

COMMUNITY CHARACTER



Community character is the combination of qualities and assets that establishes our unique sense of place and promotes a high quality of life for our residents and visitors. This chapter emphasizes the foundational role that our natural setting and heritage resources play in defining our community's character. Quality community and urban design through contextual development and redevelopment (i.e., based on the character, form, and scale of the surrounding area) shapes community character, opens up economic opportunities, and improves livability for all residents. Social activities, cultural and artistic offerings, and the unique people who live, work, and play here also contribute to the Flagstaff area's community character. This Plan recognizes the importance of the physical and social community character that makes the region's sense of place so special.

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Our Vision for the Future

In 2030, our community has designed and built contextual places and spaces that preserve our cultural and natural heritage, retaining this unique sense of place.



Native American Cultural Center

Photo credit: NAU

Scenic Resources and Natural Setting

Community residents have identified the following gateway points, corridors, and communities as providing important aesthetic impressions for the Flagstaff region (these are also shown on the Corridors as Placemakers map in the Land Use and Growth Areas chapter):

Gateways:

- I-17 at the Milton Road merger
- Milton Road at the BNSF Railway underpass (entering historic downtown)
- Highway 180 at the Cheshire neighborhood (sign exists)
- Highway 89 at the City limits (sign exists).

Gateway Corridors—include arterial roadways that provide access into Flagstaff (these will require Corridor Plans):

- I-17 to Milton Road
- I-40
- Highway 89
- Highway 180 (Fort Valley Road)
- Route 66.

Gateway Communities:

- Kachina Village (as experienced from I-17)
- Mountaineer (as experienced from I-17)
- Doney Park (as experienced from Highway 89)
- Fort Valley (as experienced from Highway 180)
- Bellemont (as experienced from I-40)
- La Plaza Vieja neighborhood in the west and Cosnino Neighborhood to the east (along the Amtrak corridor).

Residents and visitors alike consider the region's forest ecosystem as a defining trait, and it is often cited as Flagstaff's principal attraction. It is one of the leading contributors to our collective lifestyle, providing a backdrop for living in harmony with nature, recreational opportunities, and a variety of economic activities ranging from harvesting forest products to eco-tourism. Areas where community development and the natural setting are well integrated are some of the most distinctive, attractive, and desirable parts of the City. It is not enough to simply preserve and be surrounded by this resource - it is necessary for the built and natural environment to coexist spatially and visually. This is done in several ways, including through preservation and access of urban open space, on-site resource protection of trees, slopes, rock outcroppings, and floodplains, the use of native materials in site and building designs, and the use of native plant materials. However, equally important is the preservation and enhancement of viewsheds and scenic vistas to, within, and from urbanized areas. Scenic resources take into account community gateways, gateway corridors, vistas, and viewsheds.

Gateways, Corridors, and Communities

Gateways provide the first impression people have as they enter the region, and thus warrant special design considerations to reflect community pride and local design traditions. The region has gateway points, corridors, and communities, all of which require attention to give the desired impression to those entering and leaving. Yet, this initial impression needs to be reflected in the overall aesthetics of the community as well. In 2009, the community recognized the importance of gateways by investing in three unique "Flagstaff" signs, installed along I-17, Highway 180, and Highway 89N. These signs are now celebrated as reflections of the region's character, but additional investments are necessary for the gateway areas as a whole, including the buildings, signage, and landscaping one sees.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

The development of transportation corridors is one of the main ways of preserving our community character, with “Great Streets” providing not only connectivity but a memorable, unique experience. Great streets are addressed in this Plan both as vital components of our community character and also as important indicators of how we plan for land uses along the corridors.

Vistas and Viewsheds

Natural scenic beauty supports a number of important community elements, including the natural environment, quality of life and character, and local economies. The Flagstaff region is known for its scenic vistas, which contain relatively large natural areas. Residents come to love these landscapes, although we often take them for granted. Without proactive measures, roads, housing, and commercial buildings can threaten the pristine nature of these areas and diminish many of their positive benefits. The *Flagstaff Regional Plan* promotes a variety of strategies to protect scenic viewsheds by managing the amount and character of development, including regulating the type and intensity of development, design requirements, landscaping, and more.



Photo credit: Coconino County

“The peaks anchor northern Arizona, and one of the comforts of living in Flagstaff, this traveler’s town, is that they’re visible from half the state.”

- Peter Friederici, “The View from Here: Contemporary Essays by Flagstaff Authors”

SCENIC RESOURCES AND NATURAL SETTING GOALS AND POLICIES



Goal CC.1. Reflect and respect the region’s natural setting and dramatic views in the built environment.

Policy CC.1.1. Preserve the natural character of the region through planning and design to maintain views of significant landmarks, sloping landforms, rock outcroppings, water courses, floodplains, and meadows, and conserve stands of ponderosa pine.

Policy CC.1.2. Continue to define and further develop the community character by incorporating the natural setting into the built environment at all design scales.

Policy CC.1.3. Design development patterns to maintain the open character of rural areas, protect open lands, and protect and maintain sensitive environmental areas like mountains, canyons, and forested settings.

Refer to Chapter V - Open Space for more information.

Policy CC.1.4. Identify, protect, and enhance gateways, gateway corridors, and gateway communities.

Policy CC.1.5. Design development patterns to maintain the open character of rural areas, protect open lands, and protect and maintain sensitive environmental areas.

Policy CC.1.6. Encourage cluster development to preserve open space, viewsheds, and scenic vistas.

Refer to Chapter IV - Environmental Planning & Conservation for more information. “Rural by nature” cluster development allows preservation of more open space and natural resource protection.

“Great Streets”

“There is magic to great streets. We are attracted to the best of them not because we have to go there but because we want to be there. The best are as joyful as they are utilitarian. They are entertaining and open to all. They are symbols of a community and of its history; they represent a public memory. On a great street we are allowed to dream, to escape, to discover.”

- Great Streets,
Allan B. Jacobs (1993)

Streets are more than just linear physical spaces that permit automobiles to get from here to there. Great street design balances the need to move traffic with other community goals and modes of travel—where a mix of automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, homes, and businesses is the pulse of civic activity and the street itself is a public space to use and enjoy. Transportation corridors in the Flagstaff region carry tens of thousands of people each day. For many, they are the first impression, the daily encounter, and the last sense of the place. That is why it is so important that our corridors convey not just people but a sense of who we are and what we value. *Refer also to Chapter X - Transportation.*

Flagstaff’s Corridors

Flagstaff’s transportation corridors began with the sawmill industry’s needs to transport products, as well as expansion of already-established trade routes. Growth beyond the limits of the downtown area occurring in the early twentieth century resulted in many major roadways passing through urban and suburban areas, and with the post-World War II development of Route 66, there was an exponential increase in highway travel and motels in the area.

A Vision for Great Streets

This Plan envisions our corridors setting the stage in ways unique and appropriate to their role: Milton Road as an entryway and commercial center; US 180 as a trip through our natural and cultural treasures; and Route 66 as a celebration of our region’s role in the great history of our nation.

Commercial corridors in Flagstaff have historically lacked cohesive planning, as they are a product of our automobile-oriented society, and reflect the piecemeal nature of development along the corridors. They cut across different place types within the region and are not conducive to pedestrian safety or transit-oriented design because the qualities of pedestrian placemaking have been overlooked in favor of automobile access (with the exception of the FUTS expansion along a number of corridors).

