



ECONOMIC VITALITY

Future Vision for Redmond: Economic Vitality

Redmond has maintained a strong economy and a diverse job base. The City is the home to many small, medium-size and locally owned businesses and services, as well as nationally and internationally recognized corporations. Redmond is widely recognized as a community that is inviting for advanced technology, and businesses are proud to be partners in the community. The City provides a business climate that attracts sustainable development to the community and retains existing businesses. Likewise, the successful companies return benefits directly and indirectly to the community. A prime example of this is the support that both the residents and the business community have given to the school system to create an excellent educational system that serves the needs of citizens of all ages.



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Introduction

Economic vitality is essential to the success of a community such as Redmond, which strives to provide a range of employment, retailing, service, and recreational opportunities for its residents. Further, economic vitality is important to Redmond as it will provide for a successful and sustainable community and help achieve the overall goals of the Land Use Plan.

In 1993 the employment within the City was 39,000 but by 2004 employment had doubled to 79,500. This significant growth in jobs places Redmond as the fourth largest employment center within the four-county central Puget Sound areas. While much of this growth has been in software and business services, there has also been significant growth in communications and retailing. Redmond has shown a net job increase almost every year since 1993. However, traditional manufacturing has during this same period (1993 – 2004) shown a decline.

In addition to its central geographic location in King County, the City has many demographic characteristics which support its continued economic vitality. For example, 60 percent of Redmond’s 2000 population is between the ages of 25 and 64 which are considered prime earning years by economists and is significantly above the



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national and regional percentages. Another significant factor is educational attainment and within Redmond 56 percent of women and 65 percent of the men over the age of 25 have either a college degree or professional certificate.

The Puget Sound Regional Council has forecasted that jobs could increase within Redmond to approximately 112,000 in 2020 and 123,000 by 2030. The City plans to accommodate up to a total of 118,000 jobs by the year 2022, which is consistent with the region's 20-year employment target, for the period 2002 to 2022, for Redmond.

While over the last 10 years Redmond's economic role in the region has changed significantly, past performance does not guarantee future success. The policies of this element help direct the actions of the City in the future in support of a sustainable and successful economy.

Economic vitality cannot be successfully achieved by the City of Redmond acting alone. More than most elements within the Comprehensive Plan, the successful implementation of the economic vitality policies relies upon the City engaging in a variety of partnerships. In many cases Redmond may be the catalyst for the partnership to be formed and the role of the City from that point may diminish. In other cases, the City may have a permanent leadership role. In each case, the following policies will guide Redmond in selecting the appropriate partnerships as well as the role for the City within each of those partnerships to achieve a successful and sustainable economy.

Sustainable in the case of economic vitality has a two-fold meaning. Within the context of land use planning, it supports the concept that employment activities will be encouraged which can be perpetuated in the future without diminishing irreplaceable resources and doing permanent harm to the environment. The City's desire is that jobs in businesses that exist today will exist in the future and that by emphasizing renewable resources or reduced consumption of irreplaceable resources both the economy and environment of our community will be protected and sustained.



Microsoft building – LEED certified

Sustainability in the broader context also recognizes the convergence of economic, environmental, and social needs so that while the community is continually changing, the community seeks to maintain and improve its economic, environmental, and social characteristics so that members of the community can continue to lead healthy, productive, and enjoyable lives. This does not imply that everything continues to increase in size and intensity. However, it does imply that things continue to get better for the community. Implicit in such a concept is the development of a measurement system where a baseline for sustainability is established as well as future goals. Annual achievement through the use of benchmarks and monitoring are developed so that new actions or initiatives are continually evaluated to identify whether new initiatives support the adopted goals.

To be successful in the future, the City of Redmond must be aware of the future. This requires continuous monitoring of local, national, and international trends which may have effects on the City. Analysis of these trends may then indicate actions the City may chose to pursue in order to favorably respond to these trends.

In addition to an active monitoring of future trends and activities on a local, regional, and national scale, Redmond as a whole should have an economic vitality strategy that identifies how to retain successful businesses and how to evaluate



and pursue future opportunities. Imbedded in such a strategy are the roles and responsibilities of the various community members and organizations.

While the City may have a major role in developing the strategy, it can only be successfully implemented through the cooperation and involvement of the entire community. Economic vitality is not solely or predominantly the role of City government but a series of interwoven partnerships that function to create and perpetuate the sustainable economic development that is preferred.

Even though much of the work to enhance economic vitality will be done in partnerships, the City has a number of specific economic vitality roles and responsibilities including:

- ❖ Providing a supportive Land Use Plan and development regulations;
- ❖ Encouraging the continued provision and enhancement of the public and private education systems for all ages;
- ❖ Providing necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of the Land Use Plan;
- ❖ Ensuring the adequacy of the infrastructure, where provided by other agencies or private utilities, to meet the needs of the Land Use Plan;
- ❖ Providing or coordinating the provision of an adequate transportation system that successfully moves people, goods and information;
- ❖ Providing coordination or seeking investments in infrastructure and other public enterprises;
- ❖ Acting as a catalyst, partner, convener, or coordinator for the development and provision of programs consistent with the economic vitality strategy; and
- ❖ Encouraging the development of sustainable economic vitality strategies, investment by others in the community and acting as a catalyst for the development of other programs in support of economic vitality.

Listed below by category are the policies which direct these roles and responsibilities which have been adopted to recognize and promote Redmond as a major economic center within Puget Sound and to identify ways to maintain and enhance the sustainable economy of Redmond.

