



Leah Brock, Senior Planner
Yavapai County Development Services
Via E-mail: leah.brock@yavapai.us

Re: AutoCamp – Zoning Map Change – Planned Area Development on
APN# 408-34-008, HA# PLA20-000044

Ms. Brock,

Thank you for inviting the City of Sedona to provide agency comments on the proposed zone change for the AutoCamp; AC Sedona LLC project.

While it is customary to review these types of requests at a staff level, due to the proposed development's proximity and potential impacts to the city, the intensity of the proposed change in use, and the inquiries we have already received from Sedona residents concerned about the project, we felt it necessary to also provide our City Council an opportunity to give input on this proposal. The City Council met on October 27th and spent several hours discussing this item. 16 members of the public commented on the project. Every one of those spoke in opposition.

The conversation largely focused on the inappropriateness of the land use and lack of community benefits to either Yavapai County or the City of Sedona. Given that development should occur in accordance with all adopted plans and zoning designations pertaining to a property within a jurisdiction, and that adopted plans and zoning regulations provide assurances to property owners in the vicinity and the larger community that certain development patterns are appropriate and acceptable on a particular property, any changes to the adopted plans and zoning designations on a property should be substantiated and support a new shared vision for a particular property. Based on the information provided about the AutoCamp project, the Council believes that the requested change is not substantiated, does not support a shared vision for this area, nor is it appropriate in this particular location due to the sensitive surrounding wilderness environment and lack of adequate infrastructure and services for guests.

Additional comments are as follows:

Appropriateness of Land Use

- The proposal for 100 units would significantly increase the allowable density which currently permits a maximum of 8-9 single family residences and would also intensify the use by changing it from residential to commercial.
- The proposal is equivalent to the size of a large hotel and incorporates a 4,500 square foot clubhouse, ancillary amenities, an onsite wastewater treatment and disposal system, 124 parking spaces, and outdoor multi-purpose pad being proposed to accommodate events like weddings and corporate gatherings.
- The location of the proposal in a remote and sensitive area with no services will increase vehicular trips on Dry Creek Road specifically and the City as a whole, as guests seek services, such as groceries, retail, restaurants, entertainment, etc.).

- There will be an increase in demand for recreational experiences (hiking, biking, sightseeing, OHV/ATV use) which brings with it additional traffic and parking impacts. With no public transit to this location and no shuttles provided, guest driving to their destinations in Sedona will add to the overcapacity parking problems at trailheads which overflow onto City streets such as Dry Creek. No mitigations are proposed.
- The proposed location adjacent to an extensive network of OHV routes and the outdoor recreation experience will lend itself to guests arriving with off-highway vehicles (OHVs). As these vehicles are street legal it is likely that AutoCamp guests with OHVs will also visit destinations such as Broken Arrow and Schnebly Hill Road, thus driving through the City and adding to residents' concerns about the noise generated from vehicles like ATVs and larger UTVs (utility or side by side vehicles). The City continues to try and address the noise created by these vehicles as they travel on Dry Creek Road and within the City.
- At this location, there is little potential for patrons to walk, bike, or take transit to anything other than a few trailheads. All trips will likely be by passenger vehicle.
- Employees and other service providers will also need to commute in (single occupancy) vehicles due to lack of transit or shuttles in this remote area.
- With a proposed staff of 25-45, plus contracted third party services, and no workers housed onsite, many more people would need to be housed in Sedona/Cottonwood/the Verde Valley. Finding workforce for existing business is already a challenge. Workforce housing is a further and increasing challenge. There should be consideration given to the need to provide housing for employees, preferably onsite, to mitigate the impacts if approved.
- 100 fire pits and communal fire areas will increase the wildfire risk to surrounding wilderness and existing cultural resources.
- An increase in density of this magnitude is a change which would typically be accompanied by elements in the proposal which result in a positive impact on a community. Associated community benefits are not readily apparent.

Public Safety

- It could be anticipated that from time to time Sedona officers will need to respond to the development if officers from the sheriff's department are not in close proximity or need back-up assistance. If assistance were needed and Sedona sent officers, it may deplete resources otherwise intended to respond within the City.
- It is likely that patrons of this proposed development would seek services and entertainment in Sedona. The increase in daily traffic within Sedona would be expected to increase the number of calls for services (e.g. auto accidents) to dispatch.
- A project of this scale would typically have security, especially during overnight hours. There should be an assigned security person who patrols the property, attempts to mitigate potential issues, and is available for quick response before requesting law enforcement.
- Concerns were also raised about narrow streets and only one way in and out of the site and lack of adequate cell service in the case of an emergency.

Economic Development

- The diversification of Sedona's economy is a priority for Sedona and for the Verde Valley. This includes growing and attracting sustainable industry sectors within Sedona and the surrounding area. This project does not help diversify the existing economy but instead is another of many lodging/tourism projects.

- Routinely, Sedona businesses state the biggest impediment to business and economic development is lack of workforce and attainable housing. In the Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization Strategic Plan, the aging population, lack of housing diversity, and lack of housing affordability are identified as major challenges to Sedona and the region's workforce. This limits Sedona's and the region's ability to attract talent and capitalize on opportunities to diversify and sustain the regional economy. Instead of contributing to solving these regional issues, this project will only exacerbate those challenges.

Public Works

- The City of Sedona is concerned about traffic impacts from AutoCamp visitors and employees seeking services in the City and the resulting increase in vehicle trips. Traffic is already a significant concern for Sedona and this development would further strain an already overburdened infrastructure.
- Should the project advance, the City would request the developer conduct a Traffic Impact Analysis for the Dry Creek Road corridor and propose warranted improvements. Sight distance is a concern at the White Bear Road and Kachina Drive intersections of Dry Creek Road. Added traffic may result in improvements being warranted. Impacts to the Dry Creek Road and 89A intersection should also be assessed and addressed.
- Should the project advance, the City would request developer consider contributing to potential vehicular or shared use path (SUP) connections. Currently, to offset traffic and parking issues, the following projects are proposed in the vicinity of Dry Creek Road:
 - Dry Creek Road SUP (2 Fence Trail to USFS)
 - Dry Creek Road to Rodeo Road SUP
 - Navoti Drive to Dry Creek Road connection SUP
 - And/or coordinate with USFS for trailhead parking expansion projects

Thank you again for providing the opportunity to comment. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Karen Osburn

Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director

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