

Lakewood Station District Subarea

Public Engagement Plan - APRIL 2020

Introduction

The Public Engagement Plan provides a framework for understanding how engagement will be coordinated with the Lakewood Station District Subarea (LSDS) planning effort. It is a tool the City and project team will use to organize and direct their efforts. In addition to outlining the purpose and objectives of engagement, this Public Engagement Plan identifies key stakeholders and possible methods of engagement. As the project progresses, the team will use this Public Engagement Plan to select and design events that are aligned with the project schedule and respond to community needs. The Public Engagement Plan identifies a range of engagement options that meet the needs of the people, businesses, and agencies affected by the LSDS planning effort, including a range of methods that meet requirements for public health and safety in response to COVID-19.

Objectives

The Lakewood Comprehensive Plan affirms that Lakewood values working together with vision, focus, and cohesion towards a successful future and opportunities for all.¹ This speaks to the importance of public engagement in developing policies and plans, including the LSDS Plan. Outreach and engagement objectives for the LSDS Plan include:

- Clearly communicate the project's purpose and process so the community is well-informed.
- Ensure a seamless experience for participants by integrating LSDS Plan development with environmental review, planned action development, and draft code development.
- Build project support through outreach and engagement efforts that invite meaningful input.
- Actively solicit questions, priorities, and concerns from businesses, residents, and property owners.
- Seek perspectives of affected parties and those unlikely or unable to participate.
- Provide safe, accessible, and enjoyable engagement opportunities.

¹ City of Lakewood Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 1, page 3.

Stakeholders

Since Lakewood became a City and published its first Comprehensive Plan, the LSDS has been recognized as an area of future growth and opportunity. It is a major gateway to the City for people entering through the SR 512 interchange, Bridgeport Way, or Lakewood Station. It is home to about 800 households and over 170 businesses and could become home to many more as it transitions into a denser, more walkable district.

Stakeholder Group	Subgroups
Subarea Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Property owners ▪ Renters ▪ Low-income households ▪ People of color ▪ Latinx residents
Area Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lakewood residents ▪ JBLM residents
Transit Riders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residents within ½ mile ▪ Workers within ½ mile ▪ Lakewood Station users ▪ SR 512 Park-and-Riders ▪ Town Center Transit Center users
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ St. Clare Hospital ▪ JBLM ▪ Hotels ▪ Businesses within ½ mile

Stakeholder Group	Subgroups
Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail employees ▪ Service employees ▪ Health care employees
Community and Non-Profit Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Korean Women’s Association ▪ Latino Partnership Group
Public Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lakewood Water District ▪ Pierce County Sewer ▪ Lakeview Light and Power ▪ Lakewood Public Works ▪ Lakewood Police Department ▪ West Pierce Fire and Rescue ▪ WSDOT ▪ Sound Transit ▪ Pierce Transit
Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lakewood Landing

Methods and Tools

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

People must be aware of the LSDS Plan in order to participate. The following tools will help build this awareness:

- **Project webpage.** This will be a repository for LSDS Plan information, including status updates, draft documents, schedules, official notices, and links to partner agencies. It may invite electronic input through features such as comment boxes, surveys, or online open houses.
- **Print and social media.** Information about the LSDS Plan will be advertised through the City’s social media platforms and other online accounts, as well as through print mailings and newsletters. Press releases may be issued for public meetings and at project milestones.
- **Official notices.** City staff will comply with notification requirements for comment periods and public hearings specified by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the Lakewood Municipal Code.
- **Interested parties list.** City staff will maintain a list of interested parties who will receive electronic notification of public meetings and project milestones. Participants who provide contact information to the City will be added to the list.
- **Local advocacy and business organizations.** Staff and consultants could ask local advocacy and business organizations to distribute information to their memberships. This effort could target hard-to-reach stakeholder groups.
- **Postcard mailings.** The City will mail postcards to businesses and homes within the LSDS in the visioning phase and prior to the release of the Draft LSDS Plan.
- **Place-based outreach.** Posters and signs can be an effective way of informing people of a project. Combined with engagement, place-based outreach may include pop-ups, canvassing, participation in community events, or other efforts that provide casual interaction with the community. Social distancing requirements may limit opportunities for place-based outreach.
- **Translation and interpretation.** Translation of print materials and interpretation at meetings will be available as needed. The team should work with trusted advisors and community leaders to determine the most effective way of distributing materials in other languages.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement methods could include in-person and remote applications, which may be used to reach a broader audience or to comply with public health orders.

- **Interviews.** Gather in-depth feedback through scripted interviews with key stakeholders—such as community or advocacy groups—to learn more about the needs of specific populations. Interviews are typically conducted by phone or online meeting platform.
- **Focus groups.** These small, facilitated discussions collect in-depth input from a variety of groups. These may be conducted by phone or online meeting platforms. A “meeting-in-a-box” could enable groups to host their own discussions and record key takeaways that they then return to the City.

