SD City Planning

Economic Prosperity Element

Draft 2027 General Plan Amendment

City of San Diego

Fall 2026

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Purpose

To increase wealth and the standard of living of all San Diegans with policies that support a diverse, innovative, competitive, entrepreneurial, and sustainable local economy.

Introduction

Economic prosperity is a key component of quality of life. The structure of the City of San Diego's (City) economy influences the City's physical development and determines the City's capacity to fund essential services. There have been dramatic changes in the structure of our economy in the last several decades, from a production-based economy to one increasingly based on creativity and innovation. The 21st century economy requires flexibility. Recognizing that the City operates within the broader context of a regional and global economic setting, the City must strengthen its competitive position by creating an environment and infrastructure where industries for which San Diego is competitive can create, respond, and adjust rapidly.

The policies in this element are intended to improve economic prosperity by ensuring that the economy grows in ways that strengthen our industries, retain and create good jobs with self-sufficient wages, increase average income, and stimulate economic investment in our communities. A strong economy creates the wealth that allows San Diegans to support the public facilities, services, and quality of life they demand. The Regional Plan, adopted by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), envisions a complete and integrated transportation system that is fast, fair, and clean that connects people to jobs, homes, and services while protecting the environment and supporting the regional economy. The Regional Plan states: "A new era of economic innovation promises exciting advances in biotechnology, renewable energy, cybersecurity, and automation that will change the way people live around the world. Our region can play a leading role in these fields when individuals who live here can connect, collaborate, and create. More than ever, our region's future prosperity will depend on mobility—the ability of people to travel quickly and easily from communities where they live to centers of innovation where they work."

The City shares SANDAG's vision and plays an important economic role in the region due to the amount and significance of employment land located here relative to other jurisdictions. The City's size and location within the region, its major infrastructure for economic development, its universities, and its large labor force contribute to the economic role it plays. Several of the key issues that SANDAG identifies in the Regional Plan are addressed in the City's economic prosperity policies including: developing a dynamic binational economy, strengthening the relationship between workforce requirements and educational programs, identifying an adequate supply of land for housing and businesses, improving the region's business environment and monitoring our progress, and supporting the next era of economic innovation.

The City's Economic Development Strategy further refines the policies in this element. It translates regional economic and quality of life information to more specific economic policies and programs, emphasizing quality of life and community partnerships. Regular updates to the strategy identify those industries that are growing for which San Diego is competitive in the global marketplace. However, traditional industries, while not necessarily growing, are still important to large segments of our population. The City's policies anticipate a future economy supported by technology, telecommunications, biotechnology, earth and environmental sciences, education, health products and services, maritime, tourism, professional services, trade, defense, and new unnamed industries that will emerge in the ever-changing global economy. The achievement of economic prosperity goals also relies on policies in the Land Use and Community Planning Element to appropriately designate land for economic development, the Housing Element to provide workforce housing accessible to employment areas, the Mobility Element to provide a critical link between

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housing and jobs, and the Public Facilities, Services and Safety Element to address the provision of regional facilities needed to reinforce the viability of our industrial areas.

The Economic Prosperity Element links economic prosperity goals with land use distribution and employment land use policies. Employment land includes land utilized by industrial, commercial service, and commercial retail users. The capacity for the City's basic industrial, commercial, and service export industries is particularly important for bringing income to the City and building wealth for its community members. To retain an adequate supply of land appropriate for future base sector industries, these employment uses should be designated in key areas throughout the City. Underutilized land that could be redeveloped for certain types of export industries and other types of employment uses in urbanized areas should also be identified. The Regional Center, Subregional Employment Areas, and Urban, Community, and Neighborhood Villages will have an important role in the City's economic prosperity strategy by providing the land and infrastructure needed to support business development, and a variety of employment and housing opportunities. The element's overall goals of preserving regionally significant employment lands, using employment areas more efficiently, and strengthening the border economy, will require the refinement of policies when individual community plans are updated.

The Economic Prosperity Element also expands the traditional focus of a general plan to include a variety of economic development policies that have a less direct effect on land use, but are designed to achieve a rising standard of living. These include policies aimed at supporting existing and new businesses that reflect the changing nature of industry, creating the types of jobs most beneficial to the local economy, and preparing our workforce to compete for these jobs in the global marketplace. Despite the economic growth that has occurred over the last several years, economic prosperity has not been evenly distributed in San Diego. National and local economic trends are potentially creating a skewed economy (fewer middle-income jobs, more high-quality professional jobs, and many low-wage services jobs), exacerbating income, social, and spatial disparities. The impacts of these disparities include social service costs incurred by the City and other public agencies. Implementation of the policies addressing these issues will require more specific initiatives including regular updates to the Economic Development Strategy.

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A. Industrial Land Use

Goals

- A diversified economy with a focus on providing quality employment opportunities and self-sufficient wages for all San Diegans.
- A city with sufficient land capacity for base sector industries to sustain a strong economic base.
- Efficient use of existing employment lands.

Discussion

The Availability of Industrial Land

The supply and type of employment land uses in the City are significant factors in determining the ability of the City to meet the needs of a rapidly changing economy. As of 2023, 24 percent of all designated industrial land was still vacant in the City. More than 54 percent of the total vacant industrial land in the City is located in the community of Otay Mesa. The majority of the remaining vacant industrial land within the City is located within the other Subregional Employment Areas (see Figure EP-2, Regional Center and Subregional Employment Areas). Regionally, there is adequate long-term availability of employment land, but there is a shortage of available land within the City close to housing, transportation, public transit, and other infrastructure. This diminishing supply of industrial land is a potential challenge to the growth and retention of base sector industries providing middle-income job opportunities in the City.

Adopted community plans vary in their treatment of industrially designated land. Some community plans discourage or prohibit non-industrial uses, some plans identify areas to locate industrial support uses, and others contain industrial land that clearly anticipates a mix of non-industrial uses. The General Plan recognizes that industrial areas play a role in both the community and the San Diego region. Therefore, the General Plan accounts for the various roles of adopted land use designations in community plans and provide a policy framework for evaluating the future role of currently designated industrial land through the community plan update process. The focus is on a strategy to evaluate and preserve critically-located base sector areas but to allow, through comprehensive analysis, consideration of conversion or mixed-use of industrial land if it is not critical to the City's or region's base sector employment goals.

Economic Base Sector Industrial Uses

Economic base sector industries create wealth for a local jurisdiction by exporting products and services primarily to national and international markets outside of the local area. As such, base sector industries drive regional prosperity, are a source of competitiveness and innovation, and are the primary source of new businesses in the region. San Diego has become a major hub for innovation in tradable industries including science, technology, manufacturing, and defense, hosting globally-recognized industry clusters in life sciences, aerospace, and cleantech. These industries play an important role in exporting goods and services outside of San Diego and bring new money into the region. Interconnected networks of businesses, suppliers, educational institutions, and infrastructure, which support these tradable industries, have co-located within the City to facilitate an efficient exchange of goods, people, and ideas. In San Diego, these uses are growing and becoming more internationally competitive. The retention of these uses also preserves the City's ability to maintain a stable tax base and support higher levels of municipal services for a growing population. Base sector industries primarily include science, technology, and defense related industries that support the innovation economy.

Increasing globalization will continue to result in the loss of some traditional manufacturing operations that support middle-income employment both nationally and in the City. Maintaining areas for base sector industries with existing infrastructure is the principal way that the General Plan and community plans can influence the economic health of the City. Protection of these areas from encroachment by non-base sector uses that have alternative site opportunities within the City, such as commercial

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retail and services, residential, and some institutional uses, creates opportunities for existing users to expand rather than relocate out of the City. Community plan land use designations which are sufficiently refined to protect key industrial areas can create conditions which do not further exacerbate the local impacts of these global trends and, where possible, facilitate the development and expansion of base sector manufacturing, research and development, and support industries in the City.

Long-term changes in the economy have increasingly favored San Diego as a location for industries focused on science, technology, manufacturing, and defense which can be performed in an office setting or flexible industrial space. Although current industrial development standards allow for adequate intensification of all types of industrial and office uses today, over the long term the City needs to continue to strengthen polices that support higher-intensity industrial development in particular locations that accommodate these research and development uses, supportive professional services, and corporate headquarters. Higher-intensity development also uses the City's limited land supply more efficiently.

