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*For immediate release*

**Greater Phoenix Economic Council and Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities, Inc. join in effort to elevate Arizona's economy**

**Feb. 12, 2009** – Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon and Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup announced a new business development program Thursday, spearheaded by the state's largest regional economic development groups.

"Arizona Sun Corridor: Open for Business" is an unprecedented partnership between the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) and Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities, Inc. (TREO) that is designed to bring high-wage jobs and investment to the Sun Corridor. The Phoenix-Tucson metroplex is projected as one of 10 U.S. markets expected to see most of the nation's growth in the next 35 years.

The pilot program pools resources from GPEC and TREO to place a contractor in California who will be responsible for researching companies and qualifying those poised to expand operations. The contractor will actively generate business development leads in targeted industries such as aerospace/defense, healthcare/bioscience, transportation/logistics, renewable energy and information communications technology.

"California and Arizona share key strengths in these industries," said Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon. "The collaboration between GPEC and TREO will uncover opportunities that will benefit Arizona through new investments and strategic partnerships."

The business development program highlights the uniqueness of GPEC and TREO's decision to be more efficient in the current economic climate and demonstrates their commitment to improving Arizona's economy.

"We need to work together as Arizonans," Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup said. "Economic development leaders in each of our markets are joining together to meet Arizona's need for a diversified economy."

The consultant contract is with Research On Investment, a market research firm based in Montreal. Its contract with GPEC and TREO is through July 2009.

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