

Regional Plan Focus Group 1
Land Use, Growth Areas, Circulation & Bicycles

June 11, 2009 - 3-6 p.m.
Aquaplex – 1702 N. Fourth Street

SWOT Analysis Results

LAND USE & GROWTH AREAS	
Strengths	Opportunities
Infill and redevelopment in areas with existing infrastructure. Example: Sawmill	Planning Reserve Areas (PRA's) – appropriate development with variety of housing and preserved resources
Protecting the natural & cultural resources and physical location. Example: international dark sky city	Choice of densities – choice of housing types. 'Variety with common sense' = <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less dense at the edges • Variety of architecture • Affordable options
Diversity of employment/jobs	Transfer of Development Rights
Diversity of housing types are available	Land exchanges between federal and state land agencies
	Cluster development for more shared open space – appropriate location and density of cluster.
Weaknesses	Threats
Inappropriate character of new buildings. Example: Fed Ex building.	NAU exempt from community 'vision,' (exempt from zoning and building regs)
Inability of City to 'hold the line' (or 'stick to the Regional Plan') during development negotiations.	Planning Reserve Areas (PRA's) – high density contiguous to National Forest is INAPPROPRIATE
Cost of living	Inappropriate location of residential.
	Unavailability of land = \$\$\$
	Businesses taking over historic homes = loss of Flagstaff 'character'
	Increased densities on West Route 66 threaten dark sky requirements for two observatories.

CIRCULATION & BICYCLES	
Strengths	Opportunities
Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS)	Bicycle improvements: corridors and arterials
Bicycle System – lanes, trails, maps	Incentives for reduction of car use. Examples could be (staff provided examples): <i>bus eco-passes (employees, jurors, etc.); well-connected trails & transit; retail ‘discounts’ for bike commuting; etc.</i>
Bicycle Friendly – attitude and support	Maintain Flagstaff uniqueness
Mountain Line transit system	Preserve wildlife corridors with all circulation decisions
Newer Neighborhoods are better designed – keep this up! Example: Inclusion of trails, bike lanes, transit stops and sidewalks.	Re-use, remodel and redevelop existing vacant business structures before building new business structures.
Short commute relative to other areas	Use available Federal \$\$
	Increase citizen involvement in transportation decisions
Weaknesses	Threats
Milton congestion overall	Wildlife preservation
Lacking Freeway & Railroad overpasses	Losing recreation corridors to new roads
Lack of Milton & Fourth Street bikeways	Road standards that encourage high speeds
Roads are not designed or maintained for their intended purpose. Example: Milton was intended as regional highway but has become a “main street”.	
Communication – awareness of the Regional Transportation Planning process.	

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Public Focus Group Comments

Neighborhoods Represented:

Cherry Hill, Ponderosa Trails, Upper Greenlaw, Lake Mary Road, Sunnyside, Summit, East Flag- Elden Foothills, Sedona, NAU, Doney Park, McMillan Mesa, Foxglenn, Coconino Estates, Continental Country Club, Kachina Village, Downtown, Boulder Pointe, Swiss Manor, Timberline, 4th Street, Woodlands Village, Forestdale

Question posed:

What would your ideal community be?

- Looks Good
- Trees everywhere
- Active Downtown
- Homeownership
- Tone down new urbanism
- House with a yard
- Own a single family home- preference is still the house with a yard
- Museums
- University
- Unusual mix of employment- needs to be recognized
 - Do not lose what we are as we move forward
- Medical center & providers
- Regional Airport
- Can walk everywhere you need to go
 - Affordable
 - Lot sizes not too big or constrained
- Denser Housing needs to accommodate adequate parking
- Climate/ outdoor activities/ diversity/ community
- Emphasis is on Single Family rather than high density
- Enjoys walking everywhere
- Idea- Affordable
- Convenience of Bike Trails
- Good Size (of city)
- Diverse community, outdoors
- Rural opportunities-horses, etc.
- Limited Growth Ability
- Place in community for rural lifestyle

What are the big land use & growth issues in Flagstaff?

- Need to realize what it is & what it isn't
- Need to reframe what we are
- "Tale of Two Cities" - Downtown + overlying areas with major resources in the forgotten aspects of Flagstaff (4th Street)
- "New urbanism is sprawl- cramming units onto smaller acreages"; Need to tone down and re-evaluate what 'new urbanism' is for Flagstaff
- Put back Vision 2020
- Need to re-look at 2020
- Current Plan favors developers + real estate community
- Downtown v. East Side
- Control west side expansion
- Need to focus on East Side
- For denser housing, know where cars go/park
- Limit ability to grow- University, Airport, How really limited is that growth potential
- Westside- Current RP is incompatible w/ Westside created by Flagstaff Ranch- lighting codes not sufficient to protect observatory- 120 acres designated mixed use w/ in Zone I
- Fought hard for results last time+ remain happy (Walnut Canyon)
- Water- what population can be supported
- Yavapai Land exchange area- what is going to happen?
- Higher density doesn't prevent running out of land
- Growth boundaries
 - In general yes- in all aspects no

Thoughts on the last 10 years?

- Like sawmill development, unsure what it will be
- Presidio community unto itself
- Bad- Presidio- Tree Density trade-off scraped commercial areas
- Bad- Gated communities
- Rio homes- no where to park
- Rather town not grow at all
- Feathering of densities
- Juniper Point- Activity Center
- Expansion of Mall Well Laid out
- FED EX Facility – looks worse then hangex

Thoughts on Density?

- Preserve variety- market driven economy
- Keep lower densities around observatory
- Walkable community
- Diversity- Density in central areas, but - lower density at the fringes
- Less Dense Around Edges- especially sensitive areas
- Non Traditional Architecture in higher density areas
- Mixed- Increase affordability
- Why so much housing on highways?
- Conversion of houses downtown for commercial – is this good?

What changes to land use designations should there be?

- Happy with existing
- West Side- uses in conflict with “compact” and “continuous”
- Concern to Naval Observatory
- Mixed Use Designation
- Need affordable housing and public transportation
- Should re-visit 2020
- PRA’s hanging out there
- What is the future of Forest Service Areas
- What population can the water supply support?
- Concern with Fed Ex, what’s happening around the airport – inappropriate architecture

1,200 people per year = 500 units per year @ 3.5 dpu → 142 acres per year – too much

Does our current plan support the type of neighborhoods we want?

- Overall- yes; in details-not always
- How to help existing neighborhoods?
- Outside of city limits – where are the activity centers?
 - KV-sense of community center is not there
 - Timberline – like living in country, but do not want to drive 10 miles to get milk or eggs

Why are we growing?

- NAU, GORE – good jobs
- Secon home market
- Big 300k homes w/ front yards- this development will not support all future growth
- County- Many do not want paved roads, street lights, or a market at the end of our street - we want to live in the country.

Thoughts on State Land?

- (Sections 22,28,30) = Priority state land parcels to preserve
- Area by walnut canyon is so archeologically delicate
- County-→ protect Roger's lake
- Picture Canyon = preserve and protect whole section by BUYING IT. Or protect the corridor.
- "We'll let you have section 20" – How high do you want to go?
- Not appropriate to have really high densities next to Forest Land
- Bond \$ for open space [ballot measures] - cannot purchase as much land as previously anticipated
- Camp Navajo may acquire surrounding land

What sticks out? (New Development)

- Most stick to the plan
- Bad example: Presidio removed 90% of trees
 - Retail scrapped
 - Traffic impact
- Concern with Presidio- not well knit with the rest of the community
- Good example: Sawmill-redevelopment of area with no trees, infrastructure in place
- Rio Homes- no place to park
- Villaggio- averaging densities instead of feathering from 7 to 5 to 3 per acre
- Juniper Pt- activity center in SE corner- can only be supported if Section 26 is developed
- Bad example: Fed EX
- Bad example: Silver Addition to Bio building at NAU
- Should not have any more gated communities
 - Should be able to walk through

What are appropriate Densities?

- Staff presented the following definitions based upon Urban Planning standards:
 - Single Family-4 units per acre
 - Town Houses- 9 units per acre
 - Condos- 13-15 units per acre
- Preserve variety
- Determined by market and what sells
- Lower densities near observatory
- Higher density in core where infrastructure exists
- Increase in density probably inevitable , if for no other reason, cost
- Reserve fringe areas for later
- Less dense around edges, helps protect adjacent F.S. lands
- Not as jumbled architecture in high density areas
- No Town Houses that are garage dominated
- Why is there so much housing adjacent to the interstate?
 - Could offices or other uses be there as a buffer
 - Prefer residential North of downtown rather than commercial