

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND VISION STATEMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION

This comprehensive plan was prepared by the city of Sedro-Woolley in accordance with Section 36.70A070 of the Growth Management Act (Act) to address growth issues in Sedro-Woolley and its adjacent urban growth area. It represents the community's policy plan for growth over the next twenty (20) years.

### **Why the City of Sedro-Woolley is Planning**

#### **To Implement the Growth Management Act from the "Bottom Up"**

The Growth Management Act was intentionally drafted to give significant decision-making power to local jurisdictions. Although the Act tells jurisdictions that they must identify concerns and goals of the community, prioritize these goals, and plan how these goals will be achieved, it does not dictate the solutions. This "bottom up" approach is unique to Washington State's growth management legislation, and is the main characteristic which distinguishes it from similar acts in Florida and Oregon.

#### **To Maintain Local Decision Making Power**

For several years, the population in Sedro-Woolley remained stable after experiencing a slight loss in the mid-1980's after the closure of Skagit Manufacturing. However, between 1990 and 2005, Sedro-Woolley has shown an annual population growth of close to three percent. Since 2005 the growth rate has slowed, likely a result of the housing crisis and economic recession from which the region is still recovering. This growth is largely the result of migration northward from the more densely populated areas of the central Puget Sound region. With this growth comes increased demand for public facilities such as streets, sanitary sewer, solid waste collection, and fire and police protection. Provision of these services and the general operation of the city is increas-

ingly influenced by policy decision made at the federal, state and regional level.

The citizens involved in the preparation of Sedro-Woolley's comprehensive plan believe that the most effective way to maintain local control is to become more actively involved in planning. By clearly stating a vision for the future of the community, the city can readily evaluate the implications of its policy decisions, and express community concerns to regional, state, and federal entities. In addition, the Growth Management Act requires that state agencies comply with local comprehensive plans and development regulations. Therefore, the comprehensive plan and the implementing regulations allow the city to assert local control over certain issues with the assurance that state and county agencies will respect their decisions in a manner consistent with the community's desired vision of itself.

#### **To Promote Desired Changes**

Sedro-Woolley has attempted to diversify its economy, especially after the loss of its major employer (Skagit Manufacturing). However, the loss of this employer had a significant negative impact of the community's value which made it difficult to promote the city to potential new industries. As a result, most new development has occurred in the form of single-family subdivisions. While this new housing was needed, concerns were raised that Sedro-Woolley would become primarily a "bedroom" community for the employment centers located along Interstate 5.

The comprehensive plan sets forth goals and policies that promote the concept of a balanced community where job retention and attraction is given equal consideration to new housing developments. Included in the plan is an evaluation of the existing infrastructure capacity with current demand and a projection of capacity supply in order to direct future growth. This information is crucial in order for the city to take a proactive role in attracting the type of development required to meet the needs of its citizens, and make the wisest use of land and public re-

sources. The ability to make decisions in response to the growth and changes that are occurring in Sedro-Woolley will allow the city to take advantages of positive opportunities and better assess potential impact on the quality of life.

### **To Address Changes in Community Needs**

The city of Sedro-Woolley is also updating its comprehensive plan to address dramatic changes since the previous plan was adopted. There has been a steady decline in the size of households, and an increase in the number of elderly individuals living on fixed incomes. The balance between the number of jobs and the number of housing units has shifted as major employers have left the community, and the viability of timber and agriculture industries has waned. Concerns about environmental quality and the impact on personal finances have also created a change in traditional land use patterns as well as a preference for alternatives to the automobile. Finally, the economy has shifted away from land intensive industries to light manufacturing and service industries that are more compatible with other land uses.

### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

This comprehensive plan was developed in accordance with Section 36.70A.070 of the Growth Management Act to address growth issues in the city of Sedro-Woolley and its surrounding urban growth area. It represents the community's policy plan for growth over the next twenty (20) years. The city of Sedro-Woolley is not self-sufficient, and relies on many other communities. In such situations many unexpected changes could occur over which Sedro-Woolley has no control. Therefore, the long-term planning for the city needs to be adaptable and responsive to these kinds of circumstances. Rather than being a simple priority list of actions which assume a static environment, it must provide policies to guide decision-making in response to the unforeseen. The plan includes the following elements:

- \* Land Use
- \* Transportation
- \* Parks

- \* Capital Facilities
- \* Utilities
- \* Housing
- \* Economic Development

### **County-Wide Planning Policies**

The county-wide planning policies provide the framework for Sedro-Woolley's planning process, and a measure for ensuring coordination and consistency between the city and Skagit County. These policies address urban growth areas and the twenty (20) year population forecast accommodation, means to promote contiguous and orderly development and provision of urban services, siting of county-wide and state-wide public capital facilities, county-wide transportation facilities and strategies, the need for and distribution of affordable housing for all economic segments, joint planning between the cities and county within the urban growth areas, economic development and employment, analysis of fiscal impact, and environmental quality. All of the individual elements in the plan have been integrated along with the county-wide planning policies to ensure consistency.

### **Goal of 2016 Update**

The goal of this update is to achieve greater consistency between the plan and the development regulations.

The city has been updating portions of the plan since 2009 in order to meet the required deadline to update by June 30, 2016 (RCW 36.70A.130).

The plan must be updated at least every eight years but no more frequently than once a year. Capital facilities plans are adopted as part of the comprehensive plan. Capital facilities include transportation, sewer, police, fire, schools, and may include library and municipal facilities. The city reviewed and updated the capital facilities element in 2014-2016 and incorporated the 20 year population and employment data adopted by Skagit County for the 2016 county-wide planning policies.

The transportation plan is being updated further in order to develop a zone-based traffic model to assess impact fees.

A community action planning process in 2000 and 2001 established several priorities for the city:

- Economic Development
- Downtown Revitalization
- Parks and Open Space

Further directions from the mayor were to:

- Improve the attractiveness of commercial development along Highway 20; and
- Require urban infrastructure in all new development.

These priorities continue to influence the 2016 Comprehensive Plan updates. Improving consistency and predictability of the development approval process was an additional goal.

### **Urban Growth Area**

After the Skagit County government declined to adopt city ordinances requiring urban infrastructure for development in the unincorporated urban growth area (UGA), the city filed an appeal before the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board. The Board ultimately ruled that adequate provisions for urban services must be provided concurrently with development. Following this ruling, the county and the cities began a collaborative planning process to adopt development regulations that apply to all of the UGAs in the county. The subsequent ordinance adopted by Skagit County and supported by the cities, requires a minimum lot size of five acres for residential development when no urban infrastructure is required, but allows for cities to develop an Urban Reserve Development Permit in portions of the UGA where they expect urban infrastructure to become available relatively soon. A limited amount of commercial and industrial development can also occur in the UGAs without requiring the installation of urban services. The city of Sedro-Woolley may consider developing a program to allow development at higher densities with a mechanism to pay for re-

quired infrastructure that does not shift the costs of infrastructure to the taxpayers.

Deficiencies in urban services are a significant problem in much of the Sedro-Woolley UGA. Skagit County Planning and Development Services permitted residential subdivisions and mobile home parks to be developed in the UGA without requiring urban services. Most of the UGA east of city limits stretching eastward to Fruitdale Road are on septic systems. There is no economic or practical incentive for sewer to be extended to this area. In addition, the streets in the developed UGA are not to city standards; the right-of-ways lack curb, gutter, sidewalks and street lighting. A comprehensive stormwater conveyance system is also absent in these areas. In order for further development to occur in the portions of the UGA that already have significant urban densities but no urban services, the city will depend on Skagit County government to provide financial and technical assistance for the provision of urban services to the area.

### **UGA Size and Expansion**

The jurisdictions in Skagit County worked together to adopt growth projections over the next 20 years. Those population and employment growth projects were reviewed and adopted by the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG). The city then analyzed the available land inventory to determine if the SCOG projections can be accommodated in the current UGA boundaries.

