



**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission**

16089 N Bullard Ave  
Surprise, AZ 85374

Thursday, June 12, 2025 @ 6:00 PM  
Surprise Regional Library

- A. Call To Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Staff Reports
- E. Library Commission Agenda:

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In order to address the Board\Commission, you will need to fill out a Call to the Public Form available at the front counter, and then turn it in to the Secretary before the meeting begins.

Note: A.R.S. 38-431.01(H) - During this time members of the public may address the Board\Commission only on issues within the jurisdiction of the Board\Commission which are not an item on the agenda. At the conclusion of the open call, the Board\Commission may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda. No discussion or action shall take place on any item raised.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:**

- |    |          |   |                                    |
|----|----------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to the May 8, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.                           | Arts, Culture & Library Department |
| 2. | Citywide | Discussion and action pertaining to the recommendation of approval of the Surprise Public Library System 2025 Strategic Plan. | Arts, Culture & Library Department |
| 3. | Citywide | Discussion pertaining to strategies to advance the Library Advisory Commission’s mission.                                     | Arts, Culture & Library Department |
| 4. | Citywide | Discussion and action pertaining to the approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Library Advisory Commission meeting calendar.        | Arts, Culture & Library Department |

- F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
- G. Current Events and Reports
- H. Adjournment

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KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

POSTED: June 4th, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

**SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK’S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.**



**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: June 12, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

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Consent: No              Regular: Yes              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

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**Agenda Wording:**

Consideration and action pertaining to the May 8, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

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**Motion:**

I move to approve the May 8, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

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**Background:**

Not applicable.

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**Objective Analysis:**

Not applicable.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 050825 LAC Meeting Minutes DRAFT
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**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission  
16755 W Vereda Solana Dr.  
Surprise, Arizona 85387**

Thursday, May 8, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Asante Regional Library

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Kady McCarthy, Vice Chair Tomasina DiCapo, Commission members Annie Ansell, Deborah Gentry, Desiree VanLoon, Mark McCall and Jamie Baker

Absent: None

Staff: Ashley Ware –City Librarian and Heather Donaldson – Sr. Management Analyst

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Staff Reports

Ms. Ware reported on the following items:

- Introduction of Commissioner Annie Ansell.
- Hollyhock is gaining two new employees. Darlene will be starting at the end of May, and our second new staff member is going through the process to make it official.
- Summer Reading is here! Registration is available right now through our website, and patrons can start logging minutes on June 1st. Our kick-off event is going to take place at Surprise Regional on May 31st at 10am.
- Library card designs have been picked! We are going to be reaching out to our winners next week, and they will be announced at a Council meeting in June. The designs will be available for patrons on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and all entries will be up in the library for patrons to peruse.
- We wanted to do something for late Commissioner Shields for the work he has done for the library and his advocacy, so his wife, Judy, will be choosing a library card design in his honor.

E. Library Commission Agenda

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

None

**REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS – NON PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. Consideration and action pertaining to the April 10, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Gentry moved to approve the April 10, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner McCall 2<sup>nd</sup>. 7 Yes votes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion and review pertaining to the Surprise Public Library Strategic Plan first draft for review and feedback.

City Librarian Ware lead a discussion with the Commission regarding the first draft of the strategic plan. The Commission reviewed and commented on the following draft plan sections:

- Background and History:
  - Timeline
  - Background and History
  - Relations to Other Plans and Studies
  - American Library Association Mission and Core Values
- City Council Strategic Plan (2023):
  - Safe and Healthy Community
  - Economic and Cultural Vitality
  - Community Livability & Live-Long Learning
  - Stewardship
- Public Engagement:
  - Public Engagement
  - Methods of Engagement
  - Survey (794 responses)
  - Survey Outreach
  - Individual Meetings (63)
  - Focus Groups (7)
- Mission and Vision of Surprise Public Library System:
  - City of Surprise Mission
  - Surprise Public Library Mission
  - Surprise Public Library Vision
- Strategic Goals
  - Goal 1: Grow community connection to improve the lives of Surprise residents.
  - Goal 2: Develop and encourage lifelong learning through innovative and impactful programming, collections, and resources addressing community interests and needs.
  - Goal 3: Strengthen the visibility of the library to broaden the perception of what a library could be for the community.
  - Goal 4: Explore options for library expansion for the growing needs and population of Surprise to enhance the community experience and improve services.
- Community Input Survey
  - Results
  - Comments

F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items:

- Commissioner Baker asked if the Commission can be notified of how they can help with the Summer Reading Program.
- Commissioner VanLoon commented that the social media campaign for the anniversary of Paul Revere's Ride was terrific, and it would be amazing to notify local media in advance of doing these types of things.

G. Current Events and Reports

- Commissioner Gentry attended her HOA's neighborhood event, and there was a great library presence there.
- Commissioner Baker advised that Safety Splash is happening tomorrow, and the Library will have a presence there.
- Vice Chair DiCapo is very excited that the Library is being sponsored by the Phoenix Mercury for the Summer Reading Program. She also advised that she knows the Mercury mascot and dancers if the Surprise Public Library System ever want to have them come any library events.

H. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn at 7:05 pm – Vice Chair DiCappo made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Baker 2<sup>nd</sup>. 7 Yes votes. Motion Carried.

