



■ Economic Development Element

DRAFT

Introduction

Longview has an industrial foundation, has a reputation for heavy industry, and is a cost-competitive alternative to the increasingly costly and congested Portland-Vancouver and Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan areas. However, given the current market conditions and trends, it is becoming more evident that the City needs to diversify its economy to improve economic stability, opportunity, and prosperity as well as stimulate new jobs and investment.

Longview's Economic Development Element is intended to provide background information on the local economy and strategies to strengthen economic conditions to help meet the community's vision:

- Longview in 2023 is a vibrant regional economic center. Support for traditional industries and health care services, a strengthened port, and flourishing new industries result from an environment that welcomes business. Tourism, improved productivity, and paperless business transactions through the use of applied technology reflect change and growth. A vital downtown that is safe, inviting, and historic complements the entire region.

Summary of Existing Conditions and Trends

In the late 1970s, there were 6,400 timber jobs in Cowlitz County, and a third of all jobs were in manufacturing. The county's per capita income was close to the state average and above the national average. Since then, timber and manufacturing employment has declined, and wages and income have not kept up with the rest of the nation. The county has had some success with diversification, but it has been a case of two steps forward, one step back.

During the Great Recession, Cowlitz County lost 7 percent of its nonfarm employment, more than the state or nation. Its unemployment rate hit 15 percent (not seasonally adjusted) at one point, before easing downward at the end of 2010. By fits and starts, employment growth turned positive in 2010, helped by construction projects on new investments: a new grain terminal, a new steel pipe plant and two new Walmarts (in Longview and Woodland). However, employment retrenched in 2011, stagnated in 2012, before finally taking off in mid-2013 and accelerating in 2017. Employment as of October 2017 was 1,000 jobs—2.6 percent—above the pre-recession peak, with a year-over-year growth rate quite strong at over 4 percent.

In 2016, one-sixth of Cowlitz County's employment base was in manufacturing, including two paper mills, several sawmills, a large chicken processor, as well as numerous smaller producers in machinery, fabricated metals, chemicals and other segments. The county has excellent transportation connections, including two active marine ports, rail connections and Interstate 5.

Labor force and unemployment

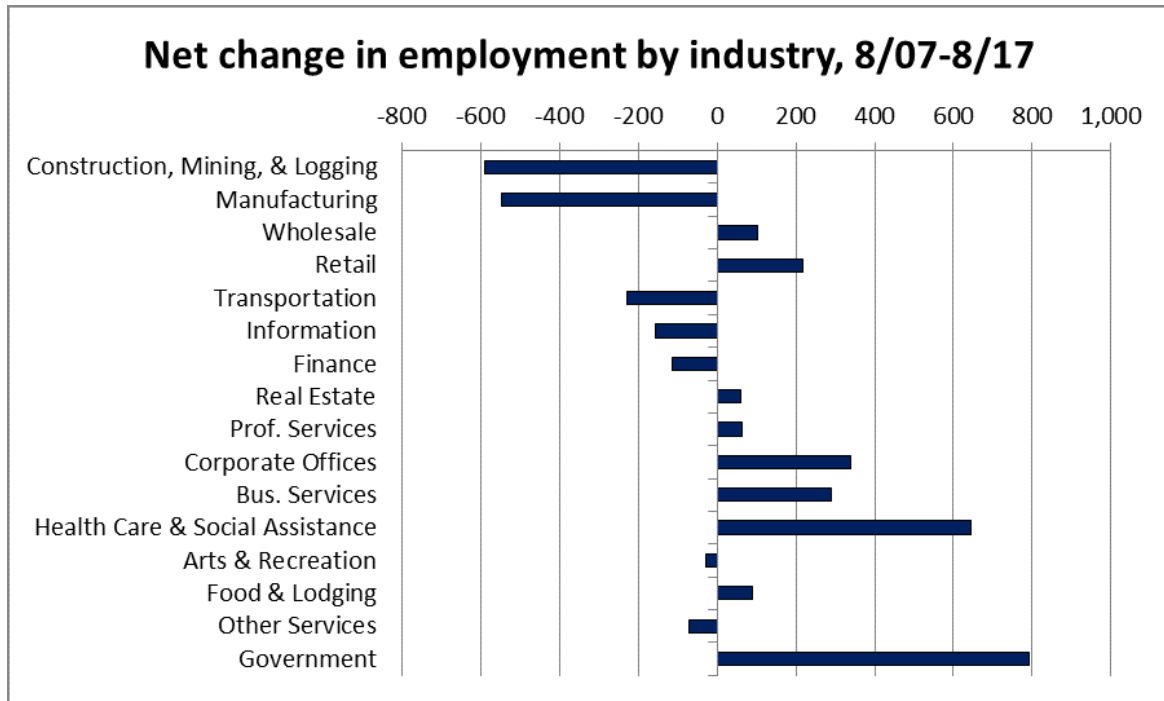
Over the past two decades, Cowlitz County's unemployment rate has run about two percentage points higher than the national average during good times, and three or four points higher during recessions. The average annual rate in the county topped 13 percent in 2009, before easing down a point a year through 2016, when the annual rate was 7.5 percent. Preliminary measures of unemployment dropped further in 2017, reaching the lowest rate on record at 5.2 percent in October. The county's labor force participation rate in 2016 dropped from 56.6 percent down to 54.9 percent, substantially lower than the national mark of 63.0 percent. The rate for women (50.9 percent) was much lower than that for men (59.1 percent), and both were seven to nine percentage points below the comparable national figures.