- **Community events, pop-ups, and intercepts.** This type of engagement brings opportunities to participate out into the community, such as tabling at a Farmer’s Market, talking with commuters at the Lakewood Station, or canvassing a business district. While these conversations are best held in person—particularly with hard-to-reach populations—remote methods can provide adapted approaches. These require strong outreach through postering and mailing, or through social media with links to surveys, interactive maps, and polls. Materials could be mailed with a postage paid return, though this would require participants to be motivated to return the materials.
- **Public meetings.** Public meetings can include in-person and virtual open houses, workshops, town halls, or charettes. They invite the community to learn more about the project and provide comment, and can include interactive activities like live polling, small group discussions, and “walkshops.”

While public meetings are traditionally held in person, remote options include:

- **Real-time remote meetings.** Meetings may be held in real time using conferencing platforms accessed by computer or smart phone. These allow for moderated discussions, question and answer sessions, presentations, and small group discussions. Those without a smart phone can participate by dialing in with any phone and using a supplemental packet of hardcopy or digital materials made available in advance. Real-time meetings can be recorded and posted online for people to review at their convenience.
- **Online open house.** These are interactive platforms with which people can engage at their convenience. Depending on the platform, they provide information with embedded opportunities for input, such as storymaps, and surveys.
- **Commission meetings.** The Lakewood Planning Commission meets twice monthly to discuss issues related to the Comprehensive Plan, redevelopment, and transportation. City staff will regularly brief the Planning Commission throughout the development of the LSDS Plan. This appointed group of Lakewood residents represents a cross-section of interests and will provide input on the development of the LSDS Plan. Public comment is accepted orally and in writing at these meetings. The Planning Commission may also hold public hearings, as authorized by the Lakewood Municipal Code, and make recommendations to City Council. Meetings may be held remotely in accordance with best practices and City procedures.

Engagement by Phase

Development of the LSDS Plan will occur over a series of phases lasting just over a year. Prior to each phase, the project team will use this Public Engagement Plan to develop a tactical engagement approach that identifies timelines, roles, and responsibilities. This Public Engagement Plan will adapt to evolving project and public health needs. The Project team will regularly assess objectives and equity considerations and adjust outreach and engagement to ensure community perspectives are represented.

Outreach Phase	Engagement Activities
<p>Project Launch</p> <p>Inform stakeholder and community groups about the project and learn about trends and existing conditions.</p> <p><i>Spring 2020</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder workshop. Invite representatives from local agencies, organizations, and neighborhoods to participate in a stakeholder workshop to share project information and gather information on existing conditions, trends, and area plans. ▪ Emails and phone calls. Follow up with groups or agencies unable to participate. ▪ Mail an introductory postcard to LSDS area residents and taxpayers explaining the project and timeline, and direct them to the project website. ▪ Request drone flyovers of the LSDS from Lakewood Police Department for use in outreach efforts.
<p>Visioning</p> <p>Refine the vision for the LSDS and develop guiding principles.</p> <p><i>Spring and Summer 2020</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public survey. Launch an online survey inquiring about vision and guiding principles. Conduct supplementary outreach through print and social media. Mail hardcopies to residents and businesses in the study area with a postage return envelope. Poster within the study area to reach visitors and transit riders. ▪ Virtual “walkshop.” Recruit participants to document their experiences moving around the study area with pictures and video. ▪ Focus groups. Recruit participants from targeted populations and stakeholder groups for an in-depth conversation. ▪ Vision workshop. Build an interactive platform that shares what has been heard to date. Invite participants to provide input on the vision and guiding principles. Consider hosting a supplementary in-person or real-time online meeting.
<p>Draft LSDS Plan</p> <p>Share draft vision, goals, policies, land use alternatives, and environmental review information. Review draft planned action and form-based code.</p> <p><i>Fall 2020 to Winter 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online open house(s). Use an interactive storymap to collect input on the Draft LSDS Plan and planned action. ▪ Community open house. Whether in person or online, a community meeting is required for the planned action. ▪ Pop-ups. Attend community events or hold pop-ups within the study area to build awareness, gather input, and encourage participation in the online open house. If prevented by public health requirements, expand outreach efforts to drive participation. ▪ Website. Upload all materials, meeting schedules, and public feedback to the dedicated project website.
<p>Final LSDS Plan</p> <p>Take a revised Draft LSDS Plan through the legislative process for adoption.</p> <p><i>Winter and Spring 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online materials. Summarize materials using a storymap with opportunity to comment. Comments will be provided to the Planning Commission as part of their public hearing process. ▪ Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and accept oral and written comment. At the conclusion of the hearing and comment period, they will make a recommendation to the City Council. ▪ City Council. The City Council will meet to discuss the Planning Commission’s recommendations and hold a public hearing in which public comments will also be accepted.