

**City of Renton  
Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Public Participation Plan**



**January 2013**

## Introduction

The City of Renton is updating its Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) governed by RCW 36.70A. In 1990, the legislature adopted GMA because “uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a lack of common goals expressing the public's interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, pose a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of this state.”\*

Thirteen adopted goals guide the development of Comprehensive Plans under GMA. These goals include: encouraging urban growth, reducing sprawl, promoting efficient transportation, ensuring availability of affordable housing, encouraging economic development, protecting property rights, timely permit processing, maintaining natural resource industries, retaining open space and recreation opportunities, protecting the environment, ensuring public participation and coordination between adjacent jurisdictions, providing adequate public facilities and services, and the preservation of sites of historical and archaeological significance. While all the goals of the Growth Management Act should be pursued in local Comprehensive Plans, it is up to each community to determine how to best balance these goals.

Comprehensive Plans establish policies for community growth and development for the next 20 years. GMA requires that cities include certain “Elements” in their Comprehensive Plans. Typically these Elements are distinct chapters in the Plan: Land Use, Transportation, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Housing, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, and Shoreline Management (for communities subject to the Shoreline Management Act). Renton has also developed optional elements on topics of importance to our community: Environment, Community Planning, Community Design, and Human Services.

Most jurisdictions in the state are required to adopt a Comprehensive Plan consistent with the GMA and to update their plan every eight years. Annual amendments may be made to a Comprehensive Plan, but the

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\* RCW 36.70A.010

periodic update is required to assess the plan as a whole. Renton’s last major Comprehensive Plan update was adopted in 2004. However, the legislature extended the deadline statewide, so Renton’s periodic update is now required to be adopted by June 30, 2015.

*Project Overview*

It will take about two years to complete the Comprehensive Plan update. The first step in the process will be to evaluate the City’s Vision, which summarizes the most important principles driving the Comprehensive Plan. Renton’s Vision also defines those priorities and qualities that make our community distinctive and unique. Efforts to define the Vision will shape the review and amendment of the individual elements in the second, and longest, phase of the project. Review of Comprehensive Plan Elements will be staggered over about a year and a half. Review of necessary changes to the Renton Municipal Code will also be included during this time. Environmental Review, including the production of a new Environmental Impact Statement for the Comprehensive Plan, will be the last phase of the project.

Project Timeline

<b>Project Framing and Visioning</b>	Winter 2013- Spring 2013
<b>Element Review and Revision</b>	Spring 2013- Summer 2014
<b>Environmental Review</b>	Spring 2014- Spring 2015
<b>Final Approval</b>	Spring 2015

Public participation is a key component of this two year planning effort. This Public Participation Plan has been created for two purposes. First is to identify potential stakeholders and invite their participation in the planning process. Second is to guide public participation efforts throughout the process to ensure early and continuous involvement in decision-making. Efforts to ensure public participation will continue to evolve throughout the life of the project.

*Roles and Responsibilities*

The City of Renton is responsible for the update of the Comprehensive Plan in compliance with GMA. This responsibility includes actively inviting public

comment and coordinating with state, regional, and county planning policies in the Growth Management Act, the Puget Sound Regional Council VISION 2040 Plan, and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

The primary contact person for the City of Renton is:

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Department of Community and Economic Development  
1055 S. Grady Way  
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(425) 430-6578  
PlanUpdate@rentonwa.gov

The Renton Planning Commission will take the lead as the advisory body for this project. Planning Commission meetings are regularly scheduled and open to the public with opportunities for the public to speak at each meeting on both agenda items and non-agenda items. Staff will ensure that City Council receives regular briefings on the work of the Planning Commission. Both the Planning and Development Committee and the Committee of the Whole will receive updates on this project. Committee of the Whole briefings will be more general in nature and Planning and Development Committee briefings will cover more specifics. Council committee meetings are regularly scheduled, announced each week during the regular City Council meeting, and open to the public. Committee of the Whole meetings are also televised live on Channel 21 and subject to replay throughout the week, plus are available through live streaming and video archive the City's website [www.rentonwa.gov](http://www.rentonwa.gov).

