

REDMOND 2050

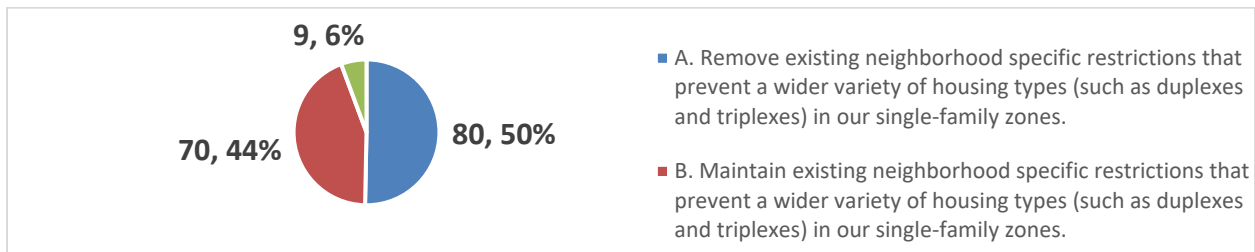
Housing Policy Options & Alternatives

Summer 2021 Feedback

Summary below includes feedback received through Sunday, September 12, 2021, from:

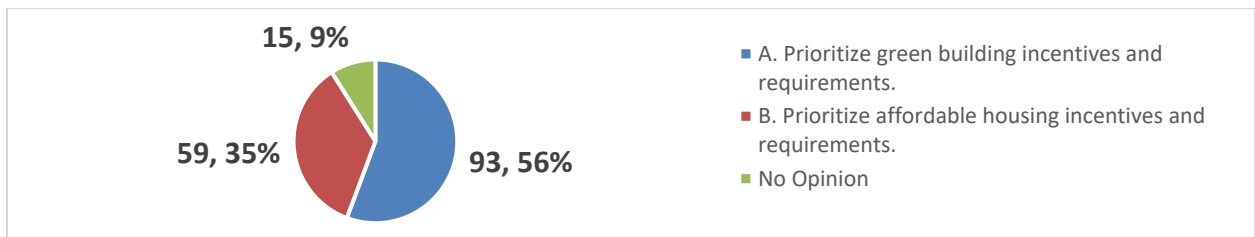
- Redmond 2050 Let's Connect questionnaire
- Community Workshop participants
- Redmond 2050 CAC
- Senior Men's Group
- Planning Commission
- Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
- RYPAC

Thinking about the future of housing in Redmond, which option do you prefer to increase housing choices?



In a follow-up question that explained the trade-off based on their choice, all but 1 respondent maintained their original choice.

Thinking about the future of housing in Redmond, affordability and green building are both high priorities. We expect to address both through updated housing policies and regulations. However, we want to know: which is a higher priority for you?



In a follow-up question that explained the trade-off based on their choice, all but 3 respondents maintained their original choice.

8/25/21 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

[WATCH RECORDING](#)

Questions:

- Do HOA restrictions/covenants apply to this issue?
 - a. *Staff answer: no, so no changes in HOA developments*
- Both are important - it is a hard choice.
- Will there be incentives for retrofitting existing housing stock to be more green in addition to new buildings?
- Consider that affordability is a "green" option. Density reduces emissions, increases green spaces.
- Consider lifetime cost premium (or reduction) of "green" building - both up-front and maintenance.
- How much opportunity is there for City to provide outside leverage/assistance for developers to provide green? (grants etc., so cost is not fully on developers)
- Voted for Green priority; energy incentives to reduce energy bills, adds to overall affordability, not just rent/mortgage.
- I like the focus on cost/benefit. May be more cost upfront, but is there the ability to see the long-term cost benefit instead of the either/or? Right now, green building is cost restrictive and widens the gap of affordability.
- Thanks for exploring!

Discussion:

- Use Design Review Board (DRB) to enhance green building, aesthetics
- Electric-only houses (ranges, heating, water etc.) vs natural gas?
- Transportation system need to be integrated into affordability/"green-ability" conversation
- Affordable housing definition - 80% of "area median income" (AMI) is still high in high-income Redmond, consider looking at 30-40% AMI
- Consider tension between increasing tree canopy and achieving ten-minute walkshed/cities
- Does the 2050 plan address adding electric car charging at existing apartment buildings?
- Is there any discussion to annex more land into Redmond to specifically build affordable housing? There are some large parcels along the east boundary of the city that seem like an obvious site for development. They are in King County and zoned rural.
- Knowing that street parking reduces visibility of bikes and pedestrians, how do cities resolve issues with parking when removing existing neighborhood restrictions, given the potential for duplexes, townhouses in neighborhoods. In other words, where will everyone park?

Planning Commission

- Green Building and Affordability
 - Both are City priorities.
 - Interested in return on investment and tradeoffs of green building technologies and the ultimate housing affordability
 - Interested in smaller housing sizes; accomplishes affordability and sustainability.
 - Recognize that NYC is a green city precisely because of the density.
 - Policy direction is to ensure the baseline green building codes are as progressive as they can be within reason for the existing and desired building types and uses.
 - Explore ways to “greenify” retail and commercial.
- Missing Middle Neighborhood Restrictions
 - Concerns about cars & parking related to missing middle.
 - Would smaller green missing middle buildings be built back-to-back? Would transit serve these areas? Need to minimize car use.
 - What have other communities looked like after allowing more missing middle building typologies?
 - Older neighborhoods have outdated restrictions.
 - Recognize that intensifying density might upset HOAs.
 - Need to balance missing middle typologies with City goal of 40% urban canopy cover.
 - Discussion about where citywide housing policy ends and neighborhood planning begins.
 - Explore methods to plan for density and share those approaches out.
 - Missing middle is important to fulfill Equity and Inclusion goals and themes.
 - In outreach, need to emphasize difference between attached dwelling unit types (like duplexes) and accessory dwelling units.
 - Review Master Builders Toolkit
 - Fee simple townhomes
 - Importance of equity and inclusion related to TOD and harmonizing density.
 - Ask school districts what they think is best to help absorb population growth.