Non-Base Sector Employment Uses

Non-base sector employment provides goods and services to base sector businesses and their employees. The significant growth of non-base service sector employment in San Diego has created a demand for multi-tenant and other commercial service office buildings. There is an adequate supply of land for these uses due to their ability to locate in a wider variety of commercial, mixed-use, and business park areas throughout the City. Intensification of these uses should be encouraged in appropriate locations, particularly in central locations within the City that are served well by transit, such as neighborhood, community, and urban villages and transit corridors. These uses also have greater compatibility with residential developments and should be encouraged as part of diverse village or other mixed-use developments.

In sum, maintaining an adequate supply of a variety of employment land types contributes to the economic health of San Diego in two major ways – accommodating a wide range of jobs for the City's residents, and importing dollars from outside the area. Economic diversity is crucial to a region's ability to weather economic cycles and to perpetuate the continuous generation of new industries and businesses. While traditional industrial park development may still be required in the future, the City will follow the trend toward increasingly vertical work places. Community plan land use designations for the Industrial Land Use category have been created with the goal of providing communities a menu of potential categories to fit individual conditions and community plan objectives while advancing citywide economic prosperity goals (see also Land Use and Community Planning Element, Table LU-4, General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories).

Industrial and Prime Industrial Land

Prime industrial land as depicted on Figure EP-1 identifies areas that support export-oriented base sector activities such as research and development uses, heavy or light manufacturing, and warehouse distribution. These areas are part of even larger areas that provide a significant benefit to the regional economy and meet General Plan goals and objectives to encourage a strong economic base. There are six criteria to analyze to determine whether a particular area should be identified as prime industrial land (see Appendix C, EP-1). While not a selection criterion, some of the areas depicted on the map include supportive business uses.

It is anticipated that the Industrial and Prime Industrial Land Map will be revised over time, particularly as appropriate land uses are evaluated during comprehensive community plan updates. Land identified as Prime Industrial will undergo additional scrutiny if land use amendments are proposed that could diminish their potential role for base sector and related employment uses either before or after comprehensive community plan updates. The identification of prime industrial lands is intended to protect valuable employment land for

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base sector industries. The identification of land as Prime Industrial does not change the land use designation or zoning of a property, nor influence the processing of ministerial designated land in the applicable community plan.

Some of the industrial areas could convert to other non-industrial uses, such as commercial or residential uses, after an analysis of relevant factors to determine if the property could still feasibly support industrial uses and is appropriate for the use requested. Land identified as Prime Industrial Land – Flex allow for employment-oriented mixed-use with potential residential uses to support the innovation economy. In many industrial areas containing obsolete industrial, non-industrial uses (such as office and commercial uses), and high concentration of knowledge-based jobs near transit, conversion to other uses, such as allowing mixed-use development, could contribute significantly to community enhancement and revitalization.

The City's industrial land availability has been impacted by the location of sensitive receptors such as child care facilities and schools (see the Glossary for "sensitive receptor" description). These uses require separation from certain commercial and industrial operations. Their location in industrial areas may limit the ability of the permitted industrial uses to expand. In addition, prime industrial lands, often characterized by large level lots, have been increasingly utilized by land-intensive uses which have been preempted in higher-cost commercial areas. In order to maintain an adequate supply of land to accommodate base sector employment uses, residential, and some commercial and institutional uses should be limited in prime industrial areas until, or unless, a comprehensive study is performed to demonstrate the preservation of land for industrial and other base sector activities is no longer needed, in accordance with policies EP-A.12 through EP-A.15. The identification of prime industrial land does not preclude the future application of any of the industrial community plan land use designations provided that residential is not included.

Residential and Industrial Collocation and Conversion

The lack of affordable homes in San Diego negatively affects the local economy by limiting the ability of an industry to compete nationally for the necessary workforce. Additionally, the lack of housing near employment nodes has led to a strain on the City's roads, freeways, infrastructure, and environment, and affects the quality of life for all San Diegans by increasing the household cost of transportation. Policies aimed at increasing the supply of low- to moderate-income housing for the workforce are contained in the Housing Element.

As community plans are updated, opportunities for employment uses, as well as areas appropriate for locating workforce-housing opportunities near job centers, will be identified. In the interim, as community plan amendments are requested for collocation or conversion, there needs to be a means to minimize land use conflicts and preserve the most important types of industrial land, or prime industrial land, from residential, public assembly, and other sensitive receptor land uses.

Policies

Base Sector Industrial Uses

EP-A.1 Protect base sector uses that provide quality job opportunities including middle-income jobs; provide for secondary employment and supporting uses; and maintain areas where smaller emerging industrial uses can locate in a multi-tenant setting. When updating community plans or considering plan amendments, the industrial land use designations contained in the Land Use and Community Planning Element should be appropriately applied to protect viable sites for base sector and related employment uses.

EP-A.2 Encourage a broader geographic distribution of high technology businesses throughout the City.

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EP-A.3 Encourage large regional employers to locate and expand in the Regional Center or Subregional Employment Areas.

EP-A.4 Include base sector uses appropriate to an office setting in Urban Village and Community Village Centers.

EP-A.5 Consider the redesignation of non-industrial properties to industrial use where land use conflicts can be minimized. Evaluate the extent to which the proposed designation and subsequent industrial development would: • Accommodate the expansion of existing industrial uses to facilitate their retention in the area in which they are located. • Not intrude into existing residential neighborhoods or disrupt existing commercial activities and other uses. • Mitigate any environmental impacts (traffic, noise, lighting, air pollution, and odor) to adjacent land. • Be adequately served by existing and planned infrastructure.

EP-A.6 Consider potential opportunities to create innovative mixed-use development in industrial areas, allowing residential uses to support industrial employee housing needs, based upon co-location studies to ensure land use compatibility.

Non-Base Sector Employment Uses

EP-A.7 Provide for the establishment or retention of non-base sector employment uses to serve base sector industries and community needs and encourage the development of small businesses. To the extent possible, consider locating these types of employment uses near housing. When updating community plans or considering plan amendments, land use designations contained in the Land Use and Community Planning Element should be appropriately applied to provide for non-base sector employment uses.

EP-A.8 Increase the allowable intensity of employment uses in Subregional Employment Areas and Urban Village Centers where transportation and transit infrastructure exist. The role of transit and other alternative modes of transportation on development project review are further specified in the Mobility Element, Policies ME-C.8 through ME-C.10.

EP-A.9 Concentrate more intense office development in Subregional Employment Areas and in Urban Villages with transit access.

EP-A.10 Efficiently utilize employment lands through increased intensity in “urban villages” and Subregional Employment Areas.

EP-A.11 Locate compatible employment uses on infill industrial sites and establish incentives to support job growth in existing urban areas.

EP-A.12 Encourage the provision of workforce housing within employment areas not identified as Prime Industrial Land that is compatible with wage structures associated with existing and forecasted employment.

Prime Industrial Land

EP-A.13 Protect Prime Industrial Land as shown on the Industrial and Prime Industrial Land Map, Figure EP-1. As community plans are updated, the applicability of the Prime Industrial Land Map will be revisited and changes considered.

a. Amend the boundaries of Figure EP-1 if community plan updates or community plan amendments lead to an addition of Prime Industrial Lands, or conversely, a conversion of Prime Industrial Land uses to other uses that would necessitate the removal of properties from the Prime Industrial Land identification.

b. Amend the boundaries of Figure EP-1 if community plan updates or community plan amendments/rezones lead to a collocation (the geographic integration of residential uses and other non-industrial

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uses into industrial uses located on the same premises) of uses.

c. Justification for a land use change must be supported by an evaluation of the prime industrial land criteria in Appendix C, EP-1, the collocation/ conversion suitability factors in Appendix C, EP-2, and the potential contribution of the area to the local and regional economy.

EP-A.14 In areas identified as Prime Industrial Land as shown on Figure EP-1, ~~do not permit~~discourage discretionary use permits for public assembly or sensitive receptor land uses.

