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How to read this Plan to find guidance for the future . . .

The guidance provided in this Plan to direct Sequim's future occurs at varying levels of detail and directive effect:

Vision – the most general expression of community expectations for Sequim's future, focusing mostly on values, qualities and attributes. The Vision presents a look at what citizens today hope to see and experience in Sequim in 2035.

Goals – express broad community ambitions for growth and development to attain the Vision. Goals are statements of general expectations that the community hopes to achieve.

Policies – direct specific actions, behaviors, or practices to achieve a Goal. Policies explain what the City should be doing or how it should be acting to achieve the related Goal. Policies should express long-term direction on what things should be done over the time-span of the Plan rather than tasks which can be done in short time.

Discussions – provide explanations, applications, and other context for the Policies. A policy Discussion may not only describe *what* is to happen but also *where, when, why* and *how* something is expected to happen. A Discussion is intended to be an extension of the related Policy and carry the same directive effect. Discussions must be read to understand the full purpose of Policies.

The Sequim 2015-2035 Comprehensive Plan was prepared and adopted in conformance with the Goals and citizen participation mandates of the Washington State Growth Management Act, RCW 36.70A.



We plan today so that we will recognize tomorrow when it arrives…

And with that recognition, feel good about what we have done.



INTRODUCTION AND VISION - Chapter 1

WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

Planning is a part of everyone's life. We make plans for our careers, vacations, families, and where we wish to live. Planning is how we increase the likelihood that these things will occur in ways we desire. Without plans, we face never-ending uncertainty about future events. Consequently, we end up reacting to one situation after another.

For similar reasons, communities make plans. In urban areas where the landscape is complex and constantly changing, community plans shape the changes that the future brings in desirable ways. The city is a place where people have many varied needs and where citizens live, work, shop, and play. The city is, therefore, the place where material goods, police and fire protection, sewers, water, transportation, recreation, and many other



Sequim is an active community where residents can get involved.

services must be provided. It is through the city's plans that these needs are identified and met. Comprehensive plan is the name given to identify the community's long-range plan for growth and development. It is comprehensive because it provides guidance for all aspects of the city's growth and development and it is long-range in that it provides direction over a long period, typically twenty-years - an entire generation. The Plan consists of one "umbrella" document that presents goals, policies, maps, illustrations, and implementation strategies that state how the city should grow physically, socially, and economically. It includes all other complementary planning documents that set directions for growth and development for specific sub-areas of the city - Downtown, for example - and for specific functions and facilities to support planned growth - such as for transportation, water, sewer and parks.



Public Works crew members maintain streets and the sewer system.

The Comprehensive Plan provides the overall scheme of city development - how land can be developed and used, how people can move within and through the city, what parks, recreation, and open spaces are available, and how economic needs are met in centers of shopping and employment. This plan establishes the framework for all other planning activities and documents. By law, decision-makers and managers in city government must follow the direction of the Comprehensive Plan. When the state enacted the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990, it changed the purposes of comprehensive plans prepared under the GMA rules. Requirements to plan for housing, private utilities, shorelines and economic development were added to pre-1990 mandates to address land use, transportation, and capital facilities. The GMA

authorizes the inclusion of additional plan topics of specific local interest, and Sequim's Plan includes chapters on Energy and Environment, and Historical and Cultural Resources.

In its operation, the Comprehensive Plan provides the following directions to city-elected officials and staff:

- Locations where growth should occur.
- Quantities and types of housing to shelter existing and future population.
- Transportation, public improvements, and public services that are desired.
- Ways to help create a healthy economic environment and provide job opportunities.
- Actions to protect the natural environment.
- Development patterns to provide cost-effective delivery of public services.
- Timing and conditions for annexation.

The GMA includes provisions to ensure that the city follows these Comprehensive Plan directives. Firstly, the city must regulate land use and development consistent with the Plan; the zoning code, subdivision code, environmental ordinances, and building code must follow the plan's intent. Secondly, the city must make capital budget decisions and capital project investments in conformance with the plan. These two GMA rules give the new Comprehensive Plan a much higher level of importance in guiding the city's growth and development than previous editions of the plan.



Residents and tourists enjoy festivals and events throughout the year in Sequim.



Sunny weather, safe streets and plenty of amenities provide Sequim residents with a high quality of life.

