

Next Steps for Redmond's Downtown



Urban Renewal District



Prepared For:

City of Redmond, Oregon

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Next Steps for Redmond's Downtown Urban Renewal District

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December 2004

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Introduction & Background

Community-based visioning and planning is a critical key in revitalizing a downtown commercial district; many communities choose to develop Action Plans that define their vision and serve as roadmaps for redevelopment efforts.

In 2000, Redmond's City Council/Urban Renewal District Board hired the firm of Walker Macy to facilitate a community-based effort to develop a Downtown Action Plan. The resulting plan carefully outlined sixteen streetscape, parking, and public space projects to be implemented within Redmond's Downtown Urban Renewal District. The plan also included cost estimates for the proposed projects to serve as guides for the Urban Renewal Board.

The Downtown Action Plan has not languished on a shelf; instead, many components of the plan have been successfully implemented – including streetscape and alley enhancements, and the creation of parking areas and public spaces.

Unfortunately, the plan does not address several of the larger, equally significant issues associated with downtown redevelopment. Specifically, the Downtown Action Plan does not elucidate downtown's target market or its niche within the City and region. It does not call out the best opportunities for business and property development, nor does it describe the Urban Renewal District's role in *initiating* and *guiding* redevelopment activities (rather than *reacting* to proposals made by developers). Lastly, the plan does not recognize the importance of sufficient organizational capacity and willingness of downtown businesses (and business associations) to partner with the City

and Urban Renewal District on revitalization activities and projects. Recognizing some of the plan's deficiencies in terms of the implementation of both past and future projects, Wendy Akins, Administrative Assistant for the Downtown Urban Renewal District, said, "We need to know if we will have the revitalized, healthy downtown that we want if we continue to implement the kinds of Urban Renewal Projects that we have in the past." This willingness to review outcomes, and the openness to question next steps before moving ahead, says much about the vision and leadership within the City and its associated Urban Renewal Board and Advisory Committee.

It was through this reflection and questioning process that the City of Redmond initiated a Request for Proposals to assess past efforts and to help set the course for future projects and initiatives within the Downtown Urban Renewal District. The goal of this "Next Steps" projects is to ensure that Urban Renewal dollars and City efforts will be effectively spent and leveraged to make certain that downtown becomes the healthy vibrant business district the City and its stakeholders envision.

Oregon Downtown Development Association (ODDA), a regional non-profit dedicated to assisting communities in achieving revitalization success, was chosen to review past Urban Renewal efforts and propose appropriate next steps.

An agreed upon scope of work was developed and a date set for the ODDA team to visit Redmond and meet with a variety of downtown groups and stakeholders. Vicki Dugger, Executive Director of ODDA, led the project with Matthew Arnold, a planner for the

Portland-based SERA Architects, assisting. Wendy Akins, Administrative Assistant, and Cameron Craig, Budget and Finance Analyst, represented the City/Urban Renewal District through meetings with stakeholders. The on-site portion of the project included meetings with the Chamber of Commerce Executive Board, downtown merchants, City Council/Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, local developer Jean Wood, and City staff. The visit also included walking and driving tours of the Downtown Urban Renewal District.

This *Next Steps Report* serves as a follow-up to the on- and off-site work that included a review of existing plans, codes, Urban Renewal projects and information gathered from downtown stakeholders. The purpose of this project is not to develop a redundant planning document, but to offer implementable next steps that build off the work that has already taken place – thereby helping Redmond achieve a more vibrant downtown commercial district.

Existing Conditions

This section of the report lists a broad range of downtown efforts and activities that are planned, underway, or completed. Following this section, recommendations for next steps are outlined and explained.

Projects Completed & Planned

Many of the proposed public space improvements outlined in the 2000 Downtown Action Plan have been completed. These projects include streetscape improvements, alley improvements, parking lot improvements and the creation of a public plaza.

Streetscape improvements include:

- Sidewalks, including pavers
- Curb extensions and upgrades
- Undergrounding of utilities
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Banners
- Street trees
- Pedestrian furnishings, including benches, trash receptacles & bike racks.



Alley improvements have occurred on one block out of three recommended.

They include:

- Undergrounding of utilities
- Decorative pavers
- Screening of dumpsters
- Lighting



Parking lot improvements have occurred in two lots. They include:

- Paving and striping
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Signage

Public Plaza Improvements include:

- Paving
- Lighting
- Banners
- Benches
- Planters/Trees/Flowers
- Screening of dumpsters



Currently, thirteen public improvement projects are on the list for the Downtown Urban Renewal District, with five of them in various stages of completion. These projects include:

- 5th/6th Street from Black Butte to the north end of couplet: sidewalks, street, and pedestrian-scale lighting (partially completed)
- 5th/6th Street from Black Butte to Highland Avenue: installation of curb extensions, repair paved walks, install pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, and furnishings (50% completed)
- 5th to 8th Street from Deschutes, Evergreen & Forest: widen east/west sidewalk, install pavers, pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, and furnishings
- 6th to 9th Street, on the north side of Highland, repair sidewalks, install curb extensions, pedestrian-scale lighting, and street trees

- 9th Street from Antler to Indian: install street trees and pedestrian-scale lighting
- Deschutes Avenue, from 9th Street to Canyon: repair curbs, install sidewalks, and street trees
- Alleys from Cascade to Forest: underground utilities, paving, furnishings, and pedestrian-scale lighting (1/3 completed)
- Off Street Parking at 7th Street & Black Butte: purchase property and construct parking lot
- Off Street Parking at 7th Street & Deschutes: purchase property and construct parking lot
- Off Street Parking at 7th Street & Cascade: purchase existing parking lot and upgrade with landscaping
- Off Street Parking at 7th Street & Forest: purchase existing parking lot and add lighting (partially completed)
- Off Street Parking at 7th Street & Forest to Glacier: purchase existing parking lot and add lighting
- Off Street Parking at 8th Street & Forest to Evergreen: re-stripe and add landscaping to existing parking lot (2/3 complete)

By far, Redmond's largest Urban Renewal expenditure to date has been for the City's portion of the proposed bypass route for Highway 97, a project which will re-route the majority of truck traffic around downtown. Although not yet completed, this project is viewed by the community as one of the most important to achieving a more comfortable, livable, and vital downtown district. According to ODOT, the

schedule to have the re-route finished is Fall/Winter 2007.

Another 'pipeline' project that will have an impact upon downtown is ODOT's coupled development of Highland and Glacier Streets. Slated for 2005, this project has gone through ODOT's design process. As part of the overall improvements, the Urban Renewal District will pay for:

- Installation of pedestrian-scale lighting along Highland
- Installation of lighting on 6th Street between Highland and Forest (to close the gap between the existing lighting and new lighting slated to be installed)

As part of the proposed phasing, it is also recommended that pedestrian-scale lighting be installed along Glacier when the street's primary use has transitioned from residential to commercial.

In addition to Urban Renewal's funding for public improvements, a low interest Façade Loan program is available to help encourage property owners to reinvest in downtown. The Façade Loan pool is currently set at \$100,000 per year, with terms that include a cap of \$25,000 per loan and an interest rate of 2%. The Façade Loan program has been in place for a year, with no takers to date.

Recommended Next Steps

With a wide array of projects in various stages (from completed, to in-process, to 'on the to-do list', to 'what's next?'), now is an opportune time to examine which next steps will have the highest level of impact, support, and potential

for revitalizing Redmond's downtown business district.

This *Next Steps* portion of the report will be broken into the following sections:

- **Important Internal Strategic Decisions**
 - Moving beyond public space projects: taking a proactive role in the redevelopment of downtown
 - Providing better incentives to encourage downtown redevelopment
 - Downtown management, business support, and development
- **Detailed Plans Recommended**
 - Downtown Market Analysis & Business Development Plan
 - Downtown Parking Analysis & Management Plan
- **Standards Recommended**
 - Downtown Design Standards
 - Downtown Parking Standards
- **Immediate To-Do List for Projects**
 - Alley upgrades behind Historic Redmond Hotel
 - Historical street lights with conduit for future installations
 - 'Complete' the plaza
 - Streetscape amenities on 5th Street

- **Projects Requiring Additional Information**
 - Additional parking lot acquisition & development
- **Addressing Sensitive Issues**
 - Capacity & willingness of Downtowners to partner with the City in an expanded role
 - Conflict of interest issues
 - Trust & communication issues
 - 'Baggage' projects

Important Internal Strategic Decisions

As the project team began developing implementation strategies for downtown, it became clear that there are several areas where the City/Urban Renewal Board could adopt agreed-upon strategies to help focus, support, and guide future downtown redevelopment efforts. Following is a list of recommended strategies, some of which will require additional consideration while others will be relatively simple to implement.

Strategies to Guide & Induce Redevelopment

Proactive Redevelopment Role

There is a need for the City/Urban Renewal Board to consider altering its role from strictly implementing public improvements, to one that is more proactive in the redevelopment of downtown properties. Implementing public space improvements has been a

successful way for the Urban Renewal District to begin downtown's revitalization, and these efforts should be continued. However, it is time for the Urban Renewal Board to take a more proactive role in the redevelopment of Redmond's downtown 'opportunity sites.' This more sophisticated, positive role will allow the City/Urban Renewal Board to guide redevelopment efforts in downtown, as well as leverage its own infrastructure investments, rather than simply reacting to projects that developers bring forward (and that may or may not "hit the mark" for what the City is trying to accomplish).

During the on-site visit for this project, it was evident to the project team that there are many parcels in the downtown core that are underutilized and that could be prime candidates for redevelopment. A plan should be developed that lists, maps, and prioritizes appropriate 'opportunity sites.' This plan should be created in conjunction with owners of these 'opportunity site' parcels.

