



## TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT - ADDENDUM

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Technical Committee

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**File Numbers:** PR-2015-00795 and SEPA-2015-00993

**Project Name:** Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Amendments for the Old Town Historic Core Overlay and for Leary Way and Gilman Street

*This report addresses Package 2, the second of three additional addendums to the original Technical Committee Report of June 26, 2015, and to the August 5, 2015 addendum. This report addendum provides the Technical Committee's refined recommendations regarding on-site parking requirements, alternative processes for design review, and design of the building cap and of building corners in the Old Town Historic Core.*

**Reasons for the Recommendation:** The reasoning for the Technical Committee's recommendation includes to:

- Reflect significant stakeholder and community feedback provided during 2015 and 2016;

- Refine the Zoning Code to provide additional clarity and opportunities for innovation for corners and roof treatments compared to the earlier Technical Committee recommendations; and
- Maintain current Zoning Code requirements that provide: 1) on-site parking standards for proposed uses in the Downtown and 2) administrative procedures to allow for approval of alternative minimum standards when the alternative will avoid adverse impacts on other uses and streets.

## **I. APPLICANT PROPOSAL**

### **A. APPLICANT**

City of Redmond

### **B. INTRODUCTION TO PACKAGE 2**

The refined Technical Committee recommendation as described in this report and shown in Exhibits A and B is provided in response to significant feedback from stakeholders that staff received during 2015 and during community and stakeholder engagement in 2016. Topics in Package 2 include on-site parking requirements, alternative process for design review, and design of the building cap and of building corners. Exhibit B provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback by topic, briefly highlights the recommendations, and references current policy and/or code for each topic.

The topics in Package 1 that Commission previously discussed include Comprehensive Plan policies and vision, definitions, Downtown density limits, and building design specific to exterior material in the Old Town Historic Core. And, topics in Package 3 will include amendments specific to Leary Way and Gilman Street; building height, mass, stepbacks, encroachments, base design, and frontage design edging parks; incentive strategies, pedestrian experience and connections, and signage.

### **C. BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR PROPOSAL**

As described in the June 26, 2015 Technical Report, staff began the Historic Core planning process in January 2014. The purpose is to develop a plan for the historic central core of the City's first business district with the significant participation of property and business owners and community stakeholders.

Property and business owners and community stakeholders informed, reviewed, and provided feedback to the recommended policy and code refinements that comprise the deliverables in general and in particular Package 2. Staff also provides frequent project status to the Historic Core parties of record, totaling 54 at the time of this report.

The engagement process included:

| Date(s)                         | Engagement Process   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| February 2014 to May 2015       | Community and stakeholder engagement to inform development of preliminary Historic Core concepts. Engagement included community meetings, activities within the Historic Core, activities in partnership with Downtown capital improvement projects, online input tools, social media and other web-based discussions, email and mail, and in-person meetings. |
| June 24, 2015 to August 5, 2015 | Planning Commission public hearing that remained open for verbal and written testimony through August 5, 2015. On March 23, 2016, the public hearing was continued to a date certain of April 20, 2016. Staff will request that it be continued to April 27.   |
| February 18, 2016               | Package 1 community and stakeholder engagement meeting   |
| February 15 to March 14, 2016   | Package 1 individual stakeholder meetings  |
| April 21, 2016                  | Package 2 community and stakeholder engagement meeting   |
| April 7 to May 20, 2016         | Package 2 individual stakeholder meetings and conversations  |

Staff's analysis for Package 2, in Exhibit C, reflects the Planning Commission's direction from April 15, 2015 regarding policy level questions and issues. These were identified as questions and issues that the Commission would like to consider during review of proposed Historic Core plan amendments including:

- Consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies regarding the Downtown vision and associated design standards,
- Consistency with the City Council's approved design standard principles, including for reference in Exhibit F to the April 8, 2016 Technical Report Addendum,
- Recognition and awareness of the Old Town Historic Core,
- Economic impacts,
- Quality and timeless architecture and design,
- Mobility choices and parking opportunities, and
- The relationship between the Old Town Historic Core and the rest of the Downtown.

The Supporting Analysis section below describes the alternatives staff considered particular to this amendment.

## II. RECOMMENDATION

The Technical Committee recommends approval of the refined proposed amendments to sections of Zoning Code and maintaining the Zoning Code provisions regarding on-site parking standards

for the Downtown. This package includes on-site parking requirements, alternative processes for design review, and design of the building cap and of building corners within the Historic Core.

