Arlington and Darrington

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN

AMERICA'S BEST COMMUNITIES

November 6, 2015

Applicants:

Economic Alliance
SNOHOMISH COUNTY

808 134th St. SW, Suite 101
Everett, WA 98204
economicalliancesc.org

Arlington and Darrington

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN

America's Best Communities
Quarterfinalist Submission

November 6, 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amid the spectacular natural landscape of mountains, forests, rivers and the Puget Sound, sit the Washington communities of Arlington, a small vibrant city with growing industries, and Darrington, a mountain town in the foothills of the Cascades. Halfway between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., these communities work to balance quality of life with living wage jobs.

On March 22, 2014, these communities experienced a devastating mudslide that took 43 lives and temporarily closed State Highway 530, the physical and economic lifeline between the two communities. In the aftermath, what emerged was evidence of two resilient and interdependent communities with a shared goal of growing their economies while preserving quality of life.

In August, 2014, the communities were awarded a U.S. EPA grant to develop an Economic Redevelopment Plan (ERP), which identified six major goals for economic development in the predominantly rural North Stillaguamish River Valley:

- **Goal 1:** Infrastructure
- **Goal 2:** Industries and Employment
- **Goal 3:** Community and Workforce Development
- **Goal 4:** Resilience and Sustainability
- **Goal 5:** Placemaking
- **Goal 6:** Rural Innovation

As Arlington and Darrington jointly prepared this Community Revitalization Plan (CRP) as a quarterfinalist submission for the America's Best Communities competition, these six goals are used to organize strategies and tactics. The two documents work in tandem to demonstrate a comprehensive economic development strategy for the region. The communities will use both the ERP and the CRP to mobilize resources and seek funding for initiatives that move their region toward the sustainable future they envision.

The work done in developing the CRP has been the result of outreach to the people of Arlington and Darrington to understand the needs and aspirations all participants have for the community as well as extensive consultation and dialogue between key stakeholders. The final outcomes from this plan will strengthen efforts to encourage sustainable economic growth, provide a high quality of life, and support community spirit and pride.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Outlining a Strategic Approach to Sustainable Economic Development

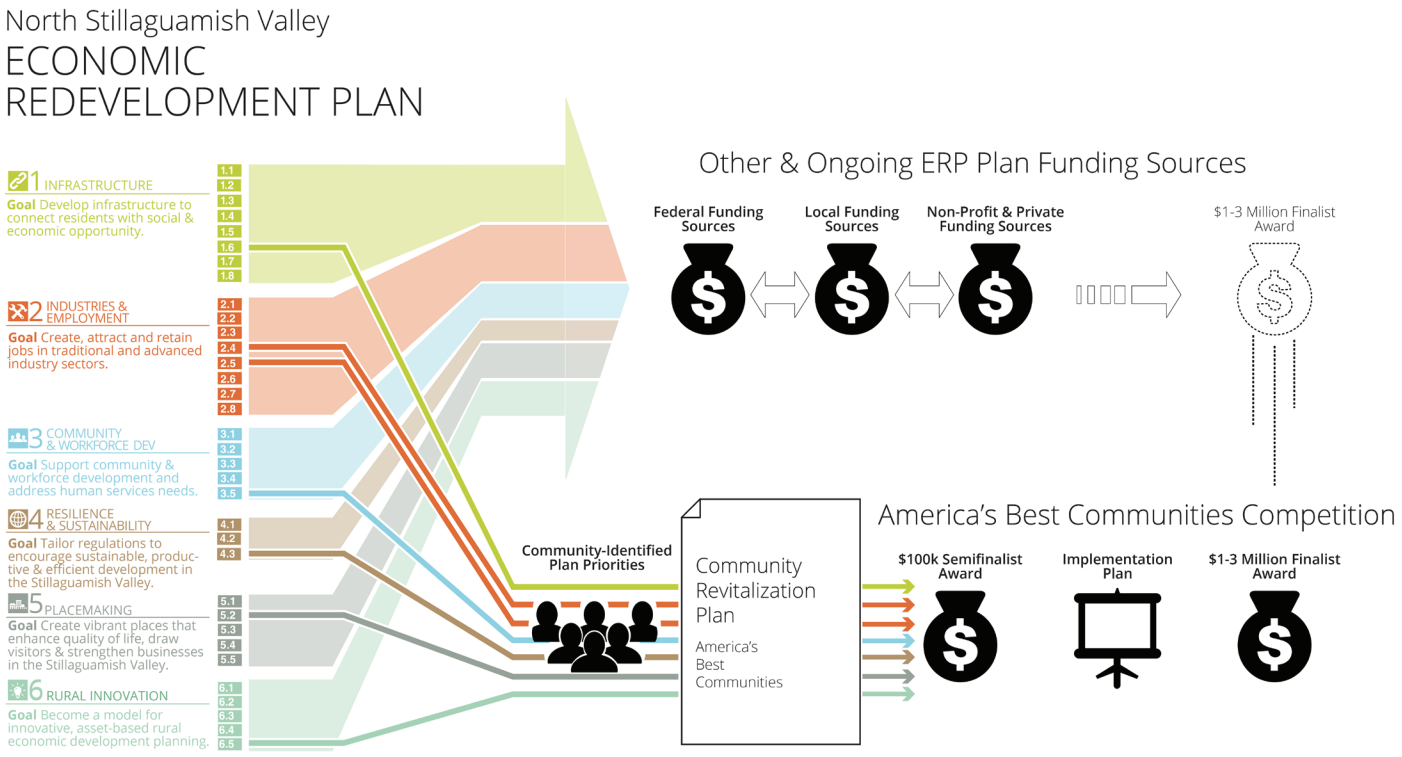
Arlington and Darrington, small towns in the North Stillaguamish River Valley of northern Snohomish County, Washington have prepared this Community Revitalization Plan (CRP) as a quarterfinalist submission for the America's Best Communities (ABC) competition. The communities recently completed a larger economic development strategic plan—the North Stillaguamish Valley Economic Redevelopment Plan (ERP)—that outlines a comprehensive economic development strategy for the region and provides essential context for the actions identified in the CRP. In this way, though this CRP is an action-oriented proposal for $100,000, and must be implemented in an 11-month timeframe, it does not exist in a vacuum.

The communities of Arlington and Darrington are located in the North Stillaguamish River Valley, in northern Snohomish County, within the four-county central Puget Sound region.

The ERP and CRP share six major goals for economic development in Arlington and Darrington. For the purposes of these planning documents, goals provide high-level objectives intended for long-term implementation. Those goals, along with specific strategies and actions from the ERP, were further vetted through an extensive public engagement process during the ABC planning phase. The refined strategies and tactics that emerged from our citizen-led action teams have been included in the CRP and prioritized for funding and implementation in an 11-month timeframe.

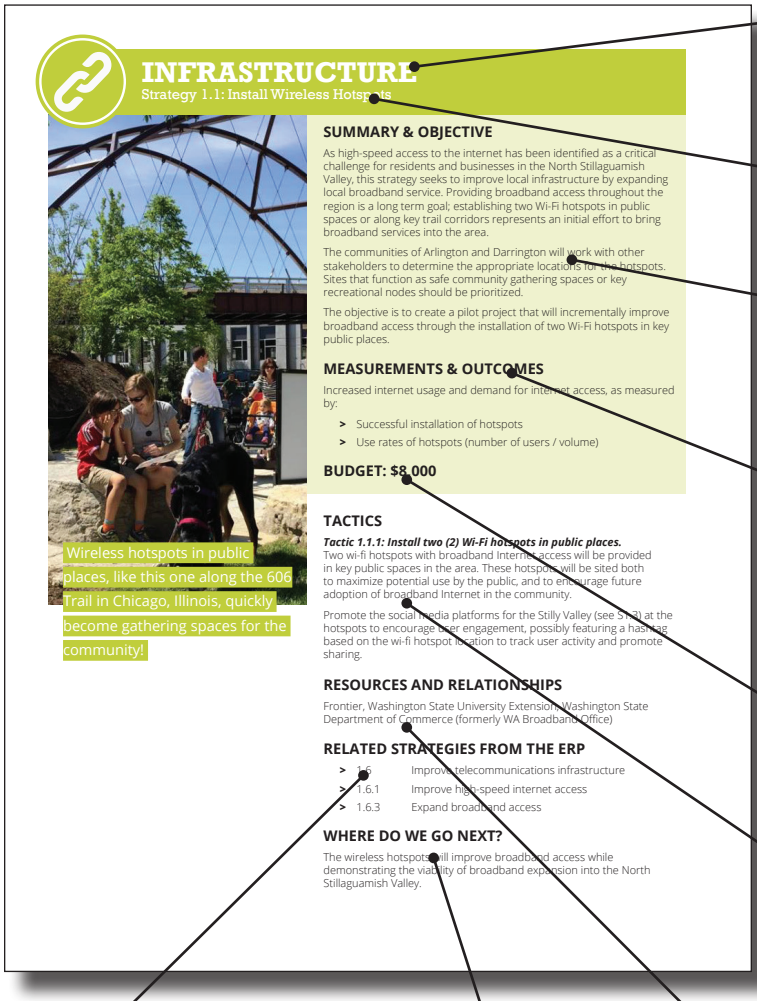
Developing a Shared Understanding of Community Vision and Priorities

The ERP involved significant public engagement, including community forums, a technical assistance panel, targeted stakeholder interviews and a business survey. Community involvement is an equally important component of the CRP, and members of the public were responsible for prioritizing ERP actions for immediate funding and implementation. During this round of engagement, many of the ERP actions were expanded or refined to better respond to the needs of the ABC competition. As a result, the CRP reflects a shared community vision for how to begin implementation of critical ERP actions. Those ERP actions that aren't prioritized in the CRP remain as economic development priorities and will seek funding from different sources, as appropriate. The graphic below helps illustrate the relationship between the two plans.



How to Navigate the Plan

This plan provides a series of strategies formatted as one-page handouts that present consistent information in an easy-to-use format for planning and implementation:



INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategy 1.1: Install Wireless Hotspots

Wireless hotspots in public places, like this one along the 606 Trail in Chicago, Illinois, quickly become gathering spaces for the community!

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

As high-speed access to the internet has been identified as a critical challenge for residents and businesses in the North Stillaguamish Valley, this strategy seeks to improve local infrastructure by expanding local broadband service. Providing broadband access throughout the region is a long term goal; establishing two Wi-Fi hotspots in public spaces or along key trail corridors represents an initial effort to bring broadband services into the area.

The communities of Arlington and Darrington will work with other stakeholders to determine the appropriate locations for the hotspots. Sites that function as safe community gathering spaces or key recreational nodes should be prioritized.

The objective is to create a pilot project that will incrementally improve broadband access through the installation of two Wi-Fi hotspots in key public places.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Increased internet usage and demand for internet access, as measured by:

- Successful installation of hotspots
- Use rates of hotspots (number of users / volume)

BUDGET: $8,000

TACTICS

Tactic 1.1.1: Install two (2) Wi-Fi hotspots in public places.
Two wi-fi hotspots with broadband Internet access will be provided in key public spaces in the area. These hotspots will be sited both to maximize potential use by the public, and to encourage future adoption of broadband Internet in the community.

Promote the social media platforms for the Stilly Valley (see S-3) at the hotspots to encourage user engagement, possibly featuring a hashtag based on the wi-fi hotspot location to track user activity and promote sharing.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Frontier, Washington State University Extension, Washington State Department of Commerce (formerly WA Broadband Office)

RELATED STRATEGIES FROM THE ERP

- 1.6 Improve telecommunications infrastructure
- 1.6.1 Improve high-speed internet access
- 1.6.3 Expand broadband access

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

The wireless hotspots will improve broadband access while demonstrating the viability of broadband expansion into the North Stillaguamish Valley.

Goal: Each page in the Goals & Strategies section identifies the applicable ERP/CRP goal with a icon and color-coding.

Strategy: The CRP strategy is listed beneath the goal.

Summary & Objective: The summary and objective define the intent of the strategy, general context and key elements.

Measurements & Outcomes: This defines how these strategies may be evaluated to determine progress during the plan, as well as the intended objectives and a desirable end-state for the strategy.

