JULY 2025 DRAFT

Western Gateway Master Plan

CITY OF SEDONA

City Council

Scott Jablow, Mayor
Holli Ploog, Vice Mayor
Melissa Dunn, Council Member
Brian Fultz, Council Member
Pete Furman, Council Member
Kathy Kinsella, Council Member
Derek J. Pfaff, Council Member

City of Sedona

Anette Spickard, City Manager
Steve Mertes, Director of Community Development
Cari Meyer, Planning Manager
Cynthia Lovely, Principal Planner (Retired)

Planning & Zoning Commission

Kathy Levin, Chair
Charlotte Hosseini, Vice Chair
Kali Gajewski
Will Hirst
Jo Martin
Rob Smith
Sarah Wiehl

Consultant Team

Dig Studio | Lead Consultant
Jay Hicks, Senior Principal
Yuan Liu, Senior Planner
Jeff Lothner, Principal
Moqi Yao, Landscape Designer

The Barnhart Company | Public Engagement
Brock Barnhart, CEO

RSP | Architecture
Mike Duffy, Associate Principal

LOKAHI | Traffic Engineer
Jamie Ann Blakeman, CEO

DRAFT

Contents

1 Introduction

Project Description 6
Project Objectives 8
Master Plan Process 10
A Vision for the Community 12

2 Project Parameters

Plan Area & Context 16
Regulatory Setting 17
Site Condition 18
Housing Needs 19

3 Community Outreach

In-person Public Workshops 22
Online Survey Summary 25
Stakeholder Interviews 26
Key Findings & Input 27

4 Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles 30

5 Options & Evaluation

Options Overview 40
Options Evaluation 44
Critical Factors for Success 47
Preferred Option 48

6 Western Gateway Master Plan

Master Plan Development Process 52
Illustrative Plan Overview 54
Preliminary Program Study 56
Example Building Use 58
Vehicular Circulation & Public Parking 62
Transit 63
Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation 64
Open Spaces 68

7 Implementation Plan

Master Development Strategy 74
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program 75
Example Phasing Plan 76

DRAFT

DRAFT

1

Introduction

DRAFT

Project Description

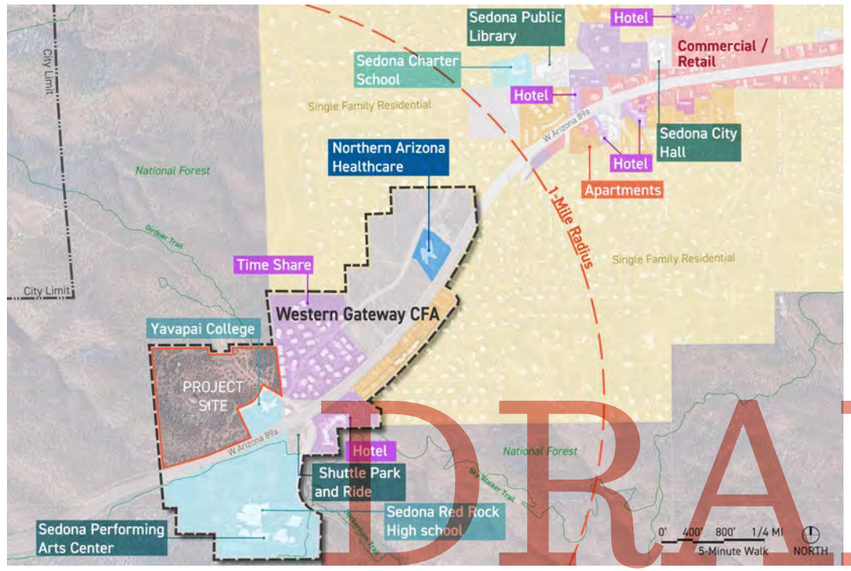
What is the Western Gateway Master Plan?

The Western Gateway Master Plan (the "Master Plan") has been prepared to guide future land use and shape new sustainable, mixed-use development within the city limits of Sedona. The Master Plan incorporates a clear vision for the future of the Western Gateway site (formerly known as the Cultural Park site) offering a framework to guide the transformation of this significant area in a way that reflects community values and aspirations.

The Master Plan outlines the process, guiding principles and anticipated results, supported by policies and implementation strategies designed to predictably realize a community-based vision for the site. By establishing a cohesive and forward-looking approach, the Master Plan aims to ensure that future development within this important property and gateway to Sedona contributes to a sustainable, vibrant, and inclusive neighborhood.



Sedona is a premier destination renowned for its breathtaking red rock formations, outdoor adventure, and artistic charm — all of which sustain a thriving tourist industry. The city's built environment complements its dramatic landscape, blending Southwestern and rustic architecture with natural materials and earthy tones.



The Western Gateway site, formerly known as the Cultural Park, is a prominently positioned parcel along SR 89A at Sedona's western edge. Located within the Western Gateway CFA, it serves as a visual and functional transition between Coconino National Forest and the City core. To the north and west, the site is bordered by national forest, offering views of Sedona's iconic scenery and access to recreational trails. To the east, the area transitions into a mix of lodging, and residential uses, while the south side is Red Rock High School and limited housing and hospitality.

DRAFT

The Western Gateway Past & Present

The Western Gateway site was originally developed and opened in 2000 as a world-class event venue. From 2000 to 2002, the Sedona Cultural Park flourished as a premier cultural venue in Northern Arizona. It hosted a wide variety of events, including world-class performances, film screenings, and festivals.

Despite the park's initial success, logistical difficulties led to the venue's ultimate closure. The high cost of maintaining the venue, combined with a lack of steady funding or donations, created financial strain. Additionally, challenges such as the remote location of the park, limited parking, and seasonal weather constraints affected attendance.

In 2003, the park was forced to close its doors, despite a series of fundraising events and community outreach in the final months of operation.

After many years of unsuccessful, largely hospitality-focused development proposals, the City of Sedona acquired the 41-acre Cultural Park site in December 2022, with the intent of implementing key community priorities. The property, zoned as Planned Development and located within the Western Gateway Character Area, borders Coconino National Forest and adjacent developments. This strategic purchase enables the city to develop the land in alignment with adopted plans while addressing the pressing need for workforce housing.



1990s A grand vision of creating a central hub for cultural and artist events



2000 Grand Opening

2003 Logistical difficulties led to the venue's closure

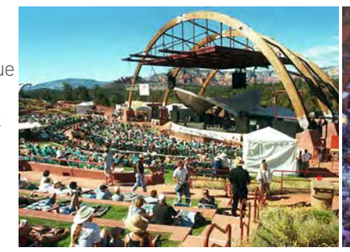
2022 City of Sedona purchased the site now known as Western Gateway

2024 Western Gateway Master Plan started



1998 Construction of the amphitheater completed

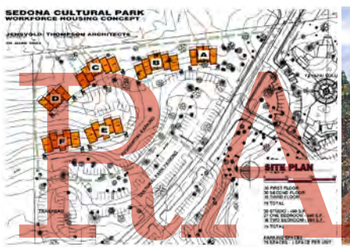
1998-2002 As a premier cultural venue in Northern Arizona, Sedona Cultural Park hosted a wide variety of events





2004-Present Various proposals and plans for redevelopment of which many were with a hospitality/ lodging focus

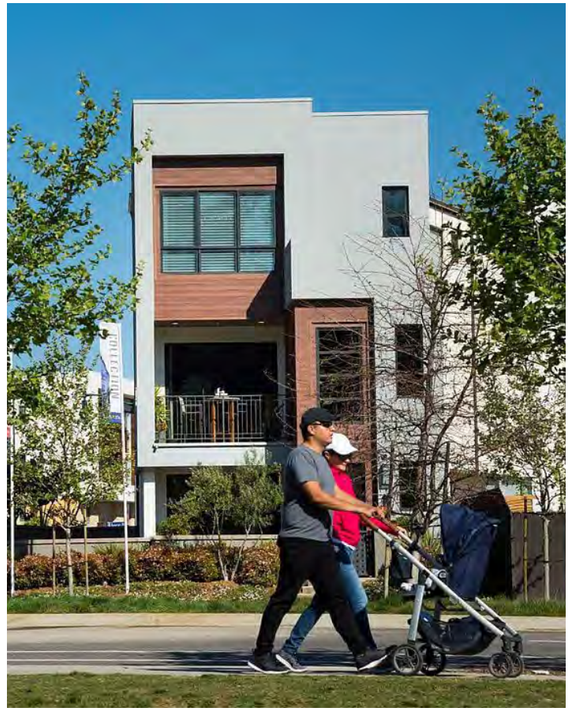






Project Objectives

The project objectives define the core goals guiding the Western Gateway Master Plan's development, ensuring a strategic and purpose-driven approach. These objectives were established through a comprehensive process incorporating key principles from the 2024 Sedona Community Plan and 2022 Western Gateway Community Focus Area (CFA) Plan, housing needs analysis, and extensive engagement with the public, City of Sedona officials, and stakeholders. By aligning with broader planning visions and community priorities, the objectives create a clear framework to address critical challenges and opportunities—shaping a sustainable, inclusive future for the Western Gateway.



1. Address Housing Shortages and Affordability

Develop a plan that includes a variety of housing types including rental and ownership to meet the critical need for workforce housing, and align with the identified gap by *Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment: Volume 1.*



2. Integrate Community and Ancillary Uses

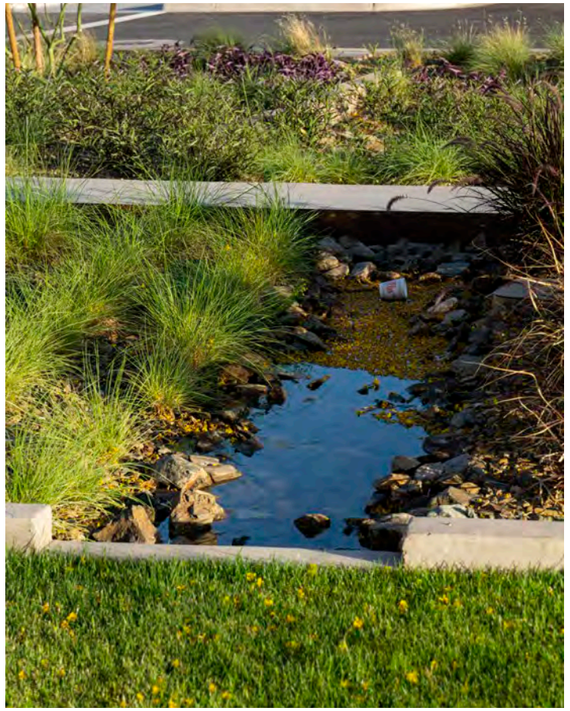
Design mixed-use spaces that combine housing with complementary amenities to support a vibrant, sustainable community while adhering to the *Sedona Community Plan* and *Western Gateway CFA* goals.

DRAFT



3. Enhance Multi-Modal Transportation and Accessibility

Incorporate transit, public parking, and multi-modal pathways to reduce car dependency, connect to existing infrastructure, and improve access to adjacent Coconino National Forest trailheads.



4. Promote Sustainable Development

Ensure the plan prioritizes environmentally sustainable practices, including leveraging the site's topography for efficient land use, integrating natural environment and open space, while employing green building standards.



5. Foster Community Engagement and Collaboration

Engage those who live and/or work in Sedona, local business owners, city staff, and officials through a collaborative process to ensure the Master Plan reflects community needs and aligns with the *Sedona Community Plan, Western Gateway CFA, and Land Development Code.*



6. Create Public Spaces and Cultural Integration

Design community spaces that enhance cultural, artistic, and social interactions, while preserving Sedona's unique landscape and supporting its identity as a tourism and arts destination.

DRAFT

Master Plan Process & Key Components

The Western Gateway Master Plan was developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process that carefully examined all planning options while prioritizing extensive community engagement. The approach involved detailed analysis of site conditions, thorough understanding of community needs, and careful consideration of public values regarding the future of this important site.

1. Plan Area Analysis

In 2024, the City of Sedona initiated the planning process by conducting a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a qualified consultant team to assist City staff in studying the Plan Area and preparing a master plan. The selected team brought together diverse expertise, including planners, public engagement specialists, architects, and transportation planners. Beginning in September 2024 and continuing through 2025, the City staff and consultant team worked collaboratively to conduct a thorough analysis of existing conditions. This included extensive mapping, site visits, and reviews of key planning documents such as the Sedona Community Plan, Western Gateway Community Focus Area (CFA) plan, and existing City zoning regulations. These efforts ensured the plan would be grounded in a clear understanding of both physical and policy contexts.

2. Public Engagement

A robust public engagement program formed the cornerstone of the planning process. The team hosted two well-attended public workshops in October 2024 and February 2025, designed to gather community feedback, identify development priorities, and present planning alternatives. These workshops provided residents with meaningful opportunities to help shape planning concepts for the site. Complementing these events, the City conducted two rounds of online surveys in November 2024 and January 2025, which generated over 1,500 responses, offering valuable quantitative insights into community preferences.

To ensure a comprehensive range of perspectives, the team conducted targeted stakeholder meetings with key agencies and organizations. Participants included the City of Sedona's leadership and departments—City Council, Community Development, Housing, Parks & Recreation, Public Transit, Sustainability, and Wastewater—as well as essential service providers such as the Sedona Fire District, U.S. Forest Service, Arizona Water, and APS. The team also engaged with educational institutions, including the Sedona Oak Creek Unified School District, Yavapai College, and Red Rock High School, along with advocacy groups like the Verde Valley Cyclists Coalition and the Housing Advisory Group. Additionally, Northern Arizona Healthcare contributed valuable insights. (A detailed list of interviewees can be found in Chapter 3: Community Outreach.) This multi-faceted approach to engagement helped build a shared understanding of community needs while fostering broad support for the planning effort.

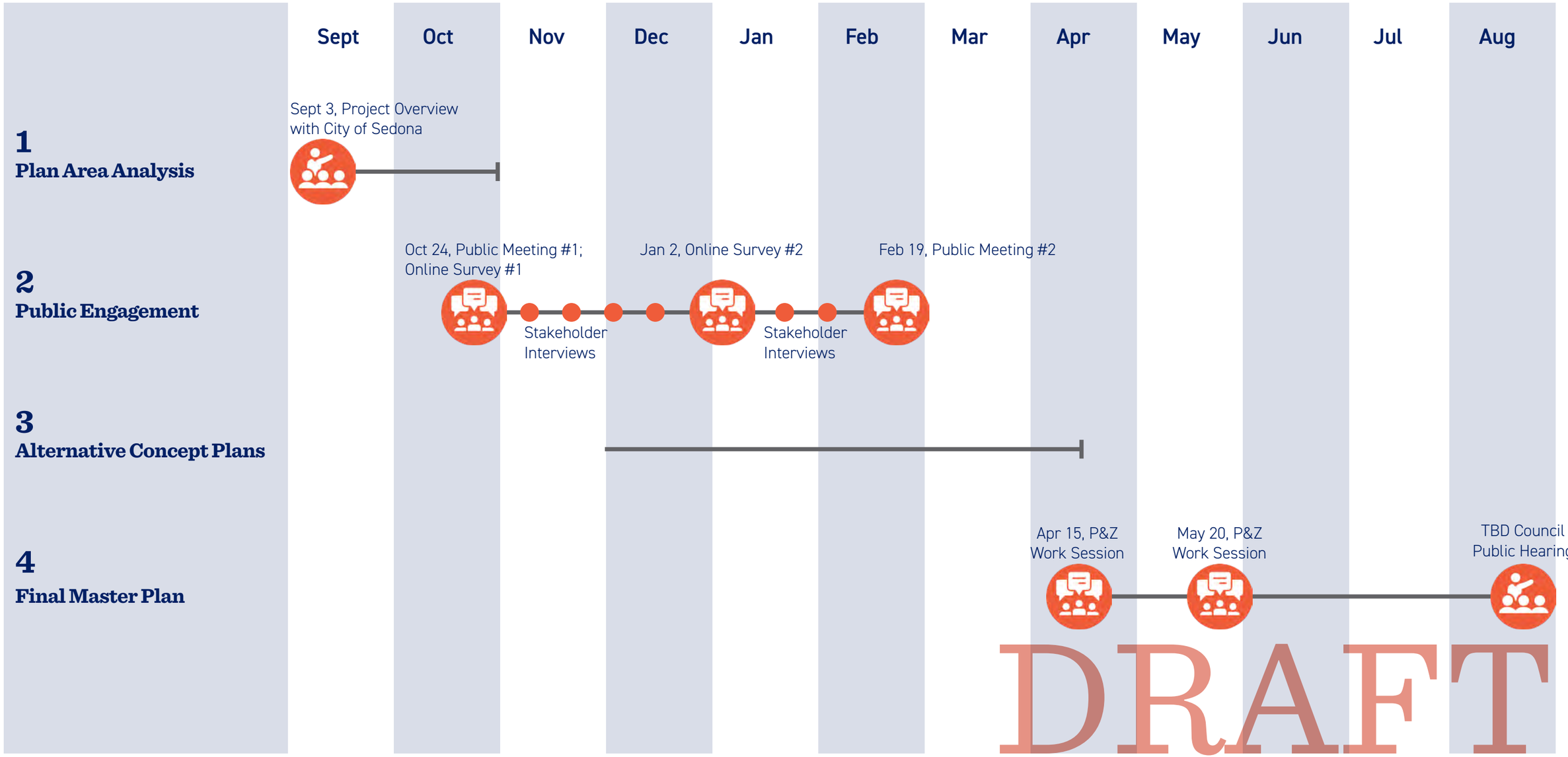
3. Alternative Conceptual Plans

Building on the wealth of community input gathered during the engagement phase, the team developed four distinct planning themes, each with associated conceptual alternatives. This phase focused on translating public feedback into tangible planning options while carefully evaluating how each alternative addressed identified community needs. The alternatives served as important interim products, capturing early community thinking while providing a solid foundation for the eventual master plan.

4. Final Master Plan

Guided by the clear preferences expressed through workshops and surveys, the team refined the preferred alternative into a cohesive vision for the Western Gateway. A set of Guiding Principles was established to ensure the plan remained true to community values throughout the final design process. From May through August 2025, the team prepared the final master plan for public review, incorporating additional technical analyses and hosting study sessions with the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. The resulting document reflects both the community's aspirations and practical considerations for implementation, culminating in a plan that will thoughtfully guide the Western Gateway's future development.

DRAFT


Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
1
Plan Area Analysis
Sept 3, Project Overview with City of Sedona
2
Public Engagement
Oct 24, Public Meeting #1; Online Survey #1
Stakeholder Interviews
Jan 2, Online Survey #2
Stakeholder Interviews
Feb 19, Public Meeting #2
3
Alternative Concept Plans
4
Final Master Plan
Apr 15, P&Z Work Session
May 20, P&Z Work Session
TBD Council Public Hearing

DRAFT

A Vision for the Community

1. A Sustainable Community

Sustainability is a core value for the Western Gateway, ensuring the City and residents of Sedona can meet present economic, social, and environmental needs without compromising future generations. This commitment is grounded in these principles:

- Environmental Sustainability: Thoughtful stewardship of natural resources through efficient use and management.
- Economic and Fiscal Sustainability: Creation of a resilient mixed-use community adaptable to economic shifts while maintaining long-term operational viability.
- Social and Political Sustainability: Fostering a vibrant, inclusive place where residents can live, work, and thrive for generations.

2. A Walkable Neighborhood

Prioritize safe, accessible, and visually appealing pedestrian connections to trails, open spaces, and community amenities, reducing reliance on vehicles and enhancing quality of life.



DRAFT

3. Workforce and Family-Oriented Living

Deliver diverse housing options—including rentals and ownership opportunities—that are attainable for Sedona's workforce and families. Integrate open spaces, trail access, and recreational amenities within walkable distances to promote health and community cohesion.

4. Design that Honors Sedona's Unique Character

Ensure homes and landscapes reflect Sedona's distinctive beauty and cultural identity, blending built environments harmoniously with the natural surroundings.

5. Housing Sustainability and Equity

Ensuring equitable access to housing for people of all ages, abilities, and income levels through inclusive, anti-displacement strategies that support long-term community stability.



DRAFT

DRAFT

2

Project Parameters

DRAFT

Plan Area & Context

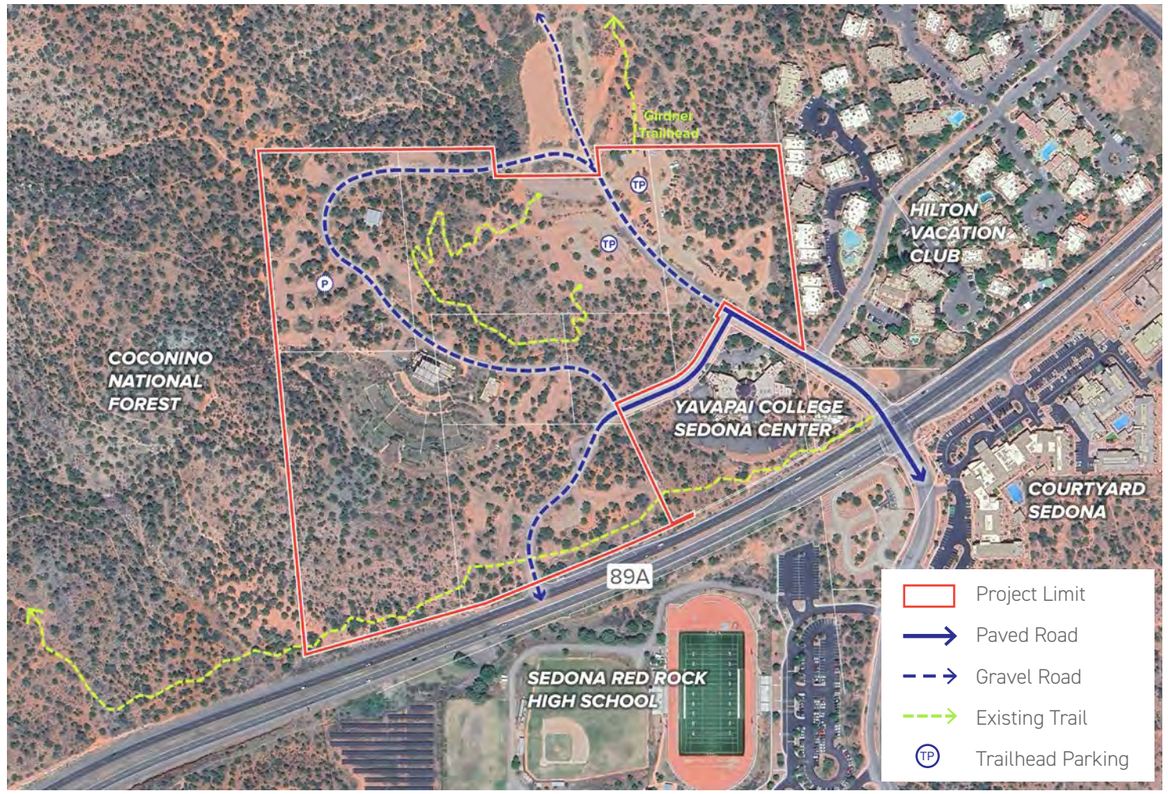
Land Ownership

The 41-acre site was bought by the City of Sedona in December of 2022 with the goal of being developed with mixed uses that support housing and the community. A 66-foot-wide access easement extends from the terminus of the paved portion of Cultural Park Place to the northern boundary of the site, providing access to Coconino National Forest for the National Park Service.

The project site is bordered to the west and north by Coconino National Forest, to the east by a timeshare development owned by Signature Resorts Inc., and to the south by property owned by Yavapai County Community College District. Directly across State Route 89A to the south is land owned by the Sedona Oak Creek Unified School District. Additionally, the southwest corner of State Route 89A and Cultural Park Place is owned by the City of Sedona and is currently operated as a Trailhead Shuttle Park and Ride facility.

Site Access and Circulation

The primary entrance to the site is via signalized intersection at Cultural Park Place, which leads directly to the Girdner Trailhead parking area. From there, the road runs alongside parking lots developed for the defunct amphitheater parking lots before looping back to Arts Village Drive (the paved portions of Arts Village Drive and Cultural Park Place are dedicated public ROWs). Arts Village Drive approximately 1,000 feet west of Cultural Park Place serves as a secondary access point, branching off from Cultural Park Place and connecting back to State Route 89A via a right-in, right-out due to center running median.



Plan Area & Context Map

Zoning

The City of Sedona serves as the governing authority for the project site, overseeing local services and traditional municipal functions. The project site is zoned as Planned Development (PD) District. This zoning designation is intended to allow for a flexible mix of land uses, ensuring compatibility between residential, non-residential, and/or mixed-use areas. The purpose of the Planned Development District is to facilitate development of the defunct amphitheater and will need to be amended to allow development as proposed under the master plan.

DRAFT

Regulatory Setting

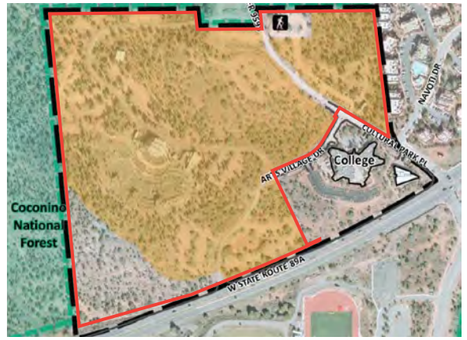
CFA Land Use

The Western Gateway Community Focus Area (CFA) Plan provides valuable guidance for future development. As it pertains to the site, the CFA plan has provided a framework of compatible uses, as well as objectives and strategies based upon community input.

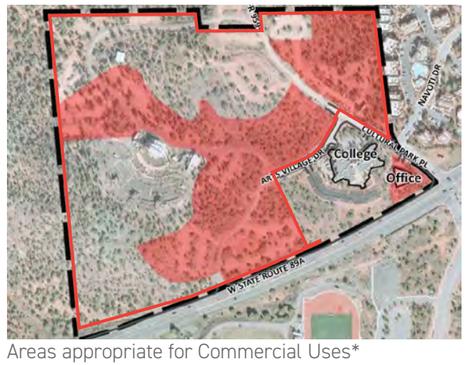
Multi-family Residential - According to the land use designation, the majority of the site is appropriate for multi-family residential uses. These uses may include a mix of residential and commercial developments, such as apartments, townhomes, and condominiums. Densities exceeding 12 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) are recommended to support housing diversity and affordability goals.

Commercial – The Western Gateway CFA Plan also identifies areas appropriate for commercial uses within a quarter mile of future neighborhoods, nearby timeshares, and lodging facilities. These areas are accessible to nearby neighborhoods on the north side of State Route 89A via Navoti Drive without the need for vehicular traffic on the highway. A wide variety of commercial uses is encouraged.

Open Space – As shown on the map, certain locations are identified where open space preservation or landscape buffers are important or potentially needed.



Areas appropriate for Multi-family residential uses*



Areas appropriate for Commercial Uses*

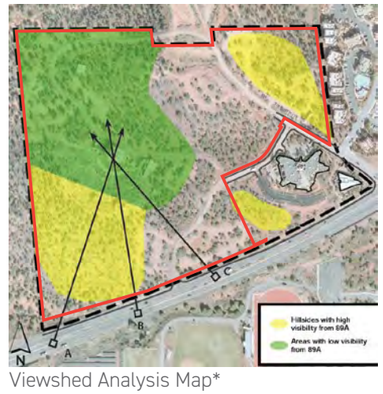


Areas appropriate for open space

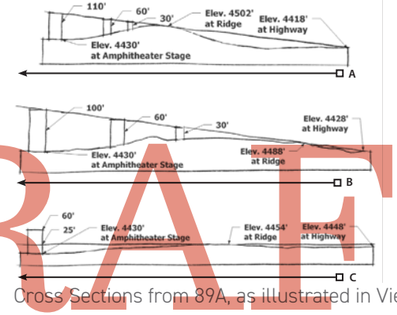
Resource: Western Gateway Community Focus Area Plan*

CFA Viewshed

According to Viewshed Analysis in the Western Gateway CFA Plan, to preserve natural open space and protect viewsheds along 89A, areas with high visibility have been identified. Development in these locations should minimize visual impact, especially on ridgelines, hilltops, and scenic views. In less visible areas, development standards may allow for additional height if a viewshed analysis demonstrates minimal impact. The elevation cross sections below illustrate how height can be increased without compromising visual integrity.



Viewshed Analysis Map*



Cross Sections from 89A, as illustrated in Viewshed Map*

DRAFT

*Western Gateway Community Focus Area Plan can be found here:
https://www.sedonaaz.gov/your-government/departments/community-development/community-focus-areas/western-gateway-cfa

Site Conditions

Site Vegetation

The site is characterized by a mix of native desert species, primarily adapted to the arid climate and rocky soils of Sedona. The vegetation is dominated by drought-resistant plants, including Juniper, Pine, Prickly Pear cactus, Agave, and various desert shrubs. These species are highly efficient at conserving water, thriving in conditions with minimal rainfall.

The vegetative cover appears well-integrated with the site's natural terrain, with plants dispersed across the landscape. The presence of diverse species, including both succulents and woody shrubs, helps prevent erosion and stabilizes the soil on the site's steep inclines.



Vegetation has overgrown around the terraces

Girdner Trailhead

The Girdner Trailhead is in mostly good condition, with its key infrastructure such as the shade structure and picnic areas well-preserved. However, the metal information stands require attention to fulfill their purpose of informing and guiding visitors.

The shade structure appears to be in good condition. The roof is intact, providing protection from the sun. The picnic tables and benches under the shade structure are in good condition. There are no visible cracks or deterioration in the wooden materials. The tables and benches are constructed from sturdy wood, with minor signs of aging but remain structurally sound. The information stands, intended to display trailhead information, are worn out. The metal surfaces appear weathered and faded, and there is no visible trail or interpretive information available on the stands.



Picnic tables and benches under the shade structure

The Amphitheater

The Sedona Cultural Park amphitheater, originally a venue for cultural events, now shows signs of aging and exposure to the elements. The structure itself remains in place, showing the effects of years without active maintenance. The wooden floor of the stage has experienced wear over time, with sections warped or missing. The laminated wood beams, a central design feature, have weathered after years of exposure, and the structure displays visible signs of degradation. The walls and structures surrounding the stage have been marked with graffiti.

Vegetation has naturally overgrown parts of the amphitheater, particularly around the terraces and steps, where original pathways and seating areas are now less accessible. The landscape, once carefully maintained, is now more integrated with the surrounding natural environment.



Existing wooden floor of the stage

DRAFT

Workforce Housing Shortage in Sedona

According to the most recent housing needs data, Sedona continues to face a severe shortage of affordable housing, with an estimated deficit of approximately 1,620 units. This represents a 29% increase from the 1,258-unit gap identified in the *2021 Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment: Volume 1*—a projection that has now likely materialized or even been exceeded. The shortage disproportionately impacts lower- and moderate-income workers—including essential service employees, hospitality staff, and retail workers—who are vital to sustaining Sedona's tourism-driven economy. Without accessible and affordable housing options, these critical workers face mounting challenges in maintaining employment and meeting basic living expenses.

Research from the most recent housing assessment projected that, over a five-year period, demand for affordable housing would increase by 29%, reaching an estimated need of 1,620 units. That timeline has now elapsed, and current conditions suggest this demand has likely materialized or been exceeded. The growth in housing need has closely tracked Sedona's expanding tourism sector, which accounted for 78% of all new jobs created in the region between 2018 and 2022. The housing crisis has been further intensified by demographic shifts, including an influx of higher-income retirees and remote workers, who now comprise 22% of Sedona's residential population. These trends have fueled a competitive housing market where median home prices have risen 47% since 2018, significantly outpacing wage growth in essential service sectors.

The Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment documents that as of 2021, approximately 75% of Sedona's workforce commuted from neighboring communities, with average round-trip distances exceeding 35 miles. This spatial mismatch between jobs and housing creates significant economic inefficiencies, including:

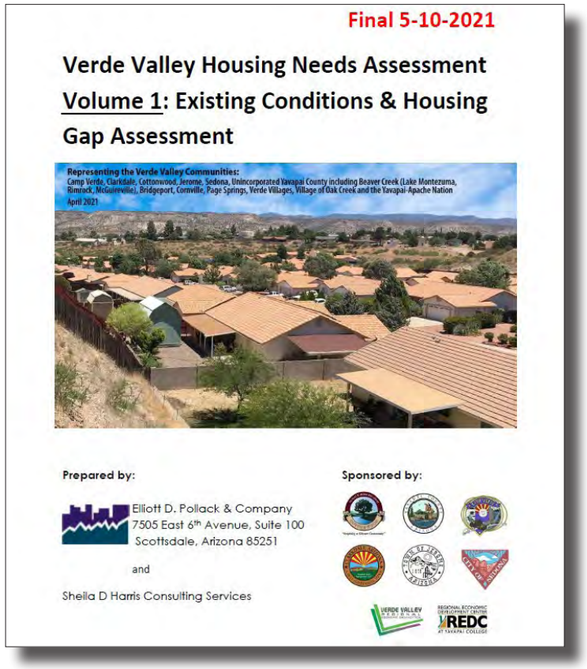
- An estimated $8.2 million in annual lost productivity due to extended commute times
- Increased traffic congestion on State Route 89A, with peak travel times lengthening by 18 minutes since 2019
- Higher employee turnover rates (32% annually) in hospitality and service.

Employment projections suggest Sedona will add 1,609 new jobs by 2030, with 83% concentrated in accommodations and food services. The study concludes that without immediate intervention to address the housing shortage, Sedona risks significant economic instability, including:

- Inability to staff essential services
- Declining competitiveness in the tourism sector
- Accelerating wealth disparity between service workers and higher-income residents.

The Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment recommends three evidence-based strategies for addressing these challenges:

1. Implementing inclusionary zoning policies to ensure new developments include affordable units.
2. Creating workforce housing tax incentives for employers.
3. Developing public-private partnerships to finance mixed-income housing projects.



The Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment: Volume 1 can be found here:

https://www.sedonaaz.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/44313/637653265699170000

DRAFT

DRAFT

3 Community Outreach

DRAFT

In-person Public Workshops

Overview & Purpose

The purpose of the Public Engagement Workshop was centered in information gathering. The workshop would allow residents of Sedona to express their desires for the Western Gateway site. Before the workshop the Western Gateway Master Plan Team evaluated existing Western Gateway facilities and created an inventory of the Western Gateway system. The Team then presented the inventory to the residents that participated in the public workshop. The workshop allowed resident participants to communicate how they would like to see the City's Western Gateway systems move forward within the next ten years. The Master Plan Team facilitated the gathering of information from residents that participated in the workshop, and quantified the information so this master plan report can accurately reflect the resident's desires.

The workshop facilitators were Dig Studio and the Barnhart Company. The Dig Studio team presented the Western Gateway inventory and gathered resident opinions and input. The Barnhart Company oriented the residents to the workshop and guided participants through voting for what park programs and facilities they would like to see in the coming years.

Public Workshop #1

On October 24, 2024, the City of Sedona held the first public workshop at Sedona Hub in Posse Ground. The session presented overview of the project and potential programs to gather community feedback on the best use for the Western Gateway site.

The first activity involved attendees ranking their preferences for nine types of infrastructure and five types of uses on voting boards. Condominium and apartments received the highest points of first-preference votes (242), followed by a recreation center (175), a healthy community (158), and entertainment venue (145).

The second half of the session featured a bubble mapping exercise, where participants placed adhesive cutouts that were scaled to a site map to show preferred uses and land use arrangement. A community park was the most frequently included element (54 mentions), followed by a dog park (52) and a play ground (37). The 25-unit townhome was the most popular housing type. Additional write-in ideas included a museum, senior living facility, and technology center.

