

CITY OF MOSIER STRATEGIC PLAN

FEBRUARY 21, 2018

HELLO

Welcome to our 2018 Strategic Plan which looks to the next 5 years and maps out carefully planned changes.

Mosier is currently at a crossroads with years of planning finally resulting in funding for a number of projects. The balance between growth and preservation has always been an important challenge for our community and this document is the result of hundreds of discussions – some lively and some dull – across all points of view.

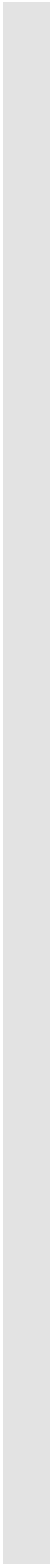
Think of this document as a tool for all of us to use as we carry out our shared vision.

The following pages describe our overall opportunity (*Vision*), the role the City of Mosier plays (*Mission*), the principles to consider when making decisions along the way (*Values*), the six *Goals* for making this happen and the specific *Projects* to bring those goals to life. At the end of this document is a list of *Challenges & Strengths* to keep in mind as we go.



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BACKGROUND

The goal of this Strategic Plan is to make the direction of the City clear so that the Council and the community have a shared understanding of where we are now and where we are going.

Over the past 40 years, the Mosier community has responded to 20 different surveys, focus groups, town halls, and visioning workshops. You can find summaries of these efforts on the City website under Public Documents and on the Main Street Mosier website. What is remarkable through all of the research, among all of the different people and over all of those years, is that there is a call for the same unified vision for Mosier.

That vision does not include unfettered growth. Instead it calls for implementing a wish list of key improvements, businesses and services that bring convenience and keep people from having to leave town.

It asks the town to move carefully from tiny to small.

At the same time, because we are required by Oregon law to build and maintain modern sewer and water systems, adding just a few more residences & businesses spreads the cost of those services out a bit so they are not so painful.

It's also a vision for Mosier that reaches back in many ways to the early 1900s when Mosier was a hub of civic and economic activity including a bank, newspaper, six different stores, a restaurant, hotel, barber shop, pool hall, five real estate agencies, and two churches. While no one is looking to reintroduce that full list again today, the community has made it clear in survey after survey that they'd like to see a bit more of that bustle.

Thanks to the hard work and passion of people in our community, the next few years will see a number of projects in our downtown area that tackle some of the bigger items on the wish list. There will be many opportunities for public input on the details of those projects and a number of decisions along the way. It's important to emphasize that these decisions are not made by the residents of the city alone – the town is a hub for the entire valley and those views are reflected in the background research and are integral moving forward. We are all one community.

To help make the most of our limited budget and time, this document will serve as a shared summary of the Mosier vision and tool to help us achieve it together.

VISION

def: An aspirational description of what we'd like to achieve in the future

Vibrant Mosier.

A lively, functional town where we can live, work, and play without having to leave Mosier

MISSION

def: An aspirational description of what we'd like to achieve in the future

The City of Mosier is committed to providing robust infrastructure, resilient social systems, and a strong local economy while protecting Mosier's historic and small-town character.

VALUES

*def: Our guiding principles
for how we make decisions
along the way*

The Mosier Way: We are a small rural town with deep agricultural roots and an interesting history. We slow down and take time to say hello before getting down to business; we try to listen more than we talk; and we have potlucks.

Diversity: We are all neighbors -no matter age, economic status, race, gender, self-identity, political leanings, religion, and so on. We believe that differing views plus respect leads to better ideas.

Interdependence: We believe in strong relationships: with each other, the wider valley, the county, and with regional partners. Our volunteer spirit is based on our ag roots - we help each other out when needed, coming together to get things done. We are stronger together.

Sustainability: It's important to maintain a dynamic balance as we preserve the future of our environment, Infrastructure, and economy. This means a focus on economic diversity, financial integrity, emergency preparedness and overall self reliance as a town. We make decisions that consider the next generation of community members.

Preservation of Beauty: There's no other place like the Columbia River Gorge. We protect our natural and cultural resources. We value the river, the valley, the hills and the air. And art - we value art.

Compassion: We are kinder than necessary. We protect our most vulnerable residents. We know that people make mistakes so we believe in the power of an apology and the choice to forgive. We choose to give just a little more than we take. We drive as if the person in the other car is our elderly neighbor (because it probably is).

Innovation: We're creative and entrepreneurial with the tenacity to follow through. We don't give up just because it's hard - we surf the tsunami.

Vision: We believe that size doesn't matter when it comes to doing what's right and ethical. We believe in taking the time to look ahead and know what we want to do and where we want to go. And we believe we can achieve a dynamic, vibrant community while maintaining our Mosier quality of life.

Going Deeper: We don't make decisions based on assumption but will take the extra time to be informed with vetted facts and multiple sources. We believe in direct communication as an antidote to small town rumors. We value curiosity, greater awareness and expanding our educational resources.