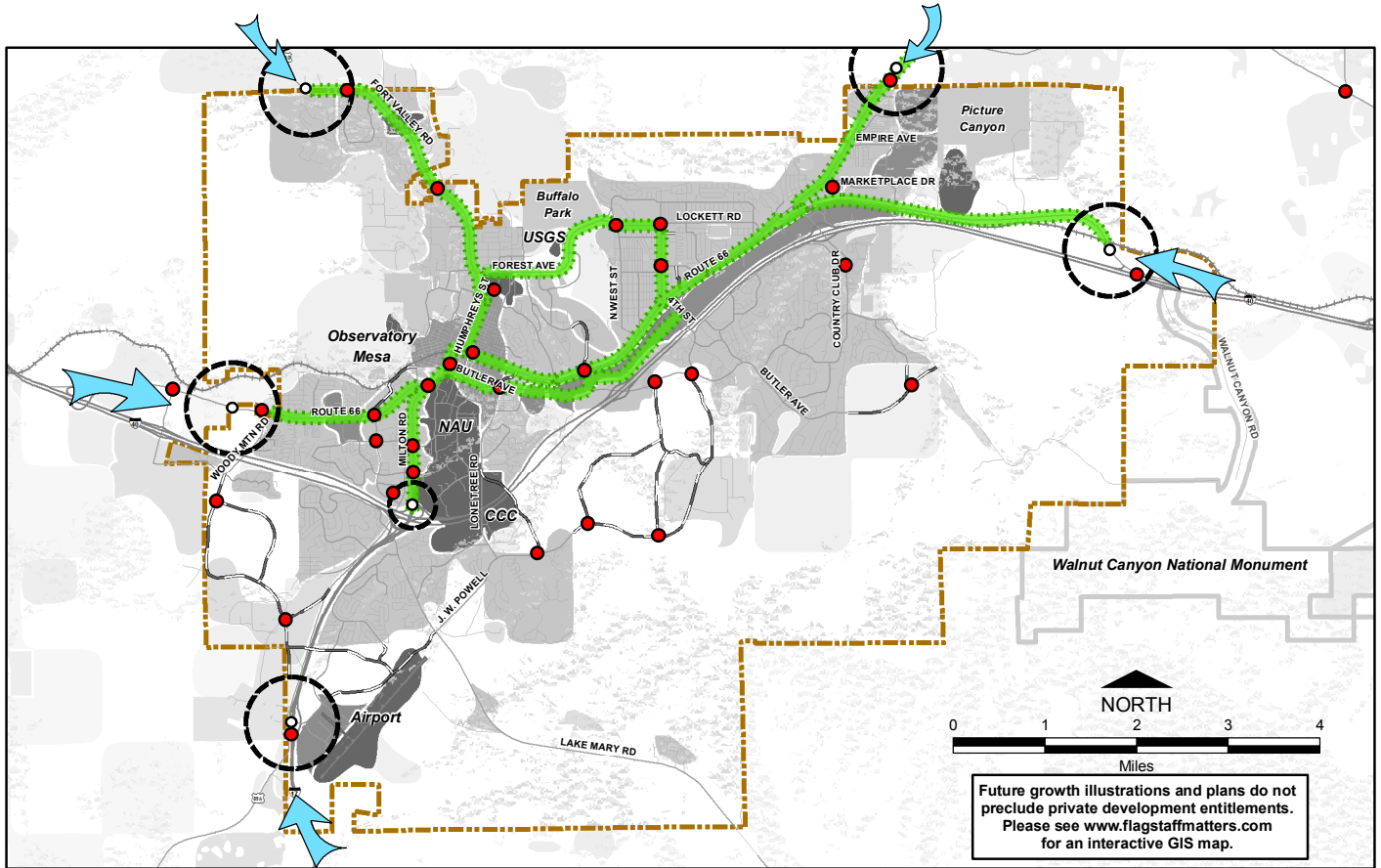
Flagstaff’s Great Streets

The corridors illustrated on Map 12 have been identified as having potential for reinvestment, retrofit, and revitalization to make them more appealing to pedestrians (and shoppers), enhance transit potential, and make them ultimately safer.

This Plan envisions our corridors setting the stage in ways unique and appropriate to their role: Milton Road as an entryway and commercial center; US 180 as a trip through our natural and cultural treasures; and Route 66 as a celebration of our region’s role in the great history of our nation.

**Map 12:
GREAT STREETS AND GATEWAYS**

**FLAGSTAFF REGIONAL PLAN
VISION 2030: PLACE MATTERS**



- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| City of Flagstaff | Activity Centers | Open Space - Preserved (Typically USFS) | Urban - Existing |
| Great Street | RTP Future Rd Network | Rural - Existing | Industrial / Business Park - Existing |
| Gateway Area | | Suburban - Existing | Special District |

Milton Road

A Vision for Milton Road

A traffic-calming type of entry feature could enhance the sense of place both for Milton Road and Flagstaff and give a better, more distinct feel to visitors. Along Milton Road, buildings of substantial design and materials could be built to the street with enlarged sidewalks, to create a tree-lined boulevard. The areas along Milton Road have been built to mixed-neighborhood standards, with contextual architectural features of brick, stone, and large timber, which may be regulated and incentivized.

Milton Road is the main entrance to Flagstaff from the south. The road between Phoenix and Flagstaff was completed in 1961 and completed to interstate standards in the early 1970s. In 1954 one took a more circuitous route through Prescott via SR 79.

Driving on Milton Road from I-17 sends drivers towards a masterpiece of environmental beauty framed by hodgepodge development and a very busy arterial street. Milton Road is an Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) highway, it serves as the major entrance into the City from the south, is lined by highway commercial uses, and has multiple access points through highly visible private parking lots. The City does not have the legal right-of-way for most of Milton Road, and thus aesthetic and pedestrian improvements are challenging. The unrestricted access and center turn lane makes the street a dangerous experience for pedestrians and it is uninviting to walk or experience. This is unfortunate, as Milton Road is the southern gateway into the City, and it is a main connector between multi-family residential uses, the university, and downtown. In the winter, ski resort traffic causes increased congestion, and in summertime, there is a great influx of tourists.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Route 66

Route 66 was designated by the Federal Highways Act in 1921 and the highway, much of it unpaved, ran from Chicago to Santa Monica through Flagstaff. Paving of the highway was completed in 1937. The route through Flagstaff was placed on an existing alignment and ran along what is now South San Francisco Street and Mike's Pike and later moved when the bridge under the railroad was constructed in 1934.

SOURCE: (http://www.flagstaffarizona.org/downloads/visitors/route66_walking.pdf)

The Route 66 corridor has been greatly improved with the removal of the billboards in 1990 and installation of landscaping and a heavily used FUTS trail. This has improved the south side of Route 66, and now there is much potential for revitalization and infill on the north side. Pedestrians find it challenging to cross the street, even at intersections. Some recent new signage and renovations are incorporating the “retro” character, celebrating the Route 66 heritage. Route 66 motels have become Flagstaff’s “affordable housing.” The corridor will benefit from further refinement into segments with distinct character objectives for each, such as west side, historic downtown, east potential, and two-lane road.

A Vision for Route 66

Route 66 has maintained, preserved, and restored a number of significant motels. Some of the 25 historic Route 66 motels have become elegant boutique hotels, and bed and breakfasts. Some have been adaptively re-used for small business centers, student housing, and single-occupancy tenancy. Cultural and historical billboards, neon lights, and retro-architecture have been preserved and continue to encourage further restoration and redevelopment along the corridor. Roundabouts that are pedestrian friendly are applied at all major intersections, and the thoughtful revitalization and landscaping efforts on the south side have been applied to the north side as well.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

A Vision for Fourth Street

With widened sidewalks, street trees, landscaped parking lots, as well as new buildings built up to the sidewalk, with older retro-fitted and revitalized buildings – one the best features of the Fourth Street is its walkability. All bus stops have covering, benches and amenities; local businesses are mixed with destination shopping/entertainment venues; and the streetscape frames the natural view. An arts incubator has inhabited and remodeled an older building. This area is modeled after downtown’s mixed-use and density, but certainly has its own architectural flavor, modeled on the surrounding neighborhoods. Small plazas and pocket parks have retained the ancient and monolithic ponderosa pines. These changes have been brought about by a zoning overlay district with design guidelines, along with incentives for incremental change and public investment in the public realm.

