Planning and Development Services Report

August 26, 2015

TO: Transportation Commission

THROUGH: Jeff Bauman, Traffic Engineer
Dan Folke, AICP, Planning Director

FROM: Sara Dechter, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager

RE: Transportation Commission Meeting, September 2, 2015
Specific Plan for La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood

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 Fall 2015, staff is seeking input from City Commissions on the Plan’s policies and implementation strategies. Recommendations gathered from City Commissions will be incorporated into the public hearing draft of the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan.

Recommended Action: Commission Discussion and Direction
1. Staff is requesting direction from the Transportation Commission on the Specific Plan’s road, bicycle and pedestrian related direction, specifically the policies and implementation strategies for Goals 10 through 15 and the Concept Plan. Staff would like to hear from the Commission on the following items:
   a. The Clay Avenue/McCracken Street Extension and alternative scenario,
   b. Street cross-sections in Concept Plan,
   c. Policy 13.1 and 13.2 as inputs to a future corridor plan
   d. FUTS trail and on-street bicycle connections
   e. Bicycle and pedestrian crossings of the rail road, Milton Road and Route 66
   f. Traffic calming and streetscapes
2. A recommendation for Council to adopt the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan, including any changes the Commission may endorse.
Transportation-related Issues and Concerns

City staff received feedback from several neighborhood meetings, and many comments focused on transportation within and along the La Plaza Vieja’s boundaries. Staff heard the following concerns from the public over the course of the year’s public meetings:

1. Congestion issues along Milton and Route 66 should be addressed within the corridor and not in the neighborhood.
2. Cut-through traffic on Clay Avenue is a major concern of neighborhood residents.
3. Improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure within the neighborhood has broad support.
4. On-street parking near Old Town Springs Park on Lower Coconino Avenue is a concern on weekends because of large groups renting the ramada.

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.

Attachment A. Transportation excerpts from the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Plan
Attachment B. Background information on Specific Plans and the Regional Plan
Transportation Excerpts from La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Plan

Please note that formatting in this document may not match the draft plan.

Chapter 1 Excerpt

TRANSPORTATION

ROADS
The existing road system in and around La Plaza Vieja consists of major arterials (South Milton Road and Route 66), minor collectors (Clay Avenue, Blackbird Roost), local neighborhood streets (i.e., Tombstone and Tucson Avenues), and alleys (see Map 2).

Both South Milton Road and West Route 66 are Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) jurisdictional roads, and the intersection is one of the most congested in Flagstaff. The congestion on these roads has impacted the ability of La Plaza Vieja residents to move in and out of the neighborhood on foot and by vehicle. Blackbird Roost and West Route 66 is not a signalized intersection but is frequently used in conjunction with Clay Avenue as a bypass when the intersection at Milton Road and West Route 66 is congested. This intersection is also frequently used as a pedestrian crossing by residents going to the pharmacy, shopping, restaurants, or grocery stores.

In the interior of La Plaza Vieja, road conditions have recently been improved by the water and sewer project funded by the 2010 tax collection ballot which also updated water and sewer lines (see Error! Reference source not found.). Through this project, neighborhood traffic circles were installed at three intersections to slow traffic cutting through La Plaza Vieja’s residential areas. Traffic is consistent throughout the day, and is fairly light overall, except at peak hours. Therefore concerns have been raised about providing a safe crossing near the school and park for residents.

THE REGIONAL PLAN ROAD NETWORK
Because of the congestion issues and evidence of cut-through traffic, the Flagstaff Regional Transportation Plan and FRP30 have proposed a road extension that connects the intersection of Butler Avenue and South Milton Road to Kaibab Lane and Woodlands Village Boulevard. The Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Regional Transportation Plan identifies this as a conditional future road, which means that it needs further analysis before the City decides to pursue it or not. LPVNA has opposed this concept because they are concerned that the challenges for bicyclists and pedestrians on Milton Road and Route 66 would be extended further to the interior of the neighborhood by making this connection. In conjunction with a package of transportation improvements that are being considered on Milton Road, the FMPO conducted modeling of Clay Avenue. The modeling was inconclusive as to whether the extension would relieve
congestion, but further study is needed to confirm whether or not the road would benefit the regional transportation system and if the traffic volumes that would be moved to Clay Avenue could be mitigated.

Streets throughout the City of Flagstaff are categorized into functional classifications: arterial, collector and local. Arterials and collectors are further refined into categories of major and minor. Roads are grouped into classifications based on the type of access they provide and the nature of the traffic on them. An arterial serves cross-town and longer distance trips, has a faster speed, and should have more limited driveway access compared to a collector or local road.

