



**SURPRISE**  
ARIZONA

# City Council Strategic Plan

Update 2013



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## Acknowledgements

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Surprise sees a bright future and exciting challenges ahead for our dynamic and energetic community. As the City Council and community have reflected on various challenges over the last few years through visioning sessions, surveys, and other input opportunities, a focused vision for the City of Surprise has emerged.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**“Develop a high standard of community life through shared vision, superior service, and sustainable practices.”**

To make this vision become a reality, the City Council has created a strategic plan. The strategic plan is a document that will be used to communicate with citizens the Council’s priorities and corresponding goals and the actions needed to achieve those goals.

Our plan identifies seven strategic priorities:

- **Transportation**
- **Economic Development**
- **Community Lifestyle**
- **Sustainability**
- **Tourism**
- **Education**
- **Public Safety**

These priorities, with their accompanying goals and strategies, will guide City Council policy and budgetary decision making, shape

partnerships locally and regionally, and involve the residents of Surprise in building the future of our community. The Strategic Plan is a dynamic roadmap that will help us to realize our community’s future and, in concert with other planning and policy documents, including the long-range General Plan, will provide us with the guidance and tools to achieve our community’s shared vision.

## CORE VALUES

1. Integrity (fiscal)
2. Safety and Security
3. Cleanliness / Community Pride
4. Public Accountability / Transparency
5. Economic Vitality
6. Environmental Stewardship
7. Community of All Ages / Age friendly
8. Civic Engagement
9. Initiative and Innovation
10. Customer Service

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## TRANSPORTATION

### Vision Statement

Develop an efficient, cost effective, multi-modal transportation system that provides connectivity to the region, ease of movement into, within, and out of Surprise, and supports a high standard of community life.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Improve access to and from Surprise, specifically east/west connections.**

### Strategies:

- Identify a list of specific east-west corridor improvements, and develop funding strategies with neighboring jurisdictions, MAG and Maricopa County.
- Facilitate planning for connections to major existing and future transportation corridors, e.g., SR303, Interstate 10, Interstate 11, White Tanks freeway.
- Improve intersection of Bell Road and Grand Avenue to accommodate future travel demand and improve safety and ease of movement, while improving the aesthetics of this important city gateway.

**Goal 2: Improve internal circulation by completing missing and incomplete links in the arterial network in the city.**

### Strategies:

- Complete scalloped streets (streets not built to their full planned width) as identified in the Capital Improvement Program from the Gap Study and the Arterial Capacity Study.
- Update the Long Range Master Street Plan recommendations



for arterials in the Surprise planning area in concert with the intended growth plan for the city.

- Coordinate with MCDOT on regional transportation corridor studies.

**Goal 3: Develop a robust multimodal transit plan that provides for transit connectivity to the region.**

### Strategies:

- Coordinate with MAG and west valley communities on commuter rail planning.
- Pursue grants to fund planning for transit oriented development along the Grand Avenue Commuter Rail corridor.
- Include commuter rail provisions in General Plan Update and Village Plans.
- Identify a transit strategy for SR303.
- Identify a transit strategy for Bell Road.

**Goal 4: Provide local public transit service in Surprise.**

### Strategies:

- Enhance local multi-modal linkages (e.g., local and express buses, and streetcar).
- Monitor and evaluate the Total Transit cab contract for provision of dial-a-ride service to Surprise residents.
- Work with MAG to develop local transit plan through the Northwest Valley Local Transit System Study.

- d. Explore local funding options to support public transit services such as local circulator.

**Goal 5: Institute comprehensive Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in the city.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Develop ITS strategic plan for the city.
- b. Implement ITS improvements on Bell Road, Loop 303, and Reems Road.
- c. Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions on planning and implementation of ITS improvements.

**Goal 6: Develop and institute a plan to maintain the city's streets and roads.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Explore and review alternative funding methods for transportation operations and maintenance.
- b. Assess condition of pavement on city streets.
- c. Maintain pavement of the city's total roadway network at an acceptable level.
- d. Develop infrastructure maintenance cycles to extend useful life of all assets.

**Goal 7: Identify funding sources for the transportation system.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Commit to an annual CIP allocation for local transportation improvement projects.
- b. Conduct community outreach to gauge resident interest in additional local tax with revenue dedicated to local transportation projects.
- c. Develop new transportation impact fee ordinance to comply with state law.
- d. Review federal MAP-21 legislation and grant programs to identify potential federal funding opportunities for City of Surprise transportation system projects.

- e. Actively participate in public and private regional organizations that address transportation, including MAG, Westmarc, the Joint Regional Planning Council, the Regional Public Transit Authority, and other related organizations.
- f. Consider developing "shovel-ready" plans for local transportation priority projects to put the city in a position to secure funds that may become available.

