

CHAPTER FOUR: JOBS AND SHOPPING

Building off the Economic Development Committee's (EDC) 2008 Economic Development Program (endorsed by the EDC on December 2008), this chapter identifies strategies to grow Brookfield's economy and explores the essential connections between economic development and other aspects of community health, such as education. Overall, Brookfield has a healthy and diverse local economy and is well-positioned to maintain its current strength, but its future success is by no means assured. The City must effectively leverage its assets and take advantage of its opportunities, as summarized in the Vision chapter of this Plan.

At the time this Plan was written, the world was experiencing an economic recession. In this context, it is important to remember that this is a long-range plan intended to guide the development, redevelopment, and preservation of the City over the next 25 years. When compared to the planning period, the recession will likely be quite a short term event. While the recession may delay the implementation of some recommendations in this and other chapters that are driven by private development, the continued and in certain cases, increasing availability of state and federal grants may allow other recommendations to move forward more quickly.

Jobs and Shopping Principle (Goal)

Brookfield is a premier commercial and job center that supplies valuable products and services; embraces "new economy" solutions; cultivates family-supporting careers; and offers the ideal home base for experiencing the Milwaukee area.

Jobs and Shopping Objectives (from Economic Development Program)

1. Maintain a strong working relationship among the City, its EDC, and other local and regional economic entities affecting the future of the City of Brookfield.
2. Increase Brookfield's profile as a visitor destination and attract more nonresidents to the City for conferences, events, recreational activities, and shopping.
3. Maintain a strong working relationship between the EDC and the Community Development Authority (CDA) regarding future land development and redevelopment issues in the City.
4. Ensure that high quality businesses already operating in Brookfield remain in the City, are supported by the City's economic development programs, and are provided with an environment that promotes their growth in Brookfield.
5. Strive to attract high-quality businesses to Brookfield with a particular focus on businesses in industries poised to succeed in the changing national and regional economy and on businesses that provide a diverse mix of high-quality jobs.
6. Become a regional leader in energy efficiency and sustainability through new economy and technology business development.
7. Streamline the processes for reviewing, regulating, and permitting new development projects to help ensure that the development process is comprehensible, predictable, supports small businesses, and leads to a high-quality built environment.
8. Promote, advance, and monitor the City's high quality of life as a key tool for economic development and business retention and attraction.

Jobs and Shopping Policies

1. Encourage and focus redevelopment within Targeted Investment Areas (TIAs) to support the continued economic and fiscal vitality of those areas and the City as a whole.
2. Provide sufficient business and industrial sites for the community to be competitive in attracting high quality enterprises, and in helping existing businesses grow if relocation is necessary.
3. Promote the development of new small, locally-owned businesses in Brookfield—particularly through collaboration with Baby Boomers and other emerging entrepreneurs interested in new career opportunities—and support existing small businesses.
4. Geographically target business attraction to bring businesses to appropriate parts of Brookfield based on the nature of the business and the character of the area.
5. Continue to build the City’s non-residential tax base as an asset for public education providers, and collaborate with them when major new economic development proposals are offered.
6. Support educational initiatives that recognize the changing economy and provide students with the skills to address these changes, extending from elementary school to higher education to lifelong learning opportunities.
7. Work with the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce, Brookfield Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation, Milwaukee 7 and other regional organizations to address the concerns and issues of the area; promote a healthy and vibrant business community; advance the establishment of more high-technology businesses, jobs, and employees; and advance Brookfield as a conference and convention destination.
8. Consider the appropriate use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and other financial incentives and implementation tools to promote desirable business development, redevelopment, and expansion.
9. Continue to promote “quality of life” improvements and developments which make Brookfield a more desirable community for existing and future residents and businesses.
10. Continue to use the City’s Economic Development Program as a detailed “to do” list for economic development policies and initiatives, update as appropriate, and make sure the Economic Development Program and Comprehensive Plan remain compatible.
11. Support transportation options to meet the needs of the Brookfield business community, consistent with the directions advised in the Transportation chapter of this Plan.
12. Support creation and rehabilitation of housing choices in Brookfield to support local workforce and economic opportunities, while retaining Brookfield’s position as an owner-occupied, single-family community.



Brookfield provides a variety of settings for a diverse range of businesses, including this one on Capitol Drive

13. Working with the CDA, promote the identification, clean-up, and reuse of environmentally contaminated sites for economic development purposes, where consistent with the City's land use plans (see Map 1 and any detailed TIA plan affecting the area). Recognize and communicate that, in general, environmental contamination is not a major impediment to productive use or redevelopment in Brookfield.
14. Work with State representatives and other partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to change State law or rules in a manner that is more supportive of business development and retention, without compromising other aspects of the City's Vision.