### III. FACTORS CONSIDERED AND ALTERNATIVES

To gain additional insights regarding comments from stakeholders and the community on proposed refined amendments to Zoning Code sections and design standards for the Historic Core, staff met with the stakeholders and community members. First, staff met in one-on-one meetings with stakeholders to understand and discuss their individual comments, concerns and questions. As follow up, staff developed preliminary recommendations and sought feedback from stakeholders. This outreach and engagement included phone consultation, open houses, and one-on-one meetings. Exhibit B provides a summary of this feedback by topic, briefly highlights the recommendations, and references current policy and/or code for each topic. Below is a summary of key issues, alternatives and the reasoning for the Technical Committee recommendation.

#### A. Zoning Code Design Standards

- On-Site Parking Requirements:

Stakeholders requested several modifications to requirements for on-site parking, including to:

- Reduce the minimum parking standard for residential suites to 0.35 parking stalls per bed from .5 parking stalls per bed;
- Provide credit for shared residential/commercial parking;
- Provide credit for street guest parking;
- Recognize transit oriented development by reducing parking ratios for development near transit centers;
- Maximize commercial floor area in comparison to required parking associated with general sales and service uses by lowering parking standards; and
- Apply more stringent parking standards rather than allow less than the minimum parking requirement and require more transportation management plans to reduce the adverse impacts of spillover parking for other properties and business.

The Zoning Code already provides for several of the requests related to reduced parking standards, such as:

- Credits for shared parking and curbside parking for guests;
- Opportunity to create cooperative parking facilities and agreements where two or more land uses coordinate to provide efficiency, economy of space, and superior grouping of buildings or uses;
- Allowance for reducing or waiving parking requirements in the Old Town zone for restaurants, delis, and cafés based on their gross floor area, and when located in close proximity to Downtown parks and promenades, or in an office building and primarily serving the occupants and guests of the building; and

- Procedures for the Code Administrator to consider and approve proposed alternative minimum parking standards for specific uses on specific development sites based on a parking study prepared by a qualified expert and potentially also a transportation management program to effectively reduce parking demand.

Staff also considered the additional requests including the parking ratio for residential suites and regarding commercial floor area in relationship to parking requirements, and has received input from stakeholders and other staff on these topics. Residential suites are a relatively newer form of urban development and staff is continuing to work with developers to assess parking needs and ratios. This assessment is to ensure that reductions to the required parking ratios are appropriate to the site-specific parking supply and demand associated with these uses and will avoid adverse impacts on other properties.

Commercial floor area and accessible parking for commercial uses are both highly desirable to property and business owners, customers, and developers, and balancing commercial floor area and parking supply is also important to these stakeholders. Staff received the initial request to lower parking ratios from a few developers and designers, particularly of smaller parcels within the Historic Core. The small lot sizes were part of the rationale for this reduction. Another development team emphasized strong significance in protecting commercial parking to ensure easy access to businesses and predictable parking opportunities for customers.

An owner of a business located in the Historic Core provided the comment regarding increases to parking standards. This comment is similar to concerns staff frequently receives from other business owners and from visitors to the Downtown. Staff met with Downtown property and business owners on January 5, 2016 to hear these and other perspectives. Participants voiced a variety of concerns regarding parking supply and demand. For example, some noted interest in a business zone where employees would have access to parking. Equally, participants agreed that customers needed additional assistance in locating parking.

The vision for Downtown describes the area as a vibrant urban center with a walkable environment and with a variety of choices for living, working, shopping, recreation, and tourism. To ensure support for all of these uses and activities, the Technical Committee recommends maintaining the current parking code requirements and provisions for the Downtown. Staff also proposes to continue observations and analysis of Downtown parking supply and demand, and continued outreach regarding parking choices.

- Alternative Processes for Design Review:

Stakeholders requested an alternative design review or “performance” based process to allow additional flexibility for those developments that involve proposals for exemplary or highly innovative design. Proponents believe that such

a process may result in less time for review of departures from standards, and may result in more unique architectural solutions.

Currently, the RZC allows Administrative Design Flexibility in Downtown and Overlake, and identifies standards that may be modified such as:

- Parking lot location
- Mid-block pedestrian walkways and vehicular lanes (Downtown)
- Street standards for attached dwelling unit subdivisions
- Other site requirements and standards, except for density, number of stories and Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The Technical Committee recommends the continued application of the Administrative Design Flexibility process, which is reviewed administratively and ultimately by the Design Review Board. The stated purpose of the Administrative Design Flexibility provisions in RZC 21.76.070 C is described as:

“...to promote creativity in site design, allow flexibility in the application of standards in certain zones, and to achieve the creation of sites and uses that may benefit the public by the application of flexible standards not otherwise possible under conventional development regulations.”

