

Shoreline Master Program Update

Public Participation Plan

City of Tacoma, Washington



Prepared for the City of Tacoma
August 28, 2009

Introduction

The City of Tacoma is conducting a comprehensive update to its Shoreline Master Program (SMP), consistent with the state Shoreline Management Act (SMA; RCW 90.58) and its implementing guidelines, WAC 173-26. Tacoma's updated SMP will be a planning document that will set policy and development regulations for the City's shoreline areas, which include adjacent upland areas within 200 feet of designated shorelines. The primary policy objectives of the SMA are to: encourage water-dependent and water-oriented uses; protect the shoreline ecology and natural resources; and promote public access. Since public use and enjoyment of the shoreline is a principal factor in developing the SMP update, it is imperative that the public has opportunities to participate in the process. This Public Participation Plan identifies goals and strategies to ensure such participation occurs.

Goals of the Public Participation Plan

The SMA and SMP guidelines (RCW 90.58.130 and WAC 173-26-090 and 100) require that local governments inform the people of the state about the planning process and invite and encourage participation by all who have any interest or responsibility related to shorelines. The goal of the Public Participation Plan is to provide a guide to proactively encourage public participation throughout the SMP update process. The City of Tacoma is committed to encouraging coordinated and effective public involvement.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the public participation plan for the City of Tacoma SMP update are:

1. Enhance the quality of and support for the SMP through meaningful public and agency participation in the preparation of the SMP update.
2. Balance the interests of those most directly impacted by the SMP with the interests of the entire community and those of the State.
3. Identify issues early and resolve conflicts during the planning process to ease the adoption process.
4. Comply with all state laws and regulations related to public participation and agency coordination.

Overview of the City and Shorelines

The City of Tacoma is centrally located in Puget Sound, 37 miles south of Seattle and 30 miles north of Olympia. The City encompasses an area of approximately 54 square miles. As of July 2009, the City's population was approximately 203,400, the third-largest city in Washington State (City of Tacoma website, 2009). The SMP update will also cover the city's Browns Point-

Dash Point urban growth area (UGA). This is the only UGA with shorelines of the state where annexation is likely to occur over the next several years. The SMP will not be effective in the UGA, however, until the area annexes into the city.

Tacoma has approximately 34 miles of marine shoreline (including portions of Puget Sound, the Narrows, and Commencement Bay) and 4 miles of freshwater shoreline (including portions of the Puyallup River, Hylebos Creek, and Wapato Lake) in its city limits. In addition, 3.0 miles of marine shoreline is located in the Browns Point-Dash Point UGA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The City of Tacoma is responsible for all aspects of the SMP update. The City will be the primary regulator, with Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) acting in a support and review capacity. Ecology must approve new or amended shoreline master programs. Following local adoption of the City's updated SMP, Ecology will conduct its own public review as part of its formal approval process.

The primary contact for Tacoma's SMP update is:

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Interested Parties

Local governments must consult with interested parties throughout the process of developing a SMP. To date, the City of Tacoma has identified the following interested parties, technical resources, or other stakeholders who have already participated or may begin to participate in the SMP update process:

Members of the Public

- Residents city-wide
- Property/business owners in shoreline jurisdiction
- Other citizens of the state

Business Community

- Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce
- Master Builder's Association
- Local businesses and property owners

City Officials

- Tacoma City Council
- Tacoma Planning Commission

Tribes

- Puyallup Tribe

Environmental Stakeholders

- Tahoma Audubon Society
- Green Tacoma Partnership
- Cascade Land Conservancy
- Citizens for a Healthy Bay
- Puget Creek Restoration Society
- People for Puget Sound
- Futurewise

City Departments/Agencies

- Public Works
- Tacoma Public Utilities
- Metro Parks Tacoma

Other Local Government Agencies

- Port of Tacoma
- Foss Waterway Development Authority
- Pierce County
- Federal Way
- University Place
- Fife
- Town of Ruston
- Town of Fircrest

State Government

- Dept. of Ecology
- Dept. of Natural Resources, Aquatic Lands
- Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Dept. of Commerce
- Dept. of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Some of these parties have been involved on committees in a review capacity while others have been informed and invited to participate throughout the process. Notification to these stakeholders may be accomplished via email or other means as the shoreline management planning process proceeds.

Past Public Participation Opportunities

Thea Foss Waterway Public Workshop

On November 29, 2007, the City of Tacoma held a public workshop to gain input on four subject areas: 1) Design standards and site development, 2) Public access, views, and open space, 3) Parking and circulation, and 4) Land uses and vision.

Stakeholders Meetings

Over the course of several meetings on January 10, 2008, February 13, 2008, and March 10, 2008, a group of public stakeholders met to discuss revisions to the critical areas code, TMC 13.11, with specific regard to adopting regulations for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, including marine buffers.

Ruston Way Stakeholders Meeting

On January 15, 2008, City staff met with business and property owners along Ruston Way to discuss the Shoreline Master Program update and how this update would relate to activities along Ruston Way. Both property owners and business owners were invited to attend this informational meeting.

Shoreline Master Program Workshop

On October 23, 2008 the City of Tacoma held a workshop to gain input from the public on documents prepared for the SMP update. Feedback was received on the Restoration Plan, Thea Foss Shoreline Public Access Plan, Waterfront Land Use Analysis, and Public Access Plan.

Technical Review Committee

The City of Tacoma formed a technical review committee made up of representatives from State agencies, the Puyallup Tribe, Metro Parks, the Port and environmental groups including Citizens for a Healthy Bay. The committee met on October 11, 2006 and December 17, 2008 to discuss the Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Report, Restoration Plan, Thea Foss Shoreline Public Access Plan, and Waterfront Land Use Analysis.

