



# CITY OF BLACK DIAMOND

## Interoffice Memorandum

**TO:** BLACK DIAMOND CITY COUNCIL AND CITIZENS  
**FROM:** ANDREW WILLIAMSON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
**SUBJECT:** BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS  
**DATE:** 10/27/2008

The City of Black Diamond is pleased to present the results of our first business survey.

The City posted the survey on the website and mailed a copy directly to current business license holders and commercial property owners. The survey included 15 questions on City services and the needs of business owners for various types of economic development support, as well as opportunities for free-form comments.

We received more than 55 survey responses 20 of them are in home businesses. Most respondents have been in business for over 16 years with 23 out of 29 who don't foresee moving out of the City. 37 out of 51 respondents are satisfied with the City's permitting process, fees and regulations and 36 out of 43 indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with current services from the City of Black Diamond. The services people were most interested in include pre-development consultation, marketing and customer service, and other workshop/training opportunities. The respondents offered many ideas about the types of challenges or opportunities the City faces and how to improve our services.

The intent of the survey is to provide a foundation for service improvements to aid existing and future business owners in our community. Over the next year, the City will continue its economic development planning efforts and will ask for additional community input.

Following is a summary of the results and representative comments from the survey. Detailed results by question are available on the City's website at [www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us](http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us).

Thanks to everyone who filled out the survey and for taking the time to provide thoughtful responses, participants include: Wanda Krysko, Black Diamond Garden Shop, Inc.; RM Construction NW, Inc.; Robert Charles, Baker Street Books; Steve Moergeli, Mt. Rainier Bank; Brown and Bigelow; Jenni Gould, Gould Cottage Creations; Jim Flynn; Frank Rinehart; Patti Johnson, Allstate Insurance; Ginger and Harvey Senecal, Mama Passerelli's; Renee Stouffer; Jon H. Roelofs, Edward Jones; Sandi Hull, Windermere Real Estate; Peter Fisher, Black Diamond Bike and Backcountry; Nissan-Infiniti-LT; McBride Construction; Kamas Realty; Patriot Fire Protection; Cazier and Associates; Palmer Coking Coal; Picture Perfect Painting; Taff Roofing; Green River F.O.E.; Omega Contractors; Rod Selland, Royal Towing and RV; Shane Davies, Windermere Real Estate; DCI Plumbing, Inc.; Valley Mobile Trailer Repair; Benjamin Asphalt; Dick and Joy Pinkston; Ezell V. Plyer; Northwest Fire and Mechanical; Puget Sound Surfacers, Inc.; Automatic, LLC; CheryAnn Cole, The Picket Fence; Flothe Insurance/Pedersen Agency; Crescent Realty; Asphalt Patch Systems and Auburn Sheet Metal.

## Survey Questions and Responses

### Question #1: Are you a business owner in Black Diamond?

Response: 26 Yes 30 No

### Question #2: Why did you choose Black Diamond for your Business?

Response: Live here 10 City code 2  
Location 9 Cost 1  
History 2

### Question #3: How long has your business been in operation?

Response: 1 to 5 years 7 11 to 15 years 4  
6 to 10 years 3 16 years and over 15

### Question #4: Do you operate as a home business?

Response: 20 Yes 10 No

### Question #5: Do you foresee moving your business or adding a new site?

Response: 6 Yes 23 No

### Question #6: Why and where would you like to locate?

Response: Plan to open another office in Black Diamond as population grows.  
Some place with a very large commercial size shop for equipment repair.  
Had planned to move to Enumclaw before B & O tax removed.  
Plan to move into a retail space in the City later.  
Between Lake Sawyer and Covington there are a lot of housing and road improvements in the area.

### Question #7: What additional services (available in the City or provided by the City) would be of the greatest help to your business development?

Response: Clean up businesses along highway 169.  
Being able to obtain licenses and permits over the web.  
Help getting through the maze of regulations.  
Allow on site watchman to stay in RV to stop theft of copper.  
Online permits applications.  
A point of contact within the City administration, clear policy and direction.  
Pay City bills in a timely manner.  
Establish Black Diamond's own Chamber of Commerce.  
One stop shop for permits, no surprises.  
Promotion of the recreation possibilities, mountain bike trails and local roads.  
Business support group/chamber.  
Signs are a big problem.  
A larger residential base to support supermarkets and hardware stores.  
More sidewalks and development of historic old town.  
G.I.S citywide data on utilities, parcel, roads, topographies contours, aerial images and sensitive areas.  
Affordable office rent.  
More businesses in Black Diamond.  
Online services.  
Establish a regular meeting to include any and all Black Diamond business owners and City staff to discuss.  
Issues and concerns of mutual interest.  
Street improvements at Railroad Avenue and Baker Street; maybe three-way stop.

