

# THE DESIGN



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## THE DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA

### THE REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR EXPERIENCE

The Downtown Study Area is a series of zones shaped by different physical characteristics, growth and activity patterns (both urban and natural) that exist now and will evolve into the future. The zones include:

- Sammamish River Crossing and Higher Ground
- Station and Promenade Blocks
- Open Space
- Neighborhood Blocks
- Creekside

The design of these zones is a response to the unique existing and evolving conditions that surround them, yet their design is tied together with common elements. This vision of the downtown area focuses on the 2016 Vision showing the build-out of the corridor to the degree the city can control it, respecting conditions and realities as the city now understands them to be. This vision presents the NE 76th Street corridor in roughly its current use and configuration, and typically reflects adjacent privately owned properties as they exist now or with development proposals already underway. The Downtown Study Area is presented moving from west to east from the Sammamish River to Bear Creek.

### THE REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR'S EVOLUTION

The Connector will undergo a significant evolution to move from its current state to fully realize the City's vision for what it will become. The master plan provides

a framework for that evolution to occur, with design elements that provide physical cues to guide its evolution, as well as a flexible planning framework to guide future decisions and development that are beyond resolution at this time. This framework for evolution is presented as two additional milestones of the Connector's development, 2012 and 2025, and the transitions that will occur between those visions:

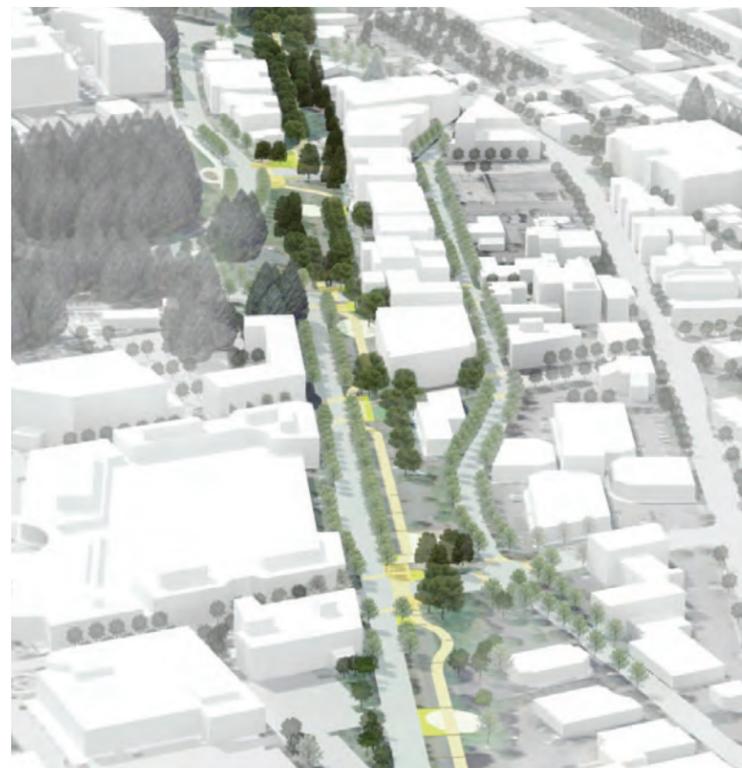
- 2012 Plan
- The 2016 Vision
- Transitioning to 2025

### THE SAMMAMISH VALLEY STUDY AREA

The development of the Redmond Central Connector in the Sammamish Valley will proceed on a longer term and yet to be established timetable. Its schedule for development will be honed as opportunities present themselves or new priorities and funding opportunities emerge. Because of the longer term timetable and undefined variables, a single vision for the Sammamish Valley is presented (Section 4.4) and provides for a number of options and flexibility for development as future conditions are further defined.

## 2012

The first phase of development is a trail connecting the Bear Creek Trail and Sammamish River Trail through downtown, creating the Connector's first physical presence and laying the foundation for the character and culture of the trail experience to be developed in the future. This vision reflects estimated scope for a Phase 1 project that is currently funded.



