



**Sharon Wolcott**

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BOARD DIRECTORY

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Mayor Sharon Wolcott was elected in 2011 on a platform of job creation, new education opportunities and improved mobility through transportation. She also committed publicly to bringing fiscal accountability and transparency to municipal government and setting a course for progress in Surprise. Her Jobs, Education and Transportation (J.E.T.) initiative has generated strong results and impressive reviews from residents, local businesses and regional and national stakeholders.

Under her leadership, the city has adopted new financial policies, ordered sweeping reviews of financial records and cut budgets to address serious shortfalls without raising taxes or impacting essential services. The current FY15 annual budget is testament to the city's rapid financial turnaround in a very short time. In just two years, Surprise has turned a \$500,000 general fund balance into a \$29 million general fund balance and restored the city's two-month operating reserve. The completion of an exhaustive review of the city's financial activities has also added transparency to her promise of fiscal accountability.

Mayor Wolcott uses a team approach to job creation -- working with Economic Development staff, the Greater Surprise Chamber of Commerce team and regional partners, such as the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, where she serves as a board member. Since taking office, more than 700 new permanent jobs and 300 construction positions have been created in Surprise as a result of \$55 million in new capital investments. In addition, Mayor Wolcott continues to support "the arts" to help fuel community and economic development. Most recently, she was instrumental in bringing a new 2,500-square-foot art museum and performance space operated by the West Valley Arts Council to the Surprise Civic Center in July 2014.

She spearheaded the implementation of the *Rachel's Challenge* anti-bullying initiative in local schools, and is active with the innovative Arizona Charter Academy, where she recently delivered an inspirational speech to graduating students. She presided over a City Council vote to approve a new agreement between Surprise and the Dysart Unified School District to share facilities and reduce costs. The Mayor has also encouraged development of youth leadership initiatives to include involvement with the City Council and summer employment at the city. She is sharply focused on securing a four-year liberal arts university in Surprise.

Mayor Wolcott is a strong advocate for a broad transportation vision for Surprise and Arizona. She is a board member of the I-11 Coalition, promoting the development of a congressionally authorized freeway linking Phoenix and Las Vegas and recognizing its vast economic potential for the West Valley. She serves on the Transportation Policy Committee of the regional Maricopa Association of Governments, and is active on the Transportation, Infrastructure & Services Policy and Advocacy Committee of the National League of Cities. She also has taken on a leadership role with the Grand Avenue Coalition, an initiative to redevelop Grand Avenue by involving regional leaders from all communities along its length. Her leadership revived a decades-old plan to solve the congestion at the city's main gateway at Bell Road and Grand Avenue.

A life-long communicator and bridge builder, Mayor Wolcott is an effective advocate for Surprise at the State Legislature and with her colleagues around the Valley. She has led the way to improve communications between Council and residents through regularly held community meetings, a constantly updated web presence and social media tools.

Mayor Wolcott has 25 years of experience in 3 states as an elected official, serving at both the state and local levels. As a mother of two and a grandmother of three, she brings a well-balanced perspective to her passion for public service and for making Surprise a great place to live and work.