





Medical Lake Public Participation Plan 2025-2026

Introduction

Medical Lake is undertaking a periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). As a city in Spokane County, Medical Lake is required to complete this update by December 31, 2026. The entire Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated. In addition, the City will also conduct a consistency evaluation to ensure that its land use regulations are consistent with the updated comprehensive plan.

The purpose of this plan is to identify the City of Medical Lake's public participation objectives, approach, audiences, schedule and opportunities. This document may be updated over time to reflect the needs of the Periodic Update and/or increase the program's effectiveness.

Guiding Principles

This program is about reaching out to all segments of the community and making a concerted effort to reach those unheard voices and encourage participation from those that don't normally participate.

The collected voices and stories will be used to create a vision and goals for the community which will lead to policies and actions. The Planning Commission and City Council will use this information to make important community decisions.

Principle 1: Involve Everyone (Seek to have all voices represented.)

Principle 2: Focus on what Matters (Together define what matters most.)

Principle 3: Play the Long Game (Commit to getting results.)

Stakeholders

There are several audiences that will be engaged in different ways throughout the update process.

Community Members: Residents, property owners, business owners

Elected and Appointed Officials: City Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners

Non-City Service Providers: Spokane Fire District 3, Spokane County Sheriff's Office, Avista, Spokane Transit Authority (STA), Spokane County Library District, Inland Power and Light, etc.

Non-Governmental Organizations: Re-Imagine Medical Lake, Medical Lake Outreach, churches, service-oriented clubs (Lions Club, Kiwanis Club), West Plains Chamber of Commerce, West Plains Safety Alliance, etc.

State, Regional and other Local Governments: Washington State Departments of Transportation, Commerce, and Ecology, Spokane County, Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), Spokane Tribe, Kalispel Tribe, Medical Lake School District, Eastern State Hospital, Lakeland Village, Fairchild Air Force Base, S3R3 Solutions, Spokane International Airport, etc.

Role of Decision Makers

Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will provide policy recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan update and will assist in ensuring the public is involved throughout the process. Planning Commissioners will be notified of all community activities and events. All workshops, hearings, and other activities with the Planning Commission will be noticed appropriately. The Planning Commission will receive monthly briefings on the update and will review any reports and drafts provided. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the updated Comprehensive Plan before making its final recommendation to City Council.

City Council. The City Council will be the final decision maker for the Comprehensive Plan update. Council members will be notified of all community activities and events. All workshops, hearings, and other activities with the City Council will be noticed appropriately. The City Council will receive periodic briefings throughout the update process and will review Planning Commission recommendations. City Council will hold a public hearing on the final draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan prior to taking action.

Role of the Planning Department

City of Medical Lake Planning Department staff will oversee volunteers, consultants, and other members of the City's staff on the periodic update. Staff will facilitate public meetings, coordinate events and activities; and present draft materials to the Planning Commission and City Council for review. Staff will provide materials and update documents in a timely manner.

Role of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will provide oversight of the Periodic Update Process for the Comprehensive Plan and land use code. The committee will consist of elected officials (Mayor and 1-2 council members), appointed officials (Planning Commissioner and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Member), and 3-4 community champions (school district, Department of Social and Health Services, nonprofits, and business leaders). Meetings will be held every 2-3 months to discuss and review plans and outcomes throughout the process and assist with facilitating community engagement events.

Role of the Public

The public will provide ideas, feedback, and confirmation of the vision and goals for the Comprehensive Plan. This participation will be accomplished through a variety of community outreach tools throughout the process.

Community participation will be accomplished by employing a variety of community outreach tools. Diverse communication tools will provide information to engage with the community.

Goals

Goal 1: Provide public access to key decision points early and often.

Goal 2: Provide a proactive public participation process.

Goal 3: Increase public awareness of the comprehensive plan and the update process.

Methods and Tools

Techniques for public participation vary in scale, technology, structure, and timing. Our community members are busy and active people. In order to get broad representation, we will bring activities to the places where they are already going. Bringing information and asking for input in neutral locations will also help to ensure that community members feel comfortable expressing their ideas. The City recognizes that to involve all community members a variety of outreach methods and communication tools must be used throughout the update process.

Communication Tools

Written Materials – Written materials are informational handouts provided at public meetings, open houses, community events, on the website, or with utility billing mailings.

Graphics – Graphics are large scale maps, charts and similar items displayed at public meetings, open houses and community events.

Interested Party Lists – Emails or text alerts will be used to send out communications about events related to the comprehensive plan update.

Comprehensive Plan Webpage – The webpage will include access to all written materials and information about community activities, events, meetings, and other relevant resources.

Social Media – The City will use Facebook to notify the community of activities, events, public meetings and hearings.

Utility Bill Newsletter – The City will include information regarding the comprehensive plan update in the monthly newsletter that arrives with the utility bill.

Conversations with Community Newsletter – The City will publish a regular newsletter to be distributed to businesses and published on the City website to provide updates and advertise public engagement opportunities.

Newspaper – The City will provide legal notices as required by the municipal code at key points during the process.

Outreach Methods

Open Houses and Town Hall Meetings – These will include background and educational presentations, roundtable discussions, and activities.

Community Events and Activities – City staff will attend and provide information at community events and activities that are already happening in the community.

Interviews – The City will interview individuals or groups for certain aspects of the comprehensive plan.

Focus Groups/Workshops – The City will conduct small scale focus group workshops with targeted members of the community.

Surveys – The City will conduct surveys to receive feedback throughout the update process.

Public Comments – Comment forms will be available online, at City Hall, and at all public meetings, community events and activities.

Public Hearings – Public hearings will be held by both the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption. Written and oral testimony will be accepted at public hearings.

Engagement Matrix

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">WebsiteNewsletterSocial MediaPublic Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SurveysOpen HousesPublic CommentsCommunity Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advisory GroupsFocus GroupsWorkshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community Partnerships
City will keep stakeholders informed throughout the update process.	City will listen and incorporate feedback into the update.	City will ensure concerns and needs are reflected in the update.	City will work with stakeholders throughout the update.

Timeline