Jobs and Shopping Programs and Initiatives

The City intends to pursue the following initiatives in support of its vision for jobs and shopping:

Implement the EDC's Economic Development Program

The City of Brookfield's Economic Development Program is intended to communicate the City's economic development vision and provide clear objectives and strategies to achieve that vision. It was recently updated in collaboration with this comprehensive planning project. The City intends to continue to implement, monitor, and update this document. These efforts will be guided by the EDC and its staff in the City's Community Development Department.



Shopping development in Brookfield on Bluemound Road

The following initiatives are elaborations of recommendations from the Economic Development Program, which were selected for more detailed consideration because they particularly implement the 2035 Vision and because Comprehensive Plan participants requested further elaboration.

Help Expand Innovation-Driven Businesses in Brookfield

Building on one key objective of the 2008 Economic Development Program, the City intends to begin a concerted effort retain, help grow, and attract more high-tech, innovation-driven companies. This may be initiated through the following approach:

- **Create a comprehensive list of innovation-oriented, high-tech companies currently headquartered or operating in Brookfield.** A initial but certainly incomplete list includes Milwaukee Electric Tool Corporation (innovative power tools, battery technology), Hydrite Chemical (industrial chemicals, research on conversion of woody biomass into biofuels and other wood-based products), FiServ, Inc. (financial technology services), Symmetrix Software (software for automation industry), Syslogic (IT services), Wisdom InfoTech (IT Services), and Flextech Systems (design, prototyping and manufacture of special purpose electronics).
- **Talk with representatives from these companies.** Such invaluable contacts would be used to find out more about their services and products, customers, partners and suppliers, emerging technologies and products, pending expansion plans, general needs for growing technology-

based businesses and employment in Brookfield, and the general direction of their industry(ies). This will help the City's Economic Development Committee and its staff gain a greater understanding of Brookfield's existing strengths and opportunities to cluster synergistic companies in the community.

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- **Consider creating a private-sector focused Brookfield innovation committee.** This could alternatively be a subcommittee of the Economic Development Committee. In any respect, it would include representatives from technology-based and innovation-driven companies currently in Brookfield to provide informed guidance to the City. Brookfield will then be in a position to begin providing missing or deficient pieces of the puzzle to fuel the growth of technology- and innovation-based businesses in Brookfield.
- **Create or adapt business recruitment marketing materials to highlight Brookfield's human capital, quality of life, access, education, and other assets as identified as important through the above efforts.**
- **Position the 124th Capitol TIA as a location for start-up or less-capitalized companies, and the Northwest Gateway TIA for more mature technology-based companies (i.e., as a "Brookfield Technology Park").** For example, the City or EDC may work with the owners of commercial and industrial properties through Brookfield to support technology- and innovation-based businesses.
- **Collaborate regionally to increase these businesses and the talent pool to support them, such as through Milwaukee 7.** Some Plan participants have identified a shortage of Milwaukee-area employees trained in the latest technologies and accustomed to using these technologies as a key challenge for further growth in technology-based businesses. Clearly, the solution to this issue goes beyond what Brookfield can accomplish alone. The City intends to collaborate regionally through Milwaukee 7 to promote the Milwaukee metropolitan area to targeted industry clusters, such as information technology, environmental technology and innovation, and next generation manufacturing, and the talent pool to support these industries.



Employment development in Brookfield



“EDGE CITY” EXAMPLES

How have other Edge Cities expanded innovation-driven business opportunities?

Oakland County, MI (population 1,207,603) has developed numerous initiatives to contact, recruit, and assist industrial and high technology companies, including:

- Conducting overseas corporate recruitment trade missions,
- Participating in domestic and international technology conferences and trade shows,
- Maintaining technology industry association memberships,
- Providing assistance to existing and new companies for expansion, site selection, financing, venture capital, permits, and regulation compliance.
- Collaborating with university research and development activities.
- Providing the Headquarters for Automation Alley, founded in 1998, as a cooperative consortium of more than 600 industrial and high technology companies in southeast Michigan.

Leverage the Strengths of the Baby Boom Generation

“Baby Boomer” is the name given to the record-breaking 76 million Americans born between 1946 and 1964. Brookfield, like most communities across the U.S., faces the impending retirement of this prominent segment of their population—a group that accounts for a large percentage of consumer spending, as well as a disproportionate share of growth and consumption. This presents an economic challenge for the community and the region, such as a talent shortage for many businesses and industries, and the potential loss of institutional knowledge in the workplace.

Coping with this significant financial, physical, and social change also presents an opportunity; in an economy where knowledge and experience are roots of success, a community’s ability to become a talent magnet, and to engage and facilitate the economic potential of its Boomers could greatly enhance its economic prosperity.

Understanding this demographic and social shift in the region, the City will work to retain the knowledge and talent of this key segment of the workforce by:

- Supporting home-based businesses that do not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood and other small office facilities, particularly with TIAs.
- Promoting entrepreneurship among this population, either in their primary area of experience or in an entirely new field.
- Expanding educational opportunities such as a mentor program with younger generations and teaching positions at Waukesha County Technical College and private education institutions like Brookfield Academy. See Chapter Six: Education for more details.