



# MINTURN

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

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Adopted by Minturn Town Council on 9-21-16  
[www.minturn.org](http://www.minturn.org)





Minturn photo by Scott Cramer

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# PURPOSE

The Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) is created and implemented to build upon the work of the comprehensive community plan, known as, Minturn's 2009 Community Plan, as well as the Downtown Colorado Inc (DCI) Plan. It is based on Minturn's community vision, needs, and priorities. The EDSP looks to increase net new economic activity in the Town of Minturn and enhance community vitality through unique solutions to local problems.

“ To increase net new economic activity in the Town of Minturn and enhance community vitality. ”

# STRATEGY

Traditionally, economic development is defined as new activity that generates income. Simply put, it is a net gain of money flow into a community. Key common sources of “new equity” for communities include: primary job development, **tourism**, **small business assistance**, **entrepreneurial incubation**, international trade, tech transfer and **place-making**. Of the aforementioned examples, those bolded have been deemed the most accessible economic development strategies for Minturn's near-term goals.

Not as traditional, yet proving to be successful, specifically to small towns, are seven basic themes discovered through the study of community economic development - defined as the process through which communities initiate their own solutions to local problems.<sup>1</sup> Minturn's strategy will look to combine these themes with the more traditional approach in order to best meet the needs of the community.

1. In small towns, community development is economic development.
2. Small towns with the most dramatic outcomes tend to be proactive and future-oriented; they embrace change and assume risk.
3. Successful community economic development strategies are guided by a broadly held local vision.
4. Defining assets and opportunities broadly can yield innovative strategies that capitalize on a community's competitive advantage.
5. Innovative local governance, partnerships and organizations significantly enhance the capacity for community economic development.
6. Effective communities identify, measure and celebrate short-term successes to sustain support for long-term community economic development.
7. Viable community economic development involves the use of a comprehensive package of strategies and tools, rather than a piecemeal approach.<sup>2</sup>