Fourth Street

Fourth Street was developed as an automobile-centric corridor and built in the typical post-World War II development style, from around the 1950s and 60s, in which business parcels were developed with limited or no pedestrian access or connectivity. There is excessive business access, which makes the street hazardous, large building setbacks with large asphalt parking lots, and limited aesthetics or amenities.

Fourth Street functions as the “Main Street” for the East Flagstaff area, including the Sunnyside and Greenlaw neighborhoods. Historically it has served as an area of commerce, a retail destination for the surrounding neighborhoods and the greater Flagstaff region. More recently, it has developed as a location for many local, viable businesses offering a variety of food, services, and products; institutions; and health care facilities within one of the most pedestrian-scaled neighborhoods in the City.

This is the geographical center of the City and Fourth Street acts as a major connector between the south and north sides of town, with the recent Fourth Street BNSF railroad overpass bridge (2006). Fourth Street to the south will eventually connect to JW Powell Boulevard – making an intrinsic connection to the airport and then I-17. A challenge is that current traffic counts are 17,000 to 23,000 vehicles per day – with potential increasing volume to the 30,000 vehicles per day desired by businesses. At the same time, the surrounding neighborhoods very much desire this street to be a place for walking, shopping, eating, visiting, and all of the qualities that make places special. *Refer to the City of Flagstaff’s Fourth Street Corridor Master Plan (2010).*



Fourth Street has experienced a decline in aesthetic appearance and functionality.

Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Fort Valley Road

Fort Valley Road/Highway 180 traverses a route that has been used for centuries because of the proximity of water sources. The treeless open areas along this road were sites of early settlement by homesteaders who not only raised livestock but grew crops. Coconino County established the Hospital for the Indigent and Poor Farm in 1908, which is now the Arizona Historical Society (AHS) Pioneer Museum. The Museum of Northern Arizona was founded in 1928 and its exhibit building on Fort Valley Road was established in 1936. Subdivision development along this corridor began in the early 1950s.

Many historical and cultural sites exist along the Fort Valley corridor intermixed between City and County jurisdictions. These sites include the Museum of Northern Arizona, Pioneer Museum, Coconino Center for the Arts, Art Barn, and the Grand Canyon Trust. The facilities of this area complement each other and define an entry to the City of Flagstaff. As one of the four major entrances into and out of the City, Fort Valley frames the gateway to the Grand Canyon for millions of visitors. Thirty-one miles of the Highway 180 from southeast of Valle to northeast of Flagstaff are included in Arizona's Scenic Byway Program as the San Francisco Peaks Scenic Road.

A Vision for Fort Valley Road

In 2012, Coconino County hired a consultant to perform a feasibility study for the Fort Valley corridor. The study serves as a vision for future development of the corridor based on stakeholder input. The most significant issues identified for the corridor include traffic, safety, natural and cultural environment, lack of corridor identity and corridor cohesion. A preliminary working vision for the corridor was developed as: "A Gateway corridor that preserves the natural, cultural, and historical assets; linking these together with the neighborhoods, the community, and the people to create a destination with a strong sense of place."



Graphics credit: Coconino County

U.S. Highway 89N

A Vision for U.S. Highway 89N

This corridor should continue to grow in a manner that embraces rural communities and serves a gateway to the City. Services should continue to be located at activity centers at major intersections and low-density residential uses should make up the majority of the corridor. South of Townsend-Winona Road, densities may begin to increase to ease the transition to the Mall Activity Center; however, strip development should still be avoided. In 2011, the Doney Park Multimodal Transportation Study identified the desired for a paved shared use path along 89N. In addition, per the *Doney Park Multimodal Transportation Study*, the Doney Park area is home to an active equestrian community. As businesses change or renovations and remodels are done, implementation of the design review guidelines offers an opportunity to make the built environment of the corridor blend more naturally with the environment and create a more cohesive style.

US 89N serves as the northeastern gateway into and out of Flagstaff leading to the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe lands, the eastern entrance to the Grand Canyon, and onto Page and Lake Powell, Utah, and places to the north.

The 89N corridor serves not just as a major cross-country highway, but also locally by providing access to natural sites including Mount Elden, trails in the Kachina Peaks Wilderness, and Sunset Crater National Monuments. It is also used as a main route into the City for the many residents of the Doney Park area. Sweeping views of the peaks and rural communities prevail along this corridor with commercial development increasing closer to the City. There is no dominant architectural style, rather a diverse blend of styles ranging from ranch style to sophisticated contemporary designs to manufactured homes. Existing commercial architecture varies from ranch/western to utilitarian in appearance. In spite of this wide variety, there are some consistencies in the use of common design elements that tend to characterize the area and relate to the natural setting.

Building colors and finishes tend to be muted natural earth tone colors with the use of native building materials such as local rock and wood. The County has adopted a Design Review Overlay Zone promoting these common design elements and architectural style applicable to commercial, public, and semi-public uses.

The Doney Park Timberline Fernwood Area Plan addresses ways to provide goods and service to rural communities along 89N without creating strip development by recognizing the potential of major intersections to serve as rural activity centers. This would leave space in between centers for low density and contextual development.



Photo credit: Coconino County

Heritage Preservation

Preserving the region's heritage, including its design, building traditions, and cultural preservation, enhances the quality of life in the Flagstaff area. Our region's cultural and historic resources must be preserved, protected, and enhanced. In accordance with federal guidelines, "Heritage Preservation" is the preservation of both cultural (pre-historic) resources and historic resources.

For cultural and historic resources to serve as meaningful focal points within the community, it is necessary to preserve archaeological sites, historic sites, and historic buildings of significance; acknowledge the railroad and its contribution to our history; restore elements of the Route 66 corridor, scenic corridors, and gateways; and respect historic architecture and design in new development.

Cultural Preservation

Native Americans have lived in the Flagstaff area for thousands of years. Archaeological sites in the Flagstaff region date human occupation to as early as 450 AD. These sites are located in areas where crops were once grown, and have yielded pottery and other evidence of civilization. Sixteen archaeological sites have been documented within a one-mile radius of the Milton Road/University Drive intersection.

There are many culturally significant sites located within the larger regional planning area as well. Areas of cultural sensitivity are included on Map 13. Some of these sites are considered sacred because of their importance to historical or traditional events associated with regional Native American tribes. Many cultural sites have been documented with the State Historic Preservation Office in conjunction with projects that use federal monies or occur on federal or state-owned lands. Although it is uncommon to require a developer to perform archaeological studies in the County, the work has been performed on sites that warrant evaluation. Archaeological resources are often hidden from view, but many lasting visual remnants remain throughout the region including petroglyphs, pottery shards, and burial sites. Many of these locations are often held in confidence to protect them from desecration. However, the remnants of pre-historic culture are most evident in Walnut Canyon National Monument and surrounding areas, Picture Canyon Conservation Area, and Wupatki National Monument. Local indigenous cultures strive to maintain traditional places and customs, which may at times be challenging as traditionally tribal places become private property.

