

MEMORANDUM

To: **Planning Commission**

From: Sarah Pyle
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Date: February 24, 2021

Subject: **Code Amendment Briefing - Zoning Code Rewrite, 2021 Workplan**

PURPOSE

During the second half of 2021, the Planning Commission will discuss and develop recommendations on proposals to amend the Redmond Zoning Code (RZC). At your February 24, 2021 meeting, staff will provide a preliminary briefing regarding four amendment packages and their anticipated review process and schedule. Staff will also seek Commissioners' questions on the review process and schedule for each of the four packages, which are:

- Redmond Zoning Code Rewrite
- Bridge "the Gap" Amendments - Overlake (OV) and Marymoor Design District (MDD) Incentives, Building Height, and Building Overhang
- Continuous Improvement and Development Services Amendment Package
- Annual Cleanup to Redmond Zoning and Municipal Codes

BACKGROUND

The City completed a rewrite of its Zoning Code, previously the Community Development Guide, in 2011. The Zoning Code is considered a “living document”. This code changes over time as called for in WAC 365-196-800, remaining consistent with the City’s Goals, Vision, Framework, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The City’s active maintenance of the Zoning Code also incorporates the focus and direction provided by the Community Strategic Plan and ensures conformance with federal and state laws.

Since the 2011 Zoning Code Rewrite, several portions of the Code have been updated through studies, per federal and state law, and as part of work programs such as:

- Southeast Redmond and Marymoor Village Neighborhood Plans,
- Wireless Communication Facilities Amendments, and
- Shoreline Master Program Update.

The rewriting process allows the City to periodically organize, streamline, and strengthen the foundation of the Zoning Code, reaffirming its efficiency and effectiveness in providing regulatory support in the implementation of the citywide vision.

- Phase 1 of a multi-year **Zoning Code Rewrite** is underway to establish a strong foundation and to prepare for future amendments during the next several years including regulations associated with Redmond 2050’s Comprehensive Plan updates. This includes collaboration with and support of a multi-sectional team to advance the amendments.

Amendments comprising the **Bridge “the Gap” package** foster the urbanization of the City’s urban centers and promote additional housing choices. This separate package of amendments will address consistency among regulations, standards and details, and support the City’s vision and policies including:

- Transit Oriented Design (TOD), a key strategy for land use and zoning near planned light rail stations in the Overlake, Downtown, and Marymoor neighborhoods. Amendments support and encourage TOD in anticipation for additional future long-term regulations resulting from Redmond 2050’s Comprehensive Plan, Overlake Neighborhood Plan and Transportation Master Plan updates during the next two to four years. Refinements will enhance alignment of the Overlake and Marymoor neighborhood development incentives with the City’s vision and account for development patterns that occurred since originating the incentives. New conditions such as the need for affordable and local commercial space will also be addressed in this amendment package.
- Onsite parking standards and shallow groundwater conditions in Overlake directly relate to the form, function, and cost of new development, particularly in the lower elevations of the City as well as impact critical aquifers that supply the City’s potable water supply. Planned density, along with regulations addressing Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and building heights can be impacted by site-specific conditions, having unanticipated impacts on achieving the City’s strategic vision.
- Easements and setbacks preserve access for maintenance of underground utilities in locations below sidewalks and plazas, planting areas, and in roadways. These correlate with the design and function of new development, necessitating consistency between the Zoning Code and the City’s Standard Details.

The COVID-19 pandemic remains present, creating unique and important demands regarding equitable access to food and housing, community recovery, and economic support for local businesses to remain resilient. Continuous improvement including to the City's Development Services allow for timely business and community support.

- Proposed amendments including in the **Continuous Improvement and Development Services Amendment package** involve streamlining processes, incorporating additional fee-payment options for customers of the Development Services Center, removing conflicts and barriers to achieving the Community Strategic Plan and community vision, and enhancing customer services.

The City also undertakes an **annual minor cleanup** process to update the Zoning and Municipal Codes for accuracy, clarity, consistency. A code cleanup is planned during 2021 with City Council action anticipated during the first quarter of 2022.

Previous amendments for this purpose were recommended by the Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council as follows:

- February 16, 2021 (Ord. 3028, 3029, 3030, 3031, 3032);
- November 30, 2019 (Ord. 2978);
- April 27, 2019 (Ord. 2958, 2959, 2960, 2960); and
- October 6, 2015 (Ord. 2803).

[Redmond Zoning Code 21.76.060.L Process Steps and Decision Makers - Planning Commission, Recommendations on Type VI Reviews](#) defines that the Planning Commission reviews, holds a public hearing, and makes a recommendation to the City Council on amendments to the Redmond Zoning Code. The City Council is the decision-making body.

ANTICIPATED NEXT STEPS

Staff anticipates providing the four packages described above and seeking the Planning Commission's review during the second portion of 2021.

Process	Anticipated Schedule
Preliminary Briefings	May - June 2021
Package Submittal and Study Sessions	June - August 2021
Public Hearings and Study Sessions	August - September 2021
Planning Commission Recommendations	September - November 2021