

Future Vision for Redmond: Community Character and Historic Preservation

Redmond has maintained its distinctive character.

The quality design of new development is a reflection of the value Redmond's community members place on the community's appearance. The design also reflects the diversity of the community. Care has been taken to create distinctive streets and pathways and to enhance the comfort, safety and usability of public places. Public view corridors and entryways have been preserved and enhanced. The city's historic roots are still apparent through preservation of special sites, structures and buildings. Interpretive signage has also been used to enhance the city's sense of its heritage.

Community gathering places are found throughout the city.

Spaces for parks have been acquired and improved by the City, and plazas have been incorporated into new developments. Both public and private investment into placemaking creates and maintains spaces where informal social gatherings and community building occur. The City and private partners have continued to sponsor a wide variety of community events in an array of public places. Community members also enjoy community gardens, parks and plazas, and walkable and bikeable neighborhoods which support healthy lifestyles and a sustainable future.

Care has been given to preserve elements of the natural environment.

Landscaping regulations have ensured preservation of special natural areas and significant trees that define the character of the city. New landscaping has, when appropriate, incorporated native plants and low-

impact development techniques. Areas of open space and forested groves near Town Center, along Redmond Way, and in other locations have been preserved where possible through public/private collaboration. Through creative design, such as in combination with neighborhood entryways, public and private projects have incorporated natural features and enhanced natural systems. Redmond continues to promote the value of the natural environment by inventorying and monitoring the elements that define the city's green character, including forested parks and open space.

Organization of This Element

Introduction

A. Community Character and Design

- People and Public Places
- Events and Community Building
- View Corridors, Entrances, and Landmarks
- Buildings and Site Design
- Streets and Pathways

B. Historic Resources

- Preservation
- Survey and Evaluation
- Landmark Nomination
- Implementation Measures
- Regional and Community Involvement

Introduction

The City of Redmond's setting includes a series of hills and valleys carved by ancient glaciers. The southern portions of the city adjoin or overlook the shore of Lake Sammamish. The waters of Bear Creek flow south and join the Sammamish River to flow north across a major valley. Redmond's unwritten history extends back many centuries to when native cultures used the natural waterways for food and transportation and had settlements, both permanent and temporary, along the banks. Those same transportation corridors led others to the Redmond area.

Redmond's recorded history began in the 1870s when the city started as a small commercial center for logging and remained a small farm community for several decades. The city began to grow in the 1970s and has developed into a major business and population center. The 1980s and 1990s included increased residential development along with significant growth in the city's business sector, helping to establish Redmond as a center for intellectual and technological innovation. Thereafter, emerged the City's two urban centers: Downtown and Overlake. Today, Redmond is planning for additional growth in the future that will continue to shape the character of the city. As growth occurs, there are characteristics that residents would like to retain, such as Redmond's green character; a safe, friendly and sustainable community; and some physical remnants of the past as reminders of its early history.

The Community Character and Historic Preservation Element provides a design framework for new development and construction and addresses natural features and historic character preservation. The element is meant to address the goals of retaining Redmond's distinct character and creating gathering places and cultural opportunities. It addresses Redmond's desire to maintain a successful business climate and to foster innovative thinking. It addresses the vision of respect for the natural environment. It is also intended to help carry out the vision of keeping Redmond a safe, friendly and attractive city in the future.

This element is complementary to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Community character is addressed broadly in the Vision, Goals and Framework

Policies Element. Specific aspects of community character are addressed in other elements. For example, Redmond's economic character is addressed in the Economic Vitality Element and locations for various uses under the Land Use Element. This element focuses more closely on design goals and the historic character of the city.

A. Community Character and Design

People and Public Places

Community cohesiveness develops in many ways. It can come from a shared vision for the community. It can be developed through the use of public places for interaction.

Successful public places have the following qualities: accessibility, comfort or image, activity, a welcoming feeling and sociability. Accessibility means having good links from surrounding areas, by foot, bike, transit or other means. It also means visual accessibility. The comfort and image come from several characteristics, including a perception of safety, cleanliness and availability of seating, both formal and informal. Identifying features, such as a fountain, artwork or a unique building, may also enhance image. Activity may be a natural outcome from a collection of uses or may be programmed through music presentations or performing arts. People typically feel welcome at public places that provide basic features, such as lighting, shelter and play areas for children, along with spaces for meetings or other gatherings. Sociability is when a space becomes a place for people to go or to meet, usually because it has elements of the first four qualities.

