



Community Development Department

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MEMORANDUM

To: Economic Development Commission
From: Emily Arteche, Director CD
Date: January 15, 2025
Subject: Summary of Roundtable Meetings and Key Initiatives

INTRODUCTION:

This memo serves as a summary of our recent roundtable meetings conducted in 2024 aimed at fostering economic growth and development in our community. The EDC Roundtables were developed to occur quarterly with employees within the city's employment districts, starting with the business park, Ridge, Kimball Creek Village, and Downtown Association regarding topics listed on the 2024 EDC Work program.

BACKGROUND:

The Commission conducted outreach to 68 local businesses, inviting them to participate in small business roundtables, which resulted in three successful meetings held at City Hall in 2024. One Roundtable scheduled in November 2024 was cancelled and has since been rescheduled to February 2025 with the Downtown Business Association.

ANALYSIS:

We engaged in small business roundtables to gather insights and foster relationships within our local business community. Below are the key points discussed and initiatives identified:

1. Supporting a Vibrant Tourism Economy

Initiatives for improving signage and wayfinding in our area were discussed to enhance the visitor experience.

The Troll Project, an artistic installation by Thomas Dambo, was identified as a unique attraction to boost tourism.

2. Addressing the Need for Increased Foot Traffic and Customers

Challenges: We identified minimum wage requirements and inflation as significant barriers affecting local businesses' revenues.

Opportunities:

We discussed creating more tourism and local marketing opportunities to draw visitors and increase foot traffic.

Enhancements to wayfinding signage were emphasized for better navigation and attraction of diverse clientele.

Increased marketing efforts for tourism and tourism development were deemed essential to raising local business revenues.

3. Workforce and Living Costs

The rising cost of living has been identified as a deterrent for workforce recruitment from within the area. We proposed exploring the feasibility of a Snoqualmie Business Bus to facilitate access to the workforce, potentially attracting employees from surrounding regions.

In summary, meetings have highlighted a strong commitment to nurturing local businesses, fostering entrepreneurial spirit, supporting tourism, and addressing challenges with thoughtful opportunities.

NEXT STEPS:

Discuss key findings and suggestions from the Roundtables and determine action items that could be considered for 2025 work program.