

## Community Character Focus Group Agenda

**October 28, 2010 Thursday – NOON to 3 p.m. – Aquaplex Meeting Rooms**

❖ *Lunch will be served at 11:45 a.m.*

Agenda:

**12:00- 12:30** Welcome & Opening Remarks

*Kimberly Sharp & Karl Eberhard*

Why this is important & Big Picture thinking

- Purpose of the Regional Plan – what do ‘policies’ do, anyway?
- State Legislation
- Review of Open House public comments – *see attached summary – appendix 1*
- Regional Plan Outline – under ‘Community Character’ & State Statute Requirements - *See Complete ‘Regional Plan Outline’ – appendix 2*

○ **Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Element**

- “Identify city programs that promote home ownership, provide assistance for improving the appearance of neighborhoods and promote maintenance of both commercial and residential buildings in the neighborhoods”
- “Identify city programs that provide for the safety and security of neighborhoods”.

○ **Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Element**

- “Plans and programs for: (a) The elimination of slums and blighted areas; (b) Community redevelopment, including housing sites, business and industrial sites and public building sites; and (c) Other purposes authorized by law.” *See ‘Redevelopment’ public comments from Economic Development Focus Group – appendix 3*

○ **Community Character & Urban Design Element**

- “Inventory and overall plans for: (a) historical sites; (b) natural viewsheds; (c) streetscapes; (d) corridor plans; (e) neighborhood plans; and (f) public art.”

*See all existing Regional Plan (2001) ‘Community Character’ Goals & Policies – appendix 4*

**12:30 – 2:00** Two break-out Groups:

1. **Neighborhoods:** preservation, redevelopment, recreation and public spaces

*Meeting Rm A*

2. **Urban Design:** Gateways, Historic preservation, viewsheds, streetscapes, planning and public art

*Meeting Rm B*

**2:00– 2:45 p.m.** Reconvene and ‘map’ it out

*Bob Caravona*

- Each group gives summary results & one big picture GOAL from each
- Overlap? Gaps?
- Big ‘Community Character’ picture & relationship to land use and transportation
- Zoning and Design Guidelines – a couple of examples of how the Regional Plan policies for Community Character are implemented.

## Breakout Groups (90 minutes)

### Breakout 1: Neighborhoods: preservation, redevelopment, recreation and public spaces

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**Facilitated by:** *facilitators – Kimberly Sharp & Tiffany Antol*

**Questions asked:**

- a. How would you define:
  - i. ‘Neighborhood Preservation’?
  - ii. ‘Neighborhood Revitalization’?
  - iii. ‘Redevelopment’?
  - iv. ‘Slum and blight’?
- b. What are the biggest obstacles for neighborhoods?
- c. Existing Policies which have worked in the past
- d. Existing Policies which have NOT worked in the past, and why

**Information provided:** *Neighborhood Map; Neighborhood investments 2000-2010; Map of Parks, recreation amenities, schools, public spaces, and FUTS.*

### Breakout 2: Urban Design: Historic preservation, viewsheds, streetscapes, planning and public art

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**Facilitated by:** *facilitators – Mark Sawyers & Bob Caravona*

**Questions asked:**

- a. How would you define:
  - i. The Flagstaff ‘Character’- built environment
  - ii. Historic Preservation?
- b. Public Realm:
  - i. Note (by photo examples) open house discussion of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ examples?
  - ii. What type of standards would improve the ‘Character’ of all streets and roads?
    1. Neighborhood streets
    2. Arterials (Milton; Fourth Street)
    3. Highways (ADOT Route 66; Ft. Valley Road)
- c. How important are viewsheds to protect? How?
- d. What role does Public Art play in the Flagstaff ‘Character’?
- e. Existing Policies which have worked in the past
- f. Existing Policies which have NOT worked in the past, and why

**Information provided:**

- Map of Historic Overlay Districts; Historic Districts; Historic Trails map
- Public Art & Beautification Project Locations map – money is being invested where?

**Appendix 1: Summary of ‘Community Character’ Open House Comments**

Full comments available on-line at: <http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=12427>

Open Houses were held: NoHo Neighborhood Mtg (7/24/10); Heritage Square (8/6/10); La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood (8/11/10); Sunnyside Neighborhood (8/12/10); Farmer’s Market (8/15/10); Ft. Valley Coconino County (8/17/10); Farmer’s Market (8/18/10); Southside Community (8/26/10)

**Best examples of community character:**

Landscaping and urban agriculture  
Front porches  
Public art, festivals and cultural events  
People walking and riding bikes, FUTS trails  
10 minutes to wilderness from anywhere  
Dark skies  
Macy’s outdoor ‘third place’  
Examples:  
Heritage Square  
Downtown  
Wheeler Buffalo, & Thorpe Parks  
NAU Old Main  
Remax building on Riordan  
Riordan Mansion  
North Country Health

