

MINUTES

JOINT PARKS & RECREATION / OPEN SPACES COMMISSION
MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

HYBRID MEETING
FLAGSTAFF AQUAPLEX
AND [MICROSOFT TEAMS](#)
1702 N FOURTH STREET
4:00 P.M.

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Roll Call**

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

OPEN SPACE

Chair Jacqueline Thomas (Present)
Co-Chair Bruce Fox (Virtual, Present)
Commissioner Mary Norton, P&Z
Liaison, (Present)
Commissioner Molly Joyce (Virtual, Present)
Commissioner Lina Wallen (Present)
Commissioner Nat White (Present)
Commissioner William Kluwin (Present)
Councilmember Rep. David
Spence (Present)

PARKS AND REC

Chair Stephen Parsons (Present)
Co-Chair Austin Kerr (Present)
Commissioner Neil Frazier (Present)
Commissioner Camile Diab (Absent)
Commissioner Lisa Lamberson
(Virtual, Present)
Commissioner Jill
Christensen (Present)
Commissioner Josh Stackhouse
(Present)
Councilmember Rep. Anthony Garcia
(Virtual, Present)

Staff present: Rebecca Sayers (PROSE Director), Amy Hagin (Assistant PROSE Director), Tyrone Johnson (Recreation Manager) Virtual, Robert Wallace (Open Space Supervisor), Lori Reynolds (PROSE Administrative Specialist), Sylvia Struss (Open Space Coordinator), Sarah Holditch (Events and Marketing Coordinator) Virtual, and Ashlee Fliney (Open Space Coordinator)

3. **Land Acknowledgment**

The Flagstaff Open Spaces and Parks and Recreation Commissions humbly acknowledge 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.

Chair Parsons read the Land Acknowledgment.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of Open Spaces Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission minutes have been deferred to each commission's next individual meeting in October.

5. **Public Comment**

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject that is not scheduled before the Commission on this day. The Arizona Open Meeting Law prohibits the Commission from discussing or taking action on an item which is not listed on the prepared agenda. Commission members may, however, respond to criticism made by those addressing the Commission, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.

Chair Parsons read the public comment statement. No comments were received.

6. **Business Items**

A. Flagstaff Regional Land Use Plan 2045 Update

Robert Wallace, PROSE Open Space Supervisor, shared with both commissions an update on the Open Spaces Commission decision to review and submit recommendations on the draft Regional Plan. He said that the Open Spaces Commission had also nominated various commission members to present at upcoming Planning and Zoning Commission meetings and City Council. The Open Spaces Commission's recommendations on the draft plan have been submitted and will be discussed at the Planning and Zoning Public Hearing on September 24, 2025. Chair Thomas, who presented at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on September 10th, shared the commission's three main points:

1. A need to ensure that open space is integrated into the plan in a way that better aligns with the core priorities of housing and climate and provides a better balance.
2. The need to guide development so it helps deliver the things that the community values, such as parks, trails and access points, and open spaces. Specifically, the Open Spaces Commission recommended map updates that pertain to open space needs for the community.
3. A recommendation to correct the Future Growth illustration maps to prevent the loss of a top priority trail corridor between the Rio de Flag Water Reclamation Plan and Forest Service land. Currently, the Future Growth illustration map proposes a Suburban Center within the trail corridor, including a medium-to-high density of people, residences, jobs and activities. Development goals for this zoning type may not support the long-standing trail corridor priority.

The discussion items that the Planning and Zoning Commission votes on and approves will become part of their recommendations of approval for City Council's consideration at the October 9th City Council meeting.

No further questions or comments from Commissioners.

B. PROSE Capital Improvement Project Overview

Amy Hagin shared on the presentation screen in the meeting room, [a table with all major projects from this fiscal year \(FY26\)](#) -- including projects from upcoming fiscal years (BBB fund and capital-funded projects). The table combined various PROSE projects that applied to both Open Spaces and Parks and Recreation Commissions.

- Parks & Recreation: Bushmaster Park sports court project has a projected completion time of November 2025.
- Parks & Recreation: Hal Jensen Recreation Center air conditioning: Design for adding AC throughout the entire building has been done. The AC will first be installed in the gymnasium with plans for future AC installation happening when additional funds are available for more units.
- Parks & Recreation: Highland Mesa, a new park near the Boulder Pointe neighborhood, has funding for development with the hope to be completed by FY27. The project is currently in the concept design stage.
- Parks & Recreation: Heritage Square restroom remodel. The two restrooms have been seeing ongoing misuse. With this upcoming remodel project, PROSE staff hope to change the restroom layout, and as a result, also see changes in the type of restroom use behaviors. Staff have been working with the Downtown Business Alliance and other entities to make the restrooms a better space for all users.
- Parks & Recreation: Annual playground equipment replacement. An ongoing project that tackles replacing outdated playground equipment that is in need of replacement.
- Parks & Recreation: Cheshire Park expansion project. The future home of a running track and multipurpose field. There is a need within the community for a public running track as there is no other public running track available. PROSE staff are looking into a possible grant to leverage this project that would include a permanent restroom. Commissioners voiced concerns regarding the impact that lighting for the track may have on the community's dark sky designation and if the turf for the track could cause unwanted heat impacts to the neighborhood and nearby wetlands. Amy replied to each, justifying that the lighting would

