

# STEVENSON COMPREHENSIVE SHORELINE MASTER PLAN UPDATE



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

### TASK 1.2

CREATED MAY 2012

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#### INTRODUCTION

The City of Stevenson is updating its Shoreline Master Program (SMP) in compliance with the Washington State Shorelines Management Act (SMA) governed by RCW 90.58 and WAC 173-26. A Shoreline Master Program is a set of policies and regulations required of all Washington jurisdictions and applies to all “shorelines of the state” and any other, locally-designated shorelines. In Stevenson, this includes the Columbia River, Rock Cove, and Rock Creek and all lands within 200 feet of their shoreline.

The purpose of the SMA is to manage shorelines to accommodate all reasonable and appropriate uses. These uses include water-dependent uses like marinas and barge terminals; they include public access points like motorized/non-motorized boat launches and trails; they include water-oriented uses like restaurants and retail development. While these uses also include ecological and environmental concerns for wildlife and fish habitat and water quality, they are not the sole focus of the SMA. Instead, Shorelines Management Programs seek to balance the human needs for the shoreline with the ecological needs to ensure there is “no net loss” of ecological function. This balancing act may be accomplished by spreading the ecological mitigation measures out over all shoreline properties, concentrating them on a few properties, or some combination of the two.

To ensure that the Stevenson’s Shorelines Master Program and its ecological balancing act are in the best interests of the community, the City wants to actively encourage public participation. In carrying out the SMP’s Public Participation Plan, the City will comply with the State’s legal requirements and guidance by

making all reasonable efforts to inform, fully involve, and encourage participation of interested persons, private entities and local, state and federal agencies as well as affected Indian Tribes.

This Public Participation Plan will 1) summarize the steps that must occur in a SMP update and provide a set of milestones for public participation events and SMP products, 2) describe the levels of participation from City Council to Planning Commission to advisory committees to passive informational groups, 3) identify key stakeholders in that will be engaged during the update process, and 4) catalogue the materials used and participants involved in the process. This Plan should be viewed as a living document that will be freely updated throughout the Shoreline Master Program update process: As new stakeholders are identified they will be added to this Plan; as new public involvement techniques are developed they will be added; as public involvement events occur, their pertinent materials will be added.

### **SUMMARY OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND MILESTONES**

Often mistakenly referred to as a “plan”, the Shoreline Master Program is best described as a full suite of analyses, visionary endeavors, and regulations that will guide the use of the Columbia River, Rock Creek, Rock Cove, and all lands within 200 feet of their shoreline. RCW 90.58.030(3)(c) contains the formal definition of “Master Program” and includes the mapping, shoreline descriptions, goal statements, and regulatory standards necessary to fully understand the functions and processes occurring at the shoreline areas.

Stevenson is one of the last jurisdictions to begin updating its program and benefits not only from the guidance put together by the Department of Ecology but also the experience of the Washington cities and counties that have come before us. This guidance and experience indicate that the SMP update process will necessitate 31 separate tasks, 29 deliverables, and take approximately three years to complete. The tasks and deliverables needed to complete the update can be categorized into six different phases:

#### General Phase

Three of the tasks and five of the deliverables recur throughout the update process. These involve coordinating with the Department of Ecology on Stevenson’s progress and use of their grant funds, securing any consulting or intergovernmental services that will be necessary, and implementing this public participation plan. The materials developed during this phase are available for public review and their adoption and modification is subject to input received by the general public and key stakeholders.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The consultant services component of this phase will occur early in the update process, by August 2012. The coordination and public participation components will occur throughout the process and will be summarized on a quarterly basis.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Use appropriate procurement strategies for selecting consultants and service providers. Maintain clear records of progress, financial obligations, and consultant selection.

#### Phase 1- Shoreline Jurisdiction & Public Participation Plan

Three of the tasks and four of the deliverables are associated with this phase. Here the City must establish the limits of the Shoreline Master Program’s jurisdiction and prepare a public participation plan. The materials generated from this phase could greatly benefit from participation by the public.

**Key Questions:** The focus of the public participation in this Phase will determine if any areas are so locally significant that they merit inclusion within the Shoreline Master Program, and what level of public participation is expected to occur through the process.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The public participation plan and shoreline jurisdiction will be completed by June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Adopt public participation plan at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Discuss expanding shoreline jurisdiction with Planning Commission and affected property owners.

