

City of Prescott

City Council - Study Session



January 28, 2025 | 1:00 PM
201 N Montezuma Street
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

AGENDA

The following Agenda will be considered by the **Prescott City Council** at its **Study Session** pursuant to the Prescott City Charter, Article II, Section 13. Notice of the meeting is given pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431.02. One or more members of the Council may be attending the meeting through the use of a technological device.

Viewing & Participation

This meeting may be viewed on Channel 64, Facebook Live or on the City's website: [City of Prescott Live Meeting Feed](#)

Public comments for Council may be submitted through the City website: [Public Comment Form](#)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **DISCUSSION**
 - A. Presentation, Discussion & Request for Direction Regarding the Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds.
4. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a public majority vote of a quorum of the City Council, the Council may hold an executive session, which will not be open to the public, regarding any item listed on the agenda but only for the following purposes:

- (1) Discussion or consideration of personnel matters (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(1));
- (2) Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(2));
- (3) Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the city's attorneys (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3));
- (4) Discussion or consultation with the city's attorneys regarding the city's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation, or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid litigation (A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4));
- (5) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations with employee organizations (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(5));

- (6) Discussion, consultation or consideration for negotiations by the city or its designated representatives with members of a tribal council, or its designated representatives, of an Indian reservation located within or adjacent to the city (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(6));
- (7) Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the city to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(7)).

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Prescott City Hall on 1/23/25 at 4:00 p.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Prescott City Council with the City Clerk.

Sarah M. Siep

Sarah M. Siep, City Clerk



TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA: January 28 Study Session
DATE: January 28, 2025
DEPT: City Manager
ITEM #: 3.A
SUBJECT: Presentation, Discussion & Request for Direction Regarding the Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds.

ITEM SUMMARY

This item is to facilitate a discussion and direction from the Council on a path forward for the Prescott Rodeo Grounds.

BACKGROUND

The Prescott Rodeo Grounds has a long and renowned history. The City of Prescott acquired the Prescott Rodeo Grounds from Yavapai County in June 2007. The property hosts the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, the Auto Club, City of Prescott Offices, and, most notably, Prescott Frontier Days' (PFD) World's Oldest Rodeo. The rodeo has operated from this location since 1913 and is now an integral part of Prescott identity and the economy that supports local business and government. Other events held at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds include the county fair, memorials, the Arizona Junior Rodeo, Toastmasters, and many more.

Due to the age of the facility, and a lack of investment in maintenance and improvements over several decades, there are now significant deferred maintenance concerns that negatively affect rodeo grounds tenants and the neighboring properties. Neighbors are especially impacted during large events when there is increased traffic, parking, light, and sound that often spill beyond the borders of the rodeo grounds and into their neighborhoods and homes.

Deferred maintenance that has accumulated to a cost in excess of \$15 million has also put a strain on tenants of the rodeo grounds. Staff estimates that more than \$10 million in underground utility work (water, sewer, electric) is needed along with major remodel work to improve bathrooms, seating, the medical treatment room, the announcer booth, the sound system, and other existing facilities and equipment. The cost would continue to grow if other improvements were considered such as additional park space, parking facilities to appropriately accommodate events, and replacement or refurbishment of aging barns, offices, and storage spaces. Without the necessary repairs and improvements, tenants are required to operate in inadequate and inefficient spaces that do not meet their needs or the needs of those they serve.

The City of Prescott has an opportunity and responsibility to address these issues, and all others related to the rodeo grounds, that cannot be effectively delegated to a tenant or a collection of concerned neighbors. The City's deferral to these groups has put an unfair burden on PFD, the neighbors of the rodeo grounds, and the community at large. It is regrettable that this deferral has also created conflict that may have otherwise been prevented. Correcting course on this issue includes owning the problems as well as the property and leading a collaborative process to improve the rodeo grounds, mitigate neighborhood impacts, establish appropriate maintenance practices, unify our community, and more effectively and efficiently manage the rodeo grounds for the people of Prescott.

With Council direction, staff is interested in moving forward with at least three phases that will need to be addressed separately and sequentially. First, there needs to be a shared vision for the

property to ensure it is a welcome asset reflective of the high standards of the community at large. Development of that vision would include hiring a third-party consultant with expertise planning spaces like the rodeo grounds. The consultant would be advised by a steering committee consisting of city staff, rodeo grounds tenants and neighbors to the rodeo grounds property. Several public meetings will be needed along the way to ensure the planning effort is reflective of what is wanted for Prescott, adequately mitigating impacts for neighboring properties, and able to support current and future tenant operations.

