PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN
FOR
REDMOND’S HOUSING ACTION PLAN
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Redmond is working in partnership with the community to create a new Housing Action Plan (HAP). This HAP will update an existing Housing Strategy Plan, provide data and strategies for implementing the Community Strategic Plan/Housing Choices, and provide a foundation for improving the Housing Element of the Vision 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update for Redmond (Vision 2050). A top priority for this work is to assess Redmond’s housing needs in the context of demographic changes and market dynamics and to develop a suite of strategies that respond to the unique opportunities and challenges of the city and its people. The HAP is being funded by a Washington State Department of Commerce E2SHB 1923 Grant.

The HAP process will connect residents, workers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, service providers, and other key stakeholders to uncover qualitative data and stakeholder stories to support HAP data. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) outlines the strategies and approaches for gathering feedback and input on perceptions of housing issues and choices, policy recommendations, and barriers to housing affordability and availability.

Our team aims to reach out to a broad and diverse range of stakeholders, including historically marginalized communities and those typically left out of public processes. Public involvement will be a joint effort between Broadview Planning (BVP), ECONorthwest (ECONW), and City of Redmond staff, and will be conducted in four overlapping phases as follows:

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<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Identify issues, engage key stakeholders, build awareness + project support</td>
<td>Identify issues, vet ideas with subject matter experts</td>
<td>Gather community perspectives on housing issues</td>
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<td>Interview questions, web page, FAQ</td>
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Throughout the process, outreach efforts will also go toward keeping websites, social media, and other materials current, relevant, and resonant. This plan should be considered a living document, evaluated on a regular basis, and improved over time.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT APPROACH

A public involvement plan is an essential tool for sound project management. Its core purpose is to identify strategies and methods to inform stakeholders of program goals, timelines and outcomes. Results of this process will present a snapshot of the current issues, stakeholder perspectives, opportunities, and future outlook for housing.
Outreach Goals
1. Collect qualitative data and community stories to provide insight and a greater understanding of community perceptions and experiences with housing and the types of housing choices community members seek now and in the future.
2. Solicit different stakeholder perspectives and subject matter expertise through a variety of public involvement approaches to inform HAP policy options.
3. Actively seek and engage community groups and populations that are historically underrepresented in traditional planning processes, and ensure input is representative of Redmond’s cultural and demographic diversity.
4. Remain focused, yet flexible, on authentic public involvement during the challenges of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Paired with data analysis, outreach results will lay the foundation for long-term buy-in for future action.

Redmond Demographics
In the last 10 years, Redmond’s population has shown significant growth and change that is only expected to continue. Redmond’s constituents are young, educated, and diverse. According to 2014-18 American Community Survey (ACS) data:

- Current population of 67,678.
- Daytime population of 135,013.
- People under 65 represent 89.5% of the population.
- More than 70% of people have at least a bachelor’s degree.
- An estimated 45.1% of Redmond’s population identify as non-white.
- Over 40% of Redmond’s population identify as being foreign-born.
- Approximately 45.5% of households speak a language other than English at home.

Despite a per capita income of over $60,000, 5.7% of Redmond’s population lives in poverty, and homelessness on the Eastside has increased by approximately 6% since 2017. The average per household income in Redmond is $134,844. Current ACS estimates show 11% of Redmond residents and 8% of families are under 200% of the Federal poverty level, which for a family of four in 2018 was $25,100.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT
Learning from experience and capturing ideas for change are keys to a successful public involvement project. This plan must be treated as a living document and should be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure goals are met, there are adequate staff and budget resources, timelines are accurate, and messaging continues to resonate with stakeholders.

An adaptive management approach for this project includes:
- Open communication and collaboration between Redmond staff and all consultants is imperative to ensuring this plan continues to meet needs and the project is successful.
- Maintaining a flexible approach to decisions and outcomes, including checking in regularly to discuss what’s working and what’s not.
- Working together to identify tactics that are not working and taking actions to correct or change tactics if needed.
- Thinking creatively and experimenting with strategies to find new and underserved communities.
Risks + Opportunities
As with all public involvement projects, success is based on public participation and clear communication with stakeholders, and all communication efforts involve risk. By highlighting and preparing for potential issues at the outset, we can minimize the likelihood, or impact, of threats to the success of this outreach process.

Like the rest of this PIP, this section will evolve as the issues, threats, and risks the program faces will change as it grows and develops. Brainstorming strategies and solutions for being prepared with the internal team will be critical to the program’s success and a cornerstone of adaptive management. We’ve identified several risks, including:

- Conducting outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic will be different from any other time – this historical moment will eliminate our ability to conduct face-to-face outreach, challenges our ability to connect with stakeholders, will present technological challenges, and may restrict meaningful public participation on longer-term issues like housing in the midst of more emergent issues.
- Difficulty reaching underserved communities – non-English speaking, people experiencing homelessness, and low-income populations.
- Successfully communicating the nuances of housing issues with those who don’t understand, or participate in, public processes.
- Managing and responding to unexpected results which may cause further debate.
- Community groups could feel underrepresented or dispute the thoroughness of public involvement in final policy recommendations.
- Including and acknowledging homelessness as part of the HAP, without exclusively focusing on strategies to combat homelessness.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS
In order to gather a wide range of stakeholder perspectives, this project has different approaches for each phase of community outreach. Each approach is iterative, and lessons learned will serve to inform subsequent outreach phases.

PHASE I Stakeholder Interviews + Analysis
Objective: Conduct 10-15 stakeholder interviews.

Key stakeholders are individuals who have interest, expertise, and/or influence in the project. These are the people that will be communicated with in a variety of channels and with a myriad of messages throughout the lifetime of the outreach process. During this phase of outreach, we will identify and interview key stakeholders to inform HAP outcomes, generate awareness of the project, and build support for future outreach opportunities, especially community surveys.

Additional benefits of stakeholder interviews include:

- Connecting with individuals who aren’t comfortable providing input in large group formats.
- Building initial support among partners to help spread the word and build momentum for the project.
- Discovering new stakeholders and potential outreach partners for focus groups.
- Identifying opportunities to tailor future public involvement strategies to meet the needs of diverse groups throughout the project so that they represent an appropriate snapshot of Redmond’s communities.
- Informing elected officials of the project and that they are aware, and supportive, of the project and the public involvement process.
• Developing a deeper understanding of different perceptions of housing issues and discusses a variety of approaches to messaging with stakeholders.
• Gaining a greater understanding of the contextual opportunities, constraints, and sensitivities.
• Presenting the size and scope of the outreach project and sets appropriate expectations.

BVP and ECONW will conduct stakeholder interviews and Redmond staff will assist with contact information, scheduling meetings, and developing an initial stakeholder list (Appendix A) that will be updated as necessary.

**Next Steps:** Finalize stakeholder list, review and approve draft questions and schedule interviews. Creating and launching a Let’s Connect Redmond project page: www.LetsConnectRedmond.com/Housing prior to any outreach.

**PHASE II**

**Online Focus Groups**

*Outreach objective: 4-6 stakeholder focus groups.*

This phase of outreach will focus on assessing housing opportunities and constraints with key stakeholder groups actively involved in Redmond housing issues. Given the technical nature of this phase of outreach, the consultant team will target stakeholders with specific expertise and insight, such as real estate professionals, affordable housing providers, and faith-based organizations. Focus groups will be held through online formats, and participants will discuss options and vet potential policy recommendations.

**Next Steps:** Finalize stakeholder list and create focus groups. This phase will start after stakeholder interviews are complete, or nearly complete, and some initial data is available.

**PHASE III**

**Online Community Survey/Questionnaire**

*Outreach objectives: Receive 1001 survey respondents, with proportional responses representing the diverse income levels, ages, racial/cultural groups, and home ownership status of Redmond residents and workers.*

The purpose of a survey is to gather information on community perceptions of Redmond housing issues and develop baseline qualitative information that will be cross-referenced with actual data. BVP will develop and deliver the survey via Survey Monkey, which will be distributed to residents, businesses, and community organizations throughout the city. The first will be broader in scope and gather a range of qualitative data about public perceptions about housing issues in Redmond. The second will have a smaller number of questions and serve as a final check in to gauge opinions on the HAP strategies and outcomes. Responses will be anonymous.

