

## MINUTES

### 1. Call to Order

#### NOTICE OF OPTION TO RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given that, at this retreat, the City Council, County Board of Supervisors, or either Planning and Zoning Commissions may vote to go into executive session, which will not be open to the public, for discussion and consultation with their respective attorneys for legal advice on any item listed on the following agenda, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).*

Mayor Daggett called the Joint Regional Plan Retreat of the Flagstaff City Council, Coconino County Board of Supervisors, and City and County Planning and Zoning Commissions held May 2, 2025, to order at 9:07 a.m.

### 2. Roll Call

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

#### **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

CHAIRWOMAN BEGAY  
VICE-CHAIRWOMAN HORSTMAN  
SUPERVISOR FOWLER  
SUPERVISOR ONTIVEROS  
SUPERVISOR VASQUEZ

#### **FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL:**

MAYOR DAGGETT  
VICE MAYOR SWEET  
COUNCILMEMBER ASLAN  
COUNCILMEMBER GARCIA  
COUNCILMEMBER HOUSE (virtual)  
COUNCILMEMBER MATTHEWS  
COUNCILMEMBER SPENCE

#### **COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:**

CHAIR TYANNA BURTON  
VICE CHAIR ROB WILSON  
COMMISSIONER DAVID HAYWARD  
COMMISSIONER LARRY LESLIE  
COMMISSIONER MARY C. WILLIAMS  
COMMISSIONER ROSE TOEHE  
COMMISSIONER SAT BEST  
COMMISSIONER SHELIA WALSH  
COMMISSIONER TINA BURGER

#### **CITY OF FLAGSTAFF PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:**

CHAIR CAROLE MANDINO  
VICE CHAIR MARY NORTON  
COMMISSIONER CHRISTINE SHEEHY  
COMMISSIONER CJ LUCKE  
COMMISSIONER IAN SHARP - **ABSENT**  
COMMISSIONER JOSHUA MAHER (arrived at 10:02 a.m.)  
COMMISSIONER MEGAN WELLER - **ABSENT**

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance, Mission Statement, and 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. Flagstaff Regional Land Use Plan 2045 Retreat

Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Manager Sara Dechter, Assistant Director and Planning Manager Jess McNeelly, Coconino County Planning and Zoning Manager Melissa Shaw, and Cascadia Partners Consultants Sachi Arakawa, Alex Steinberger, Allie Platt, facilitated the retreat. The provided a PowerPoint presentation covered the following:

FLAGSTAFF REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN 2045 UPDATE  
 RETREAT AGENDA  
 OBJECTIVES AND OPENING  
 WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH TODAY?  
 CITY AND COUNTY VISION STATEMENTS  
 GROUP INTRODUCTIONS AND DISCUSSION  
 PROCESS OVERVIEW  
 REGIONAL PLAN PROCESS OVERVIEW  
 THE PLANNING PYRAMID  
 60-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW COMMENTS

Discussion covered the following points:

- Concern was raised about usability of the regional plan document.
- The current iteration of the regional plan is now titled the Flagstaff Regional Land Use Plan, reflecting a more focused scope on land use.
- The plan should maintain a broader view, encompassing topics like energy, climate action, and socio-economic systems.
- Tensions between philosophical aspirations versus practical metrics, with a desire to focus more on what could be measured and implemented.
- The comprehensive nature of the previous plan diluted focus and hindered land use progress.
- An annual report with 97 metrics was produced, but it did not lead to land use improvements and many policies in the broad plan actually conflicted with practical land use goals.
- The revised focus stems from a lessons-learned approach: narrow the plan to actionable land use elements to improve effectiveness.
- Feedback from 23 boards and commissions confirmed the need for a more focused and implementable plan.
- The land use map was central, it must align with and support the goals and policies, or the plan will not succeed.
- Avoid disconnect between the map and the plan's aspirational promises.
- The map was developed using scenario planning, public input, and performance modeling to ensure it reflected realistic and effective growth strategies.

A break was held from 10:22 a.m. through 10:33 a.m.

