



Imagine Monroe Communications and Outreach Plan

Last updated: May 4, 2021

Overview

The Imagine Monroe Visioning Project is a citywide, collaborative, community driven project to update the City of Monroe's (the City's) vision, mission, and core values statements. The goal is to adopt new vision, mission and core values statements to guide the City's long-range strategic plans.

The plan below outlines the outreach and communications strategies the City, along with their outreach and engagement consultant, EnviroIssues, and the Imagine Monroe Sounding Board will use to reach and engage with the Monroe community. This plan is informed by a robust community assessment that was completed by EnviroIssues between January to March 2021. To learn more about the assessment phase of work please see the Assessment Phase Summary.

Purpose of community engagement

Through this visioning process, the City wants to encourage engagement and spark the interest of people connected to Monroe with a wide variety of lived experiences to learn what they want the future of Monroe to be. By engaging the community, the City hopes to generate new ideas and discussions about the built environment, sustainability, sense of place, and the City's overall identity. Discussions will help facilitate the revision of the City's mission, vision and core value statements which will provide guidance as the City begins the comprehensive planning process in late 2021 to transform these aspirational ideas into realistic and achievable targets.

The City, with the help of EnviroIssues and the Imagine Monroe Sounding Board, will implement a public involvement strategy that aims to:

- Provide clear and concise information to project audiences.
- Reflect all voices in the community.
- Be inclusive of historically underrepresented communities.
- Remove and/or lower barriers of participation to collect input (e.g., low time commitments, offer incentives, small group events, provide childcare when in-person gatherings resume).
- Offer a variety of digital and print notifications.
- Directly reach the communities we seek to engage.
- Understand and respond to the impacts of COVID-19.
- Report back on how community input was used to develop the City's new vision, mission, and core values statements.

Key messages

- The City's vision, mission and core values are meant to provide a "north star" for all elected and appointed officials, employees, and partners. These statements are succinct and provide an aspirational picture of what a City aims to achieve through their comprehensive planning.

- The City’s current vision statement was adopted in 2015 during the last comprehensive planning process and states the City’s desire to: welcome people of all demographics, improve downtown, improve highway commercial districts, leverage connection to Skykomish River, keep neighborhoods vital, safe, and attractive, improve traffic circulation, and keep Monroe compact.
- Over the past several years, Monroe has experienced increasing growth with new local businesses opening and more people moving into the area. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented Monroe with new challenges that are not yet fully understood.
- The last vision statement adopted in 2015 was developed without broad community participation. The Imagine Monroe Project aims to reach people in Monroe with many different lived experiences to understand their current values and vision for the City so they are accurately reflected in the updated vision, mission and core values statements.
- Through this public engagement process, the City seeks to better understand:
 - Input on what the City’s new vision statement should include, represent, look/feel, etc.
 - Core values that are important to the community.
 - Why people choose to live, work and play in Monroe.
- Feedback collected from the community will be used to create the updated vision, mission and core values statements that will be presented to City Council, finalized, and adopted. During the comprehensive planning process, expected to begin in late 2021, the City will use these statements to develop a framework for policy and decision making over the next thirty years.

Equity and inclusion

Based on demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau for 2018, the City of Monroe’s population is 82% White/Caucasian, 19% Latinx, 8% bi-racial, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander, and .8% Black. Given that 19% of the population is Latinx, it will be important to provide materials in Spanish to reach a wider audience.

During the community assessment phase, EnviroIssues and the City also heard that there are a limited number of people connected to the Monroe Boys and Girls Club and Evergreen Health Monroe who would benefit from having materials translated into Russian.

Digital notifications will be ADA accessible and screen reader friendly. Both printed and digital materials will include Spanish translations to reach the Latinx community. Google translate will be available on web-based materials for people who speak Russian and other languages.

Audiences

The City is looking for input from the following individuals and groups, including but not limited to:

- People who live in Monroe, both for long-term and short-term durations.
- People who visit or recreate in Monroe.
- People from all income levels.
- People who do not speak English as a first language.
- Social service providers who serve historically underrepresented communities, including people of color, low-income and those currently experiencing homelessness.
- Community organizations.
- Faith-based organizations.
- Veterans.
- Seniors.
- Youth.

- Local business owners and employees, including businesses owned by people of color.
- People who work in and have knowledge of important local sectors such as agricultural, real estate and development and historic preservation.

