

## **II. VISION STATEMENT**

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### **SUMNER: THE VISION**

Today, Sumner is bound together by its community pride, respect for neighbors, agricultural and small town heritage, and support for small businesses as well as industry, and concern for the environment. We recognize that there are community needs -- the improvement of the Downtown business area, repair of streets and sidewalks, management of traffic, along with adequate public services and parks. Our vision for the coming decades enhances our positive community ties, quality of life, and addresses community needs. We share and support this vision for the year 2024.

### **THE COMMITMENT**

In 2024, Sumner shows strongly its unique "small town" characteristics and appeal even in the face of a changing world. Through ongoing cooperation and communication between citizens, business, industry, schools, and local government, an environment exists which reflects the community's pride in itself. This environment embodies our agricultural heritage, our desire for open space, our promotion of quality education, our community interaction, and our readiness for the future.

In order to maintain this environment our community upholds responsible commitments in planning for our physical layout, the character of our residential districts, our growth patterns, the maintenance of our parks and recreational commitments, our continued economic development, and responsible governance.

### **COMMUNITY LAYOUT**

In 2024, the streets of Sumner are primarily a gridded layout of surfaced streets with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, and with handicap access. The City promotes alleys, and the majority of garages are entered from them, making the sidewalks straight, flat and in good repair. The yards are well kept, many with various trees. Scenic views are maintained where possible. As a result of the Clean Air Act, many properties have a crystal clear view of Mt. Rainier.

It is easy to see that the owners of the homes and business buildings as well, take great pride in their possessions as well as pride in the community as a whole. Buildings and property are maintained and in good repair, designed to encourage walking and community interaction and exemplifies our small town character.

Pride in the community goes beyond the homes in the residential section, beyond the commercial section, beyond the industrial section, in fact much of the source of pride is in the ground where, due to the foresight of the City Council, administrators, and leading citizens, Sumner has developed and maintained an adequate water system and tertiary sewage treatment facility. An adequate storm water system has been completed. Utilities have been and are encouraged to place as many of their systems as is practical underground.

Sumner remains "quiet" with a small town atmosphere, by building "by-pass" roads on the east side and to the north, which connect with the North End Interchange on SR 167. Sumner is unique in that most of the traffic on the streets is local and very few of the cars or trucks pass

through. Traffic calming and other measures have been taken to reduce speeds, making streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Where appropriate, Sumner has maintained the separation of incompatible uses by using and strengthening the "Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code". Where compatible, there are areas of "mixed-use", predominately around the train station, where a mix of housing and businesses creates a vibrant and diverse living environment. New parks, recreational areas, greenbelts, and buffers have been added to the landscape of the City to define the various districts as well as provide open space and recreational opportunities.

Sumner neighborhoods are linked by a network of sidewalks, trails, bicycle routes and a small-scale inter-city transit system.

### **RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER**

In 2024, Sumner's housing is predominately owner-occupied, and the community enjoys the benefits of the pride of ownership. Primarily, residential development includes single-family and owner-occupied, attached multi-family housing. A diversity of housing styles and types is maintained and adds to the community's character and creates housing opportunities for all of life's stages. Many homes include porches or other amenities where families and neighbors interact.

In 2024, Sumner continues to be a place where we and our children can afford to live and work. The improvements envisioned in this statement shall not be allowed to create an upscale community that is beyond the financial resources of our people.<sup>1</sup> To that end, we are willing to see lot sizes decrease, if that becomes necessary, to make lots, houses, and accompanying utilities affordable to our growing population. City plans support a diversity of lot sizes and variety of housing types to meet the varied needs and lifestyles found in Sumner.

A higher density of housing that is predominately owner-occupied and keeps with the overall small town character of Sumner is concentrated in the downtown where it is in easy walking distance of downtown services and the train station.

### **GROWTH**

Sumner is the envy of many of our neighboring cities in the year 2024 as they see the results of many years of planning and a good common sense approach to enforcement of zoning and environmental laws.

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<sup>1</sup>City monthly operating expenses, and, therefore, individual taxes shall not increase to the point that living in Sumner is beyond the financial resources of our people. However, because there is not always a direct relationship between cost and quality, we realize that if the market determines that homes and other real estate is worth more in Sumner than other areas, we cannot control this factor. But we can control our homeowners' costs for City government expenses.

By listening to the people of the community, then passing and enforcing laws they desired, Sumner has been able to require that developers and individuals fill in the "vacant areas" where public utilities and services were available before allowing them to stretch out and create sprawl. Infill is the rule, as far as practical, within the limits of our growth area.

