Guiding Principles

- Plan for a proper balance of land uses that will result in fiscal stability through healthy resident to business ratios, adequate employment, a solid base of services, and a variety of shopping experiences.
- Ensure adequate transportation infrastructure, communication facilities, public utility availability and capacity, and soft (social) infrastructure such as schools, medical facilities, civic organizations, and responsive local government.
- Maintain a high quality of life that will result in a stable local economy and will attract a population that includes a wide range of skilled and educated workers, professionals and entrepreneurs seeking to establish new businesses in the community.
- Embrace tourism opportunities, community celebrations, and other activities that allow visitors to contribute to the economic vitality of Payson.
- Invest in partnerships with other agencies to expand the influence of Payson City to a state and regional level maximizing economies of scale while avoiding duplicative efforts and inefficiencies.

Introduction

A vibrant business community and growing revenues from economic development activities have produced the necessary fiscal resources to support Payson City’s longstanding efforts to provide efficient services and amenities that improve the quality of life in the community. Building on this success will allow the City to complete improvements desired by residents while at the same time expanding the services available leading to an improved living environment.
In the past decade, Payson City has transformed from a traditional bedroom community, to a self-sustaining and even regional economic center capable of attracting national corporations while incubating home-grown businesses. With careful planning and implementation of appropriate land use regulations, the economic base of the City will continue to grow and a healthy balance of commercial, industrial and residential uses can be maintained.

Payson is a relatively small community with unlimited positive qualities, but it would be inaccurate to presume that the city does not have some limitations. With so many attractive aspects that have not been fully realized, it is important to focus on economic activities that are appropriate in consideration of our location, size and demographic makeup. Because of budget and human resource constraints, any significant economic attraction activities should be carefully examined to ensure the potential outcome is realistic and consistent with established economic goals.

Success in the traditional economic development activities of business attraction and retention are critical factors in establishing fiscal stability. These efforts are strategic, current, and highly responsive to national and local economic conditions. This element is designed to guide future growth that promotes a healthy variety of commercial, industrial, and residential development together with community amenities that foster investment, pride and resident involvement. Effective economic development identifies the interrelationships between residential, commercial, and industrial development as well as non-development activities such as City celebrations, shopping, employment opportunities, and recreation which combine to promote and encourage lifestyle choices desired by the residents of the community.

The preparation of a strong economic development plan will provide the framework necessary to attract commercial, retail, and industrial businesses as well as residents to the city. As south Utah County grows, Payson City is located far enough from the Provo/Orem metropolitan core to create a sustainable local economy, and in the geographic center of several rapidly growing communities creating an opportunity for Payson City to become an economic powerhouse in south Utah County.
Guiding Principle A

*Plan for a proper balance of land uses that will result in fiscal stability through healthy resident to business ratios, adequate employment, a solid base of services, and a variety of shopping experiences*

Responsible planning sets the stage for sustainable economic growth to support future generations in the community. Balance is the key to long term economic success. Healthy commercial, industrial and residential development is synergistic and interrelated. Too much residential development can result in the need to provide municipal services without the revenues of retail and commercial development. Without manufacturing and industrial development, employment opportunities will be limited. Yet commercial and retail development is dependent on residential growth. Because this balance is needed, it is imperative to maintain areas suitable for commercial development such as the intersection of major roadways, freeway interchanges, and other locations with commercial viability even in the face of pressure to develop these areas for other purposes.

Payson City offers a business-friendly environment and the City Council is committed to removing barriers for business development. A priority of the City Council is to provide employment opportunities for the residents of the community. All businesses require not only patrons, but also qualified employees, and most businesses desire to locate in communities with stable and positive population growth in hopes that the growth will lead to business expansion. Therefore, growth is not only inevitable, but desirable and necessary. Promotion of a variety of housing types for a range of incomes can allow the city to take advantage of changing economic conditions. Furthermore, this diversity will allow and encourage a wide range of workers and employment skills to diversify and strengthen the local workforce.

Many commercial and industrial developments seek and require large contiguous parcels of land with appropriate zoning designations. City Councilmembers must continue to exercise patience and avoid requests to reduce parcel sizes and/or change zoning classifications in situations where smaller lots or incompatible zoning could discourage commercial and industrial developers desiring to locate in the community and disrupt the land use goals of the General Plan.

One of the most important factors that determine whether people or businesses locate here is the area’s livability. Among the factors that influence livability are the area’s ability to provide employment opportunities, healthy businesses that provide goods and services, the quality of public services, the area’s natural beauty, affordable housing, good schools, strong neighborhoods, and efficient traffic circulation. Maintaining our community’s livability requires that we maintain a strong, sustainable, economic climate.
Guiding Principle B

*Ensure adequate transportation infrastructure, communication facilities, public utility availability and capacity, and soft (social) infrastructure such as schools, medical facilities, civic organizations, and responsive local government*

The availability of and access to adequate infrastructure is the basis for development. Infrastructure such as transportation, utilities, and communication networks drive productivity and economic growth by making it easier, and therefore cheaper, to do business. Highly desirable development opportunities can be missed when preparation for development has not been completed. Approvals, funding, and construction of necessary infrastructure can take years to assemble and in most circumstances, developers cannot withstand these delays.

Payson City provides reliable and cost effective municipal services and infrastructure to critical locations most likely to be selected for commercial/industrial development. The City must remain dedicated to providing electrical, drinking water, secondary irrigation water, solid waste removal, and wastewater services with the capacity to expand and grow the local economy through the use of impact fees, proper planning, and adherence to the Capital Improvements Program.

Strategically located, the community is well served by an interstate freeway, state highway facilities and several regionally significant roadways. Even mass transit is slated for the community in the near future. The efficient movement of goods and people is available to Payson City and should be used as an incentive to attract business.

Social and “soft” infrastructure including schools, medical facilities, civic organizations, and a responsive local government are additional benefits of the City. Often overlooked, these qualities are important elements in the creation of a healthy local economy and serve to improve the desirability of the community.

Guiding Principle C

*Maintain a high quality of life that will result in a stable local economy and will attract a population that includes a wide range of skilled and educated workers, professionals and entrepreneurs seeking to establish new businesses in the community*

In today’s world, money is not the only motivator when it comes to selecting a community to live, work, and raise a family. Everything the community has to offer in terms of quality of life is considered important. Good schools, adequate infrastructure and public services, high quality neighborhoods, an attractive community appearance, natural environment, a variety of recreational
opportunities, clean air and water attract both business and residents. These attributes serve as economic development tools and must be protected in order to continue to function as attractions to potential businesses and residents.

The quality of life in a community is a critical factor in the creation of an employee base that will attract new businesses to the city. Workforce development is often overlooked as a business expansion tool, but a very high priority to business owners. The determination of livability is highly influenced by the employment opportunities in the community. In other words, there is a strong correlation between quality of life and a vibrant and educated workforce. Both the prospective residents and employers are seeking a location that is physically attractive and financially stable with quality services, natural beauty, a variety of attainable housing, good schools and efficient transportation.

There are many unique and memorable spaces that distinguish Payson from other communities along the Wasatch Front. We need to promote our community as a place where people would like to reside, visit, experience, start a business and invest in the future of the community.

Education is a high priority for Payson City. City leaders must maintain a positive relationship with Nebo School District and support efforts to provide quality elementary and secondary public education. Moreover, Payson City must attract all types of institutions of higher learning to the community that will align education and workforce development to business needs to ensure that our educational system is providing the skills that are essential in the local, regional and global economy.

**Guiding Principle D**

*Embrace tourism opportunities, community celebrations, and other activities that allow visitors to contribute to the economic vitality of Payson*

Tourism can be an effective economic tool because in many cases the infusion of money into the local economy consumes very little of the local resources. Schools, infrastructure systems, libraries, and many other local facilities are not significantly impacted by tourists, but the revenues associated with tourism are significant.

Among other things, Payson offers natural beauty/scenery, strong sense of community heritage, affordable housing, low crime, efficient city services, entertainment venues and recreational facilities, high quality schools, health care facilities/programs, as well as community celebrations, festivals, and events. We need to preserve and enhance these unique qualities to become a visitor destination.
We must educate residents and business owners about the importance of tourism and identify ways to make visitors feel more welcome and likely to return. Promotional collateral is vital to inform visitors who may not be familiar with Payson about the activities and locations to visit in the community such as Payson Canyon (Nebo Loop), Memorial Park, Historic Downtown, Gladstan Golf Course, Peteetneet Museum and Cultural Arts Center, the Payson, Utah LDS Temple, and the many other tourist oriented locations throughout the community.

**Guiding Principle E**

*Invest in partnerships with other agencies to expand the influence of Payson City to a state and regional level maximizing economies of scale while avoiding duplicative efforts and inefficiencies*

There are several agencies at the state, regional, and local level tasked with economic development or revenue generation. Many of these organizations have resources and networks that extend beyond the financial ability of Payson City. Partnering with these agencies can stretch the resources necessary to conduct economic development activities and familiarize the Payson brand to a much broader audience.

We must coordinate with these organizations to develop clearly defined and shared goals that are customized to our particular local and regional characteristics. These goals can provide a basis for aligning resources and identifying potential partners who can bring valuable information, services, or products into the collaborative venture.

**Summary**

Economic vitality is a never ending endeavor that is highly dependent on factors beyond the control of the City. However, when making land use decisions, financial stability should be considered. This element is intended to provide decision makers with a framework for making long term decisions that can be supported by more specific and strategic economic development activities while maintaining a community-friendly outlook on a day to day basis.