WORK SESSION PT. 1: PLAN REORGANIZATION + GOALS & PRIORITIES  
 REGIONAL PLAN CHAPTERS

## STATE REQUIREMENTS COUNTY PROCESS OVERVIEW

Discussion covered the following points:

- The current plan was nine years old and no longer reflected community priorities.
- There was a process to amend the plan if a proposed project did not align with existing land use guidelines or policies.
- Amendments to the Flagstaff Regional Plan must go through a managed process since it was part of the county's comprehensive plan.
- Concerns were raised about eliminating goals and policies that some still value.
- A simplified "Goals and Policies Desk Guide" existed, summarizing key content without extra narrative, to help navigate the larger document.
- The guide was often used by staff as a quick reference, not as a substitute for the full plan.
- A proposal was made to improve the desk guide by making it more accessible, linking it to full explanations with page numbers.
- There was a call to preserve valuable existing goals and policies during updates to the document.
- It was important to acknowledge policy conflicts, policy documents were meant to reflect values and complex trade-offs, unlike strict codes.
- The planning commission's role in interpreting conflicting policies was central to the process.

## CITY PROCESS OVERVIEW PROCESS AS DEFINED BY THE PLAN ELIMINATION OF IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINE CATEGORY FEEDBACK ON ELIMINATING IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINE CATEGORY PRIORITY SURVEY 2024: TOP PRIORITIES PRIORITY SURVEY 2024: HOUSING PRIORITY SURVEY 2024: TRANSPORTATION 2025 SPRING SURVEY THE UNIVERSE OF PRIORITIES CORE PRIORITY: HOUSING ATTAINABILITY AND EQUITY

Discussion covered the following points:

- Housing was currently ranked as the top community priority, followed by a healthy economy.
- Climate action was still considered a crisis-level issue, but its prioritization may have been influenced by survey timing.
- A recent survey was released during a period of economic news such as tariff announcements, which may have skewed responses toward economic concerns.
- Despite potential timing bias, the results were consistent with previous survey rounds and public input.
- The "healthy economy" priority was added after the 60-day public review period in response to strong public feedback.
- Initially, economic concerns were seen as embedded within other priorities like housing and workforce development.
- Staff believed that housing attainability was already addressing key economic issues based on prior city economic surveys.
- Public comments during the 60-day review indicated that economic issues were not fully represented, prompting staff to include "healthy economy" as a separate priority.
- In earlier surveys, economy-related topics did not rank in the top 10 but were still present among a broader set of growth ideas.
- The process of identifying top priorities involved balancing volume of feedback, clarity, and the interrelated nature of issues.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following individuals offered comments on the Regional Plan:

- Jill Stephensen
- Calvin Adamson

- Tyler Denham

The following comments were received:

- The most important issue is our climate.
- If we do not take action now the future generations will suffer drastically.
- Please consider the climate emergency with every decision and every aspect of the plan.
- Housing affordability is the most important thing, we cannot have a sense of place if we cannot afford to live here.
- There are no opportunities for students to stay in the community.
- More jobs are needed that are attainable for students or early graduates.
- There is a disconnect between the ability to live here and the feasibility of doing so.
- The most important issues are not being prioritized in the plan.
- Appreciate the link of walkable communities to assisting with climate.
- We want higher densities but that does not always mean huge apartment complexes, it is also increasing small parcels from one unit to three or four.
- There are close to 90 cities in the U.S. with open option parking and the results have been positive.
- Parking mandates are arbitrary and counterproductive, and an open parking option can advance housing and sustainability goals.
- The Regional Plan should support an open parking option.

## ENHANCED STREET DESIGN

Discussion covered the following points:

- The goal was to enhance street and gateway design to accommodate all users safely, with features like art, landscaping, and multimodal facilities.
- Regarding Enhanced Street Design, many participants indicated hesitation or need for clarification.
- Some questioned the necessity and cost of including art and landscaping in street design, emphasizing safety and walkability instead.
- There was a call for clearer definition of what the goal entails and how it was implemented.
- Concerns were raised about maintenance challenges with landscaping in medians and the limited capacity of public works.
- Emphasis was placed on balancing multimodal infrastructure with continued vehicle access, especially in a tourism-heavy community.
- Research was cited showing that attractive, comfortable streetscapes encouraged walking and biking.
- Dedicated funds from the BBB tax paid for art and beautification, which was separate from general infrastructure budgets.
- Improving accessibility, including curb cuts and sidewalk maintenance to serve people with disabilities was important.
- Safety concerns were highlighted in school areas, especially during winter and roadwork.
- Art and beautification was vital to Flagstaff's identity, culture, and quality of life, but core functionality must come first.