**Goal 8: Develop and maintain a balanced transportation system for alternative modes of travel, including bicycling, walking and electric carts.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Identify missing links to enable electric cart connectivity throughout the city.
- b. Coordinate with Community and Recreation Services on the update for the Parks and Trails Master Plan.
- c. Develop and implement a Complete Streets policy to accommodate multimodal transportation needs on city streets.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Vision Statement

**Create a robust business environment that attracts employment, wealth, capital investment, and enhanced opportunities for investors and residents.**

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Promote Surprise as a location for clean industry, high-tech manufacturing, and corporate office development.**

### Strategies:

- Continue to promote development sites with robust electric capacity.
- Identify corporate expansion opportunities through demand analysis.
- Engage with industry experts to identify development potential.
- Identify land(s) and engage with property owners to gauge interest.
- Outline potential city support.
- Develop and share marketing collateral with industry opportunities.

**Goal 2: Continue hands-on approach with small business start-ups and retention/expansion opportunities.**

### Strategies:

- Enhance and promote the small business support guide.
- Continue to engage with Chamber to identify new needs of small business community.
- Continue to offer educational courses related to small business.



- Promote, market, and support programs at the Az Tech-Celerator.
- Encourage small business coordinator(s) to work “in the field.”

**Goal 3: Partner with Regional Chamber of Commerce to promote jobs.**

### Strategies:

- Continue to partner on job fairs and special events.
- Utilize Chamber’s contacts and resources to add value to recruitment/retention efforts.
- Continue to cross market with Chamber and other agencies in order to enhance Surprise jobs board.
- Encourage Chamber membership and city staff to continue “hire Surprise residents first” campaign.

**Goal 4: Investigate opportunities to attract family-oriented entertainment venues.**

### Strategies:

- Inventory theme parks and family fun centers in Phoenix metro region.
- Identify opportunities through demand analysis.
- Engage with industry experts to identify development potential.
- Identify land(s) and connect with property owners to

- gauge interest.
- e. Outline potential city support.
- f. Develop and share marketing collateral with industry opportunities.

**Goal 5: Attract specialty medical and/or research clinics.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Inventory medical and research clinics in Surprise area.
- b. Identify opportunities through physician needs analysis.
- c. Engage with industry experts to identify development potential.
- d. Develop and share marketing collateral with industry opportunities.
- e. Coordinate with land owners on possible site visits from potential end-users.

**Goal 6: Assist property owners with development of Surprise Center.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Work with developer to brand any private/public collateral.
- b. Identify land options and outline potential city support.
- c. Continue to communicate the vision of the Surprise Center to potential projects.
- d. Leverage substantial city investments in discussions with potential end-users.
- e. Coordinate with land owners on possible site visits from potential end-users.

**Goal 7: Implement and market foreign trade zone.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Continue relationship with WESTMARC and Greater Maricopa Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ).
- b. Assist with implementation of GMFTZ web site to promote the FTZ.
- c. Provide information on city website related to FTZ.

- d. Continue close relationship with Surprise Pointe, an approved FTZ site.
- e. Coordinate with Surprise Pointe on possible site visits from potential end-users.

**Goal 8: Identify and secure additional funding methods for economic development.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Work with WESTMARC to develop a coalition that leads to the development of TIF legislation (or a similar equivalent tool).
- b. Promote the use of Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET) relief as a viable economic development tool.
- c. Aggressively pursue federal, state, foundation and tribal grants that support economic development initiatives.
- d. Continue to use creative earned revenue post performance incentives such as construction sales tax reimbursement for economic development initiatives with significant infrastructure costs.



## SUSTAINABILITY

### Vision Statement

**Provide a vibrant and sustainable community for a green Surprise today and tomorrow.**

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Reduce total energy usage in city owned facilities, i.e. city hall, stadium.**

### Strategies:

- Develop a plan to make most efficient and effective use of awarded Energy Efficiency Coordinator Block Grant (EECBG) grant monies.
- Continue to seek after grants that will provide for more sustainable choices at city facilities.
- Establish policy requiring new city facilities achieve LEED Green Building certification.

**Goal 2: Make good use of our physical resources and ensure proper disposal of those resources.**

### Strategies:

- Enhance recycling program and educate citizens about residential recycling.
- Promote city's hazardous household waste disposal program to allow for proper disposal of electronics, paint, and other hazardous household waste.
- Develop an anti-litter program in partnership with local businesses and organizations.

**Goal 3: Respect nature by protecting critical wildlife corridors.**

### Strategies:



- Implement code and design guidelines for wildlife corridors.
- Identify wildlife linkages for northern planning area.
- Staff will work with future development to minimize impact on wildlife corridors.