Budget: This amount is the estimated budget, of the available $100,000, required to complete the tactics for this strategy.

Tactics: Tactics are individual action steps to be taken to achieve the objectives of the strategy. Tactics are intended to provide enough detail to aid implementation, but some specifics will be determined after the award.

Resources & Relationships: This element includes all potential resources available to help achieve these goals across all partnering organizations.

Related Strategies from the ERP: This reference provides a link to the relevant components of the North Stillaguamish Economic Revitalization Plan.

Where Do We Go Next?: Disucsses how the strategy and tactics relate to larger, longer-term priorities, and where future efforts will be needed.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal One: Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a critical component of economic development, and the 2014 landslide highlighted the importance of physical and digital linkages between communities of the North Stillaguamish Valley and the wider region. Improving broadband accessibility is a high priority among infrastructure needs, as this technology is vital to businesses and residents in rural areas.

Goal Two: Industries & Employment

The local economy of the North Stillaguamish Valley has historically focused on resource-related and industrial activities. Economic development efforts in the Valley must reinvent and support these industries while creating living wage jobs in other sectors. Sustainable forestry, advanced manufacturing and aerospace engineering, tourism and recreation and retail have all been identified as competitive industries.

Goal Three: Community & Workforce Development

Ensuring a sustainable, healthy community requires investment in its people, and people whose basic needs are met are more likely to seek higher education and living-wage jobs. In this way, community and workforce development is an essential component of economic development efforts. These programs ensure that all residents are able to find satisfaction and security in their work, and that local business owners can find talented employees to grow their operations.

Goal Four: Resilience and Sustainability

All economic development efforts should be sustainable, but few regions are more intrinsically tied to their natural environment than the North Stillaguamish Valley. These communities routinely deal with flooding, and risks like volcanoes and landslides are ever-present. Given the economic costs of these events, planning for resilience and sustainability is a key economic development consideration.

Goal Five: Placemaking

The distinct image and brand of a place can endear it to residents and attract visitors. Placemaking involves targeted investments to the aesthetic quality and amenities of Arlington and Darrington that will evoke character and create unique identities to make residents proud. As visitors take note of the special, place-based qualities of these towns, they will increasingly choose to spend free time at the Valley's shops, parks and festivals.

Goal Six: Rural Innovation

The North Stillaguamish Valley's rural character, beautiful landscapes and recreational opportunities are some of its defining characteristics and clear economic development assets. Sustainable, place-based initiatives offer opportunities for entrepreneurship, living wage jobs in artisanal industrial sectors and amenities that attract residents as well as visitors. Indeed, tourism and recreation can support innovation in rural economic development planning by creating an entrepreneurial culture, improving conditions for business growth and developing unique attractions that reflect the character of their communities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

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SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

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The objective is to create a pilot project that will incrementally improve broadband access through the installation of two Wi-Fi hotspots in key public places.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Increased internet usage and demand for internet access, as well as demonstrated viability of broadband expansion into the North Stillaguamish Valley, as measured by:

- Successful installation of hotspots
- Use rates of hotspots (number of users / volume)

BUDGET: $8,000

TACTICS

Tactic 1.1.1: Install two (2) Wi-Fi hotspots in public places.
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Promote the social media platforms for the Stilly Valley (see Strategy 6.3) at the hotspots to encourage user engagement, possibly featuring a hashtag based on the Wi-Fi hotspot location to track user activity and promote sharing.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Frontier, Washington State University Extension, Washington State Department of Commerce (formerly WA Broadband Office)

RELATED STRATEGIES FROM THE ERP

- Improve telecommunications infrastructure (1.6)
- Improve high-speed internet access (1.6.1)
- Expand broadband access (1.6.3)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

The wireless hotspots will improve broadband access while demonstrating the viability of broadband expansion into the North Stillaguamish Valley.

INDUSTRIES AND EMPLOYMENT

Strategy 2.1: Placemaking and Merchandising Consultant

An appealing retail environment can help "Main Street" retailers compete and improve the viability of locally-owned shops. This shopping district in Decatur, Georgia is distinguished by colorful facades, custom awnings and unique plantings.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

Businesses in Darrington and Arlington are challenged by current trends in retail, including the shift to e-commerce. However, local shops that offer unique experiences and products have strong growth potential. Understanding operations and management, brand development, consumer preferences, merchandising and product placement are essential to growing a business. This strategy suggests a rough scope for a retail-focused consultant that could provide expert advice in these critical areas. The consultant would also recommend capital investments to attract traffic to business districts. The objective is to spur activity within the downtown retail centers by improving the shopping environment and implementing retail best practices.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Improved retail environments and business viability, as well as retail district expansion, as measured by:

- Consultant utilization by local retailers and implementation of consultant recommendations
- Prevalence and recognition of "Picture This" displays
- Qualitative assessment of retail trends by business owners
- Longer term metrics, including year-over-year increase in taxable retail sales, decrease in retail vacancy rates, and new business licenses

BUDGET: $14,000

TACTICS

Tactic 2.1.1: Evaluate merchandising and operations at local retail establishments and suggest improvements
Coordinate time for the placemaking and merchandising consultant to meet with individual retail businesses and provide guidance for store layout, product placement, display design, etc.

Tactic 2.1.2: Produce materials for a "Picture This" window display series in downtown Arlington and Darrington
Provide graphic examples of unique uses for vacant storefronts to stimulate creative thinking and leasing interest.

Tactic 2.1.3: Evaluate the public realm in downtown Arlington and Darrington and recommend specific investments
Assess (via guided tour) the downtown areas of Arlington and Darrington and provide prioritized enhancements.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Downtown Arlington Business Assn. (DABA), Darrington Strong

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Enhance the diversity and character of retail offerings (2.5)
- Beautify and maintain the public realm (5.2)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

Municipalities and partner organizations will work toward implementation of major projects and recruit tenants to fill vacant spaces.

