

Auburn Business Incentives

If you're considering incentives for doing business in Auburn you may only need to look as far as a statement taken directly from our Mayor Lewis, "Through our partnerships across counties and governmental bodies we will stand by your side to bring you the best experience possible as we help each other become more successful." You see, Auburn truly is open for business! From the actions of our City Council to the operations you'll experience working with staff, Auburn is providing something special. But if your Performa needs that extra little edge, this web page is provided to you for that idea or incentive that gets you and your business to success!

The following list provides a significant list of business incentives. These pages are "active and living" as we are constantly working to add and subtract new programs as they come available. In no way do we represent that every opportunity listed in this site can apply to each prospective Auburn business, but this list is compiled to offer options for consideration to our prospective client partners. Thank you for the opportunity to serve!

1. General Service:

- A. Auburn is not a major metropolis. This industrious City with a population of 70,000+ is the 13th largest jurisdiction in the State of Washington and as such clients and prospective businesses can expect unique, personalized service that only a mid-sized community can offer. To that end we have created 'Our Service Pledge'. Please see the top of the page at the following link: <http://intranet.auburn.local/community/connections.htm> .
- B. When you come to Auburn with a new project the first question our One-Stop Permit Center often asks is "When do you need to be open?" Early Site Review, including formal and informal Pre-Application Review meetings are routinely utilized to allow the City to work with designers for the earliest possible time, avoiding costly mistakes, and guiding applicants through a more predictable process and outcome.
- C. Workforce Development, Business Assistance and Business Development Programs are services routinely provided through our Office of Economic Development and we are able and willing to assist clients with specific training needs upon request and if the specialized training your firm requires cannot be accomplished by us, we will work with [Workforce Development Partners](#) to develop the appropriate training program. A list of currently scheduled programs can be found on our Economic Development Web Page at: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/business/economicdevelopment.asp> as well as a list of past events taped to create webinar for the use of our client customers.
- D. The City of Auburn Office of Economic Development is always pleased to make introductions between our local businesses and prospective new business. Face-to-face introductions are an essential part of our economic mission and we gain great value through these mutual business relationships. The City has a wide variety of contacts; Material Suppliers, Manufacturers, Supply and Logistics, Alternative Energy Equipment, Education, Professional, Medical, etc. and we are eager to assist you in any way necessary.

2. Innovation Partnership Zone (IPZ):

- A. One of only 15 statewide Innovation Partnership Zone designations, the IPZ is intended to promote opportunities for collaboration and partnering between the City, researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, industry associations and training providers. The 'Auburn Center for Innovative Partners' comprises working clusters of diverse industries engaged in innovative research, development, and production. Detailed information including benefits can be found at <http://www.auburnwa.gov/business/economicdevelopment.asp>.
- B. Waiver of Undergrounding Aerial Utilities: *Coming soon for City Council consideration this FY 2012/13.*
- C. Project Grant Funding: For FY 2012/13, the State Legislature has dedicated \$16M in CERB grant funding and \$13.5M in project specific funding for use within the IPZ programs. Formulas and criteria for funding allocations are still being developed.

3. Downtown Urban Center (DUC):

- A. Multi-Family Tax Exemption: The Auburn DUC provides the opportunity for multi-family property tax exemptions of 8 years for new multi-family or rehabilitated housing units constructed downtown; or 12 year tax exemptions for qualified affordable housing units. Detailed information on this program is located within the Auburn City Code 3.94 and can be found on-line at: <http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/auburn>.
- B. Downtown Zoning and Design Standards: The City has worked aggressively to create review and amend its DUC Zoning Regulations and associated Design Standards to guide development within the zone in the easiest possible ways. (Please Note: Auburn has no Design Review Board. Reviews within the DUC are performed at staff level.)
- C. Comprehensive Environmental Impact Review: A downtown Environmental Impact Review (EIR) has been completed for the Urban Core. Projects submitted will benefit from a significantly improved timeline as they will only need a project review for compliance with the EIR Statement.
- D. Store Front Improvement Program: The Auburn City Council has created a program to help fund the revitalization of the existing building facades fund by property and business owners.
- E. Storefronts Art Program: The Storefronts Auburn Program has been launched to bring art installations and artist into vacant retail space within the DUC.
- F. New Market Tax Credits: Businesses developing, buying, or remodeling in downtown Auburn census tracts can get equity or below-market loans through this federal program. Investors in these projects can receive up to 39% tax credits over seven years. For additional program information visit: <http://www.cdfifund.gov>.

