



CITY OF SURPRISE
City Council Work Session
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374
Tuesday, September 15, 2026 @ 4:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

- A. Call To Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Regular City Council Work Session Agenda

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

- | | | | |
|----|----------|---|--|
| 1. | Citywide | West Valley Regional Chamber Update Presentation | Jodi Tas
City Manager Office |
| 2. | Citywide | Presentation and discussion pertaining to the FY2026 Financial Status Report through June 2026. | Sandy Simmons
Finance |
| 3. | Citywide | Presentation and discussion pertaining to a Surprise Arts update. | Julie Akerly
Sports,
Entertainment, and
Culture |
- E. Executive Session

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03

A. On a public majority vote of the members constituting a quorum, a public body may hold an executive session but only for the following purposes:

1. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, disciplining or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee of any public body, except that, with the exception of salary discussions, an officer, appointee or employee may demand that the discussion or consideration occur at a public meeting. The public body shall provide the officer, appointee or employee with written notice of the executive session as is appropriate but not less than twenty-four hours for the officer, appointee or employee to determine whether the discussion or consideration should occur at a public meeting.
2. Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection, including the receipt and discussion of information or testimony that is specifically required to be maintained as confidential by state or federal law.
3. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body.
4. Discussion or consultation with the attorneys of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its attorneys regarding the public body's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation.
5. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations with employee organizations regarding the salaries, salary schedules or compensation paid in the form of fringe benefits of employees of the public body.
6. Discussion, consultation or consideration for international and interstate negotiations or for negotiations by a city or town, or its designated representatives, with members of a tribal council, or its designated representatives, of an Indian reservation located within or adjacent to the city or town.

7. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property.

8. Discussion or consideration of matters relating to school safety operations or school safety plans or programs.

9. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to discuss security plans, procedures, assessments, measures or systems relating to, or having an impact on, the security or safety of buildings, facilities, operations, critical infrastructure information and information technology maintained by the public body. Records, documentation, notes, or other materials made by, or provided to, the representatives pursuant to this paragraph are confidential and exempt from public disclosure under this chapter and title 39, chapter 1.

F. Adjournment

KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

POSTED: Thursday, September 10th 2026 @ 4:00 PM

Meeting room doors will be open at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

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 City Council Work Session

Council Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

Contact Person: Jodi Tas, Government Relations
Director

Submitting Department: City Manager Office

District: Citywide

Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No

Regular: Yes

Public Hearing: No

Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

West Valley Regional Chamber Update Presentation

Motion:

None, discussion only

Background:

The West Valley Regional Chamber will provide City Council with an update on its year-to-date activities and regional initiatives.

Objective Analysis:

To provide City Council with an update from the West Valley Regional Chamber on year-to-date activities and regional initiatives.

Policy Compliant:

This item is within policy

Financial Impact:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Surprise Year 2 Update
 2. Surprise_City_Council_Packet[1]
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WEST VALLEY
REGIONAL CHAMBER



SURPRISE
ARIZONA

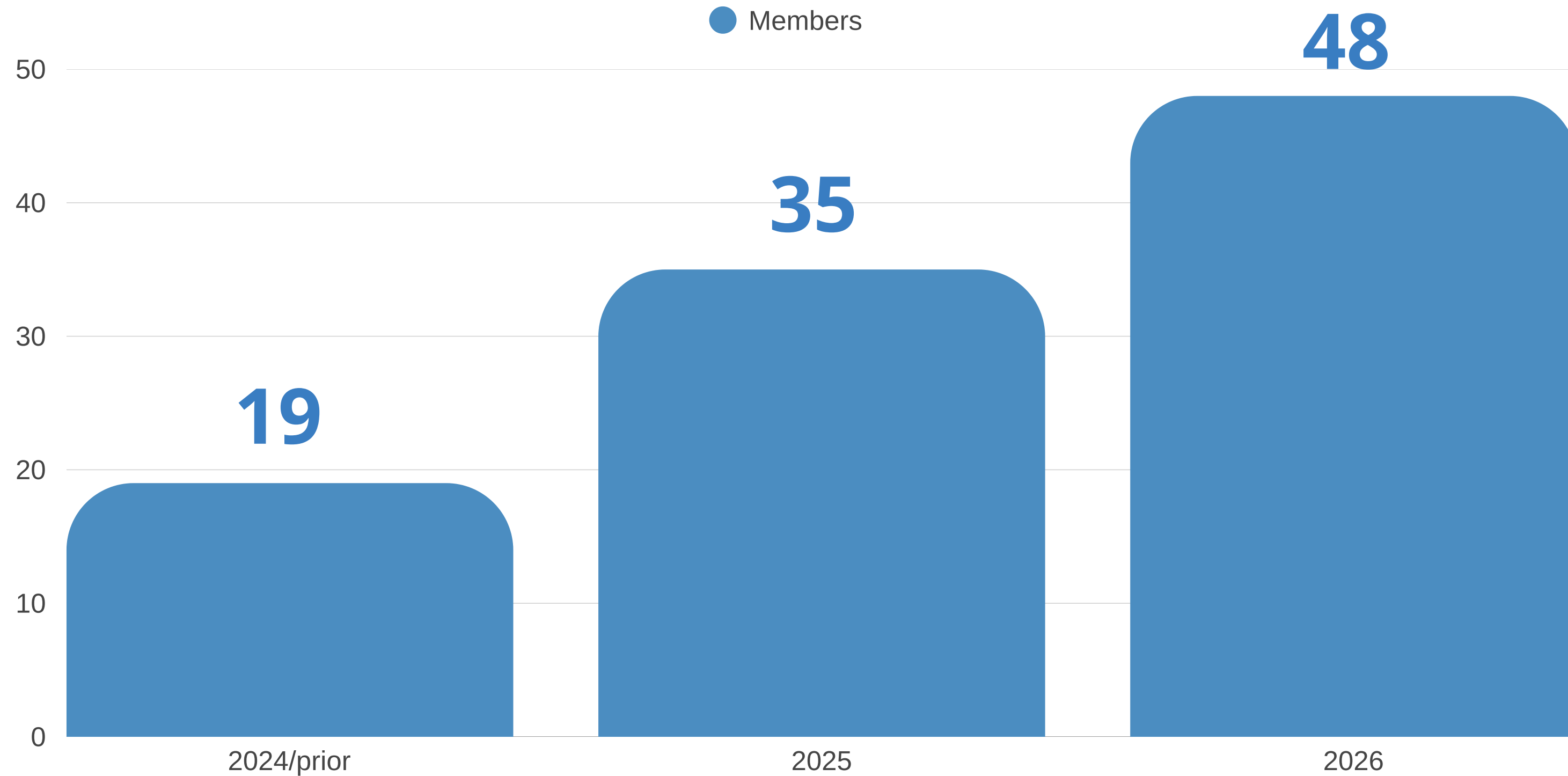
SURPRISE PARTNERSHIP

2 YEAR IMPACT OVERVIEW

SURPRISE BY THE NUMBERS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MEMBER GROWTH



MEMBERSHIP DATA

102	Active Chamber Members from Surprise
48	New Members so far from Surprise in 2026
35	New Members from Surprise in 2025
19	Members from Surprise prior to 2025
40+	Ribbon Cuttings Attended and/or Lead by the Chamber in Surprise
30	Chamber Events in Surprise
10+	Testimonials from Surprise-based Businesses
9	Upcoming Chamber Events in Surprise
3	Chamber Ambassadors Based in Surprise
3	Chamber Board Members Based in Surprise

A photograph of three women standing in front of a blue backdrop with the West Valley Regional Chamber logo. The woman on the left has blonde hair and glasses, wearing a black top with a large pink and blue floral pattern. The woman in the middle has long brown hair and is wearing sunglasses and a white top. The woman on the right has dark hair in braids and is wearing a white top. A large white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text.