Redmond 2050 Community Advisory Committee

- Neighborhood Restrictions on Attached Dwelling Units (“middle housing”)
- Would there be legal challenges related to density or zoning changes?
 - Staff response: all options under consideration are within accepted bounds
- R-4 to R-8 are already “more dense” - options 1 (eliminate neighborhood restrictions) or 2 (maintain neighborhood restrictions) probably would not change much; would expect lawsuits if we expanded to R-1
- Missing middle belongs in neighborhoods; mid-rise belongs Downtown. Do we have any data from Minneapolis, etc., on encouraging missing middle?

- Staff response: Unsure of Minneapolis. However, when Portland opened-up ADU's, it was modest uptick in ADU production. Gradually increased as more policy, program, and regulatory changes were implemented.
- If we change neighborhood regulations, would we need to go through entire neighborhood planning process again?
- Staff response: we would only amend neighborhood plans/regulations to the extent necessary to eliminate conflict with citywide housing policy
- How do these policy options tie in with growth models?
 - Staff response: the growth model scenarios consider that some of the housing unit predictions will come from an increase in building typology allowances in the neighborhoods.
- Preference for option 1; likely would happen slowly over time. Look at Capitol Hill - lots of mixing that look fine together. Will the other options create any significant amount of housing units?
- Each neighborhood plan was specific to its neighborhood, taking into account local preferences, geography. Perhaps option 2 would be a good compromise - keeps desires of neighborhood but works toward achieving housing goals. Soft preference for option 2 because R4-R8 zones are already somewhat dense
- What about parking restrictions for multiplex DU's? Not much parking in neighborhoods now. How would parking be addressed?

Topic: Energy Efficiency and Sustainability or Affordability

- Would like additional data to determine where is the threshold beyond which energy efficiency/sustainability improvements are not worth the additional cost?
- Interested to know the exact trade-off between energy efficiency and affordability.
 - Staff response: Challenging to get a single answer because there are so many different building practices and technologies. In addition, building practices and technologies are constantly changing.
- Affordability is a higher priority, so he leans toward option 2 (prioritize affordability)
- People make choices based on cost. Sometimes the payback period for a green benefit is a long time. It's a potential criterion to consider
- Option 1 (prioritize energy efficiency/sustainability) - strong requirements, especially for new mixed-use buildings. Energy efficiency are things that people don't see that have big impact over time. We need to get developers thinking in terms of energy efficiency and then make budget decisions about things that are easy to replace
- Requirements should be universal; there are often options that are green that people don't even think about. Lead people down the right path.
- Apartments are built as cheap as possible, especially heating because developers don't pay the energy bills. For middle housing, green requirements keep the price point moving up, harming affordability. Leans toward encouragement and incentives to try to get both green and affordability.

- Support for more attached dwelling housing options across neighborhoods by removing neighborhood-specific restrictions.
 - Curiosity around what is required by the city/county/state compared to what HOAs require.
 - One participant liked HOA restrictions because it controlled how the aesthetics look.
 - One participant was interested in developing a Mother-In-Law unit (aka accessory dwelling unit).
- Participants interested in seeing condos developed in Redmond.
 - Participants expressed admiration for the gorgeous downtown condos in Kirkland and condensed housing developments in Totem Lake and Woodinville.
- Interest in expanding opportunities around light rail. Noted that other communities like Kirkland don't have local Sound Transit stations.

Human Services Commission

- Want Planning staff to engage with diverse communities, in ways that the communities want to be engaged.
 - Want City to provide financial compensation for stakeholders and organizations that spend time helping the City create a better comprehensive plan.
 - Asking these communities to help without compensation is a direct repudiation of the City's stated goals and themes.
- Recognize that Redmond is changing rapidly and that engagement strategies and participatory methods to update in harmony with these changes.
- Would like Planning staff to explore cultural preferences for various housing types.
 - Recognize that classic detached single-family homes are largely western.
 - Integrate different housing typology's and layouts, as available.
 - Emphasis on housing multiple generations under one roof.
- Appreciated Planning staff updates to the thematic lenses so that the lenses are more proactive, more direct, and more inclusive.

Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee

- How are high-density buildings and mass transit coordinated with housing?
- Is this an either-or? I think some areas of Redmond should be left intact while in other we should have less restrictions.
- Would like Planning staff to come back and provide additional information on sustainability and affordable housing

Redmond Youth Partnership Advisory Committee

Affordable housing and sustainability discussion

- Prioritize Affordable Housing:

- As rents get more expensive it's harder for new people to be homeowners and have access to good school districts, don't want to worsen economic problems
- Affordability a big issue and concern, like the work on turning hotel into housing especially during COVID when need extra help.
- Prioritize Green Building
 - Carbon footprint increasingly incompatible with lifestyle, if we can slow the rise of temperatures that would be important. But how do we balance the needs of future?
 - With all the new developments new trees are being cut down, we need to think 20 years in the future and so still sustainable