The city performed a buildable lands inventory and compared the available land to the projected population and employment growth through 2036. The analysis indicated that additional land within the UGA is necessary to accommodate the projected 20 years of growth. As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan updates, the city held numerous public meetings, open houses and public hearings in support of necessary modifications to the UGA boundaries.

After the city's extensive public review program was complete, the Planning Commission and City Council recommended a modest UGA boundary expansion to accommodate the County's projected 20

year growth in the Sedro-Woolley UGA. The city forwarded the UGA expansion request to Skagit County; the county's Planning Commission held additional meetings and hearings in accordance with SCC and the Growth Management Act. Ultimately the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners found that the amount of land requested to be added to the UGA was consistent with the need showed by the city's buildable lands inventory and approved a modest UGA boundary expansion.

### **Design Guidelines**

The city's adopted comprehensive plan calls for design guidelines to help maintain the city's small-town atmosphere as it grows. Design guidelines are in place downtown and need to be fully implemented to achieve the desired early 19th-century look. This update proposes permanent design standards and guidelines that provide guidance for the development of new commercial, industrial, residential, multifamily, and planned residential developments. The standards are located in a manual which addresses building and site design and includes illustrations of the requirements.

### **Impact Fees**

SEPA requires that cumulative impacts be mitigated when identified. New private development must address its impacts upon the public health, safety and general welfare, for open spaces, drainage ways, streets, alleys, other public ways, water supplies, sanitary wastes, parks, playgrounds and sites for schools and school grounds. State legislature has enabled, and the city has elected to implement, the use of impact fees to mitigate the direct impacts that have been specifically identified by the city as a consequence of proposed development, and to make provisions for impacts. The city will continue to seek the cooperation of Skagit County in joint road, sewer and other infrastructure improvement projects in the unincorporated UGA.

### **Plan Implementation and Monitoring**

This section outlines the plan implementation and monitoring procedures developed to measure pro-

gress in implementing the goals, objectives, and policies in the city of Sedro-Woolley's comprehensive plan. This process also prepares the city for updates in the future. Annual continuous evaluation should ensure that the following items are addressed:

- \* Citizen participation in the process;
- \* Updating appropriate base-line data and measurable objectives to be accomplished in the first six-year period of the plan, and for the long-term period;
- \* Accomplishments in the first five-year period, describing the degree to which the goals, objectives, and policies have been successfully reached;
- \* Obstacles or problems which resulted in the under-achievement of goals, objectives, and policies; and
- \* A means of ensuring a continuous monitoring and evaluation of the plan during the five-year period.

Although adopted by ordinance, a comprehensive plan has traditionally been a policy document with implementation through land development regulations and other ordinances. However, the Growth Management Act encourages a variety of innovative implementation methods, regulatory and non-regulatory, which should be considered. The city will continue its public participation program following plan adoption in order to inform the entire community about the rationale and goals of the plan, as well as the changes that will take place in the city because of the plan's implementation. Sedro-Woolley believes that broad support for the plan is crucial for effective implementation.

Existing development regulations must be updated to be consistent with the plan. In reviewing regulations for consistency, the city should ensure that the development patterns suggested in the plan are encouraged. In addition to the new development regulations identified in the land use plan, other regulations (i.e. design review guidelines, drainage regulations)

will be enacted as necessary to implement the land use plan during the annual review periods.

Planning is an ongoing process, and improved data or changing circumstances will require amendment to the comprehensive plan. In particular, the plan will be reviewed periodically as required by the Growth Management Act (roughly every eight years) to ensure that the city's comprehensive plan, capital facilities planning, transportation planning and land available in the UGA are adequate to accommodate the projected 20 year employment and population growth. The 20 year update process requires that the cities and Skagit County cooperate to ensure that the Countywide Planning Policies and city comprehensive plans are consistent. The 20 year growth projections shall be based on the Office of Financial Management's population estimates. The update will also address any specific concerns, clarify inconsistencies that were identified during the year, and review the adequacy of the adopted level of service standards. If necessary, adjustments will be made to revenues, land use classifications or LOS standards to ensure that probable funding meets the projected needs of the city.

