

# Sustainability Commission Update

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist

David McCain, Chair, Sustainability Commission





# Background

## Commission History and Authority

- **Formed** in 2007 following the development of the Sustainability Program
- **Purpose:** Serve as an advisory and working capacity to recommend and coordinate activities in concert with the Sustainability Section
  - Promote compliance with City sustainability policy
  - Promote sustainable practices in all spheres of life and educating Flagstaff citizens



# Background

## Sustainability Commission

### Current Commissioners

- David McCain, Chair
- Kevin White, Vice Chair
- Eli Chamberlain
- Ariel Coffey
- John Dailey
- Kristin Kauffman
- Kristen Konkel

**City Council Liaison:** Austin Aslan

**Staff Liaison:** Dylan Lenzen

**Administrative Assistant:** Marissa Molloy



# Work Program



## Current Efforts

- Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Program
- Advancing Climate Action
- Feedback and direction on City planning, policy, programming, and budget
- Collaboration with other City Commissions
- Listening tours of City operations



# Current Work Program

## Neighborhood Sustainability Grant (NSG) Program

- Provides up to \$2,000 grants supporting:
  - Climate action
  - Sustainable food systems
  - Community resilience
  - Waste prevention and recycling
  - Water Conservation
- Has distributed \$41,895 in last 2 years
  - Funded 26 projects out of 43 total applications



# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – Examples of Funded Projects

- Compost Crowd - Trailer for Service Expansion (Funded in 2019)
  - The goal of this project was to increase Compost Crowd's capacity to provide compost collection services in the Flagstaff community.
  - Reached over 150 residential customers by the end of the 2019 Flagstaff Community Market season
  - Tripled the volume of food scraps being collected in Flagstaff
  - New partnership with City of Flagstaff for the Pumpkin Drop-Off