EP-A.15 In areas identified as Prime Industrial Land as shown on Figure EP-1, the following uses may be considered:

a. Child care facilities for employees' children, as an ancillary use to industrial uses on a site, when they are sited at a demonstrably adequate distance from the property line, so as not to limit the current or future operations of any adjacent industrially-designated property; can assure that health and safety requirements are met in compliance with required permits; and are not precluded by the applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

b. Existing hospitals previously approved through Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), provided that no new child care or long-term care facilities are established.

c. Existing colleges and Universities, previously approved through CUPSs, provided that the facilities are for adult education and do not include day care facilities.

EP-A.16 The identification of Prime Industrial Land on any property does not preclude the development or redevelopment of such property pursuant to the development regulations and permitted uses of the existing zone and community plan designation, nor does it limit the application of any of the Industrial Employment recommended community plan land use designations in Table LU-4, provided that residential use is not included.

Prime Industrial Land – Flex

EP-A.17 In areas identified as Prime Industrial Land-Flex as shown on Figure EP-1, the following uses may be included:

a. Employment-oriented mixed-use development with residential uses.

b. Opportunities for moderate income and affordable homes to reduce miles driven.

c. Shared on-site amenities, including useable public space.

d. Adaptable building structures that can accommodate changes in housing and employment demand or innovations over time.

EP-A.18 Provide multiple mobility options for commuters and community members to better connect with high-frequency transit.

Other Industrial Land

EP-A.19 In industrial areas identified as Other Industrial Land on Figure EP-1, the redesignation of industrial lands to non-industrial uses should evaluate the Area Characteristics factor in Appendix C, EP-2 to ensure that other viable industrial areas are protected.

EP-A.20 Analyze the collocation and conversion suitability factors listed in Appendix C, EP-2, when considering residential conversion or collocation in industrial land areas.

EP-A.21 Encourage child care facilities in employment areas not identified as prime industrial land where health and safety can be ensured and where not precluded by the applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

All Industrial Areas

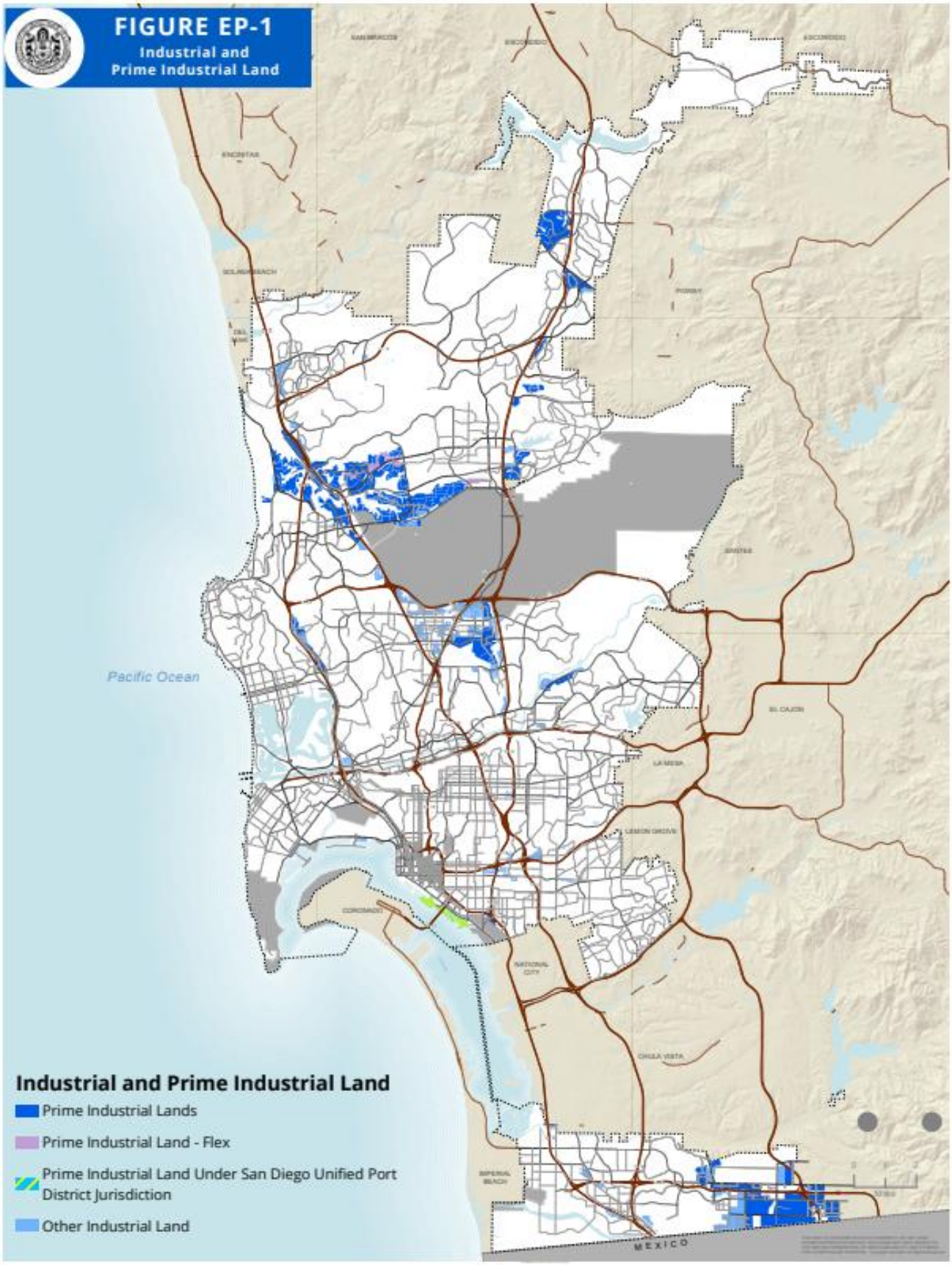
EP-A.22 Meet the following requirements in all industrial areas, except Prime Industrial

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Land-Flex, as a part of the discretionary review of projects involving residential, commercial, institutional, mixed-use, public assembly, or other sensitive receptor land uses: • Analyze the Collocation/Conversion Suitability Factors in Appendix C, EP-2. • Incorporate pedestrian design elements including pedestrian-oriented street and sidewalk connections to adjacent properties, activity centers, and transit. • Require payment of the conversion/collocation project's fair share of community facilities required to serve the project (at the time of occupancy).

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Figure EP-1 Industrial and Prime Industrial Land



B. Commercial Land Use

Goals

- Commercial development which uses land efficiently, offers flexibility to changing community member and business shopping needs, and improves environmental quality.
- Economically healthy neighborhood and community commercial areas that are easily accessible to community members.
- New commercial development that contributes positively to the economic vitality of the community and provides opportunities for new business development.
- A city with land appropriately designated to sustain a robust commercial base.

Discussion

Commercial development provides important goods and services to City community members and businesses. Future commercial development in the City will take the form of redevelopment, expansion of existing underutilized commercial areas, and some new infill development. Changes in the retail market are accelerating and format types for shopping areas are in constant flux. As we look to the future, policies regarding commercial development must be flexible to meet the rapidly changing needs of the population and their methods of shopping, given changes in technology and delivery systems. Traditional shopping centers will be redesigned to accommodate new types of anchor stores, different tenant mixes, and include a wider variety of non-retail uses (such as housing, public spaces, civic uses, open space, and entertainment uses).

Long-term market conditions can also result in commercial development in some communities in excess of what the market area can support, which results in an inefficient use of land and potential blight. The redesignation of commercial land to residential or mixed-use, particularly in older, competitively-obsolete commercial strips, increases the market for remaining retail properties, thereby encouraging reinvestment and improvement in their quality.

The City of Villages strategy incorporates the growing need for convenience and good design to attract the consumer. Many of the new shopping centers of this coming era will be designed to resemble a community and will function like a Main Street. The provision of traditionally stand-alone commercial uses within mixed-use development is an important strategy in using the City's land more efficiently. The in-migration of population to the City will encourage redevelopment of underutilized urban sites into distinct shopping areas. Ethnic and racial diversity will also play a role as Hispanic, Asian, and African-American populations accumulate significant buying power that is concentrated in urban areas. These areas can also foster entrepreneurial opportunities and wealth creation for these urban populations.

In the City, some existing regional commercial centers will expand to meet changing market demands. The enhancement of an urban lifestyle could occur through intensification of regional commercial areas and their redevelopment with multiple home residential, office, lodging, and cultural uses. In addition, over a period of decades, some malls could expand geographically and begin to mesh with surrounding commercial, office, and multiple home residential developments and districts, thereby becoming less discrete areas which would better support the development of more comprehensive and interconnected networks of public transit and services.

Within the General Plan category of Employment and Commercial Retail and Services (see also Land Use and Community Planning Element, Table LU-4), proposed community plan land use designations for commercial uses, including mixed-use areas, have been created with the goal of providing communities a menu of potential categories to fit individual conditions and community plan objectives while providing the necessary flexibility to accommodate continual changes in the retail market.

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Policies

EP-B.1 Increase the vitality of commercial areas, and provide goods and services easily accessible to community members and promote community identity. When updating community plans or considering plan amendments, apply the appropriate community plan commercial land use designations to implement the above policy.

EP-B.2 Encourage development of unique shopping districts that help strengthen community identity and contribute to overall neighborhood revitalization.

EP-B.3 Concentrate commercial development in Neighborhood, Community, and Urban Villages, and in Transit Corridors.

EP-B.4 Concentrate commercial service sector office development in the Subregional Employment Areas around transit stations, and in Neighborhood, Community, and Urban Villages.

EP-B.5 Identify commercial retail and service areas in community plans to serve markets beyond the community.

EP-B.6 Explore opportunities to expand innovative mixed-use opportunities through future community plan updates.

EP-B.7 Promote economically vital neighborhood commercial districts that foster small business enterprises and entrepreneurship.

EP-B.8 Promote and facilitate shared parking facilities including parking structures as part of commercial revitalization activities.

EP-B.9 Retain the City's existing neighborhood commercial activities and develop new commercial activities within walking/rolling distance of residential areas, unless proven infeasible.

EP-B.10 Design new community commercial centers with consideration for: traffic patterns; compatibility with surrounding land uses; site planning that reinforces pedestrian movement to and through the site; superior architecture and landscape design; and sustainable design.

EP-B.11 Focus redevelopment of community commercial centers on the expansion of community functions through the provision of additional visual, recreational, and social amenities.

EP-B.12 Consider mixed-use development to revitalize existing community commercial shopping centers.

EP-B.13 Determine the appropriate mix and form of residential and commercial uses along Transit Corridors based on the unique character of the community, considering: the types and mix of uses that will complement adjacent neighborhoods, parcel size and depth, and the need to revitalize economically obsolete uses.

EP-B.14 Ensure that regulations encourage commercial uses to cluster or intensify at focal points along major arterial streets and discourage the creation of new auto-oriented strip developments where parking is located between the street frontage and the buildings.

EP-B.15 Create distinctive shopping districts through the renovation or redevelopment of existing strip commercial development. Encourage a variety of uses (such as hotel, office, entertainment, recreational, and residential uses) to locate in shopping districts.

EP-B.16 Apply the Regional Commercial land use designation to areas intended to serve as a focal point for regional commerce and activity. Consider the following characteristics when applying the designation: • Where a broad range of uses that include retail, wholesale, office, employment, and public recreational and civic uses will benefit the existing community; • Where the incorporation of mixed-use structures and multiple home development, public and private facilities (such as parks and other community-

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oriented facilities) can be accomplished; • Where regional uses will not adversely affect the viability of nearby community and neighborhood commercial centers, particularly mixed-use corridors and villages; • Where sites are accessible to the region because of their location adjacent to primary arterials, freeways, and major public transit routes; • Where uses will not adversely affect adjacent surrounding land uses.

EP-B.17 Evaluate the amount and type of commercial development that is desirable and supportable for a community during the community plan update process and in subsequent community plan amendments. Reduce excess commercially designated land by providing for appropriate reuse or alternative use. Consider re-designating commercial land characterized by commercial retail and service uses to residential or mixed-use where some or all of the following factors are present: • Where the lot size or configuration is inadequate, or other site characteristics result in an inability to develop or sustain a viable commercial use; • Where site driveways could adversely affect traffic flow; • Where community facilities are accessible for community members; • Where the existing use is underutilized and there is an adequate supply of community-serving commercial uses; • Where there is good transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with employment areas; or • Where it would not impact the viability for base sector use of any adjacent land identified as prime industrial land on Figure EP-1.

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C. Regional Center and Subregional Employment Areas

Goals

- A city where new employment growth is encouraged in the existing regional center and subregional employment areas connected by transit to minimize the economic, social, and environmental costs of growth.

Discussion

As described in the Land Use and Community Planning Element, the Regional Center and Subregional Employment Areas will play an important role in the City's economic prosperity strategies. These areas are intended to provide the appropriately designated land and infrastructure needed to support business development and a variety of employment opportunities. In the past several decades, employment growth was focused on the creation of an employment land component in each developing community. As the City has grown, the Subregional Employment Areas facilitate the location of jobs in locations with connections to an improved transportation and transit system as shown in Figure EP-2 and described below.

Regional Center

Downtown

Downtown and adjacent Balboa Park contain most of the City's major cultural facilities including museums, symphony, opera and live theaters; Downtown is also the governmental, legal, cultural, convention, and tourism center for San Diego County. Downtown's goal is to emerge as the largest employment center in the City with a diverse range of jobs, particularly high-technology, as well as a dense residential community with a diverse range of homes for all ages and incomes.

Subregional Employment Areas

Mission Valley / Morena / Grantville

The predominant role of Mission Valley, Morena and Grantville as a regional commercial employment center will continue. In addition, dense multifamily residential uses are encouraged in key areas across the subregional employment center.

University City / Sorrento Mesa

The total employment area of University City and Sorrento Mesa has been developed with a balanced mixture of mid- and high-rise office buildings, multifamily housing, hospitals and institutions, retail, and hospitality uses – Sorrento Mesa and University contains the largest number of jobs of all employment areas, and also constitutes the City's largest and most diverse concentration of high technology industrial parks. The employment area is well served by transit, included Bus Rapid Transit and the MTS Blue Line Trolley. University / Sorrento Mesa will continue to be one of the largest employment centers in the City while also expanding opportunities for new homes so that more San Diegans have the chance to live closer to work and school.

Midway-Pacific Highway

The industrial developments in the Midway-Pacific Highway employment area are among the oldest in San Diego, to the point that the structures lack the proper size for modern industrial use. Permissive industrial zoning has also allowed the area to become dominated by large institutional uses and large retail establishments, which are much more lucrative for property owners. The eastern portion of the community is well-served by existing transit infrastructure which contributes to the area's suitability for redevelopment with mixed-uses, multifamily residential, office, and retail uses. The employment area will retain jobs while continuing to redevelop outdated and infeasible land uses, including with dense mixed-use and residential uses.

Kearny Mesa

The Kearny Mesa industrial area was built out mostly during the 1960s and 1970s for a wide range of commercial and industrial uses with a similarly diverse range of structure sizes and types. Many of these older industrial land uses have been redeveloped over the past decades as non-industrial

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commercial, institutional, or office uses, especially as industrial needs have evolved over the years and rendered these older industrial spaces obsolete. The community will continue to transition to more commercial and residential land uses, including office uses and dense mixed-use residential, particularly along the commercial transit corridors.