**AVG. OF 5
MEMBERS/MONTH COMING
FROM SURPRISE!**

SURPRISE CITY STAFF/COUNCIL EVENT INVOLVMENT



MIDDAY MINGLE

MANUFACTURING SUMMIT

RIBBON CUTTINGS

CITY TO CITY UPDATE

EPIC NETWORKING EVENTS

ANNUAL MEETING

BOARD MEETINGS

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

POWERING THE WEST VALLEY

ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT YEAR

- Implement a Surprise Premier Leaders Group, weekly industry-specific networking group
- Expand workforce partnership with local schools/employers
- Partner with Spark Surprise on getting more small businesses involved in the program and exposed to the great resources it has to offer
- Increase membership/engagement from Surprise-based businesses



PAST YEAR OVERVIEW AS AN ORGANIZATION

2025-2026



Coca-Cola

Freeway
INSURANCE

xfinity

WEST VALLEY
REGIONAL CHAMBER

WEST VALLEY
REGIONAL CHAMBER

WEST VALLEY
REGIONAL CHAMBER

WEST VALLEY
REGIONAL CHAMBER

WEST
VALLEY

YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Net Profit for the year: \$128,000
- Increased Membership by 20%
 - 287 New Members
- Paid off Debt (\$50,000)
- Launched Mid-day Mingle
- Launched Manufacturing Summit & Education & Workforce Summit
- Hosted Public Official Forums
- Foundation hosted the Taste
- Sold out Signature Events
 - Awards Gala
 - Legislative Breakfast
 - Golf Classic
 - City to City Update
 - Annual Meeting
- Upgraded Video Conferencing
- Revitalized Building Exterior

ENGAGEMENT BREAKDOWN

40 Programs/Trainings Hosted by the Chamber

105 Events Hosted by the Chamber

The Chamber Participated in **93** Community Events

63 Ground Breakings and Ribbon Cuttings

40 Committee Meetings

Impacting 10,000+ Participants



WEST VALLEY

REGIONAL CHAMBER

2025
2026

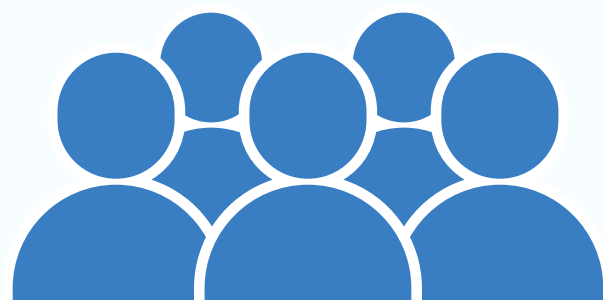
*Your Chamber
by the Numbers*



The purpose of the West Valley Regional Chamber is to **ENGAGE, ADVOCATE, and INFLUENCE** our business community through serving and educating our members!

68 years of serving
our business &
community

Membership



1,100+ Total Members

287 New Members

80% Member Retention

Gathered
10,000+
attendees at
100+ events
this fiscal year

Business Type (Top 5 Categories)

Professional/Business Services

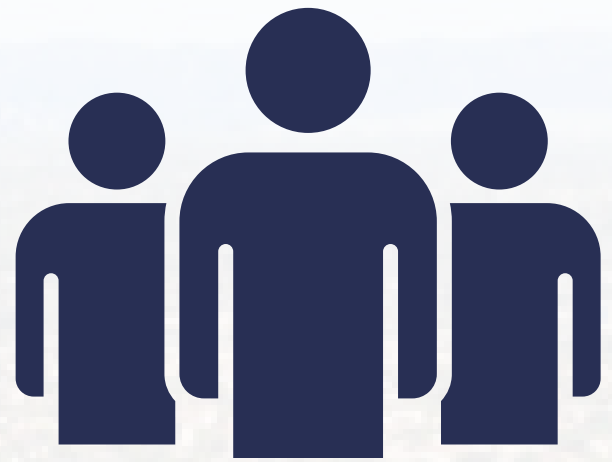
Healthcare & Wellness

Banking & Financial Services

Real Estate & Construction

Education

OUR CHAMBER'S REACH



1,100+
Members



10,000+
Individuals



100+
Events Yearly



33,000+
Media Reach

THANK YOU!

Here's to another great year!



Partnership With the City of Surprise

A Two-Year Impact Overview & Path Forward

Prepared for the City of Surprise City Council
Presented by *Jeffrey Campos*, CEO/President, West Valley Regional Chamber
Tuesday, September 15th, 2026 at 4:30pm

Why This Partnership Matters

Two years ago, the City of Surprise became a City Partner of the West Valley Regional Chamber — an investment in the businesses, jobs, and economic vitality that make Surprise a place people choose to live, work, and build a company. This packet is a straightforward accounting of what that partnership has produced so far, and what we're proposing together for the year ahead.

Council Members,

On behalf of the Chamber's board, staff, and the **1,200+** businesses we represent, thank you for the City's continued confidence in this partnership. We know a City Partnership is a public investment, and we take seriously the responsibility to show Surprise exactly what it's buying — not just goodwill, but support for local business growth, workforce development, and the region's broader economic development goals.

The sections that follow summarize what the Chamber has delivered specifically for Surprise businesses and residents over the past two years, what we're proposing for the next chapter of this partnership, and the renewal we're respectfully asking the Council to approve.

Surprise, By the Numbers

A quick look at the reach of the Chamber's work in Surprise since the partnership began.

102 Active Chamber members from Surprise <i>*List of businesses available on request</i>	35 New Surprise members onboarded in 2025
19 Surprise members prior to 2025	48 New Surprise members onboarded so far in 2026
40+ Ribbon cuttings / grand openings attended and/or Chamber-lead in Surprise	30 Chamber events held in Surprise <i>*List of events available on request</i>
9 Upcoming Chamber events in Surprise this year	10+ Testimonials from Surprise-based businesses
3 Chamber Ambassadors based in Surprise	3 Chamber Board Members from Surprise

What We've Delivered for Surprise

Business growth & visibility

- Attended and/or hosted 40+ ribbon cuttings / grand openings for new and expanding Surprise businesses and posted recaps
- Featured Surprise City Council in 10+ newsletters reaching 6,000+ subscribers
- Facilitated countless referrals and introductions among Surprise members

Advocacy & city alignment

- Represented Surprise business interests on policy issues and within committees
- Provided the Council & City staff with quarterly updates
- Provided the Council & City staff with opportunities to engage and present at Powering the West Valley Event, City to City Update, annual Manufacturing Summit Event and more

Workforce & community connection

- Hosted 30+ Networking Events and 50+ Academy Events open to Surprise residents and business owners
- Supported local nonprofits through exposure at networking events

What's Next for Surprise

Priorities we're proposing to focus on in the coming year, specifically for Surprise businesses:

- *Implement a Surprise Premier Leaders Group, weekly industry-specific networking group*
- *Expanded workforce partnership with local schools/employers*
- *Quarterly economic development updates for Council*
- *Partnership with Spark Surprise on getting more small businesses involved in the program and exposed to the great resources it has to offer*
- *Increased membership and engagement from Surprise-based businesses*

Our Ask

We respectfully ask the Council to renew the City of Surprise's Chamber City Partnership for 2027 at \$25,000 so we can continue and grow this level of support for Surprise businesses and residents.

We're glad to answer any questions the Council has today, and we're happy to provide more detailed data on any of the figures in this packet.

Prepared by

Ashley Carroll

Director of Membership & Engagement

West Valley Regional Chamber

acarroll@westvalleyregional.org



CITY OF SURPRISE City Council Work Session

Council Meeting Date: September 15, 2026
Submitting Department: Finance
Staff Recommendations:

Contact Person: Sandy Simmons, Finance Director
District: Citywide

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

Agenda Wording:

Presentation and discussion pertaining to the FY2026 Financial Status Report through June 2026.

Motion:

None, discussion only.

Background:

This update will review the financial activity through June 2026.

Objective Analysis:

The comparison of the current financial activity to the plan laid out in the budget helps the city to determine its current financial position. This will allow for better short and long term financial planning as the current fiscal year is underway and the planning for the next budget begins.

Policy Compliant:

This item is compliant with the city's Comprehensive Financial Management Policies.

Financial Impact:

The presentation provides an update of the unaudited revenue and expenditures for the General Fund for Fiscal Year 2026, through June 2026.

ATTACHMENTS:



CITY OF SURPRISE City Council Work Session

Council Meeting Date: September 15, 2026 Contact Person: Julie Akerly, Acting Director
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and Culture District: Citywide
Staff Recommendations: None

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

Agenda Wording:

Presentation and discussion pertaining to a Surprise Arts update.

Motion:

None, discussion only.

Background:

The City of Surprise established an Arts and Culture Division in 2023, responsible for overseeing the public art collection, arts and culture services, and community programs. The Division provides an annual update to the City Council regarding the Percent for Art Plan, the community impact of arts programs, and future program and initiative planning.

Fiscal Year 2026 marked a period of growth and new beginnings for arts and culture in Surprise. The City expanded its public art collection, engaged thousands of residents through various events, and launched two new signature initiatives: the Roots of Creation Festival and Surprise Arts Presents. These efforts created enhanced opportunities for community engagement and participation in the arts.

Objective Analysis:

Staff will provide an update to City Council on the outcomes of FY26 programs including 11 completed public art projects and the launch of the Surprise Arts Presenting Program. The presentation will also include information on what is planned for FY27.

Policy Compliant:

This item aligns with City Policy.

