

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT and PRE-ZONING**

### **AMENDMENT 2007-M-03 – MAPLE VALLEY HWY CORRIDOR ISSUE PAPER (REVISED JULY 19, 2007)**

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

This City sponsored map amendment will evaluate development patterns in the Maple Valley Highway Corridor under the King County Comprehensive Plan land use designations and zoning vis-à-vis Renton Comprehensive Plan land use designations and zoning for the area in the New Life-Aqua Barn Annexation Area. The area under consideration extends east of the recently annexed Maplewood Addition and includes all properties fronting or accessing from SE Renton Maple Valley Highway (SR-169), out to the Urban Growth Boundary, near 184<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, if extended. The area currently includes single-family residential, manufactured housing/mobile home parks, apartments and condominiums, a large church, and a three-acre area zoned in the County for future retail/commercial uses. This area is within an active annexation proposal. The City of Renton Comprehensive Plan designates the majority of the area as Residential Low Density (RLD). The 70.31 acre Maple Ridge Estates and View Point at Maple Ridge subdivisions are designated Residential Single Family (RS).

King County's Comprehensive Plan designates everything, with the exception of a three acre site on the south side of SR-169, Urban Residential, Medium, 4-12 dwelling units per acre. Multi-family and manufactured/mobile home areas are currently zoned Residential, 12 units per gross acre (R-12) in the County and the small three acre commercial area fronting SR-169, south of the new bridge, is zoned Neighborhood Business.

#### **ISSUE SUMMARY:**

1. Should Renton's existing Comprehensive Plan land use designation of RLD now applied to the properties fronting or accessing from SR-169 be changed to reflect development with higher densities?
2. Should Renton's existing Comprehensive Plan land use designation of RS be retained for the Maple Ridge neighborhoods, which includes the Maple Ridge Estates and View Point at Maple Ridge subdivisions?
3. Should individual parcels in the subject area be pre-zoned, consistent with these land use designations, thereby facilitating future annexation and improving land use predictability?

#### **RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY:**

- Staff is recommending that the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map be amended for portions of the 284-acre study area so that it better reflects existing uses, development patterns and densities.
  1. Change from RLD to Residential Medium Density (RMD) land use designation, which would allow R-14 zoning, upon annexation. This designation allows Residential 10 (R-10), R-14, or Residential Manufactured Home Park (RMH) zoning.

- Lands developed with existing multi-family areas with estimated net densities of 14 dwelling units per acre or above.
  - Manufactured housing sites with net densities greater than ten dwelling units per acre. RMH zoning is recommended to accommodate existing uses.
2. Change from RLD land use to RS land use designation.
    - Manufactured housing sites with net densities greater than four dwelling units per acre but less than eight dwelling units per acre are being recommended to change to where they could receive RMH zoning at the time of annexation.
- Several parcels are recommended to remain in the RLD designation.
    3. Manufactured/mobile home parks with net densities less than four dwelling units per acre are being recommended for the RLD land use designation, which would allow four units per net acre.
    4. Steeply sloped, 25 percent or greater, slopes mostly preserved in tracts set aside as part of subdivisions or public open space, be retained in the RLD land use designation, allowing for future Resource Conservation (RC) zoning.
    5. Subdivisions with net densities less than four dwelling units per acre are being recommended to have the RLD land use designation, which would allow the City's Residential 4 (R-4) zoning. This recommendation includes the Maple Ridge neighborhood which is currently designated RS. For the Maple Ridge area, the Comprehensive Plan would be changed to RLD and it would be zoned R-4 upon annexation.
  - Existing single-family detached housing subdivisions with net densities greater than four dwelling units per acre but less than eight dwelling units per acre are being recommended to change from RLD to RS land use designation, which would allow R-8 zoning.
  - Staff is recommending that the area be pre-zoned at this time. The study area is part of an active annexation proposal. Application of zoning consistent with the amended City Comprehensive Plan would occur upon annexation. (See Exhibit 7)
  - No change is proposed for the three-acre site at the front of the former Aqua Barn site that has a Commercial Corridor (CC) designation. This will allow Commercial Arterial (CA) zoning.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

As can be seen from Exhibit 1, Vicinity and Critical Slopes, the study area is framed on the south by steep slopes many of which exceed 40 percent in slope.