## PARKING

Discussion covered the following points:

- Parking was a city-only goal focused on managing supply and cost to support safety, walkability, enforcement, and infrastructure efficiency.
- Parking was categorized under housing because parking construction was a major cost driver; each structured space could cost \$50,000+ and limited housing development.
- The goal included both city-managed public parking (ParkFlag) and parking requirements in the zoning code.
- Reducing parking minimums was a trend in some cities, but Flagstaff may not yet be suited for such an approach due to its development pattern.
- Parking impacts housing affordability, as space used for parking could otherwise support additional housing units.
- It was suggested to separate parking topics into those tied to housing and those related to broader

transportation infrastructure.

- Future-oriented ideas were raised, including autonomous vehicles, shared ride services, and light rail or vehicle ferry systems to reduce personal car ownership and emissions.
- Walkability, multimodal transportation, and long-term adaptability to new transportation technologies were emphasized as part of parking planning.
- Funding clarity matters, as city beautification/art was funded separately from parking and infrastructure needs.
- Parking was complex, and the goal may need to be more clearly defined and possibly divided into subcategories for better public understanding.

## AIRPORT

Discussion covered the following points:

- The goal was to support regional economic vitality by improving the location and design of infrastructure for freight and rail in key employment areas and maintaining interstate and rail access.
- There were mixed opinions or requests for clarification regarding the airport infrastructure goal.
- One concern was that expanding direct flights could increase second-home ownership, which may worsen housing affordability.
- Another viewpoint highlighted that improved air travel could reduce car traffic, potentially benefiting climate and congestion.
- The group emphasized the need for thoughtful strategy around airport development, balancing access, tourism impacts, community capacity, and environmental concerns.
- More discussion and planning were encouraged before pursuing airport expansions.

A break was held from 12:10 p.m. through 12:41 p.m.

## WORK SESSION PT. 2: FUTURE GROWTH ILLUSTRATION AND HOW IT IS GOING TO BE USED AND DESCRIBED

WHAT IS THE FUTURE GROWTH ILLUSTRATION?

HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM THE 2030 REGIONAL PLAN?

HOW WAS IT CREATED?

FROM GROWTH CONCEPT TO GROWTH ILLUSTRATION

SCENARIO PLANNING INFORMED THE GROWTH CONCEPT

SCENARIO CHOOSING SURVEY

PREFERRED SCENARIO IS THE PRODUCT OF SEVERAL ROUNDS OF ENGAGEMENT

PREFERRED SCENARIO ALSO INCORPORATES RECENTLY ADOPTED PLANS AND STUDIES

SCENARIO E: PREFERRED SCENARIO

COMPARE SCENARIO PERFORMANCE

LIVABILITY & AFFORDABILITY

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

WHY IS THE PREFERRED SCENARIO GOOD FOR THE REGION?

WHICH BRINGS US BACK TO...STAFF AND LEGAL REVIEW

LAND USE CATEGORIES -- BUILDING BLOCKS

URBAN CENTER MIXED USE EMPHASIS, 50+ DUAC

SUBURBAN CENTER MIXED USE EMPHASIS, 29+ DUAC

RURAL CENTER

A question was raised about whether all commercial properties in Flagstaff were zoned to allow 60-foot-tall buildings at the sidewalk, and the initial response confirmed that many were, including high-density residential zones. Examples such as the HUB and a new building at Beaver and Butler showed that developments could be built to 60 feet without requiring rezoning. However, not all commercial zones allowed that height; Suburban Community Commercial, had a 35-foot limit, and Neighborhood Community Commercial zones allowed 45 feet. Due to Proposition 207, the city could not easily scale back zoning without compensating property owners.

In terms of land use planning, the boundaries for activity centers were drawn using existing zoning patterns and the preferred growth model, with an emphasis on aligning with zoning transitions and

parcel combinations. It was noted that planning was not just about height and density but also about creating cohesive development patterns and mixed uses. A concern was voiced about placing urban centers directly at busy intersections or on major arterial roads. It was argued that the most successful and walkable areas, such as downtown Flagstaff or neighborhoods in San Francisco, were typically located near but not directly on heavily trafficked roads. The placement of dense, mixed-use developments on such roads may hinder walkability and livability.

