

Chapter 7

VISION STATEMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Eatonville's Community Goals and Policies are based on the following Vision Statement.

7.1.1 Preamble. The Vision Statement is a verbal snapshot of Eatonville Community in the year 2022. It summarizes the desired character and characteristics of our Community and provides the ultimate goal for all of our Community planning and development efforts. The vision statement is intended to be realistic, yet is more than a mere prediction. Rather than describing the features of Eatonville Community as we think they are likely to be, it expresses what we would like our Community to become and believe we can achieve. It acknowledges past and current trends in Eatonville Community's relationship to external factors, but also assumes an ability to shape the future in a positive way. The Vision Statement, therefore, is optimistic; affirming and enhancing the best of our past and existing attributes and aspiring for those we now lack but hope to have.

7.1.2 We the People of Eatonville. We the people of Eatonville hereby set forth a vision statement and pledge our commitment to achieve a common vision for the future of the Eatonville Community. We the people of Eatonville have identified a set of central values which we as a Community hold in common:

- We believe that the essence of a prosperous and vibrant Community is found not in its structures but in the collective spirit of those who live and work within the Community. We hold that the built aspects of a community - its transportation network, utility system, buildings and other facilities - should not be considered ends in themselves, but as means for enhancing the quality of life and enriching the human spirit.
- We respect the picturesque and natural setting of Eatonville and believe that any development along its ridges and valleys must achieve harmony between this natural and man-made environment.
- We believe that certain controls on the choices of individual action are appropriate to ensure that the community's best interests are realized.

- We believe that human activities should be considered as one component of a complex system of relationships among living things and their environment and that we have a responsibility to ourselves and to future generations to seek a mutually supportive balance within this system.

7.2 OUR VISION FOR EATONVILLE

7.2.1 Residential, Small Town, Community. Eatonville in 2022 is an attractive, vibrant, and inviting small town self-contained Community in which to live and work. The Community has maintained a balance between residential development and commercial activities. Our neighborhoods are secure and stable, creating the foundation for our quality of life. They also have variety both in population and land use. People from all economic, age and ethnic groups live here. New businesses have moved into our Community, providing shopping and employment opportunities for our residents. Serving the tourist population, particularly during the summer, continues to be an important economic activity of the Community. The commercial core area has become a blend of successful gift shops, art galleries and restaurants, some of which combine first floor commerce with upper story residences and/or office spaces.

The people in the Eatonville Community, in its commitment to representative self government and maintenance of its vision, come together as the Community of Eatonville. The Community of Eatonville has quickly gained prominence among communities in Pierce County and is widely known as a place where scenic beauty is harmonized with urban development and job creating activities. The towering panorama and grandeur of Mt. Rainier is and remains to be the symbolic “soul” and the “heart” of the Community.

7.2.2 Land Use and Development. Land use and development patterns have changed significantly over the years. Eatonville has completed a successful transition from a lumber producing town to a self-contained Community in South Pierce County. The land area that once supported the Eatonville Lumber Mill has been converted to a mixed use development, containing variety of residential, retail and service uses. The old Mill Pond and the slash burner form the center piece of a very popular park and recreation area. Tourist related developments such as hotels, motels, restaurants and other tourist related service facilities have been built along Washington Avenue and Center Street, capturing the view of Mount Rainier. The new tourist service related facilities have replaced some of the existing single-family residential uses along Washington Avenue. Commercial development, serving the resident population, is concentrated along Center Street, east of Washington Avenue. Additional commercial activity has located at specific nodes along the intersections of major roads and streets, such as Ohop Valley. Residential development has retained its high-ground location, capturing the views of Mount Rainier.

VISION STATEMENT

Additional residential development has taken place in subdivisions ranging in size of a few homes to hundreds. Residential building lots that have remained vacant in developed areas are being built upon capturing the investment in utility lines, already existing in the ground.