**Worst examples of community character:**

MILTON ROAD (#1 answer)  
Dangerous pedestrian crossing and lack of sidewalks  
Absentee landlords – residential and commercial – run-down properties  
Vacant and distressed properties  
Overflowing trash and litter  
Oil tank refinery in town  
Bright lights, especially residential  
Fort Valley Road – overhead lines, dilapidated fencing  
Homelessness  
Examples:  
Development of McMillan Mesa  
4<sup>th</sup> Street Kmart Building

**Streets that are ‘Places to BE’:**

Heritage Square  
Aspen, Birch and Cherry Avenues around library  
Beaver Street at Macy’s  
San Francisco Street  
Leroux Street  
Route 66 from Steves to Beaver  
Cedar Avenue – coming over the hill

**Streets that are ‘Places to Pass Through’:**

Milton Road  
4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Butler from Little America to Milton  
Humphrey’s  
Clay Avenue

**How our built environment can be as beautiful as our natural environment:**

Colors that reflect our environment  
Natural and local materials  
Buildings that age gracefully  
Low profile, energy efficient  
Human-scale  
Preserve historic character  
Outdoor eating  
Increase parks and landscaping  
Street trees  
Open Space  
Dark Skies  
Sidewalks and bicycles everywhere

## **Appendix 2: Regional Plan 2012 - Table of Contents**

- I. Introduction**
  - A. Flagstaff Region Description
  - B. Purpose of Plan
  
- II. Executive Summary**
  - A. Overarching Themes: (1) Smart Growth Principles; (2) Sustainable Flagstaff
  - B. Element Overviews
  
- III. Vision & Guiding Principles**
  
- IV. Planning Framework**
  - A. Boundaries
  - B. ARS Authorization
  - C. Administration
  - D. Relationship to Other Entities
  - E. Relationship to Other Planning Documents
  - F. Amendment Process
  
- V. Community Profile**
  - A. Growth Trends
  - B. Existing Land Use and Capacity
  - C. Demographics & Statistics
  - D. Regional Context
  
- VI. Environmental Quality**
  - A. Environmental Planning Element
  - B. Open Space Element
  - C. Water Resources Element
  - D. Conservation Element
  - E. Energy Element
  
- VII. Community Character**
  - A. Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Element
  - B. Conservation, Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Element
  - C. Recreation Element
  - D. Public Services & Facilities Element
  - E. Public Buildings Element
  - F. Safety Element
  - G. Community Character & Urban Design Element
  
- VII. Development/Transportation/Growth**
  - A. Land Use Element
  - B. Housing Element
  - C. Growth Areas Element
  - D. Circulation Element
  - E. Bicycling Element
  - F. Cost of Development Element
  - G. Economic Development Element
  
- VIII. Monitoring & Implementation**
  - A. Annual Review – Community Indicators
  - B. Implementation Priorities: (1) Short vs. Long Term Action Needs; (2) Collaboration
  
- IX. Appendices**
  - A. Glossary
  - B. Bibliography
  - C. Acknowledgments
  - D. Other Resources

### **Appendix 3: ‘Redevelopment’ Focus Group Comments, May 27, 2010**

#### **Definition of redevelopment:**

- From the Regional Plan “Redevelopment includes infill as well as replacement of facilities within the community, but such efforts are carefully balanced with heritage preservation and community design goals”.
- Enhance what we have

#### **Best most recent redevelopment projects:**

- Sawmill (40 acre in-fill, in-progress); Heritage Square (dirt lot to the ‘heart’ of town); Lumberyard Brewery (historic preservation, public-private partnership);

#### **Redevelopment focus for Flagstaff:**

- Make underutilized properties usable
- Efficient development – use infrastructure in place and reduce sprawl
- Emphasize Infill with existing infrastructure (*Infill Incentive Policy needed*)
- Floodplain elimination – strategies of what to do when Rio is complete
- Mixed- use – appropriate where?
- Light manufacturing, industrial, tech. space
- Affordable housing options
- Places to focus on (area plans):
  - Route 66
  - Fourth Street Corridor
  - Milton Road
  - County
  - PMO esp. for older neighborhoods
- Development impact fees – can only be waived in infill incentive districts (AZ State Statute)
- Infrastructure needs – water supply, sewer, aging pipes,

## **Appendix 4: Existing Regional Plan Goals & Policies under 'Community Character'**

### ***Policy LU1.9—Promote Quality Design***

The *Regional Plan* promotes quality design and development. Particular emphasis shall be placed on improved character of the public realm, including attention to streetscape design, and sensitivity to neighborhood character and context for new development in or near existing neighborhoods. Quality design shall be an important element in successful infill development and redevelopment. In addition, plan policies have been developed which address design standards that minimize risks due to natural hazards, such as floods and wildfire.

## **GOAL C2**

**Downtown Flagstaff will continue to serve as the focal point of the community, as established by development intensity, land use, building height, and high quality urban design.**

### ***Policy C2.1—Reinforce the Role of Downtown***

The role of Downtown shall be reinforced by making Downtown more accessible; supporting a variety of uses as a focal point for the entire region; improving the appearance of the area; and promoting the preservation of the original architecture of historic buildings.

## **COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN**

## **GOAL CD1**

**A sense of connection will be maintained in the built environment to the region's natural setting and dramatic views.**

### ***Policy CD1.1—Preserve the Character of the Region's Natural Setting***

The character of the community shall be protected through design that maintains views to the San Francisco Peaks and other significant landmarks, retains sloping landforms, and conserves stands of ponderosa pines and other native vegetation.

### ***Policy CD1.2—Protect the Region's Mountains and Canyons***

The mountains and canyons are an essential part of the character and beauty of the region, and they shall be preserved and protected to the maximum extent practicable.

### ***Policy CD1.3—Protect the Region's Topographic Features***

Protect topographic features that define neighborhood boundaries. Assets of the existing topography shall be protected by the manner in which development site work is completed.

### ***Policy CD1.4—Protect Forested Settings, Key Entry Points, and Corridors***

The presence of forested settings and viewsheds are key features in the region and present particularly strong experiences at entry points to the community and along key highway corridors. Their character shall be retained and enhanced.

### ***Policy CD1.5—Continue Interagency Coordination for Development and Protection of Wildlife Habitat and Corridors***

Continue coordination between governmental agencies which provides early identification of potential development areas that are attractive to wildlife and that create nuisance problems and conditions that are dangerous to people and/or wildlife.

## **GOAL CD2**

**The Flagstaff region will continue to protect its unique character that reflects its forested setting of ponderosa pine trees, piñon and juniper vegetation, and meadows through quality design and development. Emphasis will be placed on quality design in both the public realm—streets, civic buildings, and other public spaces—as well as the private realm—commercial buildings, work places, and housing. Preservation of vegetation and wildlife are part of the quality design and development process.**

### ***Policy CD2.1—Develop City and County Design Guidelines***

The City and County shall establish guidelines to ensure that its physical character and built environment are enhanced by thoughtful, quality design.

### ***Policy CD2.2—Develop a Streetscape Design Plan***

Streets shall be designed with consideration to safety and visual character, in a manner that is visually appealing. Shade trees, medians and parkways, a variety of colors and materials for landscape, and other amenities shall be included in the streetscape as appropriate to regional, district, or neighborhood street functions.

### ***Policy CD2.3—Support Enhanced Civic Design***

*Flagstaff Regional Plan – Focus Group 5: Community Character  
October 28, 2010 – AGENDA*

Civic facilities, such as community buildings, government offices, recreation centers, post offices, libraries, and schools, shall be placed in central locations as highly visible focal points. The urban design and architectural quality shall express quality design, permanence, importance, community identity, and sensitivity to climate.

***Policy CD2.4—Preserve Cultural and Historic Resources***

The quality of life in the Flagstaff area shall be enhanced by the preservation of historic resources and inclusion of heritage in the development of the city and region. Historic buildings shall be considered for preservation and reused to provide a sense of connection with the past.

***Policy CD2.5—Promote Design that Supports and Enhances a Positive Image and Identity for the Region***

Place emphasis on the blending of design and materials in ways that have meaning and reflect the local heritage and harmony with the natural environment.

***Policy CD2.6—Promote Sustainable Design Technology***

City and County codes and ordinances shall not inhibit the use of sustainable design technology and shall, instead, actively promote the use of these technologies in the design and construction of new developments and facilities.

***Policy CD2.7—Protect the Character, Quality, Historic and Architectural Patterns of the Historic Districts and Other Neighborhoods***

The planning and design of changes to neighborhoods should respect traditions, identifiable styles, proportions, shapes, streetscapes, relationships between buildings and yards and roadways; use historically appropriate and compatible building and structure materials for the historic district.

***Policy CD2.8—Promote Restoration of Historic Buildings, Sites and Districts***

Preserve and improve the quality of housing and other buildings, structures and neighborhoods through their restoration and rehabilitation.

***Policy CD2.9—Collaborate with Residents to Stabilize, Protect and Improve Historic Districts and Other Neighborhoods While Maintaining Affordability and Viability***

Involve residents in the process of planning and obtaining financial and technical assistance for the protection, stabilization, affordability and viability of their neighborhoods.

**Natural and Cultural Resources - Goal**

**High standards will be maintained for protection and improvement of the region's quality of life offered by its natural and cultural, historic and archaeological resources and its natural environment.**

***Policy NCR1.9—Protect Dark Skies***

Protection of dark skies and conservation of energy shall be undertaken by minimizing the detrimental effects to the region's quality of life and astronomical observing conditions.

***Policy NCR1.10—Protect Archeological and Cultural Resources***

Historical, archeological, and cultural resources shall be identified and preserved through restoration or adaptive reuse, as links between past, present, and future generations. Any discovery of aboriginal human remains or archaeological materials shall be reported to the appropriate federal or state agency as required by applicable laws.