

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 retaining 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:

The WEDC was originally established in 2007 as a sub-committee of the Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce and authorized by the Windham Board of Selectmen. It was formed as Town of Windham Committee to better assist, counsel, and advise the Citizens of Windham, the Board of Selectmen, other Town Boards and Departments and the Windham businesses, both existing and proposed, on the merits of Economic Development.

Strategic Goals:

These strategic goals are developed to advance the mission of this organization 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 new businesses.**
- 3. Establish and nurture supportive relationships with existing businesses and property owners.**
- 4. Provide input to the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment to project a welcoming and helpful image to the business community.**
- 5. Provide education and outreach opportunities to encourage and facilitate economic development.**
- 6. Work collaboratively and seek out support for Windham economic development from local, regional, and state organizations.**
- 7. Identify and pursue funding sources, on behalf of the Town, which would enable WEDC to meet the mission and goals set forth in this document.**
- 8. Promote economic growth that provides employment opportunities in Windham.**

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.*

- Utilize the Feb. 2011 Cost of Community Services Study commissioned by the Windham Conservation Commission (as it may be updated) to measure new development valuation and how that valuation impacts the tax burden on residents.
- Show the tax impact of different types of development (retail, office and industrial buildings, etc.)

2. *Promote Windham as a destination for new businesses to locate in.*

- Further develop and enhance marketing material
- Further develop the web site as a tool to distribute information.
- Provide positive PR about Windham in local papers, regional meetings, and business groups.

3. *Establish and nurture supportive relationships with existing businesses and property owners.*

- Set up an ambassador program
- Provide public and business education events.

4. *Provide input to the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment to project a welcoming and helpful image to the business community.*

- Attend meetings where there are agendas items that impact economic development.
- Proactively work with Planning Board on Zoning Amendments for Town meeting, Site Plan Regulations, Design Review Guidelines, etc. that have an impact on economic development.
- Create criteria that outlines when and how WEDC will take a stand on ZBA/PB development applications.
- Support Community Development Department including its budget and consider taking positions on warrant articles that have an impact on economic development.

5. *Provide education and outreach opportunities to encourage and facilitate economic development.*

- Provide forums for general or specific discussion on economic development.
- Provide periodic articles on economic development.

6. *Work collaboratively with local, regional, and state organizations and seek their support for Windham economic development.*

- Monitor and work with organizations such as DOT, DRED, and GSSC to identify and positively influence economic development.

- Set up sub-committees responsible for understanding, monitoring, classifying and quantifying our infrastructure

7. *Identify and pursue funding sources, on behalf of the Town, which would enable WEDC to meet the mission and goals set forth in this document.*

- Establish a sub-committee to identify and explore potential funding sources.

8. *Promote economic growth that provides employment opportunities in Windham.*

- Prepare profile of the Windham labor pool.
- Track and report Windham employment activity
- Provide education about why local employment is good

A Closing Perspective:

Windham's population has grown at an aggressive rate over the past ten years and continues to be an attractive location for a number of reasons. Among these are:

- Its location relative to a large metropolitan area and its employment pool, services and opportunities;
- Its location relative to recreational and cultural activities;
- Windham is at the crossroads of 2 major highways.

The community will continue to experience growth generating attendant stress. Calm, reasoned planning and governance informed by an engaged community is necessary to providing its residents the most effective 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.

This Strategic Plan was adopted at a meeting of the Windham Economic Development Committee on October 14, 2011.

Robert Young

Robert Young, Chairman