Otay Mesa

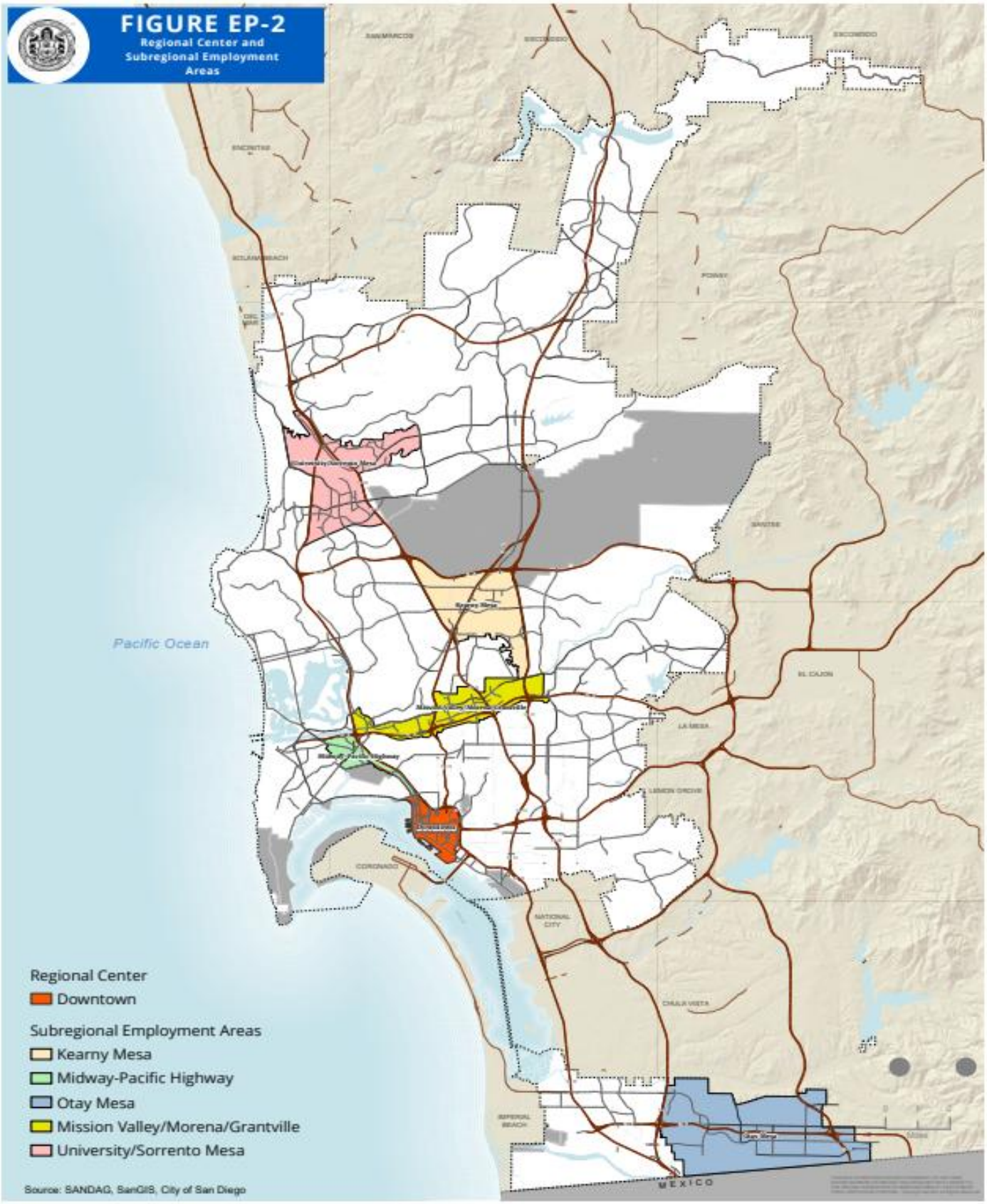
Otay Mesa is unique among the City's Community Planning Areas and employment areas because of its geographic isolation from the rest of San Diego. The employment zone has only seen recent industrial development compared to the other employment areas. Support of infrastructure development and preservation of areas for primarily industrial uses that support manufacturing and international trade activities are essential to provide middle income job opportunities and contribute to the growth of the City's overall economic base. In the future, Otay Mesa will remain an important binational economic area with a vibrant mixture of land uses to provide more homes and services.

Policy

EP-C.1 Increase the vitality of commercial areas, and provide goods and services easily accessible to community members and promote community identity. When updating community plans or considering plan amendments, apply the appropriate community plan commercial land use designations to implement the above policy.

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Figure EP-2 Regional Center and Subregional Employment Areas



D. Education and Workforce Development

Goals

- A city that provides life-long skills and learning opportunities by investing in excellent schools, post-secondary institutions, and opportunities for continuous education and training.
- Equitable access to educational opportunities.
- A city that will continue to incubate growth and investment by providing a skilled and educated workforce that meets industry needs.

Discussion

As the City moves toward a more knowledge-based economy, the key to increasing City community members' standard of living is to equip the future workforce with the tools to succeed. Forecasted job growth in high technology areas, such as biosciences, biomedical, telecommunications, computer and electronics manufacturing, artificial intelligence, and software and computer services, will result in an increase in the demand for highly skilled workers. If the City is to remain competitive in attracting, retaining, and developing businesses that could serve as a catalyst to economic prosperity, a well-trained workforce must be developed to attain the anticipated new jobs in the region.

San Diego community members have an increasing level of educational attainment relative to the nation as a whole, but over the next twenty years our schools will not produce enough graduates to keep up with future employment demand, thereby increasing the need to recruit workers from outside the region. Also, despite the region's high educational attainment level, the City has more people with less than a high school education than the national average. There is a disparity in educational achievement among races and ethnic groups and an even greater disparity between communities in the City. Programs that target underrepresented groups, provide training for low-wage earners to move up career ladders, and prepare youth for the workforce with complementary programs that encourage growth and retention of skilled workers in the high technology areas, are critical to the equitable development of the City (see Figure EP-3, Educational Attainment Levels of the Over 25 Population, San Diego Region and the U.S.). These activities can assist in reducing poverty that affects the physical characteristics of communities and the overall quality of life for all community members.

The City should continue to be proactive with the private sector, educational institutions, and other agency partners in addressing shortages in our employment market. Currently, efforts are being made in our public schools, community colleges, and universities to address existing industry gaps and deficiencies. The City has participated with private, non-profit agencies that strive to create a comprehensive workforce development system that ensures a skilled productive workforce to support a healthy regional economy.

There are also additional barriers that inhibit segments of the population from fully reaping the economic and intellectual benefits of technology. Coordinated regional technology planning focused on computer ownership and internet access in homes, the quality of technology usage in schools and public access to community technology centers, would enable the City to maximize the impact of its limited discretionary funds and make better use of established programs.

Policies

EP-D.1 Strengthen the City's role in workforce development organizations that: provide adult and youth workforce development; adult retraining; and targeted services for unrepresented and under-represented groups, such as low-income youth and adults, people of color, women, individuals with disabilities and the homeless. Continue to support programs that address potential job gaps in growing industries, and current gaps throughout all industries, to match job training and workforce development with employment needs.

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EP-D.2 Support after school programs that focus on educational enrichment and skills training.

EP-D.3 Support efforts to provide labor market information from data sources and industry sectors to local educational institutions, training agencies, and the public.

EP-D.4 Encourage academic sector participation in City advisory groups that address issues of workforce development and emerging technologies.

EP-D.5 Seek the cooperation of City agencies and departments, along with other jurisdictions and organizations, to coordinate and implement regional economic and workforce goals in all areas of the City.

EP-D.6 Assist in increasing the availability, use, and attainment of technology for low-income community members.

EP-D.7 Participate with other jurisdictions and coordinate with the private sector, to establish and implement a regional technology plan that addresses the current and long-term technology needs across all industry sectors.

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Figure EP-3 Educational Attainment Levels by Race – San Diego Region

San Diego Region	White alone	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	Black alone	American Indian or Alaska Native alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	Some other race alone	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino Origin
High School Graduate	95.3%	96.7%	90.5%	75.6%	90.8%	90.0%	70.2%	78.2%	73.3%
Bachelor's Degree	50.6%	52.8%	28.9%	19.5%	55.0%	28.0%	18.4%	27.7%	20.9%

Source: 2023 U.S. Census ACS Estimates

Figure EP-4 Educational Attainment Levels of the Over 25 Population – San Diego Region

San Diego Region	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
Persons 25+	6.2%	5.4%	18.1%	20.3%	8.0%	25.6%	16.4%

Source: 2023 U.S. Census ACS Estimates

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E. Employment and Development

Goals

- A broad distribution of economic opportunity throughout the City.
- A higher standard of living through self-sufficient wages and an increase in citywide real median income per capita.
- A city with an increase in the number of quality jobs for local community members, including middle-income employment opportunities and jobs with career ladders.

