

Policy Options and Alternatives: Overlake

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Policy Consideration: Streamlining/Simplifying Overlake Neighborhood Subareas (LU-A, LU-C, LU-F)

Topics:

- Consolidate and reduce the number of Land Use and Zoning Categories (LU-A)
- Lands around TOD should leverage opportunities provided by access to transit, such as walkable neighborhoods, reduced reliance on automobiles, and affordable housing (LU-C)
- Evaluate land use barriers to office construction and employment in the Urban Centers (LU-F)

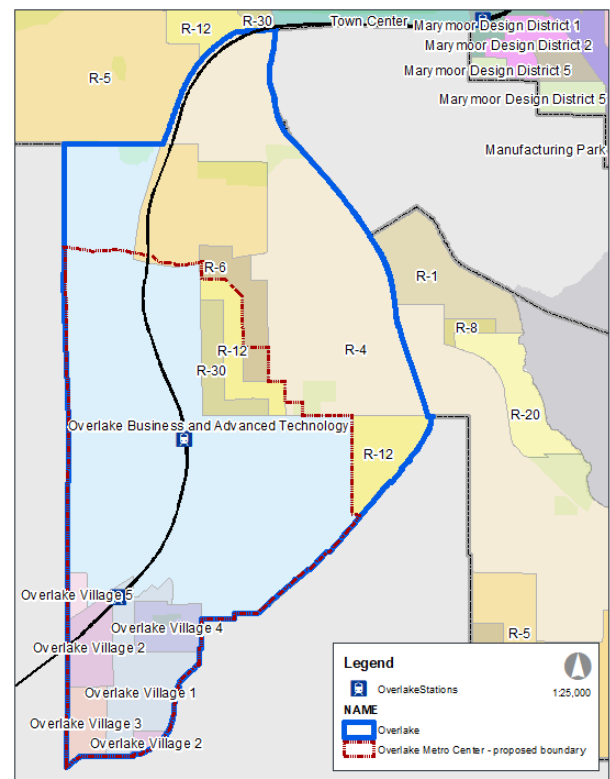
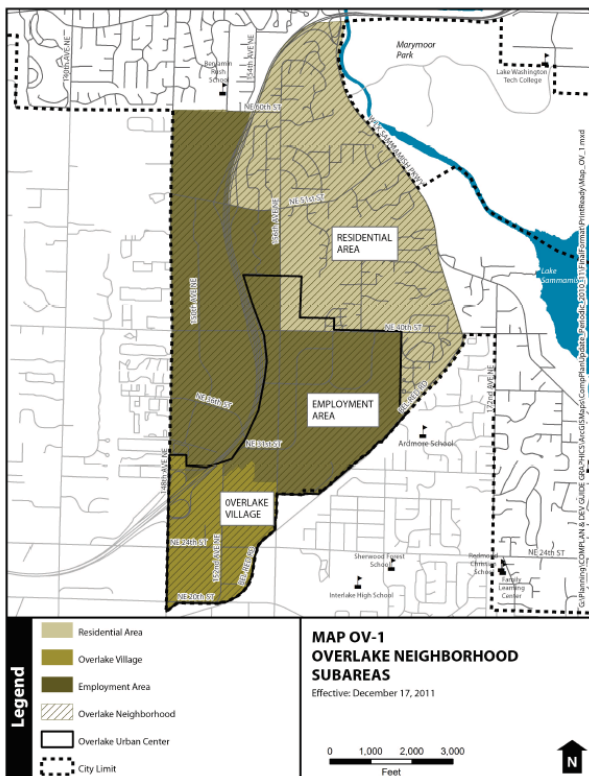
Policy question: How should Overlake subareas be organized?

There is a tension between clearly demarcating the employment areas and Overlake Village and consolidating the Overlake Village and Employment areas into a single Overlake Mixed-Use Subarea to allow more flexibility in uses.

Background or Context

Subarea Overview

Within the Overlake neighborhood are three subareas: Overlake Village, the Employment Area and the Residential Area as shown in Map OV-1.



Overlake Village

Purpose:

- Overlake Village is envisioned to become an urban mid-rise, mixed-use neighborhood that functions as the core of the Overlake Neighborhood. It is intended to provide for significant residential growth, while remaining part of a larger, vibrant commercial area that is a destination for many. It provides attractive and safe places to live close to amenities, such as restaurants, frequent transit service, and a network of parks, sidewalks and trails.

