

AGENDA



3:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

NOTES:

- Meeting room is wheelchair accessible. American Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations are available upon request. Please phone 928-282-3113 at least two (2) business days in advance.
- City Council Meeting Agenda Packets are available on the City's website at:

www.SedonaAZ.gov

THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED
LIVE ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT
WWW.SEDONAAZ.GOV OR ON
CABLE CHANNEL 4.

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

PURPOSE:

- To allow the public to provide input to the City Council on a particular subject scheduled on the agenda.
- This is not a question/answer session.
- The decision to receive Public Comment during Work Sessions/Special City Council meetings is at the discretion of the Mayor.

PROCEDURES:

- Fill out a "Comment Card" and deliver it to the City Clerk.
- When recognized, use the podium/microphone.
- State your:
 1. Name and
 2. City of Residence
- Limit comments to **3 MINUTES**.
- Submit written comments to the City Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

2. ROLL CALL

3. SPECIAL BUSINESS

LINK TO DOCUMENT =

- a. AB 3225 **Presentation/discussion/possible direction** regarding the transit program update and services, including ridership, grant funding, the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan, and capital planning efforts including the proposed Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility.
- b. **Discussion/possible action** regarding ideas for future meetings/agenda items.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a public majority vote of the members constituting a quorum, the Council may hold an Executive Session that is not open to the public for the following purposes:

- a. To consult with legal counsel for advice regarding matters listed on this agenda per A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3).
- b. Return to open session. **Discussion/possible action** regarding executive session

5. ADJOURNMENT

Posted: 06/17/2025

By: MG

JoAnne Cook, CMC, City Clerk

Note: Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02(B) notice is hereby given to the members of the City Council and to the general public that the Council will hold the above open meeting. Members of the City Council will attend either in person or by telephone, video, or internet communications. The Council may vote to go into executive session on any agenda item, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) and (4) for discussion and consultation for legal advice with the City Attorney. Because various other commissions, committees and/or boards may speak at Council meetings, notice is also given that a quorum of members of these other City commissions, boards, or committees may be in attendance.

A copy of the packet with material relating to the agenda items is typically available for review by the public in the Clerk's office after 1:00 p.m. the Thursday prior to the Council meeting and on the City's website at www.SedonaAZ.gov. The Council Chambers is accessible to people with disabilities, in compliance with the Federal 504 and ADA laws. Those with needs for special typeface print, may request these at the Clerk's Office. All requests should be made **forty-eight hours** prior to the meeting.

NOTICE TO PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS: Parents and legal guardians have the right to consent before the City of Sedona makes a video or voice recording of a minor child, pursuant to A.R.S. § 1-602(A)(9). The Sedona City Council meetings are recorded and may be viewed on the City of Sedona website. If you permit your child to attend/participate in a televised City Council meeting, a recording will be made. You may exercise your right not to consent by not allowing your child to attend/participate in the meeting.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
102 ROADRUNNER DRIVE, SEDONA, AZ

The mission of the City of Sedona government is to provide exemplary municipal services
that are consistent with our values, history, culture and unique beauty.



**CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA BILL**

**AB 3225
June 25, 2025
Special Business**

Agenda Item: 3a

Proposed Action & Subject: Presentation/discussion/possible direction regarding the transit program update and services, including ridership, grant funding, the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan, and capital planning efforts including the proposed Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility.

Department	City Manager Office / Transit Program
Time to Present	60-75 min
Total Time for Item	120 min
Other Council Meetings	May 28, 2025; February 26, 2025; November 13, 2024, July 10, 2024; April 2024
Exhibits	None

Finance Approval	Reviewed 6/9/25 BGW	
City Attorney Approval	Reviewed 6/9/25 KWC	Expenditure Required
		\$ NA
City Manager's Recommendation	Reviewed ABS 6/17/25	Amount Budgeted
		\$ NA
		Account No. (Description)

