

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: 10/05/2026

YOUR NAME: Frederick (Rick) Lopez

HOME ADDRESS: [REDACTED] ZIP: 86001

EMPLOYER: ReMax Fine Properties JOB TITLE: Real Estate Agent

E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED] LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN FLAGSTAFF: 65 years

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.*

Frederick Lopez
Applicant Signature

Rick Lopez

Letter of Interest for Appointment to the Flagstaff City Council

October 5, 2026

Mayor and Members of the Flagstaff City Council
City of Flagstaff
Flagstaff, Arizona

Re: Appointment to the Vacant City Council Seat

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council:

I respectfully submit my interest in returning to the Flagstaff City Council to fill the vacant seat. I have lived in Flagstaff for most of my 77 years, and few people share my combination of local history, civic involvement and enduring love for this special place that I continue to call home.

I want to continue the work I began during my City Council service from 1992 through 2000 and have carried forward through community involvement and advocacy. Flagstaff must be more than a great place to vacation or own a second home. It should be a thriving year-round community where longtime residents can stay, public and private schools can succeed, employers can provide good-paying jobs, and middle-income earners and first-time homebuyers can afford homes within our city limits. Our goal should be to finally retire the phrase "Poverty with a View."

The experience and perspective I would bring include:

- Eight years of prior service on the Flagstaff City Council, with firsthand knowledge of municipal budgeting, land use, transportation and public policy.
- More than three decades of experience in real estate and residential finance, with direct knowledge of housing affordability, mortgage lending and the needs of buyers and sellers.
- Executive leadership and personnel-management experience in major retail operations, along with longstanding relationships across local government, business, housing and community organizations.
- A demonstrated willingness to listen to residents, work constructively across differing viewpoints, question escalating costs and exercise independent judgment when community concerns warrant it.

My public and professional service has always been grounded in a commitment to Flagstaff's entire community. I bring institutional knowledge, current involvement in housing and public-safety issues, and a record of working collaboratively while making difficult, independent decisions. My prior Council experience, continued engagement in city issues, and strong working relationships with current and former Councilmembers, mayors, city and assistant city managers, division managers and staff would keep my learning curve minimal and provide the foundation for me to make a significant contribution to the City immediately.

I sincerely hope to earn your support for this important appointment. I would be honored to serve Flagstaff again and work with each of you on practical policies that protect our community's character while expanding opportunity for the people who live and work here.

Respectfully,

Rick Lopez

Flagstaff City Council Questionnaire

Rick Lopez | Draft responses for review

1. What makes a good Councilmember?

A good Councilmember understands that they work for the entire community, including residents who did not support them. Personal agendas must remain secondary to the public interest. Every resident deserves to be heard, and no single organization or interest should determine the outcome.

I respect the knowledge and work of city staff, but Councilmembers have a responsibility to ask hard questions. Recommendations should be supported by verifiable information, realistic costs, and a clear explanation of the benefits and possible unintended consequences.

Good decisions also require perspective. We should learn from policies that worked and those that did not, consider reliable data and past community surveys, and respect Flagstaff's history and cultural significance. Common sense belongs in that process as well.

A good Councilmember is accessible, engaged in the community, and willing to explain a decision—even to someone who disagrees. My approach is to listen carefully, evaluate the evidence, and make the best decision I can for Flagstaff as a whole.

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

Housing attainability, particularly the opportunity to own a home, is Flagstaff's biggest challenge. Too many people who work here cannot afford to buy here. Since the city declared a housing emergency in 2020, rising home prices have pushed that opportunity further out of reach.

When households move outside the city, many still return for work, school, medical appointments, shopping, and other daily needs. That adds traffic and makes it harder for our investments in transit, bicycle routes, and walkable neighborhoods to serve those households effectively.

We need to turn the housing emergency declaration into measurable action. I support clearer and more predictable development requirements, shorter review timelines, and zoning that allows a wider range of homes where infrastructure can support them. We should evaluate city-owned land, ownership assistance, and targeted fee relief tied to enforceable affordability commitments.

Housing and transportation decisions should be coordinated so more residents can live near jobs and services. We must protect public safety, water resources, and community character while examining requirements that add cost without a demonstrated benefit. Council should establish specific goals and regularly report whether our policies are helping residents afford a home.

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

My three priorities are addressing our housing crisis, creating an environment for higher-paying jobs, and making it possible for more residents to build a lasting future in Flagstaff.

First, housing policy should expand attainable options for both ownership and rental housing. Homeownership can provide long-term stability, while attainable rentals are essential for residents at different stages of life.

Second, we should work with existing businesses, NAU, and regional partners to support better-paying employment. We should collaborate more closely with ECONA to identify where our policies are working, where they are falling short, what we are missing, and how to address those gaps effectively. Predictable city processes, dependable infrastructure, and housing employees can afford all help employers retain workers and invest here.

