

## **Sedona Sustainable Tourism Plan (STP) Fact Sheet**

### **Development of the STP**

- In 2016, the Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau (SCC&TB) engaged the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for a destination assessment.
- Of the GSTC's 41 areas of review, 33 were scored highly, placing Sedona as a world leader in sustainable tourism management.
- One of the eight criteria was the need for a long-term sustainable destination strategy developed and implanted with broad public participation.

### **The Plan**

- The STP is the first community-developed sustainable tourism plan in Arizona.
- The Plan is a response to community concerns about overcrowding and congestion affecting the Sedona environment and resident quality of life.
- These concerns match a trend in popular domestic and international travel destinations regarding the impact of increasing tourism levels.
- The STP is the product of an 18-month community-wide effort that included:
  - 1,000 residents were surveyed by mail. 376 completed surveys were received
  - 1,000 visitors were interviewed at popular Sedona locations
  - Resident participation was encouraged through ads, radio spots, guest news columns and public presentations/forums
  - Business trade organizations, land management agencies, nonprofit groups and local government representatives participated in numerous focus groups
  - More than 260 Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau partners completed a sustainability planning survey
  - All results were announced publicly at community meetings where additional structured discussions took place
  - An online portal allowed continual community input following surveys and community meetings
  - Following Chamber Board approval, the Sedona City Council approved the final STP on March 26, 2019
- The Plan is built around Four Pillars identified as the community's main points of focus:
  - Resident Quality of Life
  - The Environment
  - Quality of the Economy
  - The Visitor Experience
- Each of the Four Pillars has specific short- and long-term objectives and goals and specific tactics to achieve them. In FY20, over 30 short term tactics will be addressed.



- Each of the tactics is assigned to various community groups with performance metrics and deadlines.
- The Plan aims to attract visitors to Sedona who share the same ethics for green travel and for extended stays – lessening tourism’s environmental impact while keeping the economy strong.
- The Plan has a strong component of visitor education through touch points at the Visitor Center, hotels, and short-term rentals to encourage energy savings, water use reduction and a “Sedona Pledge” of environmental awareness.
- The Plan engages and sensitizes visitors to Sedona’s sustainability ethos, encouraging activities such as ‘voluntourism’ in local environmental rehabilitation and restoration projects.
- The Plan is a partnership between the City of Sedona and the Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau.
- The Chamber is the designated Destination Management Organization for the Sedona area and is contracted by the City to manage Sedona tourism.
- An RFP process resulted in the choice of the ASU Center for Sustainable Tourism and the Nichols Tourism Group of Tempe, AZ to serve as plan developers.

### **About Sedona and Tourism**

- Sedona has a population of approximately 10,000.
- Sedona welcomes approximately 3,000,000 visitors per year.
- Sedona is rated a top destination by Conde Nast Traveler and the New York Times.
- According to a study by the Yavapai College Regional Economic Development Center:
  - Tourism is Sedona’s largest employment sector with 10,000 jobs linked to the industry
  - Overall economic impact is approximately \$1 billion annually
- According to the City of Sedona, tourism accounts for 77 percent of the City’s annual sales tax revenues.
- According to the Sedona Fire District, tourism provides 54 percent of District funding. Visitors consume 25 percent of Fire District services.
- Sedona’s annual events such as the Sedona International Film Festival, Sedona Yoga Festival, Sedona Vegfest, Sedona MTB Fest and RunSedona contribute millions to the local economy.
- Sedona has no city property tax, a resident benefit attributed to tourism revenues.
- Sedona’s location between Phoenix and the Grand Canyon, at the mouth of Oak Creek Canyon and at the confluence of two state highways designated as “scenic” also attract a high number of visitors.
- The “Sedona in Motion” transportation improvement project number 1 begins in June and consists of an additional southbound lane on SR89A through Uptown Sedona, new roundabouts, and a 2300-foot artistically-designed traffic median to prevent jaywalking



and left turns, and other additions that will enhance walkability and vehicular flow. This is the first of twelve Sedona In Motion projects that will occur over the next ten years.

More information and a copy of the complete Sustainable Tourism Plan is at [SedonaSustainable.com](http://SedonaSustainable.com).