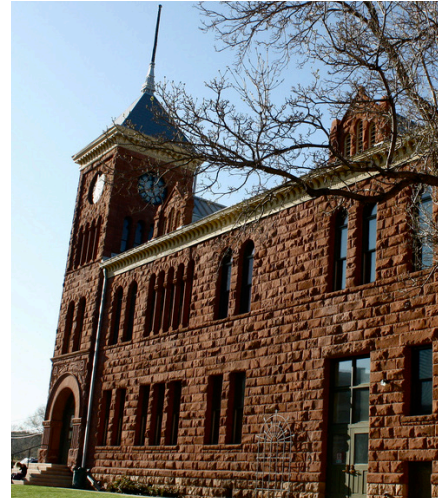
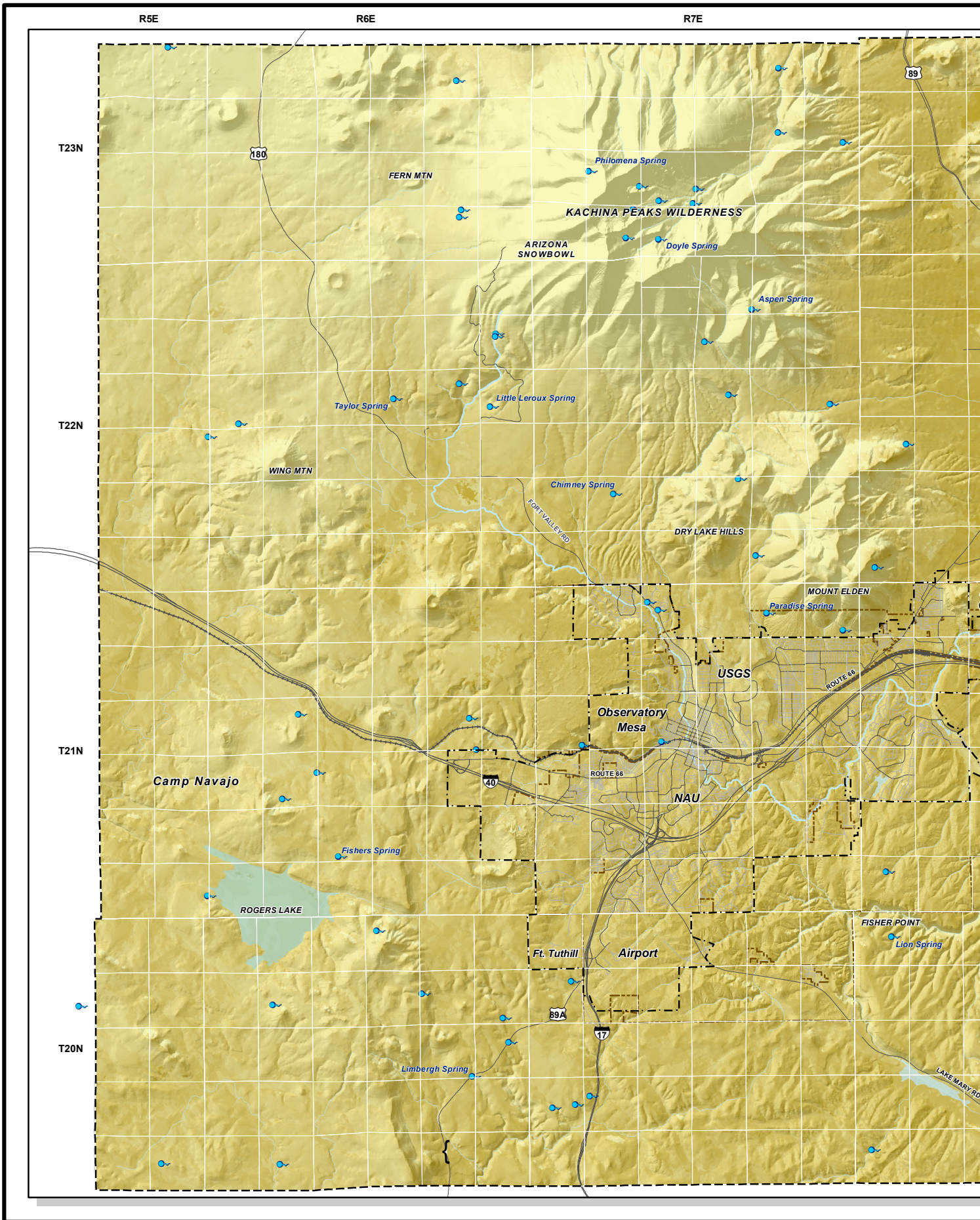


Photo by: Hannah Smolan



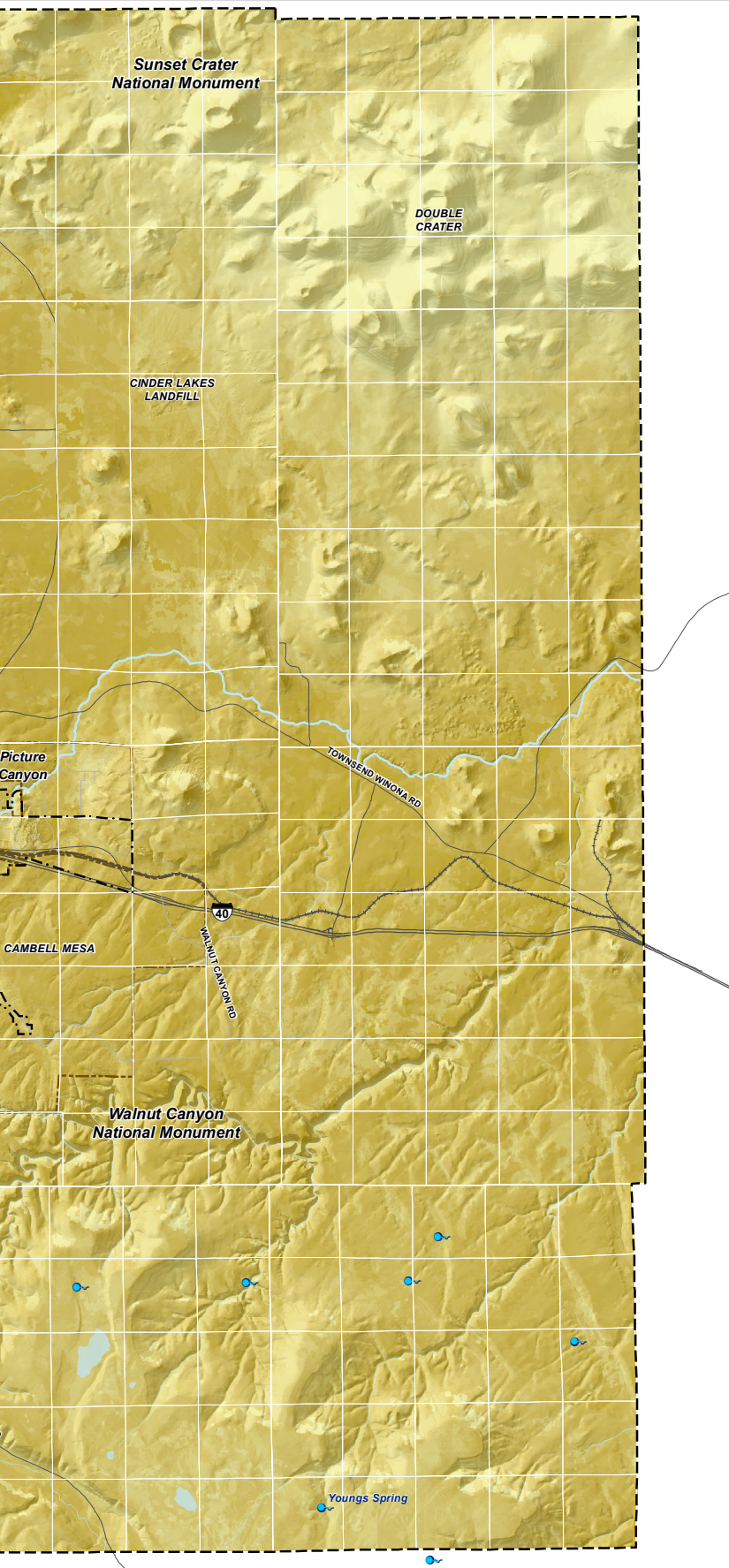
Photo by: Prairie Rose Singer

Cultural resources are varied and are best described using the national standard. Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places include "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture."



