

ATTACHMENT C

10.414 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Findings

The City of Gresham is committed to fostering sustainable economic growth, generating new family wage jobs, and improving the overall quality of life and prosperity for residents. Gresham's economic development initiatives proactively shape Gresham's economic future by providing a framework for the supply and use of employment land, attracting investment, encouraging entrepreneurship, and improving the local business environment. The goals and policies in this section are structured to meet State Goal 9 requirements while reflecting Gresham's local economic development priorities. They are coordinated with Gresham's 2026 Economic Opportunity Analysis, Volume 1, Appendix 20, which provides the factual basis for the findings Volume 1 Section 4.700 and the goals and policies in this section.

The context for economic development in Gresham has changed considerably since the City completed its last EOA in 2003. Since that time, Gresham and the broader region have experienced the Great Recession, the COVID-19 pandemic, changing population and labor force trends, rising development costs, and shifts in retail, office, and industrial markets. Gresham has also largely built out and now has fewer large greenfield employment sites than in 2003. As a result, future employment growth will depend less on expansion into new greenfield areas and more on redevelopment, infill, site assembly, and more efficient use of existing industrial and commercial land.

Gresham remains the employment and commercial hub of East Multnomah County, and it serves an important role in the regional economy. By building on its strengths in traded-sector industries and supporting local small businesses, Gresham can remain a strong place to do business. The City of Gresham will continue to work to support the growth of well-paying jobs and advance shared prosperity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL

Maintain an adequate supply of suitable employment land to accommodate expected growth.

Policies

1. Monitor employment land development and maintain a working commercial and industrial land inventory to track land supply over time.
2. Maintain an adequate supply of suitable industrial, commercial, and mixed-use land to accommodate expected employment growth, consistent with the adopted EOA.

3. Maintain a competitive short-term supply of development-ready employment land and periodically replenish it as land is developed.

GOAL

Prioritize infill, development, and investment in existing industrial and commercial areas.

Policies

1. Identify and promote the sites best suited for near-term industrial and commercial development.
2. Use public finance and incentive tools, where appropriate, to advance infill, redevelopment, site readiness, infrastructure improvements, and private investments.
3. Prioritize commercial and industrial site readiness in employment areas where infrastructure exists or can be extended efficiently, rather than areas that would require costly new infrastructure extensions.

GOAL

Advance the long-term competitiveness of Gresham's industrial land through strategies to promote development, redevelopment, and site readiness.

Policies

1. Protect prime¹ industrial land from conversion to uses that would reduce its long-term ability to support industrial employment activities.
2. Pursue industrial land readiness through strategic actions such as land aggregation, environmental remediation, and transportation and utility access improvements, especially for large and underutilized sites.
3. Align permitted uses and development standards in Gresham's industrial land use districts with market needs and the development needs of target industries.
4. Promote Gresham as an ideal place for industrial growth and highlight the city's development-ready and prime industrial development sites.
5. Reinvigorate and support prime industrial areas that are underutilized, such as the San Rafael corridor.

¹ Oregon Administrative Rules Division 9 defines Prime Industrial Land as follows: 660-009-0005(8) "Prime Industrial Land" means land suited for traded-sector industries as well as other industrial uses providing support to traded-sector industries. Prime industrial lands possess site characteristics that are difficult or impossible to replicate in the planning area or region. Prime industrial lands have necessary access to transportation and freight infrastructure, including, but not limited to, rail, marine ports and airports, multimodal freight or transshipment facilities, and major transportation routes.

6. Collaborate with property owners to plan for the redevelopment of legacy aggregate mining sites.

GOAL

Encourage commercial development and redevelopment city-wide, focusing on invigorating regional and town centers.

Policies

1. Advance commercial land readiness by pursuing external funding opportunities, coordinating infrastructure development plans, and building public-private partnerships.
2. Maintain flexible commercial and mixed-use zoning and development standards that adapt to changing economic conditions, support redevelopment and infill, and remain compatible with surrounding areas.
3. Ensure there are commercial spaces with a range of sizes and characteristics to serve businesses of varying scale and life cycle, from startup through maturity.
4. Identify opportunities to redevelop and intensify the use of commercial sites, especially to enhance economic activity in Regional and Town Centers (Rockwood Town Center, Pleasant Valley Town Center, Downtown and Civic Neighborhood).
5. Strengthen the economic vitality and physical character of the Gresham Regional Center (Downtown and Civic Neighborhood) through public-private partnerships, streetscape improvements, business support, and parking management.
6. Foster economic opportunity, quality development, and rehabilitation in the Rockwood Plan Area, with a focus on retaining and creating above-city-average wage jobs and facilitating a safe and attractive built environment.
7. Advance development of the Pleasant Valley Town Center, supporting its transition from a greenfield area into the center of civic and commercial activity in Pleasant Valley.
8. Concentrate quality commercial and mixed-use development along the City's transit corridors to serve the day-to-day needs of residents and employees.

GOAL

Prioritize infrastructure investment that supports development of key industrial, commercial, and mixed-use sites.

Policies

1. Continue to invest in public facilities that support industrial and commercial development.
2. Coordinate development, redevelopment, and reinvestment policies and initiatives with the City's other plans, including public facility plans, the Transportation System Plan, and the Capital Improvement Plan.

GOAL

Ensure Gresham is business-friendly and promotes its competitive advantages.

Policies

1. Cultivate ongoing relationships with the local business community to identify needs, priorities, and barriers to growth and retention, and connect businesses with appropriate resources and assistance.
2. Leverage the City's competitive advantages to promote the growth of Gresham's traded sector industries.
3. Assist small businesses in navigating City land use and permitting processes and identify and address process-related barriers.
4. Engage with partners, including regional and state jurisdictions, community-based organizations, and private organizations to encourage more commercial and industrial development.
5. Implement economic development tools and incentive programs, where appropriate, to encourage business retention, expansion, recruitment, and above-city-average wage job creation.