

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Transportation Vision

The City of Redmond completed its first Transportation Master Plan in 2005. Major changes to the transportation landscape during the ensuing eight years necessitate a significant update to that initial planning document. Main drivers for this 2013 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) include: adoption of a Complete Streets Ordinance in 2007, designation of Overlake Neighborhood as a Regional Urban Center in 2007, approval of East Link Light Rail to Overlake in 2008, adoption of the regional 2040 Transportation Plan in 2010, and finally this 2013 TMP completes the transportation requirements for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan update. In developing this long-term transportation plan for the city, it was very important to provide significant opportunity for community and stakeholder input. With that in mind, a robust outreach process was started in 2010 with a comprehensive travel survey for residents and businesses. That was followed by three major community events and two stakeholder events in 2010 and 2011. Additional details about these and other outreach efforts may be found in Appendix A.

*This 2013 update to Redmond's TMP presents a strategic framework that will guide transportation decisions and investments for the next 18 years in support of the long-term vision for the city.*

Redmond's overall vision is anchored by two mixed-use urban centers (Overlake and Downtown) surrounded by vibrant, connected neighborhoods. Redmond's Comprehensive Plan focuses three-quarters of the City's planned increase in new dwellings and two-thirds of new commercial floor area through 2030 in Downtown and Overlake. This will include dense, multi-story development that can be easily served by transit and other alternatives to driving. The transportation vision for 2030 aligns with and supports the City's broader vision and land use policies.



*Redmond's 2030 transportation system supports Redmond's vision for vibrant urban centers in Downtown and Overlake, connected neighborhoods and a sustainable community.*

*Movement of people, goods, and freight both locally and regionally is provided by street, light rail, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems that are complete and fully integrated.*

# The Strategic Framework

Figure 1 depicts the overall strategic framework reflected in this TMP update. As with all of the City’s functional plans, the TMP flows first from the overall city vision and is guided by both the community priorities and the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Rooted in the community priorities and the Comprehensive Plan are four general citywide principles that guide all functional plans including the TMP. They are safety, maintenance, environmental stewardship and economic vitality. These principles are fundamental considerations for all implementation activities.

The key strategies were identified as the five critical elements necessary to achieve the 2030 transportation vision. The projects, programs and activities of both the Transportation Facilities Plan and the Three-Year Action plan were selected based on their ability to effectively implement these strategies. Finally, the Transportation Dashboard has been developed as an assessment tool for measuring the city’s progress toward implementing the strategies and achieving the 2030 transportation vision.

