

Public Involvement Strategies

Project Overview

The City of Renton (City), in cooperation with the Renton Housing Authority (RHA), intends to issue an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing future redevelopment and revitalization of the Sunset Area Community. This EIS will be a joint State Environmental Policy Act/ National Environmental Policy Act (SEPA/NEPA) document, intended to satisfy requirements of state and federal environmental statutes.

The City recently approved the Sunset Area Community Investment Strategy (CIS) that was prepared in partnership with the RHA and Renton School District and culminated a significant effort prioritizing strategies for public investment in the Sunset Area. The coordinated planning and environmental review will provide the City, RHA, Renton School District, and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) streamlined land use authority to implement a broad range of improvements throughout the neighborhood. It will also simplify the redevelopment process for private developers, increasing the likelihood that planned public agency investments would lead to a transformation of the community through implementation of the CIS goals and the vision of the Highlands Phase II Task Force.

The Highlands Phase II Task Force established a vision for the community:

- The Highlands is a destination for the rest of the city and beyond
- The neighbors and businesses here are engaged and involved in the community
- Neighborhood places are interconnected and walkable
- The neighborhood feels safe and secure
- Neighborhood growth and development is managed in a way that preserves quality of life
- The neighborhood is an attractive place to live and conduct business
- The neighborhood is affordable to many incomes
- The neighborhood celebrates cultural and ethnic diversity

Sunset Area Community Proposal

The CIS culminated a significant effort prioritizing strategies for public investment in the Sunset Area. The top priority in the CIS was to support Sunset Terrace Redevelopment. The second priority in the CIS was preparation of an EIS that would address the primary proposal of the Sunset Terrace area redevelopment as well as evaluate secondary proposals such as neighborhood private redevelopment and supporting services and infrastructure improvements. The joint environmental review with the City and RHA allows for coordinated planning and achieves cost efficiencies. Additional priorities included upgrades to NE Sunset Boulevard (SR 900) as well as other infrastructure

investments. The EIS provides a framework to evaluate CIS proposals, facilitate development consistent with the vision, and to solicit public input as the City, RHA and other partners move forward on implementation strategies.

Sunset Terrace Redevelopment: The proposed project includes redevelopment of the Sunset Terrace public housing community, a Renton Housing Authority property of approximately 100 existing units in 50-year old, one and two story structures, located at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Harrington Avenue on approximately eight acres. The RHA also owns another three acres of vacant land and intends to purchase additional property adjacent to Sunset Terrace for housing and associated services. Conceptual plans propose redevelopment of Sunset Terrace and adjacent properties with mixed-income, mixed-use residential and commercial space and public amenities. Conceptual plans propose redevelopment of Sunset Terrace and adjacent properties with mixed-income, mixed-use residential and commercial space and public amenities. The redevelopment would include a 1-to-1 unit replacement for all 100 existing public housing units, some of which would occur on site and some of which would occur elsewhere in the Planned Action Study Area. It is expected that, with the Sunset Terrace property and associated properties owned or purchased by RHA, up to 479 additional new units could be constructed with a portion of the units being public, affordable, and market rate. Public amenities would be integrated with the residential development and could include the following: a community gathering space or “third place;” civic facilities such as a community center, senior center, and/or public library space; a new park/open space; retail shopping and commercial space; and green infrastructure.

Adjacent Area: As a result of the Sunset Terrace redevelopment, it is expected that private redevelopment in the neighborhood will be catalyzed. Supporting both Sunset Terrace and neighborhood redevelopment will be civic investments including: planned or anticipated upgrades to Sunset Boulevard and other local streets, stormwater drainage systems, parks and recreation facilities, education facilities, and a new public library. Sunset Terrace’s redevelopment provides the opportunity to evaluate the neighborhood as a whole and determine what future land use redevelopment is possible and what public service and infrastructure improvements should be made in order to make this a more vibrant and attractive community for residents, businesses and property owners. The EIS will address Sunset Terrace area redevelopment as well as neighborhood redevelopment and supporting services and infrastructure improvements.

SEPA Planned Action: The City is also proposing to adopt a Planned Action Ordinance pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). A Planned Action Ordinance, if adopted, would not require future SEPA threshold determinations or EISs when future projects are consistent with the Sunset Area Community EIS assumptions and mitigation measures.

