



REDMOND RENTER AFFORDABILITY SNAPSHOT

How typical rents compare to typical incomes — and where renter pressure is concentrated

This snapshot examines renter affordability conditions in Redmond, Washington using 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) data. It combines renter burden, rent-to-income ratios, and renter concentration to highlight neighborhoods where renters face the greatest pressure. The goal is not to provide an exhaustive housing needs assessment, but a concise view of where affordability risk is emerging and where targeted strategies could have the greatest impact.

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1. Problem Statement

Redmond is a fast-growing midsize city in the Seattle metro where high incomes and job concentration can mask renter vulnerability. Despite strong economic fundamentals, renter affordability stress is substantial and unevenly distributed. Citywide, about **32.9% of renter households** (roughly **6,009 of 18,279**) pay **30% or more of income toward rent**, signaling meaningful affordability pressure even in a high-opportunity context. Median gross rent is **\$2,332 per month**, while median household income is **\$166,056**, producing a median rent-to-income ratio of **17.2%**. Importantly, renters make up **about half of occupied housing units (49.3%)**, meaning affordability conditions affect a large and central share of Redmond residents. These patterns point to neighborhood-level “pressure points” where renters face heightened risk and where targeted stabilization strategies can prevent displacement.

Key Numbers: Citywide Renter Affordability at a Glance (2023)

***Renter households:** 18,279*

***Cost-burdened renters (≥30% of income):** 6,009*

***Citywide rent-burden rate:** 32.9%*

***Median gross rent:** \$2,332 per month*

***Median household income:** \$166,056*

***Typical rent as share of typical income:** 17.2%*

***Renter share of occupied housing units:** 49.3%*

Methodology and Attribution

Data for this analysis were obtained from the 2023 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau) and 2023 TIGER/Line geographic files. Data processing and analysis were conducted in R using the tidycensus, sf, tidyverse, and tigris packages. Maps were produced in QGIS with basemap data © OpenStreetMap contributors under the Open Database License (ODbL).

2. Executive Summary

- **Hidden affordability pressure:** Nearly **1 in 3 renter households (32.9%)** in Redmond are cost-burdened despite the city's high overall incomes.
- **Scale of impact:** Cost burden affects about **6,000 renter households**, making renter affordability a major citywide issue rather than a fringe problem.
- **Large renter presence:** Renters comprise **49.3% of occupied housing units**, so renter stability is directly tied to neighborhood well-being and broader city outcomes.
- **"Strong city" paradox:** With median household income around **\$166,000** and median rent about **\$2,300**, Redmond illustrates how renter stress can persist in high-growth, high-income communities.
- **Uneven geography:** Tract-level indicators show a mix of **High, Moderate**, and **Lower** pressure tracts, suggesting targeted interventions rather than uniform citywide responses.
- **Early-warning signal:** Because Redmond is not a traditionally distressed city, its pressure map functions as an early-warning tool for other growth-area jurisdictions facing similar dynamics.

3. Maps and Charts

Map 1 – Rent Burden by Census Tract

This map shows the share of renter households in each Redmond census tract who pay at least 30 percent of income toward gross rent, the standard threshold for “cost burden.” Tracts with higher percentages indicate neighborhoods where a larger portion of renters are stretched by housing costs and may be at greater risk of housing instability or displacement.

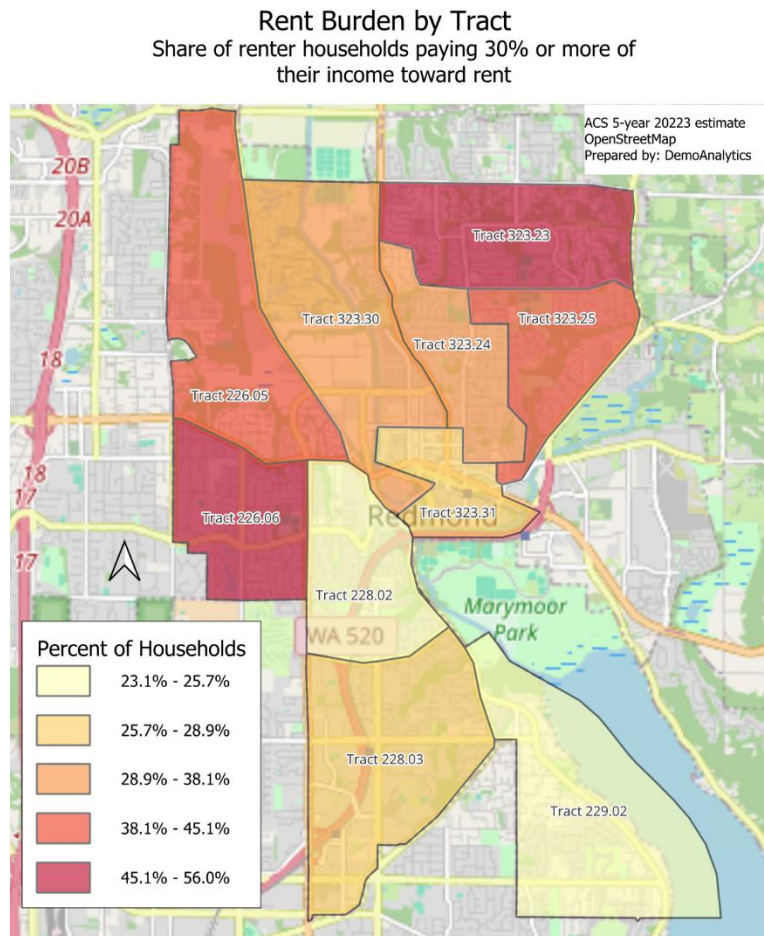
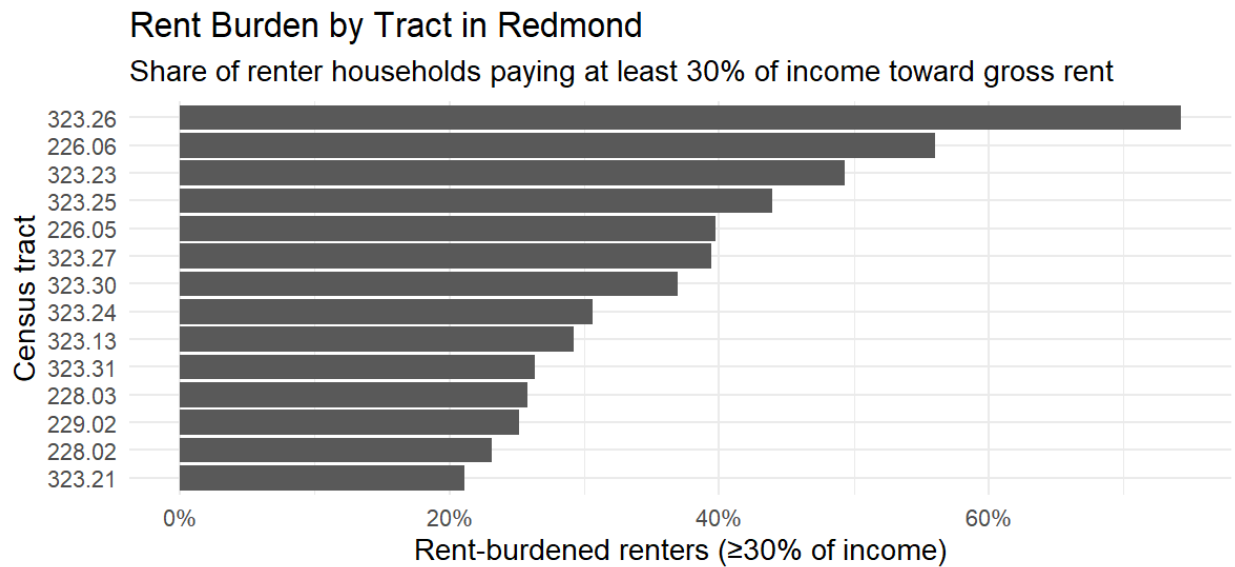


Chart 1 – Rent Burden Bar Chart

This chart presents rent-burden rates by census tract in descending order. It highlights the variation in renter stress across the city and underscores that a small number of tracts account for the highest levels of cost burden, even though cost burden is present to some degree in most neighborhoods.



Map 2 – Rent to Income Ratio

This map shows how expensive the rental market is in each neighborhood by comparing median gross rent to median household income. Higher percentages indicate tracts where typical rents consume a larger share of typical incomes, signaling structural cost pressure in the local housing market—even if individual household burden rates differ.

Typical Rent as a Share of Typical Income
Median gross rent as a percentage of median household income

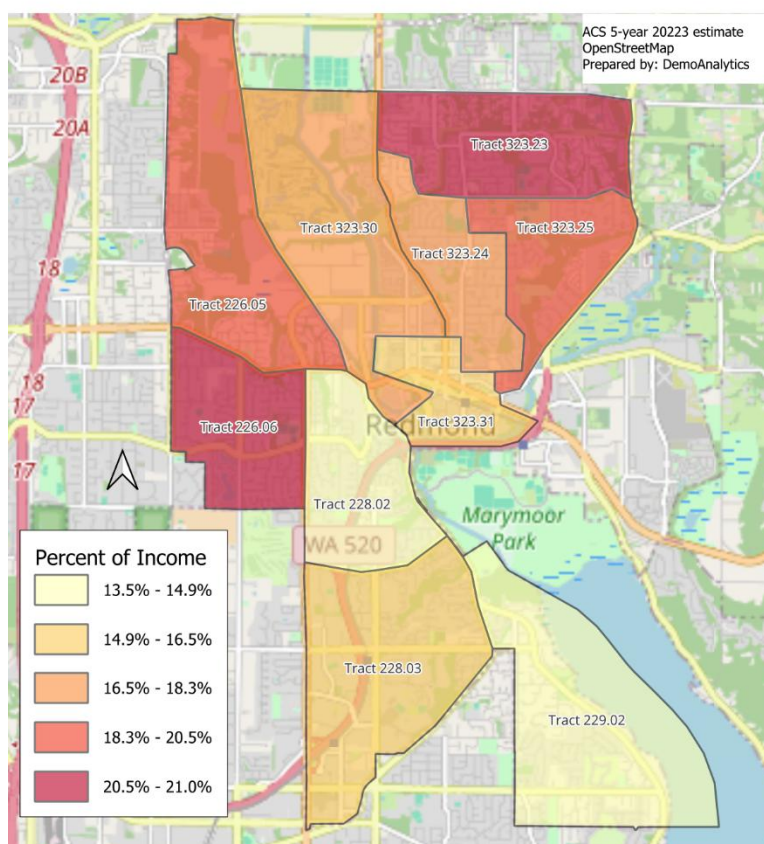
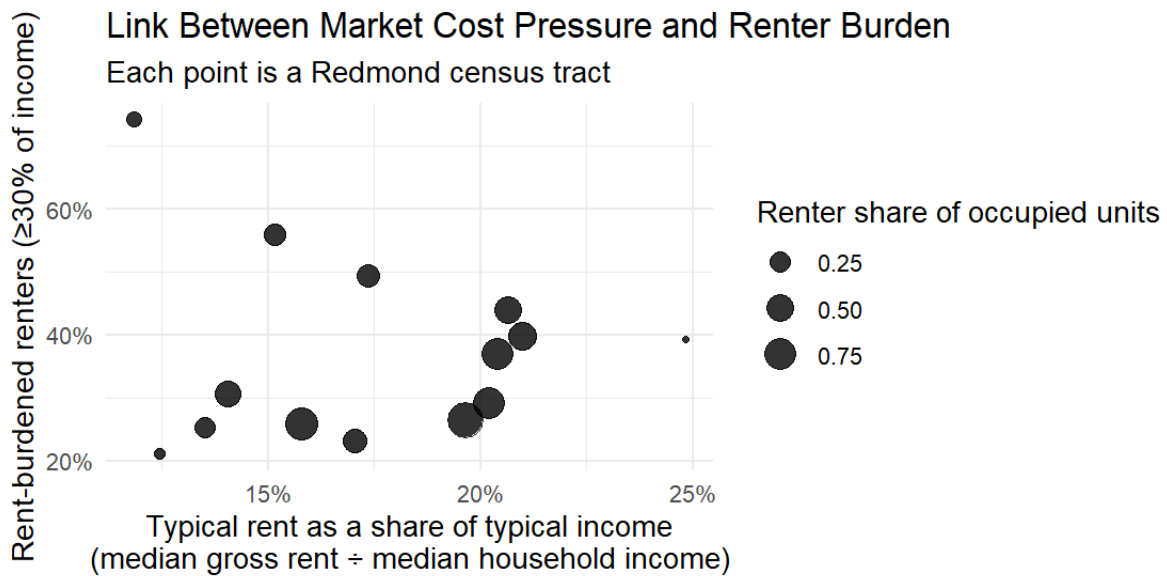


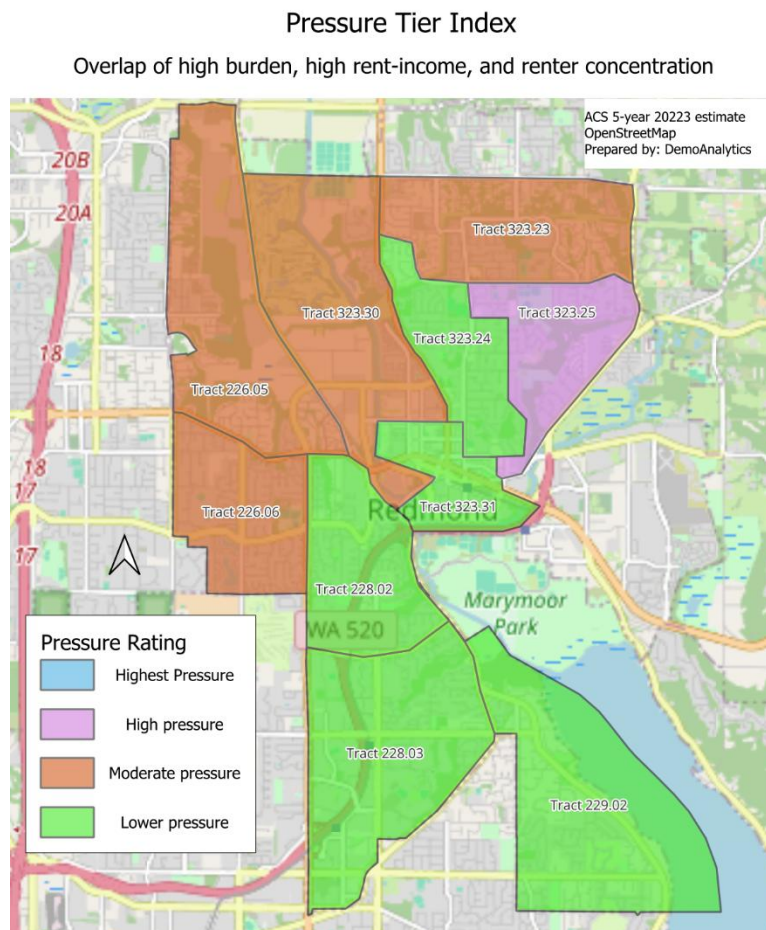
Chart 2 – Scatter: Burden vs. Rent to Income

Each point represents a Redmond census tract, plotting rent-burden rates against the rent-to-income ratio, with point size indicating renter share. Tracts in the upper-right quadrant combine high rent levels relative to income with high shares of cost-burdened renters, identifying neighborhoods where both the market and household experiences point to elevated affordability risk.



Map 3 – Pressure Tier Index

The pressure-tier map combines three indicators—rent burden, rent-to-income ratio, and renter share—to classify tracts into four categories. Under a strict definition that requires tracts to be in the top quartile on all three indicators, **no Redmond tract qualifies as “Highest pressure.”** One tract appears as **High pressure**, where both rent burden and rent-to-income are high. Six tracts fall into the **Moderate pressure** tier, with elevated levels on at least one core stress indicator. The remaining seven tracts are **Lower pressure**, with comparatively lower renter stress.



4. Findings and Implications

Where renter pressure is concentrated

Taken together, the indicators show that renter affordability pressure in Redmond is meaningful but not extreme. Citywide rent-burden and rent-to-income levels are moderate by regional standards, yet nearly one-third of renters are cost-burdened and roughly half of all occupied units are renter-occupied. The pressure-tier index identifies one **High pressure** tract where both rent burden and rent-to-income are high, along with six **Moderate pressure** tracts where at least one indicator is elevated. These neighborhoods represent the leading edge of renter risk in an otherwise strong housing market.

For policy and program design, this pattern suggests that **targeted neighborhood strategies**—such as renter stabilization supports, preservation of existing affordable units, and proactive engagement around new development—are likely to be more effective than broad, uniform interventions. Monitoring these tracts over time can provide an early signal of emerging displacement risk as regional housing and job markets continue to evolve.

5. Technical Notes

- Data come from the 2023 ACS 5-year estimates at the census tract level.
- The study area includes tracts intersecting the Redmond city boundary; small boundary slivers created by GIS intersections are removed.
- Rent-burden rate is the share of renter households paying 30% or more of income toward gross rent, based on ACS table B25070.
- Rent-to-income ratio compares median gross rent (B25064) to median household income (B19013) in each tract and is reported as a percentage.
- Renter share is the share of occupied housing units that are renter-occupied, calculated from ACS tenure table B25003.
- The Pressure Tier Index classifies tracts as High, Moderate, or Lower pressure based on whether they fall in the top quartile within Redmond on rent burden, rent-to-income, and renter share. Only tracts that are high on all three indicators would be labeled “Highest pressure”; none meet that threshold in Redmond.