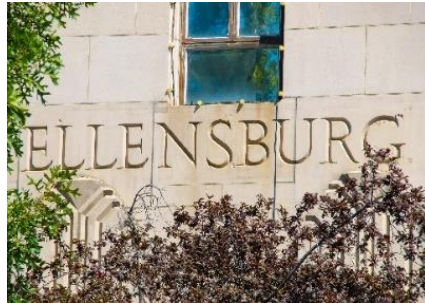




Public Participation Plan

Prepared by
City of Ellensburg Community Development Department



2017
Comprehensive Plan Update

Ellensburg is undertaking a periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act. As a city in Kittitas County, Ellensburg is required to complete its update by June 30, 2017. The entire comprehensive plan will be reviewed and updated. In addition, the City will also conduct a consistency evaluation to ensure that its development regulations are consistent with the updated comprehensive plan.

*Growth Management Act – Goal 11:
Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process to ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.*

The Growth Management Act requires local governments to create and broadly disseminate a Public Participation Plan, this Plan describes how the City of Ellensburg will achieve this goal through a community outreach process known as Heart & Soul Community Planning.

The purpose of this Plan is to identify the City of Ellensburg’s public participation objectives, approach, audiences, schedule, and opportunities for public participation. This document may be updated over time to reflect the needs of the Comprehensive Plan update project and experiences in early outreach to ensure public participation is effective.

HEART & SOUL COMMUNITY PLANNING

Essentially the Heart & Soul process is about reaching out to all segments of the community in new and innovative ways, and making concerted efforts to reach those unheard voices and encourage participation from those that don’t normally participate. The collected voices and stories will be used to create value statements for the community which will be developed into overarching principles for the community, and which City Council can refer back to when making important community decisions.

Ultimately the feedback received from the community will be tied into each of the required comprehensive plan elements as well as the overall vision for the City of Ellensburg.

COMMUNITY HEART & SOUL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ONE: INVOLVE EVERYONE

Community heart & soul emphasizes the wisdom that can be found in local experience and diverse perspectives. The heart & soul approach calls for hearing all voices in the community, so it deliberately seeks to have all groups represented.

TWO: FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS

Heart & Soul brings people together to identify their community’s characteristics and attributes and their emotional attachments to place that together define what matters most about a town.

THREE: PLAY THE LONG GAME

Heart & Soul is focused on long-term success. To ensure that plans or ideas don’t just sit on the shelf, Heart & Soul focuses on building ownership for and commitment to the results.

Community Heart & Soul Field Guide, 2nd Edition | Heart & Soul PRINCIPLES

AUDIENCES

There are several audiences that will participate in the 2017 Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan update and each will become engaged in the process in different ways:

- Community members: Ellensburg residents, property owners, and business owners
- Heart and Soul Team: a coordinated group of community volunteers that will assist in community outreach.
- Elected and appointed officials: City councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, and other City commission/board members.
- Non-City service providers such as: Fire District, Central Transit.
- Non-governmental organizations such as: Chamber of Commerce, Ellensburg Downtown Association, and various service oriented clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.).
- State, regional, and other local governments such as: Kittitas County; Washington State Departments of Transportation, Commerce, and Ecology; Quad County Regional Transportation Planning Organization, Kittitas County Conference of Governments, and the Yakama Nation.

ROLE OF DECISION MAKERS

City Council

The City Council will provide policy guidance and is the final decision maker for the Comprehensive Plan update. Council members will be notified of all public activities and events. All public workshops, hearings, and other activities with the City Council will be noticed appropriately. The City Council will receive periodic briefings throughout the update process and will review Planning Commission recommendations. City Council will hold a public hearing on the final draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan prior to taking action.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission will provide policy recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan update and will assist in ensuring the public is involved throughout the process. Planning Commission members will be notified of all community activities and events. All public workshops, hearings, and other activities with the Planning Commission will be noticed appropriately. The Planning Commission will receive periodic briefings on the update and will review drafts of the update on a section by

Public Participation Plan Objectives

Meet the public participation goals of the Growth Management Act.

Set expectations for the update process.

Offer engaging opportunities for all community members to participate.

Provide ongoing opportunities for the community to provide feedback.

Make the update accessible, relevant, and engaging to all community members.

Present information using a variety of media, plain language, and easy to understand materials.

Generate awareness, understanding, and support for the Comprehensive Plan.