# BACKGROUND

## HISTORY THAT CHARACTERIZES MINTURN'S ECONOMIC POSITION

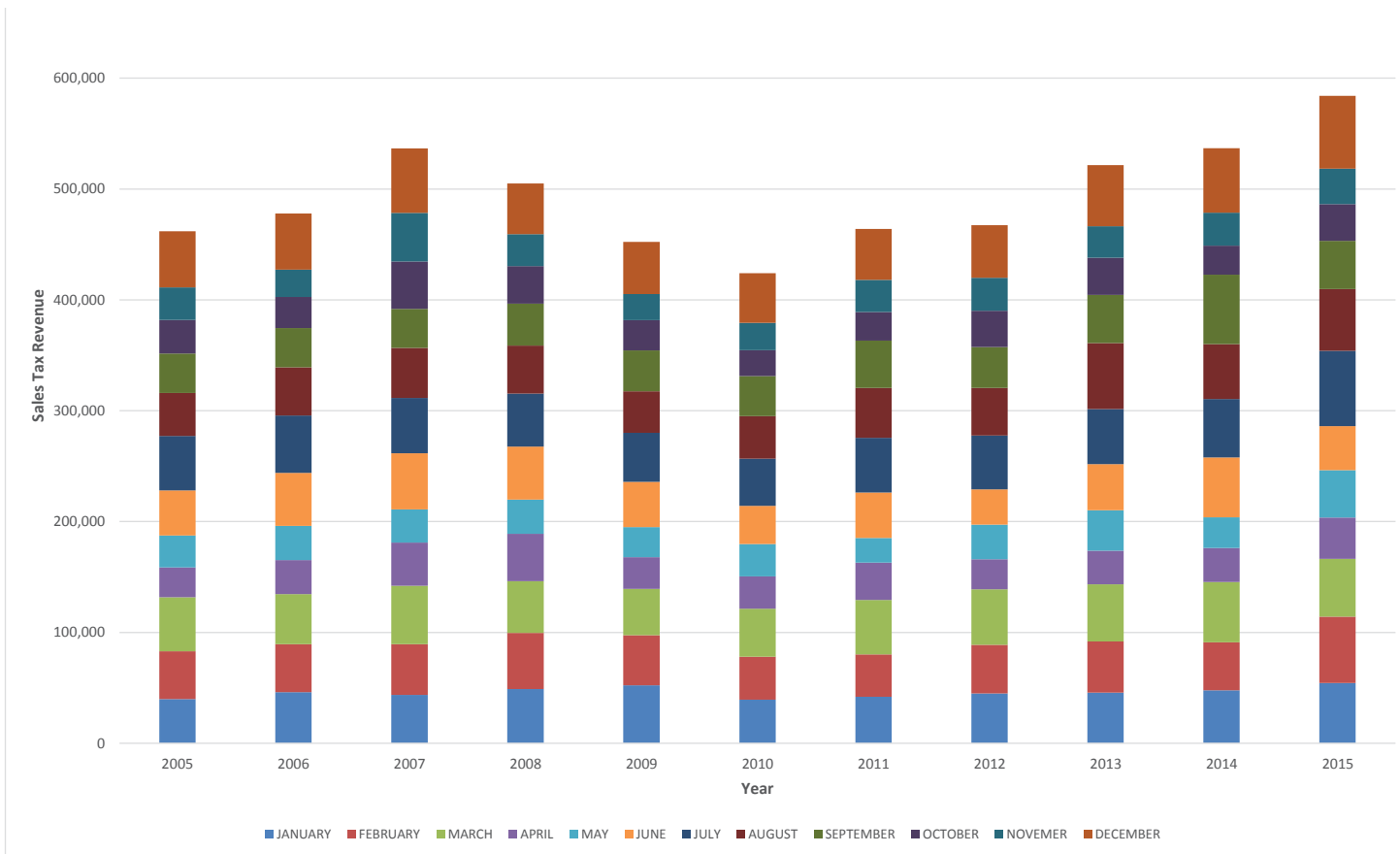
Minturn was originally developed as a railroad, mining and agricultural settlement. With the loss of all three, Minturn has become more economically entwined with the Eagle River and Vail valleys that have developed since the ski industry came to the area in the 1960's. Minturn's economic future will clearly be impacted by this larger economy of which it is a part.

The following summarizes the annual sales tax revenue over a 10-year period with results showing the before and after of the 2008 housing/stock market crash. Minturn's recovery is right in line with the rest of Eagle County, but may be better insulated from such outside variables with a more diversified revenue stream.

While local government is somewhat limited in its revenue sources, additional options to consider may include a USE Tax, rental income, increased available housing, or investment opportunities.

1 Small Towns Big Ideas. Case Studies in Small Town Community Economic Development (pp 249)  
2 Small Towns Big Ideas. Case Studies in Small Town Community Economic Development (pp 15-21)

