

COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

As evidenced in the Vision Statement and Community Character Strategy key issues for the community include maintaining and promoting Sumner's small town atmosphere, enhancing downtown, providing beneficial employment, ensuring a compatible variety of uses, managing a reasonable rate of growth, protecting and enhancing cultural and environmental resources, providing adequate infrastructure, and promoting property maintenance, among others. This image of Sumner is consistent with the regional strategy (VISION 2020) by envisioning the City as both a town center and a manufacturing center. The variety and concentration of land uses in the downtown core, proximity to the commuter rail station, and use as a transit hub, creates a strong town center. In addition, the manufacturing and industrial development on the north end of the city has become a regional manufacturing center. The goals, policies and objectives below are based on these themes.

GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

1. *Maintain and enrich Sumner's quality of life encompassed in its friendly, small town atmosphere.*
 - 1.1 Encourage development which enhances the human, pedestrian scale, creating a sense of community and place.
 - 1.2 Endeavor to maintain a complete community, consistent and compatible in character and design, containing housing, shops, work places, schools, parks, civic facilities, and community services essential to the daily life of residents.
 - 1.3 In concert with the Sumner citizens and business community, maintain design guidelines and a design code, as appropriate, which address streetscape, landscape, and building design. Materials and methods of construction should be specific to the region, exhibit continuity of history and culture, and compatibility with the climate, protect historic and archaeological resources, and promote the community's character and identity.
 - 1.4 Implement a Zoning Code which implements the comprehensive plan and community vision.
 - 1.5 Encourage in the community a continuous commitment to maintaining Sumner's character and quality of place, including land conservation and stewardship, wise management of streetscapes and public viewsheds, property maintenance, and historic preservation.
 - 1.6 Implement design guidelines that discourage the use of franchise and corporate architecture that detracts from Sumner's unique sense of place.
 - 1.7 Preserve the single-family residential scale and historic character of existing

streetscapes through various means such as floor area ratio and setback requirements.

2. *The Sumner community should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs, and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.*

- 2.1 Establish Urban Villages in the Planning Area. A mix of uses shall be allowed. Area plans shall be prepared to indicate in more detail allowable uses, design themes, buffering, public spaces, etc.