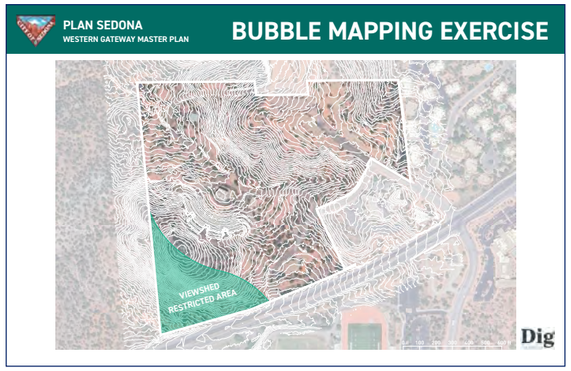


Outreach Material of Dot Exercise



Dot Exercise Results (1/5)

DRAFT

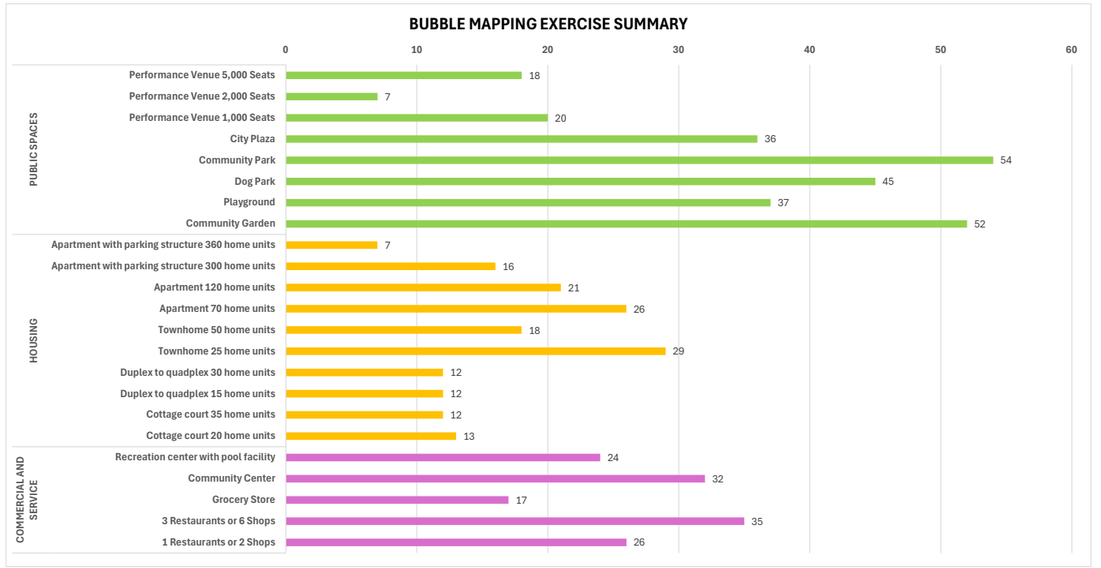


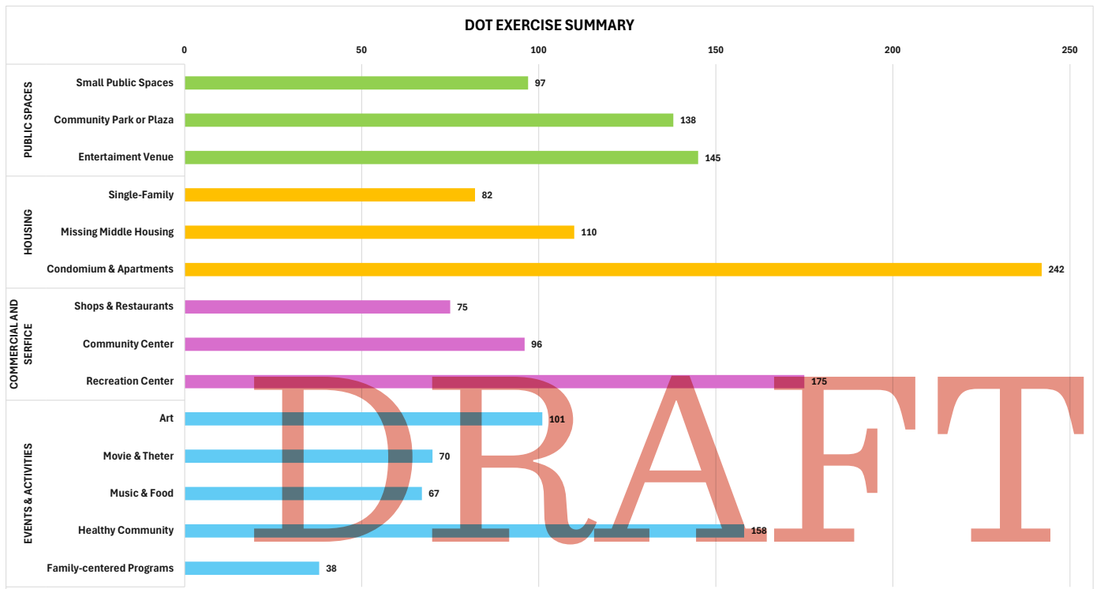


Outreach Material of Bubble Mapping Exercise



Bubble Mapping Exercise Results (30/91)



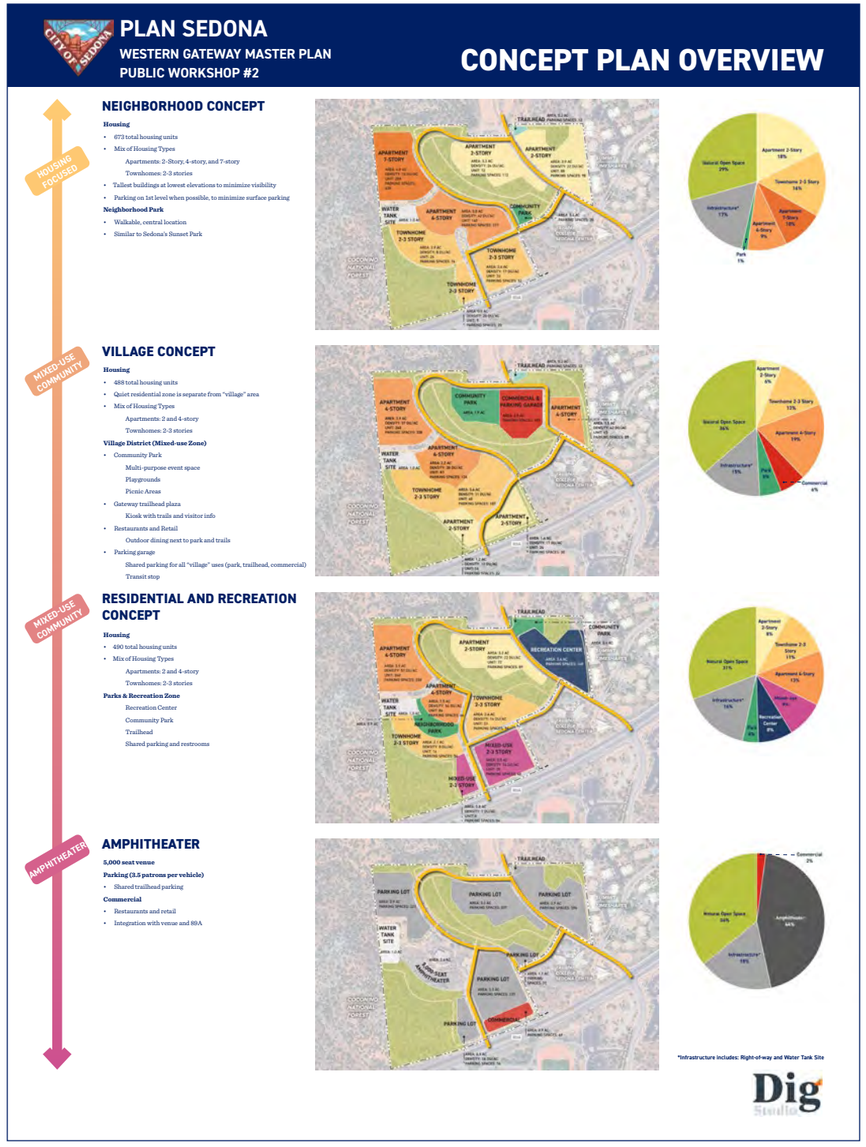


DRAFT

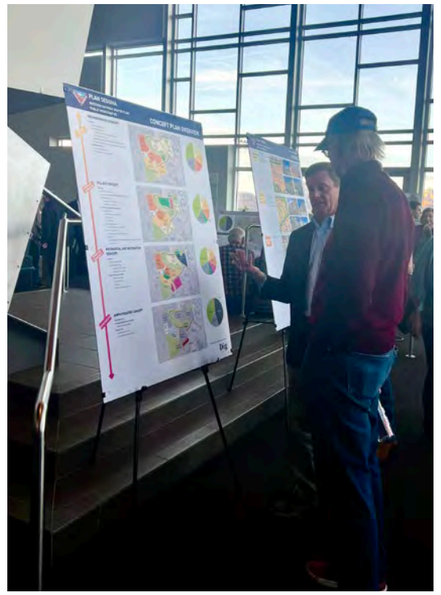
Public Workshop #2

On February 19, 2025, the City of Sedona hosted the second public meeting at the Sedona Performing Arts Center to present four alternative concepts for Western Gateway site. Dig Studio led the presentation, which provided project background, current planning status, and the development framework for the proposed concepts. Following the presentation, attendees examined detailed display boards in the lobby showcasing the four alternatives. City staff and design team members were available for discussion, with written comment stations provided for additional feedback. Participants received green tokens to indicate which concept best aligned with community needs and red tokens to identify the least representative option.

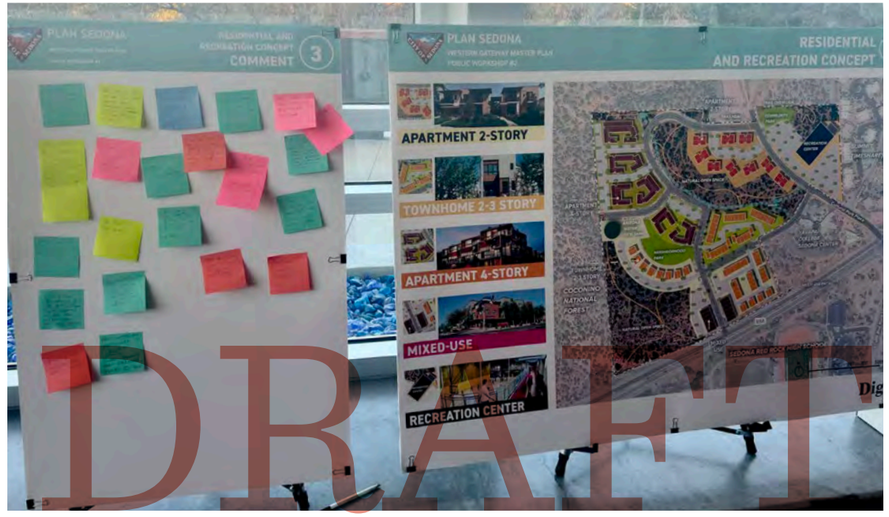
- Neighborhood Concept: 6 Green, 31 Red
- Village Concept: 34 Green, 4 Red
- Residential and Recreation Concept: 35 Green, 3 Red
- Amphitheater Concept: 17 Green, 55 Red



Outreach Material: Information board from Public Workshop #2







Outreach Material: Commenting board and concept plan from Public Workshop #2

Online Survey Summary

Receiving broad community feedback was central to the Western Gateway Development Plan. Three online surveys were implemented to collect input from Sedona residents regarding potential amenities and development strategies for the Western Gateway area.

Surveys were conducted online and distributed widely to ensure inclusive participation. Multiple distribution methods included posting survey links on the project's official website and promotion through social media platforms.

The surveys revealed community preferences and priorities regarding amenities and development approaches at the Western Gateway property.

Survey #1

The first online survey was open to the public from October 30th to November 14th, with a total of 579 responses completed.

- Respondents prioritized Parks and Recreation amenities, including neighborhood parks, trails, pathways, natural open spaces, recreation centers, and community gardens.
- There was interest in an amphitheater, with preferred seating capacities of either 2,000 or 5,000.
- Housing needs included apartments, patio/garden/carriage homes, duplex/triplex units, and townhomes.
- A balanced mix of ownership and rental housing was supported, with emphasis on workforce (rent-controlled) and senior/assisted living options.
- Desired commercial and retail services included coffee shops, restaurants, and convenience markets.
- Additional supported services included park-and-ride facilities, museums, and theaters.
- Overall, community amenities and housing were identified as top priorities for the Western Gateway.

Survey #2

The second online survey was open to the public from January 2nd to January 19th, 2025, with a total of 949 responses completed.

- Support (82%) for a City park at the Western Gateway property, with enthusiasm for a community/civic plaza.
- Recreation center supported by 54%, especially if funded through user fees (71% support).
- Resistance to future tax increases (57% against).
- Amphitheater at Western Gateway supported (64% favor), but opposition to a larger regional amphitheater (58% against).
- Resistance to using most of the land solely for an amphitheater (65% against).
- Opposition to tax increases for an amphitheater (64% against).
- Traffic management a key concern, with low support for frequent events increasing congestion (64% against).
- Favor (71%) a city partnership with Forest Service to improve Gateway Trailhead.
- Support (59%) for multi-use parking solutions for transit and trailhead users.

Survey #3

After the February 19th public workshop, where Dig Studio presented four concept plans, the designs were posted on the project website for public review and comment. This survey gave the community another opportunity to evaluate the concepts and share additional feedback. Comments provided were very similar to what was recorded on the day of the meeting.

- Focus on housing and heights.
- Sensitivity to density.
- Parking key, especially at trailhead.
- Ensure that housing developments integrate and are balanced with open parks, gathering spaces, and cultural facilities.
- Preserving open space is important maintaining the landscape character.
- Repurpose the amphitheater seating area as a community garden or park.
- Provide a multi-use park for community gatherings, concerts, and festivals (1,000 - 2,000 people).
- Incorporate more trails into the community.
- Look at limited commercial and office uses.

These survey results outline community preferences and priorities, providing critical guidance for the future development and planning efforts for Sedona's Western Gateway property.

DRAFT

Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were conducted throughout the course of the project providing an ongoing process of stakeholder input and feedback as the Western Gateway Master Plan developed. The stakeholders were drawn from housing- and utility-related services, educational institutions, govermental agencies and community based organizations.

These conversations provided much needed background related to the impetus for the acquisition of the site, desired programs, and role the city would like to play in ensuring development meets the expectation of the City and community.

Information related to site access from utilities to emergency vehicles were discussed with city and agency partners. These conversations were extremely useful in validating assumptions and providing much needed clarity as the preferred option and ultimately implementation plan are developed.

Neighbors in the USFS and Yavapai College contributed current plans and operations highlighting the opportunity for future synergies.

All those interviewed were highly supportive of the initial plans and process looking forward to future conversations as the master plan progresses.

ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE
City Council	Scott Jablow	Mayor
City Council	Holli Ploog	Vice Mayor
City Council	Melissa Dunn	Councilor
City Council	Brian Fultz	Councilor
City Council	Kathy Kinsella	Councilor
City Council	Pete Furman	Councilor
City Council	Derek Pfaff	Councilor
Forest Service	Alex Schlueter	District Ranger
Forest Service	Phillip Waldrop	District Recreation Staff Officer
Forest Service	Kevin Kuhl	Forest Recreation
Forest Service	Rebecca Shaw	Forest Recreation
Forest Service	Francisca Adrian	Forest Recreation
Forest Service	Tina Williams	Forest Recreation
Forest Service	Brian Poturalski	Forest Recreation
City of Sedona	Josh Frewin	Parks And Rec Director
City of Sedona	Bryce Beck	Sustainability Manager
City of Sedona	Robert Weber	Transit Manager
Sedona Fire District	Brian Russel	President
APS	Kellie McCune	Customer Project Representative
Arizona Water Company	John Snickers	Division Manager
City of Sedona	Roxanne Holland	Wastewater Director
Yavapai College	Richard Hernandez	REDC Director
Red Rock High School	Heather Isom	Principal
Verde Valley Cyclists Coalition	Tracy Randall	President
Housing Advisory Group	Linda Martinez	Volunteer
Northern Arizona Healthcare	Charlie Agee, MD	Chair

DRAFT

Key Findings & Input

The community's understanding and support of the need for housing has been well documented along this process as a top prioity.

This was second only to a desire for a community amenity that serves not only those who would reside within the Western Gateway site but greater Sedona community as a whole. This has been envisioned as a flexible park with open space that could host community events and performances.

Another community amenity that garnered wide support was a recreation center. Support for this amenity waned when asked about funding and operating coats. Many residents made mention of a potential alternative site for this highly regarded community desire.

Community focused uses continued to define the remainder of the site make-up. Commercial uses should allow for a variety of uses, be representative of local business, and offer the opportunity for economic diversity.

This process has consistently reinforced the community preference for a truly mixed-use development with housing at its core, while ensuring that the site continues to serve the greater Sedona community at large.