As appropriate and as opportunities arise, the Urban Renewal Board may choose to assemble parcels for redevelopment and solicit Proposals to Redevelop. These solicitations should be based on uses the City desires for downtown as well as upon information from the (recommended) Downtown Market Analysis and Business Development Plan. This process will be an excellent way for the City/Urban Renewal District to guide and encourage downtown development that best supports and enhances the existing business district.

The internal decision to move the Downtown Urban Renewal District into a more proactive role in downtown redevelopment will require an in-depth conversation based on what role the City/Urban Renewal District ultimately

sees for itself – as implementer of public space improvements that support revitalization OR as a stronger agent of change that implements public improvements *and* proactively promotes and guides those redevelopment activities that will best accomplish the goals and vision of downtown.

Moving to an expanded role for the Urban Renewal Board will take discussion, agreement, and a distinct plan to move ahead with a more complex role within the downtown redevelopment process. While more complicated, this role can help make the difference between the ultimate failure or success of downtown.

Encouraging Private Reinvestment in Downtown

One of the most critical components in ensuring that private investment occurs as part of downtown's redevelopment will be the establishment of a variety of policies and tools that could include the following:

- A 'meaningful' incentive package for developers & owners of existing properties and businesses;
- Creation of a developers database, and associated marketing plan and materials targeted to developers;
- City initiated Requests for Proposals to redevelop high priority downtown 'opportunity sites.'

Redevelopment Incentives

In order for them to 'take a risk' on downtown projects, developers generally agree that they first need to see a strong indication by the City that

the City itself is strongly committed to downtown redevelopment. This commitment is often demonstrated through comprehensive streetscape and/or infrastructure improvements and local incentives. The streetscape improvement part of the equation is in place in Redmond. However, additional incentives are needed to help spur the kind of redevelopment that is desired and needed in Redmond's downtown.

The following are a few examples of incentives that Redmond might want to consider implementing for the Downtown Urban Renewal District.

- Creation of a Downtown Entrepreneur Zone (based on the Enterprise Zone model). Incentives that might be considered under this zone designation include lower (or abated) Systems Development Charges and/or permitting fees. (Dallas, Oregon 'trades' SDC charges associated with redevelopment of commercial buildings with facades upgrades. The rationale behind this is that an existing building has already 'paid' for its impacts and by requiring investment into the façade in lieu of SDCs makes it a 'win-win' for both the City and property owner.)
- Another incentive could include streamlined (or fast-track) permitting. (One community 'fast-tracks' is by making commercial or industrial development permitting a priority in the permitting process.)
- Zero-percentage façade improvement loans that can be granted to either property or business owners within the district. The low-interest-rate façade loans currently offered by the City for such improvements have not had any takers to date. If a local bank, or banks, would offer the loan program

and Urban Renewal funds were used to buy down and eliminate the interest rate, then the loans would be much more attractive to property and business owners.

- Free architectural design services in conjunction with façade loan improvements. Some Urban Renewal Districts offer free design services to participants in their façade loan program. This helps ensure that improvement projects fit within the context and style of the downtown district, and that the loans are used for design improvements that enhance the commercial district and promote a positive pedestrian experience.
- Vertical Housing Development Zones. Such zones can be a positive tool to encourage mixed-use development projects. Upon certification as a Vertical Housing Development Zone, a tax exemption on the subject property may be in effect for not more than ten years. The percentage of tax abatement is determined by the number of residential floors *above* the ground floor commercial space. One floor of residential will yield a tax abatement of 20%; two floors, 40%; three floors, 60%; and four floors of residential will yield 80% tax abatement. (This zone designation is slated to be updated in the upcoming 2005 legislative session to be more flexible for non-profit developers.)

Information Packet for Developers

One of the easiest and most important things the City/Urban Renewal District can do to help encourage downtown redevelopment activity is to create an informational packet for developers. The packet should be attractive and professional in appearance. The

information should be prepared in such a way that it can easily be updated as necessary.

The packet should be recruitment-style in look and content – selling the prospective developer on *why* downtown Redmond is the place to be.

This development package should contain:

- Up-to-date maps and photos of downtown that show opportunity sites for redevelopment. (Private property should not be listed unless there has been a prior agreement with the property owner.)
- A copy of the Downtown Market Analysis & Business Development Plan (proposed study) that includes information on Redmond's target market, including demographic and psychographic profiles and data.
- City information, including phone and e-mail info of City Departments & associated Staff.
- Information on local incentives and any type of streamlined permitting process.
- Information on City requirements (design, zoning and parking, etc.).
- A general outline of the City's permitting process, and a general timeline for both redevelopment and infill projects.
- Schedules and locations of Planning Commission and City Council meetings.
- Information on names & types of businesses located in downtown.
- A list and description of downtown 'successes' since the inception of

the Urban Renewal District, including both planned projects and those in various stages of implementation.

- A personal letter from the Mayor with an invitation to contact him with any questions or to request a personal tour of downtown.

