Public Participation Plan

for the

CITY OF NEWCASTLE

2024 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update

April 2023

BACKGROUND

The City of Newcastle is updating its Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA). The Comprehensive Plan is the long-range policy document guiding the City's growth and development over the next 20 years. Under GMA, cities and counties in Washington must periodically review and, if needed, update their comprehensive plans to ensure consistency with state law and other regional planning documents. Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan is required to be consistent with GMA, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Vision 2050 growth plan, and King County's Countywide Planning Policies. The deadline for completion of this periodic update is December 31, 2024.

Public outreach is a key component of this periodic update effort. Among other things, GMA requires early and continuous public participation in the Comprehensive Plan update (RCW 36.70A.140). This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to guide public outreach efforts throughout the process to ensure early and continuous involvement in decision making. The City will encourage participation throughout the Comprehensive Plan update.

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

Objectives

The objectives for this Public Participation Plan are:

- Inform residents of the Comprehensive Plan update, the planning process, and outcomes.
- Give participants more ownership in the outcome of planning processes through collaborative events engaging in conversation and the exchange of ideas and information, leading to buy-in, a sense of ownership, and higher quality planning documents.
- Include 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 Newcastle, including disadvantaged groups and individuals and those who have historically been left out of community planning processes.
- Build support for the Comprehensive Plan and work with the Newcastle community, elected officials, and other agencies toward success in implementing its goals, policies, and actions.

Roles and Responsibilities

City of Newcastle

The City of Newcastle is responsible for the Comprehensive Plan update in compliance with GMA. This responsibility includes actively inviting public comment and coordinating with state, regional, and county planning policies. The City has hired a consultant, SCJ Alliance, to work alongside City staff in facilitating the Comprehensive Plan update process.

Planning Commission

Newcastle's Planning Commission, a volunteer advisory body appointed by the City Council, is required to review amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and provide a recommendation to the City Council for consideration and potential adoption. Newcastle intends to position the Planning Commission as an active part of the process.

City Council

Newcastle's City Council is responsible for adopting the plan as official city policy.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audiences

There are several audiences – individuals and agencies – which will participate in the Newcastle Comprehensive Plan update, and each will engage in the process in different ways:

- **General Public:** Newcastle residents, property owners, and business owners.
- **Elected and Appointed Officials:** City Councilmembers, Mayor, Planning Commissioners, Parks Board Members, advisory committees and boards.
- **Non-City Service Providers:** Special districts such as the School District, Fire District, Library District, and others.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations:** Greater Newcastle Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, downtown merchants, homeowners associations, Futurewise, and others.
- **State, Regional, Tribal, and Other Local Governments:** Puget Sound Regional Council, Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 8, Muckelshoot, Snoqualmie, Duwamish, Tulalip, and Suquamish Tribes, and King County.

Communication Channels

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

- City website and social media channels
- City twice-monthly newsletter
- Seattle Times (paper of record)
- Newcastle Days (September)
- Mailers and other City communications
- Email

The City will advertise Planning Commission and City Council public meetings according to the standard procedures for those bodies, as well as on the City's website. The City will also document all outreach efforts and comments and make them available for public review upon request.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Inclusivity and Potential Barriers to Participation

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 as well as how the method achieves inclusivity.

ENGAGEMENT METHOD	POTENTIAL BARRIER(S)	INCLUSIVITY METHOD
Project Website *A central location for status updates, draft documents, meeting schedules and related information, official notices, and feedback/ comment portal.*	◆ Getting visitors to the website ◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens ◆ Uploading materials in a timely manner	◆ Ensure ease of access through virtual outreach on social media and email correspondence directing public to website ◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed ◆ Make materials available in advance for distribution to the public
Social Media *Sharing of public events, surveys, and other opportunities to participate.*	◆ Posting and noticing in a timely manner ◆ Creating postings that appeal to a wide audience ◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens	◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed ◆ Provide links to surveys and other web-based platforms
Orientation Interviews, Public Meetings, Civic Events, and Presentations	◆ Arranging one-on-one interviews ◆ Identifying appropriate events for community ◆ Engaging non-English-speaking citizens ◆ Childcare availability ◆ High level of coordination/ communication required	◆ Work with City departments to identify appropriate events to reach a diverse audience ◆ Designate 1–2 point people for coordination/ communication to ensure clarity and efficiency ◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed ◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare ◆ Host virtual public meetings with a 1–2 week open timeframe
Printed Materials *Printed materials describing the update process, including:* ◆ *List outlets* ◆ *Mailers*	◆ Reaching non-English-speaking citizens ◆ Potential for low participation	◆ Provide materials in a variety of languages as needed ◆ Identify a variety of outlets with relevant contact information for notification and distribution of materials (newspapers, neighborhoods, churches, and other community-oriented organizations/groups) ◆ Include website link and QR code for access
Community Workshops	◆ Engaging non-English-speaking citizens ◆ Childcare availability ◆ Potential for low participation	◆ Provide options for non-English-speaking participants and ensure ADA accessibility ◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare ◆ Provide convenient or multiple times
Planning Commission and City Council Meetings/Hearings	◆ Engaging non-English-speaking citizens ◆ Childcare availability ◆ Potential for low participation ◆ May be intimidating	◆ Provide ample time for the public to speak and/or provide written comments and questions ◆ Provide options for non-English-speaking participants and ensure ADA accessibility ◆ Incentivize participation with food and/or childcare

