

*****DRAFT*****

Chapter 2: Community Engagement

The city strives to engage the community as a way to ensure planning is truly representative of the desires and needs of the people who live and work in Redmond.

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2.0 Introduction

Community engagement is of utmost importance to the City of Redmond. In fact, it appears as one of the City’s top framework policies:

FW-2 Encourage active participation by all members of the Redmond community in planning Redmond’s future.

Whenever a new comprehensive planning document, functional plan, or master plan is prepared, there are a series of opportunities for the public to be involved from the visioning process to the approval process. Over 1,230 people were engaged in-person and online during the outreach phases of this plan. The following sections describe the process and strategies used for community engagement as well as highlights of the feedback received.

2.1 Visioning

An overarching purpose of this plan is to set the vision for the future for Parks & Recreation in Redmond. The department serves the people who live and work in Redmond, as well as surrounding communities, so it is imperative that the vision is a good fit for the specific desires and needs of the community. To accomplish this, community members needed a seat at the table when creating plans and making decisions. During the outreach period, multiple techniques were employed to engage the community, interest groups and City leaders. Outreach was conducted in two main phases. The first phase was aimed at connecting with the community and gathering information on new ideas, goals and needs to be considered in the plan update. The second phase was designed as a follow-up with the community on key strategies, goals and projects to ensure the plan was heading in the right direction. The final phase is the adoption process, which is a legislative procedure beginning with the Planning Commission, including public hearings, and ending with the City Council.

2.1.1 Outreach Goals

Effective outreach is key to understanding the desires and needs of the community. To guide the outreach process, several goals were established by staff and confirmed by the Parks & Trails Commission and Arts & Culture Commission. Goals were designed to gather information and feedback from a representative section of Redmond’s diverse population.

Public outreach meeting at VALA Art Center.



“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

- Alan Kay

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Community Engagement Goals:

- Engage 1,000 – 2,500 participants
- Reach out to residents, workers, parks and recreation customers and businesses as major stakeholders
- Ensure that participants reflect demographics of residents and workers
- Engage Parks and Recreation staff in the outreach process as they hear from the public on a daily basis
- Be transparent
- Meet people where they are and on their terms
- Make it fun
- Help the public understand their role in the civic process and that their opinions are valuable

These goals were used to shape the strategies and activities described in the next sections.

2.1.2 Theme and Branding

The “Shape the Future of Fun!” brand was developed as a way to catch the attention of the public, be a call to action, and create consistency in the messaging for this project. It stood as an invitation for the community help shape the City’s plans for recreation and leisure activities for the next twenty years. Each of the bright bands of textured color were used to represent the four major topic areas planned for outreach: Arts & Culture, Recreation, Parks & Trails and Conservation. The branding also included text that represented the different ways the community could participate in

providing feedback: share ideas online and join a meeting. It also included a nod to a benefit of participating: make a difference. The brand intended to create a strong feeling of community and to represent the interests of all Redmond’s diverse community members. All marketing material included links to the project website which served as an online landing place for information resources and feedback opportunities.

Exhibit 2.1: Outreach Campaign Flyer



2.1.3 Phase I Outreach – Information Gathering

This phase of outreach was conducted between May and June of 2015. The following sections summarize the groups involved, strategies used and results of this effort.

Stakeholders Involved

One of the goals of the outreach effort was to engage a variety of people that represent the diversity that exists in Redmond’s population. To accomplish this, outreach efforts were designed to engage community members that represented the variety of special interests within Parks and Recreation, all the neighborhoods in Redmond, and the demographics of Redmond. Stakeholders were engaged because they represent major users of the park and

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Trail Session at a Public Meeting.



Art & Culture Special Interest Group Workshop



recreation system. City boards and Commissions were also engaged as they are community members elected to represent the public. City staff members participated in the visioning process as they interact with community members on a daily basis and hear firsthand their major needs and interests.

