

Economic Development Objectives and Policies



Green Bay Smart Growth 2022

Economic Development Plan

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Economic Development Plan

This chapter describes actions by the City of Green Bay – often in partnership with private industry and other units of government – to stimulate desirable types of economic activity in Green Bay.

Relationship to the Issues and the Concept Plan

Summary of Issues

The major issues relative to the economic development plan are:

- **Business Parks:** Where should the next office and industrial park(s) be located? Should all of the business parks be located in areas with “beltway” transportation access? Are there other areas of the city that should be redeveloped for business/industrial parks? In future developments, does the City want to encourage more efficient use of infrastructure and increase the tax base density?
- **Downtown:** To what extent should the City invest in the continued economic development of downtown including property redevelopment, infrastructure improvements (e.g., access, parking) and public space improvements (e.g., riverfront, plazas, sidewalk spaces)? What should the City do to solidify

the regional economic significance of the central business district?

- **Port:** Does it seem possible or desirable to gradually relocate and concentrate most port activities north of Main Street? What problems or advantages might result?
- **Paper Industry:** Should the city consider the area between Quincy and Webster east of the Georgia Pacific mill a redevelopment area for future paper mill related activity?
- **Food Processing:** How can affordable housing needs be accommodated with proximity or good transit access to area food processing industries? Where could the city create space for “further processing” operations associated with the current “primary processing” operations?
- **Health Care:** How can the needs of the growing health care industry for employee and patient-related parking be accommodated? Can the redevelopment of Mason Street provide expansion space for growth of the health care industry near the downtown hospitals? How can this be done in a manner that enhances the neighborhood?
- **Trucking and Warehousing:** How can the trucking and warehousing needs of key industries like paper and food processing be best accommodated?

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- **Visitor Industry:** What features of Green Bay are attractive or could be attractive to visitors? How could these features be enhanced?



- **Finance, Insurance, Government and Office:** What can the City of Green Bay do to make downtown and other locations in the City more competitive for finance, insurance, government and back office operations?

Guidance from the Concept Plan

The concept Plan for *Smart Growth 2022* provides the following general guide to economic development in Green Bay.

Competitive Position of the Region: The competitive position of the region should be sustained and enhanced by reinvestment and redevelopment in urbanized areas combined with protection of its quality of life features.

Good Jobs: The City's economic development policy should

promote the retention and capture of businesses that are high-paying, clean, have a high number of jobs per acre, use the local college-educated labor pool and leverage the natural characteristics of the area.

Development Locations: A sizable portion of the new commercial and industrial growth should occur within the City of Green Bay as redevelopment and brownfield clean-up efforts create development sites. Simultaneously, significant new commercial and industrial growth should be concentrated along the I-43 corridor.

Redevelopment: To the extent possible, redevelopment and recycling of property should be an element of the City's economic development program. A high percentage of new commercial and industrial growth should occur within the existing boundaries of Green Bay as brownfield clean-up and redevelopment efforts open up development sites in the City.

Tax Base: Encourage strong tax base density and efficient use of infrastructure and limited land in business parks through zoning, design standards, and policies regarding the use of incentives.

Partnerships: Create partnership arrangements with the private sector. A useful role for the City may be to obtain funding for commercial corridor revitalization or brownfield remediation and to establish guidance through plans and regulations while relying on the expertise of the private market to identify the details of the use of a given site.

Plan Overview

The Green Bay Economic Development Plan directs the City to work cooperatively with private industry and state or federal agencies to promote investment. Target industries for support include those that are already strong in this region such as paper, health care, food processing, finance, insurance and logistics.

Business development and job creation are guided to both central locations (redevelopment and infill growth) and fringe locations where there is good highway access.

The Port of Green Bay along the Fox River is crucial to the continued prosperity of the city and the region, so the City and Brown County will continue to improve infrastructure there and support water-dependent industries through land use planning and zoning. The City is directed to continue to aid redevelopment of commercial and industrial districts, including the remediation and re-use of contaminated buildings and sites. The downtown is the primary candidate for ongoing revitalization because of its importance as a center of office, culture, entertainment, tourism and civic life.

Finally, the public sector will support private telecommunications improvements by providing easements in public rights-of-way.

Goal: The City of Green Bay will be recognized as an economically vibrant city with a diverse economic base, strong infrastructure and quality of life features that attract companies, employees and visitors. The City's development projects will emphasize solid tax base, jobs that pay well, diversity of employment opportunities and sensitivity to environmental factors.

The objectives of the economic development plan are summarized below, followed by a section of policies that pertain to each objective. The first seven objectives relate to Centers of Economic Activity; the final objective focuses on Key Industries.

