

City Manager's Report

Aug 28, 2020

Council and Colleagues, Greetings.

These reports will be included in the City Council packet for regularly scheduled Council meetings, excluding Work Session meetings. The reports are intended to be informational, covering miscellaneous events and topics involving the City organization. In no particular order...

Butler Ave Variable Speed Limit Project

Transportation Engineering and Public Works completed, just prior to the scheduled start of the school year, a Sinagua and Knoles school area project with City Transportation Tax funds. This project was initiated through conversations with concerned citizens and FUSD that occurred several months ago, with the City agreeing to pursue possible traffic speed mitigation efforts. Councilmembers were apprised of the discussion at the time and has been involved in the meetings.

The project implements new variable speed limit signage along Butler Avenue between the two schools corresponding to arrival and departure times at each school. The City works with FUSD Administration each school year on their arrival and departure times including early release days and school holidays. Please note that currently we do not have wireless communications to this area so we are not able to easily adjust programming for snow days ... but we will work on that. The speed limit will reduce from 35 MPH to 25 MPH via these variable speed limit signs supplemented by warning beacons.

Variable Speed Limit sign with Flashing Beacons (beacons are dark in photo).



Related to the above, new and larger radar feedback signage displays changing messages consistent with the time of day variable speed limits. These signs are programmed to match the variable speed limit, so for example when the speed limit is 25 MPH, warning messages of SLOW DOWN will display when vehicles exceed 30 MPH. When the speed limit is 35 MPH the SLOW DOWN message will display once speeds reach 40 MPH. These signs have proven effective in improving awareness to drivers that are travelling at excessive speeds, reducing the percentage of drivers exceeding the posted limit by 5 and 10 MPH.



Radar Feedback signs with 32 MPH speed displayed and SLOW DOWN message displayed.

The project also upgrades the traffic signal controller at Foxglenn and Butler to accommodate the variable speed limits in setting vehicle change and clearance intervals since those are based on vehicle approach speeds which will now change throughout the day. The new traffic signal controller also enables central control and communication to the new variable speed limit and radar feedback signs. This reduces the programming workload for field staff, programming the single traffic signal controller for the school calendar versus the old method of programming each variable speed limit sign and each radar feedback sign.

As a part of the discussions with FUSD for this Butler Avenue Variable Speed Limit project we also relayed to FUSD some of the other neighborhood concerns of an all-weather safe and clear walking route from Knoles through Foxglenn Park to the signalized crossing at Butler and Foxglenn. We discussed the neighbor request for a physical barrier between Butler and the playground adjacent to Butler. We also discussed what a larger project could look like to rebuild Butler Avenue to align the Knoles and Sinagua driveway to allow for another pedestrian crossing between the two sites. A prospective future large project to redo the entrances to the two school sites is being considered by FUSD and would depend heavily on their participation and funding.

Major props go to the Traffic Engineering Team and others for their help in seeing these improvements occur, and to FUSD for our partnership. All of this, of course, occurred in the interest of enhancing safety and meeting the concerns of our neighborhoods. And specific kudos

to Jeff Bauman, Traffic Engineer, for overseeing this project and for the nice report here. Well done!

Finally, related to the crossing at Forest Ave and Hwy. 180, which is subject to ADOT jurisdiction, you may have noticed from responses to citizen inquiries that this is also a project that is happening. We will provide Council an update in the future, but for now, please take note that the City recently completed elimination of the left turn lane from westbound Forest to southbound 180 (see photo).

ADOT is currently performing a Corridor Master Plan for US 180 and they would appreciate that any comments be sent to them (Dan Gabiou). Outcome of US180 Corridor Master Plan will help identify priority spot improvements on US180 for crosswalk improvements.



Misc. Department Updates

Fire

Request was made to identify those FFD personnel that are deployed to assist in the catastrophic wildfires in California and Colorado, as we knew that the City Council, and the Flagstaff community, would be interested in knowing. Please see below:

Tanner Callan & Seth Gregar: Assigned to Cameron Peak Fire, Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests (Colorado), medic team using FFD equipment and vehicle.

Katie Brown: Assigned to the Salt Fire with Southwest Incident Management Team 5. Katie is assigned as a Situation Unit Leader (SITL), responsible for all mapping of fire and identification of any values at risk.

