

FOREWORD

This is the fifth draft of the comprehensive plan and represents final revisions to the June 26, 1996 Planning Commission recommendation as approved by the Whatcom County Council for final adoption. These revisions are responsive to substantial public input heard by the Council during its hearings and work sessions conducted subsequent to the Planning Commission's recommendation. Revisions are also responsive to direction provided by the Growth Management Hearings Board, not only in the cases involving Whatcom County but other cases in the state as well.

The first draft was produced in September 1994. It grew out of a committee-driven design that was based on extensive work by the *Whatcom County: The Next Generations* Visioning Committee. In November 1994, a second draft was produced, which incorporated comments from the public and from interdepartmental review. It was this November 1994 draft that the County Planning Commissioners spent the following eighteen months evaluating and editing chapter by chapter. From this effort the third draft was produced. The fourth draft, March 18, 1997, incorporated some recommendations for change from the Planning and Development Committee of the Whatcom County Council in response to input heard up to that time.

Over the course of the last four years, the list of interns, extra help staff, and former staff who contributed to the preparation of these three drafts is far too extensive to acknowledge individually. Planning staff wishes to express its heartfelt thanks for the efforts of all who worked with good humor and sincerity to achieve this plan. It is the work of these unnamed, dedicated individuals who guided the evolution of this plan through compromise and communication into the excellent planning tool that is presently before the Council.

At the end of each chapter, action plans have been included that correlate actions with the issues, goals, and policies of the chapters.