

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

Concept Zoning Map Amendment: McMillan Mesa Natura Area

PUBLIC HEARING
PZ-20-00063

DATE: December 21, 2021
MEETING DATE: January 12, 2021
REPORT BY: Genevieve Pearthree

REQUEST:

A request by the City of Flagstaff for a Concept Zoning Map Amendment of approximately 299.68 acres, distributed across 10 parcels generally located at 1900 North Gemini Drive, from the Rural Residential (RR), Public Facility (PF), and Research and Development (RD) zones to the Public Open Space (POS) zone. A Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) will be applied to the area covered in this rezoning request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning & Zoning Commission, in accordance with the findings presented in this report, forward the Concept Zoning Map Amendment to the City Council with a recommendation to approve an amendment to the Zoning Map for 299.68 acres from the Rural Residential (RR), Public Facility (PF), and Research and Development (RD) zones to the Public Open Space (POS) zone, with the following condition:

1. A Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) shall be applied to all areas contained in this rezoning request.

PRESENT LAND USE:

This Zoning Map Amendment includes undeveloped land distributed across 10 parcels. The Flagstaff Urban Trails (FUTS) network has several multimodal paths that cross the area. There is also existing utility infrastructure in the area.

PROPOSED LAND USE:

The parcels will be rezoned as Public Open Space (POS) and will be managed by the City of Flagstaff Open Space Program as the McMillan Mesa Natura Area (MMNA). The POS zone only allows two uses: Open Spaces and Passive Recreation.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

See the attached area context map.

North: Buffalo Park (POS Zone); USGS Industrial Park, NACET Incubator (PF Zone); Veteran's Home (Rural Residential [RR] Zone); Basis Flagstaff and several medical facilities (RD Zone);

East: Sunnyside Neighborhood (High Density Residential [HR], Medium Density Residential [MR], and Community Commercial [CC] zones);

South: Single family and multifamily homes along Arrowhead Avenue (HR and MR zones); San Francisco De Asis Catholic Church (MR and RR zones);

West: Single family and multifamily housing (HR, MR, and Single Family Residential [R1] zones); Jay Lively Activity Center (PF zone); BASIS Flagstaff School (RD zone).

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

The Commission shall find that the Concept Zoning Map Amendment meets the three findings for approval per City Code Division 10-20.50: Amendments to the Zoning Code Text and the Zoning Map.

I. Project Introduction

A. Background

The City of Flagstaff Open Space Program requests a Concept Zoning Map Amendment to rezone approximately 298.66 acres of land from the Rural Residential (RR), Public Facility (PF), and Research and Development (RD) zones to

the Public Open Space (POS) zone. This Concept Zoning Map Amendment is the third step in a longer process to set aside City-owned land on McMillan Mesa as Designated Open Space.

The MMNA is comprised of 10 parcels located north and south of Forest Avenue. The area included in this rezoning request is currently undeveloped. These parcels are owned by the City of Flagstaff, but two of the ten parcels are only partially included in this rezoning request. The portion of APN 110-08-001G not being rezoned contains Buffalo Park, the US Geological Survey campus, and the Northern Arizona Center for Emerging Technology (NACET) Incubator; the portion of APN 109-02-001S not being rezoned contains Buffalo Park and the triangle of land between Cedar Avenue, West Street, and Linda Vista Drive.

On November 8, 2016, approximately 86% of Flagstaff voters voted in favor of Proposition 413—Campaign for a Greater Buffalo Park. This proposition restricted the use of City of Flagstaff-owned Property on McMillan Mesa to public open space and passive recreation. City Council approved the results by Resolution Number 2016-38 on November 28, 2016. The area covered in Proposition 413 is known as the McMillan Mesa Natural Area (MMNA). Proposition 413 did not change the Regional Plan Land Use Designations of the MMNA, nor did it update the zoning.

The City Council initiated and approved the McMillan Mesa Natural Area Major Plan Amendment on October 16, 2018 (Resolution 2018-15). This resolution amended the Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030 by updating the Future Growth Illustration (Maps 21 and 22) and the Road Network Illustration (Map 25) to make the land use and road network designations consistent with the MMNA. Specifically, the Amendment: 1) changed the Regional Plan land use designations of the MMNA from Existing Suburban, Employment, Special District, Area in White (not assigned a future land use designation), Future Urban, and Future Suburban to Parks/Open Space; 2) Removed the Ponderosa Parkway Connection from the Road Network Illustration (this road would have bisected the MMNA); and 3) corrected some mapping errors in the Regional Plan.

