

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Vice Mayor Sweet called the meeting of the Flagstaff City Council held April 14, 2025, to order at 3:03 p.m.

NOTICE OF OPTION TO RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the City Council and to the general public that, at this work session, the City Council may vote to go into executive session, which will not be open to the public, for discussion and consultation with the City's attorneys for legal advice on any item listed on the following agenda, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).

2. Roll Call

NOTE: One or more Councilmembers may be in attendance through other technological means.

PRESENT:

CHAIRWOMAN BEGAY
VICE-CHAIRWOMAN HORSTMAN
SUPERVISOR FOWLER
SUPERVISOR ONTIVEROS (Left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.)
SUPERVISOR VASQUEZ

ABSENT:

MAYOR DAGGETT
VICE MAYOR SWEET
COUNCILMEMBER ASLAN
COUNCILMEMBER GARCIA
COUNCILMEMBER HOUSE
COUNCILMEMBER MATTHEWS
COUNCILMEMBER SPENCE

Others present: City Manager Greg Clifton; Deputy City Attorney Kevin Fincel, County Manager Andy Bertelsen, County Attorney Bill Ring.

3. Pledge of Allegiance, Mission Statement, and Land Acknowledgement

The Council and audience recited the pledge of allegiance, Councilmember Aslan read the Mission Statement of the City of Flagstaff, and Councilmember House read the Land Acknowledgement.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Flagstaff is to protect and enhance the quality of life for all.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Flagstaff City Council humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued

contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

4. Open Call to the Public

Open Call to the Public enables the public to address the Council about an item that is not on the prepared agenda. Comments relating to items that are on the agenda will be taken at the time that the item is discussed. Open Call to the Public appears on the agenda twice, at the beginning and at the end. The total time allotted for the first Open Call to the Public is 30 minutes; any additional comments will be held until the second Open Call to the Public.

If you wish to address the Council in person at today's meeting, please complete a comment card and submit it to the recording clerk as soon as possible. Your name will be called when it is your turn to speak. You may address the Council up to three times throughout the meeting, including comments made during Open Call to the Public and Public Comment. Please limit your remarks to three minutes per item to allow everyone an opportunity to speak. At the discretion of the Chair, ten or more persons present at the meeting and wishing to speak may appoint a representative who may have no more than fifteen minutes to speak.

None.

5. Upper Rio and Forest Restoration Projects Update

Wildland Fire Captain Neil Chapman and Forest Restoration Director Jay Smith provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

FOREST RESTORATION/ UPPER RIO DE FLAG UPDATE
FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT FUNDING
UPPER RIO DE FLAG FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman sought clarification from Mr. Smith about the removal of certain areas, specifically those designated for the spotted owl, from discretionary review. She asked if the intent behind this removal is to help streamline the process and move forward with obtaining necessary signatures. Mr. Smith confirmed that this was the case.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman then asked whether the pending signature was specifically from the Forest Service or from other entities. Mr. Smith confirmed that it was the Forest Service. He explained that for the Hawk Little Wing project, the paperwork is nearly complete, and they are currently awaiting a signature from Forest Service Region Three.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman asked about potential delays and how long they could wait for these signatures before it would begin to impact the timeline for forest restoration work planned for the summer. Mr. Smith responded that once the contract is ready, the RFP (Request for Proposal) is expected to be released later in April, according to The Nature Conservancy's timeline.

Supervisor Fowler proposed that, if needed, a joint letter of support could be written by the City Council and the Board of Supervisors to help move the process along. Mr. Smith said that while that might be helpful in the future, they are not at that stage yet.

Councilmember House raised a concern about whether state or private lands complicate the projects. Mr. Smith responded that while such lands do not present major complications, they do require extra communication and education efforts to ensure that private landowners understand the forest restoration initiatives.

UPPER RIO DE FLAG PROJECTS
WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION UPDATE
THANK YOU

Councilmember Aslan asked if seasonal changes affect their assessments, and Mr. Chapman explained that even when trees have no leaves, they can still estimate conditions based on branch placement. Councilmember Aslan also asked about the technology being used, and Mr. Chapman clarified that they are not using Google Earth or drones like other cities. Instead, they rely on a tool called Madronus and prioritize on-site visits with owners or renters to identify actionable recommendations.

Vice Mayor Sweet mentioned she had participated in an assessment and found it highly valuable. Supervisor Fowler raised concerns about homeowners' insurance, asking if this work helps improve it and how the mapping is being used. Mr. Chapman responded that insurance companies are currently using zip codes to assess risk, which is problematic. The goal is to build a data set showing how neighborhoods transition from high-risk ("red") to safer ("green") zones, potentially influencing insurers' models and helping them better reflect mitigation efforts.

