

## **GOAL 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

A strong commercial and industrial tax base is important to the economic vitality of the City. Financial resources are critical to maintain and provide needed infrastructure and services to retain and improve the quality of life in West Linn. Property tax and other revenues from appropriately sited and designed commercial, industrial, and other businesses should be considered in future development review decisions. Equally important to West Linn is the identity that the business districts give to the City. Hence, when planning for economic development, the City must address a host of issues that include the location of business and industry; types of new businesses needed in the City; retention and expansion of existing businesses; access control on major roadways; home occupations and cottage industries; appearance of commercial and industrial development; the City government's role in economic development; and development costs.

The City recognizes the importance of providing and maintaining an adequate balance of jobs and housing to help reduce commuting and meet other important objectives. The City also recognizes the importance of home occupations in reducing commuting and helping limit the need for additional public infrastructure.

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### **BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS**

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In July 2015, the City adopted the West Linn Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA), which complies with Statewide Planning Goal 9 and its associated statutory requirements. The EOA provides a technical framework and supports the City's economic development goals and policies that aim to make West Linn a more economically viable community, while maintaining its unique character for residents, businesses, and employees.

According to Metro's 2014 job growth forecast, West Linn is projected to add 1,902 jobs by 2035. The service sector is expected to receive the most new jobs and grow the fastest in the next 20 years. The amount of land needed to accommodate the projected job growth falls within the range of 45 to 52 acres. The City's 2015 inventory of vacant and redevelopable land zoned for industrial/institutional, commercial and mixed use land in West Linn totals approximately 46 acres, which is adequate to accommodate projected employment growth over

the next 20-years.

The City's 2015 EOA also shows employment in West Linn has increased by only 25 jobs per year (annual average) over the past seven years. The largest increase in employment has occurred in the service and retail sectors, while the largest decrease occurred in the industrial and government sectors. The biggest employment sectors in West Linn are largely service industries with the top five being: food services/drinking places; educational services; food/beverage stores; professional/scientific/technical services; and ambulatory health care services. The top employers in West Linn include several private companies and two local government entities. The top five employers are the West Linn Paper Company, City of West Linn, West Linn High School, Rose Linn Care Center and Safeway Stores. Additionally, business license data for 2014 indicates that of the 928 total licenses issued (408 businesses within city limits and 520 outside city limits), a total of 424 (47%) are home-based businesses, with most located outside the city limits.

Another statistic from the EOA the City needs to consider is the 2.4 households for every job in the City, which is far above the ratio for Clackamas County and the Metro Region. This means the majority of West Linn residents are commuting outside the city for employment. Decreasing the household-to-jobs ratio for West Linn would provide more opportunities for residents to decrease their commute, but would also require the city to attract more jobs than households over the next two decades, which is contrary to past City trends.

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## GOALS, POLICIES, AND RECOMMENDED ACTION MEASURES

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### GOAL

1. Encourage the recruitment, retention, expansion and economic viability of West Linn business and industry.

### POLICIES

1. Recruit and encourage businesses, particularly those that provide family-wage jobs to locate in West Linn.
2. Support retail businesses and services that enhance the community and provide wanted goods and services.
3. Encourage the economic vitality of the City's existing commercial areas.

4. Promote home occupations by developing and implementing supportive zoning and building codes and services and other regulations.
5. Encourage West Linn employers, including the City, to offer the option to telecommute (i.e., work from home).
6. Adopt City regulations that are predictable, easy to understand and contain standards that can be uniformly applied.
7. Consider, when appropriate, encouraging economic development through streamlined permitting processes and development fees.
8. Work with the Chamber of Commerce, business community, and other agencies and organizations, to meet the economic needs of West Linn.
9. Coordinate with Tri-Met, Metro, Oregon Department of Economic Development, and other organizations in economic development planning and implementation efforts.
10. Consider incentives such as reduced system development charges (SDCs) and shared parking districts to encourage commercial and mixed-use development.

**GOAL**

2. Support tourism-related business and services.

**POLICIES**

1. Support efforts and programs that promote tourism in the City.
2. Enhance recreation based tourism in the City focused on parcels constrained by the Willamette River floodplain or other environmental constraints.
3. Work with interested property owners to attract and accommodate a significant new hotel(s).

**GOAL**

3. Promote the efficient use of commercial and industrial land adequate to serve a range of employment opportunities in the City.

**POLICIES**

1. Preserve employment (commercial and industrial) land to ensure an appropriate mix of

- uses and jobs-housing balance.
2. Inventory and maintain a list of vacant and redevelopable sites for new or expanding businesses.
  3. Ensure the City has adequate public facilities and infrastructure to support economic activities, especially transportation. Maximize the use of regional, state, and federal funding for infrastructure planning and development. Work with ODOT to realize the full potential of the I-205 maintenance parcel.