



# Comprehensive Plan Update

## Public Participation Plan

Mason County

December 2023





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# Introduction

Mason County is updating its Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). Mason County is a fully planning jurisdiction and is required to evaluate the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations against updates in the GMA, case law, and changes in land use and population growth ([RCW 36.70A.130](#)).

The Mason County Comprehensive Plan is an advisory document for how the County will manage decisions regarding land use, zoning regulations, subdivisions, hazard regulations, annexation decisions, development review, and other community development decisions, including grants. The plan is a framework and guide for accomplishing community aspirations and intentions. It states goals and objectives, and it recommends courses of action for future growth and development of the land, public facilities and services, and environmental protection.

Public engagement is a key component of this update effort. This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to guide community engagement efforts throughout the process to ensure early and continuous involvement in decision-making. Efforts to encourage participation will continue over the course of the Comprehensive Plan update.

## Public Participation Plan Objectives

This document outlines the public participation opportunities for the Mason County Comprehensive Plan update, including engagement methods, timeline, and implementation strategies. This is a working document and may be updated over time to reflect the needs of the community.

The objectives for this Public Participation Plan are:

- ◆ Inform residents of the Comprehensive Plan update, the process, and outcomes. Utilize outreach methods to inform residents and property owners of the variety of participation opportunities.
- ◆ Exchange information by conducting collaborative events that engage in conversation and the exchange of ideas and information. By exchanging information, we can give participants more ownership in the outcome of planning processes leading to buy-in, a sense of ownership, and higher-quality planning documents.
- ◆ Be inclusive of a range of perspectives, engaging citizens in unique ways to reach a broader audience and understand their goals, needs, and desires.
- ◆ Provide access to engagement opportunities, events, and participation for all residents within Mason County, including disadvantaged groups and individuals and those who have historically been left out of community planning processes.
- ◆ Be transparent and openly reflect a variety of viewpoints within the community and the county's process for the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

# Public Participation

## Communication Channels

It is important that information be made available so any interested person can review the materials and participate. Throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process, the county will maintain several channels to notify the public and other participants of relevant meetings and events. Regular opportunities for education and notification include:

- ◆ Project website
- ◆ Social media posts
- ◆ Mailers and other county communications
- ◆ Shelton-Mason County Journal
- ◆ Email

## Participation Inclusivity and Potential Barriers

The channels by which we communicate and the events we hold should incorporate an inclusive engagement approach. The table below identifies the engagement options for this plan, including the potential barriers of each, and the methods to achieve inclusivity.

Engagement Method	Potential Barriers	Inclusivity Method
<p><b>Project Website</b>  <i>A central location for status updates, draft documents, meeting schedules and related information, official notices, and feedback/comment portal</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Getting visitors to the website</li> <li>◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Reaching residents in areas of the county with limited internet services</li> <li>◆ Uploading materials in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ensure ease of access through virtual outreach on social media and email correspondence directing public to website</li> <li>◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed</li> <li>◆ Make materials available in advance for distribution to the public</li> <li>◆ Keep participants informed of results/progress</li> <li>◆ Display information in multiple formats (images, charts, graphs, videos, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Media</b>  <i>Sharing of public events, surveys, and other opportunities to participate</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Posting and noticing in a timely manner</li> <li>◆ Creating postings that appeal to a wide audience</li> <li>◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Reaching citizens in areas of the county with limited internet services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed</li> <li>◆ Links to surveys and other web-based platforms provided</li> </ul>