The community's vision statement and comprehensive plan goals provide long-range guidance for the city. To maintain consistency and allow sufficient time for decisions to take effect, these general guidelines should not be changed more than every five years. However, as specific objectives or policies are achieved, revision of the plan in each element may be required to continue progress toward the overall goals.

Amendments to the comprehensive plan can be requested by the city council, planning commission, or by any affected citizen or property owner. However, the plan may not be amended more than once a year.

## **Consistency with State Growth Management Goals**

The data used to develop this comprehensive plan is to the greatest extent possible the best available data. The city has coordinated its plan with that of adjacent jurisdictions and the county in order to achieve compatibility and external consistency. In addition, the Growth Management Act requires consistency and/or compatibility with the planning goals set forth in the Act. The following are the goals from the Act (shown in italics), below which are listed the policies from the Sedro-Woolley Comprehensive Plan that support and/or are consistent with these goals.

### **Goals and Policies**

The goals and policies set forth throughout the comprehensive plan are the result of the "visioning" process held by the city of Sedro-Woolley in the early stages of the development of the comprehensive plan. Some modifications have been made as a result of new developments in the planning process of the city and county and as a result of the special study recommendations.

It is envisioned that the adoption of some of these goals and policies will require several years to enact. The city will actively work to implement these goals and policies within the next eight years until the next required major review of the comprehensive plan. These goals and policies will be incorporated into the city's codes as necessary and annually as amendments to the comprehensive plan.

## **Growth Management Act Goals**

### **Urban Growth**

*Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.*

**Goal GMA1: Encourage development in areas where adequate public facilities exist.**

Policy A1.1: An annexation area must be provided city services within six years, consistent with the provisions of the current Capital Facilities Plan.

Policy LU3.2: Establish transportation as an “urban” service requiring concurrency under the Growth Management Act.

Policy LU3.6: Periodically review the comprehensive plan and adjust revenues, land use classifications, or level-of-service (LOS) standards to ensure that probable funding meets the projected needs of the city.

Policy CF2.2: “Concurrent Development” shall be defined as development which can be provided transportation services by the city of Sedro-Woolley within six years of the date of the development approval. If capital facilities necessary to meet the concurrency requirement are not provided in the six-year Capital Facilities Plan, the developer shall provide the facilities at his/her own expense to meet the concurrency requirement.

Policy CF2.1: The city of Sedro-Woolley shall allow only “concurrent development” to occur within the urban growth area. Proposed developments shall complete a concurrency review provided by the city planning department.

**Reduce Sprawl**

*Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.*

**Goal GMA2: Reduce Urban Sprawl**

Policy A1.2: Reject annexation requests which are not contiguous to existing city areas, except as permitted under RCW 35.13.180.

Policy A1.3: An annexation area must be provided city services within six years, consistent with the provisions of the current Capital Facilities Plan.

**Transportation**

*Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and are coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.*

**Goal GMA3: Provide safe, efficient transportation services to community residents.**

Policy T1.1: Identify and improve substandard roads based upon a priority system which accounts for both traffic demand and surrounding land uses.

Policy T1.4: Improve arterial and collector streets identified as deficient in condition level of service to the adopted design standard, consistent with the capital facilities element of the comprehensive plan.

Policy T2.3: Improve arterial and collector streets identified as deficient in capacity level of service to the design standard, consistent with the capital facilities element of the comprehensive plan.

Policy T3.8: Consider the needs of future transit service when improving principal, secondary and collector arterials.

Policy T4.1: Establish a committee to review alternate transportation options and propose alternatives appropriate to Sedro-Woolley’s anticipated population growth and density. Options to evaluate include trails, rail, transit, walking, etc.

**Housing**

*Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing.*

**Goal GMA4: Provide adequate, diverse and affordable housing to all community residents.**

Policy A4.1: Encourage a variety of housing in Sedro-Woolley and its UGA.

Policy H1.1: Install supporting infrastructure in areas of higher density housing, as a public, private, or private/public effort.

Policy H2.1: Encourage affordable housing for the elderly. As an alternative, the elderly should be accommodated in safe, well-maintained multiple-unit structures.

