



City of Umatilla

City Council Goals & Strategic Plan

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025

Approved by Resolution No. 32-2023

Purpose: To sufficiently and appropriately manage and meet the community's expectations for high quality services, provide a general vision to manage growth and improvements, and to strengthen and diversify Umatilla's economic vitality and increase quality of life to our residents and visitors.

Guiding Principles: The City Council sets policy direction to guide staff implementation of these goals. The 2023 – 2025 City Council Goals are to serve as a Strategic Plan for the City during this set duration and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of goals. This list of goals is representative in nature and without a hierarchy of priorities. Councilmembers will be a positive and resourceful representative for Umatilla and communicate well with residents, businesses, and our partners. City Council will support the City Manager to implement the operational aspects of these adopted goals.

Goal 1: Promote a Vibrant and Growing Community by Investing in and Support of Quality of Life Improvements.

Desired Outcome: To sustain, grow, and enhance the City's Livability and Quality of Life by supporting and increasing public safety; encouraging increases in public health initiatives like community and private investments in medical facilities, wellness programs, and recreational activities; and emboldening a local culture that supports, encourages, promotes, and solicits events, festivals, and public gathering opportunities.

Objective 1.1: Support proactive and alternative community policing efforts that promote prevention, rehabilitation, and substance abuse circumvention. When possible, invest in early prevention services and programs.

Objective 1.2: At a minimum, maintain the FY23/24 Police Department staffing levels and funding and support a department with a high emphasis on officer training and purchasing of state-of-the-art police technologies and equipment.

Objective 1.3: Coordinate all major community events with the Police Department to help ensure public safety. Whenever possible, encourage officer presence at all major events as appropriate and as resources allow.

Objective 1.4: Financially and otherwise support the creation of new city-sponsored recreation programs for people of all ages. Increase and expand partnerships with other public facilities, like the Umatilla School District and others, for public use to support such programs.

Objective 1.5: Partner with other jurisdictional public health programs and private health providers in efforts to reduce tobacco use, marijuana use, substance abuse, reduce alcoholism, and reduce obesity. Seek grant opportunities to do so and give priority use of city-owned facilities to organizations that support these efforts.

Objective 1.6: Recognize the high benefit and resolve that one of the highest priorities to our community is to provide a city-wide trail and pathway system that encourages walking, jogging, biking, and mobile leisure as well as enhances public safety by reducing the risk of pedestrian/vehicle accidents.

Objective 1.6.1: While ensuring to be good stewards of the public's lands, every effort should be made to maximize river front trails and public access to our rivers and beautiful natural landscapes and views that includes our rivers, mountains, hills, wetlands, and desert features.

Objective 1.7: Continue to develop Big River Golf Course to host large multi-day Outdoor Community Festivals and events with the capacity to host no fewer than 7,500 people.

Objective 1.7.1: Use of Big River Golf course to host large events should occur during shoulder seasons (March/April or October/November) whenever possible.

Objective 1.7.2: Develop a concept plan for Big River Golf Course that includes: new pro shop and club house, possible restaurant, new on-course restroom facilities, new putting greens, updated paved pathways, and other improvements recommended by the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Objective 1.8: Continue to cultivate professional relationships with the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce. Work collaboratively to promote events, work to increase businesses, and encourage community memberships and participation. Determine the best use of city facilities and other city resources that both supports the partnership and supports the community overall.

Objective 1.9: Invest in, support, and encourage commercial revitalization, with emphasis in the downtown.

Objective 1.9.1: At a minimum, maintain the FY 23/24 grant program funding of the Downtown Facade Grant and the Local Business Grant to financially support and encourage facade improvements. If possible, work to increase the total amount available and the amount available for each applicant project.

Objective 1.9.2: If resources allow, increase funding to the Local Business Grant program to help potential businesses to locate their business into Umatilla commercial buildings throughout the City (does not include home-based businesses). Additional incentives should be made available to those businesses looking to locate in any downtown building that has been vacant for at least two years or any other commercial buildings that have been vacant for at least three years.

Objective 1.9.3: Procure, through purchase and/or condemnation, unsafe, chronically vacant, or run-down

buildings. Rehabilitate and/or refurbish such newly acquired buildings or work closely with developers and investors to do so. When appropriate, keep as publicly owned buildings; otherwise, make every effort to get the newly refurbished buildings back into private ownership to encourage business and economic growth.

Objective 1.9.4: Follow best practices and principles for downtown urban beautification; at a minimum, encourage tree plantings, flowers, ornamental lighting and fixtures, natural and manicured landscapes, murals, and the like. If necessary, do so through code revisions.

Objective 1.10: Continue to invest in and support Rock the Locks Music Festival and an additional all-new large (more than 3,000 people per day) multi-day city-sponsored event/festival that will occur annually during spring beginning in 2025.