The MMNA is also covered in two additional City documents: The City of Flagstaff Management Plan for Legally-Designated Open Space Properties, and the McMillan Mesa Village Specific Plan. The Management Plan includes detailed information on the MMNA, including natural and historic resources, public use of the area, and a priority action plan. City Council approved the most recent update to the Management Plan on July 7, 2020 (Resolution 2020-46). The McMillan Mesa Village Specific Plan was passed by City Council Ordinance 92-1779 on December 15, 1992 and shows the general land uses for portions of the MMNA south of Forest Avenue. Conformance with the Regional Plan and Specific Plan is discussed in the Zoning Map Amendment Findings section later in this document.

B. Zoning Map Amendment Process

An applicant requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map may elect to pursue either a “Direct to Ordinance with a Site Plan” or “Authorization to Rezone with a Concept Zoning Plan” per Section 10-20.50.040.D of the Zoning Code. The Direct to Ordinance with a Site Plan process requires the applicant to submit fully developed plans with all information required for Site Plan review concurrently with the Zoning Map amendment application. Once the Zoning Map amendment is approved by the City Council, then the applicant can proceed directly to construction plan and building permit review.

The Concept Zoning Map Amendment process allows the applicant to prepare a Concept Zoning Plan and pursue Site Plan approval after the City Council approves the Zoning Map Amendment. A Concept Zoning Plan should consist of a plan with proposed use(s), vicinity maps, context maps, concept phasing, housing types if applicable and a proposed circulation map.

This Concept Zoning Map Amendment request proposes no new development currently. Thus, neither a Concept Plan nor a Site Plan are required to accompany this rezoning request.

C. Zoning Map Amendment Request

This Concept Zoning Map Amendment covers approximately 299.68 acres distributed across 10 parcels. The proposed changes in area to zones in the City of Flagstaff Zoning Map are as follows:

Changes in Land Use due to Proposed Zoning Map Amendment

Zoning	Acres Reduced	Acres Added
Public Facility (PF)	100.14	0
Rural Residential (RR)	192.07	0
Research and Development (RD)	7.45	0
Public Open Space (POS)	0	299.68

Two of the ten parcels are partially included in this rezoning request (APN 110-08-001G and APN 109-02-001S). Further, parcels 101-37-001E and 101-37-002H parcels (which serves as FUTS trail connectors) were not included in the original Proposition 413 area, but they were included in the Regional Plan Amendment. Parcels 101-28-007C, 110-08-001G, and 109-02-001S are partially designated with a Resource Protection Overlay (RPO). A summary of each of the parcels included in this rezoning request is provided below.

Summary of Parcels Included in the Zoning Map Amendment Request

	Parcel Number (APN)	Location/Description	Area in ZMA Request	Total Parcel Area	Description of Area in Rezoning Request	Current Zoning	Has a Resource Protection Overlay (RPO)?
1	101-37-002J	Adjacent to the west side of parcel 107-01-001F	0.08 acres	0.08 acres	Entire parcel	RD: 0.08 acres	Yes
2	107-01-001F	Southeast of Gemini Drive	1.94 acres	1.94 acres	Entire parcel	RD: 1.94 acres	Yes
3	107-01-001G	Adjacent to the west side of parcel 107-01-001B	0.09 acres	0.09 acres	Entire parcel	RR: 0.09 acres	Yes
4	101-37-001E	1751 North Gemini Drive. This parcel is a Flagstaff Urban Trail System connector	4.16 acres	4.16 acres	Entire parcel	RD: 4.16 acres	Yes
5	101-37-002H	1750 North Gemini Drive. This parcel is a FUTS connector	1.19 acres	1.19 acres	Entire parcel	RD: 1.19 acres	Yes
6	101-28-007E	East of North Pine Cliff Drive and west of parcel 101-28-007C	0.01 acres	0.01 acres	Entire parcel	PF: 0.01 acres	Yes
7	107-01-001B	Southeast of Gemini Drive	152.52 acres	152.52 acres	Entire parcel	PF: 5.17 acres RR: 147.34 acres	Yes
8	101-28-007C	Parcel immediately north of the "Horseshoe Neighborhood"	19.10 acres	19.10 acres	Entire parcel	PF: 19.10 acres	Partial (the thin north-south portion does not have a RPO)
9	110-08-001G	North of Forest Avenue (portion)	50.16 acres	298.81 acres	Area bounded by the USGS facility,	PF: 16.11 acres RR: 34.05 acres	Partial

		not being rezoned contains Buffalo Part, the USGS Campus, and the NACET Incubator			Switzer Canyon Trail, Forest Avenue, and North Turquoise Drive		(Buffalo Park, USGS, and NACET do not have a RPO)
10	109-02-001S	North and South of Forest Avenue (portion not being rezoned contains Buffalo Park and the triangle of land between Cedar Avenue, West Street, and Linda Vista Drive)	70.43 acres	181.80 acres	Southern portion of this parcel (area bounded by Forest Avenue, Coconino High School, the "cinder pit", and the APS powerline)	PF: 59.75 acres RR: 10.68 acres	Partial (most of the area north of Cedar does not have a RPO)

