

the county to develop an overall update schedule, a land capacity analysis methodology, and background information. In the fall of 2013, a consultant hired by the county (but paid for by all of the cities as well) prepared high, medium and low projections for population and employment growth in the county through 2036 along with allocations of such growth to all of the UGAs, including Sumas. In late 2013, the city submitted a preliminary proposal to the county that identified the city's proposed allocations of population and employment growth. In early 2014, the Whatcom county council adopted a non-binding resolution establishing preliminary allocations of population and employment to all of the cities, including to the city of Sumas. In June of 2015, the Sumas city council authorized submission of the city of Sumas UGA Proposal, which included the same allocations of population and employment included in the prior county council resolution. The Sumas planning commission began the review and revision process in the fall of 2015, and the recommended revisions to the plan were made available in the spring of 2016. Final action adopting the 2016 update of the comprehensive plan was taken by the Sumas city council in June 2016.

## **Community Survey**

In July of 1992 a survey was conducted to learn the feelings of the community. A copy of the actual survey document is included in Appendix III, along with the complete set of comments made by residents. The following is a brief summary of the survey showing the five major questions followed by the responses in priority order.

- Q. What do you like about Sumas?
  - Character
  - Sewer and water service
  - Open spaces and natural beauty
  - Air quality
  - Police and fire services
  
- Q. What are the issues or problems facing Sumas?
  - Defining land-use classifications
  - Striking balance between property rights and restrictions
  - Promoting job/business growth
  - Protecting and enhancing environmental quality
  
- Q. What actions should the city take to improve quality of life?
  - Improve flood control
  - Protect water supply
  - Improve and add roads
  - Assist job/business growth
  - Limit commercial strip pattern
  - Maximize property rights
  
- Q. In which direction should the city grow?
  - South
  - West
  - East
  
- Q. What is the best way to pay for public facilities built to accommodate growth?
  - Combination of revenues

- Property taxes
- User fees
- Bonds

People's handwritten comments revealed a sharp division between those interested in promoting further commercial growth and those dismayed by the growth of the preceding 15 years. Each viewpoint was held by about the same number of people. Following are some verbatim comments that reveal the division.

Get rid of the service stations and bars and stop catering to the needs of business only.

I think the city is more concerned with the Canadian business owners than with its own citizens.

I preferred the old character of Sumas, businesses closed on Sunday and not all Canadian owned businesses -- I feel the average resident is worse off now than 15 years ago, with traffic pollution, and noise.

Fewer gas stations.

Don't let grocery stores and gas stations go beyond Cherry Street.

Try to think of Sumas and its residents, not just money and Canadians.

Sumas has been taken over by a foreign country and no longer exists as a small town. Small town services, businesses, etc., are gone. It no longer is a desirable place to live and raise a family. Pride in home maintenance is gone as more and more homes have absentee landlords. The Canadian dollar has not improved the average resident's life -- it has made it worse -- only the businessman profits! Zoning means nothing! HUD housing brings in more non-contributing residents.

Most of the favorable features or characteristics are gone -- sold to the highest bidder.

It's big enough now -- any more growth there will be no trees - or farmlands left. The animals won't have any homes -- our air would be ruined. Also cut down on Canadian traffic.

City revenue dollars -- long-term businesses create better paying jobs which in turn offer the opportunity for local youth to stay and work and prosper in their own hometown. Right now you have to look outside Sumas for good job opportunities.

As far as I see it, Sumas is right now nothing more than a gate. We have this huge fenced back yard with nothing in it to play with. If the city continues to restrict business growth, you may as well start making out a rent check to Lynden. There must be thousands of lost dollars going through Sumas to Lynden, Everson and Bellingham every day. Until this city decides to get off its hand and make a positive step towards business growth it will remain nothing more than a passageway to other points that can offer people what they need.

Let's not miss the opportunity for growth. We have many commercial opportunities we should take advantage of, and then allow residential growth to follow. We should take advantage of people passing through to better our community further.

Would like to see a wider variety of businesses. I would rather spend money in my own community and support it rather than supporting another which I must do more than 50 percent of the time I need something.

Serious considerations towards a mall complex of some sort with a variety of shops, etc., so tax dollars can stay in Sumas and not head to Everson or Lynden.

Keep the natural beauty, but please allow some space for commercial development. I feel that the city is not actively interested in a strong, broad tax base and future.