Supervisor Ontiveros asked whether insurance companies are actually responding to these changes. Mr. Chapman said there are no guarantees since the insurance landscape changes rapidly. However, the program is being recognized as a strong framework for homeowner mitigation, and efforts are underway to integrate this into city codes. While clear responses from insurance companies have not been seen yet, the groundwork is being laid for long-term influence.

Mr. Smith added that part of an existing grant is aimed at supporting smaller districts, which often lack capacity for outreach. Educating the community on guidelines is essential for shifting risk levels on the map. Councilmember Garcia brought up concerns about the fire buffer on the west side of the city, asking if it was sufficient. Mr. Smith explained that the area in question is about six miles from the highway and ten from the mountain, and current planning is designed to provide a protective buffer that accounts for extreme weather events.

Mr. Chapman emphasized that while disaster is always a possibility, the aim is to prepare two million acres for emergencies and make them eligible for preparedness funding. Supervisor Vasquez expressed concern about delays, especially regarding Bill Williams Mountain. Mr. Smith explained that once key signatures are obtained, they can begin contacting helicopter contractors to start the steep-slope project from the base of the mountain.

Chairwoman Begay closed by echoing concerns about insurance and thanking the staff for their work on these initiatives.

6. City of Flagstaff Capital Projects Update

Deputy City Manager Joanne Keene, City Engineer Paul Mood, Senior Project Manager Christine Cameron and Capital Improvements Engineer Trevor Henry provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE
FUTS ASPHALT REPAIR
JOHN WESLEY POWELL BLVD EXTENSION

Supervisor Ontiveros asked for clarification about how far the plan extends on the presented map. Mr. Mood confirmed that the corridor plan covers the entire area shown.

Planning Director Michelle McNulty added that while the plan directly affects only city property, county residents are also being included in the process to ensure they are informed and educated.

Supervisor Vasquez inquired about the map's color coding, asking if the orange areas represented the county island. Mr. Mood clarified that the green areas indicate county land.

BEULAH AND UNIVERSITY REALIGNMENT
BUTLER AND FOURTH STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Councilmember Garcia raised concerns about potential changes to the roundabout location, asking at what point the city should proceed with the current plan if they do not hear back from ADOT, and what

alterations would be necessary to make changes while still aligning with previous planning. Mr. Henry responded that a traffic analysis has already been completed with potential roundabout relocation in mind. The report has been submitted to the state, and they are awaiting feedback. If ADOT does not respond soon, the city can still proceed with the current plan. If the roundabout needs to be moved, the scope already includes flexibility for adjustments. Mr. Henry emphasized that the logistics are being finalized and future changes are being considered, including coordination with a private developer that needs to be accommodated.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman mentioned a recent Daily Sun article about potential federal grant revocations related to bike lanes and asked if ADOT has provided any follow-up. Mr. Mood said that Councilmembers and staff recently went to Washington, D.C. to advocate for maintaining those bike lane elements within the plan.

Councilmember Aslan pointed out that the underpass is not being dug below grade. Mr. Henry confirmed this, explaining that the structure will be built up about 12 feet to accommodate the slope and potential future land degradation. Councilmember Aslan also asked about a proposed temple on the same street and whether any planning or traffic considerations have been made, especially regarding concerns like dark sky preservation. Mr. Henry stated that while the city has seen media reports about the project, no official communication, concepts, or site plans have been submitted. If it proceeds, the developer will have to follow all city procedures and guidelines.

Supervisor Vasquez inquired about whether all roads in the area would be built the same, specifically asking about Harold Ranch Road. Mr. Mood clarified that Harold Ranch Road is not an official road. The plan is to make a northern connection, while the southern end will be left alone. He also noted that Little America intends to stop using that road altogether.

BUTLER AVE COMPLETE STREET CEDAR LOCKET FOURTH ROUNDABOUT

Supervisor Vasquez raised concerns about pedestrian safety, particularly for children, at a busy intersection, noting how quickly traffic can back up and questioning how vehicles and pedestrians will navigate the area safely. Mr. Henry explained that the intersection had been analyzed during the initial traffic study, which confirmed that it could handle vehicle volume using a planned "Z crossing" for pedestrians. He added that there were discussions about involving a school crossing guard and that the city has partnered with local organizations to educate students on safe crossing. Additionally, pedestrian crossing lights will be installed to enhance safety.

Supervisor Vasquez also expressed concern about cars diverting through side streets in the Sunnyside neighborhood to avoid the intersection. Mr. Henry assured that the traffic control plan includes designated detour routes that do not direct drivers through neighborhood side streets. While he could not guarantee that all drivers would follow the plan, he emphasized the city's intention to minimize neighborhood impact.