SUMMARY STATEMENT

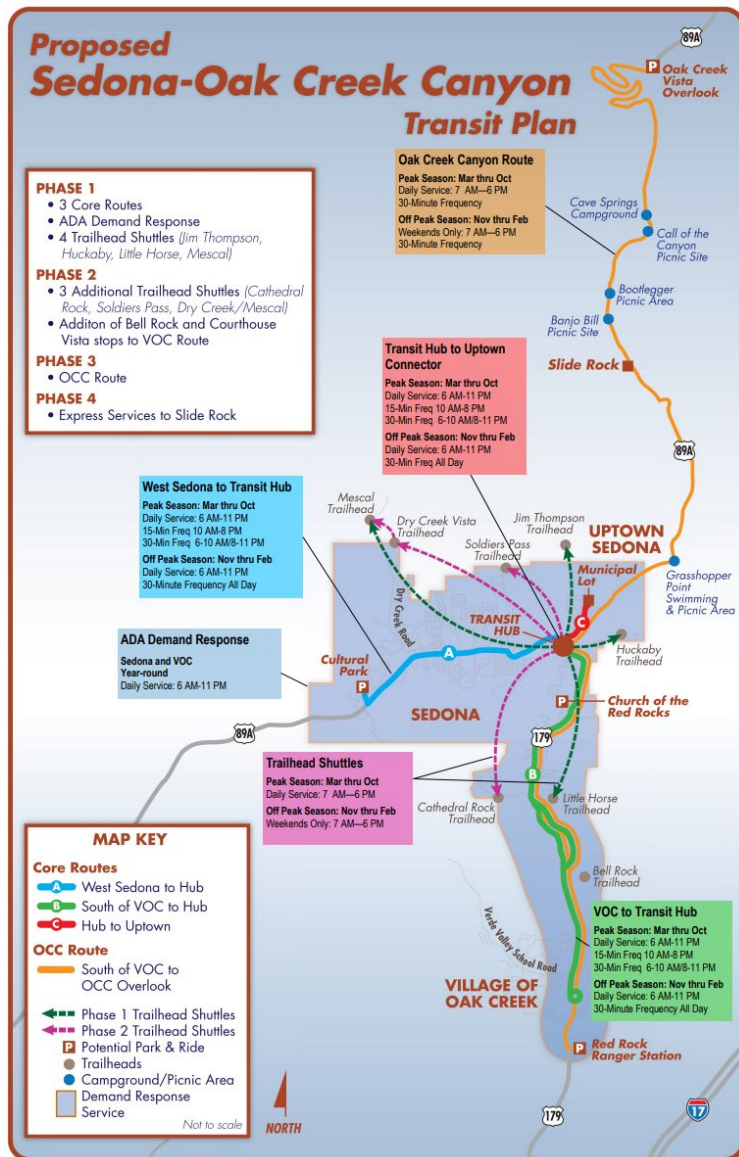
Background:

At the November 13, 2024 Council meeting, staff provided an overview of the Transit Program included in the SIM Update, which included the Transit update by Robert Weber (former Transit Administrator). On February 26, 2025, staff provided an introduction of Amber Wagner, the new Transit Administrator. During its May 1, 2025, Budget Work Session, the Council requested a more in-depth review and discussion of the City's transit program, including progress on the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan (STIP). On May 28th Amber Wagner, Transit Administrator, provided a SIM update including an update of metrics and progress on existing services and projects.

This item provides an update on the City's transit program and its progress in implementing the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan. The presentation will cover current services, ridership trends, implementation milestones, upcoming planning efforts, transit funding opportunities, and future operational needs, including capital projects such as the maintenance and

operations center. Collectively, these elements support the City's ongoing efforts to advance the Sedona in Motion (SIM) priorities and enhance local transit service.

Link: [Sedona Transit Implementation Plan Final Report](#)



Background and Purpose of Sedona's Transit Program

In 2018, the City of Sedona adopted the **Transportation Master Plan**, which identified strategies to address growing congestion, safety concerns, and limited mobility options. These recommendations became the foundation for the **Sedona In Motion (SIM)** program—a comprehensive, multi-modal initiative to improve traffic flow, support tourism and economic vitality, promote walkability, and reduce environmental impacts.