After the development of a shared vision for the rodeo grounds, consideration should be given to the zoning of the property. This has been a question in the past that the City has not addressed. Clarity is needed before permitting to make the improvements is possible. Should a rezoning be deemed appropriate, the City would be solely responsible for the rezoning effort.

Finally, with clarity around the future of property, the City should revisit tenant leases, including its lease with PFD. Terms should be fair for both parties and reflect the City's responsibility to care for the rodeo grounds.

With Council direction, and better collaboration with our community, the City has an opportunity to hit the "reset" button on the rodeo grounds and lead a collaborative, community-centric initiative to ensure this storied property remains a treasured part of Prescott's future.

There are several alternatives to the recommended action as well. Both PFD and rodeo grounds neighbors have developed plans for the property and one of those could be selected as the path forward. Because these plans have already been completed, this option would save the cost of a consultant in the short-term. Selecting either plan would still be deferring responsibility and, because the plans are currently in conflict, likely contribute to escalating conflict.

The Council could also defer a conversation until more is known about potential funding. The legislature has previously awarded \$15 million to PFD for improvements at the rodeo grounds, though these funds are currently tied up in litigation, and Senator Mark Finchem has stated an interest in pursuing a new allocation for rodeo ground improvements. Any legislative allocation is awarded to accomplish a particular plan and a lack of clarity only puts these funds at risk. Acting sooner rather than later not only advantages potential funding but also unnecessarily extends the existing conflict.

Doing nothing is always an option. While this option could save some funds in the short-term, it would exacerbate many of the concerns.

Staff recommends that the City, as the owner of the rodeo grounds, address the deferred maintenance, neighborhood impacts, and potential improvements at this property. Staff requests Council direction to begin with a collaborative planning process and the establishment of a steering committee to help guide that process.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct financial impact associated with this discussion. The recommended consultant for the planning process would likely cost \$100,000 - \$150,000. Rodeo ground repairs will likely cost at least \$15 million with additional expense possible based on the extent of the recommended improvements. Various revenue options are also possible including grant funds, rents, and so on. Based on the direction received, and pending legislative action, any required expenses would be included in the requested budget for FY26.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This item is for discussion. Following the discussion, Council may direct staff to organize a steering committee and restart rodeo grounds improvements planning process

ATTACHMENTS

1. Rodeo Presentation



Prescott Rodeo Grounds

PRESCOTT CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 28, 2025

Goal of Today's Meeting

- ◆ Receive a presentation from staff on a path forward for the rodeo grounds
- ◆ Direction from Council on recommendation to restart Rodeo Grounds Improvement Plan



History

- ◆ July 4, 1888: Rodeo began as a Cowboy Contest in Forbing Park (west Prescott)
- ◆ 1913: Rodeo moved to current location
- ◆ Mid-1930s: Grandstands constructed
- ◆ June 2007: City of Prescott purchased rodeo grounds from Yavapai County

Background

- ◆ “Cowboy Christmas”: Many professional rodeos held in July
- ◆ World’s Oldest Rodeo Buckle prized among professionals (strong overall brand)
- ◆ PFD paid over \$300,000 in prize money in 2024 (11th in U.S. Outdoor Rodeos)
- ◆ Challenges with aging infrastructure