## 2016 VISION...

The 2016 vision is the build-out of the Connector to the degree the city can control it, respecting conditions and realities as the city now understands them to be. The design includes the space south to NE 76th (as no light rail is yet constructed) and properties along the north edge of the Connector are evolving with many corridor leases and encroachments.



## ...TRANSITIONING TO 2025

The ultimate realization of the City's vision for the Connector, East Link Light Rail ties the heart of the City to the broader region as part of a new NE 76th Street. Adjacent properties have been redeveloped fronting on the corridor with lively edges that complete and merge with the Redmond Central Connector.



# THE DESIGN: 2016

## THE REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR



○ SAMMAMISH RIVER TRESTLE & HIGHER GROUND ▶

○ THE STATION ▶



THE PROMENADE ▶

OPEN SPACE ▶

NEIGHBORHOOD STROLL ▶

CREEKSIDE ▶

## SAMMAMISH RIVER CROSSING & HIGHER GROUND

Crossing the Sammamish River Trestle is one of the highlights of the Connector, providing views to the river, down the corridor, and to the evolving City beyond. Trestle railing has integrated art and historic interpretation elements while the new decking preserves the effect of the heavy timber spacing and feeling of height. Ascending the north side of the trestle abutment, the Sammamish River Spur ties the Connector to the Sammamish River Trail, both in ramp and stair connections, anchored in a plaza along the Sammamish River Trail that provides a place for pause and rest while providing intuitive clues and signage for the Redmond Central Connector.



EXISTING TODAY....

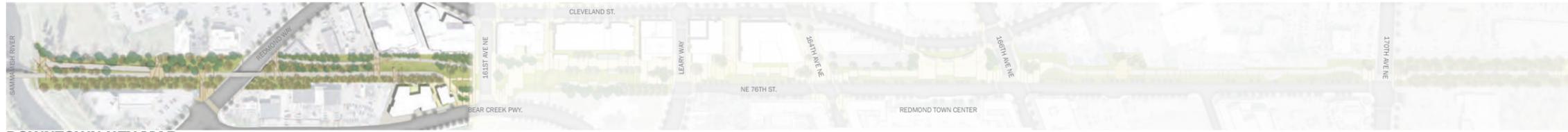
2012

2016

2025



TRANSITIONING TO **2016**



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

# SAMMAMISH RIVER CROSSING & HIGHER GROUND

## 154TH AVENUE NE TO 161ST AVENUE NE

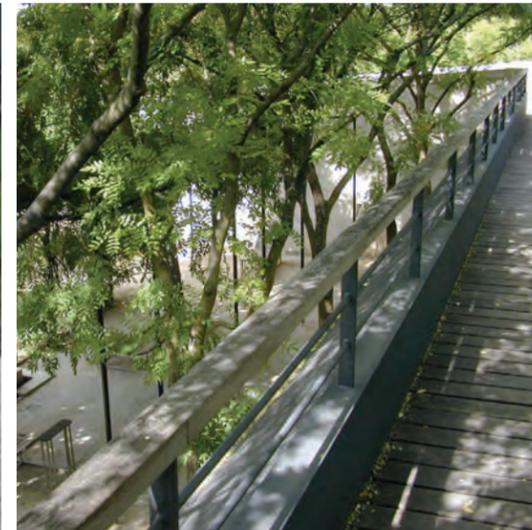
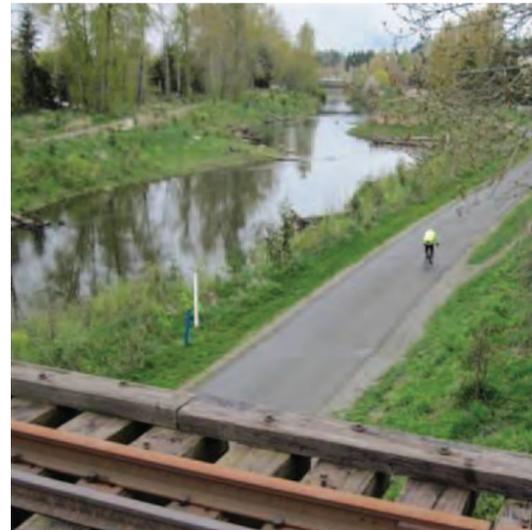
The Sammamish River crossing and the higher ground that leads to it are a powerful experience, defining a space the master plan call the “Higher Ground.” While in the midst of humming urban activity, the combination of the higher ground’s height and the trees that have reclaimed its slopes provides a feeling of placid natural escape from the surroundings, as though perched in a tree canopy. This zone and Creekside to the east, at Bear Creek, provide “bookends” that highlight Redmond’s strong connection to the natural environment and create transitions into the City’s urban Downtown. The design reclaims the historic