### Phase 2- Shoreline Inventory, Analysis & Characterization

This is one of the longer phases of the update process and incorporates eight of the project tasks and four deliverables. In this phase, the City will collect and analyze information on the shoreline's ecological and human uses and the opportunities and pressures to create, protect, enhance and/or modify those uses. In order to ensure the deliverables of this phase are accurate and exhaustive, public participation will be a key part of this phase.

**Key Questions:** Public participation will help determine what information is currently available, how the information impacts the functions and processes occurring on the shorelines, and how these functions and processes might be influenced by future development.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The shoreline inventory (a collection of existing plans, studies or assessments of Stevenson shorelines) will be completed by June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The analysis and report on the information in the shoreline inventory, referred to as a characterization report, will be completed by October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Review and adopt public shoreline inventory and characterization reports at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings. Coordinate with advisory committee to analyze and characterize the shoreline uses, processes, and functions. Maintain clear records of inventory contents and committee communications.

### Phase 3- Complete Draft SMP & Cumulative Impacts Analysis

Seven tasks and five deliverables are associated with this highly important phase of the update process. Public participation will drive the content of this phase primarily through a large shoreline visioning meeting where the community at-large can discuss the ideal uses of the shoreline, and how that ideal can be achieved. The public participation activities that follow this meeting will shape the regulatory system Stevenson creates by developing and ensuring acceptability of the goals, policies, regulations, and land use designations that structure the Shoreline Master Program.

**Key Questions:** Public participation during this phase will establish the collective desires of the community and balance the ecological impacts of those desires to ensure there is no net loss of ecological values.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The shoreline visioning meeting will be completed by October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The draft SMP will be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The cumulative impacts analysis will be completed by October 2013.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Hold a large community visioning meeting in a shoreline area. Review and adopt draft goals, policies, regulations, environment designations, and standards at Planning Commission meetings. Coordinate with advisory committee to recommend draft goals, policies, regulations, environment designations, and standards. Maintain clear records of draft SMP contents, committee communications, and input received at and after the visioning workshop. Review and adopt draft cumulative impacts analysis at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

### Phase 4-Restoration Planning & Revisiting Phase 3

Four tasks and six deliverables are contained in this phase, which will be used to develop the final content of the SMP. The restoration plan is a critical piece that ensures the negative impacts to ecological functions anticipated by the SMP are mitigated by voluntary, positive actions to improve ecological functions. Since the tasks of Phase 3 may be revisited if the balance cannot be restored, public participation will again be a large component of this phase.

**Key Questions:** As with Phase 3, Public participation during this phase will help determine how Stevenson balances the ecological impacts its actions to ensure there is no net loss of ecological values and where there is the highest potential for restoration.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The restoration plan will be completed by October 2013. The draft SMP will be revisited and revised by January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Review and adopt draft restoration plan at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Revisit and adopt draft goals, policies, regulations, environment designations, and standards at Planning Commission meetings. Coordinate with advisory committee to review and recommend draft restoration plan, goals, policies, regulations, environment designations, and standards. Maintain clear records of restoration plan contents, committee communications, and input received at and after the visioning workshop.

Phase 5- Shorelines Master Plan Adoption Process

After all SMP content is developed, this phase will ensure it meets the approval of the stakeholders and the City. The six tasks and five deliverables associated with this task are focused on public participation and approval which will be encouraged throughout.

**Key Questions:** Public participation during this phase will determine if the full suite of SMP analyses, goals, and regulations are acceptable to the community and the state.

**Approximate Completion Dates:** The final Shorelines Master Program will be adopted by March 20, 2014.

**Public Involvement Strategies:** Review and adopt final Shorelines Master Program after holding a public hearing before the City Council. Provide a SEPA comment period on final draft SMP. Maintain clear records of final draft SMP and all public hearing and SEPA comments.

