

# CITY OF FOREST GROVE



## 2025 CITY COUNCIL GOALS + ACTION PLAN



SSW CONSULTING



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# Introduction

The City of Forest Grove is pleased to present a summary of its January 2025 Council Retreat.

On January 18, 2025, the City Council and leadership team met to gain a deeper understanding of the current community and organizational landscape. The goal was to refine strategic goals that would guide the organization over the next year.

To facilitate this process, the City engaged SSW Consulting, a professional facilitation and strategic planning firm. The retreat aimed to achieve the following:

- Facilitate a team-building experience that will foster a strong and cohesive team among the Council and staff to support the Council in their role as leaders and policymakers
- Review the roles of policymakers and administration in the Council-Manager form of government and discuss expectations/agreements that will strengthen the partnership between staff and Council to advance the goals and objectives
- Provide an overview of the Forest Grove Forward project and review the results of the community engagement to inform the refinement of the Council's goals
- Build a shared understanding of the current goals and progress status and recommend refinements for 2025

Before the retreat, SSW Consulting conducted individual outreach interviews with members of City Council. This information helped shape the retreat agenda to ensure a productive and engaging experience.

During the retreat, staff and Council members worked to refine the goals developed in 2024, considering progress made and emerging priorities. They collaborated to assess the current community and organizational context, including staff capacity, the City's budget and financial outlook, and community needs. This collective effort resulted in the development of clear and measurable goals to guide the organization over the year ahead.

The City appreciates the engagement and participation of the Council and staff. The team looks forward to working together to advance these goals in alignment with the community's vision through the Forest Grove Forward community visioning process.



# Forest Grove Team

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## **City Council**

Mayor Malynda Wenzl  
Councilor Angel Falconer  
Councilor Brian Schimmel  
Councilor Donna Gustafson  
Councilor Mariana Valenzuela  
Councilor Karen Martinez  
Councilor Michael Marshall

## **City Team**

City Manager Jesse VanderZanden  
Assistant City Manager & Finance Director Paul Downey  
City Recorder Mariah Woods  
Communications & Programs Manager Stephanie Fleischer  
Community Development Director Bryan Pohl  
Economic Development Coordinator Miles Glowacki  
Engineering & Public Works Director Greg Robertson  
Fire Chief Jim Geering  
Human Resources Director Brenda Camilli  
Light & Power Director Keith Hormann  
Parks and Recreation Director Anne Lane  
Police Chief Henry Reimann



# Politics + Administration

## Defining Expectations

To kick off the retreat, the team discussed the unique roles of Council policy and staff administration to facilitate stronger partnerships. Using the graphic on the following page as a guide, they identified expectations for staff and Council, including:

### **Expectations of Council:**

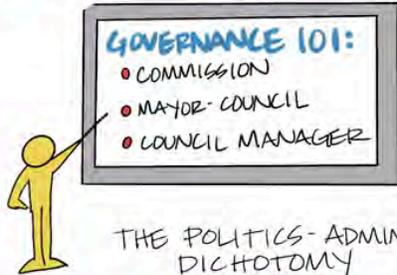
- Make Decisions — this keeps the work moving, agendas on schedule, especially with consultants/engineers
- Ask Questions
- Act as One Body — Be deliberate, decide, and commit regardless of our decision, no sabotage
- Partnership with Staff
- Follow Communication Protocols
- Be Prepared - read materials, meet with staff, questions in advance
- Groundedness - Being mindful of capacity, being realistic, stay focused
- Open Mind - understanding the range of concerns. We are here to serve the whole community and different perspectives
- Show up and Support the Policy Work - Attend events, be engaged, advocate for the work the team is doing

### **Expectations of Staff:**

- Provide Professional / Technical Expertise
- Neutral Advice
- High-Performing Organization
- Partnership with Council
- Clear and Concise Timely, Proactive Communication
- Get the Best Quality Information to Council. Do the work - research the totality, most recent practices. Bring unbiased information. Be objective.
- Remember our Role - we are not the policymakers. Do the work, but let go of the outcome. The best we can do is equip the council to make a decision. Council has policy authority
- Efficiency - Stewardship, balancing with efficacy
- If Staff Needs Clarification, Expectation to Ask So We Can Move Ahead
- Consistency - terms are uniform and understood

# POLITICS + ADMINISTRATION

● HOW THE ROLES EVOLVED



THE POLITICS-ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY  
 THE THEORY THAT CONSTRUCTS THE BOUNDARIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION + ASSERTS THE NORMATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ELECTED OFFICIALS + ADMINISTRATORS IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

## PARTNERSHIP!



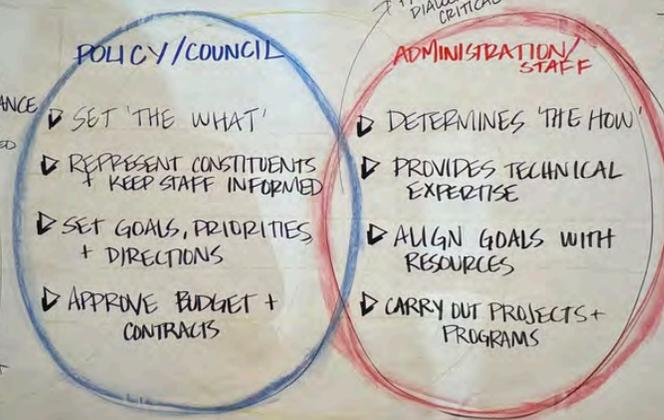
## EXPECTATIONS:

- MAKE DECISIONS
- ASK QUESTIONS
- ACT AS ONE BODY
- PARTNERSHIP WITH STAFF
- FOLLOW COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS
- PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL EXPERTISE
- NEUTRAL ADVICE
- HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION
- PARTNERSHIP WITH COUNCIL

## POLICY + ADMINISTRATION ROLES + EXPECTATIONS

### EXPECTATIONS:

- ▶ **BE PREPARED**  
READ MATERIALS, MEET W/ STAFF, QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE  
DO HOMEWORK OR ASK FOR SUPPORT IF NEEDED
- ▶ **GROUNDENESS** - MINDFUL OF CAPACITY STAY FOCUSED
- ▶ **OPEN MIND**  
UNDERSTAND + OPEN TO DIFF. PERSPECTIVES
- ▶ **SHOW UP + SUPPORT THE POLICY WORK**  
BE ENGAGED + ADVOCATE FOR OUR WORK  
MAKE THE GOAL CLEAR + IMPORTANT
- ▶ **ACT AS ONE BODY**  
RESPECT FOR THE ROLE COMMITMENT
- ▶ **MAKE DECISIONS**
- ▶ **FOLLOW COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS**  
DISCIPLINE



### EXPECTATIONS:

- ▶ **CLEAR + TIMELY COMMUNICATION**  
PROACTIVE, CONCISE  
CONFIDENT TO PRESENT INFO  
SEEK CLARIFICATION WHERE NEEDED
- ▶ **DO THE WORK**  
CLARIFY ASSUMPTIONS, RESEARCH  
BRING BEST/MOST ACCURATE INFO  
BE OBJECTIVE + UNBIASED
- ▶ **OUTCOME IS IN THE COUNCIL**  
RESPECT THE ROLE  
LET GO - COUNCIL HAS POLICY AUTHORITY
- ▶ **RELIABILITY** - IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITY  
EXECUTE W/ EFFICIENCY  
BALANCE EFFICACY W/ EFFICIENCY  
CONSISTENCY

# Forest Grove Forward

## Understanding + Visioning

Following the discussion of roles and expectations of Council and City staff, the team worked together to build an understanding of the Forest Grove Forward community visioning project currently underway, the engagement results from the first phase of engagement with the community, and the next steps for developing the community vision.

In April 2024, the City of Forest Grove began a community visioning process that includes envisioning the overall future of Forest Grove over the next 15 years and translating community aspirations into a clear vision that will guide the City's strategic planning efforts and decision-making. The desire for a long-range community visioning process came from the Council's goal-setting process in 2023 with the intention to align future Council goal setting with the resulting community vision, which is anticipated to be adopted by City Council in July 2025.

As part of this intention for alignment with the forthcoming community vision, the team received an overview of the visioning project process and a summary of the community engagement results from the past seven months, which reached thousands of community members through a variety of engagement methods, including interviews, community group meetings, online survey, and outreach at community events, local businesses, neighborhoods, apartment complexes, senior living facilities, Forest Grove High School, and Pacific University.

Following the overview of the engagement results, the team discussed the themes that emerged from the engagement and participated in a visioning exercise to provide the Council's input on the development of the community vision and discussed how the vision framework will support and align with the Council's priority development process in future years.



## Community Connection

- Central point of connection
- More engagement with Spanish speakers
- Community calendar - single place to go
- Senior/Community Center to be used more
- Access to community "house" for people to gather
- Equipped with WiFi
- Downtown Glow Up
- Planning for 75 years in the future; equal access
- Gathering spaces
- Festival Street option
- Opportunities for community engagement
- Downtown lighting project
- Connect with City and other residents
- Walkable hubs from different neighborhoods

## Health, Safety, + Well-Being

- PD: crime decreased in 2024
- Infrastructure stability and economic growth opportunities
- Performance metrics
- If we hit the other 5 goals well, it will support this goal area
- Fire: Standards for calls for service
- Establish a standard for staffing
- End result is health and safety, livability, quality of life
- Performance driven; existing dashboard we can use
- Do we have the appropriate ordinances in place to support this goal area?
- For community understanding on how metrics support a safe community
- Tied to levy
- For community understanding on how metrics support a safe community
- Services aligned with community need

## Housing

- Housing design standards
- Intentional housing planning
- Get away from cookie-cutter design, but tends to be more expensive
- Design standards, streamlined process
- Keeping State mandates in mind
- Design standards
- Need housing by downtown core to support vibrant downtown
- Choice to live and work here
- Education about housing (UGB, CFEC)
- Abundant, choice, affordable
- Supports every income level and stage of life

## Parks + Recreation

- Recreation/Athletic Center
- A place where community can come together, new pool, competitions/tourism
- Sell current pool to Pacific University
- Do it in stages so it is not a big undertaking
- Implement the 10-minute walk to park goal (We are close - only two parks left!)
- Multi-use recreation center
- Potential rec/pool center with PacU, would take time/visioning, but interest is there
- Collaborate with Pacific University, non-profits
- Education on a parks fee study to fund

## Transportation + Mobility

- Restore 19th and Pacific to two-way traffic
- Whatever form we chose, it it safe, accessible, affordable and we have the infrastrure. to support it
- Walkability, neighborhood/community connection, lower speeds, improves safety
- Fly fishing: attracter pattern
- "Decouple the couplet"
- Cars are currently blasting through these roads, we want people to slow down, stop, stay. Turn to more neighborhood-type streets
- Educate people on parking options, wayfinding

## Economy

- Leveraging industrial and commercial space to create a sustainable tax base
- Desire to bolster downtown, but limited resources to do so (events, improvements, flower baskets, etc.)
- Harness and refine downtown
- Business improvement district
- Main Street as a gathering space
- Diversification, technical assistance, and workshops
- Ties to community connection

# Goal Refinement Process

Forest Grove City Council and staff meet annually to refine the Council goals, providing policy direction for the next year. These goals serve as a foundation for the City's budget and department work plans, ensuring alignment of resources and staff capacity.

During the retreat, the team collaboratively reviewed the 2024 goals and supporting objectives. Drawing on insights from the past year of progress and the community visioning engagement results, the team worked in small groups to update the objectives which were identified for refinement and develop potential new objectives for the goals. These updates reflected the work accomplished in 2024 and incorporated opportunities for the next year.

Following the small group discussions, the team reconvened to map out the refined and new objectives.

Following the adoption of the community vision anticipated in July 2025, future Council goal-setting processes will align with the goals established in the community vision.



# CITY OF FOREST GROVE

## 2025 CITY COUNCIL GOALS



Address Long-Term  
**Growth** + Support **Housing**  
+ **Economic Stability**



Ensure an **Inclusive**,  
**Accessible**, + **Sustainable**  
Community



Maintain Community **Safety**  
+ **Well-Being**



Enhance **Recreation**  
Opportunities for All

## THE VALUES THAT GUIDE OUR WORK

**Financial  
Stewardship**

**Community  
Engagement**

**Equity,  
Diversity,  
+ Inclusion**

**Strategic  
Planning**

# Goal 1: Address Long-Term Growth + Support Housing + Economic Stability



## OUTCOMES:

- Proactive and strategic planning that meets community needs
- Robust business community
- Environmentally sustainable policies and programs

OBJECTIVE	DEPT.	YEARS
1.1 Initiate policy discussions on an urban reserve growth strategy	CD	1
1.2 Update and adopt the Economic Opportunities Analysis and the Economic Development Strategic Plan	CD	1
1.3 Update, adopt, and implement the Comprehensive Plan	CD	3
1.4 Develop and publish ADU toolkit	CD	2
1.5 Clarify strategic direction for downtown redevelopment and partnerships	CD	1

## Goal 2: Ensure an Inclusive, Accessible, + Sustainable Community



### OUTCOMES:

- Community growth and enhancement that considers the needs of the diverse community

OBJECTIVE	DEPT.	YEARS
2.1 Adopt a 2040 Vision and Action Plan	ADM	1
2.2 Hold a work session to discuss DEI policies and programs	CC	1
2.3 Evaluate funding options and implement the Urban Renewal Plan	CD	1
2.4 Develop a community academy	ADM / LIB	2
2.5 Evaluate City Council accessibility and compensation options	ADM	1
2.6 Evaluate staff capacity in administration and parks maintenance	ADM / P&R	1
2.7 Create a parking demand management plan	CD / PW	2

## Goal 3: Maintain Community Safety + Well-Being



### OUTCOMES:

- Plans that support consistent community safety services that align with projected City growth

OBJECTIVE	DEPT.	YEARS
3.1 Complete alternatives analysis for a northern fire station and select a preferred alternative	FIRE	2
3.2 Pass the Police Station Bond Measure	ADM / POL	1
3.3 Implement public safety response times dashboard	FIRE	1
3.4 Identify code updates to improve code enforcement services	POL	2

# Goal 4: Enhance Recreation Opportunities for All



**OUTCOMES:**

- Increased quality of life for a happy and healthy community
- Fiscal sustainability for maintenance and operations
- Accessible recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities

OBJECTIVE	DEPT.	YEARS
4.1 Complete Parks and Recreation cost recovery plan	P&R	1
4.2 Construct Eastside Park	P&R	2
4.3 Update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan	P&R	3
4.4 Complete design for Kyle Park	P&R	1
4.5 Develop the Forest Grove Loop Trail Master Plan	P&R	2
4.6 Identify, consider, and plan for WCCLS library governance and funding	LIB	1
4.7 Partner with the County to develop the Council Creek Regional Trail	PW	2

