

Proposition 480: A Citizen Initiative Case Study





City Council Action

Overview

- On June 6, 2023, the Flagstaff City Council approved a rezone of the property north of Fort Tuthill County Park for Phase I of the Northern Arizona Healthcare (NAH) Health Village
 - Rezone was from Rural Residential and Estate Residential to Highway Commercial and Public Facilities
- This action followed two public hearings on May 2, 2023 and May 16, 2023 on the rezone
- Council also approved a Development Agreement which outlined conditions, including NAH paying for infrastructure improvements, contributing to a new fire station and making commitments to increase energy efficiency



Getting it on the Ballot

- On July 6, 2023, a citizen petition with 5,582 signatures was submitted:
 - 4,574 were found to be valid. 2,607 valid signatures were required to qualify for the ballot
 - Final determination on July 20, 2023 (this included County verification)
- Attorneys for NAH challenged the ballot language:
 - Hearing in Superior Court on August 3, 2023
 - Judge ruled to keep the initiative on the ballot
- NAH challenged the Superior Court ruling to the Arizona Court of Appeals
 - Hearing in Court of Appeals on August 17, 2023
 - Ruled on August 21, 2023, to keep the initiative on the ballot



Proposition 480

FULL TEXT OF BALLOT

QUESTION NO. 20 (Proposition 480)

REFERENDUM ORDERED BY PETITION OF THE PEOPLE

OFFICIAL TITLE: A Measure Referred to the People by Referendum No. 01-2023 Relating to Ordinance No. 2023-11: An Ordinance of the City Council of Flagstaff, amending the Flagstaff Zoning Map to rezone approximately 98.39 acres of real property from Rural Residential (40.47 acres) and Estate Residential (57.92 acres) to Highway Commercial (63.18 acres) and Public Facilities (35.21 acres) and adding the Resource Protection Overlay to APN 112-10-036, 112-10-037, and 112-05-125 generally located at 1120 W Purple Sage Trail.

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE: Consideration of Ordinance 2023-11 amending the Flagstaff Zoning Map to rezone approximately 98.39 acres of real property from Rural Residential (40.47 acres) and Estate Residential (57.92 acres) to Highway Commercial (63.18 acres) and Public Facilities (35.21 acres) and adding the Resource Protection Overlay to APN 112-10-036, 112-10-037, and 112-05-125 generally located at 1120 W Purple Sage Trail.

A **YES** vote shall have the effect of approving Ordinance No. 2023-11 amending the Flagstaff Zoning Map to rezone approximately 98.39 acres of real property from Rural Residential (40.47 acres) and Estate Residential (57.92 acres) to Highway Commercial (63.18 acres) and Public Facilities (35.21 acres) and adding the Resource Protection Overlay to APN 112-10-036, 112-10-037, and 112-05-125 generally located at 1120 W Purple Sage Trail.

YES

A **NO** vote shall have the effect of not approving Ordinance No. 2023-11 amending the Flagstaff Zoning Map to rezone approximately 98.39 acres of real property from Rural Residential (40.47 acres) and Estate Residential (57.92 acres) to Highway Commercial (63.18 acres) and Public Facilities (35.21 acres) and adding the Resource Protection Overlay to APN 112-10-036, 112-10-037, and 112-05-125 generally located at 1120 W Purple Sage Trail.

NO



No on Proposition 480



FAQs

Will city taxpayers have to pay more taxes over time to offset costs including the ongoing infrastructure maintenance costs.

YES. Over just the next ten years, it will cost over \$20M in city taxpayer funding (e.g., fire protection and transportation). The June 6, 2023, staff report provided to the city council (and the public) stated that the cost of expanding into this new area are substantial and require support from the city (taxpayers.)

The city doesn't currently have this money, so it means that City of Flagstaff will have to find new revenue, which isn't easy, and/or funding priorities will have to shift in order to pay the new costs.





Yes on Proposition 480



Why a new hospital, you might ask?

The existing hospital, Flagstaff Medical Center, is too small, too crowded, and too antiquated. It simply cannot keep up with the demands of a growing and aging population.

Because of that, patients have experienced long wait times at the emergency room, crowded patient conditions, and too often the unfortunate instances of patients being turned away and sent to Phoenix or Las Vegas for treatment.

With the projected population of Northern Arizona to double by 2050, these problems will only get worse. Therefore, a larger hospital is needed in order to provide the best access to the highest quality care.



This seems like a big project. Shouldn't voters have more time to review this?

The new hospital has actually been under consideration for over two years. During that time, Northern Arizona Healthcare worked with the city council, city planners, community organizers, and other interested parties to determine the best fit for the community.

Countless hours were spent in the planning stages, not to mention hundreds of public meetings where the community could address their concerns.

Every idea was taken into consideration and concessions were made by NAH to meet the public's preferences and expectations. In the end, the city council reviewed all the changes and passed it 6-0.



Outcome

- Flagstaff City Charter Amendments
 - 12 out of 19 Passed

City of Flagstaff: Question 480 ★

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City of Flagstaff: A Measure Referred to the People by Referendum No. 01-2023 Relating to: Ordinance No. 2023-11

Yes

No

27.60%

72.40%

4,548 Votes

11,932 Votes



Lessons Learned

- Know what information staff can and cannot respond to
- Work on FAQs to help elected officials (and staff) be consistent with answering questions
- Make sure you have an amazing Clerk and Legal team
- Strap in for the ride!