

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission

From: Beckye Frey, Principal Planner
Planning and Community Development 425-556-2750

Date: June 30, 2021

Subject: Redmond 2050 Monthly Briefing - Preparing for SEPA Environmental Review

PURPOSE

This month's staff briefing on Redmond 2050 will provide the Planning Commission with a look at the work that is beginning for the SEPA environmental review and analysis.

WHAT WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Redmond 2050 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will identify environmental conditions and **potential impacts on the natural and built environment**. An EIS describes:

- proposed actions and alternatives;
- existing conditions of the study area;
- adverse environmental impacts that may occur if certain proposals are implemented;
- mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts; and potential significant, unavoidable adverse impacts.

The EIS focus is on adverse impacts and avoiding them, but the EIS can also identify potential beneficial outcomes, where alternatives may improve environmental characteristics like stormwater quality or improved pedestrian and bicycle environments. It will evaluate:

- Land Use & Socioeconomics

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- Transportation
- Public Services & Utilities
- Natural Environment
- Air Quality/GHG
- Aesthetics

FIRST STEPS

City staff and the consultant team are moving into the first stages of the environmental review and analysis: reviewing the growth scenarios that were developed from the parametric model and filling-out the scenarios with information that was not considered in the modeling so that the scenarios can be used for the SEPA review.

The growth scenarios are an important input to the SEPA review, but it is not a “plug and play” situation, some additional inputs are needed for SEPA. For instance, the parametric model is not a city-wide model, but rather used a subset of parcels derived from the buildable lands analysis of vacant and/or re-developable parcels.

Staff is working with the consultant team to identify where and how we need to fold in additional data to complete the growth scenarios. We have preliminarily identified the following:

- Growth from 2045-2050 (County allocations only to 2044);
- Housing Action Plan policy direction;
- Overlake Center boundary revisions to incorporate TOD;
- Countywide Centers proposals;
- Potentially increasing growth distributed to Downtown in the Centers scenario;
- Growth outside the parcels used in the model (single-family in neighborhoods, etc.); and
- Other projects (docket applications that were not included on an annual docket, CIP projects, etc.).

The scenarios are likely to evolve to reflect new data, community priorities, and environmental considerations. A high-level SEPA analysis and travel demand modeling will then take place and we will develop “report cards” that compare and contrast the ideas presented in each scenario. The consultant team will be developing a preliminary draft EIS over the summer while we develop the scenario report cards. Community review of report cards will help finalize growth alternatives for the detailed SEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

TIMELINE & PLANNED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We are at the very beginning of the SEPA environmental review timeline with several opportunities for Commissioners and the community to feed into this review process.

- Report cards will be shared with the community this fall. Comments from community engagement on the report cards will be used to finalize growth alternatives for the DEIS. The report cards will compare and contrast the performance of each scenario based on the themes of equity & Inclusion, sustainability, and resiliency as well as other community priorities.

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- The Draft EIS (DEIS) will be published in early 2022 and we are planning an extended public comment period. As part of the DEIS process, comments will be invited from the public, local, and state agencies, community members, Boards & Commissions, and Council that will be used to develop a “preferred alternative.” It is likely that the scenarios as you see today will be further modified based on input staff receives during this review process, but we do need to keep them clearly different to meet SEPA review requirements.
- Ultimately, the preferred alternative may take ideas from multiple scenarios. The most important thing is that the scenarios represent “bookends” that are far enough apart and broad enough in scope to cover in the analysis options that are likely so the preferred alternative will fall within the bookends.
- The preferred alternative will be published in the Final EIS, which we anticipate in the Summer or Fall of 2022.

