



## Planning Commission Report

**To:** City Council

**From:** Planning Commission

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**Date:** April 22, 2009

**DGA Number:** L090018 and L090019 (SEPA)

**Title:** **Manufacturing Park/Business Park Phase I, Development Guide  
Amendment (MP/BP Study)**

**Planning  
Commission  
Recommendation:**

Approve the Comprehensive Plan and Development Guide amendments to the Manufacturing Park and Business Park (MP and BP) designated areas as proposed.

**Recommended  
Action:**

Adopt an ordinance amending portions of the Redmond Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide (RCDG) relating to Business Park and Manufacturing Park designated areas.

**Summary:**

This proposal would:

1. Amend the Comprehensive Plan and Redmond Community Development Guide to allow additional land uses within Manufacturing Park (MP) and Business Park (BP) designated areas.
2. Encourage increased viability and use within MP and BP designated areas, through allowing flexibility and new uses while maintaining the integrity of the areas for existing uses.
3. Help to maintain a strong and diverse economy, and to provide a business climate that retains and attracts locally owned companies as well as internationally recognized corporations.

**Background:**

In 2007, the Planning Commission requested that the Planning Department undertake a thorough review of policies and regulations related to Manufacturing Park and Business Park areas. Over several years, there have been a number of privately initiated land use change requests in these areas, resulting in amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Redmond Community Development Guide, and which have resulted in allowing new uses or adaptations to existing ones. The Commission wanted a comprehensive review of potential revisions related to these areas.

Planning staff began the MP/BP Study in January 2008 with a kickoff meeting attended by over 60 persons, including property and business owners of MP, BP and I (Industry) zoned property, leasing agents of commercial property, and others. The purpose of the study was to review how these areas are functioning within the City and what changes, if any, are necessary to protect current uses as well as to provide flexibility for uses in the future. Staff prepared a white paper citing current trends and issues within these areas, as well as strategies for ways these issues could be addressed. Proposed preliminary findings of the white paper were reviewed by a stakeholder's group, and were subsequently refined and packaged as a group of preliminary staff recommendations. A second stakeholder's meeting was held late in 2008 to discuss and refine the recommendations.

This set of recommended amendments reflects the completion of Phase I of the study of the Manufacturing Park and Business Park (MP and

BP) designated areas within the City. The result is a variety of recommended changes to manufacturing-related policies and regulations, in zones where such uses are allowed, consistent with Redmond's long-term goals.

The MP and BP areas provide an important resource for the City as well as the regional economy. The manufacturing park areas, in particular, allow the location of more traditional manufacturing uses, such as warehousing and distribution, assembly, and other uses which continue to successfully operate in Redmond. However, as manufacturing in the region shifts to more complex products, the Comprehensive Plan also emphasizes ensuring that uses not previously contemplated that are consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan can locate within the City. These uses also help to support Redmond's reputation as a center for intellectual and technological innovation.

The recommendations of Phase I propose amendments to the Redmond Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Guide that support the City's interest in maintaining the integrity of these areas, while at the same time allowing additional flexibility in permitted uses. New uses which previously had not been identified or permitted within the City are proposed, as well as some modifications for existing uses and site requirements. No change to the City's Land Use Map is recommended at this time, and more complete analysis of land use designation and zoning that is location specific will occur in Phase II of the study.

**Reasons the  
Proposal should  
be Adopted:**

The Planning Commission recommends adopting the proposal because:

- 1) The amendment will encourage additional, more economically vigorous uses in Manufacturing Park and Business Park areas within the City while maintaining the viability of these areas;
- 2) The amendment will provide for appropriate location of uses in MP and BP areas that are compatible to existing uses and do not attract uses that are more appropriate for location in Downtown or Overlake; and,
- 3) The amendment will encourage the location of uses that are well served by major arterials, transit and freeway accessibility.

## **Recommended Findings of Fact**

### **1. *Public Hearing and Notice***

#### **a. *Public Hearing Date***

The City of Redmond Planning Commission held a public hearing for this proposal on March 11, 2009.

#### **b. *Notice***

The public hearing notice was published in the Eastside edition of the Seattle Times. Public notices were posted in City Hall and the Redmond Library. Notice for the hearing was mailed to property owners and businesses for all MP and BP designated properties and to all persons who have participated in the MP/BP study. Notice was also given by including the hearing in Planning Commission agendas and extended agendas mailed to various members of the public and various agencies. Additionally, hearing notification was posted on the city's web site and cable TV.

### **2. *Public Comments***

One piece of written testimony was received on the proposed action. In addition, one individual spoke at the hearing requesting further consideration of the proposal to allow up to 25% retail sales of associated uses within existing allowed uses in Manufacturing Park areas.

