

# City of Sedona Western Gateway Master Plan Strategic Communication Plan

**DRAFT**

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In association with [DigStudio](#) for the [City of Sedona](#)

## Introduction

This Master Plan aims to develop a range of concepts for the community and city to evaluate and potentially adopt. These concepts include various housing and mixed-use development types, opportunities for adaptive reuse, improvements to streetscapes, mobility, and connectivity, as well as enhancements to the public realm and access points for trails and national forests.

**“COLLABORATION WITH AND GATHERING INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE PUBLIC, ARE PARAMOUNT TO IMPLEMENTING THIS COMMUNICATION PLAN SUCCESSFULLY”**

**Proactive public outreach is a key element in project adoption.**

## Communication Objectives

Communications and public involvement are key elements within the fabric of project planning, delivery and operation. Community trust can be a program's greatest asset or its biggest downfall.

**The most effective public outreach program is one that anticipates and responds to the needs and concerns of project stakeholders and community. Successful execution is critical to establishing credibility and generating community trust.**

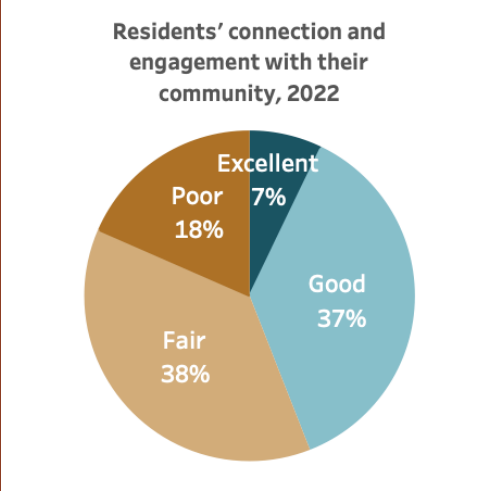
A proactive community outreach effort will ensure that the project's many constituencies are provided with information they need to effectively engage with and contribute critical input and ideas into the Master Plan. This communication plan is written to ensure that the project's communication and outreach efforts meet or exceed the needs of all impacted parties, and to grow trust and reliability of the city.

**This communication plan aims to meet the objectives of the city's "Have Your Voice Be Heard" program:**

- Increases the Sedona city government's access to its citizens' ideas and expertise.
- Makes information about citizen engagement more transparent, accessible and interactive.
- Engage capable, motivated citizens in projects they care about that will improve the community.
- Improves the collaborative process among city staff, City Council and concerned citizens.

## Inclusivity and Engagement

Inclusivity refers to a cultural and environmental feeling of belonging; residents who feel invited to participate within their communities feel more included, involved and engaged than those who do not. Our team has evaluated and researched to gain a deep understanding of the community's demographics, values, and preferences. By analyzing data from Sedona's National Community Survey, and reviewing past engagement initiatives, we have identified the key characteristics that define this community. We've also explored how residents prefer to receive information and participate in discussions. This research has allowed us to tailor our outreach strategies to effectively connect with the community, ensuring that our engagement methods are aligned with their communication preferences and interests.



## A Plan Built on Data and Experience

This Communication Plan has been developed using data gathered from the City of Sedona's National Community Survey, ensuring that the voices and preferences of the community are at the forefront of our efforts. By analyzing this valuable feedback, we've tailored our approach to address the specific needs and concerns of Sedona's residents. Additionally, we are leveraging the city's existing outreach and communication channels to effectively engage with the community. This includes using social media platforms, email newsletters, community meetings, work groups/stakeholder interviews and local media outlets to disseminate information and gather ongoing input, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive outreach process. In Addition to the data gathered, our team also researched previous sentiment and discussion as it relates to the Western Gateway. Understanding the history and sentiment, will aid us in engaging with the community effectively.

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To summarize the project's strategic approach, the project team commits to maintaining open, two-way communication channels and being a good partner in and for the community.

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To view a cumulation of previous discussion gathered through research, see **Appendix A**.