II. Application Review

On October 11, 2021, the Inter-Division Staff (IDS) accepted the Concept Zoning Map Amendment for the McMillan Mesa Natural Area with conditions. A copy of the application is attached to this report. There is no Concept Plan or Site Plan associated with this application because no new development is currently proposed.

A. Zoning – City of Flagstaff Zoning Code

If this Concept Zoning Map Amendment request is approved, approximately 299.68 acres will be zoned Public Open Space (POS) with a Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) from the current zoning designations of RR (Rural Residential), PF (Public Facility), and RD (Research and Development) with a RPO.

i. Relevant Development Standards

Per Table 10-40.30.060.B., the POS zone only permits two uses: Open Spaces and Passive Recreation.

ii. Resource Protection

Seven of the 10 parcels in this rezoning request have a Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) across the entire parcel. Three of the parcels have a RPO applied to part of the parcel (the areas of these parcels with the RPO closely match the areas included in this rezoning request, although they are not an exact match). The POS zone requires protection of 30% of the trees, 60% of the slopes with a grade of 17-24.99%, 80% of the slopes with a grade of 25-34.99%, and 100% of slopes with a 35% or greater grade. APN 109-02-001S and APN 110-08-001G contain Urban Floodplains (the West Street Wash on APN 109-02-001S and the Switzer Canyon Wash on 110-08-001G). The Zoning Code allows Urban Floodplains to be disturbed pending approval from the City of Flagstaff Stormwater Section, unless these floodplains have characteristics conducive to water quality, wildlife habitat, and stream ecology.

iv. Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Systems

Existing multimodal FUTS trails traverse the site. There is also a FUTS along Forest Avenue/Cedar Avenue, which bisects the MMNA and is an important east-west transportation corridor.

B. Public Systems Impact Analysis

No impact analyses were required as part of this application because no new development is currently proposed.

III. Zoning Map Amendment Findings

An application for a Zoning Map Amendment shall be submitted to the Planning Director, who reviews the application and prepares a recommendation. The Planning Director's recommendation shall be transmitted to the Planning and

Zoning Commission in the form of a staff report prior to a scheduled public hearing. The recommendation shall include an evaluation of the three findings for approval of Zoning Map Amendments, per Division 10-20.50: Amendments to the Zoning Code Text and the Zoning Map:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with and conforms to the goals of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans;
2. The proposed amendment will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City and will add to the public good as described in the General Plan; and
3. The affected site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics and the provision of public and emergency vehicle (e.g., fire and medical) access and public services and utilities (e.g., fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal), to ensure that the requested zone designation and the proposed or anticipated uses and/or development will not endanger, jeopardize or otherwise constitute a hazard to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located.

The recommendation shall include an evaluation of the consistency and conformance of the proposed amendment with the goals and policies of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans, the grounds for the recommendation based on the standards and purposes of the zones set forth in Section 10-40.20 (Establishment of Zones) of the Zoning Code, and whether the amendment should be granted, granted with conditions to mitigate anticipated impacts caused by the proposed development, or denied.

A. Finding #1

The proposed amendment is consistent with and conforms to the goals of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans.

The proposed amendment must be found to be consistent with and in conformance with the goals and policies of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans. If the application is not consistent with the General Plan, and any other applicable specific plan, the applicable plan must be amended in compliance with the procedures established in Chapter 11-10 of the City Code (Title 11: General Plans and Subdivisions) prior to considering the proposed amendment.

i. Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030 Process and Analysis Summary

When staff performs a Regional Plan (the “Plan”) analysis, staff reviews all maps, text, and goals and policies to determine which are the most relevant in relation to the proposed application. The Plan’s Future Growth Illustration on Maps 21 and 22 (same map; one is regional scale and one city scale) and the text of the Plan provide supplemental information for the interpretation of goals and policies. In the case of any conflict between the Future Growth Illustration and the Plan’s goals and policies, the goals and policies will prevail. The Future Growth Illustration has two types of land use designations: “Area Types” describe the place-making context of Urban, Suburban, Rural, or Employment, and “Place Types” such as activity centers, corridors, and neighborhoods which provide the framework for the density, intensities, and mix of uses within the area types.