The overall purpose of the comprehensive plan is to provide residents with a high quality of life. Cities that are seen as a desirable place to live, work, shop and play generally avoid the problems of other urban areas. New and existing businesses thrive, as do the people they employ. Residents are more likely to own their own home, maintaining neighborhood stability and cohesiveness. Youth choose to stay and make their future because it's a good place to earn a living and raise a family. With their basic needs met, people are more likely to give back to the community through civic involvement. Last but not least, there will be a large enough population base and high enough property values to generate the revenue stream needed for city government to provide the level and quality of public services that people expect and deserve.

THE SEQUIM 120 VISION GUIDES THIS PLAN...

Sequim will continue to grow and develop as the activity center and civic/cultural heart of the Sequim -Dungeness Valley while maintaining our friendliness, lifestyles, "small-town" convenience, and overall high quality of life. We choose to preserve surrounding rural lands by directing most residential growth into the city to contribute to a more complete fabric of neighborhoods as well as new downtown living. We value diversity and choice by insuring a broad variety of housing, mobility, lifestyle, and economic options to meet the needs of all age groups and family types. We respect that the legacies of our past create a civic duty for a well- planned and well-managed future guided by the quality-of-life interests of all citizens.

With this Vision, the community desires that...

1. Growth will occur mostly within the current urban growth area rather than continuing to push outward;
2. rural lands will be preserved for the agro-tourism, food production, visual qualities and open space they afford city residents;
3. new homes will fill in undeveloped residential lands to strengthen neighborhoods by enhancing safety, creating more livable streets, providing opportunities for mutual support, and promoting a social fabric where "small-town friendliness" is experienced every day;
4. a more compact pattern of growth will create a future that is affordable in all ways – physically, environmentally, socially, and economically;
5. Downtown will grow in activity and purpose not only to serve as the heart of the city and surrounding Valley but also to function as the core of a residential neighborhood that is the setting of most multifamily development;
6. greater diversity in age, household type, ethnicity, income, lifestyle, housing, mobility, and economic activity will increase community opportunities, variety, and interest;
7. improved street and path connectivity among places of living, shopping, services, employment, and recreation will increase mobility, convenience and transportation choices;
8. a wide variety of housing types will serve all lifestyles, ranging from single-family homes on large lots to cottage housing, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, assisted living and Downtown apartments and condominiums;
9. higher density housing will be directed to locations where services, convenience, and amenities make it an attractive lifestyle choice;
10. Sequim will be a more "complete" community by bringing unincorporated suburban areas that depend on the City's public services, facilities, amenities, and civic activities within the city boundaries;
11. Sequim's role as a major steward and purveyor of finite natural resources in the Valley will be reflected in a pattern of growth that promotes efficiency in resource utilization and sustainable resource management ;
12. the community's image and identity will be promoted by active management and responsible stewardship of both the human-built and natural environments; and
13. Sequim will grow as a community of all ages, from families with children, to young adults, to singles of all ages, to empty-nesters, to active seniors, to those needing specialized care, and to those nearing end-of-life.

An antecedent to this Vision

Many of the local values reflected in this Vision have endured within the Sequim community for over 50 years. Sometime prior to 1965, Sequim made this expression of the community's desired future:

> *Sequim should be developed...to the greatest extent possible, its present character of a small, relaxed, friendly community and to enhance its potential beauty. The municipality's highest and best destiny is to be a center for the accommodation of retired persons, tourism, and recreational activities. In view of the fact that the municipality has no visible characteristics to distinguish it from many other cities in Washington, the municipality and business leaders should develop plans to lend a distinctive character to the community and to encourage harmonious development.*

THE COMMUNITY VALUES EMBEDDED IN THE SEQUIM 120 VISION CREATE A STORY...in 2035, Sequim is still "Small-town and friendly."

If this Plan is successful in 2035 – twenty years after Sequim citizens laid out new directions for growth and development – residents and visitors will see and experience a community that is . . .



The City of Sequim is the commercial, cultural, and recreational heart of the Sequim Dungeness Valley.

