



PLANNING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

May 8, 2024

5:00 PM

Sedro-Woolley Municipal Building

Council Chambers

325 Metcalf Street

- a. Call to Order**
- b. Roll Call**
- c. Unfinished Business**
 - 1. Draft Economic Development Action Plan
- d. New Business**
- e. Adjournment**

Next Meeting(s) Planning and Business Development Committee - August 28, 2024

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**Planning and Business Development Committee
Agenda Item**

Agenda Item No.: c.1.

Date: May 8, 2024

From: Charlie Bush, City Administrator

Subject: Draft Economic Development Action Plan

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends making any final edits and forwarding this to the City Council for adoption so that we can begin building items listed in it into the 2025-2026 budget and the Comprehensive Plan Update.

ISSUE:

Review of the draft Economic Development Action Plan and Potential Passage on to the full Council.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY INFORMATION:

This item has been under committee review and development for almost a year. It was resorted to move up items that could be acted upon more quickly from the last iteration. Also, a few dates and items were slightly adjusted from the last conversation.

FISCAL IMPACT, IF APPROPRIATE:

N/A for the plan, individual items will have fiscal impacts that are to be determined.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Sedro-Woolley Economic Development Action Plan Version 6.0

Sedro-Woolley Economic Development Action Plan (Draft)

Version 6, May 8, 2024

Items in green are potential ARPA investments

Items in blue are underway

Priority #1: Provide business-friendly permitting

- By the end of 2025, evaluate fees
- By the end of 2025, establish permitting benchmarks for commercial permits and track progress
- Invest in Planning & Building staffing through the 2025-26 budget process to better support business permitting
- By the end of 2026, invest in Lean/Six Sigma process improvement processes to increase permitting system efficiency
- By the end of 2026, improve the City's Code to allow for more efficient and simplified permit processes, including more up-front design review

Priority #1: Support housing development to provide a larger local workforce and to further support local retail

- Evaluate the housing types needed to have the largest benefit on the Sedro-Woolley economy through the 2023-25 Comprehensive Plan Update
- By the end of 2026, implement strategies and incentives to support the housing types desired

Priority #2: Focus on public Downtown Improvements

- Parklets – consider code changes by the end of 2024
- Community Development Grant Program – completed by the end of 2024
 - Painting
 - Support updates to key buildings (ex. Woolley Market)
- Potential New/Refurbished Public Infrastructure – complete by the end of 2028
 - Sidewalks
 - AED signs
 - Murals
 - Planters
 - More trash cans downtown (on Metcalf) with better designs
 - Alleys
 - Lighting
 - Street lights recently painted
 - Extend the system on Metcalf
 - Address Parking – consider parking regulations, supply
- Festival/Event Improvements – complete by the end of 2027
 - Wiring for festivals
 - Lights for festivals – consider lights hanging across Metcalf
 - Develop a Downtown concert venue
- Partner with BNSF on public use of their right of way (ex. mobile art walk) – by the end of 2025

Priority #2: Improve the State Route 20 and State Route 9 Corridors

- Improve the appearance of roundabouts – by the end of 2026
- Improve directional signage – by the end of 2026
- Develop an archway to cover the railroad trestle and point tourists to Downtown – by the end of 2026
- Improve the appearance of fencing
- Partner with the new owners of Skagit Industrial Park, Sedron Industries, to leverage Sedron’s investment in the park to accent and benefit Downtown Sedro-Woolley and the State Route 20/9 corridor – by the end of 2025
 - Improve the State Route 20/9 appearance of the park
 - Explore improved connectivity of the park to the rest of the City
 - Evaluate Downtown improvements that may compliment the park and elements of the park that may be able to compliment Downtown and the State Route 20/9 corridor
- Work to get Ferry Street properties improved on the entry to Downtown from Highway 9, perhaps some funds could be used for environmental studies, as needed, in this area – by the end of 2028, a corridor plan for the streetscape might be an option

Priority #2: Improve the Cleanliness and Visual Appearance of Commercial Areas, including Downtown

- Invest in additional Public Works staff or partnerships to enhance the cleanliness of commercial areas in Sedro-Woolley – by the end of 2026

Priority #2: Engage in creative placemaking – support the creation of experiences and places that are unique for visitors to and residents of Sedro-Woolley

- Support public art with the support of the Arts Commission – by the end of 2025
- Develop small parks – ex. the lot by Tricky Busiu could be used for a park and parking if received from BNSF – by the end of 2026
- Evaluate streetscapes and landscaping – by the end of 2027
- Invest in trails and parks and connect them – by the end of 2028
- Create a more dog-friendly city - evaluate dog park expansion and the development of additional dog parks – by the end of 2028
- Possible food truck pads at our parks (especially Olmsted and Memorial) – by the end of 2028
- Capitalize on small-town Americana strengths by supporting and promoting experiences and services that people want
- Focus on making Sedro-Woolley more fun and interesting

Priority #2: Do further work with economic development partners to provide additional help and technical assistance for online commerce and other technical business support services

- Offer resources and referrals to partners from within the Planning & Building Department – by the end of 2025
- Partner with the Chamber to promote shopping local and to celebrate local businesses, especially manufacturing and retail – by the end of 2026
- Partner with organizations like RAIN Catalysts, the Small Business Development Center, the Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship, and the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County

(EDASC) to provide services for Sedro-Woolley businesses. Consider providing space to one or several from which to deliver services more locally here. – by the end of 2026

Priority #2: Support infill commercial and housing development

- Evaluate options/opportunities and identify barriers during the 2023-2025 Comprehensive Plan update
 - Focus on site readiness and removing obstacles

Priority #2: Continue to partner regionally to benefit the regional economy, which will benefit the Sedro-Woolley Economy

- Use the 2023-25 Comprehensive Plan Update to become clearer on what industry clusters the City wants to recruit and grow to help diversify its economy
- Leverage collective strengths in Skagit Valley – possible focus on food. Leverage valley value-added agriculture as the theme – by the end of 2026

Priority #2: Continue to Partner with the Port of Skagit and Skagit County on the Continued Redevelopment of the SWIFT Center

- Support business incubator space at the SWIFT Center, particularly the NWIRC proposal – ongoing
- Develop Olmsted Park – by the end of 2026 with first phases in 2024
- Destination music in the park in the shorter term could be a benefit to the community – by the end of 2024
- Support the theme of community wellness, recreation, tourism, and hospitality at the SWIFT Center - ongoing
- Help support the \$45 million needed to renovate SWIFT Center buildings - ongoing
- Develop meeting space - ongoing

Priority #2: Support Enhanced Tourism

- Develop a parks and trails map – by the end of 2024
- Develop marketing videos – by the end of 2026
- Tap into the City's history by working more formally with the Sedro-Woolley Museum and other history-focused organizations – ongoing, develop additional partnerships by the end of 2026
- Promote and develop sports tournaments and events through partnerships – by the end of 2026
- Cultivate and sustain a more open and welcoming atmosphere - ongoing
- Leverage lodging tax funding to fuel more tourism – ongoing
- Become the Basecamp of the North Cascades, leveraging outdoor recreation - ongoing
 - Partner with the North Cascades Institute, North Cascades National Park, the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, local wilderness guides, and other recreation-based organizations and businesses
- Work with hotel operators to consider developing in Sedro-Woolley – by the end of 2028
 - Evaluate vacation policies related to vacation rentals if hotel development does not materialize
- Evaluate cycling infrastructure and services, recruit a bike shop and other key services – by the end of 2028

Priority #2: Citywide Public Infrastructure Development

- Repair sidewalks - ongoing
- Continue to fund and build projects to support growth. Review impact fees and project funding to make sure there is financial support for the planned projects. - ongoing
- Plant beautiful trees that don't heave sidewalks - ongoing

Priority #3: Workforce Development – all items are ongoing

- Encourage Sedro-Woolley School District and EDASC to develop a Sedro-Woolley Workforce Development Action Team
- Evaluate opportunities for youth to get into apprenticeships, build partnerships with schools
- Work with the Port to evaluate possible education uses of SWIFT Center
- Help Sedro-Woolley School District connect students with businesses
- Work with Job Corps and Skagit Valley College
- Engage CTE programs (career technical education)
- Have more of a trades-focus locally