



Economic Development Position Statement

I. The essential elements for quality of life are a job and economic stability.

A former President once said "the best social program is a job." Finding and keeping a well paying job is, for most citizens, essential to enjoying a high quality of life. Neighborhood residents, business owners and property owners must recognize that their concerns are interdependent rather than adversarial. Economic development must be a priority at both the policy and bureau levels. Business associations, neighborhood associations, City Council, City Bureaus, planners and regulators must work in concert to achieve a balance of economic vitality and livability.

II. When City bureaus and other public agencies concerned with development issues are pursuing redevelopment, changes to commercial corridors, or areas of commercial concentration, job retention and creation must be the primary factor. *The anticipated impact on jobs through redevelopment must consider not only the number of jobs, but the wage and benefit quality of the jobs. Gentrification and densification of commercial corridors must not eliminate the availability of affordable commercial space which is vital to a wide spectrum of essential service industries. Existing industrial zones must be protected.*

III. In order to be profitable and to create jobs, business requires a cost climate of certainty and constancy. *Expanding regulations, high system development charges, the Business Income Tax/Business License Fee, retroactive tax increases and ever increasing water and sewer rates are all factors which will lead to a business decision to either leave, not expand, or not locate in the City of Portland or Multnomah County.*

IV. A sound transportation infrastructure is vital for a healthy business environment. *Portland's position as a global import/export facility is dependent upon the ability of goods and services to flow freely into and within the region. The City must be proactive in its endeavors and cooperate with both Multnomah County and Metro to prevent further degradation of our highway, rail and water transportation routes and facilities. The time and difficulty involved in offloading and transporting goods will be the primary factor in consideration of this region as a distribution center.*

V. Small businesses and large businesses are mutually reliant. *Small businesses, in most cases, rely on large businesses to purchase their goods and services. Consumer oriented businesses rely on the quality employment provided by larger businesses for the discretionary dollars which allow people to shop. Large businesses rely on the diverse range of products and services provided by the small employers. The City must recognize this mutual reliance and not adopt policies which appear to be small business friendly to the detriment of large business.*

VI. Availability of capital financing is essential to a healthy business environment. *City policy makers and regulators must recognize that barriers to business not only impact the ability of a business to be profitable, but also affect its ability to obtain financing. Since most business failures are associated with debt burden, the city must recognize that high permit fees and system development charges increase the capital required for a business start. The city must fight to retain economic development dollars in the budget and distribute those dollars in such a way as to provide the broadest assistance possible.*