

Public Participation Plan

City of Woodland Comp Plan Update

Introduction

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that Comprehensive Plans be periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community and comply with state and local regulations. This ensures that communities are prepared to meet future challenges. Those challenges differ from community to community, but the comp plan should generally ensure the community will be resilient to those challenges and prepared for growth.

A Public Participation Plan is required to describe how the City of Woodland will encourage early and continuous public participation throughout the periodic update process.

This Public Participation Plan describes the steps that the City of Woodland will take to provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment, as well as the City of Woodland contact information and web addresses. This plan is in addition to any other minimum requirements for public participation required by the City of Woodland Code Section WMC 19.06.

This plan is a working document and will be adjusted as needed to provide for the greatest and broadest public participation.

1.0 Public Participation Goals

To support ongoing and meaningful public participation in the comprehensive plan update process, the city has adopted the following goals to guide our outreach efforts:

- Provide interested parties with timely information, an understanding of the process, and multiple opportunities to review and comment on proposed plan and development code amendments. Use a variety of methods to inform, solicit feedback from, and collaborate with residents, property owners, and other interested parties.
- Actively solicit information from residents, property owners, and stakeholders about their concerns, questions, and priorities for Woodland in 2045. Be inclusive of a range of perspectives and experiences, intentionally reaching a broader audience to understand their goals, needs, and preferences.
- Provide access to engagement opportunities, events, and participation for all residents, property owners, and other interested parties in Woodland, including disadvantaged groups and individuals and those who have historically been left out of community planning processes.
- Encourage interested parties to informally review and comment on proposed changes to the plan and development code throughout the process and provide those comments to decision makers.
- Provide forums for formal public input at project milestones prior to decision-making by local officials.
- Consult and consider recommendations from neighboring jurisdictions, federal and state agencies, and Native American tribes.

2.0 Public Participation Opportunities

The City of Woodland is committed to providing multiple opportunities for public participation throughout the process. The City of Woodland will use a variety of communication tools to inform the public and encourage their participation, including the following:

2.1 Website

The City of Woodland website will include a “City of Woodland 2045 Comp Plan Update” project page. This page can be located on the City Projects page at: <https://www.ci.woodland.wa.us/projects>

This project page will be regularly updated and is the webpage where interested parties can access status updates, draft documents, official notices, minutes, and other project information. The webpage will be the primary repository of all information related to the process. The page will include contact information including an email link for questions and comments.

Potential Barriers: generating website traffic, reaching non-English-speaking residents, reaching residents with limited internet services, uploading materials in a timely manner.

Inclusivity Method: coordinate web content with social and print media methods to direct traffic to the project website, provide materials in multiple languages as needed, display information in multiple formats.

2.2 Survey

Survey tools will be used at meetings to solicit specific feedback from interested parties and results will be posted on the 2045 Comp Plan project page.

Potential Barriers: reaching residents that have not previously participated in planning processes and/or groups that do not often participate, reaching non-English-speaking residents, length of time to complete survey.

Inclusivity Method: provide materials in multiple languages as needed, provide alternative survey methods such as print or verbal, clearly explain how input will be used in the process, coordinate with local special interest and/or faith-based and/or social organizations to drive participation.

2.3 Open House

The City of Woodland will use one or more community open houses. Public comments received during the Open House will be posted on the Periodic Review webpage. Additional open houses may be scheduled in response to demand and to encourage additional participation opportunities.

Potential Barriers: identifying appropriate locations for community members, engaging non-English-speaking residents, childcare availability, potential for low participation, high level of coordination and communication required, inclement weather.

Inclusivity Method: consider multiple open houses in various neighborhoods to reach a diverse audience, designate one- or two-point people for coordination/communication to ensure clarity and efficiency, provide reasonable accommodations to improve accessibility, incentivize participation with food and/or childcare or child-centered activities, include hybrid attendance options.

2.4 Notice mailing list

An email list of interested parties will be created, advertised, and maintained by the City of Woodland. The list will be used to notify interested parties regarding Periodic Review progress and participation opportunities. Interested parties will be added to the list by contacting the Community

Development Department.

Potential Barriers: multiple City/consultant contacts, verbal requests, consistent tracking.

Inclusivity Method: identify a single point of contact and provide clear and easy directions for interested parties to be added to the list.

2.5 Comment

Interested parties will be encouraged to provide comments to the City of Woodland in person or by letter and email. All comments will be forwarded to the Woodland City Council and Planning Commission. The 2045 Comp Plan webpage will be the central repository for information under consideration. Documents will be available for review at the City of Woodland Community Development Department, and copies will be provided at the established copying cost.

PLEASE NOTE: All comments received during this process will become part of the public record and will be subject to posting on the project page. Do not submit any private or confidential information that you would not want posted for the public to see and read. Thank you.

Potential Barriers: non-English-speaking residents may submit comments in a different language, multiple City/consultant contacts, verbal comments not correctly recorded.

Inclusivity Method: translate comments as needed, identify a single point of contact, provide clear and easy directions for submitting written comments and providing oral testimony, verify verbal comments have been properly recorded.

2.6 Planning Commission

The Planning Commission will be the primary forum for detailed review and recommendations to the Woodland City Council. Interested parties are encouraged to attend and provide comments during the Planning Commission deliberations and/or Woodland City Council workshops and public hearings. Official notices will be published as established in the City of Woodland policy.