Mark Del Giorgio, Chris Romero, & Joel Barnett: Assigned to the Medio Fire with Southwest Area Incident Management Team 5. Mark is the deputy logistics chief, responsible for all fire logistics. Chris is the communication tech, responsible for setting up the communications system and frequencies. Joel is one of the PIOs, responsible for all fire messaging.

E-153 recently returned from a full two-week assignment on the Apple Fire in southern California, near Cabazon. While returning home they participated in a staff ride for the

Esperanza Fire -- a fatality fire that killed five Forest Service engine crew members in 2006 and ultimately ended in a murder conviction for the arsonist.

Currently two fully staffed engines are available.

We are grateful, beyond words, for the assistance that our wildfire personnel are giving to our neighboring jurisdictions during this horrific wildfire season. Thank you all!

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) and Information Technology (IT) are working together on the implementation of OnBase. The HR personnel files have been sent for scanning and HR and IT are continuing to work on electronic processes that will reduce the amount of paper used in HR.

Police

Flagstaff Police Department command staff members have been engaging with community members and partners at *Stronger As One*, Salvation Army Board meeting, Southside Community meeting, Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC) meeting, CJCC Mental Health Subcommittee, and Flagstaff Unified School District Anti-Racism / Anti-Bias Commission meeting.

Sgt. Turley and Legal Advisor Sullivan conducted mental health in-service trainings to all Flagstaff Police Department squads.

Public Works

Another Update for Joel Montalvo RFP here, and with the correct nomenclature! The Joel Montalvo park building Request for Proposal (RFP) is posted and a pre-proposal tour was offered. Stay tuned.

The installation of the Public Works Core Services Facilities 2 port electric vehicle charging station has begun.

APS has begun the installation of a Solar Array in the west parking area of the NACET Accelerator facility. The array looks very cool, and we will provide photos upon completion.

Four large Juniper bushes were removed from the Butler pocket park sitting area next to the Murdoch Center. This was done to increase the visibility and safety in the sitting area that connects E. Brannen Ave to E. Butler Ave (see pictures below).



Prompt Repair Work

Water service crews were very prompt in repairing the ten-inch water line and replacing the failed service fitting. The source of the water main break was found to be a corroded steel service fitting. A photo of the failed fitting is shown below. This repair was immediately performed on Monday, Aug 24th.

There was a total of ten water service customers impacted by this outage. Staff has met personally with each customer that was impacted, listened to their questions and provided them an update on the repairs. We also delivered a case of bottled water to them to provide them with drinking water in the meantime until their service was restored that evening.



Even though utility location was performed prior to the repair, there was an unmarked lateral gas line that was breached. Unisource completed the gas line repair and had returned the line into service by 7:30 pm that evening. There were four residents that were required to evacuate as a result of the gas leak. These residents were allowed to safely return to their homes. Another result of this gas leak is that it triggered an automatic investigation from the Arizona Corporation Commission (anytime a gas line is damaged and natural gas is released the ACC investigates the incident).

The final step was to patch and replace pavement which has occurred. All traffic barricades have been removed.

Update re payment to Southside Community Association

Another update here. The contract has been fully executed and the payment has been tendered.

Recent Meetings

NAU

On Aug. 28th I attended, along with our Vice Mayor and Interim Police Chief, an update meeting with NAU President Rita Cheng, Joshua Maher, and Erin Grisham, to discuss current progress with start of semester, COVID precautions, and related. In no particular order, please note the following, with gratitude for NAU's leadership.

- There are 29,505 total students enrolled, and the Flagstaff campus has 21,143. This represents a decline of 1,200 from last year. Also of this number, 4,400 students are participating remotely, which translates into approximately 17,000 students in person.
- Fall semester commenced, on a phased basis, on Aug. 12th. All students are required to take COVID tests. Remarkably, out of 17,000 students, there are only seven (7) positive cases which are under quarantine.
- Surge testing is being conducted in the Field House as well as Ft. Tuthill. Surge testing is seeing 200+ per day. Moving forward, saliva testing will start next week (Aug 31st) with 2,500 test kits that will be processed at NAU each week. These tests are entirely free to students, faculty, and community members.
- NAU will be executing an agreement with the County re contact tracing.
- Temperature checks are being performed with the use of 38 temperature taking machines across campus.
- Outreach to the students is most critical...the Campus Administration is being responsive to taking action to eliminate large gatherings. It is noted that The Mayor pub has been closed.
- The majority of students are masking and being conscious.
- There have been some complaint driven referrals for violations with follow up letters, and ultimately disciplinary processes involving potential suspension or expulsion.
- Our Police Department will work in coordination with NAU in terms of information sharing and reporting.

