



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Fiscal Years 2025/26 – 2027/28



CITY OF GRESHAM



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The City of Gresham's Three-Year Economic Development Strategy is a roadmap to foster sustainable economic growth, generate new family wage jobs, and improve the overall quality of life and prosperity for the residents of Gresham. It provides a framework for attracting investment, encouraging entrepreneurship, improving the local business environment, and ensuring the community's long-term economic well-being by proactively shaping its economic future rather than just reacting to changes. Staff will annually report to City Council on the success of the strategy and adjust as necessary to meet the changing needs of the City.



Traded sector businesses manufacture, process or distribute products that are sold outside of the region, state, or country.

Vision

Maintain and strengthen an environment where traded sector companies can grow, thrive and enhance Gresham's competitive advantage across the region, state and nation.

Community Impact

Traded sector economic development is crucial because it drives growth, creates jobs, and boosts overall prosperity by bringing new money into Gresham and the broader region through exports.

1. Goal – Focus on supporting and growing existing businesses in Gresham by helping companies overcome challenges and connecting them with opportunities to ensure long-term success.

1. Objective: Track companies to provide ongoing assistance.

1. Action: Schedule site visits to companies.
2. Action: Email periodic check-ins.

2. Objective: Provide information about resources.

1. Action: Send quarterly Traded Sector newsletter.
2. Action: Coordinate annual "speaker series" events.

3. Objective: Leverage partners to provide business assistance.

1. Action: Negotiate contract with Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership for lean manufacturing services.

2. Goal – Recruit new businesses to Gresham.

1. Objective: Track business leads through frequent communication.

1. Action: Engage with Business Oregon and Greater Portland Inc. recruitment staff.

2. Objective: Market Gresham as a great place to do business.

1. Action: Communicate with the broker community through regular meetings.
2. Action: Develop site selector newsletter.
3. Action: Develop and maintain marketing materials.

3. Objective: Participate in industry events.

1. Action: Host familiarization tours.
2. Action: Attend relevant trade shows and familiarization tours.
3. Action: Attend partner events.

3. Goal – Provide incentive programs to support the recruitment and retention of businesses.

1. Objective: Maintain the Enterprise Zone program to incentivize new investment and the creation of family-wage jobs.

1. Action: Manage all aspects of program administration.
2. Action: Assess program for policy updates every other year.
3. Action: Secure City Council authorization to re-designate the Enterprise Zone program by July 1, 2027.

2. Objective: Maintain the Strategic Investment Zone program to support high investment projects exceeding \$300 million.

1. Action: Manage all aspects of program administration.

3. Objective: Manage Rapid Response Team approach to facilitate the development process.

1. Action: Internally track and advocate for priority projects from submission to occupancy.

4. Objective: Assess opportunities for new incentive programs.

1. Action: Identify gaps in current incentive programs and research best practices.

4. Goal – Manage Gresham’s industrial assets for future industrial development.

1. Objective: Track existing sites and buildings.

1. Action: Maintain a list of available properties on Oregon Prospector.
2. Action: Communicate with brokers about leasing and sales activity in Gresham.

2. Objective: Develop long-term industrial development strategies.

1. Action: Assess the Springwater Plan District for development feasibility.
2. Action: Collaborate with Port of Portland and partners for long-term development opportunities, e.g., 190th and San Rafael corridors.
3. Action: Contract with consultant to strategize on repurposing industrial space given land constraints, explore public interventions to facilitate redevelopment.

5. Goal – Advocate for Gresham’s business community to help maintain an environment where companies can grow and thrive.

1. Objective: Track development code updates to ensure alignment with economic development goals.

1. Action: Follow long-range planning projects to amend development standards for industrial development.

2. Objective: Track state legislation for alignment with economic development goals.

1. Action: Follow bills that may impact traded sector industries, submit testimony when appropriate, and participate in the policymaking process.
2. Action: Continue tracking state incentive programs.

