



**City of University Place
University Place/Fircrest Division of the
Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce
Economic Development Strategic Action Plan**

Phase II Work Plan and Process

EXHIBIT A

Introduction and Purpose

Phase II of the City of University Place's Economic Development Strategic Action Plan project follows and builds on the work accomplished in Phase I – planning for and facilitating the City's Economic Development Summit, held May 17, 2001. Approximately 70 people attended the Summit and participated actively in identifying the City's special character, strengths and proposed priorities for the future. In addition to the design and conduct of the Summit, several foundational tasks were accomplished in Phase I:

- Stakeholder interviews to identify key issues, opportunities and challenges for the City;
- Summary of existing City plans and recent economic development studies conducted for the City; and
- Preparation of a Summary Report documenting the Summit's proceedings, including a summary of key comments, perspectives and areas of agreement regarding the priorities for the City's future.

In Phase II of the project, the City and its economic development partners will move forward with analytical tasks and a community-based process for developing recommended economic development priorities, goals and implementing strategies. An important component of Phase II will be the formation and facilitation of a broadly representative Advisory Task Force, to serve as a sounding board and to provide guidance in the development of new policies and strategies.

Strategic Action Plan Objectives and Products

In conducting this project, the City will be guided by three key objectives:

1. Implement the City's Comprehensive Plan and Town Center Plan – better and faster.
2. Expand business opportunities in the community and increase the community's economic choices and options.
3. Reinvest additional revenues generated by economic growth in the community.

Three products or outcomes are expected from this effort:

- Development of a **Strategic Action Plan**, to guide City policy development, implementation and investments;

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- Formation of a **broadly representative Advisory Task Force** to guide the analytic effort and development of the Action Plan; and
- A **communication initiative** to guide future positioning, promotion and marketing efforts for the City and business community.

Sponsorship and Participation

Successful economic development planning requires partnerships -- among City and regional agencies, and among City and business interests. Recognizing that the interests of all of these organizations are integrally linked and critical to the development of an effective strategy, the City seeks to obtain sponsorship and involvement from its natural partners. These include:

- The Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce; and
- The University Place business community, the Pierce County Economic Development Department and the Tacoma-Pierce County Economic Development Board.

An important early project scoping and planning task will be discussion and agreement among the participants regarding the work scope, and division of responsibilities for accomplishing the analytic tasks.

Advisory Task Force Process

The project Advisory Task Force will include representatives from University Place business and property owners, Chamber representatives, neighborhood residents, and other important representatives of the community. The Task Force is expected to reflect the diverse perspectives and interests in the community, and a significant objective of the project is to work with the Task Force to obtain consensus on the optimal and appropriate actions and strategies for the City's economic future.

The Advisory Task Force will meet monthly to review work in progress and to discuss key issues as they emerge. The Task Force's meetings will be carefully planned and facilitated -- including development of meeting agendas and packets, and meeting summaries. The materials can be placed on the City's website to share its work-in-progress with the whole community.

Economic Development Strategic Action Plan Tasks

1. Environmental Scan and Community Profile Development

- A. Develop a community profile of University Place and surrounding jurisdictions.
 - Collect and review relevant, existing economic development materials from the Tacoma-Pierce County Economic Development Board (EDB), the Pierce County Economic Development Division, the Chamber of Commerce and other appropriate local and regional economic development agencies.

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- Review relevant Census data on the community, including information on: housing stock and housing trends; densities; education; health care; and other demographic and socio-economic data.
 - Review and assess regional and local economic trends and forecasts.
 - Review and assess University Place's comparative position with respect to neighboring jurisdictions on issues such as land inventory; zoning requirements; regulatory requirements; relocation opportunities and incentives; and taxing levels.
- B. Conduct community focus groups, to obtain additional perspectives on options and opportunities for University Place.
- C. Review and analyze the Main Street Model, "Smart Growth" principles and strategies and other relevant models (including other County jurisdictions), to determine lessons learned and applicability to University Place. In particular, research Main Street models of revitalized jurisdictions with "strip" type retail development and traffic patterns. Identify areas where the model may be applicable to University Place and where it may need to be adapted.
- D. Review appropriate State economic development financing statutes (e.g. tax increment financing authority) to determine the City's abilities or constraints.
- E. Identify the key strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats for University Place, and implications of these for a proposed strategic economic development plan.

2. Business, Revenue and Market Analysis

Working in close coordination and collaboration with the business community, the following tasks will be conducted. Draft findings and analysis will be presented to the Chamber and business community for review and discussion.

- A. Review data and inventory of existing businesses in the City for content and adequacy. Inventory data on developed square footage, leasable space, comparative lease rates and vacancy rate trends will be reviewed.
- B. Update the existing Sales Gap Leakage Analysis to determine sales tax revenues foregone in the community.
- C. Design and administer a community survey or focus group to determine what goods and services residents say would be useful in the City's retail areas.
- D. Conduct a retail market analysis to assess the status of the City's existing retail districts, and the factors which explain recent successes and failures in the community.

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Determine what types of businesses can be expected to succeed in the community, based on the regional economy, existing businesses in surrounding jurisdictions, local demographics, zoning, available land and other factors.

3. Develop Preliminary Action Plan Goals and Implementing Strategies

A. Working with City staff, the Advisory Task Force and based on the results of the Summit and analytic tasks #1 and #2, develop preliminary goals and a set of strategies to implement them. The goals should build on the priorities and values identified by participants at the City's recent Economic Development Summit. The strategies should specifically address the following issues:

- Opportunities to expand and diversify the City's employment base;
- Opportunities to capitalize on the City's strengths and opportunities, address its challenges and minimize its weaknesses;
- Targeted strategies for the City's four key business districts:
 - Town Center
 - 27th Street Business District
 - Narrows Plaza
 - Orchard area
- Opportunities and strategies for home-based businesses, including technology requirements;
- Options to attract technology businesses to the City;
- Marketing and promotion strategies to increase economic growth and development of the City's businesses;
- Incentives and opportunities for business investment in the community;
- The future of Chambers Creek properties as an employment center and destination, including associated support needs from other districts and surrounding areas;
- Infill and redevelopment issues and opportunities;
- Opportunities and barriers posed by existing regulations (City, County and State), and identification of changes in approaches and requirements needed to facilitate the City's objectives and policies;
- Implications and implementation issues associated with the City's housing and mixed-use development plans; and

- Recommended short and longer-term strategies to encourage economic development.

4. Appropriate Roles and Responsibilities for the City and its Economic Development Partners

- A. Define and recommend appropriate roles and responsibilities for the City, Chamber and other entities. Prepare a summary graphic identifying key roles and responsibilities for the participating entities, and make recommendations as appropriate regarding:
- Assumption of new responsibilities for each entity
 - Potential new relationships or partnership models

5. Review the City's Vision Statement in the Context of Economic Development Action Plan Recommendations

- A. Revisit the City's Vision Statement in light of the economic development goals and strategies proposed, and make recommendations for updating and refining it as appropriate.

Schedule

Phase II is anticipated to take nine months, following formation of the project Advisory Task Force, and agreement on the scope of work and assignment of responsibilities among the City, its participating partners and the consulting team. A proposed schedule is as follows:

July-December 2001

City agreement on proposed scope of work, process, schedule and budget
Partnering agencies (Chamber, others) to agree on their role in the project, its work scope, process, schedule, budget and funding.
Design and formation of Advisory Task Force
Initiate project and hold first Advisory Task Force meeting

February-October 2002

Monthly Advisory Task Force meetings
Bi-monthly City Council briefings
Completion of draft report and recommendations
Public review and comment on draft
City Council adoption of Strategic Action Plan and Policies