FDBA

On Aug. 27th there was a Board meeting in person, with social distancing and masking being respected. The venue was the courtyard (outside) behind the Late for the Train coffee shop. The consultants working with the DBA, who also presented to the Council last week, were present to discuss some preliminary outcomes of the downtown visioning process. It was very informative. Stay tuned as we will soon be addressing the topic of paid parking and related issues with the Council.



CPWAC

I attended, on Aug. 28th, the Coconino Plateau Water Advisory Council (CPWAC) as newly appointed Co-Chair for the Governmental Affairs Committee. I will be performing this duty jointly with Deputy County Manager Joanne Keene. I look forward to the participation in this important forum. Please see agenda pasted below:

Joint Meeting
Coconino Plateau Water Advisory Council
501 (c)(4)

Coconino Plateau Watershed Partnership
501 (c)(3)

Friday, August 28, 2020

10:00 A.M.

The meeting will be a Zoom virtual meeting due to COVID-19

Go to the following link to join the meeting on your computer, no password is required:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6160099904>

Meeting ID: 616 009 9904

You may also call in on the following number:

669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 616 009 9904

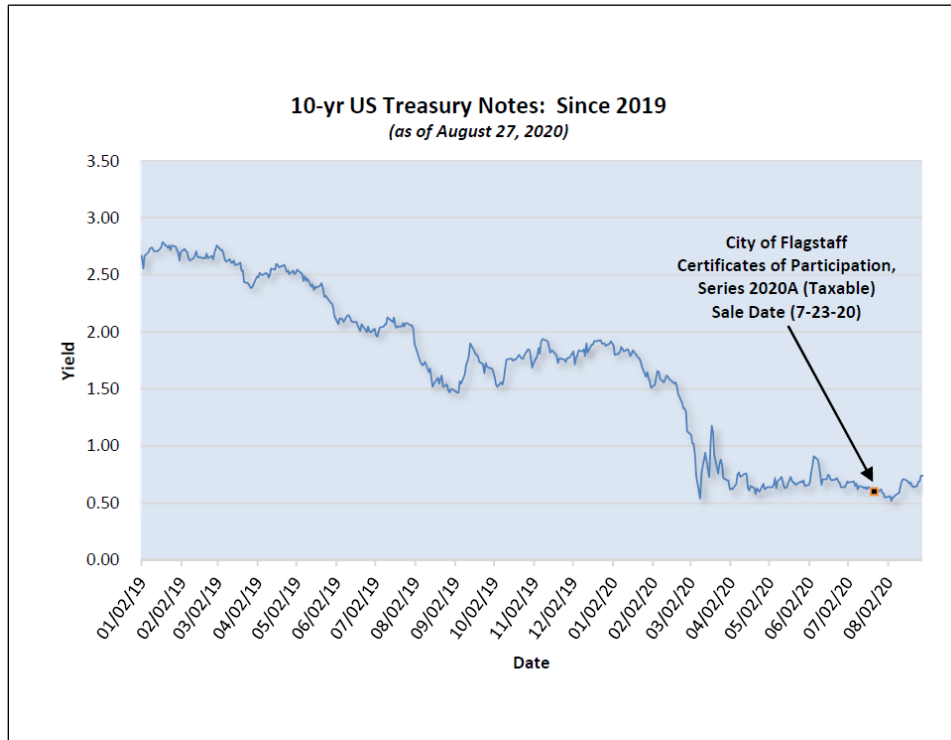
- 1. Welcome and Introductions** – Mayor Coral Evans, Chair
(5 min.)
- 2. Approval of Joint Meeting Minutes** - Meeting of July 31, 2020
(2 min.)
- 3. Action Items** – None
- 4. Non-Action Items**
 - A. Presentation on Water Related Ecosystem Services Assessment Phase II – Fresh Water Policy Consulting, Jocelyn Gibbon (60 min.)
- 5. Committee Reports**
 - TAC Report – Ron Doba (5 min.)
 - Government Affairs Report – Ron Doba (5min.)
 - Public Outreach Report – Tamara Lawless (5 min.)
- 6. Members Corner** – None
- 7. CPWP Member Roundtable** – (15 min.)
- 8. Adjournment**

Pension Fund Financing

At the risk of hammering on a subject that has been before you many times recently, you need to check out the graph below. The graph shows the 10-year Treasury Bond yield. It tells a great story.