Policy H2.2: Encourage affordable housing for those with special needs. (Including, but not limited to disabled, low-income, homeless).

Policy H2.3: Encourage affordable housing for non-traditional households. (Including, but not limited to seasonal workers, single parents, extended families, and group homes.)

### **Economic Development**

*Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.*

### **Goal GMA5: Encourage community economic development.**

Policy E1.1: Create employment opportunities within the Sedro-Woolley economy, particularly for residents who now commute to other distant employment areas.

Policy E2.1: Encourage local business development opportunities and utilization by the private and public sector, particularly for small start-up businesses owned by or employing Sedro-Woolley residents. Promote local use of special business financing and management assistance programs.

Policy E3.1: Promote tourism as a means of diversifying the economy and preserving the history of the community.

### **Property Rights**

*Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.*

### **Goal GMA6: Preserve property rights**

Policy LU5.7: Recognize the rights of property owners to freely use and develop private property consistent with city regulations.

Policy H4.3: Encourage the development of residential structures that respect existing views of natural features, and the right of everyone to enjoy them.

### **Permits**

*Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.*

### **Goal GMA7: Ensure fair, predictable and timely permit processes.**

Policy H2.6: Maintain easy access to the permitting process.

Policy T5.3: Aggressively enforce RCW 36.70A.106, requiring the Department of Transportation, or any other state agency, to comply with this comprehensive plan.

Policy UI.2: Provide utility permits in a fair, timely and predictable manner.

### **Natural Resource Industries**

*Maintain and enhance natural and resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries.*

### **Goal GMA8: Encourage productive forest, agriculture and natural resource industries.**

Policy LU5.4: Preserve and enhance Sedro-Woolley's rural and agricultural character by allow-

ing necessary agricultural support services and facilities.

Policy CC1.3: Recognize and retain logging and other timber industry practices as a heritage of this community. Strive to preserve this heritage while supporting and encouraging the development of modern forest-practices industries.

Policy OS2.2: Recognize and promote the benefits of agricultural land which include maintaining open space, establishing rural character, preserving view corridors, enhancing wildlife habitat, and providing employment for the residents of Skagit County.

Policy E3.7: Sedro-Woolley's tourism strategy should also capitalize upon the city's unique location and timber industry heritage. Strive to maintain a balance between logging history and environmental education and preservation.

### **Open Space and Recreation**

*Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.*

### **Goal GMA9: Provide open space and recreation opportunities to community residents.**

Policy P1.5: Identify zones which generally indicate where it is appropriate for future parks to be located as new development occurs.

Policy P2.3: Develop a mixture of active and passive recreation areas in order to accommodate the desires and lifestyles of Sedro-Woolley's residents.

Policy P3.1: Pursue joint ventures with Skagit County, other jurisdictions and public/private opportunities, in order to obtain access to a greater variety of recreational programs than the city could provide on its own.

Policy OS 1.2: The city shall provide input and coordinate review of development proposals with Skagit County to ensure the integrity of unincorporated open space within Sedro-Woolley's urban growth area.

### **Environment**

*Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

### **Goal GMA10: Protect the environment while enhancing community quality of life.**

Policy LU16.8: Encourage Development of a Brickyard Creek plan that addresses the creek's habitat functions, passive recreation uses and stormwater conveyance functions. The plan should address off-site mitigation opportunities in the creek's riparian area in accordance with the regulations for critical areas – Chapter 17.65 SWMC.

Policy CSA1.2: Provide the public, staff and decision-making bodies with information pertaining to the identification, classification, and designation of critical areas.

Policy CSA1.5: Promote land use patterns and methods of development that will protect the value of sensitive and critical areas, and prevent hazardous conditions.

Policy CC5.2: In conjunction with the Sedro-Woolley school district, ensure that curriculum within Sedro-Woolley schools emphasizes social and environmental responsibility.

Policy CSA4.1: Encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation, such as, carpooling, public transit, walking, and biking, in order to reduce the amount of automobile emissions.

Policy U3.2: Promote conservation of water and electricity within the urban growth area. Work with utilities, service agencies and other jurisdictions to promote conservation products and programs.