One of SIM's core recommendations was the creation of a public transit system. This led to the development of the **Sedona Transit Implementation Plan (STIP)**—a detailed, phased 10-year roadmap to deliver local and regional transit services.

Adopted in 2020, **The Sedona Transit Implementation Plan** includes:

- Core fixed-route service
- Trailhead shuttles
- ADA demand-response
- Regional/express service connections

- **SIM** provides the vision and high-level goals.
- **STIP** translates those goals into actionable transit services.

Sedona Transit Implementation Plan (STIP) Timeline Overview

The Sedona Transit Implementation Plan (STIP) is structured as a four-phase, 10-year roadmap, with Phase 1 beginning in FY 2020. The timeline below outlines the major milestones and actions identified for each year of the plan.

Years 1–3: Planning & Initial Construction

- Facility and site selection
- Coordination with USFS for trailhead access
- Begin design and construction of operations & maintenance facility and transit hub
- Bus acquisition and stop improvements
- Initial marketing

Years 4–5: Phase 1 Service Launch

- Complete facility construction
- Launch core routes and trailhead shuttle service
- Hire transit operator
- Begin planning for VOC/OCC park-and-ride improvements

Years 6–7: Phases 2 & 3 Rollout

- Launch Oak Creek Canyon (OCC) route and expanded trailhead service
- Construct VOC and OCC intercept lots

Years 8–10: Phase 4 Launch

- Develop Slide Rock intercept lot
- Launch Slide Rock Express route

Deviation from the Original Implementation Timeline

Since adoption, shifts have occurred in the rollout of the STIP recommendations:

- **Trailhead Shuttle Service (Sedona Shuttle Trailhead)**
Originally scheduled for Years 4–5, service was launched two years early in March 2022. Four routes (Cathedral Rock/ Little Horse, Soldiers Pass, Dry Creek, Dry Creek/Mescal) have provided over 1 million rides as of March 2025.
- **Microtransit (Sedona Shuttle Connect)**
Delayed from early Phase 1, the on-demand microtransit service launched in August 2024 due to vehicle procurement delays. It is now operating successfully, with positive trending performance and community reception.
- **Transit Maintenance & Operations Center**
Design began in January 2025, later than planned due to delays with grant funding requirements. The project is currently in the concept and space programming phase and supported by a federal grant.

Transit Momentum: Ridership and Progress to Date



Trailhead Shuttle Service

The Sedona Shuttle Trailhead Service has been operational since March 2022 and was developed in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service as part of a coordinated effort to reduce congestion, manage visitor impacts, and protect access to sensitive trailhead areas.

Key highlights of the service include:

- Four active routes serving major trailheads:
 - Cathedral Rock / Little Horse
 - Dry Creek / Mescal
 - Dry Creek (additional service coverage)
 - Soldiers Pass
- Over 1 million boardings since launch
- Service operates Thursday – Sunday and daily during peak seasons and provides direct shuttle access to high-demand trailheads that previously lacked adequate parking or circulation capacity

The Trailhead Shuttle is a cornerstone of the City's strategy to enhance visitor mobility, reduce traffic volumes on local and residential streets, and protect natural resources while ensuring continued public access to outdoor recreation.

Sedona Shuttle Connect (Microtransit)

The Sedona Shuttle Connect is the City's door-to-door, on-demand transit service, launched in August 2024 to improve local mobility and reduce reliance on personal vehicles. It fills a critical service gap by offering flexible, accessible transportation within most of Sedona.

Key service highlights:

- Ridership (as of May 2025): 13,305 rides completed
- On-time performance: 85%
- Shared ride rate: 50–60%, reflecting efficient vehicle use and responsiveness
- Community engagement: Promoted through a summer marketing campaign partnerships with the lodging industry, and a free ride coupon program mailed to Sedona households at launch

Connect is helping to establish a more adaptive, user-friendly transit system that supports both residents and visitors with reliable, door-to-door service, and is an important step in building out the City's long-term transit vision.