The heart of a rural valley

As residents of a growing urban center, Sequim citizens enjoy the legacy of its founding as a rural community at the heart of a productive agricultural landscape. Organic farming and lavender production thrive alongside stands of forest preserved in public ownership. With over 40,000 people living in the Valley, the City plays the role of a much larger city as the venue for shopping, civic life, entertainment, health care, recreation and employment. The city's reach as a service center covers the breadth of the North Olympic Peninsula, a market population of over 100,000 people. Maintaining the City as a compact, efficient community affords urban dwellers a respite in the tranquility and refreshment of the surrounding countryside. Few communities have equivalent public access to saltwater shorelines, streams, rivers, forests, open fields and protected nature spaces. By living inside the City, people help preserve the rural Valley that is the reason for Sequim's being.

A "connected community"



Sequim streets provide for many modes of transportation.

Sequim is both a socially and a functionally connected community with a transportation system that provides many modes of travel throughout

the city. Movement through and among neighborhoods is seamless for all. Walking and bicycling through neighborhoods on streets and dedicated paths is a favored activity for young and old alike. The grid system of street and sidewalks offers multiple route choices from one end of the City to the other, maintaining the convenience of a "small town." Residents *feel* connected, too, with neighborhood streets designed to create friendships among neighbors as well as to promote safety with more "eyes on the street."

A great place to live from childhood through retirement



Sequim is an attractive place to live for all ages, from retirees to young families.

Once widely known primarily as a community for senior living, Sequim now grows with diversity in age and family type. We are a great place for all ages. The community's success in attracting family-wage employment not only sets a foundation to raise a family but also includes diverse job opportunities for those emerging into adulthood. The city's range of housing – from Downtown condos to cottage housing – appeals to the community's increasingly broad demographic that attracts professional and technical workers as well as those with skills in trades. The city's urban amenities of urban parks, trails and entertainment complement our world-class outdoor recreation.

The Sequim School District is a highly-regarded institution for growing the minds and bodies of the community's youth. The school system is well-supported in the community – levies and bond issues keep operations and facilities in excellent condition. The growth of family households in the city's east end is attracted to the relatively new elementary school and neighborhood park at the center of the neighborhood. The District is preparing to construct another elementary school as a neighborhood focus in the city's southwest corner.

The Senior Living District is a complete sub-community that offers highly-convenient and affordable lifestyle options for retirees and those needing living assistance. Residents travel safely by foot, bicycle, mobility scooter, electric cart / car and shuttle within the District as well as by car to more distant destinations. High reliance on solar energy for powering homes and vehicles and accessing health care and other daily needs facilities within the District both reduce the cost of living to residents.

A community of volunteers who make Sequim better



Volunteers feel ownership in Sequim's success.

As the central place serving most needs in the Valley, Sequim relies on its corps of volunteers to help maintain services and keep the community looking fresh and well. Volunteers make up a substantial work force for the City, and the high percentage of seniors supplies most of this effort. Volunteers are visible throughout the city, serving as members of boards and committees, caring for gardens and public landscapes, overseeing parks, and being VIPS (Volunteers in Police Service).

Residents throughout the Sequim-Dungeness Valley are connected to the city not only as their primary venue of services but also for feeling ownership in Sequim's success. Many of the city's volunteers live outside the city limits and participate as members of the community. The ethic of civic volunteerism, flourishing in the Valley for decades, is part of Sequim's identity and continues to produce rewards for those who give their time and energy to meet community needs.

A place that attracts people from everywhere

The nature surrounding Sequim brings people from all corners of the country and all points on the globe to hike, camp, fish, and nature-watch. Lavender fields are plentiful and complemented by wineries, organic farming, and shellfish production which contribute to the region's economic diversity as well as attract tourists. Sequim is a desirable place for visitors to stay while they enjoy the surrounding beauty. The once- dammed, nearby rivers offer pristine stream fishing as well as nature hikes. Adventurous visitors bike the Olympic Discovery Trail from Sequim to rivers, ocean beaches, and mountains within and surrounding Olympic National Park. Annual festivals and weekend markets keep the community alive with activities and visitors from May to Labor Day each year, while quality services such as electric vehicle charging stations, Wi-Fi, and numerous choices for food and lodging insure an enjoyable experience.



Visitors from all over the world enjoy the agricultural heritage and world renowned festivals in Sequim.

A community built of friendly, safe neighborhoods

Sequim grows with the qualities of a traditional "small town" formed of compact neighborhoods where society is close-knit and meeting daily needs for living is quick and convenient. Sequim residents get to know their neighbors as they meet to socialize while walking neighborhood streets for exercise and to access local services. Neighbors also convene at the elementary school, neighborhood park, and neighborhood retail center.



