

DATE: July 11, 2025
TO: Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Tom Whitmer, Acting City Manager
SUBJECT: Bi-Weekly Management Report



[Police Department](#)

SkillsUSA National Leadership Conference

Baltazar Avila, a new Police Aide, recently traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, to represent Cottonwood, the State of Arizona, and the Cottonwood Police Department at the SkillsUSA National Leadership Conference. We are incredibly proud to have Baltazar on our team and see him representing our community nationally.



Arizona School Resources Officers Association Conference

Cottonwood Police Officer Brandon Iurato (pictured top center, left side) joined Juvenile Probation Officers and School Resource Officers (SROs) from across the Verde Valley at the Arizona School Resource Officers Association (ASROA) Conference held in Fort McDowell, AZ. The ASROA Conference brought together professionals dedicated to school safety and youth engagement, providing training and collaboration opportunities that enhance their ability to serve and protect our schools.



Citizens Police Academy

Join the Cottonwood Police Department's Citizens Police Academy starting Thursday, August 14, 2025. This FREE 8-week program provides a behind-the-scenes look at local law enforcement, covering topics from 9-1-1 communications to SWAT operations. Classes are held on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m., with one session scheduled for Saturday. Each session lasts approximately 2 to 3 hours. To register or for more information, contact Sergeant Chad Sinn at csinn@cottonwoodaz.gov



Public Works

Main Street Improvements Project

Work activities on the Main Street Improvements Project are scheduled to resume the evening of Sunday, July 13, 2025. Combs Construction will start work on Phase 2 of the project, which consists of utility adjustments, asphalt milling and removal, roadway excavation, subgrade preparation, and paving between Cactus Street and the north City limit. Paving work on this segment is scheduled to be completed by Sunday, July 20, 2025, weather dependent. The contractor will also be constructing the new ramp at the southwest corner of Main Street and Cactus Street.

The contractor will be working 24 hours a day in order to expedite the completion of this phase. As the contractor performs work on Phase 2, one-way traffic will be maintained on Main Street between Cactus Street and the north City limit. Main Street traffic will be controlled with flaggers, and vehicles will be escorted through the work zone via a pilot car. Groseta Ranch Road will be closed at the intersection with Main Street, and On the Greens Boulevard will be closed at the intersection with Main Street as work is completed on this phase. A detour route for Groseta Ranch Road traffic will be in place using SR-89A to Mingus Avenue to Willard Street to Main Street.

On Sunday, July 20, 2025, the contractor will begin work on Phase 3 between Cactus Street and the north side of the intersection with Pima Street. Work activities on this segment will consist of asphalt milling and removal, roadway excavation, subgrade preparation, and paving. Work on this phase is scheduled to be completed on Saturday, July 26, 2025, weather dependent. Phase 3 work activities will be performed at night between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to minimize impacts to Old Town businesses and visitors. Main Street will be closed between Cactus Street and Pima Street, and Main Street traffic will be detoured using Pima Street and Cactus Street. City staff and Beta Public Relations will continue outreach and coordination efforts with Old Town businesses before the start of work on this phase.

Kudos to Mark Larremore and the Public Works Streets Department

On Tuesday, July 1, 2025, the City Manager's office received a comment from a citizen through the citizen portal on the City's website, giving kudos to Mark Larremore, Facilities Superintendent, and the Streets Department team.

Hi,

This is a compliment for Javier and his crew for all the hard work they did on the ditches along my property. The ditches had not been dealt with for years, so they had their work cut out for them. They arrived this morning and in about 2 1/2 hours were finished and everything looks great! They dug out, they reinforced, they made everything so much safer for any upcoming storms. The backhoe operator had many obstacles to deal with - and dealt with them very well. They worked quickly and efficiently. All of them were very friendly and answered my needed questions. Mark Larimore was very helpful at the initial stages. I cannot over-emphasize enough how well all of this went and it was all due to the men involved with this project. My sincere thanks to them all.

[Parks, Recreation, Library](#)

Youth Writing Program with Joan Bourque

The Youth Writing Program with Joan Bourque was a Summer Success! The Cottonwood Public Library was excited to host local writer and artist Joan Bourque for a special youth writing program throughout June. Joan led two weekly sessions, one for ages 8–12 and another for teens 13–18. Participants had the opportunity to write, illustrate, and create their very own books. Her guidance and creativity made a lasting impact on our young writers, helping them build both storytelling skills and confidence.

The program was a hit! One of our participants, Mia, was so inspired by Joan's mentorship that she made a heartfelt painting as a thank-you gift. We're grateful for Joan's partnership and proud to offer enriching programs like this to our community's youth. Thank you to everyone who continues to support library programming. We're always excited to share what's happening in our space!



Cottonwood Advisory Commission

Applications for the Cottonwood Youth Advisory Commission are now open for recruitment. If you are in grades 8th – 12th, we encourage you to apply and help be a part of a group of like-minded, developing leaders who give back to the community in meaningful ways and help shape Cottonwood for our youth. Applications are accepted until August 15, 2025, and can be found online at <https://cottonwoodaz.gov/386/Youth-Advisory-Commission> or by scanning the QR code on our flyer.



Youth Summer Camp

The Cottonwood Oak Creek School District cafeteria staff has been excellent this summer. They have provided breakfast and lunch for the kids involved in summer camp. The staff allowed the kids to make their own pizza to switch things up a bit. Once the pizza was baked, each child enjoyed their creation. Many of the children said, " This is the best pizza I've ever had."



Riverfront Park New Playground Structure Ribbon Cutting

The Parks & Recreation Department held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new playground structure at Riverfront Park on Thursday, July 3, 2025. The event had a great turnout, and the enthusiasm from attendees made the celebration of our new playground even more special. We thank our wonderful City Council, dedicated City staff, and the community for making this project possible. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended!



Youth Basketball Camp

The Parks & Recreation Department held a successful Youth Volleyball Camp this summer at the Cottonwood Recreation Center. We thank the Mingus basketball team and Coach Austin Hudson for helping run the camp. This program is open to students in grades 1st–8th, and they went over fundamental skills for basketball for the younger group and higher-level skills with the older group.



Fantastic Family 4th of July

The City of Cottonwood's 26th Annual Fantastic Family 4th of July was held at the Kids Park, and we had a great turnout! The public enjoyed free food, vendors, inflatables, a flyover, and our fireworks show at night's end. Thank you to all staff, volunteers, and community members for making this event successful.



Parks & Recreation Month

July is Parks and Rec Month, and to celebrate, we will highlight many of the city staff who help the department run. Please follow the [Parks & Rec Facebook page](#) to see staff highlights throughout the month of July.

Community Development

Building Official Provides Mentorship

On Tuesday, July 8, 2025, Community Development's building official shared his expertise by teaching a class through the Yavapai County Juvenile Probation Department's Learn and Earn Program.

Planning & Zoning Commission

The Cottonwood Planning & Zoning Commission will meet on Monday, July 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the City Council Chambers – Riverfront, located at 1083 E. Riverfront Road, Cottonwood, AZ. The agenda item listed below will be discussed.

New Business:

- ZO-25-006 - AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF COTTONWOOD ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 404 GENERAL PROVISIONS AND ARTICLE II (SECTION 201) DEFINITIONS.

Historic Preservation Commission

The Cottonwood Historic Preservation Commission will meet on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the City Council Chambers – Riverfront, located at 1083 E. Riverfront Road, Cottonwood, AZ. The agenda items listed below will be discussed.

New Business:

- 2025 COTTONWOOD HISTORIC PROPERTY TOUR
- 2025-2027 HISTORIC PRESERVATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Items for Discussion:

- OLD TOWN MASTER PLAN
- DISCUSSION REGARDING REVISIONS TO SECTION 427 OLD TOWN SPECIAL PLANNING AREA (OTSPA)
- HISTORIC PICTURES IN COTTONWOOD CLUBHOUSE
- HPC BRANDING/LOGO

Appreciation Team

Upcoming Events

- City Hall Selfie Day: On Tuesday, August 12, 2025, celebrate civic pride! Departments will take selfies to share on the City's social media to highlight all the work you do to keep Cottonwood running!
- Chili Cook Off: On Thursday, September 25, 2025, participate in our chili cook-off at the Rec Center event hall. Bring your best chili to compete, or simply enjoy sampling all the entries and voting for your favorite!

- Halloween/Fall Decorating Contest: On Friday, October 31, 2025, Departments are encouraged to decorate their offices for Halloween/Autumn. The department voted to have the best decor will win a prize!
- Surveys & Feedback: From November 1 to 30, 2025, The A Team will collect feedback on all the monthly events organized in 2025. Share your opinions and ideas with us!
- Appreciation Dinner & Awards: On Friday, December 12, 2025, join us at the Verde Valley Fairgrounds for a celebration including a catered dinner, door prizes, and the 2025 service awards!

Administration

All Employee Meetings

On Thursday, July 10, 2025, the City hosted two all-employee meetings at the Recreation Center, one in the morning and another in the afternoon, to accommodate various work schedules. The meeting featured updates from the following individuals: Kirsten Lennon, Financial Services Director; Amanda Wilber, Human Resources Director; Jennifer Somit, Public Works Project Manager; and Tom Whitmer, Acting City Manager.

The topics discussed included:

- The Main Street Improvement Project
- The Verde Santa Fe Well and Mingus Wastewater Treatment Plant Project
- The current status of the City Hall Building
- The start date for the new City Manager
- The FY 2026 Budget

Awards were presented for the 2024 Team of the Year, 2024 Manager of the Year, and Employee of the Year. Congratulations to the following employees for their dedication and hard work.

Team of the Year: Finance Department

Manager of the Year: Alexis James, Communications Manager

Employee of the Year: Kevin Murie, Commander





If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you.

Tom Whitmer
Acting City Manager