### **Citizen Participation and Coordination**

*Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.*

#### **Goal GMA11: Encourage early and continuous citizen participation in the comprehensive planning process.**

Policy A11.1: Encourage, respect and reward citizen activism.

Policy A11.2: Hold neighborhood meetings within proposed annexation areas in order to answer questions about the implications of annexation.

Policy LU5.6: Ensure that community's planning programs reflect basic community values.

Policy H3.8: Work to develop multi-family design recommendations based upon a participatory design process with community residents.

Policy CC6.6: Commit to honest, equal citizen participation III city processes.

### **Public Facilities and Services**

*Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.*

#### **Goal GMA12: Assure capacity for new developments through a capital facilities plan.**

Policy CF1.1: Provide capital improvements to correct existing deficiencies, to replace worn out or obsolete facilities and to accommodate desired future growth, according to the six-year capital facilities plan.

Policy CF2.3: Ensure that future development bears a fair share of capital improvement costs necessitated

by the development. The city shall reserve the right to collect mitigation impact fees from new development in order to achieve and maintain adopted level of service standards. The city shall be responsible for its fair share of capital improvement costs for existing deficiencies.

Policy CF2.4: Ensure that city plans and development regulations identify and allow for the siting of "essential public facilities," as described in the Growth Management Act. Work cooperatively with Skagit County and neighboring jurisdictions in the siting of public facilities of regional importance.

Policy CF3.1: Update the six-year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) annually prior to the city budget process. All city departments shall review changes to the CFP and participate in the annual review.

### **Historic Preservation**

*Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.*

#### **Goal GMA13: Preserve historically and culturally significant sites and structures.**

Policy LU6.5: Develop and implement a local historic and cultural preservation procedure.

Policy H1.3: Protect historically significant housing sites and structures.

Policy CC1.1: Preserve historically-significant buildings, trees and site within the Sedro-Woolley urban growth area through the development of historic preservation and urban forestry programs.

Policy CC1.2: Preserve culturally-significant sites identified within the Sedro-Woolley urban growth area. Do not allow development or encroachment upon sites identified as significant by tribal nations.

## VISION STATEMENT

The year is 2036. Sedro-Woolley has a small-town environment and a strong sense of identity. Many people know each other here. Residents greet each other by name. Business owners know both other owners and their regular patrons. People feel comfortable and safe walking through town.

The “centralized” nature of town, revolving around the central business district, helps keep the tight-knit structure of the community. The town’s scale promotes a “homey” feeling. Residents feel important as a part of their community rather than alienated as they might in a big city. Residents are involved in the community and strive to maintain a safe, healthy, enjoyable, and economically viable community. Visitors are encouraged to come to Sedro-Woolley. Signs on the main highways (Interstate 5 and State Routes 9 and 20) are inviting. Walking and shopping on and around Metcalf Street promotes a warm but bustling atmosphere.

### Growth and Land Use

Citizens recognize the need for the city to grow. The city expands slowly through annexations primarily for residential development. This is done in an environmentally and aesthetically rational way, under compliance with the State’s Growth Management Act. Even though the city’s residential sector is growing, planning efforts strive to maintain an intentional balance of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses.

### Economic Development

Sedro-Woolley’s job base is strong and vital. The city is economically self-sustaining and is not considered a “bedroom community” for larger cities in the region. Residents who live here can also work here. Sedro-Woolley is home to a diverse collection of larger employers. An occasional slump in one area will not depress the entire economy. The retail and tourism focus of the city is in the central business

district and is complemented by larger businesses at commercial nodes in various parts of the city. Professional offices, light industry, and support services are sited at these nodes. Industrial parks in Sedro-Woolley are complete and fully utilized.

### Other Commercial Development

Both commercial and light industrial businesses are encouraged in Sedro-Woolley. Zoning keeps commercial strip development along the highways from sprawling. Rather, nodes of service-type enterprises along the main roads thrive. Development in these areas caters to the highway traveler and does not compete with downtown retail and tourism. Open space and green areas are maintained in the city’s zoning ordinance, and further promoted in the growing areas of the city. The downtown retail core is primarily retail businesses with some service businesses.