Councilmember Aslan asked about an old-growth tree located on the Pine Forest Charter School property and whether it could be preserved. Mr. Henry responded that two trees on the property will be saved, but one tree located closer to the improvement zone will need to be removed. The school has been informed and is supportive of the plan, and arrangements have been made to process the removed tree and return some of the wood to the school.

LONE TREE OVERPASS AND CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS DOWNTOWN MILE SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman acknowledged that the project has been a long time in development and noted that it, along with the Lone Tree Overpass, will significantly impact traffic. She emphasized the importance of having clear detour plans in place and conducting community outreach to keep residents informed throughout the process.

Ms. Cameron agreed, recognizing the challenges ahead and stating that while the situation may not be easy, transparent and realistic communication is essential. She assured that staff is actively working to educate the community and keep them informed, especially given the number of major transportation

projects happening simultaneously.

RIO DE FLAG FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

Councilmember House thanked staff for their work and praised Ms. Cameron for her impactful lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C. She emphasized that the project graphics will be valuable for educating the community, particularly in addressing concerns about water flow and demonstrating the thoughtful planning behind the improvements.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman echoed this appreciation, noting that the project has been discussed for decades. She acknowledged the plan's effectiveness in flood mitigation and its importance to the community's long-term safety.

Councilmember Garcia, who has followed the project since before his time on Council, raised a technical question about water flow, specifically how the retention basins at Killip and the Wedge would interact during heavy flow from Spruce Wash. Mr. Henry explained that the Wedge will first take in as much flow as possible, with water being directed there via a pipe down Linda Vista. From the Wedge, water will continue along Grandview Drive. Designers created an inverted crown to manage additional flow, and while not all flow is fully contained, the system has multiple integrated components and temporary measures to manage capacity. He also noted that the current focus is on the north section of Spruce Wash, while the southern portion would be addressed in a future second phase.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman highlighted how the drainage improvements exemplify collaboration between the city and county, particularly in the construction of the parkway basin and phase two work that reduces sediment and supports the overall effectiveness of the system.

Supervisor Vasquez commended the team, connecting the project's origins to the 2021 flooding events. He acknowledged that while the improvements may seem overbuilt, such infrastructure is critical for disaster preparedness and securing future funding. Supervisor Fowler also praised the collaborative work, pointing out the importance of federal funding and the team's creativity in bringing these much-needed community improvements to life.

7. Trail North of Elks Lodge Update

Transportation Planner Martin Ince and County Parks and Recreation Director Cynthia Nemeth provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

- ELKS LODGE TRAIL
- INTRODUCTION
- DESCRIPTION
- FUNCTION
- TRAIL PROJECT
- PROPERTY RIGHTS
- MUSEUM OF NORTHERN ARIZONA
- SOCIAL V. PUBLIC TRAIL
- PLANNING EFFORTS
- RECENT SURVEYS
- PRIOR CITY-COUNTY TRAIL PARTNERSHIPS
- DRAFT IGA
- QUESTIONS

Councilmember Spence inquired whether the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) discussed was specific to the two-mile trail or a broader scope. Mr. Ince clarified that the IGA would be limited to this specific trail, though they could explore additional IGAs for other trails if needed.

Councilmember Aslan raised a question about the Arizona Trail, which passes near the proposed trail, and asked how the two trails are related. Mr. Ince explained that while the Arizona Trail intersects with Buffalo Trail, the two serve different purposes and the new trail would not function as an alternative to the Arizona Trail.

Councilmember Garcia thanked staff for their collaboration and inquired about Chickadee and Hootso streets, asking whether they are public or private roads. Mr. Ince clarified that these are private streets.

Vice-Chairwoman Horstman discussed the challenges surrounding the trail, noting it has been heavily used as a social trail and that nearby residents are aware of its existence. She noted that some residents are for this trail and others are not. She explained that during the water line project, when some residents in favor of the trail suggested aligning the trail with the waterline. Additionally, there have been discussions with the Forest Service about expanding their trail system, which could connect with this one. Vice-Chairwoman Horstman emphasized the opportunity this could present and mentioned positive responses from some residents, though some remain opposed. Efforts will continue to address concerns, and there may still be opportunities to adjust the trail route where acquisition issues exist.

David Pabst, David Simmer, Kelly and Rona Mortensen, Dave Boehmer, and Bill Charles submitted written comments in opposition to the formalizing the social trail into an official trail.

8. Open Call to the Public

None.

9. Informational Items To/From Board of Supervisors, City Council, and City and County Managers

The Board of Supervisors and City Councilmembers expressed gratitude for the staff and collaboration efforts.

Supervisor Vasquez spoke of the recent Mexican Consulate event and how successful it was for the community.

Councilmember Garcia expressed appreciation for staff and acknowledged Councilmember House's birthday.

10. Adjournment

The Joint City/County Work Session held April 14, 2025, adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK