

**--Third Draft for Committee Endorsement--**

**Goals for Public Communication and Engagement  
City of Snohomish Open Government Committee  
For Committee Endorsement on March 7, 2016**

At their first meeting on February 1 2016, open government committee members brainstormed on some possibilities for overarching goals, or guiding parameters, for the recommendations they will eventually make to the Snohomish City Council. Members then reviewed a draft of these goals and offered comments and edits. A second draft of the goals was sent to members on February 21, and additional comments/edits provided by February 29.

Seven out of the nine committee members have indicated their approval of these goals. The committee will endorse them as a group at their March 7, 2016 meeting. These goals will be supported by specific recommendations that detail the ways in which the goals will be implemented.

**Public Communication and Engagement Goals**

*The public communication and civic engagement program carried out by the City of Snohomish will strive to meet the following parameters:*

**1) Open and Welcoming.**

The city welcomes public input. City leaders actively seek the involvement of citizens and invite public participation in city decision-making. The city has a well-defined decision making process and clearly identified stages where the public can participate and provide feedback.

**2) Free of Barriers**

The program includes a strong education component that informs the public about the most effective ways to engage in decision-making, the types of issues, projects, and programs most likely to include public engagement, a menu of public involvement techniques, and ideas for how citizens can best avail themselves of those techniques. Every effort is made to reduce intimidation and ease the way for citizen participation.

**3) Proactive**

Notification about upcoming issues and projects is provided in a manner that allows ample time for citizens to a) learn about the project; b) understand how they can be involved in decision-making; c) participate in forums designed to gather their feedback and advice; d) create opportunities for dialogue to encourage creative solutions and avoid misunderstandings.

**4) Accessible to the Broadest Possible Audience**

Public information and engagement techniques are made available to the broadest possible spectrum of Snohomish citizens and include “reach out” methods that put information in clear view where people frequent, allowing them to decide whether or not they are interested, and “reach in” methods that put information in places for individuals to seek out and access additional or more in-depth information. One size does not fit all for our community. A variety of technologies, messages, and media are used. The public engagement program creates a bridge between the social, ethnic, and age differences of all Snohomish citizens.

### **5) Consistent**

Public information and engagement is consistently applied across all city departments. Techniques depend on the type of project under consideration, Citizens know what to expect in terms of their involvement. Likewise, the citizens of Snohomish have an obligation to actively learn about, and participate in, the civic engagement program.

### **6) Responsive**

The city will provide feedback to citizens describing the way in which their ideas and comments have been used in decision making. Citizen influence in decisions will be clearly delineated.

### **7) Actively Monitored and Continually Improved**

The city will actively monitor and measure its communication techniques to determine their effectiveness. Only those techniques that are accessed and utilized most frequently are retained. The *quality* of the technique and the degree to which it is effective in informing and engaging citizen interests has precedence over the *quantity* of techniques employed by the city.

### **8) Focused on Building Trust and Civic Engagement**

The bottom line success measure for the city's communication and involvement program is the degree to which the program achieves citizen engagement and builds citizen trust in the city's elected and appointed leadership.