Public Outreach Requirements

An EIS is an informational document intended to allow for citizen and agency comment to assist agencies in making informed choices about proposals. SEPA and NEPA require public scoping comment periods to obtain written public and agency comments as the EIS alternatives and topics are formulated and a comment period after the issuance of a Draft EIS. The Final EIS responds to public comments.

Since the EIS process includes designating a planned action by ordinance, a public hearing will be required prior to adoption. SEPA and NEPA also encourage public meetings during comment periods.

If Comprehensive Plan amendments are needed (e.g. to address updated capital plans), the City will follow a public participation process through the Planning Commission and City Council, that typically includes at least a briefing and a public hearing. These meetings may occur in concert with other meetings related to the EIS and planned action ordinance. Per RCW 36.70A.130(2)(a)(v), the adoption of comprehensive plan amendments necessary to enact a planned action is not subject to the annual amendment cycle.

Communication Strategies

This public involvement plan recognizes past and ongoing outreach efforts and intends to apply successful outreach techniques from these efforts to the current SEPA/NEPA EIS. The EIS process will serve as a framework for the outreach efforts associated with current efforts to implement key CIS recommendations.

Prior Outreach and Other Ongoing Initiatives

This summary details the public communication activities that have occurred in support of previous planning and design efforts in the Sunset Area, as well as related initiatives that are ongoing.

- Highlands Phase II Task Force (included a larger boundary than the Sunset Area)
 - Public Input Meeting
 - Task Force meetings comprised of property owners, residents, City staff, business owners, and other community stakeholders
- Sunset Community Investment Strategy
 - Interdepartmental Team Kickoff and site tour
 - Stakeholder interviews including RHA, Renton School District, and City staff
 - Stakeholder focus groups comprised of property owners and developers
 - Stakeholders Workshop
 - Community Open House and picnic
- RHA Board and Resident Meetings
 - To conceptually plan the redevelopment of Sunset Terrace, RHA selected a development consultant, Shelter Resources, Inc. (SRI), in 2007, and SRI retained an architect to help plan the property. Conceptual redevelopment designs were first prepared in December 2007 by Bumgardner Architects,

and have been the subject of RHA board meetings, throughout 2008 to the present, and of resident meetings on June 19, 2009, and July 12, 2010.

- PRO Plan - Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Natural Resources Plan
The City updates the above plan approximately every six years and has commenced this process in September 2010 (previous plan adopted in May 2003). The public planning process will take approximately one year and include the following:
 - Interdepartmental Team meetings (5)
 - Steering Committee meetings (4)
 - Stakeholder Interviews (5, including Renton School District)
 - Topic Area Focus Group meetings (2 – organized sports/active recreation and open space/natural areas)
 - Joint Parks Commission/Planning Commission meetings (3)
 - Citywide Public Open House meetings (4)
 - Citywide Public Visioning Workshop (1)
 - Interactive website with Community Questionnaire
 - Citywide statistically valid Random Household Survey

Key messages that will be communicated throughout the project include:

- Plan looks out over a twenty year timeframe and provides a six-year vision with implementation strategies.
- Plan provides guidance and direction for acquisition, development, expansion, and programming.
- Plan provides guidance and direction for stewarding and preserving property, accepting property donations, and identifying potential funding sources and partnership opportunities.
- Plan identifies current use, needs and gaps in the system and forecasts future trends to provide city guidance to best meet parks and recreation opportunities in a growing and changing population.
- Plan identifies park type classifications and level of service standards to accommodate projected population growth.

- Trails and Bicycle Master Plan and Map (Joint Parks and Transportation plan)
 - Public Open House meetings (3)
 - Parks Commission meetings (9)
 - Renton Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Committee meetings (10)

Key messages have been communicated throughout the project and include:

- The City is working with residents and businesses to create a safe and inclusive community.
- Public input shapes the public investments in this area.
- Preserving and improving quality of life is important to this neighborhood.

Key messages that were communicated in the Trails and Bicycle Master Plan include:

- Plan looks out over a twenty year timeframe and provides a six-year vision with implementation strategies and potential funding sources.
- Plan inventories existing routes and destinations and identifies opportunities for potential new trails and bikeway routes.

