

## TRAILHEAD SHUTTLES

### Why were the trailhead shuttles started?

The City's Transportation Master Plan survey in 2017 found 65 percent of survey takers supported resident and visitor transit in Sedona. In every City survey since then, transit has continued to be highly supported, including the random sample, statistically valid 2020 Community Survey in which 81 percent of residents indicated they support mass tourism-related transit in Sedona.

In response to this high level of public support, in 2019, City Council approved the [Sedona Area Transit Implementation Plan](#). This is a multi-million dollar, multi-phase, comprehensive plan over 10 years that includes visitor transit, resident transit, trailhead shuttles and more.

### A milestone event

As the [coronavirus pandemic](#) canceled or changed most Americans' travel plans, [people flocked to public lands in record numbers](#)—many for the first time. This shift in behavior also led to a record increase in visitation to Sedona. In 2020 the City experienced unprecedented levels of visitation as outdoor recreation became a major draw where visitors could remain socially distant and safely recreate.

Traffic and parking congestion in and around the Cathedral Rock and Soldier Pass trailheads adversely impacted public safety and the resident's basic quality of life. There were reports of homeowners who were unable to access their homes. First responders were significantly delayed or could not access some of these neighborhoods. To access these trailheads, hundreds of pedestrians flooded residential surface streets and roadways that were simply not designed for them. Limited line of sight, fast moving cars, distracted drivers and pedestrians all created unsafe conditions. Residents living near some of the City's most impacted trailheads demanded action.

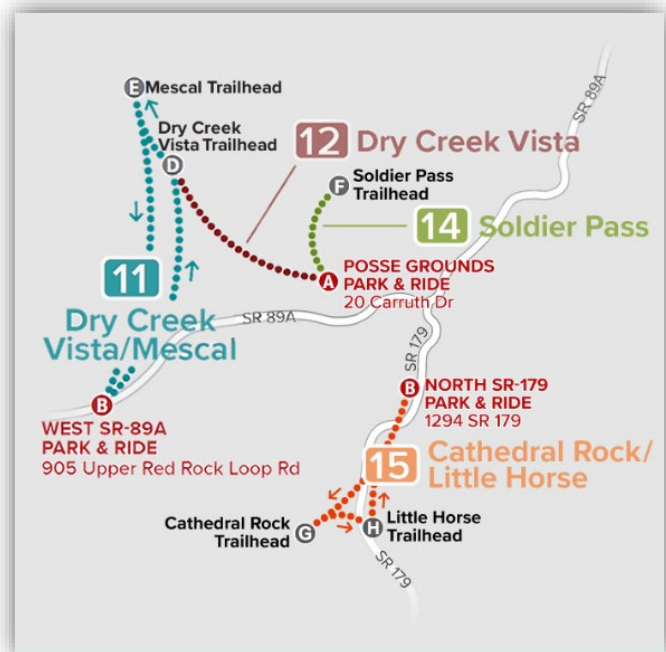
In response, the City implemented the Trailhead shuttle program on March 22, 2022 – years ahead of what was originally contemplated in the Sedona Area Transit Implementation Plan.

### Trailhead shuttle program objectives

The primary objectives of the trailhead shuttle program are to:

1. Provide a safe and sustainable alternative for both residents and visitors to access the City's most heavily impacted trailheads.
2. Reduce traffic and parking congestion in and around the trailheads.
3. Improve public safety for residents and visitors alike.
4. Protect the fragile environment from resource damage around trailheads by reducing the number of illegally parked vehicles.

Working with the USFS, trailhead parking at Cathedral Rock and Soldier Pass was closed to the public while the shuttles were operating. The City established two park & ride locations (now three) and diverted trailhead visitors to these locations to park and utilize the shuttles. The effect was immediate. Traffic and parking congestion in and around the Cathedral Rock and Soldier Pass neighborhoods was significantly reduced and pedestrian traffic was significantly diminished on the roadways surrounding the trailheads.