Outreach Strategies

The City took a multi-pronged approach to accomplish the outreach strategies in midst of a community with little free time to participate in civic matters. The approach included in-person meetings, on-line meeting, postal mailing, posters and signs in parks and public places, on-line and telephone surveys, on-line learning via the website, and on-line engagement through a two-way forum and social media.

A highlight summary of the results of these different strategies is provided below. A full report of feedback gathered by all of these efforts can be seen in [Appendix XX](#).

Statistically Valid Survey: One of the best ways to gather consistent information from a community is through a survey. The City selected a professional survey consultant to conduct a statistically valid survey designed specifically for this plan. The 2015 PARCC Survey can be found in [Appendix XX](#).

The target audience for the survey was residents and workers within City of Redmond boundaries and other users of the Parks and Recreation system. To invite participation in the survey, a postcard mailer was sent out randomly selected households in city limits. The postcards included a web address where participants could take the survey online and a phone number to call if internet connection was not available to them. Often, public surveys are conducted by phone, but providing the survey online allowed participants to respond to it when it best fit their schedule. In addition, the survey was provided in three languages . other than English: Spanish, Mandarin Chinese and Russian. These languages represented people who speak a foreign language at home and have the lowest levels of English proficiency. The survey information was also shared in the newspaper, GoRedmond, social media, the Parks and Recreation newsletter that reaches most users, and the City's newsletter. This enabled all users and workers within Redmond access to the survey. Surveys answered by residents were coded and reported separately from non-residents.

The survey was very successful, engaging over 830 participants that live or work in Redmond. Participants represented all the major demographic groups and neighborhoods in the city.

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Public Meetings: A series of public meetings were held during the outreach process. Three meetings were planned, each in a different part of the City and on different nights of the week in an effort to accommodate a wide variety of schedules. The locations for the meetings were Redmond High School, Rose Hill Middle School and the VALA Art Center.

Staff organized and facilitated several interactive feedback sessions that grouped department services into four main topic areas:

1. Arts & Culture
2. Recreation & Active Parks
3. Trails
4. Resource & Conservation Parks

During these meetings, staff members led participants through exercises where they identified priorities for funding, arts and cultural events, park and trail project ideas, and conservation efforts. Fifty nine people were engaged through these meetings.

Exhibit 2.2: Postcard used to advertise Public Meetings and Online Forum



Front View



Back View

Online Public Forum: The City understands that in-person meetings do not accommodate many of the busy schedules of the people that live and work in Redmond. Also, Redmond's population is known to be highly savvy with the latest communications technologies. With this in mind, an online public forum was developed to provide a way for people to give their feedback on their own timeframe. The forum was designed to mimic the experience provided at the in-person meetings. The information and survey questions were presented in the same four topic areas listed above.

Multiple tools are readily available for a public online forum. My Sidewalk was selected by staff after reviewing several similar platforms. It provided a format that supported survey questions arranged by topic and allowed for conversational dialogue between participants and staff members. Approximately 70 people participated in the online forum.

Interest Group Workshops: As part of the Shape the Future of Fun! outreach effort, special interest groups were invited to a workshop where visioning discussions were facilitated by staff. During the workshop, participants provided their feedback and guidance on the topic area of their

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expertise. Also, special meetings were requested with each of the Parks and Recreation Department's commissions and volunteer committees listed above where similar visioning exercises were facilitated by staff. These workshops engaged over 80 people.

There are several special interest groups in Redmond that use the parks system on a frequent and highly structured basis. These groups are major users of the system and groups that have a vested interest in the City's long range plans. The City also organizes several volunteer committees made up of highly engaged citizens that use the system extensively. These groups are sources of valuable information when establishing plans and priorities for the future.

The following is a list of the interest groups that were engaged during outreach.

