 2013.

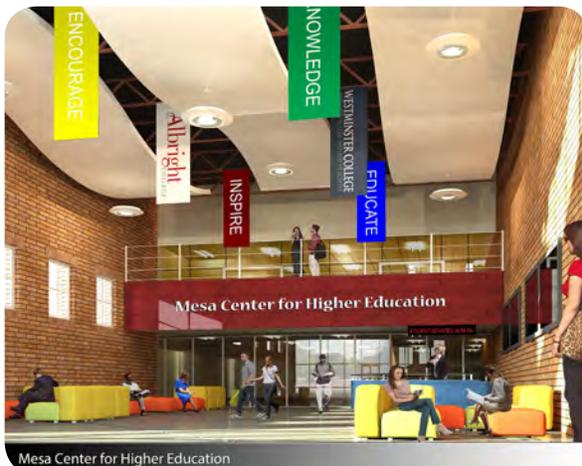
“We are excited to partner with the City of Mesa and be part

of this vibrant community,” Wilkes University President Patrick F. Leahy said. “Wilkes is committed to academic excellence and personalized attention, values that have produced student success for nearly 80 years.”

Founded in 1933, Wilkes University is consistently named one of the nation's best universities by U.S. News and World Report while The Princeton Review ranked Wilkes on its “Best Northeastern Colleges” list.

The Mesa Center for Higher Education, 245 W. 2nd St., will be a 53,000 sq. ft. shared academic space. Wilkes University joins Westminster College and Albright College in announcing plans to locate branch campuses there.

For more information about Wilkes University, visit [www.wilkes.edu](http://www.wilkes.edu).



Mesa Center for Higher Education

## Lincoln Property signs 164,000 SF in leases at Broadway 101 Commerce

Lincoln Property Company signed a new lease with PODS, an international moving and storage services company, for 67,949 sq. ft., and with Mitel Networks, a global provider of business communications and collaboration software and services, for 38,157 sq. ft. These new tenants will be occupying the only remaining shell distribution building in the project located at 2160 W. Broadway Road in Mesa. Lincoln also renewed Accu-Tech and Superior Pool Products for a total of 57,880 sq. ft.

“Lincoln Property Company and Cassidy Turley have successfully leased all of the distribution space at this point,” said Cooper Sutherland, Vice President of Real Estate for Lincoln Property Company, Desert West Region. “These international tenants further strengthen the overall quality of the property.”

“We are pleased that this large commercial space in Mesa has been leased by companies that are growing and adding jobs,” said Mesa Economic Development Director, Bill Jabjiniak. “This is evidence that the economy is continuing to get stronger and we know that interest in west Mesa will continue to develop due to its strategic location.”

For more information, visit [www.lpcphx.com](http://www.lpcphx.com).

## Economic Development Advisory Board

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**William Jabjiniak, Economic  
Development Department  
Director**

*The Economic Development  
Advisory Board meets the first  
Tuesday of every month at 7:30  
am in the Lower Level Council  
Chambers (57 East First  
Street). All meetings are open  
to the public.*



## The Quick Jab *by Bill Jabjiniak*

### New Downtown developments increase activation

Mesa has all the right ingredients to transition a good downtown into a great downtown: pedestrian-oriented streets; shaded walkways; specialty shops; patio dining; state-of-the-art cultural amenities; quality businesses; historic neighborhoods; adult and K-12 education; churches; and public gathering spaces. Recent announcements mark the next phase of downtown development in Mesa: activation. The following projects provide a glimpse of the activity Downtown Mesa will experience in the near future.

#### Metro breaks ground on rail extension

Metro broke ground May 30, 2012 on a \$200 million light rail extension into downtown Mesa as the project's backers predicted it will transform the emerging area into a thriving urban core. The new 3.1-mile segment will bring Metro service to Mesa Drive and add four stations. The service should add about 10,000 passengers a day to the 42,000 who currently use it.

Construction has just begun in earnest and the extension is set to open in the fall of 2015, about 4-6 months earlier than original estimates.

