

IMPORTANT NOTICE: *The City Council may consider applicant qualifications for the Council vacancy in executive sessions which are closed to the public, and then make the appointment in a public meeting. You have the right, however, to have your application considered in a public meeting by providing a written request to the City Clerk.*

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF
APPLICATION TO SERVE ON THE CITY COUNCIL**

RETURN TO: CITY CLERK VIA EMAIL AT STACY.SALTZBURG@FLAGSTAFFAZ.GOV

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION: MONDAY, OCTOBER 12 AT 5:00 P.M.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS PUBLIC INFORMATION
(personal identifying information will not be released)**

DATE: 10/8/2026

YOUR NAME: Nicholas Jones

HOME ADDRESS: [REDACTED] ZIP: 86005

EMPLOYER: Self JOB TITLE: Owner / Operator

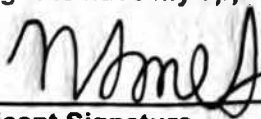
E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED] LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN FLAGSTAFF: 37

Using additional pages, please answer the following questions in 250 words or less, per question:

- 1. What makes a good Councilmember?**
- 2. What do you think is the biggest issue facing Flagstaff? Give specifics and ideas for addressing the issue.**
- 3. What are your top three priorities for being a City Councilmember and why?**
- 4. What method do you expect to use to make a decision when you believe that there is a segment of the Flagstaff population not being heard on a particular issue?**
- 5. Please give an example of when you were in a position of responsibility and others disagreed with you on how an important matter should be handled. How did you help resolve the issue?**
- 6. What is your leadership style, please provide an example of your style in use.**
- 7. What is your understanding, awareness, and familiarity with the Flagstaff Zoning Code?**
- 8. A key role of the Flagstaff City Council is to adopt the city's budget; how would you balance the seven key community priorities and the realities of the city's financial position with the Council's role of policy development?**

I certify that I meet the statutory requirements of living within the corporate limits of the City of Flagstaff for at least one year, that I am over the age of 18 years, that I am a registered voter of the City of Flagstaff, and that I have read and understand the right to have my application considered in a public meeting by providing a written request to the City Clerk.



Applicant Signature

Nick Jones
Flagstaff, Arizona

October 8, 2026

Mayor Daggett, Vice Mayor Sweet, and Members of the Council
c/o Stacy Saltzburg, City Clerk
City of Flagstaff, 211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Dear Mayor Daggett, Vice Mayor Sweet, and Councilmembers:

I am writing to ask for your consideration for the vacant seat on the Flagstaff City Council.

Flagstaff is my home. I was raised here, went to school here, and have spent 32 of my 38 years here. I attended the University of Arizona in Tucson, spent a semester in Phoenix as a research intern at the State Senate, then worked for tech companies that placed me in more than a dozen cities. I keep coming back to Flagstaff. It is who I am, and it is where I plan to stay.

I also grew up in City Hall. My father, Paul Jones, worked more than a decade as the City's urban design planner. He designed key parts of the Flagstaff Urban Trail System and the tunnels that carry it safely under our busiest roads, and he helped build the City's public art program. He also served as staff liaison for beautification and for the arts and science grants, and worked on downtown revitalization, including Heritage Square and the train depot. On Council nights, staff would wheel a TV and VCR into his office for me while he was in the meeting. He died in 2013. My dad raised me to understand that service is the highest calling for those capable of it.

In 2015 my mother, retired hospice nurse and historian Susan Johnson, and I started Freaky Foot Tours. Eleven years later it is a family company that has hosted more than 30,000 guests and has been voted Best of Flagstaff Guided Tour Company three years running. I know what it takes to make payroll here and to keep good people in a town they struggle to afford.

I will bring three things to the Council. First, a research habit: I was trained in nonpartisan research on elections and water rights, where both sides received the same numbers. Second, experience on the other side of the dais. At Lime I worked with city councils and staff across the country to bring a new kind of transportation into their streets, at both the policy and the operations level. Third, the habit of meeting people where they are. As a volunteer first responder with the Black Rock Rangers, I learned that you cannot serve people you have not listened to. I practice that on Flagstaff's sidewalks every week, and in bringing people together for our Howl-O-Ween pet parade and the Route 66 Centennial Walking Tour.

I want to be direct about two things. I own businesses downtown and in tourism, so I will disclose those interests and recuse myself wherever the law or good judgment requires. And I understand that an appointed member joins a Council chosen by the voters. My job would be to prepare, listen, and help this Council do its work through December 2028.