The City can facilitate the success of public places by promoting activities that enliven a space and by ensuring well-designed spaces.

CC-1 Maintain Redmond's vision for its size and character while balancing its regional role in meeting transportation needs, caring for the environment, and meeting the demands for growth.

CC-2 Recognize and encourage Redmond as a center for intellectual and technological innovation.

CC-3 Ensure that the Downtown is a place that feels comfortable for pedestrians and respects views of tree lines and adjacent hillsides through control of such characteristics as height, scale and intensity.

CC-4 Reflect Redmond’s heritage as a farming community by retaining and encouraging knowledge of and interest in sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices through uses and activities, such as:

- Community and corporate gardens;
- Farmers markets;
- Education about sustainable choices, such as organic gardening methods and permaculture;
- Allowing agricultural-related facilities such as small winery operations in low-density zones; and
- Supporting educational and recreational programs related to gardening.

CC-5 Continue to provide community gathering places in recreation facilities and park sites throughout the city and encourage development of new community gathering places, including in the Downtown and Overlake neighborhoods.

CC-6 Preserve and develop informal community gathering places, such as the fountains at Town Center, local coffee shops, and spaces within parks. This can include techniques, such as:

- Requiring seating opportunities with multi-seasonal amenities, such as cover

from the elements and heating during periods of cooler temperatures;

- Encouraging art or water features;
- Providing visual access to sites;
- Providing for active uses in the space; and
- Promoting partnerships and implementing incentives where appropriate to create public places, such as plazas in combination with outdoor cafes.

CC-7 Ensure that public places are designed and managed to encourage high levels of activity by including:

- Multiple entrances,
- Flexible spaces,
- Focal points that create activity throughout the space,
- A signature attraction that provides a compelling identity,
- Multi-seasonal attractions, and
- Active management of space and activities.

CC-8 Design and build Redmond’s public buildings to enhance their function as community gathering places.

CC-9 Incorporate and provide opportunities for art in and around public buildings and facilities. Encourage additional opportunities throughout the city for art as design elements or features of new development, as well as placement of significant art.

Events and Community Building

Community cohesiveness can also be nurtured by community events. Community events provide an opportunity to help foster people’s interest in getting to know their neighbors and form friendships and collaborative networks. These events can also



Derby Days Criterium



Redmond Lights festival

enhance awareness of diversity, cultural traditions, and Redmond's heritage throughout the community. By providing community events, such as Derby Days and Redmond Lights, as well as a wide variety of other public activities, the City serves as a conduit, supporting these interactions and possible community building outcomes that can support a myriad of other objectives from disaster preparedness to economic vitality.

CC-10 Provide links to public places to encourage their use through such means as:

- Providing safe and convenient pedestrian walkways,
- Providing bikeways,
- Developing nearby transit stops, and
- Designing for visual access to and from the site.

CC-11 Encourage and support a wide variety of community festivals or events, such as Derby Days and Redmond Lights, reflecting the diversity, heritage and cultural traditions of the Redmond community.

CC-12 Facilitate the development of a diverse set of recreational and cultural programs that celebrate Redmond's heritage and cultural diversity, such as:

- Visual, literary and performing arts;
- A historical society; and
- An active parks and recreation program.

View Corridors, Entrances and Landmarks

People orient themselves by remembering certain features that include unique public views, defined entries and landmarks. These features also can set apart one community from another and are part of what defines the unique character of a place. Preserving key features and creating new ones can help define Redmond and its neighborhoods.

CC-13 Identify and establish distinctive entryways into the city, support neighborhood efforts to identify and maintain unique neighborhood entryways, and emphasize these locations with design elements, such as landscaping, art or monuments.

CC-14 Identify public view corridors unique to Redmond, such as those of Mount Rainier, Mount Baker, the Sammamish Valley, Lake Sammamish, the Sammamish River, the Cascade Mountains; and, when feasible, design streets, trails, parks and structures to preserve and enhance those view corridors through such means as:

- Site and landscape planning and design to preserve views,
- Removal of invasive plants,
- Properly pruning trees and shrubs while including them as a part of the vista,
- Framing views with structural elements, and
- Aligning paths to create focal points.

CC-15 Encourage schools, religious facilities, libraries and other public or semipublic buildings to locate and design unique facilities to serve as community landmarks and to foster a sense of place.