INDUSTRIES AND EMPLOYMENT

Strategy 2.2: Mobile Tool Library

ADX Portland, a fabrication laboratory, makerspace and de facto community center, illustrates the concept behind Strategy 2.2.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

A strong "DIY" culture is present in the Valley, as residents have the skills and interest in creating, fixing, and tinkering. However, many members of the community have identified the need for access to additional tools to do everything from simple home improvement projects to upkeep around storefronts and even new product development. This strategy for a mobile tool library will serve Valley residents, and business owners in particular, to complete minor maintenance projects in the short term, but the tool library may offer an opportunity to work toward a fabrication lab or makerspace concept, that uses shared access to technology to incubate businesses.

The objective is to encourage property maintenance through shared resources and encourage the entrepreneurial spirit and DIY culture.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Improved property maintenance and demonstrated community support for the tool library, as measured by:

- Number of tools purchased/donated
- Use rates for tool library
- Before and after photos to demonstrate project success

BUDGET: $12,000

TACTICS

Tactic 2.2.1: Create a Business Plan
Create a business plan for the mobile tool library that assesses potential sources of revenue, operating costs, capital costs for startup and future expansion, rates for use and management of the resources.

Tactic 2.2.2: Purchase Tools and Machinery
Based on the business plan, tools and machinery will be purchased through initial startup funds.

Tactic 2.2.3: Gather Letters of Intent for Future Expansion
Seek interested individuals to sign letters of intent, which will be used to generate momentum and obtain resources for expansion.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Northwest Innovation Resource Center, Washington State University Extension, University of Washington

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Open a business incubator (2.4.4)
- Open a makerspace (2.4.6)
- Foster a regional innovation ecosystem (6.1)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

Find permanent physical space for a fabrication lab and business incubator with high quality facilities and state of the art technology to facilitate entrepreneurship and enable increased teleworking.

COMMUNITY & WORKFORCE DEV.

Strategy 3.1: Arlington and Darrington Youth Councils

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

One critical component of community and workforce development is supporting the youth of today to become the leaders of tomorrow. Smaller rural communities frequently lose their young people as they move out of the area to pursue higher education and entry-level careers, resulting in a "brain drain" of talent needed to sustain a vibrant local economy. This strategy establishes independent youth councils that will focus on issues of interest to youth leaders by integrating young people into the political process and equipping them with the skills and resources to address these problems.

The objective is to encourage young people to make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and the region as a whole through the creation of autonomous youth councils in Arlington and Darrington. Ultimately, the intent is to give them a sense of investment and a bond that will promote the Stillaguamish Valley as a place where they can grow professionally in the future.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Demonstrated effectiveness and sustainability of youth council model and increased rates of retention / return for younger people in the region, as measured by:

- Participation rate / demographics of participants
- Attendance at meetings / retreat
- Projects implemented

BUDGET: $10,000

TACTICS

Tactic 2.1.1: Hire Part-Time Coordinator
A part-time coordinator will be employed to coordinate the youth councils. Position duties will focus on streamlining initial implementation, with long-term management coordinated by Arlington and Darrington staff.

Tactic 2.1.2: Arrange Materials and Operations Budgets
Management of the youth councils will be independent to encourage self-direction by the participants. To support this, the town councils and other partnering agencies will look to provide sustainable, long-term budget support for materials and operations.

Tactic 2.1.3: Organize Annual Retreat
Although the focus of youth councils will be on local areas, a regional retreat will be held annually to establish regional priorities, identify opportunities for collaboration, and celebrate major accomplishments.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Arlington and Darrington School Districts, Glacier Peak Institute, North Counties Family Services, 4-H, Boys and Girls Club

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Invest in the development of strong workforce talent across all demographics (3.1)
- Expand programming and recreation opportunities for youth (3.5)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

After this initial start-up period, these youth councils are envisioned to continue their efforts for years to come, evolving and expanding their reach as they become firmly established.

RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 4.1 Support Glacier Peak Institute

Glacier Peak Institute, a Darrington-based STEM learning program, is using the Stillaguamish Valley's abundant natural resources and recreation opportunities to teach advanced scientific concepts to young people.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

Glacier Peak Insitute (GPI), based in Darrington, was founded in direct response to the tragedy that resulted from the SR 530 slide in March 2014. Its mission is to "empower youth, community and ecosystems to prosper and cultivate a shared resilient future through action-based education." GPI's curriculum takes students out of the classroom and into the environment to learn scientific research techniques through the collection and analysis of field data. This strategy bolsters the institute's ability to provide students with a strong field biology experience through the purchase of scientific equipment used to monitor ecological health. Students are already contributing to slide monitoring projects, building their own monitoring equipment and learning about early warning preparation for natural disasters.

The objective is to enhance opportunities for students to engage in environmental risk assessment and restoration efforts.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Increased student interest in and understanding of scientific research methodologies, as applied to disaster preparedness. Measurements will include:

- Number / demographics of participants
- Participant survey

BUDGET: $7,000

TACTICS

Tactic 4.1.1: Purchase Scientific Equipment
GPI has identified the types of equipment needed to broaden students' data collection efforts and create monitoring devices, such as 3D printers, a turbidimeter and In-Situ smarTROLL RDO Handheld Dissolved Oxygen Meter.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Glacier Peak Institute, Arlington and Darrington School Districts, Darrington Collaborative

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Support Glacier Peak Institute (3.1.4)
- Expand programming & rec. opportunities for youth (3.5)
- Study, implement enhanced hazard mitigation (4.2)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

The new equipment will substantially add to GPI's capacity to provide students with a strong background in scientific exploration and better understand the environmental challenges faced by the Stillaguamish Valley.

PLACEMAKING

Strategy 5.1: Beautification Campaign

Targeted investments "below the roofline" will complement our unparalleled scenery above!

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

The North Stillaguamish Valley's natural beauty is understandably a great source of community pride, though the aesthetics of the houses and other buildings in the area could benefit from some additional investment. In many cases, only small changes may be needed to provide a significant positive change - improvements such as new paint, landscaping and power washing can completely change the image of a property and potentially provide a catalyst for other improvements. This strategy creates a fund, managed by the municipalities, that will award grants to property owners interested in making aesthetic improvements to their properties. This will focus on supporting small-scale improvements and efforts will be made to address major areas of concern in neighborhoods.

