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- The public is encouraged to comment via email to pced@cityofanacortes.org, via written comment addressed to PCED, P.O. Box 547, Anacortes, WA 98221. Public comments received prior to 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting will become part of the record for the meeting, just as if presented in person.
- Complete guidelines for virtual participation in Anacortes Planning Commission meetings are available [here](#) (page 2). View the quick video example for connecting to the meeting [here](#).

Anacortes Planning Commission
Municipal Building - Council Chambers
904 6th Street

March 27, 2024
6:00 PM

PRELIMINARY AGENDA
[Packet Materials](#) / [Watch Meeting](#)

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Minutes**
 - a. There were no minutes provided for review.
3. **Public Comment**
4. **Public Hearings**
5. **Other Business**
 - a. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Review of the Draft Public Participation Plan
7. **Adjournment**

**Citizens wishing to comment on items not on the agenda may do so under Public Comment. Citizens wishing to comment during a public hearing may do so as those items are considered by the Planning Commission during the course of the meeting.*

The City of Anacortes is committed to making public meetings available and accessible to all members of the community. For assistance with special needs, please contact the City Clerk at 360-299-1960 in advance of the meeting.



Planning Commission Agenda Bill

Meeting Date: March 27, 2024

Agenda Item: 5.a.

Subject: 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Review of the Draft Public Participation Plan

Staff Contact: John Coleman

Approved for Submittal to Commission by

LIBBY GRAGE
John Coleman

Action Type

Discussion

Summary Statement: A draft Public Participation Plan has been prepared for the 2025 periodic update of the Anacortes Comprehensive Plan.

Background: Under the Washington State Growth Management Act, every county and city in the state is required to conduct a periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. Anacortes' periodic Comprehensive Plan update is due to be completed by December 31, 2025.

One component of this requirement is that jurisdictions must establish a public participation program to engage with residents, stakeholders, tribes, and state agencies early and often. The city has drafted a public participation plan (PPP) to explain how the city will engage community members in the update process. The PPP also gives estimated time frames for when each portion of the update process will take place.

The Planning Commission will be reviewing the draft PPP at their March 27 meeting. Public input is encouraged.

Previous Action:

Competing Viewpoints Considered:

Recommended Motion:

Alternative Actions:

Attachments (listed in order presented):

1. DRAFT Anacortes Public Participation Plan (20240321)

Public Participation Plan for the City of Anacortes Comprehensive Plan Update

DRAFT March 21, 2024

Introduction

The City of Anacortes is conducting a required periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan. The Anacortes Comprehensive Plan is a broad statement of the community's values and vision for its future, directing the orderly and coordinated physical development of the City for the next 20 years. A major update to the Comprehensive Plan is conducted approximately every 10 years – this update is due by December 31, 2025.

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the periodic update of comprehensive plans and development regulations to ensure that they are consistent with recent changes to state law, updates to countywide planning policies, and to update information such as population changes and infrastructure needs and investments. The periodic update will include a review of the city's zoning policies and urban growth area (UGA) to ensure there is sufficient capacity of land available to accommodate projected housing and employment growth over the next 20 years.

One component of the required update is that the City establish a public participation program to engage with residents, stakeholders, tribes, and state agencies early and often. This Public Participation Plan (PPP) identifies how the City will provide for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations implementing the plan, as required by the GMA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The City of Anacortes is responsible for updating the Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the Growth Management Act. This responsibility includes actively inviting public input and coordinating with local, state, and regional agencies. The City has hired a consultant, MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design, to assist with the update process.

The Anacortes Planning Commission, an appointed advisory body, is required to review amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, hold public hearings, and provide recommendations to the City Council.

The Anacortes City Council is responsible for considering the Planning Commission's recommendations and adopting the updated Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

The Board of Skagit County Commissioners is responsible for making decisions on amendments to the county-wide planning policies and any city-proposed changes to the Anacortes UGA boundary.

Public Participation Goals

Initial goals for community engagement for the Comprehensive Plan update include:

- Build awareness about the Comprehensive Plan, the development regulations, the process under which they are developed, adopted, and amended, and how the public can participate in the process.
- Spur a productive community conversation about Anacortes's long-term challenges and opportunities.
- Elevate the voices of communities most affected by past and current discriminatory land use and housing practices, who are vulnerable to potential impacts of plan outcomes, and/or who are historically underrepresented in planning processes. This could include, but is not limited to, youth, people of color, renters, and low-income individuals.
- Focus resources on soliciting input on elements of the update process likely to be of greatest interest/impact to the community.
- Offer engagement opportunities that are relevant to all audiences.
- Share data and community stories to increase the shared understanding of issues.

Audiences & Partners

There are multiple audiences and partners – individuals, agencies, and governments – that may participate in the Anacortes Comprehensive Plan update, and each may choose to engage in the process in different ways. The city will use the tools and actions in this public participation plan to reach and give a voice to as many of those people and organizations as possible. While outreach and engagement will focus on those who currently live, work, play or otherwise interact with Anacortes, the needs of those who *want* to live and work in the future in Anacortes will also be considered.

