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\$20 million rec center is first step for Redmond church

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Image courtesy of Fourfold Architecture [\[enlarge\]](#)

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The Washington Cathedral Church in Redmond plans to complete construction on the \$20 million Randy & Rod Halvorson Recreation Center in October. The center, a 40,000-square-foot building, is the first part in the completion of a 10-year master plan.

The center, on Woodinville-Redmond Road, is a multiuse space built into the side of a hill. When finished, it will have a swimming pool, gymnasium, theatre, library, commercial kitchen, baby nursery, music room, meeting rooms, counseling offices, administrative offices and other rooms. It is two stories, with a mezzanine.

Linda Skinner, COO and pastor at Washington Cathedral, said it has been a church dream to have a large community space since it was formed in 1984. At the same time church members and athletic directors Randy and Rod Halvorson, brothers with Duchenne muscular

dystrophy, wanted a space that was designed so others with special needs could benefit from athletic activities like they had. “Those two dreams kind of collided and boom! We had the Randy and Rod Halvorson Recreation Center,” Skinner said.

The Halvorson brothers are two of the oldest surviving people with the condition in the world, church officials say.

The center is designed to be totally accessible to those with special needs. Ramps throughout the building will allow wheelchairs to move freely. The pool is a zero entry pool, meaning people that use walkers or wheel chairs can enter it without having to be lifted. Skinner said the pool will be the first zero entry pool on the Eastside that is also public.

The whole recreation center, and its many services from free tutoring to counseling, will be open to the public. Skinner said it is part of the church's mission to provide services to its community. “That's just part of who we feel as Christians we should be. Not just sitting in our ivory tower but actually reaching out to the community and touching people's lives.”

The architect on the project is Fourfold Architecture. The general contractor is E. Kent Halvorson, brother to Randy and Rod Halvorson.

Troy Howe, principal in charge with Fourfold Architecture, said the city of Redmond recognized the project's benefit to the community so it worked to help the team through the process. Nevertheless, Redmond required it review the entire master plan and issue a conditional use permit for the 15-acre site before it approved the recreation center. The master plan took about a year and a half to develop.

The master plan calls for an additional 94,000 square feet of space stretching over four buildings. When complete there will be a building housing seniors with an outpatient clinic for volunteer doctors; a new sanctuary; a primary school from preschool to elementary; and another multipurpose building with a focus on continuing education and job training. The site currently has a 10,000-square-foot worship center on it. It also has a functioning dairy and ice cream shop on it that was there when the church bought the land.

Howe said it was a challenge to design a building with so many different uses, but it was also a challenge for the city to permit. “The uses didn't neatly fit into any codes that the city had so we were kind

of defining stuff the city had never worked with before.”

The plan was approved in early 2006 and work began on the recreation center about the same time. The church has 10 years to complete all the projects approved in the master plan, otherwise it will have to apply for another permit.

As part of the recreation center, the team is completing infrastructure work for the entire site including parking, utility work, transportation and much of the stormwater systems. That's why the price tag for this first phase of work is so hefty, Skinner said.

The church also focuses on a number of environmental aspects. Scott Becker, principal designer of the center with Fourfold, said building into the hill allowed the project to decrease its heat load from the sun and better control lighting. It was also more economical than grading a space for the building, and allowed the project to avoid stairs for the entries, which are located on the slope.

The stormwater system of on site retention ponds is designed to look like waterfalls, a theme of the church. Some runoff is reused in irrigation. Other green features include use of energy efficient lighting and motion sensing and light sensing systems, and recycled and locally manufactured materials.

The project team on the recreation center included E. Kent Halvorson, contractor; Fourfold Architecture, architect; D'Amato Conversano, structural engineer; Interface Engineering, electrical engineer; DB Engineering, mechanical engineer; and RDH Building Sciences, as building envelope engineer.

The project team for the site design and master plan included E. Kent Halvorson, contractor; Fourfold Architecture, architect; The Berger Partnership, landscape architect; 2020 Engineering, civil engineer, on site; Site Development Associates, civil engineer, off site; Transportation Engineers NorthWest, transportation engineer; GeoEngineers, geotechnical engineer; and Duane Hartman and Associates, surveyor.

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