

5. Economic Development Element **DRAFT**

Portola, as many other small, rural communities, has experienced economic stagnation because of the long-term decline of basic industries such as mining and forestry. Historically, the local economic base relied on extracting and consuming natural resources. Basic industries that brought new revenue to the community formerly meant exporting the natural resource. Relatively low wages, high unemployment, low property values, and little prospect for return of the historic job base are common economic factors.

However, new circumstances promise new economic growth if communities are poised to take advantage of them. These circumstances include:

- an increase in healthy active people seeking retirement in attractive communities with recreation opportunities,
- new telecommunications technologies that enable businesses to locate virtually anywhere, and
- an increase in tourism and retirement lifestyles brought about in part by the overall health and wealth of people throughout the nation.

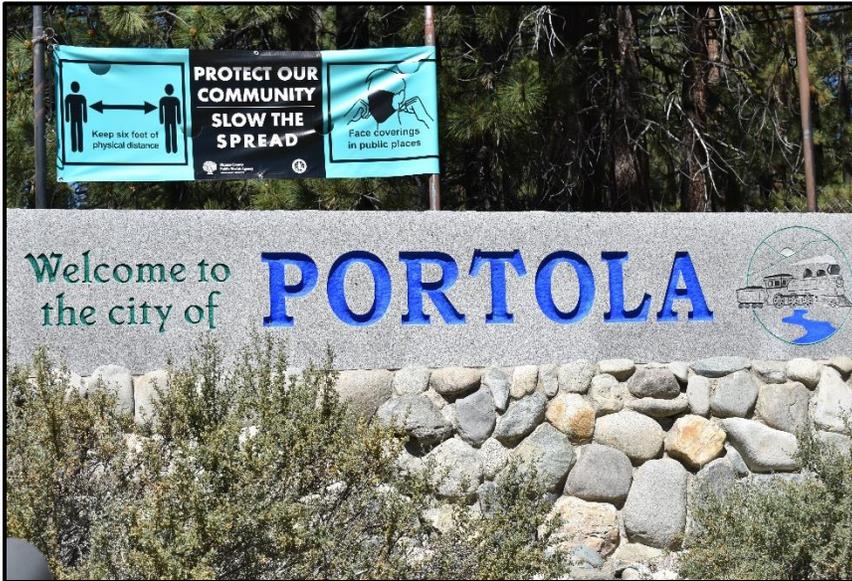
Traditional location criteria such as availability of shipping or the aggregation of certain services or business connections have become less important for many types of businesses. With the advent of various telecommunications technologies, and growth in industries based on information services and manufacture of small, highly transportable goods, business decision-makers can be much more flexible in selecting a new business location.

The new criterion for business growth is broader than the traditional concerns. In addition to the need for access to markets and transportation, the new criterion includes the availability of business services, telecommunications technology, and the quality of the local environment. For some employers the quality of life opportunities are now as important as proximity to markets and transportation.

Economic development opportunities in Portola will occur, in part, because of the high level of natural amenity and recreation resources. Protection of the visual and natural amenity in this area is essential to the success of economic development. Good housing, good schools and parks, a vibrant social and cultural life, recreation opportunities, good transportation systems, and above all, an attractive natural setting are essential to the future potential growth in jobs and economic opportunities.

The strategy underlying this Element is to enhance and broaden tourism as a basic economic engine, and to establish a new non-tourism employment base in the City. This is accomplished by establishing land use, community design, circulation, public facilities, and natural resource conservation goals, policies and standards in the General Plan and

Portola Municipal Code that will accommodate new growth while protecting the natural environment.



Authority

The Economic Development Element is an optional element of the General Plan under Section 65303 of the Government Code.

“The general plan may include any other elements or address any other subjects which, in the judgment of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county or city.”

Relationship to Other Elements of the General Plan

Although this is an optional element, it is given considerable weight in this General Plan. The success of economic development is interwoven with virtually all aspects of the community. Thus, the Economic Development Element incorporates policies and concepts that are linked with the Land Use Element, Housing Element, Public Facilities Element, Open Space and Conservation Element, and the Circulation Element.

Regional Cooperation

Portola is the service center of the east Plumas region, and the economic future of the City significantly depends on maintaining and expanding that role. Consequently, the economic success of Portola is closely linked with the success of the enterprises in the region. Provided that economic growth in the surrounding area is of good quality and does not diminish the environmental qualities that attract visitors and new residents, Portola will benefit from the success of its economic neighbors and will cooperate in efforts to ensure their success.