R8E

R9E



Map 13:
CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

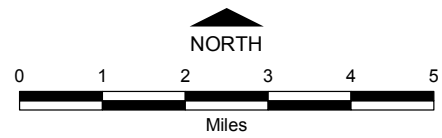
-  FMPO Boundary
-  Flagstaff City Limits
-  Urban Growth Boundary
-  Springs & Seeps
-  Water Courses / Washes



Methodology: Stepwise logistic regression was used to compare archaeological site locations and environmental variables for the purpose of producing a prediction equation that defines the probability curve between 0 (low likelihood) and 1 (high likelihood). Using ArcGIS, environmental information was extracted from known archeological site and non-site locations. A probability surface was created through a linear combination of GIS data layers.

The presence of natural, cultural, and heritage resources does not preclude private development entitlements. The intent of this map is to inform the community that significant archeological sites may exist upon the land.

Please see www.flagstaffmatters.com for an interactive GIS map.



**FLAGSTAFF REGIONAL PLAN
VISION 2030: PLACE MATTERS**

Historic Preservation

Flagstaff hosts a rich array of historic resources, which reflect more than 100 years of settlement and growth, providing tangible witness to the development of the railroad, transcontinental highways, logging and building-stone industries, local and County government, military, livestock and agriculture, science, higher education, and business in Flagstaff and northern Arizona. These resources contribute to a strong sense of place and local identity, and attract visitors to the community through their aesthetic charm and significance.

The City of Flagstaff is a Certified Local Government, making it eligible for financial and technical assistance in historic preservation efforts under the National Historic Preservation Act. The City's Zoning Code requires cultural resource impact studies and impact mitigation strategies for new development. The Zoning Code further requires that the City appoint a Historic Preservation Officer to work in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Commission to conduct reviews of property for historic significance; create historic property inventories; help in forming and maintaining landmark and historic districts (Map 14); review new developments for historic compatibility; conduct public education and outreach, provide documents, resources, and guidelines on historic preservation; and administer an annually funded Historic Facades and Signs Grant Program. Program staff works with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Heritage Preservation Commission on heritage preservation efforts.

More than 650 resources from the historic period (1880-1945) are inventoried in surveys, many of which are included in several National Register historic districts (Map 14). The official National Register historic districts include the Flagstaff Townsite Historic Residential District, Railroad Addition Historic District, North End Historic Residential District, and Flagstaff Southside Historic District. The three local historic districts include the Downtown Historic District, Townsite Historic District, and Landmarks District, which is a floating overlay district applicable to qualifying locations within the City. The local historic overlay districts contain more than 300 individual properties. One prime example of a property needing preservation efforts is the Basque Pelota Court, constructed circa 1926. It is located in the Southside neighborhood, and is now the only such court remaining in Arizona, and one of only 14 known to exist.

Historic trails are unique resources that mark the travels of early explorers and settlers in the area. Over time, many of these original corridors were transformed into wagon routes, recreation trails, ranching roads, highways, or train corridors. Although there are no national historic trails within the regional planning area to date, among the more interesting trails are the Beale Wagon Road and the Grand Canyon stagecoach line. The original Beale Wagon Road was a military road connecting Arizona's Fort Defiance and southern California. The stagecoach line was initiated by a private company to take tourists from Flagstaff to the Grand Canyon.



Basque Pelota Court on San Francisco Street

Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Outside the City limits, heritage preservation efforts primarily have been completed by land management agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, Arizona State Land Department, National Park Service, and local Native American tribes. Coconino County is not a Certified Local Government, and is not required to be such to recognize historic structures or seek their protection. The County does not have dedicated historic preservation staff, so individuals and small groups who focus on specific properties or local landmarks undertake most of the efforts occurring on private lands.

“Knowing that these cultures are close by, cultures for which dance is vital and integral to their being, also anchors the dancer in me here. [...] Groping for words to describe how Flagstaff affects my desire to dance, I begin to understand why the explanation is elusive.”

- Kari Morehouse, “The View from Here: Contemporary Essays by Flagstaff Authors”

HERITAGE PRESERVATION GOALS AND POLICIES



Goal CC.2. Preserve, restore, and rehabilitate heritage resources to better appreciate our culture.

Policy CC.2.1. Actively locate, identify, interpret, and preserve historical, archaeological, and cultural resources, in cooperation with other agencies and non-governmental organizations, as aspects of our society for future generations to retain, understand, and enjoy their cultural identity.

Policy CC.2.2. Formally recognize heritage resources through designation as local landmarks and historic districts.

Policy CC.2.3. Mitigate development impacts on heritage resources.

Policy CC.2.4. Support restoration and rehabilitation of historic housing, buildings, structures, and neighborhoods.

Policy CC.2.5. Provide incentives for heritage and cultural preservation.

Policy CC.2.6. Expand a program to educate the owners of historic resources of the heritage value of their properties.

Policy CC.2.7. Protect existing historic districts from encroachment by land uses that compromise the historic characteristics of the district.

Policy CC.2.8. In “Historic” activity centers (Downtown and Five Points), prioritize Community Character (CC) and Downtown (LU.11 and LU.12) goals and policies over the Activity Center goals and policies found in LU.18 when considering cases for rezoning.

Policy CC.2.9. Strengthen the City’s historic preservation and adaptive reuse programs by increasing funding for further inventories, grants to property owners, and education campaigns, especially, where the underlying Zoning for the historic resource put it at risk.

