



## Town of Windham, New Hampshire Windham Economic Development Committee Strategic Plan

### **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:

- **Improve quality of life in our community.**
  - Engage in on-going communication with residents to establish types of desired businesses.
- **Promote Windham as a destination for businesses.**
  - Establish and nurture supportive relationships with proposed and existing businesses.
- **Encourage community outreach and support.**
  - Provide education opportunities and events to communicate the benefits of economic growth.
- **Promote balanced tax responsibility between businesses and residents.**
  - Support a desirable town with successful businesses, desired municipal services, cultural capital, and excellent schools.

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

1. *Improve quality of life in our community.*
  - a. Utilize results from Town surveys (e.g., Master Plan, WEDC Economic Development Opinion Survey, Northeastern CURP, etc.).
  - b. Seek input from the residents of Windham in order to establish which types of businesses are desired and will provide the most valuable services.
  - c. Encourage continued citizen participation with visioning, affirm community strengths, and find collaborative approaches to meet challenges creatively.
  - d. 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.)
  - e. Promote economic growth that provides high-skill, higher-wage employment opportunities in Windham.
  
2. *Promote Windham as a destination for businesses.*
  - a. Further develop and enhance marketing material to best guide free market selection.
  - b. Further develop the web site as a collaborative tool to distribute information.
  - c. Provide positive media updates for local papers, regional meetings and business groups.
  - d. Target potential business through packaging our town assets to compete for the types of business Windham desires and highlight our support of existing ones that have made investment and achieved success.
  - e. Solicit public and business input on potential amendments in Zoning which may better support planning for the location and focus of specific business development.
  - f. Review large undeveloped parcels in areas with the greatest potential for the town.
  - g. Highlight the potential for parcel assemblage to achieve an area's highest potential.
  - h. Evaluate and catalogue opportunities and constraints through the lens of desired development.
  - i. Nurture supportive relationships with existing businesses and property owners.
  - j. Participate in public and business education events.
  - k. Solicit data on foot traffic to measure growth and set goals for continued success.



- b. Utilize the January 2012 Cost of Community Services Study, commissioned by the Windham Conservation Commission, to measure new development valuation and how that valuation impacts the tax burden on residents.
- c. Show the tax impact of different types of development (retail, office and industrial buildings, etc.) using data and statistics to communicate a vision of the benefit of focused planning.
- d. Research and communicate the benefits of increased cultural capital.

### **Subcommittees**

Set up to allow for greater focus on Communication, Land Use, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, and other issues as they may arise. 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 over the past ten years 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.