

# Public Meeting Summary - October 19th, 2023

Thursday, October 19, 2023 8:00 PM

## Public Meeting Summary

J. Andy Dickey, Deputy City Manager, at the City of Sedona, provided a brief introductory kickoff to the meeting. He explained after the introductory presentation, everyone could breakout into areas of specialty, where specific information would be provided and feedback would be gathered. He explained that, comments, concerns and input would be gathered and incorporated into a final report that will be presented to City Council on November 15th.

A brief background was provided. Starting nearly 20 years ago, the city began studying the parking needs in Uptown, eventually completing the first study in 2005. More recently, in 2019 the city completed the Uptown Parking Needs and Siting Assessment, then in 2020 moved forward with acquiring property, and designing the development of a garage on Forest Rd. In 2022, the city decided that several factors had changed in relation to the development of the garage, which warranted a renewed consideration of the decision to build a garage at this site. The main considerations included, evacuation of Uptown, access to the new Forest Road extension, resident concerns, operation of transit, impact on traffic, and accounting for updated parking capacity and demand data. This led to pausing the garage development effort and beginning a re-evaluation of Uptown parking needs.

The re-evaluation effort began in March of this year, and is now nearly complete. In this effort, a Taskforce Advisory Group was formed, made up of consultant experts in parking, traffic, and transportation engineering; staff from various disciplines including transit, land use, engineering and city leadership; and two resident and two business representatives. It was explained that all members came into this process open to new considerations and potentially a different outcome, based on the results from objective analyses and evaluation of mutually agreed upon criteria.

The Taskforce Advisory Group includes:

- Karen Osburn, City Manager
- Andy Dickey, Deputy City Manager
- Robert Weber, Transit Manager
- Bob Welch, Project Manager
- Steve Mertes, Community Development Director
- Joe Zani, Resident Representative
- Avrum Cohen, Resident Representative
- Mike Wise, Business Representative
- Jesse Alexander, Business Representative
- Jeremiah Simpson, Kimley-Horn (parking expert)
- Andrew Baird, Kimley-Horn (local Prescott office manager)

In relation to the vision of this effort, it was explained that the group considered factors supporting the vision that came out of the Uptown Community Focus Area planning effort, which envisions tomorrow's Uptown being more walkable and bikeable, efficiently connected to transit, containing welcoming and accessible community gathering spaces, public plazas and other hospitable amenities, and improved traffic flow.

It was explained that representatives are prepared to discuss:

- If new parking is needed,
- If so, where new parking should be located,
- How parking impacts traffic, transit, evacuation, and the environment,

In response to a common question heard by y staff, "How could this new evaluation be unbiased when the city had already put such a significant effort into developing a garage on Forest Rd, at the selected site?" Andy explained, while significant cost and effort had already been expended, our taskforce did an exceptional job in taking in new information, remaining open to changing conditions, considering there may be different results based on new analyses, and giving all possibilities a viable chance at being the recommended outcome.

Regarding the need for new parking, the Kimley-Horn analysis did confirm new public parking is needed, to add somewhere between 70 to 320 public parking spaces, needed over the next 5- to 10-years. In order to objectively evaluate the various options, the taskforce went through a priority setting exercise and

decided on six evaluation criteria and seven different options that would be evaluated. – some of these options included, no new public parking, along with an option to expand surface parking only, without a garage, garages at other locations, and also an option was considered to build additional remote/intercept parking lots, outside Uptown, connected to transit. (for further information, please see the presentation board on Parking)

The taskforce decision, after objectively evaluating each option against the criteria, the taskforce determined the best course of action is to proceed with a parking garage at the north side of Forrest Road, at the previously selected site, and also to look at options to consolidate and expand public parking lots on the south side of Forest Rd and at the Municipal Lot.

Regarding taskforce rankings, it was explained that the taskforce was not unanimous in all of its rankings. The two resident members did not agree with the conclusions of the study process, and do not support building a garage, however, there was very healthy discussion around the pros and cons of the different options, and while the concerns brought up by all taskforce members were addressed through the study process, there was not 100% consensus.

For the breakout stations, it was explained that you should look for the topic of your interest. Each station would have a technical representative, and other representatives that can answer general questions. It was requested that attendees keep an open mind as they review data provided and attempt to consider the options and criteria in the context of what is best for Sedona. The boards and technical experts are here to help gain a better understanding of how the task force arrived at its conclusions, the criteria used, and the options that were evaluated and why. It was also explained that there would be scribes at each station to capture comments and other feedback that will be considered before finalizing the study and making final recommendations to City Council.

For the outcome, at the six stations you will find,

1. On Parking - You'll hear why new parking is needed,
2. On Traffic - You'll hear why consolidated parking helps improve traffic and reduce congestion,
3. Over at Emergency Response - they'll cover why consolidated parking works best with evacuation operations,
4. Land Use Planning & History - will cover why new parking should be located on Forest Rd, at the selected site,
5. At Transit - they'll talk about why this consolidated parking works best with transit,
6. Finally at Goals & Options -
  - o They'll cover why consolidated parking, in fewer locations with high capacity, is needed,
  - o And how this helps reduce environmental impact

To answer questions most efficiently, please now visit the breakout stations that fit the topic of your questions.

Thank you everyone!