Every functional classification of a street has a standard width and composition. A local road has 11 to 21 feet for\n
Map 1: Close Up of Future Road Network (from FRP30)
Black roads denote freeways; blue denotes Circulation; and orange denotes Access. Dashed lines are future roads.

Map 2: Road Functional Classification
travel lanes and parking on either side. Traffic volumes are low enough that bikes share the travel lanes with cars. With sidewalks, parkways, curb and gutter, the total width of a local street is between 51 and 61 feet wide. Minor collectors carry more volume and allow travel at higher speeds and therefore have bike lanes that separate bicycle and vehicle traffic and do not allow on-street parking. They also have a shared turn lane that allows for vehicles making left turns to get out of the travel lane. Their standard width is 70 feet. Cross-sections of road can be wide when they allow for more than 5 feet of sidewalk or FUTS trails to run alongside the road.

The standard for alleys in Flagstaff is that they have a minimum 16 feet of right-of-way and, when paved, 12 feet wide pavement. Alleys in older neighborhoods are often unpaved, but property owners can be required to improve them when an existing alley is used as ingress-egress to required parking.

On the west end of Clay Ave, there is a dirt road that is used for maintenance of the railroad. The road is outside of the City limits and is maintained by BNSF railroad. All City-maintained roads in La Plaza Vieja are paved. The unimproved BNSF maintenance road, private driveways and alleys are often confused for City rights-of-way.
TRANSIT
In the past, Clay Avenue and Blackbird Roost were frequently used for area bus routes because the connection center was located on Malpais Lane. Complaints about the frequency and noise caused by bus traffic and the relocation of the connection center to Southside resulted in buses being routed along Milton Road and West Route 66. La Plaza Vieja still benefits from relatively close proximity to the Downtown Connection Center, without the impacts associated with the connection center being within the neighborhood boundaries. Currently there are three bus routes that use Milton Road between Butler Avenue/Clay Avenue and West Route 66, with frequencies between 20 and 60 minutes. In the future, NAIPTA may determine a need to move one of these lines to Clay Avenue to provide better transit access for the Haven Montessori Charter School, ballpark, and neighborhood residents. This would also provide a better car-alternative to NAU students, who are tenants in the neighborhood but have classes on central and south campus.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS IN LA PLAZA VIEJA
An important step in any transportation planning process is a robust consideration of alternatives. Congestion in and around La Plaza Vieja has been a concern for decades and many options have been considered. As part of updating the Regional Transportation Plan, the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization is conducting traffic simulations for options in this area (see Appendix 4 for details), including:

- Widening of Milton Road to six general purpose lanes;
- Adding outside lanes for bus, bike, and left/right turns;
- A traffic signal at West Route 66 and Blackbird Roost;
- McCracken Street connection and extension as an alternative to the Clay Avenue extension; and
- Clay Avenue configuration alternatives using various mitigation techniques.

Traffic simulations test the assumptions and possible outcomes of these alternatives. La Plaza Vieja’s Neighborhood Specific Plan may also be considered; but ultimately, decisions about transportation alternatives are made in corridor plans and studies.

Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (NAIPTA) is also looking at options to improve transportation service in La Plaza Vieja and regionally. Transit improvements along Clay Avenue may include shelters and bus pullouts. Shelters may be located close to the curb and street or setback behind the sidewalk depending on the site and landscaping. Bus pullouts may be shared space with travel lanes, or they may be dedicated right turn and bike lanes if there is additional shoulder space. A bus pullout may also be located where there is currently on-street parking. The relocation of a bus route and associated improvements is not dependent on a Clay Avenue extension. Improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle network also strengthen transit access as they increase mobility to and from bus stops.

Figure 1: Examples of NAIPTA Bus Shelter
PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Sidewalks are present along both sides of most streets in La Plaza Vieja. Exceptions include:

- The west side of Blackbird Roost between Clay Avenue and Route 66;
- The north side of Phoenix Avenue for the first half-block west of Route 66;
- Two short segments on the west side of Malpais Lane, south of the Haven Montessori Charter School driveway and across the frontage of Dairy Queen; and
- At the ends of several streets – Clay Avenue, Coconino Avenue, Tombstone Avenue, Phoenix Avenue, and Florence Street – where the street dead-ends into BNSF right-of-way.

None of the sidewalks within La Plaza Vieja or on perimeter streets have a parkway strip between the street and the sidewalk. Curb ramps are present at most intersections and have been recently replaced to better conform to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. In 2008, the City and ADOT conducted a walkability audit in La Plaza Vieja with residents and community leaders from the neighborhood. The audit yielded a number of significant observations about the neighborhood’s pedestrian environment.

