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Greetings!



Coconino National Forest proposes trailhead transit expansion

The city of Sedona, in partnership with the Coconino National Forest, seeks to provide mass transit shuttle services at select trailheads located within the greater Sedona area to reduce traffic congestion, overflow parking in residential areas and improve pedestrian safety.



By doing so, the Coconino National Forest puts forth a **public comment period and proposed action** to allow for city of Sedona mass transit shuttle services to drop off at Dry Creek, Little Horse, Mescal, Cathedral Rock and Soldiers Pass trailheads.

The city expects shuttle service to run year-round from trailhead shuttle exchange parking lots to service West Sedona and State Route 179 trailheads, between 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, beginning in March 2022. Additionally, it is being proposed that Cathedral Rock and Soldiers Pass public parking would be closed during shuttle operations to encourage the use of the shuttle and alternative transportation. Walk and bike-in access to these trailheads would remain during transit hours and public parking and recreation access would remain open at Dry Creek, Little Horse and Mescal trailhead parking lots.

A description of the proposed action, along with maps and other information, can be found online at the following link.

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<https://tinyurl.com/TrailheadTransit> or <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60969>

Traffic and congested parking during peak visitation are frequent complaints by Sedona residents and visitors. Popular trailheads are often beyond parking capacity. Parking demand then displaces visitors more than a half mile away into undesignated areas, surrounding neighborhoods and surface streets. This traffic pattern results in resource damage, adverse public safety and diminished residents' quality of life.

Access to popular trailheads can be improved by utilizing alternative modes of transportation for visitors who would otherwise drive their own vehicles to trailheads. A proposed transit program, operated by the city of Sedona, would offer reliable transportation to and from popular trailheads.

"I believe this joint venture between the Red Rock Ranger District and the city of Sedona will help mitigate some of the traffic congestion problems people face at trailheads and also improve safety for pedestrians across the board," said District Ranger Amy Tinderholt. "With how popular these trails have become, it will be vital to find long-term solutions such as this to allow for greater and safer access, while improving the experience for everyone in the area."

"The city is working diligently to deploy a trailhead and microtransit shuttle system this coming spring and summer. In order to make the program a success, we believe considering trailhead parking closures during shuttle operational hours at our most popular destinations is critical. While there are still many operational details to iron out between now and March 2022, this consideration is necessary to incentivize both locals and residents to take trailhead shuttles, and to provide much needed relief to the cathedral and soldiers pass neighborhoods impacted by the current oversubscription of trailhead parking. This transit service will take cars off the road, reduce carbon emissions, and provide an easier option for those seeking to access these and other sought-after trailheads," said city of Sedona City Manager Karen Osburn.

Other points of the transit proposal include:

- Shuttles would operate on an approximate 15- to 45-minute frequency.
- Pedestrian and bicycle traffic is encouraged as an alternative transportation method.
- Shuttles may be increased during peak-use holidays and spring break months.
- To accommodate shuttle access at Cathedral Rock, a trailhead re-design would convert an existing pedestrian path to a motorized route that exits onto Back O' Beyond Road. A new pedestrian path would be constructed.
- Trailhead modifications may include adding a designated shuttle stop, relocating parking stalls or closing select parking stalls during shuttle operations.

How to comment

The public is invited to provide input on the Red Rock Country Trailhead Transit and Parking Restrictions Project during a 30-day comment period from Oct. 20 to Nov. 19, 2021.

Provide written comments with "Trailhead Transit" in the subject line via:

- E-mail: comments-southwestern-coconino-redrock@usda.gov

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- Fax: (928) 203-7539
- Regular mail: Red Rock Ranger District, Attention: Trailhead Transit, P.O. Box 20429, Sedona, AZ 86431
- Hand delivered: Red Rock District Office at 8375 State Route 179, Sedona, AZ 86351 between the hours of 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. weekdays

For additional information, please contact Recreation Special Uses Permit Administrator Mark Goshorn at mark.goshorn@usda.gov.

More information on the city's transit program

For more details on the city's transit program, go to www.sedonaaz.gov/transit or contact city of Sedona Transit Administrator Robert Weber at (928) 203-5086.

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