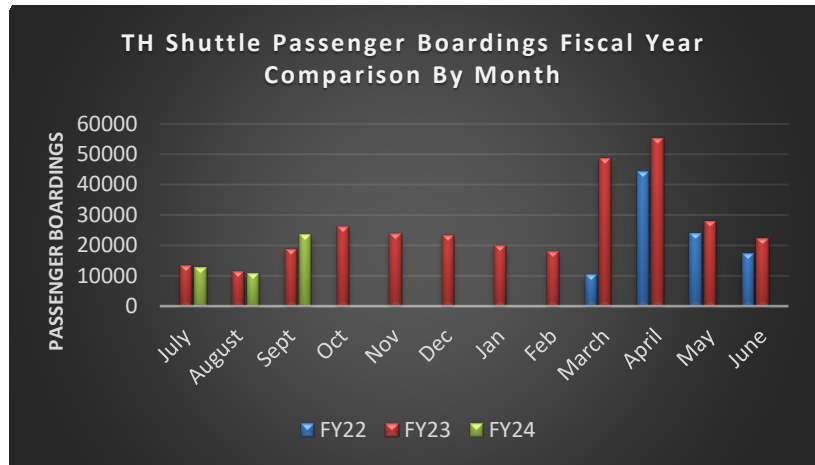




## Do people use the shuttles?

While the service is operated with just four buses and only ran 222 days during the first year, it carried 283,952 passengers, representing 35.5 passenger boardings for each hour of bus service provided. This rivals the productivity of many large urban transit systems. Additionally, in its first year of service, the program provided as many passenger trips as 18 other rural Arizona transit systems combined.

As of September 30, 2023, the shuttles have logged over 450,000 passenger boardings and are on track to provide over a half a million passenger trips by the end of November of 2023.



## What's next for the trailhead shuttle program?

City staff will continue to work with our federal partners from the US Forest Service to evaluate the need for expansion of the trailhead shuttle program. Any future expansion will depend on available budget, Federal funding assistance, and a demonstrated need for additional services.

## MICROTRANSIT

### What is microtransit?

When thinking of public transit, most people imagine traditional fixed-route services, such as buses, light rail, and subways that pick up riders at a fixed stop according to a predetermined schedule.

Microtransit is a demand response shared-ride public transit service that riders can dispatch directly using a smartphone application, similar to Uber™ or Lyft™. Microtransit systems turn the traditional public transit model upside-down – that is, that the transit vehicle finds the passenger rather than the other way around. These systems typically operate in a predefined service area within high traffic and congested areas in both urban and rural communities.

### Why is microtransit good for Sedona?

Transit agencies and municipalities throughout the country are implementing microtransit solutions to improve the rider's experience by operating smaller public transit vehicles that offer flexible routing and on-demand scheduling. The application of GPS and smartphone technologies make microtransit systems inherently data rich. Real-time data allows the agency and operators to modify the scale and span of the service quickly. Also, it enables decision-makers to continuously monitor the service's performance and adjust it to better meet the community's needs.

Microtransit service in Sedona will offer many residents and visitors an alternative transportation option that will allow them to leave their vehicle at their residence or hotel for short trips to and from areas within the City with limited parking availability.

In addition to providing convenient connections to uptown, West Sedona, Tlaquepaque, the Hillside Shopping Center, and the trailhead shuttle park & ride lots, microtransit service also includes options for residents and visitors with limited mobility, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. These include wheelchair-accessible vehicles, an app designed for riders with visual / hearing disabilities, and call-in booking options with a live agent for individuals who prefer not to use a smartphone.



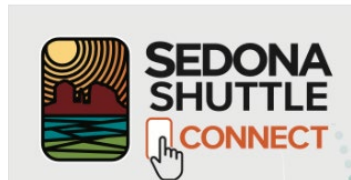
# Trailhead shuttle and microtransit FAQ

While it is difficult to foresee all the potential community benefits of microtransit for the City of Sedona, this mode of service is widely embraced as a good fit for our community.