Industry employment

A recap of the last two decades: Cowlitz County was hit harder by the 2001 recession than the state, in part due to the closure of the former Reynolds aluminum smelter. Expansion resumed in 2004 but tapered off beginning in 2006. The county led the nation going into a recession in mid-2007. Recovery really didn't start until halfway through 2013, and employment growth was relatively rapid in 2017.

Construction, mining & logging made up just fewer than 8 percent of county nonfarm employment in 2016, down from 10 percent in 2007. As in many areas of the country, construction employment in the county was decimated in the recession. Payrolls in construction, mining & logging peaked at 4,000 jobs in mid-2007 and bottomed out at 2,700 jobs (-32 percent) before recovering somewhat to 3,300 jobs in 2017. Within those totals, logging employment has declined from 700 to 500 jobs.

Historically the county averaged about 500 housing permits a year. The bubble years drove that number up to 700 units in 2006. The market for new homes bottomed out in 2011 (113 permits), with 2016 being the first decent year of late with 308 units permitted. Only 35 of those were for multifamily units, which remain in short supply.



In 2016, 17 percent of county jobs were in manufacturing, down two percentage points from 2007. Like elsewhere, manufacturing was hit second hardest. In Cowlitz County, after the 2001 recession, factory jobs had stabilized at 7,300 jobs until early in 2007. Employment bottomed out at 5,800 jobs in mid-2009 (-21 percent), before recovering to 6,500 jobs in 2017. Most of the loss during the recession was in paper products (-600) and wood products (-400); the county has seen steady growth (+300) in other durable goods such as metals and machinery and in other nondurable goods (+300).

Wholesale trade, which made up 4 percent of county jobs in 2016, slid by 300 jobs, from 1,600 to 1,300 (-19 percent) during the recession, but by the end of 2017 had almost fully recovered the loss. Retail trade has consistently had a 12 percent share of Cowlitz employment. Retailers cut 500 jobs falling to 4,300 during the downturn (-10 percent), rallied with the opening of a new Wal-Mart, retrenched again, and then began adding jobs in 2014. Employment fully recovered from the recession in 2015. Taxable sales suffered a hefty 24 percent decline from the pre-recession peak, but finally made it back to previous levels in 2016. Throughout this period, just over 12 percent of jobs were in retail trade. Transportation jobs, while sometimes quite volatile due to port activity, have hovered around 1,700 jobs throughout the past decade, contributing 4 percent of total employment.

The financial services sector cut almost a fourth of its payroll, falling from 1,600 to 1,200, with the closure of the Cowlitz Bank in mid-2010 being a low point (it was acquired by Heritage Bank). By the end of 2017, most of the gap had been closed, as job counts hovered around 1,500—just under 4 percent of all jobs.

The county's professional services industry drifted downward by 100 jobs from 2010 to 2015, but has rebounded since then back to 800 jobs. Business services employment was quite volatile,

due mostly to large swings in temporary staffing services. It trended upward from just under 1,000 in 2007 to more than 1,300 in 2017. Altogether professional & business services made up less than 6 percent of total jobs.

Healthcare and social assistance peaked at 6,000 jobs in late 2011, declined in 2012, but began adding jobs again in 2014 and again reached 6,000 jobs in 2017. This sector employed 15 percent of the workforce in 2016.

Leisure and hospitality, which has consistently had a 9 to 10 percent share of total employment, lost 500 of its 3,500 jobs in the downturn, then had a very uneven recovery before returning to that level in late 2013. A burst in late 2015 pushed job counts up to 3,700, where it has remained through most of 2017. Hotel/motel sales, which dropped 29 percent in the downturn, had completely recovered by early 2015, and were 15 percent above the previous peak midway through 2017. Restaurant sales dipped by 11 percent but increased rapidly during the recovery and have also surpassed their previous high by 18 percent.

Government agencies employed 6,000 workers in 2008, recovered to that level by 2015, and by 2017 employed almost 6,500. Federal and state governments were unchanged, while K-12 school employment rose by 5 percent and other local government employment by 17 percent. Government's proportion of total jobs in the county has consistently been around 16 percent.