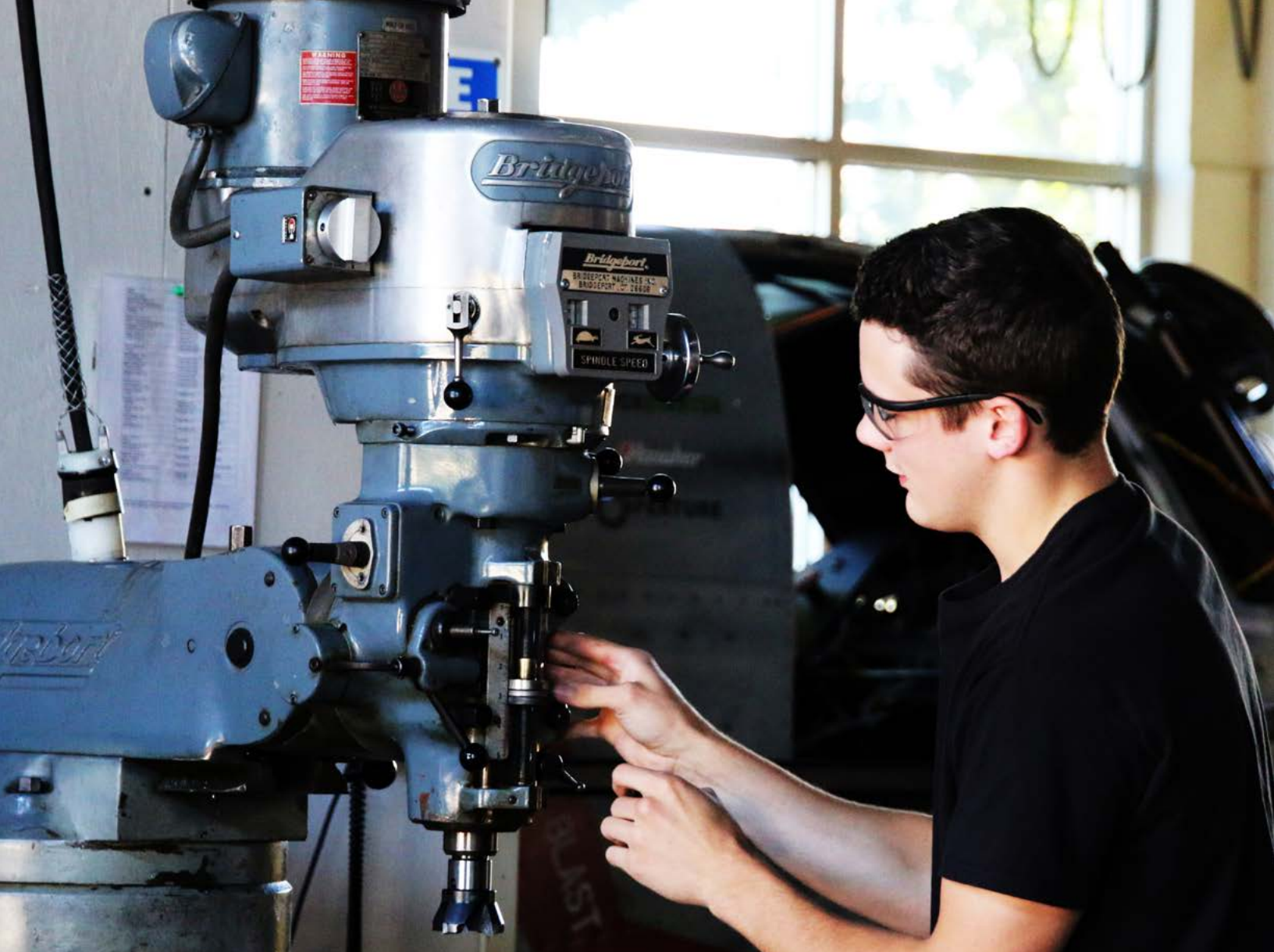
3. Objective: Maintain proactive communication with legislators.