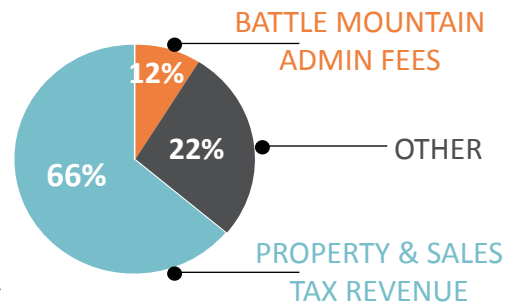
## ANNUAL SALES TAX REVENUE



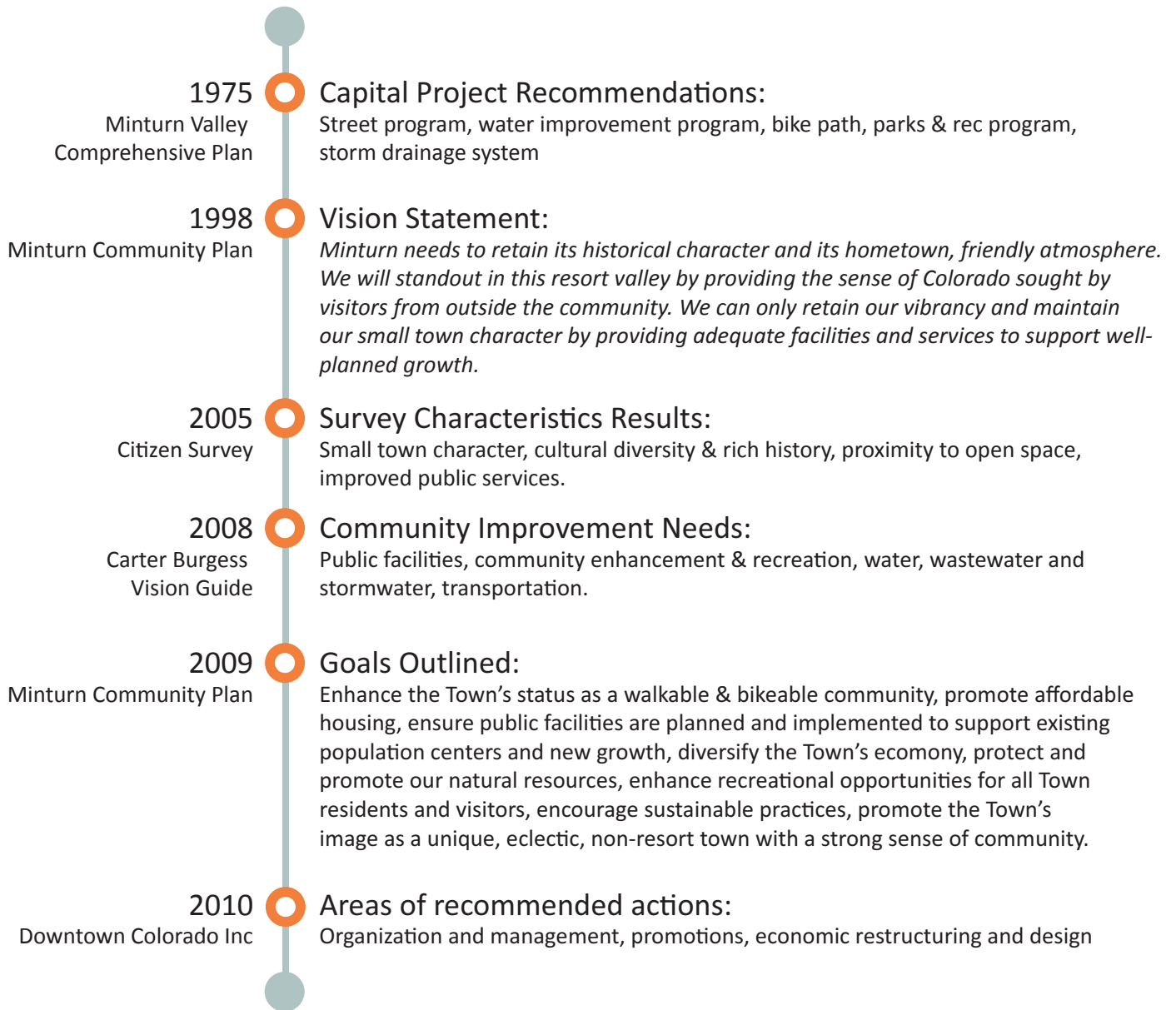
As is evident from the 2014 Revenues diagram, two-thirds of Minturn’s income comes from the tax of goods and property. With the eventual elimination of the Battle Mountain fee payments, the town must either increase the “other category” or at a minimum, better position its income within the tax revenue category.

In 2012 an Economic Development staff position was created by the Town of Minturn municipality to lead marketing efforts, and events. In 2014, the Minturn Town Council added the creation of the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) with a goal to strengthen and expand economic opportunities within and for the Town of Minturn, its residents, and its businesses. The EDAC works to achieve this goal primarily with the creation and subsequent management of the EDSP.