The objective is to encourage investment in private property to enhance community aesthetic quality by providing funding and support.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Enhanced community aesthetic character, as measured by:

- Number of grant applications and awards
- Beautification projects completed
- Before and after photos

BUDGET: $6,000

TACTICS

Tactic 3.1.1: Fund Property Improvements

A fund will be made available to Arlington and Darrington landowners to support beautification projects. These grants will be managed by the two municipalities and awarded until funding is exhausted. Applications will be reviewed to ensure these improvements would contribute to the neighborhood beautification.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Arlington Office of Economic and Community Development, Town of Darrington

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES:

- Acquire maintenance equipment (5.2.1)
- Fund physical improvements (5.2.3)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

With this pilot grant program, Arlington and Darrington will be able to assess the viability of similar future incentives for owners of private property.

PLACEMAKING

Strategy 5.2: Pocket and Pop-Up Parks

PARK(ing) Day is an opportunity to demonstrate the utility of small-scale public spaces in downtown areas. Though this strategy is about creating permanent pocket parks, PARK(ing) Day's temporary installations will rally public support at a critical stage in the design process.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

Downtowns ideally function as centers for employment, commercial activity and public gathering. The public parks currently available to residents and visitors in Arlington and Darrington are in need of maintenance and expansion. In addition, both downtowns would benefit from smaller-scale public spaces that provide opportunities for visitors and shoppers to stay and enjoy the community. Each of the municipalities have identified potential sites for parks that can enhance the environment of their downtowns. This strategy entails selecting sites in both communities and developing an initial site concept and design through pro bono or student services. PARK(ing) Day, an annual worldwide event where communities transform parking spaces into temporary parks, will be celebrated in both towns to promote awareness of the roles parks and open space play in the community. The objective is to celebrate and bring community awareness to local park improvement efforts.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Community support for design implementation and continued commitment to construction of proposed parks, as measured by:

- Attendance at charrettes and public meetings
- PARK(ing) Day attendance
- Survey results from PARK(ing) Day
- Completion of design documents

BUDGET: $12,000

TACTICS

Tactic 3.2.1: Complete Site Selection and Surveying
Initial site surveys will be completed in Arlington and Darrington, with the selection of a pocket park project site made from potential sites identified in each community.

Tactic 3.2.2: Site Design
Each community will identify options for developing conceptual park designs, which may be created by a university landscape architecture studio or through pro bono work from a local design firm.

Tactic 3.2.3: PARK(ing) Day Demonstration
Temporary parks in downtown parking spaces will demonstrate how new public spaces could contribute to the streetscape and quality of life in neighborhoods. This event will also be used to display the park designs and gather feedback.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

City of Arlington, Town of Darrington, selected design consultants (pro bono professional service providers or graduate student design studios)

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Improve parks and open space (5.2.2)
- Solicit pro bono design/build services (5.2.4)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

This initial phase of design work will set the stage for a more detailed design phase, followed eventually by construction of the parks.

RURAL INNOVATION

Strategy 6.1: Stillaguamish Valley Outdoor Adventure Recreation Plan, Phase I

Graphic design can improve the clarity and accessibility of maps. Investing in high-quality promotional materials for recreational assets can help drive traffic and commerce. This map of Gresham, Oregon exemplifies the high-touch approach to cartography.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

The 2015 North Stillaguamish Valley Economic Redevelopment Plan recommended the development of an outdoor recreation plan to identify, improve and market local recreation assets and tourism opportunities. With its wealth of natural assets, the region is well-suited to increase its appeal to visitors interested in outdoor recreation. This strategy initiates work that will contribute to the Outdoor Adventure Recreation Plan, which will strengthen the region's position as a recreation destination. The Rural Tourism Studios (Strategy 6.2) that target a select group of stakeholders could potentially be a source of important feedback that would aid development of the plan.

The objective is to promote and enhance the region's unique recreational assets through the establishment of a community vision and the creation of an inventory of recreation assets and natural amenities as well as printed promotional materials.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Demonstrated interest in promoting, and greater awareness of, the region's recreation assets, measured by:

- Kick-off attendance
- Downloads / hard copies distributed of asset map and promotional materials

BUDGET: $14,000

TACTICS

Tactic 6.1.1: Community Kick-off
A community kick-off meeting will introduce the project, outline the process and compile initial input and feedback for the plan.

Tactic 6.1.2: Inventory of Recreation Assets
A prioritized inventory of relevant recreation and tourism assets will be developed, including selected natural features, trails, facilities and other infrastructure.

Tactic 6.1.3: Asset Mapping and Promotional Materials
Based on the asset inventory, a series of visually appealing maps will be created. These will be designed as promotional materials for area recreation and tourism and used both to inform residents and market recreation opportunities to visitors.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, Snohomish County Office of Economic Development, Snohomish County Parks & Recreation

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

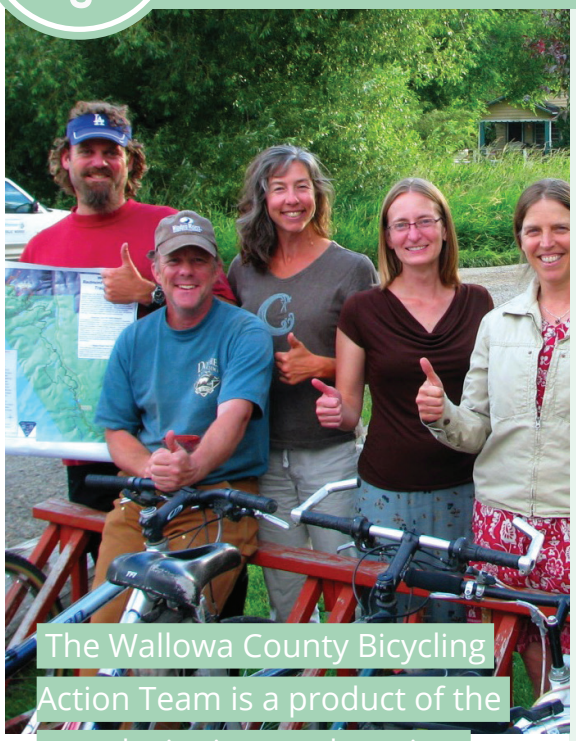
- Create a recreation master plan (5.3.8)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

Phase II of the SVOARP will continue to deploy promotional materials and develop an action plan to improve recreational offerings. The specific scope for Phase I and Phase II will be negotiated during consultant selection.

