



# City Council Study Session

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## AGENDA

June 5, 2017

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

### Call to Order

**Estimate time**

**4:30 pm**

### Topics

- Department Report: Community Development **4:30 pm**
- Discussion: R-1 Land Use Density Analysis **5:15 pm**
- Discussion: Urban Forestry Management Plan **6:00 pm**

### Adjournment

**6:30 pm**

City Council meetings are wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation is available upon request. Please phone (425) 295-0500 at least 48 hours in advance. Assisted Listening Devices are also available upon request.



# **Community Development Department Report**

Presentation will be given at the meeting





## MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** June 5, 2017

**To:** City Council

**From:** Jeff Thomas, Community Development Director

**Re:** R-1 Zoning Discussion

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### **Introduction**

During deliberations in late 2016, on site-specific land use map amendment proposals submitted to the Comprehensive Plan docket, the City Council expressed interest in having a high-level discussion on R-1 zoning before considering any further proposals to “up-zone” or increase the allowed density on properties throughout the City. This memorandum discusses common reasons for instituting R-1 zoning on a parcel or group of parcels, reviews past City efforts relating to R-1 zoning, places the City’s zoning in the context of the Growth Management Act (GMA), and discusses how current City initiatives, like the transfer of development rights (TDR) program, may provide the City with better outcomes than up- or down-zoning properties through land use map amendments or zone reclassifications.

### **Background**

Under King County jurisdiction, the 1993 East Sammamish Update Plan included the following justifications for zoning a parcel R-1:

- The land is already substantially developed with an established pattern of 1-acre lots.
- The parcels are severely environmentally constrained (less than 25% buildable area).
- The area has significant open space value that can function as a defining community separator between growth areas, or is a wildlife habitat network that links major wetlands and other environmentally constrained features with good habitat value.
- The area can provide buffer between high density urban development and rural area.
- There are long term environmental and financial obstacles to the sufficient provision of urban services and infrastructure.

Upon incorporation in 1999, the City inherited much of its underlying zoning, including those areas zoned R-1, from King County. There has been recent suggestions that R-1 zoning is closely correlated with environmentally critical areas and buffers. While there is some correlation in this respect, the relationship is not exclusive – R-1 zoning does exist in a number of areas not known to have environmentally critical areas and buffers.

### **Past Efforts**

The City has multiple areas of R-1 to 4 and R-1 to 6 “interim” zoning on its future land use map and corresponding R-4 and R-6 interim zoning on the current zoning map that were adopted in 2003 as part of the City’s first Comprehensive Plan. Research has revealed some degree of legislative intent in 2003 to initiate an area-wide rezone, but no further action has been taken. These interim zoning districts do require resolution at some future point and, in some cases, reconciliation between the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan and the current zoning map.

In 2012, a development regulation proposal was submitted, through the annual Comprehensive Plan docket process, to allow R-1 zoned properties to use gross density calculations instead of net density

calculations, in order to provide more flexibility for such properties to develop. As you may recall, the City switched from requiring a gross density calculation to a net density calculation in 2005, citing a concern that the City's population growth target "would likely be exceeded" using gross density (Ordinance 02005-174). The Council approved further consideration of the proposal, and it was later integrated into a larger discussion related to the then-upcoming 2015 Comprehensive Plan. Ultimately, in 2014, the Council determined not to move forward with the pilot program as part of their Comprehensive Plan deliberations.

### **Zoning and the Growth Management Act**

As a City required to plan under the GMA, Sammamish must demonstrate it can accommodate housing and employment targets assigned as part of a larger county wide effort. As part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update, Sammamish adopted a new housing target of 4,640 units through the current planning period to 2035, and demonstrated the capacity to achieve such. Therefore, no "up-zoning" is required for the City to be able to meet this assigned target. It is important to note the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update assumes a roughly 50-50 split between new housing units in residential zoned areas and new housing units in the Town Center. The next Comprehensive Plan update is currently required to be completed by 2023 for which new housing and employment targets will be assigned for the planning period to 2043.

### **Transfer of Development Rights Program**

Staff are currently engaged in developing administrative procedures for the City's In-City Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program established through Ordinance O2011-297 and Chapter 21A.80 SMC. The TDR process allows landowners to sell development rights from their land ("sending site") to a developer who then can use these rights to increase density on their project property ("receiving site"). The TDR program shares similar goals to restrictive zoning like R-1, such as conserving environmentally sensitive lands, open space, and other lands with public benefits and encouraging development in areas more suited for growth. As such, the Council may consider promoting the TDR program as an alternative to using up- and down-zoning as a tool for encouraging development where it is appropriate while steering it away from environmentally critical areas and other locations that may provide public benefit by being left undeveloped.



## MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** June 5, 2017

**To:** City Council

**From:** Jeff Thomas, Community Development Director

**Re:** Urban Forest Management Plan – Proposed Scope of Work

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief overview and description of the proposed scope of work to be completed by a consultant team in developing an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) which meets the goals and objectives outlined by the City Council. Staff will present supporting information and detail to City Council at its June 5, 2017, study session.

### **Project Background**

The City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan includes a directive to "create and support a robust and comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan" (Policy EC.10.10). In response to this directive, staff began meeting with the City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission in mid-2016 to discuss priorities for the vision, mission, objectives, and scope of work for the UFMP.

Over the course of discussion sessions on March 17, March 21, June 7, and July 7, 2016, and April 6, 2017, Council and Commission members advocated for robust public involvement and education in the plan (including social media and engagement with schools and other community groups), came to a general agreement that the plan should focus on trees on both public and private lands, and expressed a desire to gain a better understanding of the status of the City's tree canopy and how it can be improved in the midst of a significant amount of new development. There was an expressed desire to apply the latest in best management practices and studies about the health and environmental benefits of trees to the plan and subsequent regulations and programs as well.

At the May 9, 2017 joint City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, representatives from the University of Washington's Urban Ecology Research Lab outlined a proposal for a more ecologically complete policy approach to urban forestry that takes into account the widespread presence of laminated root rot within the City. In coordination with City staff, the University of Washington representatives proposed a three-part approach to understanding the current health of the City's forested character and how it can assist with the development of the UFMP and protect the City's tree canopy long-term. Under a separate contract than the primary plan consultant, it is proposed the University of Washington team will complete the canopy cover assessment and provide supplemental policy review and support throughout the UFMP process. In addition, they will complete a pilot research study related to laminated root rot at Pine Lake Park separate from the scope for the UFMP.

### **Scope of Work**

Based on comments by City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission, staff drafted a proposed scope of work to be completed by a consultant team that will both build upon and incorporate the work proposed by the University of Washington's Urban Ecology Research Lab as described above. This consultant's work will include the following items:

1. Obtain public input by continuing to engage established stakeholders and developing a strategy to identify new groups with which to engage. Target specific groups early in the project using methods that may include e-mail, social media, focus group discussions, online surveys, and other strategies. The consultant may host open houses, booths at public events, or other methods to gauge the public’s priorities for the UFMP.
2. Work collaboratively with the University of Washington’s Urban Ecology Research Lab to incorporate the results of their canopy cover assessment and laminated root rot analysis into the text, goals, and policies of the Plan.
3. Establish a clear vision statement for the UFMP.
4. Establish long-term, comprehensive goals and objectives to achieve the UFMP vision statement.
5. Develop a long-range (minimum 20-year) strategic framework supported by incremental management plans, with recommended annual operating plans.
6. Develop a prioritized list of potential actions and resources needed to implement the plan’s goals and objectives, with phases of work that coincide with City budget cycles.
  - a. Identify and leverage all departments’ data collection and urban forest management-related activities to support city-wide goals
7. Create a monitoring and informational feedback loop so that outcomes and effectiveness are measured over time and made available to the public. Include a scheduled periodic adjustment of goals to reflect updated conditions.
8. Develop narrative text, tables, images, and maps so the information in the Plan communicates in a meaningful, definitive, and easy-to-follow way that is consistent with other City of Sammamish plans. The Plan should be a convenient and definitive reference tool for policy makers, staff, developers, and residents for both high level and routine decisions, actions and tasks.

**Project Timeline**

The proposed scope of work will be included in a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be sent out to potential consultants. Staff has developed the following tentative timeline for releasing the RFP, evaluating proposals, and selecting a consultant:

Request for Proposals Published:	July, 2017
Proposals Due:	August, 2017
Consultant Selection:	September/October, 2017
Contract Award:	November, 2017

**Financial Impact**

In November 2016, Council approved \$115,000 for professional services related to the Urban Forest Management Plan as part of the 2017-18 budget. In addition, the City received a \$15,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to support a canopy cover assessment. A summary of how these funds will be allocated is listed below.

Canopy Cover Assessment:	\$40,000
<i>To be completed under a separate contract with the University of Washington</i>	
Urban Forest Management Plan:	\$90,000
<i>To be completed by the City’s Consultant Team</i>	
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Total:	\$130,000

**Direction Requested**

Staff is seeking City Council direction on the proposed scope of work in order to proceed with the RFP and selection process.