Create a Marketing Plan & Database of Potential Developers

A recruitment packet for developers is only part of the equation for attracting private redevelopment projects through marketing. The other two pieces of the recruitment 'puzzle' involve the creation of a database of potential developers, both private and non-profit – including contact info, information on the size and type(s) of projects they prefer, and lists and addresses of completed projects – and the development of a plan to market downtown Redmond to this group. A good marketing plan will also define other groups to which downtown should be marketed, i.e., businesses, shoppers (both residents & those living outside Redmond), etc. The marketing collateral (informational pieces that include packet, brochures, etc.) should have a consistent look and tone. The design should also be flexible enough so that it can be kept up to date.

The marketing plan should lay out the framework for contacting developers, including follow-up calls (possibly from the Mayor), once the developer has had time to look over the information sent to them.

In addition to the packet, the marketing plan should include a downtown redevelopment section (that includes information in the developer's packet) on the City's website.

The creation of a developers' database is an important component in the overall effort to revitalize downtown Redmond. It should include local and regional developers, both for profit and not-for profit, who have been successful with different types of downtown projects (including redevelopment and infill). In addition to the developers' names and contact info, the database should include types of projects, contacts made/and when, on-site visits, and follow-up.

City Initiated RFPs to Redevelop Downtown 'Opportunity Sites'

As mentioned in the *Internal Strategic Decisions* section of the report, the City/Urban Renewal Board should consider moving to a more proactive role – that of assembling high priority opportunity parcels and issuing RFPs for redevelopment. This can be an excellent way for the City/Urban Renewal District to help guide and induce appropriate and desired downtown development, rather than waiting and hoping that the 'right thing' will come along.

Downtown Management, Business Support & Development

Throughout the interview process with downtown stakeholders, the need for professional downtown management and business development services was highlighted time and again. It is clear that downtown Redmond is missing this important and critical component in its revitalization efforts.

Redmond is in need of a Downtown Manager who will undertake and lead business support and development for the district, in addition to other identified activities. It will be important for this staff position to concentrate primarily on

business retention, expansion, and development, rather than special events. This position should not be a City employee, but it should answer to downtown businesses, so that their interests are supported and advocated for.

Redmond should look to other communities (such as Walla Walla, WA) who have made excellent Downtown Manager hires and explore the best ways to move forward. One solution might be for Urban Renewal to help support a Downtown Manager's position over a limited period (three years, for example) with the understanding that other funding will be secured (through an Economic Improvement District or Business Improvement District, etc.) for the long-term support of the Manager's position. This approach will take demand willingness and capacity of a local organization to direct and help fund the work of such an important staff position.

Currently, the existing downtown merchant's group, the Downtowners, would seem to be a logical organization to 'house' a Downtown Manager position. However, this group is not meeting on a regular basis and does not seem to have a plan in place, or the organizational capacity to move forward. On the other hand, the Chamber of Commerce has strong organizational capacity, but is not able to concentrate their efforts solely on downtown, as they are bound to represent all of their members irregardless of their business location.

This leads to important issues and questions of interest and capacity level for the Downtowners, including:

- Is there interest in re-forming, moving to next steps in their organizational development, and 'housing' a Downtown Manager?

- Is this group interested in being the downtown business district's advocate that works with the City/Urban Renewal District, existing businesses and property owners, and potential business and property owners and developers?
- Is this group willing to develop independent funding for a Downtown Manager when Urban Renewal support disappears?

These are crucial questions that must be answered before the decision is made by Urban Renewal to help fund a Manager's position for downtown. The organization that would 'house' a Downtown Manager should have clear and unwavering support for having such an advocate. This support must be coupled with strong organizational capacity, a vision for downtown's future and a willingness to 'step up to the plate' with funding efforts.

Hiring a Downtown Manager should not be approached with the thought that 'if we can't find funding, then we'll eliminate the position in three years.' Rather, the approach should be more positive and proactive, '...this position is of such critical importance to downtown that we'll do whatever is necessary to make sure it succeeds.'

If efforts move ahead to hire a Downtown Manager, it will be essential that the hire have a very good working relationship with the City/Urban Renewal District, the Chamber, and the Industrial Development Specialist. A collaborative and collegial working relationship among these groups and entities will be critical for the success of downtown revitalization efforts.

Detailed Studies Recommended

1. Downtown Market Analysis & Business Development Plan

Downtown Redmond's revitalization efforts continues to struggle for several reasons, including the explosion of big box retail south of downtown and the lack of an advocate dedicated to downtown business development and support. Another contributing factor to downtown's plight might be that there has been no recent market study to determine the target market area (including demographic and psychographic profiles of its consumers) and to identify the types of businesses that are 'missing' and that have the best chance of success.

Even though Redmond is growing at an amazing rate, so are its retail offerings. In an ever more competitive retail environment, it is critical for Downtown Redmond to understand its target market and clarify its niche by strengthening and supporting existing businesses and by developing and marketing business clusters that complement each other and address identified retail needs. In short, downtown as a whole needs to function more as a destination. A Downtown Market Analysis and Business Development Plan is needed to help move these efforts forward. It would serve as the *roadmap* for downtown business development.

