

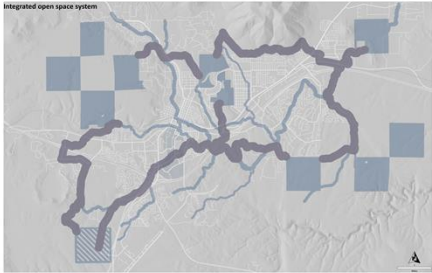
# Open Space Summary of PROS Committee Ballot Priorities

## Open Space Mission

*Protecting and restoring Flagstaff's natural, cultural, and scenic resources to enhance recreational and educational opportunities for residents and visitors.*

## Open Space Vision

*To create an integrated system of protected lands around Flagstaff that are connected by the Flagstaff Urban Trail System and various corridors, such as washes and hillsides.*



## How We Got Here...

### History & Facts

- Incorporated existing plans into the process to identify how to move forward: OS Strategic Plan, Open Space and Greenways Plan, Legally Designated Open Space Management Plan, FUTS Master Plan, Regional Plan and CAAP
- Conducted detailed GIS analysis to assess access, locations, FUTS priorities, current use trends, and locations in need of improvement
- Directed extensive communication with the community to gather data on needs for an integrated open space system: Conservation Study Forum, Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Rio de Flag, Audubon Society, Flagstaff Trail Initiative public comment to the Open Spaces Commission

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### Known Gaps

- Allocation of Open Space is not equitable based on coverage, community need, nor community growth
- Residents do not have equal access (Open Space opportunities within a 10-minute walk or ¼ mile) across our community, which is identified as a primary goal of the Open Space and Greenways Plan
- Spatial configuration and connectivity need to be incorporated into the City's integrated Open Space system to provide walkable, bikeable networks
- Access for residents and visitors will improve well-being and improve usability

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### Strategic Planning & Priorities

- The Open Spaces Commission reviewed guiding plans, collected data, and identified needs to formulate a path forward that would greatly benefit the community
- The path forward led to determining priorities to share with the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Committee

## Recommended Open Space Priorities

Priority	Description	Estimated Cost
<b>Integrated OS System</b>	Secure open space in the SE quadrant of Flagstaff and provide connectivity to existing trails and natural areas. Flagstaff lacks OS opportunities in this region and connectivity between preserves. This would ensure an equitable, livable, walkable, healthy community.	\$24.5 M
<b>Conserve Existing OS</b>	Preserve current City’ OS assets by completing 48 backlogged projects, 20 restoration, 10 preservation, and 18 facility improvements. Projects would include invasive plant removal, vegetation restoration, graffiti mitigation, wildlife friendly fencing, and trail repairs essential for proper management and a presentable condition.	\$2 M
<b>Observatory Mesa Trail System</b>	Enhance the quality and value of Observatory Mesa by implementing comprehensive trail plan. The only formal trails in this natural area consist of a connector between Thorpe Park and Tunnel Spring, and a small section of the Flagstaff Loop Trail. Creating a stacked loop trail system would provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike.	\$2.9 M

## Open Space Importance to Community Growth

### Community Growth

- An integrated open space system will reduce traffic congestion, noise, pollution, infrastructure deterioration and changes in community character.
- Open Space expands transportation choices and provides mobility options to all sectors of the community.
- Reducing transportation emissions is priority in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

### Community Health

- People living in walkable neighborhoods get about 35–45 more minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week and are substantially less likely to be overweight.
- Obesity rates have risen dramatically. Being physically active is more than a personal decision; community design and the availability of Open Space strongly influence how active people are.

### Economic Benefit

- Studies demonstrate that on average, open space lands require far less expenditures to maintain than they generated in local revenue.
- Access to nature is one of the key reasons people visit our community.
- Maintaining our communities’ character with open space dispersed throughout the city will maintain community character and keep us from becoming just another unidentifiable city.

### Equity

- Parks, from their earliest roots, help bring people together across social, economic and racial divides.
- Research shows OS has a positive impact on low-income urban communities, by filling gaps in health inequalities. One study found that residents of low-income communities with higher levels of OS have comparable mortality rates to residents of higher-income communities.

### Resilience

- Open space captures precipitation, reduces stormwater management costs, reduces air pollution control costs, and protects habitats that allow for stabilizing biodiversity.
- Open space acts as a buffer from catastrophic wildfires.
- Open Space has a great important as carbon sinks.