CC-16 Prohibit billboards and other large signs and use design review for new signage to protect views of significant land forms and community features, avoid visual clutter, and ensure citywide design standards are met.

receive a higher level of scrutiny than single-family homes. Many projects are evaluated by a design review board. Some projects with nominal impacts are reviewed at an administrative level using the adopted design standards.

CC-17 Maintain a system of design review that applies more intense levels of review where the scope of the project has greater potential impacts to the community. Implement this system through a formal design review board process in conjunction with the use of administrative review.

CC-18 Use design standards and design review to accomplish the following:

- Ensure the elements of design, proportion, rhythm and massing are correct for proposed structures and the site;
- Retain and create places and structures in the city that have unique features;
- Ensure that building scale and orientation are appropriate to the site;
- Encourage the use of high-quality and durable materials, as well as innovative building techniques and designs;
- Promote environmentally friendly design and building techniques such as LEED for the construction or rehabilitation of structures;
- Minimize negative impacts, such as glare or unsightly views of parking;
- Incorporate historic features whenever possible;
- Maintain integrity of zones such as Old Town with unique or historic qualities; and
- Ensure that the design fits with the context of the site, reflecting the historic and natural features and character.

CC-19 Design and build Redmond's public buildings in a superior way and with high-quality

Buildings and Site Design

There is a high expectation for quality design in Redmond, and a set of design standards provides local guidance. The commercial or multifamily projects

materials to serve as innovative and sustainable models to the community.

CC-20 Encourage high-quality and attractive design that promotes variety between different developments and different areas in Redmond to maintain and create a sense of place.

The National Crime Prevention Institute endorses a set of guidelines called Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). These guidelines illustrate how design can affect the safety of a site or building. Clearly distinguishing between public and private spaces makes it easier to identify intruders. The ability to easily observe activities helps parents and caregivers keep sight of children and helps neighbors or workers identify activities that should not be occurring. Areas with little or no use are typically not cared for and can offer areas for unwanted activities.

CC-21 Ensure safe environments by requiring use of building and site design techniques consistent with CPTED guidelines to:

- Distinguish between publicly accessible open space and private open space;
- Provide vandal-resistant construction;
- Provide opportunities for residents and workers to view spaces and observe activities nearby; and
- Reduce or eliminate “unclaimed” areas, such as unmaintained easements between fence lines and street or trail right-of-way.

Members of the Redmond community have expressed that stewardship of the natural environment is important to them. Although Redmond continues to urbanize, many features of the natural environment can be preserved, enhanced and restored. Design of landscaping and the built environment can reduce the impacts to natural systems. At the same time, well-thought-out landscape design can enhance a site and create unique character.

CC-22 Foster care for the natural environment and maintain the green character of the city, while allowing for urbanization through techniques such as:

- Encouraging design that minimizes impact on natural systems;
- Using innovations in public projects that improve natural systems;
- Preserving key areas of open space; and
- Requiring the installation and maintenance of street vegetation as defined by the citywide street tree program.

CC-23 Encourage landscaping that:

- Creates character and a sense of place,
- Retains and enhances existing green character,
- Preserves and utilizes native trees and plants,
- Enhances water and air quality,
- Minimizes water consumption,
- Provides aesthetic value,
- Creates spaces for recreation,
- Unifies site design,
- Softens or disguises less aesthetically pleasing features of a site, and
- Provides buffers for transitions between uses or helps protect natural features.

Streets and Pathways

Streets can be more than just a means of getting from one point to another. They can define how the city is viewed as one passes through it and create a sense of unique character. Elements of street design, such as width, provisions for transit or bikes, pavement treatments, and street-side vegetation, affect the quality of a traveler’s trip and the sense of place. Those design elements also can affect the behavior of motorists, such as their speed, their decisions to yield or take the right-of-way, and the degree of attention that is paid to pedestrians, bikes and other vehicles.

Likewise, path design affects usage by bikers, walkers or equestrians. Both streets and paths are a means to link activities and uses, and the way they are designed can affect the functionality of various places.

CC- 24 Design and create trails, sidewalks, bikeways and paths to increase connectivity for people by providing safe, direct or convenient links between the following:

- Residential neighborhoods,
- Schools,
- Recreation facilities and parks,
- Employment centers,
- Shopping and service destinations, and
- Community gardens.