Financial Impact:

This item does not have a financial impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City Council Updates

2. FY27 Percent for Art Plan
 3. FY26_SurpriseArtsAnnualReport_FINAL
-

Surprise Arts

City Council Updates
2026

FY26: A Year of Growth



11

New
Public
Artworks



Launched
Roots of
Creation
Festival



71

Total
Events &
Programs



Launched
Surprise Arts
Presents



6,593

People
Served

Surprise Arts Presents

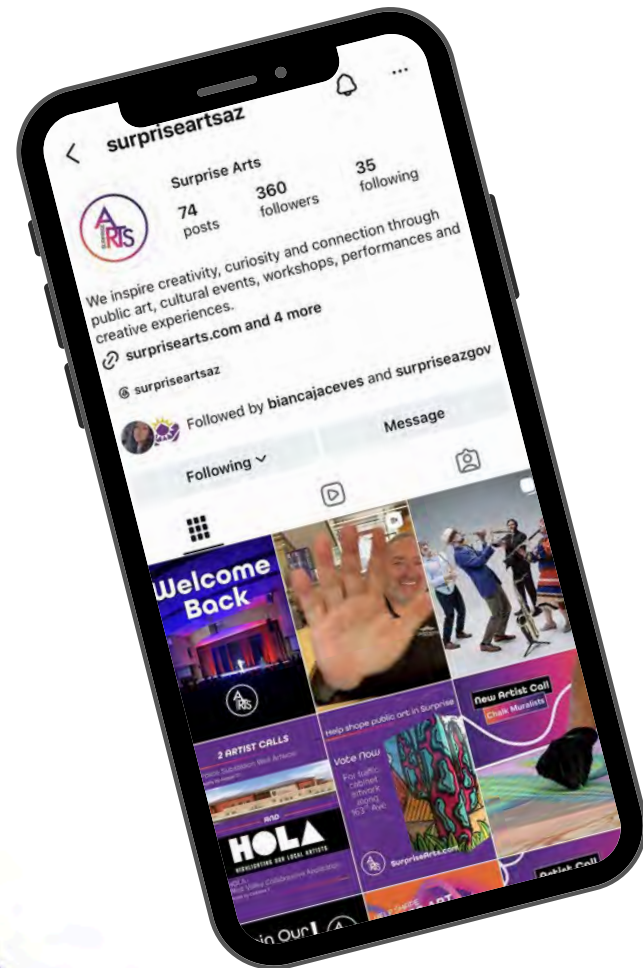
Start -Up Season Highlights

- 6 performances
- 3,349 audience members
- 7 community partners
- \$62,581 in ticket revenue

“It felt like we were at a classy
event in downtown Phoenix, except
we felt more at home.”



Brand Launch



Digital Community Growth



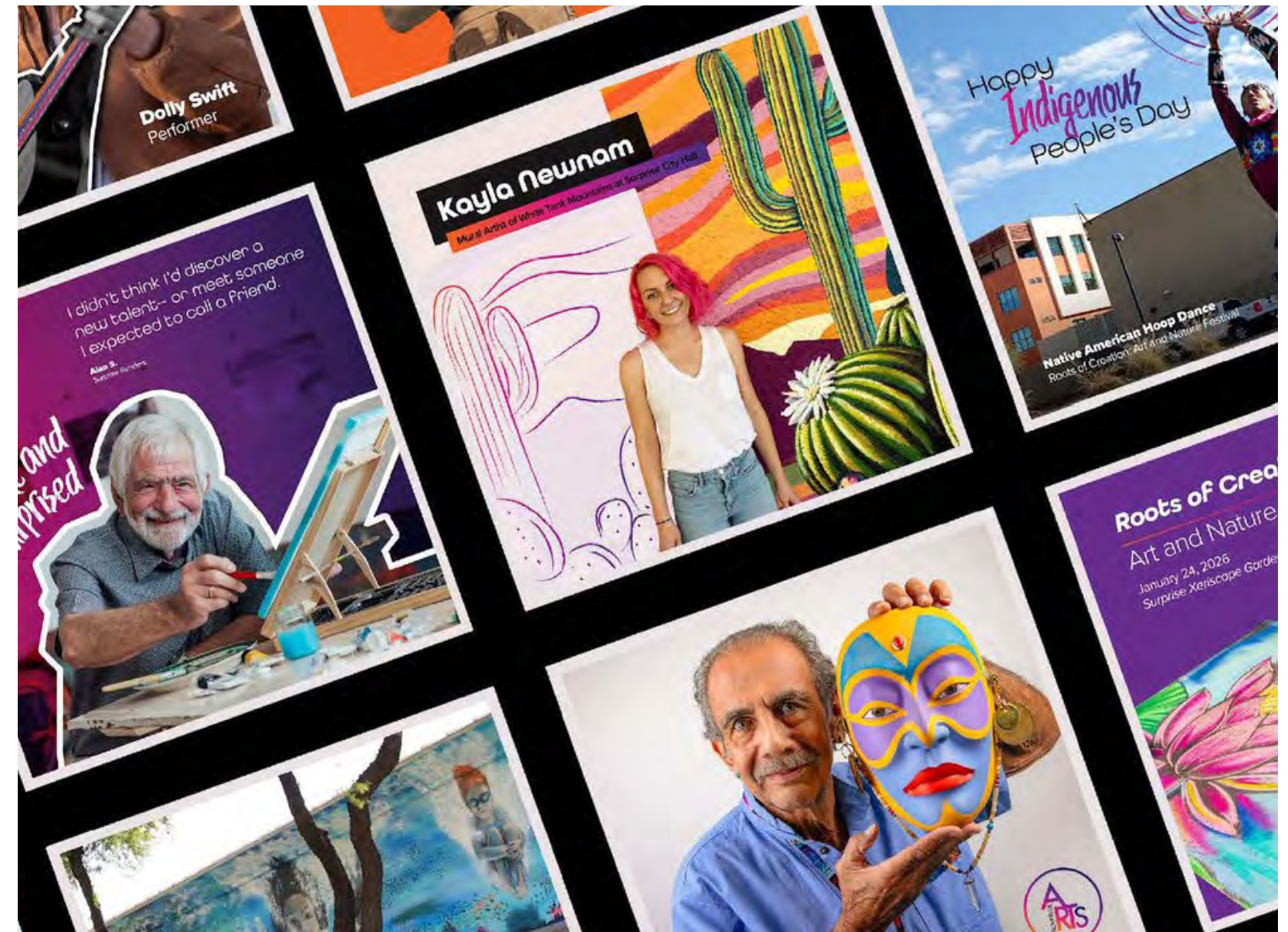
5,598 Unique Website Visits



551 New Social Followers



2,573 Newsletter Subscribers



Powered by Volunteers

- 65 volunteers
- 230 hours of service
- \$8,312 value of services



Membership Program

Building a community

- 40 new members
- Member Only outings
- Discounted tickets
- Exclusive artist content and meet and greets



Beyond the Stage

Community
Engagement

100 Orchestra
Students

2 more
presenting
artist
engagements
in FY27



Promoting Pathways to Creative Careers

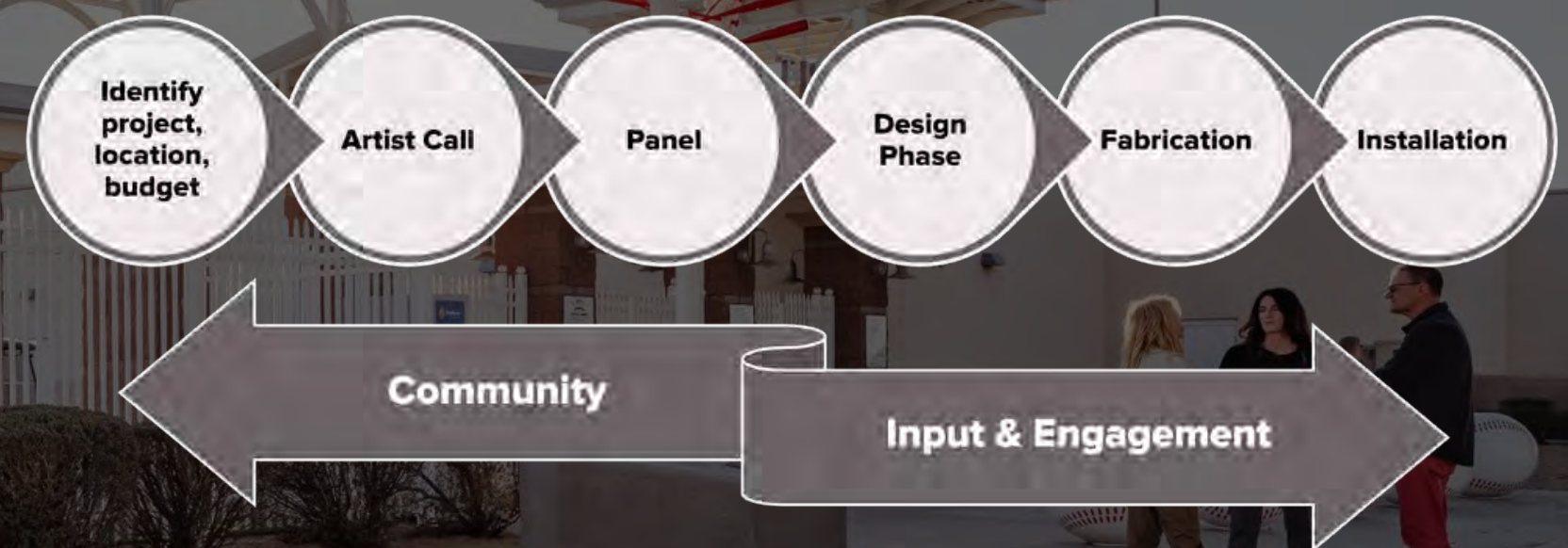
Traffic Cabinet Student Mentorship Program

