General Reactions to Scenario 1: Status Quo

There was a variety of responses among residents on whether the current land-use pattern should be continued, some were in favor while others raised objections. Among the reasons given for this objection, one was the desire to preserve the aspect of the small-town community infrastructure aesthetic as well as the character of the community. However, one of the strong reasons for the objection to the 'status quo' scenario was that the scenario failed to meet demands for housing. Some of the residents felt that the status quo would not be sufficient to solve the growing pains in housing, especially as it concerns seniors and low-income families.

General Reactions to Scenario 2: Downtown Sequim Emphasis

The general reactions to Scenario Two were mixed, with participants expressing both support and concern. Many residents were apprehensive about the potential loss of Sequim's small-town charm and neighborhood character due to taller buildings and increased density. Traffic and parking issues were common concerns, with fears that development could lead to congestion. However, some saw opportunities for economic growth through more retail, tourism, and nightlife, though there were warnings about the risks of over-relying on downtown development. Many stressed the need for supportive infrastructure, balanced growth, and maintaining a rural feel while addressing challenges like housing affordability, and homelessness, and ensuring adequate public services.

General Reactions to Scenario 3: Washington Corridor

Many participants expressed mixed opinions regarding Scenario Three, which proposed growth along the Washington Street corridor through new residential and commercial nodes connected by transit. The feedback leaned toward favoring economic opportunities while expressing concerns about infrastructure and maintaining the town's character. Some community members saw the Washington Corridor as an opportunity for economic expansion, with potential benefits for schools and healthcare services, as well as a chance to foster a younger population and enhance nightlife options.

In addition to this, several participants highlighted the potential for the scenario to create a more inclusive environment for residents living on the outskirts, offering more business opportunities and a greater variety of retail options.

However, there were also concerns raised on the loss of Small-Town Charm. A recurring theme was the fear that increased development, particularly large commercial areas along Highway 101, could lead to traffic congestion, loss of the town’s rural character, and increased homelessness.

Key Themes from Community Comments

Aside from these general reactions to the scenarios, participants were allowed to give some comments on what they preferred among the scenarios, actions to be taken to make these scenarios better, and other comments they had. These are the main themes of this section.

Housing Concerns

Many residents expressed that the status quo would not meet current housing demands. They highlighted concerns over high housing costs and restrictive downtown height requirements. Additionally, there were fears

that low-density developments would lead to sprawl. A recurring concern was the lack of housing options for families and younger residents, as current development trends appear to cater primarily to retirees. This, some feared, could transform Sequim into another retirement zone, limiting inclusivity for families.

Economic and Infrastructure Opportunities

Residents saw opportunities for economic growth, particularly with the development of mixed-use areas downtown and along the Washington Street corridors. They emphasized the need for matching infrastructure to support this growth, including medical services, parks, and transportation improvements. The potential development around the Washington Corridor was viewed both as an opportunity and a concern, depending on whether it would serve local needs or cater exclusively to tourists.

Transportation and Connectivity

Transportation was a major focus, with calls for better pedestrian and biking infrastructure and improved walkability. There were concerns about Highway 101, which was seen as an obstacle to development, underscoring the need for improved access and transportation infrastructure.

Community and Environmental Focus

There was strong support for preserving Sequim's "small-town feel" while ensuring new developments aligned with the town's architectural spirit. Residents prioritized maintaining green spaces and addressing climate change. Supporting local businesses was also seen as key to achieving a balanced development approach that would allow both the local community and tourists to coexist without sacrificing the town's rural charm.

Obstacles and Challenges

There were several concerns about expanding infrastructure due to financial limitations and overdevelopment. Over-development was considered a reason for inflated rents. It is also seen as a reason for the increased stress on supplies of water and medical services. There was also some concern about leadership and careful planning that would support Sequim's growth in a manner enabling it to retain its identity.

Downtown Character and Density Concerns

Many residents feared that taller buildings and increased density downtown could change Sequim's small-town charm and neighborhood character. Specifically, multi-story buildings were seen as potentially harmful to seniors, obstructive to scenic views, and contributors to higher rents and homelessness.

Traffic and Parking Issues

Traffic congestion and parking difficulties in the downtown area were frequent concerns. Without adequate planning, residents feared that increased development could lead to significant congestion and parking shortages.

Support for Infrastructure and Services

Participants stressed the importance of supportive infrastructure, including transportation options like bike lanes, medical services, and public facilities. The need for expanded fire, paramedic, and healthcare services to support Sequim's growing population was also highlighted.

Economic Opportunities vs. Risks

While some saw opportunities for downtown development, including expanded retail, tourism, and nightlife options, others were concerned about relying too heavily on downtown for economic growth. They feared this could lead to homogeneity and economic vulnerability if trends shifted.

Balanced Growth

Many residents favored a balanced approach to growth, blending aspects of different development scenarios. They emphasized the importance of maintaining green spaces and walkability while ensuring that development did not come at the expense of Sequim's rural character.

Obstacles to Implementation

Obstacles to implementing growth strategies included restrictive height requirements downtown, geographic limitations, funding challenges, and the need for strong leadership and strategic planning. There were concerns about attracting developers and ensuring that new housing developments would meet loan criteria.