Staff has identified the MMNA as a Park/Open Space area type. The Public Open Space (POS) zone is consistent with this area type.

ii. Applicable General Plan Goals and Policies

As part of its review, staff identified relevant Regional Plan Goals and Policies that could be applied to support or not support the proposed Zoning Map Amendment. These goals and policies are located within the applicant’s narrative. The narrative identifies 32 Regional Plan Goals and Policies that support the proposed rezoning, and eight Goals or Policies that do not support the rezoning. The following is a discussion of how the project generally meets or conflicts with goals and policies in the Regional Plan. A detailed Regional Plan conformance analysis is included as an attachment to this staff report.

Regional Plan 2030 Goals and Policies that Support the Rezoning

The Goals and Policies that support this rezoning request can be found in the following Regional Plan categories: Environmental Planning and Conservation (E&C), Open Space (OS), Community Character (CC), Growth Areas and Land Uses (LU), Economic Development (ED), Neighborhoods, Housing, & Urban Conservation (NH), Recreation (Rec), Transportation (T), Water Resources (WR). The applicant has summarized conformance as follows:

- **Open Spaces, Natural and Cultural Resources (E&C, OS, CC, LU):** These Goals and Policies are focused on the protection of natural resources, including dark skies, ecosystem health (protecting native plant and animal communities, conserving and restoring ecologically sensitive areas, controlling invasive species), and open spaces that act as greenways and wildlife corridors. This section also includes Goals and Policies to identify and protect historical, cultural, and archaeological resources. The MMNA will protect a montane grassland, which is an at-risk ecosystem type per the Regional Plan, and it will promote dark skies. Per the Legally Designated Open Space Management Plan, the MMNA will be regularly surveyed for invasive plants, and management strategies will be enacted accordingly. Finally, the MMNA will protect existing cultural and ecological resources.
- **Great Streets and Views (CC, LU, ED):** These Goals and Policies are focused on protecting, respecting, and enhancing views, gateway corridors, and public spaces. Map 12 of the Regional Plan shows Cedar Avenue as a Great Street that offers views of San Francisco Peaks, Dry Lake Hills, and McMillan Mesa. Designating the surrounding land as Public Open Space will preserve these views.
- **Nearby Neighborhoods and Schools (NH, CC):** These Goals and Policies are focused on stabilizing neighborhood identity, protecting cultural diversity, and completing sidewalks and FUTS connections for schools, community colleges, and university campuses. The MMNA will preserve open space adjacent to surrounding neighborhoods, and will provide safe non-motorized access through the open space between neighborhoods, community centers, and schools surrounding the MMNA.
- **Employment and Special District Area Types (LU, ED):** These Goals and Policies are focused on improving multimodal connectivity between existing and proposed employment centers and neighborhoods. It also focuses on leveraging regional assets, including the natural environment, to promote economic development. The MMNA is surrounded by, and interspersed with, important employment centers, including the USGS and NACET, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods of Switzer Ridge/Mesa, McMillan Mesa Village, and Sunnyside. The multimodal trails across the MMNA help connect these areas to each other, and may help increase marketability of the area.
- **Recreation (Rec.):** These Goals and Policies are focused on integrating active and passive recreation opportunities to promote a healthy community, promoting public and private partnerships to increase parks and recreation areas, and designing new/updating existing parks and recreational opportunities where feasible. The Buffalo Park/MMNA complex will provide the City's second-largest park/open space area. The size of the area and its continuity with Forest Service trails and resources will further enhance these combined properties' management and recreational opportunities.
- **Transportation (T):** These Goals and Policies are focused on providing multimodal transportation opportunities (walking and biking) that are safe, efficient, and consistent with conservation, preservation, and development goals to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on the natural and built environment. There are eight existing trails that pass through the MMNA. Coconino High School and BASIS benefit from safe places for students to walk and bike.
- **Water Resources (WR):** These Goals and Policies are focused on maintaining a sustainable water budget and partnering with resource land managers and adjacent landowners to improve water yield and hydrologic processes. The MMNA is not expected to grow water demand or require additional water infrastructure capacity at this time because no new development is proposed.
- **Stormwater and Watershed Management, and Water Quality Goals and Policies (WR):** These Goals and Policies are focused on supporting a healthy watershed, identifying and mitigating downstream impacts

associated with new development, improving flood control, increasing groundwater recharge, improving water quality, and encouraging low-impact development strategies. The MMNA is not expected to generate any downstream impacts because no new development is proposed at this time. However, ample mitigation, treatment, and recharge opportunities already exist within its boundaries.

