



Chapter 5: Economic Development Element

CAC Draft
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Introduction

Burlingame has a diverse local economy, with strengths in hotel, tourism, retail, and airport-related industries. Burlingame’s proximity to San Francisco International Airport has been key to attracting hotels, logistics, air transportation, and business services companies. Burlingame also has a variety of retail centers that serve unique market niches, including regional-serving retail in Downtown Burlingame, local independent retailers and restaurants in the Broadway district and Burlingame Plaza, and automobile dealerships along California Drive and adjacent to Highway 101 near the Broadway interchange. While the city is not a primary regional office location, the potential for attracting office-based technology and business services firms is likely to expand as new projects come online and businesses take advantage of Burlingame’s convenient transit and freeway access to the major job centers of San Francisco and the Peninsula.

This Economic Development Element establishes goals and policies focused on protecting and growing Burlingame’s economic assets. These goals and policies also leverage new business retention and attraction opportunities created by Burlingame’s competitive advantages within the evolving and dynamic San Francisco Bay Area economy.

Economic Base

A healthy and diverse business mix allows Burlingame to weather economic cycles and provides a range of job opportunities for residents. The revenues generated by businesses—such as hotel taxes (transient occupancy taxes), sales and use taxes, and business license fees—help to ensure that the City can continue providing high-quality services for residents, employees, and visitors. These amenities and services further reinforce Burlingame’s reputation as a highly desirable location for businesses, creating a virtuous cycle that benefits the entire community.

The following goal and policies are designed to maintain and diversify Burlingame’s economic base by accommodating a variety of business types, supporting major revenue-generating activities that support City municipal services, and maintaining the city’s competitive advantages.

Goal ED-1: Maintain a diversified economic base that provides a wide range of business and employment opportunities capable of ensuring a healthy and prosperous economy for generations to come.

ED-1.1: Diverse Building Types and Sizes

Encourage development of new office, research, and technology spaces to diversify the types of businesses in Burlingame, specifically focusing on the Rollins Road, Bayfront, and Downtown areas. [DR, MP, SO]

ED-1.2: Flexible Building Use

Provide opportunities for flexible building uses, such as live-work uses or conversion between types of space, as appropriate in the Rollins Road, Bayfront, and Downtown areas. [DR, MP]

ED-1.3: Automobile Dealerships

Support the continued presence of automobile dealerships in Burlingame at appropriate locations where they benefit most from clustering and regional exposure, and where impacts on surrounding uses can be minimized. Recognize and respond to the evolving nature of automobile sales and service in a manner that continues to benefit dealerships and the contribution of such businesses to the local economy. [DR, MP, SO, PA]

ED-1.5: Hotel Base

Protect and grow hotel businesses by supporting such use and ancillary activities on properties located along the Bayfront and, as appropriate, as boutique operations in Downtown. [DR, FB, SO, PA]

ED-1.6: Community Benefits of Development

Ensure that major commercial development projects contribute toward desired community benefits of urban design, land use, sustainability, resiliency, affordable housing, and community health while also expanding the economic base of the city. [DR, FB, SO, PA]

Business Retention and Attraction

Burlingame is located within a competitive and dynamic environment for businesses, entrepreneurs, and worker talent. The City's ability to attract and retain businesses is influenced by Burlingame's land use and economic development policies, infrastructure and place-making investments, and ongoing operations.

Burlingame's economic development policies must be responsive to larger economic trends in the Bay Area region. Increasing demand for high-quality office and research and development

space on the Peninsula—driven by the computer technology and biotechnology industries, as well as emerging businesses resulting from a strong presence of venture capital—has generated interest in large-scale development in the Bayfront area and smaller increments of space in the Downtown area. The Bayfront and North Rollins Road areas are anticipated to attract private redevelopment interest and pressures for turnover of long-established industrial operations in favor of higher-intensity uses. At the same time, Burlingame’s retail districts and automobile dealerships must adapt to rapidly changing retail patterns and competition.

The following goal and policies support Burlingame’s desire to retain and attract businesses and remain economically resilient in the longer term through careful planning and investments.

Goal ED-2: Cultivate a business environment that supports long-established enterprises, attracts new and emerging businesses, and provides support for synergistic business relationships and partnerships.

ED-2.1: Land Use Compatibility

Address potential land use compatibility issues and roadway/truck access conflicts between office, industrial, retail, and residential uses in areas of transitioning land uses, such as the Bayfront and North Rollins Road areas. [DR, MP, PA]

ED-2.2: Commercial Zoning

Protect and simplify commercial zoning in the North Rollins Road and Bayfront areas to ensure that established businesses can remain and continue to meet community needs. [DR, MP]

ED-2.3: Municipal Services and Infrastructure Capacity

Promote growth in locations with existing or potential capacity to provide high-quality municipal services and infrastructure. [DR, MP, FB, SO, AC]

ED-2.4: Transportation Access

Optimize multimodal transportation access to major employment and retail destinations. [DR, MP, AC]

ED-2.5: Streetscape Maintenance

Maintain attractive streetscapes citywide as a means of encouraging business investment, particularly in areas of high pedestrian activity, as identified in the Community Character Element. [SO]

ED-2.6: Household Supporting Retail

Promote growth of neighborhood-serving retail uses—such as grocery stores, dry cleaners, convenience stores in conjunction with strategic local growth of housing. [DR, PA]

ED-2.7: Broadway District Streetscape

Implement improvements to the Broadway district streetscape and pedestrian environment, while minimizing any potential negative impacts to businesses and residents during construction periods. [M, SO, PA]

ED-2.8: Broadway Business Mix

Position the Broadway district as a destination for locally owned and operated businesses and restaurants. [MP, PA]

ED-2.9: Regional Shopping Destination

Support Downtown businesses, and encourage the branding and marketing of specific activities that increase the district's recognition and competitiveness as a regional shopping destination. [DR, FB, SO, PA]

ED-2.10: Shopping Districts

Collaborate with business and property owners in the Burlingame Plaza and Broadway areas to strengthen the economic performance of smaller retail stores and restaurants. [DR, MP, PA]

ED-2.11: Bayfront Office and Research and Development

Strive to position the Bayfront area as a location for larger office-based and research and development businesses. [SO, MP, PA]

ED-2.12: Economic Development Services

Provide economic development services—such as grants and loans for expansion and tenant improvements, architectural design consultation, and relocation assistance—to support businesses of all sizes. [SO, PA, PI]

ED-2.13: Business Organization Partnerships

Collaborate and coordinate with business associations and districts for marketing, branding, and promotion activities to enhance business attraction strategies. [SO, PA, PI]

ED-2.14: Small Business Assistance

Collaborate with local organizations to provide technical and permitting assistance to small businesses. [SO, AC, PA, PI]

ED-2.15: Commercial Data Tracking

Monitor occupancies and vacancies and track trends in major industries through collaboration with brokers, property owners, and business owners. [SR, SO, PA, PI]

ED-2.16: Marketing Available Business Spaces

Promote efforts to market and fill spaces in commercial and industrial buildings, especially smaller creative and technology firms in Downtown and larger firms attracted to the North Rollins Road and Bayfront districts. [SO, PA, PI]

ED-2.17: Permitting Processes

Provide efficient and transparent permitting and approvals processes for businesses permits and land use development/improvement projects. [DR, SO, PA, PI]