Verde Shuttle (operated by CAT)

The Verde Shuttle provides a critical regional transit connection between Cottonwood and Sedona, operating hourly, seven days a week. The route includes stops in West Sedona, Uptown, and near Poco Diablo, offering consistent service for both residents and workers. This service plays an essential role in reducing vehicle trips along SR-89A and enhancing regional mobility and connectivity.

Ridership trends demonstrate increasing demand for this service:

- **FY 2023:** 69,119 rides
- **FY 2024:** 84,798 rides (*a 23% increase*)
- **FY 2025 Year-to-Date (through April):** 77,982 rides

Based on current usage, the service is on track to surpass prior years' totals, highlighting its effectiveness and value as a transportation option. The steady upward trend in ridership reflects the growing role of the Verde Shuttle in supporting Sedona's transportation goals and providing a viable alternative to personal vehicle use.



Implementation Status and What's Next

The city has delivered core components of Phase 1 and is preparing for future phases:

Uptown Circulator Feasibility Study

- Evaluates fixed-route service between the Uptown garage and key destinations
- Funded by an FTA Section 5311 Planning Grant
- Explore other funding sources to support service
- Consideration of public/ private partnerships
- Kickoff expected mid-June 2025
- Final Recommendations expected in December 2025 or January 2026



Transit Maintenance & Operations Center

- Replaces temporary Sinagua site for administration, dispatch and bus storage.
- Located on City-owned land near the wastewater treatment plant
- Design partially funded by an FTA 5339 grant (\$720,000 federal + local match)
- Centralizes administration, operations and maintenance functions currently housed in separate temporary buildings.
- Supports future fleet and service expansion.
- Currently in space programming and concept design phase, which will inform site layout, building functionality, and cost estimates. Design will be completed June/July 2026.
- **M & O Business Plan:** This will be developed in conjunction with the design phase. Business plan completion is anticipated in Fall 2025. Elements of the plan will include the following:
 - Facility requirements with staffing and maintenance needs. Leading to facility site plan / floor plan development, this will include future expansion opportunities.
 - Regional service partnership opportunities
 - Capital and operating costs
 - Funding strategy. This will look at what local revenue and costs are anticipated, what partnering agency revenue is expected, what return on investment is expected, etc.
 - Phased implementation timeline. It will serve as a roadmap to ensure the facility supports current operations, future service expansion and potential partnerships in a sustainable and efficient way.



Key Decisions Ahead

As the City prepares for the next phase of implementation, it will be important to evaluate and prioritize the following strategic decisions to ensure the continued success and sustainability of the transit program:

- **Core Route Planning:** Continue planning core fixed-routes in Phase 1 to serve daily mobility needs within Sedona for residents and visitors. Insights from the Shuttle Connect microtransit service and Circulator Study will help inform route design and service planning.
- **Village of Oak Creek (VOC) and Oak Creek Canyon Services:** Continue planning and developing partnerships for regional routes and intercept lots, as outlined in Phases 2 and 3.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Continue planning and identifying funding strategies for priority capital projects outlined to support the development and roll-out of additional

transit services outlined in STIP. This includes evaluating the potential use of the City's ½-cent transportation sales tax to support long-term infrastructure and vehicle needs.

- **Trailhead Shuttle Expansion:** Consider Phase 2 trailheads (Bell Rock/Courthouse Vista, Huckaby, Slide Rock) and focus on optimizing existing routes.
- **Optimize Microtransit Service:** Use performance data, trip trends, and rider feedback to refine service zones, improve efficiency and ensure Shuttle Connect continues to provide flexible, responsive transportation.