How can downtown move forward with business development if it has no idea of who the target market is and what it needs to focus on?

2. Downtown Parking Analysis and Management Plan

One of the priorities outlined in the 2000 Downtown Action Plan was to develop off-street parking – and this has been, and continues to be, accomplished. However, the project team's on-site visit pointed to the appearance of an overabundance of off-street parking. In order to reconcile the perceived need versus the actual need for off-street parking, a Downtown Parking Analysis and Management Plan should be undertaken. Without such a plan, the City does not have the analytical basis for making decisions regarding the development of additional parking lots.

Current parking management is intermittent, at best. Further, downtown parking standards should be reviewed to ensure compatibility with downtown development – rather than with a more suburban, strip-commercial model.

Having reliable baseline information on available on- and off-street parking (as well as its usage and turnover), in addition to a well-defined management plan, will help attract business development into downtown. Developers appreciate knowing that downtown parking is being addressed analytically and as part of a downtown management plan.

Standards Recommended

1. Downtown Design Standards

Through conversations with downtown stakeholders and the on-site visit, it became obvious that there is a need - - and desire - - for implementing Downtown Design Standards to help guide redevelopment and infill.

Currently, the majority of new businesses are being built in a suburban, strip-center development style, rather than a downtown style that is more conducive to pedestrian comfort and browsing. Within the downtown core, development should be located at the sidewalk with parking to the side or preferably at rear of the building. Buildings should be contiguous and designed to enhance and encourage the pedestrian experience. Currently, new buildings in downtown district are being set back from the property line with 'front-loaded' parking – making for an unfriendly and uncomfortable pedestrian environment.

The overall goal of downtown should be for it to function as a complete district, rather than as a group of disconnected businesses that behave as strip-type development destinations. Likewise, scale, massing, height, context, and design are also important considerations in downtown infill and rehabilitation projects. All these elements should work together to yield the type of new development and redevelopment that supports and enhances the district as a whole.

Design Standards from another community are included in the Appendix of this report to serve as an example.

2. Downtown Parking Standards

It may be necessary to upgrade Downtown Parking Standards so that they are more compatible with, and support, traditional downtown development patterns. This step should be taken if recommended as an action item in the Downtown Parking Analysis and Management Plan (recommended study).

Immediate To-Do List for Projects

1. Alley Upgrades Behind Historic Redmond Hotel

The 2000 Downtown Plan suggests upgrades to the alleys between Cascade and Forest (west of 6th Street) and so far 1/3 of the work has been completed. The next step should be to implement alley upgrades between Evergreen and Forest to support the rehabilitation efforts underway with the Historic Redmond Hotel. This would help show support for the private redevelopment of this important downtown asset.

2. Underground Utilities & Install Lighting on High/Glacier Couplet Project

The City/Urban Renewal District has a good opportunity to leverage efforts as part of a larger ODOT project to create a couplet on Highland and Glacier Streets. Installing pedestrian scaled lighting on Highland are logical next steps - - with the installation of lighting on Glacier recommended when the primary use has transitioned from residential to commercial.

3. 'Complete' the Plaza

A visual inspection of the plaza located adjacent to the Chamber office, and interviews with City staff, indicate the recently completed public space is not meeting its potential and serving as the community attractor as envisioned. We recommend the City/Urban Renewal move to next steps and 'complete' the plaza by incorporating a water feature/fountain in the center of plaza (alleviating the unsightly drain that currently exists). As developed, the plaza is attractive, but is a heat sink that does not have an interactive feature that draws people. Medford Urban Renewal developed a nice hardscape plaza with a fountain that

people of all ages enjoy in their downtown - - serving as a wonderful gathering space for the community. Redmond should consider a similar design solution for their plaza.

We also recommend that a green screen be planted to visually separate the plaza from parked cars in the adjacent lot.

4. Streetscape Amenities on 5th Street

Streetscape improvements have been implemented along 6th Street, but no improvements have been made along 5th. We recommend that improvements along 5th Street become a higher priority, as 5th is the other 'main street' of downtown - - with high volumes of traffic. The creation of the couplet through downtown made 5th the other 'main street' by default. In almost all cases of developing couplets in smaller communities, one 'leg' of the couplet is always weaker than the other and this is why 5th Street doesn't have the same attributes as 6th - - it was never developed as a main street.

However, now that 5th serves as a main street for downtown Redmond, it needs the same streetscape treatments as 6th to help visually tie the two together and calm traffic. Upgrading the streetscape along 5th Street could be tied to redevelopment efforts of adjacent 'opportunity sites.'

In whatever form the streetscape improvements along 5th Street take place - - as a stand alone project or tied to specific redevelopment projects - - they should be moved up on the priority list.

'Wait for More Information' Projects

1. Additional Parking Lot Acquisition and Development

The City/Urban Renewal District should wait to acquire and redevelop any more parking lots until a Downtown Parking Analysis and Management Plan are completed. The Plan should identify if, and where, additional public parking lots should be located.

