

# Leadership Ellensburg

## *A Catalyst for Change*

Results of SWOT Analysis<sup>1</sup>  
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### ***Participants***

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### **Vision**

Ellensburg should strive to be a classic small town with a vibrant town square, restored historic structures and few empty storefronts or vacant buildings. New businesses should be encouraged. Ellensburg should continue to be an attractive, friendly and safe place to live where people value and support education, the arts, law enforcement, emergency response and related programs. Ellensburg should provide adequate and diverse family-wage jobs and housing connected by a network of attractive walking/bicycle corridors. We believe that Ellensburg should become a nexus for outdoor recreation with a strong commitment to preserve our rich natural and agricultural resources. Goals and objectives related to these values and commitments should be incorporated in the city plan and codified. Achievements should be evaluated and reported periodically to ensure accountability and alignment with vision.

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by R.L. Soltz, Ph.D., June 24, 2006

### Strengths

*The following is a list of community characteristics and/or resources we think can help to achieve our vision:*

- **Location** - center of State
- **People** - educated, skilled, friendly, engaged
- **Weather** - four seasons, diverse recreational opportunities
- **CWU** - jobs, events, people and resources
- **Downtown** - structures and events
- **Environment** – rich natural and agricultural heritage
- **Education** - strong K-12 system with university
- **Health and safety** – adequate medical resources and low crime rate

### Weaknesses

*We lack strength in the following areas:*

- There are not enough family-wage jobs
- There is not adequate housing or water resources
- We have relatively little ethnic and cultural diversity
- Our central location leads to pass-through tourism and makes it easy for residents to shop elsewhere
- We are experiencing explosive growth with limited supporting infrastructure and no unified vision
- The agricultural economy is declining
- There is limited shopping
- University students are sometimes not aware of or integrated in Ellensburg business community events
- The greater Ellensburg community does not take full advantage of university events

### Opportunities

*The following external events or situations could be seized to contribute to our success:*

- **Suncadia** and other destination resorts
- Accessibility of **alternative energy resources** such as solar, ethanol, biodiesel, wind and other sources
- Interest in and potential construction of **water distribution/storage facilities**
- **Increasing retail and other business opportunities following growth**
- **Comprehensive Planning Process**

- Development of new **technology**
- **Rapid transit**
- Growth in State **wine industry**
- Improved **ethnic and cultural diversity**

### Threats

*These external events or situations may provide challenges:*

- **Energy and water shortages**
- **Competition** drawing customers from Ellensburg to boutique retail opportunities at destination resorts
- The initiative process and the potential for **dramatic shifts in government budgets**
- Wholesale agricultural **land conversion**
- **Loss of significant environmental values and resources**
- Rising **taxes and the anti-tax movement**
- **Skyrocketing housing costs**
- **Potential wastewater spills and violation of environmental statutes and regulations**

### Strategies

*Based on our scan of the internal and external environment relative to the Ellensburg community, we suggest that City and business leaders:*

- **Work with CWU to identify, fund and develop promising alternative energy projects**
- **Identify and “package” the environmental and cultural elements that make our community unique to create a compelling image that will promote local businesses**
- **Work with Suncadia and CWU to share resources and create centers of scale/expertise in tourism, civic engagement and community relations development**
- **Explore the possibility for Ellensburg to become a State distribution, rapid transit and/or air transportation center**
- **Develop and support a CWU student business center downtown**
- **Support downtown development and redevelopment, and create incentives for new businesses to locate downtown**
- **Consider adopting an “ASK ME” program**
- **Identify and support measures to develop a dependable water supply**
- **Identify and support efforts to enhance environmental quality**

- **Explore how best to promote Ellensburg businesses with marketing efforts already underway at Suncadia**
- **Explore how Suncadia clients and resources could contribute to existing/new business**
- **Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan reflects community vision**
- **Take additional steps to ensure that community members know when and how they can participate in community leadership, planning and assessment processes**
- **Implement strong development standards**
- **Consider adopting additional economic development strategies including the creation of a Port District**
- **Use existing Innovation Park to promote “home grown” research, attract industry and create new jobs**
- **Create job markets that attract a diverse work base and provide opportunities for CWU students to stay here and work**
- **Create a Leadership Ellensburg Fellows Program with the specific mission to endorse, implement, track and report the progress of these subject strategies**