

City Manager's Update City Operations

April 3, 2020

Council and Colleagues, Greetings.

The purpose of this report is to provide updates regarding the City's Divisions and operations. It is intended to be an informational synopsis of current operating status throughout the organization. It is also supplemental to the Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), being amassed by our Fire Department, to address divisional responses to future resource and staffing reductions that may materialize due to the pending pandemic.

The updates, courtesy of our division and section directors, are in no particular order. One more notable here – things are changing rapidly and it's a bit of a challenge to ensure that these reportings are up to date. Some of the division summaries were obtained a week ago, and much has evolved in the past several days. Nevertheless, the intent here is to give the Council, and the public, a snapshot of how things are going within the City organization, and this report should help accomplish that. In the words of our City Attorney, "please take care to stay healthy. We **are** honored and proud to serve the City of Flagstaff – thank you"!

Information Technology

The IT Division is working remotely, with staff only coming into City hall to image new PCs or to perform equipment maintenance (operations, servers, switches, etc). *HelpDesk* is staggering staffing to ensure we comply with the social-distancing rule when in City Hall. GIS is working with Public Affairs Division and Economic Vitality on Developing COVID Informational map resources, and mapping of businesses remaining open.

IT was successful last week in increasing our City bandwidth by 10x ensuring all remote employees are able to remote in when needed with little interruption. We are grateful to IT Operations, NAU, and Suddenlink, for their assistance in this much-needed boost. Overall network usage has definitely spiked since the closure, but we are not experiencing slowness, and users are connecting to all the necessary resources.

HelpDesk is down 1 of our 3 positions, all other sections of IT are doing well, working remotely. IT is working hard to provide 100% of normal services, with the exception of in-person *HelpDesk* staffing assistance. Planning efforts are directed toward maintaining all City network and Data Storage systems, Remote Access systems, Security Authentication (DUO), and Employee support.

Economic Vitality

Airport

Wiseman Aviation is open from 6 am – 6 pm – using social distancing practices in and out of their building with a portable wash area outside that the Division recently arranged. The

Airport is seeing a 63% reduction in flights with American and United. The rental car sales have plummeted with little or no activity currently.

Community Investment

The Economic Development Team is reaching out to all businesses to see what they need and to let them know about the grants and loans they can use. *ParkFlag* has hooded all kiosks to show free parking and have also established curbside carryout zones. A variable message board has been installed on Aspen Street to promote local businesses. Arts & Sciences is working on a relief fund for the arts, culture, and science community. Stay tuned.

Library

The Library will be launching *Hoopla* this Wednesday. This is a full-library digital platform for all library card holders. No cost to the user.

Tourism

Flagstaff Local – My Actions Matter movement is full steam ahead. Our Mayor has asked 500 to take the pledge by signing up at www.flagstafflocal.com. We also did a video with Dre (a local) that is going viral, explaining how to shop Flagstaff while social distancing. Staff is working on other messaging – “We look forward to seeing you soon” and “Come meet Flagstaff” to help us rebound.

Management Services

The Division continues to function to provide the numerous important functions of the organization related to finance, procurement, payroll, and related services. The Budget Team continues to meet, remotely, on a regular basis and is preparing for the upcoming Budget Retreat. While it is not in the forefront of visible activities involving the organization, rest assured that much effort is being expended behind the scenes on this very important and rapidly evolving budget process.

Efforts were concluded to provide an additional \$10K in budgeted funding for emergency housing to the Flagstaff Shelter last week.

Please note that Management Services is working with Municipal Bill customers for payment arrangements, eliminated late fees, and we are not disconnecting water services (unless asked by customer) during the declared emergency.

Management Services does not have any absenteeism at this time, just an occasional use of PHEL (paid emergency leave). Some staff have the need to use City Hall for some of our processes and are limiting the number of staff allowed in each area. There are no reductions in service at this time. Management Services is working on our plans to maintain essential services should absenteeism become an issue.

