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# THE REDMOND Spokesman

A special good morning to subscriber D. Evans

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## Cascade East Transit to launch pilot bus routes in Redmond



Leo Baudhuin/Redmond Spokesman

A passenger boards a bus in Redmond on Thursday, July 21 to Bend.

BY LEO BAUDHUIN • Redmond Spokesman

Redmond is slated to launch two bus routes in the city next year, a first step toward what could soon be a fully functioning public transportation system in the city.

“Redmond is growing,” said Derek Hofbauer, the outreach and engagement administrator at Cascade East Transit and Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council. “It needs a better transit system to support the population.”

Each bus will each have 18 seats, with an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible ramp that lowers to the ground to allow people in wheelchairs to board.

The buses will loop through northeast and southeast Redmond, hitting stops that include Walmart, the senior center, Redmond Hub and the Redmond Airport. The routes follow a flex model, which means that drivers are able to deviate up to a half mile from a fixed route to pick up or drop off passengers who call in to request service ahead of time.

CET currently provides Redmond with connecting buses to Bend, Madras, Prineville and Sisters. Within the city, there’s a dial-a-ride, a shared service that provides rides on demand from 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays. Although those services are available to the general public, passengers must schedule their trips at least 24 hours in advance.

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## As pandemic winds down, downtown businesses bounce back

BY LEO BAUDHUIN

Redmond Spokesman

After a couple years of social distancing, mask mandates and other COVID-19 regulations, Redmond’s downtown is bustling and open for business.

A handful of new businesses are taking the opportunity to establish themselves in the community as foot traffic and indoor dining return.

Redmond economic development and urban renewal manager Chuck Arnold said the city lost its fair share of businesses to the pandemic, both due to a lack of customers and a change in attitude among entrepreneurs.

“This happened all over the world,” he said. “(It was) an opportunity to assess: Is this exactly what I want to be doing?”

For some people, that answer was no. But those decisions offered opportunities for a new generation of business owners.

“Conversely, you had a large group of people that said, ‘I don’t really want to work for somebody else anymore,’” Arnold said. “Now’s the time for me to pursue my dream.”

From food carts to storefronts, they did. The new downtown businesses include bars and community spaces like Otto’s Landing and retail spots like the kitchen store Arome.

Arnold said about 100 restaurant and retail locations are currently occupied in downtown Redmond — roughly 88% of total storefronts.

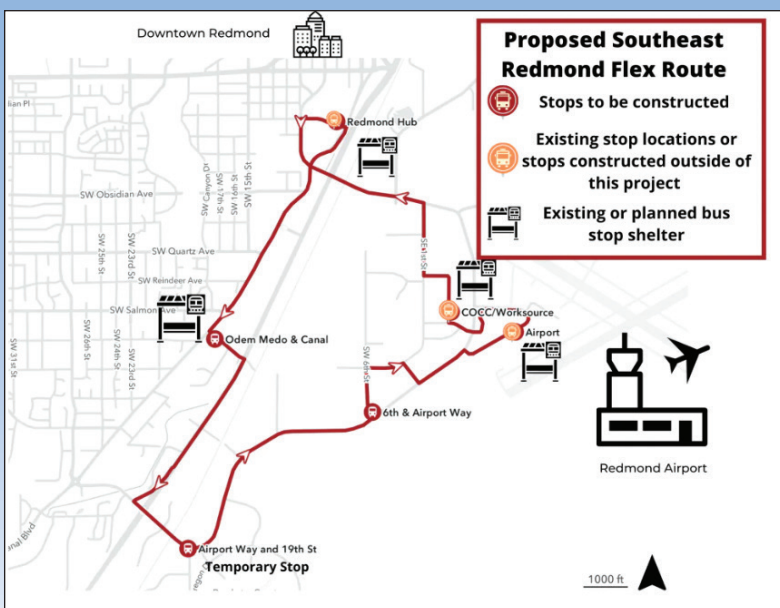
### Otto’s Landing

Otto’s Landing opened its doors at 652 NW Seventh St. just under two months ago. The space features indoor and outdoor seating, with four food carts available outdoors for dining and a bar and televisions to watch live sports inside. The second floor of the premises, which includes some pool tables, are reserved for those ages 21 and up. The first floor boasts arcade games and a children’s play area.

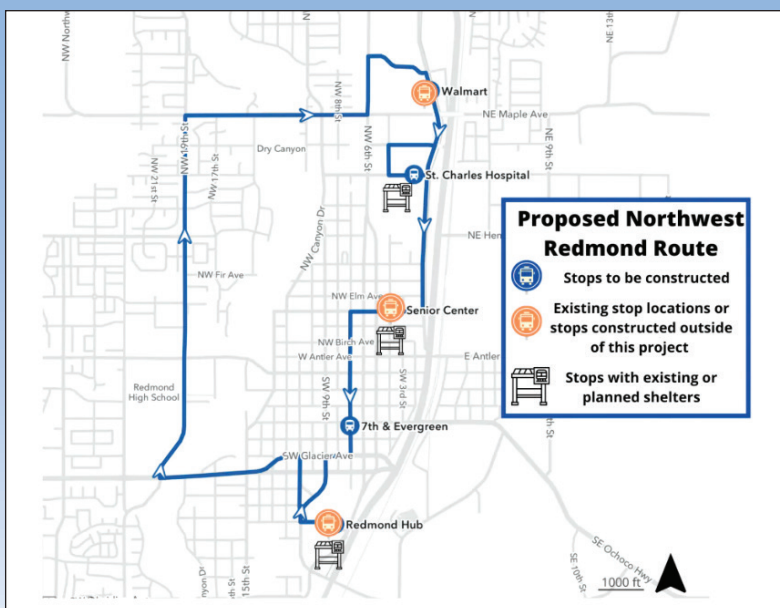
“It’s hard to find a spot for kids if you’re a young family,” Otto’s owner Nick Olson said. “The kid room was my wife’s idea of having a space where kids can be kids and play and have fun,” while still allowing adults a space to be adults.

The pandemic wasn’t a huge issue for Otto’s. Owners took the peak of the pandemic as an opportunity to plan and build the space they wanted — and then open as pandemic restrictions eased.

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Proposed bus routes.



City of Redmond

## REDMOND

# Expion360 looks to build \$450M facility

BY MICHAEL KOHN  
CO Media Group

Redmond-based Lithium battery producer Expion360 Inc. has unveiled plans for a \$450 million facility to be built close to the company’s current headquarters on the southern outskirts of the city. It’s a big bet for a small company but one that could pay large dividends to Central Oregon in the form of jobs and taxes.

Expion360 plans to produce 250,000 to 500,000 lithium cells a day and occupy a roughly 100-acre campus, according to company founder John Yozamp. Plans remain tentative as Expion360 has yet to purchase the land it needs for the project.

Expion360, founded in 2016, is trying to move its lithium cell production

from China during an unprecedented era of global supply chain breakdowns. Yozamp says that producing lithium batteries in the U.S. gives him a tighter grip on the lithium cell supply chain, heading off bottlenecks and delays associated with overseas production.

“The focus of our company is to control our supply chain vertically,” said Yozamp, who previously founded Zamp Solar, a Bend-based company that builds portable solar panels for RVs and outdoor recreational use.

The proposed facility would also take a sizable footprint in the city. At one million square feet, the new building will be equivalent to about seven Costcos put together.

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Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Chris Finlaw processes lithium batteries at Expion360 in Redmond on July 14.

The Spokesman uses recycled newspaper

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