



King County Flood Management Plan

Partner Planning Committee

Meeting #5 – April 18, 2023

Meeting Agenda (10:30 – 12:30)

Topic	Time	Speaker	Affiliation
Welcome and Introductions	10:30 – 10:35		
Public Comment	10:35 – 10:45		
Presentation: Flood Plan Policies	10:45 – 11:15	Steve Bleifuhs, Jason Wilkinson	King County Water and Land Resources Division
Breakout Rooms: Flood Plan Policies	11:15 – 11:40		
Committee Discussion: Flood Plan Policies	11:40 – 12:10		
Presentation: Introduction to Evaluating Actions	12:10 – 12:20	Spencer Easton	Environmental Science Associates
Wrap Up	12:20 – 12:30		

Meeting Objectives:

- To solicit initial input from the Committee on the Flood Plan's approach to policies and on specific policy recommendations.
- To introduce evaluation criteria that can be used to assess actions proposed for inclusion in the Flood Plan.

Partner Planning Committee process



Legend

★ =
current topic

Committee
Input

External to
Committee



Opportunity for Public Comment



Flood plan policies

What We've Done	Objectives for Today	What Happens Next
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Today's meeting is the first formal discussion of flood plan policies with the Partner Planning Committee, although several policy topics were raised in previous meetings.• Introduced flood plan policies to King County's interdepartmental Internal Planning Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce flood plan policies.• Begin to discuss policies, with a specific focus on priorities for the new flood plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County Internal Planning Committee work session (May).• Partner Planning Committee continues discussion in months to come.

Flood plan policies

- Contained in the 1993 and 2006 Flood Hazard Management Plans – not updated as part of 2013 plan update.
- Policies set the course for work program priorities and project decisions.
- Connection to King County Comprehensive Plan:
 - *E-499r: King County's floodplain land use and floodplain management activities shall be carried out in accordance with policies, programs and projects detailed in the King County Flood Hazard Management Plan.*

Flood plan policies

- 2006 policies tend to fall into three categories—big picture policy statements, project design guidance, and operations. They address topics such as:
 - Geographic scope of plan
 - Compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program and state requirements
 - Floodplain land use and development standards
 - Property acquisition
 - Management of large wood, sediment
 - Capital project design, maintenance, and monitoring

Application of flood plan policies

- Policies contained in the County's flood plans built upon the goals and objectives to form a set of operating principles and mission statements, and help frame priorities when taking action.
- Collectively the policies are used to guide coordinated efforts to reduce the risk of flooding, protect people and property, and promote resilience in the face of flood events.
- The policies guide decision-making and actions for coordinating actions among agencies, including emergency responders, local government, and community organizations.
- Become foundation for code development to implement the goals and objectives on the policy.

Four major focus areas of current flood plan policies

1. Risk assessment and mapping: Identification of areas at risk of flooding, including flood-prone and channel migration areas, used to guide land-use decisions, project design, and inform emergency planning efforts.
2. Flood risk reduction infrastructure: Provide guidance on the design, construction, and maintenance of infrastructure such as levees, revetments, pump stations, and drainage systems to minimize the impact of flooding on the county's residents, businesses, and infrastructure.

Four major focus areas of current flood plan policies

3. Education and outreach: Emphasizing the importance of public education and community outreach in reducing flood risk by providing information about flood hazards, flood insurance, and steps that individuals and communities can take to prepare before, during, and after floods.
4. Emergency response: Guide emergency flood warning, emergency response, and communication protocols to ensure the County and its partners are prepared to respond quickly and effectively during a flood event.

Updating flood plan policies

- 2006 policy framework is extensive – likely more extensive than necessary.
 - Policies that address capital project guidelines or operational activities can be covered elsewhere in the plan.
- Flood plan should provide guidance to the county's flood risk reduction work and floodplain management decision-making.
- Looking to 2006 policies as a starting point for conversation but can set them aside if they aren't useful.

Updating flood plan policies

- Themes we've heard thus far:
 - Flooding occurs throughout King County and affects a wide range of different land uses, and the causes are numerous and interrelated.
 - Patterns of flooding are changing, and changes should be expected to continue in ways that will result in greater impact if not addressed.
 - The negative impacts of flooding disproportionately affect certain groups more than others.
 - Flooding provides beneficial functions, and some land uses are compatible with flooding.

Updating flood plan policies

- Themes we've heard thus far:
 - Solutions should be comprehensive and look for ways that address the limitations of legacy infrastructure while also supporting natural processes where possible.
 - Solutions should be resilient to the impacts expected from climate change.
 - Communities should be engaged in developing solutions, and greater coordination among government agencies is needed to improve overall effectiveness.
 - The flood plan should be able to be adapted as new information becomes available.

Updating flood plan policies

- Based on what we've heard, policies could focus on topics such as:
 - Geographic scope.
 - Regulatory obligations.
 - Integrated floodplain management, including climate-resilient solutions and promoting natural functions where possible.
 - Equity and social justice and ensuring those most impacted are served by the plan.
 - Role of county agencies and interagency coordination.

Approach to updating flood plan policies

- Policies should tie back to the plan's goals and objectives and be consistent with certain sideboards:
 - Compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - Commitments under the Endangered Species Act, including habitat restoration.
 - Consistency with other priority county initiatives:
 - Strategic Climate Action Plan
 - Clean Water Healthy Habitat
 - Land Conservation Initiative
 - Local Food Initiative

Approach to updating flood plan policies

- Discussions with Internal Planning Committee and Partner Planning Committee will inform draft policies.
- Policies will be vetted with King County leadership to ensure consistency with county priorities and existing policies/plans.
- Policies will be included in the draft flood plan, subject to public comment, and in the final plan transmitted to King County Council.
- Reminder: the policies apply across King County, and all are asked to bring this lens to the conversation.

