City of Snoqualmie, Washington

Economic Development, Branding & Marketing Plan

CONTENTS

The lure of gold in the Cascade Mountains prompted Jeremiah Borst to set out from Seattle in 1858, only to be stopped by the natural beauty and fertile soils of the Snoqualmie Valley. He settled there and made it his home, encouraging other settlers to come to the area as well.

Today, just like Jeremiah Borst, more and more people are becoming entranced with the natural beauty of the Snoqualmie Valley and choosing to call it home. Only 28 miles east of Seattle, Snoqualmie offers spectacular scenery and alluring attractions, plus a wealth of outdoor recreation options.

Borst hiked the 28 mile trail to Seattle for his supplies. During the 1860s, the settlement grew, and for a number of years it was the only settlement east of Seattle. The first tourists to visit Snoqualmie Falls – fifteen men and women - traveled by schooner, then canoe, up the river in 1865 with fourteen Native American guides.

Agriculture was originally an important industry in the Valley, and Jacob Borst grew fruit, potatoes, onions, and hops. Hops were a thriving commodity in the 1880's, until aphids destroyed them all in 1890. Borst took charge of building the first road over Snoqualmie Pass in 1868, expanding trade through the mountains.

Snoqualmie was platted in 1889 when the railroad came through town, and then the trip to Seattle became much easier. Incorporated in 1903, the new city of Snoqualmie became a hub of industry. The first long-distance transmission of hydroelectric power in the Northwest was conceived and brought about by a father and son team at Snoqualmie Falls, with the generators producing electricity by 1899. The Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company began a thriving operation in 1917. Dairy farming was an important industry until the 1950's.

The Seattle, Lakeshore, and Eastern Railway ensured that Snoqualmie would be a commercial center for the Valley. The 1890 Queen Anne style railroad depot in the middle of downtown is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Throughout the 20th Century, Snoqualmie remained a small town with great rural charm and stunning scenic beauty on the outskirts of the Seattle metropolitan area. Local industry remained largely rural-based, with a decline in the logging mill activity. When Interstate 90 was built, the 1970s saw an in-crease in visitors to Snoqualmie Falls, and the Falls have become the second most visited destination by tourists to Washington State.

As the greater King County population has increased, development has spread eastward, resulting in a surge of Snoqualmie's population and housing since 1990. Snoqualmie has grown from 1,546 residents in 1990 to 4,210 in 2002 (Puget Sound Regional Council, September, 2002) with the majority of growth occurring in the newly developed mixed-use community of Snoqualmie Ridge. The downtown core has retained much of its small town ambience. The Snoqualmie Railroad Depot, housing the Northwest Rail Museum, is centered in the downtown core.

The mixed-use development on Snoqualmie Ridge includes new retail buildings, an industrial complex, and community parks in addition to residential neighborhoods. New public facilities, police and fire, have also been built on the Ridge. With so much activity now taking place outside of the historic commercial core of the town, there is concern about the continued viability of businesses downtown.

As development on the Ridge has progressed, the City of Snoqualmie has taken on ever greater responsibilities for the increased number of residents. Expanded city services to accommodate the increased population needs a long-term tax base of support, to be found in a thriving business and retail environment.

In order to assure long-term economic vitality and preserve the scenic and historic character of Snoqualmie, the City has secured the consultant services of Destination Development, Inc. to produce an Economic Development Plan for the City of Snoqualmie. The goal of the Economic Development Plan is to provide initiatives and methods that will encourage diversity of the City's economic base, tap into opportunities for economic expansion, and help to create a sustainable, vibrant community.

In order to develop an Economic Development Plan that would meet the goal and fulfill the vision of a vibrant and sustainable economy for Snoqualmie, Destination Development, Inc. has performed a number of tasks that were detailed in the scope of work, as follows:

Part I. Community Assessment

Destination Development performed a two part community assessment of Snoqualmie including branding/marketing effectiveness and an on-site assessment

For the first part of the assessment, Destination Development assigned two staff members to plan a trip to the Western Washington area without informing them of the specific location. In this way, they performed visitor research objectively, reviewing marketing materials to determine both visibility and effectiveness of materials and sales efforts. This research also offered a comparison of the effectiveness of marketing materials with others in the region.

The second part of the assessment included an on-site visit to the community – a two-day intensive look at the community from the eyes of an outsider. Signage, wayfinding, gateways, and attractions were reviewed, as well as beautification efforts, attractions mix, visitor amenities and services, critical mass, ease of getting around, local business offerings, friendliness, general appeal, etc.

Particular attention was paid to signage and wayfinding, including directional signage, community entry points, sign clutter, merchant signage, connections from and to neighboring communities.

Downtown Snoqualmie was assessed in terms of critical mass, business mix, customer, service, curb appeal, operating hours, cross-selling of other businesses and local services, etc.

Dozens of photographs of Snoqualmie were taken, and the findings and suggestions were presented to the community in a two-hour workshop.

Part II. Stakeholder input

A vital ingredient in a community's economic development plan, stakeholder and community input was achieved through several means. Primarily, Destination Development met with local organizations, individuals, city staff, elected officials, downtown retailers, development interests, and others selected by the City. These included individual meetings as well as group workshops and discussions.

Meetings and workshops included the Snoqualmie Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Community Relations Committee, the Assessment workshop which was open to the public, the Arts Commission, the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association, the Parks Board, the Rail Museum board, the Planning Commission, the Economic Development Commission, and a number of meetings with city staff.

Individual meetings with stakeholders included representatives of the hardware store, Mignon Home Furnishings, MK Property Services, the Parks Director, the Mayor, Opus, the Chamber of Commerce, Salish Lodge, the Valley Record, City Council representatives, the City Administrator, Optiva Past President, the CEO of Phillips, the City Attorney, NW Capital Corporation, King County Historical Preservation Program representative, several representatives from the NW Railway Museum and building, Kimball Creek Village, the Systems Network Director at the Administration Building, the Public Works Director, a property owner of five city lots, prospective Performance Arts/Film Center representative, Walker Family Trust, Snoqualmie Tribe representative, board members of the Railway Museum, Thomas Consultants regarding Salish, and ongoing with city staff. Teleconference meetings were held with a representative from Quadrant Homes, the Community Relations Committee, and the Snoqualmie Valley Record, as well as several others.

Internet and telephone communications provided an additional means of stakeholder input, and a large amount of correspondence was achieved in this manner as well.

Part III. Research & Reviews

Destination Development conducted demographic and statistical research of the area to determine target markets for new business recruitment and further investment in the community, including a definition of the trade area. The elements of previous studies and reports for the City that were pertinent to the economic development process were also reviewed.

Among the reports reviewed were the City's Comprehensive Plan which includes an Economic Development segment. The objectives of which are to encourage economic development that supports Snoqualmie's natural, cultural, historic, and social environment and contributes to the long-term sustainability of the city and region. To accomplish these objectives, the plan recommends retaining and development small businesses, particularly

small retail businesses in the downtown historic district. Also, to encourage local entrepreneurship, improve the aesthetic environment of business and commercial areas, and to encourage local hiring. It is also recommended that downtown Snoqualmie's unique character and heritage be enhanced to increase its viability as a tourist and commercial center of activity.

The Land Use, Parking Areas, Population, Public Infrastructure and Facilities, Gateways, Housing, Open Space, Parks and Recreation sections of the Comprehensive Plan were also reviewed.

In addition, Destination Development reviewed the Snoqualmie Retail Development Plan of 2002 and the Retail Development Plan Appendices, and the State Route 202 Corridor Improvement Study. Brief summaries of the studies are included in the Appendix of this report.

Destination Development also reviewed Lodging Tax receipts and expenditures, marketing materials, and branding perceptions.

This effort has helped to guide the economic development goals and direction, to assist in creating a list of industries/businesses that would fit with the community's long-term strategies and vision.

Part IV. Development of the plan includes specific recommendations regarding:

Marketing issues:
- Website, brochures and other marketing materials and efforts developed by the city and other local organizations that play a role in marketing/providing services to the community.
- Advertising, sales efforts, public outreach (PR) efforts
- Visibility: Recommendations on increasing visibility for the community's economic development business attraction program
- Use and return on investment of lodging tax revenues
- Public/private marketing partnership programs
- Recruitment recommendations attracting new businesses/industry to Snoqualmie
- Branding initiatives
- Three-year detailed marketing plan
- Public relations strategy
- Marketing themes, events

Community and downtown revitalization:
- Curb appeal recommendations/streetscape improvements for downtown
- Façade improvements, retail/business mix, zoning issues, theme development
- Signage gateway, and wayfinding recommendations
- Visitor amenities: parking, restrooms, visitor information
- Zoning and land use recommendations in the downtown core area
- Retail specifics: window displays, signage, curb appeal, merchandising
- Customer service, employee attitudes

Business mix:
- Lodging, dining, entertainment options (downtown) making it a destination for locals and visitors alike
- Private/non-profit attractions and amenities: improvements, capital projects, expansion, repositioning
- Business signage program, destination retail initiatives
- Individual business recommendations and for the historic district as a whole

Development:
- List of primary businesses and industries to be recruited
- Marketing initiatives to develop a business attraction program
- Capital projects, public/private partnership projects
- Mill site recommendations

Visitors Bureau/Economic Development:
- Organizational structure, management, funding and board makeup
- Third-party recommendations and roles in the program
- Partnership programs with county/state resources
- Roles for various local organizations and the city
- Possible creation of a Main Street or similar program

Brand Identity & Signage:
- Design of a brand identity (logo) for the city and community branding/promotional efforts
- Design template for decorative wayfinding signage at key intersections, including wording, size, placement
- Determination of locations for key signs and design of each sign

Financial
- Funding, financing options for recommendations
- Detailed budgets (approximate costs) for each program

Timelines:
- Order and timelines related to implementation of each item
- To-do lists including committees, organizational assignments

Part V. Historic Downtown technical assistance

This element has included multiple meetings with the City and planning staff, property owners, and merchants regarding theme/revitalization, downtown infrastructure improvements, parking, marketing, retail mix, operating hours, entertainment. Also included, meeting with the newly formed Economic Development Commission for the purpose of defining roles, focus, organizational structure, funding, and agendas.

The City of Snoqualmie has done what most communities should do - Commission the creation of a comprehensive Economic Development, Branding, and Marketing Plan. In these days of shrinking subsidies, grants, and external funding programs, communities are forced to operate like businesses: work to market the community for the purpose of importing new cash into the community in order to keep local taxes low, and improving the quality of life for its residents.

In the case of Snoqualmie, the community has one of the highest percentages of "leakage" we've found. Leakage is the loss of local income as it is spent outside the community. It happens when a community exports more money than it imports, as local consumer purchases are made elsewhere. In the case of Snoqualmie, the community is quickly becoming a bedroom community to Seattle and the Eastside: local residents commute to jobs outside the community, and spend most of their income while outside the community: shopping, dining, entertainment, and personal services. Consider the following:

1. Snoqualmie Ridge residents are more situated to Interstate 90 and other Eastside communities than they are to their own newly adopted community (Seventy five percent of Snoqualmie residents have lived in the community less than five years). They don't see that downtown Snoqualmie has much to offer them, and most of their needs, can easily be met in other communities where they work or on the way home. Residents want convenience, but there is not sufficient critical mass to keep them spending their money in Snoqualmie.

2. When it comes to entertainment, including entertaining friends and family, local residents follow the market and generally go to other communities: Redmond Town Center, Marymoor Park, Bellevue, Issaquah, and downtown Seattle, further contributing to the earnings leakage.

3. The Snoqualmie Ridge Business Park is home to Philips, a terrific asset to the community, yet because housing is so expensive in Snoqualmie, more than 400 workers commute to Snoqualmie each day, earn their checks, then commute back home with their earnings, creating little positive economic impact for Snoqualmie.

4. Snoqualmie is home to one of Washington's most visited attractions, Snoqualmie Falls, which hosts some 2.2 million visitors a year, yet 99% of those visitors don't spend time or money in Snoqualmie, but head to the North Bend Outlet Mall, or back home. The fact is that many of these visitors don't even realize there is a downtown Snoqualmie.

5. In casual interviews with Snoqualmie Ridge residents, most are embarrassed by downtown Snoqualmie's poor curb appeal and lackluster condition of most of the shops. While Snoqualmie has transitioned from a sleepy timber town to a high-income bedroom community, the downtown core does little to cater to this new population and has not much to offer local residents, their guests, or guests of Salish Lodge, one of the premier lodging properties in the Northwest.

6. Most of the 80,000 Rail Museum visitors see nothing across the street that entices them to spend money in Snoqualmie, compounding the situation further. In fact, we saw, on several occasions, visitors looking across the street, then leaving.

In summary, Snoqualmie Ridge, built to be a "live, work, play community," has instead become a bedroom community with much of its workforce commuting out of the city each day.

This brings us back to the reason the Snoqualmie City Council commissioned the creation of this Plan. What does Snoqualmie need to do to develop a strong enough tax base to offset the costs of maintaining dozens of new parks, improve and expand a growing infrastructure, revitalize downtown, and provide better and more services to one of the state's fastest growing communities?

This is the driving question this plan seeks to answer. The challenge is that in order to implement an aggressive economic development plan, cash is required - an investment that has to be made today, to provide a return on that investment three to five years down the road. This creates a political hot potato: what services do we cut back on today (if necessary) so that we can grow the tax base and revenues and afford those services tomorrow?

This plan includes more than 45 recommendations, which we have broken down into six categories:
  • Organizational
  • Business attraction program
  • Downtown revitalization program
  • Community development initiatives

- Branding initiatives
- Marketing program

In a nutshell, and without reviewing all the recommendations in this executive summary, we recommend that the city do the following things:

1. Downtown Snoqualmie

We believe the heart and soul of any community, besides its people, is its downtown. While Snoqualmie has moved up-market in terms of residents (75% of Snoqualmie residents live in the Ridge) and visitors, its downtown lags far behind and offers little appeal to either local residents or tourists.

This plan includes nearly 25 recommendations geared specifically to downtown Snoqualmie. Recommendations include the creation and implementation of a Main Street program, a business improvement district to create a funding mechanism for improvements, new gateways, putting utilities underground, facade improvement programs, creating a plaza area along Falls Avenue, development of streetscape improvements along Railroad Avenue, and a major shift in the business mix downtown.

Downtown Snoqualmie offers little, if anything, for breakfast, and little to do after 5:00 pm. Successful communities have transformed their downtowns into signature "gathering places" that become a hub of activity - something missing in the entire Snoqualmie Valley. And Snoqualmie has great potential to become that hub.

Consider the location of Washington's most popular destination small downtowns: Port Townsend, Poulsbo, Leavenworth, Winthrop, LaConner, Port Orchard, to name a few. All of which are located at least an hour's drive from the Puget Sound metropolitan areas. Downtown Snoqualmie has the potential of becoming a destination community or gathering place, drawing on a population base of nearly 3.5 million residents - within a 40 minute drive.

2. The gathering place

Downtown needs to be a hub of activity with specialty shops, many of which we've identified in the plan. Events, markets, seasonal outdoor seating, wider sidewalks, enhanced beautification elements, will all contribute to the attraction of downtown. Perhaps the most controversial recommendations in the plan will revolve around the recommendation to relocate neighborhood retail businesses located at street level along Railroad and Falls Avenue to other areas and fill those spots with destination retail (specialty retail) shops. Additionally, homes along the river in the downtown core would be converted to retail uses, and still others would eventually be demolished to create open space. The river is one of the community's best assets, yet it's all but hidden. This implementation would need to be market-driven.

3. Recruitment & revitalization

Implementation of this plan will require the dedicated effort of two people and a supporting cast of committees, local officials, and partnerships with private enterprise.

We recommend that the city contract for an Business Recruitment Professional, and working for that person would be a Main Street Revitalization Manager. This team would be charged with:

- Implementation of this plan
- Recruiting new business enterprises and investment to Snoqualmie
- Grant writing, creation of public/private partnerships
- Working with local committees on various projects

Both of these positions (or firm) could be home-based, or work from their own offices. These individuals would spend at least 80% of their time specific to recruitment or downtown revitalization. We are not a proponent of creating more organizations that require additional overhead, capital costs, and more bureaucracy.

The recruitment position will most likely sunset in three to five years, while the Main Street position may continue for five to seven years.

The Snoqualmie Economic Development Council, a volunteer program, will steer the implementation of this plan. It will include nine members, of which one will be appointed as the Chair. It will operate much along the lines of the Planning Commission, but will work directly under the direction of the Council instead of a city department.

There will also be one other committee:

- An intergovernmental committee made up of Snoqualmie Valley city representatives, King County and Washington Dept. of Transportation to develop and implement a valley-wide signage and wayfinding system.

Note: An existing "Clearing House Committee" of city departments would work collectively with new development projects through the permitting process.

4. New commercial development
For the Business Park area, the recruitment effort would focus on industries and business sectors that have a preponderance of higher income jobs, as opposed to entry level, factory, and second-income jobs. The business attraction effort will be geared to attracting the types of industries that will keep local residents working in the community. Industry sectors include technology research and development, education, professional services (architecture, engineering, consulting, legal & accounting, finance, etc.), corporate offices and headquarters (where quality of life leads the location decision), medical technologies, philanthropic organizations, software development, etc.

Also included in the recruitment process is a high-quality, mid-priced hotel (Hampton Inn or similar), gas and interstate-oriented retail, and moderate-income multi-family housing. To house these new companies, the recruitment effort will work to attract a Corporate Campus developer (office complex development), and additional neighborhood retail space.

5. The Rail Museum
Many projects to be undertaken by the Northwest Railway Museum have been detailed in this plan, perhaps the foremost of which requires the removal of nearly 60 rail cars and engines now dilapidating along Railroad Avenue just west of the downtown core. Most of these cars have been there for years and MUST be dealt with as part of the revitalization process. While they are treasured by the rail community, to most they represent a junk yard of old rail cars - rusting hulks that have been there for decades. But moving them will require a true partnership between the museum and the city, in terms of securing funding, permits, financing and other elements needed to make these changes. The Northwest Railway Museum hosts nearly 80,000 visitors annually and could be a major draw to the community.

6. Wayfinding system
Recommendations also include branding initiatives including a valley-wide, wayfinding signage system, creation of a new branding identity (logo) for the City of Snoqualmie. In developing destination areas of the city, we've recommended that the retail area at Snoqualmie Ridge be identified as "Ridge Marketplace," while downtown be referred to as "The Rail District" or simply

"Railroad Avenue Shops." Pole banners, signage and gateways would showcase these areas of Snoqualmie.

7. Product development over marketing
More than 40 of the 50+ recommendations are product development initiatives. In order to achieve success, you must have something to sell - that visitors and residents can't get closer to home or to where they work, that will make Snoqualmie THE destination or gathering spot. Businesses always relocate to places they have had a favorable image of while visiting. That requires investment - both from the public sector as well as the private sector.

This plan includes fewer than ten marketing recommendations: creation of recruitment materials, a valley-wide Activities Guide, a strong internet presence for both economic development and tourism (the state's fastest growing industry), and the installation of visitor information kiosks to "connect the dots" keeping visitors in the community longer, which translates to additional local spending.

8. The financial commitment
Implementation of this plan will require approximately a $300,000 commitment from the city each year for five years, plus grant funding, and will be offset by millions to be spent by the private sector over the next decade. Implementation of this plan will dramatically increase the local tax base and revenues, assisted by a stronger tourism program - perhaps the purest form of economic development: visitors come, spend money, then go home.

The following section of this plan "Return On Investment" details the benefits of investing in this process. The city might expect to see a buildout of commercial areas at the Ridge Marketplace, Business Park and downtown in 15 to 20 years. With a strong commitment to a professional recruitment program, the city could cut this timeline in half - something the city needs to do with the residential buildout scheduled to conclude by 2010 - just four years away.

9. Tourism as a catalyst
Tourism is the fastest growing industry in Washington and is an $11.4 billion dollar industry, nearly half of which is spent in King County. Snoqualmie is, by no means, seeing its share of that spending, in spite of millions of visitors. The number one reason for travel is to visit friends and family, yet when visitors come to Snoqualmie are locals taking their guests to local businesses and attractions or to other neighboring communities? Do visitors to Snoqualmie

Falls spend money in town, or do they move on?

Stronger partnerships need to be forged to increase tourism spending in the valley. You are far more effective as one loud voice than a number of under-marketed and underfunded small voices. Additionally, the more you have to offer, collectively, the further people will travel and the longer they will stay. Our marketing recommendations follow this philosophy and include more than just Snoqualmie.

10. Private sector must be a partner
It takes a village - the entire community - to make this plan work. Tourism and economic development require private sector investment, and that is what drives the tax base. The city is there to facilitate and assist wherever possible.

Each recommendation made herein is individually numbered and includes:
 • A description of the recommendation
 • Who should be charged with implementation
 • Approximate cost of implementation
 • Possible funding source or sources
 • Timeline
 • Rationale for making the recommendation
The plan includes budgets, timelines, and responsibilities, by organization for implementation of the recommendations.

11. One step at a time
There are several things NOT addressed in this plan, and because they are not included does not minimize their importance to the community. Those include Meadowbrook Farm, the golf course, the mill site, the proposed casino, and the Meadowbrook District.

All of these can play an important role in Snoqualmie's future, but this plan concentrates on the foundation and building blocks. Trying to "fix" every-thing is daunting, and so we recommend starting with the core items and then readdressing and updating this plan every three to five years. As projects have been implemented, new ones can be added. This plan focuses on the things that can most increase the local tax base and visitor spending.

Once this plan is well on its way to accomplishing its goals, any opportunities to extend the plan into these other areas should be taken advantage of.

12. Adopt and implement
It is our hope that the City Council will adopt the plan and instruct staff to implement it, coming back to the council for specific approvals during the process. A plan of this nature is integrated, and the sum of all parts will create a successful economic development program.

Cutting some recommendations, and altering others will result in a puzzle that can't be successfully solved. While there are some recommendations that may not be acceptable to some residents, politics is, more often than not, the killer of economic development. In draft form, the plan can be altered, rearranged, changed to fit the will of the City and community, but once a final plan has been developed and adopted, it will be important to stick to the plan.

Snoqualmie is a rapidly changing and evolving community. It is not the same community that was founded 100 years ago, and while some residents resist change, major changes need to be made in Snoqualmie in order for it to thrive as the outstanding community it is and can become. Making changes requires dedication and hard work to tackle the projects that are worth accomplishing.

A personal story:
In 1992, I (Roger Brooks) was retained to recruit investment into Ocean Shores, a community much like Snoqualmie in many regards. The city needed tax base for a new community-wide sewer system, new roads, new fire and EMS equipment, etc. I visited with every member of the city council and told them that if we accomplished the goal of increasing the tax base, that they would have to take the political hits and just keep moving forward - that success could not come while winning popularity contests. Chances were good that they might not be reelected when their terms came around again.

To make a long story short, we recruited $180 million in new development projects to Ocean Shores in just three years, doubling the tax base of this community of 3,000 residents. None of the city council members were re-elected, but four years later, local residents were back trying to restart the economic development program. After all, that new tax base allowed the city to develop a city-wide sewer system, purchase new fire and emergency medical equipment, new police equipment, build a new library, repair miles of failing roadways, build a new golf course clubhouse, increase tourism

revenues to all-time highs (retail sales and services in Ocean Shores add up to $80 million annually) - all of this while maintaining one of Washington's lower property tax rates.

Snoqualmie has the potential to become the showcase community of the Northwest while maintaining its rural charm and character, but it will require investment, and dedication.

Development of this plan involved hundreds of interviews, ongoing correspondence, research, and reviews. We have made sure the recommendations are in conjunction with the city's Comprehensive Plan and vision, as well as the other planning and development efforts that have been produced over the last ten years for and by the people of Snoqualmie.

Upon approval of this plan, existing City Documents should be updated to reflect and support these recommendations.

Two common conceptions about the travel industry are:
1. Tourism creates low-wage, seasonal jobs
2. The destination community subsidizes visitors.

Does this conventional wisdom ring true?

Bandon, Oregon, (population 2,900) was fast declining in the 1970s, the aging buildings of its historic downtown becoming derelict, and local businesses moving to the highway. Set on the Pacific Ocean, Bandon's natural beauty drew new arrivals into the town, bringing fresh viewpoints and an appreciation for the setting and the small town atmosphere. As "hippie" artists and craftsmen discovered the area, setting up shop in the old downtown buildings, the Port began some renovations next to downtown, investing $4 million into a boat basin for commercial fishing to replace the declining lumber shipping industry. The port officials decided to make the waterfront tourist friendly, and added fishing and crabbing docks.

Visitors began to be more attracted to the small town, and residents and tourists alike saw the budding opportunities for opening their own businesses. Galleries and shops opened up in downtown, the buildings renovated, and more visitors have been drawn to the area.

When Bandon Dunes Golf Resort opened in 1999, the small town began seeing private jets bringing celebrities to visit the town, play golf, and enjoy the ocean beaches.

Revitalization of the downtown core continues with new sidewalks and streetlights, plus a Port project with a boardwalk, enclosed picnic shelter, and amphitheater at the waterfront.

Population in Bandon had grown by a third in the decade from 1990 to 2000. Median family income had climbed 67 percent to $37,188 a year, and 28 percent of the city's homes had been built since 1990. The shopkeepers, hoteliers, construction workers, and golf course operators in Bandon have found that tourism has provided them with successful, living-wage employment. Plus, they are able to live in a spectacular setting with a vibrant downtown and waterfront – one that other people travel to in order to enjoy.

Bandon, Oregon, is one example of a town that has become a successful tourist destination. Visitors, by spending money in the town, have contributed financially to the revitalization and prosperous economy that residents of Bandon now enjoy.

As an economic development activity in Washington State, tourism generates sales in lodging, food service, recreation, transportation, and retail. Direct travel spending in Washington amounted to $11.6 billion in 2004, a 7.4 percent increase over 2003. Ten percent of all visitor spending in the state can be attributed to international visitors, and 47 percent of all travel spending can be attributed to visitors from other states. Tourism is an export-related industry, in that it brings cash from other localities into the community.

140,200 jobs in Washington State are directly the result of travel spending, totaling employment earnings of $3.7 billion during 2004. Tourism generated the greatest number of jobs in arts, entertainment and recreation, food services, and accommodations.*

The travel industry generates a large number of entry-level positions and opportunities for small business ownership. The majority of tourism-associated businesses are small enterprises, offering opportunities for entrepreneurs. Seventy-eight percent of travel industry gross state product consists of payments to employees, higher than any other industry except aerospace.*

No other industry in Washington generates as high a proportion of tax revenue in relation to its gross state product (11 percent) as tourism. Most of these taxes are paid by travelers, and many of these taxes go directly into the local government's coffers.*

The travel industry has shown the most stable growth over the last twelve years of any industry in the state, in spite of the effects of 9/11. Historically, the growth of the travel industry is consistently strong.*

In King County, travel spending also provides a very strong impact on the economy, with total direct spending reaching $5.26 billion in 2003. Visitors spent $729 million on accommodations; $858 million in food and beverage services; $133 million at food stores; $764 million for ground transportation and motor fuel; $395 million on arts, entertainment and recreation; and $506 million on retail sales. This spending resulted in direct local tax receipts of $121 million and state tax receipts of $218 million; and it created 49,900 jobs in King County.*

While Snoqualmie Falls is one of the state's most visited attractions, the city of Snoqualmie sees little tourism spending as a result of this attraction, located just half a mile from its downtown. Tourism is the leading revitalization strategy for downtowns across America and every successful redevelopment effort contributes a tremendous portion of the success to increased tourism into their downtowns.

The tourism industry, by importing cash to a community, provides the opportunity for a variety of employment, small businesses, and entrepreneurs. The wages paid to these travel industry workers becomes part of the economy of the community when they, in turn, spend their wages on rent, food, clothing, gas, etc.

As an economic development diversification strategy, tourism contributes greatly to a healthy local economy and quality of life for the residents of a community.

* Dean Runyan Associates for State of Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

Snoqualmie's unique economic situation has highlighted the essential importance of a stable, diversified source of City revenues. Once the one-time development revenues derived from the building boom on Snoqualmie Ridge are eliminated at build-out, the City will require different revenues in order to maintain services. The ideal sources are retail sales taxes and business and occupation taxes – not from an increase in those tax rates, but from an increase in the volume of retail sales and the number of businesses operating in the City. The ongoing development will, of course, increase the amount of property taxes as well, due to the increased valuation, but that revenue will level out. The strategy of this plan is to invest in those areas of the City that will have the greatest impact on increasing those sales tax and business and occupation tax revenues, creating a stable, diversified economy in a City environment that will also enhance the sense of community spirit and pride in the community's history and heritage, offering residents and workers a setting that is attractive, interesting, and vibrant.

Measuring return on investment in economic development and downtown revitalization is traditionally difficult due to the extreme number of variables. This type of work requires community participation and commitment, and when the efforts are sidetracked by a few, or a grant falters, or the weather is terrible for months on end, or the national economy slows to a trickle, even the most diligent efforts can be met without much success. However, the efforts can also be wonderfully successful, resulting in a community that is economically sound and a pleasure in which to live.

Return on investment in economic development and downtown revitalization should always be considered in two parts: financial and non-financial. The financial results will contribute to a strong business sector providing jobs and tax revenues. The non-financial results are a community that is a joy in which to live and work. The non-financial benefits – a beautiful, vibrant city – also contribute to the financial effort. When businesses and investors see a community working hard to enhance their city, they are attracted to it – the efforts themselves are a draw. And a community that is beautiful and vibrant, offering a high quality of life, attracts people, to live, to work, to visit and to bring their business.

Downtown Snoqualmie has a historic character that is unique. As the center of the community, a city's downtown is a reflection of the community's image. It provides a civic forum where events, gatherings, and celebrations can take place. Snoqualmie's historic ambience and potential for attracting retail spending, however, has never been fully realized, but with work, downtown can be enhanced into an attractive gathering space, where visitors and residents alike will enjoy shopping, dining, and being entertained.

With 1.5 million visitors to Snoqualmie Falls each year, the potential for visitor retail sales is outstanding. In order to tap into that incredible resource, downtown must offer visitors an attractive setting with a variety of retail, dining, and entertainment options. As it is, even with the attraction of the Rail Museum, most visitors either just pass through downtown or go around it. The recommendations for revitalization in this plan are designed to correct that situation and enable Snoqualmie to take advantage of the potential for a great increase in retail sales offered by the large number of visitors already so close by.

Snoqualmie's retail sales/use tax receipts have been steadily increasing over the years – in great part due to the sales tax from construction on Snoqualmie Ridge. Sixty-four percent of Snoqualmie's retail revenues come from Ridge construction. Once build-out occurs, that revenue will decline, so it is imperative to find other sources. Even with that sales tax revenue from the construction boom, Snoqualmie's retail sales tax receipts have been very low compared to other cities due to "leakage." Many residents do most of their shopping outside the City.

The chart "Comparison of Retail Sales/Use Tax Distributions with Population Ratios" (page 16) illustrates the comparison between Snoqualmie's tax receipts, figured per person based on population, and several other cities in the state. These other cities generate substantial retail sales from visitors. Snoqualmie generates a retail tax per person per year of $216, compared with Winthrop (a town of only 351 people) whose per person tax is $635. This shows the power of visitor spending – Winthrop thrives due to its visitors. If we take out Snoqualmie's revenues from the Ridge construction, Snoqualmie's retail tax generated per person is only $78, which is $557 less per person than Winthrop's.

Even Port Orchard, a town of similar size as Snoqualmie, and not a major tourist attraction, generates $342 per person each year. If Snoqualmie were to attract visitor spending on a par with Port Orchard's, Snoqualmie would generate $2,169,990 a year in retail sales/use tax, as opposed to the $1,369,816 it received in 2005. That is an increase of $800,174 for one year.

Using the ERA Retail Study Visitor Retail Percentage of Sales and current Department of Revenue figures, if Snoqualmie proceeds to implement the marketing and product development recommendations in this plan, it will see a steady rise in retail sales tax generated from visitor spending. According to ERA, the visitor percentage of retail sales is currently 23% of total sales. 2005 retail sales attributed to visitors at that rate is $31,505,768, generating $315,058 in retail sales tax revenues for the City from visitors.