1. Action: Develop an outreach plan for meetings with county, regional and state elected officials.
4. Objective: Engage with partners to advocate for local and statewide economic development goals.
1. Action: Track partner economic development strategies, e.g., Business Oregon, Greater Portland Inc, Metro, Multnomah County.
2. Action: Participate in committees and task forces i.e., Oregon Economic Development Association Policy Committee, Oregon Business Council opportunities, Business Oregon incentive work.



Gresham Vista Business Park

The Gresham Enterprise Zone has supported new investments exceeding \$1 billion and the creation of hundreds of family wage jobs at over 20 companies since 2006.



Microchip, a Gresham employer, partnered with the Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center to develop a training program focused specifically on the semiconductor industry.

Vision

Gresham residents have access to local employment, training, quality jobs, and family wage career pathways.

Community Impact

Workforce development is crucial for both individuals and the economy because it equips people with the skills needed for in-demand jobs, boosts productivity, and fosters economic growth. By investing in training and education, businesses can reduce employee shortages, increase innovation and stay competitive. For individuals, it provides opportunities for career advancement and higher earning potential.

1. Goal: Provide youth and young adults with career connected learning opportunities.

1. Objective: Introduce youth to career opportunities in the business community.

1. Action: Support career technical education (CTE) programming through industry connections at Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC)..
2. Action: Support CTE programming through financial support.

2. Objective: Connect industry with K-12 education.

1. Action: Market engagement opportunities such as career fairs in company communications.
2. Action: Include education partners in company site visits.

2. Goal: Take action to meet the current and future workforce needs of Gresham's business community

1. Objective: Assess the workforce needs of Gresham's business community.

1. Action: Convene a traded sector workforce development summit to bring companies and partners together.

2. Objective: Connect industry with education.

1. Action: Keep companies informed about engagement opportunities with education partners.

3. Objective: Support programming at MHCC to meet industry needs.

1. Action: Participate in the Semiconductor Ecosystem Network at MHCC.
2. Action: Support the mechatronics/semiconductor program.

3. Goal: Support training for both new and incumbent workers in Gresham's business community.

1. Objective: Coordinate with partners to connect companies with existing programs.

1. Action: Invite partners to attend site visits to educate companies about existing programs.
2. Action: Contract with Worksystems Inc to connect and support Gresham companies with ongoing programming.

Vision

Gresham's local sector, small businesses and entrepreneurs have the tools and resources necessary to launch and succeed.

Community Impact

When Gresham local sector, small businesses, and entrepreneurs thrive, they generate innovation, employment, bring services closer to residents, contribute to a diverse and resilient economy, and act as anchors for a vibrant community.

1. Goal: Support local sector and small businesses at all stages of growth.

1. Objective: Facilitate partnerships with resource providers.

1. Action: Support the local Small Business Development Center's annual resource fair.
2. Action: Contract with entrepreneur resources for accelerator programs to help aspiring entrepreneurs launch and grow.

2. Objective: Maintain ongoing communication with local sector and small businesses.

1. Action: Conduct site visits, including with Mayor and City Council.
2. Action: Distribute the Small Business Center newsletter.
3. Action: Develop an email campaign to check-in with small businesses annually.

3. Objective: Administer City of Gresham's Garage to Storefront program.

1. Action: Seek City Council reauthorization by Dec. 31, 2025.
2. Action: Assess expanding the eligibility boundary area.

4. Objective: Explore other local sector and small business incentive programs.

1. Action: Research best practices in comparable communities.
2. Action: Survey local sector and small businesses to assess current needs.

5. Objective: Assist businesses with navigating internal City processes.

1. Action: Serve as concierge for building permits, business licenses, green businesses, code compliance, fire, police, etc.

2. Goal: Improve Gresham's visibility and viability as a place to start a business.

1. Objective: Leverage digital and traditional marketing channels to showcase Gresham's vibrant community, current thriving businesses, and the City's business-friendly environment.