This transit and economic development project creates unique opportunities for transit-oriented development and redevelopment along the line. Access to transportation is a powerful asset and attractive to existing and prospective employers. The light rail line extension through downtown played an important role in attracting higher education institutions to Mesa and will spur additional projects.

#### Senior housing receives approval

In early June 2012, Mesa Housing Associates, LLC's proposed five-story, 81-unit senior housing project at 25 W. 1st Avenue received an Arizona Department of Housing tax credit allocation and a development agreement approval from the City of Mesa City Council. Construction must begin by November 1 and completion should occur in the fall of 2013.



#### City transforms vacant building for higher education space

The Mesa Center for Higher Education (MCHE) will be located at 245 W. 2nd Street. The 53,000 sq. ft. building is being transformed into a shared academic space with three new colleges and universities expanding into Mesa. Revitalization plans for the building are currently underway and construction is anticipated to be completed by July 2013.

Anchor tenants include Westminster College, based in Fulton, Missouri; Albright College, in Reading, Pennsylvania; and Wilkes University, from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The City of Mesa will lease the facility to the individual colleges with classes beginning with the fall 2013 semester. Albright will open a first location in the Fiesta District to begin classes as early as fall 2012.

Benedictine University is opening a recruiting office in August 2012 in Downtown Mesa at 51 E. Main Street and its campus in a separate building at 225 E. Main Street in fall of 2013.

The October 2012 newsletter will feature profiles of each of the new colleges expanding to Mesa.

For further information:

[www.valleymetro.org/metrolightrail](http://www.valleymetro.org/metrolightrail) | [www.albright.edu](http://www.albright.edu) | [www.westminster-mo.edu](http://www.westminster-mo.edu)

## FlexPrint, Inc. expands to new headquarters in Mesa



FlexPrint, Inc., ([www.FlexPrintInc.com](http://www.FlexPrintInc.com)), the leading national provider of managed print solutions and document management, will expand its headquarters to a new facility in Mesa, Arizona. The company has purchased a 40,000 sq. ft. building in the Red Mountain Business Center to house operations including service and support, administration, sales and marketing, information technology, and executive teams. FlexPrint is anticipated to move into the new facility in the fourth quarter of 2012.

“I want to thank our hard working and dedicated employees for fueling our dynamic growth. The expansion into this new headquarters will improve internal communications and help us deliver exceptional customer service to our growing national customer base,” said Frank Gaspari, CEO of FlexPrint, Inc.

The new space is designed to streamline communication and integration of services among various departments. The relocation coincides with the firm’s recent opening of a new regional office in Chicago, IL, and the expansion of additional managed technology services.

“We are pleased that FlexPrint is expanding their corporate headquarters in the Valley,” Mesa Mayor Scott Smith said. “FlexPrint’s managed technology solutions are provided nationally, and we are proud that they will continue to call Arizona home.”

## EVIT helps students achieve dreams and scholarships

Sam White, a student at the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) and Dobson High School, took top honors this spring -- and won an \$80,000 scholarship – in a Careers in Culinary Arts Program competition. During the event, the 18-year-old White wowed judges with a



classic French dish called chicken chasseur and dessert crepes with pastry creme and chocolate.

White’s scholarship allowed him to select from schools all over the country and he will attend the Arts Institute of Phoenix next school year.

Five other students from EVIT won scholarships at the annual Careers in Culinary Arts Program competition in March 2012:

- Anne Chung, Corona del Sol High School in Tempe, \$2,000 scholarship to college of her choice.
- Courtney Clardy, home-schooled, free tuition to the summer explorer program at Le Cordon Bleu and a junior membership to the American Culinary Federation.
- Chelsey Hacker, Apache Junction High School, \$5,000 scholarship to Scottsdale Community College.
- Brandy Pennick, Apache Junction High School, \$21,645 scholarship to Art Institute of Las Vegas.
- Calena Srutowski, home-schooled, \$14,000 scholarship to Arizona Culinary Institute.



