**Warrenton – Economic Vitality Top Priorities for Action**

**Your Opinion Counts!** Community leaders and volunteers are working together on an Action Roadmap for Economic Vitality. During the community assessment phase, nearly 100 community members shared ideas for priority projects to strengthen Warrenton’s economic vitality. We’re ready to identify a few focus areas to jumpstart action and results in a 90 day period! Several themes and potential projects are listed below from the community input.

**Business Attraction & Community Livability**

1. Make more walkable
	1. *"A dead downtown (not walkable, not vibrant for residents)”*
	2. *“Trail connections are not all linked”*
	3. *“Improve safety for pedestrians/bikers”*
	4. *“There is no downtown.* Where does it start? end? Is it just big box stores? No sidewalks or pedestrian mobility”
2. Flip the negative: “Warrenton is underdeveloped, but as a result – we now have the opportunity to direct its future!”
	1. *“clean slate”*
	2. *“lots of land to work with”*
	3. *“attractive prices and no sales tax”*
	4. *“entrenched economic base (logging, fishing, military) can be assets*
3. Attract/grow small businesses to locate in downtown/Main Street (overlaps with Downtown Revitalization theme)

**Build Up a Desirable/Market-Ready Workforce**

1. Need affordable housing options – among the top cited issues tied to workforce
2. Create more activities, events, and spaces for youth especially as future residents and workforce
3. Reduce drug abuse
4. Create pathways for success

*“once employed with a company there are no or limited opportunities for advancement or pay so we lose employees to bigger cities.”*

**Revitalize Downtown & Improve Appearance**

1. Create targeted plan to improve specific properties along ‘main street’

*“looks like a sleepy town”*

*“looks cheap”*

1. Create a common identity/image/brand – what do we want to be known for? (Ie. The answer cannot be big box)

*“Lacks an identity”*

*“Feels like we are a sellout to any and all developments*”

3. Elevate Warrenton’s potential as a place for beautiful scenery and nature

* *Wetlands planning was a theme*

**Addressing Nuisance Properties**

Develop incentive or recognition program for cleaned up, painted houses and yard
clean up

* + - *“rundown and vacant buildings: homes and businesses”*
		- *“Spruce it up, ever heard of the broken window principle? There's a lot of broken windows in Warrenton. Spruce it up, add sidewalks and provide opportunities for local SMALL businesses to develop or start”*

**City Staff Image/Rebranding Campaign**

1. Address and eliminate the perception that city staff are difficult/rude to deal with; too many obstacles/’old guard’
	* + *"Eliminate overregulation"*
		+ *“Minimize government review, develop a cooperative attitude at City Hall toward developers”*
		+ *“Make the permitting process more enjoyable. Staff not helpful. We are aware that the code is what it is, but building and planning Dept are tough to work with. “*
		+ *“1-Lack of support from City Hall. 2-Slow or no response from Public Works. 3-Hurdles imposed by the Planning Department”*
2. Increase transparency, allow residents to feel like they have a voice
	* + *“Require the city to produce at least once a quarter a small newspaper telling residents what physical upgrades were made in the previous 90 days and what physical upgrades are planned for the next 90 days and to send that to all residents that have a utility bill with the city as a bulk mailing”*
		+ *“Create an open system to appeal rules from City Hall.”*