Examples:



Employment Area

Purpose:

- The Employment Area is intended to remain a home to major corporations and high technology research and development businesses, as well as compatible manufacturing uses, while maintaining a campus-like environment. Smaller developments within this area are intended to provide for employees' basic shopping needs and services and to provide opportunities for employees to live near work.

Examples:



Residential Area

Purpose:

- The northeastern portion of the neighborhood includes a collection of single-family and multifamily neighborhoods.¹
- Maintaining the traditional residential character of these areas is an important community objective.

Examples:



Trends

Office Developments

The Overlake neighborhood contains more than 44,000 jobs, making it the third largest job center in the region. The current land use around the future Overlake Village Station and Redmond Technology Station is predominantly commercial.

Microsoft is replacing 12 office buildings with 17 buildings totaling 3 million square feet at its main Overlake campus. The project has a clustered village design that will encourage multimodal travel and include shops, restaurants, and sports facilities. Microsoft is also kicking off additional renovations to the Red West campus and a campus master planning process is underway to determine future space needs and expansion plans.

Office space is also proposed as part of the Esterra Park, Seritage, and Limited Edition master plans.

Overlake Mixed Use Communities

The Esterra Park 26-acre and Seritage 13-acre Master Planned Developments are examples of how Overlake land use patterns are changing and recent mid-rise transit-ready developments. The owners of the Onyx & Eaves properties near NE 40th St and 156th Ave NE have requested up-zoning due to their proximity to Microsoft and the new Redmond Technology Station.

¹ The statement included here is from the existing Comprehensive Plan. Please note that the multifamily developments are moving into the Metro Center boundary and a new zoning district is being drafted for these areas. What remains will be primarily single-family detached homes.

Growth Targets

The regional planning process has resulted in Redmond being allocated growth of 24,000 new jobs and 20,000 housing units by 2044. Extrapolating to 2050, that is approximately 30,000 jobs and 25,000 housing units. The growth scenarios that have been developed for evaluation include different percentages of that overall growth being assigned to Overlake. Growth in Overlake ranges from about 6,000 to about 20,000 jobs, and about 4,600 to 11,900 homes.²

Stakeholder Feedback

Community engagement is ongoing as of early October 2021. To date staff have heard that diversity in land uses, services, businesses, and other aspects of the neighborhood are valued. Stakeholders have expressed a desire for small retail spaces for locally owned businesses, less complexity and layering in the zoning, housing opportunities near jobs, and transitions on the periphery of Overlake.

² The actual number assigned to Overlake may be different and will be based on community feedback and the preferred alternative developed through a SEPA Environmental Impact Statement process over the next year.

Analysis: LU-A, LU-C, LU-F

LU-A, LU-C, LU-F: Streamlining/Simplifying Overlake Neighborhood Subareas

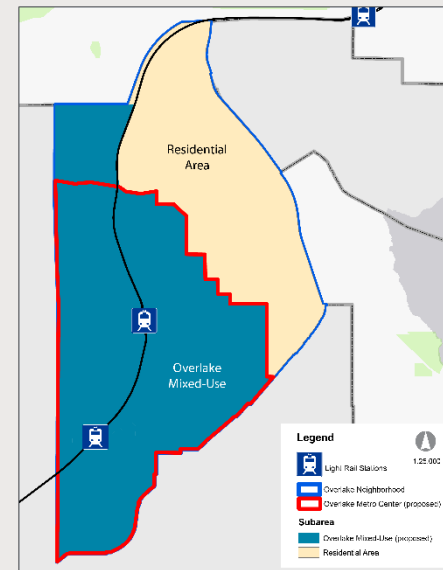
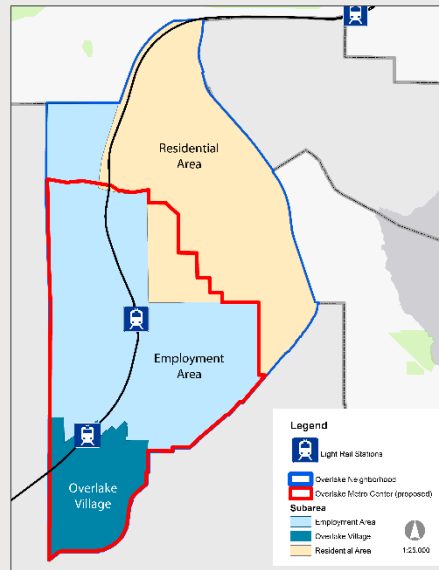
- Option 1: Keep the existing clear demarcation between the employment areas and Overlake Village area 2: Consolidate the Overlake Village and Employment areas into one subarea and allow more flexibility in uses

Potential Strategies

Potential Strategies

- Maintain the focus on offices, corporate campuses, research and development, compatible high technology manufacturing, distribution, and business services that directly support surrounding businesses
- Campus style of development pattern remains in place in the Employment Area, potentially with taller buildings near the Redmond Technology light rail stations while retaining a buffer between the Employment Area and the Residential Area.