## **Public Participation Plan**

State law requires the City to invite citizens and stakeholders to participate in the Comprehensive Plan update process. Public participation is also very important to the City of Renton as an effective tool to balance competing interests and needs that are inherent in land use decision making processes. It is important that information be made available so any interested person can understand the materials and participate. The City will encourage participation in several ways.

## *Stakeholders*

A variety of groups, agencies, and individuals may have interest in the update of Renton's SMP. These stakeholders can be categorized as follows:

- Other Governmental Agencies
  - Adjacent jurisdictions: Kent, Tukwila, Seattle, Newcastle, King County
  - State agencies: Washington State Department of Commerce, Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
  - Regional Organizations: Puget Sound Regional Council
  - Tribal government: Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Quasi-governmental Groups
  - School Districts: Renton School District, Issaquah School District, Kent School District
  - Renton Housing Authority
- Residents and Property Owners
  - Neighborhood Associations
- Business Groups and Associations
  - Business Organizations: Renton Chamber of Commerce, Mayor's Business Executives Forum
  - Trade Organizations: Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties, Seattle-King County Association of Realtors
- Environmental Organizations and Conservation Groups
  - Local groups: Sustainable Renton, Herons Forever
  - Regional groups: Futurewise, Washington Environmental Council,
  - Local Chapters of National groups: Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Trust for Public Land, Society for Ecological Restoration

## *Project Outreach*

Initial public outreach will include reaching out to both the general public and identified stakeholders to invite participation. Stakeholders will be invited to participate through email, post, phone calls, or in-person contact.

Outreach to the general public will include posters in public places such as libraries, community facilities, and businesses. Renton residents will be sent a notice in their utility billing statements, and project kick-off information will be circulated in the Renton *CityNews*- a bi-monthly City newsletter received by most households, as well as sent through the Neighborhood Program.

Throughout the process of the Comprehensive Plan update, the City will maintain several channels for communication and public participation. One of the primary tools will be a City webpage dedicated to the project: [www.rentonwa.gov/planupdate](http://www.rentonwa.gov/planupdate). This website will include notices for upcoming public meetings, documents available for review, and other information related to the project. Visitors to the website can sign up to be on the interested parties list. Ideally, the website would include interactive features that would allow on-going exchange of information and ideas related to the project. A dedicated email address, [PlanUpdate@rentonwa.gov](mailto:PlanUpdate@rentonwa.gov), has also been established specifically for questions and comments on this project.

Stakeholders who express interest in participating will continue to receive notices and informational mailings from the City. Joining the interested parties list by providing contact information to receive updates about the project by email or post will be the best way for an individual to consistently receive notices and messages about the process.

A series of public workshops and public hearings will be held throughout the project. Prior to public workshops or public hearings, notices about these events will be posted in general community locations and distributed through various City channels including *CityNews*, the Neighborhood Program, and Channel 21 and distributed through methods required for public hearings by the Renton Municipal Code. These methods are intended to inform the general public, or those who have not provided individual contact information, of key opportunities for participation in the Comprehensive Plan update.

Public meetings held by the Planning Commission, City Council, and Council Committees, will be noticed according to the standard procedures for those bodies, as well as on the project website.

All outreach efforts will be documented by the City and available for public review upon request.

#### *Document Review*

Update of the Comprehensive Plan will result in several work products that require review. Some of these products include: draft policy changes, draft code changes, issue papers, staff reports, and environmental review documents. It is expected that the City will consult with stakeholders in the development of documents and other work products for this update.

Once drafted, all documents will be available for official review by the public. Comment periods will be clearly specified and advertised through the means identified in this public participation plan. The City will maintain a database of all comments received throughout the Comprehensive Plan update, which will be available for public review upon request.

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process offers additional opportunities to seek public input. The City anticipates integrating SEPA review into the proposal through the Growth Management Act/SEPA integration process. Prior to Planning Commission making a final recommendation on the amended Comprehensive Plan and any related changes to the Renton Municipal Code, the City will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, which provides the opportunity for additional specific input on environmental impacts of the proposal.

### **Conclusion**

The update of Renton's Comprehensive Plan is a collaborative effort in which the City will engage the public, businesses, governmental agencies, and other interested groups. The City website, public postings, community events, public meetings, and workshops will be used to reach out to interested parties and get them involved in the process.