Thank you for your service and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nick Jones

Application to Serve on the City Council: Question Responses

Nick Jones

1. What makes a good Councilmember?

A good Councilmember does the reading, listens before deciding, and can explain a vote to the people who disagree with it.

My first job after college was nonpartisan research at the Arizona State Senate, where both sides get the same numbers, so the numbers had better be right. I still work that way.

A good Councilmember knows what the job is. Council sets policy, adopts the budget, and directs the City Manager. It does not run departments. That means hard questions for staff in public, then trusting professionals.

It means being one of seven. Joining mid-term and appointed rather than elected, my job is to be a prepared, steady colleague, not to arrive with a campaign. I will disagree when I disagree, say why, and respect the decision the Council makes.

It means showing up. Most residents never come to an afternoon meeting at City Hall, so a good Councilmember goes to them: neighborhoods, events, shop counters, sidewalks. I grew up here and have run a business on Flagstaff's sidewalks for eleven years. Most of what I know about this city I learned by being present with the people who live here.

Finally, a good Councilmember is honest about the limits of what they know. I will do the work to understand each issue, and when I fall short I will ask staff, the public, and my colleagues. I own businesses downtown, and where a vote touches them I will say so and step back.

2. What do you think is the biggest issue facing Flagstaff? Give specifics and ideas for addressing the issue.

Housing. It sits under almost everything else the city is trying to do.

The city's 2025-26 housing report puts the median sale price near \$701,000 and average rent at \$2,300, against a median household income of \$71,512. Flagstaff declared a housing emergency in 2020 and set a goal of 7,976 homes created or preserved by 2031. As of June, 63 percent of that goal remains. The cost shows up everywhere: employers who cannot keep staff, families who leave, and a City workforce with 15.5 percent turnover.

1. Finish the zoning work already underway. In June the Council backed the code analysis recommendations: more homes by right on commercial corridors, lower parking requirements, simpler incentives. Drafting and hearings will take a year. I would hold that schedule and ask for public progress reports.
2. Put public land and bond dollars to work. Voters approved \$20 million for housing in 2022. I would track each program by homes delivered and shift money toward what is producing.
3. Make small-scale building easy. Middle housing and accessory dwelling units are now allowed citywide. Pre-approved plans and predictable permits let local owners and small builders add

homes, not only large developers.

4. Protect what makes Flagstaff worth living in. Dark skies, water, and neighborhood input should shape how we build. This is not a trade-off to split down the middle. The towns that keep their character find ways to add homes without losing it, and finding that way is the work I want to do.

3. What are your top three priorities for being a City Councilmember and why?

1. Housing that people who work here can afford. For the reasons above, it is the issue that most decides who gets to stay in Flagstaff.
2. A budget that keeps core services strong. The City's budget describes a public safety funding gap in the hundreds of millions over the coming decade. State shared revenue is shrinking, and the City's one percent sales tax, its largest General Fund source, sunsets in 2035. Voters decide Propositions 404 and 405 on November 3. Whatever they decide, this Council has to deliver police, fire, and emergency response within the answer voters give, without letting streets, facilities, and staff pay fall behind.
3. Streets that are safe to walk and bike. In May 2021 I was riding in a Flagstaff Bike Party safety ride when a tow truck hit the group. I watched a friend get hit; he lost his leg. Another rider did not survive. At Lime I worked with councils in more than a dozen cities on fitting new ways of getting around into their streets, so I know how this is done well, and I know personally what happens when it is not. Flagstaff is building the Lone Tree overpass and extending the urban trail system my father helped draw. I would make safe routes for people outside cars a test of every street project.

One test runs through all three: can a family, a worker, or a small business here today still afford to be here in ten years?

4. What method do you expect to use to make a decision when you believe that there is a segment of the Flagstaff population not being heard on a particular issue?

The same steps, each time.

First, compare who is affected with who has spoken. Public comment tells you who had a free afternoon and a strong opinion. It does not tell you what a renter, a night-shift worker, a student, or an elder thinks.

Second, go to them. I would ask the City's commissions, including the Indigenous Commission, the Commission on Diversity Awareness, and the Commission on Inclusion and Adaptive Living, and neighborhood groups, employers, NAU, and service providers who I should talk to. Then I would go where those residents already are, at hours that work for them.