### 2014 REVENUES



## HISTORIC DOCUMENTS REFERENCED



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The regional economy in which Minturn exists is a predominantly tourism and service-based economy. These sectors will therefore dominate Minturn's economic picture as well. For the last few years, 80% of gross sales generated within the Town of Minturn have been from the retail and service sectors. The retail trade sector was dominated by the local restaurants representing 44% of total retail sales in the community. Services contributed 31% and the next largest economic contributor of sales tax was the construction industry at 16%.

Minturn is so small that one or two stores can dominate or completely occupy an entire service or manufacturing category. The loss or addition of a single business can have a significant impact on gross sales in the community. Minturn has lost many of its "neighborhood" commercial businesses (grocery store, dry cleaner, and hardware store) presumably because of competition from regional or national chains locating in the Vail and Eagle River valleys where the higher density populations make business more economically feasible.

Minturn has a reputation for being more eclectic than the other, younger nearby communities. Minturn needs to understand and protect the niche that it occupies - small town and small businesses. However, larger scale businesses can be sensitively developed to accommodate Minturn's small town character.

Growth in a small community presents special problems. Improvements must be paid for in advance of increased tax revenue generated by growth. Maintenance and replacement costs are quite high, but funding is often lacking or sources of funding are not fully investigated nor utilized. "Bedroom communities" such as Minturn often have a difficult time providing for their needs because the relatively large amount of residential use creates costs not met by the small amount of commercial sales tax funds. Minturn's seasonal, tourist-oriented economy means that infrastructure, resources and services have to accommodate additional demands placed by visitors and part-time residents.

The Town of Minturn is aggressively seeking to own the Dowd Junction parcel, currently owned by the United States Forest Service. The USFS desires to consolidate their administrative offices in Eagle. If the move to Eagle occurs, Minturn plans to team with a development partner and Eagle County to create a variety of public and private uses. The public uses would include access to Meadow Mountain, public parking and ECO bus service, and river access. Minturn desires the private uses to be high sales tax producing businesses, such as, hotels, grocery stores and other retail. The desired uses are intended to be complementary to downtown businesses. The process for any acquisition of the Dowd property is ongoing, subject to USFS approval, and has various milestones during the 2016 and 2017 time period. Creation of larger format, sales tax producing businesses has the potential for Minturn to fund important capital needs. The town is currently engaging a waterline extension to service the Dowd Junction site, which is currently served by a well.

## MISSION

**"To enhance the economic vitality of the town of Minturn."**

## VISION

The following economic development vision for Minturn was taken from the 2009 Community Plan document, adopted December 16, 2009, Resolution No. 28 - Series 2009.

*"The Town of Minturn is strategically positioned geographically between two world-class ski resorts. Minturn recognizes that a positive visitor experience is directly related to a positive economic environment. Streetscape improvements in the downtown core are necessary to enhance the pedestrian experience by making the town a more attractive place for visitors and residents alike. A diverse mix of businesses catering to the local community and tourists are necessary for a stable, year-round economy. Special efforts should be made to promote the existing businesses in town and to also facilitate new business development. Additionally, the town should promote its unique history to capitalize on the heritage tourism market."*

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTION STEPS

Minturn has identified four key common sources of "new equity" for communities which are relevant to Minturn: **Tourism, Small Business Assistance, Place-making** and **Entrepreneurial Incubation**-to be reviewed at a later date. The first three "buckets" of new equity, combined with the non-traditional approach of community economic development, will create the framework for Minturn's community economic development efforts.

# TOURISM

## GOAL: INCREASE GUEST VISITATION TO MINTURN

**OBJECTIVE:** CREATE A MULTI-USE RIVER PLAN TO INCLUDE SEASONAL USAGE, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION.

Action Step: Provide a status update on the health of the Eagle River and restricted uses.

Action Step: Create an online and hard copy survey for initial user-group feedback.

Action Step: Evaluate need for establishing a River Work Group with outlined goals for moving the river plan objective forward.

**OBJECTIVE:** CREATE A DOWNTOWN MINTURN EMPLOYEE PARKING PLAN FOR THE FACILITATION OF CONVENIENT VISITOR PARKING.

Action Step: Engage local business owners in dialogue to determine user-group buy-in.