Implementing the marketing and product development recommendations will spur visitor retail sales, as shown on the chart "Snoqualmie Visitor Retail Projections." Initially there will be a slow increase, then, as downtown sees revitalization and an increase in destination retail stores through the recruitment effort, visitor retail sales will begin to increase dramatically. The expansion of the Salish Lodge and opening of the new Casino will bring even more visitors to Snoqualmie, further increasing the potential for visitor spending. We would anticipate, with a moderately aggressive effort at revitalization, that within five years, Snoqualmie could see a doubling of visitor retail sales revenues. This amount is still less than the visitor retail sales revenues of Port Orchard, in the example above, showing there is still ample opportunity to expand these revenues even further.

The second part of the retail sales tax revenue equation is increasing retail spending among the residential population. While the work done to revitalize downtown and add to its retail mix will attract residents as well as visitors, the greatest increase from residents will be on Snoqualmie Ridge and the other commercial areas. The key to providing retail that will appeal to residents is to recruit what is most desired and needed. Property owners are most interested in selling or leasing their properties – it doesn't much matter to whom. Therefore, without a strong recruitment effort, much of the available space may not be filled with the businesses that are most advantageous for the economic well-being of the city.

The Snoqualmie City & UGA Resident Retail Projections chart shows the increase in retail sales and tax revenues that can be expected from residents with recruitment of the kinds of retail that is in demand.

Additional business and occupation taxes are another important revenue source for the City, and the revitalization of downtown, plus the growth and recruitment of business and industry on the Ridge and in other commercial areas, will increase those revenues. Making the City attractive for investors and new businesses is key, and the recruitment effort will target desired business.

The current revenues from B & O taxes include a substantial amount from the Ridge development; therefore, replacement of those revenues is urgent before the Ridge is built-out. With a moderately aggressive recruitment effort, the City could anticipate a steady increase in B & O taxes, then a drop at Ridge build-out, then further increase. The B&O Tax Revenues chart illustrates this growth.

The Snoqualmie Commercial/Retail Property Build-out chart (page 18) shows the increase in property values and taxes with both a moderately aggressive recruitment effort and with little recruitment effort. The aggressive recruitment effort accelerates the amount of property tax receipts, providing those funds to the City earlier. A recruitment effort also provides the very important opportunity to attract the businesses and retail development that the City chooses.

Simply by virtue of the ongoing growth on Snoqualmie Ridge, the City will see increases in many of its revenue sources before build-out occurs. After build-out, though, the importance of having a variety of self-sustaining revenue sources will be very clear. By taking steps now to expand the retail sector so as to attract a much larger volume of both visitor and residential retail sales, the City will be able to tap into two existing customer bases – the 1.5 million visitors who already come to Snoqualmie, and the growing number of residents. Attracting new businesses and industries that fit the vision and needs of Snoqualmie will provide local jobs as well as more business and occupation tax revenues. The recruitment effort will help on both fronts, and the revitalization of downtown will contribute to an increase in retail sales by helping to create an attraction, a gathering space, and a community focus.

Implementation of this plan is designed to accelerate the increase in Snoqualmie's revenue streams - property taxes, B&O taxes, retail sales taxes, utilty taxes, etc., so that as Snoqualmie Ridge reaches buildout the city won't have to wait several years until commercial construction projects come on line to fill the void. What might be a typical 15 to 20 commercial buildout, should now be a 7 to 10 year buildout. Granted, there are any number of variables that can affect this effort, but taking a leadership role in the communities development, will absolutely accelerate the process, just as a sales and marketing department does with any business.

SNOQUALMIE VISITOR RETAIL PROJECTIONS
With Marketing and Product Development Implementations

Year	Visitor Retail *	City Retail Tax (1%)	% Increase	Additional Taxes Rec'd
2005	$31,505,768	$315,058		
2006	32,135,883	321,359	2	$6,301
2007	35,349,472	353,495	10	38,437
2008	42,419,366	424,194	20	109,136
2009	84,838,732	848,387	100	533,330
2010	101,806,479	1,018,065	20	703,007
Totals	$328,055,700	$3,280,557		$1,390,211**

* Based on DOR figures and ERA Retail Study Visitor Retail Percentage of Sales

** Over the next five years, the city would see an additional $1.4 million in increased sales tax revenues ONLY from visitor spending in Snoqualmie. This is an increase of more than $700,000 annually.

2007 Increase based on additional targeted marketing to promote specific stores and restaurants, per recommendations made in this plan.

2008 Additional increase based on additional retail downtown from recruitment effort and additional events held downtown.

2009 Additional increase due to product development, Casino, and Salish Lodge expansion.

COMPARISON OF RETAIL SALES/USE TAX DISTRIBUTIONS WITH POPULATION RATIOS

	2005 Total	Population	Tax per Person
Snoqualmie	$1,369,816	6,345	$216
Port Orchard	$2,700,435	7,900	$342
Poulsbo	$2,322,970	6,800	$342
Chehalis	$3,287,711	6,990	$470
La Conner	$428,222	761	$562
Friday Harbor	$973,504	2,150	$452
Winthrop	$219,710	351	$635

If Snoqualmie increased its retail sales to be on a par with Port Orchard/resident:

6,345 x $342 = $2,169,990 : An increase of $800,174 annually.

The point of these two charts is to demonstrate the tremendous potential Snoqualmie has in capturing visitor dollars. None of the towns listed above are as close to the major population centers as Snoqualmie is, and few host as many visitors as Snoqualmie already sees annually.

There is no question that with both public and private investment in downtown Snoqualmie, the city would see increases in sales tax revenues of more than $1 million a year. And this is only from retail sales. Additionally, the city would see increased B&O taxes, and increased assessed valuations (property taxes). There is no reason why Snoqualmie can't exceed the per capita spending of towns such as Port Orchard.

SNOQUALMIE CITY & UGA RESIDENT RETAIL PROJECTIONS
With Moderately Aggressive Recruitment Effort

Year	Retail Sales Demand**	City Retail Tax (1%)	% Increase	Additional Taxes Recd*
2005	$105,475,800	$1,054,758		
2006	124,461,444	1,244,614	18%	189,856
2007	154,332,191	1,543,322	24%	488,564
2008	174,395,375	1,743,954	13%	689,196
2009	191,834,913	1,918,349	10%	863,591
2010	209,100,055	2,091,001	9%	1,036,243
2011	219,555,058	2,195,551	5%	1,140,793
2012	228,337,260	2,283,373	4%	1,228,615
2013	237,470,751	2,374,708	4%	1,319,950
2014	246,969,581	2,469,696	4%	1,414,938
2015	256,848,364	2,568,484	4%	1,513,726

*Retail sales taxes, received from resident spending (does not include visitor spending), based on a revitalized downtown, based on ERA study projections. In the first five years the city would see its resident retail sales taxes double from $1 million to $2.1 million.

The far right column shows only the INCREASE in retail sales taxes to the city. These figures do not include figures for inflation or CPI increases.

**This is the retail demand (spending) that could take place in Snoqualmie, by residents alone, IF the retailers were in the city.

The idea of a strong recruitment effort is to expedite this process, speeding up a typical buildout that might take 15 to 20 years to realized, to a 7 to 10 year accelerated program.

SNOQUALMIE B & O TAX REVENUES

Year		B&O tax receipts
2005		$606,274
2006	5%	636,588
2007	5%	668,417
2008	10%	735,259
2009	25%	919,074
2010	15%	1,056,935
2011	-20%	845,548
2012	-10%	760,993
2013	10%	837,092
2014	10%	920,801
2015	10%	1,012,882
2016	10%	1,114,170
2017	10%	1,225,587
2018	10%	1,348,145
2019	10%	1,482,960
2020	10%	$1,631,256

Years 2011 and 2012 show a decrease due to the build-out of the Ridge and the loss of B & O tax revenues from the buildout of that project.

Year 2009 shows a substantial increase due to the Salish Lodge expansion

SNOQUALMIE COMMERCIAL/RETAIL PROPERTY BUILD-OUT - BUILDABLE SQ FT

	# Sq Ft	Cost p/sq.ft.	Value
SR Business Park	1,281,000*	$150	$192,150,000
Kimball Creek	20,000	$200	$4,000,000
Snoqualmie Downtown	10,000	$250	$2,500,000
Ridge Marketplace	83,750	$200	$16,750,000
Salish Expansion	Estimate		$60,000,000
Total			$275,400,000

Property tax estimates during buildout with **Moderately Aggressive Recruitment** based on a 10 year buildout period (commercial properties only).

Year	Percent Built	Value Built	Property Tax Receipts**
1	5%	$13,770,000	$34,345.13
2	5%	$27,540,000	$68,690.27
3	5%	$41,310,000	$103,035.40
4	10%	$68,850,000	$171,725.67
5	10%	$96,390,000	$240,415.94
6	10%	$123,930,000	$309,106.21
7	10%	$151,470,000	$377,796.47
8	15%	$192,780,000	$480,831.88
9	15%	$234,090,000	$583,867.28
10	15%	$275,400,000	$686,902.68

Property tax estimates during buildout with **Little Recruitment**:

1	2%	$5,508,000	$13,738.05
2	2%	$11,016,000	$27,476.11
3	2%	$16,524,000	$41,214.16
4	4%	$27,540,000	$68,690.27
5	4%	$38,556,000	$96,166.38
6	2%	$44,064,000	$109,904.43
7	2%	$49,572,000	$123,642.48
8	2%	$55,080,000	$137,380.54
9	2%	$60,588,000	$151,118.59
10	4%	$71,604,000	$178,594.70
11	4%	$82,620,000	$206,070.80
12	4%	$93,636,000	$233,546.91
13	4%	$104,652,000	$261,023.02
14	4%	$115,668,000	$288,499.13
15	4%	$126,684,000	$315,975.23
16	4%	$137,700,000	$343,451.34
17	4%	$148,716,000	$370,927.45
18	4%	$159,732,000	$398,403.55
19	6%	$176,256,000	$439,617.72
20	6%	$192,780,000	$480,831.88
21	6%	$209,304,000	$522,046.04
22	6%	$225,828,000	$563,260.20
23	6%	$242,352,000	$604,474.36
24	6%	$258,876,000	$645,688.52
25	6%	$275,400,000	$686,902.68

Comparison between a moderate recruitment effort and little recruitment:

Year	W/Recruitment	Slow Effort	Difference
1	$34,345	$13,738	$20,607
2	$68,690	$27,476	$41,214
3	$103,035	$41,214	$61,821
4	$171,725	$68,690	$103,035
5	$240,416	$96,166	$144,250
6	$309,106	$109,904	$199,202
7	$377,796	$123,642	$254,154
8	$480,832	$137,380	$343,452
9	$583,867	$151,118	$432,749
10	$686,903	$178,595	$508,308

This chart showcases the effect of a moderately aggressive recruitment effort (upper left) and increases in new construction valuation with little recruitment effort (lower left). The chart (above) compares the two. The difference is a ten-year buildout instead of a 20-year buildout. This projection shows an annual increase to the city of more than $500,000 after ten years. However, it will take the city a number of years before it recoups its investment in the recruitment effort if only gauged from property tax increases, which is typical of a recuitment effort.

*640,500 x 2 story buildings
**City portion of property tax - new assessed construction only

Increases in tax receipts if Snoqualmie proceeds with a business recruitment program and revitalization effort:

Year	City Visitor Retail Sales Tax Increase	City Resident Retail Sales Tax	B&O Tax Increase	Property Tax Increase	Annual Increase
2006	$6,301	$189,856	$30,314	$34,345	$260,816
2007	38,437	488,564	62,143	68,690	657,834
2008	109,136	689,196	128,985	103,035	1,030,352
2009	533,330	863,591	312,799	171,726	1,881,446
2010	703,007	1,036,243	450,661	240,416	2,430,327

NOTE: Granted, revenues will increase simply by default as more people move to Snoqualmie and given inflation and other factors. But compared to other cities, Snoqualmie's revenues, in spite of rapid growth, has remained relatively flat - particularly on a per-capita spending basis. This effort is geared to reducing leakage and increasing the local tax base in terms of new commercial development, a stronger local work force (jobs), and increased spending by both visitors and local residents.

THE BOTTOM LINE: The City's retail sales have remained quite low for its population size with the exception of construction revenues, but with a moderately aggressive revitalization and recruitment effort, the City should see a considerable increase in its tax revenues.

Based on these projections (detailed on the charts, previous pages), by 2010 the City could see additional tax revenues of $2,400,000 in retail sales tax to visitor and resident spending, B & O taxes, and property taxes on new commercial construction. **NOTE**: The figures shown on the previous pages do NOT include any other increases in other taxes, such as utility taxes, property taxes on residential construction, increases in property taxes from higher valuations, real estate excise taxes, etc. As downtown becomes more of a destination, with beautification and retail for visitors, downtown property values will also increase along with the retail sales figures.

As neighborhood retail is recruited and utilized by residents and workers, those retail sales figures will increase. The key is to recruit the businesses that will meet the demand of local residents and the wants of visitors, providing business-friendly locations in beautiful, vibrant, pedestrian-oriented centers.

While this plan is geared to increasing tax base, there are many offshoots including developing an economic development program that will strive to get the people who live in Snoqualmie to actually work in Snoqualmie, making it a true live/work community as opposed to a bedroom community of daily commuters. Finally, revitalization of downtown Snoqualmie is a "Legacy Project." That means that while downtown won't see as substantial return on investment as new development projects in the business park, it will create community pride, will provide many small business opportunities, and will make Snoqualmie a showcase community for the State of Washington.

While the following case history is in Louisiana, it has many similarities to Snoqualmie; local highway running through town, residential growth next to a major interstate, a historic train depot, etc.

Ponchatoula, Louisiana

The community of Ponchatoula, Louisiana (population 5,000) is a rural community about an hour's drive north of New Orleans. With a statewide economic downturn in the 1980's, the city's downtown deteriorated. The community eventually came together to revitalize their central business district, emphasizing specialty retail.

Ponchatoula's economy has traditionally been based on agriculture, growing strawberries for delivery throughout the United States. Calling itself the "Strawberry Capital of the World," it hosts a Strawberry Festival every April.

Ponchatoula's downtown was comprised of small businesses forming the town's commercial center. When a statewide economic downturn depressed the town, the business core seriously declined. Other factors also contributed to the downturn.

A local highway ran through downtown, being part of the town's main street. A highway expansion project created serious access problems for downtown's stores. The highway led to a major Interstate freeway west of town, and new residential growth occurred west of town in response to the highway expansion. This led to more commercial development of strip malls and large shopping malls outside of downtown.

This shift of commercial activity outside of downtown was devastating. At one point, 80% of the downtown buildings were empty. After a while, a private company made offers to buy up the entire area. Then a factory outlet developer tried to buy all the buildings on one street to convert to a factory outlet mall.

The possibility of losing the town's economic independence through a single owner prompted the business community to take action to save their downtown. The people of Ponchatoula had once before taken initiative by saving their historic train depot when out-of-town interests sought to purchase it. The community formed a non-profit corporation, which purchased the station and turned it into The Country Market (an excellent idea for Snoqualm-

ie's downtown grocery store and a good fit for downtown - themed as a "country market" type of atmosphere).

The very successful Country Market sells local handmade or homegrown products. Governed by a volunteer board, they monitor the merchandise, rent booths to vendors, and maintain the station. They also operate their own booth, selling commercial products, and use the revenues and rents for advertising and publicity. As a nonprofit, they offer very low rents to local venders, enabling there to be a variety of attractive products for their customers.

When the local business owners gathered to try to rescue their downtown, they used the Country Market's organizational structure and group participation model. They called their group "The Property Owners' Association."

Choosing one goal, the revitalization of Pine Street, they selected a large part of the street as a specialty retail site for a cluster of antique stores. Ponchatoula's downtown is a nationally registered historic district, and the Association felt an antique theme would fit the area. In addition, the town already held a weekly antique auction, plus an antique booth had operated in the Country Market for a year and a half. The selection of an antique theme was carefully considered in light of the town's past, its regional appeal, the extent of refurbishing buildings, and the theme's uniqueness in the area.

The Property Owners' Association receives volunteer contributions from members, and owners of downtown real estate and their renters are required to make an annual donation of one month's rent. The property owners are required to rent their spaces at very low prices. The Association uses the revenue to promote the city in a year-round marketing campaign for economic development.

Six years after forming the Association, 100 percent of downtown Ponchatoula is occupied. Many property owners have financed renovations on their buildings. In three years, retail antique store sales went from $231,000 a year to $2.3 million. The focus on specialty retail has helped the entire economy of Ponchatoula.

The success of this retail niche strategy has led to the growth of other traditional businesses in the city's downtown as well. Residents and tourists take advantage of the downtown beauty shop, drugstore, barbershop, hardware

store, etc., which all benefit from the large volume of pedestrian traffic created by the antique shopping. Professional services are also housed once again downtown, and the local economy is varied and viable. There are waiting lists for apartments downtown.

Cooperation between business owners has been a key element of the town's success. Shared goals have led the community to support each other's efforts. The continued economic growth depends on the ongoing marketing campaign. The volunteer effort and determination of the community enabled it to save itself. In less than one year, the Property Owners' Association made downtown Ponchatoula's antique retail center viable.

Through careful management and planning, the community plans to retain the small town atmosphere while encouraging the thriving tourism industry that funds its antique retail core. The efforts of the business community are an excellent example of how a small town can use a niche retail strategy to refocus the economy of its downtown to ensure its survival.

Ponchatoula's brand is now "America's Antique City."

Contact information:

Ponchatoula Chamber of Commerce
www.ponchatoulachamber.com

City of Ponchatoula
125 W. Hickory Street
Ponchatoula, LA 70454

(985) 386-6484

Bob Zabbia, Mayor

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Organization of the Snoqualmie Economic Development Commission

DESCRIPTION:

The Snoqualmie EDC should be made up of nine members, selected by the Council, with the following makeup:

- A city council representative (non-voting)
- Two downtown property/business owners
- A representative from the business park
- A representative from the hospitality industry
- A citizen at large
- City Administrator (non-voting)
- Two business representatives at large and/or citizens at large

Responsibilities of the EDC will include:

- Oversee hiring of a recruitment specialist and Main Street Manager
- Management of the recruiting effort
- Reporting every other month to the city council
- Organizing monthly EDC meetings
- Reporting every alternate month to the Council Community Relations Committee
- Providing information to local organizations, city staff
- Acting as a press conduit as new projects begin to come on line
- Manage the dealings and makeup of the EDC
- Seek funding from the council each year for a continued effort

Members of the EDC will elect a "spokesperson" who will be the public voice for the EDC and will act as a Chair for the organization.

We do not recommend that the EDC become a not-for-profit organization at this time, but act as a committee of the City Council, operating much like a Planning Commission. All members would be volunteers, and must agree to attend 75% of the monthly meetings.

The City Council would address the selection of EDC members on an annual basis, making changes as necessary. The council would consult with the chairperson each year for possible changes to the EDC membership.

The EDC would have no funding, except as needed and requested from the council, but would request funding for continuation of the business attraction program. The EDC would have city staff support for minutes and meeting organization.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie City Council

APPROXIMATE COST:
None

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
By end of 2005 calendar year

RATIONALE:
Much of this plan hinges on an effective economic development business recruitment program and implementation of this plan, which includes 50 recommendations. The Snoqualmie EDC will be charged with managing the business attraction program, while city staff and other local organizations will be responsible for implementation of other recommendations.

The plan includes contracting with a marketing professional, with some expertise in real estate development/marketing, to take on the task of recruiting specific business sectors to Snoqualmie. It is important that this person or firm spend 80% of the time marketing Snoqualmie, and not managing a program.

Therefore, it will be critically important that the EDC manage itself through a strong volunteer effort. This requires that members of the EDC be active in the organization, which will meet once a month and will report to the city council every other month.

It is NOT the job of the contracted positions to organize meetings, take minutes, and manage the organization. Their entire effort is geared to increasing the tax base in Snoqualmie, spending at least 80% of their time doing just that.

This means the EDC members will need to take on roles of taking minutes, requesting funding from the city, and other organizational duties.

RECOMMENDATION #2:
Contract for plan implementation services

DESCRIPTION:
The primary function of the Snoqualmie EDC is to oversee a business attraction effort. The EDC will be charged with the development of a job description, advertising for a "Recruitment Specialist" and interviewing and making a recommendation to the council to enter into a contract with the firm or individual to be hired to attract business to Snoqualmie.

The Specialist will spend 45% of his or her time recruiting specific industries to the Ridge Business Park and newly developed commercial areas near I-90, with an emphasis on specific industries (identified in this plan). Another 45% will be spent attracting a new mix of small businesses to the downtown core area - business sectors also identified in this plan. The remaining 10% would be spent managing the effort and meeting with the EDC and council as needed.

The job would be a contracted position and the selectee must have a business license and would be responsible for his or her own taxes, benefits, and overhead. The person can work from home or another office, but would not be a city employee or an employee of the EDC.

This effort is an "outside sales" effort, but would have access to city facilities (with staff permission) for meetings and related activities.

The contractor would be hired on an 18-month contract, with a renewable 18-month extension.

IMPLEMENTATION:
The Snoqualmie EDC will act as a selection committee for the City Council and will provide direction for the contractor, while the City Administrator would provide managerial supervision.

APPROXIMATE COST:
$110,000 per year over three years. This includes all overhead, taxes, benefits, and costs related to the effort. This does not include the Main Street manager.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General fund revenues

TIMELINE:
Starting in mid-2006 for repeating 18-month agreements

RATIONALE:
While it's tempting to create an official not-for-profit economic development agency, such an organization will require office space, equipment and furnishings, and will incur overhead costs, etc. A quality recruitment effort will sunset in three to five years, at which time Snoqualmie will be built-out and will have a strong, stable, self-sustaining economy.

By using a sub-contractor, the EDC will be able to find the person best suited to the job, and will allow that person to work from an existing office or home. It is hoped that the person will be a resident of Snoqualmie or live within the valley, although this should not be a deciding criteria.

It is the Recruitment Specialist's job to attract primary industries to Snoqualmie, and small businesses to downtown. The following are desirable traits to look for in selecting this important contractor:

- Excellent in commercial real estate sales. This is a sales position
- Well spoken with excellent writing skills
- Experienced in dealing and negotiating with large corporations and small businesses alike
- Has a strong understanding of the real estate and development industries and markets
- Has extensive contacts in the development and business industry
- Understands public/private finance, land use, zoning and other issues that will need to be addressed during the recruitment process
- Is self motivated, a strong leader, and results-oriented
- Understands commercial finance, incentive programs, etc.

This person does NOT need to manage the EDC. This is not an executive director type of position, and so it's important to contract with an individual or firm that will be charged with recruiting specific industries and business categories to the City of Snoqualmie.

For the first 18 months of this program, the entire effort will revolve around recruitment of targeted industries, but if the City and EDC would like to continue the effort, then other factors should be incorporated into the economic development effort including:

- Job retention program
- Education and training for local residents
- Infrastructure improvements and enhancements
- Quality of life issues including housing

At that point, perhaps the cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie could explore creating a Snoqualmie Valley EDC, which could become a stand-alone agency that would assist the communities throughout the valley with their economic development efforts.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Economic development roles defined

DESCRIPTION:

1. The Snoqualmie EDC would oversee the implementation of this plan, making recmmendations regarding the hiring of the two contract positions, and directing the efforts of those contractors. The EDC will work with the various organizations, businesses, and agencies that also have "to do" items identified in this plan, and will work under the direction of the City Council as a recommending body.

2. The City Council and staff will, of course, be involved when it comes to funding issues, zoning and planning issues, applications for grants, and other aspects of the plan as it moves forward. The EDC would update the City Council every other month regarding progress and implementation of this plan. In off months, the EDC would update the Community Relations Committee. The schedule for updates will be reviewed and revised as necessary after one year.

The Snoqualmie EDC would be a committee of the City Council, and not under the direction of another department or agency. The Council will select members of the EDC, and the EDC will appoint a Chairperson from among the EDC members.

3. The Snoqualmie Valley Chamber of Commerce would provide visitor information services, and be the "marketing agency" for Snoqualmie's tourism efforts. This includes the development of a valley-wide Activities Guide, website development and management, and management and maintenance of visitor information kiosks as they are developed.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC

APPROXIMATE COST:
None required

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
2006 Calendar year and ongoing

RATIONALE:
In any economic development effort, it takes a number of organizations and agencies to create a cohesive working environment. It is always important to define the roles of each organization.

This effort should not be added to any city department's list of responsibilities, particularly the Planning Department, but would be managed by the Snoqualmie EDC, reporting directly to the City Council and City Administrator. While every department will play a role in the implementation, it's important that people realize that this is a marketing, sales and revitalization effort. This effort is about "making things happen" for the City of Snoqualmie with the bottom line: bringing increased tax base to the city.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Develop an intergovernmental Wayfinding System Committee

DESCRIPTION:
One of the priority recommendations made in this plan is the development of a Snoqualmie Valley wayfinding system. This will require a unified partnership that will include the following agencies, who would assign an elected official to represent each organization:

- City of Snoqualmie
- City of North Bend
- King County (representing Fall City and the unincorporated areas)
- City of Carnation
- City of Duvall
- Washington State Dept. of Transportation

This committee would jointly apply for grant funding for the development of the Wayfinding System Plan and its implementation (funding, fabrication, installation, maintenance).

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie would take the lead

APPROXIMATE COST:
None

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
Established by mid-2006

RATIONALE:
The Valley MUST do a better job "connecting the dots" between attractions, amenities and services. Each community in the valley should work to cross-sell each other, keeping visitors in the valley longer, which will increase spending locally. Communities are always more successful as one loud voice rather than a number of small individual voices, and signage is one of the easiest ways to educate both local residents and visitors as to what you have to offer and where things are located.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Contract for a 2005/2006 census

DESCRIPTION:
We have recommended, and the city has agreed to have a 2006 special census prepared. This will provide invaluable information about the number of jobs in Snoqualmie, commute times, the types of people that are moving to Snoqualmie, where they work, the types of employment that is predominate, etc.

The census should identify population, household size, household income, age, racee, level of education, employment sector, current commute distance and destination.

This will help potential development/business interests who may be looking at Snoqualmie as a potential site for either expansion or relocation. For instance, if there are a large number of professional services industry workers, managers or owners living in Snoqualmie, perhaps the EDC can work to recruit some of those corporate offices to the city.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$30,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General funds

TIMELINE:
The special census will be performed in 2006

RATIONALE:
This plan was developed using a number of assumptions, but the 2000 Census provided inaccurate information about Snoqualmie. Knowing who lives in Snoqualmie (your work force) will be important to the recruitment effort.

SNOQUALMIE SPECIAL CENSUS

1. In attracting any kind of retail business to the Ridge, developers and tenants will look at the demographics, which primarily come from the U.S. Census, so it's important that a typical census be performed so the information is current and accurate. This special census will help determine who lives in Snoqualmie, where they work, etc.

2. In terms of economic development, it is important to determine whether or not there might be demand for professional office space in Snoqualmie. What office space there is in the Ridge is full. We have a good idea that most of the workers that live in Snoqualmie (particularly on the Ridge) commute out each day (another fact we need verified). Are any of these commuters in a decision-making capacity regarding the possibility of moving their operations to Snoqualmie – if space were available and conditions right.

3. The following questions will help provide these answers:

a. What percentage of households are two (or more)-worker households (adults over the age of 18)?

b. Of each household are the workers full-time or part time?

c. In what zip code or city does each adult worker work?

d. How far, each way, do they commute? How many days a week?

e. What size firm do they work for? (less than 15 employees in their office, 16 – 50, 51-100, 101-200, 200+)

f. How many are self-employed, own, or manage the business they work for?

g. Would they consider relocating their business (if applicable) to Snoqualmie if space and conditions were right?

h. How many workers operate a home-based business?
i. Is anyone considering opening or starting a new business within the next two years?

j. If so, what type of business? (Professional service, retail, food service,

manufacturing, other – please identify)

k. What is your position or current capacity or title in your job?

l. If jobs were available in Snoqualmie that fit your pay scale and skill set, would you consider changing jobs?

The idea is to get to know WHO all these people work for and from this information the city may be able to recruit some of their employers to Snoqualmie. Particularly if they have a large workforce living in the community. This might open the door for a branch office, a headquarters move, or even another company that doesn't have workers here, but wants to tap into this workforce (probably highly educated, motivated professionals – another thing we need to verify).

Finally, you need to know if there is interest in opening new businesses in Snoqualmie, by Snoqualmie residents.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Arrange for a FEMA Floodway No-Rise Analysis of the downtown area

DESCRIPTION:

With downtown Snoqualmie in a FEMA floodway, it is critical to know how much infill and redevelopment is possible when planning and implementing the revitalization program. An area-wide analysis of downtown would enable individual building projects to be planned and go forward.

Prior to implementation, the City should work closely with FEMA to ensure that FEMA agrees that this analysis would be valid, and would be willing to certify that such an area-wide analysis would be sufficient, so that individual projects would not need to do a separate analysis as long as they were consistent with the footprints analyzed.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:

$100,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

To be determined

TIMELINE:

2006-2007

RATIONALE:

The outcome of this analysis should help determine the level of investment that can be made downtown. It will also enable development downtown without the necessity of each individual project having to do a separate no-rise study.

RECOMMENDATION #7:
Recruit targeted industries to Snoqualmie Ridge Business Park & other commercial areas near I-90

DESCRIPTION:
In order for Snoqualmie to become a live, work and play community, it will be important to the recruit industries where there is a high ratio of high-paying jobs to match the type of high-end housing currently being sold and developed in Snoqualmie.

This will create a shift from factory-oriented (light manufacturing) facilities to professional services, research, education, and technology companies.

The EDC, working with the recruitment contractor, will need to refine the list, which should include:
- Research and development companies and R&D departments of technology companies looking for R&D locations
- Bio-tech and medical research firms
- Professional service firms looking for new locations or expanding: architecture, engineering, finance and accounting, legal, investment, and corporate headquarters for regional, national, and international firms creating a "corporate campus" type of development in the business park
- Foundations, philanthropic organizations
- Bioinformatics start-ups
- Green-engineering /architectural firms

Additionally, specific business sectors need to be recruited to the business park and neighboring properties, now being developed:
- A mid-priced hotel near I-90 (Hampton Inn, Extended Stay America, Courtyard by Marriott, etc.)
- Professional office design/build projects (corporate campus)
- Auto fuel near I-90 along with other interstate-oriented retail
- Neighborhood retail center: for small community-based businesses including insurance, dry cleaning, accounting, banking, printing, legal services, investment, real estate, auto-related businesses, beauty salons, video rentals, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC working with contractor

APPROXIMATE COST:
Included in contractor agreement

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
N/A

TIMELINE:
Mid-2006 through 2009

RATIONALE:
The number one reason for locating a business to Snoqualmie revolves around quality of life. Because of this, Snoqualmie has become a high-end residential bedroom community for workers who commute to cities throughout the Eastside and Seattle.

In order to entice these people to live and work in Snoqualmie, the effort will be to recruit the businesses they work for to the Valley, and in particular, to Snoqualmie.

While this plan includes performing a current census of Snoqualmie, chances are strong that most of the workers living in Snoqualmie are in technology, medical, or professional service industries. Therefore it will be important to attract and entice those businesses to Snoqualmie.

Additionally, the land in Snoqualmie has been cost prohibitive to the development of manufacturing and warehousing concerns as is the lack of a workforce for lower-income jobs.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
In recruiting new business, you must first look at the region's readiness for new business investment, based on the location needs of a corporation seeking to locate to a new area.

The following are key location factors that need to be taken into consideration:

Labor quality & availability:
- Soft skills, i.e. communication, teamwork, honesty, leadership, dependability, initiative, interpersonal, business acumen, etc.
- Educated workforce

- Special skills, i.e. engineering
- Work ethic
- Ability to upgrade skills needed
- Ability to recruit a quality workforce

Adequate infrastructure:
- "Shovel ready" real estate
- Spec buildings (for lease tenants)
- Adequate capacity – sewer & water
- Telecommunications infrastructure

Operating costs:
- Utilities – energy, water, etc.
- Transportation
- Labor

Favorable business climate
- Government attitude/reception
- Financing
- Favorable tax
- Financial incentives
- Reduced up-front start-up costs
- High(er) return on investment

Accessibility
- Market location
- Transportation costs

Quality of life
- Educational system (K-12)
- Vocational training
- Secondary, community college
- Affordable housing

Through numerous interviews with local officials, businesses, and residents, as well as research and reviews of the City's Comprehensive Plan and Retail Development Plan, review of marketing materials and economic development assistance, and the site tours and visits to the community, the following strengths and weaknesses were identified:

Snoqualmie strengths:
- Lifestyle
- Landscape, scenic beauty
- Close proximity to market
- Educated population
- Availability of special skills, and ability to upgrade skills
- Energy, water
- Available real estate on the Ridge

Snoqualmie weaknesses:
- Lack of affordable housing
- Cost of lease space on Ridge
- Flood plain restricts downtown development
- Lack of small office/small retail space
- Negative perceptions of distance of city from metropolitan Seattle
- Negative perceptions of dealing with the city to develop new structures
- Lack of regional transportation

The Snoqualmie community is very protective of its rural, historic nature. The development of Snoqualmie Ridge has forever changed the dynamics of the city, however. The location of downtown in the flood plain, and the building restrictions due to that fact, severely limit the options the city has in preventing downtown from withering.

