



ASU WEST

FACT SHEET

ASU WEST: HOW IT CAME TO BE

Arizona educators, legislators and community leaders have been telling each other for more than 10 years that, for its size, the West Valley is the most deprived urban area in the nation in terms of higher education.

It takes an hour and a half for a typical West Valley resident to commute to and from Arizona State University's main campus in Tempe. For that person, enrolling in a class at ASU can be equivalent to taking a second job.

In 1975, the westside population of Maricopa County was estimated at 506,000. Now, it is at 600,000 and is expected to reach 1 million by the year 2000.

The 25-34 age group is anticipated to increase by 29 percent in Maricopa County between 1980 and 1990, while the 35-44 age group is expected to go up as much as 54 percent. These are the "non-traditional" age groups best served by an upper level university.

In May, 1976, the Arizona Legislature established a committee to look into the pros and cons of an ASU branch campus to serve the west side of Maricopa County.

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The 10 member committee, headed by Jack W. Whiteman, included representatives from the Board of Regents, the Maricopa County Community College Board, ASU, the legislature and the community at large.

The Whiteman Report concluded that Arizona urgently needed more facilities for higher education and recommended an upper division (junior, senior and graduate level) university in western Maricopa County, complementing the community college system.

In 1978, ASU extended its services to the west side community by leasing space at Metrocenter, Alhambra Elementary School and other westside locations in which to offer classes.

The Arizona University System Mission and Scope Statements, published by the Board of Regents in 1980, specified "the development of a modified, upper-level, primarily non-residential branch institution of Arizona State University in the urban area of western Maricopa County."

In 1982, the Legislature set aside 300 acres between 43rd and 51st Avenues, Sweetwater Avenue and Thunderbird Road as an ASU West campus.

ASU began to plan.

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A 1983 public opinion poll confirmed that West Valley residents have high regard for ASU and confidence in its programs. They overwhelmingly approved of an ASU West campus. An internal survey of ASU colleges and departments revealed a wide range of academic programs which could be offered on the west side.

That same year, university officials asked the regents to present the legislature with a \$4.5 million budget request to establish the ASU West campus. The regents cut the request to \$1 million, designated for developing services rather than facilities on the west side.

The 1984 Legislature changed the state statutes to require the Board of Regents to maintain an Arizona State University west campus in the western part of Maricopa County. The Legislature then appropriated \$1 million and approved spending an additional \$900,000 from other sources for ASU West, stipulating that \$400,000 of the appropriation was to be used for facilities planning.

Paige Mulhollan, Executive Vice President of ASU, was named Chief Operating Officer of ASU West on July 20 at a flag raising ceremony on the site of the new campus.

The NBBJ Group of Seattle and Cella Barr Associates of Phoenix were engaged as planning consultants for ASU West in October, 1984.

. . . And the development process began.

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