



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Carolina Mejia-Barahona

District One

Gary Edwards

District Two

Tye Menser

District Three

COMMUNITY PLANNING &

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Creating Solutions for Our Future

Joshua Cummings, Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thurston County Planning Commission
FROM: Maya Teeple, Senior Planner
DATE: April 19, 2023
SUBJECT: Work Session 4: Thurston 2045 – Phase 2 Public Outreach Plan

SUMMARY & DECISION POINTS

This is work session # 4 on the Thurston 2045 and will review the outreach plan for phase 2 of the comprehensive plan periodic update. The Planning Commission previously reviewed the draft scope of work for Thurston 2045 at three work sessions on November 16, 2022, February 15, 2023, and March 15, 2023.

Community Planning staff requests assistance from the Planning Commission in the public engagement for phase 2 of Thurston 2045. The specific tasks of that subcommittee are outlined in the detailed outreach plan for phase 2 (attachment A). The full public participation plan was presented to the Planning Commission previously.

Staff also requests any other feedback on phase 2 public outreach at this time.

BACKGROUND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE

Thurston 2045 is the name for the county's periodic update that is due by June 30, 2025, and will plan for the next 20 years of Thurston County. The comprehensive plan guides future land use, housing, economic development, population and employment growth, natural resource and environmental protection, and capital facilities. The periodic update process will take a minimum of two years to complete. The actual length of the update can vary depending on the extent of the revisions as well as the extent of the public process that accompanies the update.

TIMELINE FOR THURSTON 2045 PUBLIC OUTREACH

1

Late 2022-Early 2023: Scoping the Update

The early phase of project planning is to decide upon the scope and determine what to include in the update. The Comprehensive Plan gets updated every few years. We're currently in an update period.

2

March 2023-March 2024: Initial Outreach and Internal Review

The second phase is the largest outreach phase and consists of two primary goals: 1) spreading awareness about the update and 2) getting feedback from the community that will be used in updating the Plan's information, goals, and policies. The early months of phase 2 will consist of listening sessions, online interfaces, and pop-up events to spread awareness and gather feedback to develop proposed changes. Later months of phase 2 will consist of targeted outreach and presentations to groups around topics that interest them and may include presentations on what is changing as those proposed changes are developed over the year.

3

March-September 2024: Planning Commission Review

Outreach at this stage is focused on spreading awareness about proposed changes, providing information on how the community can participate and comment, and collecting comments on proposed changes.

4

September 2024-June 2025: Board of County Commissioners Review and Action

Outreach at this stage is focused on spreading awareness about proposed changes, providing information on how the community can participate and comment, and collecting comments on proposed changes.

DETAILED PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN FOR PHASE 2

Staff developed a detailed plan for public outreach in phase 2. The detailed plan is intended as a goal that Community Planning will aim to achieve. However, the amount of outreach that Community Planning successfully completes will depend on the resources allocated by the Board of County Commissioners.

Community Planning recognizes that policy and planning decisions about land use, transportation, environmental resources and capital facilities do not impact us all in the same way. Therefore, the detailed plan for phase 2 prioritizes engagement with community members who have historically been left out of public planning processes, such as renters, people living with disabilities, immigrants, and BIPOC-led organizations, with the hope that the resulting feedback contributes to the Plan is well-grounded in the experiences and knowledge of a broader range of public perspectives than has historically been achieved.

Errors in exact compliance with this outreach plan shall not constitute grounds for invalidation of any comprehensive plan amendment, development regulation, or other legislation adopted under this chapter so long as the spirit of the procedures is observed unless otherwise provided by state or federal law.

PLANNING COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEE

To help achieve the Phase 2 public outreach plan and as an opportunity to include the Planning Commission as a direct link to the community, staff is requesting a Planning Commission Subcommittee be established to aid in outreach. Specifically, staff requests a Planning Commission subcommittee hold listening sessions with the community.