Addressing Sensitive Issues

1. Capacity & Willingness of Downtowners' to Step Up & Partner in Expanded Role

If the City/Urban Renewal District decides that a Downtown Manager staff position is a critical piece of Redmond's redevelopment 'puzzle' and are willing to help make it happen, then conversations will need to begin with the Downtowners to gauge their interest and capacity in moving forward.

The role of the downtown organization that would 'house' a Downtown Manager should include:

- Assistance and support for downtown businesses
- Business development and recruitment
- Advocacy
- Marketing and promotion of downtown
- Education and training
- Developing partnerships
- Communication

Although the conversation with the Downtowners group about their willingness and capacity to grow into a new role may not be an easy one, it must happen prior to any decisions being made by the City/Urban Renewal District to hire a Downtown Manager.

If the Downtowners agree they are ready and willing to move ahead, then an agreement should be drawn up that defines the partnership, including roles, responsibilities, expectations and timelines between the City/Urban Renewal District and the Downtowners.

2. Conflict of Interest Issues

If a problem is perceived or real, it is still a problem - - especially when it is a conflict of interest issue and involves the City. It is critically important that the City/Urban Renewal District uphold the highest standards when dealing with perceived or real conflict of interest issues - - making every effort to not show any bias or preference, thereby providing a level playing field to all. Transparency in all dealings of the City/Urban Renewal District will also help instill trust and support for projects.

3. Trust & Communication Issues

Issues relating to trust and communication between the City/Urban Renewal District and downtown stakeholders were raised during our on-site visit. Whether the problems raised are perceived or real, they are red flag issues that must be addressed. It is critically important that the City/Urban Renewal District work to help solve 'us vs. them' issues within the downtown district through better communication - - slowly rebuilding trust that has divided downtown stakeholders. By good faith efforts to help work through issues and develop better communication, the City/Urban Renewal District can help initiate a more cooperative spirit in downtown.

Downtown Redmond's success will depend heavily on the downtown stakeholder groups pulling together to help affect positive change - - too much is at stake for this not to happen.

4. 'Baggage' Projects

Currently, downtown is saddled with a 'baggage' project, the abandoned redevelopment of the site across from City Hall. It will be important for the City to work through all its issues related to this project in the best and most efficient way - - then move forward. All communities have projects that go sideways and the best advice is to take lessons away from this project so that it does not happen again. If the City regains control of this property and the City/Urban Renewal District decide to become more proactive in their approach to redevelopment, then this might be an ideal property to issue an RFP on.

In Conclusion

Downtown Redmond has seen many improvements implemented through the Downtown Urban Renewal District during the past few years - - putting the 2000 Downtown Action Plan into action!

However, now is an opportune time for the City/Urban Renewal District to transition to a more integrated and proactive role in downtown redevelopment. The recommendations, strategies, and projects outlined in this report will build off the good work that's been accomplished and help Redmond reach its goals of a more economically viable and livable downtown commercial district.

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Downtown SWOT Analysis for Redmond: Physical Environment

The following **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats** (SWOT) Analysis is a snapshot view of downtown Redmond's physical environment within the project timeframe. The SWOT was undertaken as part of on-site survey work by Vicki Dugger of the Oregon Downtown Development Association and Matt Arnold of SERA Architects. It is intended to be an easy to read gauge and quick guide to the physical environment of downtown.

SWOT Rating		General Condition				Comments
		Good	Fair	Poor	Needs Improvement Yes / No	
S, O	1. Appearance / attractiveness		√		Y	Redmond's downtown district is most intact along 6 th Street and also most attractive. However, there are storefronts along 6 th that are in great need of rehab.
W, O, T	2. Appropriate siting/design of new infill			√	Y	This is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately, as new infill within downtown is set back behind parking lots rather than sited to the sidewalk, as is the rest of the district.
O	3. Bike Parking		√		Y	Some accommodations are available for bike parking, but not enough.
S, O	4. Browsibility factor - - attractive storefronts that 'pull' shoppers down the street			√	Y	There are a couple of areas along 6 th Street that function as the whole district should; with some clustering of complementary businesses. In other parts of the district, however, the businesses function more as 'stand alones' rather than as part of the whole.
S	5. Cleanliness – tidiness	√			N	Downtown's appearance was neat and clean.
O	6. Critical mass of businesses - - holding power			√	Y	More retail and service offerings AND grouping them in complementary clusters will do much to revitalize downtown Redmond.
S	7. Friendly & welcoming people	√			N	We were served by friendly and knowledgeable sales staff.
O, T	8. Filled ground floor store fronts		√		Y	There are some glaring ground floor vacancies along 6 th Street that need to be filled.
W, O	9. Good variety of businesses - - both retail & service		√		Y	There seems to be a fair variety of retail & service businesses - - they are just not clustered very well, making it a park often and shop once environment rather than vice versa.
S, O	10. Lamp posts / lights		√		Y	5 th Street is in need of the same streetscape treatments as 6 th to better connect it to the rest of the district.
W, O	11. Mixed-use (housing over ground floor retail or service)			√	Y	There is a need for more mixed-use development in downtown. More people living downtown means more customers, more activity, as well as more 'eyes and ears on the street' for safety.

