

VI. Recommended Economic Development Goals and Policies

The following economic development goals and policies are offered for local participants in the planning process, so they may help in their own communities to sort the issues most important to our industry. The goals and policies are not original – many communities have used similar statements. And they are not exhaustive. They don't include statements on workforce training or transportation, for example, that are legitimate issues that should be addressed in an economic development plan. Rather, they are a sampling of development community goals and policies. Specific communities may not require each of these; others may want to develop goals or policies that are not included here.

An area's economic goals and policies are important. How they are worded and the level of detail provided are important, because they establish the legal framework within which development issues will be judged and the basis on which projects will be allowed to move forward. An area's economic plan is likely to eventually provide the basis for establishing compliance with the state's Community Readiness Initiative being administered through the Office of Trade and Economic Development.

Sample of Economic Development Goals and Policies

1. Our community is made up of:

Livable areas with sufficient opportunities for affordable housing;
Job opportunities for our residents;
Tax-paying, job-creating businesses;
Advanced telecommunication systems, utility and public infrastructure necessary to allow our residents and businesses to participate fully in 21st century;
Safe neighborhoods;
Strong educational facilities; and
Recreational and cultural amenities.

It is supported by a transportation system that encourages our contact with and support of one another and links us to the region and the rest of the world.
It is our policy:

Policy 1.1 – To have specific plans for accommodating the population, housing, and jobs increases forecast to occur, and to adjust annually, as necessary, to meet higher demands.

Policy 1.2 – To integrate the regulations, guidelines, infrastructure plans, and funding packages of our community with other communities in our urban growth area.

Policy 1.3 – To have consistent regulations and standards on which to encourage redevelopment of appropriate commercial, business and residential areas. We will:

- Create and adopt redevelopment codes and procedures;
- Reinforce existing urban centers or planned new centers; and
- Strive to balance the number of new jobs with the appropriate level of new housing.

2. Economic activities should be encouraged to locate in areas specifically designated for business, commercial, industrial and mixed uses. It is our policy:

Policy 2.1 – To develop land use plans and regulations that encourage business location and retention in designated areas including urban activity centers; community, neighborhood and smaller retail centers; business parks; and other planned business and industrial locations.

These designated areas should be mapped as part of the comprehensive planning effort and appropriate regulations should be created to encourage such development.

Policy 2.2 – To prepare a range of outcome-based design and development standards for designated areas that accommodate changing consumer trends, market demands, and economic feasibility.

Policy 2.3 – To adopt infrastructure plans and funding measures for each designated area.

Policy 2.4 – To encourage compatible, mixed uses, such as housing, retail, and public facilities, where possible, in order to ensure a balance of jobs and housing.

3. Designated funding sources will be used for building new infrastructure or replacing existing sub-standard infrastructure. It is our policy:

Policy 3.1 – To maximize our infrastructure investment by:

- Prioritizing capital facilities expenditures for strategic infrastructure investments that accommodate growth and encourage quality housing and economic development;
- Coordinating infrastructure investments of various public entities (including special purpose districts);
- Creating tax investment areas where community revitalization projects and programs encourage private development;
- Obligating future general tax revenue flows for building new and replacing existing infrastructure at the state and local levels; and

-Identifying state and federal funding available to assist the fastest growing areas, as well as resources of local special districts, such as school, water, and sewer districts that can assist in accomplishing community investment goals.

Policy 3.2 – To create methods and authorize ways of raising local funds necessary to correct existing deficiencies.

4. Buildable lands designated for growth shall be sufficient to accommodate forecasted population, employment, and housing growth. It is our policy:

Policy 4.1 – To increase the supply and capacity of buildable land available for commercial, housing and related urban uses to meet 20-year forecasted demand.

Policy 4.2 – To regularly update buildable lands studies and inventories that evaluate changes in supply and demand indicators such as land and housing availability and pricing, job/housing demand relationships, and other related indicators of affordability.

Policy 4.3 – To create measures for assessing the effect of public policies, codes, and other actions on the availability and capacity of buildable lands.

Policy 4.4 – To consider land constraints, market factors, economic feasibility, and the willingness of individual landowners to develop or re-develop property in determining the availability and capacity of buildable lands.

5. Neighborhoods and urban-area business centers will be livable, integrated parts of the community. It is our policy:

Policy 5.1 – To employ flexibility in our development standards in order to accommodate different in-fill conditions.

Policy 5.2 – To create and implement design guidelines for urban centers, neighborhoods, and other areas designated for infill development, which consider consumer trends, market demands, and economic feasibility.

Policy 5.3 – To encourage clustering of business and commercial sites in relationship with transportation systems and other community activities.

Policy 5.4 – To adopt and employ a range of outcome-based standards that:

- Encourage planned unit, cluster, and mixed-use developments;
- Permit greater height and bulk development;
- Increase allowable lot coverage;
- Allow reduced lot sizes, setbacks, and street and parking standards; and
- Offer density bonuses to encourage development in target growth areas.

Policy 5.5 – To articulate specific measures with which to gauge progress in meeting our community’s local economic development, housing, and construction goals.

6. Applications for development permits shall be reviewed and processed in a timely manner. It is our policy:

Policy 6.1 – To work with real estate and development interests toward common goals that are profitable to the developer and beneficial to the community.

Policy 6.2 – To ensure timely, fair, efficient, flexible, and predictable permit management systems that:

- Facilitate desirable development;
- Recognize the constraints of developing projects;
- Consolidate and coordinate the review process.

Policy 6.3 – To have a one-stop permitting system with simultaneous review of permits, administrative review and action, a single staff contact assigned to coordinate all reviews for a particular applicant, and contracted review of applications, where necessary.

Policy 6.4 – To fast-track permit procedures within designated development areas.

Policy 6.5 – To encourage pre-application meetings with planning staff to identify problems before significant resources have been invested in a project proposal.

Policy 6.6 – To permit more uses by right through specific, well-crafted standards and final decisions made within certain limits.

Policy 6.7 – To review projects in a spirit of collaboration.

Policy 6.8 – To require a super-majority vote of the legislative body to override planning commission decisions.

7. We will work closely with the business community to market our area to new and expanding businesses and to assure that our goals for economic development are being achieved. It is our policy:

Policy 7.1 – To participate with business leaders and organizations like real estate professionals, developers, chambers of commerce, economic development councils, downtown associations, and other groups to address current and changing business and job requirements.

Policy 7.2 – To adopt land use policies and to construct the necessary public infrastructure to assure a positive business climate.

Policy 7.3 – To monitor or support monitoring of our community’s progress toward accomplishing all the implementation tasks outlined in the annual work plans.

Policy 7.4 – To assist in developing an economic development marketing strategy for the community and to participate, as appropriate, in accomplishing the tasks identified.