The details of the goals, tasks, and timeline of this effort is included in Attachment A.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A – Detailed Phase 2 Public Outreach Plan

Thurston 2045

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Detailed Public Outreach Plan for Phase 2



The full participation plan is available on www.thurston2045.org. Phase 2 of the public participation plan will consist of outreach to the community while staff and consultants are working on the plan update. This document provides a detailed outreach plan for phase 2 of public participation. The primary goals of public outreach in phase 2 are to:

- Make the community aware of the update that is underway, including scope, timeline, and purpose.
- Share information about the current adopted plan.
- Gather feedback on what the community needs to be changed, is still relevant, or if major policies are missing.
- Provide a general timeline for the project and how to stay engaged moving forward.
- Share information on what is changing in the plan (end of phase 2/early phase 3).

Outreach may be targeted by providing updates on certain elements to specific interest groups aligned with those elements. Targeted outreach is expected to occur at the end of phase 2. Feedback from the community gathered early in phase 2 will be used to update components of the plan.

Errors in exact compliance with this specific public outreach plan shall not constitute grounds for invalidation of any comprehensive plan amendment, development regulation, or other legislation adopted under this chapter so long as the spirit of the procedures is observed, unless otherwise provided by state or federal law.

Phase 2 *Initial Outreach and Internal Review*

March 2023 - March 2024

Community Planning staff will seek early input from the public, community groups, and interested parties on pieces of the comprehensive plan that are under review. Staff will review planning documents and development regulations for GMA compliance consistent with the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work and will prepare initial draft documents.

April 19, 2023

Deliberative Draft

Public Involvement Opportunities	Input Captured In
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Webpage • Public Open Houses to introduce update, opportunities for input, and challenges for development • Social media • Thurston 2045 Photo Contest (through Facebook and Instagram) • Meetings on proposed updates to community and stakeholder groups • Stakeholder outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting summaries • Open House and online comment forms • Comments via mail and email

PUBLIC OUTREACH METHODS & INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Thurston County Community Planning will provide the public with several opportunities to learn about the update, provide input on changing elements of the Comprehensive Plan to help plan for the next 20 years, and learn how to stay involved throughout the process.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

A general project webpage will be maintained throughout the process. In phase 2 the purpose of the webpage is to disseminate information about meetings, share information about the current plan and possible changes, and provide users with an opportunity to provide feedback. This version of the website would be maintained from **June 2023-March 2024**.

In phase 1, the website consists of a single main landing page. In phase 2, the website will be updated to include sections with additional information and will serve as an online open house portal - "learn about the update". Documents and meetings will also be listed on the website.

OPEN HOUSES (STORY MAP, GENERAL, POP-UP/ROAD SHOW)

Thurston County Community Planning will host a series of open houses for the general public to learn more about the update and provide input on the elements changing as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Open houses will be aimed at the beginning of this phase to provide opportunities for the community to learn about the update and comment on “visioning”, which will be taken into consideration for the internal review and drafting that occurs over the remainder of the year during Phase 2.

Story Map

An online story map will be launched for each element (anticipated by June) and remain live for all of Phase 2. Each story map will cover a specific element/topic, be short (3-5 min), and include information about that element and what is expected to change at a high-level. The story map will provide an online comment button throughout for the community to provide input. Additionally, there will be a survey option at the end of each storymap that will remain live for the course of Phase 2 (anticipated June 2023 through Dec. 2023). The goal of the storymap is to provide an opportunity to learn about topics that interest you, possible changes, and to provide feedback. Feedback will be used in development of the proposed changes.

The storymaps may be adjusted and re-used in Phase 3 to illustrate more in depth ***what*** the specific changes are.

General Open Houses

Two in-person open houses will be held to kick off Thurston 2045 in the June-August time frame. The open houses will include a poster for each major element of the Comprehensive Plan that is changing (based on the Scope of Work adopted by the BoCC), the major changes proposed as part of the scope for that element (i.e., policy updates, population projections, etc), and a few additional posters about “how to participate” and the “timeline” for the project. There will be questions at the open house to encourage attendees to provide feedback, like “Where do you live”, “How do you get to work”, “Which County Park is your Favorite”, “What industry do you work in”, “What type of housing do you live in”, etc. Opportunities to provide comments will be made at the open house like a computer to provide a comment through the online portal, a comment box with paper comment slips, and flip charts with sticky notes for each element.

