



Jane Poston
Chandler Council Candidate
Op-Ed: Government Transparency & Open Communication

As a professional communicator, I understand the power of the tools we use to inform and educate the public. And how they can be implemented in a way that discourages public input. For example, holding meetings on important issues at inconvenient locations or at a time of day when most residents are at work. Or failing to use the tools easily available, like streaming video, or proactively communicating through social media.

Chandler historically has been a leader in garnering public input, for instance taking budget issues out to the community rather than requiring residents to come to us. When Council is making some of its most important decisions around the annual budget, at the very least, those hearings should be streamed online. City staff and facilities are already in place to make that happen. There's no reason that we aren't making that information easily available to the public online.

None of this is nefarious. It's just disappointing. Especially as someone who thinks residents' opinions are the most important ones.

As a former city employee, it was my job to ensure that our residents received honest, open and truthful communications in a timely manner. Throughout my tenure with the city, I was an advocate for government transparency and communication. I also understood the importance and witnessed the value of two-way communication.

I truly believe that an informed citizenry is a major benefit for our community. It encourages and promotes resident involvement on important issues. The city can tap the expertise and knowledge of our residents and invite those who have the time and desire to serve their community by volunteering for the many citizen boards and commissions that provide feedback to the elected officials.

In addition, I believe sincerely in the importance of local government. I think it's the form of government with the greatest impact on the daily lives of Chandler residents. When City government is working well, it is seamless; the water flows from your sink, trash is picked up on

time, and the streets are well maintained. And on the occasion when it's not working so well, you can call or send an email, and a real person – often one of your own neighbors – is there to help you. You can even voice your opinions in person to your elected officials during City Council meetings.

More importantly, city government should listen to what you have to say. In fact, a quick glance at a City organizational chart is a good reminder of who is in charge – that's you, the residents of Chandler.

I'm committed to ensuring that residents are heard through open and transparent communication, and a process that meets the needs of the residents, not just what is convenient for elected officials.

If I am fortunate to serve you on the Chandler City Council, I will work with my colleagues to not only continue to open up the lines of communication but to make our good city better. Meanwhile, please feel free to contact me anytime at www.janeposton.com.