Question 1: Prescriptive versus Descriptive

Should development regulations emphasize clear, numerical, specific standards?

or

Should they provide illustrated guidelines to allow different ways to achieve desired goals?

- The extremes are very rigid. Can we forecast needs decades in the future?
- Descriptive is like working with the DRB: subjective, and makes me nervous. Doesn't lead to wonderful outcome.
- Let's work toward a set of inspirational, acceptable choices that are prescriptive/defined, and not open ended.
- Could have carrots/sticks associated with each acceptable choice.
- For neighborhoods, prescriptive more attractive (not literally attractive)
- Rob: Seattle Green Factor is prescriptive in a sense, but offers some flexibility.
- Can still use intent/descriptive statements to communicate priorities to developers.
- Predictability is difficult in Redmond because there are descriptive ideas.
- Prescriptive code is better in some areas, like single-family residential neighborhoods.
- Descriptive more appropriate where big changes are coming, like Overlake.
- Ditto – prescriptive more palatable to neighborhoods.
- Need minimum requirements ("10 Commandments") as a baseline <u>and</u> allow for flexibility for a better product.
- Developers will work hard to figure out how to work around (break) regulations.
- It is frustrating for developers to have to keep going over a design. They need to be able to say "we've met the standards".
- Need to know what the rules are to be able to develop in Redmond.
- Dealing with different groups (Planning, Public Works, Natural Resources, Fire) can be very frustrating.
- Concern with consistency and how requirements are administered. The City now has internal disagreements on what the codes mean. Quit looking for "Gotcha".
- If requirements are too complex it makes staff's job more difficult.
- The answer is a hybrid. Prescriptive for flexibility, descriptive so people know what to expect. Project information should be descriptive so residents know what will actually be built.
- Unpredictability makes it tough for both staff and applicants. Would be helpful to have intent (descriptive) listed with prescriptive in code. That would allow flexibility if intent is met.
- Need to have specific numbers and percentages (for things such as tree removal). Some things need to be non-negotiable. Trees should be left in clumps, not single trees on lots.
- Kirkland allows outright 2 stories with incentives to go higher
- As much as I like descriptive and more flexibility you get people out of the woodwork and into political process
- Harshness destroys creativity, but other way turns into political battle and city ends up hours defending itself
- Problem with Comp Plan visions not enough people involved in that stage

Question 1: Prescriptive versus Descriptive (cont).

- Why can't you get blend?
- Our code is limiting us too much
- Still have flexibility with clear definitions
- Very important to not leave so wide open
- There are no perimeters to ensure you can do what you want
- Flexibility to consider changes in time
- Taking too much time in money to get things done
- These are not mutually exclusive. It seems to mix up the "what" and "how".
- These are two ways of getting the job done
- It can be a continuum and does not have to be either/or
- Alternatives are good, zoning codes set the base standards and that is needed. So you need a combination of both. Graphics are not enough….some things need to have clear and specific guidelines
- When considering these two types, it depends on where you are and what you need. The code now is not clear. People have to come to the City to find out what they can do with their property.
- Will there be a group from the public that will review the code for readability (basically, test the code) as we go through the rewrite process
- Redmond is very prescriptive now with the code, it is density driven. Some descriptive would be good in the future.
- Need for prescriptive for clarity. But also need descriptive for creativity and for great ideas that come along, need it to help solve problems.
- Allowing some creativity with some prescriptive. Don't want to get to loose with the code and have it become too subjective.
- Standards need to be thought out for the long term. Example: Setbacks from edge of roadway but in the future the might street is widened. So then predictability is lost.
- In choosing between these two it is really depends on where you are in the code, what sections, that will determine where one might be better than another

Question 2: Inspiration versus Prevention

Should development regulations inspire good development with "carrots"?

or

Should they prevent poor development with "sticks"?