Participants in the update process are anticipated to include, but are not limited to:

- **Tribal governments:** Samish, Swinomish, Stillaguamish, Tulalip, Sauk-Suiattle
- **Members of the public:** Anacortes residents (current and future), workers, students, property owners, and business owners.
- **Non-governmental organizations:** Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, local environmental groups, Downtown Anacortes Alliance, religious institutions, Skagit Habitat for Humanity, Skagit Land Trust, Anacortes Community Health Council, Anacortes teachers and educational staff union, Boys and Girls Club of Skagit County, Anacortes Family Center
- **Elected and appointed officials:** City Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, Anacortes Housing Authority, Port of Anacortes, Island Hospital, Anacortes School District, Fidalgo Pool and Recreation District
- **Anacortes City Departments and Service Providers:** Public Works (Engineering, Operations, GIS, Water, Sewer, Stormwater), Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Museum, Fiber, Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- **Other Service Providers:** Electric, gas, cable, telecommunications providers
- **Counties/Cities/Towns:** Skagit County, Island County, La Conner, Oak Harbor
- **Washington State agencies:** Department of Ecology, Department of Commerce, Office of Financial Management, Department of Transportation (highways, aviation, ferries),

Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

- **Federal government:** Naval Air Station Whidbey, U.S. Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Aviation Administration, National Parks Service

Communication Tools

The communication tools that will be used in the Comprehensive Plan update process may include, but are not limited to:

Webpage

Planning, Community & Economic Development Department (PCED) staff will maintain a distinct webpage with Comprehensive Plan information. Relevant documents and schedules will be posted on the webpage along with announcements and notices concerning upcoming meetings, hearings, and public involvement opportunities.

Subscription Email List

A subscription email list ([Notify Me](#)®) will be created for dissemination of announcements and notices to subscribed parties.

City Contact Email Address

A specific city email address ([to be inserted here](#)) has been created for community members to send their comments throughout the update process. All comments received will be read and considered by staff and forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council at appropriate times during the update process.

Direct Mail

Postcards or other informational materials may be directly mailed to residents during the update process to notify the public about opportunities to participate, key dates or deadlines, and/or public meetings and hearings.

News Release(s)

For major topics and decisions, the City of Anacortes may prepare press releases and distribute them to local papers.

Social Media

Established social media platforms will be used to promote public meetings and opportunities to participate in the comprehensive plan update process.

A-Town Is Our Town Quarterly Newsletter

Information about the Comprehensive Plan update process will be published in one or more editions of the A-Town, which is mailed to every resident in Anacortes.

Outreach Methods

Open Houses

Open houses may be held to encourage the public to review information at their own pace, with informational stations addressing different issues, and opportunities for providing feedback. Open houses may be held in-person or virtually.

Survey(s)

Surveys may be used to solicit input from a broad range of community members, including those who may be unlikely to attend in-person or virtual meetings. The surveys could be used to receive specific feedback on elements of the comprehensive plan update, or to help better understand the community's point of view on certain topics. Surveys could be web-based, in-person, or paper-based.

Targeted Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews will be held with parties who can provide context on current Anacortes issues, opportunities, and priorities. The interviews can be conducted with individuals or groups of people.

Stakeholder interviews will consider opportunities to meet with frontline communities dealing with environmental health and climate change impacts, and communities who are historically underrepresented in planning processes.

Climate Policy Advisory Team

As recommended by Commerce Climate Element guidance, the City will form a Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT) to aid in the development of the Anacortes Comprehensive Plan Climate element.

Pop-Up Tabling at Specific Locations

City staff will go to where the community is at, and host pop-up tabling activities at specific locations. Pop-up events can coincide with popular events that take place at parks or community centers (e.g. youth sports games), along with regularly scheduled community gatherings and festivals. Tabling can also take place at everyday locations, such as during lunch hours at popular restaurants and cafes or grocery stores at peak shopping times on weekends.

Each pop-up tabling opportunity should include visual material corresponding to the focus element and informational materials that direct people to the website.

Community and Civic Groups

City Staff will be available to meet with organized community and civic groups upon request throughout the project to offer updates and seek feedback. This opportunity should be identified on the project website, in newsletters, and whenever City staff engage with the public.

Public Meetings / Workshops

Public meetings and workshops will be held as informal public gatherings to solicit public feedback. When possible, public meetings may be scheduled as part of regular Planning Commission and City Council Meetings. Public meetings or workshops may involve presentations by city staff, question and answer sessions, and interactive activities.

Student and Teacher Outreach

To help the City get more youth engagement and input on the Comprehensive Plan, City staff can conduct outreach to local schools. The intent of the outreach is to augment civic education

with an introduction to students about planning and community concerns, with the intent of acquiring youth perspectives about local issues.

Preliminary Project Schedule

This schedule will be adjusted throughout the update process.

Activity	Time Frame (anticipated)
Project initiation	
Public participation plan	March – April 2024
Establish website, email list	March – April 2024
Project awareness building	March – May 2024
Shaping the Plan	
Agency / Partner Meetings	April – June 2024
Survey	April – May 2024
Workshop / Open House #1	May – July 2024
Pop-up tabling	April – September 2024
Stakeholder interviews	June – December 2024
Planning Commission Work Sessions	April 2024 – March 2025
Climate Policy Advisory Team meetings	May 2024 – February 2025
Student and teacher outreach	April – June 2024; October – December 2024
Workshop / Open House #2	September – November 2024
Refining the Plan	
Draft Comprehensive Plan Element Review	January – March 2025
Planning Commission meetings/ work sessions	January – March 2025
Workshop / Open House #3	January – March 2025
Adopting the Plan	
SEPA Determination	Spring 2025
Planning Commission Public Hearings & Recommendation	Spring – Summer 2025
City Council review and adoption	Summer – Fall 2025