CHAPTER 4

GROWTH AND LAND USE



Fishies, Zoe Rosenthal, 9/2022

GROWTH AND LAND USE

BACKGROUND

The Regional Plan is a place to share the facts and the details about what has already occurred in the community, where the community is now, and what opportunities lie ahead. The community conversations surrounding growth are the most challenging; they are woven into every map and every piece of guidance the Regional Plan provides to future decision makers, and they incorporate the competing values, needs, and priorities of people throughout the Region.

Finding a balance between conserving what is cared about individually and collectively and charting a future for current residents and the generations to come is difficult. While updating the Regional Plan, the community wrestled with facts, feelings, and values to uncover the choices that are possible in terms of what the Region will become and how to steward its future.

Regional Growth Trends 2012-2022

Since 2012, 5,246 new dwelling units have been constructed in the City and 1,590 new dwelling units have been constructed in the County.[2] In the past three decades (1990-2020), the City's housing production has not kept pace with demand for housing. The community has seen a steady rise in housing costs. Increasingly, people who work in the Region can only afford to live in outlying communities, leading to longer commutes. See Chapter 5, Social and Economic Systems for a discussion of factors influencing the cost of housing, including secondary homes, short-term rentals, and student housing.

Table 4-1: Single-Family and Multifamily Dwelling Permits Issued 2016-2023 (City)[3]

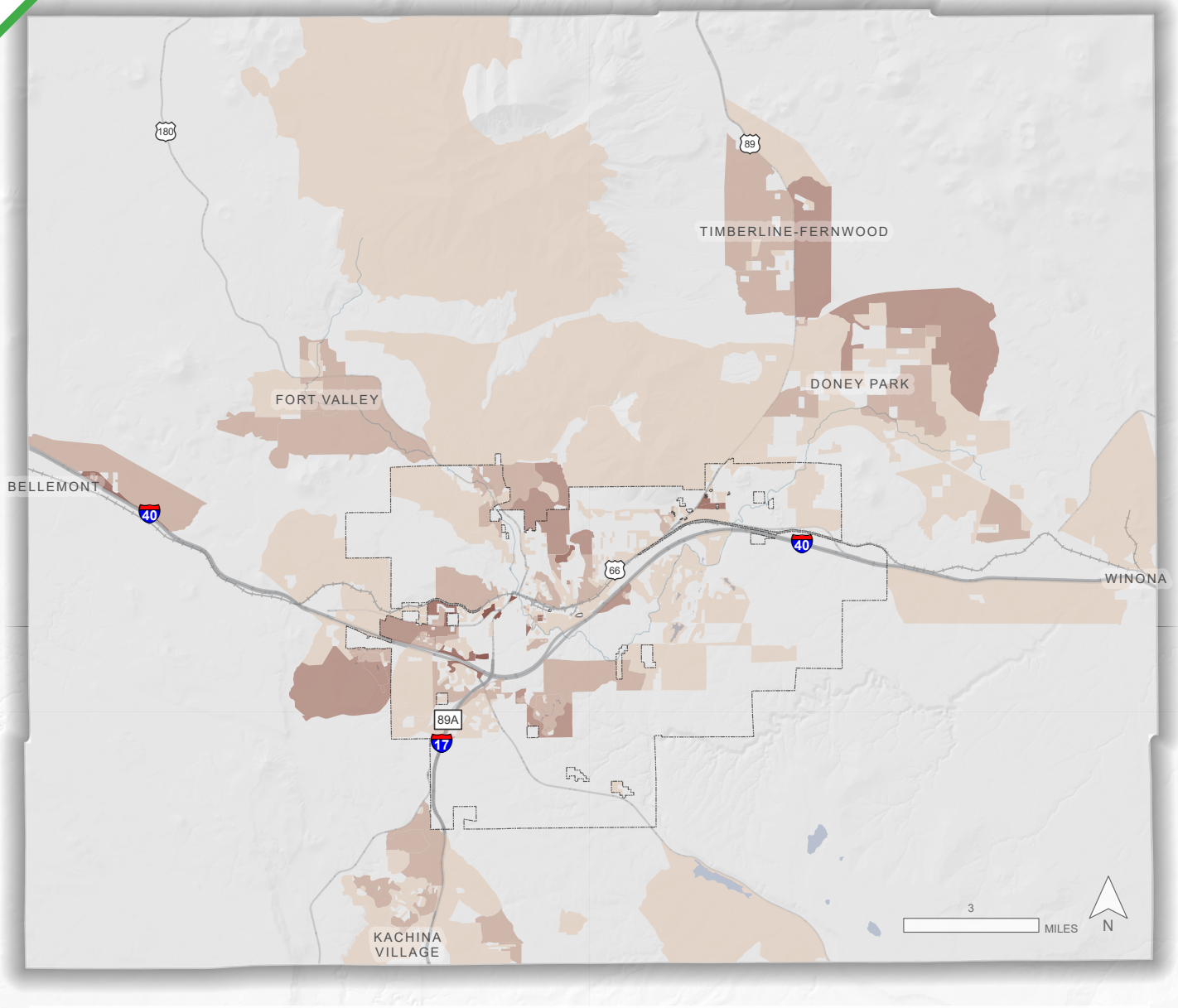
Year	Single-Family Permits	Multifamily Permits	Total Permits
2016	265	537	802
2017	258	469	727
2018	398	10	408
2019	296	117	413
2020	289	388	677
2021	220	473	693
2022	160	352	512
2023	195	592	787

Table 4-2: Changes to Population and Housing Units 2000-2020 (City)[4]

Year	Housing Units	Increase in Units	Increase in population
2000	21,430		
2010	25,648	+4,218	+12,976
2020	31,369	+5,721	+10,961

The largest increase in construction of new housing units is in the vicinity of the Milton Road corridor. Prior to 2012, the corridor was primarily commercial with few residential units along its frontage. The market trend toward multi-story, mixed-use apartments supported the *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* goals of creating mixed-use activity centers that function as walkable, denser neighborhoods.

New subdivisions developed in west Flagstaff introduced low-to-medium density housing with access to Route 66 and Interstate 40 (I-40). McMillan Mesa and Ponderosa Parkway experienced some of the greatest variety of new development and building types in the Region. New housing in these areas consisted primarily of condominiums, apartments, and senior and assisted living facilities. The development in these areas filled a significant gap in population density over the last decade. Neighborhoods near JW Powell Boulevard and Lone Tree Road added new low-density units to the South Lone Tree area. Some smaller infill developments between the Flagstaff Mall and the City limits have also increased growth on the City's far east side.

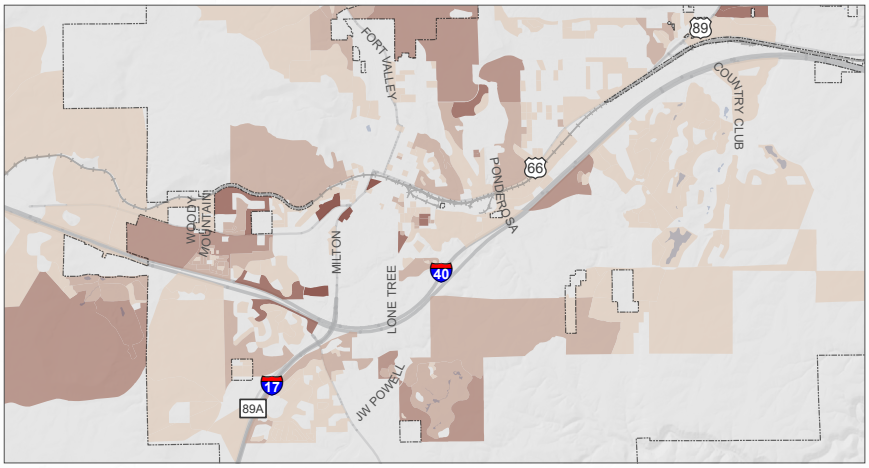


Census Blocks with New Units

Count of New Units Since 2012

- 1- 10
- 10 - 50
- 50 - 100
- 100 - 250
- 250 - 500

The geography of census blocks is defined by the United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/data/academy/data-gems/2021/what-are-census-blocks.html



Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community

Information Map 4-1: New Construction in the Region Since 2012

In November 2018, Flagstaff voters approved partial funding of transportation improvements for the JW Powell Boulevard Corridor Project between South Fourth Street and Lone Tree Road. The City has been working with multiple large and small property owners since 2020 to address the future road alignment, utility financing, and land-use proposals throughout this area. Construction of the roadway corridor is expected to begin in 2025. Its completion is necessary to support the area's development. As a result of this project, 1,820 acres of new neighborhoods and commercial areas are expected to be developed in the next decade.

Within unincorporated County portions of the Region, the primary development has been single-family homes, with infill occurring in Doney Park, Timberline, and Fernwood, and within the Fort Valley 180 Corridor on large parcels of one or more acres. The Mountainaire community is primarily built out; Kachina Village will also be built out when the newest subdivision under construction as of 2024 is completed. Bellemont is a rapidly growing residential community. The availability of water and sewer services in Bellemont supports denser development that offers a variety of housing styles ranging from townhomes to single-family homes.

Characteristics of Development in the Region

The physical character of the Region is defined by its built environment and natural setting. Areas where the built environment and the natural setting are well integrated are some of the most distinctive, attractive, and desirable parts of the City. The intent of the City's landscaping regulations is to ensure that native plants and trees are incorporated along streetscapes, in plazas, and landscaped areas, providing shade and contributing to Flagstaff's aesthetic character. Where native plants and trees are incorporated, following fire prevention principles is important.

City codes also support the use of native materials in site and building designs to reflect the City's historic character. The City has four National Register Historic Districts: the Flagstaff Townsite Historic District, Railroad Addition Historic District, North End Historic Residential District, and Flagstaff Southside Historic District. Route 66, completed in the early 20th century, brought motels, billboards, neon lights, and retro-architecture to the City, and many of these designs and structures are preserved and celebrated today. The County communities of Bellemont, Doney Park, Timberline and Fernwood, Kachina Village, Mountainaire, and Fort Valley 180 Corridor have Design Review Guidelines as an overlay district that apply specific design standards to commercial, industrial, and multifamily developments. Across the Region, significant buildings, historic districts, and urban design contribute to a strong sense of place and local identity. Modern homes and buildings in the Region sometimes replicate these historic styles and materials and integrate the natural features of the landscape, including views, geology, and vegetation, into their design.

SCENARIO PLANNING

As introduced in Chapter 1, Introduction, the process of creating the Regional Plan was informed by exploratory scenario planning, which helps communities identify issues and plan for the future despite not knowing which specific challenges will emerge. Scenario planning for the Region began with identifying three "critical uncertainties":

1. How much will the Region's population grow?
2. How much funding will be available for infrastructure?
3. How much will climate change impact the Region?

Through a series of workshops, the public then helped generate ideas and principles for how the Region should respond. Based on public feedback on vision, growth concepts and priciples, and scenario-building "Face the Future" workshops, four initial scenarios—A, B, C, and D—were developed, each with a unique set of assumptions (see Table 4-3). All scenarios assumed the same job growth and housing construction using different patterns and scales of development. A Technical Advisory Group made up of experts in various disciplines from the community were consulted on assumptions, to review input, and to verify conclusions.

Scenario	Assumptions	Key Findings
A BUSINESS AS USUAL		
 *Most detached single-family units*	All development occurs using existing zoning entitlements. Most single-family detached housing units.	» Housing costs are **54 percent higher** than today. » **17 percent fewer workers** live in the Region than today. » **1 percent increase** in transportation emissions. » **2 percent increase** in building emissions.
B COMPLETE COMMUNITIES		
 *Most housing diversity*	Focus on new neighborhoods and centers. Most housing diversity.	» Housing costs are **19 percent higher** than today. » **7 percent fewer workers** live in the Region than today. » **2 percent decrease** in transportation emissions. » **2 percent decrease** in building emissions.
C URBAN CENTERS AND CORRIDORS		
 *Most apartments & condo buildings*	Focus on higher density development in centers and corridors. Most apartment or condo buildings.	» Housing costs are **21 percent lower** than today. » **13 percent more workers** live in the Region than today. » **9 percent decrease** in transportation emissions. » **7 percent decrease** in building emissions.
D NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL		
 *Most attached housing units (i.e. townhomes)*	Focus on smaller infill projects in existing neighborhoods. Most attached housing units.	» Housing costs are **22 percent lower** than today. » **13 percent more workers** live in the Region than today. » **8 percent decrease** in both transportation and building emissions.

Table 4-3: The Four Scenarios

The scenarios considered in this process assumed that public and private actions could be coordinated through regulations and incentives and that reasonably foreseeable technology and population projections occur as they are currently forecasted. The Regional Plan cannot regulate or even influence all of the factors that would need to align for the scenarios to occur in the way they are projected. However, the comparison of scenarios informs how the City and County should set goals and policies for what they can influence to create the environment for the better growth outcomes.



N San Francisco Street in Downtown Flagstaff

The four scenarios showed that centrally located density will be essential to both housing affordability and carbon neutrality. Scenarios C and D were the only scenarios that reduced the cost of housing and significantly reduced auto dependency and lengthy commutes for workers in the Region. Scenario B showed that new neighborhoods can also support these goals when completed in a manner that allows a greater density and mix of uses. Scenario A, which assumed land-use patterns would not change, resulted in higher housing costs; fewer workers living in the Region; and increases in transportation and building emissions.

The Preferred Scenario

The public was asked to evaluate each of the four scenarios through a scenario choosing survey, and a Preferred Scenario was developed based on the outcome. The Preferred Scenario was a hybrid of the four scenarios, focusing on Scenarios C and D while including emphasis on compact, single-family development from Scenario B. The Preferred Scenario prescribes allowing more housing density in existing neighborhoods, encouraging compact development along major transportation corridors, and improving the alignment of public infrastructure investments with areas where density is supported. These actions would create more opportunities for attainable housing, help reduce the frequency and duration that residents must drive, and support the Region's progress toward achieving carbon neutrality goals.

Disclaimer: The Preferred Scenario assumed property owners would use existing entitlements in locations where changes were not modeled. The Regional Plan cannot preclude any property owner from using their existing entitlements, even if the scenario demonstrated greater community benefits of different land uses, intensity, and density of a site.

The Preferred Scenario was projected to impact growth and land use in the following ways:

» **Livability & Attainability**
The Preferred Scenario aims to create a more livable and affordable Region by encouraging more compact and diverse housing types throughout established neighborhoods. These housing types include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and cottage courts (also known as "middle housing"), as well as more apartments and mixed-use buildings. Preferred Scenario modeling demonstrated that a combined approach of increasing housing production and producing smaller units in the Region through 2045 could result in **a 20-percent reduction in housing costs versus today**, enabling the Region to house more of its workforce locally. Achieving this outcome depends heavily on reducing barriers to creating new housing units.

» **Transportation & Infrastructure**
A major objective of the Preferred Scenario is the efficient use of scarce public funds. The Preferred Scenario focuses on encouraging more infill growth and investment in existing infrastructure, including along existing public transit lines, rather than expanding future roadways to new growth areas. The Preferred Scenario assumes that already funded projects such as the Lone Tree Overpass and the JW Powell Boulevard Extension are completed, which allows for land in these areas to be opened to housing development. By focusing the future investments on denser infill development, the Preferred Scenario produced the biggest shifts from driving to walking, biking, and transit use. Specifically, it resulted in **a 2.9-percentage point increase in the Region's daily share of transit trips, and a 1.8- percentage point increase in the daily share of walking.** These findings demonstrate that targeted investment and infill development will provide some improvement in walking and transit trips. Chapter 6, Transportation, provides more information on strategies to support these targets further with a healthy environment for walking, biking, and transit.

» **Sustainability & Resilience**
The Preferred Scenario showcases how the Region can make progress toward the City's carbon neutrality goals through improvements in building efficiency, lower-carbon energy sources, more compact development, and reduced vehicle dependency. While the Preferred Scenario does not lead to reduced VMT Region-wide, it does result in the biggest reduction in per-household driving of any scenario tested. More compact land use patterns, building efficiency measures in new construction, and reduced driving equate to an **eight-percent reduction in transportation emissions and a seven-percent reduction in building emissions by 2045.**

Integrating Priorities in Growth and Land Use Decisions

The exploratory scenario planning exercises demonstrated that moving forward with Scenario A, "Business as Usual," which mimicked past land-use patterns, will prevent the Region from meeting its affordability, carbon neutrality, energy, water, and transportation goals. The Preferred Scenario illustrates the targets the Region could set to achieve its vision and goals despite uncertainties surrounding population growth, public funding, and the impacts of climate change.

Scenario Planning Process

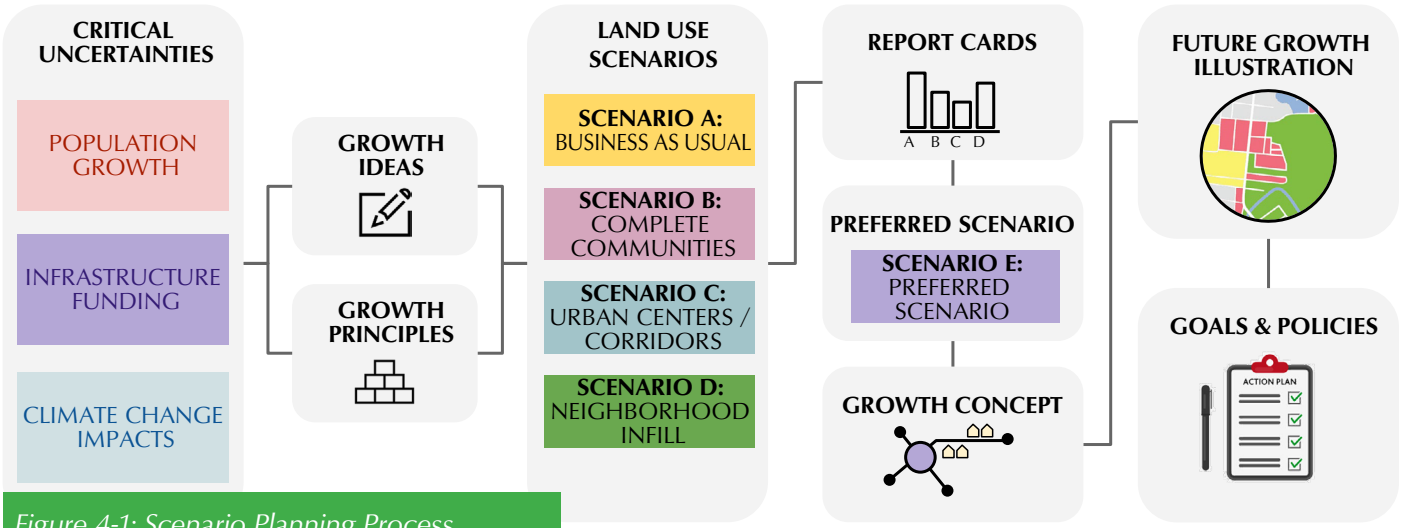


Figure 4-1: Scenario Planning Process

Once finalized, the Preferred Scenario was transitioned into the Region's "Growth Concept," which translated its broader land-use characteristics into categories to use as "building blocks" in the Future Growth Illustration (see Land Use Categories). The Growth Concept assessed the parameters and locations of these building blocks, as well as their general density and mix of uses in consideration of existing entitlements, area and specific plans, possible site limitations, and other City and County policies. Finally, the Growth Concept was presented to the Regional Plan Committee as the basis for the land-use categories and as one of the considerations used to develop the Future Growth Illustration and goals and policies.

THE LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The Land Use Framework is made up of the Future Growth Illustration, the Table of Zoning Compatibility for Each Land Use Category, Guidelines for All Land Use Categories, and Land Use Category Guidelines. These components of the Land Use Framework are used in the analysis of conformance with the Regional Plan as described in Chapter 2, How the Plan Works.

Future Growth Illustration

The Future Growth Illustration on the pages that follow is the map that defines the "proposed general distribution and location and extent of [land] uses for housing, business, industry, agriculture, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, open space and other categories of public and private uses of land as may be appropriate to the municipality."[5] The Future Growth Illustration and this chapter's guidelines set the context for the Regional Plan's goals and policies. This context influences how a private development proposal, or a public investment, contributes to achieving the Regional Plan's goals and policies and whether a proposed land-use change conforms to the Regional Plan.

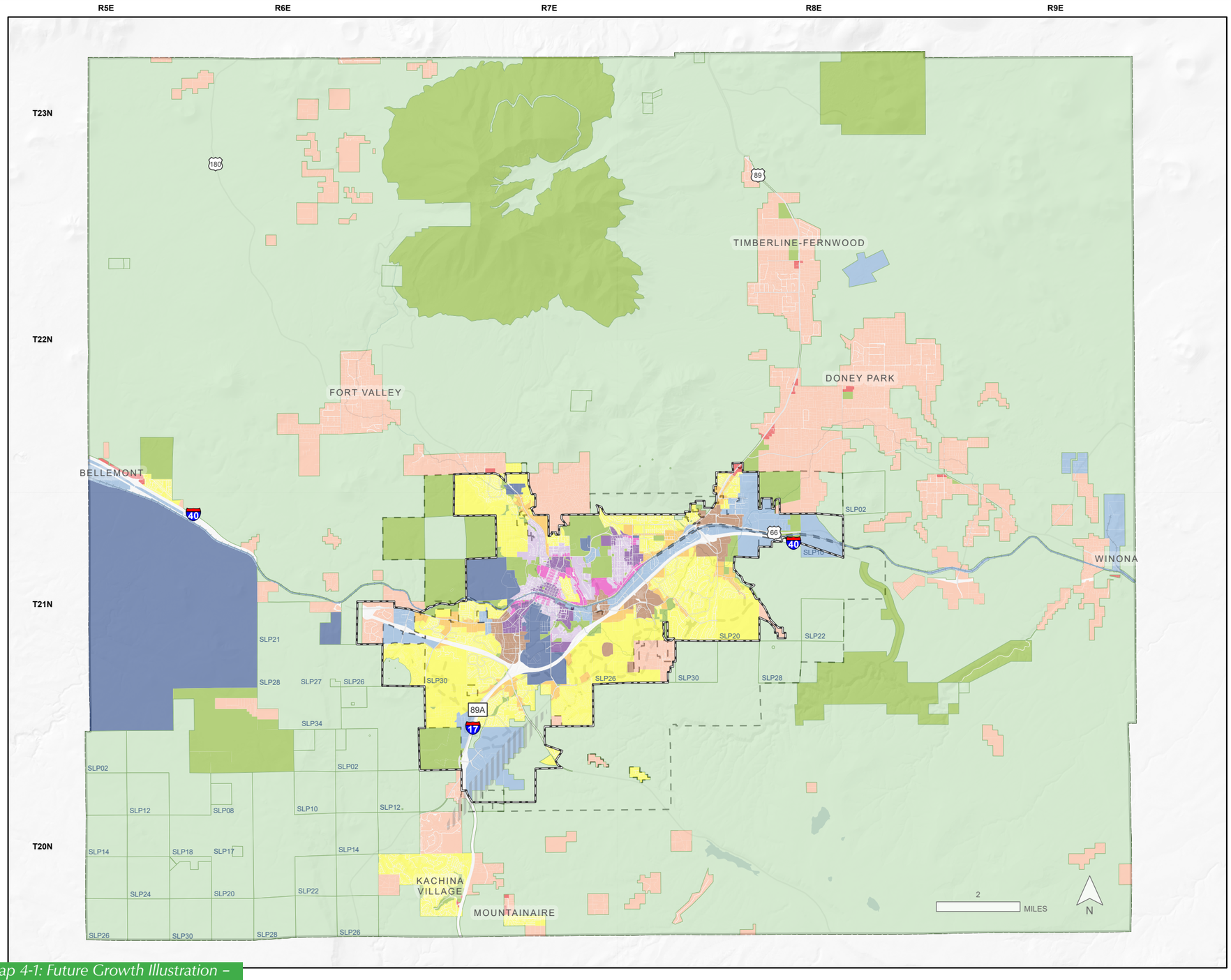
The Future Growth Illustration is built on a framework that defines the types of places that exist in the Region today, and others that would be encouraged in the future. It is made up a series of building blocks, which help explain how different parts of the Region relate to one another. For example, the building blocks identify which areas support primarily residential activity versus areas that support more commercial and employment activity. The building blocks are Centers, Corridors, Districts, Neighborhoods, and Landscapes, which are defined for different contexts including Urban, Suburban, Rural, Employment, or University and Research. The following pages provide more detail on each building block and land use category.