The existing process for review of developments with departures from standards is clearly defined, efficient, and allows a significant amount of flexibility in the Downtown. Staff will continue to identify and propose additional opportunities for alternative treatments through the Administrative Design Flexibility process as applicable, such as for materials, transparency, and building corner treatments in the Historic Core.

- Design of Building Cap:

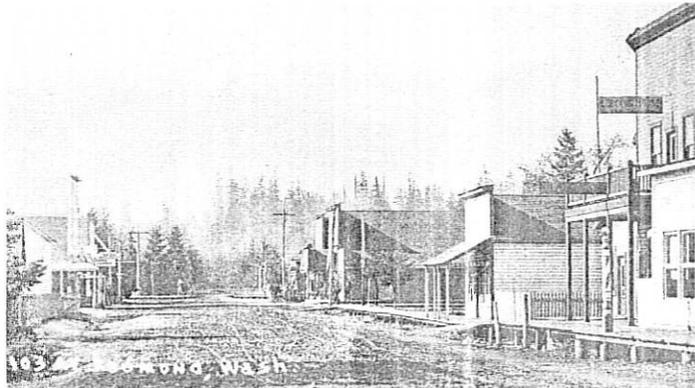
The June 26, 2015 Technical Committee recommendations included requiring a flat roof design for all roof forms in new development in the Historic Core. In response, stakeholders requested that additional building roof forms be permitted as part of the building cap design.

The Technical Committee recommends expanding the previous recommendation by including additional roof forms that would be respectful of the character of structures in the Historic Core:

- Gable;
- Gambrel;
- Hip; and
- Hip with deck.

To ensure predictability of the expanded roof design options as they translate into building height, the occupied floor area will continue to be counted as a building story.

The additional roof forms are consistent with those found in the Historic Core starting with the period of its development as the City's original business center through the present, as shown below.



- Design of Building Corners:

The Technical Committee's recommendations of June 26, 2015 regarding corner treatments are consistent with current design standards contained in RZC 21.62.020.D, Corner Lots – Building Design, and also reference Map 62.2 which identifies intersections where corner treatments are encouraged. However, the Technical Committee's initial recommended language uses the wording, "shall" instead of "should", as the existing code relies on the use of corner treatments on a voluntary basis. In addition, the initial recommended language describes the intent

of the standards in more detail and uses a series of examples in both photos and text.

Stakeholder comments received were favorable to providing additional clarity regarding intent, but stated that the criteria in some cases are not consistent with the photographic examples. Stakeholders also expressed that a requirement for corner treatment may not be feasible in all locations identified on Map 62.2 and that some flexibility should be permitted.

Acknowledging that such situations may occur, the Technical Committee recommends the addition of Administrative Design Flexibility to the section which is described in new text and photos, to allow consideration of alternative corner treatments when necessary, such as when the corner is near a garage entry. If a corner entry is not practical or feasible, the Technical Committee recommends that treatment of the corner in some manner be required and the proposed standards provide examples of alternatives when this is the case.

## **B. Other Planning Commission Topics for Consideration**

Staff analyzed the proposed additions and refinements in the context of the Planning Commission's policy level questions and issues. Exhibit C includes a summary of this analysis. Staff also considered alternatives for the following Commission's policy questions:

1. Impact Economic Conditions & Balance Community, Business, and Property Owner Interests

### Alternatives and Analysis.

- On-Site Parking Requirements:

Parking is one of the more frequent topics commented on by people who live, work, and visit the Downtown. Among the objectives underlying the Technical Committee's recommendation are parking management and balancing the supply and demand while also avoiding over-development of the parking supply. The Zoning Code allows for site-specific analysis and proposal of alternatives to meet use-based demand such as for smaller apartments and for development in close proximity to high capacity transit.

Reducing the standard minimum parking ratios in the Zoning Code for the Downtown would likely lower development costs and allow larger amounts of commercial floor area. However, staff believes that without use- and site-specific review and development of transportation management programs, Downtown businesses could experience continued impacts such as from increased on-street residential parking and decreased opportunity for on-street commercial parking.

Recognizing changes are underway in the Downtown, particularly as development continues and the future extension of light rail, the Technical Committee recommends maintaining the current parking ratios and procedures applicable to the Downtown for now. The Committee also supports continued observation and outreach with stakeholders.