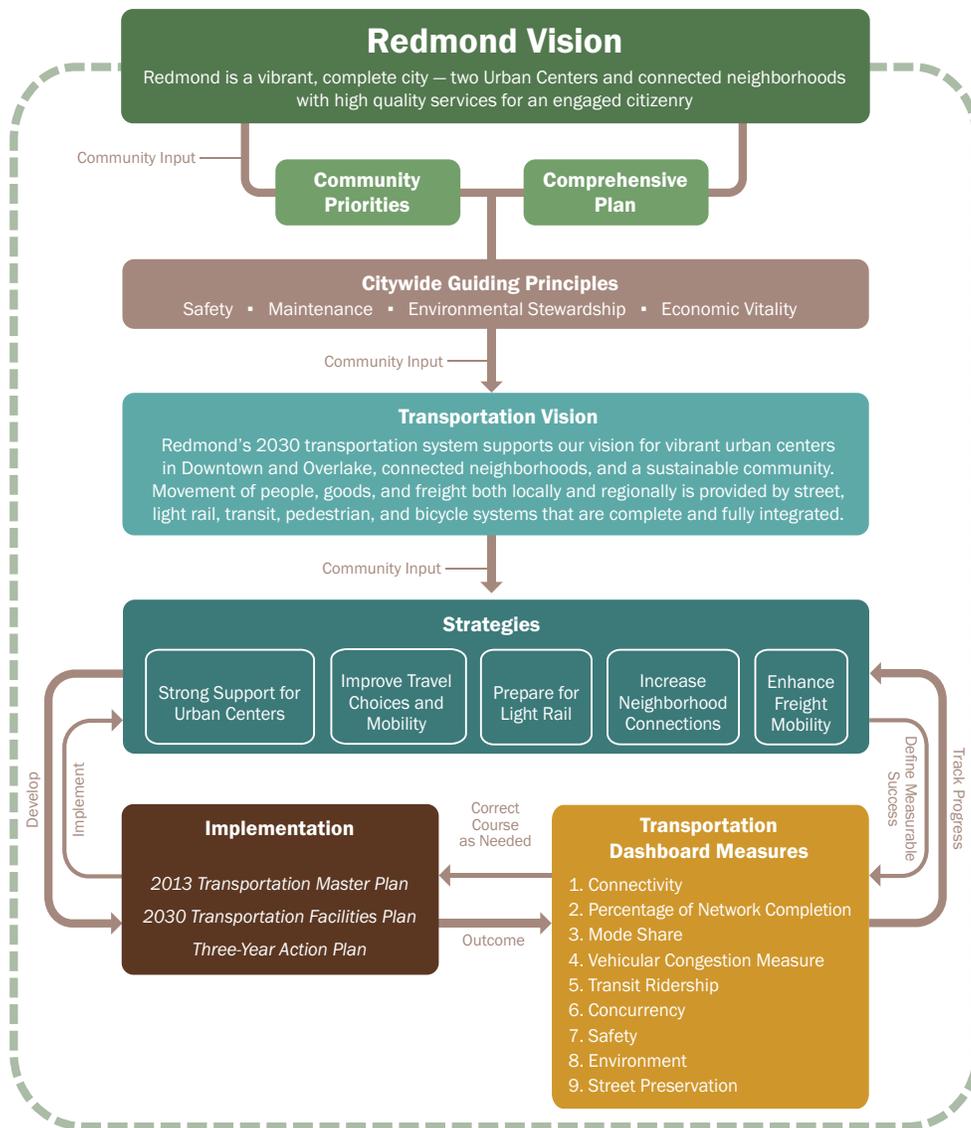


Figure 1. Strategic framework

# Five Key Strategies

The centerpiece of this framework approach is a set of five strategies that are embedded both in the vision narrative and throughout the TMP Document. Each strategy describes the core activities needed to achieve the desired outcomes. The dashboard measures will be used to evaluate progress on these strategies over time and will be explained in detail in Chapter 3. These five strategies provide the basis for the identification of projects and programs to be completed by 2030. It is important to remember that implementation activities needed to achieve each strategy will be guided by the sustainability principles of safety, maintenance, environmental stewardship and economic vitality. The five key strategies are:

1

## Prepare for Light Rail

This means increasing bus transit ridership to build the market for future light rail, building the infrastructure needed to support light rail in advance of its arrival, and encouraging transit-oriented development in areas surrounding future rail stations.

2

## Ensure Strong Support for Urban Centers

The completion of a well-designed network of streets and paths combined with a managed parking strategy will establish the transportation system needed to support the urban environment envisioned for both urban centers – Overlake and Downtown. This includes appropriately scaled streets, wide sidewalks, on-street parking, shared parking, reasonable access for delivery vehicles, interesting design features, bike facilities, and a network of walking paths.

3

## Improve Travel Choices and Mobility

This strategy calls for completing Redmond's networks for driving, bicycling, walking, bus transit, light rail, and freight movement. Managing transportation demand, network completion and careful integration of transit-oriented land use with transportation infrastructure will increase overall mobility options and support needed shifts in mode share.

4

## Increase Neighborhood Connections

This strategy seeks to ensure that Redmond's neighborhoods are connected to each other and are also internally well-connected by all modes of travel. Particular emphasis will be placed on improving modal corridors, providing safe local streets and safe, convenient walking and bicycling connections.

5

## Enhance Freight Mobility

This strategy focuses on direct and efficient delivery of goods and services within the city as well as continued vitality within the freight warehousing and distribution facilities sector.