There is a significant difference in walkability between the streets on the interior of La Plaza Vieja and streets on the perimeter. Milton Road and Route 66 carry of lot of traffic, which can move quickly at times, and the absence of parkways places pedestrians uncomfortably close to the traffic. Walkability on streets within La Plaza Vieja is generally good.

Crossing Milton Road and Route 66 is difficult and creates a barrier for pedestrians on two sides of the neighborhood: both streets are wide, and large curb radii at intersections adds to crossing distance; there are only two intersections along the perimeter streets with crosswalks and traffic/pedestrian signals (Clay Avenue/Butler Avenue/Milton Road and Milton Road/Route 66), and at both of those intersections pedestrian crossing is prohibited on one leg of the street; distances between crossings are long and it is difficult for pedestrians to cross mid-block or at non-signalized intersections.

The crossing for pedestrians at Route 66 and Blackbird Roost...
Roost/Metz Walk is difficult as a result of the speed and volume of traffic, a high number of turning vehicles, the width of the road, and the lack of crossing facilities for pedestrians. The problem is complicated because there is a large retail area south of Route 66 that is a draw for La Plaza Vieja residents and would otherwise be within easy walking distance.

The BNSF tracks along the north side of La Plaza Vieja also create a barrier for pedestrians. There are two well-used but unauthorized railroad pedestrian crossings; one at the end of Globe Street connects the neighborhood to Old Town Springs Park, and a second at the northeast corner of the neighborhood a little west of Milton Road.

Trash, weeds, overgrown vegetation, parked vehicles, and other obstructions are a significant problem at a number of locations.

In 2014, the City of Flagstaff conducted a follow-up assessment of walking conditions and found that problems with sidewalk obstructions have been reduced as a result of enforcement efforts. Most of the other issues still remain. Residents also report that drivers use La Plaza Vieja as a bypass when traffic is backed up along Milton Road. Residents view this non-local traffic as reducing pedestrian safety and adding congestion within the neighborhood. During peak traffic hours, residents feel cut-off from services, and expressed particular concern about crossings to the school and park on Clay Avenue.

**BICYCLING**

Bike lanes are present on Clay Avenue and Blackbird Roost and are part of the City-wide bikeway network. Clay Avenue connects with bike lanes to the east along Butler Avenue, and Blackbird Roost connects with bike lanes to the south on Metz Walk. When Milton Road and Route 66 were resurfaced and restriped several years ago, ADOT added striped shoulders for bicycles on both sides of both streets. In some locations the shoulders are not continuous, for example, the bike shoulder disappears for the duration of the right turn lane from southbound Milton Road to westbound Route 66. Additionally, these shoulders are narrower than typical City of Flagstaff bike lanes, although the width does meet minimum American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials standard dimensions. In keeping with ADOT policy, these shoulders are not signed or marked as bike lanes.

Strava data for Flagstaff indicates that a significant number of cyclists travel through La Plaza Vieja on Clay Avenue, then continue west on Chateau Drive and Kaibab Lane. This route allows cyclists to travel west without riding along West Route 66. Bicyclists traveling to or from La Plaza Vieja face some of the same difficulties crossing Milton Road and Route 66 as pedestrians, particularly at unsignalized crossings at Blackbird Roost and Malpais Lane.

**FUTS – FLAGSTAFF URBAN TRAIL SYSTEM**

At present there are no existing FUTS trails in La Plaza Vieja; however, the FUTS Master Plan...
shows a planned alignment for the Santa Fe FUTS Trail through the middle of the neighborhood (dashed green line in Map 10). This planned trail would begin downtown and travel west generally parallel to the BNSF tracks. The trail would provide direct non-motorized, bicycle, and pedestrian access to downtown for several neighborhoods along the south side of the tracks, including Railroad Springs, West Glen, West Village, Chateau Royale, and La Plaza Vieja. If the road network in this area is expanded then there will be more on-street connections for this trail than dedicated FUTS routes, which is not unusual for an urban area. Within La Plaza Vieja there is not available right-of-way or space to allow a continuous alignment for the trail through the neighborhood. As a result, on-street connections are planned to connect trail segments and create a continuous route. All of the streets – Florence, Malpais, and McCracken – are low-volume, low-speed residential streets that are suitable for cyclists and have sidewalks for pedestrians.

**PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CRASH DATA**

Between 2001 and 2012 there were a total of 11 crashes involving pedestrians and 23 crashes involving bicycles in La Plaza Vieja and on the perimeter streets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Pedestrian</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milton/Butler</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 66/Milton</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton/Malpais</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 66/Blackbird</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton/Phoenix</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton/Tucson</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence/Tombstone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton (mid-block)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 66 (mid-block)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackbird (mid-block)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Locations with the most crashes include the intersection of Milton Road and Butler Avenue (eight total pedestrian/bicycle crashes), Route 66 and Milton Road (six total crashes), and Milton Road and Malpais Lane (six total crashes). There were also six bicycle crashes at mid-block locations along Milton Road adjacent to La Plaza Vieja.