The Future Growth Illustration takes into account issues such as access and topography limitations, existing entitlements, and the availability of infrastructure and services to create a coherent vision for how the Region will grow.

An online interactive map is on the project website: www.flagstaff.az.gov/regionalplan2045.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

Each category depicted on the Future Growth Illustration has a set of Category Guidelines. These guidelines describe the characteristics anticipated for these areas as they develop or redevelop. The guidelines apply to development proposals seeking a finding of plan conformance[6] or a plan amendment. The purpose of these guidelines is to determine the conformance of a proposal to the Land Use Category for Zoning Map Amendments[7] and Conditional Use Permits, if applicable. Appropriate zoning for each Land Use Category and the desired densities can be found in the Table of Zoning Compatibility for each Land Use Category.



Policy Map 4-1: Future Growth Illustration – Regional Scale

FUTURE GROWTH ILLUSTRATION

Centers
- Urban Center
- Suburban Center
- Rural Center

Districts
- Urban Corridor
- Suburban Corridor
- Employment District
- University and Research District

Landscapes
- Parks and Open Space
- Federal Lands and Working Landscapes

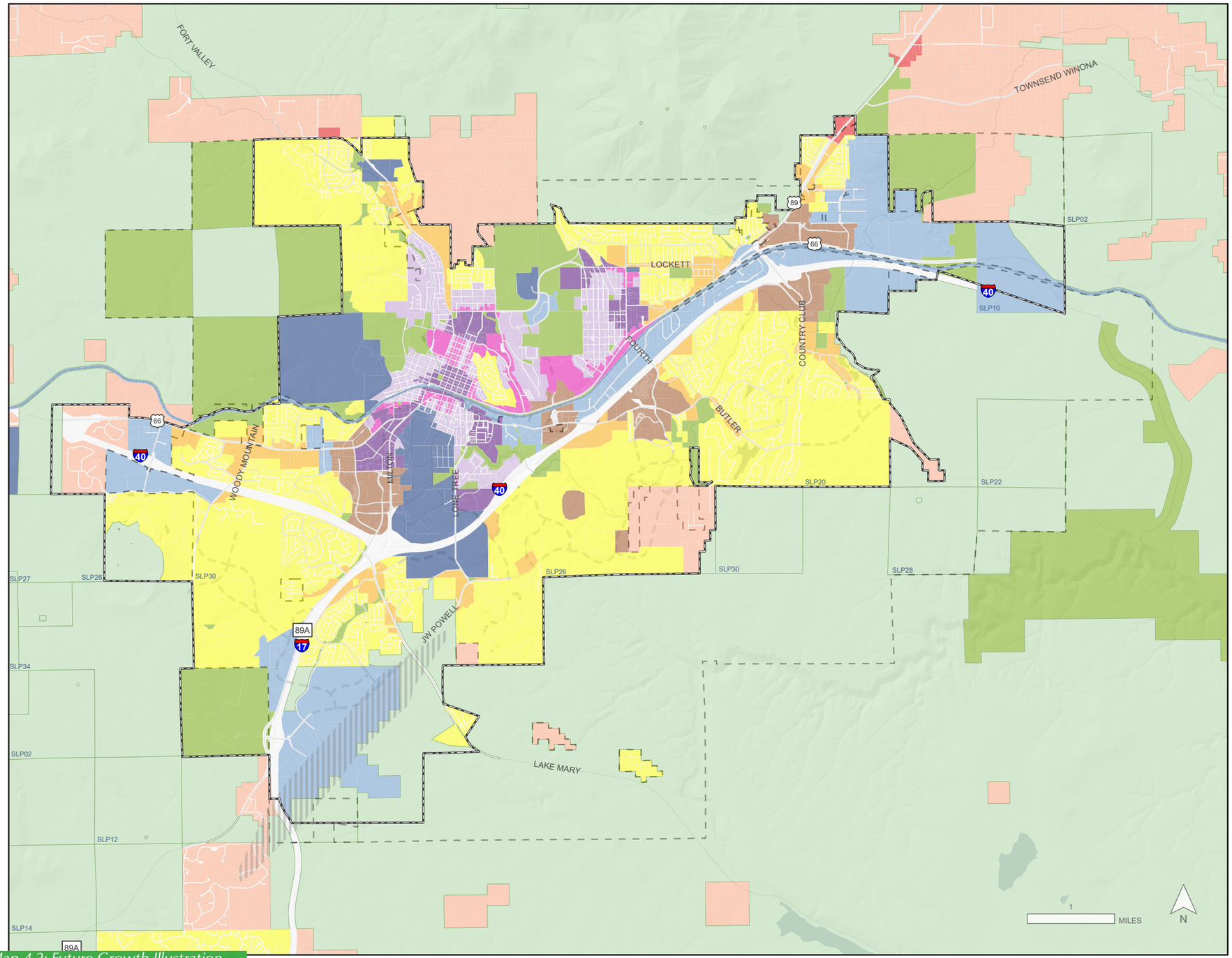
Neighborhoods
- Urban Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Rural Neighborhood

- Airport Overlay Zone
- Planned Roads
- Urban Growth Boundary
- CoF Boundary



Disclaimer: The Future Growth Illustration and desired future conditions do not preclude a property owner from exercising their currently available private development entitlements.

Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community



FUTURE GROWTH ILLUSTRATION

Centers
- Urban Center
- Suburban Center
- Rural Center

Districts
- Urban Corridor
- Suburban Corridor
- Employment District
- University and Research District

Landscapes
- Parks and Open Space
- Federal Lands and Working Landscapes

Neighborhoods
- Urban Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Rural Neighborhood
- Airport Overlay Zone
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Planned Roads
- CoF Boundary

Coconino County



Disclaimer: The Future Growth Illustration and desired future conditions do not preclude a property owner from exercising their currently available private development entitlements.

Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community

Policy Map 4-2: Future Growth Illustration – City Scale

TABLE OF DENSITY RANGES



HIGH DENSITY HOUSING (H)

Density	Housing Types	General Location
30 or more duac	Multifamily Apartments (three or more stories), Vertical and Horizontal Mixed-Use	Urban and Suburban land use categories that support vertical mixed-use development. Transit centered. Integrated community and recreational spaces. May be located on major roads.



MEDIUM-HIGH DENSITY HOUSING (MH)

Density	Housing Types	General Location
15 to 29 duac	Duplexes, Triplexes, Quadplexes, Multifamily Apartments (three or more stories), Live/Work Units, Vertical and Horizontal Mixed-Use	Urban and Suburban land use categories where housing, commercial uses, and jobs are intermixed. Transit supportive.



MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING (M)

Density	Housing Types	General Location
5 to 14 duac	Detached Single-Family, Attached Single-Family, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Duplexes, Triplexes, Quadplexes, Multifamily Apartments (two-to-three stories), Live/Work Units	Urban and Suburban land use categories with highly connected bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, where housing can be set back from major roads.



LOW DENSITY HOUSING (L)

Density	Housing Types	General Location
0 to 4 duac	Farms, Ranches, Detached Single-Family, Clustered Housing, ADUs	Rural and Suburban land use categories where there are significant natural or cultural resources being preserved, agricultural uses, or limited infrastructure.

Table 4-4: Density Ranges

TABLE OF ZONING COMPATIBILITY FOR EACH LAND USE CATEGORY

This table is used to determine compatible zoning categories for findings of conformance and related Category Guidelines. If the proposal meets the compatible zoning categories and conforms to the Category Guidelines in this chapter, a plan amendment is not required.

Land Use Category	Desired Density (duac)	Compatible Zoning Categories (City)[a]	Compatible Zoning Categories (County)
CENTERS			
Urban Center (UC)	H, MH	CB, NCC, CS[b], HR, PF	N/A
Suburban Center (SC)	H, MH	HC, CC, NCC, HR, PF, RD	N/A
Rural Center (RC)	MH, M	SC, NCC, HR, MR, PF, POS	CG-10,000, CN, PC, PRD, PS, RM-10/A, RM-20/A, RS-6,000
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS			
Urban Corridor (UCO)	H, when residential or mixed-use is proposed	CS, HC, CC, NCC, PF, HR	N/A
Suburban Corridor (SCO)	H, MH when residential or mixed-use is proposed	SC, CS, HC, CC, NCC, PF, HR	N/A
EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS			
Employment District (EMP)	Desired density is dependent on the compatibility with and pattern of the primary use and surrounding context.	RD, HI, HI-O, LI-O, LI, PF *Commercial and residential zones, when complementary to a primary zone in a master planned development, may be allowed.*	CG-10,000, CH-10,000, IH-6,000, IL-10,000, IP-20,000, MR
University & Research District (URD)	Desired density is dependent on the compatibility with and pattern of the primary use and surrounding context.	RD, LI-O, LI, PF *Limited HI when part of a campus plan. Commercial and residential zones may be allowed when complementary to a primary zone in a master plan or campus plan.*	CG-10,000, CH-10,000, IH-6,000, IL-10,000, IP-20,000, PS
LANDSCAPES			
Parks and Open Space (PS)	N/A	PF, POS	PS, OS
Federal Lands and Working Landscapes	N/A	PLF, PF, POS	Existing entitlements

Table Notes

a. New transect zones would be adopted through the creation of a Traditional Neighborhood Community Plan, which would focus on achieving desired density and intensity. They are therefore not listed in the table.

b. Commerical Service is permitted in an Urban Center, when supported by a specific plan, such as the Southside Community Specific Plan.

Land Use Category	Desired Density (duac)	Compatible Zoning Categories (City)[a]	Compatible Zoning Categories (County)
NEIGHBORHOODS			
Urban Neighborhood (UN)	H, MH MH, M in a historic district	HR, MR, PF, MH, NCC, CS *POS zoning may be considered as an accessory zone to a development project.* *LI-O uses that meet the guidelines for UN may be considered.*	N/A
Suburban Neighborhood (SN)	H, MH, M in the UGB M, L outside the UGB	R1, R1-N, MR, HR, PF, POS, MH, SC, NCC	RS zones, RM 10/a, RM 20/a, MHP, RMH, PC, PRD
Rural Neighborhood (RN)	L	R1, RR, ER, PF, POS, MH	G, AR zones, RR zones, RS zones, PC, PRD

Legend of Table Abbreviations:

Duac: Dwelling units per acre.

N/A: Not applicable.

City Zoning Abbreviations:

Central Business (CB)
Commercial Service (CS)
Community Commercial (CC)
Estate Residential (E)
Heavy Industrial (HI)
Heavy Industrial Open (HI-O)
High Density Residential (HR)
Highway Commercial (HC)
Light Industrial (LI)
Light Industrial Open (LI-O)
Manufactured Housing (MH)
Medium Density Residential (MR)
Neighborhood Community Commercial (NCC)
Public Facility (PF)
Public Lands Forest (PLF)
Public Open Space (POS)
Research and Development (RD)
Rural Residential (RR)
Single-Family Residential (R1)
Single-Family Residential Neighborhood (R1N)
Suburban Commercial (SC)

County Zoning Abbreviations:

Agricultural Residential (AR)
Commercial General-10,000 sq.ft. min (CG-10,000)
Commercial Heavy-10,000 sq.ft. min (CH-10,000)
General-10AC min (G)
Heavy Industrial - 6,000 sq. ft. min (IH-6,000)
Industrial Park (IP-20,000)
Light Industrial-10,000 sq. ft. (IL-10,000)
Manufactured Home Park (MHP)
Mineral Resource (MR)
Open Space and Conservation (OS)
Planned Community (PC)
Planned Residential Development (PRD)
Public and Semi-Public (PS)
Residential and Manufactured Home Zone (RMH)
Residential Multiple Family-10 units (RM-10/A)
Residential Multiple Family-20 units (RM-20/A)
Rural Residential (RR)
Residential Single Family (RS)

Table Notes

For more information on City and County zones, see the City of Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-40 and the Coconino County Zoning Ordinance.

This table should be updated administratively as part of the ordinance for Zoning Text Amendments without the need for a separate plan amendment process. If one jurisdiction adopts a change to the table or map, the other entity can update its version administratively with a notice at a City Council or County Board of Supervisors' meeting.

Density Calculations:

1. Density is calculated using the methods and procedures outlined in the respective Zoning Code of the City or County.
2. If proposed as part of a master block plat or specific plan, density can be calculated across the entire area included within the plat or plan.
3. Calculations of density for the purpose of Regional Plan conformance exclude use of density bonuses when the proposal would acheive more than the maximum density.
4. Commercial or industrial parcels that do not include housing should not be included in the density calculation.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL LAND USE CATEGORIES

All Categories

» Encourage infill development and redevelopment in areas already served by existing infrastructure and public facilities.
» In greenfield areas, encourage development to be clustered as a means of preserving significant natural resources, agricultural lands, and open space, and to minimize service and utility costs.
» Limit private or public green spaces that require irrigation, emphasize the use of reclaimed water (where available) and provide reclaimed water for private, ecosystem, or recreational beneficial use.
» Discourage land uses incompatible with airport and flight operations in the vicinity of airports and helipads.

All Neighborhoods

» Affordable housing units should be dispersed throughout every neighborhood.
» Promote neighborhoods that have frequent road and trail connections, and encourage transit ridership.
» Because the Region's desired development pattern is connected and inclusive, discourage gated communities and neighborhoods with many cul-de-sacs.
» Within all neighborhoods. locate and design dynamic public civic spaces, parks, and natural areas that are accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.
» Encourage growth and the management of public spaces, including streets, that enhance the unique sense of place within established and historic neighborhoods.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure

» Development requiring drinking water and sewer will be located within the UGB (City only).
» Do not extend water services to new development without sewer to maintain the ability to recycle and use reclaimed water (City only).
» Intercept and minimize contaminants from urban runoff to protect surface water quality in all watersheds.
» Support the incorporation of nature-based infrastructure solutions in new development, parks, and open space to enhance climate resilience, manage stormwater, promote land-use efficiency, and reduce impacts to significant natural resources.
» Ensure that the entire Region is equipped for growth with public facilities and infrastructure (see Chapter 11, Infrastructure and Public Safety, for details).

Natural Resources

» Discourage construction in the 100-year floodplain and conserve natural features through zoning and development review.
» If disruption of wildlife corridors with roads, walls, fences, or pavement cannot be avoided, mitigate the impacts by allowing for alternate wildlife routes and follow design standards that are compatible with animal movement.
» Follow the Arizona State Mining Inspector's Aggregate Protection Guidance recommendations when considering discretionary land-use decisions.

BUILDING BLOCK: CENTERS

Centers provide basic goods, services, and employment to significant parts of the Region and areas outside it. They may include one or more neighborhoods and serve adjoining neighborhoods. Some Centers may provide unique or specialized opportunities (such as arts and entertainment) that define their character and are best supported by larger markets.

Existing Urban Centers, such as Downtown Flagstaff and the Flagstaff Medical Center, Suburban Centers like South Milton Road, and Rural Centers such as Shadow Mountain Drive in Bellemont, are located around the intersection of major transportation corridors. Centers should contain a mix of housing, jobs, and services at densities that are appropriately scaled to their context (Urban, Suburban, Rural), as well as appropriate transportation and transit infrastructure.

WHAT IS TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE LAND USE?

Transit does not operate efficiently if destinations, people, and jobs are spread out and difficult to access. Transit-supportive land use is a style of development that puts people and places within easy reach by using transit. The Code Analysis Project has determined that transit-supportive densities in the City should be no less than eight duac. The exploratory scenario planning efforts showed the community would realize more benefits from supporting higher-density developments in Centers and Corridors. Increasing density in proximity to existing transit can support higher frequency services. Transit-supportive locations provide people who live, work, and visit the Region with a range of mobility options, services, and recreational opportunities, as well as access to key destinations such as employment centers and schools, within a short distance from their homes. Building to support transit use is an economical and efficient way to add travel capacity without significantly increasing roadway capacity, helping more people travel without increasing travel times. Although it is not a new concept, it could be a new consideration as the Region continues to grow. Successful transit-supportive land use has the following characteristics:

- **Public Realm:** Streets, sidewalks, and public gathering spaces make up the public realm. Transit-supportive public realms focus on walking. Short blocks are a sign of a well-connected street network. Wider sidewalks and engaging streetscapes make walking feel more comfortable. Bike lanes and crosswalks allow multiple transportation modes to share the roadway.
- **Physical Form:** Transit-supportive land use does not stop at the sidewalk. The ways that buildings are designed and that vehicles are parked have a significant impact on the way people interact with a neighborhood, corridor, or district. Transit-supportive design principles focus on improving the pedestrian realm. Key features include active ground-floor uses, accessible and inclusive spaces, parking lots that do not front the roadway, and direct pedestrian connectivity from the building to the bus stop.
- **People:** Activity is the biggest driver of transit ridership. Transit-supportive land use promotes a compact mix of people and jobs. Destinations should be diverse with a mix of uses to keep activity high throughout the day.

Urban Centers have a higher intensity of people, residences, jobs, and activities. Where feasible, streets and sidewalks are in a grid pattern of relatively small blocks. The area is walkable, and a variety of services and goods is available. Creating large, vehicle-oriented intersections is avoided by introducing more frequent and better connected arterial and collector roadways. Urban Centers are transit-supportive districts that encourage increasing transit frequency, ridership, and stops.

Category Guidelines

Urban Centers should:

Connectivity

- Be designed based on gridded streets, while considering constraints on connectivity such as topography, the railroad, and highways.
- Develop high pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connectivity via the street network and enhanced with dedicated facilities.
- Provide access and services through sidewalks and alleys which, in some locations, also provide attractive and interesting public spaces.



Village at Aspen Place (75 duac)

Housing Types

- Include Mixed-Use Buildings, Apartments, Live-Work Units, and Historic Buildings.

Mix and Location of Uses

- Encourage commercial uses and mixed-use developments with co-located residential and commercial uses.
- Prefer vertical mixed uses; buildings that are solely commercial should be a minimum of two stories.
- Locate midrise apartment buildings without a commercial first floor within walking distance of the central commercial area.
- Locate auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, car washes, and drive-through restaurants on major and minor arterials. Auto-oriented uses are not supported in any request to change existing zoning from Central Business to another zone.
- Allow for drive-up booths and drop-off areas for banks, hotels, food and beverage kiosks, and similar uses.
- Implement managed parking, such as a ParkFlag district.

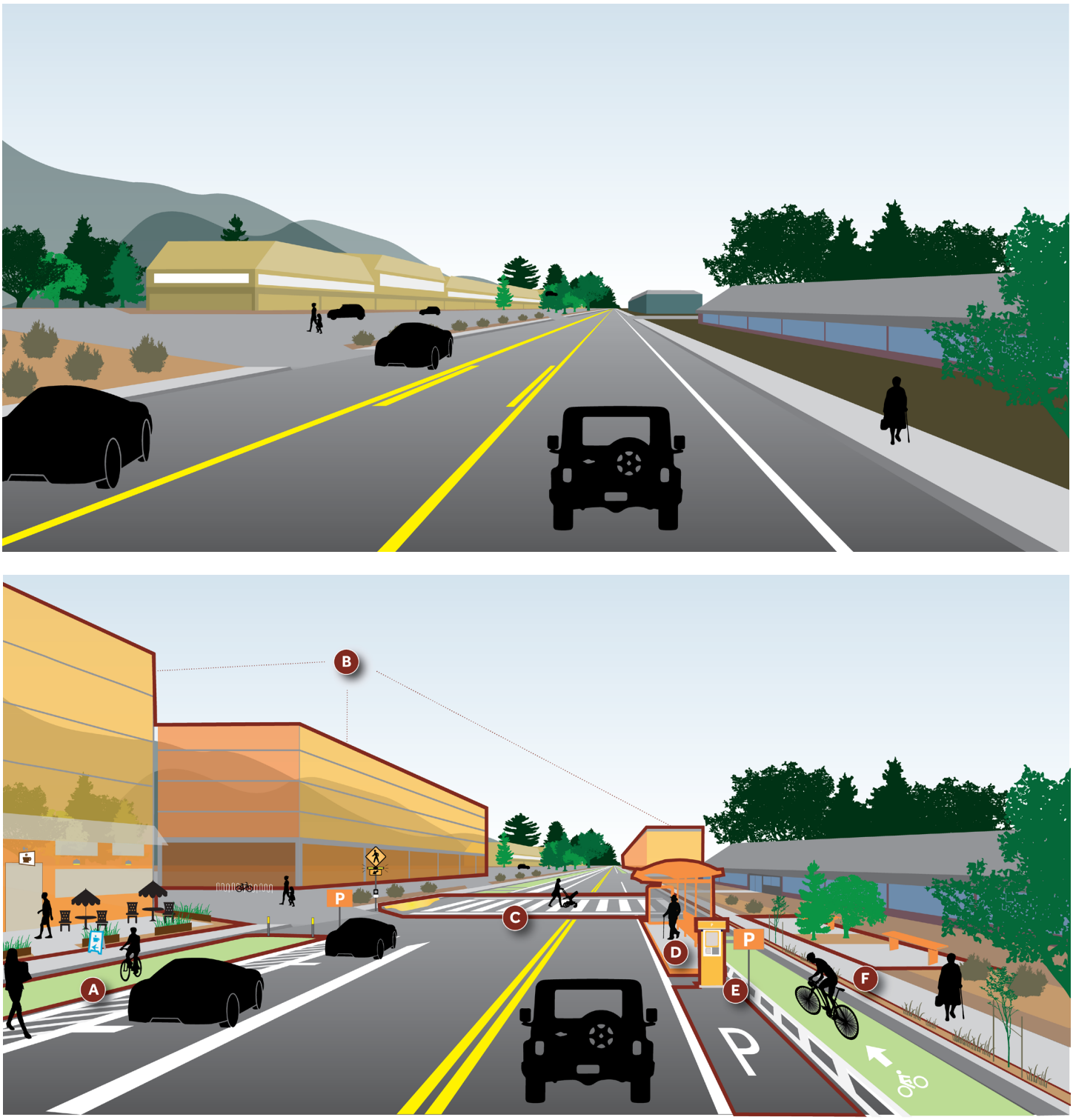
Design and Other Considerations

- Provide direct accessibility to ground-floor businesses and community services for pedestrians from a public space.
- Allow for residential and mixed-use buildings facing arterials to be set back for larger pedestrian zones and to reduce noise for residents.
- Encourage new multi-story, mixed-use buildings to have windows and doors facing sidewalks.
- Give preference to adaptive reuse of buildings and development of vacant and underutilized parcels over demolishing historic buildings and landmarks.