Risk Management

Efforts were successful in securing a hotel partner to provide housing for our quarantined

personnel who, for the health and safety of their family, believe quarantine at home is inadvisable. That was in place on March 31st.

Risk Management is also working behind the scenes to negotiate our insurance renewals to provide us with the most favorable rates with modest increases in deductibles and self-insured retentions. Look for initial results next week. This is a very important endeavor in light of the current budget constraints and rapidly increasing insurance premiums that we are seeing across the board.

There is no absenteeism currently. Service reductions have been minimal, and there are no needed planning efforts to address resource shortfalls at this time.

Water Services

Water Services leadership team has switched from bi-weekly to weekly TEAMS meetings to ensure we stay connected, share information and work collaboratively in these social distancing times.

Our Water Reclamation Plants are experiencing a higher-than-normal amount of wipes being flushed down into the sewer system and collecting at the treatment plant headworks. While these “rags” have not caused operational impacts yet, their continued increase can cause unwanted emergency back-ups in our sewer systems, so we are asking the public to be mindful to throw them away and not flush them down the toilet. Note that efforts are underway to properly outreach this issue with our community.

This week Water Services is collaborating with TGEN North and NAU’s Pathogen and Microbiome Institute to begin sampling the wastewater entering our treatment plants for COVID-19. The work by TGEN North and NAU will benefit the public health capacity within Flagstaff by evaluating a potential early warning system that would help to protect citizens and City of Flagstaff employees that work in and around wastewater collection and treatment. Additional benefits to the public at-large will be to provide on-going surveillance of the community’s wastewater, in general, to track any potential ongoing transmission of the disease within the community in the future.

There have been no absences directly pertaining to COVID-19. We do a couple of sick personnel but they are staying home as requested. There has been no service reduction.

The Water Services Administration Building is closed to the public, but we are still open for business, just remotely. Each Section within Water Services has identified the steps to be taken in the event of reduced staffing due to COVID-19 and is summarized in a memo provided to the Fire Chief. Given the technical nature of wastewater treatment plant operations, this team’s current high vacancy rate and required licensing to operate our facilities, crews have been switched to an alternate work schedule in order to minimize coming into contact with one another thereby minimizing the risk should an employee become sick to not infect the entire crew. Management staff are continually evaluating should alternative scheduling need to occur in other operational sections in the weeks to come.

Community Development

Community Development continues to provide a range of essential services and operations across all three sections utilizing appropriate safety measures, these include development and permit review, inspections, capital project management and the Housing Authority. Housing Authority programs continue to directly serve the 832 households living in Public Housing or participating in Section 8.

The majority of personnel are working from home or in the field. We have had a few absences due to not feeling well or taking care of family, but not impacting operations for now. We are taking measures to be able to continue expanded services with appropriate safety measures and from remote locations and planning for potential staffing shortages. For example, we are currently not providing inspections of occupied spaces, but considering implementing additional protective measures and video inspections.

Engineering

Court Facility - Work this week includes; Roof parapet and flashing; Metal stud framing on second and third floors and; Mechanical and Plumbing wall rough-ins & install (no electric this week as this is one of the cost savings/safety measures KCS is managing to keep workers spread out). Had a discussion with KCS about impacts of COVID19 on work force and contract extensions. City has denied any additional costs.

Rio de Flag Flood Control Project - Property Acquisition: Appraisals for BNSF properties and commercial properties have been received and sent to Army Corps to review; Team met to review outstanding items and to follow up with SWI and Tetra Tech; Appraisals are being reviewed by Real Estate Manager; Title reports for additional properties in Clay Reach have been received and are under review with the Real Estate Manager and; The future Hyatt Project is in the alignment of the Rio De Flag (staff has requested the donation of easements). Working with Bob Holmes to make contact with USACE so we can better understand their schedule of events to ensure award of a construction contract.

Humphreys Fiber Optic Conduit - The installation of dual four-inch diameter conduits to accommodate City fiber optics distribution has been completed and restoration of disturbed landscape areas will be completed in the near future.