	<hr/> Kady McCarthy, Chair
<b>ATTEST:</b>	<hr/> Heather Donaldson, Sr. Management Analyst

**CERTIFICATION:**

I, Ashley Ware, City Librarian for the City of Surprise Arts, Culture & Library Department, Maricopa County, Arizona, do hereby verify that these are the true and correct minutes of the Library Advisory Commission meeting held on May 8, 2025.

	<hr/> Ashley Ware, City Librarian
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**CITY OF SURPRISE**  
**Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: June 12, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

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Consent: No              Regular: Yes              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

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**Agenda Wording:**

Discussion and action pertaining to the recommendation of approval of the Surprise Public Library System 2025 Strategic Plan.

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**Motion:**

I move to recommend approval of the Surprise Public Library System 2025 Strategic Plan to the Arts, Culture and Library Department Director.

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**Background:**

The Library division was established to provide city-operated library services. To support the future direction of the Library division, to ensure the community has a voice, and to expand upon the current services previously provided, the Library would benefit from a strategic plan.

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**Objective Analysis:**

The strategic plan will develop the mission, vision, goals, and strategies for the Library to guide future policies, programming, and budgets.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. SPS STRATEGIC PLAN FINAL



# **SURPRISE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN (2025)**

## **Table of Contents**

Letter from the Director

Relationship to Other Plans and Studies

Surprise Public Library System: Where We've Been, Where We're Going, How We'll Get There

Mission and Vision of the City of Surprise and Surprise Public Library System

Goals

- Goal 1: Grow community connection to improve the lives of Surprise residents.
- Goal 2: Develop and encourage lifelong learning through innovative and impactful programming, collections, and resources addressing community interests and needs.
- Goal 3: Strengthen the visibility of the Surprise Public Library System to broaden the perception of what a library can be for the community.
- Goal 4: Explore options for library expansion for the growing needs and population of Surprise to enhance the community experience and improve services.

Strategic Implementation Priorities and Timeline

Appendix

- Community Input Survey – Detailed Summary Results
- Focus Group/Stakeholder Interviews – Detailed Summary

## **Acknowledgments**

**Mayor Kevin Sartor**

**Surprise City Council**

**City of Surprise Staff**

Bob Wingenroth, City Manager

Tracy Montgomery, Assistant City Manager

Andrea Davis, Deputy City Manager/Chief Financial Officer

Kelsey Lamphier, Arts, Culture, & Library Director

Ashley Ware, City Librarian

**Library Advisory Commission**

Kady McCarthy – Chair

Tomasina DiCapo – Vice Chair

Annie Ansell

Deborah Gentry

Mark McCall

Jamie Baker

Desiree Van Loon

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome friends,

We are at a pivotal moment in the life of our Library, a moment filled with opportunity, vision, and purpose. It is with great enthusiasm I share the Surprise Public Library System's new Strategic Plan: a forward-looking roadmap designed to guide our evolution as a catalyst for innovation, a driver of intentional growth, and a model for strategic community investment.

Today's libraries are more than collections of books; they are dynamic spaces where people come to learn, connect, create, and grow. They serve as inclusive environments where curiosity is encouraged, knowledge is shared, and lives are enriched. As Surprise continues to grow and evolve, so too must our library system. This plan ensures we remain not only relevant, but vital; responsive to the changing needs of our residents and positioned to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

This Strategic Plan represents our commitment to transformation. It challenges us to think boldly about the library's role, not just as a resource, but as a platform for empowerment and progress. From expanding digital access and enhancing technology to creating flexible spaces that foster collaboration and creativity, every element of this plan reflects our dedication to serving the whole community.

At the heart of this effort is a deep belief in intentional growth. We are investing strategically—in our people, in our spaces, in innovative services, and in partnerships that will extend our reach and amplify our impact. Our goals are grounded in thorough research, informed by data, and shaped by the voices of those we serve.

The Surprise Public Library System has long been a trusted place for learning and inspiration. Now, we are stepping into an exciting new chapter, one marked by innovation, inclusion, and purpose. Together, we are building a library system that honors our past, embraces the present, and shapes a brighter future for all.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this vision. Your ideas, energy, and support make this work possible. The next chapter begins now—and it begins with all of us.

With vision and gratitude,

Kelsey Lamphier

Arts, Culture + Library Director

Surprise Public Library System

## RELATIONS TO OTHER PLANS & STUDIES

### Alignment with City of Surprise Plans

This strategic plan supports the broader goals outlined in the Surprise Strategic Plan and General Plan 2040, particularly those related to lifelong learning, community engagement, and equitable access to public resources. The Library's focus on embracing the community, educational programming, and digital equity directly contributes to the City's objectives for a safe and healthy community, economic and cultural vitality, community livability and lifelong learning, and stewardship.

### City Council Strategic Plan (2025)

*SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY: Maintain a safe and healthy community amid historical growth.*

- Research increasingly demonstrates the significant role libraries play in creating safer and healthier communities. As trusted community spaces open to all, libraries encourage social connection, bridge cultural and generational divides, and support mental well-being – particularly among seniors and individuals who are isolated. Libraries also improve health literacy by providing free access to reliable health information and helping patrons navigate it.

*ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL VITALITY: Promote a healthy economy through strategies that add employment, attract new businesses, and capital investment; support opportunities for veterans and people of all abilities and income levels to thrive; and provide tourism and cultural opportunities.*

- SPLS is a vital hub contributing to a healthy economy by supporting employment, entrepreneurship, and financial well-being. They provide free access to planning tools, legal and business databases, educational programs and technology – reducing costs for veterans, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. Research shows libraries boost local economies by fostering investment, job growth, and tourism.

*COMMUNITY LIVABILITY & LIFE-LONG LEARNING: Provide a high quality residential and business-built environment; revitalize at-risk communities and assist vulnerable populations; collaborate with K-8 schools, skill centers, and higher educational institutions to support innovative services/programs and learning opportunities for all ages.*

- Libraries foster a community of lifelong learning and contribute to neighborhood revitalization. SPLS supports early literacy, school success, and digital skills through a diverse range of programs for every age. By addressing needs such as job searching, homelessness, food insecurity, and mental health, libraries also serve as critical support systems for vulnerable populations, thereby strengthening the overall well-being of the communities they serve.

*STEWARDSHIP: Foster a culture of transparency and fiscal responsibility in managing resources and providing excellent municipal services.*

- Libraries demonstrate strong stewardship by providing free, open access to information, promoting transparency, and delivering high economic value. Research shows they offer a strong return on investment through cost-effective, data-informed resource management, with an average return on investment of between \$2 to \$10 per taxpayer dollar. By adapting to community needs, partnering with local organizations, and equitably delivering services, SPLS enhances the impact of municipal efforts.

## **General Plan 2040 (2024)**

### *Community Engagement and Social Well-being*

- The General Plan emphasizes the importance of fostering a sense of community and enhancing the quality of life for residents. SPLS supports this by offering inclusive programs and services that cater to diverse populations, including youth, seniors, and underserved communities. Initiatives such as the Mayor’s Literacy Challenge and Summer Reading Program exemplify SPLS’s commitment to promoting literacy and community involvement.

### *Economic Development and Access to Resources*

- The General Plan emphasizes the importance of economic development and access to resources that foster entrepreneurship and workforce development. SPLS contributes by providing free access to technology, job search assistance, and educational programs that empower individuals to improve their economic prospects. The integration of the Surprise Resource Center Satellite Hub within the Surprise Regional Library is a testament to this commitment, offering residents access to a range of services in one convenient location.

### *Education and Life-long Learning*

- Education is a cornerstone of the General Plan, with a focus on supporting lifelong learning opportunities. SPLS aligns with this objective by offering a variety of educational programs, including STEAM workshops, digital literacy training, and early literacy initiatives. These programs are designed to meet the evolving needs of the community and prepare residents for future challenges.

### *Cultural Enrichment and Public Spaces*

- The General Plan underscores the importance of cultural enrichment and the development of public spaces serving as community gathering points. SPLS contributes by hosting cultural events, art exhibitions, and public performances celebrating the diverse heritage of Surprise. These activities not only enrich the cultural fabric of the city but also provide residents with opportunities to connect and engage with one another.

### **Integration with Educational Partners**

In recognition of the role libraries play in the learning ecosystem, this plan aligns with local school district and charter school strategic priorities, such as literacy improvement, digital and classroom readiness, and student support services. SPLS's partnerships with educational institutions, early childhood programs, and adult learning centers are designed to reinforce shared outcomes and reduce service duplication.

### **Consistency with State Library Guidelines and National Best Practices**

This plan reflects principles and recommendations from Arizona State Library Association (AzLA) strategic guidelines, as well as national standards from the Public Library Association (PLA) and the American Library Association (ALA). These inform our approaches to access, service design, performance metrics, and community assessment.

### **Building on Prior Assessments and Community Input**

This strategic plan builds upon the findings of recent surveys, needs assessments, and community engagement efforts conducted over the past two years. The input gathered from patrons, staff, and stakeholders directly shaped our strategic priorities and will continue to guide implementation.

By situating the library's strategic direction within these broader frameworks, we ensure our services remain responsive, forward-looking, and well-integrated with the aspirations of the community we serve.

# **SURPRISE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM**

## **WHERE WE'VE BEEN, WHERE WE'RE GOING, HOW WE'LL GET THERE**

### **Background and History**

#### **TIMELINE**

1980s Hollyhock Library was donated and opened

1987 Maricopa County Library District was created, and Surprise joined

2002 Surprise Regional Library opened

2019 Asante Library opened

2022 Arts, Culture, & Library Department Established

2023 Library Division established

July 1, 2023, Grand Reopening of Surprise Public Library System

### **Early Library Services**

Surprise's first library came to fruition after it was donated to the City of Surprise in the 1980s, and Hollyhock Library opened in the Original Town Site. In 1987, library services were provided by a partnership between the City and the Maricopa County Library District (MCLD). With tremendous community growth, a need for a new, larger facility became apparent. In December 2002, the Northwest Regional Library (now Surprise Regional Library) was opened. At the time, it was one of the most technologically advanced libraries in the nation, featuring innovations such as an automated book return system and a digital collection management system.

