

Economic Development

The Economic Development Element reflects the following framework goals that are highlighted in black:

FRAMEWORK GOALS

- FG1: Promote a sense of place by requiring quality building and development that is not just compatible with the surrounding environment, but enhances the community spirit.**
- FG2: Promote quality building and development that is compatible with the surrounding environment.**
- FG3: Support a variety of housing opportunities for Edgewood's diversifying population that are affordable, enhance a safe and livable community, and prepare and protect our families for life in the 21st Century.
- FG4: Pursue a strong and diverse economy and assure economic development that creates a "Heart" for Edgewood and balances regional objectives, while complementing the unique neighborhood character.**
- FG5: Protect the natural environment and preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- FG6: Promote improvements to human services as the community changes and diversifies.
- FG7: Assure effective and efficient public investment for quality public services, facilities, and utilities.**
- FG8: Balance the transportation needs of the community with regional objectives through improvement of both street and multimodal transportation systems for Edgewood's present and future population.
- FG9: Provide for inclusive and meaningful citizen involvement in community planning decisions.

Intent

The intent of the Economic Development Element is to improve the quality of life by encouraging an increased number and variety of thriving commercial businesses that provide services and create employment opportunities for Edgewood residents and diversify the City's tax base.

Background and Context

Edgewood has always been known as a desirable place to live, learn, and play. However, an area's livability is also enhanced by being a desirable place to work and shop. Most Edgewood residents travel outside of the City for jobs and shopping opportunities. Businesses choose their locations based upon many factors, often related specifically to the surrounding natural and built environments and their attractiveness. Edgewood's economy depends on healthy businesses that provide goods and services, efficient traffic circulation, good schools, and strong neighborhoods. Maintaining the community's quality of life requires a strong and sustainable economic climate.

The existing land use inventory indicates that the City has a small amount of commercial land use for a city of its population. One hundred and seven acres are utilized for commercial use, representing only 2.1% of Edgewood's land base. This low figure may be due to the proximity of commercial land in the adjacent City of Milton as well as larger commercial areas in Puyallup and Federal Way. Most commercial land use within Edgewood is clustered along Meridian Ave E. (SR-161).

The lack of sanitary and storm sewer availability serves as a disincentive to commercial investment.

Existing Conditions

The City of Edgewood contains a diverse variety of business types, ranging from parrot breeding to chiropractic services and professional consulting services. These businesses consist of home industries, agricultural businesses, and businesses in commercial buildings. Several businesses are located along the Meridian corridor, which runs through the center of Edgewood. Businesses can also be found scattered throughout the City in other locations, such as 8th Street East near Meridian; 24th Street East off Meridian; along the West Valley Highway at the City Limits of Edgewood, and many other areas. Excavating companies, gravel mining, retail services, health-related services, automobile-related services, construction, and gas stations are only a few of the commercial activities found in Edgewood. In addition, many home industries are found in Edgewood. These include day care facilities, clerical services, plant nurseries, professional consulting services, veterinary services, and others. Examples of agricultural business activities in Edgewood include cattle-ranching, Christmas tree farming, and a thoroughbred training

center. The City also contains numerous small hobby farms that have sheep, horses, llamas, and other livestock.

With the reduction of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax associated with Initiative 695, the City faced a 40% or greater reduction in its funding. The City may not be able to support economic growth through infrastructure improvements. This will result in greater demand on private financing.

Goals and Policies

Goal ED I: Plan for sufficient economic growth and development to provide for an appropriate balance of land uses that will provide a sound financial future for the City.

Policies

ED1: *Encourage land uses that increase the City's tax base.*

Discussion: The City should maintain a sound budget by broadening its tax base and attracting revenue sources that comply with its regulations.

ED2: *Encourage economic development that provides a reasonable balance between public costs and benefits.*

Discussion: In implementing this policy, the City should emphasize attracting living wage jobs to the community and encourage high tech businesses.

ED3: *Preserve the community's unique qualities through the concentration of new commercial and industrial development, protecting the surrounding residential area.*

Discussion: See the Land Use Element, Town Center, Commercial, and Industrial policies and designations.

ED4: *Support the growth of home telecommuting options and home*

employment opportunities that are compatible with the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Discussion: The City should encourage home-based businesses provided that signage, parking, storage, and noise impacts are compatible with adjacent land uses and comply with appropriate City codes.

