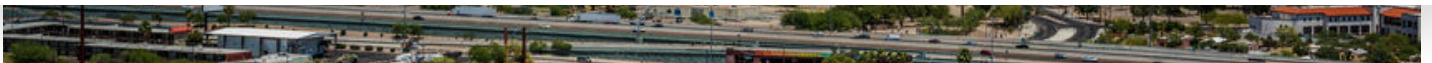


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Tucson skyline and Santa Catalina Mountain range from Sentinel Peak Park, Tucson. (Photo licensed from 123RF)

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Sun Corridor Inc., Tucson Metro Chamber announce merger

Today, [Sun Corridor Inc.](#) and the [Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce](#) Boards of Directors announce that they have agreed to merge the two organizations in 2025 to form a new stronger chamber that represents business interests in Tucson and Southern Arizona.

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Both organizations have agreed to come together with a unified business voice, strategy, and resources to address Southern Arizona's biggest economic development challenges and opportunities that impact business relocation and expansion in the Southern Arizona region.

This move will solidify Tucson and Southern Arizona as a region exploring new ways of leading and bringing together businesses of all sizes as well as diverse business, trade and civic groups to develop bold, creative solutions to regional issues.

The merger will better position the region's efforts to attract new jobs and investment and support existing companies poised for growth. The new chamber organization will include a Board of Directors, investors, committee members, and staff representing both entities. The organization's name will be announced at a later date.

The organization's new mission is to drive economic growth and prosperity through job creation in the region by uniting business advocacy and development efforts, fostering an environment where businesses thrive, and promoting Tucson and Southern Arizona as a vibrant economic hub on both domestic and international stages. Functions will include business attraction, retention and expansion; talent attraction; competitiveness; advocacy/public policy; emerging leaders; and small business support.

Susan Gray, President & CEO of Tucson Electric Power, will chair the new organization. Joe Snell will serve as President & CEO. Michael Guymon will serve as Chief Advocacy Officer.

"I am immensely proud to serve as the first chair of this newly formed chamber. Both our Boards recognized the need for a powerhouse organization that will advocate for a strong business center in Southern Arizona," said Susan Gray, Chair, Sun Corridor Inc. and President & CEO, Tucson Electric Power. "We applaud both Boards' vision to make this happen and look forward to working together with our business memberships, elected officials, and others to launch this in 2025."

“Our Boards supported this merger because we believe that our region needs a stronger chamber that is more effective in creating an environment where current and relocating businesses can thrive,” said Linda Welter, Chair of the Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce Board. “The time is right for this merger to take place, for both organizations will be able to accomplish more together than what each can accomplish alone.”

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“This move will be transformational to Tucson and Southern Arizona’s success in building an even stronger economic foundation,” said Joe Snell, President & CEO, Sun Corridor Inc. “This new chamber will represent a unified voice to effectively meet regional challenges for decades to come.”

Michael Guymon, President & CEO of the Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce, said, “I applaud our collective vision and continued commitment to adopt innovative approaches that challenge the status quo to achieve even greater success. I am excited about the merger and look forward to working with our new board leadership, staff, investors, members and volunteers of both organizations to become bolder advocates for the businesses in our region.”

Sun Corridor Inc. / Tucson Metro Chamber Merger

FAQs

Why now? What are the market dynamics that led to this merger?

- Although Southern Arizona has experienced growth over the past twenty years, the last several years have caused fundamental shifts in the economy that impact not only what we compete for but also how we compete.
- The drivers of the future economy will be shaped by complex challenges around labor, technological advancements, and politics. To continue to be competitive and build upon our successes, Southern Arizona must refocus its economic development and advocacy efforts

around the factors that drive economic competitiveness, build on its strengths, and commit to a strategy that prioritizes addressing its biggest challenges.

- This new reality requires regions to lead in new ways – bringing together large, diverse groups, politicians, community leaders, and small-to-large business leaders that develop bold, creative solutions to regional issues.
- Sun Corridor Inc. led a year-long process to evaluate Southern Arizona’s economic competitiveness and identify gaps in building a more robust economy. Perceptions and feedback on our economy were generated from local leaders and outside influencers.
- A common theme was that the region has too many competing business groups. The feedback noted that the business community’s collective voice has been diluted, limiting its ability to meaningfully influence decisions that impact our region’s economy and business success.
- In 2024, there are at least 20 local and regional business organizations in Southern Arizona representing a variety of interests across the region.
- The two most prominent groups are the Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce, which represents nearly 1500-hundred-member companies, and Sun Corridor Inc., whose member organizations represent nearly 90% of all employment in Pima County.

What are the benefits of this merger?

- Create a unified strategy and voice on behalf of the region’s business community.
- With a larger staff, more resources and a combined membership, increase political clout to influence decisions made by local, state and federal governments.
- Develop bold, comprehensive solutions to improve our community by combining all parties of the economic ecosystem: primary job (non-retail/export-based) employers and retail/small business.
- Leverage resources to enhance the quality and depth of programs for the entire business community.
- Reduce programmatic duplication and confusion.

What are the top opportunities associated with the merger?

- Talent attraction and development continues to be a top concern among business leaders. With more concentrated focus and combined resources, there are immense opportunities to deliver

stronger value to members in this area.

- There is also a great opportunity to build a strong BRE (Business Retention and Expansion) focus with existing companies of all sizes, with more staff and resources to help our local businesses grow and prosper.
- More aggressively address our competitiveness in a quest to create a more vibrant economy.

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Will the Chamber's mission of serving small business be diluted with this merger? Will Sun Corridor Inc's mission of primary job development be diluted?

Not at all, in fact the missions will be strengthened and enhanced on both sides. Creating a unified strategy and aligning both organizations' strengths and membership audiences will result in a much stronger economic foundation for the entire region.

It's a misconception that Sun Corridor only focuses on large business and the Chamber only focuses on small business. The size of the business is not the focus of building an economy; the focus of economic development is primary/direct job development in targeted high-wage industries, resulting in ripple effects of indirect jobs and additional business opportunities to retail and local businesses. The benefits of this primary job development and ripple effects extend to businesses of every size in the region.

How will the new organization handle public funding that Sun Corridor Inc. receives now, when advocacy is a large focus of the merged organization? Can an organization do both advocacy and economic development well?

- There are numerous examples across the country of merged chamber and economic development groups who have strong and effective advocacy programs.
- There are multiple avenues to separate the public and private funds.
- The new organization's leadership will evaluate the best avenue to pursue this.

What are the staffing and operational plans?

- The staffing and operating plans will be developed by the new organization's leadership.
- There will be no staff reductions as a result of the merger.
- The office location for the new organization will be determined after a thorough financial analysis has been completed.

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