

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Executive Summary

This element of the City of Chelan Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comprehensive Plan) represents an update of the Economic Development Element included in the 1993 plan. The City, with funding through the U.S.D.A. Forest Service Rural Community Assistance Program, pursued an update as a means to provide a renewed vision to guide area economic and community development efforts.

The element is comprised of five parts: I. Introduction; II. General Economic and Income Profile; III. Planning Process; IV Goals and Policies; and, V. Action Plan. Each part builds upon each other with Part I providing the Vision for Economic Development:

The communities of the Chelan Valley envision a diversified and sustainable year-round economy built upon enhancement and expansion of traditional industries that respects history, the environment, small-town values and diverse needs of residents and visitors

(The support documentation has been moved to appendix I)

IV. GOALS AND POLICIES

In developing the Comprehensive Plan, the Citizen's Advisory committee found that the Economic Development Element is a leading driver of the entire Plan. This element of a comprehensive plan addresses more of the thirteen goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA) than most other elements combined. For balance and success with the Comprehensive Plan, the Economic Development Element must be implemented. The GMA goals most applicable to this Element follow.

GMA Goal 4 - Affordable Housing: The most important factor determining whether housing is affordable is whether the residents of the community can afford to qualify for a loan or pay the price of rent. This is most often a function of wages earned. There are standard market conditions that set the price or value of housing. This Economic Development Element envisions the residents within the Chelan Valley as able to afford housing.

GMA Goal 5 - Encourage Economic Development: This Economic Development Element addresses all these components and, when implemented, will accomplish this goal.

GMA Goal 6 - Maintain and Enhance the Natural Resource-Based Industry: This Economic Development Element secures the agriculture industry and enhances the recreation industry, also a natural resource-based industry. Existing timber and fishing industries are compatible with this Plan. (Fishing is addressed specifically as a recreational use to be further developed.) This Plan attempts to conserve these lands better than other techniques, by supporting the economic viability and profitability of the industries. The businesses must be competitive and profitable to ensure their longevity. For example, the farms will only exist if the farmer can continue to make a living farming the land.

GMA Goal 9 - Encourage Open Space and Develop Recreation: The development of the recreation industry is the single most important component to successful economic

diversification as described in this Economic Development Element.

GMA Goal 10 - Environment: The Economic Development Element encourages protection of the environment as an important aspect of enhancing quality of life. A variety of recreational opportunities will improve the quality of life by creating places where humans can safely access, interact, enjoy, and appreciate the environment.

GMA Goal 13 - Historic Preservation: An important component of the Economic Development Element's focus on recreational and cultural development encourages preservation of historical sites and public education with interpretive centers or trails.

GMA Goals 3, 7, 12 - Transportation, Permits and Levels of Service: A poor economy requires City and County officials to maintain basic services despite an insufficient tax base. Existing services are highly used three months of the year (summer) and minimally used nine months of the year. Year-round economic diversification will 1) help balance use and the ability to provide these services, and 2) help reduce the financial burdens and restrictions caused by a lack of funding.

In addition to addressing the goals of the Growth Management, this Economic Development contains more specific goals. These goals and accompanying policies, which are in no specific order, reflect the results of the public process and are intended to implement the following vision for economic development:

The communities of the Chelan Valley envision a diversified and sustainable year-round economy built upon enhancement and expansion of traditional industries that respects history, environment, small-town values and the diverse needs of residents and visitors

Goal 1 Maintain, enhance and create partnerships

Rationale It is clear that efforts to improve the economic well being of the Chelan Valley is more than a single local association or government can accomplish on its own. A wide range of partnerships with appropriate public and private entities will be required for successful implementation of this Element. Depending on the project or program, each agency, organization, group, business and citizen has a vital role to play. The most critical ingredient for implementation of this element is leadership and involvement by the private sector.

Policies

Policy 1.1 Encourage close working relationships including joint business ventures between government agencies, private business interests and non-profit organizations.

Policy 1.2 Establish and maintain positive working relationships with the Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants, Port District, PUD, Chelan County, Chelan Ranger District and other local, regional and state tourism, economic, community and downtown development and local tourism promotion groups.

Policy 1.3 Establish and maintain a positive working relationship with school districts, Wenatchee Valley College and other educational institutions.

Policy 1.4 Explore non-traditional approaches and partnerships (e.g. Charter Forests).

Goal 2 **Maintain, improve and expand public infrastructure**

Rationale The most important thing a local government can do for economic development is to ensure the availability of adequate, efficient and inexpensive infrastructure with capacity for existing and planned growth and development.

Policies

Policy 2.1 Develop and implement six-year capital improvement plans for water, sewer, storm drainage, streets, bridges, park and recreation facilities, community and pedestrian facilities.

Policy 2.2 Encourage rapid deployment of high speed, high bandwidth telecommunications services throughout the Valley at an affordable price.

Goal 3 **Identify and implement programs, projects and/or regulatory changes that remove barriers and improve viability of agricultural industries.**

Rationale The traditional agricultural economy is experiencing significant change. Because of its important role in the history and development of the community and its contribution to the quality of life in Chelan, agriculture will continue to play an important part in the community's economic future.

Policies

Policy 3.1 Review existing land use plans and regulations to ensure that existing agricultural uses are protected from incompatible uses and are provided with reasonable flexibility regarding permitted uses and structures.

