



*friends of*  
**Flagstaff's Future**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



M. A. Dwyer  
March 2016

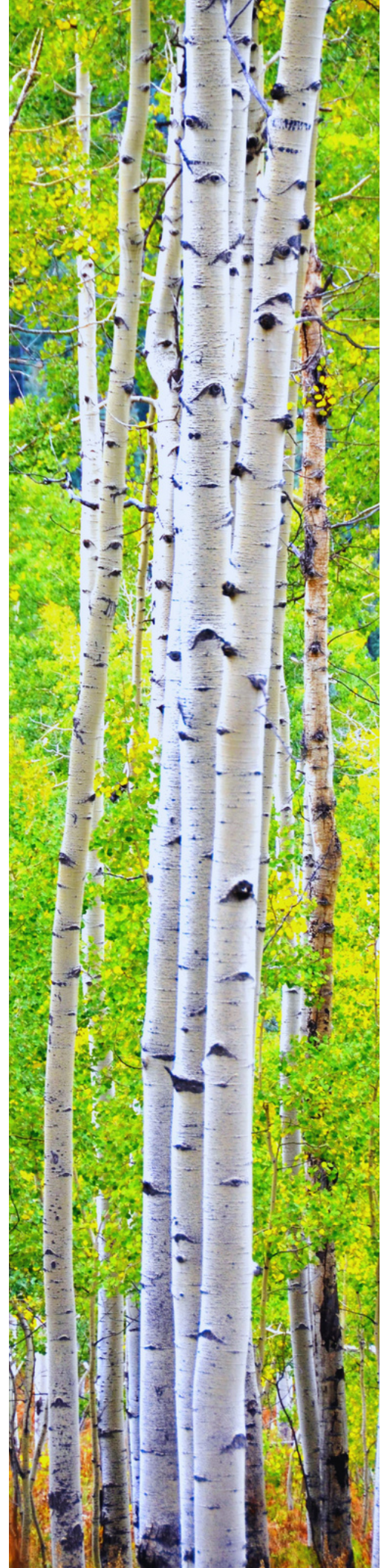
# FRIENDS OF FLAGSTAFF'S FUTURE

F3 works to promote and sustain our community's quality of life. We approach these issues with a perspective that takes into account the pressures of growth, the perils of climate change, the need for socially just practices, and the reality that many of our focus areas are interrelated and may be in conflict some of the time. Our goal is to educate and advocate in our community for policies that will lead Flagstaff's transition to a more resilient, sustainable, just, and joyful community. These policies include elevating the stewardship of our built and natural environments, minimizing the consumption of energy and the destruction of natural resources, and strengthening the local and green economy.

## MISSION AND VISION

Friends of Flagstaff's Future is a grassroots, multi-issue organization, whose mission is to achieve a sustainable, just, and thriving Flagstaff through community education, engagement, and advocacy.

Flagstaff will be a model southwest mountain town that relishes its unique character, sense of place on the Colorado Plateau, ecological and cultural diversity, beauty, and its sustainability into the future.

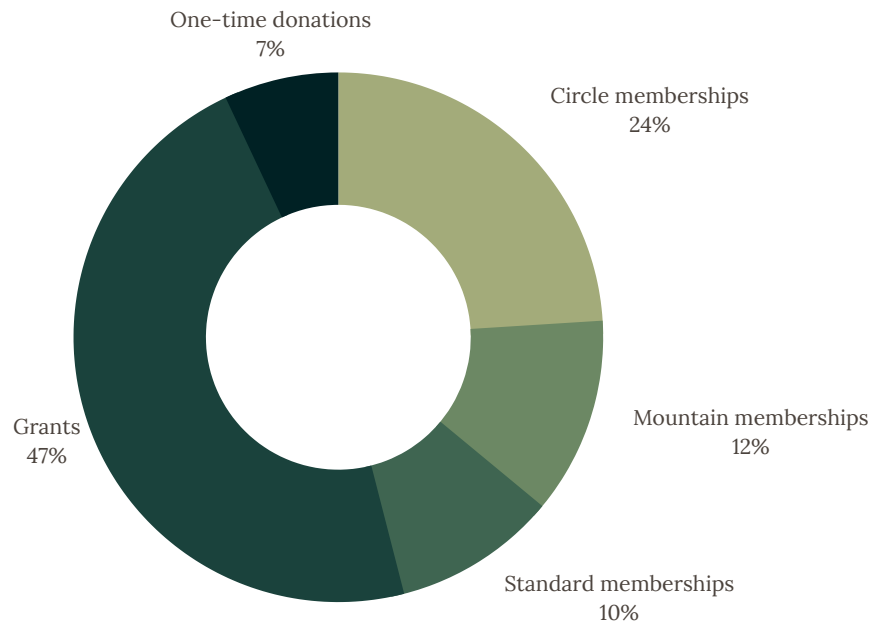


# F3 REVITALIZED

In 2021, F3 focused on growing our membership to 355 at year's end, an increase of 255%.