# Transportation Dashboard

Critical to the success of any strategic program is a set of performance and monitoring metrics that demonstrate what progress is being made toward desired outcomes. While far from the only measures needed for effective management of the city's overall transportation activities, the six measures tracked using the Transportation Dashboard provide an "at-a-glance" assessment of how the city is progressing toward achieving the Transportation Vision.

## 1. Connectivity

This measures how well properties or parcels are connected to the surrounding properties and describes mathematically how well our transportation network is connected to and accessible from the city's land uses (where people live and work). This is especially important for the walking environment which is needed for completion of all trips and is sensitive to indirect, out-of-the-way connections.

**Desired trend: increasing**

## 2. Network Completion

This measures the completeness of the city's bicycle, street, and transit networks and indicates where improvement is needed whether through completion of "missing links" or through upgrading sub-standard facilities. The highest priority for network completion will be the "modal corridors" network for vehicles, bicycles, transit, and freight.

**Desired trend: increasing**

## 3. Mode Share

The percentage of all travel on an average weekday taken by means other than the single-occupancy vehicle, including carpools, transit, walking, and bicycling.

**Desired trend: increasing**

## 4. Vehicular Congestion

This is based on measurement of peak hour average travel delay per mile on arterials throughout the city. Success means that the measure of delay does not exceed the projected average delay for 2030.

**Desired trend: maintain reasonable level of delay**

## 5. Transit Ridership

This reports the number of transit riders boarding in Redmond on an average weekday. Steady growth in transit patronage with an emphasis on both regional express service and local service is needed to grow the market for light rail, in preparation for the arrival of East Link, first in Overlake and later in Downtown.

**Desired trend: increasing**

## 6. Concurrency

This measures the rate of transportation infrastructure development relative to the rate of land use development. The success of Redmond's plan-based concurrency system will require that completion of our 2030 Transportation infrastructure proceeds ahead of, or at least concurrent with, our land use development.

**Desired trend: maintain concurrency**

## 7. Safety

Safety is expressed as the per-capita traffic-related injury and fatality rate for Redmond. Safety is a fundamental goal for the City as it builds and maintains the transportation system, and Redmond seeks to reduce its already low rates of traffic-related injuries.

**Desired trend: decreasing injury rate**



## 8. Environment

This measure has two components: air quality and water quality. Air quality is expressed as compliance with federal air quality standards for particulates, and water quality is expressed as the percent of City right-of-way that is subject to basic water quality treatment. The environment measure indicates whether the City is designing infrastructure to be “clean and green”—healthy for humans and our surrounding ecosystems.

**Desired trend: increasing**



## 9. Street Preservation

Adequate pavement condition is essential to the proper functioning of the roadway network for private travel and for freight operations. This is reported as the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for arterial lane mileage within the Redmond city limits.

**Desired trend: maintaining**



# Implementation Plans

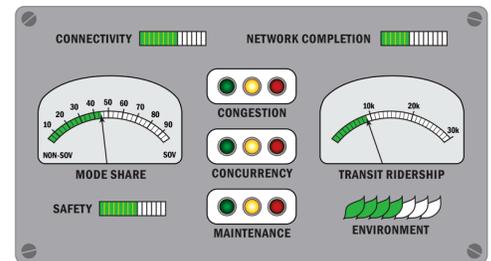
Effective implementation of the five key strategies will be achieved through the guidance provided by the Transportation Master Plan and includes a long-term investment plan and a short-term action plan:

## 1. 2030 Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP)

This 18-year plan for transportation investments has been prioritized based on how well individual projects and programs are expected to advance the key strategies. What can be included in the TFP is limited financially by the revenues forecast between now and 2030. This approach fulfills the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) to have a financially constrained long-range plan. The timing and funding level for projects and programs included in the TFP (near term, mid-term, or long-term) are aligned with the city’s Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) that includes transportation, parks, water, wastewater, natural resources, and general city infrastructure projects. The 2013-2030 TFP is based on a revenue forecast of \$369 million over 18 years and contains 42 separately described and mapped projects and 15 city-wide programs. The TFP is a subset of the city’s Buildout Plan list that describes the ultimate transportation needs for the city. Success will be measured by how well the TFP is delivered ahead of or concurrent with land use development in the city which is known as concurrency. (Chapter 7)

