

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Sarah Stiteler, AICP, Senior Planner, 556-2469  
**Date:** March 2, 2012  
**Subject:** **Redmond's Housing Strategy Plan**

### **MEETING PURPOSE**

The purpose of the March 14, 2012 study session is to provide a staff overview of the proposed Housing Strategy Plan (HSP) (Attachment 1) and to seek Commissioner questions and comments on the strategies (first column). Commissioners are asked to review the list of strategies included in the attached draft plan, and determine if any other strategies should be added.

At the next meeting on March 21, 2012, the Commission will be asked to recommend priorities for the housing strategies. After the Commission develops its recommendations for the Housing Strategy Plan, the City Council is scheduled to review and take action on the document in April/May 2012.

The Housing Strategy Plan implements Comprehensive Plan housing policies. The HSP is a document separate from though directly related to the Comprehensive Plan. Adoption of the HSP does not amend the Comprehensive Plan.

### **HOUSING STRATEGY PLAN BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The updated Comprehensive Plan Housing Element directs the City for the first time to establish a Housing Strategy Plan to consider actions that will implement the City's housing goals and policies (new policy HO-8). The purpose of the Housing Strategy Plan is to identify a wide range of potential strategies for the City to consider and to prioritize in what order specific strategies will be evaluated over the next few years. The Strategy Plan establishes the strategies to consider and priority for consideration though does not establish the action to be taken on any specific strategy. Whether to pursue a strategy after it is considered in more detail is a subsequent decision that is ultimately made by City Council or City administration, depending on the strategy.

In addition to the City's housing policies, the Strategy Plan takes into consideration:

- Local and regional housing data – contained in the 2011 Housing Needs Analysis
- Other jurisdictions' housing strategy plans

- Recommendations made by ARCH members and others at their prioritization workshops

The Strategy Plan includes actions that the City has in place currently and strategies to consider for future action. As the draft plan indicates, Redmond has taken many actions over the past 15+ years to improve the supply and diversity of housing in Redmond and to support additional improved housing supply and diversity in East King County. In summary, new strategies in the draft plan include (in no priority order):

- Consider Multi-family Property Tax Exemption
- Inventory, evaluate opportunities for surplus land
- Focus on providing a dedicated revenue source that could be targeted toward affordable housing
- Evaluate opportunities for more infill, e.g., multiplex
- Participate in additional regional initiatives to provide housing
- Diversify housing stock, e.g., in Urban Centers and to meet housing needs of seniors

### **HOW THE DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED**

The draft Housing Strategy Plan follows the policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan Housing Element and strives to provide many potential implementation options to achieve these policies. The Strategy Plan is divided into two main sections. Section I, *Land Use Regulations and Incentives*, includes strategies that involve review and possible amendment of land use regulations. Section II, *Direct and Indirect Forms of Assistance*, includes strategies that involve direct and indirect forms of City assistance.

The sub-sections of each of the main sections of the Strategy Plan are as follows:

#### Section I: Land Use Regulations and Incentives

- A. Housing Choice
- B. Affordable Housing
- C. Foster Special Needs
- D. Creating and Preserving Neighborhood Quality

#### Section II: Direct and Indirect Forms of Assistance

- A. Housing Choice
- B. Affordable Housing
- C. Preserve Existing Housing Stock
- D. Reduce Housing Costs
- E. Participate in Regional and Sub-Regional Forums
- F. Implementation/Monitoring

Under each section, one or more strategies are listed with related Housing Element policy number(s) (see Attachment 2 for housing policies). For a number of the strategies there are a bulleted list of strategy options which are suggested actions to implement the goals and policies.

To the right of the list of strategies are several columns of information. The first several columns indicate for each strategy, what affordability level of housing might be facilitated by the strategy. For example, policies that encourage additional choice or supply of market rate housing will have a check in the 'mkt' (market) column. If the housing created through a strategy might result in housing affordable to moderate income households, then that column is also checked.

The next few columns indicate if a strategy requires potential administrative (staff) action, amendments to land use code regulations, or direct action by the City Council. The last columns identify the priority and current status for each strategy listed. The status column indicates whether the strategy is new, is a strategy the City uses on an ongoing or periodic basis, or has been completed. The priority column will be completed based on input from the Planning Commission at the March 21, 2012 meeting and on input from Council as part of their review and discussion.

### **MEETING PREPARATION AND SCHEDULE**

In preparation for the meeting, please review the HSP document. Commissions are asked to read the attached draft before the meeting, and bring your questions and comments. At the meeting Planning staff will provide an overview the draft, with the assistance of ARCH staff. Staff welcomes questions prior to the meeting also.

At the first review meeting we will focus on the first column, which identifies the strategies. The objective of the meeting is to ensure the Commission has a good understanding of all the strategies and for the Commission to identify if any additional strategies should be included.

At the next meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup> the Commission will discuss priorities for the strategies. Unless there is some strong rejection of a strategy, the intent of this process is not to eliminate many strategies. Leaving a strategy option in does not accept that option, it only means that the City is open to studying that option. If the Commission does not think a strategy is a good fit now, you can give it a low priority ranking and it would be considered for study at a later date.

The Commission's recommended Strategy Plan will then be forwarded to the City Council for review, potential refinement and adoption.

In summary, the Commission's schedule for this topic includes:

- March 14: Introduce topic, discuss strategies
- March 21: Conduct public hearing, finalize strategies, discuss priorities, complete recommendation
- March 28: Planning Commission report approval

Staff will brief the Council's Parks and Human Services Committee on April 3, 2012. This will be followed by Council staff report and study session in April. Council action is scheduled for May 15, 2012.

## **HOUSING STRATEGY PLAN**

Once the Council adopts the plan, the HSP becomes an advisory document that creates a framework for the City's efforts to implement its Housing Element. Further, through the City's Budgeting by Priorities process, Redmond will continue to address the challenge of achieving the City's vision of vibrant urban centers in Downtown and Overlake, improved connections to neighborhoods and high quality services, including housing opportunities. The Strategy Plan should be periodically reviewed and updated to remain current with regard to available resources and community priorities.

Questions, comments, and feedback are encouraged. Please contact Sarah Stiteler at (425) 556-2469, [ssiteler@redmond.gov](mailto:ssiteler@redmond.gov) with questions and for additional information.

### Attachments:

1. Draft Housing Strategy Plan
2. Comprehensive Plan Housing Element (unformatted)