Background

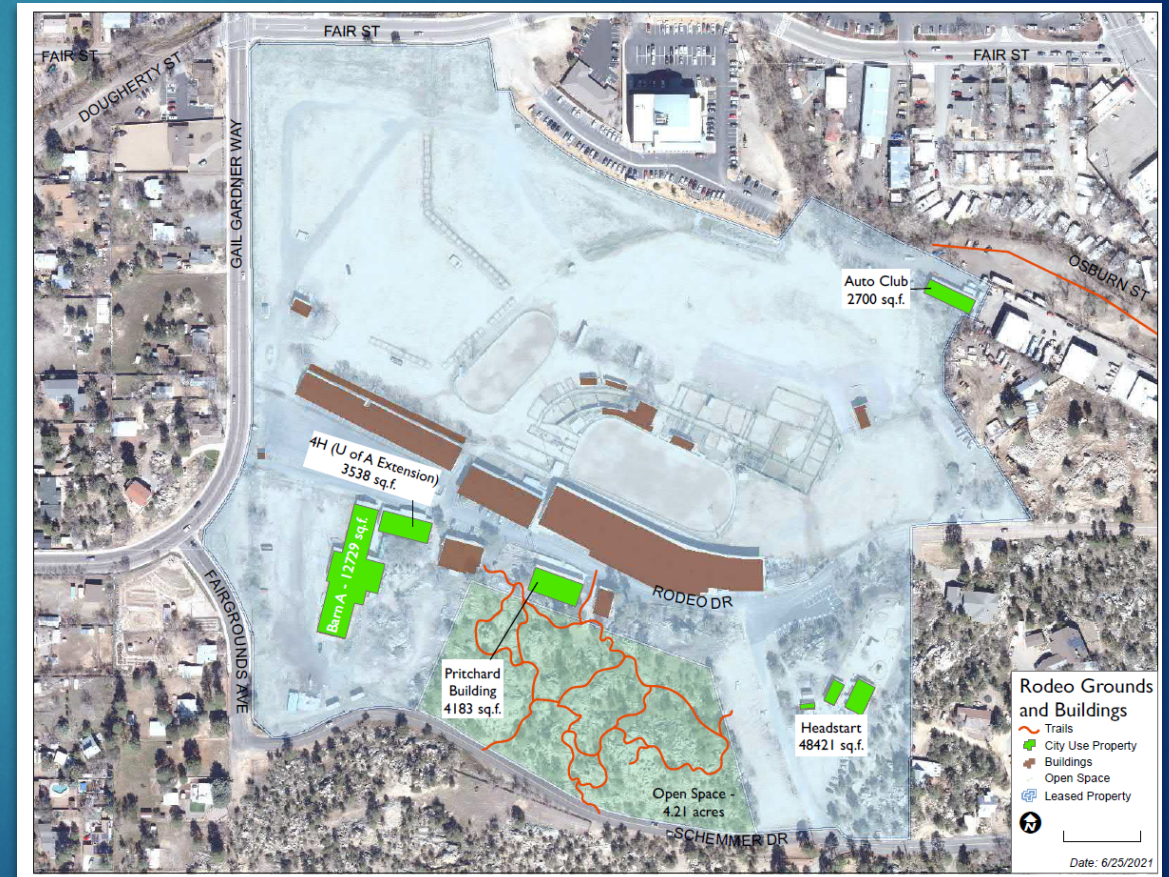
- ◆ Rodeo grounds host a variety of offices & events
 - ◆ World's Oldest Rodeo
 - ◆ County Fair
 - ◆ Arizona Junior Rodeo
 - ◆ Sheriff Posse Roping
 - ◆ Toastmasters
 - ◆ University of Arizona Cooperative Extension
 - ◆ Auto Club
 - ◆ City of Prescott
- ◆ \$7.67 million economic impact (\$171,296 in tax revenue)
- ◆ Charitable giving of nearly \$50,000 in 2024

Lease

- ◆ July 2016: City of Prescott entered a new 25-year lease with Prescott Frontier Days (City contract No. 2017-020)
- ◆ Paragraph 6: “During the initial five (5) years of the lease term, the City contemplates soliciting proposals for preparation of a Master Plan for the Rodeo Grounds to explore and realize economic development of the highest and best uses of the Rodeo Grounds complementary to the use of the premises by PFD under this Lease. The City shall invite PFD to participate in the Master Plan process...”
- ◆ Paragraph 9: “The City shall be responsible for repair and maintenance of the utility service systems serving the Premises, and underground sewer, water, gas and electric lines located on portions of the Rodeo Grounds other than the Premises and underground sewer, water, gas and electric lines located upon the Premises...”