Breakout Rooms

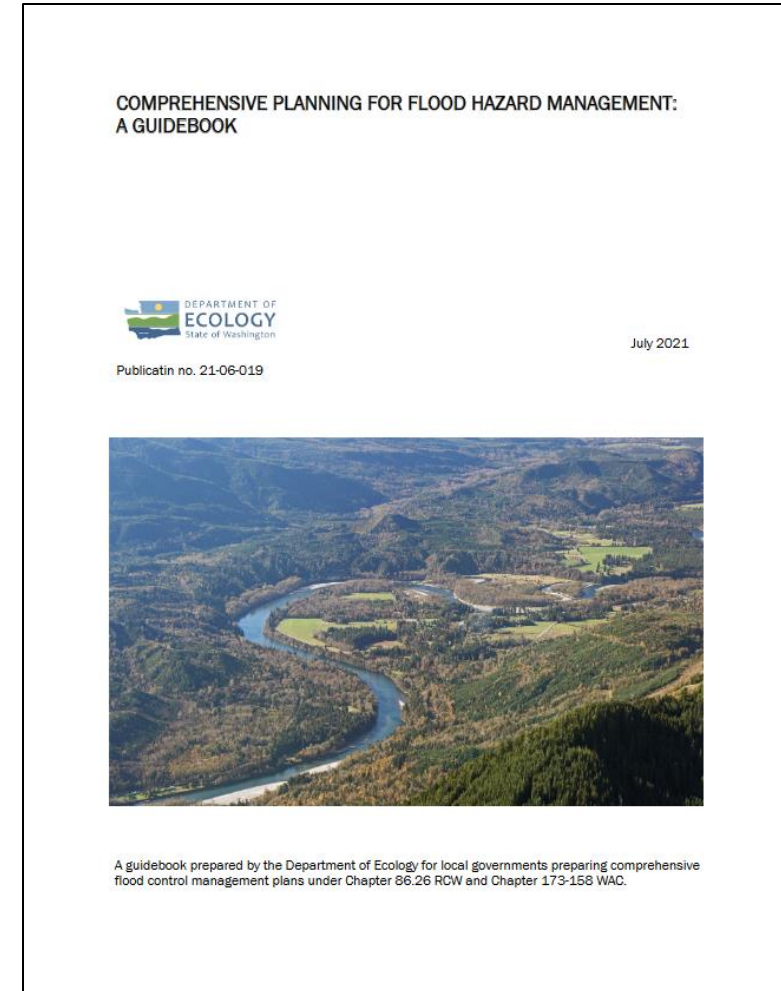
- We will split into 3 breakout rooms for 25 minutes, then reconvene to discuss as a full group.
 - We do not expect each group to reach consensus.
 - A King County staff member is assigned to record the conversation in each room.
- In your breakout room, please consider the following questions:
 - Do you agree with an approach that reduces the number of policies and focuses on high-level direction?
 - Which topics and which categories of activities should be covered by policies?
 - What are the top 3 policies from the 2006 Flood Plan that you recommend carrying forward?
 - What are 3 new policies that should be considered for the new flood plan?
 - What policies from the 2006 Flood Plan should not be carried forward or need revision?

Evaluation of actions

What We've Done	Objectives for Today	What Happens Next
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Today's conversation is the first discussion of how we will evaluate actions for inclusion in the flood plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the topic to the Partner Planning Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upcoming Partner Planning Committee meetings will include time to discuss and provide input on how we evaluate actions for inclusion in the flood plan.

Evaluation of actions

- Actions, strategies, and measures are evaluated for their appropriateness for addressing flood risks.
- Washington State Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Planning Guidebook includes guidance for evaluating alternatives for inclusion in a flood plan.



Evaluation considerations (state guidebook)

- Technical suitability of alternative to solving problem
- Preliminary reliance on non-structural measures and ecological restoration
- Environmental impacts or benefits
- Climate change and future conditions
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Consistency with local salmon recovery plan
- Environmental justice
- Consistency with applicable policies, and the goals and objectives established for the CFHMP
- Consistency with the Principles of Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management
- Permits and approvals that will be required to implement the measures
- Cost of implementation, including land acquisition, design, permitting, mitigation, and project management, construction, and life cycle costs
- Expected ongoing inspection, maintenance, and repair needs

Principles of comprehensive flood hazard management

1. Focus on Non-Structural Alternatives and Ecological Restoration
2. Respect for Rivers' Natural Processes
3. Focus on the Cause of Damage
4. Integrated Floodplain Management
5. Consideration of Entire Watershed, Not Just Local Conditions
6. Public Participation and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
7. Coordination among Public Works, Planning, and Building Departments and Other Department Activities
8. Interagency and Stakeholder Coordination
9. Planning Process-oriented Examination of Issues
10. Consideration of Future Conditions
11. Consideration of Tribal Rights
12. Consideration of Environmental Justice
13. Integration with Other Flood Hazard Management Programs and Grants
14. Incorporation of Comprehensive Planning Solutions

Evaluation considerations: next steps

- We will schedule a discussion of evaluation considerations, with opportunity to provide input, at an upcoming Partner Planning Committee meeting.
- The Internal Planning Committee will also provide input to the project team.
- Input of both committees will be considered when evaluating actions, strategies, and measures for inclusion in the flood plan.
- The Partner Planning Committee will also weigh in on each step of identifying, evaluating, and documenting actions, strategies, and measures.

Next steps

- Next meeting: April 18, 2023 – 10:30-12:30
- Contact us:
 - Jason Wilkinson, jason.wilkinson@kingcounty.gov
 - Spencer Easton, seaston@esassoc.com
- Website:
 - www.kingcounty.gov/floodplan