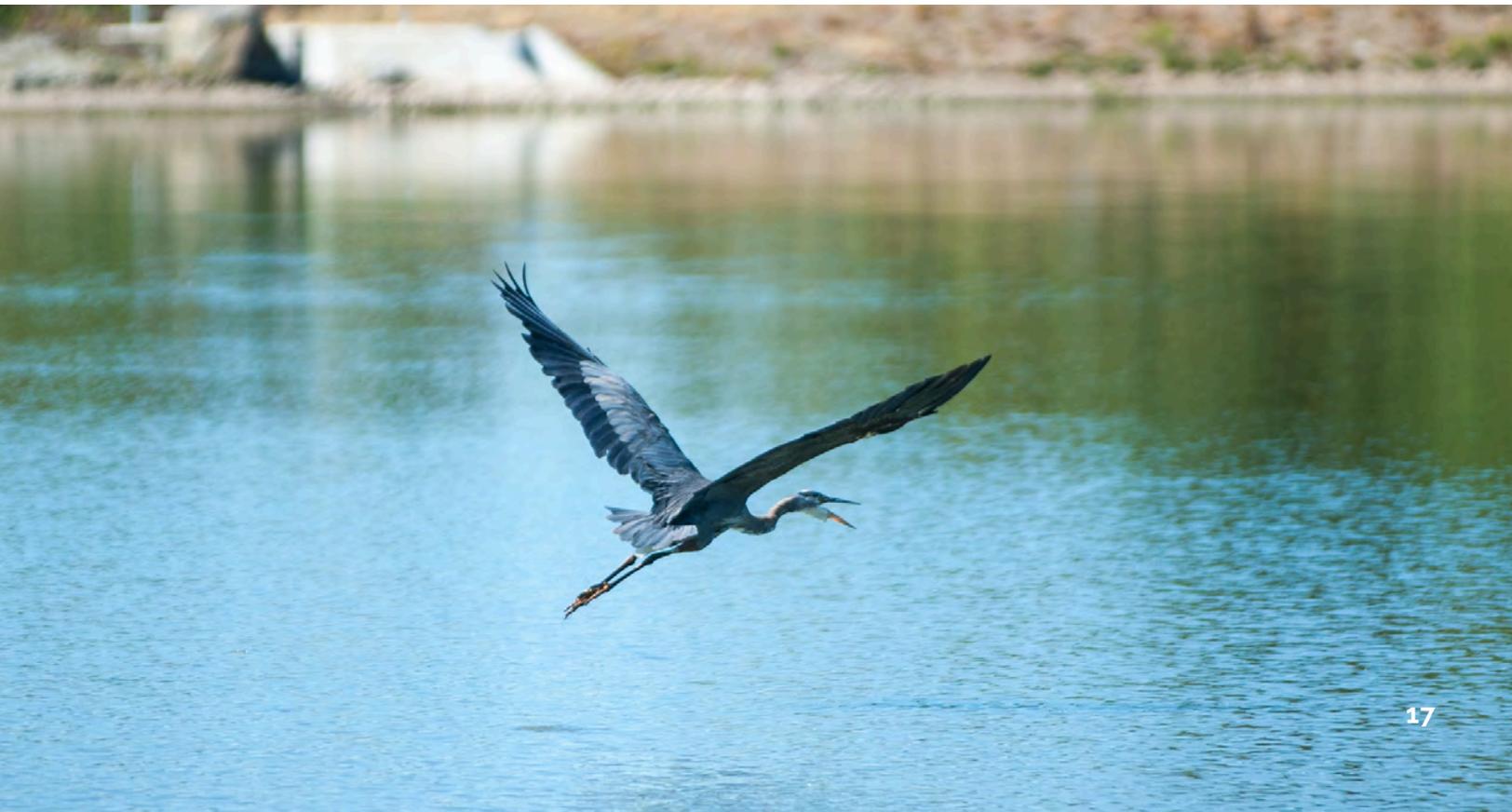
# Implementation + Progress Reporting

The Council and staff have developed the following process to support accountability and transparency in the implementation of the goals and objectives.

City staff will determine project leads and expected completion (one to three years, depending on the project), and identify Boards and Commissions to further support advancing the goals as directed by Council. Staff will develop work plans for each objective to outline the projected timeline, milestones, financial impact, and staff roles.

Staff will present regular updates to City Council on the goals and objectives. These updates will include any progress to advance the goals, challenges to be addressed, and areas needing clarification and/or further direction from Council. Additionally, staff will highlight any goals and objectives in relevant staff reports and continue to provide real-time updates to Council on relevant projects as needed.

The team will revisit the Council goals in 2026 to assess progress, refine existing goals as needed, and develop new goals to align with the community priorities expressed in the community vision.



# CITY OF FOREST GROVE

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