Discussion

Job creation and retention is directly related to enhanced economic development opportunities. The combination of preparing the local workforce for the types of jobs the region is creating, and then focusing on developing jobs that pay an adequate wage and have advancement potential, will help the City address the disparity between income levels. The nationwide economic trend away from the production and assembly of physical goods, and toward the provision of services and the production of intellectual property, has resulted in the loss of many manufacturing jobs in the middle-income range to other regions and overseas. Within the U.S., long-term trends suggest that workers and firms have been moving to areas in the South and Southwest that have lower costs of living and lower wages.

As the eighth largest city in the country, San Diego is preparing for significant job growth through 2030 and beyond (see Figure EP-4, Employment Growth by Industry Sector). New jobs will continue to be created in industries focused on science, technology, education, and health care. The expansion of these industries in San Diego has successfully created higher income employment opportunities for local community members and has also attracted others outside the region seeking employment. Because these types of industries compete in national and international markets, they have favorable long-term growth potential and also support the development of local firms that supply services and products.

In addition, the majority of the additional jobs over the next few years will be in Health Care, Social Assistance, and Professional Services (see Figure EP-5, Top Ten Occupations with the Greatest Growth). The continued success of the health care industry and professional service occupations, provides a significant source of fiscal revenue and work for skilled workers.

The shift away from base sector manufacturing to base sector service and knowledge-based employment has contributed to a skewed economy in San Diego which diminishes the share of middle-income job opportunities. Middle-income is the income category of a household earning between 81-120 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size. A middle-income job provides benefits, offers full-time employment, and is associated with a career ladder. These jobs pay a wage that will cover the cost of housing, food, and healthcare with some money left over for savings and discretionary spending. They are central to the City's economic health because they reduce the burden on social, health, and housing programs and assure an adequate supply of discretionary income resulting in higher sales tax revenue for the City. Savings from public programs and additional sales tax revenue from discretionary purchases enable the City to invest in education, mobility, conservation, community infrastructure, and other areas vital to San Diego's economic competitiveness.

Policies

EP-E.1 Encourage the retention and creation of middle-income employment by: • Preserving employment land and capacity for base sector export industries that generate opportunities for middle-income wage earners as discussed in Section A. • Investing in infrastructure, educational and skill development, and quality of life assets that support middle-income employment development. • Encouraging the development of measures that facilitate expansion of high technology business facilities that have the potential to create middle-income jobs likely to be filled by local community members. • Supporting the creation of higher quality

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jobs in low-paying industries (such as visitor, entertainment and amusement).

EP-E.2 Support state and federal legislation, by City Council resolution, to increase employee health benefits and address the rising costs of businesses that are providing healthcare for their employees.

EP-E.3 Support the creation of higher quality jobs with advancement opportunities and self-sufficient wages.

EP-E.4 Support programs to increase the standard of living for lower-income community members.

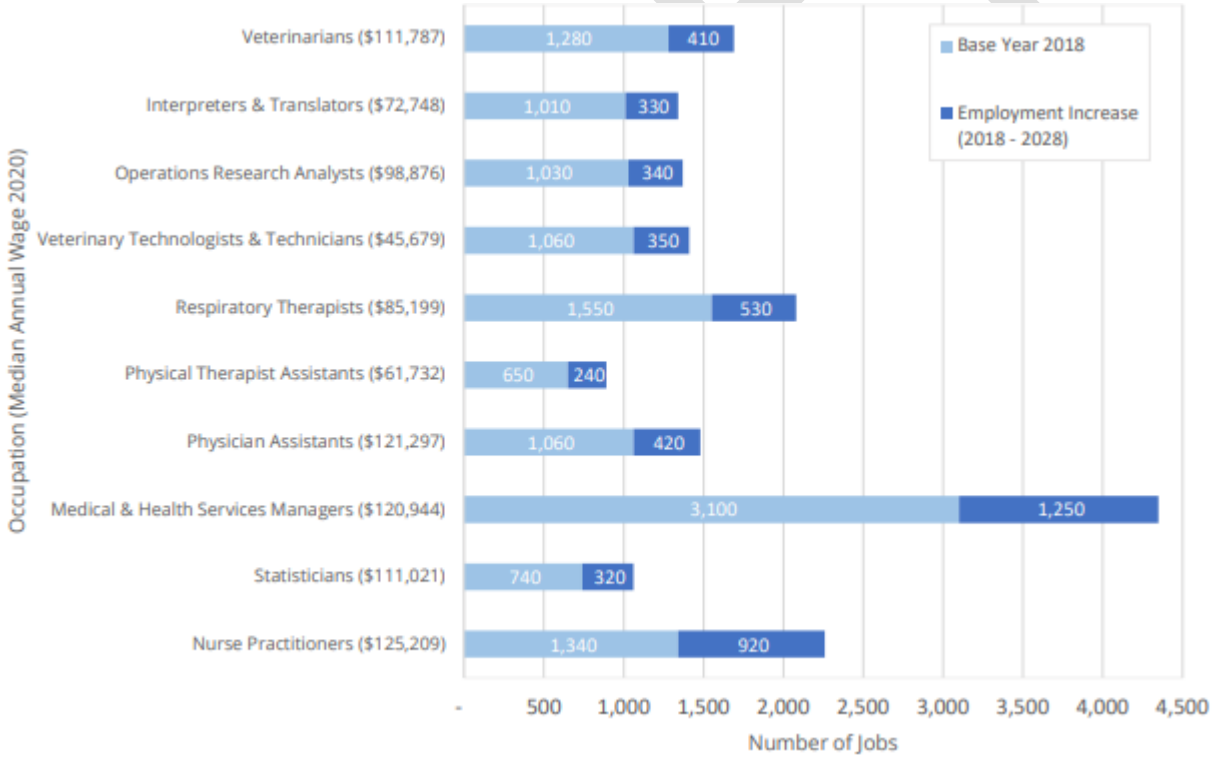
EP-E.5 Continue to promote job opportunities accessible to community members in low-income neighborhoods.

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Figure EP-5 Employment Growth by Industry Sector – City of San Diego 2020-2030



Figure EP-6 Top 10 Occupations with the Greatest Growth: San Diego Region 2018-2028



F. Business Development

Goals

- A city able to retain, attract, and maintain the type of businesses likely to contribute positively to the local economy. These industries contribute to a diverse economic base, maintain environmental quality, and provide high quality employment opportunities.
- A city focused on promoting local entrepreneurship to build locally based industries and businesses that can succeed in local, national, and international markets.
- A city with thriving businesses, particularly in existing urban areas.
- A city with opportunities for growth and expansion of small businesses.

Discussion

Businesses that contribute the most to the local economy enhance the diversity of the economic base, maintain environmental quality, generate revenue to provide essential community services, and provide employment opportunities for local community members. Although the City has many programs aimed at specific economic development goals, business incentive programs were established to attract and retain major revenue, job generating, and revitalization projects throughout the City. Municipal incentives, such as financial or processing assistance, are not a substitute for market demand. However, public incentives can focus existing demand into specific areas of the City where economic development is desired. This will increase the success of public efforts by leveraging existing limited public resources.

Nationally, there is a trend toward smaller business units that offer the innovation, speed, and flexibility required in today's economy. The vast majority of businesses operating within the City are small businesses (12 or fewer employees). They are responsible for significant portions of all new jobs created in the City and also provide revenue to the City through business license tax contributions to the general fund and increased sales tax revenue. Small businesses are more likely to be locally owned and operated, therefore a high proportion of profits are recycled into and benefit the local economy. Many businesses depend upon attracting and retaining people who have entrepreneurial, technical, or creative talent, many of whom want proximity to diverse urban centers. Therefore, the growth of small businesses also contributes to the City of Villages strategy which seeks to stimulate private investment in urban communities, improve community facilities, increase property values, and enhance community character and identity.

