

## 8. Economic Development Element

This chapter is a required element of a comprehensive plan that has been initially developed to meet the main provisions of the GMA. Further updates to this chapter are anticipated in the future (as funding becomes available) to ensure the chapter meets all of the requirements under the GMA. In overview, this chapter presents a brief description of the economic setting in Nooksack followed by economic development goals and policies.

### **Economic Setting**

#### Existing Conditions

Nooksack is small town located less than ten miles south of the Canadian border. SR 9 is a state highway that connects Nooksack to the international border crossing to the north at Sumas and to Sedro-Woolley and other locations in Washington to the south. SR 544 also connects the city to Everson and other urban areas to the west. The city has several commercial businesses primarily located along SR 9. These include commercial fueling operations, vehicle repair, convenience stores, farm supply, storage units and other commercial businesses. A cluster of commercial businesses is located in the Central Market District near the intersection of SR 9 and Madison Street, including a restaurant, grocery store, hair salon, auto repair shops, and real estate office.

The city's light industrial zone includes manufacturing, trucking and construction-related businesses. Undeveloped land within the industrial area is very limited.

#### Future Conditions

The commercial businesses in Nooksack will continue to serve the local and travelling public. The city would like to see increased development of pedestrian-oriented businesses in the Central Market District to allow citizens to have access to these businesses from the adjacent residential areas.

As part of the 2016 update of the Whatcom County comprehensive plan, the city proposed the addition of a 29-acre future industrial area located north of Tom Road adjacent to SR 9. In addition to having access to the state highway, this area can be readily served by existing water and sewer mains and three-phase electrical power.

### **Goals and Policies**

Goal. Maintain and increase access to commercial areas within Nooksack.

Policy. The city should maintain an adequate supply of commercially zoned land to serve local residents and the travelling public.

Policy. The city should encourage pedestrian-oriented businesses to locate in the Central Market District.

Policy: The city should work with business owners to ensure an adequate supply of on-street and off-street parking to serve commercial businesses.

Goal. Expand opportunities for industrial development within Nooksack.

Policy. The city should work with Whatcom County to designate additional lands suitable for industrial development to be included in the Nooksack UGA.

Policy. The city should encourage private property owners to develop lands within Nooksack that are well-suited for light industrial and manufacturing operations to provide jobs for local residents.

Goal. Attract new businesses to provide jobs and serve the local community.

Policy. The city should maintain utility rates and connection charges at levels that support the establishment and retention of businesses within Nooksack.

Policy. The city should maintain permit application review procedures that process applications in an efficient manner.