



City of Flagstaff Sustainability Division

March 2024 Monthly Report

HIGHLIGHTS:

AmeriCorps Director Visit Flagstaff; Sustainability Office

On March 15th, the Flagstaff Sustainability Office and the NAU Center for Service and Volunteerism (CSV) hosted Sonali Nijhawan, Director of AmeriCorps State and National. AmeriCorps members from across Flagstaff, and staff from NAU, the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, and the Flagstaff Sustainability Office visited community gardens, collected trash along the Rio de Flag, learned about fire ecology, and participated in a roundtable discussion. The visit was very successful—and even a spring snowstorm couldn't dampen the group's spirits.



Photos: (Above) NAU CSV, Sustainability staff, and local partners brave snow to show the Director of AmeriCorps State and National around Flagstaff projects.

Climate Action

Community Resilience:

- Staff convened with partner organizations of the **Flagstaff Regional Resilience Hub Project** to discuss and solidify our work plans, budget, and timeline in anticipation of receiving our final grant award from the EPA in the coming months.
- The Flagstaff Regional Resilience Project received notice of a technical assistance award to support the advancement of resilient solar and battery storage projects at Resilience Hubs. The technical assistance will provide staff with a better understanding of the potential benefits of solar and storage solutions while also providing funding to enlist technical expertise to produce a feasibility assessment. Thank you to the *Clean Energy Group* for this invaluable service.
- Staff participated in training sessions on Community-Led Resilience and Equity in Data provided by the *Institute for Sustainable Communities* and training on Resilience Hub Communications offered by the *Urban Sustainability Directors Network*.



Equity and Engagement:

- The climate team directly **engaged with 129 people** in March.
- The **Equity Climate Advisory Group (ECAG)** provided valuable insights regarding community benefits and engagement processes for an EPA grant proposal aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.
- Staff rolled out an equity assessment tool to assess our existing systems, policies, processes, and programs to enhance equity in our work and aid in decision-making processes. This tool was created by staff over the last year.

Building Fuel Switching and Reduced Energy Use:

- The Sustainability Division and the Economic Vitality Division are partnering to support a **Green Business Boot Camp** for Flagstaff businesses. Local First Arizona will host the Boot Camp, consisting of two in-person sessions in Flagstaff and seven virtual sessions statewide. The Boot Camp will help make progress on the City’s adopted climate and economic development goals by assisting participants to make and implement a plan to reduce energy, water, and transportation costs by at least 20%. The first set of Boot Camp sessions run from April to June, and there will be another opportunity to participate in September. More information is available here: [Green Business Boot Camp—Local First Arizona \(localfirstaz.com\)](https://localfirstaz.com/green-business-boot-camp)
- Felicia Mills is the newest addition to the team, serving as the Energy and Resilience Outreach Coordinator with the [Arizona Climate Resilience Corps](#) through NAU’s CSV. She is excited to engage the local business community to help Flagstaff become a leader in sustainable practices.

Photo: Felicia Mills, our second Energy and Resilience Outreach Coordinator.



Youth

- The [Youth Climate Leadership Academy \(YCLA\)](#), consisting of students in 9th - 12th grades, hosted bi-weekly meetings where they invited guests to provide education about managed fires and forest health, energy retrofits, community engagement, and event planning.

Neighborhood Engagement & Volunteer Services



Community Stewards Program

- March [Community Stewards program](#) statistics:

Number of clean-ups	4
Bags of Recycling	0
Bags of Trash	10
Number of People	41
Service Hours	185



Stream Stewards

- The [Stream Stewards Program](#) has reached the halfway point for adoptions! 31 of our 62 sections have been adopted. Thank you to all our volunteers who have worked with the Stream Stewards Program to help reach this point and for all the time and dedication to the Rio de Flag.
- In March, Sustainability staff joined Flagstaff Arts and Leadership Academy (FALA) students for their "stewardship week"

Photo: NAU's Pi Kappa Phi fraternity poses for a photo with trash bags after their March cleanup of their adopted avenue, West Clay Avenue.

Photo: FALA students cleaning up their adopted section of the Rio de Flag in Flagstaff's Cheshire neighborhood.