Action Step: Facilitate Minturn Business Owner meetings to open group discussion and establish ownership of the issues.

Action Step: Create communication pieces to effectively promote determined plan to local area staff.

**OBJECTIVE:** CREATE THE “DESTINATION MINTURN” CAMPAIGN.

Action Step: Create a “Destination Minturn” marketing campaign with coordinating media materials for all marketing platforms.

Action Step: Outline a pre-planned half-day itinerary for visitor recommended activities and attractions.

**OBJECTIVE:** CREATE AN ARTIST CO-OP WITH DESIGNATED SPACE

Action Step: Communicate with Minturn general public to determine level of need.

Action Step: Inventory all commercial properties within Minturn.

Action Step: Review potential locations for feasibility.

**OBJECTIVE:** SUPPORT GRANTS FOR A BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM

Action Step: Develop program outline including requirements and restrictions.

Action Step: Approve program funding.

Action Step: Communicate program availability.



# PLACE MAKING

## GOAL: COMMUNITY TO REIMAGINE ITS PUBLIC SPACES

### **OBJECTIVE:** FORMALIZE COMMUNITY RECREATION.

- Action Step: Determine level of community interest through direct communication, in person, and online surveys.
- Action Step: Review potential locations for available recreational accommodations.
- Action Step: Recruit a community champion or organization to lead recreation league.

### **OBJECTIVE:** UTILIZATION OF THE BONEYARD PROPERTY.

- Action Step: Work with Planning Dept and Citizen group for optimum space utilization.
- Action Step: Create a public awareness campaign of location and amenities.

### **OBJECTIVE:** CREATE BACK TO BASICS COMMUNICATION POINTS.

- Action Step: Review community board program feasibility including inventory of potential location, associated costs and maintenance plan.
- Action Step: Consider cost effectiveness of monthly or biweekly newspaper updates to coincide with websites, e-mail blasts and social media.

### **OBJECTIVE:** CONTINUE TO IMPROVE UPON THE EVENTS CALENDAR

- Action Step: Support funding for third-party event programming.
- Action Step: Review winter program options and funding. Determine best “bang for the buck.”
- Action Step: Fund holiday decor contests to increase seasonal aesthetics.

### **OBJECTIVE:** SUPPORT GRANTS FOR INTERESTED PARTIES TO CREATE EVENTS & ADDITIONAL PLACE MAKING AREAS

- Action Step: Develop program outline including requirements and restrictions.
- Action Step: Approve program funding.
- Action Step: Communicate program availability.

# SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

## GOAL: SUPPORT LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS

### **OBJECTIVE:** CREATE A “KNOW YOUR TOWN” CAMPAIGN

- Action Step: Highlight different businesses, attractions, recreational amenities and more through a comprehensive campaign to better inform residents of local offerings.
- Action Step: Create a display in the town hall lobby to coordinate with campaign.
- Action Step: Utilize Vail Daily Town Talk.

### **OBJECTIVE:** INCREASE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR WORKFORCE, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS IN AND OUT OF THE MINTURN COMMUNITY.

- Action Step: Review third party options and involvement vs cost effectiveness.
- Action Step: Work to provide alternative transportation methods such as

### **OBJECTIVE:** “MADE IN MINTURN” CAMPAIGN

- Action Step: Create a campaign outline with framework, goals and milestones.
- Action Step: Determine potential businesses for program inclusion.

### **OBJECTIVE:** PROMOTE CO-OFFICE SPACE UTILIZATION WHERE APPLICABLE

- Action Step: Inventory commercial spaces in Minturn.
- Action Step: Provide a platform from which owners/landlords can post space openings and facilitate in renter/owner communication.

### **OBJECTIVE:** OPEN BASIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN COUNCIL MEMBERS AND LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS

- Action Step: Work with the Vail Valley Partnership to create effective business owner surveys.
- Action Step: Coordinate the scheduling of ad-hoc meetings to encourage open dialogue.
- Action Step: Report updates back to Council.