7.2.3 Public Spaces. Public spaces, namely parks, open space, pedestrian and bicycle trails, and recreation sites have increased significantly during the past twenty years. The new family park and skateboard facility south of Alder Street has expanded to include the land around the former Mill Pond and the slash burner. The Alder Street family park with its skateboard facility; the Mill Pond area and Smallwood Park south of Mashell River have turned into a major park and recreation area for the Community. Pedestrians and bicyclists along the many trails that connect the Tacoma-Seattle urban area with Mount Rainier stop at Eatonville for restaurant and other services, contributing to the economy of the Community. Open space has been set aside and parks and recreation facilities have tended to locate near or adjacent to wetland and riverbank sites. Appreciation and respect for Eatonville historic and archeological cultural resources are being prominently displayed at the Alder Street Park and have been woven into community policies and planning.

7.2.4 Transportation. North-south traffic movement through Eatonville from the Tacoma-Seattle urban area connecting with Mount Rainier National Park, that has been a problem for years, has improved significantly. State route 161 designation has switched from Mashell Avenue to Alder Cut-off Road. State Route 161 in Ohop Valley has been improved by providing truck climbing lanes in hilly areas. A traffic signal has been installed at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Center Street, making the intersection operate more efficiently and safely. Pedestrian crossings of Washington Avenue have been improved making school and pedestrian crossings more safe. Pierce Transit has extended bus service to Eatonville and in doing so has constructed a park and ride lot north of Town. Eatonville airport continues to be home to many local aircraft owners and fliers. Activity at the airport has increased moderately, particularly the use by U.S. Forest Service and sightseeing flights around Mount Rainier.

7.2.5 Utilities. Endless supply of fresh water, that was taken for granted many years ago, no longer exists. The Town has been able to meet the growing fresh water demand by a combination of increasing its supply by drilling new wells, constructing additional storage facilities, and curtailing its use by conservation measures. The wastewater collection system has been expanded to provide services to newly developed areas. Most of the septic systems in the outlying areas been eliminated by connecting to the municipal sewer system or by modernizing their operations through technological advances. Stormwater run-off is being improved by a combination of enlarging existing collection systems and building additional retention ponds. The electric power system is undergoing continual renewal and blackouts have become a rare phenomenon.

VISION STATEMENT

7.2.6 Education. Eatonville School District with the financial support of the residents in the Community has built a modern state-of-the-art high school. The new high school is also equipped with a sizable auditorium which is used by the residents of the community for community events and gathering purposes. The School District continues to provide quality education and its list of prominent graduates is ever increasing.

7.2.7 Public Safety. Crime that periodically raises its ugly head in all communities has subsided considerably in the Eatonville Community as a result of crime prevention education and increased police presence. Further, the Community has matured; neighbors know their neighbors and neighborhood crime watch programs have caught on. Fire service has also improved. Fire and emergency medical response time has decreased considerably due to staffing them with full-time fire and emergency medical service personnel. As a result of improved fire services, the fire insurance rates have decreased significantly. Fire and police safety seminars are being conducted throughout the community on a regular basis.

7.2.8 Economic Development. The economy of Eatonville Community has increased considerably over the years. Tourists demand for hotel and motel space has created additional jobs. High-tech industry, particularly light manufacturing, has discovered Eatonville. Small plants and operations have located throughout the Eatonville Community, providing year-round family wage jobs. The additional population, jobs in the hotel industry, high-tech, and light manufacturing, all has created additional jobs in the service industry, such as restaurants, convenience and specialty stores, personal services operations, and services to businesses and residences.

7.2.9 Town Center, Central Business District. The Town should put together a Town Center Action Plan that provides a clear vision and direction for the revitalization and development of the Town Center area encompassing Mashell and Washington Avenues from Lynch Street to the Mashell River Bridge. The Action Plan should contain specific tools for attracting and maintaining economic growth and high quality of life for the Town of Eatonville. This includes identifying ways to increase business and tourism, a plan for Town Center revitalization, and historic preservation. In addition a pedestrian oriented traffic circulation and parking plan should be prepared and implemented that provides access to retail and service outlets and at the same time allows unimpeded travel along Washington Avenue to accommodate the Mt. Rainier tourist travel demand. It is about time that public bus service is extended to Eatonville.