## 2. The Three-Year Action Plan

This serves as a work plan for the next three years, providing specific direction for the highest priority activities needed in the short term to ensure successful implementation of the long-term transportation plan. (Chapter 8)



*These are high-level, long-term measures for which meaningful updates will likely occur every three to five years, but the trending direction for each should be clear and consistent.*

# Two Vibrant Urban Centers

Realizing the City's vision will require significant evolution of our transportation system. In Redmond, community values that support more human scale buildings, a green community and moderately sized roadways over wide streets pair with the economic market reality that increased urban vibrancy means more people, jobs and shopping coming together in a denser area. In Redmond those denser urban areas are Downtown and Overlake. Central to the Transportation Master Plan and critical to the success of Redmond's two urban centers is the need to reduce per capita car travel to and within these areas. With continued growth the "level of service" experienced by drivers to and within the urban centers is expected to decrease somewhat from today's levels while transportation options including light rail and other types of transit, bicycling and walking will become more competitive in terms of time and convenience.

Most of the growth in jobs and housing between now and 2030 will occur in the two compact, mixed-use, transit-served and walkable urban areas of Downtown and Overlake. National statistics reveal that as America's urban areas have continued to grow, the amount of travel by automobile has not increased in proportion to that growth. This trend is becoming particularly evident in Downtown as a rich mix of shops, commercial offices, housing and hotels emerge in close proximity to one another and in proximity to frequent transit service, reducing dependence on driving.

*The City's strategy of increasing the amount of housing in Downtown and Overlake will offer not only the opportunity to live in a vibrant, urban environment, but also the opportunity to own fewer cars per household and to drive less.*

Downtown Redmond in 2030



Even with continued expansion of housing in Downtown, automobile traffic during the weekdays has remained relatively constant there. This can be attributed to completion of the street grid system resulting in dispersed traffic and noticeable increases in walking, biking, and transit trips. In addition, Redmond's Downtown is maturing into a local and regional destination rather than a district people just drive through. The reduction in traffic relative to the level of economic activity in Downtown is beneficial for the city, and the TMP strategies will support and accelerate this trend.

The City's strategy of increasing the amount of housing in Downtown and Overlake will offer not only the opportunity to live in a vibrant, urban environment, but also the opportunity to own fewer cars per household and to drive less. Not everyone who lives in Downtown or Overlake will work there, and not everyone who works there will choose to live there, but many will make that choice. A vertical and horizontal mix of land uses, including shops, restaurants, entertainment and services in addition to housing and workplaces, will support an active, urban lifestyle for those who choose to take advantage of it. These districts also will become more important regional and local destinations, providing new opportunities for those living in Redmond's surrounding neighborhoods. Development of multi-story, mixed land uses with residential spaces above commercial spaces will spur the local market for retail and for other commercial activities. And the availability of shops and restaurants will serve as an amenity attracting people to the new housing. In addition, improving connections between surrounding neighborhoods and urban centers is also part of the transportation strategic approach.

*Development of multi-story, mixed land uses with residential spaces above commercial spaces will spur the local market for retail and for other commercial activities.*

Overlake Village in 2030



## Travel Choices and Mobility

As Redmond continues to develop into a city that is both an origin and a destination for personal travel, shorter trip lengths are becoming more common. This is important because trip lengths are key determinants of travel choices — where to go, when to travel, and how to travel. The 2010 Redmond Travel Survey shows that fully one quarter of all daily person trips in Redmond are now less than a mile in length, and three-quarters are less than five miles. These trips represent a growing market for walking, bicycling and local transit. The urban, non-auto-oriented lifestyle is especially appealing to the Millennials (those born between 1984 and 2002), who are common among the workforces of Microsoft and the other information technology employers located in Redmond.

