

1 Executive Summary

1.1 LAYOUT OF THIS PLAN

The chapters following this summary contain the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update for the City of Arlington.

For ease of use, it is broken into two main components. The first component is comprised of Chapters 1 (Executive Summary), 2 (Figures & Maps), and 3 (Goals & Policies). These three chapters are central to the plan, containing all the Council's directives. The second component is Chapters 4 – 12 contain the background information explaining how the goals and policies were arrived at and are supportive chapters. Chapter 13 is the environmental review, an Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

1.2 VISION STATEMENT

The City of Arlington is a community of vibrant businesses and a home for families that combines the best of sustainable development with the highest quality of life in the region. It is a place where the natural world is honored and respected while high value jobs and businesses are encouraged to prosper. The City is recognized throughout the State as the best example of how to preserve the past in concert with preparing for the change inherent in the future. As the vision evolves, the Arlington brand, or identity, becomes recognized for its unique ability to set the City apart as a model of civility and community harmony.

The Setting: *Arlington is located where the north and south forks of the Stillaguamish River join. The City's northern/northwestern edge overlooks the*

Stillaguamish River Valley; its eastern side looks toward the Cascade foothills; and we border I-5 on the west and Marysville on the south.

The Economy: *Arlington's future depends on its economic base keeping pace with other development. Citizens thrive when jobs are available and the necessary amenities are in place to improve their quality of life. To pay for this quality of life, our retail base must be secure and growing. It must also be able to pay for the infrastructure needed to fuel industrial growth.*

The Social Fabric: *Citizens establish the City's values, sense of place, and quality of life. In return they need cultural opportunities, recreational activities, educational resources, and entertainment for a full life.*

Mobility: *Our goal must be to provide mobility within the City and access to our county, state and federal transportation systems.*

Housing: *Arlington values its neighborhoods and hopes to pass on these values as new developments are built. We recognize the need to provide housing for all income ranges.*

Summary: *Because of Arlington's proximity to population centers and the freeway, growth is inevitable, but not necessarily as a bedroom community. Arlington will strive to maintain a small city identity, a high jobs-to-housing ratio, thriving commercial districts, safe neighborhoods, an expanding airport, a healthy hospital, a beautiful environment, great services, ample recreational opportunities, and a pride that most cities seldom experience. We want our*

citizens to continue to see Arlington as a caring community.

The principal theme of the Vision Statement is that the City of Arlington would like to maintain its character and identity - the "small town" atmosphere. The overall goals listed in Section 3.2 essential in maintaining a satisfactory quality of life for Arlington. These goals will endure as the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. As the Comprehensive Plan is updated to account for changing conditions the goals in the Vision Statement will provide direction for such revisions.

1.3 WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO ACHIEVE

In the 1995 Comprehensive plan the City Council adopted a vision statement as presented by the Select Committee established to write the plan. The Vision Statement, above, while revised from the original created in 1995, still emphasizes the strong desire to preserve Arlington's quality of life and it's uniqueness that are embodied in the goals and policies. The overall goals found in the third chapter of the plan are essential in maintaining this atmosphere and a fine quality of life for our citizens. As the Plan is implemented the goals will provide direction and guidance.

We would, as a City, would like to remain the same, but on a larger scale with the

same amenities now treasured by our present citizens granted to the new. We want to preserve our community-oriented character. We want our citizens to be able to find the type of housing they want and can afford and insure that they be able to work and shop locally. Excellent municipal services, facilities, and infrastructure need to be provided in balance with available revenues.

To the West and North of our city limits lies the Stillaguamish Valley. It is fertile farmland within the flood plain of the Stillaguamish River. As an awe inspiring entrance to our City it is unequalled. It is there that a major policy shift in our Comprehensive plan takes place as we adopt a pilot-program that will transfer development rights from the Valley to a designated area east of us. Owners of property in the Valley will gain by selling rights and purchasers in the receiving area will be allowed to come into the UGA and develop to urban densities.

We will be tested at times during the next twenty years as we fit more citizens into less space. But the rewards will be great as we look westward at a preserved Stillaguamish Valley and eastward to a master planned community.

Safe, well-kept neighborhoods and commercial areas are the ultimate goal of this plan and will continue to be so as we step forward into a bright future.