



OneRedmond Advocacy Update 2024: Volume 1

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At the local level, OneRedmond meets with our small business members to learn of their needs in our community and communicate these concerns to the City to work on finding resolutions. So far, this year's top issues include parking and public safety.

As the city of Redmond continues to grow and densify, parking has become more scarce affecting the accessibility and mobility of people and businesses. To address this issue, the City of Redmond implemented new parking policies with the goal of increasing the availability and turnover of parking spaces for customers and visitors. As this new policy has come into effect, both positive feedback has been expressed by downtown shoppers and a few challenges have been identified. The City is committed to working with the business community to resolve these issues and OneRedmond is helping to facilitate that dialog. Currently the City is seeking feedback through this questionnaire: <https://www.letsconnectredmond.com/tmp>. Learn more and share your thoughts!

Public safety, and in particular retail theft, is another concern we hear about in the small business community. At the OneRedmond Government Affairs meeting this last week, Chief Lowe was one of our featured guests. He gave a review of last year's crime rate, and talked about some new programs that are being considered including a drone program.

Chief Lowe explained that Redmond has seen a 31% population growth over the last ten years, but there has been no increase in police department numbers. Currently, the department has one hundred officers but needs to add twelve. The City is evaluating budget options to fund the notable expense of increasing the number of officers.

At the Regional level, the 2Line is coming! Formerly known as Eastlink, the 2Line's grand opening will take place on Saturday, April 27th. OneRedmond is partnered with Centro Cultural Mexicano to coordinate the programming at the Redmond Technology Station. Stay tuned for more details as we celebrate light rail and our community. Special thanks to Microsoft who is adding many extras to this event. You won't want to miss it!

At the state level, OneRedmond continues to work with our State leadership to support the needs of small businesses and our community. On Wednesday March 7th, the Washington State Legislature session adjourned Sine Die. As a supplemental budget year, this budget provides updates to the 2023-2025 biennial budget passed last session. This year's main focus areas included behavioral health, climate change, housing & homelessness, and K-12 education.

State economists are projecting a healthy balance of \$2.7 billion at the end of 2023-2025, with total reserves projected at \$4 billion. This left some room for the Legislature to make new investments in this proposed 2024 supplemental budget.

A year ago the Legislature approved a \$69.8 billion Operating budget to fund education, mental health services, health care, public safety and much more through June 2025. During this last session, House and Senate budget writers revealed their intent to spend another \$2.1 billion in the next 16 months. About half is for "maintenance level" costs for government

activities already underway and the other half is for new policy investments. Of note, the Legislature also invested \$249 million from the Climate Commitment Act funding. These are proceeds from sales of emission allowances to the state's largest polluters. Because of a pending ballot initiative to erase the law, some of these funds can't be spent until January when voters' decision is known.

At the federal level, OneRedmond met with Congressional Member Kim Schrier to talk about the needs in our small business community. As always, OneRedmond helps our congressional members in a variety of ways, including identifying businesses to participate in roundtables, and supplying economic data surrounding the needs and opportunities for our region. As the only public/private economic development entity in East King County, we have been an ongoing resource for our leaders.