RURAL INNOVATION

Strategy 6.2: Rural Tourism Studios



The Wallowa County Bicycling Action Team is a product of the award-winning rural tourism studios sponsored by Travel Oregon. These studios provide a model for a series of workshops that empower business owners to develop sustainable tourism products locally.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

The EASC, Snohomish County Tourism Bureau and Office of Economic Development intends to coordinate a series of rural tourism studios with selected stakeholders in the area. The intent of these studios will be to provide local business owners with the education to empower participation in tourism planning and development. This strategy allows the communities of Arlington and Darrington to contribute funds for the first studio, which will establish a "territory story" to serve as the basis for area-wide planning and marketing efforts as well as a roadmap for future work in the rural tourism studios. Coordinating this effort with the Recreation Plan (Strategy 6.1) will ensure that these efforts are mutually supportive.

The objective is to leverage community knowledge to create a new model for regional tourism by providing a dedicated forum for learning and guided conversations.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Demonstrated interest in collectively generating ideas and an action plan that, when implemented, will expand the region's sustainable tourism economy. Measurements include:

- Studio attendance
- Post-event survey

BUDGET: $2,000

TACTICS

Tactic 6.2.1: Host Studio 1 – visioning and "territory stories"
The first Rural Tourism Studio will be coordinated to provide stakeholders in recreation and tourism in the Stillaguamish Valley with the opportunity to build a common vision for the future of the region's sustainable tourism economy. This "territory story" will be used for direction to guide future planning.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, Snohomish County Office of Economic Development

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

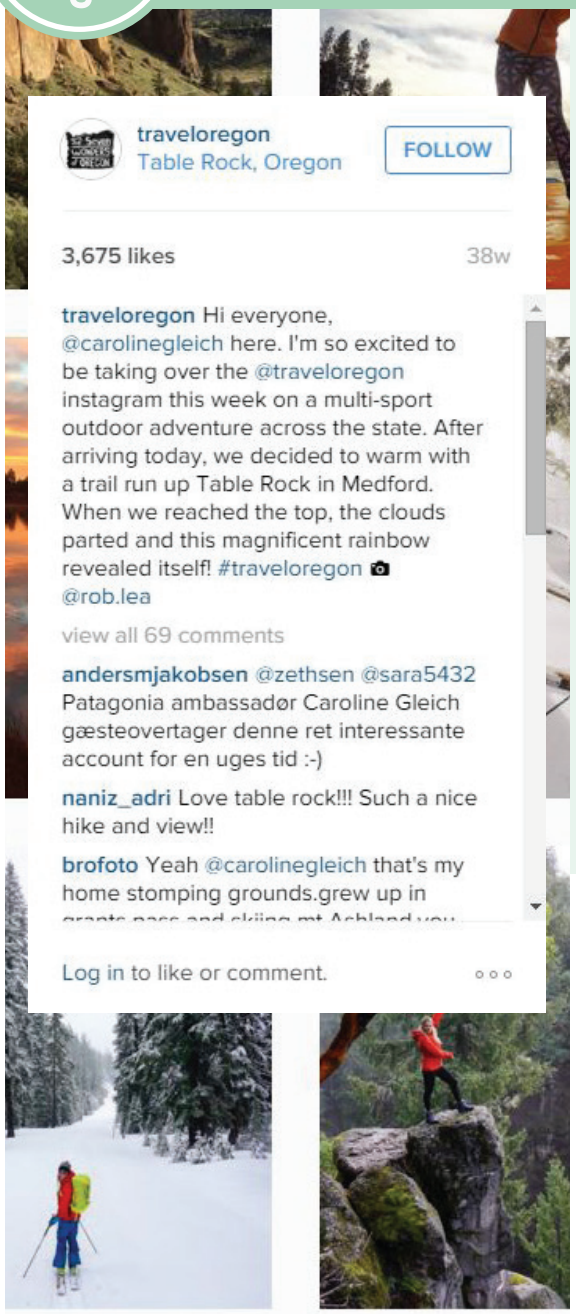
- Continue to extend recreation infrastructure (5.3)
- Market the Valley's unique assets and stories (5.5)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

This studio, the first in a series of six, will ultimately build towards a community-generated, implementation-focused Action Plan. Private and public actors will make investments in skills and product offerings based on the content of the studio series.

RURAL INNOVATION

Strategy 6.3: Social Media Blitz



Instagram takeovers are a great way to reach new followers in your target audience. Patagonia ambassador and professional skier @CarolineGleich took over the @TravelOregon Instagram account to popularize Oregon's natural wonders.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

Prior work by a branding consultant provided for a cross-media "Experience Stilly Valley" campaign. This branding effort focused on publicizing recreational opportunities and sustainable tourism in the Stillaguamish Valley through social media and other platforms. While the social media accounts associated with this campaign still exist, they are not currently coordinated under a broader public engagement strategy and many do not provide regular content to subscribers. This strategy reinvigorates the "Experience Stilly Valley" campaign, highlighting and marketing local recreation and tourism, and links with efforts in the region to increase user engagement. Associated efforts include coordinating a regular schedule of content, providing for notifications of major events and assisting with publicizing planning efforts.

The objective is to strengthen the Stillaguamish Valley's image as a recreation destination using an array of social media strategies.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Greater awareness of recreational resources in the region, eventually leading to increased visitation and recreation-related commercial activity, as measured by:

- Social media posts provided, comments/shares
- New social media followers

BUDGET: $2,000

TACTICS

Tactic 6.3.1: Manage Existing Social Media Platforms
Existing social media accounts from the "Experience Stilly Valley" campaign will be updated with new background information, and a staff member will be responsible for developing a regular schedule of social media content from events in the community and other items related to recreation and tourism. This will be coordinated with other efforts in marketing and promotion.

Tactic 6.3.2: Sponsor Instagram "Takeovers"
For the Instagram photo sharing account (and other accounts as appropriate), two to three "takeovers" involving recognized regional recreational professional will be coordinated as special events. These takeovers will highlight personal stories about the assets in the area and increase awareness and engagement with the public.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Outdoor recreation professional(s), Snohomish County Office of Economic Development, Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, Arlington Chamber of Commerce

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Optimize social media presence (5.5.7)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

Expanding the region's social media presence will need to be sustained over time, with dedicated staff to manage accounts.