Arts & Culture

- 4Culture
- Evergreen Association of Fine Arts
- Friends of the Redmond Library
- Microsoft Art Collection
- Redmond Chorale
- Redmond Clay Studio
- Redmond Town Center
- Seattle Latino Film Festival
- Second Story Repertory
- Theatre at Meydenbauer Center
- VALA Eastside
- Arts & Culture Commission

Recreation & Active Parks

- Lacrosse
- Tennis, Fitness, Education

Trails

- Cascade Bicycle Club
- Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
- King County Parks
- Lake Washington Saddle Club
- Parks and Trails Commission
- Redmond City Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory

Resource & Conservation Parks

Arts & Culture Interest Group Workshop



Trails Interest Group Workshop



Resource & Conservation Parks Interest Group Workshop



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- Eastside Audubon
- Parks & Trails Commission
- Sustainable Redmond - Imagine Overlake

Volunteer Committees

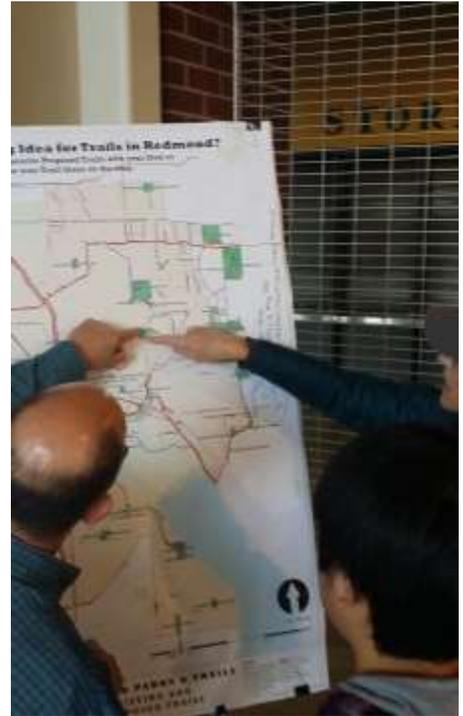
- Youth Advisory Board & Advocacy (YABA)
- Redmond Youth Partnership Advisory Committee (RYPAC)
- Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committees (PBAC)
- Senior Advisory Committee (SAC)
- Parks & Trails Commission (PTC)
- Arts & Culture Commission (ACC)

Staff Workshops: City staff members are an important source of information that is valuable in the planning process. Since staff work with the public on a daily basis, they see and hear firsthand the public's needs and desires. Staff members are also familiar with the resources, processes and policies that the City operates with which puts them in a strategic position to be able to see creative ways to meet the needs expressed by the public.

To try to capture this information for this plan, multiple visioning workshops were organized with staff groups from around the Parks Department and the City. Workshops were held with Park Operations and Recreation staff teams. Also, a workshop for staff based out of City Hall was held. This group included staff from Long Range Planning, Transportation, Traffic Operations, Public Works and other city divisions. Approximately 90 people participated in these workshops.

Project Webpage and Social Media: To provide a location for consistent information, a webpage was created for the overall plan update. The page was used to provide information on the plan update and let people know about opportunities to participate. The page included a short video introducing the plan update and how to provide feedback. It also included a link to the online public forum where participants could respond to survey questions and take part in the planning conversation. Dates for public meetings were posted there as well as links to background information and to the 2010 version of the plan. Social media was used extensively to notify the public about the outreach efforts and the opportunity to have their voices heard and ideas considered for the plan. Notifications were designed to point people to

Trail Session at a Public Meeting.



Art & Culture Special Interest Group Workshop.



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the project webpage in a way that was catchy, fun and easy to respond to. The webpage was updated during the follow-up outreach phase, noted below.

2.1.4 Summary of Public Goals & Priorities

Below is a snapshot of the top goals and priorities voiced by the public during outreach (Exhibit 2.4). A full public feedback report can be seen in [Appendix ??](#).

