



11 October 2021

Ms. Cari Meyer  
Senior Planner  
Community Development  
**CITY OF SEDONA**  
102 Roadrunner Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336

Re: LETTER of INTENT, Planning & Zoning Commission  
Uptown Sedona Parking Garage, GLA Project No. 20109

Ms. Meyer,

GLA requests an informal working session with the Planning & Zoning Commission for the review of the Uptown Sedona Parking Garage. Please accept this *Preliminary* Letter of Intent as the initiation of this request.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The proposed Uptown Sedona Parking Garage will provide approximately 270-275 parking spaces expected to be primarily used by visitors to, patrons and employees of Uptown Sedona businesses.

The Project site is located at 430 and 460 Forest Road consisting of two parcels (401-16-071 and 401-16-100) with a combined size of approximately 1.24 acres. With 315' of frontage along Forest and an upward slope of approximately 12% in the south-north direction, the Project's vertical profile is minimized by dropping one level of the garage below grade, supplemented by a ground level plus one elevated level. The maximum height along Forest Road is approximately 13.75' above grade; the height along the north side of the Garage (adjacent to the residential neighbors) varies from 3.5' at the northwest corner to about 8' at the northeast corner. A split-level arrangement is used to allow the Garage to step up the hill in line with the existing grades, minimizing its impact on the neighborhood and its overall excavation.

With the development of the Forest Road extension, a combination of multi-modal components will be addressed:

- Sidewalks and shared use pedestrian paths
- Bike lanes and off-street parking
- Bus loading/unloading bay
- E-vehicle charging stations.

Functional elements and municipal amenities are to be incorporated in the Entry Plaza for the garage including:

- General and transit service pick-up/drop-off
- Public restrooms with custodial/maintenance space
- Elevator and stairway
- Automated self-pay parking kiosk (PARCS)



- Visitor self-help information/display.

## **PROJECT CONTEXT**

Two developed commercial parcels are directly east of the proposed Garage; commercial parcels line Forest Road to the south; five residential parcels are located to the northeast, north and west. The businesses are a combination of one and two-story structures; the residences are also one and two-story buildings.

## **SENSE OF PLACE**

Numerous design features give the proposed Uptown Garage a special sense of place and purpose. The southern edge of the elevated level along Forest Road serves as a shaded, Viewing Platform with panoramic Sedona red rock, mountain vistas, while providing pedestrian circulation from parked vehicles to the central vertical circulation. Information placards are planned along the viewing platform, identifying prominent mountain sites. This initial introduction to Sedona is both informative and memorable.

The stepped profile, with its submerged floors, gives the Uptown Garage a modest scale that is inviting, approachable and friendly. The central, shaded circulation core with its information kiosk, elevator, stairs and restrooms is people-oriented and, along with the viewing platform, promotes social interaction.

The Viewing Platform has all the makings of both a formal and informal community gathering place with its spectacular views, shade and ample space for temporary community activities. Cordoning off a row or two of parking spaces would allow the city to accommodate a range of community events such as farmer's markets, food tasting fairs, arts and crafts events on the parking deck one level above Forest Road. Facilitating non-traditional activities in the parking structure fits beautifully within the City of Sedona's 10-year Vision for community growth and sustainability.

## **VIEWSHED ANALYSIS**

The one-story height and the stepped arrangement of the Uptown Garage ensures that neighbors' views of Sedona's scenic mountains and rock formation are unimpeded.

## **BUILDING MATERIALS**

Building materials will be configured in an attractive composition of colors, textures, and forms. The elevator and its adjacent central stair provide an interesting vertical focal point. The horizontal, guardrail element of the Garage will be modulated so that its mass is minimized, relieving what is typically a monotonous and unattractive component in this building type. Re-use of excavated rock in Gabion walls, and potentially, as a veneer over some support walls will be considered. This stonework offers a direct connection to the natural materials of the building site. Materials will be selected and implemented with restraint so that the design solution has a holistic character.

## **WALKABILITY**

The Uptown business district, to the east and north of the proposed Garage, is within walking distance. In combination with the Forest Road extension project, new shared pathway/sidewalks will be instituted



on the north and south side of the road, with crosswalks between, extending east to Smith and past 490 Forest Road. Getting business patrons out of their cars and walking to the nearby businesses will encourage exposure to business activity, social interaction, and contribute to the well-being of visitors to Sedona. Shade along the pedestrian route to Uptown will be provided by native trees which line the southern side of the sidewalks. Water fountains and informational material will be provided at the central core of the parking garage.

### **IMPROVED TRAFFIC FLOW**

A primary objective of the city in building this facility is to mitigate traffic caused when business patrons are forced to search for parking during their visits to Uptown Sedona. Currently, visitors often drive through and around both business and residential areas in search of parking. The proposed Uptown Garage is conveniently located, allowing patrons to quickly park, walk or use public transit to efficiently reach their destination. This will promote positive business activity and improve pedestrian safety.

### **PARKING**

Parking is convenient and accessible within the Garage. Two stairways serve all levels of the Uptown Garage. Accessible parking is provided on the ground level nearest Forest Road. An elevator serves the three southern levels of the Garage. The central gathering points at stairs and the elevator, coupled with the information kiosks and remarkable views, are expected to generate engagement and random interaction between visitors. This will enhance and make the overall Sedona experience more memorable.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

The City of Sedona has committed to achieve Bronze certification under the Parksmap criteria, ensuring that the new Uptown Garage is environmentally appropriate and energy efficient. Solar panels will be incorporated into the shade structure at the elevated view platform generating enough electricity to power the below grade lighting and the fans that ventilate the facility. 5% of the parking spaces will offer electric vehicle charging with infrastructure provided that would allow that number to increase to 20%. Material from the construction waste stream will be recycled. Regionally available materials will be employed. Bike sharing is anticipated.

### **SIGNAGE**

Obvious, yet tasteful, signage will be deployed. Clear, straight-forward signage will help first-time visitors to Sedona find parking at this city facility. Signage will be carefully arranged so that no signage interferes with residential neighbor's view corridors.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Extensive public outreach has been conducted for the project. Efforts have included:

- On-site interaction with residential neighbors, business and city visitors from 9am – 3pm on Saturday 17 April 2021
- Online and in-person surveys
- Stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the garage's design characteristics on 17 June and 11 August 2021.



**LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

Native plant material that is consistent with the natural setting and that is selected from the city's approved plant list will be deployed. Shade from trees directly south of the pedestrian sidewalks will improve the walkability along that southern side of parcel which fronts Forest Road. At the north and west edges of the property, landscaping will provide screening, minimizing the visual impact of the new facility. Plant spacing and irrigation systems will facilitate the long-term growth and health of the new plant material. Drainage swales are configured to blend with the natural landscape while serving the needs of storm management.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jan Lorant', is written over a circular blue stamp or seal.

Jan Lorant, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB  
Principal, Gabor Lorant Architects Inc.