### Housing

Most residential areas are zoned to protect the dominance of the single-family home. However, smaller lots are encouraged to protect Sedro-Woolley’s hinterlands from sprawl. Infill development in the older neighborhoods consists primarily of duplexes and accessory dwelling units that are designed to compliment existing neighborhoods.

Within the central business district, apartments on the upper stories of shops are encouraged. Sedro-Woolley offers a variety of housing types to meet the needs of its diverse citizens.

### Transportation

The city’s transportation system expands to meet demands due to growth. Through-traffic circumvents the downtown area, which discourages congestion. Safe bicycle and pedestrian transportation is encouraged by the maintenance and addition of bike shoulders on the roads as well as off-road bike paths and trails. Local youth are educated in safe bicycling and traffic laws for bicyclists on the road. Bike racks are placed at key places in town to encourage people to ride their bikes rather than drive.

### **Central Business District**

The city endorses the preservation of a functional yet aesthetically pleasing downtown area. Downtown is the city's core—it is a place where residents can come to purchase basic goods without driving to other communities. It is also the center of the city's social life. The central business district is vibrant during the day with a healthy and safe nightlife. Residential space above first-floor shops helps see to that. No buildings stand vacant. Metcalf Street, with its "Main Street" feel, is perfect for strolling. Its shops are small and unique to maintain the city's personal scale and character. Businesses that attract people to the downtown from the outside, such as retail, are promoted. This environment encourages tourists en route to the Cascades or the I-5 corridor to pull off the highway and visit for a short while. Signs from the highways indicate the route to downtown. Once again, Sedro-Woolley is a place where people go out of their way to visit. Downtown is also the city's link to its past. Its built form speaks of the old Sedro-Woolley and its rich tradition of providing services to people from near and far in the Skagit Valley. Historic buildings are preserved and renovated and new buildings visually blend with the older structures. Convenient and available parking for patrons is provided. Through design and atmosphere, however, patrons are encouraged to park their cars and walk from shop to shop on and around Metcalf Street.

### **Parks and Open Space**

Citizens support the development of small, new, neighborhood parks, as well as open green space. New residential developments are encouraged to preserve open green areas for the public. The old Burlington Northern Railroad line connecting Sedro-Woolley with Burlington provides a recreation path for bicyclists and pedestrians to use instead of the highway. This trail connects Burlington and Sedro-Woolley with the upriver communities of Lyman, Hamilton, and Concrete. Trails are also available

around Riverfront Park. Bicycle and pedestrian paths connect parks to recreation facilities.

### **Library**

The Sedro-Woolley library system is enjoyed by a wide variety of residents and non-residents who benefit from the facility's modern technological resources, wide range of research materials, and updated periodicals. The city is committed high quality library services in the city of Sedro-Woolley, and an essential element of urban life. The city will support expanded regional library services to serve the residents and non-residents, as opportunities develop.

### **Recreational Facilities**

The public promotes maintenance and expansion of the city's existing recreation facilities. They also encourage the development of other facilities, particularly for the benefit of local youth. When not in school, teenagers have activities that keep them from loitering on street corners. These older students, as well as grade-school children, have places to go for entertainment and recreation that are close to home and school. A community center that houses an indoor recreation area, swimming pool, and organized programs benefits both the town's youth and its adults. A movie theater and game center allowing people under twenty-one (21) to visit are located downtown.

### **Infrastructure**

The city promotes the improvement of infrastructure elements. Deteriorating roads in town are repaired and repaved as needed. Other pre-existing infrastructure needs such as sidewalks and sewers are inspected and repaired. All new infrastructure or improvements are supported by the city's capital facilities plan and are consistent with other plan elements. Every residential neighborhood in Sedro-Woolley enjoys paths, sidewalks, and street trees on every street.

**Community Vision**

As a whole, its citizens envision the Sedro-Woolley of the future as a warm and economically viable small-town community. Present and future residents will be honored to call it “home.”