Objective 1.11: Construct the Umatilla Business Center: rehabilitation of the old post office and all-new construction, Village Square Park improvements, alley improvements, parking lot, I Street improvements, and 7th St. improvements. Make every effort to achieve a “Festival Street” concept. Continue to explore the possible procurement of the Umatilla School District’s maintenance building to eventually be converted into a Community Recreation Center or other City facility.

Objective 1.12: Make efforts to establish work place safety. Work to establish Umatilla as a community that emphasizes emergency preparedness. Make any effort possible to ensure that all City functions can operate during times of crisis or if power or other core utilities were to temporarily be unavailable. At least once during 2023-2025, coordinate and carryout a “table-top” exercise with all other emergency service organizations in the area and work to remedy any gaps that may have been identified from this exercise.

Objective 1.13: Work to create housing at every economic level and provide investment and/or incentives to those levels of housing that are not being developed by the private sector.

Objective 1.13.1: Earnestly pursue housing development partnerships with private developers and nonprofits that provide low-income housing. Negotiate incentives with such developers that will entice them to construct their product in Umatilla. Consider constructing infrastructure, reducing fees, providing grants, density bonuses, etc. as possible means to produce such housing.

Objective 1.13.2: Continue to partner with neighboring communities on Project PATH. Earnestly pursue grant and private funding to help ensure the program continues past the funding provided by HB4123 (June 2024).

Objective 1.13.3: Work to construct/develop housing on city-owned residential property located along Big River Golf Course that is inline with housing traditionally located along golf courses (single family, condos, multi-family, etc.).

Objective 1.13.4: City-owned property near the downtown should be developed to into multi-use housing that matches the traditionally and historical character of the downtown; with commercial buildings on the ground floor and apartments/condos on the 2nd and 3rd floors. Whenever possible, encourage as much density as reasonable as part of the City's downtown revitalization strategies.

Objective 1.14: Work to expand high-speed internet and broadband services throughout the city. Whenever possible, pursue federal and state funding opportunities toward this effort. Solicit additional communication franchises to expand their services to Umatilla.

Goal 2: Promote Economic Development and Job Growth

Desired Outcome: Achieve economic stability and sustained job growth, build a highly skilled and flexible local workforce, concentrate on retaining and expanding existing local businesses, recruit new businesses that are well-suited for success in our region, encourage education, strengthen tourism, promote and encourage the preservation of our historic assets and history, support residential and commercial developers, invest in infrastructure and technology, ensure adequate supply of development-ready lands for commercial/residential/industrial use, and encourage development that is environmentally sensitive.

Objective 2.1: Continue to strongly support and encourage the development of data centers.

Objective 2.2: Promote diversification of the commercial/industrial base.

Objective 2.3: Reduce barriers to economic growth. Listen to commercial and industrial developers, partners, staff, and the public to reduce such barriers.

Objective 2.4: Cooperate with local educational institutions to coordinate training/skill requirements to meet the needs of local employers. Reduce barriers to obtaining necessary or upgraded job skills.

Objective 2.5: Cooperate with business, educational institutions, community organizations, and government to provide information to local businesses.

Objective 2.6: Assist local and non-local firms in finding appropriate development sites for expansion and encourage local employers to grow in-place.

Objective 2.7: Cooperate with other agencies and institutions to identify programs and services to assist in the creation of new small businesses.

Objective 2.8: Promote start-up businesses with both financial and technical assistance. Create a city-run business incubator program that helps new businesses off-set some of the risks of starting a new business.

Objective 2.9: Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to create local programs which provide business development, information, and technical assistance.

Objective 2.10: Partner with other jurisdictions and/or private organizations whenever possible to pool resources and leverage funds.

Objective 2.11: Improve in the city's economic vitality and competitiveness by investing in our utility infrastructure, transportation systems, and recreational opportunities.

Objective 2.12: Explore the feasibility of a city-owned industrial facility that would be available for lease to industrial customers. If viable, purchase industrial land and construct such a facility that will be no less than 40,000 square feet. If possible, do so with at a time when a commitment from a prospective leaseholder is obtained.

Objective 2.13: Grow the city's inventory of large industrial parcels, 50 acres or more, to meet the industrial demand of the region. If necessary, pursue urban growth boundary expansion according to land use law and best practices.

Goal 3: Enhance and Cultivate Relationships, Partnerships, and Community Perceptions

Desired Outcome: To enhance already positive local, regional, and state-wide relationships and to strengthen or improve poor relationships. To cultivate current partnerships and to expand partnerships that will help achieve Goals 1 and 2.

Objective 3.1: Strengthen community relations and improve public perception through proactive community engagement.

