

Critical Areas Ordinance Update

Study Session

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City of Bellevue



Direction

Staff is seeking feedback on the key topic areas where code changes are being suggested for review as draft is being developed.



Agenda



What are Critical Areas



Critical Areas Update Process



Critical Areas Update Scope



Outreach & Next Steps



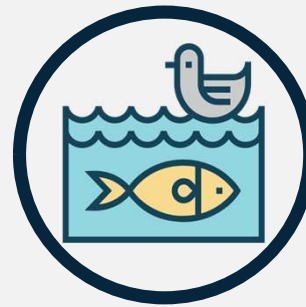
What are Critical Areas Regulations?

Growth Management Act requires designation and protection of five Critical Areas:

Conserve the functions of:



Wetlands



**Fish & Wildlife Habitat
Conservation Areas**



**Critical Aquifer
Recharge Areas**

Protect the public from:



Geological Hazards

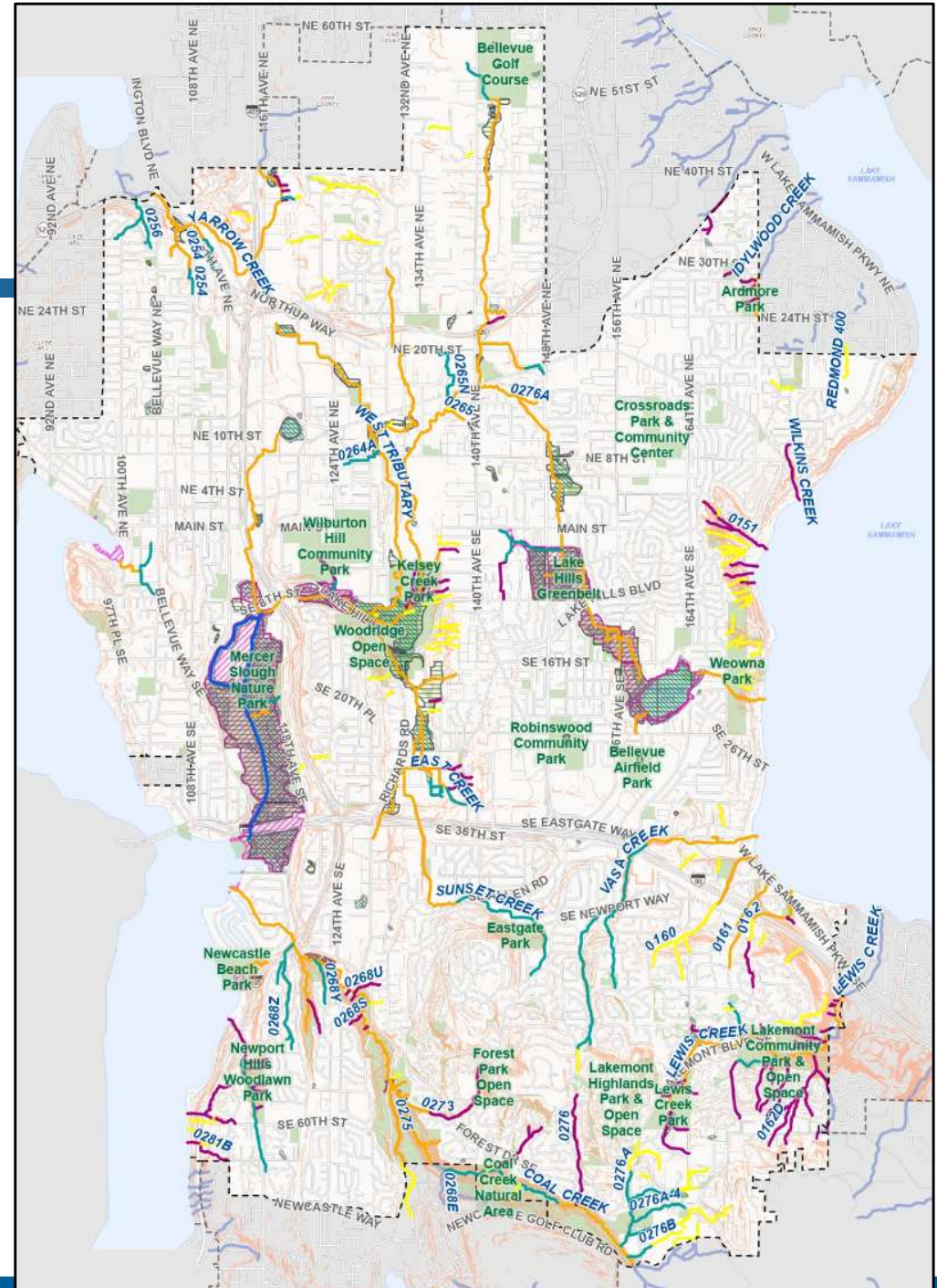


Flood Hazard Areas




Bellevue's Critical Areas

- Steep Slopes
- Streams
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Priority Habitat Areas



CAO Update Process

- ① **Policy Directive**
Periodic review of CAO required under Growth Management Act
- ② **Best Available Science**
Document scientific sources that inform CAO
- ③ **Gap Analysis**
Identify regulations that need updates based on science/changes to law



Proposed LUCA
Draft LUCA for public review



CAO Update: Sources

Amendments to the CAO informed by:



State and
Regional Policy



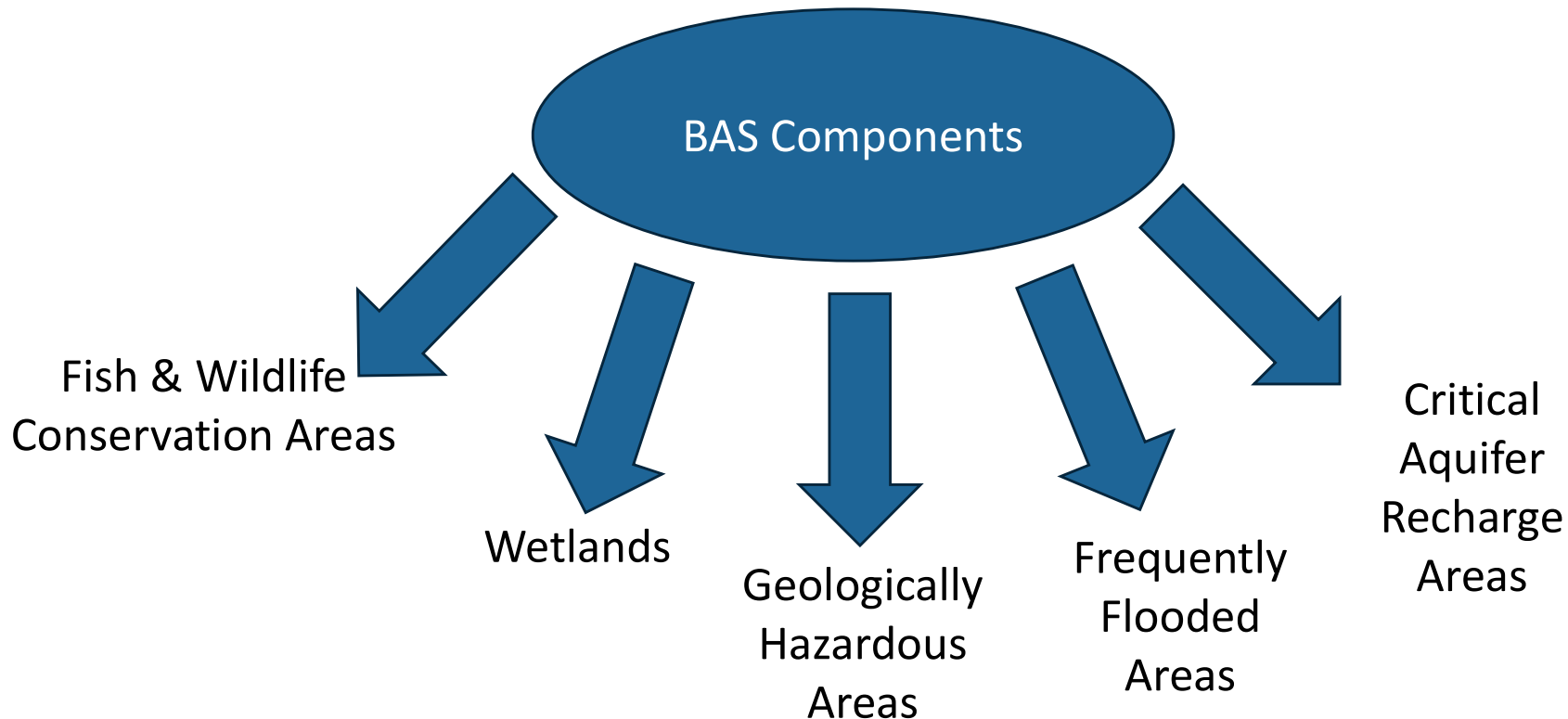
Scientific
Research



Input from residents,
neighborhood associations,
Tribes, community
organizations



Best Available Science (BAS)