### Question #8: Describe your level of satisfaction with the City's permitting process, fees, and regulations.

Response: 37 Satisfied 14 Not Satisfied

**Question #9: What is the general location of your business or property?**

Response:	Black Diamond	28	Puyallup	1
	Maple Valley	4	Kent	1
	Enumclaw	2	Spanaway	1
	Auburn	2	Bellevue	1
	Carnation	1	Selleck	1
	Duvall	1	Seattle	1
	Fife	1		

**Question #10: If you own property in Black Diamond but you do not yet operate a business on that property, have you had other permitting and land use interactions with the City?**

Response: 5 Yes 18 No

**Question #11: How can City services be improved to meet your needs as a business and/or commercial property owner?**

Response:

- Promote the south end of town more for development.
- Be friendlier towards proposed business improvements.
- Be pro-active and inter-active in finding solutions rather than problems.
- Be more responsive, less restrictive; ask your self how we can make this work for everyone involved.
- Consult with local tradesman before changing permitting process.
- Patrol old business district after businesses close to prevent burglaries.
- Don't change your mind or lose the drawings during the process.
- Lift the moratorium.
- Look at changes to the sign code, less restriction, still maintain the "not cluttered" look.
- Once a building permit is approved and construction begins do not change City requirements.
- Communication needs to be better.
- Online applications and regulations.
- There should be tiers of business licenses based on the size of the business.
- Not sure yet.
- Ask Police Department to not pull over drivers in parking lots, it is bad for businesses.

**Question #12: What do you think are the key factors (opportunities and challenges) affecting businesses and opportunities in the next five years?**

Response:

- Hard to file permits strict restrictions.
- More advertising locally from Chamber.
- Economy.
- More businesses.
- Family dining.
- Cost of business license.
- "Buy local" campaign.
- Transportation.
- Population.
- Regulations.
- Strict code.
- Enforcement and over zealous Police force.
- Tax forms are extremely annoying.
- Infrastructure.
- Black Diamond as a destination rather than just a town.
- B & O tax to high.
- Gambling tax to high.
- Preserving the natural environment.
- Cooperation among land business and City government.
- Competition from Maple Valley and Covington.
- Bookstores, restaurants.

Rapid un-controlled growth, don't want to look like Covington or Maple Valley.  
 Residential growth, getting businesses to locate in Black Diamond.  
 Growth, needs to be done is well planned way.  
 Lack of residential density and low population.  
 Poor transportation system inside and outside the City.  
 The City's staff and Council lack of experience with commercial development.  
 Poor economy for development.  
 Competition from Covington and Maple Valley.  
 Access in and out of the City.  
 Street improvements and sidewalks.  
 Smooth permitting process.  
 Open and on-going communication between the City, businesses and residents.  
 Businesses and organizations to meet the core needs of residents (grocery stores, family restaurants, family oriented activities and entertainment.  
 Opportunities.  
 Local phone calling area is too restrictive, fiber optics need to be brought to City.  
 Not much retail space which limits business growth.  
 Allowing for growth both commercial and private while maintaining the rural feel.  
 Maintaining and staying on top of infrastructure needs.  
 The loss of community identity, through the destruction of potentially our greatest financial asset. The sustainable, non-polluting trail network which draws people to this town. It could be so much more if preserved and promoted, rather than being destroyed.  
 We will never find out if we do nothing. Let's move forward soon.  
 Defining transportation corridors, cooperation amongst land owners, businesses and City government.  
 Increased interest in the area.  
 New buildings like Diamond Square.  
 Black Diamond Police reputation.  
 Improvement of old business frontage.

**Question #13: What City services would you utilize in the next year if they were available?**

Response:	Marketing & customer service	17
	Pre-development consultation	15
	Workshops, training, business seminars	11
	Home based business forum	7
	Site selection	3

**Question #14: Describe your level of satisfaction with current services from the City of Black Diamond.**

Response:	Very Satisfied	6
	Satisfied	30
	Not satisfied	7

**Question #15: What City services work well for you as a business and / or commercial property owner?**

Response: Information provide quickly and efficiently by City staff.  
 Night patrol by Police.  
 Omitted B & O tax.  
 Front counter permit staff.  
 Fire Department.  
 Being able to come to City Hall and ask questions.  
 Administrative: permits and licenses.  
 City staff is great, very friendly.  
 Utilities under Dan Dal Santo.  
 Economic Development Department.