Another factor is the lack of affordable housing. Granted, all of King County is becoming more expensive, but Snoqualmie's recent Ridge development does not offer housing that is affordable for entrepreneurs or middle- to low-income workers. For industry to locate on the Ridge, the majority of their employees would likely need to commute from outside Snoqualmie. For new business start-ups and small retail shops, it will be difficult for the owners and their workers to find a nearby place to live.

The importance of revitalizing downtown is unquestionable. Downtown is the historical heart and soul of Snoqualmie. And, even though the city's options are limited, Snoqualmie still has tremendous potential to revitalize the downtown, making it a centerpiece of the historical Snoqualmie Valley and a well-loved gathering place for its residents. The key is to capitalize on the assets that are available: the river, the historic buildings, the train depot, and the possibilities to use the land that is there to its highest and best purpose.

Revitalizing downtown Snoqualmie will also have a positive impact on the business recruitment effort for Snoqualmie Ridge. Quality of life is a critical factor in site selection, and a vibrant downtown enhances quality of life.

Snoqualmie is well-positioned to attract small, entrepreneurial businesses because of its beauty and quality of life. However, the lack of both affordable housing and locations in which to operate a small business are large obstacles. Recruiting small business is a long-term, ongoing project, but the benefits are worth the effort. Including in this recruitment effort a focus on small businesses that will enhance tourism, will help bring about the revitalization and economic diversity the City needs.

RECOMMENDATION #8:

Recruit targeted business-mix to downtown retail/dining district

DESCRIPTION:
Success of downtown Snoqualmie will come as the core area transitions from a traditional neighborhood retail (since the neighborhoods are moving away from downtown) based economy, to more of a destination retail center - a gathering place for locals and visitors alike.

While there are many areas of focus for downtowns going through the revitalization - arts, culture, entertainment, dining, shopping, events - we recommend that downtown Snoqualmie focus on being a specialty-market center. This effort would concentrate on recruiting the following mix of businesses to downtown Snoqualmie:
- Bakery (breads and desserts)
- Coffee shop and deli
- Internet cafe
- Wine shop and tasting room
- Pub and brewery (not just a retail outlet - more than one)
- Market-fresh goods - an ongoing market
- Specialty gourmet foods (including ethnic)
- Kitchen accents, utensils
- Additional ethnic dining (a total of six restaurants)
- Restaurant serving breakfast
- Revitalized ice-cream/soda fountain shop (Remember Farrell's?)
- Home furnishings and accents
- Floral shop and gifts
- Galleries (perhaps two) with artists in action
- Gifts and antiques (not second hand goods)
- Handmade Northwest goods
- Tribal gallery and goods
- Bookstore (featuring Northwest books, with reading areas)
- Train hobby store
- Outfitter with guide/tour services
- Visitor information center
- Real estate office
- Boutique upstairs hotel
- Sporting goods store

It is very important that downtown Snoqualmie become a destination area for both locals and visitors and that it offer a range of activities, events and stores that will attract people for breakfast, lunch, dinner and evening hour entertainment. It will be important to recruit businesses that will play off one another and cater to the population living in Snoqualmie, something current retailers, for the most part, have lost as the market has shifted to a higher-income population.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC working with contractor, Main Street manager

APPROXIMATE COST:
Included as part of contractor agreement

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
N/A

TIMELINE:
Mid-2006 through 2009

RATIONALE:
The retail environment in the Snoqualmie Valley and vicinity is extremely competitive. With easy access to many different retail locations close to I-90 and various highways, residents are able to quickly shop in a number of different cities. Recognizing this, the Snoqualmie Retail Development Plan prepared by E. D. Hovee & Company in 2001 stated that Snoqualmie businesses can achieve their greatest success in serving the primary and tertiary market areas, at least in the immediate future. The secondary (comparison) market is much less likely, as department store and big box retailers are already well-positioned to serve Snoqualmie residents from other locations.

The primary market appeals to people primarily on the basis of convenience, while the tertiary market appeals because of reputation, ambiance, or the unique qualities of the retail. The tertiary market draws customers from beyond the normal trade area. Snoqualmie's retail can be very successful in targeting these two market areas.

One of the goals of this plan is to ensure that downtown Snoqualmie retain its role as the central historical gathering place for the city. It is important to not compromise downtown's retail vitality by the development in the other

retail districts. One way to accomplish this is to ensure that retail development in the other districts remains geared to the primary market (convenience.) Downtown is very well-suited to provide niche retail, which can be successful in attracting both resident populations and visitors.

The strategy of niche economics helps downtowns deal with highly competitive retail environments. By determining what retail needs and wants are not being met by other nearby communities, a downtown can concentrate on providing what is missing, and then dominate that market. A downtown with several niches provides more reasons for people to come and shop.

A niche can be based on a particular client base, such as senior citizens or tourists, or a niche can be based on specific retail products, such as home furnishings or antiques. It is critical that the retail be located in a pedestrian-friendly environment, to make it easier for shoppers.

One niche market that would suit Snoqualmie well is specialty foods. A downtown commercial center should always attract local customers with food for the home; however, with the grocery store going into Snoqualmie Ridge, there is not a market for another full-size grocery store downtown. Specialty foods would tend to draw the residents of the Ridge as well as visitors. Snoqualmie already has the candy store/soda fountain, and additional ideas could include bakeries, specialty meats and cheeses, a wine shop with a tasting room, a tea shop, gourmet snacks, a retail outlet for the brewery, special coffees, and ethnic foods of all types. The Farmers' Market would be a perfect addition to the mix. Specialty food stores are natural shops to sell related gift items.

A second niche to focus on is antique stores. North Bench already has several antique shops, and if Snoqualmie also had several stores, visitors who make the trip to North Bend for shopping would easily come to Snoqualmie.

With downtown retail focused on one or two niche markets, Snoqualmie Ridge residents, as well as visitors from other nearby communities would make the trip to shop. Depending on the reputations developed by these specialty stores and the ambiance provided by the stores and the town itself, visitors could be drawn to Snoqualmie from a long distance.

RECOMMENDATION #9:

Planning Department NOT to be a self-funding enterprise fund department

DESCRIPTION:

The Planning Department should not be expected to bill out fees enough to cover all of its costs, particularly in the first three years of this program. The City should review its fees and policies, comparing them with other cities, and make revisions as necessary to be competitive.

This recommendation was NOT brought up by the Planning Department, but by our conversations with developers, local businesses, and others.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie, Council

APPROXIMATE COST:

None

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

None required

TIMELINE:

2006 calendar year, to be readdressed in 2008

RATIONALE:

With land prices in Snoqualmie as high or higher than other Eastside communities closer to primary transportation corridors (Puget Sound shipping channels, ports, I-5), it will be important to keep costs low in order to attract new industries into the community. When interviewing development firms already in Snoqualmie, all brought up the issue of the high cost of plan reviews, the billing of attorney's fees, architectural review fees, and other fees they say makes Snoqualmie one of the most expensive cities in Washington in which to do business. Whether these comments are factual or not, it is a perception among the development community.

Because Snoqualmie, even a build-out, has a small population base, it requires "pioneers" - businesses like Optiva (now Philips) - to invest and take a chance on this small community. Businesses will not locate to Snoqualmie for

quality of life alone. Every business is in business to make money and cost of development is part of the feasibility analysis. With high-quality design, construction, and beautification/building materials standards, Snoqualmie should keep its fees lower than average so that the additional cost of construction and design is offset by lower permitting, review and other fees. In the long term, Snoqualmie's high standards will translate to increased tax base (assessed values), offsetting the quick fix of fee generation.

With an already understaffed and underfunded department, it is critical that they not be saddled with the additional burden of billing "investors" for staff time and other fees not charged by most other communities of similar size.

You want to make it as easy as possible to attract investors to Snoqualmie and the first thing they look at will be:
- The cost of land (which the city doesn't control)
- Cost of construction and development (mitigation, impact fees)
- Cost of permitting and fees (soft costs)
- Time to get permits
- Availability of work force and associated costs
- Transportation issues
- Housing

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION #10:

Implement a Main Street (or similar) program

DESCRIPTION:
There is no question that downtown Snoqualmie needs an "Extreme Make-over." This will require a true partnership between the City, the County (where appropriate), downtown property owners, and downtown businesses. Revitalization of a downtown takes anywhere from five to ten years (or longer) and requires the dedicated effort of a Main Street Manager and program.

Main Street™ is a proven comprehensive approach to revitalizing a downtown commercial area. Washington State Main Street™ works in conjunction with the National Main Street Center, and communities around the state have achieved tremendous success in utilizing the program to implement changes in their communities' economic base and community pride.

The Main Street™ approach includes four basic points:
1) Organization: Includes business and property owners, bankers, citizens, public officials, chambers of commerce, and other local economic development organizations.

2) Promotion: Encourages customer traffic through marketing, festivals, parades, events, and image development.

3) Design: Historic building rehabilitation, street clean-up, banners, landscaping, lighting.

4) Economic Development: Finding long-term solutions by analyzing current market forces. Business recruitment, utilizing available space in the community, helping merchants become more competitive.

Criteria for National Designation as a Main Street™ Program includes:
1) There must be strong community support, both public and private, for the downtown district revitalization process.

2) Offer vision and mission statements that work together with the community and the Main Street™ program.

3) Develop a work plan based on the comprehensive Main Street™ strategy.

4) Historic preservation must be a goal.

5) Have an active board of directors and committees.

6) Have a sufficient operating budget.

7) Hire a paid professional program manager.

8) Develop a training program for staff and volunteers.

9) Report key statistics.

10) Join the National Main Street Network.

Initial steps in beginning the program:

First, determine the level of community support for the Main Street™ Program, by contacting individuals, holding a town-hall type meeting. Contact the State Downtown Revitalization Program at 360-725-4056 for advice and assistance.

Second, after receiving feedback, determine if there is enough support to move ahead. If so, determine the city regulations, business license requirements, fees, etc.

Next, create an interim board of directors.

Organize the structure: Create an interim board of directors; apply for a Taxpayer Identification Number and non-profit status (usually 501(c)3. Write By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation. Work with an attorney. Determine the mailing address and contact person and phone number. Apply for a state business license.

Create a realistic first year budget and workplan. Obtain donations from supporters.

Send out press releases to newspapers. Write letters to the editor.

Begin implementation of the workplan.

Additional information can be found by contacting the Washington State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development.

IMPLEMENTATION:
The City working with the Main Street Board of Directors

APPROXIMATE COST:
$95,000 annually including all taxes, benefits, etc. NOTE: This could be combined with the Snoqualmie Recruitment Specialist for a total EDC budget of $205,000 annually.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General fund revenues, corporate donations, product sales (Rail District shirts, coffee mugs, etc.), sponsorships, Business Improvement District.

TIMELINE:
Beginning in mid-2006

RATIONALE:
The Snoqualmie Comprehensive Plan states in Objective 2.H.1: "Retain and enhance Downtown Snoqualmie's unique character and heritage while in-

creasing its viability as a tourist and commercial center of activity."

The policies adopted in the Comprehensive Plan to help achieve this objective would in large part become more achievable with a Main Street Program™.

The Retail Development Plan by E.D. Hovee & Co. also recommends hiring a downtown revitalization manager to pursue a program consistent with the Main Street™ focus.

Much of the work would be done by volunteers, particularly in the organization's first year.

NOTE:
Before you even START this process, make sure you have a strong commitment from downtown property owners that they will invest alongside the city. We have worked in many communities where the public sector invested heavily in beautification, facade and infrastructure improvements, placing utilities undgerground, etc., but without private-sector investment and participation towns are all dressed up, but are going nowhere.

It's what's IN the buildings that makes a town successful. If the property owners in Snoqualmie have no desire to invest in substantial building improvements, facade makeovers, and will not work to change the business mix, then the city should not invest valuable time and resources that could be invested elsewhere in the community.

You have two or three property owners downtown that control its destiny. Are they on board? Are they ready and willing to invest? Will they "partner" with the city on creating a vibrant downtown? Find out what it will take to get these folks to make that commitment.

Snoqualmie is VERY fortunate that the major property owners reside and work in Snoqualmie - as opposed to being absentee owners, as is the case in most rural communities. These are good people that do care about the community, but now's the time to make Snoqualmie the showcase "country market" town of the Northwest.

RECOMMENDATION #11:

Develop a business improvement district funding mechanism for downtown improvements

DESCRIPTION:

While many grant programs are available for downtown improvements, all efforts will require matching funds and private investment. One of the most common and most frequently used tools for revitalization efforts is the formation of a Downtown Improvement District or BID.

We recommend that the city hire professional services to look at the various funding mechanisms, work with downtown property owners and businesses to see if such a program is feasible and to gauge support for such a program.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:

$40,000 for contract expertise, if necessary - Possibly use Main Street manager instead of hiring contract services

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

General fund revenues or grant funding (CDBG or other sources)

TIMELINE:

Beginning in mid-2006

RATIONALE:

There are dozens of ways to develop a Business Improvement District: a property tax levy, a levy based on square footage, type of business, number of employees, annual revenues, etc.

In our experience, we recommend a mix of methods - but not a levy on property tax values. The Olympia Downtown Association is going through this process now, exploring a weighted system that includes the type of business, its location, and number of employees.

It is important to note that we recommend that 100% of funds generated from the BID be invested into product development. This means the city would shoulder the cost of the Main Street manager, professional services contracts (architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, etc.) while the business community, through the BID, works on business mix, building and facade improvements, beautification, etc.

This type of partnership will be imperative to the redevelopment of downtown Snoqualmie.

We encourage the City of Snoqualmie to visit the City of Stevenson, Washington with a downtown very similar to that of Snoqualmie in terms of retail mix and size. Meet with city management and staff, who used nearly three dozen different funding sources for their revitalization efforts.

A word about revitalization: The city and property owners can spend millions of dollars creating a stunningly beautiful downtown, but it's what's in each building that makes a successful downtown that will add to the tax base of Snoqualmie, and this effort has to be part of the overall redevelopment effort.

RECOMMENDATION #12:

Develop new gateways into downtown

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that new gateways into downtown be developed to replace the existing downtown Snoqualmie signage, which is dated and of low quality. Gateways should reflect the branding effort around Snoqualmie Falls and should incorporate beautiful landscaping and water features.

Maintenance of the gateways could be partially funded through the Business Improvement District once priority capital projects have been developed.

The architectural and engineering contract would include:
        a. Location analysis - Locations identified in Downtown Vision Plan
        b. Design including structural and environmental (landscape)
        c. Construction documents and costs, bid documents
        d. Public outreach with downtown property owners and merchants
        e. Right of way analysis working with Washington's Dept. of
           Transportation and other agencies
        f. Construction funding options

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie working with a contractor for design

APPROXIMATE COST:
$30,000 for architectural and engineering
$125,000 for construction (can range from $50,000 on up)

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Grants, donations, real estate excise tax funds, Business Improvement District, other sources to be identified

TIMELINE:
2008

RATIONALE:
The primary objective of the revitalization effort is to develop a gathering place for local residents and visitors to the community. A place that people are drawn to and proud of and where they can spend money. This requires making downtown Snoqualmie a destination. Like any destination, it starts with the creation of boundaries and gateways that identify the core area and give it a "sense of place" and visitors a "sense of arrival."

The gateways should be placed at entrance points where they make a good first impression. There are currently no "perfect" spots and along Hwy. 202, both directions, the primary entrance points to downtown are less than stellar.

Currently the best spots would be just west of the bowling alley (no more than 100 feet west), and the western side of [street where the laundromat is].

The gateways should be placed on both sides of the street to create true "gateways" and, in fact, could even span Railroad Avenue.

One of the most important benefits of an attractive gateway is that it instills the "Mall Mentality" among downtown businesses. They become part of an identifiable destination where they begin to have common operating hours, and share common goals and efforts in terms of marketing, signage, outdoor dining and displays, parking, public amenities such as trash receptacles, seating, etc.

RECOMMENDATION #13:

Develop Falls Avenue into a pedestrian-friendly plaza

DESCRIPTION:

With any successful downtown, the creation of gathering places in a pedestrian friendly environment is critical. We recommend that Falls Avenue, between King and River Street be redeveloped into a pedestrian-oriented plaza that would include:

- a. Consider replacing the asphalt street with decorative pavers or stamped concrete (see StreetPrint information, next page)
- b. Develop double sided retail entrances to businesses so they front both Railroad Avenue and Falls Avenue
- c. Create additional courtyards similar to the Sherman Building.
- d. Create fencing and other barriers to screen dumpsters and other "back alley" elements
- e. Develop wider sidewalks with landscape buffers and street trees.
- d. Add bollard stations at each end of the block so it can be closed to through traffic during events.
- e. Add additional kiosk locations or pads for event-oriented vendors and/or displays
- f. There are seven homes along this stretch, including three small historic cottages which should be saved, and eventually be converted to destination retail-oriented uses. The remaining homes, which are non-historic, could be replaced with additional older cottage homes (possibly from along the river) for use as destination retail, similar to Gilman Village, providing the footprint is not larger. Or, three of the non-historic homes could be removed to create view corridors and open space to the river.
- g. Create gateways to "Falls Avenue Promenade."
- h. Erect eye-catching banners
- i. Make arrangements with property owners to spill over into the brewery building parking lot

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie, working the the Main Street program

APPROXIMATE COST:

To be determined, but approximately $1.3 million including Falls Avenue gateways. This could be phased over five years. Architectural and engineering fees would be in the [$250,000] range.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

Grants, real estate excise taxes, private donations and in-kind matching grant funds

TIMELINE:

Design: 2007
Construction: 2008-2012

RATIONALE:

The number one activity of visitors (and locals) is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly setting. Look at the success of Redmond Town Center, Pioneer Square in Seattle, Ballard, Port Townsend, LaConner, Leavenworth, Poulsbo, etc.

The challenge of Railroad Avenue is that it only has retail on one side of the street and is a state highway with increasing traffic. While Railroad Avenue improvements are critical to this plan, there needs to be a location that can be closed off for markets, fairs, musical and cultural events, and for activities recruited to the community. One of the marketing recommendations is to recruit outside events, such as car club shows and rallies, to Snoqualmie. These events should always be held where there are opportunities for attendees to spend money.

While Railroad Park, on the south side of Railroad Avenue and west of the Rail Museum is a nice park, there are no shops or spending opportunities immediately adjacent. Most attendees will see Highway 202 as a barrier, thus will attend the event and tend to move on rather than explore and spend more time downtown.

The City of Kalamazoo, Michigan narrowed a street down to a single lane, adding landscape buffers (above) and wider sidewalks and gathering areas (below left), creating the city's "Mall District," now a hub of activity. The street can be closed for special events.

Santa Barbara, California has also seen tremendous success from its development of gathering areas or plaza districts as shown in these photographs.

The revitalization, in itself, doesn't translate to success. It is the incentive that attracts the right mix of businesses, and as those thrive so does the downtown, making it the hub of activity, culture and entertainment.

Snoqualmie needs such a place in its downtown core, and Falls Avenue is ideally situated to make that happen.
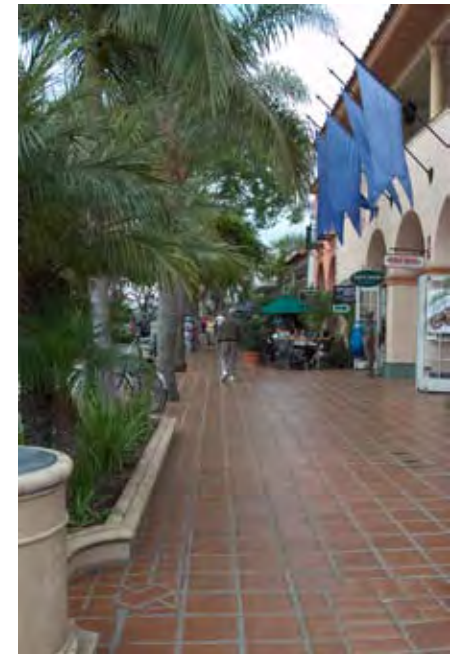
This and the following two pages show a concept of how Falls Avenue could be developed into a pedestrian-friendly "village street" or lane that can be closed, periodically, to accommodate events and open air markets. Additional renderings are included in the suporting documentation.

Conceptual Master Plan
The Rail District
Snoqualmie, Washington

NORTH
Scale: 1" = 30'

Destination Development

OBSERVATION TOWER

RIVER

VIEW AREA

VIEW AREA

ENTERTAINMENT DOME

NATURE TRAIL

AMPHITHEATER

VIEWING AREA

PROPOSED BUILDING

PARKING

FALLS AVENUE

FALLS AVENUE

GATEWAY

PROPOSED BUILDING

PARKING

RAILROAD AVENUE

SR 202

RAILROAD AVENUE

NATURE
TRAIL

AVENUE

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

FALLS AVENUE

KIOSK

PARKING

GATEWAY

RAILROAD AVENUE

GATEWAY

RECOMMENDATION #14:

Place power and utility lines underground in downtown core area: Railroad and Falls Avenues

DESCRIPTION:

One of the major visual eye-sores in downtown Snoqualmie is the plethora of power poles and power lines. All utilities should be placed underground, replaced with decorative lamp posts that reflect the historic ambiance of Snoqualmie and develop an attractive ambiance to downtown. New lamp poles would include stantions for hanging decorative banners, hanging baskets, etc.

The City of Stevenson did this through an adoption program, paid for primarily out of donations from local residents and businesses.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie working with Puget Sound Energy and the Main Street program.

APPROXIMATE COST:

$360,000 (approximately $300 per lineal foot and $4,500 per service - $180,000 estimated for Falls Avenue)

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

The City and BID with possible grant funding from PSE or other sources.

TIMELINE:

2008 as part of the first phase of the Falls Avenue Promenade development.

RATIONALE:

Part of any revitalization effort of an historic district requires it to be visually appealing. Currently, the abundance of power poles, power and utility lines create an eyesore that needs to be eliminated, particularly along Falls Avenue.

However, this effort will also require some investment by the property owners with relocation and changes to electrical and utility service panels and boxes from rooftop locations to ground-level locations. One of the upcoming recommendations is to create a downtown wireless zone, which could be part of this process.

RECOMMENDATION #15:

Develop additional parking along Railroad Avenue

DESCRIPTION:

By converting Falls Avenue to a pedestrian-friend plaza, and making improvement along Railroad Avenue, some parking may be lost and must be replaced. There are stretches along Railroad Avenue that should be converted to additional parking. Likewise, parking already defined in Railroad Park, just west of the downtown core, needs to be better identified and not hidden by rail cars. Additional angle parking can be created on one side of Falls and Maple Avenue, as shown in the Downtown Vision Plan.

Making downtown a true gathering place will require an increase in the number of parking spaces. We recommend that some parking spaces on the north side of Railroad Avenue between King and River Streets be removed for the creation of corner landscape bulb-outs, extended sidewalks for outdoor dining, etc.

This plan calls for the loss of approximately 12 parking spaces, but recommends that 80 new parking spaces be developed to accommodate a more successful downtown district.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie working with the Dept. of Transportation.

APPROXIMATE COST:

To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

To be determined

TIMELINE:

Design: 2007
Construction: 2008

RATIONALE:

Parking is, and will always be, a major issue with successful downtown redevelopment efforts. Studies have shown that downtown patrons require parking within one block of their destination (a problem Snoqualmie already has with some of its parking two and three blocks from the core area). Things to consider:

    a. Angle parking generates increased sales or "impulse buys"
    b. Visitors are more likely to stop where angle-in parking is available
    c. Parking should be within one block of the core area
    d. Two-hour parking limits sends visitors away before they are done shopping and dining (not a problem today in Snoqualmie, but could be a problem down the road as downtown becomes a more popular destination with more activities).
    e. Parking meters could be a good thing, if rates are low (25¢ per hour or so), and change easily available. Rather than restrict parking time limits, employees will find free parking areas, which may be slightly further away.
    f. Public parking must be easily identifiable

The Downtown Vision Plan provides for adding angle parking on one side of Falls and Maple Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION #16:

Develop mid-block crosswalks along Railroad Avenue

DESCRIPTION:
Pedestrian safety will be paramount to the revitalization effort. Decorative and easily identifiable crosswalks should be developed every block and mid-block between the Front Porch Restaurant (where additional parking will be developed) and the bowling alley.

Crosswalks should be decorative and put in place using a StreetPrint pattern (right) on all four sides of the three downtown intersections and every half-block.

While developing underground utility corridors, this would be a good time to install lit crosswalks. The cities of Olympia and Lacey have installed these in various locations. A sensor placed between bollards alerts oncoming motorists of pedestrians getting ready to cross the street through lit crosswalk reflectors that flash.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, working with the Dept. of Transportation

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined
Lighted crosswalks average approximately $35,000 each

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
To be determined

TIMELINE:
Construction in 2008 as part of the streetscape projects

RATIONALE:
Nothing is more important in a busy downtown than pedestrian safety. The creation of decorative and lit crosswalks will not only increase safety, but will also slow traffic, something needed throughout the downtown core area.

NOTE:
The photos shown here are decorative crosswalks developed by a company called StreetPrint, which is located in Vancouver, BC.

This process embeds decorative designs into the asphalt - this is not paint - that will last for decades. The process costs in the range of $5 a square foot, and can be driven on immediately.

In the top photo you can see the workmen finishing the process on the far side of the street. Cities including Bingen, Washington have used this process along Highway 14.

RECOMMENDATION #17:

Keep city hall downtown, but in a new location

DESCRIPTION:

We recommend that City Hall remain downtown, but move to a new or different location so that all ground-floor spaces can be converted to destination retail, dining, and/or entertainment.

There are several options which should be explored:

    a. Possible redevelopment of the Eagles Hall to a second story city hall, street level retail (15' deep), with a new Eagles Hall behind the retail front.

    b. Possibly lease or purchase the Railroad Building for use as a City Hall. The City would consolidate Planning, Building, and Administration in the RR Building. This move would have the advantage of freeing up the current City Hall building for retail purposes.

    c. Moving city hall to the bank, which is planning to move. In this case, the city would use both the bank building and possibly the fire station as well.

    d. Discuss improvements to the Eagles Building with them - possible extend the building to accommodate retail storefronts with Eagles access from Falls Ave.

Reassess the building usage from time to time. As the city evolves reassess highest and best use.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie, City Council

APPROXIMATE COST:

To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

To be determined

TIMELINE:

2008 or 2009

RATIONALE:

While the basis for downtown Snoqualmie's revitalization revolves around destination retail, dining and entertainment, it is still crucial to have it be the activity center for Snoqualmie. The most powerful revitalization tool happens to be one of the fastest growing trends: people are moving into downtowns. However, in the case of Snoqualmie, construction of new housing - even on second levels - is not allowed in the flood plane taking away a viable revitalization tool. In this case, it's important to have as much business activity downtown as possible - on upper floors so that ground level storefronts are retail-oriented.

RECOMMENDATION #18:

Open up the riverfront for public access

DESCRIPTION:
The city's Comprehensive Plan calls for the purchase of riverfront residential and commercial lots to open up corridors to the river. While there has been talk of selling lots already owned by the city to raise cash, we recommend that none of these lots be sold for development and that, in fact, the city should aggressively pursue the purchase of additional lots, creating open space and corridors to the river - perhaps the city's greatest asset and one that is almost totally hidden and inaccessible.

Purchase of these properties would be driven by market forces as opposed to eminent domain.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
Unknown

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General fund revenue, grants, donations

TIMELINE:
Ongoing

RATIONALE:
The city's greatest asset (and one of the city's biggest problems) is the Snoqualmie River, which runs through the heart of downtown. The most successful communities are water-based: Port Townsend, LaConner, Friday Harbor, Seattle, Victoria, Coeur d'Alene, Sandpoint, Poulsbo, Leavenworth, Ashland, Oregon, etc.

Water is a natural magnet for dining, shopping, parks, hiking, biking, outdoor recreation, and its ambiance enhances quality of life.

We have recommended that three homes along Falls Avenue be purchased and removed to make way for waterfront decks, view corridors, trails or a

boardwalk with interpretive displays about the environment. These gathering places can be both educational and attractive. Most visitors, once they leave Snoqualmie Falls, never see the river or have any idea that it runs through Snoqualmie - except what they may see on the news during flooding seasons. The trails/riverwalk should include historical markets and interpretive signage highlighting points of interest.

Selling lots for cash does not achieve the long term goals of an environmental friendly, attractive community.

Finally, removing structures from the riverfront may help mitigate increased downtown development potential. Currently, there is not enough square feet of retail space downtown to make it a true multi-day destination, and new structures cannot be built when impeding the natural flow of water during flooding. Removing existing "barriers" any open the door for selected new downtown development projects.

RECOMMENDATION #19:

Streetscape/beautification enhancements

DESCRIPTION:

Railroad Avenue is the "front door" to downtown Snoqualmie and should be the showcase of the city. Beautification should extend throughout downtown including Falls, River, Maple, and King, and eventually Newton. Recommendations include:

      a. Decorative street lamps and underground utilities
      b. Wider sidewalks with bulb-outs for landscape planters on the corners
      c. Extended sidewalk areas to accommodate outdoor dining
      d. Merchant-driven blade signs (perpendicular signage) and outdoor display standards
      e. Hanging baskets on poles and shops
      f. Landscape planters
      g. Decorative trash receptacles, benches
      h. Concrete sidewalks replaced with decorative pavers
      i. Public art

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie, working with the Main Street Program

APPROXIMATE COST:

To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

BID funding, grants, public/private partnerships

TIMELINE:

Design phase (in conjunction with the Falls Avenue project): 2007
Construction to start: 2008

RATIONALE:

The heart and soul of any community is its downtown, and first impressions are lasting impressions. The "Railroad Avenue Shops" need to be beautiful, creating the ambiance that attracts people downtown. Think of your favorite destination communities. What's the ambiance like? The beautification? Beautification is an investment with a tremendous return.

The Main Street Manager should spend time looking at costs, maintenance, funding sources, and public/private partnerships developed in the cities of Leavenworth, Poulsbo, Stevenson, and Blaine - all with outstanding beautification programs. Possibly maintenance may be provided by volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION #20:
Develop and foster a public-art program

DESCRIPTION:
Public art serves the community by enriching the public environment and preserving and communicating the historical significance of the locality through portrayal of cultural, natural, and historical presentations. Civic pride, education, and enjoyment are all enhanced by creative art in public spaces.

To develop a public art program, a coordinated volunteer effort would be needed. Working through the new Main Street program, the City should foster the growth of the Arts Commission made up of volunteers, who would put together a program of public art, including locations, selection, commissioning, acquiring, and presenting the art.

The ordinance enacting the 1% for arts funding from captal improvement projects should be amended to include streetscape projects as well.

Recommended art is art that enhances Snoqualmie's brand image: railroad art with a Northwest flavor.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie Arts Commission, working with the EDC and Main Street Program.

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
1% arts funding from capital improvements, grant funding, foundations, fund raising activities

TIMELINE:
2006 and ongoing

RATIONALE:
Other than the log pavilion and a couple of rail-oriented displays, Snoqualmie is missing any form of public art.

Public art enhances a community's environment, educates, and instills community pride. It gives dimension to the public environment for both residents and visitors.

With Snoqualmie's history of the railroad, the Falls, hydroelectricity, farming, and the ancient Native American presence, a rich variety of cultural art could be displayed throughout the city, adding greatly to the ambience and attraction of the area.