Parks

- Create central and activated public spaces.
- Provide connectivity to open spaces and parks within a quarter to one-third of a mile walking distance.

The concept below illustrates a shopping area (top image) that developed into an urban form, with taller, mixed-use buildings and improvements to bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and parking infrastructure (bottom image). The building forms are conceptual and do not reflect specific architectural styles, massing, or details.



A Improved bicycle infrastructure

B Mixed use buildings or midrise apartments

C Enhanced pedestrian crossings

D Transit options

E On street parking with pedestrian safety buffer

F Improved landscaping and street furniture

Figure 4-2: *Current and Desired Condition of an Urban Center*

Suburban Centers have a medium-to-high intensity of people, residences, jobs, and activities. The area is walkable, and a variety of services and goods are available. Arterial and collector streets and sidewalks are well connected and support all transportation modes. Separated paths for active transportation are commonly found midblock. Transit-supportive development is desired.

Category Guidelines

Suburban Centers should:

Connectivity

» Develop backage roads and retrofitted street connections using commercial local or collector systems to create access for businesses and mixed-use areas.
» Connect bike and pedestrian infrastructure across the block and not solely around the block edges.
» Encourage transit-supportive development.

Housing Types

» Include Mixed-Use Buildings, Apartments.

Mix and Location of Uses

» Support developments such as horizontal and vertical mixed-use, multi-story, large commercial, office, multifamily, and residential.
» Encourage residential uses co-located with commercial uses within mixed-use developments.
» Consider employment and compatible industrial land uses.

Design and Other Considerations

» Use shared parking, managed parking, and cross property access to create efficient parking and circulation that serves multiple properties whenever possible.

Parks

» Provide connectivity to open spaces and parks within a quarter to one-third of a mile walking distance.



The Standard (51 duac)



Fremont Station (38 duac)

The concept below illustrates a shopping area (top image) where a taller, mixed-use building has been added and space for parking was reallocated for two-story infill buildings and civic space (bottom image). Pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and parking improvements have also been added. The building forms are conceptual and do not reflect specific architectural styles, massing, or details.

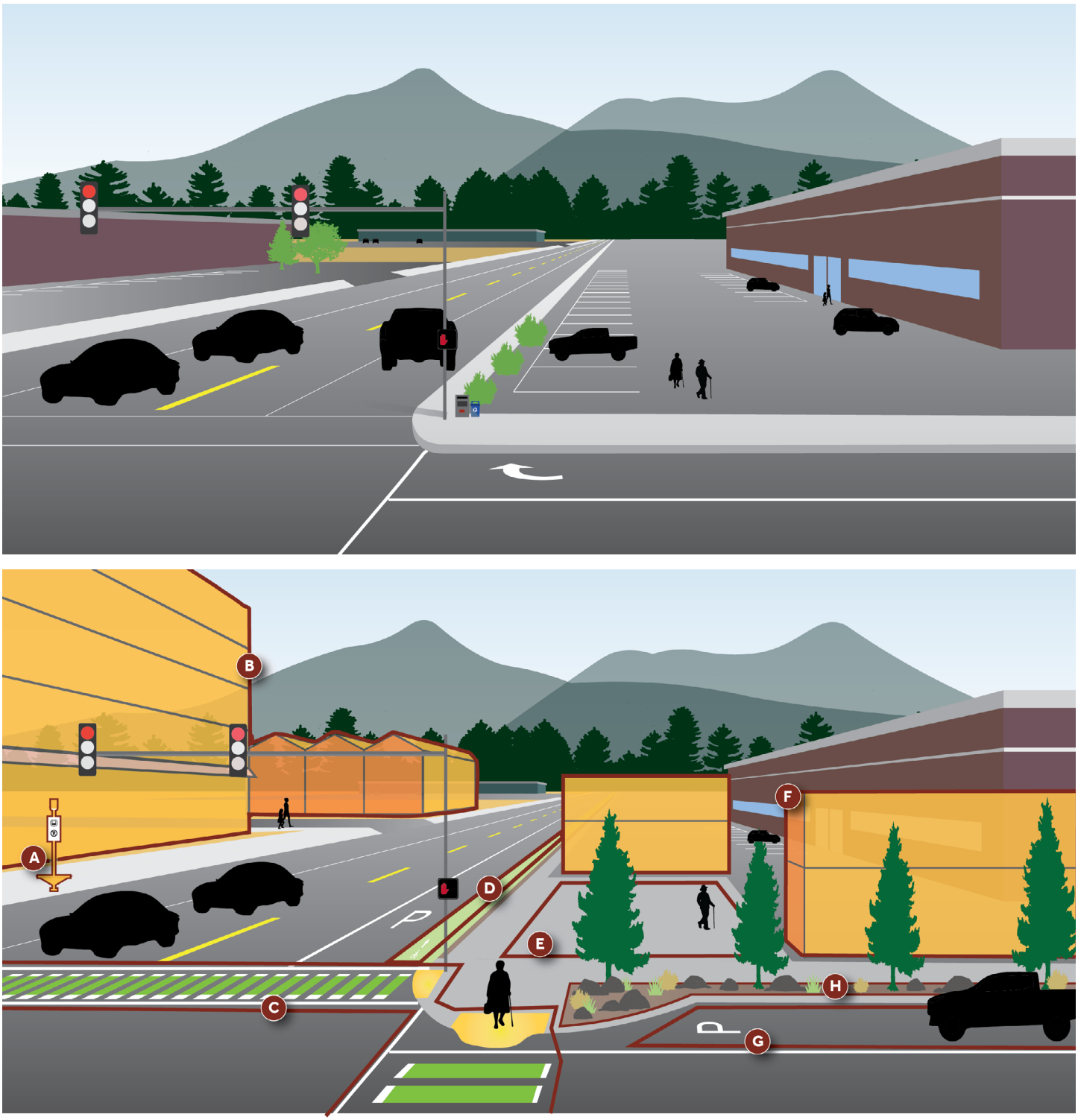


Figure 4-3: *Current and Desired Condition of a Suburban Center*

Rural Center (RC)

Rural Centers are designated locations in unincorporated areas and the edge of the City that are appropriate for locally serving retail and service businesses. Rural Centers serve as focal points for the community in which they are located. Their objective is to reduce the need to travel out of the area to meet day-to-day needs. Development in this category maintains a scale, height, intensity, and architectural character appropriate to the rural community and may include retail, civic and office uses, transit, agricultural uses, and schools.

Category Guidelines

Rural Centers should:

Connectivity

- Provide bicycle and pedestrian access to and from nearby commercial and residential areas.
- Provide park-and-ride services.

Housing Types

- May include single-family homes located behind businesses and services.
- Include mixed-use and multifamily housing where appropriate.

Mix and Location of Uses

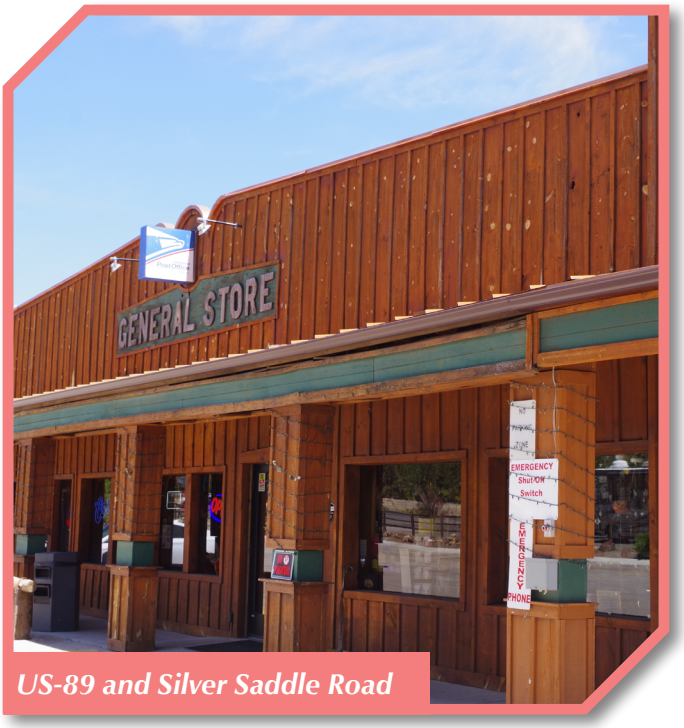
- Highly encourage services that support agriculture.

Design and Other Considerations

- Have easily accessible parking in shared lots and street parking.

Parks

- Provide social gathering places.
- Provide connectivity to open spaces and parks to the extent possible.
- Consider equestrian accessibility from rural neighborhoods.

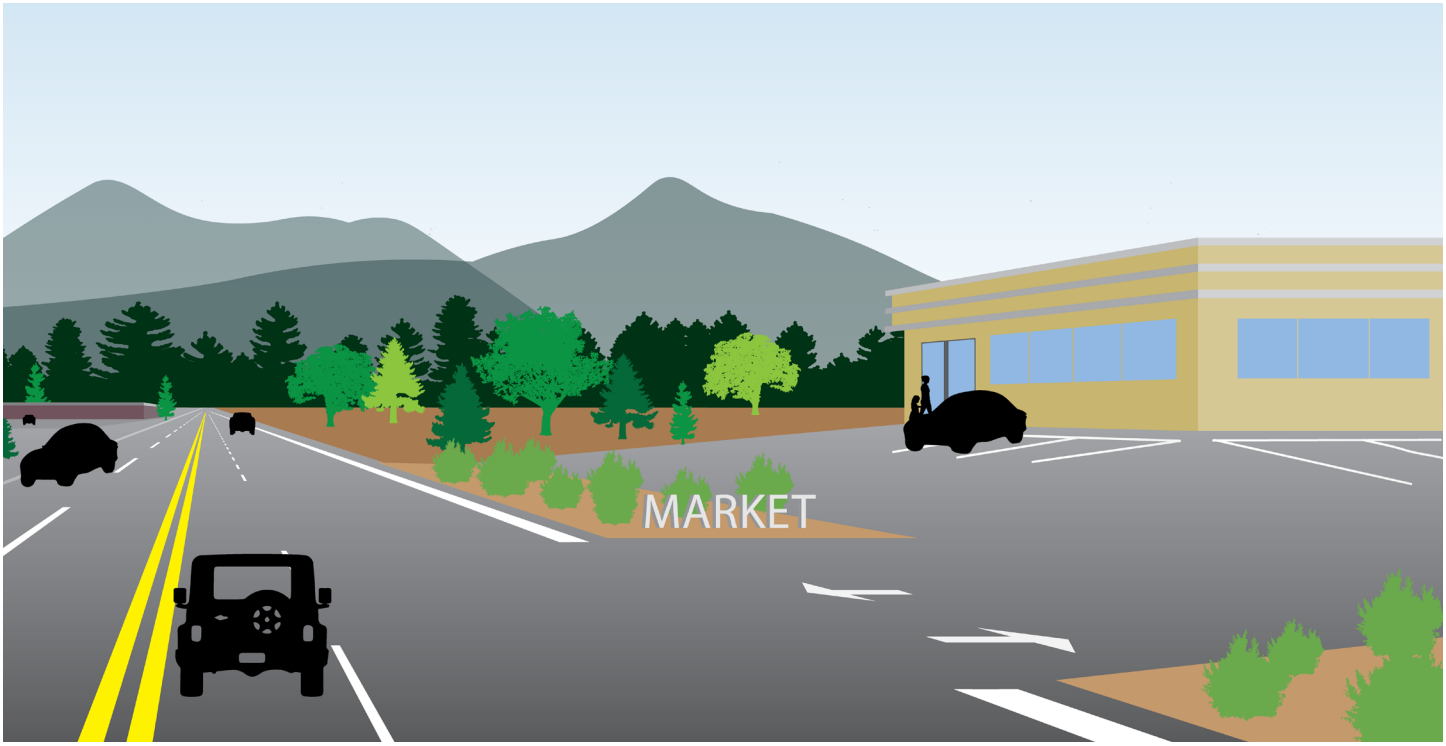


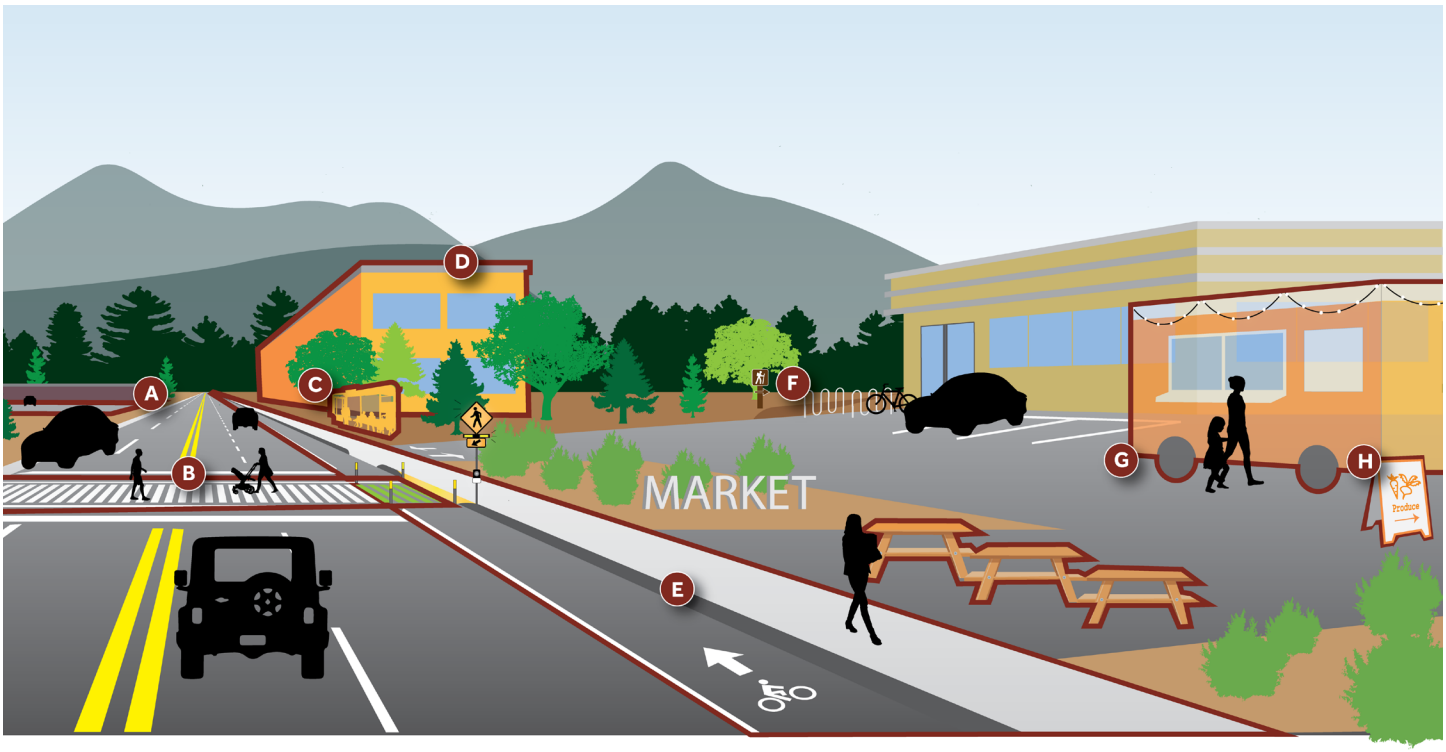
US-89 and Silver Saddle Road



7810 US-89

The concept below illustrates a rural shopping area (top image) that developed into a more active center with a mixed-use building including residential; a temporary produce stall and seating area; and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure improvements (bottom image). The building forms are conceptual and do not reflect specific architectural styles, massing, or details.





A Park and ride opportunity

B Enhanced pedestrian crossing

C Public transit

D Incremental infill

E Sidewalk and bike lane improvements

F Trail connections

G Active temporary uses

H Support of agriculture

Figure 4-4: *Current and Desired Condition of a Rural Center*

BUILDING BLOCK: DISTRICTS

There are two types of Districts: Commercial and Employment. Districts have less mixed-use than Centers but allow for a variety of uses to support the District's purpose.

Commercial Districts

Urban and Suburban Corridors are linear areas of properties outside of or connecting Centers that have frontage on major roads, emphasize commercial development, and support high-density residential. Auto-oriented commercial uses are more typical in these areas and improvements to safe, convenient bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and transit facilities are important. The land uses, characteristics, and densities of these areas support residential and commercial development at densities and intensities that are high enough to support transit.

Urban Corridor (UCO)

Urban Corridors are made up of parcels with direct access to arterials and collectors that serve large capacities of people and vehicles for commercial purposes in an urban context outside of Centers. Street parking, active transportation, and transit are encouraged, and pedestrian safety is a priority. Urban Corridors provide well-designed signage, landscaping, and public spaces, with shops, services, and multifamily housing in buildings that front the street. A variety of services and uses meet the daily needs of residents in nearby neighborhoods and the Region.

Category Guidelines

Urban Corridors should:

Connectivity

» Develop a system of high-quality, accessible pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities along Urban Corridors.

Mix and Location of Uses

» Support transit- and pedestrian-oriented commercial development.
» Encourage residential and office uses located above commercial uses.
» Give preference to vertical mixed-use with commercial buildings that are at least two stories tall.
» Minimize the impact of automotive-oriented uses, such as drive-throughs and car washes, on active transportation facilities.



Route 66 and N WC Riles Street

See Urban Center for Housing Types, Parks, and Design and Other Considerations.

Suburban Corridors are made up of parcels with direct access to arterials and collectors that serve large capacities of people and vehicles for commercial purposes outside of Centers. More intense land uses and pedestrian safety are a priority in this setting. A variety of services and uses meet the daily needs of residents in nearby neighborhoods and the Region.

Category Guidelines

Suburban Corridors should:

Connectivity

- Develop high-quality, accessible pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities on or parallel to streets.
- Provide off-street pedestrian and bicycle facilities at regular intervals to connect with nearby neighborhoods and other residential developments.
- Provide backage roads and cross-property connections where needed to manage access on the collector or arterial.

Mix and Location of Uses

- Encourage multifamily residential uses located above and behind commercial uses.
- Increase the variety of housing types along a corridor where only commercial is present.
- Allow for automotive-oriented uses and drive-throughs.



2080 S Milton Road

See Suburban Center for Housing Types, Parks, and Design and Other Considerations.


Mountain Trail (21 duac)

Employment Districts

Employment Districts are larger land areas dominated by a primary employment sector or industrial uses. Sectors may include industrial, commercial, education, technology, transportation, and other appropriate categories. The concentration or nature of the employment can require specialized transportation such as rail and interstate access. The nature of an Employment District may require mitigating impacts to nearby land uses. These areas are some of the Region's economic engines and should be protected against significant encroachment from non-employment uses. While these districts can include housing and commercial uses, they would not be the primary uses. When centrally located, these districts can be well served by public transportation infrastructure and achieve intensities high enough to support transit.

University and Research District (URD)

University and Research Districts are places for industry, tourism, research and development, and education that are master planned to support creativity and innovation. They have many features of Employment Districts but are usually anchored by an institutional, medical, or military use. They support research, testing, prototyping and experiential learning as well as more traditional university and business park uses. They may be planned as campuses that allow students, faculty, employees, researchers, and others to live and work in a walkable and cohesive district.

Category Guidelines

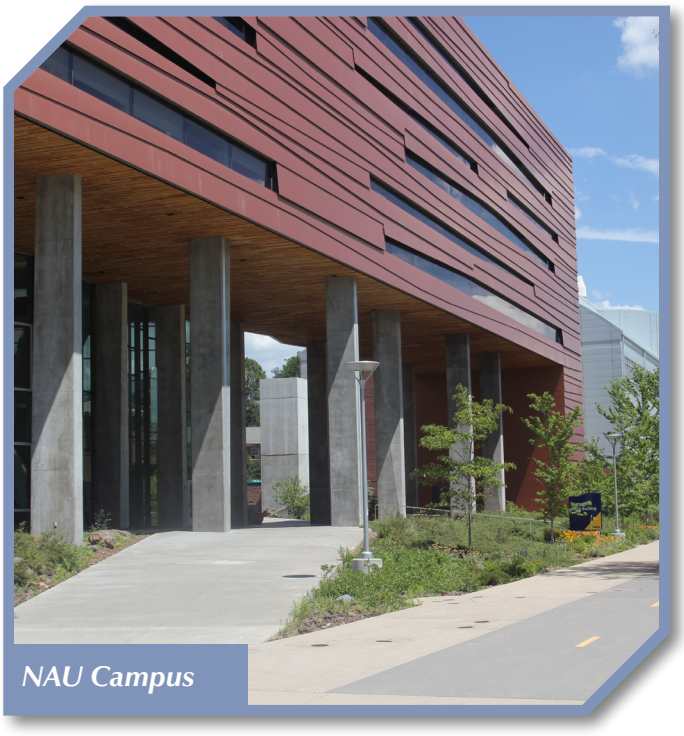
University and Research Districts should:

Connectivity

- Ensure that the road connectivity and pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure support a park-once environment.
- Ensure there is access to public transit.

Mix and Location of Uses

- Support a mix of uses and campus-like settings that support the anchor institution's mission and purpose, including housing.
- Allow for public and quasi-public settings.
- Encourage conformance with the JLUS for Camp Navajo and the NOFS.



NAU Campus

Employment District (EMP)

Employment Districts are for office parks, light and heavy industrial uses, and mixed-use business parks. Their purpose is to support jobs and economic vitality within the Region.

Category Guidelines

Employment Districts should:

Mix and Location of Uses

- » Encourage the continued intensification and expansion of uses in an Employment District, and protect existing industrial, warehousing, and distribution uses from encroachment of incompatible uses.
- » Locate new industrial areas near the airport, rail line, major highways or the interstate, and ensure they are designed to mitigate impacts to surrounding uses.
- » Promote non-residential development adjacent to existing or planned aggregate/mineral mining operations.