# TOURISM ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEP	RESOURCES NEEDED	CONSTRAINTS	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET DATES
<b>Multi-Use River Plan</b>	Environmental update	ERWC EPA	Extent of updated information	Present environmental update to Council	Pending
	Survey	ERWSD Billing Constant Contact Media Budget	Resident/Owner access ability	10%-15% Response Rate	Pending
	River Work Group	Citizen Stakeholders Planning Dept. Public Works EDAC	Staff labor, Higher priorities	Update to Council with proposed options of interest	Pending
<b>Downtown Employee Parking Plan</b>	Engage Local Business Owners	Economic Dev EDAC	Stakeholder Interest, Enforcement Willingness to comply	Willingness to discuss	Winter 2017
	Facilitate Meetings	ECSCO, Planning Dept, Venue, Budget	Stakeholder Interest, ECSCO & Planning Availability	Meetings scheduled and attended	Spring 2017
	Create Communication Pieces	Rack Card Signage	Stakeholder Willingness to participate	Materials created and implemented throughout downtown	Summer 2017
<b>Destination Minturn Campaign</b>	Create Media Materials	Organized Plan of Execution Adobe Suite Minturn Map Budget Multiple media platforms Additional Town Activities	Budget Organization of summer event schedule (need earlier confirmation of events and dates)	Increased sales tax revenue by 3% based on prior year	Summer 2017
	Provide multiple 1/2 day itineraries	Activities Locations	Available winter activities	Increase sales tax revenue by 3% based on prior year	Summer 2017
<b>Artist Co-Op</b>	Determine level of need	Communication Survey Word of Mouth Town Council Mtg	Ability to communicate with necessary user groups,	Obtain a "go / no-go decision" based on feedback from local residents	Fall 2017
	Inventory commercial properties	Staff Labor Communication with local property owners	Staff time	Obtain a complete Town of Minturn commercial space inventory list with associated contacts	Spring 2017
	Review location Feasibility	Available Parking Easily accessible Size	Cost, Available locations within town, management options	Determine approvable location or provide update than none currently exists	Fall 2017

# PLACE MAKING ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEP	RESOURCES NEEDED	CONSTRAINTS	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET DATES
<b>Formalize Community Recreation</b>	Determine level of interest	Survey, phone, word of mouth, Council announcement	Ability to receive feedback from stakeholders	10-15% involvement	TBD
	Review potential locations for available recreational accommodations.	Public Works, Planning, Town Manager	Limited available locations, water source	Meets criteria, obtain necessary approvals	TBD
	Recruit a community champion or organization to lead recreation league.	Local volunteers	Level of commitment, interested parties may be limited	Committed individual or group	TBD
<b>Boneyard Property Utilization</b>	Work with the Planning Dept and Citizen group for optimum space utilization.	Planning Dept, community input, meeting space, survey	Timeline, Planning availability, community interest	Provide recommendations & feedback to Planning Dept.	As Requested
	Create a public awareness campaign of location and amenities.	Web page, newsletter, brochure inclusion	Staff labor	Public awareness campaign executed and ongoing	Spring 2017
<b>"Back to Basics" Communication Points</b>	Review community board program feasibility.	Available locations, materials, budget, maintenance	Budget vs cost, Available high profile locations, maintenance	Go/No-go decision	Spring 2017
	Consider newspaper campaign to coincide with websites, email blasts and social media.	Budget, staff labor	Budget	Summer season of newspaper updates	Summer 2017
<b>Events</b>	Support funding for third party event programming	Interested third party individuals or organizations, Staff, event locations	Available funding, available indoor locations	Approved event funding	Winter 2017
	Review winter program options and funding. Determine best "bang for the buck."	Venues, outdoor locations, labor, budget	Venues, outdoor locations, staff	Provide a consistent winter activity/event or attraction for 3-5 years	Spring 2017
	Fund holiday decor contests to increase seasonal aesthetics.	Budget, volunteers, community involvement	Level of community interest, local volunteers needed, small budget	Annually increased community involvement	Fall 2017
<b>Place Making Grant Program</b>	Develop program outline including requirements and restrictions.	Improved paperwork, Interested third parties	Willingness of third party to participate	New activations annually	Revisions by Spring 2017
	Approve program funding.	Council approval	Limited budget	Council approval	Winter 2016/17
	Communicate program availability.	Spread the word: newsletter, community board, Council announcement, flyer	Access to interested parties	New activations annually	Winter 2017

# SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEP	RESOURCES NEEDED	CONSTRAINTS	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET DATES
<b>“KNOW YOUR TOWN” CAMPAIGN</b>	Highlight different businesses, attractions and amenities through a comprehensive campaign to better inform residents of local offerings.	Organized campaign plan covering multiple platforms, new resident welcome packet, Minturn business involvement, small budget	Staff time, budget	Welcome packet to new residents	Winter/Spring 2017
	Create a display in the town hall lobby to coordinate with campaign.	Wall or floor space, window space (possibly on Main St),	Available window space	Campaign outline with with sign-up dates for businesses	Summer 2018
	Utilize Vail Daily Town Talk.	Photos, short write-ups	High-quality photos	bi-weekly Town Talk submittal	Ongoing
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	Review public transportation opportunities in addition to the current work of the Council ECO Transit Committee.	Staff time, surveys, third party support, volunteers for coordinating	Cost-effectiveness, need to think “outside the box”	Additional transportation methods in and out of the Minturn Community	Fall 2017
<b>“MADE IN MINTURN” PROGRAM</b>	Create a campaign outline with framework, goals and milestones.	Staff time	Staff time	Campaign approval by the EDAC	Winter 2018
	Determine potential businesses for program inclusion.	Local businesses producing products in Minturn	Level of interest from the business community to participate	Participation from three to five businesses to start	Spring 2018
<b>PROMOTE CO-OFFICE SPACE UTILIZATION</b>	Inventory commercial spaces in Minturn.	Staff labor, property owner assistance	Staff labor, available inventory, interested property owners	Map with full inventory of commercial space in Minturn	Spring 2017
	Provide a platform to facilitate renter/owner communication.	web page, staff labor	Staff labor/maintenance/updating	Web page with links to locations and contact information	Fall 2017
<b>IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN BUSINESS OWNERS AND COUNCIL</b>	Create business owner surveys.	Survey review, Vail Valley Partnership, Business Owner participation	Business Owner participation, Staff labor	Survey approved by EDAC	Spring 2017
	Coordinate the scheduling of ad-hoc meetings to encourage open dialogue.	Council availability, Business Owner participation,	Business Owner participation, Council participation	Regularly scheduled town officials for open discussion with business owners	Winter 2017
	Regularly report updates back to Council.	Staff labor	Staff labor	Quarterly update	Ongoing

# SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS

## STRENGTHS

- Authenticity – real town, no chain shops
- Unique in the valley
- Proximity to skiing
- Halloween (authentic events)
- Municipal parking lot
- Funky character
- Age diversity
- SSCV/VSSA
- Maloit Park
- Meadow Mountain
- Access to backcountry
- Minturn Mile
- Little Beach Park
- Artists/Artisans
- Fitness Center
- Walkable core
- Off I-70
- HWY 24 Scenic Byway
- MCF
- Boneyard property
- Rummage sale

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Underutilized parking lot
- Lift connection to resorts
- Vacant commercial space
- River
- RR property and RR tracks
- Bike path connecting
- Develop Cemetery Rd
- Events
- Entry waterfall landscape
- Rummage building
- I-70 Services signs

## WEAKNESSES

- Critical commercial mass
- Lack of bed base
- Visual blight – south town, Business Park, RR yard, Vail Boneyard, nuisance properties, Enclave
- Parking
- Off I-70
- Don't control main transportation artery
- Traffic
- Poor pedestrian experience

## THREATS

- Edwards, Avon, Vail
- Forest Service sale of property – lost control
- Low commercial real estate valuation
- Vacant commercial space
- Union Pacific
- Accessible housing
- Concentrated commercial real estate holdings