Industry employment by age and gender

The Local Employment Dynamics (LED) database, a joint project of state employment departments and the U.S. Census Bureau, matches state employment data with federal administrative data. Among the products is industry employment by age and gender. All workers covered by state unemployment insurance data are included; federal workers and non-covered workers, such as the self-employed, are not. Data are presented by place of work, not place of residence. Some highlights:

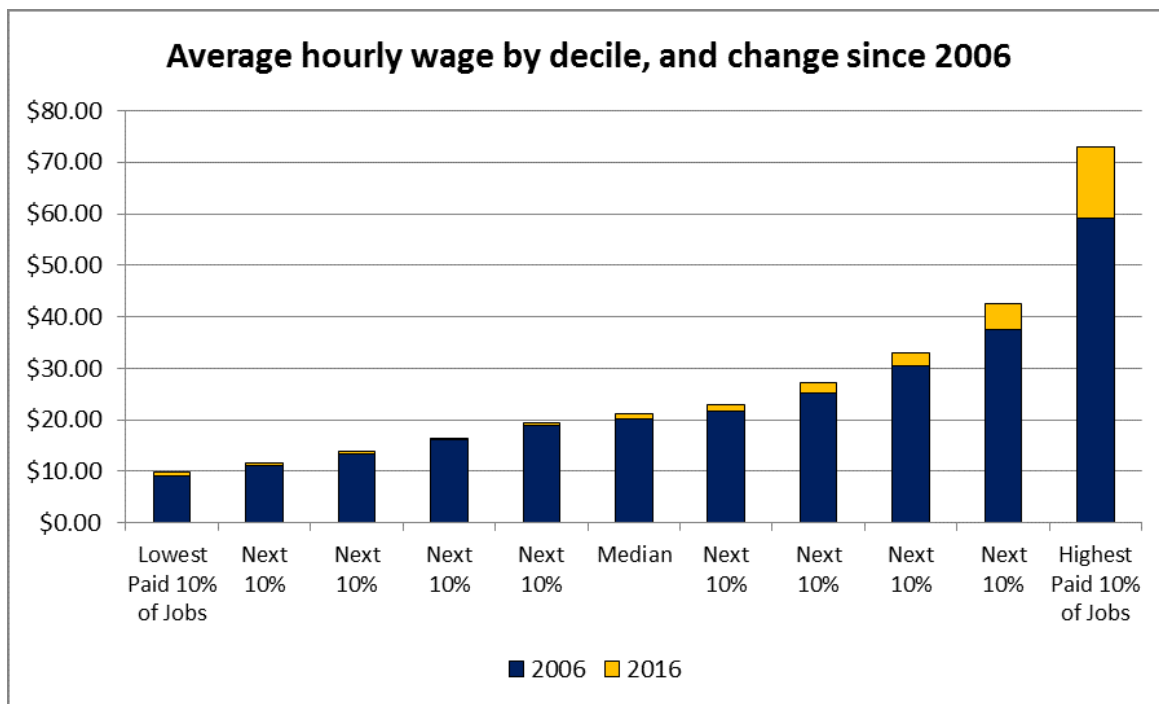
In 2016, 12 percent of the jobs in Cowlitz County were held by workers under the age of 25, while 24 percent of jobs were held by those aged 55 and over. The rest of the jobs were split between those age 25 to 34 (20 percent), 35 to 44 (22 percent), and 45 to 54 (23 percent). The county's age profile was somewhat older than the state's.

Jobs were almost evenly divided between men (52 percent) and women (48 percent). There were substantial differences in gender dominance by industry.

- Male-dominated industries included construction (87 percent), manufacturing (78 percent), wholesale trade (73 percent), transportation (81 percent) and business services (68 percent).
- Female-dominated industries included healthcare and social assistance (82 percent), finance and insurance (79 percent) and educational services (public and private combined, 73 percent).

Wages and income

The median hourly wage for jobs in Cowlitz County in 2016 was \$21.12, little changed from the 2014 and 2015 medians but still the highest on record. Cowlitz was almost \$3 per hour below the state median, but if King County were excluded, Cowlitz exceeded the rest of the state. Over the past decade, wage polarization has increased in the county. Wages for the best-paid 10 percent of jobs have jumped 23 percent, while the median was up 4 percent. The average hourly wage for jobs at the low end was up 8 percent, but between the bottom and the median, hourly wages appreciated by 2% to 5%.

