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This report identifies 4 primary goals for Economic Development:

- 1) **Diversify the economy and broaden the tax base;**
- 2) **Increase per capita income for Johnson City residents;**
- 3) **Enhance employment opportunities for young adults that offer higher quality jobs, along with greater range and selection of careers; and**
- 4) **Improve and protect the natural and built environment as assets that attract economic development opportunities and enhance Johnson City's quality of life.**

In addition, four primary market sectors were identified which are to be supported and emphasized:

- 5) **Healthcare/Medical/Technology/Education;**
- 6) **Downtown Revitalization;**
- 7) **Manufacturing; and**
- 8) **Tourism.**

The Economic Development Plan is a collection of adopted policies and actions designed to achieve the identified goals and promote the primary market segments. Policies and actions which are more general and which do not relate directly to a specific market segment are listed first (Policies 1.1 through 1.20 are reflective of Goals 1-4). Those policies and actions which relate to specific market segments are grouped together by market segment.

Policy 4.1.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to support business investments that provide economic and employment opportunities for all residents (with reasonable time and resources provided).

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city shall provide infrastructure and reliable city services to all businesses in the Urban Service Area (USA) which promotes employment opportunities.

Policy 4.1.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to support efforts in business development and retention that will help incubate new businesses, retain existing companies and promote their expansion and growth potential.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city shall support the ~~Economic Development Board~~, **Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership**, the Johnson City Development Authority, **Work Force Development focus group**, **First TN Development District (Workforce and Literacy Initiatives)**, and the Chamber of Commerce to conduct periodic surveys of local businesses to understand existing strengths and concerns, to take a proactive approach to providing assistance, and to offer solutions to their needs.

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Policy 4.1.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage entrepreneurship development.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city shall support future efforts in incubator programs that provide start-up businesses a higher success rate. Through existing and expanded economic development partnerships, the City will direct resources to support small, entrepreneurial, locally-owned businesses.
2. With increased participation in internet business, the city shall ensure zoning regulations continue to support home-based business in residential districts.

Policy 4.1.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to maintain a balanced tax system that is competitive for business and residential investment.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will review its tax structure annually to ensure it is competitive compared to the Tri-cities region, state, and federal tax structures.
2. The city shall consider taxed-based incentive programs to attract businesses.

Policy 4.1.5: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the Economic Summit and its focus groups.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. Support focus group efforts in creating successful websites that will provide citizens, businesses, and public officials' information.
2. The city shall provide staff support, facility access, and financial assistance if deemed appropriate.

Policy 4.1.6: It is the policy of Johnson City to maintain cooperative working relationships with local, regional, statewide, and federal organizations that pursue economic development activities consistent with the goals and objectives of this Element.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city shall continue to research and pursue private, philanthropic, federal and state grants that will benefit the city.
2. The city shall support organizations involved in regional economic development efforts such as the ~~Economic Development Board~~ Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, the ~~Industrial Development Alliance~~, and others associated with economic development activities.

Policy 4.1.7: It is the policy of Johnson City to ensure support seamless, professional teamwork among local economic development related organizations.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. Representatives from organizations such as, the ~~Economic Development Board~~, Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership, Johnson City Development Authority, Johnson City Chamber of Commerce, ~~Johnson City Power Board~~, BrightRidge, Tri-Cities Airport Commission, First Tennessee Development District, Med Tech Park, Tennessee Small Business Development Center, and Innovation

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Park will meet quarterly to ensure increased communication and coordination between organizations.

Policy 4.1.8: It is the policy of Johnson City to maintain its position as a regional retail and experience center.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The Johnson City Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element identifies locations ideal for retail development which will be implemented through the city's zoning regulations, and other necessary actions to provide needed infrastructure.

Policy 4.1.9: It is the policy of Johnson City to develop and nurture visionary leadership within the community.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city shall encourage citizens representing all segments of the community to participate in the local decision-making process, through appointments on a variety of committees and groups.
2. The city will support groups such as, the Citizens Police Academy, Chamber Leadership 20/15, Economic Summit, and Johnson City 101.