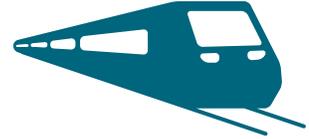
Through over a year of community outreach the City consistently heard from people who live and work here that they want the ability to travel without a car. This is not a wholesale abandonment of the automobile, which will continue to be an important means of travel well into the future, but rather an expression of a clear desire to have a broader range of travel choices and to become less dependent on cars for mobility and access.

### Locally

Locally, Redmond is planning growth oriented to a network of connected transportation infrastructure that includes streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, transit routes and paths in addition to incentives and parking pricing strategies that encourage reduced automobile use. Efficient operations and maintenance of this network will ensure a fully functioning transportation system.

### Regionally

Regionally, Redmond will work with its state and local partners to manage regional peak period auto travel demand. The region's approach will include such demand-side measures as parking pricing and variable freeway tolling (e.g., the SR 520 bridge), which will also help pay for infrastructure and operating expenses. These approaches are already working. For example, only about 63% of daily commute trips in Seattle today occur in private automobiles, according to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey. Parking pricing and high levels of transit availability are two important contributors to increasing alternative modes of travel. Redmond will work with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and state legislature to prioritize the most important projects within the SR 520 Corridor between I-405 and the end of the freeway at Avondale Road. The City will continue to work closely with Sound Transit to bring light rail to Overlake and Downtown, and with King County Metro to improve our bus service into and within the community.