Crashes were more likely to occur at intersections than mid-block, and on busy perimeter streets rather than on the interior of La Plaza Vieja. Ten of 11 pedestrian crashes, and 16 of 23 bicycle crashes, were at intersections. Only two of 11 pedestrian crashes, and none of the bicycle crashes occurred on interior streets in La Plaza Vieja.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severeity</th>
<th>Pedestrian</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incapacitating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-incapacitating</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible injury</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No injury</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Injuries resulting from these crashes were typically fairly minor; seven of the 11 pedestrian crashes were reported as possible or no injury, as were 14 of the 23 bicycle crashes. Three pedestrian crashes and eight bicycle crashes reported non-incapacitating injuries. Incapacitating injuries occurred in one pedestrian crash at the intersection of Route 66 and Blackbird Roost, and one bicycle crash at Route 66 and Malpais Lane. There were no fatal pedestrian or bicycle crashes in La Plaza Vieja.
Chapter 2 Excerpt
The Concept Plan shows an extension of McCracken Street to Malpais Lane and connects it to Chateau Drive to expand the existing urban street grid (Policy 6T.2). The Regional Transportation Plan and FRP30 show the conditional need for a collector that extends from Kaibab Lane to the intersection of Milton Road and Butler Avenue. This conceptual route has often been referred to as the Clay Avenue Extension and has been a source of controversy. The FRP30 also calls for the portion of La Plaza Vieja that is north of McCracken Street/Chateau Drive and south of Clay Avenue as a “Future Urban” area, including a gridded street system. This change in land-use policy presents an opportunity to consider an alternative route for creating connectivity in the regional transportation system (Policy 13.1). The McCracken Street/Chateau Drive alignment has been identified as an alternate to the Clay Avenue Extension by the project team.

The Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO) and the City have conducted operational microsimulations to test the feasibility and benefits of using McCracken Street as the collector route up until Malpais Lane. The model confirms that this alignment could serve the same function as a collector aligned with Clay Avenue. The obvious benefits of this strategy are the creation of more commercial frontage for property owners, and a mixed-use street that reduces traffic volume on Clay Avenue. The challenges are determining how construction of the route might be timed (it is conditioned on the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project), and how the City could pay for it. The La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Specific Plan is not the appropriate mechanism for finalizing those details. Corridor Plans that include operational analysis, cost-benefit ratios, and project design work is the appropriate mechanism for making decisions about road connectivity because they take into account the balance of local neighborhood and regional transportation needs. If a Corridor Plan for the McCracken Street Extension, South Milton Road or Route 66 comes to a different conclusion than the Specific Plan, then that Corridor Plan would take precedence in transportation and

---

**Alternative Streetscape Scenario**

An alternative to a full McCracken Extension connecting to Kaibab Lane would be to realign Chateau Drive to intersect with McCracken Street, and to create only a local street network extending north of the McCracken Street cul-de-sac. In this alternate scenario, Clay Avenue and Blackbird Roost would remain minor collectors (see Appendix 4 for an example of what this would look like). The mid-block extension of McCracken Street and Chateau Drive, in this case, would only have local benefits, such as improved access for snow plows. Therefore, it would likely not connect to Malpais Lane because of the narrow parcel through which it would need to pass. The proposed FUTS path along the Clay Avenue Wash would continue to Malpais Lane without a parallel road; a future connection through this neighborhood was proposed in the FRP30 and would be continued in this plan.
infrastructure decisions (Policy 13.2).

Urban block forms are generally smaller and the roads more connected than suburban area types. The portion of the neighborhood north of Clay Avenue already has a street grid pattern, and any new roads south of Clay Avenue would extend the gridded street network into the commercial areas of the neighborhood. Additionally, completing the grid on the west end of Clay Ave will allow City crews to plow the road more easily. Concept Map 2 depicts increased multi-modal connectivity with new FUTS paths (both on street and new dedicated FUTS rights of way) and with several bike and pedestrian crossings at the edges of the neighborhood.

The new street configuration south of Clay Avenue, the McCracken Street extension, could be connected to the west to allow traffic from Kaibab Lane to access the new minor collector. This would increase the traffic volume on the road and make it more viable for commercial and mixed use development. It would also reduce the amount of cut-through traffic on Clay Avenue. The alignment of this road is only a concept and would roughly follow the Clay Avenue Wash from Malpais Lane until it connects to Kaibab Lane in the West Village subdivision. A final alignment for the road would not be addressed until design work has been completed. This alignment assumes that the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project has been implemented, and would designate the McCracken Extension as the neighborhood’s new minor collector. Clay Avenue and parts of Blackbird Roost would then be downgraded from minor collectors to local streets.