Policy 4.1.10: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage high-speed telecommunications access to both businesses and households.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will partner with telecommunication providers to install fiber optic cable to promote connectivity.
2. The city will ensure that wireless telecommunication receivers can be located in strategic places.
3. The city will work with high-speed telecommunication companies who provide reasonably priced services to citizens.
4. Support the marketing and continued roll out of the 10Gbps high-speed Internet Service Providers (BrightRidge).

Policy 4.1.11: It is the policy of Johnson City to support efforts by organizations that attract quality¹ business and industry into our area.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will support the ~~Economic Development Board~~ Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership in recruiting business and industry that will assist in raising the city's per capita income.
2. Business recruitment shall be based on Johnson City's future economic development goals and target market sectors.
3. Businesses will be recruited that can grow under the market assets Johnson City can provide.
4. Maintain a balanced approach of supporting small businesses, attracting/retaining young professionals and incentivizing large employers to locate to the area.

¹ Quality will be clearly defined in the Strategies section under Livable Communities/Quality of Life

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Policy 4.1.12: It is the policy of Johnson City to 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.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The Johnson City school system shall ensure students are being educated in programs that are relevant to the local and regional workforce needs, and will provide students with marketable skills.
2. The city will work in conjunction with the Johnson City Schools to ~~should~~ examine the K-12 educational curriculum in the Johnson City School System to ensure students are educated in fields that are applicable to our local economy.
3. The city will encourage local colleges and universities to form partnerships with local businesses to ensure workforce development needs are being met with educated employees.
4. The city will partner with state and local economic development organizations including the First TN Development District (e2E Summit) to assess workforce education needs and to create an action plan accordingly.

Policy 4.1.13: It is the policy of the city to support beautification projects that enhance arterial gateways into Johnson City.

1. The city will concentrate beautification projects in the following areas as practical:
 - a. West Market Street (U.S. 11 E)
 - b. I-26 Perimeter green areas
 - c. I-26 medians
 - d. SR 67 (University Parkway)
 - e. SR 36 (Kingsport Highway)
 - f. Bristol Highway
 - g. Boones Creek Road
 - h. SR 75 (Suncrest/Bobby Hicks Highway)
2. The city of Johnson City shall encourage the participation of local civic clubs, garden clubs, businesses, and individuals in gateway beautification projects.
3. The city of Johnson City shall provide continuing maintenance for beautification projects on city streets.

Policy 4.1.14: It is the policy of Johnson City to strengthen the city's image and attractiveness by improving the appearance of the landscape and signage at entries to the city on major arterial roads.

Gateway signage should be placed at the following gateways into Johnson City:

1. Interstate 26
2. West Market Street (US 11E)
3. Bristol Highway
4. Kingsport Highway
5. Milligan Highway
6. Boones Creek Road
7. E. Main St from Elizabethton
8. S. Roan St

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Policy 4.1.15: It is the policy of Johnson City to support efforts in maintaining scenic open space that is attractive to both local residents and visitors.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will continue to support policy that encourages infill development, through the Urban Service Area or Urban Growth Boundary as identified in the Land Use Element.
2. Development along ridge tops should be low impact as identified in the Land Use Element.

Policy 4.1.16: It is the policy of Johnson City to provide a well-maintained environment, which will enhance public property in Johnson City.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city will retain a high level of maintenance of roads, sidewalks, city parks, municipal buildings, and other city properties. The continued maintenance and upkeep of city property shall be outlined in the city's annual budget.

Policy 4.1.17: It is the policy of Johnson City to provide a well-maintained environment for all residents, which will enhance private property in Johnson City.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will update codes and regulations that will prohibit nuisances on private property such as:
 - a. Ensure property owners maintain overgrown lots;
 - b. Prohibit trash on lots; and
 - c. Removal of junk cars
2. The city will encourage neighborhood groups to take an active role in partnering with the city to determine concerns of a neighborhood.
3. Re-establish *Blight & Beautification Task Force* to provide recommendations regarding policies and procedures addressing the safety of visual appearance of the city.