- Design of Building Cap:

As part of initial outreach for the Historic Core plan in 2014, community stakeholders expressed concerns regarding building height and expressed interest in preserving the historic and traditional character within the Historic Core. These interests informed the Technical Committee's initial recommendation.

However, property owners and developers subsequently requested that staff reconsider and expand the opportunities for various roof forms such as those that have been used in traditional architecture and within the district. Staff confirmed that a variety of roof forms were present in the Historic Core since its original development as well as in other traditional downtowns such as La Conner, Port Townsend, Tacoma, Seattle, Chicago, and New York. Particularly, staff inventoried the building designs and roof forms typical of western, pioneering towns.

Depending on the time period of western settlements, buildings would feature a predominantly flat roof, a western false front emulating a flat roof and/or allowing for signage, and gabled roof forms. *This Old House* describes that "The vertical extension of the front of a building beyond the roofline creates the false front style. Almost always used for commercial purposes, false front buildings gave an air of dignity to a quickly growing town by providing visual continuity along the street." More elaborate roof designs such as gothic spires and French Provincial - mansard roof were more common in larger cities and in the eastern US.

The Technical Committee's refined recommendation is for an expanded list of appropriate roof forms to foster variety within the overlay, to allow for flexibility of building design, and to ensure consistency with the current code as well as predictability by counting occupied floor area as a building story. Also, staff proposes maintaining the previous recommendation for design standards that call for distinctive architecture and design treatments at the building cap to create a statement of the building's termination, complementary to designs found on historic and landmark buildings within the Historic Core.

An alternative is to not expand the list of appropriate roof forms. Staff believes this would result in too much of a limit.

- Design of Building Corners:

The vision for the Historic Core is as an outstanding place to work, shop, live and recreate that is vibrant and pedestrian friendly. A number of proposed code elements for the overlay area are intended to enhance the pedestrian experience through architectural treatments and streetscape design, including modulation of the building frontage and corner treatments, for example. Stakeholders have not opposed proposed corner treatment requirements but have requested additional flexibility in their application. As a result, the Technical Committee's refined recommendation is to provide for the use of Administrative Design Flexibility when locations may not be feasible for corner entrances due to the necessary placement of garage or utility entrances or due to the limited size of the parcel. The proposed standards require some design treatment of the corner and if there is no entry at that location, the proposed standards provide examples of alternatives.

An alternative is to not provide for Administrative Design Flexibility for corner treatments. Staff believes this would not provide sufficient options for when there are practical limits, such as when garage entrances are located near to corners.

#### **IV. COMPLIANCE WITH CRITERIA FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS**

Redmond Comprehensive Plan Policies PI-16 direct the City to take several considerations, as applicable, into account as part of decisions on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Items 1 through 6 apply to all proposed amendments. The following is an analysis of how this proposal complies with the requirements for amendments.

##### **1. Consistency with Growth Management Act (GMA), State of Washington Department of Commerce Procedural Criteria, VISION 2040 or its successor, and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.**

The proposed refined amendments to the Zoning Code take into account direction by the GMA, the Department of Commerce, VISION 2040, and Countywide Planning Policies. GMA's planning goals for guiding development of Comprehensive Plan policies and associated regulations include encouraging development in urban areas, reducing sprawl, encouraging efficient multimodal transportation systems, encouraging economic development and housing opportunities, and encouraging community involvement during planning processes.

The recommended refined amendments maintain Redmond's portion of projected housing and jobs growth within King County's urban growth boundary. The planning process for the proposed amendments as well as for the refined proposed

amendments included significant amounts of community and stakeholder involvement.

GMA's planning goals also include historic preservation. This goal calls for identifying and encouraging the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance. The recommended refined amendments will facilitate this goal by recognizing the significance in continuing to preserve existing landmarked properties, encouraging high-quality and pedestrian-oriented architecture and design within the unique, historic portion of the Downtown, and supporting additional investment in the City's original business core.

## **2. Consistency with the Redmond Comprehensive Plan.**

The proposed refined amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, particularly FW-23 thru FW-26 which speak to Downtown's character and vibrancy, LU-2 which ensures that development regulations provide for achieving the preferred land use pattern, CC-3 which ensures that the Downtown is a place that feels comfortable for pedestrians and addresses characteristics, DT-25 which ensures that development in the historic portion of the Old Town zone retains the area's historic village character and complements the character and scale of existing historic buildings, policy FW-20, which calls for a variety of business choices meeting the needs of the community and PI-19 which calls for clear and consistent development regulations.

