

## **VIII. THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The Economic Development Element of the Tonasket Comprehensive Plan was first prepared in 1992 and adopted in January of 1993. At that time, the Economic Development Element contained a brief discussion of the concept of economic development which was intended to encourage community participation in planning activities. General goals and objectives were developed as a general guide for economic development planning. This introductory section remains part of this updated Plan so that it may continue as a general framework when future updates are developed. As the 1993 Comprehensive Plan was being drafted a public process unfolded that resulted in the drafting of an expanded Economic Development Element which offered a more detailed strategic plan for Tonasket's economic future. This update has been strongly influenced by past as well as current efforts lead by downtown business owners and other interested citizens intended to promote a better and brighter future for the City.

### **B. WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?**

Since economic development is so interrelated with every element of community life it is helpful to determine the community's true wants and needs before attempting to develop or implement an economic development plan. Economic development is often measured in terms of population growth which is not necessarily an adequate indicator of a strong economy, although it can be a result. Economic developers will sometimes measure economic development success in the number of jobs created; however, if this perspective is used it is important to ensure that there is a diversity of jobs available for a variety of interests and skill levels of the local work force. Additionally, providing large numbers of jobs that pay minimum wage levels may not necessarily strengthen the local economy. A measure that might be more appropriate for a "healthy" economy would be the level of social stresses in the community indicated by rates of crime, mental illness, suicide and domestic violence. For a municipality, the perception of a strong economy is commonly a strong tax base (both property and sales) that enables the local government to provide services and amenities that address social issues and result in a higher quality of life.

Developing an economy is commonly a "hit-and-miss" effort if the structure of the local economy is not completely understood. "Economic base" analysis is sometimes used to divide the economy into its basic and non-basic sector in order that it might be more thoroughly understood.

The local fruit industry is considered a basic industry. The product is "exported" to areas outside of the community resulting in "imported" jobs and income. Retail stores, service stations and professional services are members of the non-basic sector and tend to be spin-offs of basic industries. It normally stands to reason for economic development efforts to focus on the basic side of the local economic structure whether it be activities that promote ~~retention~~ retention and expansion of existing base industries or recruitment of new industries.

In summary, economic development entails actions by the community that will directly or indirectly result in the increase of trading activity within the community regardless of the quality of the trading activity and the overall benefit to the community. Therefore, the desired end product must be identified early in the process and should be the guide for economic development activity.

## **C. GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

Regardless of the approach taken to strengthen the local economy, the community as a whole should be involved in the attempt to shape its future. The "measuring stick" for a strong economy must be defined by the collection of individuals that intend to live with the results of economic development strategies. As mentioned earlier, general goals and objectives that were offered in the 1994 version of the Economic Development Element were intended to be used as a guide for the development of a strategic economic plan for the future of Tonasket. Since planning is such a dynamic process and the strategic planning portion of this plan is subject to change, it is suggested that future planning efforts should respect these general provisions.

### **1. GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- 1 Encourage an economic climate that provides diverse and meaningful employment and economic opportunities that fit the diverse local population.
- 1 Encourage the development of businesses and industries that will contribute to the social well-being of the community.
- 1 Ensure that economic development will provide a strong property and retail tax base that will enable the City to maintain a high level of service and amenities that contribute to the quality of the community.

### **2. GENERAL OBJECTIVES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- 1 Implement a community participation program that results in reasonable consensus in determining strategies for the future of the community.
- 1 Conduct an "economic base analysis" of the community's economic structure as a basis for decision making in the planning process.
- 1 Use this Comprehensive Plan as a guide in developing economic development strategies to ensure that the variety of diverse needs of the community and its physical environment are being met.

## **D. DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN**

### **1. TONASKET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Economic Development Element in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was largely the

result of the efforts of the Tonasket Economic Development Committee (TEDC). This committee was formed in January of 1992, led by Roger Castalda, a Tonasket attorney who felt that the Tonasket area possessed undiscovered opportunities for business interests existing outside the area. Another local leader, Don Vawter, who worked diligently to promote economic development as a member of the North Okanogan County Council for Economic Development (NOCED), a now defunct organization, also attended the first organizational meetings of the TEDC. Castalda was chosen as Chairman of the Committee and Vawter was appointed Coordinator.