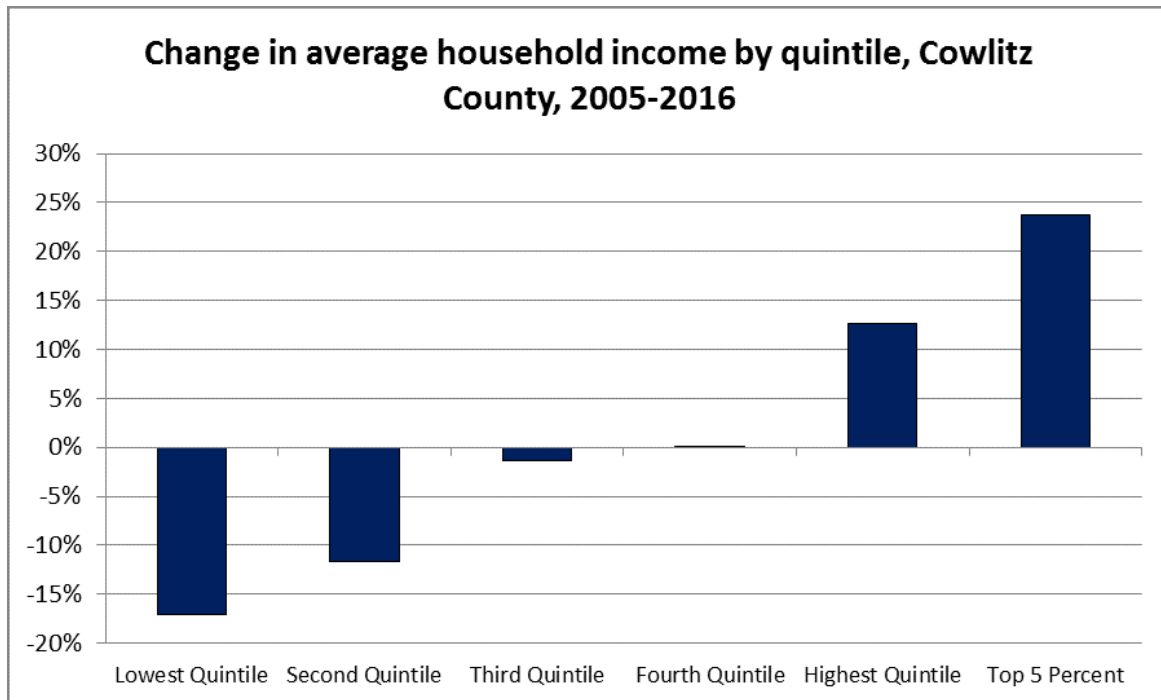


In 2016 average annual wage was \$45,775, well below the state (\$59,073) and national (\$53,611) averages. The average has risen relatively slowly over the past three decades.

During the recession, from 2007 to 2010, job losses were spread fairly evenly across the wage spectrum, except at the upper end—there was actually an increase in the number of higher wage jobs (\$48 per hour and up). From 2010 to 2016, the number of jobs paying below \$12 per hour declined, while those paying between \$12 and \$18 per hour made up 16 percent of net new jobs, and 21 percent paid \$54 per hour or more.

Not surprisingly, household income declined sharply in the recession. Household income estimates from the American Community Survey during this period are not very reliable, with significant sample error contributing to major swings that don't make sense. The overall trend—the estimate for 2016 median household income, at \$50,637 (12 percent below the U.S. median), was essentially the same as for the 2005-09 period. Median family income, which also had a few aberrant years, increased by 10 percent from 2005 to 2016's \$64,239—still about 10 percent below the U.S. median. The distribution of income worsened noticeably, as shown in the chart

below. The average income for the top 20 percent of households increased by 13 percent, and the top five percent of households by 24 percent. In contrast, the bottom 20 percent of households dropped by 17 percent. While this decline may be due to an outlier in 2016, the overall trend over the decade was flat for the lowest-income households, so in any event, income inequality had grown. Poverty remained high at 16.8 percent in 2016.



Personal Income

Personal income includes earned income, investment income and government payments such as Social Security and Veterans Benefits. Investment income includes income imputed from pension funds and from owning a home. Per capita personal income equals total personal income divided by the resident population.

In 2016, Cowlitz County per capita personal income was \$41,449, a 1.9 percent increase, more than the state or nation. Earned income (2.1 percent) and transfer payments (2.2 percent) grew even faster. Transfer payments to residents of Cowlitz totaled \$1.2 billion in 2016, an average of \$11,214 per resident. That was substantially higher than the \$8,567 per capita figure nationally. Much of the difference has to do with the county's older population—Social Security and Medicare payments were well above the state and nation. Poverty also played a role: Medicaid, income maintenance benefits (which includes Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, more popularly known as welfare) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (a.k.a. food stamps) were all above average, as were disability payments and unemployment insurance benefits. Finally, Veterans' benefits also outpaced the nation.