Climate Change Impacts: Mitigation and Management



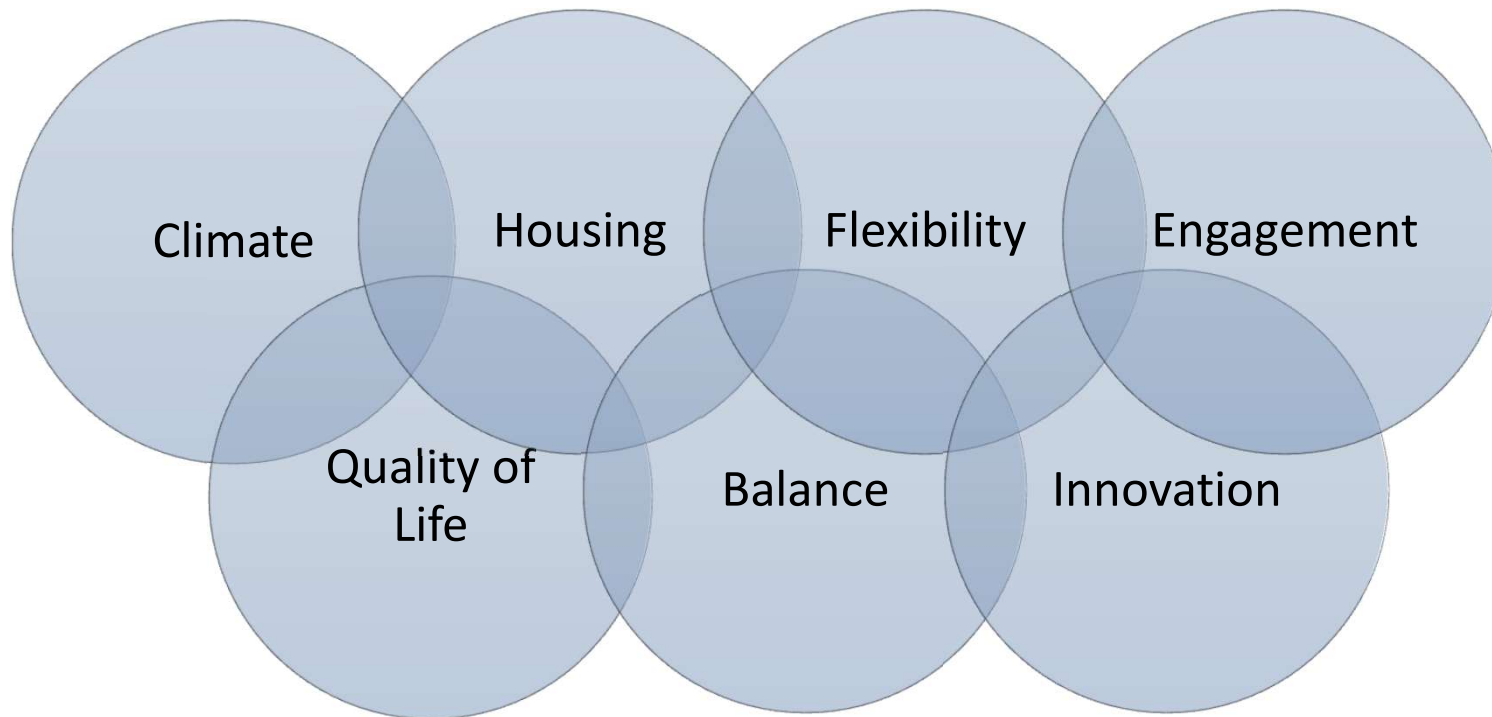
LUCA Priorities & Objectives

- Align with the latest state/regional requirements and Best Available Science
- Engage the community