“EVIT, along with other academic partners, provides relevant curriculum that prepares students and creates greater opportunity for students. EVIT has been instrumental in responding to employers’ needs and developing programs that build a stronger, more qualified pipeline for the workforce of the future,” said Bill Jabjiniak, City of Mesa Economic Development Director.

EVIT is Arizona’s first Joint Technological Education District (JTED). All programs at EVIT are occupation-specific and are taught by professionals with industry experience using state-of-the-art equipment. About 200 students are enrolled in the culinary arts and commercial baking programs according to program director Tricia Guerrero.

Visit EVIT at [www.evit.com](http://www.evit.com).

## Mesa airports soar to new heights

### Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (Gateway) is navigating a course toward phenomenal growth due to commercial airlines' success and new businesses landing at the airport.

Gateway served more than 950,000 passengers last year, an increase of 19% over 2010. First quarter numbers for 2012 were 50% above 2011.



Projections indicate that Allegiant's record-setting profitability and addition of new destinations will continue along with growth for Spirit Airlines, the airport's second carrier that began service in February to Las Vegas, then added service in March to Dallas, Denver, and Ft. Lauderdale. Airport officials are preparing to serve 1.3 million passengers during calendar year 2012.

Able Engineering & Component Services' new 181,000 sq. ft. plant will also be completed this calendar year and will house its innovative services to the aviation industry and 320 highly-paid employees - a workforce projected to reach 500 by 2015.

In June, results of the Gateway 2030 study were unveiled and focused on necessary airfield improvements, roads, and utilities. While the 2030 plans anticipate a full build-out at 20 million passengers annually and 60 gates, Phase I may be necessary in the next 5-7 years. Phase I completion would provide 14 gates and handle 3 million passengers annually.

Over the coming months, city and airport staff will work to integrate the needs into the future Capital Improvements Programs of both the City and the Airport. The third passenger terminal expansion will occur within three years, examining the feasibility of enlarging the air-traffic control tower, creation of more parking spaces and adding facilities to enhance the screening of baggage.

The airport's accomplishments were hailed in May by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) when the agency named Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport the 2012 Airport of the Year.

For more information, visit [www.phxmesagateway.org](http://www.phxmesagateway.org).



PhxMesa **Gateway** Airport

### Falcon Field Airport (FFZ)

More than \$4 million in capital investment at Mesa's Falcon Field this year and next will improve safety and modernize the facility to better serve customers and attract new business.



Mesa - Falcon Field Airport

A \$1.65 million construction project, funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the City of Mesa, and ADOT, was completed in May to reconfigure pavement on Taxiway B and more clearly alert users that they are about to enter a runway.

Reconstruction of an aircraft parking ramp is planned for this summer. The \$1.8 million project is funded by ADOT (90 percent) and the City (10 percent) and includes reconstruction of asphalt, realignment/modifications to aircraft tie-downs, and upgrading pavement strength to better accommodate corporate aircraft.

A \$100,000 pavement preservation project was completed in June on two aircraft parking ramps and a taxiway including pavement crack sealing, seal coating and re-stripping.

ADOT will fund and perform a pavement preservation project for Falcon Field's main runway. The City of Mesa will contribute \$70,000, or 10 percent of the estimated project cost. Approval of the joint project agreement will be considered by the City Council in July and work could be completed this summer.

The Airport's Planned Area Development Design Standards approved in 2011 include themed landscaping, enhanced building design, high-quality building materials, and specialty lighting. In the future, as airport facilities are improved and property leases are renewed, the standards will continue to be implemented to enhance the airport's appearance and attract new business. Conceptual planning began this year and will continue in 2012-2013 for upgrades to the airport's historic zone.

For information, visit [www.mesaaz.gov/falcon\\_field](http://www.mesaaz.gov/falcon_field).



## Mesa Mayor Scott Smith elected U.S. Conference of Mayors Vice President



Mesa Mayor Scott Smith was unanimously elected Vice President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He ascended to the position June 16, 2012 during the Conference's 80th annual meeting in Orlando. Smith served as 2nd Vice President last year and will become the organization's president in 2013, the first Arizona mayor to serve as president.

