



February 2015

# City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update

## Revised Public Participation Program



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**INTRODUCTION**

Seattle is undertaking a major periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan (Review) as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires local governments to create and broadly disseminate a Public Participation Program (Program). This revised Program updates an earlier version to reflect a modified schedule for the Review. It also describes how the City of Seattle (City) will meet the requirements for early and continuous public participation during the Review.

**A. GOALS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The overall goals of the Program are to:

- Set expectations for the process early to avoid surprises.
- Provide objective information to assist the public in understanding issues and solutions.
- Provide opportunities for the public to contribute their ideas and provide feedback on key issues through all phases of the Review.
- Close the loop with the public to clearly indicate how their feedback was considered and used.
- Improve the involvement of traditionally under-represented audiences, and make the Review process racially and culturally inclusive.
- Make the Review accessible, relevant, and engaging to diverse participants with differing levels of interest by using a variety of media, plain language and easy-to-understand materials.
- Generate general awareness, understanding and support for the updated Comprehensive Plan.

**B. SCHEDULE**

The GMA originally required that the City complete a major review of its Comprehensive Plan by December 2011. The State Legislature amended that requirement twice in recent years, and the deadline is now June 2015.

The City initially launched the Review in late June 2011 and conducted outreach and engagement in 2011-2012 including a dedicated website, an online survey, use of social media, video, use of Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) in cultural and ethnic communities, and a public meeting (see [Report on Public Engagement](#) for description of

activities). After the deadline was extended, the Seattle City Council (Council) expressed a desire for the City to take advantage of the full time allowed by the State.

On May 14, 2012, the Council adopted Resolution 31370 that included a general schedule for developing a review of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan (Plan) in phases by using the annual amendment cycles in 2013, 2014 and 2015 to review individual portions of the Plan. New policies were adopted through the 2012-2013 annual amendment process. On May 14, 2013, the Council adopted Resolution 31451 revising the schedule and approach again for the Review. Council will adopt an updated Comprehensive Plan by early 2016.

Previous Phases

Early Engagement	Aug 2011 - May 2012
Annual Amendment Process	May 2012- May 2013

Public Engagement Planned for 2015

Phase 1	Updates – project overview, schedule and what we’ve heard	Jan – April 2015
Phase 2	Public Review - Draft Environmental Impact Statement	May-June 2015
Phase 3	Public Review - Draft Plan	July – Sept 2015
Phase 4	Feedback – input reflected in Final EIS and Mayor’s Plan	December 2015

Major Project Milestones in 2015

Release of Inventories, Assessments and Forecasts	February 2015
Release of Community Engagement Progress Report	February 2015
Release of Draft EIS Released	May 2015
Release of Draft Plan	July 2015
Release of Final EIS and Mayor’s Plan	December 2015
City Council Reviews Mayor’s Plan	2016

**C. ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Seattle Planning Commission (Commission), comprised of 16 volunteer members appointed by the Mayor and Council, is the steward of the Plan. In this role the Commission provides independent and objective advice to the Mayor, Council, and City departments on broad planning goals, policies and plans for the development of Seattle. The Commission focuses on issues that shape Seattle including land use, transportation, housing and environmental policy.

The Planning Commission will be involved throughout the process and will provide input, advice and comments to the City:

- Potential changes to the Comprehensive Plan
- Development of policy recommendations
- Public Participation Program
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Preliminary Draft Plan (before release for public comment)

- Draft Plan
- Mayor’s Plan

#### **D. METHODS AND TOOLS**

The overall objective of this Program is to describe how the City will engage the public during the course of the Review. Public participation methods and tools may vary by phase. This Program may continue to be reviewed and refined throughout the Review, if needed.

While traditional methods (meetings, workshops, presentations, etc.) will still play an important role in public engagement, DPD will use alternative participation tools more extensively to make it easier for the public to participate. The following websites and social media will be used to share information throughout the Review.

Website	2035.seattle.gov
E-mail	2035@seattle.gov
Listserv	2035.seattle.gov/connect/
Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/SEA2035">www.facebook.com/SEA2035</a>
Twitter	@Seattle2035
Seattle Channel	<a href="http://www.seattlechannel.org">http://www.seattlechannel.org</a>

Some or all of the following methods will be used in one or more phases to achieve broad and continuous public participation.

Broad dissemination of background data and growth alternatives, proposals and alternatives:

- Documents such as the Public Participation Program, Draft Plan and Mayor’s Plan, Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements, and other Project materials will be posted on the project website and made available at local libraries.
- The City will send information to the Planning Commission, regional and City agencies as appropriate, and local and community-based organizations to extend outreach and expand participation.

Opportunities for written comments:

- Online public feedback tools (Email, project website, social media, online meetings).
- Comment forms at public meetings.
- Surveys
- Mail

Public meetings after effective notice:

- General notice of the time and place of the public meetings will be provided through standard notice procedures such as emails to project listserv and other related email lists. Traditional mailings may also be considered. Many community organizations have agreed to share information with their members.