“When people ask me what I’m working on, I get to say I’m doing something for the City of Surprise. To say this is something made by a high school student for the community —that’s powerful.”
-Sienna



Public Art

30 New Artworks
have been installed since the City
established the Arts & Culture
Division in 2023



Confluencia

Artist: James Dinh and Mandy Palasik

Location: Surprise Community and Resource Center



Bounce & Swing

Artist: RSP Architects

Location: Surprise
Stadium



Summer Oasis

Artist: Estevan Curiel

Location: Oasis Swim
Center



Synchronized Desert

Artist: MutaVision

Location: Community & Resource
Center



Surprise Library Mural

Artist: Adrian Ramirez

Location: Surprise Regional Library



Expressions in Full Bloom

Artist: Tiesha Harrison

Location: Asante Library



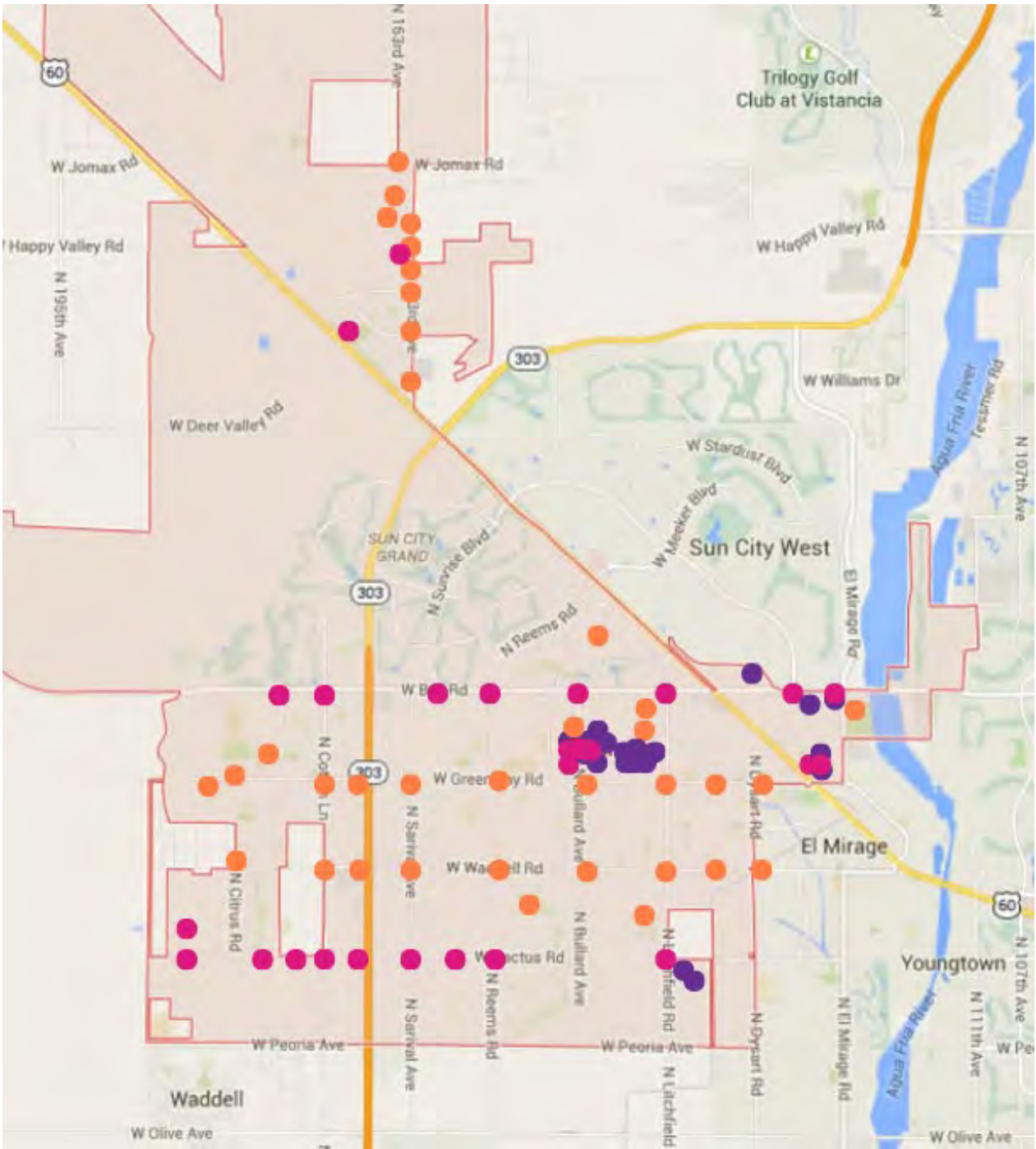
Traffic Cabinet Art

Artist: 19 West Valley artists

Location: Bell Rd. & Cactus Rd.



Art in Every Neighborhood



- Map
Key
- Existing prior to 2023
 - Completed since 2023
 - Planned

Making Arts Accessible

- 93% of events were free
- 2,265 youth engaged
- 400 complimentary tickets to Veterans (\$13,000 ticket value)
- 11 arts organizations supported through grants
- 97 professional artists hired



Roots of Creation: Art and Nature Festival

Inaugural Year



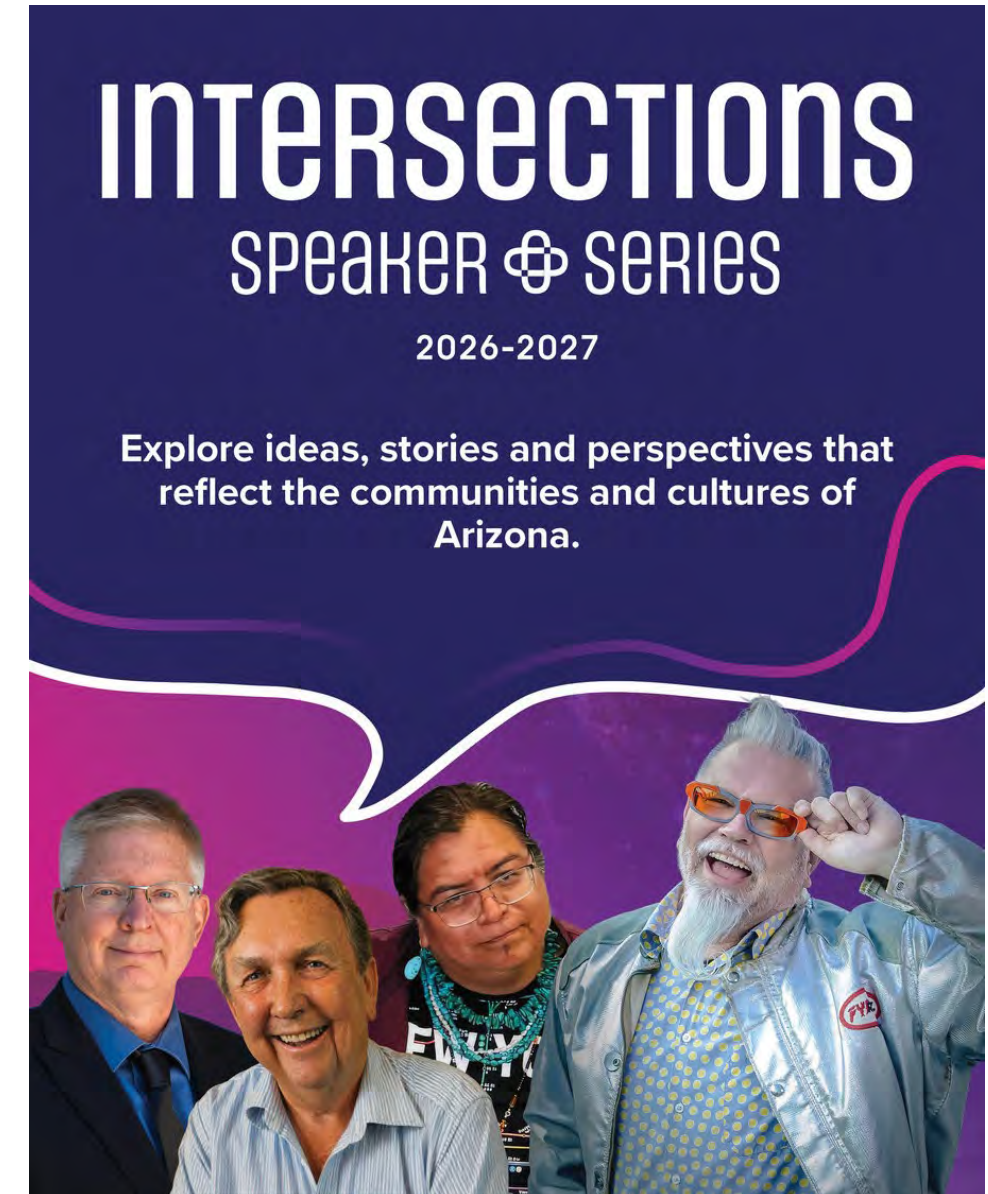
What's Next?

