

Action Plan Flow Chart

List of Catalyst Projects

The following projects were evaluated and prioritized based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Does the project promote integration?
- ✓ Was the project identified as a priority by the public?
- ✓ Is the project consistent with the existing plans?
- ✓ Is the project feasible?
- ✓ Does the project benefit the community?

Economic Development Projects

- Waterfront Cleanup and Redevelopment
- Facilitate the Recruitment of an Environmental Center on the Waterfront
- Facilitate Coordinated Branding, Marketing and Business Recruitment Program
- Public Events
- Comprehensive Way-Finding and Signage Program
- Government Civic Center

Public Amenity Projects

- Trails and Pathways
- Public Marina Feasibility Study
- Open Space Development and Improvement

Land Use Policy and Regulation Projects

- Complete Development Code Update
- Design Guidelines
- Local Financing Mechanisms

Infrastructure Projects

- Pioneer Street Rail Overpass
- Pioneer Street Corridor Transportation Plan
- Downtown Streetscapes and Uses

Ridgefield Downtown/Waterfront Integration Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Overview

The citizens of Ridgefield are working to revitalize their historic downtown area and to clean and redevelop the community’s waterfront. The primary purpose of the Integrated Planning Grant (IPG) project was to develop a shared vision along with a coordinated set of planning strategies, priority



actions, and projects for the downtown and waterfront areas. Additionally, the community wanted to encourage coordination, collaboration, and communication among the interested parties working in the area including elected officials and staff of the Port and City, business owners, property owners, and interested citizens. The plan is designed to promote the social, environmental and economic well being of Ridgefield through the revitalization of downtown and redevelopment of the waterfront. The citizens of Ridgefield endeavor to create a community where people of all ages can pursue their aspirations in ways that do not preclude future generations from doing the same.

The City of Ridgefield, Port of Ridgefield, and the Ridgefield community worked together to forge a partnership and develop con-

sensus to create a unified vision and integrated planning strategy with guidelines to direct a multi-year downtown and waterfront area development initiative.

Before beginning the public process, representatives from the City and Port discussed the successes, challenges, and missteps other communities went through in the process of redeveloping/revitalizing their local waterfront. That information was folded into the Port’s waterfront redevelopment plan for Miller’s Landing.

Three public meetings and workshops were held in 2010 to develop a unified vision and to identify and prioritize catalyst projects that will help achieve that vision. Issues, concerns, and opportunities associated with the integrated planning project were identified, discussed and resolved. From those discussions and public input at community events, through the City of Ridgefield’s website, and stakeholder interviews a clear executive action implementation plan was created.

Ridgefield, a community in transition from small town to regional center for innovative industry, creative residents, and excellent outdoor recreation opportunities, has an unprecedented opportunity to shape its future. This plan presents a vision for integrating long-term redevelopment of the Ridgefield waterfront with its historic downtown through community conversations and City and Port of Ridgefield planning. Ridgefield is an active community with a strong sense of its identity and the intrinsic values that make it a wonderful place to live, work, and play. This plan seeks to leverage its assets to foster sustainable economic and community development.

Unified Vision

Ridgefield is a regional employment and residential center that drives a local, robust economy. Ridgefield preserves and protects critical natural areas and is committed to community and environmental sustainability. Ridgefield is a destination area for tourists and visitors – admired for its walkable downtown, “Main Street” feeling, and small town character. Ridgefield is pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly with strong connections between neighborhoods, the downtown-waterfront, and adjoining activity centers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The Vision Statement is implemented through targeted community development strategies. These strategies provide focus on where the community will primarily target its resources and energy. Community building themes and economic strategies were reviewed and refined during the public involvement process. These strategies synthesize the community’s inherent assets and its values to direct future marketing, development, and investment.

Recommendations

General Policies

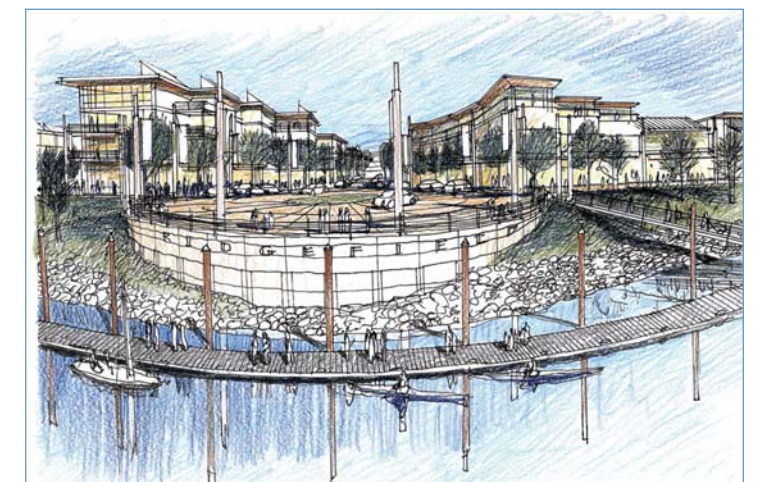
- Capitalize on previous community successes
- Downtown businesses should be oriented toward services more than goods due to behavioral changes with demographic shifts
- Cleanup and redevelopment of downtown brownfield properties in core downtown area to create economic critical mass
- Improve Main Street as a focal point to assist in connecting the downtown and waterfront areas
- Support the vision with investment in necessary public infrastructure
- Provide for pedestrian friendly circulation and access
- Maintain the community’s quality of life with development efforts
- Capitalize on proximity to the Refuge and Lake River

Land Use

- Encourage upper story residential development in the downtown and waterfront for a 24/7 presence to support community and business vitality
- Focus development and redevelopment of the downtown areas between Main Avenue and 5th Avenue and Mill Street to Pioneer Street
- Encourage arts, cultural and institutional uses in the downtown core
- Implement the provisions contained in the International Building Code to allow for greater flexibility to utilize existing buildings when desired
- Protect view sheds to the waterfront through identified view protection corridors
- Provide for appropriate building heights in downtown to maintain the “small town feel”
- Implement design guidelines for the downtown area that will integrate guidelines identified in the 2004 Downtown Design Guidelines Plan
- Establish design guidelines for the waterfront to create consistency and connectivity to downtown while allowing for the waterfront to develop its own character and identity
- Downtown should remain the civic and cultural center for the community

Connections & Access

- Support the completion of the Pioneer Street Rail Overpass
- Support a second connection to the waterfront from the downtown to provide for looped pedestrian access
- Provide for public access opportunities to Lake River
- Connect downtown, waterfront, refuge and residential areas via land and water trails and pathways
- Prepare a Transportation Plan to assess impacts to the Pioneer Street Corridor
- Include design improvements for pedestrian mobility and create an iconic gateway for the downtown and waterfront



Port of Ridgefield: Miller’s Landing