ADOT's Humphreys Widening Project - An IGA has been completed for the project and will be presented to Council at the April 21st meeting for their consideration.

Industrial Dr. and Fanning Wash Improvements - The \$1.3M project is approximately 30% complete with the new water main and major drainage components installed and; Work on the retaining walls and grading work continues.

Rt.66/Rio de Flag Utility Relocations Project - Work impacting travel lanes on Rt. 66 is complete; Contractor is focused on completing the jack & bore operation for 20" reclaim line and 6" gas line and completion of new manholes. We are confident that Eagle Mountain will

complete by April 13th as expected allowing ADOT to open bids for the Bridge Replacement work.

Linda Vista Culvert - Construction Started 3/30/2020; Excavation for new valve location and additional culvert has begun; New culvert pipe arrived today; New valve will be here next Wednesday and; Pending crew availability given the unknowns with the current COVID-19 issue, the full road closure is still anticipated for April 13 – 24 as indicated in the outreach information.

Switzer/Turquoise Roundabout - Woodson Engineering has completed field survey work and we are working to get original survey data from Point Engineers with mixed results (original design data is needed to compare design elevations to what exists in the field as we have concerns that the project was not built in accordance with the approved plans); ADOT's planned remedial work to commence April 1 however we have not heard anything from ADOT to confirm and this date has obviously been missed.

Sheep Crossing - Contract was awarded by Council however, KCS has asked for a contract clause to be added that would require city to compensate for additional costs associated with COVID19. Staff has prepared a COVID19 clause that will be shared with KCS allowing for time extension but no additional compensation. Discussions with KCS to continue.

Fourth Street Improvements (I-40 to Sparrow) - Working with AECOM to figure out additional costs associated with required design modifications. CO in the approximate amount of \$21K has been submitted and we are working to justify this request.

ADOT's Fourth Street & I-40 Bridge Replacement Project - Progress continues to be made on new bridge abutments with little impact to traffic.

Lone Tree Overpass - We are wrapping up our efforts to "refresh" the previous study as we intend to hire a consultant for design of the project through a RSOQ process.

JWP Specific Plan Phase I - Working with Peak Engineering to advance the study.

Mill Town - Working to draft a DA amendment that would provide for city funding of 50% of the pedestrian tunnel and allow for the city to delivery the design/construction of Beulah Extension and University Realignment.

Coconino Estates Improvements - Council award of GMP#1 anticipated on April 21st and Eagle Mountain Construction (EMC) has reviewed our COVID19 clause and will accept it.

Street Lighting to Enhance Dark Skies - We are proceeding with procurement of LED fixture that are compliant with the proposed Engineering Standards.

Development Review continues electronically.

Inspection and Testing continues to work in the field, respecting social distancing and staying away from their home office (Water Service's East Flagstaff Facility). Fire Department has provided PPE for the 5 staff. CMT continues to provide materials testing services.

Transportation continues to monitor the street network and to coordinate work with Public Works and ADOT as necessary. Traffic Impact analysis associated with development review continues electronically.

JWP/LT 5-Year Program Priority Discussion - preparing for Council discussion on April 7th.

Police Department

Currently, we have seen no significant impacts on our staffing in patrol, detectives, support services or dispatch. We have completed a COOP plan for operations, support services, and dispatch so we have plans in place if we do see a significant reduction in staffing in the future.

Our Officers are responding to all calls for service. There should be little to no impacts from the citizens point of view on our services in the field. We have closed the lobby to the PD but allow phone communication from the foyer and assist as we are able. We are not doing fingerprinting in most cases, a policy that is mirrored statewide. We have done outreach encouraging citizens to make reports on late incidents or lower priority events online or via phone.

Officers are still stopping traffic and still making arrests when appropriate, especially on violent offenses including assaults, fighting, domestic violence incidents, etc. Officers have been directed to consider exposure when evaluating their discretion on making self-initiated contact.

We have seen some exposures, we are appropriately documenting these, investigating and following up on them, and monitoring our officers closely.

