

## **Recent Commercial Development**

Gateway Place is a 22-acre site, adjacent to Interstate 5, partially completed as a commercial/business park. The project will ultimately include about 500,000 square feet of space including retail shops and office space. Safeco Insurance Company located its regional office in the first office building of this development in 1991; a new company, Mila, is buying the building. Regal Cinema Complex, which includes nine theaters, was constructed in 1994. Comp USA, a computer retailer, located here in 1994. Canyons Restaurant, which occupies the fourth building, completed construction in 1995. Studio 6 is a 119-unit hotel and the latest addition to Gateway Place, completed in 1997. As of November 2002, there were two lots still available to develop.

The Mountlake Terrace Corporate Center completed construction in 1999 of a Class A office building. The seven-story, 120,000 square-foot building with underground parking houses a satellite campus for the University of Phoenix, the nation's largest private university. Also, Premera Blue Cross has made extensive renovations to its multiplex headquarters off 220<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.

## **Permitting Policy**

Each year, the City of Mountlake Terrace processes thousands of applications for development permits. Applications are diverse in type, ranging from minor home improvement projects to subdivisions, grading, and large-scale commercial projects.

Reviewing applications has to take into account many needs. For example, most people want projects in their neighborhood to meet community standards for safety, transportation, environment, land use, health, property rights, infrastructure, and other priorities. Developers have special concerns for fast turn-around times, as well as flexibility in dealing with their specific needs. They also want to know the rules up-front and expect permit applications to be treated fairly and consistently. Goal 7 of the state's Growth Management Act weighs in too, calling for timely, fair, and predictable permitting. To meet all these expectations can be challenging for any local government, especially when resources are tight.

Mountlake Terrace recognizes the economic importance of having a permit process that is clear, fast, fairly administered, predictable, and responsive to community objectives. The City is engaged in quality improvement efforts to speed up the permit process while ensuring community objectives and standards are met. Such "streamlining" actions have already included a one-stop permit counter, pre-application information, an electronic permit-tracking system, and coordinated project reviews. Other improvements are being sought too, with special attention to speed, fairness, and predictability.

Policies to address efficient permitting are contained in the Plan Administration Element.