RURAL INNOVATION

Strategy 6.4: Memorial Bike Ride

The Whitehorse Trail connects Arlington and Darrington through the North Stillaguamish Valley, but a section of the trail was destroyed by the 2014 landslide. The trail will reopen with new safety features and amenities in 2017.

SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

One of the major recreation and tourism assets of the region is the Whitehorse Trail, a 27-mile trail between Arlington and Darrington that runs roughly parallel to the North Fork of the Stillaguamish River. The 2014 landslide destroyed a section of the trail, rendering the trail unusable for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Additionally, the bridges, trestle and multiple crossings of SR 530 are major safety issues that require improvement. Only six miles of the trail between Darrington and Swede Haven are currently open. Snohomish County is in the process of addressing the safety issues and damage caused by the slide.

The objective is to commemorate the third anniversary of the slide by hosting a memorial bike ride to coincide with the reopening of the Whitehorse Trail in March 2017 and celebrate the ABC-related accomplishments.

MEASUREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Regional interest and support for event as well as greater public awareness of the ABC award and related community revitalization efforts.

- Participants, volunteers
- Sponsorships and in-kind contributions

BUDGET: $4,000

TACTICS

Tactic 6.4.1: Event Planning and Marketing
Event planning will be managed and coordinated by a committee of community members. This will require a concerted effort to market the event, secure sponsorships and obtain necessary permits and permissions.

Tactic 6.4.2: Maps, Signage and Apparel
Branded materials for the ride will be developed for the event, with maps, signage and apparel available for participants and spectators.

Tactic 6.4.3: Volunteer Management and Operations
Volunteers will be coordinated to facilitate the event, ensure safety and provide information the community.

RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

City of Arlington, Town of Darrington, Snohomish County Office of Economic Development

ERP CROSS-REFERENCES

- Repair and reopen the Whitehorse Trail (1.3.3)

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

This inaugural event will highlight some key recreational investments made by the County and could result in an annual event to mark the slide anniversary.

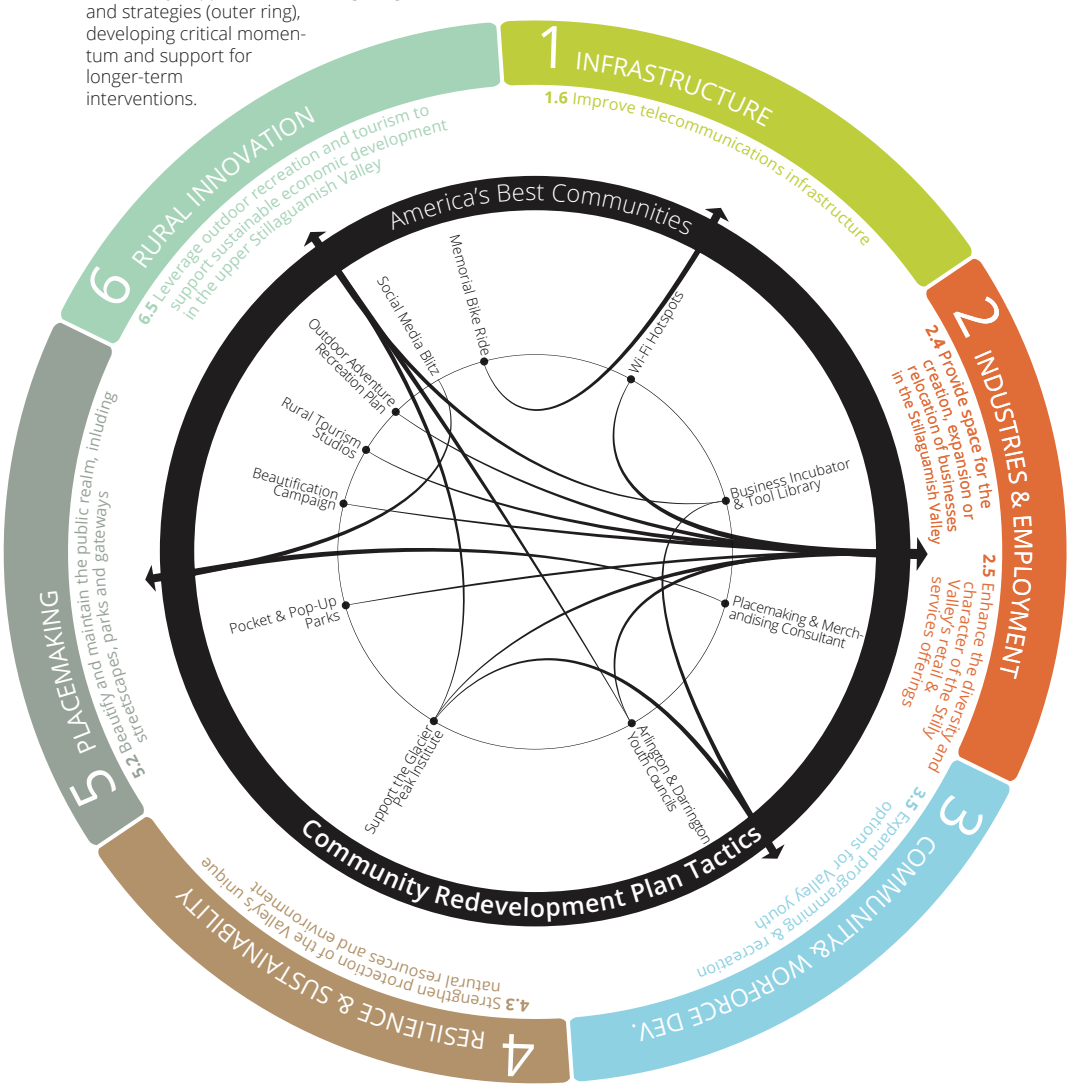
IMPLEMENTATION

The near term planning and implementation of this Community Revitalization Plan's selected strategies and tactics will provide crucial support and momentum for the longer term interventions outlined in the North Stillaguamish Valley's recently-completed Economic Redevelopment Plan. In fact, each of the individual tactics outlined in the previous section of this document were selected from the larger collection of ERP strategies and actions, then further refined for near-term implementation for this planning effort. These tactics were chosen, in part, due to their linkages with numerous other goals and strategies outlined in the ERP. These connections are illustrated in the following diagram.