### **Expansion and Branch Development**

As Surprise's population grew, the need for additional library services became apparent. This need led to the establishment of an additional branch. Asante Library opened in 2019; this 10,000-square-foot facility, with its striking modern design, boasts expansive, open windows to bring in the natural beauty of the surrounding 12-acre park and it offers unique amenities and services to the northern part of Surprise.

### **Transition to City-Operated Library System**

In July 2023, the City of Surprise assumed management of the three library branches—Asante, Hollyhock, and Northwest Regional—from MCLD, forming the Surprise Public Library System (SPLS). This transition aimed to enhance local control and tailor services to the specific needs of the community.

### **Modernization and Community Engagement**

Under city operations, SPLS has sought to be at the forefront of library services. SPLS upgraded and expanded the Polaris Integrated Library System (ILS) to include Vega Discover, which enhanced cataloging and user experience, Vega Program, which showcases the different programs offered by SPLS as well as allows for room reservations, and Vega Promote, which is used to send patrons a monthly newsletter highlighting noteworthy news, amenities, and features of the libraries. Additionally, SPLS launched a brand-new website with upgraded features and a mobile app. Available for download on both iOS and Android devices, the app allows patrons to manage their library accounts, browse the catalog, place holds, renew items, and check the status of borrowed materials. Notably, users can utilize their smartphones as digital library cards, streamlining access to library services. A standout feature is the barcode scanning capability, enabling users to scan the ISBN of any book to check its availability in the library's collection. This functionality facilitates quick and convenient access to desired materials.

## **COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS – WHO WE SERVE**

### **Population**

Over the past two decades, Surprise, Arizona, has undergone a remarkable transformation from a modest, retirement-focused town into one of the fastest-growing suburban cities in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Once known primarily for its quiet pace and seasonal snowbird population, Surprise has evolved into a dynamic, multigenerational community fueled by rapid population growth, suburban development, and economic diversification.

Since 2000, the city's population has increased more than fivefold - rising from just over 30,000 residents to more than 158,000 by 2023. A combination of affordable housing, desirable quality of life, and proximity to major employment hubs in Phoenix and the West Valley has driven this explosive growth.

This rapid expansion, while offering numerous benefits, has also presented challenges, including a need for expanded infrastructure, public services, and educational resources. In response, institutions like the

Surprise Public Library System are reimagining their roles, offering more inclusive, technology-driven, and community-centered services to meet the evolving needs of their patrons.

### **Educational Attainment**

- High School Graduates: 94.3% of residents aged 25 and over
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 31.0% of residents aged 25 and over

### **Ethnicity/ Race**

- White (Non-Hispanic): 66.9%
- Hispanic or Latino: 19.2%
- Two or More Races: 10.9%
- Other Races: Representing smaller percentages.

### **Age**

- Youth and Young Adults: About 24.5% of the population is under 18 years old.
- Working-Age Adults: 41.25% are between 30 to 64 years old.
- Older Adults: 19.76% are aged 65 to 84, and 2.68% are 85 years or older.

### **Economic Indicators**

Since 2000, Surprise experienced rapid population growth. This growth has been accompanied by a 6.4% increase in median household income, rising to \$93,371 in 2023. The City's median property value also saw a notable 12.3% rise, reaching \$396,000. These economic improvements suggest a more stable community, potentially increasing demand for library services related to financial literacy, job training, and adult education.

### **Technology Access**

While Surprise has made strides in infrastructure development, specific areas still face limited broadband connectivity and access to digital devices. To bridge this gap, the City is actively working on initiatives to enhance internet access and digital inclusion. For instance, the development of a Multigenerational

Community Resource Center aims to expand access to services such as health, wellness, and workforce development, with a focus on underserved communities.

The Surprise Public Library System is integral to the city's digital inclusion efforts. SPLS offers a wide variety of materials and electronic devices available for check-out, including Chromebooks and mobile hotspots. In the last two years, SPLS has expanded its collection to include video games. Free public Wi-Fi is available at all three libraries and staff are prepared to answer any questions or provide assistance with technological needs. Digital Tech Help programs are also offered at the libraries, with designated drop-in times for individuals to visit the library for specific help or to learn a new skill.

Between 2010 and 2023, access to technology in Surprise, AZ, has significantly improved. In 2010, around 80% of households had a computer, and 70% had internet access. By 2023, these figures rose to nearly 98% of households having a computer and over 94% having broadband internet. This growth highlights significant strides in digital connectivity across the city, making access to technology more widespread and reinforcing the importance of continued support from community resources, such as public libraries.

## **CURRENT ASSESSMENTS**

### **Community Engagement**

Public engagement was paramount in the strategic planning process, as it ensured the Library's Strategic Plan would truly reflect the needs, aspirations, and priorities of the Surprise community. By actively involving residents, stakeholders, and library users, the planning process gained valuable insights, fostered a sense of ownership and support for the Library's future direction, and ultimately led to a more relevant and impactful strategic plan.

#### Survey (794 responses)

SPLS actively sought community input through a six-week survey conducted from April to June 2024, which was widely promoted via press releases, social media, in-library signage, and outreach events. To ensure SPLS effectively addresses community needs and preferences, this survey garnered responses from a diverse range of residents. This feedback directly informed the strategic planning process, capturing valuable insights on current services, programs, priorities, and future initiatives. This comprehensive

approach ensured residents had an opportunity to share their perspectives and contribute to the library's future direction.