SWOT Rating		General Condition				Comments
		Good	Fair	Poor	Needs Improvement Yes/No	
S, O	12. Planters, flowers, banners, etc.		√		Y	The flowers and banners that grace downtown are very attractive. However, more of these amenities should be along 5 th Street to help connect it visually to the rest of downtown.
S, T	13. Public parking	√			N	There are many opportunities to park in downtown with both on-street and off-street public parking. Care should be taken that parking lots are balanced with the need for additional parking - - a parking analysis and plan would help address these issues.
S, O	14. Public parks, spaces		√		Y	The public space next to the Chamber is a good start, but should be 'finished' with an attractive water feature and screening of the adjacent parking lot. Additional plazas, etc, should be explored for downtown as it redevelops.
W, O	15. Public restrooms			√	Y	Public restrooms located in a non-obtrusive but convenient location would be an important amenity to help keep shoppers downtown longer.
S, O	16. Redevelopment potential	√			Y	Downtown has several 'opportunity sites' that could be redeveloped as part of the overall revitalization effort. A Downtown Opportunity Map should be created to help identify prime locations for redevelopment - - along with a plan to move efforts forward.
W, O	17. Retail mix – tourism needs		√		Y	There are nice offerings for tourists in downtown, but a greater concentration of specialty businesses that cater to both residents and visitors would help create a stronger shopping district. Downtown needs to address business development to help reclaim some of the market share that has been taken by big box retail and service offerings outside the downtown core.
W, O	18. Sidewalk life - experience			√	Y	Currently, the sidewalk experience is very poor due to the number of large, noisy trucks in downtown. The development of the truck bypass should make downtown a much more comfortable pedestrian environment. As appropriate, old sidewalks should be replaced to improve the pedestrian experience from visual and safety standpoints.
W, O	19. Signage – quality, size, content		√		Y	Exploring ways to consolidate and reduce the amount of on-street directional/informational signage would help the overall appearance of downtown. When there is an overabundance of signage, drivers often 'don't see' it, as there is too much information for them to take in while driving.
S, O	20. Street furniture		√		Y	New street furniture has been added to some, but not all, parts of downtown. Additional furniture and other pedestrian amenities should be put into place as phasing allows.
W, O	21. Traffic flow			√	Y	Traffic flow will be improved when the truck bypass is completed - - making downtown function more like it should traffic-wise.
S, O	22. Trash receptacles		√		Y	Having enough trash receptacles scattered throughout downtown is an important amenity that helps keep downtown looking good.
S	23. Trees & landscaping	√			N	The City/Urban Renewal has done a good job with landscaping improvements in downtown.

TO: City of Redmond
PO Box 726
Redmond, OR 97756-0100

DATE: 8 December 2004
FAX: 541.923.7706
PHONE: 541.923.7710

ATTENTION: Urban Renewal Advisory Board
PROJECT NAME: Redmond "Next Steps" Project
PROJECT NUMBER: 041761
SUBJECT: Redmond C-2 Zone

This memo contains recommendations for changes and/or revisions to the Redmond Development Code that will encourage the revitalization of Redmond's downtown in accordance with the City's Downtown Action Plan. These recommendations are designed to foster the development of a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use core for the city. [Note: this memo does not contain precise code language, but rather comments and suggestions for code revisions.]

As a general comment, we strongly recommend the creation of design guidelines for Redmond's Central Business District, as called for in the Downtown Action Plan. Design guidelines can and should address such topics as landscaping, entrance orientation, amount of glazing, building mass, building orientation, exterior materials, roof design, awnings, etc. We further recommend the creation of a Downtown Historic District (or the creation of an Historic Overlay Zone). Such a district is also called for in the Downtown Action Plan, and would help to protect and enhance the unique, historic quality of Redmond's downtown.

The following recommendations are for specific portions of the Central Business District Commercial Zone (Section 8.0155 of the Redmond Development Code):

8.0155.1.a: Currently positions downtown as primarily a commercial or "central shopping" area for Redmond.
Recommendation: We recommend broadening the description of the zone so that the CBD is described as a mixed use core with a commercial focus. While residential uses are currently allowed within the zone (as a conditional use), they should be more proactively encouraged, as this will be a key component to enhancing the viability of Redmond's downtown over the long term.

8.0155.2.d: Currently permits outright "drive-in restaurants," a clause which is at odds with the first stated objective of the Downtown Action Plan: "Enhance the downtown pedestrian experience."
Recommendation: We recommend, at minimum, striking this clause from the code. We also recommend additional language prohibiting the creation of additional drive-in or drive-through restaurants and/or businesses or, further, barring them outright.