The importance of the 10-year bond yield is that it is used as a proxy for many other important financial matters, such as mortgage rates. This bond, which is sold by the U.S. government, also tends to signal investor confidence. When confidence is high, the 10-year bond's price drops and yields go higher...when confidence is low, the price goes up as there is more demand for this safe investment and yields fall.

Now check out how the City of Flagstaff did in terms of the timing of its closing on the COPs last month. We pretty much nailed the low point in the yield, which correlates with our 2.68% aggregate interest rate on the issuance. Timing is everything!



Joy Cone GPLET

Council, the City intends to engage in discussions with Joy Cone about ways it may be able to help the business, given that the Development Agreement and associated property tax relief will be expiring. Any proposals or recommendations will be brought back to Council for consideration.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update

Council for your reading enjoyment, please also give the attached update a read. It has great photos and gives a nice summary of the highlights from this great project.

That is all for now, Council. Onward and upward...

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division

FLOWER PILOT PROJECT, SUMMER 2020

The call for flowers came from the City's Beautification and Public Art Commission (a body made up of Flagstaff community members), the Downtown Business Alliance, the Economic Vitality Division and City leadership. Beautification, Arts and Sciences staff took up the challenge in 2020, creating a pilot project and exploring what is possible now and in the future. Foxglove Gardening is the vendor selected for this year's project; they brought expertise and top-notch implementation of the project to the team.

The successful pilot project paves the way for future expansion, providing an opportunity for public engagement and community involvement.

This update provides: Components of the project this year; key lessons learned and information gathered, and considerations for future projects.

Key Highlights:

- This flower project supports local jobs, a local garden company, local nurseries, a native plant and youth nonprofit, and an artisan metalworks company.
- Flowers bring cheer to our community, now when it is needed most, while providing love to local businesses downtown.
- This project is paid for by the Beautification section of the Bed, Board and Beverage tax, funding that is supported by ordinance to be used only for these purposes as determined by voters in Flagstaff.
- The Heritage Square pollinator garden serves as a touchpoint for education on efforts the City is making to assist our pollinators and species such as the iconic Monarch butterfly.
- Public response to this project is overwhelmingly positive.



Figure 1: An image of hanging flower baskets in the summer of 2020 in downtown Flagstaff. The flower vendor selected this year is [Foxglove Gardening](#). The brackets were crafted by [Artisan Metal Works](#).

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

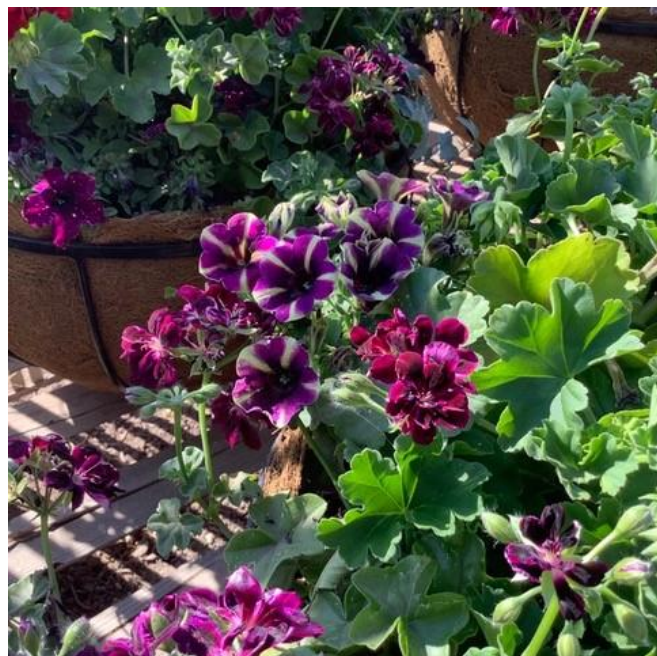
July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division

FLOWER COMPONENTS IN 2020

Hanging Flower Baskets: For the pilot project, 22 hanging baskets grace the Historic Downtown, brimming with climate-appropriate flowers. The flowers are concentrated on streets adjacent to Heritage Square, including Aspen, San Francisco and Leroux. This component of the project was by far the most complex, and entailed a structural engineering study of the lampposts, local fabrication of new brackets when the original ones were determined not sufficient, working on concepts with Traffic Engineering, partnering with Parks on the use of the lampposts and overall project logistics, and working with Streets on approval, advice and installation.



