



Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes September 16, 2022

The September 16, 2022, Economic Development Board Meeting held in person and via Zoom, was called to order at 7:37 a.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Les Anderson, Kristine Birkenkopf, Dave Pelletier, John Russell (online), Randy Heagle

Absent: Blake Arnold, Ashley Palmer

Staff Members in Attendance:

Patricia Love, Sarah Cho, Audrey Rotrock

Also known to be present: N/A

Approval of Minutes:

The Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the last meeting on July 15, 2022.

Storefront Improvement Project Update

Storefront Improvement Programs are a common tool used throughout the United States to incentivize private property owners to make investments in their properties. The program seeks to preserve and enhance the charm of the downtown commercial area by providing small grants to property owners to make physical improvements to their storefronts.

Community Development Director, Patricia Love, told the Board that this program is moving forward. The City Council had good feedback and recommended the grant amount be increased. Patricia would like to suggest \$100,000 for the budget. This will allow a range of grants (in amounts of \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$20,000) for different pilot projects to be dispersed. One of the City's consultants from BHC Consultants, who is working on the Stanwood Municipal Code update project, is a professor at the University of Washington. She has suggested using Planning students from the university for the Storefront Improvement Project as a class project. The students would work on the guidelines, and research & design parameters for this project, gaining real world planning experience. Sarah Cho, will handle the application materials and processes for businesses wanting to participate in the program.

BHC is taking this idea to the University's panel of instructors for approval, and the topic will be back on the Economic Development Board agenda in November. The City hopes to bring it back to Council in January.

The Board members had the following comments:

- The Board would like to see a common theme maintained to preserve and maintain historic/small town details.
- How will this apply to new buildings? The grant program is intended to be for existing buildings, but if a developer wanted to build a new building, they would likely need to follow the parameters of the grant program. These details are still being discussed.
- The Storefront Improvement guidelines will eventually be codified into the Municipal Code.

The Economic Development Board unanimously supports the Storefront Improvement Program.



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Draft Work Plan for 2023

Staff has drafted ideas for the 2023 work plan for the Economic Development Board and would appreciate suggestions on the following items:

1. Twin City Mile – City Beautification
2. Business recruitment, retention, and expansion
3. Storefront improvement program
4. Special events
5. EDB requests

The Board discussed adding the following items to the Work Plan for 2023:

- Adding a four-way stop to the intersection of 102nd Avenue NW and 271st Street NW – a high traffic intersection. A stop sign would allow safe crossing of the road and bring more people to west Stanwood businesses.
- Two-hour parking enforcement in west Stanwood.

Other topics discussed:

- Status of the bypass project: WA DOT is continuing to analyze traffic studies, looking at peak periods, delays, and considering whether a bypass or other, less expensive traffic calming measures would be appropriate.
- How can the City draw more residents into west Stanwood?

Business License Analytics

In the month of **July**, the City received a total of 28 new business applications – 16 Non-Resident Business, 7 Home Occupation Business Licenses, and 5 City Business Licenses. Below is the breakdown of NAICS codes for the businesses:

- 39% were classified as Construction,
- 14% were classified as Administrative and Support Services,
- 11% were classified as Retail Trade,
- 7% were classified as Other Services (except Public Administration),
- 7% of businesses were classified as Real Estate Rental and Licensing,
- 4% were classified as Transportation and Warehousing,
- 4% were classified as Information,
- 4% were classified as Health Care and Social Assistance,
- 4% were classified as Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services,
- 3% were classified as Wholesale Trade, and
- 3% were classified as Utilities.

In the month of **August**, the City received a total of 32 new business applications – 22 Non-Resident Business, 3 Home Occupation Business Licenses, 6 City Business Licenses, and 1 Non-Profit Business. Below is the breakdown of NAICS codes for the businesses:

- 47% were classified as Construction,
- 13% were classified as Other Services (except Public Administration),
- 10% were classified as Retail Trade,
- 6% were classified as Admin & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services,
- 6% were classified as Health Care and Social Assistance,



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- 6% were classified as Transportation and Warehousing,
- 3% were classified as Accommodation and Food Services,
- 3% were classified as Finance and Insurance,
- 3% were classified as Real Estate Rental and Licensing, and
- 3% were classified as Wholesale Trade.

The Board members discussed the following topics:

- Grants and/or a program for power and internet infrastructure. Since the pandemic, working from home and internet usage is on the rise. Many residents and business owners in the City conduct business online and/or have a presence online. When there are power outages and low bandwidth, it affects how business can be conducted.
- Stores providing essentials, such as T-shirts and socks, are needed in the City.
- The City is beginning to provide Grand Opening ceremonies for new business to increase public attention.
- The Land Use Assessment is going to the Planning Commission on Monday, September 19, 2022. The Economic Development Board will have a chance to see it on the agenda in October. This will be an opportunity to update zoning codes. Stanwood has met the population target but is not meeting the employment target. Changing zoning in some areas could provide opportunities for more businesses to move in and provide more jobs.

Discover Stanwood Camano Analytics

Analytics for the month of **July** are as follows: Users: 2,427, Page views: 4,580. Of those views, 88.5% were New Visitors and 11.5% were Returning Visitors.

The Acquisition Overview is 49% Organic Search, 31.4% Direct, 11.3% Referral, and the remaining 8.3% through Social.

The audience locations from the United States were: Washington: 1,612, Virginia: 150, Wyoming: 145, California: 109, and Oregon: 44.

Within Washington, the audience locations were: Seattle: 403, Not Set: 390, Camano: 146, Everett: 54, Marysville: 52, Stanwood: 49, and Mount Vernon: 34.

Facebook – Page Reach: 7,031, Page Visits: 528.

Instagram – Page Reach: 1,396, Profile Visits: 156.

Analytics for the month of **August** are as follows: Users: 2,828, Page views: 5,327. Of those views, 88.5% were New Visitors and 11.5% were Returning Visitors.

The Acquisition Overview is 52.2% Organic Search, 21.9% Direct, 19.3% Referral, and the remaining 6.6% through Social.

The audience locations from the United States were: Washington: 2,080, Virginia: 148, Wyoming: 133, Texas: 46, and Oregon: 40.

Within Washington, the audience locations were: Seattle: 554, Not Set: 425, Camano: 155, Everett: 78, Marysville: 76, and Stanwood: 59.

Facebook – Page Reach: 22,253, Page Visits: 1,036.

Instagram – Page Reach: 2,454, Profile Visits: 333.



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The Board members discussed the following topics:

- After looking at the Washington page views, could we find more nearby cities to advertise in, such as Bellingham, to attract more visitors?
- How are younger demographics getting information/news? Try to target advertising in those markets (Facebook, Instagram, TikToc, etc.)
- Find out what search word people are using to find the DSC website.
- Consider creating a handout/brochure to distribute to people participating during Glass Quest as a guide to local shopping and restaurants.

Economic Development Board Membership

Five out of the seven board members terms are set to expire this year.

1. Les Anderson – Idler’s Car Show
2. Randy Heagle – Windermere Real Estate
3. Blake Arnold – Windermere Real Estate
4. John Russell – The UPS Store
5. Ashley Palmer – Flora & Fauna

If board members choose to renew their terms, their new term will run from 2023-2024.

Board members Les Anderson, Randy Heagle, and John Russell agreed to renew their membership. Sarah Cho will reach out to those on the list who were absent for this meeting.

Chamber of Commerce Update – Les Anderson

The Stanwood Chamber of Commerce is in the process of disbanding as it was and will be restarting/rebranding as the Stanwood Commerce Alliance. This new Alliance will be partnering with the Economic Alliance of Snohomish County (EASC) and will assist and promote Stanwood businesses. More announcements will come out later this year.

Adjourn: 8:57 am

Next meeting: October 21, 2022, at City Hall at 7:30 am

Audrey Rotrock, Associate Planner