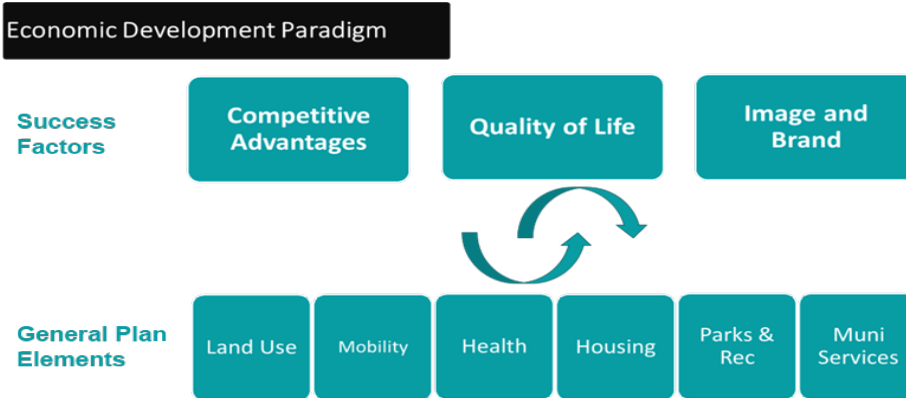




Introduction to Economic Development

The Economic Development Element is intended to guide the City’s future policy decisions in service of growing and strengthening the local economy. The Economic Development Element is not a required element for a General Plan, but the City has decided to include it in recognition that promoting economic vibrancy and resiliency is a central aspect of planning for Lawndale’s future. While presented as a separate chapter, the policies contained within the Economic Development Element are intertwined with those found in the other Elements of the General Plan. Decisions made around the topics of these other elements, such as land use, housing, mobility, open space, and health and wellness, necessarily impact economic development, and vice-versa.



Organization of Element

Given market conditions and trends in Lawndale and its location in the region, this Element has identified key areas in which the City has the greatest opportunity for economic growth and development. The goals and policies identified in the Economic Development Element are focused on these areas of opportunity and underscore the City’s commitment to being a place where workers, residents, visitors, and businesses can thrive, today and into the future. The Element is organized into five topics, as follows:

- Economic Diversification
- Support and Expand Business Community
- Workforce Development and Retention
- Create a Vibrant Hawthorne Boulevard
- Fiscal Sustainability



GOAL ED-1 ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

A City with a strong and diversified economic base that promotes job growth, economic stability, and fiscal sustainability.

A diversified economy makes cities stronger and more resilient in the face of changing economic trends. Businesses in today's economy are highly mobile, and firms consider a variety of factors when deciding where to locate or re-locate. These factors include the ease with which a firm can establish itself and operate in the City, and the level of a city's investment in and responsiveness to its business community. Creating such an environment requires intentional work and coordination from the City. To foster a healthy economic climate, Lawndale should position itself to accommodate and expand on its current strengths. The City can leverage new residential growth to drive the development of retail and office spaces. New hotels can additionally expand opportunities for visitor-serving businesses.

ED-1 Policies

- ED-1.1 **Mixed-Use Growth.** Leverage allowed mixed-use growth as a tool for drawing in a greater range of businesses that can take advantage of a growing local labor market and consumer base.
- ED-1.2 **Targeted Development.** Encourage the development of multifamily and mixed-use spaces that incorporate office, retail, and residential uses in high-activity/high-traffic corridors and areas.
- ED-1.3 **Targeted Business Attraction.** Identify and target outreach to businesses in industries that align with the City's existing industry clusters, land use patterns, and community needs while expanding business attraction to include higher-paying industry sectors.
- ED-1.4 **Visitor-Serving Businesses.** Support development of hotels and visitor-serving businesses that leverage the City's proximity to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and regional attractions.

ED-1 Actions

- ED-1a Create a five-year economic development strategic plan to design, manage, and implement short- and medium-term economic development priorities for the City.
- ED-1b Perform a baseline analysis to identify industry niches that are well-suited for the City and periodically update this analysis based on local and regional trends.
- ED-1c Identify market surpluses and leakages in the City's local economy to better understand which industries are present and/or absent compared to peer cities and to inform targeted business attraction activities.
- ED-1d Identify vacant, underdeveloped, or underutilized sites and buildings in targeted corridors that represent redevelopment opportunity, and improve their redevelopment potential by engaging with and educating property owners, finding strategic opportunities for parcel consolidation, and facilitating investor "matchmaking" through a public online inventory and other efforts.
- ED-1e Coordinate with neighboring cities and regional partners to host regional events and trade shows to broaden the City's visibility and promote local visitor-serving businesses.
- ED-1f Explore public-private partnerships and/or catalytic development projects to anchor and spur growth that builds on the City's economic, physical, and cultural assets.