Per Capita Transfer Payments, 2016

Type	Cowlitz	U.S.	Difference
Total benefits	\$11,214	\$8,567	30.9%
Social Security benefits	\$3,994	\$2,774	43.9%
Medicare benefits	\$2,396	\$2,030	18.1%
Medicaid	\$2,286	\$1,778	28.6%
Supplemental security income (SSI) benefits	\$256	\$175	46.6%
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	\$387	\$202	90.9%
Other income maintenance benefits	\$374	\$234	59.6%
Unemployment insurance compensation	\$138	\$98	40.1%
Veterans' benefits	\$379	\$287	32.0%

The above text in this chapter section is taken almost verbatim from the “Cowlitz County profile” produced by Scott Bailey, Regional Labor Economist for the Washington State Employment Security Department

Retail Sales

Before the Great Recession, Longview was seeing growth in retail sales and increases in retail space. In the few years before the downturn, a Lowes and Home Depot stores were built, the Triangle Center was revamped and a second Walmart was constructed among numerous smaller projects. Since then there has been little expansion of retail space. In 2015, annual sales finally

returned to pre-recession levels. Longview has seen six consecutive years of sales growth, the last three in excess of 4.5 percent. 2017 growth was the second highest (behind 2013) since before the recession. Longview's 2016-2017 growth rate outpaced Washington State's growth by more than a full percent (7.44% to 6.28%). While Longview is seeing decreasing commercial space vacancies, the City has not yet seen substantial interest in adding additional retail space. Nationwide retail space increases have been lackluster, non-existent or even retracting. Some of this is attributed to overbuilding prior to the great recession, increasing online (e-commerce) sales and changing spending habits. These factors are likely impacting the local area also.

Downtown

In late 2010, the City of Longview determined that an enhancement strategy to augment the **2001 Downtown Plan** was needed to further revitalize Downtown Longview. The resulting **Longview Downtown Action Agenda 2011** was defined with involvement from the City government, the local business sector, representatives of non-profit organizations, and members of the community. The **Longview Downtown Action Agenda 2011** includes the following areas of focus:

- Resident and business surveys were performed to identify what is working well for downtown and what is lacking that would attract new businesses, more customers, and more residents living in the downtown.
- A series of discussions, focus groups and meetings were held to define the community's preferred vision of Downtown Longview relative to uses and users. The resulting vision included quality retail, offices, entertainment, restaurants, living units (condos) and art venues.
- A retail market analysis indicated that opportunities exist to enhance and expand certain types of retail businesses in the downtown. A list of recommended retail businesses were identified and included in the **Course of Action** chapter of the **Longview Downtown Action Agenda 2011**.
- Analysis of office use downtown revealed an estimated 15,000 to 25,000 square feet of additional office space could potentially be supported in the downtown.
- Review of existing housing downtown identified 180 housing units with a 90% occupancy rate. Perceptions are that the downtown has an overabundance of affordable housing units and more market-rate units should be the goal.

The **Longview Downtown Action Agenda 2011** also identified a series of "Issues & Actions" specific to public safety, traffic and parking, streetscape, public signs, building improvements, business development, marketing, and management. Implementation of several of the recommendations has occurred including improved pedestrian safety features at various downtown crosswalks, changes to parking time limits and permits, new streetscape for

Commerce Avenue between Washington Way and Florida Street, promotion of pedestrian friendly hanging bracket signs for businesses, and two phases of a façade improvement grant program.

The Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) is a City Council appointed body that has been in existence since the creation of the *2001 Plan*. The DAC continues to meet regularly to consider the elements identified in the *Longview Downtown Action Agenda 2011* and make recommendations for implementation.

Strengths and Challenges

The Longview Comprehensive Plan 2006 identified Longview's economic strengths and challenges. City staff believes these still apply. They are:

Longview's locational strengths, summarized by City management, include its proximity to I-5, water depth along the Columbia River, rail access, cost competitiveness with the Seattle-Tacoma and Portland-Vancouver metropolitan areas, and some of the largest vacant industrial sites on the West Coast.

Labor force strengths, as defined in the Cowlitz Region Workforce Report, include a workforce with greater than average experience in the warehouse and distribution sector, customer service, materials handling, general office skills, sales, and numerous facets of manufacturing including assembly, repair, management and machine operations.

Community strengths are described in the Cowlitz County Community Report Card and through public input. The report card identifies positive community trends such as improved housing affordability, an increase in post-high-school training, and a decrease in both reported child abuse and youth drug and alcohol related crimes. A number of additional community strengths were described in February and June 2005 by Comprehensive Plan update workshop participants, including Longview's small-town atmosphere, historic buildings, Lake Sacajawea, access to outdoor recreation and quality health care, and its low cost of living.

Economic development challenges are described by economic sector and reflect city management and community input:

Industrial. Distance from major metropolitan areas such as Portland-Vancouver and Seattle-Tacoma and distance of prime industrial sites from I-5 (relative to other communities), relative lack of State incentives, recent timber company mergers, and Port property being outside of the City limits. Industrial firms (particularly warehouse-distribution) prefer sites directly on or with immediate access to an interstate freeway. The local street access system beyond I-5 and Tennant Way is viewed as confusing and creates substantial conflicts with non-industrial traffic.

