

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT ELEMENT

ELEMENT OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions of the Economic Development and Employment Element are intended to achieve the following nine objectives:

1. Provide a variety of jobs with varied skill levels for residents of Berkeley.
2. Promote community and neighborhood values.
3. Support businesses that are independent, locally owned, and neighborhood-serving.
4. Encourage environmentally sustainable business.
5. Promote revitalization in neighborhoods and communities that have historically higher-than-average rates of unemployment.
6. Promote a strong industrial base as a vital foundation of a stable economy.
7. Increase social and economic equity in land use decisions.
8. Support culture and the arts in Berkeley.
9. Promote general retail businesses and a variety of cultural, recreational, entertainment, and public sector activities in the Downtown to ensure the Downtown will remain a vital, attractive, and unifying center for the city.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Policy ED-1 Employment and Training

Increase the number of jobs that go to Berkeley citizens by coordinating economic development efforts with employment placement. (*Also see Transportation Policy T-15.*)

Actions:

- A. Work with job training programs and encourage training for life skills, job readiness, and specific target industries, including industrial companies in West Berkeley.
- B. Provide labor market information from data sources and industry sectors to local educational institutions and training agencies for adults and youths.
- C. Coordinate City employment and job training programs with the University of California, Vista College, and other local educational institutions.
- D. Encourage the University to hire Berkeley residents.

- E. Encourage the Berkeley Unified School District to provide education and job skills appropriate to jobs in Berkeley and the region.
- F. Create a collaborative process among the City, employers, and local disability/minority organizations to provide access to economic and artistic opportunities and development services for all people through education, technical assistance, and economic incentives.
- G. Develop and implement employment programs to assist citizens with temporary and permanent employment.
- H. Establish agreements with major employers to provide job training for Berkeley youth similar to the Bayer biotech agreements.
- I. Strengthen and improve the administration and performance of the First Source Program, and establish better links between the First Source Program and the Office of Economic Development.
- J. Consider development of an ordinance that requires that a percentage of Berkeley residents be hired for publiclyfunded construction jobs.

Policy ED-2 West Berkeley Industry

Continue to implement the West Berkeley Plan, with its central emphasis on protecting and strengthening the city's manufacturing sector. *(Also see Land Use Policies LU-33 and LU-34.)*

Actions:

- A. Publicize the economic, social, and environmental benefits of industry, emphasizing the health of Berkeley manufacturing, the “high-tech” dimensions of industry in Berkeley and the United States, manufacturing's comparatively high “multiplier” effect on the economy, and the community value of well-paying, high-benefit, low-bar-of-entry industrial employment.
- B. Work with the West Berkeley Association of Industrial Companies and the sustainable business associations to maintain West Berkeley’s attractiveness as a site of manufacturing and to facilitate relations with other business in West Berkeley and with West Berkeley residents and community members.
- C. Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the West Berkeley Plan.
- D. Focus business assistance and economic development efforts in West Berkeley on retention and expansion of industrial and Environmental Economy businesses.
- E. Examine use of land trusts, investment loans and funds, and business incubators to preserve land and buildings for industrial uses.

Policy ED-3 Local Business

Promote policies, programs, and services that support a diverse local economy providing a range of goods and services, that support existing local businesses, and that encourage new, independent business ventures. *(Also see Land Use Policy LU-13.)*

Actions:

- A. Continue to provide low-interest loans to encourage and support local small businesses.

- B. Implement a small business preference program that would support local businesses.
- C. Implement a “Shop Berkeley Program” that would educate the public about the benefits of independent, community-serving enterprise and encourage the patronage of local businesses.
- D. Maintain City purchasing policies that support local businesses.
- E. Develop and implement planning and zoning mechanisms that promote community-serving commercial diversity and that limit development of undesirable chain stores, formula businesses, and big-box developments without limiting the ability of local businesses to grow and expand and, when needed, to establish additional outlets in various parts of the city.

Policy ED-4 Neighborhood and Avenue Commercial Districts

Provide programs and services to assist neighborhood and avenue commercial districts. *(Also see Land Use Policies LU-26 and LU-27.)*

Actions:

- A. City efforts in neighborhood and avenue commercial zones should:
 - 1. Assist with the retention and development of existing businesses or attract new businesses that serve local neighborhood needs.
 - 2. Implement capital improvements and expand façade grants to restore original and historic facades.
 - 3. Maintain adequate levels of police presence.
 - 4. Maintain adequate street and sidewalk cleaning for all commercial districts.
 - 5. Enhance the pedestrian orientation of all shopping districts.
- B. Maintain a diverse mix of commercial goods and services in the shopping districts. Use needs assessments to determine what basic goods and services are lacking, and establish criteria of appropriateness for neighborhood businesses that address the following issues:
 - 1. Availability of basic goods and services that are affordable to local residents.
 - 2. Local ownership.
 - 3. Employment for local residents at living wages.
 - 4. Environmental impact on adjacent neighborhoods and businesses, for example, traffic, noise, and air pollution.
 - 5. Impact on the viability of other business districts and quality of life in other neighborhoods in the city.

