



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kelly Taft, (602) 452-5020

### Mission Possible:

#### Luke AFB Expansion Means Opportunities for the Region

*Targeted Growth Management Plan helps prepare for a growing base and region*

**GLENDALE, Ariz. (September 23, 2020)**—Thousands of service members and their families will be arriving at Luke Air Force Base (Luke AFB) over the next six years, the result of a mission expansion involving 144 new fighter jets. By 2026, the base-related population is expected to swell to nearly 24,000—the size of a small city. That growth will impact many of the surrounding communities in the West Valley.

To best meet and capitalize on that growth, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), in partnership with Luke AFB, surrounding communities and stakeholders, today released the [Luke AFB Targeted Growth Management Plan](#). Focusing on a study area based on a 20-minute drive from the base, the Plan looks at four key areas: [education](#), [workforce and economic development](#), [housing](#), and [transportation](#).

In lieu of a press conference, today's release includes a "[virtual launch](#)" in which the media and public can access videotaped comments regarding the importance of the base to the regional economy. Speakers include [Brig. Gen. Gregory Kreuder](#), commander of the 56th Fighter Wing at Luke AFB, and [Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers](#), chair of the Maricopa Association of Governments. Other comments come from Luke AFB Child and Youth Education Services School Liaison Roxane Dietrich; WESTMARC CEO and President Sintra Hoffman; and WeSERV Association of Realtors Government Affairs Director Liz Recchia; who focus on some of the plan's specific strategies to meet future needs on and near the base.

Today's launch also includes the release of an [online "Mission Critical" tool](#) that provides data about education, childcare, transportation, housing, bike trails and entertainment options near the base. A demonstration of the tool is available [here](#).

In 2012, the Department of Defense designated Luke AFB as the training home of the new F-35A Lightning II fighter jets. Expanding the Luke training mission is expected to grow base personnel by an additional 2,234 service members.

"Many of those service members have families," says Brig. Gen. Kreuder. He notes they are expected to be joined by an additional 4,717 household members, growing the base-related population to 23,704 by 2026. "Through these strategies, we will accommodate growth and provide both existing and new residents the best possible life experiences."

"The defense-related industry is a backbone of our economy," says Mayor Weiers. "The mission expansion ensures Luke AFB will continue to be an important regional player, especially in the West Valley. The goals of the growth management plan are to support the base and leverage the opportunities presented."

The Plan, [which was recently recognized](#) by the American Planning Association, draws on recent data from the base and surrounding region, sophisticated modeling techniques, an outreach survey of local residents and current base personnel, and input from advisory and focus group members. The Plan includes action steps local communities can take to leverage future growth and manage demands for services. For example, 90 percent of job impacts from the base are expected to occur in the communities of Glendale, Surprise, Goodyear, and Avondale.