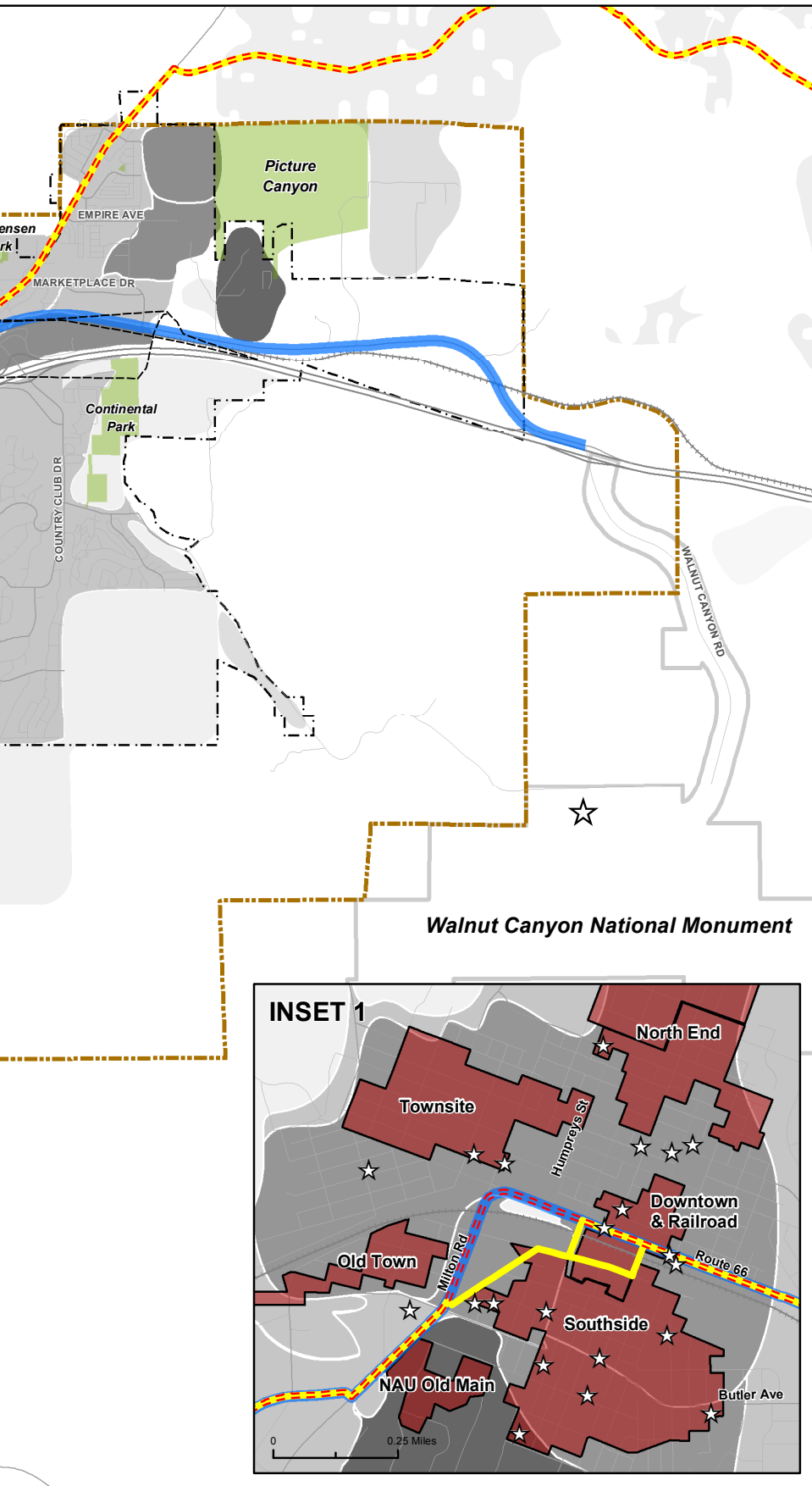
Policy CC.2.10. Educate the community and developers on the benefits of adaptive reuse and create policies to incentivize the reuse of historic buildings to maintain their integrity.

Policy CC.2.11. Assist businesses and residents, who are caretakers of historic resources, maximize the economic value of their property without damaging the integrity of the historic resource.

Policy CC.2.12. Advertise the economic impact of historic resources and history-related tourism on the Flagstaff community.

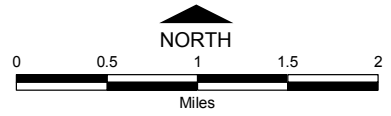
Policy CC.2.13. When the demolition or removal of a historic structure cannot be avoided, encourage the developer to make the building available for relocation and provide assistance in moving the building to the purchaser’s property, if possible.

**Map 14:
HERITAGE RESOURCES**



- Park/Natural Area
 - Historic District
 - City of Flagstaff
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - ★ National Register of Historic Places
 - Beale Trail Alignments
 - Route 66 Alignment after 1948 (Current)
 - Route 66 Alignment (1935-1947)
 - Route 66 Original Alignment (1926-1934)
- Vision Area Types**
- Open Space - Preserved (Typically USFS); Open Space - Reserved (Typically State Trust)
 - Rural - Existing
 - Suburban - Existing
 - Urban - Existing
 - Industrial / Business Park - Existing
 - Special District

The presence of natural, cultural, and heritage resources does not preclude private development entitlements. Please see www.flagstaffmatters.com for an interactive GIS map.



**FLAGSTAFF REGIONAL PLAN
VISION 2030: PLACE MATTERS**

Community Design

Overwhelming support has been shown for encouraging preservation of buildings in Flagstaff's historic neighborhoods.

- 2010 Community Values Survey



Photo credits: City of Flagstaff

The physical character of Flagstaff is defined by its built environment and natural setting. Places recognized in Flagstaff, the remarkable places, are those areas where the patterns of development are preserved, restored, and enhanced, and emulate the design traditions of the built environment and the natural setting (Map 14). This happens when the region's environmental beauty is complemented by indigenous development and local design traditions that respect the area's amazing scenic vistas through the preservation of viewsheds and use of natural materials and colors, dark-sky compliant lighting, and signage and landscaping that harmonize with the natural surroundings. Fundamental components of community design include preserving and restoring our heritage resources, and integrating historical design aesthetics and culturally reflective art in contextual new development. The design of neighborhoods, landscape, urban spaces, streetscapes and transportation systems, infrastructure, urban forestry, site design, parking, and architecture all contribute to the overall community character.

The Flagstaff region encompasses walkable urban, drivable suburban, and rural areas, all developed based upon the historic design traditions of Flagstaff. The concentration and density of development plays an enormous role in shaping the future community. Residents desire new development and redevelopment that conserves land, energy, and natural resources, as well as supporting accessible multi-modal transportation options. Challenges that future decision makers must address to ensure positive community character include removing overhead utility lines from viewsheds, properly placing utility boxes and dumpsters with site planning, integrating parking, solar panels, wind turbines and rainwater harvesting into the urban context, and improving building and public space maintenance.

Understanding and promoting the different desired characteristics of urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods and activity centers as reflections of the surrounding natural landscape is important in maintaining the diverse community desired by residents and visitors. Promoting and maintaining concentrated development in or near the city core and activity centers is one means of preserving optimal open space throughout the community.

Walkable-scale developments can achieve many community goals, from increased public transit use to economic development opportunities. These are further discussed in Chapter IX - Growth Areas & Land Use. Concentrated development, however, must be designed and built with respect for Flagstaff's character. To encourage high-quality, attractive, and marketable development, the City and County will need to invest in upgrading existing infrastructure to appropriately increase density in existing developed areas, as well as to ensure compatible design.

Urban Design

Urban design is the discipline through which planning and architecture can create or renew a sense of local pride and identity. It has great potential for enhancing the visual image and quality of neighborhoods by providing a three-dimensional physical form to policies described in the regional plan. It focuses on design of the public realm, which is created by both public spaces and the buildings that define them. Urban design views these spaces holistically and is concerned with bringing together the different disciplines responsible for the components of cities into a unified vision.

Urban design is key for the success of various areas, including downtowns, campuses, corridors, neighborhoods, mixed-use developments, and special districts. Issues to be considered include existing development, proposed development, utility infrastructure, streets framework, and sustainable development principles. Urban design plans require interdisciplinary collaboration among urban designers, architects, landscape architects, planners, civil and environmental engineers, and market analysts.

Urban design is the arrangement and design of buildings, public spaces, transport systems, services, and amenities which give form, shape, and character to a community. The use of architecture, landscape architecture, and city planning to develop a functional and attractive community framework is important in planning for the region's future. This can also connect people and places, both smartly and efficiently through consideration for place-making, environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic viability.

The City and County use area plans, neighborhood plans, and area specific plans to create design standards based on community input. The County implements design review overlay zones corresponding to area plan boundaries, and the City currently uses historic district overlay zones corresponding to historic district boundaries. Both the City and the County also regulate the scale and intensity of development through their respective zoning codes by establishing minimum standards for the development of land, including the size of lots, landscaping, building placement, outdoor signs, and lighting. Many of these standards focus on assuring safe and efficient use of land; however, they also influence the design and character of development.