## **Recommended Conclusions**

### **1. *Key Issues Discussed by the Planning Commission***

#### **❖ *Issues To Be Addressed in Phase II of Study***

The Planning Commission expressed the need to identify other issues that should be addressed within the context of the second phase, or Phase II of the MP/BP Study. Phase I has resulted in recommendations to allow additional flexibility or permit new land uses within the existing MP and BP designated areas, and does not contemplate land use designation changes. While these recommendations can be considered as shorter term or more expedient to allow specific changes, the Commission believes that broader questions concerning the future of the MP and BP areas need to be addressed. Many of these issues have been considered in previous studies of manufacturing areas within the City of Redmond and in other cities throughout the region. One such study completed by Urban Advisors, Inc. in 2003, suggested that the City of Redmond will continue to see these areas evolve into uses which are less traditionally manufacturing in nature, due to a variety of pressures, including the cost of land, housing, work force characteristics and other regional and global economic issues. Other issues identified by the Commission to be addressed in Phase II include considerations of how to enable the City to respond more quickly to land use requirements of new businesses, as well as to maximize the potential for green development in industrial development and to have better integration of MP/BP areas with transportation corridors, including light rail.

❖ **Medical Diagnostic and Short Term Treatment Facility**

Planning Commissioners discussed the proposed use of a medical diagnostic and short term treatment facility within MP and BP areas. Such a use would be a newly defined use within the City, and has evolved due to the need for more short term and outpatient treatment facilities within the medical field. These types of facilities are often housed within buildings with large floor plates due to the need for storage of large and heavy diagnostic and treatment equipment. The Planning Commission expressed the opinion that this type of use was appropriate within MP and BP areas, but did not want such a use to be interpreted as potentially allowing a hospital. The Planning Commission recommended removing the word “Major” from the defined term for the proposed new use to avoid an undefined term while retaining the reference to “large floor plate” within the text of the definition. The Commission also believed it was important to clearly indicate the short-term (less than 24 hours in patient stay) nature of the facility within the text of the definition. The parking requirements for such a use would be higher than what is currently allowed in the MP and BP zones: the existing parking standards allow 2 to 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area and are recommended to be 4.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area.

❖ **Spa Uses within MP areas**

Planning Commissioners discussed the issue of allowing spa businesses associated with other permitted uses within MP areas. One Commissioner questioned the appropriateness of such uses within MP areas and whether they would be consistent with the MP land use vision and policy. His concern was that it could represent a use that is too commercial and may be a draw for customers, which he believes is not the purpose of the MP area. Commissioners also expressed the concern that a proliferation of small, personal service businesses could locate within MP areas, which may also result in too many uses which are better suited to other commercial or retail areas.

The proposed use limits the total size of such a facility and also will preclude the location of smaller, personal service businesses within MP areas. A spa use as recommended represents a new land use within the City of Redmond. The new definition describes a use which is at least 1,000 square feet in size, to preclude small personal services businesses within MP areas. A spa is also allowed only when associated with an Athletic Club or Fitness Center and is not larger than 25% of the floor area of the combined two businesses. In this instance, the Planning Commission defined “associated with” as being physically located within (“contained in”) the same building as the allowed use of Athletic Club or Fitness Center.

❖ **Animal Day Care/Kennels**

The Planning Commission considered animal boarding facilities within MP areas. Many dog owners are seeking daily boarding opportunities, e.g., “day care” so that their pets may be properly cared for while they are at work or for longer stays as well. The Redmond Community Development Guide defines a kennel as a use which would meet this need. The Commission recommended this use as suitable within MP areas, provided that existing Special Use Criteria identified in RCDG 20D.170.15 Animal Boarding: Kennels, Shelters, and Equestrian Facilities were met.

❖ **Eating and Drinking Establishments**

Eating and drinking establishments are a permitted use within MP areas, with specific conditions which limit seating and overall size. A recent Development Guide Amendment now permits eating and drinking establishments when associated with a Food and Kindred Products use to be up to 25% of the total of the combined uses. The current recommendation is to remove the requirement that they be located within a multi-tenant building. The Planning Commission recommended this modification, suggesting that a food and kindred products use such as a catering business or brewery could reasonably be located within a stand alone building and contain a limited eating and drinking establishment.

❖ **Allow Associated Retail (up to 25%)**

Stakeholders participating in the MP/BP Study suggested that the existing regulations were too strict in terms of the amount of associated retail use allowed within the MP area. Currently, businesses within the MP zone are allowed associated retail up to 10% of the gross floor area or 1,000 square feet maximum, and must be goods that are manufactured on the premises. Stakeholders raised the concern that this limited the ability to allow contractor showrooms wherein some retail sales of products could occur from a warehouse/distribution site. The Planning Commission recommended that an associated retail sales use could be expanded up to 25% of the combined floor area of the use, with the retail sales as accessory or secondary to the primary warehouse/distribution use. Public testimony was received from a property owner's representative requesting that the Planning Commission calculate the 25% requirement on the basis of the entire property and not the business in question. The Planning Commission stated that if the percentage of retail allowed were to be calculated on the total area of the property that this could allow too much retail in the case of large properties and may result in unintended consequences for MP areas.

