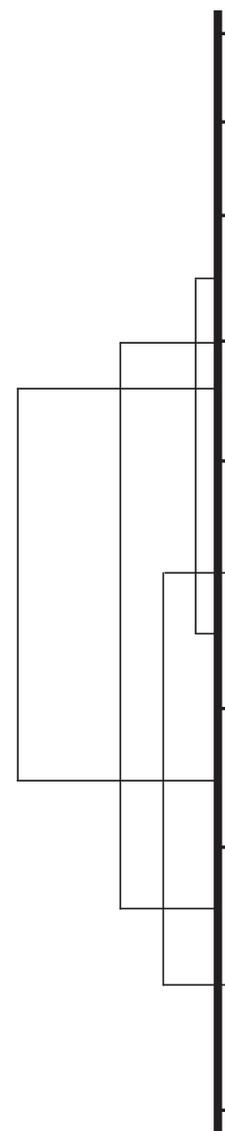


# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE VISION

This section presents the Vision Statement at the heart of this report. In addition, it explains the role and purpose of the Visioning project, as well as describes the process that generated the community's Vision for the future.



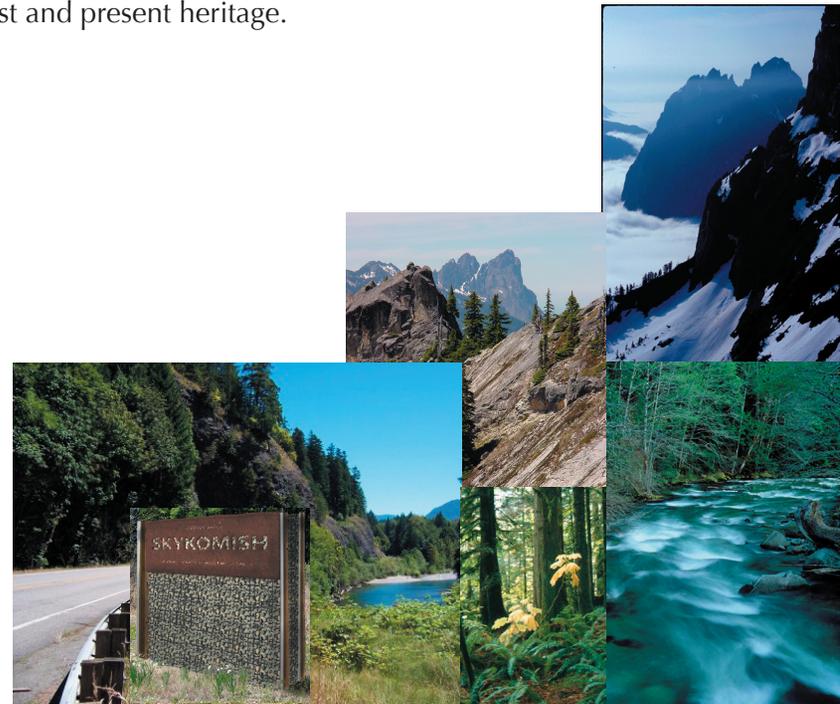
# Vision Statement

Skykomish is a quintessential Northwest town – it is nestled in a stunning mountain setting alongside a vigorous river, with a rich history rooted in timber harvest and the development of what is now the BNSF Railroad Company (BNSF). While the town’s unique Northwest history is visible in both the style of local buildings and architecture, like the inn and depot, events and facilities in town also connect to current Northwest culture and values. A hub of outdoor recreational activities and host to vibrant music and arts festivals, Skykomish also provides visitors a living classroom for environmental education. Now free of toxic contaminants, the town is a regional center for environmental education that demonstrates the harmony between the town and its inspiring natural setting. Historical references in the town evoke the early railroad era of the 1920’s, like the sidewalks, lighting, and many of the buildings in central Skykomish that are authentic pieces of this unique heritage.

The historic depot, in its original location on the southern side of the railroad tracks, is, as it always has been, a hub for visitors. It is a living vestige of the town’s rail and timber heritage, displaying artifacts and information about the history of the railroad, while also serving as an information center for current activities in town. The expansive railyard, where locomotives were once serviced, has been reclaimed for the town. Buffering this hub of activity from nearby residences is a wetland, with a multi-use trail that links up to the network of trails stretching into lands surrounding town.

While the Skykomish River levee provides FEMA-certified flood protection, it also creates a park-like area that affords views and access to the river. A multi-use trail runs along the top of the levee, which is blanketed by native vegetation. This provides a natural look and feel to the levee that complements the stunning natural setting of the town. The trail provides residents and visitors alike the opportunity

to access the river for boating, fishing, or other activities, and also to move along on top of the levee between downtown and points south. Welcoming visitors to Skykomish are attractive entrances from east, west, and north of town, with clearly visible signs and attractive landscaping along Highway 2. Visitors by car and bicycle venture through town while traveling on the Old Cascade Highway, a scenic byway which is well marked where it intersects the current highway. Consistent character among signs on the highway and in town, increases visitor awareness of arriving in Skykomish, and reflects the town’s own Northwest heritage. Facilities in town, well-marketed events, and clearly-defined access points to myriad outdoor activities support the large numbers of visitors who come to enjoy Skykomish’s past and present heritage.



