

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Planning Commission

From: Technical Committee

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Date: September 8, 2010

File Number: L100259

Title: 2010-2011 Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan:
Neighborhoods Element

Recommended Action: Adopt Recommended Amendments to the Neighborhoods Element Introduction

Reasons the Proposal should be The proposed amendments should be adopted because:

- Adopted:**
- The changes update maps and tables to reflect current conditions and the shift of planning horizon from 2022 to 2030.
 - The changes emphasize Redmond's planning goal of being a sustainability community.
 - The changes clarify portions of the text and make the document easier to read.
 - The changes reflect process modifications to the neighborhood plan update process consistent with citywide direction and the 2010 - 2011 Budgeting by Priorities effort.

I. APPLICANT PROPOSAL

A. APPLICANT

City of Redmond

B. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR PROPOSAL

The City of Redmond amends its Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis as permitted by state law. In addition to these regular amendments, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties and cities to periodically conduct a thorough review of their plans and regulations to bring them in line with any relevant changes in the GMA, and to accommodate updated growth targets. Redmond last completed a “periodic update” in 2004.

Given the extent of the 2004 major update, the scope of this update will be to extend the planning horizon from 2022 to 2030, to comply with regional and state requirements that have changed since 2004, and to implement Council direction and recommendations from current and previous studies. In coordination with this effort, the City will also be updating the Transportation Master Plan. This Comprehensive Plan update is expected to be complete by December 2011.

In February and March 2010, the Planning Commission provided input on the scope for this periodic review and update; the City Council finalized the scope in April 2010 by adopting a resolution.

Staff will bring recommended amendments to elements of the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission according to the approved schedule. This set of recommended amendments pertains only to the introduction portion of the Neighborhoods Element.

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Technical Committee recommends amending the Neighborhoods Element of the Comprehensive Plan as shown in Exhibit A.

III. PRIMARY ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The adopted scope for the 2010 - 2011 Comprehensive Plan review anticipates:

1. Amendments required because of changes to the Growth Management Act.

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No amendments to the Neighborhoods Element are required because of changes to the Growth Management Act.

2. Amendments required because of changes to regional planning documents.

No changes to the Neighborhoods Element are necessary to comply with changes in conditions or with regional planning documents. Planning staff verified the conformance of the Element with requirements of Department of Commerce and Puget Sound Regional Council.

3. Amendments required to extend the planning horizon to the year 2030.

Minor text amendments are recommended to the Element to extend the horizon to the year 2030. In addition, the recommended changes to emphasize sustainability are consistent with Redmond's vision for the future.

4. Amendments to reflect City actions since the last update and Council direction from recent or current studies.

A portion of staff's review of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify opportunities to emphasize sustainability. The definition of sustainability established for the Comprehensive Plan Update is:

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development)

New policies are not necessary to address sustainability. Recommended changes to minor portions of the text help to make plain how the Element promotes sustainability.

Map and other minor text amendments including a change in the name of one neighborhood reflect City actions including changes to neighborhood boundaries associated with annexation efforts that have taken place since 2004.

5. Other amendments (per Element)

This Element incorporates process flexibility and therefore allows for frequent analysis and update to the neighborhood plan update strategy and framework. Reflective of current City interest and results of the 2010 - 2011 Budgeting by Priorities effort, staff recommends two policy amendments.

First, staff recommends amendment to policy NP-1 to describe a tiered plan update approach including annual, mid-term, and long-term engagement with citizens at the neighborhood scale.

Staff also recommends one additional policy to precede current policy NP-3. The new policy discusses the Citizen Academy or similar tool through which staff provides a common framework or knowledge base to citizens as a precursor to considering amendments to a neighborhood plan.

IV. SUPPORTING ANALYSIS: FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Neighborhoods Element addresses the neighborhood plan update process as well as eight of Redmond's ten neighborhoods. The Urban Centers Element includes the Downtown and Overlake neighborhoods. Within the Neighborhoods Element, the introductory portion describes the process through which the City engages its citizenry in considering and updating each neighborhood's twenty-year vision and implementation strategy. Included in this Element, neighborhood improvements in the form of small matching grants and more significant spotlight projects invite citizen participation in the planning and facilitation of physical and capital improvements throughout the City.

Since the last update to the Comprehensive Plan, Redmond has completed a plan update for five neighborhoods and one sub-area. While the Neighborhoods Element holds up well to scrutiny for the 2010-2011 periodic update, the proposed process improvements help refine an effort that engages all of Redmond's citizenry and implements frequent interaction among citizens, staff, and City officials. .

B. COMPLIANCE WITH CRITERIA FOR AMENDMENTS

Redmond Comprehensive Plan Policies PI-16, LU-24 and LU-9 direct the City to take several considerations, as applicable, into account as part of decisions on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide.

