

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Planning Commission

From: Technical Committee

Staff Contacts: Robert G. Odle, Director of Planning and Community Development, (425) 556-2417
Lori Peckol, Policy Planning Manager, (425) 556-2411
Sarah Stiteler, Senior Planner, (425) 556-2469

Date: May 13, 2011

File Number: L100259

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

Recommended Action: Adopt recommended amendments to the Economic Vitality Element

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

- Adopted:**
- Reflect current conditions and the shift of planning horizon from 2022 to 2030;
 - Emphasize Redmond's planning goal of being a sustainable community;
 - Address Redmond's support of a public/private partnership to implement the 2010 Strategic Plan for Economic Development; and
 - Clarify portions of the text and make the document easier to read.

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.

In November 2010, the City held an event entitled, *Livable Redmond: A Community Conversation on Sustainability*. The purpose of that event was to understand what sustainability means to the citizens of Redmond, and how it can be implemented. Sustainability was identified as a central theme for the Comprehensive Plan update in the *Statement of Intent*, a charter document endorsed by the City Council in October 2010. Feedback from the *Livable Redmond* event was translated into a set of six sustainability principles (and their benefits), and was adopted by the City Council in January 2011. These principles have guided revisions to framework policies and policies within the individual elements, including those presented as part of this report.

Staff will bring recommended amendments to Elements of the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission according to the approved schedule for the review of the Elements. The following recommended amendments pertain to the Economic Vitality Element.

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Technical Committee recommends amending the Economic Vitality Element of the Comprehensive Plan as shown in Exhibit A. Section III summarizes the recommended amendments.

III. PRIMARY ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The adopted scope for the 2011-2012 Comprehensive Plan review anticipates:

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

No amendments to the Economic Vitality Element are required because of changes to the Growth Management Act. Planning staff verified the conformance of the recommended Element with requirements of the Growth Management Act.

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

Some changes to the Economic Vitality Element are necessary to comply with changes to regional planning documents. Planning staff sought review of the recommended Element by the Puget Sound Regional Council and received comments which are incorporated into the updates.

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

The recommended amendments update text associated with the employment targets to reflect the 2030 horizon. In addition, the recommended changes emphasize sustainability and community partnerships, 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.

In 2010 the City of Redmond adopted the 2010 Strategic Plan for Economic Development which provides direction about how the local community may encourage economic vitality. An outcome of the plan was the formation of a public/private partnership to foster economic growth. The Redmond Economic Development Alliance (REDA) consists of members representing the City, local business, education and other community interests. Policies that identify desired goals of this partnership have been added to the Economic Vitality Element.

Further, a portion of staff's review of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify opportunities to emphasize sustainability. Existing policies in the Element address sustainability. Additional recommended changes to the vision statement text and the section introductions further articulate how the Element promotes economic sustainability consistent with the City's adopted sustainability principles.

5. Other amendments

Staff recommends updating the policies to more strongly emphasize the importance of a partnership with the City, local business, education and the community, with specific actions identified to promote economic vitality. Text has been added that speaks to the utilization of performance indicators in order to measure outcomes of policies or implementation strategies. Other recommended changes serve to clarify particular passages of the text. Two new policies state the City's goal of providing a positive, accessible and user friendly atmosphere to those seeking municipal services, as well as a commitment to reviewing development regulations and processes periodically for efficiency and consistency.

IV. SUPPORTING ANALYSIS: FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Economic Vitality Element, along with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan is currently being reviewed and updated in compliance with the requirement of the GMA calling for periodic updates. Since the last update to the Comprehensive Plan, Redmond has completed the Strategic Plan for Economic Development and helped to foster the creation of the Redmond Economic Development Alliance (REDA). The REDA board consists of 11 members representing various perspectives of the economic community.

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 are consistent with 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.

Recommended changes to the Goals, Vision and Framework Policy Element are currently under review by the City Council. However, staff does not anticipate proposed changes that will result in inconsistency between the Elements, particularly as the Goals/Vision/Framework and the Economic Vitality elements both identify economic health as an important component of the City’s overall sustainability. The recommended amendments are, therefore, considered consistent with a high degree of confidence.

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 Economic Vitality 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 Economic Vitality Element that have a bearing 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 Element in 2004.

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

N/A.

- 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;**

N/A.

- 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.**

Not applicable; however, policies that promote the economic vitality of Redmond may impact the jobs/housing balance by encouraging the creation of additional jobs.

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 an addendum to address the potential impacts on Climate Change before City Council action on the Update in late 2011. The recommended amendments to the Economic Vitality Element make up only one portion of the Update. In addition, no adverse environmental impacts are expected with the proposed amendments.

D. 60-Day State Agency Review

State agencies were sent 60-day notice of this proposed amendment on May 12, 2011.

E. Public Involvement

Staff met with the Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce and the Redmond Economic Development Alliance to seek input during development of these updates. The community as a whole will have opportunities to comment on the proposed amendments during the Planning Commission review process and public hearing. Public notice of the hearing on June 8, 2011 will be provided by posting in public locations and by newspaper listing on May 18, 2011. The recommended amendments to the Economic Vitality Element are accessible through the City's web site and copies are also available at City Hall. In addition, staff included the public hearing date in the May 2011 quarterly newsletter provided to approximately 1,500 people.

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 the Economic Vitality Element

Robert G. Odle, Director of Planning and Community Development Date

William J. Campbell, Director of Public Works Date

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