Looking Towards FY27

FY27 Public Art Projects

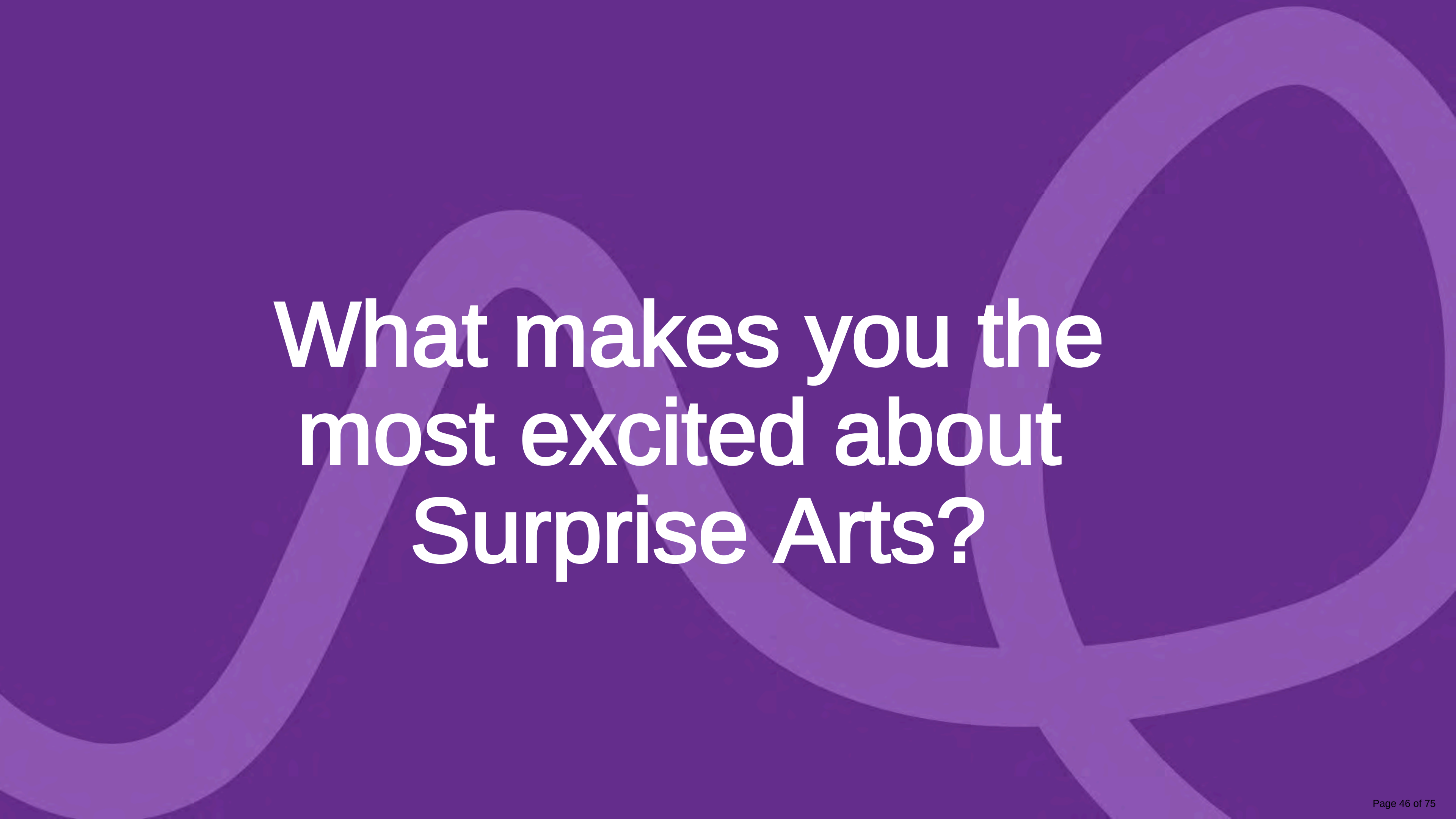
- Traffic Cabinets on 163rd Ave
- PD Substation Artwork on 163rd Ave
- iHOLA! West Valley at the Vista
- City Center Mural
- Dick McComb Park
- Original Townsite Historical Neighborhood Art Project

Returning Programs



A blurred background image showing a group of people, possibly at a performance or event. A microphone on a stand is visible in the lower-left foreground. The text 'Surprise Arts' is overlaid in a black box with white text.

Surprise Arts



What makes you the
most excited about
Surprise Arts?

**What have you been
hearing from the
community about
Surprise Arts?**

Questions or Comments?

Thank
you!

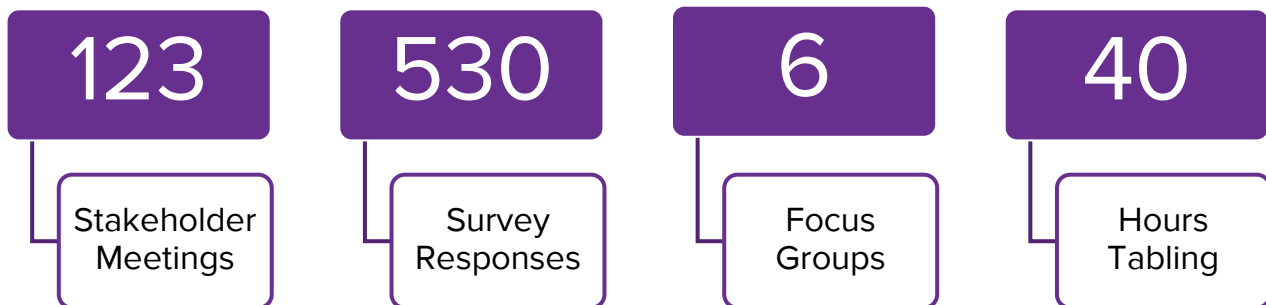




Percent for Art Plan

FY27

Community Input



The percent for art plan is based off of input from community members gathered through surveys, stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and discussions with the Surprise Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission. Based on community input, the priorities for the Percent for Art Plan over the next 5 years include:

- Parks
- Neighborhoods
- Community centers and libraries
- Opportunities for local artists
- Easily accessible
- City center/art corridor placemaking

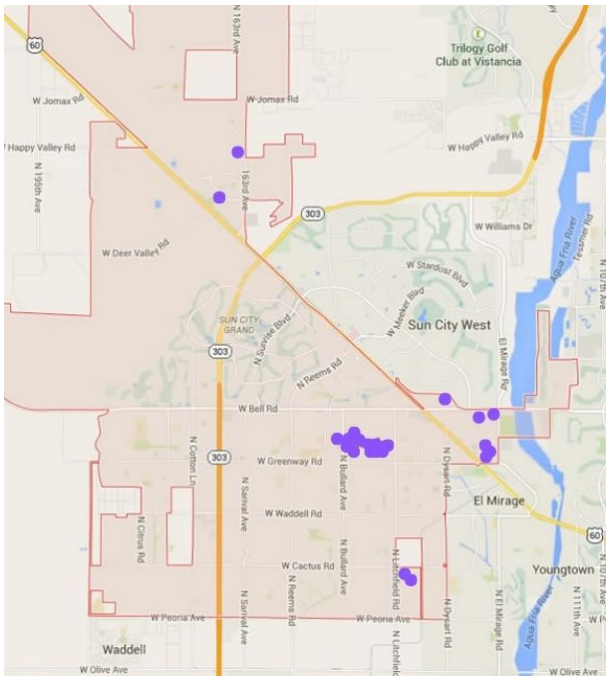
Planning Locations

Residents said they wanted arts experiences that are casual, on the way, and connect with their community. A goal of the Percent for Art Plan is to diversify the geographic locations of our art collection and ensure that every neighborhood has easy access to public art.