<p><b>Public Meetings, Open Houses, and Presentations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Identifying appropriate events for community</li> <li>◆ Engaging non-English-speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Childcare availability</li> <li>◆ Potential for low participation</li> <li>◆ High level of coordination/communication required</li> <li>◆ Inclement weather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Work with county departments to identify appropriate events to reach a diverse audience</li> <li>◆ Designate 1-2 point people for coordination/communication to ensure clarity and efficiency</li> <li>◆ Provide options for non-English-speaking participants and ensure ADA accessibility</li> <li>◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare</li> <li>◆ Include opportunities for both virtual and in-person participation; host “hybrid” public meetings –in-person meetings with a virtual participation option</li> <li>◆ Tailor events to various size audiences</li> </ul>
<p><b>Printed Materials</b>  <i>Printed materials describing the update process, including:</i>          Shelton-Mason County Journal           Mailers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Potential for low participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed</li> <li>◆ Identify a variety of outlets with relevant contact information for notification and distribution of materials (newspapers, neighborhoods, churches, and other community-oriented organizations/groups)</li> <li>◆ Include website link and QR code for access</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Workshops and Open Houses</b>  <i>Public events may be held at any location open and accessible to the public, including but not limited to neighborhoods, schools, community door to door, or other gathering places</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Engaging non-English speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Potential for low participation</li> <li>◆ Identifying appropriate events for community</li> <li>◆ Inclement weather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Provide options for non-English speaking participants and ensure ADA accessibility</li> <li>◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare</li> <li>◆ Include opportunities for both virtual and in-person participation; host “hybrid” public meetings –in-person meetings with a virtual participation option</li> <li>◆ Tailor events to various size audiences</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning Advisory Commission and Board of County Commissioners</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens</li> <li>◆ Potential for low public participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Provide ample time for the public to speak and/or provide written comments and questions</li> </ul>

<b>Meetings and Hearings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ May be intimidating</li> <li>◆ Childcare availability</li> <li>◆ Inclement weather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Provide options for non-English-speaking participants and ensure ADA accessibility</li> <li>◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare</li> <li>◆ Include opportunities for both virtual and in-person participation</li> </ul>
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# Engagement Activities

This section delves deeper into each of the engagement strategies that are planned as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, including descriptions and anticipated timeframe.

## Project Website

**Timeframe: Duration of Project**

The project website will provide the latest information related to the Mason County Comprehensive Plan update for all interested parties. The website will be linked through the Mason County website and allow the public to:

- ◆ Access project status and timelines
- ◆ View meeting schedules and related information
- ◆ Review draft and final documents and community workshop materials
- ◆ Provide feedback through a comment portal
- ◆ View official notices related to the update process

## Social Media

**Timeframe: Duration of Project**

Social media channels (Facebook and Instagram) will be utilized to broadcast public events, surveys, and other public participation activities. Project information will be targeted to areas in Mason County by using strategically scheduled posts, and will use enhancements (e.g., Facebook boosts) for area-specific communications.

To run a successful social media campaign, materials must be published on time and updated regularly. There should be a schedule for postings that lead up to events, and each post should include an image that can be clicked to redirect people to the county’s website. Any comments from social media posts should be compiled and delivered to county staff and consultants regularly.

## Orientation Interviews

**Timeframe: January/February 2024**

Interviews will be held with community representatives, collaborators, and other interested parties in Mason County. The interviews can be a combination of in-person or virtual meetings, and will be flexible

to accommodate the diverse working schedules and home life responsibilities. Up to 20 interviews will be conducted by the consultant team; county staff will identify community stakeholders and coordinate the meetings.

## Questionnaire

**Timeframe: March 2024 (est.)**

An online questionnaire will be developed to gather the community's thoughts on priorities, trade-offs, values, and preferences related to the Comprehensive Plan update. The survey will be developed through an online platform (e.g., Alchemer, Maptionnaire, ArcGIS StoryMaps), and can be made available in paper format for residents who are not likely to participate online.

## Public Workshops

**Timeframe: June 2024 and November 2024 (est.)**

The Comprehensive Plan update process will include two public workshops to support engagement. The first will be an informational meeting, with a presentation of the draft vision, and will invite community members to provide feedback and offer suggestions for refinement. The second workshop will address policy changes and elements such as land use, housing, and transportation that will make up the foundation of the plan update.

## Studio Series

**Timeframe: Fall 2024 (est.)**

There will be a series of meetings and charettes over the course of two days to support subarea planning in Allyn and Evaluate if zoning is appropriate Hoodsport, Taylor Towne and Union. There will be one public evening workshop each day to guide the studio's progress, evaluate results, and confirm a preferred direction for the subarea planning recommendations.

## Roll-Out Open House

**Timeframe: Spring 2025 (est.)**

The Comprehensive Plan update process will include a roll-out open house to invite community input on the draft plan recommendations. The meeting will be informational and educational and include activities to gather specific suggestions from participants on how the plan can be refined to reflect the community's needs and aspirations. The meeting may be in person, virtual, or a hybrid.