4. Auburn Junction Incentives (DUC):
 - A. Traffic Impact Fee Waiver: The Auburn Junction Project is a 4 block redevelopment site located within the DUC which offers a waiver of Traffic Impact Fees for new construction.
 - B. Auburn Junction Design Standards: City Council has approved specific Design Standards to guide development within Auburn Junction. (Please Note: Auburn has no Design Review Board. Reviews within the DUC are performed at staff level.)
 - C. Storm Water Capacity Infrastructure: Significant infrastructure has been designed and installed into the Auburn Junction Project to benefit proposed development projects.
 - D. 75% City Fee Reduction: **Effective only for calendar year 2013**; the City Council has approved a broad reduction of all Park Impact as well as City Building, Engineering and Planning fees on all project permit applications approved within the Auburn Junction district. **This incentive will sunset December 31, 2013.**
5. Citywide Incentives Programs:
 - A. Impact and System Development Fee Deferral: The City of Auburn has approved code authorizing the deferral of Impact and SDC Fees to Occupancy of projects as opposed to collecting fees at Building Permit Issuance to help developers and builders strengthen their project Performa.
 - B. Fee Maintenance to 2009 Rates: To assist our Builders and Developers through the current economic recession, the City Council approved to maintain all building, land use and engineering review fees at 2009 levels.
 - C. No City Business and Operations Tax: To encourage business growth and retention, the City of Auburn does not have a B & O tax. The State B&O tax is a gross receipts tax which is measured on the value of products, gross proceeds of sale, or gross income of the business. Most cities within the region and throughout the state include a municipal percentage onto this B & O Tax which typically adds 2% or more.
 - D. Construction Sales Tax Refund: This program provides a modification to Auburn City Code providing a refund for purchasers who have paid Sales and Use Tax on construction materials, fixed equipment, labor and services, or machinery installation directly related to new commercial construction, or redevelopment of existing vacant buildings. The program provides a refund of up to \$100,000 or 20% of the tax paid within land use zones DUC, C3, C4, and M1, M2 districts.
 - E. Small Business Development Fee Reduction: City Council has passed a program entitled Small Business Development Assistance intended to help with the start up costs for small businesses of 20 or fewer full time employees by reducing the costs of certain City of Auburn permit fees by a rate of 50%. See Resolution 4793 for additional information.