Our choice: Make downtown Snoqualmie a "Country Market" style downtown. This takes nothing away from the rail heritage, but just ads to it. Displays of old milk wagons, bronze statues, etc. can make Snoqualmie seem like a rural "Mayberry" - bringing people back to a bygone era.

A few public art samples are shown on the following page. Remember, this should be art, not museum pieces, like the wheel shown below.

When it comes to developing public art displays, they should tell stories - particularly those that are part of a city's history or overall theme. "The Kiss" (below) is along the Olympia waterfront and was developed by a Washington resident. It makes Olympia's waterfront a romantic place to stroll.

The Sasquatch (top right), located in Creston, British Columbia tells the story of sightings of the mythical being.

Battle Creek, Michigan is developing its brand as the "Competitive Sports Capital of the Midwest," with an initial concentration on wheeled sports, thus the display of bikers (bottom middle).

Many communities have promoted their rail heritage and in visiting dozens of towns, we found that NONE keep their historic cars and engines behind chain link and barbed wire fences and few have had any problems with vandalism.

Kingman, Arizona (below) has done an excellent job of placing rail displays in park areas as "public art" pieces.

Public art does not always need to be historical displays. In fact, we recommend creating art that pulls people into the overall "brand" or theme of the town. But these art displays need to evoke emotion - make a connection with visitors and residents. That's the challenge of wagon wheels and rail artifacts (although engines and cabooses connect with people).

Sometimes public art can be as simple as landscaping (below in Victoria). In Ottawa, Illinois one of the displays is an old-time popcorn wagon (right) that is actually used during the peak season by a local vendor.

In Fallbrook, California, another town going through a revitalization process, they've used landscaping (below right) to buffer between pedestrian areas and the busy street through the heart of downtown. They use decorative planters and benches to create an inviting atmosphere to the city.

Public art should always tell a story, not just be a display of artifacts. The two Native American statues (right and below), in Santa Fe, New Mexico tell a fascinating story and are accompanied by interpretive signage.

In Fallon, Nevada, the city developed decorative signage and a water feature to showcase the town (bottom left). This idea presents another idea for Falls Avenue.

While not public art, beautification should be a top priority for Snoqualmie. If you have the opportunity, visit Sisters, Oregon (above) and see the power of creating beautiful gathering places. This little town of 1,100 residents, located with a state highway cutting through the heart of town is a great example that Snoqualmie can learn from. It boasts the highest per-capita retail spending of any city in Oregon.

RECOMMENDATION #21:

Lease or sell the Planning Dept. building to a targeted business to downtown such as a bakery/coffee shop or similar business.

DESCRIPTION:
This beautiful building should be either leased or sold, through a competitive process for a targeted business per this plan when City Hall moves or another location becomes available.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC and the City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
To be determined

TIMELINE:
2006 or when city hall moves to a new location

RATIONALE:
1. This puts the building back on the tax rolls, if sold, and if leased, provides a revenue stream for the city.

2. It creates a great opportunity to attract an "anchor tenant" to downtown, as part of the revitalization process.

RECOMMENDATION #22:

Implement a matching grant program for downtown facade improvements

DESCRIPTION:

Many of downtown Snoqualmie's commercial buildings could benefit from facade improvements. With the City investing in streetscape improvements and beautification, the benefits of improving the appearance of the storefronts will greatly affect the success of downtown.

The City, working through the Main Street Program, should implement a $1 for $1 matching grant program for small businesses in downtown Snoqualmie up to a maximum $7,000 match for storefront rehabilitations and beautification. These improvement projects can include new signage, new awnings, painting, storefront remodeling, and lighting.

Utilizing merchant input, the Facade Improvement Program guidelines should address issues such as culturally appropriate designs and colors, durable materials and maintenance, lighting and other design alternatives to alleviate safety and security concerns for storefronts.

Applicants for the grant program must receive facade design review approval, and will receive the grant as a rebate based on the completed project's cost.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Main Street Program, working with the City

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Various sources

TIMELINE:
Beginning mid-2006 or the beginning of 2007

RATIONALE:
The rationale for this recommendation is to create incentives for downtown revitalization efforts. While the city can create beautiful streetscapes, addi-

tional parking, wider sidewalks, etc. what makes a downtown successful is its businesses and activities. The revitalization effort will require a very strong public/private partnership and investment by both sides.

Through a Business Improvement District and other funding sources, incentive programs: grants and low- or no-interest loans can be secured, so that property owners can invest and see a reasonable return on their investment.

Scenario:
In an effort like this, we would ask property owners to not renew leases with businesses that don't fit the "new" business mix for downtown. This, in itself, is a scary proposition for property owners who are in the business of making a profit.
Secondly, we would expect them to invest in these empty spaces and buildings, bringing them up to a new standard and to accommodate a different type of business.

Thirdly, we'd also expect them to offer initial lease rates at perhaps half of todays going rate so that new businesses can survive until the critical mass is reached - sometimes taking three to five years.

The return on investment, for the city and property owners, starts five years down the road when assessed values increase, tenants are successful and willing to pay market rates (rents increasing as business increases).

Because of this process and the fact the city is asking them to change the tenant mix and restrict it (possibly turning away higher paying tenants for small targeted businesses), it's important that the city do all it can to assist these property owners make the transition. It provides them with incentives, and provides the means to match their investment with public assistance.

RECOMMENDATION #23:

Recruit new destination retail mix to downtown

DESCRIPTION:
This recommendation is detailed in Recommendation #8, but is noted here since it plays such an integral part of the revitalization effort. With the limited street-level retail space available in downtown Snoqualmie, as much space as can be made usable for retail should be allocated for that purpose. This means working with other property owners along Maple and other areas to develop professional office and neighborhood retail spaces so that businesses can still remain downtown, but that "districts" can be developed for destination retail and entertainment and neighborhood retail and services.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC and Main Street Program

APPROXIMATE COST:
Included in personnel/contract costs

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
N/A

TIMELINE:
January, 2006

RATIONALE:
Snoqualmie's downtown has traditionally focused on being a neighborhood retail and trade center. With the growth of the entire region, competition for retail sales has become great. With the expanding population on the Ridge, many residents utilize Snoqualmie Parkway out to I-90, shopping in other retail locations outside the city on their way to and from work. The convenient location of the new Ridge commercial center also attracts Ridge residents, leaving them less incentive to venture downtown.

With a focus on niche or destination retail, downtown can once again attract Snoqualmie residents because downtown will become the destination. Additionally, it will attract visitors and residents from other Eastside communities looking for a unique atmosphere and items they can't find closer to home. People, including local residents, will go out of their way, making a special

trip for entertainment, niche retail shops, and events.

Western rural towns that has seen tremendous success from this effort include:

• Sisters, OR
• Cannon Beach, OR
• Poulsbo, WA
• Leavenworth, WA
• Winthrop, WA
• Mt. Shasta, CA
• McCloud, CA
• LaConner, WA
• Jackson Hole, WY
• Langley, WA
• Port Townsend, WA

Property owners in all of these towns are seeing far above average lease rates for their commercial retail spaces - a sign of a thriving community.

RECOMMENDATION #24:

Establish a retail incubator downtown

DESCRIPTION:

A retail business incubator is a strategy to fill downtown retail store buildings with viable businesses, not only encouraging entrepreneurial activity, but also providing the means to make it easier for fledgling businesses to get started and succeed. The strategy has risks, but has seen a great deal of success when implementation is grounded on solid research and organization. This is a strategy of "growing your own businesses," and can provide a stream of new small businesses with ties to the community.

According to the US Small Business Administration, a recent study shows that home based businesses represent more than ten percent of the US economy. There is a growing trend in entrepreneurialism, with approximately ten percent of adults ages 20-60 seeking to establish a new business.

A business incubator can offer low cost retail or office space plus development services, such as marketing, education, tax information, office services, etc. to these start-up companies that may not otherwise be able to afford them. They provide the entrepreneurs with expertise and tools to help them be successful. An incubation program can help to diversify the local economy, create jobs, add to the retail and service mix of the community, provide opportunity to market local products, and commercialize technologies. There are more than 1,200 business incubators in North America.

First step: Determine the market demand for a retail incubator.
Determine the market area for the incubator – this could include not just Snoqualmie, but also North Bend, Carnation, Fall City, Duvall, Issaquah, Sammamish.

Review data on registered small businesses within the market area. Identify the net increase in businesses registered to help determine business longevity.

Review the population data for the market area and the rate of population growth to determine the approximate number of possible entrepreneurs.

Survey small business owners (those with fewer than five employees) within

the market area to determine the level of interest. Would they have an interest in relocating their business to a downtown Snoqualmie retail incubator if it were available?

Survey the general population in Snoqualmie as well, to determine the level of interest among those considering starting up a new business.

Second step: Organizing the Incubator
Once it has been determined there is a market, organization of the incubator can begin. The goals of Snoqualmie's incubator should be to
> 1) add to the downtown retail mix to assist in creating a viable downtown that will attract visitors and locals alike to spend money in Snoqualmie;
> 2) encourage job creation by encouraging entrepreneurialism;
> 3) diversify the economic base of the community;
> 4) create "good will" in the community.

Important components of a successful incubator include:
> 1) Land and building – a place to house the incubator at the right location and for the right price;
> 2) Operating knowledge – staff and volunteers to meet the needs of the fledgling businesses;
> 3) Capital – revenue for operations and staffing needs;
> 4) Tenants – the new businesses.

Many business incubators are operated by the municipality. Other options include the chamber of commerce, economic development association, or a not-for-profit entity created specifically for this purpose.

The building that houses the incubator should be in a downtown retail location with visibility and easy access. Size should be determined based on the market needs. Various options can be explored as to acquiring the property: possibly allowing the private owner to operate as landlord, joint venture building ownership, charitable donation, or an outright sale.

Services to be provided to the tenants can include reception, copy/computer access, mail services, word processing, shared cashier services, communications, and marketing. Having one full-time staff person is a common method of handling these services for the tenants.

Educational services should include professional business management assistance, business start-up clinics, planning workshops, tax workshops, inventory management instruction, marketing workshops, mentoring, customer service training, employee management training, introduction to business financing sources, etc. Other topics of concern to the specific tenants can also be addressed. Local professionals should be recruited to donate time for seminars and workshops. In addition, services may be enhanced by utilizing S.C.O.R.E. and other not-for-profit organizations.

In selecting the tenants, the fledgling retail businesses who will occupy the incubator, a number of criteria will need to be determined. An application and interviews will need to be completed. Recommended criteria for the new businesses are:
1) Must provide a unique product or service that would attract visitors or residents to downtown;
2) Must have a written business plan at the time of application that would demonstrate commercial viability and an incubator exit plan within three years;
3) Must have the potential to create jobs for residents;
4) Has sufficient initial capital to pay start-up costs; and
5) agrees to certain specified operating hours.

In addition, the new business owner should demonstrate certain business knowledge and skills, such as a good knowledge of their product, its market, their business plan, and the importance of earning a profit. The owner should be willing to learn, willing to accept evaluation of their performance while in the incubator, and be a team player.

Third step: Financing the incubator
A retail business incubator should earn enough revenue to meet its expenses; it should not be designed as a program that will be continuously subsidized by the municipality or grant funds.

The primary source of operating funds is the monthly rent paid by the fledgling businesses, the tenants. Tenants also may be responsible for a portion of the shared operating expenses, possibly including janitorial, telephone, shared reception or cashiering, etc.

Initial capital for acquisition of the building, improvements, and furnishings can be found through grants, such as CDBG, or donations of materials and

services.

Fourth step: Implementation
Once all the pieces are in place, the incubator is ready to open its doors.

Retail incubation benefits can include:
• Lower overhead and operating costs
• Creative lease arrangements
• Shared office equipment
• Integrated sound, alarm and music system
• Cooperative marketing and advertising
• Web site assistance
• Business advice, support, and training
• Networking opportunities
• Advantageous location

Possible locations for the incubator include the Brewery building, the fire station, the old library building, or the old cottages on Falls Avenue.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC and Main Street program

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Grant funds

TIMELINE:
2007

RATIONALE:
A retail business incubator offers an opportunity for a city to grow its own retail businesses. It encourages entrepreneurship, making it much more feasible for the desired retail businesses to locate in the downtown, and making it easier for individuals to begin their own businesses. This program can open the doors to Snoqualmie residents as well as those living outside the city to start a small, unique retail business downtown.

RECOMMENDATION #25:

Contract with private industry for ongoing downtown public markets & events

DESCRIPTION:
One of the best revitalization tools is to recruit outside events to the downtown core area so it becomes a hub of activity. We recommend that the city seek proposals from individuals and/or businesses looking for event-oriented opportunities. In this case, the city would provide public space for markets and other events. Contractor revenues would come from vendor rental space or a percentage of gross sales. A percentage would come back to the city of which half would be spent on capital improvements and half on required maintenance and utility costs.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie EDC, Main Street Program

APPROXIMATE COST:
None, but will require staff time to get organized

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
Beginning in Spring of 2006 for the Farmers' Market. RFP issued in mid-2006 and contractor selected and terms worked out by the end of 2006.

RATIONALE:
Producing public markets and events is a full-time job. This creates an excellent business opportunity for a Snoqualmie resident (and often requires seasonal work), and will go a long way in making downtown a hub of activity.

Production of a Farmers' Market is currently in the planning stages, to begin Spring 2006.

RECOMMENDATION #26:

Contract for downtown signage, exterior display, outdoor dining standards and business assistance

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that the City contract for professional services to develop a merchant-driven downtown core area (The Rail District) Signage, Facade Improvement, and Display Program.

This would be the creation of a special zoning district with its own ordinances in terms of retail signage, regulation and use of sandwich boards, use of exterior retail displays, lighting, outdoor dining and gathering areas, parking, and beautification. In this scenario, the "association" would have its own design review board and would police its own district in terms of enforcement and approvals, etc.

Professional services would be retained to work with the Main Street program and downtown property owners and merchants to develop the guidelines and standards for this area of Snoqualmie. Another possibility is for the City to contract with King County to develop the guidelines and standards.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, Main Street Program, King County

APPROXIMATE COST:
$5,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
BID funds

TIMELINE:
2007

RATIONALE:
A coordinated signage and beautification effort will result in increased sales and will set the tone and ambiance that will attract residents and visitors downtown. Most of the merchants, businesses, and property owners downtown need assistance in creating an atmosphere that will increase their sales.

Blade signs, like those shown above in Leavenworth, attract both motorists and pedestrians. Combined with planters, benches, waste baskets, and decorative lighting and banners can increase sales by 25% or more. The development of these standards will help local businesses become more successful.

RECOMMENDATION #27:

Sell city-owned downtown lot, but with strings attached

DESCRIPTION:

The City of Snoqulamie owns the lot adjacent to the bowling alley along Railroad Avenue. This lot should be sold through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) basis, with the following requirements:

- A predetermined number of square feet be identified and agreed to by the respondent
- Particular street-level tenant mix, per the recommendations made in this plan
- That the building be a two-story structure
- Include public restrooms (during normal business hours)
- Construction start within 18 months of purchase
- Construction be complete (with certificate of occupancy) within 12 months of the start of construction (36 months from purchase to completion)
- Developed per design standards for downtown Snoqualmie

Should the selected developer not meet any of these requirements, the property would revert back to city ownership.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Snoqualmie EDC, City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:

None, but will require city staff time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

None required

TIMELINE:

Summer of 2006

RATIONALE:

With a revitalized downtown on the horizon, there will be dozens of investors who would like to purchase this key piece of property. Many, however, will simply purchase the property, sit on it, then sell it for a handsome profit down the road. This doesn't help the redevelopment effort and doesn't increase the tax base and provide job opportunities until the site is actually developed. This recommendations will provide Snoqualmie with the type of building, structure, and tenant mix the city needs as part of the revitalization effort.

RECOMMENDATION #28:

Investigate making downtown a wireless internet access zone

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that the City seek proposals for the development of a high-speed wireless zone for the downtown core area. Residents and businesses in this area would pay flat fee, per month charge for use of the internet access to cover costs.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC

APPROXIMATE COST:
Cost varies widely depending on size of area to be covered. Springfield, MO recently installed WIFI iin an area approximately three blocks by three blocks at a cost of $88,000. A smaller area of coverage would be less - approximately $50,000.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
To be determined

TIMELINE:
By end of 2006

RATIONALE:
Having wireless broad band internet access in Downtown Snoqualmie will be a powerful incentive when attracting cafes, coffee shops, gathering places, and visitors into the downtown core area. Access to visitors would be free. This has been a powerful tool for Starbucks and other businesses, generating increased sales and repeat business. Many cities wanting to bring more business to their downtown areas are finding that offering WiFi can be an excellent way to add value.

For Snoqualmie, the idea is to make downtown a central gathering place: bistros, cafes, internet cafes, coffee shops, bakeries, restaurants, and for ongoing Falls Avenue Plaza events.

WiFi Research

Free WiFi is becoming increasingly common in cities across the country. Cities wanting to bring more business to their downtown areas are finding that offering free WiFi can be an excellent way to add value.

There seem to be a couple of different models that cities are following. One model involves the city buying, setting up, and maintaining the wireless network and providing the service to a blanket area for free. Anyone in the vicinity can pick up the signal and use the free internet access, whether they are on a park bench, in a coffee shop, or sometimes even at home, if they live in the hot spot area.

In this model, the city owns and operates the system, and pays for the equipment and monthly internet access fees. Many cities are utilizing a portal site, which loads automatically when a user hooks up to the network. This site is where the user logs on to the system, and can also find information about the network, troubleshooting tips, etc. Some cities, like Long Beach, CA, are using this site to sell advertising to local businesses, helping to offset the monthly costs of the WiFi system.

Another model involves the city, or a non-profit corporation as in the case of Austin, TX, coordinating and managing the network, while individual venues pay for their own equipment and monthly fees. In this model, the city does not own the entire network per se, but acts as a centralized channel to promote and coordinate the city's free WiFi system.

Austin, TX
Austin is a great example of a city that is using WiFi very successfully.

Austin Wireless, Inc. is a non-profit corporation set up to improve the quality and availability of free public WiFi in Austin and the surrounding areas. They promote the managed network, coordinate the installation of hotspots, monitor the network, and coordinate support to the venues and users.

The venues, such as restaurants, coffee shops, etc. pay for installation of the necessary equipment and pay a monthly fee for broadband access. They in turn, provide WiFi free to their customers. The current cost for equipment and installation is $385 and they pay less than $30 per month for the internet access. Some businesses are eligible for free installation from volunteers on weekends and companies that demonstrate financial need may be eligible for

equipment donations. Additionally, the first 50 venues installed were provided donated equipment from corporate partners.

They currently have 70,000 registered users who combine for 20,000 connections per month. They consider their model to be extremely successful, calling it "economy-proof, politics-proof and hype-proof".

Some interesting info from their 2004 Annual Report: (the 2005 report is not available):
• Analysis indicates that free WiFi usage boosts business during off peak hours at cafes and restaurants. 65.9% of use occurred during off peak hours, which is the time businesses want to increase their customers.
• If one hour of usage roughly translates into a cup of coffee, bagel, beer or sandwich, then 115,463 hours represent about $500,000 of revenue pumped into businesses providing free WiFi.
• Although college students represent a significant portion of Austin's population, and of the expected WiFi users, registrations and usage increased by nearly 30% and 70% respectively during the "slow" summer months of 2004.

Spokane, WA
Spokane is an example of a city using the first model; the city set up a wireless network over a 100 block area, creating a hot zone where any user can log into the network for free. They provide up to 2 hours per day for free and subscription plans are in the works for users who want more time on a regular basis. The system in Spokane cost approximately $75,000 to install.

Hermosa Beach, CA
Hermosa Beach seems to be an example of what can go wrong when a city wishes to provide free WiFi. One city council member championed the idea and managed to get the city to install a WiFi system to a limited area of the downtown, and provide access for free. Plans were in the works to extend the system, and demand seemed to be high. But the city council ultimately voted against the measure, fearing equipment and maintenance costs. Today Hermosa Beach does still provide free WiFi to a limited area, but in perusing their support forum, it appears their system is encountering problems. There were more than one post from a resident asking the question, "Is WiFi dead?" According to some, the WiFi is still there and going strong, but I don't think the residents of Hermosa are feeling very warm and fuzzy about the system.

Individual Businesses
Businesses across the country are adding free WiFi for their customers. A simple internet search brings up lists of hundreds of coffee shops, pubs, restaurants, etc. that provide free access. So whether or not a downtown area has WiFi available, a business may provide the service to their customers.

The businesses I talked to couldn't say if offering free WiFi has increased their customer base or their revenue. They tend to think of it as simply adding value for their already loyal customer base. They do find that people tend to spend more time, and that could translate into another latte, or a bite to eat. They also find that once the word gets out, people start coming with laptop in hand, knowing they'll get internet access there. Those people could represent new customers, or customers who would go elsewhere if the internet access wasn't available. They also found what Austin's 2004 Annual Report showed; they get more business during off-peak hours.

Austin Wireless City Project

2004 Year-End Summary
Executive Summary

Although network operations commenced in September 2003, the 12 months of 2004 comprised Austin Wireless City Project's (AWC) first full year of network operation. Our analysis of the network data provides useful insight into the increasingly important role free WiFi service plays in the local economy, particularly businesses in the food services industry.

Users and Usage

New users registered ("joined") the free WiFi service at an average increase of 141.1% per quarter. Their usage of the network increased by an average 119.9% each quarter. At the end of 2004, there were 22,161 registrations combining for 115,463 sessions. A session is equivalent to 1 hour of connect time.

Students

College and university students represent nearly 15% of Austin's population. These students are thought to be the network's heaviest users. Despite this, summer (2004Q3) registrations and usage increased 29.8% and 76.1% respectively over Q2. When the students returned in the fall, the increases over Q3 were 50.1% and 114.5%. In other words, students matter, but even during the relatively slow summer months, free WiFi usage grew at a startling rate.

Economic Impact

If one hour of usage roughly translates into a cup of coffee, bagel, beer, or sandwich, then 115,463 hours represent about one-half million dollars of revenue pumped into the businesses participating in the AWC network of hotspots. At the end of 2004, there were 93 hotspots. Approximately 70% of them were in the food service industry. On a pervenue basis, this revenue gain greatly exceeds the minimal equipment and service costs required to participate in AWC. The current minimum equipment cost is less than $200 with monthly broadband fees of $30-50. Suggested voluntary donations to AWC are $25-100 per year.

Off-Peak Business Boon

There was concern that free WiFi would lead to "table holding" or "camping" during already busy periods (morning, lunch, and dinner rush) defined as 6-9am, 11am-1pm, and 6-10pm. Analysis indicates that free WiFi usage tends to bolster venue business during off-peak hours. 65.9% of usage occurred during off-peak hours with 39.2% occurring from 2-6pm, the precise slow period when venues want to increase customer traffic.

Partnerships

The secret to AWC's success is the establishment of partnerships and endeavoring to secure success for each of them. Small, locally-owned businesses such as coffee shops, restaurants, bars/pubs, and automotive services represent the majority of our venue partners. The City of Austin contributes nearly 30% of the hotspots with city-owned and -operated venues such as the public library system and city parks and buildings. Increasing access to the City's web-based services and public access to the Internet inside of libraries is cost-effectively accomplished by participation in AWC. TimeWarner BusinessClass RoadRunner became a marketing partner by providing co-branded signage and collateral for our venues. AWC requires that all venues subscribe to business class broadband services. Small and medium-sized network services companies continue to benefit from AWC referrals by providing for-pay network installation and support services to venues with critical IT needs such as point-of-sale (POS) systems and LANs secured from the WiFi network.

PR Campaign: Strength through Coordinated Marketing

Most of our venues have little to no marketing budget and present little ability to market their essential services let alone their free WiFi service. By participating in AWC, they were able to benefit from AWC's marketing initiatives. The 2004 PR Campaign netted 1.9 television, radio, print, and web stories per week for 36 weeks, driving interested wireless users to the Project's website and list of participating venues. With an estimated half-million dollars in revenue generated by AWC users, appearing on the list of hotspots was an important benefit for AWC venues.

Free Support Services for Venues and Users

AWC venues enjoyed the freedom of concentrating on their core businesses while leaving support of the free WiFi hotspots to AWC volunteers. In 2004, AWC established a network status and information hotline and an automatically updated directory of hotspots that included only those hotspots that were functional. By contrast, non-AWC venues are left to their own resources to resolve issues with their users, equipment, and service providers. Advances in automated network management services from Less Networks, enabled AWC to scale operations from 25 hotspots and 30 volunteers to 93 hotspots and 4 volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION #29:

Northwest Railway Museum improvements & assistance

DESCRIPTION:

There are a number of key things the Railway Museum needs to do to make it a major attraction for the Snoqualmie Valley and even the state of Washington. In fact, we recommend that lodging tax funds be used for product development initiatives at the Railway Museum over promotion and advertising.

1. The biggest eyesore in Snoqulamie is the collection of derelict rail cars and engines situated for more than 40 years along Railroad Avenue west of the Railway Museum. It is a priority project to have these relocated to other locations.

We recommend that the city work in partnership with the Railway Museum to secure funding to develop new rail lines so these cars can be moved to a more conducive storage location. This would free up the rail spur for perhaps the display of restored cars in shelters similar to the log pavilion.

Additionally, the removal of cars here would allow the museum to park the operating train along this spur so that the Railway Museum is more open and visible to visitors. Additionally, it will be important to open up the view to Railroad Park and public parking areas, which are currently hidden from view.

2. Develop interpretive displays
The Railway Museum is currently a very two-dimensional museum (other than the operating train), and can only keep most visitors occupied for half an hour or so. To remedy this situation, we recommend that a series of interpretive displays and kiosks be developed that will engage the visitor while educating them about the history of the trains and their role in development of the Snoqualmie Valley.

This would be done by securing the funding and hiring professional services to develop a phased improvement program for the museum.

3. The Railway Museum needs to undertake some major improvement initiatives including paint, grounds keeping enhancements, and other improvements to make it a first-rate museum. One of the primary goals of this plan is to improve the overall quality of downtown Snoqualmie - including com-

mercial buildings: tenant improvements, signage and facade improvement programs, etc. This effort must include the Railway Museum as well.

4. We recommend that perhaps 20 free-standing interpretive signs be placed in the right-of-way area between Railroad Avenue and the rail spur where the old cars are being stored along Centennial Trial. Each sign would note

the year of the car, what type of car it is, and the words "to be restored." On the back side of each sign would be text providing interpretive information about the car.

The long term goal (over the next three or four years) is to have the rail cars removed from this area, but meanwhile, perhaps locals and visitors will see the cars, through the signage, as artifacts instead of a junk yard. The interpretive signs will attract visitors along the Centennial Trail and will also make the museum much more interactive. Additionally, the Railway Museum may want to begin an "adoption" program where people can "adopt" and contribute funds to a particular car for the restoration process.

Approximate cost: Approximately $22,000 ($1,100 per sign)

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, working in partnership with the Railway Museum

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Grants, foundations, lodging tax dollars, other sources to be determined

TIMELINE:
Begin the effort immediately

RATIONALE:
The rail cars and engines along this area are a major eyesore and are quickly deteriorating. Many of these cars have been there for 40 years with little realistic chance of being restored before they have deteriorated beyond repair. The Railway Museum has long had in its plans to construct a new rail line with structures where the cars can be housed and gradually restored. According to both the City and Railway Museum, past efforts have been somewhat combative, but members of the City Council and city staff have been working to forge a new partnership with the Museum. This project is of the upmost importance in fostering and taking that relationship to the next level.

The Railway Museum could be a world-class museum and a major draw to the Snoqualmie Valley, but it will need to shift its focus from a restoration and operation of the running train, to becoming a true museum worthy of national or international recognition.

The Railway Museum needs to become much more of an interactive experience, than just a collection of artifacts. This will require interpretive signage, stories, and an effort to become a museum more than a restoration yard.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

RECOMMENDATION #30:

Develop a pedestrian trail system from Snoqualmie Falls to the Rail District (downtown)

DESCRIPTION:
The city has already begun the efforts of designing and securing land for a pedestrian access corridor from Snoqualmie Falls to downtown. An expensive portion of this project is building a pedestrian-access bridge over the Snoqualmie River. The city should continue to seek funding for this project.

There has been talk of a redevelopment of the Highway 202 bridge, which perhaps might incorporate a sidewalk to accommodate pedestrian use. We recommend that this not be considered and that the city move forward with creating a separate trail system, as is being designed.

The bridge is being designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and equestrians, and will connect many miles of multi-use trails.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$3 million

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Grants and other third-party funding sources

TIMELINE:
Beginning in 2007 - pending funding

RATIONALE:
As Snoqualmie becomes developed, its natural beauty is being threatened. The river and its corridor should be enhanced, expanded with additional public access, and developed into an attraction for both locals and visitors alike.

Currently the river is all but hidden from view and has very little (if any) public access. Creating walking trails that would include interpretive displays, will become a focal point and will connect the Falls to downtown (and Sno-qualmie Ridge) allowing increased pedestrian traffic and reducing auto traffic in the immediate area.

The trail system will become an additional draw to the area, and is a cornerstone to the downtown redevelopment effort. Snoqualmie's attractions and diversions need to be better connected - particularly for pedestrian (and biking) access - one of the foundations of the entire Snoqualmie Ridge development.

RECOMMENDATION #31:

Intersection of SR202 and Snoqualmie Parkway to remain open-space & trail head, utilizing Prairie Landscape Gateway Design

DESCRIPTION:
While we applaud the efforts of the local Rotary Club and community volunteers, we strongly recommend that work at the site be stopped and the plan reassessed as to its location. I met with Rod Johnson from Callison Architecture (a world renowned firm) who is assisting the city with its downtown revitalization efforts and we both believe that this is not the appropriate location for such a venture for multiple reasons detailed below.

As an alternative, the Gateway Prairie Landscape design, currently being developed, should be used for this location.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie working with Rotary and other local organizations

APPROXIMATE COST:

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

TIMELINE:
2006

RATIONALE:
1. Access to this site is poor. For visitors coming from Snoqualmie Falls, getting to the site is cumbersome, requiring a turn onto Snoqualmie Parkway, followed by an immediate left turn, instead of directing these visitors towards downtown (no turns). Once visitors leave the center, turning left onto the Parkway (towards the Ridge) is difficult and will become increasing more so as Snoqualmie Ridge continues to develop. For access and egress, the site is not conducive as a visitor information center and may raise safety issues as the area grows.

2. Visitor information centers should always be located in an area where money can be spent. Therefore, we recommend that the center be placed in the downtown core area. Studies have shown that stand-alone visitor information centers in non-commercial areas host less than half the visitors of those in commercial areas. Additionally, centers placed in commercial areas spur local spending – four times that of non-commercial locations. When people stop at a commercially located visitor information center, they often state "while we're here, why don't we get something to drink," or "eat," or "let's check out that little shop over there." Once people get out of their cars they are four times more likely to spend money. It's the rule of "critical mass." It will be very important for Snoqualmie's downtown revitalization efforts to garner as much spending downtown as possible. Some of our recommendations will revolve around making downtown a gathering place – a hub of activity, attractions, and amenities for both visitors and locals alike. Visitor information is one of those amenities, and an additional activity.

3. Putting a children's play area at this intersection, we feel, is not conducive to the site or for families with children. Would you take your kids to this location to play? There are terrific opportunities to provide the same type of amenities in town, where families have the Northwest Rail Museum, the city's park along Railroad Avenue, Sandy Cove Park, and local shops that cater to families - especially those with children. Downtown Snoqualmie needs the Rotary's help more than any other area in Snoqualmie, and there are a number of terrific opportunities to do a similar project downtown.

4. The importance of placing visitor information services and a children's playground within easy walking distance of shopping, amenities, and people's homes cannot be overemphasized. Eliminating the need for people to drive to each and every destination is an important goal for most cities in Washington State. With so many park facilities within easy walking distance of homes on Snoqualmie Ridge, it isn't likely many families would drive to this major intersection to use the playground. However, if it were located downtown, the downtown residents would be able to walk to the park, and, with the added appeal of the amenities downtown, Snoqualmie Ridge parents would be more likely to drive there as well.