# Role and Purpose of the Project

The central purpose of the Visioning project is to identify and describe a Vision for the future of Skykomish that represents the aspirations and intentions of the community for its future condition. This Vision report spells out what the community seeks to become down the road and identifies specific means for achieving that future. Those means are presented in this report as an implementation strategy complete with specific projects and actions to be taken in order to bring about the desired future.

In August of 2004, the Town of Skykomish adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act. The Comprehensive Plan contains a set of adopted goals and policies to guide development and policy decisions based on a Vision statement established during the creation of the plan. That Vision statement formed the starting point for the process of producing an expanded and detailed Vision presented here, and only those implementation projects that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan were considered in this report.

One of the major issues affecting the town is the imminent cleanup of petroleum hydrocarbons (oil) and heavy metals that are contaminating the soil and groundwater of the town. This cleanup also involves petroleum that is seeping into the Skykomish River. The contamination is the result of activities of BNSF at their former railway maintenance and fueling facility operated from the late 1890's until the 1970's. BNSF is conducting the cleanup of the petroleum at the site under the oversight of Ecology.

Ensuing cleanup activities present the town with an extraordinary opportunity to potentially carry out projects and actions via the cleanup process that will contribute to implementing this Vision.

Since cleanup activities will affect specific locations in the town, the implementation strategy identifies corresponding projects that may be included in the final cleanup action plan for those different areas. It is intended to guide and inform the final cleanup action plan to ensure that the outcome of cleanup projects meets regulatory compliance, and is accomplished in a way that contributes to the future the community seeks.

However, the focus of this report and the future Vision that it puts forward extends beyond the timeframe and spaces of the cleanup into other parts of town and the long term. Thus, the Vision described here is not limited to a picture of how the town would like to be "cleaned up;" rather, this report builds a comprehensive statement of the community's desired future stretching into years beyond the cleanup effort. Additionally, because the Vision for the future of Skykomish involves social and economic conditions that cannot be simply put in place by physical interventions in town, the implementation strategy also identifies actions to be carried out at the initiative of the community over the long term.

## WHAT THIS REPORT DOES

- Describes an expanded, detailed Vision for the future of Skykomish, consistent with the Skykomish Comprehensive Plan.
- Identifies the key, community-defined concepts essential to the future Vision.
- Explores options for physical development in the town and presents specific projects and actions to implement the overall Vision.

## WHAT THIS REPORT DOES NOT DO

- Does not override the current Comprehensive Plan.
- Does not contain final decisions on cleanup activities -- projects proposed will be considered for the final cleanup action plan.
- Does not require specific uses of public or private properties.

