



Adopted
February 12, 2007



City of University Place

Economic Development Strategic Action Plan 2007-2011

Building on Strengths and Leveraging Opportunities



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acknowledgements

This Plan is the result of contributions by many individuals. The members of the **City's Economic Development Committee** spent many hours, both during and outside of their regular meetings, considering research findings and developing the themes, strategies, and priorities of this Plan. The shared and differing views and opinions of these individuals form the backbone of this document.

Thanks must also be extended to **City staff, City Council members**, and the City's **Planning Commission** for their thoughtful consideration and contributions. We are particularly grateful to **David Swindale**, Development Services Director, for the considerable time and energy he contributed to this effort.

Many UP **residents** and **business owners**, as well as a number of **outside stakeholders**, contributed their opinions, insights, and questions, contributing to the quality and comprehensiveness of the final Plan.



January 10, 2007

To the University Place City Council:

We are very pleased to transmit this Economic Development Strategic Action Plan: 2007-11 to you for review. This Plan is the outcome of considerable research, deliberation, and strategizing by the Economic Development Committee.

The Plan contained on the following pages is ambitious, designed to build on our city's strengths and past efforts, maximize the opportunities we have before us, address challenges we face, and contribute towards achieving our collective Vision for the future of the City.

The City's first Economic Development Strategic Action Plan, which directed efforts from 2002 to 2007, established the City's Economic Development Office and Economic Development Committee; initiated City business retention and recruitment efforts; created a neighborhood business district program; and asserted that "the City should take a leadership role in redevelopment of the Town Center" and that the City should "work cooperatively with the County to expedite development and realize the best future for the Chambers Creek Properties." The Plan also assisted efforts to create a civic identity for UP and continue to enhance community character and livability.

This Plan continues many of the efforts contained in the earlier Plan. Other themes and actions represent an evolution of prior initiatives, as we continue to develop our economy and our community in exciting and innovative ways, never forgetting, however, the core identity and strengths of our City.



The realization of **Town Center** and **Chambers Creek Properties** create tremendous economic and community development opportunities. It is up to us to maximize these opportunities, encouraging a “ripple effect” that will continue to make our City dynamic, prosperous, and highly livable.

As progress is realized on various projects, we have the opportunity to freshly **brand** and communicate the attractiveness of our community to businesses, residents, and visitors. By further developing an overall identity for the City, as well as **distinct and attractive business districts**, we can grow our City’s economy to better capture the spending of our residents, as well as becoming a desired tourism and shopping destination.

The achievement of such goals cannot happen at the expense of a great and valued asset: the continued **high quality of life** for UP residents. This Plan encourages economic development that does not encroach on residential communities or negatively impact the character of our City. In fact, this Plan seeks to further **enhance UP’s unique character** by targeting commercial enterprises that are complementary in character and scale; encouraging quality development and distinct identities for each of our business districts; and making further investments in civic resources such as public spaces, arts, and parks and open spaces.

Much of what we hope to accomplish cannot and should not be pursued by the EDC and the Economic Development Office alone. We have collaborated closely with the City’s planning staff and the Planning Commission in developing this Plan, and intend to continue to **collaborate and coordinate** with these partners to ensure our Visions and strategies remain in alignment.

We see University Place as a part of a larger Pierce County and Puget Sound community and economy. This Plan contains strategies to ensure that we are **a proactive and collaborative contributor to regional conversations and initiatives**.

We are inspired by the possibilities that lie before us as a City and look forward to discussing this Plan with you and together implementing these and other coordinated strategies to advance our shared Vision of the future of University Place.



Dan Small



Ruthann McCaffree



Frits Akker



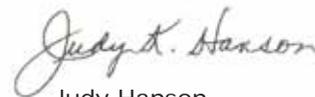
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A separate Technical Annex contains the City's Economic Profile, a summary of stakeholder interviews, and a discussion of the fiscal impacts of various development forms.



Introduction and Planning Context

Opportunities

Since incorporation in 1994, the City of University Place has sought to provide high quality services to residents and to secure that tradition through a bold program of proactive development. As this plan is written, the City is in the process of realizing a significant component of its vision as **Town Center** becomes a reality. The planned opening of Town Center represents a milestone for the City – and a tremendous opportunity to attract additional desired development and commerce.

The City has also been an active participant in shaping the development of the **Chambers Creek properties**, which will also create exciting opportunities to energize the City's economy and enhance the community's image. The Chambers Bay golf course in particular represents a potential economic development windfall for the City, bringing national attention to the region and the potential for many shoppers, diners, and overnight guests in UP.

These changes happening within and just outside of UP's downtown create tremendous opportunities for the City. Careful planning and energized and focused implementation are now necessary to **build on the City's strengths and leverage opportunities**.



Challenges

UP also faces real economic development challenges.

The City's current economy is small relative to its population base, with the majority of UP employees working outside of the City. There is also significant **sales tax leakage** occurring as City residents do much of their shopping outside City limits.

While known for being an affluent community, the City is also home to a surprisingly large population that lives on very **moderate incomes**. Housing, employment, and shopping opportunities for this population are important to maintaining a diverse and self-sufficient community.

In addition, the City's infrastructure is challenged by growth, particularly in the ability to efficiently allow auto traffic in, out, and through the UP Town area. Without resolution, this problem will only be exacerbated by the Town Center development and has the potential to not only aggravate local residents, but to limit the City's economic vitality. Addressing the **Town Center grid** by leveraging grants and working with the private sector to make capital improvements is a critical need.



This Plan

This Economic Development Strategic Action Plan will guide the City from **2007 to 2011**, helping the City take best advantage of the opportunities resulting from Town Center and Chambers Creek development, as well as the City's inherent strengths: a generally well-educated, engaged, and affluent population; an effective City government; and a high quality of life. The Plan builds off the City's first *Economic Development Strategic Action Plan 2002-07: Strategies for a Livable and Economically Sustainable Community*.

Economic Development Planning and Activities in University Place

UP recognizes the importance of proactive economic development and has had specialized staff focused in this area since 2002. The City makes this investment recognizing the value that active economic development efforts bring to the community.



The Importance of Economic Development

- Contributes to a sense of place
 - Creates local shopping choices and employment opportunities
 - Adds to the community's vibrancy and opportunities for interaction
 - Helps generate revenues that pay for City services
-

UP's approach to economic development is reflective of the proactive and dynamic nature of the community. This Plan seeks to encapsulate **the UP way of pursuing economic development**.

The UP Approach to Economic Development

- Proactive
 - Explorative, creative and innovative
 - Flexible
 - Embracing of technology
 - Engaging and interactive
-



Planning Process

This Plan, as well as the preceding Economic Development Action Plan which guided City efforts from 2002 to 2007, was led by the City's **Economic Development Committee** (EDC). The EDC is an advisory committee appointed by the City Council to advocate for the implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Action Plan as adopted by the City Council. It serves as a sounding board for various business community interests, and as the “eyes and ears” for the City in the business community. In addition, the Committee participates in community outreach efforts to communicate economic development initiatives that impact the University Place community.

From March to December 2006, the EDC met monthly to review research findings and develop this Plan's Goals, Action Strategies, and Priorities.

Members of the EDC include:

- Dan Small, Chair
- Ruthann McCaffree, Vice-Chair
- Frits Akker
- Ray Tennison
- Jim Couch
- Dirk Thompson
- Judy Hanson
- Valarie Zeeck
- Patrick J. Lyon

The EDC was supported in this effort by staff of the City's Economic Development Office: Mariza Craig, Director, and Becky Metcalf, Project Assistant. Brian Murphy, Kapena Pflum, and other Berk & Associates staff provided research services, facilitation, expert advice, and planning support.

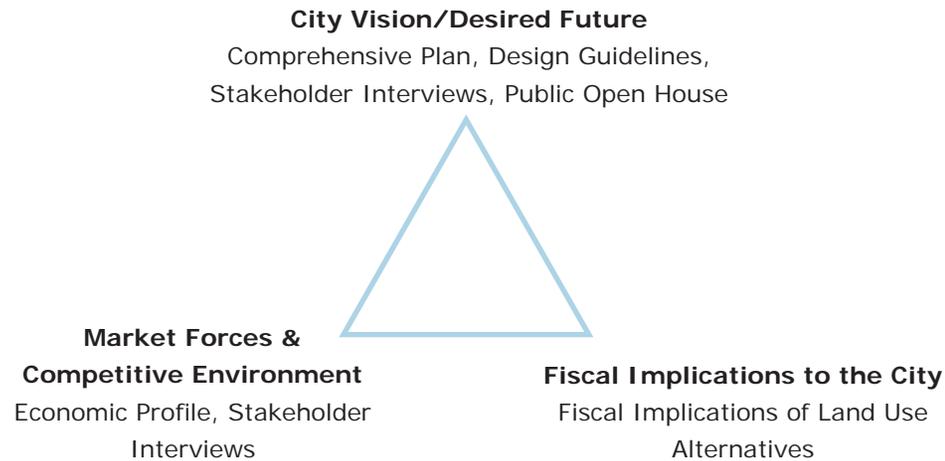
Planning Inputs

As this Plan was developed, the Economic Development Committee incorporated multiple sources of input, including a rigorous analysis of economic and socioeconomic trends in UP and the region; interviews with a wide range of stakeholders including 36 individuals as well as the UP/Fircrest Chamber of Commerce and the UP Home-Based Business Forum; analysis of the fiscal impacts of different development forms; consideration of the City's 2006 Business Survey and Survey of Light Manufacturing; the direction provided by existing City plans and priorities including the Comprehensive Plan; a Public Open House held November 8, 2006; and several meetings with the City's Planning Commission.





These many sources of input provide **three different perspectives** on the City's economic development opportunities, challenges and priorities:



- The **City Vision and desired future** as articulated by stakeholders and the public and formalized in the City's Comprehensive Plan establish a sense of identity and a representation of what the City wants to be like in the future. Economic development activities should not only be aligned with this Vision, they should be strategies for *achieving* this desired future.

- **Market and economic forces** drive commercial development and determine the range of economic development opportunities available to the City. Understanding market realities gives the City a sense of what economic development opportunities are feasible, and where the market can be encouraged to develop in ways it might not otherwise.
- Alternative development uses of the same land have different fiscal ramifications for the City, both in terms of tax revenues and the demand for City services. The City must consider the **fiscal implications** of different development forms to ensure its overall economic development strategy is fiscally sound.

By taking these three perspectives into account, this Economic Development Strategic Action Plan is grounded in the City Vision, with strategies to enable the City to maximize market opportunities, maintain fiscal sustainability, and achieve its desired future.

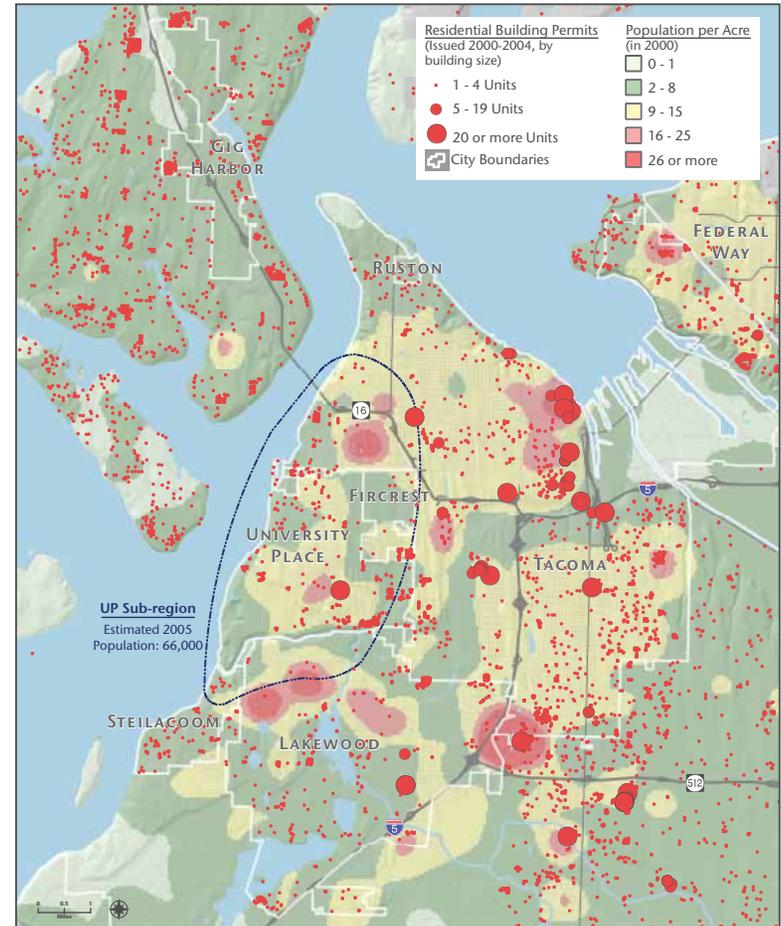
Research Findings

The **Technical Annex** of this Plan, contained in a separate volume, includes the material developed to support this planning process, including the City's Economic Profile, a summary of stakeholder interviews, and a memorandum describing the fiscal implications of land use alternatives. Key findings and exhibits from these materials are also peppered throughout this Plan to reinforce specific Goals and Action Strategies.

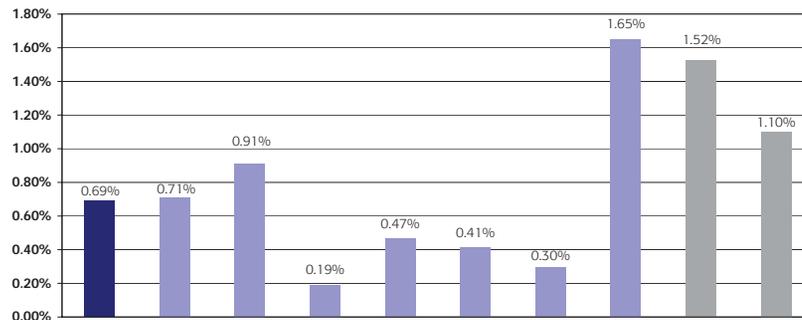
Residential Building Permits, 2000-2004 and Population Density in 2000

Population Trends and Patterns

- University Place has grown by a thousand persons over the past five years. The City is growing faster than its larger neighbors Lakewood and Tacoma but slower than Pierce County and the region.
- Recent population growth in University Place has been primarily in single-family residences along the outskirts of the city.
- The UP Sub-region (shown in map) represents the larger UP community including University Place, Fircrest, and parts of Tacoma, Lakewood and Steilacoom. This area includes about 66,000 persons and is a useful reference point for examining population demographics beyond the City's borders.



Average Annual Population Growth Rate, 2000-2005



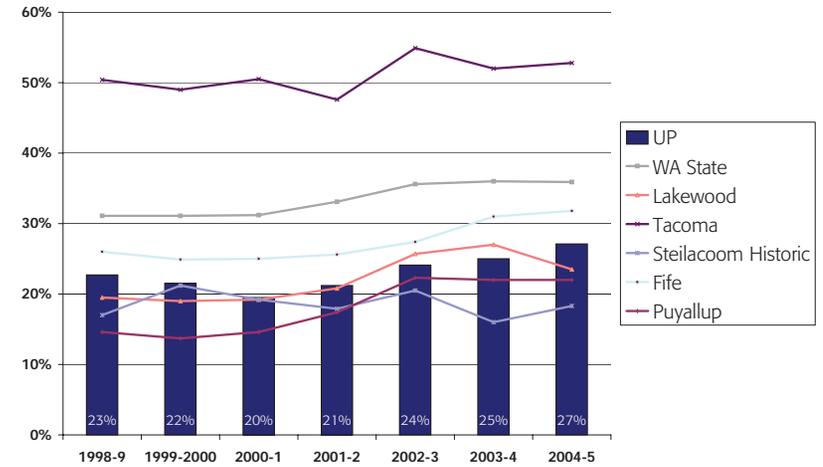
	University Place	Fircrest	Gig Harbor	Lakewood	Tacoma	Steilacoom	Fife	Puyallup	Pierce County	Central Puget Sound
Annual Avg. Growth Rate	0.69%	0.71%	0.91%	0.19%	0.47%	0.41%	0.30%	1.65%	1.52%	1.10%
Population 2000	29,933	5,868	6,465	58,293	193,556	6,049	4,784	33,014	700,818	3,275,857
Population 2005	30,980	6,080	6,765	58,850	198,100	6,175	4,855	35,830	755,900	3,460,400

I N C O M E

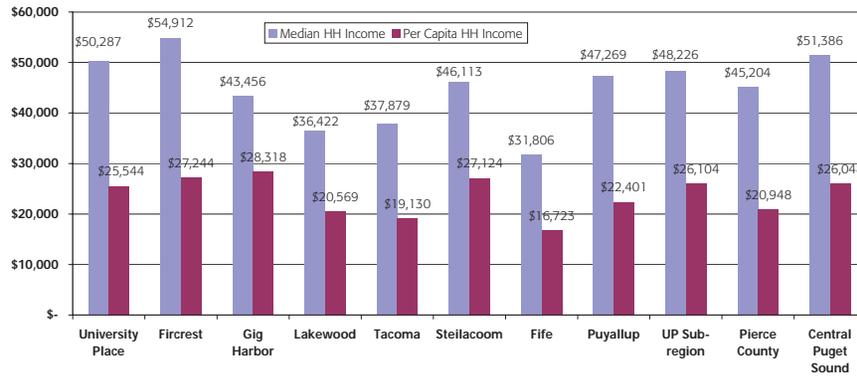
Measures of Income

- UP is relatively wealthy, but has a significant percentage of households living on modest incomes. University Place has higher income levels than Lakewood, Tacoma and overall Pierce County. The percentage of UP households earning less than \$35,000 annually (34%) is slightly less than the Pierce County average (37%) and more than the Central Puget Sound average (33%). The City's income distribution is similar to Fircrest and Steilacoom.
- Many families with children. Relative to its neighbors, University Place's per capita income is lower than its median, possibly due to the large number of families with children in the City. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, University Place had the largest average household size (2.46 persons) of all the comparable cities listed except for Puyallup (2.52 persons per household).
- More students receiving free or reduced-price lunch. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches in the UP School District has been growing since the 2000-2001 school year. The percentage is greater than in the Lakewood, Puyallup, and Steilacoom Historic School Districts and lower than the Fife and Tacoma Districts.

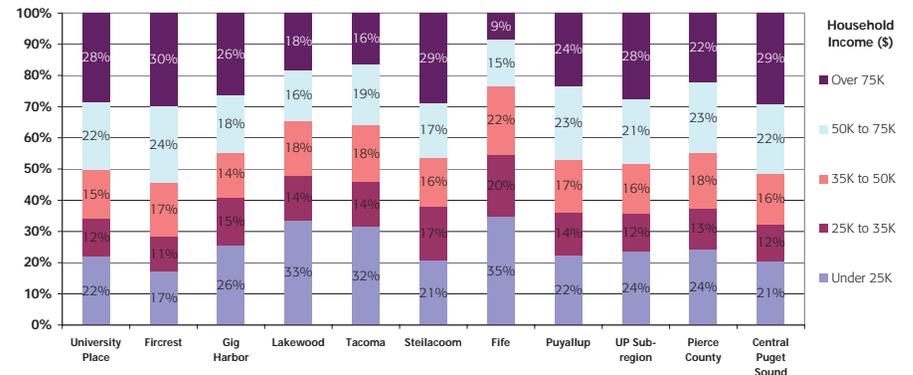
Percent of Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Meals



Median and Per Capita Household Income, 1999



Percentage of Total Households by Household Income, 1999





Plan Overview

The core of this Plan consists of **six Goals**, each with supporting **Action Strategies** that provide direction about how to achieve the stated Goal. The Plan's Goals and Priorities were established with an understanding of the City's opportunities and challenges derived from the multiple sources of input described above.

These Goals were also built around the following Economic Development Vision and Mission Statements:

Economic Development Vision

University Place is...

A vibrant and sustainable economy that encourages business growth, meets residents needs and supports quality services, parks, schools and community amenities.

Economic Development Mission Statement

Grow and develop the City's business districts to create a livable and economically vital community.

Plan Themes and Priorities

Based on the EDC's comprehensive assessment of the City's economic development opportunities and challenges, the following themes and priority items run through the Plan's six Goals and focus the City's resources and efforts on those items that will provide the greatest benefit. Priority items are noted throughout the Plan by a ▲.

- Continue **ongoing business retention and attraction efforts**, first retaining and supporting the City's existing businesses as well as proactively recruiting desirable new businesses
- Build off the **ripple effects** of the Town Center and Chambers Creek developments, creating a dynamic and exciting UP Town District and creating synergies between Chambers Creek and UP Town
- Establish and **communicate clear and commonly held visions for the City and for individual districts** and make other efforts to make the City an attractive place for developers to do business
- Effectively **brand and market UP as a whole and promote Town Center, UP Town and other business districts**
- **Align the visions and strategies of the Economic Development Committee and the Planning Commission**, enhancing the working relationship between the two groups
- Be an active and **collaborative participant in regional economic development initiatives**, raising UP's profile and contributing to a stronger regional economy



Implementation

With this planning process completed, the next phase of work – implementation – begins.

Most directly, this Plan will serve as the basis for annual workplanning by the staff of the City's Economic Development Office. The Goals, Action Strategies, and Priorities established in this document will inform the daily efforts of these staff.

This Plan also encompasses efforts that require significant communication and coordination with partners, both internal – notably other City departments and the City's Planning Commission – and externally, including the UP/Fircrest Chamber of Commerce, Pierce County, the Pierce County Economic Development Board, and neighboring cities. A first step in working with these external partners is communicating the focus and importance of this Plan and cooperatively aligning efforts, clarifying roles, and establishing action plans.

Summary of Goals

- I Encourage a Robust and Diverse Mix of Businesses through Proactive **Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction** Efforts
- II Promote a **Business Climate** that is Supportive of Economic Growth
- III Facilitate Commercial Vitality in **Business Districts** and **Other Commercial Areas**
- IV Develop the City's Potential as a **Shopping and Tourism Destination**
- V Enhance the City's **Brand, Image and Identity** through the Creation of Dynamic Public Spaces and Effective Promotion of the City and Individual Districts
- VI Be a **Strong and Effective Partner** and a **Regional Leader**



goals &
action strategies

GOALS AND ACTION STRATEGIES



Goal I Encourage a Robust and Diverse Mix of Businesses through Proactive Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Efforts

A. Support the success of existing UP businesses ▲

1. Continue to support and retain existing UP businesses through the Business Solutions Program
2. Promote existing UP businesses through the continued publication of the Business Directory
3. Through strong partnerships and proactive referral, facilitate businesses finding qualified employees; financing for expansion and other needs; and suitable sites for expansion

B. Encourage a diverse mix of commercial offerings to meet more local needs and attract more shoppers to UP ▲

1. Focus business recruitment efforts strategically on sectors that are currently underserved in the City, that contribute to the City's ability to pay for services, and that are in line with the City's Vision and strengths:
 - Specialty retail
 - Apparel
 - Sports, books and music
 - Office supplies and business services
 - Retail storefronts or kiosks for the ordering and delivery of large ticket items such as autos, boats, furniture and appliances
 - Family and full-service restaurants
 - Entertainment
 - Lodging

2. Establish strong working relationships with retail tenant representatives in the region to attract desired retail tenants and developments

C. Attract desirable office-based businesses to diversify UP's employment base and support local retail establishments

1. Focus business recruitment efforts on medium and large sized businesses in commercial centers to complement UP's strong small business sector and provide daytime spending
2. Recruit businesses that bolster the City's existing strengths and potential opportunities in the following clusters:
 - Medical and health care
 - Life sciences
 - Education
 - The arts
 - Military contractors
 - Back office support services



D. Continue to support UP's home-based businesses

1. Continue outreach and the Home-Based Business Forum
2. Provide additional resources and support services through the proposed Business Center
3. Assist businesses in finding suitable sites as they grow beyond the home



E. Continue to support UP's existing light industrial manufacturing businesses

1. Assist businesses seeking additional space for expansion
2. Seek the relocation of inappropriate retail and office uses on land suitable for the expansion of existing industrial or light manufacturing businesses
3. As redevelopment occurs within the City's industrial and light manufacturing zones, encourage the improvement of streets and other basic infrastructure
4. Respond to workforce needs through targeted job training programs in collaboration with partners



F. Conduct a feasibility study for a Business Center to support UP businesses

A Business Center would provide business support services such as training, networking opportunities and workshops, as well as access to technology and resources not often available to small and medium sized businesses, including conference or meeting space, computer and networking resources, and a photocopier and other basic infrastructure. This Center would be visible from the street to encourage accessibility, ideally functioning as a dynamic, collaborative space. Potential partners in this enterprise include local community colleges and other institutes of higher learning.

G. Maintain an inventory of available commercial space to assist in site location of new businesses or expansion of existing businesses

1. Assist new or expanding businesses to find suitable sites within the City considering such factors as the City vision for individual business districts; how the business will interact with neighboring businesses and residential communities; and development costs including City-levied impact fees

Stakeholder Input - Office Market

- "UP could position itself to attract commercial office from downtown Tacoma: it has great schools, great infrastructure, parks – and low crime!"
- "I see opportunities for smaller, regional headquarters, though I don't know if they have space. UP's office market is probably strongest for proprietor-type businesses: a small firm with a proprietor who lives in town."
- "For a town like UP, you'd look for professional services firms – engineering and architecture firms, perhaps law firms."
- "The UP office market primarily serves the internal market, with some potential to reach beyond the City limits."
- "The City should pursue more neighborhood office development to create a daytime population to support restaurants and retail. Workers will spend money on lunches and convenience shopping."
- "Pierce County is overbuilt with office space right now. It's not a market we should focus on now, though we need to look at market potential in the mid- and long-term."
- "There is a lack of affordable, quality office space suitable for small firms, even home-based businesses moving into their first rented space."
- "Home-based businesses need a place to meet with clients, as well as access to office equipment. Shared reception services would be great. The City could also use the space to hold trainings or host conferences, meetings or cultural events. It might be an income generator for the City."

EMPLOYMENT

Employment Findings

- The ratio of jobs to housing units in University Place (0.42) is lower than the Pierce County (0.81) and regional (1.12) averages, indicating that many of the City's residents commute outside the city limits for work.
- University Place has very strong Services (2,817 jobs) and Education (763 jobs) employment sectors. Percentages of total employment for these two sectors are both much higher than those seen in Pierce County and the region.
- Weaker employment sectors in University Place include Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade, Transport, and Utilities (WTU) – each with about 2% of the City's total employment base.

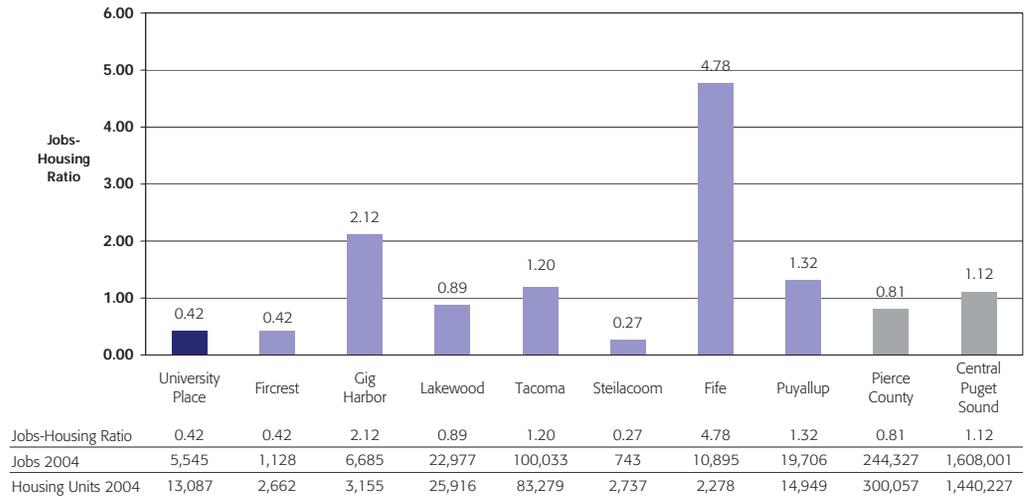
Stakeholder Input - Employment

- "UP is providing high end housing, but not lots of jobs beyond McDonald's and Trader Joe's. If they want people to live and work there, they need to diversify. You have to support a variety of employment for a community to remain strong."
- "We have a lot of very small businesses and some major franchises (fast food, drug stores and such). We don't have anything in between, such as mid-sized employers."

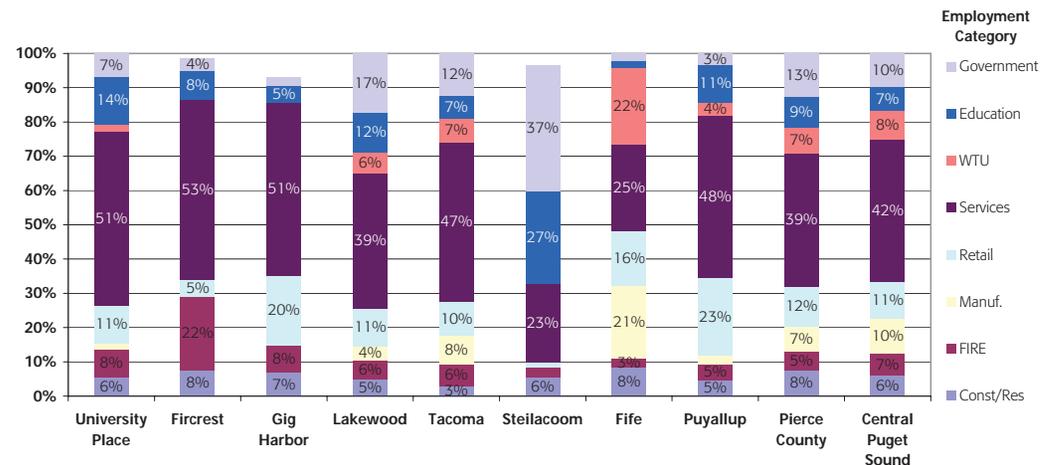
Stakeholder Input - Industrial Market

- "The first thing they should ask when thinking about industrial uses is, do they have enough land available that would even appeal to the industrial market? If so, how does that fit in with their community plans? Does that meet the rationale for having industrial land, which is usually providing family wage jobs?"
- "They should keep what industrial users they have and stay away from attracting more."
- "There's no opportunity for more industrial uses: it's not a case of NIMBY, but there's just no space."

Ratio of Jobs to Housing Units, 2004



Total Employment Distribution by Sector, 2004



RETAIL MARKET

Overall Strength of UP Retail Sector

- University Place has a modest level of taxable retail sales (TRS) per capita (\$2,480), which is about one half of the Pierce County average (\$4,981).
- Neighboring Lakewood and Tacoma have stronger TRS per capita rates close to regional averages. Gig Harbor is the one neighboring city that has significantly higher than average retail sales. The bulk of Gig Harbor's non-auto retail sales are coming from department stores and sales of building materials.

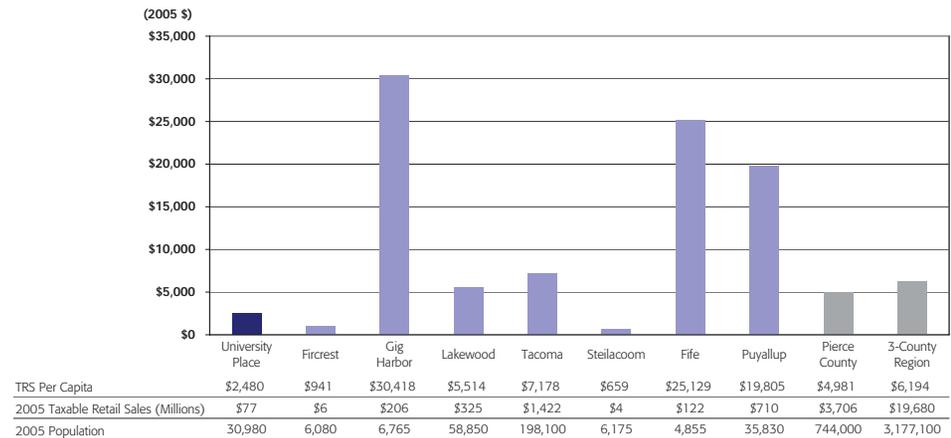
Retail Spending Patterns in UP

- Health and Personal Care stores are the strongest retail category, with a consumer base larger than the UP population. It is likely this retail category is drawing a number of customers from outside the City borders.
- No categories have person-expenditures greater than the Sub-region population, which would have been an indicator of a category with regional appeal.
- Although Limited-Service Eateries has a relatively high level of person-expenditures, Full-Service Restaurants appear to be in short supply.

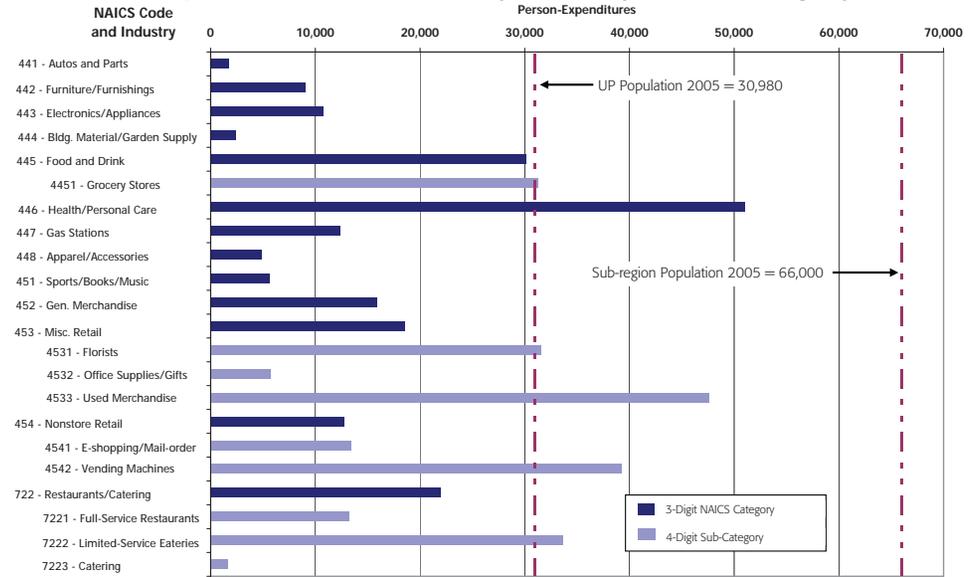
Stakeholder Input - Retail Market

- "UP should think of Redmond Town Center rather than Lakewood Town Center. Pierce County is ready for that."
- "UP retail needs a 'theme' – they shouldn't try to get just any retailer. They should target high end retailers, good restaurants."
- "They need to figure out what would work. Lakewood did this well, though obviously UP would be targeting a different niche. They should stay away from repeating the same old places."
- "Whatever their retail offerings are, they have to be worth a trip for people to come find it in UP."
- "We need more restaurants. I don't even mind the lower end drive-up places. They're practical and people use them. Just make them adhere to good design standards."
- "We're so devoid of retail anything helps. We need quality eating establishments, a hotel and a place to buy daily goods."
- "If we had a specialty hardware store it could do great targeting markets not covered by Lowe's and Home Depot. We should really establish our local character."
- "The Narrows has big box potential – but there's a lot of potential there for lots of different things. It could be multi-family mid-rises, with a new neighborhood developing there."
- "My idea of a nice shopping area doesn't have big box. There might be space for it near the Narrows, but I wouldn't want it elsewhere."

Taxable Retail Sales per Capita (excluding auto sales), 2005



Person-Expenditures in University Place by Retail Category, 2005





Goal II Promote a Business Climate that is Supportive of Economic Growth

A. While honoring UP's Vision and high standards for development, ensure the City remains an attractive place for developers to do business ▲

1. Support the adoption of a common Vision for the City as a whole and individual districts by City bodies including the City Council, City staff, Planning Commission and Economic Development Committee; clearly communicate these desires and related expectations and requirements of new development to the development community
2. Support the examination of permit process for opportunities for improvement or streamlining, including the provision of on-line permitting services
3. Encourage the evaluation of adding staff resources to process permit requests in a timely fashion and opportunities to accommodate short-term increases in permitting activity, particularly as the Town Center development is completed
4. Provide a business and development perspective in conversations related to traffic planning, including the creation of a Town Center grid, and mitigation requirements
5. Continue to work with Pierce County on an expedited sewer permitting process

B. Proactively plan for long-term commercial growth and space needs

1. As Town Center comes on-line, evaluate the City's supply of buildable land available to accommodate future commercial development; compare to projected demand; take actions to ensure adequate commercial space while protecting community character
2. Retain existing commercially zoned land and explore opportunities to appropriately augment this supply through rezoning or upzoning when this can be done in a way that is not in conflict with the City's vision for individual districts and does not adversely affect the quality of life of neighbors





C. Actively pursue workforce development activities with partners

1. Partner with local educational institutions to provide training, internships, and skill development
2. Explore the feasibility of creating an educational campus by partnering with local educational institutions to provide both workforce training and lifelong learning opportunities
3. Facilitate communication between local educational institutions and key businesses in UP to ensure that curricula are providing recent graduates with skills needed by local employers

4. Identify businesses planning to grow their workforce and help them find ways to recruit and retain employees by linking them to City partners specializing in workforce issues

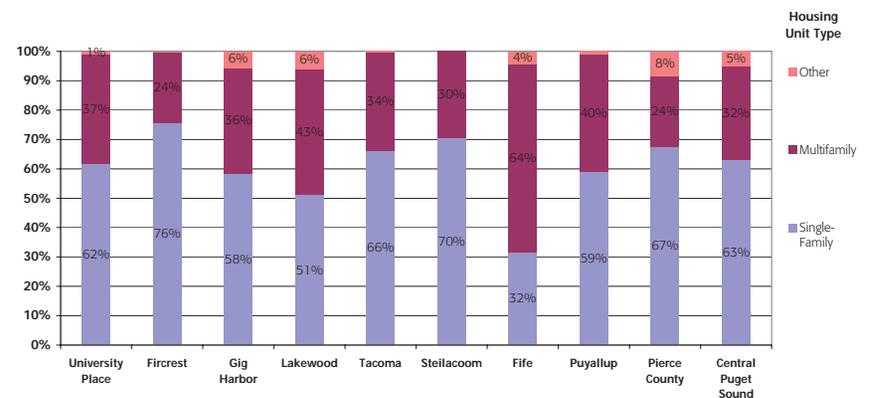


5. Utilize the proposed Business Development Center as a central location to post employment opportunities and connect businesses and job seekers

D. Collaborate with organizations such as the Pierce County Housing Authority to increase the availability of affordable workforce housing

1. Encourage well-designed workforce housing that is consistent with approved design standards
2. Concentrate higher density residential development around existing commercial areas to increase economic vitality and prevent encroachment on single family neighborhoods

Distribution of Housing Units by Type, 2005



- University Place has a relatively large proportion of multifamily housing units (37%) compared to Pierce County (24%), the region (32%), and most of its neighbors except for Lakewood (43%).



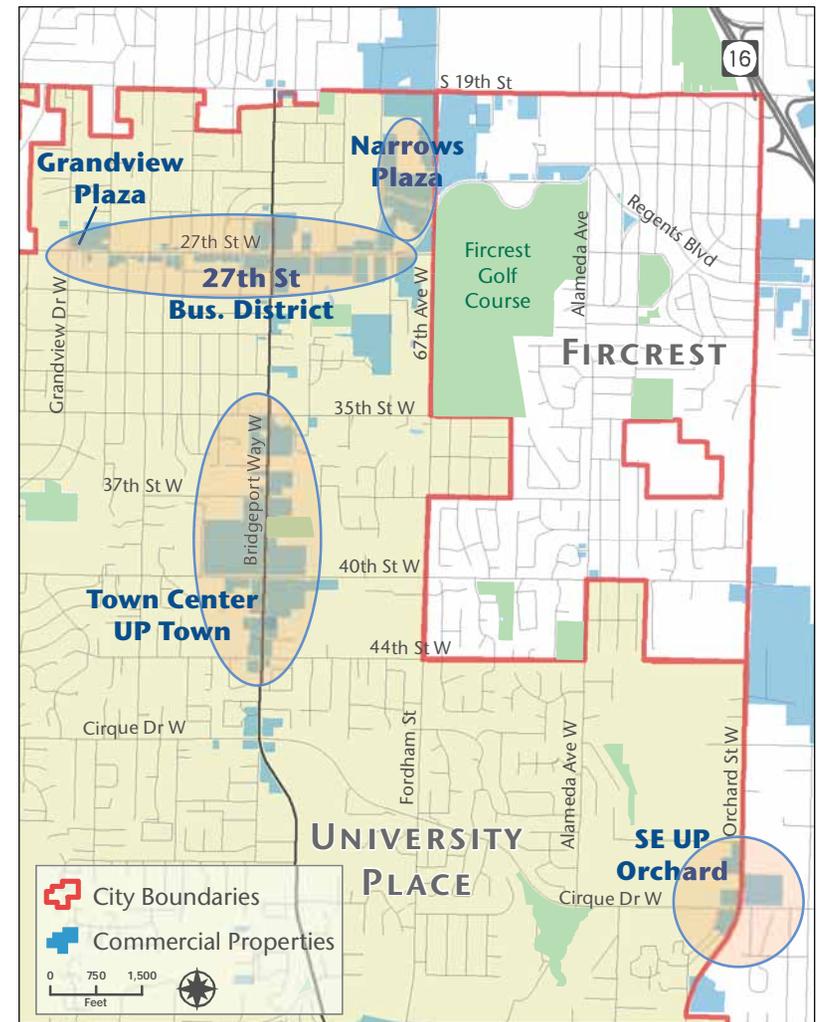
Goal III Facilitate Commercial Vitality in Business Districts and Other Commercial Areas

UP's commercial growth will be concentrated in the following business districts and commercial areas. The City's Economic Development Committee and Planning Commission are collaborating to establish district-specific visions and design guidelines for each. The following definitions and description of desired development are preliminary and not meant to be definitive: additional discussion is underway for each of these areas.

- **UP Town and Town Center** (35th – 44th on Bridgeport): mixed use, higher-end retail, office uses
- The **27th Street Business District** (67th to Grandview along 27th): neighborhood retail, small “mom and pop” shops
 - o **Grandview Plaza** (corner of 27th and Grandview): mixed use, neighborhood retail, senior focus
- **Narrows Plaza**: larger-scale retail, with the possibility for some office uses
- **Southeast Corner of the City/ Orchard Street**: to be determined

In addition to the above geographic areas, the City plans to develop design guidelines for a high-density residential and multi-family overlay. The Economic Development Committee should be involved in the development of these guidelines, particularly as they relate to neighboring commercial areas.

Business Districts and Commercial Areas





A. For all distinct business districts and commercial areas:

1. In collaboration with the Planning Commission and City staff, host a Developers Forum following the opening of the Town Center development to communicate the City vision for each district and encourage interest in projects throughout UP
2. Identify necessary capital improvements to support commercial development
3. Improve access to and connectivity between commercial areas
4. Assess design guidelines, improve signage, and develop marketing materials to foster a distinct identity for each commercial area
 - Support efforts to insert flexibility into regulations while maintaining their rigor, using such approaches as form-based code or a point-based system
 - Tailor design standards and land use requirements in commercial areas to match the City's Vision for each area
 - Facilitate input by the development community in the creation of district-specific design guidelines
 - Utilize pro forma analysis from the perspective of a prospective developer to assess the market impacts of proposed design guideline
5. Promote and encourage greater wireless and broadband access throughout the City, particularly in commercial areas

6. Consider opportunities to encourage green building and sustainable design
7. Contain commercial development and related traffic impacts so as not to encroach on nearby residential neighborhoods
8. Clearly communicate planned infrastructure changes to affected property owners on a timely basis

B. Contribute to achieving the City's vision for the Town Center development

1. Encourage the use of public spaces, art and design characteristics to ensure the Town Center development maintains a local and accessible feel
2. Provide support to existing UP businesses seeking to relocate to or near Town Center

Stakeholder Input

- "The 27th Street District is long and disjointed, going from Grandview to 67th with Bridgeport dividing it into two very different characters. The District needs critical mass, momentum."
- "I see the 27th Business District as home to mom and pop shops and medical offices, but not high intensity retail. It's important to preserve the residential character."
- "Redevelopment along 27th is going to happen when Town Center goes up and people want to move here. The District should be connected to the Narrows."
- "With Wal-Mart coming in across the street, the City really needs to focus on the Narrows, allocating staff resources to this area to work with property owners."
- "At the Narrows I see medium size box stores; perhaps mixed use development if the City wants to push the envelope."



C. Capitalize on the "Town Center Ripple Effect" to create a dynamic and exciting UP Town District ▲

1. Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties
 - Develop alternative development plans for parcels south of Town Center, identifying retail, office and other desired uses based on market research and analysis
 - Proactively work with major property owners to encourage redevelopment in line with the City's vision for UP Town
2. Explore market interest for additional professional office space south of Town Center with the potential for retail along Bridgeport
3. Invest in master planning for selected sites: 40th Street West, Green Firs, Hogan's, and Broback parcels
4. Work with City planners and the business community to improve the UP Town street grid to provide alternative routes and support projected growth in traffic with economic growth
5. Study and plan for additional infrastructure needs to accommodate ripple effects of Town Center

D. Continue the City's work with the 27th Street Business District and Grandview Plaza

1. Partner with the established business district to create a unified feel the length of 27th Street
2. Prioritize the completion of planned streetscape and sidewalk improvements
3. Prioritize improvements to the intersection of 27th and Bridgeport
4. Continue to provide technical assistance in the promotion, marketing and completion of Grandview Plaza as envisioned in its Master Plan



E. Encourage redevelopment of the Narrows Plaza Shopping Center

1. Coordinate area wide planning by collaborating with Tacoma Community College and the cities of Tacoma and Fircrest
2. Facilitate a master planning effort among property owners to develop a common vision for the redevelopment of this area to complement the UP Town district and capitalize on nearby large-scale retail development
3. Provide continued assistance to area developers to encourage land assembly and contiguous development
4. Evaluate needed infrastructure improvements to support redevelopment

F. Establish a long-term vision for the Southeast Corner of the City/Orchard Street

1. Work within the City, with the residential and business community, and with City partners to establish a long-term vision for the character of this district





Goal IV Develop the City's Potential as a Shopping and Tourism Destination

A. Create synergies between Chambers Creek and UP Town ▲

1. Invest in market research to better understand the demographics and preferences of Chambers Creek visitors
2. Create a sense of place in UP Town that is consistent with the Chambers Creek development
3. Attract retailers, restaurants, lodging options and entertainment opportunities to Town Center and other commercial areas that appeal to Chambers Creek visitors
4. Create convenient and aesthetically cohesive street and trail connections, with good signage, between Town Center and Chambers Creek
5. Explore public or private transportation options between Town Center, Chambers Creek, and other locations of interest. Possibilities include a shuttle service or a trolley
6. Pursue opportunities to provide hotel, other lodging facilities, and conference space in and around Town Center
7. Plan community special events and promotions to coincide with Chambers Bay tournaments and periods of high activity
8. Promote UP attractions in Chambers Bay literature and in media read by users of Chambers Bay
9. Ensure adequate parking exists in Town Center to support car traffic from Chambers Creek

Chambers Creek Properties and the Chambers Bay Golf Course

The development of the Chambers Creek Properties represents a significant new asset for the region. The Properties will eventually include the much-anticipated Chambers Bay Golf Course; other recreational uses including trails, open space, play fields, and an arboretum; and restaurants and lodging. The Properties will contribute significantly to local recreation options, serving as an enhancement to UP's already-high quality of life. The Chambers Bay Golf Course, designed to be a first-class facility, will draw golfers nationally and even internationally to experience the course.

UP's opportunity is to draw users of the golf course and the Properties' other amenities into University Place, enticing them with a dynamic and appealing downtown environment; shopping, dining, and lodging options that are attractive to the Chambers Bay visitor; and convenient access.

Stakeholder Input

- "The City identity will be redefined with Chambers Creek. The City's name will be associated with the course because it is located inside the City boundaries."
- "The degree to which they can harmonize their Town Center plan with Chambers Creek is an opportunity – there is chance at synergy."





B. Incorporate Chambers Creek and UP attractions into local and regional tours

1. Work with convention groups to include Chambers Creek and UP attractions as part of group tours or area golf course tours
2. Partner with City of Tacoma and the Convention and Visitor's Bureau to evaluate the City's ability to attract small scale conventions

C. Ensure UP is easily accessible and identifiable for visitors

1. Working with partners, explore opportunities to make auto and public transit access to UP convenient and direct
2. To enhance the City's identity and brand, use signage and design elements to clearly demarcate City limits

D. Capitalize on UP's waterfront

1. Support the development of a marina as proposed in the Chambers Creek Master Plan to function as both a community asset and a tourism draw
2. Support and encourage waterfront access and development of complementary recreational uses and activities for Day Island Marina
3. Support Pierce County's efforts to build a bridge over the railroad tracks, providing recreational access to the waterfront from Chambers Creek



Goal V Enhance the City's Brand, Image and Identity through the Creation of Dynamic Public Spaces and Effective Promotion of the City and Individual Districts

A. Effectively market UP as a whole ▲

1. Use the launch of Town Center and Chambers Creek as an opportunity to freshly brand and promote the City, using new materials and multiple media forms to portray an image that is energetic, dynamic, and diverse, showing a mix of people and styles; promote UP as an exciting regional destination and an artistic, family-friendly community with an active lifestyle and a high quality of life
2. Create compelling literature describing UP as a business friendly community with attractive demographics and market potential, as well as a desire to support business through a strong economic development program; low taxes and fees, including no B&O tax; an aligned planning environment; and an efficient permitting process
3. Promote the services offered through UP's Business Solutions Program, targeting established businesses as well as start-up businesses and businesses relocating to UP
4. Synthesize demographic, economic and market studies to create compelling material profiling University Place and describing opportunities for economic growth

B. Promote Town Center, UP Town and other distinct districts ▲

1. Develop marketing materials and update design standards and signage to build on the agreed upon themes established in the visioning process for each district
2. Encourage and support district- or neighborhood-based special events

C. Develop successful and dynamic public spaces to strengthen community bonds and attract visitors

1. Encourage the development of interesting and sustainable public spaces in commercial areas using plazas, urban pocket parks, distinctive architecture and memorable landmarks to create a stronger sense of place
2. Explore creative strategies using art to create a distinct and unique UP experience

An example: Encourage the placement of art in public spaces that can be lit at night to create a unique nighttime art viewing UP experience that brings evening vitality to commercial districts
3. Encourage the growth and expansion of the Farmer's Market as part of Town Center
4. Assist in the development of design guidelines that ensure that future development retains a "UP feel" and contributes to a district-specific identity

THE PLACE



D. Explore opportunities to establish an educational facility in UP

1. Explore and actively facilitate the recruitment of higher educational institutions as part of Town Center
2. Engage in dialogue with local community colleges and similar institutions about co-locating as part of an educational style campus
3. Encourage institutions to leverage resources and provide complementary programs for lifelong learning and continuing education, training opportunities for employees, and other courses to meet the changing needs of local residents and employers
4. Actively recruit the location of alternative educational facilities within UP and UP Town in particular, pursuing such options as a culinary institute, an art school, and a storefront lifelong learning venue offering arts and cooking classes, language learning opportunities, and courses on other topics offered by a local community college

E. Strengthen and market the City's art community and activities

1. Assist in implementing the Community Art Plan
2. Explore opportunities to integrate art festivals and community events with local businesses and commercial areas

F. Support efforts to improve the City's parks and open spaces

1. Continue to improve UP's quality of life by partnering with the City's Parks Commission and local school districts to invest in UP's parks and open space systems
2. Support Pierce County efforts to create a regional park in Chambers Creek



Stakeholder Input

- "I don't want to see a cookie cutter type city – we have to maintain our sense of identity. We can grow in a thoughtful manner to provide services as well as increase livability. I'm very interested in public artwork, building design, streetlights, benches, and sidewalks. People need to walk away from UP thinking it is a unique, clean place, full of different experiences."
- "I'll bet you nobody thinks there are different business districts in UP. You've got Green Firs (now known as Trader Joes), Fred Meyer, and 19th Street. There is no feeling of residential neighborhoodness, just streets and houses, despite the great things done with streetscapes."
- "It's important that people know they're in UP – we want people to know they're in a different place when they come through UP. We need to create that identity."



Goal VI Be a Strong and Effective Partner and a Regional Leader



A. Align the visions and strategies of the Economic Development Committee and the Planning Commission, enhancing the working relationship between the two groups ▲

1. Provide regular, two-way communication with the Planning Commission, including notification of upcoming agenda items on the EDC calendar that would benefit from Planning Commission input
2. When appropriate, attend Planning Commission meetings to provide an EDC perspective on Planning Commission agenda items of interest and invite Planning Commission input during relevant EDC discussions
3. Provide input early in the Planning Commission's deliberation of issues with economic development impact
4. Collaborate with the Planning Commission in creating district-specific design guidelines
5. Participate in regular review and revision of the City's Comprehensive Plan and implement Comprehensive Plan goals related to economic development



B. Enhance UP's visibility and role in the region by being an active and engaged participant in the Prosperity Partnership program and other regional conversations ▲

The Prosperity Partnership

The Prosperity Partnership is a four-county regional economic development initiative. Launched in July 2004, the effort involves over 150 government, business, labor and community organizations from King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. The Partnership's established goal is to establish long-term economic prosperity and 100,000 new jobs for the central Puget Sound Region.

The Partnership has six Foundation Initiatives designed to strengthen the basic infrastructure upon which economic development depends, including education, technology, new and small business support, tax structure, transportation, and social capital and quality of life.



Additionally, the partnership has identified fourteen primary clusters as strengths of the Puget Sound Region. Of these, five pilot clusters – Aerospace, Clean Technology, Information Technology, Life Sciences, and Logistics and International Trade – have been designated as initial priorities.

UP's continued active participation in the Prosperity Partnership has been identified as a priority for a number of reasons. Most important, there is a recognition by City staff and community stakeholders that "there are no islands," as one stakeholder stated. UP's prosperity is tied to the region's prosperity.

Involvement in the Partnership keeps UP staff involved and knowledgeable of regional economic development activities, creating opportunities for the City to both contribute to and benefit from these efforts. Additionally, participation in the Partnership creates an opportunity to raise UP's profile regionally and develop stronger collaborative relationships with neighbors.

C. Collaborate with Pierce County, neighboring cities, major businesses and other partners in dealing with economic development issues ▲

1. Continue the strong partnership between the City and the UP/ Fircrest Chamber of Commerce
2. Continue to collaborate with Pierce County and the Pierce County Economic Development Board
3. Increase cooperation with neighboring cities and Pierce County by finding similar goals and objectives including opportunities for joint marketing and business development opportunities
4. Review, reassess and clarify specific roles and responsibilities with partners at least once a year
5. Better communicate UP goals, priorities and actions to partners through regular communications
6. Support regional efforts to solidify the long-term viability of Pierce County's military bases