Exhibit 2.3: Project Webpage Screenshot



Exhibit 2.4: Summary of Public Goals and Priorities

Arts & Culture	Trails	Parks & Recreation Capital Projects	Conservation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to fund public art as it contributes to the high quality of life in Redmond 2. Provide and support more: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Outdoor festivals and events o Contemporary music o Films and film festivals o Family friendly cultural programming o Classical music and performances 3. Develop a Cultural Arts Center in Redmond 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop small trails that better connect Redmond's existing trail system 2. Develop regional trail connections 3. Build unpaved trails through parks and greenspace to connect Redmond's neighborhoods 4. Reduce user conflicts and congestion problems on popular trails 5. Add more wayfinding signage for trails 6. Build a trail that connects the Redmond Central Connector to the East Lake Sammamish Trail 7. Extend the Sammamish River Trail south to Idylwood Beach 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recreation and Aquatics Center (replacing Redmond Pool and ORSCC) 2. Downtown Park Construction 3. Hartman Park Redevelopment (Remove Pool, New Play & Picnic Areas, Sports Fields) 4. Dudley Carter Park Redevelopment, Add Artist Studio and Sculpture Garden 5. Farrel-McWhirter Park Renovation (Play & Picnic Areas, Building renovations, pathways & trail) 6. Redevelop Sports Fields with LWSD 7. Improve school play areas as neighborhood parks 8. Idylwood Park Renovations (Parking Lot, Concessions/Restroom, docks) 9. Municipal Campus Renovations (Improve infrastructure and utilities for events) 10. Overlake Village Parks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserve more open space and natural areas 2. Preserve historic homesteads

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2.1.5 Phase II Outreach – Follow up

After the first phase of outreach was completed, the results were analyzed and the strategies for the plan were formulated such as policies and goals, project ranking criteria, and project priorities. . To vet these ideas, a second round of public outreach was conducted. This was an opportunity to report back to the community what staff members heard and how staff incorporated that information into strategies for the plan. This outreach also provided another opportunity for the community to give feedback and comments. As in the initial outreach, this phase used multiple outreach formats in an effort to engage as many people as possible. The following are summaries of these formats.

In-person Meeting: A traditional in-person meeting was held at City Hall. During the meeting, a staff member and a volunteer commissioner presented the strategies and asked questions to the audience, who had an opportunity to provide feedback. The live feedback was supported by an internet based tool called Poll Everywhere which allowed the audience to see feedback data populating a graph live during the presentation. This meeting included a full question and answer period at the end of the presentation. Twenty two people attended the in-person meeting.

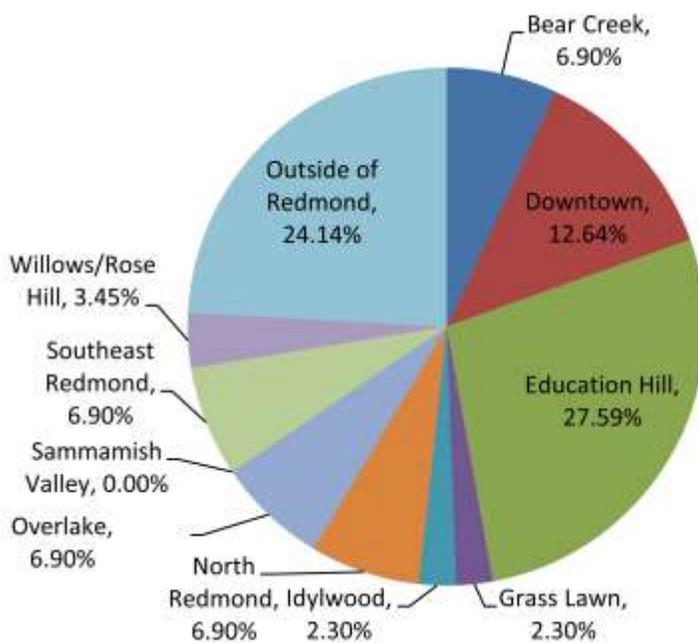
Online Streaming Meeting: An online meeting was provided for people who could not attend the in-person meeting. The same format was followed here where staff and volunteer commissioners presented questions and concepts from the plan. For this meeting, Click Webinar, an online conferencing tool, was used to allow audience members to provide and view feedback to questions live. Fourteen people participated in this meeting.

Website & Survey: To extend the opportunity for participation further, video recordings of the two meetings were posted to the project webpage along with a survey and space to provide open ended responses. An on-line survey was created with the same eight questions presented at the meetings to engage with people who were unable to participate in the meetings. This survey was open for a two week period. This method saw the most response with 60 people taking the opportunity to participate and provide feedback.

