



City of Prescott  
**General Plan Review Committee**

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February 28, 2024 | 2:00 PM  
201 N. Montezuma Street  
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor  
Prescott, AZ 86301

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Sapio called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Terry Sapio, Chair  
Don Michelman, Vice-Chair  
Andre Carman  
Mary Frederickson - Absent  
Ralph Hess  
Jim Huffman  
Thomas Hutchison  
James McCarver  
Rod Moyer  
Tom Reilly  
Gary Worob

**3. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Member of the public JD Greenberg addressed the Committee regarding the need for public awareness of existing open space and its protection. She feels there needs to be more public involvement in the General Plan process and meetings, and thanked the Committee for their work on the General Plan.

**4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**

A. Approval of the January 31, 2024 General Plan Committee Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION BY MEMBER REILLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 31, 2024, MINUTES WITH A SPELLING CORRECTION; SECONDED BY MEMBER MICHELMAN: PASSED (9 - 0) MEMBER CARMAN ABSTAINED.**

B. Presentation & Discussion from the City Planning Division Regarding the Land Use Section with Land Use Map.

Planning Manager George Worley introduced the goals and strategies for the Land Use Section. He reminded the Committee that the General Plan is a 10,000-foot view and more detailed plans can follow.

Chair Sapio asked if the plan will take into account what was discussed at the City Council Strategic Planning sessions.

Mr. Worley responded that it will be taken into consideration, the Council should

also take into consideration how the citizens vote regarding the General Plan for their future Strategic Plans.

Member Worob asked what the time frame is for the \$93,000 grant received for land use, especially climate and water. It is crucial to the vision and future for Prescott.

Mr. Worley replied that they are not sure yet, but believe it is still in the early stages.

Member Huffman commented that the zoning map and the land use map do not agree with each other.

Mr. Worley confirmed, the zoning map indicates the actual zoning of the property and the land use map indicates what is anticipated for the future.

Member Reilly asked for a description of the difference between a land use map and a zoning map.

Mr. Worley responded that a land use map is a determination of where the city wants something to go, it is future planning for land uses. The zoning map shows the current designations of the land use and controls land use through regulation.

Chair Sapio commented that the council is placing priority on land protection near the airport, and asked if that will change the maps.

Mr. Worley responded yes, he does likely see changes to keep planning for the future. The Planning Commission can recommend changes and the council can approve changes to the maps.

Member McCarver asked if the maps will contain area outside of the current city limits.

Mr. Worley responded that the city does look outside of its current boundaries.

Member Huffman asked how planning maps work with neighboring communities.

Mr. Worley replied they share their plans with the neighboring towns and the county and work together to make them match in land uses where their borders meet.

Member Reilly asked if the General Plan Committee should be making recommendations for the agricultural areas.

Mr. Worley responded that staff can bring the Committee options for the areas.

Member Hess commented that he believes it is ultimately up to the City Council on map change decisions. How often has it been required to change the land use map and what should be considered to prevent that from happening in the future.

Mr. Worley responded that when changes are requested they often do not require

a rezoning, it is something else like a subdivision plat change. Rezoning that do require a map amendment occur about one in five times, typically involving a transition from low-intensity use, such as single-family residential, to something offering more usage options, or an upzoning. The changes from higher to lower intensity are usually permitted by existing district definitions and allowed uses.

Member Worob commented about healthy communities, what are healthy communities, who is funding them, sounds like grants are made available to areas that promote a healthy community especially with open spaces. Feels Prescott is missing out on a lot of opportunities due to no full time grant writer, departments are left on their own with no support. Prescott is in the dark ages in this area.

Member Michelman added that Prescott Valley has completed their General Plan, is there anything from their plan that they are proposing that Prescott needs to take into account.

Mr. Worley responded, yes, they have looked at their planning maps to make sure opposing zonings are not placed next to each other in the neighboring communities.

