Creswell State of the City Address
Mayor Richard Zettervall
February 12, 2019

To the Creswell community,

This is my first State of the City Address as your newly elected Mayor of Creswell. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of you for your confidence in me. I am very happy and excited to continue my service for the next two years and to get to work with our new City Council and continue the excellent work that has been started.

I would like to thank former Mayor Dave Stram for his six years of service as the Mayor of Creswell. His leadership has been a wonderful example. It will be my goal to lead our City Council on the course that has been laid out by him, our City Manager and city staff. The course has been set, and the path is before us, I look forward to many more successes.

2018 was a really good year in Creswell. I want to thank all of the City Councilors that worked so hard on the many complex and important tasks and issues last year. Every single one of you played a key role in achieving great progress.

There are three City Councilors who are continuing their service. They are: Councilors Judy Drago, Amy Knudsen and Martha McReynolds Jr. Thank you for your continued service. Councilor Misty Inman won the write-in vote and has chosen to continue her service, thank you. I would like to welcome the two newest members to the City Council: Councilors Alonzo Costilla and Kevin Prociw. Thank you for choosing to serve. Both of these gentlemen have already demonstrated their dedication, willingness to learn, and excitement to serve. That bodes well for 2019, for our City Council and for the citizens we serve.

I would like to express my thanks to our City Manager, Michelle Amberg and our entire city staff. Their dedication and hard work for the City Council and the citizens of Creswell is truly incredible. Creswell is very fortunate to have the city staff that we have. City Manager Amberg has said on many occasions that our city staff are the best
and most talented people that she has ever had the pleasure to work with, and I totally agree!

Lastly, I want to thank all of the volunteers that serve on the many Advisory Committees and Commissions. Your service to Creswell is a vital part of a properly functioning government. The City and City Council could not complete the good work that has been done and will continue to be done, without your service. Thank you very much!

2018 City Accomplishments

There were many wonderful things that were accomplished in 2018 by our City Staff and the City Council. The list is very long. I will share some of the more significant accomplishments;

* Adopted the Parks & Open Space Master Plan
* Entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Cottage Grove for building inspection services
* Began processing building permits through the State e-Permitting system
* Adopted the City’s Emergency Operations Plan
* Held Creswell’s first ever Emergency Preparedness Fair
* Worked with the South Lane County Fire and Rescue Board on plans for a new Creswell Fire Station
* Completed and adopted the Airport Strategic Vision Plan
* Adopted a Tobacco Retail Licensing Ordinance
* Completed the 5th Street Project
* Received Government Finance Officers Association’s Budget Award for the 2nd year in row
* Adopted an ordinance prohibiting the storage of vehicles on public property
* Amended the City Development Code to allow accessory dwelling units
* Began work on the City’s Transportation System Plan
* Received a $1,035,000 Federal FAA Grant for the Creswell Airport
* Authorized a long-term lease between the City of Creswell and Community Food for Creswell to assist them in their plans to install a commercial kitchen in the Cobalt Activity Center
* Created an Urban Renewal Agency and Urban Renewal District
* Transferred ownership of the Old School House to the Creswell Heritage Foundation along with a one-time grant

This is only a partial list of the accomplishments in 2018, there are many more. None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the large number of people who are dedicated to Creswell. You can pat yourselves on the back. You can
take great pride in knowing that you played a big part of the positive work being accomplished in our community.

Thank you very much, Creswell is a better place because of our volunteers!

**Looking forward into 2019**

I’m very excited to get to work with our City Manager, city staff and our new City Council. Together, we will work hard and hopefully will have an equally impressive list of accomplishments in 2019. Creswell is facing many challenging issues and some that will be really exciting. Below, I will outline the issues that our city staff, City Councilors, Committees and Commissions will be working on in 2019.

**Affordable Housing**

Creswell faces a shortage of affordable housing. Current projections show that over the next 20 years, Creswell will need more than 800 new housing units, half of which will need to be affordable housing. Like many other cities across Oregon, Creswell is exploring a wide variety of programs that offer more affordable housing options.

Workforce housing is a term used by many cities across the country. The National Real Estate Investor states that Workforce Housing; “.... generally serves families and households making greater than 60 percent on the average median income, (AMI), and up to 120 percent percent of the AMI in the highest local metropolitan area.” I have had conversations with Creswell business owners who have told me that their employees looking for housing in Creswell cannot find it here. These business owners want housing to be affordable and available to their employees right here in Creswell.