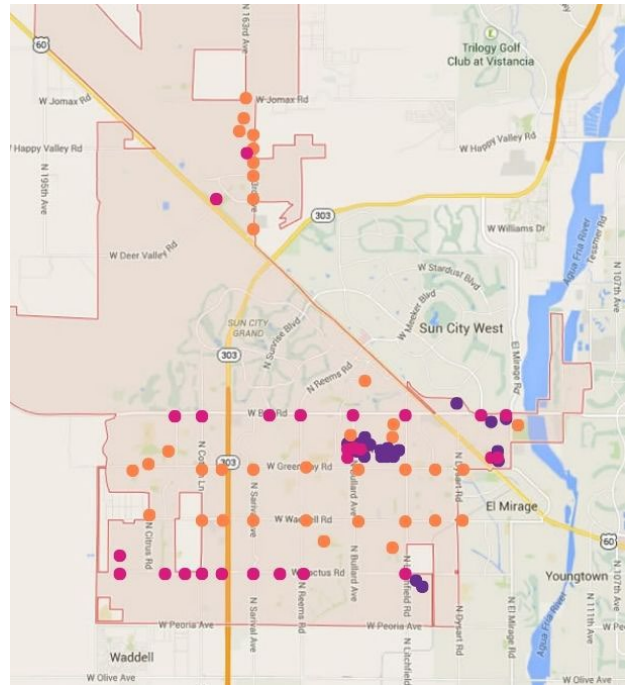
Map Key:

- Existing prior to 2023
- Planned
- Completed since 2023

2023 Artwork Locations



2026 Completed and Planned Artwork Locations



30 new artworks have been added to the City of Surprise's art collection since 2023

Completed Since 2023



Confluencia

Location: Surprise Community and Resource Center/Gaines Park

Artist: Mandy Palaski & James Dinh

Budget: \$600,000

A gathering space inspired by the importance of water to bring life and farming to Surprise, and considers the connection between the past, present, and future. The design includes seating, shade structures, and inlaid mosaics that reflect the past and present history of the area.



Bounce and Swing

Location: Surprise Stadium

Artist: RSP Architects

Budget: \$527,000

Two iconic pieces that welcome visitors to the Surprise Spring Training Stadium at the first and third base entrances. The concepts celebrate the sport of baseball, while also honoring Surprise's history. This project is now completed.



Oasis Court Mural

Location: Oasis Community Pool

Artist: Estevan Curiel

Budget: \$30,000

Surprise's first basketball court mural. The design transforms the basketball court into a vibrant summer oasis, blending the energy of play with the calm of a desert-water retreat through bold colors and joyful imagery. Centered by a life preserver honoring first responders and safety, the work invites community connection through movement, creativity, and shared outdoor experience.



Synchronized Desert

Location: Surprise Community and Resource Center

Artist: Muta Vision

Budget: \$10,000

The design features warm colors and wave-like forms referencing movement and fluctuating heart rate, with cacti symbolizing resilience. Intentional use of translucency and transparency ensures safety and maintains visibility while activating the space.



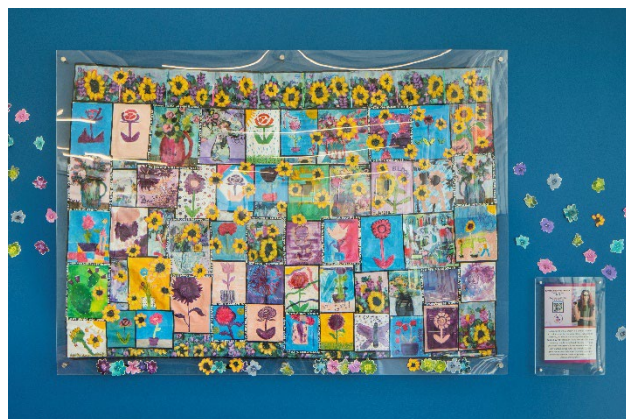
SRL Library Mural

Location: Surprise Regional Library

Artist: Adrian Ramirez

Budget: \$15,000

This mural will depict two clear actions: one panel focused on the act of crafting a story and another on reading it. These figures represent how ideas are created, shared, and passed between people through the library.



Expressions in Full Bloom

Location: Asante Library

Artist: Tiesha Harrison

Budget: \$15,000

This artwork represents your inner bloom – whether it's a feeling, an idea, or a meaningful experience. Surprise community members explored vibrant colors and bold mark-making techniques to create their own individual paintings. The artist carefully sewed their paintings together to create one unified artwork celebrating the blooms of Asante and Surprise.



FY24 Traffic Cabinets

Location: Bell Rd.

Artists: Charith Denson, Christine Sherer, Isaac Escarcega, Maureen Fairbanks, Maxx Valentine, Mikayla Hammock, Nate Butt, Robert Panzer, Steven Deschenes, Veronica Verdugo-Lomeli

Budget: \$25,000

Ten (10) artists from the West Valley were commissioned to create original designs to bring life to the traffic cabinets along Bell Rd. The artists connected with neighborhoods, businesses, and other Surprise communities to provide input and inspiration for their design.



FY25 Traffic Cabinets

Location: Cactus Rd.

Artists: Brianna Watkins, Jackson Kloog, Jesse Yazzie, Jessi Kerr, Laura Thurbon, Lauren Lee, Nichole Davy, Sienna Dutsch, Zachary Leo

Budget: \$25,000

Nine (9) artists from the West Valley were commissioned to create original designs to bring life to the traffic cabinets along Cactus Rd. The artists connected with neighborhoods, businesses, and other Surprise communities to provide input and inspiration for their design..



SCRC Construction Fencing

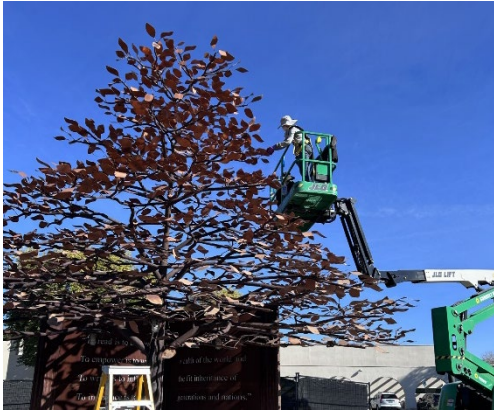
Location: Hollyhock St & Santa Fe Dr.

Artists: Art students from AZ Charter Academy

Budget: \$4,000

Art students from AZ Charter academy created eight (8) designs for the fencing during construction of the new community center in the OTS. They watched sections of a documentary on the history of Surprise for inspiration and learned about collaborative art-making.

Maintenance and Restoration



Location: Various
Conservator: RLA Conservation, Inc.
Budget: \$330,000

Restoration work has been completed on 4 artworks requiring advanced conservation treatment to extend their long-term lifespan. Upon completion, routine maintenance will commence on 10 public artworks across the City's collection, focusing on cleaning, surface care, and preventative conservation.

Project Coming Soon

Police Substation Artwork

Type of art: Steel wall design
Eligibility: National
Scale: Large
Selection Process: RFP
Location: 163rd Police Substation
Budget: \$165,000

Original Townsite Historical Neighborhood Art Project

Type of art: Digital vinyl prints
Eligibility: West Valley
Scale: Medium
Selection Process: RFQ
Location: Original sq mile
Budget: \$300,000

City Center Mural

Type of art: Mural
Eligibility: Pre-qualified Muralists
Scale: Small
Selection Process: RFP from Prequalified List
Location: Surprise Stadium Parking Entrance
Budget: \$35,000

Dick McComb Park

Type of art: Determined through residency
Eligibility: National
Scale: Large
Selection Process: RFQ & Residency
Location: Dick McComb Park
Budget: \$300,000

iHOLA! FY27 - Vista

Type of art: Indoor Sound Installation
Eligibility: West Valley
Scale: Small
Selection Process: RFQ
Location: Vista Center for the Arts
Budget: \$15,000