Open houses will be advertised on Facebook, by webmail, press release, and by a single legal notice. Ideally one open house will be in the evening, and one on a Saturday. Location expected to be held at the County facilities (Atrium or Fairgrounds).

Pop-Up Open Houses/Informational Booths

A number of smaller open houses/info booths will be held in the community throughout phase 2. Locations and times are TBD. Generally, these pop-ups will be much smaller than the general open house and provide a basic flyer and fact sheet. The flyer and fact sheet would include basic information like what the Comp Plan Update is, what elements (chapters) are changing, how to get involved, and general timeline. Pop-up info booths may simply include the fact sheet at a table during an event and not a specific staff for the periodic update. The fact sheet will direct people to the website/story map where they can learn more and provide more input. These may or may not be advertised. The goal of pop-up informational booths is to spread awareness of the update, rather than solicit specific feedback.

Possible pop-ups/info booths:

- 1) Farmers Markets
- 2) Prairie Day
- 3) Thurston County Fair
- 4) Boo-coda
- 5) Other events

SURVEYS

Surveys will be developed for each topic/element and put at the end of the storymap. The survey is geared at gathering specific feedback on each element. Timing of surveys would be expected to be June-December 2023.

THURSTON 2045 PHOTO CONTEST

Staff will work with the County PIO to hold a photo contest. People can submit photos (method/platform is to be determined, possibly social media) and voted with the most likes.

Winners will be featured in a collage on the inside cover of the Thurston 2045 plan.

The goal of the photo contest is to get people involved and aware of the update while making it fun, feature local artists, and include photos of the local community in the update.

PLANNING COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEES

The Planning Commission will have at least one subcommittee during phase 2 (public engagement). Other subcommittees may be formed on specific elements as part of the update (TBD, possibly housing, climate change), or Planning Commissioners may be asked to sit on stakeholder work groups for specific update topics (TBD, possibly housing).

Public Engagement Subcommittee

Community Planning staff requests assistance from the Planning Commission in the public engagement for Thurston 2045. The Planning Commission would form a public engagement subcommittee starting in late April or early May. The goals of the subcommittee are to help spread awareness about the update, encourage the community to get involved, and listen to feedback from the community.

The subcommittee would meet initially and then once or twice monthly with Community Planning staff. The tasks of staff and the subcommittee are as follows:

Staff Tasks	Planning Commission Subcommittee Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold first subcommittee meeting• Provide initial list of stakeholder groups• Develop list of questions for listening sessions• Meet any noticing requirements for Planning Commission subcommittee meetings <p><i>For topic-based listening sessions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify a list of possible dates for topic-based listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select chair of subcommittee• Review list of stakeholder groups, identify any missing stakeholders, provide contact information if available• Chair reports back to Planning Commission on a regular basis (5-10 minutes allotted on agenda per meeting) <p><i>For topic-based listening sessions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify dates that work for the subcommittee as a whole

<p>sessions (Building & Development, Environment & Water, etc.) and general listening sessions (estimated 6 total – 4 topic, 2 general)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After agreement on dates, schedule the room and Zoom for topic-based and general listening sessions • Advertise topic-based and general listening sessions through press release, webmail, and social media • Attend listening session, help with room set up, and take notes <p><i>For targeted listening sessions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide initial list of meeting dates for stakeholder groups that are scheduled and readily available online • Staff person may not attend targeted listening sessions • Staff will compile notes from Planning Commission subcommittee and provide to Chair for reporting back to whole Planning Commission • Staff will include feedback in master public comment tracker that will be available throughout the update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend topic-based and general listening sessions with the community, ask a list or set questions, and facilitate the conversation <p><i>For targeted listening sessions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide stakeholder groups that are not included on a topic based listening session among subcommittee • Inquire with group about meeting dates, schedule listening session, attend and hold listening session • Record notes on meeting and feedback from group (number in attendance, general themes, questions, concerns, opportunities) • Provide notes to staff
---	---

COMMUNITY GROUP MEETINGS – TARGETED OUTREACH

The primary staff time during phase 2 will be dedicated to targeted outreach to special interest groups through community group meetings. The goal of these meetings is to spread information, collect feedback, and also to reach historically under-represented groups.