Office. College graduates not returning to Longview, perceived lack of community understanding of the value of higher education and professional sector jobs, and need for conversion of downtown space that may require property owner incentives.

Downtown. Number of social services, nonretail uses in storefronts, low rents hindering property reinvestment, lack of gateways and straightforward access, and increased competition from big box retailers.

General economy. Erosion of small businesses, limited economic diversification, lack of concern with neighborhood quality as a development tool, impact of crime, and lack of four-year college opportunities.

Community challenges are also listed within the Cowlitz County Community Report Card. Health indicators identified as needing further attention include the percent of residents who are overweight or obese, a continued low representation of college graduates, and an increase in drug-related deaths.

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

This Economic Development Element describes a set of goals, objectives, and policies that affect not only land use but other marketing, investment, and employment activities of public agency, non-profit, and private participants in the Longview community. Successful implementation of the economic development element will require careful coordination between the land use and regulatory process of the Comprehensive Plan with other economic development activities extending beyond the typical purview of a planning document.

Actions that “cut across” the topic-specific components of this economic development element can be summarized to include establishing benchmarks, monitoring, capital budgeting, and marketing and branding.

Economic Diversification

Goal ED-A To achieve a diversified, balanced economy to ensure sustained economic growth and employment opportunities.

~~**Objective ED-A.1.** Biennially monitor the City’s strengths and weaknesses for various economic sectors and promote industrial, commercial, office, and mixed uses that capitalize on Longview’s strengths. Measure progress by new jobs created within key economic sectors and new employers located in Longview. Benchmarks and monitoring should involve the following~~

- ~~• Establish a well-defined set of economic development benchmarks that can be readily monitored through the biennial monitoring process. These benchmarks could include such items as employment and wage change by sector, workforce development training needs and results, retail sales and tourism expenditures, and absorption versus remaining inventory of industrial, commercial, and mixed-use designated lands.~~
- Biennially convene a forum involving key business, industry and public/non-profit stakeholders to review monitoring report results and to identify emerging

~~issues and opportunities for economic development. Include means for soliciting input from the interested public in addition to key stakeholders.~~

- Policy ED-A.1.1** Adopt land use plans and zoning classifications that are supportive of responsible economic development, accommodating a range of industrial, commercial and mixed-use opportunities reflective of community need and responsive to market demand. Provide a process for land use revisions on a periodic basis if needed to assure an adequate supply of ready-to-build sites across all employment land designations.
- Policy ED-A.1.2** Recognize much job growth can come from expansion and redevelopment of existing industry and business in the Longview Planning Area. Support existing businesses with incentives and programs such as permitting/regulatory assistance, low interest loans, bond programs, work force training, tax credits, etc. Work with partner economic development agencies to implement incentives and programs.
- Policy ED-A.1.3** Support, the expeditious processing of applications, permits, and licenses necessary to allow new industry, commerce, office, and mixed uses to locate inside the city limits and to facilitate existing business/industry expansion. Maintain up to date information on local requirements relating to zoning, infrastructure, environmental protection, and other requirements.
- Policy ED-A.1.4** Work with the Longview School District and Lower Columbia College to foster a well-trained and educated workforce (e.g., attracting four-year college programs to Longview).
- Objective ED-A.2.** Establish a public capital improvement budget (or suballocation) within the existing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for economic development, including a means for prioritizing projects based on Comprehensive Plan consistency and ability to respond to new opportunities that will make a difference for community economic vitality. This public capital improvement budget could be prepared at the time of the biennial City budget.
- Policy ED-A.2.1** Plan for adequate public facilities to attract and support sustained economic growth. Fund construction and maintenance of facilities through a combination of federal, State, and local grants, funds, and system charges as well as through mitigation fees, development extensions, and other sources.
- Policy ED-A.2.2** Consider economic development potential as a ranking criteria for all CIP projects.
- Objective ED-A.3.** Develop a marketing and branding program ~~by 2011~~ in conjunction with economic development partners
- Identify and coordinate activities of organizations involved in economic development marketing, extending from the industrial recruitment and expansion

focus of CEDC to also encompass opportunities for tourism, retail, office, and mixed use related business and development marketing.

- Establish a program to “brand” Longview in a ~~manner that can encompass the industrial/port, gateway and planned city heritage attributes of the community~~ to attract prospective visitors, residents and businesses and other investments.
- Identify and promote tourism opportunities within the City as a means to support Longview’s commercial sector.

Policy ED-A.3.1 Continue to play an active role and to support local and regional economic development programs, planning, and activities with partner agencies including the Port of Longview, Cowlitz County Economic Development Council, Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce, Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, ~~Pathways 2020~~, Longview Downtowners, Lower Columbia College, Workforce Southwest Washington, and similar organizations.