Policy 4.1.18: It is the policy of Johnson City to ensure that this economic development plan is reviewed regularly so it remains competitive and can respond to changes in the market.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The Johnson City Regional Planning Commission, with assistance from the Planning Department Staff, will review the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with ~~Economic Development Board~~ *Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership's* goals and objectives on a yearly basis to ensure the Plan is current and relevant to existing conditions and events.
2. *A report on the review of the Economic Development Element will be presented to the Regional Planning Commission on a yearly basis.*

Policy 4.1.19: It is the policy of Johnson City to develop a market specific action plan for the forward progress of Economic Development in Johnson City.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should consider hiring a consultant to study the economic climate in Johnson City and the region to determine the future direction of the local and regional economy,

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the future of the Med Tech corridor, and the impact of I-26 on the city's economic future.

2. An incentive program should be formed to recruit prospective businesses outlined in the consultant's study that have the potential to expand in our local economy.
3. A *FastTrack* program should be considered by the city to speed up the permitting and review process of new development.
4. Johnson City should recruit businesses on a regional, national and global scale that are conducive to its local economy.

Policy 4.1.20: It is the policy of Johnson City to promote the growth of retail sales within the city.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city's Land Use Plan will identify suitable commercial sites that are adequate to meet anticipated demands.
2. The city will promote convenience and experiential oriented retail that is proximate to residential neighborhoods.
3. Commercial developments will be designed to encourage pedestrian activity with provisions for sidewalks and streetscape amenities, and for pedestrian access to other nearby shopping facilities and residential areas.

HEALTHCARE/MEDICAL/TECHNOLOGY/EDUCATION

Policy 4.2.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to support efforts to expand the Medical/Healthcare Industry to become a stronger regional market.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should update the Med Tech corridor study.
2. The city shall support the continuing development initiatives directed at strengthening and enhancing the Med Tech corridor.
3. The city will identify sufficient land for the Medical/Healthcare industry (refer to the Land Use Element).
4. The city shall, in partnership with ETSU, support the implementation of the Innovation Park Master Plan.
5. The city shall continue to support the Millennium Centre.
6. The city shall continue to support Med Tech Park.

Policy 4.2.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to support initiatives from the Tennessee Valley Corridor that will grow Bio-technical markets in the region.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should support efforts that will promote the Healthcare/Medical/Technology cluster.
2. The city shall encourage regional support in the Healthcare/Medical/Technology sector as new enterprises are started, or when businesses re-locate or expand.

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Policy 4.2.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to support continuing educational opportunities that enhance the Healthcare/Medical/Technology/Education market cluster.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will provide continued support to the Pharmacy School at ETSU.
2. The city will promote other workforce development and educational opportunities that may arise in the Healthcare/Medical/Technological/Education cluster.

Policy 4.2.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage programs that integrate physical activities into citizen's daily routines and support policies that enhance bicycling and walking into community design.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will support programs that promote daily physical activity in schools and the workplace.
2. The city will continue to promote a more walk-able community through improved sidewalk facilities and develop a more comprehensive bikeway/greenway network.
3. The city will encourage local employers to promote and/or include physical activity in employees' daily regimen and to encourage smoke-free work areas.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Policy 4.3.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to support incentive programs in downtown that will offer businesses a more competitive edge to stay and expand.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should support future programs that will entice development throughout downtown.
2. The city shall support future enhancement opportunities to continue downtown improvements.
3. The city shall provide necessary infrastructure to downtown businesses.

Policy 4.3.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the Johnson City Development Authority (JCDA) in its efforts to revitalize downtown.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should support the JCDA in establishing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Program in the downtown.
2. The city should provide support to the Johnson City Development Authority in maintaining the designation of the Tennessee Main Street Program.
3. The city should support the JCDA in its efforts in working with local colleges and universities to bring academic programs into the downtown where space is available.
4. The city should support the JCDA to continue applying and implementing ~~Transportation Enhancement~~ Grants to improve and enhance **downtown projects** ~~the streetscape~~.
5. The city should complete the **downtown flood study** and implementation programs to help existing businesses, and encourage future businesses to re-locate in a flood safe district.