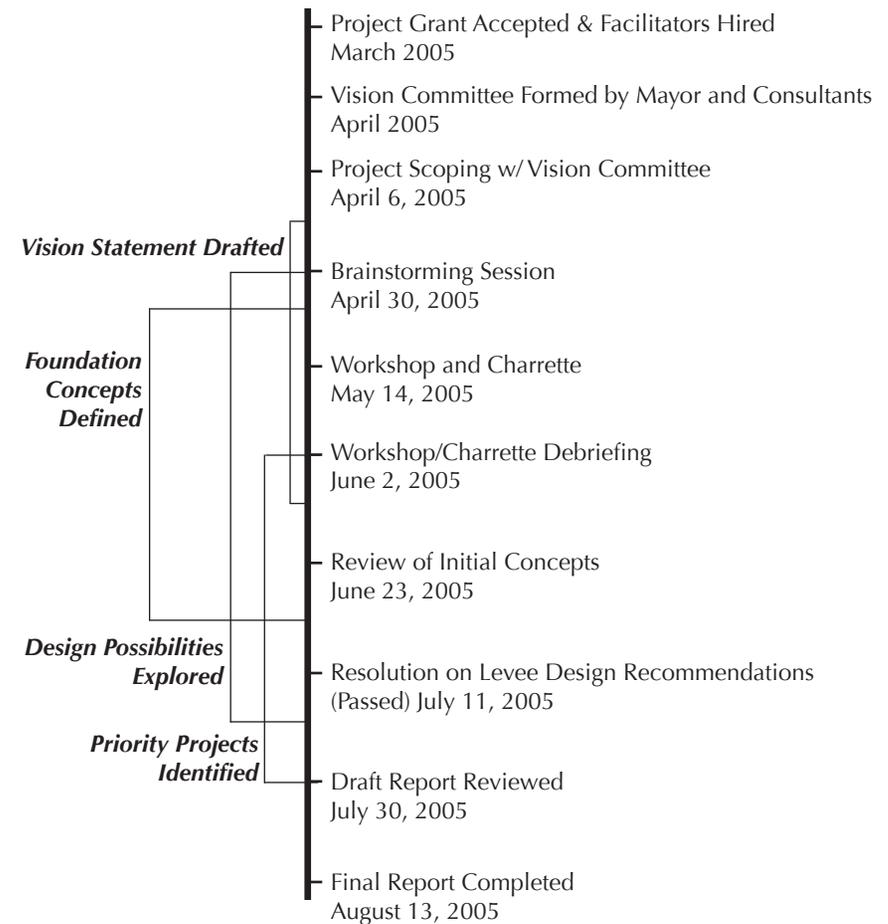
# Process of Creating the Vision

This Vision was developed through a process that integrated the broad ideas and directions of the community for its future with detailed explorations of possible options for achieving them in a unified and comprehensive fashion. The process began with the identification of a citizen committee to assist with the definition and organization of the tasks in the project. In early April, the first public meeting with the Vision Committee was held. The necessary steps for arriving at the Vision were outlined, and tentative dates established for the events in the project.

Information describing the town, its history, its setting, and current conditions, as well as plans and documents describing the planned cleanup program, schedule, and requirements were gathered early on by the facilitation team and continued throughout the process. This information was used to assist community members discuss specific topics and issues, as well as to identify discrete areas in town for implementing the Vision.

The first community workshop, a brainstorming session, was held where the community was invited to engage in dialogue leading to a Vision statement. With the facilitation team, the community explored related approaches to developing spaces and facilities in Skykomish that keep with the preferred Vision. Based on the key themes for the Vision identified in the brainstorm session, an intensive workshop and charrette was then held to produce design concepts illustrating possible options for achieving the overall Vision.

The sketches and concepts from the charrette were then refined and presented to the Vision Committee. This meeting identified remaining issues needing further attention and prioritized key design concepts. Ways to implement these concepts were then explored in detail by the facilitation team, and preliminary illustrations and designs were then



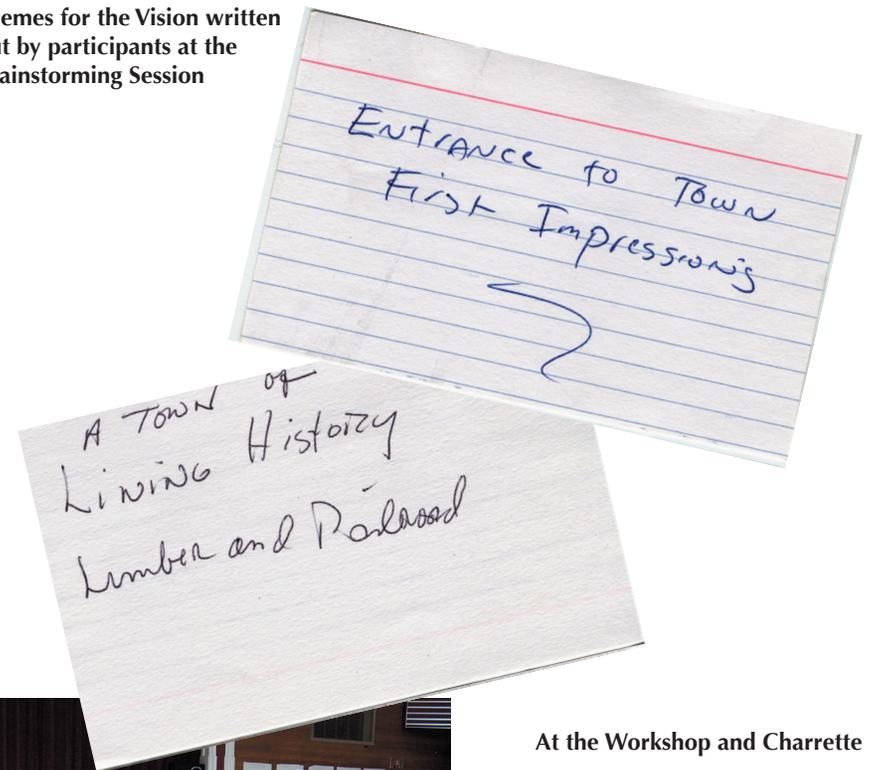
*The diagram above is a timeline of the events held to generate the Vision, and identifies the steps in this process as they relate to the development of the sections of this report.*

presented to the community. This meeting discussed further considerations, particularly the pending levee reconstruction, which will require design drawings before the completion of the Vision process. Developing the town's recommendations for the levee design was made a priority to meet this timeframe. The Vision team then focused on preparing a specific set of recommendations for the levee, which were passed by a Council resolution.

After defining and completing illustrations of design recommendations for the levee, other ways of implementing the key concepts of the overall Vision were developed by the facilitation team. Priority projects related to the overall Vision, in both the cleanup effort and the long term were defined to establish the means for realizing the Vision. This report is the culmination of the Visioning project, as it describes the town's preferred Vision for its future, and identifies related actions to be taken in the short and long term.



Themes for the Vision written out by participants at the Brainstorming Session



At the Workshop and Charrette