Helpful Terms

“Urban” areas have a higher density of people, residences, jobs and activities; buildings are taller and close to the street; streets and sidewalks are in a grid pattern of relatively small blocks; the area is walkable and a variety of services and goods are available; served by public transportation.

“Suburban” areas have medium to low densities of people, residences, jobs and activities; the streets and sidewalks vary in pattern; the area is drivable to access homes and jobs, yet walkable by special pedestrian facilities like the Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS); some services and goods are available to the residents; the area may have access to public transportation.

“Rural” areas have a low density of people, residences, jobs and activities; paved and unpaved two-lane roads with natural edges; minimal services and goods available to the residents; FUTS connectivity and public transit commuting opportunities may exist; abundant open spaces and agricultural uses.

“Infrastructure” includes but is not limited to sewer lines, water lines, reclaimed water lines, roads, intersections, sidewalks, FUTS, landscaping in the right-of-way, gateways, housing, green infrastructure, public art, and in some cases may include utilities such as electric power, data, natural gas, cable television, and telephone.

Neighborhoods



Photo by: Ryan Staab

The built patterns of development today are primarily in response to various transportation influences. Earliest neighborhoods grew near the railroad in the 1800s, creating a hearty downtown that remains the center of the region. The coming of the automobile brought commercial development along corridors and suburban residential neighborhoods. East Flagstaff, once an unincorporated county area, developed its own “downtown” with a more auto-oriented suburban design, but that remains an activity center for the City as Fourth Street. With easy access by car, the surrounding rural areas have changed from more agricultural and forestry uses to a more ranchette residential character.

Many residents celebrate the historic neighborhoods, those of the pre-Route 66 era, in which walkability, front porches, and street trees are pointed to as “favorite characteristics.” Future neighborhood design can very well emulate the characteristics of these existing places, using traditional neighborhood design as the basis. The drivable suburban context is improved when it borrows from the pedestrian connectivity character of urban areas.

Improvements to the community’s health, functionality, and appearance may be achieved with new developments that foster traditional, more walkable neighborhood design. This means confronting and correcting the tendency for disconnected developments to be dominated by traffic, parking lots, and garages.



Photo by: Tom Bean



Photo by: Tom Bean

Urban Forestry and Landscape

The trees within the developed areas of the community are typically planted as part of a development. There are some stands of old growth ponderosa pine within the City, yet the idea of the “urban forest” includes trees in streets, public plazas, and trees in landscaped areas. Many cities develop an urban forestry program, with a city-wide tree inventory and plan for replacing trees and maintaining a healthy urban forest.

Landscaping softens the built environment, and creates shade and shelter. The *Flagstaff Regional Plan* includes goals for the design of sustainable landscapes appropriate to the unique natural characteristics of the Flagstaff region.

Streetscapes and Transportation Systems

Although roads and streets are used primarily to move vehicles, bicycles, and people from one place to another, they can also frame the region’s amazing views. Street edges may serve as centers of commerce, outdoor eating places, hubs of activity and people watching, and spaces for public art. Designing and constructing “complete streets” that enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities, can provide a memorable experience for visitors and residents alike (*Refer to the National Complete Streets Coalition at www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets*).

Site Design and Architecture

Sites and buildings are the backdrop of the public realm, and they have a vital role in defining the character of the community. Community character is represented in sites and buildings by employing the region’s design traditions, and using local materials with compatible colors and architectural details. Achieving contextualism with vernacular development is a challenge for architects and other building designers to meet new needs that fit within traditional design concepts. Through community vision and civic pride, the public and private sectors can both contribute to a contextually sensitive and beautiful place to live, work, and play.

When determining design decisions about any development site, designers should consider the suitability and limitations of a piece of land for development in the first place - such as geology, hydrology, ecology, the availability of streets, utilities, and a system to handle stormwater flow.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Helpful Terms

“Context” refers to the development site itself, surrounding properties, and the neighborhood in which a development site is located.

“Development” is the carrying out of any building activity, the making of any material change in the use or appearance of any structure or land, or the dividing of land into parcels by any property owner. When appropriate to the context, “development” refers to the act of development or to the result of development within the City.

Helpful Terms

“**Green Infrastructure**” refers to an interconnected network of waterways, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, and other natural areas of countywide significance. For more information, refer to <http://www.greeninfrastructuredesign.org/>



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Parking

Parking is an essential element to be considered in site design and traffic circulation. Parking should be developed to reflect the context of each site. Walkable urban areas use street parking, shared parking lots, and parking structures. Drivable suburban and rural parking lots feature landscaping to enhance the beauty of a site, and allow for a reduction in stormwater runoff.

Parking requirements need to reflect the desired density and intensity of the place type, while respecting the need of residents, visitors, and shoppers.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

Infrastructure

Visual components of above-ground public infrastructure such as power lines and boxes, street lights and switch boxes, stormwater collection facilities, and various other infrastructure elements affect overall community character and aesthetics. Community partners can choose to plan for and implement shared spaces, and establish guidelines for the aesthetically pleasing placement of boxes, screens, and placing utilities underground when it is practical to do so. A collective “urban infrastructure plan” for water, sewer, power, telephone, cable, data, roads, and trails, working collaboratively with the community vision for growth, could greatly improve the views, viewsheds, and site design characteristics in the region.



Goal CC.3. Preserve, restore, enhance, and reflect the design traditions of Flagstaff in all public and private development efforts.

Policy CC.3.1. Encourage neighborhood design to be respectful of traditional development patterns and enhance the overall community image.

Policy CC.3.2. Maintain and enhance existing buildings and blend well-designed new buildings into existing neighborhoods.

Policy CC.3.3. Emulate the most celebrated design traditions of Flagstaff, particularly the pre-Route 66 and early Route 66 eras.

Goal CC.4. Design and develop all projects to be contextually sensitive, to enhance a positive image and identity for the region.

Policy CC.4.1. Design streetscapes to be context sensitive and transportation systems to reflect the desired land use while balancing the needs of all modes for traffic safety and construction and maintenance costs.

Policy CC.4.2. Design utilities and infrastructure to be contextual and considered as part of the overall design aesthetics.

Policy CC.4.3. Employ design solutions that balance the interface of the natural and built environments, with the most urbanized core activity areas being the most built, and the most rural areas being the most natural.

Policy CC.4.4. Design streets and parking lots to balance automobile facilities, recognize human-scale and pedestrian needs, and accentuate the surrounding environment.

Policy CC.4.5. Encourage local landscaping using Xeriscape, low-impact principles, and native vegetation wherever possible.

Policy CC.4.6. Use landscaping to benefit the environment and improve aesthetics, in order to maximize the economic benefit that a well landscaped community provides.

Policy CC.4.7. Develop an urban forestry program to catalog, preserve old growth pines, and plant new urban trees.

Policy CC.4.8. Follow arboricultural practices in maintaining a healthy urban forest.

Policy: CC.4.9. Develop appropriate tools to facilitate the undergrounding of existing overhead utility lines, especially in established viewsheds and in reinvestment areas.

Design Traditions of Western Development in Flagstaff

The design traditions of western development in Flagstaff generally can be discussed in the context of the following eras:

Pre-Route 66 (before 1926)



Photo credit: Flagstaff Convention & Visitor's Bureau

Prior to the construction of Route 66, Flagstaff's buildings were assembled from locally produced materials dominated by malpais stone, Moenkopi sandstone, Kaibab limestone, wood planks, and timber. With the exception of downtown, most structures were simple and practical, featuring a main gable roof on a rectangular plan, and modest in size. In the downtown area, historic structures were constructed of local materials and imported midwestern façade designs popular in that era. Other community design influences of this period included the imported farmhouse, Victorian, craftsman home designs, the railroad industry, and National Park architecture, which combined native materials and architecture to create visually appealing and contextual structures.

