



**MEMO TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Sarah Stiteler, AICP, Senior Planner

**DATE:** September 4, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Briefing: Public Involvement Report for Redmond’s Housing Action Plan

**I. PURPOSE**

Present the Housing Action Plan Public Involvement Report. No action is requested.

**II. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS**

Carol Helland, Director	425-556-2107
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*Planning and Community Development*

**III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND**

Since March, the City has been working closely with Broadview Planning, the public engagement subcontractor partnering with ECONorthwest, to develop and implement a comprehensive public involvement plan as part of the Housing Action Plan project. Seeking community and stakeholder perspectives will complement quantitative data collected through the Housing Needs Analysis and enrich our understanding of what individuals are experiencing while helping to provide a foundation and basis for future action.

**Public Involvement Plan – Process and Methodology**

The City and consulting team agreed that goals for this involvement effort would be:

- Use a mix of engagement approaches to gather insights;
- Actively seek input from groups and individuals who are historically underrepresented in planning processes;
- Ensure a wide range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, housing developers, non-profits, and school districts; and
- Remain flexible and tailor the engagement process due to social distancing restrictions.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, conducting outreach was quite different than initially planned and did not allow traditional face to face interviews. Despite this challenge, Broadview Planning was still able to successfully lead interviews and focus groups through virtual meetings or by phone. By building on the City’s relationships with

trusted community leaders, we were also able to engage with groups that otherwise may not have participated due to language barriers or for other reasons – e.g. residents of the safe parking program at Overlake Christian Church.

#### Phase I: Stakeholder Interviews (14)

- Individual interviews with 16 key stakeholders
  - Built support and momentum for project
  - Helped to identify new stakeholders and potential outreach partners for focus groups

#### Phase II: Online Focus Groups (6)

- Small, facilitated group conversation with 3-6 people
  - Targeted stakeholders with specific expertise and special interests such as seniors, affordable housing providers, developers, and diverse community groups
  - Encouraged participants to promote the survey to their networks

#### Phase III: Online Community Survey/Questionnaire – 928 Responses

- 10-minute survey to gather community information from renters and homeowners, encouraging those who live or work in Redmond to complete
  - Broad in scope – obtained qualitative data/public perceptions
  - Published on the City’s Let’s Connect page from June 29 through July 20, 2020

#### Phase IV: Final Community Survey – Later in Fall, 2020

- Survey/Check-in
  - Gauge public perception regarding draft housing strategies
  - Fewer questions/more visual – graphically appealing

### **Summary of Findings**

The themes that emerged from this comprehensive effort are:

- Redmond is a highly desirable place to live -
  - Livability contributes to a lack of affordability
- Public Involvement affirms that housing affordability is an issue for many due to:
  - Limited options for housing types;
  - Absence of the “missing middle” housing; and
- Homeownership is preferred over renting but seems like an impossible option to many;
- Businesses have concerns over employee retention without affordable housing;
- New housing types could better reflect Redmond’s rich cultural diversity; and
- People face stigmas about their housing that are real, pervasive, and dehumanizing.

More details are also included in Attachment B: Public Involvement Summary of Findings.

**V. TIME CONSTRAINTS**

The Public Involvement Summary of Findings identifies Housing Action Plan outreach work that has occurred to date. An additional questionnaire is planned for later this fall to further identify public perceptions of preliminary housing strategies. The Housing Action Plan must be adopted by April 1, 2021 to ensure grant compliance.

**VI. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

[A: Redmond Housing Action Plan/Public Involvement Plan](#)

[B: Public Involvement Summary of Findings – Council Presentation](#)

[C: Public Involvement Comprehensive Results](#)