- F. System Development Charges (SDC) and Utility Connections Reductions: Heavy water users have an opportunity to save money through design when presenting their projects to the City of Auburn. Options Include:
 - Splitting large services through multiple meters can be just as efficient and cost far less than large oversized meters.
 - Designing systems for the re-use of water within the site or facility offers the opportunity to install a ‘deduct’ meter. This can lead to reduced System Development Charges, and can significantly improve monthly operational costs.
 - G. System Development Charge Credits: SDC credits for prior site/building uses can be utilized to help offset the impacts of System Development Charges.
 - H. Storm Water Discharge Reductions: Storm Water drainage is a significant issue throughout the Green River Valley and the State of Washington. The use of impervious surfaces, bio-swales and other drainage materials/methods can be utilized as a tool for savings in the category of Storm Water SDC’s.
 - I. State B & O Tax Credit - Customized Workforce Training Program: Green River Community College (GRCC) is an Auburn Institution which offers incentives for customized workforce development training. Engage in customized training, add new jobs in Washington, and get a state Business & Occupation (B&O) tax credit equal to 50% of the training cost as you repay the cost of training. For information on this program visit: <http://www.workforcecollege.com/funding.asp> .
6. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Programs:
- A. The City of Auburn relies on our energy partner PSE for our reliable energy supply. PSE offers numerous programs for commercial businesses with a focus on Energy Efficiency. PSE programs range from appliance and equipment purchases, building controls and systems, engineering and design assistance, to alternative energy components. City staff will work closely with your designers and the specialists at PSE to identify potential system savings. Visit PSE at: <http://pse.com/savingsandenergycenter/ForBusinesses/Pages/Rebates-and-In> for more information on programs available at this time that may apply to your business venture.
7. King County Assistance:
- A. King County Small Business Revolving Fund: The Grow King County Fund is a small business revolving loan fund intended to spur business development and job creation. Through King County funding, this program provides small business loans with an SBA guarantee to finance existing, growing small businesses. Information on this fund can be found at: <http://www.ci.bothell.wa.us/Site/Content/Economic%20Development/Business%20Resources/GrowKingCntyFund.pdf> .
8. State of Washington Assistance:
- A. The Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) is Washington's strategic economic development resource, focused on creating and retaining jobs in partnership with local

government. CERB finances public infrastructure to encourage new development and expansion in targeted areas. Visit: <http://www.choosewashington.com> for information.

- B. Small Business Credit: Administered through the Dept. of Commerce, the CAP will target small businesses with credit needs in the range of \$5,000 to \$100,000 that have had difficulty accessing credit. The CAP will provide additional insurance by establishing a fund that lenders can access in the event of loan defaults. For additional information, visit: <http://www.choosewashington.com> .
 - C. Small Business Financing: Administered through the Dept. of Commerce, Craft3 direct loans primarily target business financing needs of \$1-5M. Its collaboration efforts with other CFDIs and lenders in the state targets smaller loans through a shared risk structure. For additional information, visit: <http://www.choosewashington.com> .
 - D. The W Fund – Venture Capital: The W Fund is a \$25M venture fund, available for investment into early-stage life science, biotech, medical device, alternative energy, and information technology companies emerging from University of Washington, Washington State University, and other research centers across Washington State. Administered through the Dept. of Commerce, information can be found at: <http://www.choosewashington.com> .
 - E. Incentive Programs - Deferrals, Exemptions, and Credits: New and existing manufacturers, research and development firms, and certain high technology companies can benefit from several tax incentives offered by the state of Washington. With numerous programs to choose from, these incentives are intended to encourage the creation and preservation of family-wage jobs, especially in areas with high unemployment. For more information visit: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/findtaxesandrates/taxincentives/incentiveprograms.aspx> .
 - F. Industrial Revenue Bonds: Provide financing for land, building and equipment for new and expanding manufacturing facilities. These loans may be used to encourage relocations and expansions of companies that provide jobs and expand economic opportunities for residents and the community. Tax exempt bonds may be applied for by the manufacturer, processing company or wholesale distribution center. For more information visit: <http://www.choosewashington.com> .
9. Federal Business Assistance:
- A. Work Force Opportunity Tax Credit: The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a Federal tax credit incentive that the Congress provides to private-sector businesses for hiring individuals from nine target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. The objective is to enable the targeted employees to move from economic dependency into self-sufficiency. Participating employers are compensated by being able to reduce their federal income tax liability.

- B. Federal Contracting Preference – Hub Zone Program: The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers a program which provides Contracting Preference on Federal Contracts for small businesses located with qualified Hub Zones. Auburn’s Hub Zone is located north of Highway 18 between West Valley Highway and Auburn Way and is bordered on the north by 277th Street.

- C. Small Business Administration (SBA): SBA offers a variety of programs and support services to help you navigate the issues you face with your initial applications, and resources to help after you open for business; including numerous loans and grant programs. For more information visit: <http://www.sba.gov> .