5. The intersection of Snoqualmie Parkway and SR 202 should be preserved as a gateway, by restoring it to its natural setting. The valley is incredibly beautiful, but as the Ridge and the Parkway develop, most of the roadside scenic beauty will disappear. This intersection is where people get another glimpse or "reminder" of what Snoqualmie Valley is all about - the natural habitat, creating an anchor point for the pristine setting that represents the

Valley. The city owns and will be maintaining the property along the river (across from the intersection) as a natural area, and is coordinating with Cascade Land Conservancy and the Snoqualmie Tribe to do the same on the western side. This site is far better suited as part of this natural gateway than another parking lot, play area, railroad displays surrounded by chain link fencing, and a visitor information center. This is the one piece of property that creates a transition or gateway to the Falls, downtown, and other areas of the valley. That transition should be as non-commercial as possible.

After driving down the Parkway passing a number of retail, commercial, and residential subdivisions, this is your one opportunity to bring people back to the natural beauty of the area. A true gateway – a respite – and a gateway to historic downtown and Snoqualmie Falls.

6. The draft plan includes the recommendation that downtown become the "Railroad District," using the Northwest Rail Museum as the "anchor" or theme for that concept. We recommend that "districts" be identified that will represent the diversity of Snoqualmie. For instance, the "Snoqualmie Business Park" would be a district. The retail area along Center Avenue would be called the "Ridge Marketplace." Then there's "Snoqualmie Falls," and finally, the "Railroad District" in downtown. With this concept, we will recommend that the beautiful engine and fuel car be moved closer to downtown, expanding the Railway Museum to encompass even more activities – things to see and do in a single location. The engine, at its current location, is out of place in keeping with the overall ambiance of the area. The rule of thumb: The more you have to offer, in a single location, the further people will come to visit and the longer they will stay. That translates to increased spending. If Disneyland were spread all over Anaheim, it would have failed long ago.

By placing the engine downtown, it can be incorporated into the overall theme, and will make the Rail Museum an even bigger and better attraction. Likewise, for the caboose visitor center. This is the rule of "critical mass."

7. Another one of our recommendations will be the redevelopment of the gateways into downtown. We think the development of new gateways would be a tremendous project for local auxiliary organizations, and would become a key part of the revitalization effort. We suggest that maybe this project be reconfigured for a better location closer to the heart of historic downtown Snoqualmie.

In summary, I don't think any resident of Snoqualmie wants the community to become the next Bellevue or Issaquah Highlands. It's the rural, pristine ambiance that makes Snoqualmie such a great place to live. Thus, it is of critical importance to maintain as much natural habitat as possible in this very key gateway to the various districts in Snoqualmie. This is the most important intersection in Snoqualmie and will set the ambiance and tone for the entire area for decades. I urge the council to stop this development until it can be fully discussed and a new plan developed. After all, whatever happens at this intersection will be there for a long time. The last thing you want is a play area, another parking lot, rail cars, fences, rail line, and mixed messages as a welcoming point to the Falls, river, historic downtown and Snoqualmie Valley.

Once again, we fully applaud the efforts of local organizations who do so much good for the community, but in this instance, we think the same project would be far better suited to a different location and would rather see you stop the project now rather than recommend it be removed at a later date.

Incidentally, we have had other professionals (landscape architects, urban planners) look at the plan and they concur that this is not the right location for this project.

RECOMMENDATION #33:

Research the development of trolley service between Snoqualmie Falls and the Rail District

DESCRIPTION:

We recommend that the creation of trolley or alternative transportation be developed to connect the Falls, Ridge, and downtown, with additional connections to North Bend and the casino. This service could be a private enterprise, a public/private partnership, or a public transportation system operated by a seasonal staff.

Research the feasibility of a trolley transportation system between Snoqualmie Falls and downtown (the Rail District.) This system could also be extended to travel to the Ridge, thereby bringing residents and workers from the Ridge to downtown or to the Falls, and to North Bend and the casino. This could be either implemented by the City or contracted to a concessionaire, and operate only during peak season, or all year round.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:

• $40,000 for the transportation study
• Restored trolleys cost between $15,000 and $70,000 each, with a median cost of $35,000.
• Operating costs depend on extend of program developed.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

To be determined, but perhaps CDBG grant funding

TIMELINE:

2008 or 2009

RATIONALE:

While creating pedestrian corridors is important, considering the weather patterns the valley experiences, an alternative needs to be explored and seriously considered. The idea is to create a transportation resource that adds to the experience, so that it, in itself, becomes a draw to the Falls and from there to downtown Snoqualmie. The trolley would be an excellent "teaser" or reason to visit downtown Snoqualmie, generating increased spending.

The distance from Snoqualmie Falls and Salish Lodge and downtown Snoqualmie (Rail District) makes it inconvenient for people to travel between the two locations. The easier it is for those visiting the Falls and the Lodge to get downtown, the more often they will go, and the more often they will spend money in shops.

Having trolleys operate to the Ridge as well would provide residents and workers on the Ridge with a simple, low cost way to travel around the city, coming downtown for lunch or riding the trolley simply for the fun experience.

In addition to the trolley system providing easy transportation, it would be an attraction and a fun activity itself, not only making it easier for visitors to get downtown to spend money, but also being one more draw to the area.

RECOMMENDATION #33:
Public areas to be maintained by Parks Department instead of Public Works Department

DESCRIPTION:
The public right-of-way areas in downtown Snoqualmie have been very poorly maintained, adding to the "second-class" feel of the downtown area. We recommend that the City Parks Department be charged with the maintenance and beautification of these areas. Snoqualmie's parks are well maintained, while areas managed by the Public Works Department are not.

The budget for maintaining these areas would be moved from Public Works to Parks.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie (Staff)

APPROXIMATE COST:
None. Just a shift in funding

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General funds

TIMELINE:
Beginning January 1, 2006

RATIONALE:
Implementation of this plan requires a true public-private partnership in terms of downtown façade improvements, new development projects, revitalization, tenant improvements, beautification, etc. Beautification is critically important to the success of any downtown.

In visiting Snoqualmie repeatedly over a six-month period the public right of ways were an ongoing eyesore with weeds sometimes two feet high and little effort to make the downtown an attractive gathering place.

Typically, public works departments are more geared to infrastructure-related issues such as utility corridors, water, sewer, storm drainage, etc. Meanwhile, parks departments are more geared to "above the ground" programs including the maintenance of parks, medians, streetscapes, etc. Parks manages the

equipment and staffing necessary to maintain these public spaces. One of these goals is to make downtown Snoqualmie a park-like setting and gathering place, which will require an investment in beautification that must be properly maintained in order to retain its allure and ambiance.

Additionally, the city is now charged with maintaining the medians along Snoqualmie Parkway, which must also be nicely maintained to keep the overall appearance of the community at a high level.

The importance of maintaining the public spaces cannot be overemphasized. Unsightly areas have a negative impact on the businesses that are housed nearby, reducing revenues. It also creates a negative impression of the overall community. Consider the cost to develop and maintain the entry areas to Snoqualmie Ridge: Beautification translates to increased sales and increased revenues to the developer and builders.

While it can be assumed that businesses that fail may simply be poorly operated, other factors within the city's control also have a tremendous impact on their success, including the upkeep and beautification of the area.

RECOMMENDATION #34:

Recruit and develop moderate-income multi-family housing

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that the Snoqualmie EDC, working with the city, look to develop multi-family housing that would be affordable to those earning less than the median income for King County.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie EDC and city

APPROXIMATE COST:
Privately developed, with perhaps HUD assistance

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Private financing, HUD program financing

TIMELINE:
2007

RATIONALE:
As more business moves to Snoqualmie's Business Park, there will be an increasing demand for moderate income housing in the valley. Already there are perhaps more than 1,000 jobs in the immediate area that do not provide sufficient income to afford housing currently available in Snoqualmie. To make the city a true "live work community" housing must be addressed.

BRANDING INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATION #35:

Use a new brand identity based on Snoqualmie Falls

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend adoption of a new identity for the City of Snoqualmie, as seen to the right. Snoqualmie needs to cement its tie to Snoqualmie Falls, using it as the primary icon. As business cards, letterhead and other printed materials come up for reprinting, we recommend the new brand identity be used. It would be used on wayfinding signage, on gateways, where appropriate, and on marketing materials.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
None

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
January 1, 2006

RATIONALE:
The new brand identity is uniquely Snoqualmie - only the City of Snoqualmie can claim the Falls. It is a positive and unique image representing the City, easy to identify from a distance, and will be very effective in promotional efforts.

These show the identity if full color (top), in two-color (middle), and in black and white (bottom).

RECOMMENDATION #36:

Developing a Branding Style Guide

DESCRIPTION:
With any branding effort, consistency is a critical part of the branding effort. We recommend that a temporary "Branding Committee" be assembled to work with a graphic design/marketing firm to develop a Style Guide for the City of Snoqualmie.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$12,500

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Lodging tax revenues

TIMELINE:
Spring of 2006

RATIONALE:
Logo and branding design provide the community with an easily recognizable "identity" – a symbol that represents the community and all it has to offer. When the logo is used, it should bring to the viewer's mind the images and experiences of enjoying the community. Repeated and consistent use of the logo and branding design will reinforce the image.

Consistent use of the logo and brand are essential in building an easily recognized visual that supports the community and its marketing efforts, reflecting its assets and values. Maintaining design consistency is critical in assuring the recognition of the logo and brand.

The Design Style Guide should contain the system of coordinated visual elements that make up the community's graphic identity by addressing specific details of the logo and brand design, and providing users with exact specifications so that they will easily be able to maintain the integrity of the design.

Examples of approved usage of the logo and brand should be provided in

the guide. The logo colors should be identified, indicating the specified color mix in cyan, magenta, yellow, and black (CMYK); as well as the Pantone color numbers. If the logo is to be produced in a single color for a specific application, then that single color should also be identified by its CMYK mix and its Pantone color number.

Instructions should be provided describing the method to use the logo on a dark background. Logo dimensions should be given, and minimum sizes should be specified to prevent an unreadable logo.

The font should be identified, as well as the source where the font can be located, if necessary. If font symbols are used, any permissible substitutions should be noted.

Wrong usages of the logo should be spelled out, including structural changes, color changes, and font changes. Use of the logo against an extremely busy background that obscures visibility should not be permitted. Combining the logo with any other logo or branding elements should not be permitted.

If there are any design flexibilities for various uses of the logo, such as T-shirts or hats, these should be noted and examples provided.

Web design templates should be illustrated showing the use of the logo, color palette and structure. RGB and HTML colors should be listed. Examples of presentation templates should be provided to show how the logo can be incorporated into a powerpoint presentation. Examples of standard layout for use of the logo in letterheads, business cards, and envelopes should be provided.

RECOMMENDATION #37:

Provide downtown with its own unique name to give it a brand identity

DESCRIPTION:
The most popular destination communities have become gathering places for the community: destinations in their own right. We recommend that the city adopt a name such as "The Rail District" for downtown Snoqualmie and that gateways into downtown reflect the name and the rail theme.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, by city council resolution

APPROXIMATE COST:
$5,000 for development of a branding icon for The Rail District, or another name if chosen

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Lodging tax funds

TIMELINE:
Make a decision in 2008, implement in 2009

RATIONALE:
Creating destination areas, or gathering places, is a key ingredient in revitalization efforts. Consider the following hugely successful districts:
- Third Street Promenade   Santa Monica, CA
- Pioneer Square   Seattle, WA
- Gaslamp District   San Diego, CA
- Baker Street   Nelson, BC
- Bricktown   Nashville, TN

By giving the downtown core area a name, it will develop its own identity and brand, and it creates the "mall mentality" among businesses in the district. They begin to look at themselves as part of a collective, as opposed to competitors and just other downtown businesses.

Secondly, on signage, "historic downtown," "historic district" or just "downtown" has little appeal to either locals or visitors, whereas The Rail District sounds like an attraction - a gathering place, a hub of activity.

The name change would not take place for two to three years or until the downtown core has been revitalized as a gathering place. Designating the area today as The Rail District would result in a failed branding effort as nothing has changed and it would be seen as the "same old" downtown Snoqualmie. Branding efforts like this require a concentrated product development effort before the branding effort can change perceptions of a downtown.

RECOMMENDATION #38:

Name the commercial retail district at Snoqualmie Ridge, Ridge Marketplace

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that the City designate the retail district at Snoqualmie Ridge as "Ridge Marketplace." We recommend an icon be developed for the Market- place that can be used on street banners and in marketing materials promot- ing the district.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$2,500

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Lodging tax funds as a 50% match from the developer

TIMELINE:
January 2006

RATIONALE:
Because Snoqualmie is broken up into various districts, geographically, it's important to be able to identify each "district" particularly as the wayfinding system is developed. This makes identification and wayfinding much easier to manage, and makes finding attractions and amenities easier.

Snoqualmie will have a number of designated districts:
- Ridge Marketplace
- Ridge Business Park
- Snoqualmie Ridge (residential)
- The Rail District (downtown)
- Snoqualmie Falls (the Salish Lodge/Falls area)
- The Riverwalk (once the trail system is developed between the falls and downtown)
- Meadowbrook Village
- Meadowbrook Farm

RECOMMENDATION #39:

Develop a valley-wide wayfinding plan

DESCRIPTION:

We recommend that the City develop a "Wayfinding Commission" that would be made up of representatives from:

- Washington State DOT (district engineer)
- City of Snoqualmie
- City of North Bend
- King County (representing Fall City and the unincorporated areas)
- City of Carnation
- City of Duvall

This Commission would put together a funding agreement and collective grant applications to hire a professional Wayfinding/Environmental Graphics firm to develop the wayfinding system. The communities would come to terms on matching funds, and pro-rata share of the cost of the program.

The Commission would also:

- Be the selection committee for hiring professional services
- Manage the consulting effort and would present the plan to their city councils, staff and community for approval
- Issue bid documentation and secure funding for implementation of the program, which might possible be phased over a three year period.
- Work with Washington DOT, the county and other jurisdictions on implementation of the plan and installation of the system.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The City of Snoqualmie would take the lead in this effort.

APPROXIMATE COST:

$140,000 for the plan's development

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

Various funding sources

TIMELINE:

Mid-2006 with the plan completed by spring of 2007

RECOMMENDATION #40:

Implementation of the wayfinding system

DESCRIPTION:
The prior recommendation was for developing the Wayfinding System Plan. This recommendation includes issuing a Request For Bids for the actual fabrication and installation of the signage system.

IMPLEMENTATION:
The multi-jurisdictional Signage Commission working with city staff

APPROXIMATE COST:
$300,000 (to be determined). Could be phased over a three year period.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General funds with some grants (CDBG, ISTEA and other transportation-oriented grants)

TIMELINE:
2007 through 2009 unless funding becomes available to implement the plan in a single phase. In that case, the fabrication and installation would take place in 2008.

RATIONALE:
The wayfinding plan will include detailed locations, exact wording, signage design, and cost estimates for implementation. It will provide signage for "connecting the dots" between communities, attractions, and amenities, making it easy for visitors and residents to travel the area.

It will be critical for the signage plan to include signage on I-90 for both exits to Snoqualmie.

The signage for each community included in the plan should reflect that community's "identity," being unique for each. Signage plays a major role in a community's branding and marketing efforts.

RECOMMENDATION #41:

Identification of the branding icon, lure and diversions

DESCRIPTION:
In marketing a community, it's important to differentiate between the community's icon, its primary lure, and its diversions and/or secondary activities. In the case of Snoqualmie, this is a relatively easy process:
- The icon: Snoqualmie Falls
- Primary lure: Snoqualmie Falls
- Diversions:
    - Salish Lodge (dining and lodging and an anchor)
    - Northwest Rail Museum
    - Snoqualmie's Dining: La Fogata, The Front Porch (with some curb appeal improvements), Gianfranco
    - Mignone Home Furnishings, Accents and Design
    - Snoqualmie Hardware
    - Golf course

In marketing a community it will be critically important to market specific businesses and activities. The generic "unique shops and restaurants" does nothing to set Snoqualmie apart from every other community in the United States.

We recommend that Snoqualmie market these specific businesses and organizations for several reasons:
- They are consistently open and provide good food or service
- They have a quality appearance and curb appeal (with some improvements)
- They can become or are "anchor tenants" to a revitalized downtown
- They set the bar for the community

Businesses that would be considered if improvements were made:
- The Candy Factory
- Snoqualmie Brewery

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie Valley Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Program, Snoqualmie EDC

APPROXIMATE COST:
None required

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
None required

TIMELINE:
Immediately

RATIONALE:
By heavily marketing specific businesses, the city will help ensure their success and provides an incentive to other businesses to "raise the bar." These showcased businesses would provide an experience worthy of a special trip from neighboring communities throughout King County and in particular, the Eastside.

RECOMMENDATION #42:

Design and install a pole-banner program

DESCRIPTION:
We recommend that the city design and have fabricated pole banners for the Ridge Marketplace and for Downtown Snoqualmie. These banners would reflect the city's branding icon.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
To be determined

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
To be determined - a private public partnership. Possible sponsorships

TIMELINE:
2007

RATIONALE:
Pole banners are a relatively inexpensive way to promote and identify the various districts in Snoqualmie. Banners can be changed with seasons or for holidays; they add color, life and a sense of place.

The banners shown are examples only; actual designs will need to be developed.

MARKETING PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION #43:

Design & install six visitor information kiosks

DESCRIPTION:

Visitor information kiosks should be developed and placed at six locations including:

- Northwest Railway Museum
- Upper parking lot of Snoqualmie Falls
- At the Snoqualmie Falls entrance near the gift shop
- In downtown Snoqualmie where the visitor information center will be located
- North Bend Outlet Mall
- Snoqualmie Ridge Marketplace

Future kiosks would be installed at:

- Ridge Business Park
- Downtown North Bend
- Remlinger Farms in Carnation

Newly developed Activity Guides (Recommendation #44) would be placed in the kiosks, along with other visitor information. When visitors reach an information kiosk, they are looking for detailed, specific information about the location; therefore, they need the detail provided in an Activities Guide rather than the simple sales effort of a rack card.

IMPLEMENTATION:

City of Snoqualmie in partnership with the City of North Bend

APPROXIMATE COST:

$6,000 each plus the cost of design and fabrication documentation. Total cost: $43,500

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:

Lodging tax funds

TIMELINE:

Designed, constructed and installed in 2008

RATIONALE:

Visitors don't just travel Monday through Friday during business hours. Visitor information should be readily available, 365 days a year, 24/7. These kiosks would display maps of the area, calendar of events (that will appeal to visitors), must-see attractions, lodging and dining options, etc. Each kiosk should also have a weatherproof brochure rack where visitors can pick up a map and Activities Guide to the area.

Here are the steps to this process:

1) Work with the appropriate land owners for specific locations for each kiosk. Photograph the locations so the designer will get a feel for space, look, and overall design.

2) Hire the services of a professional to develop the design of the kiosk. Sometimes they are actual gazebos, and others are much simpler. Make sure the designer has experience with this type of structure. All the kiosks should be the same design, simply duplicated at various locations. This way they can be fabricated in one shop, which will keep prices low. Approximate cost of design and construction drawings: $7,500.

3) Go out to bid for the construction and installation of the kiosks. We estimated a cost of approximately $6,000 each, which would include installation.

RECOMMENDATION #44:

Develop a valley-wide Activities Guide

DESCRIPTION:
Currently there are dozens of brochures promoting Snoqualmie Valley's various communities, organizations, events, and attractions. This recommendation creates a public/private partnership Activities Guide that will save thousands of dollars collectively, and reduce postage costs.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Snoqualmie Valley Chamber of Commerce

APPROXIMATE COST:
$40,000 including printing and production

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Lodging tax funds - from partnership communities: North Bend, Snoqualmie, Carnation, and private partnerships (advertorial sales)

TIMELINE:
Design, development, sales, and production: 2008

RATIONALE:
There is currently no cohesive branding or theme to the many brochures produced in the Snoqualmie Valley. In tourism, you will always be much more effective as one loud voice, as opposed to many smaller individual voices. Showing visitors the variety of activities there are to do in the entire area will keep visitors in the area longer, which translates to more sales, more money spent.

To this end, we recommend the creation of a 30-page Activities Guide. This public/private partnership project would not be an advertising driven piece, but would be a cooperatively funded effort. As a starting point, we suggest the following might be included in the Guide:
1) Front Cover
2) Back cover: contact information, resources, Washington state map, etc.
3) Inside front cover: full page photo of Snoqualmie Falls
4) First page: Table of contents
5) About the area (location, primary attractions – a one page overview)

6) Snoqualmie Falls
7) Lodging: (not listings, but an overview)
8) Lodging: Salish Lodge (perhaps a two-page spread)
9) Camping & RV: (an overview)
10) Dining: (an overview)
11) Entertainment: (an overview)
12) Entertainment: Calendar of events by month
13) Activities: Northwest Rail Museum (perhaps a two-page spread)
14) Activities: Visiting Snoqualmie Falls/picnicking
15) Activities: Golf
16) Activities: Hiking, wilderness trails, Mt. Si
17) Activities: Scenic tours (auto and motorcycle touring)
18) Activities: Mountain biking/Bicycle tours
19) Activities: Parks on the river
20) Activities: Shopping at the Factory Stores
21) Activities: Antique and specialty shops in North Bend
22) Activities: Antique and specialty shops in Snoqualmie
23) Events
24) Lodging listings: include a photo and brief description of each
25) Dining listings: include a photo of each, specialties
26) RV parks and camping: include a photo of each, brief description
27) Entertainment venue listings: website addresses, phone numbers, etc.

This project should be a public/private partnership. Perhaps 70,000 would be printed each year (in full color.) The cost for the entire publication would be determined in advance, so a per-page price could be determined, and each organization would pay for the cost of their page.

Many businesses and organizations will still want individual brochures, which would provide additional information. These, over time, would be developed in keeping with the overall theme.

The entire Activities Guide should also be placed on the internet for immediate download and printing at the convenience of the person planning the trip.

RECOMMENDATION #45:

Design an annually-updated Community Profile

DESCRIPTION:
A Community Profile is a valuable tool to assist in attracting businesses to Snoqualmie. This tri-fold piece provides an overview of the City in terms of quality of life, geography, transportation, and economy. It should be updated and reprinted every year. Four thousand copies should be printed, in full color, and distributed to the recruitment expert, local real estate offices, Opus, the Economic Development Council, the Chamber, and the City offices.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$14,500 for the first year, $6,000 in subsequent years (updates and reprints.) This includes the printing of 4,000 copies.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General fund sources

TIMELINE:
First annual profile designed, produced and printed by April 2006

RATIONALE:
The Community Profile would include the following information:
• An overview of the area
• Map of the region & state
• Distances chart to neighboring cities and counties, metropolitan areas
• Community organizations
• Community services and facilities (medical education, etc.)
• Recreation, attractions & visitor amenities
• Statistical overview including lodging revenues, visitor counts, new permit valuations, general business statistics, new home starts, etc.
• Special events listing
• Population statistics
• Climate
• Contact information and resources

The Ocean Shores Community Profile has been in use for 15 years and remains one of the community's best marketing tools.
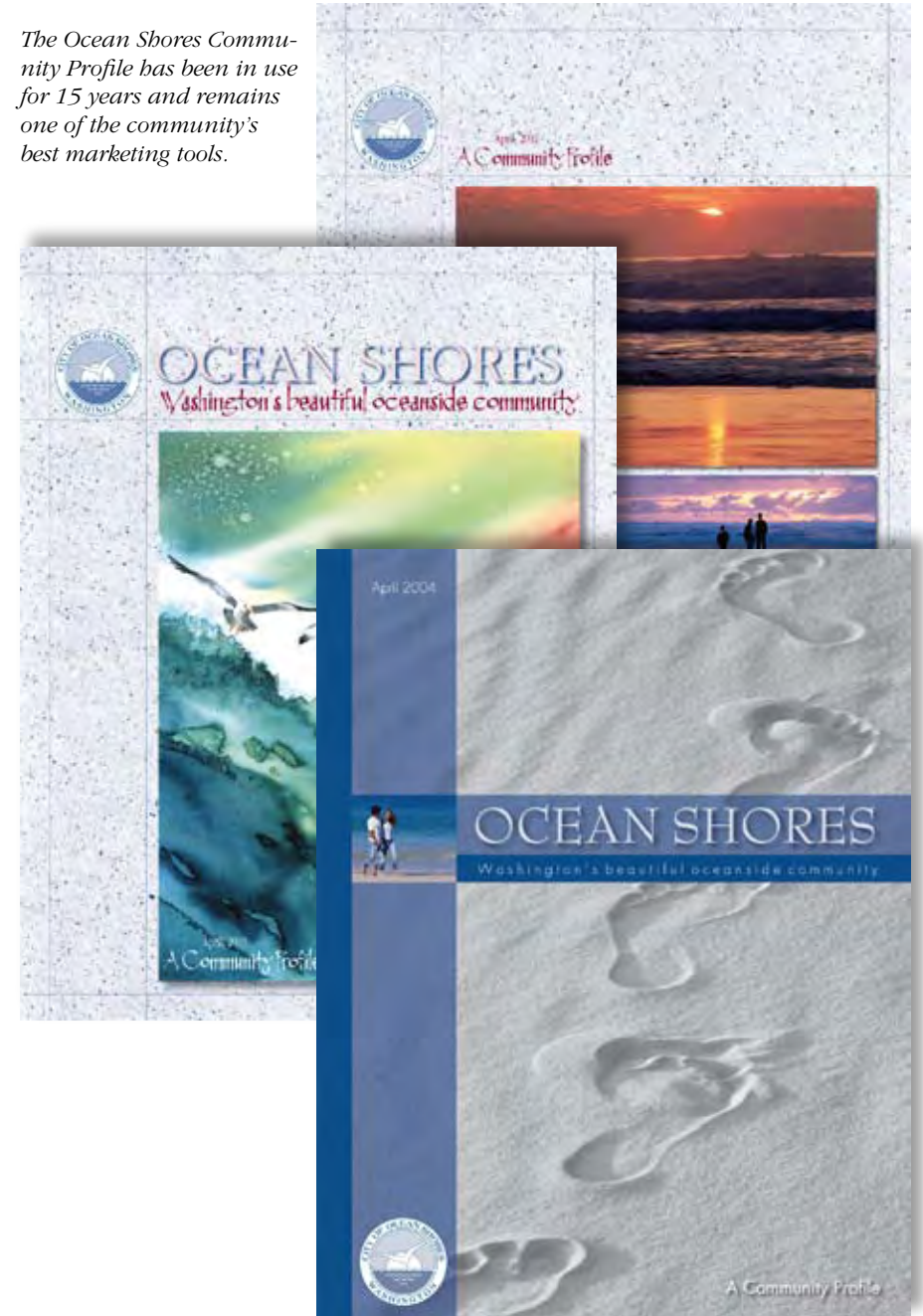
RECOMMENDATION #46:

Design an Opportunities marketing piece

DESCRIPTION:
A marketing piece designed to be a tool for the recruitment contractor to use in attracting business and industry to Snoqualmie. This piece would be a bi-fold piece, folded to 8-1/2" x 11" and detail the business opportunities available in Snoqualmie.

IMPLEMENTATION:
City of Snoqualmie

APPROXIMATE COST:
$4,500 including design, production and printing of 1,000 copies

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
General funds

TIMELINE:
Mid-2006

RATIONALE:
The recruitment contractor will need marketing tools to assist in attracting investment to the community. This includes the creation of a Snoqualmie Opportunities booklet that will showcase the advantages of locating a business or industry in Snoqualmie.

It should detail the "top ten" business opportunities and explain why each is a good opportunity. It should provide teaser demographic and statistical information supporting the development opportunities in the City. This piece would not be stand alone – mass-mailed piece, but would accompany a sales letter to showcase Snoqualmie's assets.

RECOMMENDATION #47:

Develop a strong internet presence for both tourism and economic development

DESCRIPTION:
A new website should be developed to promote the entire Snoqualmie Valley area. With a focus on attracting visitors, this site should be linked to the City's municipal site.

IMPLEMENTATION:
The City working with Snoqualmie Valley Chamber and the EDC

APPROXIMATE COST:
$40,000 to develop; updates and maintenance $5,000 annually

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE:
Lodging taxes, General fund

TIMELINE:
Beginning mid-2006

RATIONALE:
The internet is the most-used resource for travel planning and business information. Because of its vital importance as a marketing tool, it is critical that the City's web presence be good enough to "close the sale."

The website development team should consist of three professionals: a tourism professional, a graphic design professional, and a web-based database professional for developing the e-marketing portion of the site.

The "splash page" is the introductory page that is designed to pull visitors into the site. It should draw visitors in, making them want to see more, with the use of spectacular photography.

After the splash page, the site should include the following elements:
• A directory home page to make the site easy to use
• A page for each attraction by category, including Snoqualmie Falls, the Rail Museum, Salish Lodge and Spa, mountain biking, hiking, fishing, shopping, dining
• The Activity Guide should be available for download from the site in printable PDF format
• Maps, directions, distances from other metro areas (in k/m and miles)
• Weather, climate and topography
• Request for information forms page
• Sign up form for E-marketing
• Links to area attractions
• Press room and photo library (slide show)
• Sample itineraries: specific activities to do for a one-day, three-day, or five-day visit to the area, with descriptions of the locations and activities

The website should be developed in concert with the Activities Guide for continuity.

With a new website coming online every three seconds, getting noticed is just as important as having an effective website. Nearly 70% of all internet users never go past the first two pages of search results. So if the Snoqualmie Valley is listed on the 15th page, chances are slim that the site will ever be seen.

Google and Yahoo!, who command the lion's share of search engine searches, both have "pay per click" programs. We recommend the purchase of critical keywords with both of these major search engines.

The best way to build "brand awareness" – getting customers to remember Snoqualmie as a destination of choice – is to create "top of mind awareness" or TOMA. This is done through repetition. The more times a potential customer is reminded of Snoqualmie, the more likely they are to remember it as "the" place to visit.

An e-marketing program allows a website visitor to sign up for a periodic e-mail newsletter (never more than two short paragraphs and links for more info) tailored to their specific wishes. For Snoqualmie, a visitor would sign up for a newsletter and choose from the following possible options:
• Special deals and packages
• Special events
• Day trips and getaways
• Romantic escapes
• Family outings

Those who sign up for the e-newsletter are automatically put into a database

with sections for each area of interest. Every other month the chamber or VIC would write a teaser paragraph for each of the five areas of interest, which would be automatically e-mailed to each person in that category of the database. Anyone who signs up for the newsletter can cancel it at an time, or can link to the website for new information.

This is the most powerful marketing tool in the tourism industry, as it creates top of mind awareness and draws potential customers back to the website where they will see new photos, stories, or places to go visit.

It is extremely important that the website not become a "been there, done that" marketing tool. Website updates should take place monthly to keep the site fresh and to accommodate seasonal activities, attractions and events.

The site should also contain a section for the recruitment effort. The Community Profile information as well as the business opportunities information should be included.

We are in the process of writing a book "Your Town Online," which provides tips for developing a website that will effectively promote tourism. The following is the text from that book that can be used as s guide for the Chamber (and City of Snoqualmie) website development efforts.

YOUR TOWN ONLINE

INTRODUCTION

"The new phone book's here! The new phone book's here!" yelled Navin Johnson, as he danced around the gas station grounds.

"Well, I wish I could get so excited about nothing," replied his boss Harry, the gas station owner.

"Nothing? Are you kidding?!" Navin shouted back. "Page 73, Johnson, Navin R! I'm somebody now! Millions of people look at this book every day! This is the kind of spontaneous publicity, your name in print, that makes people! I'm impressed! Things are going to start happening to me now!"

Navin, played by Steve Martin in the comedy The Jerk (1979), was finally somebody. His name was in print. He was listed in the phone book with hundreds of thousands of other somebodies. What are the chances that his name was spotted by the millions of people who use the phone book? Well, slim, but at least he was somebody.

How would this scene apply to the Internet? Consider the following:

• A new website goes on line an average of every three seconds. In fact, more than 64 million domain names have been registered – so far. Can you imagine a phone book with 64 million names listed in the white pages?

• The Internet is fourth to only electricity, the automobile and television in its influence among daily American life. Not bad for a technology few even knew existed just 15 years ago.

• Eighty-eight percent of all Americans say that the Internet plays a major role in their lives, surpassing television for the first time.

• Seventy-five percent of all Americans use the Internet regularly, and sixty-eight percent have immediate access to the web either at home or work.

• New Internet users are growing at the alarming rate of nearly ten percent – per month!

• Ninety-five percent of U.S. car buyers do research on-line, and a whopping ninety-four percent of all Internet users plan their travel using the web.

