

CHAPTER 9:

Economic Development

This chapter provides economic development strategies, goals, and polices for the Priority Area 1 Specific Plan area (Specific Plan area). The strategies describe how development in the Specific Plan area can help Brentwood realize its broader economic development goals, what the development may entail, and the impact that light rail service may have on strengthening the Specific Plan area and the city's economic connections within the region. The goals and policies describe the various approaches that the City may take to encourage economic development within the Specific Plan area.

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- 9.1. Economic Development Strategies
- 9.2. Economic Development Goals and Policies

9.1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The mission statement for economic development in the City of Brentwood's Strategic Plan is to "maintain and enhance Brentwood's quality of life while developing an economy that is vibrant and diverse." To fulfill that mission, the City must take steps to balance the significant residential growth it has experienced in recent years with economic growth. Ideally, this will include attracting, and in some cases expanding, a diverse set of businesses that will increase the variety and quality of local employment opportunities and grow the tax base. The Strategic Plan identifies the Specific Plan area, which includes a sizeable portion of the remaining overall developable land supply in Brentwood, as a focus area for economic growth as it presents an opportunity to develop the mix of uses that will be attractive to a wide range of businesses that can create job opportunities available to those with a range of skills.

A primary goal for citywide economic development, as outlined in the Strategic Plan, includes implementing an economic development action plan. Much of what will be included in that action plan will be focused on the Specific Plan area, because the area contains the majority of remaining developable land, primarily in the form of concentrated greenfield sites, that will allow for sustainable economic development. This is especially true if BART, or another transit agency, ultimately builds a light rail station in the Specific Plan area. Even if the area being studied for a light rail station is ultimately developed as a transit center that does not include light rail, there will be significant opportunity for business development.

In the Specific Plan area, approximately 80 percent of the net developable acreage of land is available for regional commercial, general commercial, professional office, business park, and light industrial uses. The current consideration of locating a transit station in the Specific Plan area indicates long-term potential for regional transit connectivity. The area also has good highway access and is commuting distance to/from East Bay suburbs, the greater Bay Area regional market area, and Central Valley locations, including Stockton and Tracy. Convenient highway access to the area is provided via the I-680, I-580, and I-205 corridors. In addition, local population growth is translating into the need for additional retail and restaurants, both regional- and neighborhood-serving, as well as other services, such as education, medical, social services, and personal and household services.

9.2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

The economic development goals and policies presented below are intended to serve as a guiding framework for decision-making regarding the Specific Plan area, relating to economic development issues, and will assist the City in ensuring quality development that generates additional local employment opportunities.

To maximize the potential of the Specific Plan area to strengthen the Brentwood economy through new business activity that will generate jobs in the area and expand the City's tax base, the City intends to take specific actions. These actions are included under the associated policy description. As appropriate, actions are recommended for the short-term (0-5 years), medium-term (6-10 years), long-term (11 plus years), or ongoing.

Goal ED-1: Preserve the Specific Plan Area as a Primary Employment Opportunity Area Within the City of Brentwood.

This goal recognizes the area's unique qualities that include freeway visibility and access; potential light rail station and/or transit center; and large tracts of developable land that can accommodate a range of business needs.

Policy ED-1.1: Focus high intensity employment and mixed-use residential development in the Transit Village designated area. (Ongoing)

The City should direct higher intensity employment, such as offices, and higher density residential uses supportive of mixed-use development, such as apartments and condominiums, to the Transit Village area, so that these uses can support and benefit from the future transit station and potential light rail station. These uses are most likely to generate pedestrian traffic and transit ridership, and thus will benefit the most from being located near the future transit facilities.

Policy ED-1.2: Direct lower-intensity employment to Employment Center Light Industrial designated areas. (Ongoing)

The Employment Center Light Industrial designation is most appropriate for lower intensity employment uses, such as businesses that occupy light industrial and flex spaces. These uses are typically more auto dependent (and also need access for

trucks and equipment). These uses may also be those most likely to generate demand for space in the Specific Plan area in the short to medium-term, while demand from higher intensity employment generators may not materialize until later in the Specific Plan area’s development process.

Policy ED-1.3: Direct moderate and higher density residential to the High Density Residential and Multiple-Family Very High Density Residential designated areas. (Ongoing)

Moderate-density residential and stand-alone high density residential development should be directed to the High Density Residential and Multiple-Family Very High Density Residential-designated areas within the Specific Plan area. The City has imposed and will enforce minimum density development standards in these areas, best ensuring that the City can achieve the 2,000 residential units within the Specific Plan area that the MTC TOD policy threshold requires within a future station area.

Goal ED-2: Develop the Specific Plan Area as a High Quality, Dynamic, Mixed-Use Environment for Businesses.

While recognizing the employment focus of the Specific Plan area, the City will encourage mixed-use development. Housing and retail/services development will be ancillary to, and supportive of, the primary job-generating land uses. The Specific Plan includes land set aside for residential uses, with the intent of providing housing at residential densities high enough to help increase the supply of housing as job growth in Brentwood occurs, and diversify the City’s housing stock to provide increased alternatives to single-family housing oriented to homeowners. The City will not re-designate land in the Specific Plan area for low-density residential development, as these opportunities are provided elsewhere in the city.

