

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

February 19th, 2014

Pickering Conference Room
City Hall Northwest

1775 – 12th Avenue NW
Issaquah, WA 98027

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Karl Leigh, Chair
John Traeger
Richard Gabel
Kristi Tripple
Bill Ramos
Matt Bott
Mariah Bettise
Linda Lybert

STAFF PRESENT

Keith Niven, Economic Development Director
Andrea Lehner, Economic Development Manager

OTHERS PRESENT

Karen Donavan
Joe Forkner
Connie Marsh

CALL TO ORDER

LEIGH called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

MEETING MINUTES

LEIGH presented the meeting minutes from the January 15th meeting, LEIGH proposed on the second page to change the language to “looking to us”. TRIPPLE motioned, RAMOS seconded. Carried unanimously.

DRAFT MARKETING MATERIALS

Keith Niven handed out to the commissioners the Draft Interim Marketing Materials. He explained the purpose of these materials and asked the Commission if we are setting the right image. LEIGH commented that the pictures on the Issaquah by the Numbers page and the Community page were very similar and added that using more commercial office buildings rather than retail would be good. LEIGH also suggested that we advertise our proximity to Microsoft, Google, Amazon; for our potential to gain a High Tech company.

TRIPPLE added that highlighting Issaquah as a high rating location to retire and great medical assets should be addressed. FINKELSTEIN suggested adding proximity to skiing should impress people. BOTT stated that the pictures should show more ethnic diversity and people of color.

Connie Marsh, asked is there a way to reduce the amount of paper with the same material used and added that there should be images of the Alps, the natural beauty here.

DRAFT MARKETING MATERIALS

Employees by Industry

Learn More About Issaquah

Issaquah offers the best of both worlds – vibrant business sectors and an excellent quality of life, nestled in the Issaquah Alps.

- Best Quality of Life
- Best Sports
- Best Education
- Best Jobs
- Best Location
- Best Quality of Life

Issaquah by The Numbers

- 64.1% of homes are green
- 13,914 homes
- 458,300 sq ft of retail space
- 200 miles of trails
- Extremely Low unemployment
- 3.7% unemployment
- 5.8% population growth
- 32,130 jobs
- \$7.6 million in new jobs
- \$23,964 median household income

Recent Investments

- Investment in infrastructure
- Investment in public safety
- Investment in parks and recreation
- Investment in housing
- Investment in education
- Investment in transportation

Development Opportunities

Opportunities for growth and development in various sectors.

Sound Investments

Investment in infrastructure, public safety, parks and recreation, housing, education, and transportation.

17% of homes in Issaquah are Built Green Certified

Leader in Smart Growth And Sustainability

Excellent Place to Do Business

73%

City of Issaquah, Washington

Convenience

Only 12 miles of Bellevue

Only 17 miles East of Seattle

Only 23 miles of Seattle airport

Seattle / King County Regional Strengths

Transportation & Transit

Outdoor & Cultural Amenities

Doing Business

Employment by Industry

- 2,697 Computer and related equipment
- 1,881 Professional, scientific, and technical
- 13,114 Retail trade
- 19,947 Wholesale trade
- 1,240 Health care
- 127,960 Manufacturing
- 1,774 Public administration
- 1,638 Other

Business Benefits

Issaquah is a prime business location in the Northwest, attracting a mix of high tech firms, retail giants and small businesses.

Community

Robust Arts & Culture Community

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Thriving Shopping Areas

Top Rated Schools

One of 2014 Best 'Burbs by Sunset Magazine

STRATEGIC PLAN NEXT STEPS

Keith Niven showed a diagram explaining the Commission's next steps in regards to the Strategic Plan.

LEIGH asked that with regards to the vision we try and avoid the generic vision any City would use.



DRAFT Economic Vitality Vision & Mission Statements for EVC Discussion

EVC members John Traeger, Kristi Tripplé, Richard Gael and Linda Lybert and ED staff Jen Davis Hayes met to draft a vision statement for the economic vitality strategic plan. The discussion went from the granular to visionary and back again. Since we discussed items that are goals level concepts rather than vision or mission, they are listed here as well to provide some context to how the vision was developed. The following statements are NOT wordsmithed to perfection but are for discussion with the entire group about the concepts and direction.

VISION: (Big picture idea of what you want to achieve)

Center of sustainable innovation for the Pacific NW region.

MISSION: (How will you achieve your vision?)

To provide amenities to attract and support cutting edge start up and mid-sized companies in a sustainable and globally connected manner. Support existing businesses with emphasis on transportation and housing.

GOALS: (What areas will you focus on to achieve your vision?)

- Because of our geographic and demographics, we are pursuing the success of start-up/entrepreneurs and mid-sized targeted industries.
- In city traffic circulation improvement, multi-modal options.
- Competitive business climate for re-development
 - Rate structure for competitiveness
- Etc. to be populated by EVC.

The Vision should be Inspirational.

LYBERT stated that "Sustainable Innovation" we see this as entrepreneurial. We want them to be innovative and then stay here in Issaquah.

TRIPPLE added that we want the business to stay and locate here, maybe we want to talk about creating a foundation - Four or five bulletpoints of things we value, i.e., quality of life; to let others know what we are trying to achieve.

BETTISE asked if the City has a vision that covers the foundation? Even if they do, we should have that foundation.

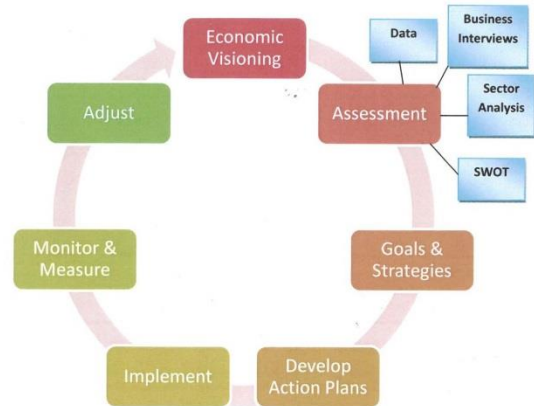
LEIGH stated that "Sustainable Innovation" has 3 or 4 definitions that must change somehow and be more clear.

Connie Marsh added that "Sustainable" has no meaning. "Innovation" is endless, always searching. This is a portion of what we want to be but not holistically all of Issaquah.

Niven added that we should simplify to "Innovate and Diversify". Sustainability can be one of the values or assumptions we build from.

Economic Vitality Strategic Plan –

Who are we?
Where do we want to go?
How do we get there?
What does success look like?



TRAEGER stated that the target audience is not who we are now; it's what we want it to be.

TRIPPLE stated that we need to incorporate items from the SWOT Analysis to help inform a clear vision.

Niven stated that the Vision Statement for the Economic Vitality of Issaquah should be clear and concise. The Mission statement or other aspects are used to describe how to get there.

TRAEGER asked what would a site selector understand from “Innovate and Diversify”?

LEIGH proposed:

A community that fosters diverse businesses and innovation.

- Location & Amenities
- Small, Medium & Large businesses
- Educated, Diverse workforce.

Connie Marsh stated that we should wait for the City’s vision statement before we do the Economic Vitality component.

LEIGH proposed:

Build & Grow your business. By the Lake....By The Mountains...

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Keith Niven explained that the City must update our Economic Vitality portion of the Comprehensive Plan this year. He asked the Commission how they would like to be involved with the update. Niven stated that the updated to the Comp Plan is due by August which likely will be earlier than the Strategic Plan; however, if the final Strategic Plan is too different from the Comp Plan, we can always update next year.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Niven explained that him and LEIGH went to the Services Committee of the Council and updated on them on following ED activities:

- Iconic Signs – stalled for now.
- Sector Analysis – not budgeted, but committee thinks it should be done.
- Way-Finding Signs – interested, need follow up from Mayor’s Office.
- Tourism Business Plan – Public Presentation scheduled 3/31 at the Barn.
- State Park EIS – Study to determine if results would pay back costs of EIS.

Niven stated that Christine Kipp resigned from the Commission and we now have an open position.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Forkner, asked the Commission to keep the vision from being too isolated. There are a lot of obstacles in the City in position where it is attractive. Transportation – Employees have long, unreliable commutes. Housing – where is decent rental housing?

Connie Marsh, stated that the Central Issaquah Plan “Town Making” will be key to making Issaquah attractive enough to make economic vitality a go. “A community that fosters diverse housing, businesses, & innovation”. Housing to help support the business, broad range of housing as a key factor for Economic Vitality.

ADJOURNMENT

LEIGH closed the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

These minutes are a brief summary of the Economic Vitality Commission Meeting. For more information or clarification, please contact the Economic Development Department at 425-837-3444.

Respectfully Submitted, Candy Baer, Economic Development Specialist