DRAFT

DRAFT

4

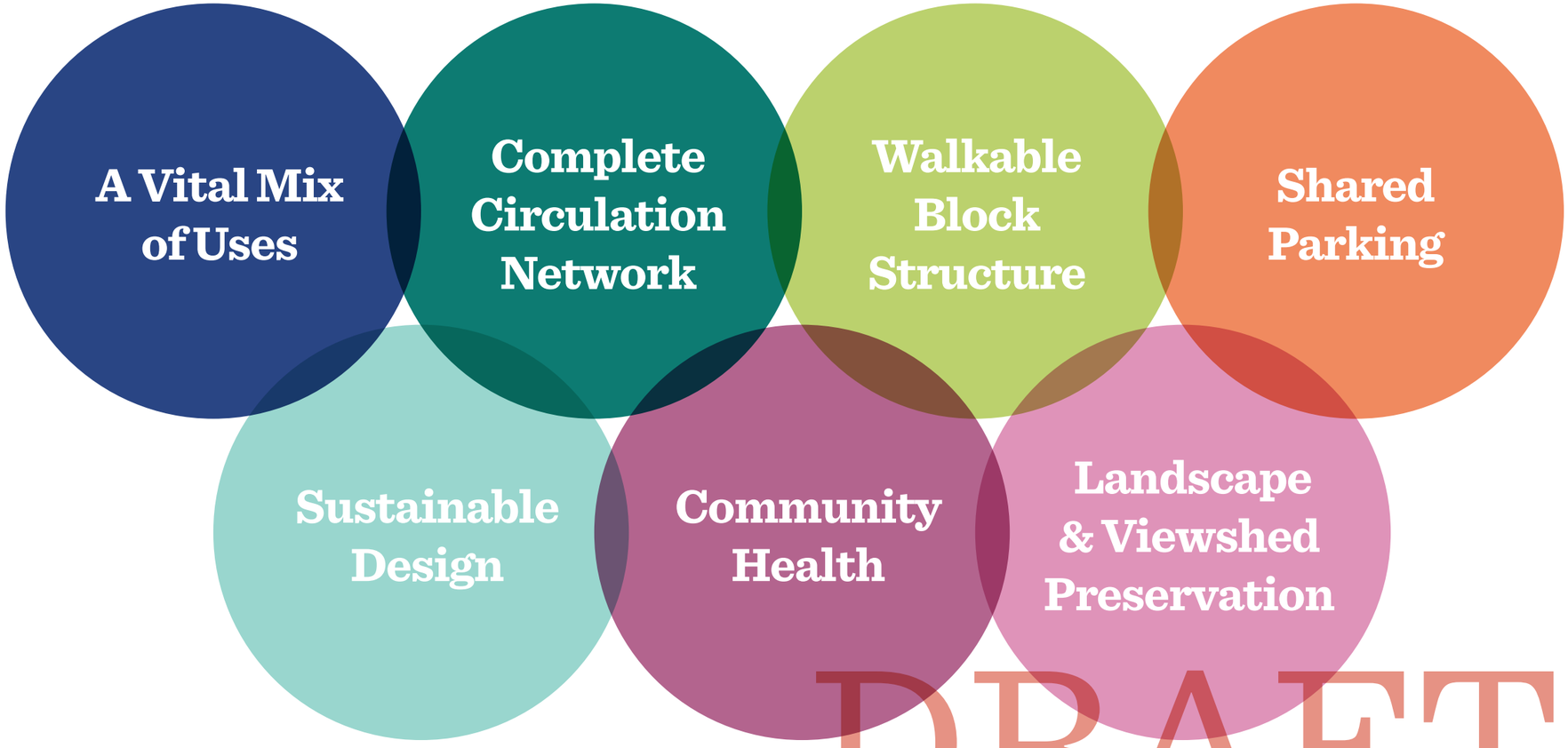
Guiding Principles

DRAFT

Guiding Principles

Principles for a Thriving Western Gateway

To transform key insights from community engagement into a clear vision and actionable strategies for the physical design and activation of a thriving Western Gateway, these Guiding Principles have been established. Building on this framework, the team developed a series of concepts to evaluate site organization, development intensity, and land-use mix alternatives—ensuring alignment with the community's goals and desired outcomes.



DRAFT

1. A Vital Mix of Uses

A key lesson learned from Cultural Park, as well as from other successful living environments, is that long-term community success depends on flexible accommodation of shifting uses as the local economy evolves. This flexibility is essential to Western Gateway's sustained viability and vitality. Future development should incorporate comparable adaptability - enabling it to respond to market needs during initial development and throughout future decades - to ensure both sustained economic viability and a vibrant living environment over time.





Mixed-use Buildings:

Mixed-use buildings provide activity at the street level, which is further supported by the residents and/or workers above.







Variety of Housing:

Western Gateway will be activated by a concentration of new workforce housing in a variety of small- to medium scale, town house types.





Active Mixed-use Places:

Activities from indoor spaces spill out into the streets and other spaces of the public realm creating connections and continuity between the variety of uses in Western Gateway.

DRAFT

2. Complete Circulation Network

A network of complete streets and trails – each balancing accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and transit – is necessary to enable and encourage access to and through the plan area and to avoid congestion at any point. As land use within the plan area intensifies, it is important to provide new routes for all transportation modes throughout the Western Gateway site, allowing residents and visitors to choose routes and modes based on trip purpose and user preferences.









Complete Streets:

Mixed-use buildings provide activity at the street level, which is further supported by the residents and/or workers above.



Programmable Public Realm:

Comfortable shaded streetscape, with wide sidewalks, and curb-side parking promotes activity in the Western Gateway.



Connectivity throughout Western Gateway:

Western Gateway's public realm network is made up of streets, trails, and public spaces, all connected to create a robust circulation network, and generate outdoor rooms of value and quality.

DRAFT

3. Walkable Block Structure

A key characteristic of a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood is that each development is at human scale and well organized, so that pedestrians can easily navigate or explore without getting lost, bored or disoriented. It is important that the plan area be divided into appropriate parcels that encourage walking as an attractive alternative to driving. Such developable parcels shall be accessible providing more convenience for pedestrians, not necessarily for cars.



Walkable Blocks:

Human-scale development, such as historic Tlaquepaque Village with comfortably designed courtyards, provide excellent connectivity and opportunities for constantly changing, varied activities.





Pedestrian Routes:

Paseos, shared courtyards, passages, and semi-private open spaces can provide circulation through the mid-points of blocks, further increasing overall connectivity.

DRAFT

4. Shared Parking

The development patterns of Western Gateway utilize shared parking arrangements that combine on-site and nearby off-site parking in shared lots and structures. This approach differs fundamentally from conventional suburban parking standards that mandate dedicated on-site parking for each building or use - requirements that have created commercial areas dominated by surface parking at the expense of human comfort. The shared parking system concentrates vehicles into efficient, shared facilities that should be visually screened from public view. By enabling parking resources to be shared among uses with offset peak demand periods throughout the day, week and year, this strategy achieves superior land utilization. It supports more vibrant and productive development while ensuring buildings and public spaces are designed primarily for human activity rather than vehicle accommodation.



Pedestrian-Oriented Frontages:

Parking in Western Gateway will generally be located in the interior of blocks, or lined on street-facing sides by active building frontages.





Parking Wayfinding:

Key to a manged, shared parking supply, is ease of use - including clear wayfinding signage directing visitors to parking structure/areas as well as key destinations within the development.

DRAFT

5. Sustainable Design

Environmental sustainability is a core value for the Western Gateway, and a key goal for the development. Sustainability in Western Gateway will be measured in building and energy efficiency, transportation and land use, materials and consumption, water and natural systems, climate resilience and other measures identified in Sedona Climate Action Plan. Walkable, bike-able, and transit-served places are inherently sustainable as they generate comparatively less use of personal vehicles and the associated natural resource consumption that have contributed to climate change.





Sustainable Buildings:

High-quality building design and building technologies will ensure sustainability in all new buildings in Western Gateway.





Solar Roof Technology:

Building roofs and carport structures will provide opportunities for solar collection.





Sustainable Public Realm:

Opportunities for stormwater collection and management is promoted as an integral part of the public realm design in Western Gateway.

DRAFT

6. Community Health

Through physical planning and design, community health is a naturally built into this plan. With a highly walkable network of streets, trails, and public open spaces, the Western Gateway will foster well-being by offering a high-quality living environment, vibrant gathering spaces, and accessible amenities that encourage active lifestyles and social connection.





Active, walkable, and bike-able environment:

Streets and public gathering spaces serve many functions, contributing to community health and well-being.







A Place for All:

Western Gateway will be a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use community, with choices and opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages.

DRAFT

7. Landscape and Viewshed Preservation

Sedona's character and charm are derived from its stunning red rock formations and harmonious blend of Southwestern and rustic architecture, featuring natural materials and earth tones. Strict building codes have ensured developments preserve scenic views and minimize environmental impact. Future development of Western Gateway must be designed to complement the dramatic natural surroundings, preserving viewsheds and maintaining a low- to medium-density, small-town atmosphere that prioritizes sustainability and seamless integration with nature.











Architectural Harmony:

Between Sedona's urban core, the foothill areas, and many local precedents throughout the City, there is a strong local history of architectural and place-making excellence that inspires future development of Western Gateway.

DRAFT

DRAFT

5

Plan Options & Evaluation

DRAFT

Options Overview

Three main factors must be considered when creating planning scenarios with input from the public and stakeholders: acceptability, compatibility, and effectiveness. This planning technique is intended to examine these three main factors:

- Do the people approve of the land uses?
- Do the suggested land uses make sense for the property?
- Do the suggested land uses effectively address the needs of the community?

Responses to the online surveys and the first public meeting revealed a need for a range of housing options, a potential performance space, and a communal area or recreation center that prioritizes servicing the community at large.

In keeping with the site characteristics discussed in Chapter 2, the site's elevation changes and the property's slope both restrict building on steep slopes, albeit the latter may permit taller building heights without obstructing State Route 89A vistas.

The City Council wants to address the need for attainable or reasonably priced homes across a range of economic brackets. Townhouses and apartments with varying densities and heights make up three of the four development choices.

Creating potential scenarios does not have to address all three main factors at once; instead, it can examine possibilities that are intentionally geared toward land compatibility or that are successful in satisfying public needs or desires. The goal is to create scenarios that evaluate the site's capacity with various land uses, building heights, housing densities, and open space safeguards that the community would eventually find acceptable.

Ultimately, rigorous community input consideration, in-depth site capacity research, and alignment with viable and community-acceptable proposed land uses are essential elements to ensure successful land use planning.

Options Overview

Utilizing the public input and the sites physical characteristics, four planning scenarios were developed illustrating various housing capacities, building heights, community park, recreation center and retaining the existing performance venue. The housing types can accommodate both rental or for sale options, but not necessarily indicated on the planning options.

The planning scenarios include:

1. Neighborhood Concept - maximizes housing, including number of units, density and building height.
2. Village Concept - creates a destination retail and park event area, with a balance of housing diversity.
3. Residential and Recreation - provides a community amenity and park, housing diversity, and small amount of retail along 89A.
4. Amphitheater – preserves the existing large-scale event destination with the required parking with a small amount of retail.

DRAFT





Neighborhood Concept

Maximizes housing, including number of units, density and building height.





Village Concept

Creates a destination retail and park event area, with a balance of housing diversity.





Residential & Recreation Concept

Provides a community amenity and park, housing diversity, and small amount of retail along 89A.





Amphitheater Concept

Preserves the existing large-scale event destination with the required parking with a small amount of retail.

DRAFT

Neighborhood Concept

Within the framework of the Neighborhood Concept, the site's capacity for residential dwelling units is maximized, and a diverse range of housing styles are included. Through the utilization of higher apartment buildings that are seven stories tall in the northwest corner of the land, the overall housing density is significantly increased at the lowest elevation of the site. An open lawn space, a ramada, and a playground are all features that are available to the immediate neighborhood in a small park. The concept acknowledges the United States Forest Service property encircling the area as the primary recreational amenity for the neighborhood.

Land Use Summary

7 Story Apartments	288 units
4-Story Apartments	160 units
2-3 Story Apartments	160 units
2-3 Story Townhomes	65 units
Total Housing Units	**673 units**
Housing	30.6 acres
Community Park	0.4 acre



APARTMENT 2-STORY



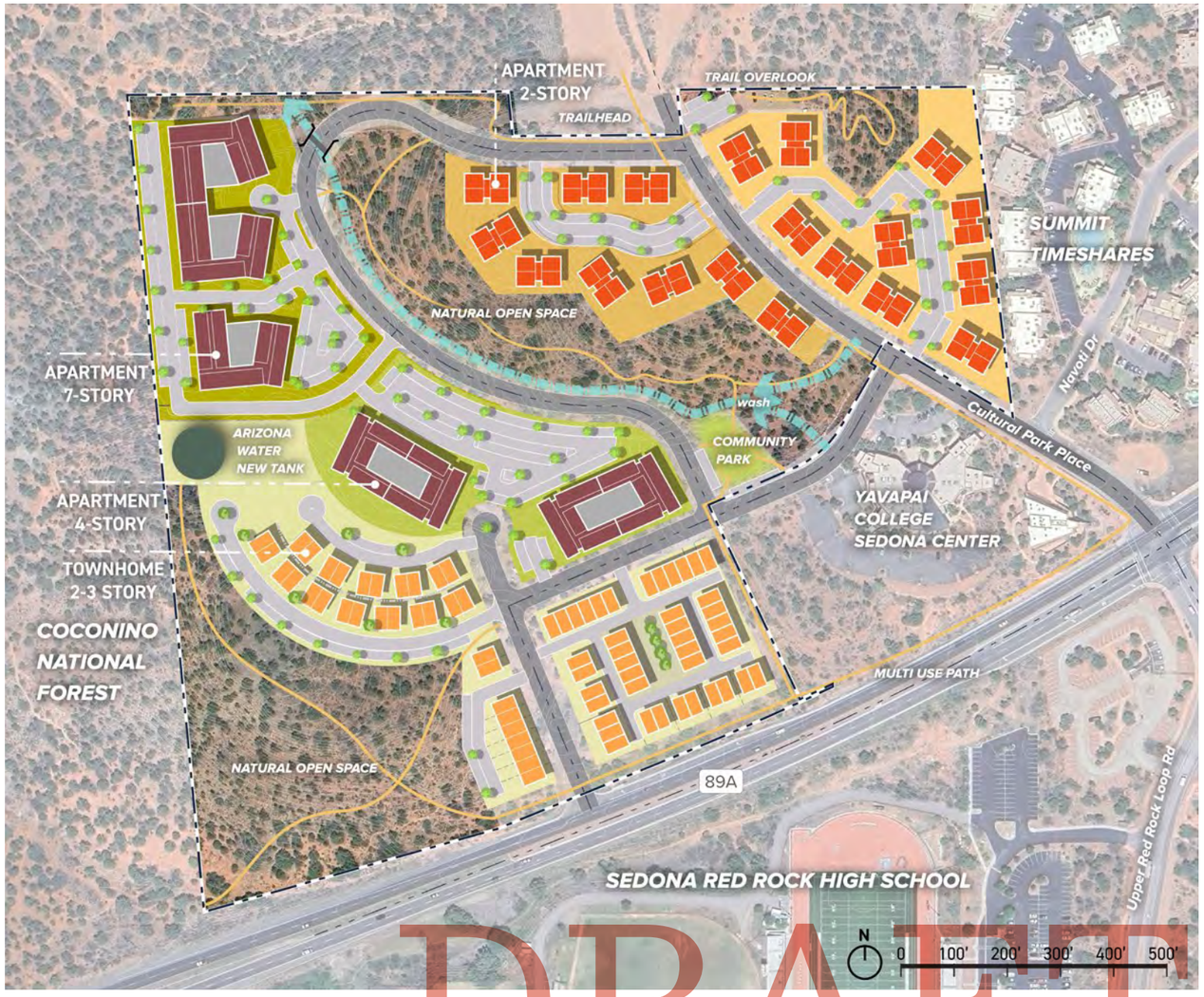
TOWNHOME 2-3 STORY



APARTMENT 4-STORY



APARTMENT 7-STORY



DRAFT

Village Concept

One of the features of The Village Concept is a park that spans two acres and has the capacity to host large-scale community events, including performances. A parking garage is available for use by retail establishments, large events, trailheads, public transportation, and park-and-ride lots. There is a wide variety of applications that can be accommodated in the commercial sector, such as retail, office, business incubator, museum, or gallery. The concept provides a variety of housing options that can address a range of income levels.

Land Use Summary

4-Story Apartments	323 units
2-Story Apartments	64 units
2-3 Story Townhomes	60 units
Total Housing Units	**447 units**
Housing	28.2 acres
Community Park	2.6 acres
Commercial	0.2 acre



APARTMENT 2-STORY



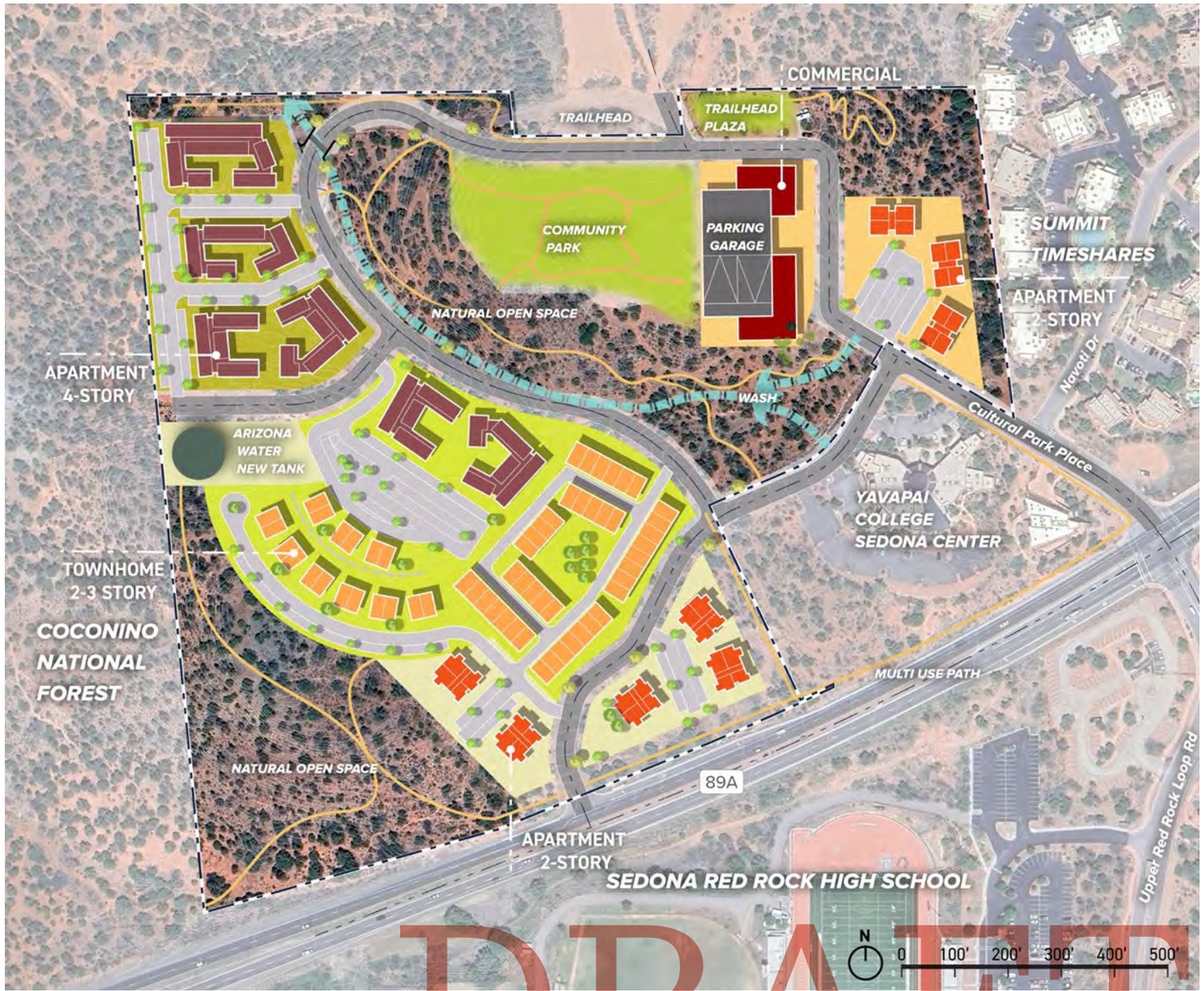
TOWNHOME 2-3 STORY



APARTMENT 4-STORY



COMMERCIAL



DRAFT

Residential & Recreation Concept

In addition to a range of residential purposes, mixed-use development near 89A offers the chance to provide a variety of commercial uses. The level of commercial use would depend on the amount needed and respond to retail and employment opportunities. In addition to giving the community a place to mingle and enjoy recreation, the recreation center and community park could host community events at approximately 1,000 participants. The neighborhood park integrates a dog park, playgrounds, and a variety of community gardens into its design by using the existing amphitheater terracing. To balance housing density with a communal benefit, the idea offers a range of residential housing types and building heights.