8.0155.2.h: Currently permits outright "public or private parking lots or facilities." While a necessary use, parking lots and garages can create a hostile pedestrian environment. Under this clause in the code, however, parking lots and garages can be built along the same streets that should be the primary pedestrian thoroughfares for the City.
Recommendation: We recommend allowing parking facilities only as a conditional use within the zone and subjecting such facilities to design review. We further recommend that, in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment along certain streets / corridors, parking facilities be allowed / sited in nearby areas that will provide access to downtown's amenities without damaging the pedestrian environment of downtown.

8.0155.3.a and 8.0155.3.b: Currently allows automobile sales, service, and repair as well as service stations as conditional uses. Such uses are at odds with a pedestrian scaled and oriented downtown.

Recommendation: We recommend that such uses be sited within zones outside of the downtown core, which are nearby but at such a distance that they will not conflict with the uses and character desired for downtown.

8.0155.3.d: Allows commercial amusement establishments as conditional uses.

Recommendation: We recommend adding theaters to the list of such uses.

8.0155.3.n: Allows a "planned unit development district" as a conditional use. Under section 8.0280.1 of the code, planned unit developments "shall not be established on less than ten acres of contiguous land" except in special cases as determined by the Hearings Body. Given the existing street grid in Redmond's downtown, planned unit developments may be unrealistic within the existing C-2 zone given the generally stated size requirement.

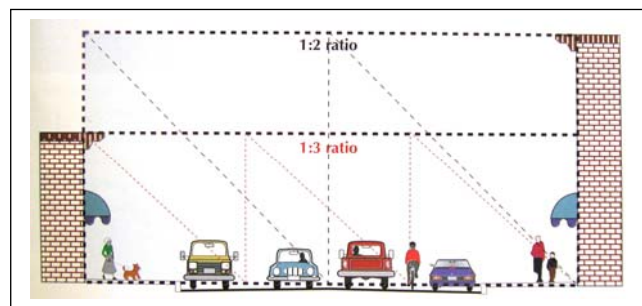
Recommendation: We recommend reviewing the compatibility of P.U.D.s with the intentions of the C-2 zone.

8.0155.4.a: Contains vague language regarding dimensional and setback requirements within the zone.

Recommendation: We recommend the creation of design guidelines specific to the downtown core that will help foster an attractive, pedestrian-friendly area, as called for in the Downtown Action Plan. These guidelines may include, but should not be limited to, provisions requiring that buildings in the downtown core be built to the property line and that all buildings be oriented towards the street.

8.0155.4.b: Sets the maximum building height in the C-2 zone at 100'. Buildings of 100' will be out of scale with surrounding development and the existing street network within Redmond's downtown core.

Recommendation: We recommend that building heights generally be set at a pedestrian scale, with either a 1:2 or 1:3 building height to street width ratio. (These ratios are generally accepted as helping to foster a friendly pedestrian environment. See example, below, from *Main Street... When a Highway Runs Through It: A Handbook for Oregon Communities*.) Such ratios, however, require that buildings be built to the property line, as recommend above.



8.0155.4.c: Restricts lot coverage for non-commercial uses to 50%. Such a restriction may greatly hinder the type of institutional uses that can anchor a downtown.

Recommendation: We recommend reevaluating this stipulation, and, at a minimum, allowing greater lot coverage for institutional uses under a conditional use process.

8.0155.5.a: Mentions "drive-in windows" as an allowed outside display / commercial use. As described above, auto-oriented uses, such as drive-in windows, are at odds with pedestrian-oriented uses.

Recommendation: We recommend removing drive-in or drive-through uses from the C-2 zone.

8.0155.5.f: Limits the siting of uses “involving drive-in window service.” While this stipulation seeks to limit where drive-in uses may be sited within the C-2 zone, it still allows them despite the fact that they may be incompatible with pedestrian-oriented uses.

Recommendation: We recommend removing drive-in or drive-through uses from the C-2 zone.

8.0155.6: Refers to off-street parking requirements within the C-2 zone, as specified under Sections 8.0500-8.0515. While Section 8.0505.1 exempts businesses within the C-2 zone from having to provide on-site, off-street parking when there is an adequate parking supply nearby, it does not exempt institutional uses in the same manner.

Recommendation: We recommend exempting institutional uses from having to provide on-site, off-street parking provided that an adequate off-street parking supply is located nearby. Also, we strongly recommend language that permits and encourages the formulation of shared-parking agreements, such that parking supply is not judged on the total number of spaces provided for the sum square footage, etc. of the uses, but instead takes into account the timing and hours of operations for the various uses. Further, we strongly recommend that parking ratios be reviewed for the downtown core. For example, one space per 200sf of retail use (8.0500.6) is exceedingly high for a pedestrian-oriented commercial zone.

BY: Matthew C. Arnold, Planner, SERA Architects

COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN

Committee:

Objective:

Activity (One per Action Plan):	Tasks Necessary to Complete Activity:	Task Responsibility:	Due Date:	Completed:	Budget:

COMMITTEE TIMELINE

Project: _____

Tasks *:	Jan.	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.

*Include estimated preparation time for each activity

*Include estimated preparation time for each activity