- Combine the Overlake Village and Employment subareas into one - Overlake Mixed-Use - including all the Metro Center area and the OBAT zoning district. Keep the residential district as-is, except incorporate existing multifamily into the Metro Center boundary.
- Update policies and statement of intent to allow more flexibility of uses and building typologies while retaining buffering between the surrounding residential areas.
- Revise policies and design standards to provide transitions between the Metro Center boundary (shown in blue on the map below) and surrounding residential areas.



LU-A, LU-C, LU-F: Streamlining/Simplifying Overlake Neighborhood Subareas

Option 1: Keep the existing clear demarcation between the employment areas and Overlake Village area
Option 2: Consolidate the Overlake Village and Employment areas into one subarea and allow more flexibility in uses

Themes Analysis

<p>Equity & Inclusion</p>	<p>Maintains the existing focus on jobs in the Employment Area and a mix of uses with focus on residential in Overlake Village. Jobs may be less accessible, which is an impact that could be mitigated through investments in multimodal mobility. This provides a separation of housing from employment and thus limits the availability of affordable housing near employment.</p>	<p>Could potentially increase opportunities for housing in what is currently the Employment Area, allowing for more people to live closer to work. This potential is limited as commercial property owner-occupiers control much of the land in the Employment Area.</p>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Continued job growth in Employment Area would promote economic sustainability. Environmental sustainability could be enhanced through the planned transit-oriented development employment uses near light rail to limit car dependence.</p>	<p>Adds additional sustainability due to the improved flexibility of uses and building typologies by encouraging mixed-use over a broader area. By providing more opportunities for mixed-use with residential, improves sustainability by providing housing within walking distance of employment.</p>
<p>Resiliency</p>	<p>Keeping the subareas distinct could be accomplished in a pro-resilient manner.</p>	<p>Adds additional resiliency due to the increased flexibility of uses. Focus just on employment maximizes use of transit but doesn't take into consideration other priorities. By having a mix of uses that have different peak times (residential, etc.) the neighborhood is safer and more vibrant and more resilient over time.</p>
<p>Other Considerations</p>	<p>Retains the existing distinction between the employment areas and Overlake Village mixed-use, but may result in the need to concentrate taller building typologies in Overlake Village to the extent an office campus feel is maintained in the Employment Area (do accommodate the growth anticipated).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaves the residential area substantially in place as-is. • Departs from current policies that indicate a preference for office campus style developments and focuses instead on mixed-use throughout the employment and Village areas. • Allows for significant streamlining of policies, reducing the number of policies.

Policy Consideration: Maximize Opportunity for Transit Oriented Development (LU-C, LU-F, LU-H)

Topics:

- Lands around light rail stations should leverage opportunities for transit-oriented development (TOD) provided by access to frequent high-capacity transit, such as walkable neighborhoods, reduced reliance on automobiles, and affordable housing (LU-C)
- Evaluate land use barriers to office construction and employment in the Urban Centers (LU-F).
- Review how “neighborhood character” has been practically defined and applied in the past to ensure it does not unduly exclude desired changes and updates. (LU-H)
- Update policies that are out of date or in conflict with anticipated growth.

Policy question: How should existing policies, that may limit the ability to implement TOD, be modified or eliminated?

There is a tension between several policies that may limit the ability to implement TOD in Overlake and the imperative to accommodate anticipated growth in an equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient manner.³

- Policies calling for campus style development in the Employment subarea may be outdated and in impede progress toward meeting mandated growth targets.
- Policies that speak to very specific business sectors may impede the ability to implement new transit-oriented building typologies.
- Policy calling for preserving the views of the Cascade Mountains from public vantage points may be too broad and in conflict with the taller building typologies that accommodate growth in Overlake.

History

Development in Overlake

The existing vision and policy direction for the Overlake Employment Area dates to 1999 neighborhood plan update. By that time there was already a high concentration of jobs in the Overlake Employment Area as well as an early vision for how the area would eventually be served with high-capacity transit. The vision for the Employment Area has remained substantially the same since 1999 while the vision for Overlake Village has evolved to include a greater mix and density of uses that serves commercial needs for nearby areas and provides attractive and safe places to live close to shopping, restaurants, frequent transit service, and other amenities.