Website use for travel planning has grown quickly and varies little by age and income or gender. Surprisingly, older Americans are using the Web for travel planning as often as younger Americans. (The Internet is used more frequently be those with higher educations, single people.) This means that the highest potential travelers (those older, retired consumers with the greatest disposable income) and be effectively reached via the Internet. According to one study by Stanford University, Internet users spend 5% of their online time researching travel sites.

So, how excited were you when your website "went live?" And now that you have a website, have you ever considered why you have it? What is your website's purpose?

Many communities will state that the website is simply an information source for local residents, businesses, and community leaders. But the real power of the Internet lies in its power to promote.

It's rare to find a community that isn't looking for some form of economic growth: residential, business, industry, or tourism. The Internet is the most powerful and cost effective way to market your community.

There are two major challenges with a website: First, is it good enough to close the sale? And second, can your customer find it?

Consider this. If Navin Johnson had a book listing the 64 million registered domain names instead of phone numbers, his name would be listed on page number 12,066 of the 313,725 page book. With 28,000 new websites coming on line every day, the phone book would grow by 4,235 pages per month!

Part I. Make your town shine – effective web-site design for destinations

TOURISM IS YOUR FRONT DOOR

Tourism is the fastest growing industry in all fifty states, and nothing promotes a community like tourism. It's the quality of life: culture, history, activities, attractions, amenities, etc. Tourism is a primary attractor for non-tourism economic development efforts. The first few pages of your website should promote the community using professional photography. Take a look at www.midland-mi.org, the City of Midland, Michigan's website. The city starts with a splash page that showcases photos of the famous Alden B. Dow Studio, the Tridge, Fun Zone, and Dow Gardens, then invites people to visit the community before opening up the home page. Simple, straight forward, and showcasing the community as a great place to live, work or play.

Showcasing your community's assets doesn't' just attract tourists. It also builds community pride, fosters a sense of community, can build the brand, and promotes economic development.

PULL YOUR CUSTOMERS INTO THE SITE

Just like a novel or magazine article, the first line or paragraph must be powerful enough to grab the reader's attention.

Your home page needs to sell your community using knock-out pictures and introductory text. Look at the splash page as the front door to your community. Take a look at Santa Barbara, California's Conference & Visitors Bureau home/splash page, www.santabarbaraca.com. Site visitors are mesmerized and watch the entire introduction (which only takes a few seconds). Does it make you want to go there?

Does the first page of your site make visitors want to spend time in the website, followed by a trip to the community? Not too far away, Sonoma County, California has done a nice job with a splash page slide show at www.sonomacounty.com.

CREATE A SINGLE FRONT DOOR

Once through the front door, more options can be available. Take a look at www.laconner.net. This small Washington State town did a great job bringing the city and chamber together. Once through the front door, you pick which direction you want to go: to the city portion of the site, or the chamber portion. More effective than multiple websites – and less expensive.

Even through keywords they've created a partnership: LaConner, Washington: the town and visitor information. What a concept!

The problem with most sites is that there may be 30, 40 or even 50 links on the home page with no central focus, and making the experience confusing before they even get started. Seventy percent of web searches are met with frustration when finding the information they are looking for is either difficult or nearly impossible. Consider your website like you'd enter a mall or even your home. You walk up to a front door with beautiful curb appeal (your splash page). That sets the tone for a good experience and states who you are.

Then you "walk" through that door into the next set of options. These options include a series of doors:
• About the community
• Visitor information
• City hall info
• Chamber
• Dong business here
• Links and resources
• Website contents

If a visitor to the site is looking for visitor information, they will click on that link that will give them more options. If they're looking for the minutes to the last city council meeting, they'll click on the city hall info link.

Make it easy and make it progressive. Don't bury the visitor with too many choices before they've even started. Statistics show that visitors who can't easily find what they're looking for, move on after only 20 seconds. Can I go through all your home-page links in 20 seconds or less?

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND IT WILL SELL

Once through the splash page, have no more than seven links on your home page. Too many choices confuse the visitor and take any focus away from the site. Navigation needs to answer the following questions: where am I? where have I been?. Where can I go next? Where is the home page?

It's a good idea to have a "back button" on every page to make navigation easy and convenient. Spend some time reviewing the Truckee site. Notice how easy it is to navigate? It's engaging, informative, and easy to use. Truckee, a town of 16,000, was our clear winner when picking a community in this region to visit. That's the power of a website that's good enough to close the sale.

Another excellent website can be found at www.pebblebeach.com. Walk through the site for a few minutes. You'll see that it's easy to navigate, is well written (using little text), uses world-class photography, uses endorsements and accolades to sell the experience, and makes it easy to plan an escape to Pebble Beach. While there, click on the 17-Mile Drive page and check out the interactive map. Simplicity always sells.

CONTENT IS KING: WORDS AND PICTURES
Journalists know the all-important rule that states if you can't engage the reader by the end of the first paragraph, chances are you've already lost them.

St. Joseph, Missouri's Convention and Visitors Bureau has done a good job of this in both their advertising and on the website by using great teasers including:

"Where the West officially started getting wild."

"Where the Pony Express began and where Jesse James met his demise."

"Bullets, arrows and stampeding buffalo. And you thought your commute was bad."

These teasers are capped off with the St. Jo tagline "The little Missouri town that's larger than life."

You want to turn web-site visitors into customers. That means you have to get them engaged almost immediately. If outstanding photography is king in making the sale, dynamic content is queen. Know what you're trying to say, and communicate it with friendly, informal, and jargon-free language. Bulleted items are a clean way to present information, particularly if they are "hot" links to other pages.

And remember, big words are not necessarily better; long sentences are more difficult to understand; and passive voices are boring. That doesn't mean you should include jokes and puns, though. One man's humor is another man's insult, so be careful.

Your content should inform the reader, letting them know what benefits they'll enjoy by visiting your town. What's in it for them? Use the benefits to entice the reader to want to read more. Then, give your visitor detailed information about what you have to offer.

Finally, always spell check your writing. And go one step further – proofread. Spell check doesn't find every error. Have someone else proofread your work as well; it's easy to miss your own mistakes. Writing good content takes time and effort, and the terrific page you wrote one day may reveal itself to be very poor quality the next; so never post your first draft. Proofread, tighten, edit, and correct. You want your web page to convey exactly what you want to say, and you can do that with dynamic, brief, descriptive content that convinces your reader that, of all the places they can visit, they want to choose your town.

DON'T PROVIDE LISTS, PROVIDE INFO (DETAILS)
Far too many websites promote lists of things to see and do, places to shop, eat or spend the night. A list does nothing to entice a visit to the community or business. Nothing can close the sale like professional photography and text. Listing the Compass Rose, a gift shop in Olympia, Washington doesn't do much for you does it? There are literally thousands of gift shops out there, and just about every community has many of them. But if I told you that the owners of this truly unique shop travel the world picking up one-of-a-kind pieces of art and furnishings from African and Asian countries, you might have an interest. The Compass Rose, in fact, features some fascinating pieces of art hand carved out of ebony, and even stone. You'll find wooden giraffes nearly seven feet tall, a four-poster bed from India, and a selection of African masks that will enhance any home. Whether you're interested in this type of art or not, it certainly sounds more interesting than just a listing for The Compass Rose. Now imagine a whole collection of interesting stores and dining experiences complete with photography and descriptions. It doesn't take long before you've got a new customer on the way.

One note: Always promote the unusual and truly unique things you have

to offer. If your customer can do the same thing closer to home, then pick something else as a key lure, and include photos and text that will make your customer want to go there.

The Rexburg, Idaho Chamber of Commerce has done an excellent job promoting specific activities.

If you go to www.rexcc.com and click on things to see and do, then click on local attractions (we recommend just using the word "attractions," it will list the various attractions, providing a teaser for each. These "teasers" could be better written to pull the visitor in, but provide the right idea. If an attraction grabs your attention, like Yellowstone Bear World, you can click on a link that takes provides you with more details, links, videos, etc.

Do NOT just link to the attractions' website unless you know it's good enough to close the sale, but offer it as an additional link, AFTER you've done what you can to close the sale for them.

Details, details, details. If visitors can't get specific details, chances are you'll lose the sale.

For instance, if you promote the fact that you have the best bass fishing in the U.S. (that sets you apart from everyone else), then tell me about the details: Where is the best fishing spot? Is a license required? Are there fishing guides or boat rentals? Docks and fish cleaning facilities? Are there seasonal considerations? Bass tournaments? What about the weather? Are you providing maps, directions, distances (miles and kilometers), resources, contact information, best time of day for the biggest catches, etc.

SELL THE EXPERIENCES, NOT GEOGRAPHY
Visitors are far more interested in things to see and do than in places: cities, counties, regions, or even states. Travelers are looking for activities, experiences, things to see and do. You must always provide a potential customer with reasons WHY why they should visit. They are far more interested in Disneyland than in Anaheim. Going a step further, while we all know that Disneyland is "the happiest place on earth" (a good reason in itself to go there), the park still promotes the activities in all of its advertising: The Matterhorn, Splash Mountain, Pirates of the Caribbean, the Indiana Jones Adventure, or even meeting Mickey or Minnie. If you visit the Disneyland website (www.

disneyland.com) you'll note that they let the visitor "choose and experience." A lot can be learned by looking at the best.

If you browse through the Disney site, or any site that does a great job of promoting experiences, you'll notice that the photography is professional, and shows people having a great time (the purpose of any experience). The photos make you want to go there. Does your site do the same thing? Every time you add an item to your site, regardless of whether it's an attraction, activity, lodging, dining, shopping, etc., ask yourself: do the photos and text I used make me want to go there? Will it make my customer want to go there?

We as human beings tend to be territorial. We are charged with marketing our community or area, so that's what we focus on: marketing geography. But as visitors, we're not looking for geography. That's second to looking for activities. We are looking for things to see and do that cater to our specific interests.

This is perhaps the biggest mistake destination marketing organizations make. Instead of focusing on cities, counties, regions, and geographic areas, instead consider building your site using the words "Pick Your Season" followed by "Pick Your Passion."

This way you start with WHEN the guest would like to visit, followed by the activities available that time of year. If you pick the winter season in Door County, Wisconsin, the activities might include snowmobiling, snowshoeing, the areas dozen or so Christmas shops, and spa facilities and lodges. During each season, the experiences change.

The point is to build your site around experiences, not places. If a visitor is looking for a spa experience in Arizona, those are the keywords you want to purchase, and once you sell the experience - that you are the place to go for a spa treatment or resort, then the fact that you're located in Scottsdale, makes you worth a special trip.

After all, branding is built around experiences, not geography, historic buildings, cities, or counties. These are important in setting the ambiance, but its the activities that make you the place to go.

Welcome to the "experience economy."
In fact, in all of your marketing efforts, avoid promoting counties and avoid

using the following, overly generic words, that do nothing to attract visitors:

• Discover
• Explore
• We have it all
• The four season destination
• Something for everyone
• Gateway
• Center of it all
• Outdoor recreation
• For a change of place
• Find yourself here
• Naturally fun
• So much to see and do
• Historic downtown

Do any of these words make you want to go there, if tagged onto the name of any community?

Tell me WHY you want me to visit. Find your niche and promote it like crazy and don't let politics kill your marketing effort.

Your website should exude the experience. Look at Disney's websites, or that of Universal Studios, or Wisconsin Dells. Then look at www.lasvegas24hours.com. A whole different audience. Even in Las Vegas, it's not about gambling, it's the experience of America's Adult Playground. After all "what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas."

In everything you do, are you selling experiences or facilities?

ALWAYS sell the reason WHY someone should visit before you dig in with lodging, dining and diversions. All too often communities miss this step.

BUILD THE BRAND
Branding is the art of differentiation. What sets you a part from every other community. Branding requires continuity in all that you do: your product offerings, claim to fame, marketing, identity (logo), slogan, and the look and feel of your marketing materials – particularly your website. Now take a look at www.calistogafun.com. The Napa Valley town of Calistoga has branded itself as a wellness center, and portrays it effectively on the chamber's website.

Round Rock, just north of Austin, has adopted the brand of Sports Capital of Texas. Home of the Round Rock Express AA baseball team, Dell Diamond, with nearly 500 acres of sports fields and amenities, Round Rock is well on its way to capturing that branding title. Visit www.sportscapitaloftexas.com.

A first glance at your website should tell visitors who you are and what sets you apart from everyone else. Look at many of the sites featured in this book and nearly all of them have a central focus:
• Round Rock, TX: Sports
• Wisconsin Dells, WI: Water parks
• Calistoga, CA: Spas and wellness
• Pebble Beach, CA: Spas and golf - an adult destination
• Truckee, CA: Recreation
• Charleston, SC: History
• Branson, MO: Entertainment

This does NOT mean this is all you have to offer, but promotes the primary lure - what you have that the visitor can't get closer to home. To win the customer you must ALWAYS first promote what sets you apart. Remember that visitors are active 14 hours a day, yet the primary activity that drew them to you typically consumes between four and six hours a day, leaving eight to ten hours for "diversionary" or secondary activities: things they can get closer to home, but do them during the "down time" while in the area.

Branson, home to 49 theaters - the primary draw to the community, sees 7.5 million visitors annually. While the average visitor may attend two shows a day, they also spend more time shopping, dining, fishing, golfing, in spas, water parks, etc.

The trick is to promote who you are: why you are different and worth a special trip, and THEN the "other things" your visitors can do while in the area.

Your brand should revolve around your primary lure. Never be all things to all people.

SPREAD THE BRAND AROUND
The city, chamber, convention and visitors bureau, and other local organizations should all use the same style or "look" on their front doors as well. This continuity helps build the brand: who you are.

It takes a village to create a strong brand, and a brand is far more than logos and slogans. It's the essence of who you are. It's how you are perceived in the minds of your local residents and, perhaps more importantly, your visitors.

It takes a village to create a strong brand: a consistent message, a consistent look. Can you imagine how Coca Cola would be perceived if every Coca Cola bottling plant produced its own Coke logo, own colors, and their own Coke commercials? The brand (and Coke) wouldn't be in existence today. It's the same with every community or region. The trick is to get everyone pulling in the same direction with a consistent look, feel, key messages, and identities. It's the essence of who you are as a community.

Therefore, once you develop an outstanding splash page promoting the ambiance and essence of the community, spread it around.

Official city, chamber, destination marketing organizations, county, historical societies, museums, convention centers, garden clubs, etc. should all have the same (or very similar) splash pages as an introduction to the community.

Imagine the strength of the brand if the City of Santa Barbara, and other local organizations used the American Riviera introduction as the splash page? This creates "top of mind awareness" that Santa Barbara is, in fact, The American Riviera.

Round Rock, Texas is working hard to become "The Sports Capital of Texas," based on the community's 500 acre sports park. Imagine the power of the branding message is the city and other local organizations all introduced Round Rock as the sports capital. "Welcome to the Sports Capital of Texas," and thanks for visiting the website of the Round Rock Garden Club.

The same goes for Charleston, SC, where every organization heavily promotes its outstanding history.

CREATE A CALL TO ACTION
If you've ever purchased a new car you know that the sales person will do everything he or she can to get you to buy right then and there. They know that if you leave, even if you say you'll be back, that the chances of you really coming back are less than 3%. It's that way in every sales effort whether in a retail store, a car lot, or a website.

You need to create a Call to Action - something that will entice the website visitor to take action. Having an potential customer think, "Gee, I'll have to go there sometime" is nice, but only 3% of the time will that translate to a real sale. Sweeten the pot by including a Special Deals section on your site - and promote prices, not percentages. Customers want bottom-line costs, not the usual hyperbole of "call for pricing" or "30% off." Thirty percent off what? Give it to them straight.

Other calls to action can be a "Request for Information" form on the site that they fill out. While the brochure is available as a download, some customers would rather have the real thing. There's certainly nothing wrong with that. After all, in a few days they will be reminded about you when it arrives in the mail in an envelope with the notation "Here's the information you requested." In this case, your brochure better be good enough to close the sale. And it should have the same look and feel (overall design) as your website so that it creates a connection in the mind of the prospect.

Special events are another good call to action. If they only happen once a year, you create a "don't miss it" reminder in the mind of the customer.

Another call to action would be to have customers sign up for an on-line newsletter (short and sweet) that caters to their interests. Once again, this creates Top of Mind Awareness, and in each you can include a call to action. Special deals, packages, events, etc.

MAKE IT EASY TO GET MORE INFO
As immediate and user-friendly websites are, some viewers will want to write to you or call you on the telephone. It's amazing how many destination websites do not provide an address, phone number or even an e-mail address for inquiries. Be sure to include all three.

Many organizations are so concerned with receiving spam that they refuse to include contact information which, in essence, punishes the customer who is looking to spend time and money in the community.

But not only must you provide contact information, you should also provide the following elements:

• An online request for information page with a list of publications and/or resources that can be sent them.

• Links to more detailed information and other resources.

The Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau has created a well-designed and easy to navigate site, starting with a focused home page that includes a single link to the visitor section of the site, and then a "send me info" link. It includes options for different materials and doesn't ask too many questions. Remember, this is about making the sale, not performing market research so just ask for the basic information. The site also includes phone numbers, e-mail addresses is this form isn't sufficient, and even names of contact people.

Every community has three or four chances to close the sale.

The first may be through advertising or public relations efforts where you hope to drive potential customers to your website. Once there, your website bust be good enough to close the sale, or to get the "customer" to call, where the person who takes the call must do their best to close the sale. The third chance comes with printed materials, whether downloaded from the site or sent as part of a planning package.

Ninety four percent of people with internet access use it as the primary travel planning resource. But even so, all too often, visitors will have questions, will need specific information, or will want information sent to them. So provide contact information: an address, e-mail link, request for information form, or even a phone number - and preferably, a toll-free number.

DOWNLOADS SAVE MONEY, INCREASE SALES
Convenience is one of the most important factors of any marketing program. Your customers want - and expect - instant gratification. Since most people do their travel planning during the evening hours in the comfort of home, they need the information readily available. ALL of your marketing materials should be available on-line in PDF format and formatted so that when downloaded, they can easily be printed on standard 8.5" x 11" paper. If you've developed a tri-fold rack brochure, unfolded it would measure 12" wide by 9" tall. While this can be reduced to print on a standard sheet of paper, the text will likely be too small to read. Instead, break the brochure up into a series of 4" x 9" panels and the customer can print the panels, or the whole brochure as needed.

Don't forget to make available maps of your destination - its attractions, amenities, and its relationship to highways, airports and Amtrak. Travelers love maps, whether it's a link to a Mapquest.com version of your destination, or an elaborate schematic of your downtown, resort, trails, or wine country.

Meeting planners, event planners, editors, writers, and others are purging their file cabinets of press and conference planning kits and are now expecting that everything they will need will be online. Less than 5% of website visitors will write down a phone number (if they can find that) and then wait till the next day to call to get more information.

By creating an easy-to-find Downloads section of your site, you will give your customers what they want: instant information, and you will save a substantial amount of money in printing, postage, and envelopes, and time. Make it easy. Make it convenient. As an extra courtesy, you may want to identify the "byte" count of each download, or the download time on a standard 56k modem. Many Internet users are reluctant to begin downloading files unless they know what they are getting into.

START WITH THE SITE MAP (CONTENTS)
The last couple of pages of this book contains a sample "site map," or contents, for an effective tourism website. Whether you are a community or business, you must make it easy to plan a visit. The easier you make it, the more likely you are to close the sale. If you're a lodging facility, you must FIRST first sell the destination, THEN the fact that you're the place to stay. For a community, you must jettison the generic and promote specifics: names of businesses, key attractions, and details. When it comes to details, telling visitors you have 100 miles of incredible biking trails won't cut it. You need to promote specific trails, by name, with exact locations, type of terrain, what makes it special, how long it should take, distance, difficulty level, etc.

Every community and business is different, and so your site map may vary from the one provided below. But this can provide you with a starting point. Just remember, you must make your site friendly enough that Grandma can easily navigate through it. Do so through a few steps. Only one link on the Splash Page (skip intro), then not more than six choices on the home page - with all six links in one location. Sites with links all over the page have no

clear focus and are confusing. As impatient as we all are when it comes to using the internet, chances are you're going to lose the sale.

DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS

The more you have to offer collectively, the further people will travel and the longer they will stay. It's the Four Times Rule. People will travel to a destination if you have attractions, that appeal to them specifically, that will keep them occupied four times longer that it took them to get there. So, if a visitor travels two hours to reach you, do you have eight hours worth of activities that cater to them? (2 hours x 4 = 8).

You will be far more effective as one loud voice as opposed to a number of individual small voices. You still need to have a primary lure that sets you apart, but you must also have plenty of diversions or secondary activities - all of which translate to increased tourism spending.

Don't just link to other sites, or to partners. YOU You need to make the sale on YOUR your site, then link the customer over for additional information.

The small town of Rexburg, Idaho does an excellent job promoting the area (not just the town) as a top recreational area, but also does a great job of promoting the individual attractions. (www.rexcc.com)

SIZE MATTERS

Laptop computer sales are quickly gaining on desktop systems, as are notepad computers and other small-screen internet devices.

Make sure you develop your site to be approximately 600 pixels wide (8.5") by approximately 400 pixels tall (5.5"). Each "home page" of a new section of the site should adhere to this size. Follow-up pages should still remain the same width, but can be longer, only requiring the customer to scroll down. You NEVER want your customers to have to scroll side to side.

Developing a site that takes up a whole screen can leave lots of empty space, takes longer to load, and is often awkwardly configured.

Also make sure you have your site automatically centered on the screen. The goal is to make the site attractive, easy to view, navigate, and use.

PUTTING TOGETHER THE TEAM

Website designers are a dime a dozen. Having the technical ability to write HTML does not equate to the talent to build an effective website. Just about everyone over the age of 12 with a computer can design build a website. But having a website does absolutely nothing for you if it can't close the sale or at least help build your brand or image.

Consider building your website like you were building a home. It's highly unlikely that you'd have the architect actually design the house, build it, furnish it, and decorate it. When it comes to a tourism website, you will need the "architect" - the tourism professional that will develop the site map and how the site flows. Then you'll need the "finish carpenter" - the graphic designer that makes the site beautiful, easy to read, and sets the ambiance and character of the site. In a home the finish carpenter adds the nice touches - wains coating, wood accents, tile and other elements that bring together the overall feel and ambiance of the home. Then you need the interior designer - the person who writes your headers and body copy. A well-written site is absolutely critical. Just like a novel or magazine article, the writing must pull you in and grab you. This part of the site also includes professional photography. Photos that make you want to go there. Photography really is worth a thousand words. A well constructed house isn't going to sell if it's full of garage-sale hand-me-downs. The other player is the "engineer" - the professional that creates the "backbone" of the site: the infrastructure. This includes optimization of the site, compatibility, scripts and forms, databases for visitor registrations and opt-in marketing, downloadable files, JavaScript and Flash components (motion elements), etc. (Please don't use Pop-ups!)

While most website design firms say they have all these disciplines in-house, check other industry-related sites they've developed. Are they good enough to make you want to go there or buy the product?

In many cases, you may have the writing experience, the photography (the furnishings, if you will), and only need other elements. But just because someone is a good graphic designer or knows how to write HTML and XML, doesn't mean you'll end up with an effective site.

One other thing: Always hire the absolute best, then negotiate the price - even if you have to phase it. You have one chance to make the sale. Let's say you're in big legal trouble and you needed a good lawyer. Your life and career depend on it. You know you only have one chance with the judge and jury. You really can't afford the best, but since this is so critical you're

going to find a way to make it work. Given this set of circumstances, would you hire the $50 an hour attorney, or the $250 an hour attorney?

The smart person would start with the very best and if you can't come to terms you move onto the second best - still very qualified and good. Your website is like making a movie: You have to have a good story (the experience), a good script (the dialogue that captivates you), a good cinematographer, good actors, and a strong supporting cast. Look at the development of your site in the same way. You're the executive producer.

HOW DO YOU STACK UP?
Make sure you stack up well against your competition. If you are looking to relocate or vacation in one of the old gold rush towns in California's Gold Country, chances are you'll start by doing some web research. Looking for recreation? Take a look at www.truckee.com. Then look at other towns in the region. Angel's Camp, Nevada City, San Andreas, Copperopolis. Where would you go?

What is it about your competition that might be more likely to attract visitors? How can you improve your site to make it more appealing?
We were assisting the beautiful historic community of Nevada City, California (located in the Nevada Sierra foothills, east of Sacramento) and asked several people to plan a trip into this area of California. They did not know which community we were assisting. True to form, they relied first on the internet to get some basic ideas before calling or looking at other resources. All six people, who worked totally independently on the project, reported that their choice was Truckee, a town located along the California/Nevada border. When asked why, the overwhelming response the the website. It was:

• Easy to navigate
• Included outstanding photography on the home page in a rotating slide show
• Good text that set the tone for a great experience.

Part II. Make your town stand out in the crowd – Marketing your website

PURCHASE YOUR WAY TO THE TOP
If bass fishing is the number one draw to your community, searching those words on Google (the most popular search engine), will yield 1,490,000 results. Since 70% of all web users don't look past the first page of search results, and 82% don't look beyond the first two pages, your site isn't going to be an effective marketing tool if it's listed on page 994.

Now you know why Google and Yahoo!, both with free search services, now "sell" keyword listings. You bid for the keywords, with the highest bidder taking top honors on the first page of results, under "sponsor matches." Keyword bidding is referred to as "pay per click" – a powerful and cost effective way to market whatever you're selling.

Google's keyword program can be found at www.adwords.com. Yahoo!'s program, which also covers Alta Vista, AOL, and other search engines, can be found at www.overture.com. Google and Yahoo! command more than 60% of all search requests.

From either Google or Yahoo!, type in the words "tourism branding," including the quotation marks, and you'll see a listing for Destination Development, Inc. If you click on that link, it'll take you to the Destination Development website. The company will pay a one-time charge for that click, costing DDI about 15¢. That's a lot cheaper than the cost of a brochure, a stamp, and an envelope, plus the potential customer gets immediate information – something we expect in the Internet age. Depending on your keywords the cost may range from 10¢ to more than $1 per click, so choose your keywords wisely. Fortunately, you can easily monitor which keywords are most effective or not used at all. You can make changes anytime, and you control the cost by setting limits. You even get to write the "teaser text" under your listing, whereas in normal search engines, text from the first page is simply displayed – not always the text that will pull customers to your site.
If you're looking for tourism consulting, you won't have much problem finding Destination Development. But then comes the second dilemma: if you go to the site, is it good enough to close the sale? If not, then the pay-per-click program will be largely wasted.

TAP INTO WEBSITE TOOLS
While purchasing key words is important, over time you hope to have your site listed at no charge AND on the first page of results. One of the best tools around for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is NetMechanic's Search Engine Power Pack. For $99 a year, this is a major bargain. It can assist you in

optimizing your site by analyzing each page for problems, compatibility, and will let you know how to properly emphasize keywords using Power Pack resources such as the Keyword Popularity Tool. (www.netmechanic.com)

LEVERAGE THE VALUE OF META TAGS
Meta-tags are a special section of HTML language in your website that some (but not all) search engines use to find appropriate website when consumers enter key words and phrases. Some search engines will use these meta-tags to index web content and give this more weight than the actual content of the page. More often than not, search engines use a combination of techniques, including meta-tags to identify websites it is looking for. However, its best to use all the tools that are available to get your website noticed, and the use of meta-tags is an important one.

There are two main meta-tags recognized by search engines: "description" and "keywords". These tags need to be placed in the "head" section of your HTML document. If you don't understand HTML your web designer will. Several engines look for agreement between the "description", "keyword", "title" and body text. So, try to use the same keywords in each field.

If you open up a website in Internet Explorer, for instance, you can go to a page, then from the menu go to View>Source. You'll see the HTML that was used to build the page, including meta-tags.

Wisconsin Dells, the Waterpark Capital of the World, has done a good job with the use of meta-tags.

When you develop, or redevelop your site, it can take up to six months for search engines to find and list your keywords, or meta-tags. Smart communities will use both meta-tags and pay-per-click programs.
Once your site appears on the first page of search results as a result of your good use of keywords, then you can drop the pay-per-click listing of those particular search words.

When searching for "fall color" and Massachusetts, the state's tourism website is at the top of the list. No need to purchase these words when you get top billing in the standard listings. By the way, when you click on the link, you are taken immediately to the pages that provide excellent information about the spectacular fall color tours in the state.

CREATE LINK EXCHANGES
Link exchanges can boost your listing positions on major search engines, and create marketing partnerships. Throughout your site you should provide links to other sites - but don't rely on those sites to close the sale. That's for you to do. The other sites will just provide additional information about the experiences you're selling. Make sure you "exchange" links: "If you link to me, I'll link to you." Reciprocal links are a terrific way to increase the visibility of your site at little, if any, cost. Some search engines will boost your standing in the search pages based on the number of other website that link to your website.

NOTE: Make sure you check the links on your site once a month. There's nothing more aggravating than clicking on old and/or broken links. Visitors don't have much patience for this inattention to detail.

CONVENIENCE IS THE TOP PRIORITY
Almost every recommendation made in this book revolves around two things: convenience, and selling experiences, not cities and towns. If the home page or splash page doesn't load within the first eight seconds, a third of your potential customers will move on. Once they find your site, it better be easy to navigate, provide specific information, (not just generalities), and getting information - now - will be critical. This is the age of immediate gratification.

Because of the push for instant gratification, it has opened the door for the most important and cost effective marketing program: e-marketing. This is NOT promoting spam, but offering visitors a chance to sign up for a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter (permission marketing), where they can request certain types of information.

The San Diego, California Convention & Visitors Bureau, has done just that.

There is no better way to create "Top of Mind Awareness" or TOMA than through "permission marketing" through periodic newsletters or notes fitting a specific category, such as "special deals" or "special events."

If you use this method, make sure you make it easy for subscribers to opt out at any time. Also keep it short and simple, providing direct links if the reader wants more information.

The island of Bonaire, in the Caribbean, does a great job of this. Every two weeks, the Bonaire Tourism Board sends out its "Quick 'n Easy Tourism Updates." Quick and easy are the operative words.

Never use more than two paragraphs, then add links so a viewer can get more information. By getting the quick and easy update every month or so, the reader is always reminded that you exist. So when it comes time for a getaway, who's the first destination to come to mind? Hopefully yours.

Every destination marketing organization should have a person dedicated to this effort.

Part III. INVEST WISELY – The Importance of Your Town Online

Too many communities think nothing of spending $20,000 or more on a brochure, while they spend $5,000 on a website. 94% of all potential visitors (especially those with money to spend) will use the internet, while less than 5% will call or stop by a visitor information center. So how should you spend your money? Spending $20,000 for a website good enough to close the sale is a very good investment. Spending another $10,000 a year to keep it fresh, updated, and changing (to bring customers back), is well worth the cost.

E-marketing programs are one of the most effective sales tools in the U.S. They create "top of mind awareness," bringing visitors back to your website – and your community – time and again. Ask for e-mail addresses only if you are diligent about creating new and relevant information and distributing it on a regular basis (for example, seasonally).

A WORD ABOUT POLITICS

Don't make the mistake of building your website for you, or the city council, or anyone else's vanity. The only purpose of your website is to meet the needs of your potential customers. Don't do anything that gets in the way of the sale, like making visitors sit through an animated presentation when they are trying to get to another page. Make sure your website works on a variety of operating systems (Windows, Mac OS, Linex.). Make the home page representative of what your unique feature is. The viewer should be able to tell what your website is about in less than 5 seconds. And as important as the mechanics are to the web designer, the bottom line is, "Does the website increase visitor traffic to your destination?" Evaluate this regularly, and consider changing your site if it is not producing.

And as for Navin Johnson, our enthusiastic "somebody", American Time News Magazine, in an interview, turned its probing eye on Navin Johnson who went on to fame and fortune after inventing Opti-grab eye-glasses. The little glasses handle sold ten million units in a few short months. "Mr. Johnson," Times News noted, "you've become a millionaire overnight. Who are you?"

Unfortunately, the internet hadn't been invented in 1979. Otherwise, no one would have needed to ask who Navin Johnson was.

A SAMPLE SITE MAP

The following is a sample site-map or "contents" for an effective community-oriented website. Just remember to always promote activities - things to see and do. Successful tourism is always experiential. This site map is simply a sample, but may give you a starting point if you're hoping to redevelop your site into a powerful marketing machine. Rule #1: Make it easy to navigate, just like walking into a home, starting at the front door.