#### Individual Meetings (63)

Conducted over 60 individual meetings with key stakeholders, including patrons, City staff, local business owners, and community organizations. These meetings provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions, addressing specific concerns, and seeking input on the Strategic Plan.

#### Focus Groups (7)

To gather in-depth perspectives, SPLS organized targeted focus groups comprising a diverse range of community members, including patrons, staff, neighboring residents, and local businesses. These facilitated discussions explored key themes including sustaining and promoting library and community services, enhancing Surprise's engagement, identifying optimal locations for future library resources, and effectively promoting existing Surprise libraries.

### **Facility Assets**

#### Asante Library

- The Asante Library located at 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr, Surprise, AZ 85387, is a modern 10,000-square-foot facility situated within the 12-acre Asante Park, offering residents a blend of architectural elegance and community-focused services that foster learning and connection.

#### Hollyhock Library

- The Hollyhock Library, located at 15844 N Hollyhock St, Surprise, 85378, is a 1,020-square-foot, community-focused branch nestled in the city's original square mile. It provides a welcoming environment for residents seeking access to information, educational resources, and community engagement opportunities.

#### Surprise Regional Library

- The Surprise Regional Library, located at 16089 N Bullard Ave, Surprise, 85374, is a 23,000-square-foot facility serving as a central hub for community engagement, education, and technology

access. Situated within the Surprise Recreation Complex, the Library offers a tranquil setting with scenic views of a nearby lake and park, providing a welcoming environment for patrons of all ages right at the heart of Surprise.

#### Surprise Community and Resource Center

- The latest addition to SPLS will be located inside the Surprise Community and Resource Center, in partnership with Human Services and Community Vitality located at Hollyhock St and Sante Fe Dr, Surprise, 85378. This new 35,000-square-foot, multigenerational facility will serve as a long-term investment into Surprise's economic resiliency and community well-being, increasing opportunities for prevention and mitigation programs and services. This facility is slated to open in Spring/Summer 2026.

### **SWOT Analysis**

#### Strengths

- Community support
- Third space for the community
- Programming offered for all ages – informative, educational, STEAM, fun, social
- Access to information through books, journals, magazines, databases, research
- Support of literacy for a growing community
- Partnerships with local schools, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Ottawa University, non-profits, and City departments
- Welcoming, inclusive, safe space for all residents
- Library's reputation of being a trusted resource and ease of access for patrons
- Staff knowledge and customer service

#### Weaknesses

- Educating patrons on how libraries have changed from the past
- Limited physical space for programming, collections, and staff
- Marketing the many services and resources the Library has to offer

- Many resources are online; not all patrons have the resources or skills to access them without assistance
- Budget to keep up with growing technologies like a Makerspace

### Opportunities

- Having unreasonable hospitality for our patrons
- Finding grants to grow our innovative and unique collections
- Advocate and promote awareness of literacy and education for community well-being
- Data-driven decision-making based on our Surprise patrons to grow with the community
- Community spaces need to be redesigned and expanded to serve the needs of residents better
- Sustainability initiatives for programming and operations
- Partner with groups and organizations for more adaptable services
- Collaboration with community groups and patrons to continually improve library services

### Threats

- A decrease in funding or budget allocations can lead to reduced services
- Changes in City and partner leadership goals and values
- Security risks of physical theft or cybersecurity
- Competition of paid subscriptions and other services like library resources
- Rising censorship threatens the right to read and access information
- Surprise population, socio-economic, and aging community changes can impact uses and services
- Public perception of outdated library services takes time to change
- Escalating costs of materials and services

## **MISSION & VISION**

### **The City of Surprise Mission Statement**

The City of Surprise delivers exemplary and innovative public service with integrity and professionalism; in a fiscally responsible manner; creating a safe and attractive community where residents and businesses can thrive.

### **City Council Strategic Mission**

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

### **Surprise Public Library Mission**

The Surprise Public Library System fosters community connection and intellectual freedom through multi-generational literacy initiatives, cutting edge technology, and engaging programs that ensure equal access and opportunity for all.

### **Surprise Public Library Vision**

To be a vibrant heart of the community that welcomes individuals of all ages and backgrounds to explore, learn, and thrive together. Cultivating a responsive collection that meets the needs of our community. Providing accessibility initiatives through a wide variety of library services. Welcoming everyone with a focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

# GOALS

## **Goal 1: GROW COMMUNITY CONNECTION TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF SURPRISE RESIDENTS**

Strategy 1.1: Provide seamless and user-centered experiences across all library services to positively reflect the Library's commitment to service and the unique needs of residents.

- Employ diverse methods like focus groups, one-on-one interviews, observations, usability testing, and community feedback sessions.
- Utilize human-centered thinking, putting patrons at the forefront of every service, system, and experience to build a reliable service model.

Strategy 1.2: Establish beneficial partnerships with community organizations, schools, and businesses to expand the Library's reach and service offerings.

- Systematically identify existing community organizations, schools, and businesses within Surprise to create an asset map.
- Build toward co-creation by collaborating with partners to design programs and services that ensure relevance and accessibility for patrons.
- Measure the impact of collaborative initiatives and share these results with partners and patrons to demonstrate continued investment.

