

Public Comment from Daniel Achterman

Hello,

My name is Daniel Achterman, and I've been a Redmond resident for nearly 15 years. Recent protests inspired me to look into how Redmond invests in public safety, so I reviewed last year's budget and was generally quite pleased. I'm happy that the city has specific metrics for measuring success, and invests in programs like housing services and youth programs.

I do have four questions I'd like to submit for consideration, about how we could better measure success, and about what impact we would see from investing more in some services. Thank you so much.

1. Safety satisfaction ratings in the citizen survey are broken down by gender and age group, but not by racial demographic groups. Can we analyze survey results to see if different race groups perceive their safety in the community differently? It seems like we should target all groups feeling safe in the city, instead of using an average that may hide dissatisfaction in underrepresented communities.
 2. Housing and Human Services is only aiming to house 60% of outreach participants, but there are no funding proposals to increase spending in this category to target increasing those results. Perhaps I'm misunderstanding the success metrics, but what would be the likely outcomes of investing more heavily in Housing and Human Services? It's currently only 1% of the city budget, and just 1/10th of police spending.
 3. What metrics are being used to evaluate the success of the Community Court pilot, which is aimed at helping low-risk misdemeanor offenders outside the traditional court system? If the program is currently successful, what would be the possible impacts of increasing funding of it? Criminal Justice Services are currently only 1% of the city budget.
 4. The performance measures for Police Emergency Services are crime rates and percentage of citizens in the survey who say they are satisfied with police and feel safe. But most citizens don't interact with police, and thus don't have an informed view of their performance, and many factors influence "feeling safe" beyond just the police. How can we more directly measure the success of police, and how can we better identify areas the police should aim to improve? Should their performance measures include statistics like number of complaints against officers?
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Public Comment from Elise Keim

Dear City of Redmond Mayor and Council,

The City's process of budgeting by priorities and engaging residents in the budget process is admirable, and I hope we will continue to budget by the community's priorities now and into the future. City budgets have tremendous impact on the lives and wellbeing of residents, and cities have the responsibility to make sure those impacts are equitable. City budgets are not equitable by default, so we must put in the work to make them equitable.

My requests to help bring equity to the city's budget are as follows:

- 1. Establish an indicator of racial equity for all city budget priorities**
- 2. Expand the indicators of the safety priority to include the social safety net**

Many people in this country are awakening to and reckoning with the realities of systemic racism perpetuated through the policies and practices in established institutions, resulting in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. Systemic racism need not have an individual malicious intent, but its outcomes negatively affect those groups not in power. Predatory lending, police brutality and disparate health outcomes in communities of color emanate from systemic racism.

Municipal budgets are not exempt from systemic racism. In a budget, racism can look like inequitable infrastructure and education investments, over-policing and under-serving vulnerable members of our community, and locating noxious or hazardous uses in poor and minority neighborhoods. In order to avoid inequitable outcomes of budgets, cities must actively reflect and engage in work to improve equitable outcomes.

Redmond's six priorities for our budget are well-considered; however, reading through the 2019-2020 adopted budget there is little mention of equity, and none of race. With the new budget cycle beginning, this is an excellent opportunity for Redmond to add measures of racial equity to all of the budget priorities, not just the diverse and connected community and responsible government priorities.

I would like to speak particularly to the budget priority of safety. For the 2019-2020 budget, the indicators of safety all surround law enforcement and fire services. Safety deserves a broader set of indicators. It need not be solely a matter of law enforcement. What about the social safety net of our community?

Improvements in human service outcomes deserve a place in the safety priority. It is a measure of safety that a family does not lose their housing when an income is lost. It is a measure of safety that everyone in Redmond has food security. It is a measure of safety that people of all backgrounds feel welcomed and included in this community. With such a narrow list of safety indicators in Redmond's current budget allocations, it is not surprising other department programs do not offer proposals related to this budget priority. By expanding the city's understanding of safety and adding an indicator of the social safety net to this priority, other programs can seek much needed funding.



Please pursue equity in budgeting by establishing an indicator of racial equity for all city budget priorities and by expanding the indicators of the safety priority to include the social safety net.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elise Keim, Resident



Public Comment from Chelsea Liekhus-Schmaltz

Hello,

I would like to ask the city council how their current budget helps to protect and serve the black, brown and indigenous community members in our city.

Thank you,
Chelsea Liekhus-Schmaltz

Public Comment from Tom Hinman

Please accept these written comments in lieu of oral testimony at the June 16th public hearing on the subject.