America's Best Communities
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN
CONNECTIONS

This diagram connects tactics selected for the America's Best Communities competition Community Redevelopment Plan with the original North Stillaguamish Economic Redevelopment Plan (ERP) Goals and Strategies.

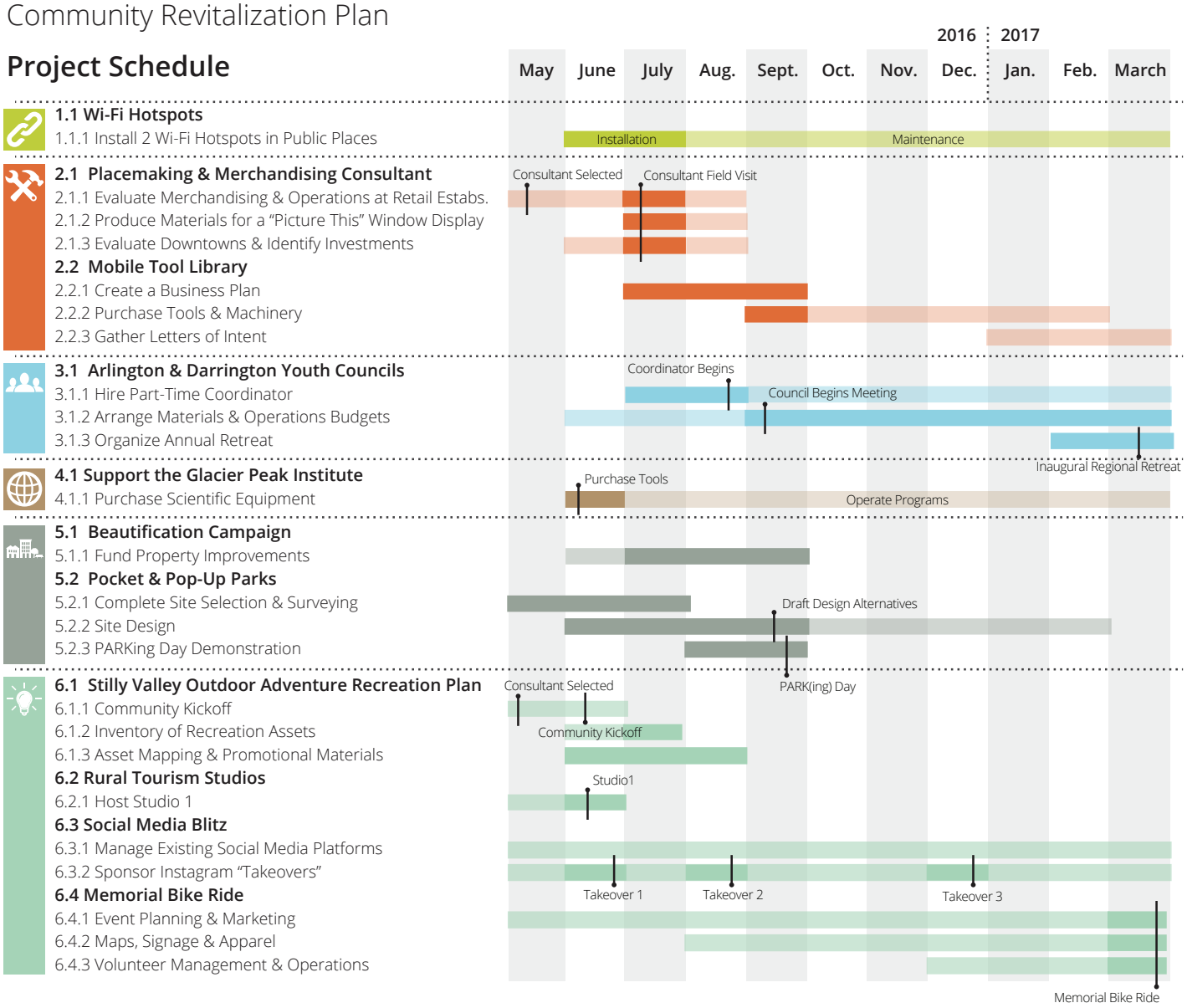
The selected tactics (inner ring of this diagram), if funded and implemented, will directly support the ERP's original goals and strategies (outer ring), developing critical momentum and support for longer-term interventions.



Project Schedule

The individual strategies and constituent tactics required to implement them are outlined in the following chart along with timelines for implementation and major milestones. The proposed timeline for each tactic represents our best estimate for project execution. Regardless of schedule shifts, we are committed to completing all tactics within ABC's alloted timeframe. Many of these actions will also require planning and maintenance throughout the 11-month period of the Community Revitalization Plan; these periods are indicated by corresponding lighter-colored bars in the chart. The main action or projected period of intensive activity is represented by the darker-colored bars.

America's Best Communities
Community Revitalization Plan



* Lighter-colored bars represent periods of planning, preparation, maintenance, or monitoring associated with individual tasks; darker bars represent action-oriented or intensive phases.

Management and Evaluation

Successful implementation of the strategies and tactics will require financial management and formal evaluation. The CRP calls for Economic Alliance Snohomish County, as the fiscal agent, to handle duties related to disbursement and accounting. Washington State University Extension, as a long-time economic development planning partner and valued community member in the region, is available to provide a rigorous community-based evaluation through the WSU Division of Governmental Studies and Service. This evaluation program will be critical to communicating successes and launching future phases from both the CRP and ERP. Both of these items require a budget allocation, which is reflected below.

ONGOING MANAGEMENT, DOCUMENTATION AND ACCOUNTING:	**$4,000**
COMMUNITY-BASED EVALUATION:	**$5,000**

Community Revitalization Plan
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Extension

cai community attributes inc

1411 Fourth Ave., Suite 1401
Seattle, WA 98101
communityattributes.com