Exhibit 2, King County Comp Plan, depicts the study area with the current King County Comprehensive Plan land use designations for the area. On the south side of SR-169 the majority of the area is designated Urban Residential, Medium, 4-12 dwelling units per gross acre.

A small three-acre portion near the intersection of 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE and SR-169 is designated Neighborhood Business Center.

Exhibit 3, Existing Land Use Designations, illustrates the City's current land use designations, most of which date back to the mid-1990s. The former Aqua Barn site, however, was updated in the fall of 2006.

Exhibit 4, King Co Zoning, shows the current County zoning designations throughout the study area. Properties on the south side of SR-169 are zoned R-4, four units per gross acre. The three manufactured home sites are zoned R-12, twelve units per gross acre, and the upland portion of the New Life Church site is zoned R-1, one unit per gross acre.

Exhibit 5, Gross Densities, depicts the existing density of development throughout the study area on a parcel basis. Densities are depicted as gross density per acre in ranges of 0-0.9, 1-3.9, 4-5.9, 6-7.9, 8-9.9, 10-11.9, and 12 dwelling units per acre and above.

Exhibit 6, Net Densities, depicts the existing density of development throughout the study area on a parcel basis but with the densities shown as net densities. Generally, net density is considered as 1.25 times gross density.

Exhibit 7, Proposed Land Use Designations, illustrates the proposed land use designations and future zoning, if annexed, for the study area.

Issue 1: Should Renton's Comprehensive Plan be amended to reflect the development of properties occurring under King County zoning?

Most of the study area is currently developed with only a small portion considered vacant, excluding steep slopes (25 to 40 percent) and wetlands. The remaining vacant site comprises approximately 6.07-acres, and there are several redevelopable sites notably those areas with manufactured home parks. At this point, the prior RLD Vision of the Comprehensive Plan cannot be realized because of the land development patterns already occurring in the area. There is not enough vacant land left to change the development pattern set in motion by the existing County zoning. As a result, it is recommended that the Renton Comprehensive Plan be amended to recognize the project densities and uses that exist. Based upon these existing net densities, comparable Renton zoning would most likely be a combination of R-14, R-8, and RMH in the areas recommended for RMD land use designation, and R-4 and RC for the areas recommended for RLD land use designation. Recommended Comprehensive Plan designation and zoning are shown on Exhibit 6.

Issue 2: Should the Maple Ridge Estates neighborhood be changed from RS with potential R-8 zoning to RLD with potential R-4 zoning?

This residential area is fully developed with two subdivisions on 70.31 acres. The overall development density is 2.6 gross and 3.2 net units per acre. There are no undeveloped tracts or vacant un-subdivided properties and no future development potential. Lot sizes range from 8,000 to 14,000 square feet. This existing development density and neighborhood character of larger

lot single family fits the purpose and intent of the RLD designation with R-4 zoning better than the existing designation of RS with potential R-8 zoning.

Issue 3: Should parcels be pre-zoned at this time?

Zoning implements the Comprehensive Plan and provides the legal regulations for development and use of property. Pre-zoning decisions are made prior to annexation and allow residents and property owners to understand how the City would implement the land use in this area. Pre-zoning is adopted by city ordinance but does not go into effect unless an annexation is approved. Pre-zoning is shown on Exhibit 7.

If the City does not adopt pre-zoning as part of the current Comprehensive Plan and area wide zoning review, the two additional public hearings on zoning will be required through the annexation process. Completing the zoning work as part of a consolidated review of the Comprehensive Plan amendments is efficient, allows the public to review and comment on these issues at the same time, and gives residents the opportunity to learn about the zoning recommendations prior to and independent of the annexation process.

**CAPACITY ANALYSIS:**

Additional capacity is analyzed for three properties and totals a potential additional 226 dwelling units:

1. Vacant 6-acre parcel recommended for RS with potential R-8 zoning.



Looking at the 6.07-acre site, it is assumed that 5.2-acres is developable as net acreage. This site is currently being recommended as RS with R-8 zoning. This would provide for 34 new single-family detached dwellings in the study area, based on buildable lands methodology.