## Communication Strategies

The comprehensive communications program uses innovative and traditional strategies and tactics to give project stakeholders and the community the information they need to understand how to provide input and ideas into the Master Plan process. The strategies employed are intended to meet the community and stakeholders where they are. Through early and widespread outreach efforts, anyone who lives and works in Sedona should know where to go to engage with the city and project team for Master Plan information, how to access and understand the Master Plan website and where to find contact information for the project team. The project team will utilize the following strategies to inform and engage with the community and stakeholders:

**Consistent Communication**

The project team commits to frequent communication, sharing easy-to-understand information in English and Spanish through the familiar and proven communication channels.



**Active Listening**

The project team will solicit feedback from stakeholders and the community and maintain open lines of communication.

**Leverage Community Connections**

The project team will reach an expanded audience by communicating through community organizations, elected officials and stakeholders.



**Transparency**

The project team strives to earn the community’s trust through transparency. The foundation for building that trust is the communication of clear and consistent information.

## Communication Tools

The proposed tools and techniques for the project have been customized to meet the specific needs of the community and align with our research findings.

## Project Informational Materials

### Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication

The project team will develop materials that can be disseminated to relevant organizations, communities, handed out at community events; and repurposed on social media. Project materials include:

- Project Fact Sheet (s)
- Postcards and door hangers
- E-Newsletters and Email Updates
- Maps
- Project Website
- Surveys



### **Purpose:**

Project informational materials inform the community on project goals, timeline and what to expect throughout the project and provide information on the many ways to stay informed and engaged.

**Audience:** General community, organizations and groups.

### **Tactics:**

- Create project informational materials, which could include, though are not limited to, fact sheets, maps, flyers and posters. Posters to be placed at city assets: libraries, community centers, etc.
- Translate all flyers, printed materials, explanations of diagrams or maps and of project materials into Spanish, and provide other translations as needed.
- Prepare email notifications that provide information about the status of the project and details about major project milestones.
- Host, maintain and regularly update the project website. The website acts as a clearinghouse of information for the project.
- Create and distribute project update flyers, postcards, door hangers and emails to update the community on project milestones and opportunities for engagement and review outcomes.

**Note:** Based on Sedona’s National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, the community engages via email approximately 98% of the time. Our team will plan to leverage city email lists and platforms to engage with the community through a familiar communication channel. Community members can sign up for project information through the city’s eNotify platform.



Get news and event notices by email.

Sign up for only the topics you want. Unsubscribe at any time.

Sign up for emergency alerts [here](#).

## Project Website

### Strategy: Transparency and Consistent Communication

The project website will be developed and launched before engaging with stakeholders and the community, providing a central hub for accessing project information and engagement opportunities. It will feature links to essential documents, maps, and schedule details, as well as updates on upcoming public engagement events and downloadable resources. Visitors will have the option to submit questions and comments directly to the project team and can choose to receive project updates via email. \*Note: The website will be built using the city's Konveio platform.

## Social Media, Content Creation and Ongoing Engagement

### Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication and Active Listening

The project team will develop project-specific information that can be shared on the city's Facebook, X (previously Twitter), nextdoor and Instagram accounts throughout the project. The channels will be utilized to share information, as well as serve as an engagement touch point for people who have questions and comments. Continuity in posting and relevance in content are key to keeping social media audiences engaged

#### **Purpose:**

Utilizing social media consistently to create and maintain project awareness allows the project team to perform outreach and actively engage with stakeholders and the community impacted by the project.

**Audience:** All stakeholders and the general community

#### **Tactics:**

- Work closely with the city to adopt a social media strategy, defining platforms and content framework.
- Work together with stakeholders and groups to leverage their social media channels through sharing posts.

**Note:** Based on Sedona's National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, the community visits social media sites about 67% of the time.



## Community Meeting (s)

### **Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication, Active Listening**

The project team will hold two community meetings throughout the project. The first meeting will introduce the project to stakeholders and the community, allowing them to share comments and ideas on the Master Plan. During the second meeting, the team will present concepts to stakeholders and the community to gather further input.

#### **Purpose:**

Community meetings (3) will provide stakeholders and the community with an opportunity to learn more about the Master Plan, ask questions and provide input and ideas. These meetings will help humanize the project.

**Audience:** Stakeholders and the general community

#### **Tactics:**

- Implement two community meetings.
- Promote the meetings using newspaper ads, email notifications, city meeting/calendar page.
- Promote the meetings through news releases.
- Create a meeting plan for each meeting, outlining communication timeline for deliverables, etc.
- Develop a meeting summary for each meeting.