Benefits of Community Involvement

Enhances the quality of planning by incorporating a wide variety of information and perspectives.

Allows communities to make decisions based on shared values.

Engages citizens in the ownership of local land use challenges and solutions.

Supports swift and efficient project implementation.

Ensures that good plans remain relevant over time.

Fosters a sense of community and trust in government.

- Washington State
Department of Commerce

section basis, providing opportunities for public comments, and will provide feedback and recommendations to City staff. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the comprehensive plan update before forwarding its final recommendation to the City Council.

Community Development Department

City of Ellensburg Community Development staff will oversee the Heart and Soul team, volunteers, consultants, and other members of the City's staff on the periodic update. Community Development staff will facilitate public meetings; coordinate events and activities; and present draft materials to the Planning Commission and City Council for review. They will revise documents as needed and provide all materials to Planning Commissioners and City Council members in a timely manner.

Heart and Soul Team

The Heart and Soul Team will be made up of volunteers whose members reflect the demographic makeup of the community and will perform tasks that include: event and activity planning and management, volunteer coordination and management, communications and outreach, and recommendations on other community members to connect with and how to establish connections.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC

Through the use of Heart and Soul Community Planning the Comprehensive Plan update will be a reflection of the community's core values and will be written to assist the community and City staff in meeting common goals.

The Comprehensive Plan will contain the community's core values, ideas, and policy objectives. During the update process it is important to retain the public's interest by making community participation as accessible as possible. The process will be driven by the community and guided by the Heart and Soul Team and City staff.

Community participation will be accomplished through the work of Heart and Soul Team volunteers; by employing a variety of community outreach tools; and using a diverse communication tools to provide information and engage with the community.

Techniques for public participation vary in scale, technology, structure, and timing. Our community members are busy and active people, in order to get broad representation, we will bring activities to the places where they are already going. Bringing information and asking for input in neutral locations will also help to ensure that community members feel comfortable expressing their ideas. The City also recognizes that to involve all community members a variety of outreach methods and communication tools must be used throughout the update process.

The following two tables provide lists of community outreach methods and communication tools that will be used to foster broad and ongoing community involvement, collect community input, and provide information to the community. These are not meant to be exhaustive lists; as the process unfolds and the community engages in the process and shares ideas these lists will be expanded upon.

Table 1: Community Outreach Methods

Public open houses and meetings	These will include background and educational presentations, roundtable discussions, activities, and encouragement of attendee participation.
Community events and activities	The Heart and Soul Team and community development staff will conduct activities at community events and activities that are already happening in the community, such as: farmers market, parades, and church socials.
Focus events	Small scale focus groups with targeted members of the community will be conducted with the following types of groups: school groups, businesses, neighborhood centers, and community organizations.
Interviews	Online, in person, and paper interviews will be used to collect community member stories, ideas, and opinions on a wide range of topics
Public hearings	Public hearings will be held by both the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption. Written and oral testimony will be accepted at public hearings.
Public comments	Comment forms will be available online, at the City Community Development office, and at all public meetings, community events and activities.

Table 2: Communication Tools

Written materials	Written materials will be accessible on the City’s website and will be shared during regularly scheduled Planning Commission and City Council meetings and with interested parties and other city departments.
Interested parties list	An interested party list will be used for the purpose of providing notification of activities and events and written materials.
Peak Democracy	The online engagement tool, Peak Democracy, will be used as a mechanism for community members to share their ideas and input and will be available on the City’s website.
Comprehensive plan webpage	The webpage will include access to all written materials and information about community activities, events, meetings, and other relevant resources.
Social media	The City will use existing social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, to notify the community of activities, events, public meetings, and hearings.
Newspaper noticing and advertisements	The City will provide legal notices as required by Ellensburg City Code and will use newspaper advertisements at key points during the process.
Radio advertisements	The City will work with local radio stations on public service announcements, interviews with city staff, advertisements, and other methods

SCHEDULE

See attached schedule for an overview of public participation opportunities and the overall schedule of the comprehensive plan update process.

CONCLUSION

The City Council will adopt the Public Participation Plan at a regularly scheduled Council meeting on August 15, 2016. This Plan may be updated administratively as conditions change and community input is incorporated into the overall update strategy. A current copy of the Public Participation Plan shall be available for viewing at the front counter of the Community Development Department and on the City's website.

City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan 2017 Update Overall Schedule