See Appendix A for a detailed stakeholder list.

Sounding Board

To ensure this process equitably reflects all voices in Monroe, the City has convened an [Imagine Monroe Sounding Board](#), comprised of representatives with a variety of lived experiences. The Sounding Board will meet several times throughout community outreach and engagement to help guide the implementation of the communications plan. They will also participate in outreach activities to assist in reaching the networks they represent. After community feedback has been collected, the Sounding Board will ultimately work together to recommend revised vision, mission and core values statements to Mayor Geoffrey Thomas and the City Council.

Engagement phase

Outreach and engagement for the Imagine Monroe project is designed for participants to give feedback in a variety of settings, including in-person¹, online, and in virtual group discussions. In partnership with the Imagine Monroe Sounding Board and the EnviroIssues team, the City will use the methods below to inform and engage the Monroe community in various outreach activities. Sounding Board members will use their existing relationships to network and help share project information with the community.

The engagement phase will kick off in June 2021 and last for up to 4 weeks. The updated vision, mission and core values statements will be presented to Mayor Thomas and the City Council in September 2021.

Digital tools:

Online survey:

- An online survey will be developed to collect community input on the project. Responses will help guide the development of the draft mission, vision and core value statements.
- The survey will be transcreated into Spanish.
- The survey will be accessible through the project website.

Project website:

- The existing project website will serve as the central hub of information, where stakeholders can learn about the project, learn about opportunities to engage, and participate in the online survey.
- The project website will be transcreated into Spanish and feature a Google Translate button, to translate the information to other languages.
- Regular updates will be published to the project website to ensure the latest information is available.
- The project website URL will be featured on all digital and print materials.

Social media and digital ad campaign:

- Social media:

¹ COVID-19 disclaimer: Since large gatherings may be restricted, input opportunities may be limited to digital platforms, such as web surveys and virtual meetings. Planned in-person events may be subject to change. If in-person events can occur, project staff will use necessary safety precautions, abiding state and public health official guidelines for social distancing.

- Social media posts will begin after online survey has launched. Additional posts will occur leading up to outreach events and share frequent reminders to participate in the survey during the engagement phase.
- Posts may be promoted or boosted on the City's Facebook and Instagram to broaden reach.
- Sounding Board members are encouraged to share the City's social media posts with their networks to reach a broader audience, including connecting to neighbors through platforms such as posting on Nextdoor and local Facebook groups.
- The City can work directly with other departments to help amplify the City's social media posts through their own Facebook pages (e.g., Monroe Public Schools).
- Digital ads:
 - Digital ads will be featured in local online publications, such as the Snohomish Tribune and The Herald.
 - Digital ads will begin after the survey has launched and will continue to run throughout the engagement phase.
 - Ads will be available in English and Spanish.

Project email updates:

- Project email updates will be distributed around key events, such as the launch of the online survey, notice of outreach events, reminders to participate in the survey before close and a thank you/next steps email.
- Sounding Board members are encouraged to forward email updates to their networks to help reach a broader audience and encourage them to sign up to receive future emails.
- A link to sign up for project email updates will be featured in the newsletter, the online survey, social media posts and other materials as fitting.

Virtual briefings:

- Virtual briefings will be offered to community organizations, social service providers and other interested groups to share project information and collect feedback. See Appendix A for a list of groups the City seeks to engage.
- Sounding Board members can help connect the City to community groups who may be interested in receiving a briefing.

Mayor's weekly newsletter:

- A short blurb about the project and opportunities to engage will be featured in the Mayor's weekly newsletter throughout the engagement phase.
- Sounding Board members are encouraged to forward newsletters to their networks to help broaden reach.

Materials:

Newsletter:

- A project newsletter will be mailed to all residents and businesses within the City limits and in unincorporated areas directly outside City limits. The newsletter will include project information, opportunities to engage and an interactive poem and coloring page.
- The newsletter will include Spanish translations.
- Newsletters will arrive the week the online survey launches.
- Newsletters will be available as a take-home handout at outreach events, City Hall and delivered to select businesses and community centers in the City (i.e. senior living facilities, public library, etc.)
- Poems and coloring pages can be submitted to the project email address and uploaded to the City's Facebook page.