S Flagstaff Ranch and Dark Sky roads

Proposed commercial or residential uses should prove that they meet the following criteria:

1. The use is part of an overall planned development[1].
2. The commercial or residential use does not inhibit those uses identified for the specific light industrial, heavy industrial, or business park areas.
3. The use does not encroach on the ability to recruit new business or expand existing businesses, such as: (a) the site characteristics and those of the surrounding area mean that the commercial or residential use is removing the potential for a future office, research and development, business park, or industrial use; or (b) there is sufficient vacant land within the business park to allow for the expansion of the existing industries and complementary uses that can improve their performance.
4. Workforce housing tied to a specific employer in proximity to their workplace may be considered in all employment areas.



Gore Campus

Design and Other Considerations

- » Fencing should be limited where riparian areas and wildlife corridors are identified. Wildlife-friendly fencing is preferred in all areas with wildlife corridors.

Parks

- » May include parks that support healthy living and open space preservation that supports protection of significant natural resources and cultural resources.

BUILDING BLOCK: LANDSCAPES

Landscapes are made up of parks, open spaces, recreational lands, federally and state-managed lands, and private inholdings surrounded by National Forests. These areas may be sparsely populated with very low-density housing and have major utility corridors, isolated industrial uses (such as lumbermills and materials mining), agricultural operations, and recreational land uses. The priority for these areas is to provide access to natural landscapes and to conserve natural and cultural resources. They are also essential areas to support rural development and community resilience to many hazards (see Chapter 8, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, for more information). Landscapes should be managed to maintain low fuel densities.

Parks and Open Spaces

This land-use category supports parks, open spaces, recreational and cultural facilities, and event spaces. See Chapter 8, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space for more information.

Category Guidelines

Parks

- » In greenfield sites and new developments, incentivize the creation of public parks and open space that fit the identified needs of the City and County master plans.
- » As greenfield sites are developed, ensure that new parks and open spaces have a balance of amenities, a flow with the natural and historical surroundings, are accessible to all, and provide complementary amenities to existing public parks in the Region.
- » Ensure that park and open space opportunities are identified in neighborhood and area plans and are included in capital planning and acquisition plans.
- » Ensure that regional parks and the nearby neighborhood parks have a balance of amenities that are appropriate to the park classification and context.
- » Design walking and bicycling improvements to achieve access of 10 minutes or less to City parks and designated open space for City residents (City only).
- » Design urban parks in neighborhoods of concentrated low-to-moderate-income households, and where the accessibility to parks and open spaces within a 10-minute walk has been diminished or is missing (City only).



Bushmaster Park

Design and Other Considerations

- » In urban parks, provide activated and safe public spaces of various sizes where there are gaps in accessibility to open space (City only).
- » Ensure that the landscaping, buildings, and activities within urban parks support safety and reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- » Design the parking, access points, and entrances and exits of regional parks to support safe and well organized, higher-impact recreational activities such as fairs, expos, rodeos, concerts, performances, farmer's markets, and tournaments.

Federal Lands are managed by a federal land management agency or as a Department of Defense installation. Federal properties may also be assigned other land uses.

Working Landscapes are state, city, or private inholdings in large areas of Federal Lands that may contain a residence but may also be managed for natural and cultural resources including sacred sites, forest restoration, research, workforce development and training, managed recreation, ecotourism and facilities, ranching, mining, or other agricultural or industrial uses.

Category Guidelines

Connectivity

- » Development that requires road access should not exceed what is permitted by federal agencies that provide road use permits or easements.
- » Seek opportunities for linking urban trails to public lands.

Housing Types

- » Development of housing subdivisions should be discouraged on these lands because of lack of infrastructure and access. Employee housing may be appropriate. Residential uses may be developed under existing entitlements.

Mix and Location of Land Uses

- » Forestry, mineral extraction, recreation developments, and land uses compatible with surrounding federal land management plans may be considered appropriate uses so long as they do not require extension of water and sewer infrastructure.

Design and Other Considerations

- » When housing is proposed using existing entitlements, housing development should be designed using the principles of integrated conservation design to preserve natural and cultural resources.



View of cinder cones and the San Francisco Peaks from federal lands



A timber landing site

BUILDING BLOCK: NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods focus on providing the Region's housing and a social community with amenities for residents. Neighborhoods can be defined by architecture, history, and social and familial connections. The scenario planning effort demonstrated that the Region will need incremental increases in density throughout existing neighborhoods, and steady development with increased density in new growth or greenfield areas to address its housing affordability challenge and the impacts of climate change.

Neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types and have a walkable pattern of development are key to overcoming these challenges. To support active transportation and transit goals, the Region must allow a broad range of denser compact housing types and improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in and between neighborhoods (see Policy Maps 4-5 and 4-6).

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial is a subcategory of the uses promoted in Urban and Suburban Neighborhoods. Neighborhood Commercial areas provide public and commercial gathering places and access to a variety of services or goods within walking or biking distance of residents' homes. They could be anchored by an existing business or neighborhood institution in an otherwise residential area, a park or civic space, or even a single vacant lot with temporary uses. Neighborhood Commercial uses can grow incrementally around an existing commercial business, new areas based on a gap in walkable services in an existing neighborhood, or can be included in the development of greenfield neighborhoods. This incremental approach to commercial development supports community vitality. Some Neighborhood Commercial may remain small, temporary, and seasonal.



O'Leary Street and Ashurst Avenue

Neighborhood Commercial areas are not mapped on the Future Growth Illustration. Their location may be identified as part of new development proposals, in neighborhood plans, or in a city-wide effort. Neighborhood Commercial allows any parcel in a Suburban or Urban Neighborhood to be rezoned to zoning categories that allow low-to-moderate intensity commercial uses of 45 feet or less in height without a plan amendment.

Subcategory Guidelines

Mix and Location of Land Uses

- Potential uses include permanent locations for temporary uses, home-based businesses, food-related retail, stand-alone commercial, and mixed-use buildings.
- Neighborhood Commercial locations in existing neighborhoods may be identified in neighborhood plans or area plans.
- Building and zoning codes may be revised to allow by-right, conditional use permits, and lower-cost development for a broad range of temporary and commercial uses in preferred locations.
- Provide a regulatory framework to support micro-entrepreneurship in Neighborhood Commercial areas.
- Neighborhood Commercial locations should be on streets that can support on-street parking or commercial traffic and are safely accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Neighborhood Commercial concept below illustrates a neighborhood street with an existing store (top image), where additional commercial uses have been added, including a temporary food truck pop-up in a parking lot and a home-based business (bottom image). Pedestrian and bicycle improvements have also been made. The building forms are conceptual and do not reflect specific architectural styles, massing, or details.

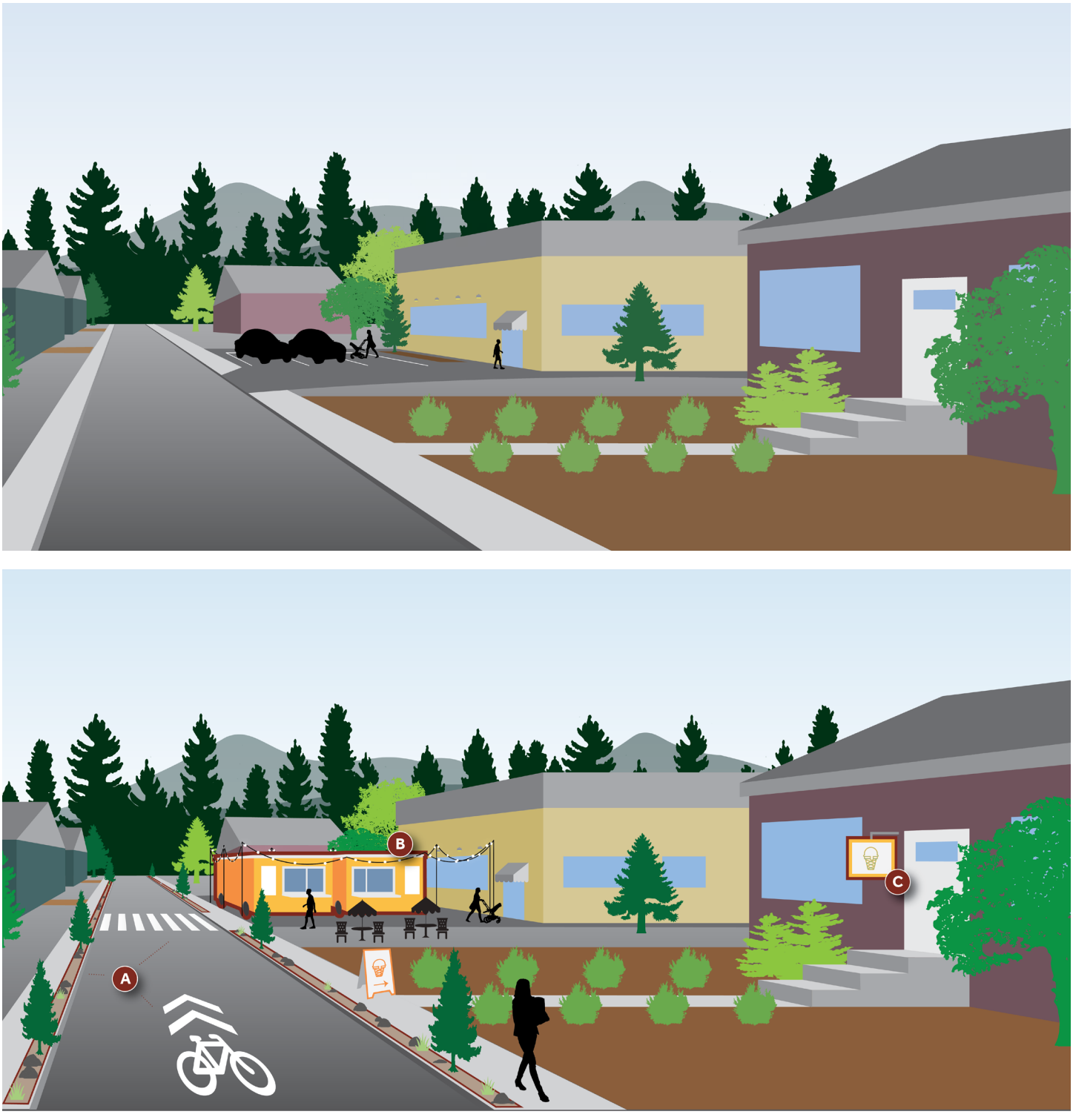


Figure 4-5: *Current and Desired Condition of Neighborhood Commercial*

Urban Neighborhoods support a variety of apartments and missing middle housing types, such as townhomes, live-work units, quadplexes and triplexes, duplexes, and single-family housing on small lots with ADUs. Mixed and commercial uses supporting shops, services, offices, and institutions are also common in Neighborhood Commercial areas.

Category Guidelines

Urban Neighborhoods should:

Connectivity

- Include direct local street connections between Urban Neighborhoods and adjacent centers—supplemented by off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections to improve accessibility to nearby destinations and transit—in the design of new developments.
- When establishing connectivity in new urban neighborhoods, consider constraints such as topography, the railroad, and highways when building gridded streets.

Housing Types

- Support a variety of housing types, intermixed throughout the neighborhood as the predominant housing pattern.
- Design missing middle housing to respect the design traditions of historic neighborhoods.

Mix and Location of Uses

- Encourage the creation of more housing units, especially where access to transit is readily available.
- Industrial uses are limited in Urban Neighborhoods but may be allowed where there is a historic context for them, such as the Southside and Sunnyside neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood Commercial areas are common in Urban Neighborhoods and are an amenity for nearby residents.

Design and Other Considerations

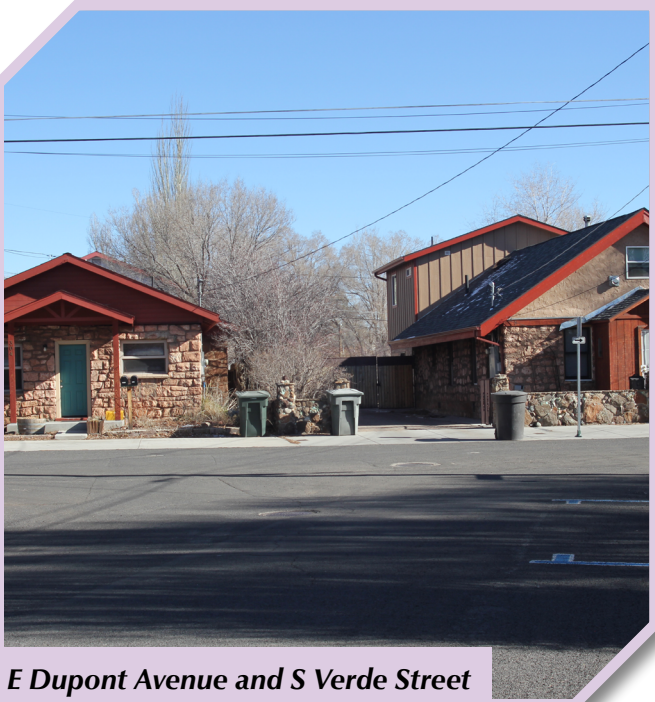
- Encourage adaptive reuse to increase the number of units within larger historic structures.

Parks

- See Parks and Open Space.



19 W Dale (39 duac)



E Dupont Avenue and S Verde Street

Suburban Neighborhood (SN)

Suburban Neighborhood areas are residential neighborhoods that support a variety of single-family, missing middle, and multifamily housing types, such as single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, and apartments. The street pattern and block sizes may be variable. Higher densities in this range may be located close to major roads, commercial areas, and where there is existing or planned transit. Lower densities may be located in areas with significant natural and cultural resources to be preserved.

Category Guidelines

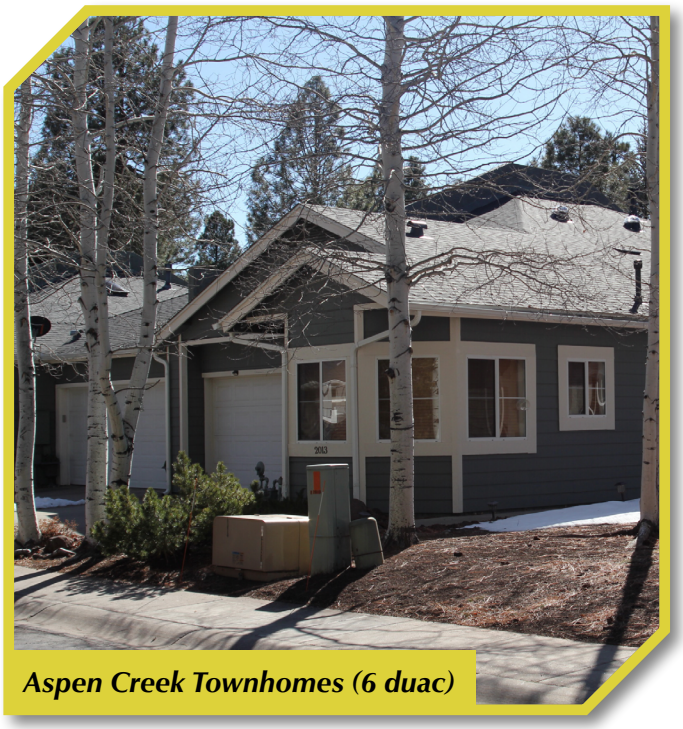
Suburban Neighborhoods should:

Connectivity

» Have streets that are well organized and provide additional mid-block pedestrian and bicycle access to Centers, Corridors, Neighborhood Commercial, transit stops, parks and open space.

Housing Types

» Support a wide variety of single-family and missing middle housing types that may be located in larger groupings and blocks compared to Urban Neighborhoods.
» Medium High Density apartments should be located in proximity to existing or future transit and have adequate access to an arterial or collector road.
» High Density apartments should be on an arterial or collector and have existing transit access.
» Outside the UGB, single-family homes with intermixed missing middle housing is the predominant housing pattern.



Aspen Creek Townhomes (6 duac)

Mix and Location of Uses

» Promote cluster development to preserve natural and cultural resources with tools such as conservation easements and cluster subdivisions, planned residential or unit development, and transfer of development rights.
» Home-based businesses, schools, and recreational facilities are appropriate.
» Neighborhood Commercial areas are common in Suburban Neighborhood and are an amenity for nearby residents.



Villas on Lake Mary Road (14 duac)

Design and Other Considerations

» Allow for housing units to be divided to provide more housing and to have additions that support more units.
» A portion of Suburban Neighborhoods should support proposed or future densities to support transit (including allowable ADUs) near existing and planned stops.

Parks

» See Parks and Open Space.

Rural Neighborhoods have a low density of people, residences, jobs, and activities; paved and unpaved two-lane roads with natural edges; and minimally available services and goods for residents. Connectivity to designated paths and trails exists when possible. Rural public transit and opportunities to transfer to carpool and transit commuting may exist. Open space and agricultural uses are abundant.

Category Guidelines

Rural Neighborhoods should:

Connectivity

» Provide trail access at trailheads, within a short drive from residences, or at an edge of the neighborhood.

Housing Types

» Single-family homes with ADUs and agricultural buildings.

Mix and Location of Uses

» Permit agricultural uses and home-based businesses with low traffic needs as part of the neighborhood's character.

Design and Other Considerations

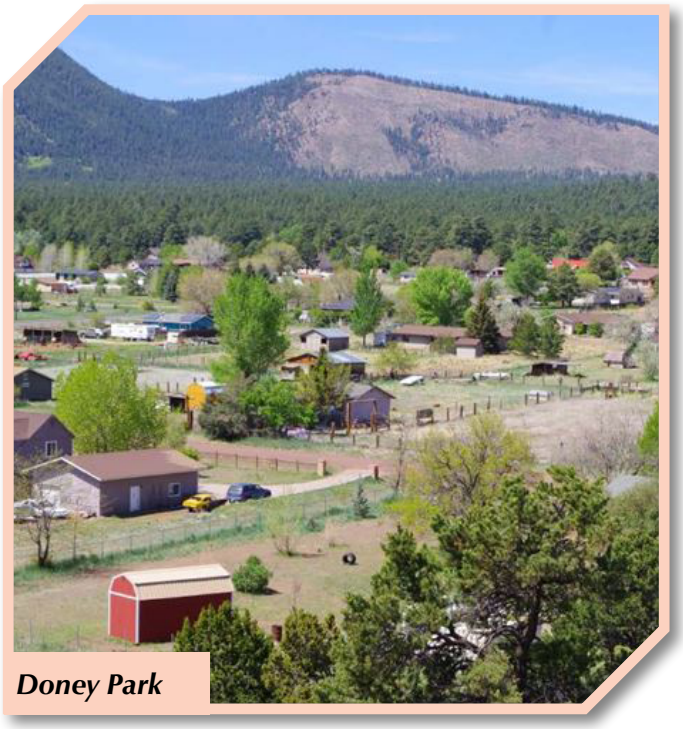
» Locate houses with large lots appropriately to reduce their risk of fire and flood damage and allow for future emergency, trail, and road access.

» Promote cluster development to preserve natural and cultural resources, and to build infrastructure efficiently, using tools such as conservation easements and cluster subdivisions, planned residential or unit development, and transfer of development rights.

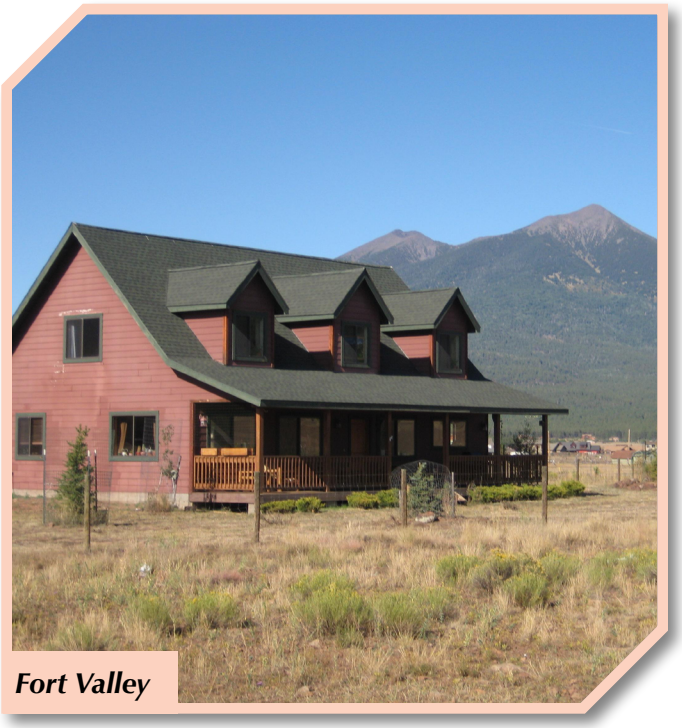
» Limit fencing where riparian areas and wildlife corridors are identified. Wildlife-friendly fencing is preferred in all areas with wildlife corridors.

Parks

» See Parks and Open Space.