The information presented and the questions asked at all three of the outreach efforts were essentially the same. The main differences being the tools used to facilitate the discussion. This approach maintained consistency in messaging and content. In each of the three formats, participants were presented with the same eight questions.

Ninety six people participated in this phase of outreach with the most participation being received by the website and online survey.

Exhibit 2.5: Follow-up Outreach Participation by Neighborhood



Answers to the question "What neighborhood do you live

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Exhibit 2.6: Level of public support for proposed PARCC Plan Strategies

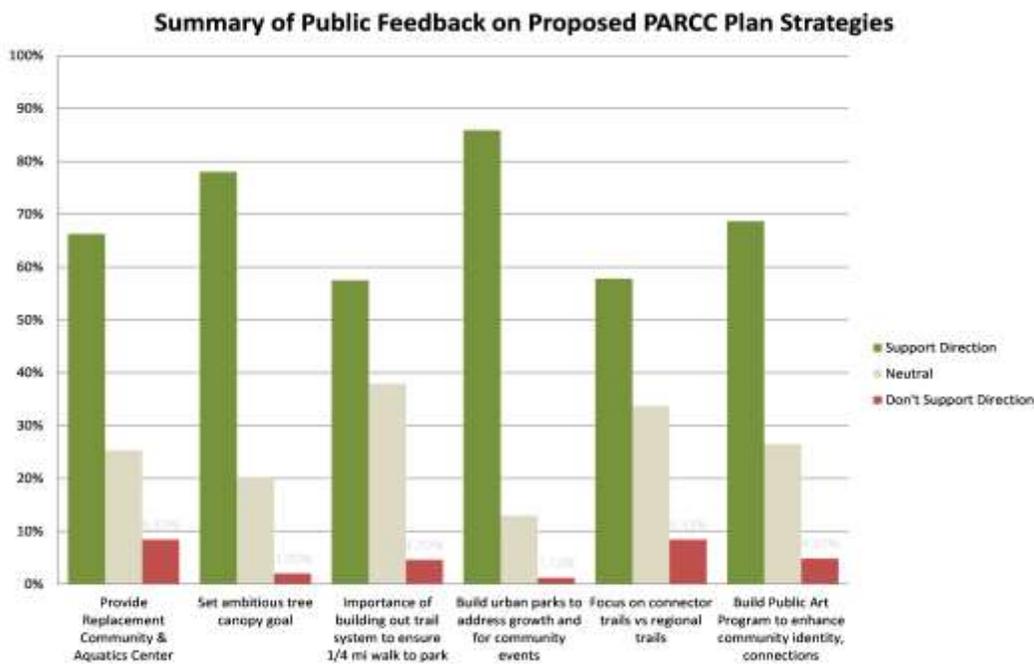


Exhibit 2.5 presents graphs of the participation per neighborhood and the level of support voiced for each of the questions.

The results of this effort showed that the people who participated generally supported the direction of the goals presented in the plan (Exhibit 2.6). The project ideas that gained the most support were regarding building parks in urban centers that support community events and building a new community and aquatics center. The proposal to set an ambitious tree canopy goal also gained a high degree of support as did the proposed direction of the Public Art Plan. More details on each of these items are reported in their respective chapters.

2.2 Plan Review Process

The plan update underwent an extensive review process both internally and as mandated by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). These reviews are necessary to ensure that the proposed plan is in compliance with existing codes, policies and plans. The following sections provide information on these processes.