## REVENUE 2021

Total revenue for the year was \$82,814 from a combination of grants, memberships, and appeals. Grants were received for use this year from: The GeoFamily Foundation, The George & Mary Rabb Foundation, GeoFund, and Grand Canyon Trust.

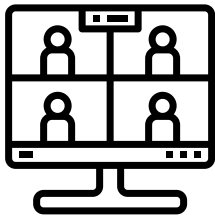


255%

Increase in membership  
from 2019.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS: BY THE NUMBERS

It's been a busy year for F3! We've had our finger on the pulse of issues affecting the city, as well as decisions and plans for the future. Our Executive Director, Michele James, has concentrated on meeting and establishing relationships with City Council and staff, Coconino County supervisors and staff, and many community organizations. She attended all Council meetings, as well as multiple monthly city commission meetings in order to keep members informed of City Council actions and relevant discussions.



**100%**

City Council meetings attended



**53**

City commission meetings attended



**150+**

Projects/issues addressed and tracked



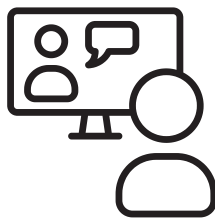
**44**

Meetings with community organizations



**24**

Newsletters & Action Alerts sent to members



**14**

City-sponsored public meetings attended



**5**

F3 member & community forums



**3**

Serving on citizens' committees & working groups

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS: F3'S VOICE IN IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES

F3 focused our attention on many local issues in 2021. Below is a summary of the major issues in which F3 made ourselves heard. Additional issues and projects were worked on as well, and many will continue to be tracked by F3 in 2022.

## Flagstaff's Carbon Neutrality Plan

The City of Flagstaff's Sustainability Program drafted an ambitious response to both Flagstaff's Climate Emergency Declaration Resolution and the recent report produced by the International Panel on Climate Change. F3 supported [Flagstaff's Carbon Neutrality Plan \(CNP\)](#) and both wrote and spoke in support of its adoption by Council. In addition, F3 supported the associated [Regional Plan Amendment](#) (adopted December 7). F3 focused on providing information to members and the public about the need for such a plan and importance of the CNP. We are now working to ensure that the plan's direction and intent is followed in city decision-making.

## Draft 10-year Housing Plan

The City declared a Housing Emergency in December 2020 which required the rapid completion of a 10-year housing plan. The City's Housing Commission created multiple informal working groups to provide recommendations. F3 actively participated on the Sustainability Working Group and provided many recommendations and ideas during this process. F3 also attended all Housing Commission meetings in 2021. The City released its [Draft 10-year Housing Plan](#) in the fall and F3 provided detailed [comments](#) in early November.

F3 expressed concern with the City's reliance on new development as the primary way of addressing the affordable housing crisis. Because private development has not historically led to an increase in affordable houses, we recommended that the City look at F3's recommendations for additional alternative strategies, including the purchase of land by the city for city-owned affordable housing, expanding the city-owned community land trust, creating city-sponsored co-housing projects, encouraging the development of alternative housing plans, and inclusion of the importance of aesthetics in the plan. F3 also requested transparent and up-to-date public information on progress made in achieving the city's affordable housing goals.

## Hospital Relocation Proposal

Our community learned on May 1st of Northern Arizona Healthcare's (NAH) proposal to relocate the hospital from the center of town to 190 acres located just north of Fort Tuthill on Beulah Boulevard. Because the proposed new medical campus and "health village" will require rezoning, citizens have the opportunity to express their concerns to Council.

F3 held a public forum on the proposed hospital relocation on November 8th and NAH answered a number of our questions (recording [here](#)). At the forum, the public learned that there is currently no funding to operate a new \$1.2 million/year Mountain Line bus route to the proposed new location.

F3 is tracking this proposal and potential impacts it will have on our community, both positive and negative. We have urged Council to ensure that any relocation of the hospital is a benefit to our community rather than a detriment.

## Downtown Connection Center

A conditional use permit for improvements of the Mountain Line Downtown Connection Center (DCC) were approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission in December. The [proposed site plan](#) includes construction of an administrative facility, 13 bus bays, and civic space at the current DCC site located south of the railroad tracks between Milton Rd. and Beaver St. An improved transit center is an important part of our community's efforts to increase use of public transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled. An expanded and well-designed transit center will assist Flagstaff in making the "big shift" away from extensive use of vehicles. Public art is an important feature of the new DCC, as is the creation of much-needed civic space for the Southside Neighborhood.

F3 advocated for the proposed civic space and also for limiting public parking so that it doesn't impact the function and benefits of the DCC space as a whole. The current site plan is a compromise arranged by the city to provide 100 parking spaces including, for now, 14 spaces in the parking lot at the corner of Beaver St. and Phoenix Ave. Mountain Line will be hiring a final design team in 2022 and we support their proposal to provide an alternative that incorporates some of this small parking lot into the civic space after the completion of the Rio de Flag Flood Control Project. F3 and others see value in the expansion of the civic space eastward. We will continue our involvement in this project to ensure that the civic space is funded and built and that interconnected projects such as the Rio de Flag pedestrian underpass are funded, both of which may be included in a 2022 city bond proposal.