GOALS & PROJECTS

To achieve its vision and carry out its mission, the City of Mosier has 6 goals:

1. Develop and Maintain a Thriving Local Economy *p8*
2. Strengthen Communications *p9*
3. Develop and Maintain a Robust Infrastructure System *p10*
4. Ensure Housing Security for Mosier Residents *p11*
5. Protect and Enhance the Environment *p12*
6. Identify and Implement New City Revenue Sources *p13*

The rest of this section describes these goals in more detail, and the projects the City plans to undertake to meet them.

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 1: Develop and Maintain a Thriving Local Economy

Despite limited resources, the City of Mosier is committed to pursuing this outcome by continually looking for ways to:

- *Create quality public spaces with an emphasis on arts and culture*
- *Take advantage of recreational and inherent assets*
- *Prioritize local entrepreneurship*
- *Emphasize production and innovation (a sustainable economy--not built solely on consumption)*
- *Connect Mosier Valley agricultural businesses with downtown Mosier*

Projects to address this goal:

ODOT TSP Enhance: This Transportation Systems Plan develops walking and bicycling routes, ADA Accessible parking, and landscape amenities that provide safe access for people of all ages. It also sustains our commitment to healthy storm water practices. *Estimated completion 2020*

Gorge Hubs Project: The Mosier Hub is part of a Gorge-wide system of community-centered rest stops that provide interpretive signage, wayfinding maps, bicycle repair tools, and amenities that familiarize local travelers with the history and scenery of each town. It also gives info on local businesses to visit. *Estimated completion 2020*

Train Derailment Site Restoration: On June 3, 2016, the tree lined paths and Western gateway to the City of Mosier were demolished by an oil train derailment. Restoration will include recovery of watershed processes and natural habitat as well as the beatific walking conditions and site amenities that restore community heritage. *Estimated completion 2019*

UPRR Land Acquisition: Since 2000, the City of Mosier has actively sought to gain control over a 3 acre commercial property owned by UPRR and located in the downtown core. The property includes the Totem Plaza and extends along Mosier's main street to Mosier Creek. As the largest undeveloped property in Mosier's downtown core, it has a critical role to play in Mosier's downtown revitalization plans. This land was granted to the City as part of the UPRR oil train derailment settlement. *Estimated completion 2018*

Civic Center/Joint Use Facility: The City is currently working with Mosier Fire to investigate the feasibility, funding, and implementation of a combined city hall, fire station and multi-purpose community space. Early studies also show potential for stimulating commercial activity in downtown. *Estimated completion 2023*

Quarry Industrial Area: The City is engaged in long-term partnership building and evaluation of land use alternatives for the Mosier Quarry property, which is currently owned by the Oregon Department of Transportation. *Ongoing*

Extension of Mosier Plateau Trail: Working with Friends of the Gorge, the city is helping to create a nature and winery loop with a connection to The Dalles. Similar walking trails have been instrumental in revitalizing small towns around the world. *Ongoing*

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 2: Strengthen Communications

Due to the large number of projects planned in the next 5 years, the City will focus on increased proactive communications with residents and organizations affected by the projects.

Projects to address this goal:

- Develop a Council Policy and Orientation Handbook. *Estimated completion 2018*
- Strengthen Staff-Council relationships by encouraging regular one-on-one communications. *Ongoing*
- Create and deliver presentations at key points in the project development and implementation. *Ongoing*
- Regularly update on the City website and Mosier Valley News. *Ongoing*
- Provide citizens better access to and understanding of the Strategic Plan and of City systems such as the new Development Permitting System. *Ongoing*

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 3: Develop and Maintain a Robust Infrastructure System

The City of Mosier has made significant investments in the past 12 years to establish first rate water, sewer and transportation systems that are capable of handling future residential, business, and light industrial growth development.

Water & Sewer projects to address this goal:

Water System Capital Improvements: In 2016 the Mosier City Council adopted a Water System Capital Improvement Plan that includes the remaining projects necessary to maintain a reliable and resilient system.

Estimated completion 2024

- Mosier Creek Bridge Water/Sewer Main Replacement: As part of the restoration of the Historic Mosier Creek bridge, ODOT worked with the City of Mosier to use the bridge infrastructure to update and enhance the East side Mosier water delivery system infrastructure. *Completed 2017*
- Our next step is an application to the USDA Rural Development loan and grant to finance a series of capital improvements - development, construction and repair to the municipal water system with a focus on the East side of town (sometimes referred to as the Eastside Water Systems Upgrade). *Ongoing*

Groundwater Remediation: Mosier groundwater levels have declined significantly in the last 40 years. The Mosier Watershed Council, in cooperation with the Soil and Water Conservation District and Oregon Water Resources Department, is working to ensure a sustainable water supply for homeowners, orchardists, and the City. These groups are fixing leaky commingling wells, developing new groundwater aquifer sources, and improving water conservation. The City is investigating moving its primary water supply well inside city limits to rely on a different source than the surrounding valley. *Ongoing*

Transportation projects to address goal:

Mosier Streetscapes Project: The City is currently developing a Transportation System Plan and has been awarded STP Enhance Non-Highway ODOT funds for the Mosier Streetscapes Project, which will begin in 2018.

