

Veterans Memorial Senior Center – YMCA Project



Workshop #1: Recap, Next Steps and Key Questions

On January 17, Redwood City and the YMCA were pleased to host a kick-off open house, the first of three community meetings that are part of the master-planning phase of the joint Redwood City – YMCA reimagining of the Veterans Memorial Senior Center and a separate and new YMCA facility. Together these new facilities intend to meet the growing needs of Redwood City residents, which have outgrown their existing, aging buildings.

Close to 150 community members participated in a self-guided “Galley Walk,” where project principles and design concepts were shared through a series of oversized vision boards, for attendees to view and ask questions of city and YMCA staff and the project team.

We are thankful for the more than 200 suggestions, questions, and comments we received at the “idea tree.” The community’s input will be integral to continue evolving the preliminary design into a refined proposal.

There were several common themes communicated both at the stations throughout the evening and on the “leaves” of the idea tree, including:

- Importance of continuing senior programming, maintaining a specialized space for senior programs, and ensuring services and classes like Adaptive PE continue throughout construction
- Protection of the green space, setbacks, and trees throughout Red Morton Park, especially along Madison Street
- Efficient and equitable management of traffic, parking, and circulation, both around the immediate facility and throughout the entire park and neighborhoods nearby
- Ample aquatics space for a diversity of year-round swimming needs including recreational, team, fitness and aquatic therapy

A few community questions arose in numerous conversations, please see reverse side of this document for responses to those questions.

At the January 31 workshop, the project’s lead architect will present fresh ideas and site plans indicating possible locations for the two separate buildings that will house the Veterans Memorial Senior Center and YMCA, along with concepts for how to approach park space, parking and traffic, park circulation and programming. Following the presentation attendees will break into table groups for a brainstorming session to discuss the plans and then share their ideas with all in attendance.

Note the workshop on January 31st will not include a design presentation. Rather, it is an important step in arriving at a refined site plan so that an initial design can be presented at the community meeting on February 22, before an update is provided to the City Council in March.



Please continue to check our website for updates at www.rewdoodcity.org/CityYMCAProject. You may also contact Chris Beth, Parks Director, at city-ymcafeedback@redwoodcity.org with questions, comments, or to request a group presentation.

What is the benefit of the project partnership to Redwood City taxpayers?

A joint Veterans Memorial Senior Center-YMCA Project will provide the Redwood City community with a new resource for health and wellness, community gathering, and enrichment opportunities. The current facilities – while valued by the community – are at maximum capacity, aging, and in need of costly repairs and accessibility upgrades. The partnership between Redwood City and the Y will complement and expand the existing network of recreational resources, engage and inspire the community to be healthy and active, and allow each entity to capitalize on its strengths in order to deliver a complete set of services to the growing Redwood City community.

How will the new Veterans Memorial Senior Center meet the programming needs of our seniors, today and in the future?

The new Veterans Memorial Senior Center will not limit existing programs at the VMSC, nor will services stop due to construction if the project is approved. The City undertook a deliberate process to engage user groups and the primary stakeholders such as the Senior Affairs Commission to understand existing demand, process questions, concerns about a changing environment, and needs for new programming.

The new Veterans Memorial Senior Center will provide a state-of-the-art facility in which to gather, exercise, and socialize. While housed in a new structure, the Veterans Memorial Senior Center will continue its current mix of senior-specific and multigenerational programs, including Adaptive PE programs and events, and will feature new amenities including a chef's grade test kitchen and dining services, a fully ADA-accessible theater, mini gym, multi-purpose classrooms and adaptive PE facilities.

How will the new design maintain existing trees, park land, and other green space?

Feedback from the community was clear that maximizing park land, trees, and other green space is an overarching priority. The envelope of the entire project and each individual building has been significantly reduced from earlier proposals to reflect community requests. Substantially set back from Madison Street, the redesigned Veterans Memorial

Senior Center seeks to maximize park space, and the larger parking structure is no longer a part of the site plan proposal, in favor of parking lots adjacent to the facilities. The City and the Y are also considering a low profile parking structure as an alternative. Reinventing the new facility's interaction with outdoor space will be a hallmark of the updated design.

How will aquatics be managed in the new design?

The strength of the City-YMCA partnership is found in the ability for each entity to “play to its strengths,” and managing aquatics is one of the Y's strengths. To that end, pools will be under the Y umbrella. The Y will be able to more seamlessly manage the diverse demands on current pool space, and do so at a comparable cost to the public. Additionally, talks are ongoing with the Sharks Swim Club to explore means to continue use. Current pool use is very limited in scope, hours and season; the new YMCA aquatics program will offer more to the community.

What is the process to study traffic and parking?

Traffic will be studied as part of the project's Environmental Impact Report, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Analyses will be done both at “peak” and “off peak” times to establish traffic counts, parking availability both on site and on the street, and waits at intersections. The findings will be compared against the existing baseline to determine if significant impacts will result from the proposed project.

The final design will address traffic and parking in a holistic way, analyzing parking capacity and demand throughout the park and examining implementation of alternative transportation modes, including improved pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, vouchers for ride hailing services, and city-operated vans and other circulators.