Land Use Summary

4-Story Apartments	324 units
2-Story Apartments	72 units
2-3 Story Townhomes	49 units
Mixed-use	45 units
Total Housing Units	**490 units**
Housing	25.8 acres
Parks	1.6 acres
Mixed-use	3.6 acres



APARTMENT 2-STORY



TOWNHOME 2-3 STORY



APARTMENT 4-STORY



MIXED-USE



RECREATION CENTER



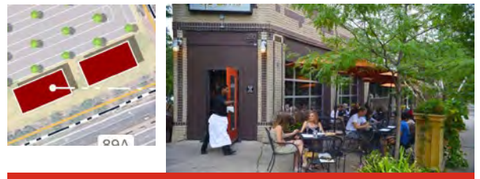
DRAFT

Amphitheater Concept

The site has the potential to continue to serve as a community event area, which might accommodate events such as music festivals, farmer's markets, art displays, and car shows. Near State Route 89A, the commercial use could include establishments such as restaurants, stores, museums, or art galleries. If it is practical, parking garages might be used in place of surface parking, which would open the possibility of other land uses. Mixed-use complexes and high-density residential buildings are two examples of the additional land uses that could be considered.

Land Use Summary

5,000-Seat Amphitheater	3.4 acres
Commercial	0.9 acre
Parking	15.4 acres



COMMERCIAL



AMPHITHEATER 5K SEAT



DRAFT

Options Evaluation

Following the public vote process that was conducted as part of the second Public Workshop, the public decided that the scenarios 2. Village Concept and 3. Residential and Recreation were the possibilities that they would most like to see implemented. In the two scenarios, the amount of green and red tokens obtained was relatively comparable. The two concepts were extremely comparable regarding the variety of dwellings and the height of the buildings. Inclusion of a community park or a recreation center was the key distinction between the two options to consider.

As the most significant public input that was opposed to the other two scenarios, they were not in favor of the seven-story apartments that were depicted in scenario 1. Neighborhood Concept, nor were they in favor of continuing to use the existing performance space that was depicted in scenario 4. Amphitheater .

In addition to public voting, the public submitted written comments. Key public statements include:

Building Heights

- Maximum of 3-4 stories to preserve views and maintain Sedona's character
- Preference is for 2-3 stories

Housing

- Housing is very important
- 600+ Housing is too many units
- Provide a balance of apartments, condos
- Provide senior housing and assisted living
- Consider range of incomes in housing options

Balance Housing with Public Spaces

- Ensure that housing developments integrate parks, gathering spaces, and cultural facilities
- Preserving open space is important to maintaining the landscape character
- Re-purpose the amphitheater seating area as a community garden or park
- Provide a multi-use park for community gatherings, concerts, and festivals (1,000 - 2,000 people)
- Incorporate more trails into the community

Develop a Well-planned Recreation Center

- Recreation center is valuable addition to Sedona
- Include outdoor spaces, cafes, multi-use rooms, and pool
- Ensure realistic funding for construction and operations
- Should recreation center be at a different location, not at the Western Gateway?

Commercial, Retail, and Office

- Small amount of retail for residents
- Restaurant, coffee shop, and food trucks around community park
- Use of parking garage to reduce large surface lots
- Possible diversity of employment opportunities

Incorporate Cultural and Community Amenities

- Dedicate space for art exhibits, museums, and public gardens
- Partner with Yavapai College and High School

Improve the Western Gateway Trailhead

- Parking is important at trailhead
- Respect the USFS trails and consider views
- Focus on designated trailheads and established trails

Provide Trails and Community Connectivity

- Provide buffer between development & USFS
- Provide internal paths and trails that connect to designated USFS trails and trailheads
- Minimize car use within the community
- Provide shuttle and park-n-ride options

This guidance was essential in the process of developing the preferred option that will be described later in this chapter by making use of the similarities that exist between the two preferred scenarios.

DRAFT

Critical Factors for Success

Critical factors in development of a preferred master plan goes back to the first section of this chapter:

- Do the people approve of the land uses?
- Do the suggested land uses make sense for the property?
- Do the suggested land uses effectively address the needs of the community?

Adherence to these primary questions that are answered more thoroughly in the public comments ensure that the preferred option aligns with the overall vision and goals of the community. The critical factors for success in developing preferred scenarios include interpreting community engagement likes and dislikes, consideration of the site's physical capacity, and feasibility of meeting the housing needs of the community.

By combining the Village Concept and Residential and Recreation scenarios, the preferred option aims to create a balanced land use plan that meets the needs of the community while respecting the natural surroundings.

To return to the first section of this chapter, the following are some of the most important things to consider while developing a preferred master plan:

- Does the public have a positive opinion of the land uses?
- Given the physical characteristics of the property, do the proposed land uses make sense?
- Do the proposed land uses adequately meet the requirements of the community in a satisfactory manner?

Maintaining adherence to these main questions, which are answered in greater detail in the comments provided by the public, guarantees that the alternative that is preferred is in accordance with the overarching vision and objectives of the community. Interpreting the likes and dislikes of the community in terms of engagement, taking into consideration the physical capacity of the site, and determining whether it is feasible to meet the housing needs of the community are the essential components that contribute to the success of constructing various scenarios.

The preferred option synthesizes the Village Concept with the Residential and Recreation Concept and seeks to develop a balanced land use plan that satisfies the requirements of the community while also showing respect for the natural environment.

DRAFT

Preferred Option

By providing a harmonious combination of residential living and recreational amenities, the Preferred Option helps to establish a community that is both dynamic and sustainable for its people to take pleasure in. This alternative makes the most of the land's potential while also catering to the requirements of both the current community and those who will be residing there in the future.

There are three fundamental components:

1. A variety of housing types;
2. A variety of mixed-use options;
3. Area for community benefit.

These components demonstrate the most likely development scenario that will fulfill the requirements of the community, while also allowing the plan to be flexible enough to accommodate unexpected opportunities or shifts in public favor. In order to provide structure to the various program elements, the following guidelines were developed to assist in the preparation of the preferred alternative:

1. Mix of Housing Options Targeting 450-490 Total Units

200 – 350	Apartments 3 – 4 Stories (48' Height) Surface or garage parking (1.5 / unit)
120 - 250	Apartments/Condos/Senior Housing 2-3 Stories (38' Height) Surface parking (1.5 spaces / unit)
40 – 80	Townhomes / Attached Homes 2-3 Stories (38' Height) Surface/Tuck-under parking (2.0/unit)

2. Mixed Use – Residential Focus with Retail / Commercial

- 10,000 – 15,000 square feet (60 – 90 parking spaces at 6 spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Locally serving retail / commercial space
- Apartments / Townhomes over retail
- Galleries / Museum / Co-Work Space

2a. Mixed Use Alternate – Employment / Commercial Focus

- 40,000 – 80,000 square feet – 2 story
- 160 – 320 parking garage spaces (4 parking spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Employment, Tech Center, Galleries, Museum, Entertainment
- Locally serving retail

3. Community Benefit Area (4.0-4.5 Acres)

- Park / Open Space for Community Gatherings (2 acres)
- Concerts / Festivals for 775 people - 4.5 acres
  - Includes 2.5 acres for 310 parking spaces at 2.5 people/car
- Recreation Center / Pool (2.5 – 3.0 acres, includes 100 parking spaces)
  - 1.0-acre park + .5 parking (+/- 60 spaces)
  - Combined parking accommodates 400 people at 2.5 people/car)
- Restaurant, coffee shop, and food trucks (3,000 – 5,000 square feet)
  - 0.2 - 0.4-acres for parking, 24 -40 spaces at 8/1,000 sf of building

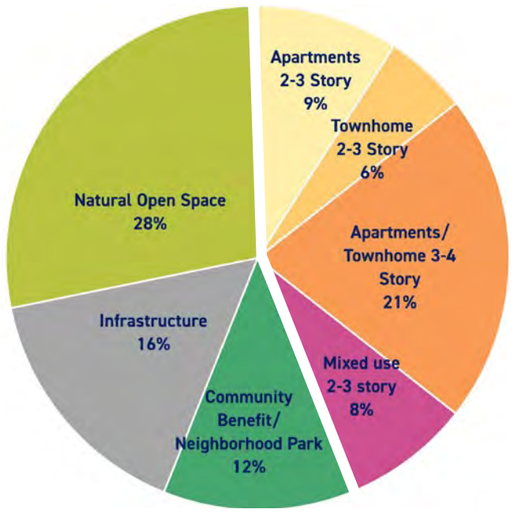
Using the guidelines described above, the recommended alternative offers a layout that is quite adaptable. It consists of four to five different types of residential buildings, a combination of commercial, office, and residential along 89A, and a community benefit area that may contain a large event area, a transit station, and a recreation center.

Land Use Summary

4-Story Apartments	324 units
2-Story Apartments	72 units
2-3 Story Townhomes	44 units
Mixed-use	42 units
Total Housing Units	**482 units**
Housing	24 acres
Neighborhood Park	0.8 acres
Community Benefit	4.2 acres
OS/Trail Overlook	12.0 acres
Total	**41.0 acres**

In addition to the housing, parks and open space components, Arizona Water Company is requesting a one-acre site for a new water tank. The need for a water tank site is to increase the capacity of the larger Sedona potable water system.

DRAFT



BLOCK #	DESCRIPTION	BLOCK ACRES	RESIDENTIAL UNITS
1	Apartments 4-Story	6.5	324
2	Townhome/ Apartments 3-4 Story	2.1	26
3	Neighborhood Park	0.8	-
4	Water Tank site	1.0	-
5	Townhome 2-3 Story	2.2	18
6	Mixed- use 2-3 Story + 6,000 SF Retail	1.1	8
7	Mixed- use 2-3 Story + 6,000 SF Retail	2.3	34
8	Public Benefit	4.2	-
9	Apartments 2-3 Story	3.3	72
10	Trail Overlook	0.4	-
R.O.W.	Right of Way	5.5	
O.S.	Natural Open Space	11.6	
TOTAL		41.0	482





Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential near State Route 89A



An office or a larger commercial use could be an alternative to the mixed-use commercial and residential use. An alternative concept that is presented offers up to 80,000 square feet of space that can be utilized for commercial, office, retail, entertainment, or tech center purposes. It is anticipated that a parking garage would be necessary to fulfill the parking requirements.

DRAFT

DRAFT

6

Western Gateway Master Plan

DRAFT

Master Plan Development Process

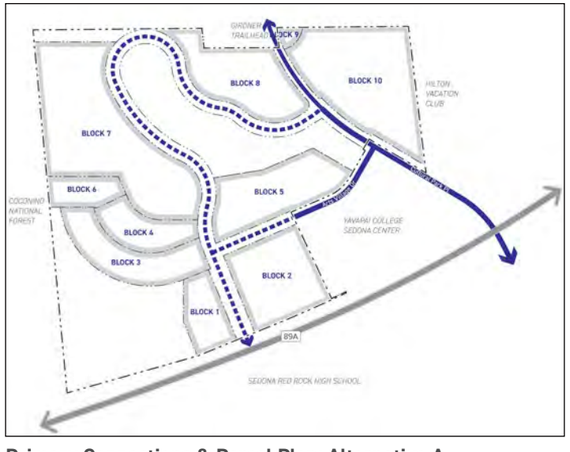
The Western Gateway Master Plan has been developed to guide future land use and shape sustainable new development for the area. This chapter presents a clear, illustrative vision for the Western Gateway's future, implementing the principles established in Chapter 4. The plan enables market forces to systematically transform this valuable site in alignment with the community vision identified through the public engagement process. Beginning with a conceptual framework of parcels, the master plan establishes development standards that promote human-scale planning and design.

Step 1 - Primary Connections & Parcel Plan

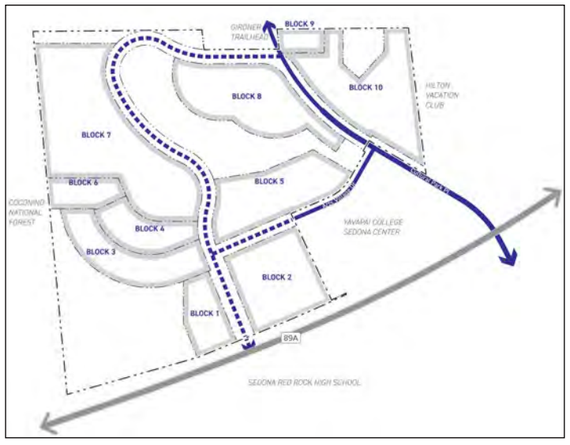
The loop drive must be reconfigured to remain entirely within the site. This drive not only serves as access through the site but aides in the creation of distinct well connected zones. The 41-acre site must be divided into an interconnected network of parcels that can support human-scale development and provide safe and comfortable pedestrian access.

Development Standards:

1. The connection to the Girdner Trailhead is required, which offers visitors views of the northern red rocks as well as access to the trailhead. This entry point must be built on the existing access to the National Forest and has the potential to accommodate trail shuttles for pickups and drop-offs.
2. Adjusting the section of the loop road near the northern site boundary to ensure it does not encroach on the national forest.
3. The western access point on 89A is required.



Primary Connections & Parcel Plan: Alternative A



Primary Connections & Parcel Plan: Alternative B

DRAFT

Legend

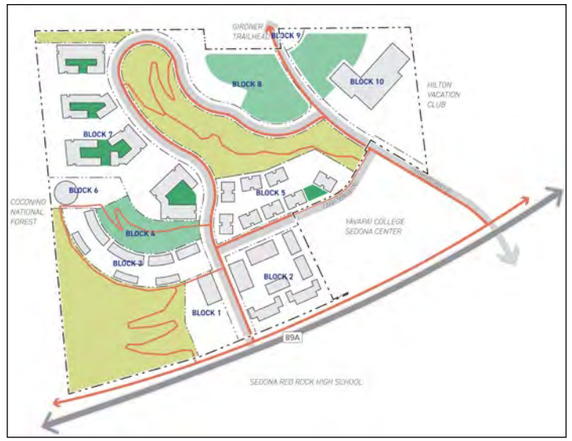
- Fixed Roadway Alignment
- Flexible Roadway Alignment
- Proposed Block

Step 2 - Open Spaces

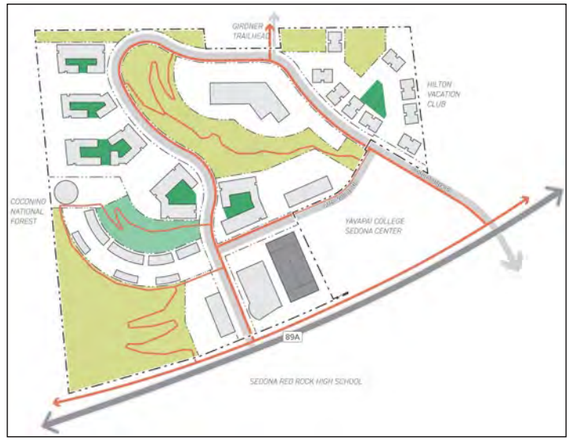
In addition to the network of streets and natural open spaces, the public realm network includes and further shaped by a number of public, semi-public and private open spaces to support events and social activities.

Development Standards:

1. Minimum 1.5 acre of open space is recommended for the community benefit on site.
2. A minimum of 6% of the parcel must be designated as semi-public space (amenitized open space) for multi-family developments.
3. A pedestrian network that includes sidewalks, trails, multi-purpose path, and paseos is required throughout the site.



Open Spaces: Alternative A



Open Spaces: Alternative B

Legend

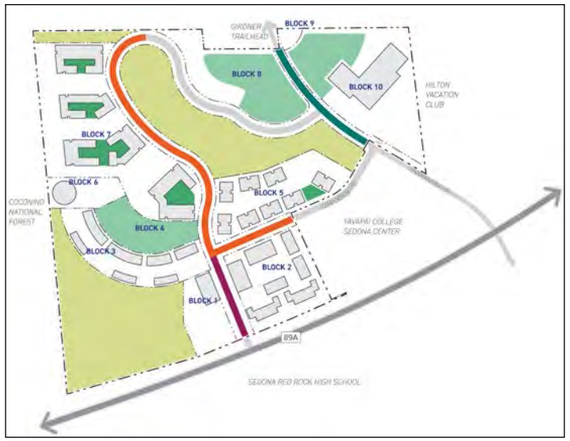
- Natural Open Space
- Community Benefit
- Amenitized Open Space
- Pedestrian Route

Step 3 - Building and Street Frontages

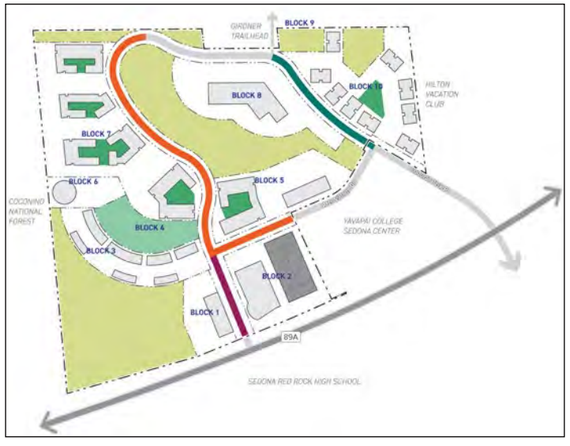
Western Gateway's public realm is shaped and activated by the careful placement of buildings with active ground floor footages.