I have two initial recommendations for this budget cycle, both of which entail addition of FTEs. Given the current constraints due to reduced City revenue, I suspect that they may be difficult to accommodate but perhaps the functions could be incorporated within existing staff resources.

TDM Assistant - I note that one of the positions that might remain vacant in the modified current budget is a TDM assistant. If Redmond is going to pursue a greenhouse gas reduction strategy that targets auto emissions (as may be a Climate Action Plan recommendation by the Environmental Sustainability Stakeholders), additional resources may be needed. Alternatively, tasking GRTMA with more emphasis on cutting single occupant vehicle usage by the community at large might be appropriate.

Communications Administrator – This position was proposed as Offer #65 in the previous budget but went unfunded. Please see my statement of support of that Offer provided most recently in my September, 2019 response to the Strategic Plan Community Survey as extracted in the attached document.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tom Hinman

REDMOND STRATEGIC PLAN COMMENTS
(extracts of Community Survey response provided September, 2019)

What else should the Council consider as an additional community priority (block 1)?

Community Engagement/Outreach – Development Awareness

Better communication coverage of development projects in Redmond and the opportunity for the community to “influence City policy and direction” is a long standing need that deserves to be addressed as a stand-alone element of the Strategic Plan. Citizen Surveys consistently list transportation and growth/overdevelopment/overpopulation as their top concerns, yet it is difficult to perceive responsiveness to public comments on these critical topics. The following is adapted from testimony germane to this glaring Strategic Plan flaw that I provided to the Council in the context of the last budget cycle:

To quote the Community Involvement Consultant Findings presented to the Council on November 27, 2018, the “Community Poll top response (65%) was not being certain that giving their input matters in decision-making.” I have to say that, with the exception of tree canopy, that has certainly been my experience in dealing with the City of Redmond for over six years. The accountability and transparency of public process in Redmond would be much more evident if there is actual two-way dialogue rather than soliciting public comment on land use and budget issues which are then listed on a matrix and not

addressed in substance.

As the Consultant Findings state, the City does great on the “fun stuff” but has weaknesses where the “hard stuff” is concerned to include “closing the loop after community provides feedback and communicating how public input will be used in decision making.” Further, a staff poll in the same report states that inputs are “most often shared with Council vs. sharing back with the community” and that there is internal confusion over who is leading public engagement. (See also recommendations in the Redmond Community Involvement Guidebook, page 2, particularly item 7 “Community members should know how their input and feedback was used in the decision-making process.”)

These findings justified my strong recommendation that the Communications and Marketing Administrator position proposed in Offer #65 (Community Engagement/Outreach portion of Diverse & Connected Community) be created and funded. To wit “The need for all City Departments to engage more effectively, dynamically and innovatively with the public is consistent with feedback received from the community and the City Council. This additional position will provide the community with neighborhood outreach and project-specific engagement for the Overlake, Downtown and Marymoor Village neighborhoods....This will allow the City to have one main point of contact both internally and externally for communication.” Filling this position would assist the Planning Department (who does the minimum amount of required public notification) and supplement the Communication Division’s historical emphasis on “softer” communications announcements that focus on matters of Citywide interest. (For example, much could be learned from the public comment process regarding the proposed Seritage development.) As suggested in the Offer and in the above findings on community involvement, such an emphasis is overdue.

Beyond the staff communications function, the Council, as the public-facing portion of Redmond’s leadership, needs to be more dynamic and interactive in responding on-the record to matters addressed in public comment. I know that Council members recognize this issue based on entries in the last budget “parking lot” and on remarks when the community engagement report was received. I have similarly provided (unaddressed) inputs on how Council Procedures/Public Participation could be improved, to include use of the ombuds function beyond “customer service.”

Cultural Inclusion

A welcoming attitude engaging our diverse cultural community is central goal worthy of emulation by others. But, the Program Vision also includes means to “influence city policy and direction,” which is a distinctly different topic and out of place per initial comments above.

Any other comments or question on Strategic Plan to share? (final block)

Citizen Surveys can be useful tools in determining sentiments among self-selected members of the public. I am presuming that these responses, plus those of the more formal telephone surveys, are the data that is intended to drive decision making. How many meaningful responses constitute a threshold for decision? What is the statistical validity of this data, particularly since it is cited as Performance Measures of many budget items? How is the budget process linked to the Strategic Plan?



Public Comment from Vickie Arsenault

Hi,

I love our Redmond Police, please continue to fund them properly.

