



Revitalizing the Redwoods

Questions & Answers

OVERVIEW

Q. What is the Revitalization Project?

A multi-year, \$32.8 million project to restore and modernize the 40 year old campus. It includes:

- Modernization and rehabilitation of Independent Living Units
- Improved dining room and kitchen
- New center for vitality, fitness and wellness
- New café
- New entry and lobby
- Improved transportation systems
- Green campus grounds

Q. Why Revitalize?

The Redwoods is an aging facility. We need to replace and restore – just like you would in your own home over time. But, we are doing more than that – we are modernizing.

We need to Revitalize so that we can meet the needs and desires of both current residents and the next generation of seniors. There will always be a need for retirement communities where the units are smaller and therefore more affordable for the low and moderate income seniors that we serve.

With the increase in older adults and the limited affordable senior housing that is available, communities like The Redwoods are more important than ever - to seniors, to their families, and to the broader community.

Q. How long will the project take?

We began in December 2013 and it will take about 24 months to complete the project. We are purposely doing this in phases to make it as easy as possible on our residents. Asking our residents to move off campus or forgo activities would just not be consistent with our philosophy. Life has to go on!

Q. What about adding more affordable housing?

Additional affordable living units will be added during a second phase. We have already held preliminary meetings with the City; detailed planning will start this summer. Construction would begin in 2016, pending City approvals.

The current Revitalization phase includes the preservation of 60 HUD subsidized apartments for very low and extremely low income residents. Restoring and modernizing the facility is just as critical for current residents (many of who are considered low or moderate income) as it is for future residents.

Q. Will the existing Independent Living Units be enlarged?

Many of our residents like having a smaller, more affordable unit, even if it is smaller than their previous home. They consider their apartment their bedroom and kitchen, but the common areas of The Redwoods as their living room. So, it meets their needs - they rent a more affordable place and can then use their resources for trips and other activities.

- The one bedroom units will remain the same in square footage, but they will be more functional, with larger and more modern kitchens, and showers instead of bathtubs.
- The plan includes creating two, 2 bedroom units, primarily to accommodate couples –of which we are seeing more.
- Over time, we may add additional 2 bedroom units, based on residents’ needs.

Q. What are you doing to make this a “green” project?

We are very committed to making this an environmentally sensitive project. This is a LEED equivalent project which meets the City of Mill Valley’s requirements. Our plan includes:

- Photo voltaic solar panels
- Low or no emission materials in construction
- Low-energy lighting throughout
- Double pane windows that will keep in the heat
- Landscaping that will use more native plants requiring minimal watering

Q. What about parking?

During construction, we will be losing about 10 parking spaces. Mt Tamalpais Methodist Church, which is just down the street, has given us 10 parking spaces to replace the lost spaces. Additionally, we recently added a second van for transporting residents.

We now have transportation to stores, doctors’ appointments and special excursions seven days a week. This is a free service to our residents. We are also encouraging those who still have cars but are not using them to sell their vehicles – thus freeing up parking spaces for active drivers.

Q. Why are you rebuilding on site rather than moving someplace else?

This would be most costlier than we could afford. Also, all of the residents would need to move for a long period, which would be very disruptive – they would be leaving their home. Staying in the current site makes the most sense.

Q. What about the rising water levels in the wetlands?

- We are planning to raise the path that is closest to the wetlands by 1-3 feet as the elevation varies– this path currently floods at high tides.
- The Wellness / Café additions will be built to match the existing main building, which is 11’ above sea level.
- The other existing building near the wetlands is 9.8’ above sea level.
- Our auditorium is 10’ above sea level.

If the City, County and State need The Redwoods to take further actions, such as adding a retaining wall, we would work with them to do just that.

THE REDWOODS RESIDENTS

Q. What will happen to residents when their units are being upgraded?

Minimizing disruption to our residents has been foremost in our minds as we have planned this project. We know that this can be tough, especially for people in the 90’s and over, so we are taking special efforts to make it as easy on them as possible. That is the primary reason we are doing this in phases and over a two year period.

- We have a special coordinator who helps with the planning.
- When a resident’s unit is being renovated, he/she will be temporarily relocated to another unit.
- The residents on the floors above the units under construction will have a number of places they can go during the day to get away from the noise, including:
 - a special quiet room with comfortable, stress-less chairs and footstools
 - several other lounges throughout the facility
 - the library

Also, we will offer them lunch and extra activities and excursions as well as headphones to block construction noise.

They will continue to pay rent – we are a not-for-profit organization and cannot afford to forgive rents; our residents understand this.

Q. What are the safety benefits of Revitalization?

The safety of our residents is always our #1 priority. Forty years ago, when The Redwoods was built, it met the safety standards of the time. Now, we know more about how to ensure a safe environment.

Examples of the safety enhancements that will be made:

- Showers will be installed in the Independent Living Unit apartments. (They currently have bathtubs – a fall risk for seniors – a risk not just here, but everywhere.)
- Addition of a therapy pool and hot tub
- More senior-friendly exercise equipment to help with fall prevention

Q. What do the residents think about Revitalization? Have they had input?

The vast majority of our residents are supportive – if not enthusiastic – about Revitalization. We have kept them informed and involved all the way.

- Early on, a number of focus groups were held over a period of months and included residents, board members and staff.
- For more than a year, the CEO conducted monthly meetings with residents to describe the project in great detail.

The input from the focus groups and the monthly updates was invaluable, and resulted in some of the specific plans, such as increasing the size of the kitchen in the Independent Living Unit apartments and redesigning the courtyard furnishings and landscaping behind the wellness center.

There is a lot of excitement about the center for vitality, fitness and wellness.

- Eighty percent of our residents live with chronic pain and many are at high fall risk. Even going down the street to the Mill Valley Community Center can be difficult for some residents.
- Having our own, top notch fitness and wellness facility on the campus and with equipment and flooring designed especially for seniors is going to be a real plus.

Q. Will residents' rents be increased as a result of the modernization?

Affordability will always be part of our mission. Over 12 years ago, in anticipation of Revitalization and its costs, we gradually began to adjust rents so that they would more closely reach market standards for low/moderate senior housing and services.

- Generally, rents increase 3 – 4% per year; beyond that, we have no plans to increase rent for our current residents.
- New residents who move in after the completion of construction will come in at a higher rate (about 15% more), but it will still be affordable.

OUR NEIGHBORS

Q. What are you doing to minimize disruption to the commercial and residential neighbors during construction?

The Redwoods has always enjoyed positive relationships with our neighbors. This includes both residential and commercial neighbors. We value these relationships and are working closely with the City and our contractors to minimize disruption during construction.

For example:

- We are limiting the number of construction vehicles on site at any one time (max 15 – 20) and they will be parking on site.
- Because this is a phased project, we won't be having hundreds of workers on site at any one time.
- Trucks won't come onto the campus until 8:30 am so as not to disrupt or disturb our neighbors, the students arriving at Tam High School, or our residents early in the morning.
- Construction will be finished by 5 pm every day and will not occur on weekends.

FINANCING AND FUNDRAISING

Q How much will the project cost, and how is it being financed?

This first phase will cost an estimated \$32.8 million. The majority of the financing has already been raised:

- \$28.2 million from bond financing
- \$2 million from the Redwoods' reserves
- We have a \$2.6 million Capital Campaign underway and as of February 2014 have just under \$1 million left to raise to reach that goal.

We have already raised \$1.6 million in donations from residents and family members, other individuals, foundations and corporations. For example, as of February 2014, residents and their families have donated an impressive \$250,000 and 100% of The Redwoods Board of Directors has donated for a total of \$150,000.

Q. Are you going to be seeking financial support from the community?

Yes! With just under \$1 million left to raise, we seek the community's help to reach our campaign goal. Given the strong support that The Redwoods enjoys from the community, we are confident that we will be able to raise this final amount.

- Gifts of all sizes will be most appreciated.
- Naming opportunities still remain for larger gifts (\$2,500 and above).
- All gifts of \$500 and above will be acknowledged on the Revitalization Campaign Donor Wall.

Q. Why should someone donate if they don't have a family member who lives (or lived) at The Redwoods?

The Redwoods is a vital asset to this community, whether or not you have a relative who lives or has lived here. It is part of making sure we have a strong community –just like people who don't have children in school will donate to the schools, or people who don't use the hospital will donate to a hospital. People give to The Redwoods to support the heart of our community.

Q. If I want to donate to the Revitalization Campaign, what do I do?

Send your check to The Redwoods, 40 Camino Alto, Mill Valley, CA 94941 or donate by credit card online at www.theredwoods.org.

If you have any questions, please contact our Development Office at 415-383-2741, ext. 267. We welcome your gift at any level!

March 2014