Potential Barriers: reaching non-English-speaking residents, potential for low participation, may be intimidating, childcare availability, inclement weather.

Inclusivity Method: provide ample time for public comment and/or provide for written comments and questions to be addressed in meetings, provide reasonable accommodations to improve accessibility, incentivize participation with food and/or childcare, include hybrid attendance options.

2.7 News Media

The local news media will be kept up to date on the Periodic Review process and receive copies of all official notices.

Potential Barriers: reaching non-English-speaking residents, reaching people that do not subscribe to selected news media.

Inclusivity Method: coordinate news media content with website and social and print media, provide materials in multiple languages as needed.

2.8 Equity and Inclusion

In the interest of providing fair and equitable opportunities to all residents, the City of Woodland strives to enhance the public involvement process in order to reach all segments of the population and ensure that all groups have a voice in the planning process regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, and income status. To do this the process will seek input from all citizens including

overburdened, marginalized groups, those in all demographic groups, including those with health needs, and those with other barriers to participation. This city will use the best environmental, demographic, and health data to identify outreach and communication methods to overcome those potential barriers to participation and will seek to ensure environmental justice in compliance with RCW 70A.02.

2.8.1 Best Practices of Outreach and Communication

Staff will ensure that all notices, decisions, and/or other public outreach material is provided in a variety of formats and through a variety of means. All public outreach material should, at a minimum, be provided in both physical and electronic format, with a focus on broad distribution of such materials, and the city will provide information resources available, both through the city as well as through outside organizations, for potentially marginalized individuals to receive assistance, including available translation services, ADA accommodations, and assistive technology.

Staff will furthermore provide 'open house' styled meetings designed to better reach individuals who may not be able or willing to participate in traditional public engagement opportunities. By offering these opportunities to provide feedback in a more informal setting, the city hopes to be able to provide an outlet for those who may historically be overburdened and/or potentially marginalized, as well as build up individual relationships with residents, business owners, and other parties who wish to provide comment on the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff will strive to develop and implement an open-door public outreach policy, encouraging feedback and communication to be provided in novel and/or non-traditional means, being aware of the methods traditionally utilized by local governments to prevent overburdened marginalized populations from providing meaningful input towards governmental decisions. These efforts may include the provision of translation services and utilization of digital methods for the dissemination of public notices, among other efforts.

2.8.2 Facilitation and Support

The City understands that often the barriers to proper and effective community outreach and/or participation are often practical, and the City shall strive to support individuals to the greatest extent possible to facilitate public participation to the greatest extent possible.

City meetings have historically been open to all residents and interested parties, including those with children, however the City should provide further clarification that children are welcome at all City Council meetings, public hearings, and other public events. While, due to the City's limited budget and size, it is not feasible to provide dedicated childcare or public transportation options, the city should encourage residents to provide assistance to those who may be limited in their participation due to limited childcare opportunities or transportation, as well as consider potential community partners who may work with the city to provide more stable transportation and/or childcare options.

2.8.3 Outreach and Communication with those that Have Language and/or other Barrier to Communication

The city will continue to provide resources for translation services, as well as other services, available to those with language barriers preventing them from accessing public outreach and communication efforts. Furthermore, the city has sought out community partnerships to benefit those that may otherwise not have access to this opportunity, including providing notice to La Casa de San Juan Diego, a local low income, primarily Hispanic affordable housing community, as well as other community spaces identified as being frequented by the City's English as a second language population. Upon request, any document produced by the city will be translated into those languages available through Microsoft Word.

3.0 List of stakeholders

The City of Woodland will engage the following stakeholders:

- The Chamber of Commerce
- City Departments
- Cowlitz County
- Clark County
- City residents
- Port of Woodland
- School District
- Cowlitz County Dike Improvement District #2
- Woodland School District
- Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon
- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
- Squaxin Island Tribe
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe

4.0 Public Participation Timeline

The following is a general timeline including anticipated public participation opportunities. The City of Woodland will coordinate with the Department of Commerce throughout the process. An ongoing timeline will be posted on the City of Woodland “City Projects” webpage. The project page will be “City of Woodland 2045 Comp Plan”.

- Public Participation Plan introduction to the City Council. (February 2024)
- Project introduction to the City Council. (March-April 2024)
- Project introduction and Public Participation Plan introduction to the PC. (March-April 2024)
- Mailings to utility customers (starting April 2024)
- Open house(s) (May 2024)
- Second mailing to utility payers (April-November 2024)
- Newspaper Articles (quarterly 2024-2025 if possible)
- Conference calls (Live public engagement) (April 2024 thru March 2025)
- PC workshop (Monthly updates through 2024)
- PC hearing (early 2025)
- City Council workshops (quarterly updates 2024, work sessions begin early 2025)
- Notification to Commerce (No later than May 1, 2025)

City Council hearing (May/June 2025)

5.0 Public Comment Periods and Hearings

The Planning Commission will conduct a public comment period and at least one public hearing to solicit input on the Periodic Review. The Woodland City Council will hold at least one public hearing before final adoption.

The City of Woodland will coordinate with the Department of Commerce on public notification of comment periods and hearings.

Public notice of all hearings will state who is holding the comment period and/or hearing, the date and time, and the location of any public hearing. Notices will be published per official policy and comply with all other legal requirements such as the Americans with Disabilities Act.