

To the City of Flagstaff Mayor and Members of the City Council:

The Commission on Inclusion and Adaptive Living (CIAL) has been established with the duty to advise the City Council on issues affecting individuals with disabilities in our community. With our duty in mind, we are submitting this letter to you to provide a voice for those members of our community whom we represent.

This letter specifically addresses the decision to not build sidewalks and instead use large rolled curbs on the Grandview Drive Reconstruction Project which is part of the Spruce Wash Flood Mitigation suite of projects. We would like to thank Mayor Daggett for bringing this project and its potential for impacting accessibility to our attention. We would also like to thank City of Flagstaff Public Works Director Scott Overton for meeting with the CIAL to explain why North Grandview Drive was reconstructed in such a way as to provide flood mitigation but at the same time impacting accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges. What is concerning to the CIAL is that this project was only brought to our attention after plans were completed and construction already begun, thus eliminating input from our commission. This is highly unfortunate. The duty of the CIAL is to advise the Council on matters affecting individuals with disabilities in our community. The CIAL is unable to complete this duty if the CIAL is unaware of city projects that affect accessibility, especially in such a negative way, as does the Grandview Drive Reconstruction Project.

Why is this of concern for the CIAL? We believe that not building sidewalks on N. Grandview Drive creates unsafe conditions for all pedestrians who use it. This is especially true for individuals with mobility challenges. Please consider what it must be like for an individual who uses a wheelchair, or someone who is deaf or blind to be forced to use the street itself rather than a sidewalk. Regarding the use of rolled curbs, as you know, there are numerous problems related to their use, especially for members of the community who experience mobility challenges. For many, rolled curbs are difficult if not impossible to navigate. Without true cut-outs for driveways, many individuals with mobility challenges will be denied access to residences. This is an infringement on accessibility and hence, rolled curbs are viewed negatively throughout the disability community.

The CIAL understands that flood mitigation must be completed in Flagstaff as we have seen the tragic damage to property and even loss of life that flooding has brought to our community. We also understand that at times the compromising of standards, even those provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act, need to happen for the general welfare of the public. What we, the CIAL, are respectfully asking for is to be informed of and be given the opportunity to provide input on projects that will impact accessibility during the planning stage of such projects rather than after the planning has been completed and construction already begun. Fortunately, this has happened in the past as with the wonderfully accessible and inclusive entrance to our downtown library. We would simply like this to happen with all city projects that impact accessibility.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

The members of the City of Flagstaff Commission on Inclusion and Adaptive Living