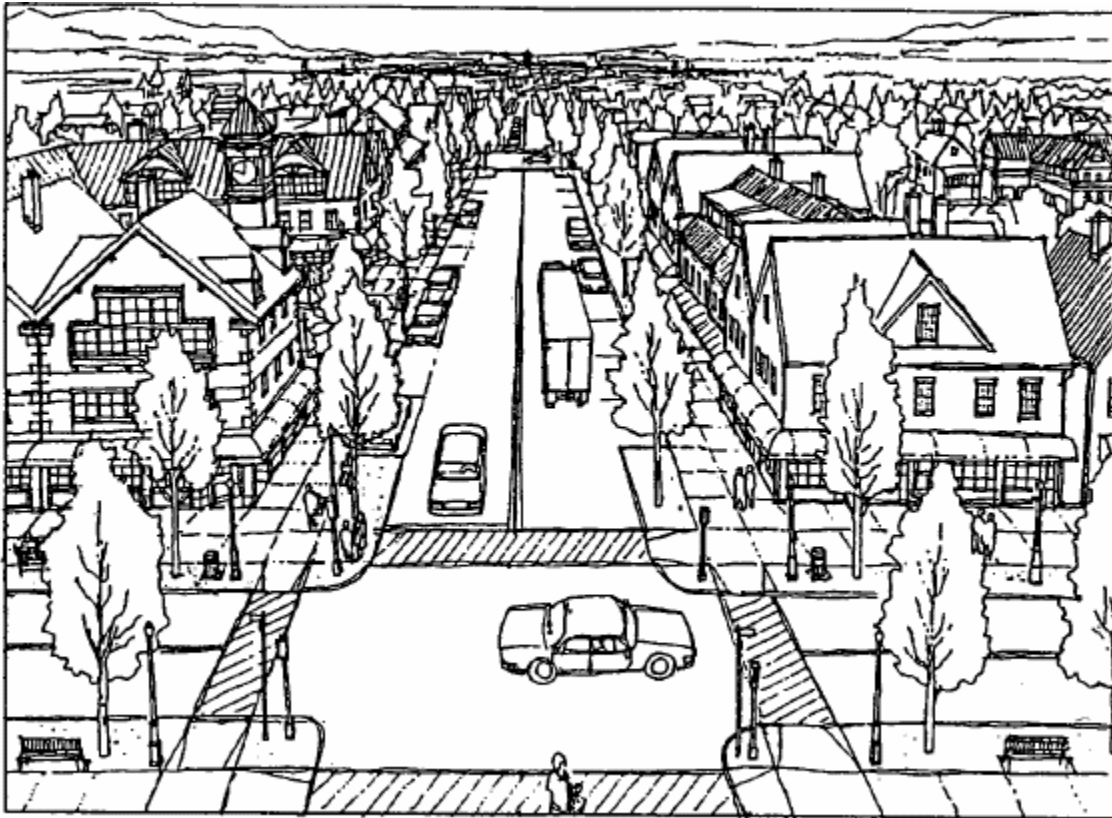


FIGURE 5: URBAN VILLAGE

- 2.2 Define neighborhoods and districts by walking distance to neighborhood centers and other community facilities.
- 2.3 Together with Pierce Transit and other agencies, establish a network of transit stops and a transit system in the neighborhoods and districts connecting to the commuter rail stations.
- 2.4 Through street standards promote pedestrian-friendly streets with trees.
- 2.5 Encourage a mix of residential-scale civic, commercial, and service uses in

neighborhood centers. Small community parks or greens shall be established where appropriate.

- 2.6 In recognition of the need for a variety of housing, allow through the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code a mix of residential uses as appropriate to the neighborhood character.