Regional Plan 2030 Goals and Policies that Do Not Support the Rezoning

Staff has identified eight Regional Plan Goals and Policies that do not support the rezoning. These conflicting goals and policies were presented to, and discussed by, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council as part of the Major Regional Plan Amendment in 2018 that changed the land use designation of the MMNA to Parks/Open Space. They are summarized here.

- **Economic Development (ED):** These Goals and Policies focus on protecting existing businesses and industrial land uses from encroachment, and promoting flexibility in land use and development options with the Urban Growth Boundary as identified in the Regional Plan. This rezoning request would change the zoning of 7.45 acres from Research and Development (RD) and 100.14 acres from Public Facility (PF) to Public Open Space (POS), thereby conflicting with the Regional Plan goals to promote infill and intensification near activity centers.
- **Growth Areas and Land Uses (LU):** These Goals and Policies focus on encouraging efficient use of infrastructure within the Urban Growth Boundary and fostering the intensification, expansion, and protection of existing industrial, warehousing, and distribution uses from encroachment where appropriate. The Public Open Space zoning designation would conflict with Regional Plan policies to protect employment and related uses from encroachment. However, the 2018 Regional Plan Major Plan Amendment already reduced the Regional Plan Employment/Special District and Housing land use area types in Maps 21 and 21: Future Growth Illustration. In the 2018 Staff Summary for the Resolution that approved this Amendment, Comprehensive Planning Staff indicated that the reduction in available land for housing and business park uses will need to be offset in another location as part of the next comprehensive update to the Regional Plan (to begin in 2022).
- **Transportation (T):** These Goals and Policies focus on creating efficient transportation networks to connect trade corridors and employment centers, protecting rights of way for future transportation corridors, and supporting economic vitality by improving intersection design for freight movements. The designation of the MMNA does not make forward progress on achieving these goals. However, the 2018 Regional Plan Major Plan Amendment already removed the Ponderosa Parkway extension to Gemini from Map 25 (Road Network Illustration). As discussed during the Amendment process, the elimination of the Ponderosa Parkway extension to Gemini was expected to reduce driving accessibility of the immediate area and could increase traffic on the 4th Street corridor. This change was expected to increase vehicle travel distances, cut through traffic in neighborhoods, and affect emergency response times.

iii. McMillan Mesa Village Specific Plan

This Plan covers parcels 101-37-002J, 107-01-001F, 101-37-002H, 101-28-007C, 101-37-001E—many of the parcels in the MMNA located south of Forest Avenue. The zoning designation of Public Open Space for these parcels will be consistent with the Plan: Tract J (101-28-007C) is shown as a School or Park, while parcels 101-28-007C and 101-37-001E are FUTS connectors that bisect areas zoned RD, MR, and CC, which are consistent with the Tracts D and E (Business Park), and Tract C (Suburban Commercial) shown in the Plan.

Tract G in the Plan (APN 101-37-002J and APN 107-01-001F) was originally contemplated to be a business park. However, the Proposition 413 identified it as open space, as did the Major Plan Amendment. At the time of the Amendment, Council elected not to amend the Plan to change the land use classification of Tract G from Business Park to Open Space because it is a City-owned parcel that had already been limited in its future use and/or sale by Proposition 413.

B. Finding #2

The proposed amendment will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City and will add to the public good as described in the General Plan.

To meet the findings for approval, the proposed amendment must be found to: 1) not to be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City of Flagstaff (the “City”); and 2) add to the public good as described in the General Plan. Staff believes that the proposed project will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare. Staff also believes that the proposed amendment will add to the public good, as discussed in the developer’s project narrative, and summarized below.