Economic Development Goals

| | |
|------------|--|
| Goal ED-1. | Expand stable year-round employment. |
| Goal ED-2. | Attract new industries that are compatible with the natural amenities and character of the City. |
| Goal ED-3. | Expand and diversify tourism both within the City and in the eastern Plumas County region. |
| Goal ED-4. | Expand education and training opportunities for City residents. |

Policies: Business Innovation and Development

- ED-P-1.** Promote new businesses that are forward-looking and apply innovative technology and practices, and that are compatible with character of the community.
- ED-P-3.** Facilitate development of commercial uses and business parks within the City.
- ED-P-4.** Maintain an adequate supply of appropriately located and zoned land to provide opportunities for industrial/ business-professional and commercial development.

Implementation: Business Innovation and Development

- ED-I-2.** Develop an incentive program for industries that meet the profile. Incentives may include cooperation in expediting land use entitlements, providing phased payment of fees, City of Portola contribution to land acquisition costs, and other financial and procedural inducements within the means of the City of Portola.
- ED-I-3.** Continue to work with property owners in the undeveloped and unserved areas to share the cost of extending sewer, streets, water distribution, and utilities among benefiting land owners.
- ED-I-4.** Monitor the consumption of undeveloped land designated for residential, commercial and industrial/ business-professional uses and supplement the land use by periodically amending the General Plan to ensure there is an adequate supply of suitable land for at least five years.

Policies: Emphasis on Protecting Natural Amenities

ED-P-5. Emphasize the quality of the natural environment as an essential feature of the City's economic development efforts.

Implementation: Emphasis on Protecting Natural Amenities

ED-I-4. Maintain and enhance the quality of the natural environment through the various policies included in the Land Use Element, Community Design Element, and the Conservation Element.

ED-I-5. Identify the quality of the local environment as an essential concern of the City in the review of all applications for development.

Policies: Local Self-Reliance

ED-P-6. Emphasize local self-reliance by using local resources, including the local work force, capital resources, transportation resources, as well as natural resources in economic development efforts.

ED-P-7. Encourage expansion of local businesses.

ED-P-8. Strengthen the City's tax base by attracting small, environmentally sensitive businesses with tax generation potential.

ED-P-9. Exercise initiative in forming public/private partnerships to create jobs and new economic opportunities.

ED-P-10. Enhance opportunities for economic development between the City of Portola and the Union Pacific Railroad.

Implementation: Local Self-Reliance

ED-I-10. Prepare an inventory of the local resources to assist in marketing the area to prospective new employers.

ED-I-11. Encourage new businesses to employ local residents.

ED-I-16. Function as the master developer and organize land owners in under-developed and unserved areas of the City to prepare and implement plans for extending sewer, water, drainage, utilities and streets in order to facilitate development of individual properties.

ED-I-18. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships in economic development.

- ED-I-19.** Identify and pursue state, federal, and other grants targeting infrastructure and land improvements, job training, new technology and other programs directed toward economic development.
- ED-I-20.** Seek opportunities to provide enterprise services, such as the management of public recreation facilities and concessions at Lake Davis that will generate additional employment opportunities for City residents.
- ED-I-21.** Invite the local managers of the Union Pacific Railroad to meet with the City Manager and City Council on a biannual basis to discuss opportunities for economic development that relate to use of the railroad services.

Policies: Affordable Housing, Education, and Training

- ED-P-11.** Enhance the aspects of the community that will help economic development efforts to draw employers and visitors to the area. This includes quality housing and neighborhoods, quality education, recreation and cultural resources.
- ED-P-12.** Promote education and training efforts to employ residents in new industrial opportunities and to enhance the labor force as a draw for new businesses.

Implementation: Affordable Housing, Education, and Training

- ED-I-22.** Establish a set of standards and “quality of life” criteria for attracting new businesses.
- ED-I-24.** Establish a partnership with the Plumas Unified School District, and particularly the administration of schools in Portola. The purpose is to identify methods of sharing resources to enhance the education value of the local schools.
- ED-I-27.** Work with the schools to establish practical job training and vocational education programs geared to industries and occupational needs anticipated in the area.
- ED-I-29.** Monitor the availability of housing in the City relative to the growth in planned employment within a ten mile radius of Portola and, at a minimum of three year intervals, evaluate the need for additional land area for housing to accommodate new housing.