Development Standards:

1. Cultural Park Pl. and its extension street are required to provide bicycle and pedestrian routes that connect existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to the Girdner Trailhead.
2. Ground floor spaces that can accommodate commercial uses are highly encouraged at retail-ready street.
3. Streets in residential areas must include on-street parking and in-street planters to provide additional parking, calm traffic speeds, and add shade.
4. All buildings are to be placed in such a way to reinforce the public realm network.



Building and Street Frontages: Alternative A



Building and Street Frontages: Alternative B

Legend

- Cultural Park Pl.
- Residential Street
- Retail-ready Street

DRAFT

Illustrative Plan Overview

Incorporating the vision, community input, and guiding principles, an 'Illustrative Plan' can be developed—representing one of many possible successful variations for the Western Gateway development. The development program serves as a carefully crafted mechanism to balance community benefits and housing needs.

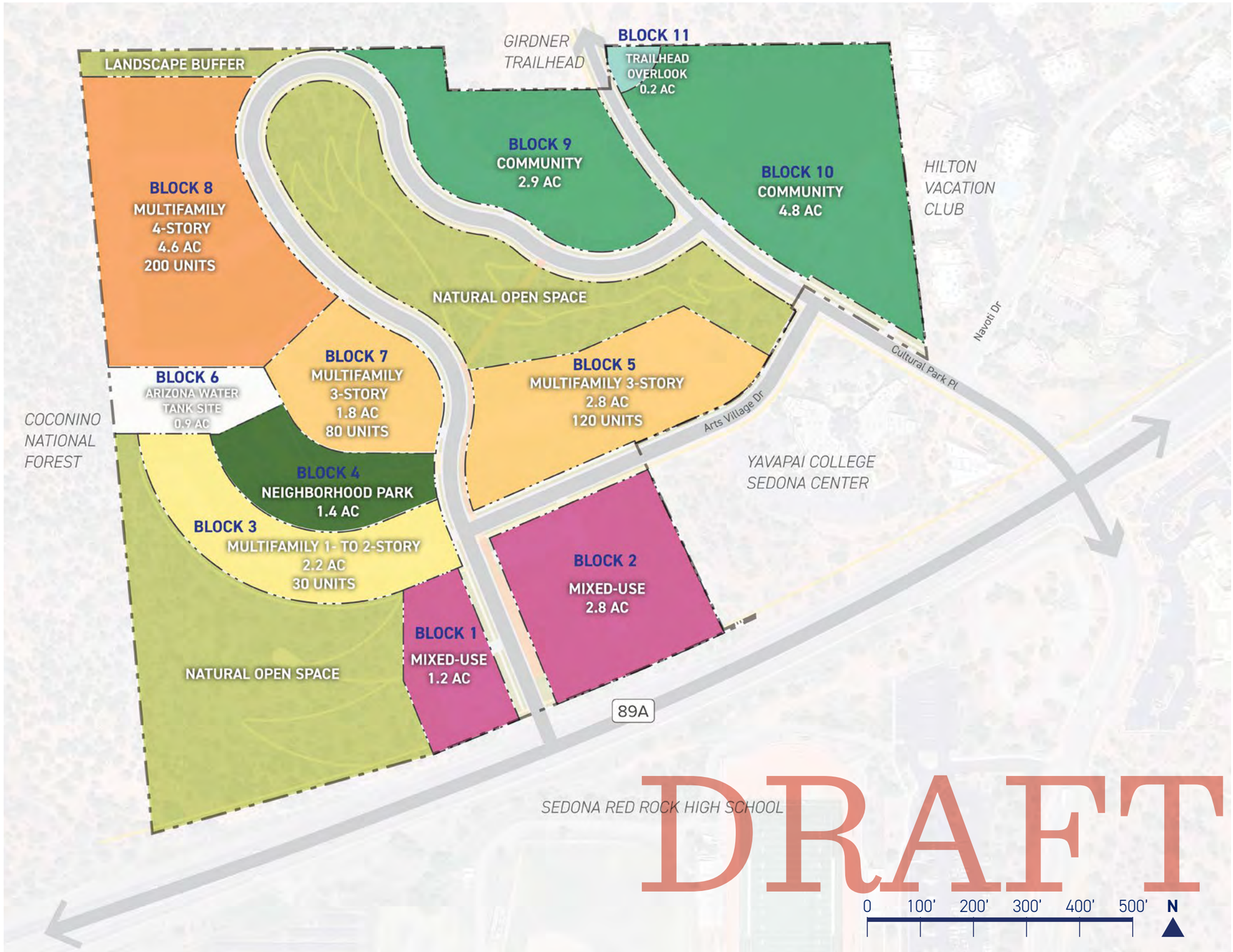
1. ***Natural Open Space:*** *Permanently conserved natural habitats on-site.*
2. ***Western Gateway Trailhead:*** *Includes trailhead amenities for hikers and bikers.*
3. ***Community Park:*** *Features a 1,000-seat amphitheater designed for Sedona residents, supporting community events.*
4. ***The 'Steps':*** *Provides direct access from the west entry parking garage to the Community Park, enabling 'Park Once' convenience at the Western Gateway.*
5. ***Terraced Neighborhood Park:*** *Renovates the existing seating area of the old amphitheater to enhance neighborhood social life and recreation.*
6. ***Trails:*** *Pedestrian routes through various open spaces for commuting and recreation.*




1
6
5
6
4
1
6
3
3
2
DRAFT
N

Preliminary Program Study

The preliminary program has been developed based on the preferred plan selected by the public during the February 19, 2025, Public Meeting and further refined during the May 20, 2025, Planning & Zoning Work Session. More than just a collection of isolated elements, the program represents an integrated, systemic approach to addressing complex challenges. The size and location of each program component are preliminary and will undergo further detailed study in subsequent design and development phases for individual projects and facilities.



BLOCK #	BLOCK DATA				SITE INFORMATION					DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY				OPEN SPACE				PARKING
	DESCRIPTION	BLOCK S.F.	BLOCK ACRES	%	BUILDING			VEHICULAR USE		RESIDENTIAL		COMMUNITY & COMMERCIAL		OVERALL OPEN SPACE		ACTIVE OPEN SPACE		
					BUILDING HEIGHT	BUILDING FOOTPRINT (S.F.)	LOT COVERAGE %	AREA (S.F.)	%	DU/AC	UNITS	GFA (S.F.)	F.A.R.	AREA (S.F.)	%	AREA (S.F.)	%	
1	Mixed-Use	52,979	1.2	3%	35'	8,125	15%	16,183	31%			16,250	0.31	28,671	54%			50
2	Mixed-Use	123,177	2.8	7%	35'	25,200	20%	50,080	41%			37,800	0.31	47,898	39%			400
3	Townhome	95,943	2.2	5%	25'	27,355	29%	22,638	24%	13.6	30			45,950	48%			50
4	Neighborhood Park	64,973	1.5	4%										64,973	100%	64,973	100%	
5	Multifamily 3-Story	123,551	2.8	7%	25'	31,200	25%	45,936	37%	42.3	120			46,415	38%	4,800	4%	140
6	Water Tank Site	38,341	0.9	2%														
7	Multifamily 3-Story	73,960	1.7	4%	35'	19,282	26%	26,961	36%	47.1	80			27,717	37%	6,092	8%	90
8	Multifamily 4-Story	199,719	4.6	11%	45'	59,211	30%	70,074	35%	43.6	200			70,434	35%	18,334	9%	220
9	Community Park	126,771	2.9	7%			0%	23,619	19%					103,152	81%	77,532	61%	70
10	Recreation Center	209,158	4.8	12%	35'	37,656	18%	49,845	24%			56,484	0.27	121,657	58%	51,615	25%	120
11	Trailhead Overlook	6,904	0.2	0%										6,904	100%			
R.O.W.	Right of Way	211,778	4.9	12%														
O.S.	Natural Open Space	457,545	10.5	26%										457,545	100%			
TOTAL		**1,784,800**	**41.0**	**100%**		**208,029**	**12%**	**305,335**	**17%**	**10.5**	**430**	**110,534**	**0.06**	**1,021,316**	**57%**	**223,346**	**13%**	**1140**

** Note: The parking numbers shown in the table are based on preliminary program calculations. Final counts will be determined during the final development plan review.*

DRAFT

Example Building Use

In response to public input received and the *2021 Verde Valley Housing Needs Assessment: Volume 1*, the plan aims to offer diverse housing options to meet the needs of a range of household sizes, types, and incomes within a walkable, amenity-rich neighborhood. This includes mixed-use developments designed to provide essential services for the community. Additionally, the proposed plan includes a recreation center intended to serve the broader Sedona population. The size and location of each building element are preliminary and will undergo further detailed study in subsequent design and development phases for individual projects and facilities.



Townhomes



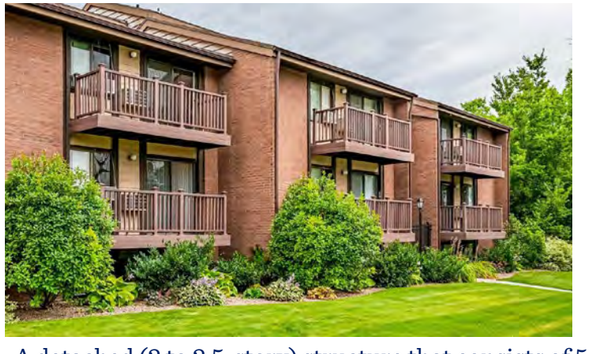


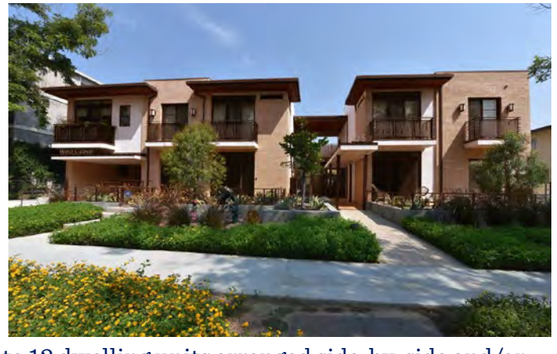




A small-to-medium-sized attached structure that consists of 2 to 16 multi-story dwelling units placed side-by-side. Entries are on the narrow side of the unit and typically face a street or courtyard. The street façades have entrances and avoid garages.

Multifamily





A detached (2 to 2.5-story) structure that consists of 5 to 12 dwelling units arranged side-by-side and/or stacked, typically with a shared entry from the street. This type has the appearance of a medium-to-large single-unit house and does not include a rear yard.





Three to four-story apartment building that accommodates approximately 40+ dwelling units per acre. These structures often feature shared entries and common areas, and access provided by elevators and stairwells. The design usually resembles a larger residential block without individual yard spaces, and it commonly includes features like balconies or shared rooftop terraces for outdoor access.

DRAFT

Mixed-Use









A traditional mixed-use building is a small- to medium-sized (2 to 3.5-story) attached or detached structure consisting of one dwelling unit above or behind a fire-separated flexible ground floor space that can accommodate a range of non-residential use. The flex space typically has a taller height (min. 10') and a shop frontage.

Mixed-Use Alternative









Block 1 and 2's prime location along Highway 89A—serving as the western gateway into Sedona—combined with its well-proportioned site configuration, makes it an excellent candidate for cultural uses such as an art museum or theater. To support regional events like film festivals, a structured parking solution is recommended to minimize traffic impacts deeper within the site. This parking structure could also serve the community park and future recreation center, helping to reduce parking demands across the broader project area while enhancing accessibility for visitors and residents alike.

DRAFT

Recreation Center













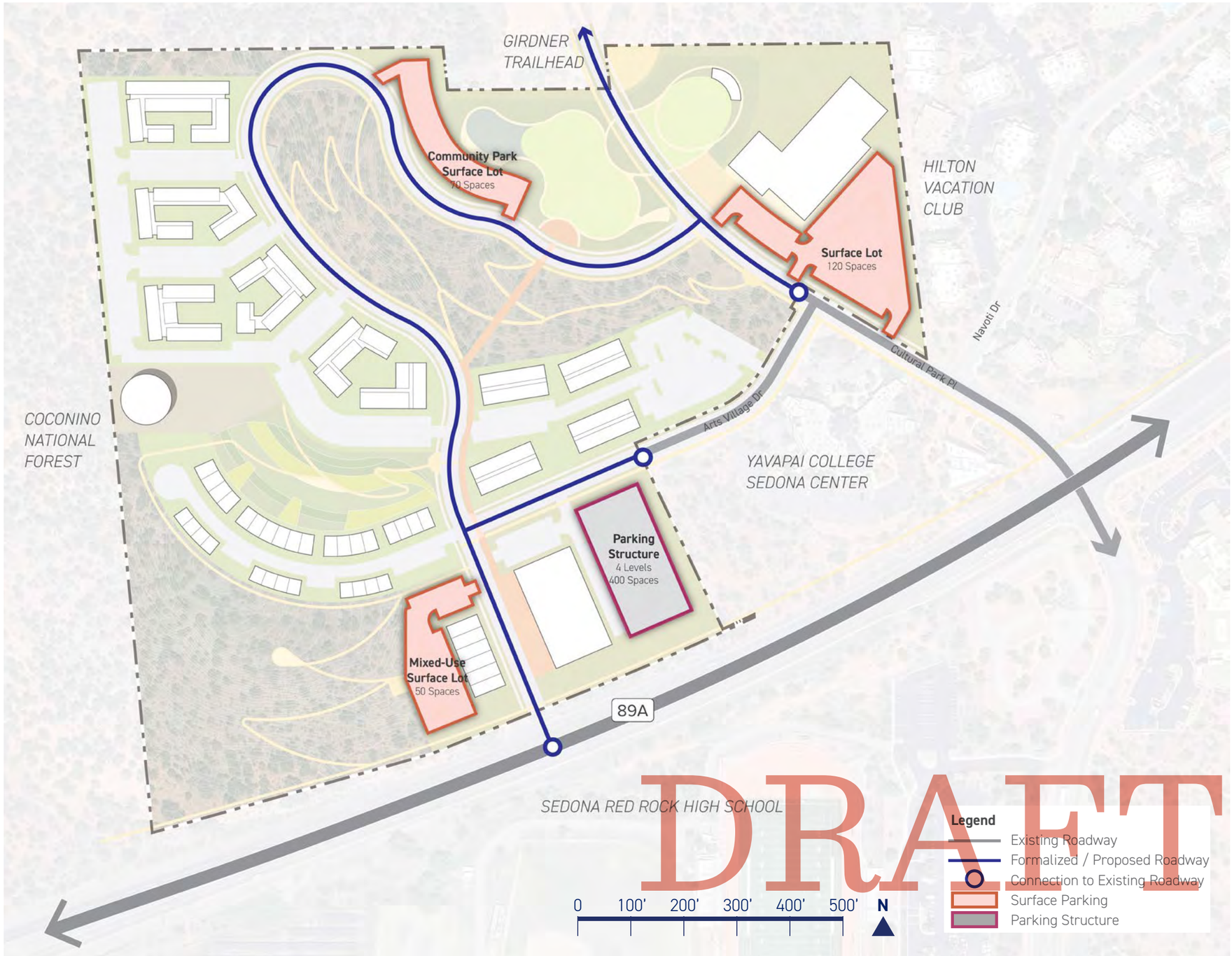
Public engagement efforts have indicated strong community support for a recreation center featuring an indoor pool facility, which would serve the broader Sedona population. If the City decides to pursue construction of a recreation center, it is recommended that the proposed recreation center be designed as a medium-sized (1 to 2-story) public facility to accommodate a variety of leisure, fitness, and aquatic activities. The structure should incorporate flexible, open floor plans with high ceilings to allow for a gymnasium, indoor pool, and multipurpose spaces. Additional program areas, such as dedicated rooms for classes, administrative functions, and community gatherings, should also be included to ensure the facility meets diverse needs. The design should prioritize accessibility, sustainability, and harmony with Sedona's natural environment, creating an inviting hub for wellness and social engagement.

DRAFT

Vehicular Circulation & Public Parking

Cultural Park Place and its extension to Girdner Trailhead will utilize the existing roadway, providing a key connection for residents, outdoor enthusiasts and visitors. The road will extend west from the proposed recreation center, then turn south to reconnect with State Route 89A. The formalized western entry point from 89A will help distribute traffic flow. Additionally, Art Village Drive will extend west to link with this roadway, forming an internal loop road that completes the circulation and provide access to all parcels.