Strategy 1.3: Ensure equitable access to library resources and services for all community members to create a central gathering place.

- Offer resources in various formats to cater to different learning styles and preferences.
- Take time to understand the distinct needs of seniors, families with young children, teens, job seekers, new residents, business owners, and all residents of Surprise.

## **Goal 2: DEVELOP AND ENCOURAGE LIFELONG LEARNING THROUGH INNOVATIVE AND IMPACTFUL PROGRAMMING, COLLECTIONS, AND RESOURCES ADDRESSING COMMUNITY INTERESTS AND NEEDS.**

Strategy 2.1: Implement a comprehensive lifelong learning ecosystem through programs spanning from birth to adulthood, providing optimal learning opportunities for every person in our community to support their unique interests and needs.

- Understand the academic needs and common challenges faced by students and teachers in local schools and homeschool groups to align literacy and academic support.
- Provide expanded access to adult learning and workforce development through job search assistance, workshops, mentorship opportunities, and partnerships through the community.
- Expand and refine literacy programs for all ages to foster social development, beat the “summer slide”, prepare for classroom readiness, and provide access to information at every age.

Strategy 2.2: Curate and promote relevant and unique collections to meet the evolving needs of the community.

- Utilize resources and the Integrated Library System to identify popular genres, topics, formats, and underutilized areas for a rounded circulation data analysis representing residents’ needs.
- Conduct a diversity audit to ensure the collection accurately reflects the community in terms of authors, characters, perspectives, and topics across various identity markers, including race, religion, ethnicity, age, disability, etc.
- Implement an ongoing weeding process system-wide to remove outdated, damaged, or irrelevant materials ensuring the collection remains fresh, functional, and reflects community needs.

Strategy 2.3: Foster a positive and passionate work environment to attract and retain talented library staff. Enhance staff expertise and community engagement by creating professional development pathways that support staff in succeeding in their roles.

- Identify current strengths and areas for growth, including both technical and soft skills to create individualized development plans that align with career aspirations and library needs.
- Provide initiatives and resources for mental health, stress management, and physical well-being to ensure staff receive the support needed to deliver excellent customer service.

**Goal 3: STRENGTHEN THE VISIBILITY OF THE SURPRISE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM TO BROADEN THE PERCEPTION OF WHAT A LIBRARY COULD BE FOR THE COMMUNITY.**

Strategy 3.1: Ensure fiscal and financial stability by demonstrating the value and return on investment of the library to the community and stakeholders through sustained data.

- Create and maintain a library dashboard with information on attendance, programs, collections, circulation, patron usage, etc., to better understand community investment.
- Actively pursue grants and monies from federal, state, and private foundations aligning with library services and community needs.

Strategy 3.2: Capitalize on opportunities to develop and implement a targeted marketing strategy that increases library visibility and attracts new patrons to resources and services.

- Optimize digital presence to ensure the library services are mobile-friendly and easy to navigate on all devices.
- Craft a dynamic marketing and social media strategy to expand community reach.
- Create a welcome orientation for all new residents and patrons by hosting in-person and virtual events to educate the community about the Library and City's offerings.

**Goal 4: EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR SURPRISE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM EXPANSION FOR THE GROWING NEEDS AND POPULATION OF SURPRISE TO ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVE SERVICES.**

Strategy 4.1: Develop comprehensive long-term facilities plan for consideration for a more extensive main library or expansion of existing buildings to guarantee all residents of Surprise have access to library resources and services.

- Conduct a detailed analysis of current library space usage and technology infrastructure to understand what areas are over-capacity or underutilized.
- Collaborate directly with City Planning and Economic Development to understand their long-term growth forecasts, new residential developments, and projected population shifts.
- Research and visit newer or expanded library facilities in comparable growing cities to identify best practices, innovative design trends, and successful space utilization models.

Strategy 4.2: Consider and develop preliminary library designs based on community input regarding needs and current space limitations.

- Distribute online and print surveys to gather input from patrons on their desired spaces, preferred library features, and how they currently utilize the library.
- Create several preliminary design concepts to address the identified needs and limitations, ranging from minor renovations to expanding into a new facility.
- Develop a phased implementation approach to expand the system, minimizing disruptions and allowing for adjustments based on ongoing community feedback.

## STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES & TIMELINE

GOAL	STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION	SHORT (1-2 Years)	MEDIUM (3-4 years)	LONG (5+ Years)
Grow Community Connection	Employ diverse methods for community feedback	o		
	Understand distinct needs of all patrons in Surprise as it grows	o		
	Work with partners for co-creation of services	o		
	Offer resources in various formats for all abilities	o		
	Create an asset map for library partnerships		o	
	Measure impact of collaborative initiatives for continued investment		o	
	Implement human-design thinking			o
Life-Long Learning	Understand academic needs of local schools and homeschool groups for support	o		
	Utilize resources for a circulation analysis representing resident needs	o		
	Implement an ongoing weeding process systemwide	o		
	Provide initiatives and resources to better support staff	o		
	Expand and refine literacy programs for all ages		o	
	Expand access for adult learning, workforce development, and mentorship		o	
	Identify strengths and areas of growth to create individualized development plans for staff		o	
	Perform a diversity audit to ensure the collection represents patrons needs			o
Visibility	Actively pursue grants and monies	o		
	Optimize digital presence for library services	o		
	Craft a marketing and social media strategy		o	
	Create a library dashboard to understand library metrics and return on investment		o	
	Create a comprehensive welcome orientation for Surprise residents			o
Future Planning & Sustainable Growth	Collaborate with city departments to understand Surprise growth long-term	o		
	Research similar sized libraries for best practices and trends		o	
	Conduct a detailed analysis of library space and usage		o	