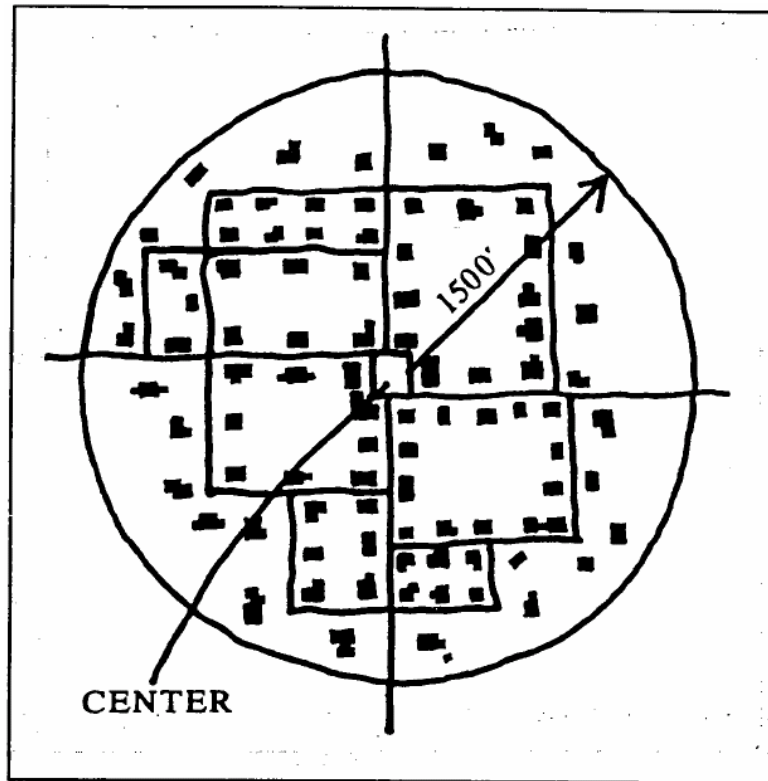


FIGURE 6: WALKING DISTANCE

Figure 7
Community Character Element Districts and Neighborhoods

Figure 8
Community Character Element Community Linkages



FIGURE 9: NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

- 2.7 In conjunction with the Sumner School District, and the Dieringer School District, encourage the location of schools within walking distance of a majority of the population they are intending to serve.
 - 2.8 Create safe walking and pedestrian crossings at major intersections through street and crosswalk design.
3. *Reinforce the downtown as the town center and commercial and cultural center of Sumner.*
- 3.1 Plan for the downtown as town center and the community core encouraging a combination of commercial, civic, cultural, recreational, and residential uses.
 - 3.2 In cooperation with Pierce Transit and the Sound Transit, establish the downtown as the intra-community transit hub and town center.
 - 3.3 Continue design review process for new and expanded uses. Any future amendments to the design regulations shall include consultation with Sumner Promotion, Sumner Historical Society, other civic groups, and citizens.
 - 3.4 Through street and design standards, promote pedestrian-scale streetscape improvements.
 - 3.5 Make a continued investment in Downtown along with property owners, businesses, Sumner Promotion and others. Working with all stakeholders, the City shall support the development of a Town Center Plan.
 - 3.6 Through the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, ensure a central role of the central business district, and limit competitive uses as appropriate.
 - 3.7 Subject to design review, encourage infill residential development in the Downtown,

such as “mixed use buildings” (multifamily units above ground-floor commercial), and “mixed use developments” (combination mixed use buildings and separate residential buildings on the same parcel), in order to allow for an active community core.



FIGURE 10: MIX OF USES

- 3.8 Work with stakeholders to visually and functionally link the Main Street Corridor from Highway 167 to the Urban Village.
- 3.9 Promote active, pedestrian-oriented retail, service, and mixed uses. Uses that require outdoor storage, provide offsite services, or have little walk-in trade as primary parts of their businesses should be oriented to secondary locations in Downtown away from Main Street and Alder Avenue.
- 3.10 Allow and encourage activities catering to a range of ages, interests, ethnicities, and other diverse attributes.
- 3.11 Encourage more housing in and near Downtown to strengthen Downtown businesses, take advantage of the commuter train, offer a range of housing in the community, and provide an active, social character.
- 3.12 Allow dining and other retail activities in the right-of-way where adequate public sidewalk widths are found.
- 3.13 Provide for community festivals, outdoor markets, performing arts, or other community events for all ages.
- 3.14 Ensure Downtown is clean, safe, and convenient.
- 3.15 Enhance “wayfinding” to and throughout Downtown. Have signs on the State routes, at gateways into Downtown, landmarks, public spaces, public parking and

other areas.

- 3.16 Improve public parking with signage, landscaping, lighting, and drainage.
- 3.17 Provide and fund maintenance of Public Restroom facilities for the Downtown Business District.
- 3.18 Maintain a high quality and attractive appearance. Work with Sumner Promotion to seasonally decorate Downtown with decorations, hanging baskets, lights, etc.
- 3.19 Prohibit franchise architecture in the Central Business District and the General Commercial zone within the Town Center.
- 3.20 Discourage, and in some cases prohibit, drive-thru businesses in the Town Center to encourage pedestrian oriented design and uses.
- 3.21 Create incentives that would expand setbacks from Traffic Avenue for residential properties to provide pedestrian amenities such as landscaping, plazas and fountains and to buffer these areas from the street.
- 3.22 All residential development in the Town Center, except for mixed use buildings, will be “ground-related” which includes single-family detached and semi-attached housing, cottages, tandem houses, and townhouses zero-lot line dwellings and structures.
- 3.23 Update Design and Development Guidelines to ensure that the design standards for multi-family and mixed use development are specific enough to create high quality designs that are compatible with the historic architectural context, and scale of the downtown.
- 3.24 Development along Traffic Avenue should be limited to a maximum height of 45 feet provided there is underbuilding parking.
- 3.25 The height in the Central Business District should remain at 35 feet to protect and preserve the small town character and scale of Main Street and reduce conflicts with adjacent residential uses.

4. *Establish a community entry statement into and out of Sumner.*

4.1 Through street standards, design guidelines, and land use regulations, promote all entrances to the City, including Traffic Avenue and Valley Avenue, as gateways to the community. The character of the Avenues shall be a boulevard with median or other treatments. Gateway design standards for community entrances shall be applied.