- ☑ Reduce the number of cars on our constrained roadway network
- ☑ Reduce vehicle carbon emissions in our fragile environment
- ☑ Improve overall mobility options for all our residents and visitors
- ☑ Improve the quality of life for our residents

## What will the Sedona microtransit be called?

Sedona’s microtransit service will be branded as “Sedona Shuttle Connect” or “SSC” for short.



## Will there be a passenger fare for the service?

The passenger fare policy for the SSC service will be decided by the City Council during its regular meeting on December 12, 2023. Interested parties are encouraged to send their comments in advance of that meeting to:

**JoAnne Cook, City Clerk**  
 102 Roadrunner Drive  
 Sedona, Az 86336-3710  
 Jcook@sedonaaz.gov

The proposed fare policy is shown below.

### SEDONA SHUTTLE CONNECT PROPOSED FARE STRUCTURE

Regular	Discount	Free	Multi-trip Pass	
			Regular	Discount*
<b>\$6</b>	<b>\$3</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-way fare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age 60+</li> <li>• Medicare cardholders</li> <li>• Veterans (with ID)</li> <li>• Persons with disabilities</li> <li>• AZ residents with a valid ACCCHS card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children under 5</li> <li>• Trips to/from any Trailhead Shuttle Park-&amp;-Ride locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 one-way fares</li> <li>• 30% savings</li> <li>• Retail: \$72</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 one-way fares</li> <li>• 30% savings</li> <li>• Retail: \$36</li> </ul>

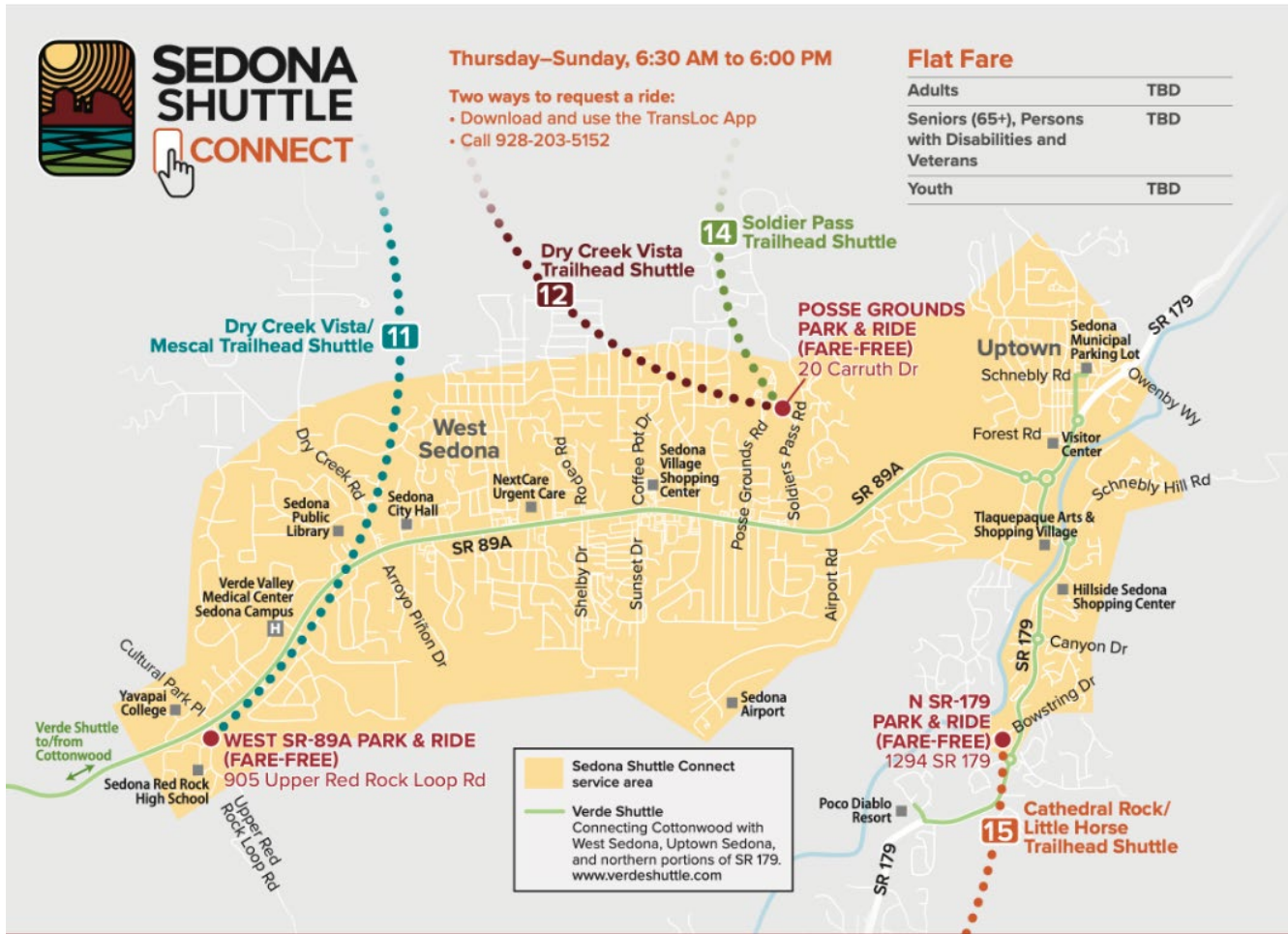
\* Discounted multi-trip passes are available for persons age 60 and older, Medicare cardholders, veterans (with ID), persons with disabilities, and AZ residents with a valid ACCCHS card