Policy ED-2.1: Establish a next generation business park. (Medium-Term)

With locational assets including good highway access and improving transit access, Brentwood, and particularly the Specific Plan area, is a good location for a flexible space business park. This type of business park is sometimes called “next generation” because it can accommodate flexible uses from office to light industrial, and is not strictly a corporate or industrial park. Due to the city’s relative affordability for office and industrial space and for housing in the greater Bay Area, the city has the potential to

attract new and expanding smaller companies to locate from within the region. The likely focus will be businesses focused on the east Contra Costa County market area. The Specific Plan could accommodate the development of a “next-generation” business park, specifically in the areas designated for Employment Center Light Industrial adjacent to the future transit station. The park could be a privately-owned development or involve limited City participation as a sponsor or investor to spur economic activity.

Policy ED-2.2: Expand neighborhood-serving retail and restaurants. (Short- to Medium-Term)

With projected residential growth in the Specific Plan area, there will be additional demand for neighborhood-serving retail and restaurants. This will likely encompass convenience retail uses, such as small groceries, dry cleaners, specialty retail, and cafes and restaurants. These neighborhood-serving uses will be developed alongside the Transit Village high density residential development, but also be easily accessible via foot, bike, transit, and auto from other parts of the Specific Plan area. This area is anticipated to primarily serve the new residents and employees locating in the Specific Plan area with convenience retail and food and beverage outlets. If demand for housing continues, the need for this neighborhood-serving retail could occur in the near future.

Goal ED-3: Prioritize Specific Plan Infrastructure to Develop Shovel Ready Employment Sites.

Brentwood can establish a competitive advantage to accommodate growing local businesses and other businesses needing to relocate from other areas if the Specific Plan area can offer sites that are readily buildable and offer available infrastructure. This, along with the environmental clearance provided by an adopted Specific Plan and certified Environmental Impact Report, will position the City and its development partners to rapidly respond to businesses looking for a site in Brentwood. The City will undertake infrastructure planning and prioritize use of available funds to stimulate infrastructure development in the employment-designated areas of the Specific Plan area. This will include roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, to provide for convenient and safe internal circulation, as well as connectivity to other parts of the City of Brentwood, in addition to regional transportation infrastructure.

Policy ED-3.1: Establish an infrastructure financing program for the Specific Plan area. (Short-Term)

The City, in collaboration with landowners and developers, may develop and implement an infrastructure financing program for the Specific Plan area. As appropriate, the City could utilize tools such as formation of a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District to help finance installation of circulation and infrastructure systems, formation of an enhanced financing district, and/or establishment of a plan area fee program to collect funds for various public improvements of area-wide benefit. When selecting and developing a financing program, the City should strive to ensure that the program does not disproportionately place financial burdens on property owners prior to development of their property.

Goal ED-4: Implement Economic Development Programs to Stimulate Economic Growth in the Specific Plan Area.

In addition to providing development sites, infrastructure, and a high-quality mixed-use environment in the Specific Plan area that will be attractive to businesses and their employees, the City will implement economic development programs to market available sites in the Specific Plan area and provide assistance to existing and new businesses.

Policy ED-4.1: Establish a City-wide Business Development Program. (Short-Term)

This program will be responsible for implementing the city-wide economic development action plan being developed for the City. The business development program, operating as the City's economic development office, should include a business attraction and a business retention program. The business attraction program, which will involve marketing and outreach, should be developed in conjunction with the Contra Costa Economic Partnership and the California Office of Business and Economic Development. These agencies can help craft Brentwood's economic development message and target its resources, including matching City resources with resources from other agencies and organizations. Once Priority Area 1 targets are set, the new office should make promoting the Specific Plan area to business prospects a primary activity.

Policy ED-4.2: Identify health care services as a targeted employment growth sector. (Short- and Long-Term)

Short-Term: Brentwood is a growing community with increasing healthcare needs. The healthcare sector is the fourth largest industry sector in the city by number of jobs and there is a need for additional health care services in the short-term as the community continues to grow. The John Muir Health Outpatient Center is the largest healthcare facility in Brentwood, offering a range of services, including medical imaging, internal and family medicine, pediatric medicine, lab services, and urgent care. It is not a fully equipped hospital; however, and it does not have emergency services. One goal for the healthcare sector is the facilitation of continued expansion of health services in Brentwood as a whole, and the Specific Plan area in particular. This could involve attracting new healthcare facilities to the Specific Plan area, in addition to a small expansion of the John Muir Health Outpatient Center at its existing Balfour Road site that is now being considered.

Long-Term: If population growth occurs at the projected level, it is reasonable to assume there would be demand for a full-service hospital within a few years. Projected population growth in the Specific Plan area could be a significant part of new demand for healthcare services, along with growing demand from continuing residential development elsewhere in the city and surrounding communities. The Specific Plan area, with available land, good highway access, and improved transit access for employees, would be an ideal location for a new hospital and should be considered for a potential full-service hospital site that serves the community, whether developed by John Muir Health or another regional healthcare organization.

Policy ED-4.3: Establish a business development center with co-working space. (Medium-Term)

To support new, small businesses, the City of Brentwood should establish a business development center with co-working space to enable start-up businesses to share costs and services with other similar businesses. There are options for program models, including incubators, accelerators, or hybrid facilities, but this facility should provide relatively low-cost space, shared services, and access to business assistance available in the city and Contra Costa County. This could include the local Small Business Development Center (a program of the U.S. Small Business Administration) or a college or university-affiliated program. The

center could be part of the aforementioned next generation business park.