

Clark County Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update

Public Participation Plan & Preliminary Scoping Schedule

Purpose

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities and counties to conduct outreach to ensure “early and continuous public participation” in developing and amending comprehensive plans and development regulations (RCW 36.70A.140). The GMA also requires that local programs clearly identify schedules and procedures for public participation in the periodic update process (RCW 36.70.A.130(2)(a)).

To ensure compliance, the Washington State Department of Commerce recommends local governments begin the periodic update process by adopting a public participation plan. It would clearly identify the scope of the proposed update, when legislative action is expected, and how the public can participate or comment. Community Planning believes this recommendation is sound, and strongly encourages the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to adopt a formal public participation plan.

Goals

1. Ensure broad participation by identifying key interest groups, soliciting input from the public, and ensuring no single group or interest dominates the process.
2. Maintain effective communication and coordination with municipalities and service providers.
3. Provide equal opportunity for participation throughout the county; east (Camas and Washougal), south (Vancouver), northwest (Ridgefield and La Center) and north (Battle Ground and Yacolt).
4. Accommodate budgetary and staffing constraints by ensuring resources are focused on elements of the update process likely to be of greatest interest to the public.
5. Distribute information and post notices efficiently.
6. Notify the public of all meetings, hearings, workshops and legislative actions.

Scope of Work

To organize the complex process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, Community Planning has divided essential elements into two phases. During Phase I, the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations will be reviewed for compliance with state law. This process will identify areas of the plan that must be amended. Phase II will be where issues identified in Phase I are addressed. The preliminary scope of work and update schedule are general rather than specific because it is extremely difficult to know the full extent of the required work until Phase I is complete. As a preliminary step, the board and Planning Commission must establish a scope of work for the update. To assist, Community Planning has classified work associated with the update as mandatory or strongly recommended. This will accommodate budgetary and staffing constraints. A summary is provided below.

Table 1 – Summary of Potential Work Items		
GMA Requirements	Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consideration of GMA amendments ✓ Urban growth areas and population projections ✓ Critical areas regulations ✓ Mineral resource lands ✓ Internal consistency ✓ Development regulation consistency
Required by Clark County Code or Comprehensive Plan	Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Other development regulation amendments
Important Planning Considerations	Strongly Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fully develop benchmark and monitoring system to guide future planning work ✓ Reorganization and rewrite of Comprehensive Plan to improve readability and usefulness ✓ Previously uncompleted annual review docket/work program items.

Phase I

Phase I will begin with a thorough review of GMA requirements and compilation of amendments since the 2007 update. The department will review the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations to determine whether revisions will be required to ensure consistency with GMA amendments.

The county also will need to analyze its Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) to ensure they are sized to accommodate 20 years of population and employment growth (based on an adopted OFM range). If, during this analysis, the county determines a UGA is either too small or too large, corrective actions will be identified. They could include altering the size of urban growth areas, changing the allowed uses and densities, or a combination of actions. Any proposed changes must be fully consistent with and supported by adopted Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs) and capital facilities plans.

Because plans and policies of other local governments and utility providers must be consistent with the adopted Countywide Planning Policies, this step will require high-level intergovernmental coordination. To address this need, the board and Community Planning have committed to working cooperatively with all involved parties as a forum for reviewing and, if need be, revising CWPPs.

Phase II

Once the initial review and analysis are complete (Phase I), the Washington State Department of Commerce recommends local governments adopt an ordinance or resolution stating a review has been completed and identifying elements of the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations that will be updated. This step will result in a report documenting changes in Clark County since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, areas of the plan or development regulations that must be updated or amended, and amendments or changes, which although not mandatory, the board and Planning Commission have chosen to consider.

Phase II essentially will be a stage where issues identified in Phase I are addressed through plan or code revisions. Until Phase I is complete, Community Planning cannot identify a detailed scope of work for Phase II. However, the department has prepared a general outline of tasks to complete in conjunction with the periodic update. The outline has been incorporated into the attached “Public Participation Plan & Preliminary Scope of Work.” A more detailed scope of work will be prepared for Phase II at the completion of Phase I.

Public Participation Program Structure

To best use Clark County’s limited planning resources, this plan identifies both *essential* public participation strategies that *will* be employed as well as *optional* strategies which *could* be employed if resources are available. The estimated completion dates for each step are indeed estimates. In some cases, final action may occur before or after the target date because of constrained resources, need for additional intergovernmental collaboration, or unforeseen circumstances.

Techniques and Strategies

The public participation methods employed by Clark County may include:

Public workshops and open houses – Informal gatherings to solicit public feedback on Clark County’s planning efforts. Workshops and/or listening posts may involve presentations by staff, question and answer sessions and interactive activities.

Public hearings – A formal public process conducted before the Board of County Commissioners or Planning Commission.

Clark County website – The online site where relevant documents, schedules announcements, notices of meetings, hearings and public involvement opportunities will be posted.

City/County coordination meetings – Community Planning will coordinate with the cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver and Washougal and the town of Yacolt on countywide planning issues that affect each jurisdiction. Clark County will coordinate meetings to discuss issues and seek consensus with each municipality before taking final action. In addition, Clark County will work directly with other municipal service providers affected by the plan.

