



Community & Economic Development Action Plan

Seven Key Strategies for Economic Development



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There are seven key strategies covering different aspects of the development process that the City will employ to cause economic growth in Waukee. Each strategy has one or more goals that define what needs to be accomplished. The goals have actions that are specific steps to be taken by City staff. The merger of the strategies into a comprehensive development approach will ensure that Waukee capitalizes on future development opportunities. The seven strategies include:

1. Marketing Waukee's assets-Primary and Secondary
2. Existing Business Relationships and Retention
3. Raise Waukee's Profile among Business Decision Makers
4. Provide Development Options
5. Build Relationships with Business Decision Makers
6. Provide Useful Information
7. Financial Incentives

Key Strategy 1: Marketing Waukeee's Assets-Primary and Secondary

The City of Waukeee can be more successful if it combines its resources, expertise and relationships with other organizations to capitalize on Waukeee's economic development opportunities. Partnerships have been established with several organizations that contribute to Waukeee's economic development action plan. The City gains from the national marketing efforts of the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and the Greater Des Moines Partnership (GDMP) through access to business development leads. The City's relationship with IEDA streamlines the processes for accessing state incentive programs for new and expanding businesses.

Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive marketing plan that addresses working with IEDA and GDMP for regional and national marketing efforts to attract primary businesses

- Action 1: Participate in activities of the City of Waukeee's economic development partners such as the Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Greater Des Moines Partnership that benefit Waukeee's development efforts.

Goal 2: Actively recruit retail and secondary businesses

- Action 1: Actively participate in ICSC to recruit retail and hospitality businesses to Waukeee
- Action 2: Actively recruit secondary businesses in the metro area to locate in Waukeee.
- Action 3: Attend meetings and events hosted by Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI) to establish relationships with local developers.
- Action 4: Attract developers that are outside the metro area to Waukeee through Urban Land Institute (ULI) and ICSC. Attend regional meetings of both organizations to establish contacts with existing Midwest development firms.

Key Strategy 2: Existing Business Relationships and Retention

Existing businesses provide job growth in a community. The people of Waukeee benefit from the success of businesses in Waukeee through more employment and increased taxable valuations. One key to the success of business in Waukeee is the relationship the City organization has with the owners or managers of the existing Waukeee businesses that create new wealth for Waukeee and the region.

Goal 1: Cultivate relationships between existing businesses and the City of Waukeee through personal contacts

- Action 1: Identify the key contacts at Waukeee businesses
- Action 2: Participate in annual visits to existing businesses
- Action 3: Organize meetings with groups of industries or business neighborhoods on topics that are of value to business.

Goal 2: Help businesses grow and expand in Waukee

- Action 1: Maintain ongoing communication with Waukee businesses by distributing an Economic Development Department newsletter and carrying out periodic executive calls to each business
- Action 2: Communicate development and expansion opportunities in Waukee to management of businesses
- Action 3: Ask owners and business managers about issues that create barriers to expansion. Work with owners and managers to develop strategies to address barriers
- Action 4: Communicate often about the City's financial incentives and assistance in the development process to existing businesses wishing to expand their operations

Key Strategy 3: Raise Waukee's Profile among Business Decision Makers

Waukee is growing and is creating new opportunities for businesses to be successful. It is important that business decision makers have an understanding of demographic changes in the community, infrastructure improvements that open up new land for development, and Waukee's positive attitude toward business development. Waukee's efforts to raise its profile can be leveraged by partnering with state and regional economic development organizations, developing trusting relationships with the media and wisely using electronic media.

Goal 1: Raise the City's Profile among Commercial Real Estate Brokers

- Action 1: Maintain active membership in ICREA and attend monthly meetings

Goal 2: Raise the City's Profile with the press

- Action 1: Meet periodically with designated press representatives to ensure that Waukee is receiving the proper press coverage for all events
- Action 2: Work with the Business Record and the DSM Register to increase articles about Waukee

Community & Economic Development Advisory Council

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Senior Vice President of Store Development, Kum & Go

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Jason Worth
Sales Manager, Gilcrest-Jewett

Key Strategy 3: Raise Waukee's Profile among Business Decision Makers (continued)

Goal 3: Build on City's relationship with the Greater Des Moines Partnership (GDMP) and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). Use the City's assets to strengthen the marketing efforts of both organizations.

- Action 1: Meet with the GDMP quarterly to align the City's and the GDMP's marketing strategies
- Action 2: Meet with the IEDA annually to align the City's and IEDA's marketing strategies
- Action 3: Provide the GDMP and IEDA with timely and direct information on Waukee's development assets.
- Action 4: Attend monthly meetings hosted by the Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI)

Goal 4: Use electronic media to strengthen the City's image and communication with business

- Action 1: Develop an Economic Development department newsletter to communicate community and business successes including project and construction updates to existing and potential stakeholders.
- Action 2: Use electronic communication to solicit feedback from businesses.
- Action 3: Identify and communicate opportunities for business engagement in community activities.

Goal 5: Review policies, fees and procedures related to development

- Action 1: Meet with the Community and Economic Development Advisory Council (CEDAC) annually to review economic development policies, fees, and procedures
- Action 2: Ensure fair and consistent treatment of all customers of the City of Waukee
- Action 3: Make development as quick and easy as possible while upholding the standards set for Waukee
- Action 4: Ensure fees related to development are competitive with surrounding communities

Goal 6: Involvement in national organizations

- Action 1: Active involvement in ICSC; attend annual conference and Midwest conference
- Action 2: Active involvement in Urban Land Institute (ULI); attend one of two conferences each year

Key Strategy 4: Provide Development Options

The availability of sites and buildings are important to economic growth in Waukee. The City has been active in working with landowners and developers to identify sites and buildings within the City that are available for immediate development and yield economic growth in Waukee.

Goal 1: Create easy paths for potential users to access information on Waukee development options

- Action 1: Prepare in-depth information for each development site
- Action 2: Provide multiple avenues for accessing information on development sites and available buildings

Goal 2: Identify business park areas that serve the need for the development of future distribution facilities

- Action 1: Research sites with I-80 access and visibility along R-22 and sites west of Waukee and north of Hickman
- Action 2: Develop concept plans for each area

Key Strategy 5: Build Relationships with Business Decision Makers

Developing business relationships with business leaders is a key way to get their input into the development strategies being developed for Waukee. These relationships give the City staff insight into economic trends and prospects looking at the market.

Goal 1: Develop a written relationship-building plan

- Action 1: Develop a written plan that defines who will be contacted, how often contact will be made etc.

Goal 2: Strengthen relationships with Commercial Real Estate Brokers

- Action 1: Showcase Waukee at the annual Iowa Commercial Real Estate Association (ICREA) Expo
- Action 2: Periodically present information on development opportunities in Waukee to the staff of commercial brokers at their weekly staff meetings

Goal 3: Engage residents with strategic positions in business for their input in industry trends and assistance in developing marketing strategies

- Action 1: Enhance the work of CEDAC to shape the economic development strategies of the community
- Action 2: Coordinate meetings with CEDAC for input on what is happening with business, industry and the general economy
- Action 3: Share information on economic activity in Waukee with members of CEDAC
- Action 4: Report progress in the Economic Development Action Plan to CEDAC at each meeting and quarterly meetings of the City Council.

Key Strategy 6: Provide Useful Information

Businesses that are considering a relocation or expansion in Waukeez need relevant, timely and accurate information on the community. The City of Waukeez has committed staff resources to gathering information that is important to businesses in their decision-making process. GIS Planning site selection software provides easy access to extensive information for business decision makers. City staff also provides useful project specific information on Waukeez through one-on-one conversations with business prospects.

Goal 1: Gather and disseminate general information that is useful for developers and businesses in making decisions to invest in Waukeez.

- Action 1: Constantly improve the Community and Economic Development Department section of the City website to enable businesses and developers to acquire information necessary for development
- Action 2: Ensure that Waukeez development land and building information is accurate and complete on GIS Planning
- Action 3: Establish a key contact at each major commercial brokerage office in the metro area to be a resource for listing information

Goal 2: Provide accurate and timely information in a format that utilizes the strengths of the City of Waukeez brand.

- Action 1: Develop and keep updated a repository of information useful to businesses
- Action 2: Respond to leads generated by the GDMP and IEDA
- Action 3: Execute responses in a manner that seeks to exceed clients' expectations for timeliness and usefulness
- Action 4: Incorporate industry standards and emerging technologies into project responses and inquiries

Key Strategy 7: Financial Incentives

The City has several financial incentives that can be customized to meet business needs. The use of tax increment financing and other assistance has facilitated the location and expansion of many businesses in Waukee over the past several years.

Goal 1: Offer financial assistance programs to new and existing businesses that invest in Waukee and add taxable valuation and employment opportunities.

- Action 1: Adopt a financial incentives policy that balances the needs of the community with the assistance provided to businesses
- Action 2: Utilize Waukee's economic development programs to provide financial incentives for the expansion and relocation of existing and new businesses.
- Action 3: Work with the Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Greater Des Moines Partnership to access state incentive programs for new and existing businesses in Waukee.
- Action 4: Develop new sources of assistance and refine existing programs to encourage business growth in Waukee.
- Action 5: Use various communication methods to ensure that existing Waukee businesses are aware of the City's economic development programs.