Executive Summary
Since July 2014, City staff and La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Association (LPVNA) have been collaborating to update the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan, 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. Before the Plan goes to public hearings for adoption in October 2015, staff is seeking input from city commissions on the Plan’s policies and implementation strategies. All recommendations gathered from city commissions will be incorporated into the final public hearing draft of the Specific Plan for La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood.

Recommended Action: Commission Discussion and Direction
1. Staff is requesting direction from the Historic Preservation Commission on the Specific Plan’s related policies.” Staff would like to hear from the Commission on the following items:
   - Historic Preservation related goals, policies and implementation strategies
   - The goals, policies and implementation strategies for compatible redevelopment of the Neighborhood Core which has potential to affect the context of the most historic eligible structure
   - Comments on the Old Town Springs Master Plan and Implementation Strategy 3.1
2. Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission make recommendation for Council to adopt the Specific Plan for La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood, including any conditions the Commission may wish to include.
Public Driven Issues and Concerns
City staff received feedback from several neighborhood meetings, and many comments focused on the historic core of the neighborhood and the Old Town Springs Park. Staff heard the following concerns from the public over the course of the year’s public meetings:

- Neighborhood character in La Plaza Vieja is defined by the historic homes. The public wants to see their scale, yards, setbacks, design and architectural details replicated in new homes and redevelopment of the commercial areas.
- Preserving the existing housing is a priority for affordable housing and for historic preservation.
- The public wants to see more owner occupied single family homes in the neighborhood.
- An inventory of Lower and Upper Coconino Avenues is a highly desired product for the community.
- The neighborhood’s history should be displayed at the parks with interpretive panels and plaques.
- The display of the American flag is missed by neighborhood families, who used to raise the flag daily. The neighborhood has felt slighted that two other possible sites for the original Flagstaff Townsite have permanent flags on display, but Old Town Springs Park lost theirs when the City was not able to pay a volunteer to raise the flag on a daily basis.

The update of the Plan included a Historic Context Report of the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood. The draft was prepared by Annie Lutes of SWCA and is meant to be a starting point that can be amended by multiple authors and researchers for furthering the historic preservation of the neighborhood. The Report recommends that:

- The period of significance for the neighborhood be defined by houses built or moved to the neighborhood by 1954.
- The City and neighborhood should pursue further research into the origin and development of the neighborhood and its residents,
- The Plan should identify the historic district/core and the goals and objectives of preservation.
- The City and neighborhood should update and expand 1993 / 2009 historic building survey,
- The City should identify primary areas of preservation, further identify neighborhood property types and the inherent characteristics of a property that either contribute to or detract from the neighborhood’s historic character, and
- Old Town Springs Park should be evaluated and assessed for significance on a local, state, and national level and identify path to preservation. Consider restoration efforts for the spring.

Priority of Implementation Strategies
The La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Association identified the following Implementation strategies as their top priorities for historic preservation efforts in the planning area:

1. **Implementation Strategy 8.4**: Continue historic research into the origins, ethnography, and migration patterns of the La Plaza Vieja in order to support applications for landmark overlays and potential historic district designations by SHPO.

2. **Implementation Strategy 8.2**: The City of Flagstaff Zoning Code has a “Landmark Overlay District” mechanism to protect structures aged 50 years and older. For eligible houses in La Plaza Vieja, the Planning Director may submit applications to add historic buildings into the Landmark Overlay District with property owner’s permission.
3. **Implementation Strategy 8.3**: Encourage groups of historic property owners who want to work together to submit an application for a preservation grant to the SHPO with the help of the local Historic Preservation Officer at the City of Flagstaff.

4. **Implementation Strategy 8.3**: Conduct an inventory of eligible historic structures along Lower Coconino Ave., W. Coconino Ave. and Spring St.

**Summary**

La Plaza Vieja’s historic properties and characteristics are a central principle of the proposed Specific Plan. The related goals, policies and implementation strategies result from months of public input and evaluation of the conditions in the neighborhood. While some resources are in poor condition, there are opportunities for reinvestment in the physical and cultural past of the neighborhood that would benefit the residents and the larger Flagstaff community.

If you have questions, or require clarification on the contents of this memorandum, please contact Sara Dechter, Comprehensive Planning Manager, sdechter@flagstaffaz.gov

**Attachment A.** Historic Preservation Excerpts from the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan

**Attachment B.** La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Historic Context Report 1901–1954, Prepared by Annie Lutes

**Attachment C.** Background information on Specific Plans and the Regional Plan
Historic Preservation Excerpts from the
La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan
Site and Area Analysis

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The styles of architecture represented in La Plaza Vieja are similar to those in other areas of Flagstaff that historically coincided with large-scale, national trends. In particular, these style movements included the national or vernacular folk tradition (1850–1930), the Craftsman bungalow (1905–1930), and the Minimal Traditional type (1935–1950) that became a popular design of post-World War II houses (McAlester 2013). Locally, these style trends appeared in La Plaza Vieja between ca. 1901 to ca. 1954.

