

13 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Permit (Section S5.C.4) requires the City to provide ongoing opportunities for public involvement in the SWMP and input on implementation priorities. The minimum performance measures include:

- Creating opportunities for the public to participate in the decision-making process involving development, implementation and update of the SWMP.
- Making the SWMP and the required annual report available to the public on the City's web site. All other Permit-required submittals shall be available to the public upon request.

Public Participation Program

The City provides a variety of opportunities for public involvement in the stormwater management program. Public comments on budget, Stormwater Codes and the SWMP also help to refine ongoing development of stormwater management activities. SPU is the lead City department responsible for implementing the public involvement and participation program for the SWMP and Permit-related activities. The City Council provides opportunities for public participation in public hearings. The public has several means of participating in the SWMP development process and associated activities, as described below.

City Budget Process. The City budget process provides opportunities for public input on how monies are allocated for implementation of NPDES-related stormwater management. Adoption of the City Budget - one of the most important products of the work of City Council - always requires public hearings to be scheduled on two or more days. All meetings are held in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. The public is encouraged to attend Council meetings, hear the debate, and offer public comment on issues. The City Council meeting schedule and methods for providing comments are listed on the City Council's web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/council/default.htm>.

Public Participation during SWMP Development. SPU facilitates several citizen advisory groups that provide an on-going opportunity for citizens to participate in planning and development of policies and programs and to advise SPU and other pertinent City entities of its findings and recommendations. SPU will continue to engage citizen advisory groups to provide a diversity of viewpoints on implementation of stormwater management activities.

To provide for additional public input beyond that provided by the stakeholder groups, SPU has created a stormwater management web site to host an electronic version of the SWMP and other related stormwater management information and documents (<http://www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/DrainageSewer/AbouttheDrainageSewerSystem/StormwaterManagementPlan/index.htm>). In addition, the web site provides contact information (swmp@seattle.gov) for citizens to provide comments and ask questions.

Public Participation during Code and Directors Rules Revision

Beginning in January 2013, a series of meetings has been conducted to inform interested stakeholders about proposed updates to the 2009 Stormwater Code. These meetings covered modifications that are being proposed both as part of the "2015 Revision of Stormwater Code" and the "2016 Stormwater Code Update". These meetings included representatives of the business community, development interests, environmental advocacy groups, engineering and consulting firms, community groups, and other local and state regulators.

The addendum to the Stormwater Code and Rule Update SEPA Environmental Checklist was posted on June 25, 2015. A public meeting about the 2016 Stormwater Manual was held at the Seattle Municipal Tower on June 10, 2015. The final draft of the Stormwater Manual was made available in September 2015 and advertised in the Daily Journal of Commerce. A public meeting was held on September 30, 2015. People who attended the meetings represented various engineering and architecture firms, as well as City of Seattle staff. The attendees provided valuable feedback and questions during the comment period. The updated Stormwater Code and Stormwater Manual were effective January 1, 2016. Information of the public process can be found at:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codesrules/changestocode/stormwatercode/whatwhy/default.htm>.