City of Port Orchard 2016
Comprehensive Plan Update

Public Participation Program

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I. INTRODUCTION

Port Orchard is conducting a periodic review of its Comprehensive Plan as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). As a city in Kitsap County, Port Orchard is required to complete its update by June 30, 2016. The entire Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated with review to include the following elements or chapters:

- Introduction (Vision)
- Land Use (and Zoning)
- Housing
- Parks
- Natural Systems (Critical Areas)
- Economic Development
- Utilities
- Transportation
- Shorelines
- Capital Facilities
- Implementation
- Appendices

In addition to the review and update of these elements and chapters, the city will also conduct a consistency evaluation to ensure that its development regulations are consistent with the updated comprehensive plan.

The GMA requires early and continuous public participation in the Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code Update in RCW 36.70A.140:

Each county and city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall establish and broadly disseminate to the public a public participation program identifying procedures providing for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive land use plans and development regulations implementing such plans. The procedures shall provide for broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, opportunity for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, provision for open discussion, communication programs, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments ...

The purpose of this document is to identify the City of Port Orchard's public participation objectives, approach, audiences, schedule, and opportunities for public participation. This document may be updated over time to reflect the needs of the Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code Update project and experiences in early outreach to ensure public participation is effective.

II. OBJECTIVES

The Port Orchard Comprehensive Plan Update Public Participation Objectives include:

- Meet the public participation goals of the Growth Management Act.
• Offer engaging opportunities to the Port Orchard community to participate in planning and comment on the future of the city.
• Provide objective information to assist the public in understanding issues and solutions.
• Provide opportunities for the public to provide feedback through all phases of the review.
• Use a variety of participation methods (such as meetings, media, social media, mailers, etc.) to offer all residents a variety of ways to participate.
• Make the review inclusive to people of all ages, races, cultures, and genders.
• Make the plan itself easily accessible to residents of the community.
• Ask new questions of the community in order to gain new insights about Port Orchard and choices about the Comprehensive Plan polices, regulations, and implementation strategies.
• Identify GMA requirements, policy trade-offs, and opportunities to voice unique conditions about Port Orchard.

III. APPROACH

The city’s current Comprehensive Plan while technically complete, contains very little in the way of an overarching vision which reflects citizen goals for the future of the city. In addition, the city has grown considerably through annexations since 2008 and the city’s newest residents’ goals may not be reflected in the existing plan. As such, the city has determined that a visioning process is needed as a precursor to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

Due to the city’s limited staff resources, the city has contracted with the University of Washington to kick-off the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update process and to conduct a thorough visioning process. The University is responsible for facilitating public workshops, focus group meetings, and other methods of public outreach related to developing the city’s vision and draft comprehensive plan elements. In accordance with their contract, the University is responsible for the following deliverables:

• Draft Public Participation Program
• Initial Conditions Report
• Draft Urban Growth Boundary Map
• Draft Introduction/Vision Chapter 1
• Draft Land Use Chapter 2
• Draft Housing Chapter 3
• Draft Transportation Chapter 8 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Portion Only)

Department of Community Development (DCD) staff will be responsible for drafting the remaining comprehensive plan elements and will coordinate with the Public Works Department and its consultants as necessary. DCD will handle the task of noticing public hearings and documenting to and responding to public comments.

IV. AUDIENCES

There are several audiences - individuals and agencies - that will participate in the 2016 Port Orchard Comprehensive Plan Update, and each will become engaged in the process in different ways:
• General Public: Port Orchard residents, property owners, and business owners.
• Elected and Appointed Officials: City Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, Design Review Board Members.
• Non-City Service Providers: Special districts such as Water and Sewer District, Fire District, Kitsap Transit, etc.
• Non-governmental Organizations: Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Port Orchard and other service clubs, the Port Orchard Bay Street Association (POBSA), Kitsap Alliance of Property Owners (KAPO), Futurewise, etc.
• State, Regional, and Other Local Governments: Puget Sound Regional Council, Kitsap County, Kitsap Regional Council, The Suquamish Tribe, and the cities of Bremerton, Gig Harbor, Poulsbo, Bainbridge Island, WSDOT, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Ecology, the Port of Bremerton, and the Department of Natural Resources.

V. ROLE OF DECISION MAKERS

City Council: The City Council will provide policy guidance and is the final decision maker for the Comprehensive Plan update. Council members will be notified of public workshops and are invited to participate early on in the planning process. All public workshops will be noticed appropriately so that all Council members are able to fully participate in these events in the event of a quorum. The Council will receive periodic briefings on the update and will review the Planning Commission recommendations on the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. Council will hold a public hearing on the final draft periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan prior to taking final action.