Technical advisory groups – Community Planning may use technical advisory groups to solicit guidance on complex technical issues requiring a high level of intergovernmental coordination. The groups will include members who have specific knowledge of or interest in specialized technical topics. Technical advisory groups may have members from business and interest groups, trade organizations, service providers, municipalities and county departments.

Email list – Community Planning will maintain a list of individuals and groups who have expressed an interest in the Comprehensive Plan update. The list will be used to disseminate announcements and notices.

Issue papers – They will provide focused guidance and document the evolution of the update process. Before final adoption, Community Planning will compile the issue papers into a single background report and post issue papers and the report on the department’s website.

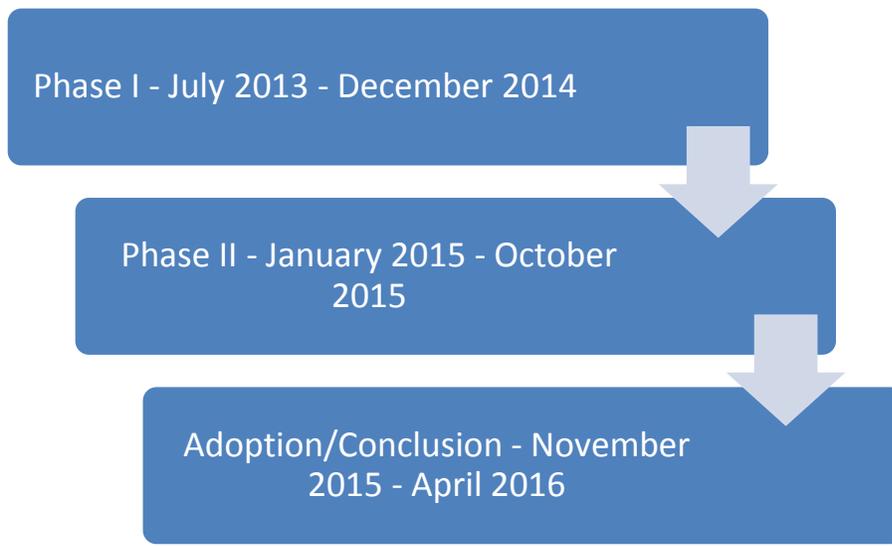
News releases – Clark County will prepare news releases and distribute them to the regional media, neighborhood associations and other local information providers throughout the update process.

Board of Commissioner worksessions – Community Planning will schedule worksessions as needed to brief board members and other interested parties.

Planning Commission worksessions – Community Planning will schedule worksessions as needed to brief the Planning Commission and other interested parties.

Notification and availability of information - Clark County will ensure meetings, worksessions and hearings are publicized as required by state law or county code. Clark County will make every effort to post all relevant documents on the county website. In addition, a project file will be maintained for public review at Community Planning, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., third floor, Vancouver.

Preliminary Schedule - After a preliminary review of State requirements and technical guidance, Community Planning has identified the following specific steps for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.



Phase I

1. Establish Preliminary Scope of Work and Public Participation Plan
 - a. *Essential public participation*: written plan, news release, website, work session, Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing
 - b. *Final action*: Resolution adopting the Public Participation Plan and Preliminary Scope of Work
2. Selection of 20-year population projection range
 - a. *Essential public participation*: Issue paper, city/county coordination meetings, website update, worksession, county and municipality review, Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing, coordination with municipal service providers
 - b. *Final action*: Resolution adopting the selected population projection
3. Countywide Planning Policies
 - a. *Essential public participation*: Issue paper, city/county coordination meeting, website update, worksession, county and municipality review, Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing, coordination with municipal service providers
 - b. *Final action*: Resolution adopting the revised Countywide Planning Policies

4. Regional growth trends and allocations
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, website update, city/county coordination meeting, worksessions, coordination with municipal service providers
 - b. *Final action:* Resolution adopting allocation of population to each planning area and urban growth area.
5. Buildable lands analysis
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, website update, city/county coordination meeting, worksession.
 - b. *Final action:* Buildable lands analysis report available to local planning jurisdictions and service providers. The Buildable lands analysis is due June 30, 2015.
6. Formal review of Comprehensive Plan and development regulations
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, technical advisory group (for certain technical elements), website update, email list, news release, public meeting in each planning area, worksession, Planning Commission hearing.
 - b. *Final action:* Adopted resolution stating a formal review has occurred and identifying pending changes or revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, and a detailed schedule and public participation plan for Phase II of the update.

Phase II

1. Urban Growth Area modifications
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, technical advisory group/city/county coordination meeting, worksession, website update, email list, news release, public meeting in each planning area where a UGA modification is proposed, coordination with municipal service providers
 - b. *Final action:* Decision on revised urban growth area boundaries, if any
2. Draft Comprehensive Plan revisions
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, technical advisory group (for certain technical elements), website update, email list, news release, public meeting in each planning area, worksession
 - b. *Final action:* Completion of proposed Comprehensive Plan revisions
3. SEPA analysis and public review period
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Update website, email list, send notice to adopt to state agencies
 - b. *Final action:* SEPA Threshold Determination issued
4. Draft development regulation revisions
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, technical advisory group (for certain technical regulations), website update, email list, news release, public meeting in each planning area, worksession
 - b. *Final action:* Completion of proposed development regulations revisions
5. Final adoption
 - a. *Essential public participation:* Issue paper, website update, email list, news release, worksession, Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing
 - b. *Final action:* Formal adoption of 2016 Comprehensive Plan update