

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

PURPOSE

This Economic Development Element provides the policy basis for supporting economic development that would improve the tax base and create local jobs that are compatible with the character of the city. The Economic Development Appendix provides further information describing the city's profile and the city's competitive position, including its retail, office, and industrial market potential.

The GMA was amended in 2002 to require local comprehensive plans to contain economic development elements. While this requirement will not be enforced until state funding is made available, the City of Orting has moved ahead with compliance to address the following:

An economic development element establishing local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life. The element shall include: (a) A summary of the local economy such as population, employment, payroll, sectors, businesses, sales, and other information as appropriate; (b) a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy defined as the commercial and industrial sectors and supporting factors such as land use, transportation, utilities, education, work force, housing, and natural/cultural resources; and (c) an identification of policies, programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development and to address future needs.

The following goals and policies are supported by the analyses and strategies included in the Appendix.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal ED 1 – Support economic growth through business retention, expansion, and formation consistent with the Comprehensive Plan vision and the other elements.

Policy ED 1.1 Prepare and maintain an assessment of Orting's business strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).

Policy ED 1.2 Coordinate City investment in capital facilities projects with related business, employment, and economic development opportunities.

Goal ED2 – Promote the creation of family-wage jobs that will serve the residents of Orting.

Policy ED 2.1 Work with employers and social service providers to coordinate employment and training opportunities for disadvantaged persons, including support for transportation, dependent daycare, language, and access to housing.

Policy ED 2.2 Maintain an ongoing dialogue with the local school districts, regional community colleges and vocational training schools to promote programs and curricula that prepare residents for jobs and ensure that the work force will support businesses considering to locate in Orting.

Goal ED3 – Promote the installation of telecommunications technology throughout the City in order to provide universal access to citizens, businesses, and institutions that is secure, reliable, and affordable.

Policy ED 3.1 Participate in seeking grant funding for improvement of infrastructure to support economic development.

Policy ED 3.2 Identify long-term infrastructure needs that support economic sustainability.

Goal ED4 – Create public-private partnerships that will nurture entrepreneurship, innovation, and business growth.

Policy ED 4.1 Encourage economic sectors that:

- Pay higher-than-average wages;
- Bring new capital into the local economy;
- Can be sustained in the City;
- Maintain sound environmental practices; and
- Diversify the economic base.

Policy ED 4.2 Ensure that City licensing and permitting practices and procedures are coherent, fair and expeditious. Where specialized industry requirements call for the inspection by government agencies, coordinate with those agencies to eliminate duplication of efforts.

Policy ED 4.3 Promote the infill and redevelopment of the downtown to enhance the sense of community, encourage pedestrian/bicycle mobility, and reduce the number and length of motorized shopping trips by working with property and business owners to market Orting, provide parking solutions, create anchor projects with public gathering places, and support the development of mixed use retail, office and residential projects.

Goal ED5 – Encourage diverse job options and entrepreneurial opportunities for people interested in full-time and part-time employment or desiring to own their own business.

Policy ED 5.1 Home-based businesses that are compatible with the character of adjoining properties and neighborhoods will be accommodated.

Policy ED 5.2 Cooperate with education providers and employer interests to ensure that availability of facilities and programs necessary to meet the needs of K-12, college, vocational and continuing education levels.

Goal ED6 – Promote business practices that protect the City’s natural beauty and environmental health.

Policy ED 6.1 Encourage the use of “green” materials and techniques in all types of construction.

Policy ED 6.2 Encourage public sector solid waste reduction and recycling.

Policy ED 6.3 Encourage existing and new commercial enterprises to become part of a linked cooperative whereby the by-products and waste of one enterprise become the raw materials of another.

Goal ED7 – Provide a variety of affordable housing choices so that people who work in Orting can live here.

Policy ED 7.1 Continue to monitor the progress in implementing the Housing Element and evaluate new ways of providing affordable housing.