Member Huffman requested an online series of maps that can be overlaid with the different map options.

Ms. DeWitt responded they will have the maps available online but will have to look into the interactive options.

Mr. Worley commented that they are looking for any ways to make the plan more interactive for the public.

Mr. Hutchison asked about zoning changes and the effect on property values.

Mr. Worley responded that the future land use map does not override existing zoning or property rights. If the map designates an area for a different use (e.g., commercial or high-density residential) than its current single-family zoning, property owners retain their rights. Changing these rights could require compensation if it diminishes property value, though such cases are rare.

Mr. Reilly asked if the Committee should be making recommendations today on suggested use for the vacant areas on the land use map, and if the topic could be placed on a future agenda so members can gather their thoughts on the topic and discuss at the future meeting.

Mr. Worley responded they can plan the topic for a future agenda, would like the Committee members comments either in person at the meetings or via email.

Mr. Reilly commented on the resiliency and sustainability land use segment, how are we addressing the topic with our neighboring communities since we are not in this effort alone.

Member Michelman asked how specific do we want to get in the General Plan.

Mr. Worley responded the General Plan is meant to be general.

Member Michelman commented that he thinks the city needs more commercial to support all the residential.

Ms. DeWitt introduced the section of Community Connectiveness.

Chair Sapio added he would like to include a goal for cellular connectivity to plan for locations for cell towers.

Mr. Worley suggested adding descriptions for areas instead of specific locations on a map.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that a huge part is to protect property values. It is important to plan for cell towers so prospective property owners can purchase knowing there eventually will be a cell tower nearby.

Ms. DeWitt responded they can add that as a goal in the General Plan.

Member Worob commented that a strategy can be to evaluate and map out future areas for cellular technology connectivity.

Councilman Gambogi added that recent proposals to the Planning Commission or City Council often meet opposition, despite representing the entire city of Prescott. Though dissenting voices may seem prominent, they often represent a minority. The challenge is to enforce plans legally, as attempted by Member Hess, despite widespread support from voters who may not fully grasp all details, such as provisions for housing. Deviations from these plans, like rezoning for commercial use, can lead to disputes. Hence, detailed plans are necessary to prioritize community needs, such as safety, ensuring clear understanding and alignment.

Member Hess suggested aligning the goals and strategies with the content referenced in the proposal, such as ensuring pedestrian access to existing open spaces. Even if the details are covered in another section, it's essential for consistency and continuity to reflect referenced content in the goals and strategies. This may involve cross-referencing or expanding on details in separate sections while maintaining coherence throughout the proposal.

Member Reilly suggested including multimodal connectiveness in this section to address interconnectedness between neighborhoods considering access to trails and emergency access and exit points.

D. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Potential Charter Amendments Related to Open Space.

Recreation Services Director Joe Baynes presented the open space topic. He worked with Member Hess to map out open space that the city currently owns. He added that Pioneer Park is leased from BLM (Bureau of Land Management)

and therefore not owned by the city of Prescott. A total of 3,686 acres of open space is owned by the city.

Member Hess advised he would like to protect the open space from being sold in perpetuity.

Chair Sapio asked if the properties were purchased with the intention of selling in the future or keeping them as open spaces.

Mr. Baynes confirmed they were acquired with the idea that they would remain open space.

Member Worob commented that it's crucial to incorporate provisions in the General Plan regarding the maintenance of open spaces, trails, and wildlife corridors. This includes defining responsibilities for maintenance and ensuring a well-thought-out plan for future upkeep. Without proper consideration, there's a risk of neglecting these vital natural assets despite their inclusion in the plan.

Member Reilly added that there needs to be strong language included that specifically addresses what the land can only be used for and makes it difficult for the city to sell.

Member Moyer added that the principle process here is making sure the city does not sell the property especially at a time when they may need money and could deem open space not as important.

Mr. Worley commented that there are other ways with city control to protect the use of specific land such as deed restrictions.