#### URBAN AND SUBURBAN CORRIDORS EMPLOYMENT DISTRICT UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH DISTRICT

Discussion covered the following points:

- Many older hotels and functionally obsolete properties along Route 66 may be candidates for redevelopment.
- The parcels were often too small to support both commercial frontage and residential in the back, leading to more strip commercial development.
- There was a desire for flexibility to allow higher-density residential on those sites, especially when infrastructure like roads already existed.
- Properties with access to a collector or arterial road could request a minor plan amendment to shift from a neighborhood to a corridor designation, enabling higher density.
- Proactively changing designations for parcels without proper access was discouraged, as it could lead to unsuitable development proposals.
- Another comment focused on employment areas along the BNSF railroad, noting the potential for a third rail from Winslow to Williams.
- A third rail would create opportunities for more rail sidings, supporting increased industrial uses.
- The current plan should accommodate long-term rail infrastructure improvements by reserving industrial land along the corridor.
- Employment districts in the revised plan were slightly more flexible than in the past, potentially allowing creative workforce housing solutions.
- Housing in employment areas must align with the goal of preserving essential industrial and employment space.
- Final decisions on such uses will rest with the City Council and Board of Supervisors during development proposals.

#### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE FEDERAL LANDS AND WORKING LANDSCAPES

A question was raised about several state land parcels located within the urban growth boundary that were marked in yellow on the map. It was clarified that those parcels were not designated as working landscapes because, unlike federal lands, state trust lands were intended for development. State lands within the growth boundary were expected to eventually become neighborhoods or other urban or suburban uses. State land had a fiduciary obligation to generate revenue for beneficiaries like public schools, so it was not managed for conservation purposes. However, state lands outside the urban growth boundary were categorized as working landscapes, as they were more likely to be used for activities like grazing, forest product leasing, or possibly future renewable energy projects, rather than development.

#### NEIGHBORHOODS AND NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING EMPHASIS, 20+ DUAC SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD DIVERSE HOUSING ENCOURAGING DENSER NEIGHBORHOODS 2-14 DAC OUTSIDE THE UGB/5-40 DUAC IN THE UGB RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL EMPHASIS, 0-4 DUAC

Discussion covered the following points:

- Concern was raised about fitting higher-density housing, like duplexes or triplexes, into neighborhoods in a way that aligned with existing architecture and keeps neighbors comfortable.
- Staff noted that there were limits on what local control could require.

- Architectural design standards in Flagstaff currently applied only to duplexes and larger buildings; single-family homes are exempt.
- Recent state laws required cities to allow middle housing types (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes) where single-family homes were allowed, limiting local design review authority.
- The city was considering updating design standards specifically for middle housing and possibly reintroducing floor area ratio regulations to manage intensity more effectively.
- Building height limits vary across single-family zones, so even within neighborhoods, structures could differ significantly in scale.
- The regional plan did not control architectural design and focused instead on providing guidance for zoning code revisions.
- New, denser housing types could drive up rent in existing neighborhoods like Sunnyside, highlighting a disconnect between density and affordability in practice.
- While increasing supply would not solve affordability alone, it was part of a broader strategy, and that affordability should be integrated visibly and invisibly into housing types.
- Tiny homes could be part of suburban neighborhoods, added as accessory dwelling units, or developed in manufactured housing areas, depending on how they met code and safety requirements.
- There was a request to organize map keys around land use building blocks (e.g., center, district, landscape, neighborhood) for better clarity.
- Suburban densities within the urban growth boundary ranged from five to forty dwelling units per acre, but actual lot configurations varied widely depending on design.
- Developers often averaged density over large parcels, which may include open space or infrastructure needs, rather than applying a fixed number per acre.
- A suggestion was made to base density on buildable acreage only, to preserve topography and open space, but staff said such a change should be handled through zoning code revisions, not the regional plan, to avoid confusion.
- Density standards for open space preservation should occur at the zoning level.
- Developers typically achieved an average of around six units per acre for single-family areas, varying from four to eight depending on the site.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Chris Harrison
- Marilyn Weissman, Friends of Flagstaff's Future
- Nick Wood, on behalf of Little America
- Jim Hill, Vice President of Development with Grand America Hotels and Resorts
- Colleen Maring, Chief People Officer and General Counsel for Northern Arizona Healthcare
- Darris Palmer