GOAL ED-2 SUPPORT AND EXPAND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

A community that supports, collaborates with, and fosters local business development.

One of the City's most important assets in promoting economic growth is its existing economic base. Supporting existing local businesses so that they can thrive, grow, and adapt to changing economic conditions will not only help those businesses and their employees, but also demonstrate to investors that the City is a desirable place to locate to. This support extends to residents, workers, students, and new entrepreneurs who may be looking to establish or grow a business in the City.

ED-2 Policies

- ED-2.1 **Support the Existing Business Community.** Help retain and expand existing businesses through supportive and responsive policies and programs.
- ED-2.2 **Partnerships.** Create and maintain avenues through which Lawndale's business community, elected officials, City staff, and civic organizations can discuss economic development issues.
- ED-2.3 **Marketing.** Market the City's central South Bay location and excellent regional access to attract new businesses and industries.
- ED-2.4 **Processes.** Streamline support for local businesses and remove potential barriers to economic development.
- ED-2.5 **Resources.** Provide the business community with easily accessible information on available resources for growth and development, including those aimed at entrepreneurship and small businesses.
- ED-2.6 **Entrepreneurship.** Educate and support entrepreneurs in establishing and expanding small and local businesses.
- ED-2.7 **Infrastructure.** Identify and address infrastructure needs that support commercial development.



ED-2 Actions

- ED-2a Meet regularly with representatives of the City’s business community, including the Lawndale Chamber of Commerce, to solicit feedback on how to improve the business environment, cement effective relationships, and help businesses overcome challenges.
- ED-2b Support collaborative partnerships and networks between and among businesses to create a robust business ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship through reoccurring roundtable events and other platforms that enable flexible participation.
- ED-2c Develop and implement a creative marketing plan that attracts new employers to the City.
- ED-2d Review and maintain a Development Code that supports investment and innovation in the City.
- ED-2e Identify ways to simplify and streamline permitting for new and expanding businesses and implement the changes as feasible.
- ED-2f Use local revenue sources as well as State and Federal grants and other financing tools to fund capital improvements and the redevelopment of targeted commercial areas.
- ED-2g Maintain and regularly update the City’s public-facing sources of information on economic development resources, including webpages, social media, and other platforms to offer accessible and up-to-date information for the business community.



GOAL ED-3 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

A City that invests in the economic success of its community and people.

The presence of a workforce aligned with the needs of the local economy, particularly growth sectors, is a major component in business retention and expansion. City residents are primarily employed in some of the region’s lowest-paying industries, with a small proportion working in higher-paying industries such as finance and insurance, information, and professional/scientific/technical services. In addition to diversifying the local job base, the City should look to enhance education and workforce development opportunities for residents. In doing so, the City can improve residents’ social mobility while bolstering its economic vibrancy. Aligning the resident workforce’s skills with the needs of the businesses of today and tomorrow will have a critical impact on expansion and diversification of the City’s economy.

ED-3 Policies

- ED-3.1 **Workforce as an Economic Driver.** Pursue strategies and programs for enhancing education and workforce skills aligned with local industries targeted for retention, expansion, and attraction.
- ED-3.2 **Workforce as Social Mobility.** Promote training, education, and labor support programs that enhance the City’s labor force, assist residents in obtaining new employment opportunities, and grow median incomes.
- ED-3.3 **Housing Choices.** Develop land use policies that facilitate development of housing affordable to a range of household types and incomes, to help diversify the local labor force and promote long-term stable residency.

ED-3 Actions

- ED-3a Partner with regional education institutions and local secondary schools to strengthen the workforce pipeline.
- ED-3b Develop and implement strategies to attract higher-paying industries to locate in the City, including outreach to targeted businesses and industry organizations, and investment in infrastructure and branding of major commercial centers such as the Hawthorne Boulevard corridor.
- ED-3c Convene major local and regional employers to solicit guidance on how the City can support partnerships and develop policies and programs to create a strong workforce pipeline.



GOAL ED-4 CREATE A VIBRANT HAWTHORNE BOULEVARD

A community with a successful corridor for commerce, mixed-use development, and social activity.