Policies

EP-F.1 Develop and maintain programs and services that address the changing needs of the local business community.

a. Regularly evaluate economic conditions to determine the industries, sectors, and locations that are most significant to regional and local economic growth and creation of quality jobs.

b. Update business incentive programs to provide incentives to projects and industries which have a demonstrated potential to provide middle-income job opportunities, that contribute to revitalization in urban areas, or which contribute to the development of village-type urban areas served by transit systems.

EP-F.2 Provide assistance for public improvement projects to revitalize business districts.

EP-F.3 Support and encourage local business improvement districts to provide private sector revitalization solutions.

EP-F.4 Recognize and maintain the unique qualities of the different neighborhood business districts, particularly in villages and transit corridors.

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G. Community and Infrastructure Investment

Goals

- Community revitalization through enhanced access to regional and national sources of private and public funding.
- Public and private infrastructure that supports economic prosperity, including new homes, good jobs, and needed community services, including access to healthy food.

Discussion

Capital is necessary for communities, small businesses, and industries to grow, improve productivity, and compete. The City, with the assistance of state and federal programs, invests in communities and provides assistance to small business and targeted base sector industries. These public investments leverage private investments many times over, to the benefit of San Diego's economic prosperity. Access to public and private capital is important for all communities within the City, without discrimination.

A city's most important investment in support of economic prosperity is its investment in infrastructure, particularly infrastructure that helps communities and base sector industries become more productive, leverages private investment, and help direct investment to areas with the greatest needs or potential benefits. Some of San Diego's communities need further investment and revitalization. These areas may have issues related to vacant and underutilized properties, aging infrastructure and economic activity that should be addressed, and lack of local services to meet community member needs, such as access to healthy and fresh food. The well-being of neighborhoods will require an economically balanced housing supply and sufficient infrastructure, as well as business that enhance the community, create jobs and have community support. There are existing local, state and federal programs and incentives designed to spur revitalization, and work continues on new strategies and partnerships to achieve community goals.

Policies

EP-G.1 Encourage the creation of, and cooperate with, private not-for-profit and for-profit community-based development entities to attract capital and facilitate investment in housing, business development, and services in communities in need.

EP-G.2 Prioritize economic development efforts to attract and induce investment in local businesses throughout the City.

a. Foster economic development using the incentives of the city's development programs that include business improvement districts, Promise and Opportunity Zones, and the Foreign Trade Zone program, and incentives authorized by Council Policy 900-12.

b. Assist existing business owners in accessing programs that can provide financial assistance and business consulting services. Such programs include Small Business Administration loans, the City's Small Business Loan Program, façade renovation grants, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) assistance.

c. Expand small business assistance to include direct or referred technical and financial assistance for small emerging technology firms and firms involved in international trade.

d. Pursue public/private partnerships to provide incubation spaces for small business.

e. Enhance funding opportunities for local businesses by supporting community-based lending initiatives and equity programs.

EP-G.3 Invest in public infrastructure that supports and leverages private investment in communities.

EP-G.4 Invest in public infrastructure that supports and leverages private investment in base sector industries that generate jobs with good wages, benefits, and opportunities for employee advancement.

EP-G.5 Monitor the volume and frequency of institutional investment, in the City's low-

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and moderate-income communities, for those financial institutions that are subject to the Community Reinvestment Act and other similar federal and state requirements that may emerge.

EP-G.6 Partner with other municipalities, school districts, and other public or non-profit agencies, whenever possible, to achieve General Plan and community plan goals.

EP-G.7 Eliminate or minimize land use conflicts that pose a significant hazard to human health and safety.

EP-G.8 Minimize displacement of existing community members, businesses, and uses. Those displaced should have adequate access to institutions, employment and services.

EP-G.9 Work closely with the Workforce Investment Board, school districts, and job training/placement providers to facilitate employment opportunities for San Diego community members created through the City's economic development efforts. Support education and training programs which improve the quality of San Diego's labor force and coordinate these efforts with economic development activities to help ensure that unemployed, underemployed and disadvantaged San Diegans find jobs.

EP-G.10 Utilize existing tools and zones for revitalization that include the Capital Improvement Program, Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts, Property and Business Improvement Districts, Maintenance Assessment Districts, Community Facilities Districts, and conduit revenue bond financing for industrial development.

EP-G.11 Pursue new tools, programs, and fund mechanisms for continued community revitalization and economic development.

EP-G.12 Consider the contribution to economic development and revitalization as one of the factors used in the prioritization of Capital Improvement Projects.

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H. Military Installations

Goal

- A city which preserves the ability of military installations to achieve their mission and to remain in San Diego.

Discussion

Although San Diego's economy is no longer dominated by defense and military expenditures, the military and defense sector is still a major contributor to San Diego's base sector economy through the creation of jobs, military and civilian spending, and technology. This region and the City are home to more than ten military installations, and San Diego remains the Navy's principal location for west coast and Pacific Ocean naval operations. Incompatible land uses close to military installations can have a negative impact on military readiness that may compromise the ability of an installation to achieve its mission. Additionally, such development could threaten public safety by placing community members and customers in harms way due to potential accidents. Such urban encroachment can also affect the economic health of a community if a military operation must relocate. In recognition of the importance of military facilities, the state has adopted legislation to guarantee that military interests are addressed through the planning process.

It is in the best interest of both the City and the military to continue to work together to anticipate future growth and development through comprehensive land use planning. Furthermore, they must agree on implementation and enforcement mechanisms that allow the City to maintain and enhance the quality of life without encroaching into land considered vital to this nation's defense.

Policies

EP-H.1 Coordinate with military base representatives to ensure that community plan updates and amendments, rezones, and projects for areas adjacent to military facilities, or underlying designated military training routes and airspace, do not affect military readiness. Projects and plan preparation should consider the impact of future land uses on public safety and military readiness activities carried out on military bases, installations, and operating and training areas, based upon the information that the military and other sources provide.

EP-H.2 Support efforts to retain military installations in the City.

EP-H.3 Consider uses which increase the public economic and social benefits of the land when preparing comprehensive plans for the reuse of military lands available through the realignment and closure process, including enhancement or provision of public facilities and services.

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I. Visitor Industries

Goals

- A city that encourages investments in the tourism industry that also benefit existing community members and support community reinvestment.
- A city that recognizes the benefits of and promotes cultural heritage tourism in the overall economy.

Discussion

Due to San Diego's coastal location, climate, natural amenities, and special environments; and its arts, culture, recreation, and entertainment offerings, the City has gained a reputation as a desired vacation destination. These same amenities also contribute to the quality of life for San Diego community members. In the year 2019, the San Diego region's travel and tourism industry, which includes transportation, accommodations, catering, recreation and travelers services, gained $11.6 billion from visitors, making the visitor industry San Diego's key economic driver with science, technology, and defense, which together make up a third of the regional economy.

The Transient Occupancy Tax ordinance (TOT) was adopted in 1964 to promote the tax- generating travel, tourism, and convention activities. Currently, the tax generates approximately $260 million in total revenue to the City, more than half of which contributes to the City's general fund, and almost half to special promotional programs, related economic development and tourism support, maintenance of visitor-related facilities, and capital improvements. A significant portion of these funds, including the TOT's contribution to the City's major recreational amenities (such as Balboa Park, Mission Bay, and Petco Park), also benefits local community members.

Visitor-services industries are expected to continue to generate employment growth. Based on past experience, employment growth in these industries is not expected to generate a high proportion of middle-income jobs for San Diego community members. Currently, the average annual salary for employees in the visitor service industry is approximately half of the regional average wage, ranking it among the lowest of all of the key industries in the San Diego region. Despite the low wages, the visitor-services industry contributes to the diversity and stability of the local economy, including its ability to maintain a relatively low unemployment rate and generate fiscal revenue.

An emerging component of San Diego's tourism industry is cultural tourism. Cultural heritage tourism means traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present, including irreplaceable historic, cultural, and natural resources. San Diego is rich with opportunities for cultural heritage tourism. Tourists can find first class museums, year-round cultural events, period architecture, and walking/rolling tours. It represents an increasingly large and lucrative segment of the travel industry. It not only strengthens regional identity and local pride, but is also a good source of revenue for the community. Heritage tourism, as an economic development strategy, creates new business, provides job opportunities, increases property values, and encourages private investment. It directly affects local economies while aiding the physical transformation of communities, preserves historic resources, and creates destinations for tourists and local community members.