This survey needs to reach many diverse stakeholder groups to ensure an accurate snapshot of the city’s housing needs. Therefore, effort must be taken to not only promote the survey but encourage people to share and forward to other community members. BVP will draft a promotional email/blog post for city staff to post directly to the project website, listserv, and any relevant social media outlets. The post will also be sent to key stakeholders and organizations (including other city department contacts) to promote on their respective social media sites, blog posts, and listservs. One option is for a promo be posted on Redmond’s social media sites at least two days prior to the official survey being released in order to create familiarity, build awareness, and generate momentum.

BVP and Redmond staff will contact stakeholders identified in the stakeholder list to promote the survey and encourage participation and promotion by their organizations. Redmond staff will also print hardcopies of the survey that will be distributed to anybody without computer access.
Before each survey opens, and while it’s open, Redmond staff will:

- Promote the release date of the survey on all social media sites (Next Door, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- Distribute link to community partners and listservs (Go Redmond, Parks & Rec, etc.), city newsletters, and press release.
- Add a page to website outlining purpose and link to survey.
- Promote on homepage and any housing webpages.
- Engage the internal communications department to promote it to all staff (with encouragement to share).
- Add a link and one-line message to their outgoing email signatures.

As the survey will launch amidst some level of social isolation protocols, additional distribution methods to consider, if possible, include:

- Hardcopy mailings
- Flyers/signs with QR codes
- Newspaper ads
- Flyers at events, including partner organizations.

**Next Steps:** Draft, review, and approve survey questions. The first survey should launch after focus groups have been completed.

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**PHASE IV**

**Final Community Survey**

**Outreach objective:** Receive 750 responses.

The second community will have fewer questions, be more visual in nature, and serve as a final check in to gauge public opinion on the HAP draft strategies. More details will be added after the results of outreach phases I-III and data analysis.

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**ONGOING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLS**

**Social Media**

Social media are one of the most important communication channels to accompany public outreach strategies. When used effectively it allows for information and messages to spread quickly across multiple communities. Through social media, we can create connections with diverse communities, establish a greater online presence, and post regular updates for project information and meeting locations.

Content will be posted to Redmond’s social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Next Door) at the discretion of city staff. Redmond staff will moderate both accounts and respond to any messages and will provide documentation of any comments/messages. Councils and Commissions may be asked to serve as “communications ambassadors” and use their constituencies and community relationships to promote the project, and more specifically the community surveys.
Ethnic or Culturally Specific Media
Given the diversity of Redmond’s population, some audiences may be best reached through newspapers, radio, and TV that target specific cultural communities and in priority languages. In order to avoid outreach fatigue and perceptions of tokenization, the consultant team will work with Alaric Bien (Redmond staff) to identify appropriate stakeholders to interview and participate in focus groups.

Communication Materials
Each outreach phase will include materials to promote the project, community meetings, and research findings. Materials will use clear, consistent, succinct messaging, graphics where possible, and use culturally relevant images that reflect the diversity of Redmond’s community. With the assistance of Redmond staff, BVP will develop communication materials, including:

- Agendas for focus group meetings
- Project fact sheet
- PowerPoint presentations for educating and communicating results of the outreach process.
- Written content for website updates, press releases, blog articles and other forms of written communication.
- Materials translated into priority languages.

Redmond will be responsible for printing all communication materials including maps, agendas, boards, fact sheets, and any payment for online advertising. Redmond staff will decide on priority languages for translating project materials.

COMMUNICATION + COORDINATION PROTOCOLS

Internal coordination
- There will be weekly check-ins with PI Steering Team (see Roles + Responsibilities table, below) during the active engagement process to discuss the themes, what’s working, and challenges.
- During the survey consultant team will track the response rate and modify outreach accordingly.
- Use the term “public involvement” rather than outreach or engagement.
- PI Steering Team will focus on the process of refining approach based on early results to inform and guide future efforts.

Communicating with the public
- Communication and information will be housed on the project’s website: www.LetsConnectRedmond.com/Housing.
  - Potential options: newsfeed, submit photos, Q&A, graphics, videos, links, etc.
  - Any ideas for using a mapping tool?
- Project email address: housing@redmond.gov, which will be forwarded and monitored by Brooke.
- We will collect and maintain a project listserv through LetsConnect.
- Redmond staff will compile and track any correspondence that comes in through the website/email.