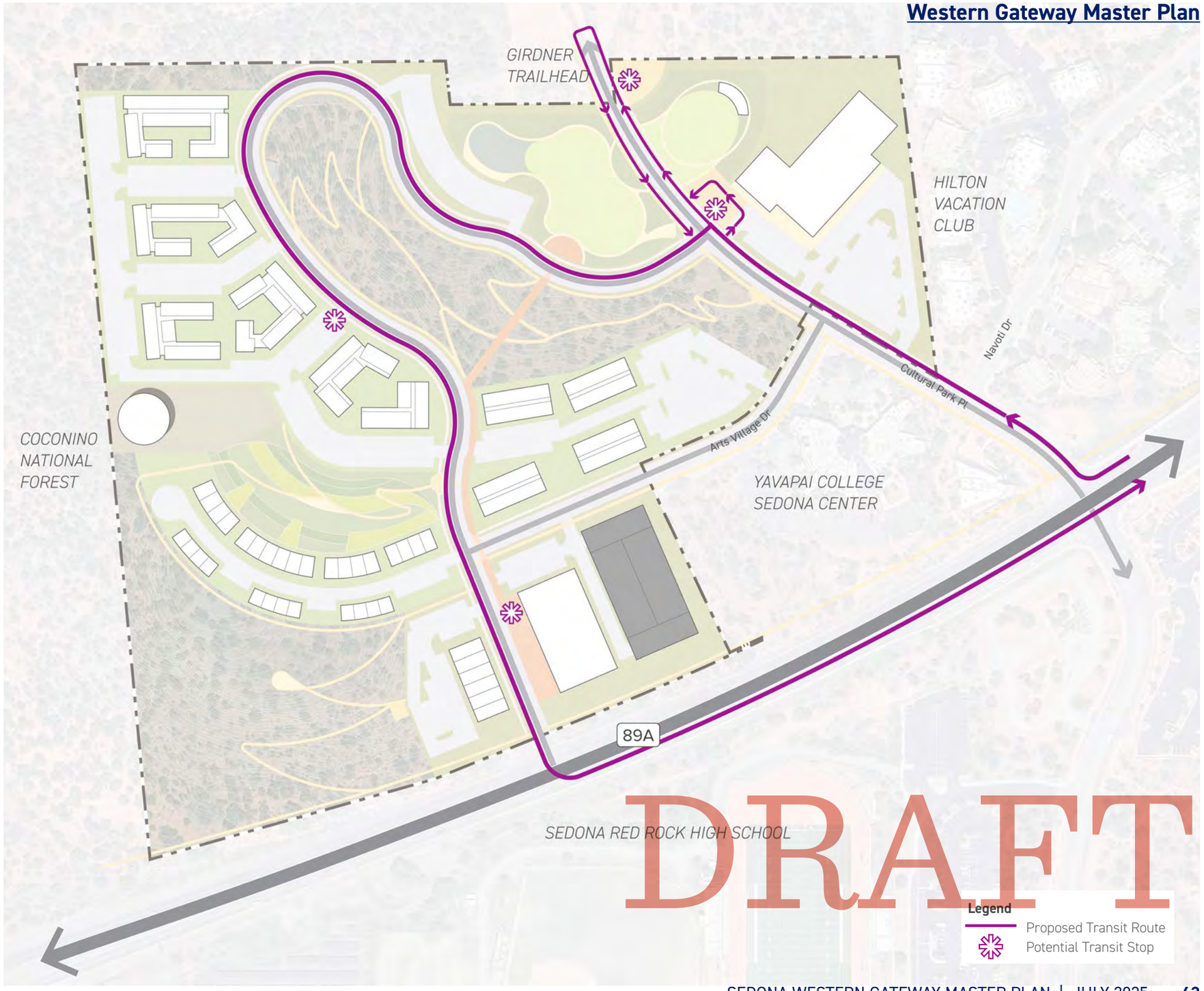
The Final Master Plan includes public parking near key destinations, allowing shared use during events while keeping walking distances reasonable. A parking structure along 89A will accommodate most parking, supporting Western Gateway's pedestrian-friendly design with human-scale amenities and open spaces. Surface lots near major facilities will provide ADA-accessible parking, and a dedicated drop-off zone in the mixed-use development will further reduce traffic congestion and shorten walking distances.



Transit

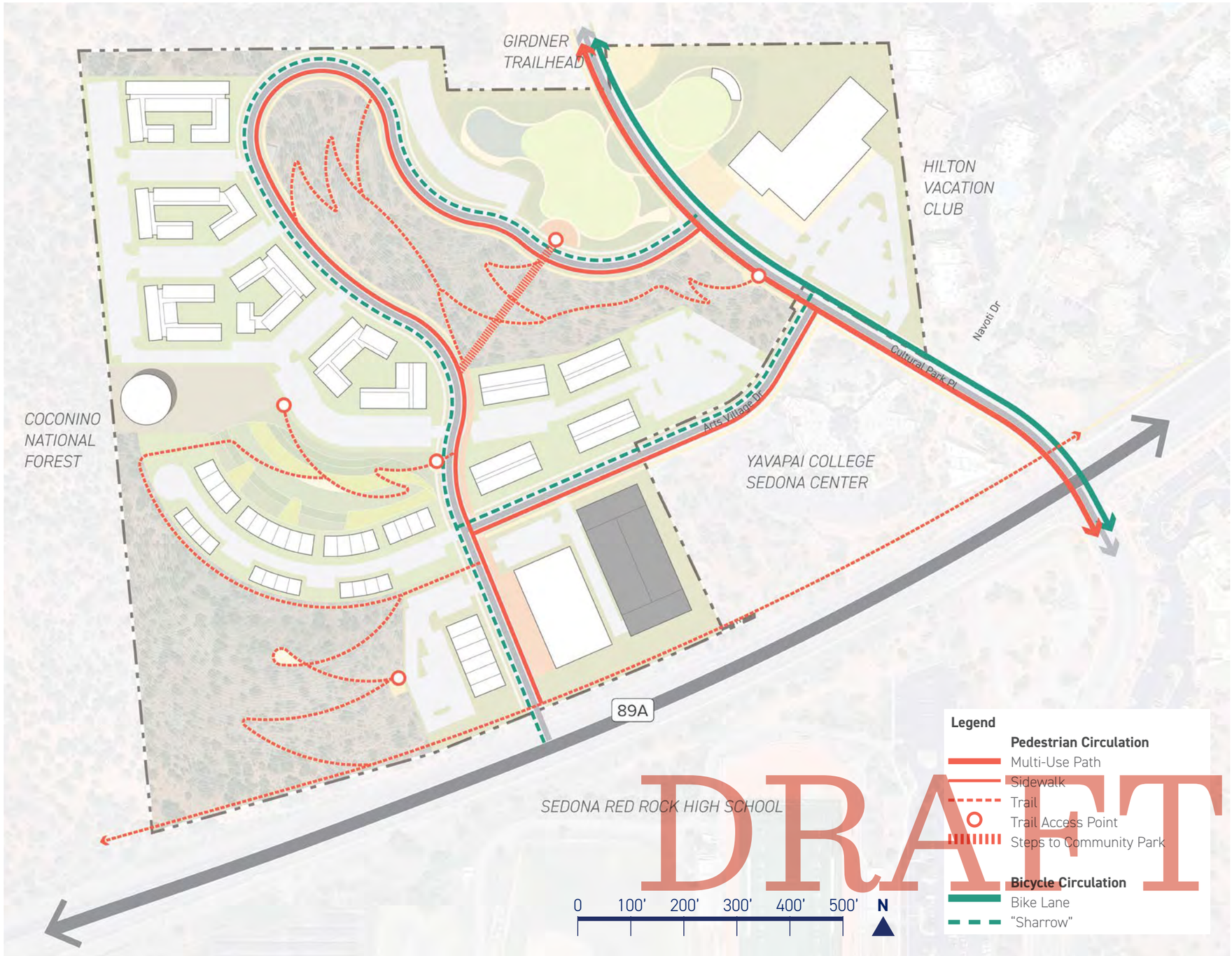
Public transit is a critical component of the Western Gateway development, providing equitable and sustainable access for residents, visitors, and users of public amenities while reducing reliance on personal vehicles. It is recommended to integrate transit stops at key locations—including the Girdner Trailhead* for outdoor enthusiasts, the future recreation site, the community park, and the mixed-use development along Highway 89A for Sedona residents— so that the system can ensure connectivity for current and future populations. Additional stops could serve planned residential areas within Western Gateway, supporting long-term growth and mobility needs.

**Note: The transit at the Girdner Trailhead will need to be coordinated with the US Forest Service.*



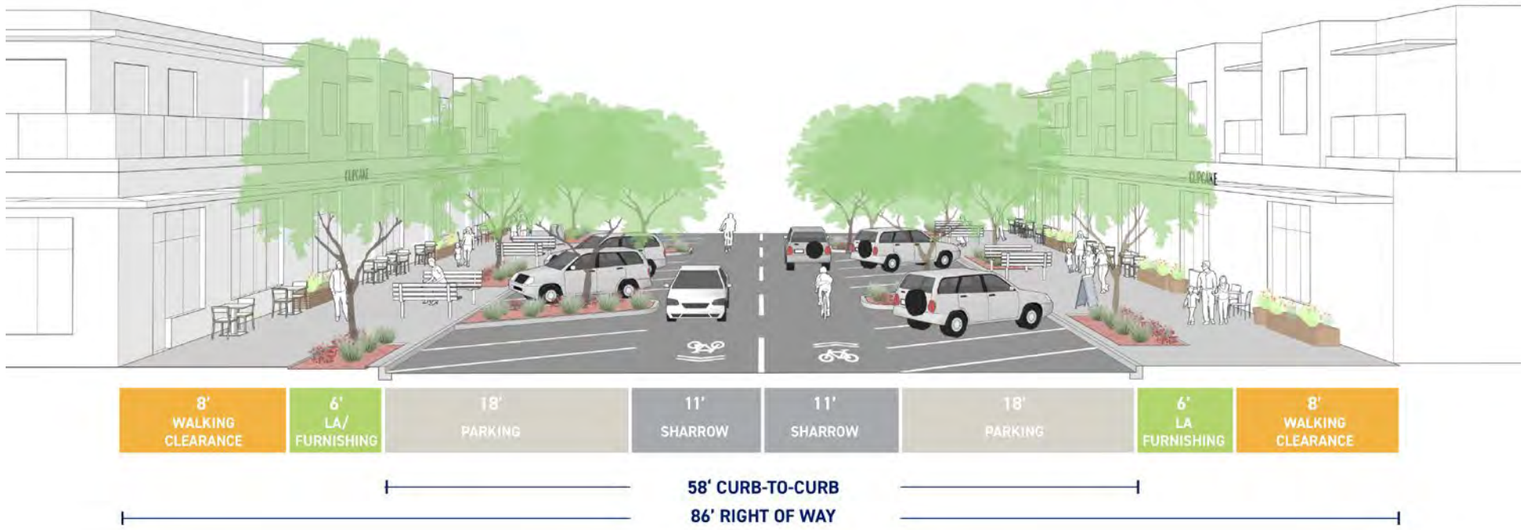
Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation

A safe, comfortable, and efficient pedestrian and bicyclist network is fundamental to the overall circulation and access strategy. This is achieved through a variety of pedestrian and bicycle routes—including bike lanes, multi-use paths, sidewalks along roadways, and trails through natural open spaces—supported by ample amenities. Encouraging greater pedestrian and bicyclist activity fosters a sustainable and healthy community.



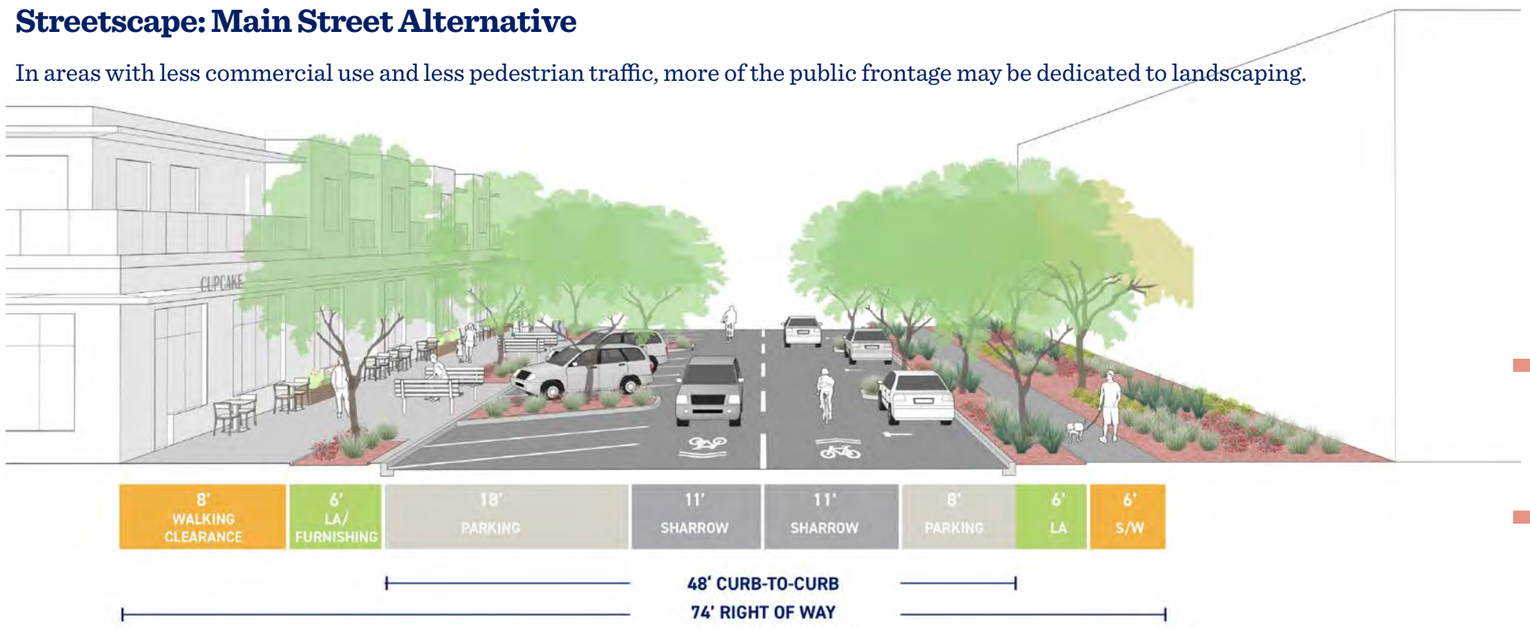
Streetscape: Main Street Typical Section

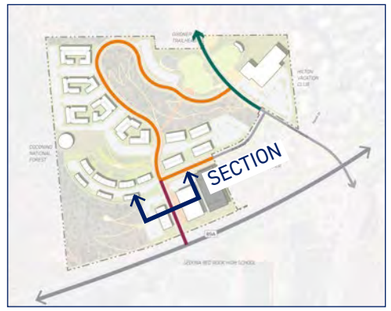
Western Gateway's western entry roadway functions as an active, pedestrian-oriented main street, with wide sidewalks, welcoming shopfronts, and convenient on-street parking for customers and visitors. The generous sidewalks provide ample room for street furnishings and café dining areas. In-street planters further soften the streetscape and provide additional shade and enclosure.



Streetscape: Main Street Alternative

In areas with less commercial use and less pedestrian traffic, more of the public frontage may be dedicated to landscaping.







Incorporate street furnishing like seating, outdoor dining, and bike facilities to enhance overall pedestrian experience.



On-street parking and in-street planters soften the streetscape and calm down traffic while providing convenient parking to shops and restaurants.

DRAFT

Streetscape: Residential Street

The residential street is designed to prioritize low traffic speeds while ensuring a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment. Pedestrians are buffered from vehicular traffic by landscaped zones, which also function as bioswales to support sustainable stormwater management. Street trees enhance the space by providing shade and further softening the boundary between pedestrians and vehicles. The typical cross-section features bioswales on both sides to accommodate higher stormwater volumes. On-street parking and in-street planters help define the street edge, contributing to traffic calming while adding vegetated shade for pedestrians. In these blocks the travel speeds are low enough that bikes can safely share lanes with cars.




Tree rows visually narrow street width and provide shade.


Sidewalk buffered by landscape, providing a safe and comfortable walking environment.


Street shared by vehicular use and bicyclists

DRAFT

Streetscape: Cultural Park Place

Cultural Park Place and its extension to Girdner Trailhead utilize an existing roadway, providing a vital connection for visitors, residents, and outdoor enthusiasts. This corridor offers direct access to key destinations, including the proposed recreation center, the community park, and Sedona's renowned natural landscapes. Additionally, it serves as a critical link to the park-and-ride lot across Highway 89A, facilitating seamless transit connections, while also providing access to multiple trail networks south of the highway. Given the anticipated volume of pedestrians and cyclists, the implementation of a multi-use path and dedicated bike lanes is essential to ensure safe and efficient mobility. The streetscape design follows a Complete Streets approach, prioritizing walkability, cyclist safety, and multi-modal connectivity.