railroad grade as the trail and seeks to preserve and enhance the unique qualities of the route, improving the forests that line the trail, adding access points to the City below and providing unique experiences and vistas from the higher ground.

2012

2016

2025



The historic and iconic Sammamish River crossing retains its iconic trestle, which is re-decked to allow safe crossing while honoring its unique character and experience, making it a "landing" and providing art and interpretation to celebrate the history of Redmond.

Trail wayfinding signage identifies the Redmond Central Connector, provides direction to Downtown and amenities, and provides information about trails and bicycle routes in the Redmond area.

Visual portals and stairs at the Redmond Way Crossing create a gateway to the City and an iconic entry to the Connector, linking from the street to the top of the higher ground, while the East Portal also provides a secondary ADA accessible path connecting to the trail near 161st Avenue NE.

Existing deciduous and evergreen trees on the higher ground are maintained and enhanced for long-term forest health.

The trail alignment is perched on the higher ground and narrows to as little as 10 feet.

The higher ground "touches down" in the heart of Redmond, at the plaza east of 161st Avenue NE, and future Sound Transit station. This is a transition area where the wooded hillside gives way to open sloping grass and views eastward along corridor and into the City.

New development at 161st Ave NE includes a smaller scale pavilion anchoring the corner with retail and a plaza creating a mixing zone for all trail users crossing 161st Ave NE.



The "Sammamish Spur" consists of visual portals, an accessible ramp, and stairs create a gateway to the City from the Sammamish River Trail and provide for an iconic entry to the Connector and higher ground.

Redmond Way Crossing is an oddly introverted experience despite its perch, unlike the Sammamish River trestle, and becomes an opportunity for art to both benefit from and mitigate the obscured quality of crossing the bridge, perhaps including lighting and a cover over the bridge. (Eventually this bridge might be replaced due to a stormwater and road regrading project allowing increased transparency and improved views to the City.)

Perches provide areas for escape and pause from the trail, cantilevering off the higher ground and providing views to the surrounding community.

Stairs connect streets and mid-block access points to the trail; in time, potentially linking to adjacent redeveloped properties.

# THE STATION

2012

2016

2025



EXISTING TODAY....