Major commercial activity corridors have the potential to drive economic diversification, anchor business activity, and generally open the City to increased economic opportunity. By enhancing the City’s primary commercial corridor along Hawthorne Boulevard, Lawndale can promote economic activity that serves the needs of residents, workers, and visitors. Enabling more intense development of mixed-use spaces along the Corridor and investing in the Corridor’s businesses, marketing, and infrastructure can generate employment and daytime activity that can support a wide range of businesses with an established customer base. These opportunities in turn will enhance the City’s overall economic base and prospects.

ED-4 Policies

- ED-4.1 **Intensification.** Promote mixed-use development along Hawthorne Boulevard that will attract visitors from across the region, support the local needs of residents, and build a sense of place.
- ED-4.2 **Streetscape Improvements.** Enhance aesthetics and “curb appeal” of the Hawthorne corridor with strategic investments such as landscaping, outdoor lighting, wayfinding, entry and building façade improvements, and other initiatives that increase its attractiveness for businesses and consumers.
- ED-4.3 **Accessibility.** Enhance City and regional connectivity by supporting multimodal transportation options along Hawthorne Boulevard and other major City thoroughfares.
- ED-4.4 **Branding Strategy.** Create and cultivate a distinctive Lawndale/Hawthorne Boulevard brand that attracts investors and update it periodically.

ED-4 Actions

- ED-4a Encourage development of mixed-use spaces in high-activity areas and corridors through zoning changes and incentive programs (e.g., density bonuses and other concessions).
- ED-4b Implement strategies and actions in the Housing Element that promote the development of diverse housing options in targeted areas along the Corridor to enhance economic activity and accessibility for residents.
- ED-4c Implement strategies and actions in the Mobility Element and the Hawthorne Specific Boulevard Plan that promote infrastructure improvements and land use policies that will enhance economic activity and accessibility.
- ED-4d Pursue funding from Local, State, and Federal sources to support storefront and streetscape improvements.
- ED-4e Conduct and implement a branding study that is consistent with and reinforces the marketing efforts, streetscape improvements, and other initiatives described herein.



GOAL ED-5 FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

A City that pursues fiscal sustainability through sound financial management and balanced growth.

The fiscal health of the City is dependent on long-term sustainability of the City’s finances and operations, measured by the City’s revenues, spending per capita, and its ability to provide services. Each of these in turn effect the ability of the City to plan, manage, and pay for public services and investments, including many of the economic development initiatives described herein. A diverse set of revenue sources helps protect a city’s budget in downturns in revenue-generating activities. Lawndale, like most cities in California, relies on a handful of revenues sources—such as property, sales, and transient occupancy taxes—to fund day-to-day municipal operations. Enabling further development and attracting a range of real estate development and business types will prevent the City from becoming overly dependent on any one sector of the market and economy. Simultaneously, new residential development and new residents will require additional costs related to city services and infrastructure, and the City will need to plan for these needs through strong financial management and fiscal policies.

ED-5 Policies

- ED-5.1 **Revenue Sources.** Consider opportunities to expand municipal revenue sources that diversify the City’s tax base, particularly those that can support infrastructure needs for future growth.
- ED-5.2 **Impacts of New Development.** Pursue strategies that ensure new development adequately and fairly mitigates its impacts on City infrastructure and service costs.
- ED-5.3 **Retail Support.** Promote additional retail development to increase sales tax revenues and expand retail amenities available to residents, employers, and visitors.
- ED-5.4 **Hotels.** Encourage the development of new hotels to serve the regional visitor population and generate additional transient occupancy tax.
- ED-5.5 **Funding.** Pursue a range of public, private, and non-profit funding sources to fund community revitalization and economic development activities.
- ED-5.6 **Cost Control.** Carefully manage City costs through judicious expansion of municipal services and infrastructure.



ED-5 Actions

- ED-5a Assess peer cities tax and fee structures and rates to evaluate Lawndale’s own structure and revise tax and fee structures as appropriate.
- ED-5b Identify the estimated costs and potential funding sources for each proposed Capital Improvement Plan project.
- ED-5c Support new retail development by maintaining mixed-use zoning at strategic nodes as allowed by the Land Use Element and Hawthorne Boulevard Specific Plan, supporting the chamber of commerce and other business associations, facilitating community engagement with property owners, and developing retail-specific marketing strategies.
- ED-5d Support development of new hotel and visitor-serving establishments by developing tourism marketing initiatives, coordinating with hospitality industry representatives, and ensuring access to developable land aligned with appropriate zoning regulations.
- ED-5e Require analysis of fiscal implications of new development and request fiscal mitigations as needed to ensure adequate public service levels can be provided over the long term.
- ED-5f Continue to investigate and pursue revenue sources, such as state and federal funding programs, that do not add to the tax burden of residents or local businesses.