STREET CROSS-SECTIONS

The proposed right of way for new collector streets is depicted in street cross-sections in Figures 19 and 20 respectively. In both scenarios, on-street parking would be allowed for on local streets and bike lanes would be provided on minor collectors. Both scenarios would increase the supply of on-street parking and provide for complete bicycle and pedestrian connections in slightly different ways.

An important element of all streetscapes in the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood is the presence of trees, the majority of which currently exist on private property. Additional street trees, whether they are planted in expanded right of ways with a parkway or in tree wells along the sidewalk, contribute to the enhanced pedestrian environment of an urban neighborhood. The Concept Map 2 shows new trees along many of the neighborhood’s streets as well as along any new rights of way that may result from reinvestment in the area, it is assumed that newly constructed streets will have an adequate parkway to plant trees between the sidewalk and the street. These would primarily occur in commercial and mixed use portions of the Transition Area. Additional trees for improving the pedestrian environment on existing roads would be planted and preserved on the private property just outside of the easement and be encouraged through urban forestry grants and cooperation with the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood Association.

Sidewalks and bike lanes depicted in Figures 19 and 20 are wider than the minimum required by the City’s Engineering Design Standards and Specifications. The additional six inches to one foot of right of way, will make this road more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists and provide higher quality access to the activity centers, corridors, Downtown and NAU.
In order to accomplish construction of new roads in the block south of Clay Avenue, the City would need to acquire new rights-of-way from property owners. There is already a need to acquire land to complete the Clay Avenue Wash improvements, associated with the Rio de Flag Flood Control project in the same location. Streets would add to the needed right-of-way but would also add value by increasing the commercial frontage of the properties. The right-of-way for a minor collector is 69 feet in Error! Reference source not found. and this could be done without removing any of the existing buildings but would displace parking, driveways and fences. The roads could be constructed incrementally as properties redevelop or could be done as a City project to reinvest in the neighborhood and build capacity for redevelopment. If the City proceeds with a project for McCracken Street, property owners would have the opportunity to negotiate the value of the property after receiving an appraisal. When Flagstaff acquires property, like other government entities, the offer gives consideration to the impact of the acquisition on the value of the remaining property.

Figure 4: Cross-Section of a New Minor Collector
Source: www.streetmix.net
Figure 5: Cross-Section of New Local Street

Source: www.streetmix.net
Chapter 3 Excerpt

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL #10: FLAGSTAFF URBAN TRAILS SYSTEM (FUTS)

La Plaza Vieja is a refuge for bicycle and pedestrian traffic through off-road trails that safely connect to and through neighborhood roads to the larger bicycle and pedestrian system. FUTS trails support safe routes to and from the elementary school on Clay Avenue and neighborhood parks.

Related FRP30 Direction: Goal T.5: Increase the availability and use of pedestrian infrastructure, including FUTS, as a critical element of a safe and livable community. Policy T.6.2: Establish and maintain a comprehensive, consistent, and highly connected system of bikeways and FUTS trails.

POLICY 10.1: Plan for FUTS extensions by ensuring that trails and streetscapes are included in the design of redevelopment projects in the Transition Area and Commercial Core, and as part of City infrastructure projects.

POLICY 10.2: Enhance existing and future FUTS trails by constructing well-designed and beautiful crossings, bridges, and underpasses; add landscaping along trails through La Plaza Vieja.

GOAL #11: BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Pedestrian crossings allow residents of La Plaza Vieja to walk and bike safely to businesses and community facilities on the east side of South Milton Road, south side of Route 66, and north side of the BNSF Railroad.

Related FRP30 Direction: Policy NH.1.3: Interconnect existing and new neighborhoods through patterns of development, with complete streets, sidewalks, and trails. Policy T.2.3: Provide safety programs and infrastructure to protect the most vulnerable travelers, including the young, elderly, mobility impaired, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

POLICY 11.1: Continue to work closely with BNSF and ADOT to create opportunities for pedestrian underpasses and bridges to connect La Plaza Vieja to NAU, Downtown, Townsite, and Southside neighborhoods.

POLICY 11.2: When future corridor studies are developed, include improvement of existing crossings and facilities and provide additional pedestrian crossings and facilities on South Milton Road and Route 66 to reduce barriers to walkability for the La Plaza Vieja and Southside neighborhoods and NAU students.

