



City of Prescott

General Plan Review Committee

March 27, 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
Ralph Hess
Jim Huffman
Thomas Hutchison - Absent
James McCarver
Rod Moyer - Absent
Tom Reilly
Gary Worob

3. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC

A. Member of the public Gary Anderson spoke as a member of the Sundog Disconnect group to request that the 2025 General Plan eliminate any references to the Sundog Connector as was mentioned in the 2015 General Plan.

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- A. Approval of the February 28, 2024 General Plan Committee Minutes.
MOTION BY MEMBER WOROB TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 28, 2024, MINUTES AS PRESENTED; SECONDED BY MEMBER REILLY: PASSED (8 - 0) MEMBER FREDERICKSON ABSTAINED.
- B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Economic Competitiveness and Prosperity Chapter.

Community Planner Tammy DeWitt introduced the topic for discussion.

Member Reilly commented on improving the effectiveness of the General Plan's implementation. He emphasized the need for specific recommendations to move the process forward, pointing out the vagueness of certain terms like "engage" and "enhance" within the document. He urged Committee members to provide ideas for concrete actions to achieve these goals and facilitate effective communication with staff for implementation purposes.

Member Huffman commented that he has concerns about the extensive content in the economic competitiveness and prosperity section, with numerous goals and strategies packed into 33 pages. He suggested creating a condensed version that references a more comprehensive document to prevent overwhelming volume. Additionally, he recommended including information on the significance of different city areas, like downtown and the airport, to give context to their impact, possibly quantifying their size or influence.

Member Hess commented about past instances where the city Council amended development agreements to replace commercial components with residential ones and suggested including language to discourage this practice in the future, as it undermines the city's recognized need for commercial space.

Vice-Chair Michelman recommended using stronger language in the narrative regarding commercial property goals, specifically emphasizing the desire for more commercial properties to be annexed or made available for development. He suggested highlighting this aspect more prominently rather than just including it as part of the goals.

Member Reilly suggested it might be more effective to focus on expressing concerns about the amendment process and the reasons behind them, rather than outright discouragement. This approach could promote careful consideration and transparency in the process, reducing the risk of unintended consequences.

Member Hess stated he is concerned about replacing commercial components with residential ones in development agreements and acknowledged the need for flexibility in amendments and the importance of strengthening the General Plan to prevent harmful changes that could disadvantage residents.

Member Reilly said one of his concerns is the current residential development in the area near the airport and should discourage residential in areas where it is inappropriate.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that there is a need to include commercial in the residential areas to have balanced neighborhoods with services for residents such as restaurants, grocery stores, doctor offices, etc.

Member Hess commented that part of the issue is that businesses will have to want to come to those specific areas.

Member Frederickson commented that she agrees with the wording of discouraging certain types of development in inappropriate areas. She also spoke about the advantages of infill commercial to complement the residential.

Member Worob commented that needs to be discussion about who will fill the jobs in the future, important to have a labor market analysis, where is the workforce coming from and how will they get here.

Community Outreach Director, John Heiney, spoke to the workforce element and workforce characteristics. 38 percent of the population is above the age of 65,

and that number has only risen. By nature, our workforce here is smaller due to the age and demographics of our population. Only 52% of Prescott's total income is earned by the working-age population, compared to 75.9% statewide. This means there are fewer earners within Prescott compared to other areas. Additionally, our wage statistics are concerning, with an average annual wage approximately \$3,000 lower than the state average, which itself isn't particularly high compared to national standards. The aging population here demands service-level workers, yet the challenge lies in their housing affordability on lower wages. Employers consider workforce availability and wages in expansion plans. Many locals commute to Phoenix due to affordability issues, underscoring the complexity of workforce dynamics. Understanding local labor availability and affordability is crucial alongside education for economic development.

Member Worob asked what the incentive is to draw people to Prescott.

Mr. Heiney responded that the lifestyle is attractive, it is a big selling point when talking to people about the possibility of bringing a business to the area.

Member Worob asked if there were any numbers available that would tell us how many people move to the area but work from home.

Mr. Heiney responded he does not have numbers for that factor.

Member Reilly commented that paying a good wage is important, we have some good industries in the area and would like to attract a high caliber workforce.

Vice-Chair Michelman pointed out the need to update the mall name since that just changed.

Member Reilly pointed out that Goal 1, Strategy 1.1 mentions the airport but not the possibility of the airport overlay to explain land use in that area. In Strategy 2.3, what is needed to get a robust broadband service.

Mr. Heiney responded that the inground fiber is the infrastructure needed as well as the providers to support the local connection efforts.

Member Hess asked about Commerce and Industry as referenced in Strategy 2.2 and if there would be prioritizing of interests between the community and the neighborhood. He is concerned that almost everything will have a community interest, when will a neighborhood interest outweigh a community interest and vice versa.

Member Reilly commented that different elected officials will approach that question differently, this is a topic that should be decided by the voters.

Member Michelman commented that it sounds like an eminent domain situation.

Ms. DeWitt advised that they could reword that strategy for clarity.

Member Huffman suggested adding clarification to Goal 1, Strategy 1.4 after the

sentence "plans are current" to emphasize the protection of the airport, such as through the airport vicinity overlay.

Councilman Gambogi commented that drawing from Planning and Zoning Commission experience, these need to be specific. The choice of words is significant, some bring a lot of attention and are hot topic words and some can bring more specificity.

Member Frederickson recommended including a qualifier word to support a significant interest.