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Policy 4.3.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the creation of welcome signage identifying the downtown district.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions: Signs should be placed at ~~these~~ entry and exit points **as indicated in the Wayfinding Signage Plan.**

1. State of Franklin Road
2. North Roan Street
3. South Roan Street
4. East Market Street
5. West Main Street
6. Buffalo Street
7. Water Street

Policy 4.3.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the integration of a pedestrian friendly streetscape and enhance safety throughout the downtown.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will encourage the following actions, but not limited to: pedestrian friendly crosswalks, increased green-space, planting of more trees, aesthetically pleasing sidewalks, **bicycle-friendly streets and trails.**
2. The city should increase efforts to promote a safer downtown. Examples are, but not limited to: increased police protection and increase lighting in areas of poor visibility.

Policy 4.3.5: It is the policy of Johnson City to support infill development in areas where infrastructure is currently provided.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will promote tax incentive programs ~~(currently establishing a TIF)~~
2. The city will encourage the use of Federal Tax Incentives for the restoration of historic buildings.

Policy 4.3.6: It is the policy of Johnson City to support and encourage local colleges and universities to incorporate university level programs as part of their presence in the downtown.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city should support JCDA's efforts in working with local colleges and universities to bring specific academic programs and uses into the downtown where space is available. Advantages of locating downtown may offer benefits to specific programs or classes such as; geographic location, space available for classes, or displaying projects and a market to support student services.

Policy 4.3.7: It is the policy of Johnson City to support events that encourage visitors to the downtown.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city shall continue to support existing events such as the Blue Plum Festival, First Fridays, UMOJA/Unity Festival, **Little Chicago, Meet the Mountains,** and new downtown events that may be created in the future.
2. The city will continue to encourage **city, county and other** office use and activities in the downtown area.

MANUFACTURING

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Policy 4.4.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the ~~Economic Development Board~~ Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership in recruiting environmentally friendly industry and manufacturing into Johnson City.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The ~~Economic Development Board~~ should recruit industry on a national and global level.

Policy 4.4.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to ensure development/location of adequate sites for industrial use at designated locations that can be readily accessed, served with utilities, and free of major environmental constraints.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city shall partner with the ~~Economic Development Board~~ Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership to delineate sites suitable for “clean” industrial growth and attraction.
2. The city through its land use policies and zoning regulations will coordinate efforts to develop sites for industrial activities, such as industrial parks.

Policy 4.4.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to work with other levels of government and with the private sector to support and encourage the clean-up of contaminated soil and other environmental remediation associated with the re-use or expansion of industrial sites.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will coordinate partnerships with local and state government and others to determine where contaminated sites may be in Johnson City.
2. The city will form partnerships to clean-up and remediate all contaminated sites.

Policy 4.4.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to work on a regional basis to address the problems of site development assembly, infrastructure improvements, and traffic congestion, which may inhibit industrial expansion in industrial areas.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will form partnerships with adjacent municipalities to solve problems with site development and its long-term effects.
2. The city will support efforts in recruiting industry on a regional level.

Policy 4.4.5: It is the policy of Johnson City to continue collaboration with both regionally focused and citywide organizations representing industrial interests so that the needs and perspectives of this sector can be recognized and incorporated, as appropriate, into the city’s actions and decisions.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city should continue to encourage organizations such as the ~~Economic Development Board~~ to work with local and regional organizations that represent industrial interests.

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Policy 4.4.6: It is the policy of Johnson City to support business retention and expansion and work to retain existing industries in Johnson City.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will support efforts in surveying local industries to identify services the city can provide that will benefit the business and the city.
2. The city will maintain communication with “roundtables” so local government will have an overall understanding of business concerns.
3. The city shall take a more active role in open communication with large employers in Johnson City.
4. The city will work with local and state governments on programs designed to assist local industry in expansion or modernization efforts.
5. The city should investigate incentive programs to retain businesses and create growth opportunities.