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section delves deeper into each of the engagement methods planned as part of Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan update, describing the tool or activity as well as the anticipated timeframe for implementation.

Project Website

Timeframe: Duration of project

The project website will be a central location for all interested parties to access the latest information related to the Comprehensive Plan update. The website will be linked through the City's website and will allow all interested parties to:

- Review background information concerning the Comprehensive Plan update;
- Access and review the project status and timeline;
- Review draft and final documents, Comprehensive Plan deliverables, and community workshop materials;
- Provide comments and feedback via a comment portal throughout the update process;
- Attend public open houses virtually, via a link on the project website; and
- See the Planning Commission and City Council's schedules related specifically to the update process.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **City Staff** *(lead):* Distribution, and translation (as needed) of materials.
- **SCJ Alliance** *(support):* Production of materials as needed, content, interactive materials.

Social Media

Timeframe: Duration of project

Social media will broadcast public events, surveys, and other engagement activities for the public. To run a successful social media campaign, materials must be published on time and updated regularly. There should also be regularly scheduled postings leading up to events, and each post should include a clickable image that redirects people to the website or event link. Comments posted on social media posts should be compiled and delivered to City Staff and consultants regularly. Social media postings will correspond with the event dates listed under Public Outreach Events, Community Survey, and Planning Commission and City Council meetings listed below.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **City Staff** *(lead):* Publishing and production of materials.
- **SCJ Alliance** *(support):* Assisting the City in the production of social media content (e.g. text, images, and information).

Public Outreach Events

Timeframe: April 2023–July 2024 (exact dates TBD)

The Comprehensive Plan update process will include several city-wide public outreach events to inform citizens of the update process and collect feedback on the plan. The Community Development Department will coordinate with other City departments as necessary to plan the outreach events.

A vision workshop will be held in the summer of 2023 to present the Comprehensive Plan update process to the public and collect public feedback. The remaining outreach events are intended to be community workshops for collecting public

feedback, and will be held through the summer and fall of 2023 and the first half of 2024 (dates TBD).

Public engagement will be coordinated with other City events and processes (like the missing middle housing study) when possible, presenting materials pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan update and related planning efforts. The consultant will refine the public engagement and outreach events once an overall schedule is agreed upon including paring down the engagement effort as necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **City Staff** *(lead):* Coordinate and help lead outreach events; publish materials on the project website and social media page(s); assist with running the events.
- **SCJ Alliance** *(support):* Design and production of materials; attending/leading outreach events.

Community Survey

Timeframe: Fall 2023

At least one online community survey will be developed to explore community preferences and planning alternatives. The survey will be rolled out to coincide with public outreach events.

This survey will collect topical information from the public on various elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The survey may also include visual preferencing and the collection of comments and ideas on planning scenarios.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **SCJ Alliance** *(lead):* Develop survey questions; digitize in Alchemer, Maptionnaire, or other online survey platform; monitor and analyze results.
- **City Staff** *(support):* Distribute survey via City outlets.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ROLLOUT AND ADOPTION

Planning Commission and City Council Meetings

Timeframe: April 2024–November 2024 (exact dates TBD)

While the Planning Commission and City Council will continue to hold regular meetings throughout the update, there will be several meetings specifically associated with the adoption of Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan update. These include:

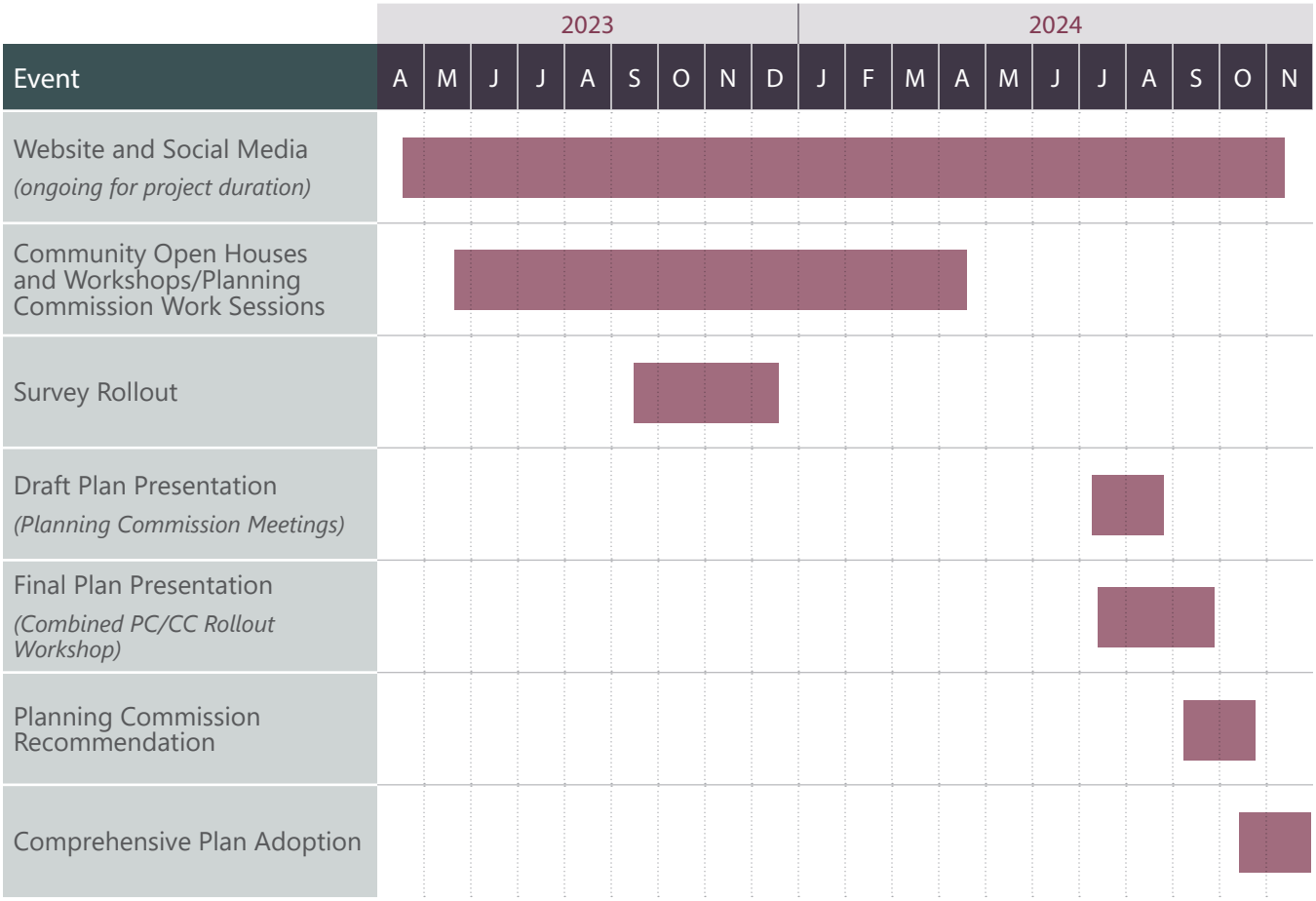
- **Draft Plan Presentation** *(tentatively April 2024):* City staff and consultant (SCJ Alliance) will present the draft Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission, with a focus on changes to the Land Use, Transportation and Housing Elements citywide as well as a comprehensive policy framwork integrating policy direction for the entire plan.
- **Final Plan Presentation** *(tentatively August 2024):* A combined Planning Commission/ City Council workshop will be held to roll out the final draft of Newcastle's updated Comprehensive Plan. City staff and consultant (SCJ Alliance) will provide an overview of the planning process, public feedback, and final draft of the plan. Final feedback will also be collected from the two public bodies and substantive comments will be incorporated into the final draft.
- **Planning Commission recommendation** *(tentatively September 2024):* The City of Newcastle Planning Commission is required to review amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and provide a recommendation to the City Council for consideration and potential adoption.
- **Comprehensive Plan Adoption** *(tentatively November 2024):* City Council will hold a hearing to adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **City Staff** *(lead):* Coordinate, schedule, and lead workshops and hearings.
- **SCJ Alliance** *(support):* Technical resource as needed; production of materials as needed.

SUMMARY

Public Participation Schedule



Conclusion

Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan update is a collaborative effort in which the City will engage the public, businesses, governmental agencies, tribes, and other interested groups. As detailed in this Public Participation Plan, the City's website, public postings, community events, public meetings, and workshops will be used to reach out to interested parties and get them involved in the process. Throughout this effort, the City will strive to involve "a broad cross-section of the community" (WAC 365-196-600) so the Comprehensive Plan truly reflects the community's vision and goals.

PURPOSE

The intent of this document is to provide a plan for public participation in the City of Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan update process. This outreach plan provides a breakdown of each engagement activity, a schedule for outreach efforts, roles and responsibilities, and key/milestone dates.