15670 NE 85th Street
Redmond, WA

City of Redmond

Memorandum

Date: 6/23/2026
Meeting of: City Council Study Session

File No. SS 26-061
Type: Study Session

TO: Members of the City Council
FROM: Mayor Angela Birney
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Executive	Lisa Maher, Assistant Chief Operating Officer	425-556-2427
Planning and Community Development	Carol Helland, Director, Planning and Community Development	425-556-2107

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Executive	Zach Houvener	Deputy of Equity & Strategic Services
Planning and Community Development	Seraphie Allen	Deputy Director, Planning and Community Development
Executive	Jenny Lybeck	Sustainability Manager
Planning and Community Development	Glenn Coil	Senior Planner
Planning and Community Development	Jeff Churchill	Planning Manager

TITLE:
Joint Redmond and Bellevue Electric Grid Capacity Study Findings and Next Steps

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

The cities of Redmond and Bellevue launched a joint Grid Capacity Study (Study) in December 2025, in partnership with AECOM and Puget Sound Energy, to assess the local electric grid's ability to support future population and employment growth, in alignment with Redmond 2050. The Study also examines how increasing electrification of buildings and transportation will shape future energy demand. The Study provides a foundation that guides next steps as Redmond continues working with PSE to ensure a resilient, reliable, and clean grid amid ongoing growth and decarbonization. The Study was initiated in response to growing concerns that grid capacity limitations and long utility upgrade timelines could become barriers to development and electrification if not proactively planned for and coordinated with the utility.

During the Study Session, city staff and AECOM will review the Study findings and near-term next steps.

☒ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☒ **Receive Information** ☐ **Provide Direction** ☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
  Redmond 2050, Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, Climate Emergency Declaration, Community Strategic Plan
- **Required:**
  N/A
- **Council Request:**
  N/A
- **Other Key Facts:**
- Existing conditions and Study approach:
  - PSE load forecasting and planning aligns with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commissions requirements. These forecasts are generally driven by regional market trends and growth projections and are typically developed on 10-year planning horizons.
  - Redmond and other cities' forecasts reflect local policy objectives as directed by the Growth Management Act, the pace of planned development, and vehicle and building electrification trends and policies.
  - The differences in growth assumptions, inputs, and methodologies made it necessary to develop a Redmond- and Bellevue-specific electricity load forecast to better understand how future electrical loads may vary and impact the local grid.
- Key findings from that analysis include:
  - Building and transportation electrification are reshaping both the magnitude of electricity demand and the timing of when that load is placed on the electric grid.
  - In Redmond and Bellevue, the primary driver of electricity demand over time is population growth and its impact on electrification.
  - PSE has multiple electrical infrastructure projects in progress to support continued electrical growth in Redmond, with implementation planned in the coming years.
  - With those planned utility upgrades in place, PSE is expected to provide sufficient substation capacity in Redmond over their 10-year planning horizon.
  - Substation improvement plans do not consider the location of growth within Redmond beyond the ten-year forecast.
  - Several Redmond substations serving key growth areas including Downtown Redmond (Spiritbrook substation), Education Hill (Avondale substation), and Bear Creek (Redmond substation), are likely to see the most constrained capacity by 2035.
- Key recommendations identified in the Study as a result of the analysis and four joint workshops with PSE include:
  - *Harmonize forecasting and planning:* strengthen coordination, data sharing, and aligned forecasting horizons to improve growth assumptions, identify large emerging loads early, and support long-range grid planning.
  - *Streamline regulatory and infrastructure processes:* promote regulatory alignment, improve permitting workflows, and coordinate project timelines to reduce delays, and support timely grid upgrades.
  - *Strengthen grid flexibility and resilience:* expand demand-side management and distributed energy resources, communicate the value of grid modernization efforts to residents, and conduct more granular and longer-horizon capacity analysis.

OUTCOMES:

The Study lays the groundwork for the City's future grid planning efforts and helps inform next steps as the city partners with Puget Sound Energy to support growth and electrification.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
  Ongoing
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
  The Study's technical analysis was completed in concert with a series of collaborative workshops that brought together staff from the City of Redmond, the City Bellevue, and Puget Sound Energy. These sessions were designed to strengthen coordination, improve information sharing, and support more aligned long-range planning.
- **Feedback Summary:**
  Key takeaways from the joint PSE/Partner Cities workshops included:
  - Shared understanding that electrification and decarbonization bring major benefits but require substantial infrastructure investment, cost management, and focus on equity, process, and public understanding about electrical infrastructure components.
  - Recognition that electrification trends and EV adoption are driving significant future demand, and that shared building, heating/cooling, and EV data between Partner Cities and PSE is essential for anticipating capacity needs and planning for load growth.
  - Agreement that earlier coordination is critical, including earlier data sharing, better visibility into system constraints, aligned public messaging, continuous coordination across differing forecast cycles, recurring alignment meetings, stronger integration between city Comprehensive Plans and PSE planning, and improving permitting workflows for timely grid project delivery.
  - Commitment to closer collaboration, with improved communication between city and PSE counterparts and use of shared data-exchange platforms to support more accurate and timely planning.

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:
$75,000

Approved in current biennial budget: ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A**

Budget Offer Number:
Environmental Sustainability

Budget Priority:
Healthy and Sustainable

Other budget impacts or additional costs: ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒ **N/A**
If yes, explain:
N/A

Funding source(s):
Grant Funding - Climate Planning Grant

Budget/Funding Constraints:
N/A

☐ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	Item has not been presented to Council	N/A

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	None proposed at this time	N/A

Time Constraints:
N/A

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:
N/A

ATTACHMENTS:
Attachment A: Grid Capacity Study
Attachment B: Presentation