2.2.1 Internal Review

Staff Review: A team of City staff from multiple divisions reviewed the draft plan and provided comments and guidance during the draft creation. City divisions represented were:

- Parks and Recreation Department
 - Park Planning & Cultural Arts
 - Park Operations
 - Recreation
- Public Works Department

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- Natural Resources
- Planning Department
 - Long Range Planning
 - Transportation Planning
 - Development Services/ Environmental Planning
 - Executive Department - Communications

Commission Review: Three key commissions were consulted with during the creation of the plan. Each commission played a specific role during the review process by providing guidance and recommendations in their areas of interest as listed below:

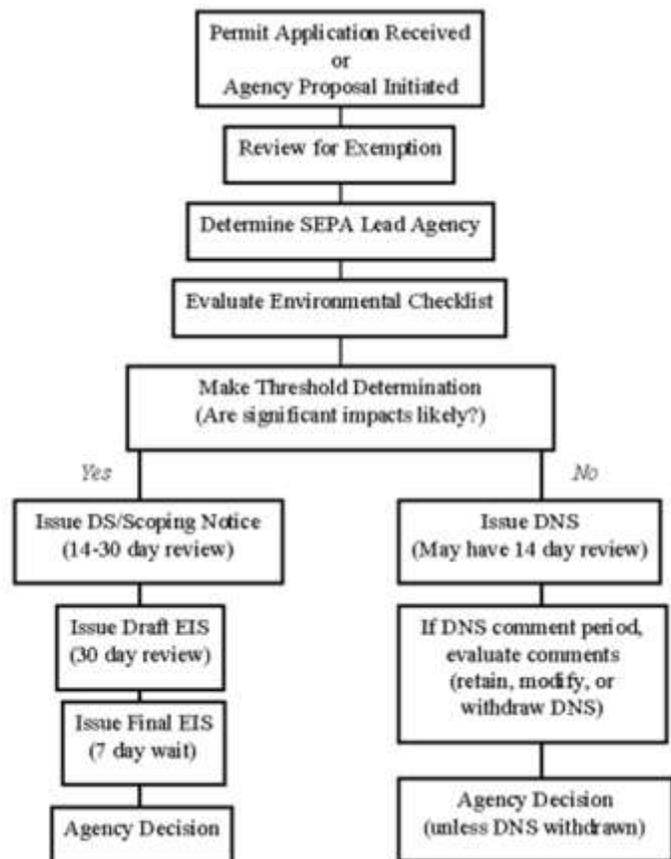
- Parks & Trails Commission: parks and trails planning and development, recreation programming and buildings, and conservation
- Arts & Culture Commission: Arts and cultural activities and events, public art, and cultural facility planning
- Planning Commission: Legislative body for the Comprehensive Plan, of which this plan is an amendment, and compliance with citywide codes, policies and regulations. This review occurs after a SEPA determination is made (see Section 3.2.2).

City Council Review: This plan update is a component of the City Comprehensive Plan which the City Council has the authority to officially modify. Adoption of the plan occurs after the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council.

2.2.2 SEPA Review

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions, including non-project actions. The PARCC Plan is a non-project action, because it serves as a planning documents for future projects. The lead agency (the City) will review the environmental checklist and other information available on the proposal and evaluate the proposal’s likely environmental impacts. After evaluating the proposal and identifying mitigation measures, the lead agency must determine whether a proposal would still have any likely significant adverse environmental impacts. The lead agency issues either a determination of non-

Exhibit 2.7: SEPA Review Process



Source: SEPA Handbook, 2003

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significance (DNS), which may include mitigation conditions, or if the proposal is determined to have a likely significant adverse environmental impact, a determination of significance/scoping notice (DS/Scoping) is issued and the environmental impact statement (EIS) process is begun. The EIS will analyze alternatives and possible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts of the proposal.

If a DNS is issued on the proposal, then a 14-day public comment period is required. Notice of the comment period will be sent to the Department of Ecology; all agencies with jurisdiction; affected tribes; and all local agencies or political subdivisions whose public services would be affected by the proposal [WAC 197-11-340(2)(b)]. In addition, a public notice will be published in the local newspaper and on the City website. After the comment period, the SEPA official must respond to comments in a timely manner and offer a ten day appeal period. Exhibit 2.7 provides a flow chart of the SEPA process.¹

¹ Washington Department of Ecology, 2003. SEPA Handbook. Ecology Publication No. 98-114.
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/handbk/hbch02.html#2-1>