Challenges

- ◆ \$15M+ in deferred maintenance
 - ◆ Aging infrastructure
 - ◆ Dust mitigation
 - ◆ Drainage improvements
 - ◆ Safety and ADA upgrades
 - ◆ HVAC
- ◆ Noise, light, traffic, and parking impacts on neighbors
- ◆ Inadequate/inefficient space
- ◆ Conflict between PFD and Gail Gardner neighbors



Resolution 2023-1862/ July 25th ,2023

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-1862

A RESOLUTION REGARDING ANY APPLICATION RELATED TO CURRENT ZONING CONDITIONS OR REZONING OR APPROVAL OF ANY MASTER PLAN, CONCEPTUAL PLAN OR SITE PLAN REGARDING THE CITY-OWNED REALTY KNOWN AS THE YAVAPAI COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS OR PRESCOTT RODEO GROUNDS

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Prescott recognize the city- owned realty known as the Yavapai County Fairgrounds or Prescott Rodeo Grounds, which hosts the "World's Oldest Rodeo," is closely associated with the City of Prescott in tourism publications and is an economic asset attracting visitors to our community; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Prescott recognize that any consideration of current zoning conditions or rezoning of the Yavapai County Fairgrounds or Prescott Rodeo Grounds as well as any master plan, conceptual plan or site plan approval for such property will have an impact on neighboring residences and the citizenry in general.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PRESCOTT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1 . THAT the City of Prescott, a municipal corporation of the State of Arizona, has authority to approve applications regarding current zoning conditions or to rezone property within its boundaries and to approve master plans, conceptual plans, or site plans for such property, including that city-owned realty known as the Yavapai County Fairgrounds or Prescott Rodeo Grounds.

SECTION 2. THAT the City of Prescott is authorized to schedule public hearings to consider applications regarding zoning conditions or to rezone property within its boundaries and to consider master plans, conceptual plans, or site plans for such property, including that city-owned realty known as the Yavapai County Fairgrounds or Prescott Rodeo Grounds.

SECTION 3. That the Prescott City Council is committed to ensuring public involvement in regards to any potential changes to zoning or increased use of the city-owned real property known as the Prescott Rodeo Grounds. To that end, the City of Prescott Council resolves that any rezoning process, or other approval of an increase in use, will, at minimum, follow the processes as outlined in Exhibit A.

SECTION 4. This Resolution shall remain in effect until July 1, 2026

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Prescott this 25th day of July 2023.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-1862

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CERTIFICATION OF RECORDING OFFICER

STATE OF ARIZONA)
County of Yavapai) ss.

I, the undersigned, Sarah M. Siep, being the duly appointed, qualified City Clerk of the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona, certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 2023-1862 is a true, correct and accurate copy of Resolution No. 2023-1862, passed and adopted at a Voting Meeting of the Council of the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona, held on the 25th day of July, 2023, at which a quorum was present and, by a 7-0 vote, all voted in favor of said resolution.

Given under my hand and sealed this 27 day of July, 2023.

Seal



Sarah M. Siep

Resolution 2023-1862/ July 25th ,2023

Exhibit A

Approval Process

1. PAC Review
2. Prescott Frontier Days, Inc. simultaneously submits: Planning Application (Rezone including Site Plan, Master Plan, exact application type to be determined with Prescott Frontier Days, Inc. leadership) and Water Service Application.
3. Staff Review
4. Prescott Frontier Days, Inc. to conduct two neighborhood meetings, advertised and noticed by Prescott Frontier Days, Inc. with City input - **Public Meeting #1 and 2**
5. Additional Staff Review, if necessary
6. After at least two neighborhood meetings and staff approval, Prescott Frontier Days, Inc. may request City mail, publish, post Public Notice for Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Public Hearing, published at least 15 days prior to meeting
7. Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Public Hearing, required for rezone per LDC 9.15.3.F – **Public Meeting #3**
8. Water Issues Subcommittee – **Public Meeting #4**
9. After published minutes of Water Issues Subcommittee meeting approved minutes, 60-day comment period commences (comments to be received by the Prescott City Council)
10. Two duly noticed City Council Study Sessions to occur during 60-day public comment period – **Public Meetings #5 and #6**
11. Duly noticed Public Hearing to occur at City Council Voting Session following the 60 Public Comment Period - **Public Meeting #7**

A Path Forward

- ◆ City takes responsibility for property, issues
- ◆ Re-start the Rodeo Grounds Improvement Planning Process
 - ◆ City-led collaborative effort with PFD, other rodeo ground users, neighbors, and community at large
 - ◆ Hired consultant with direction from steering committee
 - ◆ Hold all public meetings as required by Resolution 2023-1862
- ◆ Reconsider Rezoning
 - ◆ If needed, City will apply as part of permitting
- ◆ Renegotiate PFD Lease
 - ◆ Market-rate business lease
 - ◆ Greater City responsibility for maintenance and management