Seattle.gov Website Content Strategy

# Content Initiation

Ask these questions about your new web content. The answers will shape the creation of your content, its nature, placement, users, time frame, and importance.

#### WHAT

* Is the content part of a city/department process?
* Does the content share concrete info about a project or initiative?
* Does the content involve a public engagement process?

#### WHY

* How does the content serve the public?
* What customer data or public official mandate supports this?

#### WHO

* Who is the audience? The public, or solely city officials or city staff?
* If the latter, this content may be better placed on InWeb or in a document sharing environment.
* To better define audience and content, also ask:
	+ What is the main point?
	+ Why should my web readers care?
	+ What does this mean to them?
	+ What information do they need to know?

#### WHEN

* What is the life span of the content?
* If the content has a life span of less than three weeks, consider if it might be better placed in a blog, news release, social media, newsletter or listserv.
* Is the content urgent or part of an emergency situation?

#### WHERE

* Is the content topic already covered in an existing part of the website?
* Does a web page already exist for this content topic?
* If so, consider if this content can be an edit to an existing page, or, whether it may need to be a new page located adjacent to an existing page/pages. Determining factors for a new page may include:
	+ A city official mandate
	+ Length of content
	+ Requirement for a unique page URL for content promotion
	+ Etc.
* If not, consider where the new page will fit in the information architecture.

# Content Analysis

* Determine the target audiences and create personas, or use existing personas you have already created for your department.
* Create scenarios or sample tasks that users will perform.
* [**Persona and scenario examples.**](#personae)
* Decide where the content belongs in the information architecture, if it’s new. (This is also a good opportunity to evaluate whether existing content is in the right place as well.)
* Choose the content type or types (text, images, documents, video, etc.).
* Think visually. Where can graphics, images, graphs or charts assist to better present data, concepts and messages?
* Evaluate whether alternate delivery methods like print view, RSS, sharing are needed.
* Evaluate whether the content needs to be available in a mobile version.

# Content Design & Creation

* Develop the page structure, including headings, navigation, and links.
* Assign metadata terms to content, either from existing terms or creating new terms as necessary.
* Evaluate content for city and department taxonomy in the WCMS.
* Write the content, or if the requestor provided the content, edit it for plain language. Review using Seattle.gov Web Content Style Guide.
* Create low-fidelity prototypes.

# Content Management System Build-Out

* Review using Seattle.gov Web Content Quality Control Checklist.
* Obtain department Web Editor’s approval.
* Review with the department Web Team and the requestor.
* Create high-fidelity prototypes, if new content is substantially different from existing pages on the site.
* Identify WCMS schema types e.g. pages, components.
* Build the live pages and components.
* Build - or work with CityWeb to build - alternate versions such as RSS, print, mobile.

# Content Publishing

Before the new content is published, make sure:

* Metadata fields are completed correctly
* Taxonomy tags are assigned.
* An expiration or review date is set.
* Any content made obsolete by the new content is retired.

After content is built out in WCMS Production, publish the new content to QA for review before publishing to the live website.

# Content Maintenance

On the content’s expiration or review date, either expire or review the content. When you review the content, use a shortened version of the same steps you used to initiate, analyze, design and create the content originally.

If updates are required and the subject matter expert for the content does not provide the required information, the Web Editor has discretion to remove the content from the site until it can be updated.

Evaluate page view statistics and other analytics to determine usage; Web Editor makes decision (some low-traffic pages may be important to retain).

# Persona and Scenario Examples

**Persona 1**

Age: 45

Female

MBA degree.

Owns a small business, recently opened in South Lake Union.

Has access to web at work.

Uses a Mac laptop.

Scenario:

Needs business license information. What business taxes will she need to pay?

Our goal:

Can she use our Seattle.gov Business portal to get to the business license and tax info she needs?

**Persona 2**

Age: 23

Male

BFA degree.

A visual artist who has recently moved to Seattle from New York City.

Scenario:

Wants to get involved in the arts scene in Seattle. Needs info on local arts programs, grants, where to meet other artists and the arts community.

Our goal:

Can he use our Seattle.gov Living in Seattle portal to get to the arts info he needs?

**Persona 3**

Age: 30 somethings.

Couple

Canadians taking a cruise to Alaska from our port.

Scenario

They have a few extra days to spend in Seattle. Looking for interesting tours, food, neighborhoods to explore.

Our goal:

Can they use our Seattle.gov Visiting Seattle portal to find what they want?

**Persona 4**

Age: 17

Female.

High school student in Atlanta.

Doing a school project in public engagement, and chose Seattle as her subject.

Scenario:

She wants to find out about city services, how the city government is structured, and what public engagement opportunities are available from the city.

Our goal:

Can she get to all the info she needs through our Seattle.gov portal pages? Will she need to use more than one portal section? Which ones? How clear is it where the info is located? How many stops will she need to make?