

---

C i v a n o  N e i g h b o r s

The Honorable Shirley Scott  
Vice Mayor, City of Tucson  
Southeast Ward Four  
8123 East Poinciana  
Tucson, Arizona 85730

April 11, 2003

Dear Vice Mayor Scott:

With reference to the 2003 City of Tucson budget recently proposed by yourself and Council members Steve Leal and Jose Ibarra—which calls for the rezoning and ultimate sale of 320 acres of City-owned land across from the community of Civano—the Civano Neighbors neighborhood association is strongly opposed to the rezoning and sale of the land for any use other than that for which it is currently master planned: a multi-use park to serve all of southeast Tucson.

On March 18, the *Arizona Daily Star* reported the proposed 2003 city budget plan that would eliminate most taxes and program cuts proposed in the City Manager's earlier budget. Your proposed budget, according to the article, would also "Rezone and plat 320 acres across the street from the Civano development on the far Southeast Side to bring in \$35 million. Money from the sale would go toward the 2004 budget, which is also expected to have a shortfall."

While the Civano Neighbors neighborhood association—representing residents and businesses in the area bounded by Irvington Road to the north, Pantano Wash to the east, Bilby Road to the south, and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (Harrison Road) to the west—applauds efforts to meet the budget shortfall, we do not support doing so at the long-term expense of residents in the area.

While selling the land would seemingly be a quick fix to budget shortfalls anticipated in 2004, the long-term cost to the city would be great. The southeast corridor along Houghton Road is one of the city's fastest growing areas, yet the region is already under-served by parks. With thousands of new families moving into new developments within just a few miles of this land over the next decade, the need for dedicated park open space will only increase. Unfortunately, the cost for such land will also increase. By selling the land now, the burden for the City, and for taxpayers, will be substantially increased later.

Instead of rezoning and selling this land, we support maintaining the land for its best use—a regional park. Additionally, we encourage you and all City Council members to support the proposed Houghton-Irvington Regional Park, which spans these 320 acres and additional land including the "Fantasy Island" bike trail

system and the closed landfill at Houghton and Irvington. The Houghton-Irvington Regional Park includes ball and other playing fields, natural and landscaped open spaces, the bike trail system, trails and pedestrian paths, and much more—all essential components of a park that would serve the entire southeast area.

To further the proposed park, Civano Neighbors additionally supports the construction of the recreation center originally proposed for Civano Neighborhoods II or III (in the Development Agreement) at the Houghton-Irvington Regional Park. The recreation center, which would be constructed with funding to total \$4 million provided by passage of a general city bond proposal, was envisioned as a regional center, to benefit all residents of southeast Tucson. By moving it to the Houghton-Irvington Regional Park, amenities can be combined and its use both encouraged and expanded.

A recent survey completed by the Southeast Planning and Coordinating Committee clearly demonstrates that parks and recreation are a top priority for residents and businesses in this area. We encourage you to support the results of the survey, and our call for maintaining the land only for park uses, and remove the provision to sell this land from your and any budget plan.

Please contact me at 241.7390 to let me know when this budget provision has been removed, and to further discuss opportunities for providing much-needed additional parks in southeast Tucson. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Simmons B. Buntin  
Association Spokesperson  
Civano Neighbors

Cc:  
Bob Walkup, Mayor  
Jose Ibarra, Ward One  
Carol West, Ward Two  
Kathleen Dunbar, Ward Three  
Steve Leal, Ward Five  
Fred Ronstadt, Ward Six  
James Keene, City Manager