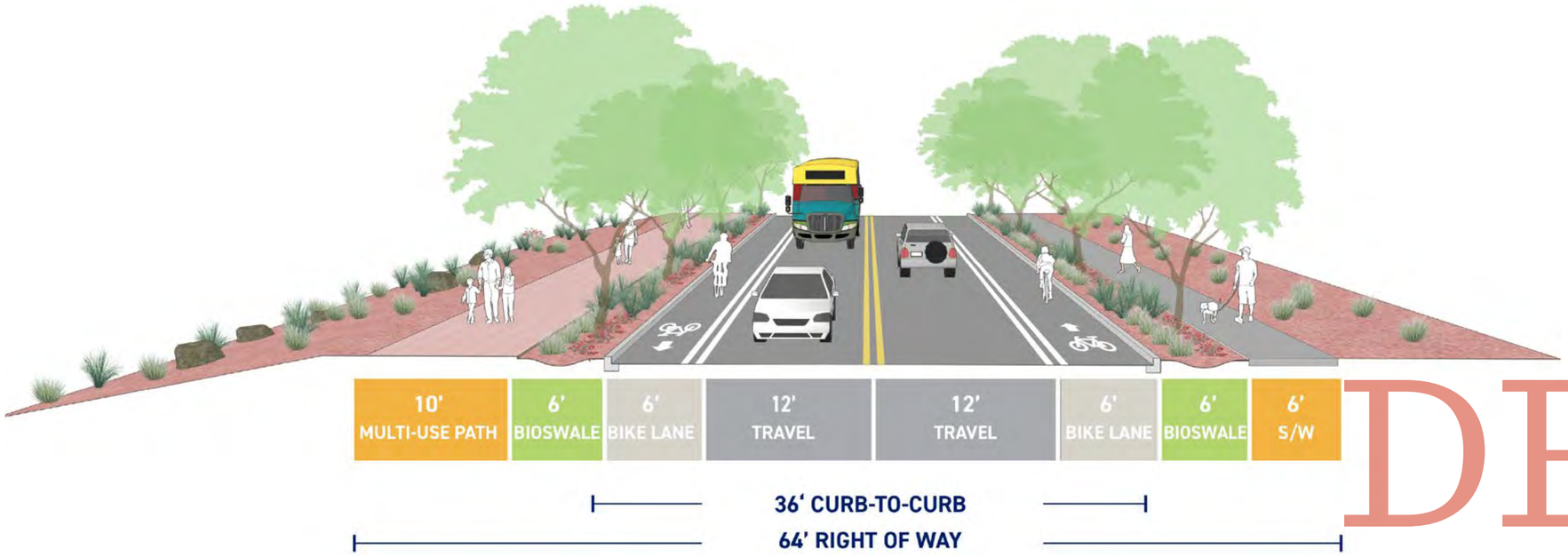




Multi-Use Path



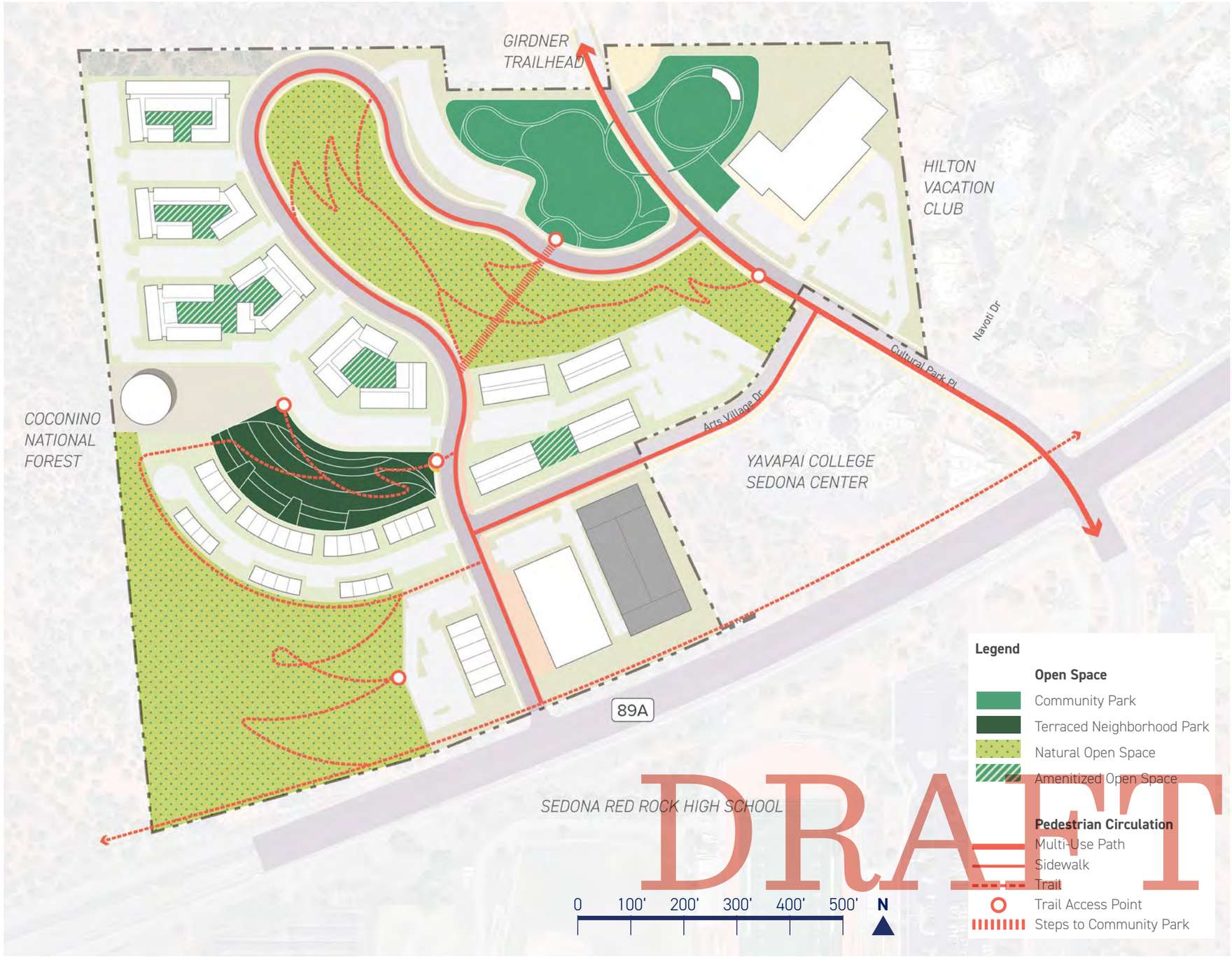
On-Road Bike Lane



DRAFT

Open Spaces

The landscape of the Western Gateway Master Plan is organized as a series of linked open spaces, varying in size, character, and function. It includes four main elements: natural open spaces, a community park, a terraced neighborhood park, and several amenitized semi-public spaces. These areas are connected through a network of trails and sidewalks, ensuring seamless movement throughout. The open space network serves as a critical component in establishing a healthy, active community, offering diverse opportunities for recreation and gathering.



Community Park









Nestled at the northeast corner of the Western Gateway site, this 5+ acre community park blends recreation, culture, and Sedona's iconic of natural beauty. The park features a half-acre turfed amphitheater, designed to accommodate 1,000 guests for outdoor concerts, performances, and community events—framed by the breathtaking red rock vistas. West to the amphitheater, a passive lawn area hosts gatherings like farmers' markets and festivals, fostering local connection. An 8,000-square-foot playground offers a vibrant space for children to play. A panoramic outlook provides sweeping views across the Western Gateway site, together with multiple trail access points, allowing visitors to experience the natural landscape. With 70 parking spaces, a transit stop, and seamless integration with a proposed recreation center, the park supports joint programming and flexibility.

DRAFT

Terraced Garden









The abandoned amphitheater, with its intact concrete structure now intertwined with native shrubs, offers a unique re-use opportunity. The idea is to transform this neglected space into a terraced garden that repurposes the existing structure. Preserving the original topography, and introducing layered planting zones and social spaces to encourage community interaction. The amphitheater's tiered layout naturally creates intimate gathering areas while maintaining open sightlines, and diversifying Western Gateway's open spaces. This adaptive reuse celebrates the site's history while revitalizing it for modern use, blending ecological restoration with social activation of an otherwise underutilized space.

Amenitized Open Space









Amenitized Open Spaces are designed outdoor areas that enhance community living. These spaces typically include courtyards, seating areas, and may feature pools, outdoor kitchens, or fire pits. They provide residents with shared places to relax and socialize, fostering connections between neighbors. By blending functionality with recreation, these spaces turn housing complexes into vibrant communities.

DRAFT

Natural Open Space


Existing Condition











Sedona's unparalleled natural beauty, with its iconic red rock landscapes and existing social trails on site, creates an ideal setting for outdoor recreation in Western Gateway. To enhance and support these opportunities, through thoughtfully integrated amenities are recommended to accommodate diverse user needs. Key elements include and not limited to: informational boards, emergency service access routes, wayfinding signage, bicycle facilities, waste receptacles, and shaded ramadas.

DRAFT

DRAFT

7

Implementation Plan

DRAFT

Master Development Strategy

Master Development Initiation

The Master Developer will oversee the following key elements for the initial phase of the 41-acre development:

1. **Mass Grading & Site Preparation**
   - Large-scale grading of development sites to ensure build-ready parcels.
2. **Infrastructure Installation**
   - Construction of roadways and utilities, funded through the Community Facility District (CFD).
   - Drainage improvements, including wash modifications to meet regulatory and environmental requirements.
3. **Community Benefit Integration**
   - Opportunities to incorporate community benefits (e.g., community park, recreation center) within the mass grading plan.

Key to Success

To ensure project viability and efficiency, the following strategies will be prioritized:

1. **Land Retention by City:** The City will retain ownership of parcels until sold, minimizing the Master Developer's debt exposure.
2. **Development Capacity:** The Master Developer will leverage its expertise to execute pre-development work without carrying land debt.
3. **Premarketing & Commitments:** Secure Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential buyers/tenants prior to commencing construction.
4. **Grading & Infrastructure Efficiency:**
   - Unified roadway and utility planning to optimize costs and timelines.
   - Master drainage plan to balance site requirements and mitigate long-term risks.
5. **Diverse Product Offerings:** Enable simultaneous development of mixed-use or varied product types to meet market demand.

This approach ensures a streamlined, cost-effective launch while mitigating financial and operational risks.

DRAFT

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program

Plan Area Designations

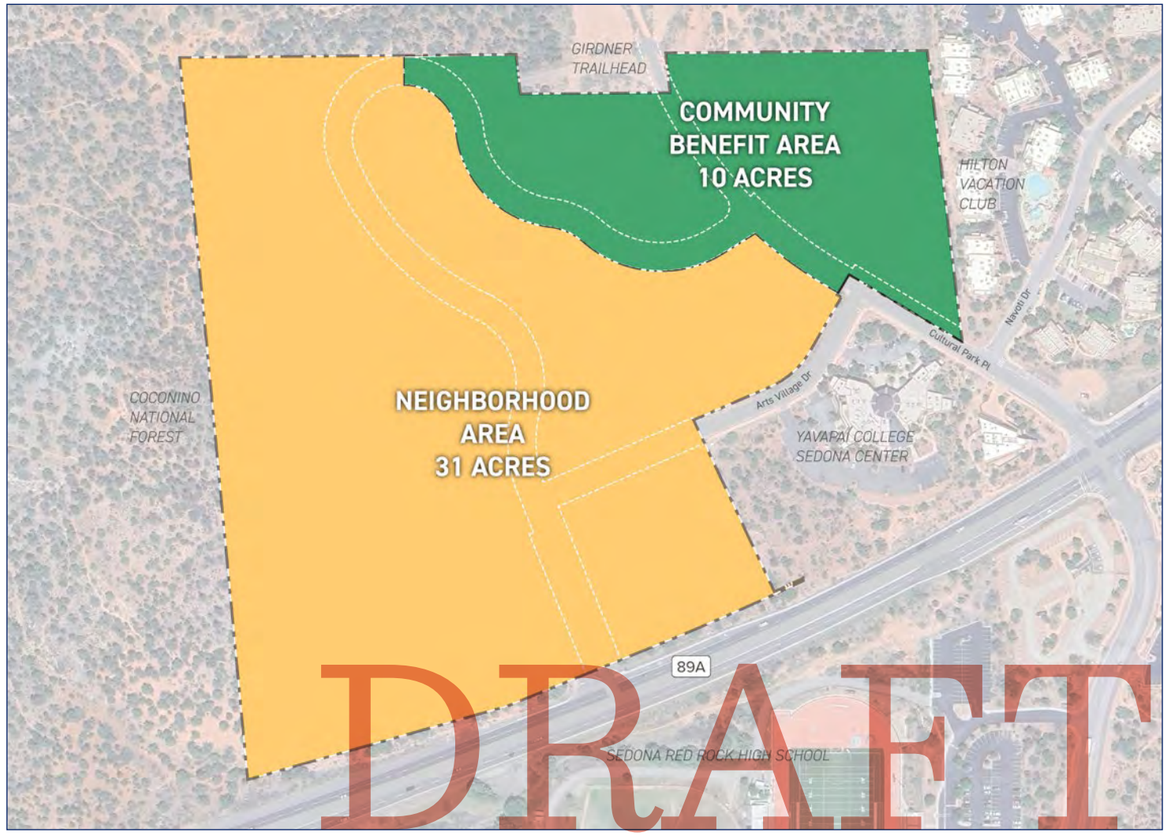
The Western Gateway Master Plan seeks to balance workforce housing needs for Sedona residents and employees while respecting the community's expectations for development density. A core principle of this strategy is to ensure that overall density does not exceed current zoning regulations across the Western Gateway site, with a strict limit of no more than 20 dwelling units per acre. This approach aligns with the community's strong preference against high-density housing development.

The Western Gateway is divided into two primary areas: the Community Benefit Area and the Neighborhood Area. The Community Benefit Area will feature a community park and potentially a recreation center, serving the broader Sedona community. The Neighborhood Area is designated for workforce housing and associated facilities, ensuring a balanced and sustainable development approach.

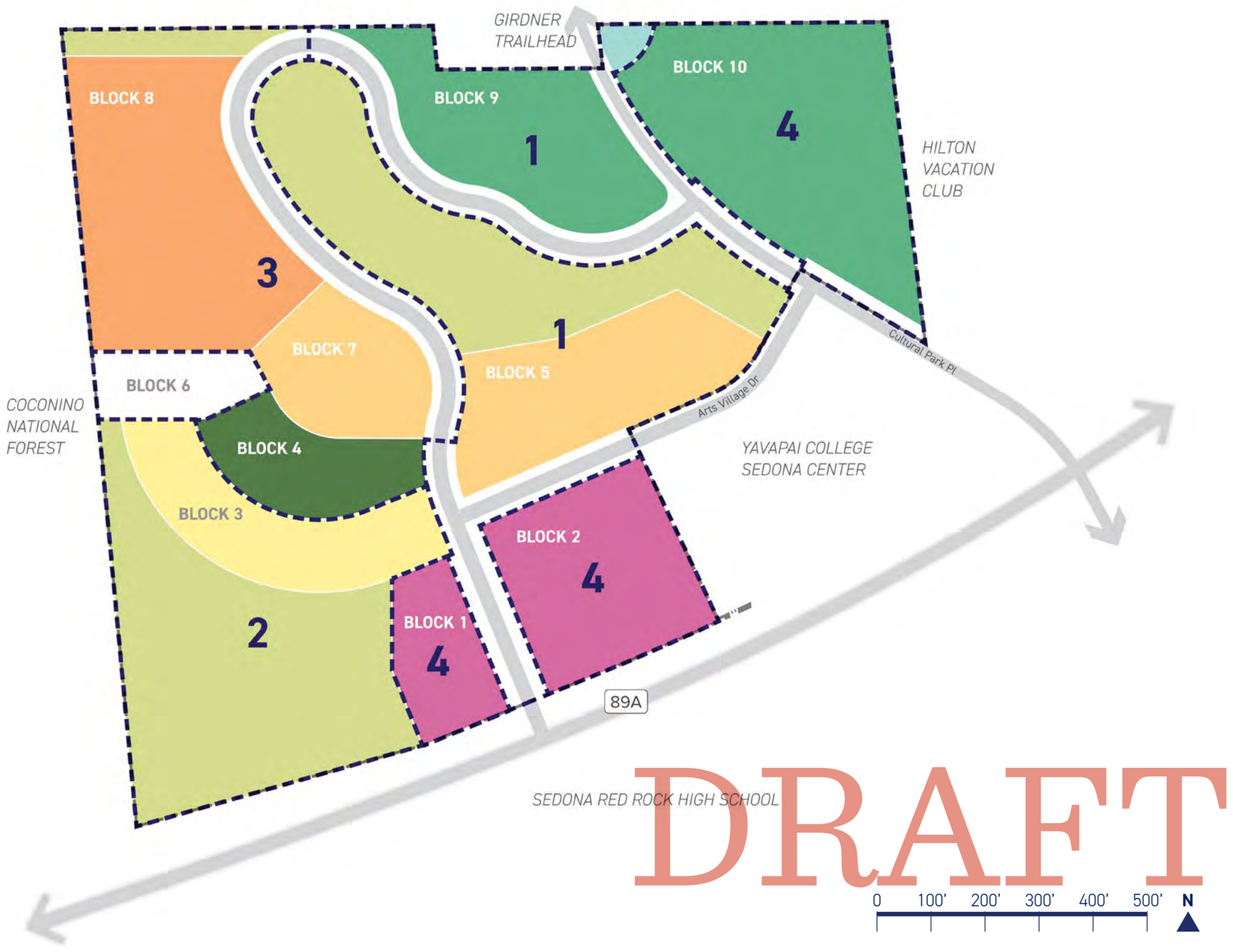
TDR Program and Density Controls

The TDR Program facilitates the transfer of residential density between parcels within the Neighborhood Area. This mechanism helps preserve low-density areas and community values by relocating development rights from parcels where mid- to high-density housing is unsuitable to designated receiving parcels within the Neighborhood Area. Transfers are capped at 100% of density between sending and receiving parcels, with values calculated per Sedona's zoning ordinance.

To maintain consistency with zoning regulations, all TDR transactions must be completed prior to the subdivision of the Neighborhood Area, ensuring that final plat maps reflect the approved density limits. While the TDR Program may allow for increased density on specific receiving parcels, the cumulative density across the Neighborhood Area will not exceed 20 dwelling units per acre, in compliance with Sedona's current zoning standards.



Example Phasing Plan



Example Phasing Plan Summary

PHASE	COMMUNITY BENEFIT AREA		NEIGHBORHOOD AREA				TOTAL
	ACRES	NON-RESIDENTIAL GSF	HOUSING UNITS	NON-RESIDENTIAL GSF	DEVELOPMENT ACRES	OPEN SPACE ACRES	ACRES
1	5.0		120		4.2	4.4	13.6
2			30		2.2	5.6	7.8
3			280		7.7	2.0	9.6
4	5.0	56,500		54,000	4.0		9.0
WATER TANK SITE							0.9
TOTAL			**430**		**18.1**	**12.0**	**41.0**

Notes:

The phasing plan is structured to ensure a coordinated and sustainable development approach for Western Gateway, aligned with the following key objectives:

1. **Orderly and Market-Responsive Build-Out**
   - Guide development in phases that align with market demand and economic feasibility.
   - Ensure flexibility to adapt to changing conditions while maintaining long-term vision.
2. **Concurrent Infrastructure and Public Facilities Delivery**
   - Provide necessary utilities, transportation networks, and community facilities in tandem with each development phase.
   - Prioritize infrastructure investments to support projected growth and avoid service deficiencies.
3. **Protection of Public Health, Safety, and Welfare**
   - Mitigate potential adverse impacts through phased implementation and enforcement of development standards.
   - Ensure compliance with environmental, accessibility, and emergency response requirements at each stage.

DRAFT

JULY 2025 DRAFT

DRAFT