## Neighborhood Community Commercial Zoning

This year the city finalized a new, F3-supported zoning called the Neighborhood Community Commercial (NCC) as an option to be adopted in three neighborhoods: Southside, Sunnyside, and north of downtown. This zoning contains all the rights that the current Community Commercial (CC) zone has except it reduces the building height limit from 60 feet to 45 feet. This allows these neighborhoods (in a separate, public process) to limit the height of buildings to three to four stories in specific, identified areas.

F3 supported the proposed NCC zone amendment because it allows for a more compatible building height in these three historic neighborhoods, while also allowing for increased upward housing density as outlined in Flagstaff's Regional Plan. Additionally, the Southside Community Plan includes the desire for reduced building heights in some portions of that neighborhood. F3 understands that these three neighborhoods are walkable and close to public transport and are therefore desirable locations for increased housing density. The proposed zoning represents a reasonable compromise at this time between maintaining neighborhood character in these three locations while also creating space for higher-density housing.

## Aura Development and Rezoning

The Aura Development and Rezone project was both complex and unusual in nature. It holds important lessons for F3, our elected officials, and the community of Flagstaff.

This development project was composed of a rezoning from Estate Residential to Medium Density Residential of a divided 11 acres located on W. High Country Trail off of Lake Mary Road. The Aura apartment project was planned for the area pending rezoning and affordable housing units were a part of the proposal.

This project was a case study in competing values. Council had to deal with how the values of fairness, affordability, housing density, neighborhood character, and commitment to the Regional Plan can conflict with each other.

F3 completed an analysis of this rezoning and development project in order to inform our members and the Flagstaff community about the difficulties of the rezoning process while providing some suggestions for dealing with future rezones for dense development. That analysis, in the form of a white paper, can be found on our website [here](#).

## Lowell Observatory Section 17

Lowell Observatory's proposal to modify existing Federal legislation became a matter of public discussion this year. The issue involved the potential development of over 600 acres on Observatory Mesa deeded to Percival Lowell in 1910 by the Federal government for "observatory purposes." At issue was both the meaning of the term, "observatory purposes," and the degree of development Lowell intended. Lowell requested that Council support a federal legislative change that would allow development unconstrained by a narrow interpretation of "observatory purposes."

F3 advocated for the development of a comprehensive plan that would outline Lowell's plans for the area, and, in the absence of such a plan, the continued inclusion of a reversionary clause that requires return of the land if used in ways that were not clearly related to Lowell's mission as a research and education center. F3's concerns with development on Section 17 included the unanswered questions about the amount of development proposed, and its relationship to a potential city-required new paved access road and its location. Council voted to not provide a letter of support for the legislative changes and in November, Lowell chose not to pursue modification of the existing legislation. F3 values Lowell's contributions to the community but nonetheless supports Council's decision and will continue to advocate for adequate guardrails on development on Observatory Mesa's Section 17.

## 2022 PLANS/PROJECTS/ISSUES

### Large-scale Planning Efforts

Flagstaff Regional Plan 2045

J.W. Powell Blvd. Extension Phase II

Final 10-year Housing Plan

Final Active Transportation Master Plan

"Flagstaff in Motion" 5-year Transportation Plan (F3 serves on Mtn. Line Citizens' Advisory Committee)

### Specific Projects/Issues (a partial list)

Lone Tree Overpass

2022 bond ballot initiative (F3 is serving on Citizens' Advisory Committee)

Carbon Neutrality Plan implementation

10-year Housing Plan implementation

Active Transportation Master Plan funding and implementation

Hospital relocation rezoning



Plans for redevelopment of current hospital property if hospital is relocated  
Downtown Connection Center implementation and funding of civic space  
McMillan Mesa Natural Area rezoning  
Greater Observatory Mesa Trail Plan  
Rio de Flag Pedestrian Underpass  
Downtown Flagstaff Vision and Action Plan  
Southside Character Overlay  
San Francisco Square affordable housing  
Vehicle & Nuisance Noise Ordinance  
Residential Sustainable Building Standards zoning update  
Lowell Observatory Section 17  
Coconino County sustainability  
City of Flagstaff Reclaimed Water Plan  
Florence to Walnut Pedestrian Underpass  
Community Development Block Grants project proposals  
Thorpe Park Annex planning  
Economic health of local businesses  
Conservation Study Forum  
AZ Snowbowl Master Development Plan implementation  
Beulah/University Road Project  
McMillan Mesa Natural Area Re-zoning & Celebration  
City Council Candidate Forum (if a primary is scheduled)  
Advocating for local control of short-term rentals