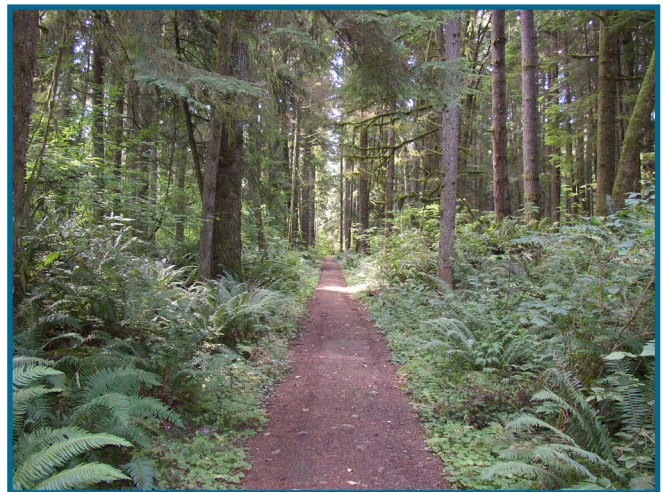
CC-25 Preserve trailheads and equestrian connections, including those between Bridle Trails State Park in Kirkland, the Sammamish River equestrian trail, Farrel-McWhirter Park, Bridle Crest Trail, Redmond Watershed Preserve, Puget Power Trail and the Tolt Pipeline Trail, and the rural areas adjacent to the city to the north and east, such as King County’s Kathryn Taylor Equestrian Park.

CC-26 Identify and create destination retail streets within Downtown and Overlake on Cleveland Street and I52nd Avenue NE, respectively, for special treatments, such as:

- Specially designed landscape;
- Unique crosswalk treatments and frequent crosswalks;
- Character-defining materials and accessories, such as seating and wayfinding elements;
- Pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Art elements throughout the project;



Downtown linkage



Watershed trail



Hanging baskets brighten the downtown streets in summer

- Sidewalk design that allows and encourages activities such as outdoor café service; and
- Allowing access by street vendors.

CC-27 Ensure that city street design, fire safety and street construction standards encourage active urban streets, public spaces and walkways, especially in the Downtown and Overlake.

B. Historic Resources

Historic resources offer a way to connect with the city's past and provide a sense of continuity and permanence. Those resources represent development patterns and places associated with Redmond's notable persons and community events. The historic fabric together with unique qualities of new development patterns define the character of a city. It is essential to preserve some historic resources to maintain the character of Redmond and to continue to honor its past. Adaptive reuse of historic structures also helps support the City's sustainability principles by reducing the need to obtain additional resources for new building construction.

The Redmond community prides itself in providing a variety of cultural and historic opportunities. Historical organizations continue to demonstrate success in connecting with the community at regularly scheduled meetings and special events. Public projects help foster this connection and build community awareness by incorporating elements of Redmond's history in design features and other opportunities, such as historic street signs in the Downtown and pioneer programs at Farrel-McWhirter Farm Park.

Preservation

CC-28 Encourage preservation, restoration, and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic properties to serve as tangible reminders of the area's history and cultural roots. Continue to designate and protect Historic Landmarks.

CC-29 Coordinate the development of parks and trails and the acquisition of open space with the preservation, restoration and use of historic properties.

CC-30 Acquire historic properties when feasible. Consider cost sharing for acquisition, lease or maintenance with other public or private agencies or governments.

CC-31 Incorporate features, such as interpretive signage, historic street names and other elements reflecting original historic designs into park projects, transportation projects and buildings on historic sites, when feasible, as a means of commemorating past events, persons of note and city history.

Survey and Evaluation

Identification of historic properties and archaeological sites is an essential step towards preservation. This includes evaluation of the historic and cultural significance of a property and the extent to which it has maintained its integrity. Property evaluation forms, deed documents, news articles and other information may all be used to evaluate a property. Knowing the history and significance of properties can foster stewardship by owners and the public.

CC-32 Maintain an ongoing process of identification, documentation, and evaluation of historic properties. After an initial survey is completed, conduct a follow-up survey approximately once every 10 years.

CC-33 Maintain and update the inventory as new information arises to guide planning and decision making, as well as to provide reference and research material for use by the community.

Landmark Nomination

A Historic Landmark designation is the most common method to identify which historic and cultural resources to protect. Designation of a property can occur at four levels: local, county, state or national. The City of Redmond, King County, the State of Washington and the United States through the United States National Park Service (Secretary of the Interior) all maintain registers of Historic Landmarks. In 2000 the Redmond City Council designated 16 landmarks for protection called Key Historic Landmarks. Of these, 12 sites were designated as Redmond Regional Landmarks during 2010 and 2011, including the Redmond Pioneer Cemetery, one of two designated cemeteries in the county. Three sites were designated as Redmond Regional Community Landmarks and one maintained as a Historic Landmark on the Redmond Heritage Resource Register. In addition, with the owner's consent, other sites can be designated as Historic Landmarks by the City of Redmond.