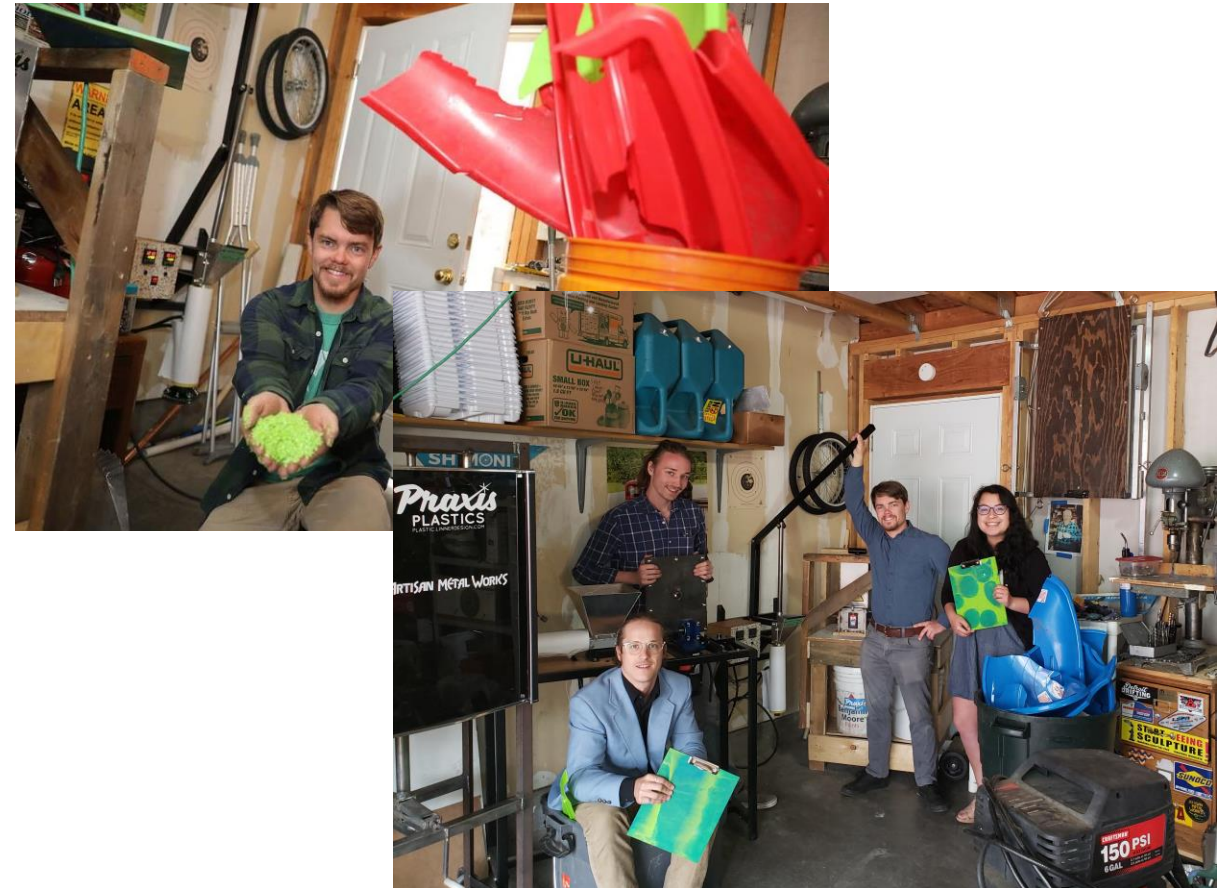




# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – Examples of Funded Projects

- Tyler Linner- Precious Plastic Recycling Project (Funded in 2018)
  - The goal was to identify and prototype plastic parts to be used to reduce the cost of small-scale recycling machines, considering Flagstaff's inability to recycle most plastic materials.
  - Won Flagstaff's Innovate Waste Challenge which funded his new business (with partner Fran Alvarado), Praxis Waste Solutions
  - Presented prototype clipboards made from recycled sleds to City Council





# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – Examples of Funded Projects

- Terra BIRDS- Flagstaff City Hall Landscape Conversion Pilot Project (Funded in 2018)
  - Aimed to prove the feasibility of the concept, demonstrate the aesthetics to the public, and work out best practices for the transformation of the remaining City Hall landscape.
  - Converted 2,000 sq. ft. of lawn into meadow that will save about 124,967 gal. of water per year

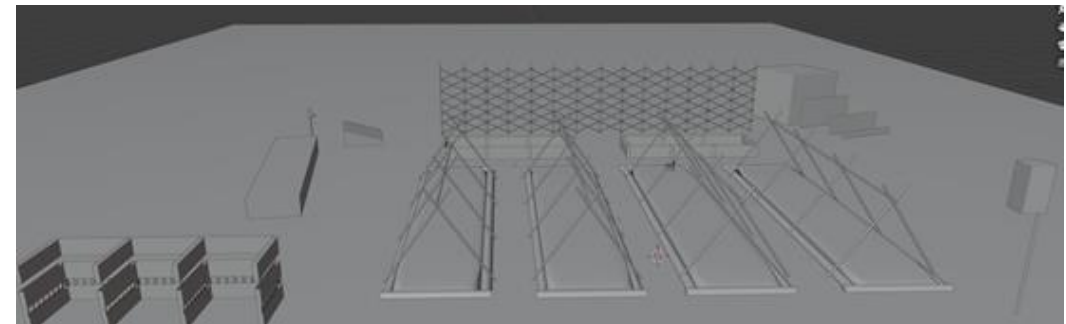




# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – FY 20-21 Grant Cycle Winners

- The Arboretum at Flagstaff – High Desert Backyard Produce Garden
  - Funded for \$1,900.24
  - Demonstrates multiple sustainable practices for successful food production in limited space
  - An educational opportunity, as well as growing space for produce donation and seed sharing



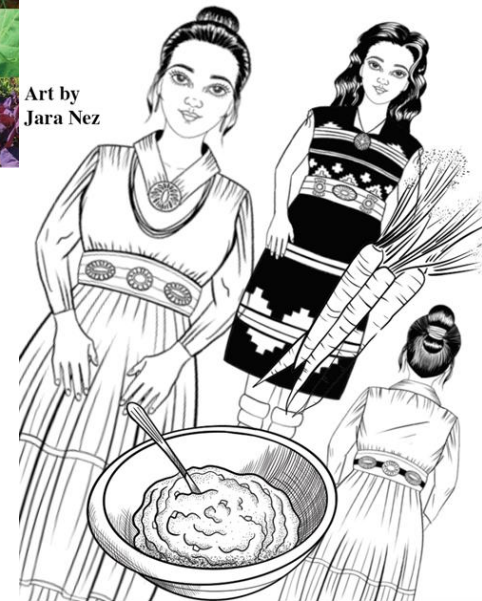
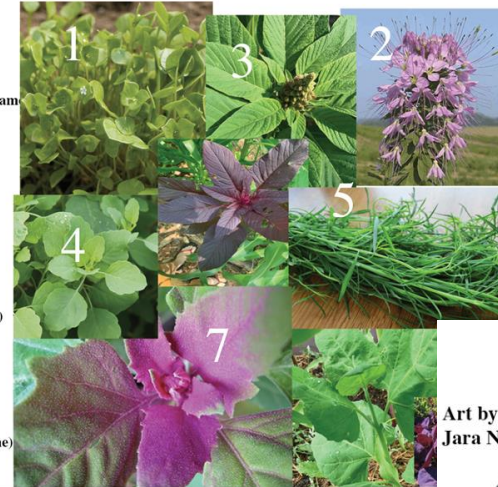


# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – FY 20-21 Grant Cycle Winners

- Oakley Anderson-Moore – Dry Greens Garden
  - Funded for \$1,994.00
  - Aims to popularize drought-tolerant native and non-native plants that can be eaten as greens
  - Distributes seed packets and educational info in English, Spanish, and Diné

- Native Greens
- *Claytonia Perfoliata* (scientific name), "towish popa'kwa" (Luiseno name)
  - *Cleome Serrulata* Coloquial (scientific name), "naá" (Diné name)
  - *Amaranthus cruentus* (scientific name), Komo (Hopi name)
  - *Porophyllum ruderale* (scientific name) Papalo (Spanish Name)
  - *Porophyllum tagetoides* (scientific name) Pepicha/Pipicha (Spanish name)
- Non-Native Greens
- *Atriplex Hortensis* (Scientific name)
  - *Chenopodium gigantium* (Scientific name)



Art by Jara Nez



# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – FY 20-21 Grant Cycle Winners

- Darrien Benally – Growing Indigenous Health and Resilience
  - Funded for \$1,134.80
  - Enables community members to grow nutritious garden plants from balconies, while learning the importance of healthy eating
  - Provides balcony gardening kits for participating families
- Southside Community Association – Murdoch Center Community Garden
  - Funded for \$341.74
  - Upgrades the Murdoch Center’s rainwater collection and irrigation





# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – FY 20-21 Grant Cycle Winners

- Threaded Together – Sustainable Sewing Classes
  - Funded for \$2,000
  - Workshop series for adults and teens focused on repurposing, responsibility, and resilience through hand quilting and mending





# Current Work Program

## NSG Program – Overhaul of Application and Review Process

- NSG Working Group
- Starting with FY 2022 grant cycle, updated:
  - Application requirements and description
  - Evaluation criteria
  - Review process
  - Support for applicants – staff-led workshop



# Current Work Program

## Advancing the Climate Neutrality Plan

- Commissioners have received monthly updates since the adoption of the Climate Emergency Declaration in Summer 2020
- Commissioners have helped vet the plan and engagement efforts
  - Comments and questions have been considered by staff throughout the process
- Assisted with engagement efforts
  - Shared information, surveys, open houses, and other feedback opportunities through their networks
- Commission Chair participated in Steering Committee meetings



# Current Work Program

## Feedback and Guidance on Other Policy and Programming

- Rethink Waste Plan
- Materials Recovery Facility Planning
- Changes to City Code – Animal Keeping Code
- Active Transportation Management Plan
- Water Conservation Strategic Plan

## Listening Tours of City Operations and Community Initiatives

- Priority-based budgeting
- Regional Plan
- Lived Black Experience Strategic plan



# Current Work Program

## Collaboration with Beautification and Public Art Commission

- BPAC-funded art project to be featured on Mountain Line buses
  - Theme of climate change and hope
  - Input from Sustainability Commission





# Future Work Program

## Upcoming Efforts

- Mission and vision exercise
  - Provide more specific direction on the role of the commission beyond the ordinance
  - 4 Commissioners have been on for less than 16 months
    - Reassess focus as a group
  - Guide future work program
- Review of FY21-22 Budget items related to climate action
  - Commission working group to provide feedback for staff and Council
- Revisions to Neighborhood Sustainability Grant review process
  - Need to accommodate higher volumes of applications as funding increases
  - FY21-22 budget request would double the impact of the program



# Challenges and Concerns

- Defining the role of the Commission
  - Beyond the NSG program, how do we best serve the needs of City Council?
- How do foster more robust dialogue among commissioners, as well as the public?
  - Ex: Materials Recovery Facility Planning
  - Are formal commission meetings the appropriate venue for this dialogue?
- How do we keep the Commission ordinance relevant?
  - Programming and community needs have changed significantly since it was adopted in 2007
- How do we manage the increase in NSG funding?
  - More applications requires significantly more time for commissioners



# Challenges and Concerns

## Ideas for consideration

- Through commission working groups, organize community forums on specific topics
  - Gather community input on programming, policy and initiatives
  - Distill feedback and subsequent commission meetings before sharing with City Council

# Thank you.

