

THURSTON COUNTY SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM UPDATE

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH PLAN 2017-2020

Handout for PC meeting: July 1, 2020

Thurston County has engaged in community outreach activities from the start of the SMP update (2017). The County is currently completing the first stage of review of the draft update with the Planning Commission and will be holding an open house and a public hearing in 2020. This paper outlines previous, current, and planned communication and outreach by CPED.

Goals of public outreach

- Connect public with information about the Shoreline Master Program update.
- Help citizens understand how the changes may affect their property.
- Provide clear, specific information about reasons for proposed updates.
- Communicate opportunities for the public to comment on proposed changes.

Key Stakeholders & Audiences

- Planning Commissioners
- Community stakeholder group (comprised of citizens). Met October and November 2017; March, April and December 2018; and January 2019.
- Regulatory stakeholder group (Nisqually Indian Tribe, Squaxin Tribe, Dept. of Ecology, WDFW, WDNR, Shellfish Protection District, Thurston County Public Works, Thurston County Environmental Health, Thurston County Water Resources, Thurston County Resource Stewardship). Met in January and March 2018.
 - The community and regulatory stakeholder groups eventually merged and met in April, May and December 2018, and January 2019.
- Shoreline residents and businesses
- Black Hills Audubon Society, League of Women Voters, Alliance for a Healthy South Sound, Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team
- Thurston County REALTORS Association, Olympia Master Builders
- Specific shoreline homeowners' associations/neighborhood groups: Johnson Point, Boston Harbor
- County Commissioners
- County advisory groups (Storm and Surface Water Advisory Board, Shellfish Protection District)
- General engaged public (including those signed up to receive Thurston County webmail)

Previous Outreach and Communication Efforts

Constant Contact Web Mailers

- Notice provided prior to each Planning Commission meeting or Open House
- Project specific web mails sent May, August, and December 2018

News Releases

- October & November 2017, January and December 2018

Open House

-December 2018

Stakeholder Meetings

-Multiple community stakeholder group meetings
-Multiple regulatory group meetings

Outreach at Interest Group Meetings

-Boston Harbor Community Meeting (October 2017)
-Thurston County Storm and Surface Water Advisory Board (November 2017)
-Johnson Point Neighborhood Association
-SW Chapter of the Thurston County REALTORS Association
-Land Surveyors Association (January 2018)
-Pattison Lake (January 2018)
-Thurston Economic Development Council

-Staff remains available to attend additional interest group meetings, as requested.

Current and ongoing communication efforts

Web site

-[Online page](#) featuring draft regulations, current regulations, comments received, maps, FAQs, fact sheets

-[PC Meetings posted](#) – with link to documents provided to PC prior to meeting

Fact Sheets (print distribution and posted on the web)

-Producing several on different topics, such as buffers and aquaculture

Web mailers (as regular community updates)

-Send webmail prior to each Planning Commission meeting

Planned communications prior to Planning Commission Public Hearing

Virtual Open House

Due to ongoing concerns about large public gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the County is replacing its traditional live open house event with a virtual open house. The open house is anticipated to launch online in late August 2020. Informational materials related to the draft documents, the update process and background topics will be consolidated online. There will also be an interactive comment form for the public to contact staff and have questions answered, or to provide written comments. This event will be advertised via a webmail, physical mailout to property owners most likely to be affected by the update, a press release, as well as advertisements on the County's general and Community Planning web sites.

Webmail Notification

When the open house is officially scheduled, a notification will be sent to the subscribers of the Community Planning e-mail list. Another notification will be sent when the public hearing is scheduled.

Separate notification will be directly e-mailed to stakeholder groups previously involved in the SMP update.

Posting Draft Materials and Fact Sheets

Staff will update the SMP web site as the public hearing draft materials become available. Fact sheets are currently being prepared on a variety of topics. A general project timeline will also be placed online ahead of the virtual open house (see the last page of this memo).

Public Hearing notice (published 20 days in advance of hearing)

When the Planning Commission's public hearing is scheduled, written notice will be published in *The Olympian*, Thurston County's newspaper of record. Notice will be published at least 20 days prior to the public hearing. Hearing information will also be sent via Webmail, posted on the web site, and included in direct mailing (see below).

Update to the Storm and Surface Water Advisory Board (SSWAB)

Staff will provide a presentation to on the Planning Commission public hearing draft, as requested by SSWAB.

Mailing for Open House & Public Hearing

Per requests by the Planning Commission, staff have looked into the logistics of individually notifying landowners whose properties may be newly included in SMP jurisdiction, or for whom a proposed change to shoreline environment designations may change the regulations that apply. Staff has performed an analysis of the number of landowners who own properties where proposed shoreline environment designation changes may result in larger buffers (per the proposed draft). The analysis also includes those properties that would be subject to the SMP for the first time due to the water body adjacent to their property having been found to now meet the threshold criteria to be considered a shoreline.

There are approximately 2,700 unique addresses associated with parcels meeting this description. Staff are drafting a postcard to notify these landowners about the SMP update, and provide information about the upcoming virtual open house and public hearing.

Thurston County's public participation efforts are designed to meet or exceed WA State Department of Ecology's guidance.

The following general information is found in Chapter 6 of Ecology's SMP handbook, Public Participation:

The major elements of public participation for SMP updates include:

- *Preparing a public participation plan and using it to guide the process. Community visioning, Task 3.1 of the SMP planning process, should be included in the plan. See Chapter 10, Community Visioning.*
- *Obtaining and sustaining public participation through a variety of outreach activities.*
- *Maintaining good records of public participation activities.*

Thurston County prepared a public participation plan for the SMP at the beginning of the comprehensive update process. Going forward, this plan will be refreshed to reflect activities listed in this memo and also cover the required periodic update the County must complete.

Throughout the course of the update, public participation has been ongoing, and obtained through a variety of methods. These have included community and technical advisory groups, an open house, and currently, ongoing review of SMP documents by the Planning Commission. Public comments on the update that are received via e-mail or through the website are catalogued, and will be provided to the Planning Commission in full ahead of the public hearing. All draft materials will continue to be published online as they are provided to the Planning Commission.

State law requires at least one public hearing, and that local jurisdictions must solicit public and agency comment. Thurston County will ultimately hold two public hearings on the SMP update; the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners will each hold a hearing. When the Planning Commission’s public hearing draft is published, staff will provide direct notice to a variety of stakeholders, and will also send a message via the County’s e-mail subscriber list.

General Timeline of SMP Update Moving Forward

July/August 2020	Bring back entire draft document with all Planning Commission requested revisions incorporated
August 2020	Final wrap up/Request for PC to set public hearing
August 2020	Virtual Open House
September 2020	Public Hearing
October 2020 -	Post-Public Hearing Work Sessions (number will depend on Planning Commission response to public hearing comments received)
TBD	Final Planning Commission Recommendation to Board of County Commissioners (BoCC will then hold their own briefings and public hearing before final action)