Informational Meetings

Union Station District Coordinating Group – Feb 2 2009

FWDA Board Meeting Presentation – April 17, 2009

East Foss Business and Property Owners – January 6, 2009 and April 8, 2009

Proposed Public Participation Strategy

Technical Review Committee

The City will continue to meet with the Technical Review Committee. The committee members will be asked to provide comments and suggestions on technical work products such as the Characterization and Inventory Report and the Cumulative Impacts analysis. This group will meet on an intermittent basis to discuss the SMP work products collectively. In lieu of group meetings, draft documents will be sent to committee members for review and comment.

To date, the following technical reviewers have been identified to participate:

WA Dept. of Ecology

- Kim Van Zwalenburg, Ecology contact
- Hugh Shipman, Coastal Geologist
- Kathy Taylor, Marine Habitat Specialist
- Alex Callender, Wetland Specialist
- Bob Warren, Soil Contamination

WA Dept. of Natural Resources, Aquatic Lands

- Hugo Flores, Aquatic Resources Division
- Lindie Schmidt, Natural Resource Specialist

WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

- Bob Burkle
- Dave Molenaar
- Jeff Davis
- Katie Knight

Puyallup Tribe of Indians

- Bill Sullivan, Natural Resources Director
- Jeffrey Thomas, Director, Timber, Fish & Wildlife Program
- Judy Wright, Director, Historical Preservation & Tribal Historian
- Raul Ramos, Land Use Director
- Cynthia Lyman, Tribal Attorney

Washington State Ferries

- Kojo Fordjour,

Army Corps of Engineers

- Koko Cronin
- Ron Wilcox
- Jessie Winkler

Washington State Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

- Stephenie Kramer

Citizen's for a Healthy Bay

- Leslie Ann Rose

Metro Parks Tacoma

- Lois Stark
- Amy Pow

WA Dept. of Transportation

- Dale Severson
- Greg Myhr

Dept. of Commerce

- Janet Rogerson

Port of Tacoma

- Sue Mauermann

Public Outreach Program

In addition to the committees described above, the City will set up a public outreach program to ensure that the broader population is also informed and has opportunity to participate. Some key elements of this program include:

- Website: A page has been created on the City's website which allows community members to access draft documents and maps, view the schedule, check for meeting notices, obtain contact information and submit comments. The webpage and City calendar will be updated as new information and reports become available.
- Open houses: Hosting a second open house at a convenient location will allow for the continued dissemination of information (i.e. maps, proposals, etc.) and additional opportunity for comment. Project staff and City personnel will be on-hand to answer questions from community members and address any concerns.
- Public meetings: Providing opportunity through the local review and adoption process with the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Public hearings: Organizing a public hearing for the draft proposal will provide the community with the forum to include their comments into the public record.
- Mailing list: Maintaining a list of interested parties would provide the City with another avenue to keep the public informed throughout the update process. Notices of comment periods, public hearings or open houses could be sent to parties on the mailing list.
- Comments: Establishing multiple means for submitting comments will allow for interested people to choose their preferred way to provide input. Methods can include on-line comment forms, written comment forms at the open house, public hearing testimony, and a direct email address for comments. The City will consider all comments received and will respond in aggregate or individually.

- Public notices: Notice of the open house and public hearing will be placed on the City's website, posted at City Hall, the downtown Tacoma Main Library, and published in at least one local newspaper (e.g., Tacoma News Tribune) Legal notices are published in the Daily Index, ads are published in the TNT
- District/Community Focused Meetings: Community forums will be held periodically to gain additional citizen input during the process. Tentative dates for forums are shown on the timeline below. Others will occur prior to key decision points. The forums will be an opportunity for other groups, agencies, and interested individuals to become knowledgeable about the issues and alternatives under consideration by the Stakeholders Group and the Tacoma Planning Commission.
- Meeting Summary Log: A database will be created to document all public meetings, including open houses, public meetings, and district/community focused meetings. The purpose of the database will be to track when the meeting occurred, who attended, and key issues were discussed or brought forth.
- Planning Commission: The Tacoma Planning Commission is the primary means for citizen involvement in the SMP update. The Commission is a nine member citizen's advisory body responsible for advising the City Council on all land use matters. The Commission's meetings are open to the public and advertised on the City's website. All interested stakeholders will be notified of meetings when the SMP appears on the agenda. The Commission will receive reports from the Stakeholders Group and review draft policies, regulations and text sections of the SMP as they are developed. The draft revisions will be widely circulated prior to public hearings conducted by the Planning Commission. The Commission will review public testimony and make final modifications to proposed revisions before making recommendations to the Council.
- City Council: The City Council will review and discuss any recommended revisions at a study session. The study session meetings are open to the public. In addition, the full Council will hold at least one public hearing to receive further public comment before adopting any revisions to SMP policies and regulations. Public testimony will also be accepted at first and second reading of adopting ordinances.

Target Schedule

City of Tacoma's Public Participation Schedule	
1 st Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting	September 10, 2009
2 nd Open House Event	October 22, 2009
Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings	January – February 2010
3 rd Open House Event	January 28, 2010
District/Community Focused Meetings	February – March 2010
Planning Commission meetings	February – May 2010
Draft SMP Submittal to Ecology	May 5, 2010
GMA 60-day Review to State Commerce Department and Ecology	May – July 2010
Local SEPA Review and Approval	June 2010
Planning Commission Meeting on Ecology Review Comments	July 2010
Planning Commission Public Hearing	August 4, 2010
City Council Study Session - First Reading	September 2010
City Council Adoption - Second Reading	October 12, 2010
SMP Submittal to Ecology	October 2010
Ecology Formal Approval Process - Public Hearing	November 2010 to Spring 2011