Infill, clustering, and other types of techniques assist the community in protecting valuable natural resources such as farmland, minerals, rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, unstable hillsides, and yet allow sensitive development. As appropriate to a site's constraints, lower density development is promoted in environmentally sensitive areas.

While agriculture is no longer one of the "main stays" of the area, ordinances which promote the "right-to-farm" have allowed some agriculture to still exist.

Along with desires to conserve or protect valuable resources and sensitive areas, City plans and ordinances ensure protection of property rights. Fair compensation practices are in place to compensate owners if property rights are taken for public use. Innovative programs are utilized such as transfer of development rights programs, and onsite clustering of development rights.

Through adequate planning for both jobs and housing, we strive to have a large portion of the work force living in the City and using something other than automobiles for transportation. There is a "new breed" of commuters which use commuter rail, buses, bicycles, and other choices to travel back and forth from work and shopping.

### **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

In 2024, Sumner's park system is a unification of a major sports complex, community parks, and neighborhood parks situated in the various sectors of the City. Each residential area has access to neighborhood parks which become focal points for interaction. Residents and businesses alike enjoy active recreational facilities and programs including baseball, soccer, tennis, golf, or others. Picnic areas, arenas and other amenities allow opportunities for concerts and community gatherings. Sumner's recreational facilities are linked by a network of sidewalks and linear trail systems along the Puyallup and White Rivers.

The linear trail system provides recreational pleasure for non-motorized cyclists, walkers, and joggers as well as aesthetic enjoyment of our natural resources. Linear trails separate development from riparian buffers and assist in the preservation of our natural resources. The City has reserved lands in a natural state for passive enjoyment and to benefit fish and wildlife.

Sumner's park and recreational system is designed for the benefit of all ages, including persons with physical limitations. The safety of adults and children is considered in the design, maintenance and management of system parks and recreational areas. Maintenance of the parks and linear trails is a cooperative effort of the City and community. Volunteer assistance by citizens, local organizations, and Adopt-a-Stream/Parks programs assist with the upkeep and enhancement of facilities, as well as promote community pride. Maintenance of existing recreational facilities is a priority ahead of the development of new facilities. Land is acquired as needed for future park needs. The arts are used to express the history, heritage, and

uniqueness of Sumner. Art is incorporated into the community through design and features of public spaces, entrance ways, concerts, murals, and sculptures.

Preservation of historical and cultural landmarks helps sustain our City's heritage. Historical, cultural, and educational features are linked to our recreation system such as the revival of a bandstand/gazebo in Heritage Park. The Historical Society finds support from a community aware of Sumner's history and heritage. History and heritage is also maintained through established landmark and historic programs that preserve the character of the buildings in the downtown.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

In 2024, small businesses are supported and nurtured throughout the community. Essential business services are found within walking distance of most neighborhoods. Our City policies and strategies provide opportunities for businesses which conform to our small town atmosphere.

A viable, economically stable business community is promoted which is distinct and separate from light industry and other light manufacturing and commercial areas. Planned industrial and commercial areas are encouraged and should utilize landscaping and other forms of buffering to ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

Downtown and the main commercial core of the City are enhanced with pedestrian amenities, landscape, streetscape, and other improvements which complement the efforts of Downtown businesses to create a coherent theme. These improvements play a major role in linking Downtown with West Sumner and East Main Street and help create a unified and seamless whole. New buildings along Main Street are built in close relation to the street with parking to the rear of buildings creating a place that is more welcoming to walking and interaction.

### **GOVERNANCE**

In 2024, all residences and businesses are served by full City services including water, sewer, storm drainage, fire protection, emergency medical care, police protection and others. Sumner is a community which takes financial responsibility for its needs. New development contributes its fair share towards improvements in proportion to its impacts on the community.

Local government, the school district, and private schools work together in the planning process for quality education. Good leadership and educational programs are supported. The focal point of the community becomes the local schools. The community supports integrated educational, recreational, and cultural activities at the performing arts center, stadium, gymnasium, sports complex, and other places. The school system serves Sumner, and the City boundaries are essentially the boundaries of the school district.

Communication between citizens, businesses, industry, and government enables responsive, effective, thoughtful, and fair governance. Town hall meetings provide a forum for community issues to be discussed in a relaxed setting. Sumner University and other formats are utilized to educate the citizens about their community and government. The City's website is used to communicate to the public and is a major resource for quick and reliable information. A local newspaper keeps local citizens and businesses informed and is part of an increased effort at

communication. Our cooperative spirit maintains our community pride, builds community ties, and ensures our readiness for the future.

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