The following comments were received:

- The current suburban neighborhood density minimum of five dwelling units per acre is a step in the right direction.
- Consider allowing a minimum of four dwelling units per acre for large-scale developments to account for site constraints like topography, trees, and natural features.
- The regional plan should allow more flexibility to help both the city and developers create a range of housing types and respond creatively to market and site conditions.
- Out of a 450-acre property, only about 260 acres were developable due to environmental constraints.
- Many have the legal right to build rural residential but prefer to build a more diverse and impactful project.
- There were challenges building in Flagstaff, but it was important to use greenfield sites to build diverse, urban communities within the urban growth boundary.
- Concerned that without a minimum density requirement, new development might replicate exclusive, car-dependent communities, lacking transit-friendly design and housing diversity.
- Truly urban communities should be built within the urban growth boundary, while suburban-style development should remain outside it in places like Kachina, Mountaineer, Belmont, and Doney Park.

- Concerned about gentrification, especially in lower-income areas where redevelopment could displace affordable small businesses.
- The regional plan should include tools or guidance to mitigate foreseeable impacts so that Flagstaff remained accessible to both new and existing residents.
- Cautioned against the city subsidizing infrastructure for gated communities and urged that any public infrastructure investments should be tied to development that included affordable or attainable housing.
- Concerned about the proposed suburban center designation along Butler, it did not suit Little America's needs as a hotel and resort.
- It was critically important for there to be flexibility in planning for the complex site with natural features like cliffs and rivers.
- The area should be designated as suburban corridor rather than suburban center to allow more adaptable development options.
- The current plan's minimum density requirement of seven dwelling units per acre would force over 3,500 units on the property just to meet employee housing needs, which was unrealistic.
- Support for no minimum density or at most a minimum of two units per acre, aligning with suburban neighborhood medium density.
- Oppose having trails mapped on their property, especially given recent fire risks.
- Oppose plans showing a transportation extension reaching all the way to Butler on the site.
- Concerned about the proposed minimum density of five dwelling units per acre.
- The jump from two to five units per acre was too drastic.
- A public preference for higher density should not override property owner rights.
- The density change could lead to conflict.
- Businesses struggle to recruit and retain people in Flagstaff because of housing.
- It was necessary to combine goals and policies with flexibility to get housing built now.
- The solution was not to build super intense apartments so the more flexibility there could be the better.
- By right development with large parcels have a lot of infrastructure that goes into them and if developments are held to an unachievable minimum, it will force them to develop by right.
- If developers are forced to build expensive bridges and other unreasonable infrastructure they will revert to by-right which is more affordable but provides a smaller number of units that would likely be second homes.
- There needed to be a middle ground that encouraged density without being unreasonable.

City Attorney Sterling Solomon responded to the public comments specific to Little America and stated that what was proposed would not be compliant with the code and would present several issues not just from a regional plan perspective but from a code perspective.

Concern was expressed about unintended consequences stemming from the city's decision to apply state-mandated density requirements across the entire city rather than just within a defined area near downtown. It could result in widespread high-density, multi-unit housing developments, making Flagstaff resemble a dense urban center like downtown Los Angeles, which was not in line with the community's vision. There was need for flexibility to support a full spectrum of housing types, including single-family homes on larger lots, to accommodate residents at all income levels. There was a housing compression issue, where middle-income earners were unable to move into higher-cost homes due to limited availability, pushing them into middle housing that should be reserved for others in need. It was important to not force developers into high-density projects and instead allow for thoughtful variety.

Staff explained that the regional plan sets a desired future density, which may differ from current zoning capacities. A table of compatible zoning categories was being used to allow for flexibility, helping guide zoning changes that aligned with long-term goals. The implementation details, especially those involving legal and zoning code alignment, would be explored more thoroughly in future discussions.