**Note:** Based on Sedona's National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, 47% of the community has attended a community meeting in person, while 39% of the community have watch a meeting online.

## Organization/Group Outreach

### **Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication, Active Listening and Leveraging Community Connections**

The project team, together with the city, will identify project stakeholders and utilize the city's citizen engagement active work groups that may already exist. For example: Housing Advisory and Plan Sedona Work Groups, etc.

#### **Purpose:**

Outreach efforts will provide reliable information to organizations, stakeholders, internal city departments and active work groups.

#### **Tactics:**

- Conduct interviews with stakeholders, organizations and work groups.

**Note:** Based on Sedona's National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, the community engages approximately 55% of the time in groups or in activities.

## Digital Community Engagement Tools

### **Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication, Active Listening**

Digital tools will allow the project team to gain input and ideas from the community in non-traditional ways, for example online surveys.

#### **Purpose:**

Digital tools will enable the project team to gather input and ideas from the community through innovative methods, such as online surveys.

**Audience:** Stakeholders and the general community

#### **Tactics:**

- Create two surveys, one to gather input and ideas on initial Master Plan and the second to gain input on the concepts developed. Surveys will be attached to a QR Code. Posters will be posted in key areas in the community to promote the survey and the Master Plan.

**Note:** Based on Sedona's National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, about 97% of the community has access to the internet, either at home or on their cell phone. Additionally, about 25% of the community shares their opinions online.

## Project Information Line

### **Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication, Active Listening, Timely Resolution**

An important tool on every project is a telephone information line that is promoted on all communication materials and answered by a project team member during business hours (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.), Monday through Friday.

#### **Purpose:**

A bilingual telephone information line will be promoted on all communication materials.

**Audience:** Stakeholders or the general community with questions or concerns

#### **Tactics:**

- Manage the telephone information line and provide staff Monday through Friday during regular business hours (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.).
- Establish response protocols with the city's project manager.

**Note:** Based on Sedona's National Community Survey, between 2016 and 2022, 64% of the community has contacted the city to share an opinion or to obtain information.



## Government Relations

### Strategy: Transparency, Consistent Communication, Active Listening, Leveraging Community Connections

As the Master Plan launches, communication and coordination with the city council members will be critical. During the Master Plan process, communication will continue to be proactive, timely, succinct, accurate and reliable. It will be important to leverage the council member’s communication channels so they may transmit timely and relevant information to the community. Additionally, as one of the first steps, the project team will interview the council to gain their input into the Master Plan.

## General Strategic Communication Plan Implementation Schedule



## Conclusion

The project team is aware of the challenges inherent in communicating with multiple stakeholders and the community who are highly diverse and have valuable input and ideas to contribute to the Master Plan process.

This plan is thorough and ensures that all affected stakeholders and community members receive reliable and timely project information to support their decision-making.

## Appendix A: Project Sentiment

### Project Sentiment

The following is a cumulation of project sentiment/discussions developed through research. Links to the stories are provided below.

**Residents come together to revive Sedona Cultural Park** - Sedona Red Rock News

**History of the fall of Sedona Cultural Park** - Sedona Red Rock News

**City of Sedona purchases Cultural Park for \$20 million** - KNUA

**Sedona Cultural Park 2.0** - Facebook Group

**Cultural Park or Work Force Housing** - Sedona Biz

**Save Sedona Cultural Park** - Facebook Group

**Petition - Save the Sedona Arizona Cultural Park** - Change.org

**The Future of the 40-Acre "Cultural Park"** - Sedona Biz

**Sedona Cultural Park** - Donnajoys.com

**Sedona Cultural Park 2 Inc.** - GuideStar

**Sedona Cultural Park 2.0** - Nextdoor

**Sedona redesignates "Cultural Park" as a Park** - Ground News

**Defunct Cultural Park eyed for workforce housing** - The Verde Independent

**Past and Future of Sedona Cultural Park Addressed** - Rose Lay Group Reporter

**Fall of the Sedona Cultural Park** - Sedona Eye

**Stop the Homeless Parking Lot at Cultural Park in Sedona** - Change.org

**Yes on Proposition 483** - yeson483.com

**Sedona Considering Solution for People Living out of their Cars** - Youtube (AZ TV 3)