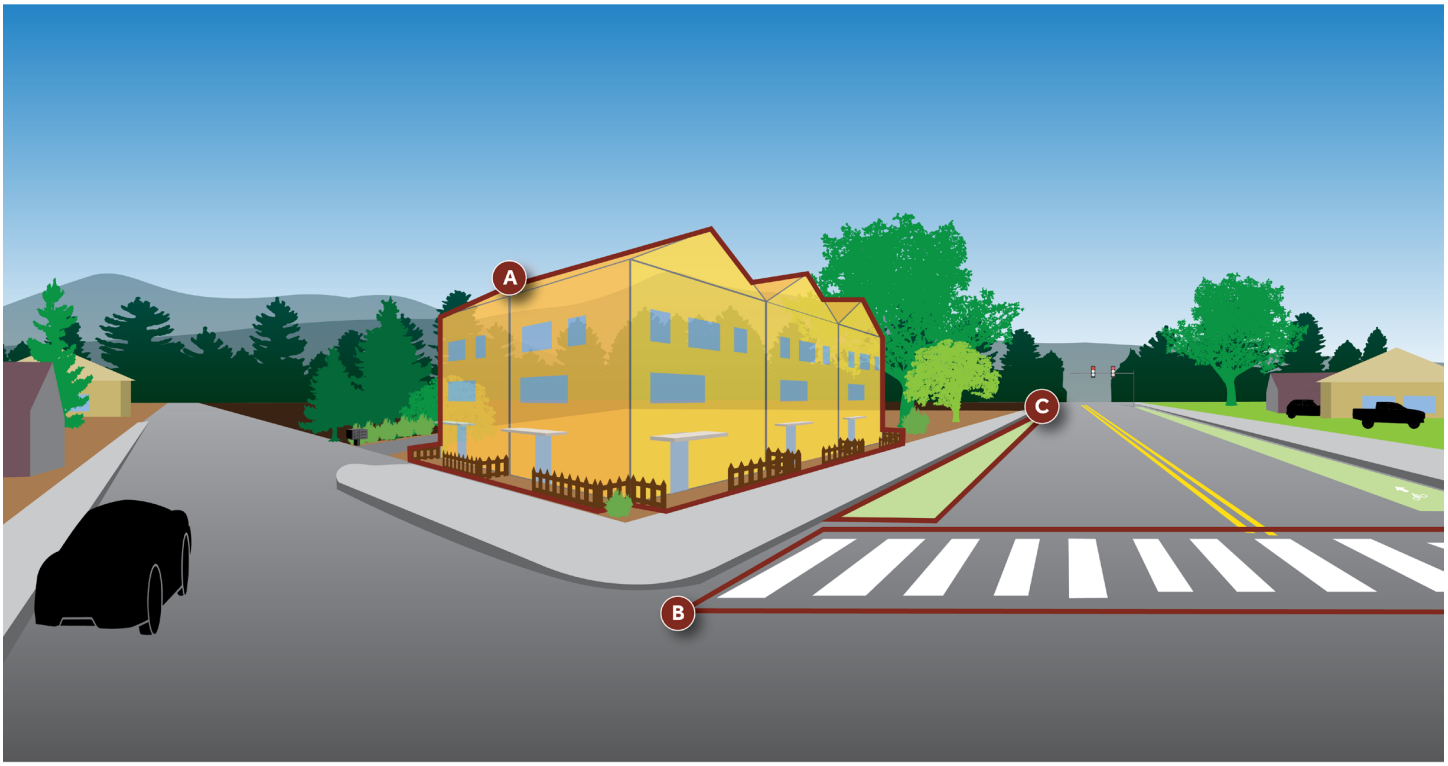
Doney Park



Fort Valley

The concept below illustrates a small, eight-plex apartment building being constructed on a vacant lot (top image) and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure (bottom image). This is one example of incremental development that could occur in the future in neighborhoods throughout the Region. The building forms are conceptual and do not reflect specific architectural styles, massing, or details.





A Multifamily housing options

B Crosswalks and sidewalks

C Bike lanes

Figure 4-6: *Current and Desired Condition of a Neighborhood Infill Site*

TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK

The Transportation Framework for the Flagstaff Regional Plan is composed of three building blocks: the Street Network, the Active Transportation Plans, and the Great Streets and Gateways. These building blocks are integrated geographically and lay the foundation for the long-term network connectivity needs of all modes. The key to implementing the Transportation Framwork is to design and build transportation infrastructure that is appropriate for the roadway classification, multimodal functionality, and land use context where it is located.

Building Block: Street Network

The Street Network (Policy Maps 4-3 and 4-4) identifies roads classified as existing and planned interstates, arterials, and collectors. Local commercial and local roads are not represented on these maps. The maps also identify two areas for future connectivity studies. These areas have connectivity needs requiring more information on land ownership, topography, geology and future land use planning to plan properly for an arterial and collector network that can support future growth.

The City, in partnership with the County and MetroPlan, anticipates providing further detail on the design and construction of the Street Network during the life of the Regional Plan through the creation of a Transportation Master Plan.

Building Block: Active Transportation Plans

Two active transportation plans are considered in the Regional Plan: the City's *Active Transportation Master Plan* (ATMP) and the Flagstaff Regional Trails Strategy. They establish plans for continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities from downtown Flagstaff to neighborhoods to surrounding forest lands and wilderness. This system is essential to public health and the quality of life for all in the Region.

Four maps brought forward from these active transportation plans: the Urban Trails Plan (Policy Map 4-5), the Regional Trails Plan (Policy Map 4-6), Bikeways Plan[8] (Policy Map 4-7), and Enhanced and Grade Separated Crossings Plan (Policy Map 4-8). These four maps compose a layered network that is integrated with and in parallel to the Street Network and trails planned for other land owners and agencies. Depictions of planned trails do not indicate a final trail location and may be refined through the update of a supporting City or County plan or in cooperation with a property owner.

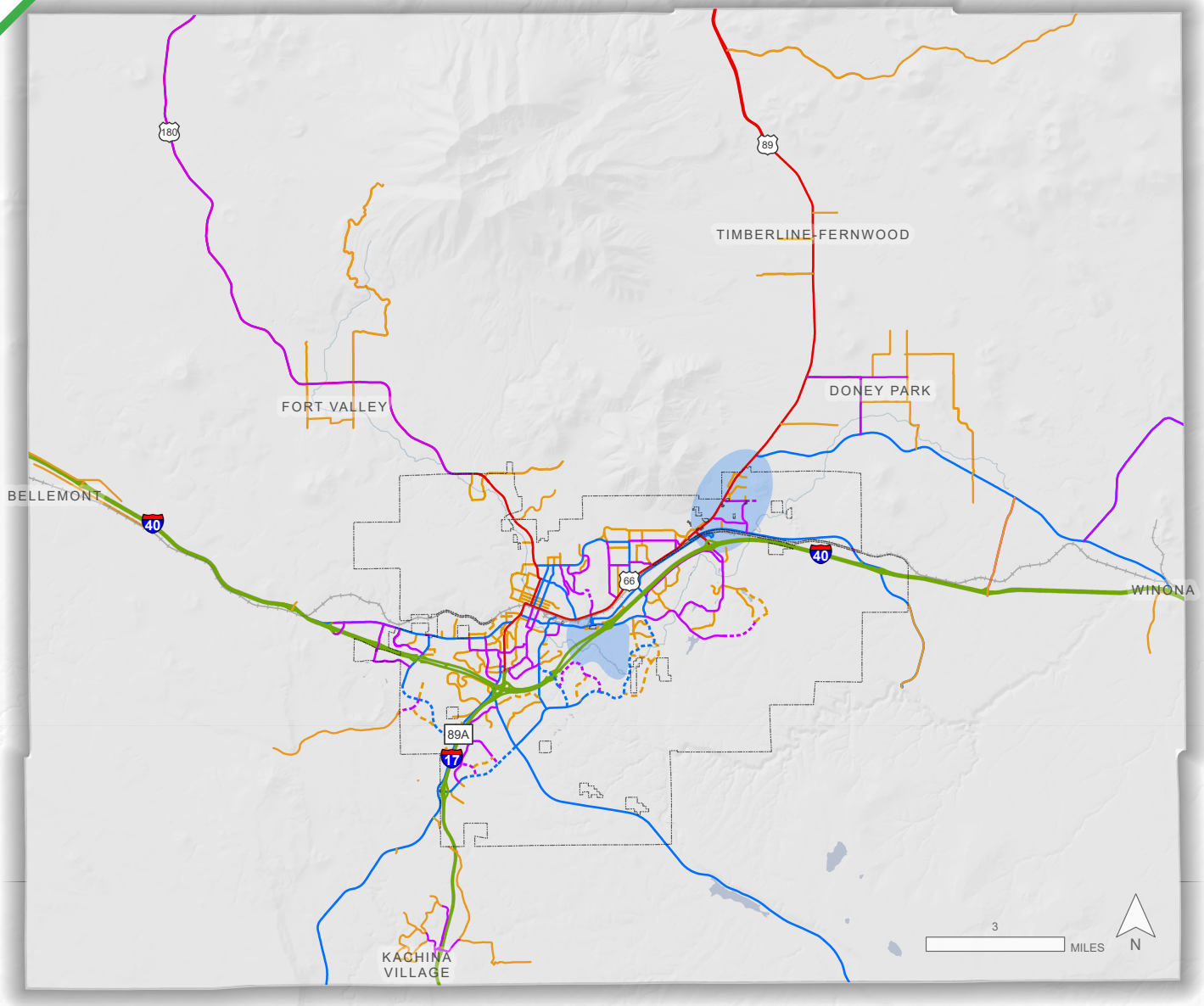
Building Block: Great Streets and Gateways

Streets are more than just linear physical spaces for automobiles to get from here to there. Outstanding street design balances the need to move traffic with other community goals and modes of travel—where a mix of automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, homes, and businesses is the pulse of civic activity and the street itself is a public space to use and enjoy.

Since 2014, the City has designated **Great Streets** (Policy Map 4-8) that serve as the framework for building successful places. Great Streets have enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that may be unique in its design; cohesive design themes; and other attributes that create a linear sense of place. Though the corridors illustrated on Policy Map 4-8 may currently lack all the attributes of a Great Street, they have been identified as having potential for reinvestment, retrofit, and revitalization to make them more appealing to pedestrians and cyclists, and enhance transit potential.

Flagstaff is designated a Gateway Community by Coconino County. In support of this designation, the Regional Plan identifies **Gateways** (Policy Map 4-9), which are areas at the entrance to the Region where signage, art, and enhanced street design could be included to create a sense of arrival and visual appeal.

See Chapter 6, Transportation, for further discussion of these maps and the systems they envision for the community.



Street Network - Region

Street Functional Class - Existing

- Interstate
- Interstate Ramp
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

Street Functional Class - Planned

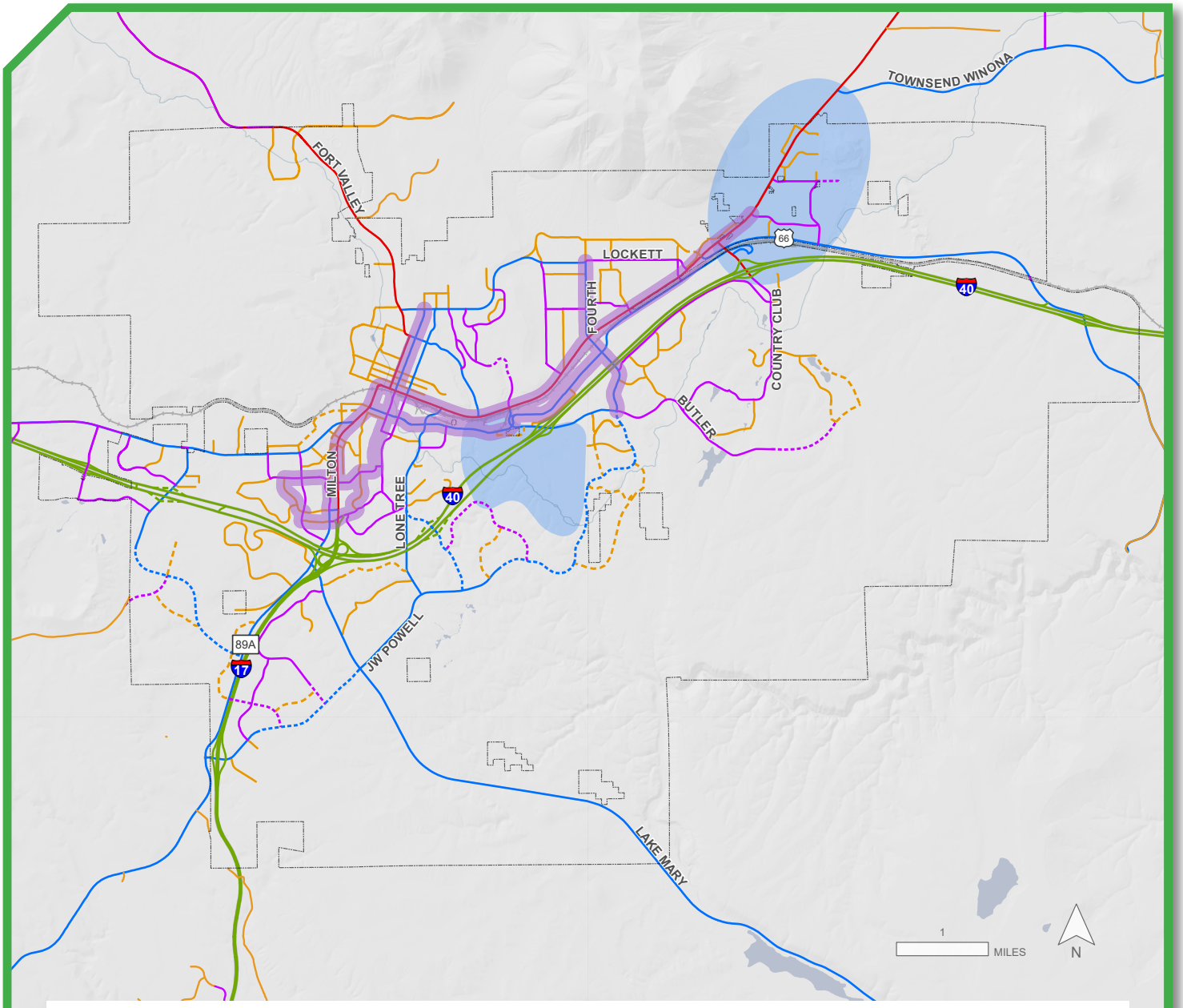
- Interstate Ramp
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Areas subject to future connectivity study



Disclaimer: Designation of planned roads does not constitute a final location or legal access unless there is a legal road easement. Future roads are conceptual in nature and may be redesigned as development is proposed to provide a similar connection with alternative alignment.

Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community

Policy Map 4-3: Street Network – Regional Scale



Street Network - City

Street Functional Class - Existing

- Interstate
- Interstate Ramp
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

Street Functional Class - Planned

- Interstate Ramp
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Areas subject to future connectivity study
- Mountain Line Permanent Transit Network

Coconino County



Disclaimer: Designation of planned roads does not constitute a final location or legal access unless there is a legal road easement. Future roads are conceptual in nature and may be redesigned as development is proposed to provide a similar connection with alternative alignment.

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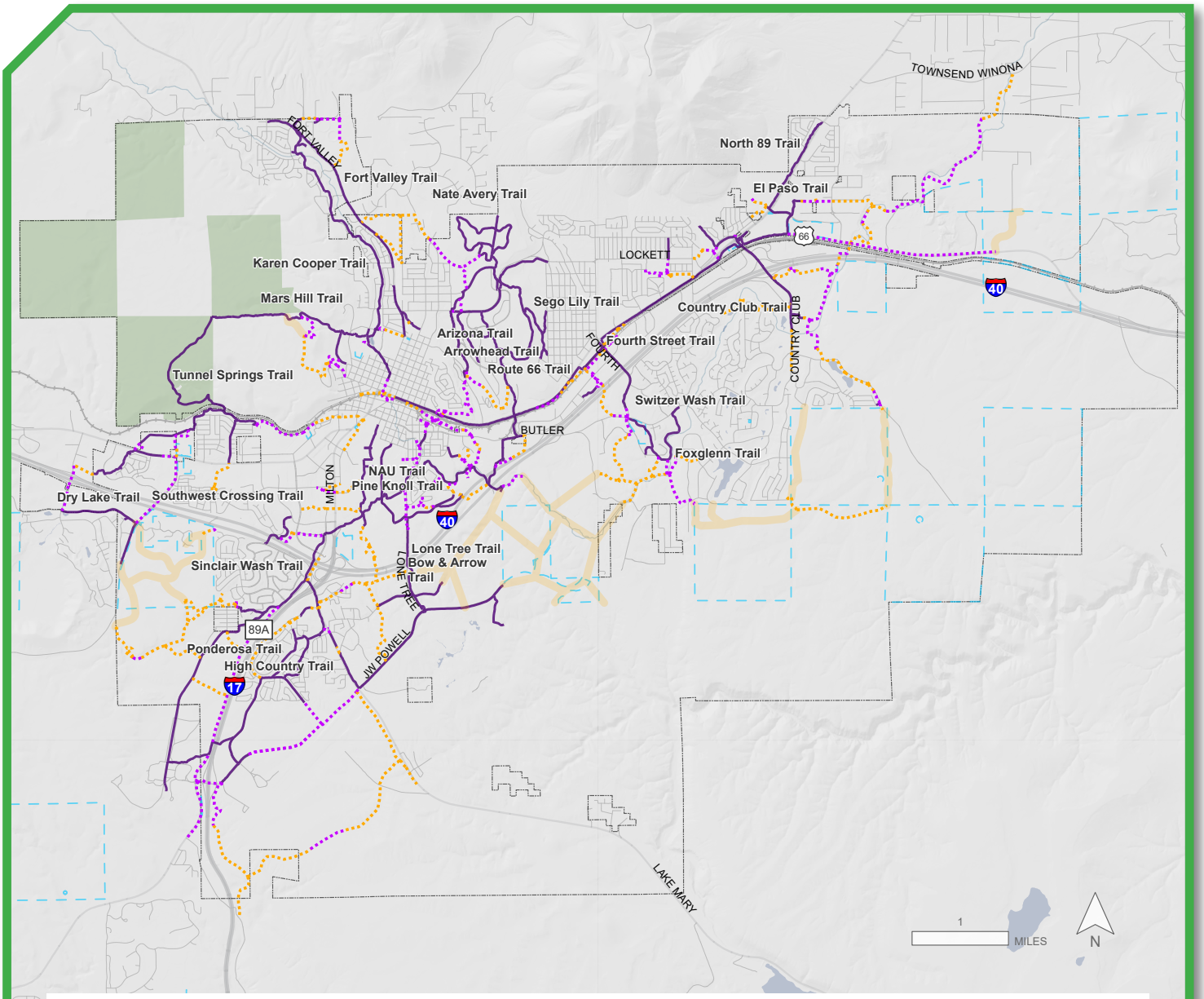
Policy Map 4-4: Street Network – City Scale



Urban Trails Plan

- Existing Flagstaff Urban Trail System
- Planned trails with existing property rights
- Planned trails on private land with no property rights
- Planned trails on private land over 400 acres with no property rights
- Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)
- Observatory Mesa Trail Plan



Depiction of planned trails on State Trust Land do not constitute final location of or legal access to trails unless a legal trail easement is obtained from ASLD. In the absence of a legal trail easement, any recreational use of State Trust Land requires that individuals and/or groups obtain a Recreation Permit. Permits can be acquired through ASLD's online portal at https://asld.secure.force.com/recreationalpermit/. Please note that certain State Trust Lands may be closed to some or all recreational activities, such as camping or campfires.

Disclaimer: Designation of planned trails does not constitute a final location or legal access unless there is a legal trail easement. Future trails are conceptual in nature and may be redesigned as development is proposed to provide a similar connection with alternative alignment.

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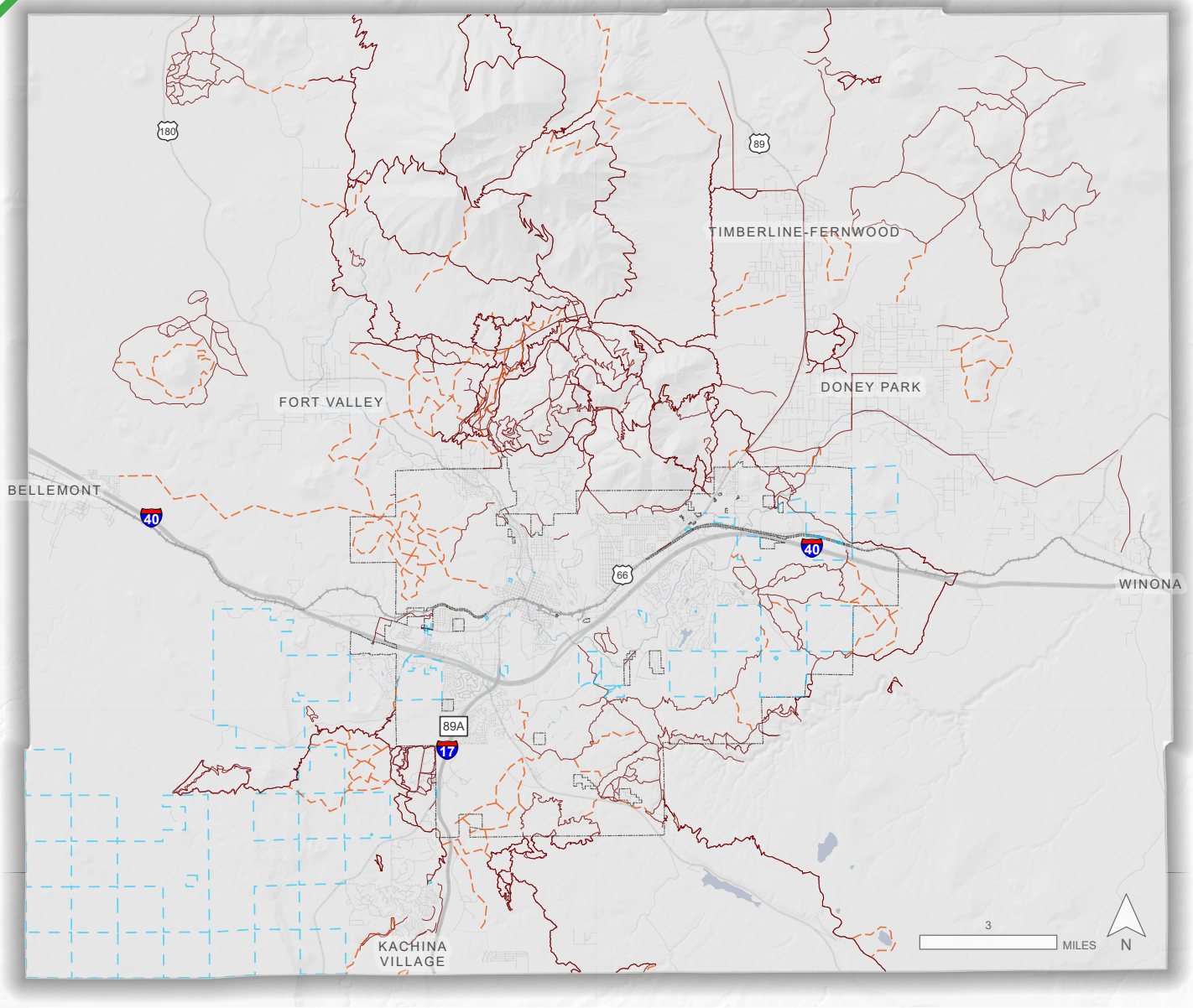
Policy Map 4-5: Urban Trails Plan



Regional Trails Plan

- Planned Regional Trails
- Existing Regional Trails
- Arizona State Land Department (ASLD)



Depiction of planned trails on State Trust Land do not constitute final location of or legal access to trails unless a legal trail easement is obtained from ASLD. In the absence of a legal trail easement, any recreational use of State Trust Land requires that individuals and/or groups obtain a Recreation Permit. Permits can be acquired through ASLD's online portal at https://asld.secure.force.com/recreationalpermit/. Please note that certain State Trust Lands may be closed to some or all recreational activities, such as camping or campfires.

Disclaimer: Designation of planned trails does not constitute a final location or legal access unless there is a legal trail easement. Future trails are conceptual in nature and may be redesigned as development is proposed to provide a similar connection with alternative alignment.