Objective ED-A.4. Continue to aggressively market City-owned property in industrial areas, such as the Mint Farm, in collaboration with major businesses and economic development partners. Revise actions and strategies through the City Council goal setting and budgeting process. The City could include the creation of a formula that would reward a capital-intensive business or industry that brings in new jobs and tax base to the City of Longview.

Policy ED-A.4.1 Strive to preserve existing industrial land that is viable and attractive to new and existing industry.

Policy ED-A.4.2 Aggressively seek annexation and development of underutilized industrial property contiguous to the city.

Policy ED-A.4.3 Cooperate with regional economic development partners in obtaining low cost expansion loans or federal or State grants for industry.

Policy ED-A.4.4 Ensure City Transportation Plans promote improved transportation linkages (highway and rail) with fewer use conflicts in accessing existing and planned industrial sites.

Policy ED-A.4.5 Support the deepening of the Columbia River Channel, together with expansion of Port of Longview maritime and upland industrial site capabilities.

Objective ED-A.5. By December 2007, update City zoning regulations for Downtown, Regional, Commercial, and Neighborhood Commercial districts. Consider implementation of flexible land management techniques such as form-based zoning. Commercial locations, development standards, and permitted uses should reflect the intended intensity of the business districts and ensure each district contributes to City goals for an attractive, flexible, and economically vibrant commercial base.

- Policy ED-A.5.1** Continually strive to make existing retail/service districts viable and attractive to new and existing business. Encourage business district associations and marketing together with property and streetscape maintenance/enhancement programs.
- Policy ED-A.5.2** Focus new retail opportunities around currently established nodes along 15th Avenue and Ocean Beach Highway, as well as at selected locations along SR-432 and Industrial Way, offering sites consistent with current retail configuration and access requirements.
- Policy ED-A.5.3** Encourage the consolidation of commercial land to achieve development that is functional, attractive, and offers community amenities.
- Policy ED-A.5.4** Promote annexation of the entire Ocean Beach highway corridor for consistent land use, design and transportation/access treatment of commercial and other corridor development.
- Objective ED-A.6.** Create incentives to encourage a mix of both downtown multi-level and campus low-rise office and business park development through zoning and marketing. ~~By December 2007, revise the Zoning Code to match the Future Land Use Plan office related districts. Monitor office demand and development needs as part of the biennial monitoring process.~~
- Policy ED-A.6.1** Encourage expansion and upgrade of existing private and public sector employers to higher quality downtown area and campus-oriented office space, supportive of major renovation and new construction. Encourage the attraction of major office employers with high wage potential as part of the community's overall economic development efforts.
- Policy ED-A.6.2** Apply mixed office and commercial zoning near St John Medical Center and the confluence of the Columbia and Cowlitz rivers to accommodate higher quality, campus-oriented medical and professional office space.
- Policy ED-A.6.3** Actively recruit major new office employers to Longview, possibly including back office data and customer service functions for financial service institutions, call centers, educational facilities, and possibly regional headquarters of major industrial companies.
- Policy ED-A.6.4** Together with regional economic development partners, promote site assembly necessary to accommodate and attract large build-to-suit employers, including supportive support for public-private arrangements for on- and off-site infrastructure improvements, parking, and/or financing incentives such as occurred with the rehabilitation of the Columbia Mercantile building.
- ~~**Objective ED-A.7.** By the end of 2007, update the Zoning Code to implement new and revised Future Land Use Map residential and mixed use categories to provide a variety of housing, including live-work choices for different household types and incomes. "Live-work"~~

~~means a building containing a business establishment and serving also as the principal residence of the business operator.~~

- Policy ED-A.7.1 Promote residential and mixed-use development to attract retirees and workers from nearby metro areas.
- Policy ED-A.7.2 Encourage substantial new housing development, especially for mid-upper income residents in or near downtown Longview.
- Policy ED-A.7.3 ~~Promote use of tax benefits (e.g., a 10-year property tax exemption) for new housing development in downtown or other priority areas of the City.~~
- Policy ED-A.7.4 Consider residential development in proximity to or with views of the Columbia River in the Barlow Point area.
- Policy ED-A.7.5 Focus new housing development around or near major public open space amenities, including trail systems.
- Policy ED-A.7.6 Encourage mixed-use development with live-work, retail, supporting services, and employment, either on-site or in close proximity to residential uses through the Neighborhood Commercial zone, Regional and Community Commercial nodes along major corridors, ~~and the mixed residential/commercial village designation near Barlow Point.~~
- Policy ED-A.7.7 Consistent with Land Use Policy LU-D.2.1, encourage the maintenance and updating of the City's older housing stock, so that neighborhoods are well maintained and existing housing is preserved, updated, or modified to meet the evolving needs of residents. Techniques could include but are not limited to fast-track permitting, educational materials about available weatherization programs, or others.
- Policy ED-A.7.8 Support actions that improve the ability to develop both public and private property that is industrially zoned at Barlow Point.