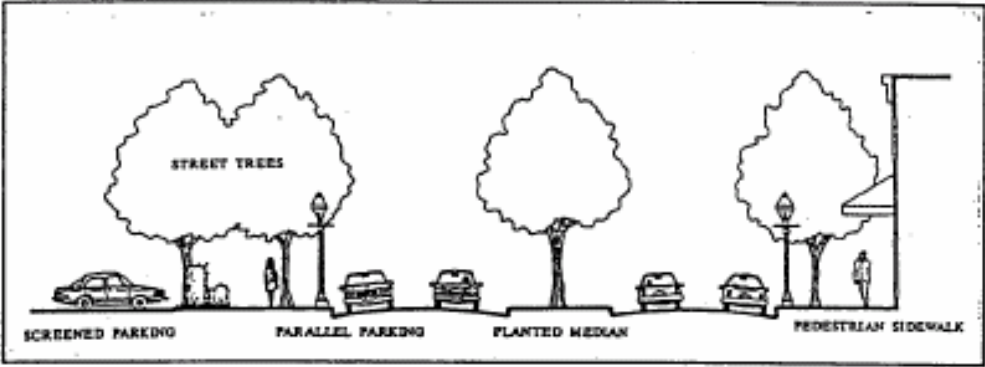


FIGURE 11: BOULEVARD TREATMENT

4.2 Encourage pedestrian-scale streetscape improvements and promote pedestrian and bicycle oriented centers at existing civic and community uses.

5. *Provide for open space and recreation and protect sensitive areas from degradation.*

5.1 In reviewing plans and development proposals, consider both long and short term environmental impacts and encourage design which complement's the area's natural and cultural features. Natural and significant cultural features should be integrated into the design of the community.

5.2 Promote the preservation of the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of the community.

5.3 Provide appropriate infrastructure to ensure environmental quality.

5.4 Promote the efficient use of renewable resources, water and energy through the use of natural drainage, indigenous landscaping, energy efficient siting and building construction, and recycling.

5.5 Promote adequate provision of peripheral and internal open space and recreation uses through implementation of the Parks and Open Space plan.

5.6 Encourage tree planting in the Town Center along sidewalks and in public open

spaces.

- 5.7 Expand Heritage Park to a full block.
- 5.8 Acquire and improve small parcels of land for developing parks and open spaces in the Town Center.

6. *Promote a compatible and varied mix of land uses.*

- 6.1 Through land use planning and zoning, promote a mix of compatible uses balancing jobs and housing.
- 6.2 Through the Comprehensive Plan, Municipal Code, and other measures, encourages a diversity of housing types, for all economic levels and life stages.
- 6.3 Promote a compact development pattern that exhibits variety in building types and scale. Historic and vernacular architectural styles should be respected. Both sides of the streetscape should complement each other.

7. *Promote the movement of people and goods and lessen the reliance on the automobile.*

- 7.1 Streets should be designed to accommodate vehicles and emergency access, but not at the expense of pedestrians. Community streets, pedestrian paths, and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully-connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and discourage high speed traffic. The commuter traffic network should be focused around regional transit and freeway travel.
- 7.2 In coordination of the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, and design guidelines, implement the East Main Street Design Strategy and Urban Village. Locations for transit stops and pedestrian nodes shall be established.
- 7.3 To lessen strip-commercial development and continued reliance on the automobile in new developments, encourage a balance of uses along the East Main Street. Certain highway oriented uses which rely on the private automobile for their primary source of access shall be limited. Front-yard parking shall be prohibited and interconnection of all parking lots shall be required. Infill multi-family developments may be allowed, including units above ground-floor commercial uses.
- 7.4 Support and implement an interconnected system of highways, public streets, and mass transit to serve employees, visitors, and the delivery and shipment of goods and materials. Pedestrian-friendly streets with shade trees as well as landscaped

boulevard medians shall be included in street standards for employment areas.