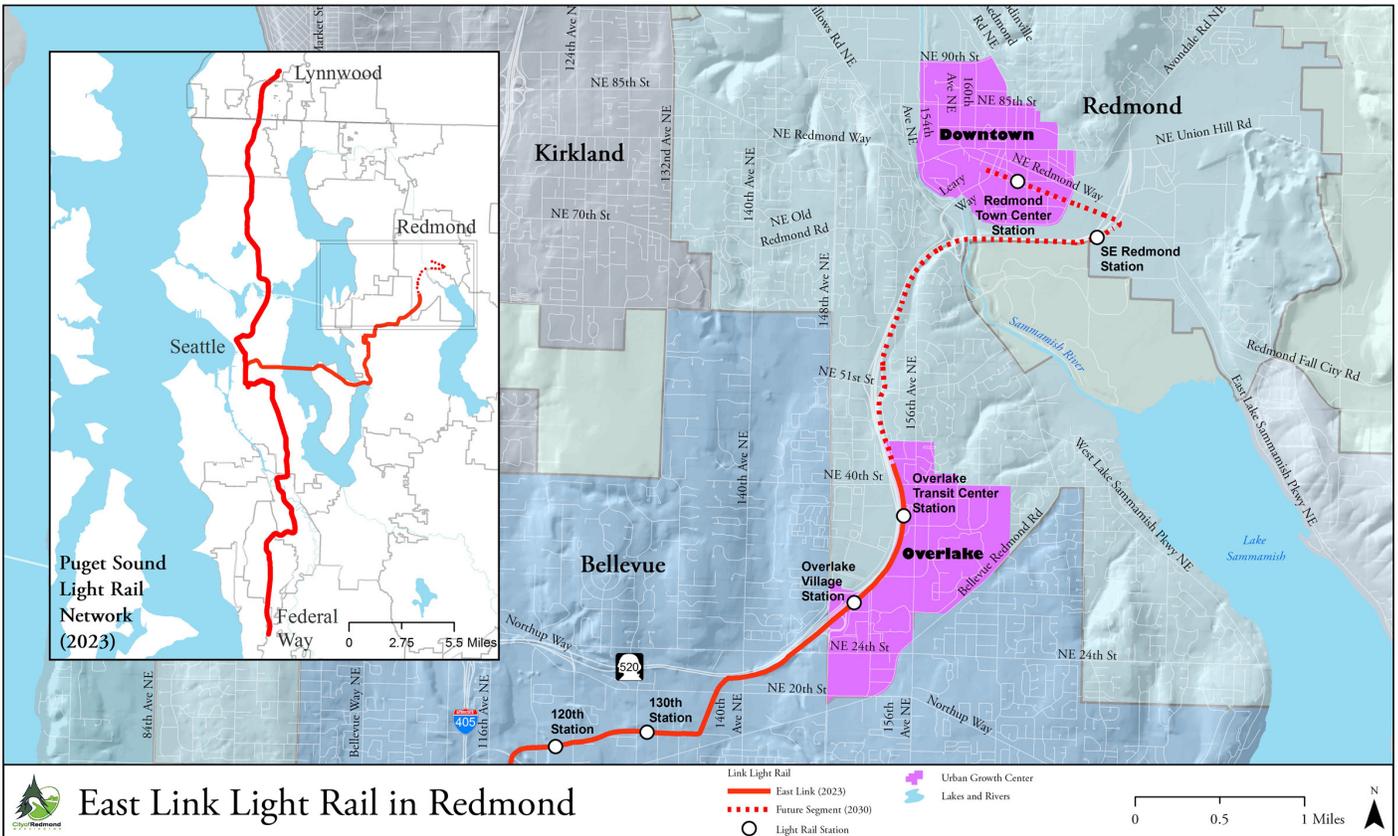


## East Link Light Rail

Transit — both bus and rail — will be critical to providing a full range of reliable mobility choices in Redmond. All-day frequent bus service and light rail corridors that connect Redmond to the region will be the heart of the future transit system. Construction of the first two East Link light rail stations in the Overlake Urban Center will start in 2015 with trains running to Bellevue and Seattle beginning in 2023. In particular, the future light rail station across from Microsoft’s main campus will expand the existing Overlake Transit Center into one of the most important multi-modal transit hubs in the region. A mile to the south a new station at the northern tip of the planned Overlake Village will become the catalyst for a dense and highly accessible urban community from which residents can walk to the train and be in Seattle in 45 minutes, or ride a bike to a local café and enjoy a cup of coffee with a friend.

*“The public conversation about transportation has changed over the past 20 or more years. In the past, the community was most concerned about moving cars and congestion. Today we talk about connectivity, and how to get around without a car.”*

Pat Vache, Councilmember  
(November 17, 2011 Community Meeting)