- The MMNA will protect a montane grassland, which is an at-risk ecosystem in the Flagstaff region.
- The Buffalo Park/MMNA complex will be the City's second-largest park.
- The City of Flagstaff Open Space program will manage the MMNA, which will allow for opportunities to enact forest restoration projects in partnership with the City Fire Department.
- The MMNA will preserve views within its boundaries and along Forest/Cedar Avenue. These views are meaningful to the character of the Flagstaff community and are essential to maintaining tourism and promoting economic opportunities.
- The MMNA will provide numerous neighborhoods with access to exercise opportunities and the outdoors.
- The MMNA will provide opportunities for outdoor education, including biological studies, environmental investigations, and opportunities to visit the site to learn about land management and urban planning. There are several schools that border or are within walking distance of the MMNA: Coconino High School, BASIS Flagstaff Charter School, the Montessori Charter School of Flagstaff, Peak School, Killip Elementary School, and Pine Forest Charter School.
- The trail network across the MMNA provides multimodal transportation options for Flagstaff residents and visitors.

C. Finding #3

The affected site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics and the provision of public and emergency vehicle (e.g., fire and medical) access and public services and utilities (e.g., fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal), to ensure that the requested zone designation and the proposed or anticipated uses and/or development will not endanger, jeopardize or otherwise constitute a hazard to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located.

Staff believes that the proposed application meets this finding, as indicated by the Inter-Division Staff (IDS) reviewed and acceptance of the Concept Zoning Map Amendment application in October 2021. Although no new development is proposed at this time, the applicant provided a summary of why the site is a suitable candidate to limit the land uses to Open Space and Passive Recreation.

- There is easy access to the MMNA for vehicles, buses, bikes, and pedestrians through Forest/Cedar Avenue, which bisects the MMNA from east to west. Mountain Line Route 2 has several bus stops on Forest Avenue and Cedar Avenue in the middle of and adjacent to the MMNA. FUTS trails allow for bicycle and pedestrian access from Ponderosa Parkway, Cedar Avenue, and Buffalo Park. FUTS trails also circulate recreational traffic through Natural Area and Buffalo Park. These trails provide recreation access to the Dry Lake Hills and Mt. Elden on the Coconino National Forest.
- The MMNA is an important habitat for wildlife and provides the community with wildlife viewing opportunities. The montane grassland habitat supports small mammals and small birds of prey, including the Mexican Spotted Owl and Northern Goshawks. It also provides habitat for mule deer and prairie dog colonies.
- The MMNA contains important biological and cultural resources, including steep slopes, rare plant species, important views, existing opportunities for passive recreation, several cultural and archeological

resources, and historic resources such as the Beale Wagon Road.

IV. Citizen Participation

Public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council are conducted in conjunction with requests for Direct to Ordinance Zoning Map Amendments. In accordance with State Statute, notice of the public hearing was provided by placing an ad in the Daily Sun, posting notices on the property, and mailing a notice to all property owners within 300 feet of the site excluding rights-of-way.

The City of Flagstaff Open Space program held two virtual neighborhood meetings about the proposed Concept Zoning Map Amendment on December 14, 2020 and January 13, 2021. Per the meeting sign-in, approximately 38 individuals attended both meetings. A Public Participation Plan, attached, was prepared in response to the questions, comments and concerns presented. The meetings included a presentation from the Open Space Program, a question-and-answer session where questions/comments could be typed into the chat or spoken, and a set of ten Community Forum Questions about the McMillan Mesa Natural Area and if/how residents currently engage with the MMNA.

Nearly all attendees supported the rezoning of the MMNA to Public Open Space. Questions and comments focused on the process/next steps and the management of the MMNA (including concerns about invasive species, social trails, and unsheltered individuals).

Although not required by City Code, the Open Space Program also initiated a 60-day public comment period on the Flagstaff Community Forum to elicit feedback on the proposed rezoning. The comment period lasted from November 20, 2020 – February 2, 2021, and asked participants to provide feedback about the McMillan Mesa Natural Area and if/how residents currently engage with the MMNA (these are the same ten questions asked at the end of each neighborhood meeting). The Community Forum had 127 attendees and 73 responses. The Open Space Program also received one written comment and five verbal comments in response to the Community Forum questions.

Most respondents (84.7%) were in support of rezoning the MMNA to Public Open Space, while 8.3% stated that they did not support the proposed rezoning (the remaining respondents did not indicate support or opposition to the rezoning). Most respondents indicated in written feedback the need for the zoning change to meet the voters' intent for Proposition 413. Most preferred minimal or no developments or improvements to the MMNA, and keeping the MMNA natural. There were some concerns related to increased use and the deterioration of the Natural Area.

As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any additional comments on this rezoning case apart from responses received during Neighborhood Meetings and the Community Forum.

Attachments:

- Application
- Legal Ad
- Legal Description and Map
- Vicinity, Zoning, and Context Analysis Maps
- Project Narrative and Regional Plan Analysis
- Public Participation Plan