



Ryan Bittle

Ryan Bittle is the Finance Manager of Budget & Research at the City of Goodyear, and like many others has recently changed career paths by trading GAAP for GASB after spending the past decade working in corporate finance & accounting. His experience spans multiple industries including IT services & consulting, hospitality, and most recently a six-year stint for a Fortune 500 homebuilder. Ryan is a licensed CPA in the state of Arizona and earned a bachelor's in marketing and an MBA from Southern Illinois University. He's a self-proclaimed "spreadsheet nerd" and his work passions include financial modeling, process improvement, and operational finance.



Matthew Dunbar

Matt is an Arizona native who was born and raised in the Prescott area. He has been with the City of Chandler now for 10 years, 7 years as the Revenue & Tax Manager and 3 years in his current role as Budget & Policy Officer. Before coming to Chandler, he worked for the City of Prescott for 8 years holding the Tax Auditor, Tax Supervisor, and Assistant Finance Director positions there. He attended Northern Arizona University (Go Jacks!) for his undergrad degree in Accounting, has a Master's in Business Administration from the Keller Graduate School of Management, and received his certification as a certified public manager through Arizona State University. He has been involved with local government for more than 18 years in Arizona and appreciates opportunities to help educate and share his knowledge whenever possible.



Dawn Lang

Dawn Lang has been with the City of Chandler Arizona (population 283,000) for over 15 years, appointed as Deputy City Manager | CFO, in August 2021. She is responsible for overseeing the Management Services Department which includes all financial functions for the City (i.e., Accounting, Budget, Tax and Licensing, Utility Services, Purchasing), as well as the Departments of Information Technology and Fleet & Facilities.

Dawn has over 24 years' experience in municipal government finance and has served on the national Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Executive Committee, previously on the GFOA committee of Budget and Fiscal Policy, and the committee of Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting. Prior to coming to Chandler, Arizona, Dawn was the Finance Officer for a small City in Oregon, and then became the Assistant Finance Director, then Budget Director for the City of Dubuque, Iowa (population 60,000) for 7 years. Before her career in municipal government finance, she obtained experience in trust accounting, public accounting, and tax and corporate finance. Dawn obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Accounting from Montana State University – Billings and has her CPA.



Ryan Jones

Ryan is the Yavapai College Regional Economic Development Center’s Economist & Data Analyst. He brings years of experience as Financial Analyst, Director, and Consultant in an eclectic mix of industries, including chemical (Ecolab Inc.) and sport (Spartan Race). Most recently, Ryan worked in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area helping specialized manufacturing businesses expand operations into Latin America. He and his wife are happy to call Prescott home.



Stephanie Nelson

Stephanie Nelson is the creator of Capital Pipeline and serves as its CEO. She leads the research and development, technology, data integration, operations, marketing, and communications for Capital Pipeline.

Before founding Capital Pipeline in 2019, Stephanie led the creation of new markets for large multi-national general contractors since 2001. She was responsible for research and development, establishing the team, setting strategy, getting board support including resources, targeting first clients, winning first projects, and helping establish leadership and operations. Working with talented firms and teams, she led the development of over \$4 Billion in new market revenue. This experience, and the research required to succeed, was the foundation for Capital Pipeline. She understands the value of data in the competitive construction industry.

Before working in the Architecture, Engineering, & Contracting industry, Stephanie was a political consultant and fundraiser for three former Mayors of the City of Phoenix, Governor Napolitano of Arizona, several city and state representatives, and six major initiative and referendum campaigns.

Stephanie earned her Masters in American Politics and Public Law at Arizona State University. She is also the proud mom of two teenaged boys.



Helen Parker

Helen Parker has been with the City of Chandler Arizona for 16 years. She is the Sr. Budget and Research Analyst instrumental in the development of the City’s Capital Improvement Program along with analyzing and forecasting data for rate development of the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste enterprise funds.

Helen has 17 years’ experience in municipal government finance. Prior to coming to Chandler, Arizona, Helen worked for the State of Arizona Department of Administration with responsibilities of preparation of the statewide cost allocation and Cash Management Improvement Act compliance. Before her career in municipal government finance, she obtained experience in the private sector, working with a telecommunications company as Financial Analyst. Helen obtained Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration and Accounting from North Carolina Wesleyan University and a Master of Business Administration in Finance degree from Western International University.



Kelly Pfost

Kelly Pfost is the Director of Management and Budget in Gilbert, Arizona, where she coordinates the development of the annual budget and spearheads efforts to be cost effective and fiscally sustainable. These efforts include helping the Town achieve an AAA bond rating from all three major credit agencies (the highest rating available). Kelly loves numbers and has over 15 years of experience with long-term financial modeling in the public and private sectors.

Prior to joining Gilbert, Kelly worked at a municipal consulting firm in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she provided expertise in economic development and long-term financial planning to cities and counties. She also worked in finance, economic development, administrative services, and recreation management at South Jordan City, Utah. Kelly holds a bachelor's degree in organizational communications from Brigham Young University-Idaho and an MPA from Brigham Young University's Romney Institute of Public Management.



Nick Russo

Nick Russo, Public Works Director for the City of El Mirage has been with the city for ten and a half years. Nick has over 20 years of industry experience in the Public Works field with both public and private sector organizations. He offers extensive experience in a wide range of public services from Parks, Recreation, Facilities, Fleet, Streets, and Utilities management. Before coming to El Mirage, Nick worked for the City of Casa Grande and the City of Flagstaff. Nick holds a Masters of Public Administration (MPA) and a Bachelor's of Science in Finance/Economics. In addition, he is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) through the National Recreation and Park Association. Nick is the current El Mirage representative on the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Transportation Safety Committee and Solid Waste Advisory Committee. He also serves on the board of directors for the West Valley Water Association.



Cindi Ptak

After a decades long career in state and federal government, Cindi founded Hummingbird Collective. This newest venture is a consulting service that supports transformational federal funding solutions for state, local, and Tribal governments for transportation and economic development programs under the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) or BIL.

She moved to Arizona during the pandemic to aid in the state's economic recovery under the CARES Act as the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development Representative where she aided in pandemic resiliency planning and funding.

She puts her robust understanding of federal funding programs to work as an advisor to the Arizona Governor's Infrastructure Task Force, where she recently secured a \$25 M grant to cap orphaned wells—directly aimed at reducing the impacts of climate change.

She advises the Arizona Governor's Director on Tribal Relations in creating a framework aimed at securing federal funding for a Tribal Infrastructure Task Force to serve the 22 Tribal Nations within the boundaries of Arizona. Her vision is to nurture a federal funding ecosystem that is transparent and accessible to all, and she's committed to empowering all communities with the knowledge, skills and strategy required to claim their seat at the federal funding table.

Cindi believes that everyone has a story to tell, and that the right story can inspire action. She is determined to use her field experience and contextual expertise to build bridges between government decision makers and communities that aren't traditionally at the federal funding table and nurture an ecosystem in which all communities can thrive.

GFOAz January Training Speakers 2022



Kristen Stephenson

Kristen Stephenson serves as GPEC’s senior vice president of research & analytics. Kristen rejoined the team in 2018 after previously working for the organization from 2002-2014. In her role, she leads the competitor market analysis, community partnership and innovative research programs, while supporting the efforts of the business development and marketing teams.



Macy Walker

Macy has been with the City of El Mirage for three years. As the Fiscal Services Administrator, she oversees the CIP, budget, and performance management processes.