❖ **Auto-Related Businesses in MP**

The Planning Commission considered several recommendations related to auto related uses within MP areas:

1) Auto repair businesses are now allowed within all MP areas as a Special Use. This review requires that an application for such a use to be evaluated against established Special Use criteria described in RCDG 20D.170.20 Automobile, Recreational Vehicle and Boat: Sales, Service and Rental. The Special Use Permit also involves a higher fee than if it is an outright permitted use within the zone. The Planning Commission supported the Technical Committee recommendation to allow auto repair businesses as a permitted use, while still maintaining the requirement to review proposed uses with the established Special Use criteria. For new or relocating auto repair businesses, this will remove the requirement for the higher fee associated with the Special Use.

2) Consistent with the recommendation to allow some additional, associated retail sales with other uses in MP areas, the Planning Commission supported the Technical Committee recommendation that auto repair businesses may incorporate associated retail sales of vehicles, if limited to 25% of the floor area of the combined uses. If sales were

involved, then the use would be subject to the established Special Use requirements and approval process. The Commission identified allowed associated uses as limited to either automobiles or motorcycles.

3) Retail sales of automobiles are currently allowed in Downtown and Overlake, but with no outdoor storage of vehicles. The General Commercial (GC) zone allows retail sales of automobiles with outdoor storage; however the amount of GC land within the City is extremely limited. The Technical Committee identified a specific area in which stand alone auto sales could occur, based upon input from auto related business owners in the Stakeholder group. The area identified for auto sales is NE 90<sup>th</sup> and NE 95<sup>th</sup> Streets, from Willows Road east to 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE, and along 151<sup>st</sup>, from NE 95<sup>th</sup> to NE 90<sup>th</sup> Street, north to south. Properties which have frontage on these designated streets would be permitted to have retail sales of automobiles, without a repair or service business as the primary use. This use would require a Special Use Permit and applications would be evaluated against the established special use criteria.

The majority of Planning Commissioners believed that auto retail sales in a defined corridor would provide an opportunity for the smaller, boutique or specialty kinds of cars and was not likely to attract large dealerships, given the location off Willows Road. In addition, they expressed the concern that existing auto sales businesses in Downtown and Overlake were currently being challenged and that the City should be responsive by providing opportunities for them to continue and thrive. One Commissioner was opposed to the proposal to allow stand alone retail sales of automobiles in a defined area. He stated his belief that such uses would be in conflict with MP land use policy, would not be appropriately located and could potentially be incompatible with other allowed MP uses in a variety of ways. In response, the majority stated that while they would not support this type of use to be allowed throughout the MP area, the defined area was appropriate and reiterated their concern for providing an additional location for this type of business.

#### ❖ **Modifications to Site Requirements**

The Planning Commission supported the Technical Committee recommendation for two changes to RCDG 20C.60.25-020 Chart of Site Requirements for Business Park, Manufacturing Park and Industry Zones. These modifications will allow greater flexibility of use and provide additional clarification.

1) Currently there is a footnote in the Site Requirements Chart that states, “Buildings not used exclusively for research and development, manufacturing, warehousing, or allowed light industrial uses shall not exceed two stories.” The footnote is confusing and limits the interior use of a building which creates inflexibility and difficulty for potential future use of a building. The Planning Commission recommends the removal of the storey limit while maintaining the current height limit of 45 feet for non-residential structures. This will allow appropriate land uses to be more determined by the Permitted Uses Chart, and less by the number of stories allowed.

2) The Technical Committee recommended that additional clarification was necessary regarding the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) within MP areas to gain additional height. In RCDG 20D.200 Transfer of Development Rights there is both text and a chart indicating that the use of TDRs is allowed in MP areas, but there is no corresponding text within the MP site requirements chart. The Planning Commission agreed that use of TDRs was clearly indicated and should have further clarification in RCDG 20C.60.25-020 Chart of Site Requirements as recommended by the Technical Committee.

**2. Recommended Conclusions of the Technical Committee.**

The recommended conclusions in the Technical Committee Report (Exhibit B) should be adopted as conclusions.

**3. Planning Commission Recommendation.**

The Planning Commission voted to recommend the amendment for approval at its March 25, 2009 meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 4-1.

**List of Exhibits**

- Exhibit A: Planning Commission Recommended Amendments to the Redmond Comprehensive Plan and Redmond Community Development Guide
- Exhibit B: Technical Committee Report
- Exhibit C: Public Comment
- Exhibit D: Issues Matrix

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Robert G. Odle, Planning Director

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Date

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Charles McCarthy, Planning Commission Chair

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Date

Approved for Council Agenda

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John Marchione, Mayor

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Date