

V. COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Twisp is a vibrant community where the remnants of the past and the town's present activities integrate to form a diverse community identity. Twisp's traditional identity is tied to its Native American roots as well as a history of mining, logging, and a close connection to the natural resources of the valley. Recreation, arts, river resources and Twisp's continued role as business center of the Methow Valley define it as contemporary. A healthy and balanced community identity requires the merging of both old and new elements achieved through a community vision and the preservation of heritage, historical buildings and trees.

A. COMMUNITY VISION

Visual appearance, traffic control for pedestrian safety and transportation links are high priorities in the community vision, with goals to increase the vitality of downtown and create a sense of place and community pride throughout the town of Twisp.

1. Beautification Committee

It is recommended that the Twisp Town Council appoint members to a Beautification committee, whose goals would be to improve the aesthetics and public image of Twisp and enhance the quality of life through the Community vision. The Beautification Committee would have several functions:

- Design Overlay – create an overlying design concept that would incorporate development standards, pedestrian safety, and transportation links establishing continuity throughout downtown and Highway 20 in both new and existing developments.
- Grants – research and write grants for street beautification, landscaping, street furniture, and public art.
- Tree Board – work closely with the Tree Board and propose the use of unmetered water within the Town of Twisp to promote the planting of trees.
- Ordinances – propose and encourage the enforcement of ordinances that support the Community Vision. One example is a Nuisance Ordinance. The MRSC (Municipal Research and Services Center) states that “The existence of dilapidated buildings, unkempt streets and property overgrown with vegetation are associated with areas of high crime and deteriorating property values. The accumulation of junk vehicles, vehicle storage, litter and other visual clutter are seen as a deterioration of the quality of life. The enforcement of nuisance codes, cleanup of property, and beautification efforts are part of crime prevention and economic development activities.”

2. Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is an important element of the Community Vision. Pedestrian and bicycle amenities, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian caution lights and bicycle lanes slow down and control traffic to insure pedestrian and bicycle safety. Refer to the Non-motorized Transportation Map IX for details.

3. Non-motorized Transportation Links

Transportation links, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a trail system, connect town with parks, neighborhoods and businesses and promote a community-oriented spirit in the residents, strengthening the community identity. Refer to IV. Park & Recreation Element for more details.

B. HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

1. Historical Buildings

Preservation of buildings that retain original architecture and have historical significance should be promoted. It is recommended that a Historical Preservation Committee be established to identify these buildings and provide information to owners of historic buildings regarding the participation in the Washington State Historical Register, the research and writing of grants to help fund renovations, and the receiving of special tax valuations for renovations of historic properties. The town might consider developing Historic Districts along Burgar Street, the south end of Glover Street or the former Forest Service compound, as examples, and encourage property owners to participate in neighborhood rehabilitation projects.

2. Preservation of Forest Service Property

The community feels that Forest Service property, strategically located in downtown Twisp, should be preserved or developed in a manner that benefits the community.

3. Cultural Heritage

Twisp's Native American heritage, as well as the history of mining and logging, should be recognized and protected. One way Twisp could take actions to incorporate the past with the present is through interpretive markers along streets and river trails reflecting its rich, natural resources and historical life in the Methow Valley.

4. Forestry Management Plan

The town of Twisp has adopted a community forestry program that manages and cares for both the public and private trees. This plan shows:

- an inventory of existing trees, including location, species, diameter, condition and maintenance needs
- the economic and environmental asset of the community trees
- a tree management plan with a set of goals for the town and an implementation strategy.

Refer to the Twisp Community Forestry Management Plan at the Twisp Town Hall for more details.