

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM NEIGHBORHOOD CONVERSATIONS

For your convenience, we've compiled answers to commonly asked questions from past Neighborhood Conversations.

IDYLWOOD TREE REMOVAL

Q: Why is the city cutting trees at Idylwood Park? We are concerned about the eagles that perch in the cottonwood trees.

A: After two separate large limb failures resulted in injury to a park patron and damage to private property last summer, our certified arborists did a visual tree risk assessment. They carefully considered tree health, defects, species, and location. They determined that 31 trees in high use areas needed to be removed and replaced with more than 60 coniferous and deciduous trees. There are no nests in the trees being removed and we obtained a Clear and Grade permit before starting work. We also completed a State Environmental Policy Act application. Redmond values our trees and natural resources, but public safety is our top priority.

Q: Can we have an independent arborist complete a review?

A: Yes, the City of Redmond is comfortable with arborists coming to the park to complete a review. It is a public space and anyone can be in the park. We have several certified arborists and our park staff have the most complete knowledge of how the park is used, but we welcome another industry expert's thoughtful review.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Q: What is the city doing to attract developers who will provide affordable housing?

A: We focus on land use regulations, direct funding assistance, and partnerships with local organizations to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing. For example, for all new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings, Redmond requires that a minimum of 10% be affordable to households earning 80% or less than the area median income. We leased surplus property for the construction of the Gabriel House, which provides 74 homes for low or moderate-income seniors. Most recently, we are working with Imagine Housing to offer affordable housing as part of the Esterra development in Overlake. For more information, please visit www.redmond.gov/affordablehousing.

DEVELOPMENT

Q: How many housing units are going in downtown and why so many?

A: Right now we have around 1,700, with 1,300 more under construction and more in the permit process. The vision for our city is to concentrate growth into our Downtown and Overlake urban centers, preserving opportunities to live in single family neighborhoods. With light rail coming to both urban centers, more residents will have access to transit.

Q: How can we learn about new projects? Is the 500 ft permit notification enough?

A: The state requirement is 300 ft and current Redmond code requires notification within 500 feet. We are reviewing this process and revamping it to ensure the community knows about projects and has opportunities to engage, early on. We are evaluating a new process that would allow residents to subscribe to and receive an email when permit applications are filed and also evaluating how neighborhood meetings should be publicized. Hardcopy mailings are expensive, but we can be using our eNews service, social media and a more streamlined website to share important project milestones with the public. Stay tuned for more updates on this!

KING COUNTY TRUNKLINE PROJECT

Q: What is going on with the NE 40th trunkline project from 172nd Ave NE to Lake Sammamish?

A: Construction has just resumed after the winter shutdown and restoration should be substantially complete in May 2018. Please note that 172nd Ave NE will be restricted to local traffic only between NE 40th Street and West Lake Samm Parkway NE Monday-Friday 7am to 4pm for final pipe installation. There will also be intermittent lane closures on NE 40th St between 172nd Ave NE and 177th Avenue NE Monday-Friday 7am-4pm for final paving and restoration. There will be pedestrian detours around work zones.

MARYMOOR VILLAGE TRAFFIC

Q. What is the plan to deal with increased traffic through Marymoor Park caused by the use of the new Redmond Community Center at Marymoor Village and light rail?

A. We work with the entire Eastside to address our traffic problems as they don't typically generate in one specific area. Light Rail is part of the traffic solution as well as providing more affordable housing in close proximity to the stations. We are working on making the area more walkable so cars are not as necessary.

COMMUNICATING WITH COUNCIL

Q. Is it best to testify under "Items from the Audience" at a Council meeting or raise a concern to Council at a Neighborhood Conversation meeting.

A. Councilmembers answers varied on this question. Some believe it is best to bring your concern forward at a Council meeting and some prefer the Neighborhood Conversation meetings that allow for a more casual discussion. Both formats as well as emailing the Ombudsperson for the Month are available for the community to ask questions and voice concerns.

TRANSPORTATION

Q. When will light rail arrive in Redmond?

A. The East Link Light rail extension is coming and will connect Overlake to Bellevue, Mercer Island, Seattle, Sea-Tac Airport, and other destinations in the Sound Transit system. Construction has already started, and light rail will be open for service in 2023. The extension includes a station at Overlake

Village (152nd Ave. NE) and one at the Redmond Technology Center (NE 40th St.). Both stations will include pedestrian-bicycle bridges across SR 520 and the station at NE 40th St. will also include a new park and ride for 320 cars. For more information on East Link Light Rail, visit <http://redmond.gov/eastlink>.

Q. When will the light rail extend from Overlake into Redmond?

A. With passage of ST3, light rail is set to extend into Southeast Redmond and Downtown Redmond. The City recently completed a Downtown bus and rail planning study to seek community feedback on four different station area concepts. Community members strongly supported an elevated rail alignment in Downtown, and a station in the “east” location—between 164th and 166th Ave. NE. Preliminary design for extension to Southeast Redmond and Downtown Redmond is underway and will open in 2024.