Early Route 66 (1926-1945)



Photo credit: Flagstaff Convention & Visitor's Bureau

In the early years of Route 66, community design was heavily influenced by the burgeoning tourism industry. Early traveler-induced developments, such as motels, were simple, practical, and built from local materials. The development of the Mother-road itself, Route 66, stimulated subsequent growth and development along its edges, and indicated the start of an important change in the community character, from a more downtown "node" to corridor development.

Late Route 66 (1945-1967)



Photo credit: Flagstaff Convention & Visitor's Bureau

Following World War II, Flagstaff saw many significant influences on community character, including the post-war housing boom, a notable growth of tourism, dominance of the automobile, and expanded use of imported building materials and designs. Residential development included a mix of the design traditions of Flagstaff, such as simple structures along gridded streets with sidewalks and street trees, and post-war production housing development featuring whole-neighborhood developments with un-gridded streets, repeated home design, and a shift to imported materials such as stucco, tile roofing, and metal windows. In addition, large multi-family structures were introduced along with the development pattern of wide streets, auto-oriented strip commercial buildings, and the introduction of "modern" materials such as concrete masonry unit block.

As the tourism industry grew, Flagstaff expanded from the small, central downtown outward to include motels, service stations, and diner-lined highways which included imported architecture and materials,

standardized building designs, and automobile serving facilities. Notable for this period was the introduction of the large, eye-catching, commercial signage to capture the attention of the auto-oriented society. This era resulted in the decline of the historic downtown's economic vitality as commercial activity dispersed and impacted the overall community character.

Interstate 40 (1967-2001)

With the introduction of the interstate highway system, specifically I-17 and I-40, auto-oriented commercial enterprises sprouted in areas adjacent to these new corridors. These sites were suburban in character and devoid of pedestrian-friendly amenities, such as plazas, trees, and street furniture. Although new zoning regulations required the installation of landscaping, it remained suburban in character. Architecturally, the shift was complete, having moved away from the design traditions of Flagstaff (e.g., simple designs, local materials, human-scale buildings and streets) to that of imported, nondescript, replicated design and materials.

As Flagstaff's last lumber mill and window plant closed, imported materials became the norm, even though the region is surrounded with natural building materials such as timber and stone. However, the latter half of this era saw an increase in community interest regarding our historic resources and neighborhoods. Downtown revitalization efforts began in 1992, introducing the Heritage Preservation Program and sparking an economic boom in the community. These efforts reflected a cognizance of the importance of preserving a "sense of place" through building, landscape, street, road, and signage designs.

Design Review Years (2001 to present)

In 2001, Flagstaff introduced design standards and guidelines into the Land Development Code. Some of these basic principles included pedestrian-friendly site design, characterized by building-forward site layout, human-scale buildings, and a preference for local materials. These regulations applied to non-residential and multi-family developments only. In 2011 design standards and guidelines were reorganized and clarified in the Flagstaff Zoning Code. Development during this period generally continues to follow the auto-oriented, highway patterns of development, with an incremental trend toward the design traditions of Flagstaff. Beginning in 2001, the City dedicated public funds to "community beautification," leading to the removal of billboards, the construction of a significant urban trail system, municipal landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and public art.



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff



Photo by: Tom Bean



Photo by: F. Kedd

Arts, Sciences, and Education

Arts, sciences, and education are an integral part of the social and economic fabric of the community. As the location of one of three public universities in Arizona, a hub of night sky research and archaeological research, and home to many Native American artists, the Flagstaff region has a wide range of educational, scientific, and cultural organizations, resources, attractions, and activities that are a source of community pride and enrichment. A great number of artists, scientists, and educators choose to live here because of these opportunities.

A number of cultural and business organizations work to promote partnerships among local arts and cultural organizations, as well as helping the community recognize that the arts are representative of the region's diversity, creativity, and vitality. As a culturally rich community, the holistic planning of events and activities between art, science, and educational venues will develop more rewarding opportunities for all. By supporting outstanding venues, smart circulation and parking options, and well-planned connectivity, the City and County can promote and encourage these partnerships. In addition, this plan supports integration of culturally reflective art into public and private commercial projects.

The following goals and policies are intended to guide development, land use, and transportation decisions that support future cultural, scientific, and educational needs of the community. Future challenges in the Flagstaff region require maximizing the potential of these resources in the region by coordinating with various community groups, businesses, agencies, and citizens.

ARTS, SCIENCES, AND EDUCATION GOALS AND POLICIES



Goal CC.5. Support and promote art, science, and education resources for all to experience.

Policy CC.5.1. Promote first class arts, research, and educational facilities.

Policy CC.5.2. Coordinate educational master plans (Northern Arizona University, Coconino Community College, Flagstaff Unified School District, and charter schools) with regional planning efforts.

Policy CC.5.3. Encourage the integration of art into public and private development projects.

Policy CC.5.4. Complete sidewalks and Flagstaff Urban Trails System connections for all schools, community colleges, and university campuses.

Policy CC.5.5. Promote and expand scientific research as a key component to the Flagstaff region's character.

Refer to Chapter XIV - Economic Development for more information regarding STEM education.

Goal CC.6. Encourage Native American art and Southwestern culture.

Refer to Chapter XIV - Economic Development for related Policy ED.4.9.

The Arts have always been a part of the community character and in many ways is associated with a greater cross-section of the community. The following groups are just some of those that contribute greatly to the local art scene:

- Flagstaff Cultural Partners – non-profit organization
- Coconino Center for the Arts – performing arts center
- First Friday Art Walk – downtown monthly event
- Flagstaff Artists Coalition – open studios
- City of Flagstaff “Beautification and Public Art Commission”
- Northern Arizona University – Audrey Auditorium performing arts center, Beasley Gallery, and world-renowned ceramics program
- Museum of Northern Arizona – art and cultural exhibits, and Native American festivals
- Doris Harper-White Community Playhouse - Theatrikos Theatre Company
- Orpheum Theater - historic entertainment venue

In addition, the region is host to many diverse events and festivals.



Photo by: Tom Bean

Science has remained a key character-defining element since 1892, with:

- Lowell Observatory
- Naval Observatory Flagstaff Station
- Museum of Northern Arizona
- U.S. Geological Survey Campus
- Northern Arizona Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology - a scientific research business incubator
- Coconino Community College - specializing in green technologies training
- Current research at Northern Arizona University

In addition, the archaeological resources of surrounding historical sites and ruins provide research and tourism opportunities.



Photo by: Shabo Zhang

Education resources are diverse and serve all sectors of the community, including:

- Flagstaff Unified School District
- Charter and private schools (Montessori, Peak, Mountain School, Northland Preparatory Academy, St. Pius Catholic School, BASIS, Flagstaff Arts and Leadership Academy) - which serve the primary and secondary needs of the community
- Coconino Community College - two campuses within the Flagstaff region offering 65 certificates, degrees, and transfer programs
- Northern Arizona University - offering over 230 undergraduate and graduate degrees, and continuing to have an economic, cultural, and physical impact on the character of Flagstaff
- Two public libraries and Joe Montoya Senior Center
- Various neighborhood centers within the City, including the Murdoch Center, Flagstaff and Cogdill recreational facilities, and the Aquaplex, all of which offer classes and lessons for people of all ages



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

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