Since the City of Tonasket, along with most of the other communities in Okanogan, was traditionally dependent on a declining supply of timber resources, it was included among a number of communities as a target for state assistance. Funding was made available by the Washington State Department of Community Development's Timber Communities Assistance Program (TCAP) to conduct the assessment of the community that resulted in the preparation of the 1994 strategic economic development plan.

The 1994 strategic plan lead directly to the development of the Economic Development Element adopted in the 1994 plan as well as providing the foundation for this 2012 update. Following is a summary of the efforts that lead to the 1994 Economic Development Element

## **2. THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**

The initial task taken on by the TEDC was to make an assessment of the community's existing economic position. The assessment was performed using a process utilized by Eric Hovee, a consultant hired to perform an earlier assessment completed for the Central Okanogan Valley in 1990. Several findings in each of these earlier reports apply throughout Okanogan County and are found in the Tonasket assessment. Essentially, the process involved listing of known Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the area, thus, the acronym SWOT is used.

The SWOT style analysis was developed with TEDC member's input and a survey that was conducted in February, 1992 and another done in March, 1992. A draft of the Community Assessment was completed in May of 1992. There was always evolving participation at the TEDC meetings and a few late-comers indicated that the Community Assessment may not be totally representative of the Tonasket area's diverse citizenry. It was at this time that the TEDC began to realize that the planning process lacked the broad base participation necessary for such a diverse community to successfully plan for its future.

Over a several month period, the TEDC used the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified in the community assessment to brainstorm potential activity that could possibly stimulate the economic climate in the North Okanogan Valley. As intended, the potential projects discussed were eventually narrowed down to several priority projects that could be conceivably accomplished by the community.

### **3. TONASKET SCHOOL/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP**

During the above described planning activity another planning process began. The School/Community Development (SCD) Partnership was developed as a pilot project of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories of Portland, Oregon. The SCD Partnership proved to be effective in drawing a diverse cross-section of the Tonasket community, likely due to its close alliance with the Tonasket School District (includes a good many community participants from the outlying areas). The TEDC decided that this activity would be good for Tonasket and verbally endorsed the concept at a well-attended meeting at the Tonasket Senior Center.

Since it was recognized that a paid coordinator was necessary to effectively organize, additional funding was made available through Timber Communities Assistance Program (TCAP) to get the SCD Partnership underway. A community member and ongoing participant of the TEDC, Margaret Johnson, was secured as a coordinator for the SCD Partnership. The Community Council was organized and a great deal of public participation in that process has resulted in the development of a number of community development goals. Cross participation between the TEDC and the SCD Partnership has not only resulted in shared goals for economic development but a recognition of the diversity of concerns and interests that exist in the Tonasket community.

### **4. PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION**

As the planning process evolved there was consistently discussion regarding the role of value-added wood products as a potential income generator for the community. In February of 1992, Ron Nielsen of the Okanogan County Council on Economic Development (OCCED) reported on a feasibility study to be conducted by Washington State University (WSU) for several value added wood product options. Several committee members traveled to WSU in October of 1992 and discussed medium density fiberboard and block board as value added options for the Tonasket area. It was decided at the meeting at WSU that block board would be a viable option to pursue. It was agreed that value-added options should be included in the Economic Development Plan. Ron Nielsen of OCCED is the contact person for that study. Unfortunately, a final report was never received from WSU on this project and the local value added wood products industry has continued to decline.

While economic development planning entered a lull after the flurry of efforts in the early 1990's, the community did not stand still. In 2002, the Tonasket Visitors and Business Resource Center (TVBRC) opened its doors adjoining the new Founders Park at the corner of First Street and Whitcomb Avenue (US 97) adjacent to City Hall.

### **5. PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION: THE ONGOING PROCESS**

In September of 1994, the TEDC reviewed this Economic Development Plan, updated various items and submitted it to the Tonasket City Council for adoption into the

Tonasket Comprehensive Plan. The Plan was adopted and in subsequent years several important items have been completed (e.g. the Tonasket Visitor and Business Resource Center) while others are still gaining traction.