Summary of Objectives

Objective 1 – Business and Industrial Uses. Encourage development and redevelopment for businesses and industry in areas with strong market potential, emphasizing good transportation access for workers and the movement of goods.

Objective 2 – Redevelopment. Redevelop contaminated, underutilized, and obsolete areas appropriate for business and industrial parks.

Objective 3 – Tax Base Density and Efficient Use of Infrastructure. Use limited business/industrial land and related infrastructure efficiently to achieve strong commercial/industrial tax base density.

Objective 4 – Downtown Revitalization. Support economic revitalization of downtown by encouraging diverse economic activity, including government and professional offices; insurance and financial services; convention, lodging, food/beverage, and entertainment; education and training; retail; and high-density residential uses.

Objective 5 – Port of Green Bay. Support water-borne movement of goods critical to the economic health of the paper industry and other key sectors of the Green Bay economy. Minimize conflicts with downtown revitalization activities and seek ways to make port-related activities into a visitor amenity.

Objective 6 – Commercial Corridor Revitalization. Expand focused commercial revitalization efforts, such as the Broadway and

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Main redevelopment projects to other commercial corridors in need of revitalization.

Objective 7 – Telecommunications and Transportation.

Support and facilitate strong telecommunications and transportation infrastructure to all centers of economic activity – business, industrial and office areas.

Objective 8 – Key Industries. Identify issues and opportunities facing key industry groups and take actions to enable them to continue operations and expand in the City of Green Bay. Industries critical to the Green Bay economy include health care; paper and related products; insurance, financial services and government offices; education and training; hospitality; food processing; and logistics – transportation, warehousing and related services.



Objectives and Policies

Objective 1 – Business and Industrial Uses

Encourage development and redevelopment for businesses and industry in areas with strong market potential, emphasizing good transportation access for workers and the movement of goods.

Recommended Policies:

1. **I-43 Business Park:** Continue to expand I-43 Business Park to the east along Mason Street with increased emphasis on infilling with office space near the freeway and overall increased density and better architecture and site landscaping. Create an office village area in the I-43 Business Park designed to maintain strong tax base density and meet the needs of small/medium-sized office users.
2. **Annexation:** Respond favorably to annexation petitions for additional business and industrial areas with good transportation and infrastructure access. Support requests for annexation in the STH 54-57 corridor in the Towns of Scott and Humboldt.
3. **Existing Industrial Areas:** Maintain and enhance existing industrial areas, with special attention to changing technology and market conditions.

Objective 2 – Redevelopment Underutilized Property

Redevelop contaminated, underutilized, and obsolete areas appropriate for business and industrial parks.

Recommended Policies:

1. **Redevelopment Focus Areas:** Implement a systematic approach to redevelop the following areas over the next 20 years:
 - Velp Avenue - near I-43 and railroad tracks
 - Tower Industrial Park
 - West of the Fox River near 9th Street and Broadway
 - West and south of Bay Beach Park.
2. **Industrial Redevelopment Account:** Create an Industrial Redevelopment Account to facilitate redevelopment of contaminated, underutilized and obsolete industrial land and facilities

Objective 3 – Tax Base Density and Efficient Use of Infrastructure

Use limited business or industrial land and related infrastructure efficiently to achieve strong commercial and industrial tax base density¹.

Recommended Policies:

1. **Development Standards:** Establish design and development standards in the new zoning ordinance and in covenants for business and industrial sites that foster strong tax base density. Also develop financial incentive guidelines necessary to achieve employment and tax base density goals

Objective 4 – Downtown Revitalization

Support economic revitalization of downtown by encouraging diverse economic activity including government and professional offices, insurance and financial services, education and training, convention, lodging, food and beverages, and entertainment, retail, and high-density residential land uses.

Recommended Policies:

1. **Washington Commons:** Help to reposition and redevelop Washington Commons to respond to market conditions and opportunities in the downtown.

¹ Tax base density is a relationship between building value and building coverage that produces a high assessed value per acre, thereby increasing the City's tax base. Studies of the I-43 Business Park show that its building coverage tends to be low, averaging 12% (building area as a percentage of land area), where a ratio of 25-30% is recommended for business park uses. This density makes better use of land and infrastructure investment. The City can require higher lot coverage through its ordinances, and can encourage higher building values through design guidelines or incentives.

