

Veterans Memorial Senior Center – YMCA Project



Workshop #2: Recap, Next Steps and Key Questions

On January 31, Redwood City and the YMCA were pleased to host the second of three master-planning workshops for 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 increasing needs of Redwood City residents which have outgrown their existing, aging buildings.

Close to 200 community members participated in a lively presentation by lead architect Clarence Mamuyac which showcased three design alternatives, followed by intimate table breakout discussions. Following the charette session, each table elected a captain to present its ideas to the audience.

We appreciate the public's input and assistance establishing design priorities, excitement for favored amenities and features, questions, and the big ideas we received from the table reports. Continued frank communication among community members will be critical to refining the master-plan concept into a final recommended site plan.

There were several common themes communicated to the project team both during the large group presentation and from the table reports:

- Excitement for, and appreciation of, the reduced footprint of both facilities which created the pedestrian promenade, eliminated infringement on Red Morton Park, and maximized green space and trees around the building.
- Importance of continuing current senior programming, reorienting the Veterans Memorial Senior Center to position specialized space for senior programs nearest to entrances, and ensuring services and classes like Adaptive PE continue.
- Concern for efficient and equitable management of traffic, parking and senior-specific parking, and circulation around the immediate facility and throughout the entire park and along Madison.
- Ensuring the building continues to honor veterans though the facility's name, possibly including a new memorial at the main entrance plaza and/or along the pedestrian promenade, and refreshed displays and secure storage for veterans' memorabilia.

A few common questions arose in the group Q&A and at multiple tables, please see reverse side of this document for responses to those questions.

At the February 22 workshop, the project's lead architect will present the preferred project plan for the Redwood City and YMCA, along with some early design concepts. The presentation will incorporate the years of discussions with community members, shared goals among local stakeholders, and the latest thinking on how to address what has been heard at the two first workshops. Following the presentation, attendees will again organize into table groups for short breakout sessions to have more intimate discussions and provide feedback.



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.

What is the process to study traffic and parking?

The project team has heard concerns about parking and traffic and is organizing a meeting with immediate neighbors which will include a discussion about overall Red Morton Park parking capacity, and how the hundreds of spaces coming online before the expected completion date for the Veterans Memorial Senior Center – YMCA project will address neighborhood-wide demand.

Additionally, alternative facility orientations and circulation plans are being examined which would further disburse vehicles around the park, and may be included as an alternative for analysis, as is integration with the considerable new parking capacity throughout the Red Morton Park complex.

Regardless of the final site plan, 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.

How will the new Veterans Memorial Senior Center meet the programming needs of our seniors and veterans, 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 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 new 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 PT facilities. Additionally, the project team is assessing ways to provide a memorial outside the main building entrance, an updated and expanded display area, improved storage, and security options for Redwood City veterans' prized memorabilia.

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 for 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 facilities be accessed by those who use the Veterans Memorial Senior Center when they are part of the YMCA?

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, which is why the pools are part of that facility. We heard from community members the aquatics facilities' distance from the Veterans Memorial Senior Center could inhibit usage. However, seniors can choose to park adjacent to the YMCA if they prefer or to be dropped off right outside, and the benefit of being able to provide a large diversity of pool uses and programs is far superior to what the city currently provides at Herkner Pool.