*Figure 1. Vacant 6.07-acre vacant site proposed for RS designation*

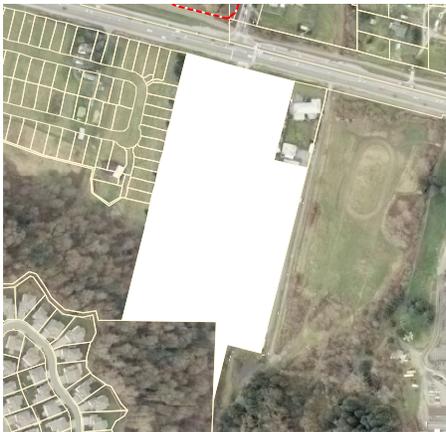
2. The 55.14-acre New Life Church site includes a large undeveloped land area although it is not anticipated to redevelop from a church at any time in the near future. At some point the church may intensify its use with other church, school or accessory buildings, or decide to incorporate housing as a part of their campus plan. The existing church and school are allowed uses in this zone with a Hearing Examiner Conditional Use Permit. The existing uses are permitted under King County regulations and would be vested upon annexation.



Staff is recommending that the steeply sloped southern 22-acres of this 55.14-acre site be designated RLD with RC zoning consistent to similar areas on the north side of the Cedar River Valley Corridor. If 20 percent of the remaining 33.1-acres, (approximately 6 acres), were developed with multi-family housing at some time in the future, at densities of up to 14 units per net acre, up to 92 new multi-family units could be built. Church facilities, or an expansion of the existing school could also be accommodated on this site.

**Figure 2.** The 55.14-acre New Life Church site is being considered for an RMD designation on the front buildable 33.1-acres and an RLD designation on the more steeply sloped southern 22.1-acres.

3. The existing Wonderland Estates Mobile Home Park is designated Urban Residential, 4-12 du/acre, with R-12 zoning in King County.



This parcel was recently vested under King County regulations with a 100-unit plat/townhouse project. Although the staff recommendation is to support a zoning designation of RMH on this parcel upon annexation, the parcel capacity as vested may eventually be realized, through redevelopment either prior to or after annexation.

**Figure 3.** The 12.21-acre Wonderland Estates site lies immediately west of the New Life Church site and is being considered for RMH zoning.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES RELEVANT TO CPA#2007-M-03:

### **Residential Medium Density (RMD) Designation:**

**Purpose:** *The RMD designation is intended to create the opportunity for neighborhoods that offer a variety of lot sizes, housing, and ownership options. RMD neighborhoods should include a variety of unit types designed to incorporate features from both single-family and multi-family developments, support cost-efficient housing, facilitate infill development, encourage use of transit service, and promote the efficient use of urban services and infrastructure. (RMD Purpose Statement, Land Use Element, p. IX-29)*

*Objective LU-GG* provides for designation of land in RMD where access, topography and adjacent land use create conditions appropriate for a variety of unit types incorporating features from both single-family and multi-family developments. *Policy LU-159* provides guidance on

mapping criteria for the implementing R-14 zone, and *Policy LU-162* provides guidance on allowed development densities. The sites in this study area meet the mapping criteria of *Policy LU-159* in that they are:

- 1) adjacent to major arterials (SE Renton Maple Valley Highway),
- 2) adjacent to the Corridor Commercial designation (CC designation on the SE Renton Maple Valley Highway on the former Aqua Barn site),
- 3) part of a designation totaling over 20 acres,
- 4) are buffered from single-family areas by steep slopes at the back of properties as shown on Exhibit 1, and are developed within the density range and unit types ranges allowed in the RMD designation as shown on Exhibit 5.

Table 1, attached, shows the current post-1993 development found along the highway in the area proposed for RMD designation. This information demonstrates that the majority of the existing development is in the net density range encompassed in the RMD designation with R-14 zoning, and that the area meets the required size criteria.

#### **Residential Single Family (RS) Designation:**

Purpose: *Land designated Residential Single Family is intended to be used for quality residential detached development organized into neighborhoods at urban densities. It is intended that larger subdivision, infill development, and rehabilitation of existing housing be carefully designed to enhance and improve the quality of single-family living environments. (RSF Purpose Statement Land Use Element Policies p. IX-28.)*

Property recommended for redesignation to RS from the existing RLD is implemented by R-8 zoning upon annexation. *Policy LU-147* states that net development densities should fall within a range of four to eight units per net acre.

Property proposed for RS with R-8 zoning is:

- Developed with single family units in the density range of four to eight dwelling units per acre, or
- Located between two sites developed at this density.