- Routes will be identified, selected, prioritized and classified as to type of trail based upon evaluation criteria (safety, accessibility, continuity and directness, connectivity/linkage, regional trail connectivity, trail experience, sensitivity, concurrency and funding/construction opportunities).
- An interconnected trail system to include water trails, hiking trails, and a non-motorized transportation network to accommodate recreational and commuting uses from pedestrians to cyclists will be created.
- Access to multiple local and regional destinations including schools, parks, businesses and residential areas should be provided.
- Residents and visitors can enjoy recreation and exercise contributing to a healthy lifestyle.
- Commuting by bicycle, using an integrated trails/road network, becomes a realistic transportation alternative

Renton Sunset Area Community EIS – Proposed Outreach Strategies

The following matrix identifies specific interest groups in the community, likely interests in the project, and recommended outreach tools and messages utilized throughout the project.

Community and Agency Interests	Primary Interests	Outreach Tools	Key Messages
Area Neighborhood residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safety and security ▪ Improve perceptions of the area ▪ More attractive retail corridor and more retail choices ▪ Walkability ▪ Pedestrian connectivity / Sunset Blvd as barrier ▪ Desire for “3rd Place” ▪ Desire for community gardens ▪ Desire for active recreation facilities ▪ Attractive and well managed growth ▪ Affordable housing ▪ Inclusive community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community meetings ▪ Neighborhood Association briefings ▪ E-updates ▪ Direct mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This project will help shape the future of the Sunset area ▪ We’re listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible ▪ The City and RHA are working together to redevelop Sunset Terrace ▪ We’re investing in this area and working to improve community amenities ▪ We’re working to make the area safer, more inviting and easier to get around
Sunset Terrace Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safety and security ▪ Improve perceptions of the area ▪ More attractive retail corridor and more retail choices ▪ Impact on public housing units and Sunset Terrace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community meetings ▪ Neighborhood Association briefings ▪ Language based outreach through churches and social organizations ▪ After school and kids programs to bring messages home ▪ E-updates ▪ Direct mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This project will help shape the future of the Sunset area ▪ We’re listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible. ▪ One-for-one replacement of public housing within redevelopment.

Community and Agency Interests	Primary Interests	Outreach Tools	Key Messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community ▪ Relocation and timing of housing redevelopment ▪ Housing choices ▪ Walkability ▪ Access to services and amenities ▪ Desire for community gardens ▪ Desire for active recreation facilities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This project will help shape the future of the Sunset area ▪ We're listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible. ▪ The Sunset Terrace redevelopment is planned as a mixed-income neighborhood.
<p>Business tenants immediately adjacent to Sunset Blvd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve perceptions of the area ▪ Safety and security ▪ Access ▪ Parking ▪ Frontage visibility ▪ Economic impacts ▪ Completion of adequate environmental process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual contact ▪ E-updates ▪ Direct mail ▪ Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This project will help shape the future of the Sunset area ▪ We're listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible. ▪ Your business district is important - our goal is make it safer and better positioned for future growth (“Ahead of the Curve”). ▪ We're investing in this area and working to improve community amenities ▪ We're working to make the area safer, more inviting and easier to get around
<p>Property owners immediately adjacent to the Sunset Blvd corridor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adverse perceptions of the area ▪ Safety and security ▪ Economic impacts ▪ Impacts from right-of-way and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual contact ▪ E-updates ▪ Direct mail ▪ Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This project will help shape the future of the Sunset area ▪ We're listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible.

Community and Agency Interests	Primary Interests	Outreach Tools	Key Messages
	<p>easement needs</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We're investing in this area and working to improve community amenities We're working to make the area safer, more inviting and easier to get around
<p>Shoppers and visitors (from outside project area)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adverse perceptions of the area ▪ More attractive retail corridor and more retail choices ▪ Safety and security ▪ Access ▪ Multi-modal convenience – walk, bike, bus ▪ Frontage visibility ▪ Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flyers and signage ▪ Direct mail ▪ E-updates ▪ ▪ CityNews (city wide publication sent to all residents and businesses that receive a utility bill) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We're listening and learning – help us make this project as beneficial to you as possible. ▪ We're investing in this area and working to improve community amenities ▪ The business district is important - our goal is make it safer, more inviting and easier to get around.
<p>Federal, State and Regional Agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential funding partners ▪ Completion of adequate environmental process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual contact and meetings ▪ Public meetings ▪ E-updates ▪ Direct mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Sunset area is important and we are working collaboratively to enhance the community ▪ We're working to make the area safer, more inviting and easier to get around. ▪ We are following applicable SEPA and NEPA procedures. ▪ We are integrating housing, job, infrastructure, and public service features to meet community needs and meet agency initiatives and goals to attract funding.