**Goal 4: Ensure sufficient water resources for current and future needs.**

### Strategies:

- Continue water conservation initiatives.
- Conduct groundwater recharge and water quality studies.
- Determine the highest and best use of reclaimed water.
- Work toward maintaining a balance between the annual amount of groundwater withdrawn and the annual amount of groundwater naturally and artificially recharged into the aquifer.
- Expand the City's water portfolio and infrastructures to meet projected growth needs.
- Manage growth to achieve a proper balance of land and water resources.

**Goal 5: Protect the air quality in Surprise.**

### Strategies:

- Seek out cleaner technologies for city fleet vehicles to reduce our carbon footprint.

- b. Utilize street sweepers to keep airborne dust to a minimum for better air quality.
- c. Encourage alternate transportation modes throughout the city, focusing on those that produce little-to-no harmful emissions
- d. Support robust carpooling and park-'n'-ride initiatives.

## COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE

### Vision Statement

Enhance community lifestyle for the current and the future residents of Surprise.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Enhance the beauty of neighborhoods throughout our community.**

### Strategies:

- Emphasize neighborhood preservation and rehabilitation.
- Continue community clean-up programs.
- Expand the city's revitalization and reinvestment program to cover all at-risk communities and developments throughout the city.
- Work to preserve the unique characteristics of individual neighborhoods.
- Ensure robust code-enforcement to maintain integrity of neighborhoods.

**Goal 2: Maintain Surprise as a safe community.**

### Strategies:

- Expand neighborhood watch programs throughout Surprise.
- Promote neighborhood and building design that focuses on issues of public safety.
- Utilize principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) that emphasize design of the physical environment.
- Support partnerships for neighborhood and school safety.



**Goal 3: Continue to promote quality neighborhoods in design and amenities and smart, controlled growth.**

### Strategies:

- Incorporate enhanced design standards in the pending Surprise Unified Code update.
- Plan for responsible neighborhood expansion and enhancement that protects natural beauty such as open space, dark skies and land forms.
- Seek the expansion of facilities to meet community needs in concert with the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.
- Establish a neighborhood park at the original town site, south of Grand Avenue.
- Focus on quality housing in all future development, particularly, well-built homes and consider incentives for establishing move up and executive housing.

**Goal 4: Encourage community connectivity when considering development.**

### Strategies:

- Consider desired land use patterns and neighborhood design when expanding transportation networks.
- Develop pathways for neighborhood accessibility to basic "neighborhood centers".
- Utilize the goals and policies found in the General Plan Land Use and Transportation Elements, to guide quality

- development and improve transportation systems.
- d. Enhance Surprise's access to the White Tanks Regional Park.
- e. Seek opportunities to create regional recreational trails based around local waterways (Beardsley Canal, Agua Fria, Mc Micken Dam).
- f. Gather citizen input regarding avenues for creating greater unity in Surprise among and between different neighborhoods.

## TOURISM

### Vision Statement

Infuse tourism dollars into Surprise's economy by diversifying the events, programs, and partnerships offered that make Surprise an attractive destination for a wide variety of interests.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Lay the groundwork for creating a multi-use facility/expansion that will draw entertainment and tourism.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Conduct a needs analysis study.
- b. Develop a funding strategy.

**Goal 2: Develop an annual festival framework.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Create a calendar that will highlight all events in Surprise.
- b. Develop an RFP process to recruit partners to hold tourism events in Surprise with defined criteria.
- c. Simplify application process for third parties to run a special event at the Recreation Campus.

**Goal 3: Develop a regional entertainment corridor.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Establish a value propositions, such as a sports village and entertainment district, soccer complex, or convention center.
- b. Identify possible site options.
- c. Conduct a feasibility study.
- d. Identify potential partners, both private and public/non-profit.



- e. Identify costs and incentives.

**Goal 4: Create partnerships that offer visitors a wide range of non-baseball activities.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Develop partnerships with hotel associations.
- b. Develop partnerships with non-baseball sports organizations.
- c. Develop partnerships with general tourism entities.





## EDUCATION

### Vision Statement

**Strive to develop world class education in Surprise by seeking and enhancing educational opportunities that support initiatives, programs, projects, and lifelong learning opportunities throughout the community.**

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### Goal 1: Support K-12 initiatives.

#### Strategies:

- Assist in the locating of a CTE education center in Surprise to enhance vocational and technical training opportunities for Surprise residents.
- Promote education and enrichment programs for high school students that will promote school wellness, student preparation and enhance a safe and secure learning environment.
- Provide a direct connection between the city and schools through the Teen Advisory Commission and the Surprise Youth Leadership Commission.
- Establish annual meetings between the schools and city council with the purpose of celebrating student success and strategies to enhance student performance.

**Goal 2: Take a strong and visible role in local and regional educational initiatives by expanding partnerships and maximizing resources for greater access to education.**

#### Strategies:

- Enhance and expand the city internship program at Surprise which allows students an opportunity to learn about and foster



- interest in a career in local government.
- Augment shared use of facilities among city and school needs.
- Collaborate with schools and city to develop a youth master plan.
- Support existing and proposed local training programs, particularly those that enhance corporate and medical education.

