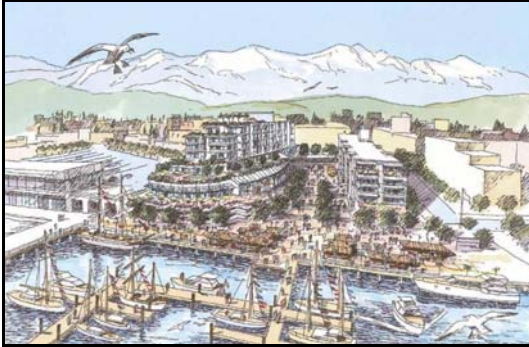


ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



“While supporting regulatory reforms, this Element primarily focuses on providing expanded employment, housing, and commerce choices.”

Economic Development Vision

Bremerton is a metropolitan city with economic vitality and diverse lifestyles. The city provides a broad variety of jobs, housing, transportation options, convenience services, and strategically dispersed commercial activities. Communities and established neighborhoods within the city each have a distinctive focus, yet all are walkable and well-connected to each other, satellites to a vibrant downtown with the most interesting mix of activities. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the accessible waterfronts, water and mountain views, and urban parks. New development merges with established styles, enhancing and protecting the charm, historical character of the city, and its cultural heritage.

Goals and Policies developed by the community to implement this vision are the core of this element. The Economic Development Element Goals and Policies are found starting on page EC5.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT
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Introduction



Bremerton, as the urban center of Kitsap County, is a vibrant environment which fosters economic vitality through its broad diversification of jobs and strategically dispersed commercial activities. The city provides a superior natural setting, a nationally recognized quality of life, and a regionally significant deep water port, home to a newly rebuilt state ferry terminal and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard - the West Sound's largest employer. Rediscovery of the city's qualities and its economic durability entices new investments, and inspires residents and businesses to pursue economic interests.

The Economic Development Element asserts the need for economic vitality for a healthier community. While supporting regulatory reforms, this Element primarily focuses on providing expanded employment, housing, and commerce choices. Advocating for a full inventory of marketable sites, especially redevelopment opportunities within newly designated Centers, this Element puts a priority on new development that increases activity levels and diversifies the economy. At the same time, it works to highlight and enhance the qualities that make Bremerton a wise investment, such as its prime waterfront, small city convenience, and rich cultural heritage.

This Element challenges City government operations to have excellent customer service and development-friendly processes and regulations. It also requires that economic considerations be included as the City prepares for future growth, including making efficient capital investments and public resources (also discussed in the City Services Element). Higher density developments in quality settings, as outlined by the Centers strategy and advocated here, will contribute to a stronger market with increasing land values that attract investments. This Element asserts that annexations should demonstrate economic growth for the City. Finally, businesses are recognized for their critical role in the City, supported with expansion locations, transportation planning, and community-wide efforts to market the Bremerton and a business-friendly regulatory environment.

The State of Washington has recognized the need to promote economic competitiveness in community planning efforts. New legislation in 2002 expanded the mandate of the State's Growth Management Act to include an Economic Development component for Comprehensive Plans. Transportation plans for regional corridors, and land use allocations, especially for Centers, are thereby challenged to support the needs of commerce. Such economic development requires partnerships across jurisdictional lines, especially to enjoy the benefits of a shared economy that does not contain itself to political boundaries. The County wide Planning Policies, negotiating such things as tax-revenue sharing in advance of annexations, are endorsed here as a

basis for regional coordination. This Element asserts the interests of local residents and businesses into the ongoing larger dialogue, working to secure strategic growth opportunities for the City of Bremerton. The Economic Development Goals and Policies that appear in the following section of this Element respond to the opportunities and aspirations outlined above. They also necessarily respond to challenges presented by existing economic conditions. To better understand both existing challenges and community goals for the future, this Element rests on a foundation of research.

To provide this foundation, the Economic Development (ED) Appendix to this Comprehensive Plan presents a “City Profile” outlining contributing demographic, physical, and historical conditions in Bremerton. The ED Appendix also contains an “Inventory of Local and Regional Economy”, citing the key data needed to understand Bremerton’s current economic conditions and to make reasonable forecasts about its economic future. The ED Appendix is found in the companion appendices to this Comprehensive Plan.

Economic Development Goals and Policies

The Growth Management Act's Economic Development Planning Goal is to:

Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.

Discussion: Local priorities, vision, and aspirations for economic vitality are reflected by the following community goals and policies for economic development.



EC1 Promote a vibrant environment for economic development

EC1A Promote and plan for an adequate supply of strategic lands and infrastructure for new employment and economic expansion.

EC1B Monitor land availability for development sites throughout the city.

EC1C Encourage redevelopment of underutilized sites.

- Utilize adaptive re-use of public buildings
- Encourage rehabilitation programs, including grant funding for clean-up and repair

EC1D Apply annexation strategies that produce economic gains for the City of Bremerton.

EC1E Pursue alternative transportation monies, including federal dollars typically spent on the interstate system, for fast-ferry research and other multi-modal investments and improvements.

EC1F Provide adequate street lighting as well as police and fire protection services throughout commercial areas.