Downtown

Goal ED-B

To create a downtown in Longview whose viability is based on a unique character, is easily differentiated from other commercial areas in the Longview/Kelso area, is attractive to residents and visitors, is active 24 hours a day, and attracts residents and visitors from Longview and other areas.)

- Objective ED-B.1.** Continue the implementation of the Downtown Plan through City staff support, development code updates, and coordination with Longview business groups. Key activities and programs should be identified biennially in conjunction with the adoption of the City's budget.

- Policy ED-B.1.1 Retain and promote existing businesses. Consistent with the Downtown Plan, expand customer marketing, business recruitment, streetscape improvement, parking supply, and property owner/developer programs for a well-defined downtown retail core and mixed use district.
- Policy ED-B.1.2 Work with building owners to encourage viable uses on the second floors of existing buildings. Provide incentives for development of new multi-level mixed use development with ground floor retail, upper level housing and/or office uses, and shared parking opportunity.
- Policy ED-B.1.3 Encourage more market rate housing in and near Downtown to strengthen Downtown businesses, take advantage of transit service, offer a range of housing in the community, and provide an active, social character. Consider conversion of some city-owned parking facilities to jump-start the process.
- Policy ED-B.1.4 Ensure Downtown's historic character is retained as new businesses and buildings are established, such as through Downtown design standards, landmark ordinances, tax incentives, or other means.
- Policy ED-B.1.5 Encourage new uses and structures that are in scale and character with surrounding areas ~~through consideration of form-based zoning.~~ while not precluding efforts to build population density in the downtown area.
- Policy ED-B.1.6 ~~A common design theme should be established to enhance Downtown.~~ The creation of an attractive streetscape and the provision of improved pedestrian and vehicular traffic circulation are encouraged. Revitalization efforts should continue as a way to enhance the entire Downtown area.
- Policy ED-B.1.7 Enliven and refresh Downtown by encouraging adaptive reuse of buildings and new construction that respects the district character and brings added people activity to Downtown.
- ~~Policy ED-B.1.8 Promote and allow for the implementation of Low Impact Development techniques and green building practices.~~
- Policy ED-B.1.9 Provide for community festivals, the farmers' market, performing arts, or other community events for all ages especially those offering residents the opportunity to market homemade/home grown items.
- Policy ED-B.1.10 Coordinate with the Longview Downtowners, and other economic development partners to promote Downtown Longview.
- Policy ED-B.1.11 Promote use of tax benefits (e.g., a 10-year property tax exemption) for new housing development in downtown or other priority areas of the City.

Gateways and Community Identity

Goal ED-C

To welcome travelers, tourists, workers, and residents by creating a sense of place and identity for Longview capitalizing on the community's unique heritage as a planned city.

Objective ED-C.1. ~~By 2011,~~ Develop a Longview Gateway and Boulevard Plan for each entrance of the City. Plans may be staggered in a priority order as determined by the City Council through the budgeting process. The plans should address development quality, signage standards, landscape treatments, and public investment actions.

Policy ED-C.1.1 Define the primary entrances to the City as follows: Ocean Beach Highway (SR 4) at Cowlitz Way and Willow Grove, Tennant Way (SR 432), and Oregon Way.

Policy ED-C.1.2 Through Gateway and Boulevard Plans, create a hierarchy of tree and vegetation standards, signs, light standards, public art, kiosks, or other features to readily direct users to key destinations. Apply these visual cues to the arterials, off-street trail network, and key local and regional destinations.

Policy ED-C.1.3 Allow private businesses, civic organizations, and other nonprofit groups an opportunity to support the aesthetic improvement of the City's gateways and streetscape by sharing the project development, establishment, and maintenance cost of landscaping and/or elements of the citywide gateway, boulevard, and wayfinding system.

Policy ED-C.1.4 Apply landscaping, access, and signage regulations to commercial and mixed-use developments in the City to ensure noticeable, attractive visual appeal. Consider perimeter and parking lot landscaping, consolidated access points and linked parking areas, and sign sizes based on pedestrian as well as auto orientation.

Policy ED-C.1.5 Provide street, access, and signage standards that allow for quick emergency vehicle responses.

Policy ED-C.1.6 In commercial, multi-family, and mixed-use districts, allow for parking to be visible but not dominate the street view. Encourage building, parking and site design treatments that accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists as well as automobiles.

Policy ED-C.1.7 Require screening of unsightly views, such as heavy machinery, storage areas, loading docks, and parking areas to reduce their visibility from adjacent residential districts and from arterials.

Policy ED-C.1.8 Minimize long-term or future deterioration of air and water quality caused by economic development through the application of local and State regulations and the SEPA process.