2. **Downtown Parking and Access:** Address parking and access issues, identified by businesses and real estate professionals as the primary barriers to downtown development.
3. **Federal Courthouse:** Support location of a Federal Courthouse and related law offices and services

Objective 5 – Port of Green Bay

Support water-borne movement of goods critical to the economic health of the paper industry and other key sectors of the Green Bay economy. Minimize conflicts with downtown revitalization activities and seek ways to make port-related activities into a visitor amenity.

Recommended Policies:

1. **Port Operations:** Strengthen port operations by increasing public ownership and/or control of land to ensure that river access is available to active users of port facilities. Support Brown County Port initiatives to relocate or reconfigure operations of companies located on the river that are no longer active users of dock facilities.
2. **Redevelopment:** Concentrate port activities whenever possible (without harming key industries) to the area north of Main on the West Side and north of the East River on the East Side.
3. **Expand Port Operations and Integrate with Other Transportation Modes:** Expand Port operations in the area north of Main on the west side of the Fox River and north of the East River on the east side. The expansion strategy should include strong intermodal links among the Port, I-43, trucking, warehousing, and rail facilities.
4. **Public Awareness:** Make port operations more accessible to visitors and residents through shipping related sculpture, historic

interpretation, use of a shipping or maritime theme and opportunities to watch the movement of ships.

Objective 6 – Commercial Corridor Revitalization

Expand focused commercial revitalization efforts, such as the Broadway and Main redevelopment projects, to other commercial corridors in need of revitalization.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Commercial Revitalization:** Support revitalization of aging commercial areas along Military Avenue, Mason Street, University Avenue, Lombardi Avenue, and Main Street (east of the Olde Main District).

Create a long-term commercial revitalization plan and a mechanism to select corridors for focused revitalization efforts such as On Broadway and Olde Main. Criteria could include market opportunities, crime, vacancy, blight, existence of a Business Improvement Districts, and the involvement/commitment of area businesses.

- 2. Business Improvement Districts:** Support creation of Business Improvement Districts as a means of improving community facilities and swerves in commercial districts through additional taxes agreed upon by the district landowners.



Attractive two-story office building with pedestrian orientation.

Objective 7 – Telecommunications, Transportation, and Energy Infrastructure

Support and facilitate strong telecommunications, transportation and energy infrastructure to all centers of economic activity – business, industrial and office areas.

Recommended Policies:

- 1. Use Rail and Port Facilities Effectively:** Control land use and encourage redevelopment and projects that effectively use limited rail and port facilities.
- 2. Key Industries:** Update transportation access and traffic management to support key industries and centers of economic activity, especially when changes occur in the volume and timing of visitors, employees or trucks.
- 3. Support for Telecommunications Lines:** Ensure that easements are made available to support state-of-the-art telecommunications, especially to centers of economic activity.

Objective 8 – Key Industries

Identify issues and opportunities facing key industry groups and take actions to enable them to continue operations and expand in the City of Green Bay.

Recommended Policies – All Key Industries

- 1. Quality of Life:** Support quality of life features that will enable Green Bay area companies to recruit technical and professional employees from other parts of the country. Implement *Smart Growth 2022* to work toward quality of life improvements.

Recommended Policies – Health Care

- 1. Parking Plan:** Develop a parking plan for downtown hospitals and update it whenever conditions change due to expansions, relocations or other factors.
- 2. Hospital Corridor Plan:** Update the Hospital Corridor Plan (downtown hospitals) whenever conditions change because of expansions, relocations or other factors.
- 3. Downtown Hospital Expansion:** Encourage the concentration of off-campus expansions of downtown hospitals along Mason Street.
- 4. St. Mary's Hospital:** Create a hospital corridor surrounding St. Mary's Hospital. Create a Corridor Plan and update it whenever conditions change because of expansions, relocations or other factors

Policies – Paper and related products

- 1. Quincy to Webster Corridor:** Be prepared to redevelop the area between Quincy Street and Webster Avenue for paper company related expansions. (Note: Include a buffer to housing along Webster Avenue).
- 2. Paper Industry Expansion:** Work with the paper industry to address needs for land with good transportation access for updated warehouse and distribution operations.
- 3. Coal Storage Sites:** Relocate coal handling and storage operations to a location that doesn't adversely affect the paper industry.

Recommended Policies – Insurance, financial services, and government offices

- 1. Downtown:** Concentrate government facilities in Downtown Green Bay.
- 2. Assistance:** Explore barriers and competitive disadvantages. Develop a proactive plan to “level the playing field,” especially with regard to parking costs in the downtown area.
- 3. Corporate Offices:** Strongly encourage the location of corporate offices in downtown Green Bay. An alternate location if no competitive site is available downtown would be the I-43 Business Park

Recommended Policies – Hospitality

- 1. Pedestrian Links from the Convention Center:** Provide strong pedestrian links from the KI Convention Center to downtown.