#### MAPPING EXERCISE LET'S EXPLORE THE MAP!

Councilmember Garcia left the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Discussion covered the following points:

- Large Parcel Planning and Zoning Interpretation
  - Large parcels (e.g., state land parcels) appeared uniform in color on maps (e.g., yellow for "Suburban Neighborhood") but were intended to be broken down into mixed uses during the master planning process.
  - Expected future developments would include a variety of uses (e.g., residential, commercial, parks) and not be uniformly one-use type.
  - Subdivision plats allowed flexibility with corridors, zoning, and development patterns (e.g., clustering housing on mesa tops).
- State Land and City Development
  - State land indicated future auction and development potential.
  - City must follow strict criteria to acquire state land through competitive auctions and currently had no allocated funds to do so.
  - There was public interest in the city becoming more active in land acquisition, but it was complex and costly.
- Little America Parcel
  - Members of the public and Councilmembers acknowledged Little America's long-term ownership and community support.
  - There was interest in giving the landowners flexibility and special consideration while maintaining density expectations.
  - Ongoing dialogue between City and property owners was encouraged.
- Zoning Flexibility and Density
  - Property owners could request minor amendments to shift from "Suburban Neighborhood" to more urban categories or mixed uses.
  - Current zoning code does not always align with future density goals; updates were needed to provide intermediate zoning options.
  - Developers may build in phases, using by-right development first, then requesting rezonings.
- Jurisdictional Awareness
  - County Supervisors emphasized differing planning processes, priorities, and lack of background in the city's land use mapping approach.
  - Support expressed for continued collaboration and mutual understanding.
- Sunnyside and East Side Community Concerns
  - High concern over traffic impacts from ongoing and future development near schools and residential areas.
  - Community wanted cohesive, safe planning with traffic mitigation.
  - Emphasis on comprehensive planning rather than piecemeal development.
  - Flagstaff's underserved, diverse neighborhoods were already zoned for high density and needed equitable consideration.
- Gentrification and Equity
  - Strong calls to ensure that development decisions were equitable and did not perpetuate historic disinvestment.
  - Urban neighborhoods, often home to historically underserved populations, bore disproportionate development pressure.
  - Concerns voiced about who benefited from and was burdened by growth.
- Northern Arizona Healthcare Campus Redevelopment
  - Concern over proposed 50+ dwelling units/acre density being too high for the area once the hospital relocated.
  - Clarified that purple designation (urban center) suggested high density but offered flexibility in zoning options.
  - Importance of balancing climate and affordability goals with neighborhood compatibility noted.
- Encouragement to maintain a high-level view and not get lost in technical zoning minutiae.
- Community input from the housing plan showed they were not yet meeting goals, suggesting a need to think "outside the box."
- One suggestion: City could consider land acquisition or direct involvement in housing development if market approaches fell short.

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Nick Wood
- Zak Skelton

The following comments were received:

- We appreciate progress on trail planning but there are still serious concerns.
- Trespassing has become a major issue due to increased public access to maps via social media and digital platforms.
- Flagstaff is known for its trails, but visible lines on maps create public assumptions about access, leading to trespassing, fire risk, homeless encampments, and property damage.
- The presence of lines on planning maps, especially without context, causes confusion and liability for landowners.
- Little America intends to incorporate a trail plan as part of future development of the 536 acres.
- The Arizona Trail will continue to run through Little America, though it may be relocated slightly during development.
- Supportive of exploring the use of arrows instead of solid lines on maps to represent potential trail corridors but flexibility is key because adding arrows over existing lines does not resolve the issue.
- FUTs should incorporate more opportunity for daily commuting.
- The best way to increase multimodal transport is to increase perceived safety while walking or on a bike and the best way to do that is to connect your economic centers with separated paths.

During the discussion, a consensus emerged on the importance of trails in Flagstaff's identity and future development. Trails already existed on popular mapping platforms like All Trails and Gaia, and simply removing trail lines from the city's regional plan in favor of arrows would not reduce their visibility or use. Instead, it could undermine open space planning efforts and lead to ambiguity about future trail locations. Some disagreed and suggested that having clear, mapped trails, even if conceptual, helped integrate recreation planning into development and ensured the public understood the long-term vision for trail connectivity.

There was also concern that lines on maps could encourage trespassing on private property. Large parcels often faced issues such as illegal camping, littering, and fire hazards, which was exacerbated when the public mistakenly believed access was permitted. The cost and responsibility of fencing or monitoring private land to prevent misuse was unfairly placed on the property owner.

Staff indicated they did not support the arrow option but had introduced it as a possible compromise to address community concerns. They clarified that trail lines on the map were only conceptual and that the city did not contribute data to third-party platforms like All Trails, which often included unauthorized trails.

