

City Talk for Oct. 26, 2021
Community Development Department
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Progress on the Community Plan update

Did you know that the city of Sedona has had a plan to guide the future of the community since 1991? The current edition of the plan was completed in 2013 and the 10-year update is now underway. The plan is based on community input, which is why we are asking everyone - what do you think the priorities should be for the next 10 years?

First, you may be wondering what the purpose of a Community Plan is (also known as a general or comprehensive plan). It's a policy document that influences many programs and projects in the city, whether it is a city capital improvement project or a commercial development project.

Many people have been asking: what is an update? Remember episodes of "This Old House" when they say "*the bones are good*" as an answer to whether you remove, replace or update a structure or building features? Thus far, the public feedback we are hearing is that the previous plan's bones are good, such as the vision and values themes, but that the new plan needs to be updated to reflect current topics like short-term rentals, workforce housing supply and tourism balance.

The current plan starts out with a vision statement that describes the community's desired future, which has been relatively consistent since the first plan's vision statement.

A vision for the future: Sedona is a community that nurtures connections between people, encourages healthy and active lifestyles, and supports a diverse and prosperous economy, with priority given to the protection of the environment.

Similar to the current plan, the new plan will be based on community priorities; thus, we are asking for input on what has changed in the last ten years, what elements of the plan are no longer relevant and what are the priorities now and for the next 10 years?

Most of the feedback received so far is from the household survey completed by almost 600 residents and property owners in April 2022 and the 350 people that attended the September 7, 2022, Plan Sedona Community Forum. This initial feedback has informed the next phase of the community outreach process.

Over the next few months there will be multiple ways to participate in the update. There will be "Listening and Learning Sessions" on a variety of topics such as transportation, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, environment, parks and recreation, the economy and community.

The intent is two-fold: the city will listen and learn by hearing from you with your questions, comments or suggestions. The community will also be listening and learning from city staff or regional experts familiar with specific topics, programs or projects to help inform their feedback. These staff and experts will provide background data, maps as well as information about what authority the city has, or does not have on certain topics.

There will also be several in-person workshops for more in-depth, complex issues that are often intertwined that will need more background information and more discussion. Examples are land use

(apartments, commercial, lodging, and residential) and where the balance point is between environment, tourism and community (ETC).

You can provide the most useful and valuable comments by sharing your suggestions and recommendations. We have hundreds of comments that there is too much traffic, too many tourists, not enough housing, housing is too expensive for employees, not enough employees for businesses, too many OHVs, too many vacation rentals etc. As we move into the next phase of outreach, we welcome you to participate in our public participation events that will feature solution-oriented discussions.

Learn more about the plan and the planning process, sign-up to receive notices of how to participate in upcoming events, or submit comments at the Plan Sedona website: www.plansedona.com. You may also contact me at 928-203-5035. We hope you join us at an upcoming event and help shape the next 10-year roadmap for our community.