

# SURPRISE

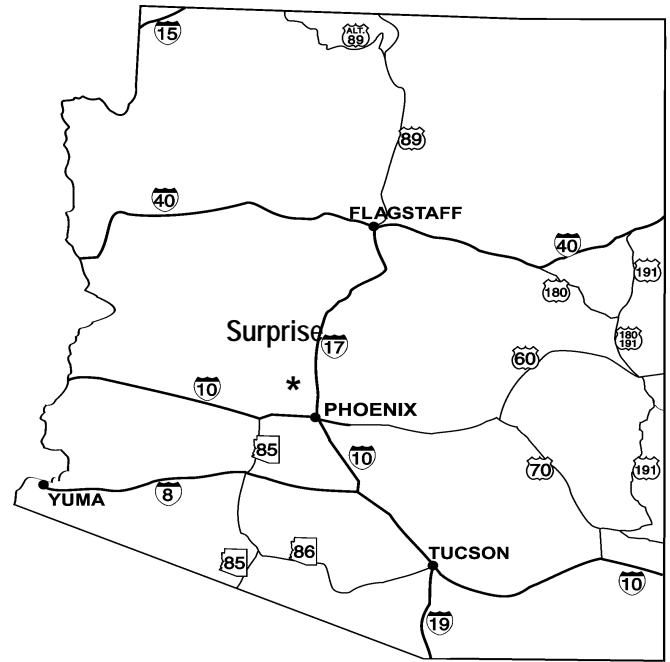
# Community Profile

## Prepared by the ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Surprise is in the fast-growing northwestern part of the Valley of the Sun, along U.S. 60/state Highway 93. It was named by its founder, Homer C. Ludden, after his hometown of Surprise, Nebraska. Ludden founded Surprise as a way to provide homes for West Valley agricultural workers. The city is experiencing explosive growth in its residential, commercial and industrial sectors. According to Department of Economic Security data, Surprise is the fastest growing city in Arizona. More than 54,000 new residential dwelling units are planned for construction over the next 10 years. Sun City Grand, Del Webb Corp's newest retirement community, is located in the city of Surprise.

FOUNDED: 1929  
 COUNTY: Maricopa County  
 DISTANCE TO PHOENIX: 25 miles  
 HIGHWAYS: I-17, I-10, US 60, Loop 303

INCORPORATED: Yes - 1960  
 ELEVATION: 1,130 feet  
 DISTANCE TO TUCSON: 140 miles



## POPULATION

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2003</u>
Surprise	7,122	30,848	51,585
Maricopa County	2,122,101	3,072,149	3,396,875
Arizona	3,665,228	5,130,632	5,629,870

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security and U.S. Census Bureau.

## PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In the past, Surprise's economy was heavily agricultural. Although it is still one of the main activities, the city's tremendous growth has created considerable employment in the construction and service sectors for Surprise residents. The city offers business and industry many opportunities for growth and profit. The expansion of a planned transportation system and plans for a massive water recharge project will allow Surprise to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

<u>County Employment</u>	<u>2003</u>
Construction	128,600
Educational & Health Svcs	159,300
Financial Activities	133,500
Government	200,800
Information	37,100
Leisure & Hospitality	152,800
Manufacturing	126,900
Professional & Business Svcs	255,100
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	321,200

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security

Figures are organized under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

## LABOR FORCE DATA

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2003</u>
Civilian Labor Force	2,640	3,680	12,244
Unemployed	187	163	977
Unemployment Rate	7.1%	4.4%	8.0%

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security.

<u>Growth Indicators</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2003</u>
New Bldg. Permit	201*	4,630	6,771
Taxable Sales (\$)	72,332,700	524,013,450	931,276,650
Net Assessed Valuation (\$)	45,758,320	176,094,650	352,017,483

Sources: Arizona State University; AZ Dept. of Revenue; AZ Tax Research Foundation

\* Incomplete data: One or more months not available.

## SCENIC ATTRACTIONS

White Tank Regional Park, which borders the city to the west, has unusual Indian petroglyphs in its 26,000 acres where camping, hiking and picnicking are popular. Surprise is also home to the West Valley Art Museum. The museum celebrates the fine arts with its expensive collection and an ever-changing series of visiting exhibits from around the world. Wickenburg, which is nearby to Surprise, is a rugged cowboy town with top-notch resorts. To the northwest is "gold country" with many interesting ghost towns. Within a short distance of Surprise is Lake Pleasant where water sports are popular. Quiet desert settings encourage hiking, rock hounding, horseback riding and picnicking. Surprise is also home to the world-class retirement community of Sun City Grand.

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## TAXES

Property Tax Rate	1990	2000	2003
Elem/High School	9.30	7.78	6.39
City/Fire District	0.84	0.85	0.91
Countywide	3.51	3.35	3.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13.65</b>	<b>\$11.98</b>	<b>\$10.52</b>

Sources: Arizona Tax Research Foundation  
 Note: Tax rate per \$100 assessed valuation.

### Sales Tax Rate

City	2.00%
County	0.70%
State	5.60%

Sources: League of Arizona Cities and Towns, Arizona Dept. of Revenue

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The City of Surprise offers a wide range of community facilities including a new air-conditioned gymnasium, a community center, library, youth center, five parks, seven golf courses, eight basketball courts, four softball diamonds (two lighted), and one lighted tennis court. A new recreation/aquatic center and library are scheduled to open in 2002.

### Educational Institutions

	Public	Private
Elementary	Y	Y
High School	Y	N

### Financial

Number of Banks: 9

### Governmental Agencies

Fire Department: Staffed City/Local Fire Department

Law Enforcement: City Police Department

**Airports** Nearby Glendale Municipal Airport (5 miles) 5,350-ft. lighted/paved runway, UNICOM radio; Phoenix-Goodyear Municipal Airport (12 miles).

### Medical

Surprise has 4 medical centers.

### Hotel and Lodging Facilities

Number of Rooms: 400

Meeting Rooms: 20

Capacity of Largest Facility: 500

## Industrial Properties

Several parcels are available. For current information contact the City of Surprise, or the Surprise Economic Development Corporation.

## Utilities

Electricity	APS (Statewide)	800.253-9407
Natural Gas	Southwest Gas Corp. (Statewide)	800.766.9722
Telephone	Qwest (statewide)	800.244.1111
Water	Citizens Water Resources (Surprise)	623.974.2521
Water & Sewer	City of Surprise	623.583.1000

Cable Providers: Yes

Cable Internet Service Provider: Yes

Digital Switching Station: Yes

Fiber Optics: Yes

Internet Service Provider: Yes

## Weather

Month	Average Temperature (°F)		Average Total Precipitation (Inches)
	Daily Minimum	Daily Maximum	
January	40.0	67.3	0.94
February	43.2	71.7	1.17
March	47.1	76.9	1.12
April	52.8	85.2	0.30
May	61.6	94.5	0.13
June	70.1	103.3	0.07
July	78.0	105.9	0.78
August	76.8	104.4	1.06
September	69.8	99.3	0.84
October	57.6	88.7	0.69
November	46.0	75.4	0.67
December	39.3	66.6	1.15
Yearly Avg	56.9	86.6	8.92

Western Regional Climate Center, wrcc@dri.edu. Period of record 1964-2003. Average Total Snowfall 0.0". Nearest data available from Youngtown, AZ.

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Department of Commerce Communications Division in cooperation with local sources.

For further information, contact:

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