



Grays Harbor Vision 2020 coming to a city near you

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Editor's note: Grays Harbor Vision 2020, a group engaged in looking forward to build sustainable economic, environmental and social systems for this area, next week kicks off a series of public forums to ask citizens what they envision for the future and what should be done to get there. Today, Michael E. Dickerson, a member of group's task force, offers his view of the importance of the effort.

My vision of a beautiful place to live is Grays Harbor County. I have been lucky to travel extensively and much of the local scenery is comparable to the best the world has to offer.

The vistas on every road into the county are a delight. My neighborhood is a real pleasure. People are small-town friendly. Almost every business has people who go out of their way not only to be helpful but make you feel appreciated. These are among the reasons I moved here after three years of looking from San Diego to Anacortes.

Vision 2020 is a way for each of us to give input as to what we like and what changes we would like to see and not see in the future. It would be easy not to participate, but it is vital that you do. It is so important for us to keep the qualities of life that we treasure with growth that is sustainable while providing for good education and jobs.

I have participated, both as a commissioner and a resident, in similar community outreach programs. One of them failed and two succeeded. The difference was participation beyond the "Usual Suspects."

So often, it is not the community leaders who make the best comments and suggestions. It is people who few politicians and leaders knew, but who say what they want and feel. They see what is real. If each of us makes our voice heard early in the process, the formulation of the plan will reflect the community.

Change is coming and only we can make sure it is for the better. A good plan with wide community support gives politicians a path to follow. As important, the good developers and business people who want to come to an area that has a broad based community vision. They want to know that their vision of the future is in synch with the community's and that the politicians know to keep the bad players

out.

\In the '40s Bing Crosby was singing "Make The San Fernando Valley My Home" — a place where you can smell the orange blossoms. Before the new residents could stop it, almost every orange tree was cut down for development. They lost the charm and gained smog and traffic.

Please come to a community outreach meeting to share your ideas.

Michael E. Dickerson is a retired businessman who moved to Aberdeen from Southern California.

FORUMS

Ocean Shores Convention Center, 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, April 15

Aberdeen High School, Wednesday, April 16, 6-8 p.m.

Ocosta High School, Wednesday, April 23, 6-8 p.m.

Elma High School, Thursday, April 24, 6-8 p.m.

Oakville Timberland Library, Thursday, May 1, 6-8 p.m.

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