- 2. Cultural Amenities:** Support cultural amenities such as the Meyer Theater and the Neville Museum. Encourage neighboring uses that are complementary, such as restaurants and other visitor attractions.
- 3. Downtown Access:** Strengthen access to downtown through improved signage and the creation of gateway corridors from the freeway.
- 4. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Circulation:** Create lanes that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly on bridges crossing the Fox River from Downtown to the “On Broadway” commercial area.
- 5. Access and Signage:** Improve access and signage to the riverfront, Bay Beach Park and other bayfront areas. Provide attractive visitor areas and interpretative facilities.
- 6. Lombardi Avenue:** Improve Lombardi Avenue, a gateway to Lambeau Field that creates an impression of the City for many visitors.

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Recommended Policies – Food Processing

- 1. Truck Access:** Improve truck access to the food processing operations near Elizabeth Street.
- 2. Affordable Housing:** Encourage well-located affordable housing for employees.
- 3. Adjacent Neighborhood Impacts:** Improve and manage the environmental impact of food processing operations on adjacent neighborhoods.
- 4. Value-Added Processing:** Encourage “further processing” of agricultural products to add value and employment in food processing operations. “Further processing” typically produces a lower environmental impact than primary processing operations



Recommended Policies – Logistics - Trucking, Warehousing and Related Services

- 1. Velp Avenue:** Redevelop Velp Avenue area to capitalize on its rail and highway access.
- 2. Bay Port Industrial Park:** Encourage logistics operations in Bay Port Industrial Park.
- 3. Obsolete Warehouses:** Encourage redevelopment of obsolete warehouse properties.
- 4. Paper Industry Access:** Work with the paper industry to address needs for land with good transportation access for updated warehouse and distribution operations
- 5. Intermodal:** Maintain and strengthen rail and highway connections to the Port of Green Bay. Support the location of intermodal facilities near the Port.

Implementation Program

This section describes the major actions involved in implementing the *Smart Growth 2022* Economic Development Plan and indicates the relative priority of each, the responsible agency and any required coordination. Numerous specific actions are described in the body of this plan while the items listed below are only the major short- and long-term actions.

Table 26-1: Implementation Program for the Economic Development Plan

| Priority | Actions | Lead and Coordinating Agencies |
|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Business and Industrial Development Areas: Support business and industrial land development and redevelopment sufficient to meet historic and projected demand. Maintain sufficient inventory to position the City competitively. | Economic Development Department Planning, Transportation and Finance Departments |
| 1 | Compact Greenfield Development: Encourage high tax base density per acre and efficient use of infrastructure by making changes to the zoning ordinance, design standards and business park covenants. Adjust land sale and incentive policies to enhance tax revenue generation in the new greenfield developments. | Economic Development Department Planning Department |
| 1 | Industrial Redevelopment. Develop a systematic approach to redeveloping contaminated and underutilized land and obsolete industrial facilities over the next 20 years. This should include creation of an Industrial Redevelopment Account, a financing mechanism that captures part of the proceeds of land sales and tax base generated in existing industrial parks to facilitate redevelopment of contaminated and underutilized areas. | Economic Development Department Finance Department, Planning Department, Green Bay Redevelopment Authority, Department of Public Works, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources |

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| Priority | Actions | Lead and Coordinating Agencies |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Key Industry Focus – Health Care: Create a Hospital Corridor surrounding St. Mary's Hospital. Work with St. Vincent's and Bellin Hospitals to create a parking plan and a evaluate opportunities to concentrate expansions along Mason Street in a manner that enhances the neighborhood and the health care experience for patients, visitors, employees, and area residents. | Economic Development Department Planning Department |
| 2 | Commercial Revitalization: Create a long-term commercial revitalization plan and mechanism to target corridors for focused revitalization efforts such as On Broadway and Olde Main. Encourage the involvement of business and property owners and the creation of Business Improvement Districts. | Economic Development Department |
| 2 | Key Industry Focus – Logistics: Encourage redevelopment in the Velp Avenue Corridor and coordinate with the Brown County Port to strengthen intermodal connections – port, rail, trucking, warehousing and highway. | Economic Development Department Brown County Port Authority; various transportation organizations. |
| 3 | Intergovernmental Coordination: Coordinate with other units of government, private and non-profit organizations involved with economic development. | Economic Development Department Brown County, Greater Downtown Green Bay, Inc., On Broadway, Advance, NE Wisconsin Technical College, Olde Main, UWGB, area utilities, adjacent communities. |