ED5: *Support regional policies for balancing commercial and residential development in Edgewood.*

ED6: *Increase and improve the City's economic base to encourage Edgewood residents to work and shop in the community.*

ED7: *Encourage a mixture of businesses that complement each other and provide variety to the community to create activity and economic momentum.*

ED8: *Ensure that land use and zoning provisions support businesses.*

ED9: *Promote optimum development of commercial property.*

ED10: *Ensure a customer service approach in City services to commercial improvements, expansions, and developments.*

Discussion: The City will continue a customer service approach to the delivery of City services, including economic development and permitting activities. The process and timing of building permit review

will be expedited under this approach and under the provisions of RCW 36.70B. In addition to the processing of permit requests, the City will hold pre-development meetings with prospective developers and business owners to identify, facilitate, and expedite proposals that are consistent with the adopted zoning and Comprehensive Plan.

Goal ED II: Enhance the image of Edgewood as a good place in which to work, shop, and live.

ED11: *Improve the character of business districts and nodes.*

Discussion: Businesses with attractive site, landscaping, and building designs improve the character of the community. Design standards and zoning regulations can encourage high quality commercial development. The City can implement this policy by cooperating with the business community.

ED12: *Encourage increased density of housing near commercial districts.*

ED13: *Use incentives to ensure quality development that enhances the image of the City.*

Discussion: Examples of incentives include development agreements, tax credits, infrastructure improvements, expediting permitting processes, transfers of development rights and grants, loans, or revenue bonds. The City can also engage in public/private partnerships and facilitate Local Improvement Districts.

ED14: *Recognize the Meridian Corridor as the economic core of the City with potential for development and revitalization, providing services, employment and opportunities, while*

becoming an activity center for Edgewood.

ED15: *Recognize local neighborhood commercial areas that are ready for development and revitalization to better serve the local community.*

ED16: *Recognize the potential for smaller commercial districts for improvement and revitalization.*

ED17: *Support and retain small businesses for the employment and services they provide to the community.*

Goal ED III: Improve the City's role to facilitate and initiate economic development opportunities.

ED18: *Maintain an inventory of commercial and industrial sites.*

Discussion: An inventory of commercial and industrial sites is an important tool for planning purposes.

ED19: *Provide economic information to existing and potential businesses within the community.*

Discussion: The City can implement this policy through market studies, inventories of commercial sites, and customer service.

ED20: *Involve the business community in comprehensive land use planning efforts.*

Discussion: The City should work with its business community to create an atmosphere that helps existing businesses thrive. The City should encourage public/private partnerships and support businesses that provide services to Edgewood and surrounding communities. To implement this policy, the City should

cooperate with businesses to create strategies and action plans.

ED21: *Create public/private partnerships with major landholders to accomplish the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and enhance the economic well being of the community.*

ED22: *Actively recruit and promote new businesses to take advantage of market opportunities.*

Discussion: New businesses improve Edgewood's image and provide services to Edgewood and surrounding areas. The City can implement this policy by providing marketing information to businesses that would enhance the economic image of the community.

ED23: *Work jointly with other jurisdictions to stimulate business retention and implement interlocal and regional strategies.*

ED24: *Create public/private entities to negotiate and work jointly on projects, issues, and problems of local importance.*

ED25: *Coordinate and initiate financial assistance.*

Discussion: The City can implement this policy by using county, state, and federal program funds, facility grants, loans, and revolving loan funds.

<p>Goal ED IV: Plan for sufficient capital facilities in order to maintain existing economic activities and allow for the development of new businesses.</p>

ED26: *Ensure adequate transportation infrastructure to support and promote economic development.*

ED27: *To create a dynamic business community along Meridian, both sanitary and storm water sewers should be installed along Meridian.*

ED28: *Direct capital facilities in key locations to encourage and promote node-like business districts.*

Discussion: Focusing capital facilities improvements in designated areas can promote the City's image, create a sense of place, and a place to locate business. The City should provide for phasing of capital facilities to key locations to promote concurrent economic development. The City can implement this policy by creating physical plans to improve the appearance and function of streets, sidewalks, utilities, access points, lights, buildings, signage, landscaping, and other facilities.

ED29: *Facilitate infrastructure improvements to increase economic opportunity.*

Discussion: The City can implement this policy through public/private partnerships.

ED30: *Make improvements to Meridian to make it functional, attractive, and pedestrian friendly.*

Discussion: The City will implement this policy through cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation.

ED31: *Create strong pedestrian and circulation linkages between commercial areas and neighborhoods.*

ED32: *Use underground utilities, where feasible, to enhance the appearance and appeal of commercial areas.*

Discussion: See the Capital Facilities and Utilities Element.

ED33: *Promote high quality transportation and transit facilities for commercial development.*