Review and approval of materials
- PI Steering Team will provide an initial review of any outreach materials.
- Jill will have final review for communication/messaging.
- Jill and her team will post/distribute electronically after final review and approval.
MESSAGING

Coordinated messaging is critical to ensuring the audience understands the reason for their participation and how this will benefit their communities. Messages should have the ability to be changed when required in order to serve different audiences and scenarios. At the outset of their process the project team identified the following key messages:

Compliance

- The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires local housing plans to identify a range of different housing types that match community needs and provide housing options for people of all income levels. (RCW 36.70A.070)
- In order to address affordable housing needs, Redmond must adopt countywide planning policies for housing that are both consistent with the GMA and coordinated with other King County cities.
- Redmond, and other cities in King County, are required to share the responsibility for a rational and equitable distribution of affordable housing in King County. Any new housing should provide a mix of affordability that reflects King County’s range of household incomes.

Housing Action Plan

- Redmond was awarded a grant from the state Department of Commerce to develop a Housing Action Plan.
- The grant encourages all cities planning under the GMA to adopt actions to increase and diversify housing options in Redmond.
- Grant funding allows the City to work with expert consultants to develop an in-depth analysis of existing and projected housing demands, conduct a robust public involvement process, and develop actionable strategies to meet current and future housing needs.
Need

- Increased demand for housing, and the resulting higher home prices and rents, has limited the opportunity for first-time homeowners, middle income, and people with fixed incomes to live in Redmond.
- Affordability is defined by the percentage of income that you are paying toward housing and utilities. Households that are paying more than 30% of their income utilities are considered cost burdened. In Redmond, 15% of households are cost burdened.
- Households paying more than 50% of their income are considered severely cost burdened and 12% of households in Redmond are severely cost-burdened.
- Housing costs in East King County and Redmond are significantly higher than in other parts of the County - our median home prices list at $818,600 and average rent at $2,095. In addition, vacancy rates in Redmond are lower than 5%, indicating limited availability of rental units.

City Values

- “Providing for affordable housing in Redmond, with a mix of multi-family and single-family options,” is a priority for the City and adopted as part of our Community Strategic Plan.
- The City’s planning policies encourage increasing the supply and diversity of housing, in order to provide opportunities for people to live and invest in the community where they work instead of spending hours commuting to and from home.
- The City’s planning policies also focus density in urban centers and retain neighborhood character.

DRAFT OVERALL PROJECT TIMELINE

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<td>FEB</td>
<td>MAR</td>
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<td>TASK 1 : Housing Needs</td>
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<td>TASK 2 : Public Involvement</td>
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<td>TASK 3 : Action Plan</td>
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<td>TASK 4a : Draft Review</td>
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<td>TASK 4b : Council Adoption</td>
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<td>TASK 4c : Implementation Plan</td>
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- Meetings
- Draft Deliverable
- Final Deliverable
Appendix A - Stakeholder List

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus Group: Developers
- Brad Machat, Lennar Development
- Leo Suver, Steve Burnstead Construction
- Steve Yoon, Mill Creek Residential
- Robert Pantley, Natural and Built Environments LLC
- Angela Rozmyn, Natural and Built Environments LLC
- Gina Clark, Master Builders Association
- Linda Pruitt, The Cottage Company

Focus Group: Non-Profit Housing
- Vilette Nolan, Imagine Housing
- Malory Gustave, Hopelink
- Patrick Tippy, Habitat for Humanity
- Jerry Kroon, Eastside Legal Assistance Program

Focus Group: Seniors Residents
- LouAnn Ballew
- Linda Clark
- Gary Ellis
- Mary Ellis
- Eileen Englehart

Focus Group: People Experiencing Homelessness
- Michael
- Janet
- Debbie

Focus Group: Spanish Speaking
- Angie Merchor
- Mariana Diaz

Focus Group: India Association of Western Washington
- Tulika Dugar
- Lalita Uppala
- Nanda Tewari
- Kunjan Kapoor
- Ranju Mandyam
- Rajee Melkote