Current Challenges

While the City has made significant progress, several ongoing challenges continue to affect the full implementation of the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan:

- **Funding Constraints:** Operating costs exceed typical grant support, sustainable funding is needed. Unlike many communities of its size, Sedona does have a valuable tool: a dedicated local transportation sales tax that supports both existing and future transit services and infrastructure. As the need for other transportation projects reduces, more of this funding will be available for transit. Because public transit is not self-sustaining through fares alone, like fire protection, public works, and libraries—long-term success will require ongoing local and regional funding commitment to ensure it remains a reliable and essential community service.
- **Rural/Urban Funding Gap:** Sedona's unique position—being a small city with high visitor demand—makes it ineligible for some federal transit programs that are geared toward larger urban areas. This funding gap limits access to direct federal support despite outsized transit needs.
- **Rising Costs:** Inflation continues to impact core cost drivers, including labor, fuel, and construction materials. These rising expenses are placing additional strain on both operational and capital budgets.
- **Vehicle Procurement Delays:** Supply chain issues have led to delays in receiving new vehicles, which affects the City's ability to expand or adjust service in a timely manner.
- **Facility Readiness:** Full implementation of planned service phases is dependent on completing the new maintenance and operations center. Additional infrastructure—such as intercept parking lots and a transit hub—will also need to be evaluated if they are necessary to support expanded service and meet long-term system goals.

Partnership Opportunities

- **U.S. Forest Service—** Continued collaboration is vital to addressing visitor-related congestion, access, and environmental impacts. The 2023 Volpe Center Sedona and Coconino National Forest TAG report outlines transit-based strategies to improve transportation to gateway communities, support sustainable recreation, and reduce strain on the Coconino National Forest. (trail access and visitor management)

- **CAT, Valley Verde Caregivers, NAIPTA, Yavapai Transit** – Regional connectivity and coordination of services such as maintenance facility and other service expansion opportunities. (regional planning)
- **Coconino and Yavapai County:** Regional connectivity and shared funding opportunities.
- **Hospitality Sector:** Ride pass programs, outreach, and user education. (promotion)
- **Federal/State Funding Agencies:** City continues to pursue competitive funding for operating and capital projects (e.g., 5339(b), FLAP, others)
- **Sedona Transit Advisory Committee (STAC):** Forum for community engagement, helping to guide service implementation, set annual priorities, and strengthen partnerships with residents, local organizations, and stakeholders.

Summary

Sedona continues to make strong progress on the implementation of the Sedona Transit Implementation Plan (STIP), with several major milestones achieved ahead of schedule. Most notably, the Sedona Shuttle Trailhead service—launched in March 2022—has provided over 1 million rides and played a key role in reducing congestion near popular recreation areas.

Other components of the STIP are now actively advancing. The Sedona Shuttle Connect on-demand service, launched in August 2024, has served more than 13,305 passengers, addressing critical transportation gaps. Planning and preliminary work on a dedicated maintenance and operations facility is also underway, supporting the long-term reliability of the system.

As the City approaches the midpoint of its 10-year transit plan, reassessing priorities, refining funding strategies, and strengthening partnerships will be essential to sustaining momentum. Sedona is well-positioned to realize the vision outlined in the Sedona in Motion (SIM) and STIP plans—a reliable, sustainable transit network that meets the needs of residents and visitors while preserving the unique character of the community

Climate Action Plan/Sustainability Consistent: ☒Yes - ☐No - ☐Not Applicable

The city's Climate Action Plan (CAP) sites the second largest source of CO₂ emissions in Sedona is from the use of fossil fuels in vehicles and other motorized equipment. A mode shift to public transit reduces the number of passenger vehicle miles traveled, which results in the displacement of CO₂ emissions. One of the specific CAP strategies is to improve and increase transit ridership. Related strategies include a sustained commitment for a transition to electric and other low-carbon fuels and a shift to alternative modes of transportation such as ride sharing, public transit, biking, and walking.

Board/Commission Recommendation: ☐Applicable - ☒Not Applicable

Alternative(s): Not Applicable

MOTION

I move to: For information, discussion, and possible direction only.