- remain dark-sky compliant, and that they have weighed various options for turf versus non-turf and while that is not solidified yet, they are leaning towards artificial turf.
- Parks & Recreation: Ponderosa Park reconstruction project. Impacted by the flooding from the Museum Fire scar, Ponderosa Park will undergo reconstruction in FY26/27.
 - Open Spaces: McMillan Mesa Trails. Robert Wallace shared that this project would include trail repair and upkeep.
 - Parks & Recreation: Continental Park future expansion project. Amy shared that the park is a heavily used location with the potential to expand to upwards of 86 acres. The City owns a narrow strip of land north of the park, extending to I-40. PROSE has projected the project to begin with 3 million dollars and would cover at least two fiscal years, with most of that money going to the initial design of the additional 86 acres and possible easements they would need to acquire.
 - Open Spaces: Trail repairs, FUTS connections, and land acquisitions.
 - Picture Canyon Trail Connection. This project will work to secure needed easements to permit the construction of a trail to the Picture Canyon Preserve from Route 66. This will improve access and make progress towards providing 10-minute walking access to open space for residents. The project would take place in FY2027-2028.
 - Land Acquisition. This project would provide approximately \$800,000 in FY 28 to help acquire property that is integral to the Open Space System, such as Regional Preserves, Connectors, and Complementary lands, to create an integrated network of open space throughout the community to provide equitable access and recreational opportunities.
 - Observatory Mesa Natural Area Plan. This project is projected to stretch across several fiscal years from 2028 through 2035, and will consist of restoration of unauthorized routes, updating signage, creating new trails, and developing basic trailhead amenities. Currently, PROSE staff are working to produce a support trail corridor. Next year, they anticipate applying for a permit with the Coconino National Forest, which would support the project's implementation.
 - McMillan Mesa Property Restoration, FY 29. This project will work to restore property with attention to erosion control, addressing unauthorized trails, providing tree buffer between development and the urban trail system, and mitigating invasive plants.

C. PROSE Master Plan Update

Rebecca Sayers shared that PROSE would begin working on a master plan project within the upcoming year. This master plan would expand upon their current Parks and Recreation plan to include both Open Spaces and Events. This will be a comprehensive plan that will help PROSE better prioritize how they operate in the future by following a guide with set goal points that more accurately serves current PROSE operations. She added that they are working on the formal procurement and hope to be able to begin shortly after the start of 2026. Both commissions should anticipate heavy involvement in this process once a consultant group has been selected.

D. Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS) Maintenance Update

Amy shared a Powerpoint presentation with the Commissions that highlighted various FUTS accomplishments this past summer. Roughly 8.5 miles of existing urban trail sections received varying levels of repair with different types of treatment on asphalt. The presentation referenced various before and after photographs on the slideshow.

E. PROSE Division Collaborations

Amy provided a recap of the 4th of July Drone Show, highlighting the success of that event between both Open Space staff and Parks and Recreation staff coming together to make the event happen that is managed by the Events Section.

Open Space staff shared a collaborative project for invasive weed control that Open Space had been working on and will be wrapping up this Fall, associated with a Department of Forestry and Fire Management grant. They also mentioned a cross-division collaboration between Open Space and Parks staff that included-assisting with illegal campsite cleanup and new signage installations, weed work on varied city property, an arbor day tree plant scheduled to take place at Thorpe Park, and educational collaborative efforts between Open Space and Recreation

7. City Council Liaison Reports - Councilmember Anthony Garcia and Councilmember David Spence

Open Spaces Councilmember Representative David Spence shared highlights of guided tours of PROSE properties that both commissions manage. He mentioned that on his tour of Continental Park, during the discussion of the park's expansion, he thought that the idea of an outdoor theater (something that is similar to the likes of Red Rock's theater in Colorado) could make a great addition. He concluded with sharing an update from City Council on sound mitigation measures at the new pickleball courts in Bushmaster Park.

Parks and Recreation Councilmember Representative Anthony Garcia shared information about their search for a new City Manager and that there would be a public outreach opportunity coming up for the position. He added that if anyone had any questions, they were welcome to reach out to him.

8. Reports -- Monthly highlights of Parks and Recreation, Open Space, and Events

Sylvia Struss, Open Space Coordinator, shared a brief highlight on Weed Pull Wednesdays. She estimated that they had collected at least 80 weed pull bags just from Picture Canyon. She also shared information on upcoming Open Space events including:

- Flagstaff's celebration of Arbor Day on September 23rd. They would be planting three Honey Locust Trees in Thorpe Park with a fourth grade class from Marshall Elementary School.
- October 6th's full moon hike at Picture Canyon led by Ashlee Floney.
- TarantulaTrek on October 5th at McMillan Mesa's Loop Trail.

A. [PROSE Monthly Newsletter](#)

The August 2025 newsletter was reviewed. The Commissioners thanked Sarah Holditch for her work on each monthly newsletter.

9. Informational items to and from Commissioners and Staff

10. Potential Future Agenda Items

It was confirmed that the next joint meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2026, focusing on BBB capital improvements. The exact date of the meeting is to be determined.

11. Adjournment

Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Parsons adjourned the meeting at 6:06 PM.