

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission

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Date: November 10, 2021

Subject: Redmond 2050 Monthly Briefing

PURPOSE

This month's staff briefing on Redmond 2050 focuses on the upcoming quarterly update to the City Council, and a recap of a travel trends workshop conducted earlier this month.

Q4 2021 UPDATE TO CITY COUNCIL

Staff will report progress on Redmond 2050 at the City Council's November 16 regular business meeting. The purpose of the November 16 staff report to review:

1. Initial input from boards and commissions on Parks, Arts, Recreation, Culture, and Conservation (PARCC) policy considerations, and
2. Community input on policy options and alternatives for Overlake.

A Council study session is scheduled November 23 for the Council to discuss and provide input and direction on Overlake policy options and alternatives. The key policy questions concern maximizing transit-oriented development opportunities (i.e., where growth should go), and the level of land use flexibility. The Planning Commission provided input on these topics in October.

Community engagement on Overlake policy options and alternatives continues. Please encourage people you know to complete the questionnaire available at LetsConnectRedmond.com/Redmond2050. It will be open through Thanksgiving weekend.

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HOW WILL TRAVEL PATTERNS CHANGE IN THE FUTURE?

From the end of World War 2 until about 2005 there was a seemingly unbreakable link between economic growth and growth in vehicle miles of travel (VMT). Forecasting VMT was almost superfluous since it had for generations rose and fell in lockstep with the economy. That changed about fifteen years ago when VMT plateaued while the economy kept growing. On the heels of that came the Great Recession, a recovery that was slow to gain traction, and then the COVID-19 pandemic.

On November 1, the City's travel demand consultant, Fehr & Peers, conducted a workshop for City staff to work through questions about how travel patterns may change in the future given that the COVID-19 pandemic and associated upheavals to the economy have altered nearly every aspect of daily life, including travel patterns. Factors like increasing rates of telecommuting, public health concerns leading to a reluctance to use transit, and increased rates of home deliveries for goods have converged to quickly change how much we drive or how often we take transit.

During the workshop, staff explored four sets of variables that are expected to impact vehicle and transit travel: **economic trends and consumer choices, travel paradigm shifts, emerging modes, and transit and active modes**. Staff was able to see how changes in these four sets of variables impacted vehicle and transit travel in 2050. Key takeaways from the workshop included:

1. If there is a long-term increase in teleworking that results in people living farther from their place of work, the impacts may be felt most acutely on roadways connecting outlying areas to urban centers (e.g. SR 9, SR 522, or Avondale Road).
2. Employers with large teleworking populations may choose to assign more people to the same amount of office space rather than have the space sit empty part time, affecting how much travel we should assume per square foot of office space.
3. Growth management policies that direct growth to urban areas, like Redmond, will continue to exert downward pressure on VMT, but are not expected to be sufficient on their own to meet VMT reduction goals in the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.
4. Variables not studied in the workshop, like congestion pricing, fuel or carbon taxes, and road user fees, would also be expected to have significant impacts on travel patterns.

Fehr & Peers will use the results of the workshop in the travel demand modeling that it is conducting in support of the Transportation Master Plan and Redmond 2050 Environmental Impact Statement. Staff found this to be a valuable exercise and is considering ways to bring these questions to boards, commissions, and the broader community.

STATE AWARDS \$350,000 TO SUPPORT REDMOND 2050 EFFORTS

In late October the Washington State Department of Commerce awarded two grants to the City totaling \$350,000 to support Redmond 2050 housing affordability and transit-oriented development efforts. The Housing Action Plan Implementation grant will accelerate the City's ability to optimize the inclusionary zoning and multifamily property tax exemption programs. The grant will fund consultant work to conduct a market study that will inform potential programmatic changes. The Transit-Oriented Development Implementation grant will fund ongoing Redmond

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2050 environmental review and potentially allow the City to explore and complete SEPA planned action ordinances for Downtown and Marymoor Village

NEXT STEPS

Other work underway and upcoming - unchanged since your October 27 update - includes:

- Travel demand modeling to support the Transportation Master Plan and Redmond 2050 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Nov-Dec).
- Draft EIS preparation is underway, with publication expected at the end of Q1 2022.
- Staff is developing a zoning district package for consideration that would consolidate the current 9 districts in Overlake to 3.
- Stakeholder meetings are being scheduled for next several weeks with Overlake residents, business, the school district, etc.
- Questionnaire on Overlake policy options and alternatives is live now through Thanksgiving weekend.