Many meetings are currently planned with our State Legislators and Lane County Commissioner to talk about creative ideas and solutions that can bring more housing options to Creswell. This is not an issue that is an easy one to solve, but rest assured it will be a very high priority in 2019 and beyond. All of us need to be concerned with the lack of housing and a variety of housing options and to work together on creative solutions.

Since being elected I have had meetings and discussions with the Creswell School District. My eyes have been opened to the challenges that some of Creswell’s students face every day due to the lack of food and housing. The numbers of students who are classified as homeless in Creswell is truly staggering. I was shocked to hear these statistics! Let’s pledge to work together with the School District and do everything that we can to ensure that every child has adequate food and housing here in Creswell.
Economic Development

An important component of economic development and job creation in Creswell is the development of the vacant commercial and industrial lands, such as the former Bald Knob Mill site. This site is one of the largest parcels of industrial land on the entire I-5 corridor in Oregon. There are many challenges with this parcel. The Phase I and Phase II environmental testing has been completed and the results show limited contamination that is concentrated in the creek that bisects the property. Your City Council will be focusing on the development of the former Bald Knob Mill site.

Additionally, we have a strong desire to see vacant commercial property on the east side of Creswell developed to provide jobs, services and retail opportunities in our community. I am committed to explore all possible avenues to spur the development of these parcels.

Public Safety

Public Safety in Creswell is one of my highest priorities. I have charged the City Council’s Public Safety Committee to; “Evaluate and make recommendations regarding ballot language and the possible cost of a Public Safety Levy to be placed on the ballot for the November 2020 General Election. Recommendation should take into account replacing the current Public Safety Fee and providing 24-hour Lane County Sheriff Office contract police coverage to the City of Creswell.” Our City Council will be working on this and it is my hope that a public safety levy in November 2020 will be approved and provide Creswell with 24-hour police coverage.

Public Safety does not always revolve around police coverage. There are many factors that go into making people feel safe or not feel safe. The City Council will be discussing the subject, “Do you feel safe in Creswell?” at the Monday, February 25, 2019, City Council Work Session. This is a topic that will only be successful with a large amount of public input. I welcome you to come to City Hall’s Council Chambers at 6:00pm on February 25th to be part of the discussion and solution(s).

Parks in Creswell

2019 should be a very exciting year regarding the addition of new city parks in Creswell. The addition of a new park on South 2nd Street behind the New Hope Baptist Church will mark the first park south of Oregon Avenue in Creswell’s history. When completed, this will be very exciting and definitely a day to celebrate.

In December 2018 the City Council adopted the 2018-2028 Parks and Open Space Master Plan. This document will guide the future of Creswell Parks, for the next decade. The adoption of this document represents the culmination of a great deal of
work by a large number of dedicated people. Conservation Technix, Inc. was contracted as the consultant to work on the creation of the document. The City Council then adopted it as one of their last action items of 2018. Mayor Stram can be proud to see the completion of this master plan on his last night facilitating a City Council meeting.

Creswell Municipal Airport

Creswell’s Hobby Field is very important to our City. Our municipal airport provides services to a large number of federal, state, corporate and private pilots. It is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the state.

Representative Peter DeFazio announced on August 27, 2018 that the Creswell Hobby Field Airport will receive $200,000 from the Federal Aviation Administration for the reconstruction of its taxiway. Representative DeFazio said that the money is “.... great news for the many businesses and general aviation pilots who use the Hobby Field Airport.” This is great news and cause for celebration.

Creswell’s Hobby Field Airport is not currently served with water or sewer services. Bringing water and sewer services to the airport is of extreme importance and will be a very high priority in my term.

The City of Creswell has purchased a large hangar and will be partnering with the Creswell School District to bring, S.T.E.M, (Science Technology Engineering and Math) classes to the airport. These students will have the opportunity to participate in vocational training including drone technology. Drone’s, also known as, UAV’s (Unmanned Aviation Vehicles), can be used in a wide array of industries from construction, engineering, utilities, energy, media, agriculture, entertainment, and forestry. These fields offer good paying jobs to students who complete the program and do not want to attend traditional colleges.

In Closing...

We can all take pride in the excellent work done by the dozens of volunteers who give of their time, talents and efforts with an uncompromising dedication for the betterment of Creswell. The City could not function without them. I welcome everyone to follow the example of these volunteers and come join us! I look forward to more people coming together and working alongside your City Council, an exceptional city staff, and all of these wonderful caring and dedicated volunteers to make Creswell even better still.

Respectfully,
Mayor Richard Zetervall