5-YEAR PERCENT FOR ART PLAN PROGRESS

Key			
Completed Since 2023		In Progress Projects	Projected Projects

Project	Start	End	Scale	Strategic Implementation
City Center Bounce and Swing	FY 2022	FY 2025	Large	Plan for signature artworks throughout the city including identifiers at cultural hubs and entrances to neighborhoods
Parks Summer Oasis	FY 2024	FY 2025	Small	Prioritize art works and programs located in parks and areas of the city that do not currently have works of art
Traffic Cabinets Bell Rd	FY 2024	FY 2025	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Community Center SCRC – Exterior	FY 2024	FY 2026	Large	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Community Center SCRC – Fencing	FY 2024	FY 2025	Small	Deepen and expand partnerships with local schools to ensure public art and educational opportunities for students and artists
Library HOLA - Asante	FY 2025	FY 2026	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Community Center SCRC – Interior Wall	FY 2025	FY 2026	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Traffic Cabinets Cactus Rd	FY 2025	FY 2026	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Park Dick McComb	FY 2026	FY 2029	Large	Prioritize art works and programs located in parks and areas of the city that do not currently have works of art
Library SRL Mural	FY 2026	FY 2026	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Community Center Police Substation – 163rd	FY 2026	FY 2028	Large	Plan for signature artworks throughout the city including identifiers at cultural hubs and entrances to neighborhoods
Traffic Cabinets 163 rd Ave	FY 2026	FY 2026	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Park Veramonte	FY 2027	FY 2029	Large	Prioritize art works and programs located in parks and areas of the city that do not currently have works of art
Community Center Countryside Recreation	FY 2026	FY 2028	Large	Plan for signature artworks throughout the city including identifiers at cultural hubs and entrances to neighborhoods
Community Center HOLA FY27 - Vista	FY 2027	FY 2028	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Neighborhoods OTS Historical Neighborhood	FY 2027	FY 2031	Large	Create incentives in neighborhoods and HOAs to increase arts and culture access and services in parks and neighborhoods
City Center Mural	FY 2027	FY 2027	Small	Plan for signature artworks throughout the city including identifiers at cultural hubs and entrances to neighborhoods
Traffic Cabinets Greenway Rd	FY 2027	FY 2027	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Park Asante	FY 2028	FY 2030	Large	Prioritize art works and programs located in parks and areas of the city that do not currently have works of art
Library Asante	FY 2028	FY 2029	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers
Neighborhoods Public Art Grant	FY 2028	FY 2030	Small	Create incentives in neighborhoods and HOAs to increase arts and culture access and services in parks and neighborhoods
City Center Elm St	FY 2028	FY 2030	Large	Plan for signature artworks throughout the city including identifiers at cultural hubs and entrances to neighborhoods
Traffic Cabinets Waddell Rd	FY 2028	FY 2028	Small	Create public art opportunities for local artists on roadways and in community facilities such as libraries and community centers



Surprise Arts

FY26 Annual Report

A letter from the Arts & Culture Manager

Welcome to Surprise Arts,

FY26 was a year of beginnings — some visible and some behind the scenes. We brought performances, public art and community programs together under one new Surprise Arts identity, established our presenting program at the Vista Center for the Arts and built the team, partnerships and systems needed to support what comes next. Along the way, we gathered for live music, workshops, art tours, new public artworks and the first Roots of Creation Festival.

In FY27, there will be even more ways to join us. We are looking forward to our first full season of shows at the Vista, moving forward with 16 new public artworks and inviting the community back for the second year of the Roots of Creation Festival. We will also deepen our partnerships with Surprise's Arts & Culture organizations, Dysart Unified School District and the Surprise Arts Foundation, while creating new ways to connect through volunteering, memberships and sponsorships.

Thank you for being part of the Surprise Arts community. Whether you came to an event, volunteered, created, partnered with us or are just getting to know us, there is a place for you here. We are excited to keep building something welcoming, creative and unmistakably Surprise — together.



Julie Akerly
Arts and Culture Manager
City of Surprise

Leadership & Community Partners



Mayor & Council

Mayor - Kevin Sartor

District 1 - Nick Haney

District 2 - Vice Mayor Earle Greenberg

District 3 - Patrick Duffy

District 4 - Johnny V. Melton

District 5 - Jack Hastings

District 6 - Chris Judd



Arts & Cultural

Advisory Commission

Chair - Crystal Kupper

Vice Chair - Hassan Rassul

Dr. Charlotte Pullins

Kat Dunphy

Kurwin Forest

Margaret Lieu

Susan deJong



Surprise Arts

Foundation

President - Jon Cavaletto

Vice President - Valerie Jackson

Kimberle Shannon

Programs at a Glance

FY26 was a year of growth and new beginnings for arts and culture in Surprise. The City expanded its public art collection, connected thousands of residents through events and launched two new signature initiatives — the Roots of Creation Festival and Surprise Arts Presents — creating new ways for the community to experience, participate in and connect through the arts.



11

New
Public
Artworks



Launched
Roots of
Creation
Festival



71

Total
Events &
Programs



Launched
Surprise Arts
Presents



6,593

People
Served



Solidify Our Unique Cultural Identity

Make Surprise a more dynamic,
connected and creative city.

Surprise Arts Presents Start-Up

FY26 marked the launch of Surprise Arts Presents, building a new foundation for live performing arts in Surprise. Through pilot programming at the Vista Center for the Arts, the City tested programming, audience response, ticketing, marketing and venue operations while developing a consistent, community-centered approach to presenting live performances.



Start-Up Season Highlights



6

Performances



3349

Attendees



7

Community
Partners



\$62,581

Ticket
Revenue

Roots of Creation Festival

The Roots of Creation Festival pilot responded to community interest in an annual arts festival that feels distinctly Surprise and reflects the culture, creativity and character of the community. Developed through collaboration across City departments and with community partners, the pilot tested a shared festival model designed to bring people together, celebrate local identity and lay the groundwork for a signature annual arts experience.



Recycled Art Sculptures

A circular image showing a sculpture of a hummingbird and a butterfly made from recycled materials, perched on a large pink flower sculpture.

Performances

Art-Making Activities

Chalk Art Murals

17
Artists

20
Vendors



16
Partners

A circular image showing a person in a colorful, patterned outfit performing a hula dance with hula hoops.



Increase Access to Programs & Resources

Develop clear, transparent and accessible arts experiences and communications channels

Arts For All. Access For Everyone.

Surprise Arts is committed to making arts and cultural experiences accessible to residents of all ages and backgrounds. Through free programming, youth engagement and initiatives that reduce barriers to participation, we created more opportunities for our community to experience, participate in and connect through the arts.



93% OF EVENTS WERE FREE

66 free events provided accessible opportunities to experience arts and culture throughout Surprise.

5,079 FREE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

77% of total participation took place through free programs and events.

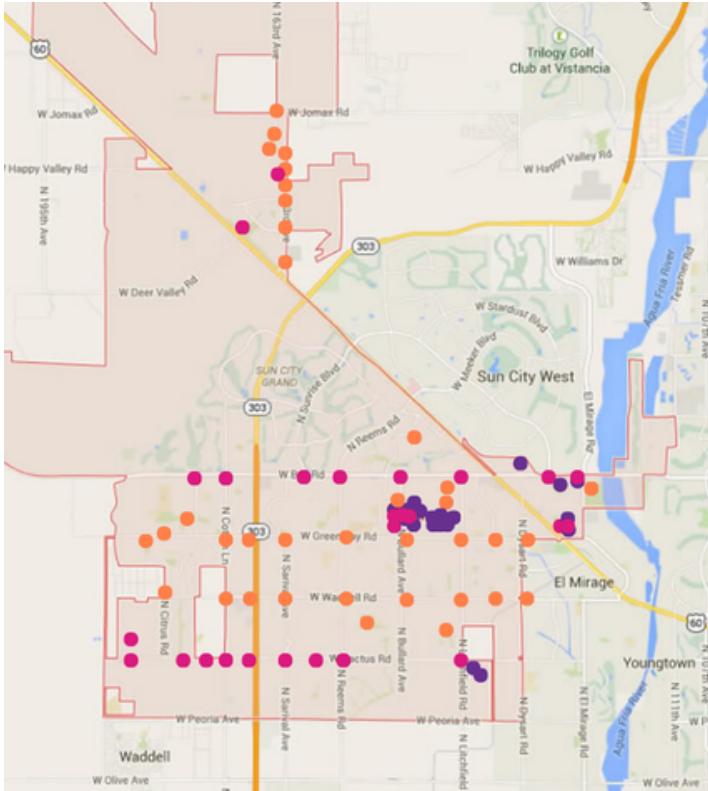
2,265 YOUTH ENGAGED

Young people participated in arts and cultural experiences designed to inspire creativity, connection and discovery.

400 COMPLIMENTARY VETERAN TICKETS

Veterans received complimentary access to Surprise Arts experiences, representing an estimated \$13,000 in ticket value.