**Goal 3: Facilitate development of a 4-year liberal arts college campus.**

#### Strategies:

- Identify potential universities to locate a campus in Surprise.
- Develop potential financing options, including seeking a Community Facilities District (CFD).
- Identify possible site options.
- Facilitate the removal of the land use restriction at Surprise Center.
- Identify strategies to share facilities and develop shared use agreements.

**Goal 4: Facilitate development of a technical college.**

#### Strategies:

- a. Identify potential technical colleges to locate a campus in Surprise.
- b. Develop potential financing options, including seeking a Community Facilities District (CFD).
- c. Identify possible site options.
- d. Facilitate the removal of the land use restriction at Surprise Center.
- e. Identify strategies to share facilities and develop shared use agreements.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### Vision Statement

Public safety departments will work cooperatively with the community to provide a safe and secure city.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Goal 1: Mitigate crimes and accidents by enhancing community awareness of public safety systems and partnering with other fire and crime prevention programs.**

### Strategies:

- Provide information and education to all Surprise residents and visitors about actions that can be taken to keep themselves and their families safe.
- Develop a partnership with area schools to provide fire and law enforcement safety awareness education to the student body population.
- Increase awareness of residents and visitors by providing information that enhances their knowledge of how public safety agencies deliver service to the community through police department community events and fire department open houses.
- Expand community education opportunities in traffic and fire safety, crime prevention and the prevention of accidents in the home and workplace.

**Goal 2: Provide public safety workers with the tools and training necessary to meet community public safety needs.**

### Strategies:

- Enhance the effectiveness of the Police training function by



expanding its infrastructure, including the capability to conduct scenario-based training.

- Deploy a Fire training division to fully manage, administer, and oversee the daily operations of the training division.
- Provide appropriate training, education and certification to effectively serve the community.
- Provide appropriate management and planning support for public safety service providers.
- Provide necessary resources including personnel, equipment, vehicles and facilities for public safety service providers.

**Goal 3: Ensure timely and appropriate response.**

### Strategies:

- Deploy fire department resources to meet the suburban response time goal in accordance with the adopted goal of 5 minutes 90% of the time to include not only station and apparatus allocation but also staff at ratio of 1.13 per 1,000 resident population increase.
- Reduce or maintain the under-five-minute Priority 1 police response time through an increase in police staffing commensurate to an increase in population at a rate of 1.54 police staff to 1,000 residents.
- Explore the option of deploying peak time adaptive re-

response units within the City of Surprise to aid in obtaining fire response time goals and reducing stacked calls.

- d. Deploy internal IT resource in the Fire Department to enhance current technologies which will assist in managing all specialized software, response time data analyses, resource allocation and deployment modeling.
- e. Support emergency response with appropriate investigation staff through future recruitments.
- f. Continue to work in concert with other public safety, governmental and non-governmental agencies and seek additional opportunities to work cooperatively to enhance customer service and efficiency.
- g. Work internally and externally to ensure that qualifying post-incident recovery of public and private resources occurs.
- h. Expand citywide emergency management capabilities through further development of program planning and exercise opportunities and by conducting at least one inter-departmental tabletop exercise per year.
- i. Evaluate patient treatment and delivery systems and innovate new methods to provide better service.

**Goal 4: Provide extraordinary internal and external customer service.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Build relationships with communities and the public that encourage collaboration, communication, trust, and understanding.
- b. Provide customers with a venue to openly discuss issues of concern.
- c. Maintain relationships with other City of Surprise departments to ensure that public safety is incorporated into the plans and goals of non public safety departments.
- d. Further enhance volunteer opportunities for community members including the crisis management response teams by recruiting qualified staff that will develop, train, and man-

age volunteers.

**Goal 5: Ensure fiscal responsibility in all public safety efforts.**

**Strategies:**

- a. Encourage, support and value innovation, efficiency and continual improvement.
- b. Be open to discuss and implement change in service provision methods and change in the needs of the community.
- c. Expand overtime management capability through the identification and use of effective financial management technology options.
- d. Fund an emergency services ground transportation feasibility study.
- e. Promote efficiencies in public safety while enhancing service delivery.
- f. Leverage technology to maximize resources.
- g. Aggressively pursue grant funding from appropriate sources to assist in providing public safety services.



## THE NEXT STEPS

### **Annual Work Program**

Each year city boards and commissions and city departments develop work programs. Action Plan goals will be incorporated into these plans and monitored for progress.

### **Resource Allocation**

Goals incorporated into annual budgets and CIP. Specific financial needs will be discussed and presented to Council and considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Strategic Plan Annual Report**

Prior to each budget cycle a report will be presented to the Council with an assessment of key indicators met.