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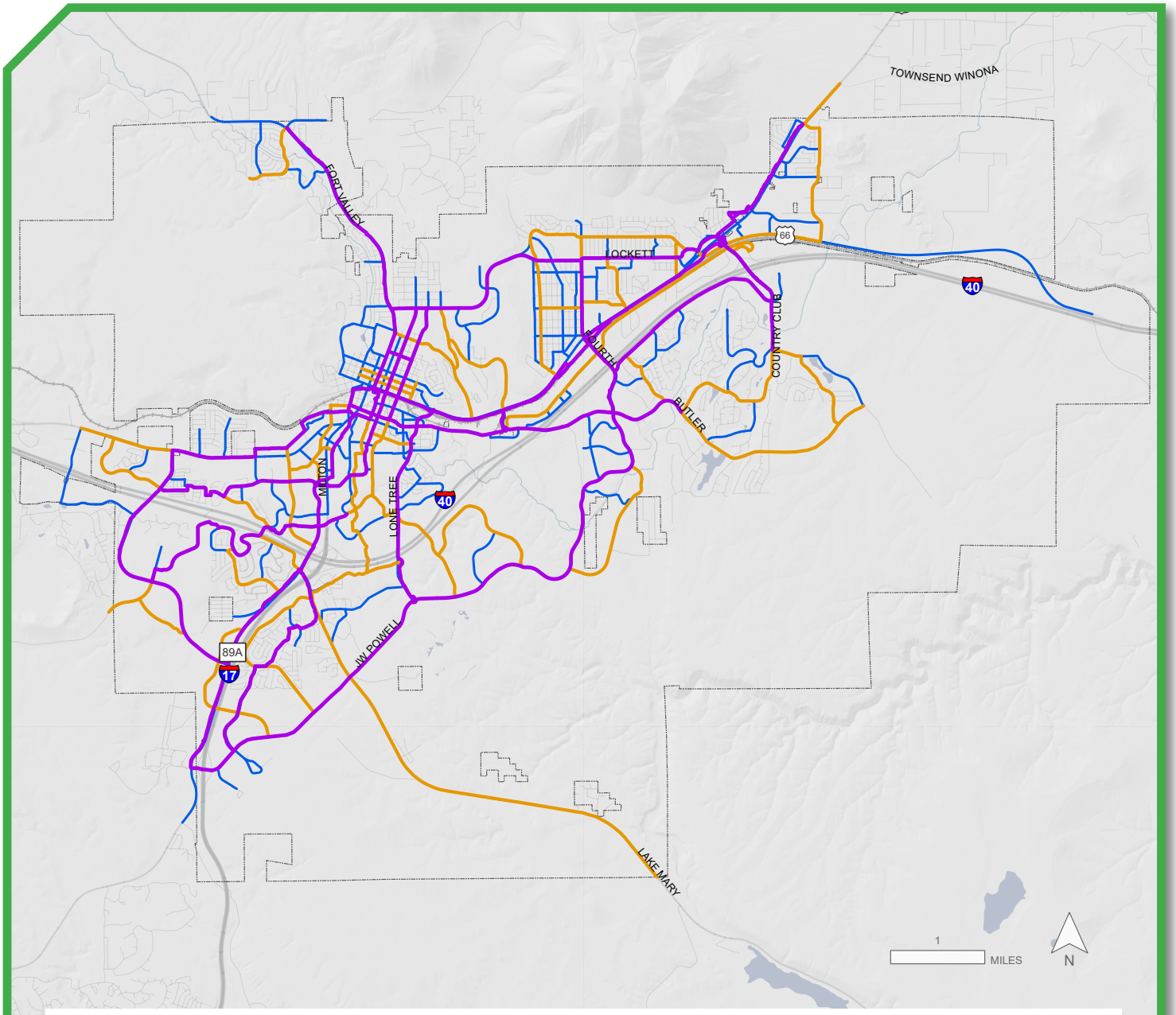
Policy Map 4-6: Regional Trails Plan



Bikeways Plan

- 1 Primary
- 2 Secondary
- 3 Tertiary



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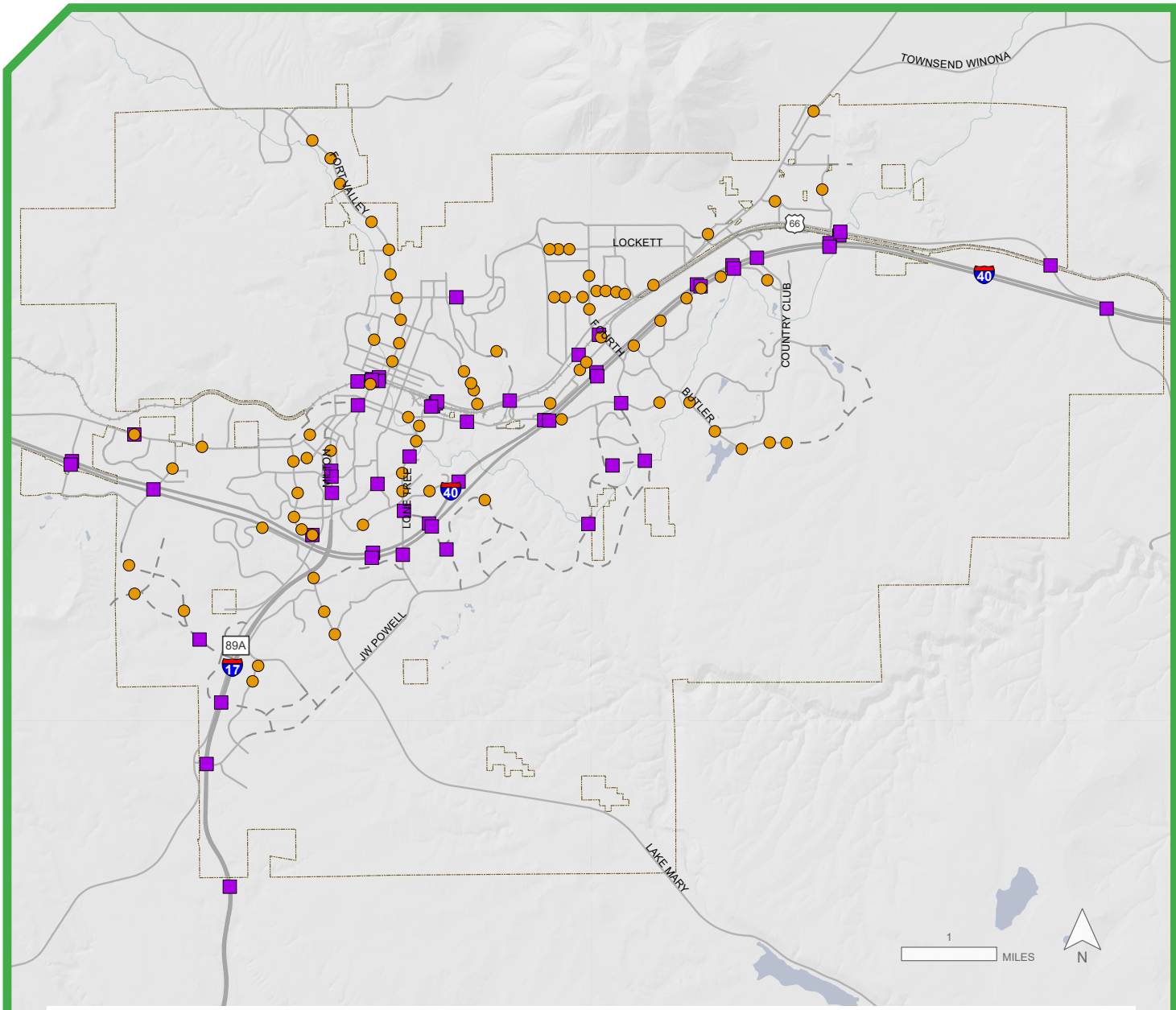
Policy Map 4-7: Bikeways Plan



Enhanced and Grade-Separated Crossings

- Enhanced Crossings | Planned
- Grade-Separated Crossings | Planned
- Street Functional Class - Existing
- Street Functional Class - Planned
- CoF Boundary



Enhanced crossings include any features that help to slow traffic, reduce the crossing distances, break crossings into smaller parts, increase visibility, or generally make the crossing safer and more comfortable. Grade-separated crossings refer to structures that carry pedestrians and bicyclists over or under interstates, railroad tracks, and major streets. Structures can include bridges and tunnels for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicyclists.

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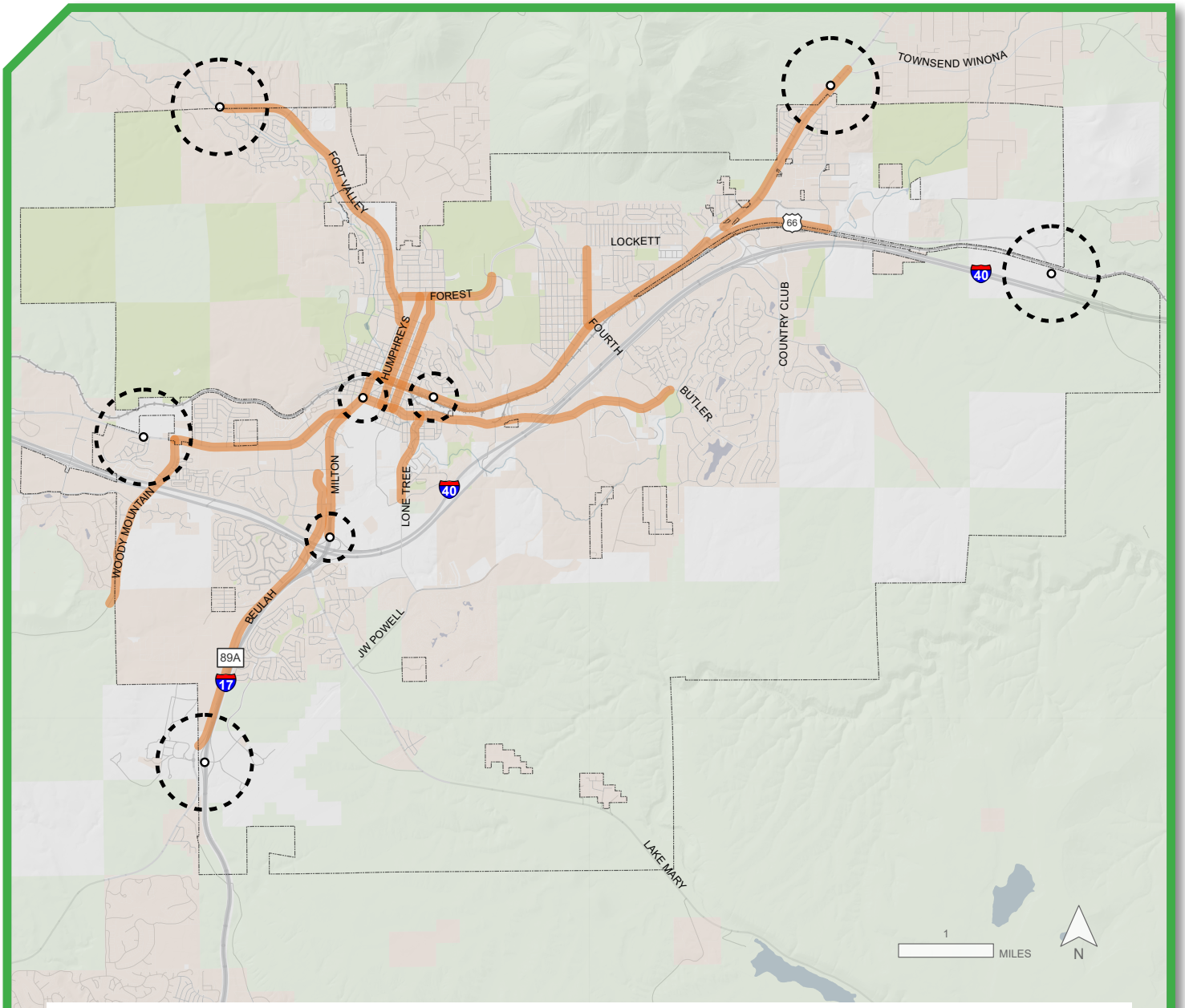
Policy Map 4-8 Enhanced and Grade-Separated Crossings



Great Streets and Gateways

- Gateways
- Great Streets
- Private Land
- Federal Lands
- Parks and Open Space



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Policy Map 4-9: Great Streets and Gateways

Chapter 4 Endnotes

1. A planned development may be achieved in a number of ways.

2. Comparable data is not available for the Region.

3. City of Flagstaff data.

4. City of Flagstaff, Housing and Community Sustainability Nexus, 2008; US Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census.

5. A.R.S. § 9-461.05.

6. These are called "Findings of Fact" in the Coconino County Zoning Code Chapter 5.

7. Coconino County, as of 2024, requires a site plan with all applications for public hearing, which is equivalent to the Direct-to-Ordinance process in the City. Therefore, all County rezoning cases would use the Category Guidelines.

8. Federal agencies will only permit one access route to private lands per law and regulation, and only if there are no other viable access options. The USDA Forest Service will not be able to permit additional access routes for emergency egress lands on National Forest System lands if there is already reasonable access to the property.

CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS



Untitled, Anonymous, Community Event, 2022

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

BACKGROUND

Social and economic systems are integral to providing for the health, safety, stability, resilience, and quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the Region. Housing, food, public health, employment, education, the arts, and commerce are interconnected systems that support meeting the community's basic needs. The built environment and the organization and interactions of people influence whether these systems function in an equitable and reliable way.

Housing and Development History and Trends

"The current Housing Emergency in Flagstaff has deep roots, with no single root cause. There is no single solution to addressing the Housing Emergency, but rather multiple strategies that will work together in providing residents with additional housing stability" – *City's Ten-Year Housing Plan*

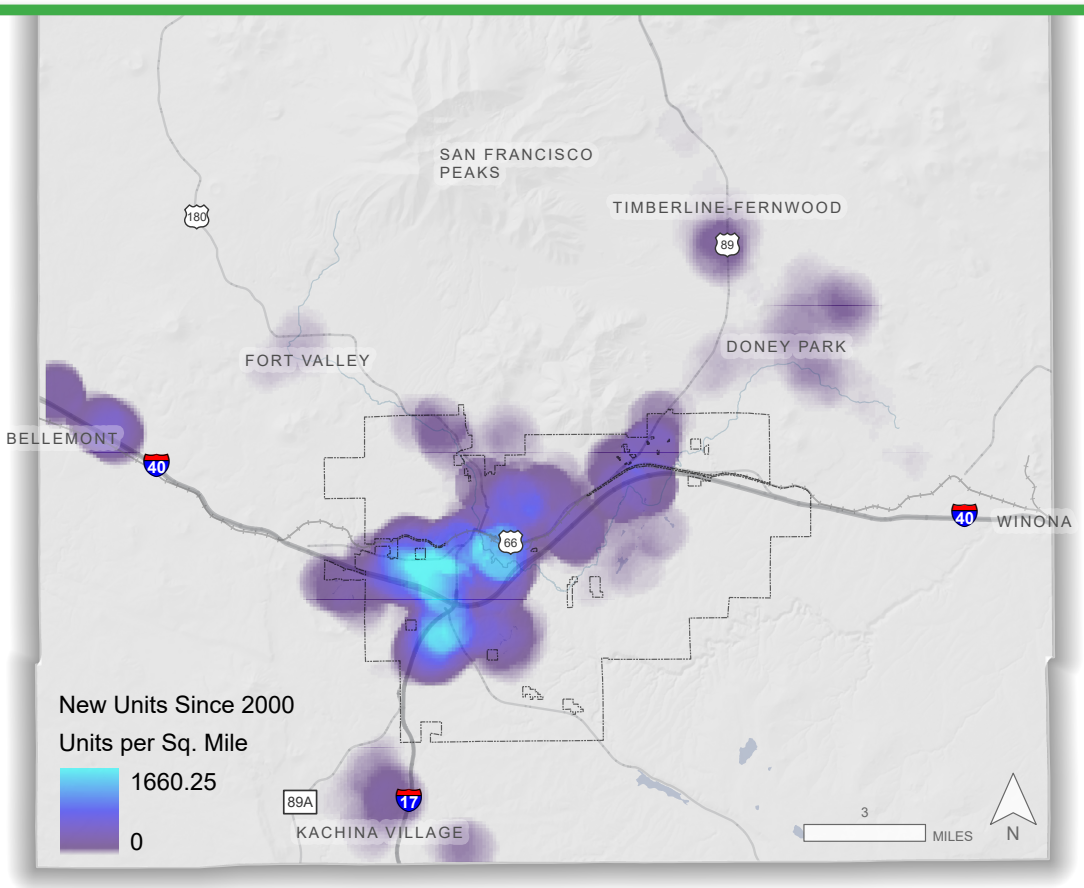
Since 2000, some areas of the Region have experienced concentrated growth, while others have seen a limited amount of new development (see Information Map 5-1). Central neighborhoods including Downtown, Townsite, Southside, Sunnyside, and Upper Greenlaw Estates make up the historic core of Flagstaff, with a high concentration of older buildings. New development has occurred most extensively in central and southwest Flagstaff, in neighborhoods such as Southside, Woodlands Village, Boulder Pointe, Ponderosa Trails, and along the Milton Road corridor; in east Flagstaff in the Fox Glenn and Elk Run neighborhoods; and in County areas, especially Bellemont.

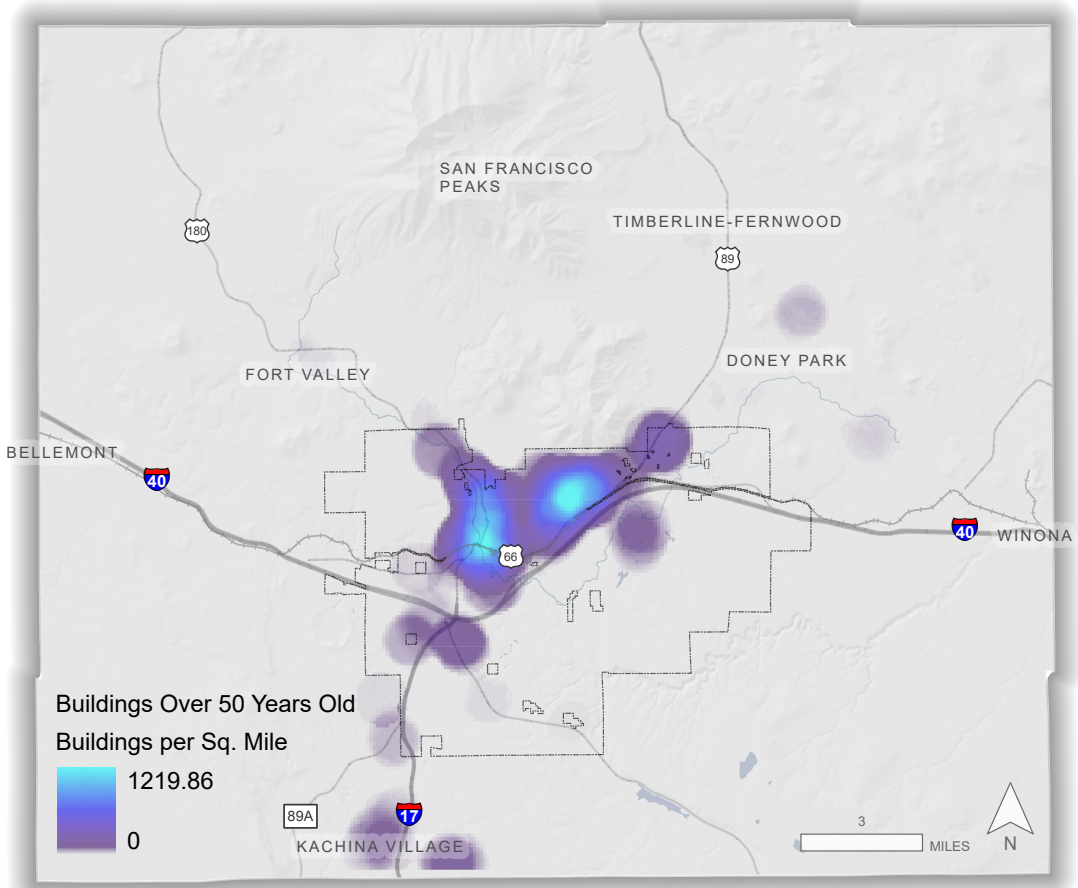
The Region's housing supply has not kept pace with the growth in demand from residents and prospective property owners in recent decades. Between 2000 and 2010, 4,218 new dwelling units were built, mostly single-family homes. Limited multifamily housing was built in the City between 2000 and 2010 (see Chapter 4, Growth and Land Use for housing data). The lagging pace of development was not unique to the City but resulted from macroeconomic trends across the country. Nationally, the Great Recession stalled housing construction from 2007 to 2011. During this period very few units were constructed. Between 2010 and 2020, 5,721 residential units were constructed in the City and, in contrast to the previous decade, they were mostly multifamily units.

After this extended period of housing underproduction, the City's Housing Gap Analysis revealed an undersupply of 7,976 units in the Region as of 2022.[1] To reduce pressure on the Region's housing stock and lower the cost burden for residents, more units, both market rate and affordable, are needed. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as any household spending no more than 30 percent of monthly gross income on housing costs. 'Affordable Housing' may be further defined as residential units that are developed or provided through some form of subsidy with eligibility requirements to rent or purchase. Across the Region, there is a need for housing units at all income levels with an emphasis on units and subsidies specifically for low-to-moderate-income residents due to a lack of federal programming for those households. Resolving the undersupply of housing will require the development of new housing units in all neighborhoods and across the Region.

Inclusionary Zoning

Many local governments in the US require new multifamily developments over a certain size to include affordable units, known as "inclusionary zoning." This potential policy is frequently brought up in public comments about planning and zoning projects in the Region. However, the ability of local jurisdictions to adopt inclusionary zoning in Arizona is preempted by a statute that prohibits counties, cities, and towns from requiring the creation of moderate or lower-cost housing (A.R.S. § 11-819). Because neither the City nor County can require developers to create affordable units, both jurisdictions use voluntary incentives to encourage affordable units in new developments.





Information Map 5-1: New Growth Areas and Areas with Older Buildings in the Flagstaff Region

Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GS and the GIS User Community

Since 2011, rents and home prices have risen much faster than incomes, leaving almost half of all City residents (45 percent) burdened by housing costs.[2] In these circumstances, households may be forced to choose between paying for other essentials, like food, transportation, utilities, medical care, or childcare. In a 2021 survey conducted by the City of Flagstaff Housing Section, over one fourth of respondents said that they were "nearly certain" or "very likely" to leave the City in the future due to housing costs, a figure which underscores the severity of the housing emergency.[3]

The availability of City's housing supply has been affected by market trends including (1) an increase in second homes, (2) the conversion of long-term housing to short-term rentals, and (3) the NAU student population.[4] As of 2024, there were about 4,007 second homes and 628 short-term rentals (excluding owner-occupied rentals) within the City, totaling about 14 percent of City housing units. While visitors contribute to the local economy, second homes and short-term rentals draw from the pool of available housing options for the local workforce. There have also been periods when NAU enrollment increased faster than its on-campus housing capacity and the university had limited family housing options, creating a larger demand for off-campus student housing. These factors are subject to change. For instance, NAU enrollment is projected to remain flat[5] and the amount of housing that is designed with student living in mind on and off campus has increased since 2014. The regulatory and economic factors that push and pull on second homes, short-term rentals, and student enrollment fluctuate but are not in the City or County's control.