GOAL #12: INTERNAL NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

La Plaza Vieja has a safe and attractive multi-modal streetscape on local streets and minor collectors that provide for the safe movement of traffic and residential parking. A pedestrian-friendly environment encourages walking and biking, enables attractive views, and supports positive street activity.
Related FRP30 Direction: Policy CC.4.1: Design streetscapes to be context sensitive and transportation systems to reflect the desired land use while balancing the needs of all modes for traffic safety and construction and maintenance costs. Policy CC.4.4: Design streets and parking lots to balance automobile facilities, recognize human-scale and pedestrian needs, and accentuate the surrounding environment. Policy LU.10.3: Value the Traditional Neighborhoods established around Downtown by maintaining and improving their highly walkable character, transit accessibility, diverse mix of land uses, and historic building form. Policy T.1.2: Apply Complete Street Guidelines to accommodate all appropriate modes of travel in transportation improvement projects. Policy T.1.3: Transportation systems are consistent with the place type and needs of people. Policy T.3.3: Couple transportation investments with desired land use patterns to enhance and protect the quality and livability of neighborhoods, activity centers, and community places. Policy T.3.5: Design transportation infrastructure that implements ecosystem-based design strategies to manage stormwater and minimize adverse environmental impacts. Policy T.3.8: Promote transportation options such as increased public transit and more bike lanes to reduce congestion, fuel consumption, and overall carbon emissions and promote walkable community design. Policy T.4.1: Promote context sensitive solutions (CSS) supportive of planned land uses, integration of related infrastructure needs, and desired community character elements in all transportation investments.

**POLICY 12.1:** In the event that cut-through traffic is increased as a result of City policy or changes to the management of State highways, provide maximum mitigations to reduce safety risk and provide a comfortable environment for residents, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

**POLICY 12.2:** Phase in traffic calming measures such as roundabouts, curb extensions, bulb outs, and tree plantings on internal neighborhood streets to increase pedestrian comfort, manage speed, and reduce the proportion of cut-through traffic.

**POLICY 12.3:** Incorporate street trees and landscaping plants or public art into traffic calming and sidewalk improvements.

**POLICY 12.4:** Use native drought tolerant plants for streetscapes that will not require ongoing irrigation after the plants have established.

**POLICY 12.5:** Enhance lighting by adding sidewalk level lights on minor collectors within La Plaza Vieja to improve the pedestrian environment, consistent with the City’s dark skies standards.

**POLICY 12.6:** Design future sidewalks, streets, and alleys to include low-impact development features in order to manage stormwater runoff.

**Policy 12.7:** Improve the public street connectivity in the area identified as Future Urban on the Future Growth Illustration (FRP30). Private streets are not compatible in this area.

**Policy 12.8:** Support City efforts to manage on street parking in order to protect neighborhood character.

**GOAL #13: NEIGHBORING GREAT STREETS**

Balance the needs of the regional transportation system and those of residents for safe, multi-modal streets through access and mobility management, intersections and pedestrian improvements, and future studies of the Route 66 and South Milton Road corridors.
**Related FRP30 Direction:** Goal T.1: Improve mobility and access throughout the region. Policy T.1.2: Apply Complete Street Guidelines to accommodate all appropriate modes of travel in transportation improvement projects. Policy T.1.3: Transportation systems are consistent with the place type and needs of people. Goal T.2: Improve transportation safety and efficiency for all modes. Policy T.3.3: Couple transportation investments with desired land use patterns to enhance and protect the quality and livability of neighborhoods, activity centers, and community places.

**POLICY 13.1:** Incorporate into the Regional Transportation Plan update and future corridor studies LPVNA’s concerns and comments that the Clay Avenue extension is incompatible with the preservation of La Plaza Vieja’s character and consider alternatives.

**POLICY 13.2:** Extension of a collector street, such as Clay Ave or McCracken St., through the neighborhood for connectivity should be considered after the functionality and capacity of arterials have been fully studied and maximized. Backage roads should support but not replace arterial functionality.

**POLICY 13.3:** If there is expansion of lanes, road extensions, and other efforts to ease congestion at the intersections along Route 66 and South Milton Road that influence the quality of life in La Plaza Vieja, use Complete Street principles and identify context sensitive solutions to mitigate impacts to residents.

**POLICY 13.4:** Any widening of travel lanes or major intersection improvements should include improved pedestrian features to allow for safe crossings, bike lanes, transit access, and sidewalks.

**GOAL #14: ACCESS TO TRANSIT**

Transit options along Milton Avenue, Route 66, Clay Avenue, and Blackbird Roost will improve mobility for La Plaza Vieja, especially for low-income and senior residents.

**Related FRP30 Goals:** Goal T.7: Provide a high-quality, safe, convenient, accessible public transportation system, where feasible, to serve as an attractive alternative to single-occupant vehicles.