- CC-34 Maintain standardized nomination, designation, and protection rules and procedures consistent with the United States National Park Services (Secretary of the Interior).**
- CC-35 Encourage nomination of historic resources that appear to meet Landmark criteria by individuals, community groups and public officials.**
- CC-36 Require consent of the owner before proceeding with Redmond's Landmark process. Notify and involve the property owner when nominating historic properties for Landmark status.**
- CC-37 Maintain a register of Landmark properties and make the register accessible to developers, the public and appropriate government offices.**

Implementation Measures

Historic resources reflect a use of certain materials, an architectural style, or an attention to detail. Improper alterations or additions can eliminate the very reason that the structure gave character to the area. Incentives actively encourage both preservation of existing structures and restoration of structures to more closely resemble the original style and setting.

- CC-38 Develop and provide incentives, such as tax abatement programs, low-interest loan funds, technical assistance, and transfers of development rights, to encourage the preservation of Landmark properties.**
 - CC-39 Emphasize the preservation of historic properties through methods such as adaptive reuse for promoting economic development.**
 - CC-40 Encourage restoration and maintenance of historic properties through code flexibility, fee reductions, and other regulatory and financial incentives.**
- Without special code provisions for historic or cultural sites, adaptive reuse (placing new uses in a building once intended for another use) or even modification of a building to make it more functional or economically competitive usually triggers a requirement to bring the structure up to existing codes. The economics of bringing older construction types up to modern ones can be prohibitive to the point that the owners often choose not to make alterations. The resulting effect may be that owners allow the building to deteriorate because of its inability to draw sufficient income to cover adequate maintenance. Alternatively, the property owner may be inclined to tear down and replace the structure.
- CC-41 Waive the application of or allow modifications to current development requirements, building and construction code, and fire code to encourage the preservation and appropriate**

rehabilitation of Landmark properties.

There may be instances where alteration or demolition of a Historic Landmark is reasonable or necessary. In these cases it is valuable for later researchers to have records of the modifications or past use. New land uses and development can have adverse effects on historic resources. Sensitive design of new development can allow new growth, while retaining community character.

- CC-42 Protect designated Historic Landmarks from demolition or inappropriate modification.**
- CC-43 Protect significant archaeological resources from the adverse impacts of development.**
- CC-44 Mitigate adverse impacts to the following by methods such as documentation of the original site or structure, interpretive signage, or other appropriate techniques:**
 - Landmark or archaeological sites; and
 - Properties proposed to be demolished or significantly altered that are eligible for landmark designation, or are of sufficient age and meet a portion of the other criteria for landmark designation.
- CC-45 Ensure the compatibility of development adjacent to Landmark properties through measures such as design standards.**

Regional and Community Involvement

Survey and evaluation work is time intensive. It is not efficient to duplicate such efforts, and opportunities such as grants to foster preservation should continue to be explored. There are financial or other limits to maintaining or contracting personnel with technical knowledge of preservation. It is important to maintain some resources to preserve the historic character of Redmond and, through cooperation, knowledge can be preserved and shared.

Historic preservation efforts work best when the owners of historic properties and the public are involved because they become a partner in such plans and programs. Working with private corporations or businesses and nonprofit agencies could broaden resources to more effectively enhance preservation goals.

Preservation of historic resources may not always be practical and may conflict with other goals, such as accommodating housing or job growth. There are alternative means of making the community aware of its heritage and preserving community identity.

- CC-46 Cooperate with regional preservation programs and use technical assistance from other agencies as appropriate.**
- CC-47 Consider qualifying the City to act as a Certified Local Government to increase opportunities to seek grant funding.**
- CC-48 Share survey and inventory information with King County, the State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, federal agencies, the public, historic societies, museums and other appropriate entities.**
- CC-49 Work with residents, property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies, tribes and school districts to develop an active preservation program, including:**
 - Walking tours, brochures and plaques;
 - Online information; and
 - Educational efforts to foster public awareness of Redmond's history.
- CC-50 Partner with or provide staff support, when possible, for private businesses and nonprofit agencies in preservation and educational efforts.**