



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF SURPRISE  
16000 N. CIVIC CENTER PLAZA  
SURPRISE, AZ 85374  
T. 623-222-1300

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20528

Todd Lyons  
Acting Director  
U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement  
500 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons,

As Mayor of the City of Surprise (“City”), I write to formally request information and clarification regarding the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) acquisition of the property located at 13290 West Sweetwater Road in Surprise, Arizona, (“The Property”) and DHS’s intended use of this site.

At a recent City Council meeting, residents from Surprise and the surrounding area expressed significant concerns regarding that the Property may be utilized as a federal detention facility, particularly in light of the absence of prior notification or coordination with the City. When major federal actions have direct and substantial impacts on local communities, infrastructure, and public services, advance communication and intergovernmental coordination are not merely beneficial—they are essential.

While the City acknowledges the federal government’s authority with respect to immigration enforcement and detention operations, the operational, public safety, and infrastructure impacts of such facilities are borne primarily by local governments. Surprise is one of the fastest-growing cities in Arizona, and the City has a responsibility to protect and preserve the health and safety of its residents by, among other things, ensuring that land uses within its jurisdiction comply with applicable zoning regulations and that municipal services are adequately planned, funded, and staffed to meet current and future demand.

I formally request a written response to the following questions:

- The intended purpose and operational use of the property.
- Any planned alterations, renovations, expansions, or structural modifications of the facility or property.
- Whether the proposed use complies with all applicable city zoning, land-use, and development regulations, and if not, what approvals or exemptions DHS believes apply.
- Anticipated impacts on traffic circulation, surrounding infrastructure, utilities, and municipal services.
- Any National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reports and/or analyses that have been or will be completed prior to alterations and use of the Property.
- Projected timelines for construction, redevelopment, and operational use.
- The expected level of coordination and support required from local law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services.
- DHS’s plan for ongoing, formal communication with the City Manager and Elected Officials on the aforementioned items and future impacts of city operations.



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The City is aware we cannot interfere with federal operations, however, the City must be able to plan responsibly, protect public safety, and provide accurate information to residents. Proceeding without meaningful coordination places undue strain on local resources and undermines public trust. Early, direct, and sustained engagement between DHS and the City is therefore necessary and expected.

In addition to the above request for responses, the City formally requests an in-person meeting with you or your designated senior staff to discuss DHS's plans for this facility, zoning compliance, and the operational impacts on our community and surrounding jurisdictions. To that end, members of the Surprise City Council and City staff will be in Washington, D.C. from March 15 through March 19, 2026, and will make ourselves available at a time and place convenient with your schedule to discuss this matter.

We look forward to your prompt response and establishing a clear framework for coordination moving forward. Please direct correspondence to the City Manager's Office to ensure these matters are addressed without further delay.

Respectfully,

Kevin D. Sartor  
Mayor  
City of Surprise  
623.222.1313  
[kevin.sartor@surpriseaz.gov](mailto:kevin.sartor@surpriseaz.gov)

cc: Surprise City Council  
Senator Mark Kelly  
Senator Ruben Gallego  
Congressman Paul Gosar  
Congressman Abe Hamadeh  
Governor Katie Hobbs