Items 1 through 5 apply to all proposed amendments. Items 6 and 7 apply when proposed amendments concern allowed land uses or densities, such as proposed amendments to the Land Use Plan Map, land use designations, allowed land uses, or zoning map.

The following is an analysis of how this proposal complies with the requirements for amendments.

1. Consistency with Growth Management Act (GMA), VISION 2020 or its successor, and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

The recommended amendments are one portion of the periodic review of Redmond's Comprehensive Plan as called for by the GMA. The recommended changes to NP-1

and the new policy preceding NP-3 are neutral with respect to VISION 2040 and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

2. Consistency with Redmond’s Comprehensive Plan, including the following sections as applicable:

The recommended amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

a. Consistency with the goals contained in the Goals, Vision and Framework Policy Element.

The recommended changes to the Goals, Vision and Framework Policy Element will be presented later in the schedule for the review and update of the Comprehensive Plan. However, staff does not anticipate proposed changes that will result in inconsistency between the Elements. The recommended amendments are, therefore, considered consistent with a high degree of confidence. However, any amendments to the Goals, Vision, and Framework Policy Element that result in inconsistencies during the 2010 - 2011 periodic update will be rectified in the Neighborhoods Element prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan update.

b. Consistency with the preferred land use pattern as described in the Land Use Element.

No changes are recommended that are directly relevant to the preferred land use pattern as described in the Land Use Element.

c. Consistency with Redmond’s community character objectives as described in the Community Character/Historic Preservation Element or elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan.

Yes, the recommended amendments are consistent.

3. Potential general impacts to the natural environment, such as impacts to critical areas and other natural resources.

There are no changes to policies of the Neighborhoods Element that have an impact on critical areas and other natural resources.

4. Potential general impacts to the capacity of public facilities and services. For land use related amendments, whether public facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively and adequately at the proposed density/intensity.

The recommended amendments present no potential impacts to the capacity of public facilities and services.

- 5. For issues that have been considered within the last four annual updates or comprehensive land use plan amendments, whether there has been a change in circumstances that makes the proposed plan designation or policy change appropriate or whether the amendment is needed to remedy a mistake.**

It has been more than four years since the City's last update of this portion of the Neighborhoods Element in 2004.

- 6. Whether development will be directed away from environmentally critical areas and other important natural resources.**

There are no changes to policies within the Neighborhoods Element that affect development activity, and therefore have any bearing on critical areas or natural resources.

- 7. If the amendment proposes a change in allowed uses or densities in an area:**

- a. The need and demand for the land uses that would be allowed and whether the change would result in the loss of capacity to accommodate other needed land uses, especially whether the proposed amendment complies with policy HO-16, the City's policy of no-net loss of housing capacity;**

This question does not apply as no changes are proposed regarding allowed uses or densities.

- b. Implications of the proposed amendment for the balance between the amount and type of employment in Redmond and the amount and type of housing in Redmond.**

This question does not apply as no changes are proposed regarding allowed uses or densities.

V. AUTHORITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL, PUBLIC AND AGENCY REVIEW

A. Amendment Process

RCDG Sections 20F.30.15 and 20F.30.55 require that amendments to the Comprehensive Plan be reviewed under the Type VI process. Under this process, the Planning Commission conducts a study session(s), an open record hearing(s) on the

proposed amendment, and makes a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council is the decision-making body for this process.

B. Subject Matter Jurisdiction

The Redmond Planning Commission and the Redmond City Council have subject matter jurisdiction to hear and decide whether to adopt the proposed Development Guide Amendment.

C. Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

Staff will complete a SEPA Checklist for the 2010-2011 Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan as a whole. Staff anticipates adoption of previous environmental documents and will prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to address the potential impacts on Climate Change before City Council action on the Update in late 2011. The recommended amendments to the Neighborhoods Element make up only one portion of the Update and are not expected to result in any adverse impacts to the environment if adopted.

D. 60-Day State Agency Review

State agencies were sent 60-day notice of this proposed amendment on August 10, 2010.

E. Public Involvement

The public will have opportunities to comment on the proposed amendments during the Planning Commission review process and public hearing. Public notice of the hearing on September 15, 2010 will be provided by posting in public locations and by newspaper listing on August 25, 2010. The recommended amendments to the Neighborhoods Element are accessible through the City's web site and copies are also available at City Hall.

F. Appeals

RCDG 20F.30.55 identifies Development Guide Amendments as a Type VI permit. Final action is held by the City Council. The action of the City Council on a Type VI proposal may be appealed by filing a petition with the Growth Management Hearing Board pursuant to the requirements

VI. LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Recommended Amendments to Neighborhoods Element Introduction

Robert G. Odle, Director of Planning and Community Development	Date
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William J. Campbell, Director of Public Works	Date
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