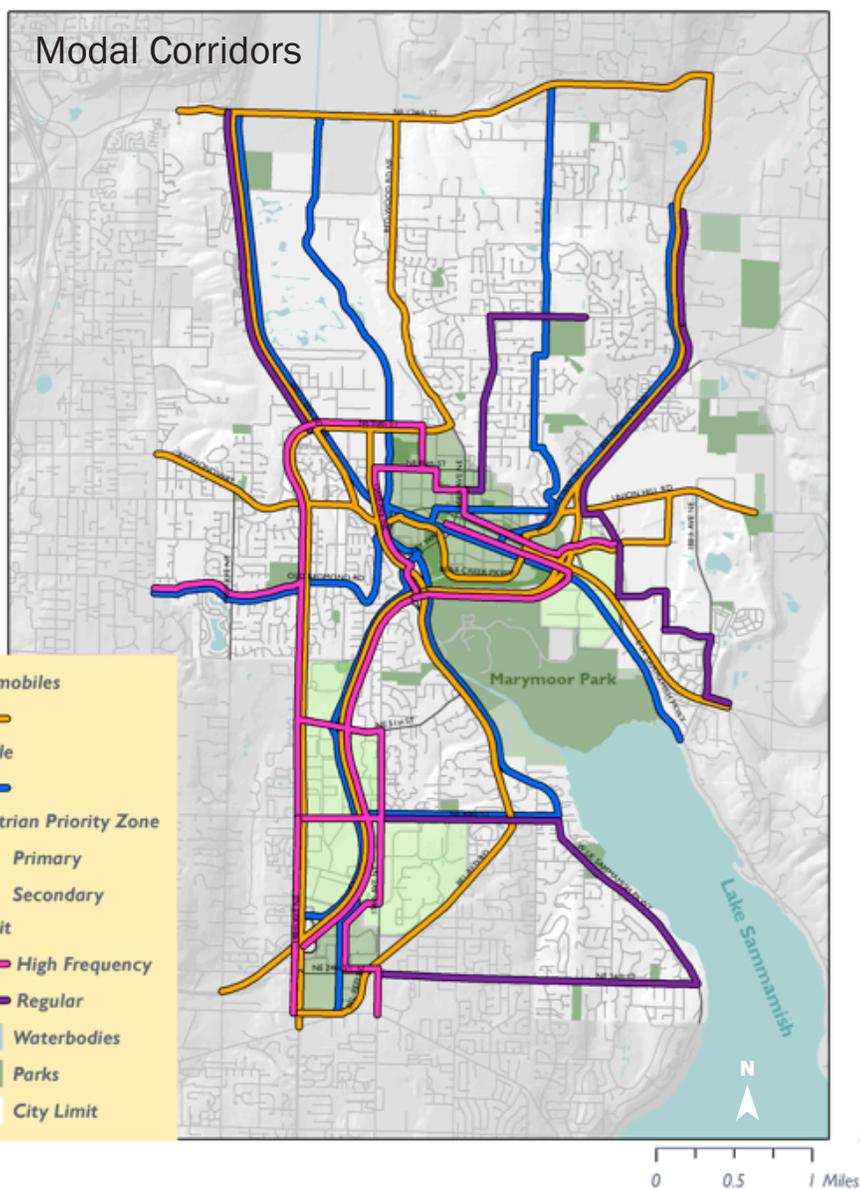


## Connected Neighborhoods

Redmond has identified critical modal corridors that serve as the backbone of our transportation system. The modal corridors include all principal and important minor arterial streets, the SR 520 corridor, and several key multi-purpose paths. These modal corridors, together with the remaining arterial streets, connecting local streets and paths are the city's transportation network. All nine neighborhoods and the two urban centers are connected by these corridors. Completing these priority modal corridors and finishing the most critical "missing links" for the street grid, bridges, sidewalks, paths, bike lanes, and transit routes is essential to achieving our vision for 2030. At the same time, it is also important to keep up with maintenance needs and with operational improvements for these critical corridors and to ensure the entire transportation system is operating safely and efficiently, and is environmentally and economically sustainable.

*Neighborhoods are to be well connected internally to local destinations such as parks, trails, and schools.*

However, large parts of the local street network were developed in our neighborhoods during the 1970s and 1980s when Redmond was a small suburban city with rapid growth in single family housing. This suburban-style network will not be sufficient to fully meet the needs of the future. Many of our older neighborhood streets and paths are not connected enough to provide functional access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities or to transit stops and stations. Completing missing street segments, connecting cul-de-sacs with pathways, adding lighting, connecting bike path segments, completing missing sections of sidewalks, and improving existing sidewalks so they are better separated from cars are all part of the TMP's strategy for ensuring neighborhood connections.



*All nine neighborhoods and the two urban centers are connected by these corridors. Completing these priority modal corridors and finishing the most critical "missing links" for the street grid, bridges, sidewalks, paths, bike lanes, and transit routes is essential to achieving our vision for 2030.*

# Freight Mobility

The vision of Redmond's future, with a high-quality living environment and a strong economy, depends not only on connected, convenient personal travel choices, but also on a well-functioning freight circulation system. As a modern city, Redmond will require the ability for goods and services to be delivered directly and efficiently throughout the urban centers and the surrounding neighborhoods. Our location at the end of SR520 on the east side of the region also makes Southeast Redmond a major center for regional distribution and warehouse facilities. For the foreseeable future, goods and services will move by truck on the same streets and highways that serve personal mobility. To better facilitate efficient freight movement this plan identifies primary truck streets for through movement of freight and truck access streets where freight distribution hubs are located.