Having a representative from Arizona as Vice President gives Arizona an added voice on the national level and a direct connection to the federal government on crucial issues such as job creation, debt reduction and transportation spending.

[www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org).

## Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau launches 100 days of summer giveaways



The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau kicked off their 100 Days of Summer campaign and will give away weekly Mesa hotel stays and daily instant-win prizes through Labor Day on Facebook to help boost summer stay-cations and encourage Mesa residents to experience the city's many tourism attractions this summer. Using the Facebook contest application, winners will be selected at random. The summer promotion will feature 14 hotel stay giveaways and 100 consecutive daily prizes that vary from hot-air balloon rides, trips for two to the Grand Canyon, certificates for Mesa dining, shopping, rounds of golf, spa and salon experiences and more.

For Greater Phoenix residents interested in learning more about Mesa's deals this summer, they can also download digital coupons at [www.VisitMesa.com/Deals](http://www.VisitMesa.com/Deals).

For more information, go to [www.VisitMesa.com/100Days](http://www.VisitMesa.com/100Days).

## Chicago Cubs new baseball stadium groundbreaking July 11



Groundbreaking for the Chicago Cubs new \$99 million spring training stadium, located at the southeast corner of Loop 101 and 202 freeway intersection, will be July 11, 2012 from 8-10am and is open to the public.



Initial renderings of the stadium have been released and the stadium will have a capacity of 15,000 including up to 4,000 for grass seating, suites and party decks. Construction is scheduled to be completed by December 1, 2013. The Cubs will begin play at the new stadium in February 2014.

For information, visit: <http://www.mesaaz.gov/bettermesa/cubs.aspx>.

## Mesa named 2012 Playful City USA



For the fourth year in a row, the City of Mesa is one of the 213 cities across the nation to be named "Playful City USA" by KABOOM!, a national non-profit organization dedicated to saving play. KABOOM! selected Mesa for its outstanding dedication to play. Mesa will focus this year's playground efforts on funding and installing shade structures, initiating joint use agreements with charter schools and constructing two new disc golf courses.

For more information, visit <http://www.kaboom.org/playfulcityusa>.

## Mesa Economic Development staff changes

### New Staff

**Ryan Brault** and **Lisa Davis** recently joined the team as Economic Development Specialists.



Ryan earned his Master's in Real Estate Development from Arizona State University (ASU) and a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Prior to studying at ASU, he worked for the City of Urbana, Illinois for over nine years managing various projects and programs in support of economic development and was involved in several organizations locally and at the State level. A native of the Chicago area, Ryan loves keeping up on the latest real estate and development trends and enjoys hiking, local history, mountain biking, and setting high goals in the gym.



Prior to joining the Office of Economic Development, Lisa worked at the City of Mesa on the Bill and Melinda Gates Communities Learning in Partnership Grant-funded initiative. She has owned and managed a multi-million dollar construction company and served as Senior City Planner with both Mesa and Gilbert. Lisa is involved in a variety of department activities and represents the Office of Economic Development on the Fiesta District stakeholders and improvements project. Lisa is a native of Arizona and earned her Bachelor's degree from ASU in Urban Geography/Planning.

### Accomplishments and Promotions

**Shea Joachim**, who joined the team in 2007 and serves as a Project Manager for the office, recently earned an MBA from ASU. Shea represents the Economic Development team on the Central Mesa Light Rail Extension project and is leading the City's efforts to establish a technology business accelerator.

**Jaye O'Donnell**, Marketing and Business Development Manager since 2010, has been promoted to Deputy Director. Prior to joining Mesa, Jaye served as the Senior Director of Marketing and Business Attraction for the Arizona Department of Commerce where she oversaw the relocation and expansion of projects that brought more than \$2.6 billion in capital investment to Arizona.

**Scot Rigby** has been promoted to Senior Project Manager for the Office of Economic Development. Scot has been with the City for more than 12 years and has led staff efforts on major projects like the new Chicago Cubs spring training facility and is tasked with leading the City's effort to continue to grow and develop the

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and bring critical infrastructure to the surrounding area.