In 1992, the portion of La Plaza Vieja south of the railroad tracks was inventoried for historic resources as part of an application to the State of Arizona for a National Register Historic District. Based on information gathered at that time, 53 properties were inventoried as having historic potential; however, there may presently be additional buildings that qualify for historic designation. Significant remodeling or alterations of the structures and lack of maintenance have contributed to the State Historic Preservation Office ruling that the area does not rise to the level of a historic district. Since the 1992 inventory some of the properties have been destroyed, some have been restored, and some further altered. Map 3 shows the location of the remaining structures that were part of the 1992 inventory and identifies other structures that may potentially be historic resources but need further evaluation.

Two areas of La Plaza Vieja stand out as residential streets with contiguous historic and compatible structures: Clay Avenue and Tucson Avenue. Both streets have at least one block where the majority of the structures have been inventoried and have historic integrity, but their condition is variable.

The homes on Clay Avenue were moved from their original locations in the early 1950’s and are the last remaining examples of AL&T workforce housing in the City. All built between 1892 and 1901, these residences are primarily national/vernacular cottages, designed with a T-shaped layout, intersecting gable roof with enclosed eaves, and weatherboard or clapboard siding. Stucco was applied to some of the residences. A few of these residences experienced alterations that added Craftsman-style details, such as exposed rafters, with California-style bungalow inspirations of offset entryways and stucco exteriors (McAlester 2013).

One of these AL&T company houses is an example of an early vernacular cottage, built around 1892. A basic house with simple form, it is a unique example of the “double-ell” cottage popular in other neighborhoods in Flagstaff at the end of the nineteenth century. The symmetrical front gables are separated by a shed-roofed porch between the modestly styled ells (Woodward Architectural Group 1993). Another house unique in its design is the AL&T company house
now at 907 West Clay Avenue. With its massed-plan layout, this box-shaped residence has a hipped pyramidal roof, demonstrating the pyramidal family of the national folk housing tradition (McAlester 2013).

**Map 1: Historic subdivisions and Buildings Inventoried for Eligibility**

**Figure 2:** Adaptive Reuse of the Historic Armory on Clay Avenue
Goals and Policies

PRESERVING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

GOAL #6: Reinvestment consistent with neighborhood character

In each area – the Neighborhood Core, Transition Area, and Commercial Edge (see Map 13) - revitalization, redevelopment and infill development occurs in a manner compatible with the character of the built environment as defined by the scale, pattern, materials, and colors of historic residences and landmarks.

Related FRP30 Goals: Policy LU.1.2: Develop reinvestment plans with neighborhood input, identifying the center, mix of uses, connectivity patterns, public spaces, and appropriate spaces for people to live, work, and play. Policy LU.1.3: Promote reinvestment at the neighborhood scale to include infill of vacant parcels, redevelopment of underutilized properties, aesthetic improvements to public spaces, remodeling of existing buildings and streetscapes, maintaining selected appropriate open space, and programs for the benefit and improvement of the local residents. Policy LU.1.12. Seek fair and proper relocation of existing residents and businesses in areas affected by redevelopment and reinvestment, where necessary.

POLICY 6.1: Redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities that do not require the relocation of existing residents and businesses are preferred to those that displace them.

GOAL #6N: Preserve the Neighborhood Core as a predominantly single-family neighborhood

Single-family residential cottages with yards are the primary building type in the Neighborhood Core with compatibly-designed accessory dwelling units and duplexes that do not dominate the block or street as an element of the urban neighborhood.

Related FRP30 Goals: FRP30 identifies the Neighborhood Core (see Error! Reference source not found.) as an Urban neighborhood within the pedestrian shed of three Activity Centers. Policy NH.1.2: Respect traditions, identifiable styles, proportions, streetscapes, relationships between buildings, yards, and roadways; and use historically appropriate and compatible building and structural materials when making changes to existing neighborhoods, especially in historic neighborhoods.

POLICY 6N.1: Small lot and block sizes are retained north of Clay Avenue to preserve the small cottage feel and open space within La Plaza Vieja.

POLICY 6N.2: Combination of residential lots to create a larger lot is compatible with the La Plaza Vieja character when it does not allow for increasing height, proportions, and building massing of permitted development above what is typical for the block or street.

POLICY 6N.3: Single family cottages facing the street with landscaped front and back yards and an optional smaller “carriage house” in back are the preferred building types in the Neighborhood Core.

