



# Redwood City Fitness and Recreation: Two Choices

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is being proposed by Redwood City?**

Redwood City, in partnership with the YMCA, is proposing vital upgrades to the Veterans Memorial Senior Center (VMSC) and the Sequoia YMCA. The community has a choice between two projects – one which proposes to tear down the current VMSC and reconceptualize the facilities as a whole, the other which would renovate the existing Veterans building and augment it with new construction.

The renovation contemplates modernizing the majority of the senior center and expanding the existing building. It also calls for an all-new YMCA aquatic and recreation center. The rebuild option would replace the antiquated Veterans Center and the YMCA with state-of-the-art recreational and wellness facilities.

### **Why is the City partnering with the YMCA? Do you have to be a member of the Y to use all of the facilities?**

Initially, the City and YMCA were pursuing individual projects. The City planned to update the 1950's era Veterans Memorial Senior Center, and the YMCA of Silicon Valley was exploring expansion of its Hudson Street building. The City and Y share a common vision for expanding health, wellness and recreational opportunities in the community, and believe this type of project will leverage each entity's strengths and experience. The re-imagining of the facilities has been in the conceptual stage for years; by working together, the City and Y will better complement one another, resulting in a strong synergy between the programs offered to the community.

The final membership structure and access fees for the facilities have yet to be determined, however the City and Y will promote the broadest access possible. The VMSC will likely remain a free or low cost model for seniors, and the Y will continue to require membership, as it does today. Both facilities are expected to promote special days – such as “senior day” – to involve different segments of the community. The new YMCA location will be more centrally located than today and will be mere steps from the park and VMSC.

### **How will the project benefit the community?**

Either building model will provide the residents of Redwood City with an upgraded, multi-generational resource for complete health, recreation, community gathering, and enrichment opportunities. The current facilities – while valued by the community – are at their maximum capacity, and are in need of costly repairs and accessibility upgrades.

### **Will the project improve accessibility?**

Either a renovation or new construction will deliver an ADA accessible and code compliant project. However, a newly constructed project will improve upon basic ADA and code required accessibility most efficiently. New construction allows for *Universal Design* standards to be implemented from the outset rather than implemented retroactively – which would be the case if renovation is chosen.

### **What is the cost difference between the two options? How will the project be funded?**

The process is at too preliminary a stage to precisely discuss cost or funding options, however experience shows costs for an extensive renovation - like what is required for this project – frequently rival costs for new construction. That being the case, the renovation would need to deliver far superior benefits than the new construction to be the best choice. Initial comparisons suggest the new construction will offer more benefits to Redwood City residents and will provide larger facilities and a more efficient use of available space.

### **What improvements are needed? Are they really necessary?**

The improvements are necessary both to allow our residents continued access to vital recreation, fitness, and enrichment resources, and to improve Redwood City's infrastructure and meet the demands of a growing community. Areas for improvements include a new theater, new gym, media and technology center, dual purpose indoor aquatics center, fitness area, kids' zone, parking facility, and outdoor enhancements.

## Does Redwood City have a formal position or preference between renovating and rebuilding?

The City's chief interest is delivering one-of-a-kind recreational resources to the community, and doing so in the most efficient and sustainable way possible. We are eager to receive feedback from neighbors, active users of the facilities, seniors, community groups, and residents. Early analysis suggests rebuilding the facilities as a whole is a more efficient use of resources than renovation. Renovation requires working within more constraints, and will likely limit the flexibility and size of the final design.

## Where in the process are we?

The process is in the beginning stages. The City is expecting to choose which concept to pursue after the community meeting in the fall of 2015. Environmental review is anticipated to take between 6-12 months, and approvals are projected by the end of 2016.

## How is parking being addressed?

The new parking structure will address existing capacity challenges by increasing the amount of parking available and removing cars from the neighborhood. The low-profile design and "green walls" will integrate seamlessly into the surrounding buildings and parkland. The new construction option provides more new parking than the renovation option.

## How will the project integrate with the surrounding park?

Improving the integration of the buildings with Red Morton Park is a priority for the project. Trees will be added to improve the verdant character of the park, and the proposed parking garage will be constructed with "green walls" to help the structure seamlessly blend with the wooded atmosphere.

## What will the impact of the proposed plans be on the Schaberg branch library?

Redwood City is committed to providing a tech-focused, flexible media and learning center to supplement the Schaberg branch library. The space will be for residents of all ages to research, read, receive tutoring, and utilize the latest technology for personal and professional education.

## What will happen to the existing facilities during renovation or construction? Will the nearby soccer, baseball, and softball fields remain open during renovation and/or construction?

The nearby fields will not be disturbed and will remain open during the construction process. Only a small portion of the park will be impacted – during or after construction – and the new facilities will be located primarily within the footprint of existing buildings. Additionally, we're actively working to ensure uninterrupted parking and programming around the Veterans building and senior center, and talking with partners at the senior center to collaborate about how best to provide uninterrupted services to those who rely on them. Options are being sought to find a temporary home for the Redwood City Sharks swim club. The City has also been in frequent contact with the NFL Alumni Association, and all parties are working together to ensure the alumni's future needs are met.

## Is the Veterans building a historic resource?

While the Veterans Building was designed by noted architect Birge Clark, the historic analysis indicates that the architectural features of the building's façade have become obscured by the Senior Center and other additions to the area. The report also shows that while the building does have relevance relating to historical events, there are no historical Redwood City residents specifically honored by the building, nor are there any informational, academic, or archeological resources involved.

The City believes the best way to honor local veterans is to provide a premier facility for their use. Extensive conversations have taken place between the City and the presidents of local veterans groups and the prevailing sentiment is to remove the existing building in favor of a modern replacement. Key stakeholders are discussing how to honor the past of the building and to continue to ensure that veterans and others have a place which feels like home.

## Where can I get more information?

There will be many opportunities to engage the project team in discussion and to provide feedback. If you have a specific information request, please contact Chris Beth at [cbeth@redwoodcity.org](mailto:cbeth@redwoodcity.org) or visit [www.redwoodcity.org/parks](http://www.redwoodcity.org/parks).

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