Ord. 2481

A. Land Use Plan and Regulations

- EV-1** Provide a mix of uses in a range of zones that allow for the daily needs of residents to be met within Redmond and support the expansion of existing Redmond businesses and the attraction of regional, national, and international businesses.
- EV-2** Preserve and expand the current economic base and employment levels and wisely use the finite supply of urban land and the existing infrastructure in Redmond by supporting economic development to occur within existing retail, office, manufacturing, and mixed-use areas.
- EV-3** Recognize that a healthy natural environment is a significant community amenity that attracts people and investments, and contributes to Redmond’s economic vitality.
- EV-4** Support the retention and attraction of land uses which complement the Comprehensive Plan using the following siting criteria:
 - ◆ Focus major employment, retail, office, entertainment, and residential uses within the Downtown and focus the Overlake Center on high technology, retail, and residential uses;
 - ◆ Focus additional employment in the Willows/Rose Hill, Bear Creek, and SE Redmond Neighborhoods;



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Redmond East Business Campus in SE Redmond

- ◆ Maintain properties currently developed with manufacturing uses for manufacturing and other uses permitted within the zone;
- ◆ Allow manufacturing uses, where compatible with adjacent uses and their impacts mitigated, to locate in the Downtown and Overlake Urban Centers; and
- ◆ Concentrate businesses where uses are complementary and can make efficient use of the existing infrastructure.

EV-5 Encourage businesses to expand or locate in Redmond which:

- ◆ Are already in the City of Redmond and are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan;
- ◆ Support existing businesses and industries;
- ◆ Fill existing or future gaps in the goods or services available within the City and provide jobs to local residents;
- ◆ Provide family or high level wages; and
- ◆ Minimize negative impacts to the community.



Nintendo and DigiPen in Overlake

EV-6 Recognize and support the preservation and creation of incubator space for existing and future small businesses.

EV-7 Allow, as permitted accessory uses, support uses, such as childcare, workout facilities, or restaurants in office and other commercial buildings.

EV-8 Provide the land use capacity and development regulations that support the accommodation of a variety of housing styles, densities, sizes, and prices so those employed within Redmond may have the opportunity to live in Redmond as well as to increase the attractiveness of Redmond to those being sought to work in the City.

EV-9 Evaluate periodically the Community Development Guide to:

- ◆ Ensure that uses not previously contemplated and that are consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan can locate within the City; and
- ◆ Review development standards and timelines to ensure predictability and consistency.



EV-10 Encourage opportunities for home-based businesses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods. Limit signs, parking, and truck deliveries and manage other potential adverse impacts in order to minimize the negative impacts and maintain the appearance residential neighborhoods.

B. Education

EV-11 Support and work with educational institutions such as the Lake Washington School District, local community colleges, the University of Washington and Lake Washington Technical College and other public and private institutions to:

- ◆ Maintain and enhance the quality of education at all grade levels;
- ◆ Encourage the location of higher education institutions within Redmond;
- ◆ Encourage the development of programs that meet the changing needs of employers and employees as well as those seeking employment; and
- ◆ Encourage educational institutions, government, and businesses to provide opportunities for youth to see and experience a wide variety of employment and business opportunities.



Lake Washington Technical College

C. Infrastructure and Financing

EV-12 Identify, construct, and maintain, to meet the needs of the Land Use Plan, City-owned infrastructure systems and facilities that support and maintain economic vitality and encourage private utilities to provide needed infrastructure.

EV-13 Use innovative finance methods and seek regional investments in Redmond’s infrastructure to support the City’s continued economic vitality.

EV-14 Utilize tax and fee systems that are fair and equitable, stable, and not penalizing to specific businesses and that provide sufficiently predictable funds to provide for local services to protect and enhance the community.

EV-15 Support the economic vitality of the City by encouraging investments in the arts and cultural activities, and through the use of superior urban design.

D. Partnerships

EV-16 Recognize that economic vitality requires the City to enter into a number of partnerships with other agencies, businesses, non-profits, and other organizations and participate in partnerships, which are of value and further the City’s economic vitality goals.

E. Actions to Be Taken

While the policies listed above guide and describe the City’s overall support of economic vitality within Redmond; the following policies identify specific actions that the City will undertake. By taking these actions or by incorporating their direction in ongoing processes, the City



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demonstrates the importance of sustainable economic vitality in Redmond to the community and the region.

EV-17 Prepare, support and implement, in conjunction with the community, Chamber of Commerce and other partners, an economic vitality strategy which will:

- ◆ Recognize that a successful community requires a strong local and regional economy;
- ◆ Identify actions to take to develop a sustainable local economy;
- ◆ Identify strategies to retain existing businesses and help them succeed;
- ◆ Include a City marketing plan which focuses on the assets of the City, the types of businesses to market to, and the marketing strategies to utilize;
- ◆ Identify the types of businesses to be encouraged to locate in the City and strategies to attract them;
- ◆ Identify needed partnerships, the members of the partnerships, and outcomes for the partnerships;
- ◆ Identify methods to attract additional knowledge based businesses;
- ◆ Identify, preserve, promote, and enhance educational, environmental, cultural, and social qualities within Redmond that will be attractive to the future workforce; and
- ◆ Identify regional and national economic development programs and the means to access their resources for the City.

EV-18 Initiate or participate in the following activities in support of economic vitality:

- ◆ Monitor future trends and economic conditions;
- ◆ Prepare information for businesses on available public sector financing;
- ◆ Support federal and State funding of cost-effective business financing programs; and
- ◆ Consider and use where appropriate community redevelopment financing and other innovative economic vitality and financing programs, which enhance the business climate in Redmond.

EV-19 As part of the City’s decision-making, consider the economic impacts of new policies, regulations, or programs.

EV-20 Focus efforts on business retention and expansion.

EV-21 Support the development of an Eastside Economic Development Committee.

Ord. 2224