*Policy LU-148* states that lots within the RS designation should have a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet. Most of the lots in the existing subdivisions in the area are greater than 5,000 square feet. *Policy LU-151* states that height should be two stories. Pursuant to *Objective LU-FF*, the RS designation should encourage re-investment and rehabilitation of the existing newer subdivisions as they mature as neighborhoods in the coming years.

This land use designation also allows for RMH zoning. However, there are no manufactured housing parks in the area proposed for this designation. Pioneer Place Subdivision is proposed for this designation and R-8 zoning. As shown on Table 1, attached, the estimated density of this

existing subdivision is 6.82 units per net acre. The other area with the RS designation is the six-acre Lightfoot property adjacent and east of the Molasses Creek Condominiums on SE Renton Maple Valley Highway. This area is currently designated RLD. If annexed, future zoning would be R-8, with a maximum density of eight units per net acre.

**Residential Low Density (RLD) Designation**

*The Residential Low Density designation is intended to apply to land either constrained by sensitive areas or to be applied to lands that are developed with larger lots at 4 dwelling units per net acre (Purpose Statement, Land Use Element p. IX-26).*

There are also several single-family detached subdivisions with an estimated net density within the density range of the Renton R-4 zone. This includes Maple Ridge Estates and View Point at Maple Ridge with an estimated net density of 2.96 dwelling units per acre and the Valley Faire No.3 Subdivision, at an estimated net density of 3.78 dwelling units per acre. These are shown on Table 1, attached.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE:**

RMC 4-9-020 G mandates that Comprehensive Plan Amendments must meet at least one of four criteria.

- 1) The request supports the vision embodied in the Comprehensive Plan, or
- 2) The request supports the adopted business plan goals established by the City Council, or
- 3) The request eliminates conflicts with existing elements or policies, or
- 4) The request amends the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate new policy directives of the City Council.

This proposal meets the first criteria.

- Land use proposed in this area for RMD with R-14 zoning, and RS with R-8 zoning is consistent with the City’s vision of *“a community that is healthy and safe, that has cohesive, well-established neighborhoods and a growing diversity of housing to match the diversity of the population with its various needs and wants”* (Comprehensive Plan Vision Chapter p. II-1.)
  - In parts of the area proposed for RMD and RS there is recently constructed housing stock, developed under County zoning, with existing densities and multifamily housing not allowed in the Renton RLD designation.
  - Other sites in the study area have pre-existing manufactured home developments that are also not allowed under the Renton RLD designation, or have proposed plats vested under King County regulations that would not be approved under Renton RLD.

- Continuing the RLD designation would require zoning of RC, R-1 or R-4 and all the development in the proposed RMD and RS areas would become non-conforming.
- Establishing conforming uses enhances the value of property, establishes a cohesive approach that stabilizes a well-established neighborhood. The R-14, R-8, and RMH zones allow a diversity of housing types ranging from manufactured home park to apartments consistent with the vision statement in the Comprehensive Plan Vision, page II-1.

**Zoning Concurrency:**

RMC 4-9-180 F mandates that all rezones concurrent with Comprehensive Plan Amendments comply with the Comprehensive Plan, meet the policies of the proposed land use designation, and either was not considered during the last area wide zoning, or has been subjected to a change in circumstances since that time.

This proposal complies with the Vision of the Comprehensive Plan, as illustrated in the section above. It also meets the proposed land use policies of the RMD, RS, and RLD designations, as demonstrated in the analysis section. Finally, the zoning of this property was not considered in the last area wide zoning.

**CONCLUSION:**

Staff's recommendations for changes to the existing Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map designations and implementing pre-zoning, as shown on Exhibit 7 and Table 1, reflect existing development patterns and densities in this mostly built-out area along the SE Renton Maple Valley Highway. Retaining the existing RLD land use designation on the more steeply sloped areas to the south will continue to allow future zoning that will protect these sensitive areas. Changing the RLD designation to the RMD land use designation, as shown on Exhibit 7, will allow future zoning to reflect existing medium density multi-family housing in the area and make most of these facilities more conforming. Changing the RLD designation to the RS land use designation, will make existing single-family detached subdivisions with net densities greater than four dwelling units per acre more conforming, in terms of density, than under the existing RLD designation.