# Comprehensive Plan Coordination

While the Planning Advisory Commission and Board of County Commissioners will continue to hold regular meetings throughout the update process, there will be several meetings specifically associated with the update process.

## Planning Advisory Commission

The existing Planning Advisory Commission will coordinate with the consultant team and county staff to host workshops, meetings, and public hearings, and they will serve in an advisory capacity throughout the update process.

The Planning Advisory Commission will workshop each element throughout the update process, then review a final consolidated draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan to prepare a recommendation for the Board of County Commissioners.

## Interdepartmental and Interagency Coordination Meetings

The consultant team and county staff will meet regularly with internal and external groups to address key issues as they arise. Anticipated partner agencies include:

### County Departments

- ◆ Building Department
- ◆ Fire Department
- ◆ Emergency Management
- ◆ Parks and Trails
- ◆ Public Health
- ◆ Public Works
- ◆ Sheriff
- ◆ Utilities and Waste Management

### Other Agencies and Jurisdictions

- ◆ City of Shelton
- ◆ Southside, Grapeview, Shelton, Mary M. Knight, Pioneer, North mason, & Hood Canal School Districts
- ◆ Mason Transit
- ◆ Mason PUD 1 & 3
- ◆ Tacoma Power
- ◆ WSU Extension
- ◆ Allyn, Dewatto, Grapeview, Hoodsport, & Shelton Port Districts
- ◆ Fire Districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, & North Mason Regional Fire Authority
- ◆ Hospital Districts 1 & 2

### Tribes

- ◆ Quinault
- ◆ Skokomish
- ◆ Squaxin Island
- ◆ Suquamish

## Interdepartmental and Interagency Coordination

Meeting Timeframe:

Below is a list of tentative dates for the coordination meetings. Additional meetings for 2025 will be evaluated at the end of 2024 and scheduled as needed.

### 2024

Quarter	Meeting Date
Q1 – January – March	None
Q2 – April – June	May 20
Q3 – July – September	August 21
Q4 – October - December	November 13

## Final Plan Presentation

**Timeframe: Spring 2025**

The final updated Comprehensive Plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for review, deliberation, and adoption in Spring 2025, coordinated with the Rollout Open House.

## Climate Planning

As part of the climate planning process jurisdictions must form internal staff team to manage the entire update process and will include at least one advisory committee composed of community volunteers and other stakeholders as its primary advisory committee for the comprehensive plan.

### Climate Planning Advisory Committee

Meetings Timeframe:

Below is a list of tentative dates for the coordination meetings. Additional meetings for 2025 will be evaluated at the end of 2024 and scheduled as needed.

Quarter	Meeting Date
Q1 – January – March	None
Q2 – April – June	June 2024
Q3 – July – September	August 2024
Q4 – October - December	October 2024
Q4 – October - December	December 2024

**Draft Element Presentation** (date TBD): County staff and consultant (SCJ Alliance) will present a summary of engagement efforts and the draft Climate Element to the Planning Commission.

**Final Plan Presentation** (date TBD): A combined Planning Commission workshop will be held to roll out the final draft of Mason County Climate Element. County staff and consultant (SCJ Alliance) will provide an overview of the planning process, public feedback, and a final draft of the element. Final feedback will also be collected from the public bodies, and substantive comments will be incorporated into the final draft.

**Planning Commission/CPAT Recommendation** (date TBD): The Planning Commission is required to review the Climate Element and provide a recommendation to the county commission for consideration and adoption.

**Climate Element Adoption** (date TBD): The County Commissions Council will hold a hearing to adopt the Climate Element.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- **County Staff** (lead): Coordinate, schedule, and lead workshops and hearings.
- **SCJ Alliance** (support): Technical resources as needed; production of materials as needed.  
**Climate Planning Advisory Committee:** Developing and revising the comprehensive plan's climate goals and policies.

## Conclusion

The Mason County Comprehensive Plan update is a collaborative effort in which the county will engage the public, businesses, governmental agencies, and other interested groups. As detailed in this Public Participation Plan, the county's website, public postings, community events, public meetings, interviews, and workshops will be used to engage with interested parties and involve them in the update process.