Vickie



Public Comment from Dylan (no last name provided)

Hello,

I would like to express my priorities as a citizen of Redmond regarding funding.

Most importantly I want to make sure that the Advanced Life Support program has everything it needs to deal with Covid-19.

I also care about the fire department, linemen, and arborists that keep our community safe from fires. I don't want this place to end up like Paradise CA, and these people defend us from that.

What I object to, are frivolous expenditures in law enforcement. Like 64,000 for drug enforcement? Get real, nobody cares about prohibition during a time like this. I don't want to pay for it.

I want us to make budget cuts to Redmond PD.

They patrol around looking for things to do and it doesn't make me feel any safer. I was pulled over by them once for a warning. Got my registration out of the glove box and the officer put his hand on his gun! What kind of wild west wet dream do you have to live in, to think a reminder to put your lights on will end in a shoot out??

The people who pick up the garbage keep my home safe from bears, give them a raise for a change.

Sincerely,
Dylan



Public Comment from Lori Moon

I would like to propose adding a dog park to the hartman park area for the next budget session. What do i need to do?

Thank You,
Lori Moon



Public Comment from Pat Vache

Comment intended for the June 15, 2020 Public Hearing

Pat Vache

Comments

2021--2022 Redmond Biannual Budget

Public Hearing June 15, 2020

The Redmond City Council is currently engaged in a critically important diversity and social equity conversation. Interwoven into the conversation are questions on policing, public safety, social changes driven by the Coronavirus and the budget impact of these issues.

As you enter the 2021 –2022 biennial budget process, I hope that you will begin with a reflection on Redmond’s current budget process and the Community Priorities. The Community Priorities are the foundation of the City of Redmond Budget. These five priorities were established by and with the community’s extensive participation. The Community Priorities were developed with a goal of aligning the budget with citizen priorities. There is no better time than now to enhance the connection between citizen expectations and the City of Redmond budget.

The budget process and the Priorities present the Council with the perfect process for creating and sustaining lasting change. As you move forward I hope you will start with a review of the five priorities and the community engagement that led to their adoption.

At least two paths are available, both focused on including the Redmond Community in your preparation of the budget. The first path is to undertake a review of the Community Priorities and the associated success indicators each of which was developed to ensure that the City understands and meets citizens expectations. Ask the question does this priority cover question of diversity and social equity, or can it be modified to be responsive?

The second longer path is to engage the community in a conversation with the intent of considering a sixth priority, one to address diversity and social equity.

I recognize that in current Covid environment substantial community engagement is difficult, but citizen participation must not be overlooked. Please take the time to understand the budget process that matches community expectation and city services.

Thank you
Pat Vaché

Suggested reading: [The Price of Government](#) David Osborn & Peter Hutchinson
[Budgeting for Outcomes: Better results for the price of government](#) ICMA IQ Report
volume 36/number 11



Public Comment from David Bowling

Hello Mayor Birney, Brooke and Alaric,

Thank you for everything you are doing to support the vulnerable residents of Redmond. CFH stands with you in this work. Attached is a letter from the King County Alliance for Human Services advocating for sustained and thoughtful funding for human services during these unprecedented times.

Thank you again for your leadership during this time. Please reach out with any questions or comments.

June 16, 2020

Dear Mayor Birney and City Council Members,

Thank you for all that you are doing for your residents and neighbors as we face the unprecedented challenges of Covid-19. Our region has never seen such a quick onset of challenges. It has been incredible to experience the community coming together to care for each other.

In this time of uncertainty, we all have a role to play in building and supporting community well-being. Nonprofits are proud to partner with business and community members, the public sector and elected officials to identify strategies, design policies, and provide supports to develop the strengths, connections, and capacities needed across our lifetimes. We are confident in the future of our region, as we all pitch in together to achieve our shared goals.

We are all in this storm, but we are not in the same boat. Many individuals and families throughout our region are facing unemployment as they comply with the directive to isolate at home in order to protect all of us. This all too often results in food and housing insecurity.

One of the most direct ways policymakers foster well-being is through their planning and development of city budget policy. We recognize that cities are facing revenue decreases in the near future. However, we also recognize that Redmond's current investment of local resources for human services are critical to residents' well-being and even more so as the economic impacts of the pandemic impact those already facing the greatest barriers. Understanding that during times of adversity, we must strengthen our network of support, we recommend that Redmond:

- Maintain at least the current level of human services funding to support community members through this period of crisis.
- Develop budget blueprints for 2021 and beyond that build over time upon Redmond's history of support.