Slow Mo' Plan: In 2015, the Mosier City Council adopted an aspirational transportation plan that outlines a long-range vision for Highway 30 in Mosier. It invites locals and tourists alike to slow down and stay awhile, by exploring improvements along Highway 30 through Mosier, as well as a bicycle and pedestrian connection to the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail. *Ongoing*

Mosier Creek Bridge Bike/Ped Safety Project: In 2017 we took advantage of the ODOT Mosier Creek Bridge construction to transform the road from two way into a single vehicle lane with bike and walking lanes added on either side. This allows safe crossing of all modes of transportation. Final signage will be developed via the Streetscape Project. *Estimated completion 2018*

Safe Routes to School: An action plan in partnership with Mosier Community School is in development. *Estimated completion 2018*

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 4: Ensure Housing Security for Mosier Residents

The City of Mosier supports its values of diversity and economic sustainability by working towards housing options for a wide range of people.

Projects to address this goal:

Comprehensive Housing Policy (housing needs and issues) which includes:

Updating the 2001 Building and Housing Inventory. *Estimated completion 2018*

Working with Mid-Columbia Housing Authority to explore affordable housing options. *Ongoing*

Committee to Investigate High School Options for Families: The City depends on access to excellent education to attract families to move to town and to retain them here. Recently we have experienced an increase of families moving away for education reasons. This committee will work with County Commissioners, Wasco County School District 21 and Mosier School to explore the challenges and potential solutions to this dynamic. *Ongoing*

Exploration of Short Term Housing policies and Room Tax options: We are interested in finding the right balance between places for visitors to stay who contribute to our tourism and available housing for permanent residents who will contribute to our community. *Ongoing*

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 5: Protect and Enhance the Environment

The City is not only committed to protecting the beauty of the Columbia River Gorge but also to doing what we can to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and to cut emissions.

Projects to address this goal:

Urban Forest Management Plan: This plan outlines the recommendations and resources needed to effectively and proactively manage our public trees. *Ongoing*

ODF Healthy Forests Project: The City removes hazardous or dead trees as part of the Urban Forest Management Plan. *Ongoing*

Streetlight LED Retrofit: Working with Pacific Power, the City replaces the old lights as they burn out with energy efficient bulbs. *Ongoing*

Chicago Climate Charter: The City of Mosier has joined 60+ cities to support the goals of the Paris Agreement. Based on those goals, our specific commitments include:

- Provide every resident with safe and accessible choices to walk, bike, or use public transit as part of Mosier's transportation system and land use policies
- Adopt policies and investments that reduce the carbon footprint of public transit systems, Mosier's vehicle fleet and privately-owned vehicles
- Accelerate municipal use of renewable energy and work to deliver affordable renewable energy access in all communities
- Reduce the carbon footprint of new and existing public and private buildings and infrastructure
- Reduce the carbon footprint of solid waste systems
- Invest in natural climate solutions such as tree canopy, vegetation, and shoreline restoration that conserve, restore and improve natural ecosystems that increase carbon storage.

GOALS & PROJECTS

Our action plan for the next five years. Note some projects apply to more than one goal.

Goal 6: Identify and Implement New City Revenue Sources

Mosier's permanent low tax rate of \$1.14 per \$1,000 of property value means that as Mosier grows, the City's ability to serve its residents diminishes. The City must look for new sources of revenue that will allow the City to maintain its critical infrastructure and to provide necessary services. Ongoing

CHALLENGES & STRENGTHS

Factors that have the potential to impact the success of our goals and projects

CHALLENGES

- Extremely low permanent tax rate (Measures 5/50)
- Few number of people to share the burden of building and maintaining expensive critical infrastructure
- Few historic downtown buildings or business spaces
- Attainable housing shortage
- Only industrial zoned properties are the 2 quarries
- Transportation gaps
- Students travel out of town for High School
- Lack of ethnic population representation
- Potential aquifer depletion
- Threat of consumption and tourism-based economy changing character of Mosier (transition of economy to rich, vacation play-zone)
- Risk that quarry re-opens without City control
- Effects of climate change
- Needs of a growing, aging population

STRENGTHS

- Location within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
- Strong ties with agricultural base in Mosier Valley and Growth of Value-added ag industry
- Significant recreational assets including the Historic Columbia River Highway, Mosier Plateau Trail, Waterfront Park, Columbia River
- Strong social connectivity, community organizations
- Strong partnerships with state agencies and other local governments—regional collaboration
- Strong, cohesive, consistent sense of community identity and vision
- Strong community volunteer culture
- Healthy infrastructure: water, sewer
- Growing economic base of recreational tourism
- Socio-economically diverse population
- Access to healthcare & other services in neighboring communities
- Reconnection of the Historic Columbia River Highway in 2022
- Potential for quarry redevelopment

THANK YOU