Policies: Infrastructure for Economic Development

ED-P-13. Ensure that the highest available levels of communications, transportation, and public infrastructure are available in Portola.

ED-P-14. Ensure that development pays a fair share of community costs associated with the development, but assist new businesses to find funding for new investment in the community.

Implementation: Infrastructure for Economic Development

ED-I-30. Maintain a Capital Improvements Program that identifies the one, five, and ten year plan for upgrading existing and constructing new infrastructure to serve industrial/business-professional, commercial and residential areas.

ED-I-31. Encourage implementation of agreements among electric service providers in the region that ensure adequate and reliable electric power sources and distribution systems in Portola.

ED-I-32. Seek to establish fiber optic, or alternate high speed communications service, within Portola and periodically meet with the service provider to review the service. As technology evolves to a new type of service, the City of Portola will seek to ensure that the "state-of-the art" in communications is available.

ED-I-35. Establish funding for new road improvements and on-going road maintenance related to the development and ultimate use of the land.

ED-I-36. Encourage Plumas County to maintain and improve Nervino Airport in support of business and tourism.

ED-I-37. Encourage local businesses to support the use of Nervino Airport by including it in advertising, and to provide services, such as airport pickup, for general aviation travelers.

ED-I-38. Review the City of Portola development fee schedule on an annual basis to ensure that the fees charged reasonable, but sufficient to ensure that all new service and public facilities costs resulting from new development are paid by the development.

Policies: Community Image and Quality of Life

ED-P-15. Maintain and enhance an attractive community environment that will draw visitors, residents, and new employers.

Implementation: Community Image and Quality of Life

ED-I-41. Vigorously enforce nuisance abatement procedures to ensure that dilapidated properties will not become visual blight.

ED-I-42. Establish guidelines for providing assistance in clearing dilapidated properties to low income households and others reasonably unable to comply with City of Portola nuisance abatement procedures.

ED-I-43. Implement the policies established in the Community Design Element on all public lands, facilities, and rights-of-way.

Policies: Regional Cooperation

ED-P-17. Encourage and participate in regional cooperative efforts for economic development by building long-term partnerships between the City of Portola, Plumas County, businesses, business organizations, and the educational, arts and environmental groups.

ED-P-18. The City of Portola will cooperate with other agencies, interest groups, businesses, and private citizens in promoting tourism and leisure industry activities in the East Plumas County region.

Implementation: Regional Cooperation

ED-I-48. Participate in regional joint marketing programs.

ED-I-49. Maintain a web page to provide information about the City of Portola and local businesses on the Internet.

Policies: Timely Development Review Procedures

ED-P-19. Establish a standard procedure for responding to inquiries about locating businesses in Portola. Such a procedure should provide a level of certainty and immediacy for applicants to assure them of the City's interest in economic development.

Implementation: Timely Development Review Procedures

ED-I-51. Appoint a City staff member to work with local organizations, commercial brokers, and project applicants.

ED-I-52. Establish clear zoning and development standards that will expedite the City's project review process.

ED-I-54. Publish a simple, clear set of guidelines and procedures for development project applicants. The publication should outline the steps involved in project entitlement and provide the name and telephone number of City and other agency staff people involved in the project review process.

Policies: Expand Tourism and Visitor Opportunities

ED-P-20. Encourage development of new tourism activity beyond the traditional summer season.

ED-P-21. Encourage the development of conference and meeting facilities.

ED-P-22. Establish multiple locations for special events throughout the core of the City. The intent is to accommodate multiple events concurrently, or to accommodate a single large event spread over several sites.

ED-P-23. Encourage development of lodging facilities.

ED-P-24. Encourage development of the railroad museum as a major visitor attraction for Portola.

Implementation: Expand Tourism and Visitor Opportunities

ED-I-55. Identify and designate sites that may be used in a coordinated program for activities.

ED-I-56. Acquire additional facilities for events, such as the vacant block adjacent to the Railroad Museum and the old hospital site.

ED-I-57. Designate sites appropriate for lodging facilities.

- ED-I-59.** Work with local businesses and land owners to identify suitable locations for conference and meeting facilities to host seminars, business meetings, small conferences, and social events.

- ED-I-61.** Establish a cooperative working agreement with the Railroad Museum to promote visits to the museum and related visitor tourist activities.

DRAFT