Opportunities for open discussion:

- Comprehensive Plan discussions at Seattle Planning Commission meetings and other Boards and Commission meetings (all meetings open to the public).
- Online dialogue and interactive activities (via social media or project website).
- Presentations, meeting-in-a-box to promote discussion Neighborhood District Councils and other citizen groups meetings.
- Public meetings, open houses, lectures and presentations.
- Workshops with interested community or stakeholder groups.
- Online public meetings and/or telephone town halls.
- Larger community events.

Communication programs and information services:

- Project website, email listserv, Facebook, Twitter.
- Project materials available at key community events.
- Project materials distributed at community outreach events hosted by Mayor's Office, Department of Neighborhoods and Dept. of Planning and Development.
- "Meeting in a Box" toolkit of project informational materials and discussion questions posted on the project website and distributed to key community groups and organizations.
- Links on the project website, Twitter, and Facebook to background reports, research and articles relevant to Comprehensive Plan elements.
- Press briefings for reporters and bloggers, and press releases distributed to local community and ethnic media.

Consideration of and response to public comments:

- The City will consider public comments throughout the Review and respond as set forth in the Seattle Municipal Code.

## **E. IMPLEMENTATION**

The Public Participation Program in 2015 will be implemented based upon the goals, targeted audiences, and strategies and tools described below:

### **Phase 1: Early Outreach (Feb. – April 2015)**

#### ***Outreach goals:***

- Provide education on the Seattle 2035 process.
- Get input on outreach tools and strategies, and adjust approach if needed.
- Set expectations for the process and make it clear how the public can participate and weigh in.
- Build awareness of and interest in the Seattle 2035 process.

#### ***Audiences:***

- Key stakeholders and partner organizations (such as environmental groups, affordable housing advocates and social service organizations).
- Community “influencers” who are likely to be highly interested in and engaged in the Seattle 2035 process.
- Internal City stakeholders, including the Seattle Planning Commission.
- The general public.

***Strategies and tools:***

- Targeted outreach activities and events, such as briefings, info booths and drop-in sessions, conducted in coordination with local community groups and organizations
- Seattle 2035 brochure
- “Meeting in a box” toolkit (fact sheet, PPT presentation, discussion questions)
- Ongoing outreach tools (social media posts, updated web content, photo journal)

**Phase 2: Draft EIS Outreach (May - June 2015)**

***Outreach goals:***

- Build awareness of availability of the Draft EIS.
- Help the public understand what’s included in the Draft EIS and how they can provide formal comment.
- Solicit robust feedback and clearly explain how comments received will be considered.
- Outline next steps for the process and how people can stay engaged.

***Audiences:***

- Key stakeholders and partner organizations (such as environmental groups, affordable housing advocates and social service organizations).
- Community “influencers” who are likely to be highly interested in and engaged in the Seattle 2035 process.
- Internal City stakeholders, including the Seattle Planning Commission.
- The general public.

***Strategies and tools:***

- Citywide Open House/Public Hearing (May)
- Formal comment period (May – June)
- Online open houses and/or telephone town halls (May – June)
- “Meeting in a box” toolkit (fact sheet, PPT presentation, discussion questions)
- Online survey
- Draft EIS Executive Summary document
- Targeted outreach activities conducted in coordination with local community groups and organizations
- Ongoing outreach tools (social media posts, updated web content, photo journal)

### **Phase 3: Draft Plan Outreach (July – Sept. 2015)**

#### ***Outreach goals:***

- Help the public understand what’s included in the Draft Plan and explain how public input shaped the Draft Plan.
- Explain what’s in the Draft Plan, and highlight major themes and any key changes from the Draft EIS.
- Solicit robust feedback and clearly explain how comments will be considered.
- Outline next steps in the process and how people can stay engaged.

#### ***Audiences:***

- Key stakeholders and partner organizations (such as environmental groups, affordable housing advocates and social service organizations).
- Community “influencers” who are likely to be highly interested in and engaged in the Seattle 2035 process.
- Internal City stakeholders, including the Seattle Planning Commission.
- The general public.

#### ***Strategies and tools:***

- Public event (July)
- Formal comment period (July – September)
- Online open houses and/or telephone town halls (July – September)
- Online survey
- “Meeting in a box” toolkit (fact sheet, PPT presentation, discussion questions)
- Draft Plan Executive Summary document
- Targeted outreach activities conducted in coordination with local community groups and organizations
- Ongoing outreach tools (social media posts, updated web content, photo journal)

### **Phase 4: Mayor’s Plan Outreach (Dec. 2015)**

#### ***Outreach goals:***

- Help people understand what’s included in the Mayor’s Plan and explain how public input shaped the Plan.
- Build support for the Plan
- Develop strategies for addressing and responding to evolving issues.
- Preview next steps in the process.

#### ***Audiences:***

- Key stakeholders and partner organizations (such as environmental groups, affordable housing advocates and social service organizations).
- Community “influencers” who are likely to be highly interested in and engaged in the Seattle 2035 process.

- Internal City stakeholders, including the Seattle Planning Commission.
- The general public.

***Strategies and tools:***

- Email update
- Legal notice
- Press release and media event
- Targeted outreach activities conducted in coordination with local community groups and organizations
- Ongoing outreach tools (social media, web content, photo journal)

**CONCLUSION**

This Program may be updated as conditions change or additional resources to support outreach activities become available. To provide feedback on the Program, please contact the following City of Seattle staff:

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