

# Coupeville Comprehensive Plan Update

## Town Engagement Plan

Draft November 2, 2021

### Project Purpose

This project seeks to evaluate and revise the Town of Coupeville Comprehensive Plan to align the plan with community desires, updated Town context, changes in state law, and best policy practices.

### Public Engagement Purpose

The purpose of the Town Engagement Plan is to outline the methods to reach the following goals:

- Offer engagement opportunities that are relevant to the target audience
- Solicit valuable feedback from key stakeholders and community participants about concerns, issues, questions, and insights
- Help the Town identify the community's policy preferences and necessary public investments

The Town Engagement Plan outlines a variety of communication and engagement tools to be used as appropriate during this project. It is meant to act as a flexible guide to reach stakeholders and interested groups; the team may adjust engagement approaches if some methods prove more successful than others.

### Public Health Considerations

While the COVID-19 pandemic moved engagement online, as of October 2021 some public health guidelines are now relaxed for in-person activities. The Town is interested in using in-person activities for this project allowable under health guidelines. Regardless of format, the project team will work to ensure that engagement activities are well-publicized, easily accessible, and follow the most current public health guidance.

### Audience

The primary audience for this project's engagement includes residents, property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders in Coupeville. Engagement will be welcomed but less prioritized for people who live outside Coupeville and who work, shop, or use services in Coupeville.

### Engagement Methods

The following engagement methods are proposed for this project:

## Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews will be held with parties who can provide context on current Coupeville issues, opportunities, and priorities. Per the scope of work and budget, up to six interviews will be conducted with MAKERS and additional 3-4 interviews with Town staff. The interviews can be conducted with individuals or groups of people. Stakeholders should also receive a copy of the public survey(s) and schedule of public meetings.

The Town has created an initial list of possible interview candidates, including:

- Residents, homeowners, retirees, and active community members
- Business owners, realtors, developers, and business organizations
- Nonprofits and interest groups
- Individual or entity affiliated with historic preservation
- Public service providers such as the hospital, school district, Port of Coupeville, Island County, and Island Transit

Town staff will contact interviewees and schedule interviews in coordination with MAKERS. These interviews will be performed by video meeting or phone.

## Surveys

Surveys will be used to engage a broad portion of the community and gauge public sentiment. At least one survey will be conducted:

1. Visioning survey. This will be a short survey that asks Town residents to identify their "Loves", "Concerns", and "Hopes" for Coupeville. A limited number of other strategic questions may be added. Input from the project kickoff meeting and continued staff collaboration will be used to craft all questions and answer choices. The survey results will be used to help formulate an updated vision statement and possibly expanded value statements. This survey will be distributed in mid-November and responses will be accepted until mid to late-December.
2. Additional surveys. The scope of work does not identify additional specific surveys. If needed (per agreement & adjusted scope of work), additional surveys could focus on priorities for each planning topic or element in the Comprehensive Plan (housing, transportation, environment, etc.) or ask for feedback on alternatives of the draft plan (such as different land use patterns).

While the scope of work says surveys will only be online, Town staff have relayed that paper surveys are popular and preferred by many residents. Therefore, surveys will be mailed out separately or with the Town utility bills and newsletters and will be designed for quick completion and easy return. The paper surveys will include a link to an online version of the survey for any participants who would prefer to fill it out using an electronic device.

Special distribution activities may be needed for residents and dwelling units who do not directly receive a utility bill, such as those who live in multifamily buildings where the utility bill only goes to the owner or manager. In this case, Town staff will include an adequate number of copies of the survey for the building owner/manager to distribute to each resident or placed in a common area. Similarly, commercial tenants/businesses who do not receive a utility bill directly will be reached through extra paper copies provided to building owners or individual drop-offs by staff. Paper copies should also be available at community hubs such as the Town Hall, library, post office, medical center, and Island County campus. Surveys will also be available in Spanish.

Town staff will tabulate the results of paper surveys and send the summary data to MAKERS, who will tabulate the results of online surveys and consolidate the paper and online results into a survey report.