Please join us in congratulating each of these high achievers!

## Patrick J. Burkhart named as new provost at Mesa Community College

Mesa Community College (MCC) announced Patrick Burkhart has been hired to serve as MCC's new Provost for the Red Mountain Campus and Downtown Center beginning July 23, 2012.

Dr. Shouan Pan, President of MCC commented, "Burkhart brings to MCC an impressive combination of senior-level leadership and management experience in higher education, county government, and private organizations." He added, "Throughout his distinguished career, he has developed considerable expertise in strategic planning and budgeting, policy analysis, media relations, and resource, workforce and economic development. His successful track record will be relevant to the Provost position and to the strategic priorities of Mesa Community College."



"The quality, depth and breadth of Mesa's human capital is, and will remain, the foundation upon which all of our aspirations for a transformational future rely. Thus I am particularly honored to join a community of scholars and educators at MCC who understand the magnitude of the challenge, and who are committed to a proportional and innovative strategic response," stated Burkhart.

Most currently, Burkhart was the Assistant Director, Workforce Development of the Maricopa County Human Services Department.

Prior to working for Maricopa County, Burkhart served at Arizona State University (ASU) College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the ASU Foundation.

In 2009, Burkhart was named Human Resources Industry Leader of the Year by the Arizona Business Magazine and the National Association of Counties presented him with three Achievement Awards.

Burkhart possesses a Bachelor of Science Degree in Natural Sciences and Business Administration and a MBA in Health Care Administration from the University of Toledo.

## Downtown Mesa offers unique shopping and dining



In today's world, it is refreshing to know Mesa offers more than the national chains. New, hip, and creative businesses are opening or expanding every month in Downtown Mesa:

- Monsterland Bar and Grill recently opened and offers a wide selection of menu items, locally brewed beers, and a scary good time. [www.monsterland.com](http://www.monsterland.com)
- OohLaLa Boutique at 19 W. Main Street is Mesa's newest apparel boutique, carrying both women's and children's clothing along with specialty items such as antique furniture, fashion flowers, and accessories. Call 480.610.0008 for information.
- Desert Eagle Brewery at 150 W. Main St. is opening this summer and will be Downtown's first microbrewery.
- Patio dining has also expanded along Main at Urban Picnic, Mangos, Queen's Pizzeria, Nunthaporn's Thai Cuisine, Grill on Main, de la Cruz Bistro, Sweet Cakes, and others.

Downtown Mesa Main Street plays host to a number of monthly events, including Motorcycles on Main the first Friday of every month, 2nd Friday Night Out, and signature events like the fall beer festival and Halloween's Nightmare on Main.

Visit [www.downtownmesa.com](http://www.downtownmesa.com) to discover the possibilities in Downtown Mesa.

## Mesa Chamber to sharpen focus on downtown business assistance



Businesses that want to open or expand in Downtown Mesa can look for assistance from the City or a number of business development agencies, but to make things easier all those agencies are banding together to create a more business-friendly environment at a time when Metro light rail construction is just beginning.

The centerpiece of the effort is a new full-time position at the

Mesa Chamber of Commerce that will coordinate the activities of various organizations. The effort is also supported by the Phoenix office of Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), which in the past has provided support for development in Greater Phoenix.

Visit [www.mesachamber.org](http://www.mesachamber.org) for additional information.



## Job seekers get help through Mesa's Job Help Hub program

Job seekers now have a new opportunity to learn valuable tools to land that dream job. The Job Help Hub, is a federally funded program that helps job seekers improve their computer skills, search for jobs smarter, create cover letters, streamline resumes, sharpen interviewing skills, and learn how to start a small business.

The Job Help Hub is holding a grand opening ceremony on Thursday, July 12 at 3 pm at the Red Mountain Library, 635 N. Power Road. The grand opening event will feature a laptop lab open house, job announcements, job club information and a question and answer session. Light refreshments will be served.

