



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 15, 2008

TO: Chair Robertson, Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Michael Paine, Environmental Planning Manager, PCD
Heidi Bedwell, Associate Planner, PCD

SUBJECT: Shoreline Master Program Update—Bellevue File # 07-122342 AC

This summarizes the current status, next steps and key future milestones of the ongoing Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update. Staff will be available at the meeting on July 23rd to give a brief update to the Commission. This is informational only, and no action is requested at this time.

Planning Process

As a reminder, the SMP Update process is a three year long process consisting of six phases. The four substantive phases include:

Phase 1:	Preliminary shoreline jurisdiction, public participation plan, and inventory	<i>(Winter 2007-Spring 2009)</i>
Phase 2:	Shoreline analysis and characterization	
Phase 3:	Shoreline environment designation, policy and regulation	<i>(Winter 2008- Summer 2009)</i>
Phase 4:	Cumulative impacts, restoration planning, revisiting phase 3	<i>(Summer 2009- Winter 2009)</i>

Phase 5 is the local adoption process and includes multiple study sessions before the Planning Commission and the City Council. Included in this phase is a public hearing before the Planning Commission as well as specific public outreach events. Completion of the SEPA process would also occur early in Phase 5. Phase 6 is the state approval process. Generally this is an iterative process in which the local government works directly with Ecology staff to address requested changes. *(Spring to Summer 2010)*

Current Status

Phase 1 is nearly completed and Phase 2 is underway. To date, we have submitted a preliminary draft shoreline jurisdictional determination and public involvement plan to the Department of Ecology. The project consultant is working on the final draft shoreline inventory and the shoreline characterization¹ is underway and will be completed by December 2008. Additionally, a public opinion survey has been fielded. See the public involvement section below for more information on the survey.

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The analysis phase will describe the ecosystem-wide processes and ecological functions for all areas of shoreline jurisdiction through systematic application of landscape ecological principles. The general idea is to work from the landscape or regional scale down to the reach scale, carefully summarizing the influences of climate, geology, topography, soils, hydrology, land cover type, and land use. The next step is to identify management issues of concern such as those ecological processes that no longer function as they once did due to impacts of urbanization or specific inputs of pollution.

Community Visioning and Next Steps

As we discussed previously, the Shoreline Management Act (SMA) mandates “reasonable efforts” to inform the public regarding the proposed SMP Update and to actively encourage participation by all persons and groups showing an interest in shoreline management programs. As a consequence, we have detailed a robust public involvement effort that ensures the SMP Update process is transparent, inclusive, effective and comprehensive. The outreach program is multifaceted and includes the following Community Visioning components some of which are underway or scheduled to commence in the fall:

- **Public Opinion Survey:** With the assistance of EMC Research, we conducted a statistically valid telephone survey of approximately 400 residents and 100 shoreline residents, yielding a margin of error of less than 5 percent. The results of the survey will be useful in guiding the staff and consultant team in preparing SMP Update provisions, communicating to the public on this topic and providing useful input to Planning Commission and City Council deliberations. The final compilation and a summary report will be completed in August, and the results will be presented to the Planning Commission by the project consultant in early September. We will also ask the Commission to identify issues that they would like to explore more fully in a formal focus group setting.
- **Letter to Neighborhood Association Leaders:** Staff has sent out a public information sheet describing the SMP Update project to Neighborhood Association Leaders. The Associations contacted have a portion of their association within the Shoreline Overlay district, or have the potential to be interested in the topics which are part of the project focus.
- **Formal Focus Group:** Following direction from the Planning Commission, we will convene a focus group whose participants will be specifically chosen to help probe the results of the survey or to answer questions posed by the Commission to address perceived gaps in the survey. One useful outcome will be to identify how different groups talk about the issues, what language they use and what reasoning they employ. Staff anticipates the focus groups will occur in October.
- **Shoreline Tour:** We have scheduled a boat tour of the Lake Washington shoreline. The varied nature of the Lake Washington shoreline lends itself well to discussions of land uses, public access, piers, bulkhead, storm water, invasive vegetation, setbacks, and other topics of major interest. Commission members should reserve September 20th on their schedules if they plan to attend the tour. The tour will begin at 1:00pm and last until 4:00pm. Additional details will be forthcoming.
- **Open Houses:** As part of the public visioning process, the project team will conduct its first open houses in either later November or December to roll out the inventory and characterization work and solicit feedback from the community regarding environmental designations and areas of interest.

Staff will be returning to the Commission more frequently beginning in the fall to provide further updates and briefings. And as a reminder the project webpage <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/shoreline-master-plan.htm> will contain updated information as the project proceeds.