TRANSITIONING TO **2016**



TRANSITIONING TO **2025**



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

# THE STATION

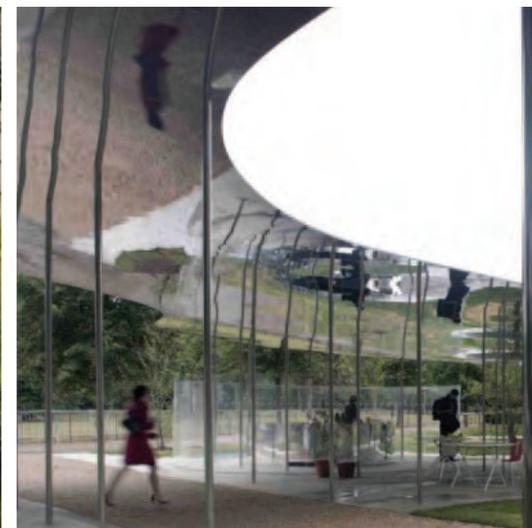
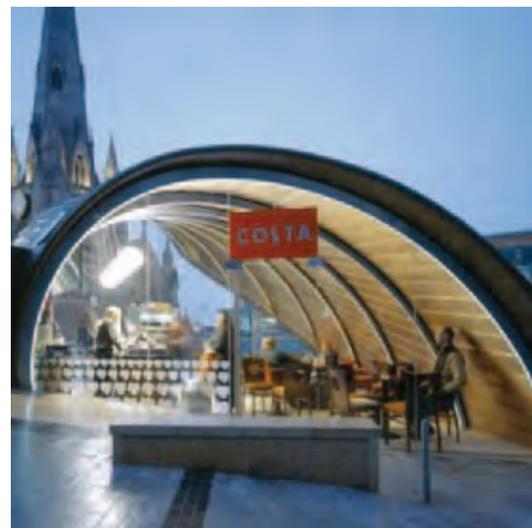
The station block will ultimately be the most intensively used of the Redmond Central Connector as it becomes the terminus for East Link Light Rail, bringing thousands of riders a day. Until light rail arrives, the block is a valued link between Downtown and Redmond Town Center. The block also links Downtown with the recreational riches of the City, connecting to the Heron Rookery, the Town Center Open Space, and the Bear Creek and Sammamish River Trails. In setting the tone for the future light rail station, the design for the block includes a paved linear plaza that incorporates the mixed-use trail along with canopies and retail

pavilions with station-like architectural character. The future light rail station is “claimed” with playful topography and planting interconnected with paths and canopies suggestive of the spacing and rhythm of the future platform. This space is envisioned as an art platform for displaying works created by artists in the community and with the community, and becoming a tool to promote and build support for the Redmond Connector.

2012

2016

2025



Evergreen groves are used throughout, providing year-round visual interest and buffering, bringing their ever-visible presence in Redmond into the heart of the City.

The rhythm of ties increases approaching the end of the park blocks, intuitively warning and slowing those on the Connector approaching intersection points.

Ties reach out into the community, including connecting the future Downtown Park north of Cleveland Street.

Brown Street is transformed to a shared street where cars and pedestrians safely co-mingle, and its design draws people between Downtown Central Park on Cleveland Street and the Connector.

Brown Street "Jewelbox" provides a small-scale retail pavilion to infuse the Connector with commerce and its associated vitality and strengthens the connection to Cleveland Street.



New buildings provide service/parking entry at mid-block connections between Cleveland Street and the Connector.

Artfully designed canopies provide weather protection, places for gathering, potential uses for Saturday Market vendors or other street vendors, and opportunities for inspired lighting to welcome Connector users in all weather and conditions.

An interim forest edge of densely planted trees encloses the south edge of the Connector on the City-owned former King County shop site. This will provide a visual buffer to any interim uses, such as a proposed temporary parking lot.

As a City-owned property, the "Shop Site" can be graded and prepared for any number of interim uses, from a grassy meadow that can become an interim home to Redmond events (Saturday Market, art sales, Derby Days, etc.) or an interim parking lot. However, the long-term goal for this property is for a performing arts center or similar civic use that will provide an economic benefit to the City.

A single iconic "Heritage Tree" becomes a visual terminus of both the higher ground and the Downtown section of the Connector.

The new 161st Avenue NE intersection provides connections to and from the Heron Rookery trail that provides a southern connection to Dudley Carter Park and the Sammamish River Trail as well as a northern connection to Cleveland Street and Old Town.