Policy ED-5 Merchants and Neighborhood Associations

Encourage merchants and neighborhood associations and other groups to enhance business districts and to meet the needs of adjacent neighborhoods. *(Also see Citizen Participation Policy CP-10.)*

Policy ED-6 Customer Access and Convenience

Improve customer access to Berkeley businesses. *(Also see Transportation Policies T-2, T-3, T-25, T-31, T-32, T-34, T-36, and T-41.)*

Actions:

- A. Support streetscape and facade design that makes it easier to identify businesses and more pleasant to shop at them.

- B. Create a free shuttle system that circulates throughout the city's commercial districts frequently enough to generate a reliable supply of riders.
- C. Use improved enforcement to limit all-day parking at parking meters and short-term parking spaces, and reset meter timing to better meet the needs of the commercial district visitors and shoppers.
- D. Support and encourage delivery systems in Berkeley as a means to reduce customer parking demand in commercial areas.
- E. To maximize parking for customers, create local shuttles, carpools, or options to reduce driving to work by employees, particularly those who live in Berkeley.
- F. Implement parking validation programs with local merchants.

Policy ED-7 Environmental Economy

Improve the environmental profile of all economic activity in Berkeley and promote Berkeley as a regional center for environmentally responsible business.

Actions:

- A. Target environmental businesses for technical assistance, business retention, expansion, and attraction. Establish definitions and criteria for environmental and green businesses, sensitive business practices, environmental products, services, and resources, and green building and design practices.
- B. Promote environmentally sensitive business practices in all business.
- C. Develop local and regional alliances to maximize institutional links, improve public information and marketing, mobilize resources, and build the infrastructure to support the green economy in Berkeley. Build a partnership of businesses, local government, the University of California and local nongovernmental organizations in support of the environmental economy in Berkeley.
- D. Improve public information and marketing of environmental products, services, and resources.
- E. Expand awareness regarding the “green” economy and its possibilities by business, policymakers, and the general public.
- F. Develop and implement incentives, marketing assistance, and technical assistance to green businesses.
- G. Maintain and improve City “green purchasing” procurement policies.
- H. Promote “green” building and design practices that improve occupant health and comfort while minimizing negative effects on the environment. Support demonstration projects that model green building, eco-efficiency practices, and alternative transportation projects. *(Also see Environmental Management Policy EM-5.)*

Policy ED-8 Capital Improvements

Implement capital and transit improvements to support the local economy. *(Also see Transportation Policies T-29, T-35, and T-36 and Land Use Policies LU-20, LU-26, and LU-27.)*

Actions:

- A. In West Berkeley, improve circulation and access in commercial and manufacturing areas with truck routes, bus shelters, bus stop lighting, and where appropriate, sidewalks.
- B. In region-serving commercial districts, such as the Downtown, University Avenue, Fourth Street, Adeline/Ashby, San Pablo Avenue, and Telegraph Avenue commercial districts, make parking improvements where needed, transit and shuttle service improvements, lighting improvements, and other improvements that will support local businesses.
- C. When considering public improvements in commercial districts, ensure that preservation of historic elements to maintain district individuality is considered.
- D. In the Downtown, implement projects and capital improvements that support the Downtown as the civic, cultural, commercial, and entertainment center of Berkeley.

Policy ED-9 Local Funding

Encourage local efforts to fund additional services and improvements for business districts, such as business improvement districts, redevelopment areas, and assessment districts.

Policy ED-10 The Downtown Economy

Continue to diversify, revitalize and promote the Downtown as the civic, cultural, commercial, and entertainment center of Berkeley. *(Also see Land Use Policy LU-16.)*

Policy ED-11 Arts and Culture

Promote Berkeley locally and internationally by taking actions to support the development of arts and culture in Berkeley. *(Also see Land Use Policy LU-19 and Urban Design and Preservation Policies UD 36 and UD 38)*

Actions:

- A. Develop a Cultural Plan that establishes citywide goals and strategies to support and develop local arts, culture, and entertainment. The Cultural Plan should promote the city's arts, identify partnership opportunities between the City, nonprofits, and other arts agencies, and establish fund-raising strategies.
- B. Implement policies and programs to expand performance, visual, and public art.
- C. Encourage and support community and business participation in the development of the arts and culture in Berkeley.
- D. Continue to provide grants and technical assistance to artists and arts organizations.
- E. Promote understanding and awareness of Berkeley's architectural and cultural past.
- F. Coordinate arts and cultural activities in the city and on the University of California campus through scheduling, siting and access planning.
- G. Establish a task force or other body to examine the effects of gentrification on the arts community and develop tools to counter the negative effects.

- H. Identify existing public and private locations such as churches and schools that might be appropriate for artistic and cultural events.

Policy ED-12 Promoting Berkeley

Promote Berkeley as a location for appropriate business, visitor, and conference destination. *(Also see Urban Design and Preservation Policy UD-38.)*

Actions:

- A. Develop and distribute marketing materials that showcase and enhance Berkeley as a positive business location within the region.
- B. Coordinate efforts with the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, the Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the University's cultural programs and facilities.
- C. Develop, maintain, and distribute economic and demographic information pertaining to the Berkeley economy.
- D. Promote Berkeley as a city with high-quality architectural design and historically significant buildings and districts.
- E. Convene a Planning Commission task force to evaluate the need for and appropriateness of a new Downtown hotel and conference center facilities based on:
 - 1. Market demographics
 - 2. Traffic and transit conditions
 - 3. Hiring and employment policies
 - 4. Public amenities and community accessibility
 - 5. Urban design