Member Reilly recommended adding to Strategy 4.1 the verbiage of without sacrificing the health safety and welfare.

Member Hess recommended replacing the references to gift clause rulings with Article 9 Section 7 of Arizona State Constitution, and he would like unnecessary regulations clarified.

Chair Sapio recommended alternative wording to replace "unnecessary".

Member Hess suggested that in Goal 5 to change the wording to in the past since it references something that will be in the past at the point the public votes.

Member Huffman asked how the website experienceprescott.com is advertised.

Tourism Manager Cristina Binkley responded that experienceprescott.com is important to tourism but also the residents, she works to get the word out every way possible by including the QR code in just about every communication and advertisement.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth spoke regarding Goal 4 adding that the city needs more parking for all the businesses downtown.

Member Reilly asked what the benefit to the city is when residents work from home.

Ms. DeWitt advised that there are a lot of studies coming out that highlight the benefits to the community when workers telecommute.

Member Worob said that he saw a huge relief to companies from the economic responsibility of their workforce when people began to work remotely. Outdoor amenities are a draw to those that can work from anywhere.

Member Reilly commented that the answer would be that it brings higher wage jobs that contribute to the tax base.

Councilman Gambogi commented that there are so many plans, but they are interconnected. If employees can live close to work or telecommute, they use the roads less and reduce traffic, the degree to which it can be mentioned in the General Plan is the degree to which the Council can reference it years down the

road because they are linked.

Member Frederickson asked does the state wanting to reduce parking spots translate to trying to encourage people to take public transportation.

Ms. DeWitt responded that the state seems to forget the rural areas do not have the same public transportation options that the cities do.

Member Hess recommended expanding resources for revenues, changing to make the city less dependent on sales tax.

Member Worob asked if the topic of Community Development Corporations has come up, would like to include that for consideration.

Member Reilly recommended adding a link so readers can learn more about what a Community Development Corporation is.

Member Reilly commented on "Housing Affordability and the Workforce Goals & Policies" Goal 1, Section 1.6, need more details on what a county-wide housing authority looks like before suggesting one.

Member Worob commented that he is against the wording of housing authority.

Member Reilly commented on "Regional Competition and Cooperation Goals & Policies" Strategy 1.4 need to reference CYMPO (Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization).

Vice Chair Michelman asked what Chino Valley's and Prescott Valley's plans look like since they are the adjacent jurisdictions.

Member Hess asked what multi-modal transportation is.

Ms. DeWitt responded it is anything that is not walking, can add a description or definition.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that growth should pay for itself and should be a goal.

Member Frederickson asked what the change in impact fees was in 2019 since 2014 saw a decrease, and how does Prescott compare to other communities' impact fees.

Community Development Director Chelsea Walton responded that other communities provide different levels of services so makes it difficult to provide apples to apples, but staff can check with public works.

Member Reilly commented there was a huge study done in the past that looks at every detail of impact fees, if that has not been done recently it may be time to revisit.

Member Huffman asked what the sources of funding are for building infrastructure, for example the northern area by the airport.

Ms. DeWitt commented that the Council approved the goals of the Workforce Housing Committee so staff will add those to the plan.

Staff Liaison Michael McInnes commented that now that the goals have been approved, next the Workforce Committee will work on the strategies.

Ms. Walton commented that the Workforce Housing Committee has done a lot of research and can now dig into their options.

Member Worob asked if there is fear of section 8 housing, it can open more funding options.

Mr. McInnes responded they did not include lower levels of income below \$49,000 at Council direction.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that affordable housing has been talked about for a long time, but nothing has been done about it, need an actionable item in the General Plan for our community's workforce housing.

Councilman Gambogi commented that no matter what you call it, it is still a topic that the community needs to be educated on its advantages.

Mr. McInnes commented that Goal 9 community outreach can include community education.

Vice-Chair Michelman asked what some examples are of third-party stakeholders or partners.

Mr. McInnes replied that could be realtors, developers or a non-profit.

Chair Sapio asked if down payment assistance has been discussed in the Workforce Housing Committee.

Mr. McInnes replied down payment assistance has been discussed.

Chair Sapio commented that rent payments are similar in price to mortgage payments, how can renters get into home ownership since they have shown they can make those payments, maybe they just need help with the down payment.

Ms. DeWitt commented that there are airport plans that we need to update in the Prescott Regional Airport Section.

Member Huffman commented that in 2015 and in 2017 events that shed light on why we are buying land around the airport currently, it would be helpful to include that history.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that the airport is regional, but Prescott is

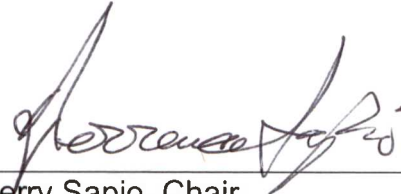
the only one paying for it. Think we pay a lot of money to the county in property tax but do not get a lot of that back. Would like to get the county to have more skin in the game.

5. UPDATES

Next meeting will review the Community Connected Chapter which consists of Circulation, Open Space, Wildlife Corridors, and Digital Connectivity on Wednesday April 24, 2024 at 2 p.m.

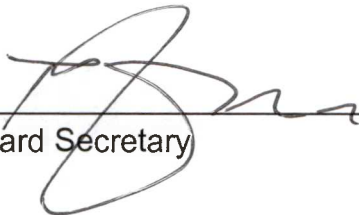
6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Sapio adjourned the meeting at 4:08 p.m.



Terry Sapio, Chair

ATTEST:



Board Secretary