Numerous new policies have been authored and are in place to give appropriate guidance to officers on PPE, exposures, quarantine protocols, services available, etc.

Public Works

Public Works is utilizing cross section labor, vehicle, and supply pools as available to keep essential services provided. A continuity of operations plan is in place to implement as necessary.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks crew is a bit reduced due to COVID-19 related issues, ranging from being ill or having family ill. Parks amenities that are closed so far include permanent restrooms, field rentals for youth and adult sports, special event reservations, and ramada reservations, until further notice. The Cemetery has directed mortuaries to perform direct burials only where funeral home staff witness the burial or placement of cremation remains. Family can observe from their vehicles.

In conjunction with the stay at home order, additional closures are being implemented including play structures, BBQ grills, sport courts, dog parks, etc.

Recreation staff have been conducting deep cleaning and preventive maintenance, minor painting, and inventory. Recreation facilities are closed, however recreation staff are researching how we may be able to safely provide day care for essential workers and possibly set up as a quarantine site for first responders and essential workers, if necessary.

Streets

Streets leadership has been emphasizing the need to stay healthy and working with the social distancing protocols. Public Works anticipates some impacts in the coming weeks with employees that have young children home due to the complete school closure and limited childcare resources. Streets is currently taking advantage of lower traffic volumes and completing work where we normally see conflicts.

Facilities & Fleet

Facilities is currently focusing on preventative maintenance and facilities inspections for providing service and working to focus on primary operations, such as Airport, Public Works, Fire, and Police Departments for supplies and other needs, as requested. Fleet continues to provide needed service to emergency response and essential service vehicles.

Municipal Court

Flagstaff Municipal Court is continuing the majority of cases that have been set for March 16th through the 31st, subject to any direction from the Arizona Supreme Court, for 60-days or providing a telephonic option for customers wishing to appear telephonically for court matters. We will continue to conduct in-custody initial appearances, in-custody arraignments, other in-custody court events, out of custody arraignments, and protective order court events. We are also working with the City Attorney – Prosecution Division on modified pre-trial conference hearing procedures. For additional information you may visit the Court's website at: <https://www.flagstaff.az.gov/1203/Flagstaff-Municipal-Court>.

The Court is experiencing a moderate level of absenteeism due to COVID-19 and the impacts of school and day care closures. The Court is open and is operating under Administrative Order of the Arizona Supreme Court and Administrative Order of the Coconino County Superior Court.

Human Resources

All staff are working remotely, and all services are generally running (exception, we are not offering in-person Investing In You (IIU) courses at this time).

HR is working with the CMO, Management Services and the Legal team to operationalize and communicate information regarding the two recent Acts: Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Extended Family Medical Leave – both are effective April 1st. We continue to assess through a lens of compliance, what is best for City of Flagstaff team members, and ease of administration.

Legal

The City Attorney's Office continues to serve City Council and staff as our clients and strives to effect justice to preserve peace in the community in general.

The Civil Section is working to ensure the Mayor, City Council, and staff receive necessary legal advice in this ever-evolving pandemic. Aside from the regular work which continues to be performed remotely, added tasks over the last few weeks include advising the Mayor and City Council specific to local proclamations and state executive orders. (A special thank you to the IT department for making a smooth transition to working from home not only possible, but effective.) We have been heavily involved in reviewing, interpreting and advising Human Resources (HR) on recent federal and state legislation prompted by COVID-19. This has allowed employees to receive the most up-to-date information to assist them in navigating many difficult decisions about leave time and work schedules. In addition, we continue to advise on new issues such as regular press releases to dispel inaccurate information, upcoming elections, open meeting law in the context of remote meetings, emergency housing funds, contract modifications, etc., all as a direct impact of the pandemic.

Unrelated to the pandemic, litigation of civil claims is ongoing, and our civil team continues working with City Council, staff and outside legal counsel on each case as needed. Of course, we continue to provide sound and solid legal advice on all legal matters for our clients, and we will continue to do so. If you need to reach out to us, please do so by email and phone at your convenience or as needs arise.