Objective 3.1.1: Create opportunities for residents to build relationships within their neighborhoods to foster social cohesion, sense of community, and broaden understanding.

Objective 3.2: Actively promote positive actions the City is providing in our community. Promotions may include, but are not limited to: events, parks programs, festivals, city services provided, City staff achievements, elected officials' achievements, completed projects, partnership achievements, etc.

Objective 3.3: Continue to build upon positive Police Community Engagement activities, especially in socio-economically challenged areas to create meaningful engagement opportunities.

Objective 3.4: Expand public involvement opportunities. Make every effort possible to ensure to provide the public the ability to participate in-person or remotely through utilization of technology. Whenever possible, use live-streaming services of Council or Committee meetings. Post recordings to the City's website to be viewed on-demand.

Objective 3.4.1: Actively solicit and encourage the community to become committee members, task force members, and to join advisory committees. Each position should be advertised prior to any appointment or re-appointment.

Objective 3.4.2: Whenever possible, provide opportunities for the public to provide feedback on strategic plans, master plans, improvements plans, etc. Participation should be made as accessible as possible and should utilize traditional methods such as town halls or in-person comment opportunities; and should utilize technology whenever possible.

Objective 3.4.3: Encourage city-wide “Community Honor” activities such as Community Clean Up Days, Community Day of Service, Community Historical Celebrations, and similar.

Objective 3.4.4: Create a Mayor’s Choice: Citizen of the Year Award to be presented at either a major Community appreciation event or during a City Council meeting. The recipient of this award will have a day declared in their honor via Mayoral Proclamation.

Objective 3.4.5: Create programs in partnership with the School District and/or other education organizations to have students Pre-K through high school to come and lead City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance at each Regular Council Meeting.

Goal 4: Increase Public Involvement, Increase Transparency, and Enhance Cultural Diversity

Desired Outcome: To develop and implement highly efficient and transparent communication methods with the public, encourage public participation through each of our processes, and welcome and engage all members of our community by eliminating barriers of participation. Promote a higher sense of community spirit and inclusiveness through celebrating culture, tradition, history, holidays, and community achievements.

Objective 4.1: Invest in and utilize videoconferencing or webinar technology that will allow the public to interact with City Council or their appointed commissions/committees from anywhere with connection to the internet.

Objective 4.2: Create and continue to increase on-demand city information and data available to the public on the City’s website.

Objective 4.3: At least quarterly, publish a City newsletter to be circulated to subscribers and online.

Objective 4.4: At least once a year, host “town hall” or informational sessions for the public to come interactively discuss topics that are important to them.

Objective 4.5: Expand outreach to and engagement with residents who have limited English proficiency by developing and executing strategies specifically designed to build relationships and encourage participation with this citizen group.

Objective 4.6: Seek opportunities to partner with organizations that celebrate or teach about our diverse heritage. These may include education seminars, dances, festivals, trainings, or similar. Whenever possible, provide venue space to host such activities.

Objective 4.7: Whenever possible, Council members or city officials should accept invitations or seek opportunities to speak/present in neighborhood groups, businesses, or other local boards or outside organizations to share information about City affairs and share these goals.

Goal 5: Perform at the Highest Levels of Operational Excellence

Desired Outcome: Provide exceptional customer service that exceeds the public’s expectations, invest in staff and elected official development, and sustain and improve the City’s financial positions.

Objective 5.1: Continue to invest in staff’s professional development.

Objective 5.2: At least twice a year, offer training to elected officials. Topics may include at least the following: use of City technology, public official ethics, public meetings, public records, roles and responsibilities, basic budgeting, media relations, or use of social media.

Objective 5.2.1: Each year, no later than April, have City staff provide a City Tour to elected officials and their invited guests.

Objective 5.3: Integrate a Customer Service element to annual employee performance evaluations.

Objective 5.4: At least annually, poll the community regarding their level of satisfaction with any recent service they have received from the City.

Objective 5.5: Increase the number of customer self-service options for those who wish to limit their direct interaction with staff or elected officials.

Objective 5.6: Focus efforts on retention of employees. Ensure that wages and benefits are competitive, frequency of trainings are appropriate, and employee recognition and morale is a priority.

Objective 5.7: Expand the City's social media presence being sure to utilize multiple platforms to engage with the community "where they are." Use social media as part of our overall communication efforts and to also create opportunities to bolster our sense of community, celebrate our history and diversity, and create excitement for the work we are doing and events we are sponsoring.

Objective 5.8: Receive the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Award annually.

Objective 5.9: As part of the city's sustainable budget strategy, whenever pragmatic, maintain a prudent operational reserve of at least 20% in each of the following funds: General Fund, Street Fund, Water Fund, and Sewer Fund. Whenever possible, all major capital purchases should be planned utilizing a multi-year savings approach.