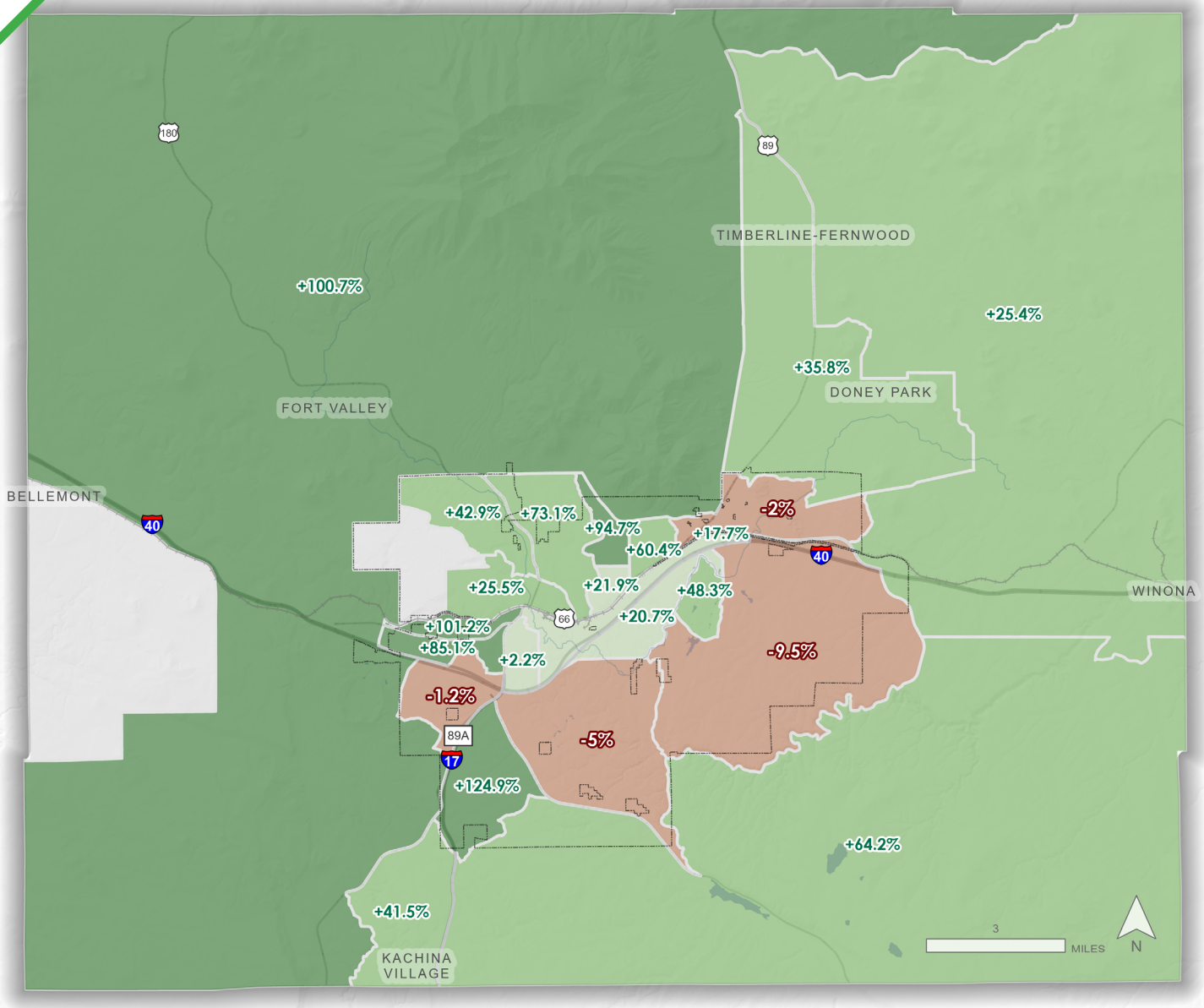
Supporting more housing options for local residents and the workforce is the first concern for housing efforts in the Region. The City produces an annual report related to the *Ten-Year Housing Plan* that highlights progress made on housing goals. It shows that the City is on track to meet the plan's housing production goals for market and affordable housing. While recent housing production has not yet resulted in lower housing prices and rents for market rate units, the vacancy rate for rental units has increased according to an annual survey by Housing Solutions of Northern Arizona from around two percent between 2010 and 2020 to 6.76 percent in 2024. A healthy vacancy rate for a rental market is generally between five and 13 percent. According to the study, a Flagstaff renter must earn approximately $79,480 annually to afford an average two-bedroom apartment.[6]

Housing affordability is also an issue within the County, including the areas within the Region. Although the County has not conducted an in-depth housing study like the City's *Ten-Year Housing Plan*, the County's Economic Recovery Dashboard tracks rent-burdened households and shows a County-wide increase in households paying more than 30 percent of income toward housing costs. The average rent per unit increased by over nine percent between 2022 and 2023. While the communities of Bellemont, Kachina Village, and Mountainaire have been considered more affordable areas to live within the Region, housing price increases—coupled with factors such as the cost of travel to and from work and shopping, increasing transportation costs, short-term rentals, and second home ownership—affect housing prices in these areas and make them less affordable.

Across the Region, the majority of land is publicly owned, and there is limited land available for private development (see Information Map 1-2). Large-lot zoning in the majority of the Region also results in higher land prices. Approximately 58 percent of land within City limits is zoned primarily for single-family home development. Because of the high costs of on-site wastewater and extending utilities and infrastructure to more rural areas, development costs are higher. The transportation costs from commuting to and from rural areas and employment centers also contribute to the overall cost of living in these areas.

Housing Insecurity and Displacement

There are no areas of the City that meet the definitions of "slum and blight," which A.R.S. § 9-461.05 states should be examined in the General Plan for cities. However, there are areas where the gap between income and housing costs has increased housing insecurity and the risk of displacing longtime residents, as well as low and moderate/higher-income workers. In some areas of the City, median income has risen substantially during the past decade, indicating that lower-income households are being pushed out of some neighborhoods. The high income required to afford more expensive housing prevents low-to-moderate-income households from remaining in or moving into the same area.



Percentage Change in Median Income Between ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010-2014 and 2018-2022

Percentage Change

- -10% - 0%
- 1% - 25%
- 26% - 75%
- 76% - 125%



Information Map 5-2: Percentage Change in Median Household Income[30] Between American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates 2010-2014 and 2018-2022 (Table S1903).

Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community

Housing insecurity can include but is not limited to doubling up of households, displacement and eviction risk, being housing-cost burdened, or homelessness. People and families in these circumstances experience not only economic stresses but often health impacts. For example, they may relocate to more affordable-but-substandard housing to avoid homelessness, which may expose them to health and safety risks, such as vermin, mold, water leaks, and inadequate heating or cooling systems. Children who move frequently, or who experience displacement or homelessness, are more likely to have chronic conditions and poor physical health. This impacts their educational opportunities and lifelong well-being. Evictions and displacement can also result in trauma and impact mental health.[7]

In the City, Black or African American and American Indian or Alaska Native households are less likely to own a home as a percentage of the population. While 51 percent of White households in the City are homeowners, 19 percent of American Indian or Alaska Native households, 24 percent of Black or African American households, 39 percent of Hispanic households, and 41 percent of Asian households own their home. Across racial and ethnic groups, the percentage of renter households that are cost-burdened is high, consistently above 55 percent. While available data on renter households does not indicate a significant racial disparity in cost-burdened status, the disparity in homeownership rates is stark and reflects a deep inequality in generational wealth.

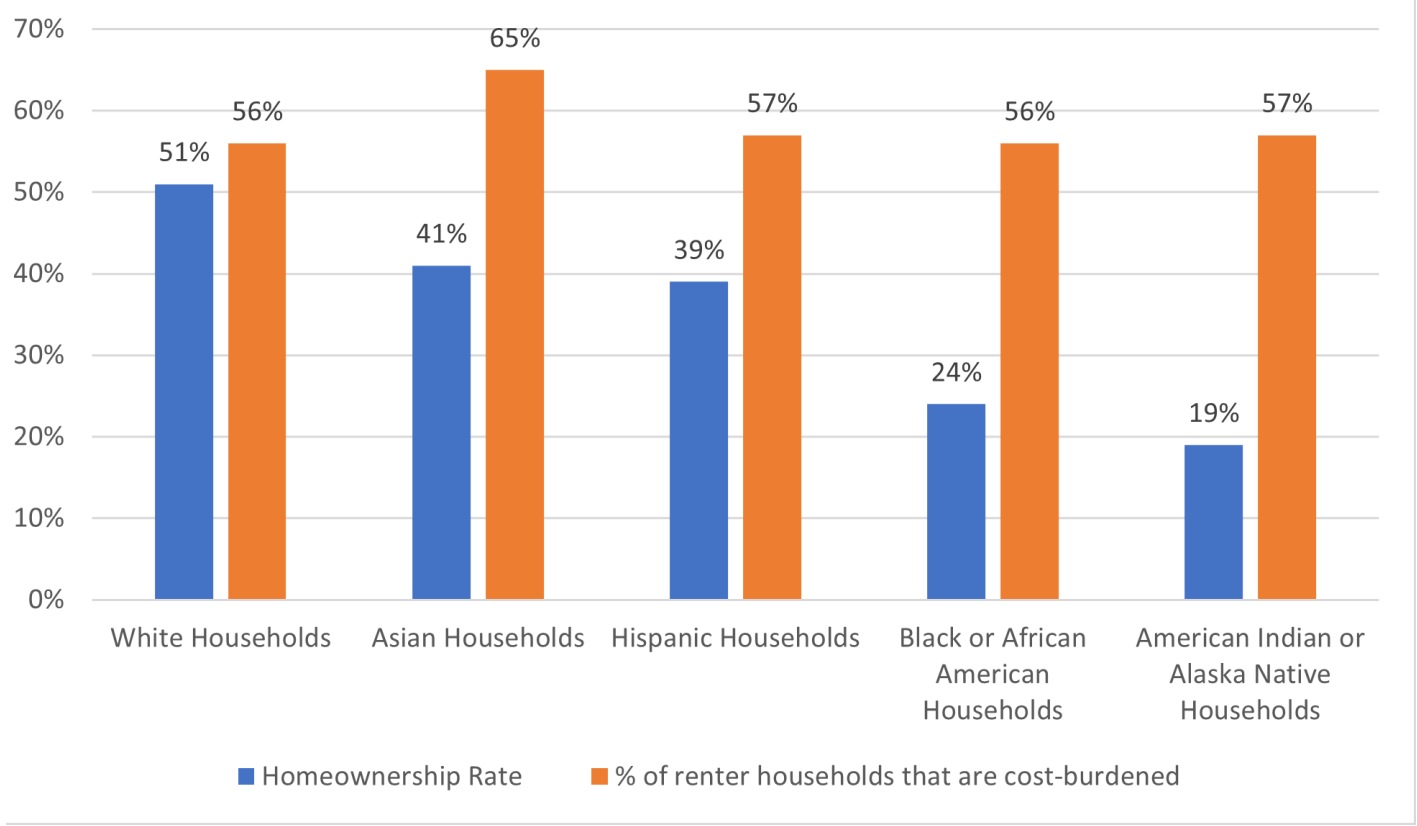


Figure 5-1: Homeownership Rate and Renter Cost-Burden by Racial/Ethnic Group. Source: Homeownership data from 2020 Census (Tables H4A-H4O). Renter cost-burden from the ACS 2016-2020 (CHAS Table 9). Note that racial/ethnic groups varied widely in size.

Homeownership has long been a primary way to build wealth in America. Though the City did not have formally enforced redlining as seen in larger US cities, informal segregation existed. Participants in the *La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Plan* and *Southside Community Plan* spoke to City staff about their past experiences being denied as renters outside of certain neighborhoods, being denied loans to improve or purchase property, and of being told by their families about places that were unsafe for them because of the threat of violence. Indigenous people have also shared stories of these influences on where and if they could live in the community. At the same time, the Region did offer better opportunities for education, jobs, fellowship, and homeownership in certain parts of the community than other cities and regions.

Addressing Flagstaff's racial gap in access to housing is a critical component in resolving the Housing Emergency. The City supports the provision of fair housing for all residents, under the federal Fair Housing Act, and is committed to advancing solutions based in racial equity.



Construction of a multifamily building

The shortage of housing contributes to the prevalence of homelessness in the Region. Unsheltered people in Coconino County frequently report not being able to find affordable housing and/or not being able to pay their rent or mortgage as among the top explanations for why they became unsheltered, as measured by the annual Point-In-Time Count.[8] Over a fourth of the same respondents reported having some level of current employment, and many reported receiving disability, Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), social security, or veterans benefits. Nearly a third of Point-In-Time survey respondents had been continuously unsheltered for more than three years. Individuals reported that they dealt with conditions including issues with substance use, mental illness, and a chronic physical injury, indicating a need for healthcare services and supportive housing models, such as group homes. People experiencing homelessness may face multiple barriers to achieving stability in their lives, and the Region's lack of housing compounds these other challenges.

> "Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life."[9]

Homelessness disproportionately affects some racial groups in Flagstaff. For example, residents who are American Indian or Alaska Native make up 10 percent of the City's population but 38 percent of its homeless population. The housing needs of Native Americans in the Region are defined by several factors that are less common in other demographic groups. Of particular interest are Indigenous people who move frequently between urban areas and Native nations based on opportunities and circumstances such as education, jobs, health statues, and housing availability.[10] This cycle of migration creates higher risks for displacement, homelessness, and overcrowding because most housing and assistance programs are set up for long-term residents or people experiencing homelessness. The needs of these individuals are more difficult to place within the housing continuum.

Table 5-1: Percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness by race/ethnicity (City). Source: Ten-Year Housing Plan		
Race/Ethnicity	**Percent of City Population**	**Percent of HMIS* Population**
White alone, non-Hispanic	59.9%	38.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native alone, non-Hispanic	10.4%	38.4%
Hispanic, any race	19.7%	12.7%
Other (including multiple races, non-Hispanic)	5.3%	6.6%
Black or African American alone, non-Hispanic	1.9%	3.1%
Asian alone, non-Hispanic	2.5%	0.4%
Pacific Islander alone, non-Hispanic	0.3%	0.2%

**HMIS is the Homeless Management Information System, a local data information technology system used to collect data on homelessness.*



Breaking ground on a new housing project

Housing Services and Support Programs

The City has a Housing Division whose mission is to develop a viable urban community by providing decent and adequate housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for the Flagstaff community, especially for low- and moderate-income persons. The Flagstaff Housing Authority was established in 1942 and assists low-income residents with safe, decent, and affordable housing opportunities as they strive to improve the quality of their lives. The Housing Authority is part of the City 's Housing Division and operates 265 public housing units across two main sites and a number of scattered sites and manages another 80 units owned by the Flagstaff Housing Corporation. The Housing Authority also administers more than 522 Housing Choice Vouchers under several programs. The County does not have a housing program, but the Planning and Zoning Department supports affordable housing opportunities by applying Comprehensive and Regional Plan goals and policies to appropriate development projects that require public hearings.

In addition to impacting quailty of life, the limited supply of housing affects the Region's ability to grow and develop economically. The City supports a variety of programs to serve families and individuals throughout the housing continuum from homelessness to homeownership. Many programs are delivered in collaboration with community partners and other agencies to:

- Coordinate with community partners for shelter and crisis housing.
- Assist low- and moderate-income households with affordable rental resources.
- Increase housing inventory and availability.
- Economically stabilize local households through the benefits of homeownership.
- Support workforce retention with employer-assisted homeownership programs.
- Support efforts for safe, efficient, and resilient homes.
- Revitalize community neighborhoods.



A Sunnyside mural

THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Employment by Sector

More than 75,000 people were employed in Coconino County[11] as of December 2024.[12] The largest sectors of the Regional economy are Education and Health, and Arts and Hospitality. The Region's status as a tourist destination, the presence of large educational and healthcare institutions, and its geographic position and connections to the larger transportation network are the foundations of these sectors. Because the City is the County seat and home to several federal agencies, the public sector employs a large slice of the workforce. In addition to these sectors, manufacturing, life sciences, and forestry have been historically strong industries for the Region. The top employers in the City are NAU, Flagstaff Medical Center, W.L. Gore & Associates, and Flagstaff Unified School District. The Region is also home to many medium- and small-scale businesses.

Table 5-2: Workforce Employment by Sector. Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate 2017-2022 (S2403)

Sector	AZ	County	Flagstaff
Agriculture/Mining	1%	2%	1%
Construction	7%	6%	5%
Manufacturing	7%	8%	9%
Wholesale	2%	1%	1%
Retail Trade	12%	12%	12%
Transport/Utilities	6%	4%	3%
Information	2%	1%	1%
Finance/Ins/Real Estate	9%	4%	4%
Professional Services	13%	8%	10%
Education/Health	22%	29%	30%
Arts/Hospitality	10%	17%	15%
Other Services	5%	5%	4%
Public Administration	5%	5%	5%

Tourism

About five million people visit the City each year,[13] drawn by the Region's outdoor recreation opportunities, historic character, and proximity to state and national parks including the Grand Canyon.[14] Tourism supports Flagstaff's Arts, Entertainment, and Hospitality sectors, with visitors contributing $750 million to the local economy annually.[15] However, the tourism industry is vulnerable to shocks, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the City and County experienced a sharp spike in unemployment, as businesses shut down and people stayed home. Since 2021, the unemployment rate across the County has returned to pre-pandemic levels and even below, trending under five percent as of December 2024.[16]

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges

Economic diversity is critical to viable and resilient communities. The City's Economic Vitality Division strategically recruits businesses as part of an initiative called Choose Flagstaff, which focuses on employers that provide high-skill, high-wage jobs in desired sectors.

Economic Strategic Plans -- In 2024 the City completed both an *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and a *Workforce Development Analysis and Strategic Plan*. The City's *Economic Development Strategic Plan* identifies specific sectors that are well positioned to grow in Flagstaff and provides strategic initiatives to guide staff and City investments. The *Workforce Development Analysis and Strategic Plan* provides significant analysis and detail regarding the makeup of Flagstaff's workforce and provides guidance to staff about how to support improvements to that workforce in the best ways. The City works with many local and regional partners to implement the various strategies identified. Most City investments are funded through Bed, Board and Beverage – Economic Development funding and have a limited impact on the City's General Fund.

The Region faces some challenges with attracting and retaining businesses and with housing its workforce, which threaten its economic stability. This stems mainly from the high cost of living for employees, the higher-than-normal cost of development, and a lack of readily available vacant space.[17]

Although the Region has a strong tourism-based economy, it can be a double-edged sword in terms of employment opportunities. While the injection of outside dollars provides a strong tax base which supports the majority of activities and programs, it also relies on and supports a growing number of entry-level, low-wage, and often seasonal jobs.

The lack of attainable housing options and housing availability can discourage employers from relocating to the Region and present challenges for existing employers who struggle to recruit and retain their workforce. When the workforce cannot be housed locally, workers must accept longer regional commuting distances and times. Although long commutes can mitigate the lack of available nearby housing, including low-cost housing, they also burden workers and conflict with the Region's climate goals.

Opportunities

The Region's top three economic development opportunities relate to business retention and expansion efforts, workforce development, and the successful Region-wide delivery of broadband. These three efforts build upon existing industry, resources, and connections; will serve the Region optimally; and are consistent with local and Regional priorities.

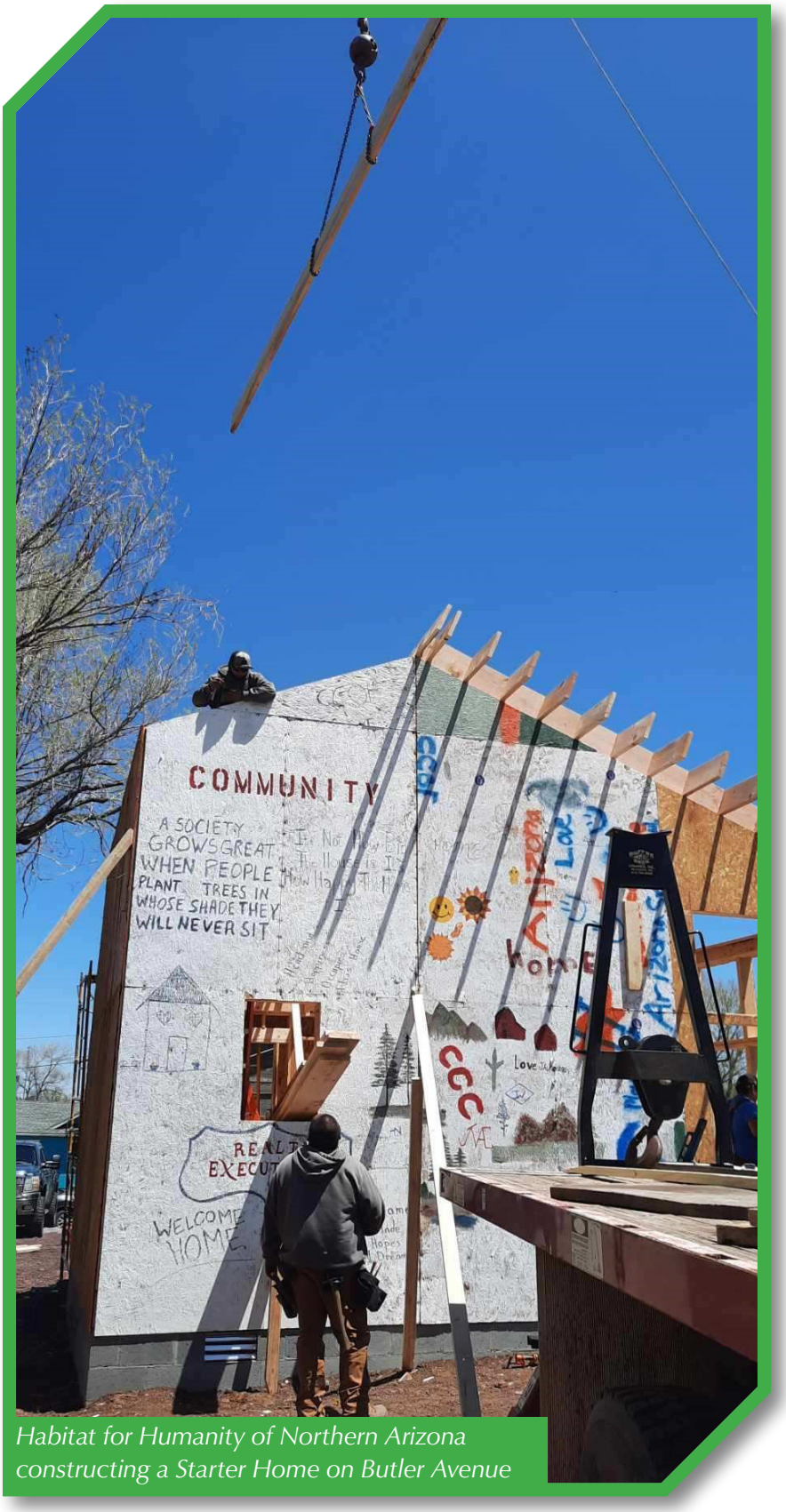
Despite some challenges, numerous businesses have recently relocated to the City or expanded their footprint, and there has been some growth in specific sectors. Flagstaff also has a strong entrepreneurial landscape. The City provides facilities and support services to help entrepreneurs thrive through the Incubator and Accelerator at its Innovation Mesa science and technology park. These facilities provide office and manufacturing space for companies that support a sustainable business/idea, the technology sector, light manufacturing, biotechnology and/or bioengineering, or meet the purpose of job creation in greater Flagstaff. These buildings house numerous businesses that have received business development support through the nonprofit Moonshot organization, which supports entrepreneurialism.