Key Stakeholders

To ensure that the Shoreline Master Program is relevant and/or acceptable to the public, the following key stakeholders will be directly engaged and informed of their public participation options:

	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Contact Date</b>	<b>Commitment Level</b>
<b>City</b>	City Council	Late 2011	Sporadic through late 2013 Heavy through mid 2014
	Planning Commission	Late 2011	Heavy through late 2013
	Planning Department	Mid 2011	Heavy through mid 2014
	Public Works/Building/General Administration	Mid 2012	Sporadically through mid 2014
<b>LAC</b>	Columbia Gorge Kiteboard Association Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association Mid-Columbia Association of Realtors Port of Skamania County Shoreline Property Owners Skamania County Skamania County Chamber of Commerce Skamania County Economic Development Council Skamania Permaculture Guild Stevenson Business Association	Mid 2012	Monthly through mid 2014
<b>GAC</b>	Bonneville Power Administration Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Columbia River Gorge Commission Columbia Riverkeeper Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Federal Emergency Management Agency	Mid 2012	Monthly through mid 2014

Friends of the Columbia Gorge Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Underwood Conservation District US Army Corps of Engineers US Environmental Protection Agency US Fish & Wildlife US Geological Survey WA Department of Archeology & Historic Preservation WA Department of Ecology WA Department of Fish & Wildlife WA Department of Natural Resources WA Department of Transportation WA Recreation & Conservation Office Washington State Extension Office Yakama Indian Nation		
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### **Levels of Public Participation**

Stevenson is a small town of 1,500 people where word travels fast and citizens have many opportunities to directly interact with their City policy makers. Since Stevenson is also set on the Columbia River, along a major freight transportation corridor, and within a National Scenic Area, many outside interests have a stake in the conduct and policies of the City. In the development of its Shoreline Master Program the City will create many opportunities for interested parties to help shape the final SMP product. The various levels of participation include:

#### **General Public**

The general public not participating in any of the above groups will be informed of the Shoreline Master Program update process through notices in the *Skamania County Pioneer* and public postings associated with specific meetings and tasks. As interest in the SMP update ebbs and flows these participants may wish to increase their level of involvement and may be added any of the above groups at their will, and any written or verbal comments they give will be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

#### **Mailing Lists**

As an alternative to the more involved committees described above, interested stakeholders of all kinds will be invited to participate in the Shoreline Master Program update through the mail/email list. The City will maintain a list of interested stakeholders and send out notices of key meetings, fact-finding and opinion questionnaires, and other pertinent information on the SMP update process.

#### **Advisory Committees**

At least two advisory committees will be created as part of the Shoreline Master Program update to capture the voices and input of the key stakeholders. While additional committees may be created if a specific need arises, the City does not wish to burden its limited resources with a process that is overly top-heavy and hopes that most interests and issues can be accommodated within the two-committee system.

A Local Advisory Committee will be the first formed. Invitations to serve on this committee will 1) be sent directly to all shorelines property owners and select local interest groups and 2) be published in the local newspaper, the *Skamania County Pioneer*. To save the committee time and mileage, and to save the City the cost of materials, this committee will be provided detailed informational email briefs throughout the update process and invited to attend all Planning Commission meetings on the topics that pique the

interest of each individual member. The Local Advisory Committee will include at least one Planning Commission member as liaison and shape the SMP through the expression of their desires.

A General Advisory Committee will also be formed in the early stages of the Shorelines Master Program update. Invitations to this committee will be sent directly to staff at various state agencies, affected Indian tribes, and regional interest groups. This committee will exist largely in cyberspace through informational emails sent amongst the group members. Members of this group will also be invited to attend all Planning Commission meetings on the SMP and will occasionally be asked to give special presentations to the Planning Commission on specific technical topics. The General Advisory Committee will include at least one Planning Commission member as liaison and shape the SMP through the depth of knowledge and information they possess.

#### Planning Commission

The Stevenson Planning Commission will serve as the primary public forum for the Shorelines Master Program update and recommend the final draft for Council approval. Interested stakeholders will be able to influence the final SMP through attendance at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings, special workshops, and public hearings on the draft SMP products. Membership on the Planning Commission is also available to citizens after vacancies are publicly advertized, interested candidates submit statements of interest, and the City Council appoints its preferred candidate. Beyond their meetings, select Planning Commissioners will also serve as liaisons to the specific advisory committees that will be formed during the update process.

#### City Council

As the City's elected leadership, the City Council will be responsible for adopting the final Shoreline Management Program at a public hearing, appointing the Planning Commissioners and City staff who will develop the majority of the SMP, and keeping updated on the SMP as it develops. Stakeholders interested in the Shorelines update project have many direct lines of communication to the City Council, and citizens desiring even more voice in shaping the plan may run for election to the City Council.

## **Public Participation Materials Catalogue**

The following pages include the key public participation materials used during the Shorelines Master Program update process. These materials are organized chronologically and will be updated throughout the process.

### Current Materials

1. Shoreline Local Advisory Committee Solicitation Letter
- 2.