The Prosecution Section is working hard to continue to process all incoming misdemeanor crimes committed in the City of Flagstaff as efficiently and effectively as possible, given truly unprecedented circumstances. The prosecutors are working from home largely Monday through Thursday but appearing by phone and occasionally in person for in-custody hearings as scheduled by the court, conducting officer interviews and ongoing discovery and disclosure processes. We continue to appear in person for our Friday Pre-trial Conference calendar. Staff, thanks largely to efforts by IT, has been enabled to work from home, making brief, limited appearances in person at the office to gather required paperwork and to do the mail run for victim notifications and the like, endeavoring to perform the data entry required for the attorneys to prepare and prosecute their caseload. The City Prosecutor is continuing his ongoing efforts to work toward innovative, cost-effective solutions to address the cycle of substance abuse, mental health, and criminal activity that makes up the great majority of his office's caseload by working with stakeholders throughout the community.

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs team is tracking the aid available to our local business and non-profit community through the CARES ACT and created targeted outreach to them. We continue to monitor the plans for a fourth phase of the stimulus and identify city projects that could benefit (this phase will be focused on infrastructure).

While the City does not have a public health role, we are working closely with our partners (private and public) to identify needed messaging for our community and sharing as widely as possible. Much effort has been expended to provide accurate information and linkages to applicable sources and responding to the multitude of inquiries and concerns streaming into the City via email, social media and other avenues. There has similarly been a significant effort to help correct the misinformation in the community that becomes rampant in times like this.

Our Coordinator for Indigenous Initiatives (Rose Toehe) is actively working with tribal partners to identify messaging needs and when it is appropriate for the city to assist.

The NAU Neighborhood Liaison (Valeria Chase) is working with local student housing complexes to ensure they are aware of the recent state prohibition on evictions and conducting outreach to our student population.

Sustainability

Sustainability staff is poised to assist with the transition from COVID emergency response to community bouncing “forward” (recovery). Staff is working to identify funding opportunities focusing on climate action and community equity.

Sustainability continues its uplifting actions and community resources through its social media campaign – (www.facebook.com/FlagstaffSustainabilityProgram and www.instagram.com/flgsustain).

City Clerk

It has been a busy couple of weeks coordinating the technical equipment and training for conducting virtual employee and Council meetings. Significant work has been coordinated with IT and Legal to ensure we are including the public and providing ways for them to participate. Overall it has been a successful effort and we look forward to continued improvement of our meetings.

Clerk’s Office staff has been working from home maintaining business as usual. We are processing liquor licenses, processing public records requests (which never seem to stop or even slow down), and catching up on other things that have taken a back burner prior to this crazy time.

We are in full swing with elections right now and at this moment it appears that we will have 4 candidates for Mayor and 6 candidates for City Council.

Lastly, we are working with IT on our conversion from Laserfiche to OnBase. This is something we have been looking forward to for years and are eager to continue the process forward.

Fire Department

Fire has been coordinating division input from all divisions into several planning efforts

- Short term planning to identify essential functions
- Staffing plans to address 10%, 25%, 50% absentee rates (Continuity of Operations Plans or COOPs)

- Ongoing development of an Incident Action Plan for the City
- COOP updates for several departments. Volunteers displaced from other departments impacted by the closing of City Hall have been very helpful.

FD has not seen impacts to staffing due to the virus to date. It is now the coordinating agency for all the Greater Flagstaff Regional Fire Departments to the EOC for logistics requests to the County.

Command Staff has been conducting operational shift brief each tour since shortly after the Emergency Declaration. Operational policies are changing almost daily as guidance to address the risk to our staff is updated.

FD has appointed a Fire Captain as Agency Representative to the EOC to improve communication to the incident and internally.

Adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) continue to be a grave concern. We are working with the County EOC, the regions partner agencies, and our vendors to stay in front of our PPE needs.