**POLICY 14.1:** Ensure that bus frequencies do not negatively impact walkability and La Plaza Vieja character.

**POLICY 14.2:** Provide appropriate lighting and context appropriate transit stop facilities. Consider opportunities for public art at transit stops.

**POLICY 14.3:** Partner with LPVNA to provide outreach regarding para-transit services for residents to help seniors age in place and to support residents with disabilities.

**POLICY 14.4:** Assist NAIPTA in conducting neighborhood specific outreach when transit changes are proposed that impact the neighborhood.
Chapter 4 Excerpt

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL #10: FLAGSTAFF URBAN TRAILS SYSTEM (FUTS)

Implementation Strategy 10.1*: Construct bicycle and pedestrian trails and on-street connections between La Plaza Vieja and the West Village, Townsite, and Southside neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategy 10.2: Maintain right-of-way for comfortable bicycle and pedestrian access along the Clay Avenue Wash after implementation of the floodplain improvements as outlined in the Rio de Flag Feasibility Report and Final Environmental Impact Statement. If the McCracken Street extension is pursued, the City may limit curb cuts along the south side of the street. The City may also provide a sidewalk in place of a standard FUTS connection if the right-of-way that can be acquired is limited.

Implementation Strategy 10.3: Acquire pedestrian and bicycle access that connects the Guadalupe Park and nearby elementary school to the future FUTS trail to the south.

GOAL #11: BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Implementation Strategy 11.1: Provide a pedestrian crossing at Route 66 and Blackbird Roost to create access to groceries and services. This may be accomplished through a pedestrian-only crossing or as part of a fully signalized intersection.

Implementation Strategy 11.2: Construct a railroad-pedestrian underpass between Florence Avenue and Walnut Street to connect the La Plaza Vieja and Townsite neighborhoods. Incorporate public art designed with input from LPVNA into the structure. If possible, allow passage to be used by vehicles in emergency situations, such as flooding.

Implementation Strategy 11.3: Construct a pedestrian bridge over Milton Road to connect the La Plaza Vieja and Southside neighborhoods. Work with BNSF to place the bridge in their right-of-way.

Implementation Strategy 11.4: Construct an under-grade crossing of Milton Road for pedestrians and bicyclists at or near Malpais Lane that would be a direct access from the Northern Arizona University campus into and out of La Plaza Vieja.

GOAL #12: INTERNAL NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

Implementation Strategy 12.1: Coordinate with the LPVNA for shared responsibilities in applying for grants and maintenance for streetscape and transportation improvements.

Implementation Strategy 12.2: Enhance and maintain streetscapes, dark-sky friendly lighting, and signage through City reinvestment and private property redevelopment. Streetscape improvements

1 The bicycle and pedestrian crossings in this section are listed in order of priority. Not all desired crossing may be possible to implement but they provide aspirations for consideration in future corridor studies.
include, but are not limited to: curb, gutter, sidewalk repair or installations, crosswalks, street lights, street trees, planting strips, and street furniture.

**Implementation Strategy 12.3:** Regularly assess speed limit compliance and the need for residential traffic calming on Clay Avenue and Blackbird Roost. If speed limits are regularly exceeded, consider school zone speed limit restrictions on Clay Avenue at Haven Montessori Charter School to protect children walking to and from school or other traffic calming measures as outlined in the Concept Plan.

**Implementation Strategy 12.4:** Acquire right-of-way to extend McCracken Street to Malpais Lane and create a connection north to Clay Avenue in order to achieve the Future Urban form of these blocks.

**Implementation Strategy 12.5:** Complete missing sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.

**GOAL #13: NEIGHBORING GREAT STREETS**

**Implementation Strategy 13.1:** Ensure any potential extension of a collector road to the west is designed to not increase the number of travel lanes on Clay Avenue, provides appropriate traffic calming, and landscaping, and is designed as a Complete Street in order to preserve the *neighborhood* feel of the street.

**Implementation Strategy 13.2:** Consider the McCracken Street extension as a possible alternative to the Clay Avenue Extension.

**Implementation Strategy 13.3:** Increase right-of-way dedication widths on Milton Road and Route 66 to allow for wider sidewalks and landscaping that support the pedestrian environment.

**GOAL #14: ACCESS TO TRANSIT**

**Implementation Strategy 14.1:** Per NAIPTA’s Regional Five-Year and Long Range Transit Plan, provide bus service on Clay Avenue and Blackbird Roost with neighborhood input.
Appendix 2 – Methodology

Transportation and Infrastructure

Infrastructure, road and sidewalk condition data is maintained by the City’s Utilities, Engineering, and GIS divisions. The data shown for this report is up-to-date as of August 2014 and includes recent construction including replacement of water and sewer infrastructure and street surfaces. This was supplemented by a review of the walkability audit and survey results.