³ See memo for Planning Commission September 29, 2021.

Trends

Development in Overlake

The development trends in Overlake have been consistent with the existing vision. Major office expansions are underway at Microsoft while transit-ready mixed-use developments are planned, under construction, or completed in Overlake Village. Transportation trends are also aligned with the vision, with the advent of the B Line RapidRide serving Overlake in 2011 and the construction of the Overlake Village and Redmond Technology light rail stations that will open in 2023.

Stakeholder Feedback

Community engagement is ongoing as of early October 2021. With respect to maximizing transit-oriented development opportunity, staff have heard support for focusing growth within about a half-mile of the station. Community stakeholders have indicated that they are looking forward to transportation improvements in Overlake (all modes), additional parks, and cultural amenities. Community members have expressed concern about traffic, creating urban canyons, losing trees, and displacement. Staff expects to gather additional opinions on all of those topics during October and November 2021.

Analysis: LU-C, LU-F, LU-H

LU-C, LU-F, LU-H: Maximize Opportunity for Transit Oriented Development			
Option	1: Maintain existing policies related to campus style developments, views, and business sectors.	2: Significantly modify or remove policies related to campus style developments, views, and business sectors to maximize TOD potential.	3. Focus on maximizing TOD potential around the light rail stations and maintain existing policy direction in the rest of OBAT.
Potential Strategies			
Potential Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep existing policy language Add language that focuses taller building typologies in the Overlake Village, rather than in the Employment Area (OBAT zone), to accommodate growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace existing policy language with language that expresses support for mixed-use TOD and urban office buildings in the Employment Area. Add support for additional business sectors in policy language. Identify specific view points or corridors that are important to preserve and not in conflict with station area TOD objectives, including views from above ground level (bridges, rooftops, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise policy language to specify that TOD in Employment Area - in a broad array of business sectors - should be focused only on properties closest to the light rail station. Identify specific viewpoints or corridors that are important to preserve and not in conflict with station area TOD objectives, including views from above ground level (bridges, rooftops, etc.).
Themes Analysis			
Equity & Inclusion	<p>Raises distributional equity concerns by focusing more of the benefits and impacts of growth into a smaller area (Overlake Village).</p> <p>Smaller and older buildings are usually more affordable, which could keep some affordable commercial options in place in the Employment Area if there is less redevelopment pressure there.</p>	<p>Maximizes distributional equity potential throughout the Employment and Overlake Village subareas.</p> <p>Adding additional uses could improve equity by expanding business options and business relocation opportunities.</p> <p>Might see additional redevelopment pressure on older business campus sites in the Employment Area, which may increase displacement risk.</p> <p>Views from above ground-level may not be accessible to those with limited mobility.</p>	<p>Similar to option 1, with relocation opportunities and displacement risks also near the Redmond Technology Station.</p> <p>Views from above ground-level may not be accessible to those with limited mobility.</p>

LU-C, LU-F, LU-H: Maximize Opportunity for Transit Oriented Development

Option	1: Maintain existing policies related to campus style developments, views, and business sectors.	2: Significantly modify or remove policies related to campus style developments, views, and business sectors to maximize TOD potential.	3. Focus on maximizing TOD potential around the light rail stations and maintain existing policy direction in the rest of OBAT.
Sustainability	Environmental sustainability benefits may be realized more quickly in Overlake Village as newer, greener, and transit-oriented development is built over time.	More likely to result in environmentally sustainable development pattern in both Overlake Village and the Employment Area. Potential to combine viewpoints with green roof amenities.	Similar to option 1, but adding the Redmond Technology Station area as an area that would be likely to experience the environmental sustainability benefits of TOD more quickly. Potential to combine viewpoints with green roof amenities.
Resiliency	Not as flexible or responsive to market preferences for business sectors or building typologies.	Maximizes flexibility and diversity of uses, increasing resiliency. Adding view options that are not at ground level adds options, which improves resiliency if ground-level view options are not available.	Similar to option 1, but with increased resiliency around the Redmond Technology Station. Adding view options that are not at ground level adds options, which improves resiliency if ground-level view options are not available.
Other Considerations	Keeping a broad view policy allows for creativity and flexibility in implementation. This would require making the policy intent very clear.	Choosing option 3 here may be in conflict with option 1 in the previous discussion.	