	Capture patron feedback on desired library spaces and features		o	
	Create preliminary design concepts for expanding or building new library space			o
	Develop phased implementation approach for expansion			o
				o

# APPENDIX

## Community Input Survey

Community feedback served as a crucial foundation for developing the Surprise Public Library System's Strategic Plan. This process involved various engagement methods, such as focus groups, meetings with community stakeholders, and a comprehensive survey that garnered 794 responses. The analysis of the survey data took into careful consideration the unique circumstances of the Library's transition from County-led to City-led operations. The assessment aims to measure overall satisfaction levels and to identify emerging concerns or successes. By conducting this survey, the Library gained a deeper understanding of the community and has taken informed steps to enhance the patron experience.

The survey data below show the top percentages of survey responses focusing on key trends for actionable insights and identifying the viewpoints of the majority in our community.

Overall, how important is the library to you and your family?

- 61.10% Very Important
- 28.82% Important
- 5.48% Somewhat Important

On average, how often do you visit a Surprise Library?

- 30.85% Monthly
- 30.09% Less than once a month
- 29.08% Weekly

What type of library materials do you check out the most?

- 77.23% Physical books
- 41.48% eBooks & eAudiobooks
- 26.54 DVDs & Blu-rays

Which library do you attend programming at most often?

- 86.89% Surprise Regional
- 11.43% Asante Library
- 1.68% Hollyhock Library

How do you typically find out about library programs?

- 53.02% Library website

- 33.05% Signs or flyers at the Library
- 23.32% Social media

## Survey Comments

### **Goal 1: Grow community connection to improve the lives of Surprise Residents.**

- “A good library is an essential component of the city.”
- “Gathering place, place of peace and welcome. Great variety of books and resources.”
- “Just continue to grow and meet the needs of the community. I think we have a large population of people with disabilities/neurotypical differences, so maybe some programming that is sensory friendly or partnering with Adapted Recreation would be beneficial.”
- “We love the ability to meet neighbors, and people of the community while sharing a common interest and enjoyment of reading.”
- “I value the community space where my children can read and be able to play with other children.”
- “[The Library] allows my child and I to bond and spend time with each other in an educational setting outside of the home as well as allows socialization with others for free.”
- “It’s a needed place for many community members. It allows for people to do work, be entertained, have a place to get out of the heat, and a place for people to come together.”
- "More activities and events for older people. How about mental health care-related events as I know many people with issues and could use a good connection source etc"
- "Surprise has a large Homeschool community. I believe If the Surprise Library held some homeschool hangouts, it would be beneficial to our community."

### **Goal 2: Develop and encourage lifelong learning through innovative and impactful programming, collections, and resources addressing community interests and needs.**

- “The [Library’s] computers and internet, the newspapers are needed because there are still people who do not have access to them. The Mobile Library is a great way to service those who don’t drive or are home bound.”
- “The programs (like baby and toddler time) and events (like zoo/science center collaborations) have been huge for me and my two kiddos. I get to meet other moms, they get to tumble around

with kids their own age and learn hands-on, not sitting at a desk! The library staff really kills it too; they bring so much energy and make it fun for the kids.”

- “What I value is also how it benefits access to entertainment, education, safe spaces, and helping those without computer access.”
- "Continue to retain/attract excellent staff and continually add to selections."
- “I have little kids, so the little classes/storytimes are our favorite.”
- “The resources available to the community. My most used resource is hands down, Hoopla.”
- “I use my library card mostly to check out audiobooks via Libby. Occasionally, I visit the library to read magazines and peruse the cookbooks.”
- "I would love more digital access to things through the library. Maybe access to LinkedIn Learning, and even digital tickets to the local resources available in person”
- “The staff and programs are wonderful. Access to materials without buying everything. Pride is taken in care and upkeep and accommodating children, lots of activities, and classes.
- “I love that I can share the gift of reading with my grandbabies. Going to pick out books weekly and choosing themes teaches them skills they will hopefully care through life.”

**Goal 3: Strengthen the visibility of Surprise Public Library System to broaden the perception of what a library could be for the community.**

- "I feel like many people are stuck at home looking at screens and need to get out of the house. I wish more families were aware of all the resources at their local library. Maybe a news spot or a commercial? We just need to get them into the parking lot and through the doors!"
- "Increase outreach to those who don't have access to services"
- "Teach us about all the library has to offer! There is so much, and it is really overwhelming. I feel like I use 1/100th of the services offered. I would love articles about what each service offers and how to use them. Like Libby. Maybe you could include this in the newsletter, or provide a link to the article?"
- "Ensure that the inter-library loan program is marketed. Continue to host the on-going teen clubs (YuGiOh), host community events to raise awareness, invite schools to tour/have events there"
- "Many people are unaware of everything the library has to offer, a better way of reaching out would be good."