Listening Sessions

Listening sessions will be broken into three components: topic-based and general listening sessions, and targeted listening sessions with underrepresented groups.

The ability to complete topic-based and targeted listening sessions will be dependent on the involvement of the Planning Commission Subcommittee.

Otherwise, staff may facilitate general listening sessions only for the community. For topic-based listening sessions, a session will be held around a specific theme and interest groups associated with that theme will be invited.

Targeted listening sessions will include:

- Building, development, & economic
- Environment, water
- Residents
- Housing

General listening sessions (estimated to hold 2) will be open to anyone. Ideally, they will be in hybrid format with a room for in-person attendance, and Zoom function.

Targeted listening sessions will be listening sessions held at the meeting of the individual group. Efforts in holding targeted listening sessions are reserved for underrepresented groups.

Staff will have a list of prompts for listening sessions. Questions will generally be the same for each listening session. Staff attending the listening session will take notes from the meeting.

Sample questions include:

- What do you know about the Comprehensive Plan?
- Share one word that you think of when you think of Thurston County?

- How do you get around the County today? How do you think that will change in 20 years?
- What is something that is currently challenging or missing from our local community?
- What do you wish there was more or less of here in Thurston County?
- Are you satisfied with the types (amount/price) of housing that are available to you right now?
- Do you think the community is doing enough to protect the environment? What's missing?
- What does your ideal Thurston County look like in 2045?

Presentations

Staff will provide a presentation (oral/visual) on specific topics as requested by community groups. Some presentations may be a high-level overview of what the update is. Others may be topic specific (i.e., water, etc). Presentations at this stage are geared at what's in the plan and what may change based on required changes, not on specific numbers/verbiage for policy changes. The goal is to spread information and collect feedback to feed into updates beyond required changes.

DRAFT LIST OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

A draft list of stakeholder groups is below. Not all stakeholders may participate in listening sessions. Some stakeholder groups may be geared more towards one-on-one outreach, targeted presentations, or listening sessions with their specific group:

- **Business/Economic/Building:** CPED Business Advisory Group, Thurston Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council, Agritourism Advisory Committee, STEDI, SSBPOC, Olympia Master Builders, Thurston County Realtors Association, Thurston Asset Building Coalition
- **Environment/Water:** Agricultural Advisory Committee, Thurston Thrives – Climate & Energy, Thurston Thrives – Environment Action Team, South Sound Community Farmland Trust, Sierra Club, Storm & Surface Water Advisory Group, Voluntary Stewardship Program Workgroup, Black Hills Audubon Society, League of Women Voters, WRIA/Basin Partnerships, SPSSEG, Nisqually River Council
- **Residents:** CPED Residents Advisory Group, Homeowner and Neighborhood Associations

- **Housing:** Thurston Thrives Housing Action Team, Housing Action Team Homeless Housing Hub
- **History:** Historic Commission
- **Tribal:** Nisqually, Chehalis, Squaxin Tribes
- **Underrepresented:** CIELO, Cultural Community Center (ASHHO), Asian Pacific Islanders, People of Color Community Coalition, SSBPOC, La Mesa Redonda, Islamic Center of Olympia, Hispanic Roundtable, Schools (Civic Classes?)

STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETINGS (TOPIC SPECIFIC) – TARGETED OUTREACH

Targeted stakeholder groups may be convened on specific topics to gather feedback for plan updates. These are to be determined, but may include topics like housing.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE FOR PHASE 2

- Planning Commission subcommittee – April-December 2023
- Pop-Up/Informational Booths – May 2023-Feb. 2024
- General Open Houses – June-August 2023
- Surveys – June-December 2023
- Listening Sessions – June-December 2023
- Project Webpage – June 2023-Feb. 2024
- Story Maps – June 2023-Feb. 2024
- Thurston 2045 Photo Contest – June 2023-Feb. 2024
- Targeted Presentations – August 2023-Feb. 2024
- Stakeholder Groups – August 2023-Feb. 2024