EC1G Promote Local Improvement Districts as a tool for infrastructure improvements, particularly in areas experiencing new investment and redevelopment.

EC1H Expand and support marinas in the City.

EC1I Promote both short and extended recreational activities in Bremerton, especially along the extensive waterfront.

EC1J Ensure business zoning designations are in appropriate locations (See EC2 & Land Use Map).

- Consider critical mass of customers for locating and sizing business locations
- Promote mixed use and higher density residential development in proximity to business locations



EC2 Maintain the existing asset of being a small city with convenience and quality

EC2A Provide for various Centers throughout the community that encourage economic activity.

EC2B Coordinate sub-area (community, neighborhood, and Centers) planning for localized economic development.

EC2C Encourage mixed use developments (residential combined with commercial activities) in designated Centers.

EC2D Identify distinct core development for District and Neighborhood Centers.

EC2E Encourage balanced ratios of designated uses within centers, to ensure economic vibrancy.

EC2F Work with Kitsap Transit to plan around activity areas with convenient hours and connections for commerce.

EC3 Provide for a full-service, 24-hour, regional downtown Center

EC3A Encourage the development of the downtown as a neighborhood as well as the heart of the city and region.

EC3B Diversify and enhance the quality of office space available, and in use, in the downtown area.

EC3C Encourage services downtown for commuters as well as residents.

EC3D Provide incentives for downtown redevelopment and reinvestment.

EC3E Create a character-of-development vision for downtown, stressing consistency but allowing flexibility.

EC3F Provide for a unique downtown ambiance, stressing safety and visual interest.

- Support street lighting, window displays, increased security, and consistent treatment for signage and amenities (trash cans, benches, etc.)
- Investigate outdated (obsolete) signage for possible removal or rehabilitation
- Preserve historic storefronts downtown, for unique character and visual interest

EC3G Encourage the use of design elements as stated in Community Character Element.

EC3H Support on-going entertainment and community gathering downtown.

- Provide for variety of compatible attractions for a diverse population
- Locate multi-purpose sites for social events and community gathering

EC3I Encourage cultural activities and special events downtown

- Provide support for entertainment venues

EC3J Provide convenient and purposeful parking downtown.

- Study parking polices for economic development
- Provide for short term, strategically located, parking lots downtown
- Allow alternative parking requirements for evening and late night-oriented businesses, such as use of existing parking lots designed for regular business hours



EC4 Support the expansion of commerce

EC4A Ensure convenient access to advanced internet and digital communications.

EC4B Apply tax strategies that attract and retain businesses.

- Review all taxing policies to identify incentives for economic investment, including tax breaks
- Pursue eligibility for all areas of the City that may qualify for State Empowerment Zone designation.

EC4C Support expansion of transportation systems and facilities, particularly the Bremerton National Airport, to move products.

EC4D Ensure good access, including public transit, to business areas.

EC4E Support transportation corridors that are convenient and complimentary to downtown and activity Centers.

EC4F Ensure that business districts – areas where commercial uses make up the majority of a city block – have a recognizable access points that can function as gateways.

EC4G Locate and secure convenient and well-designed parking opportunities within business districts.

EC4H Identify business districts for coordinated parking and improvement strategies.

EC4I Support home occupation businesses.

EC4J Encourage supportive environments for the growth of small businesses, such as opportunities for shared overhead and administration costs.

EC4K Pursue state legislation and programs to aid businesses and business districts.

EC4L Encourage a more diversified economic base to increase elasticity in the local economy.



The Norm Dicks Government Center houses multiple public agencies for customer convenience.

EC5 Establish Bremerton as a city that welcomes the opportunity to serve business, residents, and visitors

EC5A Expedite the permit and development process.

- Advocate on behalf of development projects that meet code provisions
- Improve predictability with established timelines for various development permits
- Clarify code regulations and definitions
- Publish condensed development guides

EC5B Provide customer service training programs for City employees who interface with the public.

EC5C Encourage business and customer service training programs.

EC5D Promote Bremerton throughout Puget Sound.

EC5E Produce a sense of welcome and orientation for visitors throughout the city, especially downtown and at arrival points to the City of Bremerton.

- Provide for visual aides such as directional signs to direct tourists to local business and destination points

EC5F Encourage marketing and tourism efforts.

- Accent the city’s unique character and assets, such as its waterfront and historic downtown

EC5G Support tourist features and amenities, especially the regularity and convenience of state ferries which directly service Bremerton.

EC5H Partner with private and public agencies and associations to publicize community services and amenities.



EC6 Provide greater economic opportunity for residents

EC6A Ensure convenient access to advanced internet and digital communications.

EC6B Educate property owners in development options and interests.

EC6C Support opportunities for affordable owner-occupied housing.

EC6D Promote and support the local labor force.

- Encourage workforce training programs and initiatives
- Support educational opportunities through public, private, and higher education institutions

EC6E Attract new employment opportunities throughout the city.

EC6F Support efforts of the local business and economic development associations, especially in their efforts to attract new business and primary dollars (money from outside the community) to the City of Bremerton.

EC6G Pursue regional and state investment interests, especially public dollars, through continuous lobbying and relationship-building, highlighting Bremerton as a stable appealing community committed to partnerships and collaboration.