#### Town Newsletters and Photo/Drawing Submissions

The Town distributes a short newsletter every other month with its mailed utility bills. The newsletter is an opportunity to provide general updates on the planning process, share updates on upcoming events, and remind readers of ways to get engaged. The chart below documents the projected timing of the newsletters and identifies potential newsletter topics.

One engagement method that will be integrated with the newsletter is a call for photo or drawing submissions. This will occur in one of the early 2022 newsletters and the opportunity could also be advertised by staff through the school district. Readers, including children, will be invited to submit a photograph or drawing by mail or e-email that represents what they value about Coupeville. These images will be used to create an image board at Town workshop #2 and/or the project website, and can be used to help illustrate the Comprehensive Plan itself (such as the cover page and chapter headings). Collectively, the images will help inform the project team about the community’s values and vision for Coupeville.

Newsletter Release	Possible Newsletter Feature
November 2021 (materials needed by Nov. 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan introduction</li> <li>• Visioning survey</li> </ul>
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary visioning results</li> <li>• Photo/drawing submissions</li> <li>• Town workshop #1 information</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town workshop #1 results</li> <li>• Early element direction, if possible</li> <li>• Updated timeline</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town workshop #2 notice/information</li> </ul>

Newsletter Release	Possible Newsletter Feature
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft plan/element direction</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town workshop #2 results</li> <li>• Updated plan details</li> <li>• Anticipated adoption schedule</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remaining adoption schedule or announcement of final adoption</li> </ul>

### Public Meetings

Where possible, public meetings may be scheduled as part of regular Planning Commission and Town Council Meetings. The following public meetings and topics are anticipated:

Public Meeting	Date	Description	SOW Task
Kickoff Town Council and Planning Commission meeting and visioning	November 9, 4:30 – 6:30 PM	This meeting will introduce the team and ask public officials what elements of the comprehensive plan update are most important to them. This could include particular goals or policies or how the engagement process is done. The presentation may include preliminary audit results. It will also include comparisons of vision statements from other communities. One or more draft vision statements for Coupeville will be introduced to begin the discussion.	1C, 2B, 2C
Town workshop #1	TBD	The consultant team will present the plan audit and context findings, online survey results, and the updated draft vision statement. Multiple workshop exercises will identify key issues, opportunities, and priorities.	3D
Draft check-in #1	TBD	The consultant team will present the first draft of the comprehensive plan to the Planning Commission and/or Town Council for feedback, with a focus on the updated existing conditions information, the draft goals and policies, and possible implementation actions.	4
Draft check-in #2	TBD		
Town workshop #2	TBD	This workshop will present and evaluate the plan's goals and policies. This workshop will be in-person if desired and as pandemic restrictions allow. A combination presentation/open house format usually works best at this juncture. The presentation allows the team to provide an overview of key features, goals, and policies – and pointing out special provisions that warrant close review. The open house allows for casual drop ins as well as more detailed	4

Public Meeting	Date	Description	SOW Task
		discussions with community members on topics they are most interested in.	
Adoption meeting #1	TBD	The consultant team will be available to support the adoption process at up to two Planning Commission and/or Town Council meetings.	6
Adoption meeting #2	TBD		6

A variety of techniques will be used to seek input and present information at each meeting, depending on the stage of the process, the type of input needed, and the material being shared.

#### Project Webpage

The Town anticipated developing an entirely new website for itself, expected to go online in 2022. In the meantime, Town staff have created a separate project webpage for this comprehensive plan that went online in early November. MAKERS will provide simple content introducing the project to the public, including the project purpose, major work tasks, schedule, and opportunities for public input.

The project webpage will allow people to participate in the plan's development at their own pace. Town staff will manage a project page and the consultant team will assist with the approach and content on an ongoing basis. During early stages, the page will include background content on the project need, goals, and schedule, and over time it will evolve to provide a clearinghouse of project documents and information in a visual and accessible manner.