Q. What’s being done to increase bus service?

A. The City has recently entered into funding partnerships to provide a variety of transportation options. These options include additional service on bus routes #269 and #244, the new “Redmond Loop” neighborhood shuttle that serves a circulator route around the edge of Downtown and a new alternative service called “real-time ridesharing” where you can download an app and find a carpool on-demand. Transportation planners have also been working to develop Redmond’s first Transit Strategic Plan, which should be completed this summer. This plan complements Metro’s long-range plan and identifies ways to improve bus service in Redmond. For more information on options for getting around Redmond and the region, visit <http://redmond.gov/transportation> and select the transit link or visit <http://www.goredmond.com> for commute options.

Q. How successful is the Redmond Loop?

A. The [Redmond Loop](#) consists of only one van at this time and runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays, with trips around the edges of Downtown every 45 minutes. Average daily ridership is 20, with the max capacity being 30 riders a day. This 2-year pilot is jointly funded by King County and Redmond. We’ll jointly monitor performance, ridership and customer feedback and fine-tune service where possible.

Q. Do we have a plan for connecting sidewalks across the city and specifically, Red Wood from 109th?

A. We do plan for sidewalks in our [Redmond’s Transportation Master Plan](#). A project that has been prioritized for funding is on the west side of Red-Wood Road from 109th south across the ravine to the Verona Mondavio development. Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2017 or 2018. There are many miles of missing sidewalks in the City, and new sidewalk projects have to be carefully prioritized to address the most significant gaps. More information on sidewalks can also be found [here](#).

HOUSING

Q. What is the City doing about affordable housing and the challenges with aging in place here?

A. The City focuses on land use regulations, direct funding assistance, and partnerships with local organizations to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing. For example, for all new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings, Redmond requires that a minimum of 10% be affordable to households earning 80% or less than the area median income. We have also just leased

surplus property for the construction of the Gabriel House, which provides 74 homes for low or moderate-income seniors. For more information, please visit <http://www.redmond.gov/Government/Housing/HousingAffordability>.

PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT

Q. Why are there so many hotels being built in Redmond?

A. There is a demand for rooms. Though we don't know the exact occupancy rates, our economic development manager coordinates with current hotels and understands they run close to capacity. We currently have five hotels in Redmond, with a total of 867 rooms. By 2018, another five will be built, bringing the total number of rooms to 1,735. Redmond currently collects a 1% lodging tax on the rental of hotel rooms which funds the Tourism Promotion Program.

Q. Why did the city institute a \$500 deposit to file a land use appeal?

A. The city recently passed a fee resolution that will become effective in December 2017 requiring a deposit of \$500.00 to partially defray the city's cost to hear an appeal, which includes staff time and hearing examiner time. In the event of a successful appeal, the deposit is refunded to the appellant. This decision was based on an analysis done on the amount of time and money spent on appeals by the city.

For general information about development and road projects around the City, please see the interactive Project Viewer map at <http://redmond.gov/ProjectViewer>.

PARKS & RECREATION

Q. What is the City doing to plan for a new pool and community center?

A. We just completed a public engagement effort to solicit feedback on our facilities and the stakeholder group briefed Council on April 11. We continue to coordinate with Eastside agencies on a possible regional aquatics facility. ORSCC will be remodeled for district preschool programs, and the current lease agreement will end effective June 2018 to allow time for renovations. During the short-term transition time, recreation programs at ORSCC will be relocated to Redmond Senior Center, Teen Center, LWSD schools, and potential leased space. For more information visit <http://www.redmondscommunitycenters>.

Q. When will the Downtown Park be completed?

A. The current grass field between Cleveland Street and Redmond Way will become a signature destination park. A contractor was recently selected and construction starts in June 2017. The new iconic park will open in 2018. For more information on the park, visit <http://redmond.gov/DowntownPark>.

HOMELESSNESS

Q. What are we doing about homelessness?

A. The City continues to implement key recommendations of the Homelessness Community Task Force. Police will have a full four-officer roving bicycle team in the summer of 2017. The city has also hired a

full-time homeless outreach specialist. We also continue to increase awareness through the All In All Home Redmond Campaign, understanding that we all need to be involved. Finally, we continue to work closely with our nonprofit partners to connect individuals to resources. More info at <http://www.redmond.gov/homelessness>.

Q. What should I do if an occupied van or RV is parked on private property without permission?

A. Call the police non-emergency number at 425-556-2500 to report the vehicle, ensuring you have the plate number and description. Officers will determine next steps, which may include asking the vehicle to move, coordinating with our homeless outreach specialist, or initiating the criminal trespass process.

MISCELLANEOUS

Q. How do I report potholes?

A. The City welcomes reports from drivers about roadways in need of repair. Providing us with the exact location (for example, outside southbound lane on 148 Avenue NE just north of NE 70 St.) will help speed response time. You can report potholes to Public Works at 425-556-2821 or email Street Operations at pwops@redmond.gov.

Q. What can I do to help out with the Climate Action Plan?

A. There are several steps individuals can take to reduce their carbon footprint. Vehicles produce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Residents can participate in the City's commute trip reduction program called Go Redmond and use alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, or riding transit. Residents can reduce the amount of electricity or gas they consume. Getting a home energy audit through Puget Sound Energy will reveal ways to save energy. Also, reducing trash generation, increasing recycling, and composting food and yard wastes all help the environment and reduce our carbon footprint. Trees also sequester carbon from the air, so planting them is a great idea! To get more involved or learn about upcoming conservation events, check out [Green Redmond Partnership](#).