

About the Aberdeen Tomorrow Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is designed to serve as a blueprint for our future physical and economic development. It includes plans, goals, objectives, policies, and actions for use by our elected and appointed officials, members of advisory committees, civic groups and organizations, department directors and staff, and citizens as ongoing decisions are made and our vision is achieved. This plan provides us guidance and direction in the areas of land use and future growth, transportation, economic development, parks and recreation, and community appearance.

Our Purpose

Beginning in late 2003, our citizens and leaders began to tackle the difficult question of how best to plan for the long-term future of the community. While Aberdeen has had great success in its past and recent history, we are now confronted by a new era and a unique set of circumstances, which create both opportunities and uncertainties. Therefore, we made a choice to decide on a course of action that offers the greatest likelihood of continued success. To do so, what is required is a shared vision of the preferred future that can be used to help guide us as a community over the next two decades and beyond.

Our Intent

This plan is intended to serve all interests of the community and offers the following benefits:

- ◆ It states our intentions as to our physical development and infrastructure investment, which creates a level of certainty for all residents.
- ◆ It establishes policy and provides guidance toward future development and redevelopment, which may be utilized by our Planning and Zoning Commission, City Commission and others in their decision-making.
- ◆ It identifies programs and initiatives in the form of specific recommendations, which form a coordinated work program for the departments of the City.
- ◆ It identifies capital improvement needs and priorities, which may be utilized by management in annual budgeting and capital programming.
- ◆ It indicates the type, pattern, and density of future development and coordinates transportation and infrastructure improvements.
- ◆ It serves as a blueprint for our future economic and physical development, which is also useful to other local, State and Federal agencies engaged in the provision of programs, services and facilities.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Community Profile
3. Community Vision
4. Land Use
5. Transportation
6. Economic Development
7. Parks and Recreation
8. Community Appearance
9. Growth Policies
10. Implementation



A Deliberate Vision

A clear vision of what the community aspires to achieve is the first step in charting a path to address the complex decisions facing the community in both the near and distant future. Rather than simply reacting to events as they unfold, a shared vision will enable the community to develop a proactive plan for achieving the ideal future that was imagined by the community through this comprehensive planning process.

Words to be used in the background

- Growth
- Vibrant
- Out-of-the box
- Clean
- Exciting
- Comfortable
- Youthful
- Secure
- Outstanding
- Progressive
- Cultural
- Proactive
- Refurbished
- Leader
- Friendly
- Developable
- Safe
- Opportunity
- Award-winning
- Attractive
- Energetic
- Regional center

The Aberdeen of "Tomorrow"

Our vision statement identifies where we intend to be in the future or where we should be to best meet the needs of our residents and businesses. Our vision is a shared understanding of our purpose and describes our preferred future.

Our Vision

By the Year 2025, Aberdeen will have strengthened its position as a regional "Hub City," providing citizens with ample economic opportunities, quality health care services, exemplary educational opportunities for life-long learning, plentiful cultural and entertainment activities, retail diversity, and a lifestyle second to none.

Our Mission

The City of Aberdeen will continue to invest in its infrastructure, including long-term, adequate provision of public facilities and services. The integrity of neighborhoods will be sustained through replacement of aging infrastructure, rehabilitation of "tired" structures, and empowerment of residents. There will be reinvestment in historic sites, districts, and structures, which represent a proud heritage and serve as points of interests for tourists. The tax base will be stabilized and strengthened by helping businesses grow, adapting to new economies, and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. Our public and parochial schools will contribute to educating our youth and future workforce. The quality of life will be further enhanced with a first-class park and recreation system. There will be heightened attention to preserving the environment. Aberdeen will be a community with a charming character, rich in history, culture, and family values.

Preserving Our Character

Residents of Aberdeen cite our small-town atmosphere, reasonable cost of living, access to quality primary and local higher learning institutions, plentiful parks and amenities, and strong family values as our most valued assets. We enjoy the benefits of a small town located in a largely rural environment with reasonable access to more populated areas. The expanse of rural open space surrounding our community and its agrarian use contributes to our small-town character. We each have a strong sense of pride in our community and enjoy it as a place to live and raise a family. The importance of this plan is, thus, to translate these intangible values into future



Aberdeen Comprehensive Plan Tomorrow Plan

development and growth strategies so our decisions enhance, rather than deteriorate, our values as a community.

