



**Town of Windham, New Hampshire**  
**Windham Economic Development Committee**  
**Strategic Plan**  
**Adopted July 8, 2016**

**Mission:**

The Windham Economic Development Committee's mission is to enhance the vitality of the local economy by supporting existing business and attracting new businesses to Windham, encouraging economic development consistent with the Windham Master Plan, and promoting the spirit of the Town Motto: Old Values, New Horizons.

**We Serve:**

Our committee serves to better assist, counsel, and inform on the merits of planned economic growth for the benefit of the Residents of Windham, the Board of Selectmen, other Town Boards and Departments, existing businesses and businesses proposing to move to or expand in Windham.

**Strategic Goals:**

These are developed to best communicate our priorities and intentions to the Residents of Windham and are in alignment with the Board of Selectmen approved WEDC rules:

1. Promote growth in property valuation that generates tax revenue which exceeds municipal costs, in order to reduce the tax burden on Residents
2. Promote Windham as a destination for businesses
  - Establish and nurture supportive relationships with proposed and existing businesses
3. Encourage Community outreach and support
  - Provide education opportunities and events to communicate the benefits of economic growth
4. Improve Quality of Life in our community
  - Engage in ongoing communication with residents to establish types of desired businesses
5. Promote interaction with local, state and federal boards

Each of these goals is defined below with possible tactics to achieve them:

1. Promote growth in property valuation that generates tax revenue which exceeds municipal costs, in order to reduce the tax burden on Residents
  - Seek to maintain a balance between growth in non-residential tax revenue and protection of Windham's natural resources

- Utilize the January 2012 Cost of Services Study, or the most updated version, to measure new development valuation and how that valuation impacts the tax burden on residents;
  - Track the tax impact of different types of development (retail, office and industrial buildings)
  - Evaluate large undeveloped parcels and promote parcel assemblage in areas with the greatest potential. Take into account opportunities and constraints of the parcels
2. Promote Windham as a destination for businesses
- Develop and enhance website/marketing material to attract and retain businesses.
  - Target new businesses which are desirable to Windham
  - Highlight the potential for parcel assemblage to achieve an area's highest potential.
  - Support increased pedestrian traveled ways including sidewalks and connectivity
  - Continuously update the profile of the greater Windham labor pool, track and report employment activity,
  - Include broader region demographics as an important consideration for businesses locating in Windham.
3. Encourage community outreach and support.
- Nurture supportive relationships with existing businesses and property owners.
  - Identify and prioritize outreach and working with businesses which have challenges or expansion needs.
  - Provide or participate in education and outreach opportunities to encourage and communicate the benefit a shared vision of economic development.
  - Work collaboratively and seek support for Windham economic development from residents, businesses, neighboring cities and towns, and State organizations.
  - Provide forums for discussion on topics of interest related to economic development.
  - Provide periodic articles on economic development including topics of current conditions, progress measurement, obstacles and achievements.
  - Monitor and proactively work with organizations such as DOT, DRED, and regional Chambers of Commerce to identify and positively influence economic development.
4. Improve quality of life in our community.
- Utilize results from Town surveys (e.g., Master Plan, WEDC Economic Development Opinion Survey, Northeastern CURP, etc.).

- Seek input from the residents of Windham in order to establish which types of businesses are desired and will provide the most valuable services.
  - Encourage continued citizen participation with visioning, affirm community strengths, and find collaborative approaches to meet challenges creatively.
  - Communicate considerations in regard to traffic impact to promote development consistent with the Master Plan. (e.g., Retail developments have weekend impact on certain routes also, whereas Offices may impact traffic only during the week.)
  - Promote economic growth that provides high-skill, higher-wage employment opportunities in Windham.
  - Research and communicate the benefits of increased cultural capital
- 5 Promote interaction with local, state and federal boards
- Provide input to various boards as issues relate to this strategic plan
  - Attend meetings where there are agenda items that impact economic development.
  - Proactively work with Planning Board on Zoning amendments for Town meeting vote, Site Plan regulations, Design review guidelines, etc. that have an impact on economic development.
  - Further develop criteria that outline when and how WEDC will advise on ZBA/PB development applications.
  - Support Community Development Department and consider advising on warrant articles that have an impact on economic development.

### **Subcommittees**

Responsible for monitoring, classifying and quantifying information and communicating effectively to the WEDC so it may be best enabled to achieve these goals.

### **A Closing Perspective:**

Windham's population has grown at a substantial rate, which has outpaced the region, and continues to be an attractive destination for a number of reasons. Among these are:

- Location relative to large metropolitan areas in New Hampshire and Boston Massachusetts.
- Recreational and cultural activities, and close proximity to many other like attractions.
- Ease of access due to the Interstate Highway and three major State of NH transportation routes.
- Exceptional quality of the School systems.
- Business friendly town staff, employment pool, services and opportunities.

The community will continue to experience growth and will benefit from highly informed planning with a clearly communicated Vision. Governance informed by an engaged community is necessary to providing its residents and businesses the highest quality of life possible.

The WEDC was formed to assist and facilitate the process. This plan focuses on contributing impartial, informed counsel to governing boards and engaging the resident and business communities.