We are confident in the future of our region. If we all pitch in together we will achieve our shared goals. Together we are building a strong, resilient community. Together we can meet our residents and



neighbors where they are, pitch in to reinforce strengths and build skills, and provide opportunities for everyone to reach their full potential.

We appreciate your service and your consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

David Bowling, ED Congregations for the Homeless,
Jack Edgerton, ED Eastside Baby Corner, Eastside Advocacy Team Convener
And the Eastside members of the King County Alliance for Human Services



Public Comment from Susan Cozzens

Please share this question both with the budget hearing this afternoon and with the City Council meeting this evening.

Is Redmond considering moving any budget from the police to other social services?

Thank you, Susan Cozzens

Public Comment from AJ Venturato

I am aware that the City has various activities going on in terms of meeting the various titles of the civil rights act (e.g., Title II, Title VI), ADA, cultural inclusion and welcoming initiatives.

What I'd like to see as a resident, though, is a more cohesive approach to the issues of equity and social/environmental justice. I see various reports on the City website, but do not understand the connections between Parks ADA plan, EEO, Human Services, Cultural Inclusion, Title VI and the efforts of the Police department.

The City should consider a formal Office of Equity & Environmental Justice or an Equity & Sustainability Manager to better coordinate these various groups, ensure that staff are appropriately trained and following civil right requirements, and serve as a community resource for the important discussions that are going on now and into the future.

I know budgets are tight, maybe this could be done by streamlining the various groups or having the new Environmental Sustainability program include Equity as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Public Comment from Harold Evans

Ms. Mayor and Members of the Council

I am Harold Evans currently of Redmond, WA. I served in the US Army for seven years prior to making my way to Redmond to support my significant other's career opportunity. As a former member of the US Army I have been granted the opportunity to travel across the entire United States making my way initially from Connecticut. It is because of that that I plead with you today to explore alternatives to any further funding of the police department. In its stead we need to be spending a considerable portion of our budget on human services, affordable housing, and our community. I currently have the pleasure of living downtown and have been since I moved here. I work locally in a retail chain (although I am furloughed now) and cannot afford to live within 20 miles of what my customers tell me "is a staple of the community" without substantial financial assistance. Expand human services, affordable housing, and parks and recreation. I believe if we can solve our humanitarian issues we can end the need for policing and I challenge you to see how feasible that is. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Harold Evans



Board of Directors

June 16, 2020

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To: Mayor Birney, Council President Padhye, & Redmond City Council Members

From: Kirk Hovenkotter, GRTMA Executive Director

Subject: City of Redmond 2021-2022 Budget Public Hearing Comments

The Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association urges City leadership to propose and approve a 2021-2022 budget that makes significant investments in sidewalks, trails, and bus passes to make Redmond an easier place to walk, bike, and take transit.

When weighting allocations in a difficult budget climate, we ask the Mayor and City Council to prioritize affordable investments that encourage walking, biking, and transit over investments that make it easier to drive.

Our members represent over 100,000 people who come to Redmond every day for work or school. These commuters are asking for streets that are safe to cross, trails that make biking to work stress free, transit signals and bus lanes that speed up bus service, and affordable transit passes. Bike ridership is at all time highs. Transit ridership has doubled in the past 10 years and 12% of Downtown Redmond residents do not own a car.

Prioritizing these investments not only answers the call from our commuters, but helps the City achieve its goals and recover more quickly.

The majority of Redmond's emissions come from cars. If the City is going to meet its climate goals, it needs to significantly increase the investments it spends on sidewalks, trails, and transit passes this budget cycle.

Redmond's residents and commuters who have been hit the hardest by the recession are the more likely to walk, bike, and take transit to work. They are also more likely to be people of color. Prioritizing these investments will help those who have been squeezed the most and help make Redmond a more accessible inclusive community.

The lack of investment in the past to support this has pushed the cost onto our member companies and Redmond's employees. Many spend hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to subsidize shuttles or vanpools for their staff. Employees spend thousands a year on bus passes. Expanding funding for transit passes is a start to making Redmond a more affordable place to work and get the City light rail ready.

The real priorities of a city are reflected in its budget, not in its plans. When faced with budget proposals that fund left turn lanes, expand roadways, or add overpasses, we ask you to consider the sidewalks, bike paths, and transit passes that they could fund instead.

On behalf of our members, I encourage the leadership of Redmond to propose a budget that makes significant investments to prioritize walking biking, and transit.

Kirk Hovenkotter, Executive Director, Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association