Policy 4.4.7: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage clean-up, re-use, and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized industrial sites. Where continued industrial use is no longer viable, re-designation to another land use should be evaluated.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city should work with state and federal agencies to identify brown field locations in Johnson City that may be contaminated for development purposes. Partnerships should be formed to ensure site remediation.
2. The city should utilize federal resources for brown field remediation.
3. The city should consider rezoning industrial property to a beneficial use if industrial use is no longer viable.

Policy 4.4.8: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the ~~Economic Development Board~~ Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership in creating an all-inclusive list of buildings, which qualify in a grayfield economic development program.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. Johnson City will encourage infill development by taking inventory of vacant buildings in the city that have infrastructure such as: roads, water, sewer, rail service, etc.

Policy 4.4.9: It is the policy of Johnson City to determine locations for warehousing and distribution related sites that are in close proximity to the two major interstates (I-81 and I-26), and that can be readily accessed, served with utilities, and free of major environmental constraints.

This policy is to be implemented by the following action:

1. The city will locate and zone potential distribution sites that are easily accessible and in close proximity to Interstate 81 and Interstate 26.

TOURISM

Policy 4.5.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the ~~Chamber of Commerce Convention & Visitors Bureau~~ in a marketing program to encourage tourism in the region.

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This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will continue to provide funding to the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau with such funds earmarked for the promotion of tourism in the area.
2. The Johnson City Chamber of Commerce should explore creating extended stay packages that bring guests to Johnson City. The packages should promote the many attributes of tourist related activities in the region and attract tourists to stay and dine in Johnson City.

Policy 4.5.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to support ETSU in its efforts to locate a museum and education center at the Gray Fossil site.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will provide the necessary infrastructure for the development of the fossil site.
2. The city will explore the feasibility of locating a visitor center at the Gray Commons facility that would enhance and take advantage of tourism at the Gray Fossil site and other locations in the city and surrounding area.

Policy 4.5.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to become a visitor destination by preserving and enhancing the unique qualities of both rural and urban areas.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city Convention & Visitors Bureau will promote historical and cultural areas such as Tipton-Haynes and Rocky Mount. Property adjacent to these historic sites should be protected to enhance their aesthetics.
2. Johnson City should discourage development that takes place along ridgelines, to assist in preserving the natural beauty of the area.
3. The City, Chamber of Commerce, NETREP, and the Convention & Visitors Bureau shall continue to promote outdoor activities that are important to our area such as whitewater rafting, fishing, hiking, camping, mountain biking, road cycling, walking, etc. and commit to prioritizing and approving projects that meet or target all four areas of focus (stewardship, education, infrastructure and economy) in NETREP's Outdoor Development Plan."
4. The City, Chamber of Commerce and the Convention & Visitors Bureau shall continue to promote tourism events such as the Storytelling Festival, NASCAR racing, Apple festival, Blue Plum festival, Little Chicago, UMOJA/Unity Festival, Meet the Mountains Festival, etc.
5. The City and the Convention & Visitors Bureau shall continue to support traffic tourism (motorcycles, RVs, road cycling, classic cars, etc.) in a form which protects the City's quality of life.

Policy 4.5.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to promote the city as a regional / national amateur youth sports destination.

This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:

1. The city will continue to fund and support efforts that promote tournaments and athletic events in Johnson City and partner with private entities to accomplish goals related to this policy.

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2. The City should strive to become a regional/national attractor of youth sports by building and promoting facilities that will host major tournaments and events. This should be balanced based on ROI and the efforts to promote Johnson City as an Outdoor Recreation destination.
3. The City and Convention & Visitors Bureau shall support ETSU's efforts to host large sporting events in Johnson City.
4. The City shall support the efforts of the Convention & Visitors Bureau to host national events such as United States Professional Disc Golf, USA Softball, and Music for All as well as others that are awarded to the Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Policy 4.5.5. It is the policy of Johnson City to promote and support professional/semi-professional sports such as Appalachian League baseball.