Community and Agency Interests	Primary Interests	Outreach Tools	Key Messages
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We're committed to moving this project forward. ▪ Our collaboration with other agencies, residents and businesses will make this project successful.
Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constituent support for project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Briefings ▪ Public hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Sunset area is important and we are working collaboratively to enhance the community ▪ Our collaboration with other agencies, residents and businesses will make this project successful. ▪ We're working to make the area safer, more inviting and easier to get around. ▪ This project is key to moving forward on innovative future projects.

Outreach Work Plan

Public communication will utilize the following outreach tools and activities. These tools serve to support the project during the environmental review and associated planning and engineering processes.

Outreach Tools

Mailing List

The City has assembled an initial mailing list that includes residents, business owners, agency partners, and other interested stakeholders. The mailing list was sent as initial outreach and interested members of the public wishing to sign on to the interested parties mailing list for this project will be encouraged to do so. The interested parties mailing list will be used for continued outreach with materials sent by either postal mail, or email, at the preference of the interested party.

Public Meetings and Hearings

A public meeting is planned during EIS scoping and is anticipated to be in an open house format. A public hearing is planned during the Draft EIS comment period to obtain comments on the document as well as testimony about the draft Planned Action ordinance.

Prior to the public meeting and hearing, the City will create announcements to be distributed to those on the project mailing list. A clear record of all public comments received at the meetings and hearing will be maintained.

Study sessions and briefings are planned periodically for the Planning Commission and City Council at their regular public meetings.

Informational Materials

An array of issue-specific informational fact sheets and a Frequently Asked Questions sheet will be prepared and updated periodically with current project information. These materials will be made available at public events and can be/have been used by the City for distribution at other community meetings, local libraries, neighborhood centers or schools.

Project Website

The City of Renton has developed and maintained a project website to provide an easy-to-access, up-to-date source of information for the public. The project website will include materials such as: announcements for upcoming public events, summaries of meetings and public input, project schedule and electronic copies of downloadable informational materials. The website also includes an online comment form that can be filled out online and sent directly to the City's project manager.

Agency Coordination Meetings

The City, RHA, and consultant team will meet with agency partners periodically, and coordinate by email and phone, to apprise them of progress, ask questions, etc. The consultant scope includes meetings and coordination with US Department of Housing and Urban Development (2 meetings), WSDOT (2 meetings), and resource agencies (e.g. historic resources up to hours budgeted) during the project to confirm schedule conformance and maximize the potential for the project's implementation.

Environmental Justice Outreach

Low-income and non-English speaking residents and business owners often require additional methods of outreach in order to effectively solicit feedback. While public meetings provided the general public an opportunity to learn about the project and provide comment, language barriers or general feelings of unease (on the part of some cultures) often prevent some interest groups from attending. To attract input, the City and/or RHA will provide meeting advertisements in English and Spanish, and provide for translators at public meetings. The City and RHA will work through established groups to

provide targeted presentations outside of broad public meetings; for example neighborhood association, residential association, and other regular meetings.

Electronic Updates (E-Updates)

Business owners, residents and other members of the public are provided with an opportunity to sign up for the interested parties list at public events and via the project website. The City will utilize this outreach tool to keep the public informed about project milestones and upcoming events to distribute occasional email updates.

Outreach Schedule

This outreach schedule provides a summary of the various outreach activities that are planned for the Planned Action EIS scope of work. This schedule will be updated to provide an accurate account of the project team’s outreach efforts.

Milestones and Activities	Time Period
Scoping	Summer 2010
<input type="checkbox"/> Developed initial project mailing list	Completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Scoping Notice (30 day comment period)	August 13 – October 18
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Meeting announcement #1	August 16, 2010
<input type="checkbox"/> Launched project web site	July, 2010
<input type="checkbox"/> Public and Agency Scoping Meeting	September 1, 2010
Refine Alternatives & NEPA/SEPA Documentation	Q3 2010 – Q1 2011
<input type="checkbox"/> DEIS Public Comment Period	December – January
<input type="checkbox"/> DEIS and Planned Action Planning Commission Public Hearing	January 2011
<input type="checkbox"/> Briefings to City Council	Dec 2010, March 2011
<input type="checkbox"/> Update project website	Ongoing