Policy 3.2 Review and update existing land use and infrastructure plans and regulations to ensure, without limiting uses, that there are a variety of locations ready for development or expansion of agricultural support and processing facilities.

Policy 3.3 Promote and support efforts to diversify the agricultural industry through agri-tourism, wineries and other value-added agricultural products, and produce stands.

Policy 3.4 Advocate and participate in groups and efforts intended to change county, state and federal statute that limit the viability of agriculture in the Chelan Basin.

Goal 4 **Enhance and expand tourism in the Chelan Valley**

Rationale Tourism has played a major role in the history and development of the community. Along with agriculture, tourism and related development is an essential part of the economic life blood of the Chelan Valley therefore a goal and specific policies related to tourism are an important part of this Element.

Policies

Policy 4.1 Review existing land use plans and regulations to ensure that existing and planned tourism oriented uses are protected from incompatible uses and are provided with reasonable flexibility regarding permitted uses and structures.

- Policy 4.2 Support and facilitate development and enhancement of recreational amenities, facilities, activities and events.
- Policy 4.3 Use “hotel/motel” tax dollars to build infrastructure and capital improvements to support tourism and promotional activities (e.g. distribution of brochures, development and continued refinement of web-based endeavors, local and self-contained events, year-round recreational opportunities and media spots).
- Policy 4.4 Support and facilitate the development of events and appropriate venues for a variety of cultural activities.
- Policy 4.5 Consider design and redevelopment of private and public waterfront areas for mixed-use development projects that include retail shops, living spaces, overnight lodging, boardwalks, marinas, and water-related commercial activities.
- Policy 4.6 Develop and refine a list of opportunities for expansion of existing water dependent, water related and water oriented business and industries and for desirable new industries.
- Policy 4.7 Support and facilitate the expansion of existing and development of new public accesses to Lake Chelan.
- Policy 4.8 Support and facilitate a marketing plan which provides for marketing, promotion, education and product development for tourism in the Chelan Valley.

Goal 5 Enhance and expand access to education in the Chelan Valley

Rationale It is critical that access to higher education be available to provide for a variety of educational and cultural enrichment opportunities. Access to quality education, particularly higher education and vocational training, is a central ingredient in a vibrant community’s recipe for success. It is also important that local K-12 schools remain well funded and supported in to continue provision of a well-rounded, meaningful and relevant education to area children.

Policies

- Policy 5.1 Support and facilitate the continued operation and encourage expansion of Wenatchee Valley College’s Chelan Center.
- Policy 5.2 Ensure that concurrency requirements of GMA are met in relation to impacts on schools resulting from development.
- Policy 5.3 Pursue expansion of the availability of distance learning opportunities at all educational levels.

Goal 6 Identify and develop suitable sites for light/low impact business and industry

Rationale Development of the infrastructure, funding and capacity to accommodate and implementation of a program to expand existing and recruit new businesses and industries is central to the creation of a year-round, diverse and sustainable economy.

Policies

- Policy 6.1 Review and update existing land use and infrastructure (water, sewer, streets, storm drainage, and emergency services) plans and regulations to ensure that that community projects a positive climate for growth by providing a variety of locations available and ready for commercial and industrial development and expansion.
- Policy 6.2 Make development, adoption and implementation of fair, consistent and timely permit review and land use regulatory processes a priority.
- Policy 6.3 Develop and refine a list of opportunities for expansion of existing business and industries and for desirable new industries.
- Policy 6.4 Support and facilitate the development of the Naumes Planned Development.
- Policy 6.5 Support and encourage continuation and expansion of business retention, revolving loan and business counseling programs and strategies.
- Policy 6.6 Support and facilitate a marketing plan which provides for marketing, promotion, education, product development, and economic development in the Chelan Valley.
- Policy 6.7 Actively pursue opportunities for grant and other “outside” funding to offset the impact of development costs on area citizens and businesses.

Goal 7 Create a strategic plan for a downtown “renaissance “

Rationale A centrally located, easily accessible, strong, and interesting downtown is important for the community’s economic well being and add to the quality of life. Efforts to enhance or revitalize downtown must include a wide range of partners, each with specific roles. While the local government can provide a catalyst to initiate an effort, implementation and success rest with the business and landowners.

Policies

- Policy 7.1 Review and update existing land use and infrastructure (water, sewer, streets, storm drainage, and emergency services) plans and regulations to ensure that the downtown area is clearly defined, pedestrian friendly, well served by utilities and ready for commercial development and expansion.
- Policy 7.2 Develop a consistent directional signage program for parks, retail services, restrooms and other points of interest.
- Policy 7.3 Work with the Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants and land owners, citizens and other regional and state entities to maintain a vibrant downtown.

Goal 8 Protect the quality of the air and water in the Chelan Valley

Rationale Clean air and high water quality are essential to the quality of life and an important factor in decisions that make the Chelan Valley a popular destination. These important environmental factors should not be compromised as a result of growth.

Policies

Policy 8.1 Continue review and updates of existing land use and infrastructure (water, sewer, streets and storm drainage) plans and regulations to ensure compliance with County, state and federal statutory requirements for protection of the environment.

Policy 8.2 Create and adopt incentives that encourage new development to take advantage of the site's terrain and natural features with minimal disturbance.

Policy 8.3 Review and update existing land use and infrastructure (water, sewer, storm drainage, transportation, parks and emergency services) plans and regulations to ensure that appropriate planning for land uses and infrastructure precedes significant development.