The future light rail station is occupied by landscaped mounds and depressions (potential rain gardens) interconnected with paths and canopies suggestive of the spacing and rhythm of the future station platform, while creating an interim "art platform" for displaying works created by artists in the community.

As the visual terminus of Brown Street, a grassy berm invites interaction, seating for planned or spontaneous events and a passive spot for escape.



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

# THE PROMENADE

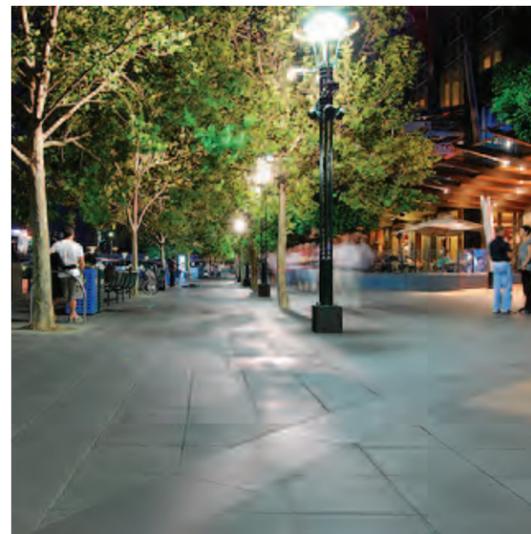
2012

2016

2025

The promenade block has the opportunity to be the most urban of the Redmond Central Connector, particularly in the near-term, forging a strong link between the historic heart of Redmond and Redmond Town Center. This block is a space infused with art, commerce and activity, making it a connection as well as a destination with spaces for people to gather and stroll. The role of adjacent developments immediately abutting this block and close by is critical, providing retail and commercial frontages that enliven the Connector with uses that invite people in and encourage them to linger. With the intensity of use and activity on

these blocks, the Connector is predominately paved with the character of an urban plaza through which the mixed-use trail has been routed and delineated, but also integrated. The design creates conditions that allow for safe bike and pedestrian behavior for such an intensively used “mixing zone.” Planting is used strategically to shape behavior and provide the greatest impact and experience. This softscape is also an important element on the southern edge of the corridor in the near term as a buffer to NE 76th Street, while also occupying the future light rail transit way, minimizing investment in areas that would ultimately be removed.



The Gilman landing is a visual endpoint to Gilman Street and becomes a significant "event" and gathering space on the promenade. It is predominately hardscape with strategically placed natural element intended to soften the space.

The Leary Way "Jewelbox" provides a small-scale retail pavilion as an iconic contemporary commercial building located in the NW corner of the block that can be an icon for the forward-looking quality of the Redmond Connector, and possibly a catalyst to move the Connector forward to reality.

Adjacent buildings are encouraged to seamlessly blend with the Connector, providing an "activity zone" charged with energy from commerce within the building.

The Promenade is a mixed-use space that includes the trail corridor and opportunities for parallel secondary pedestrian circulation routes.



Islands of vegetation buffer the corridor experience from vehicular street traffic, while creating eddies for small gathering spaces, seating, and art elements.

The Leary Way intersection offers safe crossing for pedestrians and is a key element in tying Redmond's historic Downtown to Redmond Town Center, creating a strong connection all the way from Cleveland Street to the Justice White House.

Justice White House is a historical and architectural gem across from the SW corner of this block and is embraced by the Connector as materials and design elements "jump" NE 76th Street and engage the house, strengthening it as the gateway to the City. Its historic architecture is a complimentary juxtaposition to the Leary Way Jewelbox across.

Art walls/screens provide seating and become eddies for small gathering and aesthetic focal points moving down the Connector.

Gilman Street becomes a shared street, safely mixing cars and pedestrians, providing public parking, rain gardens, and meeting the operations and access needs of adjacent buildings.

