

2010 ARIZONA MAIN STREET AWARDS  
DESIGN/ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING  
Best Large Scale Renovation  
Sedona

Sedona Main Street Program (SMSP) nominates the L'Auberge de Sedona for Best Large Scale Renovation.

**Historical Background:** L'Auberge de Sedona, a restaurant and inn located just off 89A (Main Street) in Uptown Sedona opened in 1985. Prior to "Project Elevation", L'Auberge consisted of just 58 units comprised of a mix of traditional lodge rooms and individual, freestanding cottages spread out over 11 acres. Due to its proximity to Sedona's Main Street, the hotel's occupancy is a critical revenue stream for the retail shops, services, tour operators and restaurants that line Main Street. Additionally, L'Auberge de Sedona has long enjoyed a strong reputation as a top tier destination hotel, attracting tourists and travelers with a higher than average household income to Sedona for shopping, dining and patronage of the area's many activities. Despite this, L'Auberge guest facilities had declined in quality over the years due to a succession of owners and management companies until the current owner took control of the property with the goal of restoring and expanding it.

**Project Elevation:** Project Elevation is a \$25 million capital project embarked upon in 2008 and completed in 2010. The project was designed to expand and improve L'Auberge de Sedona's guest accommodations and facilities. The vision was to "elevate" the property not only physically with the addition of 18 brand new Hillside Cottages and 13 new Spa Cottages but also to improve and expand existing cottage and lodge units. A key guideline of the project required that L'Auberge incorporate sustainable building practices whenever possible and ensure that new units would blend seamlessly into the landscape. When it was determined that we could not efficiently construct cottage units to acceptable green standards on location, modular units constructed of recycled and sustainable materials were sourced and the exteriors were skillfully redesigned to match pre-existing cottages. Additional capital expenditures included the addition of over 100 new native trees, public art, the purchase of electric non-polluting Gem Cars (jitneys) to shuttle guests around Sedona Main Street District, and implementation of a locally-focused recycling and donation program.

**Challenges:** Major technical challenges faced by Project Elevation included the engineering of a weight-bearing system that could support 1200 square foot cottage structures on the erosion prone sandstone and clay hillside of Main Street. Additional challenges presented by the site included the installation of new cottages without damaging or destroying old growth native trees. This was accomplished by means of a crane and hydraulic lift system. Local noise and traffic ordinances had to be adhered to and because of L'Auberge de Sedona's location across Oak Creek from private residences, extra care had to be taken to avoid construction during non-business hours, resulting in significant cost and time overrun.

**Benefits and Impacts, Return on Investment:** Estimates of incremental sales and bed tax payments generated by the additional units provided by Project Elevation will amount to approximately \$1,000,000 per year. Traffic engineers have also estimated that the implementation of the L'Auberge electric "jitney" program for shuttling guests throughout the Sedona Main Street area will result in up to a 50% reduction in vehicles on 89A in the Uptown area, reducing congestion and air pollution. The addition of 33 new hotel rooms in the Sedona Main Street District are projected to increase retail, dining and tour activity, thereby benefiting the overall economic performance of Sedona. The restoration and improvement of L'Auberge de Sedona's guest accommodations and facilities to a world-class level has & will continue to draw press and media attention as a result of the hotel's marketing efforts, resulting in a higher profile for Sedona as top-tier destination and thus increasing demand for travel and commerce. L'Auberge de Sedona was recognized in the August 2010 issue of Travel + Leisure as the #29 Resort in the US and Canada. L'Auberge de Sedona anticipates an increase in Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) of 21% in the first year following construction and 15% in the second year. ROI is conservatively estimated at 11% over 5 years.

# ARIZONA MAIN STREET AWARDS

**2010**

*Fiscal Year July 1 – June 30*

## **Best Large Scale Project**

Enhancing the visual image of the Main Street district with appropriate renovation activities creates a positive impact for the main street district. Projects in this category include exterior or interior property improvement that expended over **\$150,000**.

*Nominations are due to the Arizona Main Street Office  
no later than September 3rd, 2010*

**Arizona Department of Commerce  
Arizona Main Street Program  
1700 W. Washington, Suite 620  
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

## **PERSON/ORGANIZATION MAKING NOMINATION:**

Holly Epright, SMSP Executive Director  
450 Jordan Road, Suite B  
Sedona, AZ 86336  
928-204-2390

## **LIST ALL PERSONS/ORGANIZATIONS WHO SHOULD RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THIS PROJECT:**

Name and Title: L' Auberge de Sedona Owners and Operators: Al Spector and Susannah Durant.  
Role in Project: Creative Team leaders, visionaries and financiers

Name and Title: Tiffany Construction Company, Inc. - Herb Tiffany  
Role in Project: General Contractor Overall

Name and Title: R. Dibble Construction, LLC. - Ron Dibble, owner  
Role in Project: Vertical Construction Contractor