Creswell State of the City Address
Richard Zettervall, Creswell Mayor
February 10, 2020

To the Creswell Community,

It seems impossible to me that I have served as the Mayor of Creswell for over a year now. As I get older, time seems to be the one thing that never changes. It goes by faster every day. Like the lyrics of the song in “Fly like an Eagle,” by the Steve Miller Band, “....Time keeps on slipping, slipping, slipping into the future....” That is so true. There is still much work to be accomplished, and as, time keeps slipping by, I have to work with the time that I have and work hard toward the goals that I see for Creswell. I look forward to the challenges we will face moving into the new decade.

I would like to thank all of the city councilors that have worked so hard on the many complex and important issues that we faced in 2019. Your preparation, dedication and respect for each other, even when our opinions differed, was a joy to behold. In the end, we made the difficult decisions for the betterment of Creswell.

In 2020, all six city councilors are continuing in their service to Creswell. As many of you know, over the last several years, there has been a fairly high turnover of city councilors. With all six city councilors continuing in their service, the City of Creswell is very fortunate to have such a great group of councilors. Every one of them are independent thinkers and offer varying points of view on the many issues that we face. I feel that the City of Creswell is better served because of that. Every one of the city councilors has engaged in continued training and educational opportunities. They are experienced, intelligent, dedicated, and compassionate. What more could you ask for in your elected officials? I look forward to 2020 and working with each and every one of you serving the citizens of Creswell.

I would like to express a huge thank you to our City Manager, Michelle Amberg. Her amazing dedication and hard work for the city council and the citizens of Creswell is truly remarkable. Creswell is very fortunate to have Ms. Amberg as our City Manager. As quoted from the January 30, 2020 issue of The Chronicle, in an article titled, “Leading — without excuses.” “In an era where accountability and self awareness often are lacking, spending any time around Michelle
Amberg is a refreshing alternative. No excuses. No finger-pointing. No blame. It’s full responsibility, all-out ownership, all the time.” I completely agree!

Also from The Chronicle, dated January 30, 2020, Senior City Planner, “Madeline Phillips who has worked for Amberg since her arrival, said Amberg “transformed the city into a collaborative environment….She restored a level of confidence that drives organizational success.”

Saturday February 1, 2020 was Ms. Amberg’s sixth anniversary with the City of Creswell, congratulations! I look forward to many more years of dedicated service to the City of Creswell.

I would also like to thank all of our outstanding city staff. Ms. Amberg has told me more times than I can count, that this is the most talented city staff that she has ever worked with. They work very hard for the city council and the citizens of Creswell every day, thank you very much!

Lastly, I would like to thank the many volunteers that serve on the Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions. Your service to Creswell is a vital part of a properly functioning city government. The city and city council could not function, without your service. Thank you very much!

2019 was a very good year for the City of Creswell. Many important policies and issues were put in place and very difficult decisions made by city staff and the city council.

Two major Master Plans were worked on and adopted by the city council. First was the adoption of the Transportation System Plan. This document will “set forth a long range plan that sets the vision for a community’s transportation system for the next 20 years and beyond.” The second was the adoption of the Housing Needs Analysis. “This report presents a Housing Needs Analysis and Economic Opportunities Analysis for the City of Creswell….the Study includes population and employment forecasts that describe how much growth Creswell should plan for over the 2019 to 2039 period, and the housing needs analysis forecasts the amount and type of housing necessary to accommodate growth in Creswell over that period.”

These are major accomplishments and the culmination of work done by dozens of people. They represent State and County Agencies, consulting teams, stakeholders, community volunteers, city staff and the Creswell City Council. These documents will play a very big role in how Creswell will plan for economic growth, housing growth and how we travel around our community over the next 20 years. It was a very proud moment when the city council adopted these documents.

What an outstanding accomplishment by so many people, congratulations to all those who played a role in the adoption of these important documents.

2019 also brought growth in our city staff. One additional person was added. Wendy Smith is our new Assistant City Recorder and Municipal Court Clerk. Jerry Luke has been reassigned and is now Creswell’s Code Enforcement Officer. I’m very happy to have you both join an already great city staff.
Working together we have seen many accomplishments in 2019. The following is a brief list of the progress we have made:

- ADA Railroad Crossing, this will greatly enhance safe passage across the railroad tracks.
- Created a new Bicycle Wayside Park at the corner of Cloverdale Road and Dale Kuni Road.
- Installation of ADA accessible outdoor exercise equipment at the Cobalt Activity Center. This equipment will offer exercise opportunities for everyone.
- Awarded the $400,000 Community Development Block Grant, this grant makes available funds to correct deficient housing in Creswell and other cities in Lane County.
- Began construction of Community Food for Creswell’s Cobalt Community Kitchen Project. This will see the creation of a commercial kitchen which had been a dream of my wife and I for a long time. The project really grew legs in 2018 and 2019 and we are now seeing our dream finally come to fruition. Congratulations Community Food for Creswell in getting this accomplished.
- The City of Creswell was awarded the Tourism Ambassador Award for 2019.
- Started an Annual July 4th Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest, coloring sidewalks by City Hall.
- Began an Annual City of Creswell, Public Works Day. This was a great event and offered our citizens the opportunity to talk to our public works staff, view the equipment that they operate and tour both the Waste Water Treatment Plant as well as our drinking Water Treatment Plant.
- There were two major weather events that happened in 2019. In February the city was totally engulfed in nearly 2 feet of snow. Our public works staff was diligent in the use of equipment to clear our streets. Thank you public works staff! Following the snow melt came heavy rain and a flood event. Thankfully Creswell did not suffer major damage. Many of our community members that live close to the Coast Fork of the Willamette River had to be evacuated. The whole community came together to help each other out in both of these major weather events. As your Mayor, I was so proud of our community coming together in our time of need. This was a true and obvious example of why Creswell is called, “The Friendly City.”
- Assisted South Lane County Fire and Rescue district with their Strategic Plan process.
- Several of our Community members, including myself, served on the SLCF&R Creswell Fire Station Advisory Committee. This committee helped in the design and location of Creswell’s new Fire Station. On February 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. the SLCF&R Chief John Wooten will present the design and location of the new Fire Station to the Creswell City Council at our Council Work Session.
- SLCF&R and the City of Creswell co-sponsored Community Emergency Response Team “CERT” training for everyone who wanted to receive the training. Several community members completed the training and will be recognized at a future City Council Meeting.
- Held several meetings and countless communications with State Legislators, County officials, Homes for Good, NEDCO and DevNW regarding more affordable housing in Creswell.
- Selected a consultant company to complete a study of Creswell’s System Development Charges SDC’s. These funds provide vital revenue for developing capacity for future capital projects.
- Began the engineering and planning for the A Street project, which will go from Holt Park to 1st street. It will improve that street to meet current city standards. This will be great to see.
This highly traveled street will be widened, have sidewalks and bicycle lanes to improve safe travels by multiple modalities. The work will take place in Summer of 2020. I look forward to the improvements.

• The City Council Public Safety Committee participated in the National Night Out in August. This was a very well attended event, with prizes awarded to a few lucky people.

• Completed the final purchase agreement of the parcel along south 2nd Street and behind the New Hope Baptist Church. This parcel is approximately an acre in size and will be designated for a new City Park. This will be the first ever City Park South of Oregon Ave.

• The Creswell Airport was awarded F.A.A. Airport Improvement funds that enabled the resurfacing of the Hobby Field Taxiways. Congratulations to Airport Manager Shelly Humble for getting these funds that offered vital improvements to our Municipal Airport.

• City staff completed work on the City of Creswell’s Emergency Operations Plan “EOP”. Then the city council adopted the EOP. This too is the culmination of work by a lot of people who played a part in the adoption of this vital document.

• City Council’s Public Safety Committee has completed their Public Safety Survey. More than 600 people completed this survey, regarding the future of policing levels in Creswell. Thank you to those who participated. In 2020, this survey will assist city staff and city council in the determination of future policing levels as well as how to pay for it.

• The city council sought out assistance from the University of Oregon’s Public Relations Class Project to look for ways to better connect with those that we serve. As a result of the U of O students’ research and recommendations, the city council members will take turns doing short videos following each City Council and Work Session meetings. The councilors will be recapping what happened at these meetings. The video’s will be posted on the City of Creswell Facebook page. Our hope is that it will offer our citizens the opportunity to get to know the Mayor and City Councilors a bit better and also to better understand the issues that we worked on at these meetings.

• The city council decided to take a step into the future by adopting an Electronic Device use Policy. This policy provides for each city councilor the use of a city owned tablet for use in their city council duties. This policy also established that council packets will be provided electronically. This policy will save a great deal of resources that were once needed to print out council packets for every council meeting and work session.

• The city council’s Administration & Finance Committee completed a charge to totally re-do the city councilor’s page on the City of Creswell’s web site. The Mayor and each city councilor created their own Biographies. Their Biography also includes a photo of each councilor. It is hoped that this will give our community a chance to get to know us more personally. To view these go to; https://www.ci.creswell.or.us/bc-cc/page/city-council-meeting-28 and click on the Mayor and City Council tab to read about the dedicated and caring people who serve on the Creswell City Council.

• KNND Radio in Cottage Grove has reached out to members of the Creswell City Council to take part in “The Beeper Show.” Councilors Kevin Prociw and Martha McReynolds Jr. have taken on this opportunity and have done a great job. Thank you Councilors! Tune in to 1400 AM on the first Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. to listen to the broadcast and learn more about what’s going on in Creswell.
As you can see from the list of accomplishments in 2019, the City of Creswell was very busy. It took a lot of hard work and dedication from a lot of people to accomplish the great things we did in 2019. We continue to serve the citizens of Creswell every day. The people who serve on the city staff, city council, and those who volunteer on the many advisory boards, committees and commissions all appreciate your support of their service. We can all take great pride knowing that the City of Creswell is better now than it was a year ago. The year 2020 begins a new decade and a new level of commitment. There is still a great deal of work to be done. As your Mayor, I will continue to dedicate each day of service to the citizens of Creswell. Working with a great city council, city staff, and many volunteers, we will continue to work hard for the betterment of Creswell and to those who call Creswell “The Friendly City” home.

Respectfully,

Richard Zettervall
Creswell Mayor