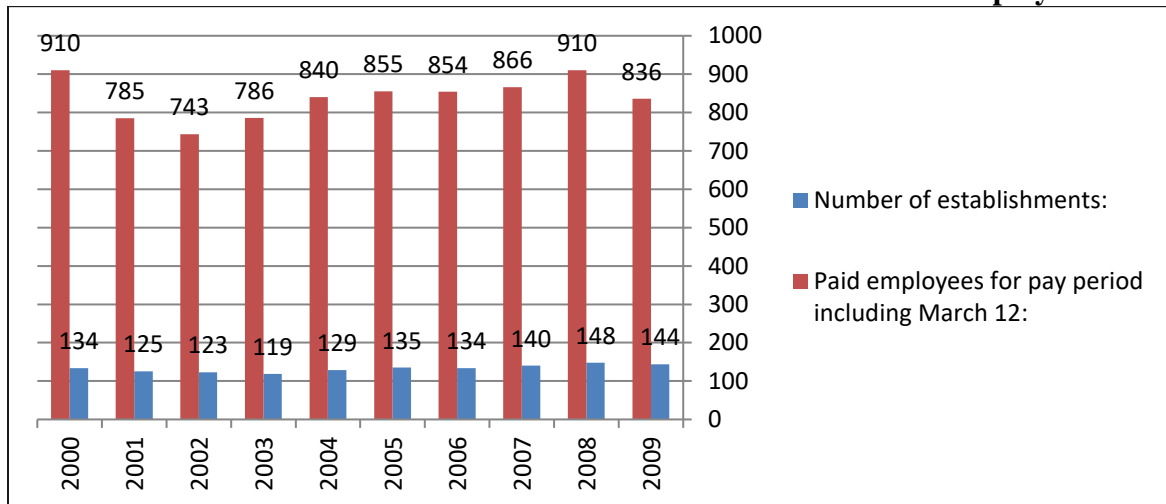
As this Element of the Comprehensive Plan was updated in early 2012, a new group was formed by downtown and area business persons with the intent of improving the appearance of the community in the short term and improving the economic climate over the long term.

The completion of and update this Economic Development Element is far from being the end of economic development planning activity for the Tonasket community. The goals, objectives, actions and recommendations contained herein suggest a never ending course of planning. As implementation strategies unfold, ongoing evaluation should take place that will change the specifics of the plan. This is to be expected as long as any changes are a result of critical evaluation to ensure reasonable consistency with the general goals outlined in the introduction to this element.

### E. ECONOMIC PROFILE

One of the keys to developing a successful plan for development of a sustainable economy in the community is to development an understanding of local business patterns and economic trends. The following series of graphs provide several different views of economic trends over the past decade gleaned from statistics (2000-2009) obtained from the US Census Bureau for the 98855 area code1.

**FIGURE VIII – 1: Total Number of Establishments and Employees**

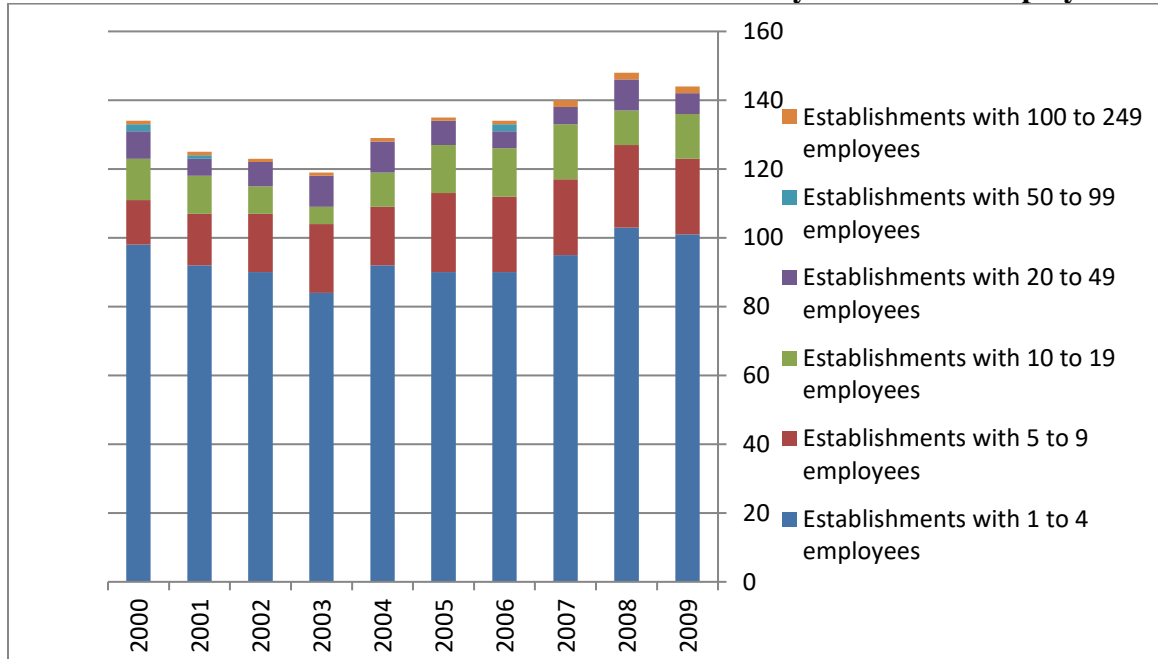


The preceding graph shows that the number of businesses at the beginning of the new century was 134, with that number declining through 2003 before beginning a slow increase in 2004 with a peak of 148 establishments in 2008. 2009 saw a decline by four establishments with no data

1 - see Appendix \_\_ for complete data.

available for 2010 or 2011. During this same period the number of employees peaked in the year 2000 with 910 then declined to 743 in 2002 before slowly reaching the 910 level again in 2008 before dropping back to 836 in 2009. While there is some correlation between the number of establishments and the number of jobs it is not a direct due to the varying number of employees that may become unemployed when a business closes. For example a loss of 4 businesses with 1-4 employees each does not have the same effect as the loss of 1 business with 50 to 99 employees. The following graph provides an illustration of this.

**FIGURE VIII – 2: Number of Establishments by Number of Employees**



This graph shows that the decline in number of employees in 2001 was likely due to the loss of businesses that employed from 20 to 99 employees and the slow recovery in number of employees from 2004 through 2008 due to new businesses with between 5 and 19 employees. This graph also shows that by far the largest number of establishments only provide between 1 and 4 jobs and that generally small business, those with less than 50 employees form the backbone of the local business community.

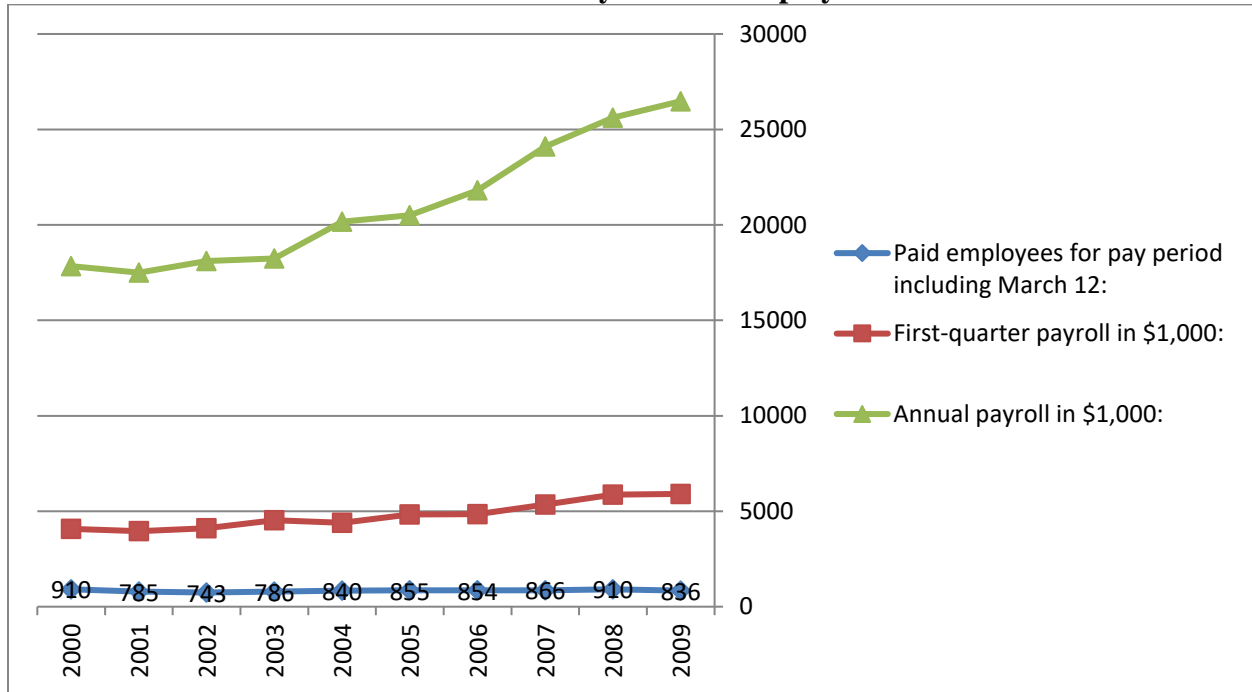
**TABLE VIII – 1: Number of Establishments by Type**

Τυπε οφ Βυσινεσσ Βασεδ Νορτη Αμερικαν Ινδυστρψ Χλασσιφιχατιον Συστεμ (ΝΑΙΧΣ) χοδε	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Τοταλ φορ αλλ σεχτορσ	144	148	140	134	135	129	119	123	125	134
Αγριχυλτυρε, φορεστρψ, φισηινγ ανδ ηυντινγ	5	6	5	6	6		8	8	9	9
Μινινγ, θυαρρψινγ, ανδ οιλ ανδ γασ εξτραχτιον	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
Χονστρυχτιον	29	29	28	23	23		13	14	15	15
Μανυφαχτυρινγ	7	9	10	8	7		6	7	3	3
Ωηολεσαλε τραδε	4	5	6	5	5		5	8	8	8
Ρεταιλ τραδε	27	29	24	27	28		26	24	27	26
Τρανσπορτατιον ανδ ωαρεηουσινγ	5	7	5	5	5		3	3	3	0
Ινφορματιον	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	2	3
Φινανχε ανδ ινσυρανχε	2	2	2	2	2		2	3	4	4
Ρεαλ εστατε ανδ ρενταλ ανδ λεασινγ	9	10	9	5	7		4	4	4	4
Προφεςσιοναλ, σχιεντιφιχ, ανδ τεχνηνιχαλ σερπιχεσ	4	4	4	4	4		4	3	3	5
Αδμινιστρατιψε ανδ συππορτ ανδ ωαστε μαναγεμεντ ανδ ρεμεδιατιον σερπιχεσ	5	4	3	2	2		4	2	3	1
Εδυχατιοναλ σερπιχεσ	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	0
Ηεαλτη χαρε ανδ σοχιαλ ασσιστανχε	13	12	12	14	12		9	12	12	13
Αχχομμοδατιον ανδ φοοδ σερπιχεσ	10	10	11	11	12		13	12	11	12
Οτηερ σερπιχεσ (εξχεπτ πυβλιχ αδμινιστρατιον)	19	16	17	18	18		18	17	14	13

The table shows that the Construction, Retail Trade and Other Services sectors have historically contained the largest number of business establishments, however the construction sector has shown the greatest increase in number of businesses with a near doubling of the number of businesses from 2000 to 2009. Several sectors, including Mining, Accommodation and Food Services and Professional, scientific and technical services, have been fairly steady in terms of number of establishments, while others, Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services and Manufacturing have seen a steady increase and Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and Wholesale trade have seen steady declines.

Another view of the economy in the Tonasket zip code is payroll information. The following graph shows that total payroll has been increasing at an average of 4.57% annually, while the total number of employees has remained relatively flat.

**FIGURE VIII – 3: Payroll and Employees Data**



## F. THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

### vision statement

*The Tonasket Community is striving for a healthy, diversified and sustainable economy that provides a variety of options for present and future generations.*

Generally, the vision statement represents the overall end product that the Tonasket community is working to achieve. To successfully attain the vision it must be common to the majority of the community while the actions in its pursuit should be orchestrated to maximize limited community resources. This plan offers Goals, Objectives and Strategic Actions that provide the means to collectively set and hold a common course that is aimed at attaining the vision. Many months of public participation are the basis for ensuring that the Vision, Goals and Objectives are common to the majority of the Tonasket community.

Each Goal represents a key component of the vision while Objectives represent key projects that build upon the goal. Priority Objectives are projects that are currently being pursued and considered key to accomplishing other projects identified in the plan.

Rationale statements are also provided for several Objectives in order to demonstrate their importance



to the overall economic development strategy. Particular items that were identified in the community assessment are included in Rationale statements.

Specific Actions are necessary to keep things happening. Actions are the most dynamic part of this plan because they can be systematically eliminated in a very short period. One action may lead to several more actions that are not identified in the plan. Actions are provided mostly to get things started and should be used as a basis for the ongoing preparation of short-term action plans that identify responsible parties, timelines and potential barriers to success. As any individual or group pursues objectives of this plan they should strategically lay out, in writing, a list of actions that will be used to accomplish the end result.

## 1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL:** Revitalize the Tonasket business district to create a comfortable, attractive and pedestrian friendly trade center that appeals to visitors and residents alike.

**RATIONALE:** The image of Tonasket' central business district has been a an ongoing concern expressed by both downtown businesses and the patrons of downtown business. Additionally, this goal should be easiest to pursue in the short-term.

It stands to reason that an attractive community will help to:

- 1) Entice the traveling public to stop and trade in Tonasket;
- 2) assist in recruitment of new business and industry by demonstrating a high quality of life; and
- 3) build a positive self image for the community that will encourage positive things to happen.

**PRIORITY OBJECTIVE:** Develop an ongoing community revitalization program that is a priority agenda item at every Chamber of Commerce and City Council meeting.

**ACTION:** Support and encourage downtown improvement committee of Chamber of Commerce that includes, City representatives, and other pertinent community members with a focus on promoting and implementing downtown beautification efforts. This group should prepare more detailed action strategies that include methods to assist businesses in improvement their streetfront appearance.

**ACTION:** Explore potential benefits of becoming certified under the State of Washington's Main Street Program.

**ACTION:** Pursue funding to hire an individual that works to promote tourism,

business and downtown revitalization efforts.

**ACTION:** Ensure that the Chamber, downtown businesses and other organizations are provided opportunities to shape the outcomes of transportation projects on US 97 and SR 20.

**ACTION:** Work to update and implement a streetscaping plan for downtown that includes estimates for the costs of business owners to participate in a local improvement district (LID). An LID could be coupled with outside funding to complete a comprehensive improvement project.

**GOAL:** Increase business opportunities in Tonasket by recognizing, promoting and utilizing local talent and resources.

**RATIONALE:** This objective was originally the result of goal a setting activity of the School/Community Development Partnership and was intended to nurture the school/community relationship while providing a base for economic development activity. Many developing entrepreneurs have the innovative ideas, abilities and resources to produce but lack the business training and/or experience to be successful. The business resource center project addresses several findings of the 1991 Community Assessment, which are just as valid in 2012 as they were in the early 1990's.

Strengths and Opportunities identified in the Assessment and taken advantage of by this project include:

#### Strengths

- There is a demonstrated record of volunteerism and successful fund raising for important community projects with a force of expertise from retired individuals.

#### Opportunities

- Recreation based tourism.
- Entrepreneurial ventures.
- Canadian business expansion.

Weaknesses and threats potentially resolved by the business resource center include:

#### Weaknesses

- Tonasket resource based industries are shrinking, resulting in loss of job and income possibilities.
- Limited job and career opportunities for young people.
- Lack of comprehensive marketing strategy.
- High unemployment and a depressed economy.

Threats

- Employment needs.
- Low expectation of community.
- Economic downturn.

**PRIORITY OBJECTIVE:** Support the Tonasket Visitors and Business Resource Center (TVBRC) in developing partnerships with other entities that will provide management counseling and loan packaging assistance for existing and start-up businesses.

**ACTION:** Work with the Economic Alliance to coordinate Small Business Development Center counseling services and the North Central Washington Business Loan Fund to assist in securing financing for projects.

**ACTION:** Work with local, state and federal government agencies and institutions to identify funding and other resources for the center.

**ACTION:** Identify private funding sources and pursue ongoing funding for Center equipment and staff.

**ACTION:** Assess local businesses and organizations for interest and support.

**ACTION:** Contact Wenatchee Valley College and assess level of interest for potential participation.

**PRIORITY OBJECTIVE:** Hire a person for the management and coordination of activities intended to satisfy the Goals and Objectives identified in this plan.

**ACTION:** Identify potential funding sources for ongoing of this position.

**ACTION:** Use City engineers, contract planner and/or Forest Service grant writing personnel to pursue funding from identified sources.

**ACTION:** Retain coordinator.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop a comprehensive business strategy to capture the Canadian market that travels through the community.

**ACTION:** Perform a survey that targets the Canadian traveler to determine the most desired products and services sought by this market.

**ACTION:** Encourage businesses to incorporate products and services identified

the survey.

**ACTION:** Encourage businesses to develop advertising strategies that inform the Canadian traveler that their wants and needs are satisfied in Tonasket.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop a cottage industry retail/wholesale facility.

**ACTION:** Develop an inventory of home based businesses for the Greater Tonasket Area.

**ACTION:** Survey home based industries to assess needs and determine level of interest for retail/wholesale facility.

**ACTION:** If enough interest is generated feasibility for the facility should be further explored.

**ACTION:** Encourage expansion of the Tonasket Farmer's Market as one avenue for local producers to sell products.

**ACTION:** Explore the possibility of a consignment store.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop and promote a community-wide recycling program geared to local remanufacture and reuse of locally generated solid waste.

**ACTION:** Work with the Okanogan County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee and Green Okanogan to identify, implement, maintain and expand recycling /reuse programs.

**ACTION:** Assist in locating funds to conduct feasibility studies for recycle/remanufacture entrepreneurs that are working on innovative methods of reusing or recycling waste.

**ACTION:** If feasibility studies are favorable, study potential for a community corporation that sells shares in a solid waste processing and recycling facility. Donated space and utilities could be convertible to shares.

**OBJECTIVE:** Take advantage of the quality of life benefits offered by existing physical assets of the community including, the Okanogan River and Bonaparte and Siwash Creeks.

**ACTION:** Businesses and City government continue support for an annual Bonaparte Creek clean-up.

**ACTION:** The City, working with the Okanogan Conservation District, Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board and Upper Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group design and implement an expanded

clean up programs for the River and Creeks in the community that are modeled after the Adopt-A-Highway program where groups or individuals can maintain specific sections of the stream and are recognized for their efforts.

**ACTION:** Work with Tonasket School District to incorporate the river and creeks into on-going curriculum as critical science programming.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop an intercommunity pedestrian/bicycle trail system in shoreline areas of the community.

**ACTION:** Prepare conceptual site plan for community trail system.

**ACTION:** Pursue trail funding through Recreation and Conservation Office, Department of Natural Resources and other sources as identified.

**GOAL:** Adapt existing, traditional industries to contemporary conditions and needs.

**OBJECTIVE:** Identify options for adding value to local wood, agricultural and mineral products.

**ACTION:** Check market feasibility for selected value added options.

**ACTION:** Identify sites for favorable value added product options.

**ACTION:** Encourage local business and industry to pursue favorable value-added products options.

**ACTION:** Collect all value-added information and make available through the TVBRC and Economic Alliance.

**ACTION:** Coordinate with Tonasket School District in developing curriculum that builds the future work force's capacity for innovation.

**GOAL:** Attract new commercial and light industry to add diversification to the base economy along with meaningful jobs.

**OBJECTIVE:** Evaluate the community for components that are necessary for new industry.

**ACTION:** Prepare an inventory of vacant buildings that have light industrial or other attractive business amenities.

**ACTION:** Evaluate existing and planned commercial and industrial sites that are identified in the comprehensive plan for infrastructure needs.

**ACTION:** Work with landowners of potential commercial and industrial sites that are interested in attracting new light industry to determine need of sites.

**ACTION:** Pursue funding for feasibility studies for expansion or extension of city utilities and transportation systems to serve planned commercial and light industrial sites.

**ACTION:** Identify skills and interest areas of local people who need jobs.

**ACTION:** Once the community feels it is prepared to accommodate new industry and feels comfortable with the kinds of new industry it would like to accommodate, a marketing brochure or information packet should be completed that can be used to sell Tonasket area for business start-up or relocation.

**ACTION:** Work with the Economic Alliance on business recruitment.

**OBJECTIVE:** Educate the local work force for new and changing industry.

**ACTION:** Support continued upgrades of Tonasket School District facilities in order to build its capacity to support a variety of vocational/technical programs

**ACTION:** Determine availability of training and education programs that could potentially be used at the Tonasket School District facilities.

**ACTION:** Coordinate with the School District for the establishment of needed programs and training facilities.

**OBJECTIVE:** Ensure that adequate housing is available for middle and upper income people commonly associated with new industry.

**ACTION:** Amend Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code to provide for new areas for housing of all types and greater flexibility in permitting and required improvements.

**ACTION:** Update housing needs assessment to ensure that needs will be met for any new industry that develops.

**ACTION:** Work with local landowners and investors to devise innovative methods for extending city services as a means to encourage new housing starts.

**ACTION:** Identify vacant properties that have infrastructure available.

## **G. RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Recommendations for implementing of the Economic Development Plan can be accomplished by identifying those objectives that can be accomplished in the short-term and preparing more detailed actions plans to accomplish each. Detailed actions should be assigned to individuals or groups within the community. Progress reports on each project should be given on a monthly basis as a means of progress evaluation. Discussion of four project areas are presented below with a recommended action to initiate each.

### **1. THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

A new Economic Development Committee needs to be formed using the facilities and resources of the TVBRC and the newly organized group of local business owners as a core.

- a. **Recommendation:** The Committee should embark upon an aggressive membership campaign and should pursue a variety of means to fund their activities. If the committee feels that it can gain adequate support, the members may want to consider formally organizing as a non-profit organization which could widely expand its opportunities.

### **2. COORDINATION**

It has been observed that there is a high degree of volunteerism in the Tonasket community; however, most of the volunteers are excessively active and "burnout" is a common problem. Successful economic development can be a full-time activity that needs long-term attention. Therefore, an objective in the Strategic Action Plan is to hire an individual to orchestrate economic development efforts in the community. A community leader that could volunteer substantial time and energy to strategic planning activities would obviously be ideal but waiting for that leader to emerge would not be very productive.

- a. **Recommendation:** The Economic Development Committee should pursue ongoing funding sources for the coordinator position. The City, as in the past, should continue to provide assistance whenever possible by providing planning assistance and sponsoring requests for outside funding.

### **3. TONASKET VISITOR AND BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER**

This facility and its staff of volunteers is making a difference in the Community.

- a. **Recommendation:** Every effort should be made to ensure the long term viability of TVBRC.

### **4. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**

Downtown revitalization is the task that is the focus of the newly organized downtown group with some immediate actions planned. Since the primary stakeholders in downtown revitalization are primarily the downtown business owners, an effort should be

made to get more downtown business owners involved on this project. Also, the TVBRC can provide an invaluable resource to these groups to help enhance their downtown revitalization program.

- a. Recommendation:** Two or three members of the Economic Development Committee should form a committee to carry out the task of visiting each and every business owner in the community to determine: 1) the level of assistance that might be necessary to improve storefronts; 2) apprise business owners of economic development activities while recruiting new members; and, 3) educate owners regarding the benefits of beautifying downtown while determining the level of interest for doing so.

If all recommendations are successfully carried out, the stage should be effectively set for an economic development program that can attain Tonasket's vision for economic development.