# Trailhead shuttle and microtransit FAQ



## Where can I go on the Sedona Shuttle Connect Service?

The SSC service will provide curb-to-curb on demand service within the service area shown in the map below. Both the origin and destination must be within the designated service zone, which extends ¼-mile on either side of SR 89A from Owenby Way to the East, and just beyond Upper Red Rock Loop road to the West. The zone also includes a corridor on SR 179 extending south to the N SR 179 Park & Ride.



## When will the Sedona Shuttle Connect service begin?

In May of 2021 the City Council directed City staff to proceed with the development and implementation of a microtransit system for the City of Sedona. The service was meant to deploy in conjunction with the Trailhead Shuttle service launch on March 24, 2022, however COVID-related supply chain issues affecting vehicle manufacturers have delayed the deployment of the Sedona Shuttle Connect service to at least mid-2024, perhaps beyond.

For updates and other information concerning the planned Sedona Shuttle Connect service, you are encouraged to sign up for the Sedona Shuttle newsletter at [SedonaShuttle.com](http://SedonaShuttle.com). Complete the “Stay in Touch” form at the bottom of the main page.

**Stay In Touch**

Sign up to receive information about additional Sedona Shuttle services as they are added!

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# Trailhead shuttle and microtransit FAQ



## When do the Trailhead Shuttles and the Sedona Shuttle Connect service operate?

Both services are scheduled to operate Thursday to Sunday, which coincides with Sedona's peak visitation days. The services operate in unison to allow for passenger connections between the two modes.

Trailhead Shuttle	Sedona Shuttle Connect
7 AM to 5:30 PM	6:30 AM to 6 PM
Thursday to Sunday*	

\*The 2023 holiday / supplemental schedule is shown below:

Holiday / Event	Dates Observed	Service Schedule
New Year's Day	1/1/23	Service Operates
Spring Break	3/1/23 – 4/17/23	Daily
Memorial Day	5/29/23	Service Operates
Independence Day	7/3/23 & 7/4/23	Service Operates
Labor Day	9/4/23	Service Operates
Thanksgiving Week	11/20/23 – 11/22/23	Service Operates
Thanksgiving Day	11/23/2023	No Service
Week Before Christmas	12/18/23 – 12/20/23	Service Operates
Christmas Day	12/25/23	No Service
Week After Christmas	12/26/23 & 12/27/23	Service Operates

## Are shuttle services ADA accessible?

Yes, all Sedona Shuttle transit vehicles are fully ADA accessible and can safely accommodate up to two wheelchairs or mobility aids.