SPLASH PAGE
    Welcome text
    Flash slide show (four or five photos)
    Skip intro button
HOME
    Link to site search page
    Link to contacts (site map)
    Link to contact info page
    Primary buttons to categories below & next pages (in BOLD CAPS)
VISITING (intro text)
    Primary Attractions (intro)
        Historical
        Cultural
        Urban
        Entertainment
        Environmental
        Recreational
        Activity vendors
    Day Trips & Other Attractions (intro)

Within an hour's drive
Local diversions (secondary activities)
Quaint escapes
Events (intro)
Major events (visitor-oriented events - not local events)
Events by month
Quick Facts (intro)
Legends & claim to fame
Elevation & geography
Population, demographics
Did you know...
Photo Gallery (intro)
Send a postcard
Photos by attractions category w/descriptions
Photographer credits/links
Getting Here - Maps & Directions (intro)
National
Region (multi-state)
State map
Region/area map
Distances chart (miles, k/m)
Weather & Seasons (intro)
Typical weather patterns
Current weather & forecast (link from weather site)
Best activities by season
Visitor Services - Lodging, Dining & Shopping (intro)
Lodging (sort by location, type, price)
Dining (sort by type, style, location - featured restaurants)
Shopping (sort by type, location - featured retailers)
Services (sort by location, type of service)
Transportation (intro)
Driving conditions
Travel by RV
Travel by boat
Airports & services
Tours (individual & groups)
Rentals, other
Group Information (Intro)
Venues: outdoor
Venues: indoor
Reunions and personal gatherings
Conferences, meetings & trade shows

Tours, group services
Sporting events, venues
Trip Planner (Intro)
Suggested itineraries
Resources
Travel Links (Intro)
State tourism info
Local chamber offices
AAA, travel clubs
Services
LIVING (Intro)
Community info
Community links, events
Real estate
Doing business
HISTORY (Intro)
Pioneer/Native Americans
Modern times
Historical attractions (link to attractions)
Historical resources
SPECIAL DEALS (Intro)
Packages
Seasonal discounts
DOWNLOADS (Intro)
Activities Guide
Meeting Planners Guide
Video clips
RESOURCES (Intro)
Press room
Press releases (sort by topic)
Backgrounder
Events
Photo library (thumbnail with contact info)
Press contacts, resources
Press downloads
Articles about the area
State government offices, links

SITE FOOTER
Copyright info
About the site link (browsers, webmaster info)

Implementation Timeline	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
#1 Organization of EDC	X									
#2 Contract fo plan implementation	X									
#3 ED Roles defined	X									
#4 Wayfinding system committee	X									
#5 Contract for Census	X									
#6 FEMA No-rise Analysis	X	X								
#7 Recruit targeted industries	X	X	X	X						
#8 Recruit business mix downtown	X	X	X	X						
#9 Planning Dept funding	X		X							
#10 Main Street program	X	X	X	X	X					
#11 Business Improvement District	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#12 Downtown Gateways			X							
#13 Falls Ave Plaza development		X	X	X	X	X	X			
#14 Power & utility lines underground			X							
#15 Additional downtown parking		X	X							
#16 Mid-block crosswalks			X							
#17 City Hall new locations			X	X						
#18 Open riverfront for public access	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#19 Streetscape/beautification		X	X	X	X	X	X	x	X	X
#20 Public art program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#21 Planning Dept building	X	X								
#22 Downtown façade improvements	X	X	X							
#23 Recruit destination retail	X	X	X							
#24 Retail incubator downtown		X	X	X	X	X				
#25 Public market & events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#26 Signage & display standards		X								
#27 Sell city-owned lot w/strings	X									
#28 Investigate wireless zone	X	X								
#29 NW Railway Museum assist	X	X								
#30 Pedestrian trail system		X	X							
#31 SR202 & Snoq Pkwy openspace	X									
#32 Research trolley or transit			X	X						
#33 Public areas/Parks Dept	X									
#34 Recruit mod-income housing		X	X							
#35 Snoqualmie brand identity	X									
#36 Branding style guide	X									
#37 Name downtown/identity				X						
#38 Name Ridge Marketplace	X									

Implementation Timeline	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
#39 Valley-wide wayfinding plan	X	X								
#40 Implement wayfinding system		X	X	X						
#41 Identify icon, lure, diversions	X									
#42 Pole banner program		X								
#43 Visitor Info Kiosks			X							
#44 Activities Guide			X		X		X		X	
#45 Community Profile	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#46 Opportunities marketing	X									
#47 Website	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

PROJECTS	ORGANIZATION				FUNDING SOURCE							
	CITY	EDC	CHAMBER	OTHERS	LODGING TAXES	GENERAL FUNDS	GRANTS	FUND RAISING	BID	SHARED	TBD	N/A
#1 Organization of EDC	X											X
#2 Contract for Plan Implementation	X	X				110,000						
#3 ED roles defined		X										X
#4 Wayfinding System Committee	X			X								X
#5 Contract for 2005/2006 Census	X					30,000						
#6 Arrange for FEMA No-Rise Analysis	X										100,000	
#7 Recruit industries to commercial areas		X		X		included						
#8 Recruited business to downtown retail		X		X		included						
#9 Planning Dept. Funding	X											X
#10 Main Street Program	X	X		X		95,000		X	X		X	
#11 Business Improvement District	X					40,000	X					
#12 Develop new gateways into downtown	X						155,000	X	X		X	
#13 Falls Avenue into pedestrian plaza	X			X		X	1,300,000	X			X	
#14 Power & utility lines underground	X			X		360,000	X		X			
#15 Additional parking on Railroad Ave	X										X	
#16 Develop mid-block crosswalks	X										X	
#17 Move City Hall to new downtown location	X										X	
#18 Open riverfront for public access	X					X	X	X			X	
#19 Streetscape/beautification	X			X					X		X	
#20 Public art program	X			X							X	
#21 Lease or sell Planning Dept building	X	X										X
#22 Grant program for downtown façade imp	X			X		X	X	X	X		X	
#23 Recruit retail mix to downtown		X		X								X
#24 Retail incubator downtown		X		X			X				X	
#25 Contract for public market & events	X			X								X
#26 Contract for signage, display standards	X			X					5,000			
#27 Sell city-owned lot with strings	X	X										X
#28 Investigate wireless internet zone		X									X	
#29 NW Railway Museum improvements	X			X	X		X	X			X	
#30 Develop pedestrian trail system	X						3,000,000				X	
#31 Intersection SR202 & Snoq Pkway open	X			X								X
#32 Research trolley service	X						40,000					
#33 Public areas maintained by Parks Dept.	X					X						X
#34 Recruit moderate income housing	X	X										X
#35 Use new Snoqualmie brand identity	X											X
#36 Develop branding style guide	X				12,500							
#37 Provide downtown with name/identity	X				5,000							

PROJECTS	ORGANIZATION				FUNDING SOURCE							
	CITY	EDC	CHAMBER	OTHERS	LODGING TAXES	GENERAL FUNDS	GRANTS	FUND RAISING	BID	SHARED	TBD	N/A
#38 Name Ridge Marketplace	X				2,500					X		
#39 Develop valley-side wayfinding plan	X			X						140,000		
#40 Implement wayfinding system	X			X		X	X			300,000	X	
#41 Identify branding icon, lure, diversions	X	X	X	X								X
#42 Design and istall pole banners	X										X	
#43 Design & install visitor info kiosks	X			X	40,000							
#44 Develop valley-wide Activities Guide			X		40,000					X		
#45 Annual Community Profile	X					14,500						
#46 Opportunities marketing piece	X					4,500						
#47 Internet website for tourism & ED	X	X	X								X	
TOTALS					100,000	654,000	4,495,000	0	5,000	440,000	100,000	0

Cash Needs Projection	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
DESCRIPTION										
#1 Organization of EDC										
#2 Contract for plan implementation	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000						
#3 ED Roles defined										
#4 Wayfinding system committee										
#5 Contract for Census	30,000									
#6 FEMA No-rise Analysis		100,000								
#7 Recruit targeted industries										
#8 Recruit business mix downtown										
#9 Planning Dept funding										
#10 Main Street program	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000						
#11 Business Improvement District	40,000									
#12 Downtown Gateways				155,000						
#13 Falls Ave Plaza development		433,333	433,333	433,333						
#14 Power & utility lines underground			360,000							
#15 Additional downtown parking		TBD	TBD							
#16 Mid-block crosswalks			TBD							
#17 City Hall new locations										
#18 Open riverfront for public access		40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000			
#19 Streetscape/beautification		TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
#20 Public art program	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
#21 Planning Dept building										
#22 Downtown façade improvements	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000						
#23 Recruit destination retail										
#24 Retail incubator downtown		25,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000				
#25 Public market & events										
#26 Signage & display standards		5,000								
#27 Sell city-owned lot w/strings										
#28 Investigate wireless zone										
#29 NW Railway Museum assist	TBD	TBD								
#30 Pedestrian trail system		1,500,000	1,500,000							
#31 SR202 & Snoq Pkwy openspace										
#32 Research trolley or transit			20,000	20,000						
#33 Public areas/Parks Dept										
#34 Recruit mod-income housing										
#35 Snoqualmie brand identity										
#36 Branding style guide	12,500									
#37 Name downtown/identity				5,000						

Cash Needs Projection	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
#38 Name Ridge Marketplace	2,500									
#39 Valley-wide wayfinding plan	70,000	70,000								
#40 Implement wayfinding system		100,000	100,000	100,000						
#41 Identify icon, lure, diversions										
#42 Pole banner program		TBD								
#43 Visitor Info Kiosks			43,500							
#44 Activities Guide			40,000		40,000		40,000		40,000	
#45 Community Profile	14,500	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
#46 Opportunities marketing	4,500									
#47 Website	40,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Totals	429,000	2,499,333	2,927,833	834,333	101,000	61,000	91,000	11,000	51,000	11,000
INCREASED REVENUES/SOURCE										
Grants			2,288,333	453,333						
Business Improvement District		15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Fund Raising			50,000	50,000	50,000					
Increased Visitor Retail Sales Tax	6,300	38,400	109,100	533,300	703,000	750,000	775,000	785,000	800,000	800,000
Increased B & O Tax	30,000	62,000	304,000	313,000	450,600	240,000	155,000	231,000	326,000	400,000
Increased Property Tax	34,300	68,690	103,000	171,700	240,400	309,100	377,800	480,800	583,800	686,900
Increased Resident Retail Sales Tx	190,000	488,564	689,196	863,591	1,036,243	1,140,793	1,228,615	1,319,950	1,414,938	1,513,726
Cooperative Shared Funds	52,000	127,500	75,000	75,000						
Lodging Taxes			83,500		40,000		40,000		40,000	
Subtotal	312,600	800,154	3,727,129	2,484,924	2,545,243	2,464,893	2,601,415	2,841,750	3,189,738	3,425,626
Addl Funding from General Funds	116,400	1,699,179								
Surplus			799,296	1,650,591	2,444,243	2,403,893	2,510,415	2,830,750	3,138,738	3,414,626

TBD Amounts need to be added when determined

Public art program is self-funding from specific taxes set up for that purpose.

Additional funding from Lodging Taxes will be used to offset the NW Railway Museum assistance, in addition to fund-raising and grants.

We firmly believe that lodging tax dollars should be "invested" and not handed out as grants. That means for every recipient, the city should look for a return on that investment. The only way to grow the fund is to increase overnight stays in the community. This means that the more you can do for Salish Lodge, the more the fund will grow.

But until Snoqualmie has more product to offer, this investment should at least help increase retail sales in the community.

Major initiatives should include the redevelopment of the Chamber of Commerce website. While this plan is being developed for the City of Snoqualmie, we believe that the city needs to be part of a marketing effort that sells the Snoqualmie Valley, including Carnation, Snoqualmie, Fall City and North Bend.

The more you have to offer collectively, the further people will come, the longer they will stay and the more they will spend.

Here's the catch:
For Snoqualmie, the following businesses MUST be promoted, and if these folks are not chamber members, they need to be featured on the website. If not, then Snoqualmie should create it's own visitor website providing ample links to the chambers site for other activities and attractions.

Specific businesses which need to be featured (including photos and write-ups of each). A page should be dedicated to each "featured" business.

• Mignone Home Interiors
• The Front Porch Restaurant
• La Fogatta Mexican Restaurant
• Gianfranco Restaurant
• Snoqualmie Brewery & Taproom
• Carmichael's True Value Hardware (an old fashioned hardware store)
• Mount Si Golf Course
• Chainsaw Carvers Depot, Kenny's Northwest Experience
• The Candy Factory
• Salish Lodge
• The Ridge Marketplace (noting the number of restaurants, coffee shops, etc.) In this case they don't need to be individually marketed, although the district needs to be sold as another destination for dining.

Stating that "downtown Snoqualmie is home to unique restaurants and shops" will not make downtown a destination. This type of statement means nothing at all because every community can say this.

You MUST promote specific businesses that have raised or set the bar for the community. Snoqualmie is home to three excellent restaurants - each worthy of a special trip from the major metro areas.

This effort MUST be geared to convince visitors coming to the falls or to North Bend to spend a little time in Snoqualmie discovering the Brewery, restaurants and the Railway Museum.

You want to drive as many people to downtown Snoqualmie as you can, and even to the Ridge Marketplace district. These funds must be used to increase retail sales in Snoqualmie, while partnering with your neighboring communities.

As other businesses "raise the bar," you should add them to the website. Don't let politics get in the way by trying to be all things to all people. If visitors have lunch at La Fogatta, then the retail shops next door have a terrific opportunity of grabbing those visitors. This is the "Mall Mentality." Radio Shack and Hallmark don't need to advertise when they are located inside a mall, because they get business from people there for the anchor tenants (like Nordstrom). The same principal applies for downtowns.

The lodging tax dollars should be spent, in 2006 on the following projects:
• Creating a branding style guide $12,500
• Creating a downtown name & icon $ 5,000
• Design & install visitor info kiosks $40,000 (partner with North Bend)
• Create a valley-wide Activities Guide $10,000 (Snoqualmie portion)
• Redevelopment of the website $10,000 (Snoqualmie portion)
• Snoqualmie events* $ 5,000
• NW Railway Museum** $12,500
• Chamber marketing efforts $10,000

* For marketing of the events OUTSIDE the valley.
** For marketing and public relations efforts. Additional funds could be made available for interpretive signage and product development projects, provided the museum begins removing the dilapidated cars along Hwy. 202 (an exchange - you help us, we'll help you).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

25 STEPS TO RECRUITMENT
Recruiting Business and Investment to Your Community

PART I. BUILDING THE FOUNDATION
Introduction and Philosophy

First things first

- Help local businesses be all that they can be before you try to get more.
- Can your recruiting efforts help existing businesses become stronger or larger?
- Are the support industries all they can be?
- There is nothing wrong with competition. Don't let politics or fear of competition stand in the way of a successful program.

Step 1. Understand the "investor"
- Focus all recruitment efforts on answering the investor's of developer's primary question: "What's in it for me?"
- Businesses will invest in your community only if there is a return on their investment.
- With nearly 30,000 cities in the U.S. wanting some form of economic development, answer these questions honestly:
    - "Why your community?"
    - "What sets you apart from other communities?"
    - "Can a business make more money in your community than in others?"
    - "If not, why should a business invest in your community?"
- Keeping those questions in mind, look at these motivating factors:
- Quality of life: schools, parks, neighborhoods, curb appeal, medical services, amenities, activities.
- Cost of doing business: land costs and lease rates, site availability, taxes, labor costs.
    - Transportation.
    - Incentives.
    - Quality labor pool
    - Housing.
    - Cost of living.
- People: Attitudes of community leaders, city/county staff, business leaders, residents.

Step 2. Take Another Look at Your Community
- Take an objective look at your community, as if you were the potential investor:
    - Would you spend money to move your company into your community?
    - How do you stack up to competing communities?
    - Why would you choose your community?
    - What are your community's strong points?

Step 3. Your Community's Brand
- What sets your community apart from everyone else?
- Do you have a primary lure that attracts visitors?
- Promote your greatest asset, your greatest strength.
- Do you have one or more specific niches that your community appeals to?
- Your recruitment projects should fit your community's brand and niches.
- Developing niche markets and brand identity will aid your economic development efforts, attracting more investment.

Step 4. Show and Tell
- Developers and investors will judge your community by their first impressions.
- Put together a 30 to 45 minute driving tour – focus on community and quality of life. This is where the decision will be made.
- Never tell a potential developer "Take a look and get back to me." You need to take them, guiding them through your town.
- 80% of the decision will be based on the community's:
    - Look – does your community look attractive and inviting?
    - Feel – how about community assets and amenities?
    - Story – is your story a good one? Compelling?

Step 5. Sales Ability
- Enthusiasm is like a ripple on the water – it spreads.
- Make sure you are:
    - Well spoken
    - Well written
    - Well groomed
    - Excellent listener
    - Enthusiastic
    - Persistent
    - Resource savvy

• If you can get the prospect excited, you have a much better chance of success.

Step 6. Marketing
• Are your marketing materials presenting your community as a second-class citizen? The image presented by your materials is important.
• Review your community's marketing materials, local advertising efforts.
• Look at the community logo and the local signage.
• Review your community development/planning materials.
• Advertising will do little to attract development, but it does promote quality of life.

Step 7. Your Team and Their Attitude
• The most successful recruitment efforts begin with the words, "What can we do to help?"
• Are local officials and staff on the same team, using the same game plan?
• Who's around you and how do they contribute to the effort?
• Include active professionals in varying fields on your team.
• Are local businesses on board?
• What are the attitudes of staff in building and planning departments?
• What are the regulations and fees – are they workable, or expensive and restrictive?
• Is the community supportive of growth?
• Developers don't want to do battle.
• How long will it take to "make something happen?"

Step 8. The Money
• Keep the money local; develop local partnerships.
• Look into local businesses for providing:
    - Professional services.
    - Trades (architectural, engineering, construction, etc.)
    - Banks and financial institutions.
• Sell local financial institutions on the projects.

Step 9. Your Invitation
• Just say NO to development RFP's.
• Invite, and make them welcome.
• Who wants to come to a party where no one is invited?

Step 10. Your Tools
• Provide the investor with all he needs to make a decision.
• Community profile.
• "Opportunities" marketing piece.
• Sales pieces for specific projects.
• Community marketing materials.

PART II. CREATING A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT
Tools and Methods

Step 11. Develop the organization.
• The key person should be a super salesman – not an office manager, grant writer, administrator, or fund raiser.
• Let the key person do his job – which is to sell. Let volunteers and staff handle the administration and fund raising.
• Public outreach should be the responsibility of the Board of Directors.

Step 12. Get the money.
• Memberships can be important, but should not be the focus. If possible, eliminate memberships so you can narrow your focus.
• Grants are important, but should not be the focus.
• Big checks: Yes! Remember – what's in it for them? Hit 'em with the numbers.

Step 13. Develop the recruitment list.
• Get to the bottom line: What are you really looking for?
• Be sure your list focuses on your brand and niche markets.
• Ask for community input.
• Develop the Ten Most Wanted list:
• Specify the industry.
• Include details, such as employees, square footages, infrastructure needs.
• Weigh the pros and cons of each.

Step 14. Create the marketing materials.
• Work with local tourism organizations on quality marketing materials.
• Create an Economic Profile or Opportunities brochure, to provide facts, figures, and details necessary for your investor or developer.
• Create a Community Profile.
• These materials make it easy for a prospect to see the whole picture and

make a decision, plus they help in determining feasibility.

Step 15. Create the database.
• Contact industry associations and publications.
• Get a list of "members" or contacts.
• Industry vendors make great referrals.
• Develop the sales database with contact names: press, vendors, businesses.
• Subscribe to local business and commerce journals for additional leads.

Step 16. Publicize the effort.
• Create a press release with key selling points.
• Create a "fact sheet" – a bulleted list of key points, to go along with the press release.
    - Submit them to business journals, business and trade publications.
    - Contact business editor about your story.
    - Save the press clippings.
    - Get contact names and follow up with a phone call.
    - Send drawings or photographs, if available.
• Publicize each deal you land. Developers are attracted to winners, so let the world know of your successes. And remember, nobody likes to be first.

Step 17. Advertising.
• Ads must be seen five times before the reader remembers it, so frequency is important.
• Promote the community – not your organization.
• Keep your ad simple; include contact information.
• Advertise in specific trade publications and business newspapers.

Step 18. Trade Shows.
• Target your specific industries, and go to their trade shows.
• If possible, rent a booth.
• Network with everyone you meet there; it can open many doors.

Step 19. Sales Calls.
• Search for names and contacts in regional business journals.
• Call them, ask if you can send them information.

Step 20. Websites.
• Include community and economic development information on your community's website.

• Promote the community – not your organization.
• Provide the information in easy-to-download, printable PDF format.
• Include maps.
• Include a form so they can easily request more information.
• Include your contact information on every page.

Step 21. Send sales letters to key contacts.
• Always send to an individual by name – never just to the company.
• Get to the point – the first sentence is critical – what's in it for them?
• Bullets are better than narrative.
• No more than two pages.
• Include your sales literature, but no books or studies. Too much stuff gets put aside.

Step 22. Follow up is critical.
• Don't wait for them to call you; call or e-mail them.
• Once you've made the call, you develop a relationship. It prompts them to look at what you sent.
• If they are not interested, ask for a referral.

Step 23. Send out "Updates."
• Create a monthly newsletter – not for memberships or fund-raising, but a sales tool with news about your town and its economic development progress.
• Send it out to your contacts. This will create Top of Mind Awareness.

Step 24. Hand-holding.
• The job isn't done until the project is open for business.

Step 25. Don't give up!
• You'll meet opposition, naysayers, and negativity in your recruitment efforts – from your own community to your prospective investors. It's part of the territory.
• Marketing and advertising can be helpful, but personal contacts are the key to your success.
• Remember all the great attributes your community has that would benefit an investor – it's really a great place! After all, you live there!

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR RECRUITMENT EFFORTS!

Snoqualmie Comprehensive Plan

Background of Snoqualmie Community
• North of I-90, 30 miles east of Seattle, in foothills of Cascade Mountains, Snoqualmie is adjacent to the southern bank of the Snoqualmie River.

• Economy originally included logging and milling operations. Dairy farming was significant up to the early 1950s. Hydropower from Snoqualmie Falls began in 1898. Tourism in the area has been popular since 1889, when the railroad was constructed, bringing tourists from Seattle. Construction of U.S. Route 10, now I-90, made it easy for Snoqualmie residents to commute to work, and as land prices have increased dramatically throughout King County, people have moved further east in search of more affordable housing, resulting in a housing boom in Snoqualmie with the construction of Snoqualmie Ridge.

Vision Statement
We, the citizens of Snoqualmie, envision a City that respects and preserves its historical and cultural resources and provides an effective stewardship of its outstanding scenic and natural features; a City that maintains its historic small town identity while encouraging a balanced, cohesive yet diverse community as it grows; a City that continues to thrive in its location within the floodplain while taking every action possible to alleviate the impacts of flooding; a community where residents' various physical, educational, economic and social activities can be pursued in a safe, attractive and healthy environment; and finally, a City that has an adequate tax base to provide a high level of service to its residents.

Community Character and Design
Goal: To preserve, protect and enhance Snoqualmie's community character and assure future growth and development is integrated into the City in a manner sensitive to that character through design and the protection of character defining resources.

Character of Snoqualmie includes the beauty of its natural, rural setting – the trees and vegetation, natural features, rivers, wetlands, etc., plus its small town atmosphere.
Important policies:
• Conservation, historic preservation
• Integrate new development with existing community – pedestrian

orientation, physical and social linkages
• Encourage open spaces
• Protect visual access to natural features
• Promote planting of trees, reforestation; promote natural elements
• Mitigate for loss of trees due to development
• Encourage social, cultural, recreational opportunities, and education about the community

Mountains to Sound Greenway – take an active role in protecting the I-90 corridor, assuring that it will remain a multi-purpose green corridor with unique small towns, rural lands, and natural treasures.

Scenic beauty of Snoqualmie Valley is greatest factor in the city's unique character and sense of place. The Falls, Snoqualmie River, Kimball Creek, Mount Si, Rattlesnake Ridge, Cascade mountain foothills all contribute to the area's attraction. Views must be protected and enhanced.

One objective of the comprehensive plan is to promote preservation and protection of historic and cultural resources. In 1992, the city established an overlay zone for historic districts in the city along Railroad Avenue and the Meadowbrook area.

The restored Queen Anne-style railroad depot dates from 1890, and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. A Commercial Landmark District and Historic Design Guidelines have been developed.

Important policies:
• Identify and evaluate aspects of historical and cultural heritage; regulate to protect them.
• Support downtown Snoqualmie historic district. Urban design, streetscape and park improvements should support the historic theme.
• Support efforts of local heritage organizations.
• Consider local heritage when naming city streets and facilities.
• Balance heritage preservation and economic development.

The Comprehensive Plan contains an inventory of Snoqualmie area historic sites.

Economic Development and Community Character
Objective: To encourage economic development that supports Snoqualmie's natural, cultural, historic, and social environment and contributes to the long-term sustainability of the city and region.

• Retain and develop small businesses, particularly small retail businesses in downtown historic district
• Encourage local entrepreneurship and businesses such as:
  • value added wood products
  • community supported agriculture
  • community services
  • home based businesses
  • specialty retail
  • arts
  • telecommuting and computer services
  • tourism
  • consultants
  • human resource development
• Improve aesthetic environment of business and commercial areas to promote economic development through regulations of commercial signage and lighting
• Encourage local hiring

Enhance and maintain gateways at prominent entry points
• From the north on SR 202 – Salish Lodge pedestrian bridge over SR 202
• From the west on Snoqualmie Parkway: the Welcome to Snoqualmie sign just inside city limits – maintain sign and install public art
• From the west on Snoqualmie Parkway and from the south on SR 202 – the intersection of the Parkway and SR 202 – install gateway landscaping, public art, signage
• From the west on Meadowbrook Way and from the south on SR 202 – the intersection of SR 202 and Meadowbrook Way – install gateway signage and landscaping with directional signage
• From the south on 38th – the bridge over Kimball Creek – install welcome sign and landscaping, bridge improvements
• From the east on Meadowbrook Way – the Meadowbrook Bridge over the Snoqualmie River – install welcome sign on bridge, include landscaping or art

••Enhance Downtown Snoqualmie's unique character and heritage while

increasing its viability as a tourist and commercial center of activity• •

• Extend Centennial Trail into and through Downtown
• Increase parking capacity and improve pedestrian crossings on Railroad Avenue
• Reconfigure Falls Ave between King and River Streets to increase parking
• Encourage retail and commercial development on Falls Avenue
• Continue building street frontage along Railroad Avenue
• Add pedestrian amenities such as street trees, benches, landscaping and pedestrian scale lighting to sidewalks and other pedestrian areas
• Design crosswalks with bulb-outs, street striping, and pedestrian activated crossing lights
• Construct a walkway on west side of Railroad Ave
• Enforce pedestrian right-of-way at crosswalks
• Enhance Sandy Cove Park so that it is more visible from King Street and Falls Ave

Neighborhood districts are described in detail.

Recommended public infrastructure and facilities:
• Street layout and circulation – classic grid layout with alleys to encourage small town atmosphere and walkable environment, with side walks and pathways.
• New subdivisions should connect to existing street ends.
• Streets should have through access.
• Public alley ways
• Network of pedestrian and bicycle linkages between commercial and residential area
• Improve pedestrian environment along Railroad Avenue and River Street
• Improve pedestrian environment along Park Street and East Meadowbrook Way

Recommended roadway design:
• Use traffic calming methods such as bulb-outs, circles, and pavement variation
• Design new public bridges to accommodate pedestrian travel.
• Design new bridges with architectural features , such as artwork, patterns, etc.
• Construct minimum roadway width feasible to reduce impervious surfaces, with lower speed limits.

Recommended streetscape design:
- Provide sidewalks, street trees, and street lighting
- Provide planter strips with street trees between streets and sidewalks on residential streets
- Utilities should be placed underground

Street Furniture
- Provide benches along Railroad Avenue within Historic District, and along key pedestrian streets
- Coordination location, style and color of trash receptacles, bicycle racks, benches, light standards, newspaper boxes

Street Trees
- Develop and maintain street tree program

Public Art
- Encourage placement of commissioned art and seasonal displays through out the city to enhance Snoqualmie's culture and character

Municipal and institutional buildings
- Buildings should be prominent, attractive, and set a precedent for quality design in Snoqualmie, consistent with city's historic and natural characteristics

Signs
- Ensure that public and private signs contribute to Snoqualmie's small town atmosphere, pedestrian scale, and historic and scenic qualities
- Minimize streetscape clutter
- Develop an attractive, coordinated public directional signage program. Direct people to historic areas, scenic drives and resources, parking areas, business districts
- Install interpretive signs at historic or noteworthy sites
- Commercial signs should fit the architecture and site design of the building, the nature of the business.
- Signs in Historic District should be regulated more strictly.

Lighting
- Minimize glare, night sky light pollution, energy waste
- Use downward directed, shielded lighting fixtures that control light output
- Discourage illumination of landscaped areas

- Limit use of street lighting on local access streets to pedestrian scaled light fixtures
- Use downward directed fixtures

New Construction
- Ensure housing diversity through wide variety of architectural forms and sizes
- Orient homes to the street to strengthen pedestrian orientation, neighborhood character and identity
- Additional new construction guidelines to promote pedestrian, small town, look and feel

Commercial Retail Sites and Buildings
- Orient to the street, be pedestrian friendly, visually interesting
- Reinforce historic scale and character of small town Snoqualmie
- Parking be located to side or rear of building, unless not feasible
- Landscape buffer between parking and pedestrian areas
- Share parking and circulation
- Main entrances on front or main façade on primary street
- Recess pedestrian entrances along sidewalk
- Scale, siting, architecture, and massing are addressed in the plan

Floodway overlay commercial buildings
- The overlay zone allows for alternative uses to new residential construction within the FEMA floodway of the Snoqualmie, since no new residential construction is permitted within that zone.
- Ensure that new business and commercial development constructed in the Floodway Overlay Zone is compatible with residential character of surrounding residential neighborhood, by incorporating residential detailing and relate in size, scale, setback to the residential homes.

Office Park and Light Industrial Development
- Ensure that office park and light industrial development compliments and contributes to the character of Snoqualmie

Land Use
Long range guide to the physical development of Snoqualmie and its urban growth area to encourage a pattern of land use and development which protects environmental quality, conserves natural resources

Community Planning and Design
- Encourage mix between residences and work sites
- Locate shopping and neighborhood services within walking distance of homes
- Encourage new housing and jobs be developed in close proximity to each other and to transit stops, improve transit service to the city, so more residents will commute to work via transit rather than single-occupant vehicle
- Foster pedestrian oriented development

Policies:
- Encourage city to maintain center focus combining commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses
- Design new mixed-use communities
- Amend zoning code to cluster commercial districts to concentrate business and facilitate walking. Discourage auto-oriented sprawl.
- Allow neighborhood shops and services within walking distance of homes.
- Promote site design that includes pedestrian access, orientation, and transit use.
- Fully-connect streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths
- Provide open space in the form of squares, greens, and parks – encourage frequent use.
- Ensure well defined edges of the city with greenbelts, wildlife corridors, urban separators
- Respect integrity of topography, vegetation, landscape when locating roads, etc.
- Establish maximum impervious surface lot coverage standards
- Support natural drainage and infiltration systems in development

Land Use Designation Maps are included in the plan.
Sensitive areas overlay depicts areas constrained by steep slopes, wetlands, and the 100-year flood plan.

Floodplain Land Use
The historic city of Snoqualmie, together with some annexations, lies substantially within the 100-year floodplain of the Snoqualmie River. New residential construction is prohibited by state law within the FEMA 100-year floodway. Wetlands are also common in these areas. Current zoning of much of this area is residential zoning.

A Floodway Overlay District was created in 1995 to provide opportunity for commercial uses that are compatible in scale, character and impacts with the single-family residential uses in existence in these areas.

Objective: Direct higher intensity development to unconstrained land, reserving floodplain properties for lower intensity development. Ensure that land use with the Flood Hazard Areas complies with regulations while insuring that property owners within these areas have reasonable use of their properties.