1. Action: Leverage digital and traditional marketing channels, including a social media campaign, to promote local events, support local businesses, spotlight current businesses, and explain City of Gresham departments and services.
2. Action: Maintain marketing print materials including the Garage to Storefront brochure and Entrepreneur Resource Guide.
3. Action: Partner with City departments to distribute a quarterly welcome letter and materials to new businesses.



Local sector businesses provide a product or service to East County and regional communities.

The City of Gresham defines a small business as one with 25 or fewer employees.

Since 2010, the City's Garage to Storefront program has helped 375 businesses fill vacant commercial and retail spaces.





There are 16 shopping centers in the city of Gresham, seven of which were built before 1980.

Vision

Gresham is a retail destination for outdoor enthusiasts, foodies, families, and young adults, with shopping centers being repurposed and redeveloped into vibrant centers of commerce and activity.

Community Impact

Redeveloping retail centers revitalizes struggling areas, supports Gresham's economy, and adapts to shifting consumer needs – transforming existing spaces into vibrant, sustainable hubs that attract foot traffic and new businesses.

1. Goal – Ensure Gresham is an attractive location for investment and commerce.

1. Objective: Attract new retailers to Gresham that address market gaps and complement existing businesses.

1. Action: Conduct regular outreach with commercial real estate brokers to share Gresham news and success stories.
2. Action: Attend annual International Conference of Shopping Centers and others to promote Gresham's openness to new investment.
3. Action: Develop retail recruitment strategy using results from marketing and branding strategy that targets retailers serving these demographics: outdoor recreationalists, foodies, new parents, and young adults.
4. Action: Assess Rapid Response Team approach to high-priority commercial development projects.
5. Action: Explore expanding the City's 66-day review process to include mixed-use development projects.
6. Action: Administer Vertical Housing Development Zone incentives to spur infill development.

2. Goal – Invigorate legacy shopping centers and underutilized commercial retail space.

1. Objective: Maximize opportunities for infill development at existing commercial nodes.

1. Action: Partner with property owners and analyze redevelopment opportunities - including zoning and infrastructure needs - at commercial hubs, e.g., Civic, Springwater, Gresham Town Fair, 181st Avenue, Burnside Street.
2. Action: Explore creating micro-tax increment finance districts to support single-site redevelopment projects.
3. Action: Partner with City departments to distribute a quarterly welcome letter and materials to new businesses.

Vision

Gresham is a destination of choice for people across the metro region and beyond, offering easy access to the outdoors, diverse dining options, and a unique local character.

Community Impact

Tourism is a key economic development strategy that generates revenue, creates jobs and revitalizes communities. It boosts local economies by increasing demand for goods and services, bringing more revenue to businesses and supporting improved infrastructure. Tourism also helps preserve cultural heritage and promote sustainable practices.

1. Goal – Make Gresham an attractive tourist destination.

1. Objective: Broaden awareness of Gresham's attractions and businesses to regional visitors.

1. Action: Partner with Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce to support the Visitors Center.
2. Action: Use marketing campaign materials and community tagline in promotional materials.
3. Action: Hire consultant to complete a Gresham destination strategy.

2. Objective: Support the local hospitality industry.

1. Action: Conduct market study and feasibility analyses for new hospitality options, including a boutique hotel and conference center in historic downtown.





IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Action	Ongoing	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
TRADED SECTOR				
1.1.1 Company site visits	X			
1.1.2 Email check-ins	X			
1.2.1 Quarterly newsletter	X			
1.2.2 Speaker series	X			
1.3.1 Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership contract		X		
2.1.1 Business Oregon and Greater Portland Inc recruitments	X			
2.2.1 Industrial broker meetings		X		
2.2.2 Site selector outreach	X			
2.2.3 Marketing materials	X			
2.3.1 Host familiarization tours			X	
2.3.2 Trade show attendance	X			
2.3.3 Partner event attendance	X			
3.1.1 Enterprise Zone program administration	X			
3.1.2 Enterprise Zone policy updates			X	
3.1.3 Enterprise Zone reauthorization			X	
3.2.1 Strategic Investment Program management	X			
3.3.1 Rapid Response Team internal management	X			
3.4.1 Incentive gap analysis and best practices			X	
4.1.1 Oregon Prospector web updates	X			
4.1.2 Market activity outreach	X			
4.2.1 Springwater development feasibility study		X		
4.2.2 Port of Portland development opportunities		X	X	X
4.2.3 Repurposed industrial space study			X	
5.1.1 Industrial development long-range planning	X			
5.2.1 Track state legislation	X			
5.2.2 Track state incentive programs	X			
5.3.1 Legislative outreach strategy		X		
5.4.1 Track partners' economic development strategies	X			
5.4.2 Task force/committee participation	X			
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT				
1.1.1 Mt Hood Community College navigator programming	X			
1.1.2 Career technical education support	X			
1.2.1 Connect companies to career fairs	X			
1.2.2 Connect educators to company site visits	X			
2.1.1 Traded sector workforce development summit			X	
2.2.1 Connect companies to education partnerships	X			

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

	Ongoing	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
2.3.1 Semiconductor Ecosystem Network		X		
2.3.2 Mechatronics program support		X	X	X
3.1.1 Connect businesses to workforce development partners	X			
3.1.2 Worksystems Inc contract			X	X
LOCAL SECTOR/ SMALL BUSINESSES/ENTREPRENEURS				
1.1.1 Small Business Development Center resource fair	X			
1.1.2 Accelerator program events		X	X	X
1.2.1 Mayor/Council business visits	X			
1.2.2 Small Business Center Newsletter	X			
1.2.3 Small business retention outreach			X	X
1.3.1 Garage to Storefront reauthorization		X		
1.3.2 Garage to Storefront expansion analysis			X	X
1.4.1 Incentives best practices			X	
1.4.2 Business needs survey			X	
1.5.1 Permit concierge	X			
2.1.1 Business and events social media campaign		X	X	X
2.1.2 Marketing print materials	X			
2.1.3 Welcome letter to new businesses		X	X	X
NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RETAIL ATTRACTION AND REDEVELOPMENT				
1.1.1 Commercial real estate broker outreach	X			
1.1.2 International Council of Shopping Centers presence		X	X	X
1.1.3 Retail marketing strategy deployment			X	X
1.1.4 Commercial development Rapid Response		X		
1.1.5 Significant project 66-day reviews		X		
1.1.6 Vertical Housing Development Zone administration	X			
2.1.1 Redevelopment of major commercial hubs	X			
2.1.2 Micro-urban renewal districts			X	
TOURISM				
1.1.1 Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center contract	X			
1.1.2 Tourism marketing campaign			X	
1.1.3 Gresham destination strategy		X		
1.2.1 Hotel feasibility analyses		X		

METRICS/MEASURES OF SUCCESS



Traded Sector

- Conduct 20 site visits per year.
- Respond to five business recruitment leads per year.
- Process five new Enterprise Zone applications per year.
- Host four meetings with industrial broker community per year.
- Host four meetings with county, regional and state legislators to discuss economic development priorities per year.



Workforce Development

- Participate in three career technical education events per year i.e., career fairs, youth summits.
- Establish 10 industry to education connections per year.
- Connect five companies with Worksystems Inc resources.



Local Sector/Small Businesses/Entrepreneurs

- Support three resource events per year.
- Showcase six social media posts highlighting local businesses per year.