Paper survey:

- A paper survey will be developed that mirrors the online survey to collect feedback from people who do not have Internet access or who wish to engage through non-digital platforms.
- The survey will be available in English and Spanish.
- Paper surveys will be included at in-person outreach events.
- Responses to the paper survey can be delivered in-person at City Hall.
- City staff will also be available to help people fill out the survey over the phone.

Press release:

- A press release will be distributed once the online survey has launched to notify audiences about the project and the opportunity to solicit input.

PowerPoint presentation:

- A PowerPoint presentation will be developed by the City to share with organizations at community briefings.

In-person activities:

Pop-up outreach events:

- Pop-up events will be held at key gathering places, such as Skykomish River Park and the Monroe Farmers Market. Staff will implement necessary safety measures to abide by state and public health official guidelines for social distancing.
- Events will be an opportunity for people to talk to project staff and/or Sounding Board members, share their input and take home project materials (i.e., newsletter).
- Events will be held on a variety of weekend and weekdays to help reach a broader audience.
- Sounding Board members are invited to help staff the event and promote the events to their networks through social media channels, word of mouth, email, etc.

Partner with existing neighborhood/community groups:

- Sounding Board members will be encouraged to join existing neighborhood group meetings they have relationships with to share project information and collect feedback to share with the City.
- Sounding Board members will be encouraged to leverage their existing relationships in the community to increase project awareness through various platforms such as:
 - Sharing/boosting the City's social media posts.
 - Forwarding project email updates and/or the Mayor's weekly email updates that include information about the project.
 - Share information through word of mouth.

Resources for people to learn more or get in touch with the City:

- Visit the [project website](#).
- Subscribe for [project email updates](#).
- Subscribe to the [Mayor's weekly newsletter](#).
- Follow the [City's Facebook page](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).
- Email Imagine@monroewa.gov.
- Call (360)-913-0875 to speak with Deborah Knight, the City Administrator.

Next steps

After collecting feedback from the community on hopes and dreams for the future City of Monroe, feedback will be used to develop updated mission, vision and core values statements that will be presented to City Council, finalized, and adopted. During the comprehensive planning process, expected to begin in late 2021, the City will use these statements to develop a framework for policy and decision making over the next thirty years.

Appendix A: Stakeholder list

Name	Audience type	Recommended by
American Legion	Veterans	EnvirolIssues
Boys and Girls Club	Social services	Focus group
Ben Franklin	Business	Focus group
Cocoon House	Social services for youth currently experiencing homelessness	EnvirolIssues
Department of Corrections	Government	EnvirolIssues
Downtown Monroe Association	Community organization	City
Economic Advisory Board	Advisory Board	City
Engage with the following Facebook groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose Monroe (Monroe Chamber of Commerce) Familias de Monroe Mujeres Latinas Moms of Monroe Monroe Public Schools Monroe neighborhood Fryelands Monroe Police Department Let it Fly Monroe 	Residents	Focus groups
Engage with NextDoor groups by neighborhood	Residents	Focus group
Fryelands and US2 area businesses	Business	Focus group
Evergreen Drub Rehab	Social services	Focus group
EvergreenHealth	Hospital	Focus group
Evergreen State Fairgrounds	Business	EnvirolIssues
Gino's	Business	Focus group
Jump Rattle and Roll	Business	Focus group
Korean business owners	Business	EnvirolIssues
Latinas con Actitud	Media	Focus group
Latinx business owners	Business	EnvirolIssues
Matthew House	Social services	EnvirolIssues
Monroe Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce	City
Monroe Community Senior Center	Seniors	EnvirolIssues
Monroe Equity Council	Community organization	Focus group
Monroe Gospel Women's Mission	Social services	Focus group
Monroe Historical Society	Community organization	EnvirolIssues
Monroe Parks Department	Government	City
Monroe Police Department	Government	City
Monroe Public School District	Government	Focus group
Saint Mary's of the Valley	Cultural/religious	Focus group
Engage with other religious groups	Cultural/religious	Focus group
Reptile Zoo	Business	Focus group
Sky Valley Food Bank	Social service provider	Focus group

Small business owners	Business	Focus group
Sno-Isle Library	Youth	City
Take the Next Step / Kidz club	Social services for youth currently experiencing homelessness	Focus group
YMCA	Social service provider; Youth	City, focus group