## **3. Potential general impacts to the natural environment, such as impacts to critical areas and other natural resources, including whether development will be directed away from environmentally critical areas and other natural resources.**

The proposal is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on the natural environment and may have some positive impacts. For example, federal and state law requires the preservation and protection of cultural resources. States are also mandated to maintain a record of archaeological and historical resources. Staff has considered these mandates in the context of new and redevelopment in the Historic Core and has notified respective property owners of the requirements they shall adhere to in this regard. Staff will continue communicating these requirements to property owners and developers, particularly in areas such as the Historic Core where the presence of cultural resources may be high.

## **4. Potential general impacts to the capacity of public facilities and services. For land use related amendments, whether public facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively and adequately at the proposed density/intensity.**

The proposal, calling for refinements to amendments regarding design standards is unlikely to have any significant impacts on the capacity of public facilities and services.

**5. Potential general economic impacts, such as impacts for business, residents, property owners, or City Government.**

The proposal could have positive impacts on the economic condition of businesses in the overlay by guiding design of development to support achievement of an attractive, engaging, and highly functional pedestrian environment. The proposed refinements to amendments would also continue to provide opportunities for variety and flexibility.

**6. For issues that have been considered within the last four annual updates, whether there has been a change in circumstances that makes the proposed amendment appropriate or whether the amendment is needed to remedy a mistake.**

This package continues review of an amendment first included on the Comprehensive Plan annual docket in 2013-14 and carried over to the 2015-2016 annual docket.

**V. AUTHORITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL, PUBLIC AND AGENCY REVIEW**

**A. Amendment Process**

Redmond Zoning Code (RZC) 21.76 requires that amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and Zoning Map be reviewed under the Type VI process. Under this process, the Planning Commission conducts a study session(s), an open record hearing(s) on the proposed amendment, and makes a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council is the decision-making body for this process.

**B. Subject Matter Jurisdiction**

The Redmond Planning Commission and the Redmond City Council have subject matter jurisdiction to hear and decide whether to adopt the proposed amendment.

**C. Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)**

A SEPA checklist was prepared and a Determination of Non-Significance was issued for this non-project action on June 10, 2015 (see Exhibit E in June 26, 2015 Technical Committee Report). The Technical Committee's refined recommendations are not different in terms of anticipated environmental impacts compared to the initial recommendations.

**D. 60-Day State Agency Review**

State agencies were sent 60-day notice of this proposed amendment on June 1, 2015 and of the proposed refinements to amendments on April 1, 2016 and May 20, 2016.

**E. Public Involvement**

The public and stakeholders have had several opportunities to contribute to and comment on the proposed amendments and on the proposed refinements to the amendments including a significant number and variety of engagement events from February 2014 to May 2015, February to May 2016, and through the Planning Commission review process. A public hearing was held on July 15, 2015 and was continued to a date certain of April 27, 2016. Initial public notice of the hearing was published in the Seattle Times on June 24, 2015 (see Exhibit D in June 26, 2015 Technical Committee Report) and on March 30, 2016. Notice of the Planning Commission hearing was posted in City Hall, the Redmond Library, and through RZC 21.76.080, Extraordinary Notice: two 4' x 8' signs were installed at two different locations in the proposed Historic Core Overlay area. Notice of the hearing is given on the Planning Commission agendas and extended agendas. Notice was also provided to business and property owners affected by the proposed amendments to the Zoning Map. Specific outreach to stakeholders within the Historic Core has occurred on multiple occasions between May and July 2015 and during February to May 2016 via mailed packet, telephone, e-mail contact, and in-person meetings.

**F. Appeals**

RZC 21.76 identifies Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan Amendments as a Type VI permit. Final action is by the City Council. The action of the City Council on a Type VI proposal may be appealed by filing a petition with the Growth Management Hearing Board pursuant to the requirements of the Board.

**VI. LIST OF EXHIBITS**

- Exhibit A: Recommended Amendments to the Redmond Zoning Code
- Exhibit B: Summary of Stakeholder Comments, Technical Committee Recommendation, and Current Code
- Exhibit C: Evaluation of Technical Committee Recommendation relative to Design Standard Principles and Planning Commission Criteria

**Conclusion in Support of Recommendation:** The Technical Committee has found the proposal to be in compliance with the Redmond Zoning Code, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, Redmond Municipal Code, and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

  
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