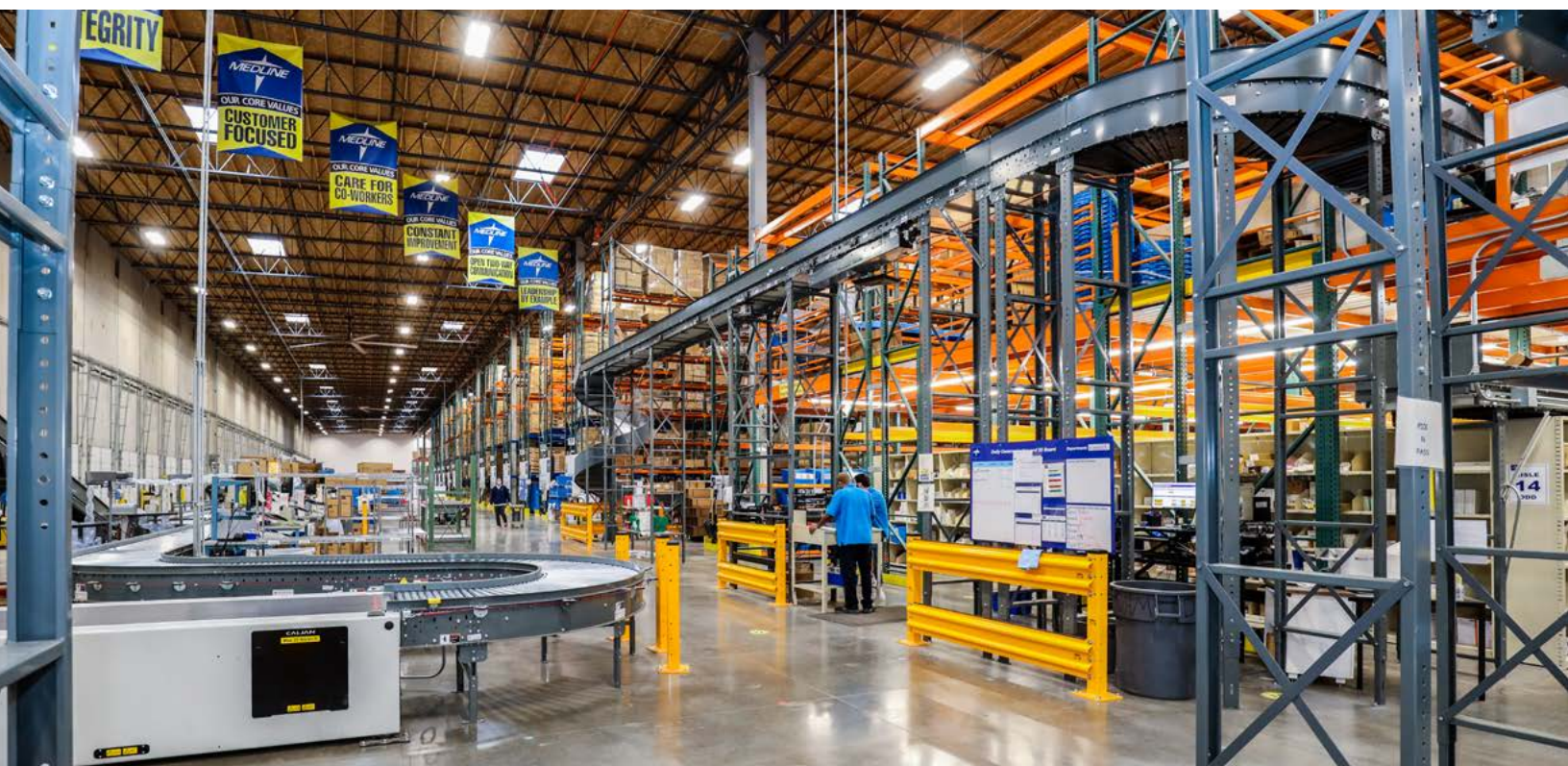
National and Regional Retail Attraction and Redevelopment

- Participate in four developer roundtable conversations per year.



Tourism

- Achieve annual growth of at least 10% in visitors and tourists.





To learn more, please visit **GreshamOregon.gov/Economic-Development** or call 503-618-2640.

This document was produced by the Economic Development and Communications departments at the City of Gresham.