The City of Flagstaff conducted an online biking and walking survey that was supplemented by in-person surveys in health facilities for low-income residents and community events throughout the summer of 2014. The questions posed were administered City-wide but requested information about specific locations from the respondents. For the purpose of this analysis, responses for locations within the boundaries of the Plan were compiled.

The City of Flagstaff conducted a walkability audit in 2008 with residents and community leaders. A walkability audit uses a standard form created by the National Center for Safe Routes to School and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center to assess the pedestrian environment for barriers and conditions that decrease the comfort of the pedestrian. This allows the City to compare different neighborhoods and corridors in a consistent way. In fall 2014, Andrew Hagglund and Tyler Shute, City interns, went out to La Plaza Vieja to check for changed conditions from the original survey. This was primarily to incorporate the changes after the construction work in the summer of 2014.

Crash data and reports were examined for every accident in the area boundary between 2001 and 2012 in order to better understand the pattern of crashes, most of which occur along Milton Road and Route 66. The vehicle movement, condition of the pedestrian or cyclist, and the level of injury were examined in this analysis.
Appendix 4 – Milton Road Microsimulations and Alternative Street Scenarios

The Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO) has been working on operational microsimulations of alternatives for improving access and reducing congestion on the Milton Road and Route 66 corridors adjacent to the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood as part of the effort to update the Regional Transportation Plan. The recommendations of the evaluation are still pending. The results of the study will inform a future corridor study that aligns operational treatments with preferred land uses and urban design. The final study can be referenced at a later date for a full performance evaluation of the scenarios discussed in this appendix.

The microsimulations bundled together improvements along Milton Road, Route 66 and related cross streets and backage roads into varied packages of treatments. Treatments included intersection improvements, pedestrian crossings, and new network connections. The treatments were tested against today’s conditions and future conditions represented by a 20% growth rate in the corridor. Improvements included widening of Milton Road, extensions of either Clay Avenue or the potential McCracken Street Extension and a traffic signal at Blackbird Roost among others. Clay Avenue extension was looked at in early iterations for its potential outcomes but was dropped from future bundles after a consensus was reached that the McCracken Street extension could carry the same volume and would better meet the goals and policies developed for the neighborhood Specific Plan.

Three final bundles will be constructed of the most effective treatments and add alternative transit services as well. The operational performance including traffic delay, queue lengths, transit frequency, distance between pedestrian crossings and more will be reported on. A general assessment of land use policy alignment and relative cost will also be provided.

One bundle will be more urban in nature. It will include the McCracken Street Extension, a fully signalized intersection connecting Blackbird Roost and Metz Walk, a full system of backage roads on the east and west side of Milton Road, and increased connectivity across Milton Road. Preliminary results for this bundle showed higher traffic through the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood than other alternatives and more congestion on S. Milton Road as a result of increased delay at the intersection of Clay Avenue, Butler Avenue and S. Milton Road.

Another bundle will be more suburban and include six lanes for vehicle travel on Milton Road and major improvements to Humphreys and Route 66 intersection. Widening Milton underneath the BNSF bridge was not modeled at this time, because it is difficult to predict when bridge replacement that would allow for 6 lanes will be possible. The third lane on the northbound side of the road instead makes a right turn into the Southside neighborhood on Phoenix Avenue. Preliminary results for this model show that these changes allow for all traffic increases to be handles through the arterial network and congestion would improve.

The final hybrid bundle will include partially widening Milton Road to allow for six lanes between Riordan Road and the BNSF bridge, bus rapid transit improvements, increased connectivity and backage
roads. Like the more suburban bundle, the third lane on the northbound side of the road makes a right turn into the Southside neighborhood on Phoenix Avenue. Preliminary results for this model are not yet available. See the final study for more information.

Map 5: Alternative scenario for streets in La Plaza Vieja Transition Area

Map 5 shows what the road system south of Clay Avenue could look like if the discussion is made not to pursue a collector extension west of the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood and the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project is not pursued. The interior roads would improve the ability to provide winter access, on-street parking and safe bicycle and pedestrian connections. The roads would also help achieve the urban form called for in the Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030. The cut through traffic along Clay Avenue in this scenario would be addressed by expansion of Milton Road to 6 lanes and improvements at the Humphrey Street intersection with Route 66. This would make connections across Milton and Route 66 more difficult for pedestrians, especially senior residents or those with limited mobility but could draw more businesses and services to the interior of the neighborhood to serve their day-to-day needs.
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. 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 content presented today has undergone legal review to determine that it meets all of these requirements.

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.