Several alternative mapping solutions were proposed. One favored idea was to retain the trail lines but differentiate between public and private segments using different colors. This would allow continued support for long-term trail planning while making clear which trails were not legally accessible. Bright colors and explicit labels like "Private Property -- No Access" were suggested to help avoid confusion and reduce potential trespassing.

It was agreed that there were competing priorities of supporting community access to open space and protecting private property rights. There was strong interest in finding a balanced solution, possibly a hybrid approach that preserved the clarity and utility of trail maps while respecting property owner concerns.

Supervisor Begay left the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

WORK SESSION PT. 4: CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE  
COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY CHARACTER/IDENTITY  
2025 SPRING SURVEY  
SENSE OF PLACE BEST PRACTICES  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Calvin Adamson
- Russ Randall, on behalf of Barrier Free Flagstaff

The following comments were received:

- Recently moved to Flagstaff and quickly developed an appreciation for the city's sense of place, natural beauty, and historical character.
- It is important to preserve Flagstaff's unique identity, including its historic and scenic elements.
- Maintaining a true sense of place goes beyond aesthetics, and should focus more on affordability, accessibility, and public infrastructure.
- Concerned about walkability and bike safety, including unsafe streets, fast traffic, and dangerous rail crossings.
- Design alone would not protect community identity, solutions must include housing attainability and improved public services.
- Prioritizing visual views over practical needs risks losing residents due to high cost of living and economic hardship.
- Density and housing solutions were key to maintaining community health and inclusivity, even if it challenges traditional concepts of Flagstaff's character.
- Ensuring a sense of place must include accessibility for all, including individuals with mobility challenges.
- Approximately 20% of the community identifies as having a disability.
- Architectural design and planning should intentionally incorporate inclusive elements to promote belonging and usability for people with disabilities.
- Emphasis on designing a sense of place that is welcoming and functional for everyone, not just those without physical limitations.

Discussion covered the following points:

- **Sense of Place and Affordability**
  - A sense of place was not just visual; it included affordable housing, safety, and access to public services.
  - Prioritizing walkability, bike safety, and housing attainability was critical for preserving community identity.
  - Visual design mattered, but lived experience (e.g., rent, mobility, access) defined the daily sense of place for many residents.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion**
  - 20% of the community had a disability; planning must ensure a sense of place that included accessibility.
  - Pedestrian-oriented design supported everyone, not just those with specific needs.
  - The plan should reflect inclusive architecture and accessible infrastructure.
- **Landscape and Visual Identity**
  - Flagstaff's identity was visually linked to peaks and pines, which should be preserved as defining elements.
  - Native, evergreen landscaping was viewed as a low-cost, high-impact way to reinforce local character.
  - Developments that ignored native flora felt visually disconnected from Flagstaff's environment.
- **Terminology -- "Sense of Place" vs. "Community Character"**
  - Some felt "community character" or "identity" was more relatable and encompassing than "sense of place".
  - Others appreciated "sense of place" for being more inclusive and less historically exclusive, especially for underrepresented communities.
- **Cultural and Historical Acknowledgment**
  - Sense of place must include Indigenous perspectives, acknowledging Flagstaff as Native homeland.
  - Signage, education, and design elements should visibly reflect Indigenous culture and significance of natural features like the peaks.
  - More Native art, representation, and explanatory materials were needed in public spaces to

- reflect true cultural identity.
- Design Elements
  - Visually appealing design mattered but should not override functional and inclusive needs.
  - Emphasis on native landscaping, natural integration, and historical continuity in new developments was preferred.
  - There was concern that urban development and zoning for taller buildings may threaten views and character unless managed carefully.
- Concerns About Over-Curation
  - Some worried about a "curated" identity being defined by government planners rather than organically by the community.
  - It was vital that community members, not just officials, shaped and defined Flagstaff's evolving identity.

RECAP  
WHAT WE HEARD  
POTENTIAL CHANGES

Members of the City Council, County Board of Supervisors, and the Planning and Zoning commissions offered appreciation for the collaboration and willingness to participate in the process.

Ms. Arakawa provided closing comments and concluded the retreat.

**5. Adjournment**

The meeting of the Flagstaff City Council held May 2, 2025, adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

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MAYOR

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK