

Memorandum

To: Planning Commission

From: Jon C. Spangler, Natural Resources Manager, 556-2823
Andy Rheume, Watershed Planner, 556-2741

Date: January 15, 2014

Subject: **Informational Briefing – Water Resources Strategic Plan and Watershed Management Plan**

PURPOSE

To provide the Planning Commission with an overview of the Water Resources Strategic Plan and the Citywide Watershed Management Plan. These plans are significant guidance documents for stormwater, surface water and groundwater management throughout the city. The Commission will not be acting on these documents; both will be reviewed and approved by City Council directly. However, these documents will inform and intersect with other efforts that the Commission will be involved with.

BACKGROUND

Water Resources Strategic Plan

The purpose of this strategic planning effort is to better define and communicate the City of Redmond's approach to water resources protection and to describe how these efforts support the overall City vision and other City functional areas. The end result is a framework for making policy decisions, setting priorities, and most effectively allocating funds. The Plan also includes a 3-year action plan outlining the major planning efforts, programs and projects in water resources.

The intent of this plan is to document existing strategic direction and approaches, rather than establishing new policies. This is not a master plan or functional plan. Additional planning efforts will be undertaken to address functional requirements, capital investments and funding. However, a framework diagram is provided to show how those efforts link to the strategic plan.

The City Council was briefed in a study session on August 27th, 2013. Since the study session staff has conducted internal briefings on the Plan and the intent is to also brief external stakeholders. Additionally there will be an informational briefing of the Planning Commission (this briefing) prior to Council's consideration of the plan for approval later this year.

Watershed Management Plan

The Watershed Management Plan (“WMP”) documents a holistic strategy with the goal of producing healthy aquatic habitat within Redmond. Many of our local water bodies, and regional water bodies that flow through Redmond, are significantly impacted. The primary source of impact is stormwater. The WMP customizes default strategies used to manage stormwater to the needs of each individual water body and the area that drains to them (aka their watershed).

A locally adopted, State approved, WMP will create:

- healthy stream habitat for fish and wildlife
- flexibility in applying stormwater regulations
- better return on investment in infrastructure and programs
- greater opportunity for federal and state funds
- natural features desired in Redmond Vision 2030 and PSRC Vision 2040

On July 9, 2013, staff provided Council an overview of the WMP. The purpose of the overview was to provide an introduction to watershed planning and to discuss the benefits of using a holistic approach to addressing stormwater management and surface water impairments.

On December 3rd, 2013, Council approved the WMP. Washington Department of Ecology required the plan to be Council approved before their approval will be issued, which is anticipated to arrive in February 2014.

Watershed planning is a policy of the *City of Redmond Comprehensive Plan* and will help to meet the City’s goals and vision for 2030. Furthermore, many state and federal regulators have encouraged local jurisdictions to utilize a watershed approach to address the decline of our water bodies.

MEETING PREPARATION

Planning Commissioners are encouraged to review the draft plan on the City’s website: <http://www.redmond.gov/Environment/StreamsHabitat/lakesriversstreams/WatershedManagement/>

We propose to spend about 20 minutes for each plan presentation followed by questions. We would welcome the Planning Commission’s perspective on these plans, as well as other insights.

QUESTIONS

Please contact Jon C. Spangler, (425) 556-2823, jspangler@redmond.gov with questions, suggestions and for additional information prior to the study session.