

TO: Mayor Marchione and City Council

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DATE: February 15, 2011

SUBJECT: STAFF REPORT: AMENDMENTS TO NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL PORTIONS OF REDMOND'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE (ZONING CODE) (L100393 AND L100394)

In January 2011 the Planning Commission completed a recommendation for amendments to portions of Redmond's Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide (Zoning Code) regarding Neighborhood Commercial. The Council received copies of the Planning Commission's report in their boxes on February 4, 2011.

REQUESTED DIRECTION

At the meeting on February 15, 2011, staff would like direction on any topics the Council would like to discuss in addition to those identified by the Council Planning and Public Works Committee, and whether there is any additional information sought concerning the proposed update.

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

In summary, the Planning Commission's recommended amendment would:

- Amend Neighborhood Commercial portions of the Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide (Zoning Code);
- Establish consistency between Neighborhood Commercial policies and regulations while incorporating timely updates to the Neighborhood Commercial portion of the Land Use Element;
- Provide additional policy-based criteria to guide future decisions on potential rezones;
- Promote compatibility with adjacent land uses by updating standards for elements of neighborhood commercial development such as lighting, signage, and landscaping;
- Support community interest in creation of informal meeting spaces; and

Mayor and Council

RE: STAFF REPORT: AMENDMENTS TO NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL PORTIONS OF REDMOND'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE (ZONING CODE) (L100393 AND L100394)

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- Implement other citywide policies including those found in the Goals, Vision, and Framework; Land Use; Community Character/Historic Preservation; Economic Vitality; and Transportation Elements.

Comprehensive Plan policies call for two types of Neighborhood Commercial zones: NC-1 and NC-2; however, Community Development Guide (Zoning Code) regulations do not reflect these two types. Current policies restrict Neighborhood Commercial to locations farther than one mile of other commercial zones and permit NC-1 on sites one acre and smaller and NC-2 on sites three acres and smaller. Redmond includes two Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoned locations: the northeastern corner of Old Redmond Road and 132nd Avenue NE, and the southern portion of the intersection of Avondale Road and NE 116th Street.

This update intends to establish two NC zoning designations, refine criteria that define general areas for new zones while allowing for a moderate increase in siting flexibility, and incorporate standards for site and design elements such as public plazas, landscaping, and signage. Recommended amendments reflect input from Neighborhood Commercial stakeholders. The stakeholders include owners of several Redmond-based businesses consistent with the currently permitted neighborhood commercial uses, owners of other small-scale and entrepreneurial establishments, and Redmond residents and property owners. Additionally, the update reflects recommendations by commercial real estate professionals including a developer, leasing agent, architect, and two regional planners.

Staff queried stakeholders on two occasions. During early- to mid-2010 staff distributed a questionnaire and met individually with each respondent. During the Planning Commission's review, staff and some Planning Commissioners also met with a portion of the stakeholders to ask additional questions. Stakeholders unable to attend the January 5, 2011, group discussion provided additional feedback directly to staff. The results of these meetings are included with the Planning Commission's report.

PRIMARY TOPICS OF AMENDMENTS TO NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The recommended amendments to Neighborhood Commercial consist of several major topics, all of which included some level of deliberation by the Planning Commission, as described below and in greater detail in the Planning Commission report.

Primary Topic	Recommended Amendment	Planning Commission's Points of Discussion/Concern
Placement and Distribution of Neighborhood Commercial	<p>Establish criteria through which proposed rezones to Neighborhood Commercial will be evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site size • Distance from Redmond's Urban Centers • Street classification/multi-modal corridor designation • Proximity to non-motorized connections • Proximity to population densities/mixed-use neighborhoods • Proximity to park facilities (NC-1) • Parking availability <p>Establish a policy regarding periodic evaluation of NC policies and regulations. Use market conditions, level of interest in NC zoning and community comment as triggers for a re-evaluation of policies and regulations to determine if additional updates are needed. Involve representatives from development, business and neighborhoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the criteria adequately support future development that is situated in a walkable and bikable location from single-family homes? • Should the evaluation policy be more specific regarding the timeframe for staff research and preparation of additional amendments related to interest in other forms of neighborhood commercial land use and zoning designation? • A minority of the Commission supported establishing a policy that calls specifically for assessing a micro-commercial NC zone (would allow single tenant developments and would not include siting criteria) as the City learns more about the public's support for or opposition to the larger NC-1 and NC-2.
Relationship to Redmond's Downtown	<p>Locate Neighborhood Commercial a minimum distance from Redmond's Urban Centers. Do this to avoid "commercial creep" between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and to maintain the Downtown and Overlake as major shopping and service locations for Redmond's citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate NC-1, the smaller-scale, no closer than ½ mile from Redmond's Urban Centers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether to omit the minimum distance from the Urban Centers due to concern that it discourages citizens to walk and to bike to Neighborhood Commercial locations? Also, how likely is it that neighborhood commercial businesses would detract from the Downtown?

Primary Topic	Recommended Amendment	Planning Commission's Points of Discussion/Concern
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate NC-2, the medium-scale, no closer than 1 mile from Redmond's Urban Centers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should criteria be less restrictive or eliminated, and permit market analysis the ability to determine suitable locations for future Neighborhood Commercial development?
Scale and Tenancy	<p>Neighborhood Commercial development is limited to sites as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC-1 - no greater than one-acre NC-2 - no greater than three-acres <p>Require NC establishments to include at least two tenants to support economic viability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minority of the Commission supported allowance for stand alone, single tenant or use establishments on sites sized similarly to single-family lots and located in single-family neighborhoods to promote accessibility.

COUNCIL PLANNING AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE DIRECTION

Staff will brief the Council's Planning and Public Works Committee on the amendments to Neighborhood Commercial policies and regulations on February 15, 2011, and will provide a summary of the Committee's comments at your February 15, 2011, regular Council meeting.

SCHEDULE

Staff's proposed schedule for City Council review and action on this amendment includes the following dates:

February 15	Staff report on amendments to Neighborhood Commercial portions of the Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide (Zoning Code)
February 22	Study session
March 8	Study session (if needed)
April 5	Action on amendments to Neighborhood Commercial portions of the Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide (Zoning Code)

If you have any questions as you review the report and recommendations, please contact Kimberly Dietz at 425-556-2415, kdietz@redmond.gov.