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October 1st, 2013

Mayor Nabours and Flagstaff City Council
211 West Aspen Street
City Hall Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Honorable Mayor and City Council-

We are writing to express concern that the Schultz Parcel and the 26-Acre parcel that is known as the North San Francisco Street parcel or Buffalo Park Annex are potentially being considered for sale. It was our understanding that the Schultz parcel was removed from consideration for sale in a January Council vote, and that the City Open Spaces Commission has recommended both of these properties for designation as Open Space. It is our current understanding that some on the Council may intend to vote to designate this as "surplus property" thus opening these parcels up for potential sale. We want to express that we are not opposed to selling portions of these properties as long as the fundamental character of the properties and trail access are not compromised. We recognize that there may be a reasonable approach that serves all of the varied interests.

Flagstaff Biking Organization (FBO) is a group of cyclists who came together to "promote bicycling as a safe and attractive means of transportation and recreation in Northern Arizona." Our initial project was to put on a Bike to Work Week for our community in May 2002. Building on the success we started to expand our efforts to keep people informed of cycling related issues and galvanize support for better and safer facilities, trails, and trail access. We represent as many as 300 paid members and many, many more cyclists. Please see <http://flagstaffbiking.org/about-fbo/> for more information.

Our concerns stem from the potential for adverse impacts to bicycle access to trails and public land and open space that could occur if these two parcels were sold entirely into private ownership.

We support that the North San Francisco/Elk's Lodge Property should be annexed, either entirely or in part, into Buffalo Park. This is a prime piece of land and would better serve

the people of Flagstaff if it were incorporated into Buffalo Park. The Regional Plan reflects the eventual establishment of FUTS across this parcel. We strongly support the build-out of the FUTS trail.

The Schultz “Y” property already has a very high level of social use as the de facto parking lot at the intersection of Elden Look Out and Schultz Pass Roads and is one of Flagstaff’s most publicly used staging areas for trail use in the Mount Elden/Dry Lake hills area. *(Please see attached photos.)*

There is a Forest Service Proposed Action for recreation planning in the Mount Elden Dry Lake Hills area that will shortly be out for public comment. Many members of the community of Flagstaff will be supporting the concept of an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Flagstaff and Coconino National Forest in order to create and manage a trail head on the Schultz parcel, thereby addressing the need for a sanctioned four-season access point to the Forest Service trail system.

FBO, Coconino County, the US Forest and the City of Flagstaff are partners through a Memorandum of Understanding. The stated purpose of this MOU is to “establish a framework of cooperation upon which mutually beneficial non-motorized trail systems may be planned, funded, developed and maintained.”

It is our goal to participate in the coordination of this effort and help to find ways to fund the creation and maintenance of this facility. This cooperatively developed use concept would provide a better quality recreational experience for the Flagstaff community, protect resources, and cannot happen if this property is sold into private ownership.

We would suggest that if portions of these parcels are sold into private ownership that stipulations on the development of these properties could be included to build not only FUTS trails, as has been done in the past, but trail heads and perhaps other public amenities, thus removing the financial burden for these from the public. This seems like a fair requirement given the premium value that these lands hold.

In summary, we want to emphasize that it is precisely because of the access to open space and public land for all kinds of recreation that Flagstaff is such a desirable place to live. It is as a direct result of the improvement upon, and expansion of, the opportunities to recreate on trails and open spaces that so many people and businesses have chosen to situate here. Continued build-out of prime pieces of property that reduce the opportunities to access these resources will devalue the quality of life in our community and diminish the value of this place to the sorts of people and businesses that will help our town to grow and thrive. It is the responsibility of the Council to see to it that our community is afforded the best possible planning decisions to support continued growth that adds value to the experience of living in Flagstaff.

We are not opposed to the sale of other properties as appropriate to fund the City’s needs, but we do need to state our concerns regarding actions the City takes that may adversely affect bicycle access.

In conclusion we respectfully request that the City Council permanently protect the North San Francisco Street/Buffalo Park Annex and Schultz “Y” parcels, either entirely or in part, as Open Space with trail heads and trail access.

Thank you for your consideration-

s/Anthony Quintile

for the Board of Flagstaff Biking Organization