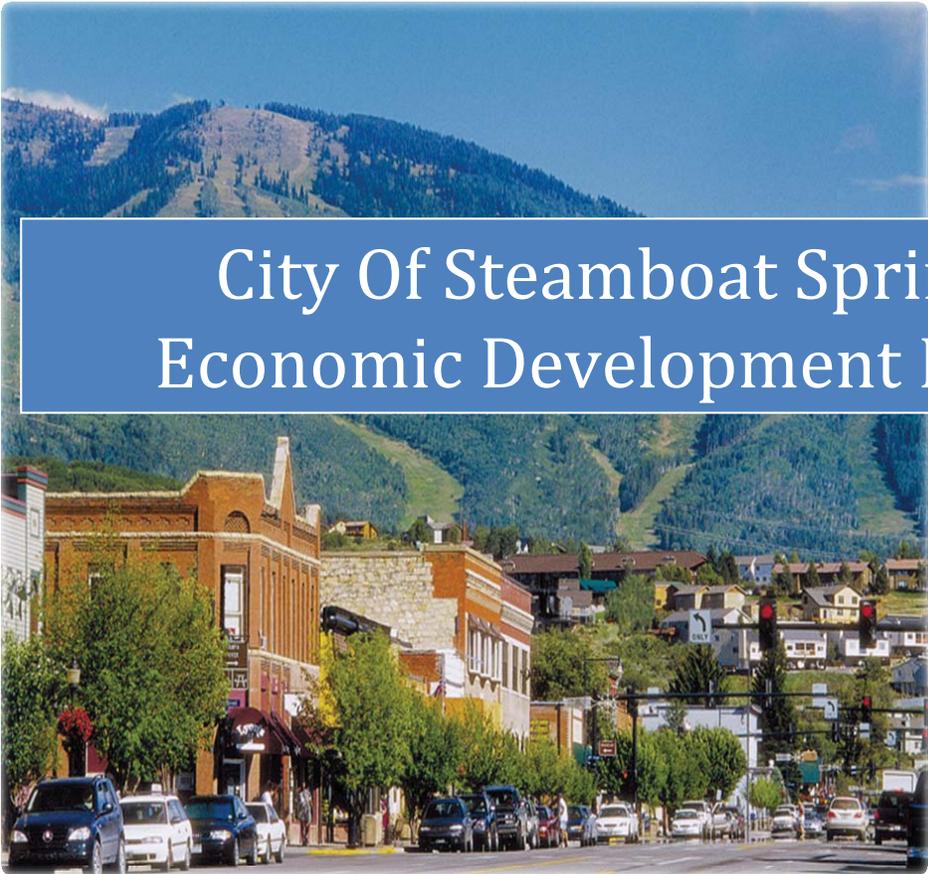


Attachment #7.

2011

City Of Steamboat Springs  
Economic Development Policy



***Our Vision:***

***The City of Steamboat Springs will support a diverse and vibrant economy by preserving and protecting City assets and amenities, by promoting and leveraging the increased use of existing public and private assets, and by further increasing economic diversity and average compensation.***



## The Three Legs of Our Economic Policy



Preserve and protect city assets.

Increase diversity and average wages.

Leverage existing assets.

*As the Council's public meetings on economic development wound down, three overarching themes became prevalent and repeated. These three are the basis for the City's economic policies:*

- 1. For economic sustainability, we must protect and preserve our existing assets.*
- 2. To stir economic activity, we must leverage our existing attributes.*
- 3. For economic development, we must encourage business diversity and career creation.*

*Howelsen Hill is the jewel of the Steamboat Springs Parks system and acts not only as a ski area that supports Nordic skiing, alpine skiing, snowboarding, snow shoeing and snow tubing in the winter, but is also the home to the rodeo grounds, ice arena, horseback and bike riding trails, an alpine slide, playground, a skatepark, tennis courts, volleyball courts and baseball fields. Founded in 1914, Howelsen Hill is the oldest ski area in continuous use in Colorado, and has the largest and most complete natural ski jumping complex in North America. 79 Olympians who have made 135 Olympic appearances and won eight Olympic medals have trained at Howelsen Hill.*

*The Howelsen Hill Centennial Campaign had its official kick-off on July 4, 2010. It is a public/private partnership designed to invest in a facility that brings great pleasure to the community. The goal of the campaign is to provide funding for expanded snow-making capacity, additional night-lighting to enhance night skiing, a summer ski jump and a mini-magic carpet for your youngest skiers.*



## **Preserve and Protect Existing Assets – Strategy #1**

### **#1A**

Maintain and replace City infrastructure through increased attention to deferred maintenance or needed improvements.