Third, ask staff for information that does not depend on turnout: who lives in the affected area, who pays, and who benefits.

Fourth, weigh it on the merits. A hundred emails are information. So is one conversation with someone who would never send an email. Neither wins automatically.

Fifth, say it out loud. When I vote, I will explain who I heard from, who I went looking for, and how it changed my thinking, so the people who organized know they were heard.

I learned this in two places. On the board of Care About Climate, I worked alongside young people pushing to be heard in rooms not built for them. As a volunteer first responder with the Black Rock Rangers, at Burning Man and at events in the United States and abroad, I learned de-escalation and meeting people where they are. Now I mentor new Rangers in both.

5. Please give an example of when you were in a position of responsibility and others disagreed with you on how an important matter should be handled. How did you help resolve the issue?

In the fall of 2018 I was responsible for launching Lime in Lubbock, Texas. A competitor had dropped scooters on Texas Tech's campus without permits, and the city answered with an ordinance: no scooter company could operate without a formal agreement with the university.

Texas Tech's planners run one of the largest campuses in the country, and they wanted restrictions: geofences on where scooters could ride and park, and a proposal to lock a scooter's wheels the moment it entered a restricted zone. I disagreed: a scooter that stops dead under a rider is a hazard, not a rule. My own company wanted speed and worried about the cost of building anything new.

So we met, again and again, in person. I walked the campus with their planners and asked what they were protecting: pedestrians, ADA access, bike racks. Then we designed for that. In a restricted zone a scooter slows to a crawl until it is no fun. Warnings come first, then fees. Riders photograph where they parked, and software checks the spot.

Lime launched on campus that November as the only scooter company allowed there, and the features we built for Lubbock were later carried to other markets.

The people across the table usually know something you do not. Ask what they are protecting, then design around it. On Council I will sit on the other side of that table, wiser for having the experiences I have in my career on how to find the best solutions.

6. What is your leadership style, please provide an example of your style in use.

I lead by building systems with the people who will live with them, writing everything down, training people well, and then trusting them.

Freaky Foot Tours is the example. Early on, everything ran through my mother and me. A company that needs its owners every day cannot grow, and it cannot give its people real responsibility. So we documented the research, the routes, and the training. We hired guides who could carry the stories in their own voices, and then we trusted them with it. Today the company runs in Flagstaff, Prescott, and Tucson, has hosted more than 30,000 guests, and does not depend on me day to day.

I learned the method under pressure. At Lime I hired more than 400 people in three and a half weeks for the Dallas launch. That only works when roles are clear, the plan is written down, and everyone involved hears the same thing from you.

I use it in community work too. Howl-O-Ween, our downtown pet parade for High Country Humane, brought out more than 1,000 people and more than 100 costumed pets in its first year, raised \$777, and led to two adoptions. This year it returns to Heritage Square with Flagstaff Mountain-Town Market and a City special event permit. My role is to line up the partners and make sure each one owns their piece.

Council leads the same way: through clear policy and through the City Manager, not by doing staff's work.

7. What is your understanding, awareness, and familiarity with the Flagstaff Zoning Code?

I know the Zoning Code as a business owner who operates under it and a resident who follows Council's land-use decisions. I am not a planner and will not pretend to be one.

Title 10 is a hybrid. Most of the city is in conventional zones. Downtown and nearby neighborhoods can use transect zones, T1 through T6, that regulate the form of buildings as much as their use. Supplemental standards sit on top: dark-sky lighting, parking, resource protection, signs, and heritage preservation. The code exists to carry out the Regional Plan, and voters ratified Regional Plan 2045 this May.

It is also changing quickly. Last December the Council allowed middle housing citywide, going beyond the state mandate, so up to four homes on a lot are reviewed like a single-family house. Accessory dwelling rules were loosened. The Council adopted a Planned Community zone on October 6, and an outdoor lighting update comes up October 20. The code analysis the Council endorsed in June will rework density, parking, and incentives over the next year.

Where I am strongest is the applicant's side of the counter. At Lime I worked with city councils and staff in more than a dozen cities to fit a new kind of transportation into their codes, so I know what unclear rules and slow answers cost applicants and neighbors alike.

Before I vote on any land-use item I will have read the relevant code sections, the staff report, and the Planning and Zoning Commission record.

8. A key role of the Flagstaff City Council is to adopt the city's budget; how would you balance the seven key community priorities and the realities of the city's financial position with the Council's role of policy development?