Policies

EP-I.1 Develop a priority ranking system for Transient Occupancy Tax projects and programs which: best implements the City of Villages strategy, provides direct benefits to San Diego community members, benefits the tourism workforce and industries, and focuses on communities with existing needs and village characteristics consistent with the Public Facilities and Services Element of Section B, Prioritization. Include consideration of the following criteria and others, as needed, in the ranking system:

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• The creation of middle-income employment opportunities, and programs to assist businesses which offer sustainable wages and demonstrate the use of training or other programs resulting in career ladders for its employees; • Visitor-oriented projects and programs, including the arts that provide the most direct benefit to San Diego community members; and • Programs that will benefit the tourism workforce.

EP-I.2 Provide business incentive programs for private, tourist-related development projects which offer good employment opportunities with self-sufficient wages, training, and programs that result in career ladders for employees.

EP-I.3 Support destination attractions in San Diego that enhance tourism trade in the City including but not limited to natural resource destinations, commercial recreational attractions, sporting events, convention and meeting facilities, and the cruise ship industry.

EP-I.4 Collaborate with tourism industry representatives to design projects that enhance San Diego's cultural and natural amenities.

EP-I.5 Support the development of business attractions that are compatible with historic districts.

EP-I.6 Encourage compatible adaptive reuse of historical buildings and structures in areas designated for commercial tourism.

EP-I.7 Promote the development of walking/rolling, driving, and bicycling tours of San Diego's historic areas and special environments.

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J. International Trade, Maritime Trade, and Border Trade

Goals

- A city that takes advantage of its location as part of a greater interregional and bi-national area to be a strong competitor in the global marketplace.
- A city that actively promotes greater interregional and bi-national cooperation.
- Protection of the quality of life in the greater border region while keeping the region secure.
- Reliable and efficient passenger and commercial transportation systems along the U.S.–Mexico border.
- A city that promotes and protects waterborne industry and commerce through cargo and cruise terminals.
- An increase in commerce through enhancement of air cargo facilities and operations.
- San Diego's working waterfront to continue to become a more vital part of the region's economy and quality of life.

Discussion

Trade, commerce, and goods movement account for billions of dollars in economic growth for the U.S. (see Figure EP-6, Value of San Diego Region Exports: 1992 to 2021). This places the City, along the U.S.-Mexico border, in a unique location, particularly as a gateway to international trade in Southern California. San Diego and Tijuana have the largest population of any twin city area along the entire U.S.- Mexico border. At the San Diego-Tijuana region's two border crossings, Otay Mesa and San Ysidro, millions of northbound crossings are made each month to work, to school, to shop, and to enjoy local attractions. These visits have been estimated to contribute billions of dollars annually to the Southern California and Baja California economies.

International trade contributes greatly to our economy and directly or indirectly supports a significant number of jobs in the San Diego region. International trade is more than a quarter of U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and supports nearly 39 million American jobs. Much of our region's world trade exports pass through San Diego's international ports of entry. However, border crossing wait times for both passenger and commercial vehicles have increased the costs of international trade and adversely affect the lives of individuals from California and Baja California who cross the border.

The continuing growth of the production-sharing industry in Tijuana plays an important role in the region. San Diego-based companies offer critical support in terms of administration, logistics, transportation, research and development, shared manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution. However, the industry is under competitive pressure from other offshore production centers where the cost of labor is comparatively cheaper. To counter this effect, Baja California is developing other sectors such as the automobile, pharmaceutical, and technology industries, and defense work where proximity to the market is a significant factor.

The Port of San Diego represents the economic ideal of industrial diversification as an economic motivator for the entire region. The San Diego region operates cargo facilities that support trade and manufacturing, as well as nonmanufacturing activities, such as maritime commerce, goods movement, retail, boat charters, marina services, bay cruises, sport and commercial fishing, yacht sales, lodging, and the military. The waterfront supports a significant amount of both civilian and military workers. Based on the economic importance of the waterfront to the San Diego region, preserving and protecting San Diego's waterfront business activities is critical in providing a diverse workforce and regional economic vitality. San Diego should also assure that commerce related to air cargo distribution continues to expand. Additional discussion of air cargo and goods movement is contained in the Mobility Element, Sections H and J.

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Policies

EP-J.1 Participate in and support regional and bi-national efforts that develop strategies for key border issues (such as the alleviation of long border wait times, infrastructure improvements, public safety, economic development, border inspection and national security at the international border and surrounding area).

EP-J.2 Support trade-related activities along the border, such as warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, assembly, production sharing, and transportation-related facilities.

EP-J.3 Encourage participation in business incentive areas/zones in Otay Mesa and San Ysidro to take advantage of their unique location for industries engaged in production sharing strategies and cross-border trade.

EP-J.4 Support infrastructure improvements that encourage the expansion of international trade capabilities in the City and the bi-national region.

EP-J.5 Support measures to encourage frequent border crossers to participate in ports of entry programs. These measures should also facilitate the application process for people and vehicles.

EP-J.6 Support efforts that facilitate the efficient movement of goods across the border for rail and truck (such as dedicated fast lanes and crossing cards) that expedite border crossing for the production sharing trucking industry.

EP-J.7 Create international connections that improve port-of-entry efficiency, enhance linkages, and improve border appearance to foster a more welcoming environment.

EP-J.8 Support efforts to expand the hours of operation for the commercial port of entry at Otay Mesa to achieve greater flexibility and competitiveness for the entire border region.

EP-J.9 Retain land uses to support waterfront commerce and industry that provide for U.S. Naval operations, ship repair, and the movement of waterborne goods.

EP-J.10 Protect and promote good working-waterfront jobs that provide self-sufficient wages.

EP-J.11 Promote the expansion of air cargo capacity in San Diego.

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Figure EP-7 Value of San Diego Region Exports: 1992 to 2021



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K. Economic Information, Monitoring, and Strategic Initiatives

Goals

- An informed public decision-making process providing economic information to the public and decision-makers.

Discussion

Major development projects can have a significant affect on a community's economic environment, especially those projects that were not envisioned as part of the community in the planning process. A formal method of providing information on the fiscal and economic impacts of revisions to community plans can assist decision-makers, community planning groups and other community members that review planning projects. The assessment should serve as an informational tool only; it should not create criteria or standards for project approval.

Indicators have been developed for the purpose of monitoring community economic performance. Traditionally, economic indicators have focused on the profits and losses of community businesses. However, the vision outlined in the City's Economic Prosperity Element requires a more comprehensive view by adding indicators to address housing, smart growth, and equity—all facets of San Diego's economic prosperity. The indicators, in combination with the existing conditions database, will provide decision-makers and community groups with frequently updated information about their communities.

Based on the monitoring of near- and long-term economic information and trends and a continual assessment of San Diego's competitiveness in a global marketplace, it is important to develop, update, and maintain (along with the private sector) an economic development strategy linked to the regional economic development strategy that identifies and responds to issues, establishes priorities, and lays out strategies and initiatives for existing and new industries.

Policies

EP-K.1 Prepare and update an Economic Development Strategy every three years to report on economic trends, describe targeted industry clusters, identify economic issues for the City, inform infrastructure and land use priorities, develop strategies for addressing near- to mid-term economic issues, and identify new initiatives with the private sector, within the context of long-term goals.

EP-K.2 Prepare a report that addresses economic and fiscal impacts associated with significant community plan amendments involving land use or intensity revisions. A determination of whether this report is required for should be made when the community plan amendment is initiated.

EP-K.3 Prepare a Market and Fiscal Analysis for discretionary permits involving large retail establishments over 100,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.

EP-K.4 Continue to evaluate citywide and community economic conditions on an ongoing basis, provide regular economic reports to decision makers, and update the list of economic indicators as new data become available.

EP-K.5 Utilize economic indicators to identify the need for new strategies and establish priorities for public investment.

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