- Redmond has worked to provide carrots over the years. But we need sticks to meet new goals/needs, especially with respect to multiple use structures and variety of housing options.
- Residents want a great place to live – they lean on prevention.
- Can't meet all goals just using carrots or sticks.
- Carrots have been subverted (by developers) – haven't worked.
- Predictability is important to developers.
- Don't give up on an inspirational code just because it hasn't worked in the past. A community can get more out of it in the end. People will rise to the occasion.
- What is the point of a new code if everything is already developed?
    - Mark: Built environment is constantly changing, even if it doesn't look like it.
- Is it possible to have a redevelopment tract and a new development track?
- Choices + incentives = marvelous places
- Look toward the future and incentivize the preferred future.
- Predictability is key – don't want to guess what City is thinking (both from developer and resident perspective)
- Culture of regulators needs to change. Should help to move forward projects and encourage economic development. Time is money – expensive to keep revising/guessing.
- Concept – Flexible use zoning. City defines performance requirements/desires. If something is not prescribed in the code it can still be allowed if it meets performance criteria. Allows both options – standards and performance – meeting goals.
- Code can't be so subjective it's up to individual reviewers to interpret. Need consistency.
- From citizen's view it is difficult/frustrating if it is not clear what will be built and how it will look (end product).
- Developers are always for performance based, but we need to look at long term impacts from uses. Need to insure uses are compatible.
- Codes need to be understandable.
- Some things need to be specific to protect the needs of the community.
- Predictability is key.
- Minimum standards are necessary and they need to be enforced.
- Need baseline for preventive/protection. In addition be specific about performance expectations. Need to have clear framework/parameters but some flexibility to allow for innovation.
- Generally (in other jurisdictions) not much "performance based" in single family. More flexibility is allowed in specific areas – business, industrial, etc.
- Difficult to apply flexibility as much in residential development.

Question 2: Inspiration versus Prevention (cont).

- Some well-stated values in Redmond have stayed, some have been lost. Need to set minimums but have both (flexibility and tolerance with minimum rules/baselines). Can do this with a lot less code. Permitting and design review process need to be revamped. Not enough staff continuity.
- If you don't understand vision
- Clarity of vision is huge
- Disagree that it's (Comp Plan) is a community vision
- Citizens have to develop their property consistent
- How do neighborhood plans play into
- Would lean toward flexibility but thinks of stress of city created by lack of predictability
- You have to have creative freedom
- The code can not keep up with innovation
- I can spend hours on site planning using perimeters
- Biggest drawback to flexibility, too much up to interpretation for those across the desk
- Concerns about decision maker
- Carrots are a good to include in the code. Example: Moved here from Texas where they had office buildings at 6 stories that where hidden in existing trees. When arriving in Redmond he saw sprawling low-rise buildings where they had to cut the trees. Why could we not have had taller buildings and saved more trees?
- Group Health worked around the trees but it was also very in inefficient.
- Make the building heights the height of the trees
- With kids, holding out carrots works better and leads to creative solutions
- Like more inspiration and flexibility
- It is explained that some communities have a two track system: 1) Predictable – by the numbers; and 2) Flexible – would require hearings.
- If you were trying to fast track a project it would be faster to move your project by going with the predictable rather than the flexible track
- PRD vs. Plat is an example here in Redmond of a two track system
- If you go heavily on the Predictable side it will result in bad design
- If you go heavily on the Flexible side you can not easily move people through the review process

Question 3: Flexibility versus Predictability

Should regulations offer flexibility to produce unique solutions and allow for alternative approaches to achieve the objective?

or

Should they define one way to achieve the objective and produce very predictable, specific results?

- What about the Comp Plan? How does it fit in to this process?
    - Gabe: We are looking at tools to implement the Comp Plan
- Looking out 20 years, it is hard to know what the needs will be; because of that, flexibility is valuable
- Lack of confidence that we can write a code flexible enough to understand.
- Lack of confidence in staff to apply flexible standards.
- Need to fix complexity problem so everyone interprets the code the same way.
- Codes getting bigger over time. There is not a clear path to understand what can be done with a property, which leads to loops in process.
- Need process predictability.
- Still need flexibility in standards, because that results in an interesting environment.
- But lots of flexibility can lead to a bogged-down process.
- Point systems work.
- "Choice" is a better word than "flexibility" – it implies some vetting of the choices through a community/public process.
- Neighborhood plans seek predictability. We want to incorporate flexibility as well, but how?
- Can we model the future using software to see what the future would look like?
- Can we model a process so it is predictable for a developer?
- Consistent flexibility is predictable. If you have consistent means of interpreting flexible codes you have consistency.
- Predictability is better. Outcome and process depend on individual planner biases if left to flexibility. Prefer to know rules going in.
- Go with flexibility. Now code pushes you where you may not want to go. Need maximum flexibility to achieve vision.
- Need standards for adequate landscape, parking, etc. but flexibility needed so we don't have cookie cutter developments. Should be discretion if goals and values are met. If another choice meets goals it should be an option.
- Specific requirements may not meet intent or may have unanticipated consequences.
- If objectives can be achieved, options should be considered. Need flexibility to allow for reasonable use while still meeting intent.
- Need flexibility to allow for adaption to changing community values, economic
- From developer standpoint, the more inspiration built into code, more possibility to argue if whether goals have been met
- When you get into public process you want to be able to say you met abcd, because the more the code is based on inspiration the more you argue in hearing process
- If wide open to interpretation the more you get beat up

Question 3: Flexibility versus Predictability (cont).

- Would be nice to provide two tracks to offer developer predictability and flexibility if they want
- How do you blend the two?
- If reviewer does not want the solution in innovation they will find a way to deny it
- Possible to define flexible / of ways to meet a code
- As long as they don't contradict each other (higher density for sustainable)
- What is the easiest way to redevelop?
- We go to code, not consistent too many variances/complex
- Linear Mind vs. Creative Mind
- Solid rules but lots of creativity
- Redevelopment is ever changing
- Need to be ever changing, reflective of changing uses to inspection and flexibility
- City is always behind – tell city what is happening in real world
- Want to be in the middle, a combination of both while leaning to Predictability on some things.
- Ok for lots to look different? Redmond has some continuity and that is good. People are afraid and what that might bring, especially in the residential zones. Flexibility might be ok in commercial zones.
- This question is like Question #1.
- Some neighborhoods predate the 1978 code and that resulted in a hodge-podge of stuff getting built. This is a good example of the need for regulation
- Flexibility might result in not knowing if the City will review/evaluate the application fairly. Could result in arbitrary review.
- Point system – this makes the idea of flexibility more appealing.
- If the code is rewritten with predictability then it will be need to be updated regularly to keep up with changes in the community/society.
- Predictability is good but if you have a reason then you can have flexibility
- Tradeoffs, choices, options are good

Question 4: Desirable Results

How could development regulations give you confidence that a decision would be carefully considered, fair and reflect community values?

- Set of choices, vetted through community, reviewed in an objective process according to agreed-upon criteria
- Need agreement on vision
- No subjective process
- Environmental regulations need to fit into process in a way that allows people to disagree, but also continue to do business.
- Need predictability on environmental issues.
- Want a survey to go out to community to identify values that community believes should be retained in RCDG. Want to reopen the values/Comp Plan questions. We need to decide who we are.
- Should ask: what do you want that is in the RCDG? What should be added? That defines aspirations.
- This must be an informed process – more than a questionnaire. Appreciate background on changing demographics given earlier in the evening. We must understand future needs.
- Tools must reflect values.
- Need better communication of development activity. Don't know whether to look for it in the mail, online, etc. Need consistency in notifications.
- Code should be clear, understandable and enforced. Should be understandable for citizens so they know what standards will be enforced. Fact based.
- If oversight committee existed, citizens could find out why decisions not strictly meeting codes are made.
- Decisions should be based on real science, not generalized rules. Use body of evidence for individual properties to make decisions.
- List community values with code. Be fair – if reasonable interpretation applicant should be given the benefit of the doubt.
- Getting things done in a timely fashion is key.
- Need reasonable timeframes for processes/permits to get done so applicants have predictable outcomes. Both parties are responsible to be timely and complete.
- Need well written code <u>and</u> predictable process for best results.
- Community values need to be considered in process. Opinions need to be addressed.
- Design Review creates the most difficulty in the process. Gets away from intent. Need to look at where a neighborhood is going and incorporate that into design rather than just focusing on what is there now.
- If code has been influenced by stakeholders
- Each group that lives in or does bus in should have weight
- A project should carry out a specific goal
- Thinks this is really the 2nd?
- The Comp Plan set vision
-

Question 4: Desirable Results (cont).

- The code complies with Comp Plan
- To say develop regulations are driver to determine vision is incorrect
- If we are to talk about process……
- Today we have a more larger complex
- Perception an public that once a project gets to hearing, that it is time to debate vision
- Important for City to inform public that the Comp Plan is time to debate vision and allow process to be streamlined to achieve the vision that has been already adopted
- There is a level when you translate vision into reality and important
- City has to inform public to get involved early
- Public involvement late involvement
- By the time people can talk is public hearing
- Room for clarify, consistency
- It is a mess
- To have effective regulations a well thought out Comp Plan where regulations can effectively carry out the plan
- Input is a two way street
- Public does not understand importance of getting involved early
- When rubber hits road is when something happens across the road
- People may be notified too late
- People will only get out what they put in
- People can't determine if it meets vision
- Take out the opinion of the reviewer, what clear and objective standards
- What is the current process?
- Sometimes it goes in for review and the project receives new comments each time the City sees the plans.
- At high level the existing process makes sense but it takes about a year to get a through the process. Timely is a very big deal as you can lose your financing while waiting to complete the review process.
- In some cases there is ambiguity and you can not get a decision from the City. (some people, some divisions)
- Entitlements should take about 4-6 months while now they take about 1 year
- There is a delay at the City. The Development side seems to work well now. The Public Works side does not.
- New owners need to know what they can do and the process. The code needs to be clear cut but also leave room open for creativity.
- All four pieces discussed (with this question) need to be in the zoning code. "Use" should be the most important.