The Future Land Use Character Plan displayed in this summary, and the goals, objectives, and recommended actions to support it, are intended to provide the guidance necessary for us to achieve our preferred pattern and character of future development. In so doing, our higher priority objectives are to:

- ◆ encourage the development of compatible land uses, avoiding mixtures of incompatible uses in close proximity to one another;
- ◆ enhance neighborhoods and commercial areas that are “at risk” of decline;
- ◆ ensure a variety of housing options, environments, and price ranges;
- ◆ reinvest in the infrastructure of the older areas, including street and utility improvements, parks and open space, sidewalks and trails, and rehabilitation of the housing stock;
- ◆ attract additional office employment and associated businesses to the downtown district; and,
- ◆ conduct regular reviews and periodically amend this plan and its implementing regulations to reflect changing conditions.

Planning for Our Mobility

Our local transportation system is multi-modal meaning that it includes our streets and highways, but also addresses air transport, public transit, and pedestrian connectivity via sidewalks and our developing community trail system. The aim of our transportation plan is to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods. The recommendations of this plan element will assist in expanding our trail system, enhancing our options for air transportation, and improving public transit service. In addition, the Thoroughfare Plan will be used to guide decisions in securing rights-of-way for new and extended streets as well as improving existing streets. Our objectives for continuous improvement of our transportation system are to:

- ◆ coordinate with other governmental agencies to develop a regional, multi-modal transportation system;
- ◆ continuously improve and extend our network of arterial streets to serve both our short-term and long-range mobility needs;
- ◆ provide continuous collector roadways within and between neighborhoods and throughout the community;
- ◆ identify parking capacity and traffic flow improvements in Downtown to provide more efficient traffic flow and meet the parking needs of customers, employees, and office workers;
- ◆ promote walking and bicycling as viable alternative modes of transportation; and,

Trends & Factors

- ◆ Strong retail trade, health care, and manufacturing industries contribute nearly 40 percent of the local employment
- ◆ The Year 2000 Census population of 24,658 persons represents a 1.1% loss from 1990
- ◆ The most optimistic Year 2025 projection reflects a population of 27,387 – an 11 percent increase
- ◆ Between 1990 and 2000, the average person per household increased from 2.50 to 2.66, contrary to national trends
- ◆ The median household income is \$33,276, which is 6 percent and 26 percent less than the state and nation, respectively.
- ◆ In the last decade, the economy has become more diversified with growth in the construction, manufacturing, real estate, and health care industries.
- ◆ The educational attainment is higher in Aberdeen than the state and nation, with 24.4 percent having a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- ◆ The number of employed persons increased 4.5 percent in the 1990s.



- ♦ provide for expanded air transportation and public transit services to improve alternative transportation options.

Our Economic Outlook

Over the course of the last three decades Aberdeen has had a relatively stable population. While the local economy has continued to grow, due in part to our status as an economic hub for the region and our success in attracting business, there is a concern as to our ability to sustain and grow our economy. Rural communities across the nation are confronted with similar circumstances as we seek each to address declining populations and eroding tax bases. Each community – Aberdeen included - has its own uniqueness and set of attributes that offer competitive advantages over other communities and regions. The key to success, then, will be our ability to uncover these attributes and capitalize on them in a way that both benefits our local economy while, at the same time, adding to our envisioned community character.

Our economic development plan expands upon our opportunities to retain and support existing businesses, attract and grow desirable new businesses, and adequately train and educate youth and the community workforce - all while sustaining, protecting, and enhancing the characteristics we value most. The purpose of this plan element is to provide guidance as to how we can be proactive in our economic development and achieve our vision without compromising character or quality of life. To accomplish this intension, we intend to:

- ♦ further improve our primary education system and the quality of our facilities and programs;
- ♦ target economic contributing businesses and solicit their placement in Aberdeen;
- ♦ provide support to our retail and service sector businesses;
- ♦ facilitate entrepreneurial business start-ups to expand and diversify our economy;
- ♦ facilitate adequate technical training and higher education opportunities for our workforce; and,
- ♦ identify means for expanding and increasing the value of local tourism.

Our Parks and Open Spaces

Parks and recreation facilities are an integral part of our public infrastructure system. Foresight and preparedness is, therefore, of utmost importance to adequately plan to satisfy the needs and desires of our citizens, both now and



Aberdeen Comprehensive Plan Tomorrow Plan

in the future. Our parks and recreation plan is intended to guide decisions as to the enhancement of our existing parks and trails and the ongoing development of new facilities to pace future changes in population, demographics, and development. It forms a policy direction pertaining to the timing of park development, their placement within the City and our three-mile planning area, the type and quality of facilities, and the method by which enhancements and improvements are funded. Our objectives for maintaining our “first-class” parks and recreation system are to:

- ◆ encourage the preservation of open space and conservation of our environmentally sensitive areas along Moccasin and Foot Creeks, within the floodplain, and in our habitat areas;
- ◆ sustain and improve the quality condition and attractive appearance of public areas and facilities with an aggressive maintenance program;
- ◆ provide an interconnected system of paths, trails, lanes, and routes that are multipurpose, accessible, convenient, and connect to residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, workplaces, major open spaces, and other destinations; and,
- ◆ form mutually beneficial partnerships with and among the public and private sectors to expand and improve the provision of services and facilities.