- Balance housing and growth priorities
- Improve the usability of the CAO for staff and applicants
- Enhance data accuracy and mapping



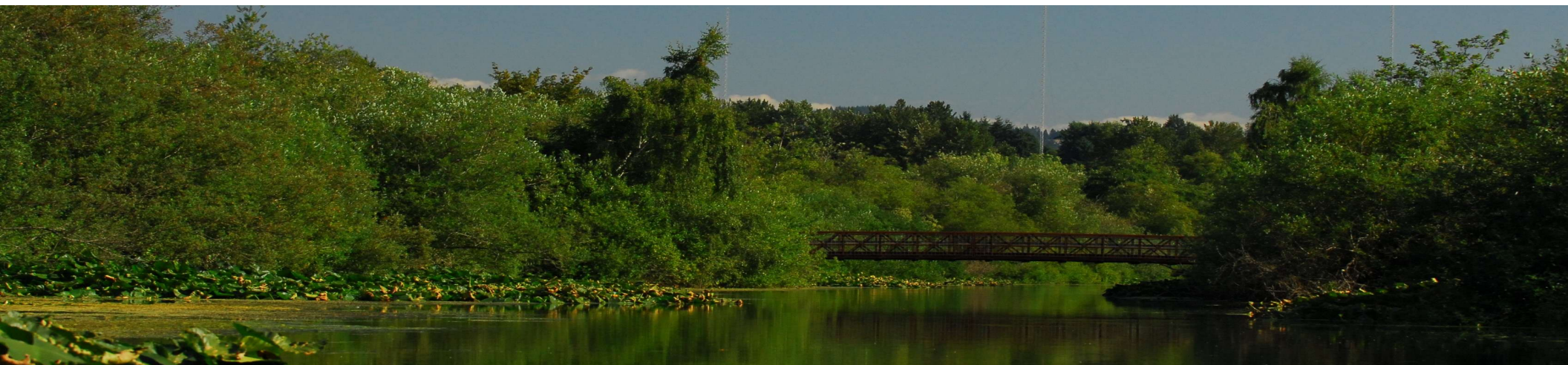
City Council Initiation

Key Themes from February 25 Initiation:



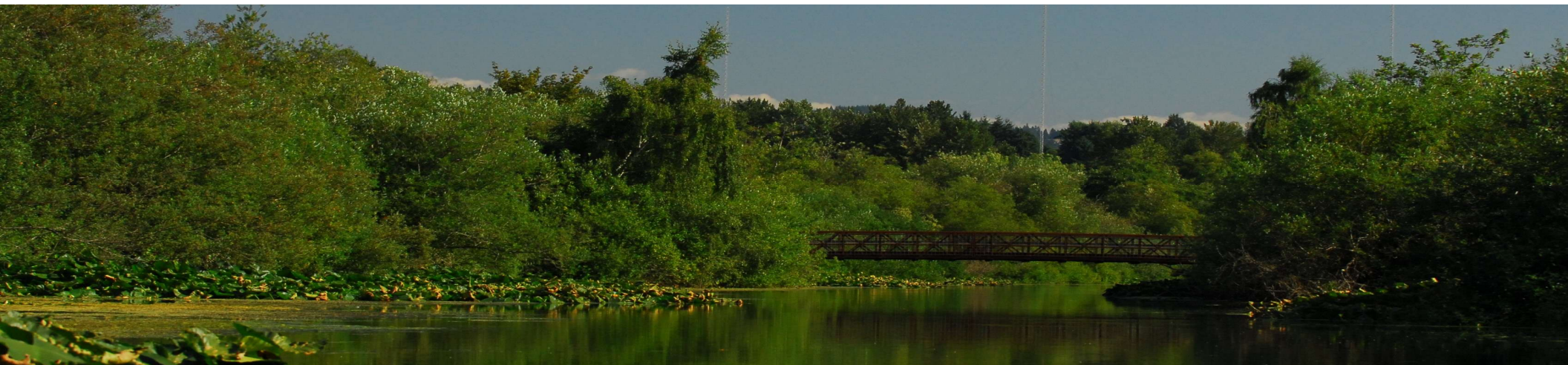
LUCA Scope - Definitions

- “Top-of-bank” versus “ordinary high water mark”
- Steep slope
- Undeveloped and developed site
- Urban streams



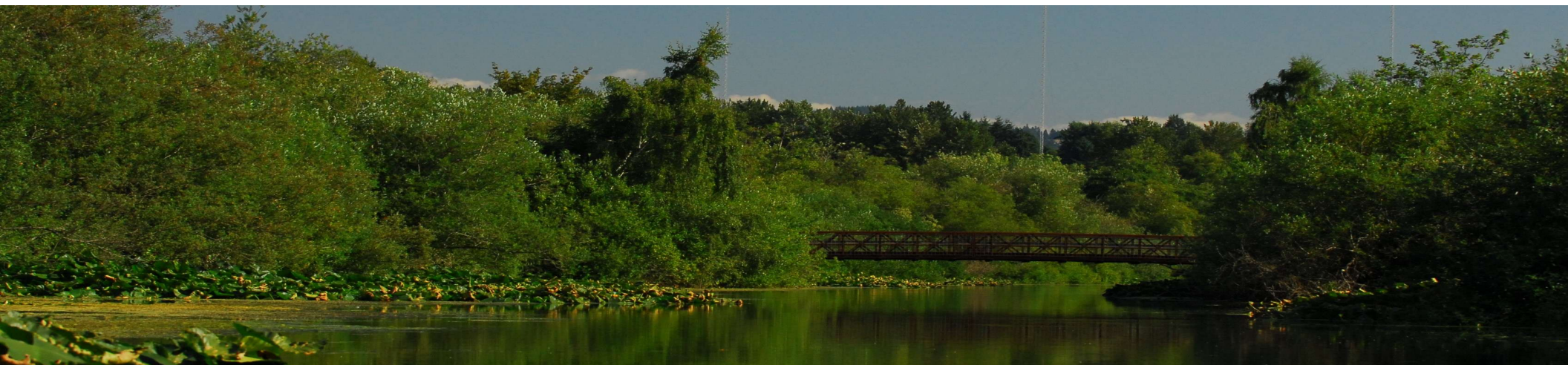
LUCA Scope Cont'd

- Refine buffer, structure setback, and mitigation requirements for all critical areas.
- Evaluate methods to distinguish between human-made and naturally occurring steep slopes.



LUCA Scope Cont'd

- Urban streams and daylighting
 - Balancing improvements to urban streams with residential development
- Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas



LUCA Scope Cont'd

- Explore updates or alternatives to the current density calculation approach.
- Improve critical areas report process and simplify performance standards and permit decision criteria.