Third, our decisions should strengthen Flagstaff as a year-round community. Second-home owners contribute to our economy, but people who live and work here also need a realistic opportunity to stay. That means considering the cost of living, dependable public services, and the quality of our neighborhoods in every major policy decision.

The reason is simple: Flagstaff has the attributes to be one of the most desirable places in the Western United States to live, work, raise a family, and retire. We need practical policies that make those opportunities available to more people and help maintain a stable community and workforce.

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?

I would go to them and invite a conversation. A Councilmember should not always expect residents to come to City Hall. Some citizens work two or three jobs and cannot attend weekday Council meetings. Others question whether speaking up will make any difference.

Renters who want to become homeowners are an important example. Many feel that ownership is beyond their reach and that the city is not moving with enough urgency to make more attainable homes possible. Their absence from Council meetings should not be mistaken for a lack of interest or need.

I would meet with residents at times and places that work for them, ask what barriers they face, and bring those concerns into the policy discussion. Their experience should help inform decisions about housing supply, development requirements, and incentives that produce a clear public benefit.

Before deciding, I would consider their input alongside reliable information and the needs of the broader community. I would also explain how their concerns influenced my decision. Being accessible means making the effort to hear people whose schedules or circumstances keep them from participating in the usual way.

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?

During my service on the Transportation Committee, there was significant disagreement about how to structure a transportation bond proposal. Most committee members wanted to place all recommendations into a single ballot question. I recommended two separate questions and explained why our past experience mattered.

I reminded the committee what happened in 1996, when the Fourth Street overpass and the other transportation recommendations were presented together. The combined proposal failed at the ballot box. Two years later, the recommendations were presented again, but the Fourth Street overpass was separated into its own ballot question. That approach was successful.

Drawing on that history, I encouraged the committee to give voters the opportunity to consider the proposals separately. The committee agreed with my recommendation and forwarded three separate ballot questions to City Council. Council approved the recommendation, and the bond election was successful.

I helped resolve the disagreement by bringing relevant experience into the discussion and showing how a different approach had worked before. For me, good leadership means learning from past decisions, explaining your reasoning clearly, and helping others reach a practical solution that serves the community.

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

My leadership style is best described by a compliment I received while managing a Bullock's department store with more than 200 employees: "quietly effective."

When my divisional manager was promoted to oversee a larger group of stores, another general manager asked whom he would miss most. He said, "Rick Lopez." His explanation was simple: when he visited my store and made suggestions, I followed through. When he returned, the work was done. I did not complain or make a production out of it; I got the job done.

That description has stayed with me because it captures what I value in leadership. Listen carefully, understand what needs to be accomplished, and take responsibility for following through. Results matter more than drawing attention to yourself.

On Council, that same approach means doing my homework, asking necessary questions, working constructively with colleagues and staff, and staying focused on the outcome. I will speak firmly when an issue requires it, but my goal is to help make sound decisions and see them carried out. Quietly effective does not mean passive. It means dependable, persistent, and accountable.

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

Having served on City Council from 1992 to 2000 and on multiple planning and bond committees, I am familiar with Flagstaff's zoning and development requirements. My real estate experience also gives me a practical understanding of how those requirements affect housing choices and costs.

I believe decades of restrictive development policy have contributed to our affordability problem. The former Land Development Code, adopted in 1991, was replaced in 2011, but we still need to examine requirements that add obstacles and costs without a corresponding public benefit.

The current LASS-CAP process seeks to remove barriers to land development in the hope of reducing housing construction costs. Those savings have yet to be demonstrated, but I strongly support bringing the proposed reforms to Council for consideration. We should pursue clear, predictable requirements while protecting public safety and community resources.

My concern is urgency. Based on the timeline city staff has described, developing policies for the various parts of the code could take 12–18 months, followed by another two to three years after adoption before we can evaluate whether the changes are working. As we enter the seventh calendar year since declaring a housing emergency, I do not believe we have demonstrated sufficient progress toward attainable homeownership. I would press Council and staff to advance reforms sooner where feasible, establish clear milestones, and report results. Residents need to see that our housing emergency is being treated with urgency.

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?

First, I would ask whether the city's seven key priorities reflect the priorities of the community as a whole. Residents' concerns about housing, cost of living, jobs, and traffic should be central to that discussion. Community surveys give Council an important way to hear from people who cannot attend budget meetings.

I attended one priority-based budgeting meeting where only four people showed up. That experience reinforced my concern that meeting attendance alone is not enough to establish what residents want. Limited participation can leave staff and Council perspectives carrying more weight than the broader community's needs.

