



## Planning and Development Services Report

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April 22, 2015



**TO:** Planning and Zoning  
Commission

**THROUGH:** Dan Folke, Planning Director  
Mark Sawyers, AICP, Current Planning Manager

**FROM:** Sara Dechter, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager

**RE:** P&Z Commission Work Session April 22, 2015 – Specific Plan for  
La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood, Working Draft

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### Executive Summary

Since July 2014, City staff and La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Association (LPVNA) have been collaborating to update the *Specific Plan for La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood*, originally drafted in 2012. This renewed effort included forming a new project team, regular meetings with the neighborhood association and public meetings to look at new information, issues, and potential directions for the plan. The team, which includes two members of LPVNA, has updated the Plan to align with the new Regional Plan, incorporate up-to-date public involvement, and better incorporate the partnership between the City and the neighborhood. The working draft presented in this staff report was distributed for an internal and legal review on April 8, 2015. Since then the team has been working on updating the concept plan and developing a preliminary funding plan. It is our goal to make it available for a 60 day public review in the beginning of May.

### Recommended Action: Commission Discussion and Direction

No decision is requested at this time. Staff is requesting feedback from the Commission on the working draft of the Plan, particularly on the usefulness of the goals and policies in evaluating future development projects. The comments provided will be incorporated into the public review draft.

### Background

#### ***What is a specific plan and what are the procedural requirements?***

A neighborhood plan is a specific plan, which bridges the strategic goals and policies in FRP30 and the site specific guidelines and standards of the City Codes (i.e. Zoning, Engineering, etc.). Its role in the development review process is similar to the Regional Plan. The Specific Plan will only apply in discretionary decisions and does not impact existing entitlements.

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However, the Plan is also a vision for compatible reinvestment, and therefore will be available as a tool for all developments within the plan boundaries to preserve and enhance the neighborhood character.

The City Code Title 11-10.30 (Specific Plans) states, “The purpose of a Specific

Plan is to provide a greater level of detail for a specific geographic area or element of the General Plan, and to provide standards for the systematic implementation of the General Plan.” This title lays out the requirements for the content of a specific plan and the procedures to be followed in its adoption. The working draft presented today is undergoing legal review to determine that it meets all of these requirements.

City staff held neighborhood meetings in November and January with the required posted sign and mailed notifications. The next steps in the City’s process for review and adoption of the specific plan will be:

- A 60 day public review of the Specific Plan (May-June)
  - Transmission of the Draft Plan to other jurisdictions
  - City Council Work Session
  - LPVNA-led meeting
  - Additional public meeting and outreach
- A Citizen Review Meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission (August)
- 2 Public Hearings of the Planning and Zoning Commission (September)
- City Council Hearing and Resolution Adoption (October)

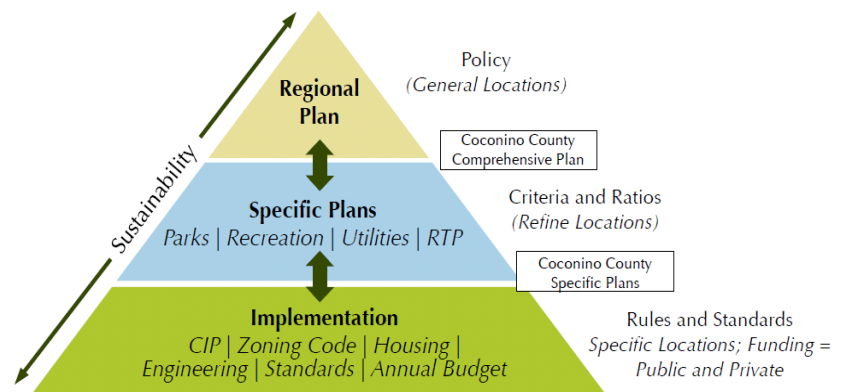
## Public Involvement Summary

### ***Why did LPVNA want to see a comprehensive update of the Plan?***

Following the hearings on The Standard in the summer of 2014, LPVNA petitioned the City to bring forward the Neighborhood Plan that had been put on hold for the Regional Plan work. The Planning Director and Comprehensive Planning Manager set up a meeting with LPVNA to discuss how to move forward with their request. LPVNA members felt a comprehensive review and update was important because they thought some of the language in the 2012 draft had been taken out of context by the developer of the Standard. They wanted to see a Plan with language that is clearer in its direction for the neighborhood, adopted by City Council and may be used to evaluate proposed zoning map amendments.