Our Livability and First Community Appearance

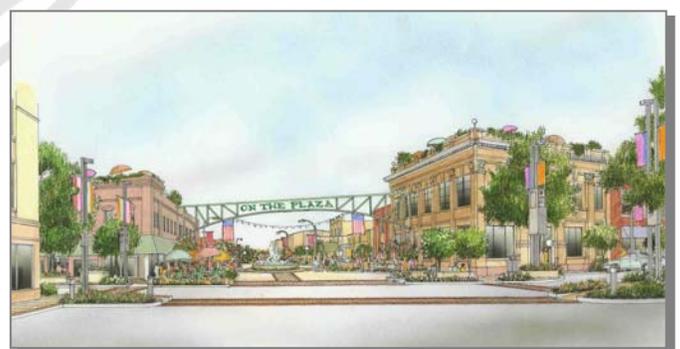
The appearance of Aberdeen is important to our livability and, hence, our physical and economic development. As residents we recognize the value of an impressionable community and are committed to its betterment. We desire welcoming entryways, attractive corridors, unique and inviting districts, pleasant and quiet neighborhoods, beautiful parks and public open spaces, well-kept properties, and a community presence that exhibits our unending pride. We are keenly aware that qualities such as charm and character do not just happen; rather, they require the involvement of the whole community to make improvements - both individually and collectively - to achieve our envisioned community.

To enhance our community character and appearance, we seek to:

- ◆ create a land development pattern that is conducive



Development clustering is a land development technique that integrates natural resources as permanent open space.



- to a suburban rather than auto-urban character;
- ♦ improve the appearance of our major roadway corridors and enhance the nature of development;
- ♦ create sufficient areas for site landscaping, open space, and screening;
- ♦ establish an edge and identity to the community through gateway and portal treatments;
- ♦ diligently maintain and improve buildings and grounds; and,
- ♦ encourage the preservation of open space.

Managing Our Growth and Development

In order for Aberdeen to realize the future envisioned by our residents and leaders, we must have a balanced strategy for achieving economic growth, while guiding development in a pattern that is fiscally responsible. Doing so will require preparedness and pro-activeness, both in terms of our advanced facility planning and future land use management. Our growth plan establishes a policy framework designed to guide timely extension of adequate infrastructure, provision of quality municipal services, and a logical sequencing of future development.

Our community is increasingly challenged by limited fiscal resources. While we benefit economically by our status as a regional hub of business activity, without population and employment growth, our local economy may not be able to sustain itself or grow. It is, therefore, essential for us to evaluate our pattern of development and seek ways to improve the efficiency of our service provision and our effectiveness in delivering quality, reliable, and adequate facilities and services to our residents and businesses. Doing so will require that we:

- ♦ revise our development regulations to require efficient types and patterns of development;
- ♦ manage the City's pattern of development concurrent with the provision of adequate facilities and services;
- ♦ utilize the provision of facilities and services to guide the timing and sequencing of future development;
- ♦ provide for a long-term supply of potable water, reliable treatment and distribution systems, and adequate wastewater treatment capacity and collection systems; and,
- ♦ provide for the ongoing needs of the police and fire departments to ensure adequate protection of the population.



Aberdeen Comprehensive Plan Tomorrow Plan

Our Implementation Strategy

Implementation is the most important part of this planning process because it is the point at which the Comprehensive Plan transitions from policy into practice. Implementation is when general concepts identified during the course of the plan development process take shape and are developed into actual projects and programs. Goals, objectives, and recommended actions that are visionary in the plan are transformed into detailed regulations, programs, capital improvements, agreements, studies, incentives, and other types of implementation activity. The role of the plan is to form the construct by which specific decisions will be made. Without strategic direction and an organizational approach, well-intentioned plans are commonly unsuccessful in seeing their vision become reality. To avoid this outcome, our implementation plan includes strategic actions, including:

- ◆ an **organizational structure** that clearly defines the roles of the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Commissions, Action Task Force, and Plan Administrator, as well as on-going participation of residents;
- ◆ a process for **annual plan evaluations** to provide opportunity for regular review and preparation of updates and revisions;
- ◆ procedures and criteria for an **evaluation and appraisal report** to be prepared every five years, the outcome of which will result in a comprehensive re-assessment and amendment of the plan;
- ◆ a plan for **intergovernmental coordination** to proactively respond to issues that are common across jurisdictional boundaries; and,
- ◆ a **prioritized five-year action plan** with specific tasks, timeframes, responsibilities, and sources of funds.