- ❖ Target grants to fit programs rather than vice versa.
- ❖ Determine a minimum CIP spending.
- ❖ Continue funding certain basic CIP programs, paving and facilities maintenance, at current levels.
- ❖ Support Howelsen Hill Centennial Campaign.
- ❖ Complete a deferred maintenance inventory and budget annually to address the issues – with a goal to resolve all issues within the next fifteen (15) years.
- ❖ Establish a policy of requiring the funding of or plan for funding ongoing operating and maintenance costs for new capital construction prior to construction.
- ❖ Follow the plans of the 2010 Rate Study for Water and Wastewater Utilities.

## Preserve and Protect Existing Assets

### #1B: Water Rights Firming.

- ❖ Continue annual budget of \$100,000 for the purchase of water rights.
- ❖ Schedule and implement plans for the beneficial use of water rights in parks by converting to the use of raw water – with an annual budget of \$50,000.
- ❖ Continue the water conservation program.
- ❖ Follow the 2010 Rate Study rates geared to encourage conservation.
- ❖ Complete and maintain the water rights accounting systems – both parks and public works.
- ❖ Coordinate efforts with other water agencies and organizations (ie. Mt. Werner, Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District) when our goals align.

*The City of Steamboat Springs Parks Maintenance Division has extensive responsibilities maintaining ninety (90) acres of parkland/athletic fields of which seventy-five (75) acres are irrigated. Use of our raw water rights rather than treated water will protect our rights while lowering our level of service costs.*



*Annually, the City provides over \$1.2 million in direct donations to community efforts ranging from summer tourism marketing to environmental efforts. Summer events are a trademark of the area bringing thousands of tourists to Steamboat Springs through the combination of entrepreneurial non-profit organizations and city support. Annual events like the Winter Carnival require hundreds of City employee man-hours to staff events.*



## **Preserve and Protect Existing Assets**

#1C: Recognize the value of partnerships to accomplish the vision. Understand that each of us is an ambassador of our city creating perceptions of Steamboat for our guests.

- ❖ Recognize our employee group as a valued partner in accomplishing hundreds of community activities.
- ❖ Partner with the Winter Sports Club to maximize Howelsen's current and future uses.
- ❖ Partner with Ski Corp., Chamber Resort Association, Routt County Riders and others on bike amenities and programs.
- ❖ Partner with citizen groups to provide at least 55 annual special events.
- ❖ Continue budgetary support to area non-profits that focus on environmental, health/human services and arts/cultural endeavors in the community.
- ❖ Demonstrate accountability of the use of taxpayer dollars by publishing interim budget/actual expenditure reports to the City's web site.

## Preserve and Protect Existing Assets

#1D: Acknowledge and support the importance of tourism as an economic driver.

- ❖ Continue to support special event funding.
- ❖ Enhance the effectiveness of marketing dollars; track chamber reports; measure and compare year to year results for accountability; work toward a comprehensive audit of effectiveness.
- ❖ We support the ongoing leadership of the Chamber Resort Association.
- ❖ Work with the community on a long term solution to ensure sufficient airline seats.
- ❖ Follow through on the Area Master Plan and Complete Streets.
  - ❖ Connect our trails and sidewalks.
  - ❖ Continue free transit routes.

*The approval of the Complete Streets Ordinance and Multi-Mode Master Plan will create a framework to implement our multi-mode transportation network by linking the trails, sidewalks and new bike and transit master plans.*



*The Colorado Mountain College Small Business Resource Center and Bike Town USA Initiative developed the "Business of Biking" seminar that helps with understanding how to create the opportunity to profit from bicycle related tourism.*

## **Leverage Existing Assets – Strategy #2**

#2A: Promote business retention.

- ❖ City Manager and Management Team will be actively involved with local professional groups to network with businesses.
- ❖ City Manager will visit at least two local businesses each month to discuss current business issues and learn how the City can best support local businesses.
- ❖ Provide incentives for expansion that creates new jobs in line with the criteria established later in this document for new business incentives.
- ❖ Coordinate with our Economic Development partners to perform business visitations and exit interviews.



## Leverage Existing Assets

#2B: Enhance Year-Round Air Service.

- ❖ Participate as a member of the local task force of the Chamber to research methods of funding future air service beyond the current provisions of the Local Marketing Tax District.
- ❖ Regularly attend the Airport Commission meetings and engage them to assist with this issue.
- ❖ Explore all avenues for assistance.
- ❖ Encourage air routes to the west.



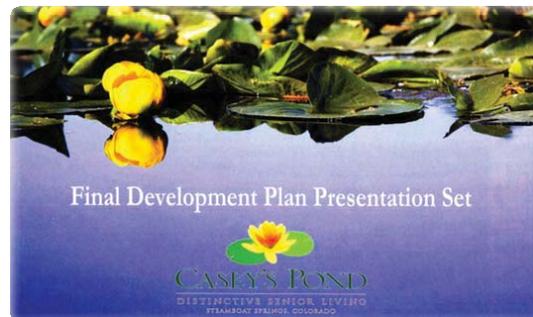
*The City's codes are simply tools created to implement the community's mutual interests in the quality, safety and well being of their city. Zoning codes, building codes and other regulations are derived from the goals and objectives of the community's publicly adopted plans as well as state and national standards. As such, the intent, substance and use of the codes must be clear and accessible by the community they are designed to serve. Many codes focus almost entirely on those things that are prohibited and attempt to prevent "bad" things through more regulation and process that at times inadvertently make it more difficult to do "any" thing. Codes that serve the community well must also make it easiest to do the "right" things.*

*The Steamboat Springs Community Development Department is currently working to create its "Development Lite" code which will provide developers with a front-end evaluation of their plans. Codes have been changed in 2011 to enable easier re-use of existing commercial space. Other work is underway to continue simplification of the current codes.*

## **Leverage Existing Assets**

### **#2C: Streamline City Processes.**

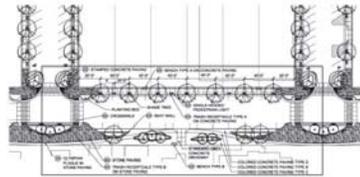
- ❖ Review and methodically change the current planning code to provide clarity and ease of use.
- ❖ Change the development review process so that a pre-review is done to give a developer an idea of whether they are "on the right track."
- ❖ Work with the regional building department to simplify and streamline the building permit process.
- ❖ Firefighters assist with commercial building inspections.
- ❖ Provide constant review of tax code to ensure it is up to date, easy to use with regulations that cover contemporary business needs.
- ❖ Use the City web site to provide citizens with easy access to services and information.



## Leverage Existing Assets

#2D: Develop and promote non-ski-season activities.

- ❖ Bike Town USA! Is a focus.
  - Purchase the Orton property.
  - Meet regularly with the HEMP group to ensure active development of the Orton property.
  - Apply for the Colorado Regional Tourism Act TIF.
- ❖ Staff and support bicycle events including these 2011 events:
  - USA Pro Cycling Challenge.
  - Bicycle Tour of Colorado.
  - Ride the Rockies.
- ❖ Revitalize Yampa Street.
- ❖ Staff, oversee and manage the improvements of the Urban Renewal Authority.
- ❖ Annually fund a summer marketing program.
- ❖ Continue to support summer special events.
- ❖ Satisfy the terms of the Triple Crown contract.
- ❖ Pursue other events.



*Yampa Street represents an undeniable opportunity for redevelopment, investment and economic growth in Steamboat Springs. Yampa Street is not only the link between the bustle of Lincoln Avenue and the amenities of the Yampa River; it is poised to be Steamboat's most complete strolling, biking, gathering, shopping and entertainment area. Attention to pedestrian amenities including improved drainage, sidewalks, lighting, access to the river and Howelsen views will set the stage for private investment.*

*The Steamboat Town Challenge is a seven race mountain bike series held every summer. The series includes both hill-climb and cross-country events that include extensive local and visitor participation. Originally started in 1989 as a friendly grass roots competition it has grown into one of the states premier bike racing series.*



## Encourage Business Diversity and Careers – Strategy #3

#3A: Enhance messaging to our visitors through local initiatives.

❖ Work with the Chamber Resort Association to ensure that participants in various City-sponsored events have a “gift bag” of information that encourages them to participate in other activities and to extend their stay.

❖ Create a follow-up methodology for responses of interest in the city.

❖ Use our economic development partner(s) to provide information to visitors who may wish to start a business in Steamboat.

❖ Use our City web site to target visitors and encourage them to return as business owners.



## Encourage Business Diversity and Careers

#3B: Create/enhance a small and new business support system.

❖ Work with our Economic Development partners to provide a well-advertised, easily located One-Stop place (which could be or include a website) for new and small business resources.

❖ Link to and support the small business element of Colorado Mountain College, SCORE, and the Steamboat Springs and Routt County EDC's.

❖ Provide direction to the EDC's we fund or support.

❖ Eliminate redundancies among the activities of the various economic development organizations that receive City support.

❖ Budget micro grants up to \$5,000 for small for-profit businesses who meet the following criteria:

- Located in the City limits.
- Evidence of other seed capital.
- New business or expansion /improvement of current, active business.
- Can demonstrate a return on investment through a business plan.

*In the mid 1980's a local couple started a business in Steamboat Springs for wool hats. Like today, bank loans were difficult to get. Steamboat Springs is a member of Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) which provided a \$5,000 loan for this new business that ultimately became the incredibly successful Smartwool Company.*

*Smartwool has grown into a global leader with more than 400 products available in 35 countries throughout Europe and Asia Pacific. According to industry research, the company owns 70% of the market share in the US outdoor market and nine out of ten best selling socks in the outdoor specialty market.*

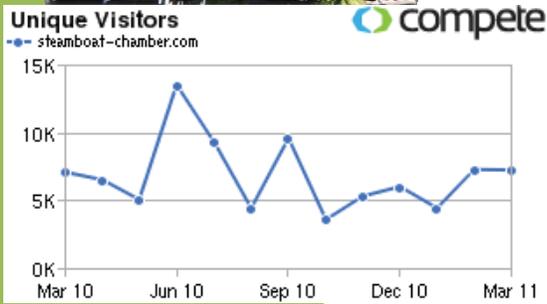
*From the very beginning, Smartwool has done business differently; looking for innovative ways to do business in everything from improving efficiencies to lessening their carbon footprint to giving back to the outdoor industry and its hometown communities.*



## Encourage Business Diversity and Careers

#3C: Require our partners who receive resources from the City to demonstrate actions and results aligned with our economic development goals.

- ❖ Require a stronger level of accountability from our partners in the budget process.
- ❖ Give our EDC partners more direction and accountability.
- ❖ Engage our economic development partners in our economic goals.
- ❖ Require the Chamber Resort Association to report trend data with its annual report – how the use of the dollars have changed over time.
- ❖ In the budget process, report on the accomplishment of activity goals in this document.
- ❖ Provide a quarterly budget report at Council’s public meetings.



## Encourage Business Diversity and Careers

#3D: Target businesses that meet our vision statement and criteria for incentives.

- ❖ Support broadband and telecommunication efforts.
- ❖ Consider all current possible economic tools:
  - Tourist Act Authority.
  - Urban Renewal Authority.
  - Tax Incremental Financings.
  - Enterprise Zone.
  - Business Improvement District.
  - Downtown Development Authority.
- ❖ Establish a budget for incentive and procedures for requesting incentive.
- ❖ Businesses requesting incentives will satisfy the attributes listed in the sidebar of this page.

*Businesses requesting incentives will have these attributes:*

*Location in the City limits.*

*Offer health insurance whereby the employer pays 50% of the employee only premium and provides a dependent plan at cost to the employee.*

*Net New Jobs must be created that pay more than average Routt County income identified annually by the US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (currently \$42,312).*

*Net New Jobs are defined as full time positions which did not exist at a Steamboat Springs area location in the twelve (12) months prior to application for incentive. The position must exist for a minimum of eighteen (18) months after creation.*

*A solid business plan.*



*Did you know? The US Department of Energy has stated that there is potential for energy saving in the magnitude of 90 Billion KWh by increasing Home energy efficiency? Estimates of the job creation potential of energy efficiency investments range up to 70 person years of employment per \$1 million invested. Municipal involvement in the field of energy efficiency can also set a positive example to the rest of the community, and help develop expertise that will facilitate the design of energy efficiency initiatives aimed at the entire community, including the private sector. ([www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org))*

*Many mountain resort communities have embraced the environmental sustainability movement and have seen increased tourism as they market themselves as leaders in environmental sustainability. This is especially critical for resort communities that rely on their surrounding scenic beauty and outdoor recreation as a draw for tourists. Many of these tourists are environmentally conscious consumers and may gravitate toward resort communities that provide leadership in environmental stewardship. With additional emphasis on sustainability, the City of Steamboat Springs will be well positioned to take advantage of this movement.*

## Encourage Business Diversity and Careers

#3E: Encourage Green Initiatives.

- ❖ Green Building Pilot program through Planning and Building Departments.
- ❖ Fund the Green Team.
- ❖ Promote CMC environmental degree programs.
- ❖ Examine partnership opportunities with or aid to the Moffat County Clean Energy Research Center.
- ❖ Provide an incentive through reduced fees for sustainable green building and green retrofits of commercial and residential buildings.
- ❖ Create “green construction detail” for use by local developers to assist with the design of both commercial and residential structures.

