

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The City has created Goals, Objectives & Policies specific to the Economic Development Element. These Goals, Objectives & Policies guide the City’s decision making process related to economic development and are as follows.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1: HAVE A STRONG PROACTIVE POSITON TOWARDS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THAT PROMOTES A POSITIVE CIVIC IMAGE AND ESTABLISHES MOUNT VERNON AS A PREFERRED PLACE FOR INVESTMENT.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Provide an adequate job-producing land base to ensure an optimal number of jobs for citizens within the community, and to aid the community in paying for infrastructure and services.

- Policy 1.1.1: Consider working towards an adequate supply of commercial and industrial lands and supporting infrastructure to accommodate the City’s forecasted growth.
- Policy 1.1.2: Consider creating a Mount Vernon specific definition for living wage jobs.
- Policy 1.1.3: Consider establishing a target of living wage jobs-to-housing ratio for the City.

OBJECTIVE 1.2: Determine where the City’s competitive advantages lie and identify clusters of companies that can power growth.

- Policy 1.2.1: Maintain the City’s focus on local companies that demonstrate high growth potential; and continue to embrace the growing health care cluster led by Skagit Regional Health.
- Policy 1.2.2: Continue focusing on being a “connected” city by expanding and marketing the City’s fiber optic loop. Consider establishing the city’s system as a regional utility similar to that of the City of Anacortes’ regional water system.
- Policy 1.2.3: Continue focusing on high tech and value added agriculture as new clusters to power growth.
- Policy 1.2.4: Focus on those areas that provide living wage jobs, such as: Management of Companies and enterprises, Utilities, Manufacturing, Finance and Insurance, Construction, Professional and Technical Services, Mining, Wholesale Trade, Government, Information, and Transportation and warehousing.
- Policy 1.2.5: Continue to utilize EDASC’s marketing and business recruitment talents to bring new companies to Mount Vernon.
- Policy 1.2.6: Focus on education and job creation to help lower income citizens become upwardly mobile.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: To the extent possible, make local and regional planning inclusive and flexible.

- Policy 1.3.1: Consider using pilot programs to move faster and lessen risk of new initiatives.

- Policy 1.3.2: Regularly solicit input from local businesses through conversations with industry leaders.
- Policy 1.3.3: Continue to provide predictable, current, clear and concise regulations and permitting processes.
- Policy 1.3.4: Consider measuring the business pulse through an annual business attitudes survey.
- Policy 1.3.5: Consider establish a dashboard of economic metrics to measure progress and benchmark against other cities in the region.
Metrics should include:
 - Personal and household income
 - Income growth vs. Home price growth
 - Homes v. Jobs ratio
 - People v. jobs ratio
 - Median Home Prices
 - Unemployment rate
 - Public Safety measures
 - Police Calls for Service per 1000
 - Violent Crime per 1000 people
 - Educational Attainment
 - Retails sales tax revenue
 - Retail sales tax revenue per capita
 - Value of retail and commercial construction built each year
- Policy 1.3.6: When possible, seek out opportunities to collaborate and regionally plan with entities such as:
 - Skagit County
 - Skagit Public Utility District #1(Water Utility)
 - Skagit Regional Health
 - EDASC
 - Skagit Valley College
 - Mount Vernon and Sedro Woolley School Districts
 - Puget Sound Energy(Electric utility)
 - WSDOT
 - Development Community
 - Engineering Community (Engineering Standards)
 - Citizen Focus Groups and Advisory Committees

OBJECTIVE 1.4: Ensure robust infrastructure and utilities exist to foster economic growth and prosperity.

- Policy 1.4.1: When feasible give priority to transportation system planning and improvements that ensure the efficient transport of goods and convenient access for workers of customers to and from places of business.
- Policy 1.4.2: Focus efforts on improvement of parking in the downtown as well as continue efforts to alleviate congestion on College Way.

- Policy 1.4.3: Focus efforts on operation and expansion of fiber optic broadband system.
- Policy 1.4.4: Encourage Skagit PUD to improve water service to the Cedardale Road area of South Mount Vernon

OBJECTIVE 1.5: Have a strong proactive position towards revitalization of the downtown as a preferred place to live, work, and play.

- Policy 1.5.1: Consider new library and fire station in the downtown to establish the city's commitment to downtown revitalization.
- Policy 1.5.2: Encourage public/private partnerships to advance the revitalization of the downtown.
- Policy 1.5.3: Consider establishing metrics to measure the vitality of the downtown to include number of filled/empty storefronts.
- Policy 1.5.4: Encourage events, concerts and festivals to be held downtown throughout the year to establish the downtown as our social and cultural center and a source of community pride.
- Policy 1.5.5: Consider establishment of design guidelines for the historic sector of the downtown to preserve, protect, enhance and perpetuate elements of our distinctive and unique small town heritage.
- Policy 1.5.6: Consider establishing incentives for redevelopment throughout the city to include permit and impact fee and system development fee reductions.

OBJECTIVE 1.6: Enhance and support tourism in Mount Vernon

- Policy 1.6.1: Grow the city's tourism through special events that are consistent with the community's values.
- Policy 1.6.2: Promote tourism using multiple media outlets and highlight the community assets.
- Policy 1.6.3: Continue to emphasize the City's connection to its rich history to strengthen our community identity.

OBJECTIVE 1.7: Expand the retail and office base within the City.

- Policy 1.7.1: Encourage retail business that increases the sales tax base of the City.
- Policy 1.7.2: Ensure an adequate amount of land is designated for retail/commercial uses based on site characteristics, market demand, community need, and adequacy of facilities and services.
- Policy 1.7.3: Provide for pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit access along identified transit arterials and encourage more intensive commercial development at major nodes in the street and transit network, to reduce dependency on automobiles.

OBJECTIVE 1.8: Sustain and expand the current industrial and manufacturing employment base.

- Policy 1.8.1: Protect the existing inventory of commercial and industrial parcels from conversion to non-industrial uses.