I would start from the facts. The adopted budget is \$626.9 million, but more than half is capital projects. The General Fund, which pays for most daily services, is about \$122 million, and roughly half of General Fund spending is people. Revenues are stable, but sales tax growth has slowed, state shared revenue is declining, and the public safety gap is large.

Given that, my approach has four parts.

1. Use the seven priorities as a lens, not a ranking. Every proposal should show which priorities it serves and what it costs. Housing, for example, is a Livable Community issue and a Robust and Resilient Economy issue at once.
2. Fund obligations first. Public safety, water, and maintaining what we already own come before new commitments. Deferred maintenance is debt by another name.
3. Match the money to the promise. Ongoing programs need ongoing revenue. One-time money goes to one-time needs. The 20 percent reserve stays intact.
4. Ask three questions of every new policy: what does it cost, what does it displace, and how will we know it worked?

I would also look at the total bill residents pay. Utility rates, fees, and taxes are set in separate votes, but households pay them together.

I run a seasonal business where a large share of the year's revenue arrives in a few weeks. Planning for lean months is a habit. As a mid-year appointee, I would first learn the budget this Council already adopted.

Nick Jones

Flagstaff, Arizona

Flagstaff native and small-business owner with a background in nonpartisan legislative research, water, and launching operations in cities across the country, including the leases, safety compliance, and government relations that come with it. Co-founder of a family-owned Flagstaff company that has hosted 30,000+ guests since 2015.

Flagstaff and community

- Co-founded Freaky Foot Tours in Flagstaff in 2015 with my mother, historian Susan Johnson. Best of Flagstaff, Guided Tour Company: 2023, 2024, 2025. 2024 Viola Awards finalist, Community Impact.
- Organizer of Howl-O-Ween, a downtown pet parade and costume contest benefiting High Country Humane. First year (2025): 100+ costumed pets, \$777 raised, two adoptions. 2026 event: Heritage Square, under a City of Flagstaff special event permit, with Flagstaff Mountain-Town Market.
- Launched the Route 66 Centennial Walking Tour (2026), partially funded by a research grant from the Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona.
- Set larger contracts aside in spring 2020 to help Flagstaff small businesses get through the pandemic shutdown.
- Arizona Daily Sun "20 Under 40" honoree.

Public service and policy

Research Intern, Arizona State Senate · Dec 2013 to May 2014

- Nonpartisan research on elections and water rights.

Board Member and Chair, Care About Climate · Jun 2014 to Dec 2020

- Youth climate advocacy nonprofit; the work carried me into UN climate negotiations as part of the youth advocacy community.

Volunteer First Responder and Mentor, Black Rock Rangers

- Non-confrontational mediation and de-escalation at Burning Man and at events in the United States and abroad; mentor to new Rangers.

Experience

Co-Founder, Freaky Foot Tours · Aug 2015 to Present · Flagstaff, Prescott, Tucson

- History, ghost, mural, and Route 66 walking tours led by local guides. 30,000+ guests and 1,700+ reviews. Featured on Travel Channel's The Dead Files (2022).
- Built the training, scheduling, and documentation that let the company run day to day without its owners.
- Partner with downtown venues, Discover Flagstaff, local artists, and nonprofits on events and promotions.

Founder and Fractional COO, Eat Sleep Launch Repeat · Mar 2020 to Present · Flagstaff

- Operating partner for owner-led small businesses: written procedures, trained leaders, and systems, with every engagement scoped to a defined exit.

Senior Expansion Manager, Sealed · Oct 2021 to Dec 2022

- Launched the Chicago, Wisconsin, and Philadelphia markets for a climate-tech home electrification company.

Expansion Manager, Lime · Jun 2018 to Dec 2019

- Lived and worked in more than a dozen cities, working with city councils and staff to integrate micromobility at the policy and operations level; negotiated leases, secured warehouses, and handled OSHA compliance.
- Hired 400+ people in three and a half weeks for the Dallas launch. Wrote Lime's first Mega Event Playbook.

Director of Expansion, Titan Urban Transportation · Mar 2017 to Jun 2018

- Directed market launches in San Francisco, Austin, and Los Angeles; built a 10-person remote support team.

City Coordinator, Northern and Western Arizona, Uber · Jun 2015 to Apr 2016

- Ran early market operations across Northern and Western Arizona.

Education

- University of Arizona: B.A. History with a Hydrology minor (Honors). Study abroad: Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica.