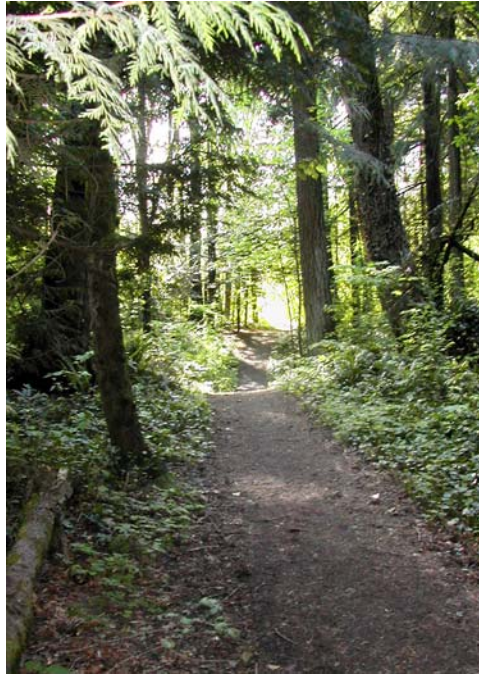


West Linn Chamber of Commerce



Strategic Outlook and 2006 Business Plan

Postal Annex
2020 SW 8th Avenue, PMB 350
West Linn, OR 97068
Tel: (503) 655-6744 Fax: (503) 656-2892
Email: info@westlinnchamber.com

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Use of Business Plan

As a directional and guideline document for Chamber board members and professional management in order to effectively accomplish its mission and goals and deliver fully on its membership and community promises.

Executive Summary

Chamber Organization

- Leadership from a nine member Board of Directors with four working committees and related task forces
- Operating from an approved annual business plan including organization vision, mission, strategic goals, priority programming and budget
- Proactive community organization with focus on business development and advocacy and enhanced community quality of life

Chamber Member Services

- Accent on ongoing improved member benefit services, especially networking and professional development opportunities
- Development of volunteer recognition and 'home-based business' marketing programs
- Evaluation of a category-driven benefits program based on membership needs survey, comparable programs and trends

Tourism, Economic Development and Community Relations Initiatives

- Strong co-participation and advocacy with City Council, neighborhood associations and Community Leadership Forum and development of required position statements on key issues
- Implementation of an updated Visitor Destination Action Plan
- Preparation of an Economic Vision and Implementation Plan

Chamber Administration and Financial Status

- Concerted effort to have organization operating with a full-time Executive Director
- Investigation to finding a best location for a combined business resource and visitors center
- New funding sources evaluation, including formation of a 501(c)3 community foundation

Organization Profile

Our History

In the late 1970s and early 1980s business people in West Linn who felt the need to be part of a Chamber of Commerce joined the Oregon Tri Cities Chamber of Commerce which served Oregon City, Gladstone and West Linn. This Chamber allowed for a Committee of West Linn business people to be organized and they met informally with the Committee Chair being appointed to the Board of Directors of the Chamber. There was no funding for the West Linn Committee from the Chamber.

In 1982 Committee members decided to become the West Linn Business Group and to be no longer part of the Oregon Tri Cities Chamber. The members of the Business Group felt that they could be more effective in promoting business in West Linn and having control of the dues the members paid to join. John Merina served as the first President.

In March 1983, West Linn Mayor Larry McIntyre invited all current holders of city business licenses to a meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to form a Task Force to address issues facing the West Linn business community. Approximately twenty people attended.

The Mayor charged the task force to answer the following questions:

- What can the city do to help existing businesses in West Linn?
- What can the city do to attract new businesses to West Linn?

One of the major items that resulted from this Task Force was the recognition by the City of West Linn that the West Linn Business Group had the same status as a neighborhood association. Because of this, until 2001 there was close cooperation between the West Linn Business Group/West Linn Chamber of Commerce to serve the business community and the city at large.

Throughout those years the West Linn Business Group was a very active organization. It sponsored a contest to have a city logo developed. The logo was then given to the City of West Linn for its use. The logo is still used currently on signs that designate community parks. The West Linn Business Group worked closely with the City of West Linn to rewrite the sign code that was obsolete. The group also participated in the zoning of business areas for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1984–85. Many of those same zones still exist today. The first business directory was published in 1984 and mailed to every household in West Linn. The West Linn Business Group along with the West Linn Old Fashioned Fair Board and the Willamette Fire Company also funded the publication of the Willamette Meteorite Book. In early 1984 the West Linn Business Group extended an invitation to Mayor Larry McIntyre to address the group on a State of the City Message. This practice was continued until 2001 by each successive Mayor.

In late 1990 the West Linn Business Group felt that it was time to examine whether to become a Chamber of Commerce or disband entirely. After many months of discussion the West Linn Chamber was created and all the assets of the West Linn Business Group became the property of the new West Linn Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber instituted the selection of a Business Person of the Year and in conjunction with the West Linn Tidings established the Citizen of the Year award. In addition it

played a significant role in the development and installation of the first city entryway at Willamette Drive (Highway 43) and I-205.

For over 15 years the West Linn Chamber of Commerce sponsored a Video Voter's Guide. It was the policy of the Chamber not to endorse candidates, but provide a forum for all candidates to present their platform. The Chamber did have a policy of endorsing issues that would have a direct benefit on the business community.

The Chamber in cooperation with the City of West Linn also sponsored West Linn Leadership which is an educational/training program for new leaders in the community. Throughout this time, members of the Chamber of Commerce have served on Committees and Task Forces of the City to represent business interests.

Our Past Accomplishments

The Chamber's main achievements over the past decade are:

- Excellent relationship developed between the City and Chamber over the years and recently exemplified through new partnerships
- Actively involved in the community leadership program
- Developed and implemented an ongoing Visitor Destination Action Plan with key projects such as the Farmers/Artists Market and the Columbia Ice Age Floods Institute
- Since early 2004 a more focused, benefit-based direction in Chamber business activities.



Our Vision

The West Linn Chamber of Commerce aspires to a vision dependent on astute leadership and professional management.

Vision 2010

Become the preeminent community engaged leader and supporter of business advocacy in West Linn.

Leader—effective, communicative and influential

Supporter—services-oriented, informative and education-based

Business advocacy—heightened recognition and results-driven

Philosophy and Stakeholder Commitment

The Chamber performs effectively by adhering to the following values and guiding principles.

Professional — well-funded, organized and accountable

Member-based — benefit-driven

Community-oriented — reliable, responsive and sustainable

Progressive — open, fair and forward directed

Our Purpose and Future Directions

The West Linn Chamber of Commerce mission is accomplished through goals, strategies and priority initiatives.

Mission

Actively encouraging and facilitating a business environment that works harmoniously to provide required services, information and support to members, residents, businesses, neighborhood associations, visitors and government agencies.

Strategic Goals

Membership Services

1. Delivering valued-added benefits and networking opportunities to increase member exposure and enhance business success.

Community Relations and Advocacy

2. Being the voice of the membership by effectively communicating and building relationships among business, local government and the community.

Tourism and Economic Development

3. Encouraging new investment and revitalization of the business sector by providing information through an official community resource center on business development and visitor attractions, events and services.

Finance and Administration

4. Operating a fiscally responsible organization with secured funding sources and measurable results.

Our Current Situation

SWOT (strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats) analyses on the West Linn community and the Chamber were conducted as follows with concluding remarks and key issues determined.

West Linn Community SWOT Analysis

Strengths

(present advantages)

- 11 distinct/complementary neighborhoods
- Citizens as active volunteers
- Good leadership
- Conscientious and caring population
- Four different commercial centers (Bolton, Robinwood, Willamette, Cascade Summit)
- Home-based businesses
- Focus on smaller retail services

Weaknesses

(present disadvantages)

- Low level of internal communications
- No one city center/gateway
- Insufficient 'foot traffic' demand
- Services related businesses only
- Perceived as a 'bedroom' community

Opportunities

(potential advantages)

- 'Buy West Linn' retail services
- Business friendly
- Proactive/high profile Chamber
- Attract visitor business
- Commercial redevelopment

Threats

(potential disadvantages)

- 'Responsible growth' platform policy from city
- Little commercial parcels/lots available
- Nearby Bridgeport upscale mall
- Metro directed potential industrial development area (i.e., Stafford triangle/Area 37)

West Linn Community Conclusions

1. Perception as a non-business location
2. More support to be directed to home-based businesses
3. New property developments and community in transition
4. Better internal communications
5. Conscientious and engaged populace with neighborhood commercialization potential.

West Linn Chamber of Commerce SWOT Analysis

Strengths

(present advantages)

- Committed board members with proactive agenda
- Good relationship with city
- Good membership base of 200
- Chamber office
- Desire to achieve/momentum in place
- Strong public relations

Weaknesses

(present disadvantages)

- Low membership penetration
- Inactive membership
- Minimal organizational structure

Opportunities

(potential advantages)

- Increased membership potential (up to 500)
- Professional staff requirements
- Business/strategic plan in force
- Add value to core membership benefits
- Enhanced communications

Threats

(potential disadvantages)

- Not well organized to achieve mandate
- Need for volunteers/ongoing good board members
- Working board only/burnout potential
- Insufficient operating capital

West Linn Chamber of Commerce Conclusions

1. Positive momentum for change recognized
2. Organizational setup and new direction required
3. Proactive leadership with positions taken on key issues
4. Primary roles and activities identified
5. Volunteers needed to undertake priority efforts.

Current Issues of Importance

- Higher Chamber recognition with more influential community decision-making (‘voice of business’)
- Core member benefits enhanced thereby encouraging new signups
- New funding sources activated
- Work priorities known
- Improved relationship-building with key stakeholders (neighborhoods, city, county and businesses).

Our Stakeholders

The primary Chamber stakeholders and the responsibility to assist them are identified below.

Membership Promise

We commit to representing and supporting our members with focused programs, resources and opportunities that will help in the stability and success of their businesses.

Community Promise

We commit to a collaboration between business resources and our community's needs to enhance the quality of place.

Our Challenges and Critical Factors for Success

The top challenges facing the West Linn Chamber are as follows:

1. Continued funding with annual business plan/budget development
2. Organizational structure/committees in place
3. Ongoing Chamber platform/roles/messages communicated.

For the West Linn Chamber to properly develop, the following factors need to be acted upon:

- Long-term funding secured (membership fees and other revenues)
- Accessible Chamber location with office management
- United board with committees/task forces
- Accountable work program with ongoing implementation.



Member Services Focus

Our Core Benefits

The primary benefits of a West Linn Chamber membership are as follows:

1. Recognition as a community engaged business
2. Online and printed directory listing
3. Customer referrals
4. Networking opportunity privileges
5. Monthly newsletter
6. Website
7. Member brochure display

Our Partner Fee Structure

In 2006 the basic membership fee is set at \$150 with a graduated rate scale based on number of employees. There is a potential of approximately 1,000 businesses in West Linn, of which slightly less than half are home-based. Goal for 2006 is to increase membership to 300. There is also an excellent opportunity to expand sponsorships with members.



Our Member Strategy and Activities

New membership directions for 2006 are identified below:

- Category-driven benefits program (contents and pricing investigation)
- Referral incentive scheme
- Volunteer recognition program
- ‘Home-based business’ marketing program
- Complimentary status to neighborhood associations.

Key membership services programs/activities to be accomplished for the year are as follows:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
➤ Membership needs survey	✓			
➤ Revised membership kit and related recruitment drive	✓			
➤ Networking opportunities (meetings and newsletter)	✓	✓	✓	✓
➤ Educational forums.	✓	✓	✓	✓



Tourism, Economic Development and Community Relations Focus

Our Target Audiences

The specific audiences of the West Linn Chamber are as follows:

In-Community

- City of West Linn
- West Linn School Districts
- West Linn neighborhood associations.

Out-of-Community

- Private sector investors/developers
- Visitors
- Travel trade operators
- Clackamas County and State of Oregon officials (Tourism and Economic Development).

Our Positioning and Key Messages

The West Linn Chamber platform to communicate to the above audiences are highlighted below.

In-Community

1. Business advocate
2. Progressive economic alternatives
3. Educational investment
4. Sense of place (preservation/conservation philosophy).

Out-of-Community

1. Recreational lifestyle experience
2. Selective investment opportunities/returns available
3. Community partner with common goals.

Our Communications Strategy and Activities

New 2006 communications directions for both in-community and out-of community audiences are identified below.

In-Community Audiences

- ⇒ Fully engaged colleagues by providing membership status

Key community relations and advocacy programs/activities to be accomplished for 2006 are as follows:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
⇒ Participation in the Community Leadership Forum	✓	✓		
⇒ Key Chamber messages and issue position statements	✓	✓	✓	✓
⇒ Attendance at City Council meetings and as necessary with neighborhood associations.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Out-of-Community Audiences

- ⇒ Implementation of updated *Visitor Destination Action Plan* and preparation of an *Economic Vision and Implementation Plan*

Key tourism and economic development programs/activities to be accomplished for 2006 are as follows:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
⇒ Preparation of an economic vision and implementation plan	✓	✓		
⇒ Continued resource center expanded development		✓		✓
⇒ Improved website contents and ongoing maintenance		✓		✓
⇒ Development of an investment opportunities guide				✓
⇒ Selective implementation and funding of visitor destination action plan projects	✓	✓	✓	✓
⇒ Neighborhood plans review with ongoing communications with city authorities and neighborhood associations.	✓	✓	✓	✓



Administration and Financial Status

Our Office and Information Locations

The current location of the West Linn Chamber is at the Postal Annex 2020 SW 8th Avenue. The Chamber is lead and managed by a four person Board Executive and a part-time Executive Director.

New administrative and financial directions for 2006 are identified below:

- Full-time professional management of the organization
- Better location for a combined Chamber resource and visitors center
- Full board complement with nine directors
- Four working committees with two co-chairs each (Membership Services, Community Relations & Advocacy, Tourism & Economic Development and Executive/Finance & Administration) and related well-functioning task forces
- A continuing strong Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer).

Key finance and administration programs/activities to be accomplished for 2006 are as follows:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
➤ Chamber Executive Committee to meet third Tuesday of every month at 4-5 pm; full board to meet first Tuesday from 12-2 pm; when required, Board work session to occur third Tuesday of every month from 12-2 pm with all meetings chaired by agenda	✓	✓	✓	✓
➤ Preparation of working committee activities and related operational and task force forms	✓			
➤ Evaluation of a new Chamber center location		✓		
➤ Completion of a following year annual business plan, including budget				✓
➤ New funding sources investigation, including setup of a 501(c)3 community foundation				✓
➤ Further financial support and operational direction to the Executive Director.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Our Two Year Estimated Earnings Statement

	2006	2007
Revenue		
Membership Services	\$8,160	\$9,650
Tourism & Economic Development	\$45,000	\$45,000
Finance & Administration	\$38,880	\$44,400
Community Relations & Advocacy	\$25,000	\$36,000
Expenses	\$117,600	\$135,050
Balance	(\$560)	\$0

Our Revenue Forecast Targets

	2006
Revenue	
➤ Membership	\$37,380
➤ Grants	\$45,000
➤ Advertising	\$8,700
➤ Event Programming	\$25,000
➤ Other	\$960
Total	<u>\$117,040</u>

Appendices

Worst Case Scenario:

1. 50 new members instead of 100 in 2006
 - 2006 membership revenue declines to \$8,750
2. Mary Closson at three-fourths time starting July 1, 2006
 - Executive Director Salary declines \$6,000