# OPEN SPACE

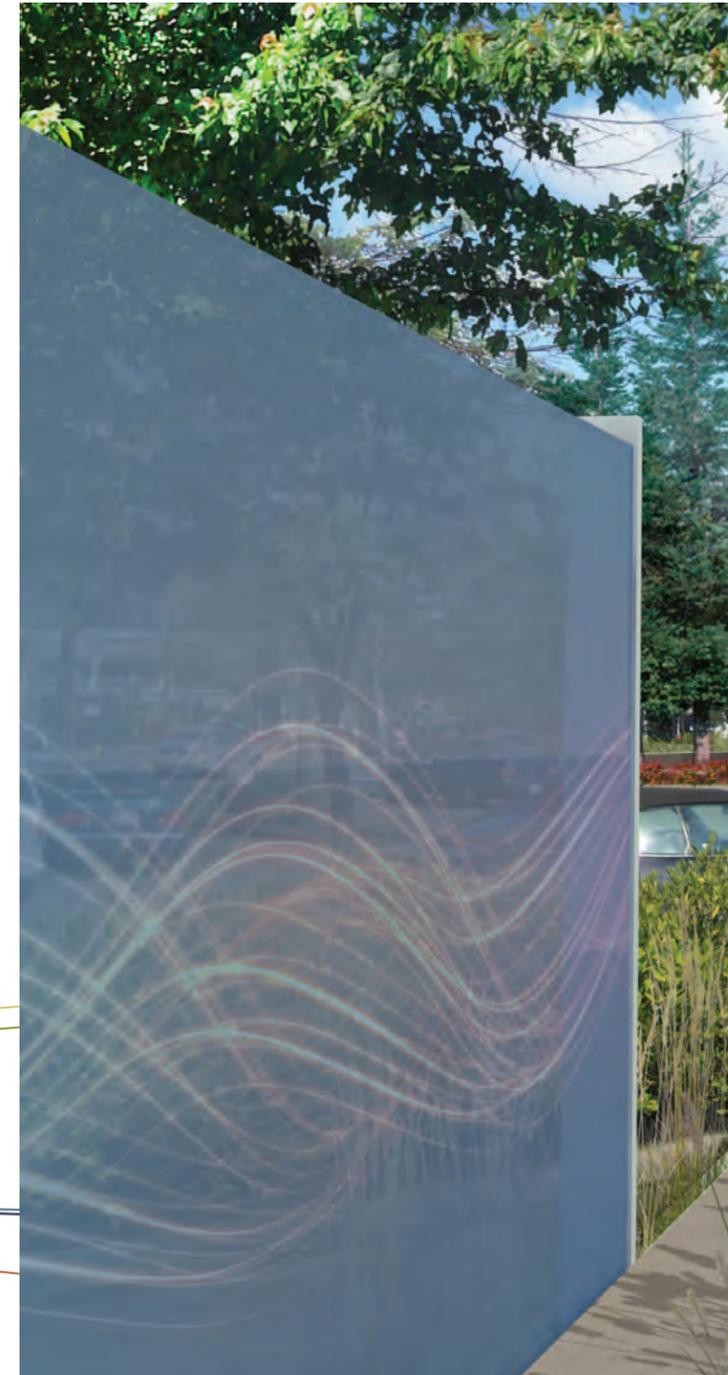
2012

2016

2025



EXISTING TODAY....





TRANSITIONING TO **2016**



TRANSITIONING TO 2025



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

## OPEN SPACE

2012

2016

2025

The open space is unique along the Downtown portion of the Redmond Connector. While the majority of the Connector is bordered on the south by NE 76th Street (and eventually light rail) and the north is bordered by private development rising to 65 feet and potentially higher, this block opens to Cleveland Street, providing a welcomed relief along the corridor. While the width and area of the Connector does not significantly increase, the perception of width and openness greatly increases because of the adjacent street rights-of-way including Cleveland Street and 166th Avenue NE. The design celebrates and builds on the

feeling of openness and the activity from the three adjacent streetscapes creating the biggest gathering space of the Connector and the opportunity to make this space the biggest “landing” along the Connector. The design seeks to be very deliberate and conscious of not “filling” this open space unnecessarily with clutter, but using vertical and overhead elements strategically to capture the sky. The open space is also unique in that the City controls most of its edges in existing conditions (as right-of-way) making it a candidate for this to be one of the first permanent art/landing features to be developed.