To view the schedule of programs and classes for the Job Help Hub, visit the Mesa Library's website at: <http://mesalibrary.org/> and click on the calendar of events.



For more information about the program, contact Job Help Hub Coordinator, Larry Lee at 480.644.4707 or email [MesaLibJHH@gmail.com](mailto:MesaLibJHH@gmail.com), follow on Twitter @MesaLibJHH, or

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MesaLibraryJobHelpHub](http://www.facebook.com/MesaLibraryJobHelpHub).

## City of Mesa Office of Economic Development

PO Box 1466  
20 East Main Street, Suite 200  
Mesa, Arizona 85211-1466

Phone: 480.644.2398  
Fax: 480.644.3458

[www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic)

## EVENTS

### JULY

11

Chicago Cubs Spring Training Stadium  
Groundbreaking Event  
Riverview Park  
8-10 am

### AUGUST

4

Downtown Mesa Association  
High Octane Main Street Meet-up  
MacDonald between Main &  
W. Pepper Place  
8-10 am  
[www.facebook.com/  
HighOctaneMainStreetMeetUp](http://www.facebook.com/HighOctaneMainStreetMeetUp)

### SEPTEMBER

1

Downtown Mesa Association  
High Octane Main Street Meet-up  
MacDonald between Main &  
W. Pepper Place  
8-10 am  
[www.facebook.com/  
HighOctaneMainStreetMeetUp](http://www.facebook.com/HighOctaneMainStreetMeetUp)

3

Labor Day Holiday  
City offices closed

6

East Valley Partnership  
SRP Annual Forum  
Tempe Mission Palms  
60 E. First St., Tempe, AZ 85281  
3:30 pm  
[www.srpnet.com](http://www.srpnet.com)

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Mesa Arts Center  
One Main Street  
2012/13 Performing Live Season begins  
[www.mesaartscenter.com](http://www.mesaartscenter.com)

## Boeing secures U.S. Army contract

Boeing's Mesa division received a \$97.3 million contract from the U.S. Army to produce AH-64D Apache Block III combat helicopters for foreign military sale.

The 4,700-employee division has been building Apache helicopters since the early 1980s, starting with earlier analog-cockpit models. The digital Block III is the latest version and has more than 20 new or upgraded technologies, including a new transmission, a new drive train and a stronger engine.

The Mesa division can produce up to 12 helicopters monthly and currently makes about six per month. Work on the contract should be completed by late 2017.

Visit [www.boeing.com](http://www.boeing.com).



## Mountain Vista Medical Center named provisional trauma center

The Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Trauma has named Mountain Vista Medical Center as a Provisional Level III Trauma Center. The status is granted for the next 16 months.

Visit [www.mountainvistamedicalcenter.com](http://www.mountainvistamedicalcenter.com).



## Ground has been broken for the first new police station in Mesa in more than 10 years



The Fiesta District Police Station, which is being built at the northwest corner of West Grove Avenue and South Westwood, will relieve overcrowding at the Dobson Police Station and enhance the revitalization of the Fiesta District.

"This is another great day for Mesa. Public safety is a top priority for our City Council and our residents, who voted overwhelmingly to build this police station and four new fire stations in Mesa," Mayor Scott Smith said.

The approximately \$10.1 million construction project is funded from general obligation bonds for public safety approved by Mesa voters in November, 2008.

"This is a tremendous step, not only to meet our public safety needs but to improve the Fiesta District as well. The addition of Albright College, the expansion of Mesa Community College and the new police station show the Fiesta District is on the road to revitalization," District 3 Councilmember Dennis Kavanaugh said.

The 34,000 sq. ft. building is designed to include the Watch Command, a locker room/fitness area, a community room and a fueling station. It will be the third LEED (U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design registration) certified City building in Mesa.

"The Fiesta District Police Station is badly needed to give us more space. It is designed to accommodate growth in patrol, detective and administrative staff over the next 50 years," Police Chief Frank Milstead said.

The new police station is scheduled to open in the summer of 2013.