Mr. Baynes suggested other optional wording, like open space or for public purposes and benefits.

Member McCarver commented that the open space should be left as is, since that was the intent of the taxation that acquired the money to buy the designated open spaces.

Mr. Hess advised the input is valuable to have for use at the Charter Review meeting.

Member Carman agreed with the flexibility that land should be protected for open space or other public purposes.

C. Presentation & Discussion from the City Planning Division Regarding Review of Major Plan Amendments.

Ms. DeWitt presented the topic of major plan amendments. She asked if the Committee would like to make it harder or easier to trigger a major plan amendment or leave the criteria as is.

Chair Sapio asked if it has ever been necessary to do a major change to the

General Plan Map.

Mr. Worley stated that it has not.

Member Moyer asked if the reason a major plan amendment has never happened is due to it being too difficult or it just hasn't happened.

Mr. Worley responded that it has been either smaller pieces of land or the larger properties were far enough away from existing residences.

Member Hess confirmed that the 40 acre rule was not in state statute. Feels that any time there is a change in the land use map or the guiding principles, goals or strategies change should trigger a major plan amendment.

Member Michelman commented that he respectfully disagrees, the size is not important, it is the situation that should be looked at. Wants to avoid possibilities of small changes or manipulations to avoid consequences.

Mr. Worley commented that these can cost lots of time and money, time for both staff and Committee members so want to be careful to not make changes that have unintended consequences.

Chair Sapio asked from a planners perspective, what are the thoughts of the current set of rules.

Mr. Worley responded it is difficult to say since there has not yet been a major plan amendment in the City of Prescott. The way it is set up works, maybe change the trigger criteria.

Chair Sapio asked if there has been any projects that they feel should have caused a major plan amendment.

Mr. Worley responded there have been several that the changes were impactful enough to a number of residential properties that a major amendment process may have served the public better.

Chair Sapio asked what the Committee members think of changing criteria to half mile instead of a quarter mile radius.

Member Reilly commented he does not have a problem changing the trigger criteria to a half mile.

Member Hutchison commented what do we expect is going to happen and what gives the city the best opportunity to address those changes.

Member Carman responded that he likes more flexibility and agrees with the half mile suggestion.

Member McCarver asked what are the consequences of going outside the rules of a major amendment.

Mr. Worley commented they apply to the city and if the rules are not met then they do not get processed or they can make changes to fit within the rules.

Member McCarver advised he is on board with the half mile radius.

Member Huffman understands the geometric application but it bothers him to rely on a geometric assessment, would like more details of projects considered and reviewed. He is okay with the half mile.

Member Worob commented that he thinks they need more time to come up with a better rational.

Mr. Worley advised they can bring the Committee some examples of scenarios and see how they feel those fit within the current guidelines or if changes may be a better move going forward.

Member Reilly commented that need to get the definition of substantial down which requires more thought.

Councilman Gambogi commented that they need to get the word out to the citizens that they need to be aware of what is in the General Plan so they know what they are voting for and the majority of citizens are represented in the guiding documents and plans.

Member Huffman commented that he likes the Scottsdale example of their major plan amendment criteria matrix, it is easier to follow.

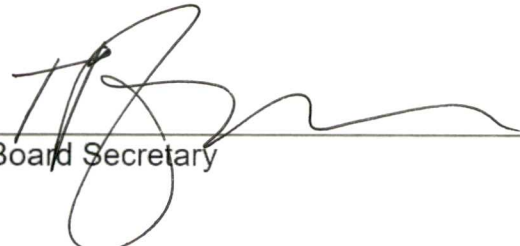
**5. UPDATES**

Ms. DeWitt advised next meeting will be on March 27th and cover the topic of Economic Competitiveness and Prosperity which includes Economic Development, Tourism, and growth and development.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Sapio adjourned the meeting at 4:35 pm.

  
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Terry Sapio, Chair

  
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Board Secretary