POLICY 6N.4: Development within the Neighborhood Core is compatible with the single-family residential character. Compatible development includes:

- Buildings with mass bulk and scale at the pedestrian (street) level consistent to adjacent blocks.
- Larger buildings with upper floors stepped back for consistent frontage with adjacent residences.
- Front entrances facing the street as the primary entrance.
- Front porches, landscaped yards and facades that are consistent with surrounding context.
Introduction

- Maintained landscaping in the front yard for rental and owner-occupied houses.
- Locally-appropriate building materials.
- Gabled and hipped roofs.
- Low malpais walls to separate front and side yards from the street.
- Garages designed as a secondary structure or entrance, set back from the house frontage.
- Setbacks consistent with other houses along the street.
- Windows and doors along the building frontage with similar scale, design, and proportions to historic residences.

Examples of incompatible development within the Neighborhood Core include but are not limited to: A-Frame houses, houses with two-car garages that are not set back from the main house, and new mobile homes.

POLICY 6N.5: Provide adequate parking on-site for residential units in the Neighborhood Core. It is preferred that on-site parking be located along the alley or behind the main residence.

POLICY 6N.6: Have development applicants improve alleyways from the property to the road, when used as the primary access for infill residences (per Zoning Code 10-30.50.070).

POLICY 6N.7: Preserve, enhance and restore historic single family homes; whenever possible.

POLICY 6N.8: Encourage property owners to plant and maintain deciduous trees that shade the sidewalk in the summer where there is no parkway strip for street trees.

PRESERVING HISTORIC IDENTITY

GOAL #8: Preserve historic structures and landmarks

Increase historic preservation opportunities for property owners who want to receive assistance from City staff to assist in preservation efforts.

Related FRP30 Goals: Goal CC.2: Preserve, restore, and rehabilitate heritage resources to better appreciate our culture.

POLICY 8.1: Identify, support, and encourage the preservation of eligible historic buildings and landmarks in the Neighborhood Core and along the commercial corridors.

POLICY 8.2: Incorporate the historic context of the Hispanic community, Route 66, the railroad, and the lumberyard in the formation and transformations of La Plaza Vieja through the design of future redevelopment projects.

POLICY 8.3: Celebrate and preserve the rich history of La Plaza Vieja through partnerships that encourage research and collection, interpretive signs, and programs and education for all ages.

POLICY 8.4: Promote adaptive re-use of historic residences, Route 66 hotels, the armory, fire house, and school buildings over demolition. Assist property owners with reinvestment through grants and partnerships.
Implementation Strategies

PARKS AND COMMUNITY SPACES

GOAL #3: ENHANCE PARKS MAINTENANCE, DESIGN, AND CONNECTION

Implementation Strategy 3.1: Enhance Old Town Springs Park (Many of these strategies are reflected in the Master Plan for Old Town Springs Park, which is a part of the Concept Plan in Chapter 2)

- Enhance the landscaping and signing on both sides of the park to provide an attractive entrance from either West Coconino Avenue or Lower Coconino Avenue. Maintain the existing sign at the north entrance to the park, which was built by neighborhood families.
- A new flagpole and American flag can be provided to mark the Old Town Spring as a significant historical site in Flagstaff. A small light can be installed at the top of the flagpole so that the flag can be flown permanently.
- Consider historically themed playground equipment when replacing or expanding.
- Add a second porta-potty near the parking area to accommodate large parties that use the park’s ramada, and indicate a limit on available parking spaces in the ramada rental permit (on and off-site).
- Consider having the Old Town Springs Park a first come, first served facility so that it is more available to the local families who advocated to have the park created.
- Interpretive signs can be installed to highlight the historic importance of the site and spring in local history.
- The spring in the park could be set apart from the surrounding grass and restored ecologically to some extent by improved drainage features and the introduction of native spring vegetation. Irrigation would be needed for establishment of new plants.
- Incorporate native stone seating areas and low-profile decorative walls to better delineate the spring and extend the gathering space.
- Install commemorative plaques for each of the pine trees planted by neighborhood families along Coconino Avenue.
- Cut back the overgrown juniper trees along the northern slope of the park so that the view of the pine trees above is improved. Add a decorative bicycle rack and new park lights to ensure attractive pedestrian safety and access.

PRESERVING THE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

GOAL #6N: PRESERVE THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE AS A PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD

Implementation Strategy 6N.1: Consider a maximum lot size for R1N in the Neighborhood Core through an overlay or other zoning code update.

Implementation Strategy 6N.2: Consider requiring an administrative design review for new single-family houses in La Plaza Vieja in order to encourage consistency with the goals of the Plan.