See Chapter 11, Infrastructure and Public Safety, for further discussion of broadband.

Workforce Development

With the presence of two higher-education institutions—NAU and Coconino Community College—the Region has a highly educated workforce. Of the population over age 25, 46.2 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is far above the state and national averages of 29.5 percent and 32.1 percent, respectively.[18] Also contributing to the Region's high level of educational attainment are 33 public, private, and charter schools, which provide early childhood and kindergarten-through-12th-grade education. The Region's schools and institutions contribute to the local economy by educating the future workforce, employing the current workforce, and attracting students, employees, and visitors who support local businesses with their spending. Additionally, the City's recently completed *Workforce Development Analysis and Strategic Plan* identified a number of partners, such as the Workforce Development Board and Goodwill, who strive to develop the workforce even further. It was recommended that the City work to support these traditional workforce development partners and that the City explore programs to support its identified sectors when those efforts do not fit more traditional funding programs.

NAU and the Regional Economy – An Economic Contributions Analysis of the 2017-2018 academic year found that between NAU student and employee spending, visitors, and off-campus construction, NAU supported 19,500 jobs in Coconino County. This employment, coupled with spending, generated an estimated $1.96 billion in economic activity.[19] In addition, as a research institution, NAU contributes to advances in technical and scientific innovation, benefitting the regional economy and beyond. NAU also contributes to the Region's social fabric, providing quality of life benefits such as opportunities for exposure to music, art, and other important humanities for residents.



Habitat for Humanity of Northern Arizona constructing a Starter Home on Butler Avenue

SUPPORTIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Neighborhood Associations and Neighborhood Plans

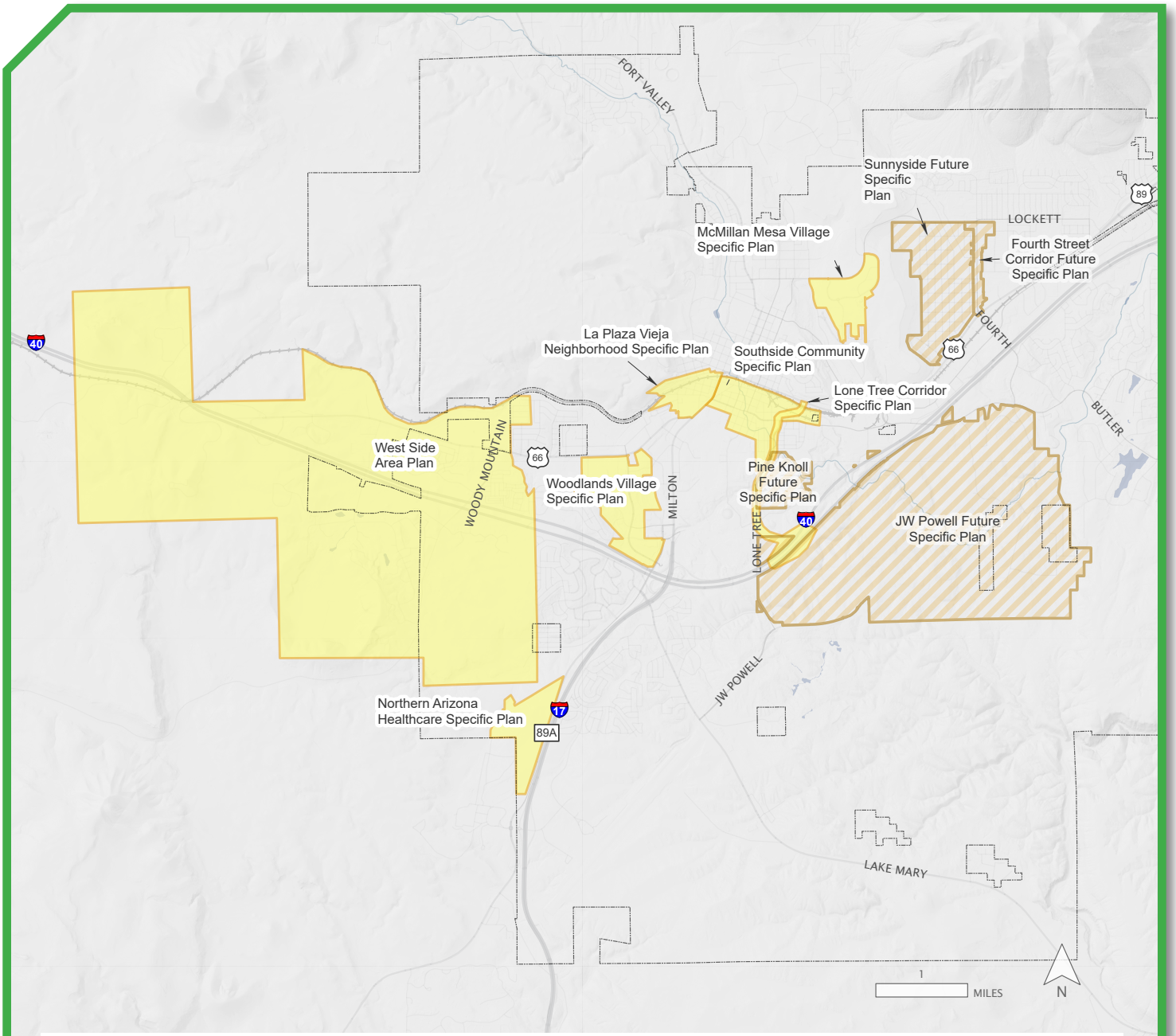
The City's Neighborhood Associations are important community-building institutions that organize residents around local issues. The neighborhoods with active associations are La Plaza Vieja, Sunnyside, Southside, and Townsite. Neighborhood Associations are different than homeowners' associations; they are voluntary organizations for a set geography, and they cannot enforce regulations or set covenants within the neighborhood. Instead, they provide a conduit of information, resources, and volunteer opportunities between neighbors and between residents and government and nonprofit entities. Neighborhood Associations in the City have different and self-determined emphases in how they organize and work within their respective communities.

The La Plaza Vieja and the Southside neighborhoods, in partnership with the City, have completed neighborhood-specific plans and the Townsite neighborhood has a historic overlay to protect its architectural character. Both Sunnyside and Pine Knoll-Brannen (part of the Southside Community Association) lack neighborhood plans. Creation of a meaningful and well-vetted neighborhood plan assists with creating and funding park and transportation improvements and identifying opportunities for property owner assistance. For instance, the need for assistance with floodproofing homes where household resources are limited was an idea generated from the *Southside Community Specific Plan*, further reinforced by the Sunnyside neighborhood's post-fire flooding, and ultimately included in the Citywide *Stormwater Strategic Plan*. Neighborhood planning has been a robust way of surfacing unmet community needs and evaluating them against the City's standard operating procedures. They have also been a means of creating more robust partnerships and cooperative opportunities with neighborhoods and supporting major grant applications and the distribution of Community Development Block Grant funding. For example, the Southside Community Association worked with the City to plan for the Murdoch Center to become a resilience hub.

Information Map 5-3 displays adopted City Specific Plans that apply to a distinct area of the City, as well as areas where a Specific Plan is planned or in progress. The full list of adopted City Specific Plans is:

- *Northern Arizona Healthcare Health Village Specific Plan* (2023)
- *Southside Community Specific Plan* (2020)
- *High Occupancy Housing Specific Plan* (2018)
- *La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan* (2015)
- *Lone Tree Corridor Specific Plan* (2008)
- *Juniper Point Specific Plan* (2006)
- *West Side Area Plan* (1999 and 1989)
- *McMillan Mesa Village Area Plan* (1992)
- *Woodlands Village Specific Plan* (1990)[20]

For more information on the relationship between Specific Plans and the Regional Plan, refer to Chapter 2, How the Plan Works.



Specific Plan Boundaries

Future Specific Plan Boundaries

City of Flagstaff (CoF) Boundary

Coconino County



bus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodatastyrelsen,GSA,GSI and the GIS User Community

Information Map 5-3: City Specific Plans

Public Health

The Region's health system, anchored by the Flagstaff Medical Center, serves a large population, some of whom travel a significant distance to receive care in the Region. The Flagstaff Medical Center is the only Level 1 Trauma Center in Arizona north of the Phoenix Metropolitan area and offers general and specialized services. There are several other specialized medical centers and clinics in the Region, including the Rehabilitation Hospital of Northern Arizona, Sacred Peaks Health Center, Native Americans for Community Action (NACA) Health Center, North Country Healthcare, Northern Arizona Healthcare, Poore Medical Clinic, and the Children's Health Center.

The Coconino County Health and Human Services (CCHHS) Department is responsible for developing health policy, enforcing public health code, providing health education to the public, connecting people to health-related resources, and providing safety-net services. The City does not have jurisdiction on these issues.

Countywide public health challenges identified in the 2024 Coconino County Community Health Needs Assessment include high rates of motor vehicle crashes, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health conditions and insufficient mental healthcare, food insecurity, and others. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was the County's leading cause of death in 2020 and 2021, intensified these community challenges. Residents continue to experience its effects, including long COVID, social isolation, and increased mental health needs.[21]



Flagstaff Family Food Center

Food System and Food Security

The Region relies on foods grown around the globe. Agriculture in the Region is limited by land and water availability, and a lack of supporting food and agricultural infrastructure. These factors limit the scale of local food operations and increase the Region's reliance on the global food supply system. However, the energy and resources consumed, and the GHGs produced, by growing, harvesting, processing, and transporting food in this global system are significant. Additionally, food availability and quality are not distributed equitably around the Region's communities, causing health disparities like hunger and obesity. These factors can be partially mitigated by strengthening the local food systems to the extent practical.

A "food system" is the cycle food follows as it moves from farm to table, and the people, land, and infrastructure involved. It encompasses a range of activities from growing, foraging, and ranching; storing and processing; transporting, and distributing; retailing and marketing; preparation and cooking; eating; waste management; safety; land and water stewardship; environmental preservation; food supply chain support; and food assistance. The journey food takes through the food system is influenced by many factors including the Northern Arizona ecosystem, climate change, research, education, funding, policies, and the community's rich cultural traditions, and is interlinked with regional, state, national, and international food production and distribution networks.[22]

The Region is a challenging environment for food production because of the arid climate, variable precipitation, access to water resources, poor soil quality, cost of land, a short growing season, and distance to markets. Despite these challenges, food production continues to be an important economic activity in the County and expanding it in the Region adds opportunities for workforce development. Before today's global food system was established, the food system was mostly self-sufficient: Food was grown, processed, sold, consumed, and disposed of in one place, and food choices were restricted to what could be grown and gathered in the Region. For centuries, the Region's Indigenous Peoples maintained a local food system, practicing floodplain agriculture in the Doney Park Timberline area and collecting native plants for food, medicinal purposes, and traditional crafts. European settlers brought nonnative agriculture plants like pumpkin, bean, and potato farming to the landscape, which require more irrigation.[23] Across Arizona about 74 percent of available water is used by the agricultural industry.[24] In Coconino County, about 25 percent of available water is used for agriculture,[25] and even less is used in the City. The need to increase food security and reduce food disparities should be done sustainably and in a manner that balances the need for long-term water conservation as an essential value of the community.



Selecting vegetables. Source: Flagstaff Family Food Center

As of 2024, the five counties encompassing Northern Arizona were home to 11,670 farms and ranches, with 17,100,981 acres in production. This area represents 70 percent of all Arizona farms and ranches and 67 percent of Arizona's agricultural acreage.[26] Agricultural uses, such as farming, crop raising, horticulture,

viticulture, silviculture, beekeeping, and small livestock keeping are allowed in the Flagstaff Region, including in the County and City. Most large-scale ranching occurs outside of the Flagstaff Region, but the larger lots in areas such as Doney Park and Timberline support small scale livestock keeping and agriculture. Despite the prevalence of agriculture in the region, Northern Arizona has seen a 10-percent loss in the number of farms and ranches since 2012, creating challenges for regional producers to access land.

Not everyone in the Region has access to healthy, affordable food. Countywide, an estimated 13.3 percent of residents are food insecure.[27] In a 2023 survey of County families, 56 percent stated they had concerns or had experienced challenges accessing nutritious food in the prior year. Food insecurity Countywide is higher than the state average. Children, Hispanic, Black, and Native American populations in the County suffer from disproportionately high food insecurity rates compared to the rest of the state. In the Coconino County Community Health Needs Assessment, access to food and nutritional security was one of the top four identified needs (along with housing, behavioral health, and transportation).

County residents participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at a higher rate than the Arizona state average (12.7 percent of Northern Arizona residents compared to the state average of 10.1 percent), and 7.7 percent of City residents participate in SNAP. Throughout Northern Arizona, many residents are income eligible for SNAP but do not participate; of eligible individuals in the County, 30.7 percent do not receive SNAP benefits.[28]

City residents have greater access to charitable food distribution programs than residents living in rural Northern Arizona, as the City is an important hub for food security resources. While food security resources should be more widely distributed throughout Coconino and surrounding counties, local organizations are doing crucial work to provide hunger relief and fill gaps in the food system. The Flagstaff Family Food Center and St. Mary's Food Bank are two organizations which provide thousands of meals each day.[29]

The City and County have strived to strengthen the Region's food system by encouraging local food production and decreasing food insecurity. Engaging with local food production provides numerous benefits to community health, the environment, and the economy. For example, gardening with other people can build community connections, reduce stress, improve nutrition, and restore soil health to foster resilient ecosystems capable of removing and storing greater amounts of carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere.

Examples of Small-Scale Food Production for Business and Neighborhoods

Foodscaping – Foodscaping, also known as edible landscaping, is means of supporting food insecurity that can be incorporated easily into the existing built environment. Public edible landscapes can provide nutritious foods with a very low barrier to entry. Current City and County landscaping regulations and plant lists do not include plants that provide edible food if they are not native. Foodscaping can be designed to be a low-water addition to landscpaing when designed with rainwater harvesting or stormwater management.

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture – The City operates and is expanding the community gardens program and has developed the Flagstaff Urban Farm Initiative to establish new urban agriculture ventures on City-owned land. Community gardens are one of many solutions that can be deployed on non-profit or public land either temporarily or permanently where food disparities are evident. The City also offers rebates, funding, and programs to support food systems projects.

Community Food Systems Assessment

In 2023, the City undertook a three-year Assessing & Growing a Sustainable Community Food System project to improve its understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to food access and distribution, create a baseline of key food system metrics that the City and its partners can track over time, and lay the foundation for the policy recommendations in a forthcoming Community Food Action Plan. The Community Food Systems Assessment (CFSA), published in July 2024, is the culmination of the first phase of this ongoing project, which is anticipated for completion in 2026. CFSA findings identify ongoing challenges in the Region's food system in addition to opportunities to strengthen it:

- Eliminating hunger was the highest ranked food system goal for CFSA survey respondents.
- Communities living on Native American reservation land have very few stores to buy from and limited food options.
- Local direct-to-consumer food sales in the Region grew by 60.8 percent between 2017-2022, strongly indicating a Regional demand for local foods. However, the small size of farms, lack of business development resources, and sales outlets make it difficult for the agricultural economy in the Region to grow.
- Accessing land on which to farm near and within the City is challenging, with the cost of land being the most significant barrier. Other barriers include extreme weather, variable growing conditions, and the cost of and access to water. Overcoming these barriers would increase the capacity of the local food system and help to reduce food insecurity.
- There is a strong need to implement community food hubs to provide resources and communal spaces for producing, processing, cooking, and equitably distributing food throughout the Region.
- The high cost of food is a challenge for many people in the Region, and locally grown food is perceived as being especially expensive and difficult to access. However, community members have shared they would buy more locally grown food if it was affordable.
- Food recovery programs exist, but their capacity should be increased to reduce food waste and food insecurity. Food recovery programs focus on collecting edible food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to feed people in need.



Volunteers for the Flagstaff Family Food Center.
Source: Flagstaff Family Food Center

Action Items

High Priority Action Items. See Appendix C for additional information.

Type of Action	Item	Timing
Code	Update the City's affordable housing incentive policy to implement the goals and policies of the Regional Plan, the *Ten-Year Housing Plan*, and the LASS-CAP recommendations. (City only)	Short term
Plan	Develop a comprehensive strategy to address infrastructure improvements needed to support infill development in existing neighborhoods.	Short term
Fund	The City and County will work in collaboration to address housing needs within the Region and to identify potential funding sources for affordable housing and associated services within the Region.	Long term
Code	Revise the City of Flagstaff Zoning, Building, Fire, and Engineering codes to reduce barriers to the creation of housing and development that supports the *Carbon Neutrality Plan* and reduced wildfire risk. (City only)	Short term

Other action items: While important, these projects may be prioritized as opportunities and funding arise.

Type of Action	Item	Timing
Partner	Support changes to federal and state laws that provide for greater control of vacation rentals and second homes; allow greater preservation, creation, and protection of affordable housing; and expand fair housing to protected classes.	Continuous
Fund	Create programs needed to identify and support entrepreneurship in Neighborhood Commercial areas.	Short term
Partner	Build partnerships and programs to address financing barriers to creating more infill, mixed-use, and affordable housing projects in areas served by transit.	Long term
Educate	Make the economic and opportunity costs of not providing housing more widely known to support the inclusion of affordable housing in neighborhoods that have demonstrated opposition to it.	Continuous
Code	Explore ways to incentivize City, County, and other employers in the Region to offer Employer Assisted Housing programs.	Long term
Partner	Acquire and rehabilitate already built properties for affordable housing projects when financially feasible. (City only)	Long term
Fund	Explore other funding mechanisms for affordable housing developments, such as a dedicated sales tax, secondary property tax for General Obligation bonds, establishment of a central business district pursuant to Government Property Lease Excise Tax statutes (GPLET), or increasing primary property taxes. (City only)	Mid term
Code	Explore alternative processes and guidelines for the redevelopment of historic and affordable housing to reduce the risk of demolition and allow for increased retention of existing units.	Mid term
Educate	At the City and County levels, support community-wide knowledge and understanding of Fair Housing laws through informative resources and programming.	Continuous
Code	Update Zoning and other City codes to support the local production, manufacturing, storage, and distribution of food on public and private land better, including the protection of agriculturally viable land and the implementation of future urban agriculture production sites.	Mid term

Type of Action	Item	Timing
Code	Conduct regular economic impact analyses to understand the comprehensive cost of area regulations on the cost of doing business.	Short term
Partner	To help people continue to afford to live in the Region, support residents in accessing programs that reduce the costs of housing, transportation, and utilities.	Continuous
Partner	Support the development and expansion of bioscience-related facilities that create scientific and technical jobs with improvements in infrastructure needed for their uses.	Mid term
Partner	Collaborate with local non-profit partners to expand programs that improve housing security through eviction prevention and mitigation.	Short term
Fund	Expand housing subsidy options that are available to low-to-moderate-income households. (City only)	Mid term
Partner	Establish resilient neighborhood networks and groups within and among neighborhoods throughout the Region to foster lasting community connections, provide neighborly support in emergencies, and build resilience to long-term climate change and short-term shocks.	Long term
Code	Develop a Planned Area Development zoning district that allows for a greater mix of land uses to support a variety of housing types and economic development. (City only)	Short Term
Code	Create specific plans for J.W. Powell area, Sunnyside, and Pine Knoll Brannen Neighborhoods. (City only)	Mid Term

Chapter 5 Endnotes

1. City of Flagstaff, Ten-Year Housing Plan, 2022.

2. City of Flagstaff, Ten-Year Housing Plan, 2022, p. 12-13.

3. City of Flagstaff, Ten-Year Housing Plan, 2022.

4. Between 2015 and 2025 the Coconino County Assessor's Office data showed a 53-percent increase in the number of properties that were classified as "NON-PRIMARY/BANK OWNED/NOT IN OTHER CLASSES RESIDENTIAL," which is the category that includes second homes and short term rentals.

5. NAU, Comprehensive Sustainable Smart Campus Master Plan, 2023, p. 01-34.

6. Housing Solutions of Northern Arizona, Rental Attainability Report, 2024.

7. HHS, "Housing Instability," 2024.

8. The Point-In-Time (PIT) Count is a national annual survey that is administered in Coconino County, with most responses gathered in the City of Flagstaff. The survey provides basic data on homelessness, which informs program planning for local organizations working to end homelessness. The findings in this paragraph come from the most recent three iterations of the PIT Count in 2022, 2023, and 2024.

9. National Alliance to End Homelessness, "Housing First."

10. HUD, Housing Needs of American Indians, 2017.

11. Coconino County is the same geography as the Flagstaff Metropolitan Statistical Area.

12. US Department of Labor, "Western Information Office: Flagstaff."

13. City of Flagstaff, Discover Flagstaff Annual Report, 2023.

14. Alliance Bank Economic Policy Institute, Flagstaff Visitor Study, 2018.

15. City of Flagstaff, Discover Flagstaff Annual Report, 2023.

16. US Department of Labor, "Databases."

17. City of Flagstaff, Economic Development Strategy, 2024.

18. Population and Demographics Regional Snapshot.

19. Alliance Bank Economic Policy Institute, Economic Contributions of Northern Arizona University, 2018.

20. Concurrent with the adoption of the Regional Plan, the City is rescinding the Woodlands Village Specific Plan.

21. Coconino County, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2024.

22. City of Flagstaff, Community Food Systems Assessment, 2024.

23. Hartwell, Meredith A., "Forgotten Fields," 2011.

24. Arizona Department of Water Resources, "Conservation: Agriculture," 2025.

25. The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Water Resources Research Center, "Arizona Water Fact Sheet: Coconino County," 2024.

26. USDA, "Table 1: County Summary Highlights," 2022.

27. Coconino County, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2024.

28. City of Flagstaff, Community Food Systems Assessment, 2024.

29. City of Flagstaff, Community Food Systems Assessment, 2024.

30. Median household income is calculated at the Census tract level.