Residents enjoy socializing while walking through their neighborhood.

Streets in our newer neighborhoods are narrower to enhance neighborhood friendliness and to reduce vehicle speed and increase safety for motorists and pedestrians alike. Streets are

designed for social engagement – sidewalks are conduits for conversations among residents – as well as multi-modal mobility.

Each of Sequim's neighborhoods has a unique community identity that contributes to residents sharing community development objectives and mutual support with neighbors helping neighbors. Our neighborhoods reflect Sequim's core values of small-town living, friendliness, convenience, safety and connection.

A steward of the environment and a natural landscape

Sequim values its legacy as a place born from an abundance of natural resources and a history of agricultural productivity. People reside here to enjoy living in a city surrounded by a rural landscape that includes natural areas as well as agricultural lands. Citizens care about the city's setting as an interface between the wilderness of the Olympic Mountains and National Forest and the maritime waters of the Straits and Sequim Bay, and we assume stewardship over the water, air, habitat, and other ecological elements between the two.



The City values its natural resources and is a leader in water conservation.

The availability, wise use, and effective treatment of water are things of great importance to the community. Sequim is a leader in managing the limited water resources of the Valley, exercising conservation through technology and low impact design and practicing it through reuse of waste water. The community's highly advanced water and waste water systems not only serve the urban area to high standards but extend throughout the Valley to redress the failure of water wells and septic systems that otherwise threaten the water resource.

The City shows environmental leadership in attracting clean, high-tech primary industry, in designing streets for alternative modes of transportation, and utilizing solar and other forms of renewable power in City facilities and systems.

THE AHWAHNEE PRINCIPLES: A WAY TO ASSESS THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The growth strategy in this Comprehensive Plan came purely from the desires and needs expressed by Sequim citizens who participated in the process. It is not mere coincidence, however, that these new directions for healthy community growth also seem somewhat familiar in their presentation.

Before World War II and the ensuing sub-urbanization of the post-war, "modern" era, communities developed in ways greatly similar to those promoted in this Comprehensive Plan. In 1998, a group of nationally recognized urbanists who are active in planning, designing and building healthier urban places met in the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park to find a response to costs of urban sprawl on American cities. After several days of brainstorming, the group adopted a set of principles – later to become known as the *Ahwahnee Principles* – that state attributes of growth and development that contribute to high quality of life. The participants also started a new national movement called the Congress for the New Urbanism that continues to influence the form of urban places of all sizes and includes elected officials as well as planning and design professionals and urban scholars. These Principles are included here as a way to look at Sequim's Comprehensive Plan in the context of advice that permeates city planning across the nation.

Preamble: Existing patterns of urban and suburban development seriously impair our quality of life. The symptoms are: more congestion and air pollution resulting from our increased dependence on automobiles, the loss of precious open space, the need for costly improvements to roads and public services, the inequitable distribution of economic resources, and the loss of a sense of community.
By drawing upon the best from the past and the present, we can plan communities that will more successfully serve the needs of those who live and work within them. Such planning should adhere to certain fundamental principles.

Community Principles:

- All planning should be in the form of complete and integrated communities containing housing, shops, work places, parks and civic facilities essential to the daily life of residents.
- Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.
- A community should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.
- Businesses within the community should provide a range of job types for the community's residents.
- The community should have a center focus that enables commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses.
- The community should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.
- Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and night.
- Each community or cluster of communities should have a well-defined edge, such as agricultural greenbelts or wildlife corridors, permanently protected from development.
- Streets, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths should contribute to a system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by being small and spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting; and by discouraging high-speed traffic.
- Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage and vegetation of the community should be preserved with superior examples contained within parks or greenbelts.
- The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.
- Communities should provide for the efficient use of water through the use of natural drainage, drought tolerant landscaping and recycling.
- The street orientation, the placement of buildings and the use of shading should contribute to the energy efficiency of the community.

Regional Principles:

- Regions should be bounded by and provide a continuous system of greenbelt/wildlife corridors to be determined by natural conditions.
- Regional institutions and services (government, museums, etc.) should be located in the urban core.
- Materials and methods of construction should be specific to the region, exhibiting a continuity of history and culture and compatibility with the climate to encourage the development of local character and community identity.