

# The Gilbert Invasion

How the town has visibly transformed:  
replacing farms with neighborhoods

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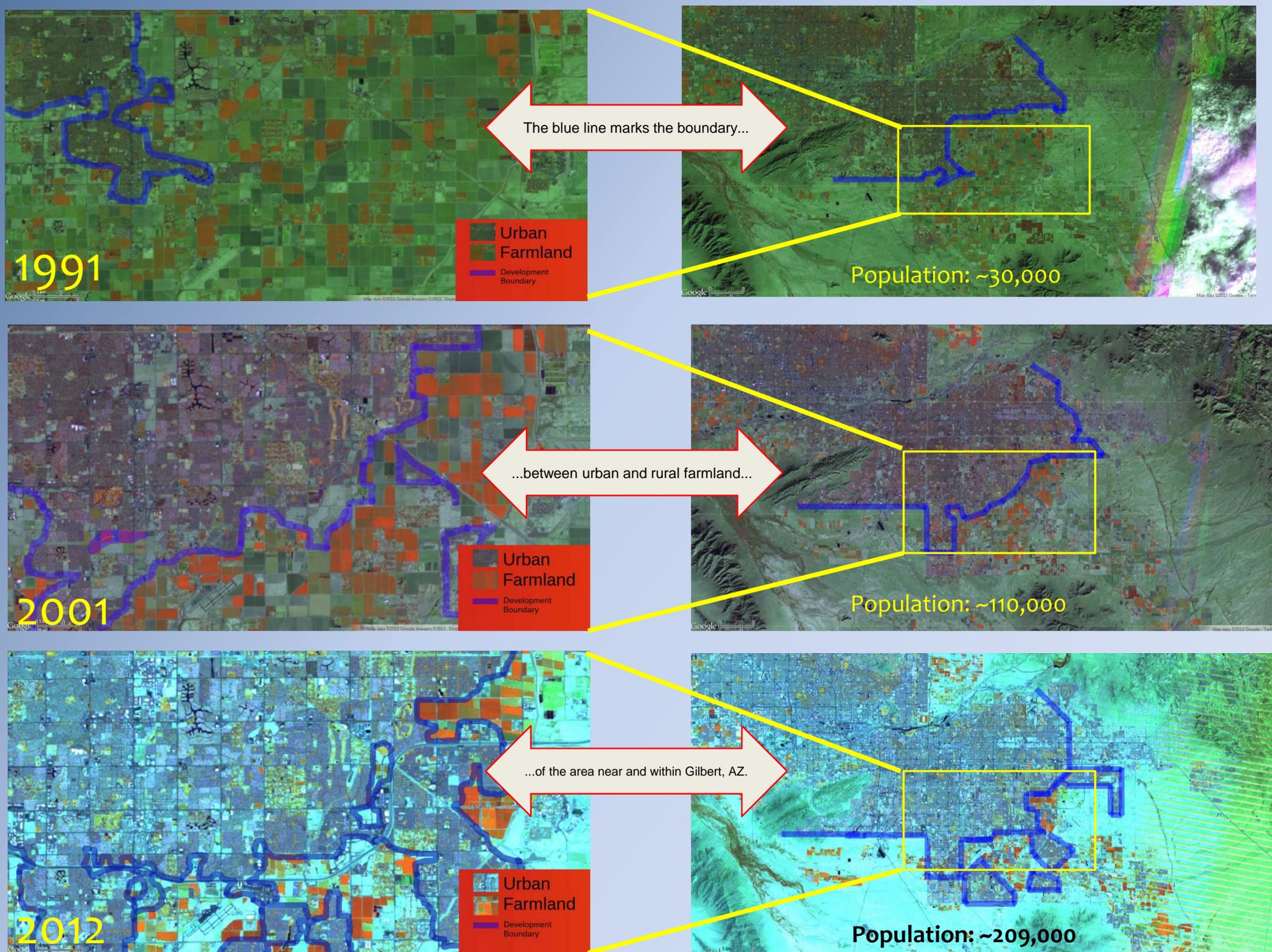
The Power of Perspective

Artist's view of a U.S. Landsat satellite. Credits: NASA.

## Birth of a city...

According to the US Census Bureau and the Maricopa County population records, the Town of Gilbert, Arizona increased by 182 percent between 1990 and 2011. According to these records, in 1990 the Town of Gilbert had a population of 29,188. By 2000, the population in the Town was 109,697 and by 2011 the population had risen to 208,876.

Source: [infoplease.com/ipa/A0884086.html](http://infoplease.com/ipa/A0884086.html), [city-data.com/city/Gilbert-Arizona.html](http://city-data.com/city/Gilbert-Arizona.html)



**The booming beginning!** In 1920, the Town of Gilbert started with only 500 citizens incorporating it as an official city. These citizens specialized in agriculture and farming because of the rich soil in the central valley. According to the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce, Gilbert was once considered the “Hay Shipping Capital of the World” - providing alfalfa for the horses used for World War I. These Landsat photos show Gilbert’s drastic population growth.

**Why the growth?** With the rising costs of land and water, and with the recession, the farmers and landowners began looking at their farmland as an opportunity to cash in. Since then, the vast miles of farmland have turned into a booming city surrounded by other large cities - which we now nickname the Valley of the Sun.

Landsat images accessed courtesy of Google Earth Engine’s Trusted Tester program.

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