The 164th Avenue NE crossing has a different character than all other crossings, with a reduced width and speed for vehicles and wider, potentially non-signalized crossings for those on the trail corridor.

164th Avenue NE is a slower speed shared street, where cars and non-motorized users safely coexist. This character may extend to the south matching the character of NE 74th Street as it passes through Redmond Town Center's center court.

The existing surface parking on the corridor is partially maintained, though the southern reach is eliminated to allow near-term use of the full expanse between Cleveland Street and NE 76th Street.

New conifers and deciduous trees buffer the remaining surface parking lot.

The Cleveland Street sidewalk is routed through the open space while a secondary pedestrian connection is maintained along the Cleveland Street curb.



A depressed rain garden provides a buffer along Cleveland Street without introducing a vertical obstruction.

Existing conifers are maintained buffering the open space for 166th Avenue NE.

A large, predominately hardscape area anchors the open space providing room for gathering and events.

Vertical art/screen elements create a visual buffer of surface parking to the north and provide seating elements that reinforce views to the south and up and down the Connector while becoming eddies of small gathering and an aesthetic focal point moving down the Connector.

Artistically designed canopy islands provide cover in wet weather and shade in hot weather for those moving along the Connector as well as providing places for pause and small gatherings.

The designated route of the multi-use trail is on the southern side of the site, allowing a gathering space to occur to the north between the trail and Cleveland Street.

Planting and earth-formed mounds provide visual interest to the Connector's southern edge while also buffering NE 76th Street.



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD STROLL

Of all the Redmond Central Connector zones in the Downtown Study Area, this stretch is likely to see the greatest change from existing conditions. In its existing state, the north edge of the corridor is predominately low density commercial development surrounded by expansive surface parking lots, many of which are on City-owned Connector property. It is assumed redevelopment of these properties to the north is likely to occur over the next several years, bringing much taller and denser development. The master plan also assumes that when redeveloped, these projects will face onto the Connector, yet will do so with an increasingly residential character such as urban townhomes and live/work lofts. The Connector's character on this block reflects the transition from the more intensive areas to the west including commercial activity. This block, which will

eventually be separated into two blocks, is defined by more softscape and reduced hardscape, becoming more park-like. With this increased softscape and planting come more opportunities for rain gardens and other low impact development strategies to have a bigger visual presence and become larger functioning systems. As this new development takes shape, surface parking will transition back for the Connector's use as public space. Because of the evolving and unpredictable nature of redevelopment of the adjacent properties, the design for the Connector focuses on claiming the trail alignment and creating a framework for future landings and other design elements to frame the character of the space and evolve over time.

2012

2016

2025



Landings begin to claim the space in an interim form (until redevelopment of adjacent sites) with a combination of playful topography, planting, paving and interim or curated art, all inviting interaction and play.

Existing surface parking lots on the City-owned property are assumed to remain on a short-term basis, but cease with redevelopment of the properties prior to construction of light rail.

Art/screen elements along the north side of the trail provide visual relief from adjacent parking and back-of-building uses, focusing views down the corridor and to the south.



Rain gardens become gateways to the neighborhood blocks and may potentially form an interconnected system flowing east to existing wetland systems and Bear Creek beyond.

A plaza with raised planters, seat walls and specialty paving provides cues for the trail users coming from the east to their arrival in an increasingly urban and high traffic area while also providing places for small gatherings and setting the tone for future Connector improvements to come.

Tie elements bring a rhythm to the trail that honors the future completion of the Downtown street grid, increasing in frequency, then stopping at the location of the future Avondale Way extension crossing.

A small plaza with planting and specialty paving creates an urban gateway to the Connector for those arriving from the east.

# CREEKSIDE

2012

2016

2025



EXISTING TODAY....





TRANSITIONING TO **2016**



TRANSITIONING TO **2025**



DOWNTOWN KEY MAP

## CREEKSIDE

From 170th Avenue NE to Bear Creek, the Redmond Central Connector is enveloped in nature, and in combination with the higher ground zone, forms a bookend that immerses trail users in a natural character and creates a transition to and from the urban environment of Downtown. A landing at the intersection with Bear Creek Trail alerts those passing that the Redmond Connector is a unique urban trail, and invites those wanting such an urban experience into Downtown. The trail reclaims the historic railroad grade, and existing wetlands adjacent to the trail are enhanced with new plantings of native trees and shrubs that buffer trail users from the service side of adjacent buildings and businesses.

2012

2016

2025





# THE REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR'S EVOLUTION

## THE REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR'S EVOLUTION

**2012...**The first phase of development will occur in 2012, which will include a trail connection from Bear Creek to the Sammamish River. The trail will claim the alignment of the 2016 vision by building a 12-foot paved trail with 2-foot shoulders. A goal of Phase 1 is to make the corridor feel like the urban trail it is envisioned to be, but to do so before the Connector has the urban critical mass to which the master plan is designed. Key elements include:

- Trail amenities intended to welcome a full spectrum of trail users, including all skill levels of cyclists, pedestrians and other wheeled users.
- Permanent or interim paving materials and finishes will provide a desired level of "friction," mimicking the character of the intensively mixed-use trail that it will ultimately become.
- Some ties are integrated into and abutting the trail, possibly with interim treatment, particularly at areas near intersections, intuitively warning and slowing trail users as they approach areas of potential conflict.
- Limited planting, specialty paving, and furnishings will provide interest and places for pause along the trail and suggest the more developed corridor that is to come.
- Interim art and playful grading is used to claim future landings and open space adjacent to the trail.

The resulting first phase of the Redmond Central Connector will be firmly anchored in the realities of making a safe and functional connection between Bear Creek and the Sammamish River, yet also designed to the highest ideals and laying a foundation for the future.



**2016...** The Connector is built out to the degree the City can control it, respecting existing limitations and boundaries and laying the groundwork to shape future improvements, as described in the previous section.

**2025...**As a result of forward-looking planning, adjacent private properties have largely been redeveloped in keeping with the vision of the Redmond Central Connector Master Plan. Close coordination with Sound Transit has resulted in a light rail line along the corridor that adds visual interest and enlivens all Downtown with its thousands of daily riders. In spite of all the change, the design framework established in 2016 and 2012 remains largely intact. Key elements in this evolution include:

- A side-running transit way of just under 30 feet in width creates the corridor’s southern edge, replacing what was predominately interim green space buffering NE 76th Street.
- Surface parking lots and other private uses that once encroached on the Connector have been reclaimed as public open space.
- Adjacent properties have been redeveloped, fronting on the Connector and enlivening it with compatible commerce or residential uses.
- NE 76th Street is reconfigured, likely eliminating the center turn lane/median to allow for transit way width with consideration of bicycle accommodations, such as sharrows, bike lanes, or bikeway to accommodate advanced riders who might choose to avoid the slower speeds and conflicts of a multi-use trail.
- Poles and catenary structures providing electrical supply to rail are typically centered between tracks. However, they could be located to one side or other with longer cantilevered arms and could provide an artistic element or be designed in theme with the corridor.
- Trail routing at intersections is reconfigured to the north and intersections re-signalized for control with the addition of light rail trains to the corridor.

While more distant, the 2025 vision provides an ideal build-out of the corridor providing guidance for future decision makers and development to fully realize the potential of the Redmond Central Connector.