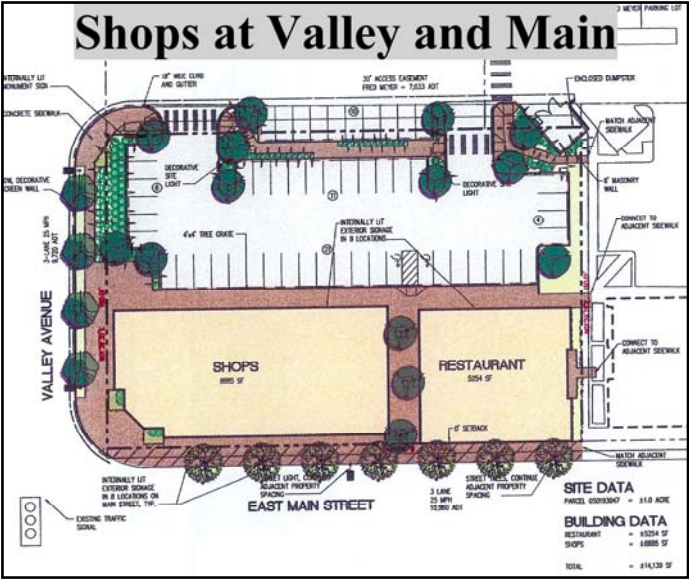


FIGURE 12: PARKING LOCATION
 Site plan courtesy of Pacland Development

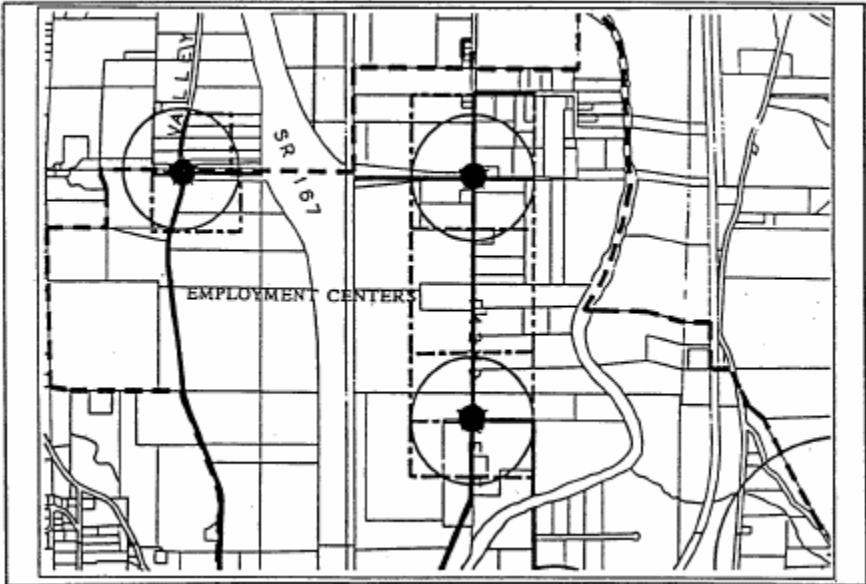


FIGURE 13: EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

- 7.5 Prepare and implement a local street plan to promote a grid pattern and alleys.
- 7.6 Seek to complete the City's sidewalk system and pursue development of a network of off road facilities for non-motorized travel.

- 7.7 Strive for continuity in the sidewalk system that links new development to the existing sidewalk network. This may include pedestrian routes through a development for more direct access to transit stops.
- 7.8 Enhance circulation in Downtown by implementing the Sumner Transportation Plan. Circulation improvements should enhance auto and non-motorized travel and provide landscaping and gateway features:
- Improve Traffic Avenue/Fryar Avenue and Main Street Intersection, and remove access from West Main Street, providing an alternative access for West Sumner,
 - Refurbish and maintain the White/Stuck River Bridge,
 - Reconfigure Fryar Avenue to relieve or improve traffic circulation,
 - Improve Zehnder Street,
 - Improve the gateway Wood Avenue and Main Street intersection,
 - Further promote travel modes by commuter rail and bus and explore additional alternative modes;
 - Complete the nonmotorized trail system along the White/Stuck River.