**Goal 4: Explore options for Surprise Public Library System expansion for the growing needs and population of Surprise to enhance the community and improve services.**

- “Very comfortable and inviting environment at no cost to enjoy.”

- "Some libraries are looking more sterile and cold and less of a cozy place to sit and read. I find it important to have many comfortable places for people of all ages to sit and enjoy reading. It would be more welcoming."
- "I really wish there were private study rooms"
- "We need another library in Surprise"
- "A separate children's section that is closed off from other areas of the library. This would give children a safe space and reduce the need to be as quiet as not to disturb the other patrons. More interactive furniture in children's section."
- "Love that this library has huge windows over-looking the park, it really makes me want to come in and physically visit the library, not just use the on-line services."
- "The main library should be moved and not near the stadium and city park where it can be affected by special events."
- "The wealth of information. The Surprise Library is a wonderful area to sit and read and enjoy a beautiful view."

### Survey Questions

**“How would you rate each of the following Surprise Public Library System services?”**

Category	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
Overall, how would you rate the Library?	40.49%	42.16%	9.38%	3.21%	4.76%
Customer Service	62.6%	24.55%	3.6%	1.8%	7.46%
Facilities	50.59%	39.69%	5.65%	2.1%	8.67%
Hours of Operation	46.13%	39.69%	5.03%	.77%	8.38%
Library Policies	31.45%	33.81%	7.34%	1.97%	25.43%
Online Services	29.44%	34.24%	10.89%	4.28%	21.14%
Internet Access	24.19%	21.72%	3.38%	2.21%	48.50%
Collections(books, movies, etc. )	21.62%	42.86%	18.4%	6.82%	10.3%
MAX & Inter Library Loan	20.05%	20.84%	8.39%	4.72%	46%
Computers & Printing	18.26%	18.13%	3.89%	.78%	58.94%
Programs	17.61%	18.89%	8.74%	1.8%	52.96%

**How important is each of the following library services to you?**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Overall, how important is the library to you and your family?	61.1%	28.83%	5.48%	2.93%	1.66%
Borrowing materials	76.02%	14.54%	3.57%	2.68%	3.19%
Online Services	51.16%	25.19%	7.84%	5.53%	10.28%
MAX & Inter Library Loans	39.20%	23.93%	12.68%	6.47%	17.72%
Internet Access	35.35%	19.48%	10.32%	16%	18.84%
Programs	23.78%	17.48%	14.65%	19.67%	24.42%
Reference	20.23%	21.91%	22.55%	18.56%	16.75%
Study Rooms & Reading Areas	18.71%	20.26%	15.87%	20%	25.16%
Newspapers & Magazines	17.36%	23.45%	20.98%	19.82%	18.39%
Community Meeting Rooms	16.45%	18.26%	15.03%	23.58%	26.68%
Computers & Printing	16.19%	15.93%	15.28%	25.52%	27.07%
Mobile Library Services	15.91%	17.59%	11%	17.59%	37.9%
Help using computers, printers, etc.	13.68%	16.39%	12.26%	28.16%	29.55%



**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: June 12, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

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Consent: No              Regular: Yes              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

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**Agenda Wording:**

Discussion pertaining to strategies to advance the Library Advisory Commission’s mission.

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**Motion:**

None.

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**Background:**

At the end of the second fiscal year as a Commission, this brings on a unique time to reevaluate the strategies of the Library Advisory Commission.

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**Objective Analysis:**

The Library Advisory Commission will discuss and brainstorm strategies to actively fulfill their mission, powers, duties, and responsibilities.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

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**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: June 12, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

---

Consent: No              Regular: Yes              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

---

**Agenda Wording:**

Discussion and action pertaining to the approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Library Advisory Commission meeting calendar.

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**Motion:**

I move to approve the FY2026 Library Advisory Commission meeting calendar.

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**Background:**

Not applicable.

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**Objective Analysis:**

Per Surprise Municipal Code Sec. 2-295(12)(c): "Each body must establish an annual schedule for regular meetings designating the time, date and location for such regular meetings." This item has been placed on the agenda to allow the Library Commission an opportunity to review and approve the FY2024 meeting calendar.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. FY26 Library Advisory Commission Calendar
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**Library Advisory Commission Meetings – Fiscal Year 2026**

*All meetings take place at 6:00 p.m.*

<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Reason for Reschedule:</b>
Thursday, August 14, 2025	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, September 11, 2025	Surprise Regional Library 16089 N Bullard Avenue Surprise, AZ 85374	
Thursday, October 9, 2025	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, November 13, 2025	Surprise Regional Library 16089 N Bullard Avenue Surprise, AZ 85374	
Thursday, December 11, 2025	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, January 8, 2026	Surprise Regional Library 16089 N Bullard Avenue Surprise, AZ 85374	
Thursday February 12, 2026	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, March 12, 2026	Surprise Regional Library 16089 N Bullard Avenue Surprise, AZ 85374	
Thursday, April 9, 2026	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, May 14, 2026	Surprise Regional Library 16089 N Bullard Avenue Surprise, AZ 85374	
Thursday, June 11, 2026	Asante Library 16755 W Vereda Solana Dr Surprise, AZ 85387	
Thursday, July 9, 2026		<b>SUMMER RECESS</b>