

Wireless Master Plan Information Sheet

Thank you for your interest in the City of Sedona's Wireless Master Plan. This information sheet is to help answer a few of the most common questions we're hearing.

Common Questions

What is it the City is doing by creating a Wireless Master Plan?

City Council asked City Staff to create a Wireless Master Plan to proactively plan for new wireless infrastructure, including identifying city-owned property that might be suitable for future locations of this wireless infrastructure.

What is wireless infrastructure?

Wireless infrastructure is quite literally any vertical element above the ground that has an antenna attached. This could be an antenna attached to a water tank, a building, a tower, at light pole, etc.

Why is the City creating a Wireless Master Plan?

The Plan is an effort to allow that infrastructure to come into Sedona with the least negative impact to the community, and to ensure the infrastructure is well concealed and fits into the landscape as best as possible to preserve the beauty of Sedona. Wireless infrastructure is already in Sedona and with technology and connectivity demands from the community, this infrastructure is going to continue to proliferate. Federal telecommunication rules will not allow cities to stop the construction of new towers -- only to influence the appearance of those towers, and encourage them in locations we prefer on City-owned properties where the City could manage where it goes and how it looks.

In other words, this infrastructure will be built in Sedona whether or not there is a master plan in place, and the City is being proactive to encourage locations that minimize impacts on residential areas and Sedona's natural beauty. With guidelines on what is best for our community, the plan will give wireless companies strong incentives to follow the community's wishes to minimize impacts. Putting infrastructure on City owned property gives the community more say in the tower and equipment size and aesthetic, because as landlords the City can dictate much stricter terms than we could simply through the City Code requirements for other property locations.

All in all, if the infrastructure is placed on City-owned land, we will have more say on where it goes and what it looks like.

What are the key types of wireless infrastructure discussed in the Master Plan?

1. Non-concealed towers – These are towers that are easily recognizable as a tower, whether or not they are freestanding or attached to a building. This is the type of tower we've heard from the community to avoid because it doesn't blend in to the environment.
2. A concealed Base Station – This type of wireless infrastructure is non-tower equipment that enables wireless telecommunications, yet to the eye is not easily recognizable as wireless infrastructure because it blends in with existing buildings and structures.

Third, is Concealed Macro Towers – These are taller towers with large antenna and require a strong structure, but because it's concealed, it is not easily recognizable as a wireless facility and blends in better with its surroundings.

4. Concealed Small Cell Sites – Small cell sites are mini networks of towers and are lower powered sites that cover smaller areas than say a macro tower. Small cell sites are installed in densely populated areas and the towers are mounted closer to the ground and are typically found on object like street lights or buildings. The ground equipment consumes less space and can be mounted on the ground or in the structure itself. These towers are concealed and not easily recognizable as wireless infrastructure.

What happens if the City has no Master Plan in place?

Regardless of whether or not the City has a Wireless Master Plan, cell towers will continue to be built in Sedona. Because the City can't stop cell phone towers from being built, the providers will dictate where and how. Having a plan in place allows the City to have some control on where they are built, what types are built, and what they look like. Without it, we take our chances.

Will there really be 20 new cell phone towers going up in town?

At this point, the City does not know exactly how many new towers the providers will want to put up in Sedona. The sites represent 20, city-owned property locations where towers *could be* located. There are also privately owned properties where towers *could be* located.

If City sites end up included in the Plan, this means that *if* a company comes to the City and would like to put up a tower, there are some already-vetted locations identified where if they follow specific appearance and height requirements, it will be an easier approval process for them. Again, towers or other facilities are only built if cell phone companies see a need for them in those particular locations.

Currently, with no plan in place, a cell phone provider can come and put a tower in whatever location they would like as long as they have the property owner's approval and it meets current zoning and building code requirements. Federal law dictates that the City must approve the request if the providers need the facilities to provide their services.

Can radio frequency emissions really not be considered when a company wants to construct a cell phone tower?

Federal law does not allow cities to stop towers from locating based on their radio frequency emissions. Part of the master planning process and looking at city owned properties is to identify where wireless may be more suitable in locations. The City is selecting sites proactively rather than taking our chances with the industry selecting sites that could be less suitable.

If a location is identified in the Wireless Master Plan, does this mean there will definitely be a cell phone tower there soon?

No, just because it is one of the city-identified sites, does not mean it will definitely have a tower. This Master Plan is looking out at a 10-year horizon, so that *if* a company comes to the City and would like to put up a tower because they have identified that as a need, the City has some locations identified for

them in which if they follow our specific appearance and height requirements, it will be a streamlined approval process.

The City has received no applications nor has the City even talked to any providers about any of the City-owned sites. Rather the City is just trying to get ahead of the providers coming in. Facilities are only built if cell phone companies see a need for them in those particular locations.

Next Steps

Once the Planning and Zoning Commission considers the Wireless Master Plan, and develops its recommendations, the Plan will be presented to City Council with more opportunity for public comment. City Council will be the ultimate decision makers on if this Plan passes and what city-owned properties will be included as potential cell tower sites.

More Information

The City believes an informed public is the best kind of public and for more information, including a video, slide show, and updates as the City has them, go to www.SedonaAZ.gov/WirelessMasterPlan. Thank you for caring about your community and please reach out to us if you have any questions.

Karen Osburn, Assistant City Manager

City of Sedona

928-203-5067

KOsburn@SedonaAZ.gov

Lauren Browne, Citizen Engagement Coordinator

City of Sedona

928-203-5068

LBrowne@SedonaAZ.gov