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission will provide policy recommendations for the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan and ensure that the public is involved throughout the process. The Planning Commission will review the draft update on a chapter by chapter basis, providing opportunities for public comments while providing feedback and recommendations to the administration. All public workshops will be noticed appropriately so that all Planning Commission members are able to fully participate in these events in the event of a quorum. The Planning Commission shall forward its final recommendation to the City Council for the periodic update no later than March 31, 2016.

Administration: The Administration will oversee staff and consultant work on the periodic update. They will facilitate public meetings and present draft materials to the Planning Commission and City Council for review. They will revise documents as needed and provide all materials to Planning Commissioners and City Council members in a timely manner.

VI. ROLE OF THE PUBLIC

The Comprehensive Plan is primarily written for and with guidance from the public. It contains their preferences, ideas, and policy objectives. During the update is important to retain the public’s interest by making citizen participation as accessible as possible. The process is driven by the community and guided by the University of Washington team and city’s professional staff, so it is vital to involve public participation. This will be accomplished through advertising, outreach, stakeholder involvement, and numerous public events.
Goal 11 of the GMA requires citizen participation and coordination: “Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.” The Washington State Department of Commerce lists benefits of including citizens in the process:

- Enhances the quality of planning by incorporating a wide variety of information and perspectives.
- Allows communities to make decisions based on shared values.
- Engage citizens in the ownership of local land use challenges and solutions.
- Educates and empowers citizens.
- Supports swift and efficient project implementation.
- Ensures that good plans remain relevant over time.
- Fosters a sense of community, and trust in government.

**VII. METHODS AND TOOLS**

Techniques for public participation vary in scale, technology, structure, and timing. The primary means of participation will be the traditional public meeting at several key points during the update process. Because not all interested citizens can attend public meetings, it is essential to provide alternate means of communication. Port Orchard has a historical lack of citizen interest, so it essential to encourage involvement from as wide an audience as early as possible.

The following tools will be employed to achieve widespread and ongoing citizen involvement:

- Public open houses and meetings
  - Background presentations, educational lectures, workshops, roundtables, one-on-one interviews, activities, games, etc.
  - Encouragement of participation by attendees
  - Effective notice
    - Underrepresented groups will be specifically targeted for outreach
    - The date, time, and location of events will be published early enough and widely enough for all interested citizens to be notified
    - Notice will be published in the Port Orchard Independent (official newspaper of record) and possibly also the Kitsap Sun
    - Regular press releases will be published ahead of public meetings, and city staff will be available for interested reporters and media outlets
    - Postings in public spaces, social media updates, and email subscription lists
- Focus events
  - Small scale focus groups with underrepresented members of the community (at schools, businesses, neighborhood centers, etc.
  - Presentations and workshops with community organizations and neighboring jurisdictions
- Opportunities for open discussion
  - Speaking sessions and roundtables at meetings
  - Additional public comment periods at Planning Commission, Council, and sub-committee meetings
- Written comments
  - Online public feedback
Comment forms available at public meetings

- Surveys
  - Online, phone, and paper surveys will be conducted to collect public opinion on a wide range of topics and from a diverse and representative sample

- Distribution of background information
  - The current Comprehensive Plan and other relevant documents will be easily accessible on the City website and available at the local library
  - Information will be shared with the Planning Commission, city departments, and regional agencies as needed

- Public hearings
  - The Planning Commission will conduct public hearings on the draft plan elements and on the final draft plan prior to making a recommendation to the City Council. Written and oral testimony will be accepted at public hearings.
  - The City Council will conduct a public hearing on the final draft plan prior to adoption. Written and oral testimony will be accepted at this public hearing.

- SEPA
  - The city’s environmental process will include opportunities for the public to provide comments on the proposed plan and its possible adverse impacts.

- Interested Parties List
  - The city will build and maintain an interested party’s notification list and provide notice to interested parties when opportunities to participate in public workshops or to provide testimony exist.

XIII. SCHEDULE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(See Appendix A attached)

IX. CONCLUSION

A public hearing on this Public Participation Program was held on April 21, 2014 by the Port Orchard Planning Commission at which time the plan was recommended for approval by the City Council. The Port Orchard City Council adopted the program at its regular meeting on May 27, 2014. This program may be updated administratively as conditions change or additional resources to support outreach activities become available. A current copy of the program shall be available for viewing at the front counter of the Department of Community Development and on the city’s website.