Council has a responsibility to review survey findings, seek additional input where needed, and explain how the proposed budget responds to residents' concerns. We should not assume we have the community's priorities right simply because we held a meeting.

At the same time, the budget must be financially responsible. Essential services, legal obligations, reserves, and long-term maintenance costs must be accounted for. I would ask for clear options and tradeoffs, including how spending decisions affect household affordability.

Council sets policy and spending priorities, and staff provides financial and operational analysis. But Council owns its budgeting decisions, right or wrong. Failing to align the budget with community priorities can lead to the wrong choices. I would take responsibility for those decisions and work to ensure our budget reflects what residents need and what the city can sustainably afford.

Rick Lopez

Resume for Appointment to the Flagstaff City Council

Flagstaff Arizona

Professional Profile

Longtime Flagstaff resident, former City Councilmember, real estate professional and community advocate with experience in municipal policy, economic development, transportation planning, mortgage lending, housing and large-scale retail management. Known for listening carefully to residents, working across different perspectives and pursuing practical solutions that balance affordability, responsible growth, public safety, mobility and protection of Flagstaff's character.

Public Service and Community Leadership

Flagstaff City Councilmember | 1992–2000

- Served as Council liaison to the Youth Commission and represented the City through the Greater Flagstaff Economic Council and Flagstaff's first Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Secured funding for an after-school program in partnership with Flagstaff Unified School District; the program continues to serve the community.
- Helped obtain funding for the Sunnyside Improvement District to address longstanding concerns regarding curbs, gutters and sidewalks.
- Advanced a voter-approved ballot question for the Fourth Street crossing at Route 66.
- Supported removal of billboards throughout Flagstaff and assisted with negotiations involving 3M that avoided major litigation.
- Cast the lone Council vote against the proposed Switzer Mesa parkway after listening to extensive community concerns regarding environmental impacts and the project's growth from an approximately \$50 million ADOT-funded arterial to an approximately \$100 million project requiring a 50–50 local funding split. Voters later defeated the proposed bond.

Southside Community Specific Plan Committee | 2018–2020

- Participated in development of the Southside Community Specific Plan, adopted by the Flagstaff City Council in September 2020.

Transportation Bond Committee | 2017–2018

- Helped formulate recommendations for three measures approved by the City Council and subsequently supported by voters: Proposition 419, Connecting the Community; Proposition 420, Lone Tree Overpass; and Proposition 421, Public Transportation.

Public Safety Committee | 2026

- Helped recommend one bond measure and one sales-tax measure that the City Council referred to voters for the November 2026 election.
- Advocated successfully for REALTOR® association support of both measures and a \$5,000 contribution to the public-information effort through the firefighters union political action committee.

Housing and Government Affairs Leadership

Workforce Housing Advocacy | 2022–Present

- Advocated on behalf of the Northern Arizona Association of REALTORS® for greater urgency in expanding attainable workforce homeownership in Flagstaff.
- Met with City Councilmembers, the Mayor, City Managers Gregg Clifton and Joanne Keene, and planning leaders Michelle McNulty and Tiffany Antol to discuss development costs, approval timelines and barriers to homeownership.
- Contributed recommendations reflected in portions of the LASS-CAP proposals scheduled for City Council consideration during 2026 and 2027.

Professional Experience

Dates	Position and Organization
2002–Present	Real Estate Agent, Flagstaff Residential representation, negotiation, market analysis and client service. Brokerage affiliations include Prudential Foothills Real Estate, RE/MAX Peak Properties and RE/MAX Fine Properties.
1988–2001	Mortgage Loan Officer, State Savings Mortgage, Scottsdale Advised borrowers on residential financing and managed loan origination and client relationships.
1977–1987	Store Management, Bullock's Department Stores Management assignments in Scottsdale, Phoenix and Westwood, California, including responsibility for major retail operations and large employee teams.
1974–1977	Store Management, Babbitt Brothers Trading Company Management assignments in Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, Page and Tusayan.
1972–1974	Assistant Manager, Yellow Front, Flagstaff

Education

Northern Arizona University | Philosophy major

- Coursework for a Bachelor of Arts Degree not completed, 4 hours remain.

Flagstaff High School | Diploma, 1967

Selected Qualifications

- Eight years of prior service on the Flagstaff City Council
- Firsthand knowledge of municipal budgeting, land use, transportation and public policy
- More than three decades of experience in real estate and residential finance
- Executive leadership and personnel-management experience in major retail operations
- Longstanding relationships across local government, business, housing and community organizations
- Demonstrated willingness to listen to residents, question escalating costs and make independent decisions

Community Commitment

My public and professional service has been grounded in a commitment to Flagstaff's entire community. I bring institutional knowledge, current involvement in housing and public-safety issues, and a record of working constructively while exercising independent judgment when community concerns warrant it.