### ***What have we done and what have we heard through public involvement?***

In November 2014, City staff held a public kick-off meeting for the project. The objectives of this meeting were to inform the public about the process and solicit feedback on the goals, policies and concept plan from the June 2012 draft. At the meeting, participants gave goals



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and policies from the previous Neighborhood Plan red or green dots depending on if they liked the policy or thought it needed to be changed. There was still support for many of the policies in the plan, such as a work program, gateway signage and landscaping, community gardens, the FUTS trail, the need for pedestrian crossings, park improvements, improved property maintenance and neighborhood association programs. Concerns were expressed about the identification of commercial corridors on the neighborhood interior, the mass and scale of mixed use development, the implication of existing zoning entitlements, and providing infill incentives.

In January 2015, staff held two topic-driven public meetings about land use and transportation issues, and an open house. At the land use and transportation meetings, staff shared posters of current conditions and potential improvements and solicited feedback about how these represented their values and desired outcomes. The transportation meeting also included preliminary findings from the Milton Corridor microsimulation model about how traffic on Milton and Route 66 could influence cut-through traffic in the neighborhood in the future and the potential impacts of a Clay Ave. Extension. The discussion around these materials helped inform development of goals and policies that focused on architectural guidelines, historic preservation, pedestrian improvements, streetscapes, traffic calming, transit, and the Clay Ave. extension.

In early March, the Comprehensive Planning Manager shared an early draft of the Plan that had taken into account public feedback with the LPVNA board. The board members discussed refining issues associated with property maintenance, illegal camping near the neighborhood, improvements at parks, potential policy language related to the Clay Ave Extension, traffic calming and signing near mini-rounds, the desire to see specifics in the land use policies, and general strategies for continuing to revise the document.

## The Working Draft

The working draft (Attachment A) is divided into four chapters:

1. **Site and Area Analysis** – describes the social, economic, physical and environmental context of the planning effort.
2. **Concept Plan** – provides a visual illustration of the desired outcome of the goals and policies. These illustrations are not standards or guidelines for future development and do not encumber private property or limit private property rights in any way.  
*For the purposes of this review, a working draft of Concept Plan is provided in Attachment B. Staff is still working on creating 3D illustrations to accompany the map provided.*
3. **Recommended Goals and Policies** – provides area-specific ways of moving forward the goals and policies of the *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030*. They are connected to policies in the Regional Plan and trade-offs of community values and resources. They are written broadly, and are intended to be viable for a 10 to 20 year planning horizon.
4. **Implementation Strategies** - provide a complete and essential picture of how the City and LPVNA can achieve the goals and policies of the Plan. Having strategies as part of the Plan allows both organizations to build partnerships, apply for grant funding, and take advantage of opportunities that arise in the future in a well-coordinated manner. Some of these strategies may not be immediately implementable but may be possible within the 10-20 year planning horizon.

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### **Specific Plan for the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood**

#### ***How does it support the Regional Plan?***

The Specific Plan for the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood supports the Regional Plan by prioritizing policies for a complex area of the city. Every goal in the Specific Plan is designed to make progress toward in one or several Regional Plan goals and policies.

#### ***What is the updated plan different from the 2012 draft?***

The Plan retains many of the concepts from the 2012 draft:

- Gateways and Neighborhood Identification
- Historic Preservation
- Neighborhood Association Programs, such as active public participation, block watch and clean up days
- Focus on maintaining a single family character for the residential part of the neighborhood
- Park, Community Spaces, and Community Gardens
- Pedestrian Crossings and Connections (including FUTS)
- Streetscape Improvements and management of cut-through traffic

Staff has also updated many policy and conceptual elements based on what we heard through public involvement and the direction from the new Regional Plan. Some examples include:

- Expanded architectural guidelines
- Incorporated Regional Plan direction on Future Urban area types, activity centers and neighborhood preservation.
- Divided the neighborhood into 3 sub-areas: Residential Core, Transition Area and Commercial Edge and created policies for the built environment that are tailored to each.
- Included more policies related to commercial and mixed use properties
- Addressed conditional use permits for rooming and boarding.
- Dropped specific policies about home ownership and reinvestment in the mobile home park, because of lack of ability to influence these decisions. Incorporated the interests in seeing more single family homes be available and safe and sanitary housing into other policies and the Concept Plan.
- Narrowed discussion of property maintenance ordinance to specific issues within the neighborhood that are not currently covered by City Code.
- Included more complete goals and policies for interior neighborhood streets and the interface of the neighborhood with S. Milton Rd. and Route 66.
- Policy statement that the neighborhood does not support a Clay Ave. Extension
- Removed Blackbird Roost and Clay Ave from commercial corridor policies
- Less focus on public art opportunities because of negative public feedback.

If you have questions, or require clarification on the contents of this memorandum, please contact Sara Dechter, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager at [sdechter@flagstaffaz.gov](mailto:sdechter@flagstaffaz.gov) or (928) 213-2631.

**Attachment A.** Working Draft of the Specific Plan for La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood – April 8, 2015 version

**Attachment B.** Initial Draft of the Concept Plan – April 15, 2015 version