## Can I bring my dog onto the bus?

### Service animals

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Sedona permits service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities without restriction onto all Sedona Shuttle services. Service animals are defined as "any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform observable tasks for an individual with a disability."

### Pets

All pets must be transported in a pet carrier that is suited to properly contain the animal, with the following exception: dogs (non-service animals) are allowed onto the service in an appropriate carrier or with a muzzle and the animal must be on a leash. Dog muzzles or masks must be properly fitted over the snout to prevent the animal from biting other animals or humans.

Service animals and pets must always remain under the control of the owner, must not be left unattended and must not block the aisleway or passenger doors.





## Can the services carry bicycles?

Each transit vehicle is equipped with bike racks, on the front of the bus or within the passenger cabin, which hold two or three bicycles depending upon the vehicle type. Bike racks are available on a first come, first served basis. If space allows, additional bikes may be accommodated in the wheelchair area inside the bus.

## How are these services being funded?

Public transit systems in the U.S. are typically funded using a mix of federal, state, local and system-generated funds (i.e., passenger fares/advertising revenue, etc.). However, most systems rely heavily on funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to subsidize capital costs like buses and transit facilities.

### Leveraging federal funds

Most FTA capital grants provide up to 80% - 85% of the total capital expense; however, the applicant is required to provide a local match for the remainder of the total project cost. Paying only \$0.15 - \$0.20 on the dollar for a new transit bus or bus facility makes good sense for Sedona's budget.

### State Transportation Assistance (STA) funds

Most states provide transit funding that can be applied toward the local match for federal grants, further reducing the transit provider's local subsidy. Unfortunately, the Arizona Transit Association is one of only four states that do not provide any form of STA funding. However, the City is advocating at the state legislative level to make this type of funding available. The Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) is also advocating that some form of STA funding be made available for public transit - particularly in rural areas.

### Funding public transit in Sedona

Since June 2020, the City has been awarded over \$1.7 million in FTA grant funding to support the development of its new transit system. These funds have been allocated to subsidize administrative, planning, and capital expenses to include a portion of the operating costs for the planned microtransit service (coming in 2024).

The City of Sedona is a self-help city and as such uses revenue from the ½-cent local transportation sales tax to fund the local match required to leverage federal funds. Local funds are also currently used to pay for operating costs of the trailhead shuttle program and will be used to pay for a portion of the microtransit service expense.

As ridership increases and the City proves to be a responsible grant recipient, additional FTA funding opportunities will become available to continue to support Sedona's transit system.

City staff is also actively pursuing additional Federal grant opportunities through the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration to fund the construction of a transit maintenance and operations center near the City's wastewater treatment plant and cover operating costs for the trailhead shuttle program.

## How can I become more involved?

The City of Sedona is accepting applications from interested parties to serve on the Sedona Transit Advisory Committee (STAC). The STAC serves in an advisory capacity to, and at the pleasure of, the City Manager or his or her designee to:

1. Provide a mechanism for communicating concerns, advice, and recommendations between those who rely on the City's transit system for their transportation needs, and the City staff.
2. Recommend actions to improve the quality of the City's public transportation system, including but not limited to policies, dispatch, routing, span of service, scheduling, and field operations.
3. Participate annually in the identification of community transit needs by establishing a list of short-term and long-term projects which may include expanding or reducing existing services.

If you are interested in serving on the STAC, you can download an application [HERE](#)