Other objectives of land use include:
- Provide land to meet most of the business and commercial needs of residents, accommodate visitors, enhance local employment opportunities and provide a sufficient tax base for the city.
- Provide industrial land area sufficient to meet most of the employment needs of the city and surrounding area.
- Provide large tracts of property where mixtures of land uses can be developed in a comprehensively planned manner.
- Provide sufficient area for institutional land uses, public and private utility uses.

Parking Areas
Objective: To reduce commute trips and create a more pedestrian and bicycle oriented pattern of development by minimizing parking supply and encouraging more creative solutions to parking demands.

Urban Growth Area Acreage, including the city of Snoqualmie and the urban growth expansion area:

Total	5,574
Developed	1,860
Constrained	2,358
Developable	1,356

Developable land is broken down into Planning Area and Designation in the report.

Population
Projected population of Snoqualmie:
2001 – 4,137
2012 –

        Low – 11,789
        High – 13,307
2022 –
        Low – 13,892
        High – 15,859

Employment Growth Job Target
2002-2022 – job target of 1800 new jobs for Snoqualmie

Employment Capacity (based on developable acreage:
Existing jobs – 1,910
Total job capacity – 7,986
2022 projected jobs – 7,282

Economic Development
Objective: Support development of a diverse and sustainable economic base

Policies:
• Provide sufficient land in appropriate land use designations with the city to accommodate job growth over the next 20 years
• Support regional economic development strategy
• Consider an economic development element of the comprehensive plan
• Orient Snoqualmie's retail and commercial services to meet the needs of local residents, employees, and visitors
• Encourage businesses that meet the full range of daily consumer needs and interests, emphasizing small store profiles and pedestrian orientation
• Orient professional office and service uses to upper floor of retail store fronts or to peripheral locations away from the heart of each district
• Locate principal retail commercial areas for the city within designated locations along SR-202 in the historic city, and in designated retail areas
• Establish a public vehicular transportation system linking Snoqualmie Falls and historic Downtown Snoqualmie, together with other commercial districts longer term
• Encourage new development and rehabilitation to meet Main Street design objectives
• Revitalize and expand Snoqualmie's historic downtown
• Encourage additional diverse lodging and visitor support services
• Complete build-out of Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center Retail area
• Facilitate small-scale retail and service businesses to serve residents and employees of the Kimball Creek Village neighborhood

• Encourage revitalization of Meadowbrook commercial area
• Develop small commercial node at intersection of Meadowbrook Way and SR-202
• Consider creation of additional commercial districts and/or expansion of existing downtown historic district as needed

Housing
Existing Housing Stock: 2,224 housing units – 30% currently in historic Snoqualmie and 70% in Snoqualmie Ridge
 In historic Snoqualmie, housing is in good condition. Approximately 46% were built before 1939. 72% is single family detached, and 25% attached or multifamily, and 3% mobile homes. These single family homes tend to be small - most with 2 or fewer bedrooms.
Housing in Snoqualmie Ridge is in very good condition. 74% large single-family homes, and 26% attached multifamily apartments and townhomes.

Objective: Encourage and enable improvements and rehabilitative efforts to be made to existing housing to maintain a supply of affordable housing and to preserve character and integrity of older neighborhoods.

Job-housing balance needs to be met. Assure that people with incomes of a level available from local jobs can find housing they can afford.

Encourage a broad mix of live/work arrangements, where self-employed individuals may work from their residence in ground floor work/shop spaces.

Provide a mix of housing types, models and densities in planned residential and mixed use development.

Provide adequate housing for all incomes

Eliminate unnecessary regulations and provide incentives to reduce the cost of producing housing.

Open Space, Parks and Recreation
The city of Snoqualmie has planned for the supply of open space, parks and recreation facilities based on population and projected population, using a standard number of parks and facilities per thousand. Based on this evaluation, the city has adequate park acreage, but still has need for active sports fields and courts. They anticipate these needs to be filled with the develop-

ment of Snoqualmie Ridge II.

Action plan for future projects through 2010:
• Renovate Railroad Park – add public restroom, improve picnic area, add quality tables and benches, improve appearance of Kiosk area.
• Acquire vacant properties along Snoqualmie River for protection, park space.
• Develop urban forestry plan to assist in a street tree program
• Expand trail systems
• Acquire vacant properties across from Centennial Fields for Community Park and KC Trail parking and open space.
• Acquire additional unique available sites for parks, etc.
• Build Community/Recreation Center
• Create safe water access at mill ponds
• Develop an off-leash dog park
• Develop skateboarding facilities
• Acquire eastern corner of Meadowbrook Ave & SR 202 for gateway, signage, landscape
• Meet city's level of service standards for current and future city needs

Additional items on the Capital Improvement Program:
• Develop pedestrian/equestrian bridge across Snoqualmie River plus further trail construction
• Swimming pool development

Snoqualmie Retail Development Plan
May 2002

Unprecedented growth of Snoqualmie, led by residential development, is creating opportunities for expanding and diversifying its retail commercial base.

Intent of Plan is to guide future retail activity, ensuring a vibrant community with a strong tax base, a viable, attractive historic downtown, and complementary retail districts serving both residents and visitors.

Plan should show how much retail is viable, type and scale of retail business appropriate. Plan should present a realistic vision and goals for creating healthy retail environment, and provide strategies to accomplish those goals.

Retail Districts:
• Historic Downtown
• Snoqualmie Ridge
• Snoqualmie Falls
• Meadowbrook District
• Maskrod's Corner
• Kimball Creek Village

Market Context:
Profile of retail demand:
• Population increase
• Income growth
• Employment increase to 6,300 by UGA build-out
• Tourism potential
• Commercial building space inventory – total 183,000 sq ft
• Capture of majority (52%) of local consumer purchase potentials
• Demand potential for over 440,000 sq ft of net added commercial space
• 40% of local consumer purchases with retailers requiring less than 7,500 sq ft

Retail commercial building & land needs:
• Household demand – net added through build-out – 201,495 sq feet
• Visitor demand – net added (proposed lodging/conference development – 240,000
• Total net added demand – 441,495 sq ft through build-out

Matching commercial needs with space availability:
• City of Snoqualmie land inventories show just under 32 acres of vacant buildable land within business districts. Another 8 acres of residentially developed lots are on sites zoned for business. If 1/2 of that residential converted to business use, that would be a total of 36 acres of vacant and redevelopable land, which would accommodate over 513,000 sq ft of new commercial space – 16% more than projected demand from the retail market analysis.

Downtown Snoqualmie's Retail Potentials:
Downtown should maintain its traditional role as a central gathering place for community functions. Its use as a destination experience

should also be strengthened.

The types of specialty destination businesses that offer the greatest potential for the historic downtown appeal to both local residents and visitors, such as small upscale specialty markets, specialty home and garden, arts and crafts, books, kitchenware, lamp and lighting, bed and bath shops, specialty clothing, custom jewelry, luggage, sporting goods, toys, performing arts/interpretive center, art galleries, railroad memorabilia, dance studio, fitness club, hair salon. For upper floor spaces: photo studio, copy center, physical therapy, psychology, tax service, real estate, title insurance, local insurance agent.

Retail Vision & Goals
Working vision: Snoqualmie's retail businesses serve residents, employees and visitors – who shop, dine, recreate and socialize in the community's distinctive, vital and pedestrian-friendly retail village environments. The different retail areas meet most of the daily product and service needs of residents, attract visitors and provide a healthy and balanced tax base for the City – in a manner that promotes the community's unique local history, culture and landscape.

Commercial Development Goals
• Market Capture: Orient Snoqualmie's retail and commercial services to meet the needs of local residents and employees, interest of residents living between Fall City and North Bend, plus visitors.
• Preferred Uses: Encourage businesses that meet the full range of daily consumer needs and interests, with small store profiles and pedestrian orientation.
• Mixed Use: Orient professional office and service uses to the upper floor of retail storefronts, or to peripheral locations away from the heart of each district.
• Retail Nodes: Locate principal retail commercial areas for the city within designated nodes along SR 202 in the historic city, and in designated retail areas within approved mixed-use developments along Snoqualmie Park way, to avoid strip commercial development.
• Accessibility: Establish a public vehicular transportation system lining Snoqualmie Falls and historic Downtown Snoqualmie, together with other commercial districts longer term, as part of a network of pedestrian ways linking all areas.
• Design: Apply and refine city design standards encouraging new development and significant remodel/rehabilitation to meet Main Street

design objectives.

Commercial District Goals
• Downtown: Revitalize and expand Snoqualmie's historic Downtown, maintaining its traditional function as the historic community's continued central gathering place, strengthening its potential as a destination experience for visitors.
• Utilize Downtown's natural and cultural resource features.
• Increase public access to the River.
• Provide opportunities for increased cultural and recreational tourism.
• Preserve the historic built environment including Snoqualmie's rail- and mill-related history and status as an historic landmark district.
• Develop a pedestrian friendly retail area.
• Promote retail business development.
• Snoqualmie Falls: Encourage additional diverse lodging and visitor support services while protecting the Snoqualmie Falls viewshed and existing character.
• Focus on increasing length of visitor stay and tourism spending throughout the community.
• Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center: Complete build-out with small-scale neighborhood retail, service and professional business, to serve residents and employees.
• Kimball Creek Village: Facilitate small-scale limited retail and service/office businesses to serve primarily residents with some visitor-oriented services.
• Meadowbrook: Encourage revitalization of historic Meadowbrook commercial area.
• Maskrod's Corner: Develop small commercial node at the intersection of Meadowbrook Way and SR 202, while protecting visual character of this area as a gateway to the city.
• Future Commercial Districts: Consider as needed. Possible need with the proposed tribal casino project.

Action Plan
Land Use Framework for Retail Development
• Revise commercial district boundaries to support creation of distinct commercial nodes, rather than strip development along SR 202.
• Adjust commercially designated land supply city-wide to accommodate projected 20-year needs; first priority should be expanding Downtown commercial area.
• Provide appropriate zoning and use regulations to complement, protect

and promote the growth, vitality and desired differentiation of designated retail districts.
• Maintain a strong civic focus in Downtown district.

Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Changes:
• Retail Zoning District Refinement – revise the "B" district creating 2 mixed use zones:
  a) MU-pedestrian covering Downtown and Meadowbrook; and
  b) MU-SR-202 for remainder of SR-202 corridor.
• Consider revising chapter 17.10 land use and zone definitions to better define more innovative mixed use structures, pedestrian-oriented uses, housing products, land use characteristics.
• Design/performance overlay zones: Expand Downtown historic overlay zone to include blocks appropriate for MU-pedestrian development. Refine design standards/create additional design overlay zones.
• Consider using project-specific agreements.
• Redraw MU-pedestrian and MU-SR-202 corridor boundaries and definitions; amend zoning use allowances; create design overlay districts.
• Encourage development y Snoqualmie Tribe on casino property that is co ordinated with and complementary to city economic and retail development objectives.

Possibly a retail outlet or performance venue in the Downtown.
• Create/market prototype projects.

Public Improvement Principles for SR-202 Corridor Planning
• Develop a network of pedestrian and bike trails accessing major features.
• Plan public circulation and open space systems to be safe day or night.
• Improve pedestrian and roadway connections from Downtown to adjacent neighborhoods.
• Provide improvements that enhance the connection from the Snoqualmie Parkway/SR 202 intersection and Snoqualmie Falls to Downtown retail district.
• Provide signage and landscape improvements, establish specific design standards for new development to enhance gateway entrance image at Maskrod's corner and the SR 202/Parkway intersection.
• Slow auto and truck traffic through downtown by using curb extensions and other techniques.
• Address interests and needs of Northwest Railway Museum in SR-202 corridor.

• Promote tourism "Trolley" connections from the Falls to Downtown, and possibly to the Ridge.
• Provide pleasant pedestrian areas in all districts, particularly Downtown.
• Provide sufficient areas for customer parking.

Implementation:
• Initiate a Downtown Main Street Program; hire downtown revitalization manager.
• Adjust commercially designated land supply citywide to accommodate projected 20-year needs, with first priority on Downtown commercial area revitalization.
• Cooperate with local organizations such as the Snoqualmie Tribe to develop interpretation, cultural arts, events programs; possibly a Historical Museum.
• Develop a trail network through the different districts of the city.
• Construct and operate a visitor center with easy orientation to Downtown and visitor attractions. Include historic and Native American interpretation.
• Work with Northwest Railway Museum to improve presentation and visitorship.
• Implement a shuttle service linking Snoqualmie destinations and retail districts.
• Create a marketing strategy and campaign for Snoqualmie in cooperation with local/area tourism facility operators. Do NOT pursue a "theme" that would be inconsistent with the historic district.
• Target retail commercial improvement incentives for historic districts, such as façade improvement grants, King County grants or below market rate loans, artisan recruitment/start-up program, start-up of a farmer's market.
• Create historically themed signage standards.

Snoqualmie Retail Development Plan Appendices: Customer Survey & Stakeholder Interviews

Market Survey conducted in various locations in Snoqualmie; 104 surveys completed.

The survey showed that nearly half the people came downtown to shop. One-third were from the area. Only 16% were in downtown to work. The rest came for assorted other reasons: sightseeing, dining, visiting friends, taking the train, using other services.

23% shop downtown daily; 24% several times each week; 21% once a week or less; and the remainder less often than that. Shoppers visited the Snoqualmie Market most of all.

Features of downtown were ranked, with customer service given the highest ranking, followed by parking, then appearance of downtown, then traffic, then quality of merchandise, then store hours, then prices, and variety of stores last.

Features liked most about downtown were, first, the small town atmosphere, then the train/historic, then the convenience, followed by sightseeing/activities, then friendly people.

Least-like features included traffic volume, lack of variety in the stores and merchandise, then Snoqualmie's new development and increased population.

The most suggested addition for downtown is a restaurant. Next on the wish list were tourist-oriented shops, followed by clothing and variety stores, and family and youth activities, then grocery.

Shoppers considered the train depot/museum, railroad to be the most visible, top-of-mind landmark of downtown.

Stakeholder Interviews – 24 personal interviews:

Trends:
• Continued growth in population and employment base.
• Increased affluence of community (including a greater split in socoeconomic characteristics between long time residents and newcomers.)
• Activity has increased.
• Community participation is lower; businesses leaving, drop in revenues decreasing due to new bypass; lack of community vision; differing opinions. (Stagnation.)
• Increase in political activism by newer residents.
• Higher percentage of local residents commutes to work outside area.

Strengths:
• New residents are affluent and family-oriented.
• I-90 location.

• New development is high quality.
• High-wage technology firms attracted to Snoqualmie.
• Weyerhauser mill operations.
• Natural beauty of area.
• Historic downtown is identifiable, compact walkable, easy to get around.
• Train Depot attraction.
• Existing downtown businesses good for visitors.
• Service businesses attracted to old town buildings.
• Attractions: Snoqualmie Falls, Salish Lodge, Train Depot.
• Historical amenities draw visitors.
• Tourists coming for major attractions offer opportunity for increased economic benefit.

Weaknesses:
• Present population base inadequate to support large retail and services.
• No moderate rate hotel.
• Limited medical facilities.
• Economic development marketing is lacking.
• City services expensive.
• Perception that Snoqualmie is far away.
• Confusion over the city of Snoqualmie being located at Snoqualmie Pass.
• New Ridge residents, being commuters, do not affiliate locally as readily.
• Lack of signage from I-90 and Snoqualmie Parkway to downtown Snoqualmie.
• Downtown is on "wrong" side of visitors' travel route since completion of Parkway.
• Poor visual appearance of downtown entries.
• Downtown is not pedestrian friendly.
• Parking separated from stores by Hwy 202.
• Not enough attractions for visitor/tourist interest.
• Flood plan location restricts residential development and imposes flood-proofing measures on commercial development.
• Lack of interest by City in downtown – focus on needs of The Ridge at the expense of downtown/merchants/business.
• Lack of business owner and merchant organization limits improvements.
• Diversity of products/services is lacking.
• Limited appeal of downtown for Ridge residents.
• Collaboration of improvement/development efforts with other entities limited, including government – King County retards growth through rural area designations; city vs. train issues; and communication between Ridge

and downtown.

Opportunities:
• More visitor-oriented retail.
• More restaurants and a community center.
• Improve programs and activities for youth and residents.
• Partnerships with landmarks (train, Falls) to enhance visitors' experience.
• Reorient downtown towards river and increase recreational uses along river corridor including a trail.
• Need good marketing/promotions plan.
• Develop conference center and mid-price lodging.
• Attract clean industry to the Ridge, such as think tanks, software companies, new high tech.

Threats:
• Snoqualmie Ridge and Falls Crossing development could threaten downtown.
• Over-commercialization
• Loss of area's scenic, rural village character.
• Flooding and cost of compliance with flood plan regulations.
• Lack of community cohesion between established population and new residents.
• Doing nothing.
•Growing pains.

Desired improvements:
• Calming traffic and creating pedestrian environment.
• Enhance streetscape and landscaping along Railroad Avenue.
• Clean up entries to city.
• Improve signage from I-90 corridor and Snoqualmie Parkway to historic Snoqualmie.
• Clean up backs of buildings.
• Review ordinances and regulations so they don't prohibit successful business.
• Continue historic preservation and theme destination.
• Develop marketing plan and materials, advertising.
• Implement planned river trail to connect Snoqualmie Falls and downtown.
• Extend rail excursion across trestle to Snoqualmie Falls.
• Encourage improvements for train facilities.

Actions to Improve Business Opportunity:
• Formulate a vision for downtown's future that is realistic.
• Increase city interaction with business community interests.
• Maintain and enhance "old town" experience.
• Expand downtown business core long-term.
• Develop and execute a marketing plan.
• Provide signage.
• Avoid over-commercialization and/or strip development.

State Route 202 Corridor Improvement Study
February 10, 2004

SR 202 is both a state highway and the city of Snoqualmie's main commercial street, Railroad Avenue. It provides a link between regional areas including North Bend, Snoqualmie, Fall City, and Redmond, as well as local access to downtown, Snoqualmie Ridge, local schools, and Snoqualmie Falls.

The growth of Snoqualmie will see the volume of traffic increase substantially over the next ten years, necessitating modifications be made to SR 202 to handle the increased volume while also maintaining safety, improving local access, accommodate pedestrians and bicycles, as well as motor vehicles, improve way-finding, and better link the various areas.

The Study provides different options for accomplishing these goals, which include the possibility of adding roundabouts at key intersections, adding medians, refuge island, and curb extensions, prominent crosswalks, sidewalks, bikeways, and modifying the on-street parking. Traffic calming measures are promoted.

Sidewalks would be widened, trees and landscaping adding, driveways reduced, pedestrian lighting added, and utilities moved underground. Off-street parking, public restrooms, public spaces and connections, and building infill opportunities created.

The options for modifying and enhancing SR 202 would substantially improve the quality of downtown Snoqualmie, making it safer for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, while providing for the increased traffic that is projected.

Falls Avenue Concepts. Sandy Cove park concept.

VIEW
AREA

ENTERTAINMENT
DOME

STAGE

AMPHITHEATER

VIEWING
AREA

PROPOSED
BUILDING

KIOSK

AREA

PARKING

PARKING

GATEWAY

KIOSK

KIOSK

FALLS

Falls Avenue concept. This is the Brewery area of Falls Avenue.

PROPOSED
BUILDING

FALLS AVENUE

FALLS AVENUE

KIOSK

Falls Avenue concept. This shows the grocery store area along Railroad Avenue with landscape improvements.

GATEWAY

KIOSK

PATIO

SED
NG

SR 202

RAILROA

Falls Avenue concept. This view shows the eastern end of Falls Avenue.

TRAIL

FALLS AVENUE

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

KIOSK

FALLS AVENUE

KIOSK

PARKING

GATEWAY

SR 202

RAILROAD AVENUE

GATEWAY

Falls Avenue concept. This concept shows the possible use of roundabouts to create a dramatic entry. Notice the physical gateway into the district.

Hardware store

KIOSK

KIOSK

PARKING

GATEWAY

Planning Dept.

Falls Avenue concept. Western end concept showing the location of a new building on the vacant city-owned parcel.

Conceptual Master Plan
The Rail District
at Snoqualmie, Washington

SnoqualmieDowntownVisionPlan

CALLISON

Snoqualmie Downtown

Snoqualmie Downtown Vision Plan

Project Number 205088.01
November 21, 2005

Past

Present

Future

CALLISON

Objective: Maintain a balance of resident and tourist oriented retail shops, services and amenities.

Implementation Policies/Measures:
- As recommended by the 2005 Economic Development, Branding and Marketing Plan (#17), keep City Hall downtown. Develop a new City Hall/Administration building on the old fire station and library site.
- Focus retail shops, restaurants, and galleries on Railroad Ave., Falls Ave., River St. and King St., within the Downtown Landmark Commercial District.
- Encourage retail businesses the serve both residents and tourists to support year-round shopping and activity in the downtown.
- Encourage senior-friendly housing in/near the downtown.
- Develop upper story housing, offices and artist studios over retail where possible.
- Allow small boutique hotel and bed and breakfast accommodations within the down town.
- Locate non-retail commercial services in mixed-use buildings on Maple Ave. between King and River streets, and within the Business Office district in the Historic Snoqualmie Planning Area.

Snoqualmie Downtown

Snoqualmie Downtown Vision Plan

Project Number 205088.01
November 21, 2005

Downtown Vision Plan

CALLISON

Park Ave. SE

Falls Ave. SE

Railroad Ave SE (SR 202)

SE Newton St.

Snoqualmie River

Falls Ave. SE

SE River St.

Maple Ave. SE

Sandy Cove Park

NW Railway Museum

Doone Ave. SE

SE King St.

Maple Ave. SE

Doone Ln SE

Railroad Ave SE (SR 202)

Railroad Park

Olmstead Ave. SE

SE River St.

SE Newton St.

SE Fir St.

Maple Ave. SE

Silva Ave. SE

SE King St.

Residential area

Legend:
- Existing Parallel Parkings
- Proposed Parallel Parkings
- Existing Angled Parkings
- Proposed Angled Parkings
- Existing Off-street Parking
- Proposed Off-street Parking
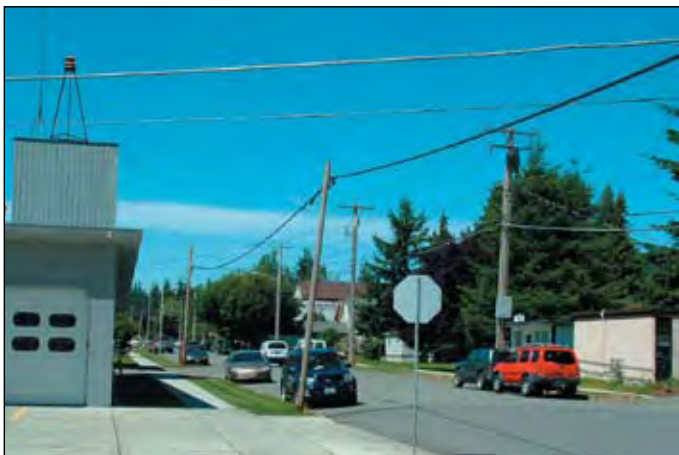
Total Estimated Parking
1,150 Stalls

Snoqualmie Downtown

Snoqualmie Downtown Vision Plan

Project Number 205088.01

Proposed Downtown Parking Area

Before

CALLISON

1. Commercial Buildings Oriented to Maple Ave.
2. Ground Floor Commerical
3. Second Story Residential or Office
4. Angle Parking One Side
5. Coordinated Streetscape Improvements
   - street trees/hanging baskets/banners
   - pedestrian scaled lighting
   - wider sidewalks

After

Snoqualmie Downtown

Snoqualmie Downtown Vision Plan

Project Number 205088.01
November 21, 2005

Perspectives 4 (Maple Ave. SE & SE River St.)

Project # 1957165 - Prepared For: Destination Development
Center Of Town
Snoqualmie, WA

Pop Facts: Demographic Quick Facts	Center Of Town 0.00 - 25.00 mi		Center Of Town 0.00 - 50.00 mi		Center Of Town 0.00 - 100.00 mi	
Population						
2009 Projection	1,683,410		3,615,511		4,786,218	
2004 Estimate	1,622,520		3,437,674		4,547,895	
2000 Census	1,570,696		3,289,182		4,349,036	
1990 Census	1,342,614		2,759,065		3,618,390	
Growth 1990 - 2000	16.99%		19.21%		20.19%	
Households						
2009 Projection	680,675		1,418,656		1,871,653	
2004 Estimate	656,229		1,348,361		1,776,885	
2000 Census	635,543		1,289,802		1,698,048	
1990 Census	542,309		1,076,509		1,405,739	
Growth 1990 - 2000	17.19%		19.81%		20.79%	
2004 Estimated Population by Single Race Classification	1,622,520		3,437,674		4,547,895	
White Alone	1,194,439	73.62%	2,639,499	76.78%	3,587,969	78.89%
Black or African American Alone	90,275	5.56%	172,013	5.00%	184,984	4.07%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	14,987	0.92%	40,595	1.18%	64,668	1.42%
Asian Alone	191,645	11.81%	308,845	8.98%	333,104	7.32%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	9,163	0.56%	20,337	0.59%	23,479	0.52%
Some Other Race Alone	50,433	3.11%	92,112	2.68%	156,469	3.44%
Two or More Races	71,578	4.41%	164,273	4.78%	197,222	4.34%
2004 Estimated Population Hispanic or Latino	1,622,520		3,437,674		4,547,895	
Hispanic or Latino	109,035	6.72%	215,987	6.28%	330,898	7.28%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,513,485	93.28%	3,221,687	93.72%	4,216,997	92.72%
2004 Tenure of Occupied Housing Units	656,229		1,348,361		1,776,885	
Owner Occupied	392,596	59.83%	840,781	62.36%	1,130,563	63.63%
Renter Occupied	263,633	40.17%	507,580	37.64%	646,322	36.37%
2004 Average Household Size	2.41		2.49		2.50	

Project # 1957165 - Prepared For: Destination Development
Center Of Town
Snoqualmie, WA

Pop Facts: Demographic Quick Facts	Center Of Town 0.00 - 25.00 mi		Center Of Town 0.00 - 50.00 mi		Center Of Town 0.00 - 100.00 mi	
2004 Estimated Households by Household Income	656,229		1,348,361		1,776,885	
Less than $15,000	69,595	10.61%	140,546	10.42%	203,368	11.45%
$15,000 to $24,999	55,725	8.49%	120,181	8.91%	171,840	9.67%
$25,000 to $34,999	68,466	10.43%	149,802	11.11%	206,895	11.64%
$35,000 to $49,999	93,705	14.28%	205,473	15.24%	276,636	15.57%
$50,000 to $74,999	131,236	20.00%	284,915	21.13%	373,298	21.01%
$75,000 to $99,999	93,120	14.19%	192,359	14.27%	240,623	13.54%
$100,000 to $149,999	82,178	12.52%	157,513	11.68%	190,191	10.70%
$150,000 to $249,999	42,862	6.53%	69,357	5.14%	81,141	4.57%
$250,000 to $499,999	12,782	1.95%	19,310	1.43%	22,845	1.29%
$500,000 or more	6,560	1.00%	8,905	0.66%	10,048	0.57%
2004 Estimated Average Household Income	$ 76,808		$ 70,790		$ 67,257	
2004 Estimated Median Household Income	$ 57,739		$ 55,105		$ 51,989	
2004 Estimated Per Capita Income	$ 31,440		$ 28,161		$ 26,640	

*In contrast to Claritas Demographic Estimates, "smoothed" data items are Census 2000 tables made consistent with current year estimated and 5 year projected base counts.

Lodging Tax Fund – Income of $50,000 to $60,000 per year. Reserve of approximately $90,000. Annual income will increase upon completion of Salish Lodge expansion project.

Real Estate Excise Tax – Tax on real estate sales. To be used for capital projects defined as: public works projects including street construction, acquisition, repair, improvement; roads; highways; sidewalks; street and road lighting; traffic signals; bridges; domestic water systems; storm and sanitary sewer systems; parks; recreational facilities; law enforcement facilities; fire protection facilities; trails; libraries; administrative and/or judicial facilities.

Grant Resources for Parks, Trails and Recreation:
National Park Service
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
Provides expertise and experience to help conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.

Office of the Interagency Committee:
• Land and Water Conservation Fund: Provides funding to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources, including parks, trails, wildlife lands, other lands and facilities. Administered by the US Dept of the Interior through the National Park Service and the IAC.
• National Recreational Trails Program: To rehabilitate and maintain recreational trails and facilities. Administered by the US Dept of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration and IAC.
• Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program: For acquisition and development of local and state parks, water access sites, trails, critical wildlife habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife habitat, through IAC.
• Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account: For purchase, improvement or protection of aquatic lands for public purposes, and providing access to those lands; through IAC.

Grant Resources for Economic Development or Historic Preservation:
The National Development Council
• A national non-profit community and economic development organization. Purpose is to increase flow of capital for investment, jobs, and community development.
• Provides technical assistance for community development strategies and project financing and direct developer services.

• NDC employs 501(c)(3) and 63-20 bond financing, New Markets Tax Credits, Historic Preservation Tax Credits to assist in financing alternatives.

Community Development Block Grant Programs
• State Administered CDBG for development activities
• Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program
• Community Development Block Grants are used in a variety of ways throughout the country. Some examples:
- Beaumont, Texas has used CDBG funds as seed money for a revolving loan fund providing low-interest loans to minorities, women and economically disadvantaged citizens who want to start or expand a business. More than 56 businesses have received loans totaling more than $1.3 million dollars.
- Dayton Beach, Florida, has used $315,000 in CDBG funds to create a small business incubator and for business development. The incubator provides low-cost office space and low overhead costs to small businesses to get on their feet and transition into their own office space.
- Davenport, Louisiana used $900,000 in CDBG funds for two projects dealing with redevelopment of vacant/abandoned buildings and blight abatement. The city leveraged approximately $11 million in additional funds.
- Onondaga County, New York – several small cities used CDBG funds to create the "Commercial Rehabilitation Program", to preserve small, central business districts. The CDBG program provided $143,000 towards commercial rehabilitation with the business owners providing $183,000 in matching funds.
- Shoreline, Washington used CDBG funds to rehabilitate 21 homes.

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
Certified Local Government Program: Helps local governments preserve Washington's historic and cultural resources. Provides financial and technical assistance, established by the National Historic Preservation Act.

Housing and Urban Development
• Office of Community Planning & Development
• Office of Economic Development

Washington State Department of Transportation
• Infrastructure Funding Sources
• STP Regional: provides flexible funding for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the NHS, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

U.S. Department of Commerce
• Economic Development Administration
• Public Works Program – Investment Program

Tax Increment Financing
• Tool to promote economic development: City captures the increase in net tax capacity resulting from new development within a designated geographic area called a TIF District. The TIF authority uses the tax increments, which are the property taxes paid on the captured increase in net tax capacity, to pay for TIF-eligible costs of the new development that generated the increase in net tax capacity. The funds pay for the infrastructure needs of the new development.

Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board
• Low-cost financing for public facilities improvements that are required for private development. Job creation and/or retention of jobs are the goals for CERB's investment in public infrastructure. Loans and occasional grants are available to cities to offset infrastructure costs such as access roads, sewer and water extensions, and other public improvements to make specific sites attractive for private sector development.

Business Finance Unit
The Community Development Finance Program is available to help business owners and entrepreneurs obtain financing for start-up and expansion projects. This could be a good resource to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs, particularly for the retail incubator program.

Cascadia Revolving Fund
Cascadia is a Pacific Northwest nonprofit community development financial institution serving Washington and Oregon. They provide loans and technical assistance to small businesses and non-profit organizations. This could also be a good resource to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs, particularly for the retail incubator program.

National Endowment for the Arts
• The Arts Endowment assists public and private local arts agencies and other organizations that work specifically with local arts agencies in the coordination of cultural leadership.
• Access to Artistic Excellence Grants: To encourage and support artistic excellence, preserve our cultural heritage, and provide access to the arts for all Americans. An organization may request a grant amount from $5,000 to $150,000.

Washington State Arts Commission
• Project Support Program: Small arts organizations and community service groups may apply for matching grants for specific arts events targeted to a general public audience.
• Organizational Support Program: Arts organizations with a previous year cash income of at least $79,000 may apply for operating funds in OSP.

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