Art in Every Neighborhood



Map Key

- Existing prior to 2023
- Completed since 2023
- Planned

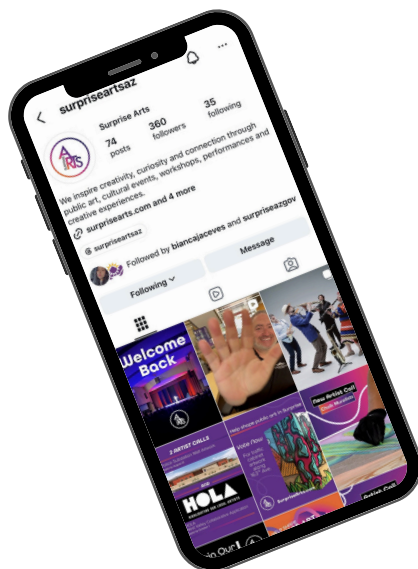
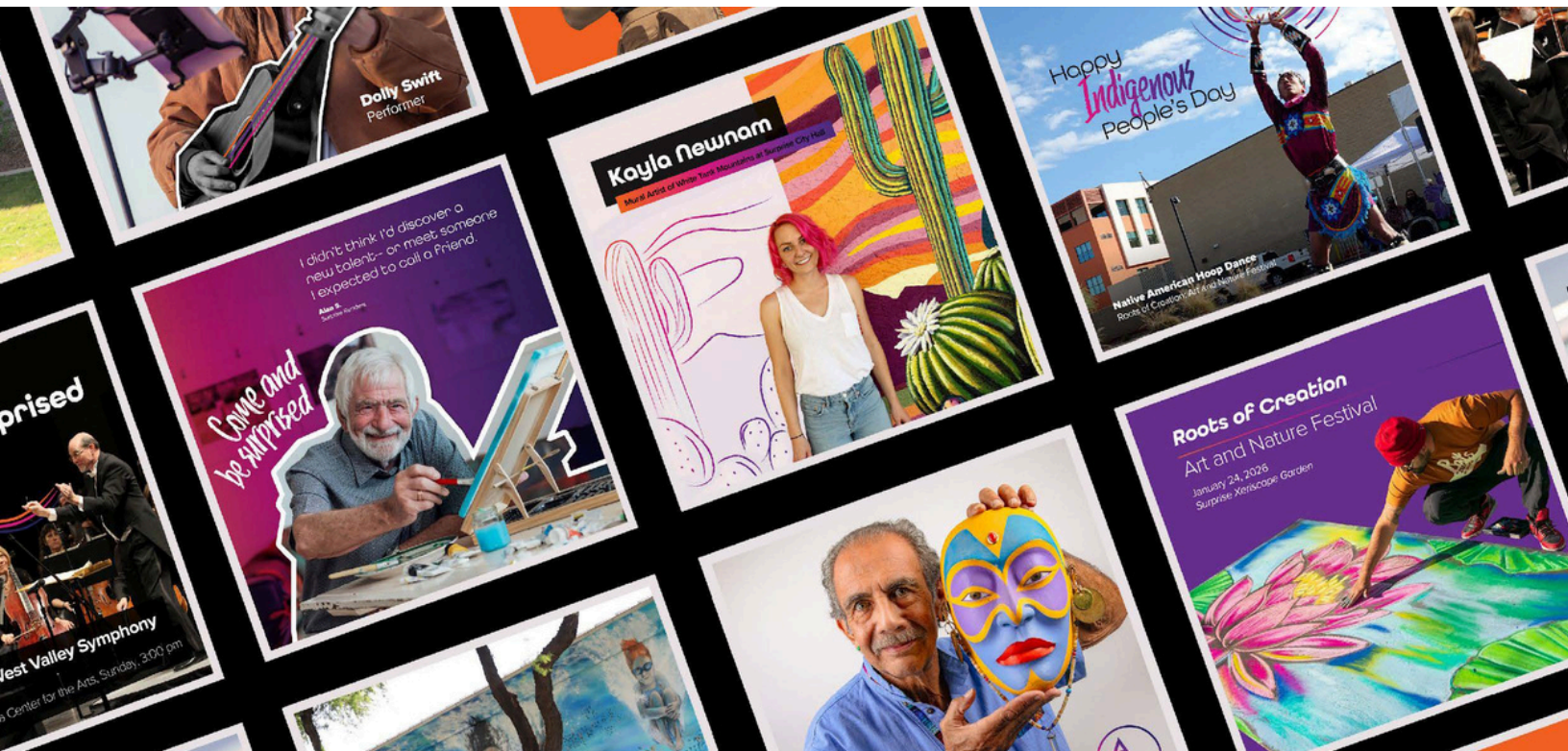
11
New Art
Works

We are committed to bringing arts and culture closer to every resident by expanding opportunities throughout Surprise. The community said they wanted more art that is casual and on the way in parks, roadways, and community centers. We have created a 5-year plan with the goal of making public art accessible to every neighborhood in Surprise.



Surprise Arts Brand Launch

FY26 marked the launch of Surprise Arts, creating one clear, recognizable identity for public art, community arts, cultural programming and presenting. Alongside the new brand, the team built a new website and communications platforms to give residents one place to discover programs, find opportunities and purchase tickets.



Digital Community Growth



5,598 Unique Website Visits



551 New Social Followers



2,573 Newsletter Subscribers



Elevate the Arts & Culture Sector in Surprise

Sustain Arts and culture organizations,
artists and culture bearers

Investing in Artists

97

Professional Artists Supported

Through paid opportunities and meaningful work across Surprise Arts programs and initiatives.



Professional Artists By Program



26

Workshop
Instructors



17

Roots of
Creation Festival



16

LIVE at
Asante



15

Public
Artists



9

Art Tours



15

Surprise Arts Presents



6

Speaker Series

Investing in **Our** Communities

Grant Recipients

Through strategic grants, we empower local arts and culture organizations to inspire creativity, strengthen our community, and drive meaningful impact.

11

43,057 served by grant programs
29,142 Surprise Residents



On Stage Now



One Step Beyond



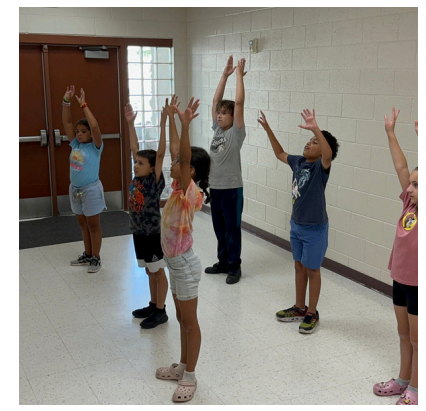
Surprise POPS Band



West Valley Symphony



West Valley Arts Council



Honor Dance



WHAM Art Association



Actors PlayGround
Theater Company



Cafe Flutes



Dysart Schools
Festival of the Arts



Ground Floor Artists



Arizona Art Alliance

Promote pathways to Creative Careers



Traffic Cabinet Student Artwork Mentorship Program

The Traffic Cabinet Student Mentorship Program gives young artists hands-on experience creating public art for their own community. Student artists work alongside experienced professionals to develop an idea from initial sketch through digital design and a finished work ready for installation, building creative skills, confidence and an understanding of the public art process. For the program's first student participant, Sienna, mentorship from Traffic Cabinet alum artist Charith Denson provided professional guidance while ensuring her original artistic voice remained at the center of the work.

Connecting with Dysart Students

Student Workshops with Touring Artists

Surprise Arts Presents connected **100 Dysart orchestra students** with touring artist Spinphony, giving students the opportunity to experience a live performance and see professional musicians at work. **Twenty-five students** also participated in a hands-on workshop, playing Spinphony's original pop music arrangements for string quartet. The engagement reflects a growing partnership between the City and School District, and demonstrated a shared commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for the next generation of artists.





Increase Internal Capacity

Build a strong and supportive
Arts & Culture Division

Building Our Network

Powered by Volunteers

We established a volunteer program, with **65 volunteers** contributing **230 hours** of service, helping bring Surprise Arts programs and experiences to life. From welcoming guests to supporting events and activities, their time and dedication strengthened our programs, expanded our capacity and helped create meaningful arts and cultural experiences for the Surprise community.



Membership Community

Surprise Arts launched its Membership and Sponsorship Programs, creating new ways for residents and community partners to connect with and support the arts. In its inaugural year, the programs welcomed **40 new members** into our community.

Team Building

As Surprise Arts programs and services grew, so did the team behind them. With 5 new full-time positions and 4 new part-time positions, Surprise Arts gained specialized skills and experience, and strengthened its capacity to deliver quality programs and experiences for the community.





Stay Connected

Email: arts@surpriseaz.gov

Phone: 623-222-2787 (ARTS)

SurpriseArts.com



@SurpriseArtsAZ