Engagement Approach



Best Available
Science review



Two community
workshops



Input from residents,
neighborhood associations,
Tribes, community organizations



Project website
and virtual info
sessions



Coordination
with Ecology,
WDFW, and
Commerce



Environmental
Groups & Bellevue
Development
Committee



Community Workshops & Info Sessions

- Booth at April 19 Earthfest Event
- Two planned community workshops
 - Discuss Best Available Science
 - Gather input changes and approach
- One planned info session sharing draft LUCA

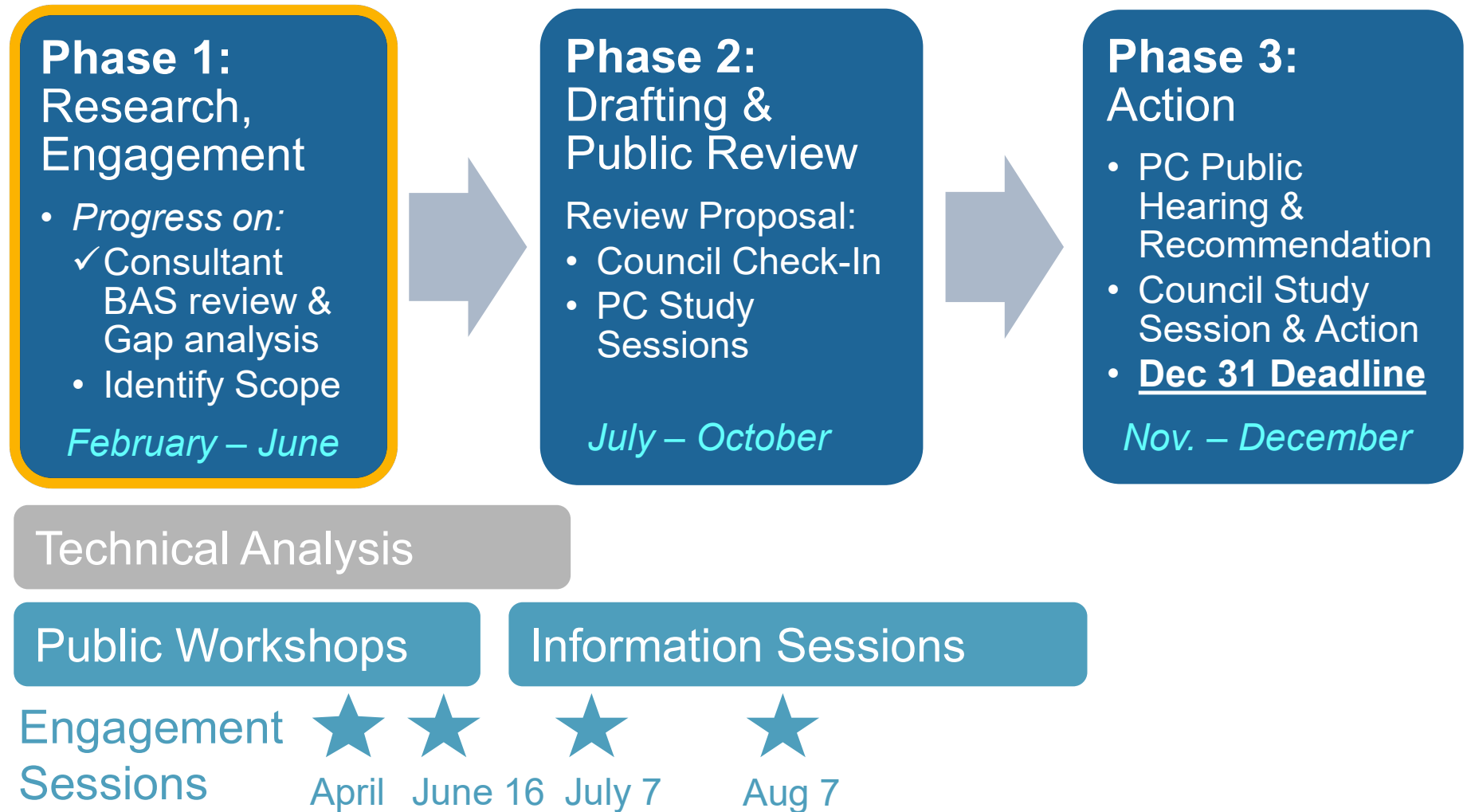


Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage environmental groups and Bellevue Development Committee
- Ongoing engagement with neighborhood associations
- Coordinate with Ecology, WDFW, and Commerce



Next Steps





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