Employee Volunteer Policy

- Since the beginning of 2024, city employees have contributed over 100 hours of volunteer service throughout the community. Volunteer efforts have included preparing food for the Flagstaff Family Food Center, the Point in Time Count, Donating Blood, Downtown Special Events, caring for animals at the Humane Society, fixing items at the Fix-It Clinic, and helping with snow removal. Sustainability staff manages this program.
- Learn more about the Employee Volunteer policy [here](#).
- Starting in April the tracker, calendar, and all other related information will be available via a SharePoint site.

Employee Volunteer Data	Calendar Year to Date
Number of Volunteers	29
Number of Events	24
Total Service Hours	109.75

Neighborhood Engagement and Outreach

- Sustainability staff started attending Discover Flagstaff's monthly roundtable, Coffee Klatch, and the Friends of the Rio de Flag monthly board meetings to share office offerings, such as ways to get involved in upcoming workshops, events, and volunteer opportunities. This information is shared through varied types of presentations and a monthly calendar. These



meetings provide an opportunity to answer community member's questions and receive feedback on the Sustainability Offices offerings.

Food Systems

Total Food & Waste Engagement in March: 70 people

Urban Farm Incubator

- Sustainability worked with Procurement and Legal to finalize an Invitation for Applications for licensing a portion of the McAllister Ranch as an extension of the [Urban Farm Incubator Program](#). Staff plan to release the invitation and make a selection in April of an agriculturally focused entity to grow food, carry out educational programming, and steward the space.
- Sustainability worked with Water Conservation and Water Distribution on the process of installing a water meter on-site at McAllister to provide consistent water access for agriculture.

Community Gardens

- Plot registration for the [Community Garden Program](#) opened on March 1st, and at the end of the month, we received 73 applications. Returning gardeners are asked to apply for and confirm their plots by April 1st. Then, new gardeners will be able to rent available plots on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to those new gardeners who do not have access to growing space at home or those who qualify for SNAP benefits.

Waste Prevention

Compost

- **2,470.4 pounds of food waste** were diverted from the landfill in March through the [Residential Food Scraps Drop-off](#) program.
- In March, PROSE staff assisted Sustainability in installing more permanent signage at the five food scrap drop-off locations. These signs will hold up better to winter weather and are easier to read.



Photos: New aluminum signs at the Aquaplex and Hal Jensen Residential Food Scraps Drop-off.

Waste Reduction

- Staff are working with PROSE to finalize a **new Zero Waste Event guide** to implement in the City's special event permitting process as a resource for partners.



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- The Flagstaff Sustainability Office partnered with Water Conservation to build a display for the Flagstaff West Community Library made of waste material to educate the public about water usage and waste reduction.

Recycling

- In March, Public Affairs and Sustainability created the following content for social media to promote proper recycling in the community (the links provided are to the Instagram posts, but these were also posted on Facebook):
 - Reel: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C4y4k28v631/>
 - Posts:
 - https://www.instagram.com/p/C38wjsnPhfz/?img_index=1
 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/C4O2OSSPoxY/>
- Staff met with Flagstaff High School students to share a recycling presentation and discuss the students' display for the Flagstaff East Community Library.

Sustainability Commission

- The March [Sustainability Commission](#) meeting was on Thursday, March 28th. The agenda included a presentation from the Planning Director Michelle McNulty on the Land Availability Suitability Study/Code Analysis Project (Lass/CAP), an introduction to equity in the Sustainability Office and the equity assessment tool, and an update of the Regional Planning process and the creation of a subcommittee to comment on chapters.
- City Council appointed three new commissioners on March 5th: Rodger Scurlock, Tom Lammie, and Noah Baker.
- Commission [agendas can be found here](#) and Commission [minutes can be found here](#).

Social Media

- In March, our Facebook reached **4,469 people** and engaged with **341 people**. We have gained **4 new followers** this month, making our total follower count **7416**.
- In March, our Instagram reached **2,480 people** and **629 people** engaged with our content. We gained **9 new followers**, leading to our current total following of **2,291 followers**.

Photo: (Left) Our top Facebook post was to thank outgoing Sustainability Commission Chair, Kevin White (16 likes and 47 users engaged).

Photo: (Below) Our top Instagram post was a video announcing the Community Garden Plot Application opening (107 likes and 133 users engaged).





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Albert Meets Coco the Comet

On March 26th, the Flagstaff Sustainability Office's mascot, Albert the Abert Squirrel, was invited to Coconino Community College for the debut of their mascot, Coco the Comet. Albert had a great time and took pictures with other mascots and members of the public.

Photo: Albert, the Sustainability Office Mascot, and Coco the Comet meet on March 26th