Heritage Square Planters and Pollinator Garden: The pollinator garden is part of larger efforts of Parks and Sustainability on increasing pollinator plant species throughout Flagstaff and supports Mayor Evan’s Monarch Pledge. The Heritage Square Garden provides the most visible public education point for these efforts, and was designed by Terra BIRDS, a local native plant and youth engagement non-profit (it was planned to have a youth education component that was cancelled due to COVID). The pollinator garden is complimented by informational signage designed by Discover Flagstaff.



Flowers for ‘Expanded Use of Right-of-Way’ Project: Additional flowers were added to the scope as part of the expansion of seating and business use in streets and alley closures. These included wine barrel (11) and whiskey barrel (3) plantings as part of the infrastructure to close spaces and to delineate a pedestrian and bicycle lane.

Figures 2 and 3: Close-ups of hanging baskets created by Foxglove Gardening, courtesy of Foxglove Gardening.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division

Foxglove Gardening is the vendor selected for the project this year, providing the plantings and maintenance, working with Terra BIRDS on the pollinator garden. The hanging brackets were crafted by local company Artisan Metal Works.



Figure 4: Before and after pictures of the Heritage Square planters, including the pollinator garden. The before pictures were taken in the winter, the after were taken in June 2020.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division



Figure 5: The Heritage Square pollinator garden in the summer of 2020.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division



Figure 6: One of the eleven wine barrel plantings used as part of the infrastructure for the Expanded Use of Right-of-Way on Aspen Avenue and in an alley perpendicular to Aspen Avenue downtown. This is a picture of the alley facing south.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division



Figure 6: Wine barrel planting in the partial closure area of Aspen Avenue. The closure creates more outdoor space for social distancing and outdoor dining in response to COVID, helping to protect public health while supporting local businesses. A row of wine barrels on Aspen Avenue helps delineate a pedestrian and bike lane.

Flowers for Flagstaff Update, August 2020

July 2020, City of Flagstaff, Beautification, Arts and Sciences Program, Economic Vitality Division

LESSONS LEARNED AND INFORMATION GATHERED

Perhaps the most valuable outcome of the pilot project is that it created a blueprint for future flower projects for Flagstaff and provided rich learning to inform flower projects for years to come. Staff and partners learned about the technical and logistical components and began building partnerships for the future.

Technical Knowledge:

- **Lamp Post Capacity:** The downtown posts do have the capacity to support hanging baskets. The pilot included a survey by a structural engineer to determine the load capacity of our decorative downtown lampposts.
- **Regulations** that effect the project are now understood related to traffic, ADA compliance, streets, permitting and more.
- **Materials:** we learned about bracket materials and components that work well, site-adapted plant materials, and basket and container types, sizes and options suited for Flagstaff's environment (including recycled materials, such as the wine barrels used this year).

Cost: Staff now understands the cost of a high-quality flower program. The quotes from businesses came back much higher than we anticipated, and the project scope was reduced. For the reduced scope, the original flower vendor contract was for \$38,871. When components for the 'Expanded Use of Right-of-Way' program were added to allow for more public space for seating and local businesses, the contract was increased by over \$8,000. We have funding in an ongoing line item for this project; yet if the scope increases we may need to identify additional sources of funding.

Project Structure: This year it was important to have a professional company implement the project due to staff constraints and to learn successful methods for planting in this challenging high desert environment. A private company is the best option for a high quality, successful program. However, we can consider different models for the future that engage more volunteers and partnerships with local organizations for plant care if the cost is too high or that is the path leadership wishes us to pursue. We may also want to consider some species in planters that work year-round and/or more perennials.

Public Feedback: Comments were overwhelmingly positive from the public and businesses. Business owners do want to be included in conversations about plans for future years. Additionally, staff noted that because it took so many City Departments and partnerships to carry out the project, there was a sense of shared ownership – a positive outcome we hope to build upon.

Site Considerations: This pilot focused on Heritage Square and streets adjacent to it. Several challenges became apparent – first, many businesses wanted the baskets in front of their site. Second, the visibility of the baskets was not as great as anticipated in some locations, as these streets have many trees and colorful signs that create visual 'noise.' For future years, considerations of prioritize entry points and gathering places will be explored. It is important to explore expanding to the Southside as well in 2021; the Southside was in the original scope before the project was streamlined due to costs and COVID. We will also consider a business 'buy-in' program for next year, and expansion beyond the historic core to sites such as the fourth street gateway.