Implementation Strategy 6N.3: Incorporate elements of the architectural and landscaping policies and details from La Plaza Vieja’s built environment into an overlay zone for the planning area.
## Implementation Strategies

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<tr>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Strategy 8.1</td>
<td>Consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the purpose of repackaging a proposal for smaller targeted historic districts within La Plaza Vieja, such as the relocated AL&amp;T houses on Clay Avenue, Lower and Upper Coconino Ave. and the homes along Tucson Avenue.</td>
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<td>The City of Flagstaff Zoning Code has a “Landmark Overlay District” mechanism to protect structures aged 50 years and older. For eligible houses in La Plaza Vieja, the Planning Director may submit applications to add historic buildings into the Landmark Overlay District with property owner’s permission.</td>
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<td>Implementation Strategy 8.6</td>
<td>Create a partnership between the City, LPVNA, and NAU that provides students with experience in historic neighborhood research and preservation. LPVNA may use this partnership to find grant funding for a paid intern to work for them as part of a 1-year fellowship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Strategy 8.7</td>
<td>LPVNA and the City’s Historic Preservation Commission may work together to apply for grant funding to create a network of digital and real world interpretive opportunities to inform residents and visitors about La Plaza Vieja’s rich history and vibrant past. Examples may include: historic plaques on residences and businesses, guided tours, Quick Response Code (QR code) driven self-guided tours, etc. Leverage student volunteers, local non-profits, historic resource professionals, and City resources to support this effort.</td>
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La Plaza Vieja’s historic integrity is largely defined by its historic single family cottages. The homes are primarily wood, one to one and a half stories tall and have simple architectural styles. Several families in the neighborhood have receipts from the AL&T lumber mill store for the wood used in building their homes (Figure 46). Corbels under the eaves of homes are a common architectural detail. Floor plans are simple “L,” double-“L,” or square patterns but additions are common. Most homes have a front porch that is included in the front or extends across the entire frontage or a covered stoop. Front yards are usually used as gardens or have steep slopes and decks that allow for views of Flagstaff. Low Malpais walls and fences often separate the front yard from the public sidewalk. Garages are set back behind the home and backyards are often used for parking, sheds and accessory dwelling units. Below are some examples of historic homes in the neighborhood that illustrate these elements of single family cottage design.

Triplexes are not allowed under the current zoning but this property is an example of how rental units can be managed compatibly with the neighborhood character. The exterior of this home is the same, scale, materials and style of other houses on the block. The additional unit was added to the rear. The front yard is fenced and
landscaped and the rear yard provides parking. The landlord even provides garden beds and a bike rack for tenants.

Figure 5: Single Family cottages at 829 and 831 W. Coconino Avenue

The home on the right is a historic single family cottage and on the left, is an infill cottage that was designed to be compatible with the neighboring house.

Figure 6: Single family cottage with covered stoop at 510 W. Tombstone Avenue

This home was recently remodeled on the exterior to remove aging stucco. The owner returned to the wood exterior materials and replaced old eaves and corbels to improve the homes appearance.
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Figure 7: Single Family double "L" home at 923 W. Clay Avenue

Figure 8: Single Family Cottage on steep slope at 208 W. Dupont Avenue
OLD TOWN SPRINGS PARK

This page is subject to update following the August 16th hearing with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Figure 9: Existing Conditions and Conceptual Representation of Improvements
Old Town Springs Park is of particular significance to the neighborhood. The Park was developed through organizing efforts of the local residents and is one of three possible locations of the original “flag of Flagstaff.” During its renovation in the 1980’s, the City also unearthed numerous archeological resources tied to the original business district that was located along the railroad.

These illustrations demonstrate how the improvements under Implementation Strategy 3.1 could be achieved in the Old Town Springs Park. The overall desire of this plan is to improve the entrances and appearance of the park by making the spring a focal point. The spring is currently invaded by the adjacent bluegrass and this proposal would include removing the current vegetation and replacing with native sedges similar to those found in hillslope springs in Thorpe Park (i.e. Carex geophila, C. occidentalis or C. duriuscula). The low wall around the spring would mimic the low rock walls seen in front of residences on the adjacent streets.

The sign on the north side of the park would be maintained because it matches the sign at the neighborhood entrance at Florence Ave. and Clay Ave. These signs were designed and installed by neighborhood residents.

New lighting in the park would be similar to what has been installed at Bushmaster Park for ease of maintenance and appearance. A small LED light would be added to the top of the new flag pole so that the American flag can be flown at all times. This is the practice at Frances Short pond and in front of the Chamber of Commerce, which are also considered possible sites of the original “Flagstaff flag pole.”

This illustration also shows the addition of interpretive signs to provide details of the natural and cultural history of the park and surrounding area. A plaque along the sidewalk would also identify that each of the spruces along the north side of the park was planted by a family from the neighborhood as a part of Flagstaff’s centennial celebrations.

Figure 10: Illustration of Improvements to enhance Old Town Springs Park