



## What is the Sunset Community Focus Area?

As most people know, Sedona development is guided primarily by two documents: the Community Plan, which is a broad vision and policy guide that articulates the community's vision for our city, and the Land Development Code, the municipal laws that define what is and is not permitted for development or redevelopment of land within city limits.

The city also shapes future development by creating plans for special areas, called Community Focus Areas, that delineate additional goals for specific parts of the city. These CFAs advance community priorities by creating thoughtful, well-researched plans for each unique area to incentivize the kinds of developments Sedona citizens want. They are aligned with the goals of the Community Plan and requirements of the Land Development Code.

The Sunset Live/Work CFA, comprising 38 acres between Sunset and Shelby drives, is an industrial area that offers an opportunity to advance two of the Sedona City Council's highest priorities: affordable housing and economic diversity.

## What's so special about the Sunset area?

The Sunset area, because of its location, landscape and current land use, provides a unique opportunity to advance community goals to create more affordable housing and expand Sedona's economy beyond tourism. The area is already industrial in nature, is farther from the highway with a more limited viewshed, and is already zoned for light industrial businesses and multi-family housing.

## Why allow taller buildings in the Sunset CFA? I don't see them elsewhere.

Sedona has several buildings that exceed current height limitations. One example is the Sedona Rouge Hotel, which, at three stories, still conforms to code. The Best Western Arroyo Roble Hotel, which was constructed prior to Sedona's incorporation, is five stories when viewed from creekside. Buildings such as the Best Western, with one level below adjacent road level, can blend with the landscape and appear to be shorter because of design and placement on the building site.

The Land Development Code limits building height to 22 feet above natural grade but does allow some increases depending on the design of the building and slope of the lot. Some CFA plans support additional height for buildings if their

purpose is consistent with the CFA goals, and the building design is in harmony with the natural environment and does not visually detract from Sedona's scenic views. In these CFAs a condition for permitting variation from code requirements is that the development will help the city achieve the vision set forth in the Community and CFA plans.

In the case of the Sunset CFA, any proposed taller building would back up to the Airport Mesa hillside, not impact or compete with neighbors' or the public's red rock views, and would be required to be of a color and brightness that would blend with the hillside. In addition, the property owner would be required to demonstrate that the building meets the goals of the CFA, including housing diversity and economic development.

Allowing additional height allows developers to recover the cost of their investment by significantly reducing costs per square foot. It can also lower costs for tenants or buyers. Without these incentives it is unlikely that Sedona, with high land and development costs, would be able to create the housing diversity residents have told us they want.

## Does the Sunset CFA open the door to allowing tall buildings elsewhere?

The opposite: the entire purpose of a CFA plan is to articulate the kind of development appropriate for, and specific to, that CFA area. The Sunset CFA plan is unique to the purpose and topography of this area, and no other.

The Sunset Live/Work CFA Plan states that only projects that meet the community's goals for affordable housing and economic diversity could be considered for alternate building heights if very specific criteria are met. Even if a proposed project meets criteria, it would still require vetting and review through the normal public hearing processes. There is no automatic entitlement to these exceptions.

## What development is planned for the Sunset CFA?

There is no development proposal before the city, and no word of any that might be proposed in the immediate future. The reason the city is talking about the Sunset CFA is that the time to begin planning and establishing guidelines for development is *before* a proposal is presented, when the city council has time to review data, discuss goals and reach consensus on how best to achieve its goals.

*This document updated May 15, 2019*

*An image showing how additional